

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF PLATTE CITY

Disciples of Christ



OUR HERITAGE AND HISTORY

Revised and Updated 2022

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The First Christian Church of Platte City

Our Heritage and History

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By Peggy P. Miller, historian 2000

Revised and updated by Cathy C. Brown, board secretary 2022

Design by Bunnie Foster, office manager

Part of a Movement — Disciples of Christ

The First Christian Church of Platte City (FCCPC) is a part of a definite and powerful religious movement, a movement which began in the opening years of our nation's history. It is a movement which has two watchwords: "Religious democracy" and "Christian unity," both rising from the ground swell of freedom and togetherness which gave our nation its birth.



It was the early 1800s. Prevailing sectarian narrowness, bitterness and competition between religious groups was the order of the day. In western Pennsylvania and West Virginia, Thomas Campbell and his son, Alexander, led a movement to bring unity and harmony to the church. At the same time, Barton W. Stone was leading a similar group in northern Kentucky and Indiana. Eventually these two groups merged, and with other lesser groups, formed the religious body known as the Disciples of Christ, or Christian Church. The Disciples of Christ was one of the churches active in Platte County when it became a part of the state of Missouri in 1837. The congregation in Platte City was formed in 1847.

Historical and Biographical Sketches of the Early Churches and Pioneer Preachers of the Christian Church in Missouri. Written in 1888 by Thomas Preston Haley (an early minister of our church)

The Platte City Church was organized in 1847 under the labor of P.L. Hudgins of Savannah, Missouri, and Elder M.E. Lard. Of the early members there were the Wallers, Todds, Tribbles, Parks, Hartmans, Cockrills and Christies.

The church met for a long time in the court house, but at length, erected a neat and commodious house in which they still worship (this being the building erected in 1855). It has been repaired and refitted in the last years and is one of the most comfortable houses in the upper Missouri. The church has generally maintained the worship on the Lord's Day. They have, for the most part, had preaching once a month, but much of the time they had preaching over half of the time. The congregation has for many years been one of the wealthiest in the county. They have been liberal and hearty in cooperation with their brethren for the spread of the gospel.

Among the preachers who have served them are M.E. Lard, A.H.F. Payne, T.P. Haley, W.C. Williams and Hon. H. Duncan. They have had visits from the protracted meetings held by many of the most prominent men in the church: T.M. Allen, D.S. Burnett, Joseph J. Wyatt and many others. For many years Professor F.G. Gaylord has been president of the college there and has greatly aided in keeping alive an interest in the church.

The Annals of Platte County, By William M. Paxton

1873

Financial Report:
Receipts \$496.85
Disbursements \$485.10
Balance \$11.75

In 1852 Disciples of Christ founder "Alexander Campbell toured the Platte Purchase country and DOC churches in Savannah, Camden Point and St. Joseph. He spent 4 years in Missouri and was generously supported in all his church projects." *Historical Fact*

1874

The following were listed as members for that year: William Chestnut, M.C. Park, Dr. E.M. Coffey, T.B. George, Clinton Cockrill, C.W. Hawley, George T. Jones, E.C. Redman, Fred Krause, Thomas Herndon, B.F. Spencer, R.P. Tribble, F.G. Cockrill, W.C. Wells, James Adkins, John Collins, Joseph Tribble, T.G. Cockrill, E.O. Waller, J.F. Merryman, F.G. Gaylord, R.M. Huston, Mrs. Sue Reno, Mrs. Lou Hatton, Elihu Park, James Christy, G.F. Clemings, R.R. Waller, F.N. Cockrill, Mrs. J.V. Morin, Fountain L. Waller, C. Herlin, Eliza Waller, Kendrick Waller, Mrs. Emma Moore, Simpson Park, G.V. Collins, Joel Chinn, Mrs. Amanda Beaumont, Mrs. McCluer, Michi Maupin, Leaney Recht, J.C. Sutherland, G.W. Smith, Henry Coleman.

From the Minutes – February 1884

Bros. Waller and Duncan were appointed a committee to confer with the ladies (C.W.B.M.) about the building of a hall and to express to them it is the judgement of the board that a public hall would not be an advisable investment.

At the next meeting in March, the committee appointed to confer with the ladies about building a hall reported their action. But we are left to wonder what the action was, as the minutes do not say.

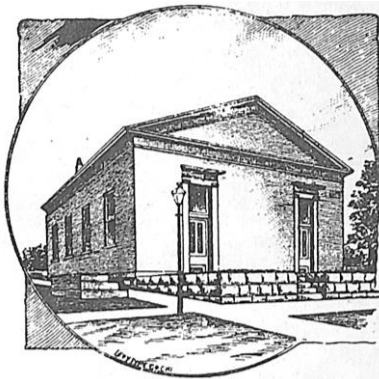
From the Minutes – April 1884

Bro. Krause's attention was called to the need of repairing the belfry and also to an ugly hole in front of the church, both of which he was authorized to attend to.

The Old Building

The Landmark, June 9, 1893

There is no authentic record of the old building, except that the lot on which it stood and the lot on which our current building stands, Lot 1, Block 32, was purchased from the administrator of the estate of Robert Todd, March 24, 1855 for the sum of \$613. During that year the first church was built. It was a plain brick building, 45 X 60 feet and 20 feet high. It fronted Oak Street (now Ferrel Street) looking north. The floor was about four feet above the grade of the present sidewalk, the building setting some 20 feet back from the street. In front of the building on a line with the street was a rock wall raised to about the height of the church floor. As the accompanying cut shows, rock steps led up to this platform and in front of the two doors was another stone step. The roof of the old building was self-supporting and made of such durable and heavy timbers and so honestly constructed that it required considerable effort to remove them. Galusha Sprague contracted for the brick work, while the venerable and respected W.D. Bonnel had the contract for the woodwork. The heavy and substantial woodwork for the roof was done by William and Abe Hartman, sons of Grandma Hartman, two of the most skilled artisans of their day. Uncle Henry Hartman, their father, himself a skilled workman, superintended the erection of the building. The edifice, when completed, cost about \$4,000. James Christy, Davis Johnston and Henry Hartman constituted the building committee. The records are very meager, yet we learn that Hiram Waller and Samuel Oliphant were the first elders. The seating capacity of the old building was about 500. During the terrible days of the Civil War, most of the town being burnt, the old church was used as a place of public gathering. Here the people met to have their public meetings. Here the children were brought to Sunday school and church. Here they confessed their faith in Jesus. Here they were married and here, when the last summons came, their remains were brought before they were consigned to



the city on the hill. Well do we remember the trembling form of Uncle Jimmie Christy, the cheerful face of James Buckhart, the kind-hearted Davis Johnston, the plain, blunt, honest John Collins, Andy Tribble, a rough ashlar, but one of nature's noblemen; William Hartman who always rose during prayer, though the congregation might be kneeling, with his long black Quaker-cut coat and long hair

hanging over his shoulders. In form, straight as an arrow. His conduct and Christian character being squared towards all men and measured by the golden rule of his Master. But then we might go on and on in our reminiscences of these grand old men who loved to do right because they thought it was right. Then the many kind, dear old faces of the mothers of Israel, who for so many years sat on the same old benches. Noble, self-sacrificing women, who have left the stamp of their character, even down to the present generation. As God spared a few of the chosen Israelites to pass over into the promised land, so He has in this case selected four of the charter members of the church; four of these grand old women, to witness the dedication of the new temple: Grandma Hartman, Letitia Breckenridge, Ann Hunt and Eliza J. Waller. The memories of the bygone patriarchs are green and in this new church edifice their children and children's children have built a monument to their zeal and devotion. God has blessed them, and though we see them no more, their good works live after them.

Farewell, old church, so dear to those
Whose hearts and lives are a bound to thee
With loving hands of praise and prayer
To Him whose eye alone can see;
How great this sacrifice must be
To those who saw thee slowly rise,
Brick by brick, toward the skies.

Old church, how oft thy walls have rung
With "Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me,"
While hearts and voices blend and sung
"Oh, let me hide myself in Thee."
And "Jesus lover of my Soul"
Was oft our morning song to Him
Whose power alone could make us whole
And cleanse our hearts from every sin.

Dear church...Thou wert the peoples' home
Where they found rest from earthly care;
And gathered strength on Sabbath days,
By God's good grace their cross to bear,
Our children sat with faces pure
And listened to the song and prayer.
Our hearts at thine altar
And left us for another's care.
And there in love we laid our dead
While voices softly sang, "Asleep
In Jesus," "Where none wake to weep."

Like Israel of old we mourn
And hand our harps in mute distress
To see "our home" all bruised and torn.

Old church...Thy memories are dear,
Thy very stones cry out with pain,
To us who see with vision clear
The faces we ne'er shall see again
Until we cross the river deep,
Whose waves end on the other shore,
Then those loved faces that now sleep
Shall greet us there to part no more.

And now old church, once more, farewell;
We, too, shall pass that way ere long;
And in the coming time shall tell
Of thee, in many a loving song;
How God has been our hope and trust
In all these years of joy and pain,
Now must thy head be laid in dust;
God grant it be thy people gain;
Goodbye old church, in thee we trust.

As we look at the congregation and membership roll today we see the descendants of those early day pioneers who settled in Platte County and established and nurtured the church from the beginning. The following is a listing of some of these descendants:

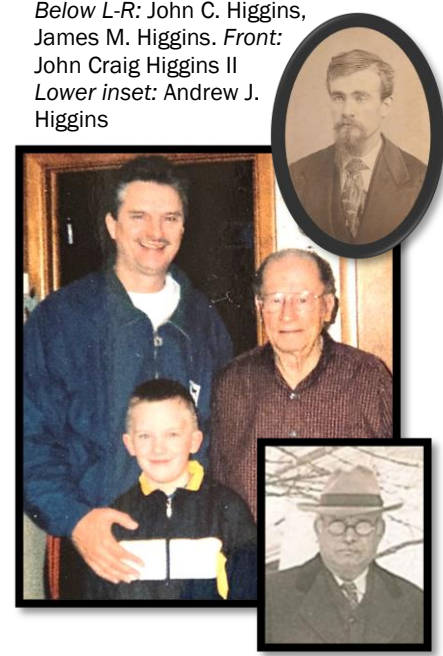
- | | |
|---|--|
| James Adkins | Great-Grandson: James E. Wren |
| William Chestnut | Great-Grandson: Jack Cockrill
Great-Granddaughter: Margie Kalousek
Great-Great-Grandson: Patrick Cockrill
Great-Great-Great-Granddaughter: Abby Cockrill
Great-Great-Great-Granddaughter: Elizabeth Scott
Great-Great-Great-Granddaughter: Emily Hockaday
Great-Great-Great-Great-Grandson: Camden Hockaday
Great-Great-Great-Great-Grandson: Leo Scott |
| Clinton Cockrill | Great-Grandson: Jack Cockrill
Great-Grandson: Richard C. Woodson
Great-Great-Grandson: Patrick Cockrill
Great-Great-Great-Granddaughter: Abby Cockrill
Great-Great-Great-Granddaughter: Elizabeth Scott
Great-Great-Great-Granddaughter: Emily Hockaday
Great-Great-Great-Great-Grandson: Camden Hockaday
Great-Great-Great-Great-Grandson: Leo Scott |
| G.F. Clemings | Granddaughter: Margie Kalousek |
| John Collins | Great-Granddaughter: Edith May Palmer
Great-Great-Grandson: James E. Wren
Great-Great-Granddaughter: Becky Cutler |
| Jesse L. Collins | Granddaughter: Edith May Palmer
Great-Granddaughter: Becky Cutler |
| Marion Collins | Great-Grandson: James E. Wren |
| David B. Higgins | Son: Andrew Jervie Higgins
Grandson: James M. Higgins
Great-Grandson: James J. Higgins
Great-Grandson: John C. Higgins
Great-Grandson: Robert D. Higgins
Great-Great-Grandson: John Craig Higgins II |
| Simpson Park | Great-Great-Granddaughter: Lucille Wells |
| Dr. E.C. Redman | Great-Granddaughter: George Ann Coffey |
| Dr. Spence Redman | Granddaughter: George Ann Coffey |
| Hiram Waller | Great-Great-Grandson: James E. Wren |
| Lou Tatman Waller | Niece: Ann Clevenger
Great-Niece: Carole Coots
Great-Great-Niece: Jackie Babcock
Great-Great-Niece: Kelly Fritz |
| William C. Wells | Great-Grandson: J. Wells Hull
Great-Great-Granddaughter: Beth Hull-Smith |
| George W. Jenkins,
(Building Contractor) | Great-Niece: Shirley Kimsey |



Chestnut / Cockrill
*Top Inset: Patrick Cockrill.
 Above L-R: Emily Hockaday with son Camden, Elizabeth Scott with son Leo.
 Lower inset: Jack Cockrill*

Higgins: Five Generations

*Top Inset: David B. Higgins.
 Below L-R: John C. Higgins, James M. Higgins. Front: John Craig Higgins II
 Lower inset: Andrew J. Higgins*



Note of Early Member

Andy Tribble's daughter married F. Grundy Cockrill, whose descendants were Thomas and Robert Cockrill and Ida Cockrill Yuille, who joined the church as young people, but transferred their membership when they moved from the area.

