

## Glenville New Life Community Church 1962-2013

Glenville New Life Community Church, PCUSA is celebrating 50 Years of Ministry in the Glenville Community. Glenville New Life Community Church originally began as Glenville United Presbyterian Church on September 23, 1962. Glenville United Presbyterian Church was birthed from the Old Glenville Presbyterian Church, which had served the community since the early 1890s. The Old Glenville Presbyterian Church was under the leadership of Rev. Gaston, D.D. The Old Glenville Presbyterian Church was a vital part of the community from its inception in 1890 to its closing in 1960. The Old Glenville Presbyterian Church struggled in relating to a community that was changing racially, economically, and demographically. Therefore, the church closed, remaining closed for about 2 years.

The Presbytery of Cleveland was also undergoing some changes. The Presbytery of the Cleveland changed its boundaries and its name, becoming the Presbytery of the Western Reserve in 1973. Regardless of their name, the Presbytery still had the same mission to ensure ministry in the Glenville area. Realizing, that a void had been created in the Glenville Community with the closing of the Old Glenville Presbyterian Church, the Presbytery of Cleveland decided to start seeking how to restart the Glenville Presbyterian Church.

Early in 1961 the Presbytery gave permission to send a young, newly ordained seminary graduate named Rev. David L. Zuverink and his wife Mary Ellen Zuverink to organize a mission. Rev. Zuverink and his wife moved into a home on Columbia Avenue a few blocks away from the church. He then began an evangelism campaign by walking throughout the community and inviting people to come to church. Rev. Zuverink walked from house to house inviting members of the community to become a part of the church. Rev. Zuverink had a great response from the community. Members began to meet together with fellow members in various homes. They originally began to call themselves Glenville Presbyterian Church following the name of the previous Glenville Presbyterian Church. Eventually, in order to distinguish themselves from the Old Glenville Presbyterian Church, the new church members decided to change the name of the church. According to the Secretary of State, the church name was changed on February 16, 1960 to Glenville United Presbyterian Church. Under their new name and with the continued leadership of Rev. Zuverink these original members continued to meet for several months in each other's homes.

With the assistance of God and Rev. Zuverink these members decided to formally organize the church and they began to have worship services in the actual church building located on the corner of 105<sup>th</sup> street and Helena Ave. Many of the women of the church cleaned the church and prepared the building for worship. The members continued to worship, pray, and evangelize in the community. Once they had enough members they were able to formally organize the church. On Sunday May 20, 1962 at 3:00 pm an administrative commission of the Presbytery met formally to organize Glenville United Presbyterian Church USA with Rev. David L. Zuverink serving as pastor.

The church was officially incorporated on September 23, 1962 into the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. Glenville United Presbyterian Church became member of the Presbytery of Cleveland, now the Presbytery of the Western Reserve. Rev. Zuverink with the help of God and a receptive community had,

in less than a year, been able to organize a full service church with 69 charter members. The membership increased to 79 by the end of that year. Fifteen elders were elected, ordained, and installed. Lillie Jackson, current charter member, was our first church secretary. Rev. R. Waite Stennett a retired minister, served as church caller and Adult Sunday School teacher from 1962 until his death on August 20, 1979. His presence, his age and his wealth of knowledge and experience made him an invaluable asset to the young pastor and the members of the church through the years.

Mr. John C. Moffett, husband of current charter member, Aileen Moffett, was elected as the first Clerk of Session and served until June 1968. Mrs. Doris Lanier was the first director of Christian Education serving until August 31, 1968. Mrs. Marsha Snulligan, a seminarian, served the church for one year beginning January 3, 1977. Mr. Hugh Thompson was the first choir director and musician from 1962-1965.

Some of the involvements of the Glenville United Presbyterian Church in the beginning were: Bible studies, The Head Start Program, Early Concerns with school desegregation, half-day school classes, voters registration, maternal health care, rehabilitation of houses, the civil rights movement, Operation Bread Basket, St. Luke's Employee Hospital Strike, organized community center in 1968, dental clinic at church, preschool classes for developmentally delayed children, organized boys and girls scouts, and the federal food program.

