

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%.

In response to an invitation to the daughters of Dr. McNair, the first pastor of Village Chapel, here are some comments from a letter received from Kay McNair Holloman directed to the writer of this document:

Thank you for contacting us about the 50th Anniversary celebration of the Village Chapel. From the moment you called back in January, Martha (her sister) and I looked forward to the March 26th weekend. We know that “You can’t go home again,” & that’s what we did.

We showed our husbands First Presbyterian and luckily ran into a workman who let us in the sanctuary. Our husbands were really fascinated by the physical plant, the richness of the sanctuary interior—just everything about First!

We showed them where we lived on Brooks Street and where one of my best friends lived on Kanawha Blvd., near Brooks Street.

We also found the spot on Cabin Creek where our father had preached on Sunday afternoons. The building – we don’t remember if it was just a building (or perhaps a church, has burned down, but we were able to salvage two bricks which we presume were part of the foundation of the building.

I do think our dad was looking down at us and proud that we remembered the tiny Cabin Creek days as well as the days spent at the magnificent plant that is First Presbyterian.

We were also able to introduce our husbands to a few people we knew at Village Chapel—not many, of course, since many have died or moved away. Those people were Pete and Steve Moore and their wives, Kathryn McCrary and her children, Betty and Jim Arthur and their children. We (Martha and I) also visited with Polly Dodson and some of her children, and with Lou Arthur. Luckily Betty Burton said she monitored her mother’s visits, but we feel fortunate she let us visit.

The weekend was so very special to Martha and me. So many memories which we had shared together were brought back from that memory bank called brains, and we were able to share those memories with our husbands, and we’ll be able to keep and cherish those memories in our hearts and minds forever.

Thank you again for contacting us about the celebration so we could be there for a very special day.

Sincerely,
Kay McNair Holloman

As a gift and remembrance of the 50th Anniversary, one of our families, Tom and Sandra Wilkerson and their daughter, Cindy Hanna, and their son, Jim Wilkerson, made “Suncatcher” crosses for each Village Chapel family. These were made available for each family on the roll of active members to take after the worship service and families were encouraged to “Hang it in your home and when you look at it remember the love and caring that went into this Celebration of Faith.”

As a celebration of Village Chapel’s history, Sandy Bowles and Amy Parker gathered information and “relics” from the past 50 years and placed on the walls of the Fellowship Hall. “Every inch was covered!!” In addition, a power point made by Sandy Bowles, illustrating the first 50 Years ran continuously on the computer screen in the Fellowship Hall. As a viewing exercise, a “50th Anniversary Scavenger Hunt” directed participants to “Look on the walls of the Fellowship Hall for the answers to 27 questions which included the following:

How many times do you see yourself?
How many times do you see a member of your family?
How many brides do you see?
Find a picture of our sanctuary with the front looking different.
What was the date of the groundbreaking for the current sanctuary?
What was wrong with the first set of dishware?
Where did the Sunday School meet in 1946?
And 20 more . . .

Many Church groups were recognized during the celebration. For example, the Presbyterian Women and the leadership of this group which included: (alphabetically) Susan Ainsworth, Sally Brown, Lucille Carrington, Elsie Cochran, Polly Dodson, Helen Eberbaugh, Fern Huff, Lora Ingram, Jane King, Dot Massey, Virginia McNutt, Lucy Wintercamp, Kathy Blank, Gloriann Caudill, Peggy Cooley, Vicky Cunningham, Sharon Curnutte, Perry Field, Cindy Hanna, Patty Harding, Brenda Jones, Mary Lee Jung, Susan Perkins, Patti Salisbury, Michelle Sampson, and Phoebe Trost. Treasurers have included: Flo Seaton (for 15-20 years), Evelyn McClure, and Phyllis Livesay.

The actual celebration of the Anniversary took place on Sunday, **March 26th, 2000** carrying out the theme “Remember – Rejoice – Renew”. Beginning at 9:45, children through 6th grade met in their Church School classes. Youth and adults were invited to gather in the Sanctuary for light refreshments and conversation. The worship began at 11:00 with guest leaders former Minister Conrad Crow and Associate Minister Floyd N. Rhodes, Vice-Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA). These individuals focused on assisting the congregation to think about being a congregation of Christ’s church in the past, the present, and the future. Music was provided by the adult and children’s choirs accompanied by Village instrumentalists and brass from the West Virginia Symphony. Frank Mansell, Felecia Stewart Hoyle, and Jack Grimm served as liturgists. Music included an anthem “O Radiant Light”, written especially for this service by University of Charleston student, Mark Thompson. Following the service, a luncheon served by Joe Zando of Catering

Unlimited was offered. The luncheon was served in the Fellowship Hall with seating in the library, classroom, Fellowship Hall, and the Sanctuary. An anniversary photo was taken as well. KRT bus transportation was provided between parking in the area and the Church.

Other activities involved in the Anniversary celebration included those published in 1999 activities as well as newspaper articles, historical notes in The Villager, the creation of a “Hall of Pastors” in the main floor classroom in the Education Building. Also, an eight page “Brief History” written by Sandy Bowles was published and made available to those attending the Anniversary Worship Service.

THE CHURCH BEYOND THE 50th ANNIVERSARY 2000

The congregation was encouraged to read the Bible in **2000** as part of the continuing celebration of the Church’s 50th Anniversary. The year 2000 began with the celebration of Holy Communion, an act of worship that reminds one of God’s presence. On **January 7th** Village celebrated the Reaffirmation of Our Baptismal Covenant, remembering our own baptisms and reaffirming our commitment to be Christ’s disciples.

The **2000** Session consisted of: Class of 2001 - Vicki Cunningham, Mike Carey, Kathryn McCrary, Sheila Danzer, Jean Blair, and Mike Panger; Class of 2002 – Sandy Bowles, Rick Cook, Kemp Melton, Sharon Richardson, Lynn Sheets and Alice Vande Linde; and the Class of 2003 – Kathy Blank, Fred Joseph, Julia King, John Robertson, Patti Salisbury and Jack York. In the **January 16th** edition of The Villager, Frank Mansell included the following note: “MINISTRY TEAMS” The Session is using this name in place of “committees” as we move into 2001. “Committee” sounds like a dull or at least routine meeting. But we are involved in a vital ministry as members of the Church of Jesus Christ. Our ministry takes various forms— education, worship, outreach, care, fellowship, service, property, stewardship, and personnel. A team of people is being selected by the Session this week to lead us in each of these ministries. Each ministry team will be enlisting others in the congregation to be active in various ministries. We will use the term “Ministry Team Leader” instead of “Moderator” for each of the ministry teams. Surely, we will slip and use “committee” from time to time. But try out the new name; remind yourself of it. The words themselves may help us to be more focused on our calling to serve Christ and to serve others in the Church and beyond.

On the last Sunday in January, an Ecumenical Worship Exchange was held with Kanawha City Baptist, Good Shepherd Episcopal, Westminster, South Park and Village Chapel. The Youth participated in collecting food and money for the 2000 Souper Bowl and received \$178 which was donated to the Covenant House Food Pantry.

In **January 2000**, the church initiated Traveling Communion. There were five teams, each assigned to take communion to two or three individuals: The John Calvin Team (the “father” of Presbyterianism) composed of Lou Maxson, Kathryn McCrary and Phil Harich; the

John Knox Team (writer of the Scots Confession) composed of David Dawson, Julie King and Amy Parker); the Francis Makemie Team (established the Presbyterian Church in America) composed of Sandy Bowles, Charlie Stebbins, and Kathy Kruk; the Rachel Henderlite Team (first woman ordained in ministry in the PCUS – 1965) composed of Dianne Ellis, Howard Salisbury and Sara Slamick; and the William Benfield Team (Moderator of the General Assembly, 1st chair of COCU, professor at LPTS, pastor at First Charleston, interim at Village Chapel) composed of Sandra Wilkerson, Tom Wilkerson and Todd Zubick. Team members were given written instructions to be carried out with the visit including an opening scripture reading, an invitation to communion, prayer, words of institution, distribution of the elements and a closing prayer.

A Teacher's Breakfast was held in March along with a special "March into Church School" Spring Rally Day. Sunday School offerings continue to support the Heifer Project which involves purchasing chickens, rabbits, or oxen to provide an ongoing source of food for families in Third World countries. Rev. Mansell led a Lenten Bible Study on "The Lord's Prayer" over the four Sundays in March.

The twelve young people confirmed this year were portrayed with a picture and a lengthy paragraph about each indicating where they have gone to school, their interests, and a bit about their family and personality. The group includes Bobby Johnston, Elliott McNeil; Krista Jacobs; Catherine Hoy, Joey McClung Carter France, Kisten Noell Parks, Emily Salisbury, Kevin Blank, David Dobson, Scott Castleman, and David Mullins.

Village Chapel helped to plan and participate in an ecumenical Easter Sunrise Service on **April 23rd** at Watt Power Park in conjunction with all Kanawha City churches at 6:30 a.m. to 7:45 a.m. The minister for the service was The Reverend Doctor Arthur Backus, the Former District Superintendent and Pastor in West Virginia and Delaware. Music was provided by the combined choirs of Good Shepherd, Morris Memorial, Kanawha City Baptist, and Village Chapel. The service also featured a live depiction of the scene at the cross performed in costume by area residents.

Sandy Bowles, Moderator of the Worship Ministry Team, instituted "Rose Cards and Roses" to honor births and deaths in the congregation. A white rose symbolizing the innocence of the baby and a card bearing a message to the family was placed on the communion table for the Sunday service following the birth. Following the service the rose and card was given to the family if present, and if not, was taken to their home following the service. In the event of a death, a red rose symbolizing the richness of a life well-lived and a card bearing "The Rose Beyond the Wall" was handled in the same manner.

The Bluestone Conference was held last weekend in April with 40 members and friends attending. It was an especially enriching experience as the West Virginia Presbytery Moderator, Gay Mothershed joined the group for the celebration of Village's 59th Anniversary.

On **May 12th and 13th of 2000**, Sandy Bowles attended the Presbytery of West Virginia meeting held at Cedar Lakes. Topics discussed included: “The Reality and Context of Change,” “Models of Ministry, Leadership Issues and Vital Churches and Ministries,” “Models of Ministry and Mission Meeting Community Needs”, and “Implications for Ministry in Local Areas”.

The Children’s Choir presented the play “The Troubbable of Zerubbable” on **May 14th**. The young people participating in this were: David Salisbury, Samantha Hanna, Jamie Hanna, Erin Chiparo, Brian Misiti Lisa McClung, Alex Panger, Brian Pratt, Alex Cook, Katie Cook, Erin Cook, Jared Hawley, and Sarah Hawley.

High School Graduates were recognized on **May 21st** during the Worship Service and a reception in their honor was held after the service. Graduates this year were Sarah Brown, Clark Campbell, Emily Danzer, Peter Grimm, Laura Hanna, Christine Husson, Corena Maiden, Sara Misiti, and Andrea Tetrick.

The **2000** Sunday in the Park, which was also Pentecost Sunday, was celebrated at Kanawha State Forest Shelters 5 & 6 on **June 11th** and included Holy Communion. The service was followed with the now traditional picnic and games.

In early June, the church welcomed Anne Ross as the Summer Seminary Intern. Anne completed her first year at Princeton Seminary after working 20 years as a nurse. She will spend ten weeks here at Village.

During the month of June, Felicia Stewart Hoyle and her husband had the unique opportunity to go to Maui, Hawaii where she and her husband served as interim pastors for a church in the town of Hana. “It was an incredible working vacation where we shared our faith with people who have a very different perspective on life but who share many of the struggles we see in West Virginia—contrasting cultures, disparities in wealth and opportunity, and declining interest in the church.”

A new brown and teal communion service was given to Village Chapel as a gift from John and Sandy Bowles in memory of their son Michael who died June 10, 1997.

A very special event occurred over the week of **June 18-24** – a Youth Mission Trip to Charleston, South Carolina to build a Habitat House on St. John’s Island. The Youth participating were: Keri Blank, Clark Campbell, Jason Campbell, Adam Cook, Julia Danzer, Kate Dobson, Danielle Fink, Choccol Gupta, Amanda Hoy, Melissa Phouthavong, Maggie Sears, and Erin Snyder. Adults accompanying the youth were: John Bowles, Sandy Bowles, Jeff Chiparo, Frank Mansell, Joan Mansell, Sara Sears, and Anne Ross, our Summer Intern.

On July 5th, the Younger Youth participated in a “Day of Service” donating and preparing “Care Packages” for Covenant House. Afterward, they spent the afternoon at the Wave Pool in Hurricane.

The **2000** ARK AVENUE - “God’s Great Get Together” was the theme for the 2000 Vacation Bible School held **July 17-21st**. There were 63 children participating. Teachers and Youth Leaders included: Preschool – Sharon Richardson and Barbara Richardson; 5 yr. old – Joanie Panger, Keri Blank, and Bobbi Johnston; 1st and 2nd – Jill Burford, Harriet Hoy, Nancy Johnston, Elliott McNeil, and Joey McClung; 3rd and 4th – Cindy Hanna, Patti Harding, David Dobson, and Kristen Parks; 5th and 6th – Kathryn McCrary, and Laura Hanna; Youth – Anna Ross; Crafts- Jane McNeil, Alice Vande Linde, Cindy Dobson, and Kate Dobson; Snacks – Fifi Wolfe, Helen Singleton, Heather Barry, Kevin Blank, and David Mullins; Director - Kathy Blank; Christian Educator – Felicia Stewart Hoyle; Summer Intern – Anne Ross; and Prayer Partner – Peggy Cooley.

The Service Ministry Team established a ministry program for underprivileged children at Marmet Elementary School. Over the year, ten members of the congregation became “grand friends” of an individual or a class and went once a week to real aloud, to provide parties as “home room mothers,” to tutor as needed, or just be a friend – talking and listening. It was a very rewarding experience for the Village Chapel volunteers who engaged in this service. In addition, Rick Cook, John Bowles, and George Singleton constructed a computer lab platform for the school. The goal of this project was to provide encouragement and raise self-esteem for these children.

Village Chapel participated in an afternoon World Communion Service at the New Jerusalem Non-Denominational Church in Kanawha City. Sponsoring churches were good Shepherd Episcopal, Morris Memorial Methodist, and Ruffner Memorial Presbyterian. New Jerusalem is the home congregation of the family living in the Habitat House built by Village Chapel in the summer of 1999. The World Communion Peace Offering collected \$352. Following this service, the Worship Ministry Team discussed the possibility of “alternative” services with the suggestion that Ministry Team members attend other services at other churches to explore ideas. It was also suggested that for Christmas 2001 that the congregation be asked to donate nativity creches in lieu of flowers and to begin to build a collection for decorating the church in the future. Another suggestion was made in view of prayer requests and that was to place a “Prayer Basket” on one of the tables in the narthex with appropriate slips and request the congregation to place prayer request in the basket prior to the beginning of the service. The basket would be carried forward by the acolyte to be available for the minister to read during “Prayers for the People”. The “Hope Basket” that is on the back table was donated by Lillian Kelly in honor of Paula Vasale, a former member of the UC faculty and a friend of many in our congregation. The basket is a special edition “Hope” basket created for the American Cancer Society.

