

THE WSBC

CENTENNIAL TIMES

January, 2012

Issue Number Ten

10th
EDITION
CENTENNIAL
COUNTDOWN
10 months

MORTGAGE
PAYOFF
COUNTDOWN
\$453,359
TO GO

Celebrating 100 Years 1912-2012

**CENTENNIAL
EVENTS YOU
DON'T WANT
TO MISS!**

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A NEW YEAR'S PRAYER

*Eternal God, Creator of all,
we see and experience just a small part of your
creation, and even that is beyond our
understanding or imagination.*

*We recognize that you created us – each of us, the
billions of us, each one individually; that too is
beyond our comprehension.*

*Everything we are and have is your creation -
your continuing creation. Indeed, we live and
move and have our very existence in you. Apart
from you we are nothing and have nothing.*

*Beyond creating us, you also love us. How do we
know what that means? Your love is eternal, yet
focused for us in that greatest of all acts of love -
the gift of yourself in death on the cross.*

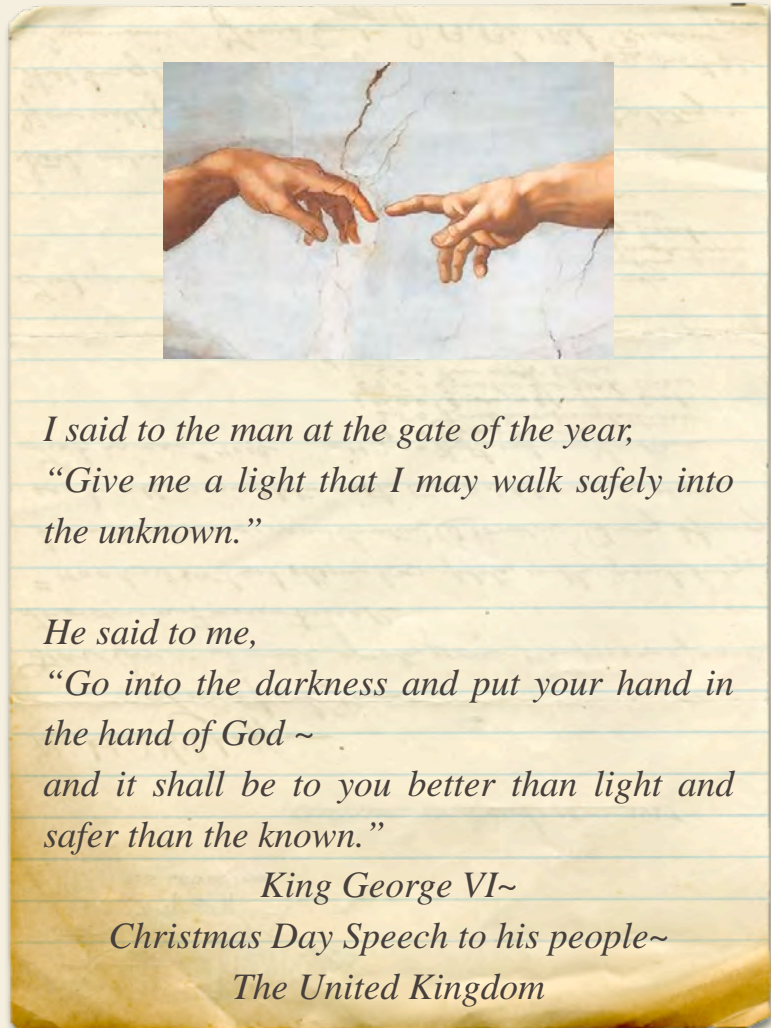
*We believe you have chosen to reveal these truths
to us, and given us sufficient understanding that
we may respond as we should -with worship, love
and commitment to you alone.*

*And yet, you do not force us. You have allowed
us to choose; you do not make us worship you –
you do not make us love you – you do not make
us serve you. You simply reach out with nail-
pierced hands And invite us to be in eternal
relationship with you.*

*We want to respond – we want to worship you –
we want to love you - we want to serve you, but
our strength is small, our wills are weak, and our
pride deceives us. So our petition today is for
your strength, and your power, and the filling of
our lives with your Holy Spirit, so that we might
worship you, and love you and serve you as you
intended when you created us.*

Hear our prayer; O God. Amen

By Norm Swift



Artwork from Michelangelo's fresco, "The Creation" ~ Sistine Chapel

A YEAR OF SPECIAL EVENTS: SAVE THE DATES!

