



Middletown Presbyterian Church 1720

ARTIST'S SKETCH shows original stone building of old Middletown Presbyterian Church, built in 1766.

Scottish settlers founded Middletown Presbyterian

Church marks 250th birthday

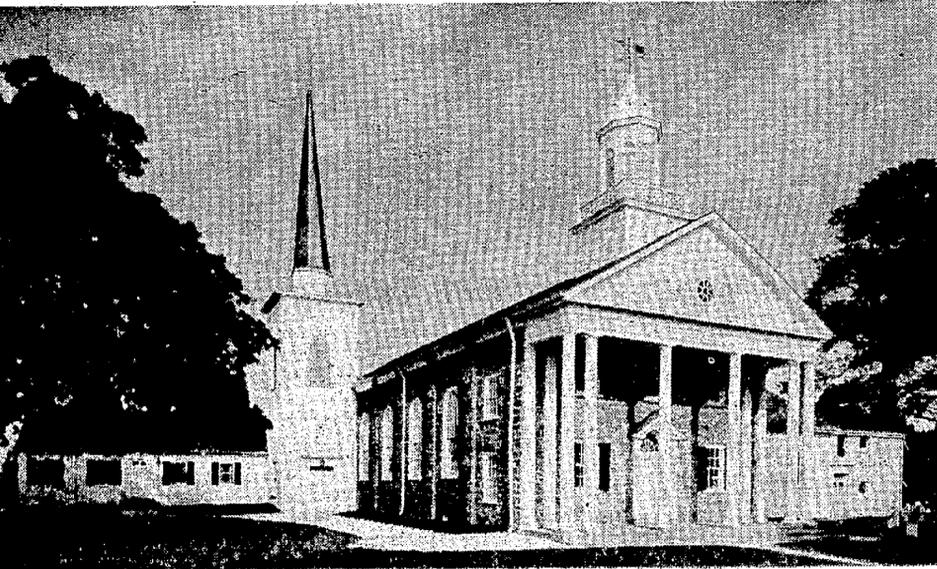
By FLORENCE STEUERWALD

Daily Times Correspondent

MIDDLETOWN — Middletown Presbyterian Church, the oldest Presbyterian church in Delaware County, celebrates its 250th anniversary this year.

It was founded in 1720 by dissenters (Scottish settlers in Ireland who, when they found the discrimination against them unbearable, came to America). Many settled in Middletown, whose history goes back to 1686, as well as in the areas to the west and south.

For 100 years it was the only Presbyterian Church for 15 or 20 miles around. In 1820 Ridley, later Leiper Memorial, was organized; in 1834, Marple; in 1844, Darby First, later Glenolden; in 1853, Chester First; in 1854, Darby Borough; in 1886, Media and Chester Second and in 1880, Glen Riddle. Middletown Presbyterian was mother to all except Darby First and Darby Borough.



NEWEST ADDITION to Middletown Presbyterian Church was completed in 1967 at a cost of \$200,000.

THOUGH MANY of the church records which contained information of its history have been damaged, a volume of Richard Baxter's "Christian Directory" is a treasured possession.

The book was presented to the church by Rev. Dr. Isaac a copy of his "Book of Hymns of London along with Hymns" which has since been lost.

On the flyleaf, dated Jan. 30, 1735, is the inscription: "This book, called Mr. Baxter's directory, was given by ye Reverend Dr. Watts of London to ye Protestant Dissenting Congregation usually assembling in Middletown in Pennsylvania that people who come from far and spend the whole day there may have something proper to entertain themselves with, or to read to one another before the seasons of worship, morning and afternoon; and 'tis for this end entrusted to ye care of ye Protestant Dissenting

Minister who preaches there, and to his successors, to be used by him or them in their weekly studies and when they please and to be secured and devoted to the use of ye congregation, on ye Lord's days.

"This book is committed to the care of Mr. Benj. Hawley to be carried over to Pennsylvania, and after he has kept it in his own hands and made the best use of it for six months, that is, till the 30th of July next, he shall deliver it to the hands of the present Protestant Dissenting Minister for the purposes before mentioned."

IT IS NOT certain whether there was a church building of any kind prior to 1729 but historians believe there may have been a small log church, later replaced by a frame church for action of the Presbytery in April, 1729 states:

"The Presbytery agrees and concurs in Brandywine and

Middletown in their building a house in Middletown, agreed on by both, provided they continue a united congregation until Presbytery see cause to make a separation, and that they be equally supplied."

The relation continued until 1768 and Rev. Robert Cutchart, who served until 1741 became the first pastor under the joint arrangement. Later the Lower Brandywine Church moved into Delaware.

IN 1766 a stone building with walls 27 inches thick was built. These stone walls have remained through all the changes to the building over the years.

In 1798 the building was repaired and the first stove put in the old session house so that members of the congregation could "warm themselves after their long horseback rides." Two old mounting blocks stood in the church yard and in recent years they were allowed to crumble away.

