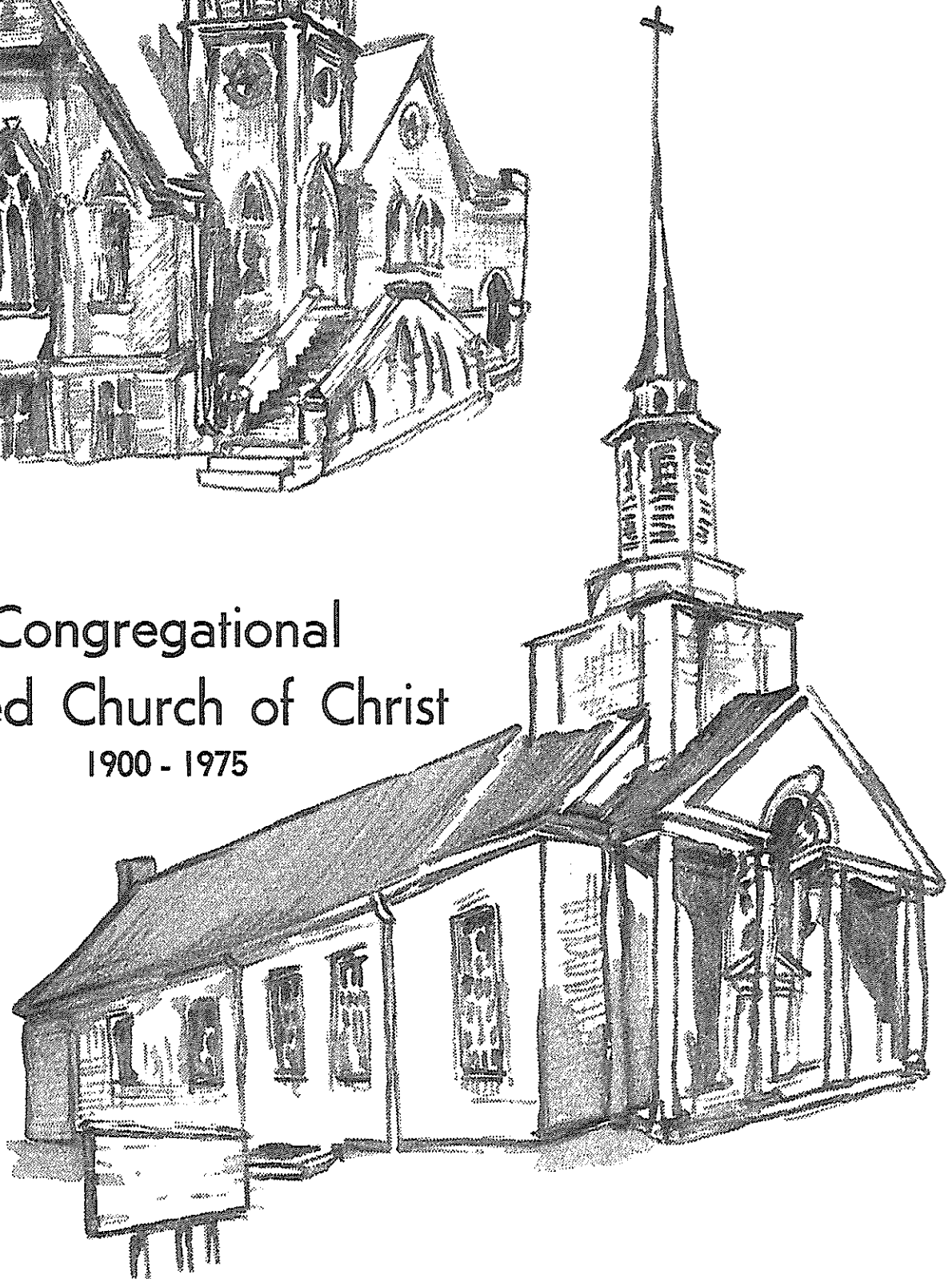


Our Church Home 1903-1952

Walker Ave. & Eugene St.

Congregational United Church of Christ 1900 - 1975



Our Church Home Today

400 Radiance
Dr.

THE FIRST 75 YEARS

The First Christian Church

1900

First Congregational Christian Church 1933

Congregational United Church of Christ 1963

This narrative history was written by John R. Foster, son of a charter member and an active layman who has been close to the church and its members all of his life. In the three-month labor of love, he personally interviewed more than 50 people and poured through countless documents. He even walked among a few gravestones in pursuit of names and dates.

He offers the following personal commentary: "The question which Pilate asked Jesus during his trial—"What Is Truth"—is the plea of every one who seeks historical fact and hopes to make an accurate account of things past. Frustrating, indeed, are the contradictions encountered, and the errors inadvertently spawned by oral recount and the inevitable imagination of humans. Even though sincere and sometimes laborious efforts were made to attain accuracy, there remains the inescapable fact that possibly as many things have been left out as have been included. The errors, whatever their number, are of the head and not the heart. Hopefully, this work will recall days past to stimulate our awareness of a greater future. For, as it has been written, "All our past acclaims our future."

"Almost every farmer is depressed; many are disheartened; labor is unremunerative; the value of land is depreciating, and there is a growing disposition to abandon the farm and seek other employment . . . The boasted progress and wealth in North Carolina is not shared by the farmers."—Report to the N.C. Legislature in 1889.

These conditions expedited the movement of population to the cities of North Carolina, including Greensboro. With most of these people came strong religious convictions and the desire for a community of houses of worship in which they could join together for spiritual expression. Also, their rural churches had provided a focal gathering place for social exchanges (perhaps even a bit of gossip).

Groups of specific denominations banded together and met separately since each had its own doctrinal precepts. It was not unusual for the groups which had church buildings to lend them to various congregations. Some of the first sessions of the Christian

denomination in Greensboro, for example, were held in the Quaker Meeting House located at that time at 115 East Lee Street. Likewise, some met in the Centenary Methodist Church on Arlington Street.

One of the charter members of Centenary, Mrs. Nell Glascock Rives, a charming and gracious lady of more than 90 years, chuckles as she tells of Sunday School meetings held in the afternoons being so well attended because, she says, there was nothing else to do on Sunday afternoons. It requires only elementary imagination to guess that the period following the afternoon devotions was frequently utilized for expressions of devotion of a more tangible nature. (The Townsend Buggy Company and a livery stable were in close proximity, and the rental charges were very modest.)

Appropriately enough, after the completion of our building on Walker Avenue, it was loaned to the Lutherans for worship while their structure was under construction in 1909.



Our Church Home 1903-1952

Walker Avenue at Eugene Street





Another View Of Original Building.

IN THE LATE 1890's the Home Mission Committee of the Christian denomination assigned The Rev. L. I. Cox to serve as pastor to an embryonic Greensboro church group as an outpost of the James O'Kelley branch of Christians. This denomination had originated in 1792 when O'Kelley rebelled against existing ecclesiastical methods.

The Rev. Mr. Cox was diligent in getting the people from Hines Chapel and several other rural chapels to band together and establish a cohesive organization. In 1899, at the urging of The Rev. Mr. Cox, a committee consisting of The Rev. J. W. Holt, S. A. Hollerman and H. V. Simpson appeared before the Home Missions Committee of the North Carolina and Virginia Conference of Christian Churches seeking admittance to that association. Their petition was favorably acted upon and officially accepted by the Conference at its meeting on January 8, 1900, held at Apple's Chapel in Guilford County.

The Rev. Mr. Cox was assigned to the pastorate. There is mounted on the southeast wall of our present church a bronze tablet commemorating his tenure. He had been instructed to spend one-fourth of his time with the Greensboro group at a salary of \$100 per year, but his efforts were well-received and he was asked to meet twice monthly with the people. (No mention is made of any adjustment of his compensation after he undertook the added assignment.) The progress was so effective that on June 3, 1900, almost exactly six months after entry into the Conference, the organizational meeting of our church was held.

The following persons composed the charter group. They were accepted in sequential order:

John W. Truitt, Henretta J. Truitt, Robert S. Petty, Nannie L. Petty, Effie Lowe, Nannie Truitt, Grace Ellington, J. P. McAdams, Jennie McAdams, L. M. Clymer, Anna I. Clymer, Ava Danely, G. W. Ellington, Mrs. G. W. Ellington, Luvenia Truitt, Mrs. G. J. McCanley, E. H. Holder, Mrs. F. H. Holder, C. E. Thomas, Robert Klapp, Mrs. Cora Anthony, Florence Lillard, R. E. Andrews, Mrs. R. E. Andrews.

These intrepid souls thus embarked on a venture that today is our religious heritage.

The Rev. Mr. Cox had made arrangements for the church to have a place for meeting. Minutes of the Greensboro Meeting of Friends (Quaker), January 4, 1900, state that The Rev. L. I. Cox of the Christian Church had made a request to use the meeting house for divine worship on afternoons of the first Sunday in each month, and that the request was granted provided he pay all expenses therewith. (Recognition is gratefully given to the excellent manner in which the Quakers have preserved their history.)

Shortly afterwards, August 5, 1900, Mrs. J. W. Angel and J. R. Truitt joined the newly organized Church, they being the first to do so since its charter. On November 4, 1900, Mrs. M. L. Truitt joined by profession of faith. At the close of its first year, the First Christian Church of Greensboro had a total of 27 members.

There is no charter member living today; the last was Miss Effie Lowe, who passed away on May 4, 1965. At present there are descendants of only two charter member families still active in the Church, these being the Clymer and Truitt clans. In attendance and participating in ceremonies at the time of the ground breaking for our present structure on Sunday, April 29, 1951, were Miss Effie Lowe, Mrs. Nannie Truitt Foster, Mrs. Grace Ellington Stewart and Mrs. Nannie L. Petty. A daughter of The Rev. Mr. Cox, Mrs. Mattie Cox Ward, is today an active member of our church.

Soon after the organization of the church, a lot at the corner of Walker Avenue and Eugene Street was purchased. A deed recorded in Book 124, page 658/659, in the Register of Deeds of Guilford County shows that a parcel of Land facing Walker Avenue, 75 feet wide with a depth of 120 feet on Eugene Street, was transferred to the North Carolina and Virginia Christian Conference. The grantors were R. S. Petty, N. L. Petty, L. M. Clymer and Anna I. Clymer. The indenture states: "That whereas the parties of the first part greatly desire to have a Christian Church in Greensboro and have procured the hereinafter described lot for that purpose . . ." This procedure was obviously necessary to obtain funds to

complete the purchase price of \$750. Payment in full was made November 17, 1900, two days before the deed was recorded.

* * *

THE FIRST regular quarterly conference of the Greensboro Church was held August 18, 1902. Eighteen members were present. The purpose of the conference was to consider matters of a business nature and also to establish and confirm policies of the Church.

The By-Laws stipulated that quarterly conferences should be held, and this practice continued for a number of years. The discussion at these conferences frequently became intense. Discipline was stern.

The early Quakers practiced a system which they referred to as "read out," which deprived a person of all privileges of worship. It is entirely conceivable that the local Christian discipline was influenced by their early association with the Quakers. The following resolution which was presented at a conference meeting apparently reflects the stern posture of some of the laity in the early 1900's:

One of the chief features of this church is an ardent desire to secure and propagate the fruits of the spirit, and to cultivate brotherly love. We therefore recommend that all things of a worldly character be looked upon as offensive and hurtful to the body, and in view of this we offer the following resolutions:

First, that if any member of this church shall be known to take strong drink as a beverage and shall persist in doing so, that his name shall be taken from the roll.

Second, that if any member of this church shall be known to play cards, play pool or gamble and shall persist in doing so, he shall be suspended until the church is satisfied that such a member has repented and ceased to engage in such things.

Third, that if any member of this church shall be known to dance and shall persist in doing that thing, such a member shall be suspended until confession is made to the church with a promise to dance no more.

R. S. Petty

G. W. Ellington

This particular resolution was tabled. It must be presumed that there could be no abridgement of the basic O'Kelley dogma emphasizing individual responsibility and accountability.

Several dismissals were made during this period due to various infractions, however. Mrs. Martha Mendenhall McLennan, who related many facts which she knew of the days when our group utilized the Quaker Meeting House, tells of the strict attitude of that group which "read out" anyone who violated any of their precepts. Rejection, once made, was not

easily overcome (as witness the repentance provisions in the Petty-Ellington resolution.)

Mrs. McLennan tells of the times when she coaxed some of the children of our families to attend the Sunday School of the Quakers when there were no conflicts. She tells of some of the outings which she and her father arranged. One of the most memorable of these was a train trip to Lynchburg, Va. Upon return to Greensboro, a terrible rainstorm was encountered. The approach to one of the bridges near Greensboro was completely inundated and the once jovial passengers had to wade through turbulent waters to reach safety. Fortunately, there were no casualties.

* * *

ON JANUARY 8, 1903, The Rev. L. F. Johnson became our first full-time minister, shortly before the completion of the building at Walker Avenue and Eugene Street.

The Building Committee, appointed in 1900 and composed of The Rev. L. I. Cox, L. M. Clymer, R. S. Petty, John W. Truitt and The Rev. J. W. Holt, had performed its task well and the Walker Avenue building was completed under the supervision of a church member, J. R. Truitt.

Three things then were significant because later events followed a similar pattern: (1) willingness to assume debt (2) establishment of building committees and/or steering committees, and (3) construction supervision under the control of one of its own members.

The "Opening Services" of the Greensboro Christian Church were held on Sunday, April 6, 1902. In accordance with the agreement with The Rev. Mr. Cox, the meeting was held in the Quaker Meeting located at 115 East Lee Street. This location later became the Jewish Synagogue. The fact that the meeting was held on the first Sunday and in the afternoon confirms the fact that the "Opening Service" was held at the Quaker location.

The "Programme" Part I notes that Sunday School was to have a lesson presentation of 30 minutes, following which there would be an "Explanation" of lesson chart by N. P. Lawrence. Part II was a 3:00 p.m. Church Service at which there was a "Reception of Members" followed by a "Sermon" by The Rev. Dr. J. U. Newman. Just prior to the benediction was the "Offertory" during which Miss Regina Williamson sang "Fear Not Ye, O Israel."

The order of service indicated that then, as now, the offering was timed so that all comers would have the opportunity to contribute, and after the sermon. Part III was a service at 7:30 P.M. The anthem was "The Strife Is O'er" and a hymn "Delay Not, Delay Not, O Sinner" preceded the sermon which was given by The Rev. J. W. Holt. The Elon College Church Choir furnished the music and the "Programme" notes that "A cordial invitation extended



Men Of Church Prepare To Seek Pledges For Building In 1949. They Stand On Steps Of Church At Eugene And Walker.

to every one" and states the hope that every member be present.

* * *

THE REV. L. F. JOHNSON ministered to a membership in a period during which indebtedness was curtailed and membership increased. The "First Christian Church of Greensboro" was flexing its spiritual muscles.

The fact that the Centenary Methodist group completed their new structure in 1908 at the corner of Asheboro and East Lee Streets suggests that our fine new church, completed in 1903, activated others to proceed to upgrade their facilities.

* * *

MANY CHURCHES in 1903 did not have central heating plants, and several records include reference to the wood that was needed for heating.

There had been in Greensboro in 1890 two Presbyterian, two Methodist, a Baptist, an Episcopal and a Catholic church. The period 1890-1900 does not seem to have been one during which many new churches were built.

From 1900 to 1910 several other new churches were built. The First Christian (ours) was one of the first to be completed in 1903. Our minister in 1905, The Rev. L. F. Johnson, gave active support in the organization of the Palm Street Christian

Church to serve the people in the northern part of the city, which was then known as McAdoo Heights.

The Rev. Mr. Johnson continued his pastorate until 1909, when on March 1 he was succeeded by The Rev. J. W. Bolton. During the Bolton pastorate, on June 1, 1909, our first building was dedicated. The dedication service was conducted by The Rev. J. O. Atkinson and W. W. Staley.

Following The Rev. Mr. Bolton on February 12, 1911, came a young minister, The Rev. L. E. Smith. He was only able to serve for a short period since he wished to complete his doctoral studies, but there were things of importance to be recorded. The Rev. Mr. Smith was married October, 1911, and Mrs. Smith organized the first Women's Missionary Society on Jan. 24, 1912.

Mrs. Martha Mendenhall McLennan recalls the many times that she and her future husband attended services conducted by The Rev. Mr. Smith. She does not, however, credit him with rendering any assistance to Cupid, since her wedding followed that of the Smiths by only a short period of time. The Smiths actually returned early from their honeymoon in order that The Rev. Mr. Smith might be in the McLennan bridal party on November 2, 1911. In September, 1912, The Rev. Mr. Smith left to resume his study, later to become president of Elon College.



Dr. Wisseman With Four Charter Members At Ground-Breaking For New Church: Mrs. Grace Stewart, Mrs. J. R. Foster, Miss Effie Lowe, Mrs. R. S. Petty. April 29, 1951.



