



A Goodly Heritage

The Foundation for a Vibrant Future!

Bedford Presbyterian Church

Celebrating our Sanctuary for 175 years

1832-2007

CHURCH STAFF

The Rev. E. Nicholas Van Gombos, Senior Pastor
The Rev. Karen J. Hagy, Associate Pastor
Barbara Flocco, Music Director
Trish Wallis, Youth Director
Michelle Jones, Administrative Assistant
Al Anderson, Sexton
Cliff Creel, Clerk of Session
The Rev. Harold G. Williams, Jr., Pastor Emeritus

COMMITTEES

Adult Ministries
Buildings & Grounds
Children's Ministry
Finance
Membership
Mission
Nominating
Fellowship
Personnel
Planning
Stewardship
Worship & Music
Youth Ministry

Bedford Presbyterian Church
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A Goodly Heritage

175th Anniversary
of the
Bedford Presbyterian Church
Sanctuary
1832-2007

and the
250th year since the first pastor
The Rev. John Houston
preached his first sermon
1757-2007



A supplement to *The Book of Remembrance* (1999)

Compiled and written by
Doris Peck Spurway

Published October 2007

Acknowledgements

It is hoped this brief supplement to *The Book of Remembrance* (published in 1999 in celebration of the church's 250th anniversary) will fill in the intervening years to the present – the members, the activities, and the ever-growing vision of the congregation which gathers in this historic building. Blessed be these ties for they have strengthened each generation and kept us linked in purpose and mission.

My gratitude and thanks to those assisting me in this endeavor:
Lou Ott, Archivist; Frances Gray, Adult Education; Barbara Potter, Typist;
Marcia Morgan, Editing & Layout; Bruce Bain, Morgan Press, Printing.

- *Doris Peck Spurway*

Message from the Pastors

The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; I have a goodly heritage.
Psalm 16:6

In common spirit with a psalmist of Israel, like the regular tolling of our wonderful old bell, a mood so easily builds in the heart when reflecting on the lasting beauty of our sturdy worship hall. Yes, we have a goodly heritage indeed!

In this year of our Lord, 2007, we mark several milestones: Our 258th year as a congregation; the 250th anniversary year of the first installed pastor, the Rev. John Houston in 1757; and the 175th birthday year of our treasured sanctuary, constructed in 1832. Sanctuary Preservation Manager Eric Myers spoke well to say, "Over 175 years ago, the leadership of this church had a great vision to build this wonderful architectural structure and fill it with members. We owe it them and to future generations to ensure that the building is here for another 175 years." We are doing our part, as commitments to the "How Firm a Foundation" preservation campaign exceeded the goal to fund restoration work now completed.

The mind drifts back to 1999, when, at the 250th anniversary of this faith family, Freda Gardner, then General Assembly Moderator, reminded us, "We build on foundations we did not lay; we drink from wells we did not dig; and we eat from harvests we did not sow. The faithfulness of previous generations...sustains and enriches us, and we are profoundly grateful for what they have bequeathed us." Indeed our God has been good to inspire a pioneer people and empower them to hand on to us this classic gem in the New England style, anchored firmly on New Hampshire's native granite stones. We have gratitude to extend – and, we have a destiny to fulfill!

The two of us who know the privilege of being the 27th and 28th clergy here join all to look back, to take stock, and to gaze ahead into the open future. These are not merely resting rocks upon which we sit, but stepping stones from which to leap with new acts of worship and deeds of service in Jesus' name today. If our faith heritage echoes the psalmist, our marching orders are sounded by the apostle Peter:

Like living stones, be yourselves built up into a spiritual house, a holy priesthood...through Jesus Christ, who is the cornerstone..." 1 Peter 2:5-6

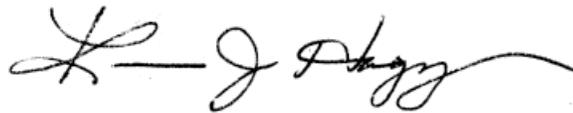
So folks, our foundation is rock solid – let's build on it!
The past has been grand – we give thanks for it!
The future stretches forth before – together let's embrace it!

