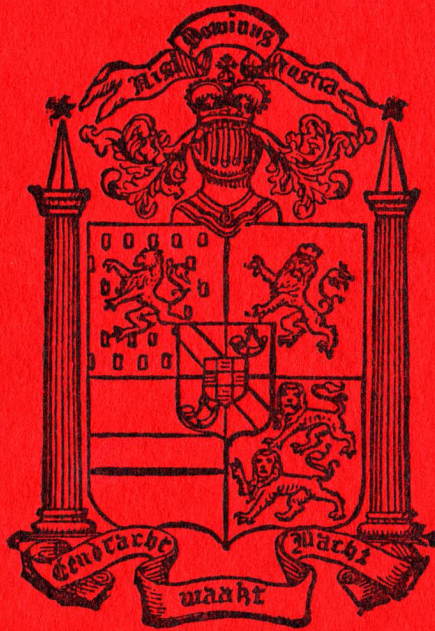


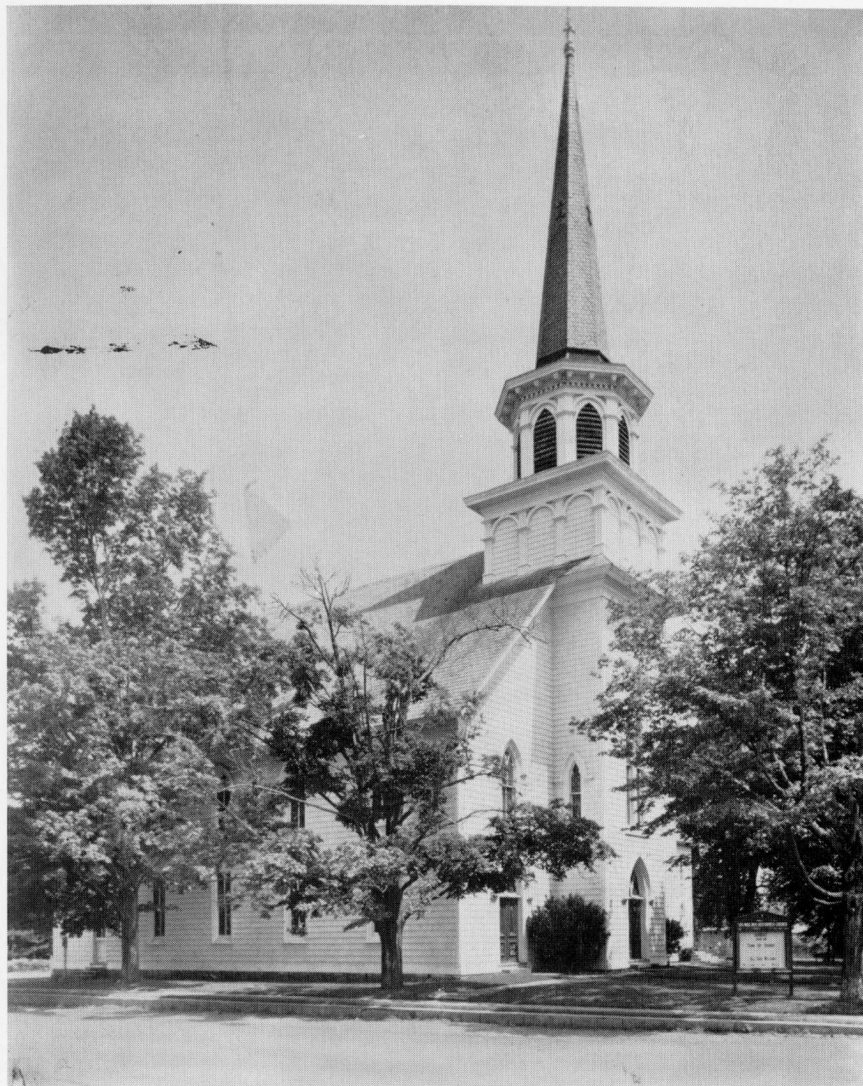
250th Anniversary
of the
Six-Mile Run Reformed Church

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1960

FRANKLIN PARK, NEW JERSEY



250th Anniversary
of the
Six-Mile Run Reformed Church
FRANKLIN PARK, NEW JERSEY

November, 1960

Dinner Meeting

Tuesday — November 15th

7:00 p.m.

