

Clifton Presbyterian Church

Celebrating Fifteen (15) Decades of Service and Gratitude



2000's – 2010's . . .

Perhaps the Most Transformative Two Decades in American History! A New Millennium dawned, but the much feared Y2K bug failed to BITE!

Yet . . . **Bubbles Burst** – Dot.com and later housing – and **Disasters Struck** . . .

9/11; Beltway Sniper; WMD's; Iraq War; Katrina; Global Recession; Mass Shootings; the Boston Marathon Bombing, and . . .

Politics Polarized — Illegal Immigration; Gun Control; Affordable Care Act (ACA); Climate Change; Fracking . . .

Social Norms Changed – Legalization of Marijuana; Same Sex Marriage; and LGBTQ Rights.

Social Media Exploded – Facilitated Movements like *Occupy Wall Street*, *Arab Spring*, *Black Lives Matter*, and *Me Too!* – (*You Tube* Founded, 2005; *Twitter* Launched, 2006; and *I Phone* debuted in 2007).

Innovations Awed – Driverless Vehicles; Drones; Artificial Intelligence; Quantum Computing; Crypto Currency; and DNA and Genetic Engineering.

Presidential Elections Debated – Bush/Gore and Hanging Chads – the Electoral College vs. Popular Vote!

President Obama, elected USA's first black President, appointed the first Hispanic US Supreme Court Justice, Sonia Sotomayor!
President Trump Impeached!

And for CPC . . . Two decades of **Celebrations** and **Challenges!** **WISHES CAME TRUE!** – Church Secretary, hired; Pastor for Youth and Families, called; and a whole new annex created! . . . But all took patience, perseverance, and Prayer!

CELEBRATIONS and CHALLENGES! A new millennium brought new growth to Clifton Presbyterian Church under the continued leadership of Pastor Lynn Stanton-Hoyle. Weddings still abounded – averaging 24 per year in the first 5 years of the decade. The average weekly attendance increased (130's), so two Sunday services were held year round, and a 4th service was added on Christmas Eve. The church used the Manse for office space and classrooms, and the garage had to be upgraded for additional classroom space. CPC was bursting at the seams! The long range planning committee had proposed exploring the expansion of facilities. Le May Erickson was chosen for the feasibility study, and a three year Capital Campaign kicked off in August 2002 – *Touching Tomorrow Today*. The logo for the campaign was designed by Marla Hembree and the beautiful wall hanging, dedicated in October, 2005 was stitched by Lisbeth Kozy. (The motivation for her work is revealed in her story.) A Ground Breaking Ceremony for the new addition was held June 5, 2005, six months before celebrating our 135th anniversary.



Following that Sunday service on Dec. 4, we continued to celebrate our history as well as our first Associate Pastor, Julie Hodges' 9 years at CPC, bidding her a tearful and heartfelt farewell at a luncheon at the Clifton Town Hall.

CELEBRATIONS! With patience, perseverance, and many prayers, Clifton Presbyterian Church added an almost three million dollar spacious new wing, and was granted occupancy on October 4, 2006. The remodeling and re-orientation of the Sanctuary was then begun. It was completed by Christmas Eve 2006, and the beautiful stained glass window given in 1968, was now visible for the first time from the interior of the Sanctuary. This was made possible by a generous donation from Nancy Scott and her family in memory of her husband Jack, who passed away in Dec. 2003. Money was also given in memory of Jack and later Ruth Rankin (09) for new banners and paraments that were designed by Peggy Cranston, embroidered by Claudette Evans, and finished by Ann Webster. Many, many generous contributions were made by many people during this campaign . . . for pews, classrooms, bricks, 2 new stained glass windows, our refurbished brass, and much more. General Willard Webb's carvings were lovingly cleaned and rehung (primarily by Marla Hembree) in various areas of the new addition, which included a Fellowship Hall with a large kitchen, and upstairs, new classrooms for the Preschool and Christian Education. An elevator made the facility completely handicap accessible enabling a Senior Respite Center to open in February 2007. The center was suspended a year later, in part due to low demand. The official dedication of this wonderful new space took place on January 21, 2007 – despite the snow! The manse, no longer needed for office space, was cleaned, painted, hardwood floors installed, and was then rented to a needy family in February 2007!

