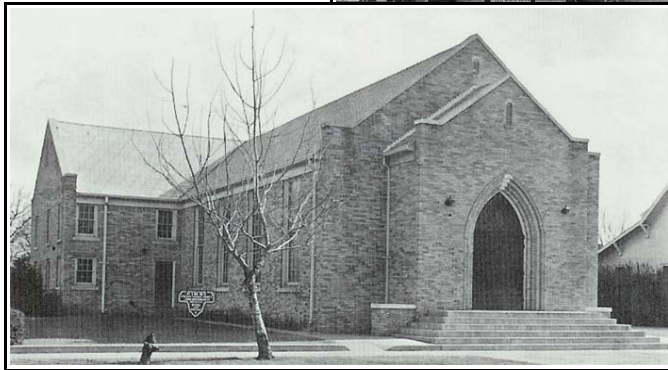
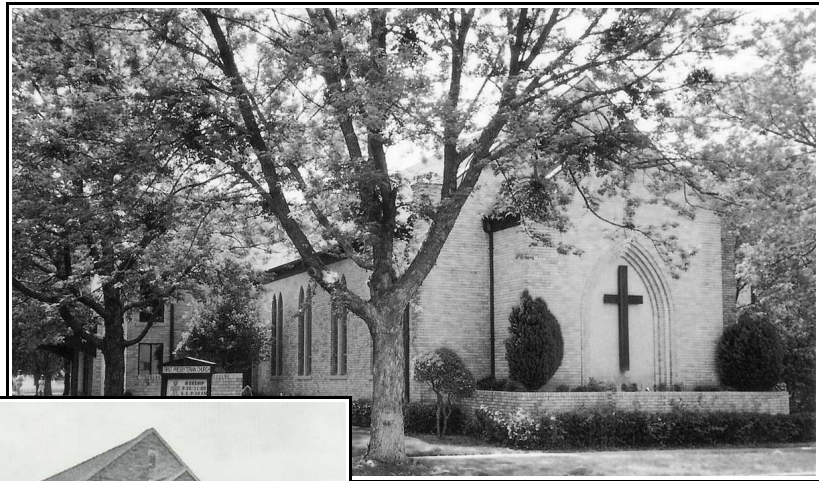


“102 Years and Growing Strong”



**First Presbyterian Church
Duncan, Oklahoma
1908 - 2010**

A History of First Presbyterian Church Duncan, Oklahoma



The history of First Presbyterian Church, Duncan, begins in 1908 when a small group of Presbyterians started holding meetings in the Stephens County Courthouse.

Their commitment and number increased until they were formally organized in the spring of that same year with **Rev. I.N. Clegg** as pastor. The records show that Rev. Clegg had fifteen communicant members

On May 21, 1908, the four lots at 8th and Ash and the frame church building there were purchased from the Baptist Church. On the same day, the Baptists turned the first spadeful of earth on their new building at 9th and Ash. Rev. Clegg

resigned in 1909 and **Rev. J.E. Wallace** was called April 1, 1910. Following him was **Rev. J.S. Johnson**, called August 13, 1911, until 1914. Rev. Johnson's records are more complete than preceding ones. In those early years, pastor's salaries were not guaranteed. He was supposed to receive \$88 a year, but reported to Presbytery he had received \$9 a month only a few times that year. A challenging record shows, however, that he established a Mission on Wolf Creek, twelve miles northwest of Duncan, and held regular meetings at Plato and Hopewell school houses.

In 1912 the first mention of a Ladies Aid and Missionary Society is found. Mrs. M.E. Peterson was president and reported four members. Rev. Johnson reported forty-eight in Sunday School, three on Cradle Roll, and fourteen in Junior Christian Endeavor - "Two males and twelve females". He was called to Central Church of Oklahoma City in 1914.

On February 25, 1915, there was a reorganization of the church and **Rev. H.O. Moore** became pastor, and remained a year or more.

