

## Bellaire Presbyterian Church

3599 Guernsey Street  
Bellaire, Ohio 43906

The Presbyterian Church  
Bellaire, Ohio

November 25, 2001

To the Congregation, our Friends and our Neighbors,

God has given us a beautiful building in which to worship. On November 14th, 1926, the cornerstone of our Church building was laid. The Church has long been an important part of all of our lives and to commemorate this special event, the Session has compiled a booklet of memories.

This booklet should bring back fond memories. Also, this booklet should help us realize how God has touched our lives. He has blessed us with friends and neighbors who celebrate with us in times of joy and comfort us in times of sorrow. The Church family has and will always be with each of us. This book is dedicated to our extended Church family.

As a Family, let us gather and thank God for his blessings.

God bless you,

The Session

## Contents

### Description of Our Building

The description was taken from the "Program for Dedication" prepared to accompany the May 1928 dedication events held for the Church.

### Pictures from Our Past

These pictures were gathered from old booklets, archival and personal photographs.

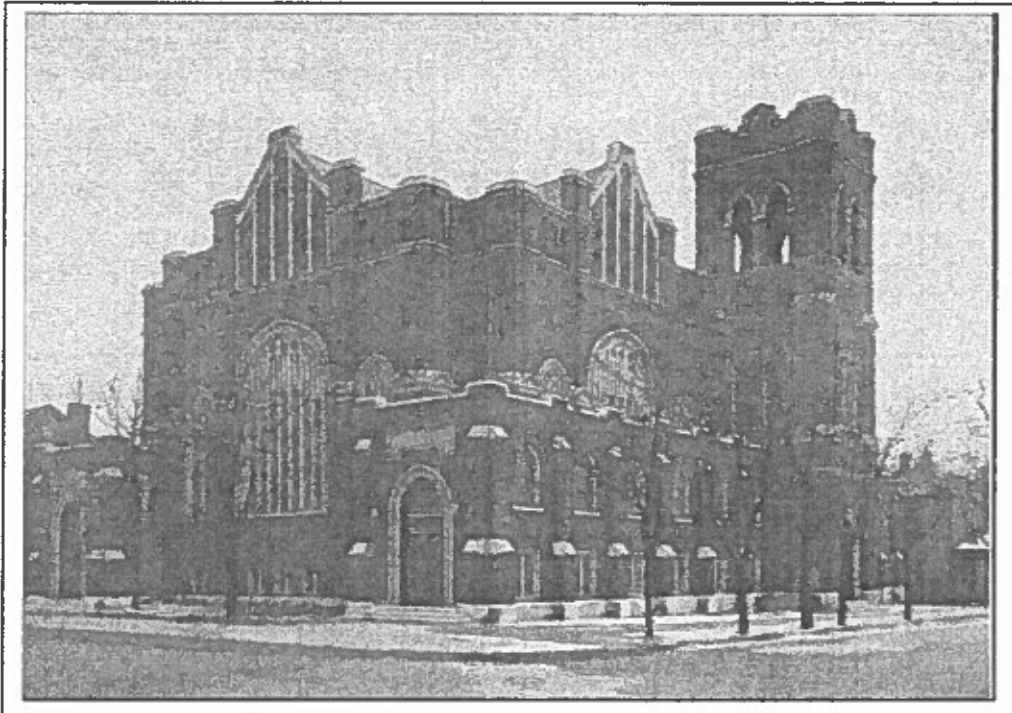
### Memories from Our Family

The memories of our Family provide insight into our Church's history and heritage.

## *Our New Edifice*

"Therefore when we build, let us think that we build forever. Let it not be for present delight, nor for present use alone; let it be such work as our descendants will thank us for, and let us think, as we lay stone on stone, that a time is to come when these stones will be held sacred because our hands have touched them, and men will say as they look upon the labor and wrought substance of them, "See; this our fathers did for us".—Ruskin.

This word from Ruskin is significant of the feeling with which the building committee approached its task of planning a new House of Worship. They realized that not the present exigency alone but the future also must be considered. Hence our building is to some degree in advance of the need of the moment in its special requirements. But in its beauty and in the joy it brings to the eye that can see and the heart that can feel, it ministers to an ever present and eternal need of the soul in worship.



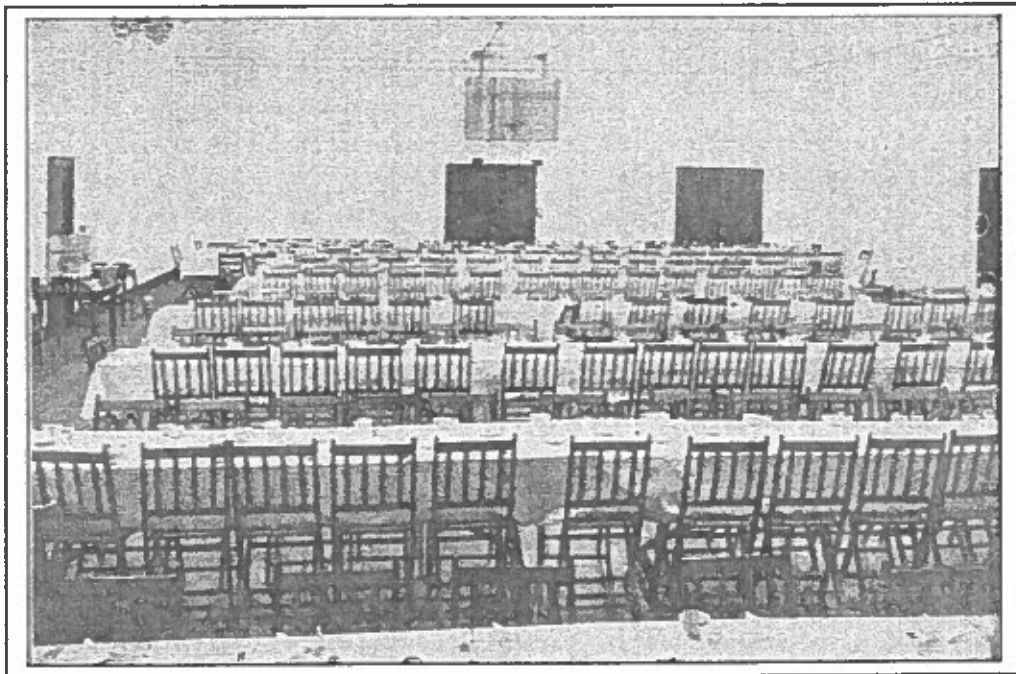
*Our Church House*

Our church occupies a corner lot on Guernsey and 36th streets some 99 x 140 feet in size. The building covers most of the lot, leaving a little space to give it a setting. The building furnished and the lot represent an investment of \$270,574.08. The architect was the late Fred F. Fans of Wheeling and the builder was our own fellow-church member and trustee, Mr. Charles D. Keyser. Of his work we are justly proud. We are deeply appreciative of the minute personal attention of the Building Committee that has followed the task from inception to completion.

On entering the building one may go first to the lower or basement floor, in which is located our kitchen and dining or recreation room. The kitchen is large enough to allow as many as twenty workers to work without interference. The ceiling is sixteen feet in height. It has been fully equipped as a hotel kitchen with all modern appliances by the Gloeckler company of Pittsburgh and the Hobart Manufacturing Company of Dayton.

Our recreation room, which has proven of inestimable value to the church thus far, is 46 x 76 with a sixteen foot ceiling. Thus there is not only space but height for such games as basket ball and volley ball, but there is also a visitors gallery on one side for the seating of spectators. This room, as a dining room, will comfortably seat 400 at the tables. At one end of the room is a stage 16 x 20 feet, well equipped with curtains, foot and flood lights. To the right and left of the stage are the dressing rooms each with showers and toilet accommodations for those taking part in games. This room with its athletic equipment promises to become and is even now the most used room of the church.

To the rear of the recreation room and on a level six feet higher is our beginners and primary department, comfortably housed in three large rooms which are the best lighted of any in the church. A children's toilet and wash room add to the convenience of teachers and scholars in this department.



*Recreation Room*

If on entering the building one goes up a short series of steps, one comes to the main floor of the church. Here is our place of worship. A beautiful auditorium which one enters t'hru artglass doors from a foyer, which extends along the entire rear of the room. There are seats for 400 worshippers here. This nearly square room has a high ceiling with a dome in the center, while four large arches resting on double pillars mark the four corners. So 'harmonious are the

proportions that one at first scarcely realizes how large the auditorium really is. Entering here on a sunny day, when the restrained light of the antique windows gives a dim religious effects, when one's steps are silenced by the deep-piled carpet, one unconsciously is drawn into a religious attitude of mind. The churchly atmosphere of form and light and color combine to lift one into the spirit of worship.

To one side of the church auditorium, and separated from it by heavy plush curtains is the adult department of our Bible school. The large assembly room of this department may, by opening the curtains, be used on occasions when the church auditorium does not accommodate the audience. Here is additional seating space for two hundred people. About this assembly room are classrooms for each class of the department. There are five smaller and two large rooms, one for the men's Bible class and one for the Willard Philathea class. This last mentioned room is furnished as a Ladies Parlor. With its fire-place, its carpeted floor, its wicker furniture, its floor lamps, and its tables this room lives up to its name in every respect. In a small room off the Ladies Parlor is a completely equipped kitchenette. Thus on occasions when small numbers are to be entertained, all work of preparing refreshments can be performed without going to the main kitchen of the church downstairs

Upstairs and over the adult department is a similar arrangement of assembly and class rooms for the junior and intermediate departments. Here as below, the classes meet for their opening exercises in the large assembly room which also, if occasion should demand, could, by opening curtains, provide additional seating space for the church auditorium. There are nine separate class rooms off this junior departmental room, providing a room for each class.

In the wide hall which serves as an entry to the junior department are the desks of the officers of our Bible school.

Thus arrangement of our Bible school provides for a completely departmentalized school. Each age group has its own opening exercises, its own superintendent, and its own budget of the Bible school expenses.

In addition to the above mentioned divisions of our building, there is provided a session room, a large choir and music room, and the pastor's study.

The following are the names of those who 'had part as builders of the church.

Charles D. Keyser and Co., General Contractor.  
Fred F. Fans, Architect.  
American Seating Company, Pews and Pulpit furniture.  
Erb Electric Company, Wiring.  
James Cooper Electric Company, Lighting.  
Lentz-Bowles Company, Plumbing and Heating.  
The Mellott Company, Carpet and Chairs.  
The H. P. Rodewig Company, Table and Furnishings.  
Andrew Kern, Parlor furniture.  
M. P. Moller Company, Organ.  
Crawford Phillips, Silverware.  
The Meyers Carey Company, Painting and Decoration.  
S G. Crow, Painting.  
Bernard Gloeckler Company, Kitchen Equipment. Hobert Manufacturing Company, Kitchen Equipment.  
The Anderson McGregor Company, Interior Wood work.  
H. Kalbitzer and Son, Hardware.  
The Greenlee Company, Glass.  
Delaware Chair Company, Chairs.  
Francis V. Boyce, Curtains.  
Pittsburgh Stained Glass Studios, Art Glass.

## *Our Windows*

The windows of the church are fashioned after the work of the Thirteenth Century designers— known as the grisaille pattern.

The large East window, composed of seven tall lancets and a beautiful tracied top, has as its theme Faith, Hope, and Charity. In the center lancet is the figure of Christ blessing the little children, the subject being Charity. To the right and left are symbolic figures representing Faith and Hope. Small angels are at the base of these three lancets, each bearing a shield with the respective symbol of Faith, Hope, and Charity. In the two lancets to the left of the central figures are the medallions of the Good Samaritan and Christ Healing the Sick. At the bottom of these lancets are the symbols of the Gospels of S U. Matthew and St. Mark. In the lancets to the right of the center are the medallions presenting the Good Shepherd and the Prodigal Son below which are the symbols of the evangelists, St. Luke and St. John. In the tracery above the main part of the window are angel figures bearing the inscription "And the greatest of these is Charity.

Beside this East window and on either side thereof are two double panel windows with their emblematic medallions of the Hawthorne of Constancy, the Lily of Purity, the Rose of Love, and the Olive of Peace.

The large window to the North is devoted to the incidents of the birth and early life of Jesus. In the center is the Mother with her child. To the right is St. Joseph and to the left are the Adoring Angels. In the other panels of this window are medallions representing the shepherds in their fields, the adoration of the three Kings, the Flight into Egypt, and the Presentation in the rfen~le

On either side of this North window are two smaller windows which have emblematic medallions of the following subjects: the Torch and Olive Branch, denoting Life and Peace; the Bee Hive, signifying Work; the Lamp and the Book, symbolizing the Word and the Light; the Sword and the Balance, denoting Justice and Judgment.

The South or Chancel window centers about the majestic figure of the Ascending C'hrist which almost fills the central panel. Attending Angels stand to the right and left. In the base of the outer panel on the left is the medallion of the Christ in Gethsemane and above it, a medallion of the Last Supper. On the right of the window are two medallions representing Christ before Pilate and the Risen Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene. Here also, as in the other windows, the upper part is filled with tracery symbols of the Vine and its Branches or Christ and His Church.

Thus beginning at the North, the windows carry out the story of the Birth, the Life of Faith, Hope and Charity, and the Death and Resurrection of Our Lord.

The foyer windows form a row of six Gothic openings on the North side of the church. These are almost entirely filled with shimmering Grisaille patterns except for narrow borders of deep color. In the center of each window is one richly colored emblem medallion. The subjects of this series are the Cross and Crown, Anchor and Rope, Open Bible, Cup, Wheat and Grapes, Lamp on Book, and Lilies. These windows on a bright day seem like rich tapestries hung in the wall.

The work was done in the Pittsburgh Art Glass Studios and is such that all who have seen it have been impressed with the beauty of design and coloring, as well as the fitness of the subjects chosen.

