

**The History
of
Huguenot Road Baptist Church**

**50 Years
of
Spreading the Gospel**

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Introduction

When the eleven huddled in the upper room after the crucifixion of Christ, they had no way of knowing that their small group would be the beginnings of a church that would grow in spirit and size, passing the test of time, all for the glory of God and our Savior, Jesus Christ. When Huguenot Road Baptist Chapel held its first Sunday service on June 14, 1964, in a small rented home at 2829 Monteith Road, there were 51 in attendance. They had no way of knowing this small group would lead to a church that 50 years later would have over 1600 members and a facility that would aid in presenting Jesus, the Son of God, through Christian love and concern to their neighbors.

This is the story of that journey: one with high points and low points, one with tears of joy and tears of sadness, and one filled with the blessings that the church has gained and has shared.

In the beginning

Every journey begins with a first step and so it was with Huguenot Road Baptist Church. Our Mother Church was Bon Air Baptist, which, in 1958 held an initial meeting of its deacons and Mission Committee to discuss the need for a new mission in the Woodmont and Old Gun Road areas of Chesterfield County. Taking such a step is much like a marriage, in that it is not to be entered into lightly. Surveys had to be conducted to determine if there was sufficient interest and support for such an endeavor. When the report came in, years later, it showed 80 families as being possible congregants, which was deemed ample for an initial investment of time, support and financial assistance. Based on the report and the commitment of many members, the Mission Committee recommended sponsorship of this fledgling effort which was authorized by Bon Air Baptist on April 8, 1964.

It takes more than authorization to start a new mission; it takes commitment and it takes organization. To that end, an organizational meeting was held that April in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Johnson. It was obviously an unparalleled success, for there were 18 in attendance (Dr. Phillip Rogerson, Dr. Frank Voight, Dr. Paul Crandall, Mr. and Mrs. H. Clinton Jennings, Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Thacker, Mr. S. C. Peck, Mr. J. Cauble, Mr. Thomas J. Nuckols, Jr., Mrs. George Street, Mr. J. M. C. Duke, Mr. and Mrs. Grant Clark, Mr. Lloyd Rivers, and Mr. Robert Bass) and the actions of that day provided the impetus for the BAB Mission Committee to appoint three members to the Steering Committee of the mission in the week that followed. Those three were Marian Helms, Clinton Jennings, and Oscar Johnson.

At a business meeting on Wednesday, June 10, 1964, Bon Air Baptist Church took actions that would definitely aid this mission in its journey. There were four items that were approved that night, and in their own way, each was a significant step.

What is a mission without a name? There was a need to select an appropriate title for the mission that would aid them in identifying with the neighborhood surrounding it. The name chosen was Huguenot Road Baptist Chapel. Given that it clearly stated the location and the denomination, this was an excellent choice. The name also denoted that this was a chapel, an organization in its infancy, stepping into a population growth area to meet the needs of God's children. While the name for the chapel had been accepted by the Mother Church, there was still some of the opinion that the name be simply Huguenot Baptist Chapel. At the first business meeting of the chapel on June 17, Dot Thacker made a motion that the name be Huguenot Road Baptist Chapel, which was seconded by Marie Johnson, and the motion carried. With this action, the word "Road" would forever be stamped on the actions of this group of believers.

What is a chapel without a building? In the days of the patriarchs, men would erect a stone altar and consecrate it with sacrifices and prayers. This was proper for a rather nomadic existence but we are not the nomads of the past. A building is essential to the preaching of God's word and of having a place upon which to focus. Thus, when approval was given to rent a house at 2829 Monteith Road for \$135 per month, the chapel had a home; temporary though it may have been, it was still home. Here, members, guests and friends could come to worship, interact with other Christians, and grow as a congregation.

What is a congregation without a shepherd? Mark 6 tells of how Jesus "had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and He began to teach them many things." So too, the people of the chapel needed a shepherd and this need was met when approval was given to call Dr. Russell M. Wallis to be the first pastor of Huguenot Road Baptist Chapel. A retired minister, he would lead and teach God's people at the chapel. As a result of his coming out of retirement, the budget indicates that he received \$135 per month, plus an allowance for a vehicle.

One more question remained on that night in June 1964, and that was: How will this infant chapel support a minister as well as rental on the Monteith property and other assorted costs associated with the startup of a new chapel? That night, Bon Air Baptist Church agreed to contribute funds toward the pastor's salary. So, all the burden of supporting a pastor was not to be borne by the chapel members, some would be borne by the Mother Church.

There were also efforts underway to assure that when the chapel opened its doors, there would be available all services associated with a full Sunday program. Sunday school administration and teachers for all age levels would be in place as would be the case with evening Training Union. With so many positions to fill, those who would become the core of the chapel came forward to serve in all the various capacities. It seems the chapel was as ready as it could be to open its doors.

June 14, 1964

The Psalmist tells us in 118:24, "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." Truly, that Sunday, June 14, 1964 was a day made by God for the people of Huguenot Road Baptist Chapel to come and rejoice. Truly, it was a day for great joy as services at the little house at 2829 Monteith Road became a house of worship at 9:30 that morning. While the children went to their classes, Dr. Paul Crandall, Executive Secretary of the Richmond Baptist Association conducted an open assembly for the adults. Dr. Crandall had been intimately involved with the establishment of this mission from the beginning. His Scripture for this assembly came from Luke 24:36, which reads, "As they were saying this, Jesus himself stood among them." Surely, Christ was there that day in Sunday school along with the 47 members and 4 visitors, and has been with us every day since. The day had just begun and already they were inspired.

Sunday school was followed by a worship service with H. C. Jennings presiding. The speaker that day was Dr. William B. Denson, Secretary of Evangelism and Associational Meetings for Virginia. Using Ephesians 5:22-33, he brought forth an almost prophetic message entitled "Growing a Glorious Church." It was a dream, a hope, a prayer, a goal and it would ultimately be realized.

Dr. Crandall later that day would become chief photographer in addition to all his other duties as he photographed those in attendance. But the day was not over. That evening, 20 returned for Training Union and worship. To preserve for posterity the significance of this day, there was a "guest book" in which every adult and child registered.

The day had ended, truly a “glorious” day, but the work had just begun.

In the Interim – June 14 through July 18, 1964

Those of us who have been involved with long established churches realize the difficulties that must be faced when a long time pastor moves on for whatever reason and a temporary minister fills the pulpit. In the case of the Huguenot Road Baptist Chapel, that period of time came, in reality, on the chapel’s opening day. Though a minister had been selected, and had accepted that position, it would take several weeks to bring him to the Huguenot Road area.

The Chapel started off by living “in the interim”. The pulpit was filled by the Grace of God and the assistance of the Richmond Baptist Association, the General Board and the Foreign Mission Board and First Baptist Church of Richmond. Following Dr. Denson was Rev. Delos Miles on June 21, Dr. Rogers M. Smith on June 28, Dr. Crandall returned on July 5, and Dr. C. C. Thomas on July 12.

Deacons, though vital today, were even more essential in the conduct of chapel business and to provide leadership in its infancy. To that end, four deacons were selected to serve in that capacity and they were Herbert F. Michie, Clinton Jennings, Oscar Johnson and Edward Thacker.

The chapel was still a work in progress and the gifts of members and friends made for a more pleasant experience. This was particularly true of the gift by W. W. Webb of an air conditioning unit for the nursery during those hot summer days. Mr. and Mrs. H. F. Michie gave 25 hymnals and Mr. and Mrs. R. Parker Riggan provided a Communion Service, cloths, and offering plates for use during the services.

The Wallis Years 1964-1967

Another Phase Begins on July 19, 1964

While it had been only slightly more than a month since the chapel's first worship service was conducted, July 19 was to be another of those significant steps in the journey of this group of God's people. The day of actually having a minister that would serve the flock was upon them. Dr. Russell W. Wallis gave the first of many messages, even though he would not be officially installed as the chapel's pastor until the night of July 24.

The 19th was also meaningful as Huguenot Road Baptist Chapel was officially constituted with a total of 34 members. Of these "charter members," 24 came from Bon Air Baptist Church. Those 24 were John M. and Marion Helms, Herbert C. and Eleanor Jennings, Larry Jennings, Oscar S. and Marie Johnson, Gary S. Johnson, Paula Johnson, Julius P. and Gladys Jones, Mrs. Cathon Marshall, Julia C. Marshall, Herbert F. and Grace Michie, R. Parker and Evelyn Riggan, Nancy Riggan, George F. and Mary Street, Gregory P. Street, Edward C. and Dot Thacker, and Ann Thacker.

The other ten "charter members" were transferees from other churches and were Joseph B. Whitley, Carolyn Whitley, Glenn Wood (Mrs. Edwin B. Wood), Debbie Wood, Edward N. and Dorothy Griggs, Jr., George and Jane Pearson, Dr. Russell W. and Prudence Wallis.

On the 24th, it became official: Dr. Wallis was installed as pastor of the Huguenot Road Baptist Chapel. The service was held that Friday night at the chapel and participating were some whose names were very familiar to all the chapel members: Dr. William Benson, Dr. Paul Crandall and Dr. Phillip Rodgerson.

"Firsts" Abound in the First Year

In one of His many parables, Christ, in Mark 4:26-29, spoke of some first things that are similar to the happenings at the chapel during its first year. Christ said, "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." The blade appears and so it was at the chapel.

On July 28, 1964, there was an organizational meeting of the Women's Missionary Union (WMU) held at the home of Eleanor Jennings. One of their first actions was to establish a tentative list of officers.

Music and the singing of hymns has always been an important part of the worship experience. While Joseph Whitley provided expertise at the organ, it wasn't until August 6 that the first choir rehearsal would be held. Afterward, melodious voices and the music of the organ would become a staple of the worship service.

Almost lost in the records of a business meeting of the chapel in August, there is a glimmer of great things to come and of a people already looking far beyond the first days, months or even years of the chapel. A letter was written by Dr. Wallis to the chairman of Trustees of the Executive Committee of the Richmond Baptist Association concerning the possibility of securing 4 acres of land adjacent to property already owned by the Association, for the new church site. This letter was made a part of the chapel records.

It would seem that all Baptists do enjoy a good meal. It is, shall we say, a part of our Christian heritage going back to the days of the early Israelites and placed in our hearts by Christ at the Last Supper. When we join with others in a meal, we are sharing a personal experience and communicating, frequently across

generations. So it was on September 2, that all the chapel's Sunday school workers, Sunbeams, R.A.'s, and G.A.'s gathered for a supper meeting.

In the process of communicating and bonding, the chapel was open to what has to be called "fun" events for the younger chapel attendees. On September 11, a group of Intermediates was taken roller skating; on September 18, the Juniors were taken bowling. Activities such as these displayed to the youth that bonding with those in their age group in a Christian atmosphere could be quite enjoyable and may have been the catalyst for having 83 in Sunday school on September 27, making that the highest attendance to date.

Moving Toward More Permanence

The business meeting for September held special significance for the chapel's quest for permanence. With a balance of \$1400, as of September 1, 1964, there was a discussion concerning the property on Virginia Route 147 (Huguenot Road) which the attendees hoped would "be the site of our new church." Realizing that the property would need to be purchased from the Association, Oscar Johnson moved that "Dr. Wallis, along with the Steering Committee, visit Dr. Adams at First Baptist Church in reference to seeking financial aid, toward purchasing the property." The motion was seconded by Ed Thacker and was approved unanimously. Also, building upon previous discussions, Oscar Johnson was authorized to approach the Association concerning the possibility of their acquisition of the 4 additional acres at a reasonable price.

While this displays the intent of the Chapel members toward new property and ultimately a new church building, initial hopes and desires are often overcome by events. So it was with the effort to obtain assistance from First Baptist Church. In October, Dr. Wallis reported that funds such as were being sought from First Baptist had already been earmarked for another developing church in the area. Dr. Adams regretted having to advise that they could not help the Chapel at this time.

However, this would be just another of the hurdles that would be cleared at a later time. The spark was still there and glowing; indeed, it was glowing so much that the Chapel authorized a topographical survey of the property owned by the Association. To that end, the Chapel hired the firm of Austin Brockenbrough and Associates to conduct that survey at a cost of \$100, on October 28.

The First Baptismal Service

In the life of a church, or in this case a chapel, the first baptism has to be one of the highest points of its existence. While the chapel had no baptismal pool, through its firm connection with its Mother Church, Bon Air Baptist, that essential portion of so sacred a service and commitment was provided on September 27. It was a day that would be very special also to two youngsters, Cathy Wood and Eddie Griggs, who would be baptized into the loving arms of Christ.

Dr. Wallis gave a special message to those in attendance at this solemn event, but especially for the two young people, in which he sought guidance for them as they walked the path of Christ. This service was further enhanced by a soloist who sang "The Lord's Prayer" and "I Walked Today Where Jesus Walked." Herbert F. Michie concluded this holy event with prayer.

One interesting aspect of the first baptismal is that Dr. Wallis wore borrowed attire, even including "waders." This is evident by the fact that in January of 1965, a vote was taken which provided "a robe and boots for Dr. Wallis and robes for the children be provided by the next baptismal service".

Helping Others Enjoy Christmas

The joy of Christmas is one that Christians need to share; as the greatest gift ever was given on that day we celebrate in December. It is this sharing and the hope for a small bit of joy for others that Oscar Johnson and the Sunday school classes received gifts from members that would be passed on through the Goodwill center to those less fortunate. Toys, socks, gloves, sweaters and other clothing, and food were gathered at the Chapel on the 20th of December and transported to the center. The Chapel reached out in Christian love to its neighbors, whomever they might be.

A Minor Modification at Chapel Aids the Minister and Members But Hard Work Still Is the Norm

In the 21st century, cell phones, iPods and other communication devices abound that aid those with hearing difficulties, such was not the norm in 1965. In April of that year, the congregation approved the installation of a “hard of hearing telephone set in the Chapel for use of Dr. Wallis and others.” While this may seem trivial today, then it was of great importance. Once this modern device had been installed, Dr. Wallis made note of it and expressed his appreciation for it.

Even though it was now an official chapel and had been in existence for almost a year, there was still much to do by the Members. True, they were serving in various leadership roles in Sunday school and Training Union. There were meetings of Sunbeams, G.A.’s, WMU and others. However, the more mundane tasks still had to be done by the Members. In the May 2, 1965 service program, there was an announcement which shows the depth of care for this new chapel. The announcement indicated that on Saturday, at 7:30 p.m., the “Duke Bible Class meets to clean the Chapel floors.”

Continued Growth

By June 20, 1965, approximately one year after the Chapel had its first service, the Sunday school attendance had increased to 81. This displays the continued growth that the Chapel was experiencing, for regrettably, there were no attendance records for the actual worship service.

The Vacation Bible School had also concluded by late June and its records indicate not only the spread of the Word of God to the young people of the area, but also a great potential for continued growth. The Bible School had 101 enrolled, with an average attendance of 92. Even more intriguing is the fact that 54 students and 19 faculty members had perfect attendance during that time. Truly there was a harvest of young people for the Kingdom of God during those days.

It quickly became evident that the house on Monteith Road was becoming too small for the congregation. By November 7, the Chapel was notified that it was to vacate the house by December 1, and the Steering Committee sought alternatives. Arrangements were made to move the congregation to the Bon Air School, and contained in the December 12, 1965 bulletin was this brief but informative statement concerning that move: “Our transition from 2829 Monteith to the school building has been well executed, and we are grateful to all Sunday school and Training Union leaders who have made it possible. We have plenty of room for expansion, let us use it wisely.” The rental for the school was slightly more than that of the house but only about \$15 per month.

The end of 1965 brought forth reflection from the Chapel, because the move was “a blessing in disguise” but that the chapel could use those facilities only on Wednesday night and Sunday. “But most of all is our deep

feeling of gratitude to Woodland Heights for deciding to give us financial help on our building site and building program. Also, it is a privilege to have the continued support and guidance from our 'Mother', the Bon Air Church."

It also brought forth the deep seated assurance of the future. "As we face 1966, we can surely envision some significant developments for us – especially the possibility of holding services in our own building, ere the year has slipped away."

A New Year Brings Joy and Grief

When the books closed on December 31, 1965, the records indicate that the WMU had 26 members and an attendance of 22. The Building Fund had increased to \$14,647 and its growth was steady. The Chapel adopted a 9 month budget in January of \$14,868. By February 9, 1966, 26 of the 32 families had returned their pledge cards.

Now the return of the pledge cards was important that year, because they were to have been returned on the 30th of January. An explanation appeared in the February 6 bulletin and read: "Our 'pledge day' on January 30 was snowed under. May your warm hearts of love quickly thaw out and return all cards real soon." The people responded that very next Sunday.

But the New Year also brought grief to the Chapel members, for on February 10, 1966, George Street passed away. He had joined the Chapel on July 19, 1964, and had served as Treasurer since his election on October 1, 1964. It was noted that he "faithfully discharged his duties until his passing. His was the first death in the Chapel since its origin on June 14, 1964. He and his good works will be missed by all."

So the joy that the new year had brought also brought tears to the Chapel members, but the work had to continue. On February 23, T. J. Nuckolls was elected to replace their beloved Treasurer.

Another milestone that brought joy to the Chapel members was the graduation of the first Chapel member from Midlothian High School. Noted in the June 6 Bulletin, the Chapel congratulated Sherry Lu Coker on her achievement.

Constituting a Church

Concurrent with work on obtaining the land for the new sanctuary, obtaining the services of an architect to design the structure, and of course gathering the necessary funds to pursue the actual purchases and construction, there was also one other hurdle that had to be cleared. Since the Chapel was an offshoot of Bon Air Baptist Church, it was still under that church's umbrella. In fact, Dr. Wallis was actually an employee of Bon Air and any actions taken by the Chapel membership still required approval of the Mother Church. In May of 1966, the congregation adopted a Constitution, requested affiliation with the Richmond Baptist Association, closed its charter membership effective June 11, 1967, established church officers and called Dr. Wallis as church pastor. This was followed by another action in August which would allow the chapel to receive the property at Huguenot and Dillon Roads, Chesterfield, Virginia.

Moving Forward Towards A New Building

Based on the architect's plan for the design of the new structure, Dr. Wallis estimated, in 1966, that a turn-key operation for the new sanctuary would be between \$140,000 and \$145,000. While that may seem miniscule by today's standard, it represents something in the vicinity of \$1,000,000 in 2013. With assistance from Woodland Heights Baptist Church, Friendship Baptist Church and the Extension Board of the Richmond Baptist Association, the chapel was able to secure loans \$133,000. Therefore, on September 11, 1966, the congregation unanimously approved a bid submitted by Earl M. Condrey for \$146,797, with an estimated construction time of 180 days.

Breaking Ground for the New Building

On the 25th of September 1966, a new milestone was reached with the actual groundbreaking ceremonies for the new structure for the chapel to be erected at Dillon and Huguenot Roads was held, with Dr. Wallis presiding. It was noted in the Saturday issue of the Richmond Times Dispatch that the chapel had increased in membership to 108 and that Sunday school enrollment had reached 168. Having its own building and not relying upon leases or rentals for the continuation of the services for the people was marked by those who had been long in the development. Mentioned in the article, along with notables from the Richmond Baptist Association, Bon Air Baptist Church and Woodland Heights Baptist Church, were Herbert Michie, chairman of the chapel board, Oscar P. Johnson, chairman of the building committee, and Clinton Jennings, chairman of the steering committee. Also notable among those participating was an old favorite of the chapel, Dr. Paul Crandall, Executive Secretary of the Richmond Baptist Association.

There was at least one more item of concern that needed to be addressed in the construction of the new facility, and that was air conditioning. It was determined that the cost of such an improvement would be an additional \$13,750, and that was approved by the congregation in November. However, it should be noted that 20 members signed a default agreement which stated that should the church default, they would be responsible for \$500 each.

