

The History of the First Presbyterian Church Ontario Center, New York

2000's

Notes Gleaned from Session Records

2000.....Sunday School students and 10 adults constructed two picnic tables to be donated to Habitat for Humanity.

- A children's day program is scheduled for June.
- Parking lot changes and fill added to allow for increased parking.
- Christian Education budget line item to support the purchase of a large fan selected by the Worship Committee to cool the church during summer worship services.
- "Invite A Friend Sunday" is slated for Sunday, October 22.
- Gail Heimberger was interviewed about her desire to be an inquirer and to be enrolled by Presbytery. At the November Presbytery meeting, Gail was officially appointed the interim pastor at Sodus Presbyterian Church.
- Geneva Presbytery is investigating the possibility of a church in Gananda.
- Capital Campaign treasurer steps down and church secretary to be asked to complete the task.
- The Presbytery Triennial visitation to occur in February 4, 2001.

2001.....Asbestos was discovered during the renovation of the basement and additional costs to remove it was discussed.

- Annual meeting congregation comments from the previous year included: full-time pastor, more children in the church school, good music program, Ham Dinner and outreach programs. Additionally, awareness of about the physical aspects of the church property, members sharing their musical talents, Gerrit Hospers significant donation to the new organ at Hope College and continued hands-on Habitat for Humanity outreach.
- Wayne Central requested use of the Parish Hall to tutor three students supervised by two teachers. The district agreed to a \$25 a week charge for the use of the facility from April to June.

- Plans are underway for participating in the first REACH Workcamp in New Philadelphia, Ohio.
- Hope Works secured a grant of \$1,500 with additional funding of \$500 each from the three churches in Ontario to host vacation bible school in the summer of 2002 at the high school.
- Mothers of Multiples (MOPs) has inquired about using our facilities.
- The front doors of the church are to be replaced at a cost of \$3,690.
- The driveway at the manse is approved to be blacktopped.
- \$285 from the Memorial Fund was approved to repair the leaded glass transom over the front doors of the church.
- New front steps to the church to be constructed.

2002.....The session approved the application from Gail Heimberger to be enrolled as a candidate for the ministry of Word and Sacrament.

- As part of her Girl Scout Gold Award project, Kimberly Masker organized items to be placed in a time capsule at the church.
- Session approves beginning the second phase of the Capital Campaign to begin work on the lower level of the church to improve the space for Christian Education and to install a “cloud” ceiling and cabinetry and storage needs addressed in the Parish Hall.
- REACH work camp in 2002 is held in Broadalbin, NY.
- Approved recommendation to form a food pantry in Ontario with other churches.
- Candelas (oil/wick) white tubes were approved for purchase from the Memorial Funds.
- Asbestos abatement work to be done in the Lower Level of the church including duct work, furnace room and floor tile removal.
- Lindsay Knight was approved as a Youth Advisory Delegate to the General Assembly.

2003.....Pastor Galan began discussion around church transformation and re-development.

- A commercial dishwasher was purchased and installed in the Parish Hall using funds from Friends for Fellowship, Memorial Fund and personal donations.
- John Domm traveled to West Virginia to assist with flood victim’s relief.
- Wayne Middle School Eagle Venture program through Hopeworks begins using Parish Hall to meet. The group donated \$100 for use of the space.
- Church services were canceled on Sunday, April 6 due to ice storm.

- Application of Incentive Loan from PCUSA for Phase II project entirety approved for \$97,000 with a total projection cost of \$164,848. Geneva Presbytery approved application in July for a 15 year loan.
- Work Camp 2003 is held in Broadalbin, NY.
- *Kicking Habits* book, authored by Thomas Bandy was distributed to Session members as a resource for the transformation process.
- Gail Heimberger was ordained and installed as Pastor at Sodus Presbyterian Church in October. Funds were used to purchase a stole as a gift for her.
- Sing the Faith hymnals were approved and purchased for use during worship services.
- Pastor Galan approved for continuing education leave to Cuba.
- East Room stain glass window to be repaired using Memorial Funds in honor of Willis Butler.
- Alcoholics Anonymous requests use of facility for weekly meeting.
- Care Cards project kick-off during Advent.

