



North Carolina Presbyterian Historical Society

Summer, 2023 Newsletter

Fall Meeting: Saturday, October 14 at

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WEST RALEIGH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, RALEIGH NC

West Raleigh was chartered in May 1927 to serve over two hundred students and about 40 professors and other employees of NC State. The majority of the first 60 plus members came from First Presbyterian. Two of those visionaries were the much-loved professor of English, Dr. T.P. Harrison, and long-time Dean of Students, E.L. Cloyd.



Sanctuary WRPC

The congregation met in buildings on NC State's campus until a sanctuary was built at the church's current location—land that only a decade earlier had been part of the old state fairgrounds—was built.

The current sanctuary was dedicated in 1952, and the education building was built in 1960.

West Raleigh has long had a concern for issues of equality and justice. In 1963, the Session voted that race would never be considered in requests for membership. Around the same time, West Raleigh's pastor and elders visited all restaurants on nearby Hillsborough St. and persuaded them to open their businesses to persons of all races.

In 1968, the church expanded its kindergarten into an accredited multi-racial, multicultural child care center—the first in Raleigh, and the first state-qualified day care in Raleigh. West Raleigh was also the first Presbyterian church in Raleigh to elect and ordain a female elder, Sibyl Pierce. The Rev. Harriet Isbell became the first female

minister in an installed position in a Presbyterian church in Raleigh when West Raleigh called her as associate pastor.

In 2014, West Raleigh became an **Earth Care Congregation**, committing itself to taking specific actions to care for creation. In 2020, West Raleigh became a **Matthew 25** Congregation, committing itself to building congregational vitality, dismantling structural racism and eradicating systemic poverty. And in 2021, West Raleigh became a **More Light** Congregation, committing itself to full inclusion and welcome of all God's people. As West Raleigh approaches its centennial, the congregation eagerly anticipates the ways in which God will call the church to serve and to witness.

HISTORIC OBERLIN VILLAGE TURNER HOUSE MUSEUM

Oberlin was no ordinary freedmen town, but an antebellum free Black enclave that grew into an African American municipality built away from White supervision. Oberlin provided a legacy of freedom and land ownership and a Black



settlement with home ownership, artisanal pride and an irreproachable reputation. The Turner House highlights achievements within the Oberlin community. Thanks to Kathy Huffstetler for organizing the tour.

A tour of the historic Turner House Museum in Oberlin Village will finish the autumn tour.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING April 14, 2023

After dinner at Assembly Inn, Montreat, NC, the Board of Directors held a brief meeting. Sam Martin, president, opened the meeting with prayer. The board confirmed that the fall meeting of the society will be held on Saturday, October 14, 2023, at West Raleigh Presbyterian Church, 27 Horne Street, Raleigh, NC 27607.

The Dudley books are being distributed among churches celebrating historic anniversaries. Sam Martin is visiting these churches during the year as close as possible to the date of the anniversary. This fall he will visit Grove Presbyterian Church, which was established in 1736 in Kenansville, NC. Next spring the Presbyterian church in Washington, NC will celebrate its anniversary. Churches along the North Carolina/South Carolina state line are among some of the oldest and should be considered for a visit. Doug Kelly and Don McLeod know those churches well.

The date for the next Board meeting has not yet been determined. John Myhre closed the meeting with prayer.

NCPHS HISTORY AWARD

At the spring 2023 meeting of the NCPS, Lois Stickell, the talented author of a monumental book: *200 Years in the Heart of Charlotte. A History of First Presbyterian Church of Charlotte* (privately printed, 355 pp, 2021) was recognized. The work is well researched, carefully documented, and lavishly illustrated. It provides a comprehensive history of the church from its founding to the present day in peace and wars, economic prosperity and depressions, all in the midst of a village transformed into a great city. The book is an uplifting story of a flagship Presbyterian church situated in the urban core of the Old North State. It is the story of a church that resisted the attractions of suburbia and remained as a lamp of hope in a busy metropolis "where cross the crowded ways of life."

Church history books published during 2023 and printed pamphlets issued during 2023 are eligible

for recognition at the Society's spring 2024 meeting. A copy of a book or pamphlet on the subject of North Carolina church history should be sent to the Society's Awards Chair: Peter G. Fish, 1006 Urban Avenue, Durham, NC 27701.

REPORT ON THE SPRING TOUR: EXPLORING OUR HERITAGE IN MONTREAT, SWANNANOVA AND ASHEVILLE

April 14 -15, 2023

By Flo Durway

The NCPHS spring meeting featured visits to the Presbyterian Heritage Center and the Church of the Prodigal Son in Montreat, Warren Wilson College, in Swannanoa, and First Presbyterian Church in Asheville. With Assembly Inn in Montreat as our base for meals and overnight accommodations, approximately 20 people attended the weekend event.



The afternoon of April 14 was spent at The Presbyterian Heritage Center. The Heritage Center focuses on "Honoring the Past, Informing the Present, and Influencing the Future," according to Ron Vinson, retiring Executive Director. After closing the Historical Foundation in 2006, the Heritage Center opened in 2008. "It highlights the history of Montreat & the Swannanoa Valley as well as the heritage of the Presbyterian and reformed Church and its worldwide mission."

