

150 YEARS

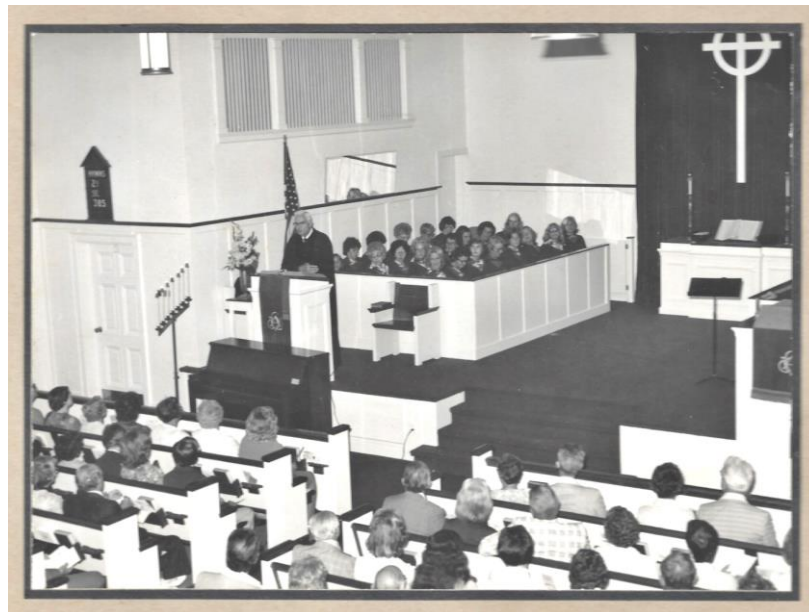
1875 - 2025

THE HISTORY OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

New Smyrna Beach, Florida

Researched and compiled by John Bros





PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PASTORS

UNION CHURCH – WASHINGTON AVE & FAULKNER ST.

Presbyterian, Methodist, Protestant Episcopal, & Baptist Churches attended

Rev. Charles Grandison Selleck 04/26/1875 to 02/10/1884 (Deceased)

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH – CORONADO BEACH -1926 TO 1933

Rev. Everett H. Sperow 01/04/1926 to 04/01/1926

Rev. Edward F. Morse 11/09/26 to 05/27

Rev. J. W. Parkhill 10/27 to 3/31/29

Rev. Frank M. Palmer 11/29 to 10/30

Rev. James L. Glenn 11/30 to 05/31

Rev. Merlin Frederick Usner 10/15/31 to 6/29/33

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH – MAGNOLIA ST. - 1933 TO 1947

Rev. Garrett V. Albertson 04/22/34 to 4/14/41

Rev. Dr. W. N. Blair (Stated Supply) 12/04/41 – 07/42

Rev. Charles P. Foreman (Stated Supply) 08/42 – 10/31/42

Rev. H. A. Rhodes (Stated Supply) 11/05/42 – 10/03/43

Rev. Bruce J. Griffen (Stated Supply) 01/30/44 – 05/31/44

Rev. Robert B. Russell 06/18/44 to 12/13/50

COMBINED WITH THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH - 1947 to 01/3/53

Rev. Karl E. Wickstrom (Stated Supply during Confederation) 1950 - 11/53

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH – MAGNOLIA ST. - 1954 – PRESENT

Rev. Dr. Walter L. Ritter (Interim) 01/03/54 to 05/11/54

Rev. Dr. Weaver Keith Eubank (04/11/17) 05/11/54 to 05/25/63 (deceased)

Rev. W. Heston Milligan (06/ /47) 10/20/63 to 04/14/68 (resigned)

Rev. Claud M. Cluney (06/15/52) 09/19/68 to 05/04/75 (resigned)

Rev. Dr. William Chegwin (06/26/66) 07/04/1976 to 12/31/2002 (retired)

Rev. David M. Keazirian (03/ /88) 07/01/04 to 02/19/15 (renounced jurisdiction)

Rev. George T. Head (09/12/86) 02/25/18 to current

Greetings from your Pastor!

A man walked up to me at a new church in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and asked, "Your name is Head?" "Yes," I replied. "Would that be the Kentucky Heads or the Indiana Heads?" "My dad was born in Kentucky," I replied. He appeared to think about that and asked, "Would that be the Owensboro Heads or the Louisville Heads?" "He was from a small place outside Owensboro," I answered, wondering who this guy was and why he was asking so many questions. "Let's see, outside Owensboro, would it be Sargho?" I was speechless. "Yes, he was born in Sargho." Then he said, "Well then, welcome to our church. Them's good people." Remember, we were in Chattanooga at the time, and I didn't know this guy from Adam's tomcat. He turned out to be an expert in this sort of thing and sought to know the history of people he got to know.

Everything has a history. People, churches, everything. This man was trying to discover my history. They say that in the south, the first relevant question when meeting someone new is "Who are your people?"

The booklet you have in your hand is an attempt to answer that question. On the occasion of our 150th Anniversary as a church, we are taking time to look back and understand better where we came from, who we have been, and celebrate God's work with and through us in the last 150 years. It's an opportunity to ask and answer, "Who are your people? Where did we come from? What historical events shaped us?" Then perhaps understand better where God is calling us in the future.

John Bros has done extensive research, gleaning data, letters, pictures and more from archives, libraries and museums, as well as our own stored boxes of "stuff" kept in dark closets. It was an heroic effort, and one I hope you will appreciate by reading and seeing the great pathway into our past. It is essentially a story of who the author is, God.

Donald Creighton said, "History is the record of an encounter between character and circumstance."

In these pages you will find a record of both. The character of the church molded by God, and the circumstances we have been allowed to experience as God has called us into Ministry and Mission.

I guess it comes down to this: Sometimes we as Christians need to stop along life's road and look back. Although it might have been winding and steep, we can see how God directed us by God's amazing grace and faithfulness.

Enjoy this journey into our past.

Pastor George Head

CHURCH HISTORY SUMMARY

PERIOD I	PERIOD II	PERIOD III
THE BEGINING 1875 -1907	THE HIATUS 1907 – 1926	THE REBIRTH 1926 – 1933
CHRIST CHURCH, KNOWN AS THE UNION CHURCH ESTABLISHED BY REV. CHARLES SELLECK	THE PRESBYTERIAN CONGREGATION CEASED, MAYBE AS EARLY 1889, WHEN THE CONGREGATIONALISTS STARTED THEIR OWN CHURCH AND TOOK MOST OF THE PRESBYTERIAN MEMBERS	SECOND ORGANIZATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN JANUARY, 1926
4 DENOMINATIONS PRESBYTERIAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL BAPTIST	1907 – PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CONGREGATION LEFT AND STARTED 'ST. PAUL PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL MISSION ON PALMETTO AND DOWNING ST.	REV. EVERETT SPEROW HELD SERVICES AT SAMSULA AND ON CORONADO BEACH
12/1875 – CONGREGATIONAL SHELDON FAMILY DONATED PROPERTY ON SOUTHEAST CORNER OF WASHINGTON AVE AND FAULKNER ST	1907 – THE BAPTIST CHURCH BUYS THE UNION CHURCH PROPERTY FROM THE OTHER CONGREGATIONS	THE DETWILER FAMILY DONATED CORONADO BEACH PROPERTY AND PROVIDED FINANCIAL SUPPORT
1877 – PRESBYTERY RECEIVES CONGREGATION REV. CHARLES SELLECK DIED 1884	NEXT INFORMATION ABOUT A PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OR CONGREGATION WAS 1925	CHARTERED AS THE 'FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH' NEW SANCTUARY BUILT ON SOUTH SIDE OF E 3RD AVE
1886 – METHODISTS LEFT AND STARTED 'THE FIRST METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH' ON FAULKNER ST. NO INFORMATION ABOUT A PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH EXISTING UNTIL 1907		CHURCH HAD SIX PASTORS OVER SEVEN YEARS DEPRESSION RESULTED IN FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES AND REDUCED MEMBERSHIP CHURCH MOVED BACK TO NEW SMYRNA, MEETING IN CITY HALL.
		PASTOR LEFT, LOST MEETING ROOM, NO PLACE TO WORSHIP

PERIOD IV	PERIOD V	PERIOD VI
THE MAGNOLIA 1933 – 1947	THE FEDERATION 1947 – 1953	THE RETURN HOME 1953 – CURRENT
FEDERATION WITH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH DECLINED	ON AUGUST 20, 1947, CONGREGATION VOTED 13 TO 11 TO BECOME FEDERATED	FIRST SERVICE ON JAN 3RD IN A REPAIRED SANCTUARY
THE WILLIAM BERGER FAMILY DONATED PROPERTY ON MAGNOLIA ST AT ANDERSON ST IN NEW SMYRNA	WITH THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST INDEPENDENT DENOMINATIONS WITH JOINT FINANCES	REV. DR. WEAVER EUBANK BECAME THE PERMANENT NON-MISSION PASTOR PASTOR IN MARCH
SANCTUARY BUILDING CONSTRUCTED IN 3 MONTHS ON THE NORTH LOT OF 4 LOTS FREE OF DEBT	NO MAINTENANCE ON MAGNOLIA PROPERTY AND IT BECAME RUNDOWN OVER TIME THE PRESBYTERIAN	CONGREGATION GREW TO OVER 350 MEMBERS NEW SANCTUARY DEDICATED MARCH '61
SIX PASTORS SERVED DURING THIS PERIOD	MEMBERSHIP BECAME DISSATISFIED WITH THE FEDERATION	DR. EUBANK DIED 1963 EDUCATION BUILDING, FELLOWSHIP HALL, CHAPEL & LIBRARY DEDICATED MARCH '67
	THE FEDERATION WAS DISSOLVED 12/31/1953	REV. DR. WILLIAM CHEGWIN BECAME PASTOR IN 1966
	NOW FINANCIALLY SOUND & NO LONGER NEEDED MISSION AID	REVITALIZED YOUTH MINISTRY PASTOR FOR 25 YRS CURRENT PASTOR IS REV GEORGE HEAD

HISTORY OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NEW SMYRNA BEACH

PERIOD I

THE BEGINNING

1875 - 1907

1845: Florida admitted to the Union.

“Just as we read in the Bible about the challenges that the churches had in centuries past, so did our first Presbyterian Church struggle. But with God’s blessing and guidance our church fathers prevailed and now 150 years later we give thanks for our church that stands strong in serving our community and each other in love, faith, and joy.” Becky Bros

The narrative of our First Presbyterian Church’s history begins here:

Early 1875: “Rev. Charles Grandison Selleck, an 1827 Congregational minister graduate of Yale, was a home missionary who traveled on horseback to churches along a 30 mile area of the eastern seaboard, with three principal centers of operation, New Smyrna being one of them.” (Rev. Selleck ultimately lived in Glencoe with his wife, Emily Crocker Selleck. The street they lived on was later named Selleck Avenue for him.)

At the time, there were no churches in the New Smyrna area. Rev. Selleck decided to organize a church. The heirs of the John D. Sheldon Estate, led by his widow Jane, donated estate property for the first church in New Smyrna “as a place of religious worship for the Presbyterians, the Methodists, the Protestant Episcopal, and the Baptist Churches.”

April 26, 1875: Excerpts from the Sales/Donation Document for the Property for the new Church are included below. The Document is from the Sheldon Research Library via The New Smyrna Museum of History:

“THIS INDENTURE, made and entered into this twenty sixth day of April, A. D. one thousand eight hundred and seventy five, between Jane Sheldon, Martha F. Sheldon, Frank W. Sams, and Zelia Sams, heirs at law of the late John D. Sheldon, of the County of Volusia and State of Florida, parties of the first part, and Edmund K. Lowd, Rhodolphus Sheldon, Francis Fox, and Charles G. Selleck, as Trustees of a church to be used as hereafter named parties of the second part.”

“WITNESSETH, that the said parties of the first part for and in consideration of the sum of one dollar, to them in hand paid by said parties of the second part, at and before the ensealing and delivery of these presents, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, have granted, bargained, sold, aliened, remised, released, conveyed and confirmed and by these presents do grant, bargain, sell alien, convey and confirm unto the said parties of the second part as aforesaid, and their successors forever, All the following lot tract, or parcel of land lying and being in the County of Volusia, and the State of Florida, know and described as follows, all that certain plot of land in the Town of New Smyrna, bounded and described as follows, viz;”. Document then describes an 80’ X 100’ parcel located on the southeast corner of Washington Ave. and Faulkner St., the 60’ side on Faulkner St. *(The document’s description of the lot states “....which right angle (plot) line passes at a distance of (20) twenty feet southwesterly from the most westerly corner of a church now being erected”.)*

Document continues: “Said lands and buildings thereon to be held by the said Trustees and their successors for the use of their inhabitants of New Smyrna as a place of religious worship for the Presbyterians, the Methodists, the Protestant Episcopal, and the Baptist churches, and to be used by any Minister of the aforesaid denominations who may be present at any time worship may be held.”

May - December 1875: “The plain white, rectangular frame church building with Gothic style windows and a hexagonal shaped belfry over the front entrance was completed by the first Sabbath in December.” There are no known records detailing how the building was financed. But consider this; the first members of the church were wealthy. The Sheldon family was local land owners, the Lowd family were local hotel and land owners, and William Coe, a close friend of Rev. Selleck, was the son of a Copper Baron. “William Coe had recently come to New Smyrna from Jacksonville mainly because Mr. and Mrs. Selleck lived there and wished very much for William and Deborah and family to come and make it their home. Rev. Selleck had married them in 1846 in Illinois. William then built his substantial home with his sons, and then built two other buildings for other parties.” Thus, it seems reasonable to believe that Rev. Selleck had the financial and labor support to get the first church building in New Smyrna, Florida constructed.



