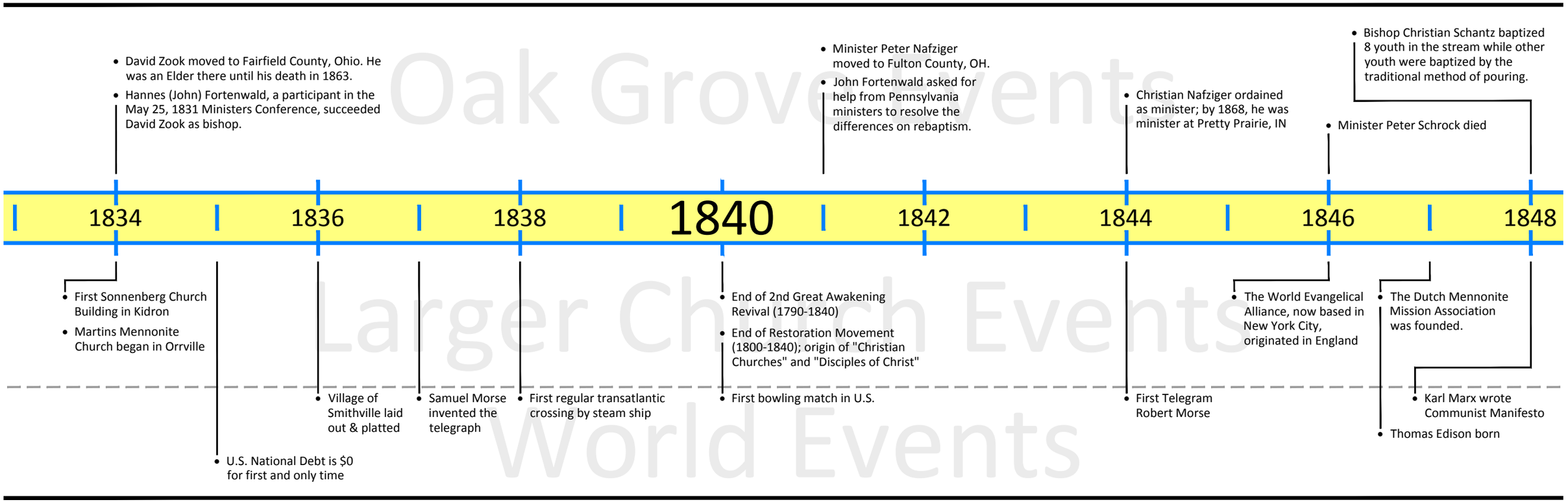
- First Bishop: David Zook
- First Minister: Christian Brandt - 1866
- Christian Brandt purchased 160 acres for $16.50/acre. In 1862 it became the site for Oak Grove Meetinghouse.
- Oak Grove started as an Amish church
- 25 families in Oak Grove
- Plank Cemetery in Wooster; burials of Oak Grove members
- John Burkholder, a baptized Mennonite emigrant from Switzerland, was accepted into membership upon his confession of faith without rebaptism.
- Bishop John (Hannes) Yoder moved to Wayne County from Center County, Pennsylvania and ministered at Oak Grove.
- Isaac Yoder told the congregation that "it has the keys, not the full ministers. The full ministers must get the key from the congregation." This statement was quoted by other leaders.
- Ohio ministers met Pennsylvania Amish ministers to resolve the dispute about accepting Mennonites without rebaptism. They concluded that rebaptism was required.
- Pennsylvania bishops met in Wayne County regarding the rebaptism dispute. A letter of concern, signed by 26 lay members, was submitted but no response was given. It resulted in two factions which met separately for a period of time.

1818 | 1820 | 1822 | 1824 | 1826 | 1828 | 1830 | 1832

- Sonnenberg settlers arrived
- Kidron established
- Sonnenberg Mennonite Church began in Kidron meeting in homes
- Crown Hill Mennonite Church began in Rittman
- Joseph Smith Published the Book of Mormon

- City of Wooster founded in 1808
- Green Township was organized in 1817
- U.S. President: James Monroe
- Congress adopted the U.S. flag design of 13 red/white stripes & 1 star for each state
- 19 states in USA (Ohio was one)
- Handel's Messiah premiered in Boston
- 1st known Christmas carol: Silent Night
- First group of freed slaves from U.S. arrived in Africa
- First RR Charted
- Ohio & Erie Canal opened Cleveland-Portsmouth, OH Closed early 1900's
- First Webster's Dictionary
- Lincoln became a candidate in Illinois General Assembly