The Center houses information on 16-18 denominations, 30,000 to 35,000 books, pictures, artifacts, and wood carvings by Rev. Dr. John Mack Walker. It creates detailed exhibits showing the involvement of Presbyterians throughout the history of the United States. It also hosts conferences such as an upcoming Missionary Conference and frequent C.S. Lewis Conferences. Examples of historical pieces include a 1789 letter from the 1st General Assembly to George Washington, the NC Synod reports from the 1830's and 1840's, and a 1743 magazine of Christian propaganda, which was the first magazine published in America.

Our next stop was at **The Chapel of the Prodigal Son**, just down the hill from the Presbyterian Heritage Center. The Chapel of the Prodigal Son houses a fresco which is 16 feet long and 17 ½ feet wide. The fresco was painted by Ben Long, and the chapel was designed to complement and focus on the fresco.



Following breakfast the morning of April 15, we caravanned to **Warren Wilson College**. We were welcomed by Professor Jeff Keith in the



Department of Global Studies. Dr. Keith gave a lecture on the history of Warren Wilson College and led us on a tour of the grounds. Started by missionaries in the presbytery in 1894, the college emphasizes academics, work, service, and engagement. Students work the farm, grow the food, cook and serve it. Working with the Cherokee tribe, the students and faculty have re-sanctified a Cherokee grave site found on the back of the property. They have found artifacts on the property that are 10,000 years old. The Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church was built by the students.

From Warren Wilson College, we went to **First Presbyterian Church in Asheville**, where former pastor The Rev. Dr. Pete Peery gave us an overview on the history of the church. The church was begun in 1794 and has weathered the cultural and societal struggles of the US throughout the years. Working to become inclusive, it started by reaching out to other churches farther west and started the Synod of Appalachia, which included churches in eastern Tennessee, southwestern Virginia, and western N.C. It has changed its architecture along with its theology and is now a Gothic structure.

A boxed lunch at the church concluded the spring meeting of the society.



Group photo on the patio at First Presbyterian Asheville

IN MEMORY

Rev. Dr. John R. Goodman, Past President of the North Carolina Presbyterian Historical Society, passed away on August 8, 2023, after a period of declining health, in the Sunnyside Retirement Community Healthcare Center near Harrisonburg, Virginia. John was known for his strong Presbyterian faith, his kindness, his great leadership ability, and a variety of talents. The NCPHS has lost a great friend.

John was born in Laurinburg, North Carolina, to Rev. Frank LeRoy Goodman and Edna Walton Goodman, while they were serving the Old Laurel Hill Presbyterian Church. He came into the world about a week before the attack on Pearl Harbor. As a "Preacher's Kid," John moved around and graduated from Churchville High School in Virginia.

John served in the United States Army as First Lieutenant at Fort Johnson, Louisiana in the Adjutant General Corps.

Always a loyal and engaged alum, John graduated from Davidson College with a BA in Philosophy. He earned Master of Divinity and his Master of Theology from Union Theological Seminary. Rev. Goodman then earned his DMin from McCormick Theological Seminary.

John's service to Jesus Christ and the Presbyterian Church led him to pastorates/associates at Spring Hill PC in Virginia, First Presbyterian of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, Lydia Robinson PC of Charleston, West Virginia;

associate executive presbyter for Presbytery of West Virginia; and John retired after serving as Executive General Presbyter for the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina. In retirement, John continued to serve as director of the Bladen Parish in Elizabethtown, North Carolina, and filled many pulpits to preach the gospel in south-eastern North Carolina and elsewhere.

While John served in West Virginia, his musical talent was realized as a founding member of the Presby Pickers, where his abilities to play the dulcimer led to performances and recordings. He always enjoyed reuniting with his fellow musicians occasionally, and he favored the NCPHS with a performance at Warrenton Presbyterian Church at the Fall meeting in 2011.

Surviving John are his wife, Laura "Tee" Hamilton Goodman of Rockingham, Virginia; two children, John Hamilton Goodman of Weaverville, North Carolina and Katherine "Katie" Le (Quoc) of Reston, Virginia; two grandchildren, Megan and Brianna Le; two nieces and a nephew. John was predeceased by his brother, Frank LeRoy Goodman, Jr.

Services were held at 2 p.m. Wednesday, August 16 in Loch Willow Presbyterian Church in Churchville, officiated by Rev. Reed Hopkins and Rev. April Cranford. Burial was in Bethel Presbyterian Church cemetery in Staunton, Virginia. In lieu of flowers, memorials should be sent to the Sunnyside Communities Fellowship Fund, 600 University Boulevard, Suite L, Harrisonburg, VA 22801 (<https://www.sunnyside.cc>). Condolences should be sent to bearfuneralhome.com. Well done, good and faithful servant.

A LETTER FROM THE PHC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE

Greetings from Montreat!

You may have read in our summer *Herald* newsletter, Executive Director Ron Vinson has announced that he will be stepping down as of December 31, 2023, after 15 years leading the Presbyterian Historical Center (PHC).

