

# CHURCH: Will look for property on which to build a smaller building

Continued from 1C

Getting to the place of acceptance took months of soul searching. Over the past couple of years, Lisa Pierce, the pastor's wife, took on the mission of finding a way to save the building.

"Lisa went from one end of the church to the other and brought in her son who is a contractor from Arkansas," Pierce said. "She talked to plumbers, electricians, roofers and an architect."

Lisa approached two television shows specializing in rehab ("Holmes on Homes" and "Rehab Addict") and gave a tour to a Restore Oregon representative. None helped.

"This place has such a good spirit," Lisa said. "I fell in love with the people here."

Her son, Nick, did repairs around the church and Lisa said she started to have hope that the church could be saved. She remembers the day she lost that hope. Nick, his voice full of dismay, called his mother into the sanctuary. He pointed to the wall directly behind the organ.

"Water was coming through the wall," she recalled. "It glistened on the wall behind the organ."

Moisture had infiltrated through a leaky roof and into the main walls of the sanctuary. It would cost around \$100,000 to fix the damage.

The church launched a professional assessment of the building to get a clearer picture of what it was up against. The picture wasn't pretty. Addressing the most pressing problems (wall damage, mold, leaky foundations and such) would cost \$300,000 — money the church just doesn't have.

Church members slowly came around to the reality that the building couldn't be saved.

"It's just a thing, but it's such a beautiful thing," Remington said. "We try to remember that the church is not the building, it's the people in it."

That doesn't mean they aren't heartbroken.

"It's such a classic old structure," said Dave Remington, Wanda's husband. "It's really part of the identity of Pendleton."

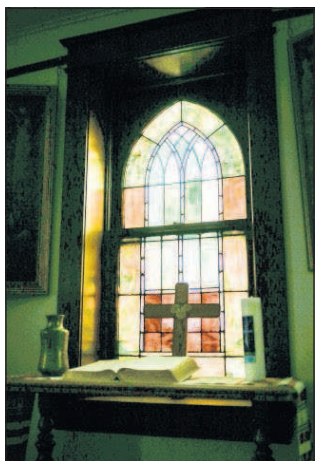
Church member Harold Nelson has a special relationship with the building. He's the guy who oversees the vintage boiler and the boiler before that. In earlier days, he said, the church was heated with wood, then coal and then oil. Nelson is also the guy who changes the lightbulbs in the sanctuary and does anything mechanical.

"This church has been a home for me for 48 years," Nelson said. "I've spent many hours here looking after it."

One of the church's missions is looking after the poor. Each Sunday, the



Worshippers sing a hymn on a recent Sunday at the Pendleton United Methodist Church.



A stained glass window in the chapel at the Pendleton United Methodist Church glows on a recent Sunday morning.



Rev. Jim Pierce preaches at the Pendleton United Methodist Church. Pierce, a veterinarian-turned-pastor from Tennessee, came to Pendleton four years ago.

church provides space for Veda's Breakfast, which offers a meal to people who are homeless or others who can't afford a meal. When the congregation leaves, the breakfast will need another location.

Louise Thompson grew up in the old church, which had hundreds rather than dozens of members in past decades.

On Christmas, there were two services.

"It was one of the strongest churches in the community," Thompson said. "It was a wonderful place. It was an amazing time."

The congregation decided to sell the church in a package with two houses on the property and a parking lot for \$410,000. Pierce expects the

buyer to salvage the stained glass, organ and other items and sell the two other buildings (one houses Legal Aid Services of Oregon and the other is the former parsonage) and the parking lot.

"It's a steal," Pierce said, adding that he's already had inquiries.

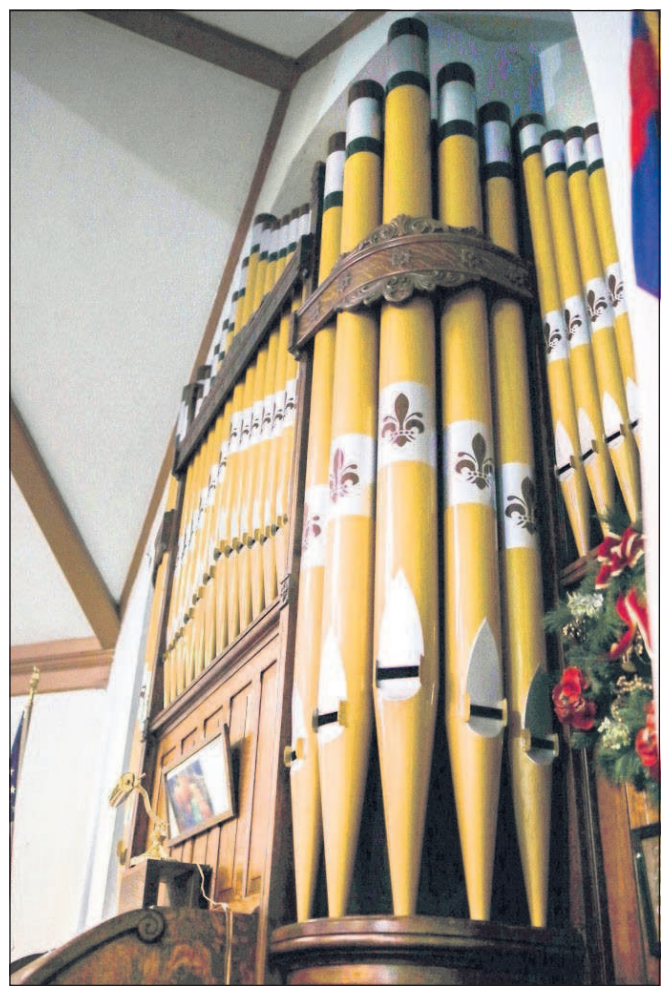
Once the church sells, the congregation will look for



Talon Anderson helps decorate the Christmas tree at the Pendleton United Methodist Church last Sunday morning.



