

# The Presbyterian Investor

Published quarterly for investors and friends of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc.

## In This Issue

- Elmwood United Presbyterian Church Extends the Reach of Jesus Christ Through Its Three Locations in New Jersey
- New Construction and Renovation at Northminster Presbyterian Church Helps Overcome Tragic Past Event
- New Building Fuels Second Stage of Growth for Southlake Boulevard Presbyterian Church
- We Welcome and Introduce to You New Board Member... Louise Westfall

*This newsletter does not constitute an offer, sale or request to purchase an investment. Such an offer is made solely through the Offering Circular that is available from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc. Investments and loans are not available in all areas.*

## Elmwood United Presbyterian Church Extends the Reach of Jesus Christ Through Its Three Locations in New Jersey

by The Reverend Robert Burkins

When I came to Elmwood United Presbyterian Church in 1987, I wasn't quite sure what the future held, but if you had told me that twenty-two years later I would be the pastor of one church that had three locations in three different cities yet all within a few miles of one another, I'm not sure I would have believed you. Sometimes I still find it hard to fathom but, as they say, the Lord moves in mysterious ways.

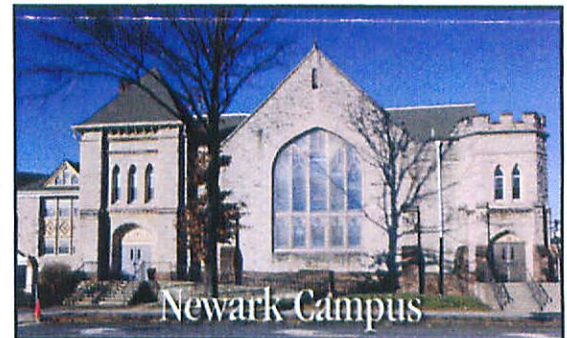
Our original church in East Orange, New Jersey, is our largest and most comprehensive campus. Our second location, in West Orange, New Jersey, known as Elmwood West @ St. Cloud, grew out of a bible study fellowship and is about five miles from our East Orange campus. And finally, our third location is known as Elmwood Central in Newark, New Jersey, and resulted from the 2007 merger of the former Central Presbyterian Church of Newark with Elmwood United.

I wouldn't blame you if you were confused by all of this. Sometimes I have to remind myself of the connections. We stumbled on the multi-site model and have no prescribed road map that we are following. I like to say that we are building the bridge and painting it at the same time.

*Continued on page 4*



East Orange Campus



Newark Campus



West Orange Campus



## Elmwood United Presbyterian Church Extends the Reach of Jesus Christ Through Its Three Locations in New Jersey

*Continued from front page*

Collectively, Elmwood United is a predominantly African-American church with one session, over 1000 members and is considered the largest African-American church in PCUSA. Our size doesn't mean, however, that we do not have challenges facing us and that we can't use the help of Presbyterian investors.

Back in 1995, our Elmwood Central location in Newark, when it was still Central Presbyterian, suffered a devastating fire that destroyed most of the campus. Even though the sanctuary was renovated and the church returned to active service, its congregation declined to only a few dozen souls and the remainder of the campus languished in its post-fire condition. Since the merger two years ago, we planned to refurbish the campus and began a capital campaign for just that purpose. With help from the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, we will soon begin construction and hope to be finished within about a year. The rehabilitation program will mean our Elmwood Central location will have the benefit of a fellowship hall, offices, classrooms, kitchen and multiple bathrooms, with a new heating and air conditioning system. All of which, since the fire, the congregation has done without. Though, the worshipping congregation has now grown to over 100.

We look forward to that day because it will mean we will gain new impetus in our mission to extend our reach, as we like to say, Across the Sanctuary, Across the Street, and Across the Sea.

One of the principal means by which we accomplish our goal of extending the reach of Jesus Christ is through Elmwood United's Harambee Community Development Initiative. Harambee, which means "all pull together" in Swahili, brings together a number of different ministries that have a huge impact on our local community. Under this banner we have pre-school for over one hundred youngsters, youth programs that promote sports excellence and musical instruction and appreciation, parenting classes and seminars that provide instruction on becoming debt free and curbing domestic violence.

Also, through the Harambee Center we provide opportunities for our young people to close the "digital divide" by making instruction and hands-on projects available in our own recording studio, video production studio, computer lab and TV studio. In fact, we hope soon to be able to provide our own simulcast of our Sunday services so that all three church locations are linked.

In addition to our domestic ministries, we also extend the reach of Jesus Christ overseas. We have had several mission trips to Ghana and another to Israel and Palestine where we are helping to develop and

support a dental clinic. We are also discussing initiating a new mission to Brazil in the near future.

People ask me what the future holds for Elmwood United Presbyterian Church, whether or not we will continue to function as one church

with three locations or eventually become separate entities, and I can honestly say I don't know. At each of our locations we have campus steering committees that ask these questions with regularity, and I think the real answer is that Jesus Christ will guide us. I can't think of a better pathfinder. We're leaving it up to Him to point the way.

If you would like to make an investment in support of Elmwood United Presbyterian Church to help further reduce the cost of our loan, please contact the Investment & Loan Program at 800-903-7457, Ext. 5865.



*The Harambee Community Development Initiative, Inc., located in East Orange, brings together a number of Elmwood United's ministries, which impact the wider community. Harambee means "all pull together" in Swahili.*