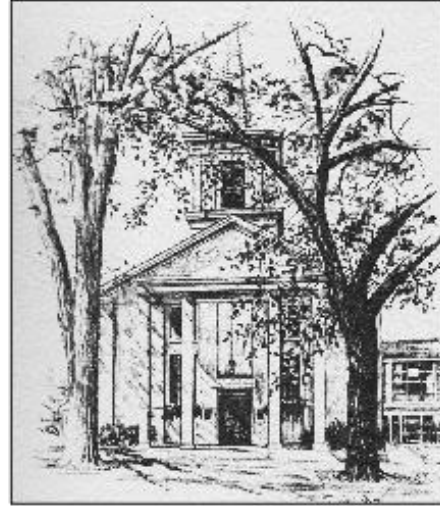




214 Walnut Street

HISTORY



The Congregational United Church of Christ, St. Charles, Illinois
Supplemental Brochure Celebrating 180 Years, 1837-2017



40W451 Fox Mill Boulevard

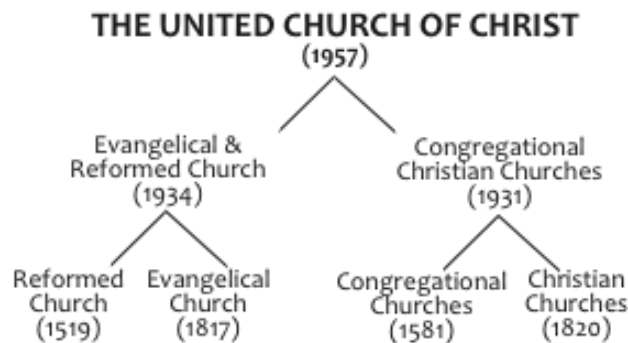
**The Congregational United Church of Christ, St. Charles History
A Supplemental Brochure Celebrating 180 Years 1837-2017**

**To accompany the Centennial Historical Booklet of 1837-1937
and
The 150th Sesquicentennial Anniversary Book of 1837-1987**

1620's-1640's

Congregationalism in America goes back to 1620 with the Mayflower and the Plymouth Colony through the Pilgrims. Soon to follow, the Puritans emigrated to America and settled in Boston and Salem, then started the Second Congregational Church. So the roots of Congregational Churches in America began with the Pilgrims and the Puritans.

As stated on our church website: *“The United Church of Christ is a fairly young denomination, but with historic roots. On June 23, 1957 the UCC was born with the joining of the Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church. Each of those two churches were the product of earlier mergers. In 1934 the German Reformed Church and the German Evangelical Synod merged to become the Evangelical and Reformed Church, and in 1931 the Christian Church, which developed on the American frontier in the late 18th century, joined the Congregational Churches, with roots back to the Protestant Reformation, and whose forebears were passengers on the Mayflower in 1620. The Congregational United Church of Christ of St. Charles links back to the Congregational Churches.”*



1830's

During the 1830's several families traveled from the east to the Fox Valley area and, using local materials, built log cabins mostly near the Fox River. Their faith was important to them, and they started to meet in different cabins to worship. **On March 4, 1837, The Congregational Church of St. Charles** was formally organized and established, the same day Martin Van Buren became President of the United States and when the city of Chicago was incorporated. (Special note: We have used that dedication date as our motto to **“March Forth”** with God as our guide throughout the years.) The first few families met in the log home of Robert Moody located where Mount Saint Mary's Park is now. There were nine charter members of the church. The first couple to be married in our church and in St. Charles, which was called Charleston at that time, was Prudence Ward and Dean Ferson. Prudence had been the first school teacher in town which may be part of the reason the church helped fund the building of the school by donating \$800. Later the congregation met at the schoolhouse which was located at 2nd Avenue and East Main Street.

In 1839, the church received a deed for the land at the corner of 3rd and Walnut Streets from Darwin and Miranda Millington. Groundbreaking for the new building began.

1840's

Even though the building wasn't completed, Rev. Foote received 100 new members as they met in the covered basement until the completion of the building.

The church, built of limestone dug from the Fox River bed, wasn't completed until 1848 due to lack of funds and difficulty hand-digging the stone. The church bell was installed in the new belfry and became not only a bell to ring for worship but a community bell. As Miss Alice Davis records in our church history: "It was a **town bell** as well as a **church bell**. It rang each workday morning at seven to start the working day. At noon the bell announced an hour for dinner, and at one o'clock sent people back to work. At six o'clock it announced the end of the workday. It was also used as an alarm to announce a fire or accident and call for help. It was the first bell in the township." Rev. Savage was the first minister to stay longer than others, from 1847-1860. Not only was he well-liked and increased the membership during his 13 years, but it was during his ministry the church building was finished.

1850's

In 1850, there was a resolution to reaffirm the 1849 position against slavery stating that no slave owner could be a member of the church. Although not documented, stories have been passed down about the church being part of the Underground Railroad.

Eden Theological Seminary, in St. Louis, MO, was established in 1850. Graduates include Bill Nagy, Tim Rhodes and Eric Fistler.

In 1852, Issac Scott, **the first African American was ordained** in the Christian Church and sent overseas as a missionary. In 1853, Antoinette Brown was the **first woman to be ordained** into the Congregational Church in South Butler, NY.

Rev. Savage and Rev. Peet from the Batavia Congregational Church met at the parsonage of Rev. Savage, a house on the northwest corner of West 5th and Illinois Streets in St. Charles. There they planned a training school for ministers of the Midwest to rank with Yale and Harvard. As a result of their plans, **the Chicago Theological Seminary** has trained ministers throughout the world since **1855**. The Congregational Church of St. Charles was Rev. Savage's only parish. Later he became secretary of Chicago Theological Seminary. Graduates from CTS include Edward Remaly, Dan Schiefeling, John Rodgers, Christine Barton, David Pattee, Suzy Richards Daly and Amanda Nagy.

1860's

In the 1860's there was dissension in the church. There were nine ministers in 10 years. There were financial problems and problems with ministers. Several people left or were asked to leave the church. One excommunication was of "Brother Scott" for abusing his wife. In 1863, Mrs. Wily was excommunicated for "causing a disgraceful disturbance during a prayer meeting." In March 1864 (referred to as spring cleaning) those who had not attended church regularly or had not given financially were "given fair warning" and if not "corrected" by the end of the year, were asked to leave the church.

On a more joyous note (no pun intended), in 1864 the **first hymnal was adopted**, *The Songs for Social and Public Worship*, and the congregation joined the choir in singing.

1870's

In 1871, **Elmhurst College**, a college of the United Church of Christ, was established. Graduates from Elmhurst include Bill and Rozella Nagy, Jane and Bill Batte, Gretchen and Ron Koeppel, Tim Rhodes, Tricia Steele, Terry Piper, Lori Kitner Tschetter, Amanda Nagy and Faith Powell, among others.

In March 1872, Kirk Fersons was baptized in the Fox River by Rev. Cruzan. They must have been hearty souls indeed as most of you know what kind of weather we can have here in March.

1880's

After Rev. Savage left in 1860 there were 16 pastors who served from 1-3 years each until Rev. George Smith was called in 1887 and stayed for 12 years.

1890's

Rev. George Smith served as our pastor until 1899. During his ministry in 1891 a new parsonage and garage were built for \$2,000.

