



HISTORY
OF THE
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
OF
RAHWAY, NEW JERSEY

*Growing towards the future -
with roots in the past.*

HISTORY OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Introduction

The history of any organization is influenced by the geographical area of its location, the economical atmosphere during its existence, and the social and religious character of its members. Such is the history of the First Baptist Church of Rahway. The land and river determined the location of the church, the physical plant growth at any time was dictated by the economics of that period, and the stewardship of the church was a reflection of the social and religious character of its members.

In the execution of this church history, material from Rev. William Rollinson's "Historical Sketch of the First Baptist Church" has been freely used, partly because the records of the first six years of the church are missing, partly because he was pastor for approximately thirty years of the first fifty years of the life of the church, and also because many members today are not familiar with the early life of the church. To his work has been added events as recorded in the minutes of the church meetings that might be of interest to the congregation. Other sources of material were "A Century of Progress" published in 1933 and the "One-Hundred-Tenth Anniversary" booklet published in 1943. Another source of some very fine material is the members of First Baptist who have made available photographs and printed material of past events which will add to this history.

It is with a deep sense of humility that this church history is written. It is good to review the past events and to read of the joys and sorrows, disappointments, sacrifices and labors of the pastors and members. For it is only in that way that one can realize how much has been poured into this church to have it still in existence after over one hundred and forty years and after passing through wars, peace, fire -- spiritual and temporal, depressions and inflation.

George P. Cary

Beginnings ...

In 1832 three separate villages occupied the ground where the City of Rahway now stands. They were divided from each other by the three branches of the Rahway River and undrained meadows. The Rahway River also was the boundary between the counties of Essex and Middlesex. The northern most village situated in Essex County was called Rahway Proper or Upper Rahway. The other two villages lying south of the river in Middlesex county were Milton and Bridgetown - though the latter was often called Lower Rahway.

Bridgetown and the area around it was originally settled by the Society of Friends who had two large and flourishing congregations. The Presbyterians early occupied the northern part of the town in Essex County and had a strong church there. At a later date a Methodist church was also formed in the upper village. Samptown (South Plainfield) and Plainfield on one side and Newark on the other were the nearest points at which a Baptist Church was to be found.

Living within the area described were a few families of Baptists who were accustomed to meeting regularly for prayer and who occasionally had church services conducted by Rev. D. T. Hill, pastor at Plainfield; Rev. G. S. Webb, pastor at New Brunswick; and Rev. L. L. Lathrop, of Samptown.

Early in 1833, thirteen people united in adopting articles of faith and organized themselves into a church which shortly was publicly recognized as The First Baptist Church of Rahway, the Methodist Church lending their house for the occasion. The articles of faith and Church Covenant were prepared by Rev. William Parkinson of New York, an eminent scriptural scholar. The Constitute members were:

Susan Bartow	William Marsh
Mary Cox	Frances Moore
Mary Day	Sarah Mundy
Ezra Frazee	Mary Osborn
Huldah Frazee	Sarah Ross
Mary Frazee	William Ross
Rhoda Laing	

A few others, amongst whom were Timothy Ross and deacons Peter Spicer and W. L. Pangborn, soon joined the young church by letter; and about the same date the first baptism was administered, the candidate being B. C. Morse, who was subsequently licensed to preach, and six years later, having completed his studies at Hamilton, was ordained as pastor of the Lyons Farms Baptist Church.

Shortly after their organization the church took steps toward the erection of a house of worship. Mr. E. W. Frazee of Milton offered to donate the ground necessary if the church would build there. His offer was at first accepted and the foundations of a building 44 x 64 feet were laid. However, it was thought wiser to select a more central location for their church and following the advice of neighboring pastors - especially Rev. G. S. Webb of New Brunswick, whose judgement had a controlling influence with the church, led them to relinquish the lots they had accepted and to purchase others more centrally located in Lower Rahway on Milton Ave. near the intersection with Second St. (Irving St.) Here a building of the same dimensions was erected and served as their church home for more than 40 years. The change in location contributed much to their success as the original site was occupied by churches of two other denominations and by each in turn deserted; due to the vicinity being a neglected suburb of the city while that chosen by the church was in its more attractive section.

The following description of Rahway in 1834 is a portion of a letter written during the year by Mr. Joseph O. Lufberry:

"The town consists of from 350 - 400 houses, population about 3000. Stores of various kinds, twenty-five; taverns, three; public buildings; one Presbyterian Church, brick; one Methodist Church; one Baptist Church, building; one Friends and one Orthodox Friends and one meeting house for the blacks; one Academy called the Athenian 36 x 68 feet, two stories; one Academy known as a boarding school; six other schools all well supported. One bank, capital paid in \$70,000; a post office, mail every day north and south; a printing office, and weekly journal; an incorporated fire engine company extending over two miles square, a mutual insurance company. There is a railroad now from Jersey City to New Brunswick passing through this town. We have at this time five vessels, one or two leaving each day for New York."

At a later date a Methodist church was also formed in the upper village. (South Mainfield) and Mainfield on one side and Newark on the other were the nearest points at which a Baptist church was to be found. Living within the area described were a few families of Baptists who were accustomed to meeting regularly for prayer and who occasionally had church services conducted by Rev. D. T. Hill, pastor at Mainfield; Rev. G. S. Webb, pastor at New Brunswick; and Rev. L. L. Lathrop, of Cambridge. Early in 1833, thirteen people united in adopting articles of faith and organized themselves into a church which was publicly recognized as the First Baptist Church of Rahway, the Methodist Church having their house for the occasion. The articles of faith and Church Government were prepared by Rev. William Lathrop of New York, an eminent scriptural scholar. The Constitutive members were:

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| William Knapp | Susan Knapp |
| Francis Moore | Mary Cox |
| Samuel Moody | Mary Day |
| Mary Gerson | Rose Frances |
| Samuel Rose | Elizabeth Frances |
| William Rose | Mary Frances |
| | Elizabeth Lathrop |

A few others, amongst whom were Timothy Rose and Deacon Peter Spicer and W. L. Peterson, soon joined the young church by letter; and about the same date the first pastor was administered, the candidate being B. G. Morse, who was subsequently licensed to preach, and six years later, having completed his studies at Washington was ordained as pastor of the young Baptist Church. Shortly after their organization the church took steps toward the erection of a house of worship. Mr. E. W. Frances of Milton offered to donate the ground necessary if the church would build there. His offer was at first accepted and the foundations of a building 12 x 20 feet were laid; however, it was thought wise to select a more central location for their church and following the advice of neighboring pastors especially Rev. G. S. Webb of New Brunswick, whose judgment had a controlling influence with the church, led them to relinquish the lot they had accepted and to purchase others more centrally located in lower Rahway on Milton Ave. near the intersection with Second St. (Living St.) Here a building of the same dimensions was erected and named in their church home for more than 40 years. The change in location contributed much to their success as the original site was occupied by churches of two other denominations and by each in turn deserted; due to the vicinity being a neglected suburb of the city while that chosen by the church was in its more elevated section.

1843 - 1853

1. Rev. Mansfield Barlow From July 15, 1834 to 1835

The church now felt the need for a pastor and a call was made and accepted by Rev. Mansfield Barlow. He began his duties on July 15, 1834, and stayed here for one year. Under his ministry and counsel "the little church moved forward and if sometimes made to feel the unpopularity of their distinctive tenets, they were amply recompensed by the tokens of the Divine approval of their work".¹ Though he was pastor for only one year, the membership of the church increased from fourteen to forty, there being eighteen baptized and fourteen added by letter.

2. Rev. Simeon J. Drake From May 6, 1836 to July, 1839

Nearly a year passed during the latter part of which the pulpit was supplied by Rev. Simeon J. Drake, a licentiate of the First Baptist Church of New York. In the spring of 1836, he accepted a call from the church and on May 6, 1836, was ordained their pastor, Rev. William Parkinson preaching the sermon. His pastorate covered the formative years of the church. "His clear and intelligent views of gospel truth enabled him to solidly lay those foundations on which the super-structure of church life was to be built."² The New Jersey State Convention had taken the church under its fostering care, and by the timely aid it rendered, greatly encouraged and assisted the pastor and his people. There were added, during his pastorate, by baptism forty-four, and by letter twenty-two, the total membership increased from forty to eighty. He resigned in July 1839 to accept a call to the First Baptist Church in Plainfield.

3. Rev. D. H. Gillette From July 1, 1840 to May 2, 1842

A call was extended to D. H. Gillette who was about to complete his studies at Hamilton College. He accepted the call being ordained July 29, 1840. During his two years here, the church ceased to ask aid of the Convention and succeeded in removing about half the heavy debt that rested on the church property besides spending several hundred dollars in improving the appearance and accommodations of the house. A blank book was given to the church for record keeping, the pastor and a committee to determine what should be included in it from the old records from the formation of the church. The church - called the meeting house then - having no baptismal pool, candidates were baptized in the Rahway River in Leesville in the area today (Oct. 1977) between the Inman Ave. bridge and the foot of Mill St. and Regina Ave.

The church granted a license to preach to Joseph C. Brittell and a letter of approbation to Jonathan Ross to study at Hamilton College.

Because of his health, the church granted Rev. Gillette a leave of absence after which he returned to the pulpit but his health again deteriorated. He was forced to resign in 1842 and seek a church in the South.

4. Rev. Joseph B. Breed From June 24, 1842 to May 11, 1843

On June 1, 1842, Rev. Joseph B. Breed became pastor at a yearly salary of \$400.00. Though his pastorate was nearly one of the shortest, it is memorable in that the years 1842 and 1843 were years of revival in this part of the state and Rahway First shared in this blessing. During the winter of 1842-43, the membership more than doubled - 110 being added by baptism.

