

Before church was built, Masses were held in school

Congregation also met at Westinghouse, Linwood Ballroom prior to construction

By David C. Sheehan

EDISON — It would be difficult to discover a church or synagogue with more unlikely beginnings than the township's Saint Matthew's Church.

The church's beginnings can be traced to January 1949, when property was purchased on Plainfield Avenue. In 1952, 6.5 acres of land were purchased at the present site of St. Matthew's on Seymour Avenue, and in July 1952, 11 more acres were purchased, comprising the congregation's present 16.5 acre site.

Roman Catholic churches are typically established by a diocesan bishop. Changes in population centers and demographics play important roles in when and where a diocese establishes its churches and their parishes.

There was phenomenal growth in the southern portion of Edison in the early 1950s; Nixon Park, Washington Park and Haven Village were three post-war housing developments which markedly impacted upon the growth of the Stelton, Nixon and Piscatawaytown areas of Edison. Young families bought these affordable homes, and with them came a boom in the young population of the area.

Catholic Edisonites, prior to the founding of St. Matthew's, worshipped at St. Paul's in Highland Park, St. Francis in Metuchen or in two smaller Edison churches, St. Margaret Mary's in Bonhamton and St. Teresa's in Lindenau. St. Matthew's was a parish whose time had come.

The Rev. James J. Duffy was appointed the pastor of the new church. It was his task to take a census of the area and determine what steps should be taken to establish a church in Edison. Bishop George W. Ahr, after whom Bishop Ahr High School in the northern portion of Edison is named, issued a "Canonical Certificate" which outlined the boundaries of the parish and assigned the name of Saint Matthew The Apostle Church to it on April 23, 1952. Duffy's duties included celebrating liturgies for the new "flock." Where, however, does one hold religious services if one has no church building as yet? Duffy held his first Masses in the Stelton School (now the Stelton Community Center) auditorium. The sacrament of penance was conducted in the classrooms. Stelton School, while school was in session, was a viable meeting place for the new congregation, but the site became unavailable once schools closed for the summer.

The church's written history reports: "With the closing of school for the summer months and the township ruling that all activities at the school must end for the vacation period, it was necessary to conduct Masses at the Linwood Grove Dining Room starting Sunday, June 1, 1952."

The Linwood Ballroom was a nightclub and lounge on Route 27 where City Federal Savings and the Wood Haven condominiums now stand. The Linwood hosted the likes of Tommy Dorsey and other big bands of the era and also was the site of Sunday afternoon "sock hops" during the 1950s and early 1960s. The Masses were held in the large dining room of the Linwood Ballroom each Sunday.

"In spite of its unchurchlike atmosphere, attendance continued to increase," according to church records.

With the conclusion of summer vacation, the parish resumed its worship services at Stelton School and continued thus for two years during the winter months.

Yet another unusual venue for a church's worship was discovered when Duffy and the new congregation celebrated Mass in the Westinghouse (now White Consolidated Industries) cafeteria, Route 27, while the Stelton School was being readied for the 1953 fall sessions. In what would be great fodder for a "Family Circus"-like comic strip, an Edison youngster was asked by his teacher what parish he belonged to. Perfectly in-

nocently, and without hesitation, the child responded: "Saint Westinghouse!"

Fortunately for all concerned, work formally began on the construction of a "real church" and a "real" elementary school on Monday, March 30, 1953, at the Seymour Avenue site.

During its seemingly nomadic years, the parish had continued to flourish. Even without the benefit of a sanctuary in which they could worship, the members of St. Matthew's had formed a church choir on September 17, 1952, using St. Margaret Mary's Church, Woodbridge Avenue, for their practices. Furthermore, no matter where the church met to hold its services, it always provided for the religious education of its youngsters. Three nuns from St. Paul's Church conducted the classes for the community.

St. Matthew's first Christening was held on October 12, 1952, at St. Francis Church (now St. Francis Cathedral). It is also reported that Steve Kovacs, owner of the Linwood Grove, presented the new church with a chalice on November 2, 1952, and it is recorded as the "first personal and concrete gift to the parish."

On May 30, 1953, 124 children received their First Holy Communion at St. Francis Church, and a breakfast reception was held following those ceremonies at the Linwood Grove.

Throughout this period, construction of St. Matthew's Church and Elementary School was progressing. Funds were raised through bake sales, "minstrel shows" and other activities.

The first Mass in the present church building was celebrated on June 14, 1954. It was also on that date that the first Christening was conducted in the church building. Masses were held on a daily basis in the new house of worship beginning June 16, 1954.

Duffy and the entire congregation held their First Holy Communion in the newly constructed church on Saturday, June 19, 1954. As if the flurry of "firsts" was not enough for any new group, a High Mass was sung by Father Connolly, the associate pastor, followed by an open house. More than 2,000 parishioners, dignitaries, neighbors and residents attended the event and toured the new facilities. The festivities were highlighted by a dinner dance.

Five Sisters of Mercy, with Sister Mary Norbert serving as principal, were assigned to the new St. Matthew's Elementary School. The school opened its doors to a full eight-year program on September 8, 1954, "to well over 400 children. For the first year it was necessary to have three first grades, two second grades, two third grades and one fourth grade. Aside from the Sisters who taught at St. Matthew's, Mrs. Norman Labrecque, Miss Phyllis Berry, Miss Ruth Peters and Miss Cornelia Penn also taught at St. Matthew's new school."

On the weekend before the opening of the school, Bishop George W. Ahr, bishop of Trenton (Edison was, until the establishment of the Diocese of Metuchen, a part of the Diocese of Trenton), paid his first visit to the parish he had only two years before established for the purpose of an official dedication ceremony. The ceremony ended with a solemn High Mass, celebrated by Duffy.

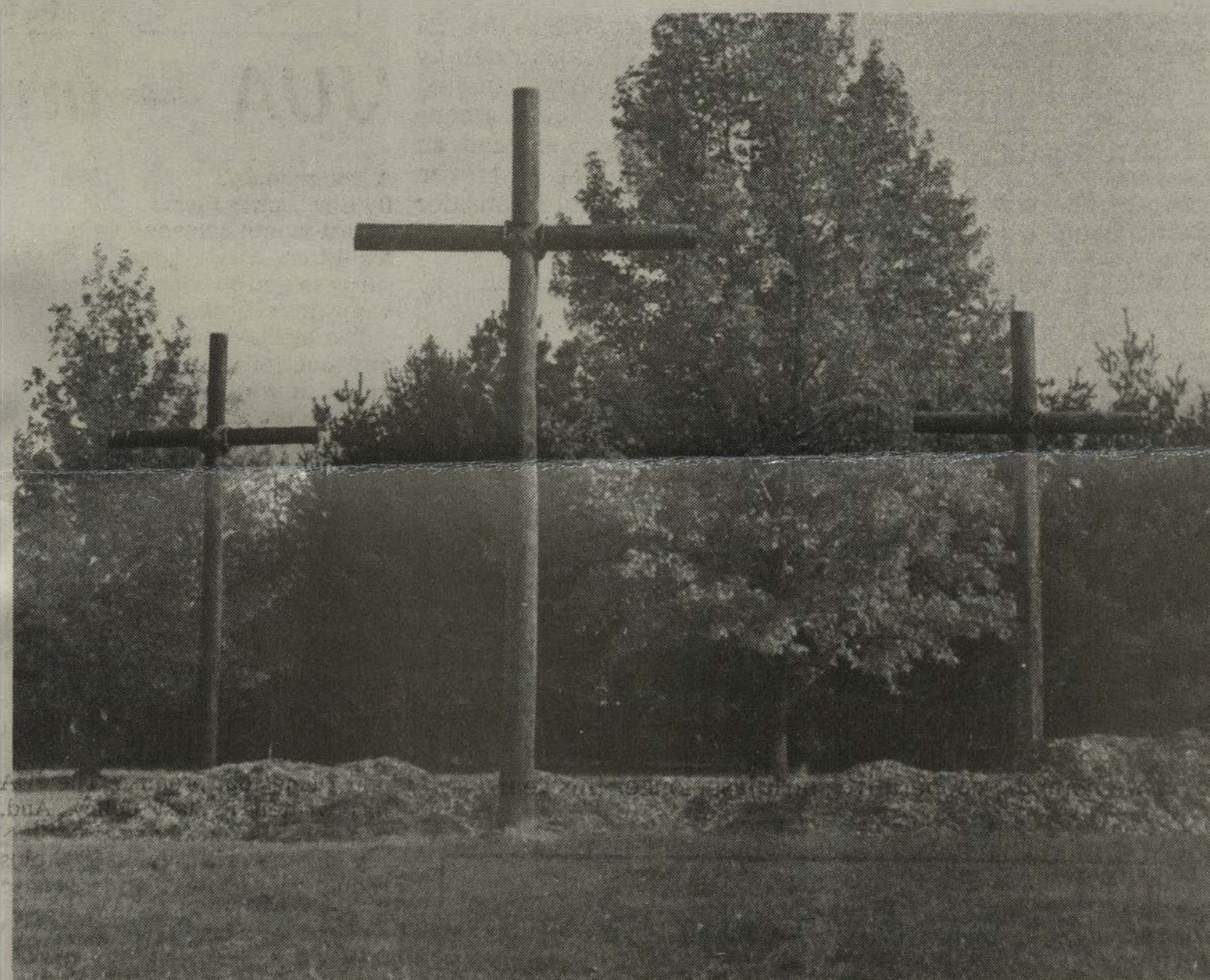
Today, St. Matthew's maintains its position as a large, active community serving the needs of its parishioners and the spiritual and cultural life of the township. Its large, well-maintained property is also the site of the annual "St. Matthew's Carnival," a week-long, family-centered event which has grown to be an institution among township activities.

A contemporary brick rectory serves as home to the parish's priests. A large red brick convent and



—Photos by Thomas R. DeCaro

St. Matthew's Church and Elementary School stand on 16.5 acres on Seymour Avenue, Edison. Before the facility was built, the congregation observed Mass in such places as the then-Stelton School, the Linwood Grove Dining Room and the Westinghouse cafeteria.



Three large, symbolic crosses stand to the rear of St. Matthew's Church, Edison.

chapel is home to the sisters who have served as some of the school teachers at St. Matthew's Elementary School. At the heart of this, and any other church, is the sanctuary in which the parishioners have now celebrated thousands of Masses, held their funerals, rejoiced at weddings, Christened their children and joined with their neighbors in worship.

Saint Matthew, an apostle, was invited by Jesus to "Follow Me." Clearly, that spirit infused the

original members of one of Edison's largest parishes as they went from place to place to place to meet and worship until they found their permanent home at the Church of Saint Matthew The Apostle.

David C. Sheehan is president and co-founder of the Edison Township Historical Society, and this article is one in a series by society members on the history of the area.

Jewish women host art show

EDISON — The Edison Section, National Council of Jewish Women, recently held a cocktail party for its art show and sale fundraiser at the Circle Gallery in Woodbridge Square.

Special guests included Mada Liebman, who represented Sen. Frank Lautenberg; Metuchen Mayor John Wiley Jr.; Metuchen Borough Councilman and Mrs. Thomas Sullivan; and Edison Township Council president Sidney Frankel.

Also in attendance were Sara Lee Kessler, a news anchor at WWOR-TV/Universal 9, and Prof. Jonathan Bell, from the Z Morning Zoo at Z100.

Proceeds from the art show and sale benefitted the Hippy Program (Home Instruction for Pre-School Youngsters), which helps underprivileged mothers give their children a head start before entering kindergarten. Mothers are trained to be at-home teachers for the 3- to 6-year-olds to help prepare them for a successful entrance into the school system.



Among those who enjoyed the cocktail party for the art show and sale of the Edison Section, National Council of Jewish Women, were (l-r) Rhona Kotler, president; Sara Lee Kessler, news anchor of WWOR-TV/Universal 9; Mayor John Wiley Jr. of Metuchen; and Lori Strauch, vice president for fundraising.

Financial planner to speak at Metuchen AARP meeting

METUCHEN — Anthony Scott, a financial planner with IDS Financial Services, Bridgewater, will be the guest speaker at Monday's meeting of Metuchen Chapter 3208, American Association of Retired Persons.

The meeting will be held at 1:15 p.m. in Fellowship Hall of the Reformed Church, 150 Lake Avenue. Scott will discuss taxes and estate planning.

The AARP chapter's annual Christmas luncheon will be held before the December general meeting Monday, December 10, at 12:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. Tickets are \$13 each with the luncheon prepared by City Caterers. Entertainment also will be provided.

A "Christmas in Waterloo Village" trip is being planned for Wednesday, December 12, with visits of the artisans' and Christmas shops and decorated houses.

births

EDISON — Deborah and Thomas San Filippo are parents of a daughter, Alissa, born September 25 at Familyborn, Princeton.

METUCHEN — Emily Rose, a daughter, was born October 20 at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital to Lorraine and Michael T. Pasquarello.

DAR chapter will meet today

Miss Kuchinskas plans to marry

EDISON — Deborah Lynne Kuchinskas of Edison Glen Terrace and Richard Francis Loman Jr. of Brooklyn are engaged to be married.

The bride-to-be is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Albert P. Kuchinskas of Plainfield Road. Her fiancé is the son of Mr. and Mrs. F. Loman of Bellevue, Wash.

Miss Kuchinskas is a kindergarten teacher at Lincoln School and a basic skills teacher at Washington School, both in Carteret. She graduated from St. Thomas Aquinas (now Bishop Ahr) High School and holds a B.A. degree in early childhood education from High Point College.

Mr. Loman is a senior auditor with the Bank of New York, New York City. He graduated from Newport High School, Bellevue, and from Washington State University.

An August 24 wedding is planned.



DEBORAH KUCHINSKAS and RICHARD LOMAN Jr.

Series of speakers starts tonight at Neve Shalom

METUCHEN — Temple Neve Shalom, 250 Grove Avenue, is planning a special series of three speakers who will address the congregation at Friday evening services.

The series begins with today's service at 8 p.m. Tonight's featured speaker, Gail Teicher Fellus, will discuss "Judaism is Alive

and Well in the Religious School Classroom."

Fellus is national director for curriculum development for the Reform movement. She has had more than 20 years of experience as a religious school teacher and principal, and she currently travels across the United States and Canada observing schools and presenting workshops for teachers, principals and lay leaders.

Her topic will focus on some of the new programs being implemented in religious schools and the methods developed by some schools to deal with pressing problems.

The second speaker in the series, Elliot Spack, will appear March 8. The executive director of the Coalition for the Advancement of Jewish Education, Spack will discuss "Jewish Education — Is the Glass Half Empty or Half Full?"

On May 10, the final speaker in the series, Ronald Becker, curator of manuscripts at Rutgers University, will discuss "New Jersey Synagogue Archives — Treasures of New Jersey's Jewish Past."

Reserve space now for MHS craft show

METUCHEN — A limited number of spaces are still available for a flea market and craft show conducted by the Metuchen High School Band Parents.

The flea market and craft show is Sunday, December 2, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the high school, Grove Avenue. Spaces are \$18 each.

For more information, call 549-4863 or 548-6320 after 6 p.m.

Dinner to benefit vet hospital fund

EDISON — The Military Order of Cooties and Auxiliary will sponsor a turkey dinner Sunday at Edison Memorial Post 3117, Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Dinner will be served from 2 to 6 p.m. at the post home, 1970 Woodbridge Avenue, near Route 1. Tickets are \$5 each with proceeds to benefit the veterans hospital fund.

St. Helena's has craft show on tap

EDISON — The sixth annual Little Elves Holiday Craft Show is tomorrow at St. Helena's School, 930 Grove Avenue, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

More than 100 crafters will display gifts and other handcrafted items. A 50-50 raffle will be drawn every hour during the day. Santa's kitchen also will be open for

Lynne Kristiansen becomes bride of Dallas Stokes

METUCHEN — Lynne Kristiansen, the daughter of Jan and Tina Kristiansen of Boonton, has been married to Dallas R. Stokes, the son of Dallas and Marilyn Stokes of Graham Avenue.

The wedding took place July 21 at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Rockaway, and was officiated by Rev. Robert Yankovich, the church's pastor.

The couple now lives in North Brunswick.

O'Shea-Robohn wedding is held

EDISON — Nancy Ellen O'Shea and James H. Robohn Jr. were married June 2 at the Second Reformed Church, New Brunswick, with Rev. James R. Esther officiating.

The bride is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Dennis P. O'Shea of Norwood Place. The bridegroom is the son of Mr. and Mrs. James H. Robohn of Mahopac, N.Y.

The couple lives in Edison.

Charity auction set for Thursday

METUCHEN — The Metuchen Woman's Club is holding its 18th annual Christmas charity auction Thursday in the social center of the First Presbyterian Church, 270 Woodbridge Avenue.

Doors open at 7 p.m. with bidding to begin at 8 p.m. Items for bid include handcrafted goods and home-baked gourmet food. There also will be free refreshments and door prizes.

Admission is free and the public is invited to attend. Proceeds will benefit the Edison Sheltered Workshop.



COLETTE HANLON

VP from hospital to speak at Beth-El

EDISON — Congregation Beth-El, 91 Jefferson Boulevard, will present Collette Hanlin as guest speaker at Friday evening services November 16.

The services begin at 8 p.m. and will be conducted by Rabbi Bernard Rosenberg Hanlon, who is vice president of pastoral care at St. Peter's Medical Center, will speak about chaplaincy and compassion after the service.

Refreshments will be served.

Rummage, bake sale this weekend

EDISON — The Sisterhood of Congregation Beth-El, 91 Jefferson Boulevard, will hold a rummage and bake sale this weekend.

The sale takes place tomorrow from 8 to 11 p.m. and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

JCC holding

Sign up to see a holiday ballet

METUCHEN — Reservations are now being accepted for a bus trip Sunday, December 23, to the New York City Ballet's performance of *The Nutcracker* at Lincoln Center.

The bus will depart at 11 a.m. from Borough Hall, Main Street and Middlesex Avenue, in order to arrive in time for a 1 p.m. matinee. Cost is \$50, including round-trip transportation and second-ring seating.

For more information or registration, call the Metuchen Recreation Commission, the trip sponsor, at 632-8502.

Librarian to speak to genealogy club

METUCHEN — A family history librarian will address the Metuchen-Edison Genealogy Club at its next meeting Tuesday at 2 p.m. in the Metuchen Public Library, 480 Middlesex Avenue.

Helen J. Rogers, librarian at the Family History Center of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, East Brunswick, will give a genealogical presentation.

New members are welcome to attend. Refreshments will be served.

MISS MAJORETTE

NEW JERSEY
1990

Kim Barrett, 8, of Edison was crowned Miss Majorette of New Jersey in the novice division of a recent competition in Tuckerton. While the Miss Majorette title is a solo award, the teams on which she also competes placed first in their divisions. Kim is a student of Valerie Vitale of Edison and is a three-year member of Valerie's Golden Strutters.

Chandler to speak on role of women in government

EDISON — Marguerite Chandler, a businesswoman and candidate for a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives, will speak Monday at a program about women's role in state government.

The program begins at 6:30 p.m. in the Victorian Manor, 2863 Woodbridge Avenue, near South Main Street.

The program is sponsored by the United Charter Chapter, American Business Women's Association. Topics to be discussed include enhancing women's knowledge of careers in government and the effect of legislative bills for the working woman. It will also show how women can make a positive contribution to their government.

Edison women hold ORT posts

EDISON — Susan Gordon and Fran Reissfeld, both of this township, have been elected vice presidents of the Central Jersey Region of Women's American ORT.

They assumed their posts during an installation dinner Tuesday at the Sheraton at Woodbridge Place and Towers, Iselin. The posts are for the 1990-1991 term.

Marla Lind, also of Edison, has received the ORT Golden Circle pin for those who have contributed or solicited at least \$1,000 to the ORT capital funds program. She was presented with her pin at an honor roll dinner June 7 at the Landmark Inn, Woodbridge.

Anyone who is interested in Women's American ORT may call 549-1155.

Chandler is running for the seat currently held by Rep. James Courter, who did not seek reelection.

Cost for the Monday program is \$16 and includes dinner. For more information, call Edith Lewis-Rodgers at 906-6036.

Meetings of the United Charter Chapter are held at the Victorian Manor the third Monday of every month.

Edison AARP meeting Monday

EDISON — Susan Krieger, a registered nurse, will discuss studies on cardiology and blood pressure at the next meeting of Edison Chapter 3446, American Association of Retired Persons.

The meeting takes place Monday at 1 p.m. in the Stelton Community Center, 328 Plainfield Avenue, near the main library.

In addition, four trips have been scheduled by the tour committee for the fall.

They are a fall foliage trip to Rocking Horse Resort, Highland, N.Y., for October 1-5; a cruise to Nassau, the Bahamas, for October 29-November 2; a bus trip to see a performance of *Me and My Girl* at the Dutch Apple Valley Theatre, Lancaster, Pa., on November 18; and a Brandywine Christmas trip to Bethlehem, Pa., for December 4-6.

For details about the trips, call 738-7441.

The AARP chapter will not meet during July and August.

Catherine Suswal to marry in 1991

METUCHEN — Catherine Mary Suswal, daughter of borough residents Carmela and William Suswal, and William Raymond Pezzuti, son of Marlene and William Pezzuti of Fair Lawn, are engaged to be married.

The future bride is a graduate of Metuchen High School and Lehigh University. She is employed by Ernst and Young, Iselin.

Her fiancé is a graduate of Fair Lawn High School and Lehigh University and is employed by Radiodetection, Mahwah.

An October 1991 wedding is planned.



DIANE SAUMS

Seminar to cover financial planning

EDISON — Dean Witter Reynolds has scheduled a series of free financial planning seminars for corporate employees and business people within three years of retirement.

The seminars will be held in the Dean Witter offices at 333 Thornall Street, between Wood Avenue and Evergreen Road.

The next seminar, on tax-free and tax-deferred investments, will be held in two sections at noon and 6 p.m. on Monday and will cover investment options for retirees who receive a large payment at the end of their employment.

Complimentary deli sandwiches will be served.

The free seminar also will be held Saturday, June 23, at 10 a.m.

For reservations, call M. Leonard Kuker at 494-9200.

'Y' sets schedule for swim lessons

EDISON — Aquatic programs for the summer have been announced by the YMCA of Metuchen-Edison.

Progressive swim lessons will run in two-week sessions from Monday through Thursday for children 6 through 13.

There will be an 8 a.m. class for Polliwogs, Guppies, Fish, Flying Fish and Sharks; an 8:30 a.m. class for Polliwogs, Guppies and Minnows; and a 9 a.m. class for Polliwogs and Guppies. Classes are 30 minutes long. The starting dates for each two-week session are June 25, July 9, July 23 and August 6.

The infant swim classes will take place once a week beginning June 25. Classes are offered mornings and evenings on various days of the week.

The preschool swim lessons will be offered in four-week sessions meeting twice each week. There will be two sessions available beginning June 25 and July 23.

Call the YMCA at 548-2044 for more information about the classes and fees for each session.



REGISTER NOW...
SUMMER COURSE
JULY 9 TO AUGUST 17

Edison offering tests for cholesterol

EDISON — The Edison Township Health Department will offer cholesterol screening Monday at the Dr. William Toth Memorial Health Center, 80 Idlewild Road.

Hours for the testing are 9 a.m. to noon. Blood pressure screening and education about cholesterol also will be provided. Cost is \$16.

The screening is available only to residents of Edison. Appointments are required by calling 287-0900, Ext. 286.

BIL installs officers for upcoming year

METUCHEN — At the May meeting of the Borough Improvement League, the following members were installed for the 1990-1991 year:

Mrs. H.I. Stewart, president; Mrs. P. McCormack, first vice president; Mrs. J. Convery, second vice president; Mrs. E. Fager, recording secretary; Mrs. R. Smith, corresponding secretary; and Mr. J. Zsoldos, treasurer.

Mrs. Norman Ferrara, past president and past district vice president, conducted the installation.

Sports medicine clinic is Tuesday

EDISON — A free sports medicine clinic is being offered Tuesday from 3 to 7 p.m. at the Robert Wood Johnson Jr. Rehabilitation Institute, on the grounds of John F. Kennedy Medical Center.

A professional clinic team will be available to screen both sports-related acute and chronic sports and exercise-related injuries. The team consists of a biochemist, a physical therapist and a physician specializing in rehabilitation medicine.

Pre-registration is required by calling 321-7757.

'Get Hooked' on books in Edison

EDISON — "Get Hooked on Books" is the theme of the Edison Public Library's summer reading program featuring mascot Whale the Whale.

The program, open to children in kindergarten through fourth grade, begins June 25 and ends August 17. For more information call 287-2351.

New Jersey
School Of

Church's rich history is preserved in structure, documents, pictures

Review 6/15/90

By Joyce Kaschak

EDISON — The New Dover United Methodist Church, located at 690 New Dover Road in the North Edison Historic District was founded 12 years before the Civil War, with the original portion of the sanctuary built in 1849 at a cost of \$2,700 on land donated by Gussie Wood.

The church is a classically simple and quite handsome white wood-framed structure with eight clear "four over five" three-tiered windows which keep the sanctuary bright and airy in appearance.

Fifteen rows of white wooden pews with deep red cushions fill most of the sanctuary space.

Four large brass candelabra are hung throughout the sanctuary, and 12 brass candle sconces adorn the plain white plastered walls.

Felt and burlap banners made by children in New Dover's busy church school program hang on the walls between the tall white-shuttered church windows.

The altar area has a lectern and a modest pulpit from which some of the congregation's 77 pastors have preached.

Also on the altar area are the church's choir pews, the organ and piano. A special green candle called the "Candle of Hope" sits on the right-hand portion of the altar at the front of the church.

This green candle, according to a New Dover United Methodist Church publication, "symbolizes the light, life and healing power of our God. It is to lit at each worship service until AIDS is cured and until the prejudice surrounding AIDS, persons with AIDS and the families and friends is overcome."

There are several pieces of evidence available that show not only how this portion of Edison Township has grown over the years, but also how the New Dover United Methodist Church has prospered and grown in its mission as well.

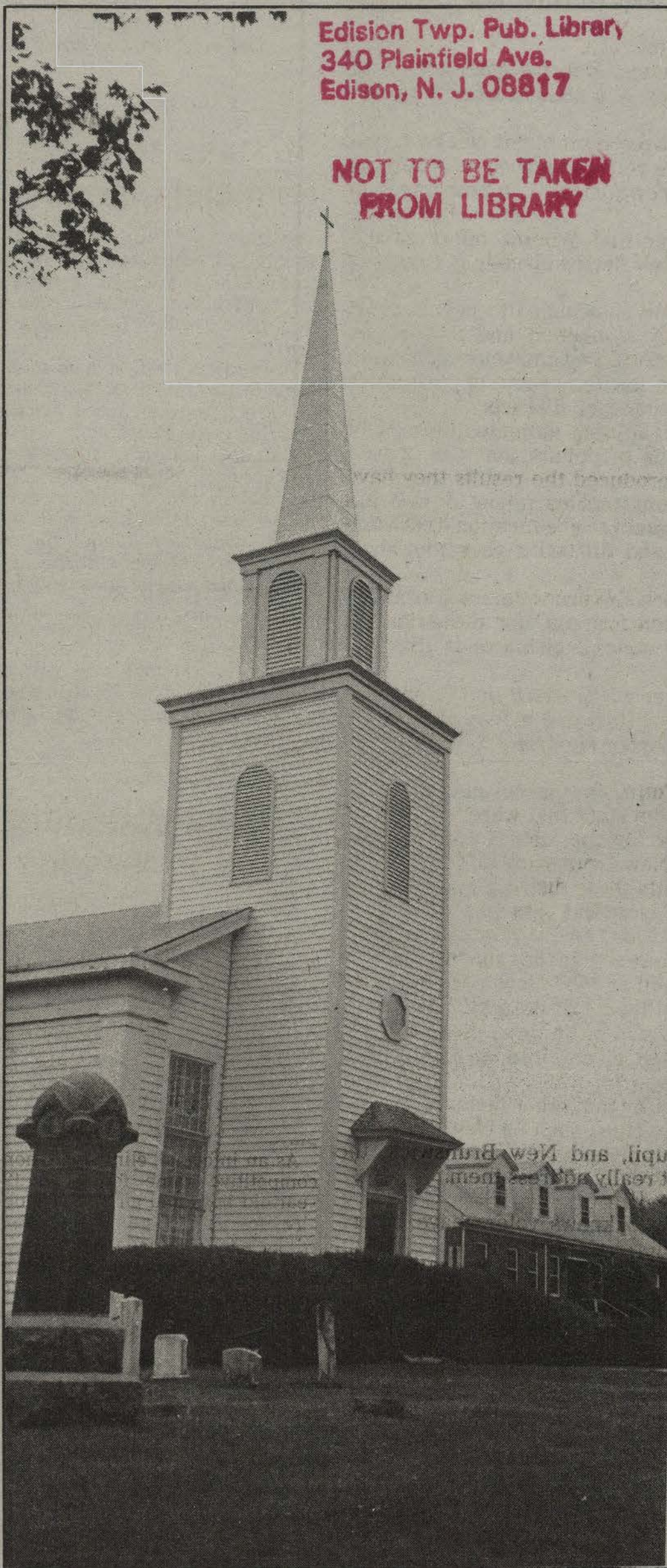
Displayed in one of the two memorial cabinets at the rear of the church is a commemorative program for the Methodist Church's 180th anniversary in 1964.

The cover shows the address of the church as New Dover United Methodist Church, Rahway, N.J., indicating that as late as 1964, Edison had to "share" post office addresses with then-larger neighboring communities.

Over the years, additions have been made to New Dover United Methodist Church, but the sanctuary retains the basic design of the original 1849 building.

In 1924, electricity was added, and in 1930 the steeple was replaced. That spire fell years later and was not replaced, according to longtime congregant Helen Towekk, "until about five years ago"

Additions to structure were made over many years, but the sanctuary retains basic design of 1849 building



The New Dover United Methodist Church at 690 New Dover Road, Edison, is a simple, handsome white wood-framed structure built in 1849.

when the present steeple was erected.

She added that it was in 1951 that "our two pot-bellied

stoves were replaced by a modern central heating system."

In the 1950s and 1960s, New

Dover United Methodist Church's facilities were expanded to keep pace with the rapid development in northern Edison and with the increases in the congregation's numbers.

Fellowship Hall, Wesley Hall (the church school), sanctuary renovations and a parsonage were added to meet the growth.

In the 1970s a new kitchen was constructed and the sanctuary was expanded to its present dimensions.

Old photos contained in the memorial cabinets reveal archival prints of the smaller sanctuary and of many church's religious and social events over the years. One shows a 1920s confirmation class on a picnic at Boynton Beach, a once popular beach resort in Woodbridge's Sewaren section.

Other treasures in the cabinet are two "Cradle Rolls" — one is an intricately hand-painted chronicle of births in the congregation dating from 1915 through 1926. Each birth was meticulously added in calligraphy as it occurred.

A more recent addition to the church's collection of "Cradle Rolls" documents the "blessed events" of the congregation in the 1960s.

Attendance rolls for each Sunday's worship service were kept equally meticulously. An

attendance record on display in the cabinet shows the following: "Sunday, April 13, 1952: Congregation: 68, Choir: 7, Pianist: 1, Total: 76."

To the left of the simple entranceway to New Dover United Methodist Church is a small cemetery for deceased members of the congregation.

In the foyer of the sanctuary is a collection of pamphlets, booklets and bulletins.

The cover of a recent Sunday's bulletin reminds the reader to "Be thoughtful, be silent, be reverent, for this is the house of the Lord. Before the service, speak to the Lord; during the service, let the Lord speak to you; after the service, speak to each other."

The first assigned pastor was the Rev. Jeremiah Cowins in 1855. Since that time, 77 ministers have served the church. The original trustees, according to church records, were Charles Toms, John Badgely, Joseph Toms, Darmel Wood and Thomas Payne.

Today, the Rev. David C. Pierson serves as pastor of New Dover United Methodist Church.

He and the active congregation carry on that spirit of service and giving which was so generously demonstrated in 1849 by the community's benefactor, Gussie Wood and those original trustees.

Joyce Kaschak is a member of the Edison Township Historical Society, and this article is one in a series for the Metuchen-Edison Review by society members on the history of the area.

—Photo by Thomas R. DeCaro

Church has roots in Sunday school

By David C. Sheehan

EDISON — The Reformed Church in America is known as the oldest Protestant denomination in the United States. One of the oldest churches and congregations in Edison is the Bonhamtown Grace Reformed Church at the corner of Woodbridge Avenue and Grace Street in the Bonhamtown Historic District.

Bonhamtown Grace Reformed Church is one of the featured stops on both the Edison Township Historical Society's Walking/Driving Tour of Historic Sites and the Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission's Walking/Driving Tour brochures.

Its architectural uniqueness and the congregation's contributions to the spiritual and cultural heritage of the community have made the church a likely choice for inclusion in these self-guided tours of the township.

As evidenced by the steep gable roof and pointed windows, the Grace Reformed Church is a very good example of vernacular Gothic architecture.

As one of the architectural gems of the Bonhamtown Historic District and of the entire township, the church serves as a handsome landmark structure and is located within the same triangle formed by the intersections of Old Post Road, Woodbridge Avenue and Grace Street, which is shared by the old Bonhamtown Elementary School. Across Grace Street, also on Woodbridge Avenue, is St. Margaret's Roman Catholic Church, one of the oldest Catholic communities and structures in the township.

The story of Grace Reformed Church began, however, long before the church building was actually constructed. Written church histories reveal that the exact date the congregation began is difficult to establish, but "it appears from a booklet, written by Rev. David Stevenson, that it must have been around the year 1800. Rev. Stevenson tells how a certain Miss Hannah Manning, a member of the Baptist Church in Piscataway (now the Stelton Baptist Church) organized the first Sunday School in the Bonhamtown School House."

Old Edison family names abound in the area around the church. Bonhamtown itself derives its name from Nicholas Bonham, one of the first six European settlers in the area. Manning Street gets its name from Hannah Manning and her family. Clausen and Westervelt avenues are named for original members of the Grace Reformed Church.

Manning's Sunday School seems to have played the most integral and vital role in the formation and development of Grace Church. Her teaching methods are recounted in the church's written histories as "clearly that of a catechism. The teacher asked the questions while the student recited the answer memorized during the week. Also the Bible was studied in those days by memorizing verses, and sometimes whole chapters. ...

"It seems to have been a one-teacher school, which was not uncommon for those days."

The Sunday School began to decline with Manning's death. After a lapse of several years, a niece of Manning's — Adele Manning — took up where her aunt had left off, but according

Landmark in Bonhamtown was constructed in 1876

Edison Twp. Pub. Library
340 Plainfield Ave.
Edison, N. J. 08817

NOT TO BE TAKEN
FROM LIBRARY



—Photo by Thomas R. DeCaro

The Bonhamtown Grace Reformed Church, which was constructed in 1876 at a cost of some \$2,500, is an architectural gem and handsome landmark. It stands at the corner of Woodbridge Avenue and Grace Street in Edison.

to the history, "in quite a different way."

Adele, the reports show, was only 11 years old, but she could read, something many people much older had never learned.

"So little Miss Manning," the report continues, "began reading the Bible regularly on Sunday nights to families in the area and seemed to have been a welcome guest in many a home."

"From this developed a permanent Sunday School in the home of Mr. William F. Manning, the father of Adele. Soon, one room was not enough to hold the interested students and two rooms had to be used. Two additional teachers helped to continue and conduct the Sunday School, Mrs. Charles s. Edgar and Mrs. Price. Adele Manning became the wife of Reverend David Stevenson and moved from Bonhamtown to Perth Amboy. But because of her vision and planning, the Sunday School continued without her presence. Sunday School was now conducted in the home of Mr. Daniel Westervelt at 'Lake Side,' who, together with his family, took a deep interest in the school."

The Grace Church history

notes at this point that "many people even today remember that once there was such a thing as a lake in Bonhamtown."

Westervelt moved to New York, and the Sunday School moved to the home of Richard Magines. Westervelt later returned to take up residence in Bonhamtown again, and the school returned to his home.

These years of moving the school from one home to another and then to another drew Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Westervelt to the conclusion that a chapel should be built "in which the Sunday School would find a permanent home and in which union religious services could be held."

The Westervelts got the ball rolling by making a "generous contribution themselves," and they "got about some one hundred people to subscribe to the newly to be constructed building. The total amount to be collected was \$2,036."

According to the history, the contract for the building "was signed at Lake Side on October 1, 1875, with contractor, Mr. John Cornell, for the agreed price of \$2,200. After installation of heating, seats and other necessary furnishings, the total came to \$2,500. The difference was cheerfully paid by Mr. and

Mrs. Westervelt."

March 1, 1876, was the date upon which construction of the chapel actually began. Mrs. Westervelt, reports show, laid the first brick in the foundation, and then each teacher of the Sunday School laid a brick. Prayers were said and hymns sung at the brick-laying ceremony.

"On April 13th, 1876, the chapel, free from debt, was formally dedicated for union religious services and for the use of a Union Sabbath School. The Rev. Dr. Rodgers of New York City preached the dedication sermon."

The Sunday School had, at last, found its permanent home. Hannah Manning's early labors had taken root in the community and led to the construction of a chapel in Bonhamtown.

Grace Chapel also served as a place where "religious services were regularly maintained by the pastors of the Presbyterian, Reformed and Methodist-Episcopal churches of Metuchen, one a month on Sunday afternoons."

"Reverend J.G. Mason of Metuchen," the history continues, "preached his first sermon in Grace Chapel on April 22, 1877, and still came to conduct services in 1901. There is a long history of a close relationship with the Reformed Church in Metuchen and the congregation of Grace Chapel over the years."

It was in 1954 that Grace Chapel was organized as a congregation of the Reformed Church in America, reflected the growth of both Grace Chapel and the growth of the township at the time.

The church's written history also provides us with what is referred to as "an interesting story" about William Acken, who was a member of the Reformed Church of Metuchen and superintendent of the Sunday School at Grace Chapel. "Mr. Acken lived in Metuchen, but in spite of the fact that trolley cars were available, he walked from his home to Bonhamtown because he did not want anyone to work for him on the Sabbath."

The Consistory of Grace Chapel on January 25, 1955, approved a motion that the congregation be known officially as Grace Reformed Church.

A year later, the congregation built a spacious seven-room parsonage on Old Post Road, and it is noted that "the building was almost entirely done by volunteer labor for members and friends of the church, and many materials were donated."

Recent pastors of Grace Reformed Church include the Rev. Robert G. Bender, the Rev. Dennis L. Baker, the Rev. Dr. Gerard Van Dyk and the present pastor, the Rev. D. Winters.

The written history of the church provides the most fitting conclusion to this brief glimpse into the rich history of its congregation:

"We are grateful to the past and to the people who lived in and around Bonhamtown. ... As we follow them, may future generations write our story and find cause for rejoicing."

David C. Sheehan is co-founder and president of the Edison Township Historical Society, and this article is one in a series written by society members for the Metuchen-Edison Review on the history of the area.



JAMES A. COLQUIST

James Colquist becomes Eagle

EDISON — James A. Colquist of Fairview Avenue has become an Eagle Scout, the highest award in Boy Scouting.

He received his Eagle badge during a court of honor in the building of Edison First Aid Squad No. 1. James received congratulations and certificates from Mayor Thomas H. Paterniti, Gov. James Florio, Sen. Bill Bradley, President George Bush and Pope John Paul II.

He also received honors from the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Jewish War Veterans, U.S. Air Force and U.S. Marine Corps.

James is an assistant scoutmaster with Troop 76, which is sponsored by St. Paul's Lutheran Church on Old Post Road.

Officers installed by Cootie auxiliary

EDISON — Dorothy Skidmore of Spotswood was installed as president of Military Order of Cootie auxiliary No. 7 during the 44th annual convention this month in the Wildwood Civic Center.

Other officers installed were Helen Ward of New Brunswick, senior vice president; Barbara Broxmyer of Milltown, junior vice president; Georgette Fish of South Plainfield, chaplain; Marie Bruno of Highland Park, treasurer; Cindy Kinney of Piscataway, secretary; and Josephine Day of Edison, guard.

Guests in attendance were Helen V. Cochran of Bloomington, Ill., past supreme president to the Military Order of Cootie auxiliary; Maryn Van Orden of Old Bridge, past supreme president; and Eleanor Burton of Chicago, Ill., supreme guard.

Children can join Jesus' journeys at Bible school

METUCHEN — "Journeys with Jesus" will be the theme of this year's vacation Bible school at the Reformed Church, 150 Lake Avenue, near the YMCA.

Classes will be held from 9 a.m. to noon Monday, July 9, through Friday, July 13. All children 3 years old through 4th grade are invited to attend.

Children will participate in Bible stories, arts and crafts, music and recreational activities centered on five "Journeys with Jesus" — at the synagogue, to the city, by the sea, by the road and in the country.

Cost is \$5 per child with a maximum of \$10 per family. Deadline for registrations is Thursday.

For more information or registration, call the church office at 548-2463.

New officers of Edison AARP

EDISON — Fred Grossman is the new president of Edison Chapter 3446, American Association of Retired Persons.

Other officers recently installed include Philip Capellupo, first vice president; Helen Rader, second vice president; Shirley Zuzio, recording secretary; Alic Christensen, corresponding secretary; and Addie Burns, treasurer.

New directors are Robert Frank, Geza Toth, Henry Charles, Rebecca Janco, John Cameron and Vincent Johnson. Gordon Koehler, Bertha Jinoch and Terry Surretsky were named to the nominating committee.

The chapter has scheduled trips to matinee performances at the Paper Mill Playhouse as well as a fall foliage trip October 1-5. Plans also are being made for a cruise to Nassau, the Bahamas, from October 29 to November 2 and a trip December 4-6 to Bethlehem, Pa., for a "Brandywine Christmas."

For more information, call Helen Rader at 738-7441.

The next chapter meeting is set for September 17 at the Stelton Community Center, 328 Plainfield Avenue.

Preschool program opens registration

EDISON — The Recreation Department is accepting applications for the 1990-91 preschool program.

The fee-based program for 3- and 4-year-olds offers a variety of recreational activities in a state licensed child-care center.

The program will be offered in two locations. The first — at the Stelton Community Center, Plainfield Avenue — will begin September 10. The second — at the community center which is under construction on Grove Avenue —



DEBRA and CRAIG SCHECKNER

Debra Beth Gottfried wed to Craig Martin Scheckner

EDISON — Debra Beth Gottfried and Craig Martin Scheckner were married June 3 at L'Affaire, Mountainside, by Rabbi Alfred Landsberg.

The bride is the daughter of Judy and Alex Gottfried of Visco Drive. The bridegroom is the son of Joyce and Norman Scheckner of Mount Pleasant Avenue.

Janis Gottfried of Edison was the maid of honor for her sister. Tracey Hill of Bound Brook and Lisa Tambone of Middlesex were bridesmaids.

Brian Scheckner of Edison served as best man for his brother. Ushers were Jeff Guarnera of Metuchen and Victor Kazdoba of Yonkers, N.Y.

After a reception at L'Affaire, the couple left for a trip to Bermuda.

They will reside in Franklin Park.

The bride graduated from John P. Stevens High School and Rutgers University. She is a senior reinsurance accounting representative with Pru-Re, Newark, the reinsurance division of the Prudential Insurance Co.

The bridegroom, who graduated from John P. Stevens High School and Kean College, is a programmer and analyst with First Atlantic Savings, South Plainfield.

Forsythe-Yanik wedding held

METUCHEN — Announcement has been made of the marriage of Carol Ann Forsythe and George Yanik Jr.

The bride is the daughter of Carol Forsythe of Midland Avenue and the late Thomas Forsythe. The bridegroom is the son of George Yanik Sr. and Linda Yanik, also of Metuchen.

The wedding was performed by the Rev. John Casey last November 3 at St. Francis Roman Catholic Cathedral. A reception followed at the Victorian Manor in Edison.

The couple lives in Metuchen.

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LORETTA LAROCCO - AND - JOEL MARK VAN DYK

THE STORY OF GRACE CHURCH

AT

BONHAMTOWN

BY

Loretta LaRocco

- and -

Joel Mark Van Dyk

We dedicate this history to the
generations of the past who wor-
shipped and learned at Grace Church.
This is their story.

The Authors

FOREWORD

The year is 1976. It is the Bi-Centennial year for the country, but the people of Grace Church are celebrating a Centennial as well. On April 13, 1876, Grace Chapel was opened and dedicated, and that historic event must not pass unnoticed.

