NOV
2026

1927-2027
Centennial



and for a hundred years more...

PROPERTIES COMMITEE PLANTS OAK IN HONOR OF CENTENNIAL



Pictured above: Dale Bowman, Properties Chair, John Yapp, Properties Manager, and Rich Johnson, Properties Committee member

Left: The Properties Committee

The Properties Committee recently honored FCC's centennial by planting a Bur Oak on the east side of the Community House. The Bur Oak was chosen by the committee because it is a strong, long-living native species that supports local wildlife by hosting hundreds of native animals and insects. A ceremony to bless the tree is being planned for a later date.

FCC APPROACHES 100th BIRTHDAY

Our History: the 1970s – 1980s



FCC Staff in 1972 *Back row left to right - F. Thomas Richardson, Louise Schweinfurth, Rev. Laurence Landers, Rev. Bill Myers Front Row: Rev. James Boren, Dr. Robert K. Bell*

In October's issue, we learned of the 1950s and 60s when the church grew exponentially in membership and in the expansion of the Sanctuary and the additions of the music wing, education wing, and church offices - all while responding to the turbulent times.

The recession of 1969 and 1970 hit Flossmoor Community Church hard. One support staff person had to be let go; the Preschool Mothers Advisory Committee did much of the daily cleaning of the education wing; and Youth Group kids handled the yard work during the summer. Despite pleas for increased pledges, budget shortfalls continued. The church postponed maintenance of the church itself, the Community House, and the four pastoral manses (later sold) for several years while freezing staff salaries through 1974. Membership remained static as fewer young families moved to the community.

The congregation reflected society's concerns. Parent Education Groups (PEGs')theme for 1970 and 1971 was pollution with speakers offering several days of workshops and study. Our youth began a monthly recycling program for glass, paper, and aluminum cans along with youth from Faith Lutheran Church. Within a year, the community response grew so the project moved to the high school grounds and became a weekly event until the village instituted recycling pick up. FCC Youth continued to volunteer at the new site on a regular basis. The church formed a Hunger Task Force and Youth participated in annual Hunger Walks. A Zero Population Growth Group was formed, and the church staff wrote a position statement reflecting pro-choice beliefs. Gift bags were sent to those serving in Viet Nam. In addition to "Good Books" study groups that examined the Bible, a Contemporary Book Group read and discussed books including "I'm Okay, You're Okay." PEGs' theme for 1973 was the energy crisis. Holiday Housewalks, Woman's Association activities, and social events continued, thus helping the relay of love to flourish through both service and fellowship.

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Rev. Bill Myers leads Time with the Children



Helen & Dr. Robert Bell with daughters Joyce, Sarah, and Ellen

In 1975, Dr. Robert Bell, who had been Senior Pastor for thirty years, retired. During that same year, Associate Pastors, Larry Landers and Jim Boren, resigned or retired as well. Youth Minister Bill Myers held the fort until the arrival of Dr. Ralph Shotwell, the new Senior Pastor. Dale Nelson joined them in early 1976.

A quote from the November 1971 Narthex sums up the church at the time. Dr. Robert Worley, a professor at McCormick Theological Seminary, was a part of a group that studied our congregation as a part of a Parish Development Project. This project was an attempt to "understand how congregations come to be innovative, responsive to a variety of needs and able to hold diverse groups in congregations together." He wrote the following about our church:

> *"The Flossmoor Community Church has been characterized over the years by its openness to change, its willingness to risk and fail in the face of challenges. This is the only congregation I have studied where its leadership, both clergy and lay, are committed to the continual transformation of a congregation in order to discover the more appropriate forms of witness and service."*

The 80s were a time of rebuilding the church physical plant. After the congregation retired the debt on the last of its building projects, and after the period of deferred maintenance, repairs became necessary. All of the pipes in the church's unique Casavant pipe organ had to be removed and sent to the factory for restoration while structural repairs to the organ housing were made. Major fundraising events paid for the renovation with the refurbished organ back in place for the 1984 Advent Season. It took six and a half hours for five men to carry the 1413 restored pipes and other parts back into the Sanctuary.



The next project was the restoration of the Community House. Unused for years, it was falling into a state of disrepair. First a decision had to be made whether to tear it down and create 12 more parking spaces or try to restore it to its former glory. With the congregation voting to renovate, Doug King and Paul Young spearheaded the effort with their combined knowledge of architecture and buildings. They directed crews of FCC volunteers (including their kids!) who worked tirelessly every weekend to knock out decayed plaster, repair floors, and repaint reusing the stencils from the original Vanderwalker designs for the stage proscenium. The heating system was replaced, duct work and air-conditioning was installed, and kitchen and bathrooms along with the plumbing were renovated.