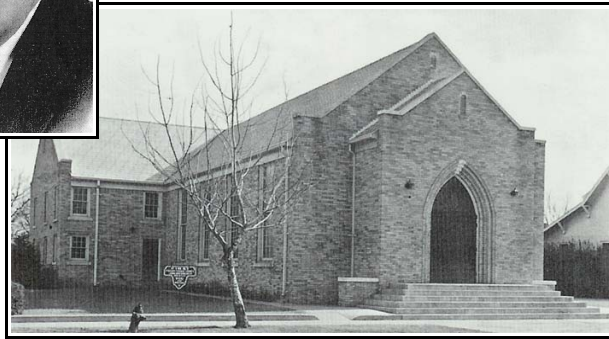


On February 25, 1918, **Rev. J.W. Moseley (Left)** from the Beal Heights Presbyterian Church of Lawton became pastor. He remained until his resignation August 8, 1930.

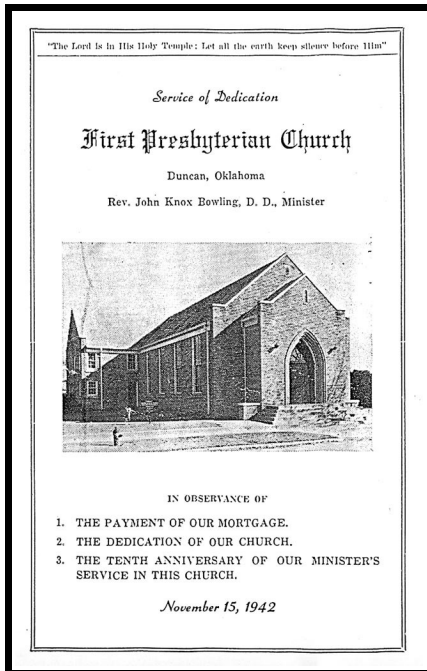
During his twelve years tenure the group grew into a real church organization. In 1921 the manse was built next to the church. An item from the October 24, 1924 Session Records reads: "Motion made and carried that the ladies of the church be authorized to proceed in their own way in repairing the church".



Rev. Paul B. Freeland was called November 16, 1930 and served as pastor until August 18, 1932. **Rev. John Knox Bowling (Left)** assumed the pastorate on November 15, 1932, coming here from the Presbyterian Church of Paint Rock, Texas.



In the next few years the church had a period of rapid growth and the old building became inadequate. The vision of a new church soon materialized and the cornerstone was laid August 25, 1933. The first service was held in the church September 3, 1933. In 1937 the organ was installed.



On November 15, 1942, an impressive ceremony was held when the mortgage on the church was burned by Mr. W.S. McCaskill, Ruling Elder, and the church was dedicated.

This was also the tenth anniversary of Rev. Bowling's installation as pastor, and celebrated a decade of devoted service in the church. He resigned in November 1943 to accept a call to St. Andrews Presbyterian Church in Wilmington, North Carolina.

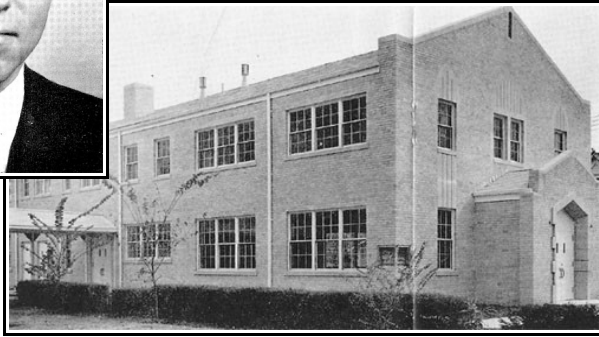


Dr. Hugh E. Bradshaw (Left) from Belcher, Louisiana, succeeded him, being installed in September, 1944. During the five years Dr. Bradshaw was pastor a great increase in the young people's work began. As the city steadily expanded, the church membership also grew and many enthusiastic young married people joined the church.

It became evident the church had again outgrown its facilities. Another vision, this time a new educational building, to stand on the site of the manse, became the next large project. Soon after the idea of a building program was definitely established, Rev. Bradshaw resigned to accept a call to the Presbyterian Church in West Monroe, Louisiana on June 1, 1949.



In July, 1949, **Rev. Pat N. Easterling (Left)** was called from the Presbyterian Church in Warren, Arkansas and assumed his work as pastor September 1, 1949.



The high point in the church's history was reached in the summer of 1949 when Mr. L.L. Humphreys and his sister, Mrs. R.L.A. Steigleder, proposed to give as a memorial to their mother, Mrs. Mary A. Humphreys, the beautiful educational building, with all of its furnishings and equipment.

