



Linwood
COMMUNITY CHURCH

1934-2024



*90th Anniversary
Celebration*

Celebrating 90 Years of God's Grace

*"It is grace that brought us safe thus far
and grace will lead us home"*



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We look back to learn and gain encouragement and endurance so we can look forward with unity and hope.

Introduction

On New Year's Day in 1773, a pastor presented a poem based upon reflections on 1 Chronicles 17. That passage is David's covenant and speaks of David's past, present, and future. The kingdom promised David outlasts a temple or a mansion. It's a dynasty and eternal sonship in which the ultimate fulfillment is in our Lord Jesus (2 Tim 2:8). The poem the minister presented that day was entitled "Faith's Review and Reflection." We know it by the first two words of the opening line, "Amazing grace how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me."

Our theme for this anniversary is taken from John Newton's text, 'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home." That famous line in "Amazing Grace" reminds us of past, present and future grace. It also sets the tone and vision for this 90th Anniversary Celebration. We seek to declare God's works from one generation to another (Psalm 145:1-4), and look back to learn and gain encouragement and endurance so we can look forward with unity and hope.

Anniversaries are a big deal. Scripture has many examples and encouragement to remember and look back for the purpose of instruction and encouragement for the future. The Bible reminds people to tell all generations the Lord's wonderful works and preserve the memory of how God has worked in our lives. Several of the Psalms speak of declaring God's work from one generation to another. A great example is Psalm 145:1-4. Someone challenged that one of the rules of a senior pastor is to feel a responsibility to steward your congregation's story. I've taken that charge to heart.

Our best example of how to tell the history of our church is the inspired account of the history of "The Church." The book of Acts is the history book of the New Testament. It tells us how the church bore witness to the Gospel by the power of the Holy Spirit. It tells how the Gospel made geographical, sociological, and ethnic progress from Jerusalem to Judea, Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth. Acts 1:8 outlines the entire book of Acts. One of those "uttermost parts of the earth" is right here at 1838 Shore Rd., Linwood, New Jersey. That story is *our* story. Church history as a whole and our local church history is our family history.

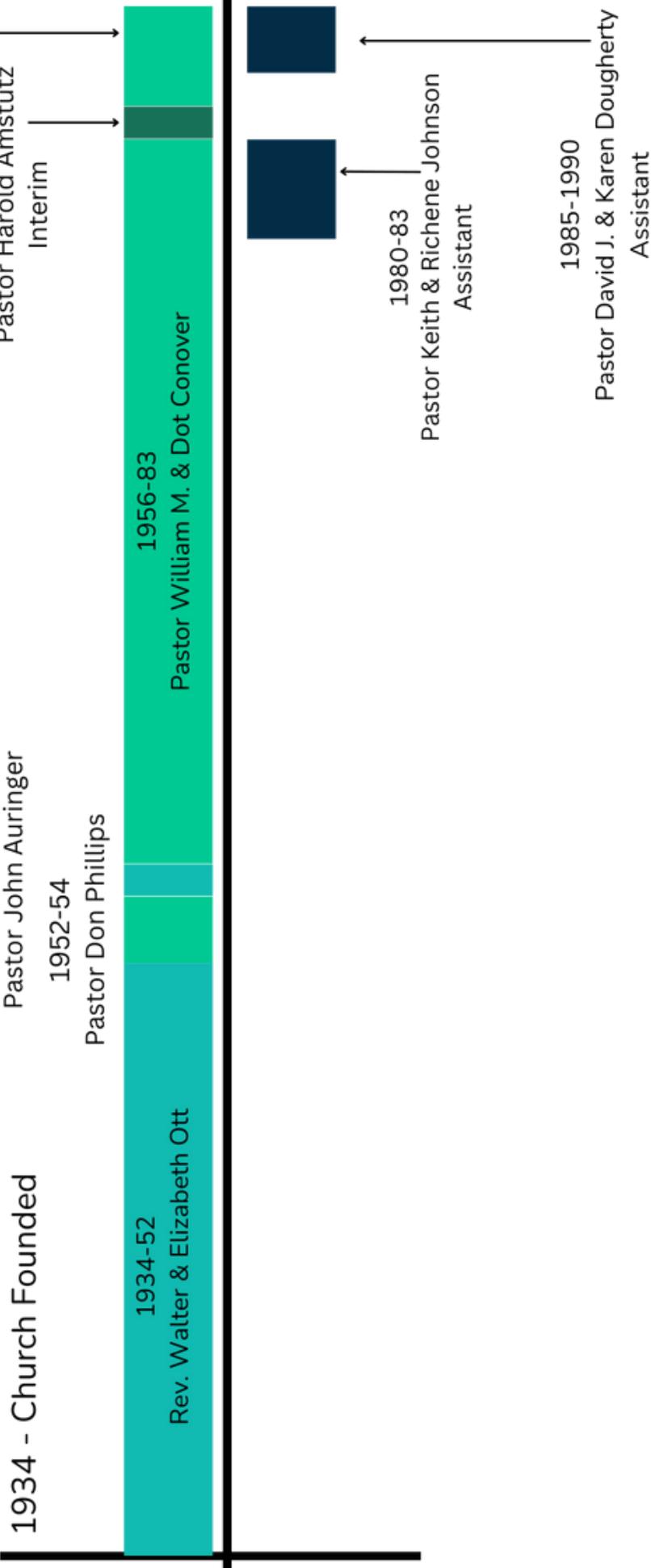
Yet one of the interesting things about the Book of Acts in chapter 28 is that it doesn't really end. It assumes that the initial 'acts' of the Apostles and the acts Holy Spirit are going to continue throughout the church age. Acts 2:42 speaks of the early church "continuing steadfastly" in some very basic and essential activities. May our "looking back" also be "looking forward" to be a "continuing church."

