

History
of the
Owingsville

First

Christian

Church

1828 ---- 1998

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*Dedicated
to
the loving memory
of
every person
whose
life has been touched
in some special way
by
The Owingsville First Christian Church*

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Preface

As church historian, and by request, I accepted the task of preparing my third edition of the history of the Owingsville Christian Church, and I take pleasure in writing about the role my church has had in former days.

The Owingsville Christian Church has been my church since 1927 when my family moved from the White Oak community to our new home in Owingsville. I must confess I have a tendency to use personal comments, and I really want to give praise to the happenings of those years. I love my church!

I trust that this book will be accepted and enjoyed by those who read its pages. It is my desire to compile the information into a manuscript worthy of the significant role the church has played in former years, and how the early history influenced the work being carried on in this present day.

History is made each and every day, and many changes and developments have occurred since my first edition in 1973. My second, written in 1988, showed even greater developments.

In preparing this edition, I have made use of material used in those previous manuscripts, and in addition, I have researched new sources of important and exciting information.

I am indebted to many persons for the information included here, and I want to emphasize that the authenticity of my material can be proven only by the source from which it was collected.

My deepest appreciation is extended to former ministers and to the current minister, Rev. Donald R. Snyder, Jr., for the source material and lots of encouragement and inspiration.

Thanks to the following:

Roscoe Pearson for locating materials at Bosworth Library, Lexington Theological Seminary;

Life of Elder John Smith, by John Augustus Williams, President of Daughters College, Harrodsburg, Kentucky. Copyright date, 1870.

Accommodation of Dissent, an article written by the late Gabriel C. Banks, and published in the Cane Ridge Bulletin, Vol. 1 #3, January 1967.

The late Rev. Rhodes Thompson for information on the Cane Ridge Meeting House.

Thanks, especially for scrapbooks prepared through the years, and to collected church bulletins and the church Messenger.

A very special thanks to Mrs. Nancy Snyder for her hours of typing and for material on The Life of Elder John Smith which she researched for her class at Morehead State University, and her willingness to work with me.

I wish to express my appreciation to the members of the Board of the Owingsville First Christian Church who serve so faithfully.

I am grateful for the suggestions made by the publishing firm and for their efficient work in finishing the book.

Lorena G. Reynolds
1997

History of the Owingsville Christian Church

IN THE BEGINNING

"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Hebrews: 11-1

It had to be a foundation of faith that gave birth to the early churches. It must have been difficult to find among the pioneers, one or more individuals who had one central idea . . . a purpose for establishing a community of believers who would be willing to work together in attaining their spiritual goal.

A church never reaches maturity. Any church must strive to progress, to reach out into the world, to spread its influence, and to be prepared to accept changes which are certain to take place under circumstances and within the lives of people.

Many times the foundations of those early churches were shaken by unexpected changes; many times the pioneers had to call upon their faith for strength to endure.

The Owingsville Christian Church had its beginning in the early days of our country's history, and it has survived the many changes which affected its growth through the years.

This church was greatly influenced by a religious revival which swept across what is now Kentucky and Tennessee.

The theory upon which this revival began was difficult to understand. It seemed that the early leaders wanted to hold to their creed, and in doing so, they met with dissension year after year.

Cane Ridge Meeting House

The Cane Ridge Meeting House in Bourbon County was the central location of this strong Christian movement. In fact, Cane Ridge was often called the cornerstone of the Christian movement.

Many records verify the little log meeting house as being the site of gatherings led by Barton W. Stone, a Presbyterian preacher from North Carolina. His preaching brought forth principals upon which the Christian Church was built.

Stone was in disagreement with some of the Presbyterian beliefs, so he and a few other preachers went apart, calling themselves Christians. This must have been in the early 1800s.

Other preachers who were prominent in this early movement were Thomas Campbell and his son, Alexander Campbell, and Raccoon John Smith, a powerful Baptist preacher living in Kentucky. The names of Asa Maxey, Thomas Chilton, and Joel Parker were strong leaders in the Cane Ridge locations, as well.

The belief in "unity of the spirit in the bond of peace" was produced by Barton W. Stone. In fact, Stone was really the pioneer leader of the idea of Christian unity. He said that the simplest basis that Christians could have was the Word of God.

The late Dr. Gabriel Banks wrote an article which was published in the Cane Ridge Bulletin in 1967. In this article, he gave proof of his support of Stone's idea on unity, and declared that this was the basic idea upon which all Christian churches would be supported.

Quoting from this article, he said, "There is no place for anything narrow and exclusive in the Christian faith. Jesus said to His Jewish followers, 'other sheep have I which are not of this fold. Them also I must bring.' Christ's church is truly a universal church in every sense of the word. Any genuine Christian is heir to all the historic help and strength and faith of the whole church"

This was truly the idea expressed not only for the Cane Ridge Church, but for all Christian churches.

THE CANE RIDGE MEETING HOUSE



The Cane Ridge Meeting House is so much a part of Christian Church history, it seems to be important to copy some materials written and published by the late Reverend Rhodes Thompson.

"Built in 1791, the Cane Ridge Meeting House was built by settlers who migrated from North Carolina under the leadership of a Presbyterian minister, the Reverend Robert W. Finley. (He had been directed to this location by Daniel Boone who pointed it out as the Cane Ridge because of the extensive cane breaks found there.)

"The pioneers went into the surrounding forests, cutting blue-ash logs to be used in constructing the church."

The church was said to be thirty by fifty feet in size with a ceiling fifteen feet high.

"Three immense girders, sixteen inches square, hewn with a broad-ax, tied the walls together with whipsaws, and the roof of clapboards was attached to the sheathing and held in place by wooden pins."

"The main entrance was from the west and extended through the center to another door on the east side. The pulpit was built in the alcove and was boxed-up having steps leading up to it."

"The old church had a gallery where slaves sat," Rev. Thompson wrote. Entrance to these seats was gained by means of a ladder. The dirt floor was in later years covered with a puncheon floor.

It is a known fact that many such buildings suffered from deterioration, and in later years this fact came to the attention of the church leaders. In 1957, a beautiful Cane Ridge Shrine was built to enclose the little log meeting house. This shrine, the fulfillment of a way to share our heritage was completed at the cost of \$100,000, by members of the Christian Church movement.

The Owingsville First Christian Church is proud to have this quaint structure to be a part of its historical background.



❧ Elder John Smith ❧

No one could possibly look back to the beginning of the Owingsville Christian Church without meeting a man who was so much a part of its history.

Elder John Smith, "Raccoon John Smith" as he was familiarly called, gave his wisdom, his influence, and his faith in God as a supportive strength that the church needed.

Elder Smith was born October 15, 1784 in Sullivan County, Tennessee, and throughout his early life he was under the strong influence of parental guidance. His father, George Smith, was even-tempered, gentle, and a man of few words . . . those words gained respect.

John's mother, Rebecca Bowen Smith, an Irish lady had a strong influence on John's life. It was she who taught him to begin every effort with determination to promote it without delay.

Not having the opportunity to study in schools, John probably learned to read and study the New Testament, for it was usually the only book available to him.

In early manhood, John felt that salvation could come only to the wicked, and it was only through prayer that this idea was conquered. With his self-triumph, he made his confession and was baptized by Isaac Denton, the 27th of December, 1804, in the waters of Clear Fork.

Isaac Denton hoped that John would accept a call from the Lord to become a minister. Robert F. Terrill, an educated man gave John the good fortune of studying at Terrill's home where he was invited to live. It was there that he toiled during the day and studied at night.

On December 9, 1806, John Smith married Anne Townsend, the first and only maiden he had ever loved. Smith grieved over his lack of "learning" and considered that a misfortune. He tried going to school after his marriage, but it proved to be a hardship for Anne to care for their four children and tend the farm, so he gave it up.

The Smiths were poor, but real poverty was never felt. Their cabin of logs, dirt floors, and stoneless hearth had no appearance of luxury, but they (and the majority of their neighbors) became accustomed to living with meager means.

