



Central Presbyterian Church



SPIRIT



900 West Airy Street, Norristown, PA 19401
610-275-2732 FAX: 610-275-2732

ANNIVERSARY EVENTS HIGHLIGHTS

- *Come and greet former pastors, members, and friends*
- *Share in our Anniversary Covered Dish Luncheon*
- *See Displays of Central's History*
- *Special Music*



Central Church to Celebrate our 150th Anniversary on Sunday October 23, 2005

On October 23, Central Presbyterian Church of Norristown will celebrate its 150th anniversary. Former pastors, members, and friends are invited to attend a special worship service at 10:00 a.m. followed by a great covered dish luncheon.

Central Presbyterian Church was founded in August of 1855 when a large number of church members broke away from the one Presbyterian Church in Norristown on theological issues. They rented a building until they erected a new church on Main Street between Swede and Cherry Streets. The cornerstone was laid on August 9, 1856 and the completed church dedicated on February 28, 1858, with Daniel G. Mallery as pastor. The congregation worshipped there for 45 years, then elected to "establish a mission in West Norristown", a growing area. They purchased a lot at the present site at Airy and Stanbridge Streets on November 16, 1902, at a cost of \$5,000, and erected the present church building, which is designed "after the early period of the English perpendicular Gothic, with transepts, nave and choir. Large trusses support open wood ceilings and are of the arch and hammer beam variety," according to a report in a 1907 newspaper, which will be on display.

The grand Hook & Hastings pipe organ still towers over the choir loft. The church's elegant stained glass windows were designed by Nicholas D'Ascenzo, who also crafted windows for the Washington Memorial Chapel at Valley Forge, Riverside Church in New York City, and the National Cathedral. At the time of the Centennial anniversary in 1955, a new educational unit was built to house the growing Sunday School membership and fellowship activities. Dr. James L. Grazier was pastor during the 100th Anniversary and was also Moderator of Philadelphia Presbytery when the Presbyterian Churches of the US and USA united.

Though Central has experienced loss of membership in recent years and faces challenges of declining infrastructure and financial difficulties, our congregation has not lost focus of our original mission to witness Christ and spread the Word of God to our community. For six years we have offered free Community Dinners every Saturday, serving 80 to 110 people each week. For 35 years, Interfaith has provided food and clothing by referral three days a week to the community. Central is also home to many community organizations such as Alcoholics/Narcotics Anonymous Meetings, MoMobile, Bridge of Hope, Habitat for Humanity team housing, and Town Watch. We now have a growing Hispanic membership, with ESL classes, and worship services and Bible studies in English and Spanish.

