FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Celebrating 150 Years of Ministry

Resurrecting the Daring Adventure of Faith
First Presbyterian Church
Salina, Kansas
1860 - 2010
As we begin the journey that will lead us through another one hundred and fifty years (and beyond!), this book will serve as a history of and tribute to the pioneering past of First Presbyterian Church. It is impossible to put in print all that has happened in the life of this marvelous congregation, but we can attempt to bring to light some of the highlights of our past.

Foremost of these highlights are the people of this church: our founders and their courage and conviction to provide a place of refuge and learning; the women of this church, who demonstrated over and over again tireless efforts to support it with their time and finances; the pastors - only eighteen senior pastors in 150 years! - the associate pastors, the support staff -- all who shared in the ministry to the members and beyond our walls; the thousands of volunteers who are the “worker bees” in the ongoing day-to-day work that is necessary to achieve 150 years of service.

You are invited to share the history of First Presbyterian Church through these pages. We hope it will serve as a beacon for all the “daring adventures” that surely will follow. We are, after all, people of God, sharing a journey deeply rooted in faith, and choosing to live in hope.

Thanks be to God!

Rev. Thomas P. Reid
Senior Pastor, 1996 - 2010

Photo at top: A picture of the congregation taken in 2009 by photographer and church member, Cheri Parr
William A. Phillips, one of Salina’s founders, was a Scottish Presbyterian as were most of the first settlers of the town, so it was quite natural that the Rev. A. T. Rankin and Dr. William Bishop of the Old School Branch of the Presbyterian Church should come to Salina to organize a church in the community.

The two missionary ministers arrived in Salina Wednesday morning, May 9, 1860. They had started from Lawrence about ten days earlier, traveling the one hundred and fifty miles in a buggy over the “Phillips Road”—the route later used for Highway 40.

Soon after the organization of the church, Rev. A. A. Morrison arrived from Illinois and preached to the small congregation until October 7, 1860, when Dr. William Bishop became Stated Supply, a position he held for five years. During 1860 the church grew to fifteen members and here it remained with little change until the end of the Civil War.

In 1868, Rev. J. L. Jones became the minister of the church and the plan of rotary Eldership was adopted. On September 6, 1870 A. C. Sloan, C. A. Campbell, Jacob Bishop, Maxwell A. Phillips and Robert Muir signed the Charter of Incorporation for the First Presbyterian Church of Salina, Kansas.

In 1870 the congregation of a few more than 50 members started the construction of a church on 8th street. It was finished and dedicated April 2, 1871. This frame building, with a seating capacity of 200, cost about $4,000. In 1876 the ladies of the congregation bought a bell, which was transferred to the two later buildings.
January 12, 1874, Rev. W. A. Simkins became pastor of the church and during his 13 years of service, the church grew from a small congregation to one of the largest in the Synod of Kansas. In 1888 Dr. William Foulkes began a memorable ministry of 12 years, serving with energy, ability and consecration. Four years after Dr. Foulkes became pastor it was decided larger quarters were needed. In 1892 the frame building was moved and later sold to the United Brethren congregation, who had it moved to South 5th Street. The new building was built on the same land where the first building had been. April 7, 1892 “Grandma” Phillips laid the cornerstone and by January 1893 it was formally opened for services.

The completed large church, costing $20,000, was dedicated May 13, 1900. During Dr. Foulkes’ ministry 452 members were added to the roll and three sons of the church went out into world service for Christ—William Blair, his brother, Herbert Blair, and William Hiram Foulkes, Jr.

Dr. and Mrs. William Blair’s missionary work in bringing Christianity to Korea during the early 1900s was financially supported by

First Presbyterian Church, Salina. When the current building was built, Blair Hall was named in his honor.

From 1900 to 1904 Dr. Stephen E. Estey was pastor. The church had a remarkable growth in all departments of its work, and a pipe organ was installed. In 1905 Dr. Frank McKean became pastor. The church prospered under his leadership. Dr. Alfred E. Van Orden became pastor in 1910 and continued until 1919. This was a time of remarkable growth in the membership of the church.

