

**OLD PINE STREET CHURCH:
MANUAL OF THE THIRD
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, IN
THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA**

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Old Pine Street Church: Manual of the Third Presbyterian Church, in the City of Philadelphia by
Various

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MANUAL

OF THE

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CITY OF PHILADELPHIA.

PHILADELPHIA:
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1859.

It is hoped that every member of the Church and Congregation will procure a copy of this book. The profits of its sale will be devoted to the "Dorcas Society," to aid the poor of the city.

A
BRIEF HISTORY
OF
PINE STREET CHURCH,
BY THOMAS BRAINERD, D. D.

The First Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia was built on the South side of Market St., between Second and Third Sts., with a burying ground attached on Bank Street. There the first congregation was gathered, and there the Presbyterians of the city worshipped for sixty years. A part of this First Church, about the year 1760, under the influence of the revivals which followed the labors of George Whitefield and the Tennents, being dissatisfied with the opposition of the Church to the revival and the men who promoted it, withdrew, and built a Second Presbyterian Church, on the N. W. corner of Third and Arch Streets. This supplied the north part of the city.

The Market Street Church, increasing by immigration from Scotland and Ireland, soon not only made up the loss, but became overcrowded. A temporary house and lot was therefore purchased on the corner of Second and South Streets, and public worship set up by the pastors of the First Church.

In 1762 a committee was appointed to ask of the Pennsylvania Proprietors the donation of the lot of ground on "Society Hill" in the South part of the city, for a new Presbyterian Church. This application was successful.

On the 19th day of October, 1764, Thomas and Richard Penn, the Proprietors of Pennsylvania, granted a lot 174 feet on Fourth

Street by 102 feet on Pine Street, "To the congregation belonging to the old Presbyterian Meeting House on the South side of High Street, near the Court House, in the City of Philadelphia, to the intent that a Church or Meeting House should be erected thereon, and a burial yard laid out for the use of the said society of Presbyterians forever."

This lot, given freely by the proprietors, was afterwards enlarged by purchase, so that the Church property now embraces about 174 feet on Fourth Street by 200 feet on Pine Street,—the open space around the edifice 174 by 300 feet.

A small frame building had existed on the spot previously, called the Hill Meeting House. Near this building the Rev. George Whitefield was accustomed to stand and preach to collected thousands.

It was some time after the lot was procured before any progress was made in the erection of a building. July 4th, 1765, a committee was appointed by the First Church to ask the Second Church on Arch Street to unite in building the Third. With some apparent feeling, the Second Church declined, because, as they alleged, they had not been earlier consulted.

In 1765 a subscription was opened in the First Church. January 10, 1765, it was voted to employ workmen and commence the work. December 24, 1766, a committee was appointed to "collect subscriptions from those who attend the meeting at the South end of the *New Market*." In 1767 a committee was appointed to inquire about the propriety of settling a new minister over the new Society forming on "Society Hill." In 1768 it was voted "that *public worship should be celebrated in the New Presbyterian Church in Pine Street, May 30th.*"

From this record it seems, that on the 30th of May, 1859, just *ninety-one years* had elapsed since the walls of Old Pine Street Church first echoed the voice of a gospel minister and the songs of Zion. But we are not to suppose that the house was completed; for November 14th, 1768, the committee of the First and Third Churches voted to sell the "temporary house, which had been a vendue house, on South by Second Street, to help pay for the new house, because it was not in repair, to defend the congrega-

tion against the storms and cold weather in winter." About the same time it was ascertained that twenty families from the First Church and sixty families from the temporary Church would take pews in the new edifice, showing that the new congregation began with eighty families. In 1768-9, £2500 were raised by *lottery*, of which it was agreed that the First Church should receive £200 "to pay its debts," and the remainder to be divided between the Second and Third Churches, in the proportion of 11 and 9. This money so equivocally obtained enabled the Third Church to finish its edifice.

The above items have been gleaned with some labor from "old records." They will be of growing interest to future generations.