CENTENNIAL KICKOFF CELEBRATION

SUNDAY, JANUARY 8, 2012

Mark your calendars! Sunday, January 8, 2012, has been designated the official kickoff of our Centennial Celebration. Join us for a Centennial Fellowship between the worship services, hosted by the Centennial Committee. We hope you will all plan to attend. Bring the whole family to the Community Room between first worship service and Sunday School classes for fellowship, with a few special touches, including a gift to help schedule this year-long celebration.

If you attend the 8:30 am service, please plan to stay for fellowship to enjoy the festivities. For those who regularly attend the 11 am service, please plan to come early. Do hope to see you there!

The Centennial Committee

The Centennial Year 2012

*Kick-off Event Sunday
Jan. 8*

*Missions Emphasis Week
March 2-11*

*All Church Work Trek
Weekend
To Be Announced*

*100th Anniversary Concert
May 20 ~ 6 pm*

*Gathering on the Green,
June 22*

*Fine Arts Fair
June 23-24*

*Homecoming Picnic
August 11*

*Rally Day
September 9*

*Sermon Series by Pastor Dean
Oct 14, 21, 28*

Celebration Weekend

*Birthday Party/Open House
Nov 3 from 2-4 pm*

*Celebration Sunday Worship
Sunday, Nov. 4th ~ 10 am*

*Celebration Banquet
The Carlisle~ Lombard
Sunday, Nov. 4th ~ 12:30 pm*

WSBC CENTENNIAL MORTGAGE PAY-OFF CAMPAIGN

PRAY

*-That all will seek and
follow God's will*

*-That each will enjoy the
blessing of sacrificial
giving*

*-That all we do will
glorify the Lord*

WHY CELEBRATE THE CENTENNIAL?

BY MODERATOR, JOHN HIRT

At our most recent WSBC congregational business meeting, we received an update on the planned events for our 2012 centennial year along with approving the 2012 church budget which provided the funding for those celebrations. A natural question to ask might be: 'Why are we making a big deal out of a church anniversary?' or 'Can we really afford to spend our money on celebration activities at a time like this?'

I think I began to learn about the art of appropriate recognition and celebration of special events soon after our first wedding anniversary. In my practical desire to acknowledge this special event, I gave Peggy a very nice waffle iron. Although we did enjoy some great waffles over the following years and she was kind enough not to complain, I received some enthusiastic advice from some more experienced husbands teaching me that appropriate wedding anniversary gifts and electrical cords were mutually exclusive! How was I supposed to know?

Over the past 33 years, we have had many opportunities to celebrate and recognize special milestones from

birthdays to anniversaries, family graduations and weddings to that all-important event of grandparenthood!

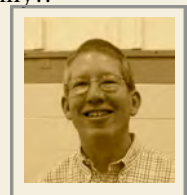
As I look back, I can see that we naturally made a bigger deal out of celebrating our kids' weddings and college graduations than we did their 8th grade graduation and their first homecoming dance. Our 25th wedding anniversary was a bigger celebration milestone than our 14th anniversary, etc. When the event was a 'bigger deal' event that also meant that we spent more money on the celebration. (The only exception to this phenomenon has to do with celebrating grandchildren...grandma is allowed to spend whatever she wants on the grandkids at any time and grandpa is wise to offer no resistance.)

Well back to our original question above... We are making a big deal out of celebrating 100 years as a church because 100 years is a very significant milestone in the life of a church family. It's important for us to step back and acknowledge the history and the evidence of God's faithful hand on WSBC over the years and then to look forward in excited anticipation toward our future with the grateful confidence

from the past 100 years of His provision! As we look at scripture and the history of the church, there is a consistent accounting of God's people celebrating special events from the annual Passover celebration of God's deliverance of His people from Egyptian slavery to our celebration of Christ's birth, death and resurrection. For these anniversary celebrations, the believers would often travel some distance to be together, sharing meals and sometimes exchanging gifts to acknowledge these special events.

Representing your Church Board and its Centennial Committee, I want to offer you the assurance that we have prayerfully sought to strike the right balance of planning an appropriate celebration of a great 100 year milestone, in a spirit of good financial stewardship with the resources God has faithfully provided through each of you. I hope each of us will be able to participate and enjoy our 2012 Centennial Celebration with thankful hearts to our Lord Jesus. Happy 100th birthday, WSBC family!!