It would seem that the church would have entered on a higher plain of usefulness. Unfortunately, difficulties and divisions arose so serious to the pastor that he tendered his resignation January, 1843, which the church accepted at the expiration of his year's service.

It was a period of severe trial for the church. The new members were like sheep without a shepherd and the older members were split by personal antagonisms which prevented them in calling a Pastor on whom all could agree.

5. Rev. William Rollinson From November 28, 1843 to November 10, 1849

In May 1843, William Rollinson, a young licentiate of the First Baptist Church, New York, supplied the pulpit. The church at once gave him a call but due to a prior commitment of six months to a Baptist Church in Jersey City, Brother Rollinson declined the call. Later, the church gave him another call which he accepted, his pastorate to take effect at the end of his prior engagement. On the 28th of Nov. he was ordained, Rev. Spencer H. Cone, preaching the sermon.

Thus began the first of Rev. Rollinson's pastorates which would span a total of thirty years in the life of First Baptist. The six months that intervened between the first call and his ordination gave time for the previous difficulties of the church to subside and for the church to be ready to give the young Minister their full support.

During the six years he was pastor, the church debt was canceled through a bequest from Ann Compton. A Sunday School building was erected opposite the church - at the corner of Fulton St. and Milton Ave. The church co-operated in all the benevolent enterprises of the denomination more fully than at any time and at home enjoyed a steady growth. The new members brought in during the great revival needed moulding and instruction and in this work the Pastor found efficient helpers in the older members.

In June 1849, the East New Jersey Association held their annual meeting here.

Rev. Rollinson resigned on November 1st 1849, to accept a call from the American Home Mission Society to serve at Racine, Wisconsin. Our present Pastor, William L. Frederickson, is from Racine and was a member of the First Baptist Church that Rev. Rollinson served as Minister from 1849 - 1852.

6. Rev. William H. Wines From June 2, 1850 to April 1, 1853

From Oct. 1849, to the spring of 1850, the minutes of the meetings held during that period are lost.

In the spring of 1850, Rev. William H. Wines was called to minister to the church, the membership being unable to agree on anyone until they heard him. On June 2nd, 1850, he began his pastorate here.

The conscientious preparations for his pulpit duties and his high personal character further strengthened the position of the church in the community. However, the inconvenience arising from insufficient support hampered him in his work and finally led to his resignation April 1st, 1853.

During the nearly three years of his ministry here, money was given to sister churches, delinquent members were dropped from the church records and the church raised money to pay the funeral expenses of two of the members.

Rev. Wines was given a leave of absence August 1852 because of sickness in his family and the church accepted his resignation to take effect April, 1853.

An interesting note--Rev. Wines was offered \$500 but he asked for and received \$600 per annum.

1853 - 1874

7. Rev. William B. Tolan

From June 6, 1853 to Dec. 18, 1855

In May, 1853, the Church called Rev. William B. Tolan of Morristown. He accepted the call and began his Pastorate on June 19, 1853. Rev. Tolan entered into his work with great earnestness and large rewards were expected. The register was revised, measures were taken to cancel a floating indebtedness which troubled the Church. Delinquents were sought out and "determined endeavors were made to bring the Church up to the Scriptural standard of life."¹

The following resolution was adopted calling attention to a neglect of Church discipline:

"Resolved, that it is the duty of any member changing his place of residence into the vicinity of a sister Church, with the intention of remaining, to take a letter of dismission to said Church; and any member so removing who shall for the space of six months thereafter neglect to call for such a letter shall be considered a proper subject for discipline, or for exclusion, at the discretion of the Church."²

Again the Church was to pass through a period of trial. Divisions again resulted in the resignation of a Pastor. Great as the differences were, the love of our Lord moved the Church to seek a solution to their problems.

On May 2nd, 1856, a Council of Delegates from the Churches of Plainfield, Newark, Somerville, Scotch Plains, and New Brunswick was called. This Council met at Rahway on the 23rd of the same month and succeeded in restoring peace in the Church.

8. Rev. William Rollinson

From July 1, 1856 to Nov. 1, 1863

The same week that the Council met here in Rahway, Rev. Rollinson came to New York after six years in the West. On the day the Council met, the Church gave him a call. Rev. Rollinson accepted on the conditions that he would be paid \$800.00 per year with a \$200.00 increase and the congregation would completely remodel and decorate the Meeting House which would cost approximately \$2000.00. On July 1, 1856, he again became their Pastor. Thanks to the advice of the Council, Rev. Rollinson was welcomed by a peaceful and united congregation.

The seven years Rev. Rollinson was here proved to be one of the most prosperous periods of the Church - financially and spiritually. As mentioned before, the Meeting House was remodeled and redecorated, a baptistery being added later. Thomas W. Conway was employed by the Church as Missionary colporteur. Two Sunday Schools were maintained, one being the nucleus of the Bethany Church - later, Irving St. Baptist. Prayer and other meetings were held at outstations and union meetings were held with the Second Presbyterian Church.

Unfortunately, the Civil War occurred during this period. The factories of Rahway, nearly all depending on Southern trade, were prostrated. Again quoting from Joseph Lufberry's letter of 1834, "The South End of Leesville takes its name from a family named Lee, who have long resided there. This family has furnished our most enterprising and public-spirited citizens as merchants and manufacturers, who were the first to lead the way to our extensive trade with the Southern States."

Rev. Rollinson remarked, "Many in the Church and more in the Community were financially ruined."

After another year, when forced by financial trouble, Rev. Rollinson resigned on Nov. 1, 1863. Between this date and his next pastorate here, he would again serve at First Baptist Church in Racine, Wisconsin.

9. Rev. E. Everett Jones

From Oct. 5, 1865 to Sept. 9, 1868

From the time Rev. Rollinson left in 1863 until 1865, the Church, owing to the financial conditions resulting from the Civil War, had no regular pastor, though the pulpit was regularly supplied. On Sept. 10, 1865, the Church called Rev. E. Everett Jones, who was installed as their Pastor on Oct. 5, 1865.

Under this leadership the Church paid off its debts incurred during the last two years of the war; the register was revised as many of the members had left during the financial disaster or had gone into the Army without taking their letters; but above all Rev. Jones was a Pastor in whom all hearts were united.

"Nov. 18, 1866, letters of dismission were granted to seventeen members to unite in the organization of a Second Baptist Church, who, with a few from other churches, were subsequently recognized as a Baptist Church, now the Irving St. Church, Rahway, connected with the Central New Jersey Association."³

On Sept. 20, 1868, Rev. Jones resigned to become the Pastor of the Bridgeport, Pa. Baptist Church.

10. Rev. C. G. Gurr

From Feb. 28, 1869 to July 31, 1870

A call was extended to and was accepted by Rev. C. G. Gurr, Pastor at Samptown (South Plainfield). He began his duties on Feb., 1869. The church records do not give much information about his Pastorate. There were no baptisms recorded but there are several cases of discipline because of departure from the faith. However, fourteen were added to the church rolls by letter.

Rev. Gurr's resignation was accepted on July 31, 1870.

11. Rev. E. A. Wheeler

From Feb. 1, 1871 to Aug. 1, 1874

On Feb. 1, 1871, Rev. E. A. Wheeler became Pastor of First Baptist. He was a frequent visitor in the homes of church members and many were added to the Church by baptism and letter.

During the early years of his pastorate - 1871 to 1873 - the Church had many plans as to repairing the Meeting House, now forty years old, or selling it and also the Lecture Rooms (Sunday School) across the street and building a new Church. The country was in a wave of prosperity and the congregation seemed to be sharing in such as they were considering a new building for \$15,000. However, on Sept. 19, 1873, "Black Friday" occurred - another of the more severe financial panics in American History. Unlike the panic of 1837, which occurred between the building of the Meeting House in 1834 and the Lecture Rooms in 1846, this one stopped their building program. Also, Rev. Wheeler's health was such as to require a leave of absence. He went South for three months in 1873. The high esteem the congregation held for Rev. Wheeler was demonstrated by their providing means to enable him to do this.

Rev. Wheeler returned in the Spring of 1874 and for a few months continued his duties but on August 1st, he resigned.

1853 - 1874

Commentary

Mention has been made of a meeting or council of delegates from sister churches that met at a church to install or ordain a minister. The same formal process - a council - was held at a church that was also having problems - either religious, social or financial. In the case of Rahway, First Baptist, the Council that met here in May, 1856, was to solve problems in the Church that had existed between the Minister and the Congregation. In this, the Council was successful.

The Church, then as now, had financial problems. One very successful method used to raise money was to have fairs - usually held on July 4th, Christmas or New Years. They were run by the ladies of the Church. When Rev. Wheeler was Pastor at a yearly salary of \$1500.00, one fair raised \$479.00.

Incidentally, the Minister not only received a yearly salary but also an annual visit by the congregation. Was this a carry-over from Colonial Days when part of a minister's salary was in farm produce?

These fairs were first held at the Atheneum Hall on the west side of Main Street near the Second Presbyterian Church and later at Washington Hall which was on the east side of Main Street near present day (Nov. 1977) Monroe Street.

During this time, the Congregation was beginning to want a new church building. Many plans were presented such as selling one or both of the buildings, and buying land at the corner of Second (Irving Street) and Milton Avenue. Even though the plans did not bear fruit at that time, due to the panic of 1857, they might have laid the basis for the desire to build the second church building in 1876.

One of the remarkable things about these church minutes during the Civil War, is that it - the War - is not mentioned. Surely the Church was affected financially by the War but they must also have been affected by the misery and loss of life suffered by this Community.

This History details what happened in the Church during the pastorate of each Minister. However, the Church was apparently supplied at all times. A side comment on this is that church meetings were not held as regularly during the time the Church was supplied by Ministers as when they had regular Ministers. A determined effort was made by the Church to start a Sunday School Library as it is mentioned several times. The Church also let the German people in town use the Lecture Rooms on Sunday nights for their services.

