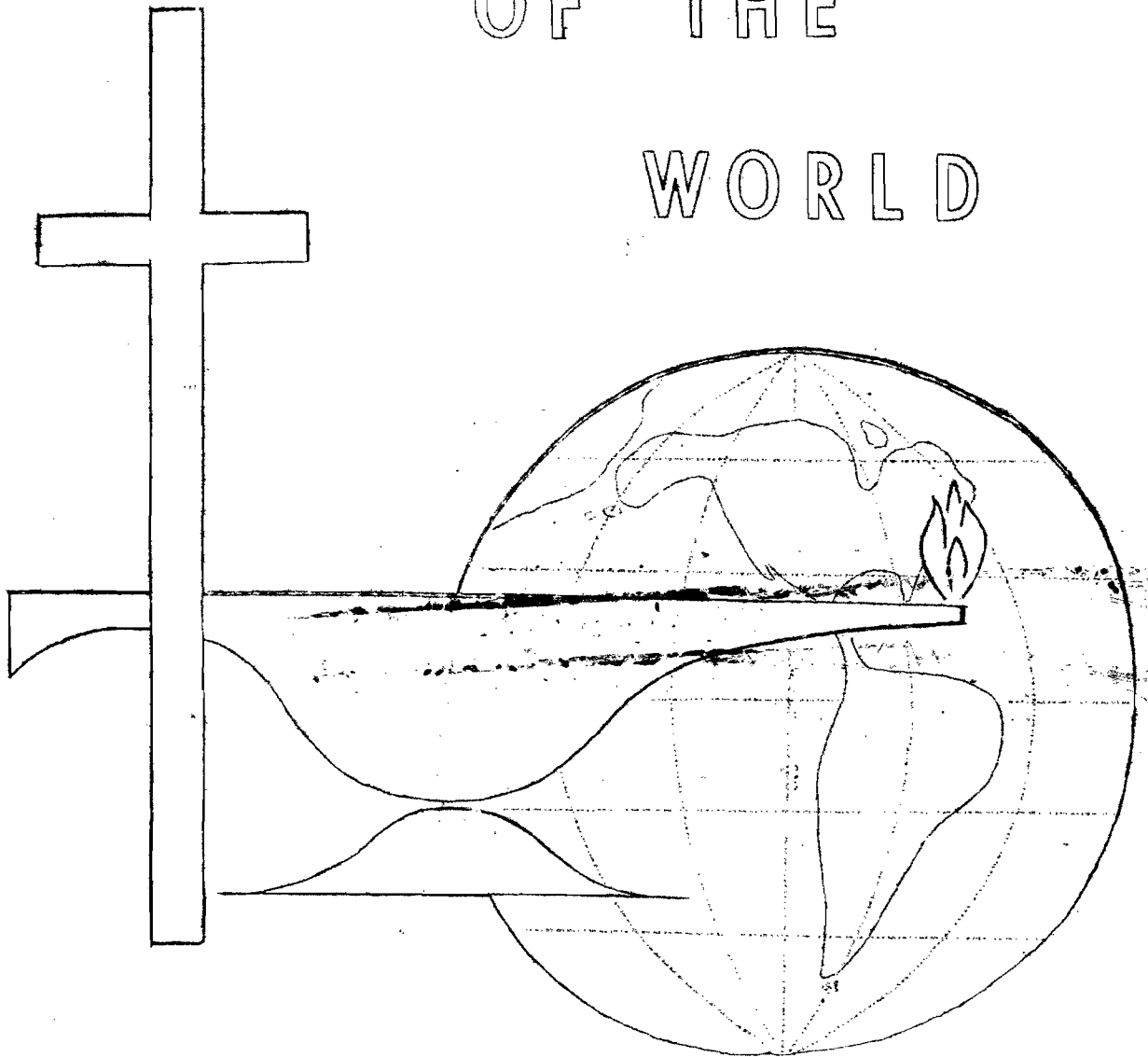


YE ARE THE LIGHT
OF THE
WORLD



TEN YEARS AT THE
MONSEY CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

1952-1962

T E N Y E A R S

a t t h e



M O N S E Y C H R I S T I A N R E F O R M E D C H U R C H

M a i n S t r e e t

M O N S E Y , N E W Y O R K

1 9 5 2 — 2 6 S E P T E M B E R — 1 9 6 2

Compiled and written by
Willemina Quackenbush

There is a little church that has stood for many years. That is, the white frame building has weathered many seasons. But the story of its life within is not so unchanging. Were the walls of this country landmark to speak, they would reveal a varied history of change and decay, of strength and weakness, of renewed efforts and disappointments.

The people for whom this meeting place was built about ninety-five years ago lived in a quiet farming community in the Ramapo foothills of southeastern New York. Even forty-three years earlier its congregation had originated. Had the members of that 1825 group had television, they could have witnessed the inauguration of John Quincy Adams as the president of their Union of twenty-four states and could have viewed the ceremonies marking the completion of the Erie Canal as link between East and West.

A long time has passed since then. The history of this church's first century and more has been studied and written.* So this part of the story begins mid-twentieth century.

It was 1948. The little white chapel had a remnant membership of one. Once a week a preaching service was being provided by visiting ministers, and local initiative kept a Sunday School in operation. Looking into the past offered little encouragement for the twenty-mile distant mission board in charge of affairs to continue efforts or to hope for the existence of a congregation again. But the Lord Who "sitteth as King for ever" (Psalm 29:10) had "other sheep" (John 10:16) in Monsey and stayed the doors from being shut. There were voices pleading for another opportunity. And God used that granted opportunity as the beginning of new spiritual life in this community.

Concession was made to station a Calvin Seminary student in the town for a trial period of twelve weeks. The experiment was blessed. At the end of that

* Dick L. Van Halsema, The Church in Monsey 1825-1955

memorable summer an inscription was placed in the new pulpit Bible: "Rom. 8:28" (ASV: "And we know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose.")—an eloquent tribute to the faithfulness of God and the faith of His people.

With the work maintained by the General Committee for Home Missions of the Christian Reformed denomination and directly supervised by the regional Home Mission Board and the consistory of the Englewood Christian Reformed Church, a local chapel committee was chosen to carry on the mission project under the chairmanship of the Rev. Harold Dekker, then pastor of the Englewood Christian Reformed Church and the person responsible, more than any other single individual, for resumption of regular church life at Monsey Chapel. Once more year-round attention was given to two Lord's Day worship services; and instruction classes and societies functioned according to a regular schedule.

Further stability was added in 1949 with provision of a resident missionary pastor. The seminarian employed the previous summer accepted the call to return; and in September, 1949, the little white church was the scene of the ordination into the gospel ministry of Dick L. Van Halsema and of his installation as Home Missionary for the East, with duties also at Asbury Park-Wanamassa, N. J., Philadelphia, Pa., FairLawn, N. J., and New York City.

Busy days followed. In addition to the spiritual work being done, there was also the building of the parsonage in 1950, completion the following year of its basement Fellowship Hall for meeting and social purposes, and the dedication of a new electronic organ in December of 1951. And so came 1952 and the reorganization of a congregation in the family of Christian Reformed Churches.

Now a decade later we review the past ten years. We do so by noticing the details arranged in outline form for each year, with the highlights of each year singled out for comment. To preserve the flavor of specific situations direct quotations have been used.

This is not meant to be merely a register of events, or a list of statistics, or a compilation of facts. But it is the story of God at work in a community and of peoples' response in one way or another. And so there were services, meetings, and concerts; baptisms and professions of faith, clothing drives and work bees-- all opportunities for growth "in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and for ever. Amen." (II Peter 3:18)

REGULAR ACTIVITIES 1952

Worship Services: morning and evening each Lord's Day; on special days: New Year's Day, Annual Day of Prayer, Good Friday, Ascension Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Old Year's
Preaching: included sermons following outline of Heidelberg Catechism
Sacraments: Baptism as requested; Lord's Supper quarterly
Music: Morning organist, Thea B. Van Halsema; evening, guests from New Jersey CRC's
Ushers: (Head, Garry Englishman and W. H. Hornsby)
Weekly bulletins
Sunday School 9:30 AM Superintendent John Kamp; Note: staff meetings, SS PTA in July, first Nursery class for 2- and 3-year-olds, SS picnic, Christmas program
Instruction Classes for adults, young people, children, RTRI
Societies: MC, SrF, YCC, YP (see key to abbreviations after 1953 outline)
Other: Meetings of Chapel Board and later Consistory; family visiting, pastoral calls, pastoral letters to those away from home; committees, promotion of Banner, BGH, FA; fellowship dinners, hymn sings; congregational meetings (male voting)

ANNUAL ACTIVITIES 1952

4th DVBS 28 Jul-8 Aug; 70 enrolled
1st MCMC (Neighborhood Evangelism Nights) 13-15 Aug; Rev. T. Van Eerden "Prophet on the Run"
4th Thanksgiving Concert: Paterson III Choir and Organist Dick Van Halsema

OTHER ACTIVITIES OR EVENTS TO BE NOTED 1952

Classis Hackensack meeting at Monsey in March
Participation of young people in Eastern Youth Bible Conference, Terrace Lake
Assistance by Seminarian Kenneth Slager for four weeks in summer
Summer Bible Class for Adults (weekly for six weeks)
Publication of monthly neighborhood paper CHAPEL CHIMES (July-December)
Chapel renovation
Reorganization of congregation on September 26 1952
Group attendance at Reformation Day BGH Rally in Carnegie Hall, New York City
Installation and dedication of chimes from tower (Botbyl gift)
December Korean clothing drive
Christmas candlelight carol sing

CONSISTORY 1952 (Preceded by Chapel Board before Reorganization)

Pastor: Home Missionary Dick L. Van Halsema
Declined call to Oak Park CRC, Chicago, Illinois in October
Elders: John Kamp, J. Hamilton Scott (Clerk)
Deacons: Otis M. Mapes, Richard Dykstra, Sr. (Treasurer)

FINANCES 1952

Budget adopted for year: \$5,203.90
Regular Offerings: General, Benevolence, Building Funds
Special offerings for specified causes
Note: Organ completely paid for in 1952 (Organ Fund)

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE 1952

Custodian: Lillian Marshall
Cemetery care
Note: Remodeling of chapel begun

Reorganization of Congregation at Monsey, New York

At its 16 September 1952 meeting Classis Hackensack received a petition from chapel members in Monsey requesting approval that they become organized as a congregation. Excerpts from some of the records of that year will aid in following the steps in the procedure:

27 July 1952 bulletin:

AN historic decision was made last Wednesday evening (July 23) by those members of Monsey Chapel who were present to discuss organization. It was voted to petition Classis Hackensack for permission to organize in September. The Clerk (Mr. J. Kamp) and H. Shuart will circulate a petition this week; signers will be charter members of the new congregational group. May God bless each of us in this step of progress.

Part of the letter addressed to Classis Hackensack read as follows:

IT is with deep gratitude and thankfulness to our Lord that we have been so blessed with increase spiritually and numerically, that this matter may be presented to this classis. The history of Monsey is one of the oldest, but in the past half century full of many discouragements. It is, therefore, a repeating of the fulfilment of the many promises of God that the prayers of righteous men availeth much, and certainly so many prayers have been made that this light at Monsey, often so very feeble, may again burn brighter and not go out.

And after the meeting of Classis:

21 September 1952 bulletin:

THIS past week has been one of historic import for members of Monsey Chapel. At its meeting last Tuesday in Sussex, N. J., Classis Hackensack authorized the organization of our Chapel into a regularly-constituted congregation. For this great blessing we thank Almighty God! After almost 45 years of no congregational status, Monsey has been re-born. May our unique past history ever remind us that churches do die sometimes, and that in order to avoid this a church must remain built on the Rock of the infallible Word of God. This Church can grow only as the result of the work and prayers of every member and supporter. Let us rest in God's mercy for this fresh beginning, and let the Church be the center of our lives!

The organization of a Chr. Ref. Church involves a worship service followed by a membership business meeting. This event will take place this week Friday in the Chapel, 8 PM.

1952

Rev. Wm. Heynen and Rev. J. Meeter, from Paterson III and Englewood churches, and Elder M. Woudeberg from Passaic Prospect St. will be on hand as Committee of Classis to conduct the organization meeting. All members will be expected. All friends and visitors are invited, children and adults alike. After prayer and a message by Rev. Heynen, the election of a 4-member Consistory will occur, following rules of the Church Order. Then the newly-elected elders and deacons will be installed into office in the presence of the congregation. Be sure to attend with your entire family. It will be an event long remembered.

(Note: Prior to organization all memberships were held at Paterson III CRC where they had been transferred from Englewood CRC in 1951.)

28 September 1952 bulletin:

LAST Friday evening, September 26, 1952, the Monsey Christian Reformed Church became a reality. With gratitude to God and deep joy we mark this re-organization of the congregation at Monsey, (about) 130 years after the original establishment of this church, 44 years after its last congregational standing in the denomination, 3 years to the day after the ordination of the present Pastor. As constituted Friday, the congregation consists of 14 families, 40 communicant members, or 68 souls. We thank our faithful Covenant God for re-activating Monsey's congregation and for the help given us by former home missionaries, ministers, consistories of Englewood and Paterson III.

Thanks also to Chapel Board members and to the women of the Chapel, whose prayers and work helped bring this reorganization to pass. Highlight of the evening was the election of the first Consistory. Called to the office of elder were John Kamp and J. Hamilton Scott; to the office of deacon, Otis Mapes, Jr., and Richard Dykstra, Sr. May God bless these first officials of our congregation. Wonderful surprise of the evening occurred when it was announced that, in memory of their father, the late Rev. Meindert Botbyl, John, Helen, and Agnes Botbyl were presenting the Church with the complete Tower Chimes system which has been so long desired. With the inspiring sermon preached earlier in the evening, these events made Friday night historically memorable. Praise God from Whom all blessings flow!

It was not long before the consistory proposed to the congregation the addition of one elder and one deacon. At a congregational meeting on 11 December Richard Dykstra, Sr. was chosen to serve as elder (instead of deacon) and Garry Englishman and Herbert Shuart were chosen deacons.

Although no listing of the 1952 charter members has been found, from all evidences the membership roll in October seems to have been as follows:

1952

Gerald Berry
Edward and Faye Campbell and baptized daughter Dayle Ann
William A. and Phoebe Conklin and baptized children Patricia Sue,
William A., Jr., Lee Daniel, Bruce Hayden
Miss Wanda Conklin
Mrs. Adelbert (Cara) Dennis and baptized son John Wesley
Bert Dennis
Richard Sr. and Frances Dykstra and baptized children John, Tunis,
Richard Jr., Frances (Butscher), Sidney, Robert
Fred Dykstra
Garry and Elsie Englishman and baptized children Garry Roger,
Linda Lee, Donald, Judith Ann
William and Lina Grete and baptized children Robert L., Wilma L.
W. Howard and Agnes Hornsby
John and May Kamp and baptized children Phyllis Ann, Arthur John
John and Anne Lehmberg
George Lehmberg
Otis Marion and Jean Mapes and baptized son Glen Otis
Lillian Marshall
Sterling and Joy Pitt and baptized daughter Kathleen Joy
Mrs. Calvin L. (Doris) Quackenbush and baptized children Adele Cara,
Diane Susan, Douglas Calvin
Mrs. Richard (Jeanne) Rode
Mrs. John F. (Lois) Rose
Mrs. Annabelle Scott
J. Hamilton and Alice Scott
Miss Audrey Lois Scott
Miss Marilyn Scott
Herbert and Jeannette Shuart and baptized daughter Patricia Jane
Mrs. John (Phebe) Swan
Dick L. (Rev.) and Thea Van Halsema and baptized children David Emo,
Nancy Tess
Norman Watt
Miss Minnie Young

Later in the year, on 23 November, two children were baptized: John Stephen
Rose, born 21 October to John F. and Lois Rose; and Donna Jeanne Rode, born
18 July to Richard and Jeanne Rode.

Remodeling of Chapel Facilities

Some time before organization took place action was taken to do something
about the great need for additional facilities. Notice:

11 May 1952 bulletin:

IT was reported (at the Chapel Board meeting) that the denomina-
tional Mission Board has appointed an architect to present
plans for excavation and renovation of the Chapel basement.
As you know, rest room facilities and additional Sunday School

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space are sorely needed.

