

HISTORY OF THE CLARKSTON CHURCH OF CHRIST

by Viola H. Cook

The Church of Christ was organized March 1899 by George F. Stivers of Garfield. There were 16 charter members among whom were Mr. Jerome Pedigo, Mr. and Mrs. J. S. Fisher, Mr. and Mrs. William Reed, Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Baskett and Mr. and Mrs. J. Henry Pedigo.

Services were held in the school building, until May 1900 when a new church building located near 13th and Highland was dedicated by J. B. Daisley of Pomeroy. This site was chosen because the majority of the members lived in that neighborhood. There was a small congregation of about twenty members at Peola and they were asked for donations to help build this church. Brother M. N. Jeffreys, then living at Peola, donated and hauled six hundred feet of lumber for the building.

Soon a Bible School was organized and a choir with W.E. Baskett as director and Mrs. Fred Lytle organist. Prayer meetings were held each Wednesday and the building became the center of neighborhood activities.

In the spring of 1902 a short meeting was held by Brother and Sister L. F. Stephens.

In 1903 the building was moved to its present location, Tenth and Sycamore and Diagonal Streets and enlarged to a seating capacity of 200.

Brother and Sister Stephens held another evangelistic meeting in the new building which resulted in 99 additions, including the late Rev. Henry A. Van Winkle of Spokane.

In 1905 the first parsonage, a two story structure, was erected on 11th Street north of Elm Street.

According to the records, the women of the church have played an important part in the financing of our organization since its very beginning. When the first parsonage was built the women—then called the “Ladies Aid”—paid \$650.00 on the cost, then borrowed \$250.00 at the bank at 12% interest, 36 members signing the note which was paid off in a short time.

In 1910 D. Lloyd Morgan was called to be our pastor and through his efforts the Olson-Moss evangelistic team was secured to hold a meeting in April and May 1911.

On February 14, 1911, a committee of six men, F. M. Hartley, J. H. Bethel, F.E. Nuss, S. J. Roberts, P. Bliss and D. Lloyd Morgan were appointed to secure lumber to build a tabernacle for the Olson-Moss Meeting. Seven hundred dollars was borrowed from the First National bank of Clarkston to erect this building. Brothers F. E. Nuss, S. J. Roberts, J. H. Bethel, J. H. Cooper and F. M. Hartley signed the note. This tabernacle, seating approximately 800 people, was built across Sycamore Street from us where now our little Foster park is located. This structure was completed in one day by volunteer labor, the “Ladies’ Aid” serving a hot meal at noon to all the workers.

The building was filled to near capacity almost every night resulting in about 200 additions. The Misses Hazel Mohundro and Viola Hartley played the two pianos nightly during the six weeks of meetings.

With so many additions our old church building was inadequate so, by unanimous approval, a new building was planned into which a portion of the old building was incorporated forming the north wing of the new structure.

On May 22, 1915, the Trustees were instructed to purchase more land—a ½ lot on the west side and a ½ lot on the north side of the church property and a building committee was appointed: Brothers D. Lloyd Morgan, J. H. Bethel, F. E. Nuss, G. A. Davis, W. G. Mohundro, J. Q. Fitzsimmons, N. E. Ware and F. M. Hartley.

The “Ladies’ Aid” pledged and paid to the building fund \$2,500.00

The old building was razed and the corner stone to the new one was laid January 1, 1912.

Directly under the corner stone, that the writing is on, there is a miniature vault containing a Bible, list of the membership, officers, history of the church, and a quotation, “Consigning the stone and its contents to the elements and to posterity.”

The Bible was carefully wrapped in very fine paper and the documents were written on parchment paper, and the Bible and documents all placed in a tin box which was in turn placed in the vault and concrete poured in to fill the vault, then the stone which we see was cemented on top. Several hundred people were present to witness this impressive ceremony.

Until such time as our basement was completed services were held upstairs in Horton Hall, just two doors north of Sycamore Street on Sixth Street.

During the process of building, the committee and other members of the Board under the leadership of Orrin Jacks gave unselfishly of their time and money. Some of them sacrificed to the point of going without necessities in their homes in order that they would have more money to put into the new church building. Money was borrowed from the Lewiston National Bank, and \$4,000.00 from the Church Extension.

On September 8, 1911, a scale of wages per day was set. Carpenters \$3.75, Handyman \$2.60, Common laborer \$2.00, and Man and team \$4.00 per day. Each to donate 25% of their wages to the church. On October 3, 1911, a new wage scale per day was adopted. Foreman \$3.00, Carpenter \$2.75, Handyman \$2.00, Turner and Tamper \$2.50, Team and Man \$3.00, and Common laborer \$1.50 with no deduction.