During this period, 144 were added to the Church by baptism, 134 by letter and 8 by restoration. However, the total membership of the Church decreased from the 235 members in 1855 at the end of Rev. Tolan's ministry to 170 members at the end of Rev. Wheeler's ministry in 1874.

1. "Historical Sketch of the First Baptist Church, Rahway"
by Wm. Rollinson
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

1874 - 1901

12. Rev. William Rollinson From June 1, 1875 to Dec. 27, 1891

Prior to the return of Rev. William Rollinson as Pastor here in 1875, First Baptist and Irving St. Baptist - due to conditions existing then - were discussing a union of the two Churches. However, as they could not agree on all the details, the plans were not carried through. In 1884, the Church voted to invite the former members of the Irving St. Church to unite with First Baptist.

On Oct. 26, 1874, the Church voted to call Rev. William Rollinson as their Pastor for the third time at a salary of \$1,500.00 per year. Rev. Rollinson accepted this call on the condition that the Church raise \$5,000.00 for a new Church Building. This the congregation did, and Rev. Rollinson began his service here in June 1875.

In 1876, the new building, ninety-one by fifty-two feet and built of brick, was started on the same location as the first church building and by that winter was far enough advanced so that the Church could hold services in the Lecture Room. In June of 1877, the building was dedicated and "until its demolition remained a monument of zeal and devotion displayed by the Church during the severest pressure of the trying period in which it was erected."¹ Remember that this was done right after the panic of 1873.

In 1873 and 1882 there occurred two revivals and First Baptist again shared in this blessing - there being about seventy conversions in 1882 alone.

In 1883, the East New Jersey Baptist Association held their Annual Meeting here which commemorated First Baptist's 50th Anniversary.

At the Association's 50th Anniversary held here in 1891, our Church Letter stated that our Church was one of the fourteen Churches which helped to form the Association in 1841, and that one of our "constituent members," Mrs. Mary Osborn, was the only surviving Church Member who had been present at the formation of that body.

On November 4, 1885, the Church voted to become a corporate body under the provisions of an Act of The New Jersey Legislature.

In 1889, plans were made to pay off the \$5,000.00 bonded indebtedness of the Church. One plan had each member save a penny a day which was collected monthly. By March of 1891, the debt was reduced to \$3,500.00 and an attempt was made to secure one hundred pledges of \$35.00 each to liquidate the mortgage.

In December of 1891, Mr. and Mrs. William Rollinson died. Thus ended a Pastoral Charge extending over thirty years of the first sixty years of First Baptist.

During Rev. Rollinson's Pastorate, the membership increased from 170 to 233. Surely this Church is the better for his service.

13. Rev. H. M. Lowry From Sept. 1, 1893 to May 1, 1901

From the time of the death of Rev. Rollinson to September of 1893, the Church did not have a Pastor. However, the Pulpit was supplied and no Sunday Service or mid-week meeting was missed. Rev. B. O. Parvin, a close friend of Rev. Rollinson and a resident of Rahway, was a frequent preacher on Sunday.

A call was extended and accepted by H. M. Lowry of Port Jefferson, Long Island. He began his duties on Sept. 1; 1893.

Many changes and improvements were made during his Pastorate here. The Church Covenant was re-written; new rules and regulations were adopted; the rented pew system was abolished; the main auditorium and lecture room were decorated; a new organ was installed; the latter being paid for by money raised by the Christian Endeavor Society.

A Memorial Tablet to the memory of Rev. and Mrs. Rollinson was installed to the right of the Pulpit, a gift of the Ladies of the Bible Class. This Tablet is on the south rear wall of our Sanctuary today.

The Church was still troubled with financial problems. Again there was another panic - 1893. They revised the register and did an Every Member Canvass to raise money besides asking the congregation to increase their contributions. In this, the ladies took a very active part -- so much so that in the minutes of May 4, 1900 they received a vote of thanks.

In 1894, the Trustees were authorized to put the property up for sale due to the interruptions of services from the noise of the trains on the Penn. R. R. However, there is no mention of the results of this action.

Rev. Lowry resigned May 1, 1901. The fine relationship that existed between Church and Pastor was shown formally by their refusing to accept his resignation, then having a committee call on Rev. Lowry to ask if he would reconsider. The resignation was finally accepted and a resolution was passed expressing their affection and good wishes.

1874 -- 1901

Commentary

After the disappointment of failing to build a new church during Rev. Wheeler's Pastorate, it must have seemed like a miracle to the Congregation to be able to build in 1876. Though they were slowed by the War (1861 - 1865) and a Panic (1873), their devotion for and love of God still guided them. It was no small project to undertake such a task and from photos and descriptions that exist of the building, it truly was a work of love. Unfortunately, its location so near to the Penn. R. R. proved to be a detriment. However, they were not alone in building there. What is now the Trinity Methodist was diagonally across the street near the tracks and the Reformed Episcopal Church was on the corner of Fulton St. and Milton Ave. See 1882 map of Rahway in Rahway Public Library or Rahway Historical Society Tavern. Also the R. R. traffic in 1876 must have been a lot lighter than in 1894 when they were considering selling the property. Note - Was the Reformed Episcopal Building the Lecture Rooms built by First Baptist in 1846?

During this period many organizations were formed in the Church to help carry on its work. In 1885, a Young Peoples' Association was formed and the Mission Board supported a native Preacher in Teluge. (Telugu?) In 1889, a Christian Endeavor Society was formed which was very active in the Church and in 1895, a Jr. Christian Endeavor Society was formed. In 1899, two organizations were formed -- the Ladies' Mission Society and the Young Mens' League. Also the appointment of Managers to the Baptist Home for the Aged appear in the records.

In the record books containing the minutes up to 1893, there is some lack of explaining or giving details on events. Two cases in point are the selling of some lots on Whittier St. and what did they do with the building containing the Lecture Rooms built in 1846?

At the start of Rev. Lowry's ministry, a new type of record book was used. In it not only is there space for the recording the minutes, but there is also space for the letters to the East New Jersey Association, the Sunday School Statistics, Church Property and Contributions.

Below are the Sunday School Statistics and Church Membership:

Year	Church Membership	Teachers	No. of Pupils	Library Volumes
1894	200	5-19	188	266
1895	200	24	148	277
1896	196	No record		
1897	188	No record		
1898	179	No record		
1899	175	22	141	No record
1900	167	No record		
1901	175	No record		

During Rev. Rollinson's ministry, the membership increased from 170 to 233 while the membership decreased from 200 to 169 during Rev. Lowry's ministry, due in part to the fact there were 27 deaths recorded. The difference in the membership - 233 - at the death of Rev. Rollinson and - 200 - at the start of Rev. Lowry's ministry could be due to the time - 1 3/4 years - the Church was without a regular minister. Also the records of 1896 and 1897 mention a depression (1893?) which must have had an influence on the membership.

1. "A Century of Progress 1833-1933
First Baptist Church
Rahway, N. J."

1901 - 1922

14. Rev. N.A. Merritt Jr. From Nov. 1, 1901 to Dec. 1, 1909

In September of 1901, the Church called Rev. N.A. Merritt who was one of the ministers suppling the pulpit after the resignation of Rev. Lowry. He accepted the call and began his duties on Nov. 1, 1901. From the records and from conversations with people who knew Rev. Merritt, the relationship of Pastor and Church must have been ideal and resulted in the spiritual and financial growth of the Church.

During the time between the resignation of Rev. Lowry and the start of Rev. Merritt's ministry, the congregation was busy renovating the Church. A new metal ceiling was installed in the Sanctuary and the interior was painted.

Further improvements were made to the Church during Rev. Merritt's ministry. Steam heat was installed in 1902, and in the same year the Sunday School rooms in the basement of the Church were renovated.

A new individual communion service was presented to the Church by Mr. and Mrs. David H. Ramsey and also Mrs. Margaret Stanford left a legacy to the Church which was applied to the mortgage.

The Pastor started a Bible Study Class, held Monday evenings, and also continued the mid-week prayer meetings. A Young People's Society of Christian Workers was formed as were a Boy's Club and a Men's Class.

As usual, the Ladies' Aid Society was active raising money and performing other church related activities.-- one of which was to entertain the delegates of the East New Jersey Baptist Association when they met here in June 1904.

On the night of January 27th., 1905, the Church was badly damaged by fire. The congregation immediately set about making plans for a new church in a better location away from the noise of the trains.

At first, services were held in the Lecture Room of the Second Presbyterian Church or in the Republican Club rooms. Baptisms were conducted at Central Baptist Church in Elizabeth, N. J. Mrs. Hazel Mundy said she attended Sunday School in the Exchange Building on Irving St. Today (Dec. 1977) the new addition to the National State Bank occupies that location.

The church property was sold to the Pennsylvania Railroad for \$8000.00 with the understanding they could fix and use the basement for services until their new building was ready. They also could take all memorial windows, pews, fixtures, etc. from the building. The Church collected \$3500.00 Fire Insurance and the night they voted to sell the property, \$1600.00 was raised.

In the spring of 1906, ground was broken for the new Church building which was to be of frame construction with a brick veneer, on ground which cost \$2500.00 on the corner of Elm and Esterbrook Ave. This is the same land which was nearly purchased during Rev. Wheeler's ministry. The laying of the cornerstone was celebrated on Sunday July 1, 1906, though the manual work was performed the day before. Thus no work was done on the Sabbath.

The Church cost approximately \$25,000.00 and was built by D. I. Muddel and the Architect was J. A. Oakley and Son.

The first Service was held in the new Church building Feb. 17, 1907. During the following week, dedication services were held and \$1500.00 was subscribed. This enabled the Church to clear all their indebtedness leaving a mortgage of \$6000.00 NOT BAD!

