

Dover First Baptist Church History

Any institution that has survived 250 years in this world deserves a serious investigation. When that institution is the Church of Jesus Christ we can say with confidence that the church has a message it has sought long and hard for the world to hear. That church also shall have a story worthy of listening to or reading. The story of Dover First Baptist Church goes back beyond its 250 years. Like every true Christian church all our roots go back over two thousand years ago. We go back to the cross on a Hill called Mt. Calvary to a very special man. In the words of the great historian of the first century Flavius Josephus – “if lawful to call him a man”. He died for the sins of the whole world.

He rose again in mighty power and glory and stirred the hearts and minds of his selected apostles and disciples to go to the four corners of the world and preach the message of the gospel.

Those disciples we are told in scripture turn the world upside down for Christ. The message of Christ and eternal took grass roots and spread through Judea, Samaria and to the uttermost parts of this world. One by one the message spread through the years and down through the centuries... That message came to the new world across the Atlantic on many ships.

One such ship that came to America was called the Mayflower that landed in Plymouth Rock. Aboard that ship was a man by the name of John Alden. William Bradford wrote, in his History of Plymouth Plantation: "*John Alden was hired for a cooper [barrel maker] at Southampton where the ship [Mayflower] supplies. He also was an assistant for the Plymouth colony for many years, and was deputy governor for two years.*" John Alden married Priscilla Mullin's. John and Priscilla Alden probably have the largest number of descendants of any Mayflower passenger, among those descendants are Samuel Waldo according to the "Ferris Family Genealogy."

- Pastor Anthony Bacino

The Beginnings of a New Church & Elder Samuel Waldo

For us who are living today it is not easy to go back two hundred and fifty years and visualize the Church and those who carried on in those early days. And yet as we read the old records we see in vision a sturdy people, of profound faith, with high ideals of honesty, sincerity and spirituality.

Our regret, in writing this historical sketch, is that the material found in those ancient records is so meager. We have done our utmost to give, as correctly as possible, the names of those who served as pastors and officers in the Church from its beginning until now. If there are omissions, we are sure the readers will be lenient with us, for the records are so incomplete.

It has not been easy to arrange this sketch into periods of activity. We can only speak of the seeming outstanding work of the Church under the leadership of certain pastors. The significance and value of every man's work can only be told in Eternity.

The early records of the Church were evidently kept on loose papers, for we find on the first page of the oldest of the four Church books in our possession the following inscription:

“THE BAPTIST CHURCH OF CHRIST,

in Pawlings Precinct, Dutchess County and Province of New York; being met at a Church Meeting, January the 4th Domini, 1776 Considering the irregularity of the Church Records being kept on loose

papers; Voted that Samuel Waldo Elder, and Brother Timother Badcock, should collect and transcribe them, into this Book.”

The first record in this old book is the call for a Church organization and reads as follows:

“**BEEKMAN’S PRECINCT**, November 8th, 1757,

In answer to a Request from this place a meeting was called, and the nature of a Church Covenant opened by William Marsh a Baptist Minister, in the Jarseys, and then under him as Moderator we whose names are subscribed to this Covenant told our Experience of the Grace of God, bestowed on us, and our Desire, and Willingness to be in Church State, and satisfaction with one another on the Ninth Instant in a solemn manner signed, being all Baptized and were received by the Above said William Marsh, and by him declared to be a Gospel Church of Jesus Christ.

It is unfortunate that the names of those who constituted that first Church are not given in this record. If signed upon the original document, the names were omitted when transcribed in the new book. But we do know from the records of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, that when the Churches were reporting on the number of constituent members, this Church reported eleven. We have examined very carefully the list of members received, and in checking this, as recorded on the Church books, we find mentioned in the activities of the early Church the names of the following who insert names:

It will also be of interest to us to today to have the original covenant of the Church as adopted at that time. It is as follows:

THE SOLEMN COVENANT of the Baptist Church in Beekmans Precinct in York Government. "We who desire to walk together in the fear of the Lord do through the Assistance of his Grace profess our deep and sincere Humility for all our Transgressions and we do also solemnly in the presence of God & of each other in the sense of our own unworthiness give up ourselves to the Lord in a Church State according to the Apostolical Practice and Constitution *2 Cor. 6 Chap. 16, 17 Verses*, that he may be our God and we may be his People through the everlasting Covenant of his free Grace in which alone we hope to be accepted by him through his blessed son Jesus Christ who we take to be our high Priest to justify and Sanctify us and Prophetto teach us and to be subject to him as our Lawgiver and the King of Saints and to Conform to all his holy Laws and Ordinances for our growth, establishment and consolation that we may be an Holy Spouse unto him and serve him in our generation and wait for his second coming as our glorious Bride-Groom being fully satisfied in the way of Church Communion and the truth of grace in some good measure in one another’s Spirits we do solemnly join ourselves together in holy Union and fellowship humbly submitting ourselves to the discipline of the Gospel and all holy Duties required of a People in such a Spiritual Relation.

1st. We do promise and engage to walk in all holiness, Godliness, Humility, and brotherly Love as much as in us lies to render our Communion pleasing to God comfortable to ourselves and delightful to the rest of the People of God.

2nd. We do promise to watch over each other’s Conversation & not to suffer sin upon another as far as God shall discover it to us and to stir one another up to love and good Works to warn, reprove, rebuke and Admonish one another with Meekness according to the Rule in God’s word in that Case.

3rd. We promise in a particular manner to pray for one another and for the increase of the Church and for the presence of God in it, the pouring out his spirit upon it and for his protection over it for his own Glory.

4th. We do promise to bear one another's burdens and to cleave to one another and to have a fellow feeling with one another in all Conditions both outward and inward as God in his providence shall cast us into.

5th. We do promise to bear with one another's weaknesses and infirmities with much tenderness not discovering them to any without nor to any within the Church unless it be according to Christ's Rule left us in that case.

6th. We do promise to strive together for the Truth of the Gospel and Purity, Godliness and endeavor to keep the Unity of the spirit in the Bonds of Peace.

7th. We do promise to meet together on Lords Days and at other times as the Lord shall give us Opportunity to serve and glorify God in Ways of his Worship to Edify one another and to Contrive the good of his Church.

8th. We do promise according to our Ability to Communicate to our Elder or Pastor God having ordained that they that preach the Gospel shall Live of the Gospel.

These and all other holy Gospel Duties we humbly submit ourselves unto promising and proposing to perform not in our own strength being sensible of our own Weakness but in the Strength and by the Power of Almighty God whose we are and whom we do Desire to Serve to whom be glory forever and ever ... Amen."

The following items in the same record really completed the organization, and the Church begins its work. You will note in these items as well as those given above, that we have endeavored to make a perfect copy of the original writing, as to spelling and punctuation:

PARTICULAR VOTES, RECORDED:

1757, Dec. 1: It was voted the first Thursday in every Month, shall be our Church Meeting in Course. Also it was voted that we are free for any Improvement of Publick Gifts among us, let their Denomination be what it will, provided they are under Suitable Recommendation. Also it was voted that Ebenezer Cole keep the Church Records.