Two members of our confirmation class have undertaken to write the story of Grace Church as part of their studies at confirmation class. It is their gift to the people of Grace Church, so that they may be all the more aware of their heritage as members of Grace Church, and to enable them to carry this heritage into the future all the more consciously.

I am sure that I also speak for the members of Grace Church when I warmly thank Loretta and Joel for the considerable amount of work they did. Not only have they done their reading for this project; they also had to search for documents, and they conducted several interviews with members of the congregation.

On April 4 of this year, Loretta and Joel will be confirmed, together with the other members of the confirmation class, as communicant members of the Church. We commend them to the care and affection of the membership of Grace Church and to the love and guidance of our Lord who has promised to be with us always.

Rev. Gerard Van Dyk

The story of Grace Church began long before the chapel was actually built. The exact date is difficult to establish but it appears from a booklet, written by Rev. David Stevenson, that it must have been around the year 1800. Rev. Stevenson tells how a certain Miss Hannah Manning, a member of the Baptist Church in Piscataway, organized the first Sunday school in the Bonhamtown School House. Right away we notice the name Manning as one of the streets in close proximity to our church. The people of Bonhamtown are also familiar with names such as Westervelt Avenue and Clausen Road, also named for people who were or still are closely connected with the story of the church.

Teaching and teaching methods were different from the ones now in use. Rev. Stevenson reports, e.g., that one of the questions Miss Manning asked of her students was, "How is it that Christ executes for us the offices of a Prophet, Priest and King?" The method was clearly that of the catechism. The teacher asked the question, while the student recited the answer memorized during the week. Also the Bible was studied in those days by memorizing verses, and sometimes whole chapters. It is clear then that our church began as a Sunday school, or as a Sabbath school as it was called at that time, and its beginnings were humble indeed. It seems to have been a one-teacher-school, which was not uncommon for those days. But the result was that the Sunday school died with Miss Manning.

After a lapse of several years a niece of Miss Hannah Manning, Adele Manning, took up where her aunt had left off, but in quite a different way. Adele was only eleven years old at the time, but she could read, something many people much older never had learned. So, little Miss Manning began reading the Bible regularly on Sunday nights to families in the area, and she seemed to have been a welcome guest in many a home. From this there developed a permanent Sunday school in the home of William F. Manning, the father of Adele. Soon one room was not enough to hold the interested students and two rooms had to be used. Also Miss Manning was successful in acquiring two as extra teachers for the Sunday School. After they were married they were known as Mrs. Charles S. Edgar and Mrs. Price. So, when Miss Adele Manning became the wife of the Rev. David Stevenson and moved from Bonhamtown to Perth Amboy with the family, the Sunday school could go on just the

same, even though it was now conducted in the home of Mr. Daniel D. Westervelt at Lake Side who, together with his family took a deep interest in the school. Many people even today remember that once there was such a thing as a lake in Bonhamtown. When Mr. Westervelt moved to New York, the Sunday school moved to the home of Mr. Richard Magines, but when Mr. Westervelt returned to live in Bonhamtown, the school once more found a shelter in the Westervelt residence.

The wandering years of the Sunday school had come to an end, however. Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Westervelt decided that the time had come that a chapel should be built in which the Sunday school would find a permanent home and in which union religious services could be held. Beginning by making a liberal donation themselves, the Westervelts got about some one hundred people to subscribe to the newly to be constructed building. The total amount collected was \$2,036., a large sum for that time and from people who did not have much money to give. The contract for the building of the chapel was signed at Lake Side on October 1, 1875, with contractor, Mr. John Cornell, for the agreed price of \$2,200. After the installation of heating, seats, and other necessary furnishings, the total cost came to \$2,500. The difference was cheerfully paid by Mr. and Mrs. Westervelt and they took responsibility for the entire amount.

On March 1, 1876 a beginning was made with the building of the chapel. Rev. Stevenson reports that Mrs. Daniel D. Westervelt laid the first brick in the foundation; then each teacher and scholar of the Sunday school laid a brick. The Superintendent, Mr. C. P. W. Merrit, then offered a prayer, after which every one present united in a song of praise. The beautiful window in the gable of the chapel was given by Mrs. William B. DeForest of New Haven, Connecticut, in memory of her sister, Mrs. Hollenback. "On April 13th, 1876, the chapel, free from debt, was formally dedicated for union religious services and for the use of a Union Sabbath School. The Rev. Dr. Rodgers of New York City preached the dedication sermon."

Not only had the Sunday school found a permanent home, but also religious services were regularly maintained by the pastors of the Presbyterian, Reformed and Methodist Episcopal churches of Metuchen, once a month

on Sunday afternoons. The Rev. J. G. Mason of Metuchen preached his first sermon in Grace Chapel on April 22, 1877, and still came to conduct services in 1901.

The life of the Sunday school became better organized now, although even under primitive and difficult circumstances the activities had been substantial. Many remembered the first Christmas celebration, that was held long before the chapel was built, while the Sunday school was still at Walnut Hill, in charge of Miss Adele Manning. The people in charge were of tender years but were determined to make it a success. Each of them pledged the payment of twenty-five cents. There was one girl, however, who did not have that kind of money to give. All she had was a ten cent piece with a hole in it which she wore on a chain around her neck. Much as she valued it, she gave it and insisted that in this way she contribute to the Christmas Festival. Her father, who was a carpenter, provided and put up the cedar tree on which the gifts were hung.

But still, since the Sunday school now had a permanent home, it could do so much more, and organize itself so much more extensively. Much interest was taken into starting a library. The young lady in charge contributed her own books for a beginning. A few dollars were secured for the purchase of some new books, and a Baptist Church in Brooklyn donated the first hymnbooks to be used in the chapel.

The first superintendent after the Sunday school was moved to the chapel was Mr. C. P. W. Merrit. Among the teachers were: Henrietta Sofield and Miss Martha Amanda Ross. The last one is known to us from the plaque in the back of the chapel. Miss Ross taught and led the Sunday school for many years with much devotion and dedication.

Miss Mary P. Campbell, later known as Mrs. George S. Campbell, took a deep interest in chapel services and Sunday school work. On June 1, 1882, she organized a Helping Hand Society consisting of fifty-eight members. This society has been very successful in securing much of the funds for necessary expenses. Its very first fundraising affair was a Strawberry Festival on the grounds of the chapel. At the time of this writing the Society still very much continues its useful function and from time to time and from year to year pro-

vides for extra and unforeseen expenses, and has been responsible for transforming a red figure on the balance sheet into a black one more than once.

It is, of course, impossible to list all the people who ever were active in the Helping Hand Society or even to begin to enumerate its activities. An exception, however, must be made for that first organizational meeting and fundraising affair in 1882. The first president was Miss Minnie Campbell, the vice-president, Miss Lizzie Tappen, the treasurer, Mrs. MacGuire and the secretary, Miss Henrietta Sofield. At the Strawberry Festival also lemonade, home-made cakes, cream, nuts, candies and fruit were served. The tent was lighted with transparent lanterns which gave off a beautiful glow. The festival was an obvious success. After 80 quarts of cream and 60 quarts of strawberries were consumed, the profit was \$70.00. And seventy dollars was a lot of money in 1882.

And so the Helping Hand Society went on and still goes on. The affairs vary from time to time as taste and habits change. There have been card parties, square dances, dinners, auctions, bake and rummage sales, paper drives, and not to be forgotten the still popular annual bazaar. In 1953 the Helping Hand Society financed the sidewalks. It also has paid the bill for paving the parking lot and wrote many a check for furnishings in the chapel and dishes, and utensils in the kitchen. And as we suggested already, in the past the Helping Hand Society used to raise funds to support the Sunday school and its activities.

The people connected with the Sunday school devoted much work, money and interest to the Christmas festivals for the children. Some of the families were even of the opinion that the preparations could be done more economically. In order to remove this objection and to make sure that the Christmas programs were nevertheless sufficiently funded, the Rev. Stevenson organized a "Sunday School Aid Society" in 1900, consisting of some sixty members. Through programs of entertainment this society secured the necessary funds. It seems, however, that after some years this function was also taken over by the Helping Hand Society.

The Sunday school continued, but funds were often lacking. The parents of the children did not have much

to contribute, and so it was welcome news when it was learned that Mr. William A. Ford and his sister, Miss Mary A. Ford, who had spent their youth in Bonhamtown, and were now living in Newark, had decided not only to donate sufficient funds for the maintenance of the Sunday school, but also offered to pay for an extra room to be added to the chapel. When all was paid, the total sum amounted to one thousand dollars. Besides this the Sunday school also was assured by Mr. Ford and his sister that an annual gift of \$240.00 could be counted on for upkeep, repairs, and necessary furnishings so that the work of the school might be enlarged. It was thought wise that the management of the annual appropriation would rest with the trustees of the Reformed Church in Metuchen. The relationship between the chapel and the Reformed Church in Metuchen has been a very close one till 1954 when the chapel itself was organized as a congregation of the Reformed Church in America. Not only did the Sunday school now have extra space to meet, but also the Helping Hand Society had a place to gather.

The chapel addition was formally opened on Tuesday evening, May 15, 1901. Mr. Wm. Acken, superintendent of the Sunday school offered a prayer, the Rev. J. G. Mason of Metuchen preached the sermon, and the Rev. Stevenson read a paper of thanks. Appropriate remarks were made by other people present, and the benediction was pronounced by Rev. Searle. An interesting story about Mr. Wm. Acken, a member of the Reformed Church in Metuchen and superintendent of the Sunday school at Grace Chapel comes down to us. Mr. Acken lived in Metuchen, but in spite of the fact that trolley cars were available, he walked from his home to Bonhamtown because he did not want anyone to work for him on the Sabbath.

It seems that World War I was something of a divide in the life and activities of Grace Chapel. Before the war the Sunday school was unquestionably the most important part of Grace Chapel. Classes were held every Sunday afternoon at three for an hour, while church services were only conducted once per month for the people of Bonhamtown. Not everyone came to the services of worship. The attendance was at most twenty-five, and that not very often. But the attendance in the Sunday school was an entirely different story. Just a little before World War I, beginning in 1912, a student

from the Reformed Church Seminary in New Brunswick, by the name of Joseph P. Putnam, was able to build up the membership in the Sunday school to 125. Mr. Putnam rode his bicycle from New Brunswick to Bonhamtown for the weekend and visited the people of Bonhamtown in their homes, encouraging the children to come to Sunday school. He found his way to the dinner tables of the people also and seems to have been a frequent guest in the home of the family Clausen. Everyone of whatever Christian persuasion came to the Sunday school.

In this way the Sunday school increased considerably in students and teachers alike inspite of the setbacks of World War I, so that after the war also the church services were held more frequently. There was no choir then and no organ, but a piano served very well while ministers from the area and students from the seminary in New Brunswick faithfully supplied the pulpit. The minister from the now extinct Reformed Church in Oak Tree was a frequent preacher at these services. All this worked together, of course, towards that day in 1954 when Grace Chapel itself became an organized congregation within the Reformed Church in America.

The organization of the Sunday school remained much the same over the years. A number of superintendents served the Sunday school faithfully. Classes were usually kept small if teachers were available. The curriculum materials that were used, as a rule came from the Reformed Church's Headquarters in New York City and was of the usual standard type in magazine form. Even though at this time the new method of teaching had found its way into the Sunday school and although the material up to a point was graded for the different age levels, much more emphasis was placed on memorization than is today. Bible verses especially were to be known by heart. This showed up, e.g., in the Christmas and Easter programs. Sometimes the Sunday school endeavored a little scene or a little play, but as a rule the children came forward and one by one recited their memorized verse as they stood on a little platform constructed for the occasion in front of the chapel. A decorated cedar tree served as Christmas tree, except, of course, for Easter, when hyacinths decorated the chapel. The flowers were then given to the children after the service. At Christmas the children were delighted to receive some hard candy and a game. Also the teachers gave their students a little personal gift.

Of course, there were no cars then to bring the children. They came walking, rain or shine or snow, and the big potbelly stove saw to it that clothes were dry again before going home. So eager the students were to come that often they even came when sick so that they would not be counted absent and miss their reward pin at the end of the Sunday school year. That also was the time when they would go on picnics and names like Boyden Beach, Deaamlad Park, Olympia Park, Willow Grove Park and Palisades Park still ring a bell with some of our people. We were told that it was not only the very young who came eagerly and faithfully. Mrs. Mabel Dudling Shaffer attended Sunday school for twenty-five years without missing one Sunday and received an orchid with her 25th pin, while in 1952 Mrs. Mabel Fisher received a pine for twenty-five years of perfect attendance at church.

Since the Sunday school was flourishing in the 1920's and church services were more frequent, more people began to find their way from the Sunday school into the church. For communion services the people went to the Metuchen Reformed Church, but catechism classes were already being conducted by ministers of neighboring churches or students from the Seminary at Grace Chapel and began to be a kind of extension of the Sunday school. Whereas first the Sunday school presented the students with a Bible after they were able to recite certain things like the Ten Commandments, the books of the Bible, etc., now the Bibles were being presented to the students of the catechism class.

With the increase of students by 1920 there also was a need for more room as only the chapel and the Ford room were available. Even though the space was economically used by partitioning it with hanging curtains, it could not contain the growing number of people. The situation was taken up with the trustees of the Reformed Church in Metuchen by the representative of Grace Chapel. Grace Chapel always has been represented on this board. Miss Martha Amanda Ross served in that capacity until her death and was succeeded by Mrs. Gertrude Clausen End. In 1938 Mrs. Henrietta (Walter K.) Clausen Wood was named and served till 1954 when Grace Chapel became a congregation of the Reformed Church in its own right. But we are getting ahead of our story.

As more space was needed by the 1920's, the trustees

granted permission for another room, and so the Edgar room was built, a spacious room with a usable basement for bathrooms and more classroom space. It was given the name Edgar because it was largely financed by M. I. R. Edgar. The room has beautiful acoustics and is used today as a rehearsal room for the choirs. It also serves for meetings and small receptions and in the past has housed kindergarten classes for the Edison Public Schools.

During World War II the Sunday school had a difficult time as the war effort was calling many people away from Bonhamtown as everywhere else. Teachers were not always easy to come by and the seminary in New Brunswick could not supply us with student help. At the time Mrs. Henrietta (Walter K.) Clausen Wood was superintendent and with the help of the Rev. Harry Ver Strate, minister of the Reformed Church in Metuchen, the activities of Grace Chapel were helped along.

The formation of Grace Reformed Church was an outgrowth of a dream of the Westervelt family. At the time of the building of the chapel, the Westervelts had directed that, should ever a church be formed out of Grace Chapel, the deed was to be turned over to the church. And so it happened.

After World War II, the Sunday school flourished again, and religious services could again be held on a regular basis. The Helping Hand Society increased its activities again. In short, things were on the up. Beginning November 1, 1953, the Helping Hand Society underwrote weekly preaching services, and Mr. William Arthur Downs, a student at the seminary in New Brunswick who in September of that year had become the superintendent of the Sunday school, also was engaged now as student pastor. Consistent progress was made, and the Classis of New Brunswick was requested to make Grace Chapel a congregation within the Reformed Church of America. All along the Helping Hand Society was having its affairs to help with the necessary funds. On May 9, 1954, an organizational meeting was held in which seventy-four charter members were received along with twenty-one adherents, a total number of ninety-five. Grace Chapel became the 19th congregation within the Classis of New Brunswick. The consistory was installed on June 6, 1954. The first consistory meeting was June 7, 1954. The members were: Elders-Doary Nau, William Nagy, William

E. Clausen, and Henry Clausen; Deacons-Earl Johannson, Leroy Clausen, Stephen Pastor and Harold Vreeland Jr.

In a meeting on January 25, 1955 the consistory passed a motion that we be known officially as Grace Reformed Church. In February 1956 the building of a spacious seven room parsonage was begun on the property donated by Mr. Otto Johanns at 563 Old Post Road. The building was almost entirely done by volunteer labor from members and friends of the church, and many materials were donated. Again the members of the Helping Hand Society did their part in raising funds by means of auctions and bazaars. In December 1956 the parsonage was completed and dedicated at an open house. The following month as Mr. Downs had completed his work at the seminary, the Rev. Downs became the first regularly installed minister of the Grace Reformed Church in Bonhamtown. The service, attended by about four hundred people, was held in the Reformed Church in Metuchen at which time the Reverend Downs was presented with a robe from the members of Grace Church. On November 14, 1958 the Rev. Downs left Grace Church and became the minister of the Reformed Church in Willingboro, New Jersey.

On May 15, 1959, the Rev. Robert G. Bender was installed as the new minister of Grace Church. During his ministry a spacious new educational building was erected. Groundbreaking ceremonies took place on May 21, 1961. The completed building was dedicated on March 25, 1962. The downstairs classrooms are built around a central room for worship and activities. The upstairs consists of a large social hall with a kitchen. Again, the Helping Hand Society was most helpful with fundraising affairs. As we already mentioned, when the parking lot was contracted to be paved on March 17, 1964, it also was the Helping Hand Society that paid the bill.

On February 2, 1969, the Rev. Bender left us to become the minister of another church. The Rev. Dennis L. Baker was with us as minister from March 18, 1970 till June 15, 1971. At present the Rev. Gerard Van Dyk serves our church as Stated Supply and was installed in that function in September 1971. A new Allen Digital Computer Organ was dedicated "to the glory of God and in honor of past and present members" in a special service on March 3, 1974.

And so we have come to the end of our story. And yet, as we stop writing the story goes on, being carried into the future by all the people of Grace Church together. We are grateful for the past and to the people who lived in and around Bonhamtown. They heard and learned the story of God's love in Christ for the world at Grace Chapel and passed it on. As we follow them, may future generations write our story and find cause for rejoicing.

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Newspaper Clippings

Personal Interviews

JCC to celebrate Purim next week

EDISON — The Jewish Community Center will celebrate the holiday of Purim with a variety of activities.

On Tuesday, Feb. 26, a volunteer group of seniors and youngsters in a 4-year-old program will bake hamantaschen together. All youngsters enrolled in preschool classes at the JCC can come to school in Purim costumes and participate in a mini-carnival during school hours. There will be games, prizes and refreshments.

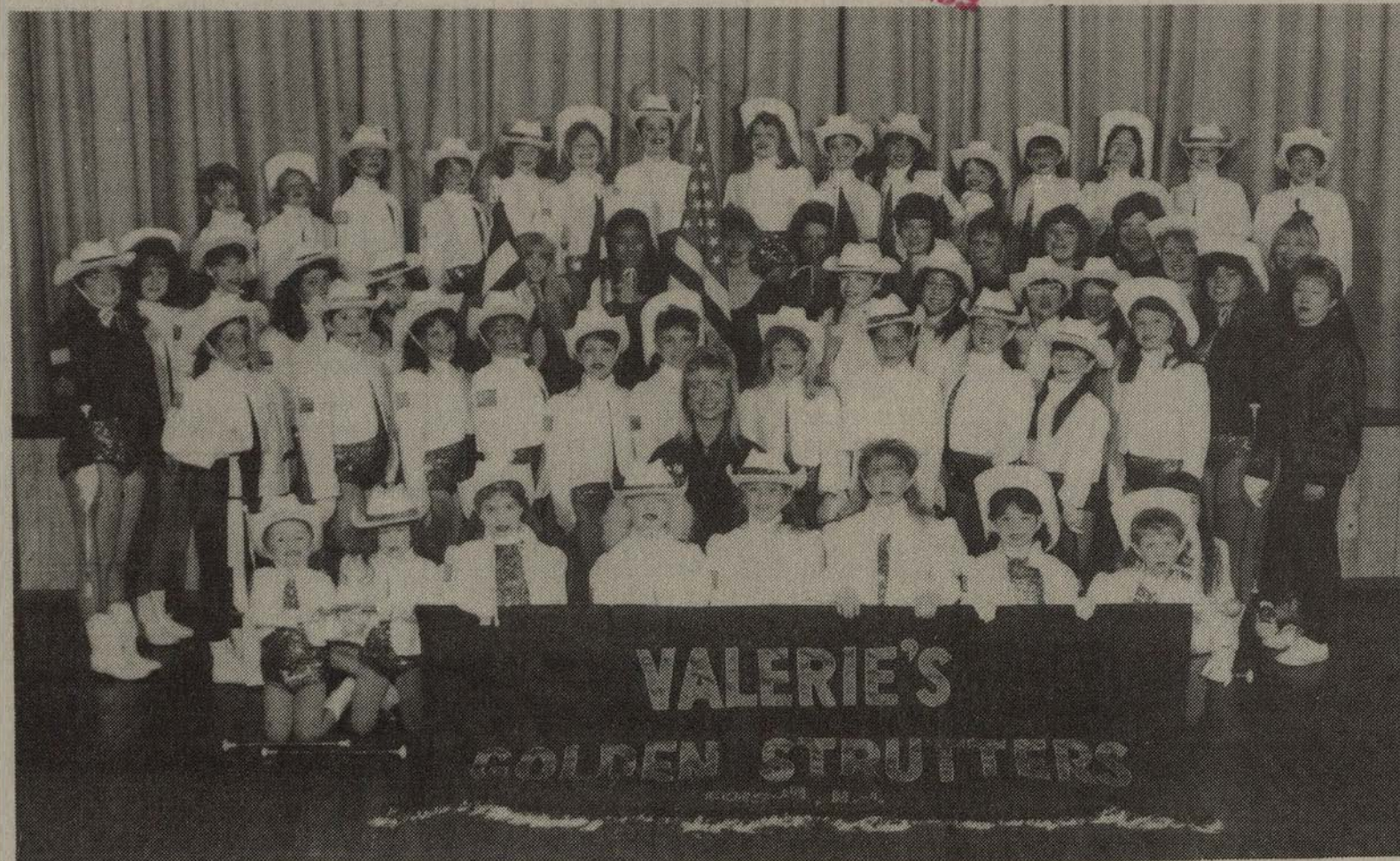
In addition, a cooperative program with the Chabad House of Edison will feature the Small Wonder Puppet Theatre in a special new show on Monday, Feb. 19 at 6:30 p.m. in the gym. The puppet show will be followed by singing, dancing, a raffle prize and refreshments.

Tickets cost \$1 for members and \$2 for non-members. Tickets can be purchased in advance at the JCC.

Fish and chips on dinner menu

METUCHEN — St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Route 27 and Oak Avenue, will hold its annual fish and chips dinner on Saturday, March 2, from 5 to 7 p.m. in the auditorium of the church's Fryer Hall.

Tickets are \$7 for adults and \$3.50 for children 12 years and under. Tickets are available at the church.



Valerie's Golden Strutters earned a total of seven team awards and many individual honors at recent championships held in Trenton.

Golden Strutters win six top-team awards

EDISON — Valerie's Golden Strutters won six of seven team divisions entered at the recent New Jersey State National Baton Twirling Association Championships, held at Steinhert High School, Trenton.

The 25-member team won first-place honors in the beginner tiny tot small, beginner tiny tot large, beginner juvenile small and beginner juvenile large divisions.

strut champ, ages 7-9; Heather Shamy of Edison, state military second place, ages 7-9; Danielle Plyler of Edison, state modeling second place, ages 10-12; Shannon Fitzmorris of Edison, state modeling champ, ages 10-12; and Laura Mann of Edison, open modeling second place, ages 10-12.

In the novice division: Kim Barrett of Edison, state solo champ, ages 10-12; Heather Shamy of Edison, state duo champ, ages 10-12; and Heather Shamy of Edison, state trio champ, ages 10-12.

open solo second place, ages 10-12.

All of the girls at Valerie's School of Baton and Dance, Edison, are under the direction of Valerie Kuntz Vitale, a past champion herself. Vitale received the 1990 All-East Regional Eastie Award, which recognizes achievement in the development of baton twirling.

Bishop Ahr High School to host confab on renewal

EDISON — Two internationally known speakers, the Rev. Real "Ray" Bourque and Walter Matthews, will address the 1991 New Jersey Charismatic Conference to be held next weekend, March 1-3, at Bishop George Ahr High School.

Bourque has been involved with radio ministry since 1979, television since 1984, a world mission outreach and conferences in the United States, Haiti and Tahiti. He has served on the Eastern Service Committee for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and the Charismatic Renewal National Advisory Board.

Matthews is associate director of the National Service Committee of the Charismatic Renewal in the United States and has served

in various leadership positions in the renewal for more than 17 years. In April 1990, Pope John Paul II appointed Matthews to a five-year term as a member of the Pontifical Council for the Laity.

Highlighting the weekend will be talks by these main speakers on the conference theme "Learn From Me." More than 24 workshops also will be offered, including some in Spanish. Liturgies will be conducted in both English and Spanish. A bookstore, a penance service, prayers for healing and a concert will be among other features.

For further information write to the New Jersey Charismatic Conference, P.O. Box 202, Morris Plains, 07950, or call 644-2643.

Register soon for 'Storyhour'

EDISON — Registration in person or by phone will begin Monday, Feb. 25, for "Preschool Storyhour" at the Edison Public Library branches.

Storyhour, which will meet in four week sessions, will feature stories, games, songs and simple crafts for children 3½ to 5 years old. Kindergartners are not eligible.

Registration is limited and open to township residents only. Sessions will be as follows:

— In the Main Library, Plainfield Avenue, on Tuesdays, March 5-26, at 10:30 a.m.; and Wednesdays, March 6-27, at 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

— In the North Edison Branch, Grove Avenue, on Tuesdays, March 5-26, at 1:30 p.m.; Wednesdays, March 6-27, at 10:30 a.m.; and Thursdays, March 7-28, at 1:30 p.m.

— In the Glen Rock Branch, Hoover Avenue, on Wednesdays, March 7-28, at 10:30 a.m.

Edison: Churches

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February 22, 1991 — ME REVIEW — A-5

Growth brought new church to Oak Tree section

By David C. Sheehan

The year was 1966, and Edison Township was experiencing another period of growth. The new growth area in the 32-square-mile community was in the Oak Tree neighborhoods.

The year was 1966 and in the midst of all this development, the world saw Charles DeGaulle begin his second seven-year term as France's leader; Indira Nehru Gandhi take office as the new prime minister of India; the Soviet Union's Luna 9 make its soft landing on the moon; Iraq's new president Major General Abdul Rahman Arif take office; Gemini 9 make a 46-orbit journey; Medicare begin; the New York Herald Tribune cease publication; the new minimum wage set at \$1.60 an hour; the Baltimore Orioles defeat the Los Angeles Dodgers in the World Series; and Harold Alley become the new principal of Edison Township's John P. Stevens High School.

It was Feb. 27, 1966, and "The Service of Organization of the Oak Tree Presbyterian Church" is held at the Oak Tree School, Edison, the new congregation's usual house of worship, as reported in the church's records.

The service was attended by congregants and no fewer than 10 area ministers, including the Rev. Chester M. Davis, pastor emeritus of the First Presbyterian Church of Rahway and initial organizing pastor of Oak Tree Mission and the Rev. Joseph Fowler of Community Presbyterian Church, Edison.

Mention is made of Alley and Fowler because of the integral roles they played in the organizing of Oak Tree Presbyterian.

Alley, then a resident of Edison's southern section and former principal of neighboring Highland Park High School, informed his pastor, Fowler, of his intent to relocate in North Edison. Fowler suggested that Alley investigate the development of a new Presbyterian congregation to serve the expanding Oak Tree area of town. Assisted also by Metuchen's First Presbyterian Church, the Oak Tree Presbyterian community took its "first steps" in 1961.

Situated in the Oak Tree section of Edison at that time was the Marconnier Reformed Church. Part of the "Survey and Conversations" process of the development of the new congregation included talks with that church to possibly form a "United Protestant Effort." Marconnier later sold its church building, and it was converted to its present-day use as the Edison Valley Playhouse.

Congregation to celebrate 25th anniversary this year

The progress of the founders was revealed in the arrival of Dr. Chester M. Davis, the first worship service and the first steering committee meeting which were held in September 1963. Coupled with these milestones was the formation of the senior choir under the direction of Mrs. Daniel Grow.

February 1964 saw the issuance of Oak Tree's first newsletter. In that same month, the congregation's communion service was presented and used for the first time. Soon, the need for a pre-school nursery was discovered and started in the Community Hall in North Edison Gardens by Mrs. Chester M. Davis and women of the congregation.

In the spring of 1964, the new church's building fund was officially designated in a new savings account with a balance of \$1,013.38. Further, by May 1964, the Property Committee proposed and completed the purchase of the Church House at 5 Branford Road and the church site on Plainfield Road.

The congregation, in the summer of 1964, held its first Family Picnic, formed its Junior Choir, and it later joined with Community Presbyterian Church for Thanksgiving services.

By 1965, a Petition of Organization was begun, further solidifying the new group as a true church culminating in 1966 with the approval by the Presbytery of Elizabeth of the church's charter. In recognition of its past, the Presbytery met at Oak Tree School for the signing of the charter. It was at Oak Tree School, too, where the Service of Organization of the Oak Tree Presbyterian Church was held.

The Rev. Robert Seaman was installed as the parish's first pastor. By 1966 the Marconnier Reformed Church merged with Oak Tree Church. The church history notes that the former Marconnier Reformed Church donated personal property to Oak Tree Church.

The start of a new church is an exciting and anxious moment for any congregation, and groundbreaking for Oak Tree Presbyterian Church was held in September 1967, at the church's

current site at 455 Plainfield Road. April 1968, marks the date of the first worship service in the new home.

A "Statement of Mission" was presented by Oak Tree's session in April 1969. It offers an excellent insight into not only the history of the church, but into its present and its future direction:

"A short time ago the particular community we serve was a non-community — a multi-racial, varied income level section of a sprawling township. There were people, houses, stores and schools. We organized to be a church which would serve this area well and become a vital center of its life. As members of a congregation, we, too, need a place to come together for worship, fellowship and continuing education, from which we could go out replenished into the community. Our congregation is a conglomerate: it is multi-racial; the median age is about 40-42 with aged persons represented and many youth; of wide-ranging incomes among its businessmen, professionals, laborers, retired persons, craftsmen and technicians. It is important to us to attract and retain these diverse elements within the congregation. Only then can this church be truly representative of the whole community."

The Rev. Jeffrey Chesebro became pastor of Oak Tree Presbyterian in February 1982. He continues to serve in that capacity.

Alley, a charter member of Oak Tree Presbyterian Church, related that, to him, "Oak Tree has always been an energetic congregation and has served as an inspiration ... to lead an improved life."

This year's 25th Anniversary celebrations will be an exciting period in the church's history.

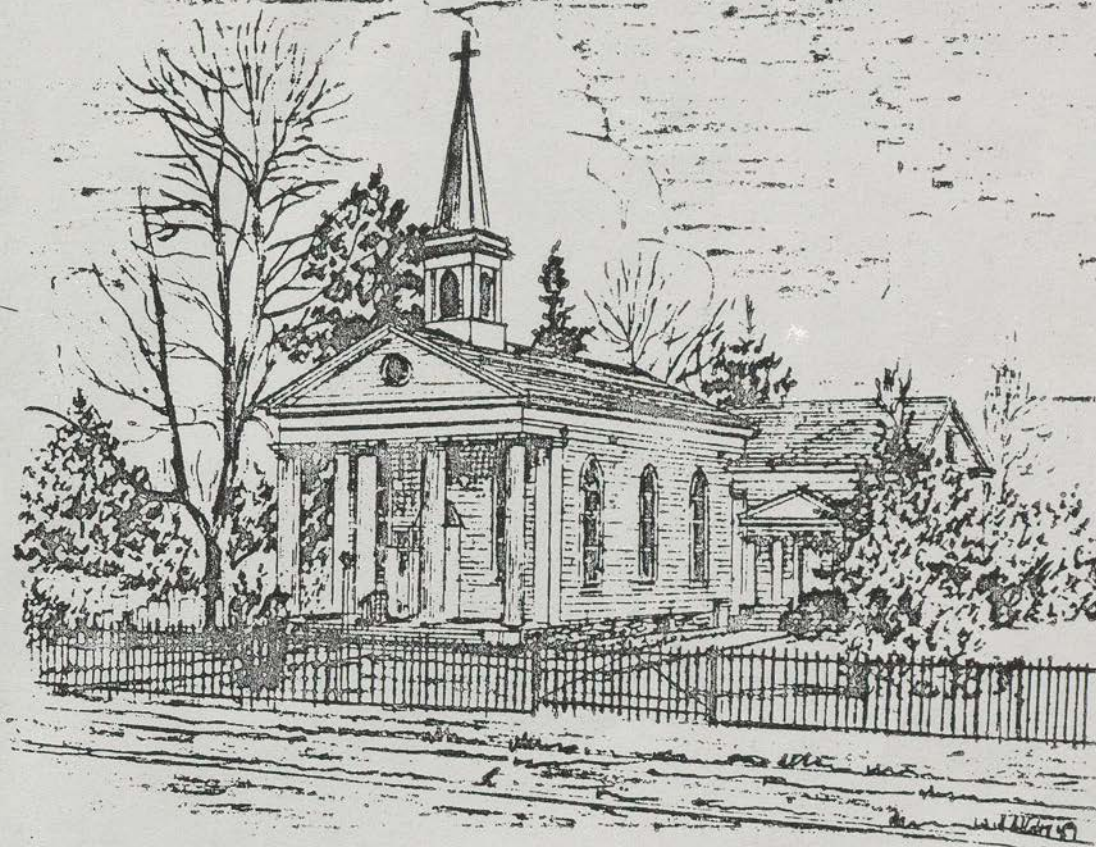
The church is situated on a wooded lot which compliments the cedar-shake siding of the inviting sanctuary and classroom complex. It is there that the parishioners will make plans to celebrate the anniversary appropriately. Most notable in their history is the church's concern and caring for its congregants and its dedication of service to the community.

David C. Sheehan is president and co-founder of the Edison Township Historical Society, and this article is one in a series by society members on the history of the area.

EDISON - CHURCHES
1978

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The Story of St. James' Church
Piscatawaytown, New Jersey
And The Neighborhood

FORWARD

From time to time the Rector of a Parish receives requests from members and other interested persons for a written history of the Parish. As we have entered upon our nation's Bicentennial Year these requests have become more frequent, especially as St. James' Church was one of the earliest colonial parishes of our diocese.

For some time two manuscripts have lain with the Parish records unseen and unread. Both of these were written by former Rectors of St. James' and tell the story of the Parish in Piscatawaytown (now Edison Township). Neither manuscript is dated, however, the dates can be approximated by the period of rectorship of these two priests of the Church.

It seemed appropriate at this time, both as a tribute to Doctor Gifford and Doctor Phillips and to those who played a part in the birth of our nation some 200 years ago, to publish these manuscripts. Hopefully they may also provide encouragement for some writer of history to update the written account of the Lord's work in St. James' Church.

Thanks are especially due to Mrs. Raymond (Helen) Frazee, a member of the parish, who typed the entire manuscripts with such slight editorial adjustments in the Gifford manuscript as was necessary to make it more easily followed.

(The Rev.) Clarence R. Waldron, Jr.

Edison, New Jersey
July 4, 1976

ERRATA

We regret that a few typographical errors managed to slip by. All should be obvious to the reader and it is necessary only to note:

Phillip's M/S - p. 5 - Par. 5 - line 9 - for "demond"
read "demand"

There would also seem to be two errors which need attention but are printed as they occurred in the Phillip's M/S:

- p. 8 - par. 3 - "Sunday July 4th" should no doubt read "Sunday, July 7th" as July 4, 1776 was a Thursday. This would then agree with the statement in the following paragraph that the churches were "shut from the 7th of July..."
- p. 13 - par. 1 - In the description of the Church property it should read "The Church owns a frontage of 90 feet by about 150 feet." This is in accord with the 1916 deed to the land. As the M/S the parish has is a carbon copy, this error and the one above may have been corrected on the original.

The Story of St. James' Church
Piscatawaytown, New Jersey and the Neighborhood

By The Rev. W. E. Phillips, Th. D.

Rector at St. James' Church - April 8, 1928
to
June 25, 1944

There is no literary history so far as I have discovered. The six volumed work of Dr. Orra Monette yields a great deal of information for the years 1664-1714. To arrive at some definite result, it is necessary to read the whole production, and tabulate the findings. The New Jersey Historical Society has much information available to the expert. Sprague's Annals of the American Pulpit, Volume V, yields an interesting survey if one knows what to look for. The Digest of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel has some references to Piscataway, but the information is very meagre and reference is made to the missionaries reports in the archives at Westminster, England.

I am fortunate in having the M/S of the late Dr. Henry Hale Gifford a former rector of St. James' Church, who left a great deal of information that needed careful editing and preparation before putting the results in a more permanent form.

Piscataway was originally, New Piscataqua, and later became Piscataqua and finally Piscatawaytown about the year 1830. English settlers from the Plantations of Piscataqua in New Hampshire, who had failed there partly owing to material and partly owing to spiritual difficulties, were attracted by the early reports given out concerning this part of Nova Ceasarea. An early report reads almost like the report of the optimistic spies who went to Canaan. Of course some who remained in New Hampshire could only anticipate the "giants", while others figuratively could measure the possibilities of the grapes and pomegranates.

Later came English and Scotch immigrants by way of Perth Amboy, who settled, some in Woodbridge; and others in Piscataqua. Not merely religious toleration, but complete religious liberty was the norm in New Jersey, and while it is untrue to say that in Piscataqua, Baptists and Church of England people live like the Prophet's Lion and the Lamb, in an idyllic religious companionship, they at least tolerated one another, and worked together for the benefit of the community.

On December 18th 1666, the first conveyance of land was made to John Martin, Charles Gilman, Hugh Dunn and Hopewell Hull. In 1675 Piscataqua had a charter for self-government and a County Court. Ten years later, the township which extended from the present Bound Brook to the boundary line of Fords extending thence to the River on the one hand and South Plainfield on the other, had four hundred inhabitants

In this locality now known as Piscatawaytown, lives in addition to the other people mentioned, the Drakes, Fitz Randolphs, Dunhams, Langstaffs, Runyons, Smalleys, Bonhams, Munday, Mannings and Stelles. About forty of their direct descendants are here today. Others are found in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Virginia and even as far abroad as the State of Washington.

An early report to the English Society named Piscataqua as "one of the considerable town of New Jersey", but entirely failed to live up to its promise. The small towns of Piscataqua and Woodbridge were entirely eclipsed by Perth Amboy, Elizabeth Town, and later still by Plainfield and New Brunswick.

Another deciding factor was the tendency of the younger generation to go further afield and make homes for themselves elsewhere.

Within one hundred years, the original families had representatives in Milford, New Jersey, and as far west as the present Frostburg in Maryland.

After the War of the Revolution, many joined the great trek westward and went to Virginia and Kentucky, where their descendants are today according to Dr. Monette.

I will here quote Orra Eugene Monette on this point; (Vol. 5 Page 6700):

"Piscataway and Woodbridge are unfamiliar terminology to many students even, and to searchers. They invite little curiosity and not much popularity in their appellatives. But when the picture of New Jersey settlements unfolds and the truth develops, as that much of the history and genealogy of the WESTWARD MOVEMENT, via New York, Pennsylvania (excepting its own German and Scotch Irish factors) Maryland, and somewhat of Virginia, into Kentucky and Ohio, no genealogist or historian can fail to appraise at its true worth this excursion and survey of American fundamentals, established and spread in early New Jersey, and through her establishment to the GREAT UNFOLDING WEST of the eighteenth century."

Interesting and historical landmarks are the foundation of the old Piscataqua Inn known for two hundred years as the Hopewell Hull Inn, the foundation of the Old Town House now on the Skewis lot in the Cemetery and the old St. James' Church known as the "White Church".

Unfortunately, as newer arrivals came, little attention was paid to the historicity of the past. Old places that should have been preserved, were ruthlessly destroyed. By 1876 few monuments of the past were left and by 1930, only the old Dunham House now owned by Samuel Winfield remained.

The church left exactly as it was in 1724, was rebuilt after a complete collapse during a tornado in 1836, and was reopened a year later, having been restored as it was, with much of its ancient material as the result of the beneficence of Captain Foulkes a wealthy merchant of New York City, who as a boy had worshipped there. The only alteration was the failure to restore the short gallery at the north end of the Church.

The original pulpit and floors and foundation beams and stones and above all, the old bell that came from Leeds in England were all saved, and are in the present edifice. The bell dates from the early eighteenth century; it is now cracked but still calls the worshippers as it did in Colonial Days. In the lower part of the steeple are to be found pieces of wood that according to a W. P. A investigator a few years ago, must have come from a local shipyard on the Raritan River, otherwise unknown but probably the old "Martin's Dock" at the river end of the Silver Lake Avenue.

Pictures of the Church and all measurements have found a place in the Congressional Library, and a few years ago, a photographer took pictures of the exterior and the interior for the New York Museum of Art.

The Cemetery is not part of the Church property; it is administered by a local Association, and is kept up by voluntary contributions that are not very extensive.

In the rear of the Church is the last resting place of some English and Scotch soldiers, thirty-three in number, who were either slain in a skirmish a half mile east of the Church, or who died of wounds or sickness during the six months from December 1776 to June 1777 when the Church was turned into a barracks by the British. It is popularly believed that the Church was a hospital; but Dr. Abraham Beach in his report distinctly asserts that the Church was used as a barracks.

The first church organization was that of the Baptists, who began about the third quarter of the seventeenth century to organize a church with at the first six members; that grew to about twenty members when a split occurred with regard to the observance of the Sabbath Day, which brought into being the Seventh Day Baptists, who have a following in New Market to this day.

Gradually, other settlers came from Britain and among them were men from England, some of whom at least had belonged to the Church of England. Reference is made in manuscript to a Mr. Antill "a respectable laymen."; who seems to have conducted Church of England Services in his own home.

The town of Piscataway to use its present name, succeeded an Indian settlement. The charter came in 1667 (vide Monette Vol. 1, Page 36). In 1673 Piscataway was for a short period in the hands of the Dutch authorities (ibid p 36), and the settlers by virtue of an oath of allegiance became Dutch subjects and in some cases Dutch officials. The town for this period was known as Piscataqua Corp.

Dr. Orra Monette disputes the statement made by William H. Benedict (New Brunswick in History, 1925) that Piscataway began in 1667 and with regard to historical accuracy asserts that the date should be 1664.

The old Town House one of the first edifices in Piscataway was used indifferently by various religious families, for at an early date there were found here, Quakers, Seventh Day Baptists, and what have been referred to by the Rev. George Keith in 1704 as "Euthchians". These all had a free right to the Town House, and in addition, such meetings as were needed for the civil well-being of the community were all held in this place.

In the middle of the eighteenth century the old Town House fell into decay, and it is probable that its boards and timbers found harborage elsewhere, in the houses of inhabitants.

For one hundred years up to 1929, the site of the Town House had been lost to record, until the present writer in conversation with Mr. Oscar Martin, now a man of ninety years of age, related the fact that his grandfather told him, that he helped to remove the remains of the foundation "the old Town House". Thus it is, we are able now to locate the site of that ancient building as being in a place adjoining the "Skewis" lot in Piscataway Cemetery, on the northwest corner about sixty feet from the street.

The Cemetery with its ancient tombs dating from 1693 are well known. The grave of "Richard and Charles Hoopar"(sic), who died of poisoning, have been referred to historically over and over again; until at last a record is found in the Library of Congress with a portrait of the ancient tomb.

There is another grave stone not so well known lying not far distant north of the Hoopar Grave; but is is impossible to decipher the inscription; only the date 1693 remains. Obviously it is the stone of an adult grave; was there laid to rest here the mother of the boys-fancy lingers; but fanciful speculation is not history.

The Rev. George Keith seems to have been the first clergyman of the Church of England to hold services in this neighborhood. Mr. Keith was educated at the University of Aberdeen, where he received the degree of M.A. His early religious life was peculiar.

In early life he seems to have broken with the Presbyterians to become a member of the Society of Friends.

From his early writings as a Quaker were many strictures against the Church of England that were quoted as an argument why he should not be accepted by the English Bishops as a candidate for Holy Orders.

In 1685 George Keith arrived in New Jersey as Surveyor General and ran the dividing line between East and West Jersey. He founded and lived in for a time, the village of Freehold.

In 1689, Keith removed to Philadelphia and became the head of a large school. Not only so, but he entered into an aerimonious debate, oral and written with the followers of John Fox, many of whom he accused as mere Deists and as being false exemplars of the life and doctrine of true Friends. A small sect who followed him were called "Keithians" (see H.H.Gifford M/s).

George Keith as a clergyman of the Church of England settled down and became a model missionary. It is true that he definitely set to work to win man and women from the way of the Friends, and brought many into the Church of England; but his plan and method was definitely that of a missionary. He it was who largely laid the foundations of the work of the Church of England in the East. That work was ably seconded by his one time assistant John Talbot, who has been referred to as the Anglican "Apostle to New Jersey". Had there been no Keith, one many doubt whether or not there would have been so distinguished a John Talbot of Burlington and district.

