

## CHAPTER IX

### CHURCHES

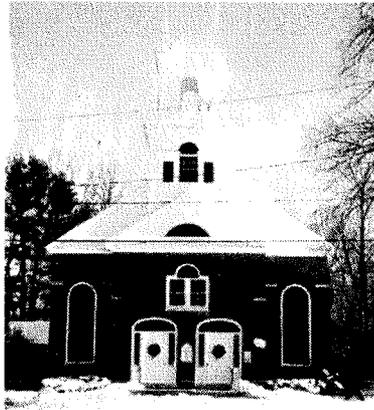
#### FIRST CHURCH OF JAFFREY

Located in Jaffrey Center at the foot of Mount Monadnock, this church has seen several ministers serving as pastor in recent years: the Reverend John H. Leamon, 1962-1972; the Reverend Alden S. Mosshammer, 1973-1975 (died very suddenly in the parsonage); the Reverend Wesley A. Mallory, 1976-1983; the Reverend Nelson Howard III, 1984-1989; the Reverend Daniel B. Leavitt (interim) 1989-1990; the Reverend Quentin L. Peacock, 1990-1993; the Reverend Daniel B. Leavitt (interim) 1993-1995; the Reverend Richard Hough-Ross, 1995-1997; the Reverend Robert K. Nace (interim) 1997-1998; the Reverend Dr. Hugh H. Knapp assumed the position of pastor in February 1998.

During Dr. Leamon's tenure there was cooperation and a sharing between the First Church and the United Church of Jaffrey on the one side, and St. Patrick Church and Our Lady of Peace Seminary on the other. There were ecumenical services of worship and dialog groups. Within the congregation, study groups, parish suppers, and other activities made the need for a proper meeting place very evident.

At a special meeting in February 1969, the church members voted to start a \$40,000 campaign for the major renovation of the church barn. The work included extending the building to enlarge the main room and provide space for a modern kitchen. On the south side an opening was made into a newly constructed passage connecting the barn to the main church building, thus providing space for a new entrance from the driveway. Recessed lighting, an acoustical ceiling, and wall-to-wall carpeting were installed. An enclosed stairway to the lower level provided space for several small rooms, a garage for the minister, a pastor's study, and separate classrooms for the Sunday School. The newly rebuilt church organ by John Wessel was dedicated on June 15, 1975, and in 1977 work on the new parish house was completed. The installation of the pipe or-

gan necessitated removing the upper section of the west wall of the sanctuary and led to the insulation of the roof and upper walls near the belfry. Thus another major redecoration was begun. The walls of the church were repainted, the dorsal was removed, and a large memorial cross replaced it above the altar. New brass chandeliers were installed, the wall of the narthex was also repainted, and brass candle sconces were added. Window frames were reconditioned and storm windows were installed.



*First Church  
of Jaffrey*

A new pulpit replaced the old lectern, and pew cushions were re-covered. In 1993 John W. Harris, a Dublin archivist, collected information, with the help of the church historian and the Women's Society president, and put all of the church records in proper archival order. Two hundred and 10 years of First Church history are now cataloged and stored in the pastor's office in archival boxes and on computer disks stored in safe-deposit boxes at local banks.

Not to be overlooked is the Women's Society, which is today's version of the longest continuing organization of the church. In the 1870s, when the church was having financial difficulties, the Benevolent Society or Ladies Aid Society began holding fund-raising events. The first of the fabulous fairs was held in 1882, and by 1918 the annual summer fair had taken its prominent place in the life of the church and community. The annual church fair, always held on the first Wednesday in August, is the society's major fund-raising event. Well known throughout the region, it attracts many people from surrounding towns and some from as far away as Boston. Proceeds from the fair allow the Women's Society to make a major annual contribution to the church and to support a wide range of benevolences. Laban Ainsworth, the first minister of First Church, would be proud of his church today.