At one time, John had taken his family to Alabama where he hoped to make some money on land speculation, and while there, he continued to preach.

It was in 1808 when John Smith was ordained as a minister. His influence on neighbors and his acquaintance with other religious leaders led him to become more serious about extending his ministerial effort.

The family of John Smith suffered a tragic fire which claimed the lives of two of his four children, and the loss of his cabin home. The tragedy was so great for John's wife, Anne, and she died soon after. Smith, himself, became very ill, but he recovered.

Family Ties in Kentucky

Smith had strong family ties in Kentucky, (He was the grandfather of Mrs. Molly Nesbitt and Mrs. Lella Walden of Owingsville). This could have been the reason, after the family tragedy, that he returned to the bluegrass section of Kentucky, and settled temporarily near Crab Orchard.

In later years, John Smith married Nancy Hurt, and eleven children were born to this union. The following years were spent in a happy relationship.

In 1818, Smith and his family moved to Montgomery County, in Kentucky. He preached at churches in Mt. Sterling, Grassy Lick, and Spencer.

In 1828, John Smith began organizing churches in Sharpsburg and Owingsville in Bath County.

In spite of his lack of education, Smith was said to have held a place of prominence at various gatherings throughout the areas in which he lived and preached.

What kind of person was Raccoon John Smith? It was said of him that "few men ever achieved so many single-handed victories, and yet never put a trumpet to his lips to sound abroad his triumphs."

At one time, Smith was asked to comment on his life, and he gave a quick reply: "I have never aspired to any notoriety, my brethren, my only object through all my public life has been to do all the good I could without the least craving after what the world called fame."

On November 4, 1861, Smith's wife, Nancy, died in Georgetown, Kentucky, and he came to make his new home with his daughter, Maria M. Lee, of Owingsville, Kentucky. He also spent some time with his other daughter, Emma S. Ring, of Mexico, Missouri.

Elder Smith's preaching was often negatively questioned, and he was subjected to criticism. He resisted charges made against him, and continued to preach in Kentucky, considering this his home.

As he grew older, Smith became very frail in body. However, his strong devotion to the cause of Christianity often led him to forget bodily function in order to accomplish a purpose which he had on his mind. The spirit that dwelt within overpowered the influence of outward decay. When the cause he loved was in jeopardy, he regarded neither danger nor suffering to defend that cause.

It was said of Smith that whether he attacked wrong or held out for truth, "he never counted his enemies. It never mattered to him whether they were ten or ten thousand strong."

Smith continued to work faithfully even though a palsied and ill body forced him to be fed like a child.

In February, 1868, Elder John Smith was called from his ministry, and he was buried by the side of his wife, Nancy, in the Lexington, Kentucky, cemetery.

A portrait of Elder John Smith was given to the College of the Bible at Lexington by the Mexico, Missouri church. Mrs. A. W. Walden was instrumental in securing this unusual portrait of her grandfather. She was also responsible for sending her grandfather's strong box to the college library for safekeeping. This box contains receipts and records, and also some coin-silver teaspoons treasured by the Smiths.

The Owingsville Christian Church

The Owingsville Christian Church was organized in 1828 by Elder John Smith who took the Scripture as the only rule of faith. It was one of the earliest churches of the religious movement. This church can proudly claim Elder Smith as the strong leader in its beginning history.

The first ten years of the history of this church gave few and incomplete records. A reorganization was made in 1838.

Prior to this date, it is a supposition that groups of early settlers held their religious services in open air or in the various homes of the early settlements.

Later, as the settlers realized the need for a place of worship, they built a frame structure on a plot of ground which was most likely donated by Elder Smith.

The exact date of this structure cannot be verified, but in 1848, a committee was appointed "to look after the upkeep of the building."

This frame building was used until 1889, and was then replaced with a brick structure. (It cannot be determined the reason for this replacement, but the congregation's growth is the most likely and most reasonable claim.)

It is historically true that this building burned in 1893 when a large fire destroyed much of the town.

Dr. A. W. Walden, husband of Lella Lee Walden, the granddaughter of Elder Smith, was the author of a history of the Owingsville Christian Church. Written in 1928, this paper gives a comprehensive description of the tragic fire, and parts of this story are being included at this time.

Dr. Walden had a unique and expressive language, and he wrote: "It was greatly to the credit of our women that they worked so nobly, undaunted by the flames, carrying out the heavy pews." The pulpit and the Bible were carried out undamaged, according to the records.

It has been noted that the chimney of the old church withstood the fire in an upright position, and that the new structure was erected to include this huge, brick chimney. The new structure bears the date 1894, and is the building now occupied.

Through the years, this new brick structure, which was built in 1894, has been the home of the Owingsville Christian Church, and it has held its place in the center of town that chose to develop around it.

The unique and beautiful windows of the artistic stained-glass have added beauty to the exterior and the interior of the church, and they date back to the year 1894. There has always been a question as to the origin of the windows. Some of the older citizens of the town suggest that the windows were salvaged from the 1893 fire, but with such destructive flame, it seems unreasonable that this could be true. Others claim that the art glass was imported from Italy. Records have never been found to verify their origin.

In later years, the frames of these have been repaired, and in 1972 the windows were covered completely with a storm glass.

In 1935, the plastered ceiling of the sanctuary was encased with paneling, adding interest and beauty to the interior of the church. A recent inquiry concerning the huge beams supporting the ceiling gave reason for some discussion and research. These beams of natural beauty are decorative as well as serving what seems to be support. Without finding any records as to their origin, it is supposed they were placed in their position when the 1894 structure was built.

New Sunday School rooms were realized with the addition of an annex at the rear of the main church building. This was made possible by a bequeathed amount in 1913.

The beautiful chandelier suspended from the high ceiling of the sanctuary was originally lighted by the use of oil. In later years, it was wired for electricity, and reflectors were added to increase its lighting potential.

The chandeliers in the foyer were presented as a gift in 1980. They were being "no longer used" by the Presbyterian Church, and were obtained from the Presbyterian Board, renovated and installed in the Owingsville Christian Church, thanks to Randolph Richardson.

It was in 1951 when the large area beneath the church was transformed into an all-purpose room with a 2,500 square foot area complete with kitchen, tables, chairs, and facilities for church and community programs. The front room of this area was later made into a formal fellowship room and was dedicated to the memory of the Rev. George C. Frey who worked hard to realize his dream.

Another improvement to be noted in this area was the installation of a drop-ceiling over the kitchen in 1987. New tile flooring, and a wide walnut step at the rear of the basement space added to the convenience. The gift of a beautiful nature mural placed on an unattractive bare wall added interest and personality to the facility.

Other changes include sliding doors to separate areas for Sunday School classes and committee meetings, and the installation of two new furnaces with air conditioning in 1980.

Church Served by Many Ministers

Records show that the early church was served by a great number of ministers, and that some were known to serve only one year.

Pioneer preachers were known to labor long and hard, and oftentimes they worked with little or no pay. In fact, they considered their labors to be a faithful service to the church.

Elder John Smith was one of the pioneers of Kentucky. He was a great man, and an aggressive preacher. He had a sense of humor, which no doubt helped in those early days. He also had a power of reasoning which gave him the ability to gain victories.

It was to be noted that Elder John Smith served the Owingsville church, but it was not known to what extent he ministered. It was said that every time the church bell would ring, he would go as if it was a special call for him.