John Hirt



Lloyd Fesmire pastors through the post-war years 1945-1967



Helen Fesmire, Lloyd Fesmire and baby Connie~ 1945

A 21 YEAR PASTORATE BEGINS

Pastor Lloyd Fesmire was called to our church in 1945 and soon helped to fulfill the dreams of previous years. The radio broadcast of "Songs in the Night" brought recognition to the small church. The time was now ripe for an aggressive building program. The 10:15 pm Sunday evening broadcast brought visitors from miles around and the basement building could barely seat so many visitors.

The modest annual budget had little room for building funds, so \$50,000 was borrowed and five year Certificates of Indebtedness bearing 4 % interest were sold to get started. The total cost of the completed sanctuary was \$72,000. At the same time, three additional lots were purchased (*in close proximity to the church structure on Johnson Avenue.*)

On September 19, 1949, the dream was realized. The group that had started in a kindergarten room, had moved to a store front, then worshipped for years in a basement church, now had a new church home seating approximately 300.

Marguerite Orth

"We were married two years and our first baby girl was born back in Pennsylvania the day before Lloyd preached his first sermon at the Village Church on September 16, 1945. I was 23 and Lloyd was about to have his 28th birthday. Our initial assessment of the church was that it was a small congregation that loved the Lord but was in need of spiritual maturing through Bible teaching. We were grateful for the strong leadership we found among the members of the congregation. They expressed to us that the church needed a pastor who would be there to nurture and to pastor them. We also knew the church needed a main floor with a sanctuary and as well as a stronger missions program."

Helen Fesmire~ 2011

One of our own remembers....

MY RECOLLECTIONS OF LLOYD FESMIRE

I met Lloyd Fesmire in the Spring of 1962, while I was a senior at Lyons Township High School. However, I was introduced to him by a friend, a roommate at the University of Illinois Summer Youth Music Camp. My friend's name was Torrey (I didn't learn until much later the significance of that name), and his background was from an evangelical family where his father was a former preacher whose temper prompted him to resign from pulpit ministry. Torrey and I spent several days arguing history and, obliquely, religion, and he challenged me to read some of the Bible I thought I knew "enough" about. I was almost shamed into doing this when, after discussing what I thought a verse of Scripture meant, he broke out laughing!

Several months later, he told me that his family had come to Songs in the Night at the Village Church and were acquainted with the minister there. Would I be willing to join him on a Sunday morning if he would go to my current church and I would go with him to WSBC. I said I would do that on a cold Sunday in February, 1962. After we left my church, Torrey remarked that the preacher did not offer any words about Jesus, God's love, or how to know Christ personally. That thought was with me when I listened to Lloyd Fesmire preaching about how much God knew me and loved me anyway. I was going to remark how that sermon meant so much to me when Torrey walked up to Pastor Fesmire and said I wanted an appointment to see him! That led to a private meeting where Pastor Fesmire talked to a confused and yet very open young man, and I accepted Jesus that afternoon, March 7, 1962. The confirmation of this event in my mind was when I walked into my home and my mother, not even looking at me, asked what was different about me that afternoon! (Incidentally, I later learned that Torrey had been running from Jesus, and that my conversion led directly to his own!!)

For the rest of that school year, I met with Pastor every Wednesday afternoon for about an hour, starting around 3:30 or so. He listened to me, asked questions about Scripture verses I was reading, answered questions about what troubled me about my new life in Christ, and prayed with me about all sorts of things. He encouraged me to go to the Billy Graham crusade in Chicago that year, and to my GREAT surprise, told me to come forward the next Sunday when Billy would be preaching at WSBC – he wanted me to meet Billy Graham personally and pray with him. I didn't wash my hands for weeks after that!!

I knew so little about how the church operated in those days, and since I left for college for five years after that summer in 1962, my only contact with Pastor Fesmire was listening to Songs in the Night on WLS radio in my room at Urbana (when the moon was right and there was no interference or static to prevent receiving the show). After I finished college and listened to those who knew Pastor better, I was amazed at what it cost him to meet with me so many times. He had to prepare Sunday morning and evening services, Wednesday night reflections prior to prayer meeting, Songs in the Night scripts, and of course all the visitation that he had to do between all that. I never knew him to tell me that he would not meet with me except one time he had a fever and did not come to church that day. I owe much to Lloyd Fesmire, and I know that God brought him to WSBC at a time long before he ever met me, but God was preparing him for that high school senior kid who needed to have a quiet talk with a man on fire for the Lord.

Howard Amerlan



“Lord, You have been our dwelling place throughout all generations.”

Psalm. 90:1

