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Somerville churches to vote on union Jan. 30

By MILDRED S. CARSON

SOMERVILLE — If two-thirds of the confirmed members of the First and Second Reformed Churches approve a proposal to consolidate, the Covenant Reformed Church of Somerville will be born Jan. 30. The plan has been approved by a United Consistory composed of members of both congregations and follows a year of "covenant relationship" between the two churches.

It has been accepted by the consistories of the individual churches which have recommended the proposal.

If approved, the new Covenant Reformed Church would be the second in this area to be formed by a union of two old, established congregations.

The First Presbyterian Church and the Grant Avenue Presbyterian Church in Plainfield formed the United Presbyterian Church in Plainfield last July after just 53 days of formal consultation and study.

The two Plainfield churches merged to achieve goals, many of them concerned with human needs, that they found impossible to achieve separately in an era of declining church memberships and financial support.

"We tend to complement each other, not conflict, in our styles of ministerial leadership" — the Rev. John Faulstich of the First Reformed Church of Somerville.

IT HAS BEEN PROPOSED that if the Somerville Church members approve consolidation, the congregation formed would use the facilities of the Second Reformed Church and would be served by the Rev. Maurice Marcus of that church and the Rev. John Faulstich, pastor of the First Reformed Church as co-ministers.

The First Reformed Church property would be sold and the net funds invested.

These funds would not be used for current expenses, the Rev. Mr. Faulstich emphasized, but at least one-half would be made available as "seed money" for church missions or for community services and the remaining money from the sale kept in a trust fund as resources for future needs.

He envisions the money as being administered in a similar manner to the funds of a foundation, with appropriate church officials determining the greatest needs of those who apply for aid.

In defining the mission of the new church, the United Consistory members who drew the plan, indicate firmly that the church exists "not so much to serve ourselves, but as a means to serve others."

Thus the new church would make its facilities available to meet community needs in an "open door" policy, the Rev. Mr. Faulstich said.

There is a definite commitment to the understanding, too, that the church itself is concerned with human needs in the community as well as in the congregation and that this concern is with physical and sociological as well as spiritual needs, the Rev. Mr. Faulstich said.

A KEY WORD IN all the planning for consolidation has been "diversity."

"We recognize that all are not of a common mind," the First Reformed pastor said, "that there are differences in the understanding of faith, but we also recognize that everyone should have the freedom to express his faith actively.

"Although the Rev. Mr. Marcus and I are the personification of diversity," he went on to say, "we tend to complement each other, not to conflict, in our styles of ministerial leadership. The feeling has prevailed in the United Consistory that by continuing our pastorship rather than starting off with a 'new slate', the congregation would recognize and affirm that diversity."

The Rev. Mr. Marcus has often noted, during the covenant relationship year, that he felt stimulated and filled out in his ministry by this Christian diversity, the Rev. Mr. Faulstitch recalled.

"His skills, orientation and training complement mine in many areas," the First Reformed pastor said.

In affirming its diversity also, the new church would retain its traditional forms of worship, but also would experiment with contemporary music, language and visual expression, the plan states, to bring new meaning to old symbols and there will be freedom of expression for world, national and local social concerns within the context of worship.

"No worship service can be insulated from the concerns of the world," the United Consistory plan states, "either those we bring with us or those with which we need to be confronted."

"During the year of covenant relationship between our two churches I have been stimulated and filled out in my ministry" — the Rev. Maurice Marcus of the Second Reformed Church of Somerville.

IT ALSO NOTES the need for the church to be an agent for peace, justice and reconciliation in the community on local, national and international issues.

It is the intent of the planners of the new church that increasing portions of its resources would be devoted to outreach concerns each year until a major portion is devoted to such concerns.

Regardless of the outcome of next week's vote, neither congregation will ever be the same as it was before the two embarked on a year's covenant relationship last January, the Rev. Mr. Faulstich believes.

"Both congregations have been profoundly affected," he said, "and it has been a positive experience. People have been jolted out of their complacency and many, whose ideas of the church and the direction it should take were vague, have refined their thinking considerably."

SOME MEMBERS of the First Church have been disturbed by the fact that their church would be sold if consolidation takes place.

It occupies one corner of a downtown Somerville block, the rest of which is occupied by the County Courthouse, administration building and jail.

Freeholder Director Bjorn Firing has indicated the county's interest in acquiring the church property and noted that the sanctuary might be used as a courtroom or library and the existing facilities for offices.

In a gesture of friendship and concern toward the First Reformed Church members, the Second Reformed Church Consistory already has recommended that an architect be consulted to determine what artifacts, such as the baptismal font, from the First Church might be incorporated in an esthetic and appropriate manner in the Second Reformed church building the new church. would use.

It has been tabled for referral to the consistory of the new church.

