

THE HISTORY OF ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
OF NYSSA, OREGON

1907 - 1959

Early in 1904 Mr. and Mrs. Josiah Boydell, who were the inspiration for our first Episcopal Church services in Nyssa, came with their family of five children from the Province of Quebec, Canada.

At that time Nyssa had a population of about 100, more or less, in the town proper. Most of the town consisted of one long street on the east side and parallel to the railroad tracks. It consisted of a Section House belonging to the railroad, a hotel, a general store and Post Office and several houses, but no depot, a two story farm home known as the Ehrgood place and further east, where the Sugar Factory now stands, was another farm homestead. On the west side of town were a few scattered buildings.

That winter the J. Boydell family lived in Boise, returning to Nyssa in the spring of 1905, when Mr. Boydell went into the mercantile business.

Soon after coming to Nyssa, Josiah Boydell wrote to the Bishop of Oregon, at Portland, asking for some contact with the Episcopal Church. Nyssa, at this time, had a small white community church, which, I understand had been used as a school and moved in from the country. It was situated on the north side of Main Street and North Third. It was used by "preachers" from various denominations and had a community Sunday School which the Boydells attended.

In 1907, when Bishop Robert L. Paddock came to the Missionary District of Eastern Oregon, contact was made with him by the Boydells with the help of the Bishop of Oregon. Bishop Paddock came to Nyssa and held services, also clergy from as far as Portland.

In May 1909, the first confirmation class took place in the small community church, with the Rt. Rev. Robert L. Paddock officiating. This class had seven members as follows: G. Eva Boydell, Ethelwyn T. Boydell, J. Blayney Boydell, Clarence D. Bean, Ruah E. Ward, Lotta E. Phillips and Nellie R. Points.

The small church was abandoned when the larger Community Church was built on the south side of Main Street at Third Street. It later became a Methodist Church. The Presbyterians also built, and in these and other buildings in town we had Episcopal services at intervals, with the Deaconess Alice J Knight as a faithful visitor in our midst.

On September 22, 1910, the Ladies Guild was organized with the following members present at the home of Mrs. J. Boydell; Mmes. G.B. Wills, F.A. Goeltz, F. Sexton, A.W. Ward, Sarah McConnell, Harriet Boydell, the Misses Eva Boydell, Josephine McConnell, Elizabeth Boydell, Ethelwyn Boydell, and Lotta Phillips. A constitution was adopted and it was decided to call it St. Paul's Guild after Mrs. Boydell's home church. Mrs. Boydell was elected president of the Guild and held that office until early in the 1930's.

On October 5, 1910, the Sunday School was organized with the Mrs. J. Boydell as superintendent. She held this office until her death in 1934.

It was decided at the October meeting of the Guild to purchase five lots on the corner of Fifth and Bower at a cost of \$1000.00. These lots were fully paid for by December 16, 1912.

On December 16, 1912, Bishop Paddock appointed the following as a building committee: Josiah Boydell, Thomas Canham, Charles Bean, A.W. Ward, and G.B. Wills, to act in conjunction with O.F. Jones, D.D., Missionary to the District of Eastern Oregon. They were directed to erect a Parish House for Nyssa. \$1005.00 was secured in pledges.

On a Sunday in April 1913, Bishop Robert L. Paddock consecrated the ground and laid the cornerstone of St. Paul's Parish House, Nyssa. The contract was let to C.C. Forbes for \$1540.00 on April 21, 1913. A loan secured from Bishop Paddock was paid by the Guild in a short time.

The Parish House was completed in 1913 and early 1914 it was equipped and ready for occupancy and named St. Paul's. It had a piano, chairs, kneeling stools, gas lights and was heated by stoves. When the Parish Hall was built it was with the intention that later a church would be built adjoining it for church purposes. The Parish Hall, at first, had a stage at the end and two dressing rooms. Social activities, as well as church services were held here for the community.

