

History of the Shawnee Presbyterian Church



*Pencil Sketch of the
"Old Stone Church" from the 1853 Box in the Cornerstone*

Shawnee Presbyterian Church in Shawnee-on-Delaware traces its history back to 1750, when William Allen of Philadelphia conveyed five acres of land to Nicholas Depui for a "Presbyterian Meeting House."

The meetinghouse was erected in 1753.



Original Sounding Bard

The “Old Stone Church” featured a high pulpit with a sounding board and window sills above the heads of the seated congregation to thwart Native American attacks.

Presbyterian, Dutch Reformed, Lutheran, German Reformed and Baptist congregations worshipped here in past generations.



Cornerstone Reopening on July 7, 2002

The present brick structure was erected on the original stone foundation in 1853. Ann Depui Erb, great granddaughter of Nicholas Depui, laid the cornerstone.

The names of the Building Committee and the initials of the 1752 Committee can be seen on the church foundation on the left.



Shawnee Churchyard

Newton Presbytery dedicated the church building in 1854. That year, the Reverend John Kirby Davis, a graduate of Princeton Seminary, was called as pastor.

He served until 1868 and is buried among Revolutionary War soldiers in the Shawnee Churchyard, the oldest in Monroe County.



Current Structure

HISTORY of PROPERTY and its Significance of National, State and/or Local History)

The exact date of the founding of the first church at Shawnee-on-Delaware is unknown but in 1741 Johan Casper Freyenmoet, a young man whose theological studies had been carried on abroad was appointed the first regular pastor. Originally the church was Dutch Reformed, and probably had been maintained as a house of worship, it was a crude log-framed affair and situated about two miles from the present site. The worshippers were no doubt made up of white settlers and Indians as the latter had been brought into the true faith by the evangelizing efforts of such missionaries as David Brainerd.

Perhaps because of the difficulty of obtaining qualified ministers of the Dutch Reformed faith, the church at Shawnee had become Presbyterian by 1752, when the stone edifice was built. The initials of the men responsible for the building of the church, together with the date, are still to be seen on the foundation of the present structure. They are N.D.P. (Nicholas DePuy), S.D.P. (Samuel DePuy) and A.V.K. (Abraham Van Kampen).

A pencil sketch of the old stone church drawn in 1851 by M.R. DePuy, is still preserved and hangs in the vestibule of the present church, perhaps the oldest relic, and the most valuable is a sounding board which at one time hung above the pulpit; today it rests among the rafters of the church and few people are aware of its existence. Several years ago Henry Ford wanted to buy the board from the church but the deal was never consummated. Eventually, it may be restored to its rightful position by some friend of the church; until then, it remains in the dark confines of the attic, gathering the dust of time.

In the course of a century the Old Stone Church became dilapidated and the members resolved to erect a new building. Its corner stone was laid August 11, 1853. The names of the men responsible for its construction are also to be seen in the foundation: R.R. DePuy, J.D. LaBar, S. Dietrich, F. Bush and A. Bush. Forty years later the church was enlarged by the addition of the present vestibule and pulpit. The area covered by the new pulpit extends over part of the old burial ground belonging to the DePuy family: consequently their stones were embedded in the rear foundation.

The burial ground around the church is also very old. Some of the stones are almost undecipherable but among the first interments was that of Samuel DePuy who died June 15, 1766, and is one of those buried beneath the present pulpit.

Please propose how the owner of this property has PRESERVED, ENHANCED and/or PROMOTED” the historical structure. (Commercial and Non-Profit) extending its life cycle in the community, neighborhood, or the public, including planned future efforts.

As a church, the congregation has continually been involved in the preservation of the property of since 1851 as a Presbyterian Church. Currently the Church Session is investigating both State of Pennsylvania and National Registration.



Remodeled Manse

The narthex and chancel were added in 1893, covering some of the early interments. The first manse was built in 1871. It was destroyed by fire in 1912 and a new manse was erected. The manse has now been remodeled and expanded.



Christian Education Building

A church hall (parish house) was built in 1891.

