

A significant activity conducted by the Session in **1989** was the administration of a survey relating to many aspects of the Church which resulted in the return of 211 of 374 completed surveys. Some of the items receiving “Acceptable” ratings were the choir, accessibility, the sanctuary, youth fellowship, and hospital visits by the minister. Items “Needing Improvement” included vacation church school, effectiveness of the DCE, fellowship opportunities, effectiveness of committees, and effectiveness of the minister. Items rated as “Unacceptable” included the selection of hymns, sermons, effectiveness of elders, inspiration and following up on inactive members. As a result of the survey findings, members of the congregation were asked to volunteer to work with Session committees to work toward “revitalization” of Village Chapel. A Pastoral Leadership Task Force was put in place to hear the concerns voiced by the congregation and to take steps to enable the congregation, session and staff to be more effective in ministry and mission.

VILLAGE CHAPEL IN THE 1990s

Session minutes of **January and February, 1990** contained discussion from the Pastoral Leadership Task Force that was established at the end of **1989**. Members of the Task Force included Ron Cole, Brenda Jones, Gordon and Mary Lee Jung, Jane King, Becky Lippitt, Katie Martin, Bill and Kathryn McCrary, DeLane Randolph, and Clark Thurston. The minutes indicated that this group continued to meet to identify the best approaches to deal with concerns of the congregation. For example, in looking at survey comments related to worship, it was stated that the service “needs to be brought to order in a more ‘orderly’ way – too much talking.” Frank commented that “we’ve used the prelude and chimes and regardless of order, people still talk.” A recommendation was also forthcoming from the Worship Committee that a period of silence/meditation after the sermon would begin immediately. In the meeting, there was continued discussion as to “What is the most effective way for me (Frank) to relate to committees?”

In regard to music in the services, which had been identified as “unacceptable”, Frank outlined how he chose hymns for a worship service: 1) seasonally appropriate and 2) the theme of the service and added that he has a real sense of personal integrity for the overall picture of Sunday’s service. It was suggested that it might be helpful to have a few lines in the bulletin about why a particular hymn was chosen. The service on January 21st was conducted with NO music which resulted in mixed comments, such as: “I like the music much better than silence.” “The service is nothing without music.” And another: “I loved the silence. I think a person can worship more in a quiet place. However, I wouldn’t want this all the time because I think music adds a lot too.” “Please don’t have hymns anymore without music. Just tone the organ down during the benediction and after so we could talk with any visitors we have.” “The leader of the Worship Committee should be hanged. I come for the joy and sound of music. I cannot believe that this church would attempt such a stupid act on worship.”

One of the Session members stated that “as a congregation we are intolerant. Hymns, music, sermon, prayers are criticized with little regard for the time, interest, energy spent in planning and carrying out many of these areas of our worship services.”

Minutes of the **February 1990** Session meeting included a motion to allow Pat Jacobs and an anonymous donor to acquire and donate four dogwood trees to the Church. These would be planted on the 39th street side of the Church with one in the backyard. The motion was approved and the trees were obtained and planted. (In 2024, a “wayward” vehicle hit and destroyed one of the three trees on the 39th Street side of the church. Todd Wright, the minister at the time announced to the congregation that the tree had “given its life” to save the church area behind it.)

The Worship Committee reviewed and revised the Wedding Policy, and it was presented to the Session for approval at the March 1990 Session meeting.

Concern was expressed about needing more pew cushions. As a result, members of the Worship Committee explored options for increasing the number of cushions as there was a memorial gift of \$100 designated for that purpose.

In response to an issue identified by the Leadership Effectiveness Task Force survey regarding hymns in the worship service, the Worship Committee reviewed a chart of hymn usage for the past twenty years. As a result, a special effort was made to use a “favorite” each Sunday and subsequent newsletter articles provided information about hymns in worship. A new hymnal (Blue) was published in the summer of 1990, and the Session recommended the solicitation of memorial gifts of new hymnals with a target of 150 books which could be purchased at a pre-publication price savings of \$12.50.

The **April 1990** minutes of the Service Committee report to the Session indicated that the 2 cents a Meal contribution received from the Presbytery of West Virginia in 1989 was \$84,991.00 – an impressive figure when congregations are asked to give so little!

The **April 1990**, Women’s News proclaimed, “USED EYEGLASSES WANTED!!!” and indicated that as part of a peacemaking project, Presbyterian Women were soliciting used eyeglasses. These were to be brought to the Spring Gathering and from there would go on to the Synod Gathering and finally, to be taken to Central America for distribution by the Volunteer Optometric Service to Humanity. A later issue of Women’s News reported that 60 pairs of used eyeglasses were received at Village Chapel.

A report from the Pastoral Task Force presented an interesting discussion of Prayer during the worship services. Reverend Mansell explained that Presbyterians are not “spontaneous” in regard to prayer – nor do they have a set liturgy. Therefore, when preparing for prayers during the worship service, he uses a “theme” approach, and a 50/50 ratio in regard to prayers he has written and prayers he has selected from other works. Often, he will make changes in prayers as the worship service progresses. When one of the task force

members questioned why Village Chapel members criticized this part of worship, another responded that our “members come from a wide and varied range of worship experiences/denominations”.

In the same discussion, a member of the Task Force questioned “how much are we going to bend and change for this congregation as there may be some people who will never be fulfilled at Village Chapel. Perhaps they need to take a valuable possession, their Church membership, and find a church that more closely meets their needs – always knowing they can return to Village Chapel.” At this point, Polly Dodson, a charter member of the church, stated that she “is and will be a Village Chapel member for life.”

On **June 24, 1990**, Harry Brawley was honored for his service of 43 years as a Sunday School teacher at Village Chapel. Harry was very active in the Church and was highly regarded as a teacher. He also had a great sense of humor as early in his career he wrote a parody of the Ten Commandments (based on society’s tendency to water down the message). Here is his version of the Ten Commandments:

1. I am the Lord, your God, and I have done a lot of nice things for you. I would appreciate it greatly if you didn’t worship anything or anybody else—unless you’re in love, in business, or in politics.
2. Please don’t make any idols to bow down to. That embarrasses me, and I might be upset with your grandchildren or great-grandchildren. But don’t tell them. They think I’m square.
3. And watch your tongue. Please don’t swear and use my name unless you are an athletic coach.
4. It would be nice if you could do all your work in six days and save one for me – unless your county option votes the other way. After all, look at what I did in just six days.
5. I’m sure your parents would be pleased if you would be nice to them. I realize they are fuddy-duddies but be patient with them and I’ll let you live longer.
6. Please don’t kill anybody unless it is in the national interest.
7. You really should keep your marriage vows unless you are at a convention, or your mate is out of town.
8. It is not nice to steal unless you do it legally.
9. Also, it is not nice to tell lies when you are under oath.
10. And don’t go around green with envy because your neighbor has a better house, a prettier wife, a maid and butler, and better-looking horses. Do what he does, and you can have them too.

These suggestions the Lord made to you. He would appreciate it if you would give them your sincere attention and follow them as closely as your personal prejudices and greed will allow.

A Shepherd Program with the purpose of insuring that every member of Village Chapel is under the care of an elder was instituted and Guidelines for Shepherds published in the **August 1990** Session Minutes. The Guidelines for this program, as presented, indicated:

1. The most important part of this program is that each member of your “flock” knows that you are their shepherd and initially, a personal note or phone call should be made to introduce yourself. After the initial contact, a one-on-one visit should be made with each member so that you can get to know that person and his or her needs. This visit may take place at the member’s home, at lunch after Church, or in any other setting that may be appropriate.
2. Consider having a group event for your Shepherd group within the first three months.
3. If you discover that a member of your group has specific needs that are not being met through the Church, report back to the Ministry Committee or to the Pastor as seems appropriate.
4. Be available in times of celebration, crisis, change, sickness, and grief. You are not expected to provide support by yourself but will hopefully bring the resources of the Church in to help in a difficult situation.
5. As part of your ongoing commitments to your members:
 - a. Make periodic contact (suggested frequency every three months)
 - b. Be aware of the Church attendance patterns of your members and contact them if the pattern changes significantly (you will be provided with Sunday attendance rosters to do this.)

NOTE: As a Shepherd, you are not expected to provide personal services, such as driving people to the grocery store and doctor’s office, unless you choose to do so. The Ministry and Service Committees are compiling the names of members of our Church who have volunteered to perform such services.

To assign Shepherds, church membership was plotted out on a map of Charleston and divided into 18 districts of approximately equal size. Elder assignments were made based upon where the elders lived.

In the **August 1990** meeting, the Session approved signing a contract with Heartland Nursing Home (located at 39th Street and Chesterfield Avenue) that provided that Village Chapel would become an emergency shelter in case of need for their people.