In November, All Saint’s Day remembered those friends and relatives who died during the previous year. Those placed in memory were “Sard” Yeager, Helen Coffey, Kathryn Ward, Bill Reichard, Alyce Morgan, Paul Snyder, Marshall Jones and Harold Litton.

In **2000** the Property Ministry Team completed a number of projects including: repair and/or replacement of the window lintels on the north wall of the Education Building, repair of the sign board at the corner of 39th Street and Venable, installation of a security system controlled by church office staff, improved or replaced locks on the Education Building doors, repaired the kitchen roof drain system, coordinated a spring clean-up prior to the 50th Anniversary celebration, and coordinated the Sunday morning church opening.

At the end of each month over the year **2000**, Village donated clothing to the Clothing Closet at St. Marks United Methodist Church and food was taken to Manna Meal and to the food pantry at First Presbyterian Church. The congregation continued to support the community through the Good Samaritan Fund, 2 Cents a Meal, One Great Hour of Sharing, the Pentecost Offering, the World Communion Offering and The Joy Gift at Christmas. Christmas in July, the Angel Tree Project, and Keep-A-Child-In-School all continue to provide backpacks and school supplies for at-risk children in the fall and toys at Christmas.

Circle projects for the Presbyterian Women's Group included donations to Meals on Wheels (\$105), Day Mark (\$35), and the Samaritan Fund (\$237). The circles dressed 12 dolls, provided 70 stuffed stockings for needy children and made 110 Cancer Recovery Bags. And again, Mildred Wrenn and Evelyn McClure made a huge number of bears (252) and dolls (239) for children hospitalized at Women and Children's Hospital. The circles also provided bedding and accessories to refurbish a room at Sojourner's, a shelter for battered women and their families. Through correspondence with Missionary Marion Strain, Circle 5 learned that reading materials, particularly paperback books, were greatly needed by the Presbyterian Teacher's College – Rubate, in Kenya. In response to this need, the PW collected and mailed two boxes of books to the College.

Other ongoing ministries include use of the building by the Rug Hookers, Bridge Players, and Narcotic Anonymous. The VIP Senior Adult Fellowship continues to meet each month for lunch and activities.

In **2001** Village Chapel returned to its "regular" life after spending most of 1999 and 2000 celebrating 50 years of this Church. At the request of the Care of Members Ministry Team, the recommendation was made and approved to move the following individuals to the inactive roll: Isabel and Paul Oxley, Chris Carney, Geoffrey Gage, Katie Gage, Chad Hall, Terry and Luke Mafazy, Erica Maier, DeShele Randolph and Christie Workman.

January 28th was approved as Youth Sunday and Super Bowl Sunday. The Youth Groups also were given permission to go skiing at Winterplace.

The Property Ministry Team moved, and the Session approved that \$2900 Be set aside for purchase of 50 new chairs to be used in adult meeting/class rooms. These are to be delivered in **2001**. Also, the rental property was to have been vacated on December 31st and it was scheduled to be inspected, cleaned and renovated as needed in order to be made available for rental again for the amount of \$600 per month. As a result, eight people worked

about 70 hours and spent \$1300 on getting the property ready for rent. The house was completely repainted and cleaned. All carpets were removed and the hardwood floors refinished. Necessary plumbing and electrical repairs were made. Lewis and Virginia McLaughlin, retired educators from Clay County, moved into the house during February.

In the February meeting of the Session, Rev. Mansell reviewed items discussed in the Session Retreat concerning communications and topics of interest that involved the total congregation. There was agreement that the following were of great importance to Village Chapel in terms of “Growing Disciples – 2001”: Invite and Welcome Others, Stabilize Number of Members, Minister to Youth and Children, Care for One Another, Provide for Fellowship, Study and Worship Together, Serve in the Name of Christ and demonstrate Good Stewardship of People Resources.

The Care of Members Ministry Team decided to consider enacting a program brought to the Committee by Frank Mansell called the “Four Acts of Kindness” developed by James R. Zug of Wichita Falls, Kansas. The goal of this program is for members to care for members, without the Church staff being responsible for administrative duties. Research has shown that if contact is not made with members following a third consecutive absence, the chance of getting that person or family back into regular attendance diminishes with each week contact is not made. The program lets people know how important they are to the life of the Church. It assists individuals by providing for their needs. It encourages personal spiritual renewal and enrichment through service to others and permits participation of the congregation in a caring ministry to the Church members. To implement the program at Village, a plan was developed through which records would be kept of all church meetings/groups/worship. If a person (member or regularly attending non-member) misses 2 or 3 weeks, they will be contacted by phone. All relevant information is collected on a data sheet and shared with the Minister. A Program Coordinator was identified as well as volunteers to make calls and training for the callers was provided. Each caller was to make only 4 calls each week (the 4 acts of kindness). The Ministry Team believed that this program, if implemented, would help to maintain the church’s current membership.

John and Fifi Wolfe and their children, Heather and Nicholas and Jeanne MacDonald, and her daughter, Maddy, joined the Church on **March 11, 2001**.

Upon her death, the family of Mary Darnold Hague, the founder and long-time director of a excellent pre-school program at Village Chapel, established a trust in her honor which provides scholarships for Village youth to attend leadership conferences provided by the American Youth Foundation. As the young person chosen to attend in 2001 could not work attendance into his schedule, Frank Mansell and Kathryn McCrary proposed that the money (\$1500) be used to cover half the cost for three young persons (Gracie McClung, Jason Campbell, and Erin Snyder) who will be participating in the Presbyterian Youth Triennium held at Perdue University. This was agreed upon for the **2001** event along with any funds not used for this purpose to be used to underwrite the cost of the Church’s Urban Work Camp,

another educational event in which a number of Village Chapel youth participate. The Hague family agreed to these options.

Easter services, including a Maundy Thursday Communion Service, were held in collaboration with South Park, Ruffner, and Westminster at Village Chapel. The parish churches continue to come together periodically.

The Session approved the purchase of a hand carved creche' to be used in the Sanctuary during Advent. The nativity scene was ordered by Felecia Stewart Hoyle on **May 23rd** from a Mr. Jesse Wilkinson of Conover, North Carolina as from the letter it appears he made one of these for Felicia's mother. The nativity was to include: 3 camels, 2 donkeys, 2 sheep, 1 cow, 3 wisemen, 3 shepherds, Mary, Joseph, and a Baby in the manger, the Baby being carved separately so it could be added to the scene on Christmas Eve. The cost of each of the pieces was \$25 for a total cost of \$450. The finished work was picked up by Frank Mansell, Jr. and Frank Mansell, III over the last week of November so that it could be used with Advent.

In April, confirmation was received that the Presbytery provided a grant in the amount of \$750 to Village to purchase computer software for Marmet Elementary School. The grant program was associated with funding available during the 2000 Year of the Child Program. Village Chapel continues its "Grand Friend Program" with Marmet and used the grant money to purchase FAST TRACK, a mathematics program that can be used for students in kindergarten through sixth grade. Over the school year, four members of the congregation participated weekly with the Grand Friends Program.

In April of **2001**, Bluestone requested donations to buy picnic tables for the Camp. The Ministry Team approved the payment of \$160 to buy two picnic tables for the Conference Center.

Frank Mansell participated in two workshops at Princeton Seminary in May – one on supervising interns and another on pastoral care. Village continues to seek to bring summer interns to the Church as they make significant contributions to the summer youth program.

In May, Felecia Stewart Hoyle resigned her position and prior to hiring a Coordinator for Youth Mission, the Session revised the Job Description for this position looking at qualifications, time commitment, responsibilities, accountability and working relationships, compensation, evaluation, and termination. Following this, Vickie Frisk, a member of the Church, was hired as Coordinator of Youth Ministry and assumed this position as of **July 1st**.

Jerry Deck, from Princeton Seminary, served as the Summer Intern in **2001**. Jerry arrived on **May 24th** for a 12 week term of service. He participated with Frank and Felicia in the worship service on **June 27th**. He accompanied Frank and Patti Salisbury on a mission trip June 2-8. In August, Jerry expressed a desire to unite with Village Chapel as an active member. As a result, the Session moved and approved he be received upon the reaffirmation

of his faith. On **August 15th**, Jerry was baptized and received into membership of Village Chapel. In the **August 14th** issue of The Villager, Jerry shares observations from when he first arrived in Charleston and then goes on to say, “Each of these experiences has been meaningful. Yet, they pale in comparison to the relationships I have formed with you, the members of Village Chapel. I have so enjoyed getting to know you all. You have been so willing to let me into your lives, and for that I will be eternally grateful. Unlike the last internship I did (with an attorney) I leave this internship with a greater desire to be in this line of work. I will always hold Village Chapel dear to my heart.”

As part of the Church School during the summer of **2001**, money was raised through the classes to support the Heifer Project – a development organization working to end hunger and poverty around the world by providing livestock and training to struggling families. A total of \$730.32 was raised to purchase animals for low income families and the individual classes chose the following animals:

Pre-school	\$60	3 rabbits
Grades 1 & 2	\$60	3 rabbits
	\$20	Starter flock of chicks
	\$60	3 Rabbits
Grades 3 & 4	\$20	Starter flock of chicks
Grades 5 & 6	\$250	Water Buffalo
Grades 7 & 8	\$120	Pig
Grades 9 to 12	<u>\$150</u>	Llama
	\$740	

In July, the Outreach Team requested the Session’s approval to add a second service on Sunday that was held from 4:30 – 6:00 p.m. Suggested names for this service included: Jubilee Worship, Serendipity Service, Christ and Coffee, and Denim, Drinks and Disciples. Village@ Five was selected. The second service was instituted and a grant of \$2000 was requested from the Presbytery Mission Development Fund for use in promoting and conducting the new worship service. Approximately 20-30 individuals attended the later service, many of which were non-members from the nearby area.

During the summer months of **2001**, the Property Ministry Team was very busy. They replaced the glass on the sign at the corner of 39th Street and Venable; installed fencing along the west wall of the education building to protect against individuals falling into window wells; recharged all fire extinguishers; replaced batteries in emergency lights; repaired sanctuary windows replacing rotten wood and painting; trimmed shrubbery and removed overgrown shrubbery; repaired air-conditioner mal-function; and transported a ping-pong table donated by the Kramers to the Church. The team also spent considerable time improving parking in front of the Church. A new sidewalk was poured the entire length of the Venable frontage. Asphalt pavement was provided for drainage and ramping, along with new bumper blocks.

In September, Jane King, a pillar in the church, moved to Houston, Texas and was honored for her many years of devoted service to this congregation. A resolution was circulated to the congregation through The Villager and presented to Jane. The resolution recognized her as a charter member of Village Chapel, a member of the choir, a teacher in the Church School, an active member of the Women of the Church and having been made an Honorary Life Member of that organization. She also served the Presbyteries of Greenbrier and West Virginia, served as an Elder at Village, worked as the Church Secretary for 28 years and was the Clerk of the Session for 12 years. The concluding statement: THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that on this nineteenth day of September in the year **2001** the Session of the Village Chapel Presbyterian Church gives praise and Thanksgiving to God for the life and work of Jane Silling King, for her love of the Church and her commitment to Jesus Christ and for her presence among us during these 51 years.

On **September 11th**, Sharon Curnutte, Carolyn Perrine and Vickie Frisk issued an invitation to parents of children enrolled in grades 1 through 5 to again participate in Close Encounters. Meeting on Tuesday afternoons after school, Close Encounters provides children a real learning experience with music and the opportunity to share God-given talents. "We will again be using the Orff instruments (xylophones, glockenspiels, metallophones and percussion) and the kids' voices to add to our worship time." Although the main emphasis is on music for these sessions, time is also provided for recreation, crafts, and snacks.

World Communion was celebrated at 4:00 p.m. on **October 7th** with an ecumenical service hosted by the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd. Choir members from the participating churches were invited to sit together and sing. Ministers from Good Shepherd, Kanawha City Baptist, Westminster, South Park and Village Chapel Presbyterian, and the New Jerusalem Nondenominational Church participated. The offering was devoted to flood relief in southern West Virginia. A time for fellowship was conducted after the service.

For All Saints Day, the use of vocal/chime recognition of those members who have died during the past year was recommended by Sandy Bowles who had observed this when visiting a church in Oklahoma where this was done. Following the service the first time this was done on **November 4, 2001**, Frank Mansell sent a memo to the Worship Committee indicated that this was an appropriate way to recognize the "Saints" of the previous year; however, noting that at least two individuals who are active in the church but for whom he did not conduct a funeral service (Raymond Gunnoe and Will Calhoun) were omitted from the service of recognition. The suggestion was to include all for whom a service had been conducted but in addition, ask the congregation to share in advance the names of family or friends whom they would like to have remembered. A form could be included in The Villager and in Sunday Bulletins for a couple of weeks in October to gather this information and to be more inclusive.

In November, Frank Mansell was recognized in a letter from Gay Mothershed for his work as the Moderator of the Presbytery in **2000** and as Moderator of the Presbytery's Council in **2001**.

In the January Session meeting held on **January 5, 2002**, Mr. Mansell briefly explained the process for an individual desiring to become a minister including endorsement to the Presbytery by a congregation, the Presbytery receiving that person as an Inquirer, and further exploration of his/her call before acceptance as a Candidate. A Candidate then must be under the care of the Presbytery for at least one year prior to being ordained. As a part of this process, the Rev. Eric Faust, Chair of the Presbytery of West Virginia was to have attended this meeting to orient the Session to the process, preparation and responsibility for the candidate; however, due to illness, Rev. Faust was unable to attend and was scheduled to come at a later date. Jerry Deck, who is engaged in this process, informed the Session of his present studies and plans for the future, expressing gratitude to Village Chapel for being instrumental in his decision to pursue parish ministry. Because an official liaison between Jerry and the congregation is required in the process of ministry candidacy, Fred Joseph was unanimously appointed by the Session to fulfill this role.

Teachers in Church School **2002** included: Preschool and Kindergarten – Rhonda Jacobs, Pat Jacobs, Joan Mansell (Sub); Grades 1 to 3 – Vickie Frisk, Jean Blair, Jeanne McDonald, Jennifer Wilson, Heather Barry, Kathy Blank (Sub); Grades 4 to 5 – Patti Salisbury, Warren Danzer, Karen Cook, Kathy Blank (Sub); Grades 6 to 8 – Sharon Richardson, Sarah Sears, Sheila Danzer (Sub), Cindy Hanna (Sub); Grades 9 to 12 – Beth Chiparo, Howard Salisbury; Adult Bible Study “The Present Word” Bobby Caldwell, Diane Ellis; Adult Discussion “Companions in Christ” Vicki Cunningham, Polly Dodson; Adult Bible Study “The Bible from Scratch” Kathryn McCrary, Chris Johnson; Education Ministry Team: Sharon Richardson, Debbie Hanna, Barbara Richardson, Demetrice Hardman, Vicki Frisk, and Parri Campbell.

The **February 19th** edition of The Villager provided this definition of Lent and Easter: In the Spirit of Christ whose suffering, death, and resurrection we remember. In addition to the individual disciplines, we may undertake during this season (reading, prayer, meditation, fasting, giving to those in need, and the like), the church provides opportunities for worship, study, and action with other disciples.