The New Christian Church Dedicated to the Lord



The contract for the new building was let on July 6, 1891 to George W. Jenkins of St. Joseph for \$8,000. The architects were Messrs. Hogg & Rose of Kansas City.

Contractor Jenkins began tearing down the old building on the 20th day of July, 1891. The cornerstone was laid August 27, 1891 with appropriate ceremony. The brick work was completed October 6, 1891 and the keys were turned over to the building committee on December 22, 1891. The building committee was composed of E.O Waller, William Chestnut, E.C. Redman and W.C Wells. The outer dimensions of the church were 50 x 70 feet. The main room, the auditorium, was 50 x 50 feet, Sunday school room 20 x 50 feet, so arranged as to make one large room 50 x 70 feet. Above the Sunday

school room was another large room 20 x 50 feet which could be used as a gallery. Four hundred people could be comfortably seated in these three rooms. The main room was 22 feet high with a fine oil-finished paneled ceiling. The unique design in the ceiling was beautiful. It was an old design, having been used for centuries in Europe and it took great skill to build it so perfectly. It, like many of the designs used, had its own symbolic meaning.

The idea of building a new church probably originated with Mrs. Eliza Wells, wife of Hon. W.C. Wells, who constantly urged upon the members of the Christian Women's Missionary Aid Society to try toward this end. In this work the ladies heartily responded, and by their efforts of years, raised \$700 towards building the church, \$247.44 for carpets and furnishing and \$300 for a handsome organ.

Mr. George H. Pope, in his will, left a neat sum with which was furnished a handsome memorial window on the North. The King's Daughters, a society composed of the young unmarried ladies of the church, also furnished a lovely window on the East at a cost of \$92.50. The church was seated with handsome oil-finished birch benches (still in use), the magnificent gift of Hon. W.C. Wells, who furnished them at a cost of \$500. On the ends of the front row are silver plates with the following inscription: "These Seats are Donated by Wm. C. Wells, In Memory of His Wife Eliza J. Wells, Who Died December 28, 1890, Aged 53 Years 3 Days." The pulpit was on a platform at the front of the church, and beneath it, the baptismal font. The total of \$8,252.05 was collected by subscription, to the amount every member of the church and many outsiders contributed. The furnishings of the building, including organ and seats, cost \$1,114.85, and if the old material, valued at \$500, is counted, the building as it stood cost \$9,866.90. It was heated by a hot air furnace and was lit by elegant chandeliers. The building committee passed quite a compliment on Mr. George W. Jenkins, the contractor, saying they ever found in him a pleasant gentleman, one always ready to oblige and by whose advice and honesty they were saved hundreds of dollars. Probably, to the tireless energy and zeal of the building committee more than others, is due the collection of the amount necessary to complete the building. The exterior of the building was in full keeping with the interior, a faint idea of which can be drawn from the accompanying sketches (*right*). The bell that was used in the old building, where it was hung on a lofty frame in the rear of the building, was placed in the new belfry and was used to call saint and sinner to worship. It was purchased August 10, 1868 at a cost of \$2000. This bell still hangs in the belfry.

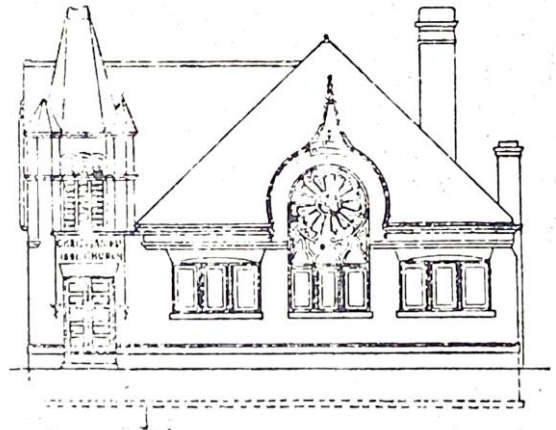
At the time of dedication, the officers of the church consisted of William Featherstone, pastor; F.G. Gaylord, E.O. Waller, Lewis Dearing and W.C. Wells, elders; T.B. George, Charles T. Murdock, Spence Redman, Marion P. Collins, Jesse Collins and Fred Krause, deacons.

Sunday, May 28, 1893 was a day long remembered by the people of Platte City and especially the members of the Christian Church at that place. For it was the day set apart for the dedication of the new Christian Church, a building of which the whole community could well be proud. Early on the above-mentioned day, people began gathering in from all parts of the county and by ten o'clock a large

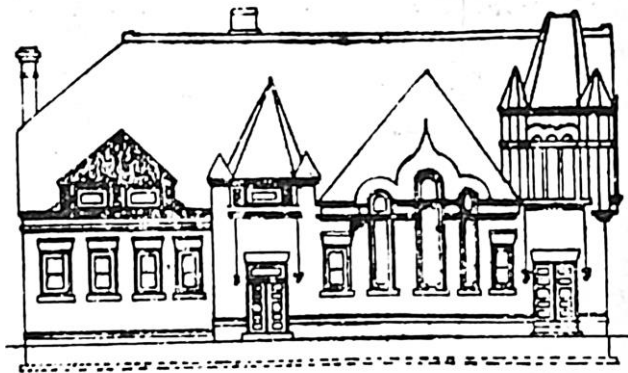
congregation had collected in the new building. Gentlemanly ushers seated the great mass as best they could and yet many were unable to get inside the building. On the platform were Elders Thomas P. Haley of Kansas City, Alexander Proctor of Independence and William Featherstone in charge of the church at Platte City. At eleven o'clock, Elder Featherstone briefly outlined the exercises of the day and said Elder T.P. Haley had kindly consented to act as conductor.

Brother Haley then arose and stated he appreciated the kindly spirit of Brother Featherstone in yielding to him on this occasion, that he knew it was on account of his former pastorship of this church, a congregation to which he preached so many years. The hymn "Come Said Jesus' Sacred Voice" by a quartet of Misses Laura Valliant and Clara Zarn, Mr. Henry Means and Prof. Cowherd. Then a prayer was offered by Rev. Henry Powell of the M.E. Church South, of Kansas City, and a hymn by the choir.

Brother Alexander Proctor then delivered in his own plain, simple, though grand, manner one of the finest — most earnest and logical sermons ever delivered in this place. Every word and idea was imbued with zeal and strength that carried with its own conviction. To the many who had listened to this grand old man in years gone by, in those days of Moses E.L. Lard, Wyatt and others and when old Mason Summers and F.G. Gaylord led in the songs of Zion, this was a rare pleasure. The younger generation enjoyed the beautiful diction — the strong and earnest thoughts as the speaker basically pictured the Ideal Man in us. At the close of the services Miss Clara Zarn sang, in her rich contralto voice, "The Crucifixion." Prof. Carl Hoffman, the noted musician of Leavenworth, presided over the organ.



FRONT VIEW LOOKING NORTH.



SIDE VIEW LOOKING EAST.

Adjourning the morning services, the congregation dispersed to the homes of the townspeople where they were welcomed to partake of their hospitality. Many went to the rotunda and yard of the court house where great tables were spread — loaded with all that was good for a hungry man. At three o'clock the church was again crowded. Bro. Haley, after a few introductory remarks, called upon the building committee to make a report, at the same time promising the people a surprise.

Bro. W.C. Wells, on behalf of the committee, read a synopsis of the monies received and how expended, and presented the edifice to Elder Featherstone,

pastor in charge and the congregation at Platte City — presented the beautiful building, complete in all respects, and without one cent of indebtedness. On motion of Bro. E.O. Waller, the report was referred to the following persons not members of the Christian Church — Judge Norton, A.J. Coleman and Judge J. ?. Bro. Haley said he had been in charge of this church twenty years ago and he could now look over the great audience and see the faces of grown men and women who were children when he left this place, though it seemed but a few short months. Now he could look around him and there was many a dear familiar face — faces of the brave old men and women who had stood for so many years as pillars of the church — faces that have long since shone with radiant brightness — voices that though still on earth would someday greet us in the celestial choir above.

As in the custom with congregations of this denomination, communion services were held to which all Christians of all churches were invited to partake — for as Bro. Haley stated, this was a time and place where every child of God could feel he was in his Father's House. This ended the simple, though impressive, dedication ceremonies. *The Landmark*, June 9, 1893

Officers and Operations

Mission Statement

The First Christian Church of Platte City is a deeply caring community of faith, blessed by the love and gifts of God, encouraging people to work and worship and grow together for the glory of God.

Developed during the visioning process 2004.

From the Minutes – January 1884

The minutes say that on the first Sunday in 1884 the board of elders and deacons met. Those present were Bros. E.C. Waller, Wells, Krause, Clemings, George, Duncan and Deering.

It was ordered to take a collection every Lord's Day morning and Bros. Wells and Duncan were appointed a committee to see ladies about collection baskets.

From the Minutes – February 1884

Election for the year 1884 was held at this meeting and the following were chosen: Elders – F.G. Gaylord, E.A. Waller, John Collins and E.C. Wells; Deacons – S.C. Woodson, G.F. Clemings, F.B. George, F. Krause, E.C. Cockrill and M.C. Park.

From the Minutes – May 1884

The May meeting was, with due cause it appears, devoted largely to finances. The treasurer reported only 99 cents in the treasury and debts of over \$120.

Fortunately, we are not left long to worry about financial troubles of the church in 1884. In the June minutes it is reported all debts were paid and the treasury had \$66.37.

From the Minutes – January 1888

A picture of the courtesy and formality of this early church board: "The motion as seconded and after mature deliberation was carried, with one dissenting vote, being put by Bro. F.G. Gaylord, who asked the dissenting voter, Bro. Marion Collins, if he would consider it an offense if vote as declared carried, stating it is not the province of Christians to trample on the minority. Bro. Collins declared himself not offended, and the motion was declared carried."

April 18, 1890

Although it does not hold today, the officers of the Christian Church published a card denouncing dancing and card playing. (*according to Gordon L. Miller*)

New Members

At the board meeting on May 2, 1954 a policy was approved to receive new members into the congregation. Members of other churches may unite with the church by presenting their letter or statement to the minister, and the minister announcing from the pulpit such transfer of membership and that the new members coming forward at the invitation be optional; with the understanding that any person who is not a member of any church shall come forward during the invitation and make their public confession of their belief in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and as personal Savior, and he shall be baptized by immersion as is the common practice among our Brotherhood.

Old Records Found

In March of 1997 Donna Nash, Platte County Collector, found a 1910 book from the church in the storage area of the court house. It was a minute book for the Y.P.S.C.E. and roll of membership. There are many familiar names in it and it goes through 1922. It is believed to be the Young Peoples Christian Endeavor group and likely at the court house because Lena Hymer Baker worked there for many years and for some reason it was left there. The book was returned to the church.

Rules, Rules, Rules

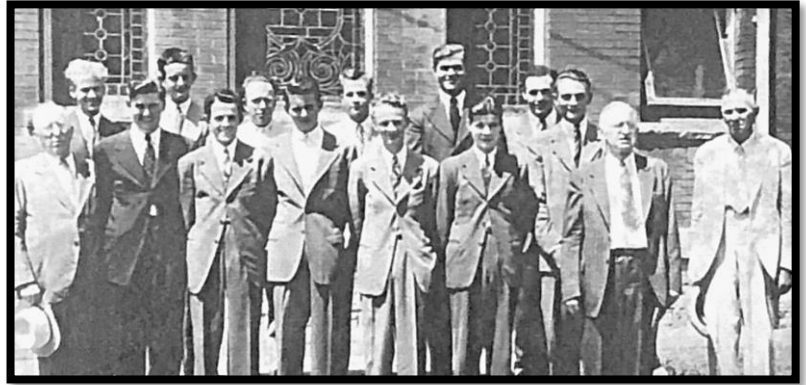
In 2005 the by-laws committee developed a set of governing rules for FCCPC. About this time FCCPC became incorporated. In 2009 a policy and procedure manual was completed.

