

History of Perrysville Baptist Church

1865 - 2000

On August 26, 1864, "agreeable to previous appointment, a band of brothers and sisters met in T.W. Coulter's Hall to organize themselves into a regular Baptist Church in Perrysville." Such organization was agreed upon by 40 of the 41 present that day.

September found them recognized as the Perrysville Union Baptist Church and adopting the "Article of Faith and the Church Covenant," the stipulation was made that church membership would be refused to "the slaveholder or his sympathizer and abettor."

A False Start

The group of members then proceeded to call a council of the neighboring Baptist churches to meet with them. The council convened and "after mature deliberation of that body, it was resolved that applicants for church organization in this place have erred in not asking letters of dismissal from the parent church of Greentown, and that they be requested to return to the mother church until they can come in regular order."

Thirteen of the original forty requested letters and were granted by the Greentown church. The others were accepted by their desire to unite with them and by "experience." Of this group, three were appointed as a committee to "circulate a subscription for the purpose of building a house of worship."

Meetings were held and interest heightened, until early 1865, when they chose two from their number to be deacons, "authorized the purchase of a hymn book for the stand," and decided that they would commemorate the Lord's Supper "on the second Sabbath in May next."

The church was very desirous that their members live as Christians as well as professing Christianity. In the event any of them were not doing so, a committee composed of the deacons would call upon them. If this reprimand proved effective, well and good, but if not, the church would "withdraw the right hand of fellowship."

Officially a Church

The little band continued to meet, and on May 13, 1865, they became a constituted organization when they recorded that “we now permanently organize the Perrysville Union Baptist Church on the letters of dismissal and recommendation from Greentown and other churches,” and endorsed “all former acts.” They also elected “three trustees to take charge of the church and all church property.”

In the late months of that year and the early months of 1866, the original church edifice was erected. This first church building had no baptistery. The new converts were baptized in a stream near the village. Rev. Reason Lockhart was hired as pastor and served “half his time” for one year. A committee was appointed “for the purpose of circulating a subscription to raise funds to pay Elder Lockhart his salary of \$250.00 per year.”



The photo above (taken from the cover of an old church directory) shows the original church building at 118 S. Bridge Street

In 1914, a two-year project began that included putting in a basement after raising the church, the installation of a baptistery, the placement of a corner tower, an addition to the rear of the building and the veneering of the outside with brick.

Elder John Gray was hired as pastor from 1867-1868 and oversaw the organization of the Baptist Sunday School and expenditure of "the money on hand for carpet." The organization of a very timely improvement was begun by the congregation in the last two months of 1869, with the remodeling of the interior of the church and the additional comfort afforded by the installation of coal stoves.

Pastoring Perrysville, Greentown, and Vermillion churches

Typical difficulties of the century "the circuitous routes and long travel by rail" resulted in the Rev. J. W. Heistand serving as pastor for less than one year, being replaced by Rev. S.F. Stanley from 1871-1873 when "the committee to confer with the Greentown and Vermillion churches in reference to dividing S.F. Stanley's time between the three churches, reported that they had agreed to divide the time equally." During these years, the church people were engaged in such general maintenance as papering and painting the interior and paving and guttering in front of the church.

The little church's affairs seemed to flow smoothly and uneventfully through the leadership of Rev. J. L. Wiley (1875-1876), Rev. S.F. Stanley (1877-1878), R.B. Tullos (1878), and Rev. H. McLaughlin (1887-1883).

During this passage of time, they recorded the purchase of an "Estay Chapel organ for \$105.00 cash," and the erecting of hitching posts. "Brethren turned out and fixed suitable hitching facilities, and also put on a new roof, all expenses so far have been met and a small balance in our hands."

Few records of this time were preserved excepting the ministers who served during the following dates:

1883- 1886	Rev. C. N. Harford	1894 - ?	Rev. A. W. Yale
1887-1888	Rev. A.A. Scriggs		Rev. E. C. Myers
1890-1893	Rev. W.V. Thomas		Rev. J Frank Smith
			Rev. John A. Erbe

Footnoting this era were items of quaint interest, such as the purchase of a street lamp in the amount of \$5.50, the extension of a vote of thanks "for a gift of a beautiful pulpit, also for windows donated for the gallery."

Church Name Change

In 1902, we were able to pick up the thread of heritage in tracing the incorporation of the church under the name of Perrysville Baptist Church.

