

The History of Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church



On June 5, 1805 a group of inhabitants of the village of Vernon met and formed the Mount Vernon Presbyterian Society. The church building was completed in 1815 on land donated by Abram Van Eps, founder of Vernon. The structure has been changed several times in its over 200 years of existence, but basically it is the same building.

The original building cost \$5,000 raised by the subscription and 1805 sale of pews. In 1854, stone steps were erected on the east by volunteer labor for the convenience of those getting in and out of carriages.

The manse was erected in 1868, for a cost of \$2,900. In 1919, the steeple was removed because it was unsafe. In 1972, the bell which had been dropped down to another level when the steeple was removed, was then removed completely when a new roof was put on. In 1975, the bell was placed in a memorial bell tower on the front lawn. It was designed by Paul Sears, built by volunteers, and dedicated to Fred Smith.

In 1951, a board of Deacons was installed – all men.

In 1957, a carillon was purchased and installed in memory of James B. Richards

In 1963, Breta Lewis and Kathryn Ruttan were elected first women Deacons

In 1967, Marion Laube was elected the first woman Elder.

- In 1973, Betsy Naminga became the first woman Trustee

A memorial committee was formed in 1964 to handle donations given in memory of members of their families. A second garage was added to the manse in 1971.

In 1996, the accessibility project phase one was completed with the installation of the elevator.

In the late '90's the unicameral board system was adopted and the Board of Trustees was eliminated.

In 2005, we celebrated our 200th anniversary with a special celebration and other events. A sealed time capsule was placed in the church front hall containing memorabilia, to be opened in 100 years. For many years we were yoked with the Vernon Center Presbyterian Church. In 1991, we became yoked with Verona First Presbyterian Church.



In August 2006, we began a combined ministry with Mt. Vernon, Verona First and Cochran Memorial Presbyterian churches. The Rev. Sharon Hare and Lay Pastor Peg Ward were co-pastors of the three churches.

In August, 2016, the work of the Lord was fulfilled as Mt. Vernon Presbyterian Church gifted their church, manse and property to Shiloh Bible Church to enable them to expand their ministry.