## *Our Organ*

Our organ was built by the 1VJ, P. Moller Company, of Hagerstown, Md. It is a three manual organ containing the Great Organ, the Swell Organ, the Choir Organ, the Echo Organ, and the Pedal Organ. There are some 43 stops and 2,500 pipes in the organ. On the evening of March 6th, Dr. Charles Heinroth, of Carnegie Music Hall in Pittsburgh, opened the organ with a recital which proved one of the happiest and best attended musical events in the history of our city.

# Children and Christmas



1994



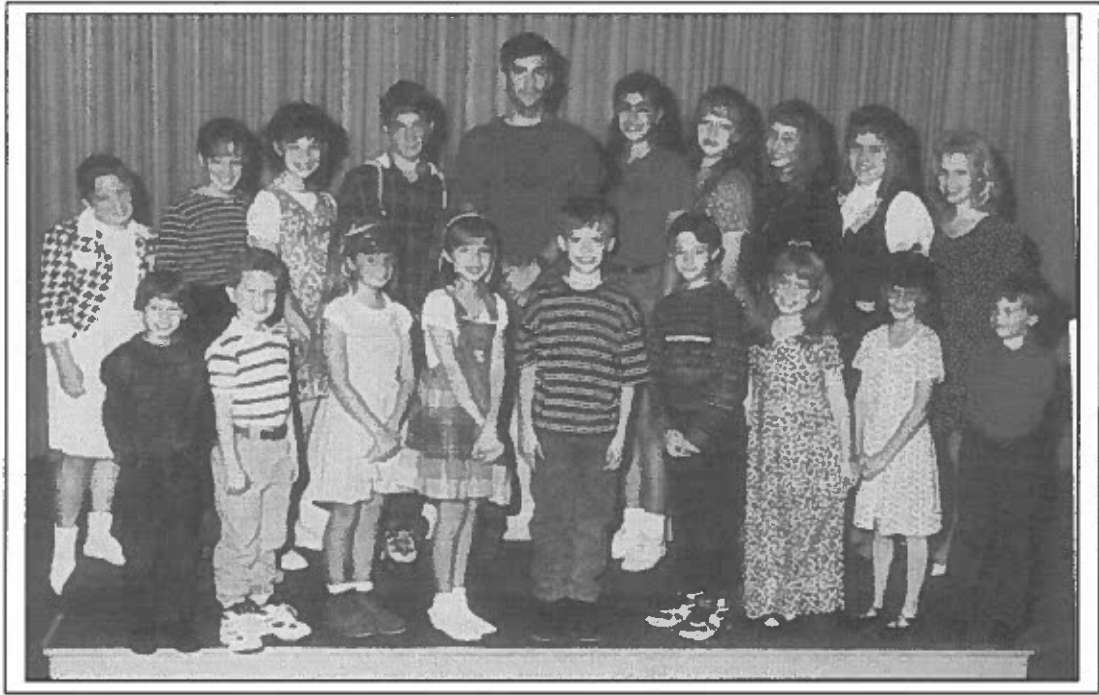
1987



1959



# Sunday School



1996



1957



1957



1957

# The Session

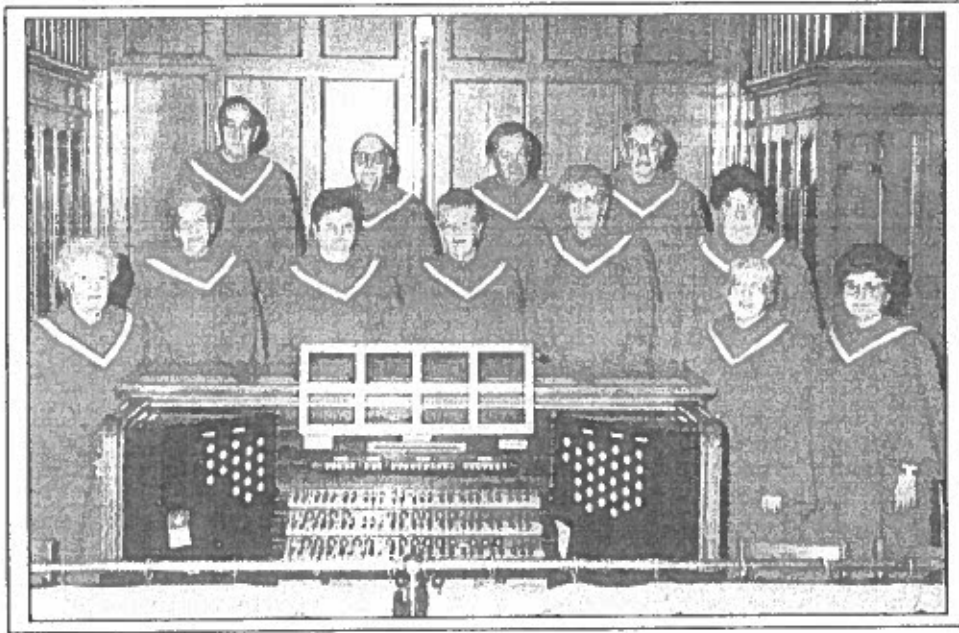


1996

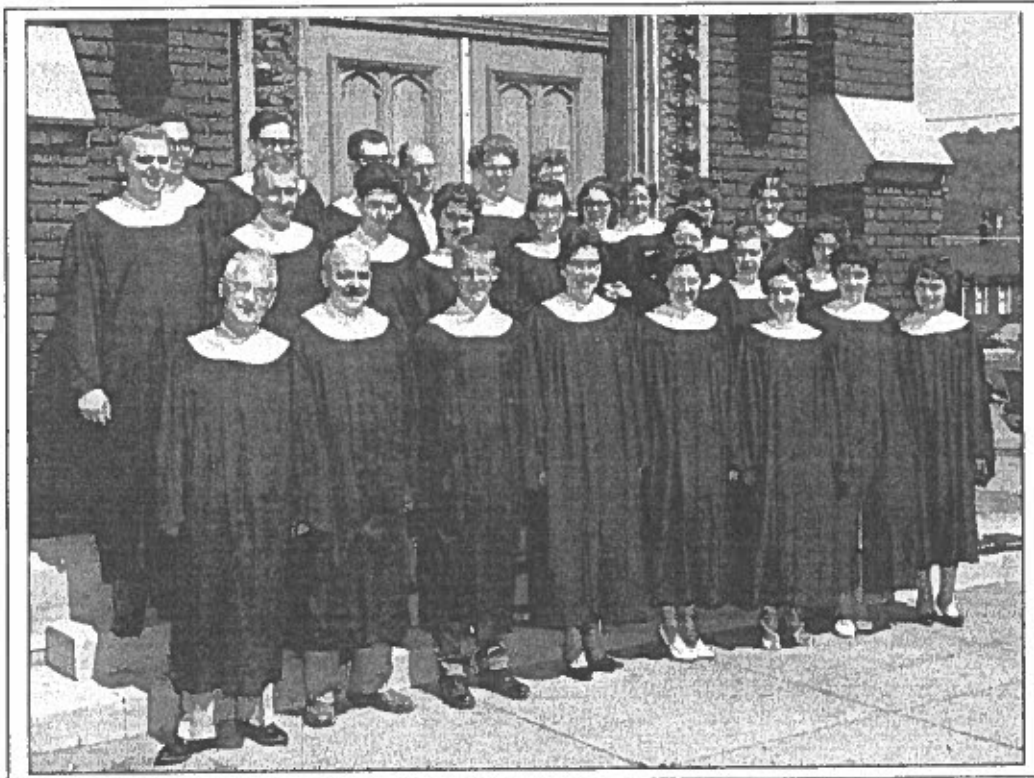


1960

# The Choir



1996



1960



1958

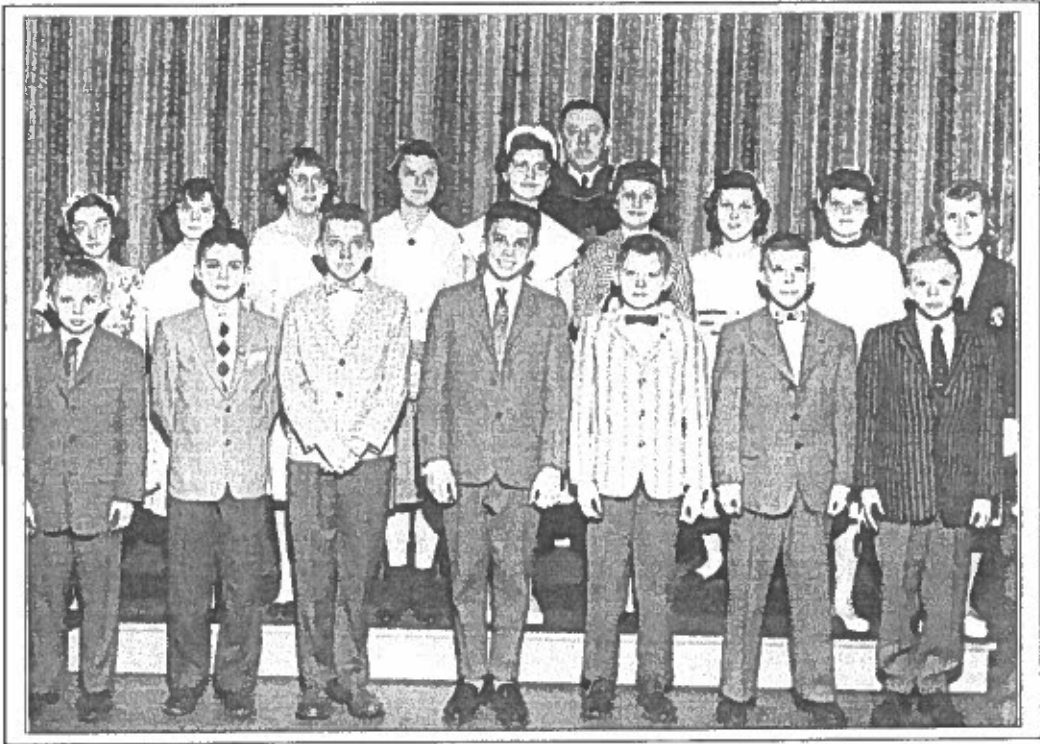


1957

# Communicant's Classes



1996



1960



1967



1969

# The Annual Bazaar



1976



1956





1960



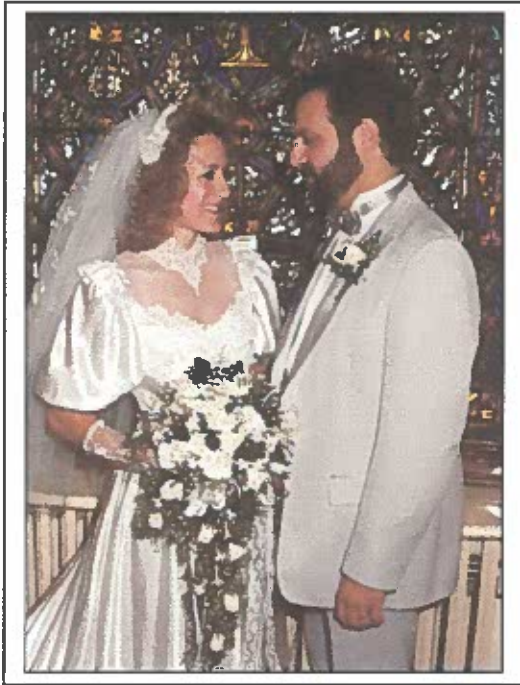
# Baptisms



1957



1957



# Weddings

Marty and Barry Roth - 1991



Hattie and Tom Luikart -1974

## **“The Rhymer”**

Like a “Mighty Fortress” this church does stand,  
“Oh, God, beneath thy guiding hand”;  
“Jesus loves me, this I know”,  
“Praise God from whom all blessings flow”;  
“Nearer my God to thee”, when in this dwelling,  
Scenic religious stories, the stained glass windows are telling;  
“Take time to be Holy”, here,  
“Our faith looks up to thee”, eliminating doubt and fear;  
A stately edifice, full of “Amazing grace”,  
“Surely the Lord is in this place”;  
“Come, ye people, rise and sing”,  
Happy Birthday to this house of our King;  
“God, himself, is with us”, “Day by day”,  
“Grace and truth, as always, shall mark the way”;  
“We love to tell the story”, “Praise the Lord for he is good”,  
“Spirit of God, descent upon my heart”, if you would;  
“Faith of our Fathers”, built these sturdy walls,  
“When morning gilds the skies”, Abide with me”, the Lord calls”  
If these rooms could talk, what stories they could tell,  
Those who’ve gone before, took care of them quite well;  
If this were just a building, it might seem austere and cold,  
The energy of this congregation, supplies a warmth untold’  
Many Christian families, sat and worshipped in these pews,  
Sharing prayers, hymns, messages, and some “old-fashioned  
Presbyterian news”;  
I ponder for a while, which words were used the most?,  
Whether just “Amen”, or “Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost?”;  
We know not what lies ahead, or what is in store,  
Maybe this venue will continue to serve 75 years more;  
Over the years, it’s served us well, and for it we have deep care,  
A landmark in this town, 36<sup>th</sup> and Guernsey in Bellaire;  
This is our “House of Worship”, that we all do know,  
Pause, reflect, remember, and thank, those who made it so;  
Once again, “We dedicate this temple”, with joyous, happy tears,  
And gratefully celebrate its anniversary of 75 years.

**Bob Bomer 432-43<sup>rd</sup> St. Bellaire OH 43906**

## MEMORIES

### Fred Schick

From Jeanne Schick

Your message regarding the early years of the church was passed on to me by my niece, Jeanne Kigerl.

I left the church and Bellaire a few days after Christmas, 1938, so my only connection with the church since then has been occasional visits to see my family. However, I will list a few memories below.

The oldest memory I have was a fund raising in the adult Sunday School room. Pledges were made aloud and my sister, Mary August Schick, and I each pledged \$25.00. That was big bucks for a couple of kids in those days.

The many suppers held in the recreation room were excellent and were well attended. They had a cooking crew which was just great, including my Mom, Vera McGraw, Bess Koch, Kitty Sedgwick, Florence Cooper, Margie Strall, etc. The Alumni banquets served there for years were also very good.