In May of 1908, the Pastor's salary was raised from \$1200.00 to \$1300.00.

In Nov. of 1909, Rev. Merritt resigned, effective Dec. 1, 1909. In his letter of dismissal the following was added: "During the eight years of his pastorate here, not the slightest cloud has appeared to mar the serenity of a perfect sky, and we thank God that he came among us."¹

Spiritually and financially the Church entered the 20th Century with flying colors - the membership increased from 169 to 240 and in 1909, the Bible School grew from 105 to 150 and even with the building of a new church edifice, they were not burdened with too heavy a debt.

15. Rev. Arthur S. Cole From June 1, 1910 to July 1, 1911

In April of 1910, a call was issued to Rev. A.S. Cole to be Pastor at \$1300.00 per year. He accepted the call at \$1400.00 which the Church felt financially able to handle and Rev. Cole began his ministry here on June 1, 1910.

Though Rev. Cole was here for only a year, his pastorate was spiritually rewarding and the financial condition of the Church continued to improve.

Twenty-six were baptized in the one year, the Bible School grew so large that they had to use the auditorium, the Young Men's Bible Class fixed up the tower as a class room and a Junior Dept. was formed.

The Ladies' Aid Society paid off \$200.00 on the mortgage. A plan to pay off the mortgage in three years by selling shares was considered and also the Church was beginning to think of a Sunday School addition to the church building.

On July 1, 1911, Rev. A. S. Cole resigned.

16. Rev. Francis G. Merrill From April 1, 1912 to Sept. 30, 1922

On April 1, 1912, Rev. Francis G. Merrill became the sixteenth Pastor of First Baptist. Spiritually and financially it was a decade of great growth - not withstanding that World War I occurred during that time.

Since the Bible School Class continued to be too large for the Chapel, plans were begun towards the erection of a Sunday School addition to the Church and by 1921, the Church had \$1100.00 in a building fund plus another \$1100.00 pledged.

In 1915 and 1916, revival services were held which resulted in many being baptized.

The Men's Brotherhood Class was organized on Nov. 15, 1913, and they finished off rooms in the basement for social functions. A Boy Scout Troop was also formed and during World War I, sold \$75,000.00 worth of Liberty Bonds and U. S. Saving Stamps.

In 1919, electric lights were installed, replacing the gas lights used up to then.

Because of the fuel shortage during World War I, joint prayer meetings were held with one of the Methodist and one of the Presbyterian Churches. Though 32 members of this Church served during the War, all returned safely. A Red Cross Unit, which was formed in 1918, gave many hours of their time to the war effort as did the Ladies' Aid Society. In 1918, the Church gave \$1042.76 for missions and war relief and in 1919, gave \$1222.75 for the same causes plus the local hospital.

The Church, up to this time, never having a parsonage for the ministers, in 1920, purchased from Mr. R. S. Farrington the property next to the Church for \$9500.00. By 1921, the parsonage and church mortgages were paid. Both mortgages were burned Sept. 28, 1922. Besides this, the Church "assisted one of the colored Baptist Churches in their campaign for a new church building."²

On Sept. 30, 1922, Rev. Merrill resigned, due in part to "a lack of harmony and co-operation among a few in our membership."³

While Rev. Merrill was Pastor, the membership increased from 245 to 365 with 191 being baptized.

1. "Historical Sketch of the First Baptist Church, Rahway"
by Rev. William Rollinson
2. Ibid
3. Ibid

1901 - 1922

Commentary

These first two decades of the 20th Century were rewarding to First Baptist. Spiritually it was a time of growth in membership and numbers of candidates baptized, and physically it was a period of gloom, with the burning of the second church building, but joy on the occasion of their first service in the present church.

Undoubtedly, the Church was blessed during this time with three Ministers unusually devoted to God. Through their and the Church's efforts, they - the Church - went from a debt of \$3500.00 in 1901 to the burning of two paid up mortgages, one on the present church building and the other on the first Parsonage in 1922. They also went from a membership of 175 to 366. During this same time span, 286 were baptized - 56 in one year - 1917.

Mention is made, in the minutes of 1919, that the Church gave money to the local hospital. That hospital, the first home of the Rahway Hospital, was located at 81 Jaques Ave.

One of the original thirteen physicians, who made a contribution to a general fund for hospital equipment, was Dr. George Galloway. The present parsonage was built with the aid of a legacy from Dr. and Mrs. George Galloway.

Two members of the original Board of Governors of Rahway Hospital were also trustees of First Baptist -- Frank W. Kidd and William H. Rollinson.

In the Church Letter of 1919, to the East New Jersey Association, mention is made of the trying times that the Church passed through. These include World War I with its sacrifices and anxieties, the shortage of fuel and the influenza epidemic of 1918 - 1919. However, the letter goes on to state that these trials brought the Church into closer fellowship.

Located on the south rear wall of the present church, a plaque lists the names of the men from this Church who served in World War I.

Mr. Sidney Greenhalgh has said that the electric lights installed in 1919, were located at the corners of each square of the present ceiling design and these locations - today - have circular metal plates covering them.

1922 - 1935

17. Rev. Wilbour Eddy Saunders

From April 1, 1923 to Mar. 31, 1927

On April 1st, 1923, the Rev. Wilbour E. Saunders, formerly Associate Pastor of the Marcy Avenue Baptist Church, Brooklyn, N. Y., began his ministry here. That ministry was to last for four years ending on March 31, 1927.

Again the Church was fortunate to have such a leader. "Through the experience gained in a large metropolitan church, the zeal put into the work by the young Pastor, and the eloquent presentation of the Gospel, the membership gained rapidly by constant accessions."¹

In the May 23rd, 1923, letter to the East New Jersey Baptist Association, it is stated that the Church had adopted Pastor Saunders' ten definite aims for the coming year. These included greater church attendance, a 50% increase in Bible School membership, adoption of a budget and a thorough visitation program.

The Sunday School had an increase in average attendance of 50% in 1924, 25% in 1925, and 20% in 1926. Several times the capacity of the auditorium was taxed due to this increase in membership through the resulting inconvenience did not deter the members. However, in 1925, a committee was appointed to formulate plans for a Sunday School addition to the Church and in 1926, \$12,500.00 was pledged towards its construction.

On March 31, 1927, the trustees passed a resolution to sign a contract for the erection of the new addition which was to be a two story building conforming with the architecture of the Church and containing individual classrooms, an assembly room, a pastor's study and various changes in the pulpit and choir space. The cost to be about \$29,500.00. Ground was broken on April 10, 1927, and the first service was held October 2, 1927 with the dedication on April 15, 1928.

Two new organizations were formed. One - The Malcus Club - formed sometime in 1924 - 1925 and consisted of the former Ushers' Association and the Men's Bible Class. This unification of all the men's activities resulted in a more efficient way in carrying out their work. The other - The Delta Alpha Class - was formed in 1923 at the suggestion of Mrs. Saunders who was their first teacher.

¹The Charter Members of the Delta Alpha Class were:

Mrs. W. Saunders	Miss A. Spencer
Mrs. R. Mackey	Miss E. Conill
Mrs. R. Carlisle	(Mrs. S. Greenhalgh)
Mrs. W. Hill	Miss M. Brown
Mrs. W. Rulison	Mrs. G. Gallaway
Mrs. J. Cleaver	Miss E. Reed
Mrs. B. Crue	Miss Isabel White
Mrs. O. Wilkerson	Miss Almy
Miss W. Stuart (Mrs. J. Gerner)	Mrs. P. Voorhees
	Miss H. Martin

Of the above eighteen Charter Members, three are living today.

(Feb. 1978): Mrs. J. Cleaver
Mrs. B. Crue
Mrs. S. Greenhalgh

The first and present officers are listed below:

1923		1978	
President -	- Mrs. B. Crue	Mrs. Addie Greenig	
Vice President -	- Mrs. E. Carlisle	Mrs. June Gjertsen	
Secretary	- Miss Mamie Brown	Mrs. Catherine Bean	
Treasurer	- Miss Isabel White	Mrs. Edna Hurley	

This class has had only four regular teachers:

Mrs. W. E. Saunders	1923 - 1927	Mrs. J. Kemp	1951 - to date
Mrs. R. Howard	1927 - 1945		
Mrs. J. N. Martin	1945 - 1951		

These wonderful teachers, together with all the devoted, faithful and hard working officers during the fifty-five years, have inspired the class to accomplish great things for the Church and for God's Kingdom." 2

How could they do otherwise with their motto "Not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

During Rev. Saunders' ministry here, benevolence increased 70% and the Church membership increased from 366 to 504. In 1925, Rev. Saunders was appointed Chaplin at the N. J. State Reformatory "and was thereby greatly extending his usefulness in the Masters' Service." 3

After resigning his Pastorate here, Rev. Saunders returned to the Marcy Avenue Baptist Church, Brooklyn, N. Y. as Pastor. Later he was to be Headmaster of the Peddie School, Eightstown, N. J., and then President of Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, Rochester, N. Y., to mention only two of his many services. Truly this Church is fortunate.

18. Rev. Finley Keech

From December 1, 1927 to Sept. 1, 1935

On December 1, 1927, Rev. Finley Keech, formerly Pastor of the South Baptist Church, Newark, N. J., became Pastor. The recent Sunday School addition was put to good use during his Pastorate. Even though the Church was without a regular Pastor from April 1, 1927, to Nov. 30, 1927, the membership remained united and faithful to their commitment to Christ.

During his first year here - 1927-28 - \$18,000.00 was raised for all purposes. During the same period, the Delta Alpha Class sold 1000 rose bushes and made and sold 10,000 Easter eggs which represented just part of their work.

