

**Michael J. Venezia**  
**MAYOR**



Telephone  
(973) 680-4080  
Fax  
(973) 680-4040

## **TOWNSHIP OF BLOOMFIELD**

*One Municipal Plaza*  
*Bloomfield, New Jersey 07003-3487*  
*mvenezia@bloomfieldtwpnj.com*

July 22, 2014

To whom it may concern:

Steps must be taken immediately to stabilize the 218-year-old sanctuary building of the Bloomfield Presbyterian Church on the Green to prevent catastrophic collapse onto Broad Street in the direction of Bloomfield High School. The work required to save Bloomfield's most recognizable landmark--the spire of which appears on the bicentennial seal of the Township--will take several million dollars and widespread support from the community.

**I am writing to offer my wholehearted endorsement of the Church on the Green Sanctuary Restoration Project.** This massive undertaking will preserve a New Jersey architectural and historical treasure for future generations.

The church campus has been a place of welcome in the historic heart of Bloomfield for seven generations. I want to see it reopen its doors for worship, community events, musical offerings and educational purposes. The congregation members are already giving generously of their means and holding year-round fundraising events but they cannot cover the cost of the entire project themselves.

The stately high Georgian brownstone structure is situated in The Bloomfield Green Historic District which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Its stained glass windows are made of layered opalescent glass in the technique pioneered by John LaFarge and later adapted by Louis Comfort Tiffany. One of the windows, "The Walk to Emmaus," is a John LaFarge original. The sanctuary houses a brand new 3-manual 48-rank French Romantic Peragallo pipe organ that was dedicated just weeks before the structural problems were detected and the building closed for safety reasons.

Historic figures associated with the church include: William Batchelder Bradbury, a Bloomfield resident and composer of hundreds of hymns and children's songs including "Jesus Loves Me;" the acclaimed American composer Charles Ives who premiered original compositions during his tenure as church organist; and the Rev. George Duffield, Jr., who wrote the Civil War era hymn, "Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus," to honor an evangelist friend who spoke out against the Fugitive Slave Act.

The church operates a food pantry and thrift shop, and serves monthly meals to the community free of charge.

Let's be creative and resourceful in helping the members of the Church on the Green preserve our town landmark. Let's come together to **Save Bloomfield History!**

Sincerely,

Michael Venezia  
Mayor