While in high school I helped Scott Brannen take up the collection in Sunday School and also count it. We also sent birthday cards to all of the members.

The only time I played hooky at school was when I was a sophomore and that was the stupidest thing I ever did. I woke up to the fact that I didn't have anywhere to go and everyone else was in school! I spent most of the day on the roof of the church staring longingly at the high school!

While in high school I had two wonderful Sunday School teachers, Judge Tyler and F. N. Reinbolt.

My Dad played the organ when Blanche Robinson wasn't there and he really enjoyed that.

We use to enjoy walking through the snow to Christmas Eve candlelight service. Of course, that depended on whether or not we had any snow!

We have taken our children through the church several times and they were very impressed with the windows contributed by the Schick family when the church was built.

I hope you get a good response for your newsletter and look forward to seeing the finished product.

**Fred Schick, Box 20072 Sedona AZ 86341 jeannes @ sedona.net**

### Carolle Klee Tedeschi

My fondest memories of the Church when I was growing up was preparation for baptism youth group fellowship with Julia, Mary Lou, Janice and Bob, Mrs. Griffin's enthusiasm for outings, a nice evening at Gertrude Rataiczak's house, singing in the choir under the direction of Mrs. Stitt, the gentleness of Rev. Radford and last but not least the firmness of Rev. Showalter.

But my most precious memories are of my mother Gertrude Klee. Her love of the Lord and her church overflow in my heart. She also truly loved her family and friends. They were all important to her. Whether working at dinners, the bazaar, making kimonos for the missionary or delivering food for those in need, it truly was a labor of love for her. My father John also did his part in driving her for

deliveries. I remember that he bought coffee and fruit out of his own money and he told me that just because you were having hard times you still needed a cup of coffee and children needed fresh fruit. And let me not forget how proud my mother was to make the Communion bread! What wonderful examples of Faith, Hope and Charity did these two loving parents give to my sister, brother and I. I thank the Bellaire Presbyterian Church and all those loving people who touched my life in one way or another. You instilled such good things in my heart and soul in those very important formative years that carry through my life today. God bless! Love and prayers, **Carollee Klee Tedeschi 1227 Wellesley Avenue, Steubenville OH 43952**

**Joan "Coyne" Helms**

Having spent years involved in the church some of my fondest memories are of attending Sunday school and finally teaching for years; Choir (youth and adult); from youth fellowship to women's club and then to also see my own children grow up in the church. My inspiration was from some very strong and influential women such as Helen Bell, Gertrude Rataiczak, Wilma Burnett and Polly Stitt who helped make me the person I am today. Thank you !!! **Joan "Coyne" Helms 53456 Key Bellaire Rd., Bellaire OH 43906**

**Jean Ault Cowen**

Dear Church Family,

At the time I joined the Presbyterian Church I didn't realize how young it was. By both being young one might say we grew up together and matured together with the help of our wonderful S. S. teachers and ministers. Also the organist and choir directors were inspirational to us, most of our crowd of girls was active in the church Young Peoples and Choir Our parents also played a big part in our participating in church activities. We surely thank them.

I remember especially Wilma and Ray Burdette. They taught us to respect ourselves and when it came time for marriage to seek out the kind of a man we want to share our life and what does and does not make a good marriage. This has worked for Bill and me (52 years) and we tried hard to pass this on to our family. So God Bless the Church, the congregation and the staff that feeds eager information to our young and old. **Jean Ault Cowen 4031 Shadow Rd Drive, Radford, VA 24141**

**Our memories of the church:**

I will never forget and always love our Christmas Eve services. The church looks so beautiful with the Candle lite Candles and red bows and decorated so pretty with the poinsettias up front. We always went early just to sit and enjoy the music and peace. The choir processional at the beginning of service was so beautiful. But I guess most of all—seeing the church full with all the families there together celebrating Jesus' birthday.

### **The Craigs**

**Jim & Wanda Craig 65418 Hillview Ave. Bellaire OH 43906**

My memories are of the Sunday School Christmas pageants-practicing and dressing our roles. And the time the scene where the camel is coming down the isles and got stuck! I especially remember opening exercises with Doreen Rataiczak to lead us, and Helen & Prentice Bell providing music. **Crystal Craig**

My memory of the church is the Christmas Eve services and the music. All our family attending together enjoying the Christmas music. Another memory is of Everett Criss and his special role-Santa. Another is the Halloween party when Dick Thomas wore stilts-several small ones were a bit scared-he was so tall!

**Mike Craig**

### **Dave Koch**

Thank you for finding me in Bay Village, so I can participate in the 75 years of the Presbyterian Church Newsletter.

My first memories involve going to Sunday School and Worship. As a child, I marveled at all the people who attended Sunday School, even large number of adults. Mother's Dorcus Class and others would cook & serve wonderful dinner, filling the gym to overflowing.

Eleven o'clock worship was enjoyable because of the choir, the pipe organ and good preaching. From the time I can remember until college days arrived in 1946, these ministers inspired: McCleary, Jackman, Storch, McHendry and Radford.

They all helped build a foundation, along with Church School teachers, that I could build on in Seminary. Frank Storch shared a sermonizing technique that I still use today when reading a book. He said: "When you read a passage you like, write the page number and topic in the back. Then file them. This becomes a wonderful source of illustrations to lift up a Sermon.

Stewart Radford had been a Chaplain in the U.S.Navy. He shared his insights of the ministry and the Chaplainry which were helpful. He also arranged my ordination service, with the gracious reception afterwards, coordinated by Gertrude Rataiczak and Kate Dix and others.

My thanks go to all of the member for sharing a Fellowship that was memorable. Finally I still marvel at the beauty of the Sanctuary, the rest of the Building and the Brick Exterior. Best wishes, **Dave Koch 23101 Lake Road Bay Village, OH 44140**

### **Ann Hodges**

When my Aunt Janet Bauknecht asked me to write some of my thoughts and memories of our church, I said "No way", but then I thought it over and here are a few of my thoughts.

Our family may have one of the longest history lines belonging to this congregation. Our five grandsons are the sixth generation to be part of this congregational family. My great grandfather gave the collection plates in memory of his wife, Amelia Carnes, my grandparents. (Ross and Elizabeth Carnes) were instrumental in the building of this wonderful building we worship

in. My mother (Helen Carnes), my aunt (Janet Bauknecht) and my cousin (Bertram Snedeker) were among the first to be baptized here. My brother (Dick) and I were baptized here, attended Sunday School, Youth Fellowship and choir. My children, Jeff Hodges and Amy Bennington were also baptized here, attended Sunday School, Fellowship and choir along with being church officers. Our sixth generation is Ben Hodges, Brett Bennington, Gunner Hodges, Matthew Hodges and Eric Bennington. They all look forward to Sunday morning and Sunday School. Maybe some day they will write their memories.

My memories are too numerous to put on paper.

My hope for the future of the Church is that "our" church will grow and flourish again and welcome the next six generations of our family and all families of our church. **Ann Hodges**

#### **Janet Bauknecht**

I was among the first to be baptized in the church as were my sister, Helen Carnes and my cousin, Bert Snedeker.

The offering plates we still use were given by my grandfather, Miles Carnes in memory of my grandmother, Amelia Carnes, and her name is engraved around the rim of the plates.

My mother, Elizabeth Carnes, told the story that the first Sunday there were services in the sanctuary the pews had not been installed so they sat on nail kegs.

My parents, Ross and Elizabeth Carnes, sang in the first choir formed in the church. My mother said she couldn't sing but my father could, so she joined so that he would. The first organist was Blanche Robinson, who had very crooked little fingers. My mother was pregnant for me at the time and believed that my little fingers are crooked because she worried about it.

My father and Carl Koch were members of the Trustees when the mortgage was burned in the 40's.

My husband, Walter Bauknecht Jr., and Charles Van Camp, were members of the trustees when the second set of hymnals, which we still use today, were purchased.

I was married in the church in 1946, and all five of my children and my two grandchildren were baptized here. **Janet Bauknecht 3595 Belmont St Bellaire**

#### **Doug Allen**

**As a child I remember:**

Attending Mrs. Roman's Sunday School class. Before class started, I kept an eye open for Everett Criss's father. He always had a stick of Juicy Fruit for me.

The Sunday School opening exercises up on in the third floor with Mrs. Burdett and Helen Bell.



Being in Mrs. Stitt's Children's Choir, she impressed upon us kids how fortunate we were to have such beautiful stained glass windows and what a magnificent musical instrument we had in the pipe organ.

The youth fellowship group led by Zyg and Doreen Rataiczak-wiener roasts at Breezy Point, a used book sale, fun activities in the gym.

Christmas Eve candlelight services. How beautiful the sanctuary looked especially with all those candles. The choir singing "O Holy Night" and getting to stay up so late.

Sunday Church services. Mrs. Stitt playing the clock chimes. The clouds, which were painted in the dome-Rev. Berger's sermons (They seemed to go on forever!) **Submitted by Doug Allen 30 Walnut. Wheeling WV 26003**

### **Elva Mobley**

#### **Remember When!**

Remember our Turkey dinners, baked sales and bazaars? I remember when we hosted the Chamber of Commerce and their guests. And many other organizations were on our schedule from banquets to smaller gatherings. A lot of legwork but it was worth it as we accepted complements on our menu and the professional way we handled our duties. Some of us graduated to the kitchen where we did everything that needed to be done. The women who had the job of preparing the turkeys-soon had them ready for the oven and joined the crew who were peeling potatoes, cleaning vegetables and washing dishes! The turkeys came out of the oven, nicely brown and crispy. Our basement floor held tables displaying many items-quite a few-hand made. And with Christmas just around the corner, many were bought for gifts. Our bake goods consisted of pies, cakes and cookies-all contributed from members of our congregation. And lets not forget the men who volunteered to do all the heavy lifting. Very little remained in the kitchen and our bazaar tables, baked goods as the doors closed on another successful Turkey Day. **Elva Mobley. 433 32<sup>nd</sup> St Apt. 309, Bellaire OH 43906**

### **Jeanne McKelvey Kigerl**

#### **Dear Friends at Bellaire Presbyterian**

I was delighted to receive an invitation to share some of my memories about the church, and I passed along the request to my uncle, Frederick Schick, who remembers when the church was built.

My earliest memories of the Bellaire Presbyterian Church involve the annual turkey dinner and Christmas bazaar, which was a highlight of my childhood. How exciting it was to descend the steps to the busy fellowship hall, see the many booths of homemade goods, take a chance on an unknown prize behind the "fishing booth", and finally peek into the bustling kitchen to see my grandma, Mazie Schick, and her friends serving up delicious portions of turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes and all the fixings.

There were always "church projects" going on at my home since my grandma lived with us. I remember her making candles, pinecone wreathes and candle rings, footstools made of fabric-covered coffee cans, and patchwork Christmas stockings, all to be sold at the bazaar. My mother, Gussie McKelvey Workman,

picked up where my grandma left off, contributing to the annual bazaar and turkey dinner, singing in the choir, and supporting the church. Her many sewing projects were popular at the annual craft sale. I was married in the church to Jack Kigerl in 1970, and in 1976 our first daughter Amy was baptized there. I congratulate the Church on 75 years of history, and look forward to seeing the commemorative newsletter. Sincerely **Jeanne McKelvey Kigerl 235 Harbel Dr. St. Clairsville OH 43950**

**Mary Elinor Waser**

**Dear Friends,**

Sending you best wishes as you enter another quarter Century, I was a member there from 1946 – 1959. I have many fond and meaningful memories of my time there and the many, many folks who impacted my life and the life of my family. I remember so many too many to mention. I am thankful for those with whom I still have a friendship “May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. May the Lord lift up His Countenance upon you and give you peace”. In His love, **Mary Elinor Waser**

**John W Giffin II**

**MEMORIES OF BELLAIRE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

**John W Giffin II 262 Toura Dr. Pgh PA 15236**

When I think of the Presbyterian Church in Bellaire, my first thoughts are always back to when I was a small boy. Every Sunday I would sit on that hard pew and, sooner or later, my head would tilt back and I would be staring at that beautiful, domed ceiling above me. As I would sit there and stare at that dome, I was sure that I was staring at heaven. The words coming out of the mouth of the man standing in front of me never penetrated my ears but I knew that I was in God's presence because that was his home right above me.

The other “church” feeling I remember from my childhood was security. What better place could a young boy be? My grandfather and grandmother were immediately in front of me. My father was on my right and my mother on my left, providing a shield from my devilish sister who was on the other side of my mother. I was surrounded by the ones I loved. The ones who loved and protected me, and God was in his house right above me.

As I grew older, I was impressed with the large crowds at special services when the adult Sunday school room curtains were drawn back to accommodate the people. On those occasions the singing was always beautiful...all of those people...the choir...the soprano's soaring high above everyone else in harmony...the organ swelling forth...truly awe inspiring performances. But there was more to the church than just Sunday morning services. It was a way of life for many of the people in the congregation. There were the dinners in the gymnasium below. The wonderful aromas and the wonderful food that came from that huge kitchen. And there were the bazaars held down there when all sorts of amazing articles made by members were available to be purchased and taken home. I knew my mother had all sorts of talent for making things, but there were always things there that she didn't make at home.

Then there was the side of the church to which I wasn't exposed to any great extent during my youth, but I knew it was there. It was the ministers and the people going to the hospital to visit and comfort the sick. There were the visits by the ministers to our homes to talk with us, pray with us and have an every day contact with us. This part of the church was the church beyond the brick and mortar at 36<sup>th</sup> and Guernsey Streets.

