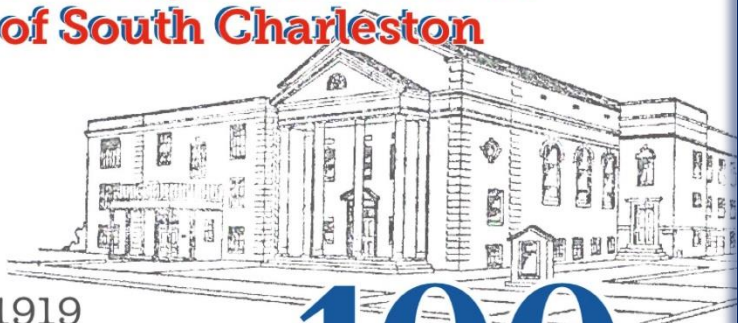


First Presbyterian Church of South Charleston



est. 1919

100
Celebrating
years



First Presbyterian Church Brief History

Before 1897 – A mission Sunday school was started in a wagon shop across from the C & O station on the Kanawha Turnpike.

Later, a lot was secured and a chapel built on the river bank where the shopping center is at the base of the Patrick Street bridge. Rev. Barr of First Presbyterian Church, Charleston served the mission. The lot was sold to the C & O Railroad, the bell and pulpit were kept to use in the future.

1906 - a Sunday school was run by a Mr. Crossman and Mr. Otis Thayer.

1908 - First Presbyterian Church of Charleston, sponsored the Southside Mission in South Charleston, under the direction of the Home Missionary Society. By then it was meeting in a small school house near 2nd Ave and A St. at “Stop 5.”

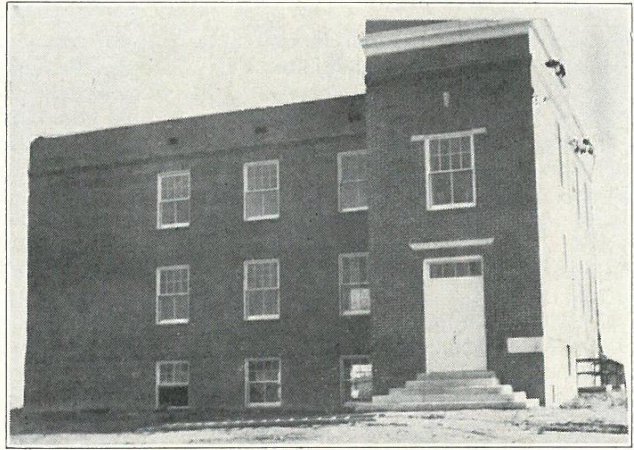
1908 – The First Presbyterian Aid Society was formed as part of the Southside Mission. This was a women’s organization to raise funds for the new church furnishings. They held fundraisers by purchasing mail order items and selling them locally; sewing aprons, quilts and other items to sell.

1910 - The Mission moved to a new small frame building, built in an orchard on 4th Ave. The bell tower included the previously used church bell. This is how the church became known as, “The Church in the Orchard.”

June 22, 1919 – on the hundredth anniversary of Presbyterianism in Kanawha Valley, First Presbyterian Church in South Charleston, also known as The Church in the Orchard was organized with 57 charter members. First Pastor- Rev. J. A. Boyd served the church until 1945.

1920 - electricity and toilets were installed.

Oct 1926 – Sunday school building, (the back half of what we now call the Sanctuary building) was erected at corner of 2nd Ave and B St.



1927 – The new building was occupied and the small frame building from the orchard was sold to the Church of Christ who moved the building to 3rd Ave and E St. Dr. F. M. Ryburn was the pastor (1925-1947).



The Little Church in the Orchard

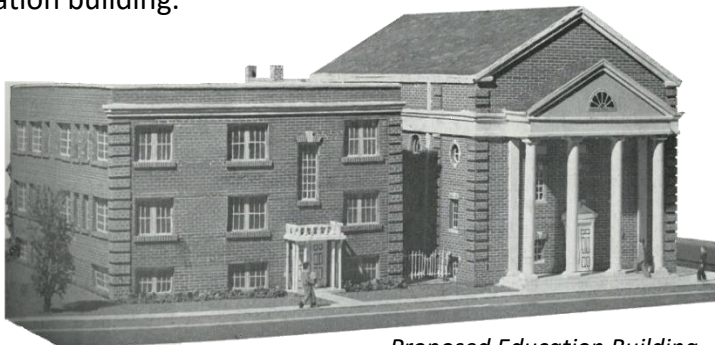
Jan 7, 1940 – “Auditorium,” (Sanctuary) with “dining room” below, was dedicated. That same year the session requested that the City Council of South Charleston pave B St.



1942 – Church allowed the Red Cross to teach nursing in the basement and they continued to use the church building for their headquarters throughout WW II.

1943 – a special program was held to recognize the 46 members who served in the armed forces and money was collected for religious services to the servicemen away from home.

1945 – The lot next to the church was purchased for building an education building.



Proposed Education Building

1947 – Rock Lake Mission was started by our church. In 1949 Rock Lake Mission became Rock Lake Presbyterian Church.



1948 – Dr. Water W. White was installed as pastor.

1954 – 2nd Education building was occupied. The church started a public Kindergarten because the city had discontinued theirs. This Kindergarten continued until 1972.

1955 or 1956 – New mission church was begun by our church, in Teays Valley. It became the Teays Valley Presbyterian Church in 1959.

1964 – Oakhurst Presbyterian Church was started as a mission of our church. It became an official church in 1965.

1967 – The new pipe organ was dedicated.

1972 – The first 2 women officers were elected.

Dec 19, 1997 – Oakhurst Presbyterian Church united with First Presbyterian Church of South Charleston.

Jan 1, 1998 – Oakhurst Child Development Center became a ministry of our church.

Of Interest to our members in 2019:

1967 – Mr. and Mrs. Graham Shook donated chimes to be added to the organ in memory of Mrs. Shook's mother.

1974 – Mrs. G. A. Brown, Sr, the only living, active charter member was recognized in worship. (Anna Brown's mother-in-law and George Brown's grandmother.)

1978 – Jan 22, for the first time in the history of the church, no Sunday services were held due to snow.

1987 - Handbells purchased in memory of Jeff Smith, son of Malissa and Jack Smith.

Pastors, Past and Present



REV. J. B. MORTON



REV. J. A. BOYD



REV. F. M. RYBURN



REV. J. A. VACHE



REV. L. P. GROVES

Written by Rev. Sharon Gearing.

Information obtained from:

- "First Presbyterian Church South Charleston, W. Va. 1919 – 1979," by Patricia Glaser
- Agreement of Union documents from the union of Oakhurst Presbyterian Church and First Presbyterian Church written in 1997.
- "History of the Presbytery of Kanawha, 1895-1956."

For the 100th Anniversary of
the First Presbyterian Church
in South Charleston, 2019

