

Christ Church
United Church of Christ
Annville, Pennsylvania
200th Anniversary
1804 - 2004



Historical Booklet
October 2004

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1804

200th Anniversary

2004

CHRIST CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST Annville, PA

In this year of 2004 we are celebrating our 200th anniversary. Therefore, it is beneficial that we consider where we came from and how we have progressed and what we think and hope our future holds.

The Reformed Church was an early occupant of this region. The first church in our area was the Hill Church, north of Cleona (now Hill Lutheran), dating from 1737. Residents of Annville had to travel by horseback or buggy to the Berg Kirche (Hill Church) for corporate worship. Lutheran and Reformed people worshipped at this union church.

In 1804 there was organized in Annville, then known as Millerstown, the Jerusalem Church organization, consisting of the Lutheran and Reformed congregations. This is Christ Church's direct ancestor. The land on which the church was built was deeded in two adjoining tracts by Martin and Dorothea Ulrich and Abram and Elizabeth Raiguel on July 26th 1805 for 5 shillings per tract. The Raiguel tract contained 1 acre and 16 perches (484 square yards = 1 perch) and the Ulrich tract was 75 perches. Two small adjoining tracts were purchased, one from David Black in 1849 containing 18 and 6-10 perches, and 1 from Jacob Killinger in 1867 containing 36 perches. These 4 tracts are included in the present church property, embracing church ground proper and adjoining lot and cemetery.