2004.....The Presbytery Triennial visit to occur February 29.

- Core Team group formed that includes Session members and other congregational members. The Team meets at the end of the Session meeting.
- Lindsay Galan attends the Youth Triennium in July.
- The 2004 REACH Work Campers traveled to Gettysburg, PA.
- Ontario Food Pantry to open at the Masonic Temple in September.
- East Room stain glass window repaired, installed and dedicated along with the new Sing the Faith hymnals on October 28.

2005.....Annual meeting format suggestion from Rev. Galan's colleague to incorporate action items blended into the worship service. This format continued through January 2011 for annual meetings. Debbie Barnes, church secretary; Gerrit Hospers, organist; and Tammie Bixby, church cleaner continue their service to the church.

- A church-wide retreat is planned for late fall at Camp Whitman.
- Church officer mini-retreat is planned for April with a presentation by Rev. Judy Lee Hay on the coordinated efforts to revamp the South Wedge Neighborhood in Rochester along with church transformation initiatives.
- Water damage at the Manse was repaired.

- Culinary Cabaret to occur at Wayne Middle School to help with fundraising for Workcamp 2005. The work campers traveled to Oceana, WV for REACH Workcamp 2005.
- Pastor Galan attends the Annual Recreation Workshop in Montreat, NC as part of her continuing education.
- *Welcome to First Presbyterian Church of Ontario Center* flyer was created and to be used to give to visitors and given out as other opportunities arise.
- Four confirmands were received and presented on May 15.
- Fair Trade Equal Exchange products available for sale in East Room as a mission project.
- By-laws were amended to change Session elders from nine to six.
- In response to Hurricane Katrina disaster relief 37 school kits were delivered to Rochester along with \$110 received to help with shipping. Carolyn Smith assisted in the relief project.
- Rental space in the Parish Hall approved for Jazzercise opportunity.
- Touch of Brass ensemble performed on Work Camp Sunday.
- Transformation Grant Team convenes to brainstorm ideas to include in grant. Presbytery of Geneva approves grant of \$9,375 to use the funds faithfully through an avenue to draw community participation, and ultimately decided on a labyrinth project, entitled “Circle of Recreation—A Labyrinth Project.”

2006.....Work Camp Mission Trip for 2006 is in Lampeter, West Virginia.

- First Presbyterian Church hosted the January 2006 Geneva Presbytery meeting.
- Catherine VanWagner approved as Youth Advisory Delegate for summer 2006 and ultimately selected as an alternate.
- Pastor Galan led the worship service on March 12 for the ordination of Rev. Kirk Baker at the Williamson Presbyterian Church.
- Jane Smith and John Domm attended the Presbytery Mission Trip to Gautier, Mississippi for Hurricane Katrina relief.
- Pastor Galan is a participant on the search committee for the next Executive Presbyter replacing Rev. Sam Edwards.
- The Session approves the purchase of an Ontario Bicentennial Banner representing the church to be displayed for a three year period. The church was open for public tour in September 2007 as part of the celebration.

- Jazzercise is no longer offered in the Parish Hall due to lack of instructors.
- The furnace and the roof are replaced at the manse.
- Projection equipment was purchased using Dream Team grant funds.
- Catherine VanWagner is approved for mission funds to Jamaica.

2007.....Twenty volunteers from the church and community flew to Camp Hope in New Orleans to help with Hurricane Katrina Relief efforts.

