

The History of First Christian Church of Pittsfield, II.

“History,” according to Will and Ariel Durant, “is an excellent teacher with few pupils. Civilization is not inherited; it has to be learned and earned by each generation anew.”

The Lord knew how forgetful mankind could be when He established the Passover Feast for the Israelites. “When your children ask you, ‘What does this ceremony mean to you?’ Then tell them, ‘It is the Passover sacrifice to the Lord, who passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt and spared our homes when he struck down the Egyptians.’” (Exodus 12: 26,27) We commemorate an even greater salvation each Lord’s Day when we partake of the Lord’s supper, as instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ the night before he was crucified. “Do this in remembrance of me.”

Unfortunately, much of the history that occurs in families and nations—and in churches—is totally forgotten. How can we learn from the past if we have no idea what has occurred before our short time on this earth? As an effort to preserve and memorialize at least a small part of the history of the First Christian Church of Pittsfield, we, of the 175th Anniversary Committee, wish to present this booklet on the first 175 years of this congregation. We hope you will read it, and pass it on to your children. In the year 2011, not many institutions in Pike County are 175 years old. We are thankful that God has blessed us as a congregation of believers, and we pray that He will continue to bless this church until He comes again in the clouds. “Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

Illinois became the twenty-first state of the United States of America on December 3, 1818, and Pike County was established on January 31, 1821. For two years, the county boundaries included all of Illinois north and west of the Illinois River, with the county seat located in Coles Grove in what is now Calhoun County. The size of Pike County was gradually reduced as other counties were formed from its original territory, and in 1823-24 the county seat was moved to Atlas.

In 1825, the “Kingdom of Pike” was reduced to the present boundaries, and by 1833 it was decided that the county seat should be closer to the geographic center of the county. Three commissioners selected a prairie location about four miles east of the geographic center of the county. The cost of the 160 acres was \$200, which the county government borrowed from Col. William Ross to purchase the site from the federal land office. The town was named Pittsfield, after Pittsfield, Massachusetts, the hometown of Col. William Ross. The first lots for the new village were purchased at auction on April 15, 1833.

The new county seat soon became a site of learning and worship. The first church building erected in Pittsfield was the Congregational Church, organized by Col. Ross and including many of his family members.

During this period of American history a religious movement called the restoration was moving westward from beginnings in Pennsylvania and Kentucky. The main leaders of the early movement were Thomas and Alexander Campbell, Barton Stone and Walter Scott. All of these men had come from a Presbyterian background, but they left that denomination and strove to “restore” New Testament Christianity as they saw it in the early church, as recorded in the Bible. Barton Stone’s followers usually called themselves Christians, and described their churches as Christian churches. The “Campbellites,” as they were sometimes called by others, usually called themselves disciples of Christ, and their churches were called churches of Christ. Barton Stone and Alexander Campbell recognized that they were both pursuing the same type of primitive,

non-denominational Christianity, and publicly joined together in 1832, the year before Pittsfield was laid out as the county seat of Pike County.

Some of the early settlers of Pittsfield, such as Jacob Hodgen, had come from Kentucky. We trace the origins of the First Christian Church of Pittsfield to a small but faithful group who began meeting in 1836 at the home of Jacob Hodgen, (which once stood at the NW corner of West Adams and Mississippi Street) “for the breaking of bread and prayer.”

Jacob Hodgen was born at Hodgenville, Kentucky in 1793, where he was a neighbor of the Lincoln family. He came to Pike County in 1832, and it is recorded that “Abraham Lincoln often visited his home here.” He also knew both Alexander Campbell and Barton Stone. Hodgen was a wagonmaker, farmer and merchant. He was one of the grandest characters among the pioneers of the county and the church, characterized by the strictest integrity, sturdiest manhood, and unwavering faith. His enthusiasm in the cause of Christianity made his house the home of the ministry, and it was known as the “preacher’s hotel.” It was said of him that, whatever the need, he stepped into the breach, whether it was to pay, to pray, to preach, to plead or to cry. This is the character of the man who was the leading spirit in the beginning of this church.

There were several meeting places in the early days before the congregation came into possession of a church building. Sometimes the little group of worshippers met in the John G. Shastid house (still standing at 326 E. Jefferson, and known as a home where Abraham Lincoln visited.) For a time they met in a small building at 128 E. Fayette Street. At another time they met in a room at 130 Adams Street on the northeast corner of the square. The second courthouse in Pittsfield (erected 1838) was another meeting place, sometimes in the courtroom, sometimes in the treasurer’s office. Still another meeting place was a two-story frame schoolhouse at 213 West Adams Street.

Some of those who preached for the disciples in those early days were William Gale, W.H. Strong, James Burbridge, Charles W. Bolin of Milton (a member of the State Legislature), and David Roberts.

In 1839 William H. Strong of Winchester became their first regular minister, and taught a private school, the pupils being mostly children of the church members. During that year the state meeting of the Disciples of Illinois was held in Pittsfield.

