COMMEMORATING

100 YEARS
CONTINUOUS SERVICE

TUALATIN PLAINS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
1873 - 1973

HILLSBORO, OREGON
THE LITTLE CHURCH

I came upon it unexpectedly—a little church outlined against the sun. Its modest spire was pointed heavenward as if to say, “father, thy will be done.”

I stepped inside where it was cool and dim and felt—within that unpretentious nave—a softer quietude...a sweeter sense of peace than any rich cathedral ever gave,

This memorial booklet is dedicated to the memory of all those men and women, living and dead, who through the years by their faith and self-sacrifice have developed a responsive Christian fellowship, a meaningful Christian witness, and a dignified place of worship on the Tualatin Plains, including the eighteen pastors who served with sterling devotion and unselfish dedication.
THE CENTENNIAL STEERING COMMITTEE

Mr. and Mrs. Sam Crawford, Chairmen
Mrs. Ross Cox, Co-Chairman
Mr. and Mrs. Ray Haag
Mr. and Mrs. Wes Batchelder
Mr. Dave Fuiten
Mrs. Elizabeth Godbold
The Reverend Mr. Gene Upton

THE CENTENNIAL PROGRAM

December 1972  Layman's Invitation to The
               Congregation to Participate
               Chairman, Sam Crawford

January 1973  Old Time Service of Worship
               Chairman, Pearl Crawford

February  Tree Planting and Dedication
            of Founders Grove; Chairmen,
            Wes and Marie Batchelder

April        Art Show
            Chairman, Meredith Bach

May         Home Coming - Former Members
            Chairman, Elizabeth Godbold
            Military Memorial Service
            Chairman, Rev. Merriman Smith

June        Descendant's Day
            Chairmen, Ray and Carol Haag

July        Ice Cream Social
            Women's Association

September  Bar-B-Que in Founders Grove
            Chairmen, Don and Emma Jossy

November  Festival of Re-Dedication
            to a Second Century of
            Christian Service
            Chairman, Pastor Gene Upton

December  Tasting Tea -
           Centennial Memories
           Women's Service Guild
OUR CHARTER MEMBERS

William and Catherine Chalmers
Rev. and Mrs. George Ross
John Milne
Mr. and Mrs. James Smith
George and Mary Alexander
Eliza Jessie Alexander
Miss Alexander
Catherine Chalmers

FIRST PASTOR

The Reverend George Ross

First Elders

William Chalmers
James Smith

FIRST BURIAL IN THE CHURCH CEMETARY

Margaret Smith Chalmers
"Little Peggy"
May 28, 1876
6 years, 9 months
The California Gold Rush of 1848 may seem far removed from a Church Centennial Celebration in Hillsboro, Oregon in 1973. But without it Tualatin Plains Presbyterian Church may not have been. Herein lies the tale, the unplanned— but for the providence of God—circumstances that brought the Chalmers, the Alexanders, the Rosses and the Smiths to the Tualatin Plains.

One of those who came to San Francisco, when it was a town of only 50 people, searching for his fortune was a man by the name of John Center. He was a close friend of the above mentioned families and a native son of Aberdeenshire, Scotland. He did not find his wealth in Gold but inland, and the things that it could produce. By supplying the miners with fresh produce from his farm he was able to realize a sizable fortune.

By 1850 San Francisco had grown to a city of 30,000 inhabitants. Mr. Center, according to his ledger of 1861 was receiving from his accounts about $20,000 a month.

When the Continental Railroad was being built across the nation Mr. Center and other wealthy men of the area contributed large sums of money for its completion.

In 1869 after it was finished the railroad management, to show their appreciation, offered Mr. Center and the others a one week all expense paid vacation in New York City. They would be given a free train trip there and back. Mr. Center gratefully accepted the offer with the provision that he be allowed to take the one week in Scotland rather than New York. His request was granted. So it was that John Center.

It was while he was in Scotland visiting his old friends that his enthusiasm for America enticed the others to come to this country. It all began on a balmy June evening in 1869. The day before he was to leave to return to America, and his free train trip
back to San Francisco, he was given a farewell party to which William Chalmers and his family were invited. One member of that family, the oldest son Alexander, who was just nineteen at the time, was so taken by the stories Mr. Center told he decided then and there he would go with him to America. With Mr. Center's permission and his parents blessing he set sail the next morning for a new home. Little did he know then that it would be permanent, or that his parents would so soon follow.

Alec wrote home often and the next summer, on June 3rd, 1870 William Chalmers set sail from Liverpool on the City of Washington. He described it as an "iron screw-propelled teamer with sails." He arrived in New York on the 14th. From there he booked passage on the Hudson River and New York Central Railroad to Chicago. Then by the Great West Pacific Central to San Francisco. Another 14 day trip.

The more he saw of this country the more he wanted to be a part of it. He began looking for land. Land that would grow good crops and support shorthorn cattle. That was his occupation in Aberdeenshire, Scotland. California was too hot and too dry. They would try Oregon.

They arrived in Portland on the 13th of July and again set about looking for land. First around Salem and Albany, then up through Lebanon and McMinnville and on to Washington County. His report to the family back in Scotland was brief..."Saw Mr. Cornelius' farm, also stock to go along with the farm, and bought it at $14,268."