13 July 1952 bulletin:

ARCHITECT has begun sketches for Chapel basement renovation, providing rest rooms and meeting space. Offerings from other Churches are beginning to come in to aid with this building project.

3 August 1952 bulletin:

ALL will be happy to hear that news has been received from Home Mission Headquarters in Michigan that \$8,000 has been 'earmarked for Monsey Chapel reinforcement and re-modeling'. Architects at present are working on specifications.

15 September 1952 CHAPEL CHIMES:

MONSEY Chapel is ready to undertake a major remodeling of its present facilities. Long without a basement and without proper facilities, Monsey Chapel will be raised upwards two feet; basement will be excavated; new foundations placed under the entire building; rest rooms furnished; Sunday School space provided; organ tone chamber built; complete new heating system installed.

A wonderful boost to the financial side of the project was received this week when Classis Hackensack announced its decision to present a gift of \$5,000 to the local church. This amount accrued from a mortgage held on New York City church property, formerly belonging to the True Reformed Dutch Church, of which Monsey was a member before 1890. This historical tie led delegates to Classis to consider favorably making the \$5,000 an outright gift to Monsey Chapel. This, together with an \$8,000 loan from denominational Home Missions Board, gives the impending project immediate financial stability.

15 November 1952 CHAPEL CHIMES:

ON November 13, a strange activity was seen at the Church on Main St., Monsey. House-movers came to start the great new modernization project at the Monsey Chr. Ref. Church. Jacking up the building, the movers were ready to give the old auditorium a ride forty feet south. One neighbor lady called to find out whether the church was leaving the town.

During the week of November 17, excavation began. A power shovel managed to get a large part of the new cellar dug out, but toward the end of the week the job was slowed up somewhat because rock was struck. This necessitated blasting. It is expected, however, that mason work will begin some time before the end of the month. Then the contractor hopes to have the building moved back on top of the new foundation which will have been prepared.

15 December 1952 CHAPEL CHIMES:

WE are glad to report progress with the building program.

1952

As you sidewalk superintendents have noticed already, the Church has been moved back on top of the new foundation. Bulldozer work is finished as far as backfilling is concerned, and now the experts in the carpenter, plumbing, heating and mason lines can proceed inside, out of the weather.

A lot of excitement for a congregation three months old! But youthful vigor and renewed challenge, with the blessing of God, combined to undergird the undertaking. There had been several "firsts", too, in this memorable year: first time since 1890, when it entered the Christian Reformed Church, that Classis Hackensack met in Monsey; first Nursery class for two- and three-year-olds in Sunday School; first Midsummer Conference for neighborhood evangelism; first playing of the Botbyl-given chimes from the tower; and all the other firsts that go with a new congregation. But the years roll on, and so does our story.

REGULAR ACTIVITIES 1953

Worship Services: morning and evening each Lord's Day; on special days
Preaching: included sermons on 1953 Goals (Word Study, Prayer, Giving, Going);
Canons of Dort; Heidelberg Catechism; Covenant of Grace
Sacraments: Baptism as requested; Lord's Supper quarterly
Music: morning organist, Thea B. Van Halsema; evening, guests from New Jersey CRC's
Ushers: Head, W. H. Hornsby, Sterling Pitt
Nursery care during morning service (new)
Weekly bulletins
Sunday School 9:30 AM Superintendent John Kamp; Note: staff meetings; SS all year
around (including summer); Cradle Roll; SS Seminar 19, 21, 22 January; SS PTA in
February; beginning of Adult Bible Class 24 May; SS picnic; Christmas program
Instruction Classes for adults, young people, children; RTRI (35 children in September,
grades 4-8; bus hired for transportation)
Societies: MC, SrF, YP, YCC
Other: Meetings of council, elders, deacons; family visiting, pastoral calls, pastoral
letters to members away from home; committees with written reports; fellowship dinners,
hymn sings, films; weekly community mailings; promotion of Banner, BGH (4 week TV
series beginning 15 Feb), FA; congregational meetings with male voting; outdoor
bulletin board, library, tracts; establishment of Chapel Book Room

ANNUAL ACTIVITIES 1953

5th DVBS 13-24 Jul; 107 enrolled
2nd MCMC 5-9 Aug; Rev. Rolf Veenstra "Prayer"; pre-conference prayer meetings; chorus
5th Thanksgiving Concert: Soprano Grace Eavesloot, Tenor Wm. Van Tuinen, Organist Dick
Van Halsema

OTHER ACTIVITIES OR EVENTS TO BE NOTED 1953

30 community homes visited by three teams in January
Korean clothing drive
Young people at Eastern Youth Bible Conference, Terrace Lake
Spring concert by Eastern Academy Chorus
John Kamp representative at denominational Synod in June
Coming of community worker in June
Dedication of new facilities 31 July
Opening of Chapel Book Room
Opening of Rockland County Christian School in September
Group attendance at Reformation Day BGH Rally, Carnegie Hall, New York City
Preparation for calling own pastor
Christmas candlelight carol sing

COUNCIL 1953

Pastor: Home Missionary Dick L. Van Halsema
Declined calls to Oak Glen CRC, Lansing, Illinois in March
Madison Avenue CRC, Paterson, New Jersey in October
Elders: Richard Dykstra, Sr., John Kamp (Vice-president), J. Hamilton Scott (Clerk)
Deacons: Garry Englishman, Otis M. Mapes, Herbert Shuart
Comptroller: James A. Quackenbush

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES 1953

Baptisms:

25 Jan	Clark Gerard Van Halsema, born 14 Jan 1953
12 Apr	Patricia Carol Areford 18 Oct 1949
12 Apr	Nancy Marie Areford 29 Jul 1952
3 May	Adrienne Faye Campbell 17 Apr 1953
2 Aug	Kathleen Elaine Steensma 25 Jul 1943
4 Oct	Judith Ann Shuart 14 Sep 1953
1 Nov	James King Bangma 9 Oct 1953

Adult Baptisms and Professions of Faith:

4 Jan James A. Quackenbush
4 Jan Robert D. Ridgway
12 Apr Otis Frank and Sarah Mapes

Professions of Faith:

5 Apr Patricia S. Conklin
5 Apr Katherine M. Hunt

Re-affirmation of Faith

12 Apr Mrs. Thomas (Nellie) Areford

Transfers from Other Churches:

Richard and Geraldine Steensma from Calvin CRC, Wyckoff, N. J.
baptized children Nancy Jacqueline (18 Dec 1942), Kenneth Richard (19 Feb 1947)
Kathleen Elaine (see baptisms above)

Kenneth and Geraldine Baker from Roseland I CRC, Chicago, Ill.
baptized children Janice Faye (born 9 Nov 1948), Nancy Jean (18 Feb 1951)

Miss Willemina Van Halsema from First Hudsonville CRC, Hudsonville, Mich.

Transfers to Other Churches:

William B. Grete family to Presbyterian Church, Media, Pa.

FINANCES 1953

Budget adopted for year: \$7,620.00 with tithing as goal (tithing letters to congregation)

Regular Offerings: General, Benevolence, Building Funds

One offering per month for designated causes; also donations to special causes

Calvin College and Seminary "Needs of Today" Campaign envelopes distributed and used
by members.

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE 1953

Custodians: Lillian Marshall and

William A. Conklin, Jr. later in year with increased duties with new
building and opening of RCCS

Cemetery Care

Note: Completion of church remodeling

ROCKLAND COUNTY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL 1953

Opened in September with 14 pupils

Teacher: Mrs. Richard (Geraldine) Steensma

part-time teaching: Willemina Van Halsema

The following abbreviations are being used:

BGH	Back-to-God Hour	FA	Family Altar
CBR	Chapel Book Room	RCCS	Rockland County Christian School
CRC	Christian Reformed Church	RTRI	Released Time Religious Instruction
DVBS	Daily Vacation Bible School	SrF	Senior Fellowship
MC	Martha Circle	SS	Sunday School
MCC	Married Couples' Club	YCC	Young Couples' Club
MCMC	Monsey Church Midsummer Conference	YMWG	Young Married Women's Guild
		YP	Young Peoples'

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Dedication of Remodeled Facilities

It was well into 1953 before the remodeling project of the church was completed and a dedication service was held. From the bulletin of 2 August:

THE dedication of our remodeled building took place last Friday evening. (July 31) Another milestone has been reached in the history of the Monsey Church. 'Hitherto hath the Lord helped us!' Our help has been entirely from Him, and to Him do we give all the praise. May our facilities, for which many of you have worked hard and long, be a source of blessing to the congregation and to the community where we are called to live and preach for Christ.

The program folder for the occasion carried this information:

THE work began around November 19, 1952. The Church building was moved south to permit excavation of new basement and erection of new walls. By May, practically all work was completed by contractors, and remaining tasks were performed by men of the church. Added facilities include: new cloak room, rest rooms, library-classroom, assembly room, council room, safe room, organ tone chamber, new heating system, closets, church office, choir loft and grill, quiet room, trophy display case (donated by carpenters), entrance lobby, front porch, iron work, and cement walks. Financing done by four principal means: members' tithes and offerings; \$5000 gift from Bank St., New York City; mortgage plus offerings from congregations of Classis Hackensack; \$8000 loan from Home Missions Committee; and, loans from members.

Community Worker

Early during 1953 plans were being made for the engagement of a community worker for the summer, and on the 14 June bulletin was this announcement:

THIS week, the arrival of our Summer worker is expected. Miss Willemina Van Halsema, sister of the Missionary Pastor, has been engaged for a period of ten weeks, during which time she will assist with Vacation Bible School, Mid-Summer Conference, Sunday School, community visitation, and other projects. Her office will be located in the main floor room directly behind the auditorium. A new feature of this office will be the 'Chapel Book Room', a service to the church and community through which religious books for adults and children may be purchased.

After the summer period the community worker was asked to stay for another

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four months; and additional short-term periods were added until her work was concluded in September, 1955. Part of her support during that time was received from the Rockland County Christian School where she did part-time teaching.

Daily Vacation Bible School

One of the first tasks of the community worker was preparation for DVBS. Personal calling brought a record enrollment of 107, and a consecrated staff helped to maintain this part of the church's mission in the community.

Second Midsummer Conference

The Second Midsummer Conference was marked by attendance of Jew and Gentile from the community, with the entire congregation appointed to the publicity committee. A special conference chorus sang, and in his inimitable way Rev. Rolf Veenstra explored Old and New Testament teachings on Prayer.

The Chapel Book Room

The Chapel Book Room was established as a community ministry and for a number of years was open at stated times. The income has been turned back steadily into additional stock, so that today there is a sizeable inventory on hand. There is, need, however, for greater availability to the public. During each Bible Conference the Chapel Book Room has maintained a Conference Book Table in the downstairs rooms of the church.

Released Time Religious Instruction

For several years Monsey CRC conducted Protestant "religious instruction" classes for children from the Monsey school during the released hour provided each week for such training by the state of New York. Beginning in 1953 a bus was chartered by the church for transportation to and from school at the specified

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hour. Various members of the congregation served as teachers. This program was given up in 1959 because of difficulties in arranging a suitable hour of release and with transportation.

Rockland County Christian School

Interwoven with the history of the church is the story of the Rockland County Christian School. Simultaneous with all this other activity was progression toward the opening of a Christian school, as can best be summarized by these bulletin news items:

22 February 1953:

DURING March, attention will be focussed on Christian Education.

Lord willing, next Sunday morning's sermon will deal with this topic, and on March 13 an inspirational meeting is being planned for all parents and interested friends. Discussion will involve possibilities for a Christian day school in Rockland County.

5 April 1953:

YOUR prayers and your presence are requested for this Friday's Christian Education meeting: organization of a Society will be effected and practical matters discussed about a local Christian School. All are invited because all are needed: whether you have children of school age or not, kindly be present. Pray--and you won't stay away!

3 May 1953:

CHRISTIAN School News: a fine attendance on April 24 was present for adoption of Constitution.

17 May 1953:

AT the fourth meeting of the Rockland County Christian School Society last Monday the following were elected to the Board: Mr. R. Steensma, Rev. and Mrs. Van Halsema...Mr. Otis Mapes, Jr., Mr. J. Kamp...Mrs. Richard Steensma, Mr. R. Dykstra.

14 June 1953:

A Christian School is being planned for September in our basement rooms. Would you like to enroll your children? Capable teaching, new equipment, Christian curriculum, consecrated board members--all this and the assurance of God's blessing are ours. Pray about this.

That summer a Rockland County Christian School newsletter contained these excerpts:

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IN less than a month, God willing, the Rockland County Christian School will be opened in the basement of the Monsey Christian Reformed Church. In order that the neighbors and friends in the community may know more about this important event, Mr. Richard Steensma, President of the school board, submits the following information.

No institution but the Christian School can provide such God-centered instruction. Today's children in today's world need eternity's God every moment of their lives--not one hour of released time a week, or one hour of Sunday School each week, but in all three parts of their environment: God in the home, in the church, and in the school.

The Monsey Church does not sponsor the school. In this sense, it is not parochial. Parents band together and they incorporate to accomplish this purpose.

On 9 September 1953 school opened. Mrs. Richard Steensma with varied teaching experience was the first teacher and continued for five years. There was a total of fourteen pupils in Kindergarten, Grades 1 and 2, and Grades 4 through 7: Linda, Donald, and Judith Englishman; Frank Hubach, Phyllis and Arthur Kamp; Peter, Ellen, Janet Pulis; Adele and Diane Quackenbush; Nancy, Kay, Kenneth Steensma.

Additional information about the school can be found in the report for the year 1960, in which year the school discontinued operation.

Expanding Ministry

In the 25 October 1953 bulletin appeared this notice:

THIS week's mailings will go to 250 homes in and outside of our immediate community. Gradually our ministry is expanding: do you realize that in addition to Sunday School and worship services, our community program includes the weekly letters, full-time neighborhood worker, released time religious instruction for thirty public school children, Christian day school for covenant and other children, the mid-week meetings, and the new Chapel Book Room? Yet, a definite need exists for a Mission Volunteer Workers' Group. Numerous nursing homes, the County Home, and other institutions are without spiritual care. Can we help meet the challenge?

1953

Preparation for Calling Own Pastor

The congregation had been organized now for over a year with a Home Missionary Pastor who had responsibilities also in other fields; and it was time for Monsey to consider calling a pastor of its own:

22 November 1953 bulletin:

AT Consistory on Nov. 2 and at Council on Nov. 9, plans were approved on a matter to be presented at the Dec. 7 Congregational Meeting: application to January 1954 Classis Hackensack meeting to permit Monsey Church to call its own pastor. Reasons: our spiritual needs are increasing, policy of Home Missions Committee calls for such a step, and financial responsibility need not entail much more than the congregation presently bears.
(Approved by the congregation on Dec. 7)

In line with his work as Home Missionary for the East Rev. Van Halsema, among other things, began conducting a Sunday afternoon Bible Class for interested Back-to-God Hour listeners, following the Reformation Day Back-to-God Hour Rally at Carnegie Hall on 30 October. Several members of the Monsey congregation accompanied Rev. Van at different times and aided the group which met each Sunday afternoon at the Hotel Great Northern on 56th Street in New York City. During the following year this work was taken over by Mr. Sidney Rooy, Calvin Seminary graduate, who was doing post-graduate work in New York City.