Oak Grove Events
Larger Church Events
World Events
1834
1836
1838
1840
1842
1844
1846
1848
David Zook moved to Fairfield County, Ohio. He was an Elder there until his death in 1863.
Hannes (John) Fortenwald, a participant in the May 25, 1831 Ministers Conference, succeeded David Zook as bishop.
Minister Peter Nafziger moved to Fulton County, OH.
John Fortenwald asked for help from Pennsylvania ministers to resolve the differences on rebaptism.
Christian Nafziger ordained as minister; by 1868, he was minister at Pretty Prairie, IN
Minister Peter Schrock died
Bishop Christian Schantz baptized 8 youth in the stream while other youth were baptized by the traditional method of pouring.
First Sonnenberg Church Building in Kidron
Martins Mennonite Church began in Orrville
End of 2nd Great Awakening Revival (1790-1840)
End of Restoration Movement (1800-1840); origin of "Christian Churches" and "Disciples of Christ"
The World Evangelical Alliance, now based in New York City, originated in England
The Dutch Mennonite Mission Association was founded.
U.S. National Debt is $0 for first and only time
Village of Smithville laid out & platted
Samuel Morse invented the telegraph
First regular transatlantic crossing by steam ship
First bowling match in U.S.
First Telegram Robert Morse
Karl Marx wrote Communist Manifesto
Thomas Edison born

- 1850-1870: Influx of progressive French Amish Mennonite immigrants; Rich, Liechty, Alliman, Gerig, Meyer, Kropf, Graber, Sommer, Krabill, Jeanneret, & Jaquet were common names
- Hannes Yoder and Emanuel Hostetler withdrew from the congregation.
- Jacob D. Yoder was ordained to ministry at Oak Grove with a request that the congregation permit him to baptize in the creek. - 1858

- Jacob D Yoder ordained as bishop

- John K. Yoder ordained as minister in Mifflin City - 1906
- Emanuel Hochstetler moved to Ohio and joined the ministry at Oak Grove. - 1862
- Peter Blough ordained as minister
- The Ausbund was replaced with the Unpartheyisches Gesangbuch (Mennonite Songbook)

- After financial difficulties and subsequent controversy, Bishop Yoder moved to Indiana.
- John K. Yoder ordained as bishop
- Christian Conrad ordained as minister
- Jonathan Smucker ordained as minister
- Christian K. Yoder ordained as minister

- The first Oak Grove meetinghouse named "Amish Mennonite Center of Green Church" and a cemetery were built.
- First Diener Versammlungen (ministers' gatherings/conferences) were held at the Samuel Schrock farm, with 72 ordained leaders from Maryland to Iowa

1850 | 1852 | 1854 | 1856 | 1858 | 1860 | 1862

- Dispensationalism, introduced by John Darby in England, believed that God uses different means of working with people during different time periods.

- Premillenialism promoted a literal 1,000 year reign of Christ.
- Amillenialism regards the 1,000 years of Revelation 20 as symbolic, not literal.

- First Sunday School in Holmes County
- John Holdeman established the Church of God in Christ Mennonite (Holdeman) in Wayne County, Ohio.

- The General Conference of the Mennonite Church of North America was formed.
- Beginning of 3rd Great Awakening revival movement (1860-1920)

- Second Sonnenberg Church built in Kidron

- First Adding Machine with keys

- City of Orrville founded

- Charles Darwin published "On the Origin of Species"
- First transatlantic cable used

- Organized Baseball began in San Francisco
- Abraham Lincoln elected

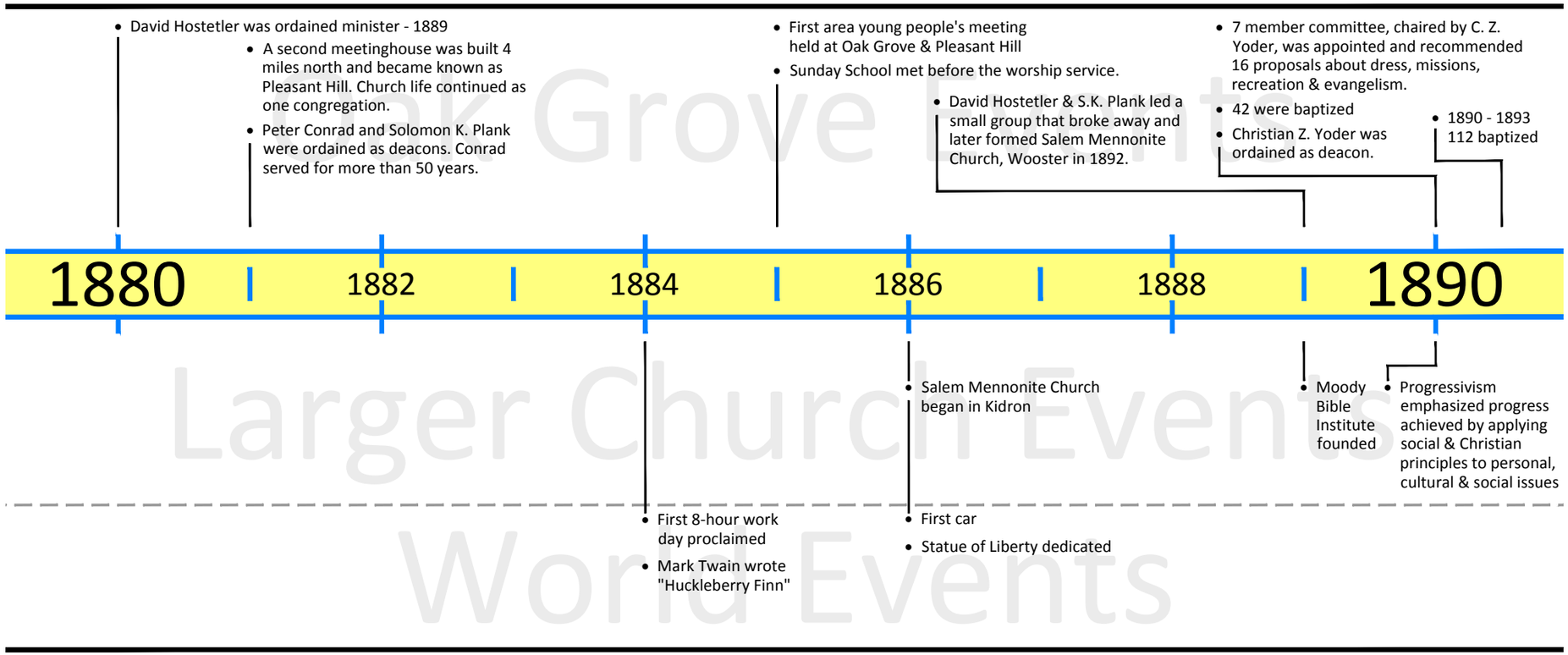
- The Civil War began. Some paid a $200 exemption fee.
- Cornerstone speech given by Vice President Alexander Stephens