More Ground-Breaking: John R. Foster, J. Hinton Rountree, Dr. L. E. Smith, N. Carl Monroe, Dr. W. E. Wisseman, William Truitt, Dr. W. T. Scott, Mrs. H. G. Ballinger, Mrs. R. B. Kent, S. D. Scott. April 29, 1951

From 1913 until 1914 The Rev. Hersey E. Rountree served as minister. In 1914 the ominous clouds of war hovered over America. Since The Rev. Mr. Rountree was in the Navy Reserve force, he was called into service.

(Our Church has had two ministers who have been Navy chaplains. Our present minister, Dr. E. O. Floyd, is a captain in the Navy Reserve Chaplain Corps. When Dr. Floyd checked the Navy records, he found that The Rev. Mr. Rountree served in the Navy until 1940, and that he had been the only chaplain in the Navy of the Christian denomination.)

* * *

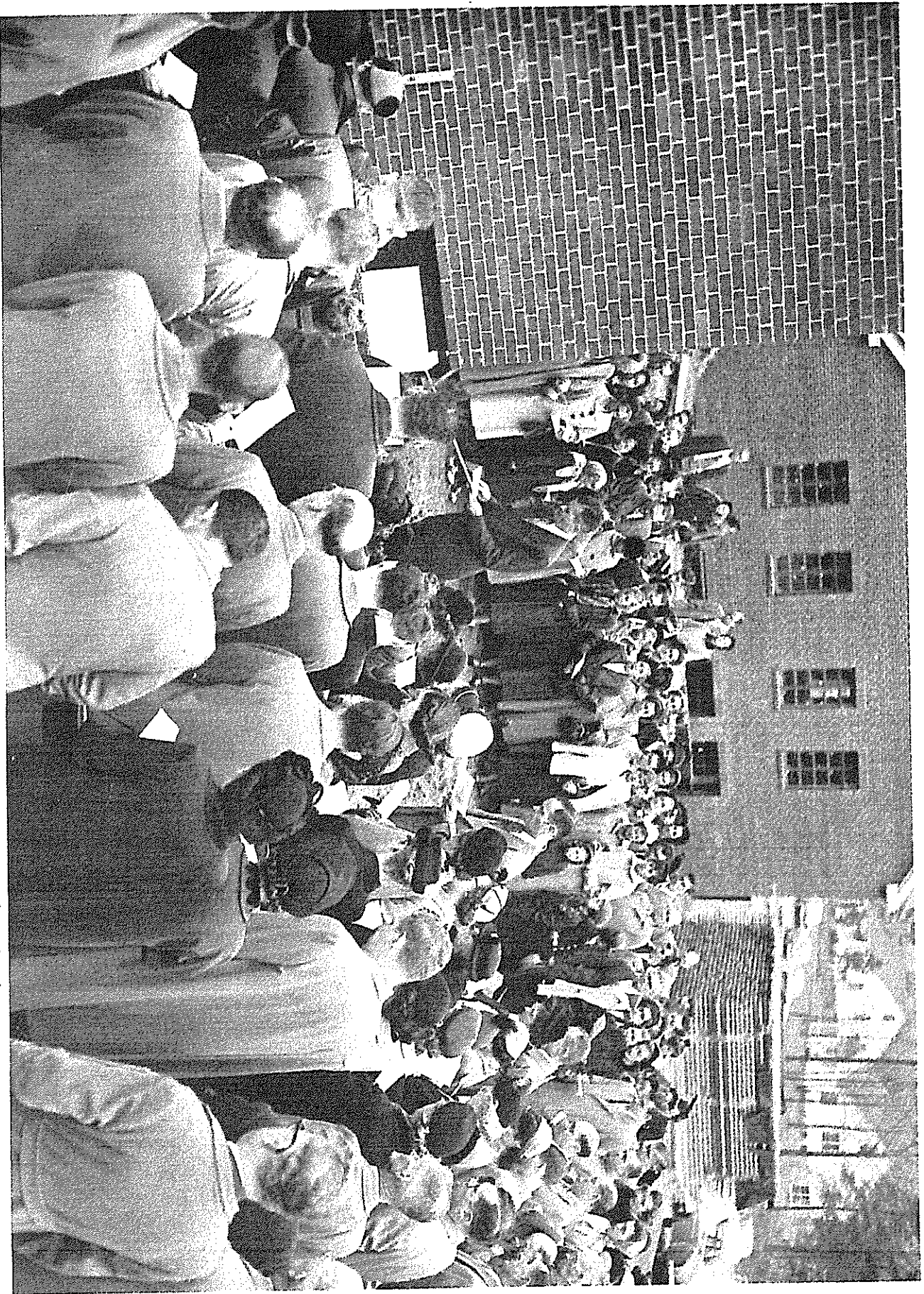
ON NOVEMBER 1, 1914, The Rev. P. H. Fleming became our pastor. In the first Quarterly Conference of the Greensboro Christian Church following prayer service on Wednesday evening, February 17, 1915, The Rev. Mr. Fleming made a comprehensive report:

"Since Conference November 17-19, 1914, I have preached 43 times; conducted 12 prayer meetings, two funerals; married two couples; received into the

Church 15 members and made 187 Pastoral calls."

In this same report the pastor stated that one of the crying needs was a parsonage, and if building one is not possible at present (1914), then an allowance to cover rental costs should be made. S. A. Caveness, C. A. Hines, and L. M. Clymer were appointed as a committee to meet with three women to be appointed by the Ladies Aid Society and work out the solution to the housing problem. This same report suggested that a "Young Peoples Society of Christian Endeavor" be organized and that a copy of the denominational paper, the "Christian Sun," be sent to every family in the membership.

The pastor's annual salary for the fiscal year ending October 31, 1915, was \$1225. The organist was paid \$130; the janitor \$123.50. After his reelection to the pastorate in August, 1916, The Rev. Mr. Fleming's salary was increased to \$1,500 per year. In one of the first annual reports, he made a statement which is almost prophetic as we observe our 75th anniversary and look to our future with great hope and high anticipation. He wrote: "We are on the eve of a great awakening in our Church



Cornerstone Laying For New Church: Dr. Wisseman Presides. 1951.

...” Now, 60 years later, we have the same conviction.

The request of The Rev. Mr. Fleming for youth activities materialized: “The Christian Endeavor Society wishes to report that they organized February 20, 1916. We hold our regular meetings each Sunday at 6:45 and have monthly business and social meetings and six honorary members . . . Our 1916 subscription to the advancement of Christian Endeavors in North Carolina is \$6.00. (signed) Nellie Fleming—President C. E., Lois Petty—Secretary.” November 1, 1916.

* * *

AT THE THIRD Quarterly Conference of the church held August 1, 1917, a committee was appointed to investigate the estimated cost of putting in toilets and enlarging the pastor's study. At this same meeting the election of a pastor for the ensuing year was in order since this was stipulated in the by-laws. The vote by standing count was not unanimous, but “Brother S. D. Scott” was authorized to notify “Brother Fleming” of his “call” for another year.

At a special meeting held September 1, 1917, the project committee reported that the cost of brick work was estimated at \$100 and the plumbing at \$150. Authorization to proceed on this basis was given. In the meeting of October 3, 1917, Dr. Fleming requested that the church telephone be trans-

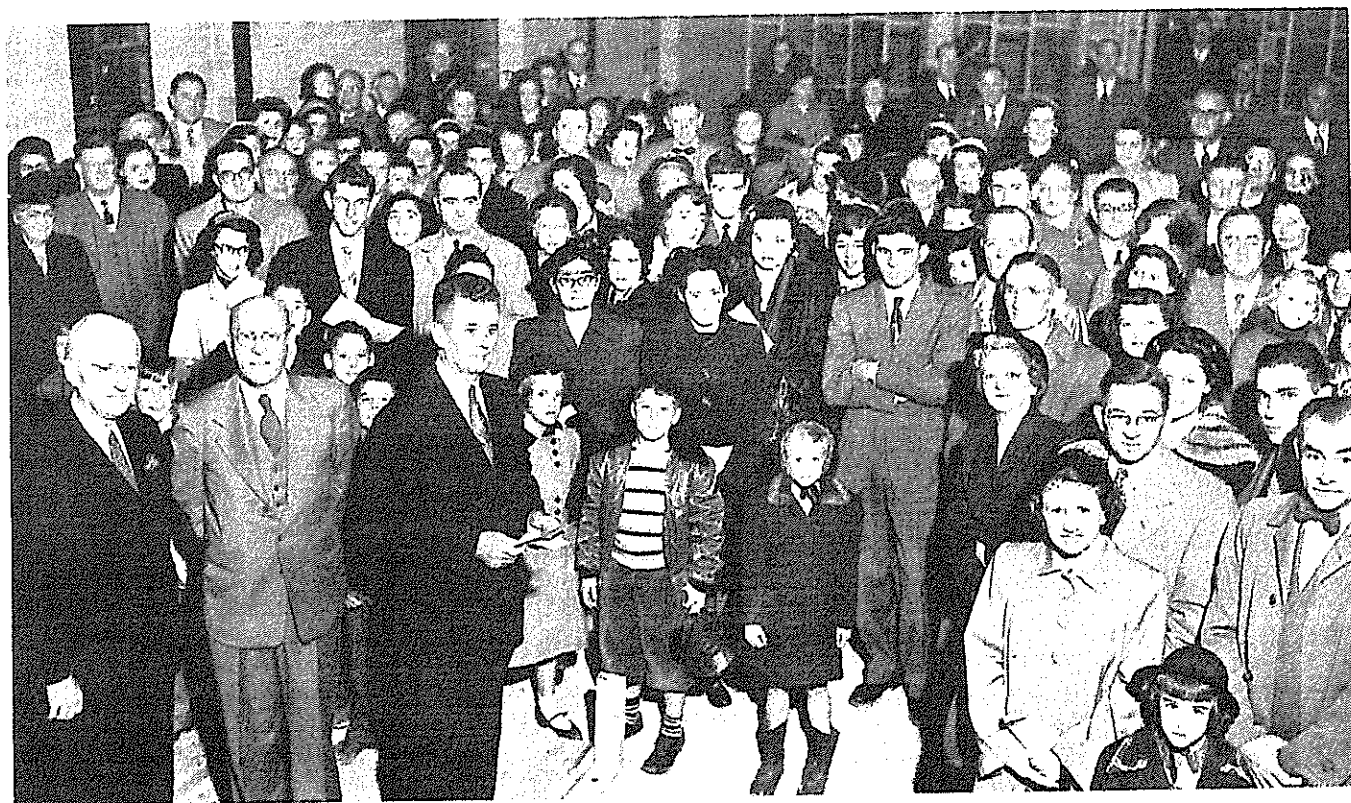
ferred from his home to the church office. J. E. Murray was elected Treasurer, succeeding S. A. Caveness.

The following special pledges were made contingent upon the balance being raised by the congregation: R. S. Petty \$20, Dr. Fleming \$25, S. A. Caveness \$50, L. M. Clymer \$50, J. R. Foster \$50, and C. A. Hines \$50; a total of \$245, leaving a balance of \$355 to be raised in order to eliminate the need to borrow \$600 from the bank. The bank obligation required interest payment of \$29 per year.

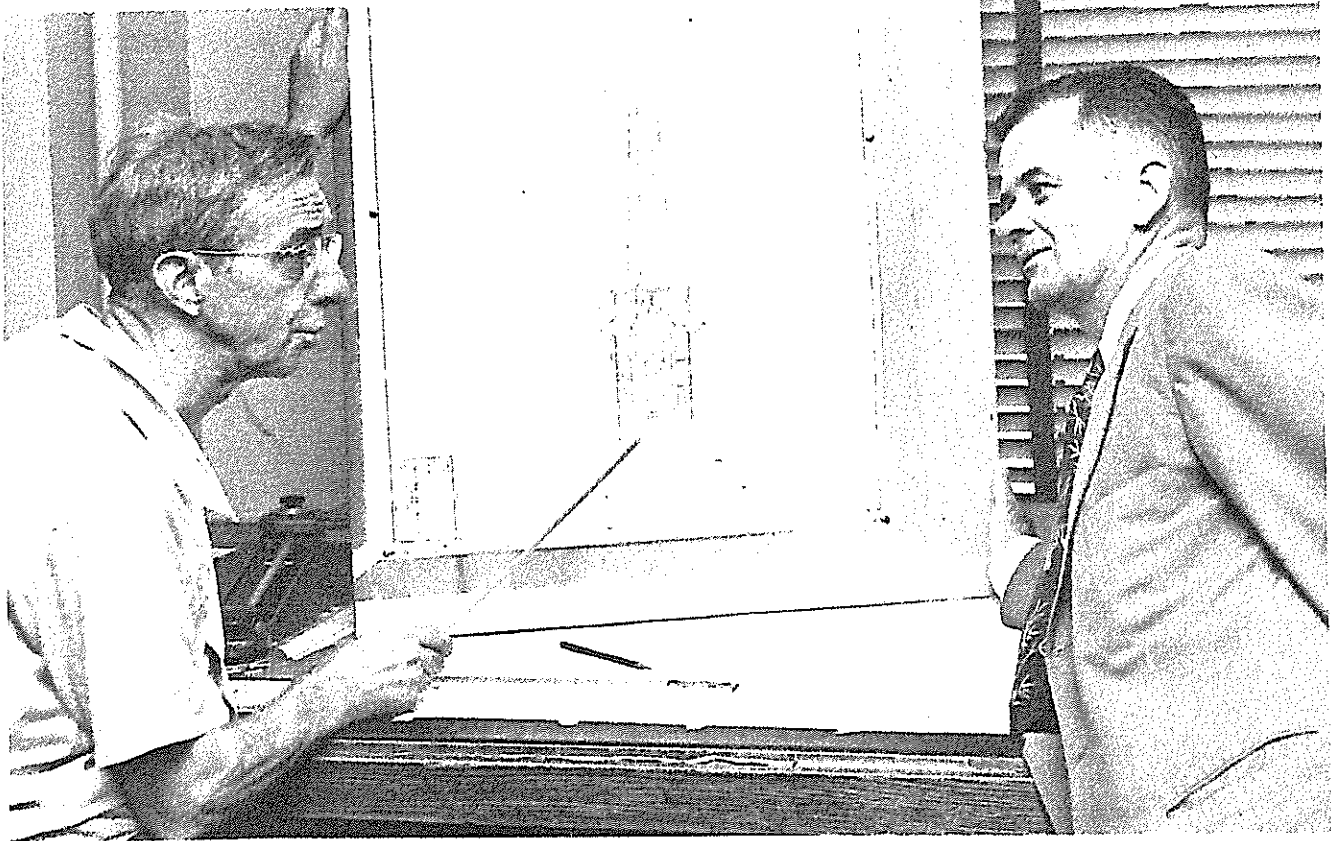
During the period of the late teens and early 1920's, a considerable amount of time and money was required for local charitable relief. There was, of course, no elaborate governmental provision and only a minimal agency for welfare in the local government. Several references are made to efforts being made to obtain relief for the needy from the county, but with very little success.

At the close of the fiscal year ending October, 1917, the relief fund showed a balance of only \$4.10 and the general treasury had a balance of just \$12.14. The challenge donations previously pledged were of no avail since the requirement of the congregation's part was not met.

Accordingly, borrowing was the only solution and \$600 was borrowed from the Greensboro Loan & Trust Company (and indeed they had trust in this case).



Inside Ceremonies On Cornerstone-Laying Day. 1951.



W. B. Truitt, Who Designed Our Church Steeple, Shows Drawing To Dr. Wisseman.

BY A VOTE taken at a meeting held each year for the purpose of electing the minister for the ensuing year, the vote was 10 to retain The Rev. Mr. Fleming and 6 against. This action was in the record and no doubt weighed heavily in the decision of Dr. Fleming to submit his resignation on July 7, 1918, to become effective July 15, 1918.

It became necessary to arrange for services pending the arrival of a new pastor. Sunday night services were suspended. A proposal was made that The Rev. B. F. Black be contacted and offered the pastorate at the next N. C.-Va. Conference, or sooner if possible. Proposed salary was \$1,800 per year. The effort to obtain The Rev. Mr. Black was unsuccessful and various ministers filled the pulpit in the interim. The Rev. Mr. Fleming preached several times and Dr. J. O. Atkinson and The Rev. J. W. Patton filled in until The Rev. J. Vincent Knight was secured. He began his pastoral duties on November 20, 1918.

The Rev. Mr. Knight noted in his first report covering the period from November 20, 1918, to January 30, 1919, that he had been quite active—preached 12 sermons. He stated that his salary had been received in full to January 1, 1919.