On November 13 a new foreman, Archie Axtell was hired at \$4.50 per day. The two electricians, Clarence Jones and Spencer Clark, were to receive thirty cents per hour.

After 1½ years of ceaseless toil, our building was completed at the cost of \$18,000.00—a huge sum at that time, and dedicated March 23, 1913. According to an article in the Lewiston Morning Tribune dated January 12, 1913, the dedication was to have been held sometime in December 1912, then another date was set, January 26, 1913, but owing to the non-arrival of the pews it was necessary to again postpone the dedication.

Another item from the Lewiston Morning Tribune dated January 1, 1913, the “Ladies’ Aid” of the Church of Christ will serve a chicken supper on New Years Day to which the public is invited. Twenty-five cents will be charged for the supper.

Everyone worked. Each Bible school class and the Christian Endeavorers made separate pledges that were raised in various ways such as box suppers, black face minstrels, and the “Ladies’ Aid” with cooked food sales, bazaars, and sometimes each lady earning a dollar in some special way to put into the treasury.

Everything was carefully watched to cut down expenses such as having the janitor work done in daylight to cut down the electric bill.

The carpet and choir loft curtains were bought and paid for by the Christian Endeavorers, and sewed together by members of the “Ladies’ Aid” and laid by the men of the church, before our first meeting in the auditorium.

We all felt that in giving our time, labor, and money that we were making a good investment in the Lord Jesus Christ. And those of us who are yet here feel that that investment is paying good dividends.

Our young people's group at that time consisted of most of the young people of the church. The Intermediates were included in our social times as well as the older folk.

At times it seemed almost impossible to raise enough money to keep going but in November 1919 the mortgage was burned, while Mrs. F. M. Hartley read an original poem telling of the many difficulties that had been overcome and the pride and joy that every one felt at this time. It was through the faithful efforts and careful leadership of Brother A. F. Van Slyke that the heavy church debt was lifted. However, he did not witness the burning of the mortgage as he resigned in 1918.

Our thoughts then turned toward a new parsonage. Our old parsonage was of the old fashioned square type, two story building located several blocks distant from the church. The modern types of dwellings were one floor bungalows and we owned enough land on which to build one in close proximity to the church, so in July 1919 action was taken to sell the parsonage. In due time our present parsonage was built and our beloved Brother and Sister N. E. Beach were its first occupants.

Enough pledges were made to build the parsonage but many of the pledges were never paid so the money had to be borrowed to complete the job. Again there was a time of careful planning and sacrificing in order to meet the payments. But eventually the debt was paid and there was another happy time when the parsonage mortgage was burned.

In 1921 when the high school located at 13th and Sycamore Streets burned our class rooms were used, for a time, to accommodate school classes.

For the most part our congregation has moved forward continuously.

To date, four different heating plants have been installed in this building.

A ladies' restroom was installed.

In the fall of 1939 celotex was put on the ceiling of the main auditorium and at a later date the Primary room was celotexed. 1942 saw a new shingle roof put on the church, paid for by a special fund aside from the regular church offerings.

In the year 1946 there were many improvements made to our church property.

A new automatic oil burning furnace was installed in the parsonage at a cost of \$587.00 to replace a coal burning furnace. Also tower chimes, the parsonage basement floor completed, gravel and sand being donated by Brother and Sister E. W. Poe. The pastor's study was moved into the church and a phone installed. Three classrooms and the study were equipped with gas heat.

In November, 1947, hearing aids were put into the pews of the main auditorium; also in this same month a new fluorescent lamp for the piano was purchased.

The Women's Council bought and installed new carpets and drapes in the auditorium in 1948.

Also in 1948 we accepted the Crusade Goal of \$2,093.84. Baptisms 73, transfers 73, Bible school enrollment 293, trained leaders 16, tithers 41, proportionate givers 41. To date we have achieved \$594.52, baptisms 37, transfers 21, Bible school enrollment 307, trained leaders 3, tithers 10, proportionate givers 3.

In March 1948, a new Hammond electric organ was installed at a cost of \$2,546.19 and to date, March 1949, \$2,120.77 has been paid by offerings other than the regular church offering, and in November a public address system was put into the nursery in order that the worship service might be heard by those caring for the little ones. In January, 1949, a modern fluorescent lamp for the organ was given by friends of the church.

There have been periodic evangelistic meetings held, many of which have shown gratifying results.

Many of the years our volunteer choir has presented two cantatas each year—one at Christmas and one at Easter time.

For several years it has been the custom for an Elder and a Deacon to take the emblems to shut-ins each Lord's Day morning.

