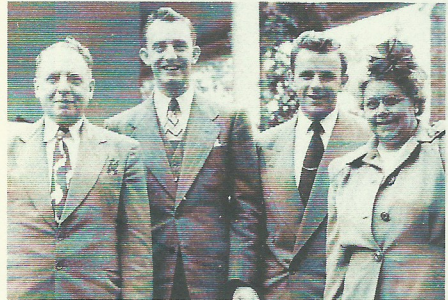
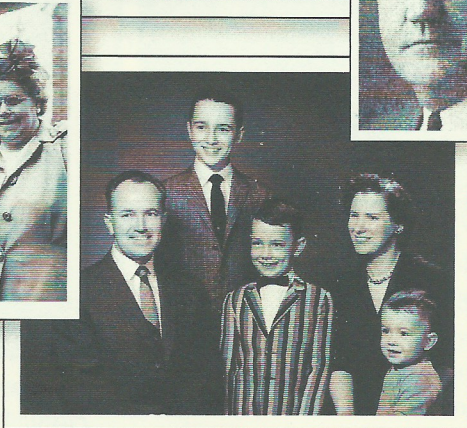


Remembering Our First Parsonage



*Pastor Williams and family,
Pastor Stephenson and family,
and Pastor Jones*



The First Baptist Church • Delaware, Ohio

Pastor Foster's Unpleasant Surprise

When Rev. Foster accepted the call in 1926 to be our new pastor, he assumed that we'd provide him with a parsonage. He was surprised to find out later that we didn't have one.

His surprise made church members realize that it was time to raise money for a parsonage. A parsonage fund was started, led by Mrs. Rufus Crane, but the fund grew slowly. (The Great Depression was from 1929-1939 and many people struggled financially.)

When Pastor Foster retired in 1938 we still didn't have enough money for a parsonage.



Pastor H. Schuyler Foster and his wife Florence in a photo taken while he was pastor.

Pastor Williams is Hired Part-Time

Our church had around 180 members (130 of them active), but money was tight. The parsonage fund was just \$600, and our church decided to hire a part-time pastor.

Rev. Morgan Williams (father of the late Don Williams) was hired in 1938. He was around 49 years old and had gone back to college to get a PhD in Sociology. He lived in Columbus, attended OSU, and only came to Delaware on Sundays and Wednesdays.

The Williams family found carbon copies of letters he wrote to relatives. In one he said, "I give them only part time...they cannot raise much



Pastor Williams

money". In another letter he said, "This position...pays but \$23 per week. Hence we have had to borrow money in order to live and to put our boys through school."

The Parsonage Committee

Money willed to the church from the Ryan and Mitchell estates finally made the parsonage fund large enough to buy a house.

A Parsonage Committee was formed in June 1940 and consisted of Mrs. Crane (chair), Mrs. Barth, Mr. Nash, Mr. Sperline, Mr. Via, and Mr. Richards.

The search didn't take long. The "Bartholomew House", located a few feet south of the church, was chosen by the end of the summer.



Helen Crane in a photo taken when she was older. She led the parsonage fundraising and was also chair of the Parsonage Committee.

The Bartholomew House

Not much is known about the early history of the house, but we think it was built in the 1870s or 1880s, and was used at least part of the time as a boarding house.

The house originally had gas lights (Sophia Stephenson says part of a gas wall light was still there in 1947).

We think each room originally had a gas heater, and several heaters were still there when it was a parsonage. There was also a furnace that sent hot water to radiators. It was probably added later and most of the gas heaters were removed.

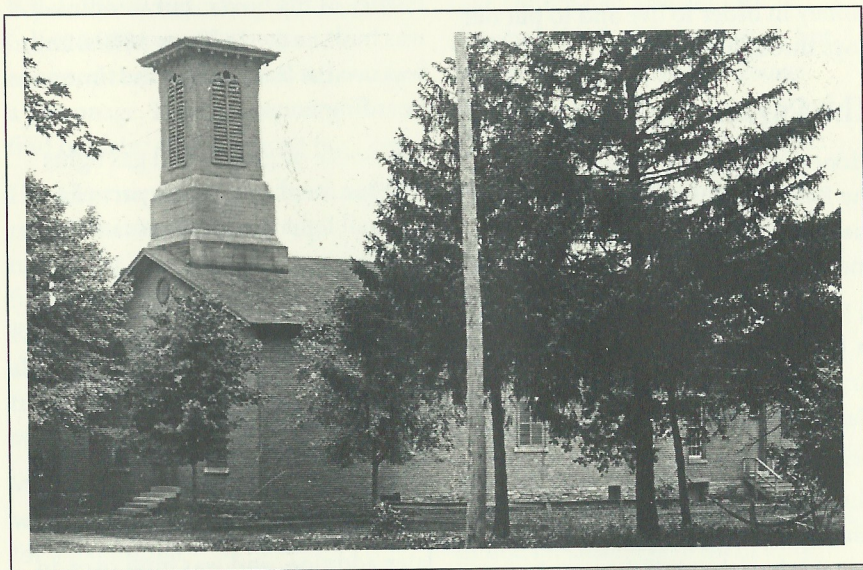
A woodframe kitchen was also a later addition, and was built over an old water well (Delaware didn't have city water until the 1890s).