December 5, 1875: “On the first Sabbath in December A. D. 1875, the following named persons, citizens of New Smyrna and vicinity, assembled in the church recently erected and the first and only building that had been set up in the place for religious worship, and organized themselves under the supervision of Rev. Charles G. Selleck, into a church. In addition to Rev. Selleck, the members were William and Deborah Coe, Emily Selleck, Jane Sheldon, and Victoria Lowd. Also present the following two named brethren, local preachers of the Methodist and Episcopal Church.” It concluded: “We gave our solemn assent to the following Creed and covenant, and dedicated ourselves to the service of God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, desiring to be known by no other name than The Church of Christ.”

December 1875: From Robert Campbell WPA Documents #1 dated Nov. 6, 1940: “Records of the Christ Congregational Church show they held their organizational meeting the first Sabbath in December 1875 in this building “recently erected and the first and only building that had been set up in the place for religious worship”.” Rev. Selleck was listed as their Pastor.

From the website of The United Church of Christ, originally the Christ Congregational Church: “In December 1875 during the youthful days of New Smyrna Beach, a small band of spirit-led Christians, under the leadership of the Rev. Charles G. Selleck, met together to form a church which they called Christ Church. Their first place of worship was a one-room hall on the corner of Washington Ave. and Faulkner Street, the present site of the large Baptist Church diagonally across from our existing sanctuary. Membership totaled 16.” It is now clear that The Church of Christ (Union) had five religious denominations worshipping from 1875.

February 1876: Rev. Selleck wrote to the Presbyterian Presbytery of Austin, Texas: “We have dedicated our church edifice; though not yet completed, it is comfortable and pleasant. We organized a church of seven members, on which occasion sixteen sat down at the Lord’s Table. It was the first communion service of a Protestant church in this part of the land. We expect to have preaching here twice a month, Bible class and Sunday school every week.”

1876: The completed Church of Christ’s white building, facing on Faulkner Street at the SE corner of Washington Ave, became generally known as the ‘Union Church’ due to the ownership and usage by the four designated

denominations. Each had an assigned Sunday service time, and the Presbyterians were at 9:00am.

1877: “The Protestant Episcopal congregation first met in the home of Edmund Kirby Lowd (over a year after The Church of Christ started). The same year the congregation moved to the Church of Christ (Union or Community Church).”

May 1877: “The Presbyterian congregation was received into the South East Florida Presbytery, PC USA with the name appearing in General Assembly Minutes as “Community Church” after two Elders were elected, and appeared in the General Assembly Minutes each year from 1877-1884. One of the Elders was William Henry Coe, the founder of the hamlet of Glencoe in 1874.

1879: Mrs. Jane Sheldon donated a bell to the Union Church that was salvaged from the Mississippi River Steamship 'The Belle of Texas', which was wrecked on the beach just north of the Turtle Mound.

October 1879: William Henry Coe died and was buried on the Church of Christ's property. He was later interned at the Hawk's Park Cemetery (now Edgewater) at the church's request.

1880: New Smyrna population was 119; Church membership averaged 12.

February 10, 1884: Rev. Charles Grandison Selleck died at the age of 82 in Norwalk, Connecticut and buried there.

1886: From Thomas Waldrup WPA Documents dated August 23, 1940: “Church of Christ (Union) members who adhered to the Methodist Episcopal faith secured the use of the town school house, and there a church was organized with 7 charter members. A year later, the First Methodist Episcopal Church's building was erected at 315 N. Faulkner St.”

March 1887: The Blue Spring, Orange City and Atlantic Railroad arrived in New Smyrna with the station located on Lytle Avenue.

1887: The town of New Smyrna was incorporated. From the 1887 book titled 'The East Coast of Florida, “little had changed with the Alden, Cook, Detwiler, and Wilson families maintaining residences on the peninsula (Coronado). On the mainland, it was estimated there were some 115 permanent residents occupying forty-one dwellings that dotted the New Smyrna landscape. A railroad depot, church, hotel, livery, school, and several commercial buildings supported the New Smyrna community.”

NOTED: Many of the following quotes about the early history of the Christ Church/Union Church were reported by Robert P. Campbell, an employee of The Works Project Administration (WPA) in 1940. He was doing a Historical Records Survey – Church Inventory. He interviewed Mrs. Zilia Wilson Sweett, Great Granddaughter of John and Jane Sheldon, the Jane Sheldon that donated the land for the Union Church in 1875. The Campbell Documents #1 & #2 were found on the State of Florida website (floridamemory.com) in June & July, 2024 while researching ‘The Union Church’, Mrs. Zilia Wilson Sweett, and Volusia County Presbyterian Churches. Thus, this historical information is a new and important addition to the Presbyterian Church of New Smyrna’s history.

Feb 18, 1889: From Robert Campbell WPA Documents #1 dated Nov. 6, 1940: The Congregationalists left the Union Church, formed the Christ Congregational Church, “taking with them most of the Presbyterians” and constructed a church building kitty-corner to the Union Church’s property.

Feb 18, 1889: From the Christ Congregational Church’s Charter: Charles Melbourne Sselect, The Church of Christ’s (Union) founder’s son, and Rodolphus S. Sheldon, one of the The Church of Christ’s property donors, left with them and served on the committee to prepare a Constitution.

1907: “The Protestant Episcopal congregation left the Church of Christ and moved into their newly completed St. Paul Protestant Episcopal Mission’s building at Palmetto and Downing Streets.”

1907: From Robert P. Campbell WPA Documents #1 dated Nov. 6, 1940: “A mutually satisfactory arrangement was made by the several congregations involved, and the heirs of Jane Sheldon, and the Baptist Church bought the Church of Christ’s property, moved the old church building to the back of the lot where it served as the Baptist Sunday School, and a Mission Baptist Church was built on the front. This arrangement officially ended The Church of Christ/‘Union Church’.”

This period of the history of the Presbyterian Church of New Smyrna comes to an end.

HISTORY OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NEW SMYRNA BEACH

PERIOD II

THE HIATUS

1907 - 1926

1908 – 1924: In the three narrative documents on the history of the church provided by the Edwards Felmet Family, Rev. Harry A. Rhodes, and Anonymous, and both Campbell Documents, no information is found about an organized Presbyterian Church in NEW Smyrna Beach from the 1890's through the first 25 years of the Twentieth Century. Contrary to that, there were records of the First Congregational Church over that same period detailed in the Campbell Documents. After “most of the Presbyterians joined the First Congregational Church in 1889” and the Baptist Church bought the original church property in 1907, it is evident that an organized Presbyterian congregation had ceased to exist, maybe as early as 1889. Then ‘Happy New Year 1925’ arrived.

This period of the history of the Presbyterian Church of New Smyrna comes to an end.

HISTORY OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NEW SMYRNA BEACH

PERIOD III

THE REBIRTH

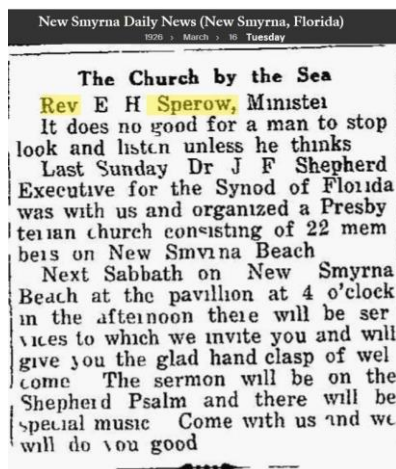
1926 - 1933

April 19, 1925: From The New Smyrna News dated April 24, 1925:

“The Rev. Dr. John F. Shepherd of Eustis, executive head of the Presbyterian Church in the State of Florida gave a very fine sermon to an appreciative congregation at the regular hour, 9:30 am, Sunday. Dr. Shepherd is a personal friend of Mrs. Grace Garcee, and it was through her influence that the people here were fortunate enough to have the opportunity to hear him.”

January 4, 1926: “The second organization of the Presbyterian Church in New Smyrna came about as follows: Twelve (12) Presbyterians met in the home of Mrs. Grace Garcee. It was voted to ask Rev. Shepherd to engage the Rev. Everett H. Sperow to preach in the New Smyrna area for three (3) months. Mr. Sperow began his work on Jan. 10, 1926. He held Sunday services at Samsula in the morning and on Coronado Beach at (The Brann) Pavilion in the afternoon.”

March 14, 1926: From The New Smyrna News dated March 16, 1926: Three weeks before Easter Sunday, the local newspaper advertised “**Church by the Sea**” on Coronado Beach, and there the second congregation of the Presbyterian Church was effected by Rev. John F. Shepherd (with Rev. Everett H. Sperow), and the first service took place at ‘The Brann Pavilion’. “There were twenty two (22) charter members who met at the Pavilion.



April 26, 1926: “With land and financial support for the new church and religious education building having been donated by Mrs. Ella M. Detwiler, a building committee was appointed and during the summer the first unit of the proposed new church plant was begun”. Confirming the above in a 1999 letter, Mrs. Ruth Eichelberger, (joined First Presbyterian in 1960), wrote to the First Presbyterian church of New Smyrna Beach on Magnolia Street responding to requests for memories for their 125th anniversary: “The Detwiler family were supportive of 1st Church, gave a lot (property) and building support to the first First Presbyterian Church (USA) of New Smyrna Beach.”

June 17, 1926: From Robert P. Campbell WPA Documents #2 dated Nov. 9, 1940: The Presbyterian Church’s Charter, dated June, 14, 1926, Charter File No. 16668, was approved by the Judge of the Seventh Judicial Circuit in and for Volusia County, Florida and recorded in Book 5 Incorporations, page 425.” “The name of this corporation shall be THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH U.S.A. of New Smyrna Beach”. Corporation # is 74-16-NP-701409.

November 9, 1926: Rev. Edward F. Morse was installed as the first permanent pastor and served until the spring of 1927.

1926: The First Presbyterian Church became a Mission Church. That is, it received aid from the Board of National Missions to help pay the Pastor’s salary. Pastors were supplied by The Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the USA located in New York.

November 10, 1926: Bryan Memorial Bible School was approved by the Synod.

Early 1927: The First Presbyterian Church building, located on E 3rd Ave. on Coronado Beach was dedicated in early 1927. According to Rev. Harry A. Rhodes’ 1943 narrative, the church was located on “the right side of the road proceeding east from the south bridge and beyond the flower shop”. The flower shop was Musson’s Florist, which was located across the street from a building (originally an auto service station) that in 1946 became Norwood’s Restaurant. “And beyond the flower shop” places the church in the area between the Dunkin Donuts located at 441 E 3rd Ave. and Starbucks located at 491 E 3rd Ave.



Confirming Rev. Rhodes' narrative about the new church's location, Mrs. Ruth Eichelberger wrote in her 1999 letter: "It went dark and when reactivated at a location off east end of South Causeway Bridge, again gifts were given to the church".

1927: The construction and dedication of the Religious Education Building for the Bryan Memorial Bible School was completed by the Synod's committee.

1931: The Bryan Memorial Bible School closed and was "sold to Dr. Fred Lewis Pattee and his wife" for \$1400. The Pattee's later "donated the building to Rollins College", who renamed it 'The Pelican House'. Photos show a sign on the north end of the building with the words "Rollins College Beach House, The Pelican", and Pelicans on each end facing the center.

1931: From Robert P. Campbell WPA Documents #2 dated Nov. 9, 1940: "Dwindling of the Winter Colony (a result of the depression?) caused a decline of the church with attendant financial difficulties." Majority of the congregation lived on the mainland.

October 15, 1931: Rev. Merlin Frederick Usner, a 1930 graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary, became Pastor of The First Presbyterian Church of New Smyrna on Coronado Beach.

1932-1933: During Rev. Usner's pastorate, Presbytery's Committee on National Missions made a survey of the New Smyrna field and recommended that the beachside site be given up and that the church be relocated across the river in the town of New Smyrna. This was done and a temporary meeting place was secured in the old City Hall at the corner of Live Oak and Lytle Sts. "The church property (on 3rd Ave.) was sold and converted into a private residence."

1933: The Coronado Beach based First Presbyterian Church had 6 pastors in 7 years, the last being the Rev. Merlin Frederick Usner.

June 29, 1933: "Pastor Usner left on this date for his vacation in July. He never returned and so far as we know, no one knew that he was not coming back." The city needed the meeting room for other purposes, and services were discontinued as there was no place to worship.

This period of the history of the New Smyrna Presbyterian Church comes to an end.

HISTORY OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NEW SMYRNA BEACH

PERIOD IV

THE MAGNOLIA

1933 - 1947

September 1933: An effort was made by the pastor of the West Palm Presbyterian Church and the Secretary of the of the Board of Missions of the Congregational Church to unite the Congregational and Presbyterian churches of New Smyrna Beach. Articles of Federation were agreed upon at a meeting with only four (4) members of the Presbyterian Church present.

November 7, 1933: “The third organization of the First Presbyterian Church of New Smyrna Beach came about as follows: “However, after all had returned from summer vacation, the members of the church met at the home of Mr. and Mrs. C.A.E. Asendorf, and decided not to do the Federation. They drew up a request to the S. E. Florida Presbytery and the Synod of Florida asking that a moderator be appointed for the church and that the \$1400 from the sale of the school building be made available to start construction on the Magnolia Street property donated by Mr. & Mrs. William H. Berger.”

November 24, 1933: Rev. Garrett V. Albertson was appointed moderator and a Building Committee was appointed with Mr. George Speidel as chairman. Rev. Albertson’s “Silent Partner” donated \$1400 to replace the requested \$1400 that had already been designated by Presbytery for the “Young People’s Organization of Florida.

