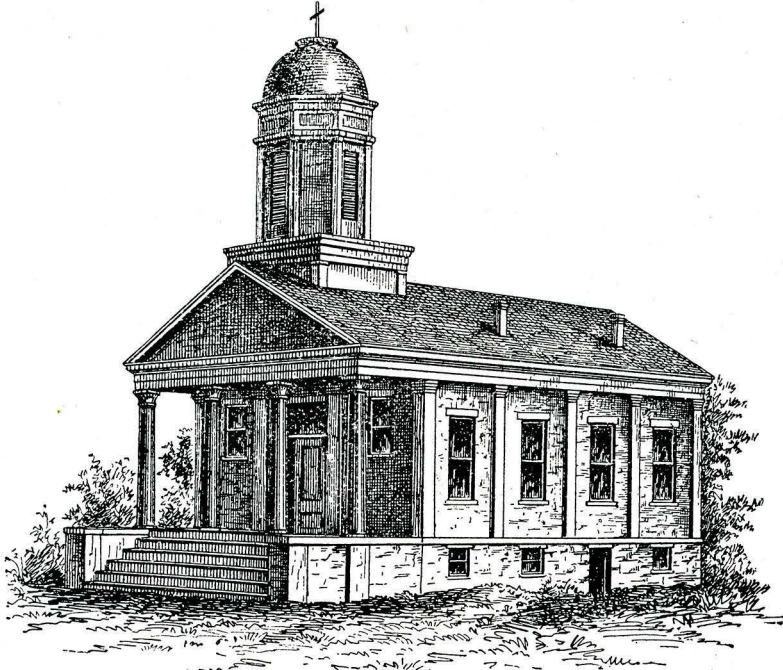


THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Iowa City, Iowa

Organized on September 12, 1840



THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IOWA CITY

ISSUED IN CONNECTION WITH THE
CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION
OF THE
FOUNDING OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
AND THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF THE IOWA CITY PRESBYTERY
NOVEMBER 17, 18, 19, 1940

IMPRESSIONS OF ONE HUNDRED YEARS

An Intimate Pageant

by

Professor W. LEIGH SOWERS

Monday, November 18, at 7:30

Episodes

- I. The 1840's Founding the Church
- II. The 1850's An Old Fashioned Sunday School Class
- III. The 1860's The Church as a Civil War Dormitory
- IV. The 1870's A Wedding
- V. The 1880's Packing the Mission Barrel
- VI. The 1890's In Memoriam
- VII. The 1900's A Lawn Social
- VIII. The 1910's Student Work
- IX. The 1920's Fall Festival
- X. The 1930's Celebrating the Centennial

Directors

Mrs. A. D. HENSLEIGH

Mrs. H. J. THORNTON

Committee in Charge

Mrs. L. B. HIGLEY

Mrs. H. J. THORNTON

Prof. W. L. SOWERS

Mrs. A. D. HENSLEIGH

Miss LUELLA WRIGHT

THE FOUNDING OF THE CHURCH

Iowa City was a little more than one year old; streets had been opened and lots cleared of timber; the inhabitants had erected many log cabins and a few frame and stone houses and had finished one story of the capitol when, on August 1, 1840, Rev. Launcelot Graham Bell and Rev. Leonard Freely conducted a meeting to discuss the organization of a Presbyterian Church. Six weeks later Mr. Bell and Rev. Michael Hummer arrived, commissioned by the Schuyler Presbytery of Illinois, to complete the task. September 12, 1840, was the day when these two ministers presided over the meeting at which the First Presbyterian Church of Iowa City was formed.

If the little frontier society officially recorded the events of that day and the following eight years, such records whether kept by Mr. Hummer or the elders or the trustees have disappeared. Whatever information there is about those years of infancy has been gleaned from other sources. Certainly, however,

John McConnell, a Clear Creek Township farmer, was elected the first ruling elder at the organization meeting. Another apparently authentic fact about that memorable occasion is that John Shoup, who had staked out four claims near Iowa City in the summer of 1839 and the winter months of 1840, was also a charter member of the society, for when, after serving as ruling elder for fifteen years, he left in 1868 to make his home at Deepwater, Missouri, the session of the church officially declared that he "was one of the first to encourage the organization of and to unite with this church. Afterwards during all its discouragements he faithfully

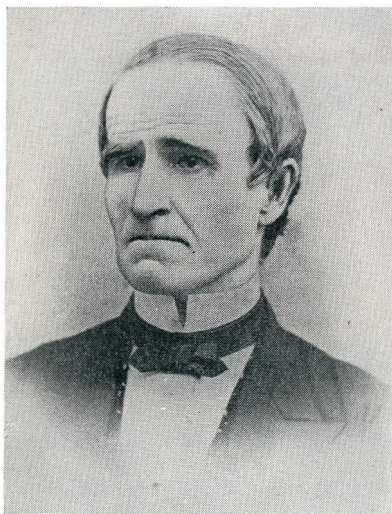


LAUNCELOT G. BELL

performed his part in sustaining and fostering it, accomplishing more by his untiring devotion and his undoubting faith than many persons possessing greater advantages in education and wealth."

