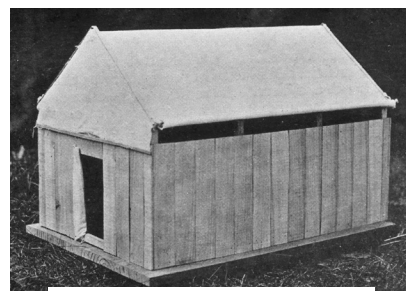


A Brief History Timeline of First United Methodist Church of Lawrence

1854 – Kansas officially becomes a territory in late May. The city of Lawrence is founded in September. Methodist ministers, William H. Goode and James Griffing, arrive in Lawrence in November to begin Methodist ministry in Kansas Territory.

1855 – The Methodist Episcopal Church of Lawrence is formally created and a building lot at 724 Vermont purchased for \$150.

1856 – A “Tent” church is erected, consisting of rough board sides, a canvas top, and a dirt floor. Although the y already owned a lot in central Lawrence, the “tent” church was built about where the Episcopal Church now stands at 10th and Vermont. The temporary church was later destroyed in a windstorm.



Model of the “Tent” church



The “Frame” church on Vermont

1858 – A wooden “Frame” church is completed at 724 Vermont at a cost of about \$2000. The Church has about a hundred members.

1863 – The church is used as a morgue in August following Quantrill’s raid. Plans for a new “brick” church are discussed and building lot #93 on Massachusetts Street (10th and Massachusetts) is purchased.

1865 – The new “Brick” church building is complete and serves Lawrence Methodists for the next 25 years. A cabinet organ was donated to the church “by a stranger who was pleased with the new brick building.”

1869 – Miss Gertrude Bough ton begins as permanent church organist, a position she would continue for four years.

1872 – Two building lots at the corner of Berkeley (10th Street) and Vermont are purchased for \$2,200. Plans are drawn up by architect, George Wells, for a Gothic ‘Stone’ church to be the “largest and finest west of the Mississippi outside of St. Louis.” Excavation for construction begins in October.

1873 – Construction on the stone church is halted by widespread financial depression.

1888 – Bids for the stone church are taken based on plans of J. G. Haskell, architect.

1889 – The cornerstone for the new stone church is laid as construction is resumed based on the design of J. G. Haskell.

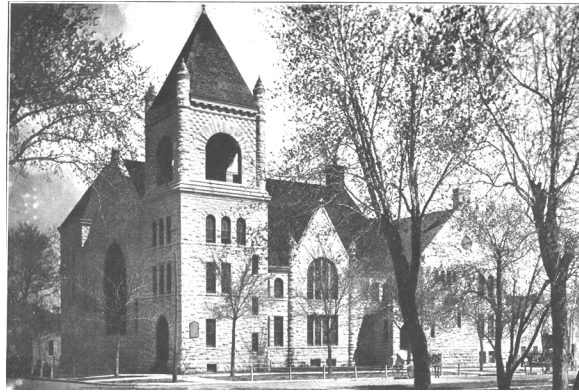
1890 – The brick church on Massachusetts is sold to J. B. Watkins for \$5,000. Some stained glass windows from the church are eventually moved to the Watkins Bank (now Watkins Community Museum).



“Brick” Church on Massachusetts

1891 – The stone church is complete and the congregation moves from the brick church on February 8. Dedication is May 21. Church membership is 540.

1895 – The Pipe Organ Society is organized. The name was later changed to the Woman's League after the organ was installed in 1904. The organization continued until 1940.



The "Stone" church at 10th & Vermont

1904 – In November a new pipe organ inaugurates "a new epoch in the music of the Church."

1915 – The Church has 1092 members, property valued at \$54,000, fifteen auxiliary societies, one regular pastor, one foreign missionary pastor, and one student pastor.

1918 – The German Methodist Church of Lawrence disbands and members join First Church.

1920 – First Church buys its first movie projector for \$525. A mimeograph machine is added about the same time.

1929 – First Church celebrates its 75th anniversary with a banquet on October 10, attended by more than 350 persons.

1934 – In November the Church celebrates 80 years and Sunday services stressed the anniversary theme. Former ministers were recognized.

1936 – Following deaths in the Ecke family, the Ecke building east of the stone church is bequeathed to the Church.

1938 – Church services are held in the Granada Theater on Massachusetts Street while a new Reuter organ is installed. The organ is a gift of Charles B. and Lloyd Russell in memory of their parents. Charles B. Russell was Vice President of Reuter Organ at the time of the gift.

1939 – The Russell Memorial pipe organ is dedicated on March 19.

1940 – Following the uniting of three national branches of Methodist churches the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Lawrence becomes "First Methodist Church" of Lawrence.

1943 – First Church pulpit is replaced with one purchased with funds given in memory of church member, Mr. W.B. Wilcox by his wife.

1953 – About \$100,000 in repairs and renovations to the sanctuary are made including the removal of the large chimney, which separated the front sanctuary from the rear. The rear sanctuary was slanted to make it coincide with the slope of the front sanctuary.

1954 – Rowena Pine begins work as Director of Junior High Choir, her first year of nearly 40 years of service to the Church. Her husband, Ken Pine, joins the chancel choir beginning more than 50 years of participation.

1962 – The new education wing is added to the north and church offices are relocated there.

1963 – Dan Abrahamson begins as organist for First Church.

1967 – First use of closed circuit television for overflow of congregation.

1968 – Merger with Evangelical United Brethren leads to "First United Methodist Church" of Lawrence.

1975 – Happy Friends class for adults with developmental disabilities is created, led by Millie Peters, Carol Abrahamson, Lynette Rapp, and other volunteer lay persons.

1982 – The rear balcony is removed in conjunction with major roof repair.

1983 – First computer system purchased, a Zenith Data Systems computer.

1986 – Major expansion of the church is undertaken with the creation of a fellowship hall, modern kitchen, renovation of education spaces, new offices, a gathering area, and creation of a rooftop playground at a total cost of more than \$2,200,000.

1993 – Rowena Pine retires as Diaconal Minister.

1999 – Rev. H. Sharon Howell is appointed as the first woman Senior Pastor. Major ceiling repair uncovers the dove in stained glass windows hidden for many years.

2001 – Purchase of 67 acres West of Lawrence at a cost of \$1,700,000 with \$750,000 from the Kansas East Conference



A “tent” church on new west campus - 2001



Dan Abrahamson

2003 – Rev. Virgil Brady installed as Pastor Emeritus. Fellowship Hall is re-named Brady Hall. Rowena Pine installed as Diaconal Minister Emerita. Dan Abrahamson is recognized for 40 years as church organist.

2004 – First Church has membership of 1,676 with average Sunday attendance of about 548. The downtown and west campus properties are worth an estimated \$8,000,000 with current debt of approximately \$611,000.

The Sesquicentennial Committee of First Church has published updated histories of First Church from 1915 to 1954 and from 1954 to 2004.