



First Presbyterian enjoys reaching out to the community through new worshiping styles, events, and mission opportunities.

Top left: Designated Associate Pastor, Rev. Kati Collins, leads a service of “The Light,” our New Worshiping Community.



Middle left: Willie the Wildcat (Kansas State University’s charismatic mascot) visits First Presbyterian on the first day of the Sunday School year. Newlywed members Taylor and Kirk Provine enjoy his company.

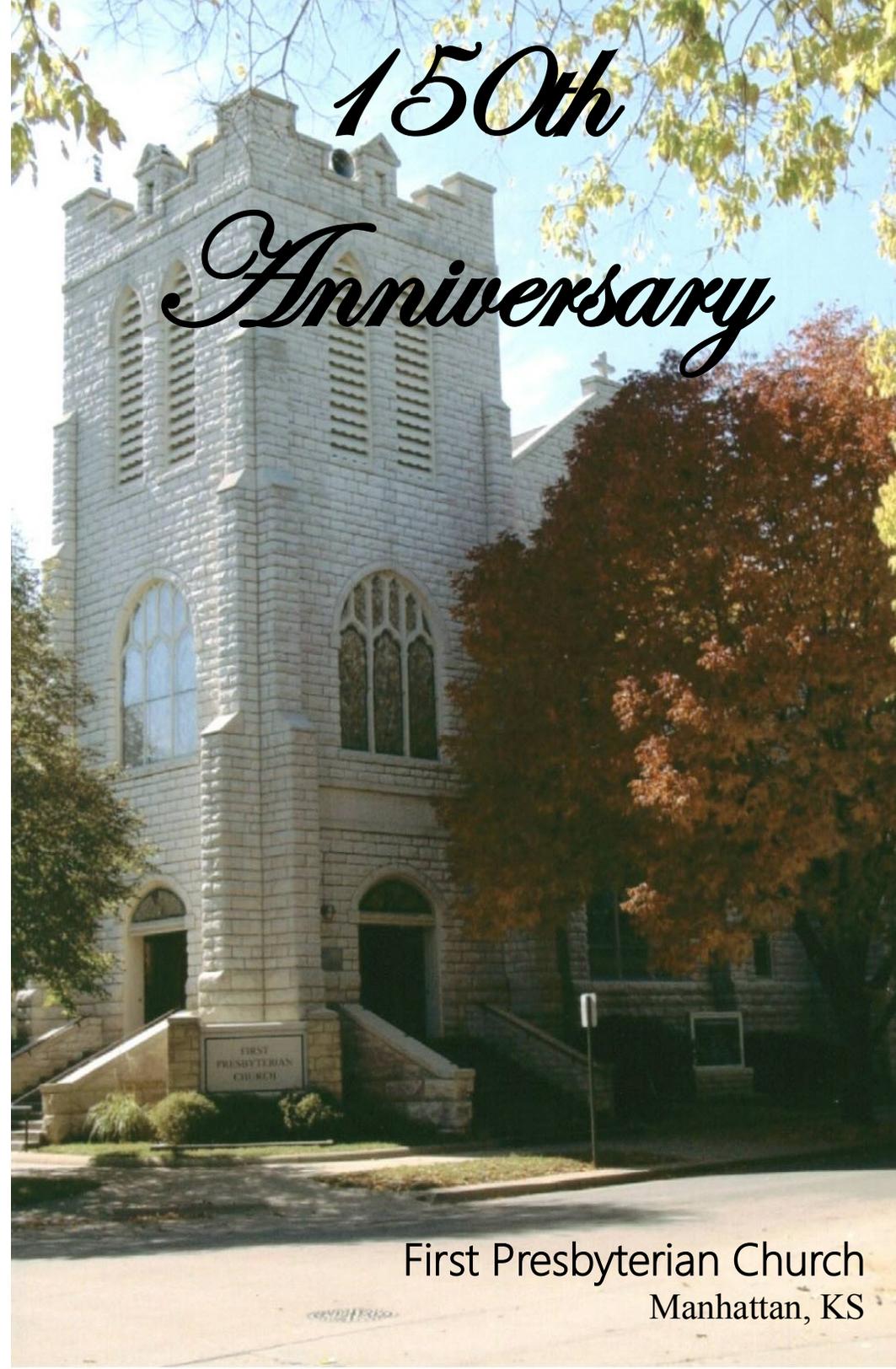


Bottom left: Member Micky Jensen assists in the renovation of the Christian Education wing by painting a beautiful mural.