RALLY DAY was held on **September 2nd** with an Opening Assembly beginning at 9:40 and breakfast organized by Vicki Cunningham. There were red balloons, signs and short programs focused on the theme of “Promise” including a puppet show and the singing of “I Am a Promise”. The Church School Teachers were introduced prior to everyone going to their classes. The Teachers and Youth Advisors were installed during the Worship hour.

The new hymnals were placed in the pews and dedicated in the **September 23rd** Worship Service. While the goal for the new hymnals was 150, there were 205 available for the congregation– another demonstration of Village Chapel’s “giving for the good!” With availability of the new hymnals, it was assumed that the old red books would be removed; however, as the new books did not contain some of the favorite and much used hymns of Village Chapel, it was suggested that they remain in the pews as a “supplement” to the new blue hymnals!

A brass Advent wreath, stand, and hangings were ordered at the cost of \$1,285 and paid for with funds donated in memory of Lynn Priestley.

A letter from Kathryn McCrary was provided to the **October 1990** meeting of the Session stating that Frank Mansell, III had been voted by the Youth Sub-Committee of the Committee on Christian Nurture as a nominee for Youth Advisory Delegate to the 1991 meeting of the Synod of the Trinity meeting June 18-20, 1991. The Session voted to endorse “young Frank’s” nomination.

In **January 1991**, to continue to respond to congregational negative views of the elders as voiced in the 1989 survey, elders-elect participated in five training events and completed written examinations. Each of the new elders shared where they felt they were in their pilgrimage of faith.

The Worship Committee continued to look at strategies for including members of the congregation in worship leadership including ushering, greeting, and participating in reading the liturgy.

Over the weekend of **March 1-3, 1991**, the Church held a Lenten Retreat with the theme, “What Does Love Require”. The leader for this event was Richard W. Fiete the Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Morgantown.

In **April 1991**, Frank Mansell led New Members of the Church in a series of classes over four Sundays during the Sunday School hours. These classes were designed to introduce new members of the congregation to the Presbyterian Church and particularly, to Village Chapel.

Mildred Wrenn and Evelyn McClure began to assemble worship bags for young children staying with their parents for the service. These were available to be picked up prior to the Worship service and returned as the children left after the service.

The Presbyterian Women redecorated and refurbished an “adopted” room at Sojourners. In addition, they will add pictures and curtains to make the room more “complete”.

Worship in the Park was held on **June 9th** at Coonskin Park. The congregation was asked to meet at the church at 10:00 a.m. to organize transportation. The Worship service was held at 11:00 with a picnic lunch afterward. Activities for both the youth and adults were provided. Becky Lippitt was instrumental in planning for this event.

In the fall of **1991**, there were 35 Village Chapel students enrolled in college. The list of colleges and universities included: WVU (7); Marshall (3); VPI (2); UC (2); Radford (2); UK (2); Wofford (1); Davis & Elkins (1); UVA (1); PITT (1); USC (1); Wake Forest (1); Grove City (1); Davidson (1) American U (1).

1992 presented some special celebrations for Village Chapel. The choirs of Village, Ruffner, Kanawha, Bream, and Westminster combined to present Vivaldi’s “Gloria” with a string quartet, flute, trumpet, and organ accompaniment. An offering of \$614 was received from approximately 260 people in attendance.

Another event was a costumed tableau of the Last Supper staged for the Maundy Thursday tableau of the Last Supper with men from Village and Ruffner.

On **October 10th**, the church hosted a progressive dinner. Appetizers were served at the home of Alan and Nancy Johnston; the main course at the home of Ken and Jane McNeil; and dessert at Jan and Vicki Cunningham’s home. Participants selected the dish they wanted to prepare and take to the home where it would be served.

During the month of December, electric “Welcome” candles donated by the Bowles family were placed in the windows of the sanctuary and Fellowship Hall.

In **1993**, a new format for Vacation Church School was highly successful. The new intergenerational, evening program enabled many adults to participate both as teachers and as students.

The Session approved the hiring of Kerri Preslar as Director of Christian Education at a salary of \$32,500 per year. It was recommended that a support group be available for the new DCE. It was also recommended that a computer be provided for Ms. Preslar.

After 30 years of service at Village Chapel as our custodian, Madeline Pleasants retired. This lady was a treasure, having served the Church since its opening on Venable Avenue.

In lieu of the congregation placing flowers in the Church in honor or memory of someone as has been done in years past, people were encouraged to make a gift to one of the service ministries supported by the Church. Donors and those honored were then listed in The Villager the week prior to Christmas. The Ministry Committee's Annual Report for **1993** stated that: "Our emphasis has been on person-to-person relationships with fellow Church members and visitors. We have sent letters, made phone calls and visited members who have missed church frequently. We have tried to greet visitors warmly and have often sent notes or made follow-up calls and, in several instances, it really made a difference when these individuals returned for services.

In **February 1994**, the Church received a gas bill of \$900!! On the positive side, the house located next door was rented as of February for \$500 per month thus increasing the church's monthly income a bit!

On **February 28th**, Mike Misiti and Greg Blank volunteered to spend the night at Coonskin Park to be "first in line" on **March 1st** to reserve the desired picnic shelter for Worship in the Park!

A Lenten Retreat was held on **March 4-5th** with Ruffner Presbyterian Church. Dee Koza, a church educator from Savannah, Georgia presented a program on "Signs and Symbols of the Faith." The congregations gathered for dinner at Ruffner on Friday evening followed by the program. On Saturday morning the group met at Village for a light breakfast and continuation of the program. Saturday evening there was a gospel sing by Ethel Caffee-Austin and "make your own sundae" dessert served by the Junior High Fellowship.

On **March 31st** a joint Maundy Thursday service was held with the other churches in the parish - South Park, Westminster, and Ruffner. The evening began with a carry-in supper at 6:30 with the Worship service to follow. Communion was served with worshippers invited to gather in groups of 15-20 around the communion table which was placed at floor level. Frank Mansell was the presiding minister assisted by Village Chapel elders. The Elements were passed from one person to the next as they stood around the table. Anyone not comfortable in coming forward in this way could ask to be served in their pew without "calling attention to them". Readers (a man and woman) from each of the four churches read the Passion Narrative and extinguished candles when indicated. One individual was assigned to carry the Christ candle from the sanctuary and return it at the appropriate time. Members of the choirs from the four churches were invited to serve as a joint choir to sing the selected anthems: "Were you There?" and "O Holy Jesu".

In the spring of **1994**, Church School attendance averaged 76 and Worship attendance averaged 158.

In **June of 1994**, the Church met at Kanawha State Forest for its annual “Worship in the Park”. The men cooked hot dogs and hamburgers and everyone attending brought their favorite picnic dish. After the worship service and picnic, those in attendance played a variety of games and/or had a great exchange of conversation!

Frank Mansell, III was approved as an “Inquirer” leading to “Candidacy” for the Ministry. For the **August 17, 1994**, Session Meeting, John Noah, a member of the Presbytery’s Commission for Ministry, was in attendance. Mr. Noah explained that he was in this meeting to explain the Session’s responsibilities to Frank Mansell III as he began his seminary experience as an Inquirer. The Book of Order states that “the Session of Village Chapel will support Frank both financially and as friends. Frank will be undergoing testing as to his vocation or calling and his knowledge of the Bible and the Session will be responsible for finding out what and how he is doing.” There will be annual conversations both with Village Chapel and with the Presbytery and Presbytery will make the decision as to when he becomes a Candidate. Howard Salisbury served as his Liaison.

J. Moody McNair, the first pastor of Village Chapel, died in Bradenton, Florida on **October 29, 1994**, at the age of 89. Rev. McNair relocated to Florida 40 years ago from Village Chapel Presbyterian Church in Charleston, West Virginia. He retired in 1969 as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Sarasota. He was a 32nd degree Mason, a member of the Scottish Rite, and a past chaplain for the Sahib Shrine Temple. He was a member of the Board of Directors of The Salvation Army and a member of the Rotary Club in Sarasota.

Up until **September of 1994** the organ was tuned twice each year by Randall Dyer who traveled to Village Chapel from Tennessee. However, a “very competent” tuner, Christopher Nagorka, became available in Charleston and the Worship Committee authorized Carolyn Perrine to contract with him to tune the organ four times per year at a cost less than the twice-yearly tuning that had been done since the installation in 1981.

On **November 3rd** a Health Fair featuring Nursing and Sports Medicine students from the University of Charleston was held. Services provided included:

Eye screening

Laboratory testing using “P22” which screens cholesterol, blood sugar, and electrolytes.

Hearing screening courtesy of the Beltone Corporation

Blood pressure screening

Evaluation of arm and leg joints

Provision of information on Elder Programs such as CAMC’s “55 Plus Program” and Elder Assist Devices

Selected health information on heart disease prevention and management

On **November 20th** an Advent Festival, “Christmas Around the World,” was held from 6:00 to 8:00 in the Fellowship Hall. Tables featuring a different country (Denmark, Germany, Mexico, Kenya, and England) were set up and featured each country using maps, items from that country and offered specific crafts. For example, Mexico featured the “Eyes of God,” poinsettias and a pinata for children to break. Food and music from each of the countries made the evening very special!