In 1841 in the courthouse, the little band completed an organization, with Jacob Hodgen and Jonas Clark, elders, and Joseph Sanders, deacon. To the following covenant fourteen charter members affixed their signatures.

COVENANT

“We, whose names are hereinafter written, acknowledging ourselves as subjects of the King of Kings, the Lord Jesus Christ, having submitted in humble obedience to his command and taking the New Testament scriptures as our only rule of faith and practice, do hereby associate ourselves together as disciples of Christ, to keep the ordinances of the Lord’s house and to be known as the Church of Christ at Pittsfield, Ill.”

W.H. Strong and wife
Jonas Clark and wife
Jacob Hodgen and wife
Jonathan Piper and wife

John G. Shastid and daughter Sarah Shastid (who later married a Cowden)
Joseph Sanders and wife
Caroline Barber
Calista Bennett (afterwards Holmes)

Very soon after the organization many other names were added: the Wyatts, Bennetts, Hendricks, Rubles, Quinbys, Johnsons, and others.

Of the ministers who held meetings in the early days, two especially remembered were W.W. Happy and William Brown, familiarly known as Billy Brown.

Many of the most eminent men in the church have preached in Pittsfield: Alexander Campbell, Barton W. Stone, D.S. Burnett, Jacob Creath, Jr., John T. Jones, D. Pat Henderson, John Sweeney, W.H. Hopson, F.D. Power, A. McLean, G.L. Wharton, J.H. Hardin, Judge C.J. Scofield, R.E. Hieronymous, and many more.

Two fine men went out from this church as ministers of the Word in the first three quarters of a century: Charles G. Kindred, for many years a most successful pastor of the Englewood Church in Chicago, and Clarence Rainwater, who prepared for the ministry in Drake University and later taught in the University of Southern California.

During the first 70 years of its existence, the church owned and worshipped in three buildings. The first was a small frame structure, bought from the Congregational Church about 1844, and moved to the northeast corner of Washington and Memorial streets. In 1853 this building was sold to the German Lutherans, and a two-story frame building was built at 225 N. Memorial (the southwest corner of Memorial and Jefferson Street). Lucius Bennett, R.W. Scanland, and D.D. Hicks were trustees. Jonathan Atkins was pastor and schoolteacher.

The new church building was dedicated on Christmas Day, 1853, with Jacob Creath, Jr., of Missouri, preaching the sermon. The lower story of the building was owned by a stock company and was used for school purposes. Here John D. Thomson, Jirah Burt and Brother Jon Shastid taught. In 1857, Brother Shastid bought the lower story of the church and owned it as long as the building stood. Here was the place of worship for about 38 years. These years held sacred memories for many, of gospel invitations, confessions, baptisms, funerals, weddings, cherished friendships and pleasant associations.

1890

In February 1890 the church decided to erect a new building; the two-story frame building was moved to the west side of the lot, and a new brick structure, built on the "Akron Plan," (with semi-circular seating) was erected on the site of the previous house of worship.

W.A. Meloan was pastor of the church at the time, and on his motion the following were made the building committee: Samuel Luthy, E.F. Binns, H.S. Loyd, George Barber, T.N. Hall, R.T. Hicks and C.I. Swan. The architect was O.A. Bartholomew of St. Louis; the contractors were Nathan Kibler and Son. The soliciting committee was W.A. Meloan, George Barber, C.I. Swan, Mrs. George Barber and Mrs. William Davis.

The last prayer meeting in the old building was a memorial service, D.D. Hicks presiding. In his history of the church, which he read at the dedication of the new building in 1891, Mr. C.I.

Swan gave a most touching and impressive description of the talks of Mr. Hicks, Mr. Ruble and others, who had long been members and worshipped in the in the building for 38 years.

At the final service in the old church, which was Sunday School, January 4, 1891, the report for the year 1890 was read: average attendance, 181; total collections \$194.24; average collections, \$3.73; largest attendance (Dec. 28, 1890), 224.

Dedication services began Sunday morning, January 4, 1891, and the building was crowded to the farthest limit. In the choir were Mrs. Maggie Benn, Mrs. Frances Barber, E.F. Binns, John Moore, L.A. Chamberlain and Richard Scanland. R.S. Meloan presided at the elegant piano, the gift of Austin Barber and D.D. Hicks.

Elder Meloan was in charge of the service. Rev. Young of the M.E. Church and Rev. Rose of the Congregational Church and Elder Littleton, pastor of the Barry Christian Church, assisted in the opening services. H.D. Clark, then of Mt. Sterling, Ky., preached the dedicatory sermon. It was to Bro. Clark an especially enjoyable occasion, as it was the anniversary of the beginning of his first pastorate with the church 25 years before. He had served as pastor of the church three times, three years each time.

There was an afternoon meeting for the observance of the Lord's Supper. The house was filled again for the evening service. The scriptures were read by Rev. John F. Smith, pastor at Atwood, Kansas. Bro. Swan read the history of the church. Bro. Steers made the dedicatory prayer. Brother Clark delivered the sermon from Luke 24:46-47, and closed a memorable day for this church.