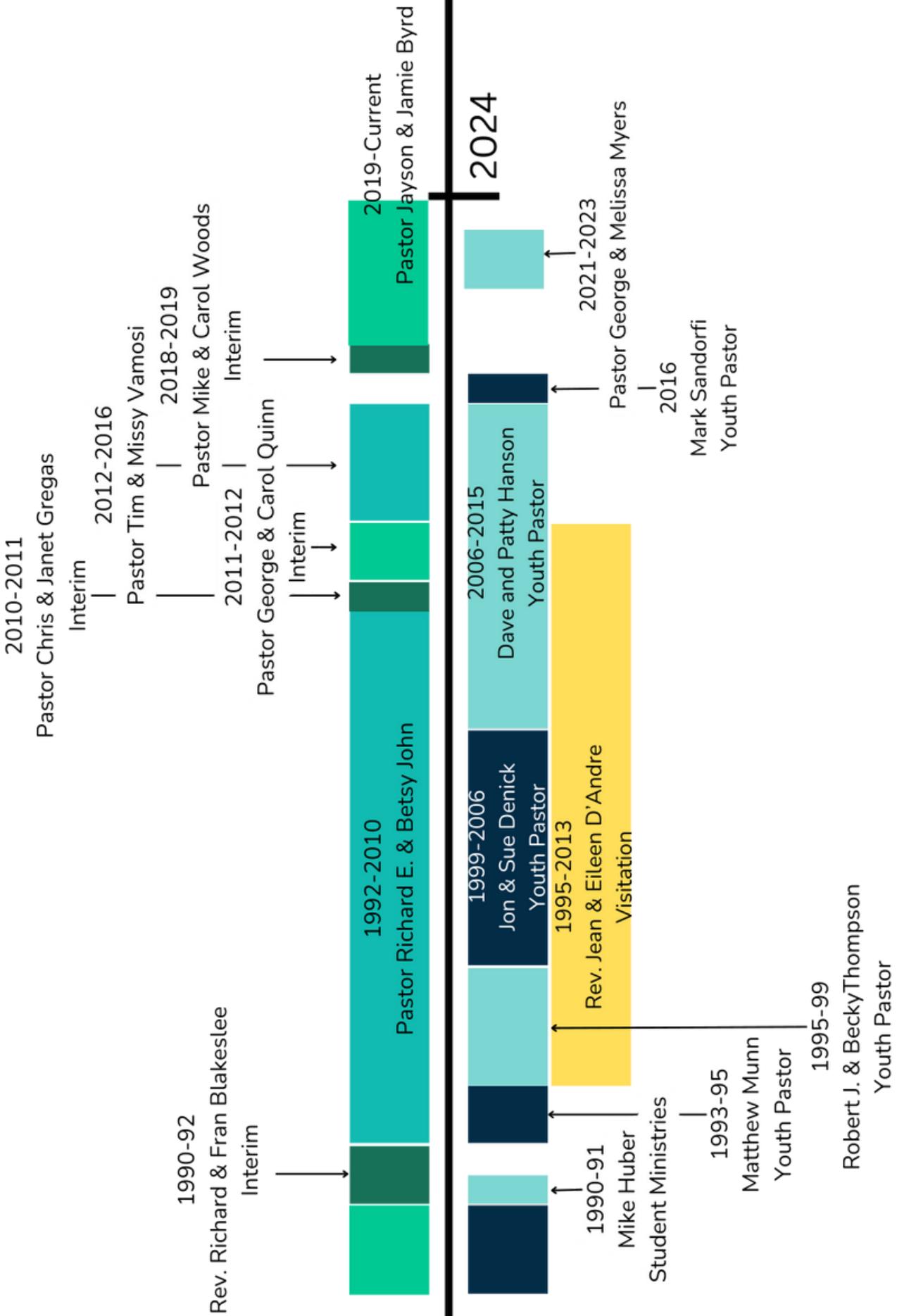
Grace to you,
Pastor Jayson Byrd



Undershepherds Who Have Served LCC

Eph. 4:11-12 & 1 Tim. 3:1







Lewis and Ida Ireland
(from the dedication of the 1979 Church Directory)

We lovingly dedicate this directory to the memory of Lewis Ireland and in honor of Ida Ireland. The Irelands, along with a small group of believers, brought the Linwood Community Church into existence.