Dr. Joseph Clokey became pastor in 1920, remaining for seven years. Dr. Clokey led the congregation in building the third home of the First Presbyterian Church on Mulberry from Eight to Ninth Streets. One of the most beautiful edifices in the Midwest, it was designed by local architect Charles Shaver at a cost of approximately $225,000.

(The second of the three part video series, the History of First Presbyterian Church, chronicles that event in church history and is narrated by Shaver’s son, John, a FPC member)
Dr. Raymond V. Kearns was installed as pastor May 12, 1927 on the 67th anniversary of the founding of the church. During his pastorate of 19 years, the membership became 1500 communicants and there was a steady growth in all departments, particularly in the ministry to the youth though the church schools and Westminster Fellowship programs.

The most significant accomplishment of Dr. Kearns’ ministry was clearing the church of all indebtedness. Thanks in part to the continuing efforts of the women’s organizations the debt of $90,000 was raised with $7,200 in cash above the amount in spite of the depression and the drought years of the 1930s. In 1946 Dr. Kearns resigned as pastor to become Associate Secretary for the Department of Evangelism of the Presbyterian Church of the U. S. A.

Dr. James S. Elliott became pastor on December 30, 1946. At this time there were four separate women’s organizations in the church: The Women’s Missionary Society, the Willing Workers, The Daughters of the Church and the Presbyterian Women’s Guild. In order for the women to have a sense of “oneness” and a greater interest in what the church was doing at home and abroad, Dr. Elliott suggested forming an inclusive Women’s Society, a plan that was being adopted by Presbyterian and other churches throughout the country. On October 7, 1948, the Presbyterian Women’s Association was born.

During Dr. Elliott’s 18 years of ministry, the Shaver Architectural Firm was commissioned to redesign the sanctuary. John Shaver, son of the building’s designer, removed the organ pipes from the chancel arch to expose the Resurrection window telling the story in Mark 16. A new pipe organ was also installed and the choir loft was moved to either side of the chancel.

In 1954, 200 members of the congregation were encouraged to start Sunrise Presbyterian Church. In the latter part of the 1950s, $400,000 was pledged for the construction of a Christian Education Building costing $273,000. It was dedicated September 27, 1959 in time for the church’s centennial celebration in 1960.

During Jim Elliott’s years as pastor, the church showed large increases in new members (231 in one year) and attendance (550 enrolled in Sunday School). In 1964, Dr. Elliott resigned as pastor.
Since the beginning, First Presbyterian Church has been a positive influence in the life and growth of Salina. During World War II, the church sponsored a Soldier Center for the servicemen stationed in Salina. The Presbyterian Manor, Meals on Wheels and Habitat for Humanity are just a few of the programs the church has helped initiate. For more than 40 years, the church has housed the Salina Day Care organization and The Family Hope Center was an outreach program, providing support groups, counseling and health care to the Salina community for more than 25 years.

Mariners

National Mariners was founded to strengthen and encourage Christian marriage and family life. FPC Mariners began in 1941 with two groups—the “Schooners” and the “Clippership.” For a brief time a third group, the “Yawls,” formed but was short-lived. Initially Mariners membership was limited to couples, but as family definitions changed, anyone, single or married, was welcomed.

Each ship held a monthly meeting, usually with a covered dish dinner, in the downstairs parlor, followed by devotions, a brief business meeting, and an activity. Because Mariners was a service organization, fund raising activities included annual spaghetti suppers, fish fries, rummage sales, and for a few years an ice cream booth at the Smoky Hill River Festival.

For many years Mariners was a part of FPC fellowship and service, but as the new century began, needs and interests had changed and the members decided to disband the last remaining group, the Schooner Mariners.
- Women of the Church -

From the beginning, the Presbyterian women’s groups - the Women’s Missionary Society, the Willing Workers, The Daughters of the Church, the Presbyterian Women’s Guild and Presbyterian Women’s Association (later called United Presbyterian Women’s Association) - have worked behind the scenes, doing God’s work, making our church a better place.

Like its predecessors, the uPW, organized into circles, improved our church property, called on the sick, made new people welcome and studied about the church and its work. They have contributed substantial sums of money through fundraising projects such as dinners, teas, fashion shows, bazaars, cookbooks, and items sewn by the sewing circle, most notably their quilts.

