

OMHPC at 165 years
a period of outreach, continuing
action and service by the
church family



Original oil painting by Cynthia Pagano for the 150th Anniversary of OMHPC

OMHPC at 165 years - an update: 2005-2020

The history of the Otisville - Mt. Hope Presbyterian Church is a dynamic one. Rather than going back to the origins which have been covered in earlier anniversary celebrations at 100 years and 150 years, this updated history is a recounting of some of the activities of the church and its many groups since 2005 when the milestone 150th anniversary was celebrated. It's a story of continuing action and service by the church family to its members and to the greater community. The period has been under the leadership of Jeff Farley who continues now as the longest-serving pastor of OMHPC. The congregation cares about others and works to soften some of the hardships faced by God's people far and near.

The projects and undertakings of the Deacons and church members have been in response to the needs of the local community, the wider area, the nation and beyond our shores. When flooding and raging streams have caused devastation in the region, teams from the church have gone to help clean up the damage. From Roscoe to Texas to North Carolina and Louisiana, OMHPC volunteers created response teams and traveled to help others to restore a semblance of normality to their communities.

The congregation has helped with flood buckets, donations of cleaning supplies and financial assistance through the PCUSA. A team of volunteers traveled to Haiti in the aftermath of a devastating earthquake in Port-au-Prince and also raised funds to purchase supplies. The congregation has also supported a member's efforts in Africa to develop better sources of water and to fence in gardens.

Other important works undertaken by the Church community are the Deacons' 5K Run which has raised money for worthy causes such as Habitat for Humanity and the Brittany Miller Foundation. The church participates with the school district's backpack program sending food home with

students whose families are struggling. The Deacons operate a food pantry which serves more than 30 families as well as the annual Thanksgiving basket program. OMHPC also conducts services at Park Manor nursing home in the Town of Wallkill.

In recognition of our veteran members, there are periodic "legacy luncheons" after the 11 a.m. service. Members of the congregation also help in the community doing small projects that help others. Some of the assistance has been trimming hedges, pressure washing and cleaning up.

Since the 150th Anniversary Celebration, OMHPC has adopted new technology. Large screens have been placed in the sanctuary and the Fellowship Hall to assist with the service while providing an in-house experience for those who have difficulty seeing, challenges of mobility or have child care needs during Sunday services. Services have been expanded to include 8:30, 9:30 and 11 o'clock gatherings. EMPOWERkids and EMPOWERyouth, our children's ministry programs, are an integral part of our church community and mission.

The Memorial Garden by the parking lot has been cleared of some brush and is an area of quiet reflection. The bench donated by the family of Ron James, has been relocated within the Garden. A new more permanent structure has been added for Church activities such as the Live Nativity held every Christmas season.

Other efforts at building a Church community have included the Prayer Shawl ministry. The group which met until COVID-19, has provided nearly 1,000 prayer shawls and blankets for those in need of comfort. Prayer shawls are also given to newly baptized children and adults.

The quilting group has extended their talents to making and donating pillowcases to emergency housing, KindQuilts for ill children and during the COVID 19 pandemic, masks and scrub hats.

OMHPC groups have participated in the Walk

for Habitat for Humanity, Church World Service CROP Hunger Walk, Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes and meals for local warming stations.

Bringing the joys of our church to the community has been rewarding. OMHPC has presented Mystery Dinner Theatre Drama productions, Christmas music Concerts, Trunk or Treat events and the Live Nativity. College care packages are sent to students away from home for the first time.

Due to health and safety concerns during the COVID 19 pandemic, most of the church's activities have been temporarily suspended. In spite of the challenges of the pandemic, our Deacons continue to serve the community's ever-growing need for the food pantry. The 3 Sunday services became an on-line service with a small team of musicians and a technology crew aiding our energetic leader, Jeff. Sunday worship is on line at YouTube and FaceBook. There is Sunday evening outdoor worship in the Orchard St. parking lot.

Two views of OMHPC. The photo on the right was taken around 1990 during the height of the Fall season. The bottom photo was taken in September 2020 and reflects our continuing programs even during a pandemic.