Indeed, a goodly heritage – thanks be to God!

Faithfully yours,



E. Nicholas Van Gombos, Senior Pastor



Karen J. Hagy, Associate Pastor

Message from the Music Director

Music has always held a dear place enriching worship at Bedford Presbyterian Church—a goodly heritage, to be sure, and with good cause. Personally, I’ve often pondered how music began at all. Most likely with rhythm—the gentle patter of rain and the consistent washing of waves with the tide, the song of the bird with its never-ending variations to inspire the musician’s ear. Perhaps the first song sprang up as an attempt to comfort...possibly as a lullaby. Then music became an energizer to help people accomplish difficult tasks. It is the perfect vehicle for poetry. And within the community of faith, it has been used to inspire, to inform our devotion, and to aid us in our rejoicing and in our grief. The power of music to assist us in our worship never fails. Who has not felt the vigor of a hymn well-voiced or of a simple spiritual sung from the heart? It can erase pain and put us back in touch with our deepest feelings in the blink of an eye.

One imagines the earliest days when plain song or shaped note singing a capella and led by traveling teachers was the norm. The record indicates that in our present sanctuary, the musicians for a time were perched in the balcony loft, the congregation rising and turning around to be led by wind instruments, accordion, and strings, including the great bass viol now on display in Fellowship Hall.

You know the importance of music here just by taking a stroll through the music library accumulated over a century now. Scan the anthems and you will see they were collected from every musical period since the Renaissance to today. Examples of the best church music from every age are represented in this well-endowed treasure trove. We are the blessed recipients of this heritage.

Blest are we, too, by the instruments of our church. Add to the historic bass viol, the well-preserved self-pumped reed organ now residing in the Parlor that was used prior to the purchase, by the Ladies Circle in 1885, of the much beloved Hutchings organ which now graces the nook in front of the sanctuary. What a proud and satisfying moment when that installation was completed—and still is so today.

Through the years, we have continued to add to the “musical fleet.” A Yamaha grand piano was donated for use in the sanctuary and an electronic organ installed in the balcony to serve as the choir outgrew its traditional space in the chancel surrounding the Hutchings. Then came the wonderful addition of a three-octave set of English handbells—a very concrete step of faith since the handbell choir was not in existence at the time. A true case of, “If we buy it, they will come!” And so they have, with the handbell program now in its fifth season and going strong.

Praising God with voice is now a mainstay too. Our Senior Choir has grown in numbers and talent and continues so—even traveling to Carnegie Hall for a marvelous concert there last spring. And let’s listen as the voice of the future rings out in the choruses of our children—one more enriching piece to our healthy Children’s Ministries. We host choirs for all ages from Cherubs starting at age 4 to Children’s Choir in the elementary years on to Soli Deo Gloria serving youths through 8th grade. During our summer music offerings, children and teens are often in the mix providing vocal and instrumental melodies of a wonderful variety. And who does not warm to the enthusiastic sounds of our children’s special productions at Christmas and in the spring—a very proud tradition which will most certainly continue.

Finally, for now and into the future a magnificent array rounds out the offerings—Messiah Sings to Jazz concerts, solos from classical to folk, and our rockin’ Revelation Band—to bring a more contemporary flair to the rhythms heard here. One wonders what our ancestors would say, could they listen in today as God’s Presbyterian people on this historic hill continue to worship with music for all ages from all ages. Here’s to another 175 musical years springing forth from our Goodly Musical Heritage. May it be so—Soli Deo Gloria—to the glory of God!

–Barbara Flocco
Music Director



Message from the Youth Director

Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.