Mrs. Bernice Robbins Scott smiles as she recalls

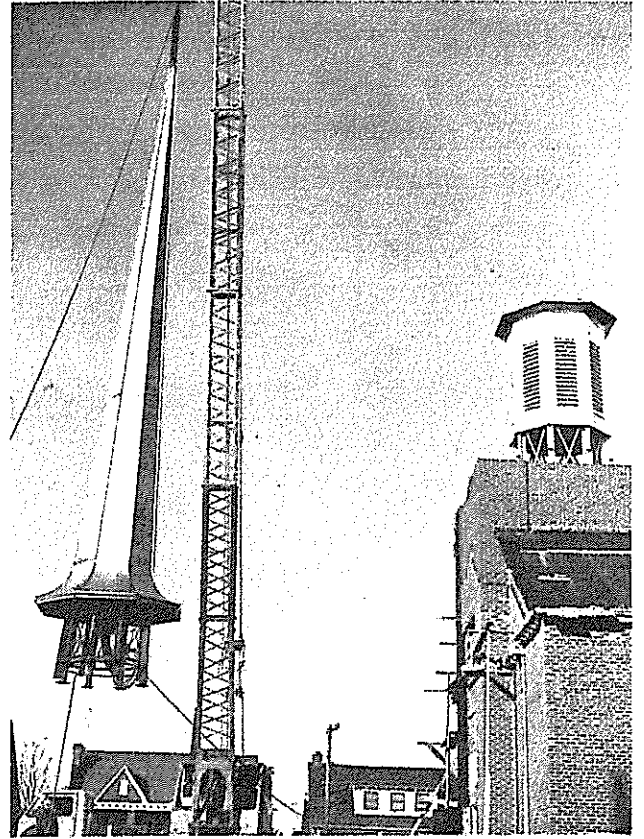
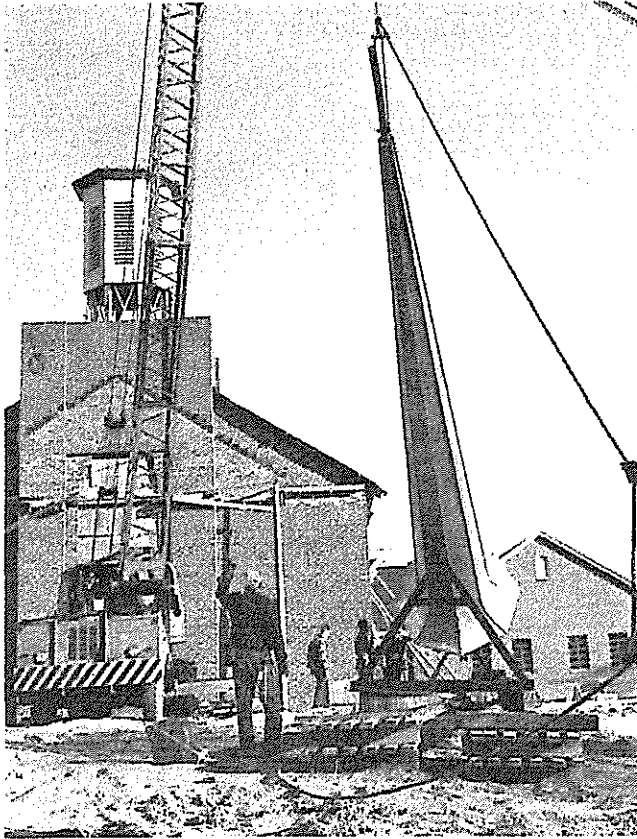
coming to Greensboro from Hines Chapel as the bride of S. D. Scott. She speaks highly of the work of The Rev. Mr. Knight during the devastating flu epidemic of 1918-19 and says that the pastor ministered to the stricken and became quite skilled at caring for the babies of the sick.

In July, the local church passed a resolution that suitable recommendation be made so that member William T. Scott could enter "Biblical Class" at the upcoming session of Elon College. Scott was to become the first minister from our congregation, later becoming Dr. William T. Scott, President of the Southern Convention.

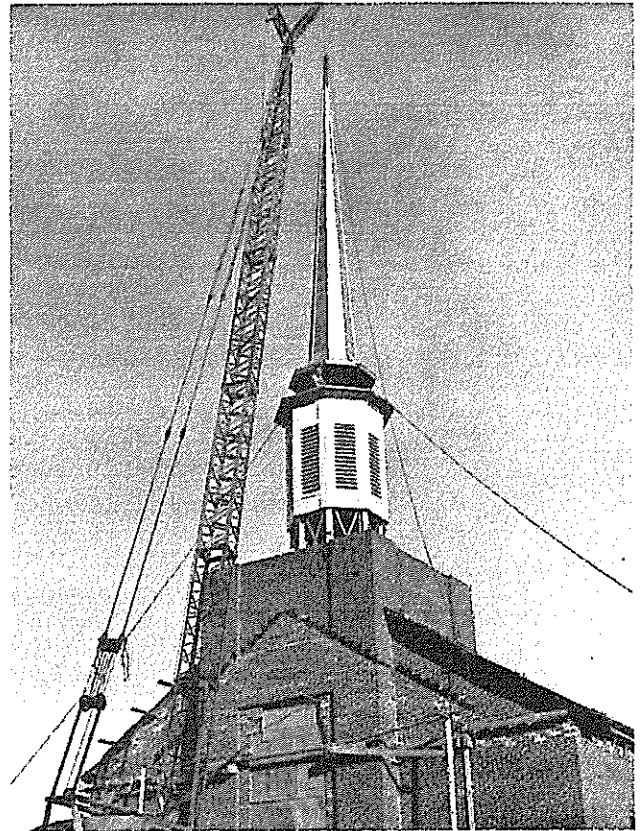
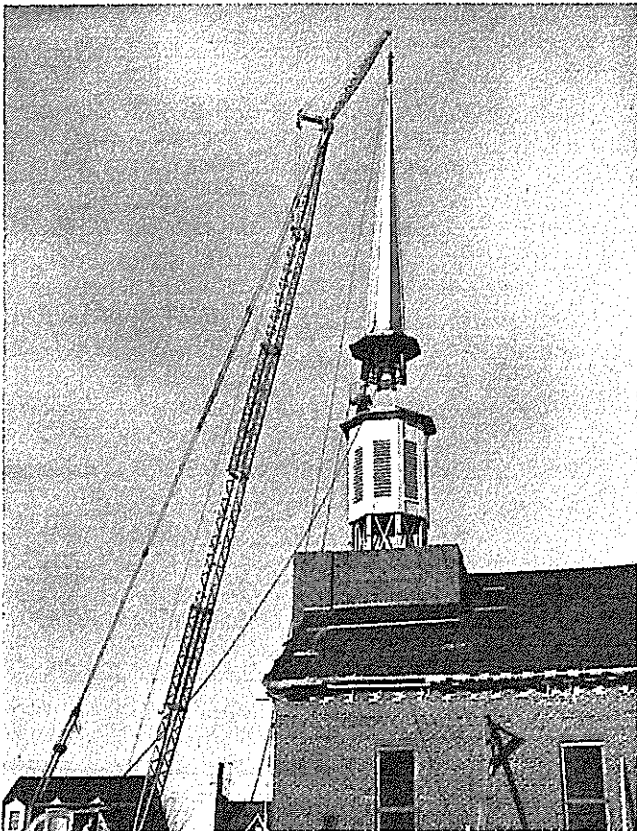
In 1919 one of the more substantial disbursements was made to cover a meeting conducted by the Berge sisters. Their rail fare was \$12. Mrs. S. A. Caveness was paid \$54 for boarding the ladies and \$225 was paid for their services.

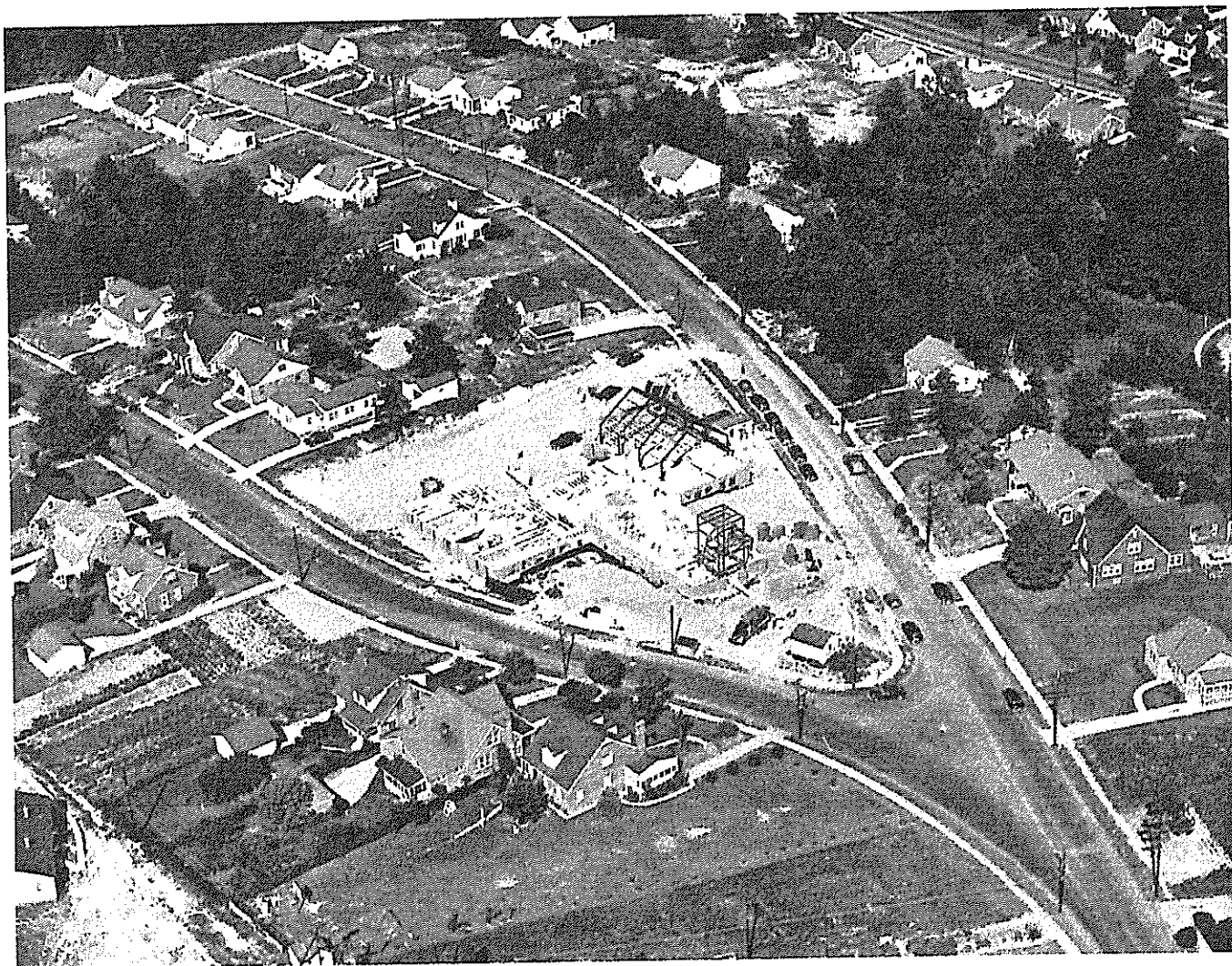
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EVEN THOUGH the bank balance was only \$21.60 on October 30, 1919, the local conference voted to purchase a lot at the northwest corner of the intersection of Blandwood and Washington streets for the church. Notes for \$8,000 were given as payment. Accordingly, a campaign was proposed to raise \$12,000 to pay the note, with the remaining



The Steeple Goes Up





Our Church Site From The Air As Building Rises In September, 1951.

\$4,000 to be used for "other purposes."

At the meeting of May 5, 1920, the resignation of the longtime secretary, L. M. Clymer, was tendered, but he was asked to make it effective at the end of the year. By a unanimous vote, Clymer was elected to be Honorary secretary of the First Christian Church for life.

A committee was appointed to "arrange and plan for a 20th anniversary of the Church." The committee was composed of the "charter members now with us and including the pastor."

Three deacons were asked to confer with The Rev. Mr. Knight to ascertain if he would serve another year and "if he cannot to confer with other preachers" and report at the next quarterly meeting. In the meantime, a special meeting was called after the service on Sunday, June 6, 1920, at which time a motion was made that The Rev. Mr. Knight be called and the salary would be \$2,000 per year. The motion was duly seconded and carried.

However, The Rev. Mr. Knight did not see fit

to remain and arrangements had to be made again for interim ministers.

The treasurer's report of the Truitt Philathea Class for the period ended October 12, 1920, shows that \$50.04 was collected for "building and loan." A profit of \$60.41 was realized on the sale of candy and \$35.71 on the sale of Larkin goods (I still recall the odor of Larkin soap.) A special collection for a person in need amounted to \$38.

* * *

ON NOVEMBER 26, 1920, a motion was made that Dr. W. C. Wicker be sought and offered \$75 per month until the pulpit could be filled by a permanent minister. Dr. Wicker accepted and commuted from Elon College each Sunday to conduct services. He continued while the search for a replacement proceeded.

Sunday evening, March 20, 1921, a special meeting of the church was held to "invite Dr. Clem of Springfield, Ohio, to hold a 10-day series of meetings." On May 8, 1921, the pastoral committee made a report in which they recommended: "1—

That a call be extended to Dr. Russell Clem to assume the pastorate of the church as soon as he can arrange to do so. 2—That the call be made for an indefinite period with a stipulation that a 90-day notice must be given by either the pastor or the church if a change becomes desirable. 3—That a salary of \$3,000 per year be offered. 4—That Dr. Clem be asked to give his decision within two weeks time."

Dr. Clem accepted as of September 13, 1921, and shortly thereafter participated in a revival meeting for which he was paid \$200. The expenses for moving his family amounted to \$202.36.

On September 25, Dr. Clem called a special meeting of the men of the church at which the subject of finances was fully discussed. On October 13, 1921, a special meeting was called to approve the new constitution. One article in the document was opposed by a constant dissenter and the entire document was tabled until the next business meeting.

The regular quarterly meeting was held on November 2, 1921, and the "Constitution—Principles and Rules" was adopted with the request that 400 copies be printed. A resolution was adopted which stated: "That we hereby pledge our hearty support to our pastor; that we give our endorsement to the new Constitution and endeavor to regulate our conduct accordingly . . ." The treasurer's report showed a note payable of \$625 and a balance in the bank of \$177.24.

The year 1922 opened with vigor. John Parks reported on the Boy Scout movement and was asked to attend a Scout leaders' meeting to begin January 9. He also reported on the idea for a band, but no action was taken. Dr. Glen reported on the Father and Son movement, and it was voted to have a Father and Son banquet on February 10. F. M. Clements was chosen as "Master of Arrangements and Ceremonies." Dr. Clem earnestly asked for better church attendance.

In the meeting April 6, 1922, preparations were made for Easter services. Parks reported on the banquet and there was a rising vote of thanks for his efforts in its behalf. Ten people were assigned to raise \$50 to cover the probable cost of the upcoming banquet. During the quarter ended January 31, 1921, a contribution of \$300 was made to the orphanage but the salary of Dr. Clem was in arrears by \$233.50.

* * *

THE MEETING of May 1, 1922, was most important—the Sunday School had expanded to the point that there was no space available for further growth. Action was taken to go immediately into a permanent building program for a new Church. The resolution stated that only temporary quarters needed for expansion would be provided. The emphasis was on temporary since the proposed new

building would be designed to take care of all needs for space. The proposed program was approved 41 to 0 at a special congregational meeting held May 21, 1922.

Dark clouds appeared on the financial horizon at the meeting of June 15, 1922, however. At the end of May the salary of Dr. Clem was one full month delinquent. Dr. Wicker was still due a half month salary of \$37.50 and the bank note of \$625 remained open. Dr. Clem reported that William Clem had not been paid for serving one Sunday as supply pastor. A permit had been obtained for the erection of temporary quarters for the Sunday School.

