

LAI D THE CORNERSTONE

Impressive Ceremony and Interesting Addresses at New Baptist Church Site.

Tuesday, July 4, marked an all-important milestone in the Baptist church history of Liberty and the community when the cornerstone of the new \$128,000 Second Baptist church was laid by the Grand Lodge A. F. & A. M. of Missouri, Grand Master Olaf A. Lucas of Kansas City presiding.

The magnificent new church, which is in process of erection, will take the place of the old church built in 1883 and which burned March 21, 1920.

There were two parts to the order of ceremonies on Tuesday. The first included the laying of the cornerstone by the A. F. & A. M. Grand Lodge, and included the reading of the contents of the box deposited in the cornerstone by Dr. A. M. Tutt, grand treasurer of the lodge and clerk of the church.

During the second part Dr. O. R. Mangum, pastor of the church, presided. This included addresses by Rev. L. M. Proctor of Independence, who spoke representing the Baptists of Missouri; Dr. D. W. Moore, pastor of the Liberty Christian church, who represented the churches of Liberty, and Dr. J. P. Greene, acting president of William Jewell college, who spoke for the college.

The ceremonies began promptly at 2:30 o'clock with a large crowd of people assembled. Many also gathered in nearby lawns and porches to make way for the Masonic procession in full regalia which was headed by the Liberty band and its conductor, Mr. J. C. McCartney,

Besides members of the Masonic Grand Lodge who were present, there were in the processional Liberty Lodge No. 31, A. F. & A. M., Liberty Chapter, No. 3, R. A. M., Liberty Commandery, No. 6, K. T., and the local DeMolay chapter.

The band played "Onward Christian Soldier" as the processional marched to the church site and Grand Master Lucas ascended to the platform where the cornerstone was in readiness. Rev. L. M. Proctor, pastor of the Independence Baptist church, gave the invocation.

As Grand Master Lucas began the stately ceremony of the cornerstone laying, he said that while the Masonic organization is the oldest building order in existence it devotes its tenets and principles to building character and building men. He then asked that the stone be put into place and that all give attention to Grand Chaplain F. V. Loos of Liberty. In a prayer addressed to the Chief Architect Mr. Loos petitioned that perfect harmony and no discord reign in the new House of Prayer.

The contents of the box deposited in the cornerstone, were read by Grand Treasurer Tutt. Then the band played "Lead Kindly Light." Three grand officers of the Masonic order tested the stone with proper implements of Masonry. Deputy Grand Master Walter Craven of Excelsior Springs tested the stone with the square; acting Grand Senior Warden Clyde Crawford with the level, and acting Grand Junior Warden Alan F. Wherritt with the plumb. They found the stone well formed and true and christened it with corn, symbol of plenty; wine, symbol of peace and happiness, and the oil of joy.

In his address Grand Master Lucas spoke to the church, the people and of the cornerstone and said in part:

"Be serviceable to the brethren and fear God, the Great Architect of the Universe. May this be a place of concourse of good men and may it at all times promote peace and concord."

A final prayer by the Grand Chaplain concluded the Masonic ceremonies.

In presenting the speaker representing Missouri Baptists and all Baptists at large, Rev. L. M. Proctor, Dr. Mangum spoke of the inscription on the cornerstone of the church and that Rev. Proctor's address would be based upon the description and commitment of the church as inscribed on the stone. The inscription is:

"My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples."

Rev. Proctor divided his address into three questions concerning the stone, but applying to the people of the church: "Is it strong, has it luster, and does it fit?" "The stone is not like the others used in the building of the church," Rev. Proctor said, "it is selected. It is the only one that has received special attention in dressing and lettering. Which of us will shine in the service of the church? Whose work and lives will have the luster that comes from God?"

The speaker closed his talk with a definition of Christianity as given by Charles Evans Hughes: "To have courage without pugnacity; conviction without bigotry; charity without condescension; faith without credulity; love of humanity without mere sentimentalism; meekness with power, and emotion with sanity."

When Dr. Mangum introduced Dr. Moore, who spoke representing the other churches of Liberty, said: "Since the loss of our church we Baptists have imposed much upon the other churches of Liberty. The church as a whole is under deep obligation to them."