Immediately following the dedication, revival services were held by J.B. Corwine of Missouri. The first baptism in the new church was that of Harry Swan, then a lad of about 14 years, later known as Burr H., Editor and Publisher of the Pike County Republican, deacon in the church, clerk of the official board, and superintendent of the Sunday School.

1907

The year 1907 will ever be memorable in the history of this church. Plans had long been in the making to hold outside evangelistic services for the month of August. A tabernacle for that purpose had almost been completed across Memorial Street, and services about to begin, when a great storm damaged the tabernacle and almost totally destroyed the church building. The evangelists came anyway, and our good friends and neighbors of the Congregational Church offered their building, where meetings were held until the tabernacle was repaired. The evangelists were Rev. Wilson and Rev. Lintt, and the meeting resulted in about 50 additions to the church.

Plans were soon made for the restoration of the church building. The architect was Mr. Bullard of Springfield; Clayton Kibler had general supervision of the work. Building committee members were T. N. Hall, Dr. F. M. Crane and E.D. Glandon. Dr. Crane died before the project was completed.

A very familiar figure about this church at the turn of the century was Bro. "Lum" Ervin, the faithful janitor. He survived the administration of four pastors and the domination of 12 years of Ladies' Aid Society, and still carried about with him a smiling visage.

The church was rededicated Sunday, February 2, 1908. The first service was an enthusiastic session of the Sunday School with 265 in attendance, and \$10.85 collected.

In the morning church services the usual order of exercises was observed. Bro. C.G. Kindred was present and assisted. A full choir rendered excellent music, with E.D. Glandon, leader, and Mrs. Maude Allen Hesley, pianist. Ray Colvin sang a solo, "The Way of the Cross." Elders Ruble and Hicks presided at the Lord's Table. Bro. Spicer gave a strong, practical sermon. Four persons responded to the invitation: Mr. and Mrs. C.A. Penny of Barry, by letter; Mrs. Harry Reineke and Miss Frances McEvers by confession.

The Young People's meeting in the evening was a union meeting led by B.H. Swan, and attended by members of the Young People's Societies of the Methodist, Lutheran, Baptist and Congregational churches.

Services were held each evening during the following week, with former pastors and other ministers as speakers. Elder Russell F. Thrapp of Jacksonville, Elder F. M. Rogers of Springfield, Rev. Charles Kindred of Englewood, and Rev. Will H. Cannon of Lincoln spoke. Mrs. Emma Crowe read her history February 2, 1908 at the rededication of the church building, and acknowledged her indebtedness to Jon Shastid for much of it, and to C.I.Swan for his history presented at the dedication in 1891, which was printed in the Pike County Banner of January 9, 1891.

1908-1936

Pastor W.E. Spicer resigned February 9, 1908, and moved with his family to Bisbee, Arizona, after faithful efforts in Christ's cause at Pittsfield for three years.

Rev. William H. Cannon, a grandson of Hardin Goodin, who was an early member of the church, came as pastor in May 1908, and remained until July 1, 1913. The minutes of the church secretary for October 5, 1908 record, "The pastor reports that he and his wife made 100 calls since July." They lived in Pike County several years, serving several churches, and were much loved.

Rev. David N. Wetzel followed as minister from 1914 to 1918, and left lasting impressions for good in the church through these years. His wife was capable of filling the pulpit when needed. He also served as interim minister in later years.

In May 1918, the Christian Church voted to federate with the Congregational Church during the World War I. Articles of Federation were adopted, and Rev. W.H. Hopkins was selected as pastor. The Federation continued until after the Armistice was signed November 11, 1918.

Rev. E.S. Priest was pastor of the church from 1919 to 1922. He came after World War I, wearing his uniform. Mrs. E. D. Glandon was largely responsible for the installation of the pipe organ and new pews during his ministry. Chairs had been used until that time. Mrs. Priest took her husband's place in the pulpit when it was necessary for him to be absent.

Rev. H.E. Keltner was the minister from January 1, 1923 to June 1925. Mrs. Keltner was an invalid. During his years here, Keith Cunningham was ordained to the Christian ministry.

Rev. Russell E. Booker was extended a call as pastor January 10, 1926. He served until the end of 1944, almost 19 years—a much longer period than any other pastor. He and his family

were the first occupants of the parsonage on Adams Street. He was educated in music and a gifted singer. He organized the "Vesper Singers," and their Christmas vespers have since been enjoyed by Pittsfield and Pike County. He organized many other musical events during his years in Pittsfield. He resigned in the autumn of 1944 to take a pastorate in Snow Hill, Maryland. He became ill, and was brought here to Illini Hospital where he passed away in 1947. He was laid to rest in the West Cemetery.

THE CENTENNIAL OF 1936

During Rev. Booker's ministry, the Centennial of the church was observed from June 21 to June 24, the aim being to convey the memories of the past and the hopes for the future.