Originally the back yard had an outhouse (no sewers in Delaware until 1908). Many homes back then had washstands in bedrooms, so the bathroom might have been created later.

One document describes the house as an Italianate design typical of the late 19th century, with carved stone lintels over the windows and bracketed cornice (decorative molding near the roof), and it says the front porch was a later addition.

The house had several owners, but by 1930 it was owned by the family who sold it to us. The 1930 census said it was owned by Frank Bartholomew (a piano tuner) and his wife Harriet,

Our church looked like this when the house was built. Our original church was built in 1858, then greatly enlarged in 1897 to create our current building. The house is barely visible on the left edge of this photo.



along with two “roomers” — Harry Simester (a college teacher) and John Haughn (a restaurant employee).

We Buy the House

The plan to purchase the house was announced in September 1940, and the deed was signed December 24th. We bought it from Harriet Bartholomew, now a widow.

Neither the deed nor church records state the total price, but records say we paid \$3,700 by April 1941, and made a final payment of \$100 in November 1941. So if we made a big down payment and monthly payments of \$100, perhaps the total was around \$4,500.

Parsonage Rented Out

After years of fundraising, it was ironic that when we finally bought a parsonage, the pastor didn't need it. Pastor Williams was still a student at OSU and preferred to live in Columbus, so we rented it out for several years.

Pastor Williams Moves In

In early 1943 Pastor Williams was asked to teach a navigation course at the Naval Flight Preparatory School at OWU in Delaware, and he requested permission to move into the parsonage with his wife (their sons had joined the military).

Church records indicate his salary was lowered to compensate for

free housing: "The church voted unanimously on \$20 a week and the parsonage as being fair to all concerned."

In a letter to his sister he said, "On the 27th of May we moved up here to the house which the church purchased a few years ago ... It is a large eight room and bath, of red brick, and quite the fitting place for the Baptist minister.

"The church is paying to have all the down-stairs rooms papered, the woodwork re-enameled, and various improvements made. The kitchen has a modern cabinet sink, good cupboard space, etc. The house is heated by hot water system of radiators in all rooms but two of the bed-rooms...

"The front room, which will be used for my study and the church office,

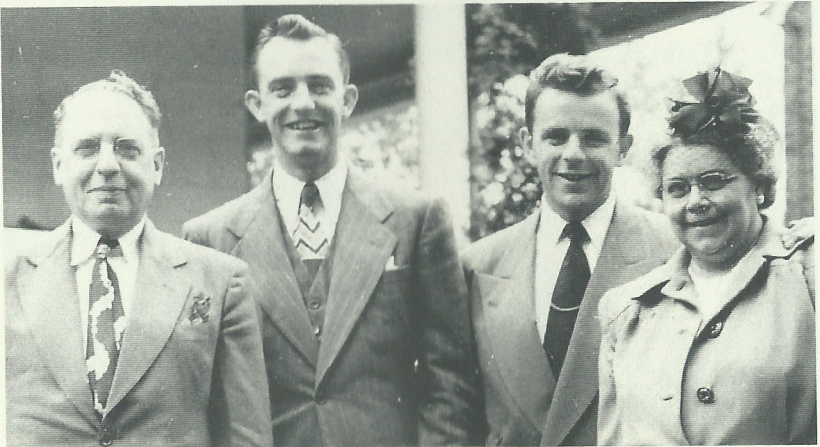
has been papered, and the kitchen is done all but a final coat of varnish on the floor. The upstairs needs yet to have bathroom re-decorated by a couple coats of paint, and hallway floor painted.

"Belle has attractive new curtains at the bedroom windows, and everything in attractive order. The large back bedroom is used as a storage for my books, etc

"We are located within five minutes walk from the business district and in ten minutes I can walk to the University where I am teaching naval cadets the techniques of calculating airplane navigation..."

Rev. and Mrs. Williams lived there until 1946 when he resigned to become the head of a boys school in New York state.