December 13, 1933: The ‘Magnolia Street’ Sanctuary construction began on the north lot of the four donated lots.

March 11, 1934: First Presbyterian Church’s third church building, located at 507 Magnolia Street, completed in 3 months by Mr. George Speidel and several church members, was dedicated free of debt.

Rev. Garrett V. Albertson became pastor of the third congregation of The First Presbyterian Church of New Smyrna Beach and the first service took place. Pastor Albertson served until March 31, 1941. Five pastors supplied the pulpit until 1947/48.



1934: The new church was located on a main thoroughfare. “Old U.S. Route 1 went North on Magnolia, West on Canal, then North again on Orange Street.”

1935: “The old building (Union Church) stood until 1935, when it was torn down and rebuilt on the corner of Enterprise Ave. and Cottonshed Ave, to be used by the Methodist Episcopal Church.” The bell salvaged from the Mississippi River Steamship ‘The Belle of Texas’ served for many years as the Town’s fire bell.

1937: “During Rev. Albertson’s ministry, the church was once again indebted to his “Silent Partner” who provided \$750 for the construction of the religious education and social activities building.”

1940: New Smyrna’s population was 4402.

1942: Rev. Harry A. Rhodes, a Mission Pastor, became the Stated Supply Pastor and served for one year, November 11, 1942 to October 5, 1943. In 1943, the Presbytery requested each church to provide a history of their congregation. Rev. Rhodes compiled a 5 page narrative that provided valuable information about the early days of the church.

1947: “New Smyrna” became “New Smyrna Beach” when the city annexed Coronado Beach.

August 20, 1947: The congregations of the New Smyrna Beach Presbyterian and Congregational churches had become small and the town was

”over-churched”. First Presbyterian voted 13 to 11 to become ‘Federated’, acting under the agreed to ‘Articles of Agreement of the Federated Church’, to meet and work together “that the Kingdom of God might better be served”.

This period of the history of the New Smyrna Presbyterian Church comes to an end.

HISTORY OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NEW SMYRNA BEACH

PERIOD V

THE FEDERATION

1947 - 1953

1947 - 1953: The Presbyterian and Congregational churches retained their denominational identity throughout the time the Federation existed and separate services were held at the United Church of Christ Congregational Church located on the northwest corner of Washington Ave. and Faulkner Street. Finances and all revenue from both denominations were under the control of the Federation's Board of Directors in a single account. First Presbyterian maintained ownership of the Magnolia Street property during this period, although the pews had been sold for \$400 to provide funds to maintain the building's roof. "During the time of the Federation, the church became self-supporting and no longer needed Mission aid"

1950: New Smyrna Beach population was 5775.

November 4, 1953: Trustees of the Presbytery of Southeast Florida, having met with the Presbyterian congregation of the Federated church on October 18th, presented four recommendations to the Presbytery at its West Palm Beach meeting pertaining to the future of the congregation. The Presbytery adopted these recommendations, as follows: "The \$35 monthly rent from the Manse be redirected for improvements to the empty Magnolia St. Sanctuary; Do not sell or rent the Magnolia property; Because of the constantly recurring unrest and dissatisfaction of the Presbyterians in the Federated church, we recommend The Federated Church Presbyterians return to Magnolia St. and re-establish their separate Presbyterian Church; Cancel the Terms of the Federation or rewrite it to recognize the current status." As there was no Presbyterian Pastor for the Federated Presbyterian Congregation, the Trustees appointed Rev. E. A. Finn as Moderator of the Session

November 20, 1953: "Meeting and acting under the Articles of Agreement of the Federated Church, the members of the Presbyterian Church of New Smyrna Beach did overwhelmingly vote to withdraw from the Federated Church and to re-establish the activities of this church in this community"

December 3, 1953: “The Joint Committee of the Federated Church moderated by Dr. Tuttle, of the Florida Congregational Christian Conference, and with Rev. E. A. Finn from the Southwest Presbytery and Moderator of the Session, voted that the dissolution of the Federated Church would be effective as of December 31, 1953, with joint efforts ceasing as of that date forward.”

This period of the history of the New Smyrna Presbyterian Church comes to an end.

HISTORY OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NEW SMYRNA BEACH

PERIOD VI

THE RETURN HOME

1953 - CURRENT

January 3, 1954: The fourth organization of the New Smyrna Presbyterian Church came about as follows: "The first service of the newly reconstituted independent First Presbyterian Church of New Smyrna Beach was held with Interim Pastor, The Rev. Dr. Walter L. Ritter, delivering the message. The congregation of 41 members, which included members returning from the Federated Church, were sitting on chairs borrowed from a local funeral home as the pews had been sold to provide funds to repair the Sanctuary's roof". Rev. Dr. Ritter served as interim pastor until May 1954. A member's Mother donated money to paint the outside of the church and it was painted white.

January 1954: During the five (5) year duration of the Federation, only \$250, (which came from Federation's funds) was spent on the Magnolia Sanctuary, and that was for the purchase of pews. Thus the reason for the degradation of the building. "For the purpose of restoring the rundown condemned Sanctuary, and for its maintenance and upkeep, a Presbyterian Building Fund was established." "Because we were considered a 'new' church by the Presbytery, the church was given a \$1500 grant by the Synod. The funds were used to refinish the floors, paint the walls of the Sanctuary, install pews, and redecorate and furnish the Manse."

February 6, 1954: "The Clerk (of Session) reported that upon recommendation of Dr. Ritter, Moderator, and Dr. W. K. C. Thomson, Chairman Committee Ministerial Relations, Southeast Presbytery, that he had contacted Dr. Weaver Keith Eubank, Pastor of the Ninth Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia, Pa. by telephone. That on behalf of this church invited Dr. and Mrs. Eubank to come to New Smyrna Beach on February 21, 1954, with Dr. Eubank to conduct the Sabbath Services on that date."

February 17, 1954: Congregational meeting nominated a five (5) member Pastor Nominating Committee.

February 28, 1954: Congregational meeting to consider the Nominating Committee's report as follows: "We, the Nominating Committee, being on sufficient grounds, well satisfied with the ministerial qualifications of the Rev. Weaver K. Eubank, D.D. do hereby unanimously recommend him to this congregation for election as Pastor." (signed Jack M. Cole, Secretary). The congregational vote was unanimous.

April 20, 1954: Although the dissolution of the Federated Church would be effective as of December 31, 1953, the equitable settlement of the joint properties and monies had not been resolved. At the Presbytery meeting on this date, The Board of Trustees of the Southeast Presbytery recommended in item 3: "Whereas: Six or seven attempts were made in conference with the State Superintendent of Congregational Churches of Florida, to make an equitable settlement of the property and money held by the Federated Church of New Smyrna Beach; and Whereas: All these attempts resulted in failure to agree on a fair distribution of such property and money, therefore we recommend to Presbytery that we leave the final distribution of the property and money entirely in the hands of the State Superintendent of Congregational Churches of Florida; to give to the Presbyterian Church of New Smyrna Beach what share of the property and money now held in the name of the Federated Church to which he feels they, in the name of Christ and in His spirit, are entitled." The recommendation was adopted.

April 26, 1954: Included in the church's extensive file on the Federation Dissolution, the final communication on the dissolution issue came from Mr. E. A. Finn, Presbytery's Stated Clerk, to Rev. William N. Tuttle from the Florida Congregational Christian Conference, informing Mr. Tuttle of the Presbytery's Board of Trustees adopted recommendation.

May 11, 1954: Dr. "Weaver Keith Eubank became the first permanent Pastor of the newly reconstituted independent First Presbyterian Church of New Smyrna Beach. Mrs. Grace Eubank "became a strong leader, worked with the church children, and taught Latin at the high school."

1954: Modern 'Presbyterian Women Association' chapter was established.



June 1955: Purchased the building just north of the church for Sunday school classes and a Church Office.

1957: Program started to raise \$25,000 to renovate the Education Center; pay the mortgage; and for a New Sanctuary Building.

1960: New Smyrna Beach population was 8781. Church membership was 398.

1960: New property adjacent to the parking lot was purchased and named Magnolia House.

September 28, 1960: Ground was broken on the south lot of the Magnolia property on September 28, 1960 for the church's new Sanctuary Building to replace the original Magnolia Street Sanctuary dedicated in 1934. Mr. J. H. Cunningham donated all the brick for the Sanctuary building.

March 12, 1961: Dr. Eubank dedicated the new Sanctuary Building, our current Sanctuary. The architect was Mr. Henry Whitworth of Winter Park, Florida, and the contractor was Mr. W. S. Martin of Cocoa Beach, Florida. Contract amount for construction was \$74,226. At the dedication, Mr. Whitworth gave the church a seven foot Celtic cross to hang over the communion table. As of June, 2024, that cross hangs in Eubank Hall on the back wall of the platform.



May 25, 1963: Dr. Eubank died just prior to his planned retirement from First Presbyterian Church of New Smyrna Beach.

October 20, 1963: Rev. Heston Milligan was installed as pastor.

March 12, 1967: The New Education Building with Eubank Hall, the Robinson Memorial Chapel and the Albertson Memorial Library was dedicated.

August 1968 – July 1976: The pulpit was supplied by six (6) pastors during this period.

April 1973: The new church Carillon's were donated by the family of Anton "Tony" H. Boll and dedicated to "The Glory of God and the Service of Man in Loving Memory of Anton". There is a plaque in the Sanctuary's Narthex.

1975: Stained glass windows installed in the Chancel.

July 4, 1976: Dr. William Chegwin became Pastor.

1979: Church membership had outgrown the Sanctuary's main floor 308 seat capacity, so chairs were setup in the aisles. Worship was moved to Eubank Hall (including the pews) while a balcony was added to the Sanctuary to seat an additional 100.

1983: William Mitchel Newman, from Michigan, formalized the church member's weekly men's volunteer building and grounds maintenance group and it was named Newman's Crewmen. That group, now Newman's Crew for men and women, continues today, 2024.

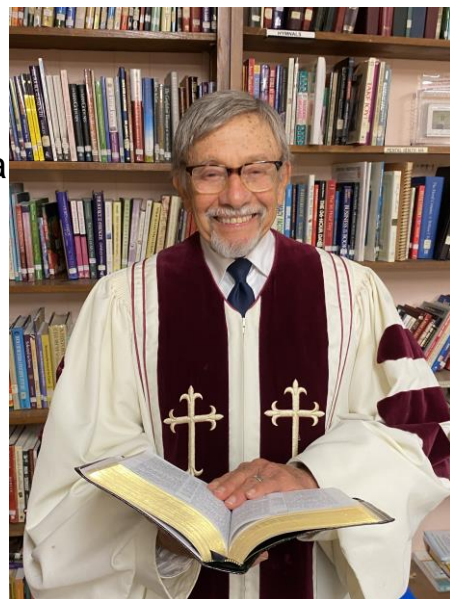
September 4, 1990: The 611 Magnolia Street home property, built in 1941, was purchased for \$100,000 from Edna & Joe Vick of Danville, Kentucky to be used for Church ministries.

2000: "A large garage was constructed on the 611 Magnolia property in total by Newman's Crewmen to house all the maintenance equipment stored throughout the church and the church van." The building was dedicated in loving memory of Bill Newman, who had died in 1998 before the building was completed.

December 4, 2001: Rev. William Chegwin retires after serving as pastor for 25 years, the longest serving pastor for the First Presbyterian Church of New



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2001 - 2004: Rev. Beverly Richardson (12/4/2001 - 8/1/2002) and Dr. Robert E. Palmer (8/1/2002 – 6/2/2004) served as interim pastors.

July 1, 2004: Rev. David M. Keazirian was installed as pastor.

2009: Celebrate Recovery Chapter established.

February 21, 2015: Rev. David M. Keazirian his Pastorship.

July 12, 2015: Rev. Robert Ward was installed as interim pastor and served until September 22, 2017.

September 2017: Rev. Robert Anderson served as a bridge pastor from September 2017 until December 2017.

February 25, 2018: Rev. George Head was installed as pastor.

Spring 2018: Bicycle Ministry was established by Chuck Nighswonger to refurbish donated used bicycles that were then donated to various charities and schools as needs were identified.

2021: The Presbyterian Women Association chapter was re-activated.

2022: PB&J (Peanut Butter & Jelly) was organized to provide a lunch twice a week to the homeless in the area.

June 2024: Church membership is 163.

The following is an excerpt from 'History of the New Smyrna Beach Presbyterian Church' written by the church's pastor, Rev. Harry A. Rhodes in 1943:

"The growth and development of the church has been interrupted by a change of sites and of organization. At times there has been dissension. Quite a number of its former members are still resident in New Smyrna Beach and vicinity. Some of them are members of other churches. However, the church has been a means of grace to many. It has been served by able ministers of the Word. Letters from former members tell of their affection for the church and happy memories of its fellowship. It is the only Presbyterian church in the city and no other nearer than Daytona Beach, Deland, and Titusville. Someday the New Smyrna Church will be self-supporting and have a large new church building. Then the members will say, "Others have labored and we have entered into their labors." Meanwhile, the church in each period of its history serves its own generation. Each year there will be, in New Smyrna, a large number of winter residents whose presence and help are always much appreciated. May the Word be always truly preached and taught as in the past, and may leaders of the Lord's own choosing be raised up to carry on the work with ever increasing power and

momentum. May the Lord add daily (weekly, yearly) to the New Smyrna Beach Presbyterian Church "such as should be saved."