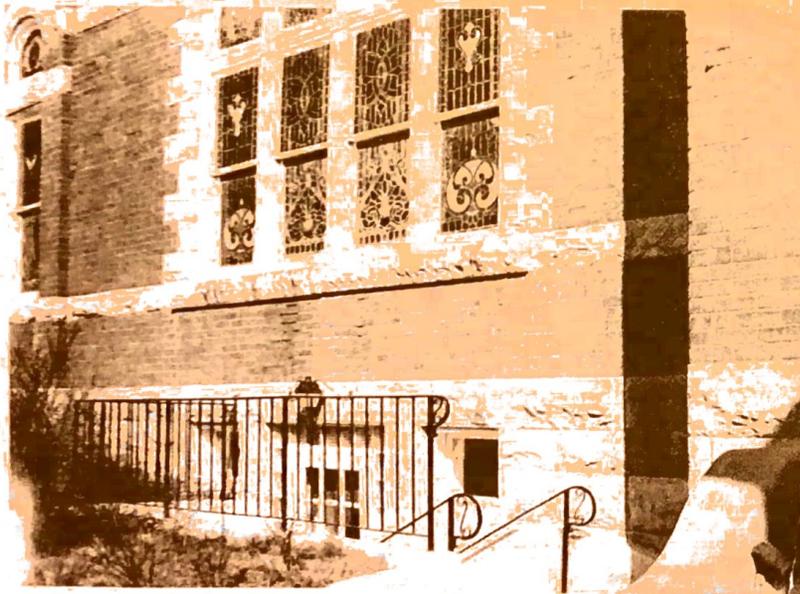
One occasion, a mountain preacher came to church unannounced, and in his prayer he began to flounder, and finally said to Bro. Smith, "Please finish this prayer for me." However, Elder Smith made a quick reply by saying, "I will not try to finish this one, I will make a new one."

An early and prominent religious leader was Asa Maxey. However, it is questionable if he had a place in the history of the Owingsville church's ministry.

Maxey was a native of the state of Virginia, and came to Kentucky about 1800 when his parents, Thomas and Olivia Maxey, settled on Slate Creek.

After his marriage to Catherine Steele, daughter of Henry Steele, of Stepstone, he moved to Owingsville in 1815. It has been said that he and Jacob Steele finished the front of the Owings House, and also assisted in the building of several log houses in the Owingsville area.

In the year of our beginning, Maxey and Elder John Smith agreed to travel together and evangelize for one year, and a great number of people were baptized by this effort.



It is true that Asa Maxey's leadership was responsible for the organization of churches in Morgan, Bath, and Fleming counties.

John Curran Maxey, the son of Asa Maxey, served as pastor of the White Oak Christian Church in Bath County.

Samuel McCormick, a pioneer, served as minister of the Owingsville Christian Church in 1853, and J. T. Holland was the minister in 1868. It is not known how long they served the church. However, following this date, Moses E. Lard held a great revival with large crowds in attendance, and many people were baptized.

Elder W. T. Tibbs, R. C. Ricketts, and Thomas Munnell preached in the Owingsville Christian Church during the years 1869-79.

Thomas Munnell suggested building a baptistry in 1879, and he was appointed to raise the money for that purpose.

In 1880, records show that Elder Henry Turner served the church for nine months for fifty dollars a month. (It was the same year that one dozen hymnals were purchased for four dollars and eighty cents.)

Other short-term ministers serving the church were Jasper Stafford, Bro. Cook, and Charles Henry Catron.

In 1886, Elder J. C. Walden, father of A. W. Walden, moved from Cynthiana to Owingsville and served as pastor for nearly four years. Succeeding him, Clinton Lockhart served the church for one year. He was followed by A. P. Aten in 1893.

It was in 1894 that Brother Thad Tinsley began a four-year ministry. He was a most beloved minister who organized many churches in the county and held many county meetings.

Tinsley was a graduate of the College of the Bible in Lexington. He served as minister of the Ridgewood Christian Church in Brooklyn, New York. During that time, he returned to Owingsville Christian Church to celebrate his fifty years in the ministry. At the age of 75, he suffered a fatal heart-attack.

Later years in the history of the Owingsville Christian Church include the following pastorates: Elder G. W. Porter, Robert Campbell, Kent Pendleton, George W. Miller and M. C. Hart. Bro. Hart served as pastor from 1918 to 1921, and was followed by Henry S. Ficklin filling a four-year pastorate.

In 1927, the long-term ministry of George C. Frey saw the growth and development of a "village church into a large-Town and Country Church."

When George C. Frey retired in 1964, his successor was Robert I. Collins of the Point Pleasant (Kentucky) Christian Church. He served from September 1964 to November 1965.

Other ministers serving the Owingsville Christian Church in more recent years include Stephen J. Brock, Hugh H. Owen, Jr., William H. Hawkins, and Richard V. James. (More extensive coverage of these ministers follow this summary.)

The Rev. Donald R. Snyder's ministry began November 21, 1993, and he is currently serving the church as this historical message is written.





The Ministry of George C. Frey



When the Reverend George C. Frey accepted the call to the Owingsville Christian Church, there was no thought of spending a total of thirty-seven years of his life in that one ministry. However, in the years that followed, Rev. Frey and his wife, Callie Mae, learned that pastoral duties can become so extensive as to include the interests of an entire community.

Yes, it is most unusual for a minister to witness the development and growth of a small town church in a rural community.

In 1927, after completing his work at Transylvania University and graduation at the Lexington Theological Seminary, he and Mrs. Frey came to Owingsville to make their home.

During the years of his ministry, Rev. and Mrs. Frey made new and lasting friendships in the Owingsville church and in other churches of Bath county.

The Rev. Frey served faithfully in the civic organizations, receiving among many awards: a Bronze Plaque from the Kentucky Association of Soil conservation Districts, and a special award from the Rowan County District.

Other citations during his ministry included: 1) Minister of the year by the Disciples of Christ of the National Convention, Portland, Oregon, 1953. 2) Chosen Citizen of the year in Bath County, 1957.

3) Received a citation from Transylvania University as one of the outstanding graduates. 4) His National Education Day Sermon, Honorable Mention Award in 1929 was entitled, Religious Education. 5) His work with 4-H Clubs through the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture and Home Economics received special recognition. 6) In August, 1955, the Freys were delegates at the Fifth World Convention of Disciples of Christ Churches in Toronto, Canada.

Mr. Frey's interest in the community as a whole was exemplified in a very special recognition as "Rural Minister of the Year." This national award was not only a recognition, but a challenge to continue his work in this community.

Mr. Frey's minister friend, the Reverend Forest L. King, wrote a deserving summary of Rev. Frey's qualifications for such an honor. Published in the 1954 World Call, Rev. King wrote the following selected portions:

"A local church becomes significant when it touches many areas of life. It becomes a truly important church when it identifies with all persons in the community in such a way that they will know that the church is seeking to serve them in the Spirit of Christ."

Rev. Frey is an outstanding example of one man who made possible the growth of the Owingsville Christian Church. It was "through his recognition of the opportunities in the rural field, and the successful method of solving the problems that arise in a changing America of which Bath County shares a part" that he was accepted to receive such award.

Rev. Frey was reluctant to take the title of Rural Minister as a means of glorifying himself. Never in his ministry was he willing to accept any honor without praise and recognition of his faithful companion, Callie Mae Frey, also a graduate of Transylvania University.

Mrs. Frey always received equal credit and equal recognition for the many accomplishments of his ministry. She served well in the youth programs and the youth organizations showed signs of her leadership through many years.

In 1954, she was invited as guest speaker for the Tenth Annual Town and Country Institute at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa.

Mrs. Frey was frequently called to speak and to lead in county and district women's meetings, and her effort was always available in helping to bring about community spirit.

Mrs. Frey was also efficient in handling household chores and at the same time fill her position as partner with her husband.

Surely it is true that being at home in the parsonage can be very different from being at home somewhere else. There are friendly contacts, necessary and unnecessary phone calls, and schedules of all kinds. Meeting these can be difficult and consider her own life as well.

In discussing her role as a minister's wife she said, "I try not to play the part or act the part, but to live the part." She always wanted to be herself.

Mrs. Frey's idea was that a minister's wife cannot do everything, and that in the church, she will do whatever any other Christian can do with her talents and time. She wanted her talents to be used for the building of God's Kingdom on Earth.

