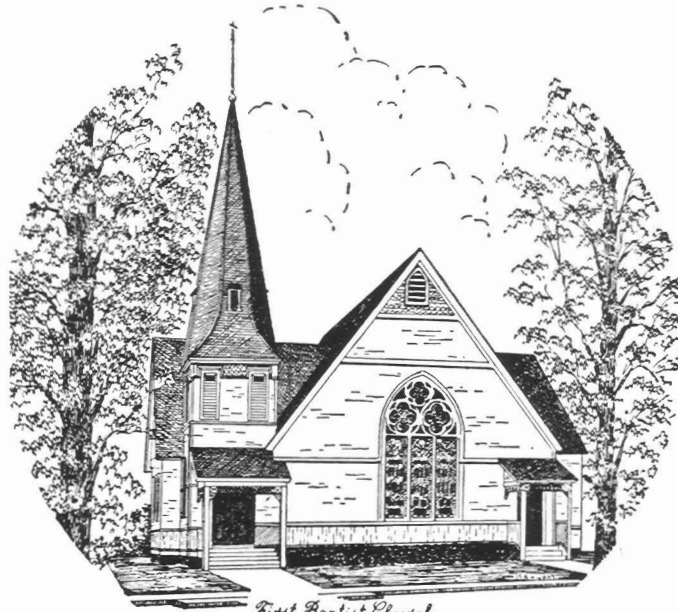


First Baptist Church, Corydon

by
MISS Dorothy Wright



*First Baptist Church
Corydon, Iowa
Organized 1854*

Condensed from the Centennial Anniversary History of the church held in 1954 and brought up to date.

In the year of 1854 a small group of people felt the need of a church organization and met for the purpose of making arrangements for the constitution of a Baptist Church in Corydon, Iowa, under the leadership of Rev. Isaac M. Seay. (Rev. Seay was appointed by the Baptist State Convention in 1856 as the first Missionary in Iowa with commission limited to the Eden Association, which embraced the counties of Wayne, Ringgold, Lucas, Clark, Union and possibly Appanoose).

Names of those in attendance are, Mr. and Mrs. J.W. Lancaster, John Atkinson, Anna Miles and John Ritchie, possibly Peachy M. Boswell.

The Baptist of Corydon is the oldest in existence in the town, and it is believed early meetings were held in the old log school house located in the south part of town. It was here the first prayer meeting held in Corydon was at the suggestion of William Miles in the fall of 1854.

In the early days of all Baptist Churches, discipline was rigid, exclusion from membership came to some because of conduct unbecoming a christian. Baptists have always stressed the Spiritual, and Prayer and Covenant meetings have been maintained through the years.

Articles of Incorporation are recorded in book 1, page 165, in the County Recorders office. Deeds to the property are also recorded.

There must have been a greater interest again at this time, since it was October 15, 1869 that William Miles (a Free Will Baptist) and wife Phebe Miles deeded the land to the church for use in the erection of a house of worship. Trustees at this time were; G.M. Gillette, F.M. Everett and W. Lancaster. (note-This is the same location of the church to-day, at the corner of Jefferson and West Street. Lot 5-8, BLK 8.)

During these years plans were made for building a church home, and in 1871 the first church building was completed. (cost \$200.00). The membership was forty. Many sacrifices made possible the erection of this building. In April 1871, it was damaged by a tornado, but was repaired.

It was the custom in these days to toll the bell when a death occurred in the community.

The baptistry was a wooden box sunk in the ground, just north of the church and it had to be filled by hand. During the winter the ice had to be removed from the water before baptismal services.

On January 15, 1880, Mrs. Phebe Miles deeded the house and lot just north of the church as a parsonage.

In 1894 another move toward advancement came under the leadership of pastor Wm. B. Stark. The old church was torn down in May to make way for a new one. The building committee was composed of Messrs, J.P. Donahue, Wm. Parr, Thomas Beal, G.W. Shelton and Samuel Stroud. The builder was Wm. Rudd. Frank Stromsten and J.C. Peck, both members of the church, had the privilege of helping with the building since they were employed by Mr. Rudd. Miles Brothers

did an excellent job in putting down Brussels carpet. The furnishings were the very best that could be obtained at the time. Mr. Morris of Des Moines very artfully used his brush, leaving the walls and ceilings artistically frescoed. To the liberality of Thomas Beal and Granville W. Shelton is due largely the erection of this handsome and stately building. The east Cathedral window was taken by G.W. Shelton, in memory of his brother R.E. Shelton and wife. The west one was taken by Thomas Beal in memory of his beloved daughter Dosia who was a faithful devoted member of the church up to the time of her death. It is said Thomas Beal paid for the north-east door so it might be put in and he always used that door, sitting on the east side. To Messrs. Donahue and Parr is also due great credit for the energetic manner in which they performed their duties as executive members of the building committee. The minister, Rev. Stark, was untiring in his efforts to forward the work and he was ably seconded by the plucky congregation who took the matter in hand and pushed it to a final completion. Sabbath, September 9th, 1894, the building was dedicated. Hon Lewis Miles delivered an able address in the evening, copies of which were printed and some are still in the possession of people in the community.