Some of Rev. Keech's aims were to add five new members each month, full co-operation with the State and the Northern Baptist Conventions in their mission tasks, a six weeks School of Missions and a one day conference on Labor Day to plan the programs for the year's work. Also a new baptistry was installed and the Parsonage redecoreated.

The average attendance for Sunday School was 223 and for Church was 282.

In the fall of 1929, the Stock Market Crash occurred resulting in the worst depression this country has known. "It reached its nadir in 1932 - 33." 4

"Although alleviated by the bold expedients of the New Deal, it did not really end until 1939-40 when America began to rearm." 5 This meant that during most of Rev. Keech's Pastorate here the Church was faced with a continuing financial problem. Again, as before in any crisis, their faith and devotion carried them through this period. At one time the Church was at least six months behind in paying salaries to Edwin Blount, sexton; W. E. Cook, organist; and Mrs. Mary L. Adams, secretary.

Some of the methods adopted by the Church to combat the financial strain resulting from this world-wide depression were: reducing the salaries of the paid church staff - Mr. Keech suggested that his salary be reduced; an unemployment fund was set up for church members; and a plan was put into operation to increase contributions by 10% which did result in an increase of \$250.00 in 1935.

In March of 1929, the Baptist Brotherhood was formed. This class, on October 12, 1930, dedicated the "Miller Room" on the third floor of the new building as their classroom. "It is a memorial to Deacon George C. Miller presented by the members of his family and his many friends."

Other organizations formed during Rev. Keech's Pastorate were the Board of Deaconess in May 1931, and the M and S Society, April 17, 1934. The first officers of the latter were:

President	John Gerner
Vice President	- Miss Anna Worth
Secretary	Miss Mildred Billings
Treasurer	Miss Helen Richey

On October 11, 1933, the Church voted to change the Rules and Regulations to allow people to join the Church as "Associate Members."

In 1931-32, Dr. Randolph L. Howard wrote an adult study book, Baptist in Burma, which was used by the Northern Baptists, the illustrations being done by Mrs. Keech. And in 1932, 1933, and 1934, the young people of the Church with G. Edwin Cook as Chairman published a Church Directory and Day-By-Day Calendar called Ko - Yin (Little Helper.)

On May 26, 1935, Rev. Keech tendered his resignation to become Pastor of the First Baptist Church in Harrisburg, Pa. While Pastor here, he was also Recording Secretary of the New Jersey Convention and also Moderator of the New Jersey Baptist Association for two years.

During his ministry of $7\frac{1}{2}$ years, 189 new members were received into the Church - 92 by baptism and 97 by letter and experience.

1922 - 1935

Commentary

The Depression could dominate one's thinking of this period and influence any conclusion drawn. To do that would ignore the many positive accomplishments of the Church.

Undoubtedly the prosperous times before the crash encouraged and enabled the Church to complete their plans for a Sunday School addition. Under Rev. Keech, they reduced the mortgage from \$16,000.00 to \$11,400.00 in spite of the Depression. The first five months Rev. Keech was here, he baptized 20 and in 1933, the Church membership was 499. Someone stated earlier in the Church records that the Church tended to draw closer together in adversity. Certainly they were contained financially - but not defeated. Five organizations were formed - The Malcus Club, The Delta Alpha Class, The Baptist Brotherhood, The Board of Deaconess and The M and S Society - all were very active groups.

Two historical events occurred in 1933. One was the meetings of the Northern Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention held in Washington, D. C. Their schedules were such that the meetings would overlap for one day on which they would hold a joint meeting - the first since the Civil War. The other event was the One Hundred Anniversary of the Church which was celebrated the week of May 7-14, 1933.

The names of two former members of this Church appear in the minutes of meetings - Rev. Benjamin L. Crue who was ordained June 13, 1934, at South Windham, Vt., and, in 1933, was Pastor's Assistant at March Avenue Baptist Church, Brooklyn, N. Y. and Rev. George S. Miller - who in 1933, was Pastor at Irvington, N. J. Also in the minutes appear the names of two people who served this Church for years: William Cook, organist, hired January 1, 1922, and Edwin Blount, sexton, hired March 8, 1929.

At the 100th Annual Meeting held May 12, 1933, it was voted to have a "Book of Remembrance" wherein could be recorded the memorial gifts in memory of loved ones. At the same meeting, it was also voted to appoint a Historical Committee which was to report yearly. However, no report from that committee, if appointed, appear in any annual meeting minutes.

In the 1882 map of Rahway, mentioned before, a Methodist Church was located to the east of the first Sunday School addition. Did our expansion conflict with their location or had the building been removed before our construction?

1. A Century of Progress 1833-1933
First Baptist Church
Rahway, N. J.
2. 40th Anniversary
Delta Alpha Class
Mrs. S. Greenhalgh
3. Letter to the East New Jersey Baptist Association
adopted May 13, 1925
4. The Oxford History of the American People
Vol. 3 page 287 by Samuel Eliot Morison
5. Ibid
6. A Century of Progress 1833-1933
First Baptist Church
Rahway, N. J.

1935 - 1955

19. Rev. Edwin A. Goldsworthy From February 16, 1936 to Jan. 5, 1955

On Feb. 16, 1936, Rev. Edwin Goldsworthy preached his first sermon as Pastor of this church. He formerly was Pastor of the Livingston Baptist Church of Livingston, N. J. for five years. Rev. Goldsworthy was graduated from Bates College, Lewiston, Maine and Union Theological Seminary in New York City. "He stood high in the estimation of Dr. Charles Goodall, State Secretary of the New Jersey Baptist Convention and Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, Pastor of the Riverside Church in New York City, who knew Rev. Goldsworthy as a student."¹

Many alterations and improvements were made to the Church and Parsonage during this period. A new exit was cut through the foundation on the Elm Avenue side of the Church. New stairs were installed from the Vestibule to the Tower Room and to the basement.

The basement area under the Sanctuary was made into a recreation room for the youth with classrooms, a stage and a projection booth. A suite of rooms consisting of Pastor's study, combined library and reception room, office and record's room was constructed. New furnaces were installed in the Church and Parsonage. A new Chancel was built, including Pulpit and Choir Loft. All that plus the ever present need of small repairs and painting.

In the 1941 Annual Report the Choir Association, a social group composed of members of the Choir and their friends, volunteered to sponsor a fund, started by Jason and Faye Kemp, for a new organ. This project was so successful that by the fall of 1942 when the organ, a Skinner, was installed, the cost of \$2,789.81 was completely paid for.

As was stated before (1922-1935), the cost for the Church School addition in 1927 was about \$29,500.00 or to be exact \$29,451.14. The original mortgage was approximately for \$16,000.00. By April 30, 1935, the 102nd Annual Meeting, the mortgage was \$11,225.00. In 1940, the mortgage was refinanced at 5% interest, a saving of \$100.00 in interest per year, and with a yearly payment of at least \$500.00, it would take twenty years to liquidate the mortgage. By May 14, 1943, the 110th Annual Meeting, the mortgage was \$8,400.00.

At this meeting Mr. Charles Baes and Mr. William Kulp spoke in behalf of the mortgage fund with the result that \$2,000.00 was pledged at the meeting. Also at the same meeting, it was voted to have the Brotherhood act as a collection agent for the mortgage fund -- they to appoint a committee. That committee consisted of William Kulp, Chairman, Charles Baes, Nelson Brower and Martin Hurley. This action resulted in the Church being able to pay \$6,000.00 on the principal by August 12, 1943, saving \$152.00 in interest.

At a banquet, served on February 10, 1944, by the Fidelis Class, at \$5.00 per plate with 132 served, \$515.00 was netted. This, added to what had been raised since August 1943, was \$167.00 short of the amount needed to pay off the final \$2,400.00 on the mortgage. The \$167.00 was loaned by the Church School so that on February 12, 1944, the mortgage was paid in full. This Church School loan was repaid April 30, 1944.

On February 13, 1944, at a burning ceremony presided over by Rev. Goldsworthy, Judge F. N. Talley, President of the Board of Trustees, burned the mortgage. All who attended this event received a book mark with the date - February 14, 1944 - on it. The liquidation of this mortgage meant that the approximately \$500.00 yearly interest was available for other purposes. Think of it - \$8,400.00 paid off in less than one year!

On February 19, 1939, the Church voted to institute an elected Board of Education consisting of fifteen members corresponding to the Boards of Deacons, Deaconesses, and Trustees to have a unification of the educational and worship functions of the Church. Before, some people came either for Church or for Sunday School. With the Unified Sunday Morning Service plan, hopefully, more would come for the full two hours, the Church and Sunday School being two parts of the whole. "It resulted in a 60% increase in attendance, enlarged the adult classes, and brought the boys and girls to a church consciousness."² It also allowed families to worship together and "prevented an overlapping of worship functions in church and school."³

On May 28, 1941, it was voted to terminate the Board of Education and the supervision of the educational work be given to an appointed Church School Cabinet composed of members of the three boards with the Board of Deacons cooperating and counseling with them when called upon by that body. No reason is given for this change but at the June 16, 1946, meeting the Church voted to have an elected Board of Education responsible for the supervision of the entire educational program of the Church. Rev. J. Norman Martin, Chairman of the Educational Committee of the Deacons, recommended the adoption of this by-law at the 113 Annual Business Meeting on May 10, 1946.

Rahway First Baptist was the first Church in the State to have such a Board of Education and the fact that it is still being used today (1978) attests its usefulness and part in the Church Ministry. Some of the results of this change were the hiring of a Director of Christian Education, participating in the State Youth programs, teacher training classes, sponsoring staff members at Green Lake and members of the Sunday School at the Conference Center at Lebanon. All the related Church School reports urged a greater involvement in the Church School for "...the influence that a Church has on a child can be measured by the interest of a parent in that Church."⁴

The increased Church School attendance and the anticipated future increase turned their minds to the need of a Children's wing. In the 1955 Annual Report, the Building Committee reported that they had preliminary plans and a scale model made of an educational addition to the Church.

