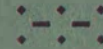


HISTORY OF THE
FLORA CHRISTIAN
CHURCH

FROM ITS INCEPTION

Carroll County Press Print, Flora, Indiana.



Published November 25th, 1934

"And the Disciples were called Christians first at Antioch." Acts 11-26



HERE IS A SINCERE DESIRE on the part of our minister, W. C. Aschanhort, to preserve facts and personal memoirs that are deserving of perpetuation. That we may unite the present with the past this is the function of your local historian.

All data which I have used has come from church members and histories. Errors may appear for memory fadeth as do the events it cherished and held in its embrace.

All life and achievement is evolution, present wisdom comes from past experiences, and the deeds and motives of the men and women that have gone before have been instrumental in shaping the destinies of this church which required great courage, sacrifice and privation.

Can any thinking person be insensible to the facination of the study which discloses the aspirations and efforts of the early pioneer who unknowingly laid so well so strong a foundation on which to build.

That we might better understand these early pilgrims of the cross, it is well that I give you a glimpse into the homes from which they came.

Their parents, traveling in large, top-heavy schooners loaded with provisions and drawn by oxen teams, migrated from Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kentucky and Virginia.

They left behind the beloved church, kinfolks, and friends. They came to conquer and inherit this trackless wilderness of virgin land. They braved the storms and risked their lives incident to a country infested with wild savages who roamed this country at that time.

Just like the fathers and mothers of Israel they braved the hardships of the journey. Most of them settled in one room log cabins with roofs of clapboard. Wooden pins were used as nails, cracks were daubed with mud, snow came drifting through the cracks, and at night the howling of the wolf and the sighing of the winds through the forest lulled them to a sleep that only the honest and courageous can enjoy.

They raised and spun their own wool and flax into cloth, which they made into clothing. View the crude cooking utensils, see the johnny cake on the hearth, the striped venison hanging from the joist, the iron crane in the big chimney, look around and see the crooked stick for a plow, wooden teeth for a harrow, there hangs the old flint gun on a fork over the door, the well sweep, the old oaken bucket that hangs in the well, the "elem peeler" hog running at large, getting fat on the acrons, and the latch string hung outside the door. This is a word picture of the primitive home of our ancestors in and around Flora.

That we might be able to perpetuate and preserve a record of our church and to give credit to the deeds and valor of the men and women of the past who spun, wove and toiled to build a christian civilization in Flora, that this memory may not fade away like the morning mist before the rising sun, and their descendents who enjoy the legacies handed down to them may not forget sacred memories, I write.

We realize every high peak rests on lower mountains so animate us to a joyful sense of our blessings, Oh God.

In honor of the few remaining christian pioneers, and in memory of the dear departed ones whose hands changed the giant forests into fertile fields, who through love of Christ and his Word established the hearthstone of our church, who gave of their lives and their substance in defence of that faith whose graves make sacred the soil their feet so often trod in humbleness, we bow.

Our Object

The union of all christians and the evangelization of the world according to the New Testament models.

Our Creed

I believe with my whole heart that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and the Savior of the world.

Our Motto

In faith, Unity; in opinions and methods, Liberty; in all things, Charity. We accept the New Testament as our only standard of faith and practice, and have no other creed. We recognize only penitent believers in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, to be proper subjects for baptism.

We believe that Faith, Repentance, Confession and Baptism, are steps into the Kingdom.

We believe in a return to Apostolic practice in regard to church ordinances and government.

We observe the Lord's Supper every first day of the week according to Apostolic precedent.

We believe in world-wide missions and have our missionaries in every land.

We repudiate human names and call ourselves simply Christians, or Disciples, pleading for unity of name, and unity of faith.

We believe in a constant warfare against sin in every form.

"Be thou faithful unto death and I will give you a Crown of Life," (Rev. 2-10).

In the old school house north of town which was built in 1877 where Noah Edmonson now lives, was conducted the first Christian church meetings ever held in Flora. In the winter of 1879, Brother Anderson conducted a revival, the outgrowth of which was the banding together of about twenty Christians. It had a very precarious existence for about three or four years and then died. Meetings were held during the time of such men as Brother Anderson, Brother J. A. Johnson and Brother Aaron Walker, the latter one of the strongest men of the church.