1900's

At the turn of the century, we called Rev. Davidson who served for three years. Then Rev. Turrell stayed for one year, Rev. Lewis for two years and Rev. Gray for one year. During the two years Rev. Lewis was the pastor, he began a music committee to choose hymns for the congregation to sing and a welcoming committee who would greet parishioners on Sunday morning. The Children's Day focused on a missionary offering and was added to the missionary budget. There was a diverse list of missions including Chicago Theological Seminary.

1910's

In 1911, the *Gleaner*, a church news booklet, was published once a month and included local advertising, poems and news from the church. This is perhaps the forerunner of our current *Highlight* which is now an online publication.

1920's

The organ pumper received 20 cents for working on Sunday morning. Wirth Gustafson was one of the young boys of the church who had this responsibility.

1930's

The **Centennial celebration** included a pageant with skits from historical records. There was singing and a banquet. So in March 1937, the congregation continued to "March Forth." An Historical Booklet was put together and titled "The First Congregational Church 1837-1937." It appears the word "First" was added somewhere along the line to our church name, though not officially. Perhaps the "First" was added because we descend from the Pilgrims and not the Puritans who established the Second Congregational Churches.

1940's

After WWII the church, through the Mission Committee, aided a family in Japan. Later, in gratitude, they sent a traditional Japanese doll. The doll was displayed in Memorial parlor until it was stolen in the late 1980's.

In 1947, Rev. McClary was called as the pastor, a leader known for his good humor. Also that year, there was a vote to unite the Evangelical and Reformed Church with the Congregational Christian Church. It was declined at that time.

Although we can't find a record of the first Lenten night suppers, it was written that the tradition of Lenten family night suppers was reintroduced in 1949. Also that year preparation was made to raise funds for pews for the sanctuary instead of the theater style chairs. Women's fellowship groups pledged \$2,000 and encouraged families to purchase pews as a memorial.

1950's

In the 1950's, there were two women's groups, Morning Guild and Afternoon Women's Fellowship. In 1952, the Afternoon Women's Fellowship purchased a Christian flag and an American flag to be dedicated on World Communion Sunday in October. We still have a Christian flag and an American flag in the sanctuary.

In 1953, the first annual **Labor Day Community breakfast** was sponsored by the "Mr. and Mrs. Club." We continued the annual tradition until we sold the building and moved to our new location. The Labor Day Breakfast, the Thanksgiving dinners, the Lenten Potlucks, the church picnics and other meals were an indication that food events were common for the church.

In 1955, the Third Street entrance was added, the first major addition to the church. The projected cost was \$78,000.

On June 25, 1957 the United Church of Christ was born in Cleveland, OH with the merger of the Evangelical and Reformed Churches and the Congregational Christian Church resulting in 2 million people joining hands by the merger. Rev. William Nagy attended this historic event.

1960's

In 1962, under the direction of Wirth Gustafson, the Sunday school children rang the church bell by pulling on the rope 125 times celebrating the anniversary of the church. Wirth had pumped the organ and rung the bell as a little boy so it was most appropriate to have him direct the children in ringing the bell on this momentous occasion. There were several celebrations throughout the year beginning on March 4. There was an open house at the church and a special Thanksgiving celebration. A minister from the First Parish Church in Massachusetts, a church founded in 1620 by the Pilgrims, spoke before the Thanksgiving meal.

In 1963, with Rev. Robinson as the pastor, the church records indicate the membership grew over 53%. A second worship service was added, a church library was instituted and expansion of space was a discussion item. By April, authorization was given to purchase property for use as the parsonage and to use the old parsonage for Sunday school and other church events. The Third Street entrance room was used as the Minister's study. For the first time, a religious consultant was hired to advise and aid in Sunday school teacher training.

Miss Alice Davis was thanked for her great efforts in writing our church history and Miss May Jordan was thanked for her continual efforts in the church library. In 1963, a new silver communion service was purchased and dedicated to Rev. and Mrs. McClary. We no longer know where the communion set is but we do have an old silver baptismal bowl and long handled wooden offering baskets. We have used them on special historic occasions.

In 1964, after examining the records of 20 ministers suggested by the State Conference Superintendent, Rev. Remaly was recommended by the pulpit committee to be our candidate. The church voted unanimously to call him as the new pastor. When Rev. Remaly arrived the **new parsonage at 1726 Howard Street** had been purchased and the old parsonage was used for Sunday school and other church meetings.

When Rev. Remaly attended his first Church Council meeting in September, he must have been disheartened to have only the church clerk and him present. In November, the 12 members of the Church Council convened. Rev. Remaly and the Council discussed mainly the purpose and function of Church Council. The **moderator position was added**, representatives from Council would represent and report on other Committees and Boards and some changes were made to the By-laws. One change was to have the annual meeting on the fourth Sunday in January to give time to form the budget and receive annual reports. Dan Schiefing, Sr. was the first moderator. Bob Rodgers became our second moderator.

By 1968, the Sunday school had grown and taken up almost all of the available space. A long range planning committee reported in 1969 there were 500 members and 139 attending Sunday school which included nursery through high school and possibly some adult classes.

Rev. Remaly introduced the Colony Outreach program to develop a time and talent survey of the members to determine what personal resources were available and how they might be used to serve God. With the church talents, new Sunday school classrooms and staff offices were provided. Sunday school had grown so much, a long range planning committee was formed to review the needs and suggest alternative solutions. They suggested a two-story addition of 7500 sq ft which would provide for a congregation of 900 and church school of 400. They projected our membership would reach this in 10-15 years. The decision was made to stay at the site and plans began to put on the addition, although it became only a one-story structure.

Our annual community pancake breakfast continued and made \$1200 for the general fund in 1969. The street was blocked off and tables set up outside for the breakfast. People from the community enjoyed pancakes, sausage, coffee and conversation.

1970's

The building fund committee exceeded 100% of its goal by 1970. Members were canvassed and plans for the addition to replace the old parsonage and garage with new space were approved.

In 1970, the Board of Deacons and Deaconesses requested "In-Care Standing" for John Rodgers, the second member of the congregation to enter training for a full time Christian vocation in the United Church of Christ.

In 1972, the courtyard addition, the one-story fellowship hall and church offices were completed. A mortgage was taken out for the expenses.

Rev. Remaly resigned in 1972. Rev. Wayne Barton served as our interim. He later was called to be the senior pastor at the Little Home Church in Wayne, IL.

The first openly gay man, Rev. Bill Johnson, was ordained by the United Church of Christ in 1972 in California. He was a graduate of Elmhurst College.

In February of 1973 we welcomed Bill and Rozella Nagy and their three children: Loren, Don and Cheryl. In March Rev. Nagy was installed as our 38th pastor. He stayed with us for 23 years before retiring, the longest serving pastor of our church. In 1973, he also was asked to be the Chaplain of the St. Charles Fire Department, a position he held for 27 years.

In April 1973, Rozella brought her idea of a preschool to be sponsored by the church to the Board of Religious Education and the Board of Trustees and it was accepted. In September, the State of Illinois licensed Swing Set Preschool. It opened with 12 students and Rozella as the director. The school has grown each year with students, classes and staff and celebrates 44 years in 2017 with 132 children and 7 staff members. There have been 4 directors since Rozella retired in 1994: Ellen Henderson, Karen Chapman, Sue Farr and now Kim Barth Arneson who is also the church Connections Coordinator.

John Rodgers was ordained in 1974 by Rev. Nagy, the chairman of the Church and Ministry Committee of Northern Association. John grew up in the church and became the second member to be ordained. Little did we know John would become our pastor in 1997.