Another scrap of evidence concerning the organization of the church was found in the county recorder's office. On December 31, 1842, "being desirous of placing themselves in an attitude to receive conveyances of real estate and to build a house of Worship thereon and to transact Such *Secular* business as might be necessary to effectuate the object of their organization," the church

society incorporated. In conformity with the law, a statement of organization was recorded, asserting that "This is to certify that on the 12th of Sept. 1840, a church was organized in Iowa City Iowa Territory to be known by the name of the *First Presbyterian Church of Iowa City* John McConnell was duly elected Ruling Elder in this church at its organization". L. G. Bell and M. Hummer were listed as presiding ministers at the meeting and the latter as the "Present Pastor". Diodate Holt was designated as deacon, and the trustees were



MICHAEL HUMMER

certified to be Chauncey Swan, Joseph Schell, George J. Huey, Theodore Sanxay, R. Hutchinson, J. W. Margrave, and Diodate Holt. It is not certain, however, that all these men were charter members of the church or that they were elected to office at the organization meeting—probably not.

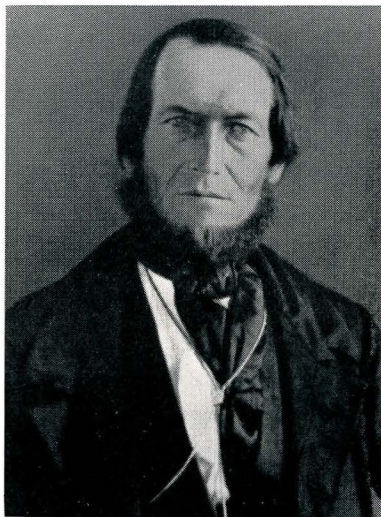
Unfortunately there are no other official records to prove who the charter members were. The only contemporary statement touching on the subject is the following declaration by Rev. Frederick A. Shearer, pastor of the church, in the year 1855: "Mr. McConel was elected Elder, and Mr. Diodate Holt, Deacon. The following persons composed the membership; viz Mr. McConel and his two daughters, Mr. and Mrs. Holt, Mr. and Mrs. Swan,

Mr. and Mrs. Moore, Mr. McCready and son and daughter"—twelve in all. Though the reliability of this report is open to grave doubt because it omits John Shoup who was an elder of the church in 1855 when Mr. Shearer wrote, most of the persons are known to have been living in or near Iowa City in 1840 and could well have been charter members of the church. In 1876 Rev. Samuel M. Osmond said that Rosanna Davis Stevens had participated in the founding of the church, but that can not be verified.

Other pioneers prominent in the Presbyterian congregation after 1840 had homes in Iowa City before the church was organized: Dr. Henry Murray and Mrs. Ellen Murray, Robert Hutchinson, Joseph Schell, Theodore Sanxay and Mrs. Hetty Sanxay, and Samuel H. McCrory. But no evidence has yet been found that any of these were among the original members of the little frontier church.

Within a year after Mr. Hummer became the resident pastor, efforts were begun to build a church. In November, 1843, a subscription paper was

circulated to raise money for a building to be commenced in the following spring which, "in point of size, taste and durability" the trustees promised, should be inferior to no church in the city. Chauncey Swan headed the list of sponsors with the sum of \$300 including a lot valued at \$100—the present site of the church which he deemed the choicest in Iowa City. Forty-seven persons promised to give a little over \$900 which was hardly enough to begin construction. The minister was sent East to solicit funds, but cash was hard to get. By the summer of 1845 the walls and rafters were up but the edifice still lacked a roof. In September, 1846, the basement was sufficiently completed to permit the holding of services there. Designed in the style of the capitol with



CHAUNCEY SWAN

dome and portico, the church was far beyond the means of the little congregation.