1758, Jan. 4: At a Church meeting Brother Samuel Waldo was chosen our Elder. And it was voted that Brother Ebenezer Cole, take the Care to send to Elder Wm Marsh, for assistance in Ordination: and to Elder Milard, or some other Meet Person: as Elder Marsh thinks proper, to assist him in the Work.

May 25: Brother Samuel Waldo was ordained our Elder; by Elder Millard, and Elder Marsh.

Sept: At a Conference Meeting, it was voted to build a Meeting House, 30 Feet Wide, and 40 long. The Church-Committee that was chose to accomplish the Meeting House, was Pelitiah Ward, Manasseh Martin, Benj'n Sealy, Ebenezer Cole, and Eliab Wilcox." The Church now organized, a pastor chosen and ordained, and a clerk chosen, began its work with evangelistic fervor, as evidenced by the fact that new members were added to the Church.

On Sept. 7, 1764: Ten members were dismissed to organize a Church in the "upper end of the Oblong" which is now Quaker Hill. The names of these ten were as follows: John Grommon, John Branson, Martin Elmer, Damaris Grommon, John Truesdale, John Millerton, Abel Sprague, Obed Harvey, Marcy Hervey, Sarah Norton

The Church sent Elder Waldo, Deacon Elliott, Deacon Waldo, John Palmer and Eliab Wilcox to “constitute them a Church by themselves”, but this Church soon ceased to exist. *Deacon Waldo it appears by the records and certain information is Samuel’s brother Elder Waldo was said to have been a powerful preacher, and an influential man. ***Elder Samuel Waldo** was born in Norwich, Connecticut on September 18, 1731, but was brought up in Mansfield in that state. He married Nov. 21, 1754, probably at Mansfield, Hannah, daughter of Samuel Waters of New Fairfield, Ct. At the age of eighteen he professed his faith as a Baptist. His parents belonged to a Presbyterian Church but became Baptists after this son united with the Baptist Association.

*Mr. Waldo’s ministry was distinguished for nothing so much as piety and success. Those who were long acquainted with him, speak of him in the highest terms of approbation, as a man of an unspotted life, of a sound mind, unusually edifying as a preacher, affable and engaging in every circle, skillful in the discipline of his church, remarkable and inimitable in the government of his family; in a word, in him was united every qualification, necessary for a plain, profitable, and successful minister of the cross.

Seven children out of nine he had the happiness of receiving into his church before his death. One of his sons is now resident in Georgetown, South Carolina.

* *“A Generation History of the Baptists”* by David Benedict

In 1784 he was Moderator of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, of which the Church was a member.

*This was the first Baptist Association in America. It was the fourth in the order of their size of the twenty-six Churches then comprising that Association. Much might be said of Elder Waldo, if time and space permitted. There was no parsonage at that time, and so he lived on a farm said to be the farm now owned by Charles A. Hoag, and occupied by the Shade Richards family.

In “A History of Dutchess County”, written by Philip H. Smith in 1877, we find many interesting incidents in the lives of the people who lived then, and we pass two of them on to you:

It is said that George Washington, when he evacuated Boston, passed with a portion of his command, by a road leading west from Wing Station. His troops encamped for the night on the hill across the brook west from Philip Hoag’s on both sides of the road. Washington took up his quarters in the Philip Hoag’s house, which house was built by Henry Dutcher in 1751.

Elder Waldo, who lived nearby, carried all the milk produced by several cows, into camp, together with other provisions and distributed them to the soldiers; told them where he lived and invited them to come to his house and get whatever they wanted to eat. Many of them did so, and partook of his generosity and to their credit be it said, nothing about the premises was in the least disturbed by them, while a family named Elliott who lived on the Philip Hoag farm were less free with their provisions and went to the officers requesting that the soldiers be entirely kept off of their grounds. The result was that not a chicken, nor any other eatable was left about the premises, the troops making a clean sweep of everything the Elliott’s possessed.

“It is related of Elder Waldo that on one occasion he went to the store where he saw some coffee beans, an article but little known. The Elder enquired what they were and concluded to buy a quart or so. He took them home, put the whole quantity in the coffee pot, and proceeded to cook them as he would field beans, but after boiling several hours, found they were as hard as ever. Finally his patience being exhausted, he took them back to the store in disgust, saying they were worthless, he could never boil them soft.”

Elder Waldo was twenty-six years old when he was in his ministry in Dover First Baptist Church, where he continued his labors with great success until his death, a period of more than thirty-five years. His was a fruitful ministry, for during his pastorate at least two hundred forty-four members were added to the Church, which number did not include Charter Members. His name has been honored by the local Grange, which is named for him. “Verily he rests from his labors and his works do follow him”. His ashes and those of his beloved

companion Hannah, repose in the old cemetery near the site of the Red Meeting House, where so much of his ministerial labors were performed. Inscribed upon his tomb stone is the following:

*“In memory of Elder Samuel Waldo, who departed this life Sept. 10th. A. D. 1793
in the Sixty Second year of his age:*

*A Dying Preacher I have been
To Dying hearers such as you
Tho dead a Preacher still I am
To such as come my grave to view
Let this to you a warning be
That quickly you must follow me.”*

The tombstone of Mrs. Waldo bears this: *“In memory of Mrs. Hannah, relict of Rev. Samuel Waldo who departed this life Feb. 4, 1818 in the 88th year of her age.”* Her epitaph to her credit is taken from Proverbs 3:17 – *“All her ways were ways of pleasantness, And all her paths were peace.”*

It appears that according to the first book of minute’s page 38 and the 3rd entry that Elder Samuel Waldo served the Church until August 1793. The entry reads as follows:

August 3, 1794: *“Voted that a subscription be made for the family of Elder Waldo deceased for his last service, being about 8 months of a year, and to be attended to tomorrow ~”*

Some of the descendants of Elder Waldo are living today. Of these, Charles A. Hoag, Elihu Hoag of Poughkeepsie, and Edith. Hoag of Dover Plains, are great-great-great-grandchildren. Still another generation are the children of Mr. and Mrs. Elihu Hoag, whose names follow: Sanford Hoag, Mrs. Elvin Sedore, Dudley Hoag, Mrs. Elmer Wyman, Mrs. Erroll Hufcutt, Mrs. Henry Hufcutt, Mrs. James Benson, all of Dover Plains, and Miss Ethel Hoag of Poughkeepsie. Harry Dutcher and Airs. Albert Roebling are also descendants of Elder Waldo.