During the mid 1970's, the church received notice from the State of Illinois that the church name was not incorporated. Rev. Nagy had the name incorporated and it officially became The Congregational United Church of Christ.

During Rev. Nagy's ministry we began the annual Thanksgiving Feast. It became the tradition for many years. In December, on the first Sunday of Advent the children and people of all ages made craft projects and enjoyed a simple meal together. The event closed with a pageant and songs. At Easter in 1974, the annual breakfast after the sunrise service began with Ginny Olson and Adele Wolf serving. Later the high school youth group cooked and served the breakfast.

In 1976, Donnley Dutcher was ordained becoming the third member of the congregation to enter Christian ministry. Pat Kitner was hired as church secretary which she continued until 1988.

The church celebrated the Nation's bicentennial by holding a colonial service in May 1976. Worshippers were greeted with drummers at the entrance of the church. The service included the historic old long handled wooden offering baskets. There was no instrumental accompaniment but a precentor lined the hymns for the congregation. During the service "tithing" men surveyed the church for dozing men and women who were then awakened by a long pole with brass knobs on one end to tap sleeping males and a feather on the other end to rouse dozing women.

For two years during the late 1970's, adult education classes were held between services to discuss LBGT issues. Greg Smith, the student pastoral assistant, invited a professor from Chicago Theological Seminary where Greg was attending to lead several seminars.

In 1979 Janet Bell and Sue Peterson led Mother's Day musicals until the mid 1990's. Sixty to eighty adults and kids of all ages participated in singing and acting. Musicals included *Music Machine*, *Bullfrogs and Butterflies*, *Kids Praise 1 and 2*, *Agapaopolis*, *The Sunshine Special* and more.

1980's

In 1980, after paying off the 1972 construction for the courtyard, new fellowship hall and church offices, a mortgage burning celebration was held ending with the traditional Thanksgiving Feast.

For years, the directive to the Board of Trustees was to give 10% of our budget to missions. In 1982, we voted at the congregational meeting to increase the mission budget by 1% each year until it reached 15%. So in 1987, the mission outreach budget was 15% of the total budget. During this time we added to our staff and called Rev. Christine Barton as Assistant Minister who served from 1980-1984 helping with the youth and pastoral responsibilities.

During the 1980's, land became available along Randall Road for purchase. The congregation rejected the idea of purchasing that property. Instead, three parcels on Walnut Street were purchased for a possible future parking lot and space for growth.

In 1985, the old steeple was removed and a new aluminum and steel steeple was added to the church. Before the new steeple was placed on the church, Hugh Cole brought yellow ribbons in support of the hostages in Iran and tied them to the steeple. The next day the hostages were released. The bell in the steeple was repaired by Bill Hoffman and reinstalled. Many members came out to watch the new steeple being erected. At the dedication we had a balloon launch and the scene of that event was painted by Carleen Bart.

Soon after the new steeple was erected, the sanctuary was redecorated including new carpet, new light fixtures and a chair lift for the stairs. From past pictures, it seems to be the third time the sanctuary had a new look. The courtyard was redesigned by Charlie Peterson and installed before our sesquicentennial celebration.

For our **sesquicentennial anniversary March 4, 1987** on Ash Wednesday, under the direction of Wirth Gustafson, the Sunday School children rang the church bell 150 times at the conclusion of the service. Rev. Nagy was the minister for this year-long celebration. There were special events and a guest speaker each month throughout the entire year. On Saturday, November 7, we had a special banquet where Ron and Gretchen Koepl performed a skit with scenes from the history of the church. The closing worship service was held on Sunday, November 8. On November 22, the Rev. Kenneth Smith, president of Chicago Theological Seminary, preached and thanked us for our past role in the founding of CTS.

In 1987 Frances Gustafson was honored for her 30 years of teaching 1st grade Sunday school and her devotion to missions. She was presented with a plaque naming her Missionary Emeritus. She joined the church when she married Wirth and continued as a devoted member until she died in 2016 at the age of 101, our oldest member at the time.

In 1988, after celebrating a Pat Kitner day honoring her for her work as Administrative Assistant, Dorothy Gaines was hired as Administrative Director and Sue Mahood as church secretary.

Tim Rhodes was a graduate of clown college and worked for Barnum and Bailey. While attending Elmhurst College Tim shared his clown ministry in our church services.

In 1988 Dennis and Amy Geyer were hired as our youth directors.

In early 1988, Rev. Nagy and Dorothy Gaines visited adult day care facilities in Crystal Lake, Naperville and Aurora. See the 1990's for the rest of the story.

1990's

In the fall of 1990, the church sponsored and housed **Elderday Care Center** which was a care service for elderly adults held in our church. Our Women's Afternoon Circle (after some mediation to assure them the program wasn't for them) enjoyed some music programs with Elderday, played piano and interacted with the clients. Our Swing Set preschool kids and Elderday clients also socialized and occasionally went on field trips together such as Brookfield Zoo and the Shedd Aquarium. Rev. Nagy was instrumental in the establishment of Elderday and Bob Beavan was a board member for several years even after it was housed at other locations. With Carol McIntyre as the first director, Elderday Center continued to grow and needed more space. In 1995 it relocated to a larger space at Geneva Lutheran Church until 1998. It then moved to Batavia where it currently resides. Our church continues to support Elderday from our Mission budget.

In 1990, Brian and Kathy Wegley were hired to be our youth directors and stayed on until 1996.

On June 10, 1990, Tim Rhodes was ordained, the fourth member of our church to go into Christian ministry.

Bill Nagy was appointed campaign director to build a conference center and new housing for the camp director at Pilgrim Park. By November, Bill led a ground-breaking service for the conference center. For several years the Ladies Get Away Weekend has been held at their beautiful conference center.

In 1990, Susan Briggs was hired as the program director. She established Kool Kids Klub, wrote newspaper articles for church events and led several youth activities. She stayed until 1995.

Beginning in 1992 and continuing for 8 years, the church had a booth at the annual Scarecrow Festival at Lincoln Park in downtown St. Charles. Dudley and Barb Pankoke brought their copper kettle to make caramel corn. Several volunteers sold the caramel corn, lemon shake-ups and taffy apples. Mike and Jane Harland built a family of scarecrows each year for the church.

In 1993, Bill led another adult retreat at a Pilgrim Park.

In 1993, Ron Koepl directed the first of several Living Last Supper dramas during Holy Week. Thirteen of our male members dressed as Jesus and his 12 disciples to reenact the events leading up to Jesus' crucifixion.

In 1994, the congregation decided to **sell the parsonage on Howard Street and provide the pastor with a housing allowance.**

Also in 1994, the Music Committee and others who were interested attended a workshop on the ***New Century Hymnal*** published by the United Church of Christ. The hymns use inclusive language and is the only Christian hymnal that honors both male and female images of God. Upon the recommendation of the Music Committee these hymnals were purchased to replace the Pilgrim Hymnals.

In 1995, Rev. Nagy announced his plans to retire the next year. He received a call from Ken Blood from B&B Developers who were planning the Fox Mill subdivision five miles west of St. Charles. Ken and Sandy's children had attended Swing Set preschool. He offered a **gift of 4 acres of land** in the subdivision to the church with two stipulations. It needed to be a colonial style building and Swing Set preschool needed to come with us.