To celebrate Lent and Easter, Village Chapel carried out the following activities during the 2002 Season:

Lenten Bible Study, Mondays, February 25 – March 18
11:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.

“Paul’s Discipleship and Ours” – Studies in Paul’s Letter to the Galatians

Sunday, March 17, 4:00 p.m.

“The Seven Last Words of Christ” by Theodore Dubois

This service of music will be presented by the Village Chapel Choir and

Guest singers from other churches in the community.

The “Village @ Five” service was combined with this service of music.

Palm Sunday, March 24

The Lord’s Supper was included in Worship with a focus on the Passion Narrative

Maundy Thursday, March 28

Worship and Lord’s Supper at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 7:30 p.m.

Good Friday, March 29

Stations of the Cross Service at Good Shepherd, Evening Service

Holy Saturday, March 30

Easter Vigil at Good Shepherd

Easter Sunday, March 31

Community Easter Sunrise Service at 6:30 a.m.

Easter Celebration at Village Chapel 11:00 a.m.

One Great Hour of Sharing Easter Offering

Jack R. York died on **January 22, 2002**. Because he was over the years, a pillar of the Church, a resolution was made in his honor on February 20, 2002 with the Session giving praise and thanksgiving to God for his life and work; for his love of his family and his Church and his presence at Village Chapel for 23 years.

On **February 6th** the Worship Ministry Team was charged with finding appropriate sites to permanently hang the three framed pictures of the congregation (1950, 1975, and 2000) and the pictures of our past and current ministers. Sites were selected on the walls in the Fellowship Hall for the congregation pictures and the adult classroom adjacent to the library in the Education Building.

On Sunday, **February 24th**, the Village@Five service featured Village Chapel’s young violinist, Miss Erin Chiparo.

The Minute for Mission published in the **February 19th** edition of The Villager was written by Ditty Lambert Markem and was titled: The “Grand Friends” of Village Chapel:

“Here we are, Lord, send us” should be the motto of the Village Chapel Presbyterian Church in Charleston, West Virginia. When an area family needed a home, Church members helped Habitat for Humanity to build it. When word of the congregation’s

carpentry skills reached a nearby community lacking a computer lab for its elementary students, members of the congregation readily agreed to assist in the lab's construction.

In doing so, a greater calling was revealed to Village Chapel. One member of the work team was struck with the disparity between the resources available to the students at Marmet Elementary School and those of his own children's school in the Church's more affluent neighborhood just minutes away. He urged members to adopt a mission close to home.

For the past year, church members have ministered to Marmet Elementary in various ways, from writing a grant to provide educational software for the lab to becoming mentors to individual students. These "grand friends" visit the school each week to tutor, play board games, or listen to their friends read. They remember birthdays of neglected children, expose them to career options, and make arrangements for camp attendance or cultural outings.

The church's involvement reaches far beyond the Service Committee. For the Vacation Bible School project, the children of Village Chapel collected school supplies for Marmet's students. Families of Village Chapel became the Secret Santas for fifty-seven students, providing toys and clothing at Christmas. The students aren't the only ones to receive a morale boost. Recognizing that teachers at high-poverty schools often miss the amenities offered at other schools, the women of Village Chapel acknowledged their contributions at a lovely Valentine tea.

A "Hats Off to Frank Mansell" indicated that Children at Marmet count on Frank! saying: Not only do we see Frank Mansell here at the Church, but he is also involved in a very special outside activity. For the past two years he has been volunteering at Marmet Elementary School in the Read Aloud West Virginia program as a grand friend. He reads to fourth and fifth graders. He loves picking out books for the children. These include chapter books which are read over several weeks as well as books that can be read in one day. The children particularly love animal stories.

Just this past week, at their final meeting for the year, the children voiced how much it means to them to have an adult to count on and that they like what he does. Their comments touched Frank deeply. The next time you are in his office at the Church, take a look at the "Super Grand Friend Certificate" that was presented to him.

At the **February 20th** Session meeting, Mr. Mansell reported that Jerry Deck has been officially received as an Inquirer by the Presbytery. As part of the church's support for him, Mr. Deck has been given \$500 and will receive \$500 more in the fall.

On **March 17th**, the Village Chapel choir and guest musicians presented the "Seven Last Words of Christ" in the Easter Cantata.

On **March 20, 2002**, a Resolution was made in honor of G. Kemp Melton who died on March 2, 2002:

Whereas G. Kemp Melton became a member of Village Chapel Presbyterian Church in 1998,

Whereas G. Kemp Melton's leadership talents began in high school where he was president of his class at Charleston High School each year and also played basketball and baseball,

Whereas G. Kemp Melton had a lifelong love for West Virginia University and its sports teams, having played both basketball and baseball there and having graduated in business in 1953,

Whereas G. Kemp Melton was a decorated war veteran, having fought in the Koran War as a First Lieutenant with the U.S. Army from 1953 to 1955,

Whereas G. Kemp Melton was elected Kanawha County Sheriff for three terms, County Assessor for four terms, and Mayor of Charleston for one term, serving and leading in these three capacities because he loved the city of Charleston and Kanawha County and wanted to make a positive difference in people's live,

Whereas G. Kemp Melton was a loving, devoted servant of his wife, his children, and grandchildren who loved him well in return.

Whereas G. Kemp Melton is fondly remembered for his legendary love for candy by family, friends, and coworkers,

Whereas G. Kemp Melton was a member of the Session, Class of 2022, who served as Co-Moderator of the Service Ministry Team and as a "Grand Friend" at Marmet Elementary School,

Whereas G. Kemp Melton was a pleasant, soft-spoken, kind, caring, compassionate, gentle-man whose life was characterized by leadership and service to family, friends, school, church, and community.

Therefore, be it resolved that on this twentieth day of March in the year 2002, the Session of Village Chapel Presbyterian Church gives praise and thanksgiving to God for the life of G. Kemp Melson, for his love of his family and his Church, and his presence among us during these four years. As noted in this resolution, Mr. Melton was an active member of the church, a community leader and a "grand friend" of Marmet elementary.

As of **April 2002**, those identified as being engaged in military Service were Randy Pope (Mansell nephew in the Air Force), Richie Jarrett (Navy), Jeff Callard (Coast Guard), and Cris Rainey (Marine Corp).

On Mother's Day of **2002**, Frank Mansell talked to the children about mothers and gave each child a special Mother's Day Pin to give to their mother. Following this, in the worship service, the child and mother team passed out pins to all adult females in the congregation. A basket of pins was left to be passed out at the Village@Five service. The same procedure will be followed for Father's Day.

On Saturday, **May 18, 2002**, a Service of Witness to the Resurrection for Betty Carson Brawley was held with Frank Mansell conducting the service. Hymns sung included: "How Firm A Foundation", "God of the Sparrow", and "Amazing Grace". Betty and her deceased husband, Harry Brawley, were the parents of Sarah Stebbins and Harriet Nottingham, members of the Church.

In **June of 2002** the Session reviewed the draft of a "Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth, and Persons with Disabilities" and is looking at options as recommended for adoption by the Presbytery.

On **June 20th**, a list of the Trustees of Village Chapel since 1984 was made. The list includes the third year of service so if the date is 1984, that individual would serve as a Trustee for three years through 1986. The list includes: Bobby Caldwell (1986; Polly Dodson (1987); George Singleton (1988); Jack Martin (1989 but served only one year); Bob King (1990) Ray Jackson (1991); Helen Eberbaugh (1992); Bill Chevalier (1993); Jim Arthur (1994); Jule Sockman (1995); Bill Reichard (1996); George Singleton (1997); Mary Lee Jung (1998); Polly Dodson (1999); Jack York (2000); Jule Sockman (2001); Pat Carey (2002); John Bowles (2003).

Keri Blank, Grace McClung, Bobby Johnston, Kevin Blank, Emily Salisbury, Carol Caudill, Melissa Phoutavong, Vicki Frisk and Frank Mansell spent the week working in Raleigh County, helping with the clean-up and rebuilding after the floods of July 2001 and May 2002. They were housed in the church-owned residence at the Marsh Fork Presbyterian Church in Dry Creek, WV and worked between there and Beckley. . . . The congregation was encouraged to "Remember the group in your prayers. . . . They will share their experience at the worship service on July 16th. If you wish to make a contribution to the flood relief efforts, it will help to provide materials for the group to use in making repairs to homes."

The **July 23, 2002** Villager included a piece about the Good Samaritan Ministry indicating that in the 6.5 months between January 1 and July 17th Village Chapel responded to 223 requests for assistance with rent, utilities, transportation, food and medical care, using approximately \$6,800 given through the Good Samaritan Fund. Thirty-two of these requests came in the 10-day period between July 8-17th. We used approximately \$1000 in assisting those who came to the Church during this time. This ministry is on hold again until we can replenish the Fund. We are applying badly needed "Band-Aids." But what can we do

to address the causes of need – no jobs, lack of education or vocational training, decreasing assistance through public programs and the like? Jesus said that the poor would always be with us. There will always be people who need help. But what are we doing to help change lives? Are we working as much as we could be with children in school to help change attitudes that perpetuate poverty and dependence from generation to generation? Are we working with our public officials to structure helpful programs of assistance and education? Using the imagery of a well-known saying, are we content with giving the hungry person a fish to satisfy today's hunger? Or do we teach the person to fish so that hunger is satisfied long term? I hope you will join me in searching or what God is calling us to do.

Frank Mansell

Also in **July**, the Session received a report from the Long-Range Planning Ministry Team composed of Heather Barry, Bobby Caldwell, Beth Chiparo, Dianne Ellis, Frank Mansell, Howard Salisbury, David Sampson, and Sandra Wilkerson. For the last year this group has reviewed materials and discussed the former and current goals of Village Chapel. They have identified a Background for Brainstorming Session and Areas of Importance (Outreach, Personal Growth, Parking, Networking, New Members, Children, Music, Community Ministry, etc.). The group will continue to deliberate.

A survey of the congregation was conducted in **September**. The data from this survey will be reviewed by the Session as part of its efforts to strengthen the Church.

For All Saint's Day for 2002, Frank suggested that it might be desirable to have someone make a white satin banner with the names of those from the congregation who have died and display this for All Saint's Day. In recognition of these individuals and in order of their death, each person's name will be read. The name will be followed by a "chime" and the congregation will respond with "Praise be to God for the life of Name of the individual" followed by a brief pause. (The suggestion for the chime came from an observation of this in a service Sandy Bowles attended while doing an accreditation site visit).

Amy Parker was hired as of **October 1, 2002**, to be the Church Educator/Pastoral Assistant. She will be working half-time (20 hours per week) at times agreed upon with the Minister and Personnel Ministry Team. A "Faith Challenge" instituted in the spring of 2002 with a goal of \$11,000 will provide the additional monies necessary to fund this position.

On **October 2, 2002**, the contents of the safe deposit box were surveyed by the current trustees of Village Chapel: Pat Cary, John Bowles, and George Singleton, the minister Frank Mansell, and these members whom they invited to sit with them: Polly Dodson, Jim Arthur, and Sandy Bowles.

Documents left in the box as of this date include:

1. Current property insurance policy
2. Original deed of trust on church property (1950)
3. Another deed of trust on church property (1961)

Documents removed from the box on this date include:

1. Old insurance policies
 - a. C.N.A. 1975
 - b. State Farm 1986
 - c. Continental 1990 (Carson agency)
2. Documents relating to loan to Conrad Crow
 - a. Note for loan 1976
 - b. Deed related to loan 1976
3. Documents related to loan to James Kirkpatrick
 - a. Note for loan 1982
 - b. Deed
 - c. Home owners insurance policy
 - d. Settlement statement 1982
 - e. Release from loan 1989
4. Statement of release from mortgage loan on church property 1961
5. Copy of loan to the church in 1989, perhaps related to the rebuilding after the fire

The old insurance policies were discarded. The other documents were placed in the Church's historical records.

From the **October 29th** issue of The Villager is a note from Mark Miller at Bluestone Conference Center thanking Village Chapel members Fred Joseph, John Bowles, John Wolfe, Jeff Chiparo, David Gould, and Shannon Bland for replacing the roof and the furnace on/in the cabin at Bluestone that Village Chapel has "adopted".

In its **November 20th** meeting, the Session approved the establishment of a joint Task Force to be selected by the Worship, Outreach, and Fellowship Ministry Teams to consider the future of the Village@Five Worship Service and make recommendations about whether and how it should continue to be a part of Village Chapel's ministry.

On **December 22nd**, the Village@Five provided a Blue Christmas Service recognizing that "not everyone is filled with Joy at Christmas." And extending the invitation: "If you need space where sadness and struggle can be acknowledged, and God's healing presence sought, then please join us for this service of prayers, scripture and music, acknowledging that Christ came to bind up the broken hearted, and that God's Word can shine light into our darkness."

On **January 12, 2003**, the Congregational Survey administered in September of 2002 was shared with the congregation. In Part 1 of the survey, the 126 people (all age groups teens through 80s) who responded expressed their feelings about Village Chapel programs. In the survey results Village Chapel is compared to the community (Zip Code 25304) in these ways. We are less diverse than the community in lifestyles. Like the community we have a lot of folks in the 60-74 year age range (the "Silents"). The community is projected to lose population by 2% over the next 5 years; we showed an increase in membership of 3% in 2002.

Our educational level is higher than the high level in the community. Like the community, we have a concern for Personal/Spiritual issues and are open to involvement in historic churches. Our giving potential is higher than the community, which matches the national average. Like the community, we prefer a traditional church style. In addition, to the community interest in Bible study, theological discussion, counseling, and retirement programs, we have an interest in family activities, recreation and camping programs, youth ministry, and spiritual retreats.

Part 2 (Reported in the **January 19th** Worship Bulletin) - We feel most favorable about our property, choirs, educational ministry, mission in the community, fellowship activities, summer intern, hospital visitation, the Session, Sunday morning worship and weekday Bible study. We feel less favorable about Village@Five, youth fellowship groups, Presbyterian Women, older adult ministry, stewardship, and the visitation of homebound folks. Some ministries we consider to be of high importance include spiritual retreats, sports and camping, active retirement programs, youth social programs, family activities, Bible study and prayer groups, and adult theological discussions.

Part 3 (Reported in the **January 26th** Worship Bulletin) we feel most satisfied about our work, our families, our relationship with God and life in our community. We are less satisfied with sharing our faith with others, personal Bible study and prayer, our involvement in the church, our relationship with a former spouse, and our personal financial situation. We express concern about retirement, long-term financial security, personal health and health insurance. We have less concern about safety, any radical change in faith involvement, “foundations” (food, housing, employment, education, etc.), and relationships with others.

Part 4 (Reported in the **February 2nd** Worship Bulletin) These activities were listed as important: worship, fellowship activities, relationships with other members and music. Youth ministry, community service, and Sunday school are important not only to teens but to older members as well. Presbyterian Women’s activities are important primarily to people over 60. A majority of respondents said they preferred worship in the summer at a time earlier than 11:00 a.m. New ministries people would like to consider include: activities for younger and older singles; after school/preschool care; seminars on parenting, divorce, marriage enrichment, stress, care of older adults; a men’s fellowship group; and summer Sunday school. Other comments included: use familiar hymns; more people involved in planning and leading worship; attention to welcoming visitors and new members; concern for declining attendance; Village@Five, a positive ministry; continue high priority on youth programming.