REGULAR ACTIVITIES 1954

Worship Services: morning and evening each Lord's Day; on special days
Preaching: included sermons on 1954 Goals (Bible Study, Evangelism, Hospitality, Stewardship, Christian Education); Heidelberg Catechism
Sermons recorded on tape for use of sick, etc.
Sacraments: Baptism as requested; Lord's Supper quarterly
Music: morning organist, Thea B. Van Halsema; evening, guests from N Jersey CRC's
Ushers: Head, Edward Campbell
Nursery care during morning service
Weekly bulletins
Note: special attention to service of reconciliation in AM worship; Fall agenda of council included lengthy study of worship
Sunday School 9:30 AM year around; 2 yr to adults; Superintendent Richard Steensma;
Note: staff meetings, special summer schedule, Christmas program
Instruction Classes for adults; RTRI (in Sept 56 pupils in grades 2-8; 6 teachers; bus)
Societies: MC, SrF, YCC, YMWG new in Sept, Choir reorganized in Fall
Other: Meetings of council, elders, deacons; family visiting, pastoral calls, pastoral letters to out-of-towners; committees; promotion of Banner, BGH, FA; BGH follow-up; fellowship dinners, hymn sings; congregational meetings with male voting; library, tracts; Neighbor Night first Sunday evening each month beginning Sept; CBR

ANNUAL ACTIVITIES 1954

1st Easter sunrise service, Murdock property, Monsey
6th DVBS 12-23 Jul; 121 total enrollment; 14 staff
3rd MCMC 1-6 Aug; Rev. D. H. Walters "The Greatness of God"; pre-conference evangelism, and prayer fellowship before meetings
6th Thanksgiving concert: Soprano Grace Ravesloot; Organist Dick L. Van Halsema

OTHER ACTIVITIES OR EVENTS TO BE NOTED 1954

Community Evangelism Project beginning with "Community Evangelism Week" 17-22 Jan
Installation of first congregation-called pastor on 1 April
Spring organ recital by Paul Pettinga (SrF sponsored)
Memorial Day presentation of service flag to congregation
Summer adult Bible study class weekly for five weeks
Korean clothing drive

COUNCIL 1954

Pastor: Missionary Pastor Dick L. Van Halsema to April 1; thereafter became local pastor
Accepted call to become pastor at Monsey, New York in March
Elders: John Kamp (Vice-president), J. Hamilton Scott, Richard Steensma (Clerk)
Deacons: Garry Englishman, Otis F. Mapes, Otis M. Mapes
Comptroller: James A. Quackenbush

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES 1954

Baptisms:

21 Mar	Leslie Tim Quackenbush, born	9 Jan 1954
21 Mar	Mark Emmett Van Halsema	13 Feb 1954
11 Apr	Karen Lee Slamen	19 Sep 1949
11 Apr	Eileen Kathryn Slamen	11 Aug 1951
8 Aug	Greg Tunis Dykstra	20 Jul 1954
8 Aug	Marlene Beth Mapes	12 Jul 1954
8 Aug	Emily Beth Van Halsema	28 Jul 1954
26 Sep	Dennis Michael Rose	14 Aug 1954
7 Nov	Lawrence Raymond Pitt	2 Oct 1954
26 Dec	Marcia Lynn Baker	9 Dec 1954

Professions of Faith:

- 11 Apr Mrs. Joseph (Virginia) Slamen
11 Apr Tunis Dykstra
18 Apr Mrs. Tunis (Margaret) Dykstra; baptized children received:
Loretta Ann (born 16 Oct 1950), Curtiss John (3 Apr 1953)
25 Jul Mrs. Bertha Braband
25 Jul John Wesley Dennis
25 Jul Calvin Leslie Quackenbush
25 Jul John Milton Scott
25 Jul Mrs. Seferin (Frances) Pulis; baptized children received: Peter Earnshaw
(born 8 May 1944), Ellen Burleigh (15 Mar 1946), Janet Marie (15 May 1948),
Elizabeth Mary (7 Nov 1949), Audrey Kinslow (3 Jul 1951)

Re-affirmation of Faith:

- 18 Apr Tien Wei Wu, student at Westminster Seminary and later at Calvin Seminary

Transfers from Other Churches:

- Dr. Clarence and Tessie Bouma from Neland Avenue CRC, Grand Rapids, Mich.
John and June Bangma from Northside CRC, Passaic, N. J.
baptized son James King (born 9 Oct 1953)
Gerard and Frances Van Halsema from First Hudsonville CRC, Hudsonville, Mich.
baptized children Sharon May (born 14 Mar 1951), Brenda Ruth (14 Mar 1953)
Dr. Howard and Anne Tousley from Midland Park, New Jersey CRC
Mrs. Florence Baker from Roseland II CRC, Chicago, Ill.
Jacob Stienstra from Paterson II, N. J. CRC (married Audrey Scott 22 Oct 1954)
Monsey CRC

Transfers to Other Churches:

- Norman Eugene Watt to Bethel CRC, Paterson, N. J.
Gerald Berry to Midland Park, N. J. Methodist Church (married June VanderBush 15 May 1954)
Mrs. William (Frances Dykstra) Butscher to Washington, D. C. CRC at Mid. Park

FINANCES 1954

Budget adopted for year: \$9,600.00 with rededication to tithing as Scriptural means of supplying church's needs

Regular Offerings: General, Benevolence, Building, Community Evangelism (new in Aug) Funds

Special offerings once per month for designated causes; donations to special causes

Subsidy received from Fund for Needy Churches: \$1,531.26

Note: Initiation of financing program by which debentures were issued to clear up existing obligations and to simplify annual payment of budgeted amount for debt reduction—approved by special congregational meeting on 10 May 1954

At congregational meeting on 20 Sept congregation voted to pay pastor's salary locally in 1955 and request no subsidy, and pay denominational quotas in increasing amounts annually (10%, 20%, 30%, etc.)—this plan not accepted by Classis Hackensack

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE 1954

Custodian: Sterling Pitt

Cemetery Care

Special Projects: church interior painted; blacktop yard and driveway project

ROCKLAND COUNTY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL 1954

Opening of second year in September with 20 pupils

Teachers: full-time: Mrs. Richard Steensma; half-days: Willemina Van Halsema

Note: newly accredited by New York State Board of Regents;
organization of Mothers' Guild

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Calling and Installation of Own Pastor

In January Monsey's request to Classis Hackensack for permission to call its own minister was granted. Rev. George Stob from Prospect Street CRC, Passaic, N. J., was named the counsellor, his task being to assist the elders in naming a trio, from which the voting membership would elect a pastor.

In the meantime:

7 February 1954 bulletin:

AS of February 3, Rev. Van Halsema has left the employ of the Chr. Ref. Board of Home Missions in order to enrol for full-time study in New York City. Until Monsey congregation obtains its Pastor by calling from the trio(s) presented by the Consistory, it has been arranged that Rev. Van Halsema serve the church on week-ends.

A congregational meeting was held on 19 February, and Rev. Van Halsema was elected from the nomination of three ministers to become Monsey's own first pastor. Ordinarily it would have been impossible for him to consider such a call along with full-time study. However, his decision is explained by this part of the letter, dated 6 March 1954, addressed and read by him to the Consistory and to the congregation:

THIS matter has been discussed with the Consistory...it was understood that the call would be considered in conjunction with the past years of work in Monsey, the present arrangement with our Community Worker, the expectation of increasing lay leadership, and the prospect of full-time responsibility during non-school months of the year.

With such a mutual, loving understanding of all factors involved, I need delay my answer no longer. With the help of God, I would serve you and the Lord as your pastor. I humbly accept.

This involves all of you, men and women, boys and girls, in a new responsibility with me before God. With His help, we shall work and pray to make Jesus known and loved increasingly throughout the town. I count on your love, your work, your prayers.

The installation service was held on 1 April 1954, with the Revs. George Stob, Harold Dekker, Hessel Bouma, Marvin Baarman, S. J. De Vries participating.

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In April Classis Hackensack approved annual subsidy in the amount of \$1400 for use in payment of the pastor's salary.

Community Evangelism Project

During the first months of 1954 the congregation was engaged also in a concentrated evangelism effort, beginning 17-22 January with "Community Evangelism Week".

10 January 1954 bulletin:

A most important event occurs in our church next week. After seven months' advance work by our community worker, we are ready to enlist our own members in a continuing program of parish evangelism which, we pray, will bring glory to God, new life to unchurched neighbors, and new blessing to you who participate. You will be asked this week to become a Visitor or Prayer Supporter. Next week, the plan will be explained at a brief supper meeting (Monday), and on Wednesday and Thursday further instruction and actual visits will be featured.

According to plan Wednesday and Thursday evenings were to be "big" calling nights. But on Wednesday a well-remembered heavy fog enveloped the area and toward evening was so impenetrable that operation of the plan for that evening had to be suspended. A report of Thursday evening follows:

24 January 1954 bulletin:

'TWO-BY-TWO' Report: We have every reason to be grateful to God for the inspiring events of last Monday and Thursday evenings, when eighteen members attended the Evangelism Week supper and then came out to make home calls. Approximately thirty-three calls were made in one night...In order to finish the initial stage of home calls, visitors are asked to come one night this week for further visits. Then, a review of progress will be held and a definite night each month set aside for new assignments and giving of reports, prayer and refreshments...No minister or single member can make thirty-three calls in one night. This 'two-by-two' lay evangelism, taught by Jesus, will do more for the outreach of the Church than anything we have undertaken before.

More calls were made during the next few weeks, and in a 12 March letter the community worker reminded the congregation:

OUR recently-organized evangelism program has shown many marks

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of blessing. Our call for workers has been answered beyond expectation. Many homes have felt the church's friendship and interest. Several of our neighbors have accepted our invitation to attend our services; some have asked for Bibles; some have expressed interest in becoming members of our church...

Our community evangelism project is not finished. First of all, please pray, 'for with God nothing shall be impossible.' (Luke 1:37)...Then, to the extent that you are able, go calling with a partner—in faith...A team arranges its calls at its own convenience, and then we meet only once a month for reports, encouragement, and instruction.

An evaluation at a later date:

13 June 1954 bulletin:

THE Evangelism Project begun in January is hereby terminated and hearty thanks are given to team members J. Kamp, N. Areford, J. Bangra, F. Campbell, W. Conklin, Ph. Conklin, P. Conklin, G. Englishman, K. Hunt, O. F. Mapes, S. Mapes, O. M. Mapes, S. Pitt, J. Pitt, J. Quackenbush, A. Scott, J. H. Scott, H. Shuart, J. Shuart, T. Van Halsema, W. Van Halsema...some 92 homes were visited between January and May.

From this experience, it is concluded that the help of the congregation will be sought during January and July of each year, when 'all-out' efforts are made to contact our neighbors for Christ. During the remaining ten months, volunteers will be sought to make monthly calls. In this way, the entire congregation can participate in the concentrated calling, and those who are led to give time more frequently can furnish the core of year-round workers who must be the link between the Church and the community.

Easter Sunrise Service

Beginning in 1954 the evangelical churches in the area have conducted an Easter sunrise service on the Peter Murdock property at the end of Grandview Avenue, Monsey. Alternative arrangements for using the Monsey CRC in case of rain have not been put into effect to date. Because of nearness to the site, Monsey CRC has been responsible for providing the necessary physical properties for the annual 6:00 service.

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Members in the Armed Services

Mentioned at this time are the members of the congregation who served in the armed forces of our country during the last ten years. On 30 May 1954 the Servicemen's Committee presented a new service flag to the congregation on which the number 7 was sewn, representing those in uniform at that time:

Wanda Conklin (Air Force Nurse Corps)
Bert Dennis (Navy)
John Bangma (Navy)
Roger Englishman (Army)
Sidney Dykstra (Army)
Robert Dykstra (Army)
Kenneth Baker (Army--West Point)

Before that there had been:

Jerry Berry (Army)
Fred Dykstra (Marines)
Richard Dykstra (Army)
Norman Watt (Navy)

And later:

William A. Conklin, Jr. (Army)

In the service column Rev. Van, in the active army reserves, can also be listed. During the summers of 1954 and 1955 he was given two weeks' leave of absence for reserve army training and chaplain duty at Camp Drum, New York. In May 1956 he performed two weeks' active duty as chaplain on Governors' Island, New York City.

The United States Army Chaplain School at Fort Slocum, New York, has been a source of contacts for the Monsey CRC. Calvin Seminary graduates attending school there have been guest preachers. And during the summer of 1956 the Rev. Harold Ellens (attending Chaplain School) and family, living as neighbors of the Aufiero's in Tuckahoe, became well acquainted with our congregation.

Other "Out-of-Towners"

Among our "out-of-towners" have been several young people away from home

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at school: Wanda Conklin, at School of Nursing, Hackensack, N. J. Hospital (graduated 1952); Marilyn Scott at Calvin College (graduated 1954); George Lehnberg at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, N. Y. (graduated 1953-- married to Janet Ann Rose 21 June 1953 at Suffern--away on work assignments in western states; master's degree 1956); Katherine Hunt at Calvin College (graduated 1958). Former member Norman Watt went from Calvin College pre-medical course to University of Rochester. Tien Wei Wu, from Formosa, while he was with us, attended Westminster and Calvin Seminaries; and Edward Brown was a student at Union Seminary, from where he went to Princeton. In 1959 Bert Dennis was graduated from Fairleigh Dickinson University. 1960 was the year that Nancy Steensma and Lee Conklin entered Calvin College and 1961 the year for Kay Steensma. At present Clinton Hunt is at the State of New York Maritime College.

Blacktop Project

Anyone who remembers the uncomely post-renodeling appearance of the church property appreciates the "before" and "after" comparison created by the completion of the blacktop project at the church.

1 August 1954 bulletin:

THROUGH the splendid cooperation and generosity of our members, the blacktop yard and driveway project, after a year of waiting, has been finished in time for the Midsummer Conference...Purpose for this improvement: to provide some off-street parking...to improve the property, and to provide recreation area for Christian School and other children's activities around the year. The drive to pay for this work by direct member donations has net with excellent results. Donations from \$1 to \$100 have been received...We thank you and we thank God.

Daily Vacation Bible School and Midsummer Conference

The two big events of the summer were outstanding again this year. DVBS enrollment climbed to 121; "teachers and helpers outdid themselves"; all expenses were met by DVBS receipts; attendance at the closing program "taxed the capacity

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of the auditorium".

Rev. D. H. Walters, Midsummer Conference speaker, won a place in Monsey hearts with his warm friendliness.

8 August 1954 bulletin:

THE Conference is over, yes—but many of you know that it really can not be forgotten. "The Greatness of God" was displayed in so many ways by that blessed speaker, Rev. Dick H. Walters, who was used of God's Spirit to teach and inspire us. Because God was with us, we had a record-breaking attendance, record offerings...sufficient to cover every expense, record book table sales, and record participation on the part of our members...May the new acquaintance we have received with God's Word inspire us as members to new grateful living: 1) Let us attend two services each Lord's Day. 2) Let all attend Sunday School and Adult Bible Class. 3) Let all have some specific service in the church (i.e., ushering, teaching, music, or the like). 4) Let us all let our light shine to men so that they may be won to God. There is our program. If we make further progress in it, the Conference will never have ended!

Other Items of Interest:

Early October meant the return to school for Rev. Van.

26 September 1954 bulletin:

DURING this week Rev. Van Halsema returns for his final full-time semester of school work in New York City. Until February 1 he will not be available week-days. However, calls may always be left at the Parsonage for his attention. Lord willing, although reimbursed for one-third regular work, the Pastor will devote Monday, Wednesday, and some Friday nights to the congregation, besides Saturday and Sunday.

In September a new society was formed when a growing number of younger women with small children found it difficult to attend the afternoon Martha Circle meetings. The group later became known as the Young Married Women's Guild, and since that time it has met at members' homes once a month, except during the summer.

Also in the Fall was another specific approach to witnessing in the appearance of Neighbor Night on the first Sunday evening of each month, with appropriate sermons, and then some form of fellowship after the service.

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Detailed attention was given on the part of the consistory and council to the study of worship, through which several changes in the liturgy of the worship services were introduced.

A fitting close for the year from the 26 December 1954 bulletin:

THE last bulletin of the year—a time for giving thanks!

We thank God for all His favor and love, we thank all the members, young and old, for their devotion and service (the true nature of which is known only to God). We thank all who pray and give and work for Christ's Church locally and around the world; we thank society members and officers...We live, we work, for God. We live, we work, that men may love Him too.