My last and probably my longest-lasting memory of the church is from my high school days. I had grown enough to take up collection on Sunday mornings...to be an usher...to be allowed to sit on those regular chairs at the back of sanctuary during the service. This was one of my proudest times in the church. After I had served as an usher for about a year, they took me further into their secrets and introduced me to the electric switchboard. During the service the lights were on brightly but when the minister stepped forward to begin his sermon, the lights were dimmed with only special lights on him alone. This was a dramatic moment when a hush would fall over the congregation and we knew we were about to hear our selected spiritual leader speak inspired words to guide us during the coming week. I was taught the intricacies of changing the lights and the timing of when to change them to bring about the desired effect. On the first Sunday I was trusted with this special duty, I stood nervously at the switchboard and as I heard the final lead-in to the sermon, I hurriedly threw the switches to darken the sanctuary and make the minister stand out. Instead of the hushed silence I expected, there was a buzz from the congregation and I opened the door to see what was happening. To my utter surprise, the sanctuary was in complete darkness and the minister was standing there with his mouth hanging open by about a foot, staring silently at the darkened ceiling.

### **George Heil**

**Happy 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday to the Grand Lady standing on the corner of 36<sup>th</sup> and Guernsey Sts.**

Altho I have only been a member of that church for more than half of its existence, I have many memories.

To begin, the delicious dinners prepared by the women of the Bellaire Presbyterian Church, and we know how much Presbyterians love to eat.

The Ladies Circles who are responsible for many projects to benefit the Church.

The many weddings performed in the Sanctuary.

The many different people who have occupied the pulpit.

The Fall Bazaars where the handiwork of the members, mostly women, were displayed and sold. Also a lunch was served where acquaintances were renewed with people from Bellaire and the surrounding area.

The overflow crowds that attended the Easter and Christmas Eve services, they were treated to many enjoyable performances by the organists and directors of the choir. They were also able to hear the music of that great Organ in the hands of talented organists.

Last, but not least, the Choir. Many young members have grown up and left but those who stayed were faithful, loyal singers who met every Wednesday evening at 7 P.M. for practice and conversations.

Those are just a few of my memories. Sincerely, **George V. Heil 102 Circle Drive St. Clairsville, OH 43950**

**Alice Sacco**

Even though I haven't been associated with this church very long, the most memorable thing to me was Rev. Gibb when he came out to Wheeling Hospital at 6:30 in the morning and said a prayer over me just before they took me into surgery. I was really scared, but his just being there and saying that prayer really made my day and I didn't feel so scared afterwards. Also the time after my stroke when he came to Bellaire Rehab at Bellaire Hospital, I remember it was on a Saturday morning right after breakfast, he came and said a prayer over me again, now previously before this day I could not walk even with my walker, that morning when I had my physical session I took 14 steps with my walker. This made me grow to love him more as my Reverend! But then sadly he had to leave. I never will forget his wonderful prayers and great personality. I really miss him and his friendship that he brought me. **Alice Sacco 433 32<sup>nd</sup> Street Apt 505 Bellaire OH 43906**

**Rik Rodefer**

**Congregation on the Anniversary**

I have three memories to contribute for your collection; from my early years, middle years and my late years.

- A. I remember so vividly the antics during the youth programs...the images of David, Peter and John Creamer still bring chuckles to me.
- B. As a member of the Choir, I remember gathering for practice-walking down the aisle and being amazed at Pauline Stitts tickling the keys with William Tell's overture or better known than as the Lone Ranger's theme.
- C. Finally, as an adult, having my father, Howard, point out the placement flaw in the beautiful glass window on the east wall. Near the lower section are three heads; one facing leftward, one centered and one facing to the right. Unfortunately, they are not symmetrical so the one facing center is located to one side.

Thanks for this opportunity. I am delighted at hearing of the proposed merger with the UP congregation-way overdue. **Rik Rodefer 1517 Ingomer Hts. Rd. Pittsburgh PA 15237**

**Diane Dixon Maute**

I think the most memorable events in my life in the church were the Christmas Eve Midnight Services as a youngster in junior choir. The church was always filled to over-flowing and we had a processional with real lighted candles! I can still see Daddy (as one of the Elders) standing close by to "put out the fire" if need be.

I also remember that everyone had his or her own pew. Not really, but don't sit in that spot!!

One other nice memory is as a high school student. I got to help serve the meals the ladies of the church prepared for the high school athletes! That

really wasn't a chore! Having our whole family involved in church is not as common today. I'm very lucky to say that both of my boys and their families are involved in church.

Thanks for inviting me to be included in your book. Sincerely **Diane Dixon Maute 1257 Pheasant Run, Springfield, OH 45503**

**Judy Rodefer Yingst**

**Memories of Bellaire Presbyterian Church from the 40's and 50's**

I remember:

Going to Sunday School and Church every possible Sunday-and finally being big enough to go upstairs to SS-Dad falling asleep during the sermon, but knowing what it was about enough to quiz the 3 of us about it-Rev. McHenry and Rev. Showalter and how much Dad enjoyed Mr. J.V. Nelson's Bible lessons-as a teenager, helping with the nursery-the beautiful stained glass windows and starlit dome ceiling in the sanctuary-best of all: the annual bazaar organized by the Presbyterian Women-everyone came for a delicious dinner, the crafts were so fine, the handmade aprons were all we ever had at our house(can you buy aprons in the stores?), we kids had a marvelous time running around, just being there, and observing committed Christians at work. It is so important for children to be a part of a community of faith in order to see and hear and experience the old old stories, to learn the grand hymns of the church, and to remember those in the church who were loving and caring, and faithful followers of Jesus Christ. I have smiled many times thinking of Mom telling the story on herself when, as an aging senior citizen, she went to church at eleven o'clock one Saturday morning. I think it was Dick Dyer who saw her and said, "Dorothy, what are doing here, it's only Saturday?" She clasped her head as we've all seen her do and replied, "I thought it was Sunday". I like to think that she is with the community of saints smiling and watching over her family and her church.

Thinking of you and wishing your church the best of luck as you witness to God's word, **Judy Rodefer Yingst 735 E Northway Ln NE, Atlanta GA 30342**

**Doris M. Ballog**

**Congratulations on another anniversary for the Bellaire Presbyterian Church!**

Since leaving the community in 1960 I can truthfully say I have not found a church that felt so much like "home" as Bellaire Presbyterian.

Your church building is beautiful and makes a wonderful place for fellowship and prayer, but it's the people of the church who make it so comforting.

Some of the people who were there for my family, and me I will always be grateful for.

Gertrude Rataiczak for sharing alternate Saturdays driving our children to the YWCA for swimming lessons, also for the late night phone chats trying to put things in perspective.

Helen Bell-I remember our running down a street in Wheeling in our stocking feet. It was raining, so we carried our shoes to keep them from getting ruined.  
Prentice Bell-I can still picture he and my Debbie square dancing. Deb was his partner at about 5 years old and all of about 2 feet tall.

Janet Bauknecht and Dorothy Drummond Lash stood on either side of me in Choir to help me hit the high notes. We did it, and I can't sing!

You asked for a note and here I am writing a book. It would take a book to mention all the wonderful people who had such a positive impact on my life.  
Thank you and God Bless **Doris M. Ballog 5110 Sansom Ct Columbus OH 43220**

### **Hazel Ault Blanchard**

**Dear Friends,**

My earliest memory of the Bellaire Presbyterian Church is when my brother, Hew, and I attended a Summer Vacation Bible School. Several churches had combined for the sessions, which met in the Sunday School rooms off the sanctuary. I can still visualize sitting at those tables with lots of other children enjoying the week.

My next memory is of the inspirational pipe organ music that adds depth to your worship. Through the years, you have been blessed with the organ and several gifted organists.

Both Mother's and Dad's lives were centered on God and their church. Thus, my brother and I were either participating in church activities or were listening to what was happening. I especially remember the Women's Association yearly bazaars and the many dinners served to area organizations. The largest dinner was served when Woody Hayes spoke in Bellaire. Dad ran errands all day and my brother made bowls and bowls of Cole slaw in the high school kitchen. How tired everyone was after serving a meal, but the food was good, a profit was made; the workers ate planned leftover in the kitchen; and hours of Christian fellowship were experienced.

When Dad was teaching the adult Sunday School class, he often mentioned the topic at home and how he wanted to approach the lesson in a meaningful way to generate discussion. He continued to teach occasionally until he was ninety-year old!

Just before Mother and Dad moved to Greenville, you gave them a very special reception after church, which was a priceless gift.

God bless all of you on your 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary! As ever, **Hazel Ault Blanchard 271 Dogwood Dr. Greenville OH 45331**

### **Gertrude Rataiczak**

**\*Some of my memorable happenings**

Effie Brown telling us that we should take a more active roll in our town government and when stores began to be open on Sundays she considered it the wrong thing for Christians to do.

In the 1940's a session member would invite new members to their home for dinner. I went to Chester Sedgwicks.

Nell Dixon was the first Women Association President, an awesome job. Ella Evans our first women Elder. She did a lot of things with young people from having taffy pulls to taking trips with them.

Bob Johnson was my partner when the session would go down the aisle as a group to give Communion in a very solemn, dedicated way-he looked at my hat and whispered, "I don't know whether to feed it or kill it".

In church I sat behind Mazie Schick. She always wore a beautiful designer hat, and she had many of them. What a talent and a great seamstress. Every year at the bazaar I always bought something Mazie Schick made.

When my Sunday School Class and their husbands surprised me by having "This is Your Life Nite". Prentice Bell came out wearing an old nightgown of mine with a hole in it.

Glenn Allen was so passionate about the organ. I'm sure he smiles down when Doug plays the organ for us.

Olive Thomas making pies and more pies for church dinners and bazaars. She insisted they charge 75 cents because she said a person would be out of their mind to pay \$1.00 for one. How times change.

Howard Rodefer believed that if you were asked to do something for the church by the church it was your duty to do so to the best of your ability. He felt that your primary commitment should be to the church. Made me think a few times. Chris Taggart as my role model. A true Christian without a doubt. The light of my life. **Gertrude Rataiczak 56550 Overlook Court, Bellaire OH 43906**

#### **Dick Dyer 2001**

##### **The Highlights of the Church**

##### **Presbyterian Church 36<sup>th</sup> & Guernsey St Bellaire OH 43906**

The year 1949 I came to Bellaire from Woodsfield OH. When I got out of the service, I went to the Union Bank in Bellaire. Carl Koch was talking to Bob Johnston & Floyd Closser, they wanted some one to take care of the Presbyterian Church, and they were trustees of the church. Bob Johnston said, "Dick would you like to take care of church until we get some one", I said, "yes I can" and it lasted 24 years. The church is a big part of my life. We had all good preachers, but Showalter was my pick. Over the years we went from church to church that he preached at. He was great, we loved his family. Maureen Bell was a great secretary and a fine girl also Jane Heathcote. Mrs. Stitt was the best organist the church had so much to offer them. I was Trustee, Elder, Sunday School Superintendent for 8 years at that time we had 108, God loves us all and we love God, I have been with the church for over 50 years. Zig, Doreen and Gertrude Rataiczak were great friends of mine and a great part of the church. The church now needs people and a Miracle, Miracles do happen. Lets hope. When I was chairman of Christian Ed we hired a director Peggy for 2 years. The women of the church were the back bone of the church and don't forget it. God loves us all and we love God, God is good, God is great, we love him for this day. Our prayers are always with the church. All five of my children came to church and I was married in the

church, also my daughters Michelle and Chris. Scott Brannen was Sunday school Superintendent around 42 years. He was the best and my good friend. He always came to my house when we had Bean Soup and Carl Koch also came. Showalters came for Roast Beef most of the time on Friday, also Ken and Grace Wood. What a great time we had at the Dyers at 4506 Noble St Bellaire. Loretta and I have been married 37 years this July 17, 5 children and 14 grand children, we love them all. So God has been good to us to be blessed with 14 grandchildren. I like Kiwanis Club and we meet every Tuesday at 12:00 at the Salvation Army. They do good things, we help lots of people. We live in the Hill and we like it very much again God has been good to us. We never quit thanking God for what we have. I went to Rock Hill and Vance but our church is still the best. I don't like the early church; 11:00 is better for us old people. Rev. Stewart W. Radford- died in Florida, he was my friend. Rev. Roland Showalter, after that it was Rev. Robert B. Berger, the first preacher to wear shorts. Some called him long legs. Then Rev. Robert J. Collins, Rev. Wayne Bell, Rev. David Bartley, who was a runner. When it rained he would run the stairs at the church. Rev. Larry Armstrong, these are the preachers I worked with, they were all good. Sorry to hear of Larry Armstrong's wife, she was a fine lady, Larry always had a hard time cutting the grass at the manse. Glenn Allen, Jim Dixon, Floyd Cunningham, Bill Meder, Jim Walker, Prentice Bell and James Cochran Sr., Dick Dyer and Virginia Creamer and Maxine Marling, the church was their life and still is. Some are gone. We miss them very much. Evertt Criss our great friend of the church, School Treasurer for many years, he was the best. Pete Roman my good friend, Jack Beveridge and George Johnston also hold back seats and I can't hear. The choir is the best, Jim Walker, George Heil and Prentice Bell, God Bless the. It helped make our church what it is. Jim and Lillian Griffin served on the Pulpit committee with me, I enjoyed their thoughts and company again thanks. What a time we had when we stopped for ice cream in PA. And we saw Jim & Lillian. Helen Gatto, Anna Allen, Chris Taggart, Hewetson and Mary Ault, Gloria Christakis, Ruth Mosser, Ruth Galloway, Ruth Green, Laura Rose McDonald, Lois Palicka, Dorothy Snedeker, Helen Bell, Lois Walker, Doreen Rataiczak and Gertrude Rataiczak, what a team this church had, I miss Bill Magellan very much, he was a good friend of mine and the church his 2 daughters sang in the choir, Ruth Mosser is missed, she helped make the choir Laura Rose McDonald, Helen Bell, Lee Wright, Homer Ullom, Bob Bomer, Doris Armstrong, Nancy Andriano was our organist, Jim Cochran Jr. treasurer for years very good job. Thanks Jim. Joanne (Vingia) Sullivan clerk of Session for some time thanks Joanne. Dick and Pat Thomas great Deacons in the church, Tess Vaglianti active in church and Hospital, keep the good work going Tess, we all will keep the faith, God loves all of us Children. Others in the more recent choir who worked hard and made beautiful music were Henry Schaefer, Deana Armstrong, Laura Major, Pat Valloric, Joyce Dvorek, Dane Drummond, Janet Bauknecht, Diane (Dixon) Maute, Barry & Marty Roth, Taylor Archer became active in the church, Barry is doing a good job on the Session, The McFarland Family a nice young