Glenna Adams, a member of the Presbyterian Women, won First Prize for a doll she dressed for the Salvation Army in preparation for the Christmas distribution of toys to needy children. She received recognition for this honor at the December PW luncheon.

A 9:00 p.m. Christmas Eve service, with 244 in attendance, was held with candle lighting, communion, and special music by the adult choir. Frank Mansell, III assisted with the service.

On Sunday, **January 8, 1995**, Village celebrated Epiphany and the Baptism of the Lord with communion. New elders for the class of 1997-- Leigh Ann Johnson, Patti Salisbury, Brian Pratt, Cathy McClung, and Rose Ellen Sockman were ordained and installed, and previously ordained elder, Larry Jones, was installed.

The Church Officer Nominating Committee and the Session recommended that the procedure for election of the Church Officer Nominating Committee be revised. The proposed plan eliminated having a congregational meeting at which seven persons are elected from a slate of 14 nominees. Instead, five members of the committee are named by five established groups in the church; the remaining two will be selected by the congregation. The Session will continue to elect two members of the outgoing class to serve as Moderator and Vice Moderator of the committee. The Minister serves as the 10th member. The procedure in summary:

Members of the Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee in any given year shall be:

Two elders from the out-going class of the Session; seven members at large, none of whom shall be active elders; and the minister who has voice but no vote. (Book of Order G-14.0201b)

On **January 15th** the Church family celebrated the Baptism of Erin Elizabeth Chiparo, five-year-old daughter of Jeff and Beth Chiparo.

On **January 22nd**, Village participated for the first time in the National “Souper Bowl Sunday” program. The congregation was invited to donate \$1.00 to the youth who were collecting money in soup pots OR they could donate a can of soup. The total amount collected was \$136.83 which was given to Health Rite of West Virginia.

Christian Unity Sunday on **January 29, 1995**, was celebrated with a Worship Leader exchange among Village Chapel, Ruffner, Westminster and South Park churches. Frank Mansell led the Worship Service at Ruffner and the Interim pastor at Westminster, A. D. Ellison, led the service at Village.

Congratulations were extended to Whitney Perrine, a sophomore at George Washington High School, who was selected eighth chair in the West Virginia All State Band.

A Long-Range Planning Committee, has been instituted to help Village Chapel determine "What are we as a congregation being called to do?"

Ongoing activities for **1995** include weekly meetings of both Senior High and Middle School youth groups, children's choir, adult choir, five Presbyterian Woman's circles (meeting monthly) VIP's senior program (meeting monthly), men's volleyball, women's volleyball (with Bream), and four church basketball teams (senior high boys, senior midgets, and two instructional league teams). A Bridge Club sponsored by the Shepherd's Center, Narcotic Anonymous, a girl scout troop, and a rug hooking group continue to use Village Chapel facilities.

February 5th saw 68 members of the congregation brave severe winter elements to participate in worship. As the choir was limited, "We all formed a choir and sang a cappella."

On the weekend of **February 9-11**, the Senior High Youth Fellowship went on a ski trip to Snowshoe, West Virginia.

The Long-Range Planning Committee met with established groups within the congregation beginning **February 19th**. The Committee shared activities to date and listened to what the membership had to say in response to the basic question, "What is God calling us to do?"

In March, "Walking with Africans, A Lenten Journey" retreat was held on **March 3-5** in conjunction with Ruffner Memorial and Westminster Churches. The event began with a dinner at Ruffner which featured African foods and a presentation by Lemar Williamson, a missionary engaged in theological education in Zaire from 1966 to 1991. Dr. Williamson now resides in Montreat, North Carolina. On Saturday morning, at Village Chapel, Dr. Williamson led the participants in a study of Jesus' Lenten Journey. On Saturday evening, Ethel Caffie-Austin, a nationally known African American pianist and vocalist, provided a spiritual music program. On Sunday morning Dr. Williamson preached a sermon "The Christian Life – A Lenten Journey" at Westminster. Recipes of African foods were made available to those attending this wonderful cultural awareness experience.

On **March 12th**, Tom and Sandra Wilkerson were welcomed as members of Village Chapel. The Wilkersons are the parents of Cindy Hanna, who with her husband, Sam, and children, Samantha and Jamie, are also members of Village Chapel.

The “Gift of Belonging” was the theme of the Middle School Presbytery Youth Retreat held at Cedar Lakes Conference Center just outside Ripley the weekend of **March 17-19**. Participants from Village Chapel were Mandy Sampson, Stephanie Withrow, Emily Danzer, Lindsey Tyree, Clark Campbell, Kari Preslar (DCE) and Tammy and Dave Jenkins (Youth Advisors). Others with leadership responsibilities were Nathan Gerencir and Kathryn McCrary.

Kari Preslar submitted her resignation as Director of Christian Education with her work ending on **April 30th**. The Personnel Committee accepted her resignation and officially terminated her employment on **May 14, 1995**. This arrangement would allow Kari two weeks’ vacation and permit her health insurance to continue for one month.

Special recognition was given to Gracie McClung and Keri Blank, the top two sellers of Girl Scout cookies in the Kanawha Valley in **1995**. Gracie sold 635 boxes and Keri sold 370. Both girls are members of the Girl Scout Junior Troop that meets bi-monthly at Village Chapel. Kathy Blank and Sharon Moriarty are the Troop leaders. Gracie is the daughter of Mike and Cathy McClung and Keri is the daughter of Greg and Kathy Blank.

On Maundy Thursday, **April 13th**, the churches of the parish – South Park, Westminster, and Ruffner gathered at Village Chapel for fellowship around dinner tables, and afterward for Worship around the Lord’s Table. Worship leaders represented the four congregations.

The Village Chapel annual “Village Chapel at Bluestone” Conference Center was held the weekend of **April 28-30th**. The theme for the weekend was “Strengthening Relationships” and was led by Frank Mansell and Peacemaking Task Force Members, Mark and Mary Jo Swartz and Bobby Caldwell. A program for children was led by Kathy Blank and Missy France. Eighty members and friends participated in this event.

Twelve graduating seniors were recognized during the Worship Service on **May 7th**. A cross made of nails on a leather thong was presented to Ryan Cunningham, Nathan Gerencir, Jonathan Hardman, Sam Henderson, Jonathan Jarrett, Carolyn Spella, Philip Britton, Daniel Curnutte, Marisa Ellis, Chuck Flannery, Geoffrey Gage, and Aleshia Perry. Church Sunday School Teachers and Youth Advisors were also recognized on this day.

As a **1995** Spring Project, each of the women’s circles bought school supplies for the children in residence at the Davis Stuart home. Dottie Joslin delivered 150 lbs. of items donated to the facility in Lewisburg.

The Presbyterian Women had a special Mother’s Day Banquet on **May 11th**. The Coordinating Team hosted the dinner, and the Men of the Church cooked and served the meal. Carolyn Perrine, along with several church members, planned and presented a special musical program following dinner.

On Pentecost Sunday, **June 4th**, Village celebrated the birthday of the Church with Communion and the release of red balloons. A fellowship time with cake and ice cream followed the Service. The WITNESS OFFERING was received on this day in support of the mission of the Church in our country and throughout the world.

The 1995 summer seminary intern, Robyn Garrison, began her work with Village Chapel on **June 7th**. Robyn brought with her a warm personality, a willingness to learn and lots of energy and enthusiasm.

The **1995** Sunday in the Park on **June 18th** was celebrated at Kanawha State Forest. An informal Worship Service began at 11:00 a.m. followed by a picnic lunch and games for all ages. There was no church school on this day.

July 10 – 14th saw a daily average of 75 children and 25 teachers participating in the **1995** Vacation Church School. Village Chapel, Ruffner, and Kanawha United Presbyterian Churches joined together mornings from 9:00 to 12:15 at Village Chapel. Classes were available for participants ranging from 2-year-olds to adults. Robyn Garrison opened each morning with a song and a skit as we learned about “Awesome Adventures: God’s Amazing Deeds”. On Friday the weather cooperated so lessons, recreation, and art were held at Coonskin Park with a picnic for families at noon.

Beginning on **July 18th**, members and friends were invited to participate in a FAMILY TIES program. On five consecutive Tuesday evenings, those involved gathered for simple dinners and broke into groups for a time of learning. Adults met for a Bible Study led by Frank Mansell, while Robyn Garrison, Vickie Cunningham and Patti Salisbury led children ages kindergarten through high school in “Faith and Action” projects such as preparing bag lunches for homeless people at Manna Meal; visiting the recycling center; visiting Shawnee Hills Mental Health group home; participating in a photo scavenger hunt looking at “God’s creations” within walking distance of the Church; and preparing care baskets and visiting folks at the Hilltop Home for the Elderly.