1 Timothy 4:12

As your Youth Director, it is a privilege to write to you on this 175th anniversary of the Sanctuary. I serve in this position because of a strong foundation laid by those throughout the years who served in this capacity on a volunteer basis under the leadership of the pastors. It is hard to imagine that this building hasn't been filled with the voices and energy of the young throughout the whole history of this church. Often times we think of our youth as the future of our church, but I believe they are an integral part right now. You don't have to look very hard to find our youth involved in the many facets of our church, and we are continually seeking new ways to increase their involvement. On Sunday mornings you will see them offering up their talents with voice and instruments. You will often find a group of youth at a Mission Work Day or on the week-long Mission Trip. We have youths serving as Youth Deacon and Youth Elder. They are encouraged to meet together for times of fun, mission opportunities and teaching through confirmation and Christian Education classes, as well as at Youth Group meetings. It has been encouraging to see us grow not only as a group but, more importantly, to witness the growth in the personal and spiritual lives of the youth who call BPC home. They are an extremely gifted and fun group of youth that will surely impact not only our church but our community and far beyond. I hope as the years go by that we will continue to support our youth and the energy and life that they bring to our congregation. It is my privilege not only to be a part of their lives, but to also personally call Bedford Presbyterian Church mine and my family's home!

May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.

2 Thessalonians 2:16-17

In service with you,

Trish Wallis,
Youth Director



Message from the First Minister of the Bedford Church

The following is taken from an item written by the Rev. Charles F.H. Crathern, pastor from 1929-1935, on the occasion of the anniversary year 1932 on the 100th year of the church building and the 175th year of the ordination of our first pastor, Rev. John Houston in 1757. We are now in the 250th year since the first sermon, but its message applies today.

“My Dear Friends:

I was born in Londonderry, New Hampshire in 1723 and graduated from Princeton College in 1753. I was ordained as the Pastor of the Bedford Church in 1757 and remained its Minister for twenty-one years. My first sermon after my ordination and installation was from the text, ‘Fear not little flock for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.’”

(Rev. John Houston, Pastor, until 1778)

Through the troublous period of the Revolutionary War the Church struggled and survived.

It is now 175 years since that first Sermon but the Preacher is still in the Pulpit and the Congregation in the pews and the people are “carrying on” in the village of their Fathers.

As God was with us in our day so will he be with you in your day. You are the inheritors of the past. What we fought for, lived for and died for, you must preserve and hand down to your children.

The home, the School and the Church are the foundation stones upon which our Republic is built. If you fail in your love and loyalty to the old Church, we shall not sleep, though flowers grow above our graves.

- Rev. Charles F.H. Crathern, Pastor, 1932

Historic Recognition Honors

On June 16, 2006, Anne Landini and Doris Peck Spurway were introduced to Christine Rankie, Architectural Historian for the New Hampshire Division of Historic Properties in Concord, New Hampshire. Ms. Rankie was the key person leading the way towards applying for recognition for an historic property. We felt confident that the 1832 colonial Bedford Presbyterian Church sanctuary would fit the necessary criteria.

Doris Spurway, church historian, exhibited a collection of pictures, articles and pamphlets of past events, construction details, etc. for background. Ms. Rankie strongly encouraged us to pursue both state and national designation. Both would require an architectural consultant. From a list of several names we chose Lisa Mausolf, who prepared a thorough description.

Ms. Rankie spoke to the Board of Session and with its approval, the process began. It took close to a year to finalize the entire procedure, which brought the final announcement in time for the celebration of our 175th anniversary in October 2007.

So it is with tremendous pride we can report that on June 21, 2007 the Bedford Presbyterian Church was honored with the distinction of being listed on the State of New Hampshire and National Register of Historic Places. A proper plaque recognizing this honor will be placed on our building along with the Presbyterian Historic Association plaque received in 1989.