A memory from Ed Klosowski about the meeting in 1995 after the call from Ken Blood. *“My favorite memory is when Reverend Bill Nagy met with Mike Baer, Jim Hagerty, Don Westphal, Charlie Peterson and me in January of 1995 as members of the Buildings and Grounds committee. We proposed various options for a future new church facility to Pastor Nagy. He was excited about the possibilities and encouraged us to pursue our vision. The rest was history, with great congregational partnership, a solid economy, spiritual intervention and after generations of false starts our St. Charles CUCC dream was realized in 1998. Mike, Bill, and I still recall that wonderful winter meeting with a fond and historic perspective. The Buildings and Grounds group always had a deep satisfaction in playing an integral role on the church's move to Fox Mill.”* These Trustees put in many hours in building the new church.

In the summer of 1995, the congregation voted to relocate knowing there was a need for more space. The Free Methodist Church on the opposite corner from the church was also outgrowing its space. The church was a perfect size for them. The building was sold to the Free Methodist Church and the properties on Walnut Street west of the church to the City of St. Charles which they use for parking. The Free Methodist Church did not need all the space in the building and Darlene Marcusson, founder of Lazarus House homeless shelter, was looking for a home. They were able to rent space from the Free Methodist Church.

We felt God's presence and timing throughout this process – our need for a larger space, the gift of land, Free Methodist needing a larger space, and Lazarus House needing a home. As Rev. Nagy admits, he kept trying to tell God how to answer his prayers for this new church building to happen sooner but he knew things happen in God's time, not ours.

After 23 years as our pastor, Rev. Nagy retired in June 1996. There was an evening retirement celebration at Villa Olivia but there were also many other good-byes and tears as our longest serving minister retired. Since he loves chocolate chip cookies, one Sunday the Sunday school children had a celebration for him and everyone gave him cookies. In Rev. Nagy's honor, there was a Mother's Day musical directed by Janet Bell and Sue Peterson with a baseball theme. Rev. Nagy is a passionate White Sox fan.

Moderator Pat Kitner asked Jack Brens and Bill Wiebmer to co-chair the building project. Joe Boyd led the stewardship campaign. Harvey and Associates were hired to help raise funds. One million dollars was raised in pledges and a mortgage was acquired for the rest.

In the summer of 1996, Rev. Bob Meissner was called to become interim minister. A construction loan was obtained and Hestrup & Associates was hired as our architects. By February 1997, bids for construction were distributed and a ground-breaking ceremony was held. Despite concerns from some members, there was a vote to go forward with building in hopes of completing by June of 1998. As former owner of his own construction company, Harold Warren focused on the construction of the new building.

Jim Hagerty focused on monitoring construction issues, mainly the steeple and cupola. The steeple was placed on top of the church in the spring of 1998. Mike Baer had expertise in the HVAC component of the building. He was reported crawling around in the dark spaces of our building. Charlie Peterson did the design for the landscaping, parking lot and outside lighting including supervising the installation. Jack Brens continued to supervise the project putting in many hours of meetings and being on the site daily. The project was not completed by July so fortunately we were able to continue sharing space with the Free Methodist Church for another month.

In the meantime, other members were focused on another endeavor. If we didn't already have enough going on, we needed to seek another senior minister. A 10 member pastoral search committee, with Wyonne Hegland as chair, was formed to seek out, interview and recommend a pastor candidate. In April 1997, the committee recommended Rev. John Rodgers. There was a reception on Saturday for John and Susan and their youngest son Geoff. Sarah and Matt were away at school. Sarah was a junior at the University of Kansas. Matt was a freshman at the University of Wisconsin. John and Susan had grown up in St. Charles and graduated from St. Charles High School and Valparaiso University. John had also grown up in the church. As a minister, John had served Churches in Palatine, Western Springs and, since 1983, in Wheaton. On Sunday Rev. Rodgers led the worship service and afterwards the congregation voted to call him to be Senior Pastor.

Soon after Rev. Rodgers joined us in the fall of 1997, there was the tragic death of their son Geoff from a previously unknown heart condition. Rev. Lori Powell and Pat Kitner filled in for a few weeks. Prior to the loss of their son, the Rodgers were planning to move from Wheaton to St. Charles that weekend. With everything already in place, they continued with their plans. Members from St. Matthew Church in Wheaton helped on their end and St. Charles members helped on their end to get the family moved. Services for Geoff were subsequently held at both churches.

In 1997, The Church Council hired Linda Pelton as the Children's Ministry Coordinator and Rev. Rodgers asked Jeff Graham to be our youth director.

In February **1998, Rev Nagy was named Pastor Emeritus.** In August, he was invited to participate with Rev. Rodgers in the emotional final service at the old building which included the removal of items such as the altar cross, Bible and candles. The pastors took our church keys and each member took a hymnal as we walked outside to meet the Free Methodist Pastor in the middle of the street to hand over the keys. We were ready to move, but the new building wasn't ready.

The congregation had shared space with the Free Methodist Church during the construction. We were planning to move in June but construction was not complete so we continued to share space until August. Needing to be out in August, members, with Barb and Ed Klosowski as the organizers, packed up everything from the church, labeled it and had it delivered to special spots in fellowship hall in the new building. However, without an occupancy permit the boxes could not be unpacked. Some of the office boxes went to Office Manager Carleen Bart's house where she and Bob Beavan, Treasurer, worked for a month. Bob had been treasurer since the mid-1970's. He was known for wearing a red shirt on Sunday to indicate when the church was "in the red."

Carleen Bart remembers plugging in the copy machine in fellowship hall to run copies of bulletins. The worship services in August 1998 were held at Garfield Farm and Richmond School until the permit was received to occupy the building in September.

The dedication of the new building was held in November 1998, exactly 150 years from the dedication of the first building. The carillon which was brought from the old building rang for the celebration. It had been donated by Tom Hendry in memory of his wife Anne in 1978. To this day, it plays songs at noon and at 6pm. Al Higgins maintains it and changes the music seasonally.

Prior to the dedication, many people had to plan and decorate the inside of the church. One particular group was the sanctuary committee, known as the "pew pickers." Among other things, they chose the pews and the carpet. Debby Graham, the committee chair, has a couple memories: *"I remember having several small sections of pews in my living room for a week or so to sit on and see if they were comfy before we made the decision to buy the official pews. Anyone who came over had to sit in them and vote!! I think we did pretty well-they are still comfy after 18 years!! The committee of all women tried to convince the men in charge that we needed to upgrade the carpet for the sanctuary and the hall. We liked the green and it was more expensive than our allotment. We kind of pushed hard on that and got it!! Looks like that was a good decision too as the carpeting is still in pretty good shape!!! Although it earned me the title of "Sanctuary Police" from John Rodgers as we didn't allow any coffee or food in the sanctuary for a long time-we still don't actually but I lost the title after a few years!!!"*

The congregation had arrived. Unpacking, sorting and storing began. Carleen Bart, hired by Interim Minister Rev. Meissner in 1996, continued as Office Manager and Margie Johnson as assistant. Susan Klopmeier volunteered as the financial manager and set up the database we use today. Trees were planted and the landscaping was implemented with the supervision of Charlie Peterson. Within the year, the Garden Angels led by Anne Graham, Carol Ludemann, Barb Pankoke, and Jeanne Humke was formed, a group who faithfully planted, watered and weeded the garden area and encouraged others to help. The Swing Set storage shed was donated in memory of Mary Kay Jeide. The spire from our old wooden steeple on the downtown building was placed on the roof of the shed.

In 1998, for a college project, Justin Bart designed the church website. Joe Bart updated the site and Penny Lancor maintained it until 2013 when Eric Weidl volunteered to redesign it. Mike Linder is the current webmaster.

