

What God Has Done

A
Historical Tour
of
Radnor Baptist
Church

June 22nd and August 24th 2008

1:00 to 5:00 PM

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History, Tradition, And the Works of God

We are told that those who forget history are doomed to repeat it. But the opposite can be just as destructive, when we live in the past either by tradition or defect; we forget that there is a life to be lived now. This booklet is an attempt to walk that narrow road which honors the past, lives in the now, and looks to the future in a mature and balanced way.

There can be no doubt, that for the 192 year history of Radnor Baptist Church God has done great things. Much of what you will learn about in these pages is brick and mortar, place and time. Yet these are only remnants, important and interesting remnants to be sure, but still only remnants of a greater work. The church is not a building or her residence an address, at least not one you could place on a map. The church is the people of God as they join together to worship Him through Jesus Christ. At times in our history the church has worshipped in 5 different church buildings, a school, and even on the front lawn. The one unifying element across place, time, and individual personalities is God Himself. This booklet and our history are only of importance in as much as they bring honor and glory to Him.

Today, as in the past, we strive to worship God and live for Him in our daily lives. So that when we step off the stage **of life and into the pages of history, we too can say...**

Come and listen, all you who fear God;

let me tell you what he has done for me.

Psalm 66:16

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE RADNOR BAPTIST CHURCH

1. The 160th Anniversary, 1976

We, at Radnor Baptist in the year 1976, will start a new chapter in the history of our church under favorable conditions. It will be 160 years since the church was organized. We are united, and we believe we have been guided by God and that the coming years will see the strengthening of the work we are attempting to do together, with the leading of the Holy Spirit.

One day in March 1802, a young man left the door of Dr. Samuel Jones, in the city of Philadelphia, with a deed in his pocket which made him owner of 4,000 acres of the wild land in the territory north of the Ohio river. The young man was David Pugh, a native of Wales, and the purchase made that day was the first step in the settlement of what is now Radnor Township. The deed called for the southeast quarter of Twp. 6, in Range 20, of the United States Military Survey, and cost the purchaser \$2,650. Dr. Jones reserved 50 acres as a gift for a Baptist or Presbyterian minister who would settle there.

In the fall of the same year, 1802, the first settlement was made in Radnor Twp., about 3/4 mile south of the present village on the farm now owned by W. G. Penry.

In 1804 David Pugh visited the settlement and surveyed the land into 100-acre lots. He sold the first 100 acres to Henry Perry, an actual settler, for \$150. By 1808 Radnor had now acquired the dignity of an important community.

Nearly all the pioneers of Radnor were religious people. For several years the people had neither a church nor school, but an itinerant minister of the Gospel was kindly received into their cabins.

The Baptist was the first religious society organized in the township. It was constituted May 4, 1816, in a log school house on land owned by William Lawrence, Esq. The eleven charter members

were John Phillips and wife Hannah, David Penry and his wife Mary, William Davids, James Gallant, Eleanor Lodwig, Daniel Bell, Rheuben Stephens and wife Elizabeth, and Thomas Walling.

The church had no pastor for two years. From 1818 to 1824 Elder Drake served the church as pastor, and his labors were greatly blessed. In 1827 the church called the Rev. Jesse Jones at a salary of \$100 a year, 1/4 in money and the rest in trade.

The first house of worship, 20' x 20', was built of logs and located near the graveyard. The settlers, without regard to denomination, were glad to help build the house of the Lord. Each one brought a few logs already hewed and assisted in the raising and completing of the tabernacle of the Most High. The giver of the land for the first church building and burial ground was the Baptist minister by the name of Jones.

Missions being uppermost in their minds, a Missionary Treasurer was elected in the year 1817. In 1826 the church joined the Cincinnati Missionary Society.

In 1828 ten members were given letters to constitute the Mill Creek Baptist Church in Ostrander.

A public meeting was called in 1829 for the purpose of eliciting the interest of the people and to arrange for the opening of the first Sunday School in the area. The meeting was held in the log chapel (on a knoll in the graveyard) and the attendance was encouraging. Our plans were made known and discussed and by a unanimous vote it was resolved that we would establish a Sunday School Society and start the school the following Sunday. The organization provided that each member should pay annually a **"bit"** (12 1/2 cents) the funds to be expended in purchasing books. On April 18, 1829, the school was opened in the log chapel, thirty adults and youth attended, and were divided into two classes. My old friend took charge of the Welsh Department and Rev. Childiaw the English. The Welsh Department was mainly adults, while the English was youth 10 to 18. ¹

In 1833, the congregation built near the log chapel a neat **stone building 30' x 40' at a cost of \$880.**

In 1853 ten members were given letters to help organize the Delaware Baptist Church and 40 members to constitute the Prospect Baptist Church.