Dora Zimmerman

Certainly reflective of a spirit of both courage and devotion was Miss Dora Zimmerman, who left the church in 1907 to unite with and serve a Baptist Church in Ningpo, China as a missionary for over 20 years. The church benefited richly by her wisdom and enthusiasm when she was able to return to this country and our town to share her experiences.



Dora Zimmerman

Both of the photos above were taken in China while Dora was serving as a missionary in Ningpo. In the photo on the left, Dora is the woman in the middle of the photo in the darker colored dress. The date of these photos is unknown.

The photo on the right was taken at Perrysville Baptist Church after Dora came off of the mission field.

Dora is the third one from the left.

The date of the photo is unknown.



Pastoring Perrysville and Vermillion Churches

The Rev. Thomas Lasley commenced in 1912 to serve as pastor to both the Perrysville and Vermillion churches, where he remained until 1921. During this time, the church was presented with the gift of an individual communion service from a church family.

Addition of a church basement, baptistry and church tower

On July 5, 1914, the church again moved toward change and improvement when they voted to remodel. This included putting in a basement after raising the church, the installation of a baptistry, the placement of a corner tower, and addition to the rear of the building and the veneering of the outside with brick. The newly improved church was dedicated on July 2, 1916.

Four years later, authorization was granted for the purchase of the first parsonage located on Main Street, which was the property of the church until its sale in 1927.

Progress during the coming years consisted of the order of morning worship service changed to precede the Sunday School hour and plans for an inside stairway to the basement. In 1943, the church voted in favor of holding services every Sunday morning instead of alternating Sunday mornings and evenings with the Vermillion Church. This was their practice for years until the decision was made to give their morning service, the second Sunday of each month, to the Newville Church. In addition, church bulletins were a new addition to the morning service.

Intertwining these events were the years of service given by:

Rev. H.B. Twinging (1922-1923)

Rev. O.T. Swigart (1923-1926)

Rev. William Schweinfurth (1926-1928)

Rev. Thomas Lasley (1928-1931)

Rev. C.M. Palmer (1932-1933)

Rev. B.A. Sherwin (1934-1937)

Rev. John R. Duffey (1938-1940)

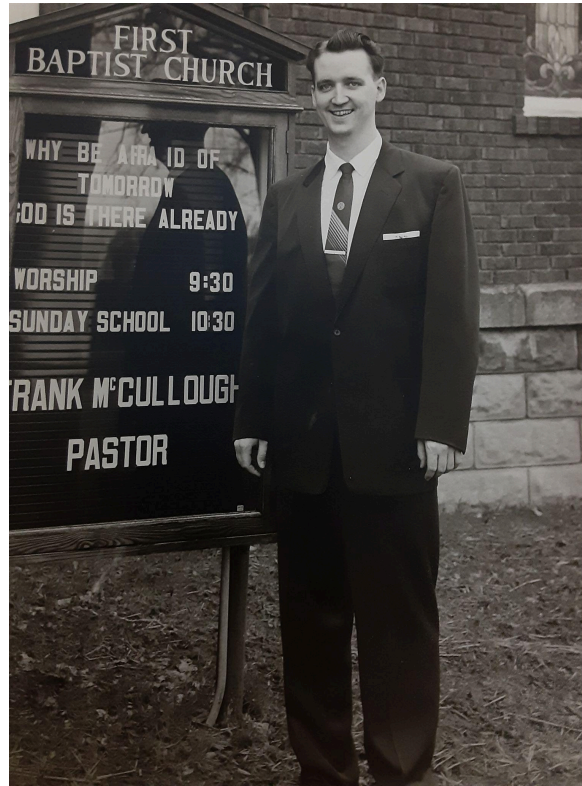
Rev. W. James Wilson (1941-1944)

Rev. A.O. Long (1944-1946)

Rev. W.W. Wigglesworth (1947-1949)

Rev. Donald F. Scribner (1949-1952)

The year prior to the coming of Rev. Frank McCullough (1952-1956) was one of activity and advancement. The auditorium was painted and new dishes were purchased for the kitchen. In 1952, new carpeting and furnishings were donated by members in remodeling the church parlor.



*The photo above is of Rev. Frank McCullough.
The photo is dated April 15, 1956.*

*Notice the name of the church in the photo.
At some point, the name of the church was changed to
First Baptist Church, and then changed back to Perrysville Baptist Church*

Four years later, one of the church's major undertakings was initiated with the purchase of a tract of land and construction of the present parsonage, which was occupied by Rev. and Mrs. Charles Masemore for the next five years.