In a masterful address, given with an eloquent choice of words, Dr. Moore said in part: "God is the great Artificer. 'He that buildeth all things is God.' We are here for a word of congratulations giving voice to the feeling of all our sister churches, that you have come to a

time like this. We do this first of all because it is ours. It cannot be confined to one communion. The church building is in a true sense the expression of the collective spirit and ideals of the community in which it stands. It exerts its influence over all, churchmen and non-churchmen, and it cannot be circumscribed by denominational lines. The church is a living monument of the practical worth of ideals. It fittingly symbolizes that Eternal City—that finer ideal that lures us, which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God."

In presenting Dr. Greene, Dr. Mangum said: "This church and William Jewell college were born within six years of each other, the church being six years the older. The two have worked together, suffered and sacrificed together and have mutually assisted each other throughout the seventy-three years."

"There are only two great institutions in the world, the home and the church," Dr. Greene said in beginning his remarks, "and each is in need of the other and cannot develop according to God's plan without constant association and communion. Religion is the best thing in this life as well as in the life to come and my desire above all else for the church and for William Jewell college is that you all help the boys and girls to become good Christian men and women."

"Rock of Ages," softly played by the band and sung by the standing crowds, after which Dr. Mangum pronounced the benediction.

The contents of the copper box placed in the cornerstone included:

Contents of the cornerstone of the old church building.

History of the church from its organization in 1843 to date.

Roll of church membership, 917.

Several calendars showing the church directory.

A short history of the Woman's Bible class of the Sunday school and a copy of the New Testament.

A record of the work of the building committee given in chronological order.

A copy of the program of the cornerstone laying ceremonies.

A 1922 catalogue of William Jewell college.

Copies of the Word and Way, Home and Foreign Field, the Liberty Tribune and Advance, the William Jewell Bulletin and William Jewell Student.

Rosters of the Masonic bodies that laid the cornerstone—Liberty Lodge, No. 31, A. F. & A. M., Liberty Chapter, No. 3, R. A. M., Liberty Commandery, No. 6, K. T., and the roster of the order of DeMolay.

Constitution and by-laws of the Missouri Historical society.

Year-book of the Fortnightly Study club of Liberty.

Name of the board of education of Liberty.

Name of the city officers and board of public works.

Copy of charter and revised ordinances of the city of Liberty.

Coins of 1922.

Coins of 1843, the date of the organization of the church, donated by Edgar Archer.

The cornerstone box was a gift of Alvin Dudfield.

History of the Church.

The history of the Second Baptist church as compiled by Prof. R. P. Rider is quite complete from the year of the organization of the church, 1843, to the present. Only two copies of the history were printed, the one that was put into the cornerstone and the other is in Prof. Rider's personal possession.

The history contains the "Declaration of Faith," the Covenant, the Constitution and By-laws, the Calendar, the Articles of Agreement, the Act of Incorporation, and a Historical Sketch of the Church from 1843 to 1922.

The explanatory portion of the historical sketch says, "the early records of the church were destroyed in the burning of the Clay county court house in 1857. The second record book, embracing the period from 1857 to 1869, has gone into undiscoverable hiding, quite as disastrous as was the fire. Consequently, for the history prior to 1869, we must rely upon the memories of those then interested in its welfare and who have furnished personal reminiscences. We have also received some little aid from casual notes and minutes of associations found in the archives of the Missouri Baptist Historical society."

On May 2, 1843, a Missionary Baptist church was organized in the town of Liberty, Clay county, Mo., with the following named brethren and sisters as constituent members:

William D. Hubbell and his wife, Eliza Hubbell, and William P. Hubbell, their son; Elijah Stout and his wife, Amanda Stout; John W. Cockrell and his wife, Elizabeth Cockrell; Robert Minter and his wife, Martha Minter; Mrs. Harriet Minter; Mrs. Amanda McCarty; Miss Betsy Dabney—twelve members in all.

