

1880's Moline Pipe Organ

The historic 18-rank Moline pipe organ was installed in the 1880's, and was rebuilt in 1959 and once again in 1999, the organ underwent major restoration. The Organ Historical Society recognized the musical and historical significance of this instrument.

12 Historic Stained Glass Windows

When the new church was built in 1856, members of the congregation donated several of the 12 stained glass windows outlining the church. Between 1984 and 1987, ten of the twelve windows were restored. The final two were restored in 1991.



Renovations

1980-1988 marked a period of growth and many improvements to the physical church took place. The original pews were restored and cushioned in 1981. Restoration of the stained-glass windows became a reality and the entire first floor of the church was remodeled, including new restrooms and offices. Restorations and renovations were made possible by individual pledges, memorials and bequests.

Galena United Methodist Church

Core Value:

Do no harm. Do Good. Love God.

Our Vision:

**We open hearts. We open minds.
We open doors. We make disciples.**

Our Mission:

We will honor our long history by nurturing and expanding a community of disciples who love God and neighbor, fulfilling the gospel of peace, justice, mercy, and servant ministry.

Affiliated with the Reconciling Ministries Network

"We celebrate God's gift of diversity and value the wholeness made possible in community equally shared and shepherded by all. We welcome and affirm people of every gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation, who are also of every age, race, ethnicity, physical and mental ability, level of education, and family structure, and of every economic, immigration, marital, and social status, and so much more. We acknowledge that we live in a world of profound social, economic, and political inequities. As followers of Jesus, we commit ourselves to the pursuit of justice and pledge to stand in solidarity with all who are marginalized and oppressed."



Galena United Methodist Church
125 S. Bench, Galena, IL 61036

Visit us at: www.galenaumc.org

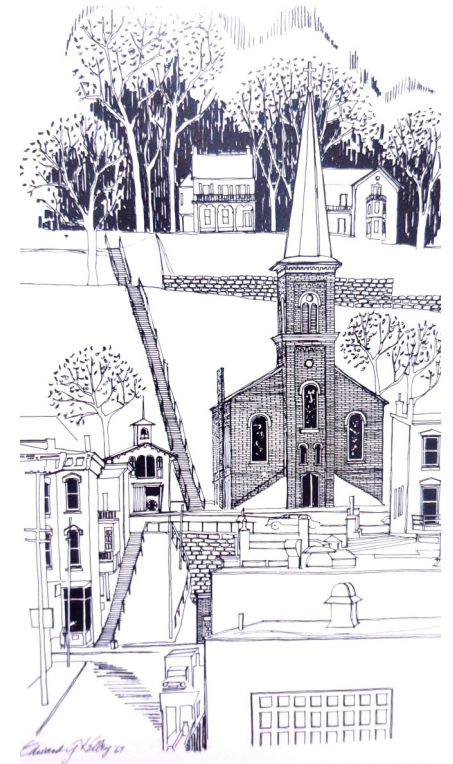
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Conference Website: www.umcnic.org

Galena United Methodist Church History



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Galena UMC was founded in 1829, just three years after Galena was incorporated so the town literally grew up around the church. Originally members held services in a house on Bench Street. As members increased, the congregation started construction of a larger structure on the site of the current parsonage, 205 S. Bench St.. Unfortunately, in January of 1838, the frame church caught fire and the building was reduced to ashes. The congregation decided to rebuild on the same site, this time using stone and brick. For three years while construction was underway, services were held in the new church basement. In 1841, the upper story of brick was completed and the church was dedicated. The brick home clinging to the hillside above the church lot and facing Prospect, The Osprey House, was the first parsonage.

The congregation quickly outgrew its new church, so the third and present structure built by John Corson Smith (Civil War General), was dedicated in 1857 by Bishop Ames. The old church building, two lots south of the new building, was retained for “parish house” activities and was known as Harris Hall. In 1894, a large Victorian parsonage was built on the north lot next to the church and was used as such until 1963-64 when it was converted to an educational unit and the current parsonage which had been built on the site of the first two churches, Harris Hall, was purchased. In 1979 the Educational Unit was sold.

The 1857 Construction

The two-story brick church was built in Romanesque Revival style. The tower is 15 ½ ft. square and the spire placed on top of the tower measures 144 feet. The basement had six class rooms. Ground floor contained an audience room capable of seating 600. The building was heated by hot air furnaces and stoves, and it was illuminated by 45 gas lights. Construction costs coupled with the lot price, were between \$19,000-\$20,00. Later in 1868, the 1,200-pound bell was installed inside the magnificent tower.

Shortly after its construction, the church welcomed Ulysses S. Grant and his family to their congregation. Grant was not particularly religious, but his wife, Julia was. The Grant family continued to attend services here for many years, even after the Civil War. The pew which he and his family occupied is marked with a small brass plate bearing the inscription: “U.S. Grant, 1859-1863.” The Rev. John H. Vincent was General Grant’s minister and personal friend. While serving here, Bishop Vincent formed his Palestine class which later became the great Chautauqua movement. He recalled that Grant was often called the ‘silent man’; however, he was an interesting and able talker. Grant’s utterance was free, his manner simple and direct, his vocabulary ample and excellent. His reserve arose in part from his wisdom. He knew when to be silent. And he knew when and how to speak.

Washington Street steps, beside the church, originally wooden, was used by General Grant and his family when they attended Sunday services. They used this stairway to get from their Pre-Civil War home at 121 S. High Street to the church. The steps are often referred to as the “Firehouse Steps.” A photo of the stairs, the steeple work, and Grant’s return celebration in hanging in the center hallway downstairs.