- John & Mary Smiley came from Indiana. John served as minister until 1878.
- Oak Grove began to question the use of beer & whiskey. Three members were asked to close their breweries.
- Oak Grove became a Mennonite Church & aligned with progressive Amish churches; became known as Amish Mennonites.
- David Z. Yoder was ordained deacon by lot
- Solomon Zook left minstry
- Sunday school started; 200-300 in attendance in bi-weekly sessions
- David Z. Yoder was ordained as minister - 1929
- Oak Grove supported the Russian Mennonite migration and assisted 20 families.

1864 | 1866 | 1868 | 1870 | 1872 | 1874 | 1876 | 1878

- Herald of Truth began - 1908
- Ohio Conference approved Sunday School
- Wadsworth Institute (1868-1878) began as the first Mennonite (GC) school of higher education in America
- D.L. Moody began evangelistic meetings
- Bethel Mennonite Church began in Wadsworth
- Bethel College (Kansas) founded
- Apostolic Christian Church established in Rittman

- College of Wooster founded
- Suez Canal opened
- Abraham Lincoln shot
- Civil War Ended
- First typewriter
- Smithville Academy began
- Completion of the Transcontinental Railroad from New York to San Francisco
- Telephone invented
- Phonograph invented by Thomas Edison
- Lightbulb invented by Thomas Edison
- First White House egg roll


Oak Grove Events
David Hostetler was ordained minister - 1889
A second meetinghouse was built 4 miles north and became known as Pleasant Hill. Church life continued as one congregation.
Peter Conrad and Solomon K. Plank were ordained as deacons. Conrad served for more than 50 years.
First area young people's meeting held at Oak Grove & Pleasant Hill
Sunday School met before the worship service.
David Hostetler & S.K. Plank led a small group that broke away and later formed Salem Mennonite Church, Wooster in 1892.
7 member committee, chaired by C. Z. Yoder, was appointed and recommended 16 proposals about dress, missions, recreation & evangelism.
42 were baptized
Christian Z. Yoder was ordained as deacon.
1890 - 1893
112 baptized
1880
1882
1884
1886
1888
1890
Larger Church Events
Salem Mennonite Church began in Kidron
Moody Bible Institute founded
Progressivism emphasized progress achieved by applying social & Christian principles to personal, cultural & social issues
World Events
First 8-hour work day proclaimed
Mark Twain wrote "Huckleberry Finn"
First car
Statue of Liberty dedicated

- Isaac Miller became pastor - 1894
- First Sunday School missions offering: $15.31
- Year round Sunday School services alternating between Oak Grove & Pleasant Hill
- Missions promoted through Sunday School
- Eastern Amish Mennonite Conference organized at Oak Grove
- Ben Gerig ordained as minister by lot - 1913
- C. Z. Yoder named to Elkhart Institute board of directors
- Ben Gerig ordained as bishop
- J. S. Gerig ordained as minister - 1955
- D. Z. Yoder family moved to colonize Denbigh, VA. They returned in 1904.
- Lina Zook moved to Chicago to help in city mission.
- Oak Grove students began attending the Elkhart Institute.
- The Point Breeze Chautauqua was organized by John B. Eberly and his son, John M. Eberly. - 1916