George Keith had spoken favorably of "Piscataqua" as one of the "considerable towns of New Jersey" in his recommendations to the S.P.G. in London. From 1702 to 1704, Keith held services here, as his itinerary permitted. His first sermon in 1702 in Piscataway was from Romans x:6-9. Keith travelled from New Hampshire to Caratuck in S.C., and travelled over 800 miles; (see Keith's Journal pub in first vol. of the collections of the Episcopal Historical Society in 1851).

In Mr. Mellick's "Story of an old Farm" it is stated that Queen Anne granted a charter to the Wardens and Congregation of St. James' Episcopal Church, when the Rev. John Brooke became the regular missionary in Piscataqua. In 1705, (November 23) he wrote as follows to the English Society: "I have gathered a large congregation"; he refers to the absence of the "Independent Minister", with the result that his congregation had increased and that a "regular minister, not a Scotchman" should be sent to them.

The Rev. John Brooke lost his life at sea in 1707, when in company with the Rev. Mr. Moore of Burlington, they had set sail for England with the intention of placing before the Bishop of London, the tyrannical acts of Lord Cornbury. Both clergymen had denounced this cousin of Queen Anne, for his immoralities and impieties and both had been made to feel the ire of the nobleman, who was Royal Governor of New York. Missionaries seem to have remained only for comparatively short periods. As neighborhoods developed, the demand was in advance of the supply, and calls were being received from Connecticut to Georgia, and as far west as Philadelphia and the new settlements of Maryland.

In 1711 the current missionary the Rev. Thomas Halliday wrote that Piscataqua "makes a greater congregation than Amboy and there are some pious and well disposed persons among them.

Some come from good distances to the meeting, but there is nothing among us like the face of the Church of England; no surplice, no Bible, no Communion Tables, an old broken house insufficient to keep us from the injuries of the weather". This no doubt is a reference to the Town House, which seemingly must have had little attention during the years of its existence.

On December 24th, 1714, the Parish of St. James, Piscataqua entered into full organization. The first Vestry was made up of James Barron, a prominent local man, Thomas Wetherell one of the early settlers as Wardens, with Robert Webster a Proprietor in 1669, Charles Glover, Hopewell Hull, Jr., whose father was known in Piscataqua as early as 1666, and was deputy to the General Assembly in 1675, Henry Langstaff whose descendants James, John and John, Jr., were delegates to nearly all the Conventions of the Diocese of New Jersey from 1785 to 1817; Samuel Walker, an early settler and member of a party that came in 1689, John Jennings, William Olden and Samuel Royce.

Barron agreed to build a timber church; floored, plastered and provided with a "decent Communion Table and Pulpit" for the sum of One Hundred Pounds. The letter sent to the S.P.G. asserts: "We are a people who are only the beginning of a Country. The township is ten miles long, and ten miles broad, contains but one hundred families, and not more than ten of these families truly affected to the Church or live a convenient distance for giving constant attendance on the "Lord's Day.

From 1722 to 1758, William Skinner, a Scotchman, was appointed to the district, with headquarters at Perth Amboy. The previous objection to a Scotchman was apparently not in the fact itself, but in the difficulty of becoming accustomed to the Scotch "burr"

In Amboy, owing to the increasing influx of the Scotch, it became a matter of good policy to have a Scotchman there. William Skinner did excellent work; he wrote during his first year as follows: "The Congregation at Piscataqua also grows daily, and they are now building a church. In all probability the congregation will be as numerous as any in these parts".

In 1724 what was described in the S.P.G record as "a handsome wooden chapel" was completed.

Confirmations of the Baptized there were none as no Bishop of the English Church ever visited the Colonies. A few people of means went to England for Confirmation truly; but there is no record of anyone from this locality having done so. A few from Britain of course would have been Confirmed there. However, in 1724 there were but nineteen communicants; in 1741 as many as two hundred would attend the Services when held in the Church. On Christmas Day 1748, the communicants numbered forty-five.

In 1742 a report to the Society in London reads as follows: "The People of Piscataqua and New Brunswick are marking out a place for a new church about two miles from the old one". In 1754, Samuel Seabury, fated to be the first American Bishop of the Episcopal Church in the United States of America, began his short ministry of ten months at Christ Church, New Brunswick. He preached in St. James Church two or three times, and thus began that corporate connection between Christ Church and St. James' Church that lasted to the end of the Incumbency of Dr. Joyce, who while Rector of Christ Church, was elected Rector of St. James' Church by the Vestry of 1880.

It can hardly be that the effects of the Great Awakening failed to touch Piscataqua. George Whitefield had preached the Gospel in New Brunswick, while the labors of Theodore Frelinghusen and Gilbert Tennant must have left their mark. The only clues as to the effect here lie in the fact that the communicant numbers grew and that an amicable arrangement was made by which Anglicanism in Piscataqua was bound to diminish while that of New Brunswick was just as certain to increase.

From 1758 to 1763, The Rev. Robert Mc Kean was the local missionary, who served the two Churches of the neighborhood. There is not a great deal here on record with reference to his ministry.

From 1763 to 1766, St. James' Piscataway was served by the Rev. Leonard Cutting, whose previous experience had been unusual to say the least. He was a graduate of Pembroke College, Cambridge, and after graduation in 1747 arrived in the Colonies as a free passenger but indentured to repay the expenses of his journey. As a "redemptioner" the captain had the right to sell his claim to whomever he would. His first work was in Virginia, where his health was not of the best. By chance a lady from Monmouth County visiting the employer, arranged to have the claim transferred to her. While so engaged, the Anglican Missionary, Rev. Samuel Cooke, passed that way and instructed the neophyte how to cut down a tree without endangering himself or the lives or limbs of passers-by. Samuel Cooke and Leonard Cutting had been fellow students at Cambridge University. Mr. Cooke laid the circumstances before the President of King's College, New York and the Rector of Trinity Church. As a result Leonard Cutting was elevated from the position of Plantation worker to that of Classical Tutor. In the year 1758 King's College conferred on Cutting the degree of M.A. After some instruction by the interested New York Clergy, Leonard Cutting was sent to England for ordination, and returned to serve St. James' Church which then had been annexed to the daughter Church of Christ Church, New Brunswick.

The letters of Leonard Cutting to the Society are most hopeful, and show no intimation of the struggle that should come later.

The Rev. Abraham Beach followed Cutting and remained in charge of St. James', Piscataway, until 1784. Abraham Beach was a congregationalist originally, but with many young Yale graduates of the period, found his ultimate spiritual home in the Anglican Church. Throughout his life, he maintained correct and cordial relations with the Ministers of other Churches, both socially and when his duties brought him into direct relationship with them. At the age of 27, after theological training, Abraham Beach journeyed to England in 1767, and was there ordained Deacon and Priest, and in September of that year, returned to New Brunswick with the oversight and pastoral care also, of St. James' Piscataway. His ministry was happily blessed until the dispute between the Colonists and the Mother Country became acute.

Although an American, Abraham Beach could not feel justified in throwing off all allegiance to Britain, and therein he suffered as could be expected.

On Sunday July 4th, 1776, Beach was in St. James' Church, Piscataway, when he was challenged by a soldier, who declared that his safety could not be assured if he prayed for the King.

The following extract from Dr. Beach's own letter will show the situation. "In these circumstances, I thought it advisable to shut the church for the present, than to violate the Declaration I subscribed before the Bishop at my ordination, the oath of allegiance I then took, and the natural feelings of my own mind. My churches were accordingly shut from the 7th of July to the 8th of December; since which time I have officiated altogether at New Brunswick, the church at Piscataqua being at present occupied as a barrack for part of the forty-second regiment. The farmers in this neighborhood seem to have been antagonistic to the British. I have read an ancient book in the possession of one of my parishioners without title or author's name, that refers to the shocking depredations of certain troops that pillaged and destroyed in a heartless way. No wonder that a detachment of troops were required to watch those capable of bearing arms!"

At the second depression on the road to Raritan Arsenal, after leaving the church on the east side, is the site of a smart skirmish that took place between the King's Troops and a detachment of Jersey militia men. The troops made up of the 42nd foot and the Royal Highland Regiment were beaten back, and threw up a redoubt facing the Old Post Road immediately in front of the north side of the Church. In my own day, grape shot have been dug up in the Rectory garden. The militia took position two hundred yards from the Church, but were forced to retire when two guns were hurried up from New Brunswick, which outranged and smothered the fire from the flintlocks.

As it was, thirty British Troops were killed or subsequently died of their wounds, and were buried simply by having the earthworks or breastworks turned in upon them. The breastworks, or rather distinct evidences of them, were visible

here up to 1910, when the cemetery was cleaned-up and levelled. The place of the sepulture ranges from one yard to the east of the church six feet from the railing, to the extremity of the Cotheal tomb.

During the period of the War, services largely went by default. From 1784 to 1794 occasional services were held by the Rev. Messrs. Rowland, Ogilvie and Henry Van Dyke. From this period, the history of Piscataway is that largely of a rural constituency. The possibility of the village becoming a town of any size, seemed quite remote. In addition however, little attempt was made to preserve an historical record. Books, that were not thrown into cellars to moulder away in the damp, were either taken away to be forgotten, or were destroyed as having no value. The present record of St. James' Church goes no further than 1825.

The old Hull Inn, the last remnant of which was pulled down when the present rectory was built, braved the battle and the breeze for many years. Here it was that George Washington is said to have stopped for a brief period of refreshment on his retreat from Newark to the Delaware, according to John Martin, Sr., who was a contemporary (quoted by Monette). Tory irregular cavalry passed through the place more than once either under pressure from patriot militia or on a punitive raid ending at Newmarket.

It is probable that not everyone in this neighborhood was loyal to the American cause. In talking with William (Fitz) Randolph who died in the year 1933 in Piscataway, I learned that the house lying close to the Raritan River bank on the right or Piscataway side of the Victory Bridge, is the old homestead of the Fitzrandolphins, although now in other hands. He also stated that he had it upon the authority of his grandfather, that "the rebels" during the Revolution had a picket in the lower or basement part of the house, while the remainder of the family lived in the rooms upstairs.

Captain John Randolph fought on the American side, lost his life in the War and is buried in St. John's Cemetery in Elizabeth.

At various times in addition to the clergy previously mentioned, the Rev. John Henry Hobart, later afterwards the Bishop of New York, officiated several times at St. James', Piscataway; this was in 1799, when for one year, Dr. Hobart was the Rector of Christ Church, New Brunswick.

The Rev. Messrs. Uzal Ogden (one of the few clergy who remained at their posts during the War, also ministered here, with at other times the Rev. Messrs. Holmes, Dunn and Ward. Unfortunately, there is nothing left on record here as to their work. The authority for the mere statement is the Rev. William Douglass, who entered later into their labors.

Several sermons with dates in the handwriting of Bishop Croes, The first Bishop of New Jersey, are in the Library of Rutgers University. Several of these were preached by the Bishop, before and after he was consecrated to the office and ministry.

In 1825 he seems to have taken full responsibility for the ministrations at St. James' Church. His connection with Rutgers through the Preparatory School is a matter of history.

Following this Ministry was that of the Rev. William Douglas, who was rector from 1829 to 1838. It was during his pastorate that the disastrous tornado of 1837 struck this neighborhood. Following the Revolutionary War, the Church was cleansed and repaired, and made suitable for Divine Service after the ill use by the British soldiery. Again in 1829, the building was repaired and a west gallery was added. There could not have been much money available here, for the necessary funds were collected in New York by the Rector and a member of the congregation, one Eliphalet Ketcham. Three hundred dollars were collected at this time, in addition to local funds, the extent of which is unknown.

In 1835, on June 19th, a fierce wind came up, which by five O'clock in the evening had reached the nature of a "violent tornado" to use the words of a contemporary.

Many houses in Piscataway were entirely destroyed; but it is curious to relate that the old Dunham House one hundred and fifty yards E.S.E. of the Church and the Old Hopewell Inn seventy-five yards N. NE. of the Church passed through unscathed. The Church must have stood in the direct path of the storm; for the roof was dismantled, and the walls partially collapsed and fell in upon the flooring. On May 11th 1837, the Church, fully restored, was re-dedicated and re-opened by Bishop G. W. Doane.

On August 1st 1837, the Rev. Frederick Ogilby became the missionary here, combining with that work the oversight of St. Paul's Church, Rahway and Trinity Church, Woodbridge. It is of interest to learn that the former was abandoned a few months later owing to lack of interest.

Mr. Ogilby accepted a call at the same time to become assistant at Grace Church, New York. The Rev. John D. Ogilby, Professor of Greek and Latin at Rutgers College supplied St. James' Church gratuitously, providing Sunday Services here, and a week night service at Woodbridge.

On October 1st, 1838 we find the Rev. Frederick Ogilby back again as Rector of the united Parishes of St. James', Piscataway and Trinity Church, Woodbridge, when both congregations had agreed to pay him the princely sum of \$550 per annum. He remained here for three years. His ministry must have been effective, as on Easter Sunday, April 21st, 1878, the Vestry of St. James' Church spread the following upon the Minutes:

We the wardens and vestrymen of St. James Piscataway in Vestry assembled.....wish to place on record a Memorial of the well-remembered services of the late Dr. Fred Ogilby in this venerable parish from 1839 to 1842.

Dr. Ogilby is not yet forgotten in our midst; and

although many have died who enjoyed his ministrations, there are still many who remember with respectful gratitude his kindly, genial and efficient work in this scene of his earliest labors. We respectfully tender to his family the heartfelt sympathy of his old friends and parishioners of many years ago, with earnest prayers for their present and future happiness, and in sure and steady hope for him and for his of all the Blessed gifts of the last and most glorious Easter.

Signed: Wm. N. Smith
Benjamin Ellison - Wardens
John Connaway
Edmund Allen
John Lindstead - Vestrymen
John T. Martin- Secy. of Vestry

This simple language gives us some ides of the unostontatious piety of men who grew up when the nineteenth century was still young.

From the resignation of the Rev. Frederick Ogilby, until 1873, various ministers officiated here, largely owing to the kind interest of Dr. Stubbs of Christ Church, New Brunswick. One ominous and stray reference informs us that at one time during this period, the communicant list numbered one soul. It is quite probable that the growing troubles concerning abolition and the strain of the Civil War had much to do with this. The records for thirty years are scanty indeed. One notable ministry was that of the Rev. Isaac Smith, whose tomb lies at the south end of the Church with that of his Wife. Mr. Smith working in conjunction with Dr. Stubbs here, rendered faithful service; his records are the neatest and best, until Dr. Joyce took charge. The Rev. Isaac Smith labored until he entered into the life to come on April 20th, 1855. A notation in the Register evidently written by Dr. Stubbs, has this:

April 20th 1855, The Rev. Isaac Smith, Minister of St. James Church, entered into his rest.

"An Israelite indeed, in whom was no guile."

The Services were performed on the 2nd Sunday after Easter, April 22nd by the Rev. Alfred Stubbs, Rector of Christ Church, New Brunswick.

On December 22nd 1881, the Church seemed to have suffered an irreparable loss in the death of its spiritual father, Dr. Stubbs, who for forty years had seen to it that the ancient mother parish should not want for spiritual nourishment.

For a time services were provided by Laymen and among them were men afterwards known to fame in the Episcopalian Church. Among the list is found Alexander Mann, who later became the

Bishop of Pittsburgh, only lately resigned, from November 4th 1883 to May 31st 885. S. M. Griswold a student of the General Theological Seminary, afterwards Suffragan Bishop of Chicago, for a portion of 1883, and the Rev. Thos Conover late of Bernardsville, beloved clergyman, saint, and founder of the famous Boys' School in Sussex County, who only lately passed to his reward.

Dr. Conover often referred to St. James' Church as "his first love"; he officiated here while a theological student from October 4th 1891 to June 4th 1893, when he left to prepare more nearly for his approaching ordination.

The Rev. E. B. Joyce kept a watchful eye upon the Parish, and when laid aside by illness as was frequently the case, he saw to it that services were regularly conducted, either by a clergyman or a theological student.

In 1892, the Rev. E. B. Joyce who received the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity from Rutgers University, was elected by the Vestry as "Rector" of St. James Church. It may not have meant a great deal, but it was the only honor that could be conferred by the Vestry and people. From this time, each month, Dr. Joyce saw to it that the people received the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

On June 21st 1905 the Parish celebrated the bi-centenary of its foundation, 1704 - 1904. Dr. Joyce was Master of Ceremonies, with Bishop Scarborough presiding. At this celebration several of the former missionaries were present and gave addresses. The record of this is in the handwriting of Dr. Joyce, and this account is the last made by him.

From the year 1904, the Rev. William Hude Neilson, a retired clergyman living in Plainfield, N.J., became Vicar of St. James Church. There are many in Piscataway who remember him. Despite the fact that Dr. Neilson was advancing in years, he took hold of the work in the tradition and following of Dr. Joyce. During his rectorship, he Baptized fifty-four candidates, and presented after due preparation forty-three persons for Confirmation by Bishop Scarborough.

Dr. Neilson had been rector of St. Michael's Church, Trenton for many years, and latterly was rector of the Church in Shepherdstown, West Virginia. In addition he was for a time a professor at the Virginia Theological Seminary, but under the accumulated strain, he broke down. Now, at the age of sixty-two, in 1904, Dr. Neilson accepted the work offered him in October of that year and for seven years was the Vicar. In 1911, at the age of sixty-nine, he became rector of the Parish and so continued until November 1914.

In 1913, the Parish was the beneficiary under the Will of the late Miss Ellen B. Cotheal, to the extent of sixty-five thousand dollars. Miss Cotheal had taken an active interest in

the Parish for many years, and it was her avowed intention that the children whom she loved so much, and the Parish itself should not want for the labors of a clergyman in full orders.

Dr. Neilson began measures in 1913, for the erection of a Parish House. It was discovered that the Church had no title to the land on which it stood. An old royal grant had long since been invalid; no attempt had ever been made to receive a valid grant from the New Jersey Proprietors. Recourse was had to the good offices of the State of New Jersey. A Bill was passed by the State Assembly reconveying the cemetery and Church ground to the Township Commissioners as "common property" who were then enabled to make a grant, which then was validated by special act. The Church owns a frontage of 190 feet by about 250 feet. The Cemetery is vested in a local cemetery association. The Parish House was completed on May 14th 1914 and served for some time as a community gathering center until the large auditorium in School No. 3 was built in later years.

In May of 1914, the Rev. Henry Hale Gifford became assistant minister; helping Dr. Neilson who at the age of seventy-two began to feel the strain of his years.

In November 1914, Dr. Neilson became Rector Emeritus and was succeeded by Dr. Henry Hale Gifford, M.A. of Princeton and Ph.D. of New York University. For twenty-five previous years, Dr. Gifford had been Rector of Grace Church, Elizabeth, N.J. He was well on in middle life, but entered into the Parish work and the work and life of the Community with much energy. It is probable that during his rectorship, the Parish of St. James reached its highest pitch. Dr. Gifford was only in Piscataway a few years; for in 1921 he became rector of St. Andrew's Church, New Berlin, N.Y., where he served the remainder of his active ministry. So beloved was he there, that at the age of seventy, his people refused to accept his resignation. He passed away in May 1937 at the age of 75, having been active almost to the end of his earthly life.

Dr. Frank Dean Gifford, who has exactly reproduced the academic distinctions of his father, and is now one of the leading clergy of the diocese of New York, and a Canon of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York, was a lay reader here under his father, and chose as his bride a local girl, Miss Hazel Kathleen Frey, whom he married on May 30th 1917. Soon afterwards, Mr. Gifford went as a missionary to Japan and for a time was acting president of St. Paul's College, Tokyo.

Following Dr. Gifford, the Rev. John Doberstine, now of All Saints' Church, Highland Park, was rector until 1926. For two years the Parish was vacant, visiting clergy assisted and Mr. P. E. Dixon, who has been associated with the Church for sixty-three years, acted as Lay Reader, endeavoring to keep together the Congregation and the Sunday School. He prepared and presented candidates for Confirmation and visited the sick.

At the same time he trained the Choir and kept the Vestry in being to perform their canonical duties. It is doubtful whether any layman in the whole history of St. James' Parish has done as much for the community and the Church, as has P. E. Dixon, who at the age of sixty-eight years, is still one of the most active members of the Parish.

In 1928, the Rev. William E. Phillips, (the present writer) received a call to become Rector. With the consent of Bishop W. Albion Knight, D.D., the Bishop Coadjutor who was administering the Diocese in the absence through illness of the Bishop of the Diocese of New Jersey, the Rt. Rev. Paul Matthews, D.D. the call was maintained and accepted. The rectorship began on April 6th, 1918. The present Rector had for some years labored in Texas and in New Orleans, Louisiana.

After eighteen months, the depression that spread throughout the Nation struck Piscatawaytown and district. Few indeed were they who had work to do. In the Church of St. James', only five people had positions. A few others were able occasionally to get work for a day or two days.

Dr. Phillips was made director of relief for Raritan Township, and he was able with helpers to organize the work under the County and afterwards the State Director, the late Lewis Compton. At one time, no less than two thousand four hundred people in the district were upon the relief rolls and most of these be it remembered, had dependents.

During this trying time, the people of the Community did all within their power to help the situation. Employment committees were formed, entertainments were organized to help those who so sadly needed help. Gradually the burden became lightened. During the worst years of the crisis no collections were taken up in the Church. There were many who could not give one penny and it was felt by the Vestry acting upon the recommendation of the Rector, that it were far better to keep worshippers from a feeling of embarrassment than to attempt the usual offering during services. In 1937, the Church was thoroughly overhauled inside and out. Many repairs had been necessary and these were undertaken. The sanitary arrangements at this time were completely modernized.

In 1929, after much discussion, it was decided that the old home known as the Casey home, and which adjoined the site of the old Hopewell Inn, could not be repaired. The old house was torn down, and the present rectory at 458 Woodbridge Ave. was built. The ancient fireplace in what was the "taproom" of the Inn, was sold to someone in New York, by the house-breakers, with crane and old fashioned appliances all complete.

The actual site of the Inn is still marked and from time to time the digging fork or spade throws up reminders of those who in the long ago passed this way.

Few of the descendants of the original English and Scotch settlers remain here. Possibly one hundred in all. The large numbers living here are those who are descendants of those who have come to this Country during the past sixty years. This one time, predominantly Protestant neighborhood, finds protestants in the minority. The great problem now is, how can the descendants of the early fathers, spiritually and by descent, do their part in building up that spirit of Americanism at its best?.

Until recently, there was to be noted the gravestone of one Thomas W. Harper, a native of Bishopsgate, London, England. The inscription ran as follows: "He died June 23rd 1835, Aged 62 years.

His death was caused by the falling of the English Church, during the great storm which occurred here in June 19th 1835."

Underneath the above were chiselled the following lines:

"Tired with wandering through a world of sin.
Hither we come to nature's common inn.
To rest our wearied bodies for a night,
In hopes to rise in nature's truest light.
The world's a city full of crooked streets,
And death the market place where all must meet."

In the gale of September 1938, a great tree fell athwart this and other tombs, destroying the gravestones of several resting-places. The tomb lay immediately across from the driveway of the present Rectory and about forty feet inward from the sidewalk.

John Stout Senior of Piscatawaytown, who died in 1929, upwards of ninety years of age, stated that in his boyhood, it was a common matter of conversation that this Englishman, was one of a party who had foregathered in the Inn. Harper was a professed atheist and used unguarded language of defiance, but never regained consciousness for on his way homeward, he was struck by a flying piece of timber that caused ultimately, his death. The stone has been either broken up or taken by vandals.

Two things emerge from this; one is that the Church that collapsed was known as the English Church a half century after the separation of the colonial Church of England from the Mother Church, and that this was indeed the Church which had for over a century been known as the English Church.

In the early part of the nineteenth century, a district school was in existence here. It was a two-storied building, one floor of which was used for boys and the other for girls. It lay immediately across from the Cemetery on the common road, thirty yards from the southern extremity of the present parish house.

John Martin was the teacher, just before the midway mark of the past century. The school was known by the ambitious title of The Piscataway Seminary. John Martin was also a local surveyor; it is recorded that when he had a task of surveying to do, he simply closed the school until his surveying was finished.

From some of the handwriting seen by me, by his pupils, he must have had at least some ability. Later, the school teacher here was a Mr. Palmer who became a lawyer in Perth Amboy.

In 1894 the ancient school building was destroyed by fire. In 1896 a new frame building was erected, which in later years was used as a police station up to 1940.

Mr. Wilfred Woodward, a graduate of Rutgers, intended to become an engineer; but found on graduation that positions were few and far between. He took up the profession of school teacher, which was not entirely new to him. He later became Principal of School No. 3 on Woodbridge Avenue, a commodious and modern building, until his retirement a few years ago. Hundreds of men and women in the neighborhood were either taught by him in the old frame building, or passed through his hands as teacher and principal.

Mr. Woodward still lives here (October 21st 1943) and has been Township Clerk for many years, a position he still holds.

In 1914, the Raritan Civic Association was formed, with Dr. Gifford as President. This Association brought about many improvements, and paved the way for the Commission form of government now in existence.

APPENDIX

Manuscript of:

The Rev. Henry Hale Gifford, B.D., Ph.D.

Assistant at St. James Church, May 1914
Rector, November 1914 to October 1921

The first settlements in New Jersey were made by the Dutch in 1620 and until 1663 they occupied what is now New York and New Jersey, and gave the territory the name of New Netherlands.

They were, however, not the first Europeans to touch New Jersey soil, for Henry Hudson in 1609 had landed at Sandy Hook, where he buried one of his sailors and had sailed between Staten Island and the main land from Princess Bay to New York.

The first mention in history of Henry Hudson is on April 19, 1607, when it was recorded that eleven seamen received the Holy Communion in St. Ethelburga's Church in London before proceeding on a voyage of discovery. The names begin with - "Henry Hudson, Master and end with John Hudson, a boy."

We are not able to state that a service according to the Prayer Book of the Episcopal Church was held on the Eastern Shore of America in New Jersey, by Henry Hudson; but it seems very probable that the Captain, being a Communicant of the Church of England, and the regular officer to conduct services in the absence of a Chaplain, would have arranged for such a service on the shores of the new land. It seems almost certain that the sailor who was buried at Sandy Hook would have had the burial service of our Church. We do know that the first service on the Pacific Coast was conducted by a Chaplain of the Church of England in 1578, as the Prayer Book Cross in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, beautifully memorializes.

The English crown claimed title to the land from the voyages of the Cabots in 1497-8, and in 1664 finally wrested it from the Dutch and established their claim also by conquest. King Charles II gave New Jersey to the Duke of York in the same year and he soon conveyed it to Lord Berkeley and Sir George Carteret for distinguished loyalty.

Berkeley had been in exile with the King and was made a peer on the Restoration. The Province was at first called Nova Caesarea from a Channel island of that name over which Carteret had been governor. The name 'Jersey' is a corruption of Czar'sey, or isle of Caesar, and this name soon prevailed over the Latin form.

The first settlement in New Jersey by the English was at Elizabeth town, where Philip Carteret, a relative of Sir George and his family, took possession in August 1665, as Governor of the Province and the Plantation was named for Lady Elizabeth, the wife of Sir George Carteret. Capt. Carteret and the rest of the ship's company were of the Church of England. They were not the first on the ground however, for in the previous year a few people had come there from New England but they recognized, on his arrival, the authority of Governor Philip Carteret.

Berkeley and Carteret were desirous of settling the territory rapidly and they offered very liberal terms, which were issued to people far and near. The "Concessions and Agreements" issued by them formed the first Constitution of New Jersey and it continued entire until the Province became divided in 1676.

Land was offered to settlers free in lots of from 60 to 150 acres, according to the time of their arrival in the Province, and the number of their half bound servants or slaves, for one half penny per acre quit rent. Freedom of conscience and of worship was guaranteed to all citizens. (Const. Feb. 10, 1664) Many of the people of New England, who had suffered from the intolerance of the Puritans, were eager to enter the new colony. The Puritans had established their form of public worship there and had exacted rigid conformity. There was a saying among the New England Immigrants that they had fled from the Lords Bishops only to fall into the worse hands of the Lords Brethren.

Members of the Church of England met with many obstructions in having their worship.

Piscataqua was from the first a colony of Christians who were not Puritans. They came from conscientious motives and set up a high standard of living, without any interference with each others religious beliefs.

On Dec. 18, 1666, the Deputy Surveyor, under Carteret made the first conveyance of lands to John Martin, Charles Gillman, Hugh Dunn and Hopewell Hull, and they and their associates founded the town of New Piscataqua. They had come from New Hampshire on the Piscataqua River and named the new plantations from their former home.

In 1675 Piscataqua had a Charter for self government and a County Court. By 1685 the township had 400 inhabitants and among them besides the four above mentioned, were the names of Drake, Dunham, Randolph, Langstaff, Runyon, Smalley, Bonham, Manning, Munday, Stelle, and others whose descendants are still living in the neighborhood.

The Indians then living in this territory were a tribe of the Delawares, known as the Raritons. They had named the Province Scheyichbi. By reason of their superior sagacity and warlike spirit they were the most influential and at the time of the settlement the dominant tribe. Three of their Chiefs, Canackamack, Capatamin, and Thingorawis, sold their claim upon the lands in 1677 to the white men for satisfactory exchanges of value.

March 12, 1832, Shawriskigung, a full blooded but well educated Indian, testified to the honorable policy and actions which distinguished the people of New Jersey in all their treatment of the Indians. He said "Not a drop of our blood have you spilled in battle, not an acre of land taken without our consent".

Fisher in "New Jersey as a Royal Province" states: "The deeds given by the Duke of York to Berkeley and Carteret granted territorial but not political rights" Inasmuch as maintaining political authority was a necessity, on account of the success of the enterprise, the Proprietors issued in 1665 the Concessions and Agreements before mentioned under which New Jersey was to be governed.

The State of New Jersey, as it is now, was divided between Berkeley and Carteret in 1673. Carteret took the northern half known as East Jersey and Berkeley the southern part known as West Jersey.

In 1681 Sir George Carteret having died, his wife, the Lady Elizabeth, and the trustees under his will conveyed the Province of East Jersey to William Penn and others, who were called the Twelve Proprietors. They held the title to all lands not sold by them and also governed the Province until April 15, 1702, when they surrendered the government to Queen Anne. She reunited East Jersey and West Jersey into one Royal Province and appointed her cousin Edward Hyde, Lord Cornbury, the first Governor of New York and New Jersey under the Crown. New York and New Jersey were under the same Governor until 1737.

The "Instructions" given to Lord Cornbury by Queen Anne provided that the "Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of the Lord Bishop of London may take place in our said Province, sofar as conveniently maybe, and we do think fit that you give all Countenance and Encouragement to the Exercise of the same".

"You shall take especial care that God Almighty be devoutly and duly served throughout your government, the Book of Common Prayer read each Sunday and Holyday and the Blessed Sacrament administered according to the rites of the Church of England.

You shall be careful that the Churches already built there be well and orderly kept, and that more be built as the Colony by God's Blessing shall be improved; and that besides a competent maintenance to be assigned to the minister of each orthodox Church, a convenient house be built at the common charge for each minister, and a competent proportion of land assigned to him, for a globe and an exercise of his industry."

They published in that year an account of their country and the method of disposing of their lands. In Samuel Smith's "History of the Colony of Nova Caesarea on New Jersey" it is stated: "The place of the Twelve Proprietors was popular and took much especially among the Scotch, of whom many had already arrived. In this and following years came many more and among them George Keith, who some time after became Surveyor General, and was accounted very skilful in the business. The Twelve Proprietors did not long hold the Province to themselves that by particular deeds took each a partner and these with the other twelve are since called the Twenty-Four Proprietors. To these the Duke of York made a fresh grant of East New Jersey dated March 14, 1682. Soon after they established a Council of

Proprietors and gave him some of management. This Council still survives and holds two general meetings yearly in Perth Amboy."

In the Fundamental Constitutions of East New Jersey in 1683 it was provided that "all persons acknowledging one Almighty and Eternal God, shall in no way be molested, or prejudiced for their religious persuassions and exercise in matters of faith and worship, nor be compelled to frequent and maintain any place of worship and ministry whatsoever; but none to be submitted to places of public trust who do not profess faith in Christ Jesus, and none under the notion of liberty by this article, to avow atheism, irreligiousness, nor practice profaneness, or murder, or any kind of violence".

The original Concessions provided that each parish should have 200 acres of land for the support of the minister, and that in all towns and villages convenient lands were to be granted for Churches and that such lands were to be free from taxation. The provision for grants of land for ministerial support seems to have failed for the most part owing to the great diversity of religious opinion among the early settlers. They were unable to settle upon any establishment, because so few agreed upon any particular form. If there had been Christian unity the cause of religion would have greatly profited by these generous offers of land from the Proprietors.

There were very few ministers of religion in the country. Many plantations were wholly without Churches, Schools, or any provision for religious worship.

The result of this state of affairs was so demoralizing that in 1704 Col. Heathcote wrote, "There are no footsteps of religion in New Jersey. Sunday is used for sports and lewd diversions. Captains of militia should keep men in exercise on Sundays unless readers are appointed for religious services."

About 1695 several of the East Jersey Proprietors applied to the Bishop of London for an Anglican Clergyman and the Rev. Edward Perthuck, or Portlock, was sent in 1698. He held services chiefly in Perth Amboy, where many of the Proprietors were of the Episcopal Church, and also in many other places, including Piscataqua. Very little is known of him beyond this.

In 1695 the East Jersey Proprietors granted two tracts of land to George Drake, Benjamin Hull, Thomas Higgins, and Edward Slater for the benefit of the Freeholders of the Township of Piscataqua in common. The first tract to be appropriated for a burying place and for exercising the town company; the other for highways and commons. Even before this date the present burial ground had been used for that purpose, and several tombstones bear the date 1693. One well known ancient slab bears the following inscription:

Spectators, underneath this tomb
Lies two boys that lay in one womb
The eldest was full 12 years old
The youngest was 5 twice told.
By eating mushrooms for food
Rare in that day time, They poisoned were.
Richard Hooper and Charles Hooper
Deseased, August Anno Dom. 1693.

In the "First Settlers of New Brunswick" by Mr. Wm. H. Benedict, we find Captain Henry Greenland mentioned as the Captain of the Piscataqua Military Company in 1675. Samuel Doty was Lieutenant, and John Martin, Ensign. He was again Commissioned as Captain in 1681 with the same officers. On June 19, 1683, the First Session of the Middlesex County Court was held at Piscataway. It is believed that this was the earliest county court held in the Middle States. The original record is in the office of the County Clerk in New Brunswick. (Charter of the City of New Brunswick, by Dr. Austin Scott) New Brunswick was then an "Annex of Piscataway".

The Town House of Piscataqua was built in 1685. It was intended chiefly for Municipal business, for holding courts, and for consideration of other matters for the public welfare. It was used also for religious services for many years, probably more frequently by the Quakers and the Baptists than by any of the other forms of religious opinion.

In the "History of the First Baptist Church of Piscataway" we find that the Baptists were organized in 1689 and that they then chose and ordained John Drake as their first Pastor. "It does not appear from any documents now in existence, or from traditions, that the Church made any attempt to build a house exclusively for worship and religious purposes, or any movement in that direction until April 1731, when the Church bought a lot, 4 6/10 acres, from Alex. McDonald, about a mile to the west of Piscatawaytown. This was eight years before the death of the first pastor.

In 1748 a Church 46 x 36 was erected on this lot. Morgan Edwards, who visited the parish during Mr. Runyon's ministry, and from him and old citizens gathered his data concerning the Church, speaks of the structure as a 'well finished house but wanting the necessary convenience of a stove'. In Climes farther North - and in times later than 1748 the introduction of a stove in a meeting house was regarded as a useless, if not an impious innovation on established customs and a reflection on the piety and dignity of the fathers and mothers of Israel of the olden times.

The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts was organized in 1700 for the care and instruction of the English people settled in the Colonies, and for the conversion of the Indians and Negroes. The Rev. George Keith became their first Missionary and he was appointed to travel over the Colonies in order to arouse them to a sense of their religious duties.

He was a man of great energy and ability, both as a preacher and a writer. He was born in Aberdeen and was originally a Scotch Presbyterian. Later he became a Quaker and removed to New Jersey at the invitation of the Twelve Proprietors who, as is stated before made him Surveyor General in 1685. He founded and lived in the village of Freehold in Monmouth County. He ran the division line between East and West Jersey in 1687. In 1689 he removed to Philadelphia to take the superintendency of a large school. He soon developed into a position of great influence as a Preacher and Leader among the Quakers. A great controversy arose over his attacks upon many of the Quakers for looseness in living and doctrine. He charged many of the Quakers with being Deists. A division arose and those that followed him were called "Keithians" and the others "Foxonians" from their leader. He published many pamphlets, sermons, and tracts that had a wide circulation. He returned to England and later became a Clergyman of the Church of England and owing to his ability and knowledge of the Colonies he became their first Missionary.

A letter from Rev. George Keith to the Secretary of the S.P.G. gave a survey of the State of Religion in the parts of North America where he had travelled.

He mentions Piscataqua as one of the "considerable towns of East Jersey" and says that "the people who are not Quakers are generally Independents who have come from New England". He believed that "The young generation might easily be brought off to the Church, if they have any Church set up among them". His letter concludes, "It seems a good expedient to me that such Ministers as go into these parts, should not constantly reside in one place at present, but preach at several places through the whole Province. And that a considerable number of little books such as the Pastoral Letter and those against swearing, drunkenness, and Sabbath breaking should be sent to spread among them. And if a little book were printed by some able man to persuade to the Communion of the Church of England, and sent among them, it would be of good service". "In all New Jersey in 1700 there was neither Church or School established by any law and no Minister or maintenance for one from the Church of England."

Mr. Keith's advice was followed and he was chosen to travel in America from one Province to another to preach and establish Churches where it seemed desirable. He travelled twice over the Colonies and was accompanied by Rev. John Talbot in most of the places.

Mr. Talbot had been the Chaplain of the ship "Centurion" on which Mr. Keith came from England; sailing April 28, 1702 to Boston and arriving in six weeks and one day. He became his assistant and associate in his Missionary travels and services and was well approved and esteemed everywhere, both with respect to his preaching and living.

The Journal of Mr. Keith's "Travels from New Hampshire to Caratuck" was published in the first volume of the Collections of the Episcopal Historical Society in 1851. It gives in detail an account of his services beginning in Boston and as far as South Carolina.

From his "Journal" we quote:

"On Friday, Nov. 3, 1703 I preached in the house of Andrew Craig, from 2 Pet. 1. 5. and baptized his four children. The next day I baptized the Children of Andrew Hampton, eight in number; he and his wife are come over from Quakerism to the Church.

Dec. 19, 1703 Sunday, I preached at the house of Col. Townley, in Elizabeth town both morning and afternoon on 1. Pet. 2. 9. Many of that town having been a sort of Independent, are become well effected to the Church of England and desire to have a Minister of the Church of England sent to them."

Under date of December 29, 1703, Wednesday, Rev. George Keith continues: "I preached at the Independents Meeting House in Woodbridge, at the desire of Mr. Shepherd (the pastor) and some others there on I. Tim. 3.16. After Sermon Mr. Shepherd kindly entertained us at his house.

Dec. 30, Thursday, I preached at Piscataway in East Jersey on Thom. 10. 6. 9."

Before this time Governor Carteret, though living in Elizabeth town, had attended Church services in New York,

Great opposition was manifested toward these Episcopal services by the Independents. Rev. John Brooke wrote Oct. 11, 1706, "Col. Townley's house, where I preached at first, in half a year's time, grew too little for my congregation, and the best place we could get to meet in was a barn, which, in harvest, we were obliged to relinquish, whereupon the Dissenters, who, presently after I came, were destitute of their old Teachers - one of them being struck with death in their meeting house, as he was railing against the Church, - would not suffer me at my request to officiate in their meeting house unless I would promise not to read any of the prayers of the Church, which I complied with upon condition that I might read the Psalms, Lessons, Epistle and Gospel, appointed for the day, which I did and said the rest of the service by heart, the doing of which brought a great many to hear me and through God's blessing have taken away their prejudice to such a degree that they have invited me to preach in their Meeting House till our Church be built. Their teacher begins in the morning at eight and ends at ten, and then our service begins. The greatest part of the Dissenters generally stop to hear all our services." - History of St. John's Church, Elizabeth, by Rev. Dr. Samuel A. Clark.

It is probable that there were other services held in Piscataway by Mr. Keith or Mr. Talbot, before Mr. Keith returned to England in 1704. He became Rector then of a Church in Sussex and never returned to America. Rev. John Talbot, after some further services as a travelling Missionary became Rector of St. Mary's Church, Burlington, and while on a trip to England was admitted to Episcopal orders by the non juring Bishops.

In 1703, Mr. Keith wrote: "There is a mighty cry and desire, almost in all places where we have travelled, to have Ministers of the Church of England sent to them in these Northern parts of America; so that it may be said the Harvest is great, but the laborers few."....."I long to have a letter from you to know what hopes you can give us of having good ministers sent over to these parts, which are so greatly wanted and desired; and if they come not timely, the whole country will be overrun with Presbyterians, and Baptists, and Quakerism."

Mr. Talbot wrote in 1702 concerning Mr. Keith. "He is a well studied divine, a good philosopher and Preacher, and above all an excellent Disputant, especially against the Quakers, who used to challenge all mankind formerly. He has become the best Champion against all Dissenters that the Church ever had and he has set up such a light in their dark places that by God's blessing will not be put out. We have good need of a Bishop here to visit all the Churches to ordain some, to confirm others and bless all. Mr. Keith's mission will be out about a year hence, but I am so well satisfied with a prospect of doing good that I have no inclination to return to England. It grieves me much to see so many people here without the benefit of serving God in the Wilderness. I believe I have been solicited to tarry at twenty-places where they want much and are able to maintain a minister, so that he should want nothing. They send to New England and call any sorry young man, purely for want of some good honest clergyman of the Church of England."

Mr. Talbot writes again Sept. 1, 1703. "Mr. Keith has done great service to the Church wherever he has been by preaching and disputing, publicly and from house to house; he has confuted many, especially the Anabaptists, by labor and travel night and day, by writing and printing of books and giving out freely, which has been very expensive to him. By these means people are much awakened and their eyes opened to see the good old way and they are very well pleased to find the Church at last take such good care of her children. For it is a sad thing to consider the years that are past, how some who were born of the English, never heard the name of Christ, how many others were baptized in His name and follow away to Heathenism, Quakerism, and Atheism for want of Confirmation. It seems the strangest thing in the world and 'tis thought history cannot parallel it that any place should for so many years remain altogether in the wilderness as sheep without a shepherd.

The poor Church in America is worse off in this respect than any of her adversaries. The Presbyterians come to lay hands

one on another. The Independents are called (and ordained) by their Sovereign Lord the People. But the poor Church has nobody on the spot to comfort or confirm her children. Nobody to ordain several that are willing to serve, were they authorized for the work of the Ministry. Therefore, they fall back again into the herd of the Dissenters, rather than be at the hazard and charge to go as far as England for Orders."

Oct. 20, 1705 Mr. Talbot wrote to Mr. Keith. "Mr. Sharpe (evidently a new assistant) and I have gone the rounds several times from Burlington to Amboy with good success, God be blessed, in all places. Now I am alone, for my Lord Cornbury has preferred him to be Chaplain of the Fort in New York. At, Mr. Keith, I have wanted you but once, and that is, ever since you left."

In Mr. Mellick's "Story of an Old Farm", it is stated that in 1704 Queen Anne granted a Charter to the Wardens and Congregation as St. James Episcopal Church. It seems probable that the services held in Piscataqua by Rev. Mr. Portlock and others bore such good fruit that on the arrival of Rev. John Brooke as regular Missionary at Piscataqua the State of the Congregation warranted the granting of the Charter.

About the year 1710, according to Dr. Hill's "History of the Church", Thomas Leicister of Piscataqua, gave 250 acres of land in Somerset County to St. Mary's Church, Burlington. As services were being held regularly in Piscataqua about that time it seems strange that Mr. Leicister did not make a donation to St. James Church.

March 14, 1706, Mr. Talbot wrote in part to the Society: "There was a general meeting of the Missionaries who resolved to address the Queen for a Suffragan Bishop and I was chosen to travel with the letter and make known the request of the Brethern abroad, whose case we had recommended formerly to the Venerable Society, but without success."