On June 21, the Sunday morning service was attended by a large congregation of members of the Christian Church and the Methodist Church, no service being held in their sanctuary. Rev. Booker's sermon was inspirational, the subject being "Yesterday and Today." The anthem by the choir was "Te Deum in B Minor" by Dudley Buck, and Mrs. Louis Stone, the organist, played several organ selections. At five o'clock in the evening there was a candle light vesper with the Vesper Singers presenting Mendelssohn's "Hymn of Praise." There was a capacity audience from all over the county.

Monday night was "Pioneer Night," with E.D. Glandon presiding. This had touching and beautiful memories and amusement as well. The older members had prepared collections of early church remembrances, and there were messages from former ministers and members living elsewhere, read by Mrs. Roy Plattner. There were messages from the Reverends George Snively, Russell F. Thrapp, W.E. Spicer, F. M. Rogers, W.H. Cannon, W.H. Hopkins, D.N. Wetzell, and H.E. Keltner, all former ministers, and Rev. Charles Kindred. Colorful, lovely costumes, some over 100 years old, were worn by the Vesper Singers and many others present.

Rev. Booker gave the early history of the church. Prepared papers were read giving the reminiscences of Mrs. Martha Coley (mother of Mrs. E.D. Glandon), Mrs. Hiram Weaver (mother of Miss Ethel Weaver), Mrs. Henry Mills (then living in Missouri), Mrs. John Gragg, and Mr. L. A. Chamberlain. The music consisted of songs of a century ago.

"Inter-Church Night" was Tuesday evening with Judge A. Clay Williams presiding. There were messages from the ministers of the Methodist, Baptist, Congregational, and St. Mary's Catholic churches of our city. An organ solo was presented by Mrs. Lee Capps, organist of the M.E. Church; and there was a baritone solo by Earl Brown of St. Mary's Church. The address was given by Rev. W. H. Walker of the Illinois Christian Missionary Society, representing 600 Christian Churches in Illinois.

On Wednesday night there was a banquet with Attorney George C. Weaver presiding. Dr. H. C. Armstrong of Anderson, Ind., gave an address on the subject, "A Century on the Great Frontier." Robert Milstead and Harry Barber sang a musical selection.

INTO THE SECOND CENTURY

Rev. Claude E. Cummins was extended a call January 25, 1945, and remained as pastor until March 1950. Our Christian Women's Fellowship was organized during his ministry.

Rev. Ward S. Humphries became minister in 1950 and remained until 1955. During his ministry, in 1951, the electric organ was installed, a gift of Fred A. Hicks. Also the church was extensively redecorated during this time period, including such changes as the relocation of the baptistry to the center axis of the auditorium and above the choir loft. The congregation worshipped at the Zoe Theatre (209 N. Madison Street) during the renovation.

Rev. Vernon Stout was our pastor from July 1955 to 1962. The home of Mrs. George Smith, with grounds adjoining the church property on the south, was purchased. Planning began for a new education building and a large part of the funding was secured. It was during his ministry that the church celebrated its 125th anniversary.

Rev. Duane Moss and his wife, Shirley, joined our church family in 1963, serving us well for six years. During his stay, a new furnace was installed in the main church building and the new Education Building was dedicated October 13, 1963.

Dr. Charles L. Emerson and his wife, Fern, served our church from 1969 to 1974. During 1972 a church directory was prepared. Many changes took place during his pastorate: cushioning for the pews was completed, the roof on the church was replaced, and work on central air conditioning begun. Two new programs were added: a fellowship following morning worship and Maundy Thursday services.

Rev. Wallace H. Robinson and his wife, Judy, and daughter, Elizabeth, began his duties as our minister on November 1, 1974 and served three years. In December 1976 the Vesper Singers presented their 50th Anniversary service. The stained glass windows in the sanctuary were restored during this period, and air conditioning was installed.

Rev. Roger Jenks and his wife, Lynne, and daughters, Shelley and Angie, moved into the parsonage in January 1978, and served us until 1984. A son, Brad, and daughter, Amber, were born to Roger and Lynne while at Pittsfield. Besides being a very effective pastor, Roger was talented as a teacher and musician. He wrote music for the choir and organized the small children to sing in the Cherub Choir. A second service at 8:15, in addition to the regular 10:30 service was begun during these years.

Rev. Michael Dixon and his wife, Peg, and daughters, Martha, Beth and Becky came to us in the summer of 1985, with an installation service August 11, 1985, and served until the summer of 1991. Our sesquicentennial celebration started with Rev. Dixon's sermon, entitled, "Looking Through Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow" on January 5, 1986, and was in keeping with the celebration theme, "Part of Forever." In January 1991, we also celebrated the Centennial of the current church building. Peg Dixon was very musical, and was involved with choirs at all levels and church education programs. The average attendance in 1986 was 225 with 123 in Sunday School.

Rev. Daniel M. Krumrei and his wife, Sue, and children, Ben, Kate and Jessica came to Pittsfield in the summer of 1992, with an installation service July 26, 1992. Dan served us until 1998. He was also a chaplain in the Army National Guard during these years. He was activated for a time during the historic Flood of 1993, when many church members were involved in sand bagging and flood relief efforts. Sue was very active in the Vesper Choir and children's choirs, as well. One of the memorable events of Dan's time with us was when we had a tent revival ("Outdoor Heritage Days") and Rev. Krumrei rode up on a horse and delivered a sermon as "Danny Saturday" (Billy Sunday) might have delivered around the beginning of the 20th century. Wednesday evening church family meals were started during these years, along with Wednesday youth activities.

