

MANSET UNION CHURCH TIMELINE
(KNOWN VARIOUSLY AS "THE OLD WHITE CHURCH," "THE SOUTHERN MEETINGHOUSE," "THE MANSET BAPTIST CHURCH," AND "THE ROCK CHURCH")

- 1792 15 people form the first island religious organization, a congregational organization, the Congregational Church of Mount Desert; the whole island at that time included in the jurisdiction of the church. (Thornton, pp. 45-47)
- 1793 At town meeting it was voted to send for a probationary minister. (Thornton, p. 46)
- 1794 The congregational organization was formally called a church for the first time by a visiting ordained minister, and a newly adopted covenant was signed by all wishing to join. (Thornton, p. 46)
- ca.1800 Up to this time visiting preachers held services in people's homes. Construction of the church building started on the old Bass Harbor Road, south of the present location. When the route of the road was changed, the church was taken apart and its lumber reused to construct the present church at its current location. The deed of the land is from Nicholas Tucker to "the church lot." (Thornton, p. 197) Known as the Southern Meetinghouse to differentiate it from a second meetinghouse being built at Pretty Marsh (Thornton, p. 46)
- Tucker family graves are in the cemetery behind the church.
- 1801 The town voted to hire its first full-time minister, Ebenezer Eaton. (Thornton, p. 47)
- 1825 Church is already in use during the summers during construction. (Thornton, p. 196)
- 1828 Church completed at its current location. Sale of pews helped finance building, as did town money; settlers donated most of the labor, and materials were also donated.
- 1848 Repairs in the amount of \$100.13 to be paid for by pew owners. (Thornton, p. 197)
- 1850's Stoves probably installed; apparently unheated for at least 20 years. (Thornton p. 196) (National Register application form filled out by Deborah Thompson, Architectural Historian, Bangor).
- 1853 Mutual Improvement & Benevolent Society (MIBS), first women's society on MDI organized in Manset. They prove to be important to the future of the church. Painted, cleaned, made curtains. (Thornton, p. 74)
- 1862 More repairs to the church in the amount of \$400, once more from the pew owners. (Thornton, p. 197)
- 1866-7 A bell (\$193.42) installed in the steeple, paid for by the MIBS. (Thornton, p. 75)
- 1860-1870 Several renovations made, including installing a central front door to replace the original 2 side doors. (National Register application form filled out by Deborah Thompson, Architectural Historian, Bangor)
- 1880's documented (?) as having been a period of extensive repairs: traceried Queen Anne stained

- glass windows, tin wall sheathings, substitution of a modern pulpit set, tripartite window in the second story, sash in the other windows changed to two-over-two lights. (National Register application form filled out by Deborah Thompson, Architectural Historian, Bangor).+
- 1919 Church steeple repairs needed. Village Improvement Association (VIA) appoints Stillman Dolliver to look into it. \$50 projected expense. A committee of 3 to get bids. (Everett Stanley? Henry Spurling? & CH?)
- 1920-22 Church steeple still an issue. Robie Norwood contacted. No action taken until 1922 when R. Hanson repairs it for \$76.15. VIA pays.
- 1930 Manset church joined the larger area parish consisting of SWH Congregational Church, Tremont, McKinley, West Tremont, Seal Cove, and Hall Quarry.
- 1937 Newly built Gleaners' Hall burns on Nov. 10, 1937. Church and library are badly damaged since the hall was located on the church lot behind the library. Newspaper article (see computer file SWHPics, "Gleaners Hall")
- Rededication service after interior redecoration. "The ceiling is white, the walls cream, the pews oak brown, with darker trimming, and the floor is carpeted to match. The work was done by the EA Lawler Paint Co., and the funds provided by the Busy Bees, the Baptist Ladies' Aid, and the M. E. Sewing Circle." Newspaper article
- 1941 Called Manset Baptist Church (MBC) and public meetinghouse.
- 1948 MBC and SWH Congregational Church withdraw from the larger parish and create a joint ministry.
- 1951 MBC & SWHCC share educational and fellowship programs.
- 1954 MUC organized and name changed to Manset Union Church since it was used by more than one denomination. Joined Hancock County Assoc. of Congregational Christian Churches.
- 1956 Furnace installed and pew doors removed. The sexton Charles Torrey used them as finishing in his kitchen.
- 1957 "Manset Union Church" legally incorporated with by-laws. (Edna Jellison artifact)
- 1961 Joined United Church of Christ with SWHCC.
- 1989 MUC & SWHCC working together
- 2001 National Register of Historic Places Registration Form filled out; no follow-up action noted.
- 2007 MUC acquires the Gleaners Hall from the SWH Fire Association and moves it from its lot (184 Seawall Rd.) just to the north of the church to be joined to the side of the church.

2015 MUC becomes the Rock Church.

2018 Rock Church building legally no longer a church. Sold to the Southwest Harbor Historical Society.

All the above information from a file "Manset Church" within our collection and from our book, "Our Neighborhood: Manset & Seawall." Where there is no specific citation, our file doesn't note the source. .