Office Managers

Bunnie Foster has been the office manager since February 2013. Previously the part-time position was held by Ruth Wilson (2006 - 2013), Pam Mann (2003 - 2006) and Rachelle Brown (2001 - 2003).

Recent Board Chairs

1996	John Higgins
1997	Terry Michael
1998	Terry Michael
1999	Eva Amos
2000	Paul Whitters
2001	Gary Brown
2002	Gary Brown
2003	Gary Brown
2004	Janet Leachman
2005	Janet Leachman
2006	Jim Everett
2007	Hal Swaney
2008	Hal Swaney
2009	Hal Swaney
2010	Debbie Faudere
2011	Debbie Faudere
2012	Kevin Bryan
2013	Kevin Bryan
2014	Ken Brown
2015	Ken Brown
2016	Traci Bryan
2017	Traci Bryan
2018	Joe Vanover
2019	Joe Vanover
2020	Teresa Bryan
2021	Teresa Bryan passed away July 25, 2021, after which Craig Higgins served as acting Board Chair.
2022	Craig Higgins



Deacons: Largest Group Ever Installed 1942

Back Row L to R: Andrew Jackson Higgins, Robert C. Wren, Ed Cline, James Higgins, J.B. Rollins, Taliaferro Jenkins George. Front Row L to R: James H. Hull, Esq., Elder: Oliver F. Coffey, Norman Thomason, James E. Wren, Richard C. Woodson, Charles Bartlett, Ross Wellington DeMasters, Rev. Martin T. Pope, Dr. Spence Redman. Picture donated by Oliver F. Coffey.

Church Board

The church board shall consist of all elders, deacons, trustees, elders emeritus, deacons emeritus and a youth representative. The ministers shall serve as ex-officio members. The church board has the authority to act on behalf of the congregation as provided by the by-laws.

The ultimate authority of the church shall rest with the congregation. All organizations within the congregation shall be responsible to report regularly to the church board.

The church board shall consider and establish procedures and policies of the church, perform and carry out the responsibilities and duties as provided in the by-laws, and advance the mission of the church through church committees and as otherwise approved.

Regular church board meetings will be held on the second Sunday of each month.

Committees

In addition to the board, ministries within the church include: bereavement, Christian education, church use, executive, membership, memorial, nominating, property, pulpit, outreach, stewardship & finance, and worship.

New Addresses

In 2002 the church obtained its first email address. Early in 2019 Ken Brown offered to install a mailbox. The post office box used for so long was cancelled saving the monthly fee and the need to travel to and from the post office.

Currently the email address is: fccpc1@gmail.com / website: www.fccplatte.org

Street and mailing address: 708 3rd Street, Platte City, MO 64079

The First Christian Church of Platte City is part of the Greater Kansas City Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) which includes churches in both Kansas and Missouri.

Ministers of the Church

Pastors, Buggies and Cars

After equipping their pastor Rev. Louis S. Cupp with a horse and buggy and all necessary accompaniments, the Christian Church still had money left in the fund to buy him a tier of the Wernicke sectional book cases in the best quality golden oak.

The Landmark, May 6, 1903

Through the generosity of Mr. Wallace Farley and Mr. Harrel Ferrel, the church presented the minister, Lester M. Weeks, a 1950 Chevrolet for a Christmas present. The car, a black four door sedan, was delivered to Mr. and Mrs. Weeks on Sunday, January 8th. Mr. Farley and Mr. Ferrel called at the parsonage on Christmas Eve to inform Mr. and Mrs. Weeks of the gift, and to present them a Christmas card which read: "Through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Farley and Mr. and Mrs. Harrel Ferrel, your church is delighted to present, as your 1949 Christmas gift, a 1950 model Chevrolet, to be delivered sometime in January or February. This is in appreciation of your splendid work here. Sincerely, Your Church."

The Call to Worship

Over the years these two generous Christian families presented several cars to the minister.



Walter M. Mundell, Evangelist
The community was invited "to hear Evangelist Mundell" along with short sermons and special solos. Date unknown.

Evangelists

Traveling evangelists often filled pulpits in the early years of rural churches.

Christian Church,
Platte City, Mo.

**PERCY GEORGE CROSS
and Mrs. Cross**
EVANGELISTS
OF WINSTON-SALEM, N. C.

Subjects from November 8-14, 1920

Monday	-	-	-	-	"7 Signs of Jesus' Coming"
Tuesday	-	-	-	-	"7 Things Man Can't Do"
Wednesday	-	-	-	-	"7 Things God Can't Do"
Thursday	-	-	-	-	"God's 7 Appointments"
Friday	-	-	-	-	"The 7 Negatives of Christ"
Saturday	-	-	-	-	"The 7 Bible Triangles"
Lord's Day, 11:00 a. m.	-	-	-	-	"Life's Discoveries"
" "	-	-	-	-	3:00 p. m. - "The Third Degree"
" "	-	-	-	-	7:30 p. m. - "Full Salvation"

Gospel Singing and Preaching by us
 proven experience and national reputation
 offered you. NEWTON BUNDY

Reverend Lester Weeks, Forty-One Years as Pastor

"Forty years as minister to a single church...The members of the First Christian Church of Platte City think that calls for a celebration; and so, on Sunday, June 11th, Lester M. Weeks will be honored for his longtime service to the church and the entire Platte City community. He has been a vital force, serving in a quiet but effective manner, giving of himself whenever and wherever needed," Larry Leachman, board chair, commented. James W. Farley was master of ceremonies at the Sunday morning services titled *Forty Years in the Same Pulpit*; special music was provided by the chancel choir. That afternoon a large crowd attended a reception to honor Rev. Weeks, to visit and recall the past forty years.

The Landmark, June 9, 1989

Rev. Weeks announced his plans to retire and on September 2, 1990 preached his final sermon in the church; which was followed by refreshments and a time to thank him for his forty-one years of service to the church and community and to extend to him and his wife Mildred, good wishes for many years of enjoyment and good health.

Reverend Harold Van Cleave

Regional Minister Dr. David Downing had the service on September 9, 1990, and then on September 16th the first-ever interim minister, Rev. Harold Van Cleave commenced his ministry. He and his wife Christine transferred their membership to the congregation on that day. They became a viable part of the church. Christine sang in the choir and was active in CWF. They attended all the meetings and dinners, called on the sick and bereaved, and served the church in an admirable manner.

On August 25, 1991 a pot-luck dinner was held in the fellowship hall honoring Harold and Christine Van Cleave. There was a large group in attendance to wish the Van Cleave's goodbye and to thank them for their year at FCCPC.

Minister History 1991 - Present

Although the minister Reverend Tom Blakley preached his first sermon at FCCPC on September 1, 1991, the formal installation service was held on September 15th. Following the worship service, a reception was held in the chapel honoring the new minister, his wife Melissa and son Leslie. Rev. Blakely served until August 2002. At that point Rev. James Allen Nichols (wife Jean) became interim pastor until Wade Miller was hired.

Reverend Wade Miller began his ministry at the church in June 2003. He brought with him his wife Theta, daughter Clarissa, and later, son Quinn. The Miller family moved to Platte City and integrated not just into FCCPC, but into the schools and community as a whole. Theta, herself a minister of the Methodist tradition, later took on the role of youth minister. Rev. Miller served the congregation for 5 years and Theta for 3½ of those years. Reverend Dr. Robert Magee (wife Shirley) became interim pastor during the minister search process in 2008 and 2009.

J. Kerry Presnell began his ministry with FCCPC in September 2009. Reverend Presnell was installed on October 25th. He, along with his wife Emily and son Korey, served nearly 7 years until his retirement on June 12, 2016. On July 31st Rev. Dr. Robert Magee was welcomed back as interim minister. This time Rev. Dr. Magee (better known as Pastor Bob or Doctor Bob) was in the pulpit for 11 months.

Reverend Kevin R. Kelley began his ministry at FCCPC in 2017. His first Sunday was July 9th and on August 6th the search team hosted a potluck dinner reception. His wife Melodie and sons Adam and Josh joined FCCPC by transfer from Liberty Christian Church on August 13th, the day he was installed. Small group get togethers were arranged so the congregation and the Kelleys could get to know each other. Rev. Kelley, becoming Rev. Dr. Kevin Kelley, earned his doctorate of ministry from Eden Theological Seminary in May 2020.

From the Minutes – July 1889

Bro. Surber was the preacher and he was paid \$83.33 a month.

Ministers Who Have Served at FCCPC

Samuel Oliphant, Augustus H.F. Payne and Moses E. Lard were early day ministers of the Platte City Christian Church, however, the dates they presided are unknown. Others:

1873	T. P. Haley	1916	C. C. Davis
1873	J. A. Reavis	1920	Newton Bundy
1876	W. H. Williams	1922	Ben H. Harmon
1877	A. F. Smith	1926	W. A. Mundell
1878	B. Waller	1930	Edward L. Armstrong
1879	W. Matthews	1933	Holly M. Hale
1881	N. E. McKeever	1941	Edward Mitchell
1883	J. E. Dunn	1942	Martin T. Pope
1884	John H. Duncan	1949	Lester M. Weeks
1889	W. B. Surber	1990	Harold Van Cleave (Interim)
1891	C. A. Moore	1992	Thomas Blakely
1892	W. M. Featherstone	2002	James A. Nichols (Interim)
1896	J. M. Blalock	2003	Wade Miller
1897	E. B. Redd	2008	Robert Magee (Interim)
1903	Louis S. Cupp	2009	J. Kerry Presnell
1905	Harry E. Tucker	2016	Robert Magee (Interim)
1914	W. P. Walden	2017	Kevin R. Kelley

The First Expansion — A New Education Building

On September 8, 1953 work was started on a new education building. The building committee was: D.R. Clevenger, chair; W Gates Wells, A.J. Whitters, Mrs. Bess Murray, Andrew J. Higgins, Carl Porter, John Lewis, Wallace Farley, Blake Anderson and Harrel Ferrel. The campaign committee was: Carl Porter, chair; Ray Brightwell, George Harrington, Oliver Coffey, Jr., W. Gates Wells, Fred R. Rollins, Sylvester Leipard, Andrew J. Higgins, D.R. Clevenger and Joe Bill Nash. The special gifts committee was: Wallace J. Farley, Harrel Ferrel, J.W. Lewis, Jr., John W. Lewis, Gene Wright and Blake Anderson. The construction committee was Carl Porter and Blake Anderson. The cost of this building, which was constructed by Sprague-Powell Construction Co., was \$35,605. Funds were raised for all but \$8,500 and Wallace Farley and Harrel Ferrel took a church loan for that amount. *Isn't it ironic that Galusha Sprague had a part in building the first church in 1855 and 98 years later in 1953 the Education Building was built by a firm titled Sprague-Powell?*

Special Gifts

Fellowship hall, beginner & kindergarten rooms	Mr. & Mrs. Wallace Farley
Kitchen	Mrs. Bess N. Murray
Kitchen cabinets	Beverly Lumber Co.
Minister's study	D.R. Clevenger & W. Gates Wells
Primary room	Mr. & Mrs. Harrel Ferrel
Junior High room	Mr. & Mrs. John W. Lewis
Loyal Daughters room	Loyal Daughters

Furnishing Gifts

Hot water heater & garbage disposal	Mr. & Mrs. C.C. Woodson
Two tables	Christian Women's Fellowship
One kindergarten table	Builders class
One table & twenty-four chairs	Loyal Workers class
Twenty-four chairs	Loyal Daughters class
Two tables for fellowship hall	Mr. & Mrs. Joe Bill Nash
One hundred glasses	Nettie Weeks

This building contained class rooms and a minister's study upstairs and a kitchen and fellowship hall in the basement. The dedication was held on February 12, 1954. Andrew J. Higgins, Sunday school superintendent, and Lester M. Weeks, minister, were the speakers. Following the dedication, a fellowship dinner was served to 200.

The upstairs room, jokingly called the "upper room" or the "old kitchen" was remodeled and converted into a senior boys' class room in November 1956. Also in this year, a new air conditioning unit was installed replacing the old window units.

