

MF 324

First Christian Church of Coffeyville, Kansas.

Records, 1887-1995, on reels of microfilm.

Include constitutions, correspondence, church directories, church histories, membership records, minutes of the Official Board, newsletters, reports, and miscellaneous materials associated with this church.

Loaned by the First Christian Church of Coffeyville, Kansas in 1996 for the purpose of arrangement and description, and for microfilming.

Copyright information is available in the repository.

See reference librarian for a comprehensive finding aid guide to this collection.

Added Entries:

- 1) CHURCHES -- DISCIPLES OF CHRIST --
COFFEYVILLE.
- 2) CHURCH RECORDS AND REGISTERS -- KANSAS --
COFFEYVILLE.
- 3) COFFEYVILLE, KAN.

KANSAS STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Library/Archives Division

Manuscripts Section

**First Christian Church of Coffeyville, Kansas
Records, 1887-1995**

MF 324	MF 395	MF 512
MF 325	MF 396	MF 513
MF 326	MF 396	MF 513
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MF 392	MF 399	MF 517
MF 393	MF 502	MF 518
MF 394	MF 510	MF 519

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Provenance: The Records of the *First Christian Church of Coffeyville, Kansas, 1887-1995*, were loaned to the Kansas State Historical Society, Manuscripts Section, for the purpose of arrangement and description, and for microfilming.

Citation: Citations for this collection should include the *First Christian Church of Coffeyville, Kansas, Records, 1887-1995, Kansas State Historical Society, Manuscripts Section*.

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NOTES ON THIS MICROFILM COPY

This microfilm contains the *First Christian Church of Coffeyville, Kansas, Records, 1887-1995*, in its entirety.

As the number of rolls of microfilm and their roll numbers could not be determined prior to the microfilming process, the series of microfilm MF number includes a number of breaks. The complete series of MF numbers is listed at the top of this guide and also in the side of each microfilm roll box.

The microfilm MF number is listed to the right of each series title in the Container List.

This manuscript collection is organized around the requirements and limitations that microfilming imposes on a manuscript collection.

The beginning of each series in this collection is marked with a microfilm target.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The records in this collection are those that one would typically expect to find among the records of any church. In terms of volume, the First Christian Church records are dominated by newsletters, Minutes of Meetings of the Official Board, and membership records. Also included are books and brochures of the church's history, three different versions of its constitution, and several church membership directories dating back to 1926.

Correspondence, financial reports, and some pastor's reports are found among the Minutes of the Official Board.

Items of lesser importance or of small volume are found in either the *Miscellaneous -- Dated* series (arranged chronologically), or the *Miscellaneous -- Undated* series.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

The origins of the Coffeyville Christian Church go back to 1874. Mr. John W. Randall was the key instigator in the formation of this church. Its growth and development in the early years was difficult, for the lack of a regular, full time pastor. A number of itinerant ministers served the struggling congregation until FCC hired its first full time minister in 1883.

In 1878, Mr. Dee Davis, Mr. Alfred Kime and Mr. O. J. Winters committed themselves to reviving the Coffeyville Christian Church. At first, they met in an empty store building on the corner of Seventh and Walnut Streets. Rev. Jennett of Wilson County came once a month to provide ministerial services.

As the congregation grew, they found the need to expand both their educational programs as well as the building facilities. Rev. J. S. Bechnel came to Coffeyville in 1883 to work both as a preacher and as a carpenter. He built a small one-room building on the corner of Tenth and Walnut Streets. However, not long after it was built, a tornado destroyed the structure. Undaunted, the

people of the church built another and dedicated it in late 1885.

In the early years, the congregation met on Sunday afternoons, as it seemed to be a more convenient time and more people would attend. Following the construction of a real church, the adults and children convened their Sunday School in the mornings, while young people retained their usual afternoon hour.

Historically, it has been the Sunday School classes of the First Christian Church which held the congregation together during times of difficulty and pastoral absence.