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The Sound of Music in 1987 starred Laura Watson (daughter of Ruth, sister of Bruce) as Maria and Doug King as Captain Von Trapp. You might recognize many of the Von Trapp children, as well!

Along with cost-saving measures using the labor of the congregation, Worship & the Arts planned a community fundraiser to raise $100,000 for the project by puting the talents of the congregation and rennovation crew to use, by putting on "The Sound of Music" on the Community House stage - even as construction continued amidst scaffolding. Four shows were sold out. Two years later, "South Pacific" was put on by the congregation to close the financial gap and finish restoration efforts. Worship and the Arts went on to hold numerous Focus on Community Artists (FOCA) events, musicals, variety shows, and chancel dramas in the space.



Senior Pastor Dale Evans and Associate Pastor David Owens, 1988

Outreach efforts in the 80s included a Refugee Resettlement Committee that sponsored the Saysongkham family from Laos and helped them establish a new life in the south suburbs and our church. We "yoked" with a church in Manila and ran a Samaritan Shop that sold items made by third-world craftsmen. The Sunday Church School "adopted" a young resident of the Buckhorn Children's Center in Kentucky, who spent a week visiting our community in 1982.

Children's Ministry flourished under the direction of Ruth Craig. Bible Fun Fairs in Fellowship Hall were a beloved annual event (did you survive the Lion's Den?) along with a week at Camp Grey in Saugatuk, Michigan. Youth were active in food drives and outreach projects, while anticipating annual trips to Minnesota's Boundary Waters Canoe Area each Summer.



The annual "Bible Fun Fairs" in Fellowship Hall put on by Children's Ministry Director, Ruth Craig, were always a big hit. Here, children attempt to knock down the "walls of Jericho".

Woman's Association put on Mother/Daughter luncheons and fashion shows in addition to their regular programs and Bargain Box efforts. PEGs brought in several nationally known speakers and encouraged attendance by the community at large. There was an active Men's Forum, several couples' groups, and a Family Life Committee that organized activities for families including fall and spring camping trips.

Flossmoor Community Church continued its faithful, resilient relay of love through two challenging decades as it prepared for the future and nurtured and served congregants and our surrounding community.



MEET OUR CENTENNIAL ARCHIVE QUEEN

The Centennial Committee wishes to express it's deep gratitude to our fellow member, Pam Marks, who has spent countless hours deep in FCC's dusty archives digging up treasures and sorting photographs. It is because of her organizational efforts that we have been able to share these historical photos with you in issues of the Centennial Narthex as well as in our displays in the Gathering Space.

Pam joined FCC in 1975 just before Dr. Bell married her and her husband, Chuck, who had been a member since 1961. She has served FCC since in many capacities - as a Stephen Minister, an office volunteer, and in hospitality. The way she knows us so well makes her an invaluable part of our team! If you've enjoyed our sharing of FCC through the years, please be sure to thank her!

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION
1927 2027
FLOSSMOOR COMMUNITY CHURCH

COMING THIS DECEMBER
The Yearbook Project

Following worship during Advent, volunteers will be on hand to help capture your photos, along with your sentiments or thoughts to share.

JANUARY 22, 2027
VHS Movie Night at the Community House

A chance to view magnificent clips of your favorite folks starring in variety shows and musicals from the 80s & 90s. We'll view clips on a big screen on stage while we enjoy pizza and fellowship.

SATURDAY, MAY 8, 2027
Centennial Celebration Dinner

The celebration of the century! We can't wait to share more details with you - but save the date!



Don't miss out for Christmas

SPECIAL COMMEMORATIVE ORNAMENTS ARE SELLING FAST!

The Centennial Committee is offering beautiful commemorative Christmas ornaments to mark the FCC Centennial. These beautiful 4" ornaments featuring our Sanctuary are being 3D cast in pewter by SteelBerry company (made in the USA), which commits a portion of their sales to social & environmental causes. Ornaments cost $20 each and are on sale now - check your eblast, Realm app, or fccfaithful.org/happenings for the link to purchase. Ornaments can be picked up at the Information Desk in the Gathering Space.

FCC in the 1970s & 80s

See more displayed in the Gathering Space during November



Joyce Nelson and her daughter get Fellowship Time punch



Youth Ringers



Vida Wilson displays a homemade banner



Youth trip to Tower Hill, late 70s



early 80s staff meeting between Pam Hilstrom, Rev. David Owens, Ruth Craig, and Mike Rogers



Congregation volunteers work to restore the Community House



Annual trips to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area