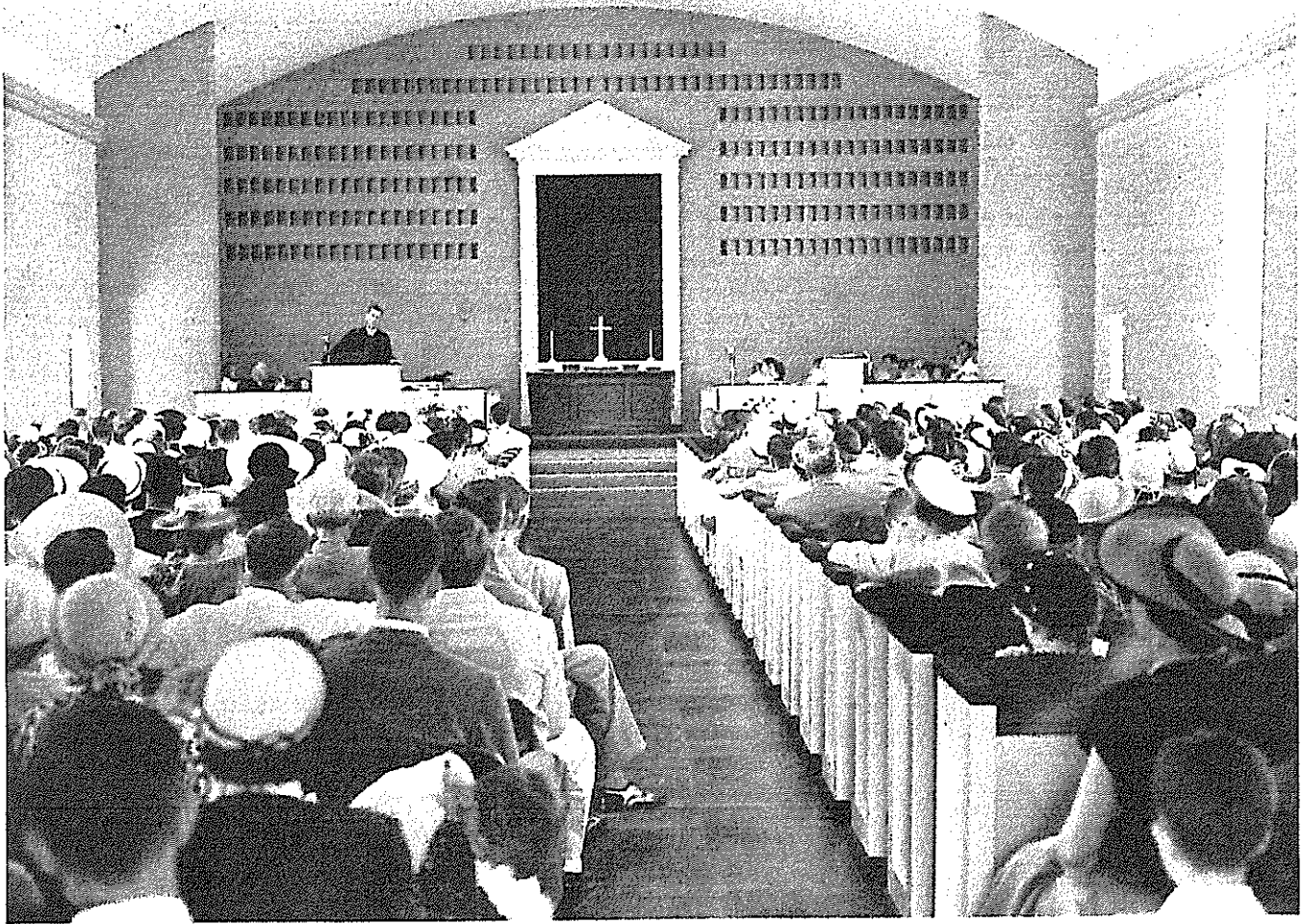
The once distant thunder became more audible by the time of the meeting of July 3, 1922. Fire-crackers couldn't wait another day. The financial report for the period ended June 30, 1922, showed cash on hand of \$3.59. Notwithstanding, Dr. Clem presented a proposal whereby "the undersigned agree to pay to the Building Committee or duly authorized agent for the purpose of erecting a church building . . . for a period of 6½ years the sum set out by our names for buying Building & Loan stock." After considerable discussion, the proposal was adopted. By virtue of a 60-day note of \$100, the bank balance had grown from \$3.59 to \$21.87 at August 1, 1922.

During this period a band was started. The instruments were furnished by the church. This venture was not successful and the instruments were returned to the custody of the church and the band sponsors were directed to make disposition of them.

If the action taken in June, 1923, had not been dated, it might easily be interpreted as June, 1975: "B. B. Phillips was instructed to see city authorities for parking relief around the church." Even though the church treasury did not reflect it, at least some of the members were sufficiently prosperous to own automobiles—the price of a Ford in 1923 was \$280.

A contract was let for construction of new Sunday School rooms—\$2,207.50 with pledges paid of \$1,788.50 and open pledges of \$329.50, leaving a balance of only \$89.50. This became known as "The Hut" and the name was quiet appropriate. There was a considerable amount of turbulence during this period, and Dr. Clem felt that construction of "The Hut" deprived the group which wanted to build a new church on Washington Street of their most potent contention; namely "The Hut" would provide much needed space for Sunday School classes.

This move prompted one of the trustees (R. S. Petty) who was active in the group advocating the building of a new church to resign his trusteeship. Actually, in his formal letter of resignation dated April 3, 1923, among other things Dr. Clem stated: "The building of The Hut has, I am afraid, so neutralized the sentiment for building that it will now be impossible to push the new building proposition."



First Service In New Building: June 22, 1952, Dr. Wisseman In Pulpit.

for some considerable time to come, even if the church could provide the financial strength."

In the meeting during which the trustee resignation was accepted ("after some discussion"), Dr. Clem announced that he contemplated resigning in the near future and offered to sell the church his residence at 410 North Mendenhall Street. The offer was refused. The fact that on October 1, 1923, there were three 90-day notes open at the bank, these being in amounts of \$875, \$500, and \$550 respectively, certainly indicates that the church was in no position to purchase Dr. Clem's residence.

* * *

IN THE SESSION of the congregation held on October 10, 1923, the Pastoral Committee presented a letter from Dr. C. H. Rowland indicating a favorable response to the proposition which had been submitted to him. The Treasurer's report of November, 1916, shows an item of \$153.40 paid for revival services and \$12 paid for board of Dr. C. H. Rowland. Obviously The Rev. Dr. Rowland ate fried chicken with some members of the church. A motion to call Dr. Rowland as pastor was passed with 44 voting

favorably. The stipend was fixed at \$3,000 per year and the church agreed to pay the expenses incurred in moving from Franklin, Va.

Dr. Rowland attended his first Board of Directors meeting February 4, 1924. To a man of lesser stature, it would have been extremely depressing to hear the first item on the agenda: a proposal that the church borrow \$14,000. This amount presumably would cover the balance due on the Washington Street lot; provide funds to purchase a lot for a parsonage and a residence for the new minister.

There were some who opposed, so that finally the amount was reduced to \$12,000, since this would leave the Washington Street land a separate transaction. Even though The Hut had relieved the space problem for additional classrooms, there remained a spark of hope for eventually building at this location. The pro-building group had gone so far as to seek release of the Walker Avenue church by the North Carolina Christian Conference.

In a letter dated November 27, 1922, the Executive Committee of the Conference authorized the "First Church of Greensboro" the mortgage or sell

the then present property on Walker Avenue provided the receipts be invested in a new structure which would be deeded to the Conference.

However, perhaps due to the fact that he had experienced the young-minister urge to build during his Virginia pastorate, coupled with his basic conviction that human souls are of greater importance than bricks and mortar, motivated Dr. Rowland to favor disposition of the land still heavily encumbered.

Living quarters for the Rowland family were found on Keogh Street (now Eugene Street). This was to serve until a parsonage could be built. J. R. Truitt resigned as a trustee in order that there would be no possible conflict of interest, since his firm had been engaged to construct an eight-room house on the recently purchased lot on Edgeworth Street. The cost was \$8,193. This action must have provided a single ray of encouragement in the morass of financial problems.

Yet another little glimmer showed on the drab horizon when the church-owned band instruments were sold. A credit for their purchase in the amount of \$250 was received. This, along with a personal note given by a member of the congregation for \$125, enabled the church to purchase a new piano. There would now be melodies in The Hut!

* * *

EVIDENCE OF the Rowland influence is significantly reflected in the second of the annual congregational meetings held October 8, 1924: offering for orphanage—\$339.50. It was noted that Dr. Rowland had been fittingly installed by Dr. J. O. Atkinson. The Hut had been built and paid for. A new parsonage had been built. The constitution and by-laws were revised and adopted without the slightest quibble.

For the first time in a long while there prevailed a spirit of exuberance. The end of the fiscal year, October 31, 1924, showed that the membership had grown to a total of 307 souls (117 male and 190 female). No reason was given for this segregated statistic! (and this before ERA!)

No doubt the fact that Dr. Rowland's report for the period February 1 to October 31, 1924, showed that he had made 750 visits contributed significantly to his acceptance by the membership. It was rumored that wagers were made to the effect that the tenure of Dr. Rowland would not last over a year. Supposedly, those were paid off in 1925.

The lot on Washington Street was offered for sale at a price of \$15,000 plus paving assessments. There were no takers even at base price less paving assessments. A wedge used to "sweeten" the loan incurred for this purchase was the life insurance policies taken on the lives of two of the younger members (cheaper premiums). (If we thought we were originating a new "sweetner" when negotiating to finance our present building, we did not realize

that our Christian progenitors had been several decades ahead of us.)

Default was made and the Washington Street project was abandoned, but not without repercussions. The keen insight and understanding of Dr. Rowland enabled him to ride out the resultant storm safely. His calmness infiltrated the entire congregation. Confidence was restored.

* * *

NO REFERENCE to Dr. Rowland would be complete without reference to his hunting and fishing expertise. He frequently took part in such activities with the members of his church. It was said that he could cast a fish lure 60 feet and hit within six inches of a predetermined spot. He could and did.

On one balmy afternoon he took one of the younger members fishing. He was very patient in his coaching in the art of fishing—the cast—the strike—the landing. The young student got a strike and started to reel in the catch. Just as the fish came up alongside the boat, it shook loose and escaped. As his heart sank, the student uttered what today would have been referred to as a mild "expletive deleted."

Dr. Rowland imperturbably continued to cast, appearing not to have heard anything. It was not long, however, before he repeated an instruction about "setting the hook" in order to land a strike. This incident was characteristic of the man. It did happen. I was the student!

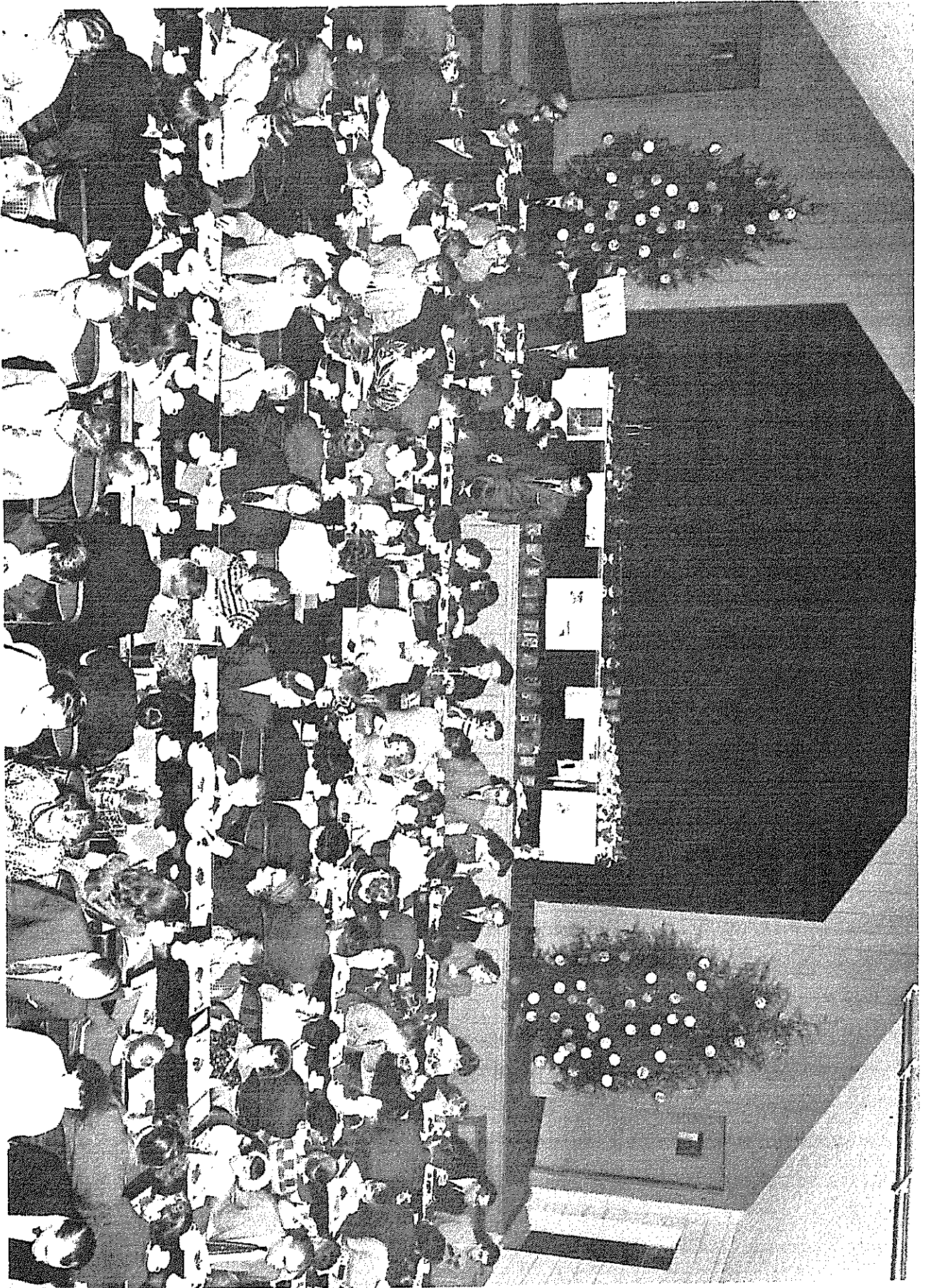
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SINCE THE principles of the denomination provide for optional baptism, there had been built in the basement of the Walker Avenue building a baptistry. The method of filling the pool was by water hose connected to the water faucet; the method of draining was by buckets handled by a brigade passing from person to person.

An entry in one report of the treasurer shows a disbursement of \$1.00 for cleaning the pool. The "do-it-yourself" by bucket brigade was cheaper. To descend into the pool there were three wooden steps. It was reported that on one occasion when the pool had not been activated for a long period of time the first step had accumulated a very slick coating, which was unnoticed by Dr. Rowland as he began his descent. The parson took an unscheduled dunking, which only temporarily upset his aplomb. He proceeded to complete the sacrament.

During the 11 years of Dr. Rowland's ministry, substantial progress was made. Shortly before his health forced his retirement, a cottage adjoining the church property was purchased for \$1,600. This space was needed to accommodate the expanding Sunday School attendance.

Dr. Rowland was made Pastor Emeritus and on October 13, 1935, his son-in-law, The Rev. W. E. Wisseman, became pastor and Graham Rowland



An Early Christmas Family In Our New Church Fellowship Hall. Circa 1957.



Dr. Wisseman And Pastor's Class, April 19, 1962.

Wisseman returned home. This team holds the record for length of service, as well as that of productive accomplishments.

Unquestionably, the gentle influence of Dr. Rowland lived on and continues today. (Daughters Margaret Rowland and Mrs. Birdie Garren are still active members of the church). Many of his years, particularly those of the early 1930's, had indeed been those that "try men's souls."

In Guilford County there was a period when no commercial banks existed—script was used as the medium of exchange. Dr. Rowland had voluntarily cut his salary by 20%. Even then he was fortunate if he received the reduced amount. Many members today remember the exigencies of this period. One present member recalls being assigned to make personal solicitation in an effort to raise funds. The response was sparse. The only satisfaction (if indeed it be such) was the fact that conditions were universally negative.

During this time The Rev. Billy Sunday was preaching against the "declining morals" of the period. Traditional pride and confidence in government and church were seriously eroded.

* * *

SOON THE REVIVAL custom was on the wane. A calm and sincere pattern of religious expression came into being. Dr. Rowland had built on

this foundation. He became Pastor Emeritus in 1935 and held this position until his death in 1938.

When The Rev. and Mrs. Wisseman came, encouraging improvement had taken place in the overall economic structure and the operation of the church no longer experienced the severe financial problems previously encountered, even though some persisted. The young couple resided in the parsonage occupied by the Rowlands. His stipend had been fixed at \$1,500 per annum.

In the spring of 1935 The Rev. Mr. Wisseman had conducted a series of meetings here and had favorably impressed the congregation, and he was called to succeed his father-in-law as pastor.

The protracted meetings no longer existed; the revival era was on the decline, but soon after The Rev. Mr. Wisseman resumed his duties the Dibbles—husband and wife team of evangelists—were engaged (similar to what we today refer to as a "mom and pop" operation). The husband's responsibility was in the area of song. He was assigned to live in the home of one of our members. Acoustics were not very efficient in those days. When the sound of a tenor voice warming up in the morning shower permeated the surroundings, a neighbor, unaware of its ecclesiastical origin, shouted with investive emphasis that the disturbance to his early morning sleep must



Kitchen Fun In The 50's: Wisseman Bible Class Cleans Up.

stop. No evidence is available as to whether the neighbor was ever converted.