All things that are good must take time and effort; they also require dedication and donation. With a new building moving forward with an opening date of June, there were physical needs that had to be met. The April 30, 1967 bulletin displayed some of the additional needs of the new building. Included in this list were three pianos, three picture files, five maps, 19 chalkboards, seven moveable coat racks, supply cabinets, book racks, three cribs, and a bottle warmer. It is obvious that the church was looking toward both the younger and older generations as to their needs. There was also the request for the whole church, and that was for two departmental Bibles.

Constituting the New "Huguenot Road Baptist Church"

June 1967 shall always remain one of the high points in the history of Huguenot Road Baptist Church. While the chapel had moved into the new building by the 4th of June, it was on June 11, 1967, at 3:00 p.m., that the days of the chapel ended. Also ending was the dependence upon others for a location upon which to hold the regularly scheduled services of the congregants. This day saw J. M. C. Duke presiding at the Constituting Service in the new building.

Officially, there were 136 Charter Members of Huguenot Road Baptist Church, with 55 having been original members of the chapel and the remaining 81 having joined the congregation between October 4, 1964 and

June 11, 1967. Of the original 136, there had been one death, George F. Street, and four had transferred their memberships to other congregations.

The End of the Wallis Years

At the July 12, 1967 business meeting, there was one item that came before the group about mid-way through the agenda. Dr. Wallis, who was presiding, read his letter of resignation, to be effective September 30. Most assuredly, this was not an action that the deacons desired to take, but after hearing the Dr. Wallis, Doug Pace, Vice Chairman and acting as Moderator, called for a motion to accept, which was made by Ed Thacker and seconded by Clint Jennings. The motion carried. As a result, at a special meeting of the church on Wednesday, August 2, 1967, the congregation selected a "Pastors Call Committee" which consisted on Grace Michie, Marion Helms, Dorothy Griggs, Eleanor Jennings, Leigh Mitchell, Jack Reynolds, Edward Thacker, Raymond Graham and Paul Cousins.

The church had grown under the leadership of Dr. Wallis. This was evidenced by the fact that on the last Sunday in August, there were 153 in Sunday School, 43 in Training Union and 145 in the morning worship service. In a Resolution passed by the Deacons, it noted that "we have been blessed with continued growth in all phases of our church life, which we attributed to the efforts and leadership of Dr. and Mrs. R. W. Wallis." It also stated, "His untiring efforts in the Lord's work in this area will surely be fruitful for many years to come." Finally, as a continuing memorial to Dr. Wallis, a copy of the Resolution was "to be placed in the cornerstone."

Truly Dr. Wallis had been a cornerstone in the beginning of the Huguenot Road Baptist Church.

Some Interesting Items After Dr. Wallis' Departure

The church did not cease its activities because of Dr. Wallis' departure. The WMU which now had 35 members, with an attendance of 25 had sent six of its members to a work shop at Montrose Baptist Church in September and had planned a week of prayer and Lottie Moon offering in December.

There was considerable discussion about a sign for the church on Huguenot Road. It was first estimated to cost about \$200 and the members decided to see if they could purchase the needed material and build it themselves for less.

There was no lack of enthusiasm for Sunday school, as a new record attendance of 184 was recorded on January 28.

The Pastors Call Committee indicated their steadfastness on two separate Sundays in February 1968, when they had made a total of six visits. By March of that year, the search committee deemed it necessary to request approval of an increase in the pastor's salary to \$10,000 per year, including car and housing allowance.

The church had a very successful Vacation Bible School during the summer of 1968, with an enrollment of 160 and an average attendance of 147. Three years before, the Vacation Bible School had an enrollment of 101 with an average attendance of 89. With an increase of 65% in attendance over the three year period, it was obvious that the Church was moving forward in meeting the needs of the people of the area.

The Reverend Harry T. Dixon Years 1968-1975

After more than a year of existence, the Pastors Call Committee could finally rest. Theirs had been a labor of love and devotion which finally resulted in the call and acceptance of the position by the Reverend Harry Tillman Dixon, Jr. Rev. Dixon gave his first message in the church on August 1, 1968, and was officially installed at a special service on August 11. With Rev. Dixon were his wife Barbara and their three children, Deanna (7), Martha (5) and David (2).

It is said that Rev. Dixon brought energy to the church and this must be viewed as a slight understatement. Such an energetic spirit was needed to accomplish the fact that after being here for a short two month period, he conducted the revival that was held from October 6 through October 11 at 7:30 each evening. It was noted that the week of revival featured “good singing with Horace Clay leading and also good preaching from our pastor”. Indeed, the success of the revival brought forth the idea of having a fall revival during the coming year.

The WMU, which had always been a vibrant part of the church since its founding, continued in its outreach to the community and the world during these days. Besides providing contact and their presence on numerous occasions at the Bon Air School for Girls and the Fulton Center, they also held parties for these young people. Notable among the “presents” that were made by this group were 20 copies of the Good News For Modern Man that they presented to the Girls’ Home. As always, their commitment to the Annie Armstrong Fund and the Lottie Moon Offering displayed their dedication to world missions. It was for these and numerous other reasons, that the WMU was one of only six such organizations in the Richmond area to receive the Advanced Society Award.

There were successes everywhere as the church grew. Looking over the weekly activities in and for the church, it is evident that there was ample opportunity for the spreading of the Gospel, the teaching of the youth, the uplifting of adults through such activities as visitation, family suppers, choir and Deacon meetings, just to give a few examples of the church in God’s work. This growth could be more evidenced by the mere fact that as early as January 1969, an exploratory committee was considered and later established that would look into the future needs of the church, such as when an addition to the physical structure would be needed. The five members of this exploratory committee were Oscar Johnson, Roddy Shingleton, Clint Jennings, Fran Franklin and Dottie Shepard.

Tragedy Strikes the Dixon Family and the Church

In June of 1969, the Dixon family and the church had to come to terms with a death that truly shocked the entire community of Huguenot Road Baptist Church. The eldest daughter of the Dixons, Deanna Frances Dixon, passed away after a very serious illness in June 1969. On June 22, Frank E. Eakin, Jr. spoke to the church body during the Sunday worship service in remarks he had labeled “Reflections on the Death of a Child of a Friend”. He stated, “Your pastor and his wife have suffered a grievous loss during this past week in the death of their daughter. Death, the final breach of human relationships, is never easy to accept... A sickness such as this one which took so rapidly this beloved child leaves a numbness which in the grace of God serves to shield us from ourselves.” He concluded his remarks by saying, “To be sure, the Dixons’ Christian commitment will see them through this dark night in which they now stand. But this tragic event gives you the possibility of truly being a church, a community of the concerned ... that as a result of this

occurrence you shall exemplify more fully the faith and the love of Jesus the Christ. Amen.” Funeral services were conducted for eight year old Deanna Dixon the next day at the church.

While there was nothing, save the grace of Jesus, that could truly be done for the Dixons, at the next business meeting, the church unanimously voted to pay for the costs not covered by insurance for the hospitalization and funeral of little Deanna Dixon. Truly, the church mourned her loss.

A Musical Commitment

In Ephesians 5, we are directed to “be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart...” To that end, the church called Horace Clay as its first Minister of Music in September of 1969. At the same time, they also called Annette Infante to be the church organist. While there had been music all along the historical past of the church, this was truly the beginning of a ministry in music which would develop under Horace Clay’s leadership that would provide a different and pleasing sound as an outreach to the people.

Among the many activities that Horace Clay initiated, one was the “Music Makers,” a group of young people in grades 1-3, visited the Dudek Nursing Home to sing carols and play bells for the residents at Christmas time. They also brought small gifts that showed their loving interest in the residents there.

Horace Clay left Huguenot Road Baptist Church in May of 1971. However, it was noted that “In the time that he has served us, our music program has improved tremendously and we deeply appreciate what he has meant to our church.”

The base for Christian music had been set and this was affirmed by the call for three different children’s choirs in October of 1971. The preschoolers were led by Barbara Dixon, the Music Makers by Fran Franklin and the Juniors by Bettie Morris and Sherrie Cooper.

By 1972, the church had established the position of Minister of Music and hired Walter K. Amacker, III as part-time Minister of Music. He would hold that position until his resignation in November of 1973. He was to be followed by Bill Lindeman in February of 1974, but with this position came an increase in the Minister of Music’s duties as well as his title. The church now had a Minister of Music and Youth Director.

The Signpost

One item that obviously was of considerable importance to Dr. Dixon was communication with the congregation. In 1972, he began a weekly newsletter, entitled “The Signpost,” which was the forerunner of the current transmittal that is called “The Road.” The first issue of the Signpost proudly displayed the Church staff. There was Harry T. Dixon, Jr., Pastor; Walter K. Amacker, Minister of Music; Marianne Amacker, Organist; Claire Cook, Church Secretary; and Alvin Garnett, Custodian. There was always an encouraging word or possibly a brief “sermon” in each of the issues. In February of 1973, Dr. Dixon wrote that the church had been trying to clean up the property for almost a year and that every time they scheduled a cleanup – rain, lots of rain. By April of 1974, “The Signpost” showed that there were changes occurring in the staff of the church, which not only added Bill Lindeman as Minister of Music and Youth, but also included Patricia Honeycutt, Kindergarten Director and Fran Franklin, Preschool Kindergarten Teacher. In October 1974, Anna J. Kronimus would replace Claire Cook as Church Secretary and Joan Boswell would be added as a Teacher’s Assistant. This weekly newsletter also provided the means to pass on information about the budget, softball practice, special events, good news and often, sad news

A Membership Milestone

In August of 1973, Dr. Dixon marked his fifth anniversary with Huguenot Road Baptist Church. When he came in 1968, the church had 151 members. On this day, they also celebrated that the number of members had increased to 330. This information was included in “The Signpost” of August 9, 1973. While making mention of the growth the church had experienced, it also praised Dr. Dixon for adding a Minister of Music, Organist, and Secretary to the staff.

Dr. Dixon Accepts Lynchburg Pastorate

That was the headline for the March 13, 1975 issue of “The Signpost.” Dr. Dixon had read his letter of resignation to the congregation the previous Sunday, March 9. In it, he said that this decision to go to Lynchburg had been a very difficult one to make, leaving a church that “has been happy and fulfilling. ... and ... friends ... who are the dearest we have in the world.” It seems there was sadness in his message as he mentioned how Huguenot Road Baptist Church had “loved, supported, and upheld us through the worse thing in our lives – the death of our oldest daughter, Deanna.”

So, Dr. Dixon left, after a reception held at the church on Sunday, April 13, to serve Rivermont Avenue Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Virginia.

In the Interim - Again

On the day that the reception was held for Dr. Dixon and his family, which ended at 5:00 p.m., another meeting took place. The Pastor Selection Committee, which held its first meeting shortly after Dr. Dixon announced his resignation, met again. It seemed quite evident the church desired to move swiftly in locating a new pastor.

There was also the need for an Interim Minister of Music and the church would call Rev. Tom Miller, who was the associate editor of the Religious Herald and a fellow church member, to fill that position. Rev. Miller would also find that due to Dr. Dixon’s departure, he was among the list of Supply Pastors, which included Dr. David Burhans, Dr. Russell Wallis, Dr. Theodore Adams and Rev. Frank Schwall, who would fill the pulpit for the next seven weeks.

By May 8, 1975, the church had obtained the interim services of Dr. William B. Denson as Interim Pastor, who would assume those duties on June 1. Dr. Denson had been a friendly face for the congregation for some time. He had delivered the first sermon to the newly formed Huguenot Road Baptist Chapel on June 14, 1964.

The Pastoral Selection Committee had received direction from the congregation of a desire to find a pastor who would provide the leadership for goals that had outreach and evangelism at its core. As reported by Bland Franklin, the committee had visited seven churches by the 26th of June with more on the horizon. Their efforts would be rewarded with success on August 24, when the church extended a call to Dr. Bob Teems, after he spoke at the morning worship service, and he accepted.

The Dr. Bob A. Teems Years 1975-1979

The September 25 issue of “The Signpost” announced the arrival of the new minister in this fashion: “God Has Heard Our Prayers.” Joining Dr. Teems in this journey from First Baptist Church of Elloree, S.C. was his wife, Mary Ann, and their three children, Rhett (11), David (10), and Laura Bea (7). Dr. Teems preached his first sermon on September 28, with his official installation service held that night.

Growth – Serious Growth

The church had strongly desired a pastor who would bring people to the love of Christ and to membership in the congregation and since that was the direction they had given the Pastoral Search Committee, they had placed that hope in Dr. Teems. God had definitely heard the prayers of the church, for under Teem’s leadership, the church experienced a growth in membership that seems almost unbelievable. In 1974, before Dr. Teems arrived, there were 365 members. By the time of his departure, four years later, that number had increased to 931. That is a 155% increase in five years. Not only was there an increase in membership, there was an increase in Sunday school enrollment of almost 100%. While the reasons for such unprecedented growth may be many, and most assuredly Dr. Teems’ hand was in it all, the role that the individual church member had in extending the hand of Christian friendship and fellowship should never be overlooked.

The Child Development Center

Proverbs 22:6 gives us a direction in regard to our young people. It states “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” That concept was put into practice with the establishment of the Child Development Center. Patricia Honeycutt was listed as the original Kindergarten Director in 1974 and Fran Franklin became Director in July 1976. Children were being trained in the ways of God. In her report about the activities of the CDC in December 1976, she mentioned that December was a ‘magic’ time for our children. “We learned about how animals in our woodlands prepare for winter, and birds find warmer homes. As in fall, so in winter, we saw how we too make changes to prepare for God’s new season.” By the beginning of 1977, the staff of the CDC consisted of a Director, two teachers and two assistant teachers. This was the birth of the CDC that still survives after almost four decades of serving the children so they may have a better understanding of their God.

Bursting at the Seams – “Together We Build”

There is one thing that growth definitely leads to: providing more space for people to come together for church related activities. In early 1977, Rev. Tom Miller, who had been called as Minister of Music in January of 1976, made a point about overcrowding when he stated that the “Music Makers have outgrown their old room and will move into the kitchen area.” Royal Ambassador attendance was averaging “between 50 and 55 boys each week.” Sunday school enrollment in March was at 529, but what was most impressive in Oscar Johnson’s report was there was an average of eleven visitors and three new members each week.” It is clear space was at a premium and sometimes the old needs to be moved out. An old piano that was occupying space in a corridor was to be given “to anybody that would have it.”

The Building Planning Committee had been working for some time on a new structure to complement the existing building. One of the main attributes of that structure would be that it would contain approximately 15,500 square feet of floor space. One of its greatest hurdles would be that its cost was estimated to be \$465,000.

Familiar names filled the roll of the leaders for the Together We Build Program. There was Bland Franklin, Paul Coleman, Tom Miller, Oscar Johnson, Marvin Gregory, Linda Alley, Gloria Pace, Joan Boswell, Alden Flory, and Clint Jennings. Their efforts were rewarded by actions taken later in the year.

By September 1977, the church had received bids on the new building and had approved an award of a contract to A. D. Whittaker with a low base bid of \$492,492 plus an addition of a breezeway which brought the total to \$509,952.

September 25, 1977 – Breaking Ground

This shall be remembered as another milestone in the history of the church. The church gathered as a body to break the ground for the new Family Life Center. There were some old friends in attendance, including Dr. R. W. Wallis, the first pastor, who blessed the congregation with some comments. There was also the singing of hymns, and one which had an obvious connection to the recent effort to raise the necessary funds for this structure was entitled “Together We Build.” This particular hymn was written by Rev. Tom Miller. An excerpt from this goes: “Together we build. All glory to God. This building we raise to study Thy Word... we yield to Thy call, And trust that Thy Spirit will lead through it all. Amen.” The intent and purpose of this effort was displayed in these words, and the hope that God would lead us in the future. After the singing, Dr. Teems delivered a message that was quite timely and appropriate. His message was “In the Nick of Time”.

An Associate Pastor and the Laying of the Cornerstone

Almost exactly one year after breaking ground, September 24, 1978, the hymn “Together We Build” would again be sung. The people would gather as masons laid the cornerstone for the Family Life Center, and they would rejoice in the completion of this significant project all for the glory of God. The need for this new building had been even more evident in the preceding months. Sunday school attendance had hit a new high and a Children’s Worship Service had been initiated to alleviate overcrowding. The youth were attending and there was an obvious need for a shepherd for that flock of young Christians. A job description for a Minister of Education and Youth had been developed and the church had ardently been seeking such a minister. By the spring of 1978, though the title of the position had been modified to Associate Pastor, Rev. William H. Duke, Jr. was given the call and had accepted it.

Rev. Tom Miller Resigns as Minister of Music

In April of 1975, when the church was between pastors, Rev. Tom Miller was asked by the deacons to provide his considerable talents to the church as Interim Minister of Music. He agreed to this and was later installed as the Minister of Music in 1977. In November 1978, he submitted his resignation. He wrote “with deep appreciation for all who have voluntarily shared their talents with the congregation” in his letter. There were two more actions that would occur before he stepped down from that position, the first being that he was to continue through December 17, 1978. His talents would be put to good use for the glory of God and the church in the Christmas program. Secondly, an “Appreciation Reception” would be held for him after the evening worship service on the 17th. Rev. Miller continued to be a member of the church and still is.

Announcements in 1979

By January of 1979, Rev. Rudy Faas accepted the position of part-time Interim Minister of Music. In April, it was announced that Dr. Paul Crandall would be speaking on “How to Have a Christian Home” on May 13.

Salome Coleman, Director of the WMU told how the WMU ladies would be transporting 50 patients from Chippenham Convalescent Center to a picnic in Forest Hill Park. A youth car wash would be held on June 2 and the contributions would be used to help with the Summer Youth Retreat at Garden City, SC. Ed Thacker announced Sunday school attendance in July was the best July since the church began with an average attendance of 350. Everything seemed to be going strong – the youth were involved, the church was reaching out, and there was growth, even in the summer.

Dr. Bob Teems Resigns

On August 5, 1979, Dr. Teems delivered a sermon that he had entitled “Can These Bones Live Again.” There was obviously a deeper message contained in this sermon. During the called special business meeting that day, Doug Pace read Dr. Teems’ letter of resignation, which was accepted. He would deliver one more sermon to end his career at Huguenot Road Baptist Church on Sunday, August 12, and his message would be “Finally Brethren ...”

A Search for a New Pastor Begins with a Twist

On August 15, at the regular business meeting, Ray Parker placed the following members’ names in nomination for the Pastor Selection Committee: Bland Franklin, Ed Thacker, Jim Langley, Marvin Gregory, Gloria Pace, David Jordan, Sandra Shelton, Salome Coleman, and Keith Boswell. The motion carried.

A committee had been established to find a pastor for the church, but there was a big difference. In the past, there had been no staff to assume that position on a temporary basis. This time, there was. Rev. William A. Duke, Associate Minister would fill that position on an interim basis until a new pastor was located. This fact gave continuity to the church and provided additional time for the search to proceed in an orderly fashion. Furthermore, the name of Huguenot Road Baptist Church, its people and its ministry was definitely out in the public view. By the October business meeting, the Pastor Selection Committee had 35 resumes on hand and had begun their visitations.

No Hiatus This Time

Huguenot Road Baptist Church was able this time to continue its path of meeting the spiritual needs of the congregation and the community without a hiatus while actively seeking a new minister. The people of the church proceeded to new levels of attendance and activity. In January 17, 1980, as the New Year began, so did a new fervor within the church. Sunday school attendance that day reached 413, with almost a perfect split among the attendees. There were 177 adults, 114 youth, and 122 children and preschool. The pictorial directory of the church members was completed. There was basketball practice in the new facility and games were being scheduled across the area. Rev. Jack a Lawson would lead a winter Bible study. The two Sunday morning worship services and one evening worship service continued. There was a continued outreach to the youth for membership in the youth choir, which sang once a month at the evening worship service. A winter retreat in Winchester was held for the youth. Dr. Bill Smith of Chamberlayne Baptist Church would lead a revival from May 4-7. Sandra Shelton reported that in the preceding year, there had been 232 visitors and 155 prospects, with 304 visitations and 23 new members added to the church roll.

