

HISTORY OF THE
COMMUNITY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
Short Hills, New Jersey

The Community Congregational Church in Short Hills has had a brief but a full and eventful existence. Sponsored by the Middle Atlantic Conference and the Board of Home Missions of the Congregational Christian Churches, it was given a comity assignment by the New Jersey Council of Churches after a survey had revealed that a new church was needed and wanted in this community. The first service was held on Sunday, September 27, 1953, and the Church School was started the following Sunday. The congregation met in the Racquets Club for its Sunday services from September 27, 1953 through April 11, 1954. On Easter Sunday, April 18, 1954, services were held in the Short Hills School on Hobart Avenue, ~~(where the congregation still worships on Sunday morning.)~~

The congregation was formally organized as a church with 126 charter members, and received into the fellowship of Congregational Christian Churches, on December 6, 1953. This service was held at the Short Hills Country Day School.

On November 10, 1954, the Reverend H. Otheman Smith,^{D.D.} who had brought the first congregation together and had served as Pastor under the employ of the Middle Atlantic Conference since the first service, was unanimously called by the church to be its Minister. On March 13, 1955, he was formally installed, with Dr. Ralph W. Sockman of New York preaching the installation sermon.

In the first year, a parsonage located at 29 Hobart Avenue was purchased as a home for the Minister and as a place where activities of the church could take place. Also a five-acre tract of land at

the corner of Parsonage Hill Road and Hartshorn Drive was secured for the site of the future church building. In November, 1954, less than a year after its organization, the church conducted a campaign among its members for funds for the erection of its building. On June 5th of the following year (1955) ground-breaking ceremonies were held, and

(2) a beautiful colonial building ~~is now under construction.~~ (It is expected that the new church building will be ready for use in the fall of 1956,) and ~~will represent~~ an investment of some half a million dollars.

(3) In the two and a half years since its organization, this church has grown to 550 members and its Church School to 300. It has an active Women's Guild of 150, a young married group of 80 members, and Junior High and Senior High organizations of some 80 young people. Plans are now under way to initiate a Scout program in the fall for Cubs, Scouts and Explorers.

(4) Present officers of the church are Alfred H. Hauser, Chairman of the Church and Chairman of the Church Building Council; Everett C. Schmachtenberg, Clerk; Paul A. Seibold, Treasurer; Wilbur J. Bretzger, Financial Secretary; and Herbert C. Englert, Auditor. John C. Hover is Secretary of the Council of Elders, and Dr. A. J. McKelvey is Elder-at-large.

There are nine members of the Board of Trustees: John Fairfield, Chairman, John D. Clark, Thomas R. Gallagher, William H. Lang, William G. Lupton, Jr., Hugh R. MacMillan, Jr., Hobart C. Ramsey, Edward W. Skelton and Alfred J. Williams.

The twelve members of the Board of Deacons are Dr. Lawrence E. Ulvestad, Chairman, Philip Bardes, George W. Gross, David H. Jackson,

Delbert F. Jurgensen, Robert V. McWilliams, Charles I. Morris, Jr., Philip A. Salmon, John E. Schmitt, Joseph Ward, II, Hugh S. Wertz and Laurens E. Whittemore.

The twelve members of the Board of Deaconesses are Mrs. Frederick P. Noetling, chairman, Mrs. Paul S. Andrews, Mrs. George D. Atwood, Mrs. John Fairfield, Mrs. Thomas R. Gallagher, Mrs. Alfred H. Hauser, Mrs. Frederick W. Hoppman, Mrs. Marshall A. Laverie, Mrs. Herbert L. Mahood, Mrs. Robert G. Rogers, Mrs. Paul A. Seibold and Mrs. Austin M. West.

March 13, 1956