REGULAR ACTIVITIES 1955

Worship Services: morning and evening each Lord's Day; on special days
Preaching: included sermons on 1955 Goals (Worship, Love, Prayer); Life of Moses; Belgic Confession; OT People; Holy Spirit; Ministry of Our Lord
Sermons recorded on tape
Sacraments: Baptism as requested; Lord's Supper bi-monthly (instead of quarterly)
Music: morning organist Thea B. Van Halsema; evening, guests from New Jersey CRC's Choir occasionally
Ushers: Head, Howard Tousley
Nursery care during morning service
Weekly bulletins (special series of articles on Church Order)
Note: Changes in order of worship; Lord's Supper now six times a year instead of four
Sunday School 9:30 AM year around; 2 yr to adults; Superintendent Gerard Van Halsema;
Note: SS Seminar on 2 Apr; Christmas Program
Instruction Classes for adults; RTRI (in Sept 75 children in grades 2-8, over 80 before end of year; 6 teachers; bus transportation)
Societies: MC, SrF, YMWG, YCC, Choir, Teen Club new in Sept, Men's Society new in Sept
Other: Meetings of council, elders, deacons; family visiting, pastoral calls; committees (including long-range planning); promotion of Banner, BGH, FA; Neighbor Nights; congregational meetings (male voting); outdoor bulletin board, tracts; library; GBR

ANNUAL ACTIVITIES 1955

2nd Easter Sunrise service
7th DVBS 27 June-8 Jul; 146 enrolled; bus route operated
4th MCMC 1-5 Aug; Dr. John Luchies "You, Tomorrow, and Christ"; preconference invitation week; prayer
7th Thanksgiving concert: Monsey Chapel Choir; Organist Janice Slump, Soprano Gertrude Baker

OTHER ACTIVITIES OR EVENTS TO BE NOTED 1955

Rev. Van Halsema and Elder John Kamp delegates to denominational Synod in June
Termination of employment of community worker Willemina Van Halsema (married James A. Quackenbush 19 Dec 1954 Monsey CRC)
Meeting of Classis Hackensack at Monsey CRC in September
130th Anniversary program for Monsey CRC
Clothing drive for Korea
Christmas caroling by choir at Rockland State Hospital
Christmas candlelight carol sing

COUNCIL 1955

Pastor: Dick L. Van Halsema
Elders: Richard Dykstra, Sr., John Kamp (Vice-president), J. Hamilton Scott, Richard Steensma (Clerk)
Deacons: W. Howard Hornsby, Otis F. Mapes, Otis M. Mapes, James A. Quackenbush (Comptroller)

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES 1955

Baptisms:

10 Apr	Donald Clyde Shuart	born 13 Dec 1954
21 Aug	Robert David Gaillard	13 Dec 1954
21 Aug	Alan Patrick Smith	2 Aug 1955
11 Sep	Kevin John Mapes	15 Aug 1955
16 Oct	Paul Vincent Dykstra	11 Sep 1955
25 Dec	Gregory Jack Stienstra	24 Nov 1955

Professions of Faith

21 Aug Garry Roger Englishman
21 Aug Peter John and Betty Ann Smith; baptized children received: Peter John, Jr. (born 8 Sep 1947), Dwight Robert (4 Apr 1950), Joyce Marlene (8 Jun 1952), Alan Patrick (see baptisms above)

Transfers from Other Churches:

Edward and Magdalena Brown from South Africa

Mrs. Gordon (Betty) Nichols from Bible Presbyterian Church, Duryea, Pa.

baptized children Robert Gordon (born 24 May 1950), Evan Langdon (31 May 1952)

(Rev. Nichols holds ministerial status in Bible Presbyterian Church)

Transfers to Other Churches:

Kenneth Baker family to Allendale I CRC, Allendale, Mich.

John Bangma family to Miami, Florida CRC

Mrs. Florence Baker to Allendale II CRC, Allendale, Mich.

Mrs. Charles (Patricia Conklin) Van Dyke to Paterson II, N. J. CRC (marriage 21 May 1955)

Monsey CRC

Deaths:

29 Jun Miss Minnie Young, 84

6 Nov Mrs. John (Phebe) Swan, 84

FINANCES 1955

Budget adopted for year: \$12,540.00 on basis of tithing

Regular Offerings: General, Benevolence, Community Evangelism Funds

Special offerings and donations for designated causes

Envelopes for Calvin College and Seminary "Needs of Today" Campaign

Note: No subsidy; first time in history full payment of denominational and classical quotas; salaries paid, budget met in full

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE 1955

Custodian: Mrs. Bertha Braband (Jan-Aug); Bert Dennis (Sep-Dec)

Cemetery care

Note: Painting bee for parsonage exterior in September

ROCKLAND COUNTY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL 1955

Third year begun in September

Teachers: Mrs. Richard Steensma and Miss Eleanor Sietsema; Faye Campbell, aide

The denominational Synod meets each year in June in Grand Rapids, Michigan. It is composed of two minister and two elder delegates from each regional classis and conducts business that pertains to the denomination as a whole. At present (1962) there are thirty-one classes: Alberta North, Alberta South, British Columbia (all in Canada); Cadillac (Michigan), California, Chatham (Western Ontario, Canada), Chicago North, Chicago South, Eastern Ontario (Canada), Grand Rapids East, Grand Rapids South, Grand Rapids West, Grandville (Michigan), Hackensack (East U. S.); Hamilton (Canada), Hudson (East U. S.), Holland (Michigan), Kalamazoo (Michigan), Lake Erie (Eastern Michigan-Ohio), Minnesota North, Minnesota South, Muskegon (Michigan), Northcentral Iowa, Orange City (Iowa), Pacific, Pella (Iowa), Rocky Mountain, Sioux Center (Iowa), Toronto (Canada), Wisconsin, Zeeland (Michigan)

First Death

One of the "firsts" recorded in the year 1955 was the first death in the congregation in seven years and the first of the reorganized membership. Miss Minnie Young, who had been the only living link with the former True Reformed Protestant Dutch congregation of Monsey, passed away on 29 June at the age of 84. Her burial is the most recent in the old church cemetery on Maple Avenue. A fund exists for the regular upkeep of this cemetery; and though often neglected, the old graveyard receives attention from time to time either by individuals or by clean-up groups under the direction of the Cemetery Committee.

The West New Hempstead True Reformed Protestant Dutch Church, predecessor of our congregation, once worshipped on Maple Avenue, near Saddle River Road. A cemetery was begun there, next to the old building. Although the present building on Main Street was next erected, the group continued to use the Maple Avenue burial grounds, where many members of the original congregation are buried.

On 6 November 1955 Mrs. Phebe Swan, the only member on the church rolls in 1949, also passed away at the age of 84.

Denominational Synod

In June 1955 the denominational Synod, held each year at Grand Rapids, Michigan, counted among its delegate membership the pastor and elder John Kamp of the Monsey Christian Reformed Church, two of the four representatives to Synod from Classis Hackensack.

Daily Vacation Bible School

10 July 1955 bulletin:

WITH deep thanksgiving we thank God and salute our teachers and parents because the 1955 Vacation Bible School went so

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well. It was the biggest in seven years at our Church: 146 in all attended, 105 of whom received attendance awards; a bus route was conducted for the first time; a large group of workers helped with refreshments and transportation... Now may the Holy Spirit bless the seed sown in children's hearts, leading them in Christian life.

Midsummer Conference

One of the opportunities given to the congregation each year to make calls in the community was at the time of the Midsummer Conference. The 1955 pre-conference invitation program was no exception.

31 July 1955 bulletin:

TUESDAY to Thursday, God used a number of our dedicated members, men and women, personally to contact almost 470 homes with printed invitations, and to leave another 110 or more where there was no answer at the door: thus covering practically the entire community with news.

7 August 1955 bulletin:

REFLECTIONS on the Midsummer Conference: Dr. J. Luchies brought blessed messages about 'You, Tomorrow, and Christ'... The greatest number of community people attended (comparing 1952, -3, -4)... Although the weather became hot indeed, many were enabled to attend... The soloists contributed much, and our Choir actually was inspired. Organist Janice Slump was excellent in her part, and the planning committee carried out its responsibility in splendid fashion. Were hearts reached? lives changed? These are the important questions. Evidences of answers to prayer were clear. Thus, thanks again to our Covenant God for honoring His Name and hearing His people.

4 September 1955 bulletin:

IN a letter just received from Dr. John Luchies, Midsummer Conference speaker, there are bouquets for you: 'The rich experiences at Monsey continue to enrich my soul. This was truly one of the high peaks in my ministerial experience... Your people were so very gracious... The wonderful way in which they responded at the meetings will never leave me quite the same.'

Meeting of Classis Hackensack and 130th Anniversary Program

In September Monsey was host to Classis Hackensack on the occasion of the 130th anniversary of the church.

1955

28 August 1955 bulletin:

SEPTEMBER 19: this Monday has been picked by the Church Council as a fitting day for the congregation to gather in festive mood. It is not only the beginning of a new season of study and work in the Church; it is not only the eve of Classis Hackensack's meeting in our church on the following day. It is the day on which we will commemorate 130 years of Monsey Church history!

18 September 1955 bulletin:

THE program is set for tomorrow evening...Short speeches will be brought by Commissioner F. Bert Nidd, John Botbyl, J. Hamilton Scott, J. A. Quackenbush, and R. Dykstra. There will also be Kodachrome slides, Choir music, display of old papers, an anniversary booklet, and a special anniversary cake. Let us all be present with many friends to praise God from Whom all blessings flow!

Other Items of Interest

In September a much-talked-about Men's Society was begun. Since then congregational male interest in the society has waxed and waned, and at present there is no study-and-fellowship group for the men of the church.

During the summer an attractive colonial style sign was erected on the church grounds as a gift from the Martha Circle. It called public attention to the church not only, but also to the Rockland County Christian School and the Chapel Book Room.

For the first time the church met its year's budget in full, receiving no subsidy, and paying its salaries and full classical and denominational quotas. The often-misunderstood quota system was once described by Rev. Rolf Veenstra in The Banner as follows:

THE quota system is nothing more nor less than a splendid arrangement by which the average share of an individual, family, or congregation is computed in carrying on the many fine Kingdom projects in which we are jointly engaged.

Some of these Kingdom projects are: denominational Back-to-God Hour on radio, Calvin College and Seminary, Church Help Fund, Home Missions, Foreign Missions, etc. See denominational annual Yearbook for complete listing.

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An announcement of a somewhat different character appeared on the
18 December 1955 bulletin:

THE Tappan Zee bridge is open. This fact is mentioned on a church bulletin because it directly affects our church. Already the H. Aufiero family, from Yonkers area (Tuckahoe, N. Y.) is able to use this span in coming to our church for worship. It may mean eventual expansion of Christian Reformed work into a new, cross-Hudson region. May this work of man be used for a work of God.

Several members and friends have traveled to our church by means of this bridge, and a present member of the congregation, Mr. Marvin Poutsma, uses it each Lord's Day and often during the week. What about the future?

REGULAR ACTIVITIES 1956

Worship Services: morning and evening each Lord's Day; on special days
Note: time of PM service changed from 7:30 to 7:00 on 6 May; time of AM from 10:45 to 10:30 changed on 27 May
Preaching: included sermons on Christian's Faithfulness (Public Worship, Prayer, Chr. Education, Work for Lord, Giving, Christian Love); Heidelberg Catechism; Acts; 7 churches of Rev. 2, 3 (DLVH); also Canons of Dort, Heid. Cat., Christmas (ETL)
Sermons recorded on tape
Sacraments: Baptism as requested; Lord's Supper bi-monthly
Music: morning organist, Thea B. Van Halsema (Jan-Jul); evening, guest organists from NJ; Hartman Bandstra, Nancy Steensma, guests (Jul-Dec)
Ushers: Head, Jack Stienstra
Nursery care during morning service
Weekly bulletins (series of articles on church order continued)
Note: first separate worship folder and calendar and announcement sheet on 11 March
Note on Worship: congregational "Amen" at conclusion of prayers in worship service; appropriate tracts distributed after services
Sunday School 9:30 AM year around; 2 yr to adult; Supts. John Kamp (Jan-Mar); Rev. Van Halsema (Apr-Jun); Allen Dykstra (Jul-Dec); Note: staff meetings, Parent Night; April reorganization of staff, Christmas program
Instruction Classes for young people in Fall; RTRI (in Sept 43 enrolled in grades 2-6 with grades 7, 8 no longer at Monsey School; bus transportation
Societies: MC, YMWG, YCC, Men's Society, Teen Club
Other: Meetings of council, elders, deacons; family visiting, pastoral calls; promotion of Banner, BGH, FA; committees (including long-range); congregational meetings with women voting beginning in Nov; Neighbor Nights; elders' district meetings; outdoor bulletin board, tracts; CBR

ANNUAL ACTIVITIES 1956

3rd Easter sunrise service
8th DVBS 29 Jun-12 Jul; 149 enrolled; 15 staff; tent used
5th MCMC 16-20 Jul; Rev. Harold Dekker "Christ Is the Answer"; pre-conference community invitations

OTHER ACTIVITIES OR EVENTS TO BE NOTED 1956

Arrival of first immigrant family on 13 April
Summer worker, Mrs. Allen Dykstra, to assist with DVBS and MCMC
Acceptance of call to Miami, Florida by Rev. Van Halsema; acceptance of Monsey call by Edson T. Lewis, Jr.
Acquaintance with Rev. Harold Ellens family during summer while he was at Army chaplain school, Fort Slocum, New Rochelle, N. Y.
Preparation for CRC 1957 centennial celebration
Thanksgiving "Family Night"; film, hymn sing
Christmas caroling at Rockland State Hospital by choir
Christmas candlelight service by Teen Club
Old Year's Fellowship at Fellowship Hall

COUNCIL 1956

Pastors: Dick L. Van Halsema (Jan-Jul)
Declined calls to East Cleveland, Ohio CRC in Jan
Twelfth St. CRC, Grand Rapids, Mich., Ann Arbor, Mich., CRC,
Wheaton, Ill. CRC all in Apr
Accepted call to Miami, Florida CRC in Apr
Edson T. Lewis, Jr. (Sept-Dec)
Elders: Richard Dykstra, Sr., J. Hamilton Scott (Vice-president), Richard Steensma (Clerk)
Deacons: W. Howard Hornsby, Otis F. Mapes, James A. Quackenbush (Comptroller), Howard
Tousley

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES 1956

Baptisms:

15 Jan Eunice Aufiero born 19 Oct 1955
8 Apr Robin Ruth Nichols 5 Mar 1956
22 Apr Ruth Anelda Quackenbush 7 Apr 1956
8 Jul Randy Jay Skala 30 Jan 1956

Professions of Faith:

8 Jul Mrs. Frank (Barbara) Skala; baptized children received: Frank Stephen (born 21 Nov 1948), Richard William (25 Sep 1951), Randy Jay (see above)
8 Jul Augustus and Margaret Dahl; baptized children received: Barbara C. (born 29 Dec 1946), Arlene M. (1 Aug 1951), Alan R. (14 Mar 1954)

Re-affirmation of Faith:

15 Jan Harry A. and Margaret A. Aufiero; baptized children received: Gretchen (born 14 Jul 1953), Audrey (26 Jun 1954), Eunice (see above)
18 Mar Mrs. Bert (Mona McNeel) Dennis from First Presb. Church, Mountainview, Cal. (marriage at Sunnyvale, Cal. 15 Aug 1953)
13 May Mrs. Bernard (Sarah) Zell

Transfers from Other Churches:

Allen Dykstra from Paterson II, N. J. CRC (married Marilyn Scott 23 Dec 1955 Monsey CRC)
Leendert and Jannetje Goedegebuure from Gereformeerde Kerk, Netherlands
baptized daughter Paulina Cornelia (born 23 Mar 1953)
Miss Margaret Louise Crawford from EastSide Cleveland, Ohio CRC

Transfers to Other Churches:

Gerard Van Halsema family to Ridgewood, N. J. CRC
Edward and Magdalena Brown to Wanamassa, N. J. CRC
Mrs. Robert (Wanda Conklin) Gaillard to Northside CRC, Passaic, N. J. and baptized son Robert David; marriage 1954 Monsey CRC)
Dr. and Mrs. Clarence Bouma to Miami, Florida CRC
Rev. Dick Van Halsema family to Miami, Florida CRC

Death:

11 Sep John Lehmsberg
One resignation

FINANCES 1956

Budget adopted for year: \$12,620.00 with encouragement in practice of tithing
Regular Offerings: General, Benevolence, Community Evangelism Funds
Special offerings and donations
"Needs of Today" Campaign envelopes for Calvin College and Seminary
No subsidy received

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE 1956

Custodians: Bert Dennis (Jan-Jul); Volunteers Otis F. and Sarah Mapes and James A. Quackenbush (Jul-Dec)
Cemetery care; summer cleaning bee
Note: repair of Sunday School building; church downstairs rooms painted by Men's Society; interior redecoration of parsonage

ROCKLAND COUNTY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL 1956

Fourth year beginning in September
Teachers: Mrs. Richard Steensma and Miss M. Louise Crawford
Christian School Mothers' Guild
Property purchased during year

1956

Changes concerning Worship Services

The year 1956 was an action-packed succession of events. Spring marked several changes in connection with the worship services and congregational fellowship. On 6 May the time of the evening service was changed from 7:30 to 7:00, one reason being the allowance of a greater attendance by children at two worship services on the Lord's Day. On 27 May the morning service met for the first time at 10:30 instead of 10:45 with the Sunday School helping through punctual adherence to schedule beforehand. (With the 1959 renovation of the Sunday School, the time of morning worship was changed again to 10:45).

