

Diamond Jubilee Services at Claude

Sixty years is a long time in the history this community in Ontario, and it was sixty years ago that the congregation of Claude was organized. Previous to that time, occasional services were held in a barn on the Clark farm close to the present church property.

In 1850 Rev. David Coult, then minister of Mayfield congregation, was called and inducted as the first minister. These two congregations have since continued to be connected with each other. Mr. Coult remained the honoured pastor for seventeen years, when owing to growing infirmity he retired from active service in 1867, and passed away in Brampton some years later.

In 1868 Rev. R. M. Croll was ordained to the pastorate. For more than ten years he remained the faithful minister of the congregation. It was during his ministry that the handsome and commodious churches at Claude and Mayfield were built. Mr. Croll is now living in Swift Current, Sask. Rev. R. Douglas Fraser was inducted in 1879 and continued with the congregation until 1885 when he was called to Bowmanville. It was during his ministry that the manse at Claude was built. Rev. S. S. Craig was ordained in 1886 and remained as pastor until 1890. Rev. E. A. Wicher, now Prof. of New Testament History in San Francisco Theological Seminary, was ordained and inducted in 1900. He remained but two years when he was called to Kobe, Japan. The present minister, Rev. J. Gordon Cheyne was ordained and inducted in 1903.

The first Session was composed of Messrs. James Balmer, Andrew Smith, and Ephraim Kilpatrick, all of whom have long since passed away, their mantle having fallen on worth successors in Messrs. R. J. McGregor, Joseph Akilt, Joseph M. Scott, George Beatty, and John Wiggins, who comprise the present Session. The Treasurer of the congregation is Mr. Donald Smith.

On October 16th and 17th, the 60th anniversary of the founding of the church was celebrated; the service on the Sabbath will long be remembered by the large congregations present. Rev. Principal Gandier, D.D., of Knox College, Toronto, was the preacher of the day. His strong, clear and convincing presentation of the Gospel message was an inspiration and his appeal for young men for the ministry was so compelling that it will surely bear fruit.