With the beautiful new educational facilities, the congregation felt compelled to renovate the Sanctuary. Under the guiding hand of Pastor Pat Easterling, the Sanctuary was painted and new pews and carpeting were added.

To represent the life of Christ and His continuing Lordship, sixteen stained glass windows were commissioned and installed. Rev. Easterling was responsible for their design and content.



Another stained glass window, '**The Seal of The Presbyterian Church**', was installed in the Narthex. That window was later removed from the Narthex and incorporated into the high, overhead window in Fellowship Hall.

Pat Easterling accepted a call to Canal Street Presbyterian Church in New Orleans on June 1, 1956.



Rev. Polk G. Moffett (Left) was installed as minister on September 1, 1956. Rev. Moffett is remembered as “a pastor who loved the people of this church deeply”. During his service, the first full-time church secretary was employed, Mrs. Nell Young. Also, to keep the membership informed, the first “Mid-Week Reminder” was published as was an annual telephone directory of the membership.

In 1957 Rev. Moffett, together with others; members of the Service for Organization Commission, appointed by Magnum Presbytery, began providing support and service to a newly established Duncan church, Community Presbyterian Church.



This new church was organized as a Sunday School mission and initially held services at Horace Mann Elementary School in Duncan. Construction of a new church building began in 1958. On September 28, 1958 Rev. Moffett led the Laying of the Cornerstone Service with prayer and the reading of scripture. At that time there were 55 members and a Sunday School enrollment of 90. First Presbyterian

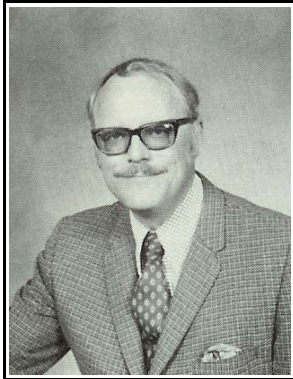
Church and Community Presbyterian Church continued during this era, closely associated in worship and fellowship. A joint Thanksgiving Worship Service was held at the First Church sanctuary in November, 1960 led by Rev. David Davies of Community Presbyterian Church. In January, 1960 a written plea went out to the First Church congregation, requesting “shrubs or plantings” to plant around the new Community Church building.

Rev. Moffett moved to accept another call on June 15, 1964.

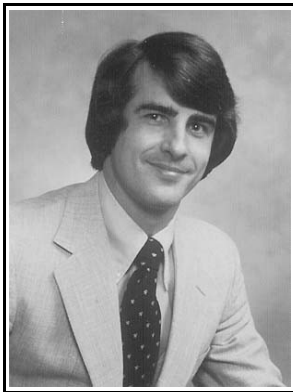


Rev. William R. Long (Pictured here with his family in a 1965 Christmas card photo) assumed the pastorate in February of 1965. His five years of ministry were marked with increased activity for children and youth. He offered leadership training and increased the size of our congregation through personal evangelism. He was acknowledged as an outstanding preacher. He accepted a call to become pastor of Wynnewood Presbyterian Church in Dallas and left in January, 1970.

The **Rev. Edward Watson** came from Sherman, Texas and was installed in February, 1970. He resigned in April of 1971. During his pastorate, the first part-time Director of Christian Education was employed, Mrs. Charles Fuson.



Rev. Robert L. McLeod, Jr. (Left) was installed as pastor in April, 1971. He helped our congregation renew a sense of responsibility to the community, presbytery and ecumenical participation. Also, under his leadership, our church employed their first full-time Director of Christian Education, Mrs. Betty Poolman. Rev. McLeod resigned in April of 1975. This era also saw the ending of Community Presbyterian Church in Duncan. The Community Church building, constructed during the pastorate of Rev. Polk Moffett, was sold to Cumberland Presbyterian Church. (Refer to page 5)



In September of 1975, **Rev. Paul S. Duncan (Left)** was called as pastor. He came from First Presbyterian Church in Ft. Smith, Arkansas. Emphasis was placed again on Youth Ministry, Christian Education and Evangelism. There was an increased awareness that the facilities had again become inadequate to serve the needs of the congregation, so on February 15, 1976, the congregation voted to build an additional facility, connecting the two existing buildings and to completely renovate the Sanctuary and Educational Buildings. They broke ground on August 29, 1976 and the first service was conducted on February 19, 1978.