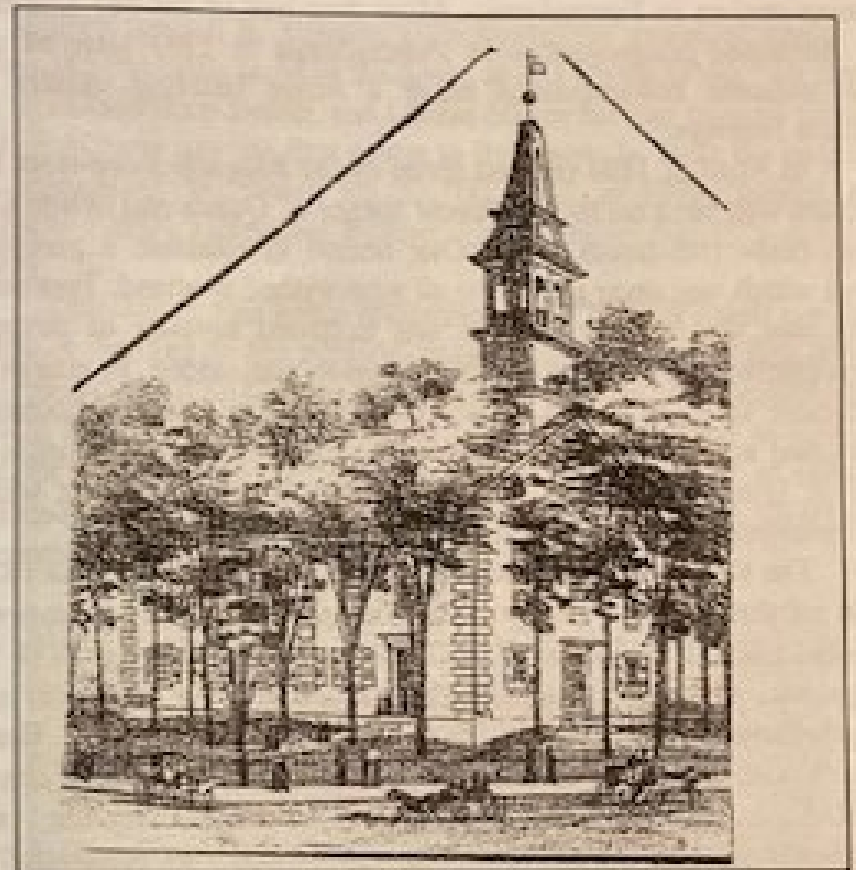


The Old Reformed Cemetery—Annville's First Burial Place

The large area of lawn extending from the rear of the church building to Manheim Street contained the old graveyard which comprised about half of this area. A 1915 booklet on Jerusalem Cemetery by Professor Thomas Stein listed 494 graves, 326 marked with inscribed stones, 24 unscribed markers and 144 with no markers. 168 graves were unidentified, 9 were moved to other cemeteries. The first person buried there was Anamaria Fischer Stroh in 1804 and the last person was Fredrick Galebach in 1891. Professor Stein includes many footnotes in his booklet of people mentioned in the inscriptions on the stones. He identifies Annville merchants, doctors, teachers, men who fought in the Revolutionary War, etc. One especially interesting inscription follows the statistics of Henry Berry who died in 1826 at age 64. It reads: "Er War Baumeister Von Dieser Gemeinde"—Henry Berry was the master builder. There were many children's graves testifying to the high infant mortality rate of that day. The majority of the inscriptions were in German. There were no family plots. Graves were placed side by side in order of death, thus a husband's, wife's and children's graves were separated by one or more other interments.

The Ulrich and Raguel tracts were decded to Anthony Karmany and Philip Karmany, Lutheran trustees, and to Henry Berry and Henry Peter, Reformed trustees. The first Reformed pastor was Rev. William Hiester, who served from 1804 to 1828 under the Lebanon charge. In 1820 the Lebanon Classis was organized and included Hill Church, Lebanon, Jonestown, Schaefferstown, Millerstown (now Annville), Campbelltown, Kimmerlings, Walmers, and Bindnagles all served by Rev. William Hiester. The first Lutheran pastor was Rev. George Lochman.

Jerusalem church was built in 1804 by Henry Berry. The three story building was constructed of limestone along colonial lines and was a substantial structure. It had a tower and bell but no vestibule. The pulpit on the east side was of the wine-glass type and there were balconies on three sides, one of which contained the organ which was made in Lititz. The full name of the church was "The Jerusalem Church of the Evangelical Lutheran and German Reformed Congregations of Annville and it's Vicinity". It was a part of the Lebanon Charge. Union churches were common among the early



Christ Reformed (Jerusalem) Church—1888



German settlers in Pennsylvania. More than half of the 485 Lutheran and Reformed congregations in Pennsylvania in 1793 were of this kind—separate congregations using a single building usually on alternate Sundays.

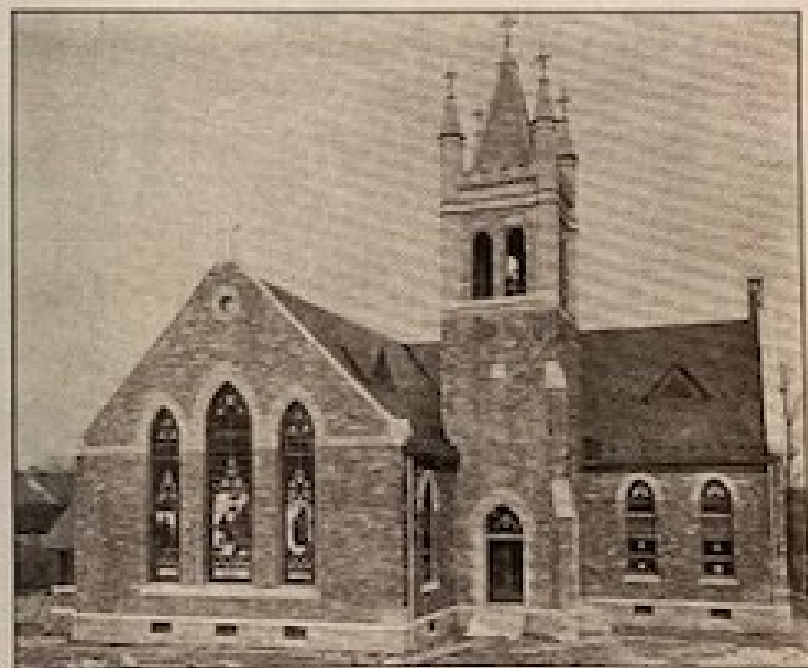
In April of 1804 on land given by the Raiguels a one-story log structure was built on the southwest corner of Queen and White Oak streets (now 105 South White Oak Street) to establish a parochial school which was open all year to all who wished to attend. Two cents a day was the fee, but no one was excluded because of poverty. Instruction was in German but later English was added. In charge of the school were Jerusalem Church's pastors: Rev. George Lochman (Lutheran) and Rev. William Hiester (Reformed), the grand uncle of Dr. J. E. Hiester. In 1830 a Sunday school was organized there which was transferred to the church in 1845.