It is often made the subject of inquiry why this church was called the Second Baptist church. The conditions under which it received its name are these: For several years there had existed in Liberty an anti-mission church. It numbered among its members some of the most influential inhabitants of the town, friends and relatives of those who were planning the new organization. To call the new church "The Baptist Church" some argued, would be to offer a slight to the older communion by seeming to ignore its existence; and to name it "The First Baptist Church" would but "add insult to injury," so, though among them there were advocates for each of the above mentioned names, through the advice of Elder A. P. Williams the conciliatory course was adopted and the new organization called "The Second Baptist Church of Liberty, Missouri."

(Mr. Williams was pastor of the Baptist church at Lexington and assisted W. C. Ligon, pastor of the Baptist church of Carrollton, in organizing the Liberty church in 1843.)

The first church home of the Second Baptist church was up on the hill where Judge Ralph Hughes' residence now stands. The church was a commodious brick house, but at fire was merely closed and made weather-tight. The walls were not plastered and the temporary furnishing was of the rudest, most primitive kind. The seats in use were slabs and benches borrowed from a nearby saw-mill and laid upon trestles; the pulpit was a rough kitchen table, probably likewise borrowed. There was preaching but once a month.

This church was destroyed by a hurricane at 2 o'clock a. m., Saturday, June 17, 1882, during the pastorate of Dr. B. G. Tutt. An interesting collateral fact was told by one who visited the scene the next morning. The old clock was fastened securely to the wall on the north side of the auditorium and after the storm it still hung there though severely wrenched to one side, and this faithful warden of the flying hours had surrendered its office at exactly 1.30 a. m.

During the time the flock was without a church they met now in the Methodist church, now in seminary building, the tabernacle or the bank hall. After one year and six months of this wandering tent-like campaign, the minutes of December 1, 1883, read in the grandeur of their simplicity, simply thus: "The church met in their new house and opened with devotional exercises."

And thus without any display, as records go, the little band of 220 members heroically suffered the loss of their much-loved church house and erected a more commodious one on the southeast corner of Franklin and Leonard streets at a cost of \$13,000.

Dr. B. G. Tutt remained as pastor of the new church seven years.

In 1892 the church installed a pipe-organ.

In 1901 the church was enlarged to a seating capacity of 1,200 seats and remained thus until its destruction by fire March 21, 1920.

During the 79 years of its life, the Second Baptist church has had 25 pastors. They include:

- Rev. A. P. Williams, 1843-1848.
- Professors Dulin and Lockett 1849-1851 (joint.)
- Prof. Dulin (full charge), 1851-1855. (Also principal of the Young Ladies' seminary in Liberty.)
- Rev. B. T. F. Cake, 1855-1856.
- Rev. W. C. Ligon, 1856.
- Rev. Josiah Leake, 1856-57.
- Rev. J. B. Link, 1857.
- Dr. Ed. I. Owen, 1858-1860, who was also professor of ancient languages in William Jewell college.
- Rev. Wm. Thompson, 1860-1864.
- Rev. W. C. Barrett, Rev. Asa N. Bird (jointly), 1865.
- Rev. X. X. Buckner, 1867.
- Rev. A. Machette, 1868-69.
- Rev. J. M. C. Breaker, 1870.
- Dr. Rambaut, president of William Jewell college, served as pastor in addition to his college duties 1870-1872.
- Rev. Wm. Ferguson, 1872-1873.
- Rev. H. M. Richardson, 1873-1881. (It was during Rev. Richardson's pastorate, May 1, 1875, the church voted to use the organ in its public services. There was some objection to what was called a sinful innovation, but it was deemed the wise policy to move onward and conciliate the objecting members later.)
- Rev. B. G. Tutt, August, 1881, December, 1889.
- Rev. Sam Frank Taylor, 1891-1894.
- Rev. T. P. Stafford, 1894-1900.
- Rev. F. W. Eberhardt, 1900-1907.
- Rev. J. P. Greene and Rev. C. M. Williams were supply pastors, 1907-1908.
- Dr. H. A. Bagby, 1908-1914.
- Rev. S. B. Cousins, 1914-1917.
- Dr. J. P. Greene and Rev. Joe Cooper were supply pastors 1918.
- Rev. O. R. Mangum, September, 1919—