The first two services of the church were held in the Ireland home on Davis Avenue in Linwood. The first service was held on December 31, 1933.

The prayers of these faithful servants of the Lord made a vision a reality. Linwood Community Church would not be here today if these folks had not been steadfastly committed to God's purpose and calling. Uncle Lew is home with the Lord, but Aunt Ida is still active and deeply concerned with all the activities of the church even though she is physically unable to attend on a regular basis.

We are deeply grateful to these two dear people for our spiritual heritage.

1933-1960

By Reverend William M. Conover

The Dedication

Down through the ages of time it has been the Will of God to choose out men to do a service for Him. Many of these men never become great in the eyes of the world, but that which they have done for God is recorded for all eternity.

Walter H. Ott was one of these men. In October of 1933, he heard God's call to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Through his answering that call he founded the Linwood Community Church which he served faithfully as Pastor until March 5, 1952.

Pastor Ott's convictions were two-fold. First, concerning the preaching of the gospel found in the scriptures, I Corinthians 9:16, "For though I preach the Gospel, I have nothing to glory of, for necessity is laid upon me, yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel." The second conviction was for his own life and this too is found in the scriptures, Philippians 1:21 "For me to live is Christ to, and to die is to gain."

It is to his memory that we dedicated this brief history with the prayer that his convictions may continue to challenge the continuing ministry of the Pastors and members of the Linwood Community Church.

“The body of Christ is not an organization, but a living organism.

It is the Body of Jesus Christ.”

~ Pastor Bill Conover

(1979 church directory intro letter)

October 1933, God put a burden in the heart of a man concerning the preaching of the gospel. This man was Walter H. Ott, who with his life's partner, Elizabeth Ott continued before the Throne of Grace seeking the leading of God concerning this burden.



Walter H. Ott

Together with a small group of fellow believers they began to meet for prayer and planning of what was more than a dream or vision, but a deep conviction of heart.

The group met on several occasions and finally it was decided to hold their first Church service in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Ireland of Davis Ave, Linwood. The service was held on December 31, 1933, New years eve. Following this service George Hagerthey, another member, said that they could use the living room of his home for all future Church services until they could purchase a lot to build on. On Sunday evening January 7th, 1932, the next service was held in that home on 1932 Shore Rd, Linwood.

On January 4, 1935, they held their first organized business meeting of the church for the purpose of finding a suitable name and determining the purpose of the church. A motion was made by Wesley Brown and seconded by Lewis Ireland that those present go into the preliminary actions and voted yes by all present.

A motion was then made by Captain John Blackman and seconded by Mr. George Hagertgey and noted yes by all present that our church shall be called, The Linwood Community Church. The purpose of the church was to be two-fold.

1. To preach the Word of God as contained in the Holy Bible.

2. To build up the kingdom of God in the hearts of men and women, boys and girls.

Mr. Wesley Brown was then elected president of the board of trustees and Walter H. Ott was elected pastor for a period of one year.

The next step was to get a charter in the State of New Jersey. The charter was obtained on March 26th, 1935, with the following original Board of Trustees as the Board of Incorporators: Wesley Brown, Capt. John Blackman, Lewis Ireland, George Hagerthey, Jessie Ireland, Mrs. Phillip Leigh, Mrs. Amey Cope, John Robinson, and Morris Worrell. Thus the burden that grew into a deep conviction became a reality.

Soon it was time to begin thinking of a lot and a building. Another time before the Throne of Grace seeking the leading of the Lord. The Lord of Heaven who is faithful, answered their prayers and a lot owned by J. M. Steelman was made available. A committee of Lewis Ireland, Wesley Brown, and George Hagerthey was selected to get a conditional bill of sale, and on April 8th 1934 the land was purchased. It was at this meeting that Mrs. Phillips Leigh donated to the church to present a communion set for its services.

As the seed that had been sown was faithfully watered and it began to take root spiritually, more steps were taken in the will of the Lord. It was voted to and on September 6, 1934, the first of these prayer meetings was held in the home of Mrs. Lena Smith.

It was during 1934 that the ladies auxiliary was started with Mrs. Lewis Ireland its first President and Mrs. Amey Cope its first secretary. The financial policy of the church was established and continues today as follows:

1. The Linwood Community Church would be supported entirely by free-will offerings.
2. There would be no bazaars, suppers, county fairs, for the purpose of raising money.