The same gentleman announced as the coming attraction for the next evening there would be a duet sung by The Rev. Mr. Wisseman and himself. It mattered not that there was no preliminary practice—he sang so loud that any Wisseman effort was obliterated.

* * *

EARLIER MENTION was made of the baptistry located in the basement of the Walker Avenue church. The last sacrament in it was conducted by The Rev. Mr. Wisseman. The participants were Warren Matthews and his sister. (Dr. Warren Matthews participated in our 75th Anniversary observance as guest minister May 25, 1975).

The cottage adjoining The Hut had been purchased when The Rev. Mr. Wisseman arrived, and an office was set up for him. Weatherstripping was non-existent and this no doubt expedited the preparation of sermons. Also the terrain was not conducive to optimum drainage, and the fact that the flow of water off an elevated concrete driveway was diverted by a ditch digging neighbor created problems.

Cost of labor being what it was then (25¢ per hour) prohibited The Rev. Mr. Wisseman from engaging labor for contra-ditch digging, so he himself performed the job. It seemed, however, that the ditch would reappear shortly after each refill. Even

today reference to this impasse tenses the muscles of the minister.

What with ditch filling, firing stoves, and stoking the furnace, we look back with amazing adulation on anyone who endured this period under these conditions. As we shared space with the Lutherans in the early 1900s, we shared a janitor as an economy measure in the 1930s. Stokers were not available but plenty of clinkers were.

Despite the physical imperfections in the plant, the membership grew. The fact that it did so is an indelible tribute to Bill and Graham Wisseman. Their untiring energies both for the church and the community were unexcelled.

Soon growth pains were felt. Both plant and equipment were deteriorating—40 years had created a blighted area. No longer were dreams of a new church silent vapors of hope. Action was demanded—the people joined without delay or dissent. United we would succeed! No campaign was ever more thoroughly and effectively planned and executed.

On February 1, 1947, the first meeting of the strategy committee was held. Some referred to it as the steering committee, but this was more—not for window dressing but for action! At this meeting Dr. Wisseman just happened to have with him a map which had been marked to indicate the distribution of our church membership throughout the city. He told of the visit he had with William K. Newman of the Board of Home Missions. Newman's order lacked

any semblance of bureaucratic verbosity. It was: "Get out as soon as possible."

The main question then was where?

The distribution map showed no great concentration of membership. It was decided to pose the question to the members. The results:

94% voted for a site in northwest Greensboro

71% favored purchase of a lot immediately

89% were not too concerned about land cost

83% said "Let's go!"

At the meeting May 17, 1947, it was reported that seven lots at the convergence of East and West Radiance drives had been purchased at a cost of \$6,200. The final recommendation of the strategy group was that actual construction not be started until \$75,000 in cash was on deposit.

* * *

OTHER GROUPS had been busy, some devoting their energies to specific areas. It has been estimated that if all the Brunswick stew brewed for sale for the benefit of the organ fund were funneled into one liquid body, a small battleship could be floated thereon.

A letter to the membership went out on September 10, 1949, stating that Curtis R. Shumacher, a former banker who served full time with the Board of Home Missions in New York as financial advisor, would come to Greensboro to conduct a training session for a general canvas of the membership on Sunday, September 25, 1949. This letter was followed by Dr. Wisseman's of September 12, 1949, in

which he stated among other things: "May Sunday, September 25, be remembered as the dawn of a new day in the life of our church."

The agenda for this Sunday called for a group meeting with a picture of the canvassers to be taken at 1:50 p.m. As the group assembled, a neighborhood non-member friend of Dr. Wisseman's (and they were legion) summoned him across Walker Avenue to inquire about the unusual crowd on the church steps. When Dr. Wisseman started to explain, he was cut short when his friends handed him a \$1.00 bill and told him to get himself a double "shooter." Instead, that \$1.00 was included in the final count of the results of the canvass.

In the meantime another group had been engaged in the planning section and on March 23, 1950, the members were sent preliminary plans. Two other plans had been rejected primarily due to cost and unsuitable arrangement. The sketch submitted had an estimated cost of \$175,000. However, our member and contractor-to-be, Carl Monroe, assured us that it could be had for \$150,000 since some strong-back labor by church members, plus other considerations, could be expected. Members were asked to go over the proposed plan and promptly offer suggestions concerning them.

The returns reiterated the "Let's Go" spirit. A "full-speed-ahead — ignore the defeaters" spirit abounded. The campaign of September had produced \$56,468.14 with the assurance of a final count of \$60,000. With substantial agreement on the basic



Sunday School In The Old Church. Circa 1950.



Our Senior Choir On Easter Sunday Morning In 1953.

plans, the designer was instructed to proceed. Accordingly, the planning group which had so effectively performed was dissolved, and in November, 1950, a Building Committee was established.

In a letter dated December 26, 1950, the statement was made that there was no reason for anxiety about progress since planning is always ahead of financing. At that time some sub-grading and drainage work had been done. To the delight of some of the "defeaters" a super-flow spring was discovered directly under the northeast corner of the proposed structure. There was a note of caution that a possible building freeze by the government in early 1951 might be announced.

* * *

ON SUNDAY, April 29, 1951, a very happy group of Congregational Christians assembled on the site and four women who were charter members again participated in a landmark event in the life of the Greensboro congregation. A number of persons other than the membership attended, some even who 50 years earlier had loaned their meeting house—the Quakers, truly friends.

Few of those in attendance were aware of the maneuvers, financial, physical and otherwise, that had preceded this moment—and only a few who were aware of them were looking to the future with faith tempered by the harsh realities of finance. The statement included in a progress report of December 26, 1950, which said "... there seems to be a little alarm ... due to delinquency in planning, but planning is, and always has been, ahead of financing", was painfully prophetic. It might also have been stated that problems of soil and nature were unforeseeable; a stream traversing the rear portion of the lot joined with the springs to require up to 16 foot pilings to support the proposed building.

On Monday, April 30, 1951, men and ma-

chines appeared on the site. The first construction shack of the Monroe Construction Co. was planted at the apex of East and West Radiance. Incidentally, this original shack of 1951 vintage still stands on the lot of the construction company. Hopefully, its walls may never reveal some—maybe many—of the discussions which took place therein! The projection of 12 months for completion was only slightly amiss. Fourteen months were required.

The first basic plan was put out for bids. This design called for 23,794 square feet and the low bid was for \$302,000. Unquestionably, this was the lowest point of dejection in our entire 75 years to date. What had started out in 1948 to have a cost of \$140,000 had more than doubled. The situation was critical.

We lacked space in the Walker Avenue location. We lacked the money necessary even to begin building. Everywhere we looked something seemed to be lacking—that is, everywhere except in faith and determination.

Determination buoyed up our faith. Emergency sessions were called to examine every possible means of proceeding. Not realizing that a similar plan of life insurance funding had been used 50 years earlier, many members made commitments in order to secure some financing by Security Life and Trust. This company made a loan of \$90,000. The Board of Home Missions made a grant of \$10,000.

While the search for funds went on, other groups were intensifying their efforts. Those members with engineering adeptness revised plans and redesigned them to obtain maximum results with minimum cost. The men with less specialized skills soon developed expertise in the "pass the block line" wherein they would line up and pass concrete blocks to locations for use the next day. Thursday became the evening set aside for these more menial tasks.



*Dr. & Mrs. Wisseman, Mary and Rex
In Front Of Parsonage On West Greenway*

The labor dollars saved could never have matched the esprit de corps which developed among the men of the church. It founded the base for one of the greatest laymen's fellowships ever. We became, in effect, our own building contractor. Fortunate, indeed, we were to have our own member, Carl Monroe, available to be employed as superintendent. Strict business procedures were established and rigorously followed—a purchasing agent, controller, and other business offices were set up.

* * *

PERHAPS ONE of the most critical points evolved when it became painfully apparent that drastic decisions must be made to determine what part of the building would have to be deferred until

finances improved. To omit the west wing would permit the completion of the remainder of the building. A meeting was called after the Sunday morning service. The dilemma was presented to the congregation. There ensued a serious discussion pro and con. Everyone sensed the tension that always precedes disappointment and despair.

The deathly silence was broken when W. B. Truitt arose and delivered one of the most impassioned statements of Christian faith ever to be heard. This revived the determination to go all out for full completion as planned. At the time Dr. Wisseman was spending his vacation with his family in Dallas, Texas. Even today when he tells of the phone call he received on that Sunday afternoon telling him that construction would continue until full completion, his eyes gleam with expressive recollection of this happy day.

A committee of three had been selected to call on the New York office to seek additional funds from the Board of Home Missions. The most economical means of transportation at the time was by train. One of the solicitors recalls that the flip of a coin determined that his would be the upper berth, but the other two would double up in the lower.

An additional \$10,000 was obtained and this was consolidated into one \$20,000 obligation. The present (1975) balance of \$11,000 on this debt represents the total remaining indebtedness of the church on any capital investment.

When the first meeting in the new building was held, June 22, 1952, we were assembled in a building originally designed to contain 23,794 square feet and had a bid cost of \$302,000. But the original plan had been revised, the building now contained 27,790 square feet of floor space, and the total cost including the kitchen and the sanctuary pews totaled only \$290,000. The coherent perseverance of a devoutly determined people had completed a "once in a lifetime" experience—the building of a new church.

As completion of the structure approached, the bareness of the surrounding landscape stood in sharp contrast to the building. Church members who had expertise in horticulture were enlisted to tackle the problem. As is usually the case, with all of the scientific theorems came the need for the strong backs of the "pass the block line."

The specialists advocated the use of sawdust as a base for the rapid growth of grass. The order went out: "All strong backs meet Saturday afternoon for organizing a saw dust parade." We were going to the location of one of our member's saw mill where an accumulation of saw dust had built a mountain pile. It sounded so simple—a light material that could be loaded on trucks (of which we had an assortment) and swiftly transported the ap-

proximate 15 miles to be dumped on the area designated as the church lawn.

Simple, elementary. But just as the more eager began shoveling, word came down from the theorist command post that we were not to load dry sawdust, but must excavate down into the mountain until we reached the level of soggy, partly decayed material since the enrichment quality of the decaying product would expedite the growth of grass.

There are two substantial differences between the wet and the dry—weight and odor. When these two factors were combined inside a 40-foot trailer in which temperatures ran around 125 degrees, desire for a fine lawn evaporated in both mind and sweat.

There are some, even now nearly 25 years later, who still believe that there existed a conspiracy created from above as a reminder that conditions in Satan's domain were constantly similar to those which existed on the earth of Guilford County inside an enclosed trailer being loaded with steaming sawdust on a hot June Saturday.

Among the chiefs in this project was a super engineer who promptly buried one of the borrowed bulldozers and had to summon all the Indians to rescue man and machine. As darkness fell the last convoy of sawdust carriers departed, happy in the thought that someday maybe somebody would discover a better, lighter turf builder. Out of this project came a strengthening of the layman's fellowship—no greater bond can weld men together than

that experienced when men engage in a united effort to accomplish a specific goal.

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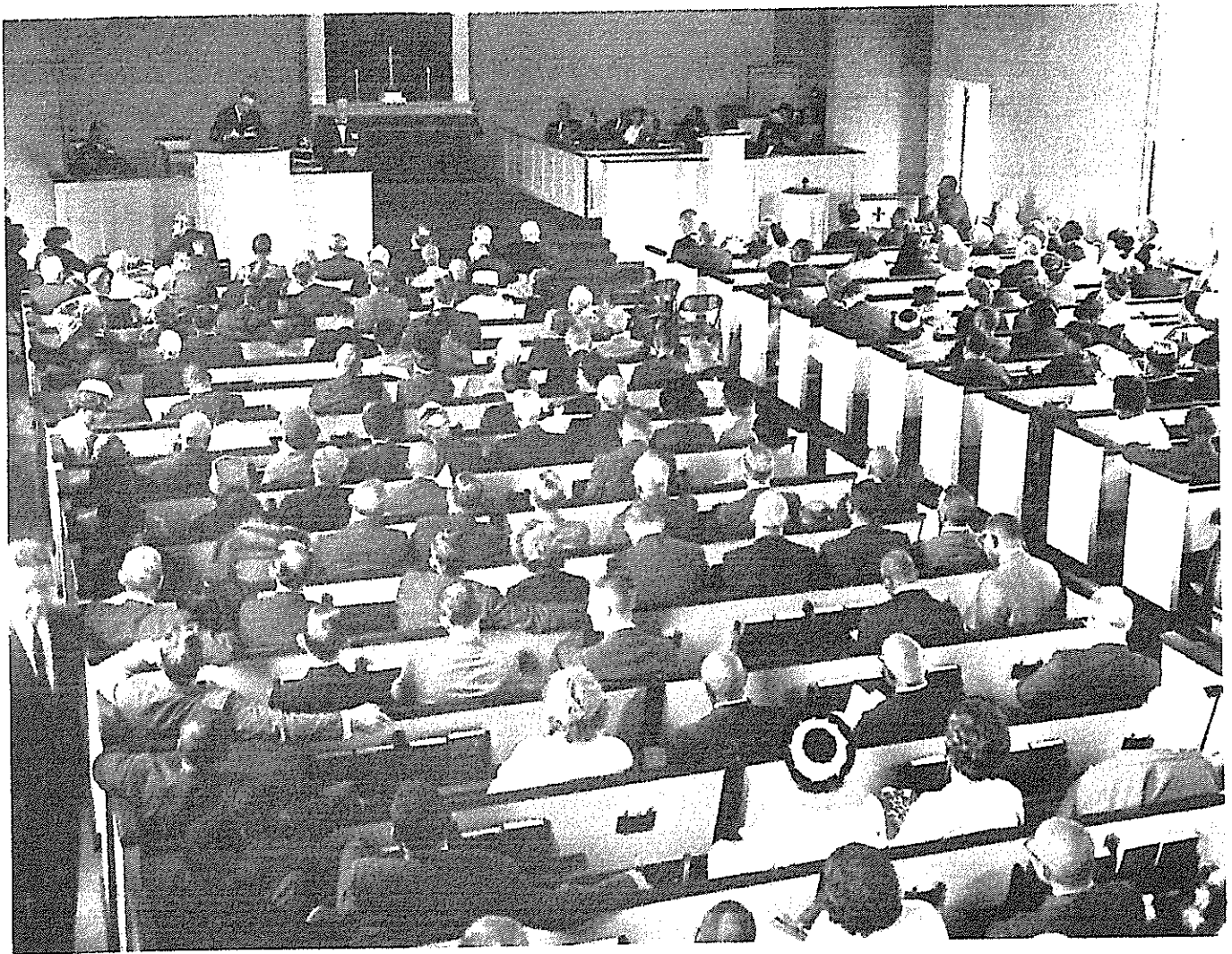
DURING THE 1950's we went through the usual "shake down" period. A leaky faucet brought complaint, and the B flat pipe on the organ was not fully reverberating, although the side walls of the sanctuary were purposely misaligned so the B flat and other tones would be faithfully projected to the new location, the members needed time to adapt to the new environment.

The fact that the church provided facilities for many community functions created an interest of solid proportion. A more heterogeneous group emerged providing a better balance of participation. The old order was changing but was calmly and serenely merging into the new. No reference was heard of the "good old times at Walker and Eugene." An era has passed. Boldly we had set out to meet the new. Today, in near proximity, there are six churches of varied denominations, which certainly is a tribute to those who selected and developed the present location.

The excitement created by the occupancy of a new Church had been so intense that it took a while to get back to reality—the realization that the Sunday of June 22, 1952, had been extremely hot. The need for air conditioning was a must. The nimble financial maneuvers had been extended just to attain completion of the basic structure. Further in-



A Man In The Nursery: James Crabtree And Children, 1957.



Organizational Meeting Of The Southern Conference Of The United Church Of Christ In Our Church November 16, 1964. Chairman Dr. Frank Hamilton Of Conference Steering Committee Is In The Pulpit.

debtedness was incurred to install air conditioning. For the first time in its existence the church had a complete facility—kitchen, Fellowship Hall, library, chapel, parlor, and adequate space for administrative and pastoral functions.

The laymen had been galvanized into a viable organization by their participation in the various jobs they had performed during construction. Practically every man could look around and see a concrete block or a brick he had handled—a blade of grass which must have been fed by a shovel of sawdust he had spread.

Indeed, there was in every one the pride of ownership—no individual, no group, no separate absentee owner, rather a place for all to come together for worship and fellowship.

* * *

ON SUNDAY, June 25, 1961, a completely reno-

vated and rebuilt organ was dedicated to honor Mrs. W. B. Truitt, who for so many years had held the position of organist.

During the year 1962, the church continued to be a gathering and meeting place not only for those groups immediately concerned with the purely religious functions. Boy Scouts and many other groups of community interest utilized the building.