Church Highlights 2000 – 2007

- 2000-2001 Interim Pastor Rev. Dr. Richard M. Webster served while the Pastor Nominating Committee searched for a full-time pastor. A campaign for restoration of the Manse, following an affirmative vote to not sell, was established. In honor of Pastor Williams' retirement, a scholarship fund was established for church members wishing to continue their education. This fund is overseen by the Deacons. Mission Committee Chairman Glenn Neff accompanied the Northern New England Presbytery to visit our new mission church in South Africa, The John Knox Presbyterian Church of the Amatola Presbytery. This partnership enjoyed an exchange program in the summer.
- 2001-2002 Interim Pastor Rev. Deane A. Kemper was in command. He had also served as temporary, part-time pastor ("supply") for four months between the pastorates of James Scotland and Jonathan Lange, so was familiar to many in the congregation. In September, church by-laws were re-written and Session voted to increase the number of ruling elders to 18 (plus the Youth Elder.) "Joseph and the Technicolor Dreamcoat" was performed by church members at the Bedford Town Hall. Directed by Kathy Metivier, Music Director, it was enthusiastically received. Remarkably, two campaigns for fund raising, the Manse and Phase III capital improvements, were successfully completed during Rev. Kemper's term.
- 2003 The Pastor Nominating Committee began to receive many resumes for the pastor position. A new "Vision Statement" was approved. Beth Richeson was accepted as an Inquirer, her first step towards becoming an ordained Minister by Presbytery. She has been a church member since 1991, ordained Elder since 1998. The Project Joel mortgage burning celebration was held in October. Ashes from the document were placed in an ivory "mortgage button" in a windowsill in Fellowship Hall. Rev. "Willie" Williams attended to observe the ceremony. A handbell choir was established with Memorial funds and other donations, adding to the musical diversity of the congregation. Church went to two services each Sunday at 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.
- 2004 On February 29 the Rev. E. Nicholas Van Gombos was installed as Senior Pastor after a 3 ½ year search. In June, Katherine Metivier retired as Music Director to pursue other interests. In September, Barbara Flocco began as our new Director of Music. During the summer, the Hutchings tracker pipe organ was cleaned and repaired. Trish Wallis was hired as our first Youth Director, and now occupies the renovated and restored Manse.
- 2005 In February a special concert to raise funds for tsunami relief in Asia was held, raising over \$11,000. A Messiah Sing, with guest musicians, and the public invited to sing, was organized by Barbara Flocco. This was extremely popular. Rev. Van Gombos initiated an overview of scripture, "Discovering the Bible," enlisting participation from more than 100 households during the year-long study.
- 2006 Marge Carpenter, former Moderator of the General Assembly, led a regional Presbyterian Women's caucus and brought her message to the congregation on May 13, Women's Recognition Day. An appreciation plaque in recognition of the services of the Women's Fellowship and Ministry Circle over the years was accepted by Doris Spurway on their behalf. The team "By You Bound" went on a mission trip to Louisiana in June 2006 to help repair damages from Hurricane Katrina, hosted by the First Presbyterian Church of Slidell. A group called "Helping Hands" was formed to help with local clean-up efforts following May and October flooding. In fall 2006, the Sanctuary Preservation Task Force was established under the leadership of Sue Pease, with Frank Rizzo, Mark Myers, Eric Myers, Dick Godfrey, and Nick Van Gombos.

2007

In February 2007, a group of mission workers, "By You Bound II," returned to the First Presbyterian Church in Slidell to continue with Hurrigan Katrina rebuilding in the area. Joan S. Gray, Moderator of the 217th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA) preached at the May 27th service to honor our church's 175th anniversary of the Sanctuary.

The Sanctuary Preservation Task Force continued its work, including repairs, painting, restorations, and renovations to the following: exterior trim, siding, shutters, fans, front columns, window sash frames, steps, and lead removal; plus interior repairs and renovations to plaster cracks, pews, interior doors, cherry wood pew rails, hymn racks, wainscot, window shades, and carpeting. A planning committee for the 175th anniversary celebration was established. Theme - "A Goodly Heritage." Sue Pease, Chairman. Committee Members - Marcia Morgan, Franny Van Gombos, Pam Van Arsdale, Doris Spurway, Anne Landini, and Paula Olsen.