In 1998, George Buck from Grand Rapids, MI, was hired to build the **organ** using some pipes from our old building. Mildred Ludemann generously donated funds for the organ.

In 1999, the **Memorial Garden was dedicated in memory of Geoff Rodgers**. The garden is in the back of the church with a fountain in the center. The area is for reflection and prayer and for the interment of cremated remains of members and their families. Families are encouraged to place a stone in the fountain with their loved one's name on it. In the sanctuary there is a plaque listing the names of all those whose cremains have been interred in the Geoff Rodgers Memorial Garden. During the same year, as an Eagle Scout project, Jim Valsa built six picnic tables to be used on our back patio.

In the fall of 1999, Suzy Richards Daly joined our staff as a seminary intern. Jeff Graham continued to volunteer as youth director. Sue Peterson was hired as the Children's Ministry Coordinator when Linda Pelton resigned pending a move to Arizona.

With help from Joe Hall from St. Matthews UCC in Wheaton the **adult handbell choir** was formed in 1999. Larry Rossi, Music Director, assumed directing the bell choir as well as directing the senior choir. The **Parlor Art** display began that same year with Gretchen Koeppel responsible for putting up the artwork and contacting different artists for our monthly displays. In 2004 after Gretchen died, Clare Claps took over the responsibility for a year. Kathy Westman has maintained the display since 2005.

Rev. Rodgers and church leaders restructured the numerous boards and committees that were previously in place into five main areas. The **Church Council** led by the **Council President** would oversee functions of the church and have representatives attend the four committees: **Worship, Christian Education, Mission and Congregational Life**. A new Mission Statement was formed and our main goal, **Increasing Our Love for God and Neighbor**, was set forth.

In addition to restructuring the committees of the church, Rev. Rodgers implemented many new programs in the first few years of his ministry. He and other members led an **afternoon Bible study**, there was a **book study** for staff and past Council Presidents, and **Novel Approaches**, a book study meeting in different homes. Rev. Rodgers began an annual **mission trip to Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, MS** and **shrimp** boils at our church. He started **Family Camp** where church families traveled together to various parts of the United States in the summer. This camp experience included a service project for the camp, where we left the camp in better shape than when we came. Asking Anne Graham to be the chair, Rev. Rodgers started a **wedding committee** to assist wedding parties during the service. There were **marriage enrichment** experiences offered and **dinner club** established. In a gentle yet convincing way, Rev. Rodgers was well known for involving different members in the leadership of the programs and ministries of our church.

Audrey Bowie became our librarian in the new building. She purchased and catalogued books for our adult and children's library until 2006 when Ann Richards and Gerda Boone took the position. Ann wrote a monthly *Highlight* article on new books in the libraries. Ellie Passow joined the team in 2007 and the three of them took turns reading to the Sunday school children. Then the children were encouraged to check out books to take home. There was a plan to have a community library in 2013. Kim Barth Arneson and other volunteers collected and catalogued many books using the children's library room. After several books were stolen, the library was closed and has not been used. Barb Arloff and Ellie Passow continue to work in the adult library.

Soon after occupying the new building, a volunteer maintenance group was formed by Dave Mack, Barney Lykins and several dedicated men. They changed light bulbs, fixed toilets, and completed many needed tasks. A banner committee led by Carolyn Higgins was formed. They designed and sewed seasonal banners for the sanctuary.

As had been done in the 1980's and 1990's, adults and kids presented musicals for three worship services. Mike Harland directed *Music Machine*, *Agapaopolis* and *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*.

Taking advantage of technology, an email prayer chain was established by Pat Kitner shortly after we moved into the "new" church. As of this writing, requests for prayer are sent to around 200 e-mail addresses. These Prayer Warriors believe in the power of prayer, relying on the scripture from James 5:16, which says: "Pray for each other so that you may be healed," as they religiously send forth prayers for the ill and the bereaved as well as for joy when announcing the birth of new babies.

2000's

Judy Glowiak was hired as financial manager in 2000. Margie Johnson resigned as assistant to Carleen Bart. Carleen worked alone in the office for a few years before other assistants. Over the years, the other assistants were Bonnie Wallace, Sara Spahn, Jackie O'Brien and Tricia Steele.

We had a 10:44, yes 10:44, contemporary worship service for a couple of years. Led by Larry Rossi, the praise band played contemporary music. The message for worship was presented in a variety of ways such as a drama or a dialogue. Sunday school was offered during this second service as well.

In 1999, to provide activities for the little children during worship, Dee Westphal began preparing *Wee Folks* bags with crayons, activity sheets and other materials. Dee still prepares those bags as well as unlocking doors and keeping the church clean and tidy.

Women's Fellowship sponsors bake sales, rummage sales and other fund raisers to provide finances for special interests. They continue to support the church by serving food for funeral lunches and helping whenever needed.

In 2000, after graduating from seminary, Suzy Daly was called as Associate Pastor. In 2001, the congregation celebrated her ordination.

In 2002, Larry Rossi retired and Jim McCullough became Music Director. Jim was also the choir director and Denise Beiermann became bell choir director. She and the bell choir decided on a new name, "*Bellissimo*." *Bellissimo* not only performed for church worship services and other church events but also several times in the atrium at Orchestra Hall in Chicago at Christmas time during the intermission and at retirement homes.

In 2002, an **Endowment Fund** was established to enhance the ministry and mission of the church. By 2011, the goal of \$100,000 in principal was reached so dispersement of income generated could be distributed partly to various ministries and missions and partly to increase the principal. This five member committee meets semiannually or more often if needed.

In 2003, Rev. Rodgers brought the idea of having a Parish Nurse to the Church Council. The Council brought in speakers and had workshops for the congregation to explain the benefits of the position. After a long process of studying the idea, a committee interviewed several people and recommended we hire **Mary Anne Rebernak to be the Parish Nurse in 2005**. We were part of the Faith Community Nurse program through Provena Mercy Hospital. Mary Anne did hospital visits, home visits, and gave medical support to many members.

Tricia Steele was hired as Nursery Director in 2003 after several years of using volunteers in the nursery on Sunday morning. The consistency of one adult supervisor was a comfort for children and the parents.

The **stained glass windows in the sanctuary** have special meaning. The lower windows are intentionally left clear to remind us to look into the world in which we need to serve. The chancel rose window depicts our two sacraments, Baptism and Communion. The upper windows on each side represent the four seasons, reflecting God's presence and providence in our lives throughout the year. The imagery in the window behind the choir is the parable of the vine and the branches symbolizing a community coming together in Christ with the dove showing the presence of God.

Specific details about the windows of our church are as follows. In 2000, the rose window was installed, donated by Helen and Melinda Weaver in memory of Earl Weaver. It is a round stained glass window above the cross at the front of the sanctuary depicting Baptism and Communion and designed by David Condon. In 2002 the stained glass music window behind the choir was donated by Lynne and Ted Hardison. The imagery of the vine and the branches symbolizes a community coming together in Christ, in this instance to celebrate and praise God through music. The outstretched arms of the vines are in the shape of a harp, the traditional instrument of musical prayer. In the tree are five pieces of ruby glass symbolizing the wounds of Christ and the dove to symbolize God's Spirit uniting with the church community. Beginning in 2003, the installation of the upper stained glass memorial windows on each side depicting the four seasons was begun. The back of the church has a stained glass window on each side of the sound booth.