Leaving his son Alec in charge Mr. Chalmers left the following week for Scotland. There he persuaded two or three families to come with him to America.

In the summer of 1871 Mr. Chalmers with his wife Catherine and their 11 children, the Rev. George Ross
with his wife Eliza and daughter Emma—who was our beloved Mrs. William Dierdorff for so many years.—George and Eliza Alexander and their 8 children, Mr. and Mrs. James Smith and their children (though we don't know yet how many) and a Miss Alexander all set sail for Oregon. The Chalmers and Alexanders were also bringing with them some prize Clysdale horses but they were lost at sea in a terrible storm.

Back in Oregon this little band of devout Scotch Presbyterians worshipped and planned and saved for the day when they would have their own church building and be a part of the organized Presbytery of Portland. That day came on November 16th, 1873. The Presbytery of Portland commissioned the Rev. A.L. Lindsley, D.D. and two Ruling Elders, Messrs. Holman and Wadham, to organize a church in Washington County to be known as the Tualatin Plains Presbyterian Church, consisting of 12 members. After the Lord's Supper the congregation elected two elders. William Chalmers, who had served that office in Scotland, and James Smith who was set apart at this time by ordination. Part of their dream and hopes had been realized. They were now a church body, officially recognized by the Presbytery.

They had been meeting in a school house, the Columbia Academy about 4 miles NW of the present site of the church, but now a more permanent house of worship was needed. Consequently on May 29, 1875 the congregation met at the home of Ruling Elder William Chalmers. There it was "resolved and unanimously agreed to that we purchase two acres of land from Jacob Hoover, Esq. as a site for a church and burying ground." Mr. Hoover was present at this meeting and was asked to state the terms on which he would sell the land. He stated that he would sell one acre for $25.00 and donate another. The only restriction was that the land could at no further time be sold to Ro-
man Catholics or Mormons. If so sold then it would revert to the original owners. The offer was accepted with thanks. The meeting then proceeded to elect three trustees. They were William Chalmers, James Smith and John Milne. These were given instruction to proceed with plans suitable for a house of God. At a congregational meeting on March 11th, 1878 the plans submitted by Mr. Balantyne were accepted, at a probable cost of $2,120. Construction began immediately with much of the labor and materials donated by church members of men and women of the community. The build- was rapidly completed and dedicated later that same year.

Through the years the church has undergone additions and improvements, but great care has been taken to preserve its original beauty and charm.

The first addition was made in the spring of 1905 when an annex was added for more classrooms. In 1955 another addition was built on the back for a nursery and Pastor's study. The basement was enlarged in 1960 to accommodate class rooms, rest rooms, a kitchen and fellowship hall.

The Cemetery too has seen many additions since 1876 when "little Peggy (Margaret Smith Chalmers), the youngest child of William and Catherine Chalmers, was laid to rest here at 6 years and 9 months old. Eight others of the original 12 are also buried here.

Here is the lasting tribute to the "Faith of Our Fathers." The graceful church spire of simple Gothic design, framed by stately Douglas fir trees, is a finger pointing to God, and set against a morning or evening sky, it never fails to lift up the heart.

This brief history does not begin to do justice to the men and women who founded this little church. A much fuller account is being prepared. Any omissions here is deeply regreted and will be included later.
OUR PIONEERS

FOR 75 YEARS OR MORE

Christinia B. Chalmers 1895
Isabella S. Chalmers 1897
Francis Chalmers 1897

FOR 50 YEARS OR MORE

Domima Sinclair Stream 1907
Coral Chalmers 1913
Eugenie Cypher 1920

FOR 40 YEARS OR MORE

Leah Rieben 1925
Edward Rieben 1925
Naomi Rieben 1925
Marion Cypher Merrill 1926
Effie Cawrse 1927
Catherine R. Hall 1933
Euphemia A. Meyers 1933
PASTORS WHO SERVED THE OLD SCOTCH CHURCH

George Ross
1873-1894

William Kirkhope
1894-1895

William H. Dierdorff
1895-1897

E.A. Holdridge (summer of 1897)

Samuel A. George
1898-1899

Albert Robinson
1899-1908

J.R. Welch
1908-1909

Dr. Andrew Carrie
1909-1937

John F. Gibson
1937-1945

Ellis Marshburn
1945-1946

W.J. Smith
1947-1950

Kenneth Brown
1950-1955

Donald W. M. MacCluer
1955-1956

Kent D. Lawrence
1956-1962

H.A. Armitage
winter of 1963

Donald W.M. MacCluer
Feb-Jun 1963

Archie W. McPhail, Jr.
1963-1968

Hubert Newton
1969-1970

Gene H. Upton
1970-
THE SESSION

Moderator
Rev. Gene H. Upton

Clerk
Mrs. Bill Tolke

Church Treasurer
Carl Schmadeke

Class of 1973
Don Jossy
Wes Batchelder
Ed Rieben

Class of 1974
Betty Tolke
Earl Johnson
Pete Johnsen

Class of 1975
Ray Haag
Bob Zurcher
Clarence Rice