Rev. and Mrs. Frey worked together to magnify the life of a rural community by the services that reached beyond denominational lines. They valued the respect of the Owingsville Christian Church membership, and expressed appreciation for the freedom they had to try any method that would promote the work of the Kingdom. At no time were they bound by tradition. Whether community health problems or improved methods of farming were the concern of the people, they chose to help.

The Rural Minister Award came to Mr. Frey through his total commitment to the town and country church program.

In an article written by Mr. Frey, he wrote: "Each of our experiments has been an improvement over the last, and we shall seek to better our programs and widen our group of participants."

"It is impossible to measure the importance and significance of an organization by size," he states. "A smaller church can become big when it identifies itself not only with the interests and concerns of its membership, but also with the concerns of individuals in the community."

Being a rural minister was so much an important part of the life of George C. Frey that he not only sought to minister to the people of rural Bath County to whom he was dedicated but he tried to inspire others to follow him, and accept the challenge to fill the needs of the rural community.

"The rural church does not call young men to a place, but rather to dedicate a way of life," Frey wrote in an article entitled, Some Satisfaction of a Rural Ministry.

Other quotes from this particular article written in 1950 seem worthy of copy!

"This field is calling for young men who with all their professional training will not stress the professional side of ministry but who will bring to their tasks a tempered personality, common sense, love for their people, and consecration to their task."

He wrote, "The call is for young men with a variety of knowledge and interests other than a specialty; young men who will launch their ministry on the basis of service and friendship; young men who will decide on the way of life that will make them at home among their people, keep succeeding at something and happy in that success, and will exemplify Christianity in their community."

Rev. Frey stated that the greatest privilege of the rural minister was to influence people by means of his preaching. His influence increases when he identifies himself with his people, "preaching so they can understand him."

In addition to the honors they received during their ministry of thirty-seven years, Rev. and Mrs. Frey were pleased to have their church receive special recognition, as well.

The Owingsville Christian Church was honored by the Town and

Country Department of the Kentucky Council of Churches, an honor given by the University of Kentucky; twice the church received a monetary gift for progress and community service from Sears Roebuck Foundation in a development program of churches of all denominations.

In 1953, the church was honored again for outstanding community service. This citation of merit was presented at a Fellowship dinner in the Lexington Leadership Institute.

Many changes were brought about during the ministry of the Rev. Frey. Probably the most extensive change in the structure was the excavation of a twenty-five hundred square foot basement area and the completion of an all-purpose room adding to the convenience of the community.

A more complete description of this change has been covered in Structural Changes, but since this change was the dream and fulfillment of the hopes of Rev. Frey, we want to remind our readers that the front room of this space was made into a formal fellowship area and dedicated in 1968 to the memory of the Reverend Frey.

The George C. Frey Memorial Fellowship Hall was rightly named for the person who had the strong determination to bring to fulfillment this worthwhile dream.

Other conveniences added to the church during the Frey ministry include the installation of hearing aids and a public address system for the convenience of those who had hearing problems.

In 1963, the first Hammond electric organ replaced the pump-type organ. In 1951, a beautiful lighted cross was presented by and dedicated to the memory of A. T. Byron family.

Christian Church Messenger

The Christian Church Messenger began its recording and reporting church events in 1931, and it has been successfully written through the years. Its files are more like a record book than a newspaper. The Messenger has listed new members, and also records the deaths among our membership. All meetings, conventions, financial status and church news can be found in this church paper. Members who graduate from high school, persons who are ill and in need of special prayer are listed. During the dark days of "war and troubled times," a listing of servicemen was made.

Not only did the Christian Church Messenger record the news in 1931, but since, it has been a record worthy of the task it performs.

A "lost" copy of the 1933 Christian Church Messenger was discovered while the current research was in progress. An unusual 5th Sunday evening service for the young people was described as follows:

"Four young ministers from Transylvania University and the College of the Bible conducted the service . . . Roy Hulan led the service, A. R. Robertson offered the prayer, John Chenault sang a solo, and Edwin Bobbitt preached the sermon. These were fine young men who had dedicated their lives to Christian service."

Another bit of news from that 1933 copy described a "special and successful" Easter Sunday morning service. Guests included the Mt. Sterling Commandery of Knights Templar, members of the Masonic Lodge of Mt. Sterling and Bath Lodge No. 55. The worship service was led by the Grand Prelate of the Commandery. The choir rendered beautiful and appropriate music, and a special anthem for the occasion. The sermon, "Building an Eternal Temple" was a discussion of the practical immortality emphasizing the beliefs cherished by the men who were guests. The auditorium was completely filled at this service.

It is not surprising that the Rev. Frey, the long-time pastor of the Owingsville Christian Church found satisfaction through serving in the rural community in which his influence touched the lives of its

people. Their decision to remain in Owingsville after retirement spoke of their love and devotion to their church, to its people, and to the rural community of Bath County.

Recalling his long-time pastorate, Rev. Frey has this to say: "The minister who stays in the community over the years enjoys some of the advantages of close friendships with the people. He has gone with them through their troubles and their sorrows, and he has shared many of their joys."

Rev. Frey justified his years of ministry by these words from his retirement message: "We wanted to plant our lives where we could grow." He said that they were like an ordinary tree that could grow in many kinds of soil. "If we thought of going elsewhere," he said, "I thought I might do better if I left myself where I was planted, and I still think I was right."

As difficult as it was for him to retire, it was difficult for his congregation, as well. Through the years that followed, he was often quoted, honored, and remembered in a fond and special way.

The Rev. George C. Frey enjoyed three good years of retirement before he was called from his earthly life in April, 1967. Mrs. Frey's death came February 21, 1990.

The retirement of the Rev. George C. Frey in 1964 brought as the new minister, Reverend Robert I. Collins, of Point Pleasant, Kentucky.

He assumed his duties as minister of the Owingsville Christian Church, and served for a short term, dating September, 1964 to November, 1965.

The Brock Ministry

Stephen J. Brock, a graduate of Transylvania College and the Lexington Theological Seminary accepted the pastorate of the Owingsville Christian Church in July, 1966.

His three-year ministry saw several changes in the church, including the pastor's study being moved from the parsonage to the church, thus meeting the need for greater convenience of study material and a more private pastor-member relationship.

Other changes can be listed as a bulletin board in the east vestibule, a guest register desk, communion receptacles at the church pews.

It was during the Brock ministry that the church adopted a new constitution bringing about changes in board organization.

The new constitution introduced the plan of naming board members to be elected and to serve on an alternate schedule. The naming of deaconesses, junior deaconesses, and junior deacons was also initiated.

Reverend Brock's ministry included the opening of a nursery in the basement area. The maintenance of this furnished room was a convenience for young parents, giving them opportunity to attend morning worship. This facility was administered by selected women of the church.

At the time of his ministry, Rev. Brock served as president of the Ministerial Association, president of District I Christian Churches, and the first campaign chairman for the Cystic Fibrosis campaign in Bath County.

It can be noted that a new parsonage was purchased during the Brock ministry. At a cost of \$25,000, the new home was made available on Malibu Drive in Owingsville, and was bought with funds from the sale of the past parsonage, plus funds in the Building Fund.

Rev. Brock resigned in April, 1969, and accepted a call to the Santa Clara Christian Church in Dayton, Ohio.

The Ministry of Hugh H. Owen, Jr.



The Owingsville Christian Church, following two rather brief pastorates, was searching for a leader who possessed the qualities essential to improving the spiritual welfare of the church.

The pulpit committee, selected by the official board, called the Reverend Hugh H. Owen, Jr. to accept this new pastorate.

It was July, 1969, when Rev. Owen, his wife, Pat, and son Michael Hugh moved into the new parsonage. The second son, Stephen Daniel was born September 12 of that same year.

Having had previous experience as a teacher, and entering his second professional effort later in life, the Rev. Owen accepted his ministerial duties by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ in a sincere and enthusiastic manner.

While never judging another, he set his standard high, and accepted the way of Christ as his rule for life.

