

Register of Old Buildings
Macon County Historical Coordinating Council

Address: First Presbyterian Church
204 W. Prairie Avenue
Decatur, Illinois 62523

Date of original construction: Congregation organized May 1st, 1852.
Cornerstone 204 W. Prairie laid Oc-
tober 9th, 1890. First sermon in this structure preached by Dr. W. H.
Fenhallegon on July 10th, 1892.

Name of original owner: 1st Presbyterian Church of Decatur, Illinois.

History: "The sanctuary was first dedicated in 1892.....
"The sanctuary was again dedicated in 1961.....
"The sanctuary form remains essentially as it was. The pews
form a quarter circle around the chancel. This, which assists the sense
of togetherness in the congregation, is once again becoming a popular shape
for a room for Christian worship...
"The color sheme is a combination of walnut for wood, gold for
carpet and earth tones, sand on the newly plastered main walls and pewter
on the chancel walls.....
"The chancel is anoutgrowth of hours of consultation and study
on the life of the Reformed Church and the shape of the Akron building.
There are three main pieces of furniture: communion table, baptismal and
pulpit. Rising over the communion table is a Celtic cross, the center
of attention. All lines in the sanctuary and the chancel are intended to
accentuate the central high place of the cross....."

From the pamphlet: The Rededication
of
The Sanctuary

The First Presbyterian Church
Decatur, Illinois
November 12th, 1961

Copy enclosed.

Present owner's name: First Presbyterian Church of Decatur, Illinois.

(See reverse side)

"The cornerstone of the church today was laid on October 9th, 1890 and on Sunday morning, July 10th, 1892, Dr. Penhallegon preached the first sermon in the new church. It was erected and equipped at a cost of \$ 85,000 and was dedicated free of debt. The "per person" cost was estimated at about \$80.00 per member.....

"Nine years later, in 1901, James Millikin University, a Presbyterian affiliated college, was founded. James Millikin, a member of this church who saw the need for an institution of higher learning, was the principal benefactor to the school which bears his name. Other members and friends dug deep into their pockets to help make the University a reality. It opened its doors for the first classes in September, 1903."

From "I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes"
First Presbyterian Church
Decatur, Illinois
Centennial Anniversary
1852 - 1952

Copy enclosed.

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Copy enclosed.

A MAGNIFICENT CHURCH.

The Presbyterians and Their
New House of Worship.

IT WILL BE OPEN SUNDAY.

A Model Temple Which Cost \$90,000—Baptists Out of Debt—Dedication Wednesday Evening, July 13—Sermon by Rev. McPherson, of Chicago.

July 9, 1892

Among the many fine edifices in Decatur in which the REPUBLICAN points with pride, are the handsome new churches lately erected. Another magnificent temple of worship is finished and will be thrown open Sunday morning for the use of the membership and friends. It is the new First Presbyterian church, which now is in the neighborhood of \$90,000, and every dollar of expense is paid. The dedication services will occur Wednesday, July 13.

It had been the purpose of the Presbyterian congregation for a number of years to build a new house of worship, but various circumstances prevented the undertaking until the year 1890 when the committee, consisting of Dr. Wm. A. Barnes, W. T. Wells, S. S. Jack, Chas. G. Powers and Rev. W. H. Penhalligon, were selected by the congregation, and authorized to proceed with the erection of the building.

Several sites had been considered for the new building, and in fact, two different lots had been purchased, but the majority of the congregation finally decided to locate the building on the corner of Church street and Prairie Avenue, where it now stands.

The question of the lot having been settled, the next step was to secure plans for the new building, and for this purpose the committee consulted several prominent architects, and visited a number of new churches in Illinois and surrounding states. After mature deliberation, Mr. Henry F. Starbuck, architect of Chicago, was chosen by the committee to design and construct the proposed edifice, and the building now stands complete, a monument to his superior architectural ability and faithful workmanship. The general style of the building, architecturally speaking, is Byzantine. The treatment of the material and the general detail being of that character, having in addition a strong Byzantine feeling, which is carried through the various parts of the building, both of the interior and exterior.

The extreme dimensions of the building are 50x100, and the building consists of an octagonal auditorium 54 ft. in diameter, occupying the southern portion of the building, while the northern portion is arranged for Sunday school and social rooms.

The entire exterior of the building is of stone from the Riverside quarry, at Independence, Ill., and is pure sandstone of fine grain, generally of a light buff color with an olive shade.

The basement is laid of heavy coursed rubble and above this the work is in what is termed random rubble style, all in rock face treatment and with rich carving at the caps and bases of columns, and about the entrances. The only deviation from the use of this stone, is in the case of the steps and platforms, which are of Bedford limestone, and the polished columns of the arcade on the east side, which are of red granite. The main feature of the exterior, is the tower which stands upon a foundation of solid concrete 30 ft. square and 42 ft. square at the surface of the ground, rising to a height of 100 feet of stone work above this, and surmounted by roof of red tiles with heavy ornamental copper finials.

The towers of the belfry and the roofs of the small towers are also covered with red tiles and finished with copper moldings.

All other masonry work of the exterior is of copper and the roof is covered with purple slate, except flat parts, which are of tin.

Lightning rods of copper cable complete the equipment of the exterior, and the whole presents a massive and dignified appearance, quiet and restful in its design, while the grouping of the various parts presents a well balanced composition from every point of view.

Through the main tower, which stands at the corner of the two streets, above mentioned, is the principal entrance to the church, while secondary entrances are located at the southwest corner on Prairie Avenue, through a smaller tower, and on the east, or Church street side, through an arcade forming the base of a similar tower, which is however, an important feature of this facade, and is the principal entrance also to the Sunday-school rooms.

Entering the main tower, one passes through a vestibule floored with a rich encaustic tile, imported for the purpose, and finished overhead with a neatly paneled oak ceiling, while on either side connecting it with the west and east vestibules, is a loggia, forming a most commodious and inviting entrance, through whose richly decorated arches, which separate the loggias from it, is seen the spacious auditorium, with its massive oak furniture, its elaborate decorations, and its heavily paneled ceiling, whose graceful lines are strongly marked by the solid oak beams and arches, which make up its ensemble.

On entering the loggia, one sees also a most home-like and attractive feature, in the shape of an open fireplace, suggestive of comfort and hospitality, which is still further enhanced as one proceeds.

From the loggia, commodious and easy stairs lead to the galleries, and the customary desolate and uninviting gallery entrances are entirely avoided so that the balcony, as arranged, is really a part of the audience-room, and the seats in it as desirable as those upon the main floor.

The entire interior finish of the auditorium is in oak, finished in a light and agreeable tint, the construction being accentuated by strong lines which are continued by the decoration and the interior finish, until the climax is reached in the ceiling, an ornamental timber roof, consisting of a double groined arch, richly paneled in oak and ash, the strong markings of which bring out most beautifully the natural grain of the material.

The gallery front is finished with an open balustrade, or railing, with alternate turned and octagonal balusters, which give the whole an effect of lightness, and the division between the auditorium and the gallery, so usual in such cases, is entirely avoided.

One of the most striking features of the auditorium is the organ, and the manner in which it is included in the general design. Instead of being, as is usually the case, an entirely extraneous figure, the only object which strikes the eye on entering the church, in this case the organ, while being sufficiently marked by its clusters of pipes, is entirely concealed and made to form one angle of the auditorium, the lines of construction being carried through it in such a way that the suggestion is at once received that the organ was built for the church, and not the church for the organ.

The location of the pulpit, choir and organ is at the opposite corner diagonally from the main lower entrance, the axis of the pews being diagonal to that of the main building.

The floor is slightly inclined to a level space in front of the pulpit platform behind which and in front of the organ is the choir gallery fitted like a balcony, and entered through the organ from the rear. Besides the steps which lead from the auditorium to the pulpit platform, a private door connects it with the rooms in the rear, so that the pastor can enter the pulpit without passing through the congregation.

ored stained glass, which are hung and balanced so as to be easily raised if it is desired to connect the Sunday school room with the auditorium, in case of an overflow.

As before stated, the entrance from Church street, on the east, is the principal entrance to the Sunday school rooms which consist of the main, or central room, 36 feet square, from which open on three sides alcoves and annexes, a part of which are divided into class rooms separated from the main room by rolling blinds, while on the east side between the main Sunday school room and Church street, is the primary room, 25x35, and opening off this still another room, 15x20, for the kindergarten. Each of these latter rooms are conveniently furnished as required for its purpose, and an ornamental open fireplace adds comfort and elegance to their general appearance.

The main Sunday school room extends up through the height of two stories and opening upon it by means of handsomely glazed sliding sash are the rooms of the second story, which consist of the ladies parlor, 25x35, with high arched ceiling and back of it a private parlor 15x25 with toilet rooms connected. Both parlors are conveniently furnished and have highly ornamental open fireplaces.

On the north and west sides, in the second story are located the refectory or supper room, 16x50, and the large and convenient kitchen, serving-room and pantries, which are fitted with every convenience in the way of plumbing and heating necessary for such entertainments as may be given by the ladies of the congregation.

In the east tower, over the entrance, is located the pastor's study, which has been provided with mantel, book cases and toilet rooms, and is sufficiently large to allow of entertaining visitors.

There are also cloak rooms, janitor's closets, closets for lighting apparatus and retiring room for the choir, all of which are conveniently placed and easily reached.

In the furnishing of the church, the ladies headed by a committee, consisting of Mesdames Orlando Powers, A. T. Hill, T. T. Roberts, L. N. Barnes, W. T. Wells, Misses Jack and Alice Roberts, have had the opportunity to exert their good taste, which they have done to a surprising degree. The carpets, mantle, cushions and parlor furniture have been selected entirely by them, and with the exception of an occasional suggestion from the architect, are the result of their labors alone. All of these have been selected to harmonize with the general decoration of the interior, the general tone being a rich olive brown, and a most pleasing effect is produced by their warm tints, as the sun light streams in through the open-paned stained glass of the figured windows by day, or when lighted by the hundreds of dazzling electric lights by night. The furniture, consisting of pulpit, communion table, flower and book-stands, two large and two small chairs are all made in the same general style from original designs by the architect with heavy carved oak frames and upholstered in an ornamental leather to correspond with the general finish.