After several years of struggle and long absences of the minister on money raising expeditions in the East, discord arose. Rev. Hummer departed for Keokuk with most of the church furniture and a mortgage on the building itself. In desperation the Iowa City Presbyterians called Rev. Silas H. Hazard to the pastorate. When he arrived in November, 1848, the church had almost dissolved: there were no elders, no deacons, no trustees, no records of the session or trustees, no roll of members, and the basement meeting place was stripped of its communion service, pulpit, Bibles, and lamps. Even the bell was gone, and the unfinished building carried a debt of nearly \$700.



SILAS H. HAZARD

Through the heroic efforts of Mr. Hazard and zealous laymen the church was completed and the languishing congregation was revived. Since the first decade of discouragement and hardship, the Presbyterians of Iowa City have experienced many vicissitudes but the church has grown stronger and its Christian services have expanded through the years. Jacob Van der Zee has told the whole story in his *One Hundred Years of Presbyterianism in Iowa City*.

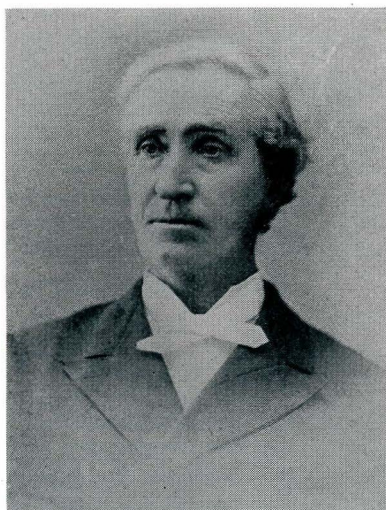
MINISTERS WHO HAVE SERVED THE CHURCH

*Rev. John Stocker	1840-1841
Rev. Michael Hummer	1841-1848
†Rev. Silas H. Hazard	1848-1851
Rev. John Crozier	1853-1854
Rev. Frederick A. Shearer	1854-1858
†Rev. Oliver O. McClean	1859-1861

†Rev. Jacob Winters	1861–1862
Rev. Samuel M. Osmond	1862–1879
Rev. William Rossman Henderson	1879–1880
Rev. George P. Folsom	1880–1887
Rev. Edward Newton Barrett	1888–1901
Rev. Dwight Witherspoon Wylie, D. D.	1902–1916
Rev. Harry Burton Boyd	1916–1917
†Rev. James H. Bigelow	1917–1918
†Rev. D. N. Scott	1918–1919
Rev. Robert R. Reed	1919–1926
Rev. John G. Rhind	1926–1929
†Rev. Charles A. Hawley	1930–1931
Rev. W. P. Lemon, D. D.	1931–1934
Rev. Ilion T. Jones, D. D.	1935–

*Pastor at Bloomington (now Muscatine), who preached on alternate Sundays at Iowa City.

†Not installed as Pastor.



JOHN CROZIER



GEORGE P. FOLSOM

E. N. BARRETT

SAMUEL M. OSMOND

WILLIAM R. HENDERSON

F. A. SHEARER

CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS

This church has the three governing bodies as provided in the Presbyterian Form of Government. They are: the Session, the Board of Trustees, and the Board of Deacons.

The Session

The Session is composed of the minister, who is the moderator "ex officio", and of as many elders as the congregation may choose. Its responsibilities are by ecclesiastical law limited to such "spiritual" services as worship, the church school, the admission and dismissal of members, and the administration of the communion.

Coincident with the organization of the church in 1840, the Session of this church was organized with the minister and one elder, John McConnell. Since that time the church has been in continuous service, its records being intact from 1849. In 1886 the Session was incorporated in order that it might administer the Stone Fund. Inasmuch as that fund no longer exists, the articles of incorporation have not been renewed.



OLIVER O. MCCLEAN

Over the years the number and terms of office of elders have varied with the needs and wishes of the congregation. For many years the church has operated under the rotation system, which limits the term of office to three years, and makes an elder ineligible for re-election for one year after his term of office expires. At its annual meeting in 1939 the congregation voted to reduce the number of elders gradually to nine. The officers of the present Session are: Ilion T. Jones, Moderator; Jacob Van der Zee,

Clerk; and A. J. Larew, Treasurer of Benevolences. Its members and their terms of office are:

William S. Cozine	(1942)	E. K. Mapes	(1941)
F. C. Ensign	(1943)	Roy Mushrush	(1941)
W. G. Hughes	(1942)	W. R. Tharp	(1943)
A. J. Larew	(1942)	Jacob Van der Zee	(1943)
Ray Lewis	(1941)	R. C. Wilson	(1941)

The Board of Trustees

The Trustees are the civil officers of the church. They are elected by the congregation and operate under articles of incorporation which are taken out in accordance with the laws of the state. The duties of the Board of Trustees are confined to such "temporal" matters as holding title to and caring for the properties and funds of the church, raising and expending money for its current expenses, and in general managing its finances on a sound business basis.