- Work Camp 2007 was in Niagara Falls, New York and ?? volunteers from the church and community attended.
- Pastor Galan attends the annual recreation workshop in Montreat, North Carolina and a workshop for Pastors of Churches in Transformation in San Francisco, California.
- Ken and Brian Masker, John Domm and Stan Hatch stripped and refinished the Parish Hall floors.
- Pastor Galan and many congregational members attend the Wayne Muller event.
- Pastor Galan and Emily Knight attend the Missional Church Conference in Chicago, Illinois.
- A group of women from the church and community whose children are entering or attending college meet regularly. The group is called “College Moms.” The group meets at the home of one of the members, held a retreat at Camp Whitman and went to The Little theatre in Rochester during their tenure to view “The Secret Life of Bees.”
- September 25, 2007 Presbytery meeting included the installation of Rev. Joelle S. Davis-Moriarity, Executive Presbyter.
- Triennial visitation by the Presbytery occurs in December 2007.
- Velvet Edges concert was held with 30 in attendance and proceeds to benefit the New Orleans and Cat VanWagner’s (Jamaica) mission opportunities. The group provided special music again during worship service on December 16.
- Initial request and ideas sought for Pastor Galan’s request for sabbatical and vacation time to visit France and family from May 12 – September 7, 2008.
- The Gathering Church at Gananda through the Geneva Presbytery and led by Rev. Colin Pritchard is dissolved.

2008.....Work Camp 2008 to be held in Monroe, North Carolina and 14 slots reserved.

- A 30 member team from the church and community is returning to New Orleans for Hurricane Katrina Relief in January.

- Debbie Barnes, church secretary, retires the end of January 2008. Congregational gifts shared at worship followed by a reception in her honor.
- A bequest from the estate of Janet Porrey Posner (1924-2007) in the amount of \$236,777 is gifted to the church. The history of Janet is that she grew up in Ontario Center surrounded by aunts, uncles, cousins and grandparents as the only child of Abram and Violet Porrey. For most of the past century, members of Janet's family have attended First Presbyterian Church of Ontario Center. Janet was baptized in the church and was a member until 1955. Janet's father and her uncle John Porrey ran an IGA store on the southwest corner of Ridge and Ontario Center Roads until 1947. Another uncle, David Porrey built the former Stevens Hardware building and operated a meat market there. Both buildings were eventually sold and on January 2, 1992, they were destroyed in a deadly gas explosion. Janet's maternal grandfather, George VanLara owned a hardware business and also ran a Buick dealership in Ontario Center. Her paternal grandfather, David Porrey worked in local iron ore mines until he died of smallpox at the age of 42. An aunt, Vera Porrey, ran an ice cream parlor near the four corners of Ontario Center. Another aunt, Anna (Porrey) and uncle, Manley Risley lived on the farm just east of the church. All had ties to the local Presbyterian Church. In fact, two uncles were on the committee responsible for overseeing construction of the present church building that was completed in 1915. Janet attended school with her nearby cousins and graduated from Ontario High School in 1941. She married Mitchell Posner and worked for Eastman Kodak until retirement. Mitch worked for an eventually owned Projansky Furs, a store in downtown Rochester. The Posner's lived in the Rochester area for the remainder of their lives. Janet and Mitch were very generous with their accumulated assets, making bequests to several charitable organizations. Janet never lost her ties to the Ontario area as friends and family reside there.
- Rev. Scott Baker, Williamson Presbyterian Church will moderate Session during Pastor Galen's sabbatical. Tasks and facilitators for many of the administrative duties of the pastor assigned to congregational members during her absence. Pastor Elaine Hawkins, newly graduated although not ordained is hired as supply pastor for non-communion Sundays during the sabbatical.
- The next church secretary, Marie Bennett is hired.
- A special congregational meeting was held to announce the funds and share that the Posner Bequest funds were divided into two \$50,000 CDs and a third CD for \$83,000

remainder of the funds left in the checking account. A motion was made and carried to retire the loan balance from the Capital Campaign of \$53,200 using the Posner Bequest. Ideas for discerning how the remaining funds were to be used included a “God Jar”—a vehicle for placing ideas posted on paper slips and “3D: Dough, Donuts & Discernment”—congregation-wide gatherings to reflect and discuss ideas for the use of the funds. There were no restrictions from the estate for the use of the funds given. The Core Team gathered the suggestions and formulated categories to determine what percentage to be spent. The categories included: *Capital/Building Improvements, Financial to Mission, New Community Outreach Initiatives, New/Expanded Congregational Ministry Initiatives, and Grow Investments/Endowment* so that significant impact could occur.