Beginning in 2004, Rev. Rodgers, together with his wife Susan, planned and led **Intentional Travels** usually every other year with members of the church until he retired in 2016. The first trip was to England with 17 members of the church tracing the Congregational heritage back to the Pilgrims and the Puritans. Other trips were to Greece, following the footsteps of Paul, to Rome and other places in Italy, to Ireland, to Israel/Palestine and Jordan where we followed the footsteps of Jesus, and to Northern Italy.

In October 2004, Pat Kitner was ordained and called as our Assistant Minister. She began in CAML, was recognized as a Licensed Lay Minister in December of 1983 and became the first person in Illinois to be an Ordained Lay Minister. She was responsible for beginning the annual women's retreat in 1999.

In 2004, Sue Peterson and Jeanne Humke began the **puppet ministry** with eight middle school kids. This program still continues with 5th through 8th graders and some high school leaders. They perform for Sunday school, at puppet festivals, for worship services, nursing homes, Marklund Home for special needs adults and other community events.

In 2005, after Judy Glowiak resigned, Debbie Dieckman was hired as Financial Manager.

In 2005, in memory of Gretchen Koepl, a **quiet garden** was dedicated. It is in a secluded place in the back of the church for quiet reflection and meditation. While sitting on the bench next to the flowers you will see the statue of a boy and girl reading, reminding us of the years Gretchen spent as a teacher in St. Charles as well as her glorious soprano voice in our choir.

After a motion was made at the 2005 annual meeting to welcome gay and lesbian members but not to allow them to become part of our leadership, the congregation voted to table the motion and began a two-year process of study and discernment. By 2007, the congregation voted to become **open and affirming**, to welcome everyone in the membership and leadership of our church.

In 2005, Rev. Daly held a blessing of the animals service on the back patio. Several dogs and cats were blessed as well as hamsters and other pets.

In 2007, Rev. Rodgers had a ministerial exchange with Rev. Helga Cornell from Morecambe, England for two months. Rev. Cornell brought a typical English service to us, introduced some new music and started a few outreach programs, some focusing on prayer. In the meantime, Rev. Rodgers served at the United Reform Church in Morecambe, giving them an American experience.

In 2008 we began learning about the opportunities to help **The Night Ministry**, an agency assisting the homeless people in Chicago. Several people from the afternoon Bible study group and others joined the staff from Night Ministry for a *Night Walk, An Urban Immersion Experience*. The benefits of a night walk in Chicago were numerous. It increased our understanding and awareness of the issues impacting youth and adults and generated a deeper understanding of the role Night Ministry has in empowering the people of the nighttime streets to meet their own needs. From that experience, headed by Ann Richards, we began joining the staff from the Health Outreach bus and the Youth Outreach Team from Night Ministry for their soup and sandwich outreach. We continue to serve meals to the homeless several times a year as well as bringing donations of socks, sweatshirts and other needs they have.

In 2008, Eric Fistler was ordained, the sixth member of our congregation to enter the Christian ministry.

In 2008, a couple of church members objected to our church being used for community meetings. They believed it was too political. Church Council re-confirmed the church's legacy of open doors to community groups for the discussion of current issues. That same year, the **Peace Pole** with six languages – Hebrew, English, Greek, Chinese, Arabic, and Spanish plus Braille at the bottom was dedicated. Mazher Ahmed, co-founder of Batavia Islamic Center and Interfaith Peace Prayer leader, spoke as a group met outside for the dedication. The Peace Pole is a global movement started by a survivor of the bombing of Hiroshima.

In 2009, a **Little Free Library** was designed and built by John Campbell to promote literacy and share with the community. The project began in Madison, WI. The Fox Mill Community does not have a public library so it is one way to help the community share books with each other. You are invited to take a book and leave a book. It is located in the back of the church.

When the church program staff and past council president read Lillian Daniel's book, *Tell it Like it is: Reclaiming the Practice of Testimony*, Rev. Rodgers encouraged us to think about and write our own faith stories. It was decided that sharing our faith with others was important. Once a month at the beginning of the church worship service, a **Faith Sharing** opportunity was added. Those volunteers participating found it a powerful experience to think about and write down how God has influenced their lives.

Initiated by Janet Bell in 2009, members of various faith communities in the area founded **Fox Valley Interfaith**. With increasing pluralism in our country, the goal of this group was to know and appreciate our neighbors better. Participants were Christian, Jewish, Baha'i, Muslim, Hindu, Humanist and Atheist. There were programs on various faith traditions and faith leaders.

2010's

What is certain in life? God and change....

This was a decade of changes – retirements from our Parish Nurse (after 6 years), Children's Ministry Coordinator (after 14 years), Office Manager (after 19 years), Senior Pastor (after 19 years), Music Director (after 12 years) and Financial Manager (after 5 years). Resignations from Children's Ministry Coordinator (after 3 years), Associate Pastor (after 16 years), Nursery Coordinator (after 13 years), and Parish Nurse (after 4 years).

In 2010, Rev. Rodgers implemented the **SEM, summer experience in ministry**, program. Any post high school young adult could apply for the program. During the summer they experienced the various aspects of ministry within the church. They went on hospital visits with the ministers and parish nurse, helped with VBS, took part in worship services and more. The list of participants is at the end of this report.

In 2010, a **labyrinth was dedicated in memory of Jack Brens**. Grant Fairchild built the labyrinth as an Eagle Scout project. The labyrinth is a form of meditation, walking the single winding path to the center and back. In 2011 a pergola was added. Kathy Brens weeds and maintains the area.

On one Sunday during the summer of 2010, instead of a regular worship service several members of the congregation went into the community to work on various projects to help local organizations. This mission was called **JHLB - Jesus Has Left the Building, and we are following Him**. This mission continues still.

Rev. Jason McCullagh from England visited for the first time in 2011 during his sabbatical. He was studying the ministry in America. He traveled to Back Bay Mission to help work on a home and immersed himself in our church life. Another visit from him was enjoyed when he returned in 2013.

Mary Anne Rebernak worked as Parish Nurse from 2005 until she retired in 2011. Among her other Parish Nurse responsibilities, she started the **Prayer Shawl ministry** and the Senior Set group, later renamed the **Circle of Friends**. She still continues leading both groups even after retirement. Through prayer and knitting, the Prayer Shawl ministry has provided shawls for those who need healing and baby blankets for baptisms. The Circle of Friends meets during the day several times a year listening to speakers on various topics of interest. Patti Molloy assumed the Parish Nurse position in 2011 until she resigned in December 2015. The position has not been filled as yet.

In 2011, Rosemary Kagel was hired as our new financial manager when Debbie Dieckman resigned.

In 2010, **Mark Molloy** had the idea of holding a festival for our church, on the property next to the church grounds. When he was Council President in **2011**, with help from the Festival Committee and many members, he implemented the idea. In September, the Saturday after Labor Day, our first **annual United Fall Fest** was held. The committee thought breaking even the first year would be a success, but the festival netted \$6,000 profit. It is a huge all-community event and a major fund raiser for our mission budget each year.

In 2011, Reidar and Laura (Hunt) Hahn built a cabinet to display a rotating list of Memorial Donations and Memorial Gifts.

In 2012, we celebrated our **175th anniversary** with a brunch, decorated bulletin boards representing our history and held a special worship service. Guest speakers included Reverends Remaly, Barton and Nagy. We held an auction the next year, 2013, with a \$22,000 profit. Quite a celebration!

In 2012, after receiving a Lily Grant, a clergy renewal grant, Rev. Rodgers had another ministerial exchange with Rev. Peter Moss from Australia. We were privileged to have Peter and Lyn Moss with us to explore “Who is our neighbor?”