1892 | 1894 | 1896 | 1898 | 1900 | 1902

- Salem Mennonite Church, Wooster began from a small group led by David Hostetler & S.K. Plank
- Elkhart Institute founded
- An orphanage was established by David & Ellen Plank Garber.
- Mennonite General Conference (MC) formally organized
- Sterling Mennonite, General Conference, organized (sold to the Church of the Brethren in 1920)
- Central Mennonite College (Bluffton University) founded
- Mennonite Mutual Insurance began. J. M. Smucker was president.
- An old peoples' home was established next to Crown Hill Church. Oak Grove contributed heavily.
- First International Peace Conference

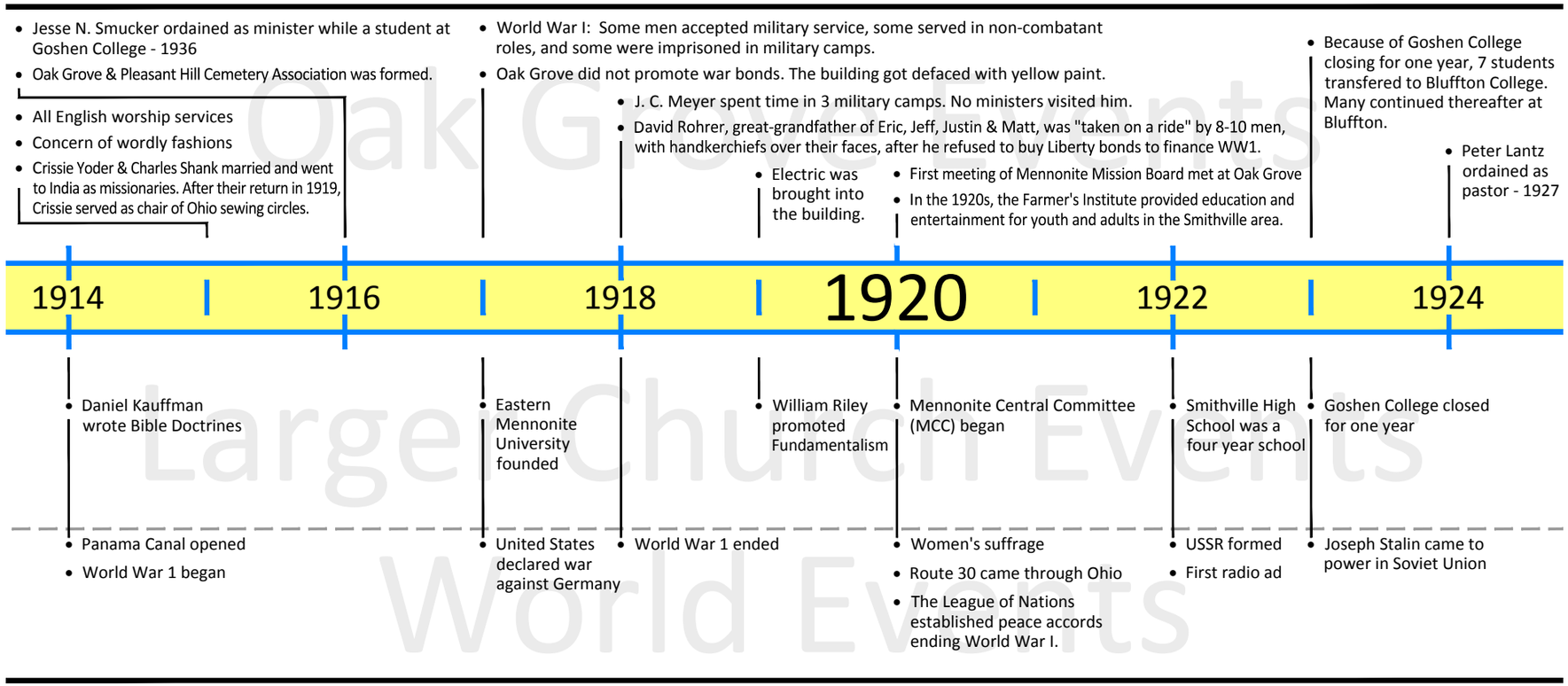
- First basketball game played in public
- Ellis Island begins accommodating immigrants
- First fingerprinting
- Radio invented
- Smucker's Jellies founded

- Oak Grove began week long Bible conferences. Many speakers were brought in. It continued for several years.
- Lina Zook married Jacob A. Ressler and returned to Dhamtari, India. They came back in 1908 due to health problems.
- Oak Grove helped with Canton City Mission
- C. Z. Yoder ordained as minister - 1930
- Present building dedicated; about 500 members
- Oak Grove Sewing Circle began
- Peter R. Lantz was ordained as minister for Canton Mission. He moved to Wayne County in 1912 and served at Oak Grove - 1927
- Helped to start Orrville Mission
- Jacob S. Gerig ordained as bishop - 1955

1904 | 1906 | 1908 | 1910 | 1912

- First Mennonite Church began in Canton
- Goshen College founded as successor to Elkhart Institute
- Third Sonnenberg Church built in Kidron
- Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities began in Rittman, Ohio
- "Herald of Truth" & "Gospel Witness" combined to become "Gospel Herald" - 1998
- "The Mennonite" began publication - 1998
- Federal Council of Churches established
- Orrville Mennonite Church began in Orrville as a mission outpost of Oak Grove & Martins
- The Scofield Reference Bible by Cyrus I. Scofield emphasized dispensationalism
- Merger Committee for Ohio Mennonite & Eastern Amish Mennonite Conferences met in Smithville (see 1927)