NOTE TO THE READER – As the author did not have access to Session Meeting Minutes providing specific information about decisions or events, much of this year’s “history” is much less specific/detailed. The information which follows essentially comes from the End-of-Year Report of the Ministry Teams, communications from Rev. Mansell, and copies of The Villager.

During **2003**, the Care of Members Ministry Team engaged in a number of activities including sending cards to the homebound, hospitalized individuals or those in care facilities. They worked with the youth to send care packages to college students; recognized those graduating from high school; sent letters of encouragement to those not attending worship services; worked with the youth to provide soup and cookies to those that were shut-in; worked with youth to deliver poinsettias to members of the congregation; and provided refreshments after a “Blue Christmas” service.

The Christian Education Ministry Team assisted the Care of Members Team in many of the above-named activities (college care packages, taking food to the elderly and shut-ins). Six youth attended a Youth Retreat at Cedar Lakes on **March 9th**. This group sponsored a Teacher Appreciation Day. On **May 4** and **June 1** it sponsored special programs led by Terry Cunningham on Advanced Directives, Living Wills, and Durable Power of Attorney. The team provided a High School Senior Recognition Day on **May 4** and provided specially prepared Bibles to the graduates. It voted to recommend Amy Parker as the designated Coordinator of the Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth, and Persons with Disabilities. Though there was no summer church school, the Summer Intern, Alice Plotts, conducted an adult class on Tuesday evenings for six weeks. A Vacation Church School with Kathy Blank as the Director, was very successful and enjoyed by both teachers and participants. Rally Day was held on **September 7** with recognition of Frank Mansell’s twenty years at Village Chapel. A number of learning sessions were provided for children and adults including sessions on “Parenting in the Pews” led by Amy Parker. Amy was also recognized for the valuable teaching and artistic gifts she brought to the Church.

The Outreach Ministry Team continued to follow up on all visitors and new attendees with postcards and letters of welcome with invitations to return throughout the year. There was exploration of the possibility of forming a group for the single folks in the congregation to include widows, divorcees, or those who had always been single. Following receiving response to a letter seeking participants, sixteen responses resulted in an organizational meeting to look at planning programs, social events, trips, etc. The first event for this group was a progressive dinner and another was the attendance at a Light Opera performance of “Music Man”.

The Personnel Ministry Team received a resignation from the Youth Coordinator, Vicki Frisk, and so spent much of the year seeking a replacement. The Team honored Caroline Perrine for 25 years of service. They received two applications for the Summer Intern position and selected Alice Plotts from Austin Seminary in Texas. Alice was very pleased with her service over the summer of **2003**. Frank Mansell was recognized for 20 years of service with a gift certificate to stay at Glade Springs Resort and play golf.

The Property Ministry Team worked to complete sound cabinets and upgrades to the Education Building entrance. They also repaired the sanctuary windows, landscaped the Church front yard and kept up with “common” maintenance projects.

The Service Ministry Team involved 15 volunteers to re-roof a home in Cross Lanes for a family unable to afford the expense and the Church donated \$2000 toward the project. They worked with the youth to sponsor a car wash to raise money for Project Graduation at Capital and George Washington High Schools. They sponsored the annual Christmas in July collecting school supplies for needy children at Chamberlain and Kanawha City Elementary Schools. Members of the congregation donated coats and sweaters for the needy that were distributed by Union Mission – the effort resulted in collecting 300 items. The No Frills Walk for Meals continued for the 6th Year. Working with youth, the event collected money that was equally split between World Missions and the VC Good Samaritan Fund. The group held a Spaghetti Dinner to raise money for a Youth Mission Trip and the Good Samaritan Fund. They also delivered dinners to members of the congregation who were unable to get out of their homes. The Angel Tree was replaced by a project to receive canned and staple foods to be distributed to flood victims in Loudendale through the Union Mission. Working with the youth, the group adopted a family to shop for them at Christmas. Other projects supported included: the Shepherd Center, Kanawha Pastoral Counseling Center, Aids Resource and Residence Program, Covenant House, Manna Meal, the Regional Coalition for Community Renewal, and Rebuilding Together.

On **January 19, 2003**, the pastors of area congregations exchanged worship leadership roles. Frank Mansell was the preacher at Trinity Lutheran Church and Eileen Dumire the pastor at Darlington and Asbury United Methodist Church was at Village Chapel. The churches participating were Village Chapel, Trinity Lutheran, Westminster, South Park, Morris Memorial Methodist, New Jerusalem Non-Denominational, Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, Darlington and Asbury United Methodist.

In a letter to the congregation on **January 21**, the Session reported that the Village@Five would not continue after Sunday, January 19 primarily due to limited participation in this service and lack of leadership to plan and organize the services and other activities of this group.

Jerry Deck was received as a Candidate for Ministry of the Word and Sacrament at the WV Presbytery meeting on March 15. Village Chapel recommended him without reservation. He also received one of two Parish Pulpit Fellowships given to graduating seniors by Princeton Seminary. The fellowship will enable Jerry to spend the next academic year in Scotland. He graduated from Princeton Seminary with the Master of Divinity degree the weekend of **May 16-18**. An update on Jerry was reported in the December 16 Villager – He is flying back to the United States on **December 16th** to spend Christmas with his family and to meet with the Committee on Preparation for Ministry in our Presbytery on December 20th. Jerry has completed his seminary work and will have been a Candidate under the care of our Presbytery for a year in the spring. His meeting with the Committee on Preparation is to receive certification that he is ready to receive a call to serve as a pastor.

On **April 13th**, nine young persons became confirmed members of Village Chapel. The individuals achieving this new relationship with the Church and their covenant partners were: Meredith France (Debbie Hanna); Jared Hawley (Joanie Panger); Jeb Sears (Sam Hanna); Taylor Johnston (Candy Hawley); David Salisbury (Vicki Frisk); Heather Wolfe (Patti Salisbury); Philip Mullins (John Wolfe); and Doug Thornton (Howard Salisbury). As this Sunday was also Palm Sunday, the Service included presentation of the palms, communion and baptism. The “Bread” served for Communion was “Bible Bread” made in Isreal of all natural ingredients by a company known as Galilee Splendor – A Gourmet Taste of Biblical Tradition. This bread is inspired by a 3000-year baking tradition going back to the time of Exodus, when the Israelites, in their flight from Egypt, prepared unleavened bread to sustain them on their journey to freedom (Sandy Bowles).

On **May 1st**, the Sessions of Ruffner Memorial, Westminster, South Park, and Village Chapel met for the third time at Westminster Church under the leadership of Sky Kershner, Director of the Kanawha Pastoral Counseling Center, to share ministries that are currently taking place, hopes, dreams, and frustrations. At a previous meeting, the group discussed the pros and cons of being a small church. For the next meeting, the group will compile a calendar of what is being offered in all the churches and devise a way to share this information, so the ministries are strengthened and not duplicated and to implement an initial joint ministry – perhaps a men’s fellowship group.

On **August 23rd**, members of the congregation were invited to donate an “old” car to “help someone go from welfare to work and save money at tax time.” The Good News Mountaineer Garage Car Donation Drop-Off Day was held at Morris Memorial United Methodist Church from 9:000 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. If needed, volunteers were provided to drive donors home!

Suggestions for nominations for elders to begin service in 2004 indicated that when seeking individuals to serve it was emphasized that they have these responsibilities: To be regular participants in the total life and ministry of the congregation; to participate in monthly Session meetings where decision are made about the congregation’s ministry; to serve as one of two Session members on a ministry team responsible for a portion of the Church’s work; to greet worshipers on Sunday; to serve Communion; to share in leading worship as a reader or liturgist; to serve as a representative of the congregation at meetings of the Presbytery of West Virginia, and to fulfill other responsibilities in keeping with his or her interests and talents. Trustees execute legal business when authorized by the congregation to do so. Elders elected to serve in 2004 were: Sarah Stebbins, Don Parker, Howard Salisbury, Alatheia Stickler, Heather Barry, and Judy Haddock. Bill Ellis was elected to serve as a Trustee.

On **December 4, 2003**, the Presbytery met at the University of Charleston. The meeting was hosted by Westminster, Village Chapel, South Park and Ruffner Memorial Churches. Moderator Mavis Grant-Lilly called the meeting to order, and Frank Mansell, Jr., pastor of Village Chapel greeted the commissioners. Presbytery recognized and celebrated the retirements of two long-time ministers: Bob Bondurant, who has been campus pastor at Marshall University, and Doug Heidt, who has been associate pastor of First Church, Charleston. Presbytery also examined and received two ministers coming from other denominations. David Lee is now the pastor of First Church, Nitro, and David Richards is now pastor of Second Church, Huntington.

At the **March 17, 2004**, meeting the Session heard from Martha Foster, Elder, that she is interested in participating in a two-year program to become a Commissioned Lay Pastor as she would like to become a “more effective church person” and make better use of her remaining years in the church. She would like to work with a small church or in combination with her medical background to be used as a Parish Nurse. A motion was approved to endorse Martha Foster as an applicant for the Commissioned Lay Pastor program in the Presbytery of West Virginia. Vicki Cunningham will be the liaison between Martha and the Session.

On **March 21st**, in a special Session meeting prior to the Worship Service, the following individuals/families were asked questions from membership vows in the Book of Order to achieve their reaffirmation of faith. Kathy Pack and her children, Courtney Renee, William David, and Morgan Leigh; Todd Zubick and his son Tyler, and John and Rose Ann Walker and their children Matthew Scott and Stephen Daniel. These new members were received, introduced during the Worship Service, and will receive certificates of membership.

The youth participating in confirmation for **2004** and their sponsors were Lisa McClung (Heather Barry), Matthew Walker (Beth Chiparo), Rob Orders (Jane McNeil), Julia McNeil (John Wolfe), Brian Misiti (Jeff Chiparo), Kyle Blank (Alan Johnston) and Erin Chiparo (John Bowles). On Sunday, **March 14**, this group assisted with preparing and cleaning up after communion. They also participated in the worship service that day with Frank Mansell and Amy Parker as they provided a response to questions related to communion called “Remembering and Giving Thanks”. The youth posed questions such as, “Why do we give thanks and praise before this Table?” and “What do we remember at this Table?” The responses to these and other questions were given by the minister and the congregation.

The four Presbyterian Churches in the parish shared jointly in a mission study **February - May 2004**. This study was designed to assess the strengths of each congregation and the mission to which we are called together in the community. Vickie Cunningham, Sara Slamick and Howard Salisbury represented Village Chapel for this project. The results of the conversations in each congregation were shared later in the spring as each church sought to identify what God was calling the four congregations to be and to do in the community. The first step in each congregation was to consider its Biblical/Historical identity.

In a called Session meeting on **March 31st**, it was announced that the next meeting of the Presbyterian Partners (PP) of the joint church representatives will take place **April 15th**. The statement concerning the future direction of PP in the Mission Study Report will read as follows: The general feeling that was expressed in different ways in each of the three discussion groups was that the best strategy for the four Presbyterian Partner churches is to continue to work together on current ministries and to search for a common ministry of service to the community that the churches can become involved with as partners. At this time the members of Village Chapel have a “reluctance to commit to a new church facility. We should let the discussion of realigning congregations to become secondary to a joint mission focus.”

In a follow-up meeting on **April 21**, a report was given by Howard Salisbury and Vicki Cunningham concerning the Presbyterian Partners Mission Study Committee meeting on **April 15th**. Each church gave a report about their congregational discussions. Each is very concerned about their futures. It is clear that each congregation is on the downside of their “church life cycles”. On the upside, Howard and Vicki spoke about the positives of Village Chapel. Vicki felt that this was a very “soulful” meeting with a lot of heartfelt emotions being conveyed. Frank feels as though the whole mission study process has helped the PP grow in unity and closeness. The next step is to meet on **May 24th** when all four written reports will be shared. A congregational meeting of Village Chapel was held **on April 25th**. Howard Salisbury led the meeting, discussing all the important information.

In the Session meeting on **September 15**, Howard Salisbury reported on the Presbyterian Partners meeting on **September 2nd**. He stated that the ideas voiced were more of the same-South Park and Westminster want a new church home, Ruffner is divided, and Village Chapel is stable. “It is still a good idea to continue having common events, but the activities should be planned with representatives from each of the churches so that everyone feels included.” Peter Vial suggested that a planning group with a representative from each congregation be formed.

In the **March 9** issue of The Villager, it was announced that “Advent Visitors are coming – We will have some special visitors in our congregation during Advent. The Session and last year’s Advent Planning Group have invited them. They will help all of us learn more about Advent, Christmas and Epiphany. The Presbyterian Women are making plans and invite the congregation to help. Folks are needed who can cut out figures (sheep, shepherds, the Holy Family, etc.), create clothes for the Visitors, sew, stuff the figures, and make some special furniture for our Visitors use.” As a result of this effort, stuffed figures associated with Advent appeared in the sanctuary for Sunday morning services.

The Maundy Thursday service on **April 8, 2004**, was a joint service with the four churches of the local parish – Westminster, South Park, Ruffner, and Village Chapel and included “The Lord’s Supper and Anointing with Oil.” Instructions in the Bulletin directed the congregation to “leave your pew as guided by the ushers and come to the Table by the center aisle. You will be served in groups around the table. You may eat the bread and drink the cup

as you receive it. When all are served, please move toward the side aisles, stopping to be anointed with oil, if you wish. Then, you may return to your seat by a side aisle.” Those in attendance were invited to contribute to the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering of the Presbyterian Church USA. This offering provides assistance to people throughout the world in times of hunger and natural disaster, as well as helping people develop resources to sustain their own lives. It was also noted that on the following day, Good Friday, a service involving ministers from “churches in the community” would be held at The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd based on the Biblical Stations of the Cross. Both of these services continue to reflect Village Chapel’s continuing attempts at community outreach.

On **April 11**, an Easter Sunrise Service was held at 6:30 a.m. at Watt Powell Park, the baseball stadium located approximately where the CAMC Cancer Center is currently located. This service was sponsored by the East End and Kanawha City Churches and featured a “Mass Choir” and a sermon by the Rev. J. Montgomery Brown. The offering from this service was divided between Manna Meal and Covenant House.

A letter dated **April 14, 2004** was addressed to the congregation from the Session informing them of a called meeting on April 25th to act on the recommendation of the Session that the Church purchase the house and lot located at 505 39th Street (corner of 39th and Washington). This house belonged to the late Mr. and Mrs. Dan Mooney and was being offered to the church by their daughter and her husband for the amount of \$110,000. The Session, at the time, believed that this was an opportunity “to acquire additional property near the church building that would benefit present and future generations of Village Chapel members. It provided land that could be used for parking or for building an additional structure to expand the ministry of the congregation.” The purchase of this property would necessitate a loan to cover the cost of purchase.

In a subsequent meeting on **April 25th** the congregation approved a motion to purchase the property at 505 39th Street for the amount of \$110,000 pending the permission of the Presbytery of West Virginia and that the Session be authorized to negotiate the best possible loan and the trustees be authorized to execute the documents for the purchase and the loan.