In June 2007, the Sanctuary was placed on the State of New Hampshire and National Register of Historic Places.

In September 2007, we welcomed Rev. Alice Townsend from the Amatola Presbytery in South Africa for a pastoral exchange program.

October 7th will see the culmination of all preparations towards the observance of 175 years in our historic and gracious sanctuary: a handsome, new welcoming sign on the lawn – a gift of the Stebbins family – freshly painted interior, plus many hands and minds are creating a significant and meaningful observation of this commemoration. We are the beneficiaries of "A Goodly Heritage" to be sure! Thanks be to God.



An 18th Century Communion Service

The communion service was the high point in the religious and social experience of 18th century Presbyterians. Because of the rural character of the colonies and the scarcity of clergy, the communion service was celebrated but once or twice a year, except in areas where there were settled clergy. It was not uncommon for families to walk or ride ten or fifteen miles to attend a service.

Following the practice of the Church of Scotland, the Thursday or Friday preceding the communion service was a day of fasting, humility and worship. On Saturday, a preparatory service was held; communion tokens were distributed by the pastor to those whom he deemed penitent and worthy to receive the sacrament – likewise denied to those he did not feel were properly qualified. The tokens served as tickets to the Lord's table.

This process was termed "Fencing the Tables." Its purpose was to prohibit the "ignorant, unbelieving and profane." The articles of the creed were reviewed, all sins forbidden by the Ten Commandments were passed in review, but the pastor always ended on an encouraging note and extended the invitation to the "believers, the regenerate and the true penitent." Fencing the Tables was a warning to the congregation against approaching the table unprepared.

On Sunday, tables were set up in front of the church and in the aisles. Usually one or two neighboring pastors were invited to participate. They would also bring many of their congregations to share in the sacred feast. This often turned the event into an all-day affair. As the participants approached a table, they surrendered their token to the pastor, partook of the bread and wine and returned to their seats, much as we do occasionally today with communion "by intinction."

Housing Arrangements Before the Manse

Rev. John Houston was called and ordained September 28, 1757.

By virtue of being the first minister, Rev. Houston received certain land rights reserved for that purpose in the settlement agreement with the township. He lived at first with John McLaughlin; later he built and moved into a house with Chandler Spofford. In 1766 he built the house we know as the Houston house on Bedford Center Road. This property, of course, belonged to him and was passed on to his heirs. There was no settled minister until 1804.

Rev. David MacGregore also lived with Mr. Spofford at first. He later bought the house at the corner of Bedford Center Road opposite the present Town Hall. He conducted a school in the long room upstairs after his dismissal as pastor in 1825. The town agreed to pay him \$600.00 for his property, and all that it owed him in arrears.

July 5, 1826, Rev. Thomas Savage was installed as pastor. He served until 1866. A brick "cottage" was built for him by Capt. William Patten, c. 1826.

When Rev. Savage retired he retained possession of his home and the Parsonage Association was formed in April 1866 for the purpose of building a manse for future pastors. Thirty-one subscribers divided the capital stock into shares of \$25.00 each and organized with officers to handle the details for a building. The Baptist Church offered a small brick building and the land for \$500.00. This was accepted, the brick building was torn down and the present manse was built for just over \$3,000.00. At first it was rented to the ministers for \$200.00, later reduced to \$100.00 and then rent was abolished.

As the years passed, some of the shareholders left their shares to the church so that by 1900 the church owned 10 shares. The Association continued until April 1939 when, upon mutual agreement of the current shareholders, the organization dissolved and the deed was turned over to the church at its annual meeting in October. Since 1866 it has been occupied by pastors and church staff.