First Church Edifice – Red Meeting House

The first Church edifice, erected in 1758, was known as the Red Meeting House, and, according to Philip H. Smith’s “History”, was for a number of years the only place of worship in what is now the Town of Dover. All contributed to its erection irrespective of Church or creed, and it was a liberal Church, according to the records already given, *“Voted that we are free for any improvement of publick gifts among us, let their denomination be what it will, provided they are under suitable recommendation.”*

Of course, Elder Waldo was a Baptist, ordained by two Baptist Ministers, and the Church belonged successively to the Philadelphia Baptist Association, the Shaftsbury Association, the Danbury Association, the Union Association and, since 1842, the Dutchess Association.

*Finally the church belonged to American Baptist Association until 1989 when the Congregation voted to become an Independent Baptist Church. More will be said about this as we come to the 21st century.

The Red Meeting House stood on the brow of the hill, on the Cemetery grounds, where the old road passed at that time. The road has been changed and is the State Road Route 55 running in front of the present Church building. This Red Meeting House was evidently in use until about 1832, when a movement was inaugurated in the community for the establishment of a union Church building.

Dover Union Meeting House & Current Church Building

We have found the original document covering the resolutions, agreements and constitution by which such Union Church should be built and governed. It seems that in this new organization there were Stock holders L. "Proprietors of the Dover Union Meeting House" and the building itself was called the Dover Union Meeting House. The original Red Meeting House and the right and title to the lot of land owned by the Baptist Society was conveyed to the new organization. The building itself and its appurtenances were to be used in procuring the new building. This was built during the year 1832.

A lot for the Union Meeting House was bought from Thurston and Mary Wing, and is the same lot upon which the present Baptist Church stands. The Church building was to "remain forever open for all religious denominations of people to perform their religious exercises in according to their usages and customs".

It developed that "the Methodists and Baptists, owning most of the stock under the constitution of said organization, and being the prevailing denominations in that vicinity" had, "for and during denominations used the Church on alternate Sundays, seeming, according to a calendar we have found, making their schedule for the year in advance."

It too is of interest to note that in the Deed it was stated that the Church should always be open for funeral services and the friends of the deceased had the privilege to select such ministers as they preferred for such services.

This order continued until 1854, when, the "two Societies having the whole period, nearly the exclusive use of the house". These two increased in number and wealth, and the building having become in commodious and dilapidated, concluded to separate, and agreed that the Baptist Society take over the property which was valued at \$550.00, by paying the I. Methodist Society \$275. The present building was erected a year later in 1855, at a cost of \$4,564.74.

Before this, on September 16, 1854, the Church had Deacons Zebulon Ross and Daniel Stevens, and Brother Thomas Wheeler, Trustees to receive and record the Deed of the Church property.

Church Parsonage

Elder Waldo lived on the farm as stated above, until his death, and evidently the Church had no parsonage property. There is a record in later years of the Church voting to pay the rent of the farm on which the pastor lived. In 1868 the Church purchased property and repaired the house for a parsonage at a cost of \$1, 600. This house is one which was afterwards owned by Deacon A. A. Denton, and is now occupied by Mr. Taddeo. The present parsonage was built in 1898 at a cost of \$2,093.95. This was during the pastorate of Rev. Maurice Stadfelt.

Keeping the Church Covenant

This Church for many years after its organization spent much time in its zeal to fulfill the principles governing the Apostolic Church. The oldest books bear more records of “dealing with offending members”, “excommunicating, excluding, and withdrawal of fellowship”, one person was excommunicated for six reasons:

- 1st. for Haying and Rangling with
- 2nd. for drinking to excess
- 3rd. for Damning the assessors
- 4th. for breaking the Sabbath
- 5th. for neglecting to come to meeting
- 6th. for neglecting to hear the Church

At the present time, when it seems the Church Covenant is treated so lightly, it is of interest to note that the Church in its early history was disturbed because the members did not keep the Church Covenant literally. We find that at one of their Church meetings the matter of Bible reading in the home, the family prayers and returning thanks at meals, was discussed. The Church took action upon these questions, and resolutions were made and adopted that daily vocal prayer was required in the home, and if the members failed to keep their Covenant promises, they were to be dealt with by the Church, of the Church. If the Church was not satisfied, the subjects would be further dealt with, and if they refused to hear the Church, they were excommunicated, excluded, or the fellowship of the Church was withdrawn.

Incorporation & Dover First Baptist Church

The Church was incorporated under the laws of New York State on the 27th of January, 1795, under the name of “The First Baptist Church of Christ in Pawling’s Town”. Timothy Babcock, Samuel Stevens and Caleb Shelden were chosen Trustees, and the certificate of the election of such trustees was signed by Freeman Hopkins and Robert Chandler. The papers were presented on February 27, 1795 to Zephaniah Platt, First Judge of Dutchess County, who signed the same, after they had been sworn to by Robert Chandler. They were recorded on the 12th day of March 1795, in Book No. 1 of Church Deeds &c., Page 27, and signed by Robert Livingston, County Clerk.

At a special corporate meeting of the Church, duly called on November 20, 1918, the following resolution was adopted:

WHEREAS, This Church, founded 1757 as under the name of the “Baptist Church in Beekman’s Precinct”, incorporated 1795 under the laws of New York State under name “The First Baptist Church of Christ in Pauling’s Town”- Reorganized in 1833 under name “The First Baptist Church of Dover”, afterward called “First Baptist Church of South Dover” and “South Dover Baptist Church”,

RESOLVED: That the wording of the name of this Church be as follows: “Dover First Baptist Church of Wingdale, N. Y.” and that all official business, bank books, bonds, etc. pertaining to said Church be under above name - and that authority is hereby given to change existing bank books, bonds, and other official papers to said wording of name, viz: “Dover First Baptist Church of Wingdale, N. Y.”

There must have been a reorganization and re-naming of the Church in 1833. On July 6, 1833 the name of the Church is given as the First Baptist Church. in Dover.

List of Church Pastors

The Church has had the ministry of thirty-three pastors during its one hundred and seventy-five years. *We cannot give the exact dates (those boxed) of all the beginnings and endings of these pastorates. In a study of the records, these are believed to be the years covering the period of their services. They are as follows:

1757-1793	Samuel Waldo	1855-1857	William G. Hoben	1905-1911	J.G. Dyer
1794-1796	Freeman Hopkins	1858-1861	G.F. Hendrickson	1911-1914	G.W. Shepherd
1796-1798	Seth Higby	1861-1862	Allen	1914-1925	L.W. Ford
1798-1799	Ashbel Hall	1862-1872	William P. Decker	1925-1927	G.H. Carpenter
1799-1800	William Buckley	1873-1879	Isaac N. Hill	1927-1928	H.F. Jendrick
1800-1812	Annanias Dethrick	1880-1882	Edward A. Merwin	1928-1930	A.G. Skidmore
1812	Elisha Booth	1882-1888	G.F. Hendrickson	1931-1937	N.R. Feagles
1812-1827	Job Foss	1888-1889	W.M. Parsons	1937-1956	George Williamson
1827-1840	Daniel Baldwin	1889-1892	F.P. Bramm	1956-1960	Charles Schreck
1840-1842	Elijah Baldwin	1893	Charles Reed	1960-1986	Earl J. Dakin
1843-1849	Johnson Howard	1893-1899	Maurice Stadfelt	1988 -	Anthony Bacino
1849-1854	John Warren	1899-1903	Edward Johnson		
1854-1855	J.W. Jones	1903-1904	J.F. Vought		

Of these, the following were ordained by the Church: **Samuel Waldo** (May 25, 1758), **Ananias Dethrick** (Nov. 10, 1802), **Elisha Booth** (June 30, 1812), **William G. Hoben** (Apr. 7, 1856), and **L. W. Ford** (December 19, 1918).