It was decided to wait until the lot was completely paid for before the building would be started and they continued to meet in the living room of George Hagerthey.

Captain John Blackman, though, wanted no mistake made concerning the site of the new church so he planted a sign on that lot.

It was a bright and clear Easter morning in the year of 1936, that these faithful servants of the Lord took their next big step. At the Easter Sunrise service they met to break ground for their now debt free ground and prepared for the building of their New Church.

The coming year was to be a busy one and an eventful one. It was spent building the new church. All of the labor was volunteered and was under the direction of Morris Worrell. The men gave freely of their time and on April 1 of 1937, they held their first meeting in the New Church.

The pulpit Morris Worrell had made from his mother's own bed. The Communion set, given by Mrs. Leigh and the pulpit furniture, given by Kathryn Marple, added to the dignity of the New Church.

As time went on the pews were added and you could buy a half of a pew in memory of some loved one for only nine dollars.



Pastor Ott continued to faithfully serve the Lord and his people until March 5th 1952, when ill health caused him to resign and on August 16th of the same year, he went home to be with his Lord that he had so faithfully served for so long.

God who is ever faithful, raised up another servant, brother Donald Phillips (the past visitation Pastor of Ocean City Baptist Church) who served the Lord here from March of 1952, until July 1954.

Following Pastor Phillips' faithful ministry was Rev. John Auringer's. It was under Pastor Auringer's ministry that the morning service was again started and the first constitution was formulated. Pastor Auringer served the Lord here from October of 1954 until February of 1956. In March of 1956 Rev. William Conover, was called to continue the Ministry.

Easter morning of 1960, we take another step by the leading of the Lord. The laying of a cornerstone for the addition of the Building that was started on a similar Easter morning twenty four years ago.



Don Phillips

1956-2012

William M. Conover was called as the next pastor, and he began his ministry at LCC on MARCH 18, 1956. Pastor Conover served faithfully until May of 1983, when he resigned to take a position with the Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry. He and his wife Dot moved to Lancaster, PA, and in December of 1996 the Lord called Dot home to be with Him.



In 1960 ground was broken for an addition to the existing building, which was completed in 1961. When it was time to raise the steeple twenty men went into its launching. It could have been disastrous if one of the ropes or ladders had given way, but God was good then – and He is still today!



“For the past five years we have been eating, sleeping and dreaming about a new Church Sanctuary. Eighteen months ago we began the actual building of the new church. Now that work is done but the real work is just starting. A church is not wood, cement and bricks but living people. The church is men, women, boys and girls that have accepted Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Saviour and have been made a part of the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit of God. Acts 2:47 tells us, “And the Lord is adding to His church daily such as should be saved.” Salvation is the work of the Holy Spirit working in and through the lives of each believer, Zechariah 4:6, “Not by might, nor by power but by my Spirit saith the Lord of Host.” We must all be in the place where the Holy Spirit can use us to win others to Christ. The building of the Living Church is before us, we are to be doing this until the last soul is placed into the body of Christ and the Lord Himself shall return in the air for His church. May our Heavenly Father continually bless each of you as you remain in the center of his will.”

Pastor Wm. Conover – Phil. 1:6



Pastor Conover

“We greet you in the precious name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. “Many, O Lord my God, are Thy wonderful works which Thou hast done, and Thy thoughts which are toward us, they cannot be reckoned up in order unto Thee: If I would declare and speak of them they are more than can be numbered.” Psalm 40:5

How we praise the Lord for His mighty works among our church, as a fellowship of believers. Over the past years, we have been challenged with the tremendous need of our community of being confronted with the precious Word of God and our living Lord. As we have sought to fulfill these challenges and responsibilities, the Lord has bountifully blessed us. The prophet Isaiah was met with a similar challenge from the Lord, regarding a need among believers. “Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitation; spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes.” We have met the primary challenge of this verse in the enlarging of the house of worship, in order that those who desire to be fed might be housed properly. All of this is in relationship to the construction of the house.

Our second responsibility: that of “strengthening of our stakes.” Oh, that we might continue to strengthen ourselves not only in the Lord, but together as a closer knit fellowship permeated by the love of Christ. May our love abound in such power, as directed by the Lord, that as a mighty witness the gospel message would be proclaimed throughout our community.

Great and mighty works has the Lord wrought before us, yet may we be challenged afresh with the pressing need of a vast field of harvest waiting upon the ministering of the Word.

It is my prayer that as we have met the challenges of the past, that through the enablement of His power, we might increase our witness and zeal for the souls of men. May the almighty love of God flow through our fellowship into our community.”

