

## Mayflower EUB Church History

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1901-1975

The Mayflower United Brethren Church was organized by Rev. Courtner in 1901, after a revival was held and in answer to the earnest prayers of Mrs. J. C. Johnson, known to the community as Grandma Johnson. Services were first held in the Mayflower School house on Sunday afternoons. Rev. York followed Rev. Courtner and then Rev. Beeler was pastor in 1904 and 1905. The church was built in 1905, the ground being donated by John Calvin William (father of Albert William), more familiarly known as Uncle Johnny William. George K. Knoll and J. C. Johnson were the main carpenters, with all the men in the community donating their labor.

The first board of trustees were as follows: J. C. Johnson, George K. Knoll, R. C. Conn, W. J. Roadhouse, and Ludwig J. William. The charter members whose names appear in the cornerstone are as follows:

George Knoll and family	R. C. Conn and family
John Johnson and family	I. S. McCune
A. O. Haeglin and family	Ludwig J. William and family
Henry R. Hurlburt and family	Fred William and family
Grandma Hurlburt	Jim Conn and family
Hans Juhl and family	T. D. Thomas and family
Carl Loaf and family	C. W. Thomas and family
Earl William and family	W. R. Conn and family
Albert A. William and family	Oliver Singleton and family
W. M. Conn and family	

The names of the pastors that have served the Mayflower Church are as follow: Rev. Beeler, Rev. Beecher, Rev. York, Rev. Chapman, Rev. Thomas, Rev. Fisher, Rev. Robert Grimes, Rev. Fogleburg & Keys, Rev. Turk, Rev. Philo Conrad, Rev. Dowds, Rev. Steve Damon, Rev. Walter J. Hill, Rev. W. H. Hill, Rev. W. A. Manion, Rev. W. H. Hill, Rev. F. D. Longneker, Rev. A. O. Kellogg, Rev. & Mrs. F. O. Needles, Rev. Will Grimes, Thomas Easterly, Rev. Will Grimes, Rev. Will Adams, Rev. Clyde Koontz, Rev. K. Barker, Rev. Hershell Straw, Dale Kurtz, Rev. G. C. Munyon, Rev. Geroge Schrenk, Rev. F. Reuel Wampler, Rev. Paul Seyffer, and Harry Chandler. Harry Chandler was the last minister and he served for about 14 years.

The Mayflower Church was first on a charge with Harlan, Leesburg, Willowdale, and Lawrence Creek Churches, with the parsonage being in Harlan. Rev. Beeler, who was serving these churches at the time, accomplished a very unusual task of building five churches; one church at each of the points then on the Harlan circuit. These churches were all of the same design and of the 5 churches Mayflower was the only one that remained closest to the original design. The foundation had to be replaced in 1954 and the belfry, showing the stress of time, had to be rebuilt in the middle 60's. To the ones that can still remember the church bells on a clear spring morning there will always be a lonely spot in their hearts. (The bell was purchased at auction by a great-great-grandson of George K Knoll. It was rung for the Bicentennial on July 4<sup>th</sup> at Gaylord, Kansas. It had rang every Sunday morning from the time the church was built until 1954 when the belfry had to be taken down and

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the bell was set aside. George K Knoll purchased the bell from Montgomery Ward in 1905 to be hung when the church was completed. The bell is still in the possession of the same family.) The Cornerstone had deteriorated and was replaced in the new foundation with what contents that could be salvaged and some late literature and the names of the persons helping with the work.

Leesburg and Willowdale were put on another charge leaving Mayflower and Lawrence Creek with Harlan for a time. In 1917 Lawrence Creek and Mayflower were put on the charge with Leesburg and Willowdale, the parsonage being at Willowdale. After the other churches ceased to function Mayflower was on the Alton charge for a while. The church was changed back to Harlan for several years until Harlan and Rose Valley were put together; then again Mayflower was with Alton until the last 14 years when Harry Chandler served the church by itself.

A number of ministers have filled the pulpit from time to time. One we feel deserves special mention was Rev. Orley Grimes, father of Robert and Will Grimes, who were pastors at Mayflower.

Two young men, Orville Kirchhoff and R. C. Conn, accepted the call to the ministry in 1908 and enrolled in Campbell College, Holton, Kansas that Fall to prepare themselves for the work.

Mrs. J. C. Johnson was the first Cradle Roll Superintendent. She also had charge of the Home Department and taught the Primary Sunday School Class as long as they lived in the community. Miss Carrie Johnson was the first Sunday School Secretary and held the office for nearly 15 years when the family moved to Colorado Springs, Colorado in 1915.

There have been a total of 5 weddings in the church. They are as follows:

Marvin Knoll and Ila Hawkins, August 16, 1936, by Rev. R. C. Conn  
Loyal Knoll and Florence Dunker, May 1947 by Rev. Clyde Koontz  
Leo Macy and Living, by Rev. G. C. Munyon  
Living, by Rev. Paul Seyffer  
Living by Harry Chandler and Rev. H. H. Stewart

The present board of trustees is Gordon Macy, Willis Hays, and Leo Macy. Leo took the place of Ralph Roadhouse after his death.

When the present church record started there had been 104 on the membership list. Of that amount 46 were listed as moving away from 1905 to 1920, 12 were dropped by request in 1918-1919.

The oldest couple with birth dates recorded was George Knoll (January 5, 1842) and Elmira (Reichert) Knoll (1844). They were the parents of Harry Knoll. The only

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family of the original ones still represented is Lena (William) Roach. Her mother (Sarah Knoll) was one of George and Elmira Knoll's children and was married to A. A. William.

The church rolled along about as usual from 1924 to 1932 when they had a revival held by Rev. Miss Bertha Fogelberg and Rev. Miss Lucretia Keys and at this revival when W. H. Hill was pastor they had 58 converts, 22 baptized by sprinkling and 9 baptized by immersion. One of the interesting things was that some of these were the ones that had dropped out in 1918-1919. At the time the church closed the membership was 26.

The George and Elmira (Reichert) Knoll family had 5 generations in the Mayflower Church: George and Elmira Knoll, Mrs. A. A. William (Sarah Knoll), Mrs. Lena (William) Roach, her daughter Living, and 3 Living grandchildren.

There have been a total of 206 members in the church with an age range from 3 months to 57 years at the time of acceptance into the church. The most common names on the membership list were Knoll with 21 names and William with 16.

The old coal and wood heater was replaced with the gas heaters in 1961. The gas heating system cost \$807.10. The church used several different lighting systems ranging from carbide, gas lanterns, and finally electricity.

The church stood through the dirt storms of the 30's and through heavy rains and snowstorms. Probably most will remember March of 1958 and to the Mayflower Community we will all remember the earnestness of Rev. Schrenk when he was trying to reach the church to officiate at the wedding of Living. He became stuck in a snowdrift about 2 miles south of the church and spent 24 hours in his car. He never suffered any ill effects though.

Lucy Knoll held an office probably longer than anyone else as Cradle Roll Superintendent. She held that office until there wasn't anyone to be enrolled on the roll.

And so as we say farewell the Church hasn't only been a landmark but a guiding light and the memories we cherish will never be forgotten.