Under Rev. Masemore's leadership, the church participated in the founding of the Judson Hill's Baptist Church Camp south of Loudonville, the church originated and approved a church constitution, redecorated the auditorium, installed hard wood flooring with carpeted aisles, insulated the church building, purchased new tables and folding chairs for the classrooms, selected a new organ, and renovated the basement.

The young married "Homebuilders" class sponsored the acquisition of adequate shrubbery and landscaping for the church yard. Each of the church families was given an opportunity to donate a certain bush or tree as an individual contribution.

Vermillion and Newville churches

Pastoral ties were broken with Vermillion Baptist Church in 1960. The spring of 1962 brought the decision for Perrysville and Newville to seek separate pastoral leadership, while maintaining their past friendly relations with each other.

Dr. Bruce Stark became the interim pastor in August of 1961 and remained as a leader until the following July when Rev. Robert A. Meyerend (July 22, 1962 - November 7, 1965) became the pastor.

Since that time, the doors of the front entrance were moved forward, the vestibule was paneled, the stairs to the balcony relocated and the front steps rebuilt. Members voted to purchase a movie projector to permit the showing of educational film for Sunday evening services and community services, such as "watchnight" on New Year's Eve.

Representatives of our church met with the Community Council of Churches, which had been an enlightening and strengthening bond of fellowship between the town's churches. The council sponsored Sunday morning services at Pleasant Hill during the summer months for campers as well as the maintenance of an interdenominational church booth at the Perrysville Fair and other church-interest activities.

100th Anniversary of the church

Our church commemorated its 100th anniversary on August 27, 1965, with a Homecoming and fellowship dinner, whereby former members, friends and past ministers were given special invitations to come. On the evening of that day, during the town's sesquicentennial, a combined service was held for all of the churches in the community.

New Parsonage (Grunewald Property)

On the recommendation of the combined Deacon and Trustee Boards, the church decided to retain the brick home at 111 W. Third Street (known as the Grunewald Property) as a parsonage and sold the present property at 193 West Third Street. The lot behind the church was purchased for a parking lot at a cost of \$1,000.



*The picture above is the Grunewald property.
Located at 111 W. Third Street, this property became the church parsonage*

The Rev. Alva O. Long returned as interim pastor, the parsonage was in the remodeling process, and the parking lot was paved.

The Rev. Larry.R. Chapman (May 1, 1966 - May 11, 1971) was called to be our pastor.

*The photo on the right is of
Rev. Larry and Elsie Chapman*

Date of the photo is unknown



Our main project for the year was the extensive remodeling of our church basement. Work was started the first week of April 1967, it included new classrooms and a new kitchen area. The work was completed without borrowing any money. A Homecoming and dedication of the classrooms and kitchen was held on October 29, 1967. At this time, youth group meetings were held each Sunday evening, which included Bible Study, songs and fellowship. We also cooperated with the community Daily Vacation Bible School. The church and Sunday School showed an increase in membership during this time. A new organ was purchased, choir benches were built to replace chairs, and new carpet was laid in the choir loft.

Death of Pastor Chapman

Due to the death of our beloved "Pastor Larry" on May 11, 1971, Dr. Bruce Stark was called as an interim pastor. Mrs. Elsie Chapman asked that Rev. Chapman's Memorial fund be used for a new walnut pulpit. Rev. Lee A. McFarlin was called to serve as our pastor (August 22, 1971 - February 1, 1984).



*The photo above shows the walnut pulpit.
Visible in this photo is a brass plate on the front of the pulpit that reads
In Memory of
Lawrence R. Chapman
1972*

A new piano has been purchased, water lines repaired, a wardrobe for the choir robes built, and new tables and chairs for classrooms purchased. At the parsonage, new carpet was installed and some slate replaced on the roof.

Bulletin boards have been installed in the classrooms, and a safety rail is in place in front of the stained glass window in the youth room. The church basement has been painted in preparation of the all day meeting of the North Central Baptist Association to be held at our church on October 16, 1973.

New Addition added

New carpet has been laid in the sanctuary, vestibule, back room and the stairs. Seat cushions for the pews are installed. A proposed addition of 50 feet by 44 feet at the rear of the church was voted on by the written ballot, the results were 34 yes and 2 against. Ground breaking for this addition was held on April 17, 1977.



*The picture above shows the side of the church
and the addition that was put on the back of the church*

Grunewald Room

The new educational wing has been completed. The trustees expressed their “thanks” to all who helped in any way. The new lounge will be called the “Grunewald Room” Books and tapes are available in the library.

