

A BRIEF CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THIRD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

- 1766,** a number of persons living in Westfield, petitioned the General Assembly for a separate Ecclesiastical society. The petition was granted and this arose the fourth ecclesiastical society. The first three names on that petition were Edward Higby, Nathaniel Gilbert, and Benjamin Atkins.
- 1773,** an ecclesiastical council was called to establish a church in Westfield. Twenty-one persons from First Church and five from the Second Church were the founding members of the church in Westfield.
- 1773,** the society built their first meetinghouse. It was 48 feet long and 30 feet wide. It stood where the present church stands. There was no paint on the building at first, either inside or out; and the only stoves used during winter were foot stoves. The first Minister was Rev. Thomas Miner. Rev. Miner was a graduate of Yale and a man of some means. He owned his own home, which is the first house on the left side of the left at the Smith and Miner. He served the church for 52 years and is buried in Miner Cemetery, which is named for him.
- 1847,** the original Meeting House was lost in a fire.
- 1849,** a new Meeting House was built at a cost of \$3,466.37. The new meetinghouse was dedicated on December 6, 1849.
- 1849,** a bell was purchased for a price of \$383.00. To this day, when the bell is rung, this very same bell has been calling Westfield residents to worship since 1849.
- 1858,** the church voted to dispose of some horse sheds and move what is now the Fellowship Hall on to the property.
- 1873,** had centennial celebration with usual worship service thanking God for God's goodness during the past 100 years.
- 1901,** the choir and others interested were given permission to install a new organ at their own expense.
- 1911,** Fellowship Hall (Lecture Hall) re-shingled at a cost of \$19.50.
- 1938,** a new organ for sanctuary was purchased and installed through hard work and sacrificial giving.
- 1947,** installed new kitchen and heating plant.
- 1961,** new ceiling installed in meetinghouse, the steeple completely renovated, and chimneys were repaired.
- 1970,** the Westfield Volunteer Fire Department built and donated the barbecue pit.
- 1973,** Bicentennial Celebration of Third Church.
- 1976,** new lighting fixtures installed in Sanctuary.
- 1981,** a new Sunday School building was built connecting the Meeting House with the Fellowship Hall. The church Sunday School building was completely re-done to become the new parsonage. All this was done for a price tag of \$175,000.
- 1988,** the parking lot was surfaced with asphalt.
- 1997,** the roof was replaced, bell tower repaired and recovered, and ceiling repaired and cleaned. On November 2, 1997, these repairs were dedicated and the Meeting House re-dedicated. New tables were purchased for the educational building and the fellowship hall by PFS. Minister's study established. Air conditioner and new bookcases installed in minister's study.
- 1998,** the heating system for the fellowship hall and the educational building was replaced and the windows were replaced in the kitchen and fellowship hall. The floor in the fellowship hall was refinished.
- 1998,** 225th anniversary celebration held with former ministers Rev. Hubert Topliff and Rev. Robert Henderson, as well as interim ministers, Rev. Winton Hoog, Rev. David Hare, and the Executive Secretary of the CT Fellowship, Rev. John Lancz attending.
- 1999,** the Butterfly Garden was dedicated.

- 2001, the kitchen was dedicated after a complete renovation.**
- 2001, voted to proceed with the idea of expanding the Educational Building. Set aside funds to secure an architect.**
- 2004, dedication of Education Bldg. Added new restrooms and 4 classrooms.**
- 2006, replaced oil tank for sanctuary. Replaced computer in church office. Steeple was repaired and painted.**
- 2007, Parsonage interior painted, new minister Pastor Norm Erlendson called to Third Church, large tree by office was taken down, roof was replaced on parsonage, new chandeliers and wall sconces have been donated by generous members.**
- 2008, a used copier was purchased for the church office.**

The roll call of ministers who have served Third Congregational Church, and the year called, is as follows:

Thomas Miner.....1773	William Williams.....1923
Stephen Hayes.....1820	Paul R. Coons..... 1926
Stephen Topliff.....1829	David Yale..... 1930
James H. Francis.....1840	Lewis Knox..... 1934
Lent S. Hough.....1847	Matthew W. Porter..... 1947
A.T.Waterman.....1864	Craig G. Whitsitt..... 1950
E.T.Hooker.....1869	Hubert J. Topliff..... 1951
John Elderkin..... .1873	Robert W. Henderson..... 1956
A.H. Wilcox.....1876	David Hirtle..... 1982
J. Webster Tuck.....1877	John Carson..... 1986
Edwin Holman.....1882	Markham E. Dunn..... 1995
David Hubbard.....1885	Norm Erlendson..... 2007
Aaron Downs.....1918	Nancy Lois.....2019
Earl Sweet.....1918	Daniel Schlorff.....2023