

submitted by Othel Wright 6/2023

## **Eckerty Christian Church**

### **100 year celebration**

**In about 1880 there was a preacher named Jonathan McBride who moved from Young's Creek to Anderson Valley. He held service in Anderson School House. Later on, he became the minister of Williams Chapel.**

**During this time frame, James Bobbitt was holding service for Christians in Eckerty school house and Methodist Church. On May 8, 1909 the Christian Church elected the following trustees: James Bobbitt, Webster Ott, I. W. Faulkenborough, Martin Williams, W. H. Hawley, Grover Gobel and Lee H. Wright.**

**Now back to Williams Chapel . . . William Chappel was sold to Bethel Christian Church by Jordan Williams and was moved to Doolittle Mills. Now the members from Williams Chapel and individuals at Anderson Valley joined church at Eckerty. The new members increased the need for a church building.**

**The trustees bought from W. H. Ott lots 41 & 42 for the sum of \$150 the property the new church will be constructed on.**

September 1911 there was a three week camp meeting at the camp ground. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of the meeting, October 8, 1911, the Christian Church was organized. There were over 40 original members. The *Crawford County Democrat* reported that the church building started two years ago as nearly completed. The trustees borrowed the money to finish the church building.

June 9, 1912 the Eckerty Christian Church was dedicated. It was said that there were over 600 people at the dedication. Individuals from English, Birdseye, Milltown, Marengo, Grantsburg, and Taswell were present.

The church originated as the Disciples of Christ. Nationwide, the church was reorganizing. The local church officers chose not to follow this reorganizing and elected to become Eckerty Christian Church in April 1968.

Over the past years, the church has changed ministers, officers, elders, trustees, and deacons.

The outside of the church building looks about the same – a few upgrades with siding, windows and the change of the front entrance.

May 1993 the inside structure was remodeled with two new class rooms, new pews, carpeting, etc. The basement has been extended several

times. The latest was spring of 2000 when it was enlarged to our present condition. Our church received our sound system in September 2004. Our piano was donated by Tom & Eunice Ridenour. Our organ was donated by Erwin Jesch in memory of his late wife, Frances.

Searching through the records, I discovered many things about this church I didn't know . . . My grandfather, Lee H. Wright, was one of the original trustees. We had a cemetery deeded to the church from James C. & Cora Mitchell on June 8, 1964 – known as Mitchell Cemetery. On the official church record book, there are 239 members who joined the church. That equals 2.3 people each year that came to Christ.

I wish to extend a special thanks to James Kaiser, Densil Wilson and the late Richard Eastridge for their works with the Crawford County Historical Society. Their past research made my job easier.