

# *History of the English Christian Church*

*This information packet was given to me by Bob Roberts. I am not sure who originally put it together, but I thought it was interesting.*

## **History of the English Christian Church**

The English Christian Church was organized in October, 1819. Our earliest record of our church organization and doctrine read as follows:

English, Ind.

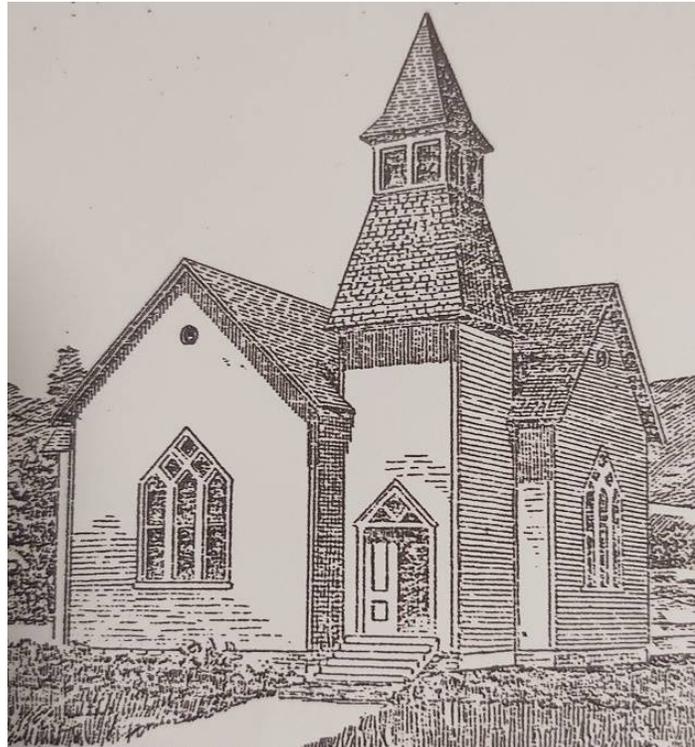
February 8, 1905

We, the disciples of the Church of Christ, worshipping at English, Crawford County, Ind., do hereby agree and constitute ourselves together as one body, for the purpose of spreading the Gospel of Christ, denouncing all human creeds and taking the Bible as our only rule of faith and practice.

We further retain the old organization that was organized October, the first Lord's Day 1819.

A check on perpetual calendar shows this date to be October 3, 1819.

We assume that the foregoing statement of doctrine was a copy or a reproduction of the original in October, 1819.



It is interesting to note that our church today holds exactly to the same creed and doctrine.

Some more information on this early church is found in a paragraph on page 151 in Prof. H.H. Pleasant's "Crawford County History." It reads as follows:

"The Blue River meeting house was built not far from the main part of town. At first there were only thirteen members. Kincaid and D.M. Stewart were working hard for the success of the church. Later more members came and at the beginning of the Civil War the Christian Church was firmly established."

More information on the church, both early and later, is found in the following newspaper clipping:

**Church at English to Mark 126<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Thursday**

*English, Ind., Sept. 29 - Indiana was but three years old, Crawford County had been formed the preceding year and the United States was in it's 30<sup>th</sup> year when the English Christian Church was established October 4, 1819. It will mark it's 126<sup>th</sup> anniversary Thursday.*

*Its birthplace was was the log cabin home of its founder, the Rev. Joseph Kincaid. Its 13 charter members were mostly members of his family, including a son who already was a minister. Into this crude home, another son, John Kincaid, was born and his children and grandchildren, retelling the stories he taught them, have furnished the only available history of that early congregation. One of these stories relates how, during a revival when the weather turned bitterly cold, he was surprised to see the men of the congregation break the stern rule of no Sunday labor by going out into the forests to cut fuel to keep the roaring fire going in the wide open fireplace--the only means of heating and cooking in the one-room house.*

*The congregation continued to worship many years in this typical pioneer home with its puncheon floors at the time when sawed boards, even for the doors were a luxury. Seven generations have continued the steady history of the English Christian Church which claims the distinction of being the third oldest Christian church in Indiana.*

*Its founder, Elder Joseph Kincaid, had brought his family here from Barren County, Ky., only a few months before starting the church in the wilderness. It is believed that in Kentucky he had been associated with the Stones and other early leaders who moved to restore the church to the early followers of Christ.*

*Since 1897, the congregation has used the present building but it has been remodeled, modernized and re-dedicated in 1933. The present building is the third the congregation has used since its meeting in the Kincaid cabin.*

The above clipping was furnished by Mrs. Birdie Jane Hooten, of Paoli. She is a great-granddaughter of the Rev. Joseph Kincaid.

