

# The Renovation News

The First Presbyterian Church  
Bergen, New York

Issue Number 3  
August, 1996

**Progress:** July has seen a vast amount of work accomplished in the Fellowship Hall wing of the church. The masonry walls of the new basement area are complete and most of the concrete floor has been poured, thanks to Ron Spink, Ron, Jr., and the people working with them. Before the walls were up and the excavation work was still underway, we had some uneasy times when heavy rains threatened to wash into the basement and undermine the old, existing foundation. But, thanks to many precautions taken by Dan Sheldon and his volunteer helpers, and some emergency work done by Pastor Dave and Jeff Ely during one storm, any damage was avoided, and the new foundation is well in place. Note: the excavation of the new basement area required the removal of about 350 cubic yards of earth (or, for those two un-named individuals who thought they could dig out the basement by hand using shovels and hand-carried buckets, 15,000 pails of dirt!)

The new floor has also been installed, with its steel I-beams and posts, joists and plywood flooring. Most of the new walls in this area are also up, showing the new kitchen area, library/lounge, first floor bathrooms, and stairway to the basement. Of particular help in this part of the project have been John Gay, Fred and Jeff Ely, Kevin Hollenbeck, Jeff Martz, Corky Shaw, Dick vonBergen, and Bill Waldruff.

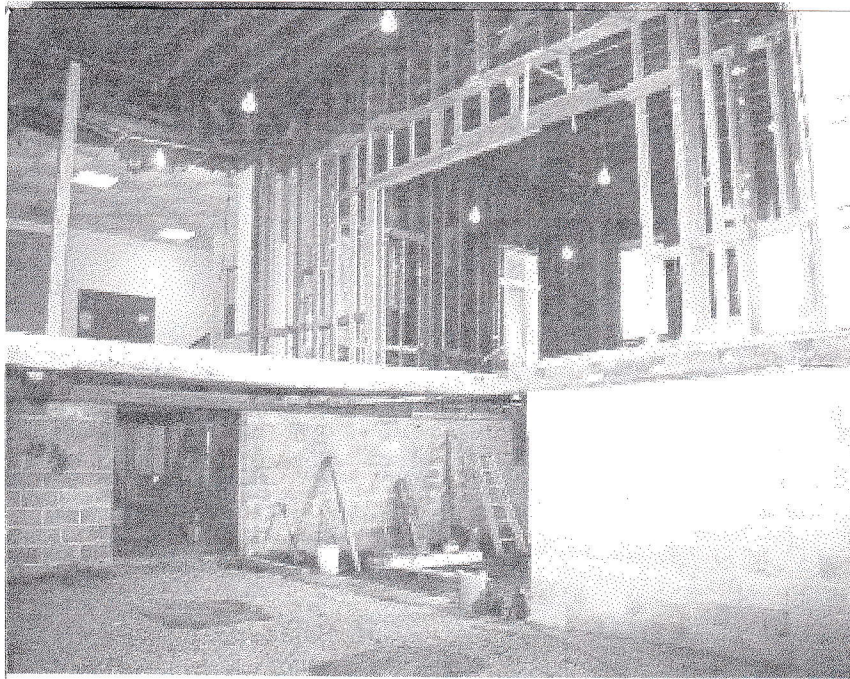
Most recently, installation of the new heating plant has begun in the basement. This new system replaces the old one we had and will very efficiently meet the air heating and handling needs of the entire church building, including the sanctuary. Our thanks to Bill Bliss for stepping forward to provide his knowledge and resources for this integral part of the new facility, and at a very favorable cost to the church.



*Some of the Excavated Earth*

**Project Costs:** To date the church has expended about \$65,000, two-thirds of which is the cost of the engineering and architectural work undertaken since the beginning of our studies of the project over two years ago. The remaining \$23,000 of costs include payments to date for the masonry work, materials (lumber, etc.), and some other construction services. Funding has come thus far from the Richards Fund in our endowments (\$44,000) and from draws on our line-of-credit account with the Bank of Castile (\$25,000). Further expenditures will be met through use of the account at the Bank of Castile, at least until revenue from the Capital Fund Drive begins later this year and next year.

It is worth noting, and celebrating, that, because of discount purchases of some materials and,



*New Basement before Floor Installation*

particularly, the many hundreds of hours our faithful volunteers have contributed to the project, we have saved over \$42,000!! This is very encouraging and gives us hope that our overall project cost limit of \$300,000 can be met.

**Things to Come:** Vacation Bible School starts August 12th, and we expect to have the entire new basement area open, cleaned up and usable for the kids that week. By the end of August the new restrooms on the first floor should be usable, and renovation of the first floor offices will begin. In early September the roof work in the Fellowship Hall should be underway. The old roof structures that are under the existing external roof will be coming down and

replaced by better reinforcing structures and a vaulted ceiling in the Hall. Late September and October will see the renovation of the first floor hall/entranceway and basement beneath.

**More Historical Notes:** Our current sanctuary building began its life on the hill that is now Mt. Rest Cemetery in the early 1800's. In 1853 it was decided to move closer to the center of the village, nearer the railroad that had just been built through the area. Sometime soon after 1853 the building was moved to its present site, although the historical record is not clear whether the building was moved en masse on logs down the road or disassembled and rebuilt at the new location. Prior to the move, the pulpit was at the current east end of the building, with a meeting room (called the session house) over it. At the time of the move or immediately thereafter, 20-25 feet were added to the west end of the building, and the pulpit was moved from its original location on the east end to the new west end of the building. Double doors were built on the east end as the main entrance. The session house was opened up and became our current balcony. (More in a later issue of *The Renovation News*.)

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