Call Extended to Dr. Ray Pollard

In March 1980, the church extended a call to Dr. Ray Pollard, who was serving as pastor of First Baptist Church of South Boston. In what may be labeled an informal acceptance of the offer, Dr. Pollard, in a letter

contained in "The Signpost," wrote of the difficulty in leaving his current church, but, he continued, "your warmth, your kindness and your many expressions of interest in our family has helped confirm our feeling of God's leadership in this move." In this move, he was joined by his wife, Gayle, and son, Scott. He began his service to the people of Huguenot Road Baptist Church on July 6, 1980. His formal installation did not occur until September 14, 1980.

The Pollard Years 1980 -1988

That the church was on the move is quite evident. The church, during the summer, had moved its worship services into the gymnasium (Family Life Center) in order to adequately accommodate the attendance. In August 1980, Butch Eudailey stated that the Child Development Center had 105 enrolled for the coming year. Another aspect of this ministry was the Mothers Morning Out and 82 children had been enrolled. Basketball was becoming a big item for the church and for the youth drawn to such a facility. This was acknowledged when Rod Hale, in December, informed the church that the Annual Senior High R.A. Basketball Tournament would be held at Huguenot Road December 29-30. On March 15, 1981, there was jubilation when the Sunday school, under the direction of Ray Parker, had a record breaking high attendance of 503. In a show of support for those who might be in an emergency situation due to a local disaster, the church offered its facilities for emergency shelter.

There was also an idea of a new sanctuary building that seemed to have worked its way into the minds of the people. John Campbell, in January of 1981, stated that a church member had given \$2,000 to the church, designated for "New Building Construction Only." Since that would be some time in the future, a savings certificate at 12% interest was purchased with those funds.

The first departure from the church's staff occurred on May 13, 1981, when Rev. William A. Duke, who had guided the church through the months as Interim Pastor, and who had been the Associate Pastor since 1978, ended his career at Huguenot Road Baptist Church.

In an effort to give Christian guidance to the young people, a job description for the position of Minister of Youth and Recreation was prepared in July 1981. Rod Hale reported that they had begun interviews for that position by July 18. This led ultimately to the call of Steve Pate on September 13. On December 27, he would be the first minister ordained by Huguenot Road. On April 30, 1983, Rev. Pate left Huguenot Road in answer to a call to serve at Calvary Baptist Church in Jackson, Mississippi.

With God, All Things Are Possible

In October of 1981, Bill Ketron of the Planning Committee made a presentation, using census data, slides and transparencies to forecast future membership for the church. This was a joint presentation with Doug Pace, chairman of the committee, who, at the close of the presentation, read Matthew 19:26 – But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." Doug Pace then moved that the church adopt as the theme for the new building program – "With God, all things are possible."

It was obvious that "With God all things are possible," for on March 27, 1983, the church approved a contract for the planning and design of a new sanctuary with the firm of Huff, Morris, Cox and Associates. Dr. Pollard had expressed this need at numerous meetings where he informed attendees that space was needed for both adult and youth ministries. So the process of moving toward a new sanctuary with all the additional space that would alleviate the overcrowding was underway.

A New Minister of Education

In coming forward with a rationale for the position of Minister of Education, the Personnel Committee stated that first and foremost, the "foundation of the church fellowship is Bible study through the Sunday school

program.” They also stated that trained lay-leadership and a professional staff resource member was essential for the lay members in order to attain that level of expertise. They believed it was important that such a position would be involved with the supervision of the gymnasium. All these thoughts plus many more were collected and detailed in a new job description for that position. While directing the overall education program, this minister would be directly involved with a comprehensive program for the youth which included retreats, special studies, and other activities that would promote their Christian commitment, discipleship and growth. Approving this description in June 1983, the church called Rev. Stephen C. Booth on October 9; he began his service on December 1, 1983.

The Old Way is Not the Best Way

As the church grew, in members, finances and properties, it became quite evident that there was a definite need for the updating of the manner in which records were kept. Accounting was done manually, which necessitated numerous hours of labor. The church membership was kept in a Minute Book and on cards in a card file. When it came to an inventory of the furniture and equipment in the buildings, there simply was no system at all. The tedious typing for the “Signposts,” bulletins and notices, was done by the church secretary. The church, on July 20, 1983, approved the purchase of an IBM personal computer with a 360K floppy disk drive and a 10 megabyte hard drive, a printer and four software packages for the sum of \$12,500, with a \$3500 down payment and the balance spread over the next 63 months. The church had moved into the modern age.

Sidney and Alwilda Reber

1984 will always hold a special place in the hearts and minds of the church members. The Commissioning Service for Sidney and Alwilda Reber on February 19, brought joy and tears to a special event. This couple had been employed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1962 and served in Malaysia. During time spent in Singapore, they aided in starting the International Baptist Church. They returned to Richmond and to Huguenot Road Baptist Church when Sidney became the Director for the Foreign Mission Board’s Management Services Division, and later, Vice President. Retiring in January of 1984, this couple had other plans than a life of leisure. On this day, they were commissioned as volunteers under the auspices of the New Zealand Baptist Union where they would work to establish another church on one of New Zealand’s islands. This was the first commissioning of missionaries by the church.

Youth Work for Opportunity to Spread the Word

That spring, Michelle Gregory, Youth Choir Director, announced that the youth would be traveling to Gatlinburg, Tennessee for a week long youth mission trip to assist the campground ministry of Cindy and Bill Black. Not only would the youth be working during that week, but they would also be working to obtain funds necessary for it. There would be a simultaneous yard sale, bake sale and car wash to raise funds to defray some of the cost. On July 22, the church held a commissioning service for the 29 youth, grades 7-12, and their seven adult sponsors. Leaving the church early on the morning of the 29th, they returned late on August 5. During their week in Gatlinburg, they conducted five day camps and a family evening program in a different campground each night.

The Need for More Space Increases

By the close of 1984, it was even more evident that the path toward a new sanctuary, and therefore more space, had been chosen wisely. The church was still growing in membership. There were now 1034 members

of the congregation. Sunday school enrollment had also broken the thousand member milestone and two new adult classes were added. It should be noted that these new classes were going to have to take over some of the space already occupied by other classes in the gymnasium. It meant that new partitions had to be purchased to give some sense of cohesiveness to the class, as well as to cut down on discussions elsewhere in the gym. Truly, the coming of the new sanctuary would be a time of great joy for all the people, but the ground had not even been broken – yet.

Groundbreaking for a New Sanctuary

Heritage Day, June 9, 1985, presented a remarkable moment in the history of the Huguenot Road Baptist Church. The congregation was 21 years old and had experienced significant growth in both the physical numbers of the congregants as well as in their spiritual development. Church services were being held in the gymnasium, which also served as classrooms for Sunday school classes. Today, a new period of facility expansion would begin which would provide the necessary space for many years to come. Yes, the church was growing, but on this date, there was a message that Dr. Pollard would bring on that day to identify the real basis for the fellowship that all shared. His message on the day was “Growing Together in Love”, and used as its scripture, Hebrews 10:24, which reads, “Let us consider how to stir one another up to love and good works.”

The list of participants in the groundbreaking ceremony that Sunday spoke volumes as to the heart and soul of the church. There was Dr. Pollard; Doug Pace, Chairman of the Building Committee; Marvin Gregory, Chairman of the Building Finance Committee; Bud Staples, Chairman of Deacons; Clint Jennings, who presided at the organizational meeting of the Chapel; and Amy Schneider. Amy was a young girl who was the most recent member of the congregation. Yes, the stalwarts of the church were there, but the hope of the church – its youth – was represented by Amy at this uplifting ceremony.

With the turning of the earth, the members departed to have lunch together under the trees and to share Christian fellowship.

A New Minister of Youth

In June 1986, the church welcomed a new staff member in the position of Minister of Youth, James E. Baucom, Jr. He was a powerful influence for the youth. That was evident in the summer of 1987 when the youth learned of his imminent departure. To display the guidance and direction that he had shown them, they sent a letter entitled “A Letter of Request From the Youth of Huguenot Road Baptist Church,” dated June 21, 1987. Included in that letter was this: “Over the last year, we feel that we have become more a part of the overall life of our church than ever before... In part, our growth has resulted from the presence of a full-time Youth Minister whose efforts have been focused only on our programs and spiritual needs. With his guidance, we have proven ourselves capable of helping to plan and carry out good youth ministry.” Jim Baucom had been a strong Christian guide to these young people and that would be his legacy at the church. In August of 1987, he would leave Huguenot Road to continue his education and spiritual calling by enrolling in the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Dr. Baucom is now the Senior Pastor of Columbia Baptist Church in Falls Church, Virginia.

A Mission Statement is Approved

In mid-June of 1986, Dr. Pollard had broached the idea of the need for a mission statement for Huguenot Road Baptist Church. His thoughts were: what is the mission of this church and what is its purpose? Since

that day, much prayer and consideration had focused on this core principle of the church. On August 20, 1986, the church approved its statement of mission which reads as follows:

“Motivated by the love of Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit, our mission is to glorify God by seeking out and welcoming all people into the family of God through witnessing, preaching and teaching God’s love and forgiveness so that all persons might have the opportunity of a personal relationship with God and participation in a fellowship of Christian believers.”

The route had been mapped and the people saw the goal, the purpose and the hope for Huguenot Road Baptist Church.

The Sanctuary is Dedicated

In just a little over a year, the footprint of the church had undergone a major transformation. On this ground now stands a church with over 18,000 square feet of floor area and seating for approximately 850. There were rooms where choir members could robe, dressing rooms for the ordinance of baptism, and for a grand piano and for a pipe organ. More than that was the way the various elements of this building brought focus. Seating was in a fan arrangement which brought focus to the pulpit and the communion table, for they are the “visible reminders of the centrality of Christ and His sacrifice, and the spoken word of witness to His saving work.” Atop the steeple was placed a “nine foot copper clad cross, reminding all who view it that Christ and His atoning death are central to the message of Christianity.”

September 21, 1986 was indeed a very special day. While it was a celebratory day for all the members of the church, there surely was a special joy in the hearts of Doug Pace, William Grant, Billy Ketron, Sue Monks and Sharon Sprouse who had all served on the Building Committee, Marvin Gregory who had served as Chairman of both the Building Finance Committee and the Together We Build Committee, and the Building Dedication Committee, Tom Miller, Kay Griffin, Rod Hale, Harry Lanzillotti, and Dot Thacker. All their efforts were evident in the program of events and the special guests that came.

The service began at 2:00 p.m. and was a Community Service of Worship, which was in keeping with the mission statement approved in August. Pastors from Bon Air Presbyterian Church, Bon Air Baptist Church, Montrose Baptist Church, and Woodland Heights Baptist Church were in attendance as were representatives from the Southern Baptist Convention, Baptist General Association and the Richmond Baptist Association. Truly this was a service for the Community.

It is wise for us to remember a portion of the Litany of Dedication that was repeated that day, when Dr. Pollard said, “God having graciously moved the members of Huguenot Road Baptist Church in the building of his house of worship, and having brought us to this joyous occasion, let us now proceed to set it apart for its proper and sacred uses, to the praise and honor and glory of His holy name, and to dedicate ourselves to His service.”

The Pipe Organ and Rev. Rudy Faas

Though a grand piano had been obtained and dedicated in the church on October 26, 1986, there was still the matter of the pipe organ. At the April 8, 1987 business meeting, the church approved the purchase of a new pipe organ from the Reuter Organ Company. On the evening of December 6, 1987, there was a dedication of this instrument that would bring music to the ears of the congregation for years to come. This evening it would be played by Dr. Donald P. Hustad, Senior Professor of Church Music at the Southern Baptist

Theological Seminary in Louisville. In the organ prelude, he played familiar old hymns, such as “Amazing Grace” and “Jesus Loves Me.” In the formal dedication ceremony, Dr. Pollard said “Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet. Praise Him with the stringed instruments and organs.” To this call, the people responded “For the glory of God and the joyous worship of His people.”

The joy was evident among the people that night, but they were also aware that Rev. Rudy Faas would soon be leaving Huguenot Road. His last day as Minister of Music for the congregation was on December 31. Surely it was with mixed emotions when he departed, for he had just seen this wonderful organ take its place in the music ministry of which he had been a part since 1979.

1988 and the End of the Pollard Years

1988 was another year of transition. On January 1, Dr. Charles Morris came out of retirement to become the church’s Minister of Pastoral Care. This was a staff position that had long been desired in an effort to meet the needs of senior adults within the church. Also, since the Minister of Music position was vacant, the call went out to Deborah Newman to serve as interim on January 22, which she accepted.

The major turn of events occurred in February when Dr. Pollard resigned effective February 14. A reception was held for him and Gayle at the church on February 7.

During his time at Huguenot Road, the church had grown in numbers and by way of its footprint on the property but more importantly, it had grown spiritually.

Dr. Pollard entitled his last message to the congregation “And Now In My Absence.” Just the title speaks volumes as to his ministry and feelings at the church.

Awaiting a New Pastor

Though the church would be without a full time pastor for many months, the church was able to continue through the efforts of Dr. William D. Dietrich, who was called as Interim Pastor in April and also through the efforts of Rev. Stephen C. Booth, Minister of Education, who shouldered many of the administrative functions during that time.

There were celebrations to be held as well. Of course, there was the annual Heritage Day, but there were other activities that displayed the fellowship of the church as a whole. On June 5, the church honored its graduates. The class of 1988 from Huguenot Road consisted of 22 high school graduates and ten who graduated from colleges and universities.

In September, the church called Richard Tyler Burkett to be the Minister of Youth and he began serving on October 23. He would later be ordained in February of 1989 by the church.

Toward the end of the calendar year, a survey was conducted by Deborah Moore, by which she was able to determine the “Top Ten Hits” or as some would name the “Ten Favorite Hymns” of the church members which would be sung in coming worship services. The list in ascending order was: “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross,” “To God Be the Glory,” “What a Friend We Have in Jesus,” “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God,” “Holy, Holy, Holy,” “Pass It On,” “Because He Lives,” “The Old Rugged Cross,” “How Great Thou Art,” and the number one favorite hymn was “Amazing Grace.”

Call of Dr. Charles H. Chandler

On December 4, 1988, the church would call Dr. Charles H. Chandler to be the next pastor. He was, at the time of this call, the pastor for the Pennsylvania Avenue Baptist Church in Urbana, Illinois. However, he would not begin his pastoral duties until February 1, 1989, and Dr. Dietrich would continue as Interim through the end of January of that year.

The Chandler Years 1989-1993

On March 12, Dr. Chandler was officially installed as pastor for Huguenot Road Baptist Church. His message for the church that day was “Foundation for the New Life.”

Terry Maples Called as Associate Pastor for Education

On September 30, 1990, the church, in a special business meeting, would call Rev. Terry Maples to be the Associate Pastor for Education. Thus began a career for Rev. Maples that would span almost two decades. However, when he arrived at Huguenot Road, one of his first functions was to master a new computer system and software that had been obtained to better communicate with the congregants and to publish such documents as “The Signpost,” as he was the editor. The new system arrived in March 1991.

Phillip Brown Called as Associate Pastor for Youth and Music

Another high point in the life of the church occurred in January of 1992, when a call was extended to Phillip D. Brown to become the Associate Pastor for Youth and Music. He accepted that call and began his ministry on February 9, 1992. He, like Terry Maples, would find his niche at Huguenot Road and continues to serve as Associate Pastor for Music and Worship. Of course, he not only found a home here for the next two decades, he also found a wife. In June of 1993, he married Lisa Michelle Monks, a member of the congregation.

Difficult Times for the Church

A church is but an organization of God’s people and even God’s people can and do disagree. Regrettably, this can lead to conflict within the church. To display the fact that this is not an isolated event, one needs only to look and find that there are individuals specially trained in conflict management within a church. So it was with Huguenot Road. By 1993, there had developed a conflict among the members, the lay leadership and the pastor which, by late August, had brought Dr. George Bullard of the South Carolina Baptist Convention to assist the church and pastor in resolving differences, studying the organizational structure and guiding in the strategic planning of Huguenot Road. There were numerous discussions, reflections and sincere prayerful considerations. After recommendations were received and accepted from Dr. Bullard, on October 31, 1993, Dr. Chandler read his letter of resignation to the entire congregation. While his days at Huguenot Road would officially end on December 31, 1993, Dr. Chandler would become the head of a ministers’ resource organization called “Ministering to Ministers.”

Pressing Forward

By late April, the congregation was on the move again. There was a spring revival led by Rev. Larry D. Wright, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Florence, Alabama. It proved to be an exciting time and one that led to further advances.

On May 1, 1994, Dr. Robert F. Woodward began his service to Huguenot Road Baptist Church as Interim Pastor. His mature leadership aided the congregation in its healing and with its movement on recommendations for improvement to the church as to its mission and identity.

The church continued providing for the spiritual health of its members and its commitment to its youth. There were, of course, concerts by the choirs, youth trips which ranged from skiing to canoeing, special presentations at the revival each night, and Vacation Bible School. There were many more, but one example of the goodwill and mission focus of the church during this time can be seen in the actions of six men in May. From May 14 – 21, men from the church journeyed to Northridge, California, to help the Northridge Mandarin Baptist Church after it had been damaged by an earthquake. Their assistance in helping this church recover was greatly appreciated by their membership.

By July, a pastor search committee had been established. Given the results of that committee's efforts, it is appropriate to identify them in this history. The Chairman of this Committee was Bland Franklin. The other members were Jim Babb, Debbie Cline, Ron Denny, Sheila Hage, Rod Hale, Ron Hurley, Ray Parker and Gayle Pollard.

Call of Dr. Herbert (Bert) O. Browning, Jr.

On Sunday, February 26, 1995, at a called business meeting, Gayle Pollard, Assistant Chairman of the Pastor Search Committee, presented to the church members the recommendation that Dr. Herbert (Bert) O. Browning, Jr. be called as the Senior Pastor of Huguenot Road Baptist church, effective May 2. This would be an "up or down" vote, and the written ballots were tallied. It was definitely an "up," for the vote was 412 in favor and 2 opposed. Such a resounding approval of the recommendation not only spoke well of Dr. Browning, but also the committee that had labored long and hard to find what would be a perfect fit for Huguenot Road.

A Bit of Background on Dr. Browning

Educated in the Chesterfield County Public School system, he had attended and graduated from the College of William and Mary in 1973. From there, he went to Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, receiving his Masters of Divinity in 1976. In 1988, he would receive his doctorate from Union Theological Seminary in Richmond. At the time of his call to Huguenot Road, he had been the pastor of Culpeper Baptist Church for 10 years.

There was one Sunday at Culpeper that he will probably never forget. On that day, he delivered his sermon, not only to his congregation, but also to several visitors. In the sanctuary that morning were President-elect Bill Clinton and his running mate, Al Gore, who were on their way to Washington for the inauguration. If that was not enough, former Governor Doug Wilder and Senator Chuck Robb were also in attendance. Apparently, all went off without a hitch and the only angst that Dr. Browning had was the same he feels before every sermon.

Preparing for Dr. Browning's Arrival

One of the vital modifications at the church to accommodate the incoming pastor dealt with office space. Room 205 was converted to the Pastor's Office/ Study. This involved new walls, new electrical outlets, and paint. It was also necessary to "install several feet of bookcases to accommodate Dr. Browning's many volumes of books and study material." Debbie Cline and Jeannie Nofsinger added a special touch to the new office by making beautiful drapes. These modifications were complete by April 28 and just in time for the arrival of our new pastor.

The Bert Browning Years 1995-2013

When Dr. Browning arrived to begin his service to Huguenot Road Baptist Church, the idea of being a pastor here for almost two decades was probably not on his mind. It was fairly obvious from his time in Culpeper that his ministry there had shown that he was a “keeper,” but that which was on his mind is summed up in his own words. He wrote, “It is an honor and a privilege to serve as your pastor. Let us grow together.” And grow in faith, in spirit and in numbers we did.