After people hear that Ron is leaving, they often remark, "He is going to be hard to replace." In reality, Ron cannot be replaced. Instead, we will find a successor to lead us into a new chapter of the PHC. Ron's gifts and talents have made the PHC what it is today. And we are incredibly grateful for what he has done. But he feels it is time to slow down, do some consulting, play golf, and simply relax with his wife, Ann.

This next step for the PHC is where you can help. Do you know anyone who might have the leadership abilities and experience to be the next PHC Executive Director? We are doing a national search, but oftentimes the most effective recruitment approach is talking to friends and networking. You are not only a friend of the PHC but are probably a great networker as well. We have attached the position description for the job and would greatly appreciate your thoughts on qualified individuals who can step in at this most important time for the PHC.

If you have suggestions or know someone we should talk to, write us at search@phcmontreat.org or call Mason Blake at 321-720-8989. We promise to keep you apprised of our progress.

Thank you for being our partner, in so many ways.

God's blessings,

PHC Executive Director Search Committee

**Executive Director
Presbyterian Heritage Center
Montreat, North Carolina**

Position Status: Part time, 25-30 hours per week

Salary Range: \$44,000 - \$67,000

The Opportunity

This unique opportunity is to lead the Presbyterian Heritage Center (PHC) into a new chapter, providing an educational atmosphere that creatively presents its threefold focus: the history of Presbyterianism and Reformed theology; the history of global Presbyterian mission; and the history of Montreat. One of the exciting opportunities for the PHC's new leader will be to make and keep the mission relevant to changing demographics while fulfilling its purpose of Honoring the Past, Informing the Present, and Influencing the Future.

This position reports to and coordinates with a dedicated volunteer board of directors. The board seeks someone with passion for the PHC's mission who will provide an enjoyable and meaningful experience for each visitor and those who participate in its programs and outreach services.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Provide oversight of all aspects of PHC operations
- Recruit, supervise, and evaluate paid staff
- Train and mentor staff on an ongoing basis
- Provide curator oversight of the library, collections, exhibits, archives, artifacts, and research
- Lead the development of new exhibits, events and other activities to support the PHC mission
- Ensure the development of positive relationships with the local community, donors, foundations and Presbyterian/Reformed churches and organizations
- Speak to various groups about the work of the PHC
- Work with the CFO and board on financial and budget oversight
- Cultivate donor participation, community relationships, and funding sources
- Be the "face" of the PHC

Abilities/Skills/Ideal Experience

- Creative skills and an active imagination
- Ability to work well with others
- Management skills/experience (at least 10 years)
- Knowledge of Presbyterian/Reformed faith
- Significant technological and research skills
- Knowledge and love of history
- Written and oral communication expertise
- Master's degree or equivalent experience in a relevant field

The Setting

Montreat is situated in a cove of the Blue Ridge Mountains, approximately 15 miles outside of Asheville. This small community is an idyllic mountain village, offering peace and respite to its residents and guests. Founded in 1897 as a retreat center, it continues in that role but has grown into a residential community, vacation haven, home to Montreat College, a hiker's paradise, and so much more.

If interested in this opportunity, please send a cover letter and resume to search@phcmontreat.org. The PHC is an equal opportunity employer.

North Carolina Presbyterian Historical Society
2023 Autumn Tour
West Raleigh Presbyterian Church
27 Horne Street, Raleigh, NC

Saturday, October 14, 2023

10:00 AM	Registration, coffee & carbs, and social time
11:00 AM	Welcome –Sam Martin
11:15 AM	History of West Raleigh Presbyterian – Ann Myhre
12:00 noon	Lunch and Business Announcements
12:45 PM	Introduction to the Turner House Museum – Kathy Huffstetler
1:00 PM	Tour of the Turner House Museum (5 minute drive)

Registration Fee \$25.00, includes morning coffee & carbs, and lunch. Please send the form below and a check (payable to NCPHS) by **October 7** to: NCPHS, P.O. Box 20804, Raleigh, NC 27619-0804. If you have questions, contact our Program Chairman Don McLeod, donaldcmcleod@gmail.com, or (910) 695-5550.

Registration Form for Fall Meeting, October 14, 2023

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ **Email:** _____

Registrations: _____ @ \$ 25.00 = \$ _____ Transportation needed? _____

Dues if included (Individual \$15; Family \$20; Individual Life Membership, \$125): \$ _____

Total enclosed: \$ _____ Please send this form **by October 7** with a check (payable to NCPHS) to NCPHS, P.O. Box 20804, Raleigh, NC 27619-0804.

If you can do so, please put the following announcement in your church bulletin or newsletter:

**The North Carolina Presbyterian Historical Society's 2023 Fall Meeting is at
West Raleigh Presbyterian Church, on Saturday, October 14.**

REMINDER

If you haven't paid your 2023 dues yet, please send them in. The form is on p. 7.

**** Individual \$15; Family \$20; Individual Life Membership, \$125 ****

NORTH CAROLINA PRESBYTERIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 20804
RALEIGH, NC 27619-0804

Fall Tour 2023: Saturday, October 14
West Raleigh Presbyterian Church
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