Yours in His love, Wilkins Howe, Chairman, Board of Deacons



“We praise the Lord for what he has done in our building program. As we look in retrospect at the many months which have gone by since the inception of the building program, we are thrilled by the way in which the Lord has led. Our problems were many. The demolition of the old house which served as an education building made it necessary for us to seek outside facilities. We were able to use Seaview Avenue School through the 1970-71 school year. At that time we had to leave to allow the school system to carry on their maintenance program. Finding space for this number of people was a challenge. After much prayer, the combining of classes and the utilization of the parsonage, we succeeded and saved much needed money in the process.

During the building period, both students and teachers have been inconvenienced. We thank God for a dedicated teaching staff who was willing to adjust to new and difficult circumstances. Their love of the Lord and their hunger for souls, both to save and to nurture, caused them to work under crowded and inadequate facilities without complaint. We know we have been in the center of God’s will in the building program. Each problem and apparent defeat became, after much prayer, the foundation of victory through Christ.

The past is but the prelude to the future. The problems and difficulties of the past have just been “basic training” for the challenges of the future. Many unchurched children and young people need to be drawn into the Sunday School. Buses will need to be sent out to bring them in. New techniques must be developed and older techniques must be refined to reach them for Christ. The Lord has provided the facilities. We must now supply the prayers and the labor to use them effectively for Him. We rejoice in the truth expressed by Paul in Philippians 4:13, ‘I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me.’”

Paul M. Williams, Sunday School Superintendent



In 1970 it was time to build again. Ground was broken for our present sanctuary and additional classrooms. The new building was dedicated on March 26, 1972.

In June of 1980 Keith Johnson was called as Assistant Pastor, and he and his wife Richene and two daughters served here until May of 1983. He went to Milford Bible Church in Milford, PA, as their new pastor.



Reverend Keith Johnson

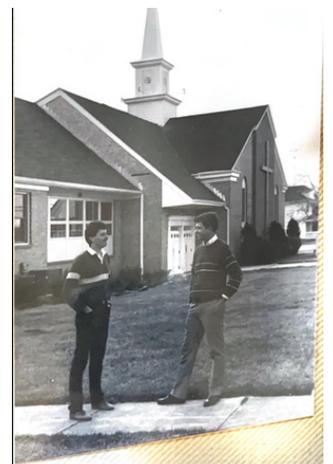
Assistant Pastor in June of 1980 till 1983

Pastor Keith formerly served as a Police Officer and also served a year in the mission field working with Native Americans. He is also noted for his concert ministry as he has sung in churches and Bible conferences across the country.



Reverend Blake Rogers

Pastor Rogers served for many years as a missionary in South Africa. Pastor and Mrs. Rogers then worked among Latin Americans in Atlantic County. Services in Spanish were conducted regularly at Linwood Community Church.



“Another factor that adds to the warmth and fellowship of the church, is the faithfulness of its members. The best advertisement is the satisfied customer. If we want people to come to our church, we need to be here ourselves. The attendance of all the congregation to all of the services and ministries of this church, is vitally important. Many of you are involved in extra-curricular activities, that take you from the services, and ministries of this church. If we believe, that the local church is a Biblical New Testament principle, then the services and the ministries of the local church **MUST COME FIRST**, When we have met this commitment, and only then, can we involve ourselves outside of the church. Letting the faithful few do the work of all, harbors ill feelings. We have an important job to do, and it will take each and every one of us to get it done.”

Pastor Bill Conover
(From 1972 Annual Report)



Harold Amstutz served as interim pastor after Pastor Conover left in May of 1983, and he remained until April of 1984, when Lee A. Gonsior was called to be pastor. During Gonsior's time here the last phase of the building was completed— additional classrooms, a kitchen, and a gym. Pastor Gonsior served as interim pastor until March of 1992.



In June of 1985 David J. Dougherty came to us as Assistant Pastor. Under his leadership our AWANA program and Jr. and Sr. High Youth Groups grew, both spiritually and in numbers. Dave resigned in September of 1990, and he and his family moved to Texas. Shortly after moving to Texas, Dave was diagnosed with cancer, and after a very hard struggle the Lord called him home on September 9, 1995. Dave's wife Karen later remarried, and she and her second husband along with the two children, continued to serve the Lord in Texas.



“A mentality of maintaining is a menace to the church” ... in Christianity whenever we stand still (maintain); we are either moving forward or backward.” Repeatedly in scripture believers are instructed to press on and avoid complacency, such as in John's rebuke to the Laodicean Church (Revelation 3), Paul's charge to the Galatians to not grow weary (Galatians 6:9), and Christ's command to His followers that they continually be in the process of winning people to God and building them up (Matthew 28:19-20).”
Assistant Pastor Dave Dougherty (From 1987 Annual Report)