MUSIC

The Sunday School Band

INVOCATION

THE REVEREND JARVIS S. MORRIS, The Community Presbyterian Church
of the Sand Hills, Franklin Park, New Jersey

TOASTMASTER

MR. LOUIS P. HASBROUCK, Elder, the Six Mile Run Reformed Church

ADDRESS

THE REVEREND LEONARD A. JONES, Minister
the Six Mile Run Reformed Church

HISTORICAL REVIEW

MR. G. CLIFFORD NEVIUS, Elder, the Six Mile Run Reformed Church

ADDRESS

THE HONORABLE CLIFFORD P. CASE, United States Senator from New Jersey

BENEDICTION

THE REVEREND JOHN G. GEBHARD, JR., Minister, 1926-1927
the Six Mile Run Reformed Church

I remember his prayers. When he was in the midst of it, someone stuck his head in the schoolhouse door and shouted, "The church is on fire!" Immediately everybody got up and rushed out, that is, everybody excepting Mr. Hullfish. He finished his devotions. He opened his eyes and turned around, and there was no one there. Imagine his feelings. Did he think he was a second Rip Van Winkle? Did he think Gabriel had blown his horn and he was deaf and he hadn't heard it? No one knows what he thought; it isn't recorded. But just imagine his position and his consternation.

Our present church was built and dedicated during the same year, 1879, that the previous church burned. I would like to point out some of its wonderful features but time does not permit me.

Finally, let us not be too complacent concerning our present pretentious operations. Let us turn to the past.

During 1831, 46 persons joined the church at one time. Later, one member, who had just been married, and, unable to secure a seat in the church for himself and his wife, had his membership transferred to the Rocky Hill Church until there was a pew available. He was William A. Cortelyou, the grandfather of our presiding elder.

During Mr. Case's pastorate here, we supported a missionary in Japan. During Mr. Keator's successful pastorate, pews were in great demand and nearly all were rented or owned at that time. The approximate value of a pew up front in the middle aisle was that of a new Ford car and was just as popular on Sunday morning as the Ford car was on Sunday afternoon.

It almost slays me to have had to discard so much interesting material in order to present the subject matter for our church in a concise manner. I am sure we should be proud of our church and our community, the bread basket of the colonies, the cockpit of the Revolution, the garden of the Dutch Reformed Church.

I thank you.

ADDRESS

THE HONORABLE CLIFFORD P. CASE
United States Senator from New Jersey

Thank you so much. I feel less embarrassed by your standing (and I deeply appreciate it) because I know it's about time for a seventh-inning stretch, anyway.

Mr. Toastmaster, Dominie, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am sure you appreciate that this is a sentimental occasion for me. If I don't get started right away, don't be unhappy. I shall wind up quickly. But this occasion is something that I feel deeply, because so many things about this church and about the people of this church have meant so much to me and to my family.

I know what it meant to my father and to my mother. I suppose there was never a more idyllic marriage, and I know they thought of their time here as the happiest of their lives. I know how much my uncle, who sits here, thinks of this community. It was always good and solid Republican in those days. It did very well by Uncle Clarence. And, of course, he deserved it.

For myself, my memories particularly date back to my college days when I spent much time in the community and at the church, playing the organ and as the recipient of the warmest kind of hospitality and friendship, I must

have been an awful nuisance to the good people who had me for dinner Sunday after Sunday. And what dinners they were! I could barely stagger onto the old bus that ran back to New Brunswick—back to college. This was typical of this community. And your asking me to come back for the 250th anniversary celebration is wholly in line with your earlier kindnesses to all of us.

I remember, in a very vague way, being back here at the 200th anniversary. I am not sure that I really remember but I have been told that this is what happened.

We were the guests of one of the parishioners, I am not sure which one, not too far up the road. My mother and father were here; my oldest sister and I were here because we were the only ones around then and we couldn't be left home. There were no competent baby sitters in Poughkeepsie at that time.

My sister and I were put to bed and everyone else came down here to the church dinner. Pretty soon my sister enticed me out of bed and we came down here too, aged four and five, or five and six, or something like that, in our night clothes, and created some little disturbance during the middle of the dinner. I am not sure that we were altogether welcome. Now I think I remember that this happened, although it could very well have been told me by some of my good friends when I came back here during my college time.

But this has been a grand church and it is still a grand church and it's good to come back and it's good to feel so welcome as you make people feel. I shall try to repay you, as I said, by not talking too long. The evening is late and while most of you are not going back to a household in which you have to get up at half-past four in the morning to do the milking and the other chores before you start your day's work, as was true when I was here, nevertheless, you've all got things to do.