Rev. Clay Boyd was our minister from 2000 to 2004. During his time with us we were able to purchase the supermarket (part of which was the old American Legion Hall) directly east across Memorial Street. The building was purchased in December, 2002, with a major remodeling project beginning in 2003, and culminating in the re-dedication of "The Crossroads Center" October 23, 2004.

Pastor Michael Ten Eyck and his wife, Renita, and children, Eli, Lainey and Ellie came to us in the summer of 2005. At first, the calling was to be as interim pastor. There was some controversy about this, because Michael's ordination was not through the Disciples of Christ denomination, which had been officially established in 1968. But, after Michael successfully served us for a year with energetic, Spirit-filled, Biblical leadership, the congregation voted unanimously on May 21, 2006 to select him as our minister, with a formal installation service June 25, 2006.

These years, leading up to our 175th anniversary, have been a time of growth in membership and ministry of First Christian Church. Since February, 2006, we have had a contemporary "Oasis" service on Wednesday evenings after the family meal and before choir practice. The church was incorporated October 16, 2006. In 2008 we formally established a relationship with Disciple Heritage Fellowship. Also during that year seating in the overflow room was expanded, and in 2009 the balcony was re-opened for seating, as it had been when the church was first built in 1890.

The most noteworthy event of 2009 was also a difficult one, the culmination of several years of studying, praying and deliberating. On Sunday, March 22, 2009, a near-capacity crowd filled First Christian Church for the 10:30 service. At 11:45 a congregational meeting was held, with Hamer Tate, Moderator, presiding. A vote by secret ballot was taken, proposing that First Christian Church of Pittsfield formally separate from the Disciples of Christ denomination. The vote was 125 in favor, 2 opposed; so the congregation exercised its historical local autonomy, and severed formal ties with the Disciples of Christ denomination. The experience was one of refreshment and renewal for the people of the First Christian Church.

Since that time we have finished the Congregational Park, located where the Congregational Church building once stood. In 2009 we built a beautiful new playground next to the Pittsfield Public Library, south of the education building. During the summer of 2009, Braxton Boren served an internship as Associate/Youth minister. His wife, Laura, was instrumental in creating our new ministry logo, reminding us of our calling to "Reach, Teach and Empower."

In September 2009, after an extensive search, Luke Justice was called to be our full-time Associate/Youth minister, to help us in our ministry to the younger families of our expanding congregation. The parsonage at 344 W. Fayette St. was sold, and the house immediately west of the sanctuary at 219 W. Jefferson was purchased. In September 2010 we began a modern worship service, the Sunday morning "Oasis" at 9:15. We now have three Sunday morning services: 8:00 and 10:30 in the sanctuary, and 9:15 in the Crossroads Center. Average Sunday morning attendance is 275 and average Sunday School attendance is 80. Most Sunday School classes meet at 9:15 Sunday mornings.

The prison ministry at the Pike County jail was re-started in 2010 by N.D. Harrison and Wayne Chamberlain, and several baptisms have resulted from that effort. In the summer of 2011 First Christian Church sent a missionary team to Bolivia in support of missionary Roger Hulford's ministry, Operation Restoration. The team, led by Lori Schweighardt, included Spencer Boren, Alysia Cooley, Ruth Hulford, Luke Justice, Matt Sealock and Kayla Spangler.

ORGANIZATIONS

The **Vesper Singers**, as noted earlier, was organized during Rev. Booker's ministry, and they continue to bring the beauty of music to church services, including the traditional Christmas Vespers. Mrs. Irene Stone was the dependable organist for some 60 years. Mrs. Greta Willard was pianist and organist for some 50 years. We have had several able directors through the years. Our current director, Mrs. Helen Earls, has served us for 27 years. Our current pianist, Mrs. Becky Irwin has served for 23 years, and our current organist, Charlotte Dunham joined us three years ago.

The **Christian Women's Fellowship** is an outgrowth of the Ladies Aid Society, which was organized as early as 1866. These women contributed \$1,200 to the church building fund and hundreds of dollars thereafter for repairs and furnishings. The Ladies Aid Society was followed by the Auxiliary of the Christian Women's Board of Missions, a strictly missionary society. This organization functioned for about a half century, until succeeded by the Christian Women's Fellowship in 1940, during the ministry of Claude E. Cummins. There are three circles, which meet for Bible study, worship and missions. Various service projects are carried out throughout the year, with the annual Christmas bazaar being the largest money-making project for the C.W.F. Bethany is a literary society of the church, which has programs on religious subjects, literature and music. This group was organized in 1900 during Rev. Thrapp's ministry, with Mrs. Florence Sanderson as the first president.