For a service an improvised Altar was placed in front of the stage and the curtains drawn at the back of the Altar. Later, the stage was removed and a Sanctuary enclosed with an Altar, made by Lon Root, of Nyssa. The large chairs were provided by J. Boydell from a downtown office. The first Altar Rail and Prayer Desk were also made under the direction of Mrs. Harriet Boydell. This Sanctuary was remodeled twice later in the early years by means of screens and curtains. A moveable curtain shut off the Sanctuary from the Hall when it was not being used for Church Services.

In 1916, the first weddings took place in the Parish Hall. Those were Elizabeth Boydell to Britt Nedry and Ethelwyn Boydell to Dr. J.J. Sarazin.

The Parish Hall was used for almost every community activity at various times. Churches, Scouts, Fraternal Organizations, the School and Civic groups used it. For many years it was the home of the Nyssa Civic Club. It had provided a recreation room for the young people, including plays, basketball and a loan library.

In 1934, when the school burned, the Parish Hall was divided lengthwise and two classrooms were made. It was used in this way for most of two years. From these activities the wear and tear on property was considerable and upkeep was maintained mostly by small groups of members. Sometimes a small fee was made for lights, heat, etc., more often there was no charge and it was a community service to any and all.

Later a kitchen was installed and the heroic ladies of the Guild served dinners and parties under adverse circumstances, but they were always a success.

In 1922, The Rt. Rev. William Proctor Remington came to the District of Eastern Oregon and served as Bishop for this Diocese until 1945. During Bishop Paddock's service the Church at Nyssa, which owed him a deep sense of gratitude, has been served by clergy coming into the district from all parts of the Oregon Diocese, with services at intervals but fairly frequent and regular. This continued for a time until Bishop Remington established a permanent man at Ontario to serve Vale, Ontario, and Nyssa. This man was the Rev. Stanley Moore. This plan continued for several years, which, of necessity, limited the work any man could do in one place as his time was divided. The center of this hub was at Ontario. Each Sunday the clergy held services at all three places which made hurried visits necessary

and little opportunity to meet the congregations, and, trying to satisfy all three churches as to time and hours was a difficult task. The schedule of services was alternated somewhat.

Nyssa's growth in the Church was steady but slow for several years and it depended on the Guild and a few faithful families to hold the line. Maintenance was difficult and a heavy task with janitor work and repair done by the Guild and congregation. A coal furnace was installed which added to the comfort but was situated in an outside partial basement and required considerable attention by those who chose to tend it.

During these years young people's activities were carried on, including a vested choir of young people at various times and all the activities were carried on successfully and maintained by the Church people.

The clergy serving Nyssa in the early years were:

The Rt. Rev. Robert L. Paddock	1907-1922
Deaconess Alice J. Knight	1907-1922
The Rev. Owen F. Jones, D.D.	1911-1913
The Rev. Charles H. Powell	1914-1918
The Rev. George B. Van Waters	1919 and earlier
The Rev. Mathew Goldie	1923
The Rev. Irving Wood	1923-1925
Archdeacon Sidney W. Creasy	1925-1931
The Rev. John Richardson	1927-1928
The Rev. F.M. Barton	1929
The Rev. George F. Pratt	1931
Joseph Ewing, a lay reader and later ordained	1929
The Rev. Stanley Moore	1931-1943
The Rev. Burton Salter	1943-1945

A number of women of the District have come to give their services at different times.

In 1945, The Rev. Lane W. Barton came to the District of Eastern Oregon. The Rev. Callahan served Ontario, Vale and Nyssa and left in 1950 and the Rev. Claire Crenshaw came. Rev. Crenshaw served Nyssa, Vale, and Ontario until June 1951, living first in Ontario and then moving to Nyssa, continuing with Vale and Nyssa as Ontario then had its own rector. Mr. Crenshaw lived in Nyssa until 1953. The Rev. Carl Gross came to Nyssa and Vale in 1953 and left in 1955.