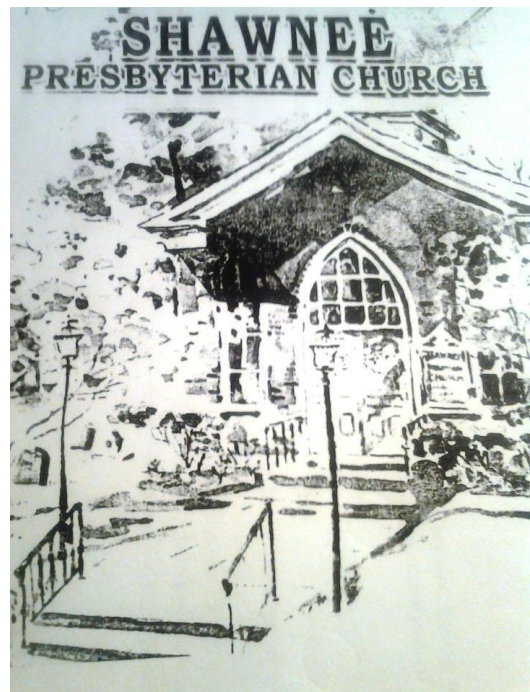
It was extensively remodeled in 1952, the church's bicentennial year and renamed the Christian Education Building.



Remodeled Church Sanctuary, 1952

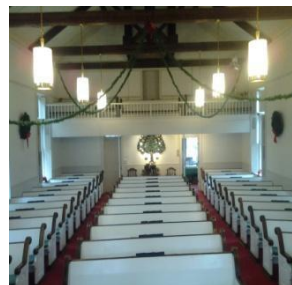
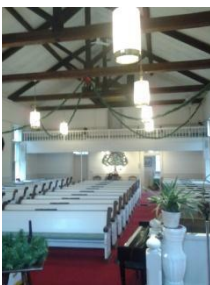
The sanctuary was rededicated in 1952 after renovations returned the interior to a colonial appearance during the bicentennial year.

Features of interest include the hand-hewn beams, the 1752 sounding board (visible about the balcony) and the antique wrought iron candelabras. A drawing of the Old Stone Church, a Civil War period desk and an antique coat rack are in the narthex.