The current C.W.F. officers are Yvonne Stauffer, president; Jenny Tate, vice-president; Barbara Fosco, secretary; Deloras Martin, treasurer; Evelyn Hoover, worship/study leader; Rosemary Clark, Mary Gates and Carole Elledge, bereavement; Joyce Lemons and Charlotte Dunham, bazaar; and Jenny Tate, Color Tour.

The **Christian Men's Fellowship** is the working organization for the men of the church. The group has bimonthly dinner meetings in the Crossroads dining room. This group has provided funding for many church projects, including helping send children to the Mississippi Valley Christian Service Camp in the summer and delivering Meals on Wheels. The current officers are Wayne Baughman, president; Michael Smith, vice president; Michael Boren, secretary; and Hamer Tate, treasurer.

The **Sunday School Program** provides fine Christian instruction and training to children, youth and adults. Many of the dedicated teachers have made lasting impressions for good on young lives. The present teachers are: Nursery, Amy Casto; Ages 3 to K, Sarah Sweeting; Grades 1-3, Teresa Bauer; Grades 4-6, Jennifer Miller; Grades 7-12 at 9:15, Charlene Anderson; Senior High Class at 8 a.m., Pastor Luke Justice, Alysia Cooley and Kayla Spangler; Disciples, Michael Boren; New Beginnings, Burdette Irwin; Young Adult, Matt Saxe; 8:00 Bible Study, Jack Hull. There are weekday Bible studies for various groups in the church, as well.

The **Youth Groups** are under the leadership of Pastor Luke Justice. LIFE (Living In Faith Everyday) consists of 6th through 8th graders, and CYF (Christian Youth Fellowship) consists of 9th through 12th graders. Pastor Luke is assisted by Spencer Boren, Alysia Cooley, Ruth Hulford, Jennifer Miller, Matt Sealock and Kayla Spangler.

BEQUESTS

Many bequests and memorials have been given to First Christian Church from members and their families throughout the years. Monies from some were put in a permanent fund and others provided material items such as communion service, choir lights, library books, Bibles, etc. All have been beneficial to the work of the church and are greatly appreciated by the congregation. Bequests are a way that older members can provide assistance to new Christians as yet unborn.

EARLY EVENTS

In addition to the above history, we will include a few other items from the past of our congregation to help us have a better understanding of some of the events of the past 175 years. The first recorded wedding of church members was that of Reuben Scanland and Susan Woolfork in 1844 at the Courthouse. The first wedding in the old church building (vacated in 1891) was that of Allen M. Penny and Mary Bennett in 1859, W.A. Mallory officiating. The last one in the old building was that of Lieut. J.H. Gardner of the U.S. Army and Miss Kittie Scanland, Nov. 19, 1884, J.G. Waggoner officiating.

The church had a “good building and regular services under the supervision of Elders Bennett and Hicks,” although it was observed, “the mode of worship is rather too primitive to meet the views of this fast and fastidious age.” (Pike County Journal, Dec. 20, 1860, as quoted in Rev. Booker’s history)

An example of church discipline from the past is found in the board minutes of July 5, 1897. “At the regular July meeting of the official board, proof was submitted of the continued intemperance of [three members]. These brethren had been reprovved by the brethren of the church, but had given no evidence of reformation. The clerk was instructed to notify them to meet with the elders of the church July 14 to state their intentions for the future. It was voted by the officers that in case they did not appear at the called meeting of the Elders nor at the regular weekly prayer meeting of the 14th of July and state their intention of reformation their names should be stricken from the church rolls, so to remain until they have given evidence of repentance and reformation. And inasmuch as they have ignored the divinely bestowed authority

of the eldership it is now declared in pursuance of Paul's command to us in the name of Christ Jesus that they are no longer members of this congregation. 2 Thes. 3:6"

The "manse" or parsonage on Adams Street was purchased in 1926. It was the residence of Mrs. Zura Foreman. The men of the church were to pay \$2,500.00 and the women of the church \$4,259.00. That parsonage was sold when Rev. Krumrei was here, and replaced with the brick home at 344 West Fayette Street.

December 13, 1902—Bro. Hall of the Committee on Heat & Light reported that 15 tons of coal at \$2.75 per ton and 5 cords of wood at a cost of \$22.00 had been purchased.

Finances were apparently pretty tight in 1904 when C.E. Hesley, the church treasurer gave the following report:

Receipts

Bal. on hand Sept. 4, 1903	\$5.25
Received from Sunday collections	35.68
Received from members	796.72
Total Receipts	\$837.64

Disbursements

Bro. Rogers, 6 mo. salary (minister)	\$549.96
C.J. Ervin, 6 mo. salary & extras (janitor)	82.00
Wood	6.75
Sawing wood	1.50
Electric lights – 6 mo.	39.00
Glass	.80
Oil	2.80
Swan, printing	7.00
Ware, treasurer's books	4.00
Hesley, salary—6 mo. (treasurer)	25.00
Mar. 5, 1904 bal. on hand	88.83
Total	\$837.64

Assets

Due from members	\$172.10
Overpaid by members	57.90
Cash in bank	88.83
Total net assets	\$203.03

The July 7, 1904 Treasurer's monthly report showed a deficit of \$148.20. Chamberlain moved that the board apportion weekly dues of membership; that each member be notified by letter of such apportionment, and if in any case it shall be unjust, such member shall appeal before the board—otherwise the apportionment shall stand. Carried. Crane moved that Chamberlain, Hicks and Rogers prepare a letter in line with the above motion. Carried. Swan,

Hesley and Barber were appointed to prepare a list of the membership, preparatory to making the assessment.