During World War II, 56 members of this Church were in service with an additional 39 being sons, husbands or those closely related to members or boys who had been members of the Church School. The reality of war was brought close to the members of the Church with the presence of two gold stars on the service flag. Corporal Thomas Parker Thorne was the first Church member to die in service in the then 112 year history of the Church. Corporal George Harold Keller, formerly a church school member, also died in service.

A Service Mens Bureau was formed to keep in touch with those in service. Packages were sent at Christmas and on birthdays to all as were lists of names and addresses of those in service so they could correspond. And a Church newsletter, "First Baptist Boomerang," was sent to all in this country and overseas so that all could be kept in closer touch with each other and be informed of the activities and locations of those in service. Also every two weeks the church calendars were mailed keeping the service personnel informed.

Of the new classes formed, one was the Mr. and Mrs. Class for married couples up to 40 years of age. It started in 1938-39. The purpose of this class being to foster Christian home-making among young married people. This class and the Unified Form of Service on Sunday mornings were the results of a series of lectures Rev. Goldsworthy gave during 1939 on "What Shall We Do To Hold Our Young People?"

"By these methods it was hoped to incorporate the young people into the spiritual life of the Church."⁵

Another was the Fidelis Class which was organized October 1, 1939, under the leadership of Miss Bess Richey. "The purpose of the Class was to give the younger women in the Church School an opportunity to meet in fellowship each Sunday to study God's Word and to promote the work of the Church."⁶

The Charter Members of the Fidelis Class were:

Jo Cleaver	Fannie Leatherman	Bess Richey
Grace Heck	Mrs. L. F. Leonard	Elizabeth Ritchie
Esther Koos	Florence Myers	Kay Tucker
Mrs. Paul Laughrey	Lillian Richards	

The first and present officers are listed below:

President	Esther Koos	Grace Marincel
Vice-President	Jo Cleaver	Evelyn Mundy 1st
		Agnes Abbott 2nd
Secretary	Grace Heck	Ruth Kochy
Treasurer	Elizabeth Ritchie	Ruth Spangenberg

The class motto is: II Timothy 2:15 -- "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

Of the many services this class has performed, two need mentioning.

One was adopting the Baptist Church in Pecel (Paychel), Hungary in 1947, to which they sent gifts and money until March 1949, when the high tariff imposed on the recipients made further aid impossible. However, the Pastor, Rev. Birtalan, did receive enough money, before the cut-off date, to purchase a second hand bicycle and could ride, instead of walk, the ten miles to his mission station.

The second is the Parker Thorne Memorial Scholarship and Loan Fund, established September 14, 1951, as a memorial to the only member of this Church to make the supreme sacrifice in World War II. The purpose of the fund is to aid the young people of First Baptist to further their training.

Besides the duties as Pastor of Rahway First Baptist, Rev. Goldsworthy was involved in many Church related organizations. He was not merely a member but was a very active contributor in whatever way he could to extend his ministry outside the Church. In the Church History published in 1943 on the One Hundred - Tenth Anniversary, Rev. Goldsworthy was described as an artist, author, musician and forceful preacher.

Two years before coming to Rahway, Rev. Goldsworthy wrote a book, "Plain Thoughts on Worship," which was published shortly after he came here. He had a radio devotional service broadcast by short wave as far away as India, served as President of the Rahway Council of Churches, preached in some of the leading churches in England during August 1938, was Moderator of the East New Jersey Baptist Association, clerk of the Northern Baptist Convention, besides serving on many committees in both organizations. These are just a few of his many contributions outside the Church.

On December 21, 1954, Rev. Goldsworthy handed in his resignation which was accepted with regret - he having been on sick leave since November. In accepting his resignation, the Church voted to continue his salary for nine months in 1955. During Rev. Goldsworthy's ministry here, 531 joined the Church by baptism, letter, experience or restoration and the membership increased from 502 to 602. From 1952 on, over 100 were put on the inactive list which explains the low figure at the end of his ministry.

1935 - 1955

Commentary

During this period the Church continued to grow. This, in spite of the fact that it, this period, contains the last five years of the Depression and four years of World War II. The economy of the Depression and the shortages of material in the War were some of the many things with which the Church had to contend. And, as in past wars, the ever present anxiety for those in service was on everyone's mind.

The benevolence reports of the Church and the individual classes such as the M and S Society and Mission Circle are full of the names of the recipients of gifts. To name a few -- Rev. Alfred Merrill, son of former Pastor, Rev. F. G. Merrill, in Assam, India; the Rahway YMCA; Second Baptist Church Building Fund; Mission to Lepers; The Mather School, A Baptist School in South Carolina. Truly its mission is not restricted to its four walls.

In World War II every effort was made to keep the people in service informed. Gifts, church bulletins, and the "First Baptist Boomerang" helped to let them know they were still a part of the Church and not forgotten.

The building and educational programs, especially in relation to the youth, were another of the main tasks of the Church. The conversion of the area under the Sanctuary gave the youth more classrooms and a recreation room with a stage and projection booth. The addition of a paid Youth Director to the Educational Staff was of great help in the youth fellowship activities and counseling. All these aids helped to bring the youth into an active part in the Church youth programs and laid the basis for future church participation as adults.

Sid Greenhalgh said that at one time the Church was planning to install chimes above the Tower Room but gave it up because it would be in violation of a local ordinance. Too bad!

Miss Jeannette A. Clark, for many years Church School Treasurer, told us that she used to ride a bicycle on St. Georges Avenue between Rahway and Roselle Park where she was Principal of Sherman School.

1. Dec. 16, 1935 Meeting
Pulpit Report
2. 1939 Annual Report
Pastor's Report
3. Jan. 4, 1939 Meeting p. 121
4. 1955 Annual Report
Church School Report
5. Sept. 26, 1938
Church Meeting p. 119
6. 1940 Annual Report
Fidelis Class Report

1955 - 1976

20. Rev. John F. Upham

From Sept. 1, 1955 to Nov. 5, 1961

On April 24, 1955, Rev. John F. Upham preached the morning sermon and on the same day the Church voted to call him starting on Sept. 1, 1955. This call was accepted by Rev. Upham, who is a graduate of Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, and was Pastor of the First Baptist Church in Vandergrift, Pa.

During Rev. Upham's Pastorate, the Church instituted a three phase building program. This included a new parsonage; remodeling and redecorating the Sanctuary, Chapel and Fellowship Rooms; and the addition of a new educational wing. At the May 13, 1955 annual meeting, a long range planning committee was formed to coordinate this building program based on the needs of the Church for the next twenty-five years.

On June 12, 1955, the Planning Committee reported that it would cost between \$10,000.00 and \$15,000.00 to repair the existing Parsonage and also it would be better to use the land for future church expansion. Therefore, the Church authorized the Trustees to purchase a vacant plot - 60'x 140' - on the south side of Elm Ave. near Bryant St. for \$5,500.00. Also they were to enter into a contract for the erection of a new Parsonage on this plot to cost approximately \$24,850. The plans were selected from Better Homes and Gardens and it was to be of colonial design with a brick veneer. After some debate, a second bath and fireplace were included. The total cost was \$36,077.55. The contractors were Mr. Sledowski and Mr. Chodosh.

Construction was started in the fall of 1955 and the Uphams moved in on June 11, 1956. On Sunday, Sept. 30, 1956, the Parsonage was dedicated with Open House in the afternoon, Dr. Saunders being the guest speaker.

It was decided to call the Parsonage "Galloway House" since a bequest to the Church of \$27,648.33 from the estate of Mrs. George Galloway, a former member, paid for a large percentage of the total cost.

At the Trustees' meeting on Nov. 12, 1956, Chairman Greenhalgh reported the new Parsonage completed and paid for.

The upstairs in the old Parsonage was used for an apartment for the Youth Director and some of the first floor rooms were used by the Church School.

The rehabilitation of the Church, the second phase of the program, was completed in 1958 at a cost of \$6,915.32. A "Rehabilitation Fund" drive raised \$6,772.32 towards this expenditure. Included in this was the redecorating of the Sanctuary and Chapel, enlarging the Choir Loft and Chancel, a new folding door between the Chapel and Sanctuary and an outside exit from the recreation area. A dedication service was held Sept. 7, 1958, with the Rev. Dr. George P. H. Beers as guest speaker.

The addition of a new educational wing was the third and final phase of the program. Certainly the inconveniences under which the teachers and classes labored had existed for too long a time. To cite a few examples -- the crib and nursery were in the old Parsonage on Esterbrook Ave., the Youth Department classes met on the stage, the stage dressing rooms and the back of the Sanctuary. Under these conditions "the teachers cannot instill the same quality of reverence and spiritual uplift as those who meet in nicely decorated and quiet rooms."¹

In January, 1959, a Capital Fund Campaign to get contributions and pledges "was conducted by the members of the staff of the American Baptist Home Mission Societies."² "This resulted in gifts and pledges of \$64,518.00."³

The architect, Mr. Southern of Rahway, hired by the Trustees, was able to change the preliminary plans so that an educational wing sufficient for the needs of the Church could be built for this amount. On July 23, 1961, ground was broken for this addition. The contractor was the N. and S. Construction Co. of Roselle, N. J. After many and long delays the first classes were held in the new building May 26, 1963.