The decorations and glass of the church have all been in the hands of one contractor, and the result is probably one of the finest pieces of work yet to be seen in Central Illinois.

All the windows of the auditorium and those which separate the auditorium from the Sunday school room are fitted with variegated open-paned and triangular glass treated with a tracery of lead work in delicate tints, occasionally accented by brilliant jewel work. Of these, the group of west windows, seen in all, form perhaps the most striking feature.

Treated in delicately shaded tones, the whole mass becomes a grand object lesson in color and figure, and taken throughout, the windows are such as glow in richness and power under the eye of the observer. The decoration has been done in such a way as to harmonize with and enrich the glass, and the whole effect of the interior is so composed as to melt together in one grand picture of chromatic harmony.

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The lighting of the church has been made an especial feature. It is fitted for both gas and electricity, the intention being, however, to rely generally upon electric lighting.

In addition to the ornate house standards, which hang from the intersecting of the groined ceiling, there are scattered about at strategic points ornate electric lamps, which give a most beautiful effect to the room.

Hundreds of feet of wire have been used for the distribution of the electric current to these many points, and the whole converges in a single point where by means of automatic switches the lights for all parts of the building are controlled.

In connection with the lighting of the church, a novel idea has been introduced. On the sides of the main tower are twelve lancet windows fitted with colored glass behind which are hung electric lights, which it is the intention to use at such time as services are being held in the church.

Besides being a most attractive feature, the inviting aspect of these lights to the outsider, will certainly have a pleasing effect.

The building is heated throughout by steam, a large portion of which is indirect, that is, the air is carried into the building over heated pipes through air chambers and distributed at various points moderately warm. This is particularly the case in the auditorium, where a small register under each pew, which can be regulated, by the congregant provides fresh and warm air.

The ventilation is provided for by large fans which exhaust the hot air to the roof, from various parts of the auditorium, and which are controlled by registers worked by rods at a central point.

As before stated, the members of the church in Henry F. Starbuck, of Chicago, who has been called up to his residence in Decatur and the work has been done from his first inspection under the personal supervision of the ladies of the general management of the building, to the details of the interior, and the result is a most beautiful and harmonious work, and it is to be hoped that the work is an encouragement to all who are engaged in the construction of a church, and that the building of a church will be a more common thing in the future.

The prominent members of the building are Henry F. Starbuck, of Chicago, who has been called up to his residence in Decatur and the work has been done from his first inspection under the personal supervision of the ladies of the general management of the building, to the details of the interior, and the result is a most beautiful and harmonious work, and it is to be hoped that the work is an encouragement to all who are engaged in the construction of a church, and that the building of a church will be a more common thing in the future.

The members of the committee have devoted a large amount of time and attention to the completion of the work, and well deserve the thanks of the congregation, who can look with pride on the result of their labors.

The Decatur
Republican
July 9, 1892

A MAGNIFICENT CHURCH

The Presbyterians and Their New
House of Worship

It Will Be Open Sunday

A Model Temple Which Cost \$80,000 -
Entirely Out of Debt - Dedication
Wednesday Evening, July 13 -
Sermon by Rev. McPherson of Chicago

*Copied from
The Decatur
Daily Republican
Sat. evening
July 9th 1892*

Among the many fine edifices in Decatur to which the REPUBLICAN points with pride, are the handsome new churches lately erected. Another magnificent temple of worship is finished and will be thrown open Sunday morning for the use of the membership and friends. It is the new First Presbyterian Church which cost in the neighborhood of \$80,000, and every dollar of expense is paid. The dedication services will occur Wednesday, July 13.

It had been the purpose of the Presbyterian congregation for a number of years to build a new house of worship, but various circumstances prevented the undertaking until the year 1890 when the committee, consisting of Dr. Wm. A. Barnes, W. T. Wells, S. S. Jack, Chas. G. Powers and Rev. W. H. Penhalegon, were selected by the congregation, and authorized to proceed with the erection of the building.

Several sites had been considered for the new building, and in fact, two different lots had been purchased, but the majority of the congregation finally decided to locate the building on the corner of Church Street and Prairie Avenue, where it now stands.

The question of the lot having been settled, the next step was to secure plans for the new building, and for this purpose the committee consulted several prominent architects, and visited a number of new churches in Illinois and surrounding states. After mature deliberation, Mr. Henry F. Starbuck, architect of Chicago, was chosen by the committee to design and construct the proposed edifice, and the building now stands complete, a monument to his superior architectural ability and faithful workmanship. The general style of the building, architecturally speaking, is Romanesque. The treatment of the material and the general detail being of that character, having in addition a strong Byzantine feeling which is carried through the various parts of the building, both of the interior and exterior.

The extreme dimensions of the building are 85 x 130, and the building consists of an octagonal auditorium 64 ft. in diameter, occupying the southern portion of the building, while the northern portion is arranged for Sunday School and social rooms.

The entire exterior of the building is of stone from the Riverside quarry at Independence, Indiana, and is pure sandstone of fine grain, generally of a light buff color with an olive shade.

The basement is laid of heavy coursed rubble and above this the work is in what is termed random rubble style, all in rock face treatment and with rich carving at the caps and bases of columns, and about the entrances. The only deviation from this stone is in the case of the steps and platforms which are of Bedford limestone, and the polished columns of the arcade on the east side which are of red granite. The main feature of the exterior is the tower which stands upon a foundation of solid concrete 80 ft. square and is 22 ft. square at the surface of the ground, rising to

a height of 100 ft. of stone work above this, and surmounted by a roof of red tiles with heavy ornamental copper finials.

The louvres of the belfry and the roofs of the small towers are also covered with red tiles and finished with copper moldings.

All other molding work of the exterior is of copper and the roof is covered with purple slate except flat parts, which are of tin.

Lightning rods of copper cable complete the equipment of the exterior and the whole presents a massive and dignified appearance, quiet and restful in the design, while the grouping of the various parts presents a well balanced composition from every point of view.

Through this main tower, which stands at the corner of the two streets, above mentioned, is the principal entrance to the church, while secondary entrances are located at the southwest corner on Prairie Avenue, through a smaller tower, and on the east, or Church Street side, through an arcade forming the base of a similar tower, which is, however, an important feature of this facade, and is the principal entrance also to the Sunday School rooms.

Entering the main tower, one passes through a vestibule floored with a rich encaustic tile, imported for the purpose, and finished overhead with a neatly paneled oak ceiling, while on either hand connecting it with the west and east vestibules, is a loggia, forming a most commodious and inviting entrance, through whose richly decorated arches, which separate the loggias from it, is seen the spacious auditorium, with its massive oak furniture, its elaborate decorations, and its heavily paneled ceiling, whose graceful lines are strongly marked by the solid oak beams and arches, which make up its ensemble.

On entering the loggia, one sees also a most home-like and attractive feature, in the shape of an open fireplace, suggestive of comfort and hospitality, which is still further enhanced as one proceeds.

From the loggias, commodious and easy stairs lead to the galleries, and the customary desolate and uninviting gallery entrances are entirely avoided so that the balcony, as arranged, is really a part of the audience-room, and the seats in it as desirable as those upon the main floor.

The entire interior finish of the auditorium is in oak, finished in a light and agreeable tint, the construction being accentuated by strong lines which are continued by the decoration and the interior finish, until the climax is reached in the ceiling, an ornamental timber roof, consisting of a double groined arch, richly paneled in oak and ash, the strong markings of which bring out most beautifully the natural grain of the material.

The gallery front is finished with an open balustrade, or railing, with alternate turned and octagonal balusters, which give the whole an effect of lightness, and the division between the auditorium and gallery, so usual in such cases, is entirely avoided.

One of most striking features of the auditorium is the organ, and the manner in which it is included in the general design. Instead of being as is usually the case, an entirely extraneous figure, the only object which strikes the eye on entering the church, in this case the organ, while being sufficiently marked with clusters of pipes, is entirely concealed and made to form one angle of the auditorium, the lines of

construction being carried through it in such a way that the suggestion is at once received that the organ was built for the church, and not the church for the organ.

The location of the pulpit, choir and organ is at the opposite corner diagonally from the main tower entrance, the axis of the pews being diagonal to that of the main building.

The floor is slightly inclined to a level space in front of the pulpit platform behind which and in front of the organ is the choir gallery fitted like a balcony, and entered through the organ from the rear. Besides the steps which lead from the auditorium to the pulpit platform, a private door connects it with the rooms in the rear, so that the pastor can enter the pulpit without passing through the auditorium.

Between the auditorium and the Sunday School room which adjoins it, are five colored stain glass, which are hung and balanced so as to be easily raised if it is desired to connect the Sunday school room with the auditorium, in case of overflow.

As before stated, the entrance from Church Street, on the east, is the principal entrance to the Sunday school rooms which consist of the main, or central room, 36 feet square, from which open on three sides alcoves and annexes, a part of which are divided into class rooms separated from the main room by rolling blinds, while on the east side between the main Sunday school room and Church Street, is the primary room, 25 x 35, and off this still another room, 12 x 20, for the kindergarden. Each of these latter rooms are conveniently furnished as required for its purpose, and an ornamental open fireplace adds comfort and elegance to their general appearance.

The main Sunday school room extends up through the height of two stories and opening upon it by means of handsomely glazed sliding sash are the rooms of the second story, which consist of the ladies' parlor, 25 x 35, with high arched ceiling and back of it a private parlor 15 x 25 with toilet rooms connected. Both parlors are conveniently furnished and have highly ornamental open fireplaces.

On the north and west sides, in the second story are located the refectory or supper room, 16 x 60 and the large and convenient kitchen, serving-room, and pantries, which are fitted with every convenience in the way of plumbing and heating necessary for such entertainments as may be given by the ladies of the congregation.

In the east tower, over the entrance, is located the pastor's study, which has been provided with mantel, book cases and toilet rooms, and is sufficiently large to allow of entertaining visitors.