Glenville United Presbyterian Church continued to be an active part of the community. Rev. Zuverink and many of the members of Glenville participated in the Civil Rights Movement. They were a part of the United Freedom Movement. "The United Freedom Movement (UFM) was established June 3, 1963 in Cleveland, Ohio. It was a coalition of more than 50 civic, fraternal, social, and civil-rights organizations." There were many individuals, pastors, and churches that participated in The United Freedom Movement. The NAACP and The CORE were major leaders of the UFM. Glenville United Presbyterian Church hosted many civil rights meetings. There were also many famous civil rights speakers like Mayor Carl Stokes and Dr. Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. who spoke from the pulpit of Glenville. The United Freedom Movement taught classes on civil disobedience. These classes were attended by Glenville's members, pastor, and staff. At one point during the civil rights movement the Dr. Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his staff maintained offices from this church. Dr. King's office was located in our current computer lab on the second floor of our Christian Education Building.

After five years of Ministry Rev. Zuverink and his wife, Mary Ellen, decided to pursue ministry work on a National level. Rev. Zuverink began working for the National Presbyterian Church USA. He served in overseas mission, and eventually became the Director of Health Ministries. Rev. Zuverink served Glenville United Presbyterian Church faithfully. He never returned to pulpit ministry and Glenville remains the only church he has ever pastored.

After Rev. Zuverink left Glenville, the church had many pastors who served and assisted the church in many ways. The church continued to participate in many community events, the Civil Rights

Movement, voting registration, educational equality, and served as a social witness. The church also remained a beacon of light in the community as a faithful witness of Jesus Christ.

During the late 1980's Glenville United Presbyterian Church began to struggle financially and membership at an all time low. At one point the church was facing closure. The church was heavily dependent upon the Presbytery for financial support. There were many faithful members of Glenville who trusted in God for our future. A search committee was gathered to seek out the possibility of a new pastor. The committee had limited funds in seeking out a new pastor. They decided to take a chance on a couple from Boston, Massachusetts. Pastor Rick and Pastor Toby Gillespie-Mobley came to Glenville at a time when our church could barely afford one pastor, let alone two. Pastor Toby and Pastor Rick believed in God for their future and the future of Glenville and decided to take a step of faith and come to Glenville United Presbyterian Church. Of the 50 years of ministry here at Glenville, Pastor Rick and Pastor Toby have served for 23 years. During their time here Glenville has undergone many exiting changes.

Glenville United Presbyterian Church officially changed its name to Glenville New Life Community Church PCUSA in 1994. The congregation held a meeting on January 23, 1994 approving the change. The state of Ohio made the change effective on April 3, 1994. The announcement of the name change was made to the presbytery at its April 25, 1994 meeting but eventually, someone realized that the presbytery needed to approve the name change. So action was taken at the October 24, 1994 presbytery meeting. The name change was officially approved and notice sent to the Office of the General Assembly.

The building of Glenville has also undergone many renovations and improvements. The outside of the building was sandblasted from black to a light tan. The church has undergone two different remodeling projects. Glenville has had a red color scheme, a green color scheme and now the current purple. The parking lot has been expanded and improved twice. The ceiling has been replaced twice. The Christian Education Classrooms have been remodeled twice. We have a multimedia system which includes live internet broadcast of our worship services throughout the world. We have our own special broadcasting channel on ROKU. We are also able to view our entire worship service throughout our entire building with our special large over head screens in the sanctuary and media broadcast throughout the building. Our services have been watched by over a million viewers on the internet.