Dennis Beiermann was hired as the Music Director after Jim McCullough retired in 2013. Dennis continues as organist and directs the Chancel Choir. He also directs Bellissimo, the bell choir, upon Denise Beiermann’s resignation.

In 2013, we added a new staff position, **Connections Coordinator**. Kim Barth Arneson helps connect various aspects of our church. She works with the Congregational Life Committee to create new social events and to help new members get involved. She is instrumental in adding new ideas to help us learn and grow together.

Carleen Bart, office manager, retired in 2014. Tricia Steele who was assisting since 2011 took over that position. Trish Thompson joined the staff as the assistant.

Tassie Brautigam was made Children's Ministry Coordinator when Sue Peterson retired in 2013 after 14 years working with the children. Sue had compiled the six year rotational curriculum, added Communion lessons to the second grade class and the Bible introduction lessons to the fourth grade class before they received their Bibles. She led Vacation Bible School each year with many volunteers. Tassie had worked with Sue previously on many of those programs so the transition was a smooth one. Tassie continued to build the Sunday school program. She had all the classrooms painted and decorated giving them an inviting look. She continued to develop and improve the children’s mission program.

Rev. Rodgers announced his plans for retirement. Instead of having an interim minister, the Church Council studied and recommended a new approach to bringing on a new pastor, the **shared ministry** approach. The congregation voted to try the new approach. Rev Rodgers and the new pastor would share the leadership for about six weeks.

A search committee for senior pastor was formed with Bob Graham as the chair. After studying and interviewing several candidates they recommended **Rev. David Pattee**. He preached in the fall of 2015 and afterwards the congregation voted to call him as **Senior Pastor**. We welcomed him, looking forward to what direction our congregation would take. Rev. Pattee graduated from CTS in 1986 and was ordained in 1988. He was pastor in Connecticut and Illinois before becoming Vice President of Development at CTS until 2006. He came to us from Kent UCC in Ohio where he served from 2008-2015. He is currently on the board of directors at CTS. In January of 2016 until mid-February 2016 Rev. Rodgers and Rev. Pattee shared the ministry.

Rev. Suzy Richards Daly, Associate Minister, resigned in December 2015. The farewell to her included present and past GF youth group members and the entire congregation. There was a worship service with balloons and a brunch with many heartfelt speeches and well wishes. In those 16 years, she developed Helping Hands for 4th and 5th graders, TGIJ -Thank God It's Jesus - for the middle school students, and taught confirmation class. She started with five high schoolers in 1999 and built a strong high school youth program, GF-Galilee of Friends, of over 40 participants. She led GF on yearly spring break mission trips, experiencing something different each year – serving and understanding the needs of the homeless, working with special needs adults, repairing and painting homes for the poor and much more. She took youth on trips to the boundary waters. Pastor Suzy led adult mission trips to Guatemala to work on a home for Habitat for Humanity and two trips to the Dominican Republic to build a community center. She led groups of adults to Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, MS, and one year convinced a group of ladies to canoe in the boundary waters.

Suzy attended **Sports Camp at Pilgrim Park** as a teenager, then became an assistant under the leadership of John Rodgers. When John retired from this position after 25 years, Suzy took on that role, which she continues today. Suzy was a mentor to the students and they relied on her for support and advice even as adults. During her time with the church we also celebrated with her on three other special occasions: when she married Rev. Mike Daly, Associate at New England Congregational Church in Aurora, and for the birth of her two daughters, Chloe and Phoebe.

In 2016, we had a farewell brunch and an evening gala for Rev. Rodgers, our senior pastor, and his wife Susan. We renamed Fellowship Hall to Rodgers Hall in his honor. Throughout his ministry many new programs, ministries and projects were added. In 19 years, the membership grew from 536 to 1031.

Tassie Brautigam resigned from the Children's Ministry Coordinator position in 2015. After an unsuccessful search for the position, the job description was changed to only include Sunday school duties. In the fall of 2016, Lauren Biddle joined the staff as Sunday School Coordinator.

After 13 years as our nursery director, Tricia Steele resigned in 2016. She was a dedicated caregiver whose love for children was evident every Sunday in the nursery. Tara Moffitt took over the position. Tara is also the teacher for the 2-year-old class in the Swing Set preschool. Tricia continues as Office Manager.

We lost our oldest member, Frances Gustafson, who died in 2016 at the age of 101. She was the first P.E. teacher in St. Charles. She married Wirth and joined our church. She continued to teach children and have a passion for mission throughout her life. She will be remembered not only as Missionary Emeritus but for teaching Sunday school over 30 years, for leading Bible study for over 50 years, for inviting people to church, and much more.

Kristen Foley became our new financial manager when Rosemary Kagel retired in 2016.

In January 2017, more than 100 of all ages from the congregation participated in our first annual **National Week of Service during Martin Luther King week**, a mission idea brought to us by Rev. Pattee. A group went to Feed My Starving Children to pack food and another group went to Northern Illinois Food Bank to work. Some baked cookies and delivered them to the fire and police departments and some had a book discussion after reading *While the World Watched* by Carolyn McKinstry.

Rev. Pattee continues afternoon Bible study and has added evening studies. He continues with Intentional Travel for members in 2017 with a planned trip to Germany, the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

At the 2017 Annual Meeting in January, the congregation voted to add a Facilities Management Committee to our By-laws and accepted the challenge of a deficit budget for this year – a deficit of almost \$60,000. With a leap of faith, trust in God and some hard work ahead, we invest in our leadership and our vision for the future.

A search committee for **Associate Pastor** was formed with Scott Powell as chair. After studying and interviewing several candidates they recommended **Rev. Joshua Kuipers** in February 2017. After listening to him preach, the congregation voted to call him as Associate Pastor. Josh, his wife Julia and their 2-year-old daughter, Caroline, have just arrived as of the writing of this brochure. We look forward to ministry with Josh and getting to know his family better.

2020's

We close this brochure with the words of historian, Alice Davis, from the St. Charles history book, *The Settlement and Growth of St. Charles*, "We do not finish this history here – it is written every day in the hearts of the congregation. However, we offer this report.....in the hope that it will preserve the precious record of the heritage of this church for those who come hereafter."

And as Rev. Nagy stated in his annual report in 1976, the nation's bicentennial and the year we held a colonial worship service: "*The Church has a long history and a firm foundation. Its roots are buried deep in soil of St. Charles. It has a sense of establishment, tradition, and belonging. We have an identity of which we are proud. Our strength however, is that none of these things have kept us bound, inhibited or stunted. We are not root bound, nor are we choked with tradition. We are a congregation with an influx of new blood, new ideas, and new input. We have been a church that has willingly shared the leadership with new members, eager to be enriched by the things they bring and share, but at the same time there has been a respect for our history and for our many traditions.*"

And so, not being bound, inhibited or stunted, we continue to **March Forth into the future** under the leadership of Rev. David Pattee, Senior Minister and Rev. Joshua Kuipers, Associate Minister. All members of our congregation, with trust and faith in God, are continuing to increase their love for God and neighbor.

