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Peek into the Past: In 1863 Rev. William McDonald accepted a call to serve as pastor at the age of 31. His pastorate lasted 25 years. It was the lot of Mr. McDonald to begin his ministry in troubled times in the life of the nation and of the community. Soon after his coming he was married to Miss Carrie Morris, a member of this church and a grand-daughter of John Ford, one of the original elders. Not only was he to minister to the congregation during the latter years of the Civil War but the turbulent years that followed while the people were striving to accustom themselves to changed social conditions.

The distress of the times is reflected in the number of members called before the Session for discipline. During the first part of Mr. McDonald's pastorate the order had been for individual elders or the pastor to be sent to talk with particular members about their conduct. However, 1869 and the years following find many members cited to appear before the Session, with an unusual number being unwilling to give evidence of repentance. (The History of Philadelphia Presbyterian Church by Rev. Russell Kerr-1970)

Interesting Fact: At the Concord Presbytery meeting in 1861, Philadelphia reported 274 members of whom 67 were black. Eighty-five families were reported. At that time the Concord Presbytery had 7,418 members (1,297 were black) in sixty-nine churches with 35 ministers. (*The Presbyterian Gathering on Clear Creek*)

A Musical "Note": Many soldiers brought musical instruments from home to pass the time at camp. Banjos, fiddles, and guitars were particularly popular. Aside from drums, the instruments Confederates played were either acquired before the war or imported, due to the lack of brass and the industry to make such instruments.

Musical duels between the two sides were common, as they heard each other as the music traveled across the countryside. The night before the Battle of Stones River, bands from both sides dueled with separate songs until both sides started playing Home! Sweet Home!, at which time soldiers on both sides started singing together as one.

Important National Events: 1861–1865: The United States is torn by the Civil War.