

# Churches - written June 1976

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# Assembly Of God Church

Seeing the need to preach the full gospel message from God's Word, the Rev. H. V. Foley began holding services in January of 1943 at 200 E. Broadway. He not only preached that men could be saved from their sins and have fellowship and communion with God, but that men and women, boys and girls could be healed by the power of God. The doctrine of being filled with the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, according to the Books of Acts, was also proclaimed.

Thanksgiving Eve, 1943, a fire which destroyed most of the block, also destroyed the church. But the small group of Christians was not discouraged and they moved down the street to an abandoned saloon. The old bar was pushed aside and a pulpit, an altar and seats were brought in and the Word of God was proclaimed.

Some of the charter members were Mrs. Jessie Magruder, Mrs. Bernice Sheppard, Mrs. Rose Spencer, Mrs. Eule Warden, and Mrs. Elva Wiseman. Rev. Foley resigned in 1944 and various ones ministered, including Mrs. Margrette Baunhofer until 1952 when Mr. and Mrs. Lester Norris became pastors. In November of 1953, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Perkins accepted the pastorate and land on North Jackson was given by Mrs. Eule Warden to build a new church. In 1956, the new church was completed and a happy congregation moved in to praise and worship God. Mr. and Mrs. John Mead pastored from 1964 to 1965 and Rev. and Mrs. Foley returned and pastored from 1965 to 1969. Different ones filled in until the church closed in

1973. On Nov. 17, 1974, the church reopened at a house on 507 E. Broadway with Rev. and Mrs. David Meek as pastors.

## **Brunswick Baptist Church**

The first services of the Brunswick Baptist Church were held in 1907 in the upstairs of a building located where the Post Office is today. Services were discontinued in 1908. Following a tent revival led by a Missouri State Missionary, the church reorganized in 1915. The first pastor received a salary of \$8.00 for preaching two Sundays per month.

Meetings were held over Mr. E. B. Johnson's store with 26 members. Mrs. Frankie Paul was one of the charter members.

The site where the church now stands was purchased for \$2000. An old blacksmith shop had to be torn down before construction could begin.

A building committee was formed in 1919: W. E. Mansfield, C. A. Straub, J. B. Robertson and B. T. Dameron. Women in the church, under the leadership of Mrs. Nora Crow and Mrs. Georgia Straub, helped raise money for the building by having bake sales and quilting bees. The church was dedicated in October of 1924. The educational building was dedicated in 1966 and the church redecorated in 1974.

With the recent resignation of the pastor, Rev. Bill Wormsley, the pulpit committee consisting of Kenneth Richardson, Harold Breshears, Mrs. Lassie Yoder, Mrs. Opal Jones, and Melvin Link are seeking a new minister.

The officers in the church are Deacons: Harold Breshears, David Link, Melvin Link, Roy Lee Oldvader, Kenneth Richardson; Trustees, John Gross, Melvin Link, Larry Rice; Church clerk, David Link; Treasurer, Larry Rice; Financial Secretary, Mrs. Mary Beth Oldvader.

## **St. Boniface Catholic Church**

The origin of the Catholic Congregation at Brunswick dates back to the days when the Missouri River was the principal way of travel. In the early 1850's, Divine Services were held in the homes of pioneer settlers, among whom were the Strub, Wittmer, and Meyer families. In the late 1850's, Father J. H. Hogan resigned the pastorate of St. Michael's Church in St. Louis after having secured the permission of Archbishop Kenrick to go into the interior of North Missouri to attempt to establish the Church. Father Hogan made his first visit to Brunswick in the year 1859 and returned again in the summer of 1860. He rented the old city hall and there administered the sacraments and preached the word of God. The progress of the little parish of St. Boniface was slow due to the outbreak of the Civil War. In 1869, the Reverend Mr. Hogan administered the Sacrament of Confirmation at the city hall. Ten years after the founding of the parish, a frame structure 60' x 30' was

built high on a hill, commanding a grand view of the surrounding territory. It was dedicated in the fall of 1870. The first one baptized in this church was Caroline Strub, and the first Mass was celebrated by one reared in this vicinity, Father Martin, O.F.M.