Speaking about brief speeches reminds me of something that I think is always helpful to keep in mind, a comment that Mrs. Frankfurter made about her husband, the Justice. There were only two things wrong, she said, with his speeches. One of them was his penchant for digressing from his subject, and the second was the fact that, unfortunately, he always got back on it again. And you have noticed, I think, this difficulty in some people, certainly not ever in any ministers of this church, but in some of the visiting dominies, perhaps, and in some of the after-dinner speakers who are asked to come, too.

Mr. Jones told a story which he said had no relevance at all. I can match it, in that sense, with a rather charming little story that was told to a few of us at the Senate last August. It was during the occasion of the American Bar Association's annual meeting in Washington. The Bar Association was host to the British lawyers, in repayment for hospitality which they had enjoyed in London several years ago, and heading the group of British lawyers who were here was the Lord Chancellor, a very charming gentleman. Besides being head of the judicial system in England, the Lord Chancellor also presides over the House of Lords. And it seemed appropriate that, as he was the presiding officer of the second legislative body in England, a few of us in the Senate should ask him to come up for lunch, which he did.

After lunch the Lord Chancellor told us a story about a young British boy who had finished his first very tough day's service in the army after graduating from college. He just about struggled into line for the dismissal, completely exhausted and stood there, and finally there escaped from his lips this groan: "Ah, sweet death!" And the Top Sergeant in the front rank, with-

out turning his head, as sergeants can, said, "Who said that?" There was a moment's pause, and then this response: "Shelley, wasn't it?" Can you match that for complete irrelevance? But I think it a delightful story and it was made even more delightful by the Lord Chancellor's British accent. The British don't lack a sense of humor, in my judgment.

I shan't attempt to reminisce tonight. I cannot compete with the people who know the church and its history so well, and I expect that perhaps you do think that I ought to say a word about national affairs.

Of course, the thing that more closely, I think, concerns the church, any church, and church people, than anything else is the cause of peace. And I should like to say just a word about it.

The cause of peace. There is nothing in the world that people want more than peace, with justice, and peace with liberty and freedom. I know that this is so and this is so right. Going back to the vision of Micah, we find those lovely words—"And they shall beat their swords into plow-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

This is a universal urge. Why haven't we accomplished it? Well, I do not know why in the past, but I know we've got a problem in the future. And right now. It's a great problem. It was certainly the concern of the American people to make the choice they did last Tuesday, with this chiefly in mind. Peace for America. Peace for the world. I don't know the answers. I've got some general ideas which I shall briefly summarize to you.

I am certain of this, that peace can't be gotten just by wanting it or willing it. I am certain, too, much as I respect those people who believe that peace can be had by unilateral renunciation of force, that this is not the way, at least not in our time. It's got to be worked for. It's got to be worked hard for.

We have problems greater, I suppose, than any age has ever faced. The complexity of life; the sheer power that science has given into the hands of man, power enough to destroy all life on this planet. Complexity in other ways, in speed of travel and of communication, in all manner of intricacies of scientific development, in medicine and everything—life is very difficult because of this, and enormously harder to manage.

All the old rivalries, too, are here, and we have new ones. There is the explosive rise in population over the world—the rise in many continents of new nations from peoples who have never known anything but abject poverty, colonialism, primitivism. They are not able, because they have had no experience, to govern themselves. But they insist, now, that they be given the right to act as independent free nations, though they have had no experience, of course, in conduct in the family of nations. They want to get in a few years or less, immediately, if you will, those things which have taken us in the West hundreds of years, many, many centuries,—millenia—to accomplish. Their leaders, themselves with no adequate training or education, are pressed by the insistent demands of people in the throes of this revolution, as it's been called, of rising expectations, and with every right, because they are human beings as we are, to press their demands.

These problems are awesome. And they would be so, even if everyone in the world were to meet them with good will and with the common purpose to solve them. But this is not the case.

There is this great power in the East, this Communist power in Russia and now in China, too, impressed, imbued, with the faith that freedom as we believe in it is outworn, an outmoded concept, that the capitalist system, the

free system, democracy, political democracy, are outworn concepts no longer of any validity; that the state is the sole important thing, the state controlled by the Communist party, and the individual—nothing. And they believe, too, that this is the wave of the future, this is inevitable, that the inexorable result of the development of history will be the achievement of this society that they believe in. And they believe that their duty is to destroy us as an impediment to the realization of that society. So every problem that exists in the world is for them not something to cooperate in solving but a chance to make difficulty more difficult and problems impossible of solutions. This is the kind of world we live in.

Our general directions, I think, are clear. I said before this election, and I say again, that our future policy must be essentially as our past policy has been. The simple duality, in relation to the Soviet World, of two things—strength and conciliation.