There are also cloak rooms, janitor's closets, closets for lighting apparatus and retiring room for the choir, all of which are conveniently placed and easily reached.

In the furnishing of the church, the ladies headed by a committee, consisting of Mesdames Orlando Powers, A. T. Hill, T. T. Roberts, I. N. Barnes, W. T. Wells, Misses Jack and Alice Roberts, have had the opportunity to exert their good taste, which they have done to a surprising degree. The carpets, mantels, cushions and parlor furniture have been selected entirely by them, and with the exception of an occasional suggestion from the architect, are the result of their labors alone. All of these have been selected to harmonize with the general decoration of the interior, the general tone being a rich olive brown, and a most pleasing effect is produced by their warm tints, as the sun light streams in through the opalescent stained glass of the figured

windows by day, or when lighted by the hundreds of dazzling electric lights by night. The furniture, consisting of pulpit, communion table, flower and book-stands, two large and two small chairs are all made in the same general style from the original designs by the architect with heavy carved oak frames upholstered in an olive-tinted leather to correspond with the general finish.

The decoration and glass of the church have all been in the hands of one contractor, and the result is probably one of the finest pieces of work yet to be seen in Central Illinois.

All the windows of the auditorium and those which separate the auditorium from the Sunday school room are filled with variegated opalescent and tridescent glass treated with a tracery of lace work, in delicate tints, occasionally enriched by brilliant jewel work. Of these, the group of west windows, ten in all, form perhaps the most striking feature.

Treated in delicately shaded tones, the whole mass becomes a grand object lesson in color and figure, and taken throughout, the windows are such as grow in richness and power under the eye of the observer. The decoration has been done in such a way as to harmonize with and enrich the glass, and the whole effect of the interior is so composed as to melt together in one grand picture of chromatic harmony.

The lighting of the church has been made an especial feature. It is fitted for both gas and electricity, the intention being, however, to rely generally upon electric lighting.

In addition to the ornate brass chandelier, which hangs from the intersection of the groined ceiling, there are scattered about at various points numbers of electric lamps, which give a most brilliant effect to the room.

Hundreds of feet of wire have been used for the distribution of the electric current to these many points, and the whole converge to a single point where by means of numerous switches the lights for all parts of the building are controlled.

In connection with the lighting of the church, a novel idea has been introduced. On the sides of the main tower are twelve lancet windows filled with colored glass behind which are hung electric lights, which it is the intention to use at such time as services are being held in the church.

Besides being a most attractive feature the inviting aspect of these lights to the outsider, will certainly have a pleasing effect.

The building is heated throughout by steam, a large portion of which is indirect, that is, the air is carried into the building over heated pipes through air chambers and distributed to various points moderately warm. This is particularly the case in the auditorium, where a small register under each pew, which can be regulated by the occupant provides fresh and warm air.

The ventilation is provided for by large flues which exhaust the hot air at will, from various parts of the auditorium, and which are controlled by registers worked by cords at a central point.

As before stated, the architect of the church is Henry F. Starbuck, of Chicago, who has since taken up his residence in Decatur, and the work has been done from its first inception under his personal superintendence. Besides the general design of the

building, he has designed the organ front, the pulpit furniture and the pews, and has generally directed the decorations and furnishing of the church, and he has brought to the work an enthusiasm and energy that have resulted in one of the most notable and attractive buildings of to-day.

The principal contractors of the building are as follows:

Masonry, W. H. Thain
Rough carpentry, R. G. Young
Inside finishing, W. C. Tabraham
Roofing and metal work, Decatur Cornice Works
Plastering, J. H. Oren
Painting, Myer and Son
Cast Iron work, Union Iron Works
Decorations and stained glass, Mitchel and Hallbach, Chicago
Pews and pulpit furniture, Haynes, Spencer and Co., Richmond, Indiana
Heating and plumbing, H. Mueller and Company
Electric lighting, Geo. L. Bachelder, Bloomington, Ill.
Gas and electric fixtures, Mitchell, Vance Co., New York
Cushions, Ostermoor and Co., New York
Organ, Roosevelt Organ Works, New York
Carpets, Linn and Scruggs, Decatur
Mantels, tile, finishing hardware, Morehouse, Wells and Company, Decatur
Lightning rods, A. Bradley

The members of the committee have devoted a large amount of time and attention to the completion of this work, and well deserve the thanks of the congregation, who can look with pride upon the result of their labors.

The above article was taken from the Decatur Daily Republican, published on Saturday evening, July 9, 1892.

The Prayer of Invocation
Given by Dr. W. H. Penhallegon
At the first service of worship
In the First Presbyterian Church of Decatur, Illinois
Located on the corner of Church and Prairie Streets
July 10, 1892

How shall we come, our Father, in the proper spirit into Thy presence? How shall we worship acceptably at Thy throne? Save us from ingratitude; save us from vanity. Help us to feel that Thou art a loving Father, both to the rich and poor. Help us to give our portion, whether it be a mite or a princely sum, in a cheerful giving spirit. We know Thou art everywhere; no place is too dark, no place too destitute, no spot so deep and desolate, but God is found there.

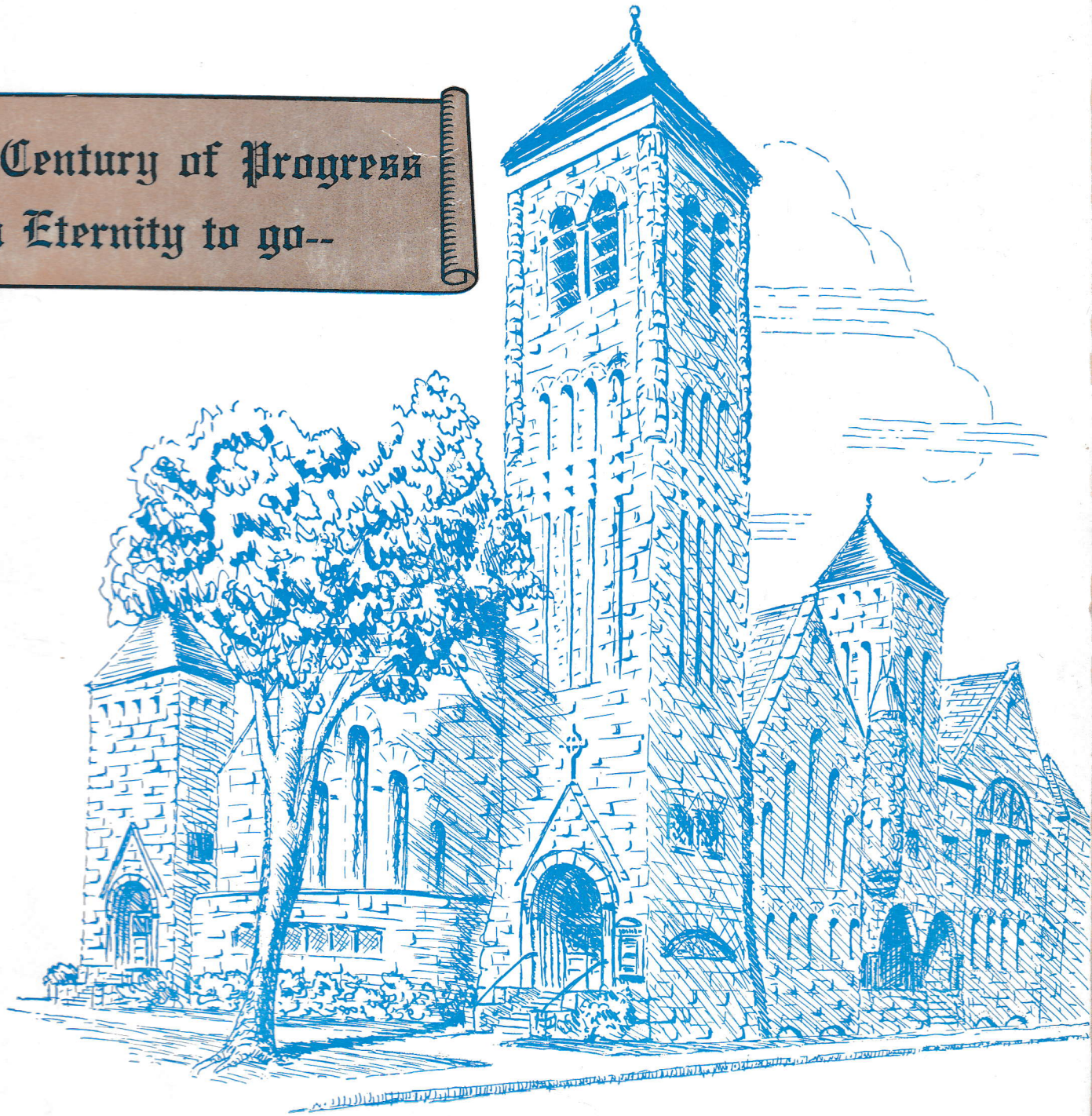
We feel that Thou art especially near this morning. We see evidences of Thy presence everywhere in this house. We know that Thou art not more easily found in some places than others, but we are more ready to hear and believe under some circumstances than others, and so we come here today into this temple to look to Thee for Thy blessing. We pray Thou wilt draw very near to us, that we may acknowledge this great privilege. Oh, how many have prayed earnestly for the dawn of such a Sabbath. How many in their quiet moments have prayed for a house where they could gather with their children and friends, and bring them to their Heavenly Father; but they have been called from the church militant to enter the church triumphant. It has been the privilege of others to gather into this house of God and acknowledge Thy goodness. May we forget for these brief moments that we are here, the cares of the store and the shop, the office and the farm; and may we worship Thee in the beauty of holiness.

Prepare us for the services of the coming week when we shall formally dedicate this church to Thy service. May it be a place where the weary heart can find rest; and we pray, oh Lord, our God, as a preacher of one of the churches of this city, show the arm of the Lord in this city where our homes are found. Bless each of the pastors of the different churches and bless us today. Wilt thou restore the sick and bless them. We ask it in Jesus' name and for His sake. Amen.