Two new organizations were formed during this time. One - The Judson Fellowship Class - started in September, 1956, with Mrs. John Upham as teacher. Perhaps the forerunner or forerunners of this class were the Young Adult Class formed in the winter of 1951-1952, followed by the Doers Class - both taught by Mr. Goldsworthy and then followed by the Adult Fellowship taught by Mr. Kenneth Abbott. The Judson is a co-educational Church School Class of all ages. Throughout the existence of this class it has been very active in the religious and social life of the Church. One of their in-church projects was sponsoring the Junior I Dept. of the Church School. They also sponsored a student of the Assam Baptist Theological College in India. As mentioned before, Rev. Alfred Merrill, son of former Pastor Rev. F. G. Merrill, was a Missionary in the State of Assam in India.

The other organization was the Parents' Guild composed of the parents of those in the Young People's Organizations. It was created to assist the Youth Director or others in charge of the youth in their programs such as furnishing transportation, refreshments, advisors, and to hold meetings to discuss or hear talks on mutual problems.

In the 1955-1956 Annual Report, the Womens' Mission Circle decided to disband and join with the Randolph Howard M and S Society to coordinate the mission work into one central group.

Also during this period, the Board of Education had three Schools of Missions -- 1958, 1959 and 1960. They also gave several Teacher Training Courses plus sending members of the Church School to Green Lake, Wisconsin, Bucknell University, Lewisburg, Pa., and Eastern Baptist Seminary, St. Davids, Pa.

Below is a church membership chart based on information in the Annual Reports during Rev. Upham's ministry here. Included in this are the 71 candidates baptized by Rev. Upham.

Membership					
		Regular	Associate	Inactive	Total
May 1, 1955		508	48	132	688
Additions	(a)	44	6		
Losses	(b)	54	7	2	
Dec. 31, 1956		498	47	130	675
Additions	(a)	51	1	13	
Losses	(b)	27	5	5	
Dec. 31, 1957		522	43	138	703
Additions	(a)	26	2	5	
Losses	(b)	24	2	4	

	Membership			
	Regular	Associate	Inactive	Total
Dec. 31, 1958	524	43	139	706
Additions (a)	15			
Losses (b)	20	2	1	
Dec. 31, 1959	519	41	138	698
Additions (a)	25	9		
Losses (b)	29	1		
Dec. 31, 1960	515	49	138	702

(a) Baptism, Experience, Letter,
From Inactive, Associate or Regular

(b) Letter, Erasure, Death,
To Regular, To Inactive

At the One Hundred and Twenty-Seventh Annual Meeting on January 13, 1961, Miss Isabel White, on motion passed, was made a Life Deaconess. Miss White was baptized June 25, 1899.

On September 24, 1961, Rev. Upham presented his resignation to be effective Sunday, November 5, 1961. He had accepted a call as Pastor of the Ferndale Baptist Church, Detroit, Michigan. During his ministry here, he also was President of the Rahway Ministerial Association, Vice-President of the Rahway Council of Churches, Vice Moderator of the N. J. Baptist Convention, Chairman of the Religious Education Committee of the East Association and Member of the Board of Trustees of the Rahway YMCA.

21. Rev. James F. Horton

From May 1, 1962 to Aug. 31, 1969

At the invitation of the Pulpit Committee, the Rev. James F. Horton preached a sermon on April 8, 1962, as a ministerial candidate for Rahway First Baptist. The same day Rev. Horton accepted the Church's call and began his ministry here on May 1, 1962. Formerly, he was Pastor of the Richmond Hill Baptist Church, Queens, N. Y.

During Rev. Horton's ministry, this church as well as other churches were affected by the unrest prevailing in the United States during the 1960s. The assassination of three of this country's leaders, the turmoil over the Vietnam War and the Civil Rights Movement, the riots and parades of protest resulted in or contributed to a lowering of church attendance or church need. This condition existed in churches of all denominations.

The Church School enrollment is an illustration of this decline. In 1962, the Church School had an enrollment of 231, in 1963, 285 were enrolled, in 1965 268. These Church School enrollments placed Rahway First as one of the leaders in the State. But in the 1967 Annual Report, the Church School Report mentions the small group of children in the Nursery, Kindergarten and Primary classes and each report after this mentions the decline in class size. In 1969, the enrollment was 45 in the Crib to Junior Departments and 28 in the Junior and Senior High Departments.

The same decline occurred in the number baptized. Below is the number baptized each year: -

1961 - 6	1965 - 8
1962 - 27	1966 - 8
1963 - 20	1967 - 4
1964 - 11	1968 - 7 4

Certainly the 27 baptized in 1962 and the 20 in 1963 rank in the upper level of those baptized in other years in this Church. And after that the decline set in.

With the amount of time the Church Staff spent taking Teacher Training Courses and attending Workshops, the results must have been frustrating. Some of these courses and workshops were the Training Course the East Association gave in October 1962; The Christian Education Conference at Green Lake, Wisconsin and an East Association Training School at First Baptist Church in Union, N. J. in 1963; and in 1965 there was a National Laboratory School for Children's Workers at Green Lake and a National BYF Conference at Ripon College in Wisconsin.

Early in 1962, the Randolph Howard M and S Society changed its name to The Missionary Society and adopted the Circle plan. There were five circles with an adult circle and a Girls Guild being added later. In 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1968 and 1969, the Board of Education had a School of Missions.

The new Educational Wing, as mentioned before, was started in 1961 and classes did not occupy the building until May 26, 1963. There was one delay after another until the Church was forced to have the Bonding Co. take over the building and finish it. Even then there were problems - one being that the Bonding Co. retained the same prime contractor against the wishes of the Trustees. "Advice of legal council was to let the work go on this way rather than take the matter to Court in order to save time." The completed building cost \$76,359.01. Because the pledges did not cover this, partly due to some not being honored, the Church had to borrow \$25,000.00 to pay for the building. This mortgage was repaid in from three to four years. Mr. Smith of Premier Oil gave the Church the oil burner and tank for the new building and installed them free.

Once completed, the new addition was put to good use. At that time - early 60s - the Church School had over 200 Sunday School members. The extra space was a welcome addition.

When the Kindergarten Class was moved into the new building, it was suggested that their old room be made into a Lounge or Living Room and double as a Class Room.

A new roof was put on the Church; a new entrance was built, designed and planned by Mr. Robert Niles, a church member; new front doors were installed; new bulletin boards were placed in front of the Church; the old Kindergarten was renovated and refinished as a Living Room and Class Room; screens were placed over some of the windows to protect them from vandalism; sound proof ceilings were installed in the new wing and the Vestibule floor was replaced. These were some of the things needed to be done on the Church's physical plant to keep it going. To pay for this the Church borrowed \$26,500.00 which was liquidated in 1969.

A church membership chart based on information in the Annual Reports during Rev. Horton's ministry is below. As in the preceding membership chart during Rev. Upham's ministry, this one for Rev. Horton's ministry includes those that were baptized - 91 in number.

Membership

	Regular	Associate	Inactive	Total
Dec. 31, 1961	476	49	154	679
Additions (a)	18	1		
Losses (b)	34		2	
Dec. 31, 1962	460	50	152	662
Additions (a)	34			
Losses (b)	11	3		
Dec. 31, 1963	483	47	152	682
Additions (a)	28	1	158	
Losses (b)	157	16	1	
Dec. 31, 1964	354	32	309	695
Additions (a)	17			
Losses (b)	11	3	10	
Dec. 31, 1965	360	29	299	688
Additions (a)	9	1		
Losses (b)	9	1	3	
Dec. 31, 1966	360	29	296	685
Additions (a)	18			
Losses (b)	19	5		
Dec. 31, 1967	359	24	296	679
Additions (a)	4	3		
Losses (b)	21		2	
Dec. 31, 1968	342	27	294	663
Additions (a)	12	4		
Losses (b)	21		4	
Dec. 31, 1969	333	31	290	654

(a) Baptism, Experience, Letter,
From Inactive, Associate or Regular

(b) Letter, Erasure, Death,
To Regular, To Inactive

The Church was the recipient of many gifts during Rev. Horton's ministry. From the estate of Mr. Albert Kline \$2,000.00 was received, from the estate of Miss Helen Martin \$7,000.00 was received, from the Nordmeyer estate \$15,522.83 plus \$400.00 from Mrs. Pascale of the Pascale Agency who handled the sale of the latter property.

The Brotherhood, in memory of a former member, Mr. Lester Miller, gave a silver service; from Mr. and Mrs. John Cox; a snow blower; and from Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Greenhalgh on June, 1966, for their forty years in the choir, racks for the backs of the choir chairs.

Other events that occurred and projects that were discussed are --
In November, 1963, the Brotherhood Class presented "The Brotherhood Frolic" for two nights.

On October 15, 1964, the Fidelis Class celebrated their Twenty-fifth Anniversary.

On January 17, 1965, this Church participated in a religious survey of Rahway conducted by the Council of Churches.

At the April 28, 1965 meeting, it was suggested to make a parking lot in front of the new building - no action taken.

At the September 28, 1966 meeting, the Deaconess reported they had purchased Revere Ware pots for the kitchen with 22½ books of S and H green stamps donated by the M and S Society.

At the suggestion of Mr. Abbott of the Board of Trustees, a Fellowship Dinner was held on October 27, 1967, resulting in a profit of \$712.00.

On November 2, 1969, at a business meeting called by the Board of Deacons, Mr. Archer Wiedling, on motion passed, was made a Life Deacon having reached seventy years of age while still a Deacon.

On November 30, 1966, the Church passed a motion to support the Billy Graham Crusade to be held in the summer of 1969.

On May 25, 1969, Rev. Horton presented his resignation as Pastor of Rahway First Baptist effective August 31, 1969, having accepted a call to be Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Nitro, West Virginia.