Presbyterians unite, conquer sentiment, work in harmony

PLAINFIELD — On the same day that the First and Second Reformed Church congregations in Somerville vote on a proposed consolidation of the two churches, Jan. 30, the United Presbyterian Church of Plainfield, formed last July 31 from the First Presbyterian and Grant Avenue Presbyterian congregations, will hold its first annual meeting.

At the time the two churches, whose histories reach back into the previous century, became one, William G. French, former assistant clerk of the Grant Avenue church session, noted that the most difficult task facing the congregations was putting aside sentiment and recognizing the need for such a union to fulfill what they believed to be the mission of their churches.

Edward W. Beglin, clerk of the Session of the United Presbyterian Church, said he felt the success of the newly formed church had been made possible because all the members of both congregations had had the opportunity during the merger considerations to take a long, careful look at themselves and to assess thoughtfully the real mission of a church in today's world.

"I think that although the first reaction to a merger suggestion was to church property, the two congregations quickly realized that they were not just trying to bail themselves out of a financial situation. Finances became a secondary consideration and the merger was accomplished, I am proud to say, because both congregations honestly felt they could do more for the local community together than they had been doing separately," Beglin said.

WALTER G. BROWN OF BERKELEY HEIGHTS, chairman of the Christian Education Committee, pointed with great pride to the completely combined church school which he described as progressing "magnificently."

"It takes time for two former congregations to lose their individuality," Mr. Brown observed, "but that process is going on steadily in the United Presbyterian Church."

He said he thought the members from the former Grant Avenue Church perhaps have had the most difficult task, because of the greater physical adjustmen to new surroundings.

"But it is extremely important," he added, "that the former First Presbyterian members realize they also are a part of a new congregation. It is not correct to think that nothing has changed except that new faces have appeared in the church," Brown emphasized.

The three buildings of the former Grant Avenue Presbyterian Church have been retained so far by the new United Presbyterian Church and all have been made available for community needs.

Much time has been spent inevitably, Beglin and Brown said, on the organization of the new church, but they declared themselves well satisfied with the results of this painstaking effort.

THE NEW UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH has four departments: Christian nurture, which is concerned with the needs of the congregation and is divided into committees on spiritual life and on Christian education; outreach, which considers the needs of the local community and the church's worldwide mission projects; administration, to deal with the management of the church, and long-range planning.

Youth of the church has been actively involved in the organizational planning and is represented on the nominating committee and on the committee actively seeking a new pastor. The Rev. Craig A. Rule is now acting as pastor of the church.

New by-laws to be voted on next week would allow youthful communicant members also to be elected to the ruling board of the church.

"It is heartwarming to me to see that two congregations can find basic compatibility and can worship and work together in harmony," Beglin said. "It makes me wonder why so many churches fragmented so frequently in the past."

CHRISTIAN & MISSIONARY ALLIANCE CHURCH
Somerset St. at Mountain Ave.
Rev. A. J. Bilajhaus — 756-7321
9:45 a.m. Bible School (Nursery Provided); 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. Worship Services
North Plainfield

MT. OLIVE BAPTIST CHURCH
314 LIBERTY STREET, PLAINFIELD, N. J.
Dr. H. S. Clipper, Pastor
11:00 A.M.—"The Women at the Well"
6:30 A.M.—Sunday School, Superintendent — Oscar Calloway
3:30 P.M.—Leave for Bethel Baptist Church, Westfield, N. J. I will speak there and the Gospel and Senior Choruses will accompany.

Terrill Road Baptist Church
Sunday School 9:45 A.M. — Morning Worship 11:00 A.M.
Church Training 6:00 P.M. — Evening Worship 7:00 P.M.
Nursery Provided at All Services
1340 Terrill Road S.B.C. Scotch Plains, N. J
232-7153
Rev. Kenneth E. King, Pastor

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
CONGREGATIONAL
REV. WILLARD A. BICKET
SERVICES 10:00 A.M.
NURSERY CARE PROVIDED
LORI M. WITMER, Director Christian Education
W. 7th. & Madison Plainfield, N.J.

YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND THE
Bound Brook Baptist Chapel, SBC
Church and West Second Avenue 968-2559 Bound Brook, N.J.
REV. WILLIAM HOTTENSEN
9:45 A.M.—Sunday Bible Study
11:00 A.M.—Morning Worship Service
7:00 P.M.—Christian Training
7:00 P.M.—Evening Worship Service
NURSERY PROVIDED FOR ALL SERVICES

ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
WOODLAND AVENUE AND RAVINE ROAD
Clergy: The Rev. Canon R. C. Hasselock
The Rev. Fr. Roland Benjamin
Phones: PL 6-0561 — PL 6-6610
Holy Eucharist—8:00 A.M.
Church School—9:45 A.M.
Family Mass and Sermon—11:45 A.M.
Weekday Services as Announced

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH
East Seventh Street and Covenant Avenue, Plainfield, New Jersey
THE REV. CANON HARRY J. KNICKLE, S.S.D., S.T.D., RECTOR
The Rev. Dr. Robert Bevan, Jr., B.A., M. Div., Curate
SUNDAY, January 23, 1972
8:00 A.M.—Holy Communion
11:00 A.M.—Church School (All Grades)
11:00 A.M.—Morning Prayer and Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Knickle
4:30 P.M.—Youth Choir Practice — Youth Pupilar
Eucharistic Service and Pageant of Lights
Sermon by The Rt. Rev. Albert W. Van Duzer, D.D., S.T.D., Suffragan Bishop of the Diocese of New Jersey
THURSDAY, January 27, 1972
10:00 A.M.—Holy Communion and Healing Service
NURSERY CARE PROVIDED

CRESCENT AVENUE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Ministers: Charles L. Mead, Manuel Rodriguez, Roland Bahnsen
WATCHUNG AND CRESCENT AVENUES
9:15 and 11:00 A.M.—Church School
9:15 A.M.—Worship Service
11:00 A.M.—"On Living in Today Without Strain." Dr. Mead Preaching.
CRIB ROOM NURSERY HOUR DURING SERVICES
PARKING LOTS ON FIRST, PL. AND WATCHUNG AVE.

FIRST CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY
400 West 8th Street, Plainfield, N. J.
A full Gospel-Charismatic Church
REV. DAVID HANNON, PASTOR
SUNDAYS 9:45 A.M.—Sunday School
10:50 A.M.—Family Hour
7:00 P.M.—Inspiration Hour
WEDNESDAY 7:45 P.M.—Bible Study and Prayer
Tel. 755-8460 Nursery Facilities

HYDEWOOD PARK BAPTIST CHURCH
NORWOOD and MANNING AVES., NORTH PLAINFIELD
Norman Sweeting, Pastor—J. F. Miller and K. F. Barber, Assoc. Pastors
11:00 A.M.—Pastor Norman Sweeting, "Doubting Thomas"
9:45 A.M.—Sunday School. Classes for all ages
6:00 P.M.—Youth Meetings
7:00 P.M.—Pastor Norman Sweeting, "Ungodly Church Members"
Nursery Provided During Services
Wednesday—8:00 P.M. Mid-Week Service
Radio Broadcasts (W&WZ 99.1 FM) Mon.-Fri. 12:55 P.M.
Wednesday, 5:30 P.M.; Saturday, 4:35 P.M.

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH WELCOMES YOU
ST. PETER'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
Mercer Avenue and Grove Street
Scotch Plains
Pastor — Douglas E. Warner
9:00 A.M.—Sunday Church School
9:00 A.M.—Family Worship
11:00 A.M.—Later Service
Communion 1st Sunday of each month
7:00 P.M.—Luther League — Parish Secretary — Janice Eadie
Organist — Marilyn Hamilton
GETHSEMANE LUTHERAN CHURCH (LCA)
1340 East Seventh St., Plainfield
756-6788
(2 blocks west of Terrill Road)
G. Milton Johnson, Pastor
8:30 and 11:00—Divine Worship
9:30—Sunday Church School
Nursery Care Provided at 11 A.M. Communion
First and Third Sundays
MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH (LCA)
430 East Front Street, Plainfield
A "Church of the Lutheran Hour"
Frederick Dodge, Pastor
756-4138
9:45 A.M.—Church School
11:00 A.M.—Service
Holy Communion Celebration in one Service each Sunday
Bring your Children

UNITED METHODIST
FIRST CHURCH
621 E. Front St.
9:30 and 11 — Worship
9:30 — Church School
GRACE CHURCH
Somerset & Park Pl., No. Plainfield
9:15 Church School
11:00 — Worship
WESLEY CHURCH
Plainfield Ave. & Pershing Pl.
South Plainfield
10:00 a.m. Worship Service and Church School
Nursery Care Available At All Churches During Worship Services

TINKER TOY CHURCH
And it has a silver bell on the steeple and a cross on top. No one suggested to Bobby that he use his birthday toy this way. He did it himself.
He could have made a ferris wheel, or a barn, or a wagon. But, as it happens, he made a church. Maybe it is because, since he was a tot, the Church has been so important in his life.
To Bobby the Church represents a warmth and love that made him want to "build one of his own."
Does your child feel that way?
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THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
525 East Front Street, Plainfield, N.J.
Craig W. Rule, Assoc. Minister
9:30 A.M.—Church School and Adult Education
9:30 & 11:00 A.M.—Worship Services
Nursery Provided

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