The original baptistry was located under the floor of the sanctuary and the altar had to be moved and the carpeting rolled back to fill the baptistry and to perform the baptismal service. The water was heated by a coal burning stove, which was later converted to gas. In January 1962 work was completed on the old Sunday school room adjacent to the sanctuary. A new fiberglass baptistry was installed with a larger heater to warm the water for the baptismal. Dressing rooms on each side of the baptistry were constructed. In addition, there was a complete remodeling of the room to include flooring, new light fixtures and new doors into the education building lobby. This room is now a small chapel and used for meetings, weddings and private devotion.





Church Building Miscellaneous 1940s - 1950s

Through the years the church has served its congregation and the community without much change. The old bell still hangs in the belfry.

In the summer of 1947 the interior of the sanctuary was remodeled by extending the pulpit platform across the entire front and new lights were installed, replacing the old fixtures. Many gifts have been received by the church; among them a piano and organ, gifts from Mrs. Bess Newby Murray presented in 1952; an ever-burning lamp in memory of Gary Nash; and carpeting and drapes donated by Mr. and Mrs. Harrel Ferrel. The art glass windows in the sanctuary and chapel were presented by families as memorials. The following is a listing of these window presentations: Mr. and Mrs. E.O. Waller, Mr. and Mrs. R.L. Waller, Marquerite Redman Ray, Eudora Herndon, King's Daughters, Mrs. Ella DeMasters, Dr. Spence Redman, Loyal Workers, Mr. and Mrs. A.P. Fulcher, George H. Pope, Guy Coleman, Loyal Daughters,

Mr. and Mrs. M.L. Newby, Wallace J. and Idabelle Farley and Lorene Cox.

List of Donors to Building Fund 1950's

Agee, F.M.	Hon, George	Rader, Virginia
Anderson, Blake	Hord, Miss L.	Rollins, Fred R.
Bailey, Ralph	Hull, Lee C. Jr.	Scholes, Bess
Baker, Dan	Hull, Louise	Scholes, Helen
Baker, J.R.	Hull, Wells	Scholes, Sara Lu
Baker, Jake	Hymmer, Mary	Sexton, J. Frank
Biscoe, William	Johnson, Mary A.	Sharpe, Howard
Brazelton, Howard	Johnston, Chas. M.	Skillman, Chris
Brightwell, Bill	Johnston, M.M.	Stamper, Dannie
Brightwell, Ray	Klein, Herman	Stapp, Mrs. John
Bryan, Wm.	Leipard, Herman	Swaney, Tom
Bullock, Grover	Leipard, Sylvester	Tate, Grundy
Calvert, Connie	Lewis, J.W. Jr.	Turner, Chester
Clevenger, D.R.	Lewis, John	Vest, Mrs. C.
Cockrill, Ruth	Lewis & Son	Wade James R.
Coffey, Oliver Jr.	Loyal Daughters	Weeks, Chris
Cox, Earl	Mann, John	Weeks, Nettie M.
Davis, Mrs. Doyle	McDonnell, Dwight	Weeks, Timothy
Deal, Beulah	Miller, Charles P.	Wells, W. Gates
DeMasters, Placeit	Miller, E.B.	Whitters, A.J.
Eskridge, Elsie	Miller, R.E.	Whitters, Mrs. John
Farley, James W.	Miller, W.G.	Wills, Algin
Farley, Wallace	Murray, Bess	Wills, Dorothy Fields
Ferrel, Harrel	Nash, Joe Bill	Wills, William
Goodin, Goldie	Naylor, Alva	Wilson, Charlotte
Hanley, Nellie	Parker, Cecil & Betty	Wingo, Mrs. T.H.
Harrington, George	Perry, Maggie	Woodson, C.C.
Higgins, A.J.	Porter, Annie	Wright, Evalina
Higgins, Frances	Porter, Carl	Wright, Gene
Hon, Garland	Porter, Opal	

Church Building 1980s – 1990s

September 11, 1983 was dedication day for the elevator which was presented as a memorial to Annie Laura Johnston by her children, Nancy Johnston Bird and Charles M. Johnston. Mrs. Johnston was born in Plattsburg and joined the church when she married Morton M. Johnston and moved to Platte County. She was known as a lovely Christian lady who was always dedicated to her church.

Open house was held on October 29, 1986 to celebrate the completion of the new rear entrance to the new parking lot, which had been much needed for quite some time. There is a beautiful art glass window over the door given in memory of Dannie Stamper by his family.

Four elders who served the church for many years were honored by an anonymous gift of four lovely pictures depicting the opening words of the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, from the ancient Irish Book of Kells. The pictures honored Elders Wallace J. Farley, John W. Lewis, Ray D. Brightwell and Fred R. Rollins.

Renovation

Extensive work was done in the sanctuary in 1994. The hardwood floors were refinished, beautiful lush green carpeting was laid and matching green velvet drapes were installed around the choir section. The birch pews, which were given by William C. Wells in 1892 in memory of his wife, Eliza J. Wells who died in 1890, as shown by the brass plates on the ends of the front pew, were refinished. The pews are absolutely gorgeous and the pew pads are color coordinated with the carpeting. Sue Farley had the elders' chairs reupholstered. The sanctuary continues to be a lovely, tranquil place to worship.

In 1996, the woodwork and stairway in the chapel were refinished and a handicap entry to the sanctuary was installed to enter from the chapel.

Parsonages

From the Women's Auxiliary minutes of January 1896, it was first discussed by Rev. Blalock of the need for a parsonage. At the January 1898 meeting, the group pledged \$400 to the building fund. Mrs. E.C. Redman, a member of the group, donated the building lot located on 2nd Street and Highway 92. In July 1898 the building was completed. This was the home of FCCPC ministers until 1961 when the old parsonage was sold to Mr. and Mrs. Spencer Buckler for \$10,000. A new parsonage was built at 55 Maple Dr. on a lot donated by Louise Wells Hull and W. Gates Wells. Thirty-one years later the church board and the congregation, having approved the sale of our parsonage, announced at the November 17, 1992 board meeting that the sale to Betty J. Elgin had been consummated.

Changes Around the Building and Property 2000 - 2015

A new roof was installed in February of 2002. Renovations to the church basement began that same year and included new green paint for the paneling, roomy storage closets, a new and very useful cabinet/counter area in the kitchen and a new corner coffee bar in the fellowship hall. Flooring in the kitchen was replaced about 10 years later. In 2004 a visioning team was formed as the congregation considered expanding the church building. The newly expanded building was dedicated with a ribbon cutting celebration in June of 2008. *(That large project is described in more detail on the next page.)* The sidewalks around the building were repaired in 2011. The youth had a great time redecorating the upstairs classroom in 2013. In 2014, a defibrillator was installed. In the summer of 2015 the corner of the building was hit by a car during a driver's test. Minimal damage was caused and the driver was said to be fine.

Extra Property Acquired

An opportunity came up to purchase two plots of ground adjacent to the church. The congregation voted to buy the property and the sale was complete on November 15, 2006. In 2007 Peggy Swaney's preschool/house and property was purchased which was adjacent to the empty lot to the south. For a while the youngest Sunday school students walked next door to meet there on Sunday mornings. Five years later the Swaney property was razed to grade level. In 2017 the house at 205 Ferrel was sold and the rental house on the other plot was torn down, leaving a grassy lot. This change made the church setting more beautiful than ever, and the semi-shaded grassy lot proved to be useful for worshipping outdoors during the COVID-19 outbreak *(see page 33 for additional information)*.

Growth — The Second Expansion

In 2004 the vision process began for a more comprehensive church expansion. Small vision groups met and a vision team, chaired by Paul Whitters, gathered ideas from these small groups. During this process a church mission statement was created and it was decided to form a building committee to address the possibility of expanding the facility. The building committee, chaired by Larry Leachman, helped define the specific needs that would be presented to an architectural consultant.



In 2006 it was decided to hire The Church Development Foundation to conduct a feasibility study before committing to the project. The study estimated the church could raise \$300,000 - \$400,000 over a 3-year period and recommended a capital campaign. Following a capital campaign involved almost everyone in some way. Commitment Sunday was held in November and on December 17th the board voted to proceed with phase 1 of the building plans.

Architect Gary Gaw was engaged the summer of 2006. Early in 2007 Golden Key, Inc. was elected to serve as general contractor. Duane Soper and Perry Brown of Golden Key began obtaining the required permits and preparing for construction. By May final architectural drawings were received and the ground-breaking was on July 1st.

In the fall of 2007 work began to expand the nursery, replace the glass front entrance, add a new rear entrance with a covered porch, add a mothers' nursing room and additional men's and women's bathrooms, move the elevator, build a kitchenette where the old elevator had been, move the main office, add a coffee bar to the foyer and install a new interior staircase to access the basement. (The new full-service elevator cost approximately \$43,000.) About a year later a Certificate of Occupancy was issued. The new building was dedicated and a ribbon cutting was held on June 8, 2008.

The loan for the project through Wells Bank was initially made with monthly payments scheduled through September, 2023. In May of 2008 the project had cost just over \$550,000. Members of the congregation paid off the last of the loan in February of 2011.

Now fourteen years later, one can still look at the beautiful new and redone spaces with gratitude for the people and resources that made it possible. The coffee bar continues to draw people and the tables that have since been added to the foyer encourage folks to linger. A list of donors to the project is available on a plaque in the foyer.

Changes Around the Building and Property 2016 - Present

The church landscape was enhanced over the course of about a year in 2017/2018 by Horticultural Impressions. First, lighting and new beds were installed on the front (3rd Street side) of the building and by the office entrance area of the parking lot. The following spring exterior lighting and landscaping were added to the front of the building and around much of the perimeter. Then in 2018 Ben Brown organized Boy Scout Troop 351 to provide the labor to landscape the area on the north part of the back (west side) of the building. That served as Ben's eagle project and offset part of the cost to the church.

In 2019 new padded chairs replaced the cold, hard folding ones in the chapel, choir and adult Sunday school rooms. After many attempts over the years, at present it appears the weatherproofing around the bell tower may be fixed for good. Related water damage in the sanctuary was repaired this summer.

Gatherings and Celebrations

From the Minutes – February 1884

Brother Waller presented a request from the ladies asking the use of the church for an entertainment, but objection was made on the ground the church would be abused.

May 12, 1884

The Christian Church of Buchanan, Clinton, Clay and Platte Counties met in convention at Platte City for a 3-day program.

From the Minutes – April 1890

The question of the day was, "What shall we do in regard to the evils of dancing and card playing, especially euchre playing, indulged by the members of the church and encouraged by some of the officers?"

The following resolution was adopted: "Resolved, that we as officers of the church, do more earnestly recommend and beseech the membership to abstain from these hurtful practices and all others as well and to discountenance them on every occasion."

There was a fun tea in 2016 where the ladies were entertained by Christian comedian and inspirational speaker, Kelly Sisney. A couple years ago there was a series of Table Talk Dinners for groups of six to eight. "Aloha Sunday" has recently become a summer tradition where the North Oak Christian Church's ukulele band STRUM, provides the music for the Sunday service. This year for the first time, the congregation combined the fun Hawaiian day with a potluck.

First Wedding

The first wedding held in the new church was that of Lou Tatman and Richard L. Waller on November 24, 1891. The bride was the lovely daughter of James Tatman and Elizabeth Story Tatman. The groom was the son of E. O. Waller. Scaffolding had to be removed for the wedding party to enter the church, as work had not been completed. *The Landmark*, July 12, 1898

Fun and Fellowship

Over the years there have been many opportunities for youth and adults to be involved in fun and fellowship. Summer vacation Bible school has taken on many different themes and formats. It has been led by the youth directors, parents and a host of volunteers who put in effort to see God's Word taught to the children in fun, engaging ways.

Females Creating Friendships and Men's Night are monthly gatherings where the women and men, respectively, gather for a meal and fellowship.

Fishing at Barney Fisher's pond and fall bonfires and hayrides, usually at Gary and Cathy Brown's farm, bring together members of all ages. Larry and Janet Leachman hosted a summer pool party/potluck at their home for many years. Later the activity evolved into a late summer/back-to-school youth event at James and Missy Wedel's.



Potlucks

Potlucks have been a longstanding tradition of fellowship for the congregation, and this history can hardly be complete without some mention of the topic. It can be said with certainty that FCCPC is home to some great and generous cooks! At one point potlucks were scheduled on the third Wednesday of each month. Then they moved to right after church on the first Sunday of the month. If Bill Wills were present, you could almost count on enjoying some of his homemade ice cream. Not much can compare to sitting in the sanctuary on a Sunday with the aroma of delicious food coming from the kitchen downstairs and knowing all have a place at the table.

