

Concerning the Churches and the Pastors of Loup City

Six Religious Denominations Represented in Loup City

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

The First Presbyterian Church of Loup City is now a modern church building, with all the modern conveniences found in the church buildings of today, and under the pastorate of Rev. E. M. Steen is making rapid additions to the membership, about 140 now being on the church roll.

Concerning the history and organization of the church, we quote from the paper read by Mr. Ward VerValin before the annual banquet as follows:

"At the request of Rev. N. C. Johnson, pastor at large of Kearney Presbytery, several christians of Loup City and vicinity, met at the German Lutheran church November 20, 1905, to discuss and advise about organizing a Presbyterian church at Loup City.

"Rev. George A. Ray was present at this meeting and explained what was required of communicants that united with this denomination. It was decided by those present to organize. A petition was prepared by Rev. Ray, to be presented to Kearney presbytery, asking that this church, 'The First Presbyterian church of Loup City,' be enrolled and admitted to its membership.

"At an adjourned meeting on November 28, 1905, it was found that twenty-four persons had signed this petition as charter members, all but three presenting letters from other churches. Of these twenty-four charter members, ten are now resident members of this congregation.

"The names of the charter members as they appeared on the petition, are as follows; Ward VerValin, Mrs. Ward VerValin, Mrs. J. F. Nicolson, Edna Minshull, C. H. Leininger, Mrs. C. H. Leininger, E. G. Taylor, Mrs. E. G. Taylor, Mrs. W. A. Hayes, Sadie Swanson, E. E. Tracy, Mrs. E. E. Tracy, Maud Reynolds, Mrs. A. P. Cully, Lizzie Leininger, Mrs. H. Leininger, Mrs. T. A. Taylor, Henry B. Musser, Harry B. Musser, Esther Musser, Mrs. W. F. Mason, Mrs. T. M. Reed, Mrs. C. C. Cooper and Mrs. Harry B. Musser.

"After being questioned by Rev. Ray, these twenty-four became the first members of this church and proceeded to elect three elders and five trustees.

"The first session consisted of E. G. Taylor, C. H. Leininger and Ward VerValin. These three were ordained at this meeting.

"The first trustees were H. B. Musser, G. S. Leininger, Mrs. A. P. Cully, E. E. Tracy and W. A. Hayes. "At the annual meeting in March, 1908, the number of elders was increased to five, and the next year this was increased to six, the present number. The board of trustees was increased to six in 1909 and at an ad-

joined meeting the same year this board was increased to nine.

"In February 1906, Rev. L. C. McEwen was extended a call to be the first pastor. In December, 1908, presbytery dissolved the pastoral relations between Rev. McEwen and this church.

"Rev. D. W. Montgomery served as pastor from January, 1909, to April, 1911.

"Rev. J. C. Tourtellot was called as Pastor in April, 1911, and continued as pastor until February 1914.

"All three of these pastors were called from Iowa to this state.

"Rev. E. M. Steen, our present Pastor, was extended a call in March, 1914.

"Our first Sunday school met in the German church and was duly organized the first Sunday in January 1906 and Ward VerValin was elected superintendent. I was not able to find a record of the attendance on the day of organizing, but the attendance Sunday before last was over 160 and the collection was \$6.36.

"During the summer and fall of 1906, this building and the manse to the east were erected, the church being dedicated October 21, 1906, by Dr. Thomas L. Sexton, synodical missionary of Nebraska. During this summer and fall of 1915 this building has been raised, new equipment added and a general overhauling and remodeling done at a cost of nearly \$4,000."

Industrial Society.

The Industrial society was organized in the summer of 1906, with a membership of fifteen. The membership is now sixty-two. At the last meeting, there was an attendance of members and visitors, of seventy-four. Mrs. E. G. Taylor was the first president and Mrs. Thompson is the present president.

The Missionary society has been an organization since 1906 and holds regular monthly meetings.

Christian Endeavor Society.

The first president of the C. E. society was Edna Minshull, and the first meeting was in April, 1906. Our present secretary is president of District No. 8, of the state C. E. society. Our society has been represented at three world conventions by four of our members; one member going to St. Paul, Minnesota, two members to Los Angeles and one member to Chicago.

At the annual meeting in March, 1908, Raymond Kearns reported an organization consisting of twenty-two members as Knights of King Arthur. He also reported, at this meeting, a strong brotherhood.

Two of the young men from our membership have entered the ministry. Raymond V. Kearns is now the successful pastor at Oswego, Illinois.



REV. L. V. SLOCUMB



REV. J. L. DUNN



REV. E. M. STEEN

Archie Kearns has been supplying a church in Indiana the past summer, and is now in McCormick Seminary, Chicago.

Miss Elizabeth Leininger, this fall, entered the Presbyterian training school, at Chicago.

Time, or rather the want of time, prevents us from making mention of the Junior C. E., the work of the choir, the cradle roll babies, the special meetings, and dozens of other things that are very interesting concerning this organization. Some things we may well be proud of. Some that we should be ashamed of for not having done better.

Commencing with a membership of twenty-four, ten years ago this month, there has been 226 names entered on the church roll, but death and removal has reduced this number to 130 resident members.

With our increased membership and improved equipment, we have increased our responsibilities.

It is up to us. What are we going to do about it?—Rev. E. M. Steen.

BAPTIST CHURCH.