### **Some Significant Ministries Over the years**

- Name Changed to Glenville New Life Community Church
- Two worship services the 8:30 am and the 11:15 am service
- Life Sharing Bible Study Groups (Tuesday 1:00 pm, Wednesday 7:30 pm)
- Pioneers Bible Study Groups for Youth Ages 6 to 12 on Wednesdays at 7:30 pm
- Young Ladies of Faith and Men of Arms Ministry Group (began in 2011)
- Sisters in the Lord
- Men Who Excel
- Angelic Voices Choir became the Warriors of Praise Choir (First Directors Pastor Toby & Katy Glenn; Current Director Demetrius Darmond)

- Chancel Choir and Gospel Gems become the Glenville Praise Choir (Directors Gwen Coats & Greg Cosper)
- Women’s Choir (Current Director Gwen Coats & Men’s Choir (Current Director Greg Cosper)
- God’s Chosen Generation Choir (First Director Annie Thornton; Current Directors Jeanette Williams-Daniels and Tanisha Rouse)
- Adult and Youth Liturgical Dancers
- Air Conditioned Sanctuary
- Remodeled Sanctuary (Replaced Pews with Chairs)
- Handicap Ramp
- Remodeled Fellowship Hall
- Remodeled Women’ and Men’s Bathroom (added more stalls)
- T.V. Broadcasts
- Website
- Birth and later closing of our Sister Church, New Life Fellowship. Many of New Life Fellowship members become members of Glenville.
- Lay Pastors
- Hired Outreach Worker, Sylvia Y. Fields
- Kellie C. Sullivan and Tony Britt graduated seminary
- Pastor Kellie hired as Evangelist at Glenville New Life Community Church
- Pastor Tony installed at New Life Fellowship Church
- Live On Line Broadcast Worship Services
- Partnership with Calvary Presbyterian Church PCUSA
- Continued support of the voter’s registration campaign.
- Excellence In Giving Campaign (2012)
  - Parking Lot
  - Air Conditioned the Fellowship Hall
  - Handicap Chair Lifts
  - Kitchen Remodel

**Pastors of Glenville New Life Community Church**

Rev. David L. Zuverink.....	November 1, 1961 to June 20, 1966
Dr. Rev. Terry Schoener.....	October 1, 1966 to May 15, 1971
Rev. Henry L. Pinckney.....	August 1969 to August 31, 1978
Dr. Rev. Raymond Swartzback.....	February 1, 1972 to April 30, 1975
Rev. James Moore (Assistant/Associate Pastor).....	November 16, 1975 to October 31, 1977
Rev. James LaRue (Interim).....	June 1, 1978 to April 15, 1979
Rev. Floyd N. Rhodes, Jr. ....	February 2, 1980 to April 30, 1984
Rev. Milan Brenkus (Interim).....	May 1, 1984 to January 13, 1985
Rev. Camille Williams-Neal (Co Pastor).....	January 15, 1985 to February 28, 1989

Rev. Robert Williams-Neal (Co Pastor).....January 15, 1985 to February 28, 1989  
 Rev. Toby Gillespie-Mobley (Co Pastor) ..... March 1, 1989 to March 2014  
 Dr. Rev. Rick Gillespie-Mobley (Co Pastor).....March 1, 1989 to March 2014  
 Rev. Kellie C. Sullivan (Evangelist) .....December 14, 2004 to March 2014

In 2011, Glenville began a Partnership Ministry Agreement with Calvary Presbyterian Church in which the two churches shared the pastoral team of Pastor Kellie, Pastor Toby, and Pastor Rick. The churches did numerous ministry projects in conjunction with each other such as a monthly hot meals food program, joint summer camp, and the joint Easter Play-The Resurrection. The churches worked together to provide Community Days for Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, Costume Party/Fall Festival and Vacation Bible School.

In the fall of 2012, the two churches began to discuss the possibility of merging and forming one congregation at the Calvary location. After many meetings, much prayer, and a lot of work, the churches voted in June of 2013 to become one congregation. Glenville had its final service in the church building on September 1, 2013. It had its final celebration banquet on September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2013. On September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013 the church marched from Glenville to begin holding its services with Calvary under the new name New Life At Calvary. The former church building was sold to True Vine Missionary Baptist Church which was under the leadership for Rev. Edward McGhee at the time. Glenville was officially dissolved as a church by the Presbytery of the Western Reserve in March 2014. Pastor Rick, Pastor Toby, and Pastor Kellie became the tri-pastors at New Life At Calvary. Sylvia Fields was the last clerk of Session of Glenville New Life Community Church. Thank you to all the members and friends who serve Glenville through its 52 years of ministry.