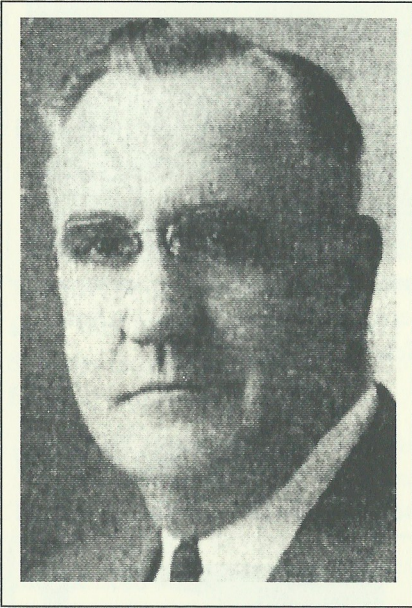
The Williams family doesn't have any photos taken at the parsonage. This photo, taken at another location while he was pastor, shows Morgan Williams, sons Roger and Don, and his wife Clara Belle (she liked to be called Billie).



Pastor C.B. Jones

Rev. Jones became our pastor in 1946. He resigned one year later and church records say very little about him.

But we know he lived in the parsonage. A Delaware Gazette article when he first arrived said he planned to “move with his family to the parsonage on North Franklin”.



Rev. C.B. Jones in a newspaper photo. We don't have a photo of his family.

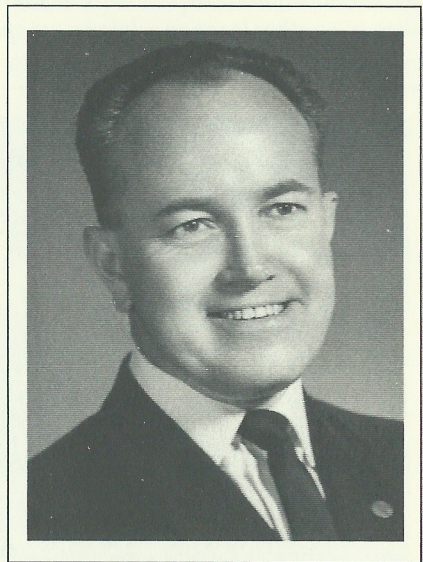
Pastor James “Steve” Stephenson

Rev. Stephenson became our pastor in 1947 and moved into the parsonage with his wife Sophia and their two-year-old son Ted. Two more sons were born later — Jim and Bob.

Like Pastor Williams, Pastor Stephenson also used the front room as his office (until many years later when a church office was built).

The house was adequate for the family's needs but was beginning to show its age. Sophia Stephenson says that the downstairs floors were slanted, closets were tiny, and some rooms got cold in the winter, especially the kitchen where items in wall cabinets sometimes froze.

But on the positive side Sophia remembers that the rooms were



Rev. James Stephenson

large and it had a great front porch with a swing where they spent many pleasant hours. Also the house was convenient to the church and downtown (where most shopping was done back then).



Sophia feeds Jim in the kitchen



The large dining room had room for a play table



Steve in his office (the front room)



Steve reads to Bob in the living room

A New Parsonage

A new parsonage was built at 632 Congress Court in 1978, and the Stephensons lived there until Pastor Stephenson retired.

The old parsonage was no longer needed for pastor housing and was rented to a series of tenants for over 30 years.

The Decision to Demolish

In 2013 the Trustees felt the old parsonage needed major repairs. Church members toured the house and discussed its future.

One option was to fix up the house and continue renting it, but there was concern about the cost of repairs, and some no longer felt an attachment to the house.

Another option was to sell the house, but there was concern that future owners might allow it to deteriorate further.

A third option was demolition. The congregation chose this option under the condition that our application was approved for a government program that would pay the demolition costs.

Demolition Preparation

Prep work included shutting off utilities and professional removal of asbestos from the basement.

Larry Vance of Historic Masonry Restoration removed many bricks and the stone steps for future use elsewhere.

Larry Faulk removed the kitchen cabinets and the decorative stone-work over one window, and the Stephensons removed several items.

Other people removed the claw-footed bathtub, interior doors and their transom windows, and a ceiling lighting fixture.

Demolition

Demolition began on April 10, 2014, with the work done by Shrock Custom Construction of Loudonville, Ohio. They protected south-facing church windows with plywood, then used a Komatsu hydraulic excavator to pull down the house.

Additional Photos

Photos and more information about the house and demolition will be placed in the church archives.

*We know that if this earthly tent which is our house is torn down,
we have a building from God, a house not made with hands,
but eternal in the heavens.*

Hebrews 3:4

This brochure was prepared in May 2014 by Jim Stephenson, with considerable research assistance from Sally Williams, Sue (Williams) Bauer, Judy Williams, Sophia Stephenson and Ted Stephenson.