The talk of consolidation which had been going on from time to time since early in the 1900's surfaced again. It appeared that the fusion of several denominational groups would be accomplished, which indeed it was. It has been said that the lettering on the outdoor identification plaque has been changed so many times that we are nearly ready to open a flea market for the sale of excess identification lettering.

The parking problem was accentuated by the

natural development in the area and further complicated by the traffic pattern which was created by street relocation. Several homes on East Radiance had been demolished to provide the necessary intersections into the outer loop highway. It became mandatory that additional parking area be provided. An alert member discovered that the North Carolina Highway Department had slipped over on a small portion of church property without benefit of prior agreement. After some discussion and a lot of wrangling, the state agreed to make concessions on the land across East Radiance and the site was designated for future parking space. Since this one lot was not sufficient to meet the parking need, negotiations began to obtain lots to the north of the first lot. Finally, after considerable negotiations, the necessary space for parking was acquired. In 1965 the parking area was paved—not completely adequate to solve the problem but certainly helpful.

It was also during 1965 that the Wissemans observed their 10th year living in the parsonage on West Greenway. Dr. Wisseman by this time had shoveled tons of coal, and it became evident that major repairs on the structure would soon be needed.

Early the next year (1966) Dr. Wisseman announced his intention to retire later that year, upon the occasion of his 65th birthday. By autumn the church's first pastoral committee in more than 40 years (no one could be found among the member-

ship who had served on one previously) had finished several months of difficult work and recommended the church call The Rev. Emmett O. Floyd from Windemere, Fla. He accepted and assumed the pulpit the first Sunday in the new year (1967).

The period during which Dr. Wisseman had served (1935-66) brought about much perplexity. His was a time (The Great Depression, World War II, The Cold War, Korea, Vietnam, et al) unparalleled in the history of the world. And an appraisal of the progress of our church in this era would be woefully lacking should the accomplishments of his wife and helpmate Graham Rowland Wisseman be overlooked. Indeed, here was a team in the truest sense. The contributions made by Graham at the local, state, national and international level of our denomination were innumerable.

The effectiveness of her work at the various levels brought not only honor to our church but meant much when we approached the national denomination for financial assistance in the building of our present structure. (While Graham was cementing relations at the upper denominational level, Bill and the lovable family collie Rex were "minding the store" at home.)

* * *

WHEN DR. WISSEMAN decided to retire, his decision was known to him and his family alone.



Dr. and Mrs. Floyd At Reception Honoring Them On The Occasion Of The 25th Anniversary of His Ordination, And His Earning Of A Doctorate, December, 1973.



Youth Choir Presenting "Once Upon A Christmas" In December, 1974.

He had not planned to announce his intentions until later in 1966, but unforeseen complications arose and he decided to make the announcement during the Easter Sunday service.

Ironically, the next thing in the order of worship following his emotional announcement was the "Halleluiah Chorus" by the choir—an appropriate anthem for the season but not for the immediate aftermath of such a shocker.

Quick thinking on the part of a choir member saved the day. He calmly stepped forward, announced to the congregation that they were not singing the "Halleluiah Chorus" to rejoice that Dr. Wisseman was going to retire, but in thanksgiving for his service. Everybody laughed and the Easter worship continued with as moving a rendition of this great anthem as has ever been sung in any church.

After The Rev. Mr. Floyd was installed in 1967, Dr. Wisseman succeeded to the position of Pastor Emeritus and continues to assist in pastoral duties in the 75th year of our church.

Two major structures honor the incomparable service of the Wissemans. One is the Wisseman Cottage at the Elon Home For Children which was financed by the church. The other is our chapel, which is officially named the "Wisseman Chapel." In addition, the membership of the church (and some non-member friends) joined together to build a retirement home for the Wissemans on a lot in the Pleasant Ridge community which they had bought years earlier.

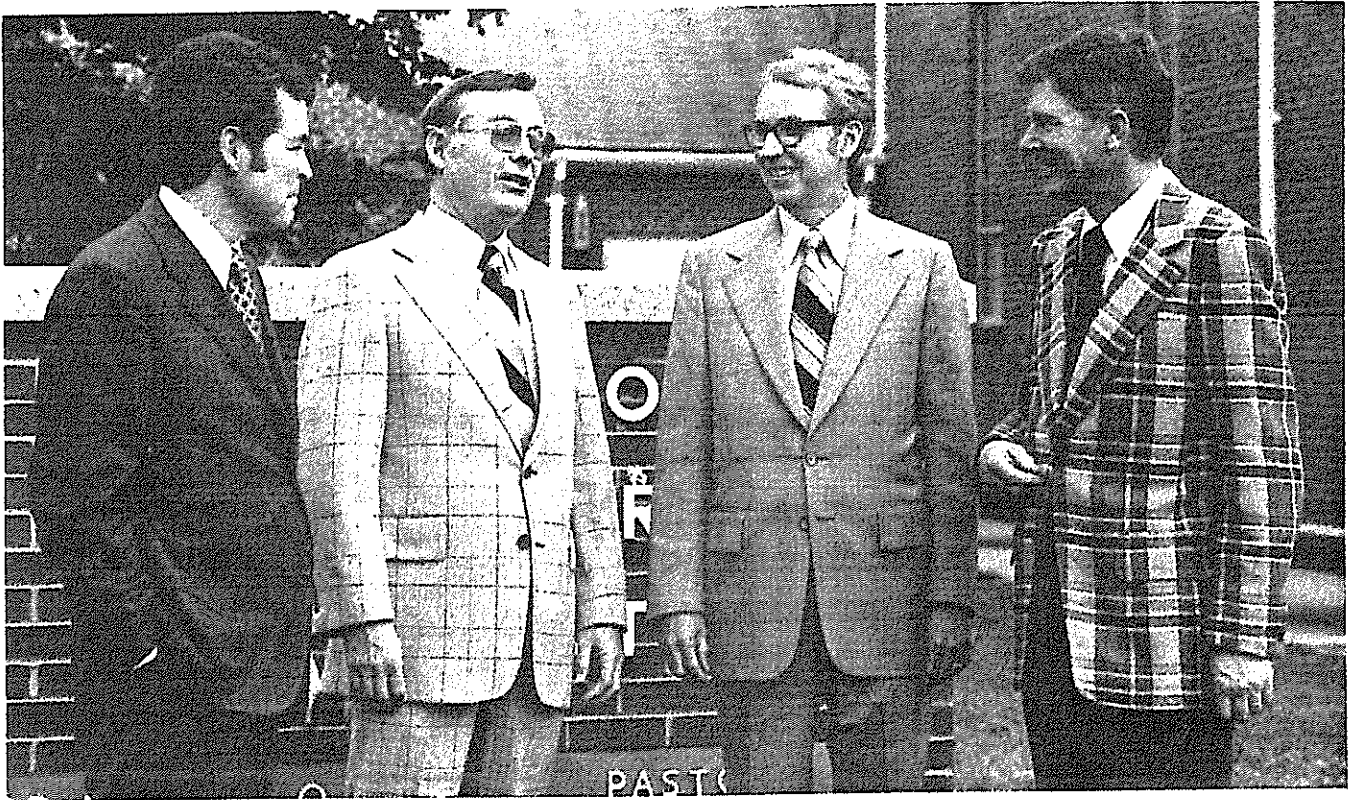
The years immediately following the completion of our new church on Radiance Drive were significant in many ways. A denomination which was simply the Christian Church had grown into the Congregational Christian Church through a merger in 1933, and in 1957 it became the United Church of Christ in a merger with the Evangelical and Reformed denomination.

It was about this same time that three personnel moves were made in our church that were to have long-lasting impact on the development of our total outreach as a congregation.

Donald Trexler, recognized as one of the area's leading teachers of choral music, was employed as director of music (his wife Ruth joined him on the staff as our organist). And a daughter of our church, Dorothy Ballinger, became church secretary and later religious education director. They have since celebrated a decade and a half of service with much honor and distinction.

The fall of 1964 found our church the scene of an historic occasion for the new denomination. The Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ officially came into being in a meeting in our church attended by nearly 1,000 delegates from the three judicatories combining to form the Conference—the old Southern Convention of Congregational Christian Churches (white), the Convention of the South of Congregational Christian Churches (black) and the Southern Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

Three years later we were host to the annual



Church Moderators Edwin Driver (1975), Roger Gibbs (1972-73-74), Bill Simpson (1970-71-72), Austin Lane (1968-69). Moderator Is A New Position Of Church Leadership Established in 1968.

meeting of the United Church Board for World Ministries.

* * *

WHEN IT BECAME known that our church had been designated as the location for the meeting of the UCC's Board for World Missions, an organization was established to make preparations. In a memo to the "task force" dated October 26, 1968, it was announced that a specialist from the home office in New York City would arrive November 6, 1968. A Control Room was set up, the purpose being to render information and assistance to the delegates. Preparations were thorough.

All members of the hostess platoon were given specific assignment. Presumably hoping to be fully prepared, a first-aid room was set up. Despite the meticulous preparations, there were two gentlemen who arrived on Sunday who were disappointed (of course, they were unaware of the first provision of the Petty-Ellington resolution) when the hostess was unable to provide the desired beverage to satisfy their thirst. The communications received after the conference were uniformly high in their praise and thanks, despite the fact that they were greeted by an early snow while on their sojourn in the "sunny South."

There were 1,763 meals served at our church during the five-day session in November, 1968. Even

though there was world-wide representation, this statistic indicates that there were no cannibalistic attendees. This event perhaps rates second only to the church building project as the apex of our first 75 years.

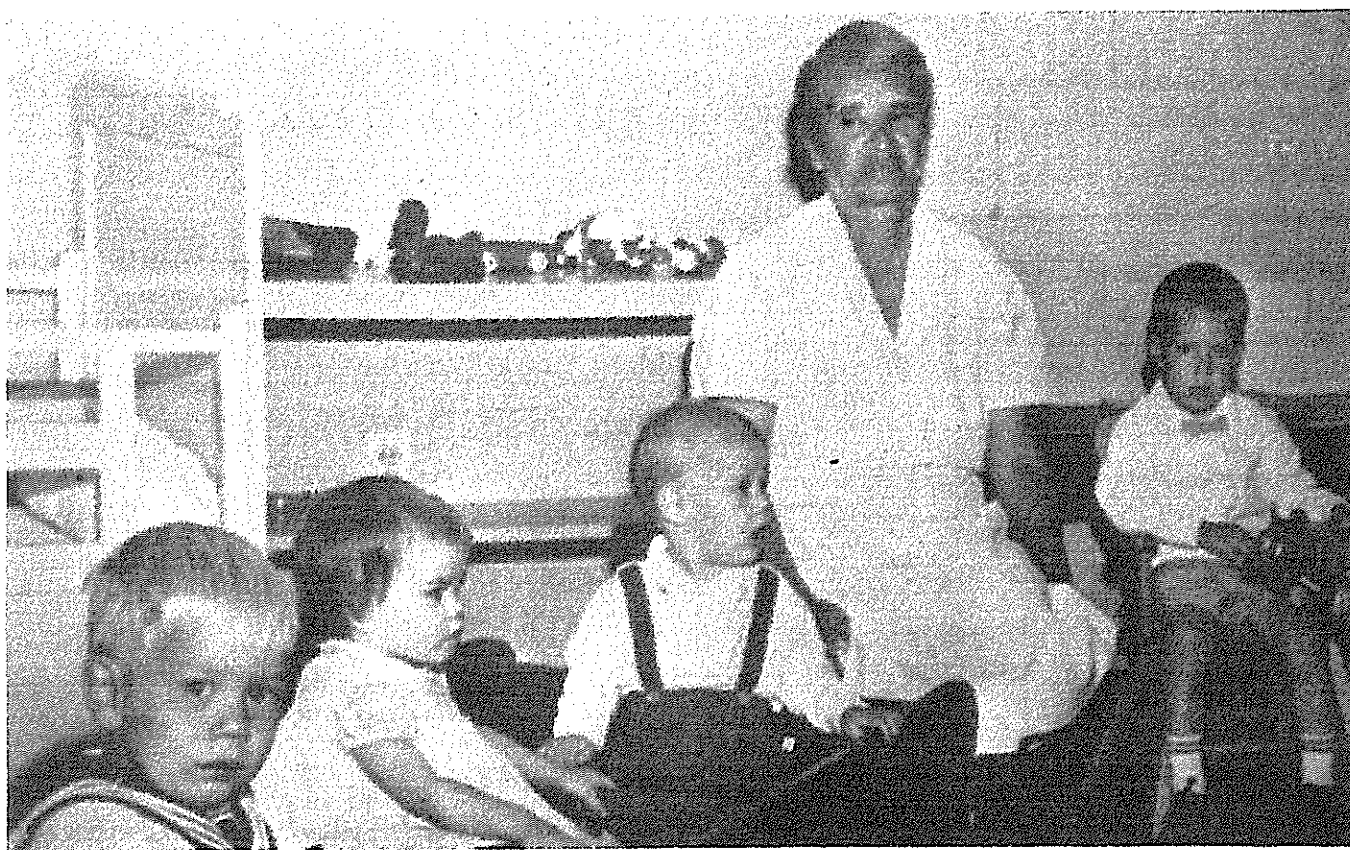
The History Committee reported that the *News Letter* started in 1953 was being bound in permanent volumes and noted that on December 31, 1968, the membership roll totaled 703. The budget submitted for the upcoming year was \$80,188.

A historical record of the church beginning with the year 1960 was completed in 1969 along with an updated list of gifts and donors. During the same year (1969) a new organ console was installed at a cost of \$6,350.

Another reminder of the past was created by the lending of our facility to the Christian Science congregation pending completion of their building on nearby Arden Place.

As we entered the new decade of the 1970's, the membership roll totaled 720. Financial support was indicative of tangible interest and concern since receipts averaged in excess of \$100 per year per member (minors included).

The Rev. Mr. Floyd and his wife Katherine quickly endeared themselves to a congregation that had known only two pastors in the previous four decades. He became a leader in the denomination



Nursery Scene: Mrs. Lucy Clyburn With Children.

both regionally and nationally, and through three summers of residence work at the San Francisco seminary and home study over a seven-year period obtained his doctorate. He also continued his work in the Navy Reserve, becoming the youngest man to reach the rank of captain in the Navy Reserve Chaplain Corps.

Dr. Floyd, following a national trend, also became interested in owning his own home, and by the end of 1973 the church reached a milestone—it was out of the parsonage business. It sold the West Greenway North house and put the pastor on an annual housing allowance.

Of no small coincidence was the fact that the home the Floyds purchased was that of the late Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Truitt, two of those whose love and labor within our church typify the spirit of our first 75 years.

* * *

THROUGHOUT ITS 75 years of existence, adaptability has been a sustaining factor of our church. As Tennyson wrote:

*"The old order changeth, yielding place
to new;
And God fulfills Himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt
the world."*

Many changes, many customs, some good, some bad, were encountered during the period starting in 1899. Only those of an indomitable spirit could have endured the dark periods of uncertainty—periods when no minister was permanently installed—when finances were intolerably discouraging—when facilities were grossly inadequate. The fact that some did so is a manifestation of a superior faith.

For the first time since its inception, the church became comfortably solvent in 1973. Incongruous as it may seem, can we not speculate as to what our situation might be today had the hardships of those earlier years not been endured? Times of almost constant financial difficulty — apathy — periods of ministerial inadequacy — personal animosities — seemed to have been ever present. Indeed, "God fulfills Himself in many ways."

As we look back upon these 75 years, let us not be lulled into complacency. The dangers inherent in the tranquility engendered by affluence can be greater than the hardships of years past.

It is now that we shall commence to formulate our history. Opportunities are without limit if we but seize them; let us nourish and develop them beyond the wildest dreams of those who launched the Greensboro congregation in the first year of this century.

Our Ministers 1900-1975



THE REVEREND L. I. COX
1899-1902

Lenneous Isaac Cox was born Nov. 20, 1868, in Randolph County, N. C., and reared on a farm in a home of religious surroundings. He united with the Pleasant Ridge Christian Church in Randolph County at the age of 13. He attended school at Fair Grove Academy. He was married to Mattie H. Craven on March 27, 1899. Called to the ministry after he was married and had three children, he moved to Elon College, N. C., in 1894, where he received the greater part of his education. He was licensed to preach by the Western North Carolina Conference of the Christian Church in Asheboro, N. C., in 1896, and was ordained an elder in 1898.

It is recorded that The Rev. Mr. Cox's power was in his consecration and earnestness as a gospel preacher, and in his tact as a church organizer and builder. During a quarter of a century in the ministry, he organized and built churches in New Lebanon, Greensboro, Reidsville, Monticello and Hope-dale, all in North Carolina. He was also president of his conference and mission secretary of the Home Mission Board of the North Carolina and Virginia Conference.