family comes a long way to church, I call that great the time change would help them and others, Thelma Beatty was a good Deacon, she served on the Christian Ed with me, Lucy Muklewicz, Janet Howell, Darin & Michelle Darrah, Janet Harris, Robert & Michele Bell, Esther Brown, Mary Burnett, Bill Cochran, Nancy Piatt, Vera Wallace & Kathryn Simon, Sara Bauknecht. Sara Schlernitzauer. Bernard & Ethel Nelson, Charles & Doris White, John & Jennifer Massey, Sue Shallcross, Patricia Valloric Larry & Shelia Craig, Bernie & Shauna Walker, Carlos & Lorraine Smith, & Amanda Webb, Doris & Laverne Ramsay, John & Beverly Ray, Betsy (Bauknecht) Cilles, Poochie Meder, Elva Mobley, Frank & Lois Palicka, Dorothy Lash, Jane Kemper, George Johnston, Leland & Doris Jones, Bob & Ann Hodges, Don & Beverly Hrdlicka Lori Tobin, Pearl Hannan, Midge Cunningham, Nancy Delman, Diane (Dixon) Maute, Darren Dyer, Timothy and Chris Gable, John & Linda Creamer, Jim & Wanda Craig, Bob and Mary Ann Castricone, Gust Christakis, Janet Bauknecht, Skip & Patty Bauknecht, Amy Bennington, Jon and Joy Bonar, Gordon & Judy Brown, Richard & June Aukerman, Tiffany Crozier, Amy Mosser, Judy Arno , Doug Allen, Martha Balsei, Jim & Tammy Balsei, Brad Heathcote , Jon Bauknecht, Cathy Sirianni all these are the best don't you think, I do, God bless them all, 75 years is a long time and the church is still here, I hope always, the Windows the organ, the church is beautiful, Lets Pray for a Miracle to happen, They do, Mrs. E. Gaynor takes care of our church office and she does a very good job. Thanks. Our new Organist Stacey Velkovich, welcome Prentice Bell is oldest, he was with first church down by Bank One, then he went up to Second church on 41<sup>st</sup> Street, and then he came to the Presbyterian Church at 36<sup>th</sup> and Guernsey St., he was trustee, elder, Sunday School Superintendent, sang in the choir for years and years and years, God loves you, so do we. Loretta, Richard & Dan Dyer sang in choir, Chris Taggart, Helen Gatto, Virginia Creamer, Loretta Dyer, Shauna Walker were nurses from our church. The Church is our home. Doug Allen was organist and Elder and a good one thanks Doug. David Brown a very good Deacon, the church is fortunate to have people like David. We are so fortunate over the years and let us keep the Faith. God Bless this church and God Bless America. May God Bless this church, **Richard Dyer Sr. 57700 48<sup>th</sup> St. Bellaire OH 43906**

#### **Pat Thomas**

##### **1976 Olympics Trip**

Rev. Bob Collins was recruiting workers to help a small church in New York, while offering a side trip to the Olympics in Montreal, Canada. Not being a sports fan, I wasn't enticed-until he said the magic words, "Shopping Malls" and "Historic Building," I was hooked!

I helped prepare meals. After breakfast and doing dishes, it was time to start lunch, do dishes, and yep-start supper, do dishes, then do laundry, and go to sleep. When not on kitchen duty, I painted a porch on the manse and supervised painting the porch. Teenagers were painting, too, so we painted the porch floor, the next day we painted the porch railing. The third day we

painted the porch floor again because a lot of paint had dripped from the railing on our second day of painting. Joe Bonar and my husband, Dick Thomas, were putting a garage door on. I don't know how many times they did it, but I don't think they used a level-that door was on crooked! Then the two of them almost got arrested. They were selling extra Olympics tickets downtown, when a police officer stopped and told them it was illegal to scalp tickets there and that they could be arrested. Dick and Joe did some fast-talking and some fast walking! Each time that the church bus went across the border into Canada, everyone had to get off so the border patrol could take the drug-sniffing dogs on the bus to make sure we weren't smuggling narcotics into Canada.

Dick and Matt saw Bruce Jenner win the Decathlon. I saw a soccer game that was exciting-but Shopping Malls? Historic Buildings? The only glimpse I had of those was from the windows of our bus as we whizzed by. The work we did at the Manse was truly needed. Most of the congregation was older and not able to do that labor, so it is good that we were able to help them. **Pat Thomas 112 Dorer Avenue, Bellaire**

#### **Ruth Ann Mosser**

I started attending the Bellaire Presbyterian Church when I was three years old. Eleanor Roman was in charge of the nursery and pre-school classes. Rev. Showalter was the minister at the time. As I grew and advanced from class to class I was fortunate to have some very good Sunday school teachers: Wilma Burdett, Helen Bell, Virginia Creamer just to name a few. I joined the Celestial Choir when I was in the fourth grade. Some of my best memories are of the choir and Mrs. J. Herbert (Polly) Stitt. She was a very kind, thoughtful, talented and dedicated person. She served the church for 40 years. I feel I learned a lot about music, religion and life from her. I remember Christmas Eve when extra chairs had to be added to the choir loft and in back of the sanctuary to seat all the people. The beautiful music and some of the most beautiful voices that made the Bellaire Presbyterian Church the best choir in town. I remember Easter Good Friday services from 12 to 3 held at the church and an overflowing attendance on Easter Sunday morning and again some of the most beautiful music.

I remember being a part of the choir that made a tape to play as back up music for the Nativity scene that was erected outside on the Guernsey St. side of the church. Many people put in many hours making the figures that made up the Nativity scene. I have memories of Bazaar's and big turkey dinners put on by the Women's Association. A dedicated group of woman who made up the Craft group worked all year on crafts to make the Bazaar the success it always was. Doreen Rataiczak called every woman in the Church for baked goods and there was always such a big variety to choose from. I was married in the church in 1968 by Rev. Robert B. Burger who was assisted by my uncle Rev. James Dyer. Our reception was held in the church parlor and big Sunday school room. The Women's Association served for me and Lillian Griffin called me and asked if she could do the flower arrangement for the cake table.

I was so honored and the flowers, which were grown in her garden, were beautiful.

My children were baptized in 1972, my grandson was baptized in 1994 and my son was married in the church 1999. Although he now lives in the Youngstown area he still considers the Bellaire Presbyterian as his church. There have been many rough times in my life that I do not think I could have gotten through without my faith and my church. My only wish is that the church will prosper and grow and provide 75 more years of memories for its people and the community. May God Bless the Church and its people. In Christian Love, **Ruth Ann Mosser, 4129 Franklin St. Bellaire, OH 43906**

### **Carla Smith Stiles**

**My Thoughts and Memories of the Bellaire Presbyterian Church (1950's & 60's) by Carla Smith Stiles (Daughter of Carlos "Smitty" & Lorraine Smith).**

The very tangible magic on Christmas Eve when as a member of the young girls choir, we were able to sing with the talented Adult Choir and the rambunctious boys choir...Holding the battery operated candle and marching down the aisle thru the Sanctuary and hearing the Adult Choir sing "O Holy Night" still give me chills.

Leaving the church after midnight on Christmas Eve with snowflakes coming down and getting so excited that Santa was on his way and that Baby Jesus was born so long ago.

At choir practice sitting on the oak laced straight back chairs listening to Mrs. Stitt telling us to say "eggshells" for the word excelsis when we sang the hymn.

Watching the talented Mrs. Stitt play the organ and nod her head to the Choir members constantly and wondering how she kept her long braids attached to her head. They never came down either.

Sitting in the pew with my parents and trying not to laugh out loud (and sometimes cringing) at the antics of the young Boys Choir. Remember the Creamer brothers?

The wonderful fun and laughs at the annual choir member's taffy pull. I was always fascinated that a sugary liquid could boil into the solid silvery delicious taffy.

The wonderful and yummy church dinners in the big church gym...helping my mom set the long tables, sometimes serve the guests, and helping to clean up. Then as the women cleaned the kitchen, we kids would play like crazy in that great big wonderful gym!

The fun and games at the annual Christmas Bazaar. I always like the "Old Fishing Hole" game.

Enjoying Sunday school...first in the Nursery school section in the lower basement and finally graduating to the "big kids" section way upstairs on the second floor.

The dizzying and scary stairs to climb to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor "big kids" Sunday school area. Most kids ran up those stairs and I always dreaded them and

forced myself to climb up and down slowly. I now realize I have a fear of heights.

Listening to Mrs. Potts, our wonderful Sunday school teacher for the "big kids". She fascinated me that she could always answer our biblical and religious questions so well. I learned so much from her too! She was truly amazing!

Being involved in our wonderful youth group led by Rev. Showalter. We had an exceptional, active and involved youth group. So much fun and wholesome activities galore.

I finally end with the other magical special moments I had sitting in the Sanctuary and looking up at the dome with its heavenly painted blue sky and clouds. I always felt it was Heaven watching over us.

I truly feel so thankful for this wonderful church I was able to grow up in and learn about God and the Bible and Jesus. It was truly a special place for me, my family and friends.

Since we are in town we hope to attend the November 25- 9:30 A.M. Worship service and 75<sup>th</sup> Special Anniversary dinner too! Can't wait to see my old church!

### **Helen Curtis Gatto**

My family and I transferred to the Bellaire Presbyterian Church in 1934 from the Bellaire United Presbyterian Church. My father had been attending the men's Bible class at the Presbyterian Church taught by J.V. Nelson. He therefore convinced my mother to make a change. My sister and I were delighted because many of our friends attended this church.

Sunday school was held on the third floor and after opening exercises we adjourned to our classes. My class was being taught by a Miss Margaret Kern, also a schoolteacher. One Sunday in class in the middle of the lesson she DIED. A rather traumatic lesson for young ladies.

My mother, my sister and I taught Sunday school at one time or another and I even helped in Bible School in the summer. Mother was involved with the Women's Assoc. and also served as its President.

The teens of the church were usually involved in Christian Endeavor. It met on Sunday evening and was under the guidance of the preacher. Besides learning about the Bible we ate, sang and put on plays and really had an enjoyable time. In the summer a religious retreat was held in Wooster College. We stayed in the dorms and took various religious classes. It was also a lot of fun and fellowship and you met people from other churches.

Reverend Jackman was in the pulpit in 1934. I knew Reverend McCleary only briefly. In the early forties it was decided to hire a paid secretary and the first one

was Lois Schommer Clark. She served with Reverend Storch and the office was built where it is today.

But among all our memories who can forget Blanche Robinson and Polly Stitt on our beautiful organ. The choir as it made its processional to the choir loft. And our children looking like angels in the junior choir. The Holiday services where it was so crowded that chairs were placed in the back or the Sunday School Room was opened for the overflow. The bazaar and turkey dinner (with Maisie Schick, Kitty Sedgewick, Bess Kemper, and Mrs. Meder working and donating crafts and goodies. All the large dinners we served especially the FOOTBALL banquet. And would you believe the Bellaire High School alumni banquet.

And perhaps the spirits of all those families that were so much a part of this church: The J.V. Nelsons, J. E. Giffin, Kenneth Coopers, Chester Sedgewicks, Ned Kempers, Homer Rings, Mary Snider, Hap Aults, Ross Carnes, Florence Ring Potts, Howard Simpsons, Emma Louis Robinson, Anna Carroll, Johsons Garrisons, Bronchick, Robert Johnstons, Cochrans, William McGraws, Jim Dixons, Howard Rodefers, Wm. Greens, Mrs. Rolston, Carl Kochs, Joseph McClain, Lloyd Cunninghans, Ralph and Harry Neffs, Elmer Robinsons, Harry McDonalds, Floyd Reinbolts, Schicks, McKelveys, Hathaways, Weyricks, and many more I can't remember.

This church had a very firm foundation, as many members were professional people and educators. Not many of their children remained in this area to keep the foundation firm.

After high school my attendance in church was not stable as I was being educated and served in the Navy during WW2. After the birth of my daughter I became more active bringing her to church regularly. I had the Brownie troop for a few years along with Doris Jones. We helped with pageants etc. Also I served as Secretary Treasurer, of the Deacons for six years. And served one year on trustees. After retiring I spent many years as one of the: "crafty ladies " for the bazaar. This church means a lot to me having spent 67 years of my life in attendance.

Helen Curtis Gatto

**Rev. Wayne Bell**

Dear Friends at the Bellaire Presbyterian Church,

It is indeed a joy for us to participate? - Even through email? With the 75th birthday of the Bellaire Church.

It seems impossible to me that it is almost 20 years since I served as your pastor. Debbie and I still live in Slippery Rock, Pennsylvania. But it is just the two of us

these days. Rachel? who was less than a year old when we arrived in Bellaire--is a Middle School teacher in suburban Washington DC. Jason, who started school when we were in Bellaire, is also a teacher. Jason teaches High School Spanish in Rock Hall, South Carolina. To round out the "teaching" component of the Bell family, Debbie teaches 3rd grade in Slippery Rock.

In the summer of 2000, I left my position with Beaver-Butler Presbytery, (a position I held since leaving Bellaire) and again moved into pastoral ministry at the West Sunbury Presbyterian Church. I find it a joy and a challenge to again be with a congregation on a regular basis.

As a family we always remember our time at Bellaire with great joy. It is wonderful to see the names of people we spent so much time with listed in the bulletin and newsletter. It is also a joy to know that the faithful witness to Christ continues at the corner of 36th and Guernsey Streets.

Those days in the late 70's and early 80's were times of transition in Bellaire and the Valley. Steel was in trouble as were the coal and glass industries. During those days many families left the Valley and headed south and west for jobs. Some months it seemed we lost a family a week.