In 1945, building committee was nominated with Mrs. J.J. Sarazin as chairman appointed by the Guild. Mr. Frank Morgan

donated some lots on North Third as a possible new site but it was later decided to stay at the original site and remodel.

In 1950, the men became more active and canvassing for funds began. The Couple's Club which gave the young adults more responsibility and also included older couples was started at this time. This group was instigated by John Kopps. Under the direction of the Rev. Claire Crenshaw, Grant Rinehart and others, the men of the church did a complete remodeling job with new walls, ceiling, floors, Sanctuary and many other improvements and we became a Church instead of a Parish House. A new furnace and lights had previously been installed. Our Church was a more livable and comfortable place of worship and it was decided to use it for Church purposes only. It was dedicated to the memory of Ethelwyn Boydell Sarazin who passed away in 1950.

Soon after this an altar was donated by the J. Boydell family, made from an oak bed belonging to the family. The work of making this altar was inspired by Mr. Crenshaw, assisted by Grant Rinehart and the Couples Club with women of the Guild preparing the wood. The wood is of heavy carved oak and a wonderful piece of work was done in completing it and it is worthy of our Church and a thing of beauty. A large wooden cross hangs above it with a background of a golden dossal made by Mrs. Pauline Church for St. Paul's Guild. Pews were bought by the Guild and our chairs put aside, also new kneeling benches were made.

The Bishop's committee decided that the Church maintenance should be taken on by the Church itself and not have the Guild keep the total responsibility for the maintenance.

In 1953, when the Carl Gross family came they were given living quarters in a home purchased by the Church at Nyssa for a "vicarage".

In 1955, Mr. Herbert Grosdidier came to Nyssa and was given the mission of Nyssa itself. The Grosdidier family lived in the vicarage which had been renovated and made ready by the members of the congregation.

While Mr. Grosdidier was here it was decided to move the Church on to a basement and face it North and South. It had previously faced to the east with a small lawn in front. This time a complete basement was made into a recreation room, with removeable partitions for Sunday School rooms, two permanent

Sunday School rooms, kitchen and a new furnace installed. For the most part the work of remodeling was done by the men of the congregation. New carpeting was put upstairs, new linoleum downstairs, also an office for the clergy, water facilities and lavatories upstairs. Wesley Browne directed the laying of the new hardwood floor upstairs. A new front porch and steps, new lawn where sagebrush had been, parking space, sidewalks and the building bricked up and painted were included in the remodeling. Lonnie Church and George Rush took charge of the sidewalk laying and seeding the lawn. The furnace was installed by William Schireman and Robert Church. Ted Morgan and William Russell have done wiring changes from time to time. Almost all of the men and women have hammered a nail or wielded a paint brush at some time during the remodeling.

Mr. and Mrs. W. L. Peterson of Ontario, parents of Mrs. Kay Brendle donated an electric organ to the Church. Our first piano was bought by the Guild and our second a loan from the Wesley Browns. The organ adds to our services and was much appreciated.

In May 1957, Mr. William Woodman and his family came to Nyssa from Pennsylvania and took up residence in the vicarage which had been repainted inside by the congregation. Previously at times, we had shared in the renovation of the rectory at Ontario and were happy to have our own.

Mr. Woodman immediately became active personally in building up our Mission. He was ordained a minister of our church very soon in an Ordination Service held at St. Paul's. Now at the end of 1958, he has brought forty new confirmed and thirty-four baptized into our St. Paul's Church, Nyssa. He has created an atmosphere of closeness and progress among our congregation.

Our Church School, which has been in session through the years 1910 to the present, is increasing in interest and membership. The Church School superintendents have been: Mrs. Harriet Boydell, Mrs. Ethelwyn Sarazin, Mrs. Marjorie Eastman, Mrs. Mae Schireman, Mrs. Betty Wilson and Mrs. Betty Rinehart. Most of our women have served as teachers at some time in the past. Those who have helped with the church school recently are: Patty Morgan, Grace Stringer, Margaret Tensen, LaRue Church, Mae Schireman, Betty Rinehart, Clarissa McEwen, Jan Church, Lucille Morgan, Nancy Stringer, Dianne Anderson, Barbara Sarazin, Anne Rush, Vera Maxfield, Betty Wilson, Eleanor Browne, Ethel Lawrence, Marjorie Eastman, JoAnne Nevins, Helen Niccum,

Mary Grosdidier, Daisy Matts, Evelyn Church, Vera Olsen, Jack Church, Grant Rinehart, Royce Cole, Mae Tracy.