I Will Lift up Mine Eyes



A Century of Progress
An Eternity to go--



First Presbyterian Church

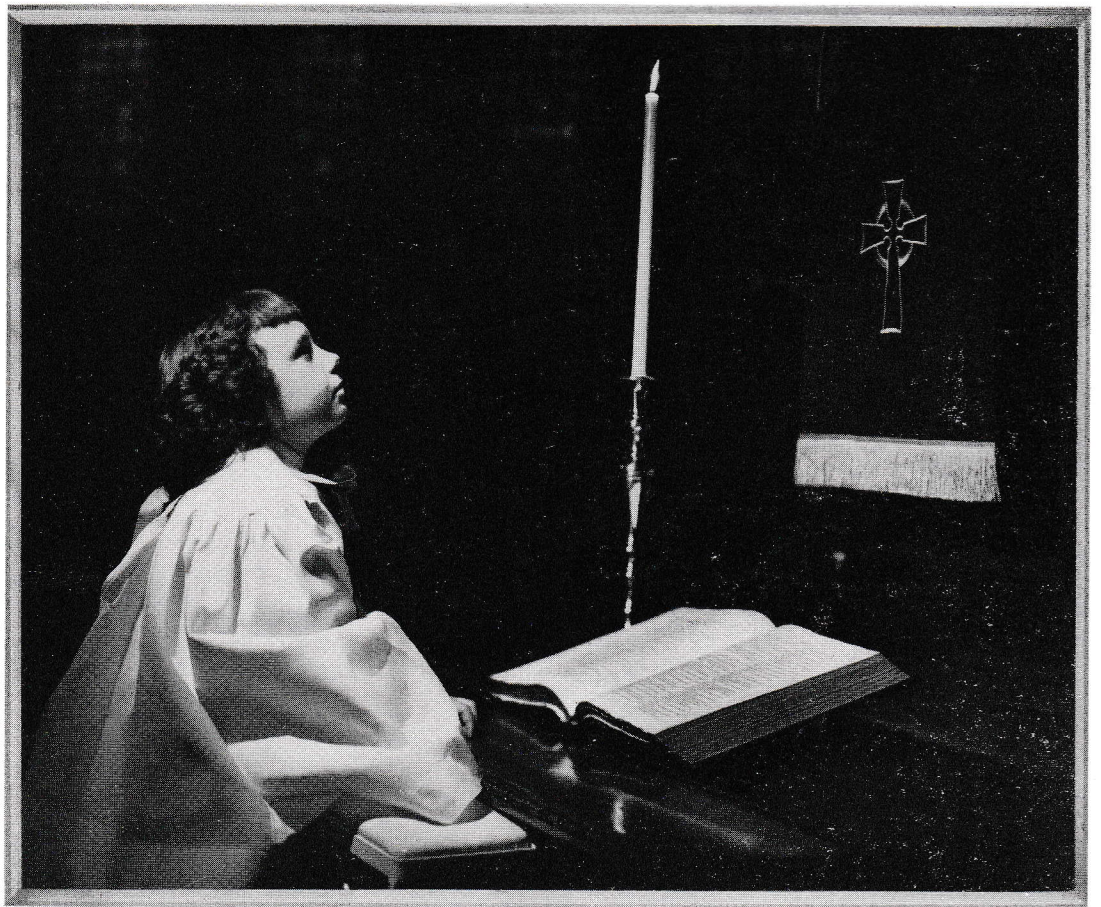
Decatur, Illinois

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First Presbyterian Church

Decatur, Illinois

Centennial Anniversary

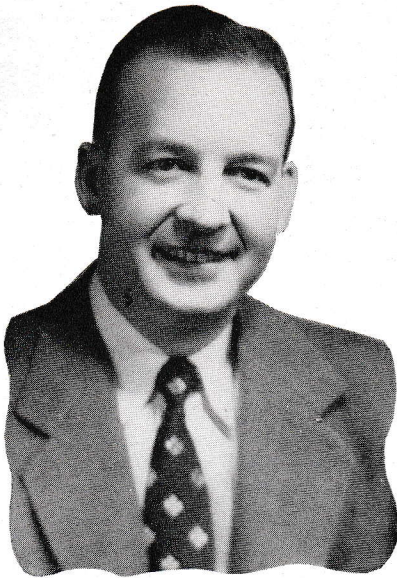


“I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes”

1952



Yesterday Greet Tomorrow



REV. JAY M. LOGAN

WE ARE inheritors. The day we are born the counsel of thousands of years falls around our shoulders.

Here at First Presbyterian Church, we have inherited a particular one hundred years of tradition; one hundred years of a free and forthright pulpit; one hundred years of community participation; one hundred years of fellowship shot through and through with genuine warmth, dynamic faith and courageous human concern; one hundred years of Christian Education so beamed that few spots on earth are completely devoid of its effect.

Words belie our debt of gratitude to our forebears of a century. To all these saints "who from their labors rest" we pay unending thanks. Truly, their years have been one hundred mountain peaks.

We now begin the second one hundred years. We have a church with potential just as great as our faith. It has a mission of real magnitude in Decatur: to be a forceful voice of faith reflecting the will of God to man here in our town; to influence through joyful fellowship a large segment of the city; to reach and hold a dynamic Christian Education program; and to

be faithful to a tremendously significant history, both here and in the reformed faith.

From this pathway of valleys and hills, the task seems forever undone and yet forever being done. But the voice of the years still speaks to us "Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it." We take courage and press on knowing full well that our best and bravest years are still ahead.

—Jay M. Logan

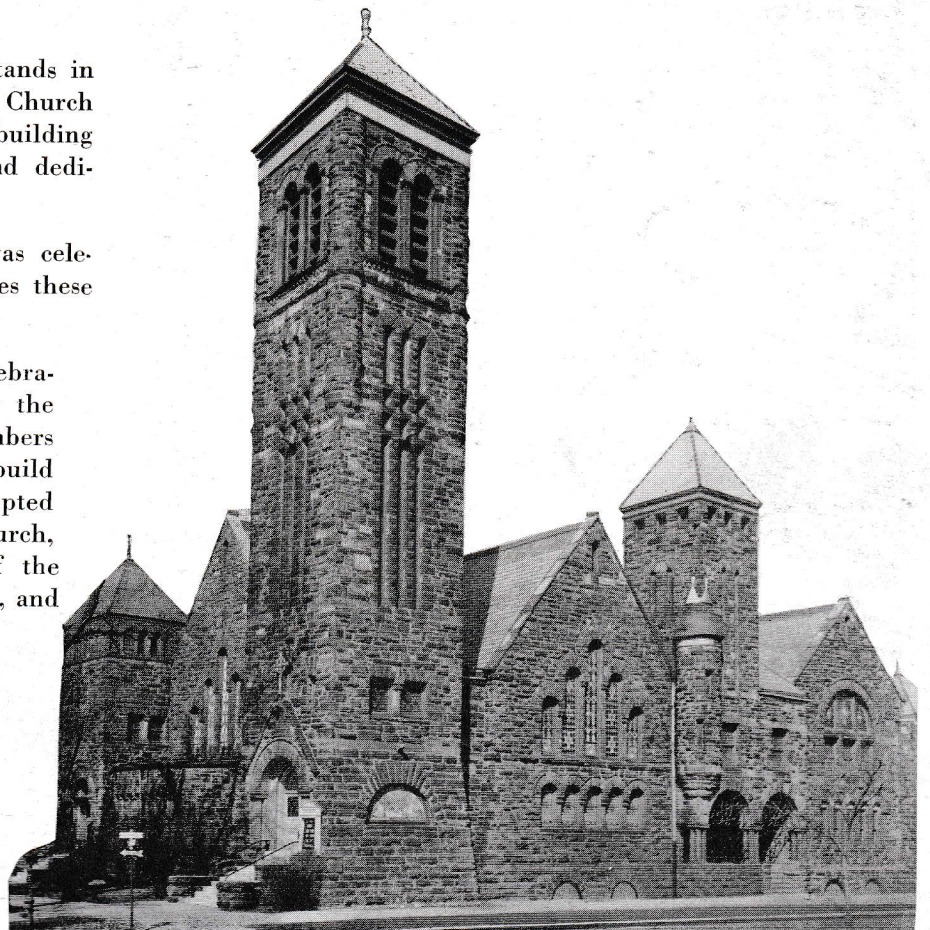
Stone Church With A Heart . . .

THIS imposing church edifice stands in the heart of Decatur on the corner of Church Street and Prairie Avenue. This building was erected at a cost of \$85,000 and dedicated free of debt on July 12, 1892.