Our summer intern, Robyn Garrison’s last day was **August 20th**, and a special reception was held after the Worship Service to say “thank you” for all she has given to Village through the summer programs. She has been a Joy!!

We shared in the sorrow of Mike Misiti’s family at his death on **September 26th**. Mike, at age 38, died at home after a long illness. A very special guy, he spent his life helping families who faced the challenges of living with physical and orthopedic handicaps. Mike was a good father and husband blessed with a great sense of humor. He was an elder in the class of 1995 at the time of his death.

In **1995** Village Chapel developed a three-year Strategic Plan for the Church. This work is reflected in the following document:

VILLAGE CHAPEL STRATEGIC PLAN July 1995 – June 1998

Statement of Purpose:

Village Chapel Presbyterian Church is a congregation of God's people. We know God through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. We are called to do God's work in the world. Our mission is to accomplish God's work through evangelism, service, and prophetic witness (God's message to society). To equip ourselves for this mission: We worship God. We study God's Word. We minister to one another.

EVANGELISM

Sharing with all people that God loves them and inviting them to become members of the body of Christ.

To establish an Evangelism Task Force by October 1, 1995, as a strategy to implement the following objectives:

- A. To improve the effectiveness of each Village Chapel member in sharing with everyone in the Community "the good news" to the glory of God (on-going)
 - 1. Provide opportunities for personal spiritual growth
 - 2. Continually emphasize the importance of "people inviting and welcoming people" one-on-one relationships, personal invitations
 - 3. Purposefully incorporate newcomers into the "fellowship of believers"

- B. To maintain and improve facilities which invite, welcome and comfort people. (on-going)
 - 1. Address parking issues: intermediate solution may be to provide valet parking Through the senior high youth program (needs immediate action)
 - 2. Explore feasibility of a "family life center program" multi-purpose facility possibly off-site or jointly with another church or group
 - 3. Explore the best utilization of property next door to church
 - 4. **Report to the Session on B2 and B3 above by June, 1996**

- C. To make known Village Chapel's presence and participation in the community (on-going)
 - 1. Explore strategic advertising /communication of special events/programs via The newspaper and other media
 - 2. Explore usefulness of a multi-purpose informational brochure about the VC Congregation and programming
 - 3. **Report to the Session on C1 and C2 above by June 1996**

This plan presents structure and direction for the Village Chapel congregation to follow for the next three years (**1995-1998**). Two task forces, the Evangelism Task Force and the Member Assessment Task Force, will continue to meet with different committees to implement this plan.

The missionaries to Brazil, Alan and Alma Gordon, were guests at Village Chapel's Mission Dinner on World Communion Sunday, **October 1st**. The focus of their work is through the Good Samaritan Clinic in Sao Paulo, Brazil. The Gordons and their daughters were members of Village Chapel when they were commissioned to missionary service with the Presbyterian Church (USA) in 1972.

Beginning **October 8**, Felicia Stewart Hoyle will serve Village Chapel as the Christian Educator/Pastoral Assistant on a part-time basis

A Thanksgiving Offering was received on **November 19th** for the Davis Stuart Chaplain's Ministry. Davis Stuart is the Presbyterian Therapeutic Residential Center for emotionally disturbed young people in Lewisburg, West Virginia.

On **December 3rd**, the Appalachian music group, the Presby Pickers, were engaged to lead a worship service of Scripture and music for the Advent/Christmas season. Invitations were extended to all the Presbyterian Churches in the Charleston area.

On **December 16th**, Judge John A. Field, Jr., a former member of the Church and the father of Bill Field, died at his retirement home in Naples, Florida at the age of 85. Judge Field was born in Charleston and graduated from Hampton-Sidney College and the University of Virginia Law School. As a young lawyer, he practiced with the firm of Brown, Jackson and Knight. He entered the political scene becoming a member of the Charleston City Council. He ran for the office of state attorney general and was defeated by Wally Barron, who would go on to become the governor. Under Governor Cecil Underwood, he was appointed tax commissioner and in 1959, President Eisenhower appointed him to a federal judgeship. He later became a senior judge for the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals. A Service of Witness to the Resurrection was held on **December 19, 1995**.

On **December 24th**, two beautiful new candlesticks were used for the first time during the Christmas Eve Service. These were memorials to Ray Jackson and Paul Livesay.

On **December 31, 1995**, we welcomed Frank Mansell, III as our minister of the day! Young Frank is a second-year ministry student at Princeton Seminary and a third-generation Presbyterian minister following his father and grandfather in service.

In 1996 Village Chapel began the year with 327 active members. Throughout the year the Church gained 8 members for a total of 335. However, the year 1995 saw several members move to other cities or states and a year of several losses to death. The total active membership on December 31, 1995, was 324 with 321 White and 3 Black members. The average attendance at Sunday Worship was 156; the total Church school enrollment was 119. The Session numbered 18 with 9 men and 9 women.

An accumulation of 21 inches of snow fell over the first weekend in January **1996** interfering with Church activities. No services were held on **January 7th**. On January 14th Village Chapel gathered for a worship service that included the Lord's Supper and the celebration of Epiphany and the Baptism of Jesus. The Communion Offering on that day was used to provide funds for ministry in the community through the Good Samaritan Fund, a fund to help individuals coming to the Church for assistance with utilities, transportation, food, etc.

New elders for the **Class of 1998** included Warren Danzer, Jane King, Sam Hanna, David Campbell, Ken McNeil and Martha Foster. These individuals were ordained and installed. Vickie Cunningham was ordained and installed to complete a one-year term.

A Special Worship Education series on "Understanding the Sacraments" was held for children in grades one through six in January. Through games, stories, filmstrips and other activities, children learned about the sacraments of baptism and communion. A luncheon was held for parents and children on the last Sunday of the series.

On the last Sunday of **January 1996**, members of the congregation were invited to donate \$1.00 to participate in a nationwide program to help ease hunger. The Youth Group collected \$112. 47 for "Souper Bowl Sunday" and this was donated locally to Manna Meal. "Souper Bowl Sunday" began in the Senior High Fellowship of Spring Valley Presbyterian Church in Columbia, South Carolina in 1990. Village Chapel began celebrating it in 1995.

Dr. Terry Perrine was featured in an article on "Waiting for the Doctor" which appeared on **January 15th** in the Charleston Gazette. Another Village Chapel member, Martha Walker, was the focus of an article in the Sunday Gazette-Mail about her experiences in the West Virginia Legislature. Martha is the sister of Jane Harich.

We shared the sorrow of the friends of former member Mary Sue Jarrett of Columbus, Ohio who died on **February 16th**. Frank Mansell led a graveside service at Sunset Memorial Park on February 20th. A number of furnishings in the sanctuary, including the stained-glass windows over the main doors, were given by Sue and her parents, Frank and Mabel Jarrett.

On Sunday **March 10th**, the Presbyterian Women led the service, "Celebrating the Gifts of Women". This day was suggested by the PUSA to remember and celebrate the gifts of women in the life of the Church. Robyn Garrison, our 1995 summer intern, returned to Charleston for the weekend to preach. Kathy Blank and Susan Perkins were liturgists. Ushers were Evelyn McClure, Polly Dodson, Glenna Adams, and Mary Lee Jung. Since March 10th was also Girl Scout Sunday, Keri Blank, Gracie McClung, Laura Joslin and Meridith France received the offering. At 6:00 p.m. Sue Ellen Hall spoke about the Mission of the Church in China and Indonesia at a carry-in dinner.

A Workshop/Retreat on “Spiritual Growth” was held in the Fellowship Hall, Saturday, **March 30th** from 10:00 to 3:00 led by Dr. Carole Riley, Executive Director of the Spirituality Program at Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, PA.

On **April 4, 1996**, a Maundy-Thursdays Worship Service was held at the Westminster Presbyterian Church located at 55th Street and Noyes Avenue, at 7:30 p.m. Music was provided by the combined choirs of Village Chapel, Westminster, South Park and Ruffner Churches. The Service was led by members and ministers of the four churches.

On Good Friday, **April 5th** at 7:30 p.m., a Tenebrae Service with the reading of the passion narrative and the extinguishing of lights was held at the Kanawha City Baptist Church. A Tenebrae Service is a Christian Service that commemorates Jesus’ Final days. The word Tenebrae is Latin for “shadows” or “darkness”. Music was provided by the combined choirs of Village Chapel Presbyterian, Morris Memorial United Methodist and Kanawha City Baptist Churches.

Our annual congregational retreat was held on the weekend of **April 25-26** at the Bluestone Conference Center with more than 60 people participating. Bluestone retreats are always a wonderful experience of Christian fellowship; eating and playing together, discussing our life as Christians, informal worship in an outdoor setting; singing around a campfire, and all ages caring for one another!