The Manse was used from time to time for interim pastors as well. After Rev. Williams and his wife, Joan, retired, discussion turned to other uses, including selling. Following a vote of the congregation favoring to retain it, the next step was needed repairs, updating, and a funding drive. Willing hearts, hands—and pocketbooks—created a fresh, clean, and handsomely remodeled interior. It is now comfortably occupied by our Youth Director, Trish Wallis, and family.

Bedford Presbyterian Church Members of 50 Years or More

Name	Date Joined	Number of years
Eleanor Kilton Jenkins	1-12-36	71
Doris Tarr Bongers	3-26-37	70
Virginia Wiggin Robinson	1-21-40	67
Frances Miltimore Wiggin	4-2-44	63
Paul Chaney Manning	5-6-45	62
Estelle Fisher	1-5-47	60
Margaret Wiggin	3-30-47	60
Ralph M. Wiggin, Jr.	12-30-47	60
Earl M. Isham, Jr.	4-4-48	59
Doris Peck Spurway	10-2-49	58
June Ellison	1-4-53	54
Kenneth E. Jenkins	4-2-53	54
Paul Johonnett	4-2-53	54
Joyce Jenkins Turner	4-2-53	54
Joanne Burns	7-11-54	53
Barbara Ramig Manning	4-7-55	52
Marjorie Richardson	1-8-56	51
Gertrude Johonnett Hersey	1-8-56	51
Olive Dobles	4-18-57	50
Jennie Wiggin	4-18-57	50

Bedford Presbyterian Church Pastors

Rev. John Houston	1757-1778
Rev. David MacGregore	1804-1825
Rev. Thomas Savage	1826-1866
Rev. Arthur Little D.D.	1866-1868
Rev. Ira C. Tyson D.D.	1869-1879
Rev. Daniel H. Colcord	1881-1887
Rev. Albert D. Smith	1888-1892
Rev. Charles H. Fields	1893-1896
Rev. W.C. Lindsay, Ph.D.	1896-1899
Rev. Albert P. Watson	1900-1909
Rev. Edward E. Weaver	1910-1911
Rev. Francis D. George	1912-1915
Rev. Thomas Chalmers D.D.	1916-1917
Rev. Norman B. Cawley	1917-1920
Rev. Covert R. Thomas	1921-1922
Rev. T. Lewis Williams	1923-1924
Rev. L. Dewey Burham	1925-1929
Rev. Charles F.H. Crathern	1929-1935
Rev. Wilbur J., Matchett	1935-1940
Rev. Richard Pacini	1940-1945
Rev. Michael P. Testa D.D.	1946-1948
Rev. Walter A. Morgan D.D.	1949-1958
Rev. James Scotland, Jr.	1959-1982
<i>Emeritus</i>	1983-2004
Rev. Richard Link, Ass't. Pastor	1978-1979
Rev. Jonathan Lange	1982-1991
Rev. Charles Peet, Interim	1991-1992
Rev. Ruth Boling, Associate Pastor	1989-1997
Rev. Harold G. Williams	1992-2000
<i>Emeritus</i>	2000-
Rev. Karen J. Hagy, Associate Pastor	1998-
Rev. Richard Webster, Interim	2000-2001
Rev. Deane Kemper, Interim	2002-2003
Rev. E. Nicholas Van Gombos	2004-

Elders Ordained

1999

Julie Rizzo
Bruce Olsen
Sara Robator–Youth

2000

Patti Sexton
Sara Cowall
Larry Cowen
Edie Schmidtchen
Bruce Bain
Lindsay Pease–Youth

2001

Dawn Jones
Keenan Pawley
Rob Swain
Jackie Opritza–Youth

2002

Christine Flanagan
Mark Myers
Pam Mikkola
Frank Rizzo
David Robator
Michael Sampson
Keith Stahl
Douglas Stevens

2003

Larry Cowen
Keenan Pawley
Paul Gronwall
Amanda Lauster
Deb Sferrazza
Joan Theurer
Michaela Olsen – Youth

2004

June Sears
Jen Carrobis
Gigi Munoz
Dave Dickey
Katie Richeson–Youth

2005

Janett Saber
Beth Cutliffe
Todd Woodhull
Deb McKinstry

2006

Nancy Wickwire
Marty Sferrazza
Sharon Cowen
Kathy Drake
Gigi Munoz
Geoff Ashley
Jill Deleault
Joe Van Gombos–Youth

Names of elders serving more than one term are listed only once. Listing resumes from publication of The Book of Remembrance in 1999. Please forgive any errors or omissions.