NOTED: Many of the quotes on the early history of the 'Union Church' were reported by Robert P. Campbell, an employee of The Works Project Administration (WPA) in 1940, doing a Historical Records Survey – Church Inventory. He interviewed Mrs. Zilia Wilson Sweett, Great Granddaughter of John and Jane Sheldon, the Jane Sheldon and family that donated the land for the Union Church in 1875. Mr. Campbell's Documents #1 can be found at this website: <https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/252151?id=1>

Robert P. Campbell, from the Works Project Administration (WPA), completed a second Historical Records Survey – Church Inventory covering The First Presbyterian Church from 1926 to 1940. He interviewed 5 officers of the church, Mr. & Mrs Speidel, Miss Francis & Miss Sarah Seaton, and Mrs. H. L. Houghton. Several quotes from that survey were included. Mr. Campbell's Documents #2 can be found at this website: <https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/252111>

Steve Waldrup, from the Works Project Administration (WPA), completed surveys of the Methodist and Episcopal Churches.

Many other quotes are from Rev. Harry A. Rhodes' document dated May 19, 1943, Stated Pastor at NSB Presbyterian Church for one year, Nov.1942-Oct. 1943, the Edwards Felmet Family, Anonymous' narrative history documents, and research on Ancestry.com.

Linda Hulvershorn of The New Smyrna Museum of History provided access to their records on local church history, and copies of several documents were obtained.

Several photographs are from History of New Smyrna Beach, Florida publications provided by our church member Jim Kennedy.

The New Smyrna Beach Library, The Library of Congress, The Central Presbyterian Presbytery of Florida, and Ancestry.com's findagrave.com.

Excerpts of "Memories" from the NSB Presbyterian Church's "Celebrating 125 years serving God and Community" 1875 – 2002 Booklet publication.

Redfin Realty for an airborne photo of Magnolia St. that included the church.

Charles Henry Coe's document about his father, William Coe's relationship with Rev. Selleck

"Founded in Faith: Two New Smyrna Beach Congregations turn 140" from the

2015 Daytona Beach News Journal Article by *Sandra Frederick, Correspondent*

CONTENT RESEARCHED & COMPILED IN 2024 BY JOHN L. BROS

CONTRACT FOR THE 'CHURCH OF CHRIST' PROPERTY

4/26/1875

Sheldon & Sams Library

THIS INDENTURE, made and entered into this twenty sixth day of April, A. D. one thousand eight hundred and seventy five, between Jane Sheldon, Martha F. Sheldon, Frank W. Sams, and Zelia Sams, heirs at law of the late John D. Sheldon, of the County of Volusia and State of Florida, parties of the first part, and Edmund K. Lowd, Rhodolphus Sheldon, Francis Fox, and Charles G. Sellick, as Trustees of a church ^{as} to be used hereafter named parties of the second part:

WITNESSETH, that the said parties of the first part for and in consideration of the sum of one dollar, to them in hand paid by the said parties of the second part, at and before the ensealing and delivery of these presents, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, have granted, bargained, sold, aliened, remised, released, conveyed and confirmed, and by these presents do grant, bargain, sell alien, convey and confirm unto the said parties of the second part as aforesaid, and their successors forever, All the following lot, tract, or parcel of land lying and being in the County of Volusia, and State of Florida, known and described as follows, all that certain plot of land in the Town of New Myrna, bounded and described as follows, viz; Beginning on the division line between the property of the heirs of John D. Sheldon and the Dougherty tract so called, as a point on said line formed by the intersection of a line drawn at right angles therewith and which right angle line passes at a distance of (20) twenty feet southwesterly from the most westerly corner of a church now being erected; thence south easterly along said right angle line (80) eighty feet, thence northeasterly parallel to said division line (100) one hundred feet, thence Northwest at right angles to said division line (80) eighty feet, and thence southwest along said division line (100) one hundred feet, to place of beginning. Said lands and the building

thereon to be held by the said trustees and their successors for the use of the inhabitants of New Smyrna as a place of religious worship & for the Presbyterian, the Methodist, the Protestant Episcopal, and the Baptist churches, and to be used by any minister of the aforesaid denominations who may be present at any time that worship may be held, and in case there shall be at any time ministers of more than one denomination above named present, the aforesaid trustees or their successors shall decide who shall use said edifice. But they shall divide the time equally each year between the above denominations provided there shall be ministers of each present who can occupy the same and in case of the death or resignation of either the aforesaid trustee the remaining three shall fill the vacancy, but if they neglect to do so for the space of one year then the regular attendants at said church male and female of full age shall by vote fill the vacancy. Together with all and singular the tenements, hereditaments and appurtenances, thereunto belonging or in anywise appertaining and the reversion and reversions, remainder and remainders, rents, issues and profits thereof, and also all the estate, right, title interest dower and right of dower, property possession, claim and demand whatsoever, as well in law as in equity of the said parties of the first part of in and to the same, and every part and parcel thereof with the appurtenances.

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the aforesaid bargained premises, together with all and singular the rights, members, tenements, hereditaments and appurtenances to the same belonging unto the said Trustees, parties of the second part, and their successors, for the uses as aforesaid, mentioned, in fee simple, and the said parties of the first part

Trustees and their successors that they are lawfully sized of said premises as of fee and have good and lawful right to sell and convey the same and that they will and their heirs, executors and administrators shall forever warrant and defend the title unto the said Trustees and their successors of the second part against the claim of any and all persons whomsoever lawfully claiming the same.

In testimony whereof, the said parties of the first part, have hereunto set their hands and affixed their seals the day and year first above written.

JANE SHELDON	(Seal)
Edmd K. Lowd	(Seal)
Victoria Lowd	(Seal)
Rodolphus S. Sheldon	(Seal)
Martha F. Sheldon	(Seal)
Frank W. Sams	(Seal)
Zelia W. Sams	(Seal)

Signed, sealed, and delivered
in the presence of us.

Geo. F. Neils (L.S.)

H. S. Rideout (L.S.)

Know all men by these presents that I ,, Martha F. Sheldon, wife of the above named Rodolphus S. Sheldon, do by these presents made and executed by me separate and apart from my said husband and in the presence of George J. Alden, a Judicial Officer of the State, acknowledge and declare that I did make myself a party to the foregoing deeds of conveyance for the purpose of relinquishing my right of dower in and to the land in said conveyance described and granted, and that said relinquishment and renunciation of dower was and is made freely and voluntarily and without any compulsion, constraint, appre-

In witness whereof, I have hereunto subscribed my name and affixed my seal this twenty sixth day of April A. D. one thousand eight hundred and seventy five.

Martha F. Sheldon (L.S.)

State of Florida,

County of Volusia.

To all whom it may concern , be it known that on this twenty sixth day of April, A. D. 1875, personally appeared before me the above named Martha F. Sheldon , who being at the time separate and apart from her husband, Rhodolphus S. Sheldon, did then and there make and execute the foregoing acknowledgement her name being with her own hands subscribed and her seal affixed in my presence.

Witness my name at New Smyrna the day and year above written.

George J. Allden (seal)

Justice of the Peace.

State of Florida,

Volusia County , to wit :

On this day personally appeared before me Jane Sheldon, Edmund K. Lowd, Victoria Lowd, Rhodolphus S. Sheldon , Martha F. Sheldon, Frank W. Sams, and Zelia Sams, to me well known and acknowledged that they executed the foregoing deed for the purposes therein expressed, whereupon it is prayed that the same may be recorded.

In witness whereof I have hereunto affixed my hand and seal this twenty sixth day of April A. D. 1875.

George J. Allden,

Filed for record 24th May 1875

Justice of the Peace.

S T A T E O F F L O R I D A ,

C O U N T Y O F V O L U S I A .

I, James B. Jordan , Clerk of the Circuit Court in and for said County and State, do hereby certify the above and foregoing to be a true and correct copy of the original record of a certain deed from Jane Sheldon, et al., to E . K. Lowd, et al., Trustees, as appears from the original record thereof in my office in Deed Book No. B page 446, 447 and 448.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and the seal of said Circuit Court this 5th day of November, A. D. 1894.

James B. Jordan
Clerk Circuit Court,
James B. Jordan



Sub. division of

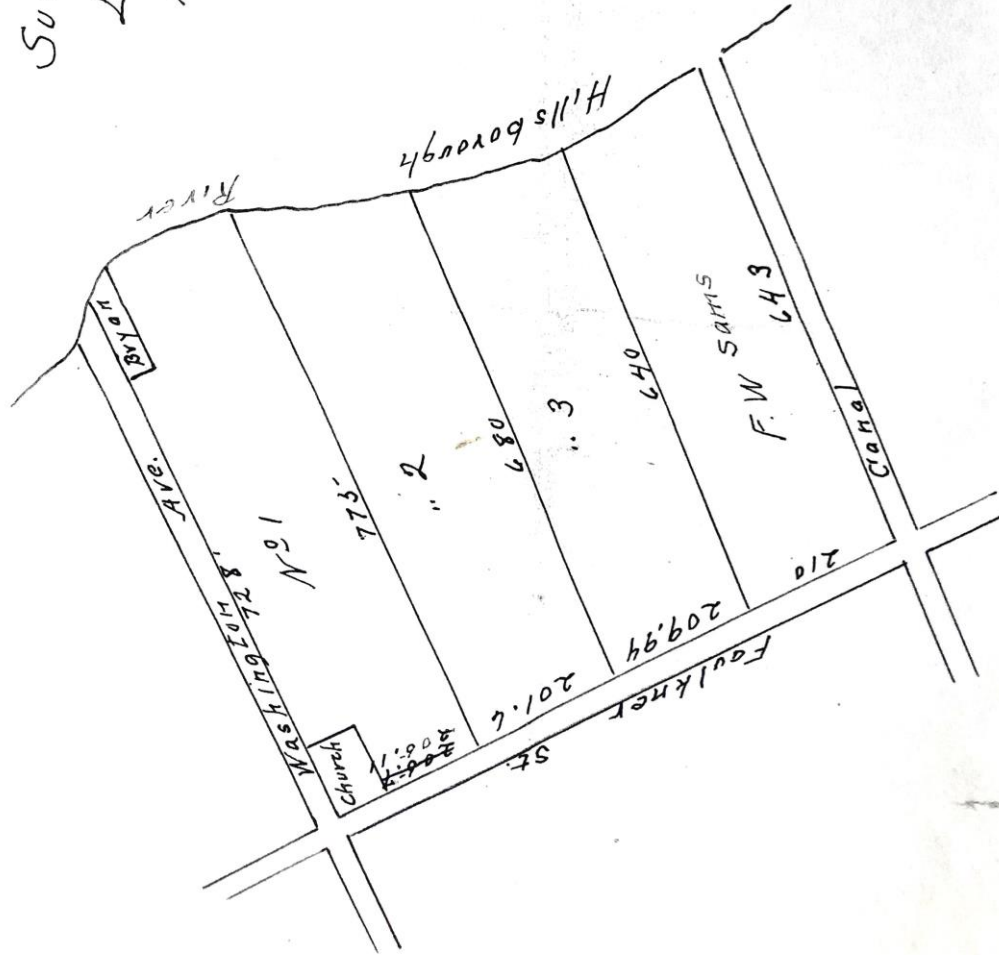
Estate of John D. Sheldon
situated in Town of New Smyrna
Volusia Co Fla

Surveyed Oct 1891

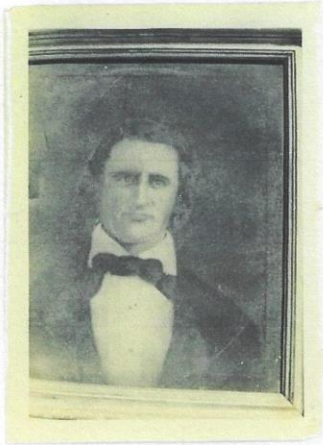
Chas F Hopkins
Surveyor

Recorded Nov 21 - 91

Bk 2 p 23



**SHELDON FAMILY MEMBERS THAT DONATED PROPERTY
FOR THE CHURCH OF CHRIST (UNION CHURCH)**



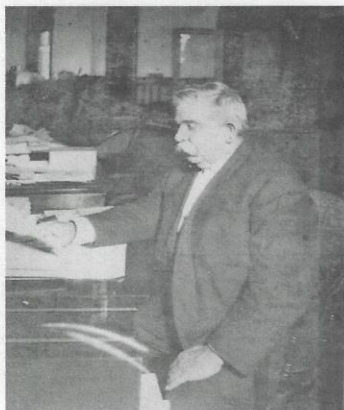
JOHN SHELDON'S ESTATE



JANE MURRAY SHELDON



VICTORIA SHELDON LOWD



FRANCIS "FRANK" SAMS



ZELIA SHELDON SAMS



**RHODOLPHUS &
MARTHA SHELDON**

ROBERT CAMPBELL'S 1940 WPA NSB PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SURVEY

Robert P. Campbell - Nov. 6, - 1940

Union Church,

Washington & Faulkner Sts.,

New Smyrna Beach.

NOV - 7 1940

Deed to the lot on which this church stood was made by Jane Sheldon to the "Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Episcopalian, and Congregational Churches".

Records of Christ Congregational Church show they held their organizational meeting the first Sabbath in Dec. 1875 in this building

"recently erected and the first and only building that had ever been set up in this place for religious worship".

From these records it seems probable the separate congregations kept separate records, sharing the expenses with respect to the building and the minister. They seem to have held joint meetings under Rev. Sellick and also separate meetings at times. The Methodists had their own preachers, probably lay preachers, and it is likely visiting clergymen of the

NOV 13 1940

several denominations held separate meetings from time to time.