The Rev. Mr. Cox was in his 51st year when he died Sept. 5, 1919. At the time of his death he was serving New Lebanon, Mt. Bethel and Apple's Chapel churches, and was also executive secretary of the North Carolina Christian Conference, and treasurer of Elon College.

Dr. John G. Truitt, Elon College, N. C., said, "Rev. L. I. Cox had great influence on my becoming a minister." Dr. Truitt was a member of the Mt. Bethel Church while The Rev. Mr. Cox was pastor there.

It was said and written of The Rev. Mr. Cox, "He was a born executive, a man of keen insight and deliberative judgment. His counsel was always worth considering. His heart was a throb with the spirit of the Master and his energy was unbounded. He was a worker who never tired, a friend who never turned his back upon you. He was a preacher of the first magnitude, a business man of rare ability. He began life a poor boy and was a great admirer of the man who didn't mind work. He encouraged young men and women to get an education. He was intensely interested in the educational work of his town, both the college and the local school. He was a neighbor who neighbored, and a friend who befriended. He was a man of conviction of purpose that was definite and ever had his heart set upon a goal that was high. He was a man with the constructive mind, having always in mind the matter of building and building well. He was a champion of missions, a disciple of giving, a friend of education, a lover of that which is true and right and honorable and just."

Of the 11 children born to The Rev. and Mrs. L. I. Cox, a son and a daughter (now deceased) were members of the First Christian Church, and a daughter is a member of the present Church.

* * *

THE REV. L. F. JOHNSON, D. D.
1903-1908

L. Frank Johnson was born in 1876 in Wake County, N. C. He graduated from Elon College in 1902 and later received a Doctor of Divinity degree from the same institution. He attended Bible School in Chicago in 1906 and also Bible School in New York City in 1912. He was ordained in 1902.

Dr. Johnson built the Palm Street Christian Church in Greensboro in 1905. He also built a \$10,000 Sunday School building in Raleigh in 1912. He served the First Christian Church in Greensboro for six years, Raleigh Christian Church for five years, First Christian Church in Norfolk, Va., for several years, and other important pastorates.

He was founder and superintendent of Carversville Christian Orphanage, Carversville, Pa., in 1926. (Dr. L. E. Smith participated in the dedication program).

At the time of Dr. Johnson's death, he was pastor of several Presbyterian churches. He died at his home in Rutherford, N. J., Oct. 13, 1930. He was returned to Wake County for burial.

Dr. Johnson spent a busy and active life in the ministry, being a man of great energy and consecration, and a marked personality and power. He made a contribution to his day and generation.

He was married to Flora Long on Dec. 12, 1906. They had three sons: L. F., Jr., Horace Mann, and Victor Long Johnson.

* * *

THE REV. JOHN WESLEY BOLTON 1909-1910

Very little is known about John Wesley Bolton. He was a member of the Michigan Conference, president of the Conference, and pastor of the Britton Christian Church.

He was born in Indiana, January 20, 1849.

He came to Greensboro in 1909 to serve the First Christian Church for one year. However, he retained his standing in the Michigan Conference.

The Rev. Mr. Bolton died in Indiana on May 31, 1913.

* * *

THE REV. L. E. SMITH, D. D. 1911-1912

Leon Edgar Smith was born in Troup County, Ga., October 25, 1884. He was converted at the age of 17 and immediately felt the call to preach the Gospel. At the age of 19 he began preaching as a licentiate and was ordained in 1905.

He graduated from Elon College in 1910, serving the Graham, N. C., Christian Church half time during the four years in Elon and until November, 1910. At that time he received and accepted a call from the First Christian Church of Greensboro.

On October 18, 1911, Dr. Smith married Ella Brunk, whom he met while they were both students at Elon. Mrs. Smith is also a graduate of Elon.

Dr. Smith served the Greensboro Church until the fall of 1912, when he entered Princeton Theological Seminary. He graduated May 1, 1913, from the Seminary and received his Master of Arts degree from the University. While attending Princeton Seminary, he served a Presbyterian mission church in Trenton, N. J. He accepted a call from the Huntington Christian Church in Huntington, Ind., and began his pastorate about the middle of May, 1915, and served through 1918.

On January 16, 1919, he went to Norfolk, Va., where he served Third Christian Church until the summer of 1921, when he became pastor of Nor-



folk Christian Temple and served there until October, 1931. Christian Temple was composed of Old Providence, The Memorial Christian Temple, and The Third Christian churches.

After the combined churches were formed, the first service was held on October 1, 1921, in the Third Christian Church. In the summer of 1921, the name was changed to The Christian Temple and was one of the great churches of the Southern Convention.

Dr. Smith also served 10 years as president of the Convention. His successful pastorates and offices held in the Convention paved the way for his election to the Elon presidency in 1931 as the fifth president of the college. When he assumed the guidance of the debt-ridden college, during the depression years, he had an almost insurmountable task.

During his 26 years as president of Elon College, 1931-1957, endowment funds were increased, enrollment increased from 100 to 1,350, and a modern power plant, Memorial Gymnasium, McEwen Dining Hall, Virginia Hall, Carolina Hall, and other facilities were built. Another dormitory initiated by Dr. Smith and later completed under Dr. Earl Dancieley's administration was named the Leon Edgar Smith Hall.

The contributions of Dr. Smith to Elon College are beyond measure. Elon today is largely a monument to his efforts.

Mrs. Smith died March 16, 1965. She was a devoted wife of fine culture, and a wonderful helpmate for more than a half century. She is buried at Elon College Magnolia Cemetery. They had two children, Rebecca and L. E., Jr.

On September 3, 1966, Dr. Smith was married to Mrs. Muriel Coen Tuck of Virgilina, Va. They made their home both at Mrs. Smith's home in Virgilina and at Dr. Smith's home at Sylvan Beach, Bayside, Va.

Dr. Smith celebrated his 90th birthday Oct. 25, 1974, and died August 19, 1975.

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THE REV. H. E. P. ROUNTREE
1913-1914

Hersey E. P. Rountree was born October 12, 1880, at Cypress Chapel, Va. He always had a desire for an education, and an ambition to preach. His ambitions were not realized without struggles. His father was poor but Hersey was determined. In September, 1898, he entered Elon College with only \$25.00.

By the grace of Dr. and Mrs. W. T. Herndon, and the sacrifices of his mother and father, and the help of others, he graduated from Elon College in 1903, and immediately took charge of the Waverly, Va., pastorate. He served there for five years, during which time New Lebanon and Wakefield were added to this charge, and he remained four years longer. He was ordained at Holy Neck Christian Church in 1904.

In the meantime, The Rev. Mr. Rountree filled the office of teacher training superintendent of the State Sunday School Association. In 1912 he was called to the First Christian Church in Greensboro, where he served for 22 months. He was then called to take charge of the church in Portsmouth, Va., and served from 1914-1917. He also served Berea (Norfolk) Church.

In 1917 he became a Navy chaplain. He served as chaplain of Hoover's flagship in 1922, during the cruise known as "The Good Will Tour." The ship was the U. S. S. Utah. He retired in 1940. He was a writer, singer and Navy song leader.

He was married to the former Miss Anne Mau-dean of South Boston, Va. They had one son, H. Braxton, and one daughter, Virginia. He died in San Diego, Calif., November 16, 1942. He was the only minister of the Christian denomination ever to serve in the Navy Chaplain Corps.

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THE REV. P. H. FLEMING, D. D.
1915-1918

Patrick Henry Fleming was born on a farm in Warren County, N. C., August 3, 1862, and in early life became a member of the Christian Church. In 1882 he entered Graham Normal College and was graduated at the head of his class. He also studied at Antioch College, Ohio, and took post graduate work at Elon College where he received the degree of Master of Arts. In 1909 Union Christian College conferred upon him and the degree of Doctor of Divinity.

Among the churches served by Dr. Fleming were Graham and Burlington (N. C.) Christian churches, Greenville, O., Manchester, N. H., First Christian Church, Greensboro, plus High Point, Asheboro, Pleasant Hill, Haw River, Longs Chapel, and Union, all in North Carolina.

He was also active in educational work. He taught at Graham Normal College for two years; was Superintendent of Public Instruction of Alamance County for one year; Superintendent of the Burlington (N. C.) Graded Schools for one year, and for 12 years was a member of the Educational Board of the American Christian Convention. He was a trustee of Elon College and secretary of the board. He is the author of "Mother's Answered Prayer" among other published articles.

In 1889 Dr. Fleming married Miss Ella H. Sipe of Linville, Va. They had six children: John H., J. S., W. H., Nellie Sue, and twins J. Holt and H. Jennings Fleming.

Dr. Fleming died June 22, 1937, and is buried in Burlington, N. C.

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THE REV. J. VINCENT KNIGHT
1919-1920

J. Vincent Knight was born June 9, 1890 in Clayton County, Alabama. He graduated from Elon College in 1915. On July 26, 1920, he was married to Miss Ethel Hackaday. They had one daughter, Virginia Lee.

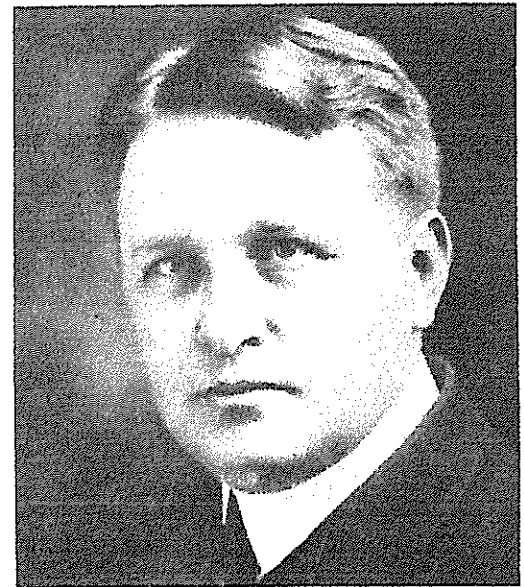
The Rev. Mr. Knight was pastor in Newport News, Va., Palm Street and First Christian Church, Greensboro, and was a student minister at Monti-

cello Christian Church while he was a student at Elon College. He did not complete his year at First Christian Church, Greensboro, and Dr. W. C. Wicker of Elon College preached for about six months to finish the year. His salary was \$75.00 per month.

He went from Greensboro to Raleigh in 1921 and served the Raleigh church and several rural churches through 1922. He moved from Raleigh to Rocky Mount, N. C., where he served Methodist churches.

After leaving the ministry, he returned to Greensboro in 1941. On October 26, 1944, he married the former Gladys Rollins. The Rev. Mr. Knight died in Greensboro on May 9, 1957, and is buried in Guilford Memorial Park, Greensboro.

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THE REV. H. RUSSELL CLEM
1921-1923

H. Russell Clem was born at Edith, in Powell's Fort, Va., on January 23, 1878, and died on July 30, 1949, at his home in Burlington, N. C.

After finishing elementary school in Virginia, The Rev. Mr. Clem went to Ohio in 1898, and entered Defiance College at Defiance, Ohio. While in college, he taught school to defray the costs of his education. He was ordained to the ministry in the Christian Church in Westville, Ohio, in 1904. Other activities in Ohio after ordination included 25 years as secretary of Mt. Vernon, Ohio, Christian Conference; six years as president of the State Christian Association; eight years as secretary of the Christian Publishing Association; and 14 years as pastor of the High Street Christian Church of Springfield, Ohio. While serving the last-named organization, he built a new church there, and also a mission church at Melrose, Ohio, which he often served on Sunday afternoons.

On September 1, 1921, The Rev. Mr. Clem accepted a call from the First Christian Church of Greensboro, and subsequently served there for two and a half years as pastor. From there, he moved to Fall River, Mass., where he served the First Christian Church there for eight and a half years. While in Fall River, he also preached at the Portsmouth, R. I., Christian Church on Sunday afternoons. Other Fall River activities included five years as City Hospitals chaplain; president of the Rhode Island and Massachusetts Christian Conference; president of the Fall River Ministerial Association; director of Associated Charities of the City of Fall River; and director of the Craigville (Mass.) Camp Meeting Association.

Moving from Fall River to West Mansfield, Mass., he served the First Christian Church there for 10 years before retirement, and moving to Burlington, N. C.

The Rev. Mr. Clem was first married to Mary Sanford of Ohio in 1904. She died in 1918, leaving four sons, Kenneth Sanford, Wendell Phillips, H. Russell, Jr., and William Ashford. In 1921, he married Bessie I. Holt, who died on January 13, 1973.

* * *



DR. C. H. ROWLAND 1924-1935

Charles H. Rowland was born September 19, 1868, in Wake County, North Carolina. He was graduated from Elon College in 1900. Soon after that he was married to Miss Berta Graham.

Dr. Rowland was licensed to preach by the North Carolina and Virginia Christian Conference at Hines Chapel, in 1890, and for 48 years served his denomi-

nation with unstinting devotion. Almost half of his ministerial life was spent at Franklin, Va., where he gave 23 years of his life, and developed the Christian Church from a small group to a large and active church, and built a beautiful brick building. In February, 1924, he became pastor of the First Christian Church of Greensboro, which position he held until forced by ill health to give it up in October, 1935. From that date until his death on May 2, 1938, he served as Pastor Emeritus.

For years Dr. Rowland was president of the Eastern Virginia Christian Conference and later filled that office in the North Carolina and Virginia Conference. He was a long time trustee of Elon College, which institution conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity. He also served as a trustee of Defiance College in Ohio.

At his death a fellow minister wrote: "He did not major in scholarships and books, but his chief concern was with folks, their nature, their needs and their welfare. A real human being himself, he understood other human beings and fathomed them and felt with them and for them in their efforts and struggles, and rejoiced with them in their victories. He knew by nature and by instinct that which many of us study many books to learn, and then do not learn and know as he did. In this particular way he was richly endowed. He loved, therefore, he was loved; he was a friend; and therefore he had friends."

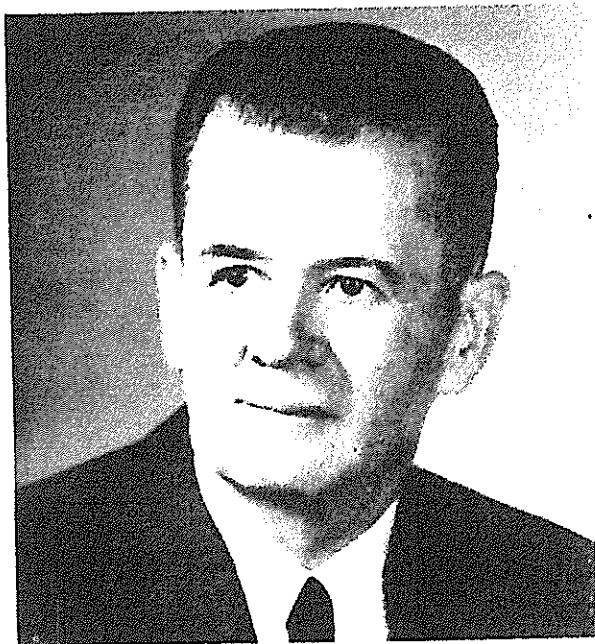
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DR. W. E. WISSEMAN 1935-1966

William E. Wisseman was born in Mason County, Texas, September 17, 1901. He received his A.B. Degree from Southern Methodist University, and his theological degree from Boston University School of Theology. After his graduation he spent four months travelling abroad, including the Holy Land. In 1944 he was awarded the Doctor of Divinity Degree from Elon College.

Dr. Wisseman was married to Annie Graham Rowland, a daughter of the former pastor of the Greensboro church. Their first parish was the Methodist Church in Schulenburg, Texas, for five years. In 1935 he became the pastor of the First Congregational Christian Church in Greensboro where he served for 31 years. During his ministry a new church building was constructed on Radiance Drive in 1952; the name of the church was changed to Congregational United Church of Christ. The chapel in the new church is named in honor of him and Mrs. Wisseman.

Three foreign students (two from India and one from Ceylon) lived in the Wisseman home while studying at UNC-G, their expenses paid by the Cora L. Anthony Trust Fund.



While serving the Greensboro Church for many years, Dr. Wiseman supplied the Pleasant Ridge Church in Guilford County.

His interest and work reached out beyond the local church; he served as President of the North Carolina and Virginia Conference of Congregational Christian Churches and later as president of the Southern Convention of Congregational Christian churches.

Active in civic organizations, Dr. Wiseman has served as a board member of the Guilford County Girl Scouts; a member of the Board of the General Greene Council of Boy Scouts; the Family Service Council; the American Cancer Society. He received the Silver Beaver award, one of the highest awards in Scouting.

In 1966 the Wisemans retired to live in the Pleasant Ridge community in their new home given to them by the Greensboro church. He is now Pastor Emeritus of the Greensboro church and the Pleasant Ridge church. He has served several churches as an interim pastor since his retirement from Congregational United Church of Christ and Pleasant Ridge United Church of Christ.