One afternoon, Bob MacDonald, Jim Walker and I were talking about how high school graduation was a time of mixed feelings within the Bellaire Church. We were proud of our young people, proud that many of them were heading off to further their education, and yet, within the church and community was a knowing reality that they would not return home - -work and careers would call them elsewhere.

Yet, in the midst of that, the Bellaire Church was faithful to it's calling as a community that prepared it's children and young people and families to face the reality of a changing world. That has been your strength and blessing to the community. I remember being told, (by Jim Dixon I believe) that shortly after the church was completed in the 1920's, the Carnegie Steel Mill closed as the Great Depression dawned. It has been the long history of the Bellaire Church to live in the face of adversity.

May God continue to bless the ministry of Bellaire Church and the lives of her members. Debbie and I hold you in our prayers.

**Peace, Wayne M. Bell**

**Ps: please note that our address has changed. Debbie and I now live at 344 Creek Drive, Slippery Rock, PA. 16057**

**Mary Jane Rataiczak**

To say that the Bellaire Presbyterian Church was my life in the 40's, 50's, 60's, 70's, 80's would be true. I recall the immense vitality of our church. I was very

young when Helen McDonald began a teaching and nurturing process that would carry me through life. We had a huge Sunday school enrollment. Scott Brannen was superintendent upstairs and as we became older, we were on that upper level with Wilma Burdett, Helen Bell, and other greats. Outside of Sunday school was choir with Mrs. Stitt and Junior and Senior Fellowship. My parents, Zyg and Doreen Rataiczak, for many years hosted Easter sunrise services, church picnics, men's club meetings, and so many fellowship activities.

### **Memories:**

Going to Camp Presmont in 3rd grade. The variety show with Dad, Uncle John, and Prentice Bell dressed as a chorus line. All the church suppers. The bazaar and days of church baking. Easter Lenten labor projects with Dad high on the ladder cleaning walls. Families working at Camp Presmont. Knowing that most of my parents' family and friends were in the church and kept me in line. Aunt Mary and Uncle Harry Deafenbaugh, Aunt Gertrude and Uncle John Rataiczak, Aunt Josephine and Uncle John DeBlasis. Our high school Sunday school class with Ella Evans. Basketball before Fellowship under Dick Dyer's watchful eye. Our Fellowship trip with Rev Showalter and my Dad to Pennsylvania colleges. I chose Westminster. John Galloway clocking our station wagon going by his house too fast after a Fellowship meeting -- calling my Dad and reporting "we must have been discussing the devil because that's what I was driving like." Rev Burger marrying Charles and myself in 1963. Celebrating my parents' 40th wedding anniversary after church service. Feeling the same strong support and love from many of life long church members after Mom & Dad's funerals in the '90's.

**Mary Jane Rataiczak Colwell**  
**4715 St. Andrews Dr.**  
**Baytown, TX 77521**  
**Email: cjcolwe@gte.net**

### **Frank Curtis**

Hi Gertrude...Nancy Cooper died several years ago in Vista CA., as did her husband Dick-presume her three children still in CA. Last I heard of David was that he was in Wash DC area with his son Jeff. Florence and Kenneth Cooper were both active in the church. As you noted, their youngest daughter Patricia and I were married in the church 51 years ago (Aug 26 1950). She died 4 years later age 30-of Hodgkin's. Her church family was of great comfort to her. Some of Pat's students at Key Ridge Elementary still remember her. I will not forget Dr. Creamer, and how attentive he was to Pat and her illness, and of her many friends in the church and her neighbors on N Jefferson. Thanks for you kind note...good luck on the church's 75<sup>th</sup>. **Frank Curtis E mail FranklinCurtis @msn.com**

**John Showalter, Jr.**

For the 75th anniversary remembrances

My father, Rev. Roland L. Showalter, pastored Bellaire Presbyterian from January 1957, to June 1960. At that time Dick Dyer was the Church janitor and the man to see for anything relating to B.P.C. "Sir Richard" came up to the manse, at 4160 Harrison, to help us get moved in, and busied himself in a tight kitchen corner behind our gas refrigerator, hooking it up. Dick then, and for many years, was never without his trademark cigar, even as he did this job.

Suddenly there was a loud "Blam!" from the kitchen that brought us all running, fearing the worst. A shaken Dick Dyer emerged from behind the refrigerator with his hair and eyebrows singed and the cigar plastered all over his face! Once we were sure he was OK, we all had a good laugh, because Dick was quite a sight! Thus we became acquainted with Dick, and started a family friendship that endures to this day.

The physical plant of the B.P.C. was the most impressive of any Church my Dad ever pastored, and he rejoiced in the incredible stained glass windows, the "Mighty Mohler" pipe organ, and the massiveness of the place. Even the boiler room, especially in the coal-fired days, was an impressive space, and I was always amazed that a Church designed/built in the 1920's had spaces intended for air-conditioning equipment and ductwork, a gym with projection booth, and so forth. Dad often told his friends of these wonders, but when you meet one of them today and the subject of Bellaire comes up, what do they most often recall Dad mentioning about the building? Yup, that was the Church that had a stained glass window in the preacher's private toilet!

**John R. Showalter**  
Swannanoa, NC

**Jane Sedgwick Sperry**

How does one begin to relate all the wonderful memories of "growing up" in the Bellaire Presbyterian Church?

There was never any question about our going to church on Sunday morning - that was just what we did as a family! I am grateful for the strong foundation and support this church provided.

I can remember so many things that made a lasting impression -

Our "regular" pew in the back right side of the sanctuary -

Seeing my friends and friends of my folks who also seemed like "my" friends, too, (Coopers, Greens, McGraws, Creamers, Rataiczaks, Kochs, Robinsons, Cochrans, Carnes - to name just a few) -

The exceptionally beautiful stained glass windows -

The wonderful & huge burgundy velvet curtain separating the sanctuary from the Sunday School assembly room -

Seeing that same curtain adorned with glistening silver stars of different sizes at Christmas time, and the church itself dressed in greenery and candles



down the aisles - how beautiful it was! - And I know my Mom had a big hand in creating that beauty -

The large room adjacent to the sanctuary where we all gathered before Sunday School to sing the wonderful hymns, many of which I can still sing without looking at the hymnal -

A processions of ministers, some of whom were Dr. McCleary (a favorite of my Dad's but while I was still too young to know well), Rev. Storch, Rev. Jackman, Rev. McHendry, and others -

How proud I was to be served communion by my Father as an Elder, a position he took very seriously -

Singing in the choir and loving being part of that group - The Christmas pageants each year - The minstrels my Mother worked so hard on for several years and the joyous participation of members of the church as End Men, etc. -

The wonderful aromas coming from the church kitchen when the ladies prepared sumptuous feasts on so many occasions, even our Senior Banquet -

The amazing bazaars with all kinds of goodies and homemade items. I remember the hours my Mother spent making beautiful aprons, pot holders, doll clothes, etc. -

Sunday night Christian Endeavor meetings when the Youth had such good times together participating in devotions and social activities -

Coming home from college and feeling the warmth and love of my church "family" -

Sunday School classes to which we looked forward but which were sometimes pretty rambunctious! Mrs. Leach seemed unflustered, though -

My marriage there to Elwood Sperry on June 24, 1950, and to whom I am still happy to be married! -

The beautiful reception so lovingly prepared by the women of the church. Mr. Carl Uhrmann, President of Imperial Glass Company, had just given the church a beautiful set of Candlewick plates, etc. June 24th was an extremely hot day and when ice cream was placed on some of the plates, several cracked and broke!

These are just a few of my recollections of Bellaire Presbyterian Church. Thank you for the opportunity to do some reflecting on just how important this church was and still is in my memory. My parents were loyal and faithful servants of the church and instilled that love into my brother, Cy, and me.

May God bless your coming together to celebrate this great occasion and may He shower His blessings upon you as you continue to teach, nurture and send forth to be His servants in this world.

**Jane Sedgwick Sperry**  
**(Daughter of Chester C. and Kitty Marie Sedgwick)**  
**165 County Road #784**  
**Etowah, TN 37331-5118**  
**E-mail: ejsperry@earthlink.net**

**Kathy DeBlasis Aspinwall**

The Bellaire Presbyterian Church is special to me in many ways. First of all, I was baptized, confirmed, and married in the church. I especially remember memorizing verses in my mother's third grade Sunday School class and later playing the piano for the primary department. Of all the special activities at Christmas, I particularly remember the decorations that my father was instrumental in providing. As music has been my lifelong career, Pauline Stitt is certainly a joy to remember as organist and choir director. Most importantly, the Bellaire Presbyterian Church provided me with the spiritual background to continue serving our Lord in the Mount Pleasant Presbyterian Church as pianist, choir director, and a member of session. Happy celebration!

**Kathryn DeBlasis Aspenwall**

**Patricia Vaglianti Nelson**

Hi Gertrude - just for you:

My memories are so numerous; it's hard to just pick one or two. Going down to the 'little peoples' Sunday School classes...climbing all those stairs to the top floor for Sunday School when I got a little older...being part of some lively discussions in Doreen Rataiczak's high school Sunday School class...singing in the choir...playing the handbells, being part of the Christmas pageant. Youth group activities were usually interesting, especially when we hosted other youth groups for games in the gym. We made a lot of friends. I guess one of the best things was just the feeling I had of so many people watching out for me, caring for me, teaching me the ways of the Lord. Doreen & Ziggy, Gertrude, Helen & Prentiss, Rev. Showalter, Rev. Berger, and so many others, were very big influences on my life. Church was where I learned all the Bible stories that I tried to make sure my children learned when they were little, and tried to pass on to the children I've since taught in Sunday School at Long's Run Presbyterian. Thanks for the memories & lessons.

**Pat Vaglianti Nelson**

**Rich Nelson**

10/10/01

Dear Mrs. Gertrude Raticzack,

I think I butchered your name and I apologize but, hey, I am at least responding to your request.

I truthfully have not thought about the Bellaire First Presbyterian Church for a few years and would not have today if my conscientious sister-in-law Pat had not called to remind me to write you.

The church has meant both beginnings and endings for me. My parents, Bernard and Ethel Nelson, were joined in their second marriage for each in the sanctuary in 1956, and this year celebrated their 45th wedding anniversary at 90 years of age (Oops, Mom, I mean 39 years of age!). My brother, Clark and Pat Vaglianti were married in the church in 1964 and Pat has never quite let me forget messing up her wedding pictures as a 15 year old best man. The church has also meant endings. My sister Fay's funeral service was held there in 1995 after she passed away in California.

I also have memories probably similar to others of my age. For example, I remember as a child the excitement of the candlelight midnight Christmas services, marching into to the Sanctuary as part of the choirs with real lit candles, with the anticipation of opening Christmas presents after returning home from the service. I also remember Mrs. Stitt and Sundays in the top of the choir loft as a child sharing comic books between musical duties (From our lofty position, we could see every person who was sleeping, including my Dad.) I also remember the Sunday evening youth fellowship programs. We were often asked by the adult advisors to each recite a verse from the scriptures. The favorite among the boys was, "Jesus wept." and we competed to be the first to say it. I also remember the dinners in the gym and the kindness of Dick Dyer who let us in to play touch football and just horse around in the gym on more than one cold winter Saturday when there was not much to do.

Probably my strongest although somewhat indirect memory of church was the Sunday in high school when Pete Creamer and I skipped the worship service to joy ride in his dad's car and were involved in a fairly spectacular but non-lethal accident on route 7 south of Shadyside. (As I recall, the other car was totaled.) I tried to forget about it but was reminded of it for years by my parents for some reason.

Many best wishes for another 75 years!

**Rich Nelson**  
**Riverdale, Iowa**

**Steve Schaefer**

Memories of Steve Schaefer  
N6443 1317<sup>th</sup> St  
Prescott WI 54021

I was active in the church from birth in 1958 until I went off to college in 1976. Some of my best memories of the Bellaire Presbyterian Church are:

1. The exceptional youth activities organized by Rev Collins in the mid 1970's. I will always remember the big green bus and the summer work camps to Colorado, Texas and Yellowstone (as well as all the people involved!).
2. I remember looking forward to going to the nursery off the basketball court when I was a toddler.
3. I remember doing plays on the stage
4. I remember the youth choir and choir practice. I still can sing all the songs we learned!
5. I will always remember the inspirational Christmas Eve services of the 70's and all the great singing.

Thanks for all the memories (people and activities). I visited the church in January 2000 and it was great to see many people sitting in the same places they did in the 70's! I will always remember the Bellaire Presbyterian Church wherever I live. Happy 75 years!

### **Cyrus Sedgwick**

At the request of my favorite - and only! - Sister, Jane Marie Sperry, I write to reflect on the greatest man I have ever known, my Dad, Chester C. Sedgwick. Raised a Baptist, he succumbed to the wiles of my Presbyterian mother when I was about to be born on Feb.14, 1925.

I suspect Dad became a member of the first Session of the birthing of the Presbyterian Church whose jour de naissance you are celebrating at this time. I believe he was a member of the search party, which located Rev. Boyd McCleary in Oneonta, New York, and lured him to Bellaire. Rev. McCleary had a very significant hand in the planning and building of "our" church. I believe some of the members of the Session (Board of Elders) at that time included Harry Neff, Earl Green, Walter McCroba, J.V. Nelson, Dr. McDonald, Carl Koch, and perhaps two or three others whose names I don't recall and Mrs. McCleary became very close friends of my parents, Chester and Kitty Marie. They spoke often of the great good fortune of having the McClearys lead our church. Dad served as an elder for at least 25 years and succeeded J.V. Nelson as teacher of the men's Sunday School class. Dad studied the Bible with a passion and it was his eternal guide throughout his life. He was -- and remains -- my ideal of a genuine Christian. Mother was a whirlwind in the Philathea Class, at Bazaars and church dinners. She played piano for the adult Sunday School class. She didn't own the kitchen but she sure knew her way around in it -- from preparation to clean-ups.