The old stone church building was torn down, and in 1867 the third church building was built of brick, at a cost of \$4,500. (This was built across the street and on the west side of John Street near the United Church of Christ parsonage.) The church faced west.

In the old brick church there was a wide entry way across the west end of the church containing two outside doors and two inside doors. One of the doors was for men and the other door was for women. In the center there was a long pole-like affair that rested on the top of the seats that seemed to be the dividing line. The men and boys used the south side of the entry way as their entrance while the women and girls used the north side, as the south side was sacred to the men.

The heating in the third church was supplied by two pot bellied stoves on each side. Beside the stoves there were always two chairs where you stopped to warm yourself before going to your usual seats.

The lighting of the third church was supplied by one or two chandeliers containing many kerosene lamps. They were all filled and trimmed with the chimneys always brightly polished. Along the walls were single wall lamps with reflectors behind them.

The corner to the left of the pulpit in the brick church was for the deacons and the church officers. It was also used during funerals for the seating of the pallbearers who marched solemnly into the church wearing white cotton gloves, which were furnished by the undertaker and worn until after the graveside service.

Under the rostrum of the church there was a baptistery. An old cistern was used as the water supply. However most of the baptizing was done in the Scioto River.

The Delaware Gazette, June 25, 1901:

At 11 p.m. Monday night lightning struck the cupola of the Radnor Bap-

tist Church and entered the ground at the southwest corner, setting fire to the building.

Emlyn T. Jones living but a short distance away (where Bess Evans now lives) was the first man to discover the fire and gave the alarm as he ran toward the burning structure. Twice he used his strong shoulders as a battering ram against the door, which gave way, and with assistance of other citizens who began to arrive about that time, all the furniture except the lamps and the aisle carpets were saved. The Bible, organ, pulpit chairs, song books and pulpit carpet were among the rescued furniture. It was at once evident that all efforts would be to no avail toward saving the building. Although it was a brick structure, the rafters and frame work burned rapidly and it was but a short time until the heavy slate roof crashed between the walls.

Many people congregated at a safe distance and watched the well known place of worship crumble into ruins. The loss is estimated to be between \$2,500 and \$3,000. And the insurance is said to have run out only a short time ago. What arrangements will be made by the congregation for a place of worship has not been decided upon.

However, the next Sunday morning services were held in the town hall and continued until the building of the new church.

A committee visited the Baptist Church at Alexandria which had just recently been built and they recommended that we build one similar. This was done. The old lot was not considered roomy enough so an acre of ground just east of the cemetery was purchased from E. O. Jones for \$100.

The old walls were torn down and the brick cleaned so it could be used in the new church.

Ground was broken for the new building on October 30, 1901, but little work was done until the next spring. The lot was quite sloping so when the basement was dug, it was six feet deep next to the road and two feet deep at the north side. After the walls were up, dirt from the old lot was hauled and the lot nicely graded. Much of the work and the hauling was donated. The materials for the new church came in by rail and were moved in wagons to the new site.

The stone was hauled from the Meredith Stone Quarry. John Utz donated the sand. In addition, a car load of sand came from Lake Erie and sandstone from Fulton Quarry.

W. E. Griffith of Prospect had charge of the carpenter work. The Wootering Lumber Co. furnished the building materials. A. J. Rodman laid the foundation and also did the plastering. A man from Chicago frescoed the walls. The old bell was ruined in the fire so a new one was secured from the Cincinnati Bell Foundry. In 1902, the walls were built to the lower window sills but because of bad weather conditions, work was discontinued until the next spring. Everyone had a mind to work and labor which saved many hundreds of dollars. An Acetylene lighting system was installed in the church. The Baptist Young People Union (B. Y. P. U.) purchased a Vocalian Organ which the Delaware Gazette says cost \$1,200 and was purchased through the untiring efforts of the young people unaided by the older members of the congregation. Rev. J. A. James who was Pastor at that time organized a choir of singers of the community and rendered **the oratorio "The Messiah" presenting it in Radnor, Prospect, and Richwood** as a fund raising campaign. Another fund raising campaign was when the B. Y. P. U. sponsored excursions to Detroit and Put-In-Bay by the Hocking Valley Railroad and the Greyhound Steamboat Lines.