First Presbyterian Church of Manhattan
Rev. R.C. McConnell, Senior Pastor
Rev. Kati Collins, Designated Associate Pastor

801 Leavenworth Street
Manhattan, KS 66502
785-537-0518

Email: secretary@firstpresmanhattan.com Website: www.firstpresmanhattan.com



150th Anniversary

First Presbyterian Church
Manhattan, KS

Note from the Senior Pastor

Fourteen members, along with the Rev. Alexander Sterrett, constituted the first Sunday worship of the congregation on the second floor of the courthouse two years after the Civil War. Three years later the congregation would build its first building on the southwest corner of Fifth and Poyntz at a cost of \$6,223.

We often associate the founding of a church or any organization in a romantic light, considering the dreams, aspirations, and vision the founders had. But we know that hard work, disappointments, and discouragements come with the territory in any proposition or idea worth working for and worth sharing with others. Such was the dedication of our founders in an effort to promote the gospel in a city with a brand new University and brand new vision for itself. First Presbyterian would join in this growth of spirit and prosperity, just four years after Kansas State University was founded.

And so here we are today, not only appreciating the diligent efforts and the visions of our spiritual ancestors, but carrying the tradition of the mission of the gospel forward so we reach others for Christ and prepare the way for future generations. As one would expect, we have expanded greatly in people, programs, missions, and facilities in the last 150 years, thanks to the continuing visions of generation after generation. It has been a privilege for me to have been a part of the leadership of such a caring and embracing congregation.

Faithfully,

Cam

Robert Campbell (Cam) McConnell



Reverend Cam McConnell came to First Presbyterian Church from Michigan in 1997, and has served as senior pastor for twenty years, the second longest term of any minister of the church.

Under Cam's leadership, the church has been expanded and remodeled. The first major project was the addition of Presby Place, next to the education wing. It was dedicated in 2005. The grounds have also been extensively renovated. The building that had housed the Manhattan Emergency Shelter was removed from the corner of Ninth and Leavenworth after the shelter built a new facility, and Tami's Garden, in memory of Tami Borck, was developed on the lot. It contains a waterfall and benches for relaxing or reading. It was dedicated in June of 2013. Friendship Park, in memory of Kevin Coffey, was also built in 2013, with playground equipment, a worship area, and permanent tables and chairs. A memorial garden was added in 2014. The sanctuary was completely remodeled in 2013-2014 with new furniture, lighting and sound systems, a new wall between the sanctuary and the narthex, and new pews and flooring. The dedication was held February 2, 2014. The Christian Education Wing was built in 1954 and remodeled in 2015.

In addition to new physical facilities, Rev. McConnell has led the church to expand missions and programs. Such programs as community breakfasts and dinners, First Academy, sports and music camps, men's breakfasts, small group studies, Presbyterian Boot Camp, and Friday Fellowship are just a few of the many programs of First Presbyterian Church under Cam's leadership.



Dr. Reg Pittman, director of the Chancel Choir and Handbell Choir, led a hymn sing at the 2017 church picnic. Members and friends gathered to sing old and new favorites while "Jim's Famous Chicken" was cooking.



Laura Lee Cross was the church hostess for over 30 years. Her cooking and hospitality are remembered fondly and celebrated through fellowship in the kitchen. In memory and in honor of Laura Lee's service, the kitchen was named the Laura Lee Cross Kitchen.



The First Presbyterian bell was a gift to the church from the Purcell family (pg. 4). The bell is still rung every Sunday to bring the congregation to worship. Member, Sally Mullen, gave a children's sermon in which the kids were allowed to ring the bell!



Good Friday in 2017 was celebrated through song and scripture as Rutter's Gloria was performed by the Presby Players and a chorus of KSU students and First Presbyterian singers.

History of First Presbyterian Members

First Presbyterian has held services in many places: Gove Hall, 5th and Poyntz, three models of the 8th and Leavenworth sanctuary, and even Presby Place during one of the remodels! No matter where we worship, the real cornerstone of the church is Jesus Christ.



An adult Sunday school class in 1927 poses for a picture. First Presbyterian emphasizes education both in Sunday school and by bringing in well-known speakers.



This Sunday school class for young children in the early 1960s is aptly shown under the painting of "Jesus Unto the Children" (see Mark 10:13-16).



Bible studies and groups are an important part of the fellowship at First Presbyterian. The Thursday Morning Circle began in the 1970s as a fellowship and Bible study group. While this Circle no longer meets, many other groups have taken its place.