The Church was unfortunate in one instance in relation to the ordination of a candidate. The Council was called, but the Church voted that the Council “lacked wisdom”, therefore the ordination did not take place. This seemed to work out for the best, for the reason that, although the candidate served the Church for a short time as pastor, he was later excommunicated for lying and stealing.

Dover Second Baptist Church

According to the records of February 13, 1794, two places of worship were being attended by members the upper meeting house in Dover and the lower meeting houses which today would be in Wingdale. It appears that Elder Waldo was pastoring both along with Freedmon Hopkin as his assistant until he died. After Elder Waldo died they made a decision to be two separate bodies. During the ministry of Elder Hopkins, who followed Elder Waldo, twenty-one members were dismissed to organize the Dover Second Baptist Church. This Church is still active under the same name, and is situated in Dover Plains. This was on August 3, 1794, and the members’ names were as follows:

Edward Southworth, David Simmons, Joseph Belding, Benjamin Allis, Moses Hayght, Reuben Allen Caleb Barnum, Samuel Elliott, Hannah Benson, Susanna Benson, Elizabeth Coon, Alse Casey, Mary Talman, Freelove Crandall, Mary Hayght, Eliphal Belding, Dorcas Gregory, Lydia Benson, Jerusha Simmons, Jerusha Woolcut and Cata Elliott.

Church Pastors and Their Ministries

The four pastorates immediately following Elder Waldo were very brief. In 1795, as we have said, during the pastorate of **Elder Hopkins**, the Church was incorporated. Then in 1800 **Elder Dethrick** was called as pastor, and ordained by the Church, serving, as far as we can learn, about twelve years. During his ministry some of the records seem to be missing.

The next period covers about twenty-eight years, when **Elders Booth, Foss, Daniel and Elijah Baldwin, and Smith** served the Church. Evidently Elder Booth and Elder Smith acted as supplies for a short time. Elder Foss lived on the field for the entire period. In 1833 we have the first mention of Daniel Baldwin working in cooperation with Elder Foss, and this continues until 1840. During the last two years of the period Elder Elijah Baldwin and Elder Smith seem to have been working with them, sharing their ministry. During this time there were continual accessions to the Church. Elder Foss died August 2, 1849, and is buried in the South Dover cemetery which once belonged to the church.

Elder Johnson Howard began his work by an evangelistic campaign, and a large number were added to the Church during his ministry. It was during the pastorate of **Elder J. W. Jones** that the present Church building was erected.

Elder G. F. Hendrickson served the Church from 1858 to 1861, and after an absence of twelve years returned for a second term, remaining six years. Elder Hendrickson was a very efficient and constructive builder of Church life, and very evangelistic. His pastorate was very fruitful, many members being added to the Church. During his first term, in 1859, the Church sheds were built, at a cost of \$658.00. During his second term Sarah A. Ladue (Mrs. Isaac Ladue), one of the church member's (who Bible sit today on our communion table) was baptized into the membership of the Church.

Rev. William P. Decker served the Church from 1862 to 1872. (We note with interest the change in the title from "Elder" to "Reverend" in the records of his ministry.) His pastorate, following that of Elder Hendrickson, was also fruitful, for we find that twenty-eight members were received into the Church in the year 1867. It was during his pastorate that the Church purchased the first parsonage property that we know of its owning.

Rev. Isaac N. Hill was pastor from 1873 to 1879. During his ministry Mrs. Jerome Hoag, was received by letter.

Rev. W. M. Parsons acted as a supply for the Church until **Rev. F. P. Braman** began his work on April 7, 1889. The following year twenty-six members were received into the Church.

Brother Charles M. Reed preached for a short time to procure funds to pursue his studies at Crozer Theological Seminary.

We find at this time a reference to the organization of a Foreign Missionary Society of the ladies of the Church, and also reference is made to a "Social Circle", but nothing definite is found of such organizations.

The annual Decoration Day Festival and homecoming was first observed, as nearly as we can learn, in 1893 and appears to continue until 1980. This day was one of the most important events of the Church year. It seems that the name of this event changed in the late 1950's to the Community Hall Food Sale on May 30 of each year and eventually was stopped sometime in the late 1980's in place of other events.

Rev. L.W. Ford began his work September 6, 1914 and served until his death on May 12, 1925. He was ordained December 19, 1918. During Rev. Ford's ministry and largely through his efforts, the stained glass

windows were placed in the Church, and the community hall was built and equipped. The front porch of the Church was entirely reconstructed with concrete, and the Church property was greatly improved by the building of the Community Hall, completely equipped, at a cost of \$2,600. The Hall has been in constant use for all social functions in community life. Mr. Ford was ordained December 19, 1918. During his pastorate the twenty-one members were received. Some of these families are still living in Dover and Wingdale; such as the Judsons and Townsends. Pastor Ford was greatly beloved of the members.

On the annual homecoming day on May 31, 1926 in presence of a large number of people in attendance, a bronze tablet and a picture of Pastor Ford were unveiled in the Community Hall with fitting remarks by James B. Gillie, Rev. Charles Williams, Rev. M. Adams, Rev. Mr. Little and Hon. John E. Mack.

Those present then gathered in the cemetery nearby and unveiled a monument erected to his memory “by the people of the community in loving appreciation of his work in building the Community Hall, and his active work among them for eleven years. Pastor Ford’s son, Dr. Glenn Ford, accepted the gift and read a poem which expressed Mr. Ford’s work. The poem is as follows:

An old man going a lone highway,
Came in the evening, cold and gray,
To a chasm, vast and deep and wide.
The old man crossed in the twilight dim,
The sullen stream had no fear for him.

When safely across to the other side,
He built a bridge to span the tide.
“Old man”, said a fellow pilgrim near,
“Why waste your time in building here?
You never again will pass this way,
Your journey will end with the closing day.

You have crossed the chasm, deep and wide,
Why build the bridge at even-tide?” The old man lifted his snow white head
And to his fellow pilgrim said, “There followeth after me today,
A youth who too must pass this way,
The stream that has been as nought to me
To the fair haired youth might a pitfall be.
He too must cross in the twilight dim.
Good friend, I am building the bridge for him.

Next in order of ministry was **Rev. G. H. Carpenter** who served from October 3, 1925 to January 2, 1927. He was followed by **Rev. H.F. Jendrick** who was called to the pastorate January 23, 1927, and closed his work April 9, 1928. Mrs. Fred Hunt united with the Church at this time.