Circle 7, the sewing circle, was the last circle to disband in May 2006. Some of the money they raised went to needed items for the church. They also sewed worship bags for children to use during services. However, most of the money raised by all the women’s groups went to the mission work of the church.

- Presbyterian Manor -

On April 22, 1972, Dr. Bernard Hawley, pastor of FPC, and the Session received a request with 48 signatures asking for a committee to investigate the possibility of a Presbyterian Manor. The committee (10 men and 4 women) recommended joining the seven Manors in Kansas.

Land was selected and purchased on East Crawford, Salina, KS. By June 1978, groundbreaking ceremonies were held and construction begun on the nearly six million dollar, six-story home to be occupied by July 1980.

As of 2010, the Manor has 183 units—34 town houses (duplexes), 58 apartments, 15 assisted living units, 16 memory support units and a 60-bed health care unit. Three meals a day, 24-hour nursing staff, and housekeeping and laundry are available, providing a continuum of care for all Manor residents. The Manor’s marketing image stresses “wellness” rather than “illness.”
In 1860, First Presbyterian Church youth involvement was limited to Sunday school and Sunday Night Youth Groups.

In 1922 when the current building became the church home, Sunday school began with opening exercises in a common room for all youth before they went to age-specific classrooms. These classrooms were held in Blair Hall and in the current area known as the Parlor.

Since the education wing was built in the 1950’s, youth Sunday school has been held on second and third floors.

During the early years, Christian Endeavor and Westminster Fellowship, were the Wednesday and Sunday night youth groups. In the 1960s, Sunrise and First Presbyterian youth helped renovate a large two-story house next to the church. The House of Agape, also called “George,” served as a coffee house where youth from the community could meet. The youth were self-governed, responsible for maintenance, activities and behavior, but an adult sponsor was always present. The house was eventually replaced by a parking lot.

Throughout the years, the youth have attended church camps and youth retreats, and were active in the Synod Youth Assembly. More recently they have gone on many Mission trips around the Midwest, gaining firsthand knowledge about helping those in need.

Troop 2 of the Boy Scouts of America has been sponsored by First Presbyterian Church for 93 years. This association has made Troop 2 the longest continuous charter with one institution west of the Mississippi. Out of 101 Eagle scouts who have been members of Troop 2, 41 have been members of First Presbyterian Church.

For many years the church had graded basketball teams that belonged to the “Church League,” sponsored by the YMCA. There have also been church baseball teams that enjoyed a strong rivalry with other Salina church teams. Many members have played on youth and adult teams and have also coached.
The Wednesday Christian Education programs, which began in the early 1990s, reach 85% of the children and youth from two and a half year-olds through high school seniors. The program’s curriculum focuses on telling Bible stories through interactive story telling, games, music and fellowship.

In the last two years, First Presbyterian Church has implemented a worship service on Wednesday to compliment the weekly Christian Education offering and to offer a chance for people to connect with God during the week. This 30 minute worship service, with communion, contains elements of traditional and contemporary worship styles intended to appeal to all ages. FPC’s children and youth also lead a worship service once a year.

Vacation Bible School has become an annual tradition at FPC during the last week in May, with over 75 participating children and 20 adult volunteers. Over the years, VBS has added a mission project that both the children and congregation work together to fulfill. Examples of past projects include reaching out and providing school supplies to the children of Honduras through Fellow Man International and providing safe and fun summer supplies for children and families served by local agencies such as Domestic Violence Association of Central Kansas and Child Advocacy & Parenting Services.
Our Pastors

First Presbyterian Church has always had strong ministers. Since 1860 there have been 18 senior pastors, many serving 10 years or more. James Elliott, 1946-1964, was pastor for 18 years and Bernard Hawley for 22 years.

Bernard Hawley began his ministry to First Presbyterian Church in 1965. During his tenure the church family grew, as did the outreach. Dr. Hawley recalls the following events:

- In 1970 Salina Child Care found a home at FPC
- The Salina Adult Center was started in this church, later moving to the old courthouse
- Meals on Wheels began through the initiative of the Presbyterian Women
- A joint project of Salina churches established the Emergency Aid/Food Bank
- FPC began a community outreach program known as the Family Hope Center
- Between 1975-1980 the Presbyterian Manor became a reality in Salina

Dr. Hawley recalled the outstanding leadership in Christian Education. He also remembered summer mission trips and the annual ski trips to Colorado.