The church furnace has been replaced, we were very thankful it didn’t break down during the cold weather. The social committee reported that it is easier for them to plan menus and many are making cash donations for bereaved families. Ceiling fans have been installed in the sanctuary and some caulking has been done around the belfry to keep the bats out.

Howdie Burnett as Youth Pastor

The Baptist Youth Fellowship (BYF) has found that Howdie Burnett, who has been hired by the church as youth director, is very helpful. Pastor McFarlin has completed 10 years of service. Our attendance on Easter Sunday reached a high of 184. In April, 1982 Pastor and Maxine McFarlin moved into their own home and commuted to church.

Mortgage burning

A mortgage burning took place on October 24, 1982 and was held with a reception following. The pastor appointed a committee to invest the \$10,000 received from the Vivian Berry Buhrman Memorial Fund. Jr. Church was started on October 1, 1983.

Howdie Burnett becomes Pastor

Rev. McFarlin read a letter announcing his active retirement from the ministry as of February 1, 1984. Members to form a pulpit committee were nominated from the floor.

The pulpit committee gave a recommendation to ask Howard Burnett to be a full time interim pastor from September 1984 to May 31, 1986, while others are being considered. He will have salary, insurance benefits and the use of the parsonage.

On December 2, 1984, the pulpit committee recommended that Rev. Howard Burnett be called as our minister. Members voted to accept the recommendation. On June 16, 1985, an installation service was held for Pastor Burnett.



Pastor Howard "Howdie" Burnett and his wife Deb.

A check to cover the cost of refinishing our church pews has been received with a request that a small brass plate be put on one of the pews saying, "Given in honor of Kenneth and Donna Glasgo" A donation of \$800.00 was made to refinish the floors to match the pews.



The photo above shows the small brass plate that Kenneth and Donna Glasgo requested be put on the back of one of the pews.

Restoration of the exterior of the church, from top to bottom has been completed. The belfry has again been caulked and the bats (an ongoing problem) are gone. The area has been disinfected and deodorized.

The nursery has been moved to the back of the church with new cupboards, new carpet and a Noah's Ark Mural painted on one wall.

The false floor has been removed from the balcony. The new floor is stair stepped, the balcony has been painted, carpeted, and the pews stripped and reinstalled.

Parking areas at the side, behind the church and the back parking lot have been paved.

The bats are back. The bell tower needs to be sealed.

The Deacons Committee reports that an extended program for Thursday night. There will be a supper hour and the Jr. choir will meet while the adults are having a Bible study and prayer meeting with the adult choir practice to follow the Bible study. This is to help young families with children.

A standing seam roof has been installed over the entire church and gutters are replaced. A "garage raising" will be held two or three weekends at the parsonage.

The pews are once again splitting and cracking. They need to be taken completely apart, sanded and re-glued. Thanks to Jim Powers, this job has been completed.

To make our church handicap accessible, a hydraulic elevator was installed. A new sound system was completed, with speakers in the choir loft, under the balcony as well as in the sanctuary. Central air conditioning was also added. We will receive around \$10,000 from an estate settlement for the above.

The kitchen has a new commercial gas range. This will be a big help to the social committee. The complete parking area has been sealed. New side lights for the sanctuary were installed, and new lights for the organ and piano.

The men have again volunteered to cater the Mother-Daughter Banquet in May. New song books were purchased and paid for.

Praise God! We have new carpet in the sanctuary, library, vestibule and stairs.

A new pictorial directory will be published with addresses of members and other church information.

Carpet was laid on all three floors at the parsonage. The walls and ceilings in the library and two ceilings at the parsonage have been repaired.

Glorious day! Our loan is paid in full!

Over the years, the two women's missionary circles, the Esther Circle and the TLC Circle have continued to mail their white cross quotas, support a number of missionaries, sponsor the Mother-Daughter banquet, the Father-Son Banquet, bake birthday cakes for the Mohican Youth Camp, and complete many other projects.

Our youth groups are growing. They are the trailblazers (Grades 4-6) and the ABY (Jr. and Sr. High) There have been skating parties, hayrides and other fun outings as well as many worthwhile projects.

135th Anniversary of the church

The 135th Anniversary of the Perrysville Baptist Church was celebrated on October 8, 2000 with a Homecoming and fellowship dinner.

*Thus the present church,
inspired by the worthy past
and incited by the greater responsibility
of the present,
faces the future
with renewed consecration and zeal.*

We have much to be thankful for!