The Third Church was designed to be held in perpetual union with the First. Its congregation was to be allowed to elect their own pastor, with the "approbation" of the First Church, and for a time the two Churches moved on in harmony. November 14, 1768, the Rev. Samuel Aitken was unanimously elected pastor, and for about one year alternated with the pastors of the First Church in supplying the two congregations. But he then fell into some immorality, and was suspended from the ministry. The two pastors of the First Church then supplied Pine Street alternately. But in 1771 Pine Street Church asserted its independence by electing the Rev. George Duffield, D. D., of Carlisle, pastor. He was a "new side" man, in the parlance of the day; and the First Church, leaning to the "old side," now claimed the entire custody of the building and locked its doors. The friends of Dr. Duffield broke open the doors, and took possession of the house. Dr. Duffield was arrested for abetting a riot, and a suit at law commenced by the First Church to recover possession of the edifice. Dr. Duffield was discharged without trial, but the suit at law was prosecuted through all the courts of the country, the verdicts being in favor of the First Church. The congregation then appealed to the King in Council, but the revolutionary war breaking out, the case never came to trial in England. Private griefs were absorbed in public wrongs. At the end of the war better counsels prevailed; the Pine Street people bought peace by agreeing to pay the Market Street

Church 5000 dollars, 750 of which was afterwards generously relinquished. Since then the mother and daughter have dwelt in peace.

The Pine Street Church suffered severely in the war of the revolution, the congregation being peculiarly obnoxious to the British, from the resolute patriotism of the pastor and known whiggery of the members. The best houses in the neighborhood were seized by the British officers, and soldiers billeted upon plainer families.

Dr. Duffield had encouraged the men of his congregation to enlist, and on a certain Sabbath morning, when the city was in danger, he told the men present, he was very sorry they were not abroad serving their country. In the course of the next week he went himself to the army, and remained with it some time as chaplain, stimulating the courage and zeal of his countrymen by appeals of patriotism and religion.

When the British army got possession of Philadelphia, they seized the Church and used it for a hospital; while they respected St. Peter's Church below, because it belonged to the Church of England. The British soldiers tore up the pews and used them for fuel, stripped the pulpit and the windows, and finally used the building as a stable for the horses of dragoons. In excavating the ground for the iron fence in Pine Street, in 1835, the laborers came upon the body of a British soldier, known by the buttons of his dress, a relic of the occupation of this now peaceful spot by a foreign foe.

While the Continental Congress, driven from Philadelphia, held its sessions at *York*, the Rev. Dr. Duffield was elected one of its chaplains, in union with Bishop White, to whom, as a theologian, a preacher, and a man, he was inferior in no respect. He died in 1790, and his ashes rest under the central aisle of the Lecture Room of this Church. He was a bold, conscientious, active, and eloquent man.

Of those who united with the Church under his ministry, not one now survives. The Records show that during a pastoral life of nineteen years, he solemnized 730 marriages, and baptized 1342 adults and children. How many he admitted to the Church is unknown.

In 1791, the *Rev. John Blair Smith, D. D., President of Hampden Sydney College, Virginia*, was called to be pastor, and remained such until 1795, (four years,) when he was dismissed to be the first *President of Union College, New York*. After an absence of four years, during which time the church was vacant, he was recalled to the pastorate in 1799. He died the same year, aged 44, of yellow fever, then epidemic in Philadelphia.

The marble slab which covers his ashes may be seen in the yard near the south-west corner of the church. As President, in succession, of one college at the South, and another at the North; and as a Christian, a preacher, and a pastor, he was among the foremost men of his day. Some of his descendants are still found in the church where he labored and died.

In the year 1800, the *Rev. Philip Milledoller, D. D.*, was called to be pastor, and remained until 1805, (five years,) when he was removed to a church in New York. He was afterwards President of Rutgers College, Brunswick, N. J. During his ministry, he solemnized 171 marriages, and baptized 334 individuals. By letter and profession, he admitted into the church 159 persons, or an average of 31 annually. Of these 159 persons, but five are known to survive in this church. They are Mrs. Catharine Ross, Mrs. Sarah Ray, Mrs. Catharine Simons, Mrs. Elizabeth Tillotson, and Mrs. Margaret Barelay. What a remnant out of 159! So great are the changes of a single half century.

In November, 1806, the *Rev. Archibald Alexander, D. D.*, was elected pastor. At a previous election in 1794, he had declined the call of the church, assigning reasons most creditable to his head and heart. He was then a young man. But the second call he accepted, and left the Presidency of *Hampden Sydney College, Virginia*, to take charge of the congregation, in 1806. In a pastoral life of six years, he solemnized 90 marriages, and baptized 291 children and adults. By letter and profession, he admitted to the church 119 members, or an average of about 20 a year.

Of those admitted by him, but two survive among us. These are Mrs. Mary C. Kay, and Mrs. Comfort Corgie. There are doubtless some others, who have removed to other churches. From the above, it appears that seven are left in the church