Ecumenical and world affairs impacted FPC during these years. Efforts of various denominations to learn about one another brought about a series of evening services, shared Lenten breakfasts and other Union Services in the community.

The new “Confession of ’67”, an exploration of appropriate witness in society, was adopted. The Angela Davis controversy and a visit by Abbie Hoffman to the Kansas Wesleyan campus were also prominent events during the Hawley years. In 1976 the nation celebrated its bicentennial.

In 1988 Cynthia Campbell became the first woman pastor to serve First Presbyterian Church. In a recent interview, Dr. Campbell recalled the following events during her six years at First Presbyterian:

- FPC leadership in the community
  Recognition by Salina and Saline County leaders of a homeless problem in the community, especially families with children, and a vision from an ecumenical group brought about the beginning of Habitat for Humanity. Bill Lyttle, moderator of the General Assembly came to Salina to help in the organization.

- World affairs
  Dr. Campbell was attending the World Council of Churches in Canberra, Australia, when the Tiananmen Square protest and massacre took place in 1989. The Council spent a day debating war issues, as Christians from Iraq added personal experience. She said it brought her a deeper understanding of world leadership during a time of crisis and its effect on global business.
F. Clark Williams served First Presbyterian as Interim Pastor for 17 months from March 1995 to August 1996. In a congratulatory letter to the Congregation on celebrating 150 years of ministry, Williams shared the following memory of his time in Salina.

“... Interim ministry ... enabled me to serve with a congregation in a very important time in its life, and to work together in the transition time between pastors. My memories of First Presbyterian in Salina are highlighted by a wonderful group of people committed to make that transition happen in the best way.

I remember feeling a sense of God's Spirit working in us as we participated in mission studies, and sought to establish the congregation’s identity and to work with joy toward the future that God had in mind. And, I remember pastoral opportunities, meaningful worship, good music, fellowship, sound education and commitment to mission as we sought to continue and strengthen programs already in place.”

Clark and his wife, Wanda, returned to Salina to share in the 150th anniversary celebration on May 9, 2010.

Thomas P. Reid began his ministry as Head of Staff at FPC in August 1996. During the past fourteen years he has

- led the reorganization and implementation of a number of program changes, including a major restructuring of FPC’s mission outreach
- provided leadership for building renovations
- assisted Endowment Fund Trustees in growing the Fund assets and developing a Legacy Society to benefit the Fund long term
- provided leadership for new directions for vision and mission at FPC.

Social Justice & Mission
In 2004 a Social Justice & Mission Committee was created in recognition that our congregation has been blessed with many gifts, and with the gift of abundance comes the responsibility to share our gifts wisely and generously. The Committee is successfully educating the congregation regarding issues relating to social justice and peacemaking.
In addition to local and PCUSA benevolence funding (15% of income budget), other significant funding has been provided to national and international agencies. Two examples of this are:

- financial support of Heifer International, with the distinction of underwriting an Ark four years in a row, which represents a $5,000 contribution each year from the congregation individually and from benevolence funds.
- financial support of Fellow Man International, a medical clinic in Honduras. For a number of years, several FPC members traveled to this mission to assist with building & maintenance needs and medical care. In addition, contributions from the congregation plus income from the Reimold Mission Fund has contributed over $95,914 for its ongoing work.
- A committee of community volunteers, including Tom Reid and nine FPC members, began a pilot tutoring program called “Homework Helpers” at Salina Central High School in 2009.

Building & Grounds Renovations

- Beginning in 1999 and continuing into 2000, a $780,000 building renovation program was completed. Changes included a new elevator, renovation of 3rd Floor church school classrooms, relocation of the Scout Room to Blair Hall, and the installation of a new entrance from the south parking lot.
- In 2007, Blair Hall was refurbished, including the installation of carpeting.
- In 2008 the restrooms in Blair Hall were renovated and made handicapped accessible.
- New playground equipment, given in part by memorial funds, was installed in the Courtyard in 2005.