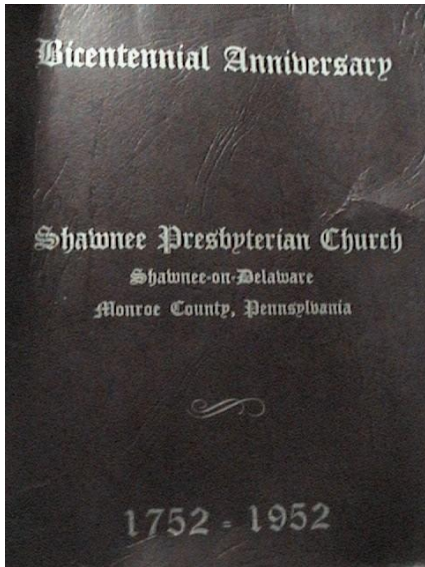




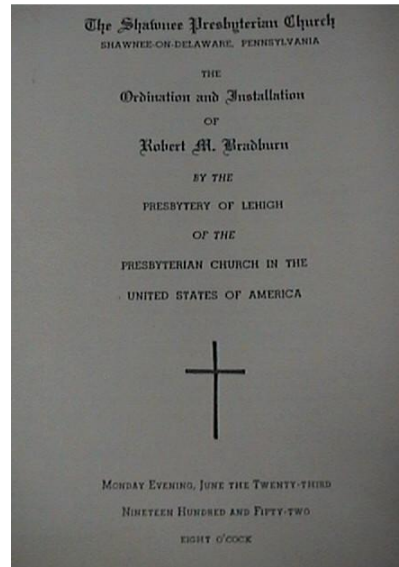
Shawnee Presbyterian Church Images



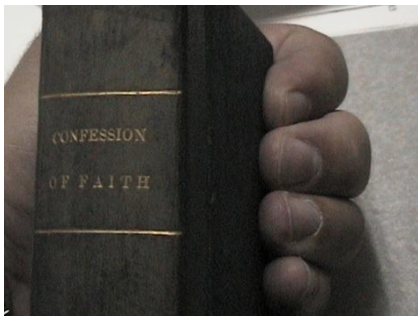
Some Artifacts found in the Cornerstone



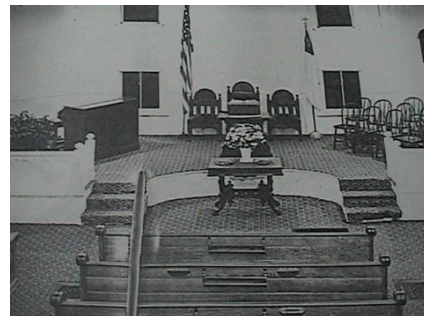
1952 Bicentennial Anniversary Program



Robert M. Bradburn Ordination Program



Confession of Faith from 1852



Interior of Church in 1951



Drawing of Old Stone Church from 1752



Renovated Interior of Church in 1952

Some contributions to Shawnee Church
Samuel Bush - Wesley Bush - Samuel Ed
Robert R. Lippincott August 11th 1853
Subscribers names

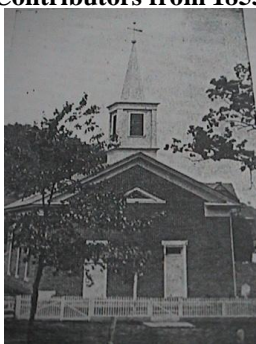
Leopold La Bar	\$50.00
Samuel La Bar	25.00
John C. La Bar	25.00
Samuel La Bar	20.00
John Zimmerman	2.00
John C. Zimmerman	2.00
John Zimmerman	3.00
Joseph W. Zimmerman	5.00
Robert Zimmerman	5.00
Abraham Zimmerman	5.00
John Strunk	5.00
Broadhead & Brothers	50.00
John Hoeker	10.00
Abraham Tanner	2.00
David Shannon	10.00
Valentine Shannon	3.00
James Tanner	2.00
John C. Zimmerman	10.00

Shawnee Presbyterian Church
Shawnee, Delaware, Pennsylvania

Proposed Budget - January 1 to December 31, 1952
 Submitted for your approval by the Board of Trustees

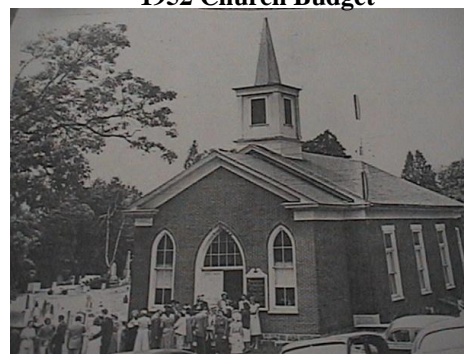
For operating the church, including the salaries of the pastor and several staff of the church's family	\$400.00
For gifts sent throughout the world	100.00
For the care of our cemetery	100.00
For the history of the church	100.00
That gifts sent may be lighted and heated	100.00
That gifts sent may be insured	100.00
That gifts sent may be cleaned	100.00
For repairs to gifts sent	100.00
Our share of the church's mission	100.00
Our share in expense of presbytery and our member	100.00
That our young people may attend camp 25.00	100.00
That our congregation may receive "Prophetic Life"	100.00
For Bulletin, stationery, postage, supplies	100.00
For Miscellaneous Expenses of our Board of Trustees	100.00
For Miscellaneous Expenses in our General Budget	100.00
Total Budget for the Coming Year	\$650.00

List of Church Contributors from 1853

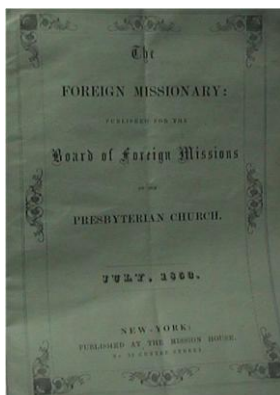


Photograph of Church, 1853

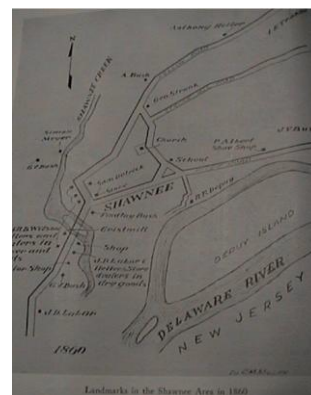
1952 Church Budget



Church with Outdoor Reception, 1952



The Foreign Missionary – July 1853



Shawnee Area Landmarks in 1860



New York Observer_– July 11, 1853



Philadelphia Inquirer_– 1952