- Airplane invented
- First college bowl game played
- First electric movie theater
- Charles Lindbergh born
- Azusa Street Revival in L.A., California was the origin of the Pentecostal movement.
- Smith Dairy founded
- The Ford moving assembly line was perfected for the manufacture of the Model T, which reduced its production time to 93 minutes per car.
- Titanic sank


Oak Grove Events
Larger Church Events
World Events
1914
1916
1918
1920
1922
1924
Jesse N. Smucker ordained as minister while a student at Goshen College - 1936
Oak Grove & Pleasant Hill Cemetery Association was formed.
All English worship services
Concern of wordly fashions
Crissie Yoder & Charles Shank married and went to India as missionaries. After their return in 1919, Crissie served as chair of Ohio sewing circles.
World War I: Some men accepted military service, some served in non-combatant roles, and some were imprisoned in military camps.
Oak Grove did not promote war bonds. The building got defaced with yellow paint.
J. C. Meyer spent time in 3 military camps. No ministers visited him.
David Rohrer, great-grandfather of Eric, Jeff, Justin & Matt, was "taken on a ride" by 8-10 men, with handkerchiefs over their faces, after he refused to buy Liberty bonds to finance WW1.
Electric was brought into the building.
First meeting of Mennonite Mission Board met at Oak Grove
In the 1920s, the Farmer's Institute provided education and entertainment for youth and adults in the Smithville area.
Because of Goshen College closing for one year, 7 students transfered to Bluffton College. Many continued thereafter at Bluffton.
Peter Lantz ordained as pastor - 1927
Daniel Kauffman wrote Bible Doctrines
Eastern Mennonite University founded
William Riley promoted Fundamentalism
Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) began
Smithville High School was a four year school
Goshen College closed for one year
Panama Canal opened
World War 1 began
United States declared war against Germany
World War 1 ended
Women's suffrage
Route 30 came through Ohio
The League of Nations established peace accords ending World War I.
USSR formed
First radio ad
Joseph Stalin came to power in Soviet Union

- Merle Lehman, Kidron, painted "God is Love" on the sanctuary wall.
- Oak Grove began having preaching services every Sunday
- The church was remodeled for the first time.
- Wednesday evening youth Bible study meetings were organized and widely attended.
- Oak Grove Amish Mennonite Church name was changed to Oak Grove Mennonite Church.
- First rendition of Handel's Messiah was performed with Irene Musser as director
- First Vacation Bible School was organized by Jesse Smucker
- Individual communion cups were approved and used for the first time.

1926 | 1928 | 1930 | 1932 | 1934

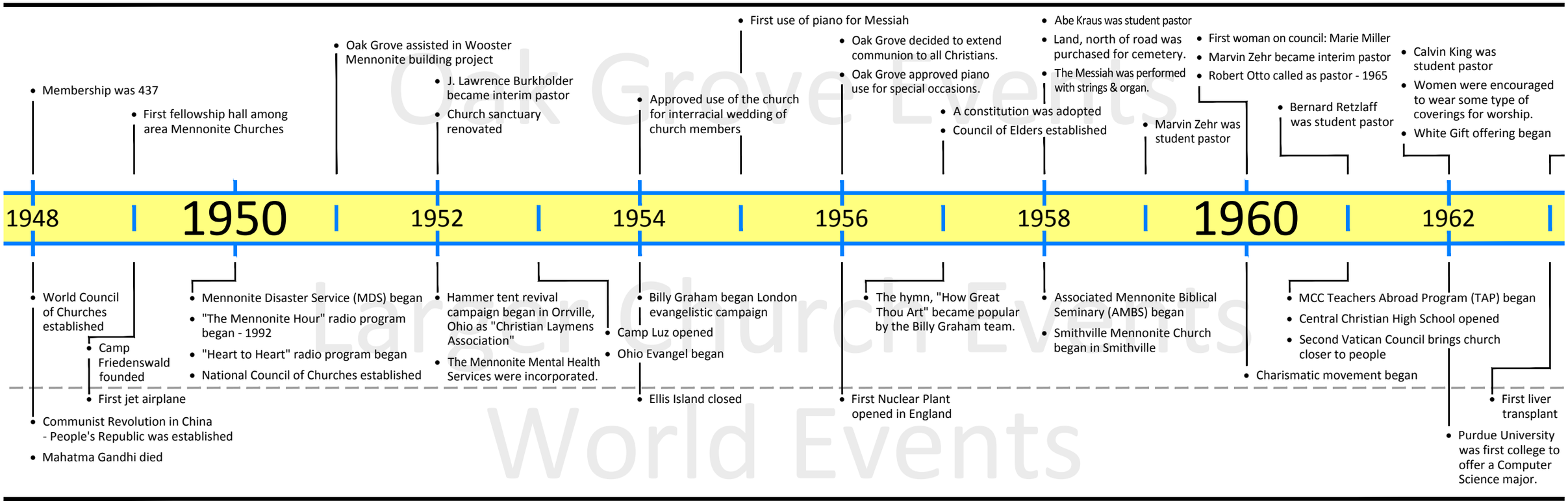
- "Mennonite Weekly Review/ Mennonite World Review" began publication
- The First Mennonite World Conference was assembled in Basel, Switzerland.
- The "Scopes" trial in Dayton, TN accused a high school teacher of violating a state act which made it unlawful to teach evolution in public schools in Tennessee. Scopes eventually was acquitted.
- Eastern Amish Mennonite Conference merged with the Ohio Mennonite Conference
- "Mennonite Quarterly Review" began publication
- Charles Lindbergh flew across the Atlantic.
- Television was invented
- "Sword & Trumpet" began publication
- The Great Depression began.
- Adolf Hitler took power.