It is probably for this reason that no records have been found except a few scraps of financial records covering money raised for the building maintenance.

The Congregationalists evidently dominated, their records showing that they made decisions with respect to the property. They built their own church in 1889, taking with them most of the Presbyterians. They were followed by the Methodists and the Episcopalians, who built separate churches, leaving the Baptists in the old Union Church property, but no change was made in the deed.

In 1907 the Baptists desired to make some improvements but were prevented by the manner in which the deed had been drawn. A mutually satisfactory arrangement was made by the several congregations involved and the heirs of Jane Sheldon and in 1907 the old church was moved to the back of the lot, where it served as the Baptist Sunday School, and a new Baptist church built on the front.

Union Church -
New Smyrna Beach,

Page 2

Nov. 6, 1940

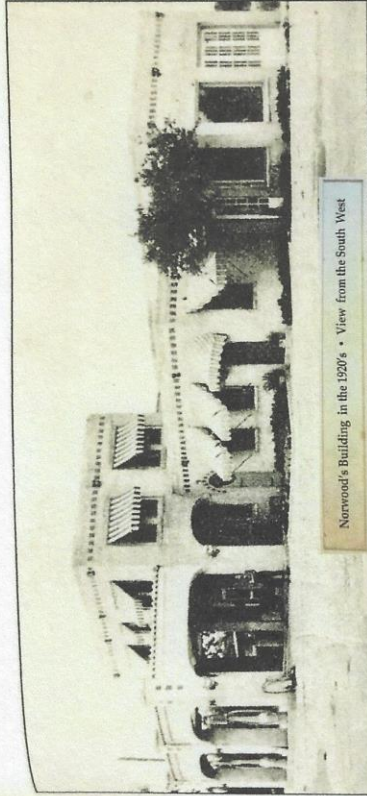
This arrangement ended the Union Church officially, although it had previously ceased to function as such, the several congregations composing it having already gone their separate ways.

The old building stood until 1935 when it was torn down and rebuilt on the corner of Enterprise Road and Cottonwood Ave. where it is used by the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church. Contemporary newspaper accounts state it was turned over to the African Methodist Episcopal Church, which is erroneous.

NOV - 7 1940

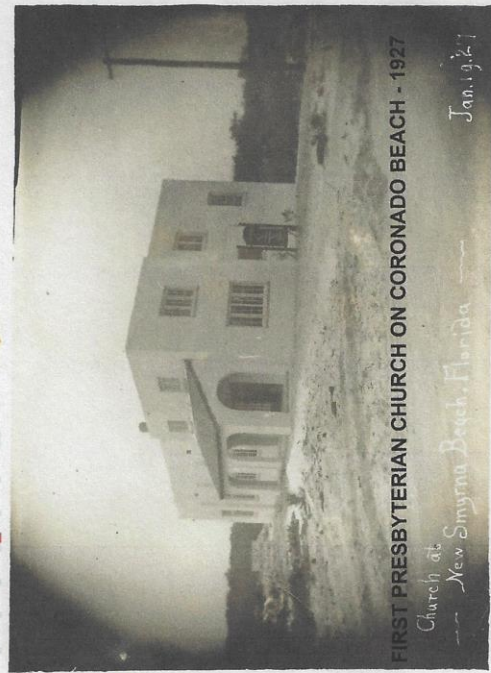
NOV 13 1940

LOCATION OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ON CORONADO BEACH IN 1927



Norwood's Building, in the 1920's • View from the South West

This service station on the beach side of Third Avenue on the beach side was built during the real-estate boom in the 1920s. It was about this time that Mr. John Musson established a nursery across the street. Paved sidewalks were poured on both sides of the side streets off South Atlantic Avenue. A number of cottages, business buildings, and oceanfront homes were built during this period of economic expansion. Every thing was booming until the real-estate boom burst.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ON CORONADO BEACH - 1927

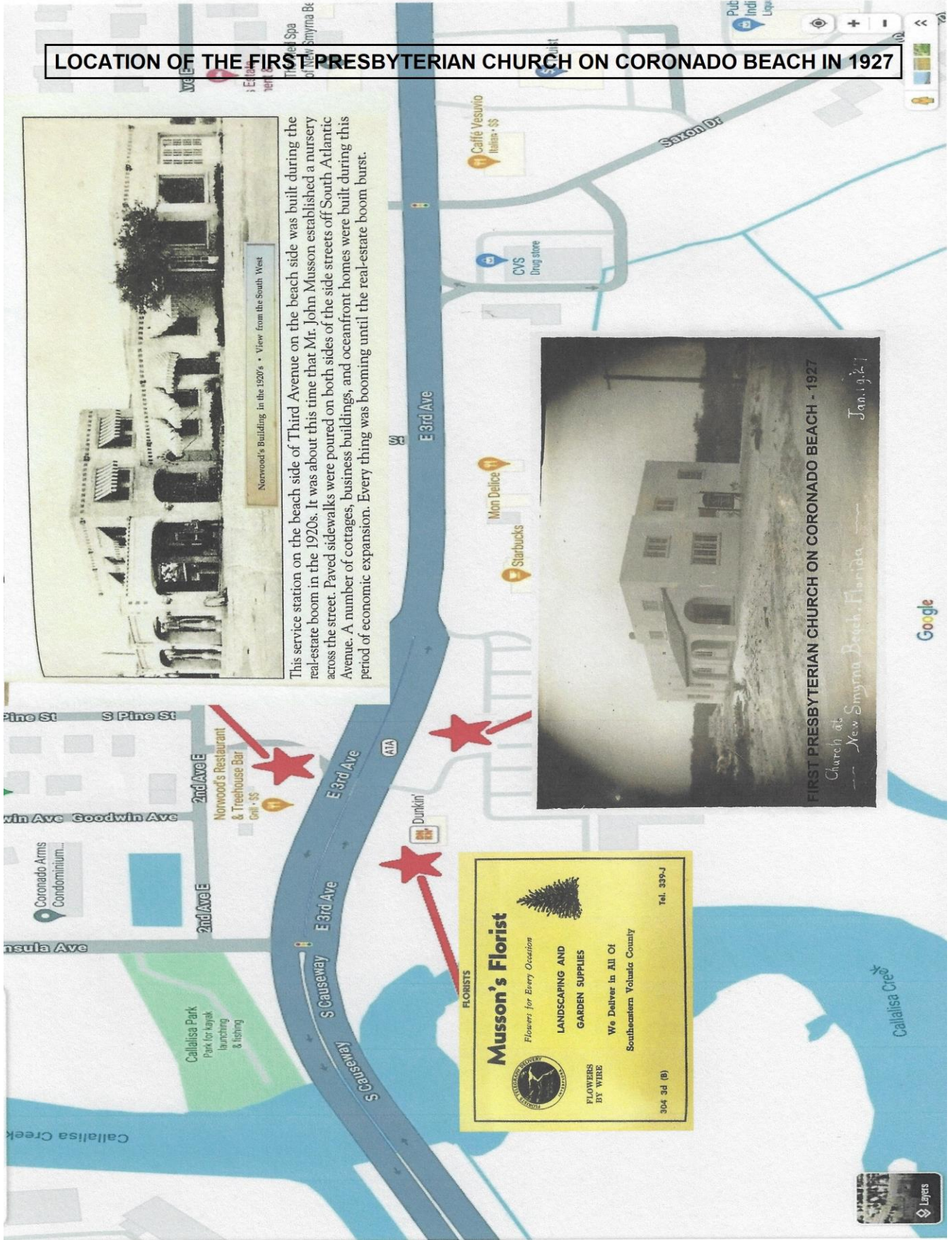
Church at
New Smyrna Beach, Florida
Jan. 1927

Musson's Florist
Flowers for Every Occasion

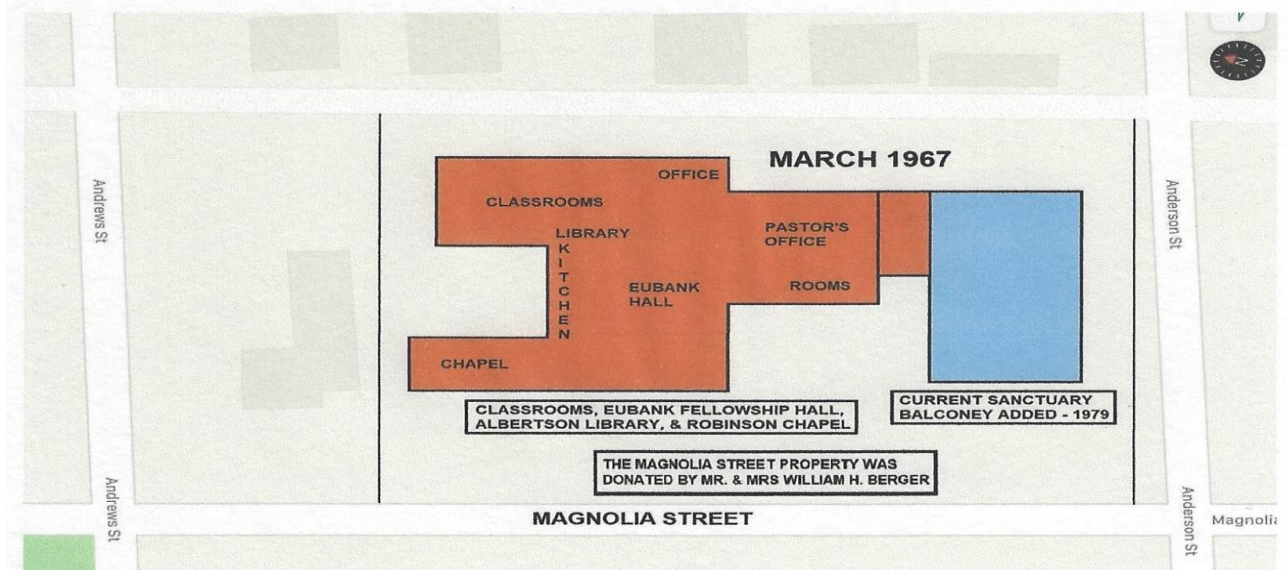
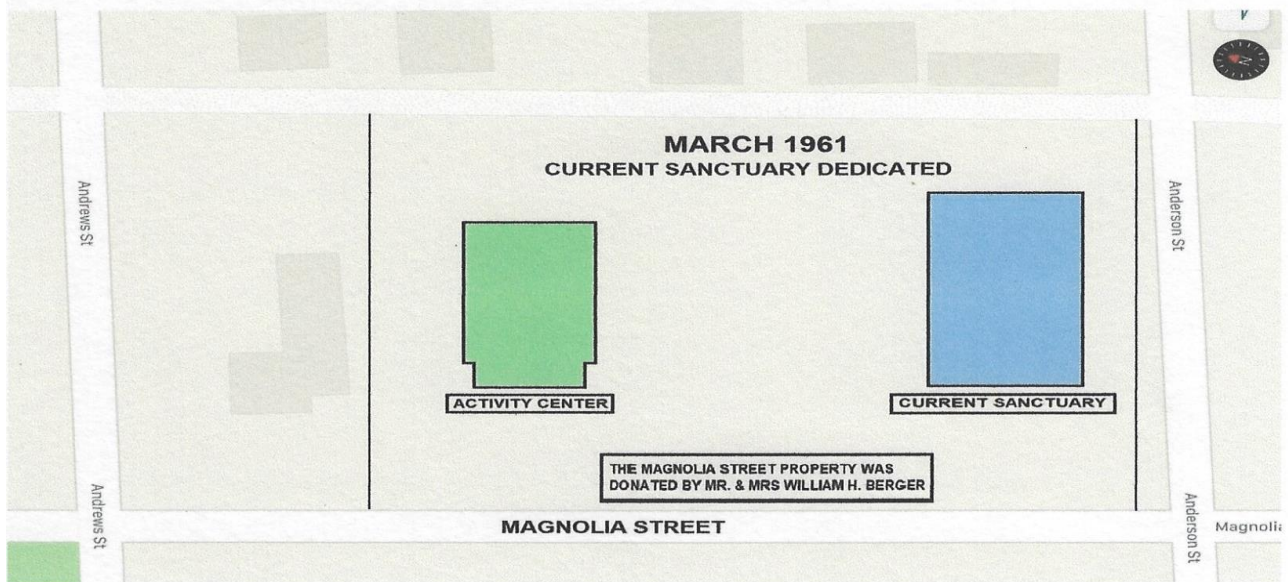
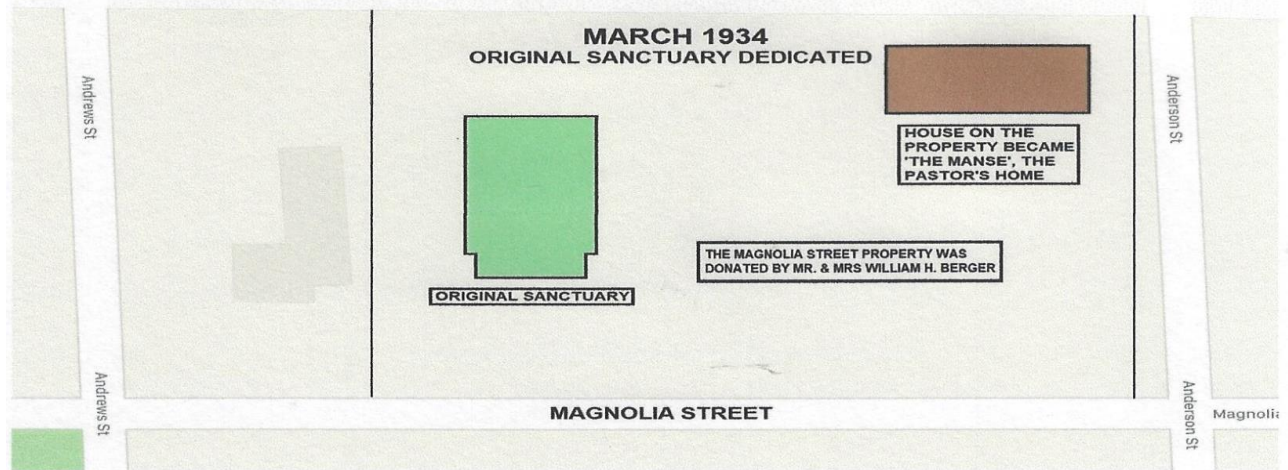
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Southeastern Volusia County

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MAGNOLIA STREET CHURCH PROPERTY BUILDING PLATS IN 1934, 1961, & 1967



NEW PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BE BUILT DURING THIS YEAR

Site on Magnolia Street
Obtained By Berger
Gift

March 16/33
CONTAINS 4 LOTS

Construction Be Started as Soon as
Plans Can Be Completed
and Accepted

That the Presbyterians of New Smyrna will soon have a new church home, which will provide the congregation with a permanent place for worship and all other church activities, is assured with the announcement made today by Rev. M. F. Usner that the local church has acquired, by gift of Mr. and Mrs. William H. Berger, four lots facing west on Magnolia street between Andrews and Anderson streets.