March 19, 1903, the W.S. Sproatt family and Mrs. Phebe Miles presented the church a fine piano, which is still in use.

The purchase of a new Baldwin Organ was made possible by donations of members and friends. In June 1954 this new organ was installed in time to be dedicated at the Centennial Observance of the church, August 22, 1954. "This organ was dedicated as a memorial to those who have labored so faithfully over the years making the 100th anniversary possible." Mrs. Jay L. Wilder of Joplin, Mo., the former Miss Ferna Donahue, a former church member here, played the dedication music.

In 1937, Miss Julia Ulrich left a \$400. bequest, and it was used to buy a new furnace. During 1948-51, the Zimmerman family left their bequest, and it was used to build a class room. In 1947 the Caldwell bequest was used to purchase lights for the choir loft.

April 28, 1940 Rev. Charles L. Nelson passed to his reward while still pastor. Rev. Nelson came in 1936 and from the first had given one tenth of his salary back to the church to be kept in a separate fund so it would not come back to him. The fund was used to carpet the rostrum as a memorial to Rev. Nelson.

During 1945 to 47 with Rev. Odishaw as pastor the church gave \$1,450.00 to the World Mission Crusade and the men's group erected street signs on the city streets. A new roof was put on, the interior redecorated and a mimeograph machine was purchased.



Photo- L.L. Cook Co., Milwaukee, Wis.

Pastors during the years;

Rev. Isaac M. Seay, 1854-55	Rev. A.K. Williams, 1901-03	No pastor, 1877	Dr. and Mrs. J.W. Neyman, 1926-29
No pastor, 1856	Rev. Anthony Jacobs, 1903-05	Rev. F.M. Archer, 1878-80	Rev. Charles M. Orcutt, 1930-31
Rev. Andrew M. Green, 1857	Rev. W.I. Cole, 1905-06	Rev. E.A. Spring, 1881-82	Rev. Ewing Holland, 1931-33
No Pastor, 1858	Rev. Chas. F. McMann, 1907-08	No pastor 1883	Rev. Robert M. Schwyhart, 1933-34
Rev. L.L. Greenlee, 1859	Rev. H.J. Perry, 1908-09	Rev. R.H. Shafto, 1884	Rev. Glen L. McKinney, 1934-36
Rev. J.L. Cole, 1860-61	Rev. Rollo C. Speer, 1911-12	Rev. Wm. Carpenter, 1885-89	Rev. Charles L. Nelson, 1936-40
No pastor, 1862-68	Rev. L.B. Pruitt, 1912	Rev. J.F. Jenkins, 1890-91	Rev. Jacob H. Flaming, 1940-42
Rev. L.B. Swallow, 1869-70	Rev. J.C. Pack, 1913-14	Rev. J.B. Tope, 1892	Rev. C.M. Goodwin, 1942-44
Rev. Wm. Barnett, 1871	Rev. Edward C. Hunter, 1915-16	Rev. Wm. B. Stark, 1893-94	Robert Lynn, supply, 1944-45
No pastor, 1872	Rev. George W. Gelvin, 1917	Rev. David Newell, 1895-96	Rev. Robert Odishaw, 1945-48
Rev. John Morris Nelson, 1873	No pastor, 1918	Rev. W.G. Hoover, 1896-98	Rev. Harry Chasteen, 1948-51
Rev. L.M. Newell, 1874	Rev. Harry N. Throckmorton, 1919-21	Rev. Amos Weaver, 1899-1900	Rev. WM. H. Taylor, 1951-53
No pastor, 1876	Rev. G.W. Fogg, 1921-23	Rev. Wm. H. Wagner, 1900	Rev. U.E. Burroughs, interim, 1953-4
Rev. Wm. Sturgeon, 1876	Rev. D.E. Killoren, 1924-26		Rev. Dan J. Peterson, April 1, 1954

Through the years the influence of Spiritual uplift has gone out with those licensed and ordained into the Ministry.

God has been good to us all the way from small beginnings, during hardships and discouragements. Let us hope and pray for Spiritual enrichment through the years to come.

Pastors Ordained;

Rev. Edward C. Hunter, 1911 - Rev. Robert M. Schwyhart, Jan. 9, 1934. Rev. Robert Odishaw, Oct. 2, 1945 - Rev. Richard G. Smith, Aug. 14, 1955. Rev. Calvin Peterson, Sept. 5, 1958 at special services. This was his first pastorate. His father Rev. L.E. Peterson

gave the ordination sermon from II Tim. chapter 2. His brother Rev. Lemuel Peterson was also present. He stayed until 1960 when he resigned.

Rev. Daniel Bean came as pastor in Jan. 1961 and remained 62-63-64-65-66-67- and until April 68 when he resigned.

Rev. Garry L. Robertson came in Aug. 68, and was here in 68-69-70 and part of 71.

Rev. C.L. Moser took over the duties of Pastor latter part of 1971 and started 1972.

Oct. 9, 1969 the Iowa and Minnesota Baptist Churches were combined. Corydon-Humeston*Eden and Confidence are in area 3.