- Oak Grove's & Pleasant Hill's membership total peaked at 666
- Oak Grove fully joined the Ohio and Eastern Amish Mennonite Conference.
- Oak Grove called William G. Detweiler to join the ministry
- C. Z. Yoder, minister, evangelist and music committee chairman for the Mennonite Church, died on December 9.
- The Ohio Sunday School Conference was held at Oak Grove.
- Some controversy arose about salvation & the ethical position of peace and non-resistance.
- J. S. Gerig asked Oak Grove and the conference to ordain another minister. A high percentage of the congregation nominated Virgil Gerig. The decision was made to ordain without the lot. Objections to Virgil's qualifications were raised.
- Oak Grove heavily supported young men, with financial aid, who chose Civilian Public Service.
- Virgil Gerig ordained as minister - 1960
- First Harvest Home
- Oak Grove was asked to leave Ohio and Eastern Amish Mennonite Conference

1936 | 1938 | 1940 | 1942 | 1944 | 1946

- Kidron Mennonite Church began
- "Calvary Hour" radio program began - 2001
- MCC Meat Canning began
- Civilian Public Service (CPS) began
- Wooster Mennonite Mission began in Wooster
- Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) began
- Ten Thousand Villages began
- Voluntary Service founded
- Minority group given possession of Pleasant Hill Mennonite Church

- First computer
- The Hindenburg crashed
- World War II began
- Pearl Harbor attack - U.S. entered WWII
- U.S. atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima & Nagasaki
- World War II ended
- United Nations established
- "Iron Curtain" was coined by Winston Churchill
- Palestine divided - State of Israel Proclaimed


Oak Grove Events
Larger Church Events
World Events
1948
1950
1952
1954
1956
1958
1960
1962
Membership was 437
World Council of Churches established
Communist Revolution in China - People's Republic was established
Mahatma Gandhi died
First fellowship hall among area Mennonite Churches
Camp Friedenswald founded
First jet airplane
Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) began
"The Mennonite Hour" radio program began - 1992
"Heart to Heart" radio program began
National Council of Churches established
Oak Grove assisted in Wooster Mennonite building project
J. Lawrence Burkholder became interim pastor
Church sanctuary renovated
Hammer tent revival campaign began in Orrville, Ohio as "Christian Laymens Association"
The Mennonite Mental Health Services were incorporated.
Approved use of the church for interracial wedding of church members
Billy Graham began London evangelistic campaign
Camp Luz opened
Ohio Evangel began
Ellis Island closed
First use of piano for Messiah
Oak Grove decided to extend communion to all Christians.
Oak Grove approved piano use for special occasions.
First Nuclear Plant opened in England
A constitution was adopted
Council of Elders established
The hymn, "How Great Thou Art" became popular by the Billy Graham team.
Abe Kraus was student pastor
Land, north of road was purchased for cemetery.
The Messiah was performed with strings & organ.
Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) began
Smithville Mennonite Church began in Smithville
Marvin Zehr was student pastor
First woman on council: Marie Miller
Marvin Zehr became interim pastor
Robert Otto called as pastor - 1965
Charismatic movement began
Bernard Retzlaff was student pastor
MCC Teachers Abroad Program (TAP) began
Central Christian High School opened
Second Vatican Council brings church closer to people
Calvin King was student pastor
Women were encouraged to wear some type of coverings for worship.
White Gift offering began
Purdue University was first college to offer a Computer Science major.
First liver transplant