Installation Service on May 7, 1995

It had been over a year since the church had a full time pastor, and on this day, there would be an inspiring ceremony. Dr. Ray Pollard, who had led the church from 1980 to 1988, would be the one to give the charge to the Church and its new Pastor. There were also participants in the activities representing the Richmond Baptist Association, the Virginia Baptist General Board and Historical Society, pastors of the Friendship Memorial Baptist Church and Christ the King Lutheran Church, the Associate Pastors of Huguenot Road, and the diaconate of our church. Music was provided through the efforts of Phillip Brown, the Chancel Choir and the James River Brass. Also, Tracie Simpson, representing the youth of the church, read Ephesians 4:11-16. Of course, Bland Franklin was there as well, having served as the Chairman of the Pastor Search Committee.

After the service, there was a time of celebration in the Family Life Center where a reception was held to honor Dr. Browning, his wife Rose, and the rest of his family.

1995, a Year of Growing at Home and Spreading the Word

Dr. Browning brought to the Sunday services his own unique style of presenting God’s Word to the people. His sermons were rich in content and loving in their design. His administrative capability, and especially his leadership for both the staff and the congregation, was inspiring to all. That influence was evidenced by the effect that his ministry had on church membership. During the first seven months of Dr. Browning’s tenure, there were 89 who came forward and joined the church. There had been 51 by letter, 28 by baptism and ten by statement. Attendance at worship services and Sunday school had noticeably increased as well. In order to reach those unable to attend the regular worship services, a “cassette ministry” was initiated and shut-ins received cassettes upon which had been recorded the Sunday morning choir offering, the Scripture reading and the pastor’s message.

During 1995, the church experienced a revitalization in missions both locally and afar. From June 11-14, six women and four men journeyed to the western part of Virginia to work at the Bland County Ministry and Dental Clinic. During these four days, they staffed a dental clinic for three days which provided dental health care to 45 patients. They also participated in making needed repairs on some of the homes and the center where they were working. This mission activity continues to this day.

On July 16, the church conducted a commissioning service for the 29 youth and adults who would carry the message of Christ to Mexico City. At the close of the Litany of Commissioning, the pastor and congregation said “May God Bless You!” This was followed by the team saying “Que Dios le bendiga!” (May God Bless You!) Phillip Brown then led this group, from July 22 to July 29, to our southern neighbor where they witnessed to people on a daily basis, ministered in parks and on the streets through clowns, mimes and

backyard studies and conducted nightly services at a Baptist church. After they returned, there was a shared evening worship service and ice cream social where they related the experiences of that trip.

From Matthew 25:40, we receive a direction that we should follow in meeting the needs of the less fortunate. "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." Building upon that theme, the church opened its doors to the less fortunate for seven days, through CARITAS, which stands for Congregations Around Richmond Involved To Assure Shelter. Approximately 30 homeless individuals were provided three meals a day (a hot breakfast, a bag lunch and a hot evening meal), overnight sleeping arrangements at the church, and other personal services. Many of the congregation participated in one way or another through either the WMU or the Sunday school classes in providing those meals or other services.

While giving of their time and talents in the spreading of God's Word, the congregation had also given financially to support mission efforts. In supporting home missions, state missions, associated missions, global missions, the Foreign Mission Board, a local benevolence fund, World Hunger and the mission trips to Mexico and Bland County, contributions totaled \$74, 524.01.

By the time that Christmas rolled around, there was another noticeable change that was being well received. Advent devotions had been prepared for several years, but this year, it would be different. Under the auspices of Terry Maples, the lay membership prepared those devotions. Through this process, the preparers of the daily devotions were able to express, to other members and the community, their heartfelt contemplation on the love of Christ during this season.

Toward the 21st Century

In late 1995, the church initiated the small group program and trained facilitators to lead in these various discussion groups. Programs normally lasting approximately eight weeks were begun in early 1996. These programs provided a valuable resource in dealing not only with studies of the Bible, but also with a Christian approach to addressing some of life's more difficult problems and were designed for specific audiences. The first group of these sessions, which began in January and concluded in March, would cover topics dealing with "Parenting by Grace," "Caring for Aging Parents," "Helping My Child Succeed in School," "Retirement – Are You Really Ready," "Adult Children of Alcoholics" and a "Winter Bible Study – Amos." The small groups process remains a part of the ministry of the church today.

The psalmist directs us in Psalm 98:4 to "make a joyful noise unto the Lord." There is also a benefit to having new hymnals available to all so these joyful noises may be vocalized. In February 1996, the church considered and approved the purchase of 808 new hymnals. The story does not end at this point, because we are also directed to be good stewards of the church's funds. At a price of only \$7 each, this was certainly a deal. Also, approximately half of these hymnals would be purchased by members, designating them as honorariums or memorials. This further reduced demand on the church's budget. On June 6, 1996, there was a special dedication service for these hymnals.

T-Net

In order to fulfill the Great Commission, on September 4, 1996, the church approved a new focus which was entitled "T-Net," the abbreviated form of "Training Network for Disciplemaking Churches." This would be a two year process and not a seminar. It provided a very meaningful experience and allowed the thorough analysis of the disciple making potential of every program and ministry of the church, which was both

instructional and in some cases transformational. Therefore, it would be a way to grow and nurture disciples. It involved three different tracks - leadership, education and evangelism. As a training process, it gave training to individuals so that they in turn would train others in the vital role of winning people to Christ.

Meeting Needs

In prior years, the church had a custom of receiving contributions on the first Sunday of each month for its benevolent fund. This was established as a means to provide emergency funds for families in our immediate community, which had fallen on difficult times. The church also participated with CCHASM, the Chesterfield-Colonial Heights Alliance for Social Ministry, in addressing some of those needs. However, with the beginning of 1997, an addition had been made to the budget which included, for the first time, direct appropriation to the benevolence fund. Although special offering envelopes continued to be provided for special contributions, this assured the membership of continued support for this needed fund.

Back in roughly 1987, several church members had purchased the house at 10532 Ashburn Road, looking at this purchase as a means of meeting long range goals for the expansion of HRBC. Originally, it had been estimated that these members would hold the property for no longer than three years. Because of a change in some of the owners' membership at HRBC, there was a proposal to dedicate the equity of the property and have the church assume the mortgage. Realizing the value of the property and that it could well serve the ministry of the church, on February 23, 1997, the congregation voted to procure the property under those conditions. It should be noted that during the construction phase underway at the church in 2013-2014, this property served as the offices for church staff. Prior to the construction, the property had been rented and later used by the youth of the church.

On October 19 the church voted to call Susan Price to be the Associate Pastor for Youth and Children. In effect, this was almost a homecoming event. Susan Price was raised in the Richmond area and "literally grew up at HRBC." She had graduated from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary with a Masters in Christian Education. At the time of her call, she was Minister of Youth and Children at Bethlehem Baptist Church in Bethlehem, Kentucky. She assumed her duties at HRBC on November 1, 1997.

By increasing the staff to include an Associate Pastor for Children and Youth, this allowed Phillip Brown, who previously had held the position of Associate Pastor for Youth and Music, to become the Associate Pastor for Music and Worship. Rev. Brown was now able to focus his considerable talents and energies on the music ministry of the church as well as to provide oversight of the Sunday worship services.

Because of the overcrowded conditions in Sunday school, the church was presented with a method to handle this wonderful, though problematic, issue. Though concepts for the renovation of the Wallis Building were proceeding, a new approach was presented to the church on January 18, 1998. The congregation approved a plan for a two session system for the Sunday school which would begin in September. The vote was 225 to 91, or 71% believing this was the best available approach to solving overcrowding.

Plans for the renovation of the Wallis Building moved from concept to action on March 22, 1998. This renovation, which would cost \$118,000, would relocate the library to a prominent position, create a flexible education area that could accommodate up to four classrooms, and finally would create an office suite to house the offices of the church staff. This would ease some of the overcrowding as well as place staff in a concentrated location. By April, \$25,986.37 had been raised for this project.

From May 15-17, the music ministry of the church reached out to its members and to the community. On those three days, the outdoor musical “How Great thou Art” by David Clydesdale, was performed. The Chancel Choir sang the musical score and members of all ages participated in this dramatic presentation that focused on the life of Christ and the last week of His earthly ministry. This effort was blessed in many ways. First of all, the weather was very accommodating, which was in part responsible for over 800 being in attendance. Secondly, and far more important, several decisions were made, as were numerous contacts. This truly displayed that the music ministry at HRBC is a valuable asset in reaching and teaching the people of God.

Staff Changes in May 1998

Change is a constant in the life of individuals and change is no stranger to a church. It was with great pleasure that the church tapped one of its own to fill a newly created position of Ministry Intern. Mark Tolley, a long time member at HRBC and who was at that time attending the Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond, was offered and accepted a two year internship under the guidance of the Pastor and the Associate Pastor for Education/Administration. While providing some financial assistance for Mark, it gave him hands-on experience in the internal workings of a church. It would also be the first step in a continuing internship program with the seminary.

This month also brought the retirement of one of the stalwart staff at HRBC. Fran Franklin, who had led the Child Development Center since July 1976, hung up her chalk, scissors and marking pens. In an article in the May 21, 1998 “Signpost,” the Pastor noted the following: “Most of the membership of HRBC does not remember when Fran Franklin was not the Director of the Child Development Center.” He continued by writing “If there were words adequate to express to Fran the gratitude of our congregation for her faithful ministry, I would use them. Words, however, seem not capable of saying what we all would like to convey to her of our love and our admiration for her consistent care for the children of the community.” In June, Janet Hamrick would take over the reins of the CDC as its director.

Services of the Church Change

Beginning in July 1998, in an effort to meet the needs and wishes of the community and our members, the church brought about a change in the way we present our living Lord. There had been an expression of the need for a contemporary worship service that would be aimed at presenting the worship experience in a slightly different manner. On Sunday the 26th, a contemporary worship service was held in the Family Life Center. This time of praise and worship carried as its theme “Becoming a People Builder.” This served as the genesis of the evening contemporary services that would begin in the winter of the next year.

Later, in September, following the direction of the congregation, the Sunday school was split into two sessions, with the first session beginning at 8:30, followed by the regular Sunday worship Service at 9:45, and then the second session of Sunday school commenced at 11:00. This practice would continue for about five years.

Following the direction contained in Psalm 98: 5-6, which reads, “Sing unto the Lord with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm. With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the Lord, the King,” the Music Ministry also changed. In addition to the Chancel Choir, the High School Choir, the Middle School Choir, TeamKid Four and Five, TeamKid Two and Three, and the Adult Bells, three new musical ensembles were established. New to the church were the High School Handbell Choir, the HRBC Orchestra, and the Praise Team.

Physical Modifications to the Church

Prior to the initiation of a renovation of the Wallis Building, it was determined that the total estimated cost of \$118,000 for the renovations would need to be in hand before any of the work actually began. Such stewardship of the church's resources is a valuable asset in meeting such commitments. Therefore, the renovation began in June of 1999. When the actual cost of the renovations came forth in September, items such as construction, asbestos removal, electrical upgrades, and the cost of room dividers had increased the total cost to \$169,970. Fortunately, the church had entered into a contract that involved the installation of communication antennae which had been placed in the steeple, and this provided about half of the shortfall. The remainder was made up through previous donations and contingency funds. Later in the year, on November 21, 1999, the church would again celebrate and dedicate a newly renovated Wallis Building.

“Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat”

From July 16-18, the Music Ministry of the church presented the noted “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.” The participants at the five performances were greeted by a “standing room only” crowd and approximately 1200 attended the dinner and show. This was not just an entertainment fete, but also served as a means of presenting the church to the community. During the intermission, one of the ministerial staff would offer an invitation to visitors, which was coupled with literature about the church made available. This provided valuable information about our ministry to the community and raised about \$4200 for a mission/music partnership in the summer of 2000.

Twelve Years of Playing the Pipes Comes to an End

1999 had been a great year for the Music Ministry at HRBC, but there was one event that must have been very emotional for the congregation as a whole. On October 17, Dwight Graham concluded his twelve years as the church's organist. He was noted as having a “passionate commitment to excellence” in his efforts and the membership was keenly aware of his talents. While he would be taking on the position of organist and assistant choir director at St. Mary's Episcopal Church, there was one bit of good news and that would be that he and his family would continue their membership at Huguenot Road. Another bit of good news would be that waiting in the wings to take control of the “pipes” on Sunday morning would be Dennis Nofsinger, who would serve as Interim Organist until he would drop the term “interim” in 2002. Dennis still remains the church's organist as of 2014.

Baptist Pastors Come to Huguenot

From November 7-8, 1999, Huguenot Road Baptist Church took center stage when it came to preaching the Word of Christ. “Proclaiming the Message for a New Millennium” was the theme for the 1999 Virginia Baptist Pastors' Conference which preceded the Baptist General Assembly annual meeting and was held at our church. During those two days, there would be three sessions, with the first including a massed choir from our church and that of the Cedar Street Baptist Church of God. Our own Dr. Browning, who was President of the Pastor's Conference, issued an invitation to the membership which started off with the emboldened headline of “Want to Hear Some Good Preaching?” Speaking at this conference would be Dr. Linda Bridges of the Baptist Theological Seminary, Dr. Benjamin Robertson, Sr. of Cedar Street Baptist Church of God, Rev. Alvin Edwards of Mount Zion Baptist Church of Charlottesville, Dr. Ronald Runion of Mount Vernon Baptist Church of Glen Allen, Dr. John Chandler of the Virginia Mission Board and Dr.

Leonard I. Sweet, the Dean of Drew University School of Theology and noted author. Taking a phrase from a commercial popular at that time, Dr. Browning said, "It doesn't get any better than this!"

Healthy Community for a Healthy Church

The first "Health Fair" was organized and conducted by our Parish Nurse, Caroline Johns. On February 19, 2000, the church provided a service to its members and the community by having 14 doctors, nurses and other volunteers at the ready to give basic health tests and to collect blood for the Virginia Blood Service. On that date, there were 36 people who had their blood pressure and cholesterol levels checked. When we think upon the sacrifice of our Lord and His shed blood for the forgiveness of our sins, it seems quite appropriate that life giving blood should also be collected at His church. 15 units of blood were collected on this day by the Virginia Blood Service. Indeed, the fair was so well received that another fair which would deal with influenza and pneumonia inoculations was scheduled for October 21. However, as many of you may remember, the flu vaccine was in short supply in late 2000, so the influenza vaccinations were held on December 3.

Close "The Signpost" and Open "The Road"

Since 1972, "The Signpost" had been coming to our mailboxes on a weekly basis. It had undergone changes since the days of Dr. Teems, including the change to have it printed as part of the Religious Herald, beginning in 1995. As the saying goes, "All good things must someday end," and that is what happened to "The Signpost." The last edition of it appeared in the February 24, 2000 issue of the Religious Herald, but as noted in Dr. Browning's remarks in that issue, there was a bit of comfort. "In The Road, you will find many of the features you have grown accustomed to in "The Signpost." You will also find some new features, one of which will be an updated calendar of activities for the upcoming month." Yes, the weekly "Signpost" was gone, but the monthly "Road" was now its new newsletter of information and events.

Staff Addition and Change in Responsibilities

On April 30, 2000, the church called Mark S. Tolley to be the Associate Pastor for Outreach and Administration, a position he would assume upon graduation from the Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond. This was a new position, but Mark Tolley was not really new to the church by any stretch of the imagination. He grew up in HRBC and his previous position was that of Ministry Intern. On October 1, he was ordained to the Gospel Ministry by the church.

This also brought about changes in duties for the existing staff members. Terry Maples' position changed to Associate Pastor for Education and Discipleship.

Emily Browning came on board at HRBC in June of 2000 as the Summer Youth and Children's Ministry Intern and by September, she had become the Ministry Intern.

In October of 2000, Sue Clark, who had filled the position of Office Manager and Financial Secretary for many years, resigned. Her successor, Lindy St. John, came aboard in December. Lindy served in that position until her resignation, effective April 30, 2014.

With the change in ministerial responsibilities, the staff was better able to devote their time, in their designated fields, to meet the special needs of the congregation.

New Waders

As anyone who has assisted with a baptism is aware, the minister, at least at HRBC, wears waders so that he can return to the sanctuary to complete the worship service without having to go through a change of clothes. To any fly fisherman or minister, having a hole come into those waders can lead to a filling of them with water and the inability to exit from that water. Although it was a very small matter, in the spring of 2000, the church purchased Dr. Browning a new set of waders because “the others had a small hole.”

Ed Thacker

On August 22, 2000, the congregation lost one of its most stalwart members, Ed Thacker. In the In Focus section of the March 2000 edition of “The Road,” Terry Maples had written one of his “Profiles in Faith” articles about Ed Thacker. It told of his becoming a Christian at the age of nine and his years of being dedicated to the Christian faith and ultimately to a little group that went by the name of Huguenot Road Baptist Chapel. That little chapel would grow into Huguenot Road Baptist Church and Ed grew with it. It was noted that his biggest thrill in life was helping to start HRBC. He had served as a deacon, trustee and general secretary for the Sunday school, in addition to many other positions. He attributed much of his spiritual growth to his wife, Dot. Truly, the church mourned the loss of one of its charter members and a devoted servant of Jesus Christ.

Missions

Missions have always played an important role in the life of Huguenot Road Baptist Church. Meeting both the spiritual and the physical needs of God’s people has always been a priority. The giving of gifts such as socks and gloves in the early days was a means of showing the church’s concern for our “neighbor.” Likewise, the efforts of the Women’s Missionary Union always provided an impetus for going forth into the world. There were efforts such as the 5th Sunday Food Offering, special collections for Ethiopia and Haiti, and mission trips by members to show Christian love for our fellow man, always conducted with a dedication of spirit and a warmth that so epitomized the congregation. In the August 2000 edition of “The Road,” a nine month summary of the giving of financial gifts to missions displayed the true cross section of the church’s commitment to this noble effort.

International Missions Board	\$13,458
Cooperative Baptist Fellowship	\$ 9,032
North American Missions	\$ 5,417
Global Mission – CBF	\$ 3,612
Richmond Baptist Association	\$ 3,972
Virginia Cooperative Program	\$15,889
World Mission 3	\$ 312
HRBC Missions Team	\$ 9,083
World Hunger	\$ 983
Camp Alkulana	\$ 246
Total	\$62,004

Huguenot Road Baptist Church has always reached out to the community, the area, the state, the nation and indeed, the world. While members are often unable to participate physically in a mission trip, by their gifts they are able to follow Christ’s direction to His disciples which He gave to them shortly after His resurrection. John 20:21 reads as follows: “Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.” Members still continue to send others when they are unable to go themselves.

Core Values

Also in August 2000, the church approved a Purpose and a set of Core Values for the congregation.

Our Purpose:

Huguenot Road Baptist Church is a Christian faith community whose foundation is Jesus Christ. We believe that God has called our church to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ in our community and around the world. Desiring to be responsive to the different ways God brings people together for redemptive purposes, we have identified commonly held values that define our distinctiveness and unify our collective ministry efforts.

Our Core Values:

The worship of God is foundational for Christians and for our faith community.

Our church is accountable to God to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ with a sense of urgency in our community and around the world.

Christians are to grow and mature spiritually through Bible study, disciplining ministries, and practicing the disciplines of the Christian faith.

Using our God-given gifts to serve others, our church is to be a visible presence of Christ in the world.

Loving relationships must permeate our church, inspiring us to value times of Christian fellowship, care for one another, and to become a unified faith community.

Each member is responsible before God to invest time, talents, and financial resources to build up the body of Christ to empower our church's witness in the community and around the world.

In our desire to honor God and to inspire and attract people, we will pursue excellence in all our endeavors.

God's call is dynamic, and our church is to remain flexible and responsive to the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

By this action, the church had charted its course for movement into the 21st century.