The Rev. Henry Kroh served Christ Church from 1828 to 1835, a part of the Lebanon Charge which included Lebanon, Jonestown, Campbelltown, Bindnagles, Hill Church and Annville. In 1833 his charge was changed to include Lebanon, Jonestown, Annville and Campbelltown. Following Rev. Kroh in 1835 was the Rev. Henry Wagner, who served us until 1851. At that time the Lebanon charge included Lebanon, Hill Church, Jonestown, Annville and Campbelltown. During his pastorate the church was remodeled in 1848. A vestibule was added on the south side and the pulpit was relocated. The original long open pews were replaced with more substantial enclosed ones. A motto "Ehre sei Gott in der Hohe" (Blessed be God in the Highest) was proclaimed. That same year the public school system took the place of parochial schools and the sale of the school house was authorized. It was purchased by Daniel Seabold for \$300. He converted it into a two-story, weather-boarded dwelling house which is still being occupied.

Following Rev. Wagner was Rev. Franklin W. Kremer, D.D. who took the Lebanon Charge which now included First Reformed Church in Lebanon and Jerusalem Church in Annville in April of 1851. In May of 1852 when, at the unanimous request of First Reformed Church in Lebanon, his pastoral relations with the Annville congregation was dissolved by Classis (now Lebanon Association). They wanted a full-time pastor.

Then Rev. J. E. Hiester, D.D. began his tenure of nearly 50 years—1852 to 1901. In 1856 the house at 113 South White Oak Street was purchased from Daniel and Louise Miller for use as a parsonage. Dr. J. E. Hiester was the first pastor to live there. In 1901 the property was sold to O. H. Henry for \$1,100. And in 1938 Samuel and Elizabeth Zellers purchased it from Elmer Henry (O. H.'s son) for \$1,800.

The church was again remodeled in 1872 to a pulpit centered church. According to the Pennsylvania Dutch tradition of that day, it had a painting of Christ's ascension on the wall behind the pulpit. Also in 1872 the Lutheran and Reformed congregations agreed to separate "that the congregations might be benefited and the cause of religion advanced". The Reformed bought the Lutheran share for \$3,000.00. The name was changed to Christ Reformed Church.



Christ Reformed Church 1904

In 1901 Rev. William F. Delong became the pastor. In 1902 Jerusalem Church was torn down because membership had increased and more room was needed. The present structure, excluding the

Sunday School wing, was erected on the same grounds but not exactly at the same spot. In 1903 a cornerstone was laid for the new building. Much of the limestone from Jerusalem Church was used in erecting the new structure, which is Gothic in style and could seat 700. A Sunday School room with 3 divisions and a square tower completed the building erected at a cost of \$25,000.00.

During this time the Main Street parsonage was built. Hill Reformed Church, north of Cleona (on what is now Hill Church Road) was constructed and added to Christ Church as a double charge. Dr. Delong was appointed Assistant Executive Secretary of the Forward Movement of the Reformed Church and he left the pastorate in 1921.

