

Portsmouth Daily Times Progress Edition Article
Second Presbyterian Church
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Second Presbyterian Church, 801 Waller Street, recently celebrated the first anniversary of the formation of Morningstar Presbyterian Parish as a collaborative effort with First Presbyterian Church. Through the joint parish, the two churches share the Rev. Stanley N. Webster, MAT, D.Min., as pastor. A Parish Council, consisting of three members from each church, guides parish organizational decisions; the parish format has led the two churches into new opportunities for shared ministries with both congregations in the past year.

Second Presbyterian Church's worship service is scheduled for Sunday mornings from 9:30 – 10:30 a.m. Sunday School for all ages is at 10:55 a.m. All members and guests are invited to participate in fellowship during a Coffee Hour between the church service and Sunday School.

2007 marks the accomplishment of a long-time goal for Second Presbyterian Church with the installation of a stair lift providing accessibility for people with disabilities and making possible attendance at meetings, receptions, church dinners and other special events held in the lower level dining and meeting rooms. Additional improvements to the church's main dining room have been completed recently.

The present Second Presbyterian Church building was dedicated in March, 1935, after fire destroyed portions of earlier structures in 1895, 1896 and 1933. The original church was built in 1875. Especially notable are the church sanctuary's stained glass windows created in the style of great church windows of the 13th century. The pattern of the windows follows those of the famous Cathedral of Chartres in France. The church chapel features beautiful Tiffany stained

glass windows, saved from the fire that destroyed the church in 1933. The church sanctuary also houses a custom-built Kilgen Organ of 2,555 pipes.

The mission of Second Presbyterian Church is to individually and collectively seek to become more Christ-like through faith, responsible stewardship and worship participation. An outstanding part of worship services, sacraments and other special presentations at the church is choral and organ music directed by Stanley E. Workman, B.A., M.M. An adult Chancel Choir, as well as Seraphim and Cherubim children's choirs, plays a major role in the regular worship service and often performs exceptional programs for the Easter and Christmas seasons such as *The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols* with full orchestra and chorus composed of church and community members. Youth dramatizations like "It's Cool in the Furnace" and "The Very Important Christmas Pageant," presented during worship service in the past year, are typical of the church's music and Christian Education programs for young people.

Second Presbyterian Church's Christian Education goes on all year with Sunday School for adults and youth, Bible School, song practices and presentations, the worship service's children's story time, acolyte participation, church camp attendance and community outreach programs. In June, 2007, Second Presbyterian Church children will attend Bible School at First Presbyterian Church, under the direction of Betty Kennedy. In addition to summer church camp offered by the Presbytery, high school students can attend the Youth Triennium 2007 at Purdue University in Indiana.

A Bible Class, taught by Rev. Webster, meets on Tuesdays at 11 a.m. and the Women's Circle meets monthly for study, fellowship and service. An active Women's Association

provides supporting services for various projects and missions and sponsors events such as the Presbyterian Women's Birthday Dinner, the annual Election Day Luncheon and an annual Christmas Tea. The group has just completed renovation of the church parlor.

God's Pantry, a program conducted by the Second Presbyterian Church Deacons and directed by Chris Liles, provides nutritious emergency food to neighbors and community residents in need. Open from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. each Wednesday, the format for God's Pantry is on a choice basis where people may select preferred food supplies. In 2006 the pantry provided food for more than 85,000 meals.

The Second Presbyterian Outreach Committee, which will assist the Deacons in finding funding for God's Pantry this year, plans and carries out mission and outreach projects. The Committee is currently planning a presentation of the Thai Dance Troupe, college-age performers from Thailand, on April 25 as a unique cultural experience for the community. Open to the public, the performance is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. at the church. Admission is free; a goodwill offering will be collected to help defray the group's expenses.

In 2006 for the first time, the Outreach Committee participated in Operation Christmas Child, a project of Samaritan's Purse spearheaded locally by Bigelow Church.

In addition to the Rev. Webster and Music Director Workman, the Second Presbyterian Church staff includes Evelyn Hughes, secretary; Jerry Wheeler, custodian; Gladys Reynolds, treasurer; Joanne Pack and Geneva Varney, assistant treasurers, and Polly Bowman, enrichment leader.