Rev. A. G. Skidmore was given a May 1, 1928, and remained until September 28, 1930. The following members were received during his ministry: Rev. Ashley Skidmore, Mrs. Ashley Skidmore, Maynard Skidmore, Wilder Skidmore, Marshall Hunt, Priscilla Hunt, Lockwood Hunt, Mrs. Lockwood Hunt, Jean Hunt, Thelma Kirby.

*Mr. & Mrs. Lockwood Hunt were still members in 1988 when I, Anthony Bacino became Pastor. I write this portion and can say it was a pleasure to know them.

The pastorate of **Rev. Nathaniel R. Feagles** began April 19, 1931. He and Mrs. Feagles were received by letter, and the following were baptized into the membership during his ministry: Louise M. Ahner, Helen Ahner, Louis Ahner, Ruth Richards, Wade Richards, Jr., Dorothea Farrington.

Pastor N.R. Feagles served Dover First Baptist from 1931–1937 and much of the history of the church was compiled mainly by his efforts up to 1932 when Pastor Feagle compile the history for the one-hundred and seventy-fifth anniversary.

On September 7, 1937, a call was extended to **Rev. George Williamson** to become our pastor. Rev. Williamson also served the Beekman Baptist Church as this time. During his ministry, a Sunday evening Gospel song service was held at the parsonage with good attendance and great blessings. After serving for 11 years, Rev. Williamson presented his notice for retirement on July 1, 1956.

Pastor Charles Schreck, of Carmel, New York, came to minister to us on August 1, 1956. It was through Pastor Schreck's efforts the church bell was heard again and is heard Sunday mornings. We find that on July 11, 1880, Thomas Wheeler presented to the Church the bell, which is now in the tower. Our church gave the Charles Schreck family a farewell supper on July 29th and on July 31st, 1960, Pastor Schreck preached his last message.

Mr. Earl J. Dakin, of Pawling, New York, was given a call to become our pastor. The first morning worship service he conducted was on August 7, 1960. The members and friends of the church gave a reception to the Dakin family on September 25th. Through the generosity of the church officers and their families a pulpit light was purchased and installed. During Pastor Dakin's ministry many repair and changes were done at the church. In October 1965 the members voted to make a window in the church a memorial to the late Mrs. Edward L. Brush, another was made in memory of Mrs. Brown. These are still present and notable in the sanctuary for our 250th anniversary. Rev. Dakin preached faithfully for his church until his retirement in 1986.

Current Church Pastor – Rev. Anthony Bacino

On October 8, 1988, **Rev. Anthony Bacino**, his lovely wife, Linda, and their son, Anthony, joined us as the 37th Pastor of our church. The pulpit committee searched long and hard for a replacement pastor for Pastor Dakin and it took listening to many substitutes before, after a grueling two- year search found the perfect pastor and family to once again fill the pulpit of the Dover First Baptist Church. We hope their stay is a long and fruitful one. In his stay, many changes have taken place, all for the better of the congregation of God's people. In 1990, the Church changed affiliations. We left the American Baptist Association of Churches and became an Independent Fundamental Baptist Church. In the past 20 years, there have been many baptisms, baby dedications, decisions of Christ, affirmations of faith, institution of a Church newspaper. The Church provides a Nursery Program, Junior Church Program, Prayer Service and Bible Study on Tuesdays, and a Sunday Evening Service.

Pastor Bacino has brought many changes to the church since he arrived. These changes include the start of Sunday night services, Wednesday night prayer service and Bible study, AWANA club ministry, and annual revivals which have taken place every August since 1989. The Church has an active Sunday school program.

Other events include monthly men's prayer breakfasts. Annual events include: men's and women's retreats, celebration of the National Day of Prayer in May, Mother's Day Banquets, Lancaster, PA trip to Sight and Sound Bible presentations, and participation in Dover Day events, Sunday school and Church picnic. Christmas season is a busy time with preparations for children's program, operation Christmas Child, candlelight service and preparation of Christmas food baskets. Easter celebration includes Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Sunrise Service and Resurrection Sunday Service.

Church Clerks

Of the clerks, there have been some whose work should have special mention, though not in any way depreciating the work of others. We refer first to **Daniel Tilton**, serving the Church for twenty six years. His work as clerk was painstaking, he was an especially fine writer, and his records seem to have been carefully kept.

Second, **Abram A. Denton**, serving for the long period of fifty-four years, was also pains taking, and his records are most legible. We speak of these because of their length of service and the character of their work.

Among the others who served faithfully and well was the late **Mrs. Elizabeth Hoag**, whose death was a great loss to the Church. Untiring in her devotion to the work of the Master and of his Kingdom, she gave of her time and strength. No service was too great for her to undertake. Her most recent work, just prior to her death, was in securing a large part of the purchase price of the additional lots for the cemetery. In the early days of the Church, regular monthly meetings were held and the proceedings recorded by the clerk. There were business and covenant meetings combined. Later, quarterly business meetings were held, but these were discontinued about 1911. The clerks also recorded the deaths of members, the names of Elders officiating at funerals, usually giving texts, and in some cases adding a tribute to the departed one. These more complete records have been a great help in a study of the character and work of the members.

Honorable mention for all the hours **Mrs. Nancy Dakin** labored as the church clerk from 1961- 1986 working with the board and at the side of her husband Pastor Earl Dakin.

Church Deacons

The first Deacon was **Benjamin Elliott**, ordained by the Church on January 19, 1760. The next mentioned was **Deacon Waldo**, but we have no record of the time chosen nor the given name. At that time there were five Waldos, members of the Church, Jonathan, Shobal, Samuel, Abiah and John. It evidently was one of them who was mentioned as Deacon.

Edward Southworth was chosen Deacon in 1794, and **Timothy Babcock** was chosen Deacon in the same year. **Eliab Wilcox** was chosen Deacon January 21, 1796. We have notices of **Thomas Sheldon** being Deacon in 1800.

Joseph Ellis in 1803, it is noted in the book of records of this church, at a business meeting that on September 12, 1801, it was voted to send letter to the association (*Danbury Baptist Association*) at Colebrook and Brother Joseph Ellis to represent this church at the meeting.

David Allis in 1812. **D. W. Stevens** is mentioned on August 31, 1844. There is a notice of the death of Deacon **Charles Patrick** in 1880.

The following are Deacons who served through 1932: **J.M. Wilcox, Zebulon Ross, Perry Wheeler, A. H. Denton** and his son **A.A. Denton, E. A. Brush, Theron Platt, E. L. Brush**, son of Deacon E. A. Brush, and **Wilford Judson**. Here we have a group of noble, devoted, praying men who, with their Elders, stood for the integrity of the Scriptures, high Christian ideals of life, conduct and service.

