

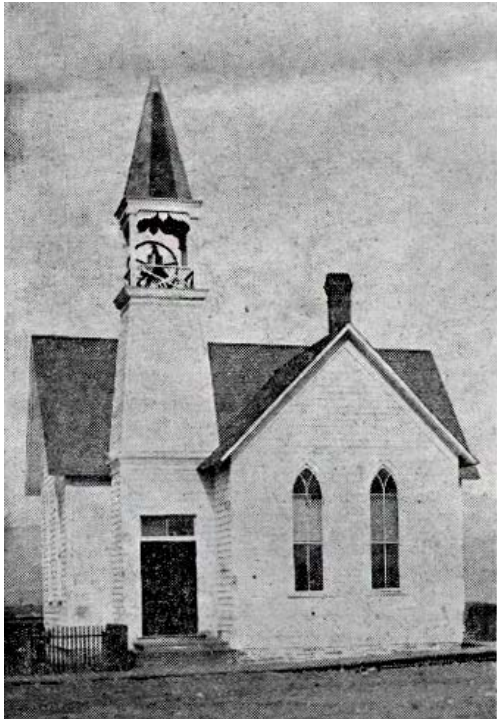


SADDLEROCK EPC
TO INTIMATELY KNOW AND BOLDLY FOLLOW JESUS

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Saddlerock EPC

A Brief History



Reverend Isam Wheelis came from Ellensburg in 1885 to conduct the first Presbyterian service in Wenatchee. He found a barren, rocky valley, scattered orchards and a cluster of frame buildings near the present site of Lewis and Clark School. Nearly every other building housed a saloon. No church or organized congregation was found in the population of 150. He preached his sermon to just nine men, women and children in the Wenatchee Schoolhouse.

The first church organized in the valley was the Presbyterian Church on May 8, 1892. Dr. Thomas Gunn, Synodical Missionary, was the presiding minister with eight charter members. Dr. Gunn served the Wenatchee church for two years. During the pastorate of J. Eadie Stewart in 1896, the congregation acquired two lots on the corner

of Chelan and Palouse streets for one dollar. They constructed the first church building in the town at the cost of \$1,200, which made it “the finest building in Wenatchee”!

Reverend W. John Bone served from 1899 to 1903. During this time, the church received its first coat of paint. A keg of white lead had been fished out of the Columbia River, and a church member acquired a barrel of oil to mix with it to paint the only building in town worth painting...the Presbyterian Church! Another gift from the Columbia River was a bell from a steamboat that had crashed on the rocks. It was rung every Sunday from the turn of the century until 1950, when the old church was demolished. This 100-year old bell now adorns the bell tower in front of our present facility. Several pastors served the congregation over the next two decades and the church building went through at least three expansion projects, including adding a basement and enlarging the sanctuary.

Membership grew to over 1,000 in 1926 with Dr. Frank Beatty at the pulpit and a cornerstone was laid for a new Sunday School building next to the church. This cornerstone is now displayed outside our main entry.



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A building fund was established in 1943 while Dr. Glenn Rice was pastor. The purpose was to erect a new church auditorium. Construction began in 1950 while Dr. Sheldon Price was pastor. The \$200,000 facility was completed in 1951. Stained glass windows and a pipe organ were added within a year of the project completion. Dr. Price served the congregation for twenty

years from 1946 to 1966. He was followed by Reverend G. Loren Jones who served for nearly 18 years from 1966 to 1984. These long-term pastors were well-loved by their congregations and were honored as Pastors Emeritus at the church's 1992 Centennial Celebration.

Under the leadership of Reverend Bob Shepard, who arrived in 1990, the membership voted to construct a new facility at the corner of Crawford and Miller Streets. Construction began in August 1998 and Phase I was completed at a cost of \$5 million, opening on Easter Sunday, April 23, 2000.

In January of 2004 Reverend Dr. R. Geoffrey Brown arrived just as the church had completed a process of "Focused Living," during which we identified three major ministry areas to focus on during the next 3-5 years, including Newcomer Welcoming, Small Groups and Equipping Ministries.

For over thirty years, First Presbyterian Church sought to lead and serve through its relationship with the Presbyterian Church USA. However, decisions of the larger denomination became more than the congregation's conscience could bear. Shortly after Dr. Brown's departure in 2008, the congregation began a process of prayer and discernment concerning its relationship with the Presbyterian Church USA, led by Pastor Paul Pankey who served as Interim Pastor and Head of Staff. In July of 2009, Reverend Pat McElroy was called to serve as Pastor, Head of Staff. The Session with the leadership of Pastors Pat and Paul guided the congregation through a long discernment process to seek dismissal from the PC USA.



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On January 1, 2012 the congregation officially changed its denominational affiliation to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. Later that year the name of the church was changed to Saddlerock Evangelical Presbyterian Church.

In February 2015, Pastor Dennis Henn, who had previously served this church as a youth pastor in the 1980's, was called to be the

Interim Pastor. During the next 18 months a new leadership model was implemented that empowered the Session and established staff positions of Teaching Pastor, Discipleship Pastor and Lead Administrator.

Pastor Dennis' enthusiasm and his relational and Biblical approach to ministry was quite inspiring to the congregation. So much so that that on May 1, 2017, he was called as the Teaching Pastor and "no longer the interim."

During the same time a search was underway for the filling of the Discipleship Pastor. The search team found the person of God's calling in Pastor Annie Rose and on September 1, 2017 she began her ministry.

Amidst all the changes and challenges this congregation has experienced, we know that God has remained faithful to His promises to bless our ministry. We have purposed to know Christ intimately and follow Him boldly as we discover the future that God has for us.