A missile inserted into the **May 30th** Bulletin served as an invitation to a “Backyard Mission Planning Meeting” to be held on June 3rd at Village Chapel with the stated purpose of: To plan how the Presbyterian Partners (Ruffner, Westminster, South Park and Village Chapel Churches) can begin a “Backyard Mission” in the community. Backyard Mission is a local mission program for people in our community or members of our congregations. It enables citizens and Presbyterian Partners to help seniors or people in need, right in our own backyard. The Mission Statement for this organization included:

1. Keep people safe, warm and dry by doing home and appliance repairs, using volunteer labor and buying materials with donated money.

2. Give people an opportunity to put their faith into action by serving their neighbors.
3. Provide a unified mission for the Presbyterian Partners to work together in our own backyard.

The Church has a new resident at 3810 Venable, the house adjacent to the church. After the death of her husband, Lewis, earlier this spring, Virginia McLaughlin moved to Charlotte, North Carolina to be near her son and daughter. Nancy Trotter, a member of the Church, will move into the house on **May 22nd**.

Congratulations to our graduates! Those graduating from college in **2004** were Clark Campbell from WV Wesleyan and Laura Hanna and Amanda Sampson who both graduated from WVU. High school graduates this year and the college they will attend in the fall are from Charleston Catholic – Kristen Parks (WVU); from South Charleston – Carter France (WVU), from Capital – David Mullins (WVU), Krista Jacobs (UC), Emily Salisbury and Bobby Johnston (College of Charleston, South Carolina).

On **August 29th**, a congregational meeting was held after the Worship Service to act on a proposal from the Church Officer Nominating Committee and the Session to establish a 19th position on the Session, a one-year term to be filled by a youth (age 22 or younger). The purpose of this proposal is to recognize the gifts of our youth to serve as leaders in the Church. The one-year term recognizes that a person in high school or college is not able to make a three-year commitment. If approved, the wording to be inserted in our election plan to accomplish this change would be: “The number of Elders serving on the Session shall be 18 with the possibility of a 19th member who is a youth. Eighteen Elders in classes of six, are elected for three-year terms. A youth member of the congregation (up to age 22) may be elected to serve a one-year term. The one-year position will be filled or not filled depending on the availability of an appropriate youth nominee. The youth serving in this position will be an ordained elder and expected to fill all the responsibilities of an elder.

Village did not have a summer intern for **2004**.

The Session, in its **August 18** meeting, approved hiring Dawn Patchell as the Youth Coordinator. She received a favorable report concerning her personal background, job experience, church history and enthusiasm for this job position. Dawn is currently a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Charleston.

In **2005**, new communion trays were given to the church by Bill and Kathryn McCrary on the event of their 50th Wedding Anniversary. The Session made the decision to give the old trays to Bluestone Conference Center along with cups.

Kathryn McCrary also sent a letter to the Session stating that as part of her training to be a Lay Worship Leader, Martha Foster would need opportunity to practice preaching at worship time. Amy Parker suggested that her first experiences should be at other churches before attempting to preach at her home church.

The **March 2, 2005** edition of The Villager offered Congratulations to Village Chapel Students for their successful participation in the Kanawha County Social Studies and Science Fair:

- Tori Parker won First Place in World History, Individual, for her project, “Richard III – Villian or Victim?”
- Nicholas Wolfe Won First Place in Psychology, Individual, for his project – “Plastic Surgery: Why Would You?”
- Allyson Robertson and her partner, Megan Johnson, won second place in Sociology, Pair for their project – “The Effect of Vitamin C on Your Immune System, and In Which Food and Juices It Is Found”
- Rheana Auvil won third place in Anthropology, Individual, for her project “What is Barbershop Music?”
- Sara Hawley and her partner, Lauren Stollings, won third place in Chemistry, Applied, Par for their project, “Which Carpet Cleaner Works Best?”
- Sean Harwell and his partner, Joseph Ta, won third place in Engineering for their project – “Maglev Trains: The Transportation of the Future”
- Daniel Walker received an Honorable Mention for his project in Physics, Applied Individual – “The Effect of Paper Airplane Design on Flight Distance and Flight Accuracy”

In the spring of **2005**, the South Park Presbyterian Church gave to Kanawha-Putnam Habitat the house located adjacent to their Church. In partnership with Habitat, the four congregations of the Parish/Presbyterian Partners worked over three weekends in May to rehabilitate the house into a safe, economical residence for a person or family in the community. The work was done in two phases--the roof and exterior initially, and when the house was occupied, the interior work was completed taking into consideration the wishes of the residents. The Village Chapel Session set a goal of \$15,000 for the congregation to contribute toward funding this project and by the first of June, \$13,000 had been contributed. Before and after pictures of the house were placed in the entry to the sanctuary. Marc Kramer served as the Coordinator for this project.

May 15, 2005, was a very special day for Village Chapel and Jerry Deck! Working with the Presbytery, Jerry, who served as our summer intern in 2001 and went on to complete the requirements for the ministry, was ordained. Following his service as an intern, Jerry joined Village Chapel, and the church sponsored him through his work at the Princeton Seminary. Jerry’s family and friends came from all over the country for the occasion of his ordination and commission. Representing the Commission of the Presbytery of West Virginia, the

following ministers and elders were named and authorized to ordain Jeremy Deck to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament:

Elders:

Ken Stone, Vice-Moderator of Quadrant Four, Chair; Janet Kinzer, Westminster; Sara Slamick, Village Chapel; John Bolt, Charleston First

Ministers:

Rob Laukoter, Church of the Covenant, Hurricane
Amy Parker, Village Chapel
Frank Mansell: Village Chapel

Invited to sit with the Commission and Participate in the Service:

Dana Holter, Pastor, St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, Charleston, WV
Ralph Hawkins, Pastor, Altavista Presbyterian Church, Altavista, VA, Presbytery of the Peaks

THE WORD IN MUSIC by A. R. Petker – Very appropriate and meaningful part of the service as the words express:

Prepare my eyes, O Lord, to see Your truth, O Lord, Help clear my vision, Lord, to see Your will. Into your hands now I commend my service, Lord. Prepare my ears, O Lord, to hear your voice, O Lord, Help me to listen, Lord, to hear Your call. Into Your hands now I commit my service Lord. I heard the voice of God saying, “Whom shall I send, who will go for us?” O Lord, here I answer You, Lord here I am, send me. Alleluia!

The Session voted to provide funds for a robe for Jerry Deck as a gift from Village Chapel in honor of his ordination and to serve as a reminder of his experiences in West Virginia. Jerry has accepted the call of the Heritage Presbyterian Church in Carol Stream, Illinois and will be examined by the Chicago Presbytery in preparation for his ordination there.

On **June 5th** Village Chapel, along with their Presbyterian Partners, South Park, and Westminster Churches celebrated worship, fellowship, food, and fun at the annual Sunday in the Park at Kanawha State Forest. The Village Fellowship Ministry Team coordinated the event and members from all three churches brought food. The Worship Service was led by Amy Parker and Denise Hall. Don Parker served as the guitarist and song leader.

Although contacts were made with several seminaries and potential intern candidates, Village did not have a summer intern for **2005**. Vacation Bible School was held July 24-28 in the evenings with dinner each evening followed by creative learning opportunities for children and youth and a separate adult class. The Presbyterian Partner Churches were invited to help and attend.

In **August of 2005** the Property Ministry Team, under the direction of the Session, purchased two kitchen ranges at the cost of \$998. Funding for these additions to the kitchen were provided through memorial funding.

Sunday, **September 11, 2005** was RALLY DAY signaling the beginning of Church School Classes for the fall. The teachers for 2005 – 2006 were:

Preschool	Sharon Richardson and Joan Mansell
Kindergarten – Grade 2:	Jean Blair and Warren Danzer
Grades 3 – 5	Patti Salisbury, Lucy Brown, and Jeanne MacDonald
Grades 6 – 8	Sheila Danzer and Sarah Sears
Grades 9 – 12	Beth Chiparo and Howard Salisbury

ADULT BIBLE STUDY (Conference Room): Diane Ellis, John Wolfe, Todd Zubick & Bobby Caldwell teaching The Present Word, a 13-week class focusing on the Book of Acts.

ADULT DISCUSSION (Library): Polly Dodson, Vicki Cunningham, Sarah Slamick and Martha Foster leading a study based on Christian Worship: Glorifying and Enjoying God considering: Does it matter what happens in worship? What is the motivation for worship? Can more than one generation worship together?

ADULT LECTIONARY (Parlor): Amy Parker and Alatheia Stickler using The Seasons of the Spirit will examine and reflect on the lectionary texts and themes used in the children and youth church school classes and in worship.

The BOOK EXCHANGE, now located on the shelves in the room located between the Fellowship Hall and the entrance to the chancel, is still in operation. The congregation is invited to “come, browse, and take those books you would like to read. Bring books back when you are finished with them – no check out, just a place to swap books! If you have books you would like to donate, please do so!” From time to time, when the shelves get too full, they are sorted and some taken to the Kanawha County Library for their fall book sale.

At the West Virginia Presbytery meeting on **September 1, 2005**, Village Chapel was recognized as one of the TOP FIVE CHURCHES IN SUPPORT OF THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH. Judy Haddock, representing Village Chapel at this meeting, accepted two certificates on behalf of the church. One as being one of the top five congregations in the Presbytery in total giving to the mission of the larger Church and the second for our per member giving. Village was the only congregation to be in the top five in both categories!

On a related note, Mr. Earl Billingsley, representing the Mission Interpretation and Stewardship Committee from the Presbytery of West Virginia came to Village to discuss the stewardship role of Village Chapel within the Presbytery. He thanked the Session and the congregation for being such good stewards to the Presbytery of West Virginia and encouraged Village to continue their giving patterns.

The year **2005 - 2006** presented a critical choice for the three Presbyterian churches in Kanawha City – South Park, Village Chapel and Westminster. (Ruffner had agreed to “table” their consideration of this activity.

A document entitled “Proposal to Sessions of Presbyterian Churches – **October 2005** prepared by Denise Hall and Frank Mansell, pastors of Westminster and South Park and Village Chapel Presbyterian Churches contained the following information:

Recommendation

1. We recommend that the Sessions of the Westminster, South Park, and Village Chapel Presbyterian Churches take the steps necessary to create a new congregation from these three churches by Pentecost Sunday, **June 4, 2006**. (In taking this action the Sessions recognize that a final decision about merger must be made by the congregations and approved by the Presbytery of West Virginia. [Book of Order G-11.103h; see also G-15].
2. We recommend that the Sessions and Congregations of Westminster, South Park, and Village Chapel Presbyterian Churches meet on **November 6, 2005**, at 4:00 p.m. at the Westminster Presbyterian Church, to talk together about this proposal.

Background

These three churches, in addition to Ruffner Memorial, have a long history of working together. We have worshipped together on Maundy Thursday for many years. In the early 1970's the four congregations were organized as the Charleston Southeast Parish with a representative Council that planned for joint ministries and at one time called a minister to provide pastoral, worship, and educational leadership in the four churches. When that effort waned, the churches continued to gather for worship and Bible Study during Lent and Holy Week. In recent years we have engaged in Bible study together during the seasons of Lent and Advent. This year Westminster, South Park and Village Chapel shared a Sunday in the Park, worshipping and picnicking together in Kanawha State Forest on **June 5, 2005**. These three congregations also shared in a Vacation Church School in 2004 and 2005. These congregations, together with Ruffner Memorial, are sharing in a project with Habitat for Humanity to rehab a house given to Habitat by the South Park Church; this project began in the spring of 2005 and hopefully will conclude in the fall. Westminster, South Park, and Village Chapel together with Ruffner Memorial, gathered for worship at 11:00 a.m. on **October 2, 2005**, for a World Communion Service at Village Chapel. This service was proposed by the ministers and approved by the Sessions of the congregations.

In the fall of **2002** the Session of Westminster Church invited the Sessions of South Park, Ruffner, and Village Chapel to meet to consider their ministry together in the years ahead. Beginning in February 2003, members of all of the Sessions met together to become acquainted, to share history, and to “dream together about our future ministry”. These

meetings began on a neutral site (Kanawha City Baptist Church) and with neutral leadership (Sky Kershner and Bonnie Mallott). Eventually, meetings were rotated among the four church buildings and in 2004 shifted the leadership to Peter Vial, the Associate Presbyterian for Congregational Development of the Presbytery of West Virginia. In the fall of 2004 and the winter of 2005, the group completed a mission study, working in separate congregations, then sharing the results together. A representative group from the four churches managed the mission study. A final report was drafted in the spring of 2005 with these recommendations:

1. Establish a Planning Committee (Council) of representatives from each of the four churches (perhaps 2 each) to plan for ministry together. This group will:
 - a. Identify well in advance activities that can be undertaken jointly and initiate establishing a representative group to plan each (e.g. a picnic, Church School, worship services, etc.)
 - b. Consider combining some of our basic ministry functions (Sunday worship, Christian Education, Youth Ministry, Presbyterian Women, and the like)
 - c. Focus on the priorities in item 2
2. Two priorities for ministry together:
 - a. Opportunities of needs to be met in our community
 - b. Spiritual formation of members; developing a capacity for ministry
3. Two affirmations.
 - a. All of the congregations have diminishing resources (people, money, energy)
 - b. A new ministry at a new location is not in the immediate future (no consensus) Spiritual formation could build bonds of trust for consensus

Most, perhaps all, of the Sessions considered these recommendations. But there has not been much movement in the direction they point in the past six months. We are concerned that we don't see any changes in established ways of doing things. There seems to be a lack of energy. We wonder if this may be the result of the churches not having a specific plan on the table. So, we make the following recommendations:

Status of Ministers

We would like to see the congregations we work with move in a new direction at this stage in our ministry with them. Frank Mansell reached retirement age in May 2005. He is working on plans for retirement in 2006, though no date has been set. Denise Hall would like to be open to consider other opportunities for ministry; she will complete four years of ministry with Westminster and South Park at the end of 2005. We are concerned when we hear reports from the Personnel Services of the Presbyterian Church (USA) that there are fewer and fewer ordained ministers available to serve small congregations.

Possible Steps Toward Creating a New Congregation

We suggest these as some of the steps the Sessions might take toward creating a new congregation from the three existing ones by **June 4, 2006**.

1. That a Transition Team be established of 5 or 6 people representing the three congregations. This team will propose to the Sessions and Congregations ways to deal with matters like these:
 - a. Governance. How to move from 3 Sessions to 1 Session. How to work with the Presbytery of West Virginia in creating a new congregation.
 - b. Budget/Finance. How to move from 3 budgets and treasuries to 1 budget and treasury.
 - c. Property. How to use the three pieces of property now owned by the churches. Prior to the formation of the new congregation, decisions about property rest with the respective Sessions and Congregations and the Presbytery.
 - d. Worship. How to create a new worshipping community; hymnals; Bibles; furnishings of the sanctuary, etc.
 - e. Community Building. How to create a new congregation of people who know and care for one another.
 - f. Education. How to provide educational opportunities, using the leadership in all three congregations.
 - g. Mission. How to define the mission of the new congregation in the community and beyond.
 - h. Staffing. How to provide adequate staff for the ministry and mission of the new congregation, honoring the position of persons presently on the staff of the three churches.
 - i. Other. Any other areas of the church's life and work that are identified as needing attention in the transitional period.