Our guild continues to be active and also our High School group, "House of Young Churchmen", led by Mr. and Mrs. Grant Rinehart. Our Junior High group, who have named themselves, "Knights of St. Paul's", are led by Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Wilson.

The past Presidents of the Guild, 1910- 1958, and their husbands, who for the most part, have had an active part in the Church work are as follows:

Harriet Boydell - J. Boydell
Ethelwyn Sarazin - J.J. Sarazin
Mae Schireman - William Schireman
Lucille Norcott - Ed. Norcott
Ida Robertson - Artie Robertson
Pauline Church - J.L.Church
Marjorie Eastman - Bernard Eastman
Hilda Tensen - Dick Tensen
Kathryn Simmons - Jake Simmons
Betty Rinehart - Grant Rinehart
Jessie Morgan - Frank Morgan
Margaret Tensen - Dick Tensen
Eleanor Browne - Wesley Browne
Ethel Lawrence - Ralph Lawrence
Mable Sallee - A.C. Sallee

Some of these women have also served as other officers of the Guild, in Sunday School, and their husbands and families have been active in church work for many years, dating back to the early teens, the twenties and thirties. Also included in this group as active members, not in the above list are the A. H. Boydells, G.Eva Boydell, the Fred Savages, and the H.R. Sherwoods. Many have come and gone and new faces have come into our group and are taking an active part along with the "old timers".

Mrs. Hilda Tensen has been our organist of long standing. Some others who have served at times in the past are Mrs. Blanche Boydell, Miss Eva Boydell, Mrs. Britt Nedry, Mrs. C.C. Hunt, Mrs. Pauline Church, Mrs. Kathryn Simmons, Mrs. Hope Grider, Mrs. Ethelwyn Sarazin, Mrs. Mae Schireman and Miss Gretchen Rinehart and others whom I do not recall from the early years.

The Altar Guild is active and at present is Mrs. Marjorie Eastman, Mrs. Nona Fischer, Mrs. Ida Robertson, Miss Eva Boydell and Mrs. Barbara Sarazin. Mrs. Alice Savag resigned to become secretary of the Guild.

The Altar linens have been made by members of the Guild over the years with a donation of linens from the Presbyterian ladies when they disbanded. Mrs. Mae Schireman, Mrs. Alice Savage, Mrs. Marjorie Eastman, Mrs. Nona Fischer, Mrs. Ida Robertson, and others have been active in making these Altar linens and adding to our supply.

Gifts for the Altar have been as follows:

The Communion Service was a gift from Bishop Paddock from a church in the district.

The Altar was a gift from the J. Boydell family in memory of Harriet and Josiah Boydell.

The brass cross and single candle holders were from Mrs. Tom Lowe in memory of Mrs. Harriet Boydell.

The missal stand was from Mrs. Hilda Tensen and Mrs. Lucille Norcott in memory of Dick Tensen and Dr. Ed Norcott.

The Prayer Book was from the J.R. Hunter family in memory of Mrs. Phoebe Hunter.

The new Altar Rail was a gift from Dr. J.J. Sarazin, Harriet and Clare Peterson, Isabelle and Warren Larsen, Norbert and Dorothy Sarazin, Margaret and Dick Tensen, and David Sarazin in memory of their wife and mother Ethelwyn Boydell Sarazin.

The candelabras were from the Rev. and Mrs. Claire Crenshaw.

The Lectern was a gift from the Bend Church and had been a memorial from Pennsylvania.