Rev. Joel Dillon was the first salaried minister, beginning in 1886. Unfortunately, his tenure was cut short by his untimely death in 1889. It was the Sunday School which held things together until another full time pastor was secured in 1890.

The First Christian Church of Coffeyville, Montgomery County, Kansas received its charter, with a period of limitation of ninety nine years, with a mission to preach the Gospel of Christ. Alfred Kime, George C. Dillon and H. H. Beatty were the original trustees.

Rev. M. Ingles became pastor following the death of Rev. Dillon, serving only for a year. S. W. Brown succeeded Mr. Ingles and stayed until 1900.

The congregation grew steadily over the years. It seems that the ever-present and reputable Sunday School classes were attracting people for miles around. The church purchased a new piece of property on the corner of Ninth and Elm Streets. The new church was built and dedicated in 1898. The old church was sold to the African-American Baptists who lifted and moved the building to a new location. Sadly, that building was destroyed by a tornado in 1917.

Ministers, it seemed, seldom stayed for long. After finishing his tenure in 1900, Ellis Purlee served from 1900 to 1909. Then C. E. Whitaker served in 1910, followed by G. W. Kitchen (1910-1912), then by Arthur Long (1913-1924).

In the early 1900s, FCC faced serious financial difficulties. Fortunately, some of the members confidentially mortgaged their homes to aid the church treasury and prevented the church from closing its doors.

As the church grew, Sunday School classes grew as well (actually, it was the growth of the Sunday School classes that led to the growth of the church). As the classes grew, they began to divide, so as to keep them limited to a manageable size. Usually these divisions were made by age and gender.

The church had an additional education building built in 1916 to accommodate the thriving education program. Originally, the new building was intended to include a new sanctuary. However, financial limitations prevented its construction until 1924. The new sanctuary included a pipe organ constructed by the Reuter Organ company of Lawrence, Kansas.

As a mutual aid benefit for members of FCC, the church organized the Christian Credit Union in 1937. This lending institution thrived, and by 1952, over one hundred thousand dollars had been lent out, and only \$10.94 lost.

In 1954, Mr. William Reese came to the FCC as its first Minister of Education. He initiated a new program for yet another building expansion of the church's educational facility.

As an addition to the church's music program, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Gray purchased a two octave set of Schulmerich hand bells.

It seems that FCC had reached its apex in Sunday School Attendance by the early 1970s, classes and classrooms were rearranged to make sure that small classes were not in large classrooms and vice versa.

In 1974, FCC celebrated its centennial year. The Centennial church service, November 3, was broadcast over the radio so that shut-ins could listen in, even if they could not attend in person. The Centennial Committee produced a special display in the church parlor, featuring the church's history. The former ministers of FCC were invited back for the big day. Mrs. Roselle Grace Hastings wrote a centennial history of the church which was distributed to everyone who attended church or Sunday School on the Centennial Sunday. Members who had been with the church for at least fifty years had a specially reserved place for them in the sanctuary on Centennial Sunday. The Chi Rho department produced 100 centennial plates (sold for \$3.00 each) and packages of centennial stationary (\$2.00 each). That evening featured a special dinner and program.

Mrs. Dessie Mitchell financed the George Mitchell Chapel, dedicated in May of 1975.

First Christian Church drew up and adopted a new constitution in 1991. This was the first restructuring of the Church since April of 1969.

List of Ministers:

Rev. Jennett, 1880-1881?
Rev. J. S. Bechnel, 1882-1886?
Rev. Joel Dillon, 1886-1889
Rev. M. Ingles, 1890-?
Rev. S. W. Brown, ? -1900
Rev. Ellis Purlee, 1900-1909
Rev. C. E. Whittaker, 1910
Rev. G. W. Kitchen, 1910-1912
Rev. Arthur Long, 1913-1924
Rev. Lin D. Cartwright, 1924-1928
Rev. Joseph Boyd, 1928-1936
Rev. H. Austin Smith, 1936-1942
Rev. J. Everard Carter, 1943-1945
Rev. Jack A. Oliver, 1945-1954
Rev. W. L. McEver, 1954-1961
Rev. William E. Furnas, 1962-1966
Rev. L. R. Hobert, 1966
Rev. Ned M. Roberts, 1966-1971
Rev. Edmund C. Miller, 1972
Rev. Richard L. Russell, 1972-1977
Rev. Jerry Deffenbaugh, 1977-1990
Rev. Vernon Strout 1990
Rev. David A. Jones, 1991-