- Parsonage built east of the church
- Lala K.K. Dey was student pastor - 1966
- Lester Hostetler became interim Pastor
- Lotus Troyer became pastor - 1971
- The first organ, an Allen, was purchased.
- Oak Grove studied baptism & membership. They concluded that they should be viewed as separate events. See 1981
- Larry Yoder was student pastor
- Sheldon Sawatzky was student pastor
- Removed the coal furnace & installed gas heat
- 2-story educational wing was built
- After a study of divorce & remarriage, Oak Grove affirmed their acceptance.
- Oak Grove applied for dual membership in the Central District Conference & Ohio Conference
  - Lester Hostetler became interim pastor - 1972
  - Ron Klassen was student pastor
  - Alice Parker's Martyr's Mirror Oratorio was performed at Oak Grove and in 1975, at McGaw Chapel, COW.
- Peter Wiebe became pastor - 1984
- First female associate pastor: Martha Smith Good - 1976
  - L. Miller family donated bells in memory of Marie Miller
  - New constitution created with 6 commissions
- The Oak Grove Preschool opened.
- Bob Schloneger was student pastor
- Fellowship Hall enlarged
- Oakie Burgers first sold at Relief Sale
- Oak Grove studied women in leadership and voted to allow women as elders
- Wayne Yoder was student pastor - 1978
- Yoshihira Inamine was student pastor

1964 | 1966 | 1968 | 1970 | 1972 | 1974 | 1976 | 1978

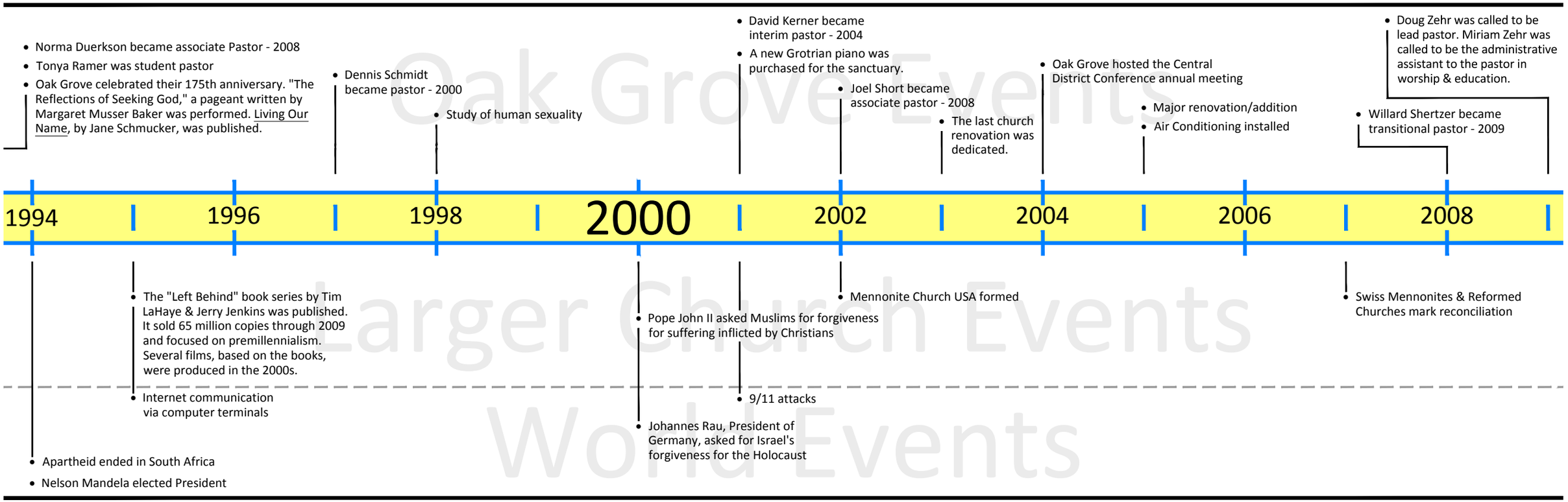
- The Ohio and Eastern Mennonite Conference acted to rescind all prior actions relative to Oak Grove
- "Good News for Modern Man," a Bible translation became popular
- "Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow" became known as the Mennonite Anthem.
- The "Living Bible" was published.
- The Ohio Mennonite Conference was established after the eastern congregations affiliated with the Atlantic Coast Conference.