My memories of "our" church are happy ones. The minstrels with Raymond Kemper as an "end" man, the Boy Scouts under the guidance of George Robinson, the choir with Ross Carnes at my side, and Blanche Robinson as choir director and organist.

My wife and I have attended services at our Bellaire church and have always felt the warmth and fellowship I knew before I entered the Navy in July 1943. I am grieved to see our Church attendance reflecting the negative growth of Bellaire and other parts of the valley, but I understand it and have resigned myself to accept it.

Have a Happy 75th Birthday and God Bless You All.

Sincerely yours, **Cyrus H. Sedgwick (now of Columbus, OH)**

### **Hattie Rataiczak Luikart**

Tom had e-mailed some pictures, which were taken in 1959, except the one of our wedding, which was taken 12/21/74.

The following were members of the

#### **Celestial Choir in 1959:**

Judy Allen	Connie Ballog
Ruth Beals	Kathryn DeBlasis
Laurel Dillehay	Bess Ann Dobbins
Betty Johnston	Peggy Johnston
Jan Jones	Carol Kaldor
Carol Ballog	Debby Kucera
Betsy Magellan	Hattie Rataiczak
Nancy Rozman	Paula Smith
Judith Snedeker	Susan Taggart
Susan Waser	Martha Wise
Sandra Dean	

#### **Crusader Choir in 1959:**

David Creamer	John Creamer
Peter Creamer	Larry Drummond
Tom Glatzer	Clark Nelson
Richard Nelson	LeRoy Nelson
Tom Rataiczak	Jim Showalter
Eddie Jo Scott	Gary Scott
Bert Snedeker	Charles Thomas
Eddie R. Waser	

#### **Crusader Hand Bell Choir in 1959:**

Larry Drummond	Jim Showalter
Bert Snedeker	Tom Showalter

Herman Glatzer  
Bill Stewart  
Billie Jo Magellan

George Kaldor  
Eddie Matthews

I wonder what everyone is doing?

Of course, I am sure that everyone remembers Polly Stitt, our choir director/organist. She could be tough at times, but I sure did learn a lot from her.

This was one of my memorable times. I remember that the choirs had a contest to called "Hymns In My Heart." It was required to sing the first verse from a Hymn without accompaniment. The member that "sang" the most Hymns was the winner. If my memory serves me correctly, I think the winner was me.

How many remember this song?

"THAT WONDERFUL MOTHER OF MINE"

The moon never beams with out bringing me dreams  
Of that wonderful Mother of mine;  
The birds never sing but a message they bring  
Of that wonderful mother of mine.  
Just to bring back the time  
That was so sweet to me,  
Just to bring back the days  
When I sat on her knee.

REFRAIN:

You are a wonderful Mother,  
Dear, Dear Mother of mine,  
You'll hold a spot down deep in my heart,  
Till the stars no longer shine.  
Your soul shall live on forever,  
On through the fields of time.  
For there'll never be another to me,  
Like that wonderful Mother of mine,

I pray ev'ry night to our Father above,  
For that wonderful mother on mine.  
I ask Him to keep her as long as He can,  
That wonderful Mother of mine.  
There are treasures on earth  
That make life seem worth while,  
But there's none can compare  
With my dear Mother's smile.

REFRAIN

(This is especially for my Mother, Gertrude Rataiczak.)

I also remember the beautiful and wonderful music we did at Christmas and Easter (yes, and also all year around),  
At Christmas and Easter we did anthems that we do not hear today and I miss them.

Another music memory was when the church would put on a "Music Show". One year I sang "How Much Is That Doggie In The Window". Betty Johnston and I sang "Tea For Two".

One year my Dad (John Rataiczak), Uncle Zyg Rataiczak, and Prentice Bell dressed up like women and did a song/skit.

Another memory was when Mother was the leader of the Youth Fellowships, I was too young to join, but I got to go and remember having fun with the "older kids". They all treated me like a younger sister.

My fondest memory was on December 21, 1974 when Tom & I got married. It was such a special day and everyone in the church made it that way. The church was decorated beautifully for Christmas (I hope the picture turned out OK)  
Rev. Bob Collins was the minister at that time and did the ceremony.

I also was a Deacon at that time, and remembered the Deacons had a surprise shower for me. Of course it was before the wedding, but I don't remember the exact date. Sorry! It must be the age!

We can't forget "Millie the Mouse"! Does anyone remember who she was? Put on your thinking "Mouse Ears"! She ran all through the church gathering information to write about. She even found crumbs to eat. Give up? I think I am part mouse, because she was my Aunt Doreen Rataiczak!

I remember all the dinners that were served in the basement. One dinner especially is when I was serving and I spilled a plate of food on none other than "Howard Rodefer"! I sure am glad that he knew me and forgave me!

It sure is something when I start writing; how I start remembering different things that happened at the Bellaire Presbyterian Church.

Well, my memory is fading at this time, so I will close the happy, pleasant, and embarrassing moments at the Bellaire Presbyterian Church.

**Hattie (Mrs. Tom) Luikart**  
**1063 Brickell Street SE**  
**Palm Bay, FL 32909**  
**hluikart@cfl.rr.com**

### **Rev. David Bartley**

I candidate at Bellaire on April 17, 1983. I remember the date because on Thursday before that Sunday our youngest son Jeff was born. Later on the 17th I picked up Kathy and Jeff from the hospital and we began to pack for the move to Bellaire. Our other sons Michael and Scott were heading to Kindergarten and preschool.

I remember stories of floods, including the one that almost got the basement flooded in the 30's(Earl Jackman the pastor then was a member of Muskingum Valley Presbytery and when He found out I was going to Bellaire he told me the manhole cover was sealed. If it had not been, the gym would have been flooded. Stories of walking across the Ohio River, glass industry stories, the building of the church (in fact Mr. Greenlee's, of the building committees, son, was my Dad's boss at Grimes Manufacturing Company in Urbana, Ohio. Of helping to get the new pool built with WPA money. Of Street Car tracks and Bob Hope in a parade. There were many others, but time and space don't permit.

I remember lock-in's with first through sixth graders numbering at least 20 spending the night in the church and teaching them sardines. This game has you join the person who is hiding and then waiting for the others to find them. We also played kick ball in the gym and with the low ceiling this was always an interesting game. With snacks and a lesson these were always fun.

We started a Shrove Tuesday dinner and intergenerational Study to mark the last day before the season of Lent.

When I arrived, about 10% of the congregation was in a nursing home. My calls were made and I think there was only one person who started out in the nursing home who was there when I left. I had a number of funerals One story from the time of the new boiler, It was a very cold Monday. Jane was not working that day and school had been called off. When I opened the door to get into the office it seemed colder than usual. The pilot had blown out and the boiler was not lit. When I opened the door on the new boiler water was bouncing off the side. It looked like the boiler had a crack. Well it was a water pipe from above. Ice had formed on the side of the boiler and the illusion was that it was coming out of the boiler. A call to the company that put it in and changing the pilot solved the problem. I spent the rest of the workday walking the church to make sure no pipes were broken. The boiler company told me we were within hours of losing the boiler.

The day we had Presbytery at Bellaire everything was going very well. Dinner was to be in the gym. It was decorated impeccably and there were candles on the tables for decorations. The area church were going to lead in worship and just before dinner the electricity went out. The halogen lights take 10 to 15 minutes to restart. The gym was dark and everyone was heading down stairs. The candles saved the day. The



electricity was back on before worship. I preached on the great mistake (which was not focusing on God's word), but used the angels in the bottom of the Great Window which was out of place. The one holding the Bible should be in the middle and the other two should be looking at the Bible.

No one can be at Bellaire and not marvel at the windows and I still do when I remember them and the church one summer I preached on the stories in the windows.

I remember community Bible School and Community services, directing camp at Presmont, joint picnics with the other Presbyterian Churches, switching to the unicameral board, pew cushions being added, roof projects, the candles at Christmas, changing the lights in the roof and wonderful music on Christmas Eve among other things. Many people come to mind, but to list them would be to leave some out and I wouldn't want to do that.

I thank you for the opportunity to serve Bellaire and I hope and pray that your future in faith will be bright.

Our family has changed; Michael graduated from Tri State in Aero Space Engineering, began working for Dynamic Engineering, married Amanda Thomas and started Graduate School In Newport New VA at George Washington. He is an Eagle Scout and played in the Band in high school. He fenced at Tri State and played in the Pep Band and met Amanda.

Scott graduated from Ohio State in Music performance on his Oboe. He spent two years at CCM at the University of Cincinnati. Last year he was a one-year substitute at Second chair Oboe for the Lima Symphony. In High School He played in the Toledo Youth Orchestra, Toledo Youth Symphonic Band, University of Toledo Concert Band, Ohio State Fair Band and won the Sousa Award in High School. This summer he started graduate school in Math Education at Ohio State and Married Monica Shaffer. They met in Columbus at the State Fair Band. They are both planning on teaching next year.

Jeff has stated Forestry Management at Hocking College. He graduated this June from Clay High School. He was in plays and the band. He played quad's for three years.

Kathy started teaching at Cherry Annex in 1991 in Toledo Public Schools. This is an inner city school and most days she enjoys it. The last two summers she has lead the crafts at Kid's Camp at Kirkmont and I have directed the camp. She has taken up quilting and being a mother -in-law. She is presently on the Session at Eastminster.

We have been in Toledo for twelve years. The boys all graduated from Clay High. We have tried to be active in their lives and in the life of the church. We enjoy living in Oregon, Ohio and being at Eastminster United Presbyterian Church. I spend two week at church camp, co-chair the presbytery Camps and Conference Committee, am secretary of the Committee on Presbytery Mission and a chair of the Synod Nominating Committee. I like being a Pastor and we are planning on staying at Eastminster.

Rev. David Bartley

#### **Janice Icenhour**

My love-filled memories of my mother, Gertrude Klee, are of the times she took time to listen, the times we shared, for all she gave, for always being there, and for the happiness that she gave to all. Not only to me, but for my sisters, brother, family and friends as well. I will always cherish my memories and they will always be a beautiful part of the love that I will always carry in my heart only to grow more beautiful with every passing year.

**Janice Icenhour**

#### **Loretta Klee Robinson**

I remember riding to church with my mother's Aunt Pearl Hannan. She had a push-button Plymouth, and I thought it was the greatest vehicle, ever! My sister Carollee and I had a catechism class with others our age, and Reverend Radford taught it every weekend. It was a truly great time, we all shared little boxes of pretzels there, and I think because his daughter Jeannie was our age at the time, he had the respect of the teens in the church at that time. He made the bible studies, a fun time for all of us. Later, I was very saddened by his death, and I thought he was much too young to have died. He and his family were wonderful people.

I remember Reverend Berger marrying my husband and I, and then coming out to my parent's house, with Mrs. Berger after the ceremony. He talked and ate with us, enjoying his visit, as he always seemed to do.

I imagine I never think of church without thinking of my mother, and how she always cooked for the dinners there. It was a very important part of her life, and she did so enjoy doing it.

I love to ride by the church and look at it, whenever I'm in Bellaire. I have always thought it was and still is such a beautiful building. Happy 75th Birthday!

Sincerely, **Loretta Klee Robinson**

#### **Marylou Dixon**

I am Nell Dixon's daughter-in-law. Gertrude Rataiczak asked for some information on our families. I'll give you what I think you might use. Jim Dixon, Sr. passed away in 1997. He had been a member of the church his entire adult life.

He was an elder for many years. He was supt. of Bellaire Schools. Nell Dixon, his wife, was very active in the church as well. She was the first president of the Women's Assn. Their main moneymaker, as I understand it, was the craft bazaar and many dinners, which the women prepared for the public. Jim, Jr. grew up in the church and sang in the choir.

He and I were married in the church by Rev. Stewart Radford in 1955. Diane and Lynne Dixon were daughters of Jim, Sr. and Nell. They both grew up in the church, as well.

My parents, Olive and Hershall Thomas, were members and participated in most church activities. Olive was active in a circle, which I particularly remember met in the evenings. I remember a pinochle card group made up of church people when Rev. Roland Showalter was here. (That may not be appropriate for your newsletter!!!)

I (Marylou Thomas Dixon) sang in the choir for many years and helped with Vacation Bible School. I hope this could be of some help to you. Sincerely, **M. Dixon**

#### **Dave Creamer**

Dave Creamer has vague memories of Boy Scout meetings in the basement of the Church.

#### **Judy Allen Piehowicz**

Dear Gertrude--So good to hear from you. Sorry it took me so long to get back to you. I have many fond memories of church. I really cherished my time in the children's choir. This was a time when we really felt like a big family. All of the hymns we learned still stay with me today. My favorites are Jesus Christ is Risen Today, O Holy Night, and O'er All the Ways Green Palms. I remember vividly the potluck dinners in the church basement. Hope these memories are helpful. Thanks and God Bless! **Judy Allen Piehowicz**

#### **Bill Stewart**

Dear Gertrude,

Your note brought back many wonderful memories. Too many to share in one short letter. However, I would be remiss not share the love I received growing up in The Bellaire Presbyterian Church.

I remember-

All the Sunday School classes, from primary to high school, including the programs in the sanctuary. Getting into see movies for the cost of an Ohio Sales Tax stamp, back in 1950. The many good teachers like Jim DeBlais and his 7th & 8th grade boys' class. Jim took the time. He had good classes, but he also took the time to take us places, like the county jail, to other churches (St John's Catholic Church, the Methodist

Church) to see how others worshipped, and fishing two or three times a year.

-All the youth activities, Boy Scouts with Mr. Bissett, basketball, the youth groups with Doreen and Zig Rataiczak and going to Camp Presmont to help build a cabin, swim after a greased watermelon, and also a place I broke my shoulder. The youth trips to Tennessee, northern Ohio, and Pennsylvania. I will never forget seeing Rev. Showalter and Zig Rataiczak laugh so hard they cried, when sharing how I saw my first five legged bull at a county fair on one of these trips with Larry Dillehay and Tom Showalter.

