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Jan 10, 1898
Rev. J. C. Haswell,
Pastor.

"A HISTORY OF THE ORGANIZATION OF THE PRESBY CHURCH."

At the fall meeting of the Highland Presbytery in 1872 the Rev. I. T. Whitmore was appointed to visit Effingham and preach and ascertain if the people wished to establish a Presbyterian Church.

He came in November and preached on Saturday evening and the Sabbath following in the old school house, then standing on the northwest corner of the Keplinger farm, east of town. After services the following persons expressed a desire to form a Church organization: Peter Carmichael, Edward T. Ayer, Ruben Ferguson, Lucy Ferguson, Alex. Cameron, Flora Cameron, Maggie Fraser, Isabella Fraser, Jane Stewart, Nancy Speedy and Sarah McGillivray.

Peter Carmichael and Reuben Ferguson were elected elders, and Edward T. Ayer and Alex. Cameron deacons.

The young church had to depend on visitors and transient ministers for their preaching, until January, 1874, when the Church was incorporated, and the services of the Rev. S. N. St. John were secured as stated supply. At this time the following names were added to the church roll: Mrs. Lizzie Anderson, Mrs. Sarah Hawk, Miss Sadilla E. Hawk, Miss Eda V. Hawk, Francis Loomis, Alex. Walker, Thomas Temple, and wife and Mrs. Frances Van Wagoner.

About this time the meetings were changed from the school house to the Central Branch depot. Previous to the change a Sabbath school had been maintained in the school house, with Francis Loomis as superintendent. Also a singing school or choir practice, in which W. M. Walker and Bert Loomis took turns in leading.

On June 6th, 1874 a meeting of the congregation was held to devise a way and means for the erection of a suitable house of worship. A resolution was passed to build a church not less than 20 by 32, and J. R. Loomis, R. Ferguson and Peter Carmichael were appointed a committee to solicit funds for that purpose; the subscription to be paid in three payments; viz., cash, three and six months.

On June 20th another meeting was held, at which the soliciting committee reported as follows: Peter Carmichael, \$287.50; R. Ferguson, \$210.50, and J. R. Loomis, \$115.00. They also reported that four lots, (the ones now occupied by W. M. Walker's residence), could be bought for \$50.00. At this meeting it was decided to build a church on the lots named, said church to be 24 by 36 and 14 feet high.

Soon after this, in August or the first of September, during Sabbath afternoon service, the advance guard of the grasshopper calamity began to alight on the depot platform, and by the time the services were concluded they were coming thick and fast. This for a time stopped all thoughts of a new church building.

In 1876 the building was begun, but was not finished until the following year. It was formally dedicated to the service of God December 9th, 1877. Rev. Dr. S. Hill, of Kansas City, assisted Rev. St. John in the dedicatory services.

Rev. St. John severed his connection with the church in 1878, and was succeeded by the Rev. Frank E. Sheldon.

In 1879 a committee composed of Peter Carmichael, Robert McPhilimy and Abram Stever completed arrangements for the purchasing of the present site for the new church building, which was erected in 1881. The old building was sold to the Baptist organization.. The new building was 32 by 50, built by Andy McNeil, C. E. Green and GMSnyder.

In 1884 F. E. Sheldon was succeeded by Rev. D. McLeod, and he by Rev. Dewey Jones, 1885. Rev. J. S. Hunter came on the field in 1887, followed by Rev. Hugh P. Wilson, who was installed pastor June 18th, 1891.

The church then purchased from T. C. Bennie the property now occupied by Geo. H. Ellis, for a parsonage. From 1893 to May, 1895, Rev. R. A. Paden was pastor. The present pastor, J. Candlish Haswell, D. D., came on this field from Larned, Kansas, November 1st, 1896.

This winter the church building has been remodeled, an alcove, 12 by 14, built in the rear end for the choir, which placed them directly behind the pulpit. The pulpit is newly furnished with a set of fine, solid oak chairs and pulpit stand. The church is papered with sage green ingrain paper with decorated ceiling, and the wood work all finished in shades of green to harmonize with the paper. The window casings are remodeled in a more modern style. The pews are newly finished in Oak to match the other furniture. The entrance of the church has been extended to the entire width of the building, and finished as same as the main room. The hall way also contains a stairway to the bellfry and a closet.

