

The History of Christ Community Fellowship 1879 – Present

Services for this group of believers were held as early as 1870 in the Walla Walla Valley. On May 11, 1879, the First Baptist Church of Walla Walla was founded by nine people. Two immediately, the same day, left town, never to return.

Reverend J.L Blich was the pastor from May, 1879 to Oct, 1880.

The Reverend J.D. Pierce then became pastor until April, 1883.

The First Baptist group met in the city hall or the Adventist, Methodist, or Cumberland Presbyterian churches when available. In Sept, 1881 they bought a lot on Rose and Colville for \$1909 and contracted to build a church for \$4500. That church still exists behind the facing of the Veterans of Foreign Wars building.

Reverend A.B Banks was pastor for 2 years ('83 to '85) then Reverend S.W.Beaven for one year ('85 to '86) and Reverend J.H.Beaven was pastor for six Years ('86 to '92) then Reverend R.C Cole became pastor 3 years from '92 to '95. Reverend J.W. Newman pastored First Baptist from 1895 to 1897 as did J.P Huckleberry for eight months in 1897. Mr. Neyman was pastor 2 years until 1900 Then Reverend H.B.Turner became pastor from 1900 till 1902.

In 1901, the Park Street Baptist church started at Park & Alder which is now the location of a 7-11 store, and met in a round building with a Dome roof. This church was a splinter from First Baptist because someone won a piano in a card game and wanted to donate it to the First Baptist Church. As is often done by zealous Christians and non-Christians alike, a rule was added by implication making gambling a sin forcing those who proclaimed that sin to disassociate with the First Baptist Church members who would allow the sin. The Park Street church building was purchased by a different denomination in 1911 when the two Baptist churches re-united. Then it was demolished by a flood in 1931.

Reverend F. Fowler was a gifted pastor and then Rev. Black until 1911. When the two churches re-united in 1911, membership was 336. Dr. D.D. McLaurin pastored from 1911 to Sept, 1913. On September 27, 1911, a bond with United States Fidelity and Guarantee Company was issued in the full and just sum of \$20,000 for the erection of a church building on Boyer and Park. The cornerstone of the new church was laid on May 12, 1912 and it was called The White Temple First Baptist Church although the legal name remained First Baptist Church.

The building was a beautiful huge white gothic temple at the edge of Whitman College in Walla Walla on Park and Boyer. The eleven steps to the grand front entry was on Boyer Avenue between four towering columns punctuating a stain glass window of Christ knocking at the door above the four entry doors.

A 3-manual Kimbal organ was installed with more than 1500 pipes ranging in size from sixteen foot for the bass sound to 3/8 inch for extreme high pitches. The pipes filled a concave arch in the cathedral framing a twenty-nine seat choir loft. In 1953, folding chairs were added to seat the 32 voice choir.

To the left of the choir loft and Kimbal organ was a glass dome topped baptistery behind the stage of the sanctuary. The dark oak pews swept the floor below the stage under a quarter circle balcony which was used occasionally for chamber music sung by the choir. The wall opposite the front doors

and the entry way was also intricately decorated dark pine which upon close inspection became a horizontal split-sliding door called a guillotine door.

Ornamental gas wall lights surrounded the sanctuary and a three foot neon cross sitting on the organ was turned on during night services.

Dr H.L Boardman was pastor from Jan, 1914 to Aug, 1916, Dr Marion E. Bollen from 1916 to 1922, Reverend A.E Davis from Nov, 1922 to Sept, 1926 and Dr Harris L. Kempton from Jan, 1927 to Jan, 1930.

A 9th Street mission was established with Sunday school and Wednesday evening services and a Chinese mission was begun on West Rose St. The Chinese mission and English lessons were ceased when the mission was burned.

Dr. Leonard Brough was pastor from Feb, 1930 to Feb, 1935 and Reverend Stuart Benson nine years from Apr, 1935 to Sep, 1943 and Rev. Luther Plankenhorn served from May, 1944 until Jul, 1953.