55th ANNIVERSARY SERVICE
Linwood Community Church

Welcome Rev. Lee A. Gonsior, Pastor
 Hymns Rev. David J. Dougherty, Asst. Pastor
 196(v.1) "There Is A Fountain"
 191(v.1) "Power In The Blood"
 186(v.1) "The Old Rugged Cross"
 543(v.1) "When The Roll Is Called Up Yonder"
 Prayer Rev. Irv Bell
 Choir Anthem "O Men Of God, Arise"
 Brief History of Linwood Community Church
 Denise Hanley
 Introduction of 50 year attenders
 Rev. Lee Gonsior
 Announcements and Offering
 Rev. Donald Phillips
 Prayer
 Offertory Peggy Doughty, Organist
 Testimony Rev. Glenn Doughty, Pastor
 Bible Church of Westville
 Hymns
 372(v.1) "Living For Jesus"
 349(v.1) "Trust and Obey"
 Men's Quartet "All That Thrills My Soul"
 Bob Chamberlain, Lee Hicks,
 Charles Kisby, Ron Lavallee
 Skit Tom & Dot Dix, Chick Kisby,
 George Strain
 Testimony Rev. Bill Conover
 Slides
 Closing Remarks Rev. Lee Gonsior
 Hymn
 175(vv.1,3,5) "Hallelujah, What A Savior!"
 Closing Prayer

LIVING MEMBERS WHO HAVE ATTENDED
50 YEARS OR MORE

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Dot Dix | 7. Madalins Johnson * |
| 2. Tom Dix | 8. Kathryn Marple |
| 3. Grace Garwood | 9. Margaret Murray |
| 4. Denise Hanley | 10. Ken Williard |
| 5. Margaret Ireland * | 11. Margaret Williard |
| 6. Elsie Johnson | 12. Amy Worrell * |

* Charter Member

PASTORS OF THE LINWOOD COMMUNITY CHURCH

<u>Name</u>	<u>Dates</u>
Walter H. Ott	1933 - 1952
Donald D. Phillips	1952 - 1954
John Auringer	1954 - 1956
William M. Conover	1956 - 1983
Keith W. Johnson (Asst.)	1980 - 1983
Lee A. Gonsior	1984 - Current
David J. Dougherty (Asst.)	1985 - Current

The flowers on the Communion Table were presented by the ladies' Auxiliary, the oldest organization of the church. All are invited to share in refreshments and fellowship in the gym following the service



Linwood Community Church
1988

Lee A. Gonsior, Pastor
 David J. Dougherty, Asst. Pastor
 927-2950

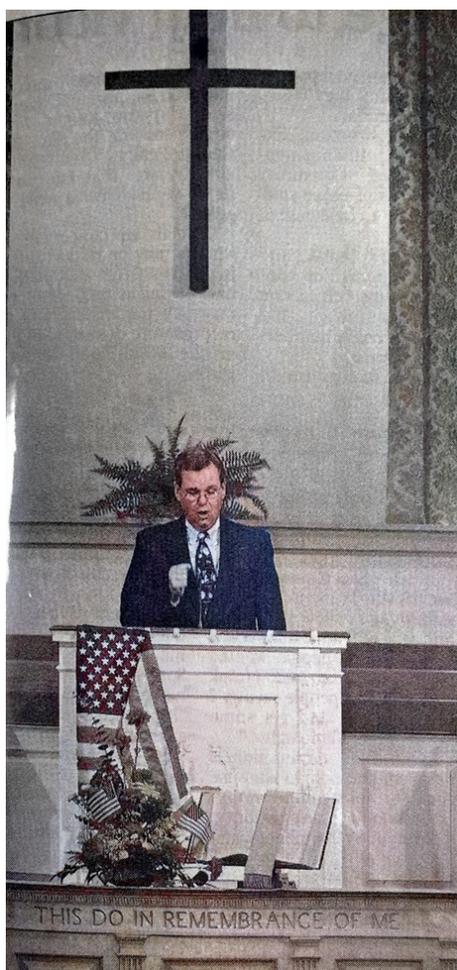
1838 Shore Road
 Linwood, New Jersey
 08221

“...I hope that we will also be able to look back and to see that you who are Linwood Community Church have flourished, grown, and developed far more than we could have ever imagined, and that love, unity, godliness, holiness, and spiritual impact upon the community through the power of the Gospel have abounded here for the glory of God. We want to hear that victories that we longed for, prayed for, and worked for in the furtherance of God’s work and the fulfillment of His purposes have been won...”
 Pastor Lee Gonsior - farewell letter.
 (August 19, 1990)

On November 27, 1990, Mike Huber was added to the staff as Director of Student Ministries. He served in that position until July 28, 1991.

On January 8, 1992, Richard E. John was called to be our new pastor, and he began his ministry on March 1, 1992. Pastor Rick, his wife Betsy and their four children served at Linwood Community Church until April of 2010, when he resigned and moved to Colorado to pastor a church there.