JACOB WINTERS

This congregation was incorporated on December 31, 1842. At that time six trustees were elected: Chauncey Swan, Joseph Schell, George G. Huey, R. Hutchinson, J. W. Margrave, and Diodate Holt.

In 1849 the congregation was again incorporated under the Iowa law of 1847 governing religious bodies. This statute placed no time limit on the life of such charters, and so it has never been renewed, although it has been amended from time to time. Competent legal authorities inform us that we can operate under this charter indefinitely and that it is of considerable historical value. They recommend that it be retained so long as the laws of the state permit.

The charter of 1849 provided for seven trustees to be elected annually. From that time the number of trustees has remained

the same, but a recent amendment changed the term of office to three years, with eligibility for re-election. The records of the Board of Trustees are intact from 1849. At present the officers of the Board are: Willis W. Mercer, Chairman; R. E. Taylor, Secretary; W. J. Burney, Treasurer. The members and their terms of office are:

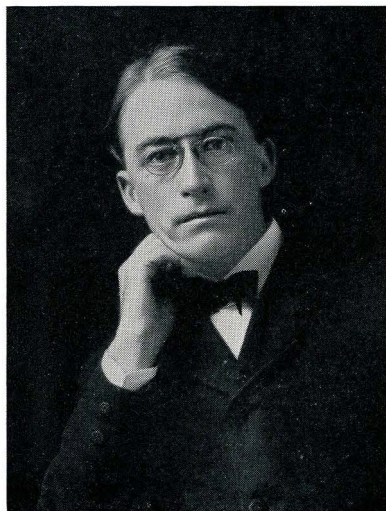
M. E. Barnes	(1941)	R. E. Neff	(1942)
W. J. Burney	(1943)	W. F. Schmidt	(1941)
Telford Larew	(1943)	R. E. Taylor	(1941)
W. W. Mercer	(1942)		

Financial Secretary

The Board of Trustees employs a financial secretary who is directly responsible to them. Miss Elizabeth Hunter has occupied this position continuously since 1918, and has served with fidelity and distinction.

The Board of Deacons

At the time the church was organized in 1840 Diodate Holt was elected as Deacon. After that time the records have little to say about the work of Deacons until April, 1909, when the present Board of Deacons was organized. Under the law of the church the minister is "ex officio" moderator of the Board. The Deacons, like the Elders, are elected and their number and terms of office are determined by the congregation. For some years the Board consisted of nine members, but the congregation in 1939 voted to reduce the number gradually to six. The Deacons are charged with the responsibility of looking after the needy of the congregation and the disbursement of such funds as are entrusted to it for charitable and philanthropic purposes. The officers of the present Board are: Ilion T. Jones, Moderator; Mrs. P. D. Ketelsen, Chairman; F. H. Battey, Secretary-Treasurer. The members and their terms of office are:



DWIGHT W. WYLIE

F. H. Battey (1941)
Mrs. Frank A. Danner (1942)
Stanley C. Davis (1941)
Mrs. Bion Hunter (1943)

Mrs. P. D. Ketelsen (1942)
H. A. Lindsley (1943)
D. D. Nicholson (1941)

The labors of the many Elders, Trustees, and Deacons, who have served the church faithfully during the century, have borne fruit in the present flourishing congregation and will continue to do so through the coming years. For all of them the congregation is grateful and deeply appreciative. And to each God gives abundant reward in His own time.



HARRY B. BOYD

The Sunday School

According to the best information available the Sunday school of our church was organized in 1843 through the zeal of Deacon Diodate Holt, one of the charter members of the church. It has been in continuous operation since, under the capable leadership of a host of voluntary workers — men, women and young people. At one time the church experimented with the policy of paid teachers; at another time the officers and teachers

planned their own courses of study. But both experiments proved unsatisfactory and were abandoned.

For a number of years all the offerings received in the Sunday school were used for benevolences, the church proper paying the running expenses of the school. But now the school is self-supporting and has its own envelope system and its own budgets. It makes an annual contribution to the current expenses of the church and to each of the benevolent boards of the denomination.