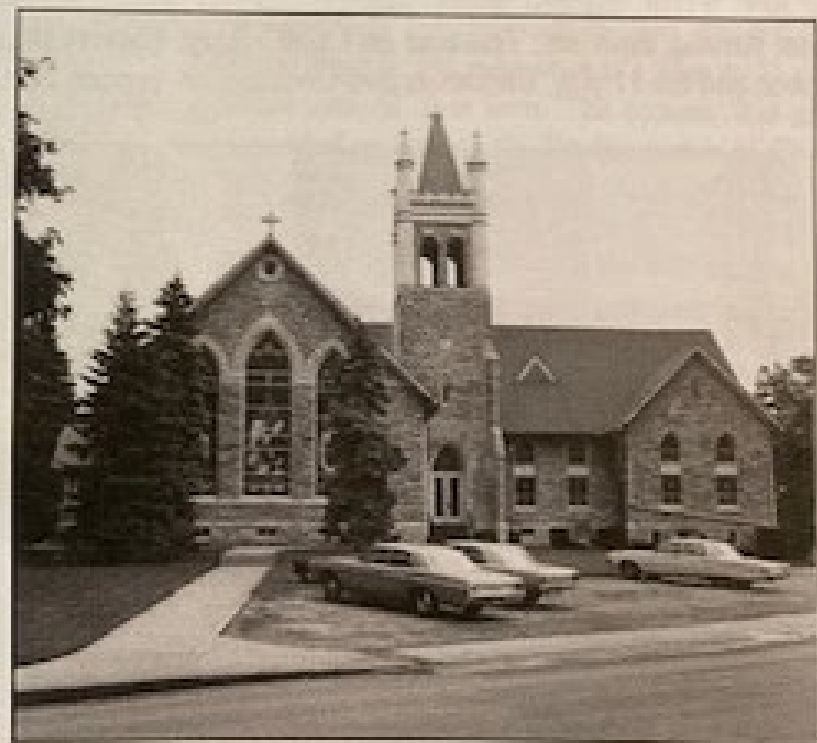
On Sunday April 10, 1904 the 100th Anniversary was celebrated with a morning service in German and afternoon and evening services in English. Services were also held each weekday evening in English. The following Sunday German communion was held at 10:15 a.m. and English communion at 7:15 p.m. Guest ministers preached the sermons and gave addresses.



Interior View of Christ Reformed Church

In 1914 the 110th Anniversary was celebrated in June with three services on Sunday the 21st. At the 10:15 service Rev. Theodore F. Herman, D.D. of Lancaster preached the sermon. At 2:00 p.m. addresses were given by Prof. A. V. Hiester, Sc.D. of Lancaster; Rev. J. Rauch Stein, a son of Christ Church, of Bethlehem and Rev. T. L. Bickel of Lebanon. The 7:30 p.m. sermon was again preached by Rev. Herman.

The Rev. James Dengler assumed the pastoral duties at Christ Church following Dr. Delong's appointment. Both pastors ended their association with Christ Church in 1921 when Dr. K. Otis Spessard began his pastorate in Annville. His was also a double charge including Hill Reformed Church.



Christ Reformed Church with Sunday School Wing

The south wing was added to the building in 1924 for Sunday School purposes. The basement of this portion was finished for social

fellowship. On Sunday April 26, 1925 dedicatory services were held for the "remodeled and enlarged Sunday School". That cornerstone was laid in 1924. Also Spessard Hall was completed for social purposes. In 1938 following a back injury from an auto accident Dr. Spessard resigned his position with us and was given the title Pastor Emeritus. He became a part-time supply pastor for the Annville area. He died in July of 1944.

The Rev. Elwood Dyson succeeded him as our pastor in 1939. He was ordained on January 24, 1939 and the following day he was married to Edith Bergey in Christ Church by Dr. Spessard and served our congregation until 1941 when his family moved from the area.

The Rev. W. Miller Price came to us October 1, 1941. He was the first full-time pastor as Hill Reformed acquired their own full-time pastor. Rev. Price initiated many special services which we still celebrate. Among them are: Tenebrae on Good Friday, Harvest Home in October, and the 11 p.m. Christmas Eve Communion Service. Mrs.



Harvest Home—sometime in the 1970s.

Price's music played an important role in the worship of Christ Church. She played many piano solos and on special occasions she accompanied Rev. Price when he treated us to his delightful bass solos. He was very active within the community, Lebanon Association and Penn Central Conference. His poetic ability was recognized by the publication of a collection of his poems "From Moments of Musing".

