

Lost Cokato: The Hi-Way Lighthouse For Christ

In the summer/fall 2008, the museum featured the display, *You May Be Seated*, a look at worship habits and customs on the Cokato area. One part of that display included area congregations about which we had little information. One of those congregations was The Hi-Way Lighthouse for Christ.

We know some aspects of the story of Hi-Way Lighthouse, but much of it we do not. Here is what we do know:

It was run by the husband and wife team of Earl and Doris (Latham) Hayes. Both Earl and Doris were born in the Howard Lake area, where they were married in June 1926. They later had two daughters, Dorene and Earlene. Doris was an ordained minister in the World Faith Mission Association. Earl died in August 1974 and Doris in October 1976.

The earliest indications of their work in Cokato can be seen these entries in the Church Notes section of the Cokato *Enterprise* from September 1953 (right), and December 1953 (below). It is not known how long they used the hall at Temperance Corner.

TEMPERANCE HALL
Sunday, 8 p.m. Regular service, full gospel preaching and inspiring musical numbers.
Thursday, 8 p.m. Testimony and praise service at our home. If you enjoy singing the good old hymns of the church or the new gospel choruses, we welcome you to come and fellowship with us. A cordial invitation to all. — Mr. and Mrs. Earl Hayes.

TEMPERANCE HALL
Thursday, 8 p.m. Interesting and inspiring service of Bible study, prayer and testimony.
Sunday, 8 p. m. Old-time gospel preaching, lively singing, and a goodly number of specials. Anyone with a musical instrument who has a desire to use it for God's glory, is invited to take part in the musical service. Everyone is welcome to both the Thursday and Sunday service. Come and worship with us and you will be glad that you did. Mal. 3:16. — Mr. and Mrs. Earl Hayes, conducting.

At some point, they acquired a structure on the west edge of Cokato, just past the Cokato Town & Country Club.

Here they established what would be their congregational home of twenty years.

Seen in the undated image at right, this building stood until 1996, when reconstruction of U.S. Highway 12 caused it to be removed.

It is somewhat difficult to discern, but underneath the name is the inscription, "Undemoninational", as opposed to the more modern, Nondenominational, or the lesser used, Interdenominational.



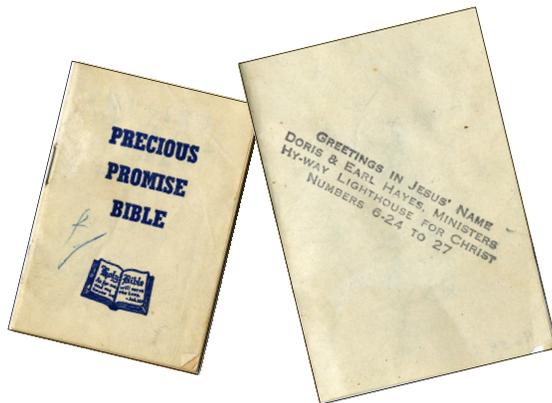
The May 1960 Church listing seen at right provided the most detailed description yet of Hi-Way Lighthouse.

Hi-Way Lighthouse for Christ
 Sunday services: 10:30 a.m., communion, 10:45 to 11:45 a.m., morning worship. Sunday is the Lord's day, honor Him by being present at both services! 7:45 p.m., evangelistic service. Something interesting and inspiring every time.
 Tuesdays, 7:45 p.m., Bible study and prayer meeting, the most important service of the church. — Doris and Earl Hayes, ministers.

Below is a promotional card used by Doris and Earl for their ministerial efforts, which were not limited to Hi-Way Lighthouse. They traveled often to use their skills as preachers of the gospel.



They would also pass out smaller items, like the small reflection bible see below. Typical of that type of material, it was purchased in bulk, then stamped with their name to be given to all who would accept.



Gust Akerlund also captured the Hayes on film. Both of the photos seen below are undated. Below left is one that was likely taken for use on a promo card. If you look closely at the card above, you will notice the same clothes and props used, so that image was probably taken at the same time.



The image at right is in our estimation the best one of the Hayes family, showing both daughters and how the entire family was invested in their ministerial work. The sash worn by Earl, "Gospel Serenaders" is certainly unique. This image is also undated though it comes from the glass plate portion of the Akerlund collection, putting it mid-1930s at the latest.

If anyone has additional items relating to Hi-Way Lighthouse we would gladly accept them. We are always looking to complete the files on congregations that served the area.