Endowment Fund

- The Endowment Fund grew from $339,019 in 1996 to $1,903,388 by the end of 2009.
- A Legacy Society, to benefit the Fund, was established in 2008.

Long Range Visioning Plans

In the past ten years two major plans for building community within the congregation have been implemented. The first plan, “People of God: Sharing our Stories, Embracing the Faith, Reaching out ... Together,” began in 1999, and continued for three years. Each year had a different focus: promoting church community through activities for children and adults, learning our Biblical heritage, and helping those around us.

The second plan, a “Church Visioning Group,” (CVG) began in 2008. With the upcoming 150th anniversary of this congregation in mind, a group of eight persons was formed to reflect on where we have been, and to discern where we might go in the next 150 years. After much study, debate and discussion, a mission statement was developed and a theme was chosen: “Deeply rooted in faith, choosing to live in hope.” The theme focused on these principles: EXPECT, TEACH, GROW, LOVE, SERVE. (see the Mission Statement in its entirety on the last page.)

Changes in Leadership Structure

Using the Mission Statement from CVG, a new pastoral structure was designed. This structure, consisting of a Lead Pastor / Head of Staff, Discipleship & Congregational Care Pastor, and Associate Pastor for Youth & Mission, will better serve the needs of the congregation, continuing the ministry of FPC that has been in place for 150 years.

First Presbyterian Church encourages people to live their lives faithfully, daily, where they are, and with what they have been entrusted, to the glory of God.

Our mission is to let our light shine and be beacons of hope, equipping people for life in the world.
Significant Program &
Building Events in FPC History

May 12, 1860
FPC founded, the first church in Salina. The Rev. A. A. Morrison was the first pastor. Christie Campbell, the first white child born in Salina, was baptized after the first church service.

1860 to 1899
1872 - First church building established in 100 block of South 8th Street.
1876 - Church bell, purchased by women of the congregation, was installed in first building and then moved to subsequent buildings.

1900 to 1929
1900 - Second church building erected on same site of first building.
1915 - Boy Scout Troop 2 chartered. The Troop continues to be the oldest continuously chartered troop west of the Mississippi River. Forty-one Scouts, holding membership in this congregation, have been commissioned as Eagle Scouts from this Troop.
1923 - First service in the third and present building held; membership was 1,500.
1927 - Dr. Raymond V. Kearns installed as senior pastor, continuing for 19 years.

1930 to 1949
1935 - Congregation burned mortgage on building, made possible primarily due to stewardship efforts of church women.
1946 - Dr. James S. Elliott installed as senior pastor, continuing for 18 years.

1950 to 1969
1954 - Sunrise Presbyterian Church organized by 200 members from FPC.
1959 - Christian Education building built and dedicated a few months prior to the 1960 Centennial Celebration.
1965 - Dr. Bernard R. Hawley installed as senior pastor, continuing for 22 years.
1967 - Church school space behind sanctuary renovated into Church Parlor and Church Library.

1970 to 1989
1970 - Salina Child Care begins residency in Education Building.
   - A community Meals on Wheels program began, staffed by Presbyterian Women’s circles.
1980 - Salina Presbyterian Manor dedicated, thanks to the vision and hard work of Dr. Hawley and many other church members.
1983 - Family Hope Center began as a whole health outreach ministry to the church and community.
1988 - Dr. Cynthia M. Campbell installed as senior pastor, continuing for 7 years.

1990 to 1999
1990 - A local chapter of Habitat for Humanity began, thanks to the leadership of Dr. Campbell and members of this congregation.
   - Renovations on the first floor, including portions of the Scout Room, of the Educational Building completed to allow all staff offices to be located on first floor. Parlor offices turned into a meeting room.
   - Choir Room behind balcony renovated.
1990 to 1999 (timeline continued)
1996 - The Rev. Thomas P. Reid installed as 18th senior pastor in the history of the congregation.
1998 - Family Hope Center initiates payment program for mental health counseling for those in the community who do not have health care coverage or private funds for such services.