The Transition Team may determine that it will be helpful to establish other representative teams to deal specifically with some of these matters. The work of sub-groups will be under the oversight of the Transition Team and will bring recommendations to the Sessions and Congregations through it.

1. The Sessions will continue to govern the congregations until such time as a formal merger is completed.
2. That Westminster, South Park and Village Chapel begin functioning as a single body for worship. Christian education, fellowship, pastoral care, outreach, and service on Easter Sunday, April 16, 2006.
3. That the combined group be known as the "Presbyterian Partners Church" until a new name can be chosen.
4. That the combined group use the Village Chapel building initially for worship and other activities, until a decision can be made by the combined group about future

facility needs. The Village Chapel name will be replaced by temporary signage for the “Presbyterian Partners Church”.

5. That the combined group will continue to explore the ministry to which God is calling it in the community. Conclusions about this ministry may guide decisions about facilities.
6. That Denise Hall and Frank Mansell continue to provide pastoral leadership for the “Presbyterian Partners Church” until final plans for merger are complete (target date is June 4, 2006). Other staff members will continue in their present positions during the transition period. The new congregation will determine staff needs for its future. (Book of Order G-11.0103h)

We believe God is calling us, pastors and congregations, to move in this direction. We do not know all the steps that need to be taken, but we urge us all to step out in the faith that God will lead us and guide us and enable us to be a stronger witness to Jesus Christ in the years ahead.

Denise Hall, Pastor
Westminster & South Park Presbyterian Churches

Frank Mansell
Village Chapel Presbyterian Church

Following the release of this document, a meeting of the “Presbyterian Partners” was held at Westminster Church to discuss the proposal. In the October 26th edition of The Villager, Frank Mansell made the following comments:

At a meeting on **October 19**, the Sessions of Westminster, South Park and Village Chapel Churches adopted a recommendation presented by the ministers Frank Mansell and Denise Hall to take steps toward creating a new congregation from the three by Pentecost Sunday, **July 4, 2006**.

“Denise and I believe that God is calling our congregation to move in this new direction at this time in our history. I have a vision of 175 people at worship each Sunday. I have a vision of the new congregation in ministry to the people of Kanawha City in life-giving ways—perhaps a community center to serve children, youth, and older adults on the property presently owned by Westminster across Noyes Avenue from their building, and a similar ministry in the South Park and Village Chapel neighborhoods. I have a vision of nicely landscaped parking along 39th Street extending from Venable to Washington Avenue, making the church building more easily accessible. There is some pain in this proposal as Denise and I talk about serving together during the transition but then moving on to other ministries. Transitions are never easy, either for congregations or for ministers. But we believe that this is what God is calling us to do.”

Howard Salisbury, Rick Hanna, Sara Slamick, and Vicki Cunningham were elected to serve on the Transition Team that will coordinate the forming of a new congregation with the other churches in the Presbyterian Partners. The group had positive comments about their first meeting with the other churches. Everyone seems ready to work towards the future. The

group intends to keep the VC members informed every step of the way in the process of forming the new congregation. The first meeting was scheduled for **January 4, 2006**, for a discussion.

The Presbyterian Partners Transition Team met on **January 8, 2006** and a report was published in the January 18 The Villager announcing that the Team met and heard a report from the Village Chapel Team members regarding a “Town Hall” meeting at Village Chapel on January 4th. “There were many good observations and reports of what the merger might accomplish.” The team discussed the need for such meetings to take place at South Park and Westminster Churches. Members of the Transition Teams from those congregations will request those sessions to set a date for meetings to take place in the next few weeks.

We continued discussions of the process of moving forward with acquiring information on worship styles, property and assets, and the creation of a new name for the congregation. The next meeting of the Village Transition Team was set for January 22nd. Minutes of the January 18 Session meeting indicated “Ruffner has decided to table any further consideration about taking part in the proceedings toward a new congregation for one year.”

The **January 18** edition of The Villager announced the Annual Congregational Meeting to be held on January 22nd. Three items were listed for the agenda, the first being the reception of 2005 Session Ministry Teams; the presentation of the budget as adopted by the Session and lastly to act on the recommendation of the Session that the number of elders serving on the Session in three year terms be reduced from 18 to 15 as this seemed to be “a more appropriate number for a congregation our size”. The motion read “The number of elders serving on the Session shall be 15, with the possibility of a 16th member who is a youth. 15 Elders, in classes of five, shall be elected for three-year terms.”

On Palm Sunday, **April 19, 2006**, ten young people and their adult partners concluded their confirmation journey which began on February 24th with an overnight retreat at the Mission Center of the Montgomery Presbyterian Church and concluded with professions of faith and confirmation as members of the church. The youth and their adult partners are: Alex Cook (Sam Hanna); Allyson Robertson (Patti Salisbury); Jamie Hanna (Tom Wilkerson); Will Pack (Greg Blank); Alex Panger (Dean Dawson); Nicholas Wolfe (Linda Meadows); Jacob Brown (Howard Salisbury); Hallie Barry (Sara Sears); Coutney Pack (Heather Barry); and Daniel Walker (John Wolfe).

The **May 24th** issue of The Villager contained an update Statement from the Transition Team that read: “As members of the Transition Team, we are thankful for the opportunity that we have had to serve God and our churches. We have had the privilege of exploring the histories and strengths of our congregations and the needs of our community. We have prayed, worked, and grown together during this time. Frank Mansell, Denise Hall, and Peter Vial have provided support and leadership for which we are especially appreciative. Although the merger of South Park, Westminster, and Village Chapel will not happen as we

had hoped at this time, the needs in our community still exist. It is our hope that our congregations will move forward together to reach out and serve our community as God calls us to do. The announcement was signed by: Jim Sothen, Howard Salisbury, Wanda Gay Postlethwait, Steve Murray, Alicia Tyler, Rick Hanna, Sara Slamick, David Wylie, and Vicki Cunningham.

Christa Brewer from the Princeton Seminary, was hired in **2006** for a twelve-week internship at Village Chapel. On the first Sunday in July and the first Sunday in August, she led the Worship service and served as the preacher at South Park Church while Denise Hall, the Pastor at this church, was on vacation. Amy Parker accompanied her for these two Sundays to offer suggestions to her about worship leadership. This arrangement was part of our sharing Christa's time and talents among the three congregations. Christa completed her internship on August 20th.

The **June 28th** The Villager announced that Village Chapel purchased a house across the street from the church located at 3013 Venable Avenue. The congregation authorized this purchase at a meeting held on **June 11, 2006**. The Presbytery of West Virginia approved this move through its trustees, moderator, chair of council, and stated clerk. The house will be available for rent in the near future.

The **August 16th** The Villager included a page of information regarding Frank Mansell's retirement (which obviously was not made available to him). The instructions were: As you probably know, Frank's last day with us will be **September 10, 2006**. In an effort to honor him for his 23 years of dedicated service, the Fellowship Ministry Team would like you to join in a carry-in luncheon following our 11:00 a.m. Worship Service. Meat, drinks and bread will be provided. Please bring a vegetable, fruit, salad or dessert to share. During the luncheon, Warren Danzer has offered to video personal messages. There will be a place set up in the Narthex where you can video your personal messages to Frank and Joan. Warren will put this on a disk for them to keep and add to their collection of memories!

Also, if you have not received a page to add to the Memory Album, please contact Kathy Blank and she will give you a photo album page to add pictures, cards, letters, etc. to be added to a large album from other families in the congregation. Pictures of our family (old and new) would be great because Frank and Joan have seen lots of families grow and change. There will be a box in the Narthex for you to leave your page so that Kathy can start putting them all together. We will present the album to them at the luncheon. Finally, the Session agreed at the last meeting that we would try to raise enough money to purchase a new car for Frank as he has been having trouble with his car and everyone felt that this would be a wonderful way to thank him for all he has done for us over the years.

Rev. Frank Mansell, Jr. conducted his last Worship Service at Village Chapel on **September 10, 2006**. As a retirement gift and in appreciation of his 23 years of service as the pastor at Village Chapel, the church gifted him with a red 2006 Volkswagen Beetle! A picture of the car, Frank and Joan, his wife, his son Frank, III and his daughters, Heather and

Erin and members of the congregation was published in The Charleston Gazette on Monday, September 11th with the heading, “Sunday Surprise”. Frank’s comments in The September 13th The Villager were:

Wow – What A Celebration! Joan and I really thought that we were going outside after worship last Sunday to take a picture of the congregation to put in our memory album and in the church history! We had no idea that a shiny red VW Beetle was waiting for us on the front walk of the church. You sneaky people!! I pride myself on knowing what is going on in the church, but I had no clue about this surprise. It’s humbling to know that I don’t know everything!

Thank you very much—for the worship service and the luncheon; for the boxes of cereal so I can keep eating supper on Sunday evenings; for the roses for Joan and the Disney watches for both of us; Joan will want to share the golf balls. Thanks to the Sunday school classes for their poems, posters, pictures and songs. The memory albums are great; I spent part of Monday looking at the pictures and reading your kind notes—lots of memories for you and for me. I spent another part of Monday giving family members a ride in the VW before they returned home.

So many people were involved in planning and leading this celebration, we are grateful to all of you. We will continue to remember you and rejoice in our ministry together. We look forward to seeing you in the community in the days ahead. Thank you,

Grace and peace.

Frank and Joan

In the fall of **2006**, Village Chapel had thirty-five students enrolled in college or graduate school. The data did not include the colleges or universities of enrollment; however, those involved were: Keri Blank, Kevin Blank, Jeff Callard, Corey Campbell, Scott Cattleman, Adam Cook, Julia Danzer, David Dobson, Katte Dobson, Carter France, Meredith France, Samantha Hanna, Jared Hawley, Emily Hoffman, Krista Jacobs, Taylor Johnston, Bobby Johnston, Bill King, Joey McClung, Gracie McClung, Elliott McNeil, David Mullins, Phillip Mullings, Courtney Pack, Kristen Parks, Melissa Phouthavong, Bethany Robertson, David Salisbury, Emily Salisbury, Matt Sampson, Jeb Sears, Erin Snyder, Doug Thornton, Corey Upton, and Heather Wolfe. What a fine group!!

On the weekend of **November 18-19**, the young people of the church had an interesting orientation to the homeless. Beginning at 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, participants were to drop off the large cardboard boxes they would sleep in at the area under the interstate bridge in South Charleston. In addition to their box, everyone was instructed to bring one can of vegetable soup, duct tape, a sleeping bag, a flashlight, gloves, hat, coat, and heavy socks. The night included a variety of activities under the supervision of the event chaperones, Cindy and Sam Hanna.

On Sunday morning following the “sleepover,” worshipers were encouraged to bring canned food to support the homeless in the community. The youth participating in the overnight were on the front lawn of Village Chapel with their boxes so that the congregation could see how they slept – or didn’t sleep. The young people attended Sunday School and Worship in the same clothing they wore the previous night.

In the **December 20th** Session meeting, the Session approved accepting John and Donzie Fleck and Janet Kinzer into membership at Village Chapel. These newcomers were introduced during the worship service on December 24th and received their membership certificates. **In March 2007**, Barbara Tabaretti and Sherry and Steve Murray were welcomed into the church. All of these individuals transferred from the Westminster Church.

On **January 14, 2007** the Class of 2009 Elders were ordained and included Lucy Brown, Lou Maxson, Sandy Bowles, David Dawson, and Sharon Richardson. Jamie Hanna was ordained and installed into the Class of 2007 (one year term) as a Youth Elder.

To find an interim pastor, an Interim Search Committee was appointed. Martha Foster served as the Chair and members were: Beth Chiparo, Demetrice Hardman, Jack Schwarz, Charlie Stebbins, Howard Salisbury, and Kathryn McCrary.

The Search Committee was successful in finding an interim pastor that the Committee felt would meet the needs of the congregation. Robert E. “Bob” Lee from Greensboro, North Carolina graduated from Columbia Seminary with a Master of Divinity and has completed all work for the Doctor of Ministry except for the project phase. He was ordained in 1980 and has served as a regular pastor for 20 years and as an interim pastor for the past five years. Rev. Lee was highly recommended by people involved with three presbyteries where he had previously worked. He indicated that he views his role at Village Chapel as guiding the congregation in its search for a permanent pastor. Comments from the Committee regarding Rev. Lee were that they felt he would work well with all age groups; he was “encouraged” that Village Chapel has a young person on the Session; he has agreed to take on the roles left by Frank Mansell; and he is looking forward to guiding Village Chapel through the mission statement segment of a ministerial search. The Session approved a Covenant Agreement with Rev. Lee that would begin **March 1, 2007**.

The **January 20, 2007** Session meeting minutes reflected that a family in the Church has been without a furnace for four years and needs a new furnace and duct work. A motion was approved to have the youth group raise \$2000 toward the purchase of a new furnace and the Session will match the funds from the budget.

The February Minutes of the Session indicated that the Service Ministry Team will continue the Christmas in July for schoolchildren, i.e., the Coat and Sweater Drive, and Angel Tree projects. A computer problem solver group will be formed to help Church members with computer problems. The Worship Ministry Team reported that the Women of the

Church are no longer delivering the chancel flowers to members of the congregation that are homebound or sick. A motion was approved that the donors of the flowers each month may opt to keep the flowers or give them away at their discretion. It was also noted that four years ago Betty and Jim Arthur donated the stained-glass windows on the 39th Street side of the sanctuary, and at the time, preferred not to be recognized but now would like a plaque put up in their honor. The Worship Team will make the arrangements to have a plaque made and installed.

On **March 1, 2007**, Village Chapel welcomed the Rev. Robert E. Lee and his wife, Joyce, as the Interim Pastor. Mr. Lee described his roots as “Midwestern and blue collar”. Following graduation from college, he moved to North Carolina and became a teacher in the Winston-Salam/Forsyth County schools. After three years, he left teaching and went into sales work and became an employee of Thalhimer Department Stores as a retail manager. While engaged in sales work, he discovered that he had a “gift for careful listening and could talk to people about faith issues in an open and uncritical manner” and began to give serious consideration to a call in the ministry. In 1977, he began studies at Columbia Seminary to become a pastor. He was ordained in Old Orange Presbytery in 1980 and served three congregations over the next twenty years. While at El Bethel Church, he also worked full-time as a customer service representative for a Greensboro chemical manufacturer but could never “shake the feeling that God wanted me back in pastoral ministry as my only vocation”. He began interim training at Union Seminary to test the validity of his “holy hunch”. After completion of this program, Mr. Lee served four congregations (twice at one) as an interim minister. He indicated that each call has “made unique demands upon my pastoral experience”. Prior to coming to Village Chapel, he served as a part-time interim on a monthly contract. In his Statement of Faith, he indicates that “The Presbyterian Church (USA) offers the world a way to see the work of God in a community of faith. Our churches exist as separate bodies united by their common polity and a firm belief in our connectional nature. We are never a perfect church, but we are called to live as God’s servants serving a world that needs the Good News of Christ and his love. Even in our errors, we remain God’s community.”

A Munch and Mingle reception was held on **March 4, 2007** to welcome the new interim pastor, Bob Lee.

In a Stated Session Meeting on **March 21st**, the Session approved endorsing Amy Parker to move into the role of Associate Pastor.