CELEBRATIONS! The growth in membership necessitated a growth in staff to include a Church Secretary, an Associate Pastor for Youth and Families, Youth Interns, and a Parish Associate in Pastor Lewis. We also supported Seminary Interns until 2014. After Lisa Kenkeremath left in 2001, we were blessed with Carl Howard, Bonnie Davis – who also served as Pastoral Assistant for Adult Ministries and then as Senior Friends Center Director, Gayle Schlenker, Pat Futato, Lois Aroian, and Harlee Johnson 8/12 – 5/14. Many innovative ideas came from these talented, creative leaders . . . Prayers of Healing and Wholeness became part of the celebration of Communion, and Candles of Remembrance enhanced the All Saints Day celebration (03). The American and Presbyterian flags were added to the Sanctuary (04). A Saturday evening contemporary service instead of Sunday worship was tried on Clifton Day weekend (03); but eventually, all services on Clifton Day were cancelled, as CPC started serving food and vendors began using our parking lot. The Harvest of Love Sale and the March Tea were discontinued, but the Spaghetti Dinner with Silent Auction added continued. Other new ideas for fellowship and outreach were initiated, such as the Book Club (03), Magnetic Nametags (03), a Newsletter, “*What’s Goin’ On*” (08), and a Connection Card in the weekly bulletin (09). In 2010 the Thursday Lunch Club (TLC) was formed, CPC received a grant to enhance our website design and start a coffee house ministry, and the Session introduced the “Speaking of . . . series.” A Younger Adult Fellowship for the 20-40 age group was organized in the fall of 2012. A Grief Support group was established in 2015. Table Time and a Blue Christmas/Longest Night service were added in 2016.





In 2017 the community was invited to Movie Night on the lawn, and costumed members started celebrating Halloween down by our road sign handing out treats to community children. Gretchen Reamy designed and mailed over 1700 Advent/Christmas postcards to the greater Clifton Community, hoping to attract new members. CPC even got a twitter handle! In 2019 the Needlework Ministry began; Donuts and coffee were served once a month to the Bikes and Breakfast Motorcycle Club in town; and we began celebrating Birthdays and Anniversaries monthly with a Bette

Petersen Cake! In December 2019, CPC hosted a wonderfully received Christmas concert for the community, led by Music Director, John Kim. And, in honor of the approaching 150th Anniversary, CPC published its second cookbook!

CELEBRATIONS! The youth membership and participation also reached a new high of over 90 youth in 2003. In addition to Associate Pastor Julie, Associate Pastors Jennifer Dunfee, Sarah Cairatti, and Jodi Ligan kept the youth engaged with fun and varied activities. There was a youth band (03), led by Jim Dixon and Joanne Woodward; programs like Godly Play, introduced in 2005; Junior Church; BLAST for families – “Bible Learning and Spiritual Teaching” begun in 2006, and was held midweek; VBS; Blessing of the Animals begun in 2013; and youth groups – Club 56, JC4me, Middle School Madness (08), the Senior High group, Tweens Sunday school class for 6th and 7th graders (new 2013) – all well attended. The youth were very active in mission trips and work teams, both locally, nationally, and internationally. In 2010 the position of Youth Deacon was created. Care packages were sent to College Freshmen (13), and over \$1300 was raised by the youth at Clifton Day for The Shoe That Grows, started in 2018! Although the number of youth in 2019 had shrunk to 15, they were still participating in Worship, service projects, the Easter Festival, and the much loved Children’s Christmas program. And Boy Scout Troop 1104 which has been active at our church for almost 50 years, continued to aid the Church and community throughout these two decades with new projects like helping to initiate the “God and Country” program at CPC (03), and building the Meditation Garden (07).



CHALLENGES! Many at CPC felt the effects of the Global Recession that began in 2008, and 2009 proved to be a challenging year. Membership at 275 was still strong, but the number of pledges declined, salaries were frozen, and Preschool enrollment began to suffer. The Preschool, in 2014 downsized to 3 classes – capping enrollment at 57. In 2017 a program was added for 2 ½ year olds, and afterschool care was extended to 5 p.m. Church membership was also in decline . . . (263 at the end of 2012, 219 at the end of 2014, and by Dec. of 2019 membership was 138.) The number of weddings dropped to half after the new addition was completed and continued to dwindle throughout the 2010’s. Many issues may have contributed to these declines – changing demographics, the temporary closing of restaurants in town and the permanent closing of Clifton Elementary school in 2011, NCP’s passage of the amendment on ordination standards, and differing views among members . . . CPC’s Easter Sunrise service was discontinued in 2012 as was weeklong Vacation Bible School in 2018 and 2019 due to waning participation and loss of workers.

CELEBRATIONS! This is a giving, caring church; and though membership lessened in the 2010's, commitment to service and mission remained a priority. Aid sent to those suffering from natural disasters – the Tsunami in Indonesia in (04), Katrina (05), the earthquake in Haiti (10), Super Storm Sandy (12), and Michael in (18) – was generous. Adults and youth participated in mission trips and work camps, both locally – Souper Bowl for S.O.M.E (So Others May Eat); nationally – N. Carolina floods, and NAILS; and internationally – Wings of Hope in Haiti, Puentes de Cristo in Mexico, and Kibwezi, Kenya to name just a few.