The congregation of St. Boniface Church gradually grew so that the little church dedicated in 1870 was inadequate. In the year 1901, Father Columban Valentine, O.F.M., pastor, called a parish meeting to discuss building a new church. A committee composed of E. J. Tschann, Julius Strub, William Wittmer, Charles Koch, Ben Strub, and B. J. Strub, were appointed on the building committee. Two lots were purchased on the level with the city, and the work began. On April 24, 1902, the first stone for the foundation was laid, on June 1, 1902, the corner stone was laid by the Reverend M. F. Burke, Bishop of St. Joseph.

Many of the furnishings of the old Church were used for years and things were added gradually. The beautiful Gothic structure 90' x 37' with its lofty tower overlooked the city. The Church was dedicated by the Rt. Rev. M. F. Burke, on Oct. 26, 1902. This church with its beautiful Gothic High Altar still serves the Catholics in Brunswick and surrounding areas.

At this time (June, 1976), St. Boniface parish consists of 76 families. Father Joseph J. Wilberding is the present pastor and has been at St. Boniface since 1970. On June 5, Father Wilberding observed his 33rd anniversary of ordination to the priesthood.

# First Christian Church

As early as 1850 there was a small group of Christians or Campbellites in Brunswick, probably constituted by Allen Wright. Among the first members were Mrs. Edwin Price and son, Sterling, later a professor in Missouri University and a preacher of some note. Others were George W. Brown and wife, Adamatine Johnson, Dr. William Beddow, and John Allega and family.

A large number of members were added to the congregation when Dr. W. H. Hopson, State Evangelist, made visits, and in 1853 when Elder D. P. Henderson and Jacob Creath held a meeting. In January 1854, Elder T. P. Haley was called to the pastorate and continued in the work until 1857. Under his leadership the congregation grew in number and influence. Meetings were held during this time by Elders Moses E. Lard, J. U. Wright, and T. U. Gaines.

Until 1854 the congregation worshiped in the City Hall, an upper room over the Market House and calaboose. During that year arrangements were made with Rev. Beebee, pastor of the Presbyterian Church, by which the Christian congregation occupied the Presbyterian Church one-half time. This arrangement was secured through the influence of that most excellent friend of the church, Dr. Edwin Price, and Adamantine Johnson, first elder of the congregation.

Benjamin H. Smith succeeded Rev. Haley as pastor and during his pastorate a beautiful little brick church was built overlooking much of the town. After the breaking out of the

Civil War, and subsequent hard times, it became necessary to sell the church building which was purchased by the Methodist Episcopal Church. This building was later owned by L. W. Heisel and burned, together with the City Hall, in the fire that destroyed the whole block on February 3, 1917.

The members were scattered but the remaining disciple and others, who had moved in, rallied their forces and reorganized in 1872.

We may not have the names of all who were in the re-organization, but among them were: Mrs. Elizabeth Burris, Mrs. Nancy Hines, Mrs. Julia A. Harris, Mrs. Ruth J. Taylor, Mrs. Ann E. Cross, Mrs. Martha Basey, Mrs. Mary Merchant, Mrs. Anna Kennedy, Mrs. Mary Knappenberger, Mrs. Susan Cabell, Levi Bowersmith, James L. Plunkett, John H. Harris, Willis H. Plunkett, Henry H. Davis, John Musick, Mrs. Harriet Johnson, Mrs. Mattie Kilgore, Mrs. A. E. Venable, Thomas Mosely, Mrs. Elizabeth Clark, Miss Emma Hines, Robert Boyd Cabell, S. R. Pulliam and Mrs. Lucy Benton.

The Congregation worshiped in the City Hall until the erection of the building now occupied, which was dedicated in 1876. During this time the congregation was ministered to by Rev. T. U. Gaines. The first minister in the new building was Rev. R. N. Davis.