Congratulations were extended to Patricia and Chris Johnson on the birth of their son, Alexander Staton on **April 19th**, and to Tommy and Fred Wiseman who celebrated their 63rd wedding anniversary on **April 22nd**.

On Saturday, **May 4th**, the Youth Fellowship held a car wash. Working hard from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m., the youth raised \$172.50 and split the proceeds between Project Graduation at Capitol and George Washington High schools and the Ronald McDonald House.

On the evening of **May 5th**, the Village Chapel Children’s Choir presented the musical, “Jonah: A Whale of a Tale”. Rose Ellen Sockman was the choreographer, Sharon Curnutte, Director, and Caroline Perrine was the pianist. The children participating were Tyler Perkins, Adam Cook, Grace McClung, Keri Blank, Laura Joslin, Luke Mafazy, Elizabeth Perkins, Emily Salisbury, Raya Mafazy, Elliott McNeil, Billy King, Joey McClung, Kevin Blank, David Salisbury, Mark Flannery, Byron Dodson, Brian Misiti, Julia McNeil, Erin Chiparo, and Lisa McClung.

Pentecost Sunday was celebrated in Red on **May 26th**. Everyone was invited to celebrate the birthday of the Church by wearing red and attending a reception following Worship Service where red velvet cake and red punch was served. Our summer Seminary student, Stephanie Hanson, from Princeton Theological Seminary began her twelve-week Internship with Village Chapel on this date.

June 9th was to have been the annual “Picnic in the Park” when the congregation would have gone to Kanawha State Forest for a worship service followed by a picnic and games. However, rain forced a change of plans, so everyone gathered at the Church for worship and an “indoor picnic” in the Fellowship Hall.

Congratulations were extended to the following high school graduates for **1996**: Barry Cunningham graduating from Virginia Episcopal School; and Joey Boyles and Peter Markham graduating from Capital High School.

The following elementary age children attended camp at Bluestone Conference Center in Hinton, WV: Gracie and Joey McClung, Abby Cable, Jenny Hanson, Keri Blank, Emily and David Salisbury, Elliot McNeil, Billy King, Carter and Meridith France, Sarah Buckalew, Adam Cook, Kristen Parks, and Taylor and Bobby Johnston. Stephanie Hanson, our Summer Intern, and Patti Salisbury attended as volunteer staff and Nathan Gerencir attended as a counselor. Kirk King attended the Youth Conference at Montreat.

The Session, in **June 1996**, adopted the recommendation of the Service Committee to make the Covenant House AIDS/HIV Residential and Resource Program a ministry supported by Village Chapel.

A “Family Ties” program for youth and adults was held on Tuesday evenings two weeks in July and August. Light suppers beginning at 6:00 p.m. were provided and programs included visitations to Barlow-Bonsall Funeral Home, Covenant House, and Health Right of West Virginia.

A Wedding Brunch honoring Frank Mansell, III and Debbie Main was held at the Church on the morning of Saturday, **July 20th** in the Fellowship Hall. Frank is the son of Frank and Joan Mansell, our Pastor and his wife. Young Frank and Debbie were married on August 31st in Martinsville, Indiana.

A reception was held following Worship on **August 11th** to thank our summer intern, Stephanie Hanson, for sharing her warmth and gifts with us this summer. Stephanie returned to Princeton Seminary on August 15th.

Village welcomed Amy Cliser as the Coordinator of Youth Ministry in September of **1996**. Amy contracted to work part-time--6 hours per week, primarily on Sundays, with the Youth Groups.

Frank Mansell wrote an article that was published in the Charleston Gazette-Mail on **September 1st** entitled “The Family Name is Christian”.

On **October 6th**, World Communion Sunday, Worship Service was held as an ecumenical service at Village Chapel. Planned jointly by Kanawha City Baptist, Morris Memorial Methodist, the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd and Village Chapel, the service included the combined choirs from the four churches and the four ministers shared in presiding at the Lord's Table. The offering received was given to the Union Mission. A time of Fellowship followed the service.

The annual Progressive Dinner was held on Saturday, **October 19th**. The Fall Harvest theme began with appetizers at the home of Dr. Garry and Lucy Brown; the main course at the home of Bill and Perry Field; and dessert was served at the home of Dr. Ken and Jane McNeil.

On **October 13, 1996**, we welcomed Jack and Sheila Grimm into active membership and the following week, on October 20th, we welcomed Mike and Joanie Panger and their son, Alex, and on the same day, welcomed Garry and Lucy Brown and their children, Sarah and Jacob. We shared the joy of Margaret Morgan who celebrated her 90th birthday on October 20th.

In mid-October, the Service Committee sponsored a "Towel Day" to collect and provide towels and washcloths for Covenant House, Sojourners, and the Aids residences.

Helen and Bill Coffey were featured in an article about retirement in the **October 1996** issue of Mid-Atlantic Country.

An Advent workshop for adults was held on **November 17th** from 1:00 to 4:00 titled, "Unplug the Christmas Machine" and was based on the popular book by the same title. Led by Felicia Stewart Hoyle, this workshop helped us examine our values and dreams and to explore ways of changing our practices to make them more in line with our beliefs.

Sunday evening **December 15th**, we gathered for our annual Christmas program and dinner at 5:30 p.m. Music by the children's choir, a skit by the Youth, a display of Creches, carols and a carry-in dinner provided a wonderful opportunity for worship and fellowship.

As of **December 31, 1995**, Village Chapel had an active membership of 324. There were 14 total gains and 34 total losses throughout the year ending **1996** with a total of 304 as of **December 31, 1996**. The average attendance at Sunday worship was 153.

At the end of **December 1996**, the church staff consisted of Frank Mansell, Jr., Minister; Felicia Stewart Hoyle, part-time Educator/Pastoral Assistant; Amy Cliser, part-time Youth Organizer; Linda Meadows, Secretary; Sharon Curnutte, Choir Director; Carolyn Perrine, Organist; and B. J. Chaney, Custodian. The church was guided by a Session of 18 members serving through the following eight committees: Education, Fellowship, Personnel, Property, Ministry, Service, Stewardship, and Worship.

New elders elected for the **Class of 1999** were: Jeff Chiparo, Demetrice Hardman, Tish Hodovan, Sarah Sears, Mark Swartz and Tom Wilkerson.

A Worship Exchange of ministers from Westminster, South Park, Ruffner and Village Chapel took place on **January 26th**. Frank Mansell led the service at Westminster and South Park and Bob Osborne was the pastor at Village Chapel.

In the first two months of **1997**, the roof over the kitchen and parlor was replaced, and windows in the Fellowship Hall were also replaced using funds set aside in 1996 for this purpose. The windows were replaced with a generous gift to the Church in memory of Rosalie Dillon.

Madeline and Brent Pleasant celebrated 50 years of marriage. Madeline was employed at Village Chapel until her retirement in 1993. Their picture appeared in the Charleston Gazette on **February 16th**.

On **March 19th** the Session welcomed into active membership the young people who have participated in the Confirmation Group this year: Jason Campbell, Matt Sampson, Sarah Bown, Clark Campbell, Emily Danzer, Peter Grimm, Laura Hanna, Penn Markham and Sara Misiti.

Sandy Bowles attended a Seminar on Local Church History at the Montreat Conference Center **April 22-25th**. Sandy will be working with others as Village Chapel moves toward its 50th Anniversary in 2000.

A special offering was collected for Bluestone Conference Center in the amount of \$722 to go toward the cost of replacing water and gas lines at the facility. Also, the Youth Fellowship held a car wash on **May 3rd** to benefit Bluestone Conference Center and raised \$188.00.

Village Chapel high school graduates this year included: Brooke Campbell from Capital High School and Whitney Perrine from George Washington High School. College graduates and the institution from which they graduated were Cris Callard (Hamden-Sydney); Davin Field Crenshaw (U. of Richmond Law School); Frank and Debbie Mansell (Princeton Theological Seminary); Jennifer Kelly, granddaughter of Phebe and Bob Trost (Marshall); and Erin LeClere, granddaughter of Betty LeClere (Lenoir Rhyne. Beth Bowles received the M.A. in Spanish from Vanderbilt and Susan Perkins received a master's degree from WVU.

On **June 27th and 28th**, Beth Chiparo participated in the 5th Annual American Cancer Society Relay for Life. The event was a 16-hour team walk/run to support the ACS.

Brooke Campbell was named to the All-State High School Tennis Team and Sarah Brown was honored as the student athlete with the highest academic average at Roosevelt Junior High. Rebecca Funkhouser's design of an advertisement for Parkway Supermarket won First Place among 5th graders in the Newspaper in Education Competition. Village Chapel youth are high achievers!

Village Chapel had two interns over the summer. For four weeks, **June 22** to July 18, Bridget Nichols worked with the Vacation Church School, worship leadership and pastoral care. Elizabeth Terrill, a 3rd year seminary student at Princeton Theological Seminary was at Village **July 20 to August 30th**. Elizabeth preached on three of the six Sundays she was here and was involved in pastoral, educational, and administrative ministries.