## THE UNITED CHURCH



*United Church*

The United Church of Jaffrey has a heritage derived from the Universalist Church, the Baptist Church, and the Congregational Church. In 1960 its members voted to join the New Hampshire Conference of the 1.5-million-member United Church of Christ. The church's motto is "ALWAYS FOR OTHERS" and stands as a monument to the dedicated individuals who have worked so hard throughout the past years to keep it a functioning, viable part of our community.

The congregation, which now numbers just under 150 families, is friendly, caring, rural, informal, and extremely proud of its church. They do not regard themselves as a Sunday church but rather as one that cares full time for its members and community. They see their church as a model of the connection between faith, worship, local mission, just peace, and open and affirming ministries. The church was built in 1850. Remnants of its rich physical heritage remain: the Paul Revere bell, which was cast in 1834, and a piece of the stained-glass window, both of which were obtained from the First Baptist Church. As of November 1970 the bell rings in the steeple, thus symbolizing the merger of the denominations.

The building is traditionally styled with a steeple, bell tower, wide-columned portico entrance, and slate roof. Inside is a large sanctuary with a raised chancel and a rear balcony. The sanctuary was totally renovated in 1960 under the direction of B. Leonard Krause, and in 1986 a new Allen digital organ was installed and dedicated with a recital by Patricia Korenienicz.

Adjoining the sanctuary is a comfortable pastor's office, a

secretary's office, and a spacious parlor that provides ample room for meetings and after-church coffee hours. The lower level of the church building houses school classrooms, the Vinal Music Room, an emergency shelter for the homeless, and a community food pantry that is staffed by church members and Woman's Club volunteers and supported by the community at large. Adjacent to the main church building is the Parish Hall, built in 1970 on the site of the former United Church parsonage that was razed in 1967. This large structure houses a full kitchen and serves as the location of large meetings, fellowship events, church fairs, and monthly suppers.

The church is governed by a church council consisting of an elected moderator, clerk, treasurer, the diaconate, the members of the board of trustees, four members-at-large, chairpersons of each standing committee, and the pastor. The church prints a monthly newsletter, "The Pathfinder," which is mailed to all members. Church organizations include Senior, Youth, and Junior choirs, two youth groups called T's & P's and Sojourners and various groups such as The Friendly Guild, The Chancel Guild, and Triple D. This last group is the heart and soul of the church's social events. The ladies of Triple D sponsor fund-raising events, an annual strawberry social, a flea market, Christmas fair, and special events such as catering receptions following funerals of church members.

The church is very proud of the Corey Van. For years the church had wished to own some kind of vehicle to transport children and youth on various trips and to provide transportation ministry for the elderly in town. In October 1991, as a result of a special church meeting and a loan from a church member, the Corey Van was purchased. Perhaps the most significant concept of the Corey Van is that it is a living memorial to the 12 young people from the parish who have died in the past few years. The concept was originally conceived by Arthur and Judy Sawtelle. The names of the 12 young people are printed on the sides of the van as follows: Barry O'Neil, Michael Smith, Shellie Ballou, Corey Sawtelle, Scott LaFleur, Patty Wilson, Jonny Hannon, Robin Hood Pimental, Jodi Thomas Bailey, Keith Pelletier, Nathan Niskala, and Beau Krause.

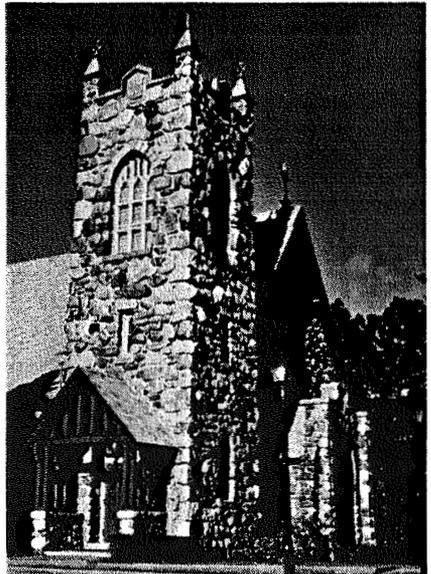
Since 1969 the church has had the following pastors: the Reverend Franklin L. Irvine 1969-1972; the Reverend Raymond P. Smith (interim); the Reverend Emily B. Preston, 1974-1993; the Reverend Lois N. Sundeen (interim), 1993-1994; the Reverend William

Beardslee, 1995-. From February to May of 1983 the Reverend Preston was on a leave of absence to accept a fellowship from Harvard University. The Reverend Roy E. Nelson served as interim pastor. On June 24, 1990, the Reverend Preston observed her 25th anniversary as an ordained minister.