Rev. Lanny Lybarger, the present minister, came to Brunswick on Oct. 10, 1965. Rudolph Krause is chairman of the church board and Melvin Rowoth is vice-president. Other officers are: Treasurer Dr. W. A. Burton, Secretary

Barbara Barry, Financial Secretary Julia Stroemer, Missionary Secretary Muriel Myers, President of the Christian Women's Fellowship, Patsy Lybarger.

## **History of the First Baptist Church by Mrs. Nannie B. Hopkins**

The first meetings of the First Baptist Church were held in 1873, in a building located southeast of the present sale barn. The building was used jointly with the Methodist Church on alternating Sundays.

After a while, the church moved to the first Negro school building which stood where the Chevrolet garage stands now.

Since the members were interested in having a building of their own where they could worship God, they decided to purchase some land and erect a church building. Of course, not being rich, they had to raise money through various projects: fish fries, pie sales, and festivals. They bought the ground where the church now stands on South Taylor and built a frame church which was destroyed by fire in the fall of 1936.

At the time of the building of the old church, the Rev. Amos Johnson was pastor and served faithfully for many years. Following him was Rev. Ephriam Jenkins and Rev. O. T. Redd, whose pastorate ended in 1899, when he moved

from Macon to Kansas City to teach at Western Baptist College. Rev. Redd served the first and third Sundays each month and some records in a ledger shows there were times when the church paid him as little as \$5.00 per Sunday; other times less than \$10.00. The largest amount paid at one time was \$66.80, yet he raised a family of six children and educated them: one became a minister, two were teachers and two or three musicians. We wonder how he was able to do all this, but we know all things are possible with God.

In 1900, Rev. G. D. Saunders became pastor and served several years. He was followed by Rev. Samuel A. Love, Rev. Howell, Sayies, Harvey, Herring, Burton and Cahron. Then Rev. Saunders came back for a brief return engagement.

When the old church burned, we were without a pastor, but we did have insurance-\$1,000, which was used to start building our present church in the spring of 1937. Through the hard and faithful work of the members we soon had a church. On August 15, 1937 the church was dedicated by our Moderator, Rev. T. R. Sayles who also preached the dedication sermon.

Following the dedication we called Rev. T. A. White who, with his wife, helped us finish the building. They were then called to Brookfield, Mo. Succeeding him were Rev. Gyce, Rev. King, Rev. Miller, Rev. Rowan, Rev. Briscoe, and Rev. Knox, and Rev. Spriggs.

In 1963, our church was blessed with Rev. C. H. Smith, and his talented wife. Rev. Smith served us faithfully for 12 years, until his death in 1975.

We are still working to improve our building and furnishings.

In 1976, we feel privileged to have as our minister Rev. Herman O. Tolson, who was the first black city mayor in Missouri, being mayor of Mexico, Missouri.

## **St. John's Lutheran Church**

The 1840's saw a flood of immigrants coming to the United States from Central Europe. They came for many reasons, to escape the heavy taxation known as "Blood Tax", long servitude in the army, better economy, and more freedom to worship as they felt.

The first several decades were beset by many problems of unrest- the floods in the river bottoms where many had settled, followed by the tragedies of the Civil War. The records give us little information on the spiritual life of these immigrants during these first decades. There is some indication that services were held and, perhaps, children were baptized by itinerant pastors. A May, 1868 *Brunswicker* states, "a committee was appointed to correspond with a view of securing a preacher. After several unsatisfactory trials, one Rev. C. Heinici was regularly employed as preacher and parochial teacher,

and he entered upon his duties on May 9, 1869." According to available records, it was not until the spring of 1871 that the Rev. Biltz of Concordia, Mo., came to Brunswick to conduct worship services for the people of Lutheran background and to baptize their children. A recent graduate of Concordia Seminary, Candidate F. G. Walther was installed on August 26, 1871 and officially the St. John's Lutheran Church was formed. Meetings were held in the German Methodist Church. William Brandt and Louis Sasse were the first new officers. Twenty members signed a newly drawn constitution. Later the City Hall was used as their place of worship.