Taken as a whole they have one of the neatest and best finished pieces of church property in the county, and when finished will be paid for the church out of debt. The committee who superintended the repairs were W. M. Walker, Thomas McPhilimy and A. M. Ellsworth. The Young Ladies Aid Society of the church pay for the papering and curtains for the church. This is the second time they have papered it. The ladies of the congregation furnish the carpets and matting. They have also been active in repairing, having papered the church once before.

The building is now warmed by a furnace heater, is well lighted, and is now one of the most comfortable and pleasant rooms in the city.

The present board of trustees is, Thomas McPhilimy, George Mackay, and W. E. Knight. The session is J. C. Haswell, Moderator, John Derby, F. M. March and A. M. Ellsworth, Elders.

The building will be rededicated next Sabbath, Jan. 16th, 1898, at eleven o'clock A. M., and a cordial invitation is extended to all to attend and participate in these exercises.

E. T. Archer, for construction of a water works which was completed in 1927.

The first fire truck for the city was purchased in 1928. Before that, only a two-wheeled cart with buckets hanging from it was available as fire-fighting apparatus.

Dom Richter had served as fire chief in 1927, and in January of 1928, A. J. Sells was chief with C. E. Sells as secretary, and J. A. Harman, assistant chief and treasurer of the volunteer department.

A partial list of men who have served the city as city marshalls (i.e. superintendents) would include Bill Acheson, Bill Allen, Jim Hall, John Burg, George Bolinger, and Edmund Stucker.

In March, 1961, the city purchased its present pumper truck with 500 gal capacity for \$8,953.07.

The writer was unable to find definite information about the first telephone system in Effingham, but an advertising leaflet printed by the New Leaf in 1899 lists two telephone and telegraph lines. Long-time residents agree that John C. Valentine surely started the first telephone company and when he retired his son, John Albert, assumed operation. A partial list of operators would include Clara Snyder Azlein, Mame Hawk, Geneva Williams Jackson, her daughters Olive Jackson and Juanita Lewis (Mrs. Jackson worked as operator 23 years), Belva Mackey, Bertha Sells, Zelda Kelley, Muriel Wolfe, Maude Murray, Mattie Valentine, Alice Beatley and Mrs. Clare Joyce. Prior to 1943 the Valentine family sold the company to Herbert Welch who in turn sold to the Northern Telephone Company about 1955. Phone service in Effingham is now provided by the Continental Telephone Company, Wentworth, Mo., operating as the Kansas Telephone Co. with the business office in Nortonville.

EFFINGHAM CEMETERY

Effingham had no cemetery for the public until 1880. In 1879, Col. Milton R. Benton, Francis Loomis and W. R. Tucker discussed the need for an established cemetery at the Tucker home. Loomis had a son who had been killed in a railroad accident, and his body and that of Loomis' wife had been buried on their farm. Two small daughters of the Abram Stever family were buried on their farm. In March of 1880, Loomis, Stever, Tucker, Alex Walker, Dr. Martin, D. L. Wilson and W. S. Knight, organized a cemetery association and it was chartered. Curtis Benton bought 4 acres (north section) from Major Downs for \$400 and deeded them to the association. Lots were priced at \$10 with dues charged yearly for maintenance of the lots. Stever, Henry Snyder and Tucker were entitled by lot to have first, second and third choice of lots. The first burial in the cemetery was that of a child, Mamie Mueller, who burned to death in a prairie fire on the M. C. Adams farm. J. G. Wolverton suggested that the evergreens be planted around the cemetery.

W. H. Tucker was the first secretary of the association, serving until 1883, when D. R. Jewel took his place. The present board of directors are: Robert J. Hawk, president; Clare Bolinger, secretary-treasurer; Leslie Delfelder and Ralph

Schurman. A. C. Wolfe cares for the grounds and Edmund Stucker assists in opening graves with the city's power digger. Lots now sell for \$120 which includes perpetual care.