The Close of the 20th Century

With all the concern over the potential for mass computer failure, known simply as Y2K, that started the year, the happenings at Huguenot Road as we approached the dawn of the new century made all those concerns fade into oblivion. While others had worried over what might happen, the church rejoiced in what had happened some 2000 years earlier and in the ongoing mission of the church. To close the year, there was the drive through Living Nativity on December 1-3. The Chancel Choir presented "Carols of the Nativity" in the sanctuary on December 17. On Christmas Eve, we would have a service that featured the High School Handbells, the Chancel Choir, the TeamKids, and the congregation singing hymns of the season. That night, like all the Christmas Eve's before, there would be a candlelight service. But, maybe the best was yet to come.

On December 31, during regular worship, there was a very special part of that service. On New Year's Eve, Dee Counts, Kimberly Honor, Stephanie Honor, Megan Nunn, Christa Pingor, Tyler Stanley, Ed Kozusko, and Anna Beth Kozusko were all baptized. One would find it difficult to ponder a better way to enter the New Year than this.

HRBC in the 21st Century

The year 2001 had arrived and with it the new century; some things would change and some would not. There would be new opportunities for spreading the Good News, and the faith and commitment of the church in adopting those new opportunities remained rock solid. One item that was definitely changing was that church membership was still increasing. As we entered the New Year, there were 1444 members of the congregation. Furthermore, Bible Study attendance for January 7 was 498 and the morning worship service that day was attended by 589.

The internet is here to stay and the church moved into its use quite logically and with care. The first announcement of its use by the church came on January 21, 2001. This would be a private web site, which is called an intranet. That Sunday, members learned that they could access the intranet to learn of activities at the church and other basic information. While the notice made it clear that there was no cost to join, there was one catch. Anyone who wanted to use it had to have a password. To get that password, one had to contact David Jordan. One can be relatively certain that David's mail box was filled to overflowing with the requests and his fingers tired of typing out responses. This was a significant step in the church using the newly available communication tools to reach out to members.

However, the intranet was rather short-lived. Members were notified that particular service would not be available after June 30. The reason quite simply was that the church was moving to have its own website, which would be up and running in the near future..

Strategic Plan

The core values that the church had established back in August of 2000 led directly to a "Strategic Plan" being presented to the church on April 22, 2001. It dealt with the appropriate response to the following three statements: "What we are here to do!" "What we will become!" and "How we plan to 'live out' our values!"

Mission Statement – What we are here to do!

Our mission is to be a loving Christian community reaching out to all people to glorify God through worship, spiritual growth, proclamation of the Good News of Jesus Christ, and ministry to the needs of the world. (Acts 1:8)

Vision Statement – What we will become!

We seek to be a growing, outwardly focused, transforming presence in the world, helping all persons connect with Jesus Christ and with one another.

How we plan to "live out" our values!

Relationships – We care for one another and maintain a welcoming fellowship.

Worship – We worship the living God corporately and privately.

Spiritual Growth – We grow spiritually through Bible study, discipleship and practicing the disciplines of the Christian faith.

Ministry – We use our God-given gifts to serve others in Christ's name.

Excellence – We honor God and attract people by pursuing excellence in all our endeavors..

Proclamation – We proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ with urgency in our community and around the world.

Stewardship – We responsibly invest time, talents and financial resources to build the Body of Christ and empower witnessing locally and globally.

Flexibility – We will remain flexible and responsive to the dynamic leadership of the Holy Spirit.

This Strategic Plan was adopted by the church in the Business Meeting held that day.

Member Missionaries In 2001

The first of these was from June 16 – 25 when 28 members of the church traveled east to Austria. Led by Phillip Brown, the focus of this group was to reach students in that country with the Gospel, through musical presentations, sharing time at the three different schools and leading in worship services. This also showed the cooperative spirit of the church as it was in partnership with the Virginia Baptist Mission Board and the Austrian Baptist Union.

Another group consisting of Amanda Browning, Carroll Chancellor, Ryan Felts, Andrew Maples, Susan Price and Kim Stratton, headed south to Brazil in July. Commissioned by the church on July 15, they would be using both hands and heart as they did construction work and spread the word of Christ in the town of Campo Grande.

Dawn Arrington had headed west to Thailand where she continued her student work and Lynn Lanzilotti had headed west to China where she was teaching English.

But all did not go “overseas” to conduct their missionary activities. In July, 63 adults and youth drove north to Philadelphia to participate in “Ministry Fuge” in Philadelphia. There they would concern themselves with various work projects, Backyard Bible Clubs, and other ministry activities in the Philadelphia Area. This seven day experience provided help to those in need and spiritual growth for those who went.

More local in nature were the ministries to Bland County, CARITAS, CCHASM, and several retirement centers in the area. Concerning CARITAS, on April 22, this function was approved as an ongoing ministry of the church.

9-11-2001

The events of 9-11-2001 will forever live in the memories of those who saw the collapsing twin towers of the World Trade Center. The smoke, the dust and the frightened masses fleeing from the carnage will be forever etched in our memories. After the fires were out and the smoke had settled, the magnitude of the loss came forth and the people of our country grieved. While the congregation of HRBC grieved for all those lost, it had also suffered a personal loss. Doug Ketcham, a member of HRBC since a youth, perished in this disaster.

“The Road to Freedom”

In late October, the church embarked on “The Road to Freedom” campaign. This was a campaign to separate the church from the lingering debt of \$1.6 million that still remained on the loan for the building of the sanctuary. The church contracted with Resource Services, Inc. to lead in this program, based on their noted successes in similar circumstances. To exemplify the need for conducting such a campaign, the church in 2001 had budgeted \$177,036 to cover the principal plus interest costs on the existing note. To remove such a financial constraint would enable the church to pursue other efforts. Over a period of three weeks, beginning October 21, the Sunday school classes had lessons based on biblical stewardship. This road to financial freedom covered a three year period, but was well underway for its outset.

2002 Begins with Trial Contemporary Service

On January 27, a new approach to the ministry service at HRBC was set for the evening worship service. On that day, there would be a contemporary service with the “As One” praise team providing the music and Emily Browning delivering the message which was “Developing Your Own Mission Statement.” The intent of this type of service was to reach all Christians and to provide a different means of transmitting the Good News to those who have never frequented church services. It was fairly obvious that this method of presenting God’s Word was well received, for on the 17th of February, an ad appeared in the bulletin which was entitled “Drummer Needed.” As part of the requirements, it noted that the drummer needed to be “committed to the Contemporary Worship Ministry at HRBC.” The contemporary service began in the fall on September 8 as the evening service.

Some of the Missions in 2002

With hammer in hand, members of the church joined with other local Christian churches to aid in the construction of a home under the auspices of Habitat For Humanity. On June 29, a new home was constructed in the Merriewood Subdivision, just off Route 1 in Chesterfield. This exemplified the teaching found in James 2:18b which reads, “I by my works will show you my faith.” Together, HRBC with eleven other churches provided this service to the needy of the area.

The Bland Mission was commissioned by the church on June 9, for a four day mission trip to Bland, Virginia. Dr. Felix Shepard and a team of helpers would be there to provide dental services to the needy of the area, as well as to help with the clothes closet, the pantry and preparing meals.

The HRBC Orchestra started a whirlwind tour with a presentation of “Worship of God ... Through Music” on July 17 at Huguenot Road. The narrated program would have gospel based hymn pieces as well as contemporary chorus based pieces. It would also include a patriotic section and one geared for the children of the audience. There would be 39 members who would travel to Suffolk, VA, Cary, NC, Rockingham, NC and wind up at Liberty Baptist Church in Appomattox, VA on Sunday, July 21.

A Year of Ordinations

HRBC was privileged to have three ordinations to the ministry in 2002. On August 4, Susan N. Price, our Associate Pastor for Youth and Children Ministries, was ordained. One week later, on August 11, Brian Hamrick was ordained into the Gospel Ministry and HRBC’s long-time friend and former pastor would deliver the ordination sermon. Finally, on November 3, Dr. Linda Gilliam would be ordained into the Gospel Ministry. It is always a pleasure to see those called by God to serve His people and for Huguenot Road to be a part of that installation.

A Very Slight Staffing Change

Dennis E. Nofsinger had been playing the organ for church services since 1999, when Dwight Graham resigned, and had carried the title of Interim Organist since then. Well, in September, his title was officially changed to “Organist.” Through all the years since 1999, Dennis has blessed the church with his talent at the organ. He coaxes beautiful melodies from the instrument as his fingers glide across the keys. The church is very fortunate to have someone so talented who is also so committed as he still continues to play for the services in 2014.

Change for Christmas Eve

The Christmas Eve at Huguenot Road would change on December 24 to better serve the families of faith in our growing congregation. This would be the first time that there had been an early family oriented service which started at 5:30. It seemed quite appropriate, with small children in the audience, that after the singing of “Away in a Manger,” the Pastor would deliver a sermon entitled “If There Had Been No Stable.” At the 11:00 service, there would be the traditional passing of the light and the singing of “Silent Night, Holy Night.” The Christ Child had come to Bethlehem and to Huguenot Road.

It Had Been a Good Year

It had been a good year for the church. The total membership had increased to 1508. The Road to Freedom had been quite successful in that pledges for over 71% of the goal had been attained by June. By the close of the books on December 31, the contributions for this debt reduction had exceeded \$455,000. Members had invested in the church, the community, and the world with their hearts, their hands, and their monies, all to the glory of God.

A Fast Break for Christ in 2003

This year, the youngsters within HRBC and surrounding churches celebrated their 3rd year of Upward basketball. This ministry which combined Christian ministry with basketball had seen 800 youngsters participate in the program. During the half-time of a game, there would be a period of about three minutes for prayer or testimony by an adult for the benefit of the youngsters and for the glory of God. This ministry provided the positive influence of adults who served as coaches, gym monitors and of course, prayer partners with these youngsters and showed a continuing cooperative effort where HRBC was able to “partner with other churches for kingdom work.” One might say that this mixing of Christian teaching and basketball coaching resulted in a “fast break for Christ.”

Dr. Charles Herbert Morris

In February of 2003, Dr. Morris, Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care, celebrated his 15th year at HRBC. In November of 2002, he had observed his 60th year as an ordained Baptist minister. He and his wife Erica had been missionaries to the Far East in Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines for 30 years before they came to HRBC. In the 15 years at HRBC, he had touched so many lives. He made trips to hospitals or homes to visit the ill or infirm, taught Bible study groups at the church, visited at Assisted Living Centers, counseled members, was deeply involved with the Triple “L” Club, provided weekly Bible study for residents of assisted living centers, conducted or assisted in funerals, and even performed weddings to just touch on a few of his many activities. He also was instrumental in starting the “Healing Hearts Club” which provided positive support for those who had lost a spouse.

On December 31, 2003, Dr. Morris would send a letter to the church signifying the end of his career here. He spoke of the highs and the lows, the joys and the sorrows of his ministry, and the encouragement he had received from the church members. He also thanked all of the church for what they had “contributed to make Erica and me a part of this Christian family and better servants for our Lord.”

While his departure would bring tears to the eyes of members, more tears would be shed. On December 2, 2004, Erica Hoffmann Morris would pass over and Dr. Morris would follow her on March 27, 2006. On the 29th of March of 2006, there would be a memorial service for him at HRBC.

Truly, this was a dedicated servant of the Lord and as he and his wife passed through the veil, one can be certain that they were each greeted with the words, "Well done thou good and faithful servant."

Prayer for Service Personnel

2003 was a turbulent year for the world. United States forces moved against Iraq on March 20, 2003. The world was teetering and there was widespread concern for the men and women in the armed forces that were in harm's way. Because of the concern for our military forces, the church placed a "Prayer for American Service Personnel" information sheet in the April 6, 2003 bulletin which requested information related to the serviceman for whom prayer was being requested. The next Sunday the prayer list with 12 names, with their ages, ranks, branch of service and place of deployment, was included in the worship bulletin. The church showed its concern and its appreciation for the efforts of these young men and women.

In addition to the special emphasis for our armed forces members in April, the Missions Team was able to send 100 New Testaments that had been prepared by the Gideon Society to service personnel in Iraq, Kuwait and Afghanistan so that they might be able to read and study God's word.

A Bit of Humor at the Quarterly Business Meeting of July 20, 2003

Some people do not believe that Baptists have a sense of humor. However, based on the minutes of the July meeting, one would have to say that is not a correct assessment. Under "New Business" can be found the following:

"2. A recommendation was made that we sell the old church van. It does not start or run and the insurance paid for it when it was stolen.

A vote was taken by Aye/No and the motion passed."

Thank goodness that the motion passed or that old van might still be sitting in the parking lot, not starting or running.

New Music and Ministry Intern

In September, Joan K. Thurman came on board the church staff as the Music and Ministry Intern. She was in her 4th year at the Baptist Theological Seminary and would be staying with the church until her graduation in May of 2004. Under the tutelage of Phillip Brown, she worked with all age ensembles and instrumental groups.

A "Functioning Website"

"Finally!" That would have been the understatement of the year, if only someone had said it. However, in making a report at the October business meeting, Mark Tolley came very close to saying just that. What he reported was "Please take note that HRBC now has a fully functioning website!!!" This announcement was a long time in coming. Yes, www.hrbcrichmond.org was up and running; however, he also added a cautionary word to the announcement noting that it would always be, as he put it, "a work-in-process." This website still functions as an excellent outreach tool in today's computer and internet oriented society.

The 40th Year of HRBC, 2004, was a Busy One

Beginning with the first Sunday in January, the church embarked on a novel approach to helping the church find itself and its place in the spreading of God's Word. Called the "Courageous Journey," it consisted of having the Sunday school text be the same as that of the Pastor's sermon during the regular service. Spanning the course of 13 weeks, it would aid members in learning exactly the characteristics of a "courageous church." The first sermon was entitled "A Fresh Vision" with the Scripture being Genesis 12:1-9 which dealt with Abram breaking the ties to the land and family and following obediently the call of God. Twelve weeks later on April 4, Palm Sunday, the Pastor's message was "A Passion For the Christ" and used as Scripture, Luke 19:28-40, which told of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem almost 2000 years ago. It had been a journey, a journey of our faith and how HRBC could become the courageous church by applying ourselves in God's service.

The Latin Cross

To those who have come to HRBC since January 11, 2004, they may not realize that this fixture of our Sunday service holds a special place in the hearts of those in attendance that day. On that Sunday, there was a special portion of the service set out for the dedication of the cross. As printed in a simple enclosure with the bulletin, there was a detailed explanation of its meaning which, in part, reads as follows: "For Christians ... the cross is the supreme paradox of salvation, for out of the humiliating and agonizing death of Jesus Christ on the cross have come glorification, reconciliation and salvation." It also noted that the cross is there to "help remember Jesus' willingness to suffer for us..." It still stands in our sanctuary as a reminder of not only the pain but also the love shown us by Christ.

40 Days of Prayer

Just four weeks after the conclusion of the "Courageous Journey," the members of the church began a new area of concentration which affected their daily lives. Beginning on May 1, each was requested to enter into a 40 day period of focused prayer. It was a time to look forward in prayer to the upcoming 40th anniversary of the founding of the church and a time to prepare for a new visioning and planning process. But more than that, it was a time to "pray for yourself, for other members of HRBC, for clarity of direction, for our willingness to follow God's leadership, and for a spirit of unity." Prayer is an essential part of Christian life; it helps us find God and ourselves.

Heritage Day – Celebrating 40 Years

It was a good day to be in the house of the Lord, and based on a head count, there were 689 in attendance at the 9:45 service on June 9, 2004. It was a service filled with music from the Chancel Choir, the HRBC Orchestra, Dwight Graham - our former organist who had returned to play for this special event, a solo by Joan Maples, and the voices of the congregation, all raising their voices or playing their instruments in celebration of this church and the work that God had done. There was also a message brought by the former pastor, Dr. Ray Pollard, entitled "Courage for the Morning." Also, the college/career mission team would be commissioned that morning. Meriam Thacker would give a charter member's testimony. A report on the status of the Road to Freedom campaign would bring the congregation up-to-date on the pay down of the loan on the church. In the midst of all this activity, and long before members and guests would avail themselves of the food and fellowship that would occur after the service, there was another communal meal in which they would participate. With the words "This do in remembrance of Me" they partook of the bread and the cup. This was the reason the church was here after 40 years and the reason it still continues today.

There was also a brief history prepared for the event and included the following:

“One of the facts of a fortieth anniversary is that somebody is getting older. The Triple L Club is one of our largest church organizations. White hair, replaced knees, heart bypasses and walking canes are part of the territory. The list of living charter members grows shorter with each passing year. We celebrate their lives and their contributions. They bought the bricks and mortar to build the church house, planted and mowed the grass, washed the windows and the floors. God never leaves his people without leaders. As one passes from the scene we wait eagerly to see whom God will raise up to take his or her place. As we pass 40 years in age, we are thrilled to see a new generation of leaders. We’re proud to hand reins of leadership to persons who choose to join us as newcomers and to those who have lived our history. Some of the new leaders have been here since infancy or childhood. When we see names of leaders who were once in a children’s class of a youth choir we know somebody did something right. That’s history with a bias. It is history through the eyes of faith that declares God has been with us all along, and He is still at work today.”

The history closed with a passage from Ephesians 3:20-21 and then with these final words: “To Be Continued.”

Melissa Fallen

On Wednesday, June 23, there was a mission sharing service in the multi-purpose room. Melissa Fallen, a member of HRBC, graduate of Mary Washington College, and a student at the Baptist Theological Seminary, showed pictures and discussed her recent mission experience in Costa Rica. What many did not realize at that time was that this was just the beginning. In September, Melissa became the latest of those who would intern with the HRBC. Her internship was directed toward senior adults and she filled a tremendous void left by the departure of Charles Morris. As time has shown, she filled it well.

Other Summer Happenings

During the summer of 2004, there were numerous “happenings” involving HRBC, some more visible than others. One that appeared on the wall of the Wallis Building was one that now might be taken for granted. The Koinonia Sunday school class purchased a defibrillator and it was installed in the foyer. Having a life-saving device at the ready seems quite appropriate for a house of God. Caroline Johns, our Parish Nurse, also was available to instruct any who desired in its use.

Noah came to HRBC in July, when the Music Ministry, with all of its talented members, presented the Broadway musical “Two by Two”. This was a musical comedy based on the story of Noah and the Ark and was performed five times from July 23-25. Scheduled as part of the outreach to the community, it attracted over 1000 and was a roaring success.

On August 8, “The Gospel Boys” held a reunion concert at HRBC. This was the first time they had played and sung together for five years. Jeff Parker, Dave Anderson, Andy Heberle, Warren Britt, Don Denny, Michael Miller, Billy Ernest, and Ron Denny brought this “toe-tapping” musical experience to members and guests at the evening worship service.

Closing Out 2004

Back in June, the church had approved a change in the way the Sunday services were conducted and timed. Beginning on September 5, there would be only one session of Sunday school starting at 9:00 and the regular

worship service starting at 10:30. There was also a reorganization of the adult Bible study classes which provided 13 different options in order for members to attend a group with which they might better relate in the studying of God's Word.

For some months, the Belgium Mission Team had been in contact with missionaries in the Refuge and Immigration Villages there as to their needs. Based upon this information and the vocations of the team members, one clearly identified need that could be filled by our team would be a Pre-Natal/Well-Baby Class. There was also an opportunity to give these mothers and families an "American" baby shower. On September 17, the team which consisted of Sharron Abell, Patty Arrington, Julie Carr, Rachel Greenwood, Beth Torres, Julie Wakeland, Jamie Lynch and Phillip Brown set out. Returning on the 25th, Phillip Brown reported that "It was such a blessing to be able to go and help and share and laugh and cry and partner with missionaries across the Atlantic."

The stewardship program kicked off with a dual giving campaign. The annual effort was entitled "The Extra Mile" and dealt with meeting the budget requirements of the church. The other segment was named "The Road to Freedom" which was an add-on effort and had as its main goal the reduction of the \$1.6 million debt that still remained on the sanctuary loan. By reducing or removing this drain on the yearly finances of the church, other ministries could be better funded. By the end of the year, the Road to Freedom contributions had reduced the loan balance to \$443,850.