The "Christmas in July/August" event involved the congregation buying book bags and school supplies for approximately 60 children. These bags were provided for elementary students in Kanawha City schools.

Frank Mansell was recognized in August by the American Red Cross on **August 11th** for collective donation of 9 gallons of blood. John Bowles was recognized as an 8-gallon donor.

On **September 8th**, Frank Mansell wrote a thank you letter to Robert and Veronica Hamon of Scott Depot thanking them for the Communion pitcher, cup, and plates which they made for Village Chapel. He indicated that they would be used for the first time and dedicated to the Glory of God on Sunday, October 5th.

On Rally Day, held **September 7th**, the theme of "Celebrating Jesus" was continued. A pancake breakfast was provided prior to the groups being dismissed to Church classes.

On **September 21st** the congregation elected the following to serve on the Session for 1998: For elder (3-year term) Garry Brown, Candy Hawley, Harriet Hoy, Jack Grimm, Chris Johnson and Steve Perkins. Helen Singleton was elected for a one-year term to complete Jane King's last year. Jack York was elected as trustee for a 3 year-term.

On World Communion Sunday, **October 5th**, Village Chapel dedicated a new West Virginia handblown crystal communion set and a quilted table runner in memory of Beverly Burdette Cartwright, a former member. Also, John Mark, an elder from the Nyeri Presbytery in Kenya read the scripture at the 11:00 service in both English and Swahili. A joint service was held at 5:00 p.m. at Morris Memorial United Methodist Church with the congregations of Village Chapel, Kanawha City Baptist, and Good Shepherd Episcopal participating.

On **November 19th**, the Session approved Wedding Fees for Member Families which included:

Use of the Sanctuary for rehearsal and wedding	No Fee
Damage deposit	\$200.00
Minister Suggested honorarium	\$100.00
Organist	
Rehearsal and wedding	\$100.00
Extra rehearsal time	\$ 30.00
Custodian Wedding only	\$ 75.00
Removal of decorations	\$ 25.00
Opening Building	\$ 25.00
Wedding and reception at church (2 people @ \$200 each)	\$ 200.00
Reception	
Use of Fellowship Hall	\$ 60.00
Use of kitchen	\$ 40.00

These fees do not include washing dishes or cleaning the kitchen after a reception. This is the responsibility of the caterer or those planning the reception.

On Sunday evening, **December 7th**, Village Chapel's choir joined with the choir of Kanawha United Presbyterian Church for a special evening service presenting "A Day of Dancing". The music by Lloyd Pfausch is from Medieval England and was accompanied only by a bassoon, flute and drum. Sarah Misiti, Emily Danzer, and Julia Danzer did interpretive dance as the choir sang.

The Junior and Senior Fellowships hosted a Colonial Christmas Tea for the Senior Adults on **December 14th**. Dressed as colonials, invitations were made on parchment and delivered by the youth who at the event performed readings, sang and played piano pieces.

Over the year, the Presbyterian Women have supported the Church, the Presbytery, and local and world community missions in many ways. Midred Wrenn and Evelyn McClure made 224 stuffed bears and 226 stuffed dolls for children who were patients at CAMC Women and Children's Hospital. They also produced 147 cancer recovery bags. PW members volunteer to stuff stockings or wrap packages for the Salvation Army at Christmas. PW volunteers work at West Virginia Health Right, Covenant House and help with the Christmas Dinner at the Men's Emergency Shelter. They collect labels to send to the Davis-Stuart Children's Home in Lewisburg. This year, three of the circles raised and donated \$722.00 toward the Church's Good Samaritan Fund which provides assistance for utilities, food, and gasoline to needy people who come to the Church seeking assistance. Another circle made up 19 boxes of supplies for Bosnia at an approximate cost of \$400. Another circle raised \$153 for Meals on Wheels. In April circles asked each member to give \$5.00 for the mission project, "Blanket the World with Love" and as a result \$215 was collected to purchase 43 blankets for this program.

Members who died in **1997** included Faith Dilger (January 13th), Paul M. King (February 24th); Wilbur J. Mason (March 29th), Mary D. Southworth (April 8th) Aileen Southworth (May 23rd), Michael D. Bowles (June 10th); Virginia Baker Wilson (June 11th); Elizabeth Fields (July 11th); Gordon Preston (August 12th) and Lois A. Farley (August 19th).

The average attendance for Worship services in **1997** was 145.

Session members for **1998** included David Campbell, Martha Foster, Sam Hanna, Warren Danzer, Helen Singleton, Ken McNeil, Jeff Chiparo, Demetrice Hardman, Tish Hodovan, Sarah Sears, Mark Swartz, Tom Wilkenson, Candy Hawley, Jack Grimm, Chris Johnson Harriet Hoy, Garry Brown and Bobby Caldwell.

Records from **1998** present a follow-up to the 1995-1998 Strategic Plan as the Session met on January 10th to review the plan, review reports submitted to the Session in 1996-97 and to develop the Session's focus for 1998. For example, the implementation during this time of the "Passing the Peace" during worship is seen as a mechanism for greeting one another; fellowship before and after worship and the Care of Members Committee were other examples of the church dealing with the previously identified need to improve relationships and provide for personal spiritual growth.

As in years past, Village Chapel, under the able leadership of Rev. Frank Mansell, continued to be an active congregation, seeking to do God's will within the community. The Church supported many local and far-spreading works including Manna Meal, the Clothing Closet, Sojourner's and Covenant House. In February, the Senior High Youth raised \$207.76 and 59 items of canned goods that were donated to the Food Pantry through the Souper Bowl Sunday event.

Another activity completed by the Senior High group was a "clean-up the neighborhood" in which on a bright sunny afternoon six young people and their two adult advisors, went into the Village Chapel neighborhood and picked up ten bags of trash.

Another example was organized by Sarah Sears – the "No Frills Walk for Meals," a route of about three miles from the Church to Kanawha Mall. Other churches were invited to participate and local businesses donated water and bananas for the hikers. About 100 walkers participated and raised \$1,850 which was donated to Charleston Manna Meal (75%) and the remaining 25% to Church World Services (Crop Walk organizers).

In the summer of **1998**, as in past years, the "Christmas in July" provided school supplies for 50+ children through the Keep-A-Child-In-School program and at Christmas the "Angel Tree" was again held to provide opportunity for the congregation to donate gifts for needy children.

Through donations from the congregation and partial support from the 2 Cents A Meal collection, the Village “Good Samaritan Fund” disbursed \$9,591.62 through **1998** in response to 366 requests for assistance. These funds provided food, rent, utilities, transportation, and medical expenses of those “walk-ins” seeking help.

The **1998** Lenten Season began with a Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper and Worship service. Frank Mansell led a Bible Study on “The Great Ends of the Church” and special services were planned for Palm Sunday and Maundy Thursday. On Palm Sunday during the message time, the congregation stood and responsively read with Frank, selections from the Gospel of Mark describing the events of Holy Week. The Maundy Thursday evening service was a joint service planned and led by ministers, elders, and musicians from Village Chapel, Ruffner, Ruffner Memorial, South Park, and Westminster Presbyterian Churches.

This year our Summer Intern was Amy Salmon. Amy had completed her first year at Princeton seminary and spent the summer engaged in a variety of education, worship and administrative activities here at Village Chapel.

During **1998**, Rev. Mansell made a conscious effort to develop relationships with other churches and to promote joint worship services and not just with the Presbyterian churches in the area – looking at ecumenical services, particularly on World Communion and Maundy Thursday. He suggested in a note to the Worship Committee that Village consider doing more with Kanawha City Baptist, Morris Memorial, and Good Shepherd Episcopal Churches.

Kathryn McCrary, a long-time member and former employee of the church, retired as the Associate Presbyter: Director of Christian Education in **July 1998**. To honor her long-time service to the Church and the Presbytery, a reception was held at Village Chapel on **June 27th**.

The **1998** Vacation Bible School was a combined effort with Kanawha United Presbyterian Church. There were 100+ children participating and many adults and youth served as teachers and leaders. A service project for this VBS was the collection of neckties and nickels for the people of Kenya.

Seventeen Village Chapel youth attended summer camp at Bluestone Conference Center and two adults served as volunteer staff for this event. Three older youth, Sarah Brown, Sara Misiti, and Clark Campbell, along with their Youth Advisor, Vicki Frisk, attended the Presbytery Triennium at Purdue University.

In October, a member of the congregation, Robert Bruce King, was appointed as a federal judge on the U. S. Court of Appeals for the 4th Circuit. Sworn in on Friday, October 23rd, hundreds of dignitaries and well-wishers packed two courtrooms at the new Robert C. Byrd Courthouse in downtown Charleston. Senators Robert Byrd and Jay Rockefeller had nominated Mr. King for the post, and both were on hand for the ceremony.