History of Effingham Churches

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

According to a History of Effingham, written by Mrs. John D. Hawk and published in an Effingham New Leaf in 1927, the people of the town used to gather on Sunday morning at the depot and conduct a Sunday school and at times preaching services. Just south of the depot, Curtis Benton, father of Mrs. C. L. Cummings, had a grain house, from which he shipped grain he had purchased, and when the building was not filled with grain, services were conducted there. At times, services were held in the freight room of the depot.

The Presbyterian Church is the oldest Protestant church in Effingham and could be considered the 'mother' of the churches following, contributing members to them and housing each during their organizational meetings and their first services which followed. In the fall of 1872, Rev. J. T. Whitmore was appointed by the Highland Presbytery, to visit Effingham and hold services and ascertain if the people wished to establish a Presbyterian Church. In November he preached on a Saturday evening in a school house standing on the northwest corner of the Keplinger farm, a half mile east of town and the next day, November 10, 1872, following Sunday services in the school, the following persons expressed a desire to form a church organization: Peter Carmichael, Edward T. Ayer, Ruben and Lucy Ferguson, Alexander Walker, Alexander and Flora Cameron, Maggie and Isabel Frazer, Mrs. Jane Stewart, Mrs. Nancy Speedy and Sarah McGillivray. There are no known descendants of these persons living in the immediate area now. Carmichael and Ferguson were elected elders, Ayer and Cameron, deacons.

The early church services were held in the 'ware' room of the depot. The church was incorporated in January 1874 with the following names added to the church roll: Mrs. Daniel (Sarah) Hawk, Mrs. Lizzie Anderson, Miss Sedelia E. Hawk, Miss Eda V. Hawk, Francis Loomis, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Temple, and Mrs. Frances Van Wagoner. Rev. S. N. St. John was secured as stated supply. In the spring of 1876, a one room structure, 24 x 36-ft. was erected on the corner of Main and Seabury streets (where the James Courtney residence is now) and services were conducted there until August 10, 1881, when the congregation built a church in the block west of the City Park (where the Fair Barns now stand). The one room structure was sold to the Baptists, who met for several years and when they disbanded the building was moved west of the Ferguson store and used by him as a warehouse. It was destroyed by fire in 1901.

The 1881 Presbyterian Church was built on lots donated by Rev. F. E. Sheldon, who served as the first minister there. In 1882, there were 73 members. In 1968, there are 143 communicant members. The church services were conducted

in this building for the next 30 years. In 1911 the congregation determined there was a necessity for a larger building and on September 12, 1912, the cornerstone of the present church was laid and on June 29, 1913, it was dedicated. The structure, on the southeast corner of Seabury and seventh streets, has an auditorium seating 225 and the adjoining Sunday School room will seat 100 more. The former church building was torn down and the lumber built into a barn on the S. O. Paige farm.

A list of ministers serving the church since its beginning includes the following: S. M. St. John, Frank E. Sheldon, D. McLeod, Dewey Jones, J. S. Hunter, Hugh P. Wilson, R. A. Paden, J. C. Haswell, W. M. Howell, H. L. Saunders, J. R. Browne, W. E. Beattie, S. A. Whysong, Wm. J. Cady, DD, J. L. Underwood, L. H. Eakes, L. V. Schermerhorn, E. L. Coombs, (deceased while pastor), Rev. Ernest L. Brown, Eric Allen, J. H. Beadle, Bartlett Hess, A. J. Hall, W. W. Pfoutz, R. J. Elwood, W. C. Templeton (deceased while pastor), A. J. Dressler, E. L. Brown, J. Franklin Mitchell (deceased while pastor), Grant Browning, John Hoff and Randal Denny (student ministers), Lee Douglas, George Clark, Alfred Cheney and the present pastor Harold J. Wise has been minister to the church since January 16, 1967.

The building has been almost completely redecorated during the last year and a half. The foundation was strengthened and the building re-roofed—the brick exterior cleaned by sand blasting—the interior walls and ceilings repaired and painted, new controlled lighting fixtures resembling early-day gas lights installed in the entrance and sanctuary—a baptismal font installed, new pews secured, new hymnals purchased and the basement Sunday School rooms have been redecorated.