A heartening touch introduced into worship was the audible "Amen" of the congregation at the conclusion of prayers.

Another alteration was the separate distribution of the order of worship folders used as guide to improved worship and the weekly news and announcements which was handed out in news sheet form after the services. This practice continued until the use of the double-fold combination bulletin now in use since 1961.

In many other ways during the year attention was called to proper worship and reverence.

Elders' District Meetings

A schedule of meetings for the elders with the members in their districts was designed with closer congregational unity in mind and for the exchange of mutual responsibilities.

20 May 1956 news sheet:

MUTUAL responsibilities— (1) On the part of the Elder: about once each quarter to call the district members together for fellowship and prayer, to call on sick and distressed as frequently as circumstances require, to remember all district members constantly in prayer, to welcome all new district members by personal call, to call on each delinquent at least once each month, and such like.

(2) On the part of the district members: to pray for their district Elder and members, to work for the closer unity and acquaintance of the group, to promote each other's spiritual welfare, by inviting Elder and members into one's home, and the like.

Doctor of Theology Degree for Pastor

During the winter Rev. Van Halsema, on part-time duty at the church, put final efforts toward his Doctor of Theology degree which was awarded him on 29 May 1956 at the commencement exercises of Union Theological Seminary, New York City. His thesis was written on "Christianity in Eighteenth Century New England".

First Immigrant Family

At a time of heavy immigration to the United States the Monsey Church received, through the sponsorship of one of its members, its first family from the Netherlands, Leendert and Jannetje Goedegebuure and daughter Paulina. An apartment was located near the church, and this family spent the first three years of its life in a new country in our fellowship. Other families followed, but by this time they have all become relocated.

Change of Pastors

The biggest change for the congregation since its reorganization took place during 1956. On 29 April the congregation heard the announcement that Rev. Van Halsema had been led to accept the call he had received from the Miami, Florida CRC. One of the factors in his decision was the impact he felt from the Lord in challenging him with four calls that he received at approximately the same time. The others came from Twelfth Street CRC, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Ann Arbor, Michigan CRC; and Wheaton, Illinois CRC.

Shortly after this he also received the synodical appointment as missionary-

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at-large for the denomination which he later accepted with the understanding that he fulfill his acceptance of the Miami call by living there for a period of time until acceptable arrangements could be made with Miami and the Home Missions office. He continues in a related post today as Minister of Evangelism for the Christian Reformed Church.

The summer schedule of events was adapted to the departure from Monsey. Mrs. Allen Dykstra was engaged as Summer Worker to help with the busy program. The DVBS reached a peak enrollment of 149 pupils and was distinguished from other DVBS's by the use of the big tent on the church lawn. Immediately following was the Mid-summer Conference with the Rev. Harold Dekker, a Monsey favorite, as conference speaker. Then came the farewell sermons on 22 July with messages centered on these Scripture texts: at the morning service:

JEHOVAH hath done great things for us, Whereof we are glad.
(Psalm 126:3) and

OH fear Jehovah, ye his saints; For there is no want to them
that fear him. (Psalm 34:9);

and at evening worship:

NOW to him that is able to establish you according to my
gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to
the revelation of the mystery which hath been kept in
silence through times eternal, but now is manifested, and
by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the com-
mandment of the eternal God, is made known unto all the
nations unto obedience of faith: to the only wise God,
through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory for ever. Amen.
(Romans 16:25-27)

On Monday, 23 July, a farewell was held at the Monsey Fire Hall.

The truth of the lack of want to those who fear Jehovah became very apparent to the congregation when on the first Sunday without a pastor announcement was made that Mr. Edson T. Lewis, Jr., recent graduate of Calvin Seminary and recipient of our third call, had made Monsey his choice. After successful examination by Classis Hackensack on 18 September, Mr. Lewis and his wife arrived in Monsey. His ordination as a minister and installation as pastor of this church occurred on 20 September 1956,

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the Revs. Clarence Vos, our counsellor, from Paterson, N. J., Dick Van Halsema, John Meeter, and other ministers taking part. Inaugural sermons were preached the following Lord's Day with the source of the messages being: morning worship:

FOR I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ. (Gal. 1:11,12);

evening worship:

BLESSED be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you. (I Peter 1:3,4)

Thus the congregation began its fifth year of reorganized life with a new pastor. Through the exchange of get-acquainted calls and the regular routine of church activities pastor and people gradually merged in their common task in the community of Monsey.

Other Items of Interest:

One matter that had been held in abeyance until the arrival of the new pastor was the question of women members voting at congregational meetings. This practice was sanctioned by congregational vote on 2 November 1956; and since that date both men and women have exercised the suffrage right at the business meetings of the Monsey church, whereas before this voting was done only by the men.

The year 1956 was marked also by preparation for the CRC Centennial in 1957 by appointment of a Centennial Committee, placement of a series of articles in the news sheet, and participation in the extensive promotional program.

Toward the end of the calendar year Rev. and Mrs. Lewis made these comments by way of the 23 December Weekly Calendar and Announcements:

WE have been with you such a short time, and yet the days have been rich ones for us...The Lord, we can plainly see, was busy, very busy, in Monsey before we came. We can see it in the gratitude with which you accept new opportunities to serve, in the love for one another, and in the kindness you have shown us. May the Lord give us grace...to grow...

REGULAR ACTIVITIES 1957

Worship Services: morning and evening each Lord's Day; on special days
Preaching: sermons included series on Heidelberg Catechism; Disciplines; Centennial
Sermons recorded on tape
Sacraments: Baptism as requested; Lord's Supper bi-monthly
Music: organist Nancy Steensma
Ushers: Head, Richard Steensma
Nursery provided during morning service
Weekly worship folders and weekly calendar and announcements sheets
Sunday School 9:30 AM year around; 2 yr to adult; Superintendent Edson T. Lewis, Jr.
Note: staff meetings, teacher training filmstrips, SS picnic, Christmas program
Instruction Classes for adults, teen-agers, children; RTRI
Societies: MC, YMWG, Men's Society, Teen Club, Choir reorganized (Frank Muus)
Other: Meetings of council, elders, deacons; family visiting, pastoral calls;
committees (including long-range, community welcome, social activities); Wednesday
evening study-prayer meetings (new); promotion of Banner, BGH, FA; elders' district
meetings after evening service on preparatory Sunday; Fellowship Nights; distribution
denominational Home Mission Bd THE WAY in community; congregational meetings; church
picnic; outdoor bulletin board, tracts; CBR, library

ANNUAL ACTIVITIES 1957

5th Easter sunrise service
9th DVBS 8-19 July; 131 enrolled; series of training meetings preceding
6th MCMC 30 Jul-2 Aug; Dr. Leonard Greenway "This Is the Life"; pre-conference
invitations and prayer sessions during conference

OTHER ACTIVITIES OR EVENTS TO BE NOTED 1957

Principles of Evangelism adopted by congregation
Christian Reformed Church Centennial
Thanksgiving program: choir, film
Christmas caroling by choir at Rockland State Hospital
Teen Club candlelight service at Christmas
Old Year's Fellowship

COUNCIL 1957

Pastor: Edson T. Lewis, Jr.
Elders: Harry A. Aufiero (Clerk Jan-Jun); Richard Dykstra, Sr., James A. Quackenbush
(Clerk Jun-Dec), J. Hamilton Scott (Vice-president)
Deacons: W. Howard Hornsby, Herbert Shuart, Jack Stienstra (Comptroller), Howard Tousley

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES 1957

Baptisms:

26 May	Joan Marie Lewis	born 27 Apr 1957
7 Jul	Randall Keith Mapes	31 May 1957
4 Aug	Cheryl Lynn Stienstra	8 Jul 1957
20 Oct	John Leonard Goedegebuure	5 Oct 1957

Transfers from Other Churches:

Rev. Edson T. and Joanne Lewis from Calvin CRC, Grand Rapids, Mich.
Charles and Elizabeth Bakker from Sussex, N. J. CRC
baptized children Jerry Charles (born 10 Dec 1948), Theresa Elizabeth (19 Jun 1950),
Henry Fred (3 Dec 1951), Charles Jr. (18 May 1953)
Cornelis and Henrina Klink from Gereformeerde Kerk, Netherlands
baptized daughters Maaike (born 21 Nov 1951), Adriana (5 Feb 1954)

Transfers to Other Churches:

Tien Wei Wu to Baptist Church, Philadelphia
Harry A. Aufiero family to Union Congregational Church, Tuckahoe, N. Y.
to be pastor of Disciples of Christ Church, Bronx, N. Y.

FINANCES 1957

Budget adopted for year: \$12,910.00

Regular Offerings: General, Benevolence, Community Evangelism, Debt Reduction Funds

Special offerings and donations

"Needs of Today" Campaign envelopes for Calvin College and Seminary

Subsidy received: \$2,026.66

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE 1957

Custodian: Volunteers Otis F. and Sarah Mapes, James A. Quackenbush

Cemetery care

Note: minor repairs on Sunday School building for RCCS winter use

ROCKLAND COUNTY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL 1957

In September opening of fifth year

Teachers: Mrs. Richard Steensma and Miss M. Louise Crawford

Music program initiated under Mr. James Stabile in January 1958

Christian School Mothers' Guild

January 1958 some building materials acquired; building plans to town board

The beginnings of Monsey Church go back to 1825 when it was one of the True Reformed Protestant Dutch Churches of Classis Hackensack. In 1857 the Christian Reformed Church was born, and in 1890 Classis Hackensack joined the Christian Reformed Church. After a varied history since that time Monsey Church was reborn in 1952. So its present life is measured in terms of that date, though its earliest beginnings predate the origin of the denomination of which it is a member.

1957

Christian Reformed Church Centennial

Perhaps the outstanding feature of 1957 was participation in the denomination's observance of Centennial Year under the theme, "God's Favor Is Our Challenge". For many months the groundwork had been laid by a central Centennial office in providing information, printed materials, program of events—all geared to a recognition of God's great favor to our church in the past and to the resulting great challenge its members face in confronting the world with the Good News.

24 February Weekly Calendar and Announcements:

A great deal of work has been done by the Synodical Centennial Committee in preparation for the 13 weeks to come. It would be most unfortunate if the local churches now failed to carry the work forward. The lasting impact of the Centennial celebration will not be made at the national level, but at the corner church. The success of the celebration depends in a very real way upon you!

A thirteen week period (3 March—26 May) had been set aside for concentrated emphasis and a series of pertinent sermons, accompanied by appropriately designed bulletins and related handbills for distribution in the community. Each of these circulars carried a message in line with the thought of the day's sermon and information about the Back-to-God Hour and the local church program. The sermons presented the basic truths of historic Christianity as the central message of the Christian Reformed Church.

Also: a centennial sign was placed on the church building; a centennial display was prepared by the Teen Club; centennial napkins, placemats, and seals were sold; newspaper articles were arranged; some of the societies purchased prepared sight-sound projects. For twenty-five weeks members had been asked to lay away offerings for a special offering on Centennial Sunday, 7 April, to be used for the erection of a Centennial Memorial Seminary building. There were also a Centennial Rally, special Back-to-God Hour broadcasts, Centennial Pageant "Upon This Rock" given in Paterson, and a Centennial Memorial Book. And, not to be forgotten, there was the book, I Will Build My Church by Thea B. Van Halsema, a story of the church of

1957

Jesus Christ beginning at Pentecost, with special attention to the branch called Christian Reformed.

11 August 1957 Weekly Calendar and Announcements:

THE year 1957 is Centennial Year for the Christian Reformed churches throughout the United States and Canada. You will never have a better opportunity to tell others how God's grace challenges human frailty than simply to tell the story of our church's 100 years. Years of blessing they have certainly been. The unfailing mercy and longsuffering of God have provided the church with steady growth, doctrinal stability, expanding opportunities to witness. You ought to tell others what God has been doing in order that they, with you, may glorify His most holy name.

Principles of Evangelism

Very young in the light of its fifth reorganized year and yet much older in origin than even its parent denomination, Monsey Church stood in the limelight of a 100-year celebration. Early in that same year "Principles of Evangelism" were drawn up and presented to the congregation for adoption.

2 February 1957 letter from pastor to congregation:

THE 'Principles of Evangelism'...demand your special attention. After much deliberation the Consistory recommends to the congregation that our 'evangelism program' assume the pattern outlined by these principles. The Consistory feels that the manifold blessings of God showered upon this congregation in the past few years require that we take this step to greater service for the King of our lives.

On 13 March a "yes" vote set in motion a community canvass. Later a Welcome Committee was appointed to call on visitors to the church services. Then, too, an informal study-prayer meeting was begun on Wednesday evenings as an aid to witnessing.

Other Items

There were further changes during the year in the order of worship with news sheet commentary toward improvement of more meaningful worship.

The DVBS this year was preceded by weekly staff meetings for study and

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preparation for effective teaching.

The Midsummer Conference was again a big event, with Dr. Leonard Greenway speaking on "This Is the Life".

Several opportunities were given by neighboring churches for attending the Billy Graham Crusade in New York City by chartered bus. Many of Monsey's members took advantage.

In view of Centennial Year: the following was accepted as Centennial Hymn and included as No. 486 in the Centennial Edition of the Psalter Hymnal:

O Lord, beneath Thy guiding hand
Our fathers' fathers formed our creed,
Brought prayer and psalm to this fair land
And were supplied in every need.

Belief in Thy sustaining power
Restored their hearts in days of fear;
Thy grace and glory, hour by hour,
Gave hope and blessing through each year.

In every part of life the light
Of knowledge shines, at home, abroad.
May covenant children, taught the right,
Tell others of their sovereign God.

Thy Name, O Lord, still leads, still draws;
That Name we sing with ardent voice,
That thousands more may know Thy laws
And in Thy saving cross rejoice.