On **June 27th**, Rev. Lee had to be out of town and Amy Parker was back for her first service since taking medical leave. On that day, Village welcomed Dr. David Haas, a professor at the University of Charleston and a well-known local musician to participate in the service. In lieu of a full sermon, Dave led the congregation in singing some favorite hymns in an Appalachian approach to music in worship.

A Property Team Task Force brought a report to the Session on **July 18, 2007** looking at the pros and cons of the Church owning rental properties as Village Chapel currently owns two rental properties. The question identified was whether it is in the Church's best interest to sell these properties or whether to retain them as rental properties. Points made in FAVOR OF RETAINING the properties included:

- The properties, with the idea of building the equity, could be considered a sound financial investment of the Church.
- Holding the properties, as well as purchasing additional properties, would give the Church the option of expanding the physical facility in the future.
- The Church may need to be able to offer a parsonage for the new minister. The Venable Avenue property, currently owned by the church, may be suitable and considered as an asset in the benefit package offered.

Points made in FAVOR OF SELLING the properties:

- Less stress on already "taxed" church volunteers, particularly the Property Ministry Team.
- Less stress on Church finances
- There are members of the Church who do not feel the church should be in the "rental business".
- The Church may never be able to expand the physical property due to zoning restrictions, available finances, decreasing church membership, and the fact that neither the property on Venable and 39th, or the property next door to the manse, may ever be attainable, which would prohibit the assemblage of the properties.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is the recommendation of this Task Force that Village Presbyterian Church consider retaining the two properties while employing a professional property manager to relieve the burden currently placed on the Property Ministry Team, while completing the Mission Study. Once the Mission Study is complete, and our needs are defined, the Session will be better "equipped" to make a recommendation to the church body regarding this matter.

In **August, 2007** the church began a Mission Study using the Presbytery of West Virginia materials including a handbook and study materials. This exercise involved the development of a Vision Statement to speak to the questions of :

1. What kind of church are we? What are the most significant characteristics of our life and ministry?
2. What beliefs undergird and shape our church's life and work?
3. What are we called by God to do at this time in this place?
4. What are some concrete goals on which we will concentrate for the next five years?

A Mission Study Team was proposed and three individuals volunteered to serve: Steve Martin, Melanie Bland, and Phil Harich. Additional volunteers from the congregation included: Shannon Bland, Martha Foster, Fred Joseph, Jane McNeil, Steve Murray and Patti Salisbury. Following an initial meeting of the Team, a “Kick off” activity was planned for the congregation on November 18th. As the congregation gathered for worship, they found some of the sanctuary windows darkened and half of the pews covered in caution tape, forcing worshippers towards the front for seating. The service proceeded as usual, but at the time for the sermon, the Mission Study Team showed a video by Joel Arthur Baker, “The Power of Vision.” Immediately after the video, a member of the Mission Study Team addressed the congregation and questionnaires were distributed. At the conclusion of the service, team members collected the questionnaires. Middle and high school youth passed out cards with starfish reminding everyone that we can make a difference. A reception was held in the Fellowship Hall for further discussions.

The Mission Study Team continued to meet--organizing, planning, and gathering data from **October 30, 2007** until **April 13, 2008**. Over this time frame, the Team looked at and discussed:

1. CONGREGATIONAL IDENTITY:
 - a. Church History – Overview from 1946 to current time
2. CHURCH DEMOGRAPHICS- Numbers, Education, Ethnicity, Service activities, etc.
3. OUTSIDE PERCEPTIONS – Accessibility, Community Involvement, Outside groups
4. COMMUNITY HISTORY/COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS – Charleston, Kanawha City, Other Churches, Schools, Housing, etc.
5. DENOMINATIONAL CONNECTEDNESS – Participation in the greater church, the Presbytery, Bluestone, Montreat, etc.
6. BUILDING ANALYSIS – Structure, Renovations, Maintenance, etc.,
7. COMMUNITY NEEDS – Hosting groups, Service projects, etc.
8. PROGRAM SUMMARY
 - a. Worship – Sunday service; Communion, Baptism, Confirmation, etc.
 - b. Education – Sunday School,
 - c. Music – Adult choir, Individual musicians
 - d. Service – Good Samaritan, Christmas in July, Clothes Closet, Food Pantry, etc.
 - e. Youth – Care packages to college students, Car washes, Pumpkin Run, etc.
 - f. Presbyterian Women –3 Circles meeting monthly, Service projects, Program, etc.
 - g. General Mission – World Communion, Joy Offering, One Great Hour of Sharing, etc.

- h. Fellowship – Bluestone Retreat, Picnic in the Park, Caroling, etc.
 - i. Membership – Send cards to visitors, Review roll of members, Directories, etc.
 - j. Recreation – Youth basketball teams, Women's volleyball, Men's softball, etc.
9. PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS – Adult education classes strong, Youth classes decreasing, Limited evangelism, need to develop more effective assessment
10. PROCESS – Information received through newsletter, leadership effective
11. CONCLUSIONS – Mission study has provided insights into the congregation. Shows evidence of care and support, People listen to one another, Congregation has many skills, Members are hardworking, Desire to continue to support community groups.

VILLAGE CHAPEL MISSION STATEMENT

Village Chapel is a congregation of God's people, a lively community of faith, striving to serve God according to God's ever evolving plan; passionately seeking opportunities to reflect God's love in our every day lives through service, humility, self-examination and reflection, study and prayer.

We are called to be generous and wise stewards of our God given gifts, talents, money and earthly resources, both as individuals and as the Body of Christ.

Our mission, simply stated, is that we are called to love, to serve, and to be beacons of Christ's endless love and forgiveness, spreading God's eternal light to all people.

GOALS:

Increase the number and diversity of active members of the congregation by such things as:

- Development of Welcome Center at the entrance of the sanctuary.
- Development of a brochure or pamphlet outlining committees and/or programs.
- Development of good follow-up procedures for visitors.
- Identifying methods of membership recruitment and implementation
- Reviewing and assessing possible expansion
- Preparing an area of the sanctuary for wheelchair access (remove ½ pew)
- Encouraging less active members to attend and to participate
- Publicizing opportunities for involvement throughout the year

Stimulate spiritual and personal growth by such things as:

- Offering seminars and classes of interest to members and friends
- Offering expanded opportunity for Bible Study or prayer groups
- Continuing development and emphasis on educational programs for all ages
- Being open to new ways to worship

Energize and enrich times for fellowship by such things as:

- Offering creative and different opportunities for fellowship
- Developing additional programs for children, resume children's choir

Increase our community awareness by such things as:

- Continuing to host community groups
- Continuing collaboration with community agencies (Covenant House, Manna Meal, etc.)
- Resuming "Good Samaritan" program
- Advertising events through banners and/or signs on the front and back of the church
- Assessing community needs for ways we can become involved
- Seek ways to include/welcome students from UC and community neighbors

Fiscal Responsibilities:

- Continue to support the church financially for expanded programs and possible facilities expansion
- Continue to provide an annual report to the congregation (fiscal and program)
- Continue to monitor the rental housing property for losses/gains or possible sale
- Leadership:
- Call a pastor with leadership skills that include serving with energy, enthusiasm, imagination, caring and love
- Elect elders with leadership skills who will serve with energy, enthusiasm, imagination, caring, and love
- Establish a long-range planning team to develop a 5-to-10-year projected plan

This report was respectively submitted to the Session of Village Chapel Presbyterian Church, **April 13, 2008**

RALLY DAY was held on **September 9th** opening with light refreshments at 9:30 a.m. and a brief program prior to initial class meetings. A picnic on the lawn followed the Worship service at noon, with hot dogs and a waterslide.

On **December 9th**, a reception was held after Worship to honor Sharon Curnutte for her 31 years of devoted service to Village Chapel without compensation! The following Citation was written for and presented to her:

Whereas Sharon Curnutte has contributed considerable time and varied talents to the ministry of Village Chapel Presbyterian Church;

Whereas Sharon Curnutte has served faithfully as the Adult Choir Director for thirty-one years without remuneration, providing inspirational leadership, musical knowledge, and kind and loving fellowship to the members of the choir;

Whereas Sharon Curnutte has served as the Director of Close Encounters Children's Groups, leading and teaching the elementary school-age children of Village Chapel to sing together, and has assisted Carolyn Perrine in directing the children's playing of the Orff musical instruments in our worship celebrations for the enjoyment of the congregation and the glory of God;

Whereas Sharon Curnutte has faithfully served as a member of the Worship Committee for many years, providing guidance, leadership, and organization for the choral music in weekly worship services, seasonal celebrations, and special summer music while also assisting the minister and other committee members with the duties of said committee;

Whereas Sharon Curnutte has used her extensive knowledge of the Bible to serve as a teacher for Presbyterian Women, adding to their understanding of God's word, and has often presented luncheon programs for the women using her talents and musical knowledge, i.e., "The History of Hymns";

Whereas Sharon Curnutte has been unfailingly willing to assist in varied endeavors of the church, helping to provide music for Sunday School and Bible School events, and along with husband, Doug, teaching Senior High Sunday School and opening her home and farm for many youth and adult activities, and from these efforts, revealed herself to be a mentor and role model for others;

Whereas Sharon Curnutte, along with Carolyn Perrine, has given the gift of her talent as a piano player to the congregation, enabling the congregation of Village Chapel to hear beautiful, inspirational, instrumental music for our musical enlightenment and the glory of God.

The congregation of Village Presbyterian Church wishes to thank and honor Sharon Curnutte for her many years of service freely given and her numerous, extraordinary talents that have enabled her to be a valuable and significant part of the life of our church community.

At the beginning of **2008**, Village Chapel owned or was buying three houses in the immediate vicinity of the church. The house adjacent to the Church, a house located at 505 39th Street, and a third house across the street from the Church at 3813 Venable. In looking at a questionnaire completed by the congregation as part of the Mission Study recently conducted, many of the responses related to the rentals were negative, essentially expressing concern as to why Village Chapel was in the “rental business” although at this time, the rentals were being handled by an outside management company to relieve the staff from the responsibilities involved.

During the **February 3rd** Worship Service, Sandy and John Bowles were commissioned on behalf of the Presbytery of West Virginia as members of the Disaster Assistance Team going to New Orleans, February 9 – 19. They participated, along with other members of the Presbytery, including Joan and Frank Mansell, in the Rebuilding Hope in New Orleans (RHINO) effort which involved the building of new homes and rehabilitating homes damaged by Hurricane Katrina in 2006.

An Ash Wednesday service was held at Village on **February 6th** at 7:00 p.m. and the Presbyterian Partners were invited.

In **March 2008**, a Mentoring Program was adopted through the Christian Education Ministry Team. The expectation was to continue and expand the mentoring program from confirmation with “Shepherds and their Flock of Sheep”. The tentative start date was set as April 20th. Other adults would “adopt” the Sheep (youth) that were not involved in the current confirmation class. The youth will have mailboxes to deliver each other notes of inspiration or other items. Each Shepherd was encouraged to follow their sheep (youth) to keep up with them when they were not in Church to make sure they were not ill or just to let them know they have been missed and send reminders to come to Church. It was hoped that this concept could be expanded throughout the entire Church with the adults being adopted by other adults to become more connected with each other.

In **March of 2008**, the Ministry Team engaged the Church in an underwear project for Iraq troops with the congregation donating 325 packages of underwear which were taken to the American Legion to be added to over 3,000 packages collected in Kanawha County. General Tackett, Commander of the Air National Guard, arranged to have a plane deliver these to Iraq,

Sandy Bowles was elected as the Village Chapel Elder representative to the **March 15, 2008** Presbytery Meeting and reported that Frank Mansell, honorably retired minister (from Village Chapel Presbyterian Church), has agreed to serve as the staff resource person in Quadrant 4 to provide pastoral care.

On **April 13th**, in lieu of a sermon during the worship service, John and Sandy Bowles presented a report on their trip to participate with other members of the Presbytery of West Virginia in the RHINO (Rebuilding Hope in New Orleans).

In the **April 16th** meeting of the Session, Phil Harich distributed the completed Mission Study Report. The Mission Study Team dedicated the 2008 Mission Study in loving memory of Emily Salisbury (January 15, 1986 – March 25, 2008). Sandra Wilkerson recognized the Team for the tremendous amount of time and work devoted to the process and development of the Mission Study. The Report was accepted as written and it will be submitted to the Presbytery Church Development Committee.

At the **June 18** Session Meeting the Service Ministry Team requested permission to explore the Common Grounds Outreach Center operated by St. Agnes Catholic Church and Morris Memorial Methodist Church as a potential alternative to the Good Samaritan Fund which provided funds to assist those individuals coming to Village Chapel seeking assistance. The Center serves the Kanawha City and eastern Kanawha County residents. Services include emergency food distributed once a month and utility aid up to \$25. The Session approved the request by Common Consent. In the September Session meeting of **2008**, plans were finalized for Village Chapel to join with St. Agnes and Morris Memorial to provide funds for emergency services (utilities, food, gas, etc.) and to provide volunteers on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 10:00 and 2:00 to assist with this effort. Appropriate information was published in The Villager and the Church Bulletin seeking individuals to participate in this community outreach. It was also suggested that it might be helpful to have the Common Grounds Coordinator come to talk with the congregation at some point.

On **July 11, 2008**, a notice came from the Presbytery of West Virginia that the Council of the Presbytery voted on July 10th to recommend that the Presbytery “divest itself of Bluestone Camp and Retreat Center, outside Hinton, WV, by the end of 2009”. By a vote of 12-4, the Council adopted the recommendation of a task force appointed in August 2006.

The camp sits on land leased from the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers; the task force was created in order to make a recommendation about the future of the Camp in sufficient time before the lease expires at the end of 2009. “It is important to note that this recommended divestiture of Bluestone does not mean that the Presbytery of West Virginia intends to dissolve the camp and outdoor ministries. . . It is incumbent on the Presbytery of West Virginia, however, to be visionary as well, to imagine new possibilities and opportunities . . . It is a time to consider thoughtfully the best interests of the Presbytery and the future of its continuing camping and retreat ministries.”

As a follow-up to this letter regarding Bluestone Conference Center, Village Chapel received a letter from Mark Miller, the Camp Director, dated **January 12, 2009** thanking Village Chapel for a \$100 donation in August 2008. He indicates 2008 as a landmark year in Bluestone history and provides additional information regarding the letter from the Presbytery of July, 2008 describing it as the “culmination of many years of Presbytery debate about what to do with Bluestone”. Mr. Miller goes on to say, “As is well known by now, the motion to divest the Presbytery of Bluestone was trumped by a substitute motion that called for the formation of a new organization called ‘Friends of Bluestone’ for the dual purpose of fundraising (to maintain and improve Bluestone’s facilities) and advocating (for ministry that

takes place at Bluestone in the form of retreats, conferences, and summer camp programs). The vote in favor of the substitute motion was overwhelming, thus confirming our Presbytery membership's love and appreciation for the holy ground we call Bluestone."