There is but one living person who was and still is a member of the first Flora Christian church. We wish to honor Mrs. Lizzie Ferguson Gee, for to her goes this distinction. She was baptized with nineteen others in the spring of 1880 at the age of thirteen in "Little Bachelor," the baby of his flock, as Brother Anderson called her.

Brother James Lily lived at Patton, Ind., and rode the train to Delphi and many are the times he walked from there to Flora to hold meetings which were arranged here by Philip Voorhees and wife. These services were held in the Baptist church, which was then located on West Walnut street. On May 25th, 1884, this group was organized.

Charter Members

Mr. J. C. Gwinn	Mrs. Hanna Hamilton
Mrs. J. C. Gwinn	Mrs. Sarah Ferguson
Mr. Philip Voorhees	Mrs. Clarinda Eikenberry
Mrs. Philip Voorhees	Mrs. Olive Ferrier
Mr. Samuel Smelcer	Mrs. Americus Bright
Mr. John Wickard	Mrs. Mary Ann Rice
Mrs. John Wickard	Mrs. Rhoda Harrison
Mrs. Peter Garrison	

ELDERS— J. C. Gwinn, Philip Voorhees.

DEACONESSES—Americus Bright, Mary Ann Rice.

Brother Lily continued to serve the church until 1886 when Brother Plunkett of Crawfordsville was called. He served about six months and was succeeded by Brother C. J. Saunders who continued about one year. In June, 1887, the aid society had about twenty dollars in its treasury. This was used for an evangelistic meeting conducted by O. E. Sharp, and sixty souls were added to this little band.

On October 4, 1887, Brother J. H. Mavity was called. Feeling the growing need of a church home and strengthened by this meeting the building started and services were held in it long before it was completed. J. C. Gwinn burned the brick used in it at cost. Philip Voorhees did the carpentry work as he found the time, and Samuel Smelcer acted as clerk, and when the spring came, there stood a dream realized, a new dedication to God.

There followed Brother S. M. Hathorn, who served a year. Brother I. N. Grisso for six months, Brother Campbell who held a meeting in January, 1891, Brother L. E. Murry who was also pastor of the Delphi church. He served a year. Brother S. M. Hathorn came back for a second call which lasted nearly two years. Brother J. H. Lacy served only a few months, then Brother B. M. Blount, followed by Brother Milo W. Nethercutt who was pastor in 1895. To this man goes much of the credit of perpetuating most of this history.

The Church in May, 1895

Brother Milo W. Nethercutt	-	Pastor
J. C. Gwinn, Philip Voorhees	-	Elders
R. D. Voorhees, J. O. Ferrier, Edward Voorhees	-	Deacons
Americus Bright, Flossie Voorhees Mary Ann Rice	-	Deaconesses

Philip Voorhees, J. C. Gwinn	-	Trustees
Dr. W. E. Callane	-	S. S. Superintendent
Mrs. Jennie Smelcer	-	Assistant Superintendent
Miss Lesta Cromer	-	Secretary
J. O. Ferrier	-	Treasurer

Y. P. S. C. E.

Dr. W. E. Callane	-	President
Miss Cora Cromer	-	Vice President
Miss Lena Myer	-	Secretary
Miss Emma Lyons	-	Treasurer
Mrs. Milo W. Nethercutt	-	Junior Superintendent
Miss Lena Myer	-	Ass't. Junior Superintendent

Ladies Aid Society

Mrs. Jennie Smelcer	-	President
Mrs. Flossie Voorhees	-	Secretary
Mrs. Clara Callane	-	Treasurer

C. W. B. M.

Mrs. Catherine Ferguson	-	President
Mrs. Mary Ann Rice	-	Vice President
Miss Bertha Ferguson	-	Secretary
Mrs. Flossie Voorhees	-	Treasurer
USHERS	-	Frank Smith, Roy Myer
JANITOR	-	J. B. Rodkey