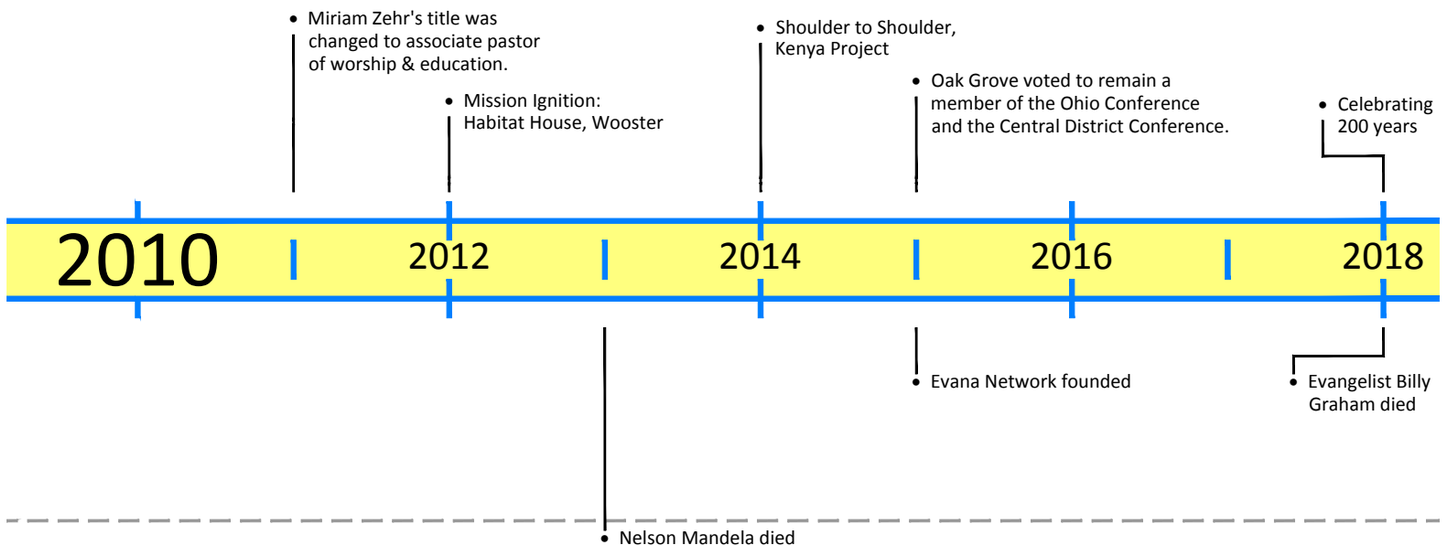
- First heart transplant
- First person lands on the moon
- I-77 opened
- Vietnam War ended
- Term "Personal Computer" was coined

- Bill Wilson was student pastor - 1979
- Elsie Miller was student pastor
- Oak Grove celebrated their 160th anniversary. "The Changeless and the Changing: An Original Historical Pageant" was performed. Creative Congregationalism, a history of Oak Grove by James O. Lehman, was published.
  - Elsie Miller became associate pastor - 1982
- Walter Dyck became interim pastor - 1982
- The church board initiated a review of the 1966 decision. At a congregational meeting, it was decided that baptism & membership be viewed as joint events.
- Church remodeled
  - Elsie Miller ordained for pastoral ministry
- Wayne Detweiler was student pastor
- The Orie Gresser bequest presented a challenge to make wise decisions on the use of the funds. A 4-year process followed to make decisions.
  - Russel Mast became interim pastor - 1985
  - Jim Schrag became pastor - 1994
- Steve Thomas was student pastor
  - Sher Speigle became associate pastor - 1992
  - The second Allen organ was purchased.
- Keith Lehman was student pastor
- Oak Grove hosted the annual meeting of the Central District Conference.
- The Oak Grove Endowment Fund was established with a sizeable gift from the Gresser bequest.
- Stephen Ministry Program began
- Search for the Christ Child began
  - Merritt Welty was student pastor
  - An elevator was installed as a memorial for Orie & Ruth Gresser.
  - Elsie Miller became interim pastor - 1993

1980 | 1982 | 1984 | 1986 | 1988 | 1990 | 1992

- Mt. Saint Helens erupted
- Fourth Sonnenberg Church built in Kidron
- Berlin Wall collapsed
- East & West Germany unified
- World Wide Web established


Oak Grove Events
Larger Church Events
World Events
1994
1996
1998
2000
2002
2004
2006
2008
Norma Duerkson became associate Pastor - 2008
Tonya Ramer was student pastor
Oak Grove celebrated their 175th anniversary. "The Reflections of Seeking God," a pageant written by Margaret Musser Baker was performed. Living Our Name, by Jane Schmucker, was published.
Dennis Schmidt became pastor - 2000
Study of human sexuality
David Kerner became interim pastor - 2004
A new Grotrian piano was purchased for the sanctuary.
Joel Short became associate pastor - 2008
The last church renovation was dedicated.
Oak Grove hosted the Central District Conference annual meeting
Major renovation/addition
Air Conditioning installed
Willard Shertzer became transitional pastor - 2009
Doug Zehr was called to be lead pastor. Miriam Zehr was called to be the administrative assistant to the pastor in worship & education.
The "Left Behind" book series by Tim LaHaye & Jerry Jenkins was published. It sold 65 million copies through 2009 and focused on premillennialism. Several films, based on the books, were produced in the 2000s.
Internet communication via computer terminals
Pope John II asked Muslims for forgiveness for suffering inflicted by Christians
Johannes Rau, President of Germany, asked for Israel's forgiveness for the Holocaust
9/11 attacks
Mennonite Church USA formed
Swiss Mennonites & Reformed Churches mark reconciliation
Apartheid ended in South Africa
Nelson Mandela elected President


Miriam Zehr's title was changed to associate pastor of worship & education.
Mission Ignition: Habitat House, Wooster
Shoulder to Shoulder, Kenya Project
Oak Grove voted to remain a member of the Ohio Conference and the Central District Conference.
Celebrating 200 years
2010
2012
2014
2016
2018
Evana Network founded
Evangelist Billy Graham died
Nelson Mandela died