The present board of trustees: Edmund Stucker, chairman, Rev. Wise, Claude Speck, Jack Taliaferro, Covell Hawk, Geo. Hinz, Jr., and James Buttron. Rev. Wise is moderator of the Session with Duane Hawk, clerk, and Everett Hawk, Paul McLenon, Clarence Todd, A. C. Asher, Lee Rader, Leonard Hawk, Charles Lockwood and Dale Nichols, session members. Nelson Miller is Sunday School superintendent and McLenon is secretary-treasurer. Mrs. Clarence Todd is church treasurer and Mrs. A. C. Asher, financial secretary. Mrs. Dan Barnett is church organist. Mrs. Paul McLenon is president of the United Presbyterian Womens organization.

ST. ANN'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

St. Ann's Catholic Church in Effingham, one of the oldest parishes in Eastern Kansas, was established as a mission parish in 1867, served from St. Benedict's Abbey of Atchison. The first missionary priests, Fathers Augustine Wirth, Placidus McKeever and Bomface, came on horseback from Atchison and said masses in private homes, among them the Francis Cullin, Richard Gerety and Lawrence Griffin homes. The first church edifice was begun under Rev. McKeever and completed in 1874. Records show that Catholic and non-Catholic alike contributed toward the building of

this first church. The first resident priest was Father John Begley, who served from Sept., 1876 to Sept., 1884. The first baptismal record is dated 9-22-1876, of Anna Augustive Griffin, with Richard Bergin and Mary Sullivan as sponsors.

The wooden building became inadequate as membership increased and in the summer of 1897, the cornerstone of the present handsome brick church was laid. Father Luke Blahnik was pastor then. The first building was sold in 1898, moved near the railroad and used by John Cavanaugh for an implement store. Later, the Hendrickson-Sharpless Hardware operated from it and in 1923, Charley Hegarty purchased it for his Hegarty Feed and Grain business. The building was sold to John Pinder in 1944, who operated a grain elevator from it. It became the property of the Effingham Co-op Assn. and was torn down about six years ago.

The present church was extensively redecorated in 1952 under Father Patrick O'Shea and exterior improvements were done in 1965. The Altar Society purchased a new electric organ for the church in 1966. The sacristy was renovated by William Sauer in 1967 and plans are now being made for extensive redecoration of the interior.

A Sisters school was begun in 1907, in a two-room building purchased from the Methodist Episcopal South Church and placed west of the church. A four-room school was erected in 1928 under Father Leander Scheier, and modernized in 1952 by Father O'Shea. Benedictine nuns from Mt. St. Scholastica staffed the school last year, Sisters Mary Walters and Mary Cyprian. There were 42 students in grades one through six. These grades will be taught again in 1968-69, but plans are indefinite concerning the coming years.

A new parish house was built south of the church in 1948 by the late Father Matthew Hall and was completely redecorated in 1967 by the Altar Society.

St. Ann's cemetery, laid out in the early 1870's, is across the street, south of the parish house. One of the first burials was that of Thomas O'Meara, February 13, 1879, who died at 90 years of age. He was the brother of P. J. O'Meara, the first merchant in Effingham.

Twenty-four priests have served the parish since its organization. Since Father John Begley, first resident priest, the following pastors have served the church: Fathers John Stader, Louis Flick, Columban Meaney, Michael Rank, Luke Blahnik, Odilo Otott, Fabian Stindell, Alphonse Filian, Gregory Neumayer, Anthony Barr, Paul Berens, Leander Scheier, Odilo Otott (again), Cosmas Schneider, Paul Berens (again), Richard Burns, Matthew Hall, Patrick O'Shea, Michael Carroll, Raphael O'Malley, George Spiegelhalter, and Damian Boeding, the present pastor.

Rev. Boeding, a native of Kelly, was graduated from St. Benedict's in 1948, and came to Effingham in 1966 from Creston, Iowa.

The present church committee members are Owen Linscott, Leo Diebolt, Russell Eckert, and Gerald Wessel. Altar Society officers are: Mrs. Leslie Nottingham, president; Mrs. Herman Schrick, vice president; Mrs. Henry Joe Falk, secre-