2000 to 2010
2000 - A $780,000 building renovation program was completed.
2002 - Increased funds for outreach to those in need in the community.
2007 - New parking lot was completed on the 9th Street side of the south lot.
2008 - Family Hope Center celebrates its 25th anniversary.
       - A Legacy Society was established.
2009 - Expanded Wednesday afternoon programs for children and youth.

Our History in Pictures

The first church building was located at 118 S. 8th. The cornerstone was set July 30, 1870 and it was dedicated April 2, 1871. It served from 1870-1900 when it was sold and moved to another location.

The second building was also located at 118 S. 8th and served from 1900-1922. The cornerstone was set April 17, 1892 and the building was dedicated May 13, 1900.

The third building, located at 308 S. 8th, was built in 1923. The cornerstone was set October 22, 1922, and the building was dedicated September 5-October 5, 1927.
In 2006, new stained glass doors at the 9th st. entrance of the Education Building were installed.

The south entry to the building was redesigned in 2000.

The playground was built in 2005.

In 1986, a first floor classroom was converted into the Memorial Chapel.

The hand and foot impressions of church members of all ages, along with scripture, hymns and other texts, on the 330 ceramic tiles on the walls of the south entryway reflect the church mission at the time - “People of God: sharing our stories, embracing our faith, reaching out...together.” 2001
One of the strengths of First Presbyterian Church is our connection to our past. As we worship every Sunday in our beautiful sanctuary, we are reminded of those who have gone before us, even as we set traditions for those who follow us.

Children & Youth in Worship

The children in the Cherub Choir often provide the choral introit at the beginning of the Sunday service.

Children grades 1-5 lead worship once a year and also perform in the annual Christmas Pageant.

Wednesday Worship

The Wednesday worship service began as a study and worship time for children from preschool through high school following the Wednesday Christian Education offerings at FPC. It has now grown into a separate worship service for all, with elements of both traditional and contemporary worship styles. It is led by Associate Pastor of Youth and Mission, Austin Ashenbrenner, who was called by this congregation in July 2010.

The Mid and Senior High Youth Groups lead a “youth-led” worship service every year. Pictured here are youth involved in the worship service planning retreat.
Associate Pastor Tom Glenn helped start a fellowship and study weekend known as Family Camp, which was held Mother’s Day weekend at Rock Springs 4-H Camp. Glenn served this church from 1980-1986, but the activity continued for several years after he left.

In the fall of 2009, St. John’s Lutheran Church and First Presbyterian worship outside at the third annual Neighborhood Block Party.

The annual Church Picnic provides an opportunity for the entire congregation to reconnect during their busy summers.

Members of FPC believe so strongly in mission, that 15% of its annual income is committed to benevolent giving.

CROP Walk 2009

Youth help stock the Food Bank’s shelves, 2009.
150th Anniversary Activities

November 1, 2009
Kick-off of FPC Celebration Year

December 2009
White Gift Offerings

January 31, 2010
Presby Follies and Covered Dish Dinner

FPC gathered in Blair Hall for a kick-off celebration that included information on the history of FPC. The church model in the foreground of the first church building was made by Jimmie Lewis.

FPC donated several food and personal items to Salina’s Emergency Aid/Food Bank throughout the month of December in 2009, but even more amazing was the monetary contribution of $7,120.06!

The Old fashioned Potluck Supper and Presby Follies were a huge success! The entire congregation joined in and celebrated FPC’s rich history with food, fellowship and fun!
150th Anniversary Activities

March 9, 2010
The Rev. James Hawley, Guest Preacher

April 18, 2010
Hymn Sing during Worship
Contents of Church Cornerstone on Display

May 9, 2010
150th Celebration Worship Service and Birthday Celebration

Rev. Jim Hawley (right) and Steve Hawley (left) stand by a photo of their father, the late Rev. Bernie Hawley, who was a pastor of FPC from 1965-1987. Jim was later called by this congregation to serve as its Lead Pastor in September 2010.

The cornerstone was opened and its contents were curated and on display from April through May. There are plans to return the time capsule with updated documents to the cornerstone.

May 9, 2010, the birthday celebration honoring FPC’s 150 years of ministry began with the release of balloons into the sanctuary!