Sometimes there is a theme. For instance, the January dinner has become an annual chili cook off. An ice cream social, picnic, barbecue or pool party frequently fills the role in the summer and may be in conjunction with vacation Bible school; and in the fall, a potluck may take the form of a hayride or bonfire and hotdog roast.

Nash Anniversary

In 2010 Joe Bill and Lila Belle Nash celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary with a reception in the fellowship hall. Although Joe Bill passed away the following year, Lila Belle, at 102, is the church's oldest surviving member.

Whitters Honored

On August 15, 1999 the church had a reception for A.J. and Mary Whitters who left to make their home in Sun Prairie, Wisconsin to be near their only daughter Ann. The Whitters were long-time members of the church; Mary having joined in 1927 and A.J. in 1930. They were deacons for many years and were very active in all of the church activities. Board Chair Eva Amos presented the Whitters with a lovely clock, a wonderful scrapbook and picture album, and a crystal pitcher from the CWF. Lovely refreshments were served to a large crowd of the Whitters' friends.

Cockrill Anniversary

Jack and Susie Cockrill were honored on their 57th wedding anniversary on September 16, 1999. All of their children and grandchildren accompanied them to church and it was a complete surprise to Susie when her family showed up at their home ready for church. The Cockrills were long-time members of the congregation.

Parishioners of Several Platte City Churches (ca 1925)



Special Days of Worship

Lent and Easter

Whether it be extra worship opportunities, Wednesday suppers, or a group study, something special is typically planned for the Lenten season. Frequently there is a worship service on Ash Wednesday. Maundy Thursday brings the congregation together again for a potluck meal with Communion and/or a short service. One year the day was commemorated with a living last supper reenactment.

Members are invited to purchase lilies in honor of or remembrance of loved ones. The lilies then adorn the church on Palm Sunday and Easter and look and smell wonderful. Most often there is an Easter egg hunt in the days leading up to Easter. For many years Bill and Jo Karen Brown hosted the fun event. Other times it has been held at the church. As in 1956 Easter Sunday is still celebrated with a sunrise service and a breakfast (now hosted by the mixed adult Sunday school class) followed by a traditional worship service.

Easter 1954

The first Easter sunrise service was held in 1954, followed by breakfast. This has become an enjoyable annual event in the church. *The Bell*, the newsletter of the time, dated April 4, 1954 reports there were 241 at Sunday school, 326 at the 11:00 a.m. service and that breakfast was served to 108. It reads:

“Easter 1954 will go down in the history of our church as a beautiful and inspiring tribute to the resurrection of our Lord. About 125 attended the sunrise service with 108 served breakfast at 7:00 a.m. The sunrise service was an inspiration to all who attended. The Communion service, the singing of the girls’ sextet and the organ and piano duet by Axie Anderson and Marie Johnson made this service one which will be long remembered.

A capacity crowd was present at the 11:00 a.m. service. The sanctuary, which will seat 212, was completely full; 16 sang in the choir and 96 were counted in the Sunday school room – a total of 326. Eleven persons came into the fellowship of the church at this service. They were Francis Boydston, Mrs. Francis Boydston, Patricia Boydston, Carol Boydston, Mrs. Will Tinder, Ralph Kindred, Jackie Swaney, Ann Miller, Patty Agee, Gary Porter and Mike Murphrey. A baptismal service was held the following Sunday afternoon for those who came into our fellowship by their confession of faith.

Breakfast was served to 108 and the offering amounted to \$35. Mrs. Walter Schmollinger donated eggs; Truman Glenn donated orange juice and sold the other materials to the church at cost; Mrs. Cleo Woodson furnished ingredients and she and Helen Scholes fried delicious donuts. The kitchen crew who prepared the meal included Arvid & June Edwards, Jack Coffey, Bob Cockrill and John Lewis. Those who took charge of clean-up and dishwashing were Peggy Miller, Mary Wade, Malone Klein, Blake Anderson, Bea Agee, Billie Tatman and the cooking crew.”



Living Last Supper, Easter 2008

L to R: Catie Coehn, Jason Brown, Mike Hanneman, Madison Harpst, Elizabeth Cockrill, Emily Cockrill, Jacob Olsen, Troy Moore, Ray Clements, Courtney Keating, Pat Cockrill, Larry Struckman and Mary Keating.

Palm Sunday 1996

On March 31st a wonderful Easter cantata was held in the church. More than 100 musicians participated in this event which was directed by Darrell Wilson, accompanied by Kathie Krug and narrated by Kevin Johnson. There were approximately 400 in attendance that evening, with standing room only. The CWF served dinner for the group prior to this performance and dessert was served to everyone after the performance.



In 1987 for the first time in thirty-seven years, the annual Christmas Eve services of Carols and Communion was not held at the church. A little after 5:00 p.m. a fire started on the west end of Main Street and by 6:00 p.m. black smoke and a mist of water were blowing over the parking lot; cars and trucks were parked everywhere; hoses were running down the streets and the downtown area was blocked off. Several remarked it didn't seem like Christmas without the service.

Christmas Season

Christmas and the weeks leading up to it are full of tradition. Most years the children put on a pageant for the holiday. The pageant usually requires rehearsals, simple costumes, and always a very patient adult director. The congregation is the appreciative audience and the children are usually treated afterwards to a Christmas party.

Christmas is also a busy time of outreach. For Operation Christmas Child, shoe boxes are filled with useful items and toys and Samaritan's Purse sends them all over the world to needy children. A small tree placed in the chapel becomes a mitten tree and members adorn it with hats, gloves, mittens and scarves which are then donated to charity. Some years the youth have made gifts to deliver to members who are unable to attend church.

Adopt a Family has been a ministry the church has taken part in since about 2002. A family in need is identified through the Outreach Committee and, often in conjunction with the youth, Christmas gifts are purchased, wrapped and delivered to that family. The Men's class makes an annual financial donation to the Platte County United Services. Bags and boxes of groceries are purchased and delivered to Day of Hope, which are then given to families on a certain day during the holidays.



Special Sundays

The church continues the annual traditions of Installation Sunday (of church officers), Graduate Sunday and Memorial Sunday. Memorial Sunday occurs on Memorial Day weekend and honors members who have passed away over the year. Baby dedications and baptisms are joyous occasions celebrated throughout the year.

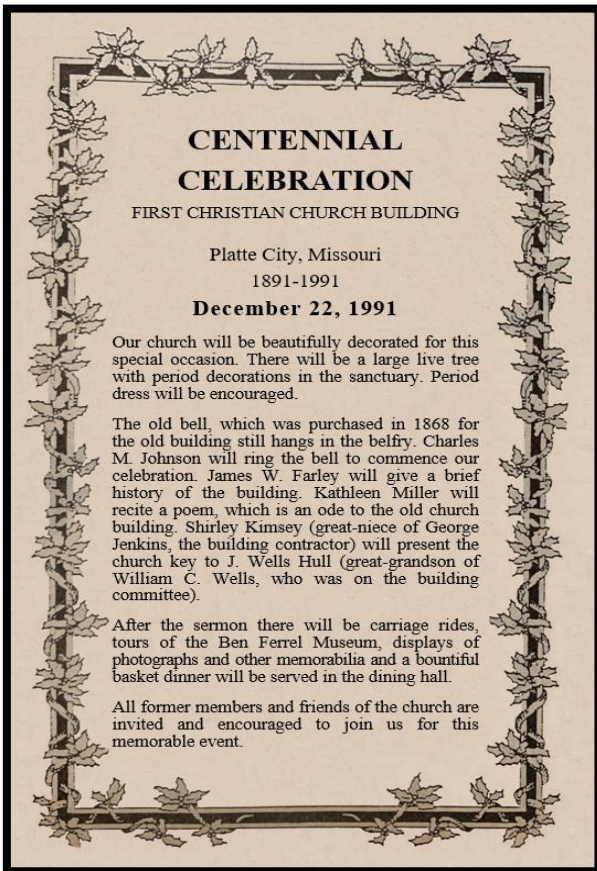
Advent

Advent candles are lit each Sunday of Advent. Poinsettias are purchased in honor of or memory of someone and are used to decorate the sanctuary. In addition to the candle arrangement and poinsettias, Janet and Larry Leachman see that a beautiful Christmas tree and other decorations go up the weekend after Thanksgiving. In 1996 and 1998, and in other years as well, the church hosted a community Advent service in conjunction with the lighting ceremony at the courthouse.

Centennial Celebrations

April 14, 1991 was a centennial celebration of the present church building. It was a most enjoyable and inspiring service. The Raytown Christian Church Bell Ringers, consisting of thirteen members, presented an unforgettable performance, and when the chancel choir joined them for an anthem it was truly a lovely number. There were 172 in attendance for the service which was followed by a delicious pot-luck dinner in the fellowship hall.

1891 to 1991 – Another Celebration for the Building



December 22, 1991. What a glorious celebration!

The weather cooperated; it was 46 degrees F. and cloudy at 11:00 a.m. The church was beautiful with the magnificent tree, lovely with Victorian lace ornaments, strings of cranberries, satin bows and 500 tiny white lights and a lace angel topping it off. The altar was filled with white, pink and red poinsettias. Garlands of evergreen with white satin bows decorated the choir pews. Burgundy satin bows with antique lace adorned the pews.

Greeters were Helen Porter, June Harrington, Dora B. McDonnell and Dorothy Miller; George Ann Coffey was at the guest book. These ladies as well as numerous members of the congregation and the minister, were attired in period dress.

The old bell purchased in 1868 was rung by Charles M. Johnston. James W. Farley gave a history of the building and quoted Paxton's Annals which stated 100 years ago this day it was 8 degrees F. with 6 inches of snow on the ground. The building was completed in December 1891; however, it was not furnished until 1892. Mr. Farley noted this seemed a remarkable feat inasmuch as the cornerstone was laid only four months previously—on August 27, 1891; this in light of his personal

experience with having a new home built recently and noting the time involved in its construction.

Mr. Farley introduced Shirley Kimsey, great-niece of George W. Jenkins, the contractor who built the church. Mrs. Kimsey gave a summary of Mr. Jenkins' work and listed other buildings he built in Platte City. She then presented a key to the church building to J. Wells Hull. Mr. Hull remarked the building had served the congregation and the community well and it surely must have been well constructed to be 100 years old and in such a good, sound condition. Of note, J. Wells Hull was the father of current member, Beth Hull-Smith and the great-grandson of William C. Wells of the original building committee.

Kathleen Miller recited "An Ode to the Old Church." The poem was read at the dedication ceremony 100 years ago. The Mike and Jan Miller family and Peggy Miller were the worship leaders and lit the fourth Advent candle, which represents JOY.

Christmas carols were the hymns of the day, led by the choir under the direction of Peggy Harmon. The minister's sermon was entitled "Rejoicing and Rehearsing." The Walt Rogers family responded to the invitation and transferred their membership to the church at the close of the service.

Following the service, which was attended by more than 200 people, old pictures and other memorabilia furnished by members of the congregation were on display in the chapel.



Church Celebration 1991

Top inset: Shirley Kimsey, great-niece of George W. Jenkins, the contractor 1891, presenting a key to the church building to J. Wells Hull, great-grandson of William C. Wells, member of original building committee. Photo Platte County Citizen.

The Ben Ferrel Museum located across the street was open for tours. It was beautifully decorated for the holidays with trees adorned by civic organizations. It seemed appropriate to include the museum as part of the celebration as it was the home of the Fred Krause family, whose members were active in the church and would have extended their warm welcome to the present

members and friends.

Outside the church a horse and carriage were waiting to take everyone for a ride. Other horse-drawn sleighs and carriages were on display to remind everyone what transportation was like 100 years ago.

A basket dinner was served in the fellowship hall. The tables were decorated as they would have been a century ago, with a red candle in the center and evergreen, fresh fruit, cranberries, popcorn and bittersweet. The tables were laden with a plentiful meal and the church passed another milestone in its history.



150th Anniversary Tent Meeting 1997

“Preacher Man” Rev. Tom Blakely holding service in a tent as the church celebrates another anniversary. Photo Platte County Citizen.

150th Anniversary

The 150th anniversary as a congregation was celebrated on October 4th and 5th, 1997.