Resident Membership

Jennie Allen
 Edith Aldrich
 Lola Brackney
 Dorothy Butcher
 Sarah Baker
 Ruth Brown
 Della Blue
 Americus Bright
 Myrtle Bright
 Bertha Brackney
 Katie Basinger
 Ella Basinger
 John Baker
 George Baker
 Mrs. Henry Baker
 Annie Baker
 W. E. Callane
 Clara Callane
 Cora Cromer
 Lesta Cromer
 Barbara Cromer
 Ida Cline
 Chas. E. Cochran
 Daisy Cline
 Drilla Carter
 John Dick
 Stella Dick
 Elizabeth Davison
 Jane Draper
 Amanda Draper
 Clarinda Eikenberry
 Mary C. Eller
 Effie A. Eller
 Maud Eller
 Mart Eaton
 J. O. Ferrier
 Rosa Ferrier
 Catherine Ferguson
 June Ferguson
 Bertha Ferguson
 Barbara Gwinn
 J. C. Gwinn
 Francis Gwinn
 Hanna Gwinn
 Lizzie Gee
 Martha Garrison
 C. N. Goddard
 Mrs. C. N. Goddard
 Everett Garrison

Rose F. Humberd
 Estella Havens
 Ward Havens
 Louise Hunt
 Rhoda Harrison
 Jasper Hunt
 Florence Hunt
 Clara Harrison
 Carrie Honecker
 Milton Hathorn
 Lula Harrison
 J. F. Jordan
 Mrs. J. F. Jordan
 E. G. Kitzmiller
 Seltina Ledman
 Lora Lape
 Nola Lape
 Mary Rutter
 Effie Moore
 Jessie Moore
 Lena Myer
 Minnie Mabbitt
 Mrs. M. E. Melson
 Orpha Myers
 W. L. Myers
 James J. Moss
 Sarah A. Mooney
 Walter Mooney
 Mollie Mooney
 Milo W. Nethercutt
 Mattie Wirt
 Hattie E. Nethercutt
 Mary Oats
 Wm. Peterson
 Carrie A. Peterson
 Chas. Pruitt
 W. A. Pruitt
 Mariah Pruitt
 Rebecca Pritchard
 Alice Pearson
 Letta Pruitt
 Grace Pruitt
 J. B. Rodkey
 Jane Rodkey
 Rosa Rittenhouse
 Geo. Rittenhouse
 Hannu Reiff
 Mary Ann Rice
 Hattie Rugamer

Roc B. Shaw
 Lizzie Shaw
 Bell Steckel
 Ella Steckel
 Cecil Whitsell
 Jos. H. Steckel
 S. W. Smelcer
 Jennie Smelcer
 Mary Stranahan
 Ida Steckel
 Grace Smelcer
 Frank Smith
 Mrs. A. S. Turner
 Pearl Turner

Anna Urbin
 Philip Voorhees
 Flossie Voorhees
 Edward Voorhees
 Sarah Voorhees
 R. D. Voorhees
 Anna Voorhees
 Addie Voorhees
 Arthur Voorhees
 J. F. Wolf
 Mary Wolf
 Sarah Wooley
 Ella Whitsell

Non-Resident Membership

Alice Baker
 Jackson Baker
 Sarah Baker
 Andrew Baker
 Hoy Benson

Chas. Ferguson
 Mrs. C. Ferguson
 Mamie Hathorn
 Daisy Riggle
 Geo. Southard

Through sunshine and shadow for twenty-six years the little brick church on the corner with its great tin world perched on its spire served the followers of the Christian faith at Flora.

At the hour of seven on the morning of April 6, 1914, members gathered in the little old church for the last time. The morning was spent in prayer, songs of praise, and thanksgiving. J. C. Gwinn, then an old soldier of the Cross, sang alone with a quivering voice, songs dear to his heart.

Grandma Ferguson, with a happy smile, told of the many blessings she had received in the service of her church. W. A. Pruitt, another aged follower, attempted to speak, but his heart was too full and words failed him.

Sweet memories and sad memories were crowding around us all as together we blended our voices in "Blest Be The Tie That Binds," and the old church with its memories became past history because immediately upon the close of the singing the razing of the old building started.

On April 14, 1914, the building committee signed a contract with W. H. Turner and work on the new building started immediately.

The laying of the cornerstone took place June 18, 1914. An address on what the church stands for was delivered by Rev. L. E. Sellers of the Christian church at Logansport, with music by our choir.

From April 6, 1914, until Nov. 29, 1914, we met in the old Flora Opera House above the Flora State Bank for Sunday School and church services.