June 30, 1709, Mr. Talbot wrote - "Is it not strange that so many hundred souls, born and bred up here in America, but of all the Bishops since the Reformation, they never sent anybody here to propagate the Gospel by ordination or confirmation

Sept. 27, 1709, Mr. Talbot wrote- "We have lost ten Missionaries and none come to take their place. My advice is, with humble submission to my superiors, to keep their money and give us leave to come home and send no more until they think fit and send a propagator of the Gospel (Bishop); for otherwise their planting the Gospel is like the Indians planting gun powder, which can never take root and is blown away by every wind. I hear Mr. Vaughan is arrived in Boston, but is not yet come into this Province. He will have enough to do to supply Mr. Brook's charge at Elizabeth town, Amboy, and Piscataqua, who have had none since he left them; but I have done for them, maybe once in a quarter or so, somebody occasionally passing by that way. As for what Indians we have converted, truly I never saw or knew any that were Christians indeed, but I know there are hundreds of our white folks

that are turned infidels for want of looking after."

All the hopes for a Bishop in America were in vain. It was not until after the Revolution that the Church of England sent to the successful rebels the Bishops they had refused to send to her obedient children. In 1740 a Memorial on the State of Religion in America was written concerning this section.

"The two colonies of the East and West Jerseys have some pretty towns and well peopled, but are wholly left to themselves without priest or altar. The Independent Preachers and the Quakers are very numerous in the Jerseys, but I am credibly informed that the people are more affected to our Clergy, could they have them."

The necessity of a Bishop to an Episcopal Church is so obvious that it was planned by King Charles II for the American Plantations. In an account of the Society published by Dr. Kenneth in 1706, a fund was being accumulated to which many of the Bishops of England contributed. In 1713 little opposition was made by such of the colonists as were not of the Communion of the Church of England, but by 1750 there was a great controversy regarding it.

In Fisher's "Royal Province of New Jersey" we find: "In order to disabuse the popular mind of any unreasonable opposition the Clergy of New York and New Jersey delegated Rev. Dr. Chandler, Rector of St. John's Church, Elizabeth town, to write "An Appeal to the Public in behalf of the Church of England in America." Answers soon appeared and a prolific pamphlet discussion was aroused. It was clearly stated that "Bishops are purely ecclesiastical persons with no temporal authority and with no interference with the rights of other sects. The Church must inevitably decrease in the Colonies if Bishops are not sent to relieve its necessities, and the Dissenters will in time gain an entire ascendancy."

The revolution fell hardest upon the Episcopalians of all the religious Denominations in New Jersey. The Clergy were objects of suspicion as the feeling against England increased. They were not authorized to omit the usual prayers for the King. The Episcopal Churches were generally closed until after the Revolution. In the popular mind the Church was usually identified with the English cause and suffered intense opposition at the outbreak of the Revolution. Religious toleration was not understood in those contentious times, and religious prejudices held violent sway. The number of Episcopal clergymen had increased in New England from six to twenty and several of these had left the Congregational ordination for the Episcopacy on account of conscientious scruples.

A number of the professors at Yale College sacrificed their positions and future worldly prospects to leave the Congregational Ministry for the Episcopal Church.

The descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers could not endure that Episcopacy should increase in the colonies and they began a determined resistance to its introduction in America. Some feared that the Episcopal Church would increase at the expense of the denominations around it, though they knew that the claim of American Episcopalians to a Bishop was perfectly unanswerable. Others feared the project as one dangerous to their liberties. The name of Bishop was associated with Spiritual courts and tithes and a long series of grievances, more or less imaginary.

As soon as American Independence was secured and fears of political dangers were dissipated, resistance to an Episcopate that was purely religious was at an end.

From the earliest days of the colonies down until the Revolution there had been opposition to the growth of the Episcopal Church and adherents of all other religious bodies were united against it. When it became known that a majority of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, and of the Constitution, were of the Episcopal Church, led by George Washington himself, the fierce opposition on the ground of patriotism suddenly ceased. It was realized that members of the Episcopal Church as well as themselves had a right to exercise their religious beliefs and traditions. Washington was in the habit of carrying his Prayer Book with him and occasionally conducted services with its aid. The most notable occasion being at Braddock's funeral.

The consecration of Samuel Seabury as the First Bishop of the Episcopal Church aroused no animosity on the part of members of other religious bodies, but probably many years must pass away before the Episcopal Church will be free from the effect of the long period of prejudice and misunderstanding against it which has prevailed in America.

The Rev. John Talbot seems to have held services in Piscataqua at intervals until 1722. There were periods when the Society had Missionaries that were able to give more frequent services, but they labored under considerable difficulties owing to the many places they visited. Rev. John Brooke was sent to Elizabeth town in 1705 and he held services at Piscataqua and at six other places, fifty miles in extent of horseback travel.

Rev. Mr. Brooke wrote to the Society Nov. 23, 1705: "I have gathered a large congregation in Piscataway. An Independent Minister has left them since I came and now they are very desirous that the Society would be pleased to send one of the Church of England who is not a Scotch man. If a Missionary of temper was sent hither, he might do more service than in any other place I know. One of the Council, who was an Anabaptist when I came, will give a minister his board (if qualified as before) and keep him a horse."

Mr. Brooke seems to have labored very conscientiously and diligently and performed no small amount of Missionary work. His Ministry came to an abrupt termination in 1707. The

Rev. Mr. Moore of Burlington, by his faithful rebuke of Governor Corburey's immoralities, had aroused his anger and the Rector was cast into prison. Mr. Brooke deeply sympathized with Mr. Moore and visited him there. Mr. Moore escaped and Mr. Brooke, also being sought by the enraged Governor, they resolved to go to London to present their cause. They embarked for England in Nov. 1707, but the vessel was lost at sea, and all on board perished. He left a widow who later became the wife of Rev. William Skinner.

Rev. Edward Vaughan succeeded him in 1709 and held services in Piscataqua and in other places. In 1711 Rev. Thomas Halliday became his assistant and he wrote to the Secretary of the Society in that year: "Piscataqua makes a greater congregation than Amboy, and there are some pious and well disposed people among them. Some come from good distances to the meeting, but there is nothing among us like the face of the Church of England; no surplice, no Bible, no Communion Table, an old broken house insufficient to keep us from injuries of the weather and where the Anabaptists swarm in the place and do sometimes preach and we cannot hinder, for the house belongs to the Town."

On Dec. 24, 1714 the Parish of St. James' Church was regularly organized with James Barron (a prominent man of the town) and Thomas Wetheril (among the early settlers) as Wardens, and John Malleson (a Freeholder in 1668) William Hodgson (among the first settlers) Robert Webster (a Proprietor in 1669) Charles Glover; Hopewell Hull (whose father was known in Piscataway as early as 1666, and was Deputy to the General Assembly in 1675) Henry Langstaff (his descendants, James, John and John Jr. were delegates to nearly all the Conventions of the Diocese of New Jersey from 1785 to 1817) Samuel Walker (an early settler and member of a party that came in 1698) John Jennings, William Olden, Samuel Royce (probably a son of John who was a large land holder in 1681) as Vestrymen.

In a letter to the Secretary of the Society, the Vestry stated that a man named Barron had agreed to build a timber Church, floored and plastered and provided with a decent Communion Table and Pulpit for £ 100. But some desired a brick Church and so the agreement was broken. The letter concludes: "We are a people who are only the first beginnings of a country. The whole township which is ten miles long and ten miles broad contains but about 100 families and not more than ten of those truly affected to the Church, or who live a convenient distance for giving constant attendance on the Lord's Day".

Rev. William Skinner, who was a Scotchman, appointed a Missionary at Perth Amboy, ministered in Piscataway from 1722 to 1758. In 1722 he wrote: "The Congregation at Piscataway also grows daily and they are now building a Church. In all probability the congregation will be as numerous as any in these parts." In 1724 the "handsome wooden Chapel" was completed. In 1725 there were 19 communicants. In 1741 the Congregation had so enlarged that he reports his hearers generally number 200. The communicants on Christmas Day, 1748 numbered 45.

This seems to have been unknown to the writers of the Memorial of 1740, before referred to.

In the Records of the Society for the years 1748-9 it is said "The inhabitants of New Brunswick having built a large and handsome Church desired Mr. Wood, 'a gentleman of very good life and conversations, bred to Physick and Surgery might, if he should be found worth of Holy Orders and be admitted into them, be appointed their Missionary', the Society have granted their request to join the Churches of New Brunswick and Elizabeth town into one mission under the care of Mr. Wood."

No mention appears of any services being held at Piscataway by Rev. Mr. Wood or Rev. T. B. Chandler, who was later Missionary at Elizabeth town and Woodbridge.

In 1754 Rev. Samuel Seabury became Missionary of the Society at New Brunswick. Of him it is written, "He went everywhere preaching the word, and on one of these missionary tours he nearly lost his life on a sail boat. He had to take the helm himself and guide the vessel to the shore when the steersman would not or could not govern the boat in a storm." He later became the first Bishop of the American Church and in his time probably arose the connection of the parishes of Christ Church, New Brunswick, and St. James, Piscatawaytown, which continued at intervals almost down to the present day.

The first mention of a congregation at New Brunswick is in a report of the Society for 1742 as follows: "The people of Piscataway and New Brunswick are marking out a place for a new Church about two miles distant from the old one", meaning the Church at Piscataway. The two parishes were served by Rev. Robert McKean from 1758 to 1763.

In 1763, as we learned from Rev. Dr. Stubbs' History of Christ Church, New Brunswick, "Hon. Edward Antill, Esq., a man of most exemplary life and singular piety has undertaken to read prayers and a sermon every two Sundays at New Brunswick and every other two at Piscataway until the arrival of a Missionary

Dec. 6, 1762, the Clergy of the Province wrote a letter to the Society that having occasionally met together in Amboy they beg leave to address the Venerable Society. Regarding St. James Church they wrote: "As the small congregation of Piscataqua have within a few years been at the expense of building a new Church and appear to be willing to contribute to the support of a Minister in proportion to their abilities, they have repeatedly desired us to request of the Society that some neighboring Missionary might be requested to take them under his care. The Rev. Mr. McKean has been so good as to comply with this request."

It was agreed soon after building the second Church at Piscataqua in 1762 to unite Piscataqua to the Mission at New Brunswick, which mission being vacant by the removal of Mr. McKean to Perth Amboy, the Rev. Leonard Cutting was appointed to succeed him Oct. 3, 1764. Mr. Cutting writes: "In New Brunswick there are about 130 families, most of them in indifferent circumstances. There are three places of public worship. An English and a Dutch Church and a Presbyterian Meeting, the members of which live together in a friendly manner." His own congregation is composed of serious, zealous and devout persons and is likely to flourish greatly. Communicants are about 25. He catechizes the children at Brunswick and Piscataqua every Sunday. In 1765 he writes: "In Piscataqua the Church is well filled and the people appear to be serious and attentive." In his next letter he says his "Church at New Brunswick and Piscataqua are frequented by serious persons of all denominations."

In 1766 The Clergy of New Jersey addressed the Society stating that they had made a Resolution to meet together annually or oftener.

Owing to the want of Bishops and a regular Discipline the Church of England in America had fallen into a deplorable state and they desired to unite their efforts to retard the evil. The first Convention was in 1758 and others were held every year with great solemnity. Their special aim seems to have been to secure a Bishop for the American Church.

Rev. Abraham Beach was appointed Missionary for both Churches in 1767 and continued in charge until 1784.

October 12, 1768, a voluntary Convention was held in Christ Church, New Brunswick to consider the needs of the widows and children of the Episcopal Clergy in America.

Under date of Nov. 30, 1776, General Washington writes: "We left Newark, Thursday the 28th and arrived here (New Brunswick) half after seven P.M. Friday the 29th." He again writes: "The enemy appeared on the Heights opposite New Brunswick and were advancing toward the crossing place. We shall retreat to the West side of the Delaware and have advanced about 8 miles."

"When the British Held New Brunswick", by John F. Wall, the following is quoted: "At this time a large number of his soldiers were entitled to their discharge and no persuasion could induce them to reenlist. It was Washington's hope that with the aid of the New Jersey Militia to make the banks of the Raritan the bounds of the enemy's progress; but, on the first of December the Army was greatly weakened by the expiration of the Terms of Enlistment of the Jersey and Maryland Flying Corps and as the Militia were not ready to take their places, another retreat was the necessary consequence."

"In New Brunswick at the Critical Period of the Revolution"
Mr. Wall writes:

"The events which took place in and about New Brunswick contributed in no small degree to the independence of the United States. Had Washington failed in New Jersey and in the vicinity of New Brunswick in particular there would never have been a surrender at Yorktown. It was here within the radius of thirty miles of Rutgers College that American independence was won. It should not be forgotten that the losses to New Jersey in proportion to the population and wealth were greater probably than to any other member of the Confederacy. It was within her borders that Washington encountered his greatest distresses and difficulties. It was here that the patriots fought half starved, and almost naked, that the sun of freedom should shine for their posterity."

The second Church of St. James saw the horseman dashing past on April 24, 1775 bringing tidings of the Battle of Lexington "the shot that echoed round the world", which had been sent to their brother patriots by the patriots of Boston, and was now speeding onward to electrify the hearts and nerve the arms of the patriots in Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Georgia and the Carolinas.

"Old Christ Church and Bishop Croes" by Mr. Charles D. Deshler

"On July 8, 1776 the old Church saw the horseman coming from New Brunswick, where he had stopped at the White Hall Tavern and delivered a packet to the members of the "Committee" who were there and who fairly leaped for joy as they learned of the immortal Declaration that proclaimed out Independence."

"On Nov. 29, 1776, the old Church saw the little patriot army with Washington at its head helplessly retreating before the advancing columns of the powerful and well appointed British army; toiling painfully over the deep ruts of the frozen road, hungry, wearied, half clad, many barefoot, and despondent and destitute of even the commonest intrenching tools. Sadly and silently marched the little army, over the crossing place of the Raritan to New Brunswick."

"During their occupation of Middlesex County with their hospital at Piscataway in St. James Church from Dec. 1, 1776 to June 23, 1777, the British army destroyed over £ 80,000 worth of property, burned two Churches, damaged three others and burned or damaged 142 dwellings and other buildings. A long trench in the Cemetery at St. James Church was filled with the bodies of British soldiers who died in the Church or nearby."

In the New Jersey Archives we find record of the patriotism that actuated the people of Piscataway during the Revolution. On May 9, 1777, 2,000 patriots attacked the Royal Highland Regiment at Piscataway. The Continental troops behaved well, drove the Highlanders out of a wood near Piscataway, and

gained an advantage over the King's best troops. The British were encamped in force in Piscataway because the people there needed watching and keeping in order, lest they should arise against them. The whole country about was for this reason sadly pillaged and outraged by the Hessian Soldiers and others.

New Jersey was, as the legislature called it in an address to Washington, when President; "The central theatre of the war". The battles of Princeton and Monmouth were within the bounds of Middlesex County and no citizens were more patriotic than those of the old township of Piscataway.

During the War services at St. James Church were broken up, but from 1784 to 1794 occasional services were held by Ministers from New Brunswick, The Rev. Messrs. Rowland, Ogilvie, and Henry Van Dyke.

The First Convention of the Diocese of New Jersey held in Christ Church, New Brunswick, May 11, 1784, was attended by lay delegates from St. James' Church, John Arnold and Henry Sutton. The former also attended the Second Convention in Perth Amboy, the following year. The Third Convention was attended by Dr. C. A. Howard. The Fourth Convention had Dr. Howard and John Langstaff as delegates. Isaac Cotheal appears as Delegate in 1791 and 1792. After 1809 no lay delegates appeared for many years.

From 1794 to 1799 Rev. John Henry Hobart was Rector of Christ Church and officiated also in Piscataway. He afterward became Bishop of New York.

March 16, 1801, Rev. John Croes became Rector at New Brunswick and Piscataway. He taught also at Queens, now Rutgers College. He was elected First Bishop of New Jersey in 1815, and continued at the same time his connection with Christ Church and St. James Church. After 30 years he was succeeded by his son John Croes, Jr., who remained for seven years and was succeeded by Rev. Dr. Alfred Stubbs in 1839. From that date to 1882 when he entered into rest, Dr. Stubbs was the faithful friend and helper of St. James Church. From 1828 to 1837, St. James Church was in charge of Rev. Wm. Douglas.

The early records of St. James Church were destroyed by fire. The present Parish Register dates from 1837 and the Minute Book of the Vestry from 1841. The Rev. William Douglas wrote a brief history of the parish in the first two pages of the Register. From this record we find: "Among those who have ministered to the Congregation at Piscataqua are the following. Rev. Messrs. McKean, Dutting, Jackson, Antille, a respectable layman, Beach, Ogden, Hobart, Holmes, Dunn, and Ward." After the occupation by the British in 1776-1777 the Church was repaired and fitted up for Divine Service again. In the year 1829-30 the building was once more repaired and a gallery erected at the West end. Upward of \$300. were expended on the repairs of the Church at this time, which William Douglas and Eliphalet Ketcham raised by subscription in New York and other neighboring towns.

On the 19th day of June, 1835, this Church and nearly all the village was destroyed by a violent tornado about 5 P.M.

An eye witness thus describes the tornado. "There was a huge black cloud, funnel shaped, revolving with a gyratory motion. It went over New Brunswick and toward Piscataqua. The point of the cloud had an up and down motion as it advanced. For this reason, some buildings were destroyed, some only unroofed, some were untouched. It struck New Brunswick where Bayard and Paterson and French Streets come together. The little village of Piscataqua, including its Church, was almost completely destroyed. Four steamboat loads of people came from New York to see the ruins. One man was killed by the falling of the Church, and this fact is related on his gravestone in Piscataqua Cemetery. It is stated and commonly believed that the present high pulpit was carried by the wind into the river and was rescued from Princess Bay and restored to the present building. The interior fittings of this Church in the old style are the only survivals of the kind in the Episcopal Church of New Jersey.

The corner stone of a new Church was laid on August 1, 1836, by the Right Rev. George W. Doane, D.D., and the building erected at the sole expense of Mr. Joseph Foulke of New York, and a native of Piscataway, was completed and consecrated to the service and worship of Almighty God on the 11th of May, 1837.

Oct. 1, 1838 the two parishes of Woodbridge and Piscataqua united in the choice of their first Rector, Rev. Frederick Ogilby, who was succeeded in the joint Rectorship by Rev. Hamble J. Leacock in 1842.

From the minutes we learn that in 1841 the Church had \$1,000 invested in bond and mortgage. Mr. John T. Martin was Secretary and Franklin Smith, Treasurer. The First annual meeting of which there is record elected the following: Franklin Smith and Joel Dunham, Wardens, and John Kirkpatrick and Henry A. Langstaff, Abram Beach, James Arnold, Jr., John T. Martin, William Orme, Reuben Langstaff, Vestrymen.

On Feb. 3, 1843, Rev. Frederick Ogle was elected Rector, but he must have declined the offer. On Easter Monday April 8, 1844, Rev. Alfred Stubbs appears as Rector and he was succeeded by Rev. Isaac Smith, April 15, 1847. A note in the Register stated that he was Rector until his death April 20, 1855.

For six years no record appears in the Minutes but in 1856 Rev. Alfred Stubbs again appears as Chairman of the Annual Parish Meeting. In 1864 Rev. Mr. Otis was in charge for a time and in 1866, Rev. Dr. Stubbs was engaged for every alternate Sunday. In 1867 Rev. Alfred Goldsborough served for one year with great acceptability. Mrs. M. A. McGrorty presented the parish with a melodeon in 1873. In 1876 Rev. Mr. Earle was minister in charge, for a time and he was succeeded in 1877 by Rev. Chas. Parkman.

In 1879 Miss Ellen Cotheal was thanked by the Vestry for the gift of an organ. The Rev. Dr. Stubbs having passed away in 1882, the Vestry passed resolutions of regret expressing their thanks for "his deep and hearty interest in the welfare of our little Church". In 1885 Miss Katharine Cotheal left a bequest of \$1,000 and in 1892 Mrs. Charlotte Augusta Swords bequeathed \$2,000 for maintaining the burial plots and for the use of the Church.

The Rev. E. B. Joyce succeeded Dr. Stubbs in his care for the Church in 1882, and in 1892 he was elected Rector of the Church.

The following is the list of clergymen and lay readers officiating in St. James Church from 1882 to 1905, under the direction of Rev. Mr. Joyce:

Rev. T. W. Nickerson, Lay Reader - Dec. 10, 1882 - June 1883
Rev. J. H. Ranger, Lay Reader - June - Sept., 1883 and 1884
Rev. Alex Mann, D.D., Lay Reader - Nov. 4, 1883 - May 31, 1885
Right Rev. S. M. Griswold, Lay Reader - Nov. 11, 1883
Rev. A. R. Taylor, Deacon & Priest - June 1885 - Jan. 25, 1888
Rev. C. M. Dunham, Lay Reader - 1888
Rev. E. B. Smith, Deacon & Priest - Oct. 14, 1888 - Nov. 10, 1889
Rev. Elvin K. Smith, Priest - Oct. 6, 1889
Rev. T. W. Challen, Lay Reader - Nov. 30, 1889
Rev. F. S. Compton, Priest - Feb. 2, 1890 - Mar. 31, 1891
Rev. W. B. Morrow, Priest - July 5, 1891 - Sept. 1891
Rev. Thos. A. Conover, Lay Reader - Oct. 4, 1891 - June 4, 1893
Rev. F. M. W. Schneeweiss, Lay Reader - July 2, 1893 - July 5, 1896
Mr. F. H. Hoe, Lay Reader - 1896
Rev. R. E. Cosens, Priest - 1896
Rev. W. W. Blatchford, Priest - Oct. 1896 - March 1897
Mr. E. W. McGann, Lay Reader - Oct. 11, 1896 - 1901
Rev. C. E. Phelps, Priest - Jan. 30, 1898 - Oct. 1904
Mr. S. E. Burwell, Lay Reader - 1901 - 1904
Mr. P. E. Dixon, Lay Reader - 1904 - 1913
Rev. W. H. Neilson, D.D., Priest - 1904

The Rev. Dr. Neilson's connection with St. James Church lasted ten years in active service. He became Vicar at Mr. Joyce's request in 1904 and held service every other Sunday. Though living in Plainfield, he faithfully visited his flock and aroused a new interest in the work of the Church. The Church was refitted and repaired through the work of the congregation, and the attendance greatly increased. In June, 1913, sixteen were confirmed, the largest class in the history of the parish.

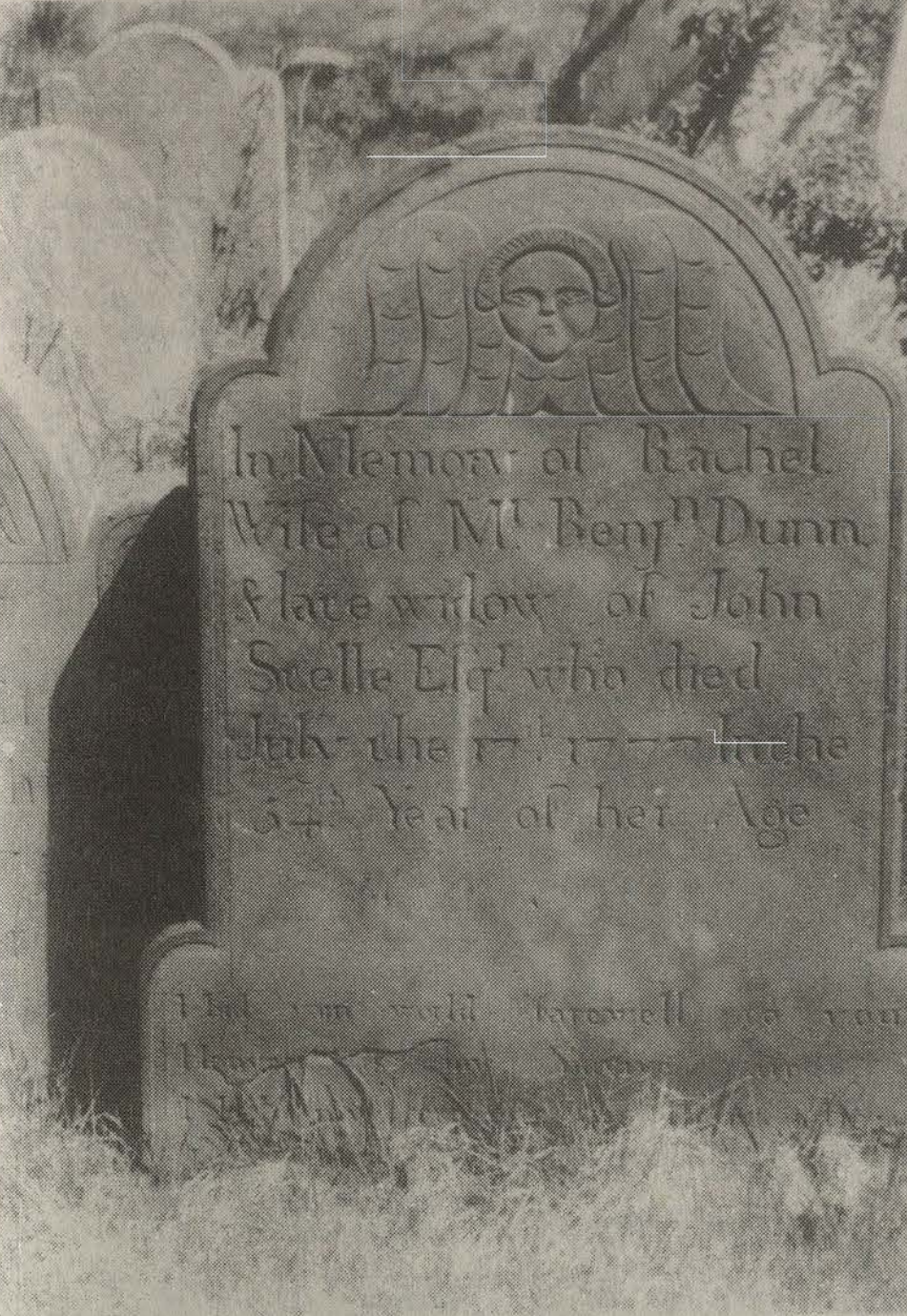
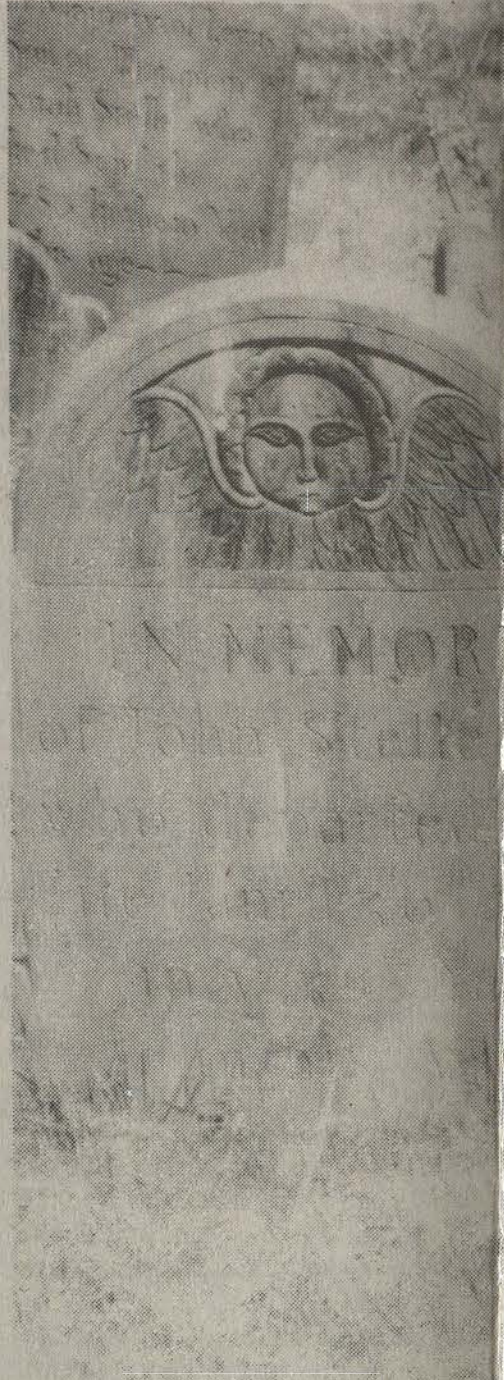
In 1911, Miss Ellen B. Cotheal gave a large endowment to the Church and Sunday School for its work. Rev. E. B. Joyce then resigned as Rector and Dr. Neilson became his successor. A Parish House for Sunday School and social work was built and dedicated May 16, 1914, by Dr. Neilson. After the completion of ten years of faithful service and winning the affection of all his people, Dr. Neilson resigned and was made Rector Emeritus, Nov. 14, 1914, and Rev. Henry Hale Gifford was unanimously elected to succeed him.

Puritans exert influence on gravestones in Edison

Edison Twp. Pub. Library
340 Plainfield Ave.
Edison, N. J. 08817



Various forms of the winged head of death are carved into Capt. Nathan Manning's gravestone (above) and those of members of the Steele family, all of whom are buried in the cemetery at the St. James Episcopal Church, Edison. The Puritan image symbolizes the spiritual transition between death and new life.



NOT TO BE TAKEN
FROM LIBRARY

Religious art form depicts voyage of soul through death to new life, student says

By THOMAS R. DeCARO

EDISON — Area residents who want to see an art form which was practiced by the American Puritans do not have to travel to New England or even to a museum. They only have to go to the graveyard at St. James Episcopal Church.

That's what Kelly Sheehan, a 21-year-old student at Rutgers University, did when her America in the Arts professor assigned a project on folk art and she decided to do a photographic essay on the stone carving on old grave markers there.

The markers or gravestones in the cemetery, which is on Woodbridge Avenue, feature carvings that were a prevalent art form among the Puritans, according to Sheehan, whose father is president of the Edison Historical Society.

"It's New England stone carving," she said, "but it — like many other art forms — is not particularly American. The Celts had done it long before the Puritans, and it also appeared long ago in what is now Yugoslavia.

"If you go to New England," she added, "you'd see a lot of it, but you don't see much of it south of New England. But we have it right here in Edison."

That some Puritans moved to the Central Jersey area would account for the art form turning up in the township. But that, Sheehan noted, while a likely scenario, is

speculation, and little definitive research has been done on gravestone carving in New Jersey.

In fact, she said, those buried at St. James were not necessarily Puritans, but their gravestones are in the Puritan style.

According to Sheehan, most of the St. James cemetery markers with Puritan carvings — an art form which lasted about 165 years — are from the 18th and early 19th centuries. But not all from that time period are so decorated.

Some are very plain, she noted, and others — particularly those from the early 1800s — do not feature relief carvings and instead are shaped into more modern designs such as obelisks.

"It has been assumed that the American Puritans had no religious art," Sheehan said. "In fact, they did, and it appears on gravestones. Using gravestone carvings as a vehicle, the Puritans utilized emblems of death, symbols of the Resurrection and iconic soul representations."

There are several Puritan designs on the markers in the cemetery, and all appear above the epitaphs.

The skull and crossbones, Sheehan said, is one of the designs symbolic of the triumph of death, while the winged head of death, which appears on many of the gravestones, indicates the spiritual transition between death and new life.

A third popular image of the

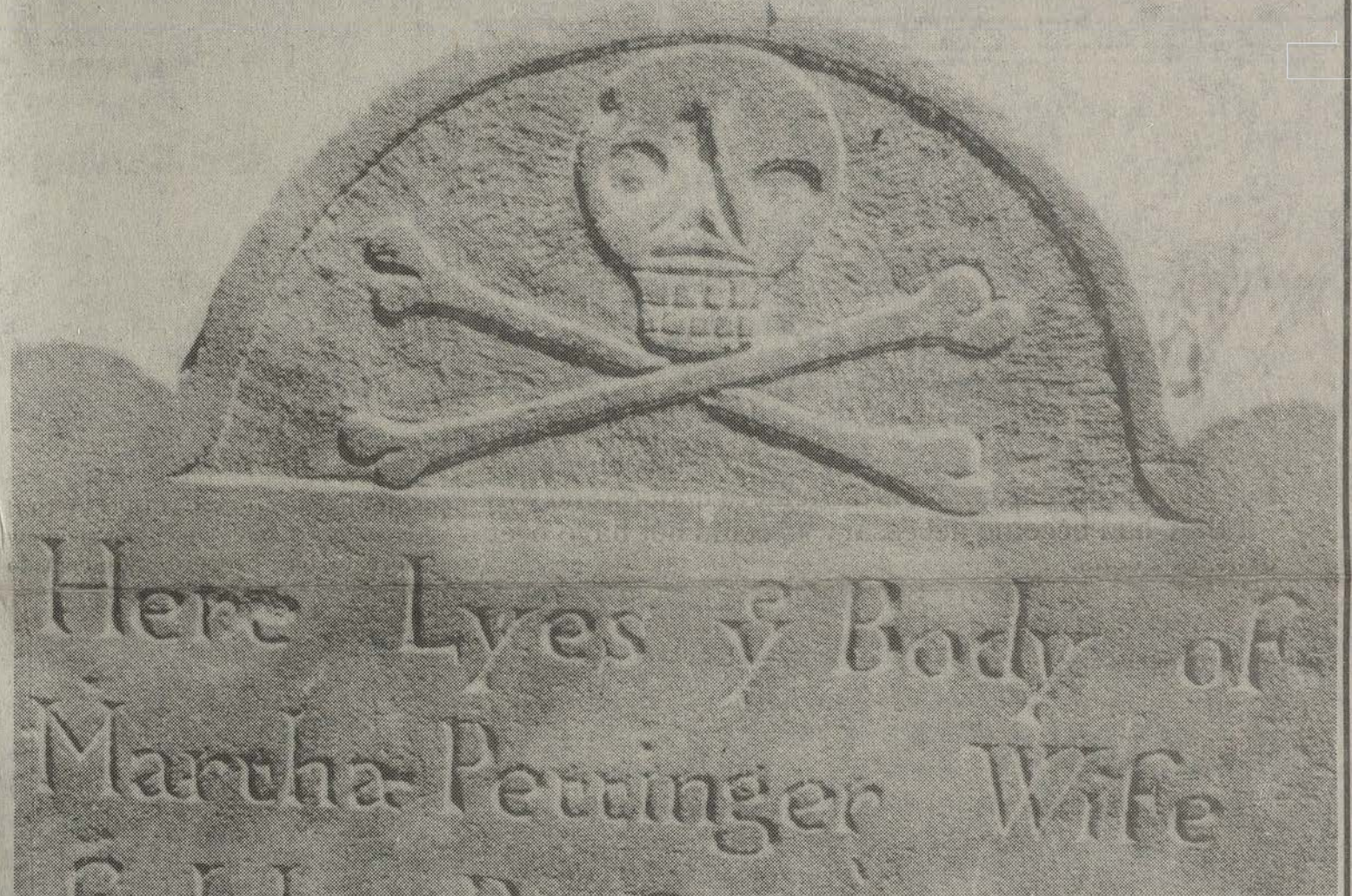
Puritan carvings includes flowers and garland and stems from the Scriptures, Sheehan said. The flowers, she noted, are associated with the life of man as well as with the shortness of life, and the garland symbolizes a spiritual victory over death.

"Gravestone art often depicted the voyage of the soul through death toward new life," she said.

Sheehan, a 1986 graduate of Edison High School, will graduate in May from Rutgers, where she is majoring in communications. Her paper on the gravestones at St. James Church so impressed her professor that he sent it to the New Jersey Folklore Society, which published it and many of her photographs in the fall/winter 1989 Folklore Society Review.

The Old Post Road resident said she had never really looked closely at the gravestones before — even though she lives a short distance from the cemetery — but had often heard her parents discuss how interesting they were. And that provided her with the inspiration for the project.

A second inspiration was that the house her family lives in was built by the Martins, one of the first families to settle and develop the Piscatawaytown section of Edison, and there are numerous Martin gravestones in the cemetery at St. James Church. One, in fact, is for the builders of the Sheehan home — Forman and Hanna Martin.



Martha Pettinger's gravestone (above) features a skull and crossbones, one of the terrors of death used by the Puritans to depict death's triumph. And the brevity of man's life is symbolized by the flower, such as the one carved into Jesse Hull's marker (below).

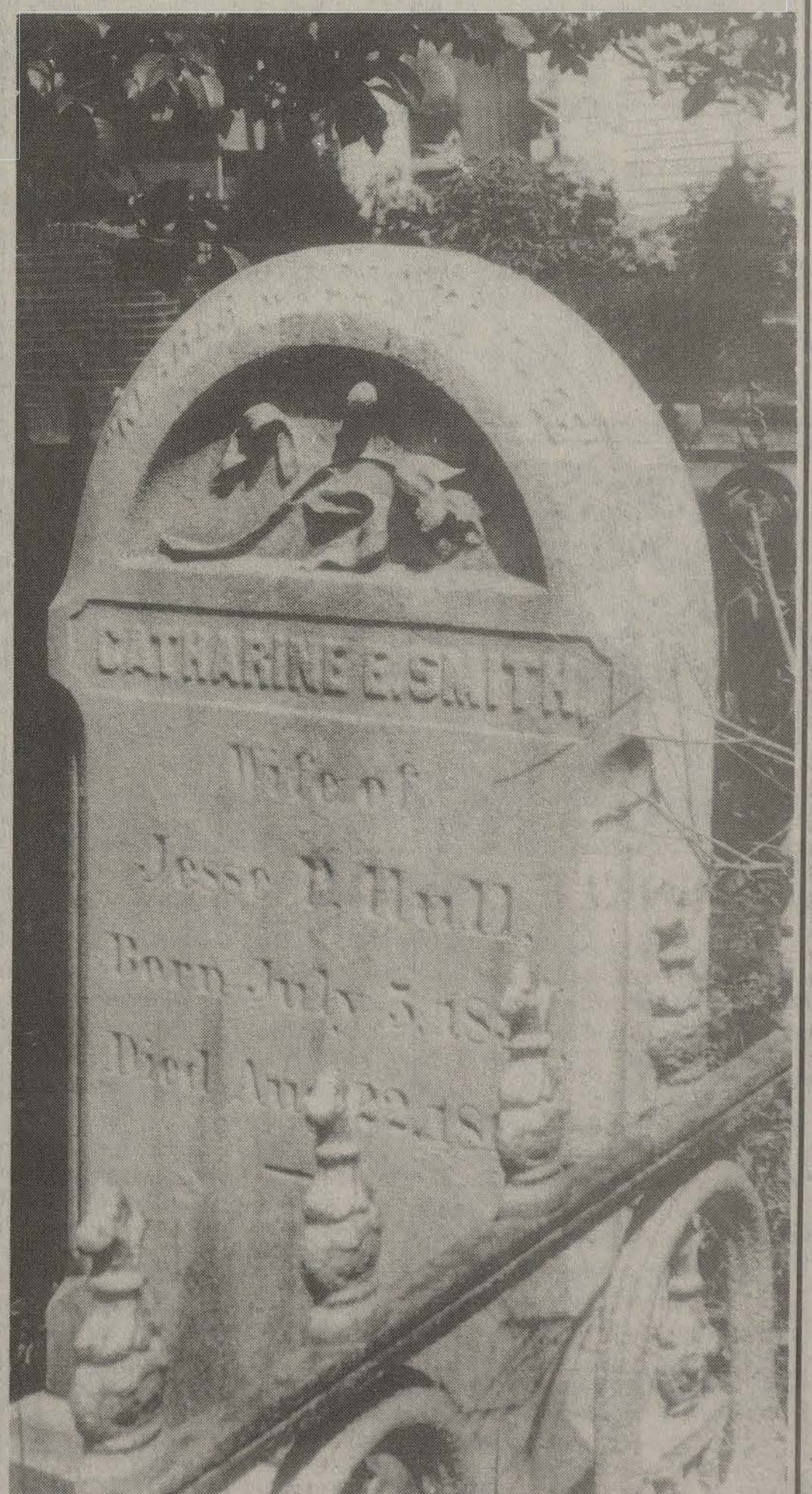
Photos by

Kelly Sheehan



Flowers and garland are the carvings on Mary Dunn's gravestone (r). To the Puritans, the flower symbolized the shortness

of life, but the garland signified the spiritual victory over death.



Miss Surretsky plans to marry

EDISON — Sherry Agnes Surretsky of this community and Michael Eugen Ciampi of Metuchen are engaged to be married.

The bride-to-be is the daughter of Jerome and Theresa Surretsky of Gales Road. Her fiancé is the son of Gisela Ciampi of Stockton Street, Metuchen, and the late Pasquale Ciampi.

Miss Surretsky is a saleswoman with Dorney Park and Wildwater Kingdom, a theme park in Allentown, Pa. She graduated from John P. Stevens High School and holds a B.S. degree from Rutgers University.

Mr. Ciampi, a patrolman with the Metuchen Police Department, graduated from Metuchen High School and Middlesex County College.

The wedding will take place February 8, 1991, at Our Lady of Peace Roman Catholic Church on the Edison-Fords border.



MICHAEL CIAMPI
and
SHERRY SURRETSKY

Eye makeup clinic in Edison

EDISON — A clinic on how to apply eye makeup will be conducted Wednesday, March 21, at Temple Emanuel-El, 100 James Street, across from John F. Kennedy Medical Center.

The program begins at 8 p.m. Women who plan to attend should arrive at the clinic without wearing makeup.

For reservations, call 985-9155. The clinic is being sponsored by the sisterhood of the temple.

Settlement is society topic

EDISON — The settlement of the Western Reserve in Ohio will be explored at tonight's meeting of the Metuchen-Edison Historical Society.

The meeting will begin at 8 p.m. in the Stelton Baptist Church, 334 Plainfield Avenue, near the main library. Speaker is Robert Martin, the president of the historical society, whose forebears settled the Western Reserve.

Admission is free and the public is invited to attend. Refreshments will be served.

Workshop on March 21

METUCHEN — In response to requests from an earlier program, Women Helping Women will explore "The Dance of Intimacy — Part II" in a community education workshop.

This program will take place Wednesday, March 21, at 7:30 p.m. in the annex of St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Route 27 and Oak Avenue. Relationships with a spouse, partner, friends, parents, children and colleagues will be addressed.

Mary Ann Thein will review some of the key points in the earlier workshop and discuss a familiar pattern: choosing the same type of partner over and over again.

Admission is \$3 for members of Women Helping Women and \$5 for the general public. It is not necessary to have been at the first program to attend the second.

To register, call 549-6000.

Purim celebrations taking place in the area

Purim, the Jewish Feast of Lots, is being marked in the area with a number of celebrations.

A Purim weekend is being held tomorrow and Sunday at Congregation Beth-El, 91 Jefferson Boulevard, Edison.

Tomorrow at 7:30 p.m. the Megillah will be read and a costume contest will be conducted. Refreshments will be served.

Sunday at 10:30 a.m. the Megillah reading will be followed by a Purim play presented by the Hebrew school. A Purim carnival will be hosted by the United Synagogue Youth.

All are welcome to attend. Participants are urged to dress in costume both tomorrow and Sunday.

An open house and carnival take place Sunday at Temple Neve Shalom, 250 Grove Avenue, Metuchen.

The open house will run from

10:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. and also will serve as the launch for the 1990 membership campaign at Neve Shalom. Refreshments will be served.

Guests are welcome to bring their families to the Purim carnival, scheduled from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The traditional Megillah reading will follow the Ma'ariv service. Children are encouraged to come in costume; games, prizes, hot dogs, soda and snacks are featured in the carnival.

Pupils in the Beth El-B'nai Shalom Religious School performed a Purim show Tuesday for residents of the Edison Estates nursing home on Plainfield Avenue, Edison.

The school is a joint effort of Congregation B'nai Shalom, Piscataway, and Congregation Beth El on Jefferson Boulevard. All the children sang songs and acted out a play as part of the school's mitzvah campaign.

Kids can see a film at library

EDISON — Children in preschool through 6th grade can come to the library this month to see a feature-length animated film.

The showings will be on Monday, March 19, at the Clara Barton library on Hoover Avenue; Tuesday, March 20, at the North Edison library on Grove Avenue; and Wednesday, March 21, at the main library on Plainfield Avenue. Showtimes are 3:30 and 7 p.m.

Registration is limited and open to children who live in Edison. Preschoolers must be accompanied by an adult; the program is not recommended for children under 2 years old.

To register, stop in at the appropriate library or call 738-0748 for Clara Barton, 548-4759 for North Edison, 287-2351 for the main library.

Chinese auction set for Sunday

EDISON — A Chinese auction will be held Sunday at Edison Memorial Post 3117, Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Doors open at 1 p.m. at the post home, 1970 Woodbridge Avenue, near Route 1 North. Tickets cost \$2.50 and may be purchased at the door. Refreshments will be served.