On Saturday evening there was a hayride and wiener roast at the farm house of Diana Cockrill’s brother, which was a fun evening.

Sunday morning, October 5th, the service was held in a big tent which had been set up on the lot south of the church. The minister Tom Blakely was dressed in an old-time reverend’s outfit. Some of the

congregation were dressed in styles of the 1800s. The music was reminiscent of the olden days. Following the service a bountiful basket dinner was served in the church fellowship hall.

Memorials and Dedications

Much of what has been done around the church has been provided for by memorial funds. Plaques hang in the foyer which list specific items and, in many cases, in whose name they were given.

Men of the Church

Men's Bible Class

In reading the minute books from the 1920s the following was observed:

The name of the class in 1926 was Pilgrim's Bible class. They had a regular business meeting prior to the lesson each Sunday; the average attendance was seven members present and the collection would average 35 cents. Some names on the roll call were: Collins, Cockrill, Coots, Ferrel, Higgins, Hull, Hymer, McCalley, McComas, Redman, Ross and Stuckey.



Men's Sunday School Class (ca 1912)

First Row L to R: Charles T. Hoy, Ray Ferrel, Harold Miller, Robert Lewis, Charles Clark, Joe Wills, Lawrence Miller, Scott Hancock,, Gates Wells, Oscar Sexton. Second Row: L to R: Placeit DeMasters, Ernest Payne, Dick Miller, Frank Lanter, Park Sweiger, Wyatt Brightwell, George Offutt, William Offutt, Flem Baker, Robert Boydston, Jack Werline. Third Row L to R: George Duncan, Elbert Elgin, Max Cowherd, Bill Wells. Fourth Row L to R: Chris Skillman, Miss Bess Newby (teacher), John Skillman, Bill Skillman.

One Sunday they took up a collection of \$25 to be sent to the Women's Benevolent Association in St. Louis. Considering the usual collection, that was quite a large contribution.

David B. Higgins was the class teacher and apparently died quite suddenly on May 16, 1926. His notes for that day's lesson were attached to the minutes of the meeting that Sunday. There was a beautiful resolution in his memory made as part of the minutes with a copy to go to his family.

Notes of Early Members

James W. Christy's daughter married Fred Krause, an early member of the church and builder of the home which is now the Ben Ferrell Museum.

Prof. F.G. Gaylord was the stepfather of Guy B. Park who was the Governor of the State of Missouri.

Over the years FCCPC has been privileged to have many Christian families join the church who are community leaders and have supported the church and have been the pillars of the congregation.

From time to time the ladies Loyal Workers class, taught by Mrs. Coats Cockrill, would join the men for the Sunday lesson. In the minutes from 1927 it was voted to entertain the ladies of the church and committees were appointed. It did not state how they were to entertain them. The next meeting a thank you letter from the ladies was read and it was reported there were not sufficient funds to cover the cost of the entertainment. The next meeting a committee was appointed to make collections for this project.

There were discussions held from time to time about the lack of attendance and it was finally decided to merge three classes of men together into one class. The following is from the April 1929 minutes:

"The Christian Church, Platte City, MO, April 26, 1929 at 7:00 p.m., 67 met as per invitation sent out by the committee, to complete the organization of the Everyman's Bible class of the Platte City Christian Sunday school. The splendid women of the Loyal Workers Bible class had prepared an elaborate banquet for the occasion and when we were all gathered about the tables the blessing was asked by Bro.

Mundell. Mr. Max Jones was chair for the evening. Interspersed between courses of the repast, Miss Louise Coots, assisted by Mr. C.A. Turner and Miss Jennie Dillingham, gave a short musical program which was very much appreciated. At the close of the banquet, Mr. Jones called on Judge Guy B. Park to make the address of the evening, which was very appropriate and well received, being enjoyed by everyone.

This was followed by short talks by J.L. Collins, Dr. Spence Redman, John J. Stuckey and Brother Mundell. During these talks stress was put upon the great work the class was expected to accomplish in the future, and the goal for charter membership as placed at 100 or more, and everyone present was asked to start the good work by signing the enrollment card to be found at each plate, which they certainly did without a single exception, and in the finest spirit.

The chair then announced we would next take up the matter of election of a full set of officers for the Everyman's Bible class. The nominations and election resulted as follows: president – Mr. Jay B Wilson; vice president – Mr. John J. Stuckey; secretary – Mr. Woodson Cockrill; treasurer – Mr. Dalph A. Deal. This completed the exercise and work program of the evening, and at the request of the chair, Prof. Cowherd pronounced the benediction."

By mid-1930 attendance again dropped back, averaging 11 members and collections average \$1.03 per week. An amusing item in the minutes of October 4, 1931: "Discussion was held about the continued absence of the teacher, Mr. James H. Hull, which caused some alarm. Finally it was decided he might be attending the World Series games being held in St. Louis and Philadelphia."



Men's Sunday School Class (ca 1950s-1960s)

Seated L to R: Abe Hulett, Dick Foster, Jim Higgins, Bill Cox, George Harrington, Holt Coffey, Sylvester Leipard, Gates Wells, Joe Bill Nash. Standing L to R: Carl Stamps, George Ray, Paul Whitters, Richard Hazelton, Clinton Woodson, Fred Rollins, Will Tinder, Rev. Lest Weeks, Jim Wren, Ray Brightwell, Merle Bartlett, Howard Sharp, Dan Baker, Tom Akers, Danner Stamper.



Men's Sunday School 2022

Sitting: L to R: Larry Leachman, Gary Brown, Ray Clements (teacher). Standing L to R: Tom Taylor, Doug Babcock, John Higgins, Hal Swaney, Craig Higgins, Jim Everett, Bill Brown.

Men's Fellowship Dinners

Men gather the first Wednesday of each month (September through April) at 6:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall sharing good food hosted by men of the church, amidst encouraging fellowship and deepening friendships.

Men's Class Today

The Men's Sunday school class has a multi-generational roster of devoted attendees. Rev. Weeks led the class until his retirement in 1990, at which time interim pastor, Rev. Van Cleave filled in. Rev. Blakely took on the role when he was hired in 1991, followed by Jim Everett and then Larry Harmon. Ray Clements stepped up when Larry passed away in 2007 and continues to lead the class today.

In addition to the weekly Sunday school collection, the class hosts a monthly fundraiser dinner open to all men of the community.

Annual donations are made to various local groups including the Treasure Chest, United Services, and FCCPC youth. Upon reviewing board meeting minutes to prepare this history, it is apparent the men's class has a dedicated history of supporting ministries within and outside of the church.

Men's Fellowship Dinner 2018

Below: Back row L to R: Craig Higgins, Gary Brown, Perry Brown. Middle row L to R: Dale Fuhrman, John Green, Hal Swaney, Jim Everett, Lynn Babcock. Front row L to Right: Bill Wills, Larry Leachman, Kevin Kelley, Joe Vanover.



Women and the Church

Tragedy in the Church

The Landmark, November 30, 1899

At half past nine o'clock, Thursday night, the startling news passed around our city the Mrs. E.B. Redd had fallen down the steps leading into the basement of the Christian Church and was killed. Hurrying to the scene the excited people found that it was indeed too true. The ladies of the Christian Church had given a Thanksgiving Supper. Nearly all had gone with the exception of Mrs. E.B. Redd, Mrs. A. Beaumont, Mrs. Mortimer C. Park, Mrs. E.O. Waller, Rev. Redd and Charity Baity, janitor, who had stayed behind to place the reception room in order.

The Christian Church at this place has an addition south of the main chapel. On the west side of the Sunday school room are three doors. One of these leads into the chapel, one into the basement below and one into the cloak room. The ladies mentioned above and Elder Redd were in the dining room, getting ready to go. Mrs. Redd went downstairs to get her wraps. Not returning, Elder Redd started to go when Charity Baity, the janitor, exclaimed: "There is a woman down there." Elder Redd ran to the door and found his wife lying on the floor of the basement. He carried her to the first story and soon found that she was lifeless. Mrs. Redd had gone hurriedly after her wraps and mistaking the door, stepped forward and was thrown to the basement beneath. Her head struck the stone wall as she fell, cutting a deep wound to the back of her head.

Elder Redd had been the pastor at this place for two years and had just accepted a call to Jeffersonville, Indiana. His wife was a most excellent Christian woman and was dearly loved by everyone. She leaves beside her husband, four little boys who will miss a mother's loving care. This is one of the greatest shocks that has ever befallen our little town. Elder Redd has the most heartfelt sympathy of all our people in the great sorry that has overtaken him and his little family.

The remains of Mrs. Redd were taken Friday evening to Danbury, Conn., the home of her father and mother. They were escorted to the Burlington Station at Beverly by the officers of the Christian Church, a guard of honor from the Order of Eastern Star and Belt Commandery of Platte City.

Note: It appears that Rev. Redd did not take the pastorate in Indiana, but remained in Platte City until 1902. His maiden sister Miss Kate Redd, came to assist him with the children and then in 1901 it appears he remarried.

Christian Women's Missionary Aid Society (The First Women's Auxiliary)

Minute books from 1895 to 1903 are amusing to read. The Society was formed in 1895 and adopted by-laws which called for twenty-five cent initiation fee and dues of ten cents per month. They met on Saturday at 2:00 p.m. either at the church or in one of the ladies' homes. There was a fine of ten cents for absences without reasonable excuse or for failing to perform duties. They had to pay one cent per month per member to the National Board of Missions.

The Annals of Platte County by William Paxton lists these ladies as charter members: "Mesdames Tom Park, Myra Coleman, Myra Meads, Leaney Recht, Issie Flannery, E.O. Waller, Maggie Woodson,Murdock, Helen Coffey, Nannie Krause,Quinn, Cynthia Cockrill, William C. Wells,Ellefrit, Nannie Irvine, Kate Clemings, Alice Jenkins, Asa Smith,Jermayne, Nannie Chiles andKurtz."

There was a very active benevolent committee which reported each month as to the needs of congregation members or others in the community that needed assistance. Grandma Hartman, who is mentioned all through the church's early days, was well cared for by this group. In the minutes there were expenditures for milk, butter, laundry, ice and at one time they were paying \$1.00 per month for an attendant to care for her. For a time, the members took their turn staying with and caring for her.

In these times it was not unusual for children to die at a young age and in the minutes of this group there were many notations of paying condolences to a member who had lost a child.

From the Minutes –
February 1884

Bros. Wells and Duncan reported the ladies (C.W.B.M.) had been seen about collection baskets and Sister Clemings, on behalf of the Society, had kindly donated the baskets.

Female Deacons

Church board meeting, April 13, 1986:
It was voted by the board that deaconess would commence serving communion during the month of May, with two serving each Sunday.

To pay for all these good works there were many fund raisers. Each year there was a Thanksgiving dinner from which they would net from \$70 to \$100. (*That is a lot of dinners at 35 cents each.*) During the summer they held ice cream and strawberry socials on the courthouse lawn. There were numerous reports of dinners served to other organizations such as Knights Templar for a profit of \$57.43 or the Gaylord Institute Alumni which netted \$65. This group tacked comforters for several years and each year it was reported how many dozen had been tacked. Income from that project ran around \$300 per year.



Christian Women’s Board of Missions (C.W.B.M.) 1917

A picnic was held at the John Brainard Smith dairy farm on Highway 92 west of Tracy, MO. Rev. C.C. Davis (sitting in front). Mr. Meade in center of group. Ladies identified are Mary and Louise Coots, Sallie Collins and Mary Lee Miller. *Photo donated by Ms. Laverne Anderson.*

At the January meeting in 1896, the president suggested they do something to add to the treasury; and they did. They started having special socials, two or three per month, in members’ homes at which there were special collections. They had musical presentations with artists from Kansas City and Leavenworth performing.

From time to time this group was asked to assist in paying the pastor’s salary and they would contribute \$15, \$25 or \$50. They paid the pastor’s cost to the National Convention and also bought new carpeting and song books for the church.