The bell from Jerusalem Church had resided in the undercroft of Christ Church for many years. In the 1940's a scrap dealer offered \$20 for the bell to be used for defense, but Consistory decided that we should keep it where it is. Then the late Rev. Dr. J. Rauch Stein, a son of the congregation, was instrumental in founding St. John's UCC in Harrisburg in 1902. In the early 50's he returned there as Pastor Emeritus and as their 50th Anniversary approached they were still small and not wealthy and among things lacking was a bell for the steeple. Dr. Stein remembered the bell which was unused in the basement of his boyhood church. He requested it's loan to St. John's until they could purchase one of their own. The request was granted and the bell was transferred to St. John's "in the name of Christian Fellowship and to the Glory of God". In the early '80s St. John's closed and their members joined other congregations in the Harrisburg area. They asked our Consistory if we wanted the bell back but they said to leave it where it is. That church is now Harambee UCC, a black congregation. They have programmed the bell to ring each day at certain times.

The church building was completely redecorated in 1951 when changes were made to the choir loft, a reredos was erected behind the altar in place of the three small stained glass windows, and the sliding doors between the sanctuary and Sunday School rooms were enclosed within a wall. Glass partitions between classes were replaced with walls or heavy velvet maroon curtains. The sanctuary walls were finished in a textured brown over white producing a smoky effect.

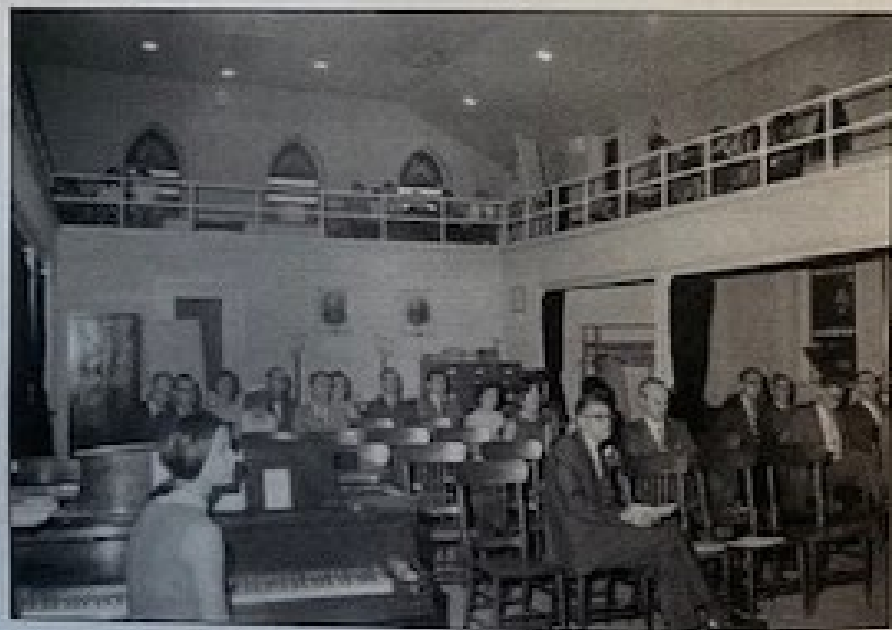
Old Jerusalem Cemetery was converted to a small park with a monument to all those who had been interred there. The graves at the north end were moved to other cemeteries and a parking lot was installed. Some graves throughout the cemetery had been previously moved.

In 1964 the 160th Anniversary Celebration was held. The Rev. Dr. James W. Moyer, President of Penn Central Conference and the Rev. Norman B. Bucher, Jr., pastor of St. Paul's Church in Manheim, were guest preachers. Rev. Price led the morning and evening services.

The property next to the church, 106-108 South White Oak Street, was purchased during the early 1960's. It was to be torn down for a parking lot but instead it was used for Sunday School classes for a time and then as the Sexton's residence. The other side of the house was rented.

Rev. Price retired in June of 1968 and became our Pastor Emeritus. He served as our supply for 7 months. From that time until September our congregation was served by supply pastors in the area.

Rev. Gary Hackenberg became minister of Christ Church in September of 1969. He also initiated many new innovations such as a monthly newsletter "The Wake-Tree", pictorial church directories, weekend retreats, Advent family celebrations and a Lay Pastoral Ministry. The Christmas Pilgrimage "In Search of the Christ Child" was presented for about 10 years for church members and the community. A new constitution was adopted.



Interior of Sunday School Room (Chapel Lounge)

Two renovations were undertaken during his tenure, one in 1972 when the educational facilities were completely remodeled, converting it from an open auditorium style arrangement to separate rooms, offices and a chapel lounge.