To the historical perspective, included in the first paragraph of the newspaper clipping just mentioned, may be added the following. In 1819, at the time this church was organized, James Monroe was serving his first term as president of the U.S. Napoleon Bonaparte was spending the last years of his life as a prisoner on the island of St. Helena. It was more than forty years before the Civil War.

On Sunday, October 5, 1919, the church celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The Rev. C. W. Parks, of Huntingburg, was the pastor. This anniversary celebration was held in a building located a short distance south of the railroad.

In 1933, as mentioned in the newspaper clipping, the church house was remodeled, modernized, and rededicated. It was enlarged by the removal of some of the corners. It's seating capacity was further increased by the addition of a balcony. The Rev. C.W. Parks presided at the dedication.

Many interesting and productive revivals have been held in the English Christian Church. Only a few will be mentioned here. Two interesting revivals were held by Evangelist John W. Marshall in or about 1909 and 1910. One interesting feature of his revivals was the extensive use of charts. One of his never to-be-forgotten sermons or lectures was the "Miff Tree."

Probably the most famous or publicized revival of all was a four weeks' revival held by the Crabb Evangelistic Company. The evangelist was A.W. Crabb, of Brazil, Ind. This revival took place mainly in March of 1912. The first week of this revival was held at the church. But the church house proved inadequate for the crowds, and the revival was transferred to a local opera house, located upstairs in the stone building. An idea of the crowds can be gained from the following statement taken from the Democrat of April 12, 1912. "The opera house was filled at every service, and on Saturday and Sunday nights would scarcely hold the people."

The total of baptisms and transfers coming into the church was 109. It was a record for the evangelist and undoubtedly a record for the church.

Another statement from the Democrat issue of April 12, 1912 reads as follows. "It may truly be said that this meeting was the best ever held in English, and the results will never be forgotten, and seeds sown will spring up in the hearts of the hearers and be harvested in the years to come."

Unquestionably, one of the greatest orators to hold a revival here was Evangelist Olan G. Mozena, of Parkersburg, West Va. He was here almost 5 weeks in February and March, 1921. He was an artist at painting word pictures. In another never-to-be forgotten sermon, "The Seven Windows of Life," he held a Sunday morning audience spellbound long after the noon hour. According to one witness, the time of the sermon was 2 hours and 15 minutes. But so thrilling, so interesting, so challenging was this sermon that apparently nobody got restless or tired. So popular was this sermon that he gave it again on one of the evenings of the revival but this time it was definitely shortened.

At the present, the church under the capable and energetic ministry of Mason SeEVERS is probably most noted for its "Faith Promise" program. The "Faith Promise" era was introduced by a former minister, Wayne Unger. It was enthusiastically sponsored by the next minister, Wayne Jocelyn, the immediate predecessor of the present minister. The church, considering its size, has achieved some spectacular goals in its "Faith Promise" work. The "Faith Promise" program was started in September, 1965. On September 1, 1969, four years later, \$20,327.06 had been given toward missionary work. The bulk of this money has been given to the following five missionaries: Wayne Unger, Charles Bell, Tom Thurman, Al Zimmerman & Anne D. Welt.

Most of the money has been spent in Africa. The first four of the above missionaries are either working now or have worked at some time in Africa. The last named missionary, Anne D. Welt, has worked in Mexico.

An interesting local project is the use of a small part of this missionary money for a scholarship fund. This fund is used to help the young people of our congregation who are attending Bible colleges.

Incidentally, 10% of the general or free will offering goes to missionary work. Of this 10%, Charles Bell receives 7.5%, and the Southern Indiana Christian Mission Youth Camp the remaining 2.5%.

In conclusion, the church is proud of many of its achievements but it knows that it can not rest on its laurels but needs to look forward to still greater achievements.