Rev. Owen appeared to be persistent in doing that which he thought best. This strong character trait was illustrated by the continuance of evening services when the interest of the church was low and attendance was in decline.

Rev. Owen considered the work of any church was the concern of all, so he reached out and found hidden talent in the church membership. He thought each person's ability is accepted for what it is and even the least is appreciated for any contribution toward a better church. He encouraged leadership in others.

❧ The Hawkins Ministry ❧

Rev. Owen was concerned about the lack of interest in the youth program, and soon it was through his encouragement and leadership that the youth program was revived.

It was during his ministry that the "Weekend of Champions" was carried out successfully in September, 1973.

Rev. Owen served as president of District I of the Christian Churches, and he was an organizer and leader in the Community Prayer service which was held the first Saturday of each month.

Mrs. Owen (Pat) had an important role in the church program, as well. Her services with the Christian Women's Fellowship, the youth programs and Vacation Bible School are examples of the quality of leadership she possessed.

In 1971, she and Rev. Owen attended the National convention in Louisville, and the State Assembly of Christian Churches in Covington in 1971 and 1972. Also, they served as delegates to the National Assembly of Christian Churches in Cincinnati in October, 1973.

Family life in the parsonage was commendable, and was greatly enhanced by the presence of two active and intelligent boys, who in addition to making friends, shared their spiritual growth in the church.

Mrs. Owen expressed her ideas of her role in the parsonage by saying that a minister's wife must be ready to make meals late, answer the telephone twenty-four hours a day, handle emergencies by herself, and know at all times that she is in charge.

Mrs. Owen firmly believes in spiritual growth and usefulness. She considers personal and daily devotions to be a priority in her schedule.

Whether in the home or in the church, Rev. Owen has as his first rule of life . . . "Christ first!" This is his rule for living and his rule for serving.

Rev. Owen ministered well to the church and realized a number of people added to the church membership. He decided his work to be completed in February, 1978, and accepted a position in the Edinburgh, Indiana, Christian Church. Mrs. Owen was named Librarian in the Edinburgh Elementary School.

"It has been said, "It's the busy people who do things." That was true when the Reverend William Hawkins accepted the call as minister of the Owingsville Christian Church in July, 1978. He and his wife, Pat, and children, Cindy, Randy, Kim and Patrick, came to the Owingsville Church from Dawson Springs.

Soon after their arrival, they each found an important place in the life of the church and in the community.

Rev. Hawkins was always busy, but he found time to do the things he wanted to do. Writing was one of the those things; he had articles accepted and published in The Disciple, The Disciples Peace Regional newsletters, and the minister's bulletin. In 1980, he was given an Honorable Mention Award for an editorial on "The Free Press" given by the Kentucky Press Association.

Music was another interest, as he wrote many hymns for use in his church services and one of these was accepted for the Lexington Theological Seminary commencement service.

While serving as pastor of the Owingsville Christian Church, Rev. Hawkins completed work on his doctorate and received his Doctor of Ministry from Lexington Theological Seminary.

During his seven-year pastorate, the Rev. Hawkins led the congregation in many new features such as a remodeling-type program, the youth program and the worship service.

In 1979, he planned for adding three Sunday School rooms by having sliding doors installed in the basement area. New carpeting was laid in the Sunday School classrooms, new hymnals and pew Bibles were purchased, and four new hearing aids were added to those in use.

Rev. Hawkins initiated a time of congregational meeting and sharing and worked for a great increase in outreach contributions. He

also began the Tape Ministry, which consisted of taping a portion of the Sunday morning services on a cassette recorder. The tapes were then taken to shut-ins on a weekly basis. The recorded services proved to be most rewarding.

Remember the Alternative? With a steering committee and the enthusiasm of the youth group, it became the fulfillment of a dream. The basement of the church building became a place to gather, listen to records, play ping-pong, an alternative to night life. "Somewhere to go and something to do!"

Adult chaperones were present on a voluntary basis. The Alternative opened on June 15, 1979, and was open on Friday and Saturday nights.



Other special features of the Hawkins' ministry was the presentation of a new Allen Computer organ, given by Robert W. Gilmore as a gift in memory of his wife, Evelyn Fulton Gilmore.

The Allen Digital Computer Organ is unique and subject to great and useful capabilities. It was custom-built to meet the needs of the sanctuary and the congregation capacity.

The dedication service in August, 1979, featured Earl C. Apel, of Morehead State University. Earl was active in musical and honorary societies, serving as treasurer of the American Guild of Organists. He had also served as vice-president of the American Guild of Organists. In addition to his special interests in musical organizations, he was a most talented and accomplished musician.

The Rev. Hawkins accepted the gift of the organ, and expressed "Thanks to Mr. Gilmore who made the gift to the church in memory of Evelyn whose life always inspired us to live with a grateful spirit."

October 15-22, 1979, can be remembered as a special observance held by the Owingsville Christian Church, marking 150 years of witness in the life of the church.

The sesquicentennial observance began with the Sunday morning worship with the Rev. Duke Payne as guest speaker. Rev. Payne had served the church as interim minister prior to Rev. Hawkins ministry.

In the following week, the Rev. James Seale of Paris, conducted revival services and the closing service was given by William Kincaid and the youth organization.

In order to make this observance more historical, Mrs. Eulene Dicken opened her home at 324 West Main Street where she and her late husband, Henry Dicken, had lived.

This home was the residence occupied by Raccoon John Smith for twelve years and is an important part of the Christian Church



history. It is interesting to note that this house was the one which John Smith established and conducted the first Christian Church Sunday School.

Certain points of interest about this historic house deserve to be explained. The house was built in 1839 and is situated in the highest point in the City of Owingsville, according to records. It was said that Gideon Shyrook, a native of Boston, designed the house.

John Smith is given credit for giving the land, the money, and the plans to Maria, his daughter. The residence was known as the J. A. J. Lee home, and much later as the A. W. Walden home.

The Walden's built a front porch around a massive tree that grew in the front yard.

In 1940, the Shanklin Pipers bought the house and did extensive remodeling; they added a "widow's walk" to the top of the roof as an interesting feature. The widow's walk was said to have been copied from houses in the East where war widows watched for their husbands who never returned from overseas duty.

Visiting this interesting and beautiful house added to the historic significance of the Sesquicentennial celebration.

Rev. Hawkins delighted in the talents of his family. Mrs. Hawkins (Pat) had music as her chief interest and made herself fully available in many community events: the May Day pageant, the 4-H talent shows, the Owingsville Community Children's Choir. She taught music in the Elementary school and directed the Bath County High School Chorus. She also served as the Owingsville Christian Church organist.

The Hawkins children participated in athletic events, each making an important contribution.

After seven years in the Owingsville Christian Church ministry, Rev. Hawkins accepted a call of leadership to the congregation of the first Christian Church in Nicholasville. The many friends of the Hawkins family gave them a sincere pledge of prayers and best wishes in their new endeavor.

The Ministry of Richard James



"Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honor preferring one another." Romans 12:10

When the Reverend Richard James responded to a call as minister of the Owingsville Christian Church, his goal for the membership of the church to which he had been called was that they be witnesses to God's love and to one another . . . that they reach out to include others to become a part of a congregation of loving fellowship.

At a special gathering of the church on the eve of his installation, Rev. James stated, "If people see us comforting and encouraging each other, forgiving and being kind to one another, bearing each other's burdens, accepting and praying for one another, then those people will say 'These are the ones I want to be with' ---."

It was June, 1985, when the Rev. Richard V. James and his family came to Owingsville.

The family, Richard, his wife, Mary, and children, David, Stephen, and Laura, settled in and adjusted to their new home and became a well-established part of their new environment.

Rev. James, a native of Norfolk, Virginia, graduated from the University of Virginia. After his graduation in 1967, he married his child-

hood sweetheart, Mary Steffen, making plans to enter the Lexington Theological Seminary, and he and his new wife moved to Kentucky.

Rev. James was presented the opportunity to serve in a non-denominational ministry at Christ Center in Lexington. He served on the staff at the center and had a most rewarding experience from 1967 to 1971.