Deacons Ordained

1999

Edie Cronin
Diane Italia
Teresa Wright
Matt Crompton–Youth

2000

Marilyn Brock
Marion Hauck
Bob Orr
Jim Moreland
Dan Martel–Youth

2001

Marcia Buxton
Peg Roney
Andrea Martel
Andrew Wickwire
Erasmus Asamoah
Frank Conery
Will Metivier–Youth

2002

Joyce Redman
Kathy Dillard
Margaret Hayes
Len Suther
Caitlin Sofield–Youth

2003

Paula Donovan Olsen
Laura Wasielewski
Nicholas Schaefer–Youth

2004

Kathy Pawley
Judy Crandall
Virginia Kilpack-Carr
Katy Cowen–Youth

2005

Kim Lovely Sampson
Betsy Tieperman

2006

Steve Dunn
Glenn Larson
Pam Mikkola
Franny Van Gombos
Sue Pease
Audrey Morgan–Youth

Names of deacons serving more than one term are listed only once. Listing resumes from publication of The Book of Remembrance in 1999. Please forgive any errors or omissions.

175th ANNIVERSARY LITANY

“A Goodly Heritage”

This Presbyterian church was organized in 1749, following the faith of its founders.

We thank thee, O Lord.

Under Rev. Thomas Savage’s leadership, a new church building was proposed in 1831. Erected on Houston Hill, completed and dedicated on Christmas Day, 1832, we began our journey in this historic house of God.

We thank thee, O Lord.

Organized in 1848 by Mrs. Lucy Savage, pastor’s wife, a Sewing Circle which became the forerunner of “Women’s Fellowship and Ministry Circle.”

We thank thee, O Lord.

From this house, God’s messengers have preached of truth and righteousness, of mercy and love, and ministered to the needs of all generations.

We thank thee, O Lord.

In 1870 the Vestry was built as a memorial to the unification of the two branches of the Presbyterian church.

We thank thee, O Lord.

Church music expanded with the new pipe organ, purchased in 1885, and the alcove built to contain it.

We thank thee, O Lord.

In 1935 Rev. Wilbur Matchett established the Unity Club, promoting social and community outreach.

We thank thee, O Lord.

1977 saw the expansion at the Sanctuary basement level for a meeting room and offices.

We thank thee, O Lord.

1994 Project Joel began, a further expansion and uniting of our two buildings, thus increasing our opportunities for our growing congregation.

We thank thee, O Lord.

In 2007 what is our task? Evangelism, worship and service, for we are all God’s missionaries – locally, regionally, nationally, and globally.

We thank thee, O Lord.