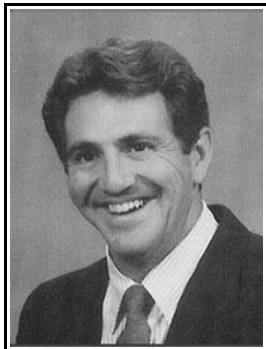
The dedication of the facility was conducted over a weekend. On Friday, February 24, 1978, the congregation met with its special guests and had dinner in the new Fellowship Hall. They saw slides recalling the history and ministry of First Presbyterian Church. On Saturday, February 25, they honored the Charter members of the church and all former pastors in an afternoon reception. That evening, the congregation enjoyed a concert of sacred music on the new Sanctuary Organ. On Sunday, February 26, the congregation formally rededicated the church facilities during worship.





In 1984 the church celebrated the final payment on their loan to fund the new construction and remodeling of their facilities. The mortgage of 1978 was burned on October 7, 1984 by Mike Weaver, Reverend Paul Duncan and Ted Legg, pictured here, (L to R). The celebration included special music by Eugene Butler, a play by the Covenant Players, 'Thanksgiving For God's Good Gifts', and a birthday cake made by Kathy Rogers.

In 1985 Rev. Duncan left as pastor of First Presbyterian Church and moved to Wichita Falls, Texas to accept another ministry position.



Rev. Terry Lucarelli (Left) was called in 1986 and served as pastor until 1991.

Emphasis remained on Youth Ministry, Christian Education and Evangelism through a developing and dynamic music ministry, led by new Choir Director Jimmy Zinn.



After an interim period, during which Charles Kriner served as pastor, **Rev. James Banks (Left)** was called in 1993 and assumed his work as pastor. He remained as pastor until November, 1997.



Mary Lee Stephens



“As the church grew and changed, so did the women's work. In 1994 we had four daytime circles and one homebound circle. There were three independent study groups who determined their own study projects. As a women's group, they met four times a year for luncheon and a special program and day of fun.” (Source: *Mary Lee Stephens*)



During Pastor Banks years at First Presbyterian Church, the music ministry of **Jimmy Zinn (Above Right)** grew in popularity and impact, both at church services and in the community, where he served as Music Director at Duncan High School.



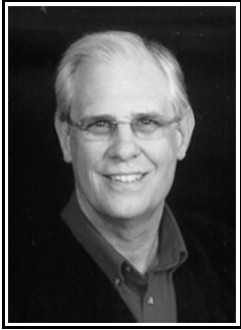
Christian Education, too, continued to be a vital part of church life, through Women's Circles and Sunday School and Bible Study Classes, including, (pictured right),



'The Becomers' – A group formed in 1973 for the express purpose of reading The Bible.



With the departure of Rev. Banks, the church was served by interim pastor **Rev. Dr. Bill Guilford (Left)** from 1998 until March 26, 2000. Here, Dr. Bill is being served by Church Office Manager, Vicky Benson.



In 2000 **Reverend Dr. John P. McGarey (Left)** was called from First Presbyterian Church of Logan, Utah. He participated in Dr. Bill Guilford's final service on March 26 and preached his first sermon the following Sunday, on April 2, 2000.

In Dr. McGarey's eight years of service to the church, significant advances were made in member volunteerism, community outreach, participative youth and adult Christian Education, Internet Ministries and programs benefiting member and community health and welfare.

The Pumpkin Patch – A Success Story

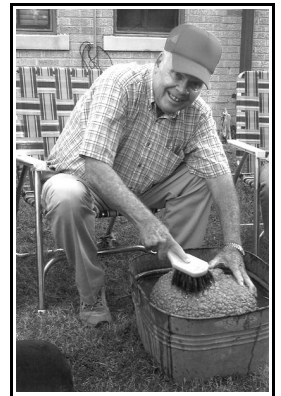


The Presbyterian Pumpkin Patch has been sort of an outreach mission to the local community. It provides pumpkins, gourds and other Autumn decorations at reasonable prices. Additionally, the net profits are returned to the community by donations to local area charities.

It all began the last week of September, 2003. Volunteers went to the pumpkin fields of Floydada, Texas and brought back a truck load.

Still more volunteers met the truck at the church and unloaded, sorted and washed the pumpkins.