Woman Minister Ordained

The Landmark, April 9, 1931

Easter a Big Day at Christian Church

Easter Sunday may well be classified as one of the crowning days in the history of Platte City Christian Church. A beautiful day, with a Sunday School attendance of 104, and collections of \$123.68 for the Orphans’ Home. The close of a lively contest between boys and girls, boys winning. That’s stepping up some for the boys. This followed by a fine Easter program, with a large attendance at the morning service to hear Rev. Armstrong’s able sermon on “Proof of the Resurrection.” The evening services were featured with two beautiful and impressive songs rendered by a choir picked from the best singers of the three churches was much enjoyed and was an achievement to be proud of. At this service Platte City Christian Church had the honor of ordaining their first woman minister to preach the gospel. This favor is highly prized as the candidate, Mrs. Ed Armstrong, through her achievements in helping her husband in the great work done here the past year, has won her way into the hearts of all in the community. Her ability and past work assure us she will accomplish much good, and we are proud to claim this honor. Fitting remarks were made by Elder J.H. Hull on ordination, and very beautiful thoughts expressed by Mrs. Armstrong regarding the call to the ministry preceding this service. This was the first service of ordination to the ministry many here had witnessed and they were impressed with the beauty and sacredness of the service. This day will long be remembered as a high mark in the history of the Platte City Christian Church.

From the Minutes – April 1884

Bro. Waller asked for the use of the house for a Mrs. Fixen to deliver a temperance lecture May 17th. No objection was made and the request was granted.

Female Elders

A historical event took place on January 20, 1991. During the morning service a woman elder served at the table for the first time in the church. Another thing unique about it was that she and her husband were both presiding at the communion table together as elders. They were Lucinda and Mark Juett. Over the past twenty years the Christian churches have been making women elders and deacons with all the honor and responsibilities of the office.



Christian Women's Fellowship

All women of the church are considered members of Christian Women's Fellowship (CWF) and there are no dues or membership fees. The purpose of the organization is to develop women in Christian living and Christian service, to develop a deeper understanding of Christ's love and salvation and to provide channels of service to the church, the community and the world. Meetings for years were held in the fellowship hall on the third, and later the fourth Thursday of each month, with the exception of June, July and August. The gatherings included a business meeting, a devotional, a service project report and a short program, followed by refreshments and fellowship. The outstanding meeting was the annual "Pot of Gold" day which was held in November. The first "Pot of Gold" day was held in 1938. In the 1953 church history it was reported that \$119.90 was collected. In 1990 the contributions amounted to \$640. Proceeds from this event went to the National CWF Special Projects as well as to special projects closer to home, i.e., the Together Center, Woodhaven Home and Tall Oaks. Projects over the years were special dinners served and making quilts. Quilts were sent to the St. Louis Children's Home (who sold them during their annual bazaar for at least \$100 each). In 1960 three quilts were sent to the home. The 1991 project was making quilts for babies born with AIDS or born to drug-addicted mothers.

The CWF group worked on many other service projects, including collecting Campbell Soup labels to help get free school equipment for Woodhaven Learning Center, donating sewing kits to Church World Service, making lap robes for nursing homes, donating to Lenoir Home and other Christian homes, and to the Together Center, donating items to United Services, plus helping on various FCCPC projects. Members visited another church in the area once each year and entertained another church at one of the monthly meetings. Other fun things included ladies' tea parties (2009 and 2010) complete with fancy hats. In 1994 a new CWF was formed for working women and mothers of small children. This group had their meetings in the evenings, thus giving some of the younger women an opportunity to be a part of this organization. CWF was active at FCCPC until about 2010, after which membership dwindled and meetings ceased.

Taking Church to the Nursing Home

Each Monday morning for nearly 30 years (around 1980-2012) Sarah Jane Higgins, Shirley Winter of the local Baptist church, and for a while Charlotte Wilson, took church to area nursing homes. Shirley played the organ, piano, or keyboard, depending on what was available. Sarah Jane offered a devotion and communion, and Charlotte helped. For the first 15 or so years they went to both Hillview and Heritage Village, after that, just to Hillview. Furthermore, from about 1983-1993 members of the congregation would deliver church services and communion to Hillview residents.



Females Creating Friendships

"Females Creating Friendships" formed in 2006 for the purpose of women getting to know each other better in a relaxed atmosphere. Women of all ages are included in the fun.

Member Quilt

This quilt (*left*) was created in 1976 and adorns the hall near the minister's office. Each square was contributed by an individual or family from the congregation.



Children and Youth Ministries



Children's Sunday School Class (ca 1905-1914)

Front Row L to R: Vincent Stapp, Marjorie Tucker (*minister's daughter*), Elbert Ross, Elbert Settle. Second Row L to R: Chesnut Dillingham, Vivian McMonigle, Stella May Ham, Ester Mason. Back Row L to R: Mary Lee Miller (*teacher*), Sara Frances Doyle.

Education Fund

In June 1958 an Education Foundation, to be known as the Farley Education Fund, was established for the First Christian Church, Platte City by Wallace J. Farley, an elder and trustee of the church, in memory of his father, the late J.W. Farley who gained his education under adverse conditions. The fund was established for the purpose of helping boys and girls complete their education beyond high school and was available for those for whom college or technical training would not be possible because of financial reasons. This trust fund is no longer in existence.



Vacation Bible School 2010

task of coordinating Sunday school, VBS, Easter egg hunts and other activities for the young members. Easing some of the responsibilities, in February of 2005, Reverend Theta Miller, wife of Rev. Wade Miller, was hired to be the youth minister. With Theta's leadership the youth became immersed in faith-based projects including mission trips and fundraisers to support them. Theta served for three and a half years before she was hired as head pastor at a Methodist church in her home state of North Dakota. At that point a youth advisory committee and a youth minister committee, chaired by Christy Vickers, were created to guide the search for a youth pastor and to help keep the youth program viable during the search.

Youth Fellowship 1962

From time to time youth groups have been organized. *The Bell* dated December 5, 1962 reads: "A Christian Youth Fellowship for high school young people has been organized and last Sunday evening 24 were in attendance. The group meets from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. each Sunday evening. Last Sunday Sharon Palmer was in charge of the singing, Bess Scholes gave the devotional, Ann Miller, Linda Tatman and Cindy Cockrill were in charge of recreation. We are studying our obligations to our church, our home, our school in the light of Christian teachings. Judge A.J. Higgins will meet with the group next Sunday evening for a discussion of 'Our Obligation to the Law.' Membership is open to any high school student. The following attended last Sunday evening: Claudia Allen, Christine Sell, Sharon Palmer, Linda Tatman, Bess Scholes, Tim Weeks, Jill Edwards, Trudy Glenn, Stan Lockhart, Hal Swaney, R.B. Miller, Janice Lockhart, Don Pine, Larry Lewis, Dan Kalousek, Linda Walker, Dorothy Jones, Peggy Wright, Ann Miller, Sharon Patterson, Cal Hupp, Doyle Davis and Cindy Cockrill."

Children's Church

In 2004 the church had so many children in church that a second nursery attendant was hired. Children's church was started for kids too old for the nursery.

Youth Ministers and Directors

Active members and busy parents Diana Cockrill, then Karen Higgins, then Gary and Cathy Brown, and now Susie Heiss have chaired the education committee since this history was initially written in 1997.

This committee shoulders the important

Abby Cockrill, daughter of Pat and Diana Cockrill, was hired as youth director on August 1, 2010. Abby grew up in the church, helped in the nursery, participated in youth group, sang in the choir and was a popular babysitter with the kids. She had recently graduated from Northwest Missouri State University with a degree in education and all the children were delighted to have her fill this important role. She held the position for just three weeks before her untimely passing in a car accident, stunning the youth and the whole congregation. In the short time she served, she impacted the children and youth of FCCPC by reaching out to welcome them as they were beginning a new school year. Abby's death was a sad and significant event in church history and in the wider community.

Eventually a young man, Dylan Riddle, was hired to fill the position. He stayed for about a year, sharing his strengths and getting the kids involved doing some landscape/cleanup work around the church. Through the changes, the education committee has served as a primary support for the children and youth and has endeavored to keep the kids of all ages and their families engaged.

Lori Wilson

A reception was held to greet Lori Wilson, the latest director of children's and youth ministries, and her family (husband Stephen and son Noah) on Sunday, November 25, 2012.

Lori stayed for more than five years and won the hearts of all ages. She planned and oversaw activities for the kids including weekly meetings, special Lent activities, day camp, a retreat, a redesign of their space, a Christian concert and a float ride on the Platte River. She welcomed all kids and their friends, led VBS and she promoted interaction

between the generations. The youth gladly included her three boys (Noah, Nathaniel and Andrew) when she had them with her and held a surprise baby shower when she had her second child. Her ministry at FCCPC concluded with a reception on February 4, 2018. Until their move to Alabama, Lori would bring her family back to church occasionally, and tries to keep up with the youth, some of which are now young adults.



Lori Wilson with Youth 2018

Front Row L to R: Kenadi Brown, Jude Brown, Olivia Dixon, Ashley Goodwin, Second Row L to R: Alaina Scroggins, Lindsay Goodwin, Elizabeth Brown, Lori Wilson (director), Nash Brown (hidden), Blaine Keuhn. Back Row L to R: Jakob Scroggins, Lindsay Vanover, Cameron Brown, Ben Brown.



Youth Missions Trip Denver CO 2019

L to R: Kenadi Brown, Adam Kelley (leader), Jakob Scroggins, Nash Brown, JD Moore, Cameron Brown, Alaina Scroggins, Allison Morelock, Kate Brown.

Music at First Christian Church of Platte City

The Story of the Choir in the Christian Church

by Evelina Wright

In May 1938 our family moved to Platte City and soon started attending the Christian Church. They had a small place for the choir in the northwest corner of the sanctuary, but we had no choir. There were several good singers in the church and sometime later someone decided to have a choir and I was invited to join as an alto singer, which I did. We had an old upright piano which was played by Mrs. Louise Hull. Our first choir was directed by Mrs. Elizabeth Brown and several singers, besides me, were Lena Baker, her sister Mary Hymer, Sweet Ferrel (Renz), Malone Klein and George Ann Coffey.

At that time, we had no men or boys in our choir. We got an electric organ some time later – and choir robes; wine color, as I remember. Alma Willis learned to play the organ and she played it for many years. Our minister at the time we started the choir was Rev. Martin Pope who stayed until 1949 when our present minister, Lester Weeks came, and who has been there since. After Mrs. Brown moved to Kansas, George Ann Coffey acted as our director for a time.

Then later, Jack Higgins came to direct our choir and did a very fine job until he had to go to Jefferson City to take his new position as a supreme court judge. Donna Farmer directed the choir for a while and then Eloise Parrett directed it until she had to give it up because of so many other activities. We are told it is a very good choir.

Mid-Week Call to Worship May 6, 1987

or six years. If they are not present today, I will see they receive their certificates and also realize they missed their chance to be formally praised.

“I would first like to thank Christine and Harold Van Cleave for being such a great help in getting this day organized. Each of the following will receive a certificate and each choir family will also receive a ceramic that reads: ‘Jesus Put a Song in My Heart.’ Will each of the following come forward as I read your name: Sarah Jane Higgins, Ester Cox, Janet Leachman, Sue Farley, Eloise Glaspie, Diana and Pat Cockrill, Sharon Bryan, Terry and Dustin Durand, Peggy and Lee Harmon, Shirley Kimsey, Judy Brown, Jan LeVan, Gareth Cannon, Dwight and Dana Donald; Christine Van Cleave and a special emeritus to Evelina Wright.”

As Reverend Van Cleave noted in the bulletin: “There were a fair number of tears as Mark made comments and made his presentation.”

Choir Recognition Day 1991

April 28, 1991 was Choir Recognition Day. After the anthem, Choir Director Mark Cutler took the pulpit. Following are his remarks:

“This morning I would like to take some time to recognize some very special people in the Christian Church of Platte City. These are people who dedicate their talents to enhance our worship service every Sunday morning. These people are very special to me and will always have a place in my memory and heart.

“Our special music was entitled *He Makes a Difference*. This is such an appropriate song for these special people that make up our choir. Jesus does make a difference in our lives and these dedicated people have made a commitment to use their talents in weekly worship. I know you, the congregation, realize how blessed we are in this church to have so many wonderfully talented musicians participating in our worship service. It is truly a blessing to me, and I know by talking to people in other churches in our area how my job is made easy because of the talented people I have been blessed to work within our church.

“Before I make my formal presentation to the present choir members, I would like to reflect on the past seventeen years and recognize the people who first started me in this job. First of all, I’ll never forget the time and evening when Bill Cox came to me and offered me the job. Remember, at that time I was just a young whipper-snapper of 23 who never before had directed an adult choir. I started out with the help of many of the people who are still currently active in the choir and also the following: Peggy and John Day Palmer; Karen McClung; Jesse, Laverne and Becky Taulbee; Mike & Freda Cox; Craig and Ida Cox; George Ann Coffey; Denise Wilson; Kathy Collings; Hal and Peggy Swaney; Dottie King; Ruth Renz; Lucille and Donnie Eskridge. Please help me if I have left anyone out.

