Where Have We Been?

In the Spring of 1930, **twenty** God-loving, dedicated people organized the Selinsgrove mission:

Mr. and Mrs. George Troutman, Lottie Troutman, John Troutman, Mr. and Mrs. Victor E. Bogar, Edith Bogar, Luke E. Bogar, Sr., Mr. and Mrs. Foster Krebs, Mrs. Ada Baumbaugh, Harry and Mrs. Hollenbaugh, Vera Hartley, Henry Martin, Daisy Martin, Minnie Reinard, James Bickhart and Mr. and Mrs. George Deckard.

The Rev. C.F. Gunther served as the first pastor of the Mission from 1930-1932, serving Selinsgrove, Hoover’s and Witmer’s First Churches. The first service was held in the Odd Fellows Hall, at the corner of Market and E. Chestnut Streets.

Attendance for the Sunday school, which first met on September 14, 1930, grew in one year from 38 to 87.

Trustees were elected and along with the pastor, served as a building committee. A location for the future church was secured at the corner of 8th and Mill Sts. The church building was dedicated on Sunday, January 25, 1931, at a cost, including the lots, of $17,900. This debt was liquidated at the 25th anniversary celebration.

The bell that is currently in the tower of Christ UMC, on 8th and mill streets, was a gift to the church. This bell is from the original Evangelical church of New Berlin, Pennsylvania, built in 1816. The church’s first pulpit and communion table were built for the new church by one of its charter members. The first pastor’s salary was $10 per week.

The sanctuary on 8th and Mill Streets, was dedicated on January 22, 1961 and it ushered in a new season of worship and ministry for the church. On June 17, 1978, the church celebrated being debt-free with a note-burning ceremony!

Meanwhile, the parsonage purchased with the original lot was found to be housing termites. This was discovered when the pastor went to the basement and the stairs gave way. The present parsonage at 3 Woodruff Avenue was purchased in 1971 at a cost of $36, 500. It was dedicated in July and occupied by Rev. Warren Baker and family in August. The original parsonage was demolished to provide the church with a much needed parking lot.

The original church building has been modified a number of times in its 74 year history. First, in 1960, the current sanctuary and fellowship hall were added to the original building at a cost of $110,596.00. The latest renovation, in the early 1990’s involved completely stripping that inside of the original church building and rebuilding it from the outside in. The renovations made the entire building handicapped accessible and re-distributed rooms for offices, classroom space, etc.

Over the years, the church has been known by several names:

1930 Selinsgrove Mission

1930-1946 First evangelical Church

1946-1968 First Evangelical United Brethren Church

1968-present Christ United Methodist Church

In 1997, a call was heard to provide a Christian pre-school for the community, and **Agapeland Preschool** was born. Today, 4 classes serve 3-5 year olds. The community actually identifies CUMC as “The Agapeland Church” because if it’s wonderful reputation. The preschool is also an excellent outreach, since most of them are not yet affiliated with Christ UMC.

Other ministries that are familiar to CUMC: music and choirs, **local and global** missions including Kidsgrove, the local playground. GYTTE mission in Tlanculpican, Mexico has been supported by CUMC for close to two decades, where members have joined work teams to build homes, classrooms and lives. **Health and Welfare** ministries connect us to those in need. Providing holiday food baskets, emergency funds and assistance during natural disasters such as recent flooding, are just a few examples.

**Age level ministries** reach across the generations. God’s grown-ups provides our older adults with opportunities to learn, love and serve. Youth and Children’s ministries include Sunday school, youth group, confirmation and camping opportunities. We value Christian discipleship for adults. Small Groups are led in homes and in our ministry space and helps members to grow in relationship with one another and in love with God.

In (date), CUMC purchased 18.5 acres of land on 22 near Amato’s Pizza. In (date), an outdoor worship center was constructed, and a parking lot was created. CUMC intends this to be the future site for ministry.

On May 4, 2015, fire struck CUMC, 429 North 8th Street. The fire was deemed electrical and accidental and caused much devastation to the education building, water and smoke damage to fellowship hall and sanctuary. Susquehanna University has offered for us to have worship and Sunday school at Weber Chapel through the summer of 2015.

On July 1, 2015, it was approved by Administrative council to enter into a one year lease for office, preschool and possibly worship at 570 South High Street, Selinsgrove. From there, we will begin to establish future ministry and continue to point people towards relationship with Jesus Christ.

On Tuesday, September 8, 2015 the Administrative Board approved the following resolution for the Church to consider at charge conference on Wednesday, October 7, 2015:

**“Resolved Christ United Methodist Church of Selinsgrove, Incorporated, will construct a church building and associated infrastructure on its Route 522 property using available insurance and building funds; and borrowing no more than $850,000.”** This resolution was passed.

On December 20, 2016, CUMC administrative board brought the following resolution to a Church conference vote, **“The Administrative Board & Board of Trustees of Christ United Methodist Church, Selinsgrove, PA, Inc., hereby recommend to the charge conference of Christ UMC the following: That Christ UMC will sell the 429 North 8th Street Property, as is, to Snyder County Coalition for Kids for $150,000.00 subject to the settlement being completed on or before 60 days as of December 20, 2015 CUMC Charge Conference Date.”**

Snyder County Coalition for Kids intends to turn the 429 North 8th street property into a Regional Engagement Center (REC) which will provide after school programming and tutoring, house “Meals for Seals” packing parties and garden coordination, meeting space for youth groups, health and wellness classes from Evangelical Community Hospital and Geisinger Health System and schedule activities for weekend and cancelled school days.

This offer has been legally finalized. Rev. Ryan Gephart gathered CUMC leaders and the building Committee, led by Ken Estep, initiated the construction of the new church on the 522 property. It is also right to mention that in January 2017, CUMC leadership began to function under one Administrative Board.

Construction began in the fall of 2016. In March of 2017, volunteer teams through the United Methodist Church from all over the country came to help us complete the construction. The volunteer leadership teams were led by Gary Bunch. Construction is expected to be complete, April 2017.

We have ended our lease at 570 South High Street on October 6, 2017, and moved to 145 Disciple Drive, Selinsgrove on September 30, 2017.

God is doing a new thing in this church and we are trying, with everything in us, to be faithful.

This is a historical sketch of the ways that God has been faithful in and through the life of this congregation. Together, we are thankful for our history, excited about our present, and joyfully anticipating our future.

We live by faith, not by sight. 2 Corinthians 5:7

TRUST GOD.