“ Each of us as individuals and all of us as a congregation at LCC have the joyful privilege of following Christ Jesus. This is a perfect definition of "discipleship".
Pastor Rick John
(From 1993 Annual Report)



Pastor Rick - Leading in "God Bless America" during a community prayer service right after 9/11

On June 1, 1993, Matthew Munn began his ministry as associate Pastor. Matthew came to us from Dallas Theological Seminary. Matthew was born and raised in California. He resigned on March 4, 1995.

Robert J Thompson was called as Youth Pastor on November 26, 1995 and began his ministry here on December 4, 1995. He resigned to attend seminary.

Jean D'Andre was added to the staff as Visitation Pastor in 1995, and along with his wife Eileen were a tremendous help to the pastoral staff until 2013





Since October of 2010 we had a succession of interim pastors, including Chris Gregas and George Quinn.

On Aug 16, 2013, Madaline Ireland Johnson, our last charter member out of 27 original charter members, went home to be with the Lord at age 95.

2013-2024

In April of 2007, Dave Hanson began his ministry as Youth Pastor up until 2015.

Chris Gregas was followed by Pastor George Quinn and his wife Carol as our interim from Jan 2011 until Oct 2012. In October 2012 Pastor Tim Vamosi was called to be our senior pastor. He and his wife Missy served at Linwood until 2016. It was during this time that Pastor Mark Sandorfi directed our youth in 2016.

During Hurricane Sandy in 2012, the Lord chose Linwood Community Church to house Franklin Graham's Samaritan's Purse. At this time our entire congregation joined with Samaritan's Purse in serving our community. Many heard the gospel and were given Bibles.



In October 2018, pastor Mike Woods become Linwood's interim pastor. He and his wife Carol served until July 2019.

Pastor Jayson Byrd was called to be our senior pastor in 2019. Pastor Jayson and his wife Jamie, along with their three children Karrigan, Draper, and Maddilyn continue to serve today.

Pastor George Myers and his wife Melissa along with their two sons, Carson, and Wesley, served as our associate Pastor from Aug. 2021 through Aug. 2023.



Covid Services



A Sending Church

It's often said that the power of a church is not in its "seating" capacity, but in its "sending" capacity. As the church grew over the years, LCC became a sending church. Irving Bell, long time Sunday School Superintendent, went to Grace Bible School in Camden, NJ and became pastor of Cardiff Baptist Church in Egg Harbor Township, where he served for many years. Glenn Doughty was the first to go through the entire church program, and is now pastor of Westville Baptist Church in Westville, NJ. Many others have left to go into full-time service for the Lord, and we are richly blessed by having been a part of them making a decision to serve the Lord. Throughout the years many individuals have gone out from this church to serve the Lord elsewhere, we praise God for each one of them.

Ennelle Wright, the first missionary we sent out from LCC, served faithfully in Brazil, along with her husband Stan, until poor health made them leave the field and the people they loved so much. We also supported Mable Broadbridge, who lived and served in China many years. A few of the early ones we supported were Rusty and Carol Baker, Bill and Irene Ridgeway, and Lee and Barbara Thompson.

Bob and Rich Felder both have been serving in mission capacities for many years, currently Rich in Turkey and Bob in campus ministry in Florida. Jim and Joanne Callahan serve at the Ceder Lane Missionary Homes here in NJ. It was a treat for our missions conference in 2022 to have several missionaries who had been in the youth group at LCC! As others left the mission field we have been able to support them financially and prayerfully, and many continue on the field today. A few of the early ones we supported were Rusty and Carol Baker, Bill and Irene Ridgeway, and Lee and Barbara Thompson. Today we praise the Lord that our church budget allows us to support many missionaries. We pray that God would call more LCC'ers into missions. We thank God for all our faithful members, and for their generous giving that makes all this possible.

Because of the vision Pastor Ott, the Irelands, and many others who helped shape this church, we share together with deep gratitude for what the Lord has done since its beginning and we pray we will continue to win souls for the kingdom until Christ returns.

Mission Report

Imagine hearing a missionary coming off the field and sharing a report about a multi-decade mission. An anniversary service is actually a mission report. It's the mission report from the mission field where you serve. All Christians are called to full-time Christian service. You may not be called to it vocationally, but nevertheless, we are all called to be full-time Christians. The difference between a missionary and vocational ministry is only context, location, and funding source. It's a mission that we are all part of.

This booklet shares many of the Acts of the Holy Spirit in one of the "Uttermost Parts of the Earth" we know as South Jersey at Linwood Community Church. Much has happened here, and God has used various human channels of His normal means of Grace. 1 Cor 10:17 says, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord." Everything that's happened here is a result of God's grace. To paraphrase 1 Corinthians 15:10, LCC can say with Paul, "Linwood Community Church is what it is by the grace of God."