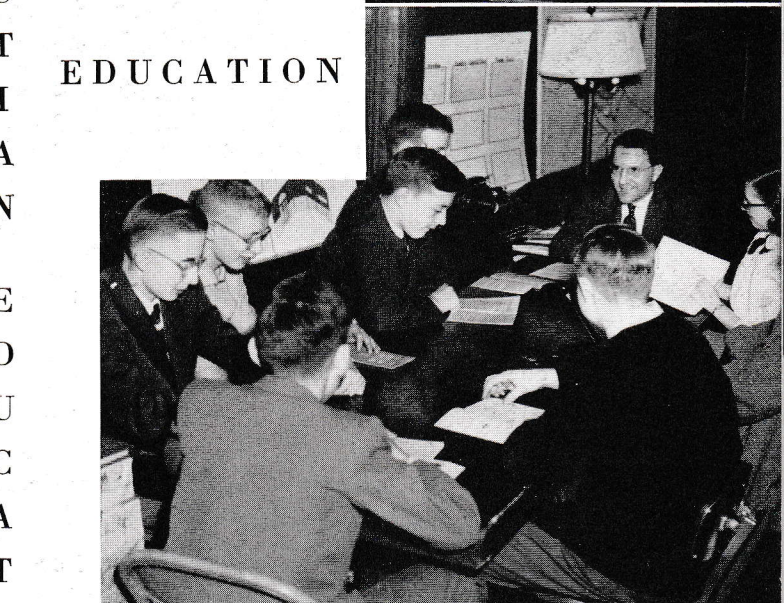
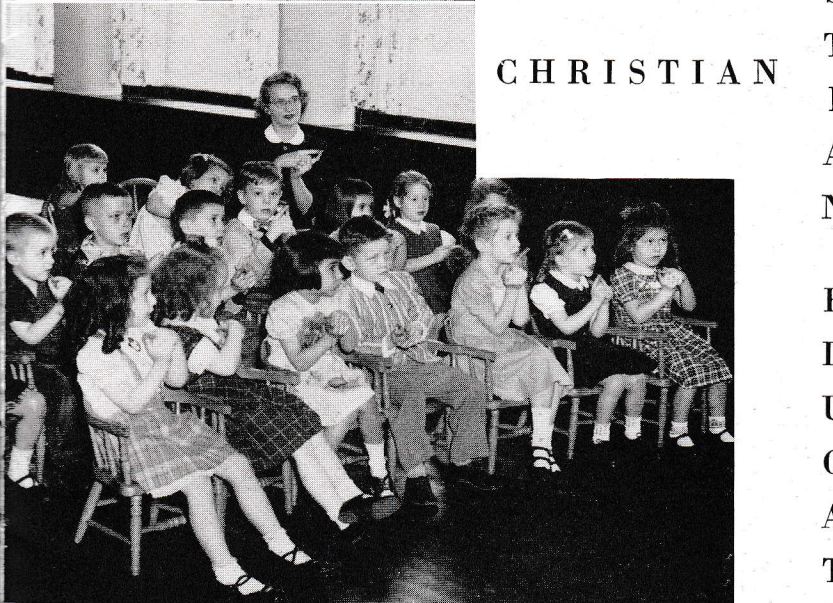
In 1927 the 75th Anniversary was celebrated and the printed record carries these words:

"The culmination of this celebration was a resolution passed by the more than three hundred members present at the banquet—to rebuild our church so that it may be adapted to the modern needs of the church, especially to meet the needs of the Sunday School and young people, and the work in general."

On this the Hundredth Anniversary of the First Presbyterian Church of Decatur, Illinois, we are of the same mind. Plans are now in the hands of a building committee calling for restoration and adaptation of the properties to meet the needs of the day.







CHRISTIAN

EDUCATION

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"In The Beginning . . ." 1852



THE SAMUEL POWERS HOME

THE FIRST Presbyterian Church of Decatur was founded one hundred years ago, on May 1, 1852. "In the Beginning," four families—the Hopkins, the Nicholsons, the Leibys, and the Maffits, banded together to form the initial group, and under the guidance of Rev. Robert H. Lilly, representing the Presbytery of Palestine and the Synod of Indiana, were received into the Church.

Decatur, named after the naval hero, Stephen Decatur, was described at that time as "a small town of 600 souls." There were no railroads, so the settling of pioneers in the town was accomplished "after wending their way across the prairie lands of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois." Two years later, though, the Great Western railroad (now the Wash) and the Illinois Central entered

Decatur and the city's growth was inevitable.

The organization of the First Presbyterian church in Decatur was accomplished mostly through the efforts of David Hopkins, who only a short time before had traveled the distance from the homestead near Kingston, Ohio with his family in a horse-drawn carriage that brought up the rear of a train of covered wagons. At Kingston, he had been an elder in the church.

Very soon, Elder Hopkins set about interesting other members of the Presbyterian faith, who had settled here, in organizing The First Presbyterian church. Ten persons, eager for a church home, had brought their certificates of former membership in the Presbyterian church across the prairie land with them. On May 1, they assembled in the residence of Samuel Powers and the church had its beginning.

Those ten charter members were: David Hopkins; his wife, Catherine; his daughter, Lydia; and his adopted daughter, Miss Nancy Ager, from the Presbyterian Church of Congo, Ohio; Mrs. Mary Leiby, from the Church of Circleville, Ohio; Robert Maffitt, and his wife, Elizabeth, from Findlay, Ohio; Miss Agnes McCormick, from the Presbyterian Church of Watertown, Virginia; John Nicholson, and his wife, Julia, from Point Lick Church, Kentucky.

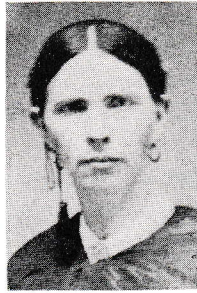
AERIAL VIEW OF DECATUR IN 1878



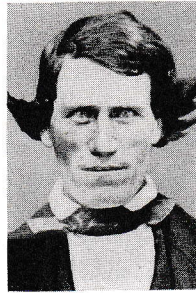
The Founders



LYDIA HOPKINS



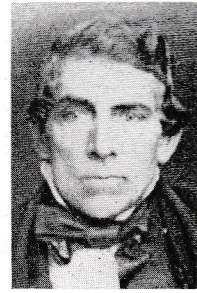
NANCY AGER



JOHN NICHOLSON



JULIA NICHOLSON



ROBERT S. MAFFITT



ELIZABETH M.
MAFFITT

(Missing)

MISS AGNES MCCORMICK

(Missing)

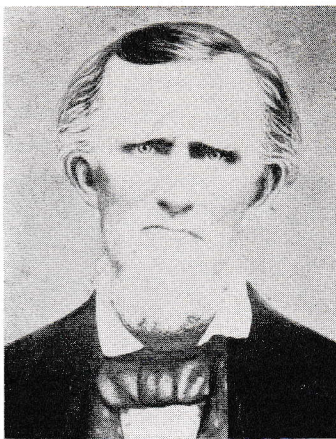
MRS. MARY LEIBY

DAVID HOPKINS, elected and installed as Ruling Elder, recorded this statement: "On the following Sabbath the Lord's Supper was administered by Reverend A. F. Pratt, serving the Church under a missionary appointment of the Board of Domestic Missions of the General Assembly."

Rev. Pratt ministered in the church one year while these ardent Presbyterians worshipped in the new brick courthouse on the southwest corner of Lincoln Square which had replaced the log one made famous by Abraham Lincoln (now preserved in Fairview Park).

In May, 1853, Rev. David Monfort succeeded Rev. Pratt, and services were held in the Masonic Hall and the Baptist church. Before he left, 24 new members were added to the roll and the church was transferred from the Presbytery of Palestine to the Presbytery of Sangamon.

Rev. E. W. Thayer, the next supply pastor, served three years—1854-1857. During that time, the members felt an urgent need for a "House of Worship" and in 1855, Dr. J. N. Roberts, an Elder, gave to the church the use of a lot on the northeast corner of East Main and State Street—across the street east from where the Millikin National Bank is now located. At a cost of \$400, a temporary building was erected, and used until the time when a new brick building could be completed on the southeast corner of West Prairie and North Church streets where the new million dollar Y.M.C.A. building is today.



DAVID HOPKINS
First Ruling Elder



CATHERINE HOPKINS

Meanwhile, the congregation had invited Rev. P. D. Young to supply the pulpit for one year, beginning May 1, 1857.

During his service, the little church received 16 new members and the number of communicants was increased to 85. In the first month he was pastor, the session "Resolved that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper be administered quarterly," which plan is in use today.

Rev. J. M. Oviatt, the fourth supply minister, succeeded Rev. Young, and one of his first activities was to purchase a new book in which the church records were transcribed. This book, which covered the years 1852-1883, constitutes the only existing record of church activities during the time of its organization.

Springtime of the following year brought the completion of the first church building—"a most imposing brick structure for its day." On March 6, 1859, the town of Decatur rejoiced with the 111 members of the congregation as they formally dedicated their church.

REV. OVIATT, whose first year of work had been so outstanding, was unanimously elected the first regular pastor on March 31, 1859. The church continued to grow and prosper, and 36 new members were added. Among them were Samuel Powers and his wife, Caroline, and James Millikin and his wife, Anna. Mr. Powers was a prominent landowner. His brother, Orlando Powers, who joined the church later, was founder of the Powers Grand Opera house, where at one time, the church held its meetings. Millikin, of the "Banking House of James Millikin," founded, among other things, the Millikin (National) Bank and The James Millikin University.

In the spring of 1861, this "music loving" congregation authorized the chorister to "pay \$50 per year to any person employed by the choir to play the new melodeon." Two years later, Rev. Oviatt, who had done much toward building the church, resigned because of ill health.

For the next three years, Rev. D. C. Marquis helped organize and extend the work of the church. With his suggestion, the Session, in 1864, adopted the policy of taking up a collection each Sunday, the gifts to be distributed between benevolences and the funds required by the working church.

Rev. Marquis, who later became a professor at McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago, was succeeded by Rev. Samuel Conn, who served for a year. Though his service was short-lived—he resigned the following year due to ill health—79 new members were added to his pastorate and the outstanding event of the time was the baptizing of Silas E. McClelland, now listed as "Historian Emeritus" of the church.

Next in line for the pulpit was Rev. J. E. Moffatt, who served for four years. During his reign as minister, 61 new members were added and a great interest was developed in missions. The Sunday School educated, and afterwards supported, a native Chinese, Shung Sheck.

The Rev. Robert Mackenzie served the church from 1874 until 1876 and it was during his term that the first signs of "outgrowing" the brick church were shown. Audiences, too large for the brick church, crowded in to hear this man who was "loved and honored, not only by his church members, but by the townspeople as well."

Succeeding Rev. Mackenzie was Rev. W. H. Prestley, and for the next 13 years he was the only pastor to serve the church. His sermons are described as being tinged with a touch of sadness, at times, pertaining to prospects of gaining salvation. But religion was still the "staff of life" to the majority of the families in the period just prior to the Gay '90's. "Father always returned thanks at the table, and nobody started to eat until that was finished. Sunday was Sunday. And if, upon rare occasion, a church service was missed, a form of prayer service was held in the home."