“Now I would like to recognize and present tokens of our appreciation to the talented members of our congregation who have been active in the church choir over the past five

The Choir 1991 to Present

June 2, 1991. During the morning worship service Hal Swaney, chair of the church board, presented Mark Cutler with a certificate of appreciation on behalf of the congregation. The certificate expressed appreciation to Mark for seventeen years of service as choir director. Lots of greetings and well wishes were extended to Mark and Becky as they left for their new home in Colorado.

Following that fanfare, Peggy Harmon became the new director of music. With the exception of the years from September 2003 to 2008 when Cheryl Clark filled the role, Peggy has held the position. Sue Farley began playing the piano for the choir and for church services at about the time Peggy became the director of music. She did so until 2017 when she retired after 25 years at the age of 80. Now Peggy herself usually plays. A new digital piano was purchased for the sanctuary in 2022 out of the memorial fund and the old one was moved to the fellowship hall.

From the Minutes – May, 1884

The matter of hymnals was brought up by Bro. Wells and it was agreed that 100 should be bought, but whether they should be paid for out of the current expenses or by a special contribution was not decided.



L to R: Janet Leachman, Peggy Harmon, Sue Farley

After she graduated from college in 1972, Janet Leachman began as the church organist and still holds that position today. She began learning to play the organ in 8th grade and did (and still does) her practicing in the sanctuary. A new Rodgers 550 organ (actually it was a 3-year old used organ with a “new” warranty) was purchased from Roger’s Music Company in February 1998. It cost \$9,995 and was paid for out of the memorial fund. It came with many extras and continues to make for nice music. The old organ, which was bought used in 1982 for \$5,000, was sold to Rollins Funeral Home for \$800.

Angel Choir

For a while starting around 2006, Cheryl Clark led a children’s singing group. This “angel choir” practiced on Sunday mornings and occasionally treated the congregation to their cuteness and music.

Carillon

FCCPC serenaded the town with the carillon which was presented as a memorial to Morton M. Johnston, a prominent farmer and member of the church. Bill Brown installed the system in 1976 and kept it running on time. The system worked like a gigantic stereo and could be heard for about two miles. The tapes of the bells sounded so authentic that visitors believed they were hearing bells, but no bells were involved except the recorded version. Bill Wills kept the carillon working until parts could no longer be found.

New Equipment Purchased

In 1999 a new public address and sound system and devices for the hearing impaired were purchased. Twenty years later a new audiovisual system was installed in the sanctuary including an amplifier, two 50-inch screens, new speakers with wireless microphones and the associated software. This improved sound quality and enabled the projection of announcements, scripture, videos and song lyrics.



Ringing the Bell 2018

“Our little bell ringers are letting Platte City know the church is open for business. (And thanks to our big helper Craig Higgins too!)”

Missions and Outreach

Potato Bake / Bazaar / Fall Festival — An Annual Affair

The first fund raiser in 30 years was a bazaar and potato bake luncheon held on October 19, 1992, to raise funds for youth projects in the church. Eighty-five members made items for the bazaar, baked beautiful pies, worked in the bazaar or kitchen or contributed money for this project. Baked potatoes with all the toppings, relishes, pie and tea/coffee were served to approximately 200. Raffle tickets were sold on a hand-made quilt and a hindquarter and forequarter of beef. Barbara Bryan and Mary Frances Edwards were the winners of the beef and Charlotte Wilson won the quilt. This was a fun event for all who participated and \$3,032.23 was cleared that day.

In 1996 the Fall Festival was a grand success, with about 225 being served with the craft booths doing a good business. Three booths were rented to local crafters and offered a varied selection along with the church booth.

Another Potato Bake and Bake Sale was held on November 14, 1997. Proceeds were \$1,620 and 240 were served. At the December board meeting CWF President Eva Amos announced that CWF would be glad to be in charge of this event next year with the understanding that proceeds would go to their organization for their projects. The board approved this proposition.

This event commenced in 1992 and has indeed become a nearly annual event and a very nice fund raiser. It occurs in late October or early November. The meal has not changed much and includes baked potatoes with various toppings, green salad, pie and coffee, and is served in the fellowship hall. Limited take-out and delivery service was added in more recent years. The Potato Bake is a big undertaking requiring lots of planning and food preparation and many volunteers. Lynn Babcock, until he passed away earlier this year, cooked the potatoes and delivered them hot the day of the lunch. Among other causes, proceeds have gone to youth activities (1993), choir robes (1994), missions (1995), CWF (1998, 1999), Feed Northland Kids (2015 & 2019), to help with the kitchen remodel and to multiple smaller projects.



Potato Bake Luncheon 2019

Rev. Kevin Kelly (left) and Outreach Chair Peggy Swaney (right) presenting a check from the potato bake proceeds to Chris Evans, executive director of Feed Northland Kids, for their BackSnack program.

CROP Walk

Over the years, several from the congregation participated in the CROP Walk. Anecdotally, church records indicate \$300 was raised for the project in 1996.

Carnival and Garage Sale

In 2004, the church held a carnival and garage sale, raising \$750 for United Services.

Another Fund Raiser

The Membership Chair Larry Leachman and his committee organized a "Trash and Treasure Auction" which was held on April 24, 1993 and netted \$762. Jim and Helen Palmer donated their auction services for this event.



Harvesters 2010



FCCPC Serving

Between 2006 and 2009 FCCPC sent mission groups to several locations. In Beaumont, Texas youth and adults donned hard hats and respirators to work at a church that had been damaged by hurricanes. In Lake Charles, Louisiana they helped rebuild a house that had suffered the effects of a hurricane. At the Heifer Ranch in Arkansas, they helped with a garden and with animals and participated in an experience living in a mock community with limited resources.

After a tornado went through Greensburg, Kansas they helped at multiple worksites including a damaged home and a damaged community center. Additionally, a couple of members embarked on a mission trip to Costa Rica. To support these trips the youth have been very creative in their fundraising. They have sold cups, babysat for parents' night out, held dinners, carwashes and bake sales, and have "flocked" yards with flamingos.

For about ten years the church did not travel for mission work, but found, and still does find, needs and opportunities to serve closer to home. Members have volunteered and donated items to Micah Ministry, volunteered at Harvesters, participated in the Big Day of Serving and in Rebuilding Together, donated money and items to United Services (the men's group has a long-standing history of being particularly regular about this) and adopted families at Christmas. FCCPC has supported Hillcrest for years by financing an apartment and providing supplies to keep it comfortable and the youth have occasionally had bake sales to help. Some have supported Hillcrest's



annual Gala and participated in their walk-a-thon. It has given to Samaritan's Purse by way of Operation Christmas Child and by donating to the chicken/poultry and farm/garden projects. It has provided for World Food Resource Bank from the Swaney farm supplemented by the children's collection boxes. Donations have been given to Day of Hope, Disciples Mission Fund, United Services Christmas Store, Operation Breakthrough, Philips Theological Seminary, Woodhaven, the Jamaica mission fund and Aviation Ministry. The youth held a VBS fun run/walk to support the Day of Giving and have repeatedly contributed to Feed Northland Kids through proceeds from the Potato Bake. Members have participated in the CROP Walk, the Tall Oaks Gala, Don Lipovac Concerts, Meals on Wheels and held carnivals and garage sales to support Hands of Hope.

The kids who had been mere babies and toddlers for the 2006-2009 trips became increasingly eager to travel for mission work. By 2018 they were fortunate to have Rev. Kelley take it upon himself to coordinate that. In July with the new minister in charge, the youth and a couple of adults enthusiastically headed to the Hinton Rural Life Center in Hayesville, North Carolina. There the group spent a memorable, rainy week doing outdoor projects, including yard work, washing windows and mending a fence. The following summer Rev. Kelley and his son Adam Kelley, took the youth to Denver, Colorado where the group spent a week serving the homeless. They worked in an urban garden and volunteered for multiple organizations in the city and reportedly had an unforgettable time.

Studies and Groups – Disciples of All Generations

Bible Studies

Currently there are three separate weekly Bible study groups meeting at the church and/or at members' homes. The studies are open to all, member or not. Although the individuals attending have varied over time, two women's groups have been meeting for more than a decade, and a mixed-adult study began this year after the pandemic-related restrictions relaxed.



Adult Mixed (Up) Bible Class 2022

Seated L to R: Jean Jensen, Lucinda Taylor, Karen Higgins, Standing L to R: Rev. Dr. Kevin Kelley (teacher), Ruth Swaney, Melodie Kelley, Peggy Swaney, Linda Everett, Alaina Scroggins, Alesia Scroggins, Ryan Scroggins, Debbie Head.

Children's Moment

During children's moment on Sunday mornings the little ones are invited forward for a short message geared towards them.



Young Adult Community (YAC) 2019

L to R: Adam Kelley, Tom & Lucinda Taylor (sponsors), Ali Ball, Emily Cockrill, Cody Hockaday, Lauren Kurtz, Elizabeth Cockrill, Jean Jensen (sponsor), Jacob & Taylor Rhodus.

Israel 2019

A group of the church's members left for a 10-day trip to Israel on January 21, 2019. The group was led by Rev. Kelley and Reverend Dave Culver of the Liberty Christian Church. They flew indirectly from Kansas City to Tel Aviv and the tour included visits to the Galilee, Cana, Nazareth, Tel Megiddo, Caesarea, Beit Shean, Jericho, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Qumran and the Dead Sea. It must have been a wonderful experience because Revs. Kelley and Culver will lead another group to the Holy Land in February 2023 with a very similar itinerary.



Holy Land Trip 2019

Back Row L to R: Dale Fuhrman, Patrick Cockrill, Lucinda Taylor, Tom Taylor. Front Row L to R: Debbie Faudere, Diana Cockrill, Melody Fuhrman, Debbie Head, Melodie Kelley, Rev. Dr. Kevin Kelley.

Worshipping in a Pandemic – COVID-19

On March 8, 2020 the regularly scheduled board meeting was held, during which plans were discussed for Lenten suppers, spring and summer activities and other usual church business. The next Sunday, March 15th, the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus halted worship and all of those plans. Around the world, church services and large gatherings of any kind were discouraged. Rev. Kelley began posting the services on line. By June, when the weather warmed and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Platte County Health Department set guidelines including 6-foot distancing and face masks outside, worshipping outdoors in the grassy side lot/parking lot/back porch turned out to be delightful and continued through September. Although there was not another board meeting until December 2020, a diverse leadership group, coordinated by Board Chair Teresa Bryan, was established to represent the congregation and help guide the church through the unprecedented circumstances.

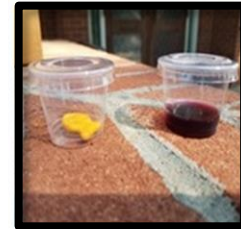


Fifty seven joined together on a gorgeous morning this past Sunday in their Hawaiian best!



When you have outside church and you meet under walnut trees.

Communion takes on a new look as we partake of the elements in an outdoor, socially distanced-with-masks setting.



Watching local COVID-19 numbers, trends and vaccination rates became the norm. Doors were kept open for ventilation when possible, masks were recommended, and Sunday school and singing together remained suspended for fear of spreading the virus. The congregation refrained from passing offering and communion plates and communion elements were instead offered in individual, single-use containers. Seating was spaced to encourage social distancing. For 2 years the Christmas Eve service was modified to be a walk-in, take communion, pray and depart event over a 2-hour period.

Eventually members resumed Sunday school and Bible studies, started singing again, removing masks, sitting closer to each other and gathering for potlucks. This April the usual Easter Sunday services and breakfast were held. As of yet, Rev. Kelley continues to post Sunday morning services on line for anyone who can't or chooses not to attend church in person and communion emblems are still offered in individual, single-use containers.

Final Note

This history has been prepared by researching newspapers, Paxton's Annals, church bulletins, newsletters, minute books and talking to members.

Undoubtedly, there are important events which have been overlooked and names that should have been included and are not, none of which is intentional. Please make known any inaccuracies or omissions so they may be included in future updates. We urge all to share in the maintenance of our history.

From the Minutes are excerpts from the article written by member Nancy Johnson Bird, January 1948.