During WW II when we had 5000 air force people in WW, the basement of White Temple provided service center for these people as or similar to a USO for the air base, V-12 at Whitman, the local VA hospital and McCaw.

The Kirkman stained glass window was on Boyer St and is now in the sanctuary of Christ Community Fellowship. The Adams Stained glass window was on Park St and is also in the CCF sanctuary.

Rev. Dallas French served from Oct, 1953 to Oct, 1957. He had been an air force pilot during WW II. He loved music in the service and had a 32 voice choir and temple Choristers.

A 1955 split started Trinity Baptist at Howard & Newell yet in 1957 attendance was 250-300 people. Dr Vincent Cox became our pastor in Dec, 1957 until Feb, 1961

Parking was always a problem for the Baptist church as indicated by the following announcement from 1960 - "Park Street has been widened to accommodate parallel parking on both sides of the street. The time limit is two hours. If you are there a while longer because of church activities, any parking ticket will be cancelled by the police Department."

Church was a formal affair with Suit and tie, gown and hat, and everyone went to church. Sunday school was 9:45 and church was 11:00 and kids got a religious storybook every Sunday to read during church. The storybook revealed the journey of Moses.

Rev. Reynold Best was pastor from Sep or Jun, 1961 until Aug, 1965 In 1962 Reynold Best wanted to buy and move to the co-op building and parking lot a block away – now the Whitman Student Union. Many left and joined the 1ST Church of God on Sturm which built a new Sanctuary shortly afterward.

Tuesday was the Boy Scout troop 13 meeting with a couple dozen boys. Wednesday night was a prayer meeting and Thursday night was the choir practice.

Harold Jacobson was pastor from July, 1966 to Feb, 1970

Because we were at the edge of Whitman College, many "Whitties" attended the service. We learned they had no Sunday evening meals at Whitman so volunteers began serving 30 to 35 meals Sunday evening. The kitchen was re-built in the lower temple at this time to facilitate that ministry. Often

times the first three or four center pews were filled with Whitman College students during this time period.

Brainard (Bud) Frazier was pastor from Oct, 1971 to Mar, 1978.

Parking was a problem so we offered to buy the Bennington apartment house next door on the South side but Whitman College outbid us.

On Monday evening we had a youth group with about 35 Junior and Senior high students.

The church had its 100th anniversary in 1979.

Doug Barram was pastor from 1980 to 1991. From 1981 on, Doug Barram attempted to eliminate the nickname "White Temple" which had become associated with the First Baptist Church.

After church at least once a month, the horizontal split-sliding (guillotine) doors were opened to provide access to the coffee and punch and cookies and social half hour in the foyer next to the sanctuary, which was now part of the sanctuary. It was a fabulous church but it was also a fabulous ministry.

Doug led the change in governance from Deacon Board to Elder Board in 1985.

In 1986, the building was sold to Whitman College for destruction. Many moved to Trinity Baptist, 1st Church of God, and 1st Presbyterian churches. The building was a "museum" with cracks and leaks, steep stairs and crumbling structure needing major renovation.

In 1986, First Baptist Church purchased property from Liberty Christian School (LCS) and began sharing facilities through a long-term agreement that is enjoyed to this day.

In 1989, the First Baptist Church became non-denominational and changed its' name to Christ Community Fellowship.

Doug continued to minister to the valley until 2008 when he moved to be closer to his earthly family.

In 1991, Ron Bruno became pastor. Then in 1996, Ron Gonzales was pastor. Then followed by Jerry Goebel who became pastor in 2004.

After several years without a pastor the Lord put it on the hearts of the church to once again pray and search for a pastor to love and help lead the people of CCF. In April 2010, Matt Dotson became pastor and moved from San Diego, CA with his wife and two children.

CCF is a group of ordinary people, from all walks of life, devoted to loving God and one another, the verse by verse study and application of God's word, prayer and reaching our community with the good news of Jesus Christ. To God be all Glory!

Christ Community Fellowship © 2010 - Compiled by Dean Van Dong - Edited by Matt Dotson