The Sunday school is carefully graded, has the usual departments of a church school from the nursery to the adults, uses the up-to-date literature published by the Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, and is conducted by a capable, faithful, and

devoted group of officers and teachers. The present staff consists of:

- Dr. L. B. Higley, Superintendent
Mrs. Ray Lewis, Secretary-Treasurer
Miss Mildred Wilsliief, Superintendent of Nursery
Mrs. S. D. Gratke, Superintendent of Beginners' Department
Miss Arlene Hunter
Mrs. Fred F. Brown
Mrs. Ilion T. Jones, Superintendent of Primary Department
Miss Esther Hunter
Miss Claire Street
Mrs. Roy S. Mushrush, Superintendent of Junior Department
Mrs. Stanley C. Davis
Mrs. Gordon Southard
S. D. Gratke
L. C. Sebern
Mrs. Elwood H. Olsen, Superintendent of Intermediate-Senior Department
Miss Jean Cassell
Miss Mildred Bradshaw
Rev. Harold A. Smith
Prof. H. J. Thornton, Teacher of University Class
Prof. M. Willard Lampe, Teacher of Men's Class
Mrs. Hattie B. Whetstone, Teacher of Women's Class



ROBERT R. REED

The Women of the Church

The first organized work of the women of the church seems to have been established in 1874. From the very beginning, however, the women of all ages have been a major factor in the material, educational, missionary, and social work of the church. Before they were organized into formal groups they were informally at work contributing to the improvement and upkeep of the church property, giving benefits, preparing meals, teaching in the Sunday school, and otherwise supporting the various activities of

the church. It would be impossible to pay too fine a tribute to the many women whose services have been given so generously to the church and without whose labors we could hardly visualize our church being as efficient as at present.

Over the years many kinds of societies, such as Foreign Missionary, Home Missionary, Ladies Aid, and Guilds, have come and gone. About the year 1928 the various women's groups were merged into the Women's Association. It is divided into eight groups, numbered numerically from one to eight. Circle No. 1,



JOHN G. RHIND

however, usually goes by the name of Reed Auxiliary, Circle No. 7, by the name of Wylie Guild, and Circle No. 8 by the name of Jones Circle. The Wylie Guild is for professional and business women and meets once a month in the evenings. The Association proper meets monthly and the Circles arrange their own meetings to suit the wishes and convenience of their members. Most of the Circles, however, also have a monthly meeting. Each Circle engages in missionary, social, educational, and church-aid service, and has its own treasury. But each

participates in the general work of the Association and contributes to its general treasury.

The officers of the Association and of its several Circles at present are:

- Mrs. E. K. Mapes, President
- Mrs. E. R. Means, 1st Vice-President
- Mrs. M. E. Steele, 2nd Vice-President
- Mrs. P. D. Ketelsen, 3rd Vice-President
- Miss Fern Young, 4th Vice-President
- Mrs. F. B. Olsen, Treasurer
- Mrs. D. L. Crissinger, Recording Secretary
- Mrs. Owen Sutherland, Membership Secretary

Mrs. E. B. Newcomb, Literature Secretary
 Mrs. Ethel Miller, Missionary Education Secretary
 Mrs. M. E. Barnes, Stewardship Secretary
 Mrs. P. D. Ketelsen, President Reed Auxiliary
 Mrs. Robert Breese, Chairman of Group II
 Mrs. W. L. Bywater, Chairman of Group III
 Mrs. R. R. Sherman, Chairman of Group IV
 Mrs. M. E. Barnes, Chairman of Group V
 Mrs. Hattie Whetstone, Chairman of Group VI
 Miss Fern Young, President of Wylie Guild
 Mrs. Fred F. Brown, President of Jones Circle

The Music

There is no record of musicians who have served the church throughout the years. Rev. John Crozier, who was acquainted with the church from its infancy and who served as pastor for a brief time in 1853, once paid a glowing tribute to some of the early musicians, both those who played instruments and the vocalists. Those who have aided in the ministry of music since deserve a similar tribute.



WILLIAM P. LEMON

When the church was remodeled in 1934, the present Austin Organ was installed at the expense of approximately \$7,000. It is now capably presided over by Prof. Herbert O. Lyte. Our chorus choir, now known as the Westminster Choir, has for several years been considered outstanding in this section of the state. Under the direction of Mr. Paul Preus, who took charge this fall, it is expected to live up to our best musical traditions.

Other Helpers

Space forbids mention of a large number of voluntary and paid workers who have made a contribution to the work of the church.