On October 1, 2003 The Patch was open for business. In the first two weeks all but about 90 pumpkins were sold. One night a group of vandals climbed over the fence and most of the remaining pumpkins were destroyed. This was a devastating blow. The local media carried stories about the vandalism which caused citizens in surrounding areas to send cards, letters and donations. Even with the destruction several hundred dollars were given to local charities.



In the succeeding years of 2004 through 2008 the Pumpkin Patch averaged over \$1,500.00 per year in net profits, all going to benefit local charities – including Christians Concerned, Women's Haven, Duncan Rescue Mission, The Toy Shop and Presbyterian Youth.

The labor has always been performed by volunteers. Many groups from the area visit the Pumpkin Patch, including preschool children and Senior citizens from nursing and assisted living facilities. *(This section based on commentary by Pat Winn, First Chairman of the Pumpkin Patch Committee of Volunteers.)*

The Alpha Course

In the fall of 2004 First Presbyterian Church began to offer The Alpha Course, a ten week participative Christian Education program, open to all, consisting of a series of talks addressing key issues relating to the Christian faith.



Evening sessions, led by program administrator *Don Cunningham, (Left)* began with a light meal which gave participants a chance to get to know each other. After a video presentation, participants were divided into small groups to discuss the topic of the evening, ask questions and express opinions. Alpha was a place where no question was too simple or too hostile.

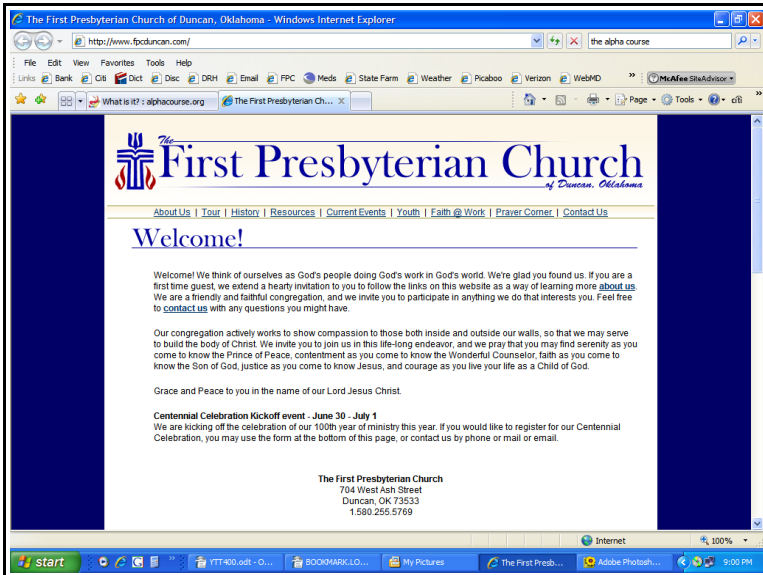
The program was well received, both by church members and local area non-members, who came to learn more about the Christian faith.

The Alpha Course, together with continuing regular and special Sunday School programs, offering classes of interest to all age groups, was the fitting legacy of the dedication to learning that began more than 75 years earlier and is still central to First Presbyterian Church.



Dr. John McGarey was an active and respected leader with the youth of the church. Whether teaching a Sunday School class or leading a youth group in song on a Palm Sunday morning, there is little question that he brought his full ministry to the young minds and hearts at First Presbyterian Church.

www.fpcduncan.com



If Alpha was a place where a small group can come together in fellowship and learning, then the church web site, www.fpcduncan.com, pioneered and developed by Dr. McGarey, working with paid technical consultants, became a place where the world can share in a new ministry, born of this age and available to all.

Regular postings include a current schedule of church activities and complete issues of the church monthly newsletter, Faith-At-Work.



Dr. John McGarey's wife, Bobbie, pictured here, also ordained, served as pastor of the Southwest Oklahoma Presbyterian Parish, which is a combined ministry of five Presbyterian churches in Southwest Oklahoma and as interim pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Lawton, Oklahoma.

Reverend Dr. John Paul McGarey ended eight years of service to First Presbyterian Church Duncan on July 1, 2008.



On February 15, 2009 **Reverend Tracy Evans (Left)** was appointed Interim Pastor for First Presbyterian Church Duncan by the Administrative Commission, established by the Indian Nations Presbytery to manage the ongoing affairs and actions of the church. Reverend Evans delivered her first sermon, “Healing Touch”, with Mark 1:40-45 as scripture reference, during the February 15, 2009 worship service.