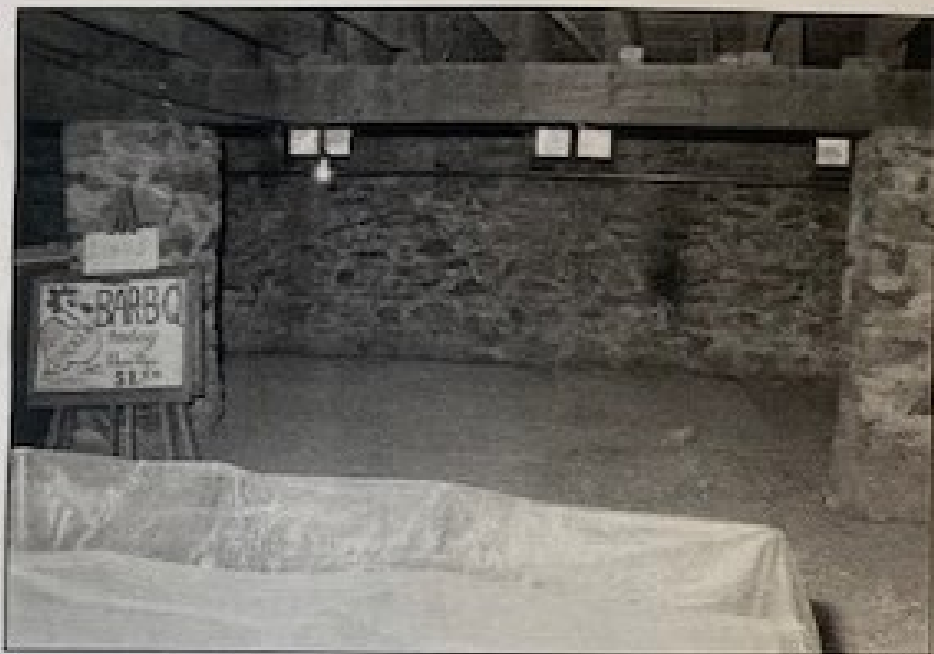


Choir room, behind Stein Bee Class

In 1976 Christ Church joined the community in celebrating the Bicentennial of Annville. Two of our organizations formed Bicentennial groups. The Adult Study Class, which was then making hamboats each month, became the "Schoonkaflaysch Schiffers" a long Pennsylvania German name (courtesy of Myrtle Fasnacht) for the Hamboaters with a pig for a mascot. Judy Feather was president and we wore period costumes. The Youth Fellowship became the "Krokodills" with a stuffed alligator in a cage as mascot. Buster Killinger was president. This was lots of fun intermingling with other local and church groups.

After much hard work Rev. Hackenberg received his Doctor of Ministry degree from Lancaster Theological Seminary in May of 1979. The second renovation was begun in 1979 when the sanctuary was

refurbished—new pews were installed with a center aisle, the choir loft and chancel were redone, the organ was rebuilt, the North Narthex was enlarged to include a ramp for the handicapped and a stairway to the undercroft and additional restroom facilities. The unfinished portion of

