



By Paul Vernon/ThisWeek

(Above) The congregation of the Worthington Presbyterian Church has a service in the new sanctuary Oct. 23. The sanctuary was dedicated during a ceremony between Sunday's services. (Below) Phillip Hazelton, senior minister at the church, holds up a framed napkin with the original conceptual drawings of the sanctuary renovations.

Presbyterians celebrate church addition

By CANDY BROOKS
ThisWeek Staff Writer

It took \$4.3-million, the volunteer efforts of hundreds of church members and plenty of patience all around. And now the addition to the Worthington Presbyterian Church is complete.

"This is really a glorious day in the life of the congregation," the Rev. Philip Hazelton said last Sunday during the dedication of the addition and alterations to the church on the northwest quadrant of the Village Green.

Though the additions are barely visible to passersby since only minor changes were made to the footprint of the church, the inside now includes an additional 200 seats in the sanctuary; a larger chancel area; a new, larger fellowship hall; and renovated classrooms, offices, and hallways.

The changes were needed to accommodate a congregation that has grown to 2,100.

Planning began four years ago, and construction took a little more than a year.

From September 2004 until last month, Sunday services took place in the auditorium at Thomas Worthington High School.

Every Sunday, dozens of volunteers

See **PRESEBYTERIANS**, page A2



Page A2

ThisWeek Worthington

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Continued from page A1

helped set up the high school with bleachers, a piano, lecterns and microphones. They also set up classrooms for Sunday school.

"We're very happy to be back in our home and our own space, especially when it is large enough to fit us," Hazelton said.

During the dedication ceremony, he thanked city and school leaders, neighbors, and the many volunteers who contributed to the planning, construction and move.

Dick Evans was one of many church members who stepped up to take a leadership role. He helped raise funds, organized the moves in and out, and did odd jobs. The finished church is worth the effort, he said.

"It's a tremendous asset to the community," Evans said. "It will be used, it is already being used."

Anita Albright has been a member for 56 years, and has seen many changes in the building, the congrega-



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Nine-year-old Emilee Sturtevant, a member of the Worthington Presbyterian Church, prays during the dedication ceremony.

tion, and the clergy.

"It is the best it has ever been," she said Sunday.

The church traces its origins to 1805, when itinerant ministers made stops in the wilderness known as Wor-

thington, which had just been founded.

In 1829, church members purchased the site of the current church for \$40 from Worthington founder James Kilbourne. The first barn-like church was built a year later.

Since then, the church has been torn down, added to, and started over. In 1926, the new brick church was built for \$51,000, including new furnishings and the church's first organ. Membership was 137.

Several additions were made during the 1950s, as young families moved into the Worthington area.

In 1991, a significant addition of an educational wing and chapel were completed.

During services on Sunday, Anne Steele, president of Muskingum College, looked to the future, asking the congregation to envision all of the lives that will be changed in the new space over the next 100 years.

"Today, the past, present, and future meet in this architectural endeavor," she said.