After his graduation from Seminary, he was ordained to full-time ministry by the Christian Church, Disciples of Christ.

In May, 1971, Rev. James answered a call to the Harlan Christian Church, and served as their pastor for six years. While there, he was actively engaged in ecumenical prayer services. He was made director of a cooperative program for children, an interracial and interdenominational after-school activity.

It was also in Harlan that he served as chairman of the Harlan Appalachian Regional Hospital 24-hour-on-call Chaplaincy Program.

Later wishing to be a part of ministry to lay-people, to relate to the spiritual needs of those in the business world, he had "opened to him" a new type of work as agent for the Commonwealth Life Insurance and later, All-State Insurance.

In the fall of 1984, he turned to pastoring and served leadership roles in the Lafayette Christian Church in Lexington.

Rev. James' ministry in the Owingsville Christian Church began with the forming of new friends in the church and in the community. He preached scriptural sermons, coordinating pastor-lay visitation, promoting special program changes to meet the new minister's goals, and an intensive study of the needs of the church as a whole.

Rev. James was dedicated to his profession and he is to be commended on being very methodical in his pastoral duties, collecting materials and making written plans as they are needed.

Mary is a very supportive wife of the minister and the mother of three. She believes in unity with her husband in his work and in his day-to-day schedule. She is a gracious hostess in her home, opening her home to friends and church.

"God expects me to influence positively the lives of those who have been entrusted to my care," Mrs. James said. She considers it necessary to care for her children as an example for those who have children.

During the time of her residence in Lexington, Mrs. James finished her Medical Technology degree at the University of Kentucky Medical Center. While there, she worked at the St. Joseph Hospital in Lexington, and at the time of her home in Owingsville, she worked as a technician in the laboratory of the St. Claire Medical Center in Morehead.

In addition to being a homemaker and a professional person, she served her church as a Sunday School teacher, and she serves well in the Christian Women's Fellowship.



Rev. James and his family are seriously committed to the teachings of Jesus Christ. In their daily walk, they show the Fruits of the Spirit to be love, joy and peace.

Music holds an important place in the life and work of the family. In church gatherings, Rev. James often includes some type of music. He likes to sing, play the guitar, and the accordion.

During his ministry at the Owingsville Christian Church, Rev. James

promoted some interesting observances, many of which have continued through the years.

One such observance was "Coming Home for Christmas," a special worship service, a catered meal in the Fellowship Hall, and a period of homecoming fellowship with each other.

This first observance was on Sunday, December 14, 1986, and was planned and carried out by the minister and the worship committee, and gave opportunity for members to seek renewal of his/her commitment to Jesus Christ and to the church.

This special observance was enhanced by seasonal banners made by members of the congregation, plus a special bulletin board display done by the local school's Art Department.

The Radio Ministry instituted in the James pastorate has been successfully continued. The Sunday morning worship service can be heard by radio on the first and third Sundays of each month . . . Thanks to the local radio station, WKCA and the faithfulness of Hayes McMakin.

Rev. James and Mary had an active interest in the youth program of the church. Through their encouragement, the youth participated in local and statewide events.

One very rewarding service on Youths Sunday, May 10, 1987, conducted by the youth organization presented Kyle Crager and Jeff Jacobs as guest speakers. Kyle and Jeff, students from Morehead State University, represented the school's Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

A real blessing was received by those who heard these two athletes share their close walk with Jesus Christ.

Other Observances

Other observances which provided inspiration and challenge for members of the Owingsville Christian Church congregation under the leadership of the James ministry were namely:

"Renewing our Faith" emphasizing commitment through Bible reading, twenty-four hour prayer vigils, prayer seminars and special

messages including a musical presentation by twelve talented youth called "Legacy" from Winchester, Kentucky.

"The Disciplines," a study was given to enrich the spiritual lives of the congregation. Richard J. Foster's book, Celebration of Discipline, the path to Spiritual Growth, was selected for this study and included subjects of meditation, prayer, fasting, solitude, service, confession, worship, guidance, and celebration, all disciplines which can be exercised in normal daily schedules.

Another rewarding observance was the film and study of "The Hiding Place," the true story of Corrie ten Boom and her family during World War II in Holland. This study was a part of the School of Christian Living.

Rev. James was active in local community projects. The Kiwanis organization was one in which he took a leading role. He served actively in the annual auction for the financial support of local charities.

During the ministry of Rev. James, he had a deep concern and interest in the business of the church on a regional basis. He served as District I representative on the Regional Board of the Christian Church in Kentucky.

Interest in Cooperative Parish

The Raccoon John Smith Cooperation was a positive interest in which Rev. James served and was deeply pleased by his efforts.

The Cooperative Parish of the Christian Church, Disciples of Christ in Kentucky, is made up of Disciples congregations in Bath, Nicholas, Clark and Montgomery counties. This cooperation is governed by a staff, an Evangelist and a council of laypersons from the churches.

The Cooperative Parish system has many advantages: 1) churches can do things together that they can't or won't do singularly, 2) the parish actions have more community impact, 3) the churches can command access to the "larger church" and the "larger community"

and build long-term relationships with these larger bodies, 4) cooperation parishes teach or train individual church leaders in group and community skills to strengthen the local church.

In making his decisions concerning the Owingsville Christian Church to which he was truly dedicated, Rev. James was quoted as saying: "I love the church, I love the people, I love the community." Mary also loved her work at St. Claire Medical Center and the children were happy in their schools.

Rev. James was interested in church growth, and especially spiritual growth, so when he felt that continuing to serve it might not be best for the church, he offered his resignation to the official board, August, 1992.

Closing his seven-year ministry at the Owingsville Christian Church, the Rev. James and his family made plans to accept a new role of leadership in the Burkesville Christian Church in Burkesville, Kentucky.



Serving Interims

In the life of a church, there is cause for a vacancy in leadership when one minister goes to another position and a new leader has yet to be chosen to fill the vacancy. This presents a need for an interim minister.

The Payne Ministry

Following the resignation of Rev. Owen, the vacancy was filled by the Reverend Duke Payne, of Paris, as an interim. He and his wife, Alline, and daughter, Susan, spend weekends at the parsonage and served the Owingsville Christian Church very capably until July, 1978.

The Cameron Ministry

Following the Hawkins ministry, the Reverend Ray Cameron filled the vacancy as interim minister, serving six months and commuting from his home in Lexington.

The Riley Ministry

In August of 1992, following the resignation of Rev. James, the interim position was filled by the Reverend Jo Riley of Lexington.

Commuting from Lexington each Sunday and at other times when needed, Rev. Riley graciously accepted his duties, meeting the needs of the congregation and ministering to those confined to their homes, and those in nursing homes and hospitals.

The Rev. Riley soon won the hearts of the congregation, and he became aware of their interests and the needs of the church.

October 3, 1993, the pulpit committee issued an invitation for Rev. Donald R. Snyder, to deliver a trial sermon.

Installation services for Rev. Snyder was held on December 5, 1993, and the Rev. Riley closed his interim with sincere thanks for the courtesy shown him by the congregation.



The Ministry of Donald R. Snyder, Jr.

As the Owingsville First Christian Church opens its leadership to a new ministry . . . a new family in the church, there will always be a challenge.

Often this challenge reminds us that there will be changes, and there will be new and different ways of cooperating with this person or persons who will be leading.

It was on November 21, 1993, when the Reverend Donald R. Snyder, Jr., and his family began their ministry in the Owingsville First Christian Church.

Very soon they became an important part of our community. Nancy, wife of the Rev. Snyder, was a strong leader with her minister husband. The children, Donnie, III, Joshua, Melissa, Abigail and Michal completed the family circle. They, too, were prominent in the youth programs of the church.

Before coming to Owingsville, the Rev. Snyder served as chaplain at Wayside Christian Mission. (Wayside is a homeless shelter located in Louisville, Kentucky.) He also served as the coordinator for the Men's Transition Shelter and provided administrative support.

