

A History of TPPC: (1900-1922)

The 20th Century Brings Conflict, and a New Edifice

In the new century, growth of the Sunday School necessitated adding an annex to the church building in 1902 to house the primary class. The school, headed up by a Baptist minister, was open to everyone in Takoma Park, not just members of the Presbyterian congregation.

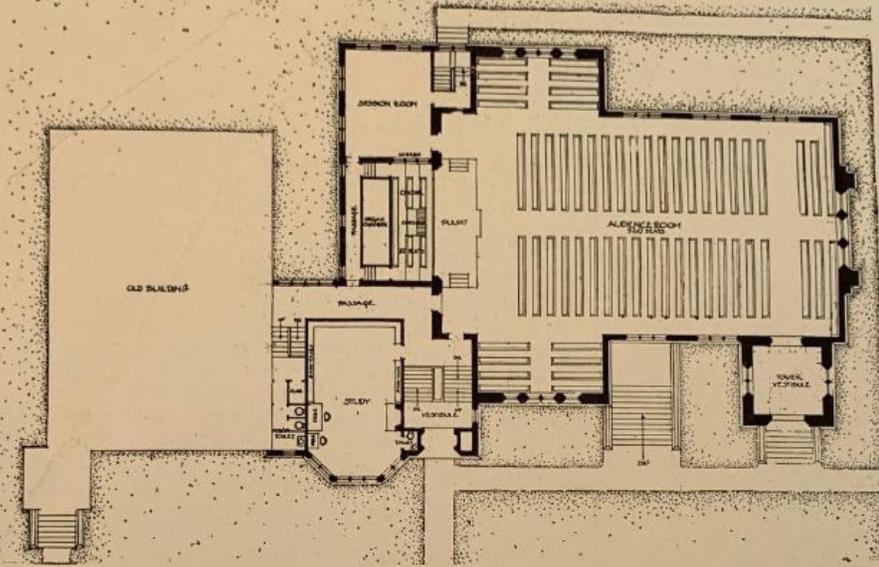
Rev. William Dexter, Ph.D., had a somewhat rocky pastorate at the church from 1902 to 1905. In addition to his pastoral duties, he was also a commanding officer of the Boys Brigade (a military cadet corps for Christian young men of high school age whose motto was "The advancement of Christ's kingdom among boys and the promotion of habits of Obedience, Reverence, Discipline, Self-respect and all that tends towards a true Christian manliness"). His leadership position in the group and advocacy of militaristic pursuits apparently caused conflicts with some of the congregation's more pacifist members and a new minister, Dr. Thomas C. Clark, was installed in 1906. He served TPPC for the next 23 years.

The church continued to grow, and in 1913 a committee formed to study the possibility of a new church structure. As a result of a gift from Mrs. Helen Thompson, the church owned two lots at the corner of Maple and Tulip Avenues. Plans for a new Gothic edifice were approved in 1915 and a fund drive for the new building was launched. World War I put off these plans until 1921 but in April 1922, a new set of plans for a gray granite Gothic church were approved by a congregation now numbering 322 persons. Within a month, \$40,000 toward the cost of the building had been contributed.

Groundbreaking ceremonies were held June 25 and on Sunday, June 30, 1922, the cornerstone was laid. Contents of the cornerstone included a Bible, church documents, carob pods from Judea, papyrus reeds and shells from Galilee, mosaics from Mt. Zion and ancient coins from the Holy Land. The new building set the stage for another decade of growth for TPPC.

THE FLOOR PLANS OF THE NEW CHURCH.

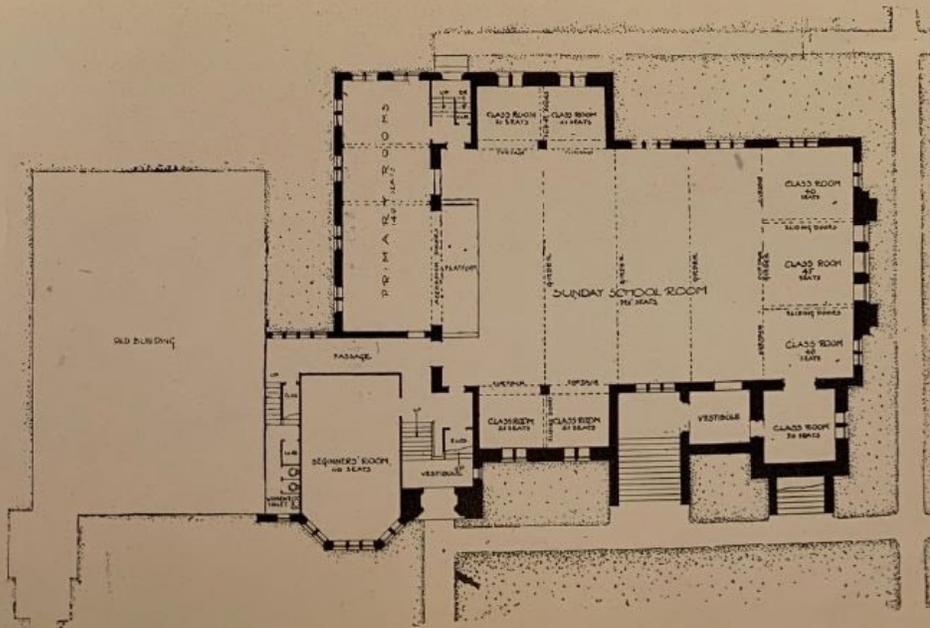
Main Floor.



The Auditorium will seat 520, with provision for a gallery when needed. The main entrance is in the tower; others through the west and east vestibules and from the old auditorium. A spacious entrance aisle faces the tower doors, with center and side aisles and a generous space fronting the pulpit, which is in full view from every seat. Behind the pulpit is space for a pipe organ and a choir loft, with seats for a large chorus choir. In the east, south, and west walls are large Gothic windows, with smaller windows grouped in east and west walls, opalescent and cathedral glass.

The entrance to the Pastor's study is from the west vestibule. The men's lavatory is on this floor. A rest room opening from the auditorium is screened from the choir loft, and may be used also as a board room and for prayer circles, etc.

The Ground Floor Plan.



1-This was the initial 1915 plan for a new church building. By 1922, when the current sanctuary was built, the plan had changed considerably.