On Sunday, Nov. 29, 1914, we gathered together with proud and rejoicing hearts to dedicate our new church home.

Dedicatory Service

10:45 A. M.

Organ Prelude — Prof. Dan Erb.

Prayer.

Hymn No. 272.

Scripture Reading.

Anthem—"Gloria," from 12th Mass.

Sermon—George L. Snively.

Dedication Hymn—"Time Old Hundred." Oh God of hearts, to thee we raise this house of prayer and holy praise; Lord Thou hast promised here to meet Thy people at the mercy seat.

These walls we to thine honor raise, long may they echo forth Thy praise; Oh! God we pray Thee fill this place with choicest tokens of Thy Grace.

Beneath this roof vouchsafe to show, how God can dwell with men below, so may we grow in grace and love; then let us dwell with Thee above.

Benediction.

Postlude—Prof. Dan Erb.

Union Memorial Service

2:45 P. M.

Organ—Prof. Dan Erb.

Hymn 286.

Scripture Lesson.

Prayer.

Brief Meditation by Pastor—G. Stanley West.

Communion.

Anthem—"Hallelujah Chorus."

Congratulatory Addresses by Ministers of all the Flora churches.

Hymn 127.

Benediction.

EVENING SERVICE—7:00 P. M.

Organ—Prof. Dan Erb.

Hymn 291.

Anthem—"Oh For a Thousand Tongues."

Invocation.

Scripture Lesson.

Anthem.

Sermon—G. L. Snively.

Invitation Hymn 250.

Dedication Vows led by Pastor.

Benediction.

Organization Nov. 29, 1914

G. Stanley West, Pastor.

ELDERS

Hon. J. C. Gwinn, Hon. James Smith, Hon. W. A. Pruitt,
N. B. Grandstaff, R. D. Voorhees, M. F. Anderson.

DEACONS

M. W. Eaton, J. H. Steckel, John Wilkinson, Chas. Cochran,
Chas. Budrow, W. A. Frick, Wilbur Kenrick,
Chas. Gibbs, Oliver Steckel.

TREASURER—M. W. Eaton.

CLERK—O. P. Pritchard.

TRUSTEES

Wm. H. Miller, Edward Voorhees, Russell Voorhees.

Building Committee

Chas. E. Smith, Chairman; M. W. Eaton, Secretary-Treasurer;
W. H. Miller, Edward Voorhees, R. D. Voorhees,
N. B. Grandstaff, Russell Voorhees.

CHOIR LEADER—Mrs. Lena Todd.

ORGANIST— Mrs. Ruth Bell.

USHERS

Chas. Cline, Roy Good, Harry Spitler, Levi Reed, Chas. Bell,
Stacey Michaels, Chas. Reist, F. C. Honecker.

Sunday School Department

Harve Bowerman ----- Superintendent
 N. B. Grandstaff ----- Ass't. Superintendent
 Guy Kenrick ----- Treasurer
 O. P. Pritchard ----- Secretary
 Miss Lois Eaton ----- Pianist
 Miss Jennie Moudy ----- Chorister
 Mrs. Chas. Budrow ----- Primary Superintendent
 Mrs. O. P. Pritchard ----- Home Dept. Supt.

Senior C. E. Society

O. P. Pritchard ----- President
 Russell Voorhees ----- Vice President
 Miss Emma Barnhart ----- Secretary
 George Weaver ----- Treasurer
 Nellie Pritchard ----- Corresponding Sec'y.

Junior C. E. Society

Mrs. Anna Voorhees ----- Superintendent

C. W. B. M. Auxiliary

Mrs. G. Stanley West ----- President
 Mrs. Chas. Reist ----- Vice President
 Mrs. Chas. Budrow ----- Secretary
 Mrs. M. W. Eaton ----- Treasurer

Ladies Aid Society

Mrs. Addie Voorhees ----- President
 Mrs. O. P. Pritchard ----- Vice President
 Mrs. Oliver Steckel ----- Secretary
 Mrs. Edward Voorhees ----- Treasurer

Another event that was outstanding that gave us cause for great rejoicing took place on the first Sunday morning in January, 1920, when Guy Kenrick burned the church notes and the church was freed from indebtedness.