### ST. PATRICK CHURCH

The beautiful fieldstone church at the top of Main Street presides over the Catholic families of Jaffrey and Rindge. Present parishioner enrollment is listed as 1,200 families, making St. Patrick the largest congregation of the churches in Jaffrey. St. Patrick Parish properties include the rectory, church, grotto, cemetery, convent, chapel, school, and two garages. In 1897 St. Patrick rectory was the first building erected on 4.8 acres of land purchased in 1886 by the parish's first pastor, the Reverend Patrick McEvoy. Today this land is the site of both the rectory and the church. The rectory was built where it stands today, to the west of the original wooden church. The rectory stands to the east of the present church. The parking lot is on the site of the original church, which was used as the parish hall for many years. The rectory is a large frame building that includes living space for the pastor, office areas for the pastor, parish secretary, school principal, and community rooms used by many parish organizations for meetings and prayer.

The foundation of St. Patrick Church was laid in 1915. The building is constructed of fieldstone that was cleared by parishion-



*St. Patrick Church*

ers from their farms and brought to the site of the new church in buggies and wagons each Sunday over a period of several years. The building was designed by architect Frank J. Untersee of Boston. It is 107 feet long and 57 feet wide with a tower of 57 feet. It was designed to hold 600 people and is considered one of the architectural gems of the Diocese of Manchester. The church was dedicated on September 3, 1917.

The church property also includes a grotto dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The grotto was built prior to 1945 and renovated in 1984 with the help of the Knights of Columbus and private donations.

St. Patrick Convent and the building site for St. Patrick School, totaling 13.3 acres, were acquired in 1949. The convent was the original Our Lady of Monadnock Academy. Cost of the building, adjacent land, and renovations totaled \$36,000. In the early 1960s the convent was extensively damaged by fire when hit by lightning. The Reverend Lionel Boulay directed the rebuilding of the convent to today's appearance. The Sisters of Mercy, the teachers of St. Patrick School, have been residing in the convent since 1980 along with sisters from other religious communities, sharing prayer life, domestic duties, and friendship. Weekday masses, prayer groups, and other religious services are celebrated in the parish chapel located in the rear of the convent. The first part of St. Patrick School was built in 1952.

The following pastors have served the people of St. Patrick parish since 1969: the Reverend Robert E. Barnea, June 10, 1969-October 1, 1972; the Reverend James W. Haller, co-pastor, October 1, 1972-December 31, 1975; the Reverend Thomas J. Bresnahan, co-pastor, October 1, 1972-December 31, 1975, pastor December 31, 1975-February 16, 1977; the Reverend William J. Bolt, administrator, February 16, 1977-June 15, 1977; the Reverend Richard A. Smith, June 15, 1977-June 30, 1987; the Reverend Richard J. Kelley June 30, 1987 to the present (1998).

During 1992 Father Kelley left the parish for a three-month sabbatical in Rome. In his absence the Reverend Anthony DiRusso served as administrator. Father Kelley is the 14th priest to serve as pastor of St. Patrick in its 110-year history.

Much has taken place at St. Patrick during the past 30 years. In 1993 the school hired a male principal, Michael Ouellette, the first

in the history of the school. Under his direction the enrollment at the school steadily increased. In 1996 David L. O'Connell was hired to replace Mr. Ouellette as principal. The cemetery has been enlarged and was only the fourth cemetery in the Diocese to erect a "pro-life" monument dedicated to the sanctity of life. (See chapter on cemeteries.) Presently the parish is mounting a campaign to raise money for the improvements and repairs that are necessary to ensure the church and parish will be here for generations to follow.