For more information, call Gen Fredmonski at 752-2628 or Roselee Fabio at 381-5787. The auction is being sponsored by District 8 of the VFW auxiliary.

Rent a table for flea market

EDISON — The auxiliary of Edison Lodge 2487, B.P.O. Elks, is holding a flea market Sunday, April 29, at the Elks lodge on Old Post Road.

Hours for the flea market are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., rain or shine. Tables will cost \$15 for a space outdoors or \$20 indoors. For more information, call Chris Gregis at 985-2487.

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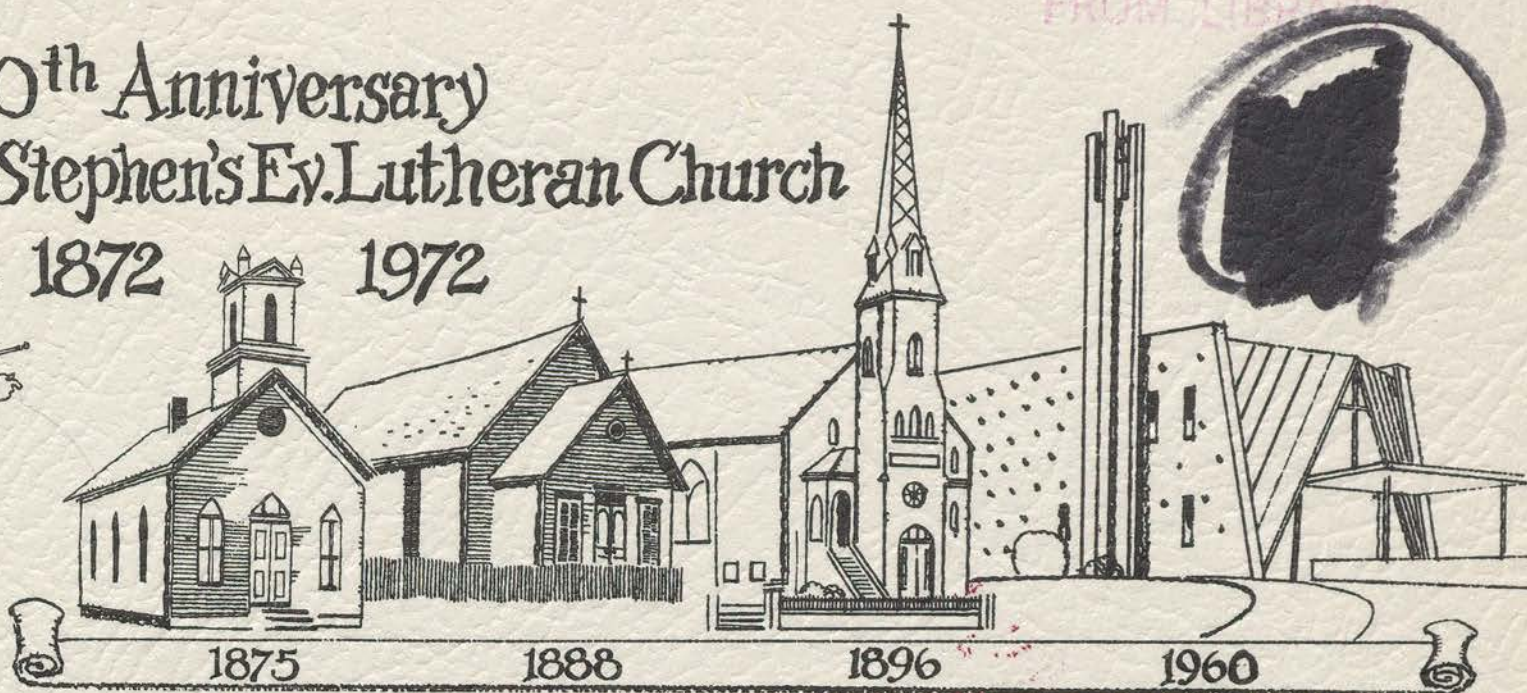
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100th Anniversary
St. Stephen's Ev. Lutheran Church

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ONE HUNDRED YEARS-

'Walking with our Lord'

Amos 3:3

"CAN TWO WALK TOGETHER, EXCEPT THEY BE AGREED?"



OH, Jesus, our Christ, Has Come To Us.

Moderato

Music: Carl A. Brodbeck
Lyrics: Fredina L. Brodbeck

—Intro—

OH Je-sus our Christ has

come to us with on-ly His O-o-pen hands. He's

come to show us our e-vil ways and to change our un-God-ly

D.C. to Coda ♪ on Fourth Verse

plans OH Yes He's come-to help us and for

man-y pe-ople to sa-ve OH tell-ing the word of His

Fa-a-ther - and giv-ing the guidance He gave.

A - MEN

For us He gave His very life,
Though t'was not very long.
His word is heard to this very day,
Still making the people strong.

3. The day will come, He'll return to us,
And give us His helping hand.
He'll make all the people holy again,
Throughout the world, His land.

Until that day our beloved Lord,
Please help us in our needs.
Give us the strength of Your loving heart,
In all of our thoughts and our deeds.

4. Yes, Jesus our Christ came to us,
With only His open hands.
He came and showed us our evil ways,
And changed our ungodly plans.
AMEN

2. The Son of God, our Lord Savior,
His goodness went on and on.
Oh, healing both body and mind, did He,
And loving all who are born.



OUR PRESENT CHURCH

120-124 Pleasant Avenue

Sunday School	9:15 a.m.
Worship	10:30 a.m. (9:30 a.m. July and August)
Holy Communion	First Sunday of the Month

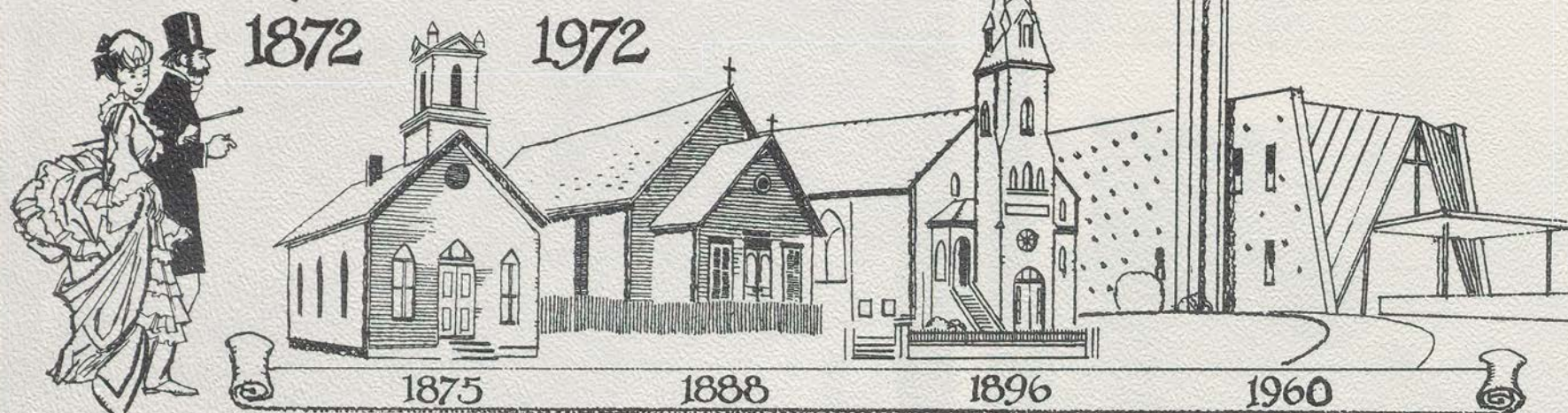
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Mr. Harry P. Lund	-	President, Church Council
Mr. Peter Seyffart	-	President, Sunday School
Mrs. Marie Luckhurst	-	Organist & Choir Director
Mrs. Magnus Johnsen *	-	President, Ladies Aid
Mr. Richard Seyffart	-	President, St. Stephen's Youth

*Mrs. Magnus (Julia) Johnsen went to be with the Lord 8/8/72

100th Anniversary St. Stephen's Ev. Lutheran Church



PROGRAM:

Mr. & Mrs. Herbert Madsen
74 Sargent Road
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BANQUET:

Mr. & Mrs. George Korch
9 Turner Avenue
Edison, N.J. 08817

CENTENNIAL JOURNAL:

Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Billich
48 Dellwood Road
Edison, N.J. 08817

HISTORY:

Mr. & Mrs. Howard Reeder
17 James Place
Metuchen, N.J. 08840

INVITATIONS:

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285 Chain O'Hills Road
Colonia, N.J. 07065

MUSIC:

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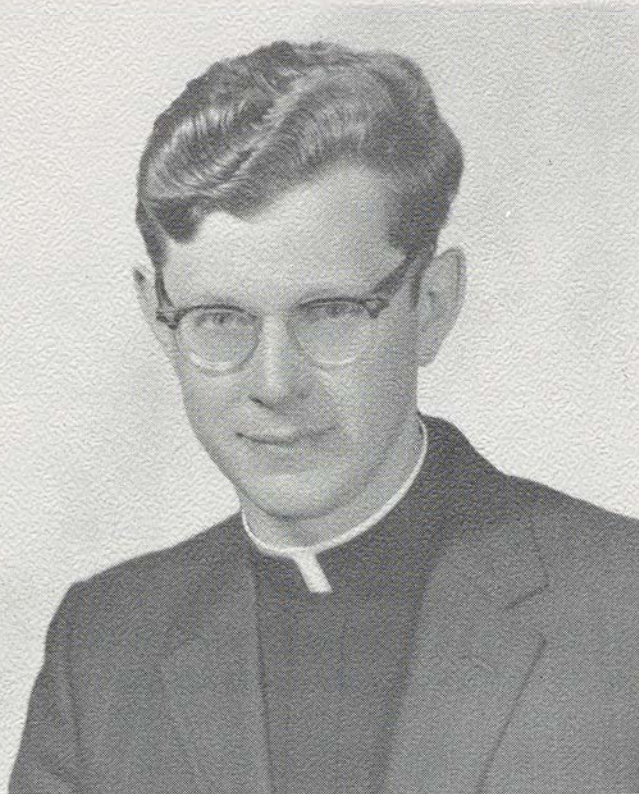
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Peace to All!

These days non-Danish Americans are discovering what Danes have long valued, the Christmas plates by Bing and Grondahl or by Royal Copenhagen. Many homes of members of St. Stephen's have splendid displays of these delicate blue porcelain plates with their scenes of Christmas, winter, Danish castles and churches.

The Danes know how to enjoy life. After all they are the ones who gave Danish modern, Victor Borge, and smørrebrød to America.

It is the word "happy" which describes the spiritual contribution of that part of the Danish Church from which St. Stephen's springs, the heritage of Bishop Nikolai F.S. Grundtvig, 1783-1872. This man is remembered by the new Grundtvig Church in Copenhagen, the church which looks like an organ. More significant is his contribution as originator of the folk school, his influence in shaping Denmark into a modern democracy, and of course, his great hymns and religious teaching.

Like Martin Luther, N.F.S. Grundtvig went through a period of agony and emptiness of the soul until he discovered God's truth and God's Savior for himself. Grundtvig lived among skeptics in a time when the state church was dormant, encountered a rationalism which offered no rebirth, saw the Bible studied without faith, and found the formalism in the church deadening. The reaction to these faults of the church has left its mark on St. Stephen's congregation of the present day.

In his spiritual pilgrimage Grundtvig experienced man's sin and helplessness and most happily discovered the effective and sufficient grace of God in Christ. About 1500 hymns bear the mark of Grundtvig's genius and celebrate the redemptive work of Christ; God's coming to man at Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost; the gifts of salvation offered in baptism and holy communion; God speaking to man in his living Word; and the supreme happiness of being alive in God's world.

Lutherans who stand in the spiritual line of Grundtvig can offer to America their example of a joyful confidence in God as their Father and Christ as their Savior, and the happiness of being His people.

St. Stephen's Evangelical Lutheran Church is now embarking on its second hundred years of service to God, family and country.

For those of us who have been associated with St. Stephen's for a lifetime, half a lifetime, or part of a lifetime, there is a part within us which will always be remembered as having come from St. Stephen's. Conversely, all of us have contributed in some degree to the first one hundred years of St. Stephen's. Many who have given much to St. Stephen's are no longer with us. Some have been gone from our midst but a short time and all too many who were with us at our 75th Anniversary celebration have been called from our midst. We each have our own indelible memories of you and how you so willingly and unselfishly gave of yourself to St. Stephen's. We remember you and humbly thank you.

May this Centennial Journal supplement the activities of our Centennial Celebration and provide a permanent record of the first one hundred years of St. Stephen's.

To Charles Waterhouse, a special thanks for the impressive drawing now in use on our letterheads and which is reproduced on the cover of the Journal.

To all, our efforts during the past two years have been directed toward assuring a memorable Centennial Celebration. It has been a labor of love for St. Stephen's.

Carl B.S. Pedersen
For the 1972 Centennial
Committee

In the Service Book and Hymnal are these Grundtvigian hymns: The Happy Christmas Comes Once More, Bright and Glorious is the Sky, Built on a Rock the Church Doth Stand, Peace to Sooth Our Bitter Woes, Golden Light Serene and Bright, God's Word is Our Great Heritage, and My Lord I Hear Thee Pleading.

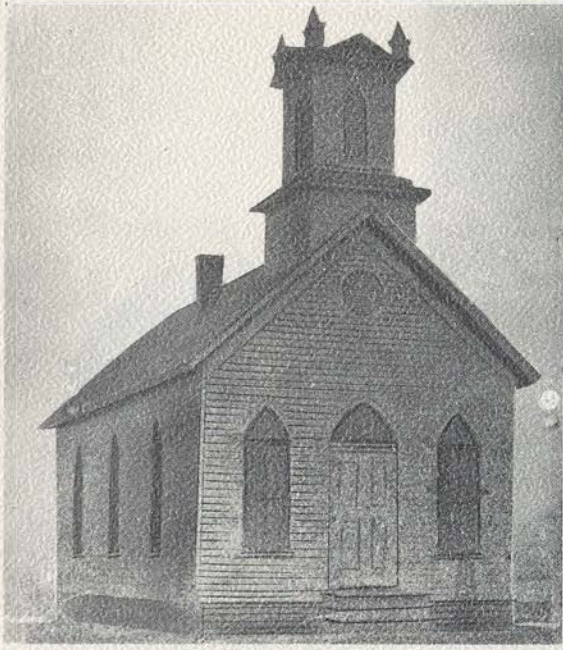
*God's Word is our great heritage,
And shall be ours forever;
To spread its light from age to age
Be this our chief endeavor;
Through life it guides our way,
In death it is our stay;
Lord, grant while time shall last,
Thy Church may hold it fast
Throughout all generations.*

During anniversaries thoughts go back to beginnings, even beyond 1872 to New Testament times, because the name of our beloved church keeps in memory Stephen, the first follower of Christ to die for his faith. In the New Testament the words martyr and witness are the same word. All Christians are called to be witnesses to the redeeming and reconciling work of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

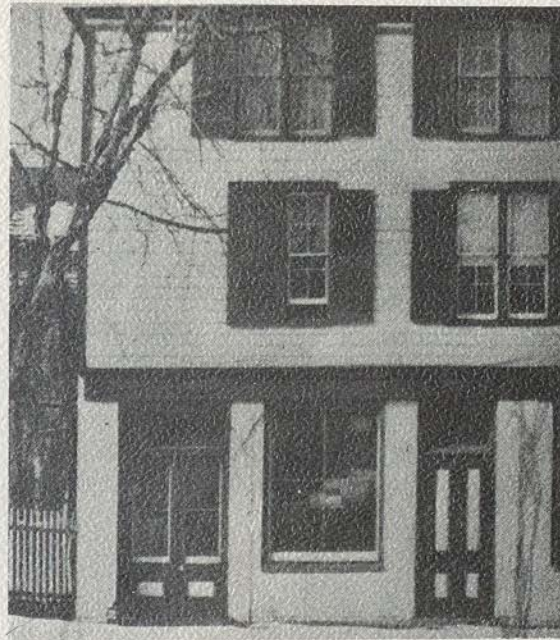
St. Stephen's Church has witnessed in many ways. 3361 baptisms in 100 years are part of this witness...God's love offered so many times in the grace of baptism...families concerned for the souls of their children.

We rejoice in 100 years of history. At the same time, the memory of Stephen and our former pastors and members call us to our present and future duty: to be witnesses to the work of God in today's world...to call people to repentance and forgiveness, to faith and citizenship in God's eternal kingdom.

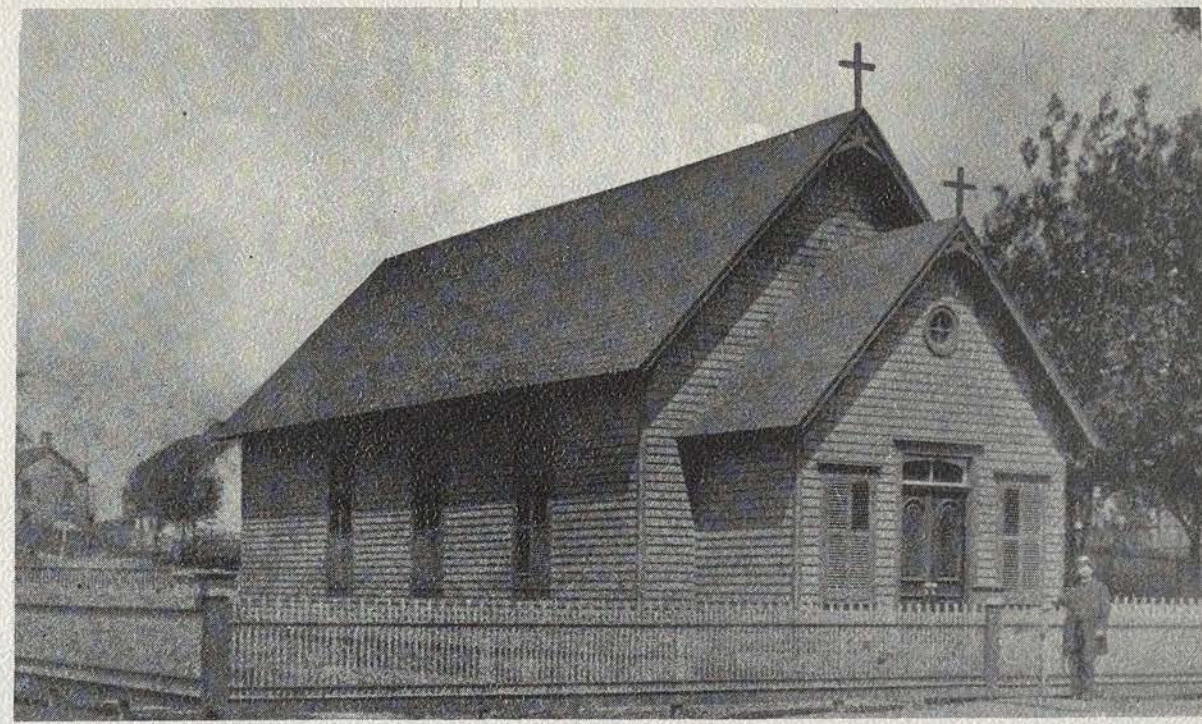
Pastor John C. Melin



First Church, East Avenue, Perth Amboy
Built 1875.



Ward's Hall, Perth Amboy, where services
were conducted.



Church on corner of State and Broad Streets, built 1888.



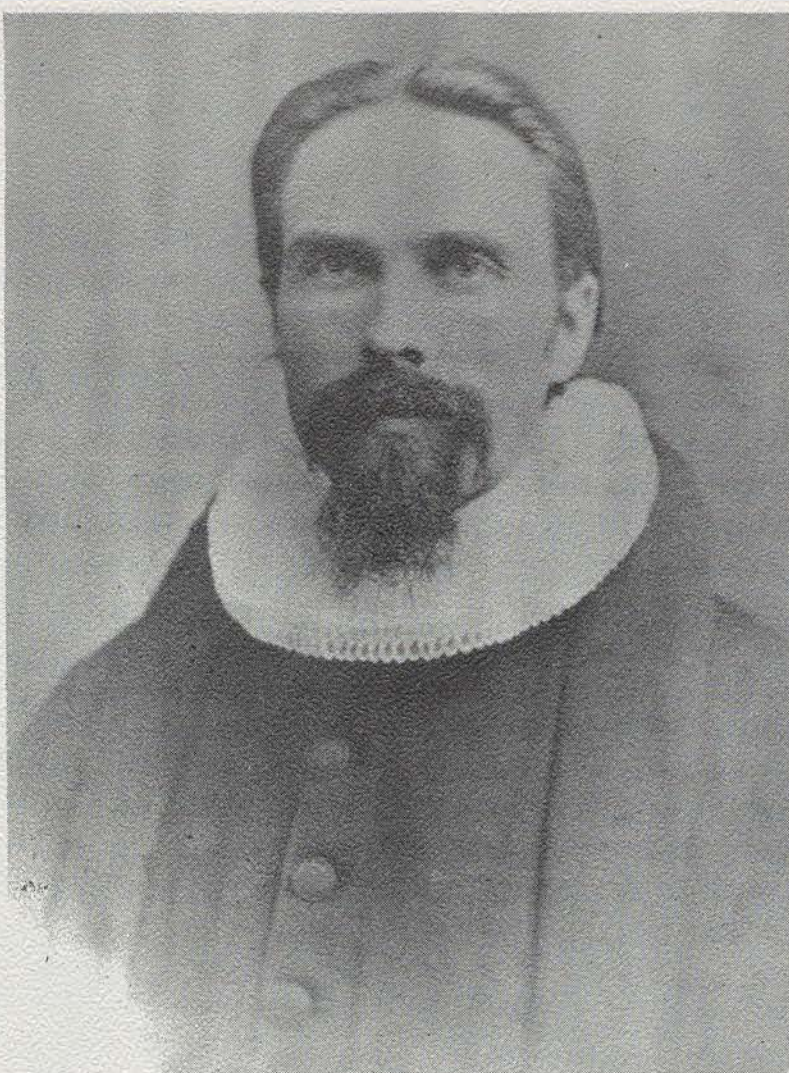
Chapel, 76 Pleasant Avenue, Edison, built
1949.



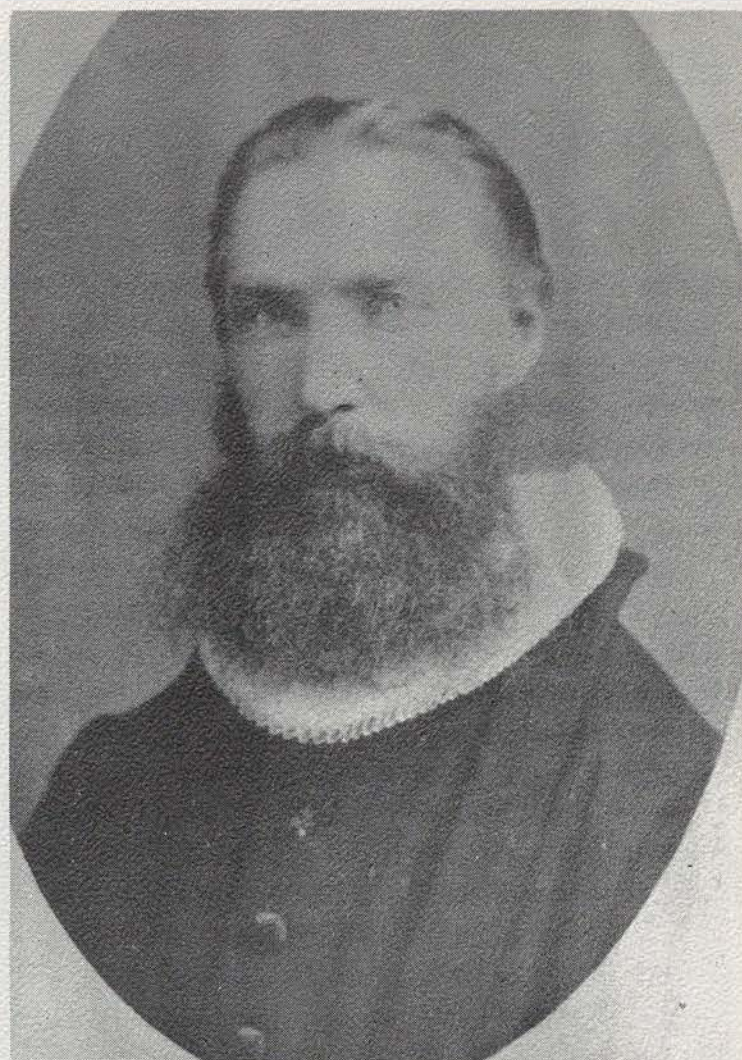
Children's Home, 414 Compton Avenue,
Perth Amboy, built 1916. Room for 16
children. Board of Directors were members
of St. Stephen's.



Interior of church on State and Broad Streets.



Rev. A. L. J. Søholm
1872-1878



Rev. R. Andersen
1878-1883



Rev. Ole Jacobsen
1887-1898



Rev. Johannes V. Steenstrup
1898-1900



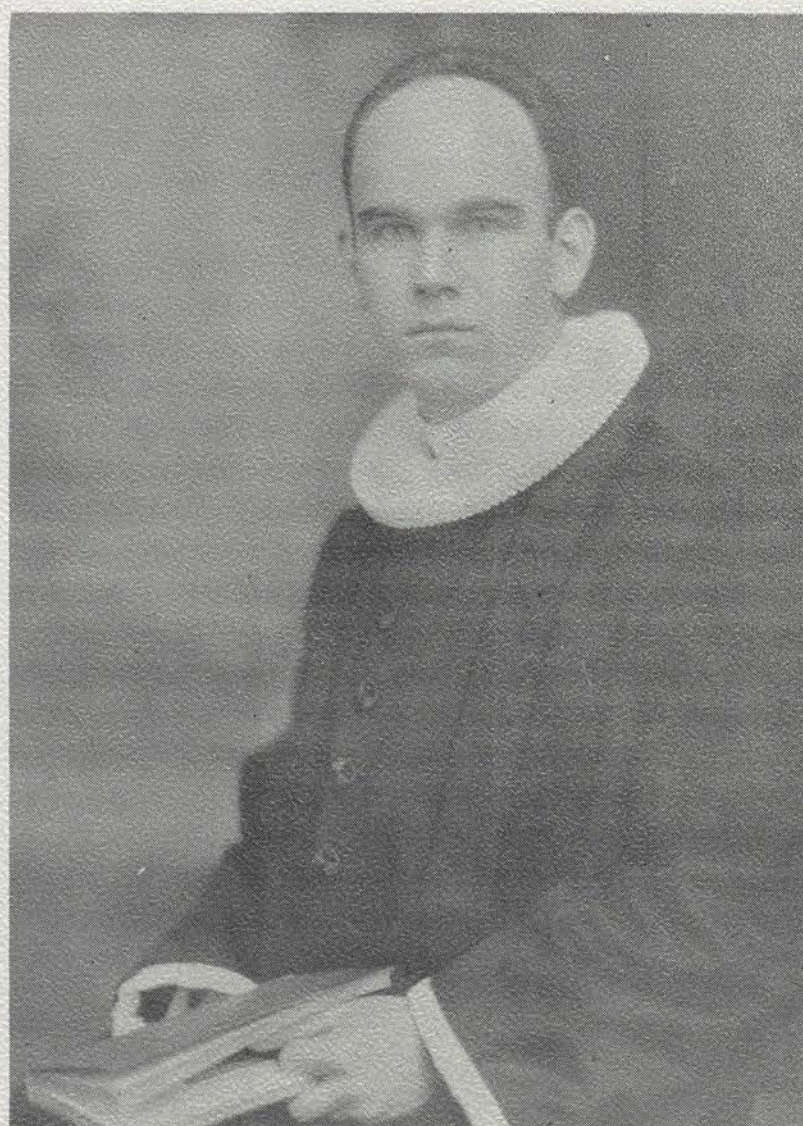
Rev. Johannes Christiansen
1900-1910



Rev. A. T. Dorf, Ph.D.
1911-1916



Rev. N. Hansen
1917-1919



Rev. Svend Kjaer
1919-1922



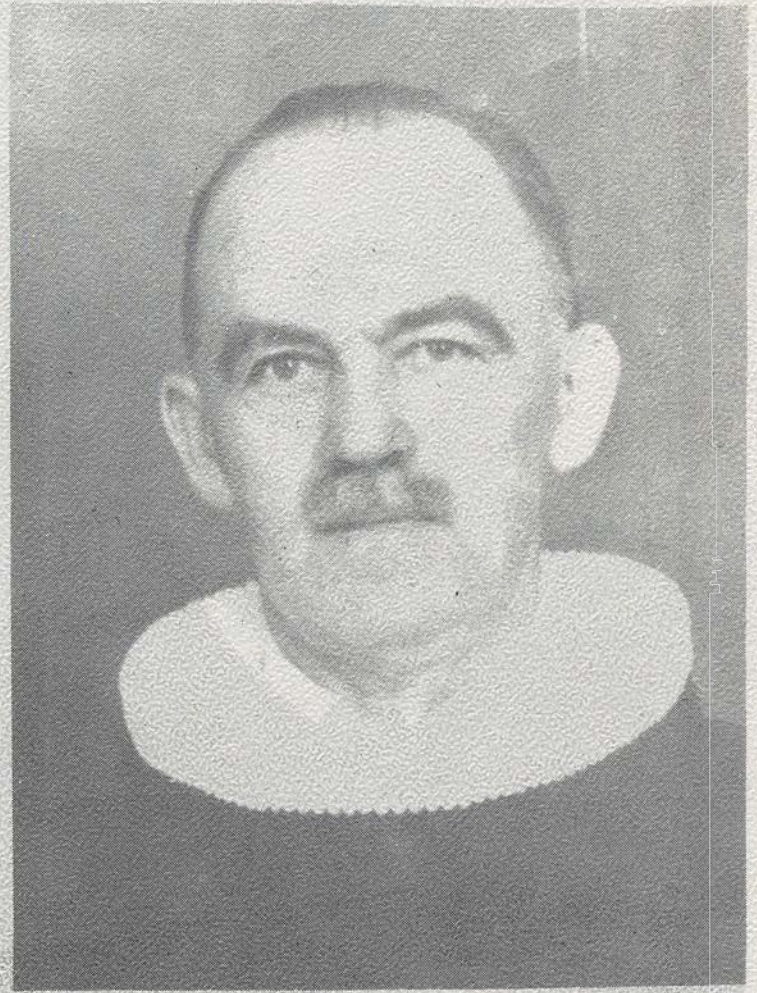
Rev. Hans Jensen
1923-1926



Rev. P. Götke
1926-1929



Rev. O. H. Dyreborg
1929-1934



Rev. P. H. Pedersen
1934-1940



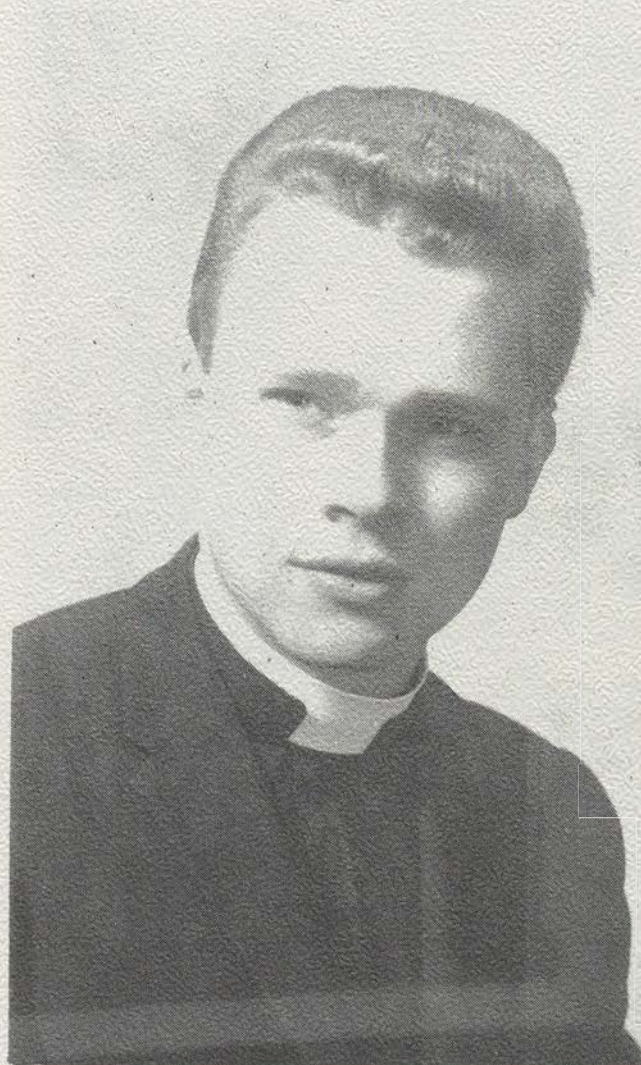
Rev. Swen A. Baden
1941-1944



Rev. Ove R. Nielsen
1945-1948



Rev. K. Kirkegaard-Jensen
1948-1964



Rev. Fred Berkobin
1964-1966

LADIES AID SOCIETY

The Ladies Aid Soceity was organized in 1889 when St. Stephen's Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church had as it's pastor, Ole Jacobsen. Although their initial meetings were held in private homes, they soon changed to the church on State and Broad Streets. Their traditional festivities such as the annual birthday party, Fastelavnsfest, Høstfest, Strawberryfest, cake sales and bazaars, served as a source of collecting the money which has enabled the Ladies Aid to make regular substantial contributions to St. Stephen's and even to various missions throughout the world. In the early days they kept very busy sewing confirmand's clothes; making children's clothes with fancy hand-embroidery; and sewing household items which were sold at the bazaars.

Prior to 1943, the meetings were conducted in Danish but, in order to encourage more ladies to join the Ladies Aid, this was changed to English. The minutes were not written in English until March 1947.

All efforts to trace the whereabouts of the Secretary's book or books, prior to 1922 have failed, so small bits of information have been gathered from listening to a few very interesting Ladies Aid members plus some excerpts taken from Ladies Aid minutes as recorded in the Secretary's books as follows:

1922: A discussion was held about the necessity of having a stove to heat the kitchen at Broad St. A member offered to donate her oilstove which, of course, was heartily approved by all...A committee of three was chosen to help the church board with a dinner and evening program for St. Stephen's 50th Anniversary celebration. The cost per dinner ticket was \$1.00 which included the serving of cake and coffee later in the evening...It was voted on to buy a water kettle and five dozen teaspoons for \$15.00 or "as cheap as possible"...A decision was made to obtain five shares from the Building Loan to help pay off the church's debt of \$3,550...A letter was received from the Red Cross asking the Ladies Aid to sew sheets, pillowcases, clothes, etc. Many ladies volunteered to do so. At the next meeting, one lady reported she had sewn 12 dresses "with bloomers to match".

1923: Ten dollars worth of groceries were purchased to stock the pantry as part of the welcome planned for Pastor & Mrs. Hans Jensen.

1932: Paid for three tons of coal for the church - cost \$35.25... A committee of five was chosen to prepare a program for our 60th Anniversary celebration...The minister was asked to get an estimate on how much it would cost to have heat installed in the Broad Street kitchen.

1937: The janitor was given permission to buy a "dustless mop."

1939: Paid \$5.00 for altar flowers when Crown Prince Frederick and Princess Ingrid of Denmark visited St. Stephen's in 1939...Decided to pay for a "Service Prayer Book" to be presented to each of our young men entering the military service in World War II.

1941: At the Strawberry Festival held on June 5, coffee was 5 cents, Julekage five cents, plain strawberries five cents, and strawberries with whipped cream ten cents.

1943: Due to oil rationing, no meeting was held in February... Bought "blackout" curtains for the basement and kitchen windows...Due to gas rationing, the Ladies Aid was unable to deliver flowers to the sick so the next best thing was to send get-well cards...Sold \$15,996.90 worth of war stamps and \$21,350.00 worth of war bonds in Grants 10¢ store in Perth Amboy.

1944: A motion was made and seconded to send \$25.00 to the "Danish War Refugees" in Sweden...At the Food Sale held in May, beside the usual cake and bread for sale, there were two smoked mackerel for sale!

1948: The Ladies Aid took in its 100th member - Mrs. Einer Nielsen of Metuchen.

The Ladies Aid has annual affairs consisting of Chinese Auctions, Rummage Sales, Spring luncheons, bus trips, bazaars and last, but not least, Christmas parties. As in the beginning, the Ladies Aid still contributes regularly to the church. It meets in the Fellowship Hall at 120 Pleasant Avenue, Edison at 1:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month with the exception of July and August.

May the Ladies Aid continue to carry on the tremendous work that has been done in the past 83 years by ladies who had such an unlimited determination to make their affairs successful! I know them well - as I've been their Secretary for 19 out of my 23 years of being a Ladies Aid member. **They will never be forgotten! OUR HATS ARE OFF TO THEM!**

