

Then we undertook to start a reading-room and book exchange and labor bureau---kept our church warmed every day and provided a place where men could sit down and read and write without going to a saloon. It was a success at once, the men bringing wood, and eagerly bringing and exchanging books and magazines. Then the miners concluded to turn over to my charge the 1500 volumes comprising their library, and were preparing to build shelves and put up the books when the fire occurred. Fortunately the books had not been brought.

All of those things kept us very busy here; but I found time to take a trip up to Bonanza and Eldorado, visited twenty families---or rather cabins---and walked twenty-five miles; one day discovered about forty professing Christians, secured the free use of a hotel room kept by Miss Mulronee, a Catholic lady who used to be a stewardess on the Alaska steamers, and thus knew me; preached there November 21, and sent Dr. McEwen up for the second service last Sabbath. It is at the mouth of Eldorado Creek fifteen miles from Dawson.

Our collections have averaged \$25 per Sabbath. Dr. McEwen has not had much practicing to do. We hope to secure an office on the front street for him, and hope his business will increase. A Catholic hospital is running here, and is full to overflowing. We hope to build one of our own next spring, perhaps in connection with the Episcopal mission.

Now comes the per contra. At five o'clock Sabbath morning, November 21, we were awakened by the light of a fire. Our cabin is over a quarter of a mile from the church. We soon found that our beloved Klondike church was all ablaze. A young Englishman visiting the room of two of our best lodgers who were both absent, stayed out too late and came in under the influence of liquor, pitched into bed with overcoat and moccasins on, lit the candle and neglected (as is supposed) to put it out, and the fire communicated itself to the bunk and partition and soon was beyond control.

The lodgers awakened by flame and smoke, barely escaped with their lives. Fourteen valuable outfits of food---more precious here than gold---were burned. Some lost even their money and watches, running out in their drawers. The church property was nearly all destroyed. We saved one table and some of the hymn books and magazines. It was the loss of \$1000 to the mission, for not a cent of the advance rent can be recovered. It was an awful blow.

So I had to go to "hustling" again. The Pioneer Association have just completed a fine hall---far the best in the town --- large and warm. The Building and Finance Committees happened to be composed of my personal friends. They brought the matter up at a meeting of the association last week and granted us the free use of the hall on Sundays till spring. Then another fire occurred last Thursday a.m., burning up a number of saloons and dance halls and the Opera House. There were a large number of benches and a piano saved, and we have the free use of these for an indefinite period.

So we had a nice comfortable service last Sabbath, with a Thanksgiving sermon in the morning, although the temperature outside was 50 degrees below zero. Mrs. Kaiser, a lady banker from Jacksonville, Ill., is our pianist. We are truly thankful for the friends the Lord has given us here. We are finding more every day. Many Christians and many others whom we hope to lead toward the way.

Now regarding our personal affairs. As I have said, we came in short of food, like so many others. Had I not received the extra \$200 at Tacoma, we could not have come in at all. Had Dr. McEwen received \$200 as well, we could have got our whole outfit in, and have been independent.

When we got here we found flour selling at from \$1.25 to \$1.50 per pound, and other things in proportion, and not to be had at all at the stores. Only sugar could be bought, but that soon ran out and so jumped up in price like the rest. Our heavy expenses against the church we undertook to raise.

We had also to buy a cabin at \$300 --- the cheapest comfortable house we could find. We have paid for it, getting (borrowing) the money from an old friend of mine who has "struck it rich." We had engaged a fine outfit, expecting to sell almost enough of it to pay for what flour, etc., we needed out of the profits. But that outfit was burned in the "Klondike Church" fire. Had it not been for the fire, we would have been able to raise all the money we needed to buy what food we will need.

We have just secured 300 pounds of flour and 200 pounds of other food---500 pounds in all---at the comparatively cheap rate of \$1 per pound. This we ask the church to pay for. Mr. Alexander Gillis, who is going out until spring, has sold us the outfit, and agrees to take the church for it. If it can be secured in no other way, I am willing to pay for it myself---only I ask the church to loan me the money until next summer.