April 27, 1873 a new church was completed on the purchased lot of Louis and Gertrude Sasse. The complete cost of the building was \$2,800.00.

In addition to serving the congregation in Brunswick, Pastor Walther traveled by horse and buggy and also conducted services in a schoolhouse in the river bottom area as well as in the village of Dalton. In 1878 the congregation purchased a parsonage for their pastor at the corner of Harrison and Washington.

On October 31, 1912, the church edifice was destroyed by fire. The following week it was resolved to erect another building. December 7, 1913 this building was completed at a cost of \$10,000.00.

In September of 1920, the faithful service of F. G. Walther came to an end. After serving 49 years in this parish, he resigned. With the coming of Rev. E. W. Abel, September

1921, it was decided to eliminate all German from the public services. In 1930, he died from a heart ailment and a call was extended to Rev. W. J. Boehne of Monett, Missouri. He was installed January 18, 1931. During Pastor Boehne's tenure the present the present edifice was erected at a cost of \$25,000.00 and dedicated March 26, 1939. He served the congregation until April 1960.

The Rev. John W. Cramer served as pastor from 1961-1966; the Rev. Loren Schwiebert, 1966-1970; Rev. Arnold E. Heimsoth 1970-1973 and presently the Rev. Charles Spomer serves as pastor.

During the church's centennial celebration in 1971 it was observed that during its first 100 years there had been 1,455 baptisms, 428 marriages, 883 confirmations and 624 burials. At present it numbers approximately 380 souls and 308 communicants.

## **The Church Of The Nazarene**

Mrs. Lucy Heisel and Mrs. Clara Harmon, both of Brunswick, desiring to start a Church of the Nazarene in this area, wrote to the general board of the church asking for a service to be held in Brunswick. In answer to their efforts, Dr. T. W. Willingham of St. Louis, District Superintendent of the Missouri District, held a service in the M.F.A. Hall in Brunswick, in January of 1943 with forty-nine in attendance.

Rev. Stanley N. Whitcanak, Pastor of the Moberly Church of the Nazarene, accepted the obligation of serving as the first minister of the group. He held services every Saturday night in a store room in the business district of the town. After more than two years, Rev. Paul Swada of Macon, Mo., accepted the call to become a full-time pastor and moved to Brunswick. The church was organized and continued to meet for several years in the building now occupied by the MVHRDC and Leo's Bike Shop.

Rev. Albert Wideman of St. Louis was called to serve the church and it was during his ministry that land was purchased on North Taylor Street, and a building was erected in 1946. It was in 1962-1963, under the pastorate of the Rev. Mr. J. M. Dennison of Oskaloosa, Iowa, that this building was remodeled.

The present pastor, the Rev. Mr. Lawrence Grant of Olathe, Kansas, is also chairman of the church board. Other officers are: Linda Bondy, secretary, John Bondy, treasurer; Kenneth Bondy and Mrs. Elda Sailor, members of the church board.

## **Prairie Chapel Church**

The Prairie Chapel Church was originally built near Dalton, Missouri, then known as Bowling Green. In the year of 1853, an acre of ground was deeded by W. A. and Rachel Pugh for the site of a house of worship. The people of the Prairie Chapel community purchased this church for fifty

dollars. it was taken apart in sections, loaded on wagons drawn by oxen and hauled to the present site. All work on the building was donated. The building was completed the same year, and was known as the Prairie Chapel Methodist Episcopal Church South.

The first Sabbath School was organized May 29, 1854, with the following officers: Superintendent, Samuel Elliott, Ass't. Supt. W. C. Shackelford, Librarian E. E. Isle. In 1860, when the Civil War broke out, services were discontinued, but reopened April 18, 1869, with the same officers in charge.

On June 1, 1884, after some extensive remodeling, a re-dedication service was held by Reverend McAnnally, who was editor of the St. Louis Christian Advocate and Reverend J. F. Shores, the pastor at that time. A large crowd attended the basket dinner.