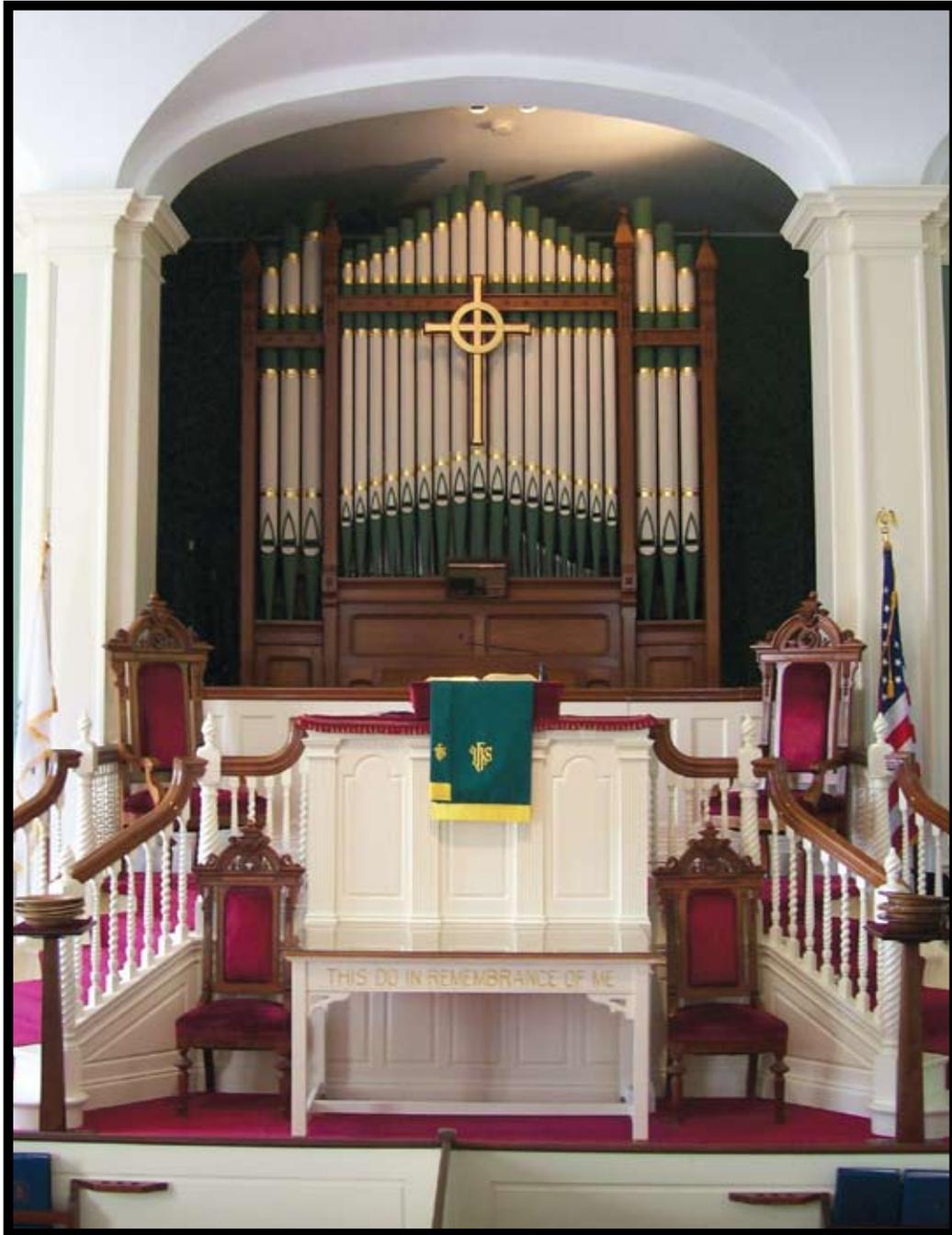
Today we rededicate this church and honor the many servants it has nurtured over the last 175 years. May we continue to learn, to teach and to serve.

In Christ’s name. Amen.

*The Lord is my chosen portion and
my cup:
thou holdest my lot.
The lines have fallen for me in
pleasant places;
yea, I have a goodly heritage.
Psalms 16: 5-6*

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission as the Bedford Presbyterian Church is to share the sovereign love of God as revealed by the holy scriptures, to worship, to nurture spiritual growth and fellowship in the congregation, and to encourage faith so that we may demonstrate God's love and the reality of Christ's presence, and practice a life of prayer, stewardship and service in the world under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.



VISION STATEMENT

We have a vision for all in our church to grow in faith by knowing and experiencing God's love, so that everyone is inspired to use his or her gifts, in service to Christ, each other, our community, and our world, with humility and thanksgiving.