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Norma C. Sorensen Pedersen

Secretary

Mrs. Julia Johnsen

President

Mrs. Alice Pedersen

Vice President

Mrs. Rose Jensen

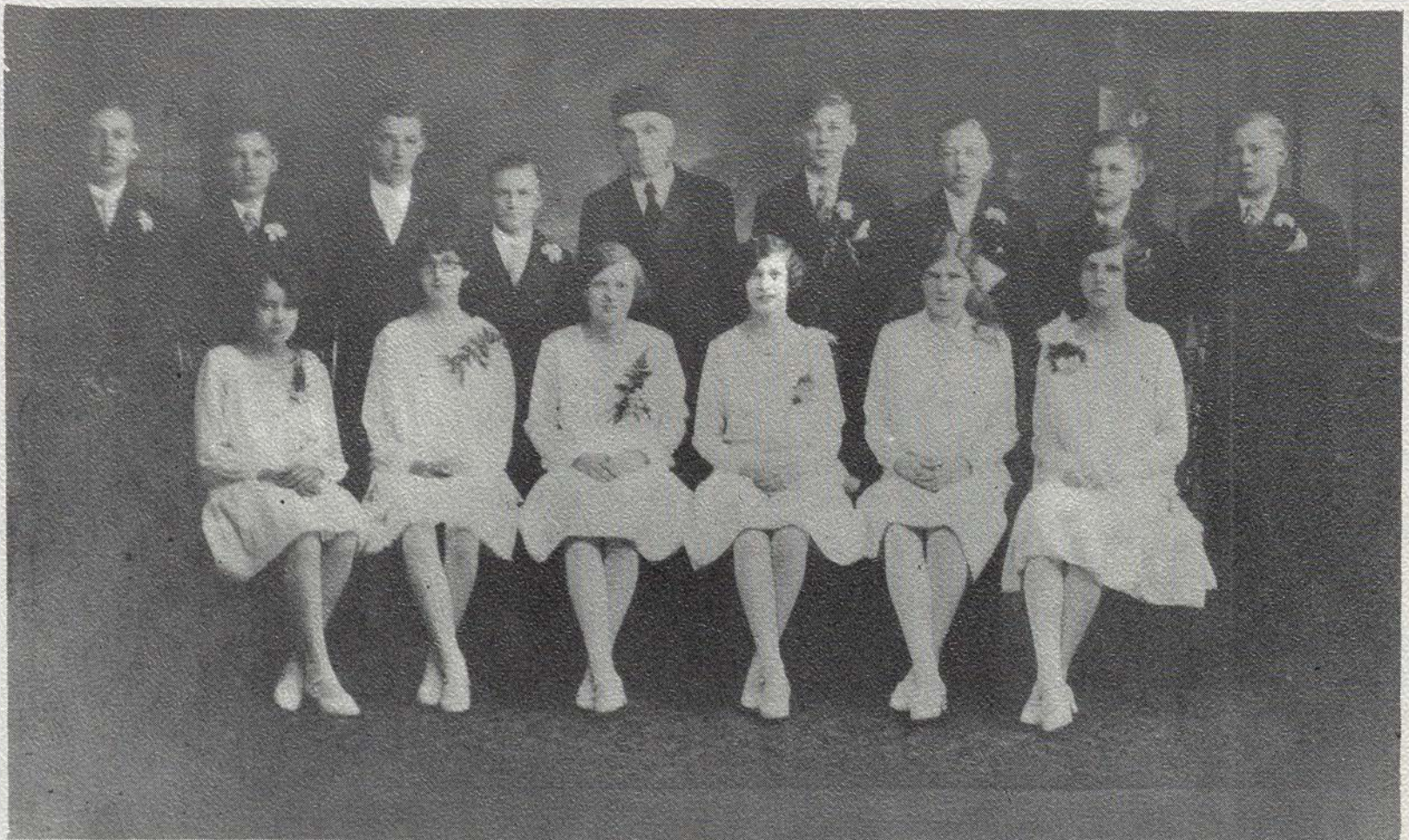
Treasurer

Mrs. Agnes Kongshoj

Hospitality Chairman



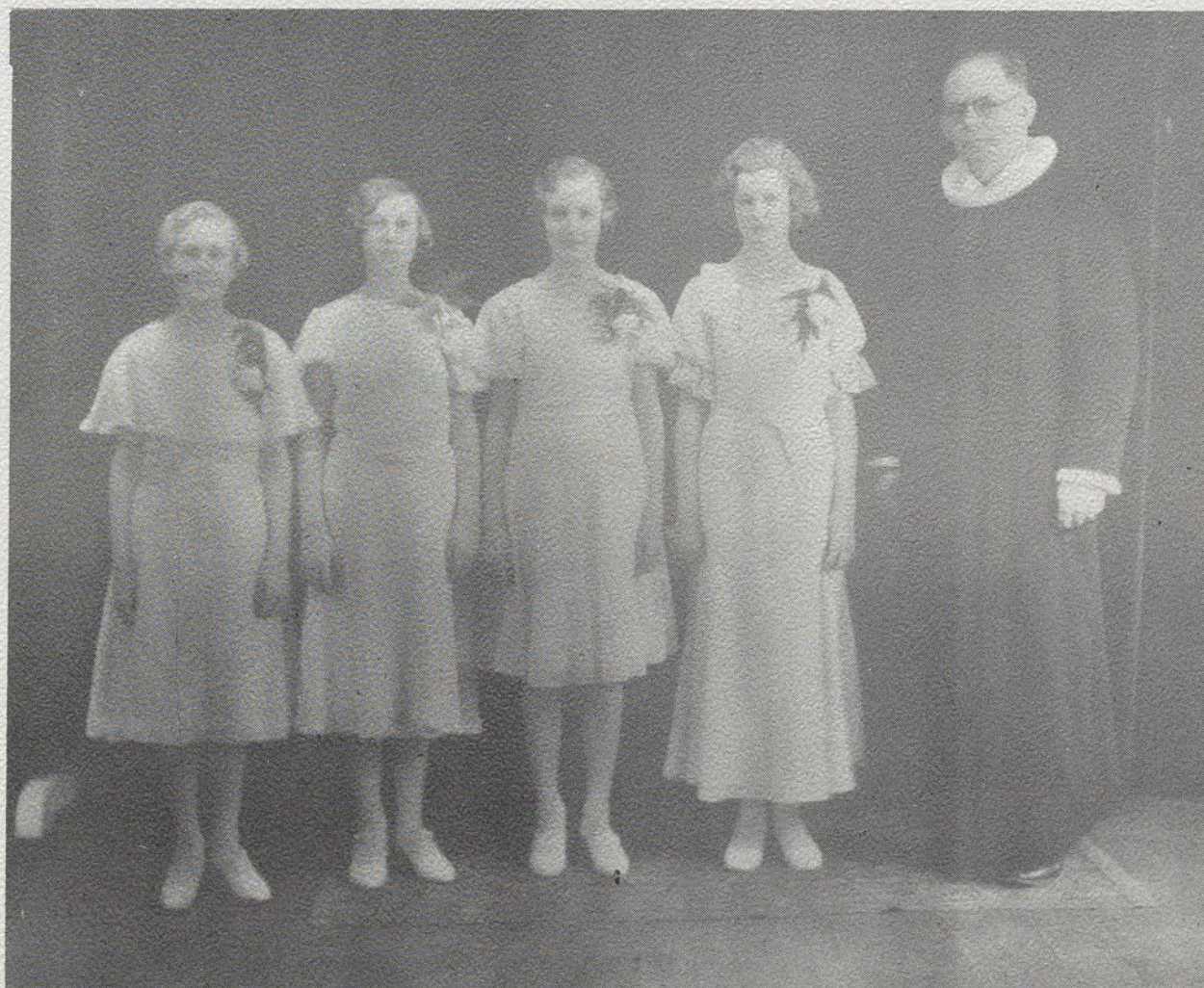
CONFIRMATION CLASS
1907



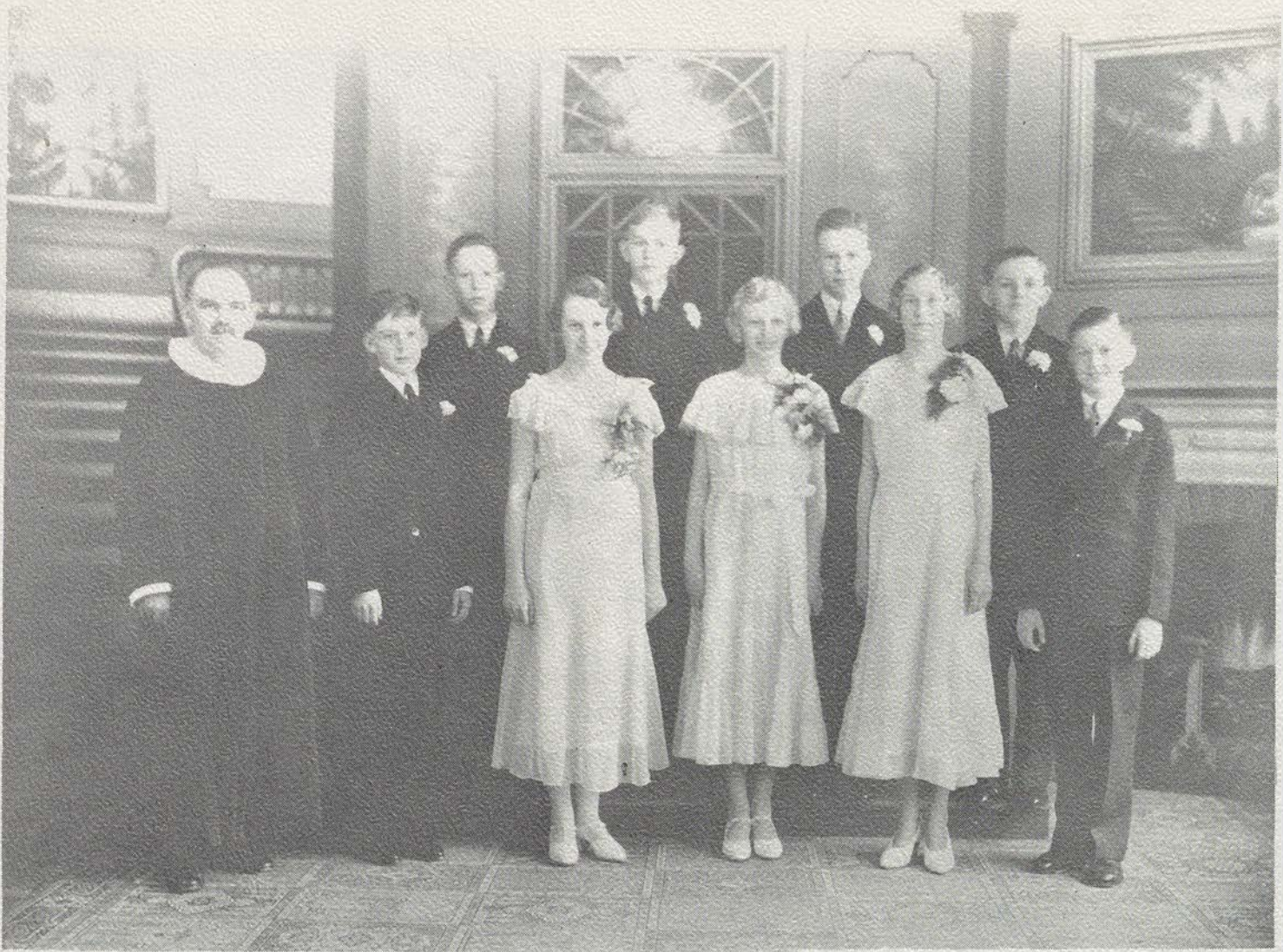
CONFIRMATION CLASS
1928



CONFIRMATION CLASS
1930



CONFIRMATION CLASS
1932



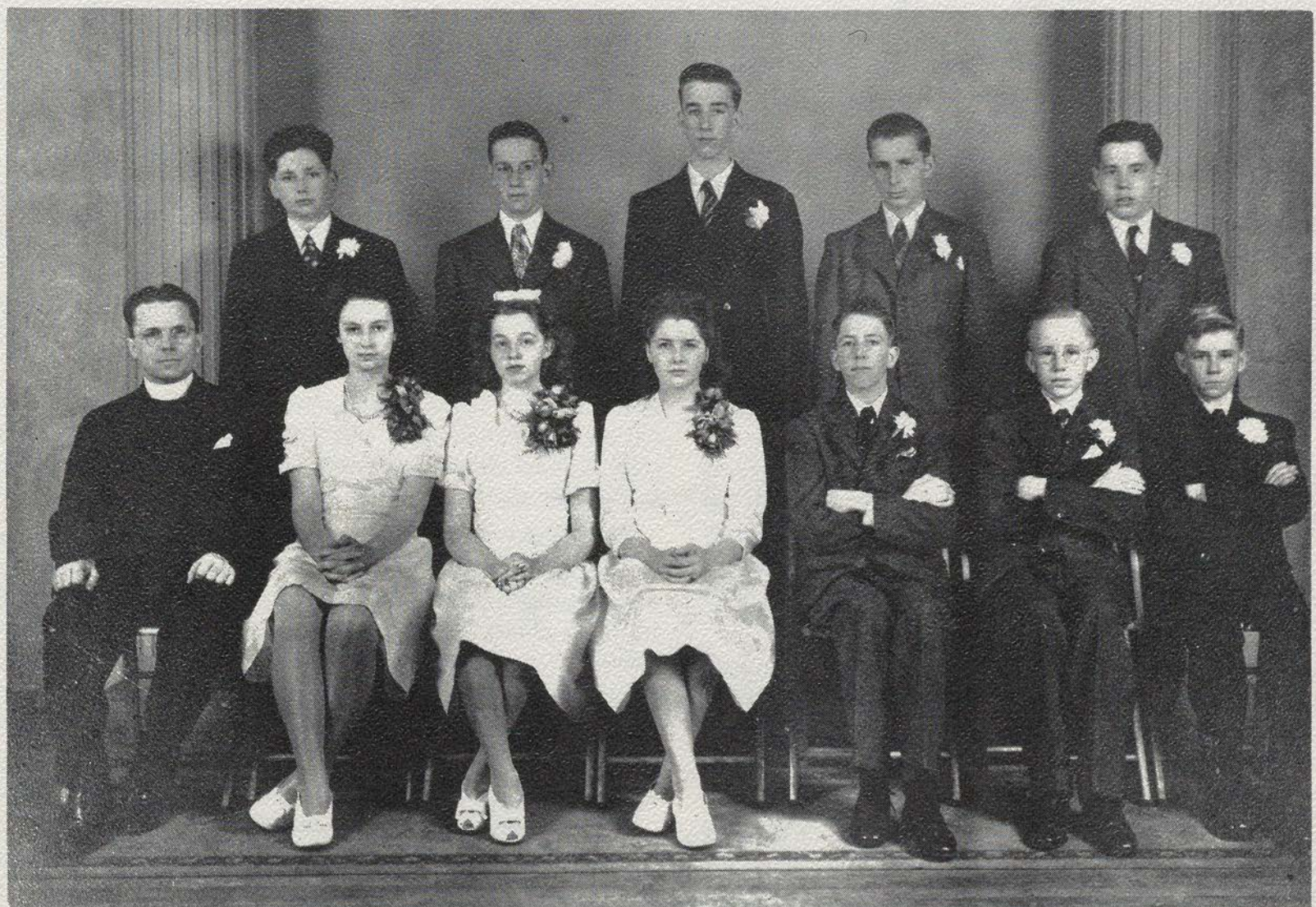
CONFIRMATION CLASS
1934



CONFIRMATION CLASS
1935



CONFIRMATION CLASS
1942



CONFIRMATION CLASS
1944

St. Stephen's Evangelical Lutheran Church has reached a milestone in its history--100 years of service to the peoples of the Central New Jersey area.

It all began during the period immediately following the American Civil War. Numerous immigrants arriving from Denmark settled in the Perth Amboy area. By 1870, it became apparent that a place was needed not only for church services in their native language, but also as a place for socializing and the promotion of good fellowship. Finally, on August 20, 1872, forty-one people assembled and St. Stephen's Danish Lutheran Church was formally organized. Five weeks later, on September 15, 1872, the first worship service was conducted in Danish by Pastor Anders L. J. Scholm.

Within three years the congregation had erected a church on East Avenue which, although small and plain, did have domed windows, an imposing cupola, and a large front door. Heat was furnished by a large pot bellied stove and rough wooden benches served as pews. Five years later, due to a decline in membership, the building was sold to the city for use as a school house. Worship services were again held in private homes or in rented facilities. Various visiting pastors held services from 1883 through 1887.

A resurgence in membership enabled the congregation to construct a new wooden frame church on the corner of State and Broad Streets in 1888. Larger than the first church, it was undoubtedly built by the congregation's many fine carpenters. In the place of the traditional steeple, a small cross adorned each of the tandem peaks of the church.

The continuing growth of the congregation made it apparent that a larger church was necessary. This time it was decided to build a brick church and a frame parsonage. The imposing church was completed in 1896 and the towering spire of its copper-covered steeple, topped by a cross, became one of Perth Amboy's most easily recognized landmarks. For over sixty years this two-storied building served the needs of St. Stephen's. The upper floor, with the traditional stained-glass windows throughout, was the sanctuary where all regular worship services were held.

A third level included not only the choir loft which extended the full width of the church, but also a huge pipe organ. Behind the organ was a small alcove where bell ringers would stand when pulling on the long thick ropes hanging down from the belfry. Young boys considered it a great honor to be permitted to ring the bell which signaled the beginning of the services. From the choir loft could be heard each and every Sunday the voices of Lydia Gerlufsen or Ellen Christensen leading the congregation in the singing of hymns, accompanied by Rolf Gunst or Ernest Christophersen at the organ.

The semi-cylindrical shaped altar area had a dome ceiling and, centered on the wall above the altar, the large painting of the Risen Christ was flanked on either side by stained glass windows. This painting which was donated by the Danish Young People's Society now hangs on the wall of the choir loft in our present church.

The church basement ("Undersalon") ran the entire length and breadth of the building and was completely finished. It served the congregation of St. Stephen's in a multitude of ways. All Sunday School classes and congregational meetings were held in the church

parlors as were all regular meetings of Church affiliated groups such as the Ladies Aid, Young People's Societies, Sea Scouts, and "Saturday School" where children were taught the Danish language and heritage. In addition, programs in the form of dances and plays were presented in conjunction with special celebrations throughout the year. A small stage was at one end of the room and behind it was a kitchen complete with all facilities. At the opposite end was the entrance with nearby coatrooms, restrooms, and the boiler room.

One of the most active groups within the church during the Broad Street era was the Danish Young People's Society. They presented annual Danish plays which were usually under the direction of Valdemar Hoyer. When the D.Y.P.S. ceased to function in 1937, a semi-monthly Dansk Aften (Danish Evening) was held. Gradually, these evenings of Danish get-togethers dwindled to monthly, then bi-monthly affairs until finally, a few years ago, these traditions became another entry in the history pages of St. Stephen's.

The year 1928 saw the emergence of another group, the Junior Young People's Society, composed of young people who were at least 14 years of age or who had been confirmed. Regular meetings were held each Friday, usually in the church parlors. Various programs were planned for each meeting. However, the third Friday was set aside for the pastor. Annual plays were staged and normally presented on two consecutive nights at Dana Hall, Washington Hall, or the Masonic Temple.

St. Stephen's was now experiencing significant changes. The younger members were mostly American-born. It therefore, became necessary for church-related activities to be conducted in English. The Junior Young People's Society had already made the transition and the last confirmation to be conducted in Danish was held in 1934. Thereafter, although services continued to be held in Danish, confirmation was conducted in English. Finally, in 1941 under Pastor Swen Baden, dual services were initiated; Danish services were at ten o'clock and English at eleven o'clock.

Mr. and Mrs. Axel Olsen donated approximately three acres of land to St. Stephen's in 1940. Conveniently located on a hillside in the nearby Clara Barton section of Raritan Township, it was often used during the gas rationing period of World War II as a picnic area. It contained a small pond on what is now the parking area. A small building was built by the men of the church to serve as a shelter and as a place of worship in the early days.

During the 1940's the church continued to be active and grew in strength. Both English and Danish services continued to draw many members each Sunday. Many of the young men who returned from the armed forces married and set up new homes. There was a general movement of members out of the city to the suburbs of Woodbridge, Metuchen, Fords, and Raritan Township (now Edison). As a result, St. Stephen's became a church of commuters.

A survey conducted in Raritan Township and Woodbridge during the summer of 1947 indicated a definite need for a Sunday School in both places. As recommended, Sunday Schools were started in Woodbridge and Raritan Township in the Fall. The small group in Woodbridge was discontinued but the larger one which held classes in the Clara Barton school in Raritan Town-

ship prospered and grew. Because this group would occasionally meet at the church park, it was called the Chapel Springs Sunday School.

Rev. Ove Nielsen, who with his wife, Ela and son Ricky came to St. Stephen's in 1945, saw a need to bring the church and Sunday School closer to the homes of the members. As a result, symbolic ground breaking ceremonies took place in the Fall of 1947 on additional property located on the corner of First and Pleasant Avenues, Raritan Township which had also been donated by Mr. and Mrs. Axel Olsen. Participating in the activities was the Rev. Alfred Jensen of Des Moines, Iowa, President of the Danish-American Lutheran Church. However, it was not until 1949 that the congregation voted to construct a building on this site. The construction was done by the volunteer labor of the men of the congregation and the furnishings were supplied by the various groups within the church, which now included a Mother's Club. The first Sunday School classes were held here in September 1949. Attendance grew by leaps and bounds and soon the building was not large enough. An addition was completed in 1954 under the leadership of Mr. Charles Miller and Mr. Harry Lund.

The first service was held in the enlarged building on September 12, 1954. It was conducted by Pastor K. Kirkegaard-Jensen. He and his wife, Nina, and their son, Ulf, had arrived on December 8, 1948, from occupation-ravaged Denmark to serve St. Stephen's. He was a strong advocate of the move to the new site in what had now been renamed Edison. Services were held on a twice monthly basis.

Shortly after the inception of these services, Pastor Kirkegaard-Jensen suffered a severe heart attack, and although he was able to return to his work the following April, his leadership was sorely missed during the long winter that followed. Worship services were continued throughout this time by using sermons which had been previously written by the pastor. The Danish Service was conducted by the Pastor's son, Ulf, and the English Service by Harry Lund.

Beginning in 1956, English services were held every Sunday in Edison in addition to the regular two services in Perth Amboy. The church and Sunday School continued to attract new members.

A choir and organ recital was held in the Fall of 1956 at the Perth Amboy Church under the direction of Ulf Kirkegaard-Jensen who at the time was organist and director of music. Ulf and his family are now living in California where he is a practicing surgeon.

After numerous meetings and discussions, it was finally decided in 1957 to sell the Broad Street church and concentrate our efforts in Edison. The church was sold to the Second Baptist Congregation and Pastor K. Kirkegaard-Jensen and his family moved to the present parsonage which had been completed in the interim.

The next two years were spent planning and working for a new church. While it was under construction, all services were held in the Chapel at 76 Pleasant Avenue. Finally, on August 9, 1959, the 122 members who had attended services at the Chapel, walked up the hill to witness the ceremonies at the ground breaking for our present church. Participating in the activities were Pastors K. Kirkegaard-Jensen and Ove Nielsen, Messrs. Axel Olsen, Charles Miller, Melvin Smith, and Harry Lund. The short ceremony ended with the singing of Grundtvig's "God's Word is Our Great Heritage."

Less than a year later on May 15, 1960, the first service was held in the new church. There were 250 members present. Nine young people were confirmed one of whom, Dane Paul Nielsen, was confirmed by his father, Rev. Ove Nielsen, our former pastor.

Formal dedication services were held on October 9, 1960. In the presence of a church filled to overflowing, six pastors from surrounding churches joined with the building and dedication committees and Edison Township officials in the ceremonies. Calling the congregation to worship was the aforementioned bell which for so many years had rung out from the spire on Broad Street. The bell originally had been donated by dedicated young women of the church who had vowed not to marry until the bell was paid for.

Having no further need for the Chapel, it was sold to the congregation of Temple Emanu-El. After using it for several years, they sold it to the Township of Edison. Today, our former Chapel serves as a branch of the Edison Public Library.

The congregation and friends of Pastor K. Kirkegaard-Jensen joined in celebrating the 25th anniversary of his ordination at a banquet held in his honor on September 22, 1963 at Kenny Acres in Fords.

The following year, after serving us faithfully for 16 years, Pastor K. Kirkegaard-Jensen decided to retire. His announcement came as a shock to the members but all understood the reasoning behind his decision. His smile and sense of humor would be sorely missed but all appreciated his contributions to the growth and development of St. Stephen's. Pastor Kirkegaard-Jensen was the last Danish-speaking Pastor to serve St. Stephen's.

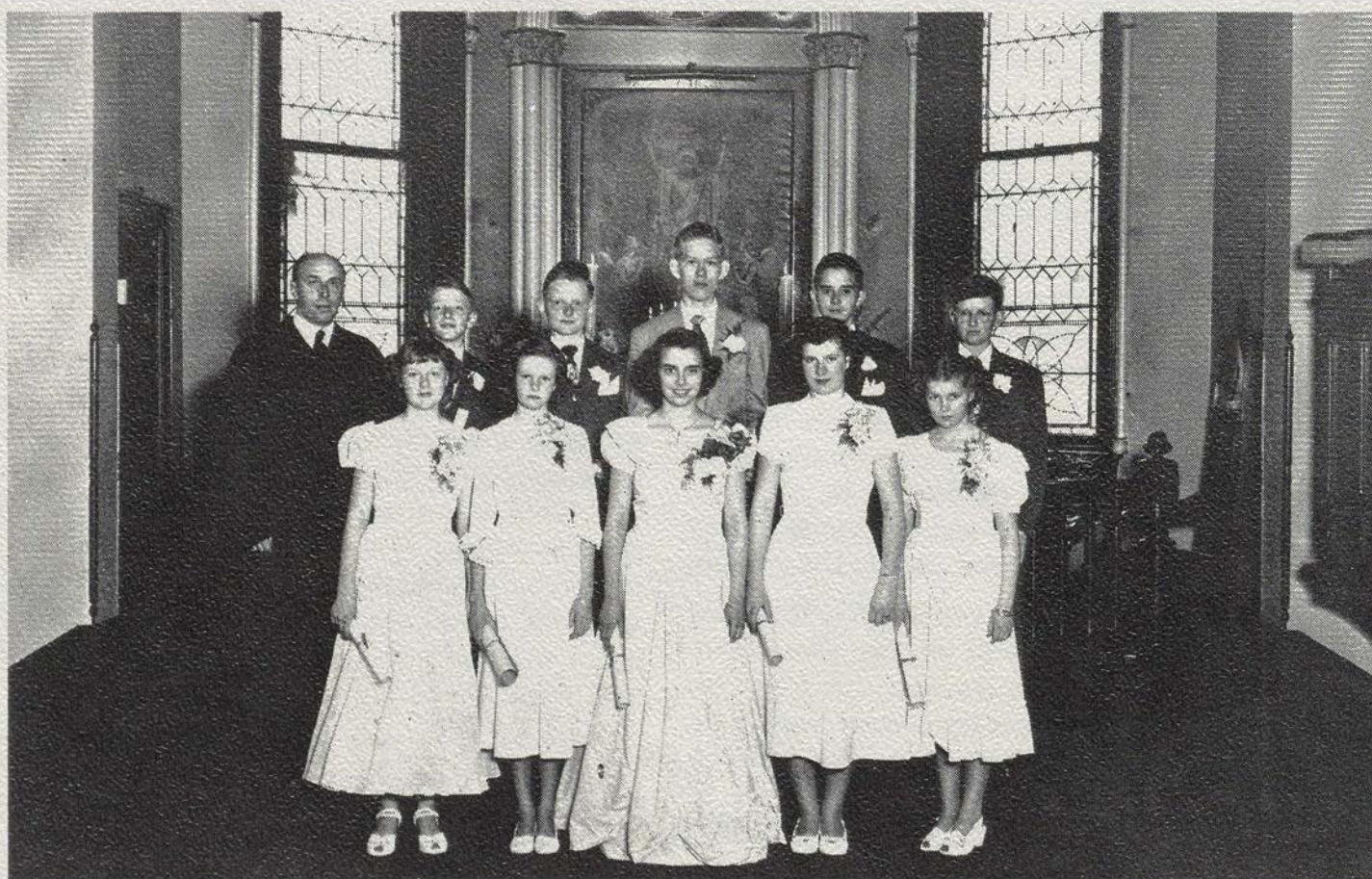
Mr. Fred Berkobin and his wife, Lynn, arrived in the Fall of 1964 to serve St. Stephen's. This young man, who had an extensive background in Lutheran youth activities throughout the country, made a definite impact on the congregation during his short tenure. He was ordained at a service of ordination held on September 13, 1964. This was the first such service ever held at St. Stephen's. The installation was conducted by The Rev. Edwin H. Knudten, D.D., L.L.D. and the sermon was presented by Rev. Henry J. Berkobin, Ph.D., father of our newly-ordained pastor. Within two years, Pastor and Mrs. Berkobin left us to continue their work at a youth camp in North Jersey.

Pastor John Melin, his wife, Carolyn, and their two sons, John and Charles, came to St. Stephen's in December 1966. Pastor Melin, son of a retired minister from Pennsylvania, was called from a mission church in Washington, N.J. Several innovations have been made during his tenure. An altar guild was formed as was a Vacation Bible School and a weekday Bible class. His attempts to revive the interest of the young people are exemplified by the formation of a basketball team which is entered in church league competition and the establishment of weekend retreats and sleep-ins at the Fellowship Hall. For a period, a girl's craft class was held twice a month.

Looking back over the past 100 years we have seen some struggle and discouragement but we have also seen much success and happiness. Let us pray for the faith, hope and courage we need to continue to bring God's word to all peoples. May God, in His Holy Grace, help us to carry out this mission.



CONFIRMATION CLASS
1949



CONFIRMATION CLASS
1959



CONFIRMATION CLASS
1960



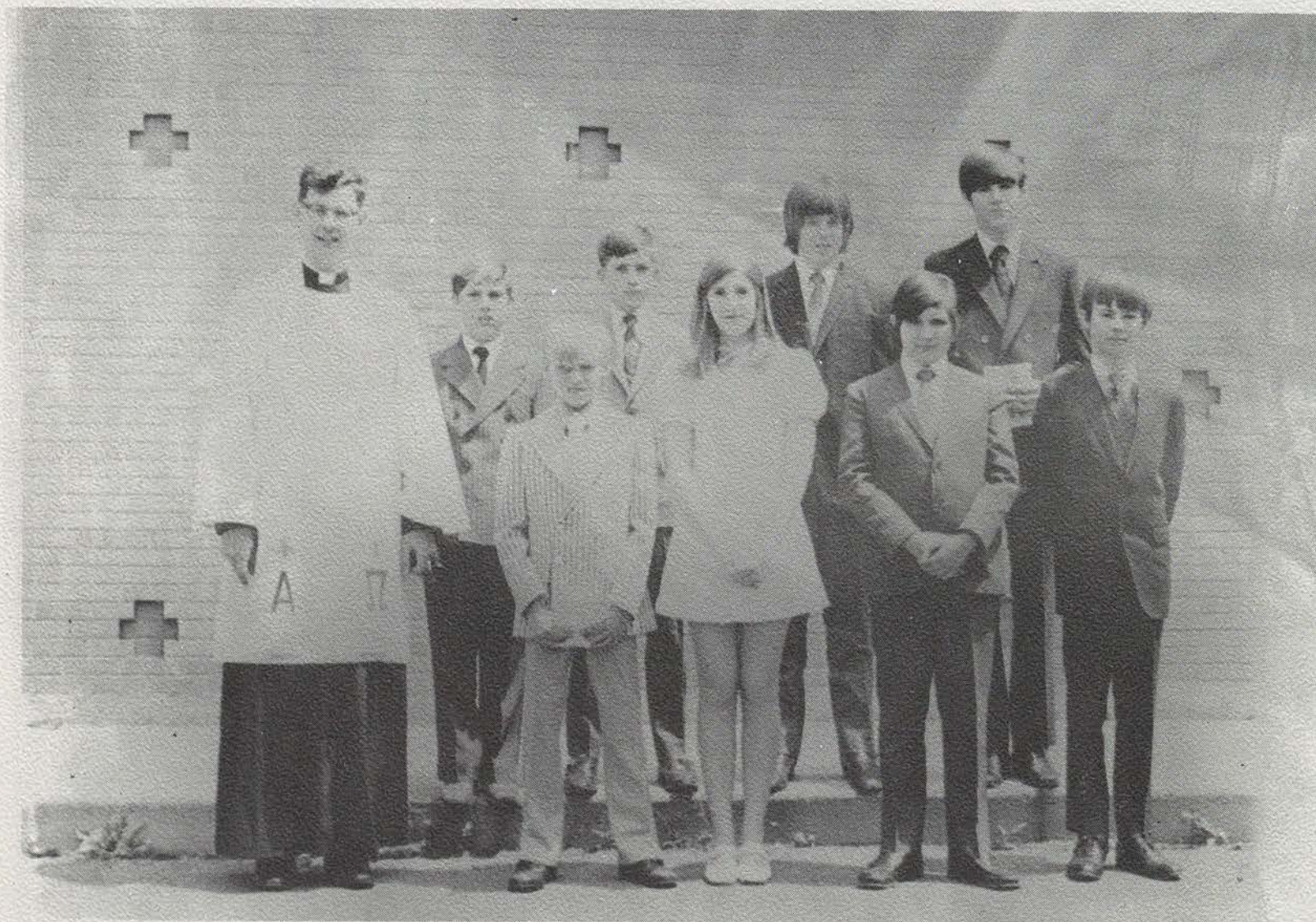
CONFIRMATION CLASS
1963



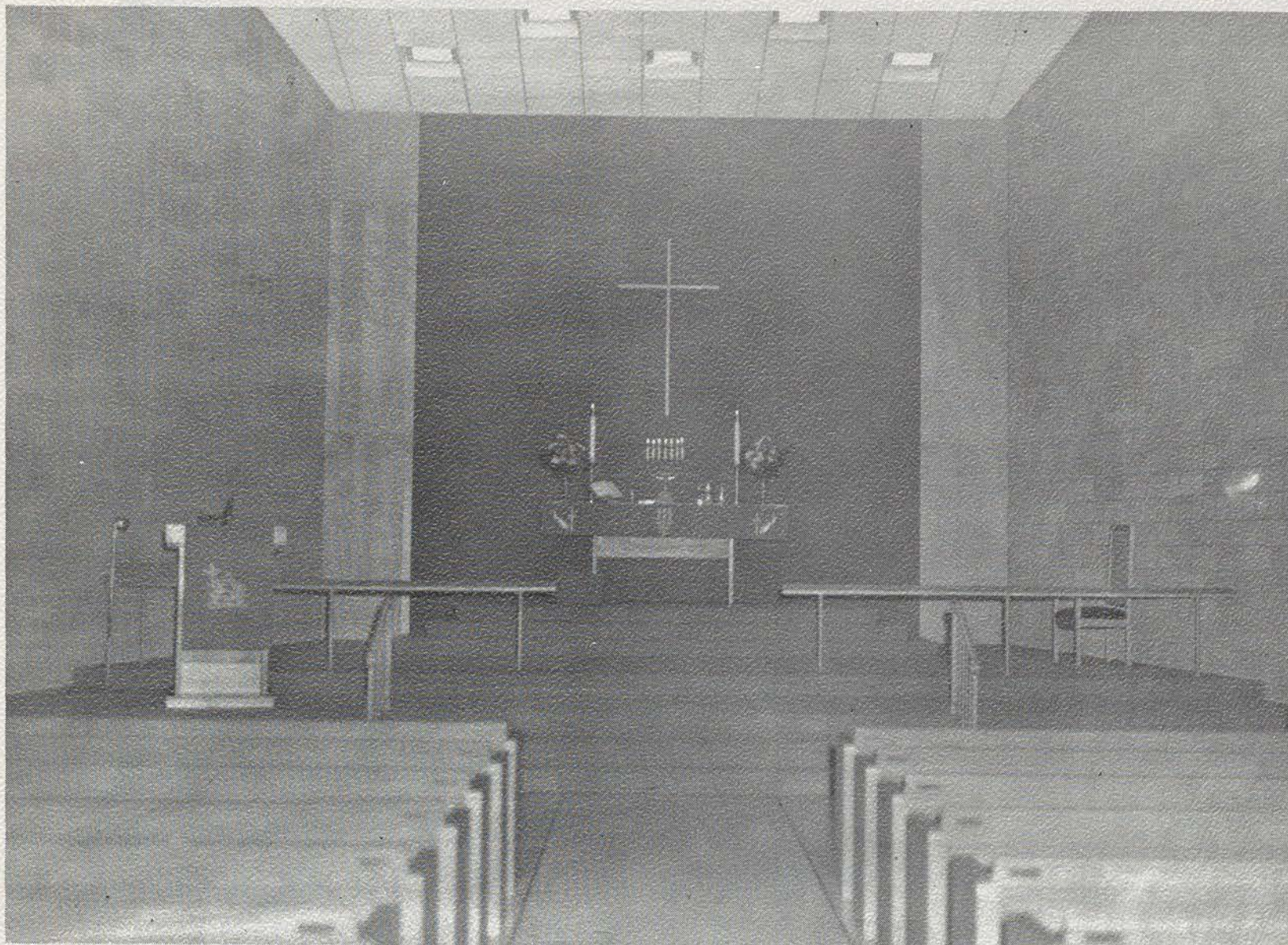
**CONFIRMATION CLASS
1967**



**CONFIRMATION CLASS
1969**



**CONFIRMATION CLASS
1971**



INTERIOR OF PRESENT CHURCH



**CONFIRMATION CLASS
1972**



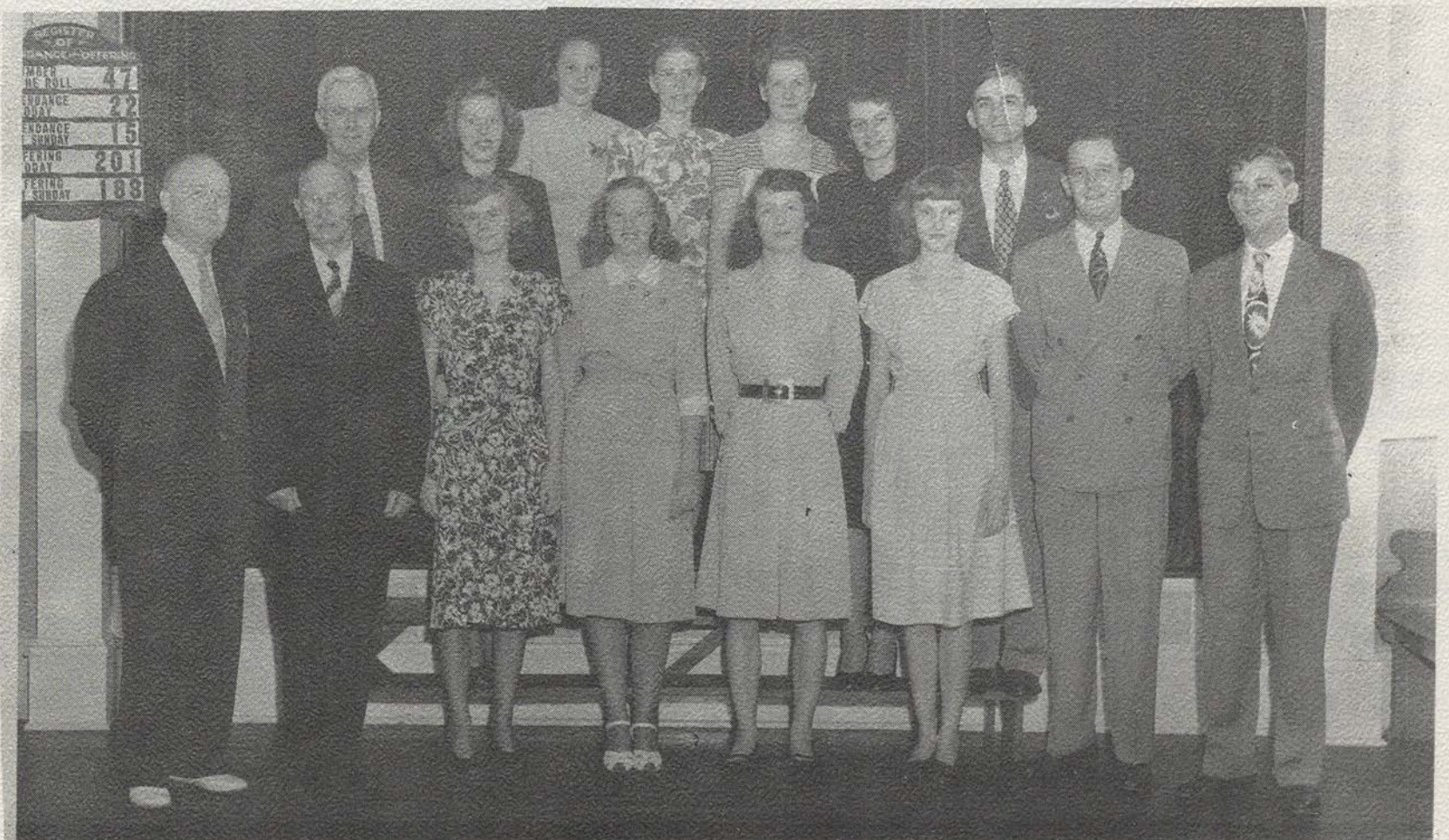
**Junior Young People's Society
1934**



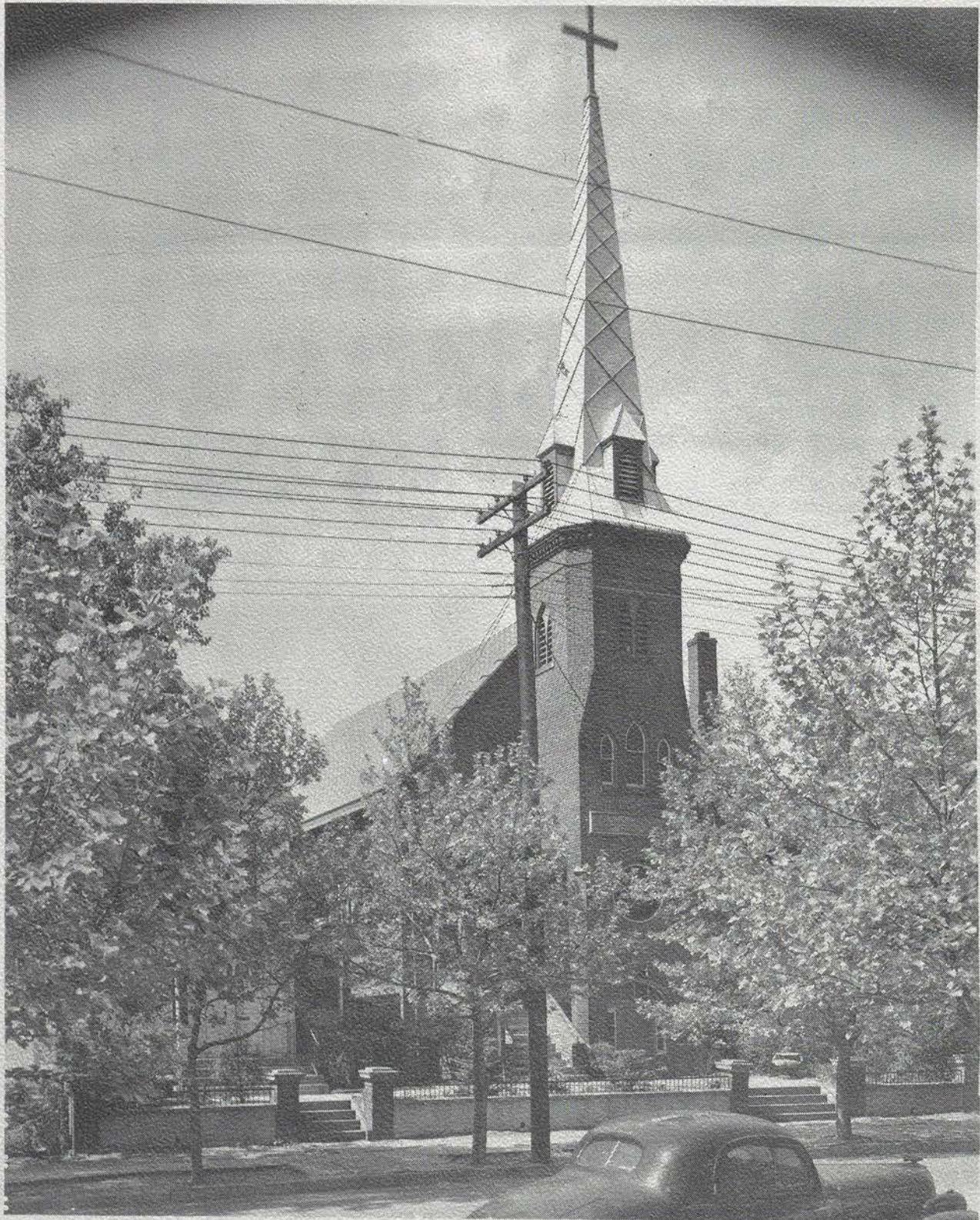
**Sunday School Teacher
in front of stage in church parlor
1947-1949**



**Interior of Church
99 Broad Street**



**CHOIR
Circa 1950**



**St. Stephen's Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church
1896**

DO YOU REMEMBER?

The Young People's Society's beach parties at Tottenville, S.I...Riding the ferry for a nickel each way...The interest and anticipation of the congregation as the new pipe organ was being installed in St. Stephen's...The joyful day when the organ was first played at a worship service...Ulf Jensen constantly eating fresh fruit when he first arrived from war-ravaged Denmark after the war...The card games at the church picnics...Gallons of coffee...Danish coffee rings from Jensen's bakery...Songs and games...Prince Frederick and Princess Ingrid in Perth Amboy...Irma Rasmussen presenting flowers...The deep singing voice of Pastor A. T. Dorf...Pastor Ove Nielsen wearing cowboy boots when relaxing...Bill Glochau taking the offering...The day that Mrs. K. K. Jensen tried to wash the rug in her bathtub...Men going to the corner establishment for cigars before church affairs...Looking forward to the District Young People's convention each summer...All wondering who would win the softball game...

The dances at Dana Hall...The "house" that surrounded the belongings of Pastor K. Kirkegaard-Jensen on arrival in Perth Amboy...Later, it was made into an addition to Mr. and Mrs. Axel Olsen's home in Sea Bright...Lars Christensen bringing the milk to all church affairs...Mr. Kjeldsen bringing coffee in bags...The Sunday School bus from Metuchen to Perth Amboy...The young Sunday School boy who called his teacher "pastor" and Pastor K. Kirkegaard-Jensen "God"...The day the collection disappeared from the church basement in Perth Amboy...Peter Freuchen, the Adventurer, lecturing in Perth Amboy...Christmas Eve services throughout the years...The stiff round pleated white collars worn by the Pastor at the Danish services...The time St. Stephen's won the softball series at the Youth convention but was not awarded the "cup" because we did not field a full team...Where did the cup disappear to...Where did it come from when it reappeared at the convention next year..."Kirke og Folk" the church paper originated in 1930 by Pastor Dyreborg & Niels M. Sorensen...Esther Sorensen addressing 200 Kirke og Folk envelopes by hand each month for 5 years...When the steps of the Broad Street church collapsed and several members of a wedding party were injured...None seriously...One of the youth group plays being repeated for charity in Perth Amboy and again for the Youth Convention in Hartford, Conn..When a quartet consisting of Einer Skouboe, Harry Lund, Einer Zangenberg and Jens Jessen sang for the Ladies Aid Festivals...Picnics at our present church complex...When most of what is now our parking lot was a small pond...Children fishing and adults slapping mosquitoes at the pond...Young people from the "Children's Home" attending our Sunday School...When the Eastern District of the A.E.L.C. had churches in Portland, Maine; Hartford and Bridgeport, Conn.; Troy, Bronx and Brooklyn, N.Y.; Newark and Perth Amboy, N.J...

Sunday School classes in Sayreville...When the Newark Congregation dissolved and gave their organ to St. Stephen's...Pastor P.H. Pedersen initiating evening English services...The only minister to die while serving St. Stephen's...Mrs. Hans Gade, dressed in Danish Folk Costume, serving the people at the Ladies Aid Bazaar...The day we received the Baptismal Font from the Bronx congregation after they disbanded in 1950...It is made out of a solid piece of Bornholm granite and is sculptured into the shape of a Communion cup...

Mrs. Pastor P. H. Pedersen importing needlepoint pictures and teaching our young women how to complete them...The set of chimes donated to the church by the Majestic Theatre through the efforts of our organist "Ernie" who played at the theatre during vaudeville days...Jensine Olsen Stensgaard, Perth Amboy's only Policewoman, teaching Sunday School to a group of venturesome boys...When the boiler on Broad Street cracked and had to be replaced...Voluntary gifts soon over-subscribed the cost of the replacement...The Strawberry Festivals in the church parlors or in the garden behind the parsonage...Picnics at the Danish Home...The delicious Fastelavn's Boller...Sunday School children honoring their Mothers with little flowers on Mother's Day...Those creaking curling steps to the choir loft at 99 Broad St...The pigeon hunts in the steeple of 99 Broad St...The only double wedding at 99 Broad St...Høstfest (Harvest Festival)...The service distracted by the tantalizing odor of the roast pork and red cabbage being prepared in the kitchen below...

Christmas: Two huge matching trees with white lights strung on the branches and topped by large star standing on either side of the altar...annual party on the Sunday after Christmas...Young and old alike holding hands and dancing around the tree adorned with tinsel, Danish and American flags, muffs, baskets woven from shiny paper, and lighted candles, which later gave way to strings of electric lights...box of hard candy and an orange given to each youngster...The Sea Scouts and later their counterparts, the Cadettes, drilling on Broad Street and participating in local parades...Our janitors on Broad St. - Mads Hansen and Waldemar Hoyer...Children's Home on Compton Avenue motivated by Axel Olsen...Agnes and Marie Nielsen teaching Sunday School at the Home...The offering collected in boat-shaped felt-lined box attached to a two foot handle...Esther Kahree teaching Sunday School on Sleigh Avenue, Tottenville...The bicycles parked in the rack at Broad Street during Sunday School, confirmation class, etc...

Sunday School Superintendents: Wilbur Jensen, Howard and Marie Reeder, Peter Seyffart, Bennett Jorgensen, Peter Juelsen... Christian Nielsen, a former Council President, playing his accordion...The J.Y.P.S. Plays - "There Ain't No Mystery", "Here Comes Charlie", etc...Play Directors: Wilbur Jensen, Harry Lund, Stanley Kjeldsen, Alma Pedersen, Bennett Jorgensen...The two separate piles of dollar bills on the altar each Christmas and Easter, one for the Pastor and one for the Organist...Alma Pedersen, the Pastor's daughter, filling in at the organ...

Cecelius Petersen singing with the choir or solo at most services...Pastor and Mrs. Dyreborg's son, Preben, a schoolmate of many current church members...J.Y.P.S. picnics at Echo Lake...The rumble seat in Dory Nau's Reo...Scavenger hunts...The night-long drive home on Sundays after the J.Y.P.S. annual conventions...The start of the weekly Sunday softball practice in April to prepare for the convention championship...Five men and five women on each team including Helen Sorensen, catching; Dory Nau, Einer Zangenberg, Einer Skouboe, Roy Skouboe, Hans Nielsen, Irma Jensen, Kirsten Andersen, Rita Clausen, Rita Nielsen, Jens Jessen, Herman Hansen, Edith Nielsen, Marie Rasmussen, Nina Mathiasen, Herbie Mathiasen, Norma Sorensen, Edna Nielsen, Ethel Petersen, Einer Sorensen, Roy Mathiasen, Roy Andersen, Margaret Juelsen, Esther Sorensen, Harry Sorensen, Allen Sorensen, Kamma Nielsen, Irving Nielsen, Arne Rasmussen, Herbie Nielsen, Myrtle Nielsen, Victor Nielsen...