In the early history of the church, revivals of three weeks or longer were held, and meals were cooked and served on the grounds.

About 1885, Prairie Chapel became a part of the Triplett Circuit. The cemetery was deeded to the church by the late Samuel Elliott and was known by the name of the church.

Today Prairie Chapel is a part of the Brunswick Circuit, and the minister, the Rev. Mr. Scott Hall; Chairperson Administrative Board, Harold Wolfe; Chairperson Council on Ministries, Howard Mauzey; Treasurer, Mrs. Kathryn Wolfe.

# United Methodist Church

In 1818, three years before our state was admitted to the Union, James Keyte, a young Methodist preacher from England, arrived in St. Louis. The records show that in 1821 the Rev. Mr. Keyte was pastor of the Boonslick Circuit which included what is now Howard and Chariton Counties. Before the town was established, there were Methodists who met in homes for prayer services and preaching. The first members were T. H. Spenser, John T. McAshan, Wilson Elliott, John G. Fitzer, and Ephraim Rucker. The Rev. Mr. Keyte, who established both Keytesville and Brunswick, built the first house in Brunswick, which was used as a general merchandise store, a post office, and a church.

The following notice appeared in the October 14, 1847 issue of the Brunswicker: "*Elder A. P. Williams will preach in the Methodist meeting house on Friday next at candle light.*" This "meeting house" was a small frame structure located south of the Norfolk and Western Railway right-of-way where the Brunswick Sales Company Building now stands.

During the early years, the Sunday School had first, second, and third spelling classes and an "A.B.C." class as well as Bible and Testament classes.

Rebeckah Keyte, mother of James and his sister Sarah Keyte, was converted in the ministry of John Wesley in

"City Road Chapel" in London. The Rev. Mr. Keyte and Miss Sarah were converted under the preaching of Dr. Adam Clark. (A letter from Miss Pearl Keyte to Mrs. Laurence Storer confirms this information.)

The first brick building was built on a site between Broadway and Vine Streets, under the leadership of The Rev. Mr. Wm. Goff Caples and was dedicated by him in 1848. This building was sold for \$1,090.00 and the money applied toward buying the site and building the present building. The 1883 History of Howard and Chariton says: "This new church just erected at a cost of \$7,000.00 is the best church structure in the county." A Centennial celebration of the church was held in 1936 when The Rev. Mr. C. L. Dorris was pastor.

The Woman's Missionary Society was organized in 1878, the same year that the General Conference authorized such organizations. Mrs. John B. Bragg of Brunswick was elected vice-president of the conference society. The society had nine members and contributed \$9.00 to the conference missionary fund that year.

In 1917, the crowds of people who attended the "Hankins" revival meeting were so large, the meetings were held at the Russell Opera House. Other churches cooperated and there were several hundred people converted. Ninety-seven people joined the Methodist Church in December, 1917, and almost that many joined the Christian Church.

At this time (1976), the pastor is the Rev. Mr. Scott Hall, a recent graduate of St. Paul' School of Theology. Officers are, Carl Shubert, President of the Board of Ministries;

Betty Smith, Secretary; Irma Koch, Treasurer; Granvil Goe, Financial Secretary; Carl Holmberg, Superintendent of the church school; and Velma Squires, President of the United Methodist Women. Yvonne Tracy is church school treasurer and editor of the local church paper.

***The following story belongs in the history of both the Christian and Methodist Churches, but also relates to the social history of Brunswick:***

The Rev. Wm. Goff Capies has been described as one of the greatest preachers who has served the Brunswick Church. In October, 1860, he and the Rev. Mr. Moses E. Lard, "a learned man and a most gifted expounder" of the Christian Church, held a debate which continued for two weeks. It was held in Brunswick's largest tobacco warehouse with Ex-Governor Sterling Price as moderator. It was attended by "noted divines from Kentucky and other western states," and most of the time the attendance was from twelve to fifteen hundred persons. One historian wrote, "As is generally the case the victory was claimed by both sides and the opinions of few were changed, most everyone adhering the more fervently to their respective creeds and doctrines."