LCC is not an end but a means. One day these buildings will be used for something else or torn down. Our physical campus and property are, what Pastor Conover said in 1972 "second to none" in all of South Jersey. While we're incredibly blessed and deeply grateful for many sacrifices of time, labor, and funds to have such a wonderful physical campus and count it a blessing from God, a building and property is not an end in itself, it is a means to the real work of ministering to people. God is not building a "house made with hands" but calling out a "people for His name." A building is simply a tool and space for the real ministry of people to take place (a wonderful and important tool, but a tool nonetheless). The church that Jesus purchased with His own blood (Acts 20:28-29) and the church that He is coming to reclaim (John 14:1-3, 1 Thess. 4) a people from every kindred, tribe, and race (Rev. 7). One day 1838 Shore Rd. will be among "all these things be dissolved" (2 Peter 3:11), but the people who were reached and disciplined here will last forever.

Until then, our commission is to "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Matthew 29:19-20

Our Lord gave His church a threefold purpose. 1. Upreach - Toward God - Worship 2. Outreach-Toward the World - Evangelism 3. In-Reach - Toward each other - Edification. This is our goal, Glorifying God by Making Disciples. Transformation (Making Disciples) is the goal - the local church is the context - the Gospel is the means.

That was the conviction for Pastor Ott and the founding members in 1934. As Pastor Conover shared, “Pastor Ott’s convictions were two-fold. First, concerning the preaching of the gospel found in the scriptures, I Corinthians 9:16, “For though I preach the Gospel, I have nothing to glory of, for necessity is laid upon me, yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel.” The second conviction was for his own life and this too is found in the scriptures, Philippians 1:21 “ For me to live is Christ and to die is to gain.” To preach the Word of God as contained in the Holy Bible. To build up the kingdom of God in the hearts of men and women, boys and girls.”

That was the purpose and mission that Pastor Rick John and his colleagues eloquently articulated in our mission statement, which was adopted in 1993.

“In obedience to our Lord’s command, we will make disciples of Jesus Christ who are: Exalting Him in worship, Edifying one another in love toward maturity, Exercising their gifts in fruit-bearing ministries, Evangelizing the lost world around us, all to the glory of God!”

And that purpose to glorify God by making more and better disciples is still the heartbeat of LCC today.



Vision for the Future

“Let’s dream, not our dreams for the future of Linwood Community Church, but His.”
~ Pastor Tim Vamosi (2013 Annual Report)

Our mission field is the seaside communities of eastern Atlantic County and northeastern Cape May County. The population of Atlantic County is roughly 276,000 souls, and the population of Cape May County is roughly 95,000 souls. That’s a combined total of 371,000 souls. If you count up every church that remotely preaches the Gospel in both counties and generously rounded up their Sunday morning attendance to 500-1000 people (reality being much less), you’d realize that not even 5% of the population is being reached.

Our community has a deep history; people come here from all over to vacation, live, work, and play on the Jersey Shore. Whether it’s the hedonistic attractions nearby, the promise of a shore house, boat, or retirement by the sea, people come here and find that the things of this world do not satisfy them. They are trying to quench their thirst with salt water when they really are longing for the “rivers of living water” that only come with a personal saving relationship with Jesus Christ. People move into our community who are wanderers and seekers, trying to protect their kids by having them in our schools, hoping for a better future and careers. Yet we have high depression and drug use rates. One would think that growing up on the shore would be an amazing experience, yet the number of teenagers on depression medications is staggering. ...And God put our church here!

A report we commissioned from “Church Answers” found that of the 168,855 people living within a 20-minute drive of LCC, the median age is 42.4. 51% are married, 23% are Baby Boomers, 22% are Millennials, Gen X and Gen Z are both 21%, with the Alpha Generation being 7% and the Greatest Generation 6.1%. ...And God put our church here!

If you could go back in time to the early 1990s and buy stock in Apple or Amazon, how much would you put in? You’d probably say, as much as I can! Why? Because you know how much it’s going to be worth in the future. The scriptures let us travel through time and see how valuable and important Christ’s Kingdom is. We see the value of the bride by the price He paid for her. We see the value of the Bride by the way He intercedes, gifts, and guides her now. And, we see the value and emphasis for Her in the future as He prepares for the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

No one is going to look back and say they wish they hadn’t invested as much into kingdom purposes. None will wish that they had given less money to ministry, to helping the poor, to supporting missionaries, to serving in children’s ministries, to continuing the legacy of their church. No; we will all wish we had invested more into the kingdom because we know what it’s going to be worth in the future.

There is a task unfinished. What is your part in it?

What LCC has been is because of Grace.

What is happening currently at LCC is because of Grace.

What LCC becomes in the future is in the hands of His Grace.

“Through many dangers, toils, and snares,
I have already come;

‘Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.”

“Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.” Ephesians 3:20-21 (ESV)





Linwood
COMMUNITY CHURCH