We must have physical strength—we must have military strength adequate to maintain the deterrent. It is an awful world in which mutual terror is the condition for continued life, but it is the world we live in. And we must have conventional military strength, too, adequate to prevent the nibbling away, by less than nuclear war, of the free world. But at the same time, we must maintain a constant pursuit of every possible means of lessening tensions.

I don't think it's possible, and I think it's probably a waste of time, for the present at least, to think about negotiating the philosophical, the ideological, differences between the East and the West, or even the territorial differences. These, I think, cannot now be negotiated. But there are common interests that we and they have. The interest in being free from mutual destruction, which ought to make it possible, once they are convinced that we will not yield unilaterally, for them to agree with us and we with them on measures, for example, for control of nuclear energy, and lessening of armaments, and perhaps other things in which we do have a common interest, if we can but realize it. This must be pursued with vigor, with imagination, and with constant persistence and patience until we make some progress along these lines. The dangers of accidental destruction are too great to do less than this.

Now, how long must we continue this? How long will we have the patience and the courage and the persistence and the strength and the stamina to go ahead with it?

I think the answer depends simply on how much we believe in what we profess to believe in. How strong is our belief that the individual human being is all important, and that his dignity and freedom are worth fighting for, worth dying for, if you will? Do we hold it with the vigor and the strength with which the Communists hold their belief in the exact opposite of this? I believe that we do. I am confident that we do. Therefore I am optimistic about the future. And yet I think that we have to look a little bit deeper, because we are going to be strongly challenged on our ideological positions by these people from the East.

They say that ours is a very selfish society. Why is the individual important—his gratification, his freedom? Is anybody this important? Isn't society more important? And it's not an easy question to answer. The President was faced with this and honestly said that it was difficult.

It comes down to this, I think. We've got to believe in democracy and the ultimate importance of the individual, if we truly believe, based upon our Judeo-Christian heritage, that the individual is himself a spark of the Divine

—that there is a little bit of eternity in each person. This is why we believe in the individual's importance and his dignity and his freedom. And I think that so long as we hold to this belief we shall not lose the faith that we need to have if we are to continue this struggle. And if we lose this faith, then I think there is more than a chance that we will lose the struggle. It comes about down to this, I think.

I am not making a utilitarian argument for a revival of religion. I don't know whether you can revive religion by conscious effort, though I think that often religious revivals do come, as Toynbee has suggested, as a result of outside stimuli. And certainly no stimulus could be greater than the Communist threat to all that we hold dear.

But there are some things that we ourselves can do. Many things that we can do. And the chief one is to practice, in our own lives, in our national life, in our international life, our belief in the true importance of the individual. This means, of course, recognizing that every human being is entitled to be treated equally, that any kind of discrimination, any kind of prejudice, any kind of hate, based upon any extraneous considerations, is not only wrong but a sin, an act of profanity. And that any time we consciously hurt anyone else on such a ground, or any ground, we are committing an act of profanity against God, as well as against that individual, and that we degrade ourselves.

I know that this church, as it has in the past, will continue, and ever more, to teach these things which alone can keep our country and the free world strong.

BENEDICTION

THE REVEREND JOHN G. GEBHARD, JR.

Minister 1926-27, the Six Mile Run Reformed Church

Honored guests, chairman, and my good friends in the house:

First of all, I am reminded of a conversation between Art Linkletter and a teen-age boy who could have been one of Leonard's children, perhaps. He said, "My boy, what does your father do?" And he said, "My father's a preacher." "Well," he said, "do you help him in his work?" "Oh, yes," he said, "I do lots of things to help him in his work." "Well," he said, "what's the hardest thing you do to help your father?" "Oh," he said, "Listening to his sermons."

Now, I am sure that isn't the hardest thing you do, listening to the sermons of the pastor, but the hardest thing you do is to try and live the truth in the sermons which he preaches. And in thinking of the fact that this church has had an existence of 250 years, there are two thoughts that I want to bring to you as a greeting.

The measure of the worth of a church could be expressed in two words. One is—saltiness. Jesus said, "You art the salt of the earth," and saltiness is to be Christ-like. If salt loses its flavor it is henceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and thrown under the foot of men. And that's what every individual in this church and others of the church of Christ are. They are salt. And they are the ones that help to preserve our society and keep it from falling into decay. And so I believe, over the last 250 years, that is one of the great things that has been carried on through this pulpit and through your hearing. Salt must be mingled; you've got to mix it with the rest of the world to do any good. If it's isolated it's no good. It's got to be mingled.

The other is that you are the light of the world, you spread your influ-