From the inception of Union evening church services during June, July, and August, with the exception of one or two summers, we have cooperated, as also, we have participated in the union vacation Bible school. For the 1948 vacation Bible school our own pastor, Ralph E. Helseth, as director. Heretofore a director had come from elsewhere.

Our building has always been open to the public for any worthwhile project and now our doors are never locked so that the building stands as a refuge at any and all times for whom-so-ever may seek entrance.

Two men have gone from this congregation into full-time Christian service: Charles R. Drake and Dr. Orval Peterson.

THE HISTORICAL STATEMENT

1979

The Church of Christ was organized March, 1899, by George F. Stivers (born 1851 or 1854 died 1920) of Garfield. There were 16 charter members. Services were held in a school building until May 1900 for the membership of 85, when a new church was built near 13th and Highland. Rev. Stivers was the Pioneer Inland Empire Evangelist.

In 1903 the building was moved to the present location, Tenth and Sycamore and enlarged to seat 200.

On January 1, 1912, the old building was razed and the corner stone for this present building laid. The dedication was March 23, 1913. The \$18,000 mortgage was lifted in November 1919.

Through the years many improvements have been made to keep the church beautiful and functional.

Updating the heating system, the lighting, carpeting and drapes in the sanctuary, and now the addition of the education unit.

Ground breaking ceremonies were September 14, 1978, with construction completed March 1979 of the 2,276 square feet of new area and the remodeled 1,920 square feet. Which include the fireside room, kitchen, library, one classroom two restrooms on the lower floor. Minister's study, secretarial office, communion kitchen, three classrooms and two restrooms on the upper level for the construction cost of \$108,017.07.

**105th ANNIVERSARY
CLARKSTON FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

March 14, 2004
By Ruth Bosserman

The Church of Christ was organized in March 1899 by the Rev. George F. Stivers, Pioneer Inland Empire Evangelist. There were 16 charter members.

Meetings were held in the public school until May 1900, when a small one-room building was erected in Pomeroy Gulch, south of Thirteenth and Highland Streets. We have a busy highway running up Pomeroy Gulch, now, called Fleshman Way.

The new church building was dedicated by J. B. Daisley of Pomeroy. At this time the membership had increased to about 85 persons.

There was a small congregation of about 20 members living at Peola. They wanted a church of their own and hired Rev. Daisley to hold a worship service for them about once a month. They realized that it would be better to join forces with the church at Clarkston, as their scarcely populated farming area could never support much of a church. The Clarkston church asked the Peola members for donations to help build a larger church. M. N. Jeffreys, who resided there, donated and hauled 600 feet of lumber for the building.

The story is a great one. Mr. Jeffreys was busy with spring planting and put off hauling the lumber until two or three rainy days made it so wet that he had to stop harrowing. "I loaded up the lumber and started in with it," he related. "I arrived at the Jones place, back of the Heights, when a hailstorm caught us. I was in my shirtsleeves and I couldn't leave the team because I was driving a colt that was excitable. So I had to stay right with the team until the storm was over. By the time I got to my cousin's place just above the location for the church, I was nearly frozen. I hauled the lumber down the north side of the gulch from 15th Street so I wouldn't have to cross on the Asotin Road."

Mr. Jeffreys later became the father-in-law of Helen Jeffreys, who has been a member of this church longer than any of the rest of the congregation.

A Bible school had been organized and a choir with Mr. W. E. Baskett as director. Prayer meetings were held each Wednesday and the church became the center of neighborhood activities.

In 1903 the building was moved to its present location at 10th and Sycamore Streets and enlarged to a seating capacity of 200. Brother and Sister L. F. Stephens held an evangelistic meeting in the new building and 99 members were added.

In 1910 D. Lloyd Morgan was called as pastor and through his efforts the Olson-Moss Evangelist Team was secured to hold a six-week meeting in April and May of 1911.

On February 14, 1911, a committee of six men was appointed to secure lumber to build a tabernacle for the meeting. Seven hundred dollars was borrowed from the First National Bank of Clarkston to erect the building. The tabernacle, seating approximately 800 people, was built in one day by a crew of 75 men on the present site of Foster Park, across the street from the church. The ladies aid served a hot noon meal to all the workers. The tabernacle was filled to near capacity almost every night and resulted in approximately 200 additions to the congregation.

With so many additions, the old building was inadequate, so by unanimous approval, a new building was planned into which a portion of the old building was incorporated, forming the north wing of the new structure.

The ladies aid pledged and paid to the building fund \$2,500.

During the process of building, the committee and other members of the board and congregation, gave unselfishly of their time and money.