(Words by Marie J. Post
Music by Adrian Hartog)

REGULAR ACTIVITIES 1958

Worship Services: morning and evening each Lord's Day; on special days
Preaching: included series of sermons on 1958 Resolutions (Fellowship, Word Study, Compassion for Lost, Persistent Prayer, Sacrifice of Self); Heidelberg Catechism; Church of Jesus Christ; ABC's of Prayer; Gospel for Personal Crises; Great Religions Sermons recorded on tape
Sacraments: Baptism as requested; Lord's Supper bi-monthly
Music: Organist Nancy Steensma
Ushers: Head, J. Hamilton Scott
Nursery care during morning service
Weekly worship folders with occasional inserts containing notes to assist in meaningful worship; also weekly calendar and announcements with feature of prayer requests listed
Sunday School 9:30 AM year around; 2 yr to adult; Superintendent Edson T. Lewis, Jr.
Note: staff meetings, teacher training program (course in OT History), flannelgraphs cataloged and filed, SS picnic, Christmas program
Instruction Classes for adults; catechism; RTRI (in Sept 32 students in grades 1-6; bus)
Societies: MC, YMWG, Men's Society, Jr and Sr Teen Clubs, YP Fellowship (new in Fall), MCC, Choir (Marilynn Dykstra)
Other: Meetings of council, elders, deacons; family visiting; pastoral calls; elders' district meetings after evening service on preparatory Sunday; Wed evening prayer-study meetings; monthly Friendship Nights; promotion of Banner BGH, FA; distribution of THE WAY in community mailings; committees (including social activities); congregational meetings; tract rack; outdoor bulletin board; CBR

ANNUAL ACTIVITIES 1958

6th Easter sunrise service
10th DVBS 7-18 Jul (about 100 pupils)
7th MCMC 11-15 Aug; Dr. Dick L. Van Halsema "God Has the Answer"; pre-conference visiting program; prayer meetings

OTHER ACTIVITIES OR EVENTS TO BE NOTED 1958

Arrival of two more immigrant families
Reformation Day Hymn Sing (YMWG)
Christmas caroling at Rockland State Hospital by choir
Old Year's Fellowship

COUNCIL 1958

Pastor: Edson T. Lewis, Jr.
Elders: John Kamp (Vice-president), Otis F. Mapes, James A. Quackenbush (Clerk), Richard Steensma
Deacons: Allen Dykstra, Tunis Dykstra, Herbert Shuart, Howard Tousley,
Comptroller: Jack Stienstra

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES 1958

Baptisms:

9 Feb	Garry Gerald Bakker	born	1 Dec 1957
1 Jun	Mark Edson Lewis		9 May 1958
14 Sep	Scott Allen Dykstra		11 Aug 1958
23 Nov	John Daniel Quackenbush		5 Nov 1958

Re-affirmation of Faith:

19 Mar Mrs. Fred (Fernande) Dykstra from Germonds Presbyterian Church (Deligny) (marriage 30 Nov 1957 Monsey CRC)

Transfers from Other Churches:

Antonie and Dresina Van Driel from Gereformeerde Kerk, Brielle, Netherlands
baptized children Wilhelmina (born 9 May 1952), Izak Jan (9 Jun 1953),
Jacoba Clazina (18 Aug 1954), Cornelis (12 Nov 1957)

Hermanus and Maria de Bruyn from Gereformeerde Kerk, Brielle, Netherlands
baptized son Hans

One resignation

FINANCES 1958

Budget adopted for year: \$12,361.00 on basis of tithing
Regular Offerings: General, Community Evangelism, Benevolence, Debt Reduction Funds
Special offerings and donations
Calvin College and Seminary envelopes
Subsidy received: \$2,110.00

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE 1958

Custodian: Jack Stienstra

Cemetery care

Note: clean-up day at church; church basement painted by Otis F. and Sarah Mapes

ROCKLAND COUNTY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL 1958

Sixth year opened in September (36 finished year in June, 1959)

Teachers: M. Louise Crawford and Katherine Hunt

Christian Home and School Society (PTA) organized in October

Monsey, N. Y. CRC belongs with these twenty-three other congregations (1962) to Classis Hackensack which convenes three times a year. The Florida churches have joined the group within the past seven years.

Bradenton, Florida	Paterson, New Jersey III
Clifton, New Jersey, Richfield	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Englewood, New Jersey	Pompton Plains, New Jersey
Jamaica, New York, Chinese	Preakness, New Jersey
Lake Worth, Florida	St. Petersburg, Florida
Lodi, New Jersey	Sussex, New Jersey
Miami, Florida	Terra Ceia, North Carolina
Newton, New Jersey	Wanamassa, New Jersey
Passaic, New Jersey, Northside	West Sayville, New York
Passaic, New Jersey, Summer St.	Fort Lauderdale, Florida
Paterson, New Jersey, Bethel	Franklin Lakes, New Jersey
Paterson, New Jersey, Madison Av.	

To complete the picture of the CRC's in the East there are also the churches of Classis Hudson:

East Palmyra, New York	Paterson, New Jersey II
Framingham, Massachusetts	Paterson, New Jersey IV
Goshen, New York	Paterson, New Jersey Prospect Park
Hoboken, New Jersey	Ridgewood, New Jersey
Midland Park, New Jersey	Rochester, New York
Midland Park, N. J., Irving Park	Washington, D. C.
New York City, Manhattan	Whitinsville, Massachusetts, Fairlawn
North Haledon, New Jersey	Whitinsville, Massachusetts, Pleasant St.
Paramus, New Jersey	Wyckoff, New Jersey, Calvin
Paterson, New Jersey I	

1958

Teacher Training Program

The Sunday School teachers and others had a wonderful opportunity to add to their own knowledge and build up their teaching repertoire by the offer of a course in Old Testament History beginning 28 January. The class was led by the pastor who spent much time and energy in research for his class presentations and the materials given out for home study.

Married Couples' Club

Recognizing the desirability of an instruction and discussion group to deal with marriage and the home in the light of Scripture, Rev. Lewis made available an opportunity dedicated to the strengthening of the Christian home. On 14 March 1958 interested members met for the first time. Since then much knowledge and many blessings have accrued from the consideration of the purpose of marriage, the role of the partners in marriage, psychology of child development, discipline in the home, sex education, religious training in the home. The monthly meetings are held in the homes of the participants. This group has more recently been named Family Life Discussion Group.

Two More Immigrant Families

A second and third Dutch immigrant family were welcomed into the fellowship of Monsey Church during 1958. The Van Driel's came with four small children and wholeheartedly set themselves to adjust to their new environment. The sudden death of one of their children the next year stunned them and the community. Because of family persuasion they finally ended a period of indecision by returning in February 1961 to their native land--also with four children, for the Lord had blessed them with another child.

The Herman de Bruyn's came with one grown son. The attraction of better

1958

employment drew them to live in Paterson, New Jersey.

Worship and Prayer

Much stress was laid again upon an atmosphere of reverence and worship in the sanctuary. And repeated invitations were extended for partaking in the blessings of the weekly prayer meetings.

Daily Vacation Bible School and Midsummer Conference

In spite of sickness, the average DVBS attendance per day for the two weeks was between 90 and 95 students; and the church was well filled with parents and friends who came to the closing program.

The 1958 Conference has been the last one held during the summer. There were the usual pre-conference invitation program and prayer meetings. Dr. D. L. Van Halsena, former pastor, delivered the messages. Later Conferences have been held during Spring and Fall.

Young Peoples' Fellowship

In October plans were under way for the establishment of youth night for Junior and Senior High School students.

26 October Weekly Calendar and Announcements:

At each meeting the Junior and Senior High groups will meet together for part of the evening (business, choir, refreshments) and then separately for instruction from God's Word... A special Recreation Committee will arrange regular outings, field trips, parties, etc. for the young people.

The Biblical instruction given at these meetings served as catechetical training for the young people who attended.

REGULAR ACTIVITIES 1959

Worship Services: morning and evening each Lord's Day; on special days
Preaching: sermons included series on Christian Life (Giving, Hospitality, Bible Study); Heidelberg Catechism; Minor Prophets; John Calvin Anniversary; I Corinthians
Sacraments: Baptism as requested; Lord's Supper bi-monthly
Music: Organist Nancy Steensma
Ushers: Head, Otis F. Mapes
Nursery care during morning service
Weekly worship folders; and weekly calendar and announcements sheets
Sunday School 9:30 AM year around; age 2-adult; Superintendent Edson T. Lewis, Jr.
Note: staff meetings, SS picnic, reorganization in Fall; Christmas program
Instruction Classes: adult instruction; catechism: concentrated program in Fall;
RTRI (Jan-Jun); bus (discontinued due to difficulties in teaching and transportation with idea of renewed emphasis on SS and catechism)
Societies: MC, YMWG, YP Fellowship, MCC, Choir (discontinued during year); New: "Our Gang" youth group (grades 4, 5, 6)
Other: Meetings of council, elders, deacons; family visiting, pastoral calls; committees (including coordinating committee with RCCS); Wed evening study-prayer meetings (discontinued during year); elders' district meetings (discontinued during year); Friendship Hours; promotion of Banner, BGH, FA; participation in BGE listener campaign in October; distribution of THE WAY in community mailings; tracts; outdoor bulletin board; congregational meetings; CBR

ANNUAL ACTIVITIES 1959

7th Easter sunrise service
11th DVBS 29 Jun-10 Jul (over 100 children enrolled); publicized in Memorial Day parade

OTHER ACTIVITIES OR EVENTS TO BE NOTED 1959

Meeting of Classis Hackensack at Monsey CRC in May
450th John Calvin Anniversary
Denominational publication of Centennial Psalter Hymnal in September
Reorganization of Sunday School in September
Member delegation to visit Queens CRC, Jamaica, New York in November

COUNCIL 1959

Pastor: Edson T. Lewis, Jr.
Elders: John Kamp, James A. Quackenbush (Clerk), J. Hamilton Scott, Rich^{ard} Steensma (Vice-president)
Deacons: William Conklin, Allen Dykstra (Comptroller), Tunis Dykstra, Herbert Shuart

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES 1959

Baptisms:

8 Mar	Deborah Jean Shuart	born 19 Jan 1959
19 Apr	Susan Joan Areford	6 Mar 1959
10 May	Todd Calvin Lewis	16 Apr 1959
24 May	Bart Allen Dykstra	25 Apr 1959
7 Jun	Diane Gail Stienstra	12 Apr 1959

Professions of Faith:

8 Feb Linda Lee Englishman
8 Feb Kathleen Elaine Steensma
8 Feb Nancy Jacqueline Steensma
22 Feb Lee Conklin
22 Feb Clinton Hunt
22 Feb Phyllis Kamp
8 Mar Francis L. Kearsing

baptized children Francis L. Jr. (born 23 May 1954), Kathleen Ann (1 Jul 1955)
17 May Joseph P. Slamen

Transfers from Other Churches:

John and Helen Hoogstra from Preakness, N. J. CRC
Robert A. and Anita Hoogstra from West Sayville, N. Y. CRC
baptized son Robert Arthur

Transfers to Other Churches:

John Kamp family to Presbyterian Church, Goshen, N. Y.
Leonard Goedegebuure family to Goshen, N. Y. CRC
Miss M. Louise Crawford to Miami, Florida CRC
Mrs. Robert (Katherine Hunt) Grete to First Presbyterian Church, Waco, Texas
(marriage 25 Jul 1959 at West Point)
Hermanus de Bruyn family to Paterson IV, N. J. CRC

Deaths:

23 Mar Carla (Jacoba) Van Driel, 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ years
25 May Richard Dykstra, Sr., 70 years
22 Oct Mrs. Sarah Zell, 87 years

FINANCES 1959

Budget adopted for year: \$12,769.60
Regular Offerings: General, Benevolence, Community Evangelism (discontinued in July .
and replaced by offerings for RCCS), Debt Reduction Funds
Special offerings and donations
Calvin College and Seminary envelopes
Subsidy received: \$2,250.00

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE 1959

Custodian: Herman de Bruyn
Cemetery care
Note: painting of pews and floor in sanctuary; work bee at church

ROCKLAND COUNTY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL 1959.

Seventh year begun in September; 34 pupils enrolled
Teachers: Rev. Donald Vittner and Mrs. Constance Pryce
Christian Home and School Society

Among our friends in the community who attend worship services
and participate with the congregation in various ways we greet:
Lauretta and Nancy Bell, the John Botbyl's, the Clinton Hunt's, Sr.,
Mrs. Charles Kearsing, the Calvin C. Quackenbush's, the John
Renken's, the Herbert Roscoe's

1959

John Calvin Anniversary

Another anniversary--this time to remember the influence of Reformer John Calvin on the development of the Christian Church.

5 July 1959 Weekly Calendar and Announcements

NINETEEN hundred fifty-nine marks the 450th anniversary of the birth of John Calvin (July 10, 1509) and the 400th anniversary of the final edition of the Institutes of the Christian Religion, the epoch making book of the Reformation. John Calvin was God's gift to the Church. The ministers of Classis Hackensack and Classis Hudson will be preaching special sermons next Sunday (July 12) to reacquaint us with our rich heritage and the Scriptural teachings brought to light by this man of God. Rev. Lewis is preaching a series of three messages on truths reemphasized by the Reformation.

Special bulletin folders were supplied for the occasion.

Another book came from the pen of Thea B. Van Halsena for this occasion--This Is John Calvin, written especially for young people, but enjoyed by young and old alike.

Daily Vacation Bible School

Special mark of the DVBS this year was its prominent float in the Monsey Memorial Day parade.

Visits to Manhattan and Jamaica Services

For the mutual interest and understanding among the churches and mission projects involved, the Eastern Home Mission Board of the CRC drew up a schedule of visits for representatives of the various CRC's in the area to attend worship services at Manhattan (Haarlem) and Queens (Chinese) in Jamaica. Monsey Church is due to have delegates at Queens CRC during November of each year and at Manhattan CRC during May. The first visitors from Monsey observed the Queens group in November 1959.

1959

Annual Review

A review of church activities for the year can best be found in the pastor's report at the 16 November congregational meeting. He reported that during the past year the following programs had been discontinued: choir, prayer service, elders' district meetings, Midsummer Conference, Released Time Religious Instruction, Community Evangelism Fund. He stated that there seemed to be indications that elimination of these programs was due more to lack of appreciation and unwillingness to make use of these opportunities than to an overload for the small group in the congregation.

As "bright spots" in the picture he mentioned the improved Sunday School program in effect since 1. October and the concentrated catechism program in progress.

Renovation of the Sunday School

This was the headline news for 1959. For months Superintendent Rev. Lewis and Assistant Superintendent Mrs. Allen Dykstra laid down on paper the details of the formula for an improved Sunday School. The big "unveiling" came on 23 September 1959:

THIRTY-SIX people attended the Sunday School Staff Dinner held Sept. 23, 1959, at the Delmonico Restaurant. A delicious meal of fried chicken was served to the group, and then Rev. Herman Braunlin of the Hawthorne Gospel Tabernacle spoke to the group. He made a special point in his message of emphasizing the importance of the Sunday School for the whole family. At this dinner, the plans for the 'new look' at the Sunday School of the Monsey Christian Reformed Church were unveiled for the first time.

The plans included: improvement of an enlarged staff, new award system, new record-keeping system, a date in the calendar for Parents' Night, a definite missions emphasis, distribution of a staff manual, new teaching aids, service of dedication, quarterly publication of the MONSEY SPARK. The first issue of this neighborhood paper explained its purpose:

THE first issue of the MONSEY SPARK initiates a new venture for the Sunday School of the Monsey Christian Reformed Church. The need of improving the lines of communication between the community and the Sunday School has been known for a long time. (The community) needs the united ministry of the Church and the Sunday School as never before. The 'SPARK' epitomizes the new zeal that the congregation has to serve its community with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The 'SPARK' epitomizes our hope that the flame of zeal for Christ's Kingdom will be communicated to many in the community. To that noble end we dedicate this and the coming issues of the MONSEY SPARK.

This worthwhile project suffered from lack of workers and not very many issues rolled from the presses.

That first MONSEY SPARK also contained a detailed report as to some of the improvements:

FIRST, concrete efforts are being made to improve the quality of the staff...All are volunteers, sacrificing time and effort to do their task well. Nevertheless, a program of teacher certification is being set up which will eventually raise the quality of instruction throughout the whole Sunday School...A continuous series of instructional meetings, films, etc., will improve the staff.

Second, more will be required of the pupil in terms of prompt attendance, memory work, and bookwork...

Third, considerable improvement has been made in the organizational structure of the Sunday School. There are 41 positions on the staff...a minimum of 32 individuals is required... Twelve different forms are used to maintain complete records... Permanent, cumulative records of each pupil will be kept.

Fourth, new and improved teaching aids are being introduced into the Sunday School. This has involved considerable expense on the part of the congregation, but we feel that the improvements have been worth it.

Catechetical Instruction

Also in October concentrated effort was put on catechism classes for children. A ten-course curriculum was outlined and sent to parents with the notice (22 October 1959):

CATECHETICAL training is especially designed for those children whose parents are members of the Monsey Christian Reformed

1959

Church. Completion of the 10 courses is designed to equip the child for a public profession of faith, and full communicant membership in the Monsey congregation.

A careful record will be kept of the children's progress in his class, and report cards will be sent to parents periodically to inform them of that progress.

What did the report card of life at Monsey Church show as it entered an eighth year? Only the Great Teacher knows—knows how each heart could sing with John Calvin the words from his hymn included in the new edition of the Psalter Hymnal published in September of this same year:

Thou art the King of mercy and of grace,
Reigning omnipotent in every place:
So come, O King, and our whole being sway,
Shine on us with the light of Thy pure day.

Our hope is in no other save in Thee,
Our faith is built upon Thy promise free;
Come, give us peace, make us so strong and sure,
That we may conquerors be and ills endure.