Harold Nelson, a member of the Pendleton United Methodist Church, looks after the church's boiler and does other maintenance around the building.



The organ at the Pendleton United Methodist Church will go to whoever buys the deteriorating building, along with stained glass windows and stone.

property on which to build a smaller building. Pierce said other churches have offered space in the interim for members to gather.

One thing is certain, they say: The church will stay together. Most of the parishioners go out to breakfast together at The Saddle after each week's service.

"We do a lot of laughing,"

said Virginia Conrad. "But behind the laughing is a lot of emotion."

Pierce, following the lead of his congregation, stays upbeat and focused on the positive, even when talking about moving from the beloved church.

"We're going to have the mother of all yard sales," Pierce said.

## Chocolate peppermint cookies are a holiday treat

By SARA MOULTON  
Associated Press

If, like me, you're a fan of dark chocolate peppermint bark at Christmastime, you're going to love these cookies. Your friends and family will, too. But you'll have to plan ahead because the batter is so soft it needs to chill overnight before scooping.

The main ingredient here is 1 1/2 pounds of chocolate, which guarantees an intensely chocolate-y flavor. The cookie's base is made of a combination of unsweetened and bittersweet chocolate. Afterward, additional chunks of the bittersweet chocolate — along with the crushed mint candy — are folded in.

The key to this recipe's success is good quality bittersweet chocolate — that is, a brand that contains at least 60 percent cacao. The higher the percentage of cacao in a chocolate bar, the darker and more intense the flavor. That's why we're adding chunks of chocolate instead of chocolate chips — bittersweet bar chocolate contains much more cacao than most chips.

Chopping the chocolate will take a little time. I recommend using a serrated knife for the job. As for crushing the peppermint candies, the best way is to put them in a re-sealable plastic bag and then gently whack away at the bag with a rolling pin. The easiest way to portion out the batter is with a 1-ounce ice-cream



Sara Moulton via AP

### Chocolate peppermint cookies.

scoop rather than a spoon — and it'll make the size of the cookies more consistent, too; just dip it in hot water between each scoop.

I suggest baking a single tray of cookies at a time because the cookies don't cook evenly when there's more than one tray. Finally, be careful not to overcook them. The cookies should be soft to the touch when you pull them out of the oven. That way they'll remain nice and gooey.

As you might imagine, these cookies are delicious year-round. If you decide to make them

during a season when peppermint candies are scarce, just leave them out and add 1 1/2 tablespoons of powdered espresso. You will end up with outstanding mocha cookies.

*Sara Moulton is host of public television's "Sara's Weeknight Meals." She was executive chef at Gourmet magazine for nearly 25 years and spent a decade hosting several Food Network shows, including "Cooking Live." Her latest cookbook is "HomeCooking 101."*

### Chocolate peppermint cookies

**Start to finish:** 1 hour and 45 minutes, plus 8 hours chilling time

**Servings:** Makes about 3 dozen cookies

- 1 pound bittersweet chocolate
- 4 ounces unsweetened chocolate
- 8 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into tablespoons
- 4 large eggs, at room temperature
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 60 grams (about 1/2 cup) all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon table salt
- 1 cup hard red-and-white peppermint candies

Coarsely chop one-half of the bittersweet chocolate and all of the unsweetened chocolate. In a medium metal bowl combine the coarsely chopped chocolates and the butter; set the bowl over a saucepan of barely simmering water, making sure the bottom of the bowl is not touching the water, and melt the mixture, stirring often. Remove from the heat as soon as all of the chocolate is just melted.

Meanwhile, in a medium bowl with electric beaters (or in a stand mixer), beat the eggs and sugar on medium speed until the mixture is very thick and pale, about 10 minutes.

Beat in the vanilla. In a small bowl sift together the flour, baking powder and salt.

Chop the remaining bittersweet chocolate into chocolate-chip size pieces. Chop or crush the peppermint candies into 1/4- to 1/2-inch pieces.

Fold the melted chocolate mixture into the egg mixture using a large rubber spatula. Add the flour mixture and fold it in until it is just incorporated. Add the chip-size bittersweet chocolate and the peppermint pieces and stir gently, just until incorporated. Cover and chill the mixture overnight.

Preheat the oven to 350 F. Line 3 large baking sheets with parchment paper, scoop out the batter into balls about 1 1/2-inches wide (the size of a walnut shell) and arrange them on the baking sheets, leaving an inch of space between them. Working with one sheet pan at a time, bake the cookies on the middle shelf of the oven for 9 to 11 minutes, until they are shiny on top and set around the edges but still soft to the touch on top. Let them sit on the sheet pans for 5 minutes and then transfer them to a rack to cool completely.

*Nutrition information per serving: 164 calories; 90 calories from fat; 10 g fat (6 g saturated; 0 g trans fats); 31 mg cholesterol; 32 mg sodium; 20 g carbohydrate; 2 g fiber; 14 g sugar; 3 g protein.*