The brass Offertory plate was a gift from Mrs. Greta Broad in memory of her mother, Mrs. Pieter Tensen.

The Paten and Chalice were a gift from Mr. and Mrs. Louis P Thomas in memory of her mother and father, Mr. and Mrs. Win Brown and her uncle Harry Brown

The wooden Offertory plate was from Mrs. Mae Schireman.

The Hymn Board was made by Charles Wilson.

The large wooden cross above the altar was made by Grant Rinehart.

Gifts of money have been received from many people and used to buy new Communion cruets and other Altar, Communion and Sanctuary necessities.

Money gifts are as follows:

G. Eva Boydell to assist in the work of making the Altar. Mrs. Marian Quackenbush in memory of her mother and Mrs. Harriet Boydell, her Godmother.

The A.W. Wards of Prairie City a gift of money
Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Eastman, a gift of money in memory of Mrs. Clara Marie Brown.

Mrs. Nona Fischer has given us a beautiful memorial book for our memorial records.

The Altar Guild has purchased a Flag, Linen, Cruets, Altar Guild manuals and brass flower vases.

A silver wafer box was a gift from the Couples Club.

Gifts have been received as part of pledges, included among these are the linoleum by the Harold Brendles, the new exit-entrance by the Vaughn Stringers. Tom Church installed iron railings on the steps. A kitchen range was given by an anonymous donor

Two of our church members are on the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Eastern Oregon. Betty Rinehart is Christian Education Director and Grant Rinehart is the District Youth Director. Mr. and Mrs. Rinehart are also youth Advisors at Cove Summer School activities.

Our boys and girls have gone to Cove Summer School since it was started and most of our families have been represented at some time or other through the years and now are, in turn, sending their children. They are leaders in our church here and elsewhere. The young people's organizations have, from time to time, contributed to our needs in various ways. The Sunday school folding chairs were a gift through their efforts.

We are grateful to our Lay Readers, Messrs. Dick Tensen, Grant Rinehart, A.C. Sallee, Dirk Rinehart, and John Church, former lay reader.

Our present church Treasurer is Dick Tensen. Previously those who served in that capacity were: Mrs. Harriet Boydell, Mrs. Ethelwyn Sarazin, Mr Frank Morgan, and Mr Edward Boydell.

The Bishop's Committee has been very active in the past few years and now assumes the responsibility of the maintenance of the church. The present Bishop's Committee is Wesley Browne, A.C. Sallee, A.H. Boydell, George Rush, Bpb Church, David Sarazin and Dick Tensen. A.C. Sallee is Senior Warden

Now in 1959, our Guild's name has been changed to the Episcopal Women of St. Paul's, Nyssa. Our Guild is still making substantial amounts of financial aid to our Church. Their untiring work deserves commendation.

Mrs. Daisy Metts, our president, has moved and Mrs. Barbara Sarazin has been nominated in her place. Mrs. Nona Fischer is our vice-president. Mrs. Roberta Jenkins, chairman of the evening guild has also moved and is succeeded by Mrs. Maylin Maxfield. Mrs. Lloyd Wilson is the chairman of the afternoon guild. Mrs. Alice Savage is our secretary and Mrs. Alf Daniels is our treasurer.

The Rev. William Woodman is our clergyman and we are happy in the progress being made in the growth and fellowship of St. Paul's Nyssa. We have a number of new workers in our midst who are doing a fine job. It has been impossible to list everyone who is serving St. Paul's.

We are grateful for financial assistance from the United Thank Offering Fund.

There are so many families that have come and gone through the years that it has been impossible to name them all. Some of these are the Pinkertons, the Hunters, the Tom Canhams, the Frank Halls, the Brill Nedrys, the Charles Emisons, the Voght, Mrs. Betty LaFrenz, the Fred Marshalls, the Austins, the Crawfords, the Arthur Cooks, the A.W. Wards, the F.A. Goeltz, the Cassels, the Burroughs and many others.

G.Eva Boydell