CONTAINER LIST

<u>Series</u>	<u>Contents</u>
1	Constitutions -- MF 324. Three different constitutions; one of them dated April 1969.
2	Correspondence, 1924-1936 -- MF 324.
3	Directories, Church -- MF 324. 1926 1929 1958-1959 1959-1960 1965-1966 1969 1975 1980 1987 1991
4	Histories, Church -- MF 324. <i>Sunday School History of the First Christian Church of Coffeyville, Kansas, by Mrs. A. E. Hastings, 1952.</i> <i>Church History: First Christian Church, Coffeyville, Kansas, Rosella Grace Hastings, 1974.</i> <i>Memories, 1874-1993, Mrs. Linda Jones, 1993.</i>
5	Membership Records and Certificates -- MF 324-326. <i>Register of Members: 1887-1904.</i> <i>Untitled bound volume of membership records, n.d. Members, 1936.</i> <i>Membership Certificates, undated.</i> Series I Series II (contained in binder notebooks arranged in alphabetical order)
6	Minutes of the Official Board, undated-1918-1993 <i>MF 367, MF 392-394.</i> The minutes also include some correspondence, financial reports and pastor's reports. Note that not all years are complete. Also note that the fiscal year begins on July 1 and ends on June 30.

- 7 **Newsletters -- MF 394-399, MF 509-510, MF 512-519**
Coffeyville Christian, 1913-1919.
Boosters and Bulletins, 1922-1928.
Church Calls, 1929-1932.
Coffeyville Christian, 1943-1995.
 Note that not all years are complete and some entire years are missing.
- 8 **Reports -- MF 519**
 Department Reports, 1926-1935.
 Pastor's Reports, 1928-1935.
 Note that many "Pastor's Reports" are also found among the Minutes of the Official Board.
- 9 **Miscellaneous -- Dated Material -- MF 519**
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| 1936-1937 | [Register of] Deceased Members and Friends. |
| 1957 May 13 | Consecration Day bulletin. |
| 1959 Jan 1 | New Year's Day bulletin. |
| 1960 Jan 1 | New Year's Day bulletin. |
| 1961 Sept 17 | "Dedication Day Services for Our Children's Building." |
| 1962 Jan 1 | New Year's Day bulletin. |
| 1966 Sept ? | Broadcast Sunday Sermon: "Jesus Converses with Satan" |
| 1966 Oct 30 | Organ Recital, Dr. Eugene J. Ulrich |
| 1967 Jan 1 | New Year's Day bulletin. |
| 1974 Nov 1 | Coffeyville, Kansas <u>Journal</u> newspaper clipping concerning the centennial of the First Christian Church of Coffeyville. |
| 1974 Nov 3 | Centennial Celebration, Morning Worship Service bulletin. |
| 1975 May 4 | Service of Dedication, George W. Mitchell Memorial Chapel |
- 10 **Miscellaneous -- Undated Material -- MF 519**
 Sermons of Joseph David Boyd:
 1) "Here is the Answer to the charge that 'The Church is Meddling in This and That: A Gospel that Is a Gospel.'"
 2) "Industrial Democracy or Toward an Understanding of the Labor Movement."
 3) "GASHMU: A Sermon on Menace."
 Picture of Jesus at an altar.
 Bookmark.
 Pamphlet, "The Bible Rides the Storm"
 Statement concerning the baptism of Maxine Smith McBride.
 List of members of the Building Committee.
 List of people on the Food Pantry ministry.