

West Henrietta Baptist Church worships in its town's oldest church building, but the congregation is older than its 1838 building. It is older than its 1818 town. At 202, WHBC is linked to its past by more than 10,500 successive Sundays. Those links are solid. Horse and buggies may have yielded to SUVs and sedans. The organ is now electric, and the replacement pews are padded, but it is very likely that any congregations switched in time would still feel at home in the little white church on the corner.

Of course, a returning old-timer might ask 'Where are the babies, the kids, the young men and women courting, the growing families?' If he ventured to look for them in the basement classrooms, he would find those rooms filled with musty art supplies and waiting storybooks, left just as they were by occupants who grew up and moved away. Was that not just yesterday?

These days at WHBC the congregation, that at times feels as old as its cherished cloud of witnesses, is working with its new pastor, the Rev. Dr. Peter Grinion, and looking to the Lord for a new future. Its corner has become a crossroads. There is radical talk of dumpsters and a fresh start.

Recently Rev. Alan Newton met members seeking to start a youth program and advised them, "Prepare the space." The nursery has been turned upside down for painting and carpet removal. Crib and toys have been tossed to make way for new.. A large basement room suitable for Junior Church is next on the list.

Alan encouraged us by observing that we have "good bones." Please pray with us that they will miraculously come to life again.