A native son, Francis J. Christian, was ordained as Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Manchester on May 14, 1996. On June 15, 1996, St. Patrick welcomed home its new bishop with a gala parish celebration. Other young men of the parish that have gone into the religious life are Reverend George R. Fitzgerald CSP, pastor of St. Thomas Aquinas University Parish in Boulder, CO, and Reverend John Tabor, missionary priest in Udon Thani, Thailand.

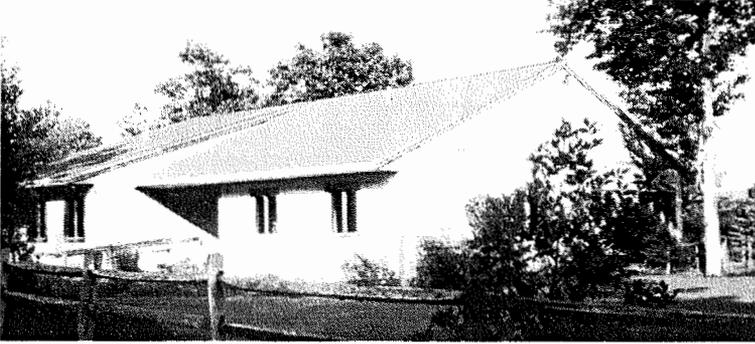
Bishop John McCormack summered in Jaffrey as a youngster in a log cabin on Gap Mountain formerly owned by William Belletete, now owned by Jack Belletete.

The organists for the church have been Hazel Butler, Catherine Kirschner, and presently Jean Hampsey. Other organists who have assisted are Dorothy Smith, sister of Father Richard Smith, Richard Boutwell, and Ruth Kennedy.

### MONADNOCK MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)

Located at the Jaffrey-Peterborough town line, in the house formerly owned by Donald and Marie Baird, is one of the newest members of Jaffrey's religious family.

Friends is the name of a Christian group that arose in the mid-17th century in England and quickly spread to the American colonies. Friends are dedicated to living in accordance with the direct, inward connection with God, without creeds, clergy, or other ecclesiastical forms. Meetings to worship God are essential to Quaker faith and are always open to anyone who wishes to come. Monadnock Meeting follows the practice of waiting in silent worship; anyone may speak when moved by the spirit. Friends have always given women equality in worship. They historically rejected a formal or salaried clergy. The public testimonies of Friends from the



*Society of Friends (Quaker) Meetinghouse*

very beginning included plain speech and dress, refusal of tithes, oaths, worldly courtesies, and an explicit rejection of participation in war. Quaker customs and a restricted place of early Friends in the social order channeled their secular achievements into education and peaceful industries. American Friends founded colleges such as Earlham, Haverford, and Swarthmore. The British chocolate industry was long dominated by Friends. Pennsylvania was founded on Quaker principles. More recently, Friends have been known for humanitarian service and relief projects and for active opposition to war.

Quakers are not new to the Monadnock Region. Historical meetinghouses, such as the one on Quaker Street in Henniker, dot the region. The Meeting School in Rindge has been in existence since 1957. Monadnock Meeting was born with the school and held its Sunday Meeting there until 1967, when it moved to Peterborough, meeting at the Peterborough Public Library, the Monadnock Worksource, and other places. Always in the minds of members was the possibility of buying a permanent place of their own. Finally the building that they now occupy became available, and they purchased the land and building in March 1993. Weekly meetings for worship are held there each Sunday, with religious education classes and child care provided. Business meetings are held on the third Sunday of each month, and community groups make use of it throughout the week.

The Clerk of the Meeting presides over the monthly meeting for business, but is not a pastor. The present clerk is James Giddings (1998).

## JAFFREY BIBLE CHURCH

The Monadnock Bible Conference opened November 4, 1965, on the grounds of The Ark in Jaffrey Center. During the summer of 1966 area residents began to discuss founding a Bible Church in town. One in particular, Arthur Hakala, was concerned for his family. The group considered building a church at the Bible Conference but concluded that the needs of both a church and a conference could not be met on the property. Therefore, for several years, folks attended other churches in the area, but they always returned to the Bible Conference.