There was continued support for all local organizations. Numbers may fluctuate, but the fellowship found in Mission work, Bible Study, the annual Women's Retreat, O.W.L.S, TLC, the Men's Breakfast, and the book club never waned. We are indeed "a community of faith, joyfully praising, glorifying, and following Christ as we: invite others into faith in Christ, meet needs, offer hope, and serve together faithfully!" (CPC'S Mission Statement – developed, 2008 and adopted Jan. 7, 2010)

CELEBRATIONS AND CHALLENGES! Many staff changes occurred during these two decades. Office Manager, Jane King resigned in 2008. Music Director, Ellen Thatcher resigned in summer 2009. The search to fill both these positions was difficult and many hires did not last. Finally in 2010, Gretchen Reamy agreed to serve as Office Manager as well as Administrative Director of the Preschool, and in Jan. 2013, Dominick Izzo became our Music Director and served until Feb. 2017. The hunt began again, but was thankfully shorter as John Kim accepted the position of Music Director in March, 2017. Educational Director for the preschool,



Marcia Stedman retired in 2014 and Administrative Director and Office Manager, Gretchen Reamy retired in 2018 after almost 23 years at CPC and the hunt was again on for an Office Manager. And, again, it took patience, perseverance, and prayer. There were several unsuccessful tries, until Debbie Kilpatrick accepted the position in March of 2019. Pastor Lynn Stanton-Hoyle announced her retirement after almost 23 years at Clifton Presbyterian Church. Sarah, the little girl who loved that January snow storm in 1996, was to be married in the fall, and Pastor Lynn

wanted to be part of the planning. She also wanted to share in her husband Dale's mission work. So on Pentecost, May 20, 2018, the congregation bid her farewell among origami flying doves, gifts, hugs, and many thanks for her years of service. The new Fellowship Hall was named in her honor – The Rev. Dr. Lynn Stanton-Hoyle FH. Associate Pastor Jodi Lingan ably filled the pulpit as Head of Staff until Interim/Transitional Pastor, Jeri Fields, arrived in January 2019. We bid Pastor Jodi farewell as she moved to North Carolina in March 2019. Pastor Lewis also resigned in 2019.



(L) Pastor Jodi (C) Pastor Jeri (R) Pastor Lewis

The town of Clifton grew during these decades as well. Clifton celebrated its 100th Anniversary with a 3 day festival over the 4th of July, 2002. Among the activities were a sunrise walk through the Webb Audubon Preserve, brunch at the Acacia Lodge, and an interfaith service held at the park's Gazebo. Several Clergy participated including CPC's Rev. Julie Hodges. A time capsule was buried in front of the gazebo to be opened in 2027. At that time the town's population was approximately 185. The Frog Hill community was established at the edge of town in 2002, and by 2010 the population had grown to 282. In 2007 the Fairfax County Historical Commission placed a historical marker at Ivakota Farm. CPC continued to be a good neighbor, hosting the Lion's Club Pancake Breakfast, and participating in town activities – the Labor Day car show (which moved to Fairfax City in 2016), CCWC'S annual Homes Tour, CBA's Christmas candlelight tour, and inviting the CBA to share in our Easter Festival. The rotated Thanksgiving services disappeared sometime in the decades, but the relationship among the churches remained strong. The Hermitage Inn Restaurant closed about the time our new addition was finished and after extensive renovations, Trummer's on Main opened in 2009. Renovated again in August of 2019, it is now the more casual Trummer's! The Heart in Hand Restaurant closed in 2011, and eventually Trattoria Villagio opened in 2013. Both remain popular and the traffic through Clifton is busier than ever!

The terrorist attack on the U.S. on September 11, 2001 changed much in our country and the world. Osama bin Laden and al Qaida became household words. The SARS outbreak in China and Hong Kong 2002-2004 gave the world a scare. Saddam Hussein was ousted from Iraq in 2003, but our troops remain in Iraq and Afghanistan, and terrorism seems on the rise – here, and around the globe. The refugee crises in Europe contributed to UK's "BREXIT" vote – which remains unfinished at decade's end. Our climate seems to be changing, but the reasons for the change are disputed as are gun rights/gun control. There are so many challenges in the world . . .

. . . But, Lord, we are grateful for the celebrations, the good news . . . We celebrate inspiring and beautiful music such as *"You Raise Me Up"*, written in 2002 by Irishman, Brendan Graham. We are grateful for the life well lived of Billy Graham who went home to You in 2018; for the leadership of Pope Francis; and for the Pastors at Clifton Presbyterian Church who are mission minded - dedicated to Your work in the world. We celebrate sports – especially the Nationals and Capitals wins in 2019; (and even the Chicago Cubs win in the World Series in 2016 after over a 100 year hiatus) – and Simone Biles, the most decorated gymnast in Olympic history. CPC is grateful for the many gifts received and talents shared – including a baby grand piano donated in 2016, the dedication of the many volunteers who have led our youth, and Marge Fare's years' long commitment to our website as our talented webmaster. And, Lord, we are so thankful that Clifton Presbyterian Church's celebrations outweighed their challenges.

The crop walk, fall 2019