The gift includes the corner lot at the northeast corner of Magnolia and Anderson streets, including the house, formerly known as "The Kentucky," and the bungalow on the east end of the lot facing on Anderson street. The gift also includes the three lots to the north facing Magnolia street. This tract provides the Presbyterian church with a tract facing 200 feet on Magnolia and 150 feet on Anderson street.

According to the pastor, Rev. Mr. Usner, construction work on the church home will begin as soon as plans have been considered and adopted by the local church, which is now self supporting and is not longer maintained by the church mission board. The local church has now on hand a fund of \$1,400 with which to begin the building of the church structure.

The Presbyterian church is one of the oldest church organizations in New Smyrna, the first church having been established here 56 years ago. It was one of the four congregations which went together back in those early days of the village to form the Union church, for which a church building was built at the corner of Faulkner street and Washington avenue on the site now occupied by the First Baptist church. The four congregations which formed the Union church at that time, besides the Presbyterian, were the Episcopal, Baptist and Methodist.

The Presbyterian interest in that church affiliation was maintained until seven years ago, when the Presbyterian chapel was built at New Smyrna Beach. This building served as the church home until about a year ago, when it was decided the location was too far removed from the homes of members of the congregation, so the place of worship was moved to this side of the river and the congregation has since been using the old city hall at the corner of Live Oak street and Lytle avenue.

The membership of the church has tripled during the last year and has become one of the most active church organizations in the city. The congregation has outgrown the accommodations provided by the old city hall building, making necessary some change to provide larger quarters.

Rev. Mr. Usner says the new church home will be completed within the next year and the location will be convenient for all members of the congregation.

**ORLANDO SENTINEL
ARTICLE ANNOUNCING
THE MARCH 12, 1961
DEDICATION OF THE
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF NEW
SMYRNA BEACH'S NEW
SANCTUARY BUILDING**

Building Costs Top \$80,000

By NORMAN WOLFE
Sentinel Staff

NEW SMYRNA BEACH—First Presbyterian Church will dedicate its new \$80,000 building Sunday.

Services at 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. will mark the observance with the 4 p.m. service to be the dedicatory one. There will be no 8:30 a.m. service but Sunday school will be at 9:45 a.m.

The \$80,000 figure is an approximate one. Actually, according to Dr. Weaver K. Eubank, pastor, the overall costs including furnishings will probably run higher.

THE CONTRACT amount for construction was \$74,226 for the 346 seat air conditioned church.

Contractor was W. S. Martin of Cocoa Beach and the architect was Henry Whitworth of Winter Park.

The building is colonial style throughout and in addition to the main chamber has vestment rooms, rest rooms, sunken organ chancel, white pews and other features.

Construction began Sept. 28 following an earlier ground breaking ceremony.

Funeral services in the old sanctuary were held recently, marking the end of an era in local church history.

THE picturesque old chapel was dedicated, debt free, in 1934 and came to be known as the miracle Church because of that fact.

Several visiting officials will take part in the dedication service.

The Rev. Dr. Charles T. Martz, Lauderdale by the Sea, will preside and make the declaration of dedication. He is the executive secretary of the Florida Synod.

Elder Earl Keltz, Fort Pierce, Synod director of finance and relations, and a former moderator of the Florida Synod, will lead the invocation.

The Rev. Walter Ritter, pastor of Yoder Memorial Church in Howey in the Hills, will lead the call to worship.

DR. RITTER was the moderator and the first to hold communion service in the reactivated church here Jan. 3, 1954.

The Rev. Robert Jones, moderator of the North Florida Presbytery and pastor of the South Lake Shore Presbyterian Church in Clermont, will lead the words of dedication.

The prayer of dedication



DR. WEAVER K. EUBANK
... Church pastor

will be offered by Mrs. J. Morton Douglas, moderator of the Florida Synod, Mrs. Douglas' father, Dr. G. V. Albertson, was pastor when the former sanctuary was built and dedicated.

The Rev. Calvin Trois of New Smyrna Beach will read the scripture and Dr. Handel H. Brown, pastor of First Presbyterian Church in St. Cloud and former moderator of the Florida Synod, will preach the sermon.

Dr. Eubank will give the benediction.

WHITWORTH, who gave the church a seven-foot Celtic cross to hang over the communion table and Martin are scheduled to take part along with Mrs. James B. Felmet, president of the church board of trustees and Dr. William Lightner, session chairman of the use of buildings committee.

Following the dedication service there will be a covered dish supper served by the Women's Assn. under Mrs. Allan McDougall, president, and Mrs. Ray McQuarrie, chairman of the circle of the month, for families and friends of the church in addition to the out-of-town guests.

Dr. Eubank announced that pews in the old sanctuary have been purchased by the Baptist Church in Oak Hill and will be delivered March 18.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, NEW SMYRNA BEACH, FLORIDA.

The first organization of the New Smyrna Presbyterian Church was effected in 1875 under the direction of the Rev. Charles G. Sellock. He was received into the East Florida Presbytery, Synod of Atlantic, in March, 1876 from the Presbytery of Cairo, Synod of Illinois. He was moderator of the East Florida Presbytery in March, 1879. The minute of his death was read at a meeting of Presbytery, April 5, 1884.

It seems that for a time he was Commissioner of Public Schools in Florida until the "carpet baggers" confiscated the school funds. As a home missionary he was most faithful and endured many hardships in his travels. One account of his work is as follows: "Rev. Mr. Sellock spread himself over a territory on the Halifax River, thirty miles long and sixteen miles wide with three principal centres of operation. At one of these, New Smyrna, he has just completed a commodious church edifice and this he has accomplished during intervals on horseback over trackless ground." Rev. J.K. Wight in his Historical Notes of the Presbytery, says: "Up to this time, the Presbytery of East Florida consisted of six churches—two in Jacksonville, one in St. Augustine, and one at New Smyrna, together with the church at Mary Esther, which with its pastor, Rev. J. Newton, was transferred by the General Assembly of 1881, from the Presbytery of Austin, Texas, to this presbytery".

Rev. P.H. Fowler in an article on the work in Florida written from San Mateo in February, 1876, wrote as follows: "Rev. Mr. Sellock, the enterprising missionary at Smyrna on the Atlantic coast, was prevented by sickness from attending the meeting of Presbytery but wrote, 'We have dedicated our church edifice; though not yet completed, it is comfortable and pleasant. We organized a church of seven members, on which occasion sixteen sat down at the Lord's Table. It was the first Communion service of a Protestant church in this part of the land. We expect to have preaching here twice a month, a Bible class and Sunday School every week. At Smyrna, we have contributed \$20. for home missions. The people ask \$200. from abroad towards the support of a minister. They hope to keep him from starving if this amount can be secured.'"

The Presbyterian Historical Society with offices in the Witherspoon Bld'g., Philadelphia, is custodian of three volumes of minutes of the East Florida Presbytery, Synod of Atlantic. Mr. Guy S. Klett, Research Historian, reported as follows: "In the minutes of the meeting of Presbytery, dated, January 18, 1877, the following appears: 'The Narrative of the Churches was then resumed. Mr. W.H. Coe was heard in reference to the church at New Smyrna. An interesting letter was read from Rev. Mr. Sellock, from which it appears that a church with rather liberal creed has been formed to meet the conditions of the people, and a house of worship erected and nearly finished'".

At the meeting of the Presbytery of East Florida in May, 1877, we quote from the Narrative on the State of Religion as follows: "The church at New Smyrna was organized two years ago by Rev. Charles G. Sellock with seven members, but it having at first, assumed no particular form of church government, it was not recognized by Presbytery till a few weeks since, when two of the members were constituted Elders; one of them was present to represent the church at the meeting of Presbytery in January, last. This must have been Mr. W.H. Coe who is mentioned above.

In the minutes of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., reports for the New Smyrna Church are given from 1877 to 1884 inclusive. During that time six were received on examination and eleven by certificate. The average membership was twelve. There were six adult baptisms and two baptisms of children. The average S.S. attendance was 23 (ranging from 15 to 38). Contributions were as follows: congregational expenses, \$440. (total for 3 yrs.); miscellaneous, \$150. (1 yr.); home missions, \$25. (total for 2 yrs.); foreign missions, \$6.00; General Assembly, \$1.00.

After the death of Mr. Sellock no report was made of the church organization. However, the building continued to be used for church services. In October, 1938, Mr. F.R. Brannen in a brief history of the First Methodist Church of New Smyrna from the year, 1895, said: "Services were held in what was known as the Community Church building, located on the ground of the ground where the present Baptist Church now stands. All the other denominations in town were permitted to alternately use this same bldg."

When the gift of the present site of the Presbyterian Church on Magnolia Street by Mr. and Mrs. Wm. H. Berger was announced in March, 1933, it was stated in an article in a local newspaper that the Presbyterian Church was one of four congregations

which went together back in those early days (56 yrs. before) to form the Union Church, for which a church building was erected at the corner of Faulkner Street and Washington Avenue on the site now occupied by the First Baptist Church. The four congregations that formed the Union Church at that time, besides the Presbyterian, were the Episcopal, Baptist and Methodist". In a letter dated Feb. 2, 1933, to Mr. George Speidel by Rev. J. F. Shepherd, Ph.D., D.D., Moderator of the Synod of Florida, Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., he wrote: "Our church was established in New Smyrna 58 years ago (1875) and the deed to the ground on which the Baptist Church now stands was made to four denominations, OURS BEING NAMED FIRST". The Congregationalists came in two years later (1877), and while we were there. We never gave up our rights and finally sold our interest for \$50." This was in 1926. From the above it is not clear as to whether or not there was a Union Church or only a Community Church building which was used by the denominations in turn. Rev. J. K. Wight in his Historical Notes of the Presbytery of East Florida says of the New Smyrna Church: "This church was at first a union church with seven members. It was more completely organized in 1877, and then had eleven members with a Sabbath School of thirty". Perhaps the Union Church was dissolved into denominations which met in turn in the one building.

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The second organization of the New Smyrna Beach Presbyterian Church came about as follows: On Jan. 4, 1926, a group of twelve Presbyterians met in the home of Mrs. Grace Garce (now Mrs. Pattee). It was voted to ask Rev. J. F. Shepherd, D.D., the Executive Secretary of the Board of Home Missions for the State of Florida, to engage the Rev. E. H. Sperow of Hagerstown, Md. to work in New Smyrna for three months. Mr. Sperow began his work on Jan. 10, 1926. He held a service each Sunday morning at Samsula and at Coronado Beach in the afternoon. On Easter Sunday, Apr. 4, 1926, the organization of the church was effected by Dr. Shepherd. There were twenty charter members and six associate members. Mr. G. W. Howey and Mr. P. A. Dowling were elected, Ruling Elders. Dr. Shepherd is still living (1943) and resides at 2349 S. Ogden St. Denver, Colorado.

Rev. Henry E. Brundage of Washington, D.C. preached in New Smyrna on Apr. 11th and 18th, 1926, and accepted a call to become the pastor of the newly organized church from Oct. 1st. Illness prevented and he died on Oct. 25th. During that month, Rev. G. V. Albertson, Sunday School missionary, assisted in organizing a Sunday School with Miss Frances Seaton as superintendent. Land for the church and religious education building having been donated by Mrs. Ella M. Detweiler, a building committee was appointed on April 26, 1926, and during the summer the first unit of the proposed new church plant was begun under the leadership of Mrs. Grace Garce and Elder G. W. Howey and later finished with Mr. George Speidel in charge.

On the death of Dr. Brundage an invitation was extended to Rev. Edward P. Morse of Troy, Pa., who was spending the winter in Florida, to become the Stated Supply for a few months, pending the selection of another pastor. Mr. and Mrs. Morse began work the first of November and on Nov. 9th he was received into the Presbytery and appointed moderator of the Session. Regular services were held in the unfinished building. As one lady guest remarked, she had "never seen such high class people worshipping amid such primitive conditions". The building is now the buff colored residence on the right of the road proceeding east from the south bridge and beyond the flower shop.