Fifty-five years have come and gone since the first meeting was held by Christian followers. Swiftly fly the passing years like white winged birds and the bitter and the sweet are mingled in their passing. We now come to another great day—the celebrating of twenty years of service in our new church.

“They say that life is a highway
 And its milestones are the years;
 And now and then there's a toll-gate
 Where you buy your way with your tears.
 It's a rough road and a steep road,
 And it stretches broad and far;
 But at last it leads to a Golden Town
 Where the Golden Houses are.”

We are to spend this day with old friends who have been invited back home. We pray for much gladness and little sadness at this home coming celebration. Our bodies shall be more than nourished by the banquet at the noon hour, and our souls will be fed on the message from His Word.

Church Organization Nov. 25, 1934

W. C. Aschanhort, Pastor.

ELDERS

N. B. Grandstaff, Everett Cochran, Chas. Budrow, Wilbur Kenrick, Frank Parks, Guy Kenrick.

DEACONS

Wm. Ayres, Guy Sharp, Wm. Pattengale, Dr. Wiley, Lee Eikenberry, Wm. Niewerth, Nola Finney, John McCloskey, Harve Calhoun, Chas. Cochran, Harry Foster, Lawrence Yerkes, Clayton Ayres, Roy Good

Wilbur Kenrick ----- Church Clerk
 Guy Kenrick ----- Chairman of Board
 Mabel Holmes ----- Choir Leader
 Ruth Bell ----- Organist

TRUSTEES

Dr. C. N. Wilson, Chas. Cochran, Chas. Reist, Frank Shoff, Harry Sibray

Senior Sunday School Department

Everett Cochran ----- Superintendent
 Wm. Garrison ----- First Ass't. Supt.
 Alfred Pattengale ----- Second Ass't. Supt.
 Guy Kenrick ----- Treasurer
 Helen Zimmerman ----- Secretary
 Cleo Gotshall ----- Ass't. Secretary
 Ernest Sylvester ----- Librarian
 George Baum ----- Chorister
 Harry Foster ----- Ass't. Chorister
 Charlene Bell ----- Pianist
 Betty Jane Voorhees ----- Ass't. Pianist
 Mrs. Geo. Brumfield ----- Junior Supt.
 Mrs. W. C. Aschanhort ----- Beginners and Primary Supt.
 Ann Thomas ----- Beginners and Primary Pianist

Ladies Aid

Laura Kenrick ----- President
Mrs. Annis Ayres ----- Vice President
Ruth Bell ----- Secretary
Mrs. Inez Eaton ----- Treasurer

Missionary Society

Ruth Bell ----- President
Amanda Cochran ----- Vice President
Mabel Good ----- Treasurer
Mrs. Aschanhort ----- Secretary

Forum Club

Ann Thomas ----- Adult Advisor
Lois Shoff ----- President
Verla Young ----- Vice President
Philip Brumfield ----- Secretary-Treasurer

Junior Christian Endeavor

Mrs. W. C. Aschanhort ----- Sponsor
Lola May Kenrick ----- President
Roselyn Cochran ----- Vice President
Marjorie Isaac ----- Secretary
Marilyn Baum ----- Treasurer

Triangle Club

Norris Ayres ----- President
Verla Young ----- Vice President
Donabell Kingery ----- Secretary
Wilbur Wilson ----- Treasurer

We wish to thank the following for their assistance in obtaining dates and events for this history:

Mrs. Charity Wooley Langston, Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Smelcer, Mrs. Lizzie Ferguson Gee, Mrs. Jennie Ferguson Jordan, Mr. Philip Voorhees, Mr. Guy G. Sharp, Mrs. R. D. Voorhees, Mr. Everett Cochran, Mr. Guy Kenrick, Mr. Elmer Eikenberry.

Tribute To The Christian Pioneers

Would God that we, their children, were as they;
Great souled, brave hearted and of dauntless will;
Ready to dare, responsive to the still, compelling voice
That called them, night and day.
Would God we knew the thrill
That exquisitely tormented them until
They stood up strong and resolute to obey,
God make us like them, worthy of them;
Shake our souls with greatness;
Our dull eyes set on some high star
Whose splendid light will wake us from our dreams,
And guide us from this fen or selfish ease, won by our
fathers' sweat.
Oh lift us up—The church has need of men.

—PAULINE VOORHEES EIKENBERRY,
(Historian).