Rev. Snyder received his B.A. degree in 1980 from Westminster College in western Pennsylvania. He attended Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in South Hamilton, Massachusetts, and received a

Master of Divinity in 1985. He later earned a Master of Sacred Theology in 1991 from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

Rev. Snyder has served pastorates in Ohio, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts, giving him a variety of experience in both suburban and rural ministry.

According to the Rev. Snyder, it took a while to make the change from a mission ministry to a pastoral ministry. Even though he realized the goal of his new ministry at the First Christian Church as an adjustment, he began a program of prayerful visitation with his new congregation and made plans to lead the church forward.

Rev. Snyder stated his "number one goal" as pastor of this church is to make it a vital congregation. "That does not mean that we are the biggest or the busiest," Rev. Snyder said. "Rather it reveals the desire for us as a congregation to pray about and pursue God's vision for our church."

Rev. Snyder believes and often emphasizes that "God has a plan for our church," and in the early weeks of his ministry, he presented to the official board of the church, a vision statement of the purpose as follows:

"To assist the people of Owingsville, Bath County, to examine the importance of Christian faith in their lives, so that as disciples, they may be spiritually nurtured for continued growth and encouraged to reach out by sharing faith and ministering to the community."

"In pursuing this vision, I feel that it is imperative that we be biblically based, Christian-centered, and spirit-filled," Rev. Snyder said. This should be a witness for Jesus Christ through worship, education, fellowship, and outreach.

"The Owingsville First Christian Church can look ahead with faith and hope for greater achievements in God's work," Rev. Snyder said.

"The first challenge to be accepted is for each family to avail themselves of the Sunday morning worship services to increase their faith through worship," Rev. Snyder encouraged.

Rev. Snyder introduced two key areas on which to work: 1) to provide for the spiritual development of the present church membership, and 2) the need for outreach.

First, Rev. Snyder stated, "Growth cannot be real if we are not nurturing the faith of the people who are already here."

Secondly, he stated "there is a need for outreach through evangelism, mission, and social outreach in the name of Jesus Christ."

In order to carry through his ideas, Rev. Snyder began in September of 1994, to preach a series of sermons entitled "Catch the Vision".

"Moving forward means growth," Rev. Snyder said, "and affords the congregation a time to reflect on the past, and more importantly, a challenge to look prayerfully at the future."

Rev. Snyder said, "With vision that looks to God's direction and that seeks to move forward, the congregation will grow spiritually and numerically, as well."

Anniversary Celebration

Given an opportunity to look at our past, a special date was remembered and on October 2, 1994, the 100th anniversary of our sanctuary, a special celebration was planned.

Celebration brings people together in a joyful time, and furthermore, a time for people to rededicate their lives to God.

This special day consisted of a planned worship service, followed by a time of fellowship, and a display of the church's historical memorabilia.

Many changes and improvements have been made since the 100th anniversary and as we look to the new year, we can see the wonderful opportunities that lie ahead.

The Rev. Snyder listed three areas which he hoped to place in focus for 1995. They were "the opening of Prayer Partners," an ac-

tive prayer ministry . . . Lay visitation teams to allow church members to participate in a home-bound program, and thirdly, he emphasized the participation of congregation membership to be deeply involved in the promotion of God's vision for our church.

Since coming to Owingsville, Rev. Snyder has been active in many community interests, some of which we make mention: a) Bath County Literary Program, b) Gateway Homeless Coalition, Board President, c) Hazel Green District, President, 1996-98, d) Gateway ADD Homeless Planning board, e) Owingsville Ministerial Association, f) Owingsville/Bath County Chamber of Commerce, President 1996-97, g) strong interest in Boy Scouts by welcoming members of Troop 222 to special worship and celebration on Scout Sunday.



There is always a sincere commitment to the family life of which he has the following to say, "With a large family, it seems there is something always happening; yet Nancy and I try to provide a good environment for our children. We have expectations of them so that they might grow in their faith as they face life's choices. We try to be open and frank with our children about issues they will face."

Mrs. Snyder manages the parsonage duties and serves at the Bath County News-Outlook as staff writer, feature writer and photographer.

Service Features

The Owingsville First Christian Church has many current features to challenge the membership. Whenever there is personal commitment, things of value can happen.

A Sunday afternoon schedule ministry to the three nursing homes in the community affords an option for volunteer support. The nursing home patients are very receptive to the comfort and courage offered by the church.

Home Communion is another service offered by the church leadership to those persons who cannot attend Sunday services.

Bible Study sessions offer a variety of study material; some focus on books of the bible and others are offered by selected topics. A special video study on Parenting Adolescents is one example of such being given on a volunteer basis.

Hearing the Word is an integral part of our journey of faith. A recent opportunity of this type provides for a tape ministry in which the New Testament can be heard on tapes over a period of selected time by choice. By listening to the tape twenty minutes per day, the entire New Testament can be completed in sixty days. This opportunity is offered to anyone, but is especially valuable for home-bound individuals. The tapes entitles "Faith Comes by Hearing" are provided through Hosanna Bible Societies."

The Acorn Ministry, a special listening time for the "little folk" of the church is being given by the Rev. Snyder on each Sunday morning. A five-minute object lesson and a closing prayer at the front of the church provides a quiet worship service for the smaller boys and girls before going to the nursery. (Who knows how many adults listen, as well?) In the nursery, the children have additional lessons and a craft, as well.

A program beginning April 6, 1997 is a special time for children and youth, and is called the Treasure Club. Under the supervision of adult volunteers, the activities include music, crafts, stories, games and snacks. This is an exciting and fun-filled Sunday evening from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. The initial theme, The Fruits of the Spirit, will be the basis for learning and worship.

Other membership challenges are presently being offered in the church so that choices of service are available. These include an adult choir, a children's choir, Sunday School classes for all ages, full-time nursery, various committees, housekeeping chores, greeting personnel, scheduled visits to the three nursing homes, C.Y.F. activities (Christian Youth Fellowship), special fund-raising projects, production and mailing of The Messenger on a regular basis, ordering materials and distributing of same.

All women of the church are encouraged to participate in the Christian Women's Fellowship. This organization, which meets the second Tuesday of each month, has a variety of study material, outreach services and fellowship.

This organization has its advantages. It is often a means of recruiting new members for the church. It provides a close and meaningful fellowship among women and serves as an outlet for various activities of the church. Indeed, it gives a strong support for faithful church participation.

Each member of the Christian Women's Fellowship has a "shut-in" friend and shares friendship with her throughout the year.

Observance of Special Days

The Owingsville First Christian Church follows an old custom of observing special days, and the congregation puts forth cooperative effort to make those observances worthy of their significance.

The Christmas season begins in November as the Advent candles are put in place and chosen family units carry out the worship each Sunday prior to Christmas Day.

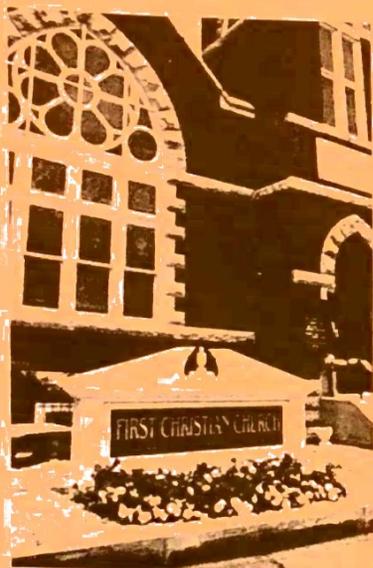
The Christmas tree, towering to the ceiling is beautifully decorated with ornaments and chrismons made by the members of the church congregation. It brings the Christmas spirit when it is electrically lighted on each Sunday before Christmas.

Other special services include "Hanging of the Greens," "Coming Home for Christmas," the Candlelight Christmas Eve Service," the placing of window candles and poinsettias, all accompanied by special messages and special Christmas music rendered by the choir.