*Monadnock Bible Conference Center*

In the summer of 1972, local laymen and guest speakers delivered sermons at the Bible Conference, sometimes with hundreds in attendance. In March 1973 the group moved to the gymnasium of the Jaffrey Grade School under the interim pastor, the Reverend David Moreland of Groton, Massachusetts. In September 1973 newly married Reverend Roland Mitcheson accepted the pastorate. Under his direction the Jaffrey Bible Church framed a constitution in 1974, and membership grew to the point where the church needed a home of its own.

In 1977 the church acquired the property of Dr. Irvin Nelson, at the time being used by Dr. Thomas Kottke as a chiropractic clinic

and a residence. The property included five acres of land, and with few changes the facilities filled the needs of the church family until 1988, when the dream of a new church became a reality. The



*Jaffrey Bible Church*

beautiful brick church across from the Jaffrey Fire Station was built by Hakala Corporation from architectural plans by Bissell Alderman. Because many volunteers contributed to the building of the church, it was completed at below projected cost.

Dedication was held November 20, 1988, with Pastor Roland Mitcheson presiding. Representatives from other area churches brought greetings and good wishes. Letters from various church officials and United State senators were read. Bissell Alderman was honored for his role. The church choir provided music followed by a reception in the new church hall. The congregation has grown from two families, the Hakalas and the Hollenbecks, to the present 100.

Pastor Roland Mitcheson and his wife, Betsy, had been with the church since its founding. He was senior pastor for almost 24 years. All three of their children were born and raised in Jaffrey. He was given a formal farewell reception on Sunday, November 16, 1997.

During the summer of 1998 the Reverend William Rogers of Troy was chosen to serve as the new pastor. Pastor Rogers formerly served the Troy Baptist Church for many years and is quite familiar with the Monadnock Region and all its families.

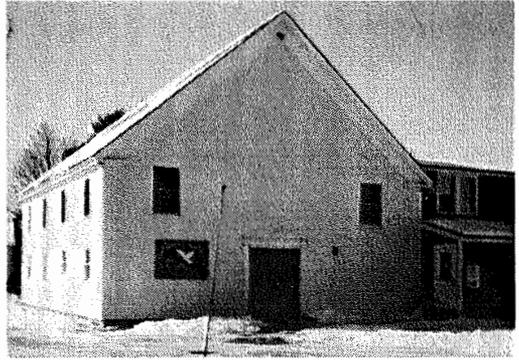
### CALVARY ASSEMBLY OF GOD

The Assemblies of God was birthed in the fires of revival that swept the world at the turn of the century. Participants in the revival were called Pentecostals. This revival resurgence is generally traced to Topeka, Kansas, in 1901. Soon the revival spread south and into the western regions of the United States. Houston

and Los Angeles became other sites for the revival in following years, which eventually birthed the Assemblies of God in 1914. The church observes two ordinances, Holy Communion and water baptism with total immersion. Then, as now, the emphasis, control, and ministry of the Assemblies of God remain with the local church.

Calvary Assembly of God in Jaffrey was founded in 1975 by the Reverend Vincent Prestigiaco, first meeting in the Cutler Memorial building, better known as the Jaffrey Woman's Club. As the congregation grew, they were able to purchase a house and attached barn on Stratton Road from Bruce Feltus in the spring of 1981. This was the

former residence of Clyde and Harriet LaPlante. The members of the congregation converted the barn to a church by gutting and replacing the interior. The ancient post-and-beam timbers were left exposed in the second-story sanctuary, leaving no



*Calvary Assembly of God*

doubt as to the building's past. The first story of the barn and adjoining house were used for a nursery, classrooms, and meeting rooms. Pastor Timothy Haynes and his family lived on the second floor. At the dedication in 1988, the Reverend Prestigiaco gave the invocation, and the Reverend Samuel DiTrolio, superintendent of the Northern New England District of Assemblies of God, preached the sermon. Church member Eva Bolles performed a song she wrote for the occasion. Its refrain was, "This barn ain't a barn no more."