The women of the church purchased carpet for the floor of the entire church. Members erected hitching rails around the outside of the entire backyard of the church.

The Art Glass Memorial windows were furnished by a Columbus firm. The two large ones cost \$300 each and the smaller ones cost \$35 each. As you can see by the names they were donated by different families: The Prichard Window, The Herbert Window, The Margaret Jones Window, The Gallant Window, The Nellie Jones Window and the Charles R. Jones Window.

The church cost approximately \$13,000 and was dedicated October 18, 1903 and was debt free.

The church has always kept abreast with the times making

necessary changes as progress has demanded. The change to electricity and the addition of other modern conveniences has enabled the church to function more efficiently

In 1921 the church was closed for redecorating and refinishing - new electric lights installed, a small kitchen and small dining room fitted up in the basement, and cistern built to furnish soft water for the kitchen.

In 1943 an electric organ was purchased to replace the old Vocalian organ. Now the young boys were relieved from pumping the organ. For 40 years the organ had been pumped by hand and many a Sunday it evidently pumped hard because two boys would come from behind.

In 1946 the church leaders began to realize the building must be remodeled. Time required for planning, fund raising, and securing materials, made difficult following World War II, delayed actual building until 1949. The free services of Cleveland architect, W. R. Powell, a former resident, permitted the needed improvements while still retaining the original architecture of the building. The basement with dirt floors was completely remodeled, rest rooms, water system and oil furnaces installed, kitchen enlarged and metal cupboards added, an addition was added for a church office, sanctuary redecorated and floors varnished. On November 16, 1952, the church building as we know it today was dedicated at a cost of \$35,000. This was almost three times as much as the original building cost. The young adults had paid for the addition of the office and enlarged kitchen. The church tower was extensively repaired in 1957, again under the gratis architectural guidance of W. R. Powell. The cost was about \$6,500.

Again in 1970, after much discussion and work by the members, an educational building was added to the north side of the church. It was dedicated debt free on October 17, 1971. The young people had much to do with starting this project.

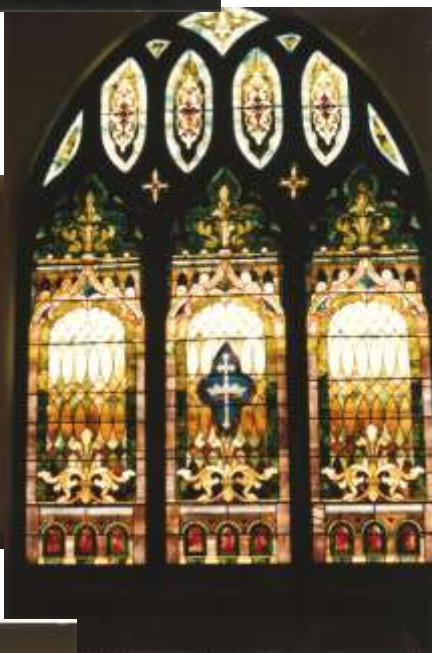
In January 1972, it was decided to build a new parsonage on a lot purchased from Anah Jones. The home was completed at a cost of \$33,500, with the men of the church donating much of the labor.



Third Church Building, Built 1867

Destroyed by fire from lightning strike, 1901





Stained Glass Windows,
Circa 1985





This red brick structure was dedicated on November 19, 1972, the Rev. William Malanowski and his family moved into the home the following December.

During the summer of 1972 the church helped to send four young people to Haiti on a Mission Tour. Several Bible Study groups were started this same year and the interest and attendance has been good.

In 1973 the congregation began a Scholarship Fund for the education of any member of the church who had dedicated his life to **full-time Christian service. The pastor's son, Steven Malanowski, is** the first recipient of this fund, studying at the Moody Bible Institute.

At the annual business meeting in January 1974, the congregation discussed the redecoration of the church sanctuary. Committees were appointed and the enthusiasm and excitement were great. The Sanctuary, large Sunday School room and vestibule were painted and carpeted, new lights and a new lighting system were installed, new padded pews and choir chairs were purchased, a new organ installed, and the loud speaker system was repaired. A service of dedication was held October 20, 1974. Again, we raise our prayers of thankfulness to God for His goodness in enabling us to do this mortgage free.