May we take as such an example the late Deacon A. A. Denton, and whose fine character was a living testimonial for his Master, and whose talents were fully consecrated to Him and His Church. The following

poem written by Rev. L. W. Ford at the celebration of the seventy-seventh birthday of Deacon Denton might well be not only a tribute to Deacon Denton, but might also apply to the devoted Deacons who have served so faithfully and well:

A tribute we might bring today
Of buds and blossoms sweet;
Or we might bring a laurel wreath
And lay it at his feet;
For he has run a valiant race
Of days and years well spent,
But flowers fade and laurel, too,
And we are not content
To bring a tribute that will last
For such a little time,
And so we pay our homage due
In this immortal rhyme.

Immortal? Ah, there was a time
When Shakespeare poets led,
Of course he wasn't any good
Until he'd long been dead.

And so I twang my little harp
And strive to woo the muse,
And if it isn't any good
At least I've this excuse
That I'm not dead. For I prefer
To be a living faker
Than be, forsooth, immortalized
By the gruesome undertaker.

Roll on ye years and lightly rest
Upon the brow of one;
For in the roster of the names
There surely can be none
Whom we delight to honor more
Than he who stands today
And gazes backward o'er the years
That came and passed away,
And still, looks on with buoyant trust
To other years to come,
'Till Time, the Reaper's voice shall say
"The day is spent - come home."
Tis scarcely needful that I say
That on a certain morn
When "frost was on the pumpkin vines"
Our honored friend was born.

He grew as other boys have grown
In those days past and gone,
And yet it seems his growing
Went to his brains instead of brawn,

But not content to have a brain
Well stocked in every part,
He chose a richer treasure still
And grew an honest heart.

That honest heart has stood him well
Through all the changing tide,
Has been his shield and buckler,
Has been his stay and guide.

It gave him faith, it gave him hope,
A zeal that never wanes,
A purpose ever staunch and true,
A peace that e'er remains,
It gave him love for God and man,
For church, for home, for all,
An ever-ready sure response
To Duty's slightest call.

It's not to flatter that we come
It's not to merely speak
The words which bring the modest blush
To Deacon Denton's cheek.
It is our heartfelt gratitude,
So many years all rife
With deeds of faithful service done.

Our God has spared his life
And may he look with buoyant trust
To other years to come,
'Till God, the Father's voice shall say,
"Well done, beloved, come home!"

The following are Deacons who served through 1932- 1960: **Charles Hodges Sr., Raymond Sothworth, Wilford Judson, Cornwell Hoag**

The following are Deacons who served through 1960-1986: **Jesse Boone, Mr. Ellis Carter, Mr. Linwood Conley, Wilford Judson, Mr. Leslie Wood, Mrs. Mary Svarplaitis, Mr. George Muncey, Jeff Conley, Art Callender, Burnetta Shelton, Hodge Brush** - *** In 1986 George Muncey was made an honorary deacon.

The following are Deacons who served through 1986-2007: (after 1988 deaconess were not consider a scriptural role for women for the office of deacon- going back to former practice) - **Jim Muncey, Roy T. Holmes, Keith Dakin, Vitas Svarplaitis, Harold Roberson, Don Bassett, Robert Liffland, Henry Muschio and Jeff Moore**

Time and space will not allow for the contributions of Jim Muncey and Harold Roberson who have labored over twenty years together in this ministry. Both exercised their various gift for the glory of God and for His Church.

Church Trustees

1797-1868: The first trustees were elected on January 27, 1795 at the time of the incorporation of the Church, and were as follows: **Timothy Babcock, Samuel Stevens** and **Caleb Sheldon**. **Eliab Wilcox** was chosen in place of Timothy Babcock later. For a long period there seems to be no record of the election of trustees. There is a reference to a reorganization of the Church in 1833, but we do not find anything in regard to trustees. On November 17, 1866 the Church voted to put in five trustees, and elected the following: **Thomas Wheeler** for five years, **Bartlett Leavings** for four years, **Theodore Wheeler** for three years, **Zebulon Ross** for two years and **A. A. Denton** for one year.

On July 6, 1867, at a Church meeting, it was voted to hold an annual financial meeting on the Saturday preceding the first Sunday in April, and to elect trustees at that meeting. The first of these annual financial meetings was held April 4, 1868.

One trustee was elected each year for the next few years, and then in 1881 the Church was again reorganized under the new law with six trustees. In 1910 it was voted to increase the number of trustees from six to seven. By the late 1950 –2007 most trustees were elected for a term. It would be difficult to present terms in its entirety for the reason that many of the men and women were reelected again and again, and for terms of varying lengths. The official church records indicate more specifically their respected terms. The following, however, gives their names and the time period in which they serviced as a trustee.

1868-1876: **Theodore Buckingham, Zebulon Ross, Theodore Wheeler, Perry Wheeler, Thomas Wheeler, Alexander Webb, Charles Dutcher**

1876-1932: **Charles Tabor, Wing J. Martin, Oscar Tabor, Abram A. Denton, George Ross, Jonathan M. Wilcox, Bailey Wheeler, W. A. Sheldon, Richard C. Rogers, Theron Platt, E. A. Brush, A.H. White, Edward Brush, J.F. Bennett, Isaac Ladue, T.H. Dyer, Thomas C. Judson, C.E. Hodge, Emerson E. Brown, George Whaley, Matthew Plankenhorn, Raymond Southworth, Frank Cooper, Wilford Judson**

1933-1960: **Raymond Southworth, Wilford Judson, Nellie Brown, Marion Slocum, Ralph Southworth, Hodge Brush, Murrey Hoag Jr., Cornwell Hoag, Hodge Brush**

1960-1986: **Mr. Wilford Judson, Mrs. E. Hodge Brush, Mr. Linwood Conley, Mrs. Elizabeth Harmer, Mrs. Homer Slocum, Mr. Egbert Slocum, Mrs. Dot Brush, Mrs. Marion Slocum, Mr. George Muncey, Mrs. Maria Muncey, Mrs. Beverly Wood**

1986 –2007: **Linda Bacino, Donna Brunow, Don Cutler, Lorraine Doyle, Debbie Fromm, Barbara Holmes, Roy Holmes, Tom Holmes, Tammy Holmes, Gloria Irish, Lyn Massiello, Georgia McGee, Florence McGee, Sally Metcalf, Michelle Moore, Jeff Moore, Debbie Muschio, Marie Muncey, Jeanne Muncey (nee Pulver), Robert Paugh, Dottie Paugh, Harold Roberson, Dan Sloss, Karen Spencer, Vitas Svarplatis, Steve Vincent, Bonnie Weck, Doug Weck**

As we go back over the records of the Church in its activities, we are impressed with the fact that these members of the official board so heartily cooperated with the pastors in all the spiritual and temporal work of the Church. In so small a Church it is rather remarkable that during those times when the Church did so much of disciplinary work, these officers were constantly doing real pastoral work in connection with the pastors in visiting “neglectful, indifferent and sinning members”.