The Christmas season is a favorite for many persons in the congregation.

The Easter observances are equally rewarding! They include the presentation of Palms, Maundy Thursday service, the Good Friday service. The Easter Sunday Sunrise service, followed by breakfast in the Fellowship Hall, the Sunday morning service with specially prepared music by the choirs and the beautiful memorial Easter lilies make this a time of real spiritual celebration for our church people.

The Owingsville First Christian Church has been in the same location since 1828. However, very often some visitors will ask "Where is the Christian Church?" The answer to that can be briefly stated, "It is in the center of town!" And that is a true statement, although the town has stretched out in all directions, the Owingsville First Christian Church remains centrally located. In fact, people driving to Owingsville can come from many different approaches, and each road will lead to the church.



Recent landscaping and furnishings have given a new front to the grounds, and the Owingsville First Christian Church has taken on a different appearance.

With the old shrubbery removed, the ground covered with pebbles, the bushes hiding the air conditioning units, and small flower beds in the center position, the courtyard setting has been established.

Concrete lawn benches added to each side of the courtyard give a peaceful atmosphere for those who are inclined to sit awhile.

A great sign bearing the name of the church and electrically lit at night has been installed at the street front of the church and all in all the Owingsville First Christian Church has donned a new and beautiful frontage.

A youth group for 5th through 8th graders was started in the fall of 1997. Chi Rho will participate in some activities with CYF (Christian Youth Fellowship), but will also be taking on some projects of their own.

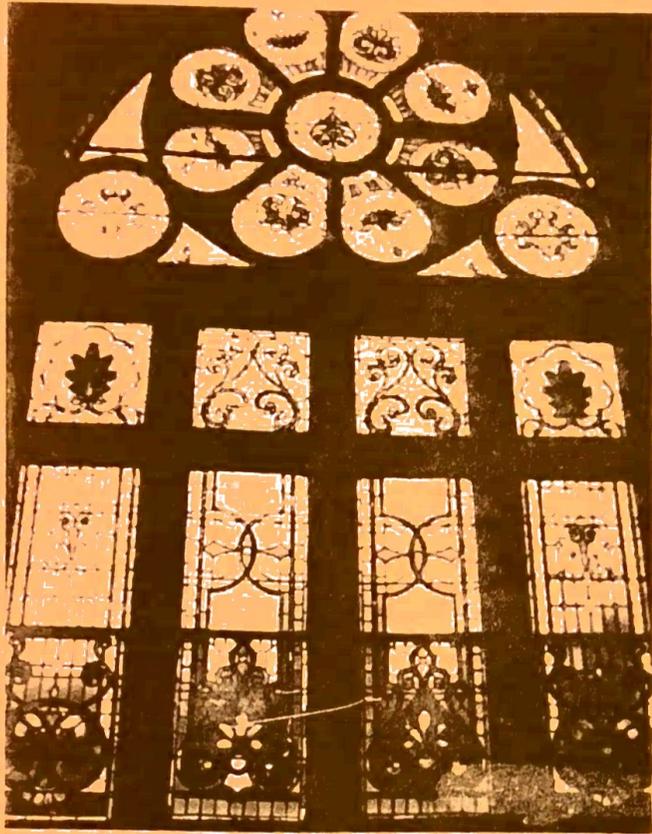
The Gateway House, a homeless shelter in Morehead, serving Bath, Menifee, Rowan, Carter, Elliott, Montgomery and Morgan counties, has been of particular interest of Rev. Snyder, and the CYF has also taken an interest in the shelter. Previously they sponsored a collection drive for personal care items greatly needed by the shelter for the residents. Recently, however, they took on a larger project, furnishing a room in the new house purchased by the shelter. Increasing the occupancy from nine to 22 required additional furniture, and the youth group received donations of a double bed, a set of bunk beds, two dressers and two nightstands, lamps and a picture.

"We have always believed that is the church's responsibility to set a good example and encourage even the youngest children in our congregation to give back," Rev. Snyder states.

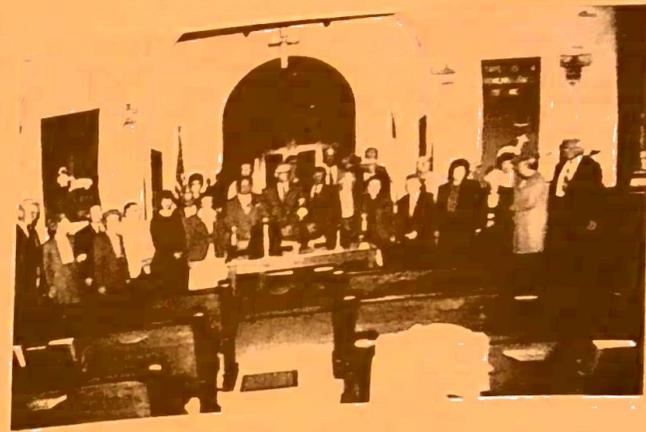
There is always work to be done in carrying out God's vision for the Owingsville First Christian Church, and surely there are challenging times as well as exciting times as we move forward. Our congregation needs that challenge.

Rev. Snyder in his April, 1997 Messenger, (the pastor's page) said: "To accomplish what lies before us, we need to begin with prayer, and be focused on people." This is what it means to be "God's People Enjoying God's Fellowship." He said we must look to God and encourage one another if we are to succeed.

"If our church is to continue to be a vital part of our community, then we must have a ministry that addresses the challenge before us," Rev. Snyder declared. "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel! Isn't this God's command?"



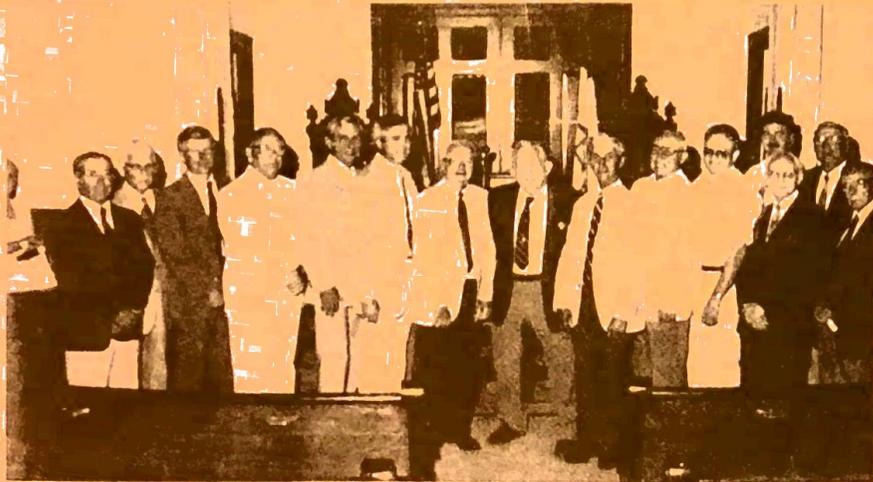
One of the beautiful windows



*Find your
picture in
this church
group!*



*Joe Thompson
Roger Byron
Robert Gilmore
Scott Roberts
R. C. Alexander*



Official Board



*Church Social
in
church basement
History of Church
presented
1988*

ONWARD! WITH FAITH!

As we look back at Yesterday, and as we become a real part of Today, we will find that we are able to look forward to Tomorrow.

It is never difficult to find hope for our future whenever each member of the church family is totally committed to the one purpose for which our church was founded.

We are sure the foundation of our church was firmly supported by those who built it and through faith witnessed its growth.

Our church, The Owingsville First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will grow stronger as its members seek to live a fuller, richer life, and share in the work being done here.

The children of our church will become the leaders of tomorrow, and through their faithfulness, they will strengthen our church for what we hope it will become in the future.

The yesterdays are behind us, and the tomorrows will reveal the unknown.

Today we will reverently remember the early leaders of our church, and we will endeavor to carry out their unfinished tasks.

Through faithful prayer we will move Onward!

-- Amen --