The 150th committee chose a tree as a symbol of being “deeply rooted in faith.” And we are “living in hope” that both First Presbyterian Church and our new beautiful tree will continue to grow in the next 150 years!
Resurrecting the Daring Adventure
Sermon preached by the Rev. Thomas P. Reid at the 150th Celebration Worship Service
May 9, 2010 ~ First Presbyterian Church, Salina, Kansas

Now as you are putting away your Bible, I bet I know what you are thinking. You are really thinking: I wish just one of those balloons would pop right now, just one. I wish one of the balloons would pop and everybody in this room would jump. I wish one would pop during the baptism and little Jack Jarvis would be startled, he would whimper, and it would be so cute. I wish one would pop and some teenager would squeal and be embarrassed and one of the little old ladies in the back would faint and ole’ Carson would jump out of the choir loft and think, “it’s a bank robbery!” Actually I knew he wasn’t able to be here today, so I could say that!

I know what you are thinking, and perhaps it will happen, and if it does, we’ll just chalk it up as yet another way to give praise to God. Now, do you know what praise really is? Praise is simply authentic gratitude.”Praise God for God’s mighty deeds,” declares Psalm 150. Thank you, God. Thank you for your greatness, thank you for your wonder, let everything that is within me praise the Lord.

Today we celebrate that this church is 150 years old. What an accomplishment! What a gift! What foresight, determination and courage it took for Grandma Phillips, Rev. A. T. Rankin, Mr. W. W. Morrison, Mr. H. H. Morrison, Mr. David Phillips and Mrs. Christina Campbell to load-up and strap down and ride a buggy 150 miles from Lawrence to organize the first church in Salina!

History records quote “they were all very enthusiastic.” Now, personally, I bet they were tired, irritable, sore & exhausted. Can you imagine riding in a buggy from Lawrence to Salina and people think Kansas is flat.

But now fast forward 150 years. What do you think history will record of our time? What will we do with this moment, this church and this opportunity that is now given over to us? In what ways will we say “praise God with every breath I have.” Thank you, God, for this moment, this life, these opportunities that are unfolding before us in this highly distractible age. Praise God that this church is viable, that people care about this place, that we are willing to invest our time and energy and resources to these days! Praise God that we’ve got a Mission Statement, that work has been done, there’s a way to proceed, and a new challenge. Praise God we have a new staffing plan, new Search Committees, new opportunities for what could happen here and in people’s lives.

Do you know what we need? I have been thinking about this. We need a sense of urgency. I picked up this book the other day, “Five Challenges for the Once & Future Church,” by Loren Mead. Here is his opening sentence concerning his thoughts on transforming churches like ours: “I wonder if we have the time.” So I urge you to consider the word urgent. A sense of urgency here. I like it. Now, not urgent as in panic. I’m not talking about sloppy, not rushed, not it’s too late. But rather: Wow! This is the right time, it is the ripe time, things are poised and we are ready. Think of it this way. Jeff Ingles, former member here, now in Lawrence (I doubt he took a buggy to get back there) remembers his dad and his urgent love of fresh corn on the cob. Do you like corn on the cob? Jeff’s dad, Mr. Ingles, liked it so much he would grow it in his back yard and when it was the ripe time, the right time, he would take out a big boiling pot, put water in it and put it on the stove to boil, then he would set the table, take the phone off the hook, gather the family, open the back screen door... and just when the water was boiling and everything was prepared...he’d run out the back door into the garden, pick six ears of corn, run back into the house, through the back door, up to the pot, put the corn in the pot, boil it the exact right amount of time and take his first bite of the corn he had anticipated all year long.

The ripe time, the URGENCY for First Presbyterian Church. You know, if you are paying attention you can feel it. It’s in the air, it is time to act, and the good news is we are ready. The Mission Statement is in place, the Search Committees are searching, there is a staffing plan. People are working, we are contributing, people care. So don’t even think about coasting after 150 years! Besides, I have it on good account that Grandma Phillips would be
angry and you don’t want to make Grandma Phillips mad! Have you seen her picture in the Parlor Conference Room? I wouldn’t want to mess with Grandma Phillips!