Skalborg Nielsen suffering from poison ivy after helping to clear the church property on Pleasant Ave...The kids catching frogs at the church pond...Jens Jessen printing the names of his children on the wood as the "Chapel Springs" building was being constructed...Ulla Reid accepting a plaque from Robert Wilentz on behalf of our congregation in memory of the help given the Jews during the Nazi purge during World War II...(Small children walking up to receive their Sunday School awards)...The house-to-house visiting after a Confirmation service...The baptism of Joe and Joy Billich's twin sons, Paul and Roy...When the young girls under the direction of Mrs. Lynn Berkobin gave a program interpreting Handel's Messiah through modern dance...Pentecost morning breakfast in the woods...The men's dinners organized by Charles Miller...A gala time for all, handsome waiters with black ties and white jackets and good food...The blackberries that grew in abundance where our church now stands...Lynn and Fred Berkobin walking barefooted on the beach during one of many youth field trips...

Edna Chismar's devotion to the Sunday School in Edison... Marie Luckhurst and her choir direction...Club 45 organized in 1960...The two-day play "Absolutely Murder", presented at the Woodbridge Masonic Temple...The Luther League...Edna Seyffart or Harry Lund pinch hitting at the organ...The Woman's Circle's kitchen band...Board President Earl Petersen...Charles Miller, a synonym for Pleasant Avenue..."The Palms" sung each Easter for over 40 years by Ellen Christensen...Faithful choir members: Kirsten Brodbeck, Elsie Feltus, Harry and Alice Lund, Joyce Thompson...Mrs. Irene Kellogg, Organist...The leaking roof at the Fellowship Hall...Flooded basement of the church proper...Many records destroyed..."Help Hector Holiday"...Oktoberfest...Car washes...Lucia pageants at Christmas time...



Ernie Christophersen



Reception for Crown Prince Frederick & Crown Princess Ingrid of Denmark at Dana Hall, 1939.

MEMORY

*Mr. & Mrs. Martin Hoy
&
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Jensen*

from Eleanor Jensen

*Mr. Niels M. Sorensen
from Mrs. Niels M. Sorensen*

*Mr. Hugo S. Pedersen
from Esther B. Pedersen*

*Bedstefar Pedersen
from Esther B. Pedersen*

*Mrs. Kirsten Rohr
from Mr. & Mrs. Floyd Kennett*

*Mrs. Kirsten Rohr
from Mr. & Mrs. Lester Bodley*

*Mrs. Kirsten Rohr
from Mr. & Mrs. Carl Wurm*

*Mrs. Kirsten Rohr
from Jens Rohr*

These also helped additionally.....

Mr. & Mrs. Magnus Johnsen

June & Leif Nissen

Elsie & Dick Feltus

Esther Sorensen Paugh & family

Allen T. Sorensen & family

Gerald A. Sorensen & family

Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Ugro

Mr. & Mrs. Sigurd Nielsen

Mrs. Elmer Larsen

Mrs. John Persson

Mr. & Mrs. Charles Toris

Mr. & Mrs. Robert Graham

Mrs. Alma Chitwood

Mr. & Mrs. Robert Thompson

Mrs. Esther Kahree Boyd

Mr. & Mrs. Anton Nissen

Mr. & Mrs. Valdemar Lund

Mr. & Mrs. Andrew J. Barry

Mrs. Victor Lund

Mr. & Mrs. Harry Lund

Mr. & Mrs. Jens Jessen

Mr. & Mrs. Howard Mathiasen

Mr. & Mrs. Roy Mathiasen

Mr. & Mrs. Donald Rook

Mr. & Mrs. Irving Nielsen

Captain & Mrs. A.G.Y. McGregor

Mr. & Mrs. John Sziber

Mr. & Mrs. Howard Reeder

Alice & Chris Pedersen

Jacquelyn & Chris Pedersen

Lillian & Edgar Petersen

Carol & Cynthia Stopen

Mary & Wm. Jensen

Joan & Herb Madsen

Mary & George Korch

Norma & Carl Pedersen

John & Charles Melin

THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS OF ST. STEPHEN'S

Music: The Battle Hymn of the Republic

Over a century ago our founders left their Viking shore.
Into this promised land the Danish stream did sparsely pour,
To settle in Perth Amboy during those many years of yore,
And build our Church anew.

Chorus:

Glory, Glory Hallelujah!
Glory, Glory Hallelujah!
Glory, Glory Hallelujah!
(Our Church) goes marching on!

At first the base was ethnic and outsiders there were none.
As natives and other immigrants, our doors they indeed did shun.
Now a hundred years have passed and all bloods congregate as one
Our Church again is new.

Chorus: --

And then about a decade ago arose our Edison spire,
To house the Love of God and our own devoted choir,
So that our aspirations and faith could climb so ever higher
Our Church was still so new.

Chorus: --

So assembled are we now to hear the glad bells loudly ringing.
While all the time to His Cloth and His empty Cross we're clinging.
Our hearts are filled, our faces raised and voices proudly singing
Our Church is for all of you.

Last Chorus:

Glory, Glory Hallelujah!
Glory, Glory Hallelujah!
Glory, Glory Hallelujah!
St. Stephen's goes marching on.

-- Words by
Bennett Jorgensen

Lutheran Church's roots go back to Civil War era

Edison: Churches

Review 7/27/90

By David C. Sheehan

EDISON — A glimpse into the history of one of the township's older religious communities provides a glimpse into the growth of Edison and the surrounding area and a glance into the religious, ethnic and cultural heritage that helps define the township.

St. Stephen's Evangelical Lutheran Church, located at 120 Pleasant Avenue in the Clara Barton and Heights of Edison neighborhoods, had its beginnings — more than 100 years ago — in Perth Amboy.

Immediately after the Civil War, numerous immigrants began arriving from Denmark and settling in the Perth Amboy area. By 1870, it became apparent that a place was needed for these new residents where they could worship and socialize in their native tongue, and so on August 20, 1872, 41 people assembled and St. Stephen's Danish Lutheran Church was formed and formally organized.

Five weeks later, on September 15, 1872, the first worship service was conducted — in Danish — by Pastor Anders L.J. Scholm.

According to church history, the congregation had erected a church on East Avenue in Perth Amboy. It is described as "small and plain ... has domed windows, an imposing cupola and a large front door. Heat was furnished by a large pot-bellied stove and rough wooden benches served as pews.

"Five years later," the history continues, "due to a decline in membership, the building was sold to the city of Perth Amboy for use as a schoolhouse. Worship was held in private homes or in rented facilities. The congregation was served by visiting pastors from 1883 through 1887."

However, the church's fortunes changed quickly, and a resurgence in membership enabled the congregation to erect a new wooden-frame church on the corner of State and Broad streets in Perth Amboy.

"Larger than the first church, it was undoubtedly built by the congregation's many fine carpenters," the church history boasts. "In place of the traditional steeple, a small cross adorned each of the tandem peaks of the church."

Later, the congregation worshipped for more than 60 years in a brick church built in 1896 with a "towering spire ... topped by a cross ... and was one of Perth Amboy's most easily recognized landmarks."

The church's Danish heritage continued to flourish for many years. Organizations such as the Danish Young People's Society and the *Dansk Aften* — that is, Danish Evening — met regularly and socialized in the Danish language and preserved the customs and culture of the congregants.

Yet in the early 1930s, St. Stephen's began to experience significant changes. The younger members of the community were mostly American-born. It became necessary, therefore, for church-related activities to be conducted in English, and by 1934, most church worship services were conducted in English. However, confirmations were still conducted in Danish.

It was at about this time that St. Stephen's began its relationship with the people and community of Edison.

In 1940, according to church records, Mr. and Mrs. Axel Olsen

donated approximately 3 acres of land to St. Stephen's.

"Conveniently located on a hillside in the nearby Clara Barton section of Raritan Township, it was often used during the gas rationing period of World War II as a picnic area," the record states. "It contained a small pond on what is now the church's parking area. A small building was built by the men of the church to serve as a shelter and as a place of worship in the early days.

"During the 1940s, the church continued to be active and grew in strength," it continues. "Both English and Danish services continued to draw many members each Sunday. Many of the young men who returned from the armed forces married and set up new homes. There was a general movement of members out of Perth Amboy to the suburbs of Woodbridge, Metuchen, Fords and Raritan Township. ... As a result, St. Stephen's became a church of commuters."

To better serve the needs of its congregants, St. Stephen's conducted a survey in Woodbridge and Raritan Townships to determine the need for a Sunday school, and it was decided that a Sunday school would be conducted in both places.

Soon, however, the Woodbridge group was discontinued, and the larger group in Clara Barton thrived. Classes were conducted in the old Clara Barton Elementary School, and because the group would meet occasionally in the church park, it was called the Chapel Springs Sunday School.

The Rev. Ove Neilsen came to St. Stephen's in 1945 and saw a need to bring the church and its Sunday school closer to the homes of its members, and in 1947, the congregation voted to construct a new building at the corner of First and Pleasant avenues.

The new church soon met the fate of the other churches as it became too small to serve the needs of the congregation. After several meetings and discussions, it was decided in 1957 to sell the old church's location at Broad Street in Perth Amboy to the Second Baptist Church of Perth Amboy and begin planning and working toward building a new church.

While it was under construction, all services were held at the chapel at 76 Pleasant Avenue. Finally, on August 9, 1959, the 122 members who had attended services at the chapel walked up the hill to witness the groundbreaking ceremonies for their present church.

Participating in the activities were Neilsen and Pastor K. Kirkegaard-Jensen as well as Axel Olsen, Charles Miller, Melvin Smith and Harry Lund. The short ceremony concluded with the singing of Grundtvig's hymn "God's Word is Our Great Heritage."

Less than a year later, on May 15, 1960, the first service was held in the new church. There were 250 members present, and nine

young people were confirmed. One, Dane Paul Neilsen, was confirmed by his father, the Rev. Ove Neilsen, St. Stephen's former pastor.

Formal dedication services were held October 9, 1960. In the presence of a church "filled to overflowing," six pastors from surrounding churches joined with the building dedication committee and Edison Township officials in the ceremonies. The bell used to call worshipers and celebrants to the service was the bell which had served the congregation for so many years at the Broad Street, Perth Amboy, building.

An interesting aside is provided in the church's 100th Anniversary History regarding the bell: "The bell originally had been donated by dedicated young women of the church who had vowed not to marry until the bell was paid for."

Having no further need for the church's old chapel, it was sold to Congregation Emanu-El. After they used it for several years, the temple congregation sold the structure to Edison, which used it as the Clara Barton Branch Library.

St. Stephen's has a proud heritage and history of service to and involvement in the community. As their church's written history concludes, "Looking back over the past 100 years, we have seen some struggle and discouragement, but we have also seen much success and happiness."

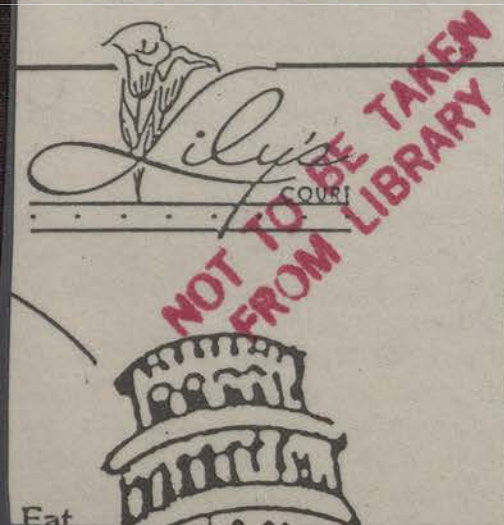
David C. Sheehan is co-founder and president of the Edison Township Historical Society, and this article is one in a series by society members on the history of the area.

Bring books back,
try to win a shirt

EDISON — Kids can win a T-shirt that will tell the world to "Pout About Books." Children can return books to any branch of the Edison library system and fill out an entry form to win a free T-shirt with Wally the Whale, the library's summer mascot. The contest begins Wednesday and continues through Friday, August 17. For more information, call 287-2351.

Scheduled MHS classes

ed for classes that graduated
gh schools.
their reunions:
School
ay, August 11; Classes of 1960
24.
High School
ay, August 10; Class of 1970, to
gh School
ember 23.
f these classes, call (800) 22-
ite to Reunion, P.O. Box 1338,



Hebrew school registration is on

EDISON — Congregation Beth El, 91 Jefferson Boulevard, has announced registration for Hebrew school classes for the 1990-91 school year. The school's program includes classes for children in 3rd through 7th grades, plus bar mitzvah and bat mitzvah instruction. Sunday Funday and Junior Funday also are on the schedule. For more information, call 985-7272. All staff members are certified in the appropriate fields.

Dinner-dance for MHS reunion

METUCHEN — The Metuchen High School Class of 1955 is planning a dinner-dance for the class' 35th anniversary reunion. The event will take place Saturday, September 15, at Cryan's Restaurant, 660 Middlesex Avenue. Anyone who has not been contacted previously should call Jadwin Santore at 549-0439.

Play a 'pirate' on a treasure hunt

EDISON — While the Mets are trying to hunt down the Pirates in the pennant race, children here can put on a pirate's treasure hunt. Kids from kindergarten through 2nd grade can put on a pirate's hat and go on a treasure hunt at any of the three local libraries. The treasure hunt is open to Edison residents only. The dates are Monday at 2 p.m. at the Clara Barton library, 141 Hoover Avenue, near Amboy Avenue; Wednesday at 3:45 p.m. at the main library, 340 Plainfield Avenue; and Thursday at 10:30 a.m. at the North Edison library, 777 Grove Avenue, near Oak Tree Road. To register, stop in at the appropriate library or call 738-0748 for Clara Barton, 287-2351 for the main library, 548-4759 for North Edison.

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EDISON ~~CHURCHES~~

CHURCHES

1976

"ASK AT. DESK"

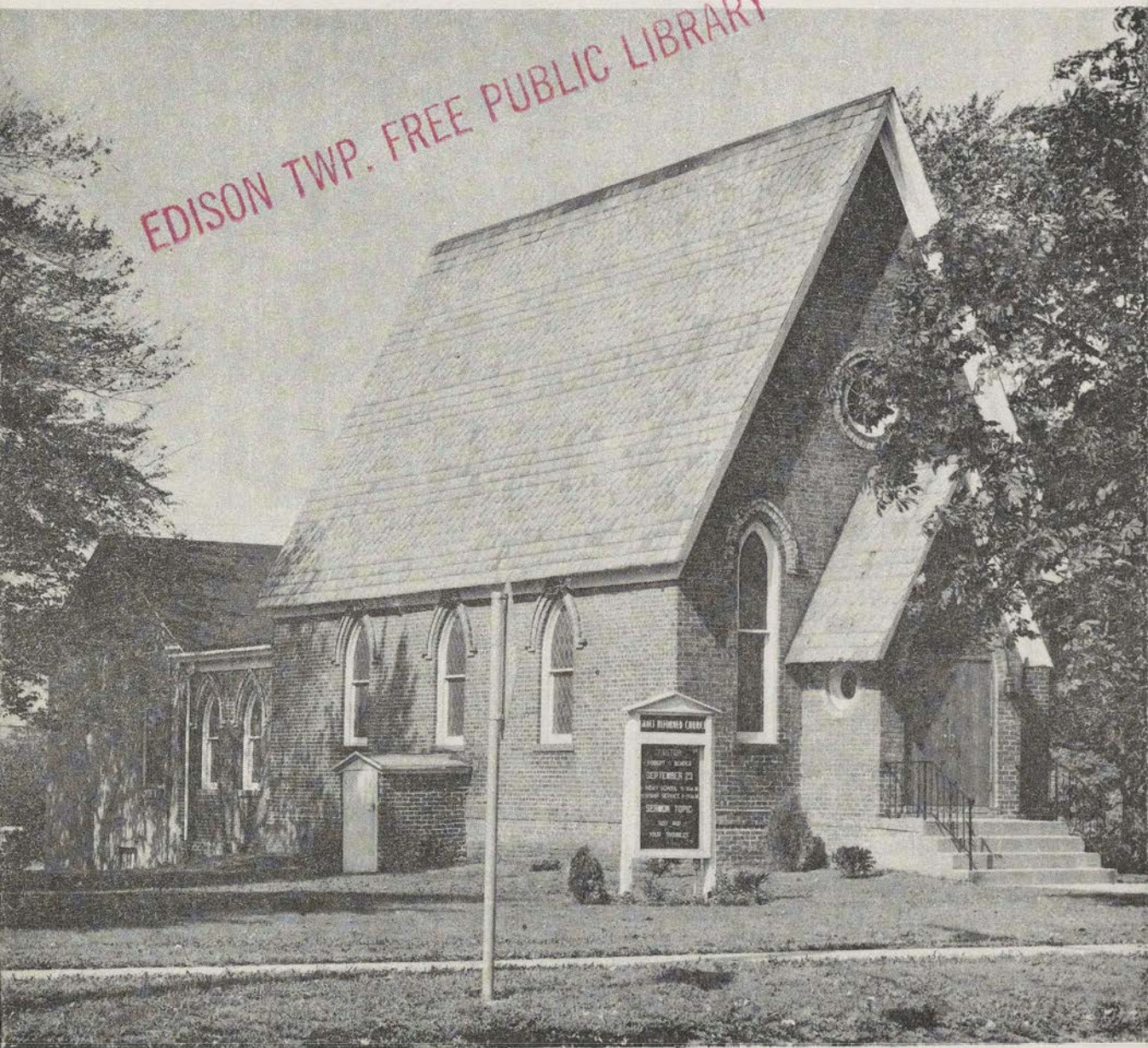
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Apr. 13, 1876 ANNIVERSARY SERVICE Apr. 11, 1976
Four O'clock

Prelude - - Chorale - - - - Boellman

*The Processional Hymn, No. 54
"All Glory, Laud, and Honor"

*The Call to Worship

*The Act of Faith:

We believe in God the Father who has made us
and all the world.

We believe in God the Son who has redeemed us
and all mankind.

We believe in God the Holy Spirit who gives
new life to us and to all who receive Him.

We believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy
Spirit; and to him be glory and praise for
ever. Amen.

*The Prayer of Adoration

*The Hymn, No. 131
"Praise my Soul, the King of Heaven"

The Confession (the congregation seated)

We know and confess, O God, that our hearts
are unworthy to receive Thee, for in many ways
we have offended Thee, but we pray Thee to
cleanse us from our sins and to deliver us
from our faults, and give us the grace of Thy
Holy Spirit that Thou mayest dwell in us and
we in Thee.

Minister: O Lamb of God that takest away
the sin of the world,

Congregation: HAVE MERCY UPON US.

Minister: Thou that takest away the sin
of the world:

Congregation: HAVE MERCY UPON US.

Minister: Thou that takest away the sin
of the world:

Congregation: RECEIVE OUR PRAYER.

Minister: Thou that sittest at the right
hand of God the Father:

Congregation: HAVE MERCY UPON US.

A LITANY

M: Almighty God, our heavenly Father, from whom comes every good and perfect gift, we now call into remembrance Thy loving kindness and Thy tender mercies which have been ever of old, and with grateful hearts we lift up to Thee the voice of thanksgiving.
For all the gifts Thou hast bestowed upon this place and this congregation during the hundred years now passed,

P: WE PRAISE THEE, O GOD.

M: For faithful teachers now departed, who gathered the children of the community around Thy word, and for all devoted workers who have entered into eternal rest,

P: WE PRAISE THEE, O GOD.

M: For the people who gave of their goods for the building of this edifice,

P: WE PRAISE THEE, O GOD.

M: For the women who worked steadfastly and diligently to provide funds and goods so that a place of instruction and worship could be maintained,

P: WE PRAISE THEE, O GOD.

M: For all who continue to worship and serve Thee in this place,

P: WE PRAISE THEE AND BESEECH THEE, O LORD.

M: Give to all Thy people grace to understand and to believe Thy word, that they may show forth their faith in their lives:

P: HEAR US AND HELP US, WE PRAY.

M: Guide us in all perplexities, that we may hold fast that which is true, and faithfully confess Thee before man:

P: HEAR US AND HELP US, WE PRAY.

M: Give us the courage to seek first Thy kingdom and righteousness, and regardless of the praise or contempt of the world to worship and adore Thee in spirit and in truth:

P: HEAR US AND HELP US, WE PRAY.

M: Here may the faithful find salvation, and the careless be awakened.

Here may the doubting find faith, and the anxious be encouraged.

Here may the tempted find help, and the sorrowful comfort.

Here may the weary find rest, and the strong be renewed.

Here may the aged find consolation, and the young be inspired.

P. HEAR US AND HELP US, O LORD.

M. Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us; unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, who taught us to pray, saying - - -

IN UNISON - -

OUR FATHER, WHO ART IN HEAVEN; HALLOWED BE THY NAME. THY KINGDOM COME. THY WILL BE DONE; ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN. GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD. AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS; AS WE FORGIVE OUR DEBTORS. AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION; BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL; FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM, AND THE POWER, AND THE GLORY, FOR EVER.

AMEN.

The Assurance

*The Psalter (Psalm 47)

Min.: Clap your hands, all peoples!

Congr.: SHOUT TO GOD WITH LOUD SONGS OF JOY!

Min.: For the Lord, the most High, is terrible,

Congr.: A GREAT KING OVER ALL THE EARTH.

Min.: He subdued peoples under us,

Congr.: AND NATIONS UNDER OUR FEET.

Min.: He chose our heritage for us.

Congr.: THE PRIDE OF JACOB WHOM HE LOVES.

Min.: God has gone up with a shout,

Congr.: THE LORD WITH THE SOUND OF A TRUMPET.

Min.: Sing praises to God, sing praises!

Congr.: SING PRAISES TO OUR KING, SING PRAISES!

Min.: For God is the king of all the earth;

Congr.: SING PRAISES WITH A PSALM!

Min.: God reigns over the nations;

Congr.: GOD SITS ON HIS HOLY THRONE.

Min.: The princes of the peoples gather as
the people of the God of Abraham.

Congr.: FOR THE SHIELDS OF THE EARTH BELONG TO
GOD; HE IS HIGHLY EXALTED!

*The Gloria Patri

Concerns of the Church

Presentation of the Bible, first used at the
dedication of the Chapel, April 13, 1876.

The Old Testament Lesson: - Proverbs 3:1-8

The New Testament Lesson: - Matthew 6:19-34

Air (Soprano) - Romans 10 : 15

Hallelujah Chorus (The Messiah) - - - Handel

The Sermon: PUTTING GOD FIRST

Soprano - "The Lord is my Light" - - - Allitsen

The Prayers (See Insert)

*The Hymn, No. 414 "Lead on, O King Eternal"

The Benediction (The congregation seated)

The Choral Response

Postlude - - Psalm XXXII - - - Marcello

REFRESHMENTS AND SOCIAL FOLLOWED

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The sermon is by the Rev. William A. Downs, the first regularly installed minister to Grace Church, and presently minister of the Reformed Church in Willingboro, N.J.

The liturgist is the Rev. Gerard Van Dyk, Stated Supply to Grace Church.

The Bible is being presented by elder Emmett Svarrer.

The Organist and Choir Director is Mrs. Marilyn Franz.

The Soloist is Mrs. Florence Sloper.

We are also much indebted to the members of our Choir for their participation in this and in our other celebrations.

The ushers are our deacons: Mrs. Elizabeth Cadmus and Mrs. Maezelma Phells.

Everyone is invited to the reception by the ladies of our Helping Hand Society, following this service, in the social hall. You will find on display items related to the history of Grace Church, posters and articles by the Sunday school, and a replica of the church by members of the confirmation class. The banners in the sanctuary were made by teachers and leaders of the Sunday school and by a member of the confirmation class.

The members of our Centennial committee are: Mrs. Ethel LaRocco, Mrs. Mary Daly, Mrs. Marilyn Franz, Mrs. Elizabeth Hall and Mrs. Barbara Yunker. Also, Miss Karyn Davis and Miss Julianne LaRocco. Mrs. Henrietta Wood coordinates the work of the committee.

You will recognize the members of the committee by the carnation they wear. They are available for questions and directions.

We would be pleased to have you sign our guest book.

Stelton Baptist Church celebrating 300th anniversary

HN 1/7/89

By ERIC BENTLEY JR.

Home News staff writer

EDISON — No members of the congregation remain to tell the tale, but June 20, 1889, must have been quite a day for the Stelton Baptist Church.

The occasion was the church's 200th anniversary. Pastors rode the bumpy roads from New York and Philadelphia to be on hand for the day's three services and two meals.

A new pipe organ was installed for the celebration, with air supplied manually by the sexton, who pumped a bellows. Newspapers that recorded the event gushed with praise.

"This church is recognized as the model, rural church of all New Jersey," the Boston Reflector wrote. "Ancient and honorable in history, strong in members, abundant in resources, sound in doctrine, sterling in virtue, beneficent in influence."

The church's location, the Reflector noted, was a great plus — three miles north of New Brunswick, "in the Valley of the Raritan, amid scenery that bears the touch of an earthly paradise."

The Rev. C.C. Smith of the Baptist Church in Hempstead, Long Island, N.Y., wrote a five-page poem for the occasion. "Though long," noted the Christian Inquirer, it "held the unflagging interest of the people, (being) fraught with bright historical allusions, admirably dressed."

One hundred years later, the congregation is preparing to do it all over again. For six years, a seven-

person tricentennial committee, under the leadership of Ruth Smith, herself a half-century church member, has been sifting through boxes of church records and memorabilia, and organizing commemorative events.

The commemoration will hit high gear this year, with a year-long schedule that includes noted guest speakers each month and a "homecoming Sunday" in July featuring the release of 300 balloons adorned with scriptural verses.

The congregation is the second oldest Baptist congregation in New Jersey, and the tenth oldest in the country. It was founded by a half dozen zealous men, three of them lay preachers, on the fourth Sunday in June of 1689, as the First Day Baptist Society of Piscataway.

Last week, sawhorses and drop cloths were strewn in place of pews on the exposed hardwood floor of the church's simple, colonial-style sanctuary.

The simple red-brick building on Plainfield Avenue, built in 1925 after the previous structure (the congregation's third) was destroyed in a fire, is undergoing a tricentennial renovation intended to make the building more truly colonial in style.

White, colonial-style pews were expected to arrive Friday, to replace old, varnished ones that, Smith said, had a distracting penchant for "pinching" worshippers in the midst of the service. New carpet, baseboard heaters and chande-

liers were being installed, and the sanctuary's stage redone.

The congregation has been meeting, quite contentedly, Smith said, in a makeshift basement sanctuary for the last several months, awaiting the expected Jan. 15 reopening date.

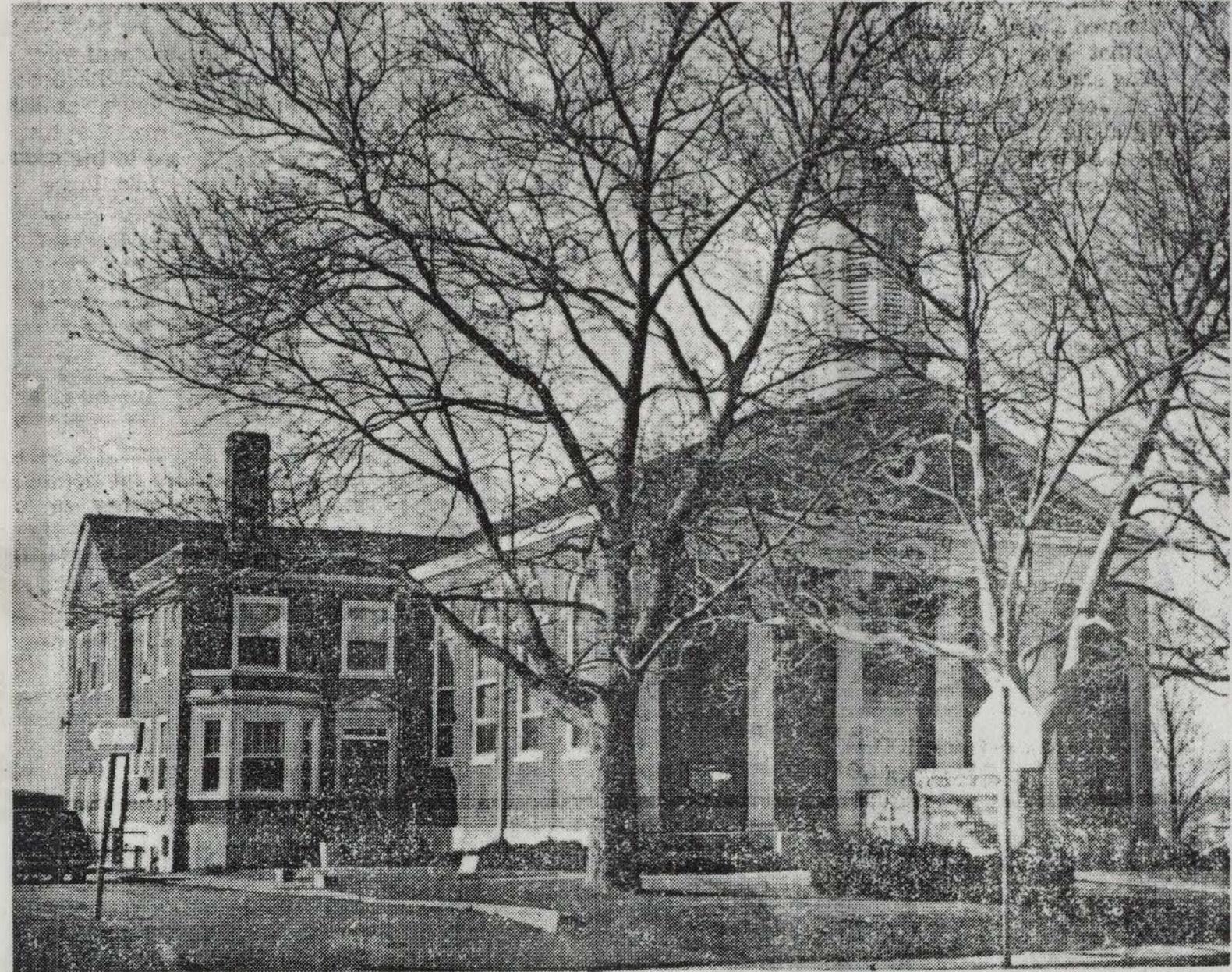
Currently without a pastor, the church's activities are being led by Andrew Grier, a licensed lay minister and chairman of the Board of Deacons. The most recent pastor, the Rev. Richard Cook, left at the end of August to accept a new pastorate in Mount Morris, Mich. The Pulpit Committee has been working actively to hire an interim pastor or new minister, but the selection process can take up to a year.

Much of the first century of the church's history is inaccessible to historians, since the church's minutes and records through 1781 were destroyed during the Revolutionary War.

Smith's office in the church, nevertheless, is filled with cardboard boxes stuffed with church records and memorabilia from after the war. A history of the church commissioned for the bicentennial and written in 1889 by a former pastor, Dr. J.F. Brown, serves today as the definitive document of the church's second century.

Smith said church membership is about 150, down from a 1960 high of about 350. But, she said, numbers are not the church's main concern.

"Great care is also taken," Dr. Brown wrote, sounding a similar



Dick Costello/The Home News

Stelton Baptist Church in Edison is gearing up for a year-long celebration of its 200th anniversary in 1989.

ASK AT DESK

note in his bicentennial history, "to carry out a firm but kind discipline in the belief that the Lord of the

Church cares for purity of life rather than for swelling numbers of communicants . . . In the desire to

keep the Church pure, the members, happily, are of one mind with the Pastor."

Church celebrates 40th anniversary

Edison: Churches

ASK AT DESK

By **ERIC J. GREENBERG**
News Tribune Staff Writer

NT
+127/92

EDISON A standing-room-only audience of more than 500 congregants helped St. Matthew The Apostle Church celebrate its 40th anniversary yesterday with a Mass led by the Rev. Edward T. Hughes, bishop of the Diocese of Metuchen, and with a dinner and dance afterward.

"Today, we celebrate with great joy the family of St. Matthew's," Hughes said to the packed house of worship located on Seymour Avenue near Plainfield Avenue. "We have all ages, all sizes, all people."

Huge stained glass windows showing New Testament scenes shone brightly from the sides of the church while the altar was surrounded by white and yellow carnations and flanked by colorful banners honoring several church organizations.

Technically, the committee is off by two years for the 40th anniversary — the first Mass was celebrated in the present facility on June 14, 1954.

But it was on April 23, 1952, that the boundaries of the new parish to be called St. Matthew were designated.

The genesis of the church is directly tied to the increase in Edison's popu-

lation over the last 40 years.

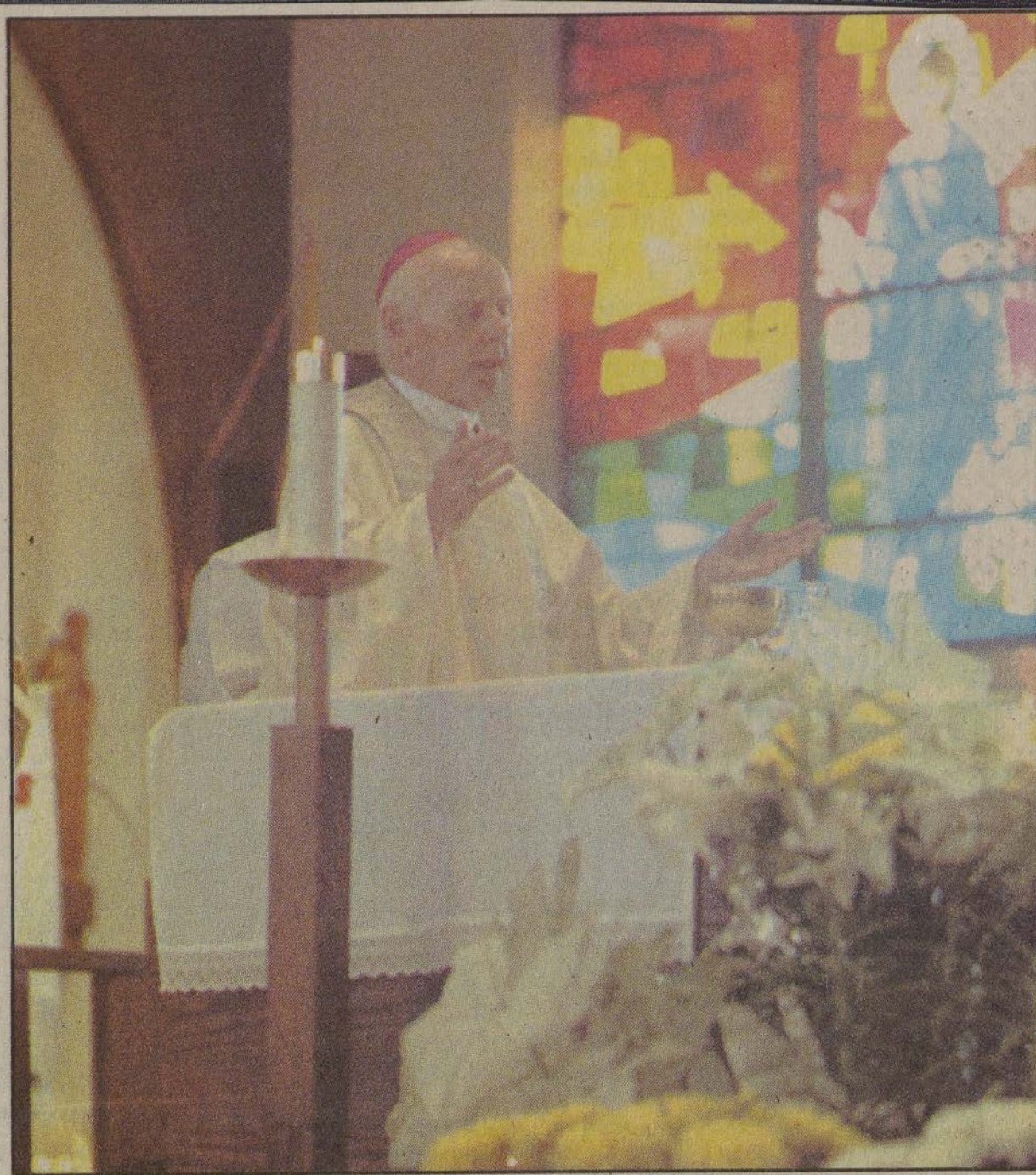
The church was built to accommodate the sudden increase in the population, including many young Catholic families, in the South Edison neighborhoods of Nixon Park, Washington Park, and Haven Village during the early 1950s as a result of the influx of large companies to nearby Route 27.

Before St. Matthew's, these Edison parishioners traveled to Highland Park or Metuchen to attend services. But when Bishop George W. Ahr was made aware of the situation, he purchased seven acres on Plainfield Avenue in August 1949 toward the establishment of a new parish.

Several land transactions later, the pieces were put into motion that would lead to the construction of a complex that would include the church, a rectory, and a school to serve more than 400 hundred.

Since then, there have been many changes and additions. And today, the church is undergoing renovations to the main entry way, says Sue Smelko, a member of the 40th anniversary committee.

"We began six months ago and have raised over \$1 million to install elevators for the handicapped and renovate the main entrance," she said.



Bishop Hughes celebrating the 40th anniversary of St. Matthew The Apostle Church in Edison at a Mass yesterday.

JILL LOTENBERG/Special to The News Tribune

Board, 8 p.m., Woodbridge Health Center, George Frederick Plaza.

COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Edison — Middlesex County Mosquito Extermination Commission, 8 p.m., 200 Parsonage Road.

New Brunswick — Middlesex County Board of Freeholders, 8 p.m., 11th floor, Administration Building, JFK Square.

STATE AGENCIES

East Brunswick — Commissioners of New Jersey Turnpike Authority, 1:30 p.m., administration building, turnpike Interchange 9 at Route 18.

CONCERTS AND PLAYS

New Brunswick — Rutgers University, Rutgers Concert Band, 8 p.m., Nicholas Music Center, George Street at Route 18.

COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS

Edison — Bishop George Ahr High School, AIDS Awareness Day, "The Gathering Storm," 8:45 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., school, 1 Tingley Lane.

Iselin — Orientation meeting for parents and guardians of fifth graders, 7 p.m., Iselin Middle School.

Metuchen — St. Frances Cathedral School, Science Fair Intervention Convention, 7 p.m., Cathedral Community room.

New Brunswick — B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation, Jerusalem Reunification Day, 7:30 p.m., 60 Clifton Ave.

Perth Amboy — Kindergarten registration, 1 to 3 p.m., neighborhood elementary schools.

FLYER MARKETS AND RUMMAGE SALES

South Amboy — Christ Church Thrift Shop, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 6 to 8 p.m., Main Street and Broadway.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Woodbridge — Woodbridge Center, flower pot painting session, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Early Learning Centre Toy Store, Routes 1 and 9.

WOMEN'S GROUPS

Perth Amboy — Women of the Moose, 7:30 p.m., lodge, Convery Blvd.

Piscataway — Piscataway Chorus of Sweet Adelines, 7:30 p.m., chapel of Reformed Church, Clinton and Main streets, South Bound Brook.

MONMOUTH

CONCERTS AND PLAYS

Manalapan — Battleground Arts Center, "Alphabet Soup," 2 p.m., Temple Shaari Emeth, Craig Road.

COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS

West Long Branch — Monmouth College Library Association, trip to Longwood Gardens, Kennett Square, Pa. Bus leaves at 9 a.m. Larchwood Avenue parking lot, campus.

SELF-HELP GROUPS

Long Branch — Monmouth Medical Center, breast cancer support group, 7 to 8:30 p.m., Room 206 of Stanley Wing.

LIBRARY ACTIVITIES

Dunn fans protest oust

Continued from Page B-1

politics. Rather, they said Dunn's removal from the airwaves was an affront to their Irish heritage.

"There was an immediate outpouring of anger in the Irish-American community," said Michael O'Hara of Elizabeth, one of the demonstration's organizers.

"We certainly are decidedly unhappy over the shabby treatment accorded this man, who is the popular and legitimate voice of the Irish-American community. We cannot think of any other ethnic group that the station would dare to offend in this manner."

O'Hara noted with irony that Quinn, too, is Irish.

Quinn could not be reached for comment.

Dunn, who is outspokenly proud of his Irish heritage, was never

paid for doing the show. Instead, he paid out of his pocket for an assistant to answer the telephone at the studio while he was on the air. And he spent hours, and sometimes days, preparing music and other material for the show.

The show, Dunn's supporters said, was never political. It was a celebration of Irish heritage as well as a chance to be updated on charity events and news about other Irish-Americans.

Dunn was known to broadcast such personal tidbits as who was sick and in the hospital, who was planning a trip to Ireland or celebrating an anniversary, and what charity was organizing a fund-raiser.

"Tom would announce everyone's birthday, a get well wish," said Charles Dreizin of the Joseph Nugent Association.

"The Irish who live in are like a family. Tom Dunn is of the family," said Sullivan, owner of Jewelers on Elmora Avenue. "I feel Tom Dunn gave the personal touch. ... No one can do [it]."

Sullivan is among the sponsors who pulled away when Dunn left. The station since has been hosted by Ward of New York.

Dunn said the supporters so much for him as it "preserving the heritage of Ireland."

But the mayor said nothing to do with the protest.

"I just drove by and saw them parading, and I stopped them for their support."

College studies the skies

Continued from Page B-1

raphy dark room and a room where club members grind lenses and make te



NOT TO BE TAKEN
FROM LIBRARY

NOT TO BE TAKEN
FROM LIBRARY

Edison: Churches

Edison church celebrates 25th year in community

Review 7/6/90

By Debbie Jordan

EDISON — St. Helena's Roman Catholic Church celebrated its 25th anniversary with a Mass on June 10.

The anniversary Mass included the participation of more than 100 children dressed in costumes native to different countries, and a continental breakfast was served following the mass.

The church's anniversary celebration will continue in the fall with monthly parish socials to which a portion of the church members will be invited. They will be held on the last Friday of each month beginning in September.

Construction of St. Helena's began June 22, 1965, and 1967 was the year of its dedication. The church's school, consisting of three grades, was formed in 1968.

The church has seen three pastors, the Rev. John Grabowski, the Rev. Adam Kearns and the present pastor since 1972, the Rev. Armando J. Perini.

Perini said the church's membership has grown dramatically since 1972, when it stood at 1,200 families. St. Helena's membership now consists of 2,500 families, and the school enrolls 400 pupils, grades kindergarten through eight. In addition, the church's catechism program consists of 650 children.

In celebrating the church's 25th year, Perini said he "hopes it will be an incentive for all of our peo-

ple to be involved with the construction and expansion of our facilities." He added that plans include the expansion of the hall, more parking in front of the school and the repairing of sidewalks.

The addition of a nun is expected to take place this year, probably in August. Sister Mary Charles is the school's principal, and St. Helena's other nuns are Sister Joselma and Sister Constance.

The church's priests include the Rev. Lawrence Cashioli, the Rev. Joseph Albert Rossetti and the Rev. Thomas Reginald Peterson.

Under Perini, the final mortgage payment was paid, the entire school was carpeted, a holy family shrine was erected in front of the church, the first Friday masses were instituted for children of the school, CCD students were given special graduation services and the investiture of altar boys has become a special occasion for the parish.

Members of the parish are invited on trips overseas, bus trips to games are provided for school children and competition between Catholic schools is available for children on various athletic teams such as baseball, softball, soccer, basketball and gymnastics.

Perini said the church's greatest accomplishment during the past 25 years has been "the external worship of God and education of our people."

301-year-old church continues to thrive

Edison Twp. Pub. Library
340 Plainfield Ave.
Edison, N. J. 08817

NOT TO BE TAKEN
FROM LIBRARY

To honor Stelle family and second pastor, congregation assumed the name of Stelton

By DAVID SHEEHAN

EDISON — The places and manners in which Edison's residents have chosen to worship are a vital part of the history of the township and have been generous contributors to the fabric of the community.

Edison has a rich and varied religious and spiritual history dating back more than 300 years. One of the keystones of this history and "keepers" of this heritage is the Stelton Baptist Church — home to one of the oldest Baptist congregations in the country, the second oldest in New Jersey and the oldest in Middlesex County.

The Plainfield Avenue church's last pastor, the Rev. Richard Cook, described Stelton Baptist Church as "the friendly church on the hill," and reported that the church was formed in the spring of 1689.

Six men — Hugh Dunn, Edmund Dunham, John Smalley, John Drake, John Randolph and Nicholas Bonham — founded the church, and through 1875 the congregation was known as the First Baptist Church of Piscataway.