The strength upon which the foundations of the First Presbyterian Church were laid was evident. The City of Decatur now boasted of nearly 25,000 people, industry had taken its hold and three railroads passed through the City. And while Decatur had more than tripled its population of 1850, the Presbyterian Church had multiplied by more than a hundred in membership. "In the beginning, there were ten—now there were 1100."

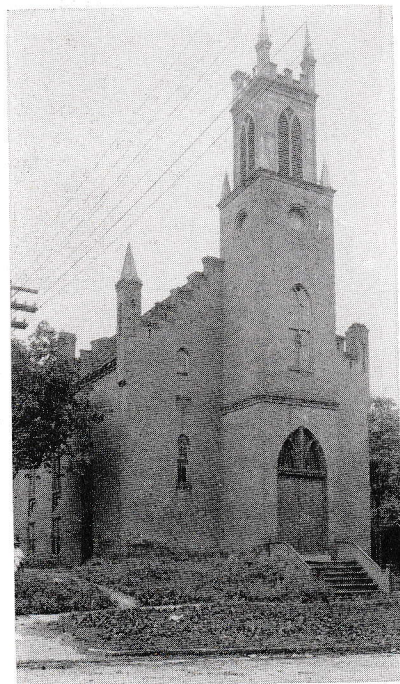
Under Rev. Prestley's guidance, the church continued to grow and prosper. A mission, known as the "College Street Chapel," was organized to serve the north part of the city.

Prior to this time there is no record of a church parsonage. Mrs. Lamyra Powers Wilkinson gave to the church a brick residence, located in the 100 block on West North Street, and this is believed to be the first manse. It was later sold and a new manse was erected, at 833 W. North Street. The manse in use today, located at 425 W. North Street, was purchased in 1939.

Dr. Prestley, after serving longer than any previous pastor, resigned in May, 1889.



LOG CABIN—FIRST COURT HOUSE IN DECATUR



THE FIRST CHURCH BUILDING
(COMPLETED IN 1859)

WHEN TO the pulpit came Rev. William Hitt Penhallegon, whose pastorate continued uninterruptedly for 24 years. In the first year of his ministry, services were held in the Powers Grand Opera house until a new and adequate building could be erected. The need for the present-day church had been realized and was being fulfilled.

The cornerstone of the church today was laid on October 9, 1890 and on Sunday morning, July 10, 1892, Dr. Penhallegon preached the first sermon in the new church. It was erected, and equipped at a cost of \$85,000 and was dedicated free of debt. The "per-person" cost was estimated at about \$80 per member.

The building committee for the structure included Dr. W. A. Barnes, S. S. Jack, W. T. Wells, C. G. Powers, T. T. Roberts, Attorney C. A. Ewing and Rev. Penhallegon.

Nine years later, in 1901, James Millikin University, a Presbyterian affiliated college, was founded. James Millikin, a member of this church who saw the need for an institution of higher learning, was the principal benefactor to the school which bears his name. Other members and friends of the Presbyterian church dug deep into their pockets to help make the university a reality. It opened its doors for the first classes in September, 1903.

The first foreign missionary to be fully supported by the church was sponsored in 1908. Dr. Ralph G. Mills, son of Mr. and Mrs. A. H. Mills, who grew up in Decatur and was a member of the First Presbyterian Church, was that missionary. While a student at the University of Illinois, he became interested in medical missionary work.

Answering a call as a medical missionary to Korea, he and his wife left San Francisco in 1908. He was stationed at Kang Kai at first, and later transferred to Seoul, where he worked on the staff of the Severance Hospital, and filled the chairs of Bacteriology and Pathology in the college. He carried on research in the bacteriology field and did much to combat Oriental diseases.

In 1918, at his request, the Board of Foreign Missions released him to accept a position as head of the Department of Pathology in the Peking, China, Union Medical College of the Rockefeller Foundation. He remained there until returning to the United States in 1929. Back in his hometown, Dr. Mills was in private practice until his death in October, 1944.

To further the work of the church during this time, another mission, called the Westminster Chapel, had been established on the corner of West Macon and South Haworth streets. Its membership grew until it was necessary to erect a new building. The College Street Chapel continued to serve the Presbyterian families in the

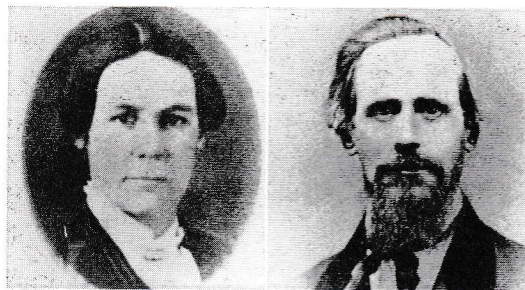
north end of town until 1913, when it was sold to the Seventh Day Adventists for \$4,000—with the right to retain all musical instruments, the song books, and the coal in the basement.

The Westminster Chapel was formed into a church in 1908 with 67 charter members. Continuing its growth, Westminster Church "moved" into the first unit of its new building at West Main and Park Place in 1917.

After the resignation of Dr. Penhallegon in 1913, Rev. C. E. Jenney, who came to Decatur from the Grace Presbyterian Church of St. Louis, became the pastor. A big advancement in church work, particularly in the mission field was made during this time.

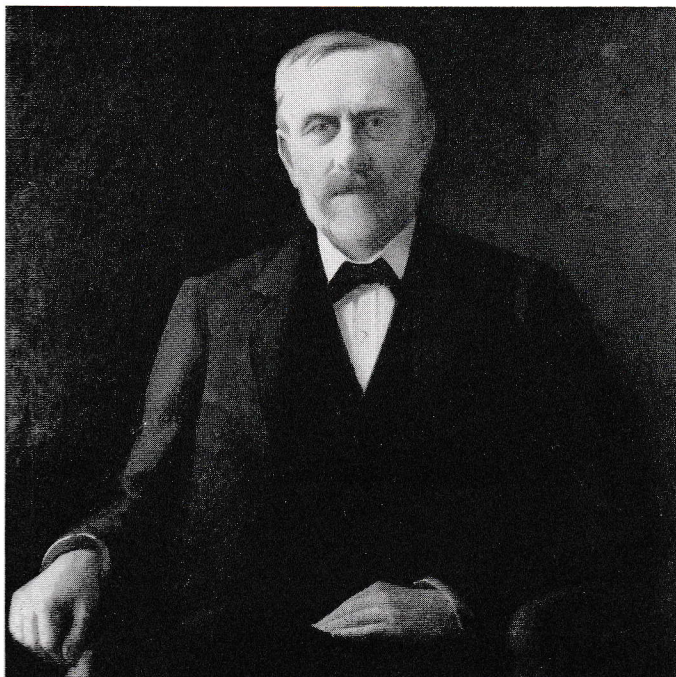
Encouragement and financial support was given to a missionary minister in Peking, China—the missionary was John R. Lyons, brother of Elder Elmer M. Lyons. He and his wife and children remained in China for eight years before returning home.

World War I took Rev. Jenney into overseas duty as a chaplain in the U. S. Army and during his

