



**Let the SON
Shine In**

A Brief History of Calvin Presbyterian Church

What a special time it was! It was September, 2007, and Calvin Church was celebrating its 50th anniversary, while saying goodbye to its beloved minister of nineteen years, the Reverend Jim Bernard. We reminisced about those few Presbyterians who began to worship on the second floor of a bank in Amelia in 1955. A few charter members remembered that 22nd day of September, 1957, when Calvin Church, 55 members strong, received its charter from the Presbytery of Cincinnati. We spoke of the Reverend Bill Fogg, our first minister, and those who followed: Robert Chestnut, Paul Milio, Richard Kranzley, Bryce McGowan, David Black, and Jim Bernard in 1989. Just a few could remember the first church building completed in 1959, while a few more could tell us about the trials encountered while building our current sanctuary and fellowship hall, completed in 1978. We talked about Bob Chestnut leading us into SEM, and Rick Kranzley working to establish liturgy teams. During Jim Bernard's tenure, we expanded our mission activities, instituted First Fruits Sundays, encouraged Neighbor-to-Neighbor involvement, and even sponsored and built a Habitat for Humanity house in New Richmond. But nothing is forever, and, on September 30, 2007, we bid farewell to Jim and Pam Bernard.

Session spent the remainder of 2007 working to call an interim pastor and, by March, 2008, Session announced that the Reverend Jim Steiner would begin his ministry at Calvin Church on April 1, with a major goal of preparing us for our next permanent minister. Jim and his wife, Caroline, were warmly welcomed, and Jim set to work to establish a Transition Team to examine where we had been, and where we were going. As 2008 came to a close, a Calvin institution, Clerk of Session Ralph Campbell announced that he was retiring after 20 years of dedicated service. Session selected Cyndi Yunger to be Calvin's first female clerk of session. Early in 2009, the congregation elected a Pastor Nominating Committee to search for a new pastor. At the same time, Jim Steiner and Session devoted their efforts to the renovation and repair of the physical plant, and contracted for its improvement with a quarter million dollar program. Part of the cost was funded with a Rae Rogers bequest and the rest funded with a capital campaign drive in 2010. Pastor Steiner accomplished most of his goals and announced that he would be leaving in August, 2009, for another interim position in Pennsylvania.

Fortunately, the Pastor Nominating Committee had been working hard to find the right person to call, and was able to present an early Christmas present to the congregation. They had a candidate! The Reverend Kathleen Haines preached her trial sermon on November 22, and the congregational meeting that followed enthusiastically endorsed the Reverend Kathleen to be Calvin's next pastor. She began her pastorate in January, 2010. Since that time, she has been especially effective in the pulpit, delivering messages that challenge the congregation to grow and work, especially in the areas of hospitality and love for your neighbors. She has also demonstrated leadership by challenging Session and its ministries to reach out to the needy and the poor. As we complete our 53d year, we trust in the Holy Spirit to be our counselor and advocate, so that we may forever LET THE SON SHINE IN.

Robert T. Bridges

September 8, 2010