## **Zion A.M.E. Church**

The African Methodist Episcopal Church was founded in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1794 by Richard Allen ' the first Bishop of the A.M.E. Church. Richard Allen, a former

slave who traveled with Bishop Asbury as his servant and companion, withdrew from St. George's Methodist Church in Philadelphia in 1787. He organized the first independent Negro church, Bethel A.M.E. The land on which the Mother Bethel Church stands has been owned continuously by Negroes longer than any other plot of ground in the nation.

The A.M.E. Church in Brunswick, Missouri was first located on the hill, but burned in 1878. The present A.M.E. Church was bought the 5th day of February, 1880. The trustees of the church at that time were Alfred M. Liddy, Armstead McClure, Nelson Williams, Bradford Miller, Minor Perry, Alexander Ashby, and Floyd Bruce. The Pastor was the Rev. Mr. Oaks.

The present trustees in this Bicentennial year are Orville Ervin, Daniel Turner, Thomas Tolson, Rachel Collins, Emma Watts, Mary Blanton, Lolita Allen, Mary L. Ervin and Juanita Turner. The Rev. Mr. John A. Barnes is the Pastor.

## **Zion Methodist Church**

Between the years 1875 and 1880, there was a large movement of families into Chariton County which was largely open prairie at that time. The determination, faith and courage of these settlers have played an important role in the progress of our community.

In the late 1870's, some families established homes in what is now Zion Community.

Zion church had its beginning in a public school house, when two young men, Albert and Dick Enyeart began a singing school. On one occasion they brought Rev. Kelso with them. He talked to the group about a revival, which later was held for two weeks with several persons making a profession of faith. This led to an organization of Sunday School to be held on Sunday afternoons with Mr. Sim Reno as teacher.

The Sunday School grew rapidly and after several meetings, it was decided to build a church. Why the name "Zion" is not known.

Mr. Dave Smutz donated an acre of ground. Those folk saw in religion something very vital to their well being and the need of a church home. All interested families made generous donations. Most labor was donated. The ladies contributed their support by serving meals for workers. The building, under direction of Mr. Bridgeman & Son, took almost a year for completion.

In the summer of 1881, it was dedicated by the Rev. Ed B. Lytle, who became the first pastor and remained for two years. The first hymn sung was "O Think of the Home Over There".

The church has continued to have services and Sunday School for all ages, youth groups, Bible study groups, music groups, women's organization, vacation church school. They have promoted various projects to support

the church, including 83 ice cream socials, homecomings and Christian fellowship.

In the early 1950's, a basement was constructed for a Sunday school room, fellowship room, etc. Then a few years later the sanctuary was remodeled under the guidance of a building committee, Dr. Schaff, and faithful members. July 11, 1954 re-dedication service was held, conducted by Bishop Ivan Lee Holt, Dr. Walter Morgia Ivan Lee Holt, Dr. Walter Morgan, District Superintendent, Rev. Joseph Thompson, a former pastor, and Dr. Walter Schaff, pastor.

Zion is now a part of Chariton County Larger Parish, enjoying fellowship with four other churches with the leadership of Rev. & Mrs. Hern, pastor and associate pastor, Richard Plackte.

The church's ladies organization began around 1916 with Edna Smith, Chairperson. The organization has given 17 life membership pins, made regular pledges to missions and supported the church. In 1950, it compiled a cookbook in which a member expressed the sentiment of the country church, "Most of us hold treasured memories of some old country church, which we cherish and love. Perhaps it isn't much of an edifice, but to us it is peaceful and beautiful. Its soft white color harmonizes perfectly with the green of the countryside. Our rural church is beloved by all of us, as a place of worship, a builder of character and a servant of our community. When viewed across the prairie and the hills, it cannot help but lift our thoughts from the common place and bring us to the realization of the fact that, 'The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof.'"