On Nov. 10, 1926, the Synod of Florida, meeting at Eustis, approved a plan for the proposed Bryan Memorial Bible School for the Synod at New Smyrna Beach. This plan was formulated in April before when Dr. Brundage raised \$2700. by subscription which was afterwards increased to between three and four thousand dollars. This was supplemented by a loan from the Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church, and the building referred to above was erected. Mr. Morse continued to serve the church until the spring of 1927. He now resides (1943) at 313 W. Sixth Street, Elmira, N.Y. at the age of 87.

In June, 1927, a Young People's Conference was held in the new building under the auspices of the Board of Christian Education and directed by Mrs. Grace Garce. In 1928 another building was bought by the Synod's committee, known as the Pavilion, from funds solicited, to be the second unit of the school. In 1931 this building, now known as the "Pelican", on the advice of the Synod's committee was sold to Rollins College and the school discontinued. This left the New Smyrna Church with the recreation and church building they had erected in 1926 upon which was an incumbrance of \$1350. due the Board of Christian Education. Of this amount \$700 was realized when the building was finally sold. Also the Synod's committee had on hands about \$1400.

from the sale of the Pavilion.

Following Mr. Morse, the New Smyrna Church was served by Rev. J.W. Parkhill, D.D. from Oct. (1927 to Mar. 31, 1929; by Rev. Frank N. Palmer from Nov. 1929 to June, 1930 and again in the fall of 1930; by Rev. James L. Glenn, D.D. for a few months during the winter of 1930-31. Mr. Palmer died in New Smyrna; Dr. Parkhill died at Winona Lake, Ind., Feb. 20, 1942; and Mr. Glenn is now pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Cross Plains, Tex.

The next pastor to be called was the Rev. Merlin F. Usner who served from Oct. 15, 1931 to June 29, 1933. He is now (1943) pastor of two Presbyterian churches in New Orleans and resides at 2901 Constance Ave. During Mr. Usner's pastorate, Presbytery's Committee on National Missions made a survey of the New Smyrna field and recommended that the Beach site be given up and that the church be re-located across the river in the town of New Smyrna. This was done and a temporary meeting place was secured in the Old City Hall at the corner of Live Oak and Lytle Sts. Mr. Usner left in the summer of 1933, services were discontinued for a time and the second period of the history of the Presbyterian Church in New Smyrna came to an end.

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In September, 1933, an effort was made under the leadership of Dr. Francis M. Fox, pastor of the W. Palm Beach Presbyterian Church and Dr. Gillette, Secretary of the Board of Missions of the Congregational Church, to unite the Congregational and Presbyterian churches of New Smyrna. Articles of Federation were drawn up and at one meeting attended by a few members of the Presbyterian church, federation was agreed upon, partly because of no place to meet as the city needed the Old City Hall for other purposes and the church furniture had been stored.

However, after all had returned from the summer vacation, the members of the church met in the home of Mr. and Mrs. C.A.E. Asendorf on Nov. 7, 1933 and drew up a memorial to the S.E. Florida Presbytery and to the Synod of Florida, meeting at St. Augustine in the fall of 1932, be made available to the church at once, in order to proceed with building on the Magnolia street lots already donated to the church by Mr. and Mrs. Berger. The memorial also stated that the church did not intend to ask for an appropriation from the Board of National Missions.

Presbytery in meeting at Winter Haven voted to appoint Rev. G.V. Albertson as moderator of the Session. When the action of Presbytery was reported at a congregational meeting on Nov. 24, 1933, a Building Committee was appointed with Mr. George Speidel as chairman. Since representatives of the Young People's organizations of Florida asked for the \$1400., the church relinquished its claim inasmuch as a friend of Mr. Albertson's thereafter known as the "Silent Partner" offered to give a like amount for the erection of a new church building.

Mr. Speidel not only supervised the erection of the building but did much of the work himself. The work was begun on Dec. 13, 1933. The first service in the unfinished building was held on Feb. 11, 1934 and the building was dedicated on Mar. 11th free of debt. During the ad-interim, services had been held regularly at Mission City for which the church had raised \$100. to provide a meeting place. On Nov. 12, 1933, Rev. Alexander Linn, re-opened the Sunday School there with the help of Mrs. Tanner. Mr. Linn also organized a Sunday School in the new building in New Smyrna immediately following the dedication on Mar. 11th.

At a Congregational meeting of Feb. 18, 1934, it was voted to call the Rev. G.V. Albertson as pastor. He was installed on Apr. 22, 1934 and served officially until Mar. 31, 1941, though not actively from October, 1940. On Apr. 1, 1941 he became Pastor Emeritus and resides at 428 So. Boulevard, DeLand, Fla. During his ministry in 1937, the church was once again indebted to his "Silent Partner" who provided \$750. for the erection the religious education and social activities building to the rear of the church auditorium.

Following Mr. Albertson's discontinuing of the active pastorate though continuing as moderator of the Session, the pulpit was supplied by the following ministers in turn: Rev. Wm. H. France from Dec., 1940 to Feb., 1942; Rev. F. E. Mann of the United Brethren Church from March till May, 1941 and again in November of that year; and the Rev. Wm. G. Reagle, D.D. during June and July and again in October, 1941. Mr. Mann now resides at Westerville, Ohio, and Dr. Reagle in DeLand. Although Mr. Franco's name is still on the roll of Presbytery, no address is known. At different times also the pulpit has been supplied by resident Presbyterian ministers who have retired, viz., Dr. Wm. K.

Zeigler of the Presbyterian Church, U.S. and Rev. J.J. Rankin whose son-in-law, Rev. M.J. McIver resident at Coronado Beach has also given assistance.

Through correspondence with the Board of Foreign Missions by the Rev. John W. Neel, pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Rockledge, Fla., the Rev. William H. Blair D.D., missionary on furlough from Korea, was secured as Stated Supply of the New Smyrna Church. Dr. and Mrs. Blair arrived in December, 1941 and greatly endeared themselves to the congregation. Unfortunately, Mrs. Blair who had been in poor health for some years, died in New Smyrna in April, 1942. Dr. Blair continued to supply the church until June.

During the summer and fall of 1942, the pulpit was supplied by Rev. Chas. P. Foreman, D.D. of DeLand. Mrs. Foreman usually came with him. Their services were much appreciated by the church and several new members were received. In October, 1942, Rev. Harry A. Rhodes, D.D. and Mrs. Rhodes, also missionaries on furlough from Korea, came to New Smyrna for one year.

Additional items to this historical narrative may be appended as follows: When the church was reorganized in November, 1933, the number of charter members is given as twelve. Five trustees were elected at the Congregational meeting on Nov. 24, 1933, but the four elders were carried over from the former organization. From Easter Sunday, Apr. 4, 1926, twelve different members have been elected to the eldership, the largest number at any one time being six in Dec., 1933. The names of the Twelve (Apostles, shall we say?) and their terms of office are as follows: Geo. W. Howey, Apr., 1926 till Mar., 1929; P. A. Dowling, Apr., 1926 till Mar., 1935 and from Mar., 1936 till Mar., 1940 Philip Marz, Jr. from Sept., 1928 till June, 1933; James W. Putnam from Jan., 1928 till June, 1933; C. A. E. Asendorf from Dec., 1932 till Nov., 1935; Miss Francis Seaton from Dec., 1932 till Mar., 1940; Mrs. F. N. Palmer from Dec., 1932 till Mar., 1935; J. S. Dunlop from Dec., 1932 till Mar., 1933; Robert R. Dempsey, Mar., 1935 till Oct., 1938; F. P. Bartholomew from Mar., 1938 till Mar., 1939; and the present two elders, Mr. Otis Ware from Mar., 1935 and E. D. Schofield from Oct. 1941.

The Clerks of Session in turn have been P. A. Dowling, Philip Marz, Mrs. Sarah C. Palmer (temporary), Miss Frances Seaton, Rev. G. V. Albertson (temporary) and E. D. Schofield. For several years from Dec., 1933, Rev. J. C. Garrett, D.D., missionary from China resigned, was asked to sit with the Session in an advisory capacity. He and Mrs. Garritt for several years gave valuable assistance in the work of the church. In congregational meetings, Miss Sarah Seaton was most frequently elected clerk. The moderators of the Session in turn have been: E. P. Morse, 1926-27; J. W. Parkhill, 1927-29; F. T. Palmer, 1929-30; J. L. Glenn, 1930-31; M. F. Usner, 1931-33; G. V. Albertson, 1933-42; and A. G. Becker since 1942.

Among the church treasurers have been Mr. C. C. Drake, Mr. Philip Marz, and Mrs. E. E. Eamer as treasurer of the Board of Trustees; Mr. H. L. Houghton, the present church treasurer has been serving since 1934.

In April, 1933, the Session voted that the pastor, Mr. Usner, organize a Christian Endeavor Society with the help of Mr. S. J. Robinson and an Intermediate Society at Mission City with the help of Mr. W. C. Dennison. However these societies were short lived as there were not enough young people to keep them going.

At the congregational meeting in March, 1929, Miss Sarah Seaton read a report of the Ladies Missionary-Aid Society, giving its history to date. It seems that Mrs. Detweiler and Mrs. Eamer were instrumental in bringing about its organization. It was organized as a Missionary Society in the Pavilion in March, 1928 with an attendance of twelve charter members. Mrs. Eamer was the first president and a year later Mrs. Parkhill was elected the second president. There was also an Aid Society. In the spring of 1933 the two societies held a joint meeting and agreed to meet together during the summer. Beginning with February, 1934, the name Missionary-Aid is used and Mrs. J. C. Garritt was elected president. However at this joint meeting vico-presidents and secretary-treasurers were elected for both societies. During the next three months the Missionary Society met separately but from June, 1934 the name Missionary-Aid is used for each meeting. It would be difficult to overestimate the value of this society to the work of the church and it would be interesting if a summary of all the work done and money raised could be compiled.

Since the organization of the church in April, 1926, the total number of members received is 125 or perhaps a few more. Among present members, seniority belongs to Misses Frances and Sarah Seaton who were charter members in 1926. For many years

these two sisters gave liberally of their talents and money as officers of the church Sunday School and Missionary-Aid Society. Mr. and Mrs. George Speidel were associate members when the church was organized in April, 1926 and were received into full membership by letter in November of that year. They have given long and sacrificial service; Mrs. Speidel as the efficient teacher of the Adult Bible Class and as an officer in the Missionary-Aid Society, and Mr. Speidel as trustee, builder, chorister and in many other ways. Of the other present members in order of seniority may be mentioned Mr. James W. Putnam and Mrs. Helen Osborn who were received in April and May respectively of 1927. Mr. Putnam was an elder for a time and Mrs. Osborn when in the city is always helpful in our church work. We could continue and mention many of the present membership who are loyal and faithful. It is to be regretted that there aren't more of them. If all the Presbyterians, past and present, who are now resident here could be brought into active membership we would have one of the strongest churches in the city. Much of the work of the church has been accomplished by our winter residents who as associate members have given liberally of their talents, money and prayers.

The church has been so fortunate in receiving gifts in answer to special needs that it has sometimes been called the "Miracle Church". In addition to the church sites donated by Mrs. Detweiler and Mr. and Mrs. Bergen and gifts of the "Silent Partner" for the present church building and the addition to the rear, other gifts are mentioned as follows: a lot on Coronado Beach which the church now holds for sale was given by Rev. Dr. Porter, sometime pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Rockledge; additional gifts of the "Silent Partner" of one and two hundred dollars on several occasions; a gift of \$500. by Mrs. Mollie Perkins for the pews; the lamps in the church by Mr. and Mrs. C. A. E. Asendorf; the piano in the auditorium by Mrs. Etta Matthews; the organ from the estate of Miss Nannie Royal; the two pulpit chairs by Mrs. L. M. Byrum; the clock by Mrs. Mary Reirs; the Communion service set by the Misses Seaton in memory of their father who was an elder; the stove in the rear of the auditorium also by the Misses Seaton; and within the last year, the gift of \$200. by Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Stratton to clear the debt on the manse. Other gifts large and small have not been recorded and some of them perhaps forgotten, but they are known to our Heavenly Father who rewards richly all His children.

The Manse came with the lots donated by Mr. and Mrs. Berger but with a mortgage \$800, which was increased to \$1000. when the building was repaired and furnished. This has gradually been paid off. Another building known as the "Kentucky" on the corner of Magnolia and Anderson Sts. was torn down. If the church grows in numbers and strength as is hoped this will be the site of the main church building of the future.

The growth and development of the church has been interrupted by a change of sites and of organization. At times there has been dissension. Quite a number of its former members are still resident in New Smyrna and vicinity. Some of them are members of other churches. However, the church has been a means of grace to many. It has been served by able ministers of the word. Letters from former members tell of their affection for the church and happy memories of its fellowship. It is the only Presbyterian church in the city and no other nearer than Daytona Beach, DeLand and Titusville. Some day the New Smyrna Church will be self-supporting and have a large new church building. Then the members will say, "others have labored and we have entered into their labors". Meanwhile, the church in each period of its history serves its own generation. Each year there will be in New Smyrna a large number of winter residents whose presence and help are always much appreciated. May the Word be always truly preached and taught as in the past, and may leaders of the Lord's own choosing be raised up to carry on the work with ever increasing power and momentum. May the Lord add daily (weekly, yearly) to the New Smyrna Beach Presbyterian Church "such as should be saved".

Harry A. Rhodes

May 19, 1943

MEMORIES

July 28, 1999

Dear Jane -

It was so good to be "back home" for a few hours - to visit with Doctor Chegwen and to go into the Sanctuary for only a few minutes. Marlene had been in our Church off and on since its dedication.