The vision of the church is to become a vital part of the Jaffrey community and to make the facilities available to various groups and community functions. It is within walking distance from downtown and wants to be considered a community church. The facili-

ties are now used for the Jaffrey Head Start program and as a site for home schooling in French. From its food bank the church supplies two bags of food to 80 families every month with no questions asked. The church opened a Christian school in 1988 under Pastor Timothy Haynes. The school was approved by the state and had children from all grades in attendance. The school later closed because of financial considerations and constraints.

The present membership is 44 families, and currently Sunday services have an average attendance of 110. Pastor T. Lee Stephens led the church from the summer of 1990 to 1996. The church is run by an advisory board of four members. One member is in charge of music, another the financial and administrative duties, another is in charge of the physical maintenance, and the fourth member serves as secretary and liaison with the women of the church. The board, together with the pastor, provides the spiritual direction of the church.

Pastor Edward Presutti replaced Pastor Stevens in 1996.

### PILGRIM BAPTIST CHURCH

Pilgrim Baptist Church is located on Route 137 between Bryant Road and Crestview Drive. The church was built in 1983 by church members under the direction and supervision of local contractors Andrew Webber and Wayne Cooke. It had as its original and founding pastor, Carl M. Nannini, a graduate of Maranatha Baptist College in Watertown, Wisconsin, and ordained by the church in 1983. The church quietly settled into our community. The church members operated an approved-for-attendance Christian Day School. It is a closed school for children of those church members who might choose not to send their children to the public school system. The school held its first graduation in 1987. To date the school can boast of 14 graduates, all of whom have gone on to attend Christian colleges.

The church originally had 50 members; presently (1998) the congregation has 30 members. The church is proud of its nursing home ministry program, which holds weekly prayer services and a monthly psalms and songs service for the residents at the Good Shepherd Home in town.

The church also has an active mission program that supports various missions in foreign lands as well as helping to start churches in the United States. To date it has helped five churches get started. The main interest of the church is outreach into the community as well as quietly giving to needy members. The church is congregational in its government. Once a month the men of the church gather to discuss the issues. These issues are then brought to the congregation, where 100 percent must vote in agreement; if not, nothing is accepted.

The formal dedication was held on September 23, 1993, on the 10th anniversary of the building of the church. In celebration, the invitation was sent to all the original church families, many of whom have moved from this area.



*Pilgrim Baptist Church*

On June 16, 1996, Dr. Wendell D. Mullen accepted the interim pastorate of the Pilgrim Baptist Church. Dr. Mullen served the First Baptist Church of Groton, Massachusetts, for 11 years and has 50 years of pastoral ministry to his credit. Pastor Carl Nannini was called to begin a new pastorate in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Pastor Nannini was given a farewell fellowship at which several pastors expressed their gratitude to him for his long and faithful ministry in New England.

On November 1, 1996, Pilgrim Baptist Christian School closed with the hope to reopen at a time when an increased number of students are in need of a Christian day school.

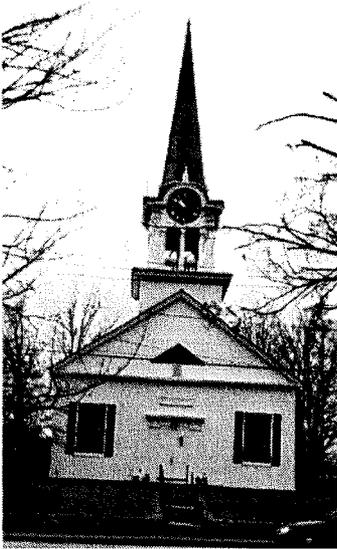
In August 1997 H. Trent Williams accepted the pastorate at Pilgrim Baptist Church. Pastor Williams is a graduate of Massillon Baptist College, where he earned the Bachelor of Religious Education degree. He is joined in the ministry by his wife, Gail, and their children Nathanael, Joshua, Caleb, and Abigail.