November 8th was a special joy as we celebrated with Frank Mansell, III during his Ordination Service as Minister of the Word and Sacrament. Young Frank moved to Charleston 15 years ago when his father accepted the call as Pastor here at Village Chapel. We have watched young Frank grow into a fine young man and have supported him throughout his college, seminary, and studies abroad. The service was followed by a reception in the Fellowship Hall.

The Advent Season of **1998** saw the youth of the church plan, prepare, and host a “Country Christmas Tea” for the older adults. Frank Mansell led a Bible Study on Monday evenings. The Christmas Program on **December 20th**, featured Sharon Curnutte on piano and Carolyn Perrine on the organ playing beautiful duets. A Christmas Eve Service was held at 9:00 p.m. and was well attended.

During **1998**, fourteen people read through the entire Bible, including Erin Chiparo, who at age 9, did so by reading three different versions of Children’s Bibles.

Other fellowship activities during **1998** included the annual “Village Chapel at Bluestone” for family and friends the last weekend of April, and the annual “Picnic in the Park” an informal service and cookout at Kanawha State Forest in June.

In **1998**, the Presbyterian Women were very active with five Circles, each having 10 - 15 members. These groups meet monthly September through May for Bible Study and fellowship. The officers for 1998-1999 were Sharon Curnutte, Moderator; Cindy Hanna, Vice-Moderator; Phyl Livesay, Treasurer; Patty Harding, Secretary; Dianne Ellis, Spiritual Enrichment; Helen Singleton, Mission Interpretation; Becky Lippitt, Leadership; and Patti Salisbury, Historian.

Just as in previous years, the PW have supported funding projects such as the Birthday Offering, the Least Coin Offering, and the Thanks Offering. In 1998 the PW contributed \$50 each to the Heifer Project and Meals on Wheels and made donations to the Presbyterian Church Camp and the Davis Stuart Children’s Home.

Two members of the group, Evelyn McClure and Mildred Wrenn again sewed and stuffed cloth bears and dolls which were given to the children who are patients at CAMC’s Women and Children’s Hospital. This year these ladies made 238 bears and 127 dolls. They also made 186 Cancer Recovery Bags for the American Cancer Society, a job they have been doing for about 30 years.

Mary Hague died November 29, 1998. Her son, Bradford D. Hague, wrote a letter to Rev. Frank Mansell thanking him for his “words of comfort and prayers” for his mother as well as Frank’s remembrance of her during worship services. Mary founded the Village Chapel kindergarten in her home in 1950 with the support of Dr. J. Moody McNair, the first pastor at

Village. She moved the kindergarten into the Church the following year and served over the years as Director of the Kindergarten, Superintendent of Sunday Schools, and deacon until 1984 (the kindergarten continued until 1988) when she moved out of state to live with one of her sons. In honor of his mother and her work with the Village Chapel kindergarten, Mr. Hague made a monetary contribution in her honor asking that it be “used for the direct benefit of the youth of the church”. This trust fund, known as the Mary Darnold Hague Memorial Fund, was designated to be used to send a youth to Camp Miniwanca in Michigan each year to develop leadership skills. Over the years, it has been used to send youth to a variety of leadership events.

Village Chapel began **1999** by ordaining and installing the following six elders the second Sunday in January: Vickie Cunningham, Mike Carey, Kathryn McCrary, Sheila Danzer, Jean Blair and Mike Panger (Class of 2001). Other Session members were: Candy Hawley, Jack Grimm, Chris Johnson, Harriet Hoy, Garry Brown, Bobby Caldwell, Jeff Chiparo, Demetrice Hardman, Tish Hodovan, Sarah Sears, and Tom Wilkerson. This same Sunday the Annual Congregational Meeting was held to receive reports from Committees and staff for 1998, and to receive the budget for 1999 as adopted by the Session, and to approve the terms of call for the minister.

A confirmation class met over a three-month period (mid-January through mid-April) with 13 youth and 13 adult covenant partners exploring Christian discipleship as members of the Church. Frank Mansell, Felicia Stewart Hoyle and Vicki Frisk served as leaders. The young people, ready to make a profession of faith as part of their confirmation, were welcomed publicly on Palm Sunday, March 28th. The youth participating were: Keri Blank, Adam Cook Grace McClung, Laura Joslin, Erin Snyder, Bethany Robertson, Jessica Tetrick, Kate Dobson, David Hoy, Julia Danzer, Corena Maiden, Maggie Sears, and Luke Mafazy. Erin Snyder and Luke Mafazy were baptized as part of their profession.

On the last Sunday of January, Village participated in an exchange of worship leaders as part of the week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Frank Mansell preached at Westminster and South Park Presbyterian Churches; Esber Tweel, rector at the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, preached at Village Chapel with Felicia Stewart Hoyle serving as Liturgist; Tim McGhee, pastor at South Park and Westminster, preached at Good Shepherd. Also on **January 31st**, Samuel Reilly Stickler, son of Alatheia and Dan Stickler was baptized with the Rev. Rodney A. Foster participating. Rodney is Samuel’s grandfather living in another state. Samuel’s grandmother, Martha Foster, and brother, Adam Cook, are members of Village Chapel.

A Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner was held at 6:00 p.m. on **February 16th** and a special evening worship service followed at 7:00.

The Theme for the yearlong 50th Anniversary celebration was 50th Anniversary: Remember, Rejoice, and Renew which was the title of the history of Village's first 50 years written by Sandy Bowles. The year **1999** was a very special year as the Church celebrated a yearlong anniversary beginning in March and continuing until the actual "birthday" in March of **2000**. During that entire year, archives of the church were on display and special emphasis was placed upon the anniversary activities.

As part of the 50th Anniversary celebration, the Presbyterian Women encouraged every member of the congregation to contribute a recipe to be included in a cookbook which was published in March. A "tasting" after worship on **March 14th** allowed the church family to sample many of the recipes contained in the Cookbook. Sales from the book produced \$1,948.19 and were donated toward the \$40,000 goal needed for a Habitat Partnership as Village Chapel's gift to the community in honor of the 50th Anniversary was to build a Habitat House during June of 1999.

On **March 21st**, the choirs of Village Chapel and Kanawha United Presbyterian Churches combined to present "Requiem" by Gabriel Faure, accompanied by organ and strings. This performance also included the premier performance of "O Radiant Light," an anthem composed for the 50th Anniversary of Village Chapel by Mark D. Templeton, a student at the University of Charleston. Soloists included Deborah Lucas, Roger Lucas, Howard Salisbury and Rick Cook.

A Maundy Thursday service was held on **April 1st** with the combined leadership of ministers, elders, and musicians of Ruffner Memorial, South Park, Westminster and Village Chapel Presbyterian Churches. Also, for the third year in a row, Village provided an Easter meal for those in the Covenant House AIDS Residential Program.

Jim and Kelly Kirkpatrick were invited to attend and have a leadership role in Village Chapel's weekend at Bluestone on **April 23-25** as part of the yearlong celebration. Jim worked with the youth at Village previously and Kelly was active in the Church as a teacher, elder and choir member. Jim and Kelly brought their youngest son, Reid, with them and everyone enjoyed the reunion and fellowship.

The children's choir performed the musical, "Moses and the Freedom Fanatics" on Sunday **May 2nd**. Choir members included: David Salisbury, Jared Hawley, Philip Mullins, Mark Flannery, Samantha Hanna, Lisa McClung, Brian Misiti, Erin Chiparo, Will Anderson, John Anderson, Jacob Hoyle, Jamie Hanna, Alex Cook, Allyson Robertson, Alex Panger, Sarah Hawley, and Corey Dobson. In honor of the 50th Anniversary and the 18th year of musical plays, some Close Encounters alumni who are still in junior or senior high school locally participated.

Pentecost worship on **May 23rd** included Holy Communion, recognition of high school graduates (Mandy Sampson and Chris Field), a printed listing of Charter members and a carry-in luncheon. Several charter members still living and participating in Church activities were: Lou Arthur, Betty Arthur Burton, Jim and Betty Arthur, Betty Brawley, Dick Callard, Joni Haynes, Jane King, Harold Litton, Eloise Litton, Hugh Markey, Don Pitzer, William “Bill” Reichard, Paul Snyder, Ruth Snyder, Jules Sockman, Rose Ellen Sockman, Polly Dodson, Tommie Wiseman and Mildred Wrenn.