In 1846, the church was again overhauled, repaired and enlarged 10 feet and a Sunday School room added to the east end of the building. The old-fashioned high box-pews were retained but a modern pulpit replaced the one that stood "10 feet above the heads of the people" behind which the pastor dropped out of sight each time he sat down.

IN 1858 the first stoves were installed in the church. There were no chimneys so the smoke pipe was carried through terra-cotta flues through the roof. This arrangement caused the fire which damaged the building in 1879 when some of the pipes overheated and set fire to the roof.

Only the walls of the church remained after the Feb. 1 fire but the pastor, Rev. Thomas Jester (1874-1889) pleaded for \$2,000 and on July 13, 1879, the rebuilt church was rededicated with the pastor conducting the service.

The first parsonage was built in 1880. It was enlarged and renovated several times over the years and razed in 1959 when the church acquired a manse across Old Middletown Road from the church.

IN 1923, the stone colonial sanctuary was erected and in 1952, the Christian Education building, which is attached to the old stone building of 1766.

The most recent phase in the long history of Middletown Presbyterian was the building program, completed in 1967 at a cost of more than \$200,000, which included the elongation of the sanctuary by 56 feet to seat 400 people, a new north and extended balcony and an administration-education wing.

In addition, the sanctuary was refurbished, a new organ installed, additional excavation completed under the oldest part of the building and a new heating plant added. Clifford Garner, a member of the congregation, was the architect.

Try SODAT, judge urges

MEDIA COURTHOUSE — Silver Hastings Jr., 20 of the 100 block W. Ridge Road, Lower Chester, was put on 23 months probation Friday on a charge of use of narcotics.

Judge John V. Diggins imposed the sentence, and ordered Hastings to get a steady job and participate in some program designed to help drug users. The judge recommended the Society to Overcome Drug Abuse Among Teenagers (SODAT), a Chester agency.

Hastings, who was represented by attorney Daniel Flaherty, pleaded guilty to the drug charge last March before Judge Diggins, who deferred sentence at the time to await a presentence investigation.

Hastings and two other youths were arrested by county detectives March 24th at 4th St. and Concord Ave., Chester.

OTHER MINISTERS who have served at Middletown Presbyterian over the years include Rev. Thomas Grier, 1801 to 1808; Rev. Nathaniel Snowden, 1809 to 1817; Rev. Alvin Parker, 1833 to 1839; Rev. James W. Dale, 1846 to 1871; Rev. William Kruse, 1889 to 1925 and Rev. Harvey Bennett, 1925 to 1942.

Rev. Raymond Pinch served as pastor from 1943 until his retirement in December of last year when he was named pastor emeritus. A new pastor has not yet been named.

The first event of the church's anniversary observance will be at 8 p.m. Wednesday when Rev. Dr. Alfred Price, pastor of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church of Philadelphia, will speak at the church.

Bids studied for bridge job

The American Dredging Co., Philadelphia, submitted the apparent low bid of \$943,630 for the construction of landfill for a portion of the Chester-Bridgeport Bridge, now under construction.

The Delaware River Port Authority said the project involves a major earthmoving operation to create fill for the toll plaza and administration building at the Bridgeport approach to the span.

The other bids ranged to a high of \$1,945,601.

Scheduled to be completed in 1972, the bridge will be a five-lane cantilever structure. It will replace the present Chester ferry.

Hundreds respond

Students' free ads due by Monday

More than 750 young people placed ads in the Delaware County Daily Times free want ad section last year and it's a good possibility there will be more than that this year.

That was the prediction from the Times classified advertising department with the deadline for receiving the special ads just around the corner.

All student ads must be in by 5 p.m. Monday at the Times office, 18-26 E. 8th St., Chester.

This is the 10th year the Times has run the free ad section to help boys and girls find jobs, promote special

services, sell or swap goods. The report so far is that student ads "have been coming in by the hundreds," a classified advertising spokesman said. So, anyone who hasn't sent their ad form in yet had better do so now.

Among the job opportunities available to young people through the ads are baby-sitting, summer lawn care, domestic duties, car washing and clerical or light office jobs. They also have a chance to sell bikes, skates or pogo sticks or trade a calico cat for two white mice.

The special section will be published May 18, 19 and 20.

PMC postpones ruling on corps

For Upper Darby police

Pay linked to living cost

UPPER DARBY — Township police will get a \$1,000 salary increase, spread across two years, under a contract approved by police and the township commissioners.

The contract, the first of its kind in local municipal-police negotiations, was announced by Township Solicitor Alvin Ackerman at a special meeting of the Upper Darby Board of Commissioners Friday.

Ackerman read the terms and the commissioners immediately approved. Ackerman and Asst. Solicitor Joseph Mylotte met with a negotiating committee representing the members of the police department. Ackerman said the negotiating committee and a majority of the policemen approved the contract.

All police will receive a \$450 salary increase as of Jan. 1, 1971 and a \$550 increase effective Jan. 1, 1972.

The contract includes a cost-of-living clause. If living costs, as determined by the federal government, increase during 1971, police are to receive an increase in 1972 that will represent half the cost-of-living jump. Should the cost of living decrease, police will receive a decrease in salaries equal to half the drop.