Women's Ministry

As has been usual in the older records of our Churches, so in this we find very little has been said about the activities of the women of the Church. Of course they were placed on committees but for the most part there was perhaps merely a reference to their character and faith in brief tributes after death. This might have been due to the fact that in those early days there was a larger group of men more active than today in carrying on the work. Nevertheless we know that the women were even then the power behind the throne, for ever have they been the ones who, by their prayers, devotion and sacrificial service, have contributed so much to the work of the Kingdom.

The first reference to a women's organization in the Church was recorded in tale minutes of the first annual financial meeting of April 4, 1868, and was as follows: "By motion of Mrs. Thomas Wheeler it was resolved to reorganize and continue the Social Circle through the summer". In 1870 four women were appointed a committee to examine the parsonage to see what repairs were needed. For this work \$580.90 was expended, and of this sum the women's Societies provided \$315.82, over half. From that time, the women, in a large measure, assumed charge of keeping the parsonage property in good repair.

At a special meeting in 1873, a committee of four women was appointed to procure wood for Church and parsonage. In the same year a like committee was appointed "to revive the sociable's".

When the Church needed repairs in 1874, a committee of two men and three women was appointed to consider the same. So we find the Church was beginning to depend on the women and their organizations to do this work officially.

From this time on they reported on their work from year to year. The Ladies Guild was organized during the pastorate of Rev. J. F. Vought. The real, substantial aid given to the Church can be readily seen in the amounts raised and expended annually by the Guild on Church and parsonage property, as well as other expenses. In just listing the amounts raise annually, the Guild has made an average of approximately \$250 per year. One year they made \$403 and another year \$408. In the year 1926 they expended over \$100 on the interior of the parsonage, and in 1929 had the interior of the Church painted at a cost of \$529. The next year they installed a furnace in the parsonage, costing about \$180.

In this system adopted by the Church and in use at that time of raising money for the pastor's salary and other Church expenses. Although this may not be in line of the Guild work, it is worthy of mention. (This system was resolved as unbiblical in 1989 and dropped in favor of the tithe.)

The Church has never failed since then to have the necessary funds for the work of the ministry and missions. God's way is the right way and it has freed our ladies to do other works of the ministry.---Pastor Bacino

We have an unusual departure from practice of the Church in the honor conferred upon Mrs. A. A. Denton. After the death of her husband, Deacon Abram A. Denton, she was chosen Deaconess to fill his place, which she did acceptably until her death. *This continued until 1989.

The ladies held monthly meetings and did much White Cross work. They held annual Memorial and Election Day Food Sales with the local Methodist ladies. They are very willing to help in whatever way they can. In 1962 they purchased a lovely walnut altar set, consisting of two candle holders and cross for the Communion table. These items are still present in the Church as of the 250th anniversary.

In contemporary times our ladies have proven to be great workers in the ministry teaching Sunday School, Jr. Church, working in Awana, heading up special events and getting together for Lady Tea's and Bible Study. We have value the members that serve on our trustee board and sing in our Choir.

Membership and Association

The membership of the Church has never been large, perhaps reaching the highest mark during Elder Waldo's pastorate. In 1761 the Church reported, at the Philadelphia Association, 18 baptized, 400 hearers, 51 members. In 1762, 80 members were reported. In 1774 the membership reached 104 and the next year 142, the largest number in its history. 47 had been baptized that year. In 1784 the membership had fallen to 53.

The Church becoming a member of the Shaftsbury Association in 1789, reported 65; in 1792, 92 members, and in 1793 again reached the high peak of 102. On June 5, 1794 it joined the Danbury Baptist Association, and later the Union Association. It was dismissed to the Dutchess Association in 1842. In 1858 there were about 75 members. The following item concerning the Philadelphia Association taken from the "history of the Shaftsbury Baptist Association", by Stephen Wright, printed in 1853, is of interest in this connection:

The first Baptist Association ever formed in America was commenced September 27th, 1707, in the city of Philadelphia, and State of Pennsylvania, and hence called the Philadelphia Baptist Association. This Association embraced all our churches throughout an extensive territory for a long time; extending from the town of Northeast, in Dutchess County, New York, and Horseneck, in Greenwich, Conn., through the states of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware, into Virginia; or some 400 miles from the Northeast to the Southwest extreme of its territorial limits; and spreading inland from the coast as far to the west as the settlements reached.

The Church later found membership in the America Baptist Association and carried on a good relationship for many years. On many occasion special guest and preachers came to preach at the church. Much good can be said about the Association in its early years.

However, in 1989 the Association had adopted policies, procedures and associations that were not conducive to this ministry nor in line with the scriptures. The church voted unanimously to become an Independent Baptist Church at a Congregational meeting on September 10, 1989 after 10 months of investigation, study and prayer. At this time members cast their votes to withdraw from the American Baptist Association.

At the time of Pastor Feagles' ministry the membership list had 64 names; of these 37 were resident and 27 non-resident members. During the former seventy-five years over 300 members have been added to the Church, an average of a fraction over four per year. This may seem small by comparison with the work of larger Churches in larger community, but it represents the spirit of evangelism, patient personal work well done, constant sowing of good seed and the harvest gathered. Who can measure the significance of a single soul won to Jesus, and the possibilities of a consecrated life given to his service. And so, as we scan the records and the names of those who have gone before us and blazed the way, and find that their children and children's children to the fourth, fifth and sixth generation are still carrying on the work of the Kingdom here and in far away fields, we come to realize more and more the power of the Gospel when faithfully preached and lived. Many of the names represented on the Church roll and lists of officials, so active in their time, have vanished away, while others still carry on.

Mrs. Mary Jones, was received by baptism in 1867, she had given her time, labors and resources most devotedly for the sixty-five years of her membership. Her daughter, Mrs. Emerson E. Brown, was the Treasurer of the Church, and had served efficiently in that office for many years.

It seems as though special mention should also be made of the Wheeler family because of this remarkable fact; that five men of that family were serving on official boards or committees during a period of many years. Their gifts were so generous it made it possible to carry out the building projects and maintenance of the Church property.

Their names were Thomas H., Bailey, Perry, Theodore and Obed Wheeler. George Wheeler, son of Bailey Wheeler, gave generously to the work he provided a large part of money used in the purchase price of the new addition to the cemetery. We find that on July 11, 1880 Thomas Wheeler presented to the Church the bell, which is now in the tower.

The Dentons also deserve special mention; Father and son, A. H. and A. A. Denton. The father was Deacon, Trustee, Treasurer, Collector etc. for many years, and the son was clerk for fifty-four years, and Deacon, Trustee, Treasurer etc. until his death.