July 11, 1904 The board continued in informal session all week, acting on the matter of the assessment of members. (The weekly apportionment listed 472 members with assessments ranging from one cent to \$1.92 per week, for a total weekly apportionment of \$39.71.)

September 4, 1905—The committee on heat and light reported having purchased a new furnace at a cost of \$85. The committee on grounds and buildings was instructed to purchase material to extend the hitching racks.

February 11, 1907—Report of committee on rules read by Chairman Hicks. Rules adopted as follows: Resolved: That in order to secure a better and more prompt attendance at Board meeting, the following rules be applied by the Board.

Rule 1. A fine of 10 cents be imposed for tardiness.

Rule 2. A fine of 25 cents be imposed for non attendance.

Rule 3. Any reasonable excuse will be accepted in lieu of fine.

Rule 4. All members above age of 60 years may be excused from attendance, especially in bad weather.

Rule 5. All members living beyond the sidewalks may be excused in bad weather.

Jos. C. Shastid and W.E. Spicer, Committee

(The Great Depression brought some difficult times to the congregation.)

February 7, 1934—The chairman of the Finance Committee reported that the old deficit stood at \$358.00, that the current obligations were \$360.57 and the current resources were \$366.15. The matter of sending to the members another letter showing the financial condition of the church was discussed: and it was agreed that this matter be left in the hands of the Finance Committee and that such letter be sent.

(Two years later we read of some financial assistance given to the church by Fred Hicks. Several members of the Hicks family have been faithful members of the church from the early years until Fred Hicks moved to Florida in 1949. How many other saints have sacrificed to keep the congregation solvent during the past 175 years? Many of them are now known only to God.)

January 6, 1936—Bert Burbridge gave the treasurer's report. He also spoke of the splendid assistance given the church by Mr. Fred Hicks. A motion was made by Miss Mayo and seconded by George Gooud that the board express its thanks and appreciation to Bro. Fred Hicks for his splendid assistance in having the painting done on the church, and for the paying of certain other indebtedness, and for many other fine acts, and that Rev. Booker convey to him this statement.

October 19, 1942—It was suggested and decided that the southeast door be locked and that all people be asked to go out the northeast door, thus providing better opportunity for friendliness and a mutual exchange of greetings.

June 22, 1949—the Committee reported as follows: "That A. Clay Williams be made Chairman emeritus. Many fine words of appreciation were spoken for the long years of service of Judge Williams. The action making him chairman emeritus was taken in light of his suggestion that the board might want to elect someone who could take a more active part. It was

felt that it was an imposition to expect him to continue as active chairman at this time.” (Note: Judge Williams had served as chairman of the board for a period of 36 years.)

June 27, 1973 – Congregation approved a yearly budget of \$44,061.00

Jan 2, 1974 – New roof on church completed except for the steeple. Contractor asked if he might put that off until better weather. It was 10 degrees below zero.

July 4, 1976 – All the churches met on the Courthouse lawn for joint services at 11 o’clock. The joint choir was led by Chuck Barber.

July 6, 1977 --Next year our church will have 24 deacons instead of 18. Don Simmons to be in charge of schedules.

June 4, 1986 – Congregation accepted the 1986-87 budget of \$102,063.00

November 7, 2010 –Congregation accepted the 2011 budget of \$376,149.00

Today, in October, 2011, only the Barber family can claim descent from a charter member. Charles Barber III is fifth generation, his daughter, Bryn Fine is sixth generation, and her son, Austin Fine, represents the seventh generation of the Barber family in First Christian Church—a remarkable record of faithfulness and service.

MINISTERS OF THE PITTSFIELD CHRISTIAN CHURCH

William H. Strong	1839	W.E. Spicer	1904-1908
Joseph Patton	1840-1845	W.H. Cannon	1908-1913
W.A. Mallory	1846-1850	David Wetzel	1913-1918
Jonathon Atkinson	1850-1853	W.H. Hopkins	1918-1919
William Apperson	1854-1858	Edwin S. Priest	1919-1922
O.H. Topliff	1858-1860	H.E. Keltner	1923-1925
E.V. Rice	1861-1866	Russell Booker	1926-1944
H.D. Clark	1866-1869	Claude Cummins	1945-1950
H.D. Clark	1871-1874	Ward Humphries	1950-1955
R.H. Moss	1874	Vernon Stout	1955-1962
H.D. Clark	1876- 1880	Duane Moss	1963-1969
James McGuire	1882-1884	Chas. L. Emerson	1969-1974
J.G. Waggoner	1884-1886	Wallace Robinson	1974-1977
J.A. Roberts	1887-1889	Roger Jenks	1977-1984
W.A. Meloan	1890-1895	Michael Dixon	1985-1991
G.L. Snively	1895-1897	Daniel Krumrei	1992-1998
Russell F. Thrapp	1898-1901	Clay Boyd	2000-2004
F.M. Rogers	1902-1904	Michael Ten Eyck	2005