Several Senior Pastors From the Past

First Presbyterian has had several pastors throughout its 150 years, including:

Alexander Sterrett



Reverend Alexander Sterrett of Evansville, Indiana was the first minister of First Presbyterian Church, Manhattan. He came to town in 1866 and gathered Presbyterians in the town and the vicinity to worship. The first meeting was at the Methodist church where Seven Dolores Catholic Church is now, and was held on Sunday afternoon. After January 1, 1867, Sunday School and morning and evening worship services were held in Gove Hall at Second and Poyntz. The church was formally organized on April 28 with fourteen members. Rev. Sterrett led the church for three years and is considered the founding pastor.

Drury H. Fisher



Dr. Drury H. Fisher came to Manhattan in January 1907 to become the senior pastor of First Presbyterian Church. His wife became the superintendent of the primary department of the Sunday School. Under Dr. Fisher's leadership, the present church building was constructed and was dedicated December 31, 1916. Seven young men from the church became ministers, and a college pastor, Reverend W. U. Guerrant, served with Dr. Fisher. Dr. Fisher retired in September 1944 after 37 years, but Mrs. Fisher continued to work with the Sunday School. She served in the superintendent capacity for 52 years.

Samuel S. George



Dr. Samuel S. George came to Manhattan in June, 1954 to become senior pastor of First Presbyterian Church. Under his leadership the Sunday School wing debt was paid, the Session was reorganized, the first woman was elected to the Session, two worship services were held, Directors of Religious Education were employed, and an associate pastor was called. The church grew so large by 1965 that plans were made to build a new facility or expand the present one, lots to the south and west of the building were bought, and houses were removed for parking areas. Dr. George left the pulpit in 1969, and it was decided to remodel the existing facility instead of building a new one.

Finding a Home

In the first several years, Sunday services were held in a rented second floor room of Gove Hall in the 200 block of Poyntz Avenue. In 1870, a church building was built on the corner of 5th and Poyntz for approximately \$6,200 (of which \$2,000 was borrowed). It had little furniture, including a modest pine table as the pulpit and pews consisting of boards laid across chairs with winter heat provided by two potbelly stoves.



In 1880, the church building was repaired, furniture acquired, a spire constructed on the corner tower and a nearby building containing a pastor's study, restrooms, and lecture room. It took many years to pay for these improvements. An unexpected "call" of the church's note caused the church to be sold. Mr. E.B. Purcell, a member and businessman, bought the building (and owned it for 12 years) in order to pay off the note.



First Pres youth groups go on mission trips to areas of the country that are in need of assistance. Pictured is the Cornerstone Youth Group, led by associate pastor, Rev. Kati Collins, on their 2016 mission trip to South Dakota to help with construction projects on a Lakota Reservation.



World Friendship is an international women's group which meets in Fisher Hall each week during the school year. The members are wives and family members of KSU faculty and Fort Riley employees from around the world. They learn English, cooking, and other skills while in a fellowship setting.



Each summer, First Pres hosts a Vacation Bible School summer camp for the community. This camp is staffed by church members and volunteers and purposes to teach children about God while having fun! The church also hosts a variety of popular sports, music, and arts camps led by both church and community members.



The children's programs adopt a charity or mission each school year to focus on. In 2015, they collected clothing and money for people in Nicaragua. In this picture, they are hosting a bake sale and donation station for clothing.

Missions

First Presbyterian is highly involved in outreach programs, both local and world-wide. From community meals and our food pantry to the World Friendship group which meets in Fisher Hall, First Presbyterian works to touch the lives of those in need.



First Presbyterian works both independently and in tandem with local charities to serve the people of Manhattan, KS. Our community meals are provided and served by church members and friends as part of a network of churches to provide food to those who are hungry in the Manhattan community.



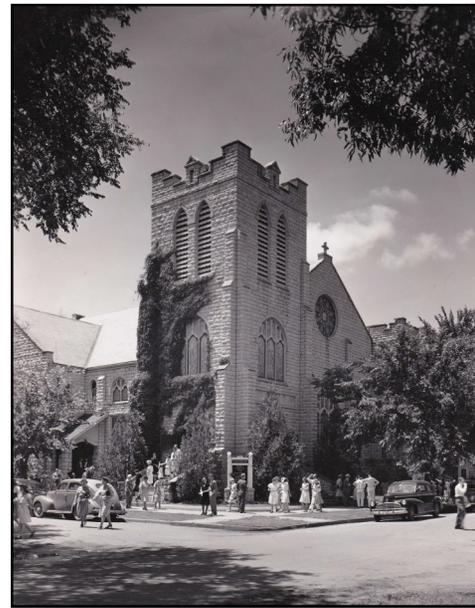
The First Pres Food Pantry works with the Flint Hills Breadbasket in Manhattan to provide for those who are food insecure. Our Pantry helps an average of 61 people per month, including adults and children.