2030's

ON MARCH 4, 2037
THE CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, ST. CHARLES
WILL CELEBRATE ITS 200th ANNIVERSARY

There have been six MEMBERS of our church ordained into the United Church of Christ

Dan Schifeling – ordained Nov 21, 1971- First member of our church to be ordained

John Rodgers – ordained Sept 22, 1974 – Called to our church in 1997, Bill Nagy ordaining pastor

Donnley Dutcher – ordained June 27, 1976

Tim Rhodes – ordained June 10, 1990

Pat Kitner - ordained Oct 24, 2004 and called as our assistant minister in 2004

Eric Fistler – ordained March 1, 2008, currently the senior pastor in Crystal Lake

Ordination pending a call - Amanda Nagy – currently chaplain at Elmhurst Memorial Hospital,
Member in Discernment

Rev. William Nagy, Pastor Emeritus since 1998, ordained in 1956

Associate/Assistant Ministers

Rev. Christine Barton, assistant

Rev. Lori Powell, associate

Rev. Suzy R. Daly, associate

Rev. Pat Kitner, assistant

Rev. Joshua Kuipers, associate

Interim Ministers

Rev. Wayne Barton

Rev. Bob Meissner

Illinois Conference Presidents

Rev. Dr. John Rodgers

Rev. Christine Barton

Mike Linder

CAML, Church of Accredited Ministering Laypeople – Graduates

CAML 1 Sue Peterson – 1981

CAML 2 Pat Kitner, Kathy Lenz – 1981

CAML 3 Charlie Peterson – 1982

Years unknown for:

Cheryl Nagy Rhodes, Barbara Zillgitt, Denise Boyd, Colleen Hofmeister, Tim Rhodes and others

SEM's, Summer Experience in Ministry

2010 – Erika Boltz, Aerika Haesili, Will Thompson

2011 – Emily Scorby, Sabrina Keck, Lizz Mook

2012 – Mallory Speck, Michael Murtaugh, Brandon Nothnagel

2013 – Ben Shurts, Luke Molloy, Joe Giamberdino

2014 – None

2015 – Megan Murtaugh, Danny Beckman

Golden Singers – Past and present Chancel Choir Members of 50 Years or More

Lois Rodgers

Elly Slater

Charlie Caldwell

Swing Set Preschool Directors

1973-1994 – Rozella Nagy
1994-1996 – Ellen Henderson
1996-2006 – Karen Chapman
2006-2011 – Sue Farr
2011- Kim Barth Arneson

Council Presidents at 40W451 Fox Mill Blvd Building – 1998-2017

1998 – Pat Kitner started the year as moderator at 214 Walnut Street St. Charles, ended at new bldg
1999 – Carol Hundley
2000 – Mike Klopmeier
2001 – Fritz Gloege
2002 – Ed Boltz
2003 – Mary Anne Rebernak
2004 – Bob Bendeich
2005 – Carol Ludemann
2006 – Ted Hardison
2007 – Peter Ball
2008 – Janet Bell
2009 – Anne Graham
2010 – Jane Murtaugh
2011 – Mark Molloy
2012 – Wyonne Hegland
2013 – Wyonne Hegland
2014 – John Speck
2015 – Nancy Scorby
2016 – Tom Palansky
2017 – Mark Bishop

Church Membership on Various Years from 1837-2016

1837 – 9 charter members
1845 – 125 members
1860 – 249 members
1870 – 109 members
1892 – 126 members
1893 – 135 members
1895 – 158 members
1920 – 115 members
1960 – 319 members
1969 – 500 members
1998 – 536 members
1999 – 618 members
2000 – 651 members
2012 – 998 members
2016 – 1,031 members

Our 40 Ministers

1837-1841 N.C. Clark
1841-1845 Lucius Foote
1845-1847 T.B. Hurlburt
1847-1860 G.S.F. Savage
1860-1860 S.W. Kellogg
1860-1861 Thomas LaDue
1861-1862 J.B. Fairbank
1862-1862 N.C. Clark
1862-1865 William A. Lloyd
1865-1867 Thomas Lightbody
1867-1868 W.E. DeRiemer
1868-1869 E.F. Williams
1869-1870 G.A. Dickerman
1871-1872 John A. Cruzan
1873-1875 C.W. Merrill
1875-1876 E.N. Andrews
1876-1877 N.A. Millard
1877-1880 G.A. Coleman
1880-1883 S.D. Belt
1883-1886 H.W. Harbaugh
1887-1899 George H. Smith
1900-1903 William E. Davidson
1903-1904 C.W. Turrell
1905-1907 Frank F. Lewis
1907-1908 E.W. Gray
1908-1912 Thomas Leggette
1912-1918 F.C. Neitz
1919-1920 Curvin E. Brenneman
1920-1924 John C. Spencer
1924-1927 Alexander McFerran
1927-1937 Frank M. Webster
1937-1941 Delbert E. Harrell
1941-1946 John C. Bockoven
1947-1956 George S. McClary
1956-1957 Carl H. Anderson
1958-1963 Jack F. Robinson
1964-1972 Edward G. Remaly
1973-1996 William L. Nagy
1997-2016 John R. Rodgers
2016- David E. Pattee

And now for the rest of the story.....

Dear Readers,

Several people have asked, “Why write history for the 180th? It seems like an odd year to write church history. We just had a 175th anniversary celebration. Why not wait until our 200th?”

Good questions. However, we do have a reason. Probably the same reason we celebrated our 95th anniversary. At that time Rev. Webster thought perhaps some members wouldn't be around to celebrate the 100th.

While visiting Bill and Rozella Nagy, Bill brought up his idea of getting some of the longtime members of the church together and record some of our church history. He thought it was important to continue writing down the history of our church before we forget or are no longer around to pass it on. Indeed, some of us won't be here for the 200th.

So the idea of a 180 year anniversary supplemental brochure began. Bill wrote a list of events he remembered that happened since 1987, the year the sesquicentennial history book was written, up to when he retired. I asked Pat Kitner, Wyonne Hegland, Mike Linder, Carleen Bart, Bob Graham and Bill Nagy to join me for a brainstorming session just to begin the process. What fun to remember some of the events and stories. We laughed, reminisced and added to Bill's list.

After that meeting, I began to read the Centennial and Sesquicentennial books, old annual reports and newspaper clippings Fran Gustafson had given to the church and I jotted down a few things from those years. Then I began to write. Surely this won't take too long I thought to myself. But what to put in? What to leave out? Who else to ask to get information? I soon realized it may take longer than I thought. I would guess about 60 hours of writing that week.

A rough draft was written and a second meeting held. After more than two hours and editing only half the material, we stopped and decided to meet the next week to finish, or so we thought. During that week I reached out to other people for stories, memories and input. I received information from Debby Graham, Janet and Charlie Bell, Jeanne Humke, Jim and Kathy McCullough, Carol Ludemann, Anne Graham, Ed Klosowski, Suzy Daly, Ann Richards, Jane Murtaugh, Mary Anne Rebernak, Kim Arneson, Kathy Westman, Mallory Speck, Carol McIntyre, Charlie Peterson, Karen Chapman, Reidar and Laura Hunt Hahn, Linda McCullagh, Barb Pankoke, Mike and Jane Harland, Ted and Lynne Hardison and others.

Throughout the week I added to the history from information I was receiving. I sent a copy to the editing group - Mike, Carleen, Bill, Pat and Wyonne – thinking all we had to do now was edit. But more information came in; we all remembered more things to add. After adding at least 15 more events I sent another updated copy to them. We met. We finished as much as we could.

Let me just say, we know we have left things out. We have not written a complete history. We have probably offended someone by forgetting an important event and written some things incorrectly. Our intentions were to do the best we could. This document can be edited. Things will be added. This is where we end this brochure but not our history. We will march forth as a faith community always increasing our love for God and neighbor.

Sue Peterson

Posted March 4, 2017