He goes on to say, "Moving forward, it is imperative that people remain aware of Bluestone, pray for Bluestone, and support Bluestone when opportunities to give and serve present themselves. It was the question of financial investment that was the practical concern that led some to conclude divestment was the best option . . . and in all practicality, Bluestone cannot be sustained without significant ongoing financial investment. . . but can we really afford not to sustain the place and the ministry that is Bluestone? . . . God meets people at Bluestone in ways that they will not experience anywhere else. The combination of a real sense of ownership (especially for those who have grown up coming here) and the magnificent witness of creation (for anyone who has ever spent any time here) has a way of drawing us closer to the heart of God than we ever could be otherwise. . . Without question, what happens when people gather together at Bluestone is priceless. Friends of Bluestone is forming because a great many people know this to be true. Very soon, Friends of Bluestone will begin doing the job of presenting various opportunities for service and financial stewardship. In turn, we are hopeful that you and many others will respond in support of Bluestone's Ministry to the glory of Jesus Christ. . . . Please pray for us as we continue to plan for the coming season, and for all those who will pass through our doors this year. Anything you can do to help us encourage people to come and experience the ministry you so generously support will ultimately further the kingdom of God. We'll do our part to continue to provide the Christ centered community experience that Bluestone was built and developed to be. God Bless."

At a Congregational Meeting held on **June 25, 2008**, a Pastoral Nominating Committee (PNC) was formed to carry out the process of finding a new minister for Village Chapel. This team included: Sandy Bowles, Sam Hanna, Curtis Hardman, Phil Harich, Sharon King, Kathy Kruk, Kathryn McCrary, and Sara Slamick.

The PNC held its first meeting on **July 13** and over the length of the process, met nineteen times with meetings lasting 1½ to 4 hours. The first task of the group was to complete a Church Information Form (CIF) and to review the Mission Study Task Force's report which was completed in the fall and spring of 2007-2008. After the CIF was completed, it was filed with the Presbytery for its approval.

In the September Session meeting, Rev. Lee announced that the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery approved the Church Information Form (CIF) that was completed by the Pastoral Nominating Committee as a part of the groundwork process for seeking a new minister. After this approval was received, it was sent to Louisville for distribution to potential candidates.

Shortly thereafter, the Committee began to receive Personal Information Forms from prospective ministerial candidates. The group reviewed at least 70 forms. Most were "matches" from Louisville, but the Team also received ten self-referrals and three persons

were recommended to the PNC by a member of the congregation. As the PNC reviewed the forms, which were 6 to 9 pages in length, they were ranked individually. The group then came together and compiled the rankings and found great similarity among them. This was an amazing but lengthy process!

For World Communion **Sunday, October 8th**, Rev. Lee extended an invitation to Ruffner, South Park and Westminster Churches. Sandy Bowles, Chair of the Worship Ministry Team, invited members of the congregation, as they were able, to read the scriptures in different languages (Doug Curnutte, German), etc. Bob Lee selected the hymns, and Special Bulletin covers were ordered. Communion was delivered by intinction, and the other churches were invited to assist with communion. By common consent of the participating churches, the offering for this Service was donated to Manna Meal.

Session Minutes of **December 17th** noted that the red hymnals (replaced by blue hymnals) have been removed from the sanctuary, and a motion was made to offer those, that had been donated in memory or honor of someone, to the individuals who originally donated them. The “unclaimed” hymnals could then be offered to anyone in the Church who would like to have one and any remaining hymnals be donated to a church on the Gulf Coast (this suggestion was made following hurricane Katrina which caused tremendous damage in that area). The motion was approved.

The year **2009** was a financially challenging year for the Church. Pledges were down and the two houses purchased to generate rental income were not producing well. In addition, the previous year, 2008, came in approximately \$17,000 below the amount budgeted for the year and a shortfall of \$39,000 was projected for 2009.

In the January Stewardship Ministry Team meeting, after significant discussion of the pros and cons of continuing with the rental properties, a motion was made, seconded, and approved that the Session (and congregation) consider selling these two properties (the one at 3813 Venable across from the church and the one located at 505 39th Street) as a means of generating needed revenue for the calendar year 2009 budget with the proviso that one or both of the properties not be sold if the amount offered would result in a financial loss to the Church. It was recognized that this action might be controversial, and that, if carried out, would be a one-time infusion of revenue and not a long-term answer to the Church’s financial difficulties. In reality, the combined rental income for 2008 was \$17,120 with expenses totaling \$22,645.81 resulting in a negative figure of \$-5,525.55. In addition to recommending selling the two properties, the Session recommended rolling the 2009 budget back to 2008 figures and requiring all ministry teams to exercise discipline in managing expenditures. There was also the suggestion of possible staffing cutbacks. The projected outcome of these actions, if successful, would result in a shortfall of \$16,000 as opposed to the \$39,000 figure.

The Session approved a motion to move forward with obtaining an appraisal on the rental properties at 505 29th Street and 3813 Venable Avenue. A letter was received from the Presbytery in accordance with the Book of Order and the Manual of the Presbytery of West Virginia giving Village Chapel Presbyterian Church permission to sell the two pieces of property. The property at 3813 Venable appraised at \$185,000 and the property at 505 39th Street at \$152,000. The permission indicated that these be sold for no less than 90 percent of the appraised value with the stipulation that 70 percent of the net proceeds be held in reserve for capital improvement/mission of Village Chapel Presbyterian Church.

The Service Ministry Team in **January 2009** recommended that the congregation be provided opportunity to contribute to the Cents Ability Hunger Program (started much earlier by the Women's Circle) and the Session voted to collect these monies on the last Sunday of each month. The 2 Cents a Meal donation will begin to be collected on the 4th Sunday of April and continue on the last Sunday of every month.

Janet Kinzer, Lou Maxson, and Bob Lee spearheaded moving forward with the Common Grounds outreach effort with St. Agnes and Morris Memorial. On **January 4, 2009**, the Communion Sunday donation amounted to \$561.00, and it was agreed that Village Chapel would donate this amount to Common Grounds. It was also agreed that Village would regularly donate paper supplies (diapers, toilet tissue, paper towels, etc.) as these are items that cannot be purchased with food stamps.

The Pastor Nominating Committee continued to move forward with the process of identifying a viable candidate for the pastor position. The group had identified their "number 1" candidate and scheduled a visit with that individual only to learn that the candidate cancelled the visit and removed his name from consideration. Back to the drawing board!

The list of candidates was revisited and narrowed to five candidates and the PNC conducted telephone interviews with these five individuals. Following completion of these interviews, they were ranked and with only two exceptions, the rankings were essentially the same. It was at that time that the Team realized how the Holy Spirit had been guiding them through the process – an amazing moment! The Presbytery Executive, Gay Mothershed, contacted the Presbytery executives in the Presbyteries of our "top" two candidates and received a "the best" comment about each of these individuals. At this point the PNC was ready to invite the candidates to come to Charleston for in-person interviews. These were completed, along with opportunity to observe the candidates as they served as "guest ministers" in area churches. After further discussion and prayer, the PNC decided to recommend Todd Wright as our candidate for minister at Village Chapel to succeed Frank Mansell, Jr.

In its **March 18** meeting, the Session recommended approval of the terms of call for the prospective pastor. A congregational meeting was set to vote on calling the pastor and if accepted, his service would begin on **June 1, 2009**. If the new pastor will need rental property until he can decide on the purchase of a home, the church will provide the house at 3813 Venable Avenue for him.

The **April 2009** Session minutes indicate that the pastoral candidate has accepted the call as pastor at Village Chapel! The candidate will be examined by the Committee on Ministry on April 21st and a congregational meeting will be set for May 10th at which time the congregation will vote on calling this pastor. As outlined in the terms of call, Village Chapel will cover all moving expense for the pastor and his family. The Session commended the PNC for the excellent work they have done in securing a pastor!

The congregation met on **May 10th** to receive a report from the Pastor Nominating Committee. The meeting was called to order with prayer by the Acting Moderator, Reverend Doug Heidt. At the conclusion of the presentation by the Pastoral Nominating Committee, the floor was opened for questions, of which there were none. With no further comments from the floor, ballots were distributed. Ballots were counted under the direction of the Clerk of the Session. The vote was unanimous (90 Yes, 0 No) to approve Rev. Todd R. Wright for the call as pastor with the terms of call as presented. Rev. Wright's first Sunday in the pulpit will be **June 7, 2009** and following the service, a "heavy hors d'oeuvres" reception will be held in the Fellowship Hall. Rev. Wright's installation service will be at 4:00 p.m., on Sunday June 28, 2009. To assist the new minister to learn individual names, the Membership Ministry team will make name tags for the congregation to wear during June.

A dinner/discussion with Todd and Maureen Wright and the Session was held the week prior to the congregational vote. Dinner was provided by Sandy Bowles. Session members indicated they felt "very good about the interactions". The Pastoral Nominating Committee has agreed to continue to serve as a support group to the new minister for at least through the first year and as needed beyond that time.

An Exit Interview was scheduled for Bob Lee, the Interim Pastor, and Jim Robinson led the Session in discussion of a series of questions related to his experience with Village Chapel.

Graduation Sunday was held on **May 17th**. A breakfast was held for graduating seniors and their families. The younger youth will serve and make decorations for the tables. The high school graduates this year were Hallie Barry, Jacob Brown, Sarah Hawley, Allyson Robertson, Daniel Walker, John Willis and Nick Wolfe.

Kathryn McCrary reported that the Committee on Ministry has approved the date for Todd Wright's installation for **June 29th** at 4:00 p.m. Individuals involved in the service will include:

Call to Worship	Jesse Haynes, Elder, Rock Lake PC
Scripture	Joan Stewart, Minister, Falls View/Montgomery PC
Sermon	Joan Stewart
Questions to Minister	Jim Rowe, Minister, Old Stone Church, Moderator, PWV
Questions to Congregation	Kathryn McCrary
Prayer of Installation	Devon Ducheneau, Minister, Westminster/South Park
Declaration	Jim Rowe
Charge to Minister	Jim Robinson, Minister, Elk Hills PC
Charge to Congregation	John Bolt, Stated Clerk, PWV

The Presbyterian Women will do the reception following the Service. Betsy White will organize as necessary.

Speaking for the Committee on Ministry, our Liaison Pastor, Mr. Robinson, described the thinking by the Committee on Ministry that the new minister and the congregation should pledge to enter into a "covenant" or agreement that the minister stay at the church for a minimum of five years. The intent is to create a non-binding covenant of enduring ministry. Mr. Robinson has discussed this with Mr. Wright.

In the Spring of **2009**, discussion came up with the Fellowship Ministry Team in regard to fellowship after worship services as it was "becoming more difficult to get people to bring refreshments". The recommendation was made to limit the variety and number of items provided and that Ministry Teams and Circles take responsibility for bringing refreshments for the first and third Sundays of each month. This recommendation was accepted and a schedule for ministry teams to provide after service refreshments was developed.

Issues with the Church website arose in the spring of **2009**--that it is very "unforgiving" and does not allow for interactive features, videos, and movable photos. Sharon King volunteered to assume responsibility to go forward with developing a new website format with the understanding that keeping the site current will fall to the Church Secretary. Sharon also volunteered to work with the Secretary to help her develop the skills necessary to maintain the site. The Session also recommended that as the job description for the secretary is developed, maintenance of the website must be added to this document

During the **May 20th** Session Meeting, Ira Morris met with the Session to bring a proposal from the Adult Sunday School Class. This group is proposing the people of the Church donate good usable things, and if individuals come to the "sale" and take items (with no charge), they would then be expected to do something nice for another person/family in return. This would occur tentatively during the first or second week of August. The Adult Discussion class would have individuals here to receive donations and work with those

coming to find usable items. The name for this event was determined to be “Pay it Forward”. A simple brochure will be developed about Village Chapel and what we have to offer. This will be passed on to those coming to the church to avail themselves of this opportunity.

In **June of 2009**, the Stewardship Ministry Team comprised of Dianne Ellis, Howard Salisbury, David Sampson, Evelyn McClure, Bill McCrary, and Todd Wright was caused to deal with non-compliance as set forth in the Book of Order regarding the method by which Sunday offerings are counted. At this time Village really does not have a procedure that would meet denominational requirements. In this meeting it was determined that a group of eight individuals would be recruited to assist with the counting of the offering each Sunday morning after worship. Members would serve on a rotating basis and two persons would count on any given Sunday and Evelyn McClure then would record the figures as she does at the present time. Dianne Ellis will recruit perspective members of the group and prepare a schedule once the plan is approved. Approval for this plan to bring the Church into compliance was provided by the Session at its June meeting.

The Membership Ministry Team, meeting on **July 9, 2009**, reported the following activities for consideration:

- Purchase Pictorial Software and develop a group of folks willing to serve as church photographers, taking photos of various events and head shots for the director. Target January 2010 for next Directory.
- The congregation needs to be more aware of visitors and more effectively “put names to faces. Todd Wright is sending notes to visitors. Should we consider the possibility of sending bread or cookies to follow up with visitors?
- Sara Slamick currently sends notes to all college students. Todd suggested sending small gifts such as post-it notes, cocoa mix, etc.
- It was suggested that interested parishioners “Adopt a homebound member” providing services such as handwritten notes, copies of sermons and boxed gifts such as food and baked goods.
- Develop marketing activities such as newsletters with articles in depth.
- Create a “Family Series” for new or interested members.
- Create a church t-shirt that folks could wear when attending a function as a group.

In the **2009 August** meeting of the Property Committee Curtis Hardman presented the appraisals of the rental properties to the Committee for review and discussion. The property at 3813 was appraised at \$185,000 and the property at 505 39th Street was appraised at \$152,000. After the discussion, it was the unanimous recommendation of the Property Committee to sell these two properties with the stipulation that the major portion of the proceeds from these sales be dedicated to the future mission of Village Chapel.

A revised children's program was initiated on **September 16th** and scheduled for Wednesdays at 3:00. Called Close Encounters, children will be learning puppetry and periodically present stories to the congregation as part of Sunday worship service. The group will meet for one hour each Wednesday with 30 minutes devoted to music and 30 minutes for puppetry. "Blind Bartemaus", the first puppet presentation, was scheduled for October 25th. Six puppets, scripts, and training resources were ordered at a cost of \$400. Assistants for the program were recruited by Demetrice Hardman. Amy Parker served initially as the primary leader, but Dionne Canterbury was hired to work with the Close Encounters group.

In the December Session meeting, Rev. Wright presented proposed teams, dates and a potential list of twenty-two individuals eligible to receive communion. Those volunteering to serve were Sandy Bowles, David Dawson, Dianne Ellis, Lou Maxson, Kathryn McCrary, Charlie Stebbins, Todd Wright, and Todd Zubick.

A recommendation was made to the Session to allow guest Worship Leaders on **July 25, 2010**. The Trinity Presbyterian Church of Raleigh, North Carolina is sending a group of 15 to attend the PCUSA Triennium held in West Lafayette, Indiana. As they return home, they would like to spend the night in Charleston and would lead Worship on Sunday, July 25th

A Blue Christmas Service was held with the Presbyterian Partners at Ruffner Memorial on **December 10th** at 5:00 p.m. This Service was initiated because not everyone is filled with joy at Christmas. The invitation to this event stated, "If you need a space where sadness and struggle can be acknowledged, and God's healing presence sought, then join us for this service of prayers, scripture and music, acknowledging that Christ came to bind up the broken hearted, and that God's Word can shine light into our darkness. Everyone is welcome."

And . . . it was announced in the December 18th The Villager, "You have a last chance to vote for your favorite Christmas hymns – we'll compare the results and sing your favorite seven hymns on December 27th as part of the worship service."