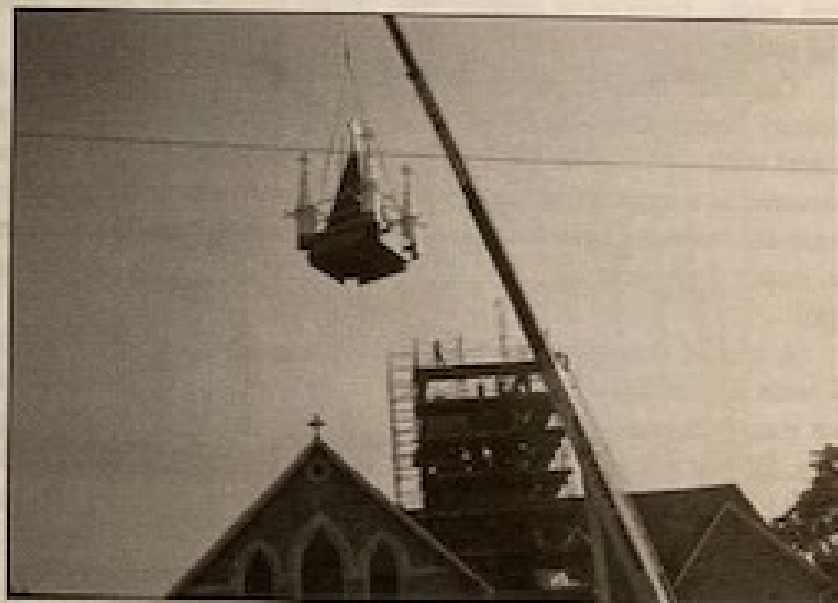


Undercroft before renovation

the undercroft below the sanctuary was finished to create a large multipurpose room with a new kitchen. New facilities for the Music Department and a separate Sunday School Office were developed. Diet Workshop began meeting in our social rooms as well as several Scout Groups and the Senior Center began serving noon meals with special programs. In February of 1981 a special dedication service was held to celebrate these new improvements.

In December of 1987 Dr. Hackenberg left Christ Church for a pastorate in Darville, Shiloh UCC. The Rev. Barry Smock served as Interim from December of that year until August 1989 when the congregation called Rev. Russell Clark, from the state of Washington, to be our pastor.

Under his auspices a prayer chain was begun. Repairs to the church and outside paving and sidewalks was done. The building was repointed and the slate roof was replaced in 1990. Jennifer Paulson used the old (and some new) slate to paint a picture of the church and these were sold with a portion of the cost given to the building fund. Doris Flory also used some of the slate on which she mounted a picture of the church which she had previously painted (see front cover). She also included some historical information. These were also sold with a portion of the money going to the church.



The spire of tower being replaced.

In the summer of 1991 the church tower was taken down, repairs made and the tower was rebuilt. This was a major event for the elementary school children to come out and watch. Work was completed in November.

Rev. Clark resigned as our pastor as of December 1995. Then one of Christ Church's sons, Rev. Norman Bucher, who was serving us as Pastor of Visitation, began duties as Interim Pastor.

Our next pastor Rev. Gary Hauze of New Hampshire arrived to begin his ministry at Christ Church in February 1997. He served us for two years and seven months, leaving in September 1999.

The Rev. Dr. Alfred C. Bartholomew then served as Interim from the Fall of 1999 to June of 2000. He was a breath of fresh air for our congregation.

The Rev. Raymond Jachowski arrived from the York area of Pennsylvania in June. During his time with us the organ was completely rebuilt at a cost of over \$180,000. Air conditioning was installed in the sanctuary, organ chambers and sacristy. The walls were painted white. Dedication service was held October 26, 2002 with special music.

Our 200th Anniversary, being just a year away, Pastor Ray and Consistory began preparing for a celebration in 2003. An anniversary ornament with a picture of Christ Church engraved in an open center was ordered as a special remembrance for our Anniversary Year. Some of these are still available for those who may still wish to purchase some. Pastor Ray accepted a call to a church in Robesonia and left us in April.

A special anniversary celebration was held on Sunday, May 2, 2004 with an artifacts display in the lounge. Letters were sent to former members and pastors inviting them for a special homecoming that day. Dinner was served in the undercroft following the service. On Sunday October 19th a Service of Celebration, which included special music by our Senior Choir and the Quartet Die Posaunen was held at 2 p.m.

As our Anniversary Year ends we are being ably served by the Rev. David Serfass as Interim Pastor. Our attendance has been improving. Our music department is doing excellent work under the direction of Kevin Biddle and including the very special talent of our organist, Jodi Loose.

There is much work still to be done--new pews, new carpet and changes to the chancel area in front of the nave are planned and hopefully will be completed within the next year. New Sunday School classes and committees need to be formed. Our theme for this year is Stewardship--of our time, talent and treasure of which we are asked to share. "Give as God has prospered us".

A Search Committee will soon be at work seeking another full-time pastor for us. With our history of long pastorates these last 15 years have been somewhat discouraging for us all. By working and praying together Christ Church will prevail.



*The symbol of the 2004-05 Stewardship Committee—
"A Sign of Faith and Commitment to Jesus Christ".*

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