Drake served as the church's first pastor. He died in 1739 after having served 50 years as pastor, the longest term in the church's history.

According to Cook, the church always has been a place where, at worship services, "we speak to God in prayer. Then God speaks to us through the worship hour, and afterward we speak to each other in fellowship."

This simple statement of the congregation's practice of its faith and its tenacity and steadfastness in the face of adversity has brought it to the celebration of 300 years of existence in Edison.

The congregation, according to church records, first met in the Town Meeting House off Woodbridge Avenue, and the church's buildings on Plainfield Avenue have been re-

placed several times because of fire.

The fire which destroyed the first structure is said to have been caused by a defective stove pipe, and the second fire — of undetermined origin in 1924 — destroyed the congregation's entire sanctuary and all but a few hymnals and prayer books.

Prior to 1871, new members of the church were baptized by immersion in the waters of the Raritan River, according to Ruth Smith, who chaired the church's Tercentennial Celebration Committee. Regardless of the temperature, she said, "it was total immersion."

"In 1843, one of our pastors baptized 54 persons on a freezing March day when the ice was very thick," she noted.

Although active for many years in the activities of her church, Mrs. Smith said that her involvement in last year's celebration of the church's 300th anniversary was what gave her "the history bug."

"Researching the history and coordinating our anniversary celebration was one of the most rewarding things I've ever done," she said.

According to Mrs. Smith, her research uncovered some interesting stories.

For instance, one item in the church's records of 1846 concern a man, one Brother La Forge, whom, the records indicate, gave an "astonishing excuse for being intoxicated."

"He had a sore arm," Mrs. Smith said, "and he was advised to rub it with rum but could not get his coat off and concluded it might do as well to take it inwardly — so he drank it, and it made him drunk."

Providing a living link to the church's past is Nellie Potts, a resident of Old Post Road.

Miss Potts was baptized at Stelton Baptist Church in 1911. She was the congregation's first deaconess, is a former clerk of the church and, for 30 years, was superintendent of its

Sunday school.

She is a direct descendant of Edmund Dunham, one of the first settlers in the area and one of the church's founders.

One of her more vivid memories of the church is riding in a horse and carriage along an unpaved Plainfield Avenue in the winter to Sunday services. She said her father would bring a heated soapstone along to worship services so that members of the family could, in turn, keep their feet warm throughout the lengthy services in the poorly heated sanctuary.

Providing another present-day link to the church's rich past is the recent announcement that the church's new pastor, its 24th, is the Rev. Michael Reilly. Reilly is the son-in-law of the Rev. Lloyd Williams, who served as the church's pastor from 1950 to 1961.

It was to honor the Stelle family, who provided the church with some of its original congregants, and Benjamin Stelle, the church's second pastor who was followed to the pulpit by his son Isaac, that the First Baptist Church of Piscataway assumed the name Stelton Baptist Church.

The Stelton School — now the Stelton Community Center — and the Stelton section of the township also derive their names from the Stelle family.

A complete renovation and restoration of the church's sanctuary coupled with a year-long series of celebrations and concerts and an award-winning appearance in Edison's 1989 Memorial Day parade were highlights of the church's tercentennial festivities.

Together they marked a fitting tribute to a community of people who have contributed much to the history of Edison.

David Sheehan is president of the Edison Township Historical Society, and this article is one in a series by society members for the Metuchen-Edison Review on the history of the area.



—Photos by Daniel Sheehan

The interior of the Stelton Baptist Church (above) was renovated for the church's tercentennial celebration last year. The Plainfield Avenue church (as seen from its adjacent cemetery, below) hosts a congregation that has thrived in Edison since the spring of 1689 when six men — Hugh Dunn, Edmund Dunham, John Smalley, John Drake, John Randolph and Nicholas Bonham — founded it.



Christina Ann Johnson marries E. Dewitt Swaak

METUCHEN — Christina Ann Johnson and Eelco Dewitt Swaak were married March 10 in a ceremony at the Unitarian Fellowship, Morristown, officiated by the Rev. Robin Capoor.

The bride is the daughter of Roger A. Johnson and Dr. Marilyn E. Johnson of Rolfe Place. A graduate of Metuchen High School and the University of California at Berkeley, she is promotions manager of Les Trois Petits Cochons, a pate company in New York City.

Her father is the senior vice president of Christopher Thomas/Muller Jordan Weiss, a New York advertising agency. Her mother, formerly a sociologist at Rutgers University and a writer on women in politics and age, owns Marilyn Johnson Collectibles in Metuchen and Red Bank.

The bridegroom is the son of Reyer Swaak and Helen Swaak of Chatham. He is a graduate of Chatham High School and Syracuse University, and is assistant promotion planning manger with Thomas J. Lipton Inc.

His father is a vice president of the National Foreign Trade Council in New York, and his mother is director of outpatient services for the Mental Health Clinic of Passaic County.

Honor attendants for the bride were Marcia Johnson, a sister who entertains children in New York as Marcia the Musical Moose, and Carolyn Summers.

Both attendants are from New York City.

Mark Swaak of Washington, D.C., was best man for his twin brother. Derrick Swaak of Ithaca, N.Y., another brother, served as an usher.

Jamie Margolis of Metuchen, a cousin of the bride, was the flower girl.

The couple is now residing in New York City after a wedding trip to Mexico.

Caregivers' group to meet at center

EDISON — A free support group for individuals caring for an elderly family member or friend will hold its first meeting Wednesday from 6 to 7 p.m. at the Hartwyck at Oak Tree nursing home, 2048 Oak Tree Road.

Conducted by a social worker and registered nurse, the group will meet on the last Wednesday of every month for an open discussion of caregivers' problems and concerns.

Guest speakers will be invited periodically to discuss specific topics related to the care of the elderly.

The group also will serve as a referral source for a variety of services and resources available within the community.

For more information or to register for the group, call 906-2749.

Hartwyck at Oak Tree is affiliated with John F. Kennedy Medical Center.

Stancie Herold will vie for title

EDISON — Stancie Herold, the homecoming queen of Edison High School, has been named a finalist in New Jersey's 10th annual Homecoming Queen Contest to be held May 5 and 6 at the Mount Laurel Hilton hotel.

Stancie is the daughter of Stanley Herold and a senior at EHS. She has the chance to win a cash scholarship as well as an expense-paid trip to compete with homecoming queens from other states for America's Homecoming Queen title in July in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Spring sale next weekend

METUCHEN — The Presbyterian Women's Association is holding a spring clothing and rummage sale next weekend in the Social Center of the First Presbyterian Church, 270 Woodbridge Avenue.

Hours for the sale are 7 to 9 p.m. Friday, March 30, and 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, March 31. Clothing



CHRISTINA ANN
and EELCO DEWITT SWAAK

Edison plans Easter Funday for 5-to-8-year-old children

EDISON — The Recreation Department in cooperation with the Easter Seal Society will hold its 12th annual Easter Funday in the Edison High School gym Saturday, April 7.

Festivities will begin at 1 p.m. for 5-year-olds, 1:30 p.m. for 6-year-olds, 2 p.m. for 7-year-olds and 2:30 p.m. for 8-year-olds.

All township children ages 5 through 8 can participate in the chance to win the grand prize, one of which will be given in each age group. And those who do not win the grand prize will receive a gift just for participating.

The Easter Bunny will preside over the festivities and will be handing out candy to all.

The Recreation Department will accept donations of 25 cents per child at the EHS gym. Donations will be turned over to the Easter Seal Society, so the event not only provides an afternoon of fun for Edison children, but it also bene-

fits handicapped children and adults.

Registration forms are available at the Recreation Department office, 328 Plainfield Avenue; the Municipal Complex, 100 Municipal Boulevard; and all public libraries. All forms must be mailed or brought to the Recreation Department no later than next Friday, March 30.

For more information, call 287-0900, Ext. 310.

Mardi Gras party set for Thursday

EDISON — The Edison String Players will hold a Mardi Gras party Thursday at Herbert Hoover Middle School on Jackson Avenue, from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.

Masks are required and costumes are desired. The party will include games, hot dogs, soda and dancing to popular music.

Admission to the fundraiser is \$2.50.

Spelling bee for Metuchen kids

METUCHEN — The Metuchen Organization of Women will sponsor its annual spelling bee Thursday, April 5, at 6:30 p.m. in the Franklin School cafeteria on Middlesex Avenue.

All pupils in 3rd, 4th and 5th grades who live in Metuchen or go to school in Metuchen are eligible. Prizes will be awarded to winners at each grade level.

Registration is being held in the libraries of Campbell School, St.

Roseann Wolk engaged to wed

EDISON — Roseann Wolk, the daughter of Joseph T. and Joanne Wolk of Edison, is engaged to be married to James S. Scofield, the son of Ronald and Arlene Scofield of Piscataway.

The bride-to-be graduated in 1985 from Bishop Ahr High School and also graduated from the Katherine Gibbs School in Piscataway. She is a secretary with Engelhard Corp. at its Iselin headquarters.

Her fiancé graduated in 1982 from Piscataway High School and is the owner of Scofield Construction in Piscataway.

A November wedding date is planned.



ROSEANN WOLK
and
JAMES SCOFIELD

Jews in Recovery to sponsor retreat

HIGHLAND PARK — New Jersey Jews who are recovering from addictions will hold a daylong retreat Sunday to discuss the challenges and rewards of being Jews in recovery.

The retreat is sponsored by the New Jersey Forum for Jews in Recovery and will be held at the Highland Park Conservative Temple, 201 South Third Avenue, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Registration fee is \$10.

The program is open to all Jews

who are active members of any Twelve Step Program, including family and friend groups.

"Out of Isolation" will be the theme of the day. Among the topics of discussion will be the beginning and end of isolation and Jewish spirituality in 12 steps, and a videotape on Jews and addiction will be shown.

For more information, call Jewish Family Service of Southern Middlesex County at 257-4100.

Sign up today for trip to gardens

COLONIA — The Colonia Branch, American Association of University Women, is sponsoring a trip on April 28 to Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, Pa.

The deadline for reservations is Tuesday. Reservations may be made by calling 755-1770 or by mailing a \$45 check payable to Colonia Branch AAUW to Wendy Rosta, 7 Anna Lane, Edison, 08820.

The \$45 cost includes a guided tour of the conservatories and the Pierce DuPont House, followed by a luncheon at the Terrace Restaurant and additional time to explore the gardens during the afternoon.

A bus will leave at 8 a.m. from the Colonia Country Club on Colonia Boulevard, Colonia, and will return at about 6 p.m.

The trip is open to the public.

Choir from temple to sing with opera

EDISON — The choir of Temple Emanu-El will perform with the New Jersey State Opera when it presents Giuseppe Verdi's *Nabucco* tomorrow evening at Symphony Hall, Newark.

The performance will begin at 8 p.m. *Nabucco* is based on the Old Testament story of Nebuchadnezzar, the Assyrian king who twice captured the Hebrew nation, and it contrasts Babylon and Jerusalem.

Principal singers include Sigmund Cowan, Susan Misura, Paul Plishka, Leslie Richards and Vincent Scuderi.

Temple and synagogue choristers will augment the opera chorus, bring to more than 200 the total number of voices.

The Temple Emanu-El choir also will perform with the State Opera in another presentation of *Nabucco* on Saturday, March 31, at Carnegie Hall in New York City.

Clara Barton squad expanding

EDISON — The Clara Barton First Aid Squad is expanding

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• **Story Time** •
Fridays 10:30am to 11am • Register Sat. thru Thu.
Ages 3 to 5, Accompanied by Parent
This month's book: *Max's Chocolate Chicken*,
This month's game: *Colors and Shapes*

• **Charity Book Drive** •
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underprivileged children receive 1% off for each book or
game you purchase (limit 10 books redeemed).

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Open Sunday 1pm-5pm
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Congregants return home

Stelton Baptist Church celebrates 300th anniversary

By WISAM ALI

Home News staff writer

EDISON — "Because there are so many places of historic interest scattered over our state, we are apt to overlook those that may be close at hand," wrote one former pastor of the Stelton Baptist Church in 1931.

Perhaps, in his records, Rev. Paul Conrad should have qualified the "we" by jotting down in brackets, "Except for us folks at the Stelton Baptist Church on Plainfield Road."

Swarms of faithful congregants, who have endured fire and ice for their church through the years, packed the baptistry yesterday — some from as far away as Missouri, Texas, Florida and England — to celebrate its 300th birthday and to hold a homecoming reunion.

The Stelton Baptist Church, which burned down twice — once in 1851 from a defective stove pipe and once in 1924, mysteriously — is the oldest Baptist congregation in Middlesex County, the second oldest in the state and the 10th oldest in the United States.

Nearly 200 faithful followers, including past pastors, attended the 2½-hour service yesterday.

Six men founded the church in 1689 — Hugh Dunn, John Smalley, H. Bonham, Edmund Dunham, John Drake and John Randolph —

"They came from Piscataway and helped found the church at Stelton."

—Kellogg Stelle

and four of those families were represented at the church yesterday in some way or another, said tercentennial organizer Ruth Smith.

Ninety-four-year-old Nellie Potts, the oldest member of the church and a direct descendant of Edward Dunham, was one of them.

Potts is one of the few surviving congregants who witnessed the days when the church would baptize its members in the Raritan River.

In the winter, parishioners would chop and chisel the ice off the river in preparation for the bone-chilling baptisms, she said.

But most telling of the church's lasting endurance was a blue banner draped on the wall. The banner read: "300th Anniversary — Rooted in history and renewing for the future."

For 41-year-old Kellogg Stelle, who flew in from London for the celebration, nothing could have

been closer to the truth.

He is the cousin of the son of the son of the son — or something to that effect — of the second and third pastors of the baptistry, Benjiman and Isaac Stelle, who served a total of 42 years from 1739 to 1781.

The name Stelton, in fact, came from the Stelle family.

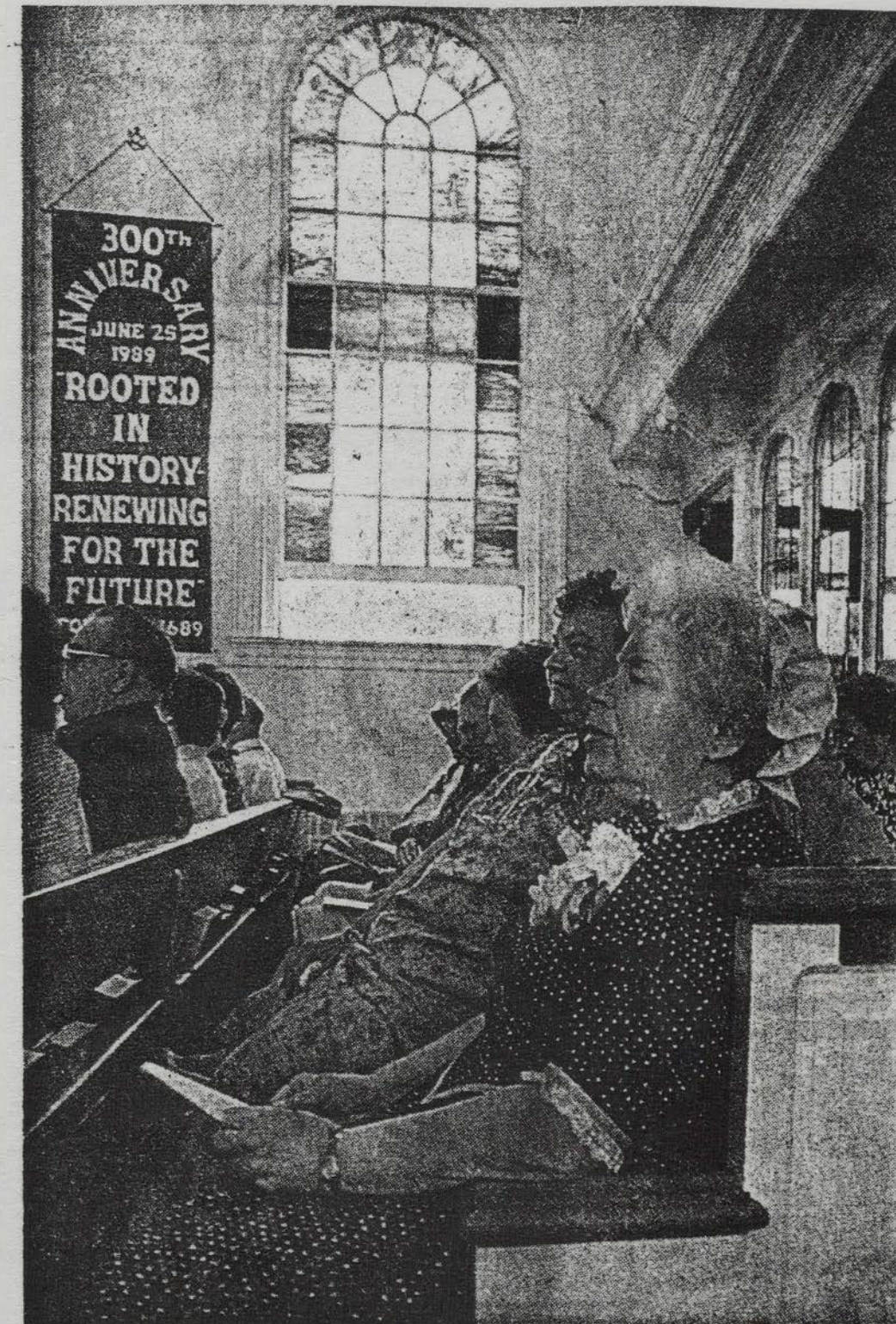
But Stelle, a physicist at Imperial College in London for the last 12 years, admits that his knowledge of the Stelle family history was limited to the following: "They came from Piscataway and helped found the church at Stelton."

In fact, Stelle said he once even drove past a road sign bearing the Stelton name while briefly studying at Princeton University in 1986 but never ventured to explore the connection — that is, until recently, when the man whose family was so "rooted" in the church's past began "renewing" his own future.

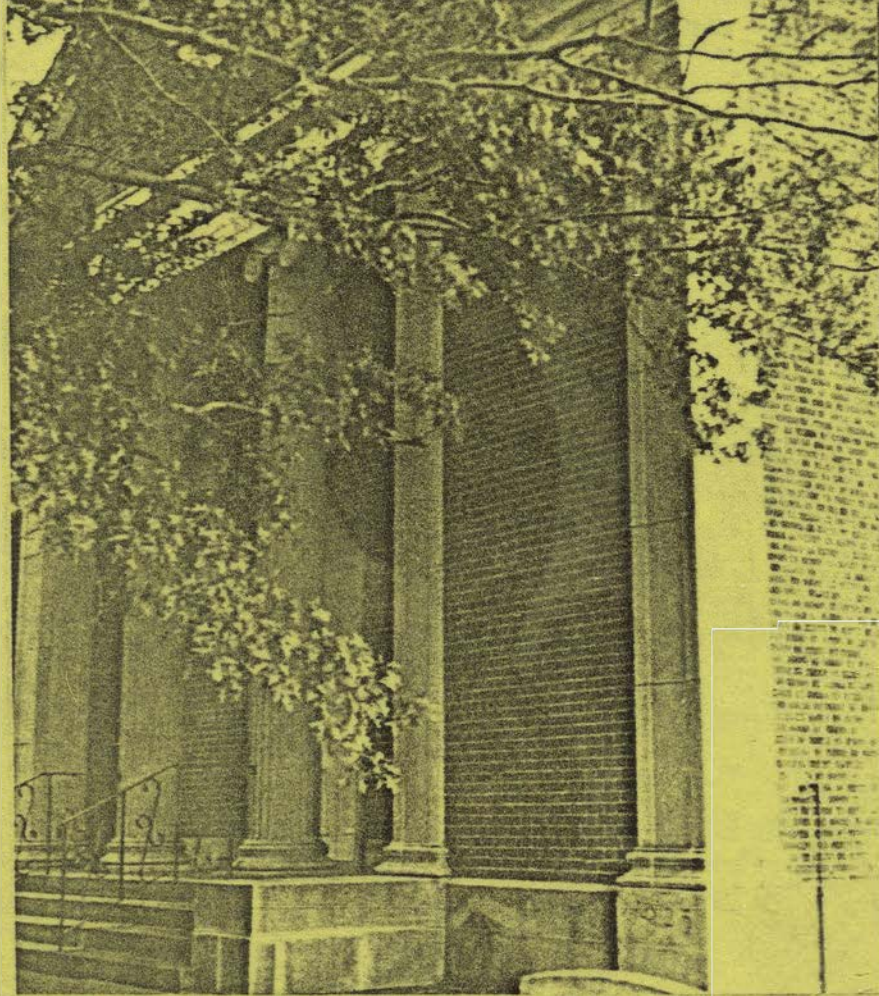
"I came to meet some family, and I did," said Stelle, pointing to two new Stelles he had just met — John McGoldrick and Virginia Stelle Kopetz.

Somehow all three strangers were in some way related to each other through a man named Poncet Stelle, the first family member to come to America from England.

"It's a good feeling, a proud feeling to have so much history behind you," said 69-year-old Stelle Kopetz.



Daniel C. Hulshizer/The Home News
Doris Horvath, foreground, and Ilse Vliet, behind Doris, attend Stelton Baptist Church homecoming yesterday.



STELTON BAPTIST CHURCH
334 Plainfield Avenue

The cemetery surrounding this church includes the graves of many members of the Stelle family - the name from which historic Stelton derives its name.

The present structure was constructed in 1925.

ASK AT DESK

Churches

(Edison History)

Edison Twp. Pub. Library
340 Plainfield Ave.
Edison, N.J. 08817

REFERENCE

No place to put the faithful, Edison church jams up traffic

Second of two parts

By ALLAN HOFFMAN

Home News staff writer

HN 3/30/87

EDISON — As Mayor Anthony M. Yelencsics put it, "They've just got too much worship for the amount of space they have."

The leader of Faith Fellowship Ministries, an Oak Tree Road church with upwards of 7,000 members, does not deny the church causes traffic problems on Thursday nights and Sundays, when people flock to hear a rousing service. But traffic problems, Pastor David T. Demola reasoned in a recent interview, also plague roads serving shopping centers and office complexes, but the authorities don't seem to complain.

"The parking problem is only a problem to those who look at the situation and say, 'Well, they're jamming up the whole road,'" said Demola, who founded the evangelical, non-denominational, charismatic church seven years ago. "They don't seem to be troubled if there's a big sale at Bradlees or there's a good Hahne's warehouse sale."

Faith Fellowship opened its World Outreach Center on a two-lane section of Oak Tree Road in May 1985, bringing 1,000 members from a building in Iselin it had outgrown. The center contains an impressive auditorium, corporate offices with modular furniture, a school — Cornerstone Christian Academy — and a sophisticated television studio.

But parking became a problem soon after Faith Fellowship opened. The church just did not have enough parking for its growing membership. Churchgoers began parking on residential streets, annoying neighbors, who, in turn, brought their complaints to municipal officials. Officials eventually banned parking on some of those streets, but problems remain — primarily traffic jams on Sunday.



Edison Police Sgt. Anthony White directs long line of cars waiting to park in the lot of the Faith Fellowship Ministries World Outreach Center Church on Oak tree Road in Edison on a Sunday morning.

To cope with its phenomenal, continuing growth, Faith Fellowship would like to expand, adding onto the school and parking facilities, and making its church auditorium the largest in New Jersey. But township planning officials seem reluctant to allow the expansion, given the problems of neighbors and people using Oak Tree Road on Sundays.

Of the church's expansion plans, Yelencsics, who sits on the Planning Board, said: "It's a rough road for them, since they want to double the area and we don't have enough parking. It's not big enough to handle all the people."

"They've had a huge traffic problem, to the extent they're parking illegally in a lot of places," said Yelencsics.

Neighbors of Faith Fellowship said the church causes Oak Tree Road to reach a standstill between Park Avenue and Plainfield Road on Sundays. In addition to making travel difficult, it adds noise to the area, they said.

In 1985, several months after the church opened, Yelencsics said: "What they petitioned the Planning Board for was a little church. What we got in the deal was a world center."

But Demola sees the situation

differently, saying Oak Tree Road — a county facility — should have been widened long ago.

"The traffic situation of Oak Tree Road is not one that Faith Fellowship has caused," he said. "We have only contributed, within our little framework of time, to the problem that already existed and has existed for years and has never been addressed."

"There's a growing community," he said. "There's an excessive use of cars. It is a major thoroughfare. They've never addressed the problem and that's why it continues to get worse."

Paul Alleman of Jean Place can see the church's parking lot from his backyard, set on a slope above the church.

"It looks like a car dealership or something out there," he said. "That's all I get to see on Sunday. It's kind of like a stadium. All those people together make noise."

"It doesn't seem that the area is big enough for the kind of growth that they're having there," he said.

Like other residents of his section of the township, Alleman plans to object to the church's expansion plans, once they Planning Board receives them. A planning committee reviewed the plans ear-

See JAM, Page B2

JAM

Continued from Page B1

HN 3/30/87
lier this month, but requested revisions and a traffic study.

Yet members of the church seem willing, each Sunday, to wait on line for a spot in the massive parking lot, helped by the direction of police and numerous parking attendants.

"They just accept it. People are just looking for a good product," Demola said recently. "And we like to believe people have found a good product here, although I don't believe that the Gospel is a product, and that the Kingdom of God is a product. But in the sense of a mind looking to understand it, they found something good, so they wait on line to get in. They expose themselves to an hour of waiting to get in the parking lot."

Edison resident Paul Sciortino, who attends the church, agreed with Demola's point of view. "It's no different from any other part of the township," he said of the traffic situation.

ASK AT DESK

NOT TO BE TAKEN
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Pastor David Demola preaching before the plentiful congregation of Faith Fellowship Ministries, of which churchgoer Kathy Bichsel of Edison, right, is a member.

Edison: Churches

Edison's remarkable ministry

Non-denominational church draws crowds in person, via television

By **ALLAN HOFFMAN**
Home News staff writer

HN 3/29/87

EDISON — The Rev. David T. Demola sees limitless growth for Faith Fellowship Ministries, a church with more than 7,000 members, a 265-student school and about 50 "departments," including a television ministry and a "Victory in Jesus" program for alcoholics and people with drug problems.

At a time when TV evangelists are coming under unprecedented scrutiny, Demola's church is enjoying dramatic growth in membership and viewers.

When Faith Fellowship opened its World Outreach Center on Oak Tree Road in May 1985, it brought 1,000 members from the Iselin section of Woodbridge, where it had occupied a former synagogue for three years. Over the next two years, membership skyrocketed — and shows no signs of slowing.

Through its Tele-Faith Productions, launched last year, the church reaches 700 television stations in the continental United States and others in Jamaica, Trinidad, St. Vincent and other Caribbean islands.

Each Sunday morning and Thursday night, people wait in cars on Oak Tree Road to find a spot in the church's sprawling parking lot, so they can go inside and to participate in a rousing service.

To cope with its growth, the church would like to double its size, adding more parking and expanding its Cornerstone Christian Academy. The church proposes to build the largest church auditorium in New Jersey and a gym for the community's use.

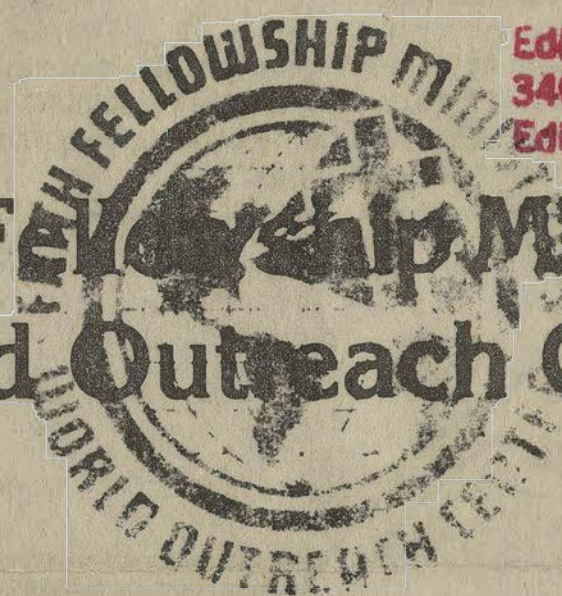
Demola, pastor and founder of Faith Fellowship, eventually plans to establish a college affiliated with the church, which he envisions becoming known around the world.

"We know factually that our church ministry has

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Faith Fellowship Ministries
World Outreach Center

ASK AT DESK



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340 Plainfield Ave.
Edison, N. J. 08817

... Give and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom . . . Luke 6:38

First of two parts

become a focal point across the United States," Demola said in an interview last week. "So Edison, New Jersey, is known in many parts of the United States — and the world now — as a place where there's this great growing church that's reaching the needs of people."

Members come to the church from many communities. Almost 400 come from Plainfield, 280 from Edison, 90 from Newark, 80 from Jersey City and many others from New Brunswick, Freehold, Princeton, Brooklyn and Staten Island.

The Home News / Walt Radomsky

"I think the basic reason why the church has grown is, we provide a positive message in a rather unsure world," said Demola. "We believe faith works. We believe that God is alive and that miracles still happen. People are looking for a hope, and it's a very — I don't want to use the word upbeat, I don't even want to use the word modern — but it's a very contemporary message."

"It reaches to the core of people and yet it has an old-line tradition of the Bible, the word of God, which is the standard which we teach and live by."

In the course of explaining what the church is, Demola said: "We don't teach a religion. We're a non-denominational church."

"That means we're not Baptist, we're not Catholic, we're not Jewish. We're a combination of everything it takes to make a person's relationship with God right."

The church employs 56 people. The building itself, set in an area of Edison with more open space and trees than the rest of the densely populated township, seems to use corporate America as a model. Its spacious lobby contains potted plants and trees, along with a receptionist's office behind glass windows. The offices include computers and modular furniture that separates rooms into cubicles.

Reach is worldwide

Aside from serving as the church's spiritual leader, Demola heads the church corporation, which had an income of more than \$5 million in 1986, according to the church.

The church operates numerous programs to help the community and people across the world, said Demola. These include distributing hundreds of thousands of Dannon yogurts for free; preparing 5,500 Christmas meals for prisoners, adolescents in special homes and nursing home residents; and running a "Free Spirit Storehouse" that distributes clothes and other necessities to the needy.

"We also have a very extensive world outreach program, where we go to other parts of the world to help poor people," said Demola. "We just came back from Jamaica. We're in the process of forming an orphanage there now for the orphaned children of Jamaica."

"All of those programs have provided an impetus for people to see that not only are they associated with a place that's doing something, but their money's being spent wisely also, in providing food and

See **CHURCH**, Page B3



Churchgoers crowd the floor of a Faith Fellowship service. The services are videotaped and broadcast.

CHURCH

Continued from Page B1

clothing for the poor and needy," he said. HN 3/29/87

Last Thursday, the auditorium of the church was packed for the 7:30 p.m. service. Parking attendants directed cars within the parking lot; a police officer directed traffic on Oak Tree Road.

Inside, members of the church distributed contribution envelopes in the lobby. Faith-Full, the church's "praise and worship orchestra," was playing in the auditorium, where a crowd strikingly diverse in age, race and economic background was on its feet, singing along with the Music Ministry, a group of singers. Above the spacious dais, slides showing the words to sing were projected on a screen. Television cameras slid across the blue carpet, filming the band, the singers and Demola's assistant ministers.

Demola did not begin to preach until after 8 p.m. He spoke in simple terms, relating his message by weaving Bible-reading with stories dealing with everyday experiences, such as someone in a truck cutting in front of your car, or convincing a child to eat vegetables. He walked back and forth across the stage with a wireless microphone, often saying, "Are you hearing me?" or, "Ha-ha-ha-ha-hallelujah."

From the perspective of several people who were at the church for the first time, the service combined elements of the classroom — people took notes when Demola spoke — a concert, a musical comedy and a friendly, outgoing party.

At one point, members of the audience were asked to greet one another. People walked around the place, hugging and introducing themselves.

After the service, people were able to buy cassette tapes of the night's service. They also could purchase other tapes, videos and books in the Faith-Life Bookstore. The tapes and videos were professionally packaged, with colorful covers.

In a tape titled "Vision 1987," Demola spoke of the word the Holy Spirit gave him for 1987: restoration.

"He said there will be a new youth outreach. I have given immediate direction for us to find a large storefront that will become Restoration House," Demola said.

"The Lord said to me, 'In this place, you'll put video games.' That's what he said to me. He said, 'You'll put in ping pong tables.' It'll be a place where young people want to gather, but it'll be a place where the Holy Spirit has total control of everything that goes on."

Churches (Edison History)

This church had its beginning as the "Grace Chapel Sunday School". The Sunday school was begun by Miss Hannah Manning. Proceeds from "...the tableau and musicle" held at Robbins Hall on April 29th 1875 amounted to \$130.00 and were the start of the building fund. The chapel was dedicated in 1876 and evolved into Grace Reformed Church in May, 1974. The current pastor of this active community is The Reverend Gerard Van Dyk. The church celebrated its Centennial on April 13th, 1976.

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ASK AT DESK

"BONHAMTOWN GRACE REFORMED CHURCH"
Woodbridge Avenue and Grace Street

REFERENCE

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Churches
(Edison History)
CHURCH PROPE

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Edison Twp. Free Public Library

October 31, 1916.

ASK AT DESK

Bayard Stockton, Esq.
137 East State Street,
Trenton, N. J.

Dear Sir:

Dr. Gifford called upon me this morning with your letter to him under date of October 19th inst. relative to the Piscataway Church corporation, upon which there is about to be placed a mortgage for \$6500.00, and in that letter you are desirous of getting some information as to the title of the property.

I have been Township counsel for the Township of Raritan for a number of years and this property has for a long time been under the observation and control of the township by reason of the fact that the township held a deed granting to it the property in question under date of March 5th, 1695, which deed is recorded in Volume 6 Book E page 413 in the Surveyor General's Office in Perth Amboy. That deed gave to the township the right to use the lands in question for the purpose of a burying ground and exercising the town company.

So far as the records show there are no other deeds changing or affecting the situation until about a year ago the Proprietors of the Province of East Jersey granted and conveyed to the church by deed of bargain and sale all their remaining right, title and interest in the lands in question, and shortly

A. B. *h* *cognis*

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afterwards the Township of Raritan released its right, title and interest in the same by virtue of the deed first above mentioned, to the church, thereby leaving the church the owner in fee simple of the lands included in the deed.

The two deeds in question, Mr. Gifford informs me, are in your possession.

He further informs me that the church was incorporated and the articles of incorporation recorded in the Clerk's office of the County of Middlesex on October 24, 1913, the record of which I have not at hand, but at any rate the church, as I understand it, is legally incorporated and entitled to be recognized as such. I have examined the bond and mortgage as you will note by my signature thereon and I find that in my opinion it is properly drawn and so far as I have been able to learn or know is the first and only lien upon the premises described therein.

Any further information which you may desire, and which I am able to give, will be gladly furnished.

Very truly yours,

W. A. Spencer

"ASK AT DESK"

Edison - ~~Library~~ CHURCHES #67 1977

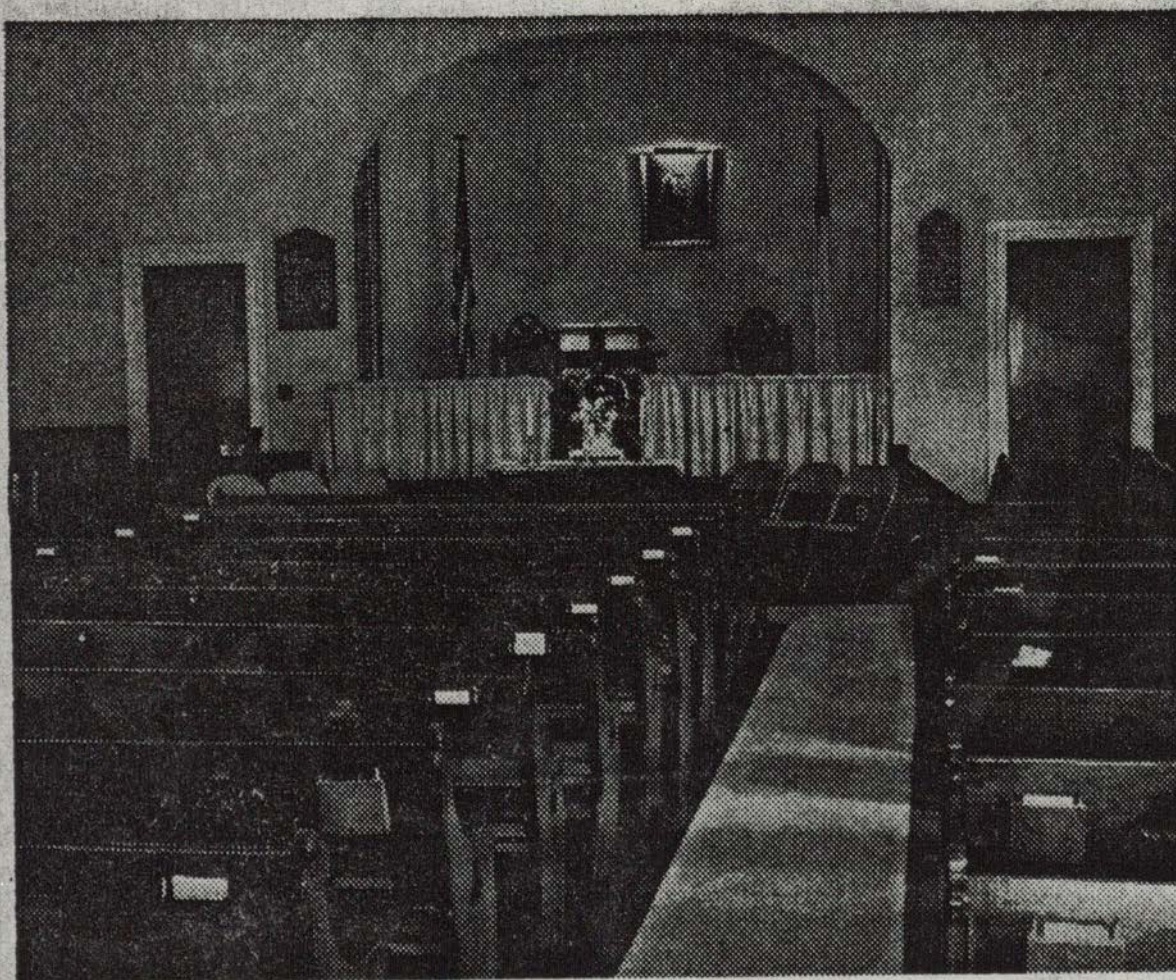
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ASK AT DESK

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Piscatawaytown Baptist Church maintains activities and recreation for children and young people of the community in its Community Center. The church was organized in 1952, as the result of Bible study classes for neighborhood children first held in 1820.



Edison Baptist Church Started as Bible Class

By S. ROSALIE NORTH
News Tribune Staff Reporter
PISCATAWAYTOWN

Piscatawaytown Baptist Church in Edison Township came into being as the result of parental concern that children in the area should receive Bible study in order to know the basic truths of their Christian faith.

The church actually began as a Bible study class. It was organized in 1820 by Ann Eliza Arnold in an attempt to satisfy her neighbors' concern that their children know spiritual truths. She invited a group of boys and girls to meet in her home to study the Bible. As time went by meetings were held in other homes in the area.

To Miss Arnold is credited the beginning of the Sunday School which has continued to the present and is now the Piscatawaytown Baptist Church School. The Piscatawaytown Baptist Church was not organized until over a century later on March 28, 1952.

LARGER QUARTERS

The original Bible study class grew in numbers within a year. In 1821 it was forced to seek larger quarters and found a place in the old Town Hall which was then used for public purposes and community meetings.

The school continued to meet there until 1875, when the present building known as "The Chapel" was built at a cost of \$2,500. This building project was the result of sentiments on the part of the women in Piscatawaytown that a more suitable place for the Sunday School meetings was needed.

According to a history written by Rev. Richard P. Young, pastor, the problem of location was solved by the donation of property by Mrs. Nancy Martin. Electricity was first installed in the building about 1925. During the 1930s, with the help of the WPA, ground was excavated underneath the building and a basement installed there making additional space available.

At the same time, two large pot-bellied stoves which had been used to supply heat were replaced with a modern heating plant.

Twice, in November 1941 and again in 1955, the building was damaged by fire.

While the building was being repaired after the 1941 fire, the school moved to the firehouse of Raritan Engine Co. No. 1.

An extension was added to the chapel to make it more suitable for church services. Sunday evening services were occasionally held there by the pastor of Stelton Baptist Church which held title to the property. The 1955 fire caused extensive damage but the

building itself was not destroyed. The chapel was again renovated.

ORGANIZED IN 1952

The Piscatawaytown Baptist Church was organized March 28, 1952, by Rev. Lloyd Williams, then pastor at the Stelton Church, under whose wing the "chapel" was operating. The Stelton Church requested a survey by the New Jersey Baptist Convention and it was decided that a full church organization was needed in Piscatawaytown.

Under Rev. Williams' guidance, a constitution was adopted and officers elected. He conducted services in the chapel and the new church was received into the fellowship of the East Baptist Association and the New Jersey Baptist Convention the same year. The church is affiliated also with the American Baptist Church. A financial campaign in November 1952 was successful and, as a result, a committee was appointed to seek a full-time pastor. On March 8, 1953, a call was extended to John Bubar, then pastor of the Glenwood Baptist Church. He became the church's first full-time pastor when he began his ministry here May 3, 1953. He was ordained by the church in November of that year.

The new pastor was living in a temporary parsonage at 444 Old Post Rd. The congregation voted on Feb. 16, 1954, to build a new parsonage on its own property adjacent to the "chapel."

After the 1955 fire, temporary quarters for the church and church school were set up in the Piscatawaytown School. The renovated chapel was rededicated May 8, 1955.

'NEW BUILDING'

Continued growth was producing serious overcrowding. Ground for a new and larger Christian education building was broken March 30, 1958. Plans called for most of the construction work to be done by men of the church. No general contractor was engaged. The task proved to be long and difficult.

Rev. Bubar resigned the pastorate in June 1960 and the congregation was without a minister until the end of that year.

A call was extended to Rev. Young, who was then pastor of the Leonardo Baptist Church and he began his ministry in Piscatawaytown on Christmas 1960. Work on the Christian education building was resumed and it was completed and dedicated in April 1963, as the Baptist Community Center.

The Church School has an enrollment of 113 and the church membership at present stands at 175. Mrs. Gertrude

Brundage is the Church School superintendent; Miss Carol Nagy, church organist and music director. Other church officers are Mrs. Helen Wilson, church clerk; Mrs. Alice Lund, treasurer; and Mrs. Alice Hehn, financial secretary.

CHURCH GROUPS

Rev. Young is assisted in the administration of the church and its mission by other boards as follows:

Deacons, William Wales, J. Richard Vliet, Charles Poper, Cornelius Hendrickson, LeRoy Stryker Arthur Bartow, Gary Stryker, alternate; and Patrick Lemkie, junior representative.

Board of Deaconesses, Mrs. Ruth Toth, Mrs. Betty Hendrickson, Mrs. Peggy Voorhees and Miss Susan Poper, junior representative.

Board of Trustees, William Van Pelt Jr., Richard Hehn, Michael Slovinsky, Mrs. Olga Voorhees, Richard Rose, Thomas Phillips, H. Ray Vliet, alternate; Frank Kovacs, junior representative.

Also, Board of Christian Education: Mrs. Nora Stryker, Neil Hendrickson, Mrs. Amelia Stryker, Mrs. Cathy Slovinsky, Mrs. Doris Kermes, Mrs. Anita Poper, Miss Valerie Szymanski, alternate; and Miss Nancy Young, junior representative.

Members-at-large to the Official Board are Mrs. Ida Vliet and John White. Serving as congregational delegates are Mrs. Gertrude Brundage to the East Association and State Convention; John White and Mrs. Anna Frey to the Standing Council; Mr. and Mrs. Edward Fitzgerald and Mrs. Anita Poper, representatives to the Council of Churches.

Presidents of the organizations are Mrs. Ruth Toth, Women's Fellowship; Michael Slovinsky, Fisherman's Club; Miss Nancy Young, Omegas; and Miss Robin Szymanski, of Alphas.

Rev. Young was born in Keyport and was a member of the First Baptist Church there. He was graduated from Eastern Baptist College and in 1952 from the Eastern Baptist Seminary. In addition to his church duties, he served as president of the Metuchen-Edison Council of Churches, 1966-68. His wife, Jean, works with him in the church ministry. They are the parents of three daughters, Lynn, Nancy and Karen.

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