Think of it this way: it is like the second half of a basketball game and there are five minutes left – two minutes more than I have left on this sermon; five minutes to go and you K-State / KU fans, you know the feeling, you know the game, this is Kansas. Five minutes: you can see it in the player’s eyes, you can sense it in the coaches. You can hear it in the arena and feel it in your heart beating. Not panic, but time – the ripe time, the right time. You go for it, you make your move.

I’m encouraging you on this 150th anniversary to feel it here, to live it here, that sense of urgency, because we are prepared and you’ve done the work. You, in your own lives, you know it. Faith matters. The presence of God in your life lifts you up, challenges you, calls you, helps you to live better, think clearer, love deeper and live with more passion and purpose and meaning to life.

This is a remarkable statement by which to live: “Deeply rooted in faith, I will choose to live in hope.” Think if you practiced that every day. Do you know where it begins? It begins with God, in praising God, in thanking God, for this marvelous gift of a church, of each other. Live the time, the opportunity to serve.

150 years! Praise God! Thank you, God. (balloon pops) Let us stand and sing.

First Presbyterian Church

Committees for the 150th Celebration

**Steering Committee**
Margy Hall
Betsy Scholten
Mary Andersen
Jerry Exline
Tom Reid

**Booklet Committee**
Jan Carr
Mary Andersen
Maxine Strawn
Joyce Pearson
Ivy Marsh
Mitzie Lewis

**All-Saints Day Kick-Off**
Jan Carr
Sydney Soderberg
Marilyn Holgerson
Connie Stevens
Julie Wood
Amy Blackim
Madison Shetlar
Meg Johnson

**Christmas White Gifts**
Margy Hogarty
Lisa Speer
Cathy Hayes

**Follies Committee**
Mary Anne Weiner
J.R. Lidgett
Stan Amick
Martha Rhea
Pat Shaver
Ruth Cathcart-Rake
Ann Knowles
Richard Koshgarian

**Cornerstone Committee**
Jan Carr
Jimmie Lewis
Jerry Exline
Jamie Hall
Jim Scholten
Kelly Hall
Andy England

**Covered Dish Dinner**
Mary Exline
Ann Jett
Brigid Hall
Rosemary Gibson
Jerry Exline
John & Betty Schmidt
Gary & Janice Armour

**Birthday Party Celebration**
Amanda Michaelis
DeDe Ryan
Ryan & Sarah Payne
Carson Jett
Madison Shetlar
Salina Central Jazz Band

**Commemorative Tree and Gifts**
Kelli Exline
Libby Shoup

**Photographers for Events**
Randy Hardy
John Shetlar
Chuck Carroll
Jerry Exline
Ed Zoch
Brigid Hall
Monte White

This book is dedicated to Jan Carr with grateful thanks and profound appreciation for her countless hours of diligent and dedicated work to preserve the history of FPC.

150th Commemorative booklet designed and edited by Sally Sutherland.
MISSION STATEMENT

First Presbyterian Church encourages people to live their lives faithfully, daily, where they are, with what they have been entrusted, to the glory of God. Our mission is to let our light shine and be beacons of hope, equipping people for life in the world.

These principles are central to fulfilling our mission:

- EXPECT We believe we are called to grow in our expectation of God acting in our lives. God is faithful, and daily, we will look for the presence of God.

- TEACH We believe we are called to teach each person, from the youngest to the oldest, a core theology based on a Reformed understanding of what is essential to the Christian faith.

- GROW We believe we are called to be a church that is authentic and passionate about a life of faith – to be a church where every person takes his or her spiritual life seriously.

- LOVE We believe we are called to be in relationship with each other. We will come to worship not just for ourselves, but also for others. We are a community, based on faith, and we need each other.

- SERVE We believe we are called to grow in our commitment to justice, compassion and love. Jesus came to serve, not to be served. In the same way, we will look outward, not always expecting our needs to be met, but to learn more about the needs of others and offer help and hope to the world.

Finally, we are called to be made different. As benefactors of a daring adventure over 150 years ago, we will seek the same today in our own lives and in the life of First Presbyterian Church. We will strive to find that place where our deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet, ever renewing the daring adventure of faith to which God calls us.