Some of them sacrificed to the point of going without necessities in their homes in order that they would have more money to put into the new building. Money was borrowed from the Lewiston National Bank and \$4,000 from the Board of Church Extension. Stained glass windows were incorporated into the building plan. The entire building cost \$18,000 and of that amount \$3,800 went for the windows. A recent estimate of our windows' value place them at one-half million dollars.

So here we are today, celebrating a history and gathering the memories of many decades. People of faith have always worshipped and worked here. There have been countless baptisms, and the church has benefited by the generosity of those who down through the years have kept the church alive and vital.

We thank our gracious God for our faith and for this place of worship. Here many souls have been nourished and the church has provided a nurturing place for all who came seeking a spiritual life.

Stained Glass Windows

From old ledgers and secretary-of-board minutes, it is recorded that the stained glass windows were purchased from a company in Portland, Oregon, and shipped by rail to the Lewis-Clark Valley. Minutes of the October 27, 1912, Building Committee meeting read as follows:

“Building committy (*sic*) met at church Oct. 17, 1912. Bros. Present, Ware, Mohundro, Fitzsimmons. First discussion of time to Place the new windows. On motion Decided to put them in all at once. Chairman appointed bro Fizsimmons as a Committy to confer with the Laydes (*sic*) of the Church in Regard to them Purchasing the Large East window in honor of Brother Cooper. Then the chair appointed a Committy of Four to Solicit for Donors, Bros. Mohundro, Jones, Bethal & Thomason. The Treasure (*sic*) was instructed to pay for the dedning (*sic*) felt, the Evans Bill, Twin City Lumber bill, & Clarkston Commercial Bill, as far as funds will admit. Nothing farther (*sic*). Adjourned subject to a call.”

F. M. Hartley, Sec

The ladies purchased the window depicting Christ praying in the garden. Other windows tell of Christ's ascension, Christ as the Good Shepherd, Christ's invitation to follow Him, and Christ in the temple at the age of 12. Besides these main windows, the sanctuary contains three smaller windows at the rear of the choir loft and a dome window containing a dove, the symbol of the Holy Spirit.

O. W. Jacks, a man who served on the building committee during construction of the church, recalled that the windows were originally installed at a cost of about \$3,800, a sizable portion of the total cost of \$18,000 for the building.

A recent estimate of the present value of the windows is a half-million dollars.

Updated March, 2007

MINISTERS OF THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
CLARKSTON, WASHINGTON

George F. Stivers.....Organizing Pastor 1899
 F. B. Laing.....1899-1903
 L.F. Stephens.....May 1903 – Oct. 1903
 H. Sibrel.....Oct. 1903
 W. L. McCullough.....Mar. 1903 – May 1906
 H. S. Champie.....Mar. 1907 – May 1908
 A. C. Corbin.....Oct. 1908 – June 1910
 D. Loyd Morgan.....May 1910 – Jan. 1914
 A. F. Van Slyke.....1914 – Feb. 1918
 N. E. Beach.....1919 – Feb. 1924
 Morton H. Woods.....May 1924 – Feb. 1925
 Otho Williams.....June 1925 – Dec. 1925
 Charles K. Addleman.....Mar. 1926 – April 1931
 A. B. Kern.....May 1931
 Hubert E. Sias.....April 1938 –
 Gerald Heskett.....
 Frank T. Carter.....
 Hugh Brunk.....
 Grant Cole (Interim).....
 Perry Swann.....
 Donald A. Ross.....1945 – 1947
 Dr. C. L. Pickett (Interim).....
 Ralph Helseth.....1948 – 1952
 Earl Miller.....
 Francis Getz.....
 Rev. Waldburn (Interim).....
 Russell Myers.....
 Howard Hake.....
 Clifton Lindsey (Interim).....
 Alton Crouse (Interim).....
 Edward Farrell.....1970 – 1975
 Maurice Swisher (Interim).....1975 – 1976
 Frank Needles.....1976 – 1986
 Arthur H. Rost (Interim).....

Delbert Pancake.....1987 – 1989
 Clifton Peightal (Interim).....1989
 Sarasopa Enari, Senior Pastor and
 Helen Enari, Associate Pastor.....May 1990 – July 1994
 Burton Brown (Interim).....1994 – 1995
 Dr. Marvin Dixon.....1995 – 2001
 Jim Burford (Interim).....2001 – 2002
 Ineke Mitchell (Interim).....2002 – 2003
 Carol Rawlings.....2003 – 2006
 Donnamae Grannemann (Interim).....2006 – 2007
 David Carringer.....2007 – Present