(Stanzas 2 and 5, No. 432
"I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art"
Centennial Edition Psalter Hymnal)

REGULAR ACTIVITIES 1960

Worship Services: morning and evening each Lord's Day; on special days
Preaching: sermons included series on 1960 Goals (Assurance of Salvation, Forgiveness, Giving); Heidelberg Catechism; Crossroads of Christian Life; Footprints to Calvary; At Boundary of Blessing; Our National Purpose; The Reaching Church
Sacraments: Baptism as requested; Lord's Supper bi-monthly
Music: Organists: Nancy Steensma (Jan-Jun); Trudy Everett and guests (Jul-Dec)
Occasional music by Men's Quartet
Ushers: Head, Garry Englishman
Nursery provided during morning service
Weekly worship folders and weekly calendar and announcements sheets
Sunday School 9:30 AM year around; 2 yr-adults; Superintendent Edson T. Lewis, Jr.
Note: staff meetings; periodic visits by staff to other SS; Parents' Night; planning retreat at Stony Point, conventionette at Nanuet; TEACH to all teachers; SS papers mailed to absentees; Christmas program; Cradle Roll re-activated previous year
Instruction Classes: catechism
Societies: MC, YMWG, MCC, "Our Gang" youth group (discontinued during year)
Other: Meetings of council, elders, deacons; family visiting; pastoral calls; committees (including coordinating committee with RCCS), promotion of Banner, BGH, FA; distribution of THE WAY in community mailings (discontinued during year); use of Home Mission Board Evangelism Newsletter; Wed morning prayer meetings beginning in October; outdoor bulletin board, tracts; congregational meetings; CBR

ANNUAL ACTIVITIES 1960

8th Easter sunrise service
12th DVBS 11-22 Jul; 76 enrolled with high percentage of perfect attendance

OTHER ACTIVITIES OR EVENTS TO BE NOTED 1960

Some members' attendance at Eastern Music Conference, Paterson, N. J. in April
Dedication of 90 copies of Centennial Edition of Psalter Hymnal on 31 July
Fall Conference 16-23 Oct; Rev. Albert Oldham "A New Life for You"; invitational folders, daily community mailings, morning prayer meetings
Thanksgiving program: film

COUNCIL 1960

Pastor: Edson T. Lewis, Jr.
Declined call to Champaign, Illinois in October
Elders: John Hoogstra, W. Howard Hornsby (Clerk), J. Hamilton Scott (Vice-president), Richard Steensma
Deacons: William Conklin (to Florida, replaced by Antonie Van Driel); Allen Dykstra (Comptroller), Fred Dykstra, Tunis Dykstra

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES 1960

Baptisms:

3 Jan	Fred Dykstra, Jr.	born 14 Dec 1959
3 Apr	David Adelbert Rose	26 Jan 1960
11 Sep	Anthony Carla Van Driel	1 Sep 1960
6 Nov	Cindy Letitia Areford	19 Oct 1960
18 Dec	Joyce Gertrude Tousley	9 Jun 1959

Transfers from Other Churches:

Howard Henry Lewis from Rehoboth, New Mexico CRC
John Yff from Covenant Orthodox Presbyterian Church, E. Orange, N. J.
Ulbe (Dick) and Minnie Faber from Calvary CRC Seattle, Wash.
baptized son Gerald (born 13 Jun 1957)

Transfers to Other Churches:

Mrs. Frances Pulis and children to First Reformed Church, Nyack, N. Y.
Bert and Mona Dennis to First Methodist Church, Los Alamos, New Mexico
William Conklin family to Lake Worth, Florida CRC

Lapse of Membership

Robert D. Ridgway, address unknown at time

FINANCES 1960

Budget adopted for year: \$13,090.76

Regular Offerings: General, Benevolence, Debt Reduction Funds

Special offerings and donations (including RCCS)

Calvin College and Seminary envelopes

Subsidy received: \$2,300.00

Note: Full quotas paid; payment completed on all note and debenture debt, leaving only denominational Home Mission Board debt; Church Activities Fund set up to take care of funds of church organizations and special activities (except SS, MC, YMWG)

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE 1960

Custodian: Francis Kearsing

Cemetery care

Note: Sound equipment moved from quiet room to balcony; church basement painted by volunteers in October; new curtains downstairs by women

ROCKLAND COUNTY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL 1960

School ceased to operate after June; Board remained constituted

Are you acquainted with the annual Yearbook of the Christian Reformed Church? which is published shortly after the beginning of each calendar year? It gives information about the congregations, ministers, classes, boards and committees, Calvin College and Seminary, home and foreign mission fields and missionaries, evangelism fields and workers, related Christian institutions, publications, etc., of the church family in which we are brothers and sisters.

Sunday School

The new Sunday School setup brought about several innovations as the plans unfolded from their blueprint stage of October 1959.

The teachers were furnished with quarterly copies of TEACH, an award-winning magazine written especially for Sunday School teachers.

Full staff meetings were scheduled quarterly with well-planned programs of inspiration, instruction, and business. Besides, departmental meetings were called to discuss matters on the various age and grade levels.

The staff by rotation was given opportunity to visit other Sunday Schools, substitutes taking over for those who went to observe.

A "first" was the Planning Retreat held at the Gilmor Sloane House, Stony Point, on 11 June. The day was spent in evaluating past achievements and weaknesses and then in determining consequent goals for the following year.

Each quarter a different mission field of the Christian Reformed Church was selected for special attention. And much attention was given to the matter of worship in the Sunday School.

Closing of Rockland County Christian School

The Rockland County Christian School had been in operation for seven years. The Sunday School building behind the church had become a second classroom. There had been the hymn sings, dinners, and programs; open house and "graduation exercises"; Mothers' Guild and later Christian Home and School Society; society and board meetings; paper drives and bakery route; finance drives and sales. A future school site had been purchased; building materials began to accumulate.

But problems of a two-room school accumulated, too. Notwithstanding the efforts of the board and the church-school coordinating committee, the problems seemed too insurmountable to be overcome. And the school doors closed. Plans

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1960

to transport children to the schools of the Eastern Consolidated School Association in north Jersey did not materialize either, and children were enrolled in local public schools. A school board remained constituted and the real estate held; but all furniture, books, and other physical properties were disposed of.

Dedication of New Psalter Hymnals

A contribution to the worship of God in this church was made by the gift of ninety copies of the Centennial Edition of the Psalter Hymnal, presented to the church by member Otis M. Mapes. On 31 July they were dedicated at the morning worship service to the praise of God. Of special interest to this congregation is Number 3 with the tune title "Monsey Chapel" composed by Dr. Dick L. Van Halsena.

Fall Conference

Because of the heat in summer and the vacations at that time of the year, the decision was made to hold a conference at the beginning of the Fall activities in place of the previously held Midsummer Conference. Rev. Albert W. Oldham was engaged as the speaker for 16-23 October and centered his messages around the theme: "A New Life for You". Invitational folders were available for distribution and daily mailings went out into the community during the conference. As many church families as possible were included in the schedule of affairs for the week. "Sunday School Night" was a feature.

23 October Weekly Calendar and Announcements:

THIS is the last day of our Fall Conference, the first that we have had in Monsey. It has been a new and blessed experience for our congregation, and we are convinced that the ministry of Rev. Albert Oldham among us this week has amply demonstrated the wisdom of having him lead us in this venture.

The conference was the occasion of calling women to morning prayer meetings

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before and during the conference. Although the present group is small, there is still a nucleus that maintains a weekly morning prayer group.

Note on Finance

Full quotas were forwarded for the year. Payment was completed on remaining note and debenture debts, leaving only the Home Mission Board interest-free loan to be repaid (\$18,000 loaned for parsonage construction and church remodeling).

REGULAR ACTIVITIES 1961

Worship Services: morning and evening each Lord's Day; on special days
Preaching: sermons included series on Heidelberg Catechism, Saints Who Conquered,
Christian Ministry, Stewardship
Sermons recorded on tape
Sacraments: Baptism as requested; Lord's Supper bi-monthly
Music: morning organist, Trudy Everett; evening, Sarah Mapes
Occasional singing by youth choir (Anne Tousley)
Ushers: Head, Garry Englishman
New: code for church etiquette and ushering
Nursery care during morning service
Weekly worship folders and announcement sheets until change to new doublefold
combined order of worship and news sheet with Mrs. Anne Lehmborg, editor and typist
Sunday School 9:30 AM year around; 2 yr-adults; Superintendent Mrs. Allen Dykstra
Note: staff meetings, Teach with Success correspondence course; planning retreat
at Botbyl home; Parent Night Week for home visits in Fall; five teachers at
Community Teachers' Training Institute in Midland Park, N. J.; attendance at
conventions; all offerings to missions; Christmas program
Instruction Classes: catechism
Societies: MC, YMWG, MCC, Youth Choir
Other: Meetings of council, elders, deacons; family visiting; pastoral calls;
promotion of Banner, BGH, FA; committees (including stewardship); weekly prayer
meetings in morning; congregational meetings; Fellowship Hour (Sunday evenings)
replaced by family night (Friday evenings) later in year; outdoor bulletin board;
tracts; CBR

ANNUAL ACTIVITIES 1961

9th Easter sunrise service
13th DVBS 10-21 Jul; first adult sessions

OTHER ACTIVITIES OR EVENTS TO BE NOTED 1961

Visitors from Monsey CRC to Manhattan CRC, New York City in May
Spring Conference 19-26 Mar; Rev. John Sanderson "Seven Last Words from Cross";
pre-conference fellowship dinner, prayer meetings each morning
In Oct invitation to Monsey CRC to have Summer Workshop in Missions team following summer
Visitors from Monsey CRC to Queens CRC in November
Every Member Stewardship Campaign
Christmas tree in church replaced by nativity scene outdoors

COUNCIL 1961

Pastor: Edson T. Lewis, Jr.
Elders: John Hoogstra, W. Howard Hornsby (Clerk), James A. Quackenbush, J. Hamilton Scott
(Vice-president)
Deacons: Fred Dykstra, Sterling Pitt, Jack Stienstra (Comptroller), Antonie Van Driel
(left for Netherlands, replaced by Edward Campbell)

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES 1961

Baptisms:

8 Jan Jill Rene Lewis born 20 Dec 1960
6 Aug Karl Dykstra 28 Jul 1961

Transfer from Other Church:

John and Elsie Vander Ploeg from Sussex, N. J. CRC
baptized children Kornelis Henry (born 10 Oct 1957), Mary Sue (4 Sep 1959)

Transfers to Other Churches:

Antonie Van Driel family to Netherlands
Cornelis Klink family to Presbyterian Church, Rye, N. Y.
Richard Steensma family to Irving Park CRC, Midland Park, N. J.
Nancy Steensma to Calvin CRC, Grand Rapids, Mich.
John Yff to Miami, Florida CRC
Robert Hoogstra family to Irving Park CRC, Midland Park, N. J.

FINANCES 1961

Budget adopted for year: \$14,221.80

Regular Offerings: General, Benevolence, Debt Reduction Funds

Special offerings and donations

Calvin College and Seminary envelopes

Offerings for RCCS discontinued, since no longer needed

Subsidy received: \$2,500.00

Note: Full quota payments and also annual portion of Home Mission Board debt paid;
adoption of new stewardship program for following year

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE 1961

Custodian: J. Milton Scott

Cemetery care

Note: redecoration of Fellowship Hall (YMWG), pastor's study moved from parsonage to church

The Board of Home Missions of the CRC administers three different volunteer programs: long-term volunteer program, teacher volunteer program, and summer volunteer program. The summer program is called Summer Workshop in Missions (SWIM) and "is designed to acquaint young people with the glorious challenge of witnessing for the Lord, to show them the joy of spreading the gospel, and to inspire them to dedicate their lives to full-time service. 'He that winneth souls is wise.' SWIM aims to provide urgently-needed workers for the church during Summer when Vacation Bible Schools, surveys and other evangelistic programs are conducted.

"SWIM can, with God's blessings, revitalize our churches through young people's participation in mission work. It will stimulate evangelism by providing our churches with anucleus of trained young people. SWIM will revive interest in the doctrines of their church, strengthen their faith and show them the blessedness of a Christian life.

"SWIM brings home to our young people the great need of a world lost in sin in the hope it will arouse a burning desire to win people for Christ."

Sunday School

Note is taken of further development of the Sunday School program.

"Teach with Success" was offered as a correspondence course to teachers and others interested. Although only ten percent of those who began actually reached the last lesson of the course, it was a good step in the direction of in-service training for the staff.

One of the significant changes was the handling of funds in connection with Sunday School. The church took over all Sunday School expenses, so that the offerings could all be channeled into missions and the children be taught the importance of giving to others. During the January-March quarter the offerings went to the Arabic Broadcasts of the Back-to-God Hour and the Indian Field (New Mexico) Emergency Fund; April-June: Nigeria; July-September: Ceylon; October-December: Back-to-God Hour and Home Missions.

A Planning Retreat was held again. For the accommodation of the staff it met two evenings at the John Botbyl home in Monsey on 28 and 29 June.

A Parent Night Week was dedicated to calling on the homes of new pupils in the Fall.

Also in the Fall five teachers took advantage of the Community Teachers' Training Institute at Midland Park, New Jersey, which featured a series of six weekly sessions taught by leading Sunday School consultants.

Belgic Confession Anniversary

1961 was the 400th anniversary year of the Belgic Confession, one of the doctrinal standards of the CRC. Special series of articles were featured in The Banner. Another contribution was made by Thea B. Van Halsema in her first-time-told-in-English story of Guido De Bres, author of the Belgic Confession, published in booklet form under the title Glorious Heretic.

New Bulletins

1961 saw the change from the separate order of worship folders and weekly calendar and announcements to the new double fold combination of the two, with Mrs. Anne Lehnberg as editor and typist.

Spring Conference

At the time of the Fall Conference 1960 it was decided to have a Spring Conference also. Rev. John Sanderson came as the speaker from 19-26 March, with messages on the "Seven Last Words from the Cross", touching on some of the deeper implications of the Christian life. Prayer cards were distributed for use throughout the conference, a prayer group met each morning during the conference, a pre-conference supper was held on Saturday before the conference week, and the congregation again was active on "service committees".

Adult DVBS Sessions

During the week following the regular DVBS session, a four-evening adult course was held.

Family Night

In the Fall the council, in an effort to provide improved opportunities for congregational fellowship, set aside the first Friday evening of each month as Family Night as a substitute for the former Sunday evening Fellowship Hour. This practice was on trial for several months, but attendance did not warrant the continuance of Family Night.

SWIM Invitation

Because of the Summer Workshop in Missions program in Monsey in 1962, mention

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is here made of this announcement in the 29 October 1961 Newsheet:

SPECIAL Notice: Our congregation has been invited to have a SWIM team here in Monscy next summer. A response to the invitation must be given by November 15, 1961. Reaching the decision will require thought, discussion, and prayer... from each of us!

Contact with SWIM for the congregation occurred during the summer of this year when morning organist, Trudy Everett, went to St. Petersburg, Florida with the SWIM team from the East.

Stewardship Program

Most prominent feature of late 1961 was the Every Member Stewardship Program directed by a Stewardship Committee. The heart of the program centered in this definition of stewardship:

CHRISTIAN Stewardship is the practice of systematic and proportionate giving of time, abilities, and material possessions based on the conviction that these are a trust from God, to be used in His service for the benefit of all mankind in grateful acknowledgment of Christ's redeeming love.

At a congregational meeting on 14 November the congregation endorsed the proposed stewardship enlistment campaign and the program for 1962 under six headings: Our World Mission, Our Pastoral Ministry, Our Worship and Service, Our Christian Education, Our Finances, Our Church Home. A great deal of study, committee work, promotion of the program culminated in Stewardship Sunday, 10 December.

3 December 1961 Newsheet:

THIS is to be a busy week for the 'Visitors' of the Stewardship Enlistment Campaign. Their first training session will be held today, and a second one is scheduled for Friday evening. Also visitors will be studying materials, and making turn-over charts for use in their calls...If all our commitments total \$277.00 per week, then the program for 1962 will be met. Consider your share prayerfully so that the visitors can receive a well-considered commitment from you when they visit your home on STEWARD SHIP SUNDAY.

We are thankful that Mrs. Anne Lehmborg has accepted the appointment as the FINANCIAL SECRETARY of the church. Mrs. Lehmborg already serves as NEWSHEET EDITOR, and it is there-

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fore with special gratitude to God that we note her willingness to take on this additional work for the church.