Jane - as to your requests about "memories". Unfortunately the type you need are not as clear as they were. But -

1. - when I left New Smyrna, any notes or memories I had written down were turned into the Church office.
2. - In case you have not come across information relative to activities, etc. ^{they} were once stored in that old big round Bank file as well as regular file housed in the original Pastor's office next to the original Secretary's office. There were pictures turned in also, and the title search was there. I think your best source is families like the McBlougall, Cole, Loveland, Felmet Avant, DeLoach, Horey, Drew, and many others. - Jack Holden
So many winter visitors winter after winter - The Blackwells Andy & Ruth - Canada.
3. - The Kletweiler (spelling) family were supporters of 1st Church, (father of Hannah Bonnet (Kletweiler) gave lot and building support to the first First Presbyterian Church (USA); It went dark and when re-activated at a location of east end of South Causeway Bridge, again gifts were given to the Church; when present Sanctuary was erected Mrs Bonnet (sp) gave generously. I am told Mrs Bonnet's grandson still has the Real Estate office in a location near Pine & Flagler. He might be of help to you - His name is Bonnet too, if I remember.
4. - There was a printer in the Complex at SE corner of Wagner Ave & Q - who had pictures of the days of 1st Baptist & 1st Presbyterian Churches.
5. - The repository kept by the Woman's Church in Daytona might have information - as well as our General Assembly offices.

- 6- I am told that even when I was in NSB - material was "put on the computer" - If surely some of the history was recorded.
- 7- Now as to tid bits I might give, Jane, please remember my age and resultant bad memory. Anything I might tell you - or write - must be subject to verification. It is now what it once was.

If you have any specific questions, if I can I shall be glad to address them.

It was so good to be back for a visit with DSC, in the Sanctuary, and some of you Church members. I do hope that a history can be assembled in time for the 125 anniversary.

May God Bless this work

Out to E.

"Allan and I came here in 1946 after he got out of the Canadian Army. We traveled by train from Toronto with a 6-months-old baby. When we told the trainmen we wanted to get off at New Smyrna, no one knew where it was. So we explained that it was somewhere south of Daytona.

We joined the small Presbyterian Church which was at the time a small brown wooden building where the Education Building is now. The present church is standing on what was a wooded lot much like the parking lot is now.

One very cold morning I walked carrying my baby from our apartment on Lytle Avenue to go to church. When I arrived there were only two men, both of them trying to light the pot-bellied stove. They told me, "Oh, there is no church today, it's too cold." One of the men was Bob Russell (the then Pastor), and the other was Clyde Drew.

The church had very few members at that time. Ruth Eisencoff taught the whole Sunday school with flannel-board stories.

The Congregational Church (The United Church of Christ Church at Faulkner St. and Washington Ave.) had a congregation but no Pastor, so we decided to join forces to become the Federated Church and met at their church building. This continued for a few years, but we still longed for our own Church.

The small building (Sanctuary) on Magnolia Street had been used for crafts which made the floor very paint-splashed and dirty. The city had condemned it, and our situation looked hopeless.

Jim Felmet went to Presbytery and asked if we could open our own Church again, but they refused saying, "There are not enough Presbyterians in New Smyrna to warrant a Church being there!"

Undeterred, Mr. Felmet came back to New Smyrna and canvassed the town for Presbyterians. He got enough signatures (I think about 50% of those needed), so he took them to Presbytery and got a very grudging OK.

The condemned building had to be scrubbed, cleaned, and sanded. This was done by the people who wanted to be in the congregation. Tait Endsley's mother, who lived on Magnolia Street, donated enough money to paint the outside of the building. This is the picture you see in the old bulletin.

We had no pews, but we used folding chairs which Settle's funeral home graciously loaned us. Tommy Loveland collected the chairs in his truck on Saturday evening and returned them to the funeral home on Sunday evening. We eventually bought some second-hand pews.

When we left the other church, we were given only five hymn books, so we had to struggle to get enough money for more hymnals. Someone gave us a piano.

We had some guest ministers from Old's Hall. My memory is hazy on this.

I taught a Sunday school class on the screened porch of the minister's cottage. Mr. MacArthur built a cement block room on the side of the building which we used for Sunday school and Church suppers. Jack Golden and I taught Sunday school there when it was completed.

At last, Dr. Weaver Eubank, a retired minister from Philadelphia, came to be our minister. He wanted to build a church and was tireless in his efforts to get it started. He literally "worked 'till he dropped" serving the Lord.

Every brick used in the new church building was donated by the Abrams family who owned a brickyard in Georgia. We were growing, so eventually, we bought an old cement block house next door to the Church and used it for Sunday school classes.

There are many more memories, but this is enough for now. The Educational Building came years later, but that is another story."

Love, Betty McDougall

Notes of Virginia Felmet Harlow Interview - 2002

The time frame of these covered years 1953 to 1969.

Presbytery rep – long meeting – 7pm- 1am: "Big Fight" (about leaving the Federated church).

The congregation had worshiped with First Congregational as "Federated", then left to reorganize as First Presbyterian.

12 people to begin the church (after leaving the Federated Church in 1954): 100 by the time Dr. Eubank came to be preacher. Supply ministers from Old's Hall in Daytona Beach.

Virginia Felmet Harlow was the second female Elder of the congregation.

Decide contemporary or traditional design for new Sanctuary. Traditional by one vote.

Parking lot Anderson Street bought from Christian Science Church.

Mrs. Eubank played the organ, children's choir, taught Sunday school.

Jim Felmet joined First Presbyterian on July 9, 1969, became Elder immediately. No one else would be Clerk of Session.

Mickie Ascheri and Barbara C. Lies

Notes of Jack and Jerry Cole Interview – 2002

January 1954: Organized as a congregation; 6 on Session

Jack taught Adult Bible Class for 15 years. Tommy Loveland was painting the pulpit when Jack first met him.

Dr. Ritter from Old's Hall came to preach. (Old's Hall was a Retirement Home for Ministers and Missionary's in Daytona Beach.)

30-35 members. Dr. and Mrs. Eubank came in early 1954. Now a 12 member Session.

Mrs. Eubank was a strong leader. Music and children.

Jack became an Elder. At one of the Session meetings, Dr. Eubank asked Jack to pray. Jack said: "I don't pray in public." Dr. Eubank replied, "You do now!", and Jack prayed.

Another Dr. Eubank story: One hot Sunday morning the a/c was not working so Dr. Eubank, in the midst of the sermon called out, "Jack open those windows over on the right!", then went back to preaching. "Dr. Eubank always preached the bible".

Jack preached on Sunday. He served on Session throughout 25 years. Jerry was President of Presbyterian Women and sang in the choir, and taught Sunday school.

Dr. Cluny's term as Minister was dissolved.

Boyd DeLoarch, an Elder and member of Session was elected Moderator of the Presbytery. Unusual for a Layman.

Jerry Cole said that from 1949 on her relationship with and service in First Presbyterian Church, New Smyrna Beach were the best part of her life.

Mickie Ascheri and Barbara C. Lies

Marilyn Lindley's Memories

Photo of Marilyn and Bert Lindley at the picnic celebrating the **100th Anniversary** of the First Presbyterian Church of New Smyrna Beach in 1975.

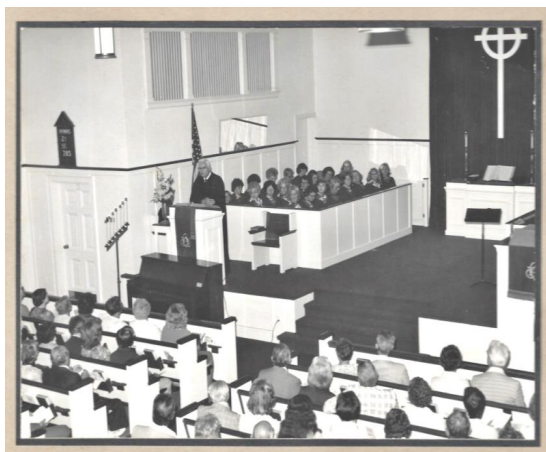


REMINISCENCES FROM 1976-2001

In July of 1976, Dr. William Chegwin, with his young family, came to the First Presbyterian Church in New Smyrna Beach. He and his wife, Patricia, had 3 boys, 11 year old twins, Doug and Eric, and 7 year old Terry. The effect of Dr. Chegwin's love of Christ and people was soon felt in a spiritual way. Newcomers felt welcome, and members were encouraged. Here are a few memories from Dr. Chegwin himself:

The "Good News" monthly newsletter was begun. It was compiled and printed by John Peck, a new member from Philadelphia whose career was that of a printer. The church bought an old-style printing press and John installed it in one of the rooms in the church. Every letter was meticulously placed in the proper slot, and every picture was properly scanned through a metal process. His wife Ethel collected all the news and the membership statistics were placed on the top line of a beautifully printed page.

The Youth Ministry was revitalized with the help of Don Moore and his family. They and other families initiated a "Youth Club" which ministered to the youth of the church and the community. Each Wednesday evening there was a meal for about 25 to 30 Junior High and High School youth and their parents. This Presbyterian organization had three main elements: music, Bible study, and games. The youth Club sang once a month with the Chancel Choir. At this time the choir was seated on the north and south sides of the chancel.



Dr. Chegwin, with the help of young families, organized the membership class for the youth. A six month course was offered to any young person 12 years and older who wished to unite with the church. Each "student" wrote an essay about his/her Christian experience, shared a testimony before the Session, "preached" a sermon, and conducted the entire worship service on the last Sunday of the month, which was designated as "Youth Sunday".

Sometime in the early 80's, Pastor Chegwin organized a youth band. The band included his children and several of their friends from school. In the worship service, they played special numbers and with the hymns, were accompanied by Carol Hampton at the organ. Richard Tuten, then Band Director at the High School and a member of our church, was extremely helpful in this program. One time Dr. Chegwin was talking with the minister of the Baptist Church in Daytona Beach concerning the music our band needed for the various

instruments. “It just happens”, said the minister, “that our orchestra leader has moved on to a different style of music.” So we acquired, free of charge, a beautiful set of sacred music for each instrument in our little orchestra.

Dr. Chegwin believed that ministry from the pulpit was not enough – that especially with the older members the personal approach to ministry was more important even than the formal sermon on Sunday morning. Much time was spent in daily visitation. Because so many church members were involved in community affairs, he too became involved. The church was no longer just a piece of real estate; the church was out where the people were. He became a member of the Chamber of Commerce, served on the board of Fish Memorial Hospital, (now Advent Health Hospital) and was Chaplain of the local Air Patrol, chosen for special recognition on the National level.

For 25 years, First Presbyterian Church was privileged to have Bill Chegwin and his family as servants of the Lord in our midst. We are glad he has been called to continue his strong ministry in the community. *That continues in 2024.*

Contributed by Paula Hoge

Provided by Sally Altobello, First Presbyterian Church member

My grandmother was born Ruth Mildred Robinson in 1897, passing in 1978. She was the daughter to the Rev. Jay Forbes Robinson, one of seven children. She moved to 803 Faulkner Avenue in the late 1950's and, as a staunch Presbyterian, she became a member of this church (as Ruth Robinson Abrams). Our family tree goes back nine generations of Robinson pastors—all the way back to the Rev. John Robinson who took the Pilgrims to Leyden, Holland. When the Pilgrims returned to England to board the Mayflower, the Rev. Robinson did not accompany them on their adventure, however, his children did. Grandma was a nurse and a teacher in her younger years, as well as a long time active member in the DAR. Her youngest daughter (of five children), Anne Schneider, was also a long-time attendee of this church and became a member in her later years. In March of 1967, the Robinson Memorial Chapel, funded by my grandmother, was dedicated.



Founded in Faith: Two New Smyrna Beach Congregations turn 140
Daytona Beach News Journal, Sandra Frederick Correspondent

Published November 17, 2015 - Excerpts from the article:

The coastal colony of New Smyrna barely persisted through about a century of hardships, beginning with those that caused most of its original settlers to flee north to St. Augustine in the 1770s. After the Civil War, though, new settlers trickled in. The town of New Smyrna was not incorporated until 1887, with only 150 residents at that, but a pair of religious congregations that still exist today were formed in 1875. The faith communities known now as United Church of Christ of New Smyrna Beach and First Presbyterian Church of New Smyrna Beach reached their 140th anniversaries this year.

A place of religious worship known as the Union Church was constructed in 1875 at the corner of Faulkner and Washington streets in New Smyrna. The Union Church was used by various denominations (*Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, and Episcopal*) with a specific time for services assigned to each and the Rev. Charles G. Selleck as pastor.

First Presbyterian celebrated its 140th anniversary Nov. 22, 2015 with a walk from the location where it started to the Magnolia Street church. Seven of the 40 members walking carried candles to signify the seven members that started the church so long ago, Pastor Robert Ward said. “It was a very symbolic and moving day for everybody”.

At 91, Billy Nettles, dressed in his Sunday best, greeted the churchgoers passing through the doors last week. Hugs and firm handshakes were freely handed out. A member for 25 years, he meets with the Newman Crewman on Mondays, to study the Bible, and then clean up the church and grounds. “I just love this church,” he said with a big grin. He sees the future as a building block for the church, a time of growth. With about 215 members, Pastor Ward said he sees the church as a community cornerstone. “It is not about the building, it is about the body of believers on the inside,” the pastor said. “I can tell you that Presbyterians play well with others. We recognize the other religions and accept whoever they are. We have found a way to stay true to ourselves. I expect amazing things to come.”





**WILLIAM & DEBORAH COE'S HOME IN GLENCOE IN 1885. DEBORAH IS ON PORCH
REV. CHARLES GRANDISON SELLECK, WILLIAM'S FRIEND, WAS HIS NEIGHBOR**





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