For a number of years prior to the first organization there had been a number of Baptists living in and near Loup City, but as they were considerably scattered it was not thought advisable to form a society until the fall of 1879. Others came, and Rev. A. Weaver, from Vinton, Iowa settled at Ord, Valley county and organized a church there, so the Baptist people here decided that if they could secure his services for a part of the time they would organize. They were successful in securing his services, so in March, 1880, a meeting of the Baptists was called, which met in the court house in Loup City, and after a thorough canvass of the matter it was unanimously decided to organize a Baptist church, Rev. Weaver to preach here once in four weeks.

Walter Moon and Albert Sloan were elected clerks.

Rev. Weaver continued as pastor for two years, after which time Rev. B. P. Russell became the pastor, remaining nearly two years, after which there was no regular preaching until the winter of 1886-7, when Rev. J. D. Stapp came to us, and it was determined to make a new effort to try to build up the church.

Services were held in the opera house, which was built on the north side of the public square at about this time.

The church building which we still occupy was built in 1888, and Rev. Stapp remained with us until October, 1888.

He was a dear old man, full of enthusiasm and zeal for the cause he loved and served and was loved by all who knew him.

Rev. B. P. Russell again became our pastor, and remained with us for nearly a year.

Bro. H. S. Cooper became the pastor November 1, 1889, and was ordained here the following May.

In October 1890, he tendered his



REV. FATHER JARKA



REV. THEODORE YOUNG



REV. F. W. GUTH

Many Improvements to Church Property in the Year 1915

resignation, as he wished to return to school, which was regretfully accepted as he had so endeared himself to the people that it was very hard to part with him.

That year being the year of drouth all crops being a complete failure, we only had preaching once in two weeks. In November 1891, Rev. E. G. Boyer became our pastor and was soon after ordained. He remained with us two years. Rev. Miller came to us soon, and remained until in May, 1896. He also was ordained here. Then Mr. Shattuck, a student, preached for us during the summer, and once in two weeks during the following winter.

In November, 1900, Rev. Hill, a student, became pastor, coming up each week, from the Grand Island college to preach for us. It must be remembered that these ten years, from 1890 to 1900 were ten years of drouth, when there was scarcely anything raised in this section of the country and there was almost no money in the country, and it was a severe struggle to keep up church services at all.

We were obliged to get along with non-resident pastors, students from the college, until July, 1903. During the most of that time, from 1901 to 1903, we had with us Brother L. D. Wey and, a very talented young man, who has since become one of the best ministers of the denomination.

Then Rev. Kennedy and wife came to us and remained one year, when, in October, 1904, Rev. H. S. Wold became our pastor and remained with us till December 30, 1906, when he accepted the call to become district missionary in South Dakota.

At first it seemed that we could not part with Brother Wold, but we felt as did he, that the Father's hand would lead aright, and that we must not thwart His plans, so we sorrowfully accepted his resignation.

During his pastorate the church membership had increased largely, and we built the parsonage.

Rev. Guernsey was our next pastor, coming to us in January, 1907, and remaining until September of the same year. We had preaching service nearly every Sunday, a student coming from the college, or some minister from Grand Island, but no resident pastor until in March, 1908, when we extended a call to D. W. James to become our pastor which he accepted, his father coming at once and filling the pulpit until the close of the school year.

During the summer the church did considerable repairing of the building, reshingled the church, put in new ceiling, furnace, new pews, painted inside and out, repared interior, purchased new organ, pulpit and choir chairs, and the church

membership increased rapidly. In February, 1909, the pastor was taken very ill, and, although we retained him as our pastor until January, 1910, he was never again able to fill the pulpit, his father filling it for him. He was a grand old man, dearly loved by all, and it was with regret that we bid him goodbye, in May, 1910. Again we were pastorless until July, 1911, although we had services the most of the time, Dr. Sutherland, Rev. Cook and Prof. Shouse coming up from Grand Island to preach.

Then Rev. M. C. Powers became our pastor, and he and his dear wife labored with us until May 15, 1912. A call was extended to Dr. Sutherland, July 11, 1912, which he accepted, and he preached for us until the first of May, 1914, coming up from Grand Island each week to fill the pulpit.

Dr. Sutherland was very faithful, and worked hard to help us to become able to secure a resident pastor, and in April, 1914, he accomplished his mission, when he helped the church to see their opportunity and they accepted his resignation and extended a call to Rev. J. L. Dunn, of Liberty, to become the resident pastor. Rev. and Mrs. Dunn came to us the first of May, 1914, and are still with us and we earnestly hope they will be for many years to come. Our Sunday school has nearly doubled and, where we had no young peoples meeting for several years, we now have a fine society with many members.

Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Bukoutz were with us for four weeks, in special meetings in February, 1914, and again for two and one-half weeks recently.

They were a great help and inspiration to us, as were also Rev. and Mrs. Martin a year ago.

We feel that our field of usefulness is opening up wonderfully, and we are planning for and expecting great things for the future.

The Sunday school has grown till we are so crowded we feel we must put a basement under the church just as soon as possible in the spring. The church is absolutely out of debt. Electric lights have been installed in the parsonage, and funds raised to paint same on outside, and recarpet the church and other improvements. Our aim and prayer is that each member of the Baptist church of Loup City may so live that they will in no way bring reproach upon the cause of Christ, but that each one may be a living monument to the goodness of God, known and read of all men, to His glory; and that they stand firm for everything that tends toward the uplift of humanity and the establishing of peace and righteousness among our fellow men.

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