A letter from Allen Dykstra, chairman of the Stewardship Enlistment

Campaign, dated 2 December read in part:

ON the afternoon of STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY, two visitors from the church will call at your home to personally acquaint you with the Program for 1962 and secure your commitments ("pledges")...One of our goals...is to encourage all our members and friends to make a definite commitment to the Program of the Church for 1962. We have never sought such commitments before...

On 17 December dedication to the Program took place at the morning service.

After the campaign came this report on the 24 December Newsheet:

THE Stewardship Enlistment Campaign turned out to be a great success. (The total so far) represents a remarkable increase over our past performance...We have therefore set ourselves to a high goal for 1962. Not only will we request no denominational subsidy next year... but we will be able to do things in 1962 which we could not do this year even though we received subsidy...

Along with the Stewardship Program came the reorganization of committees, with each of six council members in charge of each major committee for 1962.

Note on Finance

Again this year full quota payments were made and also the annual share of Home Mission Board debt.

Nativity Scene

The year drew to a close with another attempt to witness to the community when a nativity scene on the church lawn replaced the traditional Christmas tree which frequently decorated the church interior.

REGULAR ACTIVITIES 1962

Worship Services: each Lord's Day morning and evening; also on special days
Preaching: sermons included series on 1963 Program (Our World Mission, Our Pastoral Ministry, Our Worship and Service, Christian Education, Our Church Home);
Disciplines of the Cross; Epistle to Galatians; Lord from Heaven; Missions;
Heidelberg Catechism (evenings)
Sermons recorded on tape
Sacraments: Baptism as requested; Lord's Supper bi-monthly
Music: morning organist Trudy Everett; evening, Sarah Mapes
Hymn sings, beginning June, before first Sunday evening service of month
Occasional music by octet
Ushers: Head, Otis F. Mapes
Nursery care during morning service
Weekly bulletins
Sunday School 9:30 AM year around; 2 yr-adults; Superintendent John Vander Ploeg
Note: staff; Visiting Week; planning retreat at Hornsby's; partial support of missionary-teacher Peter Bulhuis in Nigeria beginning in Apr; Christmas program
Instruction Classes: catechism
Societies: MC, YMWG, Men's Society (Spring), MCC (Family Life Discussion Group)
Other: Meetings of council, ealders, deacons; family visiting, pastoral calls; weekly morning study and prayer meetings; promotion of Banner, BGH, FA; also Quarterly Prayer Guides (Home and Foreign Missions); congregational meetings; family nights (to June); outdoor bulletin board; tract rack, "tract for week" distributed after worship services; library recataloged and reopened; monthly visits to Rockland State Hospital by YMWG; CBR

ANNUAL ACTIVITIES 1962

10th Easter sunrise service
14th DVBS 9-20 Jul; SWIMers on staff

OTHER ACTIVITIES OR EVENTS TO BE NOTED 1962

New Stewardship Program in operation
Clothing drive for Korea
YMWG began monthly visits to Rockland State Hospital
Spiritual retreat for men 13, 14 Apr at Warwick Estates
Representatives to Eastern Music Conference, Paterson, N. J.
Representatives to Manhattan CRC in May
Summer Workshop in Missions team for 5 weeks 23 Jun-29 Jul; church fellowship dinner for welcome and church picnic at Ringwood Manor as farewell
Library reopened
10th anniversary program of Monsey reorganized church (1952-1962) on 26 Sept
Program by "Aunt Betty" Worrell of Child Evangelism Fellowship on 28 Sept

COUNCIL 1962

Pastor: Edson T. Lewis, Jr.
Declined call as missionary for northcentral Iowa at Ames, Ia. in May
Declined call as home missionary to Navaho Indians, Denver, Colorado in July
Elders: John Hoogstra (Vice-president), W. Howard Hornsby (Clerk), James A. Quackenbush
Deacons: Fred Dykstra, Jack Stienstra (resigned, replaced by Otis M. Mapes), Sterling Pitt (resigned, replaced by Marvin Poutsma)
Comptroller: Edward Campbell

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES 1962

Baptisms:

1 Apr Lori Ann Stienstra born 19 Jan 1962
 8 Apr Gerald Edwin Dykstra 15 Feb 1962
 22 Apr Deborah Lynn Davis 26 Oct 1954
 22 Apr John Mark Davis 30 Oct 1956
 10 Jun Mari Ellyn Dykstra 27 Apr 1962

Professions of Faith:

22 Apr Merle John and Nettie Davis
 children (see above)
 8 Jul Mrs. E. (Pauline) Dustman

Transfers from Other Churches:

Dr. Marvin Lloyd Poutsma from Champaign, Ill. CRC
 Harvey Bush from Franklin Lakes, N. J. CRC (married Lois Rose 10 Mar 1962)
 Richard and Janice Vander Floeg from Sussex, N. J. CRC
 Robert and Katherine Grete from First Presbyterian Church, Waco, Texas
 baptized children Katherine Lorraine (born 27 Apr 1960), William Bradley (3 Oct 1961)

Transfers to Other Churches:

Lee Daniel Conklin to Calvin CRC, Grand Rapids, Mich.
 Dick Faber family to First Presbyterian Church, Pleasant Valley, N. Y.

FINANCES 1962

1962 Program goal: \$14,428.75

Note: all local expenses, quotas, debt payment met to date (26 Sept 1962)

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE 1962

Custodian: M. Milton Scott

Cemetery care

Note: work day at church

Today (1962) 572 organized Christian Reformed congregations
 (and 32 unorganized groups) are found in the United States and Canada.

There are the following number in each of these provinces or states:

Canada:		Iowa	52
British Columbia	21	Kansas	2
Alberta	30	Massachusetts	3
Saskatchewan	2	Michigan	169
Manitoba	4	Minnesota	28
Ontario	80	Montana	4
Quebec	1	Nebraska	1
New Brunswick	1	New Jersey	25
Nova Scotia	4	New Mexico	3
Prince Edward Island	1	New York	8
United States:		North Carolina	1
Alaska	2	North Dakota	2
Arizona	2	Ohio	8
California	32	Oregon	2
Colorado	8	Pennsylvania	1
District of Columbia	1	South Dakota	12
Florida	8	Texas	1
Idaho	1	Utah	3
Illinois	36	Washington	17
Indiana	12	Wisconsin	16

1962

Stewardship Program and Related Committee Structure

The new stewardship program accounted for much of the distinctiveness of 1962. The activities of the congregation functioned largely within the framework of the six major committees in line with the stewardship program. Report letters carrying information about the 1962 program were written by the pastor; quarterly statements were mailed to members by the financial secretary; envelopes were used for the deposit of weekly commitments; and a regular feature of the weekly bulletin was a running report of financial status in terms of program needs and actual receipts. The faithfulness to commitments made possible systematic and prompt payment of all obligations thus far.

Evangelism Committee (Elder James Quackenbush)

The Evangelism Committee is "responsible for leadership in our mission responsibilities, both to this community and to the far corners of the world". An important task was assumed by Dr. Marvin Poutsma when he agreed to explore ways and means of confronting the congregation with information about and promoting an understanding of the denominational mission challenges (radio broadcasting, home and foreign missions, etc.). Another post, still unfilled, for which this committee is responsible is that of church newspaper reporter. More serious, recruitment for visitation teams has met with little response.

For the orientation of new members into the fellowship of the congregation the Evangelism Committee made provision for the gift of a "New Member Packet", the assignment of a member family as "Fellowship Friends", and a visit from the Stewardship Committee to acquaint them with the program of the church.

A "Tract for the Week" is distributed to the congregation each Sunday with the encouragement to pass it on to a neighbor or friend.

This committee is also accountable for the weekly maintenance of the outdoor

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bulletin board and for seeing that our church's share of denominational and classical expense is paid regularly. In May it arranged for Monsey representatives to visit the Manhattan CRC.

The biggest item on the committee's agenda, however, was our first experience with a Summer Workshop in Missions team. Rev. Lewis, local leader, attended Field Leaders' Conference in Grand Rapids, Michigan early in 1962. Once the team of six young people was chosen from applicants to their local Young Calvinist League, preparations were made for their arrival on 23 June for a five weeks' whirlwind of activity. At the morning worship service on 24 June John Addink, Paula Bronksema, Carol Hoekzema, Jeny Lou Osburn, Henry Pott, and Nancy Venema were welcomed and commissioned to the period of voluntary study and service to which they had given themselves; and on 26 June, after two days in retreat, the team was received by the congregation at a welcome dinner. Lectures, community calls, tracting, early morning retreats, individual counseling, DVBS and Sunday School teaching, visits to other churches, hospitals, all these and more tell the story of our first SWIMers, who gave a summary of their work at a farewell program on 29 July. The Otis M. Mapes', J. Hamilton Scott's, and John Vander Ploeg's were hosts to two each of the SWIMers. It is hoped that this concentrated program of the summer be a means of increasing the activity of the congregation in the community. Teacher Volunteer Carol Sybesma was to have assisted the team, but due to illness was not able to come to Monsey.

Worship Committee (Elder John Hoogstra)

Six Month Report 6 July 1962 by pastor:

THIS committee has held regular meetings to supervise the ushers, the weekly newsheet, organists, pulpit supplies, etc. A concrete result of this committee's planning has been the inauguration of the 'hymn sing' at the beginning of the evening service on the first Sunday of the month. This committee will also supervise a program for children to be presented by Miss Betty Worrall (TV's 'Aunt Betty') in our church on Friday, Sept. 28.

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Christian Education Committee (Elder W. Howard Hornsby)

Under the supervision of this committee appear Sunday School, catechism, DVBS, prayer meetings, library, audio-visuals, Family Life Discussion Group, boys' and girls' groups, spiritual retreats, correspondence courses, and promotion of Christian day school education.

News about the Sunday School from the Six Month Report 6 July 1962 by pastor:

THE spotlight here is to be focused on the missionary now being supported in part by our Sunday School. Due to the fact that Sunday School expenses are now met by church offerings, the Sunday School offerings have been freed for a special cause. After consulting with our denominational boards, the Sunday School has agreed to provide Mr. Peter Bulthuis, teacher-missionary in Africa, with \$500.00 each year on a permanent basis. A copy of Mr. Bulthuis' letter to the Sunday School and pastor is enclosed as well as a picture of the Bulthuis family. We hope you put the picture in a prominent place in your home so that you will be reminded to pray regularly for our missionary, and that you will be regular and faithful in writing to him and his family.

The Bulthuis family consists of Mr. Peter and Mrs. Winifred Bulthuis with four children: Douglas Allen 14, Susan Lynn 12, Ellen Marie 9, and Peter Herman 4. Their address: Mkar P.A. Gboko P. O. N. Nigeria, West Africa

DVBS was held 9-20 July this year with a steady average attendance of about 70. Substantial support was given by the SWIM team. Adult DVBS was held four evenings on the topic "Understanding the Jewish Religion".

According to the 6 July report by Pastor Lewis:

OTHER high spots in the past six months for the Christian Educational program of the church have been (1) the Spiritual Retreat for men early in April at the Warwick Estates, (2) the cataloging of the books in the Library and the availability of the books now for loan to members and friends of the congregation, (3) the Sunday School Retreat held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Hornsby out of which came many good plans for the Sunday School program of the church in the coming year, (4) overture to Classis Hackensack from the Monsey consistory regarding the possibility of establishing a Classical agency to coordinate activities and efforts of the Christian Reformed Sunday Schools in the east (this overture is now under consideration by a specially appointed study committee of Classis).

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Finance Committee (Deacon Jack Stienstra; later Otis M. Mapes)

This committee is in charge of finances, debt, insurance, auditing, etc.

Pastor's report 29 January:

THE most significant accomplishment here has been the arrangement of a completely new system for handling and recording the finances of the church. New records have been established for the Comptroller and the Treasurer of the Diaconate. Mr. Edward Campbell has displayed considerable efficiency and enthusiasm as Comptroller...

Pastor's report 6 July:

...DEBT payments are being met on time (\$225.00 every 3 months), and Mrs. Lehnberg, Financial Secretary, will certainly establish a legend for her handling of the records of our offerings.

Christian Service Committee (Deacon Sterling Pitt, later Marvin Poutsma)

This committee is charged with direction of the annual stewardship enlistment campaign, benevolence, the service organizations of the church, the social activities of the congregation, and during this year was requested to make arrangements for a program to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the church's reorganization. On 26 September a program was held and on 30 September a dedication worship service.

Worthy of mention in the area of Christian service is the program of monthly visits instituted during the year by the Young Married Women's Guild to a group of women patients at Rockland State Hospital. Something in the line of a program is offered, refreshments are served, and the remaining time is spent visiting with the patients, many of whom receive no regular visitors.

Building and Grounds Committee (Deacon Fred Dykstra)

The work of this committee consists in overseeing the work of the custodian and volunteer workers, making provision for necessary repairs and improvements on church properties, cemetery care, long-range planning for expanded facilities. During the first six months of 1962 the committee made several repairs, among them control of water seepage into the downstairs library-office room so that it could be restored to fuller use.

And this is the story of our little white church until 26 September 1962.

A long time ago—much longer ago than 1952, and even than 1825—and far away in Asia Minor, there were seven churches. Their origin and histories are not so well known to us. But there is something about each of these churches that Christ wants us to know and for that reason, through revelation to John the apostle, had these things recorded in Holy Scripture. These churches were distinguished by various spiritual characteristics, but in their sevenfold completeness represent the church of Christ of all ages. The names of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea recede into the background as the one church universal emerges prominent. What was true of these churches is true in varying degrees of the church of Christ today. And what the Lord said to them He also says to us.

The Lord pictured Himself as the One walking among the seven churches, or candlesticks, His lights in the world. And these are the letters addressed to the seven churches:

(Here read and consider Revelation 1:4—3:22)

Have you been able to sense the meaning of these messages for our Monsey Church? Is it possible that the Lord says to us at this point of reviewing our past, particularly the last ten years:

Christian Reformed Church of Monsey, New York,

I am the One Who walks alongside you, My candlestick, in this community, and the One Who knows all about you. I know all your work for Me and your patience, faithfulness, service and witness.

I know that you have been very busy. I have observed you for ten years (and more) and oh, if only I could say that you loved Me now just as you did in the beginning!

I know that your life is not at a stake for the sake of the gospel as was the case in the church at Smyrna;

but if you were to be persecuted like that, would I find you faithful? And even in the small persecutions that you may endure, and in the poverty that may come to you, do you know that you are rich? These are preparation for higher service.

I know exactly where you live. I know all about Monsey and every detail of difficulty challenging you in your witness of Me in this community. But do not forget—it was I Myself Who placed you in this environment. As My candle, you have the unique opportunity of holding My faith and witnessing to My Name. My standards remain as high as ever. In order to keep your light clear, there must be discipline of erring members.

I know, too, the temptations for you to compromise with the world, to eliminate the difference between the church and the world so that the church presumably will have more influence, to lower membership requirements so that more people can be members. Please remember the church is MY Holy Bride to be kept holy; and the only way for the church to maintain a good influence on the world is to keep the level of the Christian life high.

Monsey Church, you, too, have a name. You stand for the doctrine of truth, hold regular worship services and offer plenty of activities for your members. But there is something missing in your relationship with Me that leaves you quite dead in My sight. While you have the opportunity, make certain that your name is an expression of what you really are—My true and living witness.

I know that you are a small church, in fact the only church in your town. And I have set before you an open door of opportunity to preach the Gospel—to a growing population and even to the lost sheep of the house of Israel—and one day I will make even those who are your chief accusers to acknowledge that you are My people.

I also notice complacency among you—a lukewarmness which is distasteful to Me. I wish you were either fervent in your service—or cold, for then there is hope of kindling devotion. Come to Me humbly, throwing aside your self-sufficiency, and prove Me to fulfill all your needs.

Church of Monsey: I love you, and whom I love, I discipline. Repent of your lack of love, your weakness in discipline, your deficiency in being a strong influence in the community, your empty works, your lukewarmness, your failure to be My light to the world. Or I will come in judgment and, if necessary, even remove your candlestick.

To those who overcome, who cling to Me in faith, I offer the fullness of eternal fellowship with Me, the Lord Jesus Christ, which the crowns and white robes and thrones all symbolize.

Hear, you who have ears to hear, what the Spirit says to the churches!

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