Date	Particulars	Debit	Credit	Balance
1969	1969			
1968	1968			
1967	1967			
1966	1966			
1965	1965			
1964	1964			
1963	1963			
1962	1962			
1961	1961			
1960	1960			

(a) Baptism, Exhortation, Letter
From Inactive, Associate or Regular

(b) Letter, Finance, Book
To Regular, To Inactive

The Church was the recipient of many gifts during Rev. Horton's ministry. From the estate of Mr. Albert Klein \$2,000.00 was received, from the estate of Miss Helen Martin \$1,000.00 was received, from the Horton estate \$1,500.00 plus \$400.00 from Mrs. Beulah of the local agency who handled the sale of the latter property.

22. Orrin T. Hardgrove

From March 1, 1970 to June 30, 1976

On December 28, 1969, the Church voted to call Rev. Orrin T. Hardgrove as their Pastor. Accepting this call he started his ministry here on March 1, 1970.

Many projects were undertaken by the Church during Rev. Hardgrove's ministry and their completion added much to the physical plant and to the worship service.

The old organ, being considered beyond repair, was replaced by a new organ. The installation in 1970 necessitated altering the enclosure of the choir loft. The stained glass windows were re-leaded, new floor beams were placed under the Living Room, the Sanctuary and Chapel were painted as was the outside of the Church, the loft above the Sanctuary was insulated and a new roof installed. New pews were procured for the Sanctuary, their style and coloring being more in keeping with the renovated and decorated Sanctuary. The old pews were offered for sale. New Hymnals and Bibles were purchased as memorials or gifts and placed in the pew racks.

At the Parsonage a recreation room was built, heat was installed and a carpet laid. The outside of the Parsonage was painted and the driveway resurfaced.

In 1971, the Church was approached by a Community Committee concerning the possibility of using a portion of our school facilities as a Day Care Center. To this request the Church agreed and in May 1972 the Center, with an enrollment of 32, began offering day care service to the pre-school age children of Mothers of the Community who are either working or are being trained for a job. This helps families stay together and become and remain self supporting. "When a Mother has been left on her own, her only hope of being able to care for her child has been to find a job for herself and a safe place for him to spend his day."⁶

At a meeting held on December 14, 1975, two motions were made regarding the relationship between the Church and the Day Care Center. One motion permitted the Day Care Center to use the Church facilities until 1981 and the other motion authorized the trustees to borrow money to pay the Church's share in improvements in the areas both shared. Total cost was approximately \$24,000.00 and through a matching fund grant only 25% or \$6,000.00 of this needed to be raised. Of this the Church assumed a 75% share or \$4,500.00 with the Day Care Center raising \$1,500.00. The new kitchen sink, stove and refrigerator are some of the items included under this renovation.

In 1973, Rev. Hardgrove headed the Day Care Center's Board of Directors. Also a member of the Board of Trustees of First Baptist serves as a Director on the Day Care Board.

The Church also provides facilities for the Youth and Family Counseling Service of Westfield, N. J. It is a private non-profit, non-sectarian organization offering counseling to individuals and families.

On November 18, 1973, a telephone with speakers was used during the morning service to Rev. and Mrs. Jones, American Baptist Missionaries in Thailand concerning their mission work. Other calls placed were to Mrs. Burns, President of American Baptist Women in Denver, Colorado; to Homer Tricules, former Youth Director here and now N. J. Race Track Chaplain. Each call gave new insights into differing mission ministries.

Another call made was to Rev. and Mrs. James Horton in Netro, West Virginia at the dedication of their grandchild. The congregation enjoyed this special communication with their former Pastor at this auspicious occasion.

Other events that occurred and projects that were discussed or attempted follow.

In 1970, a new class for young adults was formed. Today that class - the Randolph Howard Class - is the fastest growing class in church. It also serves a two-fold purpose in bringing both parent and children to church and church school.

The Church, in 1972, joined with eight other churches in Rahway to form a Good Samaritan Fund which serves people in need who pass through Rahway. Also in 1972, the Church received \$3,000.00 from the estate of Mrs. Seymour Bush.

A Church Pictorial Record Book containing pictures and addresses of the church family was delivered in 1973 to each church member who ordered one.

The Board of Deacons participated with the Council of Churches in the city-wide distribution of "K-73" Scriptures on June 7th and 8th, 1973 to encourage the citizens of Rahway to attend the Church of their choice.

In the summer of 1973, First Baptist and Zion Luthern had a combined Vacation Bible School.

In 1975, the Church hired Mrs. McVay of the Day Care staff to run the Crib Room Sunday mornings.

At the January 12, 1975 meeting a motion was passed that only those baptized may be deacons.

At the May 11, 1975 council meeting "It was discussed and agreed that new members be accepted from other churches under watch-care and by profession of faith as letters of transfer are so slow in arriving."

The Church, in carrying out an old tradition started in the 1800s, held three church fairs - 1975, 1976, 1977 - and raised over \$2,600.00 from them.

In 1976, the Church honored three couples - Mr. and Mrs. Sidney (Emily) Greenhalgh, Mr. and Mrs. William (Mattie) Hontz and Mr. and Mrs. Jason (Faye) Kemp - on their 50th wedding anniversaries. Then in 1977, another couple - Mr. and Mrs. J. Kenneth (Agnes) Abbott - was honored on their 50th wedding anniversary.

Below is a membership chart, including 37 candidates baptized, of Rahway First Baptist during Rev. Hardgrove's ministry. This chart is based on the Annual Reports during his pastorate.

	Membership			
	Regular	Associate	Inactive	Total
Dec. 31, 1969	333	31	290	654
Additions (a)	5			
Losses (b)	14		3	
Dec. 31, 1970	324	31	287	642
Additions (a)	19			
Losses (b)	13		6	
Dec. 31, 1971	330	31	281	642
Additions (a)	8			
Losses	12			
Dec. 31, 1972	326	31	281	638
Additions (a)	4			
Losses (b)	13	2	2	
Dec. 31, 1973	317	29	279	625
Additions (a)	7			
Losses (b)	6	1		

Membership

	Regular	Associate	Inactive	Total
Dec. 31, 1974	318	28	279	625
Additions (a)	8	12		
Losses (b)	4	1		
Dec. 31, 1975	322	39	279	640
Additions (a)	5			
Losses (b)	16	1		
Dec. 31, 1976	311	38	279	628

- (a) Baptism, Experience, Letter,
From Inactive, Associate or Regular
- (b) Letter, Erasure, Death
To Regular, to Inactive

Rev. Hardgrove mailed to all the church members a letter dated October 30, 1975, resigning as Pastor to accept a position in the Union County Manpower Program. In the letter, he expressed a desire to be considered as Interim Pastor until the pulpit committee found a permanent minister. At a Church meeting on November 2, 1975, the resignation was not accepted. Rev. Hardgrove served the Church as part-time Minister until the end of June, 1976.

1955 - 1976

Commentary

The elasticity and single minded purpose of this Church is again shown during the ministry of these three Pastors. After the "Eisenhower Years" of Rev. Upham's ministry with the high church membership and Church School enrollment plus the expansion programs, the declining church membership during Rev. Horton's and into Rev. Hardgrove's ministry was a serious condition for the existence of the Church. The outside unstable atmosphere, such as the riots, assassinations, sit-down strikes and new found freedom, did not tend to create a church-oriented philosophy. But as in the past when the Church continued in spite of wars, fire, financial upheavals and dissension within the Church, so it is today.

Much of the credit for this continuation can be attributed to the church body and the dedication of the ministers. Some credit is also due to those Interim Pastors such as Dr. George Pitt Beers, Rev. Norman Martin and Rev. Ralph Drisko, who did so much to smooth the transition from one Pastor to the next and contributed much to hold the Church together; to the choir and their leaders who added to the worship service week after week; to the long list of Youth Directors who have guided the youth; and to Don Whitehead for the hours spent on the sport programs; to the Sunday School Teachers and Church Staff; all working together in a large or small measure towards a common goal.

Some anniversaries that occurred during this time were the 50th Anniversary of the Delta Alpha Class in 1973 and the 25th Anniversary of the Fidelis Class in 1964. On June 1, 1973, the 140th Anniversary of the Church was celebrated with a dinner. The guest speaker was Rev. John F. Upham.

1. 1959 Annual Report p. 17
2. 1960 Annual Report p. 14
3. 1960 Annual Report p. 14
4. From Annual Reports for those years.
5. October 3, 1962 Meeting
6. 1975 Annual Report
7. May 11, 1975 Council Meeting

This part of the History of Rahway First Baptist ends as we welcome our 23rd Minister and together continue to carry out the mission of the Church.

23. Rev. William L. Frederickson

From July 1, 1977

On March 13, 1977, a call was made and accepted by the Rev. William L. Frederickson after he had delivered the morning sermon. The night before, at a reception held at the Church, the Pulpit Committee introduced Mr. and Mrs. Frederickson to the congregation. Rev. Frederickson, a graduate of the Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, Rochester, N. Y., was Chaplain and Teacher at Wayland Academy in Beaver Dam, Wisconsin. Before that he had been Minister of Education at the First Baptist Church in Westfield, N. J.

Rev. Frederickson's ministry was started on July 1, 1977, and on Oct. 9, Rev. and Mrs. Frederickson held Open House at the redecorated and renovated parsonage, Gallaway House, for the church family.

THANKS

Anything, such as this Church History, is not the work or creation of one individual. And I am sure that few people have been so fortunate as to have had the cooperation that the First Baptist Family has given me. Your unselfish response in giving material and information relating to the Church has been beyond anything hoped for. If anything has been left out, the fault is mine and not the lack of material.

To thank everyone who has helped in this history would read like a church membership roll. Thus to all of you - THANKS - both for the opportunity to write this history and to the encouragement given.

Mention must be made of Rev. Frederickson taking time out of a busy schedule to read and edit this history, to Mrs. Carol Hughes for typing and mailing it and to my wife, Maxine, for her encouragement and typing.

George P. Carey