We have another father and son serving the Church: Deacon E. A. Brush and son E. L. Brush, the father having served in many capacities as official until death, and the, son now filling the same for the offices the father filled. These and many others were faithful and devoted; some in a quiet way, unseen of the world, sustaining this work of the Lord. A list of the first hundred members will be of interest two received on December 1, 1757 were Leddal Buck and David Cummins. The other names follow:

Ichabod West	Peletiah Ward	Fenner Palmer	Sarah Carpenter
Martha Allis	Ann Cary	Abigail. Hunt	Manasseh Martin
Lydia Palmer	Lydia Commins	Eliab Wilcox	Deborah Martin
Jerusha Wilcox	Sarah Covil	Sarah Comins	Mary Holdridge
Joseph Hicks	Benjamin Elliott	John Sealy	Daniel Ross
Elizabeth Elliott	Sarah Martin	Sarah Leake	Nathaniel Sealy
Daniel Branson	Asahal Ward	Thomas Stillwell, Jr.	Potter Sheldon
Sarah Norton	Obed Harvey	Marcy Harvey	Sabrey Hunt
Eleanor Stillwell	Jedediah Irish	Susanna Irish	Moses Butts
John Branson	Philip Chatfield	Esther 'Ward	Sarah Ross
John Palmer	Abiathar Waldo	Mary Palmer	Nathan Spaulding
Damaris Gorrimon	Elizabeth Irish	John Grommon	Lucy Sheldon
Else Carpenter	Sarah Earl	Susanna Doolittle	Oliver Shepherd
Agrippa Martin	Mary Howlet	Sarah Hardin	Sarah West
Deborah Parks	Obadiah Weller	Jonathan Waldo	Barnabas Horton
Daniel Leake	Ann Palmer	John Millerton	Elizabeth Hunt
Shobael Chapman	Ebenezer Marcy	Almy Stevens	Samuel Knapp
Sibbel Preston	Thomas Barns	Comfort Shaw	Amaziah Martin
John Curtis	Daniel Parks	Esther Hamlin	Abigail Baker
Frances Sly	Elizabeth Wilcox	Daniel Odell	Susanna Martin
Mary Dutcher	Ruth Porter	Mary Korah	Martin Elmer
Hannah Korah	Patience Millerton	Ebenezer Beman	Japhet Hunt
Thankful Conant	Sarah Barns	Shobal Waldo	Elizabeth Knapp
Johri Hoyt	Eleanor Dutcher	Abel Sprague	
James Sealy	Benjamin Stevens	Susanna Cole	

Many living in this community could no doubt trace their relationship back in direct line to those early members and workers. We have said but a little of the work of trustees of the Church and Community Hall who have loyally taken care of the Church property, and of collectors and treasurers who handled and dispensed honestly and efficiently the funds entrusted to them; of the Christian Endeavor and the Baptist Young Peoples Union, which flourished and did splendid work for a few years; of the Sunday-school carried on through the years, from whence came the active working members of today; of the Church benevolences sent to Association and Missionary Boards during these long years.

The Church cooperating with the Board of Promotion during the New World Movement pledged and paid 42,000. within the five-year period. The Church has been on the Honor list in missionary giving since 1927. Special bequests have come to the Church from those most deeply interested in its success in the future, who placed those gifts where they would help in maintaining the work for many, many years, taking the form of a permanent endowment.

These gifts were as follows: Obed Wheeler (\$44,000.00) - A.A. Denton (\$1,000.00) - Tilton Fund (\$500.00) - H. & A. Hoag (\$500.00) - Carrie A. Pendley (\$500.00) - Gilbert Tabor (\$500.00).

These funds have continue to be a blessing to the church throughout the years and today as we celebrate the 250th anniversary we thank God for the giving.

Recent Improvements: 1988-2007

New stained glass windows have been placed in the front windows above the main doors, these were done through the efforts of Karen Spencer, who designed and made them, and by Scott Sheffer who installed them. We pray people will enjoy them for many years to come.

Changes to the church in recent years include: The installation of a retaining wall with the gospel message and the paving of the parking lot. The installation of a Baptistery in the church hall in 2001, with our first in house Baptism occurring on March 11, 2001.

The Nehemiah project (addition to our church hall) was finally started Oct. 6, 2003, after several years and much planning. The dedication ceremony took place October 24, 2004. With modern technology the church developed an internet web site in July, 2002.

In relation to finances, it seems a splendid record has always been kept for building projects, purchase of property or maintenance of the same, the Church has raised the amount as nearly as possible and met its obligations, has never carried a debt of any size, and none for long.

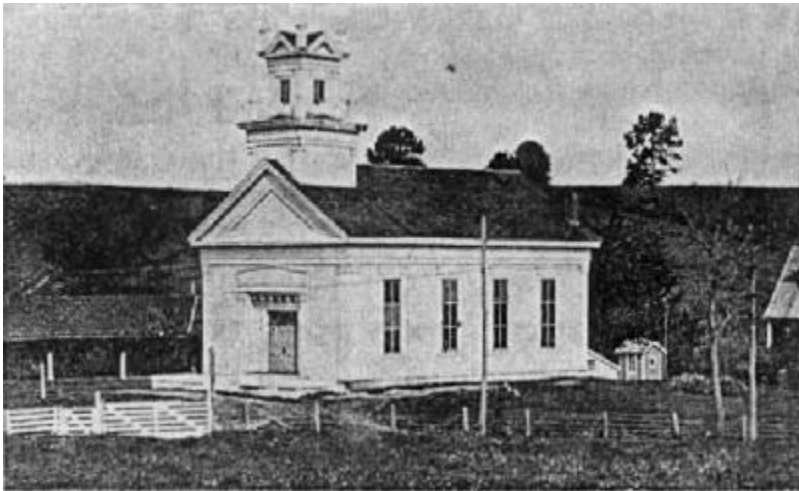
“I can say that I have never known such a giving congregation as the member of the Dover First Baptist.” - Pastor Bacino

Whenever funds were needed when things looked darkest for the Church, God’s people paid promptly. It has not been a smooth and easy road the Church has trod. There have been lights and shadows by the way, years of patient, persistent and sometimes heartbreaking travail of soul. But again and still again and always the Lord has stood by, as he did by the disciples on turbulent Galilee, and said as he did to them *“Be of good cheer”*, and He has brought them through. And disciples, **John 16: 27**, the Lord said *“In the world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world”*.

“Yes, it has been a glorious way, and as we face the future, we shall do it with increased courage, for we know that He still stands by, and the splendid record of so many Godly men and women who wrought far and exceeding beyond what they could think or know, will surely be an inspiration to us to take up the unfinished

task they have left for us to do, and He will gain the victory for us, for He has overcome the World.” As we look back over 250 years of history we are at awe with our God, “*great things He has done*”.

Dover First Baptist, Wingdale, NY – photo in the 1920’s



Second Baptist Church, photo in the 1920's, Dover Plains. 1794. The petition for separation was drawn up on April 21, 1794 and granted in May. Seth Higby was chosen as Elder and from its organization until 1824 the congregation met in the old meeting house in summer and in private homes in the winter. The old meeting house was located on the northeast crest of the Valley View Cemetery, overlooking the stream. The building had been built by the Dutch Reformed people and later abandoned.