The "Backpack Program" helps collect school supplies for students who may not be able to afford their own. Working with the Manhattan-Ogden school district, church members and friends purchase a backpack and supplies, which are then distributed among the schools.

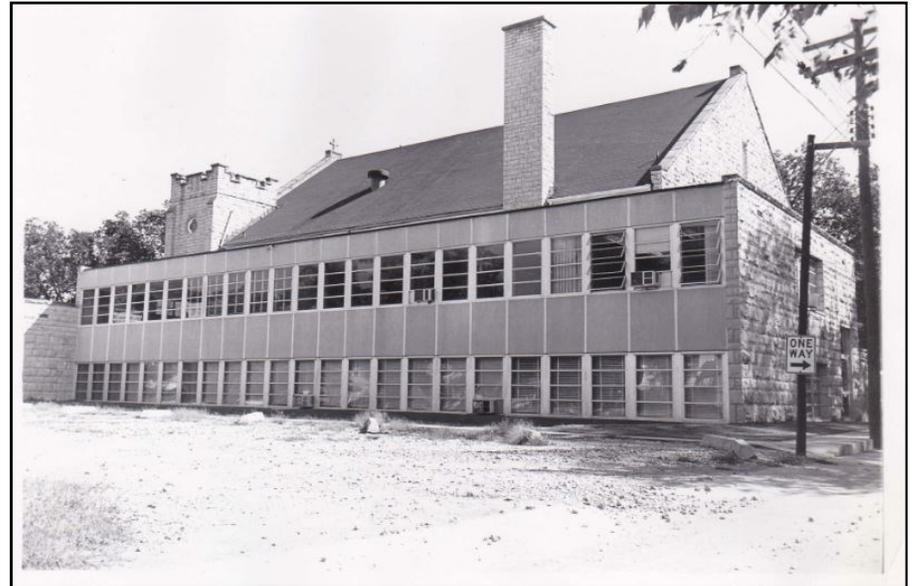


First Pres has worked with Habitat for Humanity in different capacities. Pictured left is a building crew putting together a house for a Wamego family.

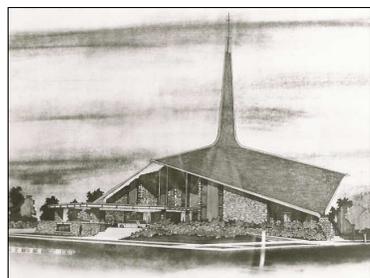


In 1915, the cornerstone of the present stone building located at the corner of 8th and Leavenworth was laid. The building was dedicated on December 31, 1916. The cost of this structure was \$44,000. Women of the congregation cooked breakfasts for college students to help pay for this building (most students lived in the area east of Juliette Avenue).

Sunday School classrooms were overcrowded, so it was decided to build a separate Education Wing. This addition was built in 1954 on the Western side of the existing building. The 1951 flood of Manhattan had caused so much damage to Fisher Hall that the congregation decided to build the Education Wing higher so as to avoid future flood damage.



By the 1960s, the size of the congregation had outgrown the sanctuary. Plans for a new building were drawn up to be built in the middle of the 800 block of Humboldt. Before construction began, it was decided that it would be better to remodel the current structure. The rebuilt sanctuary held 700 people.



In 2003, it was proposed that the Family Life Center, Presby Place, be added to the building. The structure included a gym, kitchen, stage, restrooms, and shower facilities. The recreation center has been used for everything from sports

camp to a community meal outreach. It even became the temporary worship space while the main sanctuary was being remodeled nearly ten years later.

The most recent major renovation was a remodeling of the sanctuary. Beginning in 2012, an exploratory committee along with the Session decided to return the sanctuary to a more classic style. The plan included new furniture, lighting, new pews and flooring, sound, organ modification, and a new wall separating the sanctuary from the narthex. The renovated sanctuary was dedicated in 2014.



Lynn Dobson Organ

Our congregation is truly blessed with a Lynn Dobson Tracker organ, installed in 1983. This organ was the 25th built by the Dobson builders and the largest one the company had built at that time.

The beautiful mosaic designed by Maurice Berggren had actually been installed in the church before the installation of the organ. It was dismantled and sent to the organ shop in Lake City, Iowa to be built into its current state.

Our current organist is Stephen Kucera (pictured on the far left in the top picture with Bob Edwards and Dan Myers at a recent organ recital).

