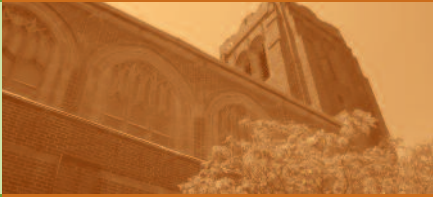




*Why God selected our FPC family for centuries to be and remain a powerful beacon of light we do not know. We only know what Christ tells us.*

*"You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go out and bear fruit, fruit that will last." JOHN 15:16*



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*Seeking Christ; Sharing His love*

## PART FOUR

# OUR CURRENT SANCTUARY

*In 1901, FPC (still located on Church Street at the time) organized a new church in Ghent. Because of growth in the Ghent section, a new sanctuary was built in 1911 at the corner of Redgate and Colonial Avenue in Ghent. In March 1912, FPC and the Ghent church consolidated under the name First Presbyterian Church.*

*The information below is an excerpt from a February 19, 1912 Norfolk Landmark newspaper article.*

## Ghent Presbyterian Church is Formally Dedicated

In spite of the inclement weather the new Ghent Presbyterian church was packed yesterday afternoon when the impressive dedication service was held at 3:30 o'clock.

The Ghent Presbyterian church is the outcome of a movement set on foot in the year 1901 by the Brotherhood Bible Class of the First Presbyterian church, then under the leadership of Joseph Brown. Members of this class selected the site upon which the church now stands and raised the first money toward the purchase of the lots.

The formal organization of the church was effected June 6, 1901, at the home of Mrs. George D. Armstrong. There were thirty-nine charter members, most of whom were received by letter from the First Church.

The church is designed in the late perpendicular period of the Gothic style and in its general plan and especially in its detail follows very closely good English precedents. The main feature of the exterior is, of course, the tower which was designed to give an impression of stability, dignity and repose. The interior varies from the usual Presbyterian plan chiefly in the arrangement of the pulpit and the seats for the elders. The reading desk upon which rests the Bible is the axis of the plan and the focal point to which all the lines of the plan approach. In these features the church follows the idea of the Presbyterian churches of Scotland.

The large window in the tower is a memorial erected by Mr. Royster to the memory of his mother. It pictures Jesus in the home of Mary and Martha, and was designed and made by J. & T. Lamb of New York. In the vestibule is a bronze tablet which bears the following inscription:



**THE TOWER WINDOW  
WAS ERECTED  
TO THE GLORY OF GOD  
AND IN LOVING MEMORY OF  
FANNIE WEBB ROYSTER  
BORN JUNE 29, 1818,  
DIED JULY 12, 1863**

The exterior beauty and interior harmony of the church are due to the unceasing labor and careful attention to details of F. Finlay Ferguson, the architect, who is himself a member of the church.

The church is equipped with the Acousticon for the use of those with imperfect hearing.

**FPC and Ghent Consolidation**

*The information below is an excerpt from a March 18, 1912 Ledger-Dispatch newspaper article.*

**Churches to Consolidate About the First of the Coming Month.  
First and the Ghent Presbyterian to Come Together Under the Name  
of the Former, with Rev. Stuart Nye Hutchison as Pastor**

The First and Ghent Presbyterian churches voted yesterday to unite with each other and form one church, under the name of First Presbyterian Church, the consolidation to occur about the first of the coming month, the Ghent Church, as pastor of the combined congregation, which is expected to number at least 400 communicants, and will be one of the strongest churches of that denomination in the South.

The place of worship of the united churches will be the handsome new edifice recently dedicated by the Ghent congregation, at Colonial and Redgate avenues, which cost about \$70,000, and to which is soon to be added a new Sunday School building to cost \$15,000. As the new edifice is practically paid for, the cost having been subscribed by the Ghent congregation, the combined church will find itself in excellent financial condition, in view of the neat sum the First Church property can be sold for, if it is decided to dispose of that plant.

It may be that the First Church property will be kept for mission purposes, as the Presbyterians feel that field, although the First Church had outgrown it, should not be entirely abandoned, and it is the intention of the combined congregations to give considerable attention to mission work in Norfolk in general. It seems certain that a mission will be operated by the Presbyterians in the old First Church field, but whether they will use for that purpose the old church property, or sell it and start a mission on another site in that part of the city, is yet uncertain. If it is decided to sell the old site, which is 96 x 110 feet, in the heart of the Church street business section, it is believed it could be disposed of to good advantage for commercial purposes, or it might be sold for use as a church.

It is expected that there will be a considerable scattering of the present members on the roll of the First Church, but, it is thought, that the bulk of them will go to the combined church. It is the hope of the leading members of the old First Church, however, that a considerable number of their present communicants will go to the Second Church and to Park Avenue Church, so as to



strengthen those churches of that denomination, and it is likely that this will be the result of the consolidation of the First and Ghent churches.

The Ghent Church, which was established about ten years ago, and has only had two pastors, Rev. Dr. Summerill, now of North Carolina, and Rev. Dr. Hutchison, has a membership of 225 in the church and 150 in the Sunday School, with Rev. Dr. Hutchison as superintendent of the Sunday School.

The First Church has 440 members on the roll of the church, but only about 300 are regarded as active members, while in its Sunday School there are 200 members, with J. T. Moreland as superintendent.

Being the older of the two churches, it was quite natural that the combined congregations should take the name of the First church, which had its beginning 229 years or more ago, and is the mother of not only the Ghent Church, but of all the Presbyterian churches in the two cities.

It bears a splendid history throughout its long succession of years and its influence for good in this community through all these years can only be revealed in eternity. Its value to the Presbyterian denomination of Norfolk is duly recognized, hence the desire on the part of both congregations to perpetuate its name and noble achievements for the spread of scriptural holiness in this city, the real object being to let the glorious record of the mother of the Presbyterian churches of Norfolk go down in the future annals of time as a precious legacy to that denomination.

**We should leave no less a legacy for future generations than was left for us.**

“For the Love of Christ urges us on...” 2 CORINTHIANS 5:14

*Presented by FPC Long Range Planning Committee in conjunction with our Growing in This Love capital campaign.*