- David Bailey concert and workshop opportunity will be held later in the year sponsored by the Genesee Valley and Geneva Presbyteries.
- Pine trees at the Manse are removed while the Pastor and Jack Galan are away.
- A harvest table is placed on Sunday mornings in the front lawn area for passers-by to take from abundance of member’s gardens with a free-will offering to help offset mission trip expenses to New Orleans.
- A natural gas line to the Parish Hall is dug to accommodate the new natural gas burning furnace being installed using the interest and some funding from the bequest along with a rebate from Rochester Gas and Electric. Congregational members installed gas line to the kitchen area to convert the stoves and hot water tank to natural gas.
- The website is being updated by an outside source and a Tech Team is formed to consider upgrading audio/visual needs in the sanctuary.

2009.....Work Camp 2009 to be held in Niagara Falls, New York and a team returned to New Orleans for ongoing Hurricane Katrina disaster relief.

- The labyrinth is used by staff from the Wayne Central School District during their Wellness Day facilitated by the Pastor and members of the congregation.
- Since attendance by children in worship had dwindled, the Pastor began offering “Whose Line Is It Anyway?” during the children’s storytelling time. Many different offerings from stories read, videos watched and reflective questions were shared during that time which included those present.
- A highlight during the annual meeting, the Pastor shared her experience at Taize in France as part of her sabbatical the previous year.

- An opportunity to attend yoga classes at the Parish Hall is offered.
- The use of projection equipment and slides is being used to reduce the amount of paper used for printing documents.
- The session meeting minutes and other records were bound into permanent record books and will be stored in a fire-proof safe with other church documents.
- The church school program is disbanded due to lack of interest and youth. Experiential worship experiences and Celebration Sundays are planned. The first Celebration Sunday occurred at Casey Park in the newly built recreation room.
- The website www.firstpresontario.org is launched.
- The Pastor recommends reading Unbinding the Gospel for Deacons and Core Team members.

2010.....Due to inclement weather, church services were canceled January 3.

- Work Camp 2010 was held in Windsor, Maine and 28 people from the church and community returned to New Orleans, LA.
- Beginning discussion for celebrating 10 years of Work Camp attendance to occur in 2011.
- Session members take responsibility of weekly counting of offering received.
- The “Seek Squad” forms to begin looking at updating the audio and visual equipment for the sanctuary.
- Casts for Kids Haiti mission opportunity received \$200 in donations.
- The safe deposit box was emptied at the bank and placed in the fire-proof safe at the church.
- A progressive dinner opportunity was offered and enjoyed by all.
- The parking lot at the church is paved and striped. The entrance to the Parish Hall east door was reconstructed and part of the paving project.
- The People in Mission grant gifted \$5,000 toward the Hurricane Katrina Fifth Anniversary celebration in New Orleans.
- A roof and stoop are constructed for the office door and entrance deck to the back door of the Parish Hall.
- Unbinding Your Heart book is read and teams of people are created with a kick-off on 10/10/10.

- Reach T-shirt quilt created and sewn by Jane Downes, mother of Rev. Galan was dedicated during the fall of 2010, in honor of the 10th anniversary of the church's participation in Reach Workcamps.
- Friends for Fellowship provides ideas and estimates for updating storage and cabinets in the Parish Hall. An opportunity for replacing the heavy wooden tables is shared and called the Table Campaign through donations from members and friends of the church in memory/honor of someone.
- Las Posadas Advent sharing occurred where infant Jesus figurines from crèche sets were shared from home to home among members and friends was shared. An opportunity to share face-to-face with passers to receivers of the gift of the figurine and also to journal the event was provided. Rich relationship building and sharing occurred.

2011.....Work Camp 2011 was held in New Oxford, Pennsylvania.

