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Annual Historic Preservation Award goes to five historic Broadway churches

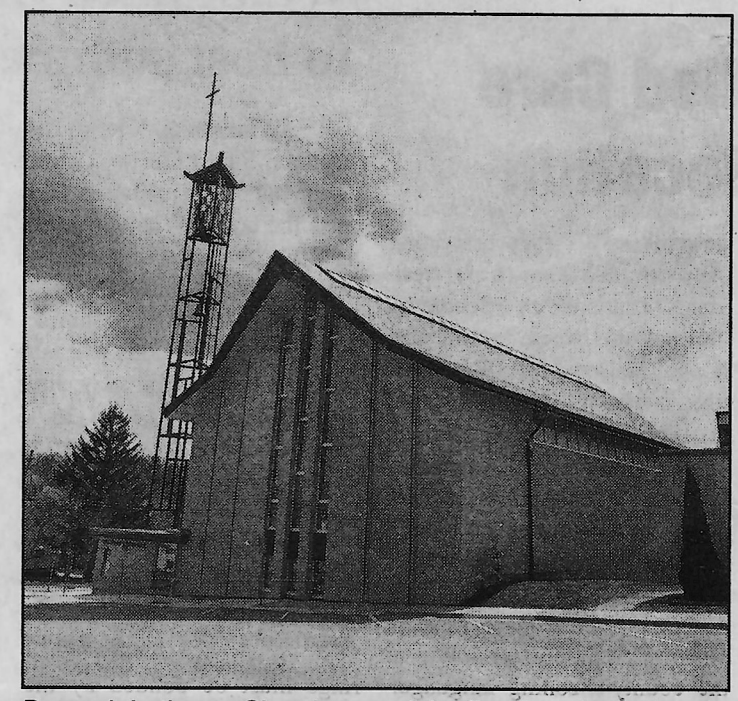
The Decorah Historic Preservation Commission will present its annual award to five historic Broadway Street churches for their on-going building preservation. The public is invited to the award presentation from 4:30-6 p.m. Thursday, May 22 at the Decorah United Church of Christ Congregational Center — 209 W. Broadway St. The preservation commission will provide light refreshments.

"The historic Broadway church buildings are a crucial part of Decorah's historic fabric, and we are eager to acknowledge the commitment to preservation that these churches have shown," DHPC member Jenny Werner said.

Commission member Judy van der Linden said this year's award complements the commission's 2019 award to St. Benedict Parish for their historic church renovation and their architecturally-compatible addition.

Each of the five Broadway churches selected for the award have undertaken major maintenance and preservation projects in recent years. All five churches expressed their appreciation for the preservation award.

Decorah Lutheran Church, built in 1961, recently rebuilt its sanctuary roof and replaced the copper flashing, repaired the storm windows protecting the 1889 and 1961 stained glass windows, and refurbished the 1961 bell tower which holds the congregation's 1889 bell and displays antique European glass panels.



Decorah Lutheran Church, one of the five Broadway churches to receive the annual Historic Preservation award, was built in 1961.The church recently rebuilt its sanctuary roof and replaced the copper flashing, repaired the storm windows protecting the 1889 and 1961 stained glass windows, and refurbished the 1961 bell tower which holds the congregation's 1889 bell and displays antique European glass panels. (Photo submitted)

The Decorah UCC Church, built in 1896, recently replaced its roof and did some exterior work, including brick repointing.

The First United Methodist Church, built in 1874, recently completed extensive exterior repairs, including complete brick repointing and replacing limestone supports under the windows and on the stepped buttresses.

Grace Episcopal Church, completed in 1876, has undergone interior and exterior repairs, including painting, a new roof and a bell inspection as well as restoring stained glass windows and installing new plexiglass window protectors. They are currently restoring their historic front door.

First Lutheran Church, built in 1876, recently installed an enclosed steel structure to stabilize the roof and exterior walls. The church is also planning a second construction phase which will likely include a new entrance, a five-stop elevator and renovation of their 1953 education and office wing. They have also announced a smaller campaign to refurbish their historic steeple bell.

"When we discovered our roof problems, we experienced an outpouring of support from both congregation members and Decorah residents for preserving our historic building and steeple," said Pastor Mike Wilker of First Lutheran. "The renovation reflects our congregation's inspiring devotion to God and warm service toward our neighbors."

A list of Decorah Historic Preservation Commission's previous Historic Preservation Awards is available online at decorahia.org/commission-and-boards/historic-preservation/awards.

Historic preservation commission recognizes Broadway churches

The Decorah Historic Preservation Commission recently presented its annual historic preservation award to five Broadway Street churches for their extensive historic church building maintenance. The award ceremony was held on May 22 at the Decorah United Church of Christ Congregational Center. Pictured are (left to right) church and city representatives Drew Pellett of First United Methodist, Nan St. Clair with the The Decorah Historic Preservation Commission, Sam Bundy of Decorah Lutheran, Adrienne Coffeen with the Decorah Historic Preservation Commission, Judy van der Linden with the Decorah Historic Preservation Commission, Jared Walter of First Lutheran, Kathy Buzza of the Decorah Historic Preservation Commission, Phil Iversen of Decorah United Church of Christ, Mark Z. Muggli with the Decorah Historic Preservation Commission, Ed Andereck of Grace Episcopal, Decorah Mayor Lorraine Borowski and Decorah Historic Preservation Commission representatives Hayley Jackson and Jenny Werner. (Photo submitted)