The Radnor Baptist Church has always been evangelistic in spirit, and through the years many revivals have been held and hundreds won to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. One famous singer that we know today played the piano for us during one of our revival **meetings in the 1950's, none other than the wonderful gospel singer Bill Gaither.**

The resident active membership in October 1975 is 195.

Throughout the years the church has been missionary minded, and we ever strive to reach or surpass our goal in giving to **missions. Even in the early 1970's, during our time of building, our** Mission giving increased each year. In 1975 we hope to reach \$10,000 for missions.

The church is fortunate in having a complete set of the

clerk's records from the first meeting May 4, 1816, and the annual Women's Mission Society booklets from 1899 to 1975-76. One of our distinguished members, W. L. Williams, served as Treasurer of the Church for 60 years.

We believe we have had 41 pastors through the almost 160 years.

We don't know what the next 160 years will bring, but we do know that God will direct our paths if we trust in Him and in all our ways acknowledge Him. ¹

2. The Fire, June 24, 1989

The night of June 24, 1989 marked a painful turning point in the life of Radnor Baptist Church. The building that had been so lovingly built and maintained was consumed by flames. The Columbus Dispatch reported on the fire the next morning:

DELAWARE COUNTY CHURCH HEAVILY DAMAGED IN FIRE

Officials and members of the Radnor Baptist Church were to meet today to discuss rebuilding their 87-year-old church, which was heavily damaged in a fire early yesterday morning.

The church is the largest in this Delaware County town.

Randy Butts, chief of the Radnor Township Volunteer Fire Department, said the roof of the sanctuary, the oldest portion of the church, was "totally involved" when firefighters were called at 2:40 a.m.

Butts said an addition to the church was not damaged.

Firefighters from six departments fought the blaze for about five hours before it was brought under control. ²

Unlike most newspaper headlines, this one downplayed the damage. The main part of the building was completely destroyed.

A member of the church was driving home from work when he saw the flames consuming the building. By the time firefighters arrived, church members were already standing vigil outside. As the church burned, the greatly loved stained glass windows melted. Mary Garrison described the melting of the stained glass like **“watching a colorful waterfall flowing down the wall of the church.”**

The church grieved the loss of their home of almost 88 years. "We feel obligated, since we inherited such a beautiful structure, to leave a beautiful structure," the Rev. Alvin Cox said. "That's what hurt; it was such a beautiful structure."³

Arson was almost immediately suspected but there were no leads. Two months later, 3 other churches in the county were burned. Old Stone Presbyterian Church and Full Gospel Fellowship Church were destroyed. Only Delaware Grace Brethren Church survived but with major damage. Area police and fire departments, **along with the State Fire Marshal's Office and Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation** joined in the inquiry.

The church did not miss a service. She began meeting at the Buckeye Valley Middle School.

On October 1, 1989, all four churches (Radnor Baptist, Full Gospel Fellowship, Delaware Grace Brethren, and Old Stone Presbyterian) that had been burned joined in a joint worship service of praise and thanksgiving.

Two suspects were arrested on September 7, 1989. John I. Mundy Jr. (22) and Eddie Evans (19) initially fought the charges but both later confessed to involvement. Only Mundy was involved in the arson of Radnor Baptist though Evans admitted vandalizing the cemetery the same night. Evans was sentenced to 11 and Mundy to 11 and a half years in prison.

This would all be only tragic except for the amazing grace of God. Before every worship service, the pastor and the deacons meet

together to pray for God’s blessing on the service. On , someone requested to speak to the leadership before the service. After meeting with him, the leadership decided to allow the man to address the congregation. Deacon David James described the atmosphere in the **sanctuary as the man spoke, “you could have heard a pin drop.”** Standing before a stunned congregation, John I. Mundy Jr. asked for forgiveness for burning down the church building. He also described how God had brought him to faith while in prison. The church joyfully expressed their forgiveness and celebrated the perfection of **God’s amazing grace.**

3. A New Beginning, May 23, 1992

The difficult days of the fire and investigation were past. And instead of extinguishing peoples faith, the fire seemed to reignite **it. Pastor Alvin Cox said, The fire “solidified our congregation. It made us closer.”**⁴ The church quickly began plans for a new building.