FIFTY YEAR MEMBERS, OCTOBER 2011

Dorothy Apps
Alberta Atwood
Eleanor Barber
Charles Barber III
Carolyn Barber
Carolyn Z. Casteel
Phil Casteel
Carolyn L. Casteel
Martha Chamberlain
Dan Chamberlain
Rosemary Clark
Neitha Dickerson
Helen Earls
Barbara Fosco
Isabel Giger

Joyce Groom
Carrol Hoover
Evelyn Hoover
John Irwin
Evelyn Ransom
Gaylord Rhodes
Aletha Rhodes
Delbert Robertson
Keith Smith
Darlene Smith
Shirley Thomas
Isabelle Willard
Roger Yaeger
Marjorie Zimmerman

175TH ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE

Michael Boren
Helen Earls
Joyce Lemons
Kay Sealock
Carol Cooley
Yvonne Stauffer
Betty Hayden
Michael Ten Eyck

OFFICERS FOR 2011

Moderator: N.D. Harrison

Vice-Moderator: Larry Wigington

Recording Secretary: Kathy Curfman

Treasurer: Ashley Ferguson

Elders: Helen Earls, Burdette Irwin, Matt Saxe, Larry Wigington, Michael Boren, Roger Dunham, Ann Ferguson (Elder chairperson), Joyce Lemons, Wayne Baughman, Wayne Chamberlain, Kay Sealock, Hamer Tate

Diaconate: Teresa Bauer, Edna Baughman, Amy Casto, Yvonne Stauffer, Gena Hoaglin, Carole Elledge, Jacque Walston, Ashley Ferguson, Dan Speckhart, Jonathan Schoenherr, Christie Mendenhall, Sandy Wigington, Carol Cooley, Glen Cooley, Keith Elledge, Chad Ferguson, Robin Herron, Ruth Hulford, Maria Owens, Rebecca Rhodes, Richard Rhodes, Jamie Sweeting, Michelle Westmaas, Charlene Anderson, Donnie Apps, Pat Apps, Tereasa Apps, David Bishop, Greg Bonnett, David Bryan, Alysia Cooley, Bryn Fine, Michelle Gates, Ron Halsey, Darin Wintjen

Trustees: Judy Losch, Darlene Smith, Walter Lamb, Bobby Smith (Trustee Chairman), Charles Barber III

Minister: Pastor Michael Ten Eyck
Associate/Youth Minister: Pastor Luke Justice
Custodian: Maria Owens
Administrative Secretary: Rebecca Rhodes
Music/Christian Education: Helen Earls
Church Organist: Charlotte Dunham
Director, Vesper Singers: Helen Earls
Pianist: Becky Irwin
Early Church Pianist: Sharon Killebrew

EMERITUS LIST

Elder

1983 – Harold Claus
1994 – R.L. Harp
1997 – Eldon Atwood
1997 – Katherine Borrowman
2000 – Lewis Dell
2000 – Don Apps, Sr.

Deacon

1983 – Luella Claus
1983 – Betty Cunningham
1994 – Don Simmons
1994 – Roy Finson
1994 – A.V. Chamberlain
1997 – Merle Willard
1997 – C.D. Rupert
2002 – Robert Clark
2011 – Greta Willard

1949 – **Chairman** A. Clay Williams
1997 – **Trustee** Victor Callender
1997 – **Member** John Lane



“PART OF FOREVER”

(The Sesquicentennial Theme Song in 1986)

What do we know of tomorrow?
We can't see the future,
 We can't hold the past,
Yet, in the love of this moment,
 We're part of something that lasts.

CHORUS

For this is a part of forever,
 the bread and the wine,
 and the faces of friends,
When we come together we're part of forever,
 for the spirit we share never ends.

As we partake of this mystery,
 this bread that's broken,
 this cup of wine;
We have become the Lord's family,
 standing together through time.

Things come and go,
 but we know somehow
 we are a part of eternity now!

CHORUS

For this is a part of forever,
 the bread and the wine,
 and the faces of friends,
When we come together we're part of forever,
 for the spirit we share never ends.



During the 175 years of the existence of First Christian Church of Pittsfield, we have experienced “wars and rumors of wars,” as Jesus told us about in the Gospels. We have felt the pain of the Civil War, the Spanish American War, World Wars I and II, Korea, Vietnam, the Gulf War and the continuing struggles in Afghanistan and Iraq. We have gone through times of economic hardship and times of plenty. Again, our present days are troubled and we look above for help. We reaffirm our Biblical foundations, pledge to be “a light shining in darkness,” and commit ourselves to **Reach, Teach and Empower** individuals with the life-changing Gospel of Jesus Christ.