A Committee chaired by Mike Carey worked diligently to plan a very special contribution to our community – a Habitat Build and on Saturday, **June 5, 1999**, Village Chapel, in partnership with Habitat for Humanity began a two-week blitz build on a house located on 58th Street in the upper end of Kanawha City. After months of planning and working hard to raise the necessary \$40,000 required to purchase building materials and other expenses, construction began. (The Church raised \$34,414.45 in cash plus in-kind contributions of materials and labor from businesses that were valued at \$5,585.55.) Village Chapel provided workers daily and Presbyterian Women helped by providing lunches and snacks, water, and juices for the crew. PW solicited donations of foods from area businesses for specific needs or days. They also acted as “hosts,” signing people in as they arrived each day. Workers received caps and T-shirts with a Village Chapel/PCUSA logo. Fourth grader Julia McNeil drew the T-shirt logo with the theme of “People Helping People”. A dedication service was held with the family that would occupy the house on Saturday, June 19th as Village’s anniversary gift to the community was completed. Rounding out the two-week blitz build, the Church held its annual “Worship in the Park” at Kanawha State Forest with a picnic and wonderful end to an amazing two weeks! The Vacation Bible School curriculum was Habitat for Humanities’ “Under Construction” and a friend of the Church brought a front-end loader for the kids to play on. The Vacation Bible School received gifts totaling \$100 to plant a tree on the property where the house was built and this was done in November 1999.

In the **Summer 1999** edition of SITE LINES, the Newsletter of Mountaineer Habitat, an article entitled “The Village Chapel Presbyterian Church Blitz-Build” was included. Excerpts from this article shared the following: “Who would believe that a church with an average Sunday worship attendance of less than 150 could raise enough money and provide enough volunteers to blitz-build a Habitat House? The people at Village Chapel Presbyterian Church, that’s who! For over a year the members of this small church planned to do something dramatic and bold to celebrate the congregation’s Fiftieth Anniversary. They choose Habitat for Humanity as the tool they would use to ‘work out their faith’ and gave the gift of partnership to four of God’s people in need. The site was a small lot on 58th Street in Kanawha City. If not for the partnership of the Kanawha Mall who provided us with the elbow room required for a blitz-build, the project would not have gone as smoothly. The next-door neighbors, Habitat homeowners, Barry and Charlotte S., also helped us have room for our hospitality tables and tents to set up. During one of the hottest June weeks in history, the house was framed and put under roof. The day the shingles were put on, the official temperature in Charleston was 98 degrees – and the temperature was surely 20 degrees hotter on the roof! ‘Consider it a blessing to suffer for the sake of Christ.’ The volunteers kept

on working; the hospitality crew kept on bringing water and the house continued to be built in spite of the unbelievable working conditions. Despite the weather, the build was completed just as the dedication ceremony was scheduled to begin. Project coordinator, Mike Carey, remarked at how surprisingly easy the project was to pull off. Village Chapel's Pastor, The Rev. Frank Mansell, Jr., said that it was tempting to exclaim, 'we did it!', but he hearkened the words of the Psalmist, 'unless the Lord builds the house, its workers labor in vain.' He noted that this was indeed a work of God through God's people and that it was God's blessing that made the project successful. Mountaineer Habitat for Humanity would like to lift up Village Chapel as an example of how congregations of any size can be involved in a big way with our ministry. Every church that has undertaken a sponsored house project has been blessed by the experience. As Mike Carey writes 'In the end, I truly believe that our congregation received more than Marlena and the boys (the homeowners to be). The joy our congregation experienced as we all came together on this project was immeasurable.' Thank you, Village Chapel!!!"

On **June 5th**, Jules and Rose Ellen Sockman celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with a reception at Village Chapel. Rose Ellen was also a 50-year-choir member.

For the **summer of 1999**, Village Chapel enjoyed the presence of another seminary student as a summer intern, preaching, visiting, learning and helping with Vacation Bible School. Matthew Camlin, a student from Princeton Theological Seminary was a welcome addition to the summer staff.

Christmas in July again provided backpacks, school supplies and small personal items for at-risk children through the Keep-A-Child-In-School program. An "Apple Tree" with children's names was placed in the narthex on **July 25th**. Church members would select an Apple and purchase school items for that child and return them to put under the tree or in the vicinity by **August 15th**.

Children from the Church attended the summer camp program at Bluestone Conference Center near Hinton, WV. Those attending included Keri Blank, Grace McClung, Joey McClung, Elliott McNeil, Julia McNeil, Syndey Clark, Jacob Hoyle, David Salisbury, Emily Salisbury, Julia Danzer, DJ Funkhouser, Rebecca Funkhouser, Philip Mullins, Mark Flannery, Sarah Wallace, Nick Wolfe, and Heather Wolfe. Adults participating were Patti Salisbury, Carol Funkhouser, and Fifi Wolfe.

Over the summer months, pictures of Village Chapel members and friends were taken in order to prepare a 50th Anniversary Pictorial Directory to be available in March 2000. On **September 12th** the congregation was invited to be in a picture taken of the congregation in the sanctuary. This picture will be a "50 years later" picture to put beside the picture taken in 1949 in the original sanctuary.

Rally Day was held on **September 12th** and began with a breakfast at 9:15 a.m. After a short program, the children were dismissed to their classes with their teachers. The theme the Presbyterian Women's Bible Study of "Psalms for a New Millennium" makes one aware of the year 2000 and will be carried over into worship services. On September 19th there was a special recognition of all those who have taught at Village Chapel over these 50 years.

A World Communion Service was held on **October 3rd**. Seven churches participated: Kanawha City Baptist, Morris Memorial United Methodist, Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, and Ruffner Memorial, Westminster, South Park and Village Chapel Presbyterian Churches. On the following day, October 4th, the congregation was invited to come to an evening reception to meet Samuel Mwaria and Nancy Kaigua who are members of a four-person delegation from the Presbytery of Nyeri who have been visiting churches in the Presbytery since September 17th.

On **October 3rd** the Presbyterian Women and Village Chapel lost a very special friend, Rose Ellen Sockman. Rose Ellen was a charter member of Village and was active in Presbyterian Women from this group's beginning. She was active in both Kanawha Players and the Charleston Light Opera Guild. Cindy Hanna offered a special tribute in memory of Rose Ellen Sockman at the October PW Coordinating Team meeting.

The 2nd Annual "No Frills Walk for Meals" set up by Village Chapel member Sarah Sears and the Service Committee, again sponsored a 3-mile walk through our neighborhood to raise money and awareness of hunger in our community. For **1999** the effort raised \$2,242.34 with 75% donated to Manna Meal and 25% to support the Church World Service Organization.

For the five Mondays in November, Frank Mansell led a Bible Study. **On November 14th**, a Celebration of Music Bulletin insert listed persons who have sung in the choir or served as directors and organists over the last 50 years. On November 21st the choir sang the anthem "Praise the Lord O Jerusalem". This anthem was sung at Thanksgiving each year for the first 30 years in the history of Village Chapel.

As part of the year-long anniversary celebration, the advent candle lighters represented the generation during which they joined the Church: Week 1 Bob Campbell, Jr. (1965) and his daughter, Brooke Campbell (1993); Week 2 Bill Chevalier (1965) and his daughters, Bonnie Cable (1969) and Cathy McClung (1970), and Cathy's daughter, Grace (1999); Week 3 David Joslin (1957) and his daughter, Laura (1999).

Village Chapel continues to support the community in many ways including: the Samaritan Fund; 2 Cents A Meal; Peace Offering; Joy Offering; the Souper Bowl of Caring; Manna Meal; Food Pantry; Clothing Closet; Keep A Child In School; One Great Hour of Sharing; WV Health Right; Covenant House; Religious Coalition for Community Renewal, Union Mission, Habitat for Humanity, Literacy Volunteers, and the Salvation Army.

The following was included in the **December 21st** issue of The Villager:

This
Christmas
end a quarrel.
Seek out a forgotten
friend. Dismiss suspicion,
and replace it with trust
Write a love letter. Share some
treasure. Give a soft answer. En-
courage youth. Manifest your loyalty in
word and deed. Keep a promise. Find the
time. Forgo a grudge. Forgive an enemy. Listen.
Apologize if you were wrong. Try to be understanding.
Flout envy. Examine your demands on others. Think
first of someone else. Appreciate. Be kind, be gentle
Laugh a little. Laugh a little more. Deserve confidence
Take up arms against malice. Decry complacency. Express your
gratitude. Go to church. Welcome a stranger. Gladden the heart of
a child. Take pleasure in the beauty and wonder of the earth. Speak
your love.
Speak it again.
Speak it still
once again.

VILLAGE CHAPEL IN THE 2000s

50th ANNIVERSARY CONTINUED

As the Church continued to move forward to its 50th Anniversary, there were a number of activities involved with the celebration. One was an identification of the nature of the population in the 2304 zip code which is primarily Kanawha City. A document labeled “10 Facts 25304–Charleston, WV” indicated the following: Current Population = 9,278; Projected 5 Year Population Change = -2.7%; Largest Lifestyles Group = Young and Coming; Non-Anglo Population = 9%; Fastest Growing Racial/Ethnic Group = Asians; Households with No Faith Involvement = 39%; Average Age = 43.6; Average Household Income = \$55,262; Single Parent Households = 29%; and College Graduates = 28%.