But we would like to record our appreciation of the following who now occupy positions of responsibility: Mrs. Gordon Southard, Church Secretary; Ernest C. Schaffer, Custodian; Elmer Anderson, Head Usher; and Jacob Van der Zee, Church Historian.

The Westminster Foundation

Two Iowa City Presbyterian ministers, Rev. Dwight W. Wy-
lie and President George E. MacLean of the State University, in
1905 made a report to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian



ILION T. JONES

Church in America which
started a nation-wide move-
ment to give special attention
to the religious welfare of
Presbyterian students in state-
supported colleges and univer-
sities. At Iowa City Dr. Wy-
lie at first had only student as-
sistants for this purpose.
From 1910 to 1929 four or-
dained ministers, appointed by
the Synod of Iowa, served as
student pastors. Synod House
was purchased as a residence
for the university pastor or
student counselor and as head-
quarters for student social and
religious work. The Synod of
Iowa next placed the responsi-

bility for administering a similar program at Ames on the West-
minster Foundation, a corporation organized under the laws of
Iowa and managed by a board of trustees elected by the Synod;
but it was not until 1924 that the Foundation's control was ex-
tended to Cedar Falls and Iowa City. Since 1929, according to
an arrangement between the session of the Iowa City church and
the board of trustees of the Westminster Foundation, the regular
pastor of the church has also served as local director of the Founda-
tion with the aid of an assistant for work among students.
Funds expended by the Foundation are derived from the Presby-
terian Board of Christian Education, the Synod's Board of Na-
tional Missions, and rentals from the Synod House.

STUDENT PASTORS

Mr. H. L. Olin	1907-1909
Mr. George A. Chickering	1909-1910
Rev. Francis M. Fox	1910-1913
Rev. E. A. Bess	1913-1917
Rev. Herbert L. Searles	1919-1925
Rev. Curtis R. Douglass	1927-1929

ASSISTANTS IN THE UNIVERSITY WORK OF THE CHURCH

Miss Genevieve Chase	1929-1931
Miss Mildred I. Leech	1931-1933
Miss Jean Louise Smith	1933
Miss Harriet M. Otto	1934-1939
Mrs. Elwood H. Olsen	1939-

BENEFACTORS

A tribute is paid to the following persons whose bequests have greatly aided the church during the past one hundred years.

Mrs. Amantha L. Bowman	Miss Annie G. Hughes
Mrs. Sarah Bradway	Miss Mary E. Moon
Mr. Oscar Coast	Mr. Milton J. Moon
Mr. and Mrs. W. P. Coast	Mrs. Jemina D. Pumphrey
Mr. Stevens Coldren	Mr. Charles Hall Ryerson
Mrs. Charlotte Deal	Mr. Theodore Sanxay
Mr. Isaac Eaton	Mrs. Priscilla F. Sharpless
Mr. Ethbert Fenton	Mr. and Mrs. Dana F. Stone
Mrs. E. Jennie Hardy	Mr. J. T. Turner
Miss Carrie I. Hess	Mrs. Joseph Walker

CENTENNIAL COMMITTEES

General Committee

Rev. Ilion T. Jones	Prof. Forest C. Ensign
Dr. M. E. Barnes	Mr. Robert E. Neff
Mrs. Clarence Van Epps	Mrs. F. B. Olsen
Mr. W. W. Mercer	Dr. J. T. McClintock, Chairman

Finances

Mr. Roscoe E. Taylor	Dr. L. B. Higley
Mrs. F. B. Olsen	Mrs. P. D. Ketelsen
Dr. George Albright	Mr. Robert E. Neff, Chairman

Pageant

Prof. W. L. Sowers	Miss Luella Wright
Mrs. A. D. Hensleigh	Mrs. H. J. Thornton
Mrs. L. B. Higley, Chairman	

Publicity and Printing

Prof. John E. Briggs	Miss Ruth Pieper
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Exhibits

Prof. P. A. Bond	Judge O. A. Byington
Mrs. M. B. Whetstone	Miss Gertrude Dennis
Miss Elizabeth Hunter, Chairman	

Music

Mr. Paul Preus	Prof. Herbert O. Lyte
Prof. E. K. Mapes	

Invitation of Guests

Rev. Ilion T. Jones	Rev. M. Willard Lampe
Prof. H. G. Plum	Dr. M. E. Barnes
Judge O. A. Byington	Dr. J. T. McClintock

Reception

Mrs. Clarence Van Epps

Birthday Dinner

Mrs. F. B. Olsen	Women's Association
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