The year was coming to an end, but the joy that is Christmas pervaded the entire congregation. There was the annual Living Nativity on December 11 and 12, which attracted over 3000 visitors. The Christmas musical "I Have Seen the Light", which featured the Chancel Choir, Children's Choirs, and the HRBC Orchestra, was presented in the sanctuary on the evening of Sunday, December 19. There was the annual preschool pageant featuring preschoolers aged 2-5 where these youngsters would dress for the pageant and would later carol with others in the nearby neighborhood. Then on the 24th, there would be the two Christmas Eve services, one for families at 5:30 and the other, a communion service, at 11:00.

To cap off the close of the year, there had been another goal that had been set and exceeded. "As of December 26, our church has given \$18,063.53," surpassing the goal of \$18,000, to the Chuck and Erica Morris Christmas Offering for International Missions. The joy that this gift would bring to the missionary world that these two fine Christians had spent a lifetime in promoting was also a proper way of saying "goodbye" to Erica as she had passed over on December 2.

Truly, 2004 and the 40th year of Huguenot Road had been a busy year; and as the candles were lifted high, all 1549 members of the church were aware that just as the writer of the history had noted in the closing, the work and the history of Huguenot Road Baptist Church was "To Be Continued."

An Unusual Start for 2005

When the members of the congregation arrived at the January 2 worship service, there was something quite different. Dr. Browning was not preaching that morning. In fact, he would not be preaching for a total of eight Sundays at Huguenot Road. No, there was no crisis of spirit; rather it was the case of a servant of the Lord taking a sabbatical in which he would use his time away from the administrative and pastoral duties of the church for a time of conference, study and, of course, free time.

In his message to the congregation in the January 2005 edition of The Road, he put it this way: “In twenty-eight years, I have never been away from the pulpit nor from other congregational responsibilities for more than three weeks at a time. It is time for a longer break.”

An old friend would occupy the pulpit from January 2 through February 20. Fortunate indeed was the church to have Dr. Ray Pollard, one of our former pastors, to come and fill in while Dr. Browning studied and refreshed his mind and body.

Susan Price’s Most Interesting Retreat

All of us, at one time or another has had a trip for which we had planned have some parts of it go awry. It is a given that not all will work out perfectly. Susan Price, Associate Pastor for Youth and Children’s Ministries, had such an experience with the Student Impact Team which she took on retreat to the beach in March. As she put it, “It was a great time of learning, growing and panic.” The weekend definitely did not go as planned. Eleven of the thirteen students came down with a “24 hour bug” which resulted in four going to the hospital and everyone else had to stay until Monday because they were so weak. As Susan in her report put it so eloquently, “It was a life changing retreat in many respects. It will go down as my most interesting retreat.”

While We Were Safe in Our Homes

While we were all safe in our homes, having just celebrated Christmas, a major catastrophe struck far across the world. The Indian Ocean tsunami of December 26 had left over 150,000 dead and millions homeless.

The church immediately initiated a funding relief effort with 50% of the collection going to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and the other 50% going to the International Mission Board, with these funds designated for “tsunami relief,” since these organizations had the administration and ability to use these funds efficiently and effectively. By March 6, the church had collected \$6851.24 to be sent to aid those who had experienced such a deadly and destructive force of nature.

Staff Changes and an Ordination

On June 5, Rev. Mark S. Tolley resigned his position of Associate Pastor for Outreach and Administration. His last day would be June 26 and of course, there would be a reception for him and his family that evening. By July 1, he had headed off to Raleigh, N.C.

On June 8, there was a special called business meeting to consider the formation of a new staff position – Associate Pastor for Senior Adults and Pastoral Care. At that meeting, the congregation not only approved the position, but also approved the person to fill it. Melissa Fallen was called that night and she accepted. The members of the church must have realized her potential, sincerity and her devotion to God and the church, for she still serves Huguenot Road.

Sunday, July 17 would become a date that was special for several people as well as the congregation as a whole. First it was special to Emily Browning, who on that date was ordained into the Gospel Ministry. It was also very important to her father, Bert Browning, our Pastor.

The Budget for the Coming Year

November is the month that is traditionally occupied, at least in part, with the stewardship campaign and this year was no different. There was one significant difference in the budget that was proposed for the coming year though. For the first time, the budget broke the one million dollar mark. Personnel would require the greatest amount of funding with a budget of \$563,054.58. Christian Education, which included as the Bible study ministry, youth, music and drama, literature and evangelism, was set at \$109,700. Properties, including utilities, insurance, debt retirement, the growth fund and others, amounted to \$170,714. Support, which included the likes of office supplies, stewardship and church fellowship, amounted to \$64,300. Under Missions, the Baptist World Alliance, the benevolence fund and mission teams were allocated \$16,000. To complete the budget, the Cooperative Program would receive \$60,044.96 and the Richmond Baptist Association would receive \$32,331.90. When all was totaled, the budget for the coming year was set at \$1,016,145.44.

Christmas 2005

The Christmas season is always a joyous time at HRBC. It seemed to come early as the decorations for the sanctuary were located in all those myriad places where they seem to hide throughout the remainder of the year and hung by November 21. The Living Nativity was conducted at the church on Saturday and Sunday, December 3 and 4. The Pastor joined with the youngsters at the CDC on the 8th and 9th. Of course, rehearsals for Handel's Messiah had been going on for some time in anticipation of the presentation that occurred on Sunday, December 18. Then there was the pre-school pageant and caroling afterward on the 21st. The celebration of our Savior's birth would continue with the two services, one for families and the other a late night service, on Christmas Eve.

However, since December 25 fell on Sunday, there would be one more day to celebrate the Christ child. At the service that morning, there was the singing of such traditional hymns as "Good Christian Men Rejoice," "Joy to the World," "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day," and "How Great Our Joy." Joan Maples sang "Then Shall the Eyes," which was followed by a duet of Anna and Joan Maples performing "He Shall Feed His Flock" and "Come Unto Him." There was also Phillip Brown, our own Associate Pastor for Music and Worship, singing "The Birthday of a King." On Christmas Day, these hymns and songs told the real reason behind the joyous season that we as Christians hold so dear, but there was more.

Tom Wyatt read the scripture for that morning which was taken from John 1:10-14, which includes the very familiar section that states: "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father." Dr. Browning then delivered his sermon entitled "Christmas Faith." Afterward, the congregation would sing "O Come All Ye Faithful" and after the benediction sang "Gloria in excelsis Deo!" as their response to it.

As the members returned to their homes full of the spirit of Christmas, the grace of God, and the love of Christ, there was warmth embodied in them that made the cold of that day disappear.

2006 Starts Off With an Ordination

On the 8th of January, the church ordained Melissa Fallen, Associate Pastor for Senior Adults/Pastoral Care, into the Gospel Ministry. She had become an intern with the church in June of 2004 and been called to her present position in June of 2005. In addition to HRBC ministers, Dr. Tracy Hartman, Assistant Professor at the Baptist Theological Seminary Richmond, Rev. Susan Blanchard, former Campus Minister at Mary

Washington College, and Rev. Steve Vaughan, Pastor at Second Branch Baptist Church in Chesterfield participated in the ordination. Nine days later, she would begin her Clinical Pastoral Education training at VCU/MCV which was a 13 week course of study recommended by the church and which would prove invaluable to her and the church in her ministry.

Planning for the Future

In January, the church also set out on a “spiritual strategic journey” which would lay out the course the church would take. Step one of the journey of faith did not involve external factors, but rather it began with each one of the members. In the March issue of “The Road,” the Pastor had outlined some of the short term modifications that would be initiated during the next six months. These modifications were: 1) Review of Missions Team makeup and responsibilities; 2) Facilities upkeep; 3) Equipping, empowering and unleashing the membership; 4) Relationship building; 5) Communication; 6) Celebrating; and 7) Exploration of worship options. The initiation of these efforts would begin immediately.

On March 19, the church distributed a congregational survey to determine the preference for the type of corporate worship held on Sunday. The survey offered four options for members and non-members in attendance from which to select the one that best identified the style of worship that was perceived to be the best for their personal encounter with God. The options were a traditional service, a contemporary service, a blended service, or one that indicated the person had never encountered the presence of God in corporate worship. The information gathered from the survey was passed on to the Journey Leadership Team as “raw data” from which they would make recommendations.

During the summer, the Pastor conducted various styles of service so as to better acquaint the membership with the types of service that were being considered. Having been immersed in the various styles, a vote on October 29 would set the order and style of service for many years to come. The approved Sunday services were an 8:45 Contemporary worship service, followed by Bible study at 10:00 and a traditional service at 11:15. This order was set to start on March 4, 2007.

Missions Meet Some Needs of the Present

While the church was exploring the future track it would take, missions, which have always been a significant part of the spreading of God’s Word to the church and its members, continued unabated. Although there would be some changes in the future as to the procedures, there were present day needs that would be addressed as the church journeyed down the road.

For the community, there would be two clinics this year, with one occurring in March and another in September. Medical personnel provided health screenings and eye and dental care, and there were those who provided hot meals and makeovers. As part of the clinic, guests would also be able to go into a “food and clothes closet” to garner some of their personal needs for the near term.

Also for the community, “HRBC made a difference at the Central Virginia Food Bank.” First Sunday food offerings to go to various organizations that provide assistance to the less fortunate occur monthly at the church. However, in May, there went out a call from the Central Virginia Food Bank for “peanut butter and jelly.” When the jars and boxes were all gathered in, the church had provided 444 pounds of good old peanut butter and jelly to the Food Bank. “We met a tangible need at the CVFB, and we helped feed the hungry of our community.”

Whether providing “skilled” labor to replace a bridge or financial support, Camp Alkulana is another of these mission efforts in which HRBC is involved on a continuing basis. The camp which is funded by the Richmond Baptist Association provides a camp experience to low income and at risk youngsters in the Richmond area.

In reaching out to the state, the Bland Mission team was in Southwest Virginia from June 14 – 18, working in the dental clinic and the food pantry. Among other duties, the eight team members transported non-perishable foodstuffs that had been collected in the First Sunday food offering.

There were also mission groups going to other states. The youth in grades 6 – 12 went to M-Fuge in Charleston, SC from July 14-18. In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, mission groups went to Gautier, Mississippi in April and again from September 30 – October 8 to help that community rebuild and to show Christian love and concern. Also as a result of Katrina, a mission group went to New Orleans from July 21-30, where they would work with Habitat for Humanity in building homes for those whose homes had been destroyed.

HRBC also reached out to the world. In cooperation with International World Changers, 23 youth and adults traveled to Salvador, Brazil, from July 28 through August 6, to share Christ with the people. There they worked in local schools, taught Bible classes, and even repaired and constructed homes, all for the glory of God.

The Road to Freedom Ends and the Note is Burned

Two dates will be etched on the minds of those present at HRBC during the fall of 2006. The first of these was September 10, when the congregation was notified that the loan of \$1.6 million, used to fund the building of the sanctuary, had been paid off. The Road to Freedom campaign was now complete, since its charge was to remove the burden that the interest was placing on the budget, which would now open the doors for the use of those monies for other labors of the church.

A separate bulletin was prepared for the evening worship service for November 12, and it carried a message prominently displayed on the cover and above a drawing of the church sanctuary and Wallis Building. It read “A Celebration of Blessing.” There was cause to celebrate and after a Litany of Thanksgiving, a verbal history by Phillip Brown and remembrances of members of the congregation, the note was burned.

The Gift of December

The church is always filled with joy and glad tidings at Christmas and this one was no different. The four weeks of Advent would culminate on Sunday, December 24th, Christmas Eve, which would be followed that evening with a candlelight communion service where the candles would be lifted high, signifying the carrying the light of Christ into the world. There would be the old familiar Christmas carols sung and the reading of the Christmas story from the Scriptures. There would even be Ron and Melin Green, missionaries in Southeast Asia, who would inspire the congregation with their message on one of those Sundays. The sanctuary would be decked out in all of its finery. All of this was done to celebrate the coming of a child who would be our Savior, a gift from a loving God.

This December, there would be another gift – a gift that reflected the love of the people of HRBC for God and the other people of the world. The goal of \$22,000 had been set for the Chuck and Erica Morris Christmas Offering for International Missions. This special offering would support missionaries and would

be equally divided between the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and the International Mission Board. By the close of 2006, the monies collected would be \$22,204. The goal had been exceeded and because of these funds and those from other churches, the light that is Christ would be spread throughout the world. What a glorious December gift it was.

Time to Change

By the third Sunday in 2007, the bulletin began reminding members that there was a change coming. For some, it would mean having to get up earlier on Sunday morning and for others, the noon meal on Sunday would have to be delayed a bit. Beginning on March 4, there was a new schedule of service. At 8:45, there would be a contemporary worship service, preceded by a coffee house, in the Family Life Center. There would be new hymns and music, new audio-visual presentations, and a more casual atmosphere in this service. However, it would still have the same sermon as the traditional service but in a more laid back style. Then at 10:00, there would be Bible study in the various classes spread over the complex. The traditional service would begin at 11:15. Since that change, HRBC has continued to present these two different worship options to its people, and both are well attended.

A Day That Affected All

April 16, 2007 is one of those days that all prefer had never occurred. At Virginia Tech, a lone gunman killed 32 people and then turned his weapon on himself. That day would bring tears for the slain and tears of relief for those who survived. When the full force of this calamity was realized, the church and its ministers knew that the people would desire to seek out their God and pray for those affected by this senseless event. On Wednesday, April 18, the church held a special service of "Remembrance and Healing for Virginia Tech and Community" that evening in the sanctuary. As the congregation sang, "O, God Our Help in Ages Past," it mourned for Virginia Tech. The people lifted their candles as they proceeded into the courtyard in a solemn display of Christian solidarity with those of that community.

Ten Years of Service Comes to an End

Rev. Susan N. Price's service to the congregation of HRBC began almost as soon as her feet hit the ground in November of 1997, and on June 17, 2007, at the close of the worship service, she announced her resignation as Associate Pastor for Youth and Children's Ministries. She had served well and had followed in the footsteps of Dr. Charles Morris in her zeal for mission participation by the members of the church. It is impossible to actually describe what Huguenot Road meant to her, for she had invested most of her life in one form or another here. In fact, she grew up in the church. She was credited with providing the direction and the impetus that initiated the Clinic which continues still. The number of youth that her wise counsel brought closer to God and in turn their impacts on others is immeasurable. In her closing letter to the congregation contained in the August 2007 issue of "The Road," she wrote: "God has big things in store for HRBC, and I will be your biggest cheerleader in accomplishing His vision." Susan's last day on staff at HRBC was July 15, 2007.

Port Sulphur, Louisiana Needed Help

Hurricane Katrina hit Louisiana at the close of August 2005 with a fury and the destruction she left was immense. Seeing people in such dire straits can be very emotional, but doing something about it can be as rewarding for those who give as much as for those who receive. In 2007, several mission teams went to Port Sulphur to aid in the reconstruction of houses and of lives. They were building storage sheds, rebuilding

homes, and aiding the Port Sulphur Baptist Church to reconstruct its church and the lives of its members and neighbors through activities such as Vacation Bible School, sports, and other community projects. While all applaud the efforts of those who went and aided these people, few actually realize some of the difficulties that our members faced while serving their God in places such as Port Sulphur. It was anything but a picnic. When Greg Carr was asked what he was “afraid of” on a trip in July, his response was “Afraid of heat, humidity, and mosquitoes. Unfortunately, mosquitoes are not afraid of me!” With a slightly different perspective on the question, Ashley Carr responded, “I’m not excited about living with fire ants and frizzy hair for three weeks!” It would seem that neither fire ants, nor mosquitoes, nor frizzy hair can stop HRBC members on a mission.

Winter Warm-Up Starts the New Year

In the cold and dreary doldrums of winter, nothing seems better than to visit with several church members, have a delicious meal and get to know them. That is the way 2008 started off at HRBC. Too often, we only see the person at church and never really get to know them. We all share the same title of being Christians, but we fail to enter into a real relationship with one another. The Winter Warm-Up was a way of getting four to five couples together in a more social setting so that they could learn more about each other. Over the course of several weeks, the groups met and socialized and finally had a pancake supper to celebrate new friends and better acquaintances on Sunday, March 2.

Staff Additions in 2008

There were two open positions on staff at the beginning of 2008. The first was filled on March 9, when the name of Amanda Lott was brought before the congregation as a candidate for the position of Associate Pastor for Children’s Ministries. Amanda was a graduate of Auburn University in Montgomery with a B.S. in Secondary Education and had previously been on staff with churches in Montgomery, Alabama, Cedar Park, Texas, and in Abingdon, Virginia. Amanda was approved by the congregation and assumed her duties on the 16th of March.

The second position was filled on May 18, when the church issued a call to Jon Greenhill to come and serve as Associate Pastor for Youth and College/Career Ministries. Jon had graduated from Appalachian State University in Boone, NC with a B.A. in Business Administration with a concentration in Computer Information Systems. For three years, after graduation, he had served as Director of High School Ministries at Third Presbyterian Church. He formally began his service to the church on the 19th of May..

The search team had again done well in its efforts and they were considerable. It is almost with a sigh of relief that on the 18th, included in the bulletin, was a message from the search team that gave the following notice: “If the congregation approves this recommendation and calls Jon Greenhill, the search team will disband having completed the assignment given by the church.” Disband they did.

Child Development Center Celebrates 35 Years of Ministry

In September of 1973, the goal of the church in establishing a Christian nursery school was attained. In that first year, there were two classes of four year olds that met in the Wallis Building and they were staffed by three members of the church. By 1975, the CDC had moved into the newly constructed Family Life Center and by July of 1976, Fran Franklin had taken the reins as the CDC Director.

By 1978, the Mothers Morning Out program had begun which offered child care to infants six months old to two year olds. At the same time, the center was providing classes for three, four and five year olds. In 1984, the age requirements for enrollment had been modified and children were accepted into the CDC from age two to age five.

At the age of 35, the CDC continued to serve the church in an outreach function and the community in a greatly needed service function. In 2008, there were 120 children enrolled and 21 very patient and understanding ladies on the staff. Janet Hamrick, who had succeeded Fran Franklin in 1998, served as Director and Linda Jordan was the Administrative Assistant.

Countless children had been exposed to the loving and learning environment of the church and the ladies who staffed the Child Development Center.

Not Only Children, But Seniors Can Learn Too

On October 6, a basic course entitled “Learning Your Computer” was offered to the HRBC seniors. Melissa Fallen and Julie Carr provided the technical knowledge and support for this hands-on basic computer skill class. Not only would they be enlightening the seniors about terminology, but they would also be teaching Excel and PowerPoint programs, and they would also be giving instruction in using the internet. The class was so well received that numerous people had requested a follow-up course, which was provided by Julie Carr on November 17.

Proverbs 1:5 (NIV) offers the following words of wisdom: “Let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance.” Those seniors who attended the classes were following this directive as they sought out the guidance, listened to their instructors and added to their learning. It is obvious that the church was providing training not only for the youth, but also for the mature adults, training that could be used in the church and in the outside world.

Morningside and a Special Christmas Visit

Each week, members of HRBC share the Good News to older adults in residence at Morningside. There is always a short program filled with hymns, scripture, and prayers. This ministry provides those living there with a diversion from their normal day-to-day activities and fosters relationships between the members and those residents. The gleam in the eye and the smile on the face show how welcome such visitations are.

On December 22, Morningside had a few extra special guests to cheer the residents. Among those that joined in this mission were several children, including Hailey, Olivia, Claire, Valerie, Sarah Grace, Emma, Alyssa, and Brandon. Amanda Lott had come prepared for this special event, for she had brought costumes for the children so that they could act out the Wise Men portion of the Nativity Story while they sang “We Three Kings.” Brandon was asked about his favorite part of the visit and he replied “the hugging.” He also mentioned that the visit made him feel “happy” and that he wanted to go again.

Having these children share their Christmas with the residents of Morningside was indeed a blessing – for all.