While the church continued to meet for Sunday worship at Buckeye Valley Middle School. The educational building, which survived the fire, was used for Wednesday night prayer meetings, choir practice, and as the church offices.

The first task was to find a new parcel of land. The original acre of land on which the former building sat was deemed to small for the needs of the congregation. This was an opportunity to find enough room for parking and an expanded building. Bill and Jeanette Jones sold 8.85 acres of land near the corner of Thomas and Radnor Roads to the church.

The insurance claim for the former building was settled for \$554,823. The projected budget for a new building was \$1.5 million. Meaning the church would need to raise nearly \$1 million. A God sized task when you consider the July 17, 1989 building fund total was just under \$9,000.

On March 11, 1990, the church voted to begin phase 1 of a 2 phase building. Phase 1 would include Sunday School rooms, Multi-purpose Fellowship Hall, kitchen, Nursery, bathrooms, mechanical rooms, and storage space. Phase 1 had a projected cost of \$1,065 million. Shortly into construction it was decided that a Narthex and office space would be added to the building before construction was complete.

The church celebrated her 175th year anniversary with her sister church, Delaware Baptist on May 5, 1991. After the worship service, a ground breaking ceremony took place at Noon on the new property.

January 22, 1992 saw the church conduct her first annual business meeting in the new building. The meeting was begun by **singing “The Church’s One Foundation.”**

The building was formally dedicated May 3, 1992. In the service the congregation was reminded of the past and devoted themselves to the future with this Litany of Dedication:

*We now, the members and friends of the Radnor Baptist Church, mindful of the inheritance into which we have entered, and the glorious company, seen and unseen, whose communion we share, do covenant together in this act of dedication, offering ourselves anew to the worship and work of our heavenly Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ. May this hallowed edifice ever be a place where **God’s Word is taught and practiced, a haven of refuge, and launching pad for mission, and a symbol of our unity in the faith. Amen.***

The majority of the congregation believing their convictions warranted the move, Radnor Baptist Church joined the Southern Baptist Convention in 2001. With gratitude for the past and expectation for the future, the church weathered this shift in association.

On April 30, 2006, under the leadership of Pastor Tony Klinedinst, Radnor Baptist Church celebrated her 190th Anniver-

sary. A special worship service, with several area pastors present, **celebrated God’s grace for His years of faithfulness.**

The celebration was continued after the service with a Hog **Roast and ‘Old Time’ games such as stick baseball, horseshoes, croquet,** and sack races.

At the end of the week, on May 6th, a Gospel Concert featuring: PraySing, New Wine, Sweet Adelines, and Mac-O-Chee Valley Folks was hosted.

4. Continuing On...

The mission statement of Radnor Baptist Church is:

We, Radnor Baptist Church are dedicated to the advancement of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ in individual lives and throughout the world.

We seek to attain this through the public worship of God, consistent Christian living by its members, personal evangelism, continual missionary endeavor, and Christian edification.

This statement is an expression of our values and the reason for our existence. As we look to the future, we trust that like those who have gone before us, we will faithfully fulfill these commitments to the glory of God and the good of people.

Citations:

¹ *Childlaw, Rev. Benjamin, “Story of My Life”*

² *The Delaware Gazette, June 25, 1901.*

Compiled by Mrs. Ivan (Vera Griffiths) Hedges from the following sources:

Radnor Baptist Church Clerk’s Record Books

1880 Delaware County History

Histories written by W. L. Williams and Rusty Jones

Coonfare, Augusta, “Radnor Churches”

² *Delaware Church Heavily Damaged by Fire, The Columbus Dispatch, June 25, 1989.*

Your Invitation

You have read our history. You have heard what great things God has done for us. How about you? Have you found a place where God has met with you. Several times in the Old Testament, when God met with a people in a special way, they commemorated it by building an altar or stones of remembrance.

Have you found your place where God has met with you? Have you commemorated it? Maybe not by stones and mortar, but something just as substantial. A life well lived. A faith that is constantly growing to trust God more.

We invite you to join us for the most exciting adventure of your life. Together we are learning to live a life that really knows and lives with God and using that life in the lives of others.

Sunday School	9:30AM
Sunday Worship	10:30AM
Tuesday Ladies Bible Study	9:30 AM
Wednesday Night Prayer	7:00 PM



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