- REACH 2012 planning is underway for receiving applications for homes in the towns surrounding Ontario.
- Two members of the congregation accompany Geneva Presbytery members for mission work in Mexico.
- Unity youth group kicks off with 22 youths and adults attending a bon fire.
- The roof over the organ is repaired by a friend of the church. The Parish Hall roof is under consideration for repair and felt that the church could get by for another winter.
- The sanctuary light bulbs were replaced with energy saving LED bulbs.
- A new church cleaner is hired.
- At the June 14, 2011 Session meeting, Pastor Cheryl D. Galan announced that she had accepted a call to the First Presbyterian Church of Topeka, Kansas. A celebration of her ministry was held on Sunday, July 31 following her last worship service.
- Rev. David VanWagnen steps in as moderator of Session.
- The new audio/visual equipment is installed including sound board, speakers, microphones and screen. An Apple laptop was purchased for the sanctuary and pastor's use.
- Applications from homeowners are pouring in for REACH 2012 and team members are making visitations to the homes.
- Beginning discussion around whether or not to keep and maintain the manse occurs. The manse is closed up during the interim period.

- Hand railings are installed outside the double doors of the Parish Hall.
- Rev. Dr. Carson O. Mouser is appointed by the Presbytery as the interim pastor and session moderator. Rev. Mouser began week one of Interim Ministry Training through PC (USA) in Princeton, NJ in 2002 and completed the second week in 2009 in Lake Tahoe, CA.
- Rev. Mouser introduces and initiates the Narrative Mission Study process which will help in creating the CIF to be submitted to seek pastoral candidates. First Part was small group meetings in homes, second part, congregational retreat at an outside facility to create identity statement and the third part was sending out teams to make observations about the community, interviewing people and gathering demographics.
- Identity statement created: "We are a church family seeking personal and spiritual growth through praying, experiencing worship, building relationships and serving in mission, locally and globally."
- The new round tables in the Parish Hall are celebrated and the memorial/honor presentation plaque is displayed.
- The New Form of Government, which was formerly included as part of the 2009-2011 Form of Government as amended by the 219th General Assembly (2010), discussions begin.
- The Pastor's sermons are recorded and uploaded to the internet.

2012Work Camp 2012 is held in the Ontario, New York area. Over 30 homes were renovated by approximately 370 work campers from across the country. Wayne Central School District hosts the work campers at the high school for the week.

- Pipe Organ removed—the historical document cites circa 1945 as the year the pipe organ was dedicated and put into service. Currently there is a plaque on the wall in the sanctuary recognizing those who gave toward the purchase of the pipe organ. A youth member of the Seek Squad, (the team looking into upgrading visual and sound technology for the sanctuary) shared that his music instructor at Wayne Central was looking for a pipe organ. Actually her husband, Charles Smith, Director of Choral Music at McQuaid is seeking an organ as a teaching tool. "I have thought about acquiring a few ranks of pipes and a console to teach my general music kids how organs work and to "build one" each year" says Mr. Smith. The Admin Team/Buildings & Grounds were informed of the request and felt that we no longer had a need for the organ. The recommendation was then shared with Session and members agreed that, rather than having it remain unused, it was a blessing to offer it to students. Session approved the

removal of the organ. Gerrit Hospers, current organist provided some history and his experience with the pipe organ. Gerrit shared that the organ hadn't been used in perhaps 30 years. It has four ranks of pipes, utilizes paper clips for parts and its cabinet is made of different woods. He also shared that it was used in the past for organ students who needed a place to practice with the understanding they would be assistant organists if needed. Charles met with Rev. Carson and Gerrit Hospers and decided he wanted to see it. Charles Smith accepted the challenge of careful removal and shared, "first, a grateful thanks for this donation. I know that our students will enjoy both the processing of "getting it going" again and using it during class for real hands on learning." A few folks from McQuaid and FPC removed the organ and faced the challenge of disassembling the pipes from the tiny closet. Our hope is that those folks who gave generously years ago would approve of our decision to donate the organ as a teaching tool for students.

- New structuring and updates to the by-laws will be presented to the congregation later in the year.
- Session elders and Rev. Mouser present and were approved to form a Pastor Nominating Committee to the Geneva Presbytery Committee on Ministry.
- Pentecost worship service planned for parking lot.
- Fill dirt is received from a construction site for the west side of property to continue bringing grade to uniform level.
- Buildings and Grounds Committee continues discussion regarding Parish Hall roof replacement, which is in dire need of replacing.
- Discussion around opening the time capsule begins.