Police will have an option of taking paid holidays or working and being paid double-time rates. They get 13 paid holidays, the same as in the present contract.

At present police are paid between \$8,050 and \$8,600. They get the lower figure to start; receive \$8,325 for one to two years of experience and \$8,600 after two years. The new rates will be \$9,050; \$9,325 and \$9,600.

The sick leave limit has been advanced 75 days to a maximum of 285 days. Beginning Jan. 1, 1972, police will receive four paid personal holidays instead of three. These are paid holidays taken when police need time off the job for personal reasons.

The contract may be reopened for further negotiations on the sole issue of pensions. This could happen if Act 600 is amended by the legislature to permit additional pension payments or in the event the State Supreme Court rules that the standards set forth in the act are minimum and are not absolute standards as determined by the state auditor general.

Program unchanged for 1970-71

CHESTER — No change in the cadet program is in the offing at PMC Colleges — at least not during the 1970-71 academic year.

PMC President Dr. Clarence R. Moll denied today published reports that a decision on the fate of the cadet corps would be forthcoming May 31, and emphasized "no changes in the cadet program are slated during the coming year."

A proposed restructuring program for the cadet corps, drawn by an "ad hoc" committee appointed by the colleges' board of trustees, has been shelved until fall.

The board unanimously agreed earlier this week to supplement the information contained in the committee report with a study by a professional organization.

In April, the ad hoc committee, headed by President Emeritus Maj. Gen. E.E. MacMorland, recommended to the board a restructuring program including a voluntary cadet corps but abandonment of the name "Pennsylvania Military College."

The proposal suggested that the institution would evolve into a single-name college which would embrace a voluntary Reserve Officer Training program in the form of a uniformed cadet corps.

The committee, in recommending the restructuring plan to the trustees, agreed that in adopting a single-name college which included the ROTC plan, the military image of the college would be altered by integrating civilian and military life into one college.

Run from peddlers of drugs

MEDIA COURTHOUSE — "Run away from these drug peddlers like you would from a poisonous snake," Judge Louis A. Bloom told a former Prospect Park woman who pleaded guilty Friday to a charge of possessing dangerous drugs.

The judge told the defendant, Mrs. Sylvia Ann Golden, 19, formerly of the 600 block 9th Avenue, that she was "lucky" to have been arrested before she had an opportunity to sell a box of pills said to be dangerous drugs.

Mrs. Golden's attorney, Howard R. Cohen, said the woman is pregnant and that she and her husband recently moved to Norwood. He said she had bought the pills in South Philadelphia for \$125.

In urging leniency for his client, Cohen told Judge Bloom that she had surrendered voluntarily to county detectives at a hamburger stand in Prospect Park last Nov. 22.

The judge told Mrs. Golden that police have been cracking down on drug sellers, and that he is determined to do all he can to "put an end" to the mounting incidents of drug abuse in Delaware County.

The defendant said she was not a drug user, but the judge warned her to avoid drug peddlers. "They'll destroy every sound fiber in your body," he said.

Before putting the woman on two years probation and fining her \$50 and court costs, Judge Bloom said he was hopeful that her baby would be "healthy and normal."

Man jailed in punching

MEDIA COURTHOUSE — James M. Hughes, 21, of the 900 block Bullock Lane, Yeaddon, was sentenced Friday to 6 months to a year in prison on charges of possessing narcotics and aggravated assault and battery on a police officer.

Judge John V. Diggins sentenced Hughes to a 3 to 6-month jail term on each of the counts and ordered that the terms run consecutively. Hughes was represented by attorney Francis R. Lord, of Upper Darby.

Hughes had been found guilty of the charges recently in a nonjury trial before Judge Diggins. The charges were filed last January and the assault charge resulted when the defendant allegedly slugged Yeaddon Patrolman Francis Maloney.

Yeaddon Police Chief Ignatius O'Brien said after sentencing that Hughes had punched a Maloney in the jaw while the officer was sitting in a patrol car. O'Brien said Maloney suffered a broken jaw.

Children's Letters To God

Dear God Did you see the "Astronauts" when they went up? Karen Age 10



Two jailed in theft of school equipment

MEDIA COURTHOUSE — Two Delaware County men were sentenced to jail Friday by Judge John V. Diggins on charges stemming from theft of \$3,000 worth of audiovisual equipment from the Chester School District last December.

The defendants were Howard A. Hudgins, 25, of the 3000 block E. 10th St., Chester, and Charles A. Eggers, 21, of the 1200 block Lincoln Ave., Prospect Park.

Police had reported that Hudgins had stored some of the stolen equipment at a DePaul, told the judge his client had been on bail since the burglary and is "trying to straighten himself out."

"He was certainly a problem child in March to charges stemming from the theft, and scanning Hudgins' juvenile record.

Finally, Judge Diggins ordered Hudgins to serve 11 to 23 months in Delaware County Jail on a charge of receiving stolen goods and imposed an