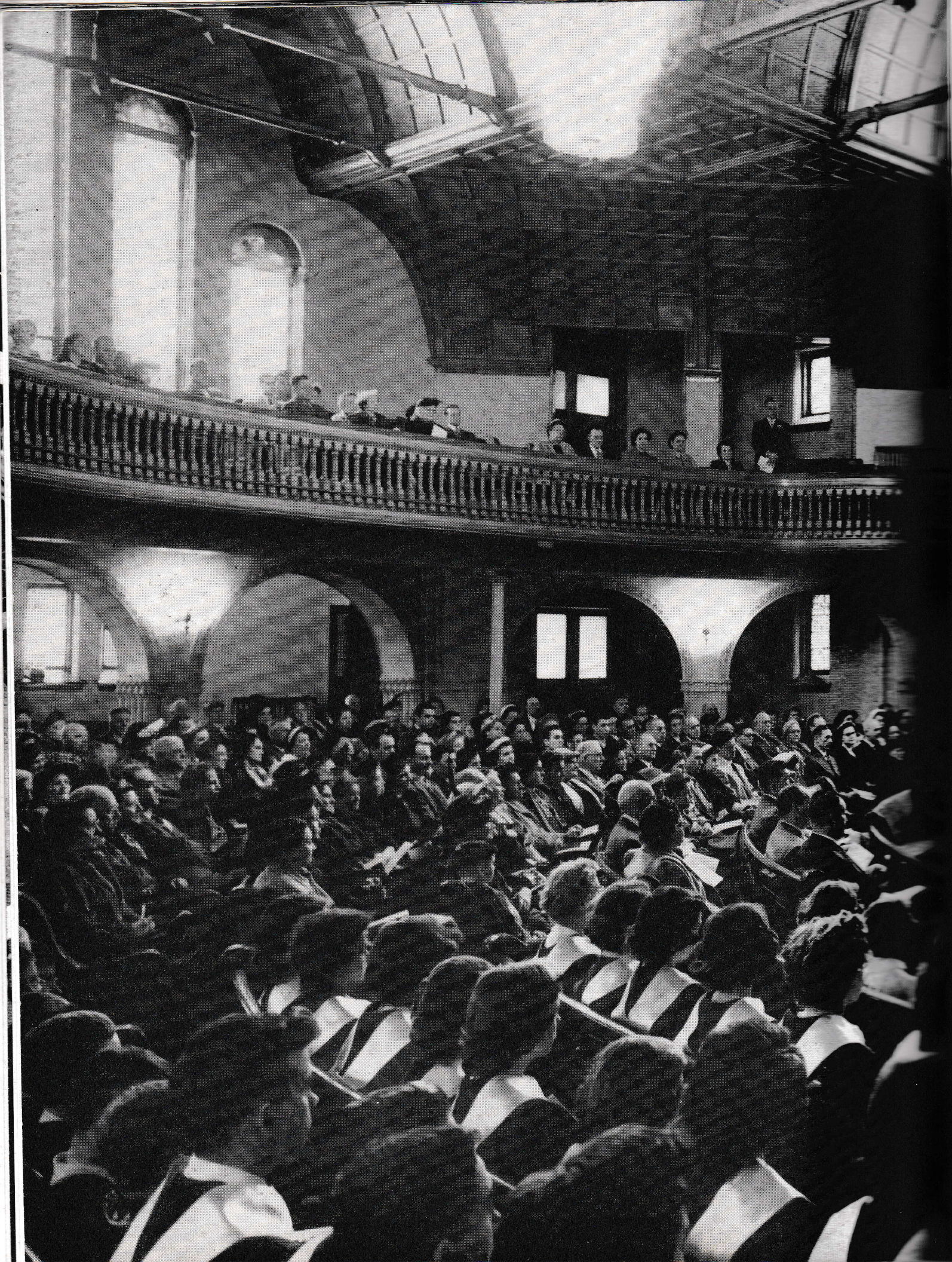


CAROLINE POWERS

SAMUEL POWERS



JAMES MILLIKIN



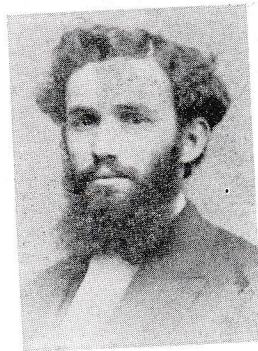




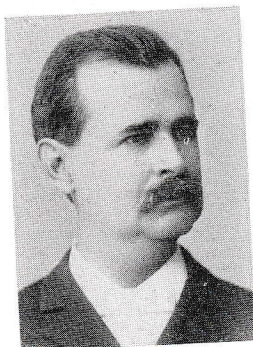
COSTUMES TYPICAL OF THE GAY 90'S ERA (Posed for Centennial Pageant)



REV. D. C. MARQUIS
1863—1866



REV. J. E. MOFFATT
1869—1873



REV. W. H. PRESTLEY
1876—1889

absence, Rev. W. S. Dando served as pastor. The church dedicated a service flag in honor of 61 members who had enlisted in the armed forces.

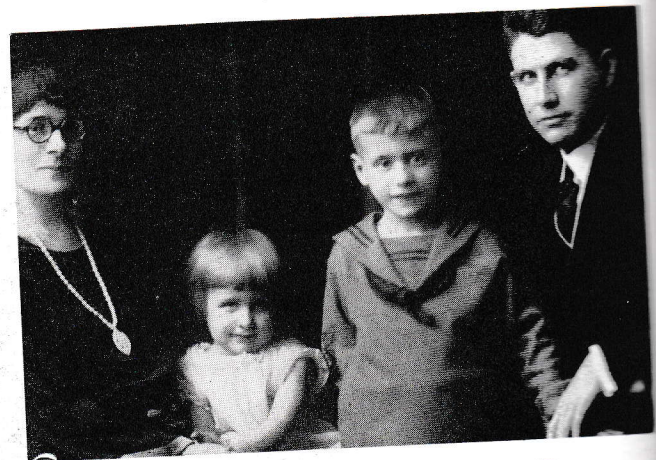
After the armistice, Rev. Jenney returned to active service in the church, but terminated his duties in 1922, when he accepted a call to the First Presbyterian Church in St. Louis. His years of service, and that of Rev. Dando, showed an increase of nearly 200 members to the congregation.

Rev. Edward W. Clippinger, ninth regular pastor, came to the church November 1, 1922 from the Westminster Church of Dayton, Ohio, and to his lot fell the task of directing the 75th anniversary of the church (1927) and of easing the pain and hardships suffered during the depression years.

The 75th anniversary of the founding of the First Presbyterian Church was celebrated May 1, 2, and 3. Dr. C. E. Jenney, the only surviving former pastor, delivered the anniversary sermon. Dr. Silas E. McClelland gave a historical review of the church which was later printed and is used much for reference.

Dr. McClelland, dean of the Elders today, has a service record of 42 years as a member of the Session. When poor health prevented him from continuing in active work in 1938, he was elected to the position of Elder Emeritus. At the present time, he also is termed Historian Emeritus of the church. In addition to his medical profession, Dr. McClelland established himself as one of the civic leaders of the city in both business and education, being chairman of the Board of Directors of the Millikin National Bank, and a member of the Board of Trustees of Millikin University.

Featured in the anniversary observance, which had as its motto "Old enough to have achieved much; young enough to attempt greater things for God," was a pageant, reception, and banquet.



CHINA MISSIONARY—THE JOHN LYONS FAMILY



DR. RALPH G. MILLS
Korean Missionary

REV. CLIPPINGER worked hard, in the years preceding the depression, to bring about the building of an addition to the church. Finally, in 1928, the completion of the project—adding a new gymnasium and an all-purpose room above it—was effected.

With his resignation from the pulpit in 1936, Rev. Clippinger retired from the ministry and a few years later was made Pastor Emeritus of the church. In the first nine years of his ministry, the church had continued to grow in strength. Though there had been a slight drop immediately following the excitement of World War I, the lean years of 1932 and 1933 affected the church seriously. Cutbacks were made in all phases of the budget.

With only a glimmer of light as to the financial future of the nation, Rev. Elmer E. Freed responded to the call of the First Presbyterian Church and was installed as pastor in September, 1936.

Three years after the arrival of Rev. Freed, Miss Edna M. Bunn, organist, retired. She had served for nearly 47 years, and first began playing for the church in the fall of 1892. Five years later, she “interrupted” her service for a two-year period to study under Harry Rowe Shelley in New York. Upon her retirement in 1939, the Session made her Organist Emeritus and presented her with a key to the church organ.

The financial condition of the church had yet to reach its low tide; the road back to prosperity was to be a rocky one, but after the first two years the church showed a gradual recovery.

In 1939, the present manse was purchased. This new home of the Freeds was soon to be a meeting place where both young and old spent many happy hours.

At this time some changes were made in the official groups of the church. The rotation system affecting elders was adopted. The Women’s Federation organized with Mrs. Carl Dick, Sr., as its first president. Its purpose was to unify the work of all the women’s organizations.

As the nation prospered, so did the church. The Endowment Fund was increased \$4,000 and soon each family in the congregation received the official magazine of the church, “The Presbyterian.”

Vast improvements in the church were planned and repairs on the church building, costing \$18,000 were made.

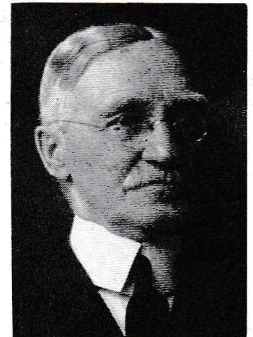
When the Protestant Churches of America set up the Restoration Fund for rebuilding churches in war-torn countries, rehabilitating churches in this country, etc., the assigned quota for the First Presbyterian Church was \$11,000 . . . The congregation over-subscribed the total by \$350 which indicated that prosperity was again on its way.



COLLEGE STREET CHAPEL



WESTMINSTER CHAPEL



REV. W. H. PENHALLEGON
1889—1913



REV. C. E. JENNEY
1913—1922

During World War II, 135 members of the church served their country in the armed forces.

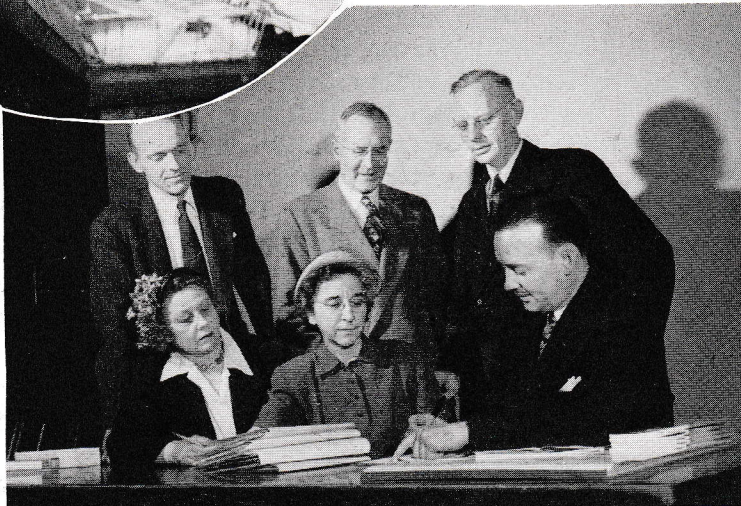
In 1948 a new curriculum for Presbyterian Sunday schools was adopted and brought improved educational ideas to the church. Beautifully illustrated textbooks were used with a presentation to the students within their interest and comprehension.

For The Future . . .

The church dreams, lays out plans, works hard, then dreams again—a never ending process looking forward to accomplishments in structure and spirit; in public relations and prayer; for youth, children and adults. It is a people's church where laymen function in the reformed tradition toward strong features of fellowship and faith.



