

THE COURIER-NEWS, Thursday, June 24, 1971

Presbyterian churches commended on efficient merger

By MILDRED CARSON

PLAINFIELD — A new church, the United Presbyterian Church of Plainfield, will be created in Plainfield one week from today. It will begin its existence with more than 1,000 members from the combined congregations of the First Presbyterian Church and the Grant Avenue Presbyterian Church, both of which will be dissolved on the same date.

Members of both congregations voted overwhelmingly by the consolidation last Sunday and the Elizabeth Presbytery confirmed the vote unanimously Tuesday. Then, in an unusual and infrequent gesture, the Presbytery also commended the congregations on their efficient and well-thought-out plan of merger.

"Although the need for mergers of urban churches is fantastically great," the Rev. Thomas Green, a member of the Presbytery's National Commission Committee, emphasized, "the accomplishment is almost nil." The Rev. Mr. Green, associate pastor of the New Providence Presbyterian Church, moderated the merger committee meetings.

He noted that the consolidation is the first between any two Presbyterian churches in the history of the Elizabeth Presbytery.

THE MEMBERS of the United Presbyterian Church will worship at the E. Front Street building of the former First Presbyterian Church. The consolidated church will continue to support the Grant Avenue Community Center and will make an effort to insure that the day care center at the church now conducted by the Family Development Center will continue to function.

The actual merger of the two congregations was accomplished in just 33 days from the time the merger was approved in May when both churches voted to draw up a plan of consolidation and asked that it be completed in 60 days.

A committee of 30 members, including two teenagers and representing the two congregations equally, went to work in earnest on May 9, to draw up a plan and to define goals they November last year and at the United Presbyterian Church in January this year church members selected a committee to begin exploring possibilities.

So the two congregations considered consolidation as a means for achieving goals they had set for themselves as a united church — goals they November last year and at the United Presbyterian Church in January this year church members selected a committee to begin exploring possibilities.

WHEN THE Rev. Bruce L. Blackie, pastor of the Grant Avenue Presbyterian Church, held tentative discussions with the Congregational Church post in March, the activity with which it has previously lowered a firm decision was accelerated.

One of the first activities of the new congregation will be to seek a new minister through its combined pulpit nominating committee.

The consolidated church plans as well will be primarily concerned with leading the new church in outreach to the Plainfield community.

A community ministry will be supported at the Balmsten House, a part of the Grant Avenue Presbyterian church property.

William G. French, assistant clerk of session, who has been active in the consolidation planning, pointed out there has been more and more recognition in recent years that the church is not an isolated institution but has responsibilities to the community and to the world.

Discussions between the First Presbyterian Church and the Grant Avenue Church began in the fall of 1969. There were numerous committee meetings and two formal congregational meetings certain amount of daring, to pull the merger committee discussed early new church. We still have in 1969.

THE MAIN stumbling block in most merger plans is the decision of the new church and a lot of determination and a 1988 when it was organized as Hope Chapel, by the Crescent Avenue Presbyterian Church. It became an independent church in 1988. The direction of William Hewitt

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Sheriffs to discuss funds disbursement

NEW BRUNSWICK — New and Freeholder Director George J. Orlowski refused to sign the Atlantic City tomorrow.

Planagan declares that under common law the sheriff and law enforcement agencies when the money is going to sheriffs in other states.

The 21 sheriffs of New Jersey will discuss whether their offices, as duly constituted law enforcement agencies, are entitled to federal law enforcement funds, said Middlesex County Sheriff John Planagan yesterday.

He said federal funds from the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) are going to other sheriffs in most of the states but in New Jersey these funds are being intercepted by the State Law Enforcement Planning Agency.

Planagan has steadfastly maintained that sheriffs are law enforcement agents and entitled to the funds. He said an attorney will review the matter tomorrow and make legal determination of the status of sheriffs as law enforcers.

The matter has come to light especially lately because of the withdrawal of a grant to a of U.S. troops from Pomona is a key to the restoration of laboratory and also by the rejected application of Planagan between the United States and for federal narcotics funds. The chief, according to reports in sheriff maintains he has the New York Times and Newsweek but the Board of day, the Long Island Freeholders thinks otherwise newspaper.

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