Having a Calendar Helps Plan 2009

In the January issue of *The Road*, the Pastor included a calendar of the various mission events that Mission Strategy Team had scheduled for the coming year. Since many of the members blocked out time on their family calendars, this served as an invaluable tool in setting personal schedules. The opportunities for service ranged from the community to even as far away as Louisiana

Not only were the sites far spread, but also the needs of the missions varied as well. The Pastor wrote “Your gifts and talents can be used in multiple ways — children's work, construction, organizing, or simply meeting and chatting with folks.” HRBC members would fill these needs by sharing their God given gifts.

Mission Giving by HRBC Recognized

Missions have always been a major part of the worship and service experience at HRBC. Not only have the members given of their time and talents, they have also given financially. Of course, there are line items in the church budget that go directly for missions, but there are also such efforts as the Chuck and Erica Morris Christmas Offering for International Missions. Another effort is the “Souper Bowl,” where the youth of the church collected over \$3,000 in 2008, every penny of which went to the Central Virginia Food Bank.

In late February, a letter from John Upton, Executive Director of the Virginia Baptist Mission Board, and Eddie Stratton, Chief Development Officer, notified Huguenot Road that it ranked 21st in total Cooperative Program/Missions giving and 20th in Virginia Cooperative Program/Missions giving. This recognition showed that others recognized the commitment that HRBC made to missions and the spread of God’s Word.

The church also received some excellent news regarding a grant from the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship for \$25,000 for use toward projects with the Hyaets partnership. “We received this grant as a result of our participation in the It’s Time study in the fall of 2006 and because of our continued commitment to missions efforts locally, statewide, and beyond. We look forward to how God will use this money in the renovation of a clubhouse and the implementation of an exchange program between our ministries.” On March 15, Bo Prosser, who serves on the national staff of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship presented the \$25,000 grant check to the church. The “It’s Time” study mentioned here referred to a study of missions during the Sunday school hour that was sponsored by the CBF.

These were not the only examples of the recognition of giving by HRBC this year. At the Richmond Baptist Association Meeting held on October 18, a report indicated that Huguenot Road was “third (out of 69 churches) in giving to the RBA and Camp Alkulana.” Sharing the gifts that God has blessed us with continues to be a characteristic of our church.

Seeing the Good that Mission Trips Do

To never see the fruits of your labor can be immensely demoralizing. On the other hand, seeing the good that has been done can be quite uplifting. On May 2, Jim Guyton, Don Hutcheson, Bob Galaspie, Chris Wampler and Laura Fowler began a week of service in Port Sulphur, LA. It was difficult to fathom that the destruction by Katrina had occurred almost four years earlier and was still evident. Families had been torn apart by the storm and were still separated because of the lack of appropriate living spaces. But the team learned of a success story that obviously brightened their stay.

In the summer of 2008, a group of youth and adults from HRBC framed a house for Miss Leona Bartholemew. When the team stopped by to see the now completed house, she insisted on giving them a tour. She told them how thankful she was for our team from last year and for all that they had done for her. Hearing such kind words makes teams proud of the work that the church is doing through them. Laura noted that “the physical bodies God gave us feel great when they are worn out from doing physical labor for the good of another.” Comments such as those by Miss Leona show the value of the efforts of the church in spreading the love of Jesus.

Later that year, in July, another team would go to Port Sulphur to help. However, instead of five, there would be 36 members of HRBC there to show Christian love and friendship by helping to rebuild.

United Praise Choir Tour

One week after Heritage Day, the United Praise choir began a “whistle-stop” tour from the Amtrak Station in Henrico County to New York City. Travelling via Amtrak, metro, subway and on foot, the choir presented a program which was entirely acapella and designed to be sung anywhere, anytime and under any condition. The goal of this choir mission was to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ and make a difference in someone’s day through a song. Be it a performance of convenience for an individual or one of our many scheduled full performances, United Praise was ready and willing to follow God’s lead. They began their journey at HRBC’s CrossRoads worship and traditional worship on the morning of June 14 and continued with another presentation that afternoon at the Bon Air Juvenile Correctional Center. The next day had them performing in the morning at the Methodist Home of Washington, D.C., which was followed by another performance that afternoon on the steps of Lincoln Memorial - National Mall. This was followed by aiding in the meal preparation at the D.C. Central Kitchen. With a day for travel, on June 17, they appeared at the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine N.Y.C., followed by a performance in Central Park that afternoon. They wound down their tour stopping on the 18th at St. Paul’s Chapel N.Y.C. and closed it out at Park Slope Community Church, Brooklyn, on the 19th before returning home the next day. While it may have been called a “whistle-stop” tour, it apparently never stopped, except long enough to catch a breath.

Later, in December, United Praise, having caught its breath, would present concerts at Bruton Parish Church in Williamsburg and at the Ellipse at the White House in Washington. Back home, there would be the Carols of Christmas and other events at the church. The presentation of Christ through the efforts of these talented singers is quite a blessing to all who hear them.

The Clinic – September 2009

Though the Clinic was held on Saturday, September 12, the planning for it had taken eleven months and the week before required hard labor for the clothes closet in the Multi-Purpose Room and the housewares area located in the narthex. It all came together that morning when families began lining up at 7:00 a.m.

Over 549 guests were registered, welcomed by and assisted by advocates who directed them to the medical, vision and dental care, blood pressure and glucose testing, haircuts and massages. In addition to the services that were provided that day, 125 bags of groceries, 149 bags of school supplies, and 147 houseplants were given out. The team in the kitchen served over 700 hotdogs in less than 90 minutes. Many of the youth served as Spanish translators for those who needed that assistance. Over 220 volunteers, both adult and youth, made certain that those who had come received a warm Christian welcome and the help they needed.

There was also a group of three who “performed” a very vital function that day. Some in the crowd had waited outside in the sun for as much as two hours, but their time was seemingly shortened by the presence of these three clowns. By being silly, handing out balloons and bringing smiles to the faces of the adults and children, they made the wait time pass swiftly.

2010 Begins With Earth Shattering News

On January 12, the world was again shaken, this time by a 7.0 earthquake near the city of Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Over 200,000 people would die, over 300,000 were injured and an estimated 1.5 million would be homeless. With the news ringing in our ears, HRBC put words into action. After contacting the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, staff learned that Steve and Nancy James, Baptist missionaries, were in Haiti and in desperate need of medical supplies so that they could minister to the injured and dying. A list of items was sent via e-mail to the church members on the 21st with this dire message: “Due to the urgency of the need, HRBC will collect these items on Sunday, Jan. 24, 2010.”

Even before the Sunday deadline, bandages, splints, medical scissors, scalpels, and innumerable other medically related items began to appear at the collection point. By Monday morning, Amanda Lott and her two daughters would be at the church along with other families to pack the supplies. Several bins were overflowing with disinfectants, gauze, over-the-counter pain medication and even Band-Aids. Ten very large boxes were shipped to our missionary partners in Haiti. In commenting on this outpouring of Christian concern, Melissa Fallen said, “We saw a need, the church realized the need, and we mobilized to meet that need.” Truly, the church was responding to our Master’s direction when He said, “I was sick and you took care of me...” (Matthew 25:36 NRSV)

Changes at the Child Development Center

In February, Janet Hamrick, who had been the Director of the CDC since 1998, advised the congregation that she would retire, effective August 1. This would bring to a close a total of 24 years of service to the CDC, with 12 years as Director and 14 years on staff. Many had been blessed by her commitment to the children, the church and the CDC. At the reception held in her honor in July, it was bittersweet to see her close this portion of a very loving ministry of the church.

When one considered the importance of the position that Janet vacated, it is quite understandable that the Personnel Team would immediately seek a replacement, hard though that would be. However, on April 11, at a called business meeting, the Personnel Team recommended and the membership approved the employment of Barbara Booth as the new Director. Barbara began her new duties on August 1.

Sometimes “You Can’t Fight City Hall”

There is an old adage that “you can’t fight city hall.” Sometimes such words of wisdom do have a vast amount of truth in them. This time, it was the county of Chesterfield and not city hall that wound up being the victor. For several years, as the result of a Heritage Day project, the church had sought to have an electronic sign with a variable message display in order to notify the community about the goings on at HRBC and to have that sign placed near Huguenot Road. Simply put, the permit from the county to erect that sign was never forthcoming even after numerous hours of discussions on the subject. By April of 2010, the church and the county were at an impasse with no conclusion deemed possible. As a result, at the congregational business meeting on April 25th, the church approved a new approach, that being a request for a sign for the CDC and another one for the church proper. Ultimately, this approach would be successful but

it would be almost a year before construction of the signs was underway. “And now, you know the rest of the story.”

Terry Maples Accepts Position with the Tennessee Cooperative Baptist Fellowship

It had been a long time since September of 1990 when Terry Maples accepted the call to Huguenot Road to be the Associate Pastor for Education, almost two decades, and though his service to our church would end, it was a new beginning for him and his family as he accepted the position of Field Coordinator for the Tennessee Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, effective June 1. Referring to the position that Terry had accepted, Bert Browning wrote in the April edition of *The Road*, “This position is a tribute to the kind of person and leader we all know Terry to be. It is a wonderful step forward into a place of responsible service, vision-casting and church development for which Terry is uniquely gifted.”

It just seemed that Terry Maples had always been there and many thought he would always be there. A considerable amount of his energies had been expended in behind the scenes activities. His involvement with Sunday school and the discipleship small groups that he formed were his way of guiding the church to find its true path in service to Christ. His ability in the field of Christian education was recognized by the Virginia Baptist Education Association when they named him “Educator of the Year” in 2000. He even had to master several different computer systems during his time at HRBC. With his love and concern for young people, there was one program that always brought a gleam to his eye and that was the Upward Basketball program.

While accolades could be heaped on Rev. Terry Maples, the finest words that anyone could say were written of him by his boss and our Pastor, when he wrote that he was “a Christian gentleman.” Very few titles could top that one. Bert Browning closed his message to the congregation with these words: “Godspeed, Terry. We are sad to see you leave, but we rejoice in your journey!”

A New Partnership in Owsley County, Kentucky

On May 15, the first official Owsley County mission team departed from Huguenot Road Baptist Church to serve in health care facilities, food and clothes closets and anywhere their skills and abilities could best be utilized to assist the people in this rural portion of Kentucky. The team consisted of Phillip Brown, Rory Francisco, Jill Hardin, Dennis Nofsinger, Jeannie Nofsinger, Lee Ann Perkins and Alice Waller. During this week long endeavor, these seven would lay the foundation for our ministry there.

The road to this relationship had been a long one. Owsley County is one of the poorest counties in the United States and came under the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship’s “Together For Hope” initiative which had originally been launched in 2001. That initiative, which HRBC had joined, was to establish long-term relationships, to effect change, to break the cycle of economic disparity, and to offer the hope that is the Gospel. In this effort, HRBC would be working closely with First Baptist Church in Frankfurt.

By July, another group of 19 would wind their way to Owsley, with the primary mission of leading Vacation Bible School in the LeeRose Baptist Church and the Upper Buffalo Baptist Church, both of which were very excited to have HRBC bring this activity to their community. When not involved with Bible School, the team members aided with the food and clothes closets, worked on wheelchair ramps, did some power washing and offered senior activities.

God had opened the doors of Owsley County to HRBC and its members responded.

More Staff Changes

In June, Linda Almond, church secretary, announced that after almost 12 years of service, she would be retiring on the last day of the month. She was the kind and helpful voice on the phone and the friendly face behind the desk. Most of her labors were “behind the scenes” but aided in the smooth running of the church office. HRBC was grateful for her service in the daily life and ministry of our church.

Fortunately for the staff and congregation, it only took about two months to find someone for the church secretary position. Donna Earley filled that position on August 1. With a B.S. from Virginia Tech and an M.B.A. from the University of Richmond, her marketing and business backgrounds brought an added dimension to the staff and church. Her friendly smile and willingness to help are at the forefront of her service to the people.

Fall Festival

“It’s so nice that you give us a fun, safe place to bring our kids. Thank you.” That was the message that one parent passed on at the annual Fall Festival at Huguenot Road. For many years, the church has been conducting its Fall Festival as an alternative to having children walk the darkened streets and ring doorbells at homes of strangers, all for a bit of fun and some candy. This year, Sunday was the last day of October and the kids and parents came out. There were carnival type games as well as food and tasty desserts.

It was estimated that about 550 people availed themselves of this ministry of HRBC. While the kids truly enjoyed the fun, games, food and candy, in retrospect, the big winners were the members of the congregation who saw the smiles on those small faces and the peaceful faces of the parents who knew their children were having a great time in a safe environment.

Dr. Browning’s State of the Facilities Message - January 2011

In the January issue of *The Road*, Dr. Browning laid out some very interesting facts concerning the physical state of the HRBC facilities. The sanctuary was the most recent major construction and that was completed in 1986. The Wallis Building had undergone some modification about ten years prior, but considering that it was originally constructed in 1967, it would need renovation. Significant challenges to our home base were imperative if we were to provide for the worship, training, fellowship and discipleship of members, friends and visitors.

Given the aging of the church family and community, there was inadequate first floor education and activity space and there was no elevator to access any second floor space. Restrooms were small and few in number to meet the demands of significant attendance at various functions. Many rooms were configured in such a manner as to make them unusable or used with difficulty. Congestion in the public areas of the buildings was also one of Dr. Browning’s points. Then, there was the security issue. Security had, regrettably, been on the minds of most people for years and the open breezeways and separated buildings made that a significant issue.

This presented the basic facts that the Facilities Development Team had been considering since their first meeting in November but which had been identified as part of the master plan for the development of church facilities during the past two years.

New Associate Pastor for Discipleship and Missions

After compiling and considering input from the congregation, the Personnel Team advertised in the Religious Herald for an Associate Pastor. This meant that the position had local, regional and national exposure. By January of 2011, the Personnel Team had already begun the arduous task of reviewing resumes prior to the conduct of interviews.

In May, the congregation approved the Personnel Team's recommendation and issued a call to Rev. J. Matthew Hensley to be Associate Pastor for Discipleship and Missions. Matthew, a native of South Carolina, had served the Haymarket Baptist Church in Northern Virginia for seven years, most recently as the Minister of Education. He obtained a B.A. from the University of South Carolina and his Master of Divinity from the Baptist Theological Seminary Richmond in 2007. He assumed the position on August 1, 2011.

The Renovation Process Begins

At the same quarterly congregational meeting which called Rev. Hensley, the church membership, having seen and discussed the proposal to initiate Phase 1 of a reconstruction plan, consistent with the efforts of the master plan and the Facilities Development Team, voted to proceed with the next steps for the expansion and renovation of the Wallis Building which was estimated to cost \$2.5 million. These next steps included the determination of financial feasibility of the project and the securing of working drawings for it. In keeping with fiscal stewardship, this approval also included a requirement that one-third of the total cost would have to be secured and in-hand before any construction began. Many of the financial considerations were discussed with Dr. Tom Melzoni, Vice President of Generis Partners, concerning a three year fund-raising effort to accomplish the project at an informational meeting held on May 8.

Mission Work Continues

While the renovation process was on everyone's mind, efforts in the mission field continued unabated. During the week of May 22, the Owsley County Mission Team provided handyman repair work, served lunches to local school teachers, helped in the clothes and food closets, and most importantly built relationships with the people there. The Bland County Dental Mission Team departed just after the worship service on Heritage Day concluded. Dr. Felix Shepard and Dr. Jerry Jenkins provided the free dental care, assisted by fourteen other members, who would also perform valuable service in the clinic and to other portions of the community.

"It's Time" Gets Going

The capital campaign to raise the necessary funds for the building renovations was given the title of "It's Time" and by October, the Steering Team had been established to provide the support and to seek the aid of the members in this grand investment of time and monies. The team consisted of the following:

Executive Directors: Ray Parker, Dave Anderson

Campaign Manager: Richard Martin

Facilities Development Team Representative and Stewardship Education Coordinator: Rod Hale

Leadership Team Directors: Roy and Jane Lewis

Leadership Team Coordinators: Mike and Molly Wood, Glen and Cindy Ford, Marvin and Carolyn Gregory, Curtis and Lesley Montgomery, Wayne and Janet Hamrick

Administrative Director: Melissa Fallen

Communications Director: Donna Earley

Student Directors: Jon Greenhill, Kim Biggers Hayes
Children's Directors: Amanda Lott, Renee Pulliam
Major Event Directors: Kay Griffin, Phillip Brown
Spiritual Awareness Directors: Fred and Nell Branton
Prayer Team Coordinators: Charles and Jean Gibson

The campaign was underway.

Reading the Bible Through

In an effort that was deemed inspiring by those who attended or participated, the Prayer Team provided the impetus and the sanctuary provided the venue for a week long effort of reading the Bible through. Beginning on Monday, November 27, members and friends of HRBC would individually step forward to read aloud the Bible for 20 minutes and then pass on the reading to the next. This continued for 12 hours each day until all the words of the Bible, from Genesis through Revelation, had been spoken. All ages participated in this occasion, from children to senior adults. Mary Turner DeWorken noted, "Reading the Bible, out loud, in the sanctuary (with its acoustics), during the season proclaiming our Savior's birth and thus our salvation, was a blessed experience." It reminded others of Jesus' blessing and admonition found in Luke 11:28: "Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it."

Amanda Lott Awarded Children's Ministry Certification

Diane Smith, Children's Ministry Strategist with the Virginia Baptist Mission Board was present at the December 11 service to award Amanda Lott the Virginia Baptist Children's Ministry Certification. Amanda had been working diligently on this certification since she joined HRBC; by receiving it, she displayed her specialized education and talent to direct children toward a better understanding of Christ and a closer walk with Him. This epitomized the wisdom found in Proverbs 22:6 which states, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

"First Fruits" and Total "It's Time" Pledges Close Out 2011

As a result of the "It's Time Celebration" on December 4 and the "First Fruits Sunday" of December 18, the funds received and pledges over the next three years amounted to more than \$1.2 million. Of that amount, pledges over the next three years totaled \$637,000 and the remainder was through the initial gift of the First Fruits Offering. It was obvious that there would be some time before members saw construction vehicles and fences in the parking lot.

The January 2012 Issue of "The Road"

Cautiously optimistic might be the words to describe the pastor's comments on the progress of the It's Time Campaign in the first edition of The Road in 2012. "We should reach the \$800,000 mark in no more than 12-18 months. How much we must borrow toward construction will depend on your generosity over that same time period." The mark, to which he referred, was set by the church at one-third of the total cost of the project, and the original estimate was \$2.4 million. The increase in available funds was displayed to the membership in each Sunday service bulletin, and it did grow. By August 19, it had reached \$794,307.80 and by September, the goal had been attained. However, estimated costs being what they are, it was determined that the actual amount necessary to proceed would be \$913,000. Was this a setback for the church, to come so close and then have it seem to wiggle away from its grasp? Not really, for the pledges kept coming in and

the direct gifts to the “It’s Time” campaign continued to mount. The following notice appeared in the December 23 Sunday bulletin: “Called Congregational Meeting - On Sunday, January 13 at 6:00 pm the church will consider a joint recommendation from the Stewardship and Facilities Development teams and from the trustees to enter into a construction contract and to secure a construction loan. Please plan to attend this important called meeting.” That the church had reached its goal was obvious, that the Wallis Building would soon be under renovation was certain, and that the people had been faithful to friends, fellow members, and staff was proven. Most of all, it showed that the church was committed to spreading the Word of God through the new and improved facilities.

Two Anniversaries Are Celebrated

This year, there were two anniversaries celebrated by the staff of HRBC that elsewhere might have gone unnoticed. Finding and keeping people dedicated to service is a difficult task, but fortunately when those people are committed to an organization, the blessings that flow in all directions are multiplied.

For 20, yes 20 years, Doug Oliver has been serving the members of this congregation, having started on February 17, 1992. As senior custodian, he made certain that the facilities were clean and ready for whatever event appeared on the calendar. Whether it was getting set up for the CrossRoads service or preparing for the coming of the CARITAS guests, the work was done.

