

C O M M E M O R A T I N G

1 0 0    Y E A R S  
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.

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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 Fr. 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

## OUR HISTORY

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 McMinville 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. Holnan and Wadhams, 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 R<sub>0</sub>-

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 accomodate class rooms, rest rooms, a kitchen and fellowship hall.

The Cemetary 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
Naom. 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 Carric	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