**Long Range
Planning
Board**



**Church
Staff**



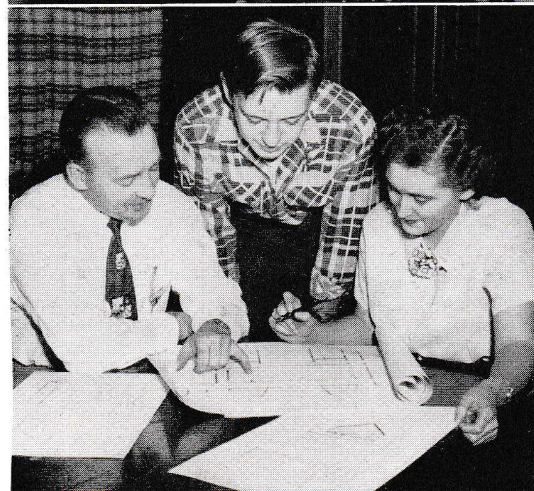
**Volunteer
Workers**



**Junior High
Westminster
Committee**



**Senior High
Planning
Committee**



**Women's
Federation
Board**





KIMTERIAN—SQUARE DANCING



CHURCH POT LUCK

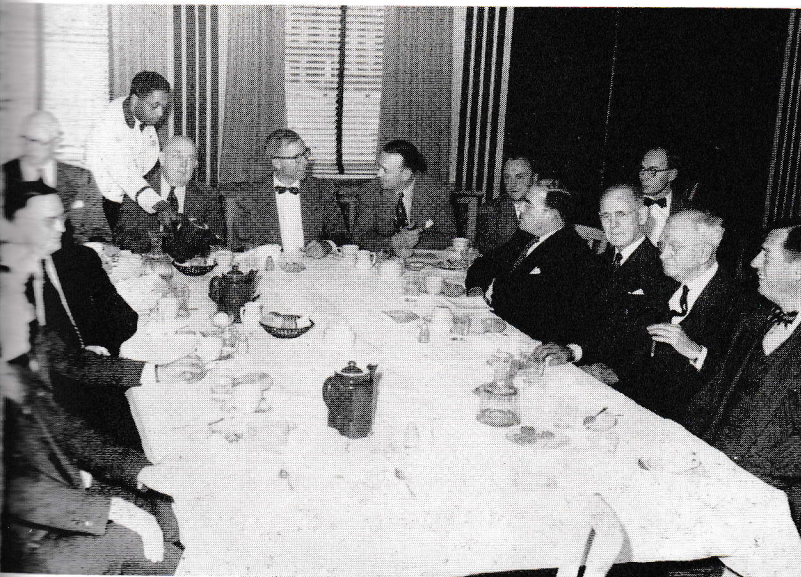
Activities



JUNIOR HIGH—LANDSCAPING



BOY SCOUTS—FIRST AID



"JAM SESSION"



FUN & FROLIC

Celebrating The Past—Working For The Future

Today's work in First Church is characterized by plans and achievements. A long range plan has been built by committees and boards to encompass objectives of growth for the years which lie immediately ahead. The four main areas of advance planning are (1) Faith and Life (2) Stewardship (3) Fellowship and (4) Public Relations. The work of church groups and committees are assigned by the various official boards in keeping with their natural functions. We look forward to filling 1,000 important positions in the life of the church with lay leadership. Already objectives of the plan are being accomplished and charted as finished. Thus, in the midst of continual study pointing to the years ahead the following accomplishments are already evident. A church, justly proud of its past, clears the way so that tomorrow will be thankful for today.

WORK IN PROCESS

MINISTRY

1. A Regular Ministry from the pulpit with a steadily growing congregation.
2. A service in baptism, communion, new membership, marriage, special seasonal observances and services for the bereaved.
3. Seven days a week counseling, visitation, shepherding through 42 neighborhoods, friendly assistance to the needy and a church open each day for private devotions.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

1. A complete Sunday Church-School with classes for all persons of all ages with a staff of 51 teachers and leaders under contract. The faith and life curriculum—the best known.
2. A Westminster Fellowship program for youth showing promise of real devotion and service.
3. Boy scouts and cub scouts.
4. Vacation bible school.
5. Summer camps and conferences, leadership training, youth budget and gym program.

THE MINISTRY OF MUSIC

1. Five choirs under fine leadership.
2. Inspiring organ music at all services.
3. Thursday noon organ devotions.

GROUP LIFE

1. An active women's federation with nine circles.
2. Kimterians for young married women.
3. Business and Professional women's club.
4. Women's guild.
5. A Men's club employing the every man plan—Jam Sessions.
6. Fun and frolic.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

1. A weekly flyer to a mailing of 1000.
2. A lighted tower—a message in every dark night.

CHRISTIAN OUTREACH

Support to national missions, foreign missions, Christian education, pensions, American Bible Society, the National Council of Churches, Decatur Church Council, the Illinois Church Council and to local charities.

100th Anniversary Celebration Committee

GENERAL CHAIRMAN

JACK POWERS

Advisor Ex-Officio

Rev. Jay M. Logan

Historian Emeritus

Dr. Silas McClelland

Finance

C. C. Miller

Music

Howard E. Akers

Pageant

Mrs. Robert Harlan, Director
Herbert Joys
Mrs. Harold Dill
Mrs. Mary Vincent
E. B. Penhallegon
Carl Swartz

Directory and Brochure

Robert Harlan

Research Committee

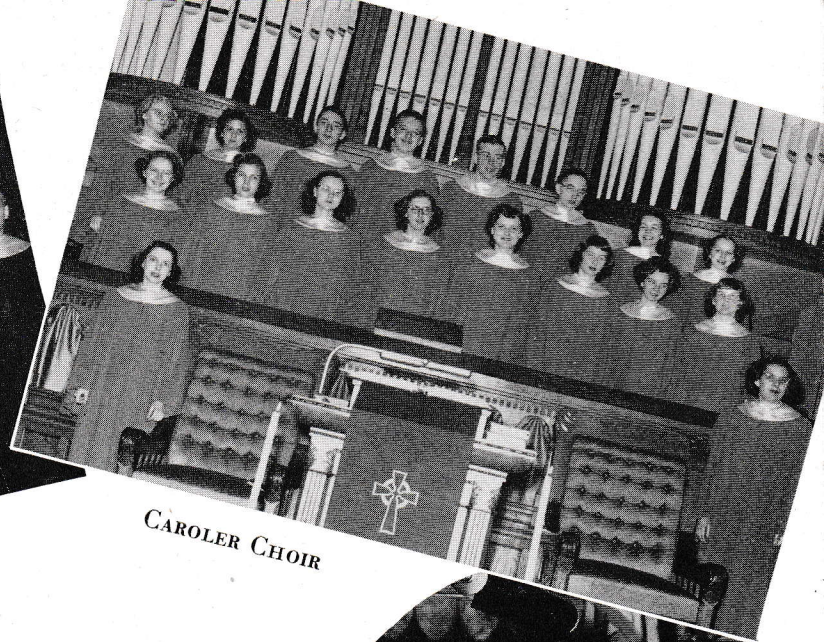
Miss May Boland
Miss Jenny Wells

Sunday Dinner Arrangements

Mrs. H. D. Greider
Mrs. Carl Dick



CHERUB CHOIR



CAROLER CHOIR



ARCHER AND ALICE LOGAN
Soloists

The Choirs

SANCTUARY CHOIR



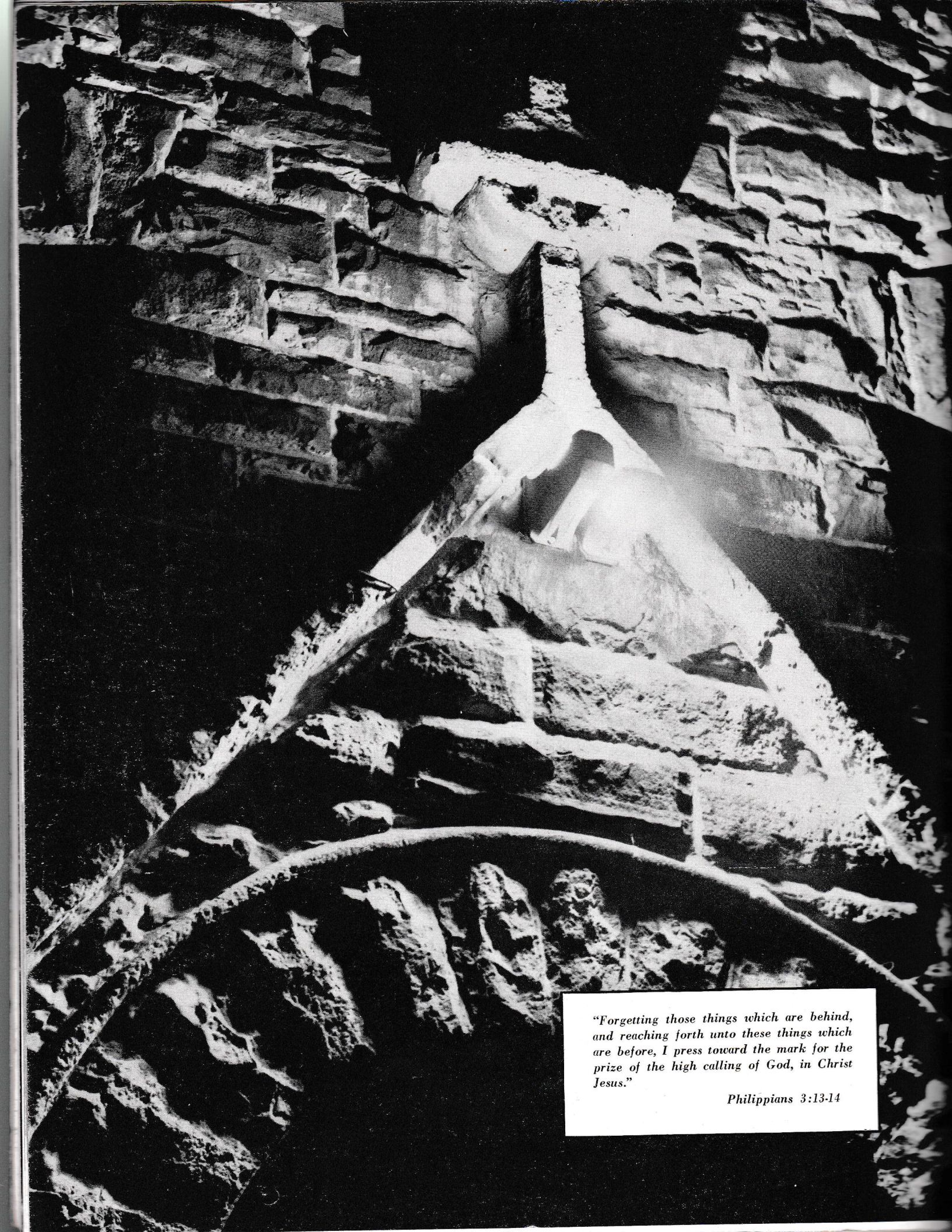
MRS. MORRIS LOWE
Organist

SERAPHIM CHOIR



CHERUBIM CHOIR





*"Forgetting those things which are behind,
and reaching forth unto these things which
are before, I press toward the mark for the
prize of the high calling of God, in Christ
Jesus."*

Philippians 3:13-14