In March 1998 the church suffered extensive losses because of a fire in the cellar. After many weeks of repairs, the church reopened in July 1998.

### JAFFREY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Reverend Laban Ainsworth (1758-1858), the first minister of Jaffrey, held and taught a belief system based on the Westminster Confession, which is the foundation of the modern Presbyterian Church. Founded in 1936 under the leadership of Dr. J. Gresham

Machen, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, as it is called today, has as its purpose the continuation of the witness of historic Presbyterianism. It emphasizes the historic Christian claim that Biblical truth is changeless as opposed to modern relativism, which views truth as changing with the consensus of the times. Hence it appears that the Reverend Ainsworth has ties to citizens of Jaffrey even in the late 20th century.



*Jaffrey Presbyterian  
Church*

The present church in Jaffrey began with a small group that met without a minister. The congregation listened to tapes of sermons, read published sermons, and prayed together, especially for a minister to lead them.

In the summer of 1995 the Reverend Gregory E. Reynolds, who resides in Manchester, began to come once a month on Sunday afternoons to lead worship. By 1996 he was able to come every Sunday afternoon. In October 1996 the Presbytery of New York and New England received the Jaffrey Presbyterian Church into its membership. Beginning in January 1997, the services have been at the more traditional morning hour in the Cutler Memorial building.

The Reverend Gregory E. Reynolds was installed as a regional missionary on December 6, 1996, at the Cutler Memorial. This

marked the official beginning of the church in Jaffrey. The Reverend Reynolds was graduated with a Master of Divinity degree from Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia and was ordained in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in 1980.

### HARVEST CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP (A FOURSQUARE GOSPEL CHURCH)

Harvest Christian Fellowship is a part of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, headquartered in Los Angeles, California. The Foursquare movement was born out of the evangelistic ministry of Aimee Semple McPherson in 1923 and today has nearly 28,000 churches worldwide, with about 90 percent of the fellowships located in foreign lands. In addition to these churches, Foursquare also maintains several bible colleges, numerous secondary and primary schools, as well as a number of orphanages around the world. The term Foursquare, although not in common usage today, means "marked by boldness and conviction, forthright, and equal on all sides." In relation to the Gospel, it stands for the four-fold ministry of "Jesus Christ as Savior, Baptizer in the Holy Spirit, Healer, and soon-coming King."

Harvest Christian Fellowship was started in April 1996. Thomas Brian Johnston and his wife, Catherine Lynn Johnston, are the founding senior pastors. Mike Haase is the assistant pastor for worship. David and Catherine Maillat are associate pastors. The church is located in the Bean Block on Main Street. Through hard work and ingenuity, the pastors and congregation have transformed the original store frontage into a modern and efficient working office staffed by secretaries Catherine Maillat and Becky Chickering. This hard work has also been responsible for a spacious sanctuary. Weekly attendance at services averages about 100 people. Worship services are conducted Sunday mornings and Home Fellowship groups meet mid-week throughout the Monadnock area.

Although part of a movement with a rich Pentecostal heritage, Harvest Christian Fellowship is not a classical Pentecostal church. In fact, no one local church in the Foursquare movement is typical of the movement as a whole. Although founded on the same doctrinal principles and having the same governmental structure, the variety of styles within the Foursquare is wide indeed. Each church

is free to express its ministry as the Holy Spirit leads, and each has its own characteristics that define its ministry. Harvest describes itself as “an Evangelical church with a Holy Spirit distinctive,” using a contemporary format and seeking a practical application of its beliefs.

In July 1997 the church purchased 21 acres of land on Nutting Road at the intersection with Route 202 for the construction of a new building planned for the year 2000.

The Johnstons have assisted in founding four Foursquare Gospel churches in New Hampshire in the last five years. They are located in Hancock, Jaffrey, Berlin, and Keene and actively participate in church planning endeavors. The Reverend Johnston is also in charge of all the new Foursquare churches being established in the Eastern District from Ohio to Washington, D.C., and up the east coast to Maine.



*Harvest Christian Fellowship*