-The choirs (Boys, Bell, and Sanctuary), Mrs. Stitt, Mother Bell, Christmas Eve, the music, and the choir shows. Oh, was it great to get Mrs. Stitt to play the "Lone Ranger" theme on the church organ after choir practice for the likes of Mike Kennedy, Larry Dillehay, Bob Bissett, Herman Glazer and others!

During my time in the sanctuary choir, we had a member who was able to keep us (Bob Bonner, Howard Simpson, Phil Johnston, Prentice Bell, Homer Ullom) entertained with his many antics. Later, we learned that this person was a female impersonator at one of the local establishments.

-There were many good times, serving coffee with Dick Dyer at one of the many dinners served in the church, the Christmas Bazaars, or painting the showers with LL Cunningham during Lent. There were sad times too, and I will always remember David Marling.

There is too much to share, but it's all warm and with love.

You (The Bellaire Presbyterian Church) will always be with me.  
**Bill Stewart**

#### **Nancy Taggart Piatt**

This is about the church in a round about way -

I must have been about 4 yrs old and my mother made me a rag doll. My Sunday school teacher (probably the first one) was Virginia Creamer and I named my doll after her. My family had a plot of ground in north Bellaire on the riverbank and we had a vegetable garden there. We would go up in the summer to take care of the garden and one day I took my rag doll Virginia with me. Well, when we came home I realized that I had left Virginia down at the garden plot but I never got her back because the river came up over our garden plot and she got washed away. This story isn't really about the church but I think that my very first Sunday school teacher must have been a pretty important person to me if I named my doll after her.

Another thing I remember - the youth choir. You had to be in 4th grade to sing in the choir and I remember how happy I was when I started in 4th grade and could join the choir. We had choir practice on Wednesday evenings for an hour before the grown up choir and we got to sing on Sunday mornings once a month and of course on Easter Sunday and Christmas Eve. We had bright blue choir robes. Polly Stitt was our choir director. In May each year there was a choir banquet for our families and us and we all took part in a variety show. Ruth (Holloway) Mosser and I sang a song from "The Sound of Music" one year. Each year Mrs. Stitt gave us (children's choir) a test to see how our music education had progressed during the year and she would announce at our spring choir banquet who had the highest score. The winner would get a small gift and I remember wanting to be the winner so badly and finally I was the winner. I don't remember what the prize was but I do remember how important that was to me. I guess the point of these two stories is that the church was a big part of my life as I grew up.

**Nancy (Taggart) Piatt 51376 Burrwood Dr. St. Clairsville OH 43950**

### **Drusilla Ice**

Memories of my Mother's life at First Presbyterian Church Bellaire.

My Mother, Alberta Powell Ice, began her life as a Presbyterian at the 18th Street Chapel of the First Presbyterian Church of Wheeling, WV. Throughout her life she cherished the Bible presented to her by the Chapel's minister Reverend Croft on the occasion of her confirmation.

In the early 1980's Mary Ault persuaded my parents to move their letter from First Church Wheeling to the Bellaire Presbyterian Church. That marked the beginning of a rich spiritual life there that sustained my Mother through many trials until her death in 1995.

Mary was the first of many Bellaire Presbyterian women whose fellowship and friendship Mother came to treasure. Gertrude Rataiczak and Lois Walker come to mind among others.

Mother enjoyed all aspects of her life in the Church--Bible study, cooking for banquets, baking for the Christmas Bazaar and participating in the Women's Circle. She was deeply honored when she was asked to serve as an Elder.

Though she started life in the Church elsewhere, she came home to First Presbyterian Bellaire. She worried about the Church's survival as so many of it older members passed away. I'm sure she is very pleased to know Bellaire Presbyterian is celebrating its 75th anniversary--during her Birthday week nonetheless.

Submitted by **Drusilla Ice**

### **Joe Bonar**

When I think of Bellaire Presbyterian Church, the foremost thought I have is the magnificent, beautiful windows surrounding the worshiper- they are without parallel.

In this church I was married to the most wonderful girl in the world; three of our sons were baptized here, as well as one of our grandsons.

I also think of the wonderful trip we, as chaperones, had the privilege of sharing in 1976 when the church youth attended the Olympic Games in Montreal. We have many fond memories of the camaraderie, sharing, sometimes work, and most of the time fun.

I remember playing basketball in the gymnasium with Homer and other friends, and thinking how fortunate we were to have such facilities available... I also have fond memories of attending Sunday school, albeit not often enough, to share views with Mr. Ault and others.

**Joe Bonar**

### **Judy Rataiczak Bonar**

#### Memories of Bellaire Presbyterian Church Ramblings by Judy (Rataiczak) Bonar

When I think about my "home church," my mind races with memories in a very disorganized manner. I recall:

Choir practices with Mrs. Stitt; choir parties with taffy pulls in the basement, the choir loft filled on Christmas Eve with chairs set up on either side for choir members. The church sanctuary was always filled on Christmas Eve. I remember Danny Simpson playing "God of Our Fathers" with such zest and energy.

Jr. High and Sr. High Fellowships: meetings were always on Sunday nights. Uncle Zyg and Aunt Doreen worked faithfully to get us to accept our responsibilities and take turns in leadership positions. One night we all went sled riding on their farm and I tore my brand-new jacket that I wasn't supposed to be wearing. Our Sr. High meetings sometimes included youth groups from other churches. We had a variety of leaders under the guidance of Rev. Radford and Rev. Showalter. My mother was always involved with the Sr. High group, inviting them --- plus the college kids --- to our house for holiday get-togethers. We also enjoyed going Christmas caroling to the shut-ins and the get-together afterwards.

Sunday School was a very important part of my memories. I remember the loving guidance of Wilma and Ray Burdette on the third floor and not being

able to get a match to light when it was my turn to light the candles during the carefully planned Opening Exercises; I remember Jim Dixon as our Sunday School teacher during high school; I remember playing the piano downstairs where Aunt Josephine (DeBlasis) and Eleanor Roman taught classes. I remember the Sunday School Christmas program and enjoying the antics of the Creamer boys, and of course, I recall Santa Claus a.k.a. Evertt Criss. Dick Dyer was an active part of Sunday School for many years, too. And when I was quite young, I remember Scott Brannen bringing live rabbits to church on Easter Sundays. I wasn't the only teenage choir member who giggled at some of the ladies' hats we saw on well-dressed ladies at Easter time. As an adult, Effie Brown was an inspiration at Sunday School; she always stood up for what she believed and did not hesitate to share her beliefs that stores should **not** be open on Sundays, and people should **not** shop on the Sabbath.

When I joined church, we met with the Session to answer questions, and my father was an Elder. He had a spell at church and was rushed to the hospital, where he died a week later. I vividly recall the large number of church friends and family who surrounded us with love during that difficult time. Several Overlook Court neighbors were also church members: Brannens, Dixes, Rodefes, Smiths, Robinsons --- and perhaps the Uhrmanns, I'm not sure.

We were married in this beautiful church by Rev. Burger, who told us he and his wife, had **never** had an argument. This is where our first son, Jeff, was baptized. I was in my sister's wedding here; by this time we had three sons and they were all a part of Hattie's and Tom's Christmas wedding.

The first time I came home from Muskingum, I went to church dressed as a college gal, wearing my fancy new coat and hat. Howard Rodefer came to me and gave me a big bear hug, causing my hat to roll down the aisle. That quickly brought me down to where I should have been.

The Bazaars were always a big event. The ladies worked so hard to create such beautifully detailed crafts, and men also donated their share of wooden crafts and help. Uncle Zyg made lots of items, and so did others. The table with punch and cookies was always elegant and the servers varied, but I remember Nell Dixon and Anna Allen. There were lines of people waiting to get in when the doors opened.

I remember serving Communion once when I was an Elder and as I picked up the juice, I could smell it was not grape juice, but wine. Jim Dixon and Glen Allen were also Elders then, and I felt they were responsible, but I couldn't get them to admit it. I remember the "Laying on of Hands" ceremony when Mother was installed as an Elder; I thought she was the first woman Elder at our church, but she tells me Ella Evans was. I remember Ella being involved in the taffy pulls with the youth --- perhaps she cooked it, I don't remember.

But I've rambled enough, so I'm calling it quits. I am very grateful for my church memories. Bellaire Presbyterian Church has been and is, a very important part of my life and who I am.

**Judy R. Bonar**

### **Lee Wright Craft Group**

I joined the Craft Group in 1977. When I first joined we made things from cards, egg carton, etc. Then a year or two later Helen Dull joined the craft group and then we became professionals. Helen Dull was a very, very good teacher. We met one day a week all year long for about 5 or 6 hours. When I joined there were 13 or 14 members and your last bazaar in 1998 there were only 6 of us left. We met at each other's homes and someone was always in charge of desert. They were great times. The Bazaar was held about 2 or 3 weeks before Thanksgiving. Santa's elves (us) were glad as we were worn out working all year! Turkey dinners were served during the bazaar. Then when there wasn't much help we ended up serving a luncheon.

We had a lot of fellowship in the craft group and was a place to relax and away from all the daily pressures.

Every other month we would take off and travel to different areas for new craft ideas and supplies and patterns. We were good at this! At one shop we were in a corner drawing a picture because we thought it was too expensive. We had more fun! But we had to get home by dark, as Helen Dull would say, "I got to get home before Al closes the barn door".

Remember Ann Allen how you would take a magnifying glass and look at cross-stitch patterns in a book and get the patterns? Or should I tell all our trade secrets.  
**Lee Wright 56220 First St. Bakersfield Addn. Bellaire OH 43906**

### **Life Size Nativity Scene**

Helen Gatto had made a Nativity scene for the altar and it was gold colored. Rev. Bob Collins looked at it and said, "Why can't we do a life-size one." So that is where the idea came from.

It was in the year 1974 or 1975. So many people had worked on the project and it took months to finish. The basis of the body was made with wood and chicken wire. Imagine shaping the bodies! Zyg Rataiczak and Bill Vaglienti did this. Also a huge manger scene was built to house the manger. Dick Dyer did the staining of the wood. Old clothes, bathrobes, blankets, jewelry were needed to dress the forms. Mannequin heads were used. Even one of Helen Bell's wigs was used. A recording was made with the choir singing and scripture readings. A piece of scripture was read and then the choir would sing a carol. Member of the congregation would be one of the prophets and read the scripture. Dorothy Snedeker was Micah; Ann Cochran did the voice of one of the characters. Pat Thomas did a voice. Helen Bell did her share and Patty Bauknecht. These are the few I can remember. We used a lot of thread and those needles were put into action. I can remember being on a ladder and doing the angel wings which were up high. I remember Everett Criss working on the sheep. Glenn Allen did the tail on the camel. Pat Thomas and Effie Brown worked on the King. These are the people I remember as they were there when I was. Laverne Ramsey did the electrical work. Young Doug Walker did the sound system. These are the people I remember and there were many more who worked on this project.



Then low and behold it was done! The Army Reserves was called to install it. It was lit up by floodlights. We had people that would park and look and listen, and also there were pedestrians. Everyone was invited to come in for hot chocolate, coffee or tea. We took turns on different nights serving. It was a time to look forward to. I don't know when was the last year for doing this. After what I know it was taken down to the city park. For how long I don't know.

**Lee Wright**

**John Creamer**

Fond memories of the Youth choir, the music, the Christmas and Easter processions down the sanctuary, all take a back seat to the playing of tic-tac-toe, the laughter and the jokes played on each other while the preacher preached his sermon. Craig Allen, Rick Nelson and I always had a good time. And hold Mrs. Stitt in fond memory. Sincerely, **John Creamer**

**Tom Rataiczak**

What a monumental question you ask. Being in that church for so many years, I could write pages, and I just don't have that much time. But I'll list things that come right off the top of my head (God forbid that):

Seeing the curtains pulled back at Easter and Christmas to hold the overflow crowd

Seeing the beautiful glow of the candles at Christmas Eve services

Getting a small present from Mrs. Henthorne, our choir mom, after the service

Building the nativity scene with dad, Bob Collins, John Galloway

Climbing out over the cold roof tile to hang the star from the building

Tackling one of the wise men when I was a janitor because I thought he was an intruder

Calling the police when I heard noises in the church, saw the choir loft in shambles, to draw a bead on the organ repairman sitting in the office with his pants down (he was changing clothes) as no one told me he was coming

The upstairs Sunday school rooms with Wilma Burdette

Being allowed by Mrs. Stitt to choose our favorite hymn to sing if we were good (mine was Guide Me Oh Thou Great Jehovah)

Tearing the kitchen apart, scrubbing it, painting all the cabinets, and labeling the cabinets as to their contents (they still hold the same tags close to 30 years later)

The strawberry and ice cream socials on the farm

The fall bazaars, the crafts, and the fantastic dinners

The choir talent shows (I had to sing "This Old House" with my sister  
Studying in the choir room while mom and dad attended church meetings  
Buffing the terrazzo in the Narthex like it had never been buffed before  
Howard Rodefer giving me heck my first Sunday as janitor because there was a splinter under his seat

Traveling in the back seat with Rev. Berger at the speed of sound to show him where people lived

Theological discussions with Bob Collins after Sunday's sermon

Uncle John collapsing at the water fountain before he died

Climbing up to the bell tower and looking over the city of Bellaire

The active fellowship meetings

Getting a strong foundation that has never left me on the Bible and hymns

As you are aware my last memories have not been real pleasant. I'm still trying to deal with them, and, at times, have a very difficult time, but those are not pleasant ones, so we'll skip them

The needlepoint project on the chairs

Running through the church while Mrs. Stitt played the "William Tell Overture"

Setting up and tearing down tables for dinners, weddings, funerals, etc.

Rev. Radford What a special man he was

Refinishing the doors to the outside in a project that took days

The beautiful stained glass windows when the sun hit them

Hearing the swell for the Doxology that Mrs. Stitt used to play before she hit the main song

Watching Rosemarie VanCamp coming in at the very last minute

Everett Criss with his pocketful of pens and Sunday school pins

That's about it for now. I have a meeting in 30 minutes. If I think of more, I'll write

Shalom. Tom