Another behind the scenes person celebrated 25 years of service to HRBC on September 1. Norman Boswell for two and one-half decades had been the Sunday custodian. It was he who had the doors of the church open for Sunday services and closed on Sunday night. He had also been the person primarily responsible for operating the sound system during the traditional service, making certain that they were recorded so that anyone who could not attend could receive a copy of it.

Both of these men had dedicated much to HRBC, and it was appreciated.

The Music Ministry Comes Through Again

The Music Ministry at HRBC has always been exceptional. It has always been a blessing to the church in more ways than just providing accompaniment for the singing of hymns during the Sunday services. This ministry has brought people from the surrounding community and the Richmond area into the church. If one looked at the schedules of musical activities that happen on a weekly basis and then add to it the special events, one would be simply be amazed. And yet, somehow out of Phillip Brown’s multi-talented bag of musical wonderment, he was able to find another means of filling the church.

On Sunday, March 11, 2012, the Annie Moses Band showed up at HRBC. Not only did they provide their musical talents for both services that day, they also had a 90 minute concert in the sanctuary that evening to a capacity crowd. This family of Christian musicians, led by Annie Wolaver and consisting of siblings and in-laws, provided one of the best musical fetes that has ever been held in the Richmond area; from the hymns that all recognized, to the classics and pop, they did it all. Annie captivated the audience with her virtuosity on the violin, or on what some would call a fiddle. Regardless of what you call it, it truly sang under her touch. The addition to the services was inspiring, and the concert – it was fabulous.

A Tradition Continues

A long-standing Easter tradition at Huguenot Road has been the adornment of the cross with fresh cut flowers. On Easter morning, April 8, men, women and children brought flowers to place in the netting that surrounded the cross that had been placed in the courtyard. The symbolism is not lost on those who passed by the church that Sunday, for it spoke to the resurrection of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. It showed the community that we honor and love this Friend for we remember the love that He showed for us. We also remember His words, found in John 15:13 – “Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” The tradition continued that day and will for the future as well.

Ordination of Kristin Francisco

On September 16, an ordination council was convened to examine Kristin Francisco’s gifts for the ministry. As a result of that council meeting, it was the privilege of Huguenot Road Baptist Church to host her ordination service on Sunday, November 18. A member of the church, she was a graduate of the College of William and Mary, had obtained a Masters in Social Work from Virginia Commonwealth University and a Masters in Divinity from the Baptist Theological Seminary Richmond. God had called her to Pastoral Care and we all rejoiced in her ordination.

“Angels Among Us”

At the end of the year, as a Christmas special, Phillip Brown would again use his God-given talents to bring to the church an original musical entitled “Angels Among Us.” This performance, on the evening of December 16, focused on the birth of Jesus Christ and was well-choreographed and uplifting to those fortunate to see it. With the orchestra, the choirs, and the actors, one was taken on a journey that found the real meaning of Christmas. Over 100 participated in this musical and the time spent in preparation was obvious. Simply put, well done.

The Announcement of 2013

One might think that the big announcement at the beginning of 2013 would be the signing of a contract for the construction and renovation of the facilities. That was news that the congregation had been anticipating and longing for ever since the beginning of 2011, and really even before that. Instead it came on January 27 at the congregational meeting. The pastor detailed the information in an open letter contained in the March issue of The Road.

“In Case You Haven’t Heard…”

I announced at the January 27th congregational meeting that I will retire on June 30 of this year.

Why?

I have said for a number of years that I hoped to retire at age 62. I will reach that age on May 22nd. After 37 years of being pastor in four different Virginia Baptist churches I am simply tired and ready to bring those responsibilities to a close. The best time to close a ministry is when the church is strong and relationships are good. That’s now.

But we’re starting a building project

Yes, and isn’t that wonderful? HRBC has made a significant commitment to the future of ministry in its setting. The new facilities will enhance the church’s mission. That mission is not dependent on me, nor should it be. God’s work will go on under new leadership. And God will provide.

What happens next?

Many of you took advantage of the sessions on transition and change we offered during Winter Bible study with Bill Wilson from the Center for Congregational Health, so you have a better idea of what lies ahead.

The deacons are charged with the responsibility of recommending to the church how the pulpit will be supplied and whether to call an interim pastor. They also are responsible for the eventual nomination of persons to serve on a Pastor

Search Team. The deacons will be meeting and discussing these options over the next several weeks before coming back to the congregation with specific proposals. You will have ample time and opportunity to consider what they recommend.

For now,

Let us thank God for a wonderful 18 years together, and celebrate!

Bert Browning”

The Building/Renovation Moves Forward

Dr. Browning’s retirement letter did come as a surprise to most of the members; but the letting of the contract, for the new construction and renovation that the church had been awaiting for over a year, was no surprise. At a special called meeting on the 24th of February, the church approved a contract with Century Construction Company for the renovation and expansion of the church facilities in the amount of \$2,414,060.48, which did not include the architectural fees of \$204,000 for such items as site surveys, furnishings, insurance, etc. The church, having fulfilled the requirement that one-third of the monies must be in hand before any contractual agreement, was able to authorize the execution of this contract. Actually, the “It’s Time” fundraising had exceeded its goal, for by February 24, that fund totaled \$973,215.33. Now it was time to “get a move on,” at least as far as the church offices, the Sunday school classrooms and gym were concerned.

On March 3, the congregation gathered outside, in front of the Wallis Building, to officially start the construction. A group of very special members, young and old, new members and charter members, lined up with shovels in hand to turn the first dirt. Dr. Browning led the massed members with a small bullhorn as the group sang and prayed. Everyone was involved in this ceremony. Rocks that had been passed out when the campaign began and which bore the names of the families where they had been housed for the last year, were collected for incorporation in the foundation. These rocks reflected an adherence to the word of Christ when He spoke to Peter and said “upon this rock I will build my church” (Matthew 16:18).

The move affected everyone. The first impact could be seen as the church offices were moved to the house on Ashburn Road, adjacent to the church. That meant that among other things, there would be telephone service disruption with the staff. More dramatic were the changes in location for the Sunday school classes. Since the Wallis Building had harbored the bulk of the classes, and it would now be off limits, the classes had to go somewhere. That entailed using just about every available space, the gym, the sanctuary and the CDC rooms. On the last Sunday that classes were held in the Wallis Building, March 3, many took the opportunity to write comments and scripture on the walls that had served them for so long a time. It was much like saying goodbye to an old friend, but with the knowledge that there would be a new one in the very near future.

We have all heard the old adage that necessity is the mother of invention. That was obviously something that Vince Gray, our custodian, had learned through his many years of experience. In order to transport the heavy articles from the church to the new office, he constructed and donated the “Flo dolly” in memory of his wife Florence. With this device, the movement of cumbersome files and equipment was done more rapidly and with less pain to the backs of those doing the work.

Change at Easter but Not Much

With all the construction beginning and the classes in new locations, Easter would be somewhat different from those of the past. Both the contemporary and traditional services were being conducted in the

sanctuary, which was a bit of a change. Walkways had been constructed for the mobility challenged which brought them through Sunday school classrooms. Parking anywhere near the church was at a premium since construction equipment had caused the closure of the lot on the Ashburn side of the church. Last, but far from least, the cross that normally would be covered with flowers on Easter could not be erected in front of the Wallis Building.

On this day that we celebrated the resurrection of our Lord and Savior, all these minor inconveniences were set aside as the people greeted one another with glowing smiles. Over 300 had attended Sunday school and 615 had attended the two worship services. In the sanctuary, the Pastor gave the greeting “The Lord is risen!” To this, the people responded “He is risen indeed!” The cross, a symbol of our faith, had been brought inside and placed at the front of the sanctuary, where it had been adorned with flowers by the faithful. Yes, there had been change this Easter, but it did not diminish in any way the joy of this day or its meaning.

Preparing the Way for an Intentional Interim Pastor

On April 7, Dr. Bill Wilson, President of the Center for Congregational Health, was the guest speaker for the Sunday services. At first glance, his topic entitled “Our Uncertain Future” may appear to be a negative reaction to the impending departure of our pastor, but instead, it was an uplifting insight into the opportunities that lay ahead of HRBC. Not only did he lead the two worship services, he also led the Bible study hour in the Family Life Center. This allowed for questions and answers about the transition process.

At the April 28 Congregational Meeting, Joe Hester made a motion to enter into an agreement with the Center for Congregational Health in Wake Forest, NC. The Center would provide an Interim Transition Specialist who would take over the administrative and pastoral duties of a full time pastor, while leading us through the calling of a new pastor. Approval of this motion would mean that HRBC would make direct payments to the center which would take care of the salary and fringes associated with the intentional interim. The cost of this agreement would in line with the amount paid our current pastor. Furthermore, the agreement would continue until such time as a new pastor is found. It was also noted that staff would fill the pulpit until the interim became available. Having discussed this motion, it was approved.

More Going on Than Bricks and Mortar or Pastor Search

While filling the position of pastor and the construction of new and the renovation of older facilities were major undertakings by the church, these two activities did not consume the zeal of the members in their quest to minister to God’s people, wherever they might be. From January 31 – February 3, ten members had travelled to Charlotte, NC, to aid the Hyaets ministry by remodeling a bathroom, sharing in a meal, hosting a super bowl party and establishing strong Christian relationships.

Members were also willing to dig deep into their own resources to further the ministry of our various partners. A goal of \$4,000 had been established for the 2013 Home Missions Offering. On April 14, it was announced that goal had been exceeded. Reported in the Bulletin that Sunday, the amount was \$5,555.55 which would be divided equally between Hyaets, Owsley County, the North American Mission Board and the Cooperative Baptist fellowship. This unselfish act by the membership displayed their commitment to provide the means for others to share the message of Christ.

Jon Greenhill, Associate Pastor for Youth and College Age Ministries celebrated his 5th anniversary with HRBC in May. Through his efforts, the youth of the church have gained insight into their own relationship

with God and their relationships with all the people of God. Romans 12:2, which reads as follows: “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect (NRSV).” This continues to be the foundation for the youth led activities at HRBC. Whether they were in a retreat at Plant Wisdom in Woodbridge, VA or participating in mission trips to Owsley County or Hyaets, Jon was instrumental in showing that God has a purpose for each young life and that they all have to ability to understand His will and to pass it on through Christian love and work.

There was also a change at the CDC, when Barbara Booth resigned as Director in April. By May 22, the Personnel Team announced that Amanda Lott, Associate Pastor for Children’s Ministries, had been hired as Interim Director for the 2013-2014 session.

The Browning Years Come to a Close

Heritage Day, June 9, 2013, was another of those days with mixed emotions. It was a day that would have the congregation rejoice with the baptism of Jim, Laura, Michaela and Mason Morris. There was a commissioning of the Bland County Dental Team and the United Praise as they began their mission tour. It was also a day of reflection on the past 18 years of the ministry of Dr. Herbert Oswald “Bert” Browning, Jr.

On that Sunday evening, following the suggestion that the pastor had made in his letter when he wrote, “Let us thank God for a wonderful 18 years together, and celebrate!” the church held a retirement celebration in the sanctuary, followed by a reception in the Family Life Center. There were pictures from the past as well as a video made specifically for this event by the various Sunday school classes. There was good humor and personal remembrances by staff, members of the congregation, and special guests.

Dr. Browning would give his final sermon as pastor on June 23 which was entitled “When All is Said and Done.” The scripture that he chose for this last message was taken from Acts 20:17-24, 27-28, 32, which reads as follows:

“From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church. When they arrived, he said to them: “You know how I lived the whole time I was with you, from the first day I came into the province of Asia. I served the Lord with great humility and with tears and in the midst of severe testing by the plots of my Jewish opponents. You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house. I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.

And now, compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there. I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me. However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God’s grace.

For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God. Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. (NIV)”

Under his guidance, Huguenot Road Baptist Church had grown to over 1600 members. The facilities were in the process of being modernized. Staff had been increased to fill the needs of the congregation. However, more than this was the fact that the church had never lost sight of its mission – to spread the word of Christ, to minister to others, to rejoice in Christian fellowship, and to grow in Christ.

And as the people said their goodbyes to Dr. Browning, with his message ringing in their ears, many probably thought of those often quoted words of our Lord, found in Matthew 25:21. “Well done, thou good and faithful servant”

The Intentional Interim Pastorate of Dr. Layne Smith Begins

With the departure of Dr. Browning, the church entered into a phase of its history like none before it. Having reached an agreement with the Center for Congregational Health (CCH) to obtain the services of an intentional interim pastor and having had the pleasure of meeting that individual in mid May, there would only be five Sundays that would require filling the pulpit before the interim came on board. This temporary vacancy would be filled by the staff of HRBC. Beginning on Sunday, June 30, pulpit supply was provided by the staff in the following order: Melissa Fallen, Phillip Brown, Matthew Hensley, Amanda Lott, and concluding on Sunday, July 28, with Jon Greenhill.

On August 4, 2013, Dr. Layne Smith arrived to take the helm of Huguenot Road Baptist Church until such time as a new pastor could be called. After the Commissioning, which was led by Phillip Brown and joined by the congregation, Dr. Smith gave his first sermon at HRBC entitled “How Will HRBC Measure Success?” The scripture that was used for this message was John 12:20-33.

Raised in Kansas, Dr. Smith most recently served as an interim pastor at Forest Hills Baptist Church in Raleigh, NC. Before that, he had served as senior pastor for 26 years in two pastorates, one in North Carolina and the other in Arkansas. After the traditional service, joined by his wife Dianne, he would meet and be welcomed by congregation at a more informal setting dubbed “Layne’s Lemonade on the Lawn.”

An Anniversary and a Mission

August 4 was also a special day for Rev. Matthew Hensley, Associate Pastor for Discipleship and Missions. In the two years since his call to HRBC in 2011, his practical guidance of mission efforts and his commitment to discipleship training, through Sunday school and small group’s Bible study had made him a valuable asset to the church. On this day, he would also be one of those commissioned to minister “to the needs of the world” as he would be heading up the Slovakia Mission Team scheduled to leave later in the week.

The Slovakia Mission Team, consisting of Matthew Hensley, Dave Anderson, Kristin Francisco, Laura Fowler and Phillip Brown flew to Kosice, Slovakia on August 9, to join with Cooperative Baptist Fellowship missionaries Jon and Tanya Parks who are serving there. The purpose of this exploratory mission was to determine how HRBC can best minister and assist the Parks as they bring God’s word to the Roma people of the area. The Roma people are a minority in Slovakia and live on the edge of society where they face problems of poverty and crime. Returning on the 17th, they told of their experiences and the needs of this missionary effort of our newest partner.

Change of Venue for the Clinic

Due to the construction occurring at HRBC, the location of the Clinic this year required a cooperative venture with Central Baptist Church located on Courthouse Road in Chesterfield County. On September 21, the hours of planning for this annual event paid tremendous dividends. By 10:00 o’clock, the 150 volunteers had gathered and many of the guests had arrived. By the close of the Clinic four hours later, over 300 guests had benefited from this outreach. The assistance of Central Baptist in this effort was greatly appreciated by the church and those that participated.

Transition Team

The path to finding a new shepherd for HRBC was going to take time and it was designed in that way. It had been initially estimated that the process would take at least 18 months. In order to get a good fit between a new pastor and the congregation, the church needed to know the answers to who we are and where we want to go.

In the September issue of "The Road," Dr. Smith outlined the direction for the Transition Team that would be the lead group in a self study of the church in five major categories. Those categories are: Heritage, Mission/Vision, Leadership, Connections and the Future. Basically, this was the start of the map that will take into account the will of the congregation.

By October, the Transition Team had been established and consisted of Dave Anderson, Randy Camden, Shirley Hinkson, Jamie Sasser, Kim Biggers Hayes, Sue Hurley, Kim Felts, Ed Leslie, Lesley Montgomery and Ray Parker. The team would be moving forward, not in haste, but with due diligence, meeting and collecting information from the members of HRBC so that ultimately, when it was time for a Pastor Search Team, the groundwork would have been laid and the process flow smoother. Over the next several months, there would be surveys, listening sessions, group meetings, one-on-one discussions and most importantly, prayer as the team sought to follow the members' direction in achieving God's will for Huguenot Road.

The Close of 2013

2013 had been a year of change, immense change. The church had seen its pastor of 18 years retire, had embarked on a major construction effort, had obtained the services of an intentional interim pastor, had established a process for selecting a new pastor, had continued its mission efforts both locally and nationwide, had expanded its mission partnership to include Slovakia, had given financially to spread the word of God, had ministered to its people and had dealt with the difficulties of having construction disrupt the status quo.

The Advent Season brought forth a calming focus for the church. The joy that is Christmas and its meaning to the faithful took center stage in more ways than one. The sanctuary was decorated with wreaths and the Advent candles lit one by one. The Annie Moses Band had again come to HRBC to perform. But there was one more event that would herald in Christmas that would represent the hope for the church, community, state, nation and the world. On Christmas Eve, with candles lit, the congregation raised them as they sang "Silent Night". In the singing of that calming hymn of the birth of our Savior, one could hear the original German words being sung along with the English, as both had been provided. "Christ the Savior is born!" "Jesus der Retter ist da!"

2014 the Passing of a Charter Member

As the number of Charter Members decline, in this the 50th year of Huguenot Road, the church has again suffered such a loss. Edward N. Griggs, Jr. was one of original 34 Charter Members of Huguenot Road Baptist Chapel in 1964. His son, Eddie, would be one of the first new members baptized into the chapel congregation. In many ways, he served the chapel, the church and the Lord. On March 9, 2014, the Lord called him home.

Pastor Search Committee Nominations

In the Bulletin for Easter Sunday, April 20, was an insert that showed the due diligence in the church's search for a new pastor. It identified that the Deacons of Huguenot Road Baptist Church had initiated the process of filling a Pastor Search Committee. In this notice, it requested that members of HRBC recommend not more than five members whom they would desire to serve on this committee. The form containing the nominations could either be returned to the church office or filled in online by May 4.

Welcome Back

Everyone was looking toward April 27. It had been prominently displayed in the Bulletin of April 13 as being "Grand Opening Day!" On that day, the newly constructed/renovated Wallis Building would have its doors swing open to welcome back all of its loyal congregants who had been walking around its exterior to get to the various church services. The big question was: "Will it really happen?"

There was ample reason for concern, as permits from various governmental agencies had to be obtained and inspections conducted before the issuance of such permits. While the necessity of such requirements is obvious for the safety of our members and guests, it can also be somewhat frustrating. In one case, sensors had to be moved a few inches to meet the standards. Such actions as this added time to the labors of the construction crew working very hard to meet that designated date of April 27.

When it was announced on Easter Sunday, April 20 that the offices would be moving out of the Ashburn Road house, the big question seemed to have been answered. Yes!

At 9:45 on April 27, the rear parking lot of the church had a new look. No longer were there construction vehicles or the tall fencing around its perimeter. On this morning, there were cars in the lot and people waiting, in great anticipation, for the grand opening.

The honor of cutting the ribbon to symbolically open the new facility was given to two Charter Members, Marvin and Caroline Gregory, and two of the newest members, Abigail and Madeline Montgomery. After the ribbon cutting, the group prayed in unison, acknowledging what God had done and seeking His assistance in having the church be good stewards of His property.

With the ceremony completed, the people filed through the welcoming doors into the Wallis Building to see what had been accomplished. There were the new bathrooms, a new office complex, and an elevator. After a brief tour of the building, the people went to their new Sunday school classrooms. The long awaited day had come and the people rejoiced in it.

Looking Back and Looking Forward

There is no way that a history of Huguenot Road Baptist Church can detail all that the congregation has shared over the past five decades. While there is a communal memory which is dear to all of us, there are the personal remembrances that hopefully will be rekindled by this history. Regrettably, over time, some of the fondest recollections may be lost forever. It is good to look back every once and a while because it is impossible to know where you are going if you don't know where you have been. Huguenot Road Baptist Church has a great history; but as it seeks to do the will of God, to spread the word of Christ, and to show Christian love to neighbors, its past will pale when compared to its future.