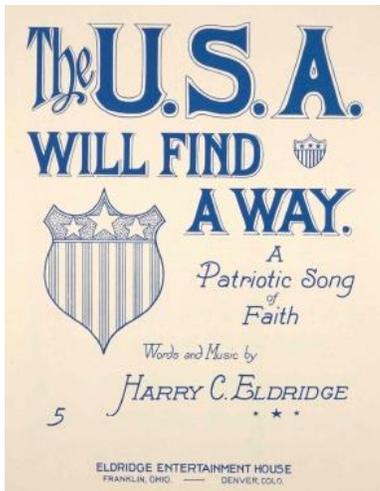


The Franklin Methodist Church During World War One

During the church services held at Franklin First UMC on November 11th this year, the church bell was rung for one minute at precisely 11:11 am to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the end of World War One (WWI). The chancel choir also sang "Let There be Peace on Earth" when the ringing finished.

The people of Franklin and the surrounding area actively contributed to the war effort during WWI by sending over 100 men into various military and service organizations. Several men were affiliated with the Methodist congregation that included former pastor Rev. Norman Sweat who took a leave of absence from the church ministry to spend 1917 in the Army YMCA then spent 1918 as an U.S. Army Chaplain in France. Our choir director Harry Eldridge also joined the Army YMCA as well as composing and publishing at least seven patriotic songs. Dr. Silas Stahl, who was a choir member and active in the church leadership, served as a volunteer doctor with the Red Cross during the war. Other members of the Franklin congregation included Josiah Cafferty and Fred E. Robinson who had joined the army and marine corps, respectively.



One of the seven songs written and published by Harry Eldridge during World War I.

Mrs. Anna Stahl, a music teacher and the Methodist church organist for nearly twenty years, was one of the primary organizers of the Red Cross Auxiliary in Franklin that raised funds and supported many of activities throughout the war.

(One of a regular series of brief reports on the people and events associated with the history and ministry of the Franklin First United Method Church. Robert Bowman, Historian)



**Rev. Norman
Sweat**



**Dr. Silas
Stahl**



**Harry
Eldridge**



**Josiah
Cafferty**

Methodist men in uniform from a photograph of those who served in WWI and published by the Franklin Chronicle in July 1919.

On the morning of November 11, 1918, the U.S. State Department made the announcement that an Armistice had been signed by Germany to take effect on the 11th month, on the 11th day, and 11 minutes past the 11th hour of 1918 bringing to an end to the fighting in WWI. The Great War had been fought from August 1914 to November 1918 and resulted in more than 37 million military casualties and 8.5 million additional deaths worldwide. The American Expeditionary Force (AEF) casualties numbered 323 thousand with nearly 117 thousand deaths occurring between May 1917 and November 1918.