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DR. EMMETT O. FLOYD 1967

Emmett Owen Floyd was born March 21, 1928, in Griffin, Ga. He was educated in the public schools in Covington, Ga., received his B.A. at Mer-

cer University, Macon, Ga., in 1948; Master of Divinity from Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky., in 1951; M.A. from Emory University, Atlanta, in 1956, and S.T.D. from San Francisco Theological Seminary, San Anselmo, Calif. in 1973.

He now holds the rank of Captain (youngest chaplain of this rank when selected in 1972) in U.S. Naval Reserve Chaplain Corps. He serves as Senior Area Co-ordinator for Chaplains in the Sixth Naval District.

He held pastorates in Georgia and Florida before coming to Greensboro. He has been very active in the work of the Southern Conference as well as serving on the Board of Directors for the United Church Board for World Ministries 1969-1976. He is serving on the Executive Committee of the Western Association of the Southern Conference and is a member of the Board of Trustees of Catawba College 1975-1981.

Dr. Floyd has been very active in civic organizations in the city, having served as President of Greensboro Ministers Fellowship in 1970; a member of the Human Relations Board of Greensboro; a member of the Board of Directors of the Carolinas Area of National Conference of Christians and Jews, a member of the Board of Directors for the Voluntary Action Council, plus other organizations of our city.

He is married to the former Katherine Holmes of Sandersville, Ga. They have five children: Marian, Beth, David, Karen and Karyl. They reside at 1423 Garland Drive.



Dr. Wisseman Reflects

Many memories rush to my mind when I think of my years at the Greensboro church—1935-1966. The move to Greensboro itself was a traumatic experience, leaving my native state of Texas, leaving the Methodist denomination in which I had grown up, and following a minister who was a great preacher and loved by all. It was hard to succeed a man like that. The spirit in which the people stood by and gave their support continued through the years, and it is the spirit of this congregation which I would like to recall.

We were a scattered congregation and we soon realized that we had to re-locate. The congregation was given the opportunity to decide: should we move? In which section of the city should we locate? With no dissenting votes it was decided to move; northwest Greensboro was the locale which was chosen. A lot between East and West Radiance was pointed out and after several weeks it was decided by unanimous vote to purchase the lots for a new meeting house.

This undertaking meant sacrifice on the part of all. The men and women of the congregation spent two evenings a week working on the lots; sometimes there were as many as 40 workers. In the summer of 1951 the building was started. There were many tasks the people of the congregation could perform: unloading building material, placing filler blocks, scraping walls, cleaning up. When decisions had to be made, the matter was brought before the congregation; it was the feeling that everybody should have a voice in the construction of the church.

The great day came in June, 1952, when we entered for our first service. It was a great achievement, accomplished because the people were united in the effort. That spirit of unity prevailed not only during the construction, but continued. A debt had to be paid and the spirit of sacrifice continued in that effort.

But the interest of the congregation was not simply in themselves and a lovely church building in which to worship. Even more has been the concern for others. I think back to the war years when so many soldiers were located at O.R.D. in Greensboro. Many soldiers were entertained in our homes and at the church, meals and sleeping quarters being provided.

I think of how our concern for people in other countries was stimulated by the foreign students who came to this country by funds made possible by the Cora L. Anthony Trust Fund.

I think of the concern for orphan children, children from broken homes which resulted in a cottage being built at the Elon Home for Children by our congregation.

So it was—support of all worthy causes; always a readiness to accept a challenge to help in any part of the world.

Other people may record the statistics, the historical events, but what I hold in my heart and in my memory is the spirit of the people—the spirit of unity, of sacrifice, of concern for others. The spirit of love.

—W. E. Wisseman

Dr. Floyd Looks Ahead

To read the history of this church and to share the experiences of some of those whose lives and memories stretch backward toward the early days is an inspiring experience. As pastor, I am humbled by the example and service of my predecessors. I am thankful that I have been privileged to know the Wissemans and to share a sense of partnership in the ministry here.

I agree with Dr. Wisseman that the outstanding feature of this congregation is its spirit of concern

and love. We live in a world which continues to need this kind of caring. We cannot rest content to recall what has been—we must continue to work and to serve in the same manner.

No one knows what the future has in store for us as persons or as a church. But our faith is such that we can be assured that God will be with us. We can commit ourselves afresh to Him—grateful for the past—responsive to the present—and hopeful for the future.

—Emmett O. Floyd

Our Church Music

Music has always been an important part of worship in the Congregational United Church of Christ. When the congregation was planning a building, the women were planning to buy an organ. The first instrument was a reed organ pumped by hand. Mrs. J. F. Tussey (Mamie Foster) was the first organist.

Miss Esther Lowe then became organist in 1910. Two years later she married William Brooks Truitt and she remained as organist until 1961, except for a short period during World War I when she was living away from Greensboro. Mrs. Trexler followed Mrs. Truitt, who became associate organist, playing one Sunday each month until 1970. During those years Mrs. Truitt served with untiring devotion to her church and worked constantly to enlarge and improve the music program. Margaret Rowland was assistant organist from 1930 to 1960.

It was due to the inspiration of Mrs. Truitt that the Philathea Class of young women worked hard and long earning money to purchase a pipe organ which was presented to the church. In the early 1940s chimes were added to the organ and dedicated to the memory of former pastor Dr. C. H. Rowland.

When the church moved to the new building on Radiance Drive the organ was not large enough. Urged on by Mrs. Truitt once again, the Women's Auxiliary assumed the project of enlarging the organ. The following account was published in the News Letter September 1961.

"A significant milestone in the life of our church was June 25, 1961, when the dreams of many years were realized. Our pipe organ, pivotal instrument in the rendering of worship through music, was rededicated upon completion of an addition which doubled its size. This addition added 13 stops and 600 pipes, at a cost of some \$14,000, and brought the organ to a total of 23 stops and 1,250 pipes plus new couplers for new combinations of sounds. The organ addition, appropriately, was dedicated in honor of Mrs. W. B. Truitt . . . who contributed more than any other in time and energy making this dream come true . . ."

An electric organ for the chapel was given in 1959 by an anonymous donor and has greatly enhanced the worship services in that room.

The pipe organ console was in need of extensive repairs by the late 1960's. The purchase of the new Austin console was made possible by bequests to the church from the estates of Mrs. Mary McAdams Harden and Mrs. Carol Hotz. The new console was dedicated May 3, 1970, and Mrs. Truitt was honored at that service.

The first choir director was Harold R. Moag. Before he came, the organist had directed the choir. The choir under Mr. Moag was ambitious and active. They sang part of "The Messiah" by Handel in December, 1932; participated with 36 other church choirs in a State Church Choir Festival in Raleigh in April, 1933; sang at the dedication of the United Congregational Church in Winston-Salem in April, 1934; and joined with the Guilford College Choir and other local church choirs in several programs.

The roll of choir members in 1932 follows:

Miss Viola Lassiter, Mrs. Phillip Malone, Mrs. P. A. Robinson, Mrs. Cecil Field, Mrs. J. C. Washburn, Mrs. Grace Stewart, Mrs. R. L. Caviness, Miss Effie Lowe, Miss Tom Strader, Miss Frances Truitt, Miss Frances Foster, Miss Elberta Murray, Mrs. G. W. Putnam, Mrs. W. W. Tate, Miss Ella Neese Lassiter, Miss Dorothy Truitt, Miss Roberta Murray, C. P. Flynn, H. F. Swanzy, J. S. Stewart, H. R. Moag, J. R. Foster, Dudley Stewart.

Most of these choir members started singing in a children's chorus which was directed by Ellen Putnam. Former members of that chorus recall a statewide contest for learning hymns in which their group won a certificate for memorizing the largest number of hymns.

Choir directors to follow Mr. Moag were: James Wesley White, Charles Summers, Mrs. W. N. Huff, and Horace W. Johnson. Johnson held the job for several years during which much progress was made with both junior and adult choirs. The Youth Choir for young people of junior high and high school age was organized in 1952 with 17 members.

Donald Trexler, the present director of the music program of the church, began his service September 1, 1955. All three choirs have made significant progress under his direction. A total of 80 persons are currently participating in the choirs, and several young people play instruments on special occasions. Trexler gives free voice lessons each week to a number of choir members and has developed some excellent solo voices. His wife, Ruth Trexler, became full-time organist when Mrs. Truitt retired in the late 1960s.

A few years ago, motivated, inspired and encouraged by Mrs. Trexler, some of the choir members composed some responses. A total of 28 were written including introits, scripture, prayer and benediction responses. These have been duplicated and compiled in a pamphlet and are sung regularly by the choir in worship services. The amateur composers who contributed are Mrs. Charlotte Dame, (Robert), Mrs. Alex S. Brown (Nancy Taylor), Miss Eunice Rush and Mrs. M. W. Blakey (Margaret).



Junior Choir Gives Birthday Party For Choir Director Don Trexler, March 14, 1958.



*Mrs. W. B. Truitt At Organ In
Original Church.*



*Ruth And Don Trexler:
Our Music Team Today.*

An Early Start By Our Women ... And Other Activities

The activities of the membership of the Greensboro church have had significant impact from almost the very beginning.

The Women's Fellowship was founded in 1912, and that event itself was a major milestone. It was the first missionary society to be organized within the Southern Convention of the denomination. Originally known as the Ladies Aid and Missionary Society, it was formed with five charter members—Mrs. L. E. Smith (pastor's wife), Mrs. S. A. Caveness, Mrs. R. I. Williams, Mrs. A. B. Pearce and Mrs. L. M. Clymer.

Through the years the women of the church have played a major role in church missions and in improvements of the physical plant. They helped remove the indebtedness on the old North Edgeworth parsonage, they purchased the Hut next door to the old church building (dedicated Oct. 10, 1943), and they gave \$500 toward the purchase of the original pipe organ. Years later they were to raise just better than \$7,000 for an expansion of the organ (1961).

The Women's Fellowship also made many contributions to the new church building in the early 1950s. Equipment for the kitchen was entirely paid for by the women, and the Rowland Memorial Library was originally given by the women in memory of Mrs. C. H. Rowland. In addition, the furnishings for the church parlor were acquired largely through their sponsorship.

Latest contribution by the Women's Fellowship was the launching of the daily Open Door for Prayer program in 1974.

* * *

CORA L. ANTHONY, who left almost \$30,000 when she died in 1947, remains perhaps the No. 1 inspiration for the mission work of our church. Mrs. Anthony accumulated the estate through hard work and self denial and left her money to further the mission work of our church. Specifically, she directed that the income from the trust be used to train missionaries in this country. To date the fund has provided a year or more of study for students from China, Japan, Puerto Rico, the Phillipines, India, Africa, Ceylon and Nigeria.

* * *

SUNDAY SCHOOL history in our church is exemplified by the Truitt-Moffitt class. It is a combination of the old O'Kelly class for men, which had its beginning with the birth of Sunday School in the church, and the Philathea class of young women, which was formed in the earliest years as well. The

only date to tie to either is 1907, when William B. Truitt became teacher of the Philathea class.

Mr. Truitt remained as teacher of the Philathea class for 50 years, and in latter years he was honored by having the class named for him. Robert G. Moffitt taught the O'Kelly class for more than 25 years, and it later bore his name. In 1961 the two classes joined together to become known as the Truitt-Moffitt class.

The Rowland Bible Class was founded March 13, 1931, as a "young married class." There were 21 charter members and 12 of them are still members in the church's 75th year. Another "young married" class was to follow April 23, 1950, and this one was to become the Wisseman Bible Class in honor of Mrs. W. E. Wisseman, who started the class in the living room of the parsonage on North Edgeworth.

Another adult class was formed in the fall of 1956 and named the Pilgrim Bible Class. This class has since become the Hal Jordan Bible Class, renamed in 1973 in memory of its first teacher, Hal Jordan.

The youngest of the adult classes is the Garren Bible Class, started in the fall of 1964 as another "young married and young adult" class. It is named in memory of Martin T. Garren, for many years one of our church's lay leaders.

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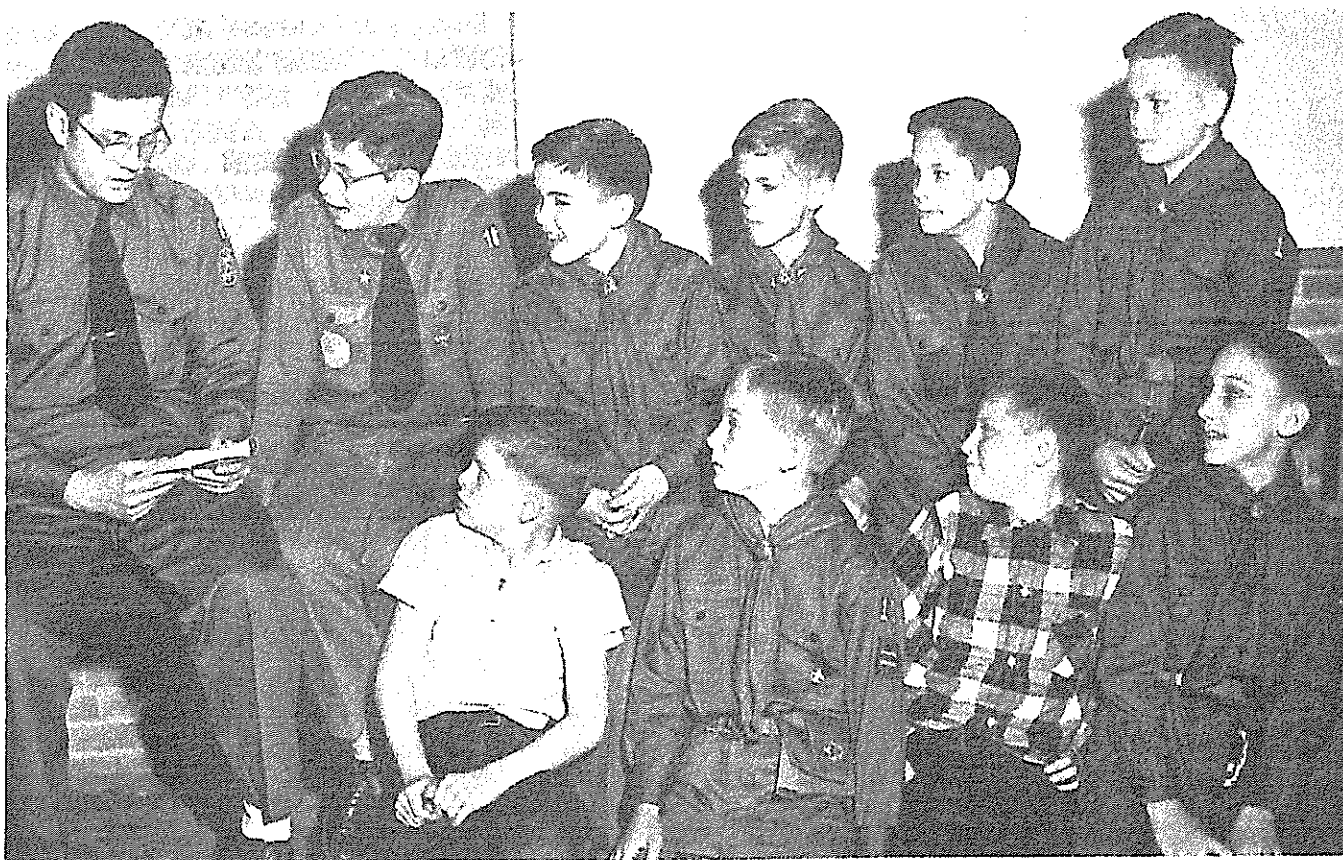
BOY SCOUTS became an important activity within our church soon after we moved into our new building. Our first troop was organized in November of 1952 and received its initial charter on January 31, 1953. Our first Scoutmaster was O. H. Alexander Jr. He is still our Scoutmaster 22 years later.

More than 350 young men have held membership in our church's troop over the years, with eight of them receiving God and Country awards and 32 of them earning Eagle awards.

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ALTHOUGH THERE has been little organized activity in recent years, for many years the Layman's Fellowship supported many worthwhile projects of our church as well as the denomination beyond. The finest hour of the Layman's Fellowship, and the peak of its contributions, perhaps, was during the late stages of fund-raising for the new church and during the construction period.

Who will ever forget the men of the church moving dirt by the spadeful?



Scoutmaster O. H. Alexander Jr. Instructs "His Boys", March, 1953.



Dorothy Ballinger: She Directs Christian Education and Keeps Church Office Running.



Cora Anthony Scholar Perfecto Yasay With Dr. Wisseman.

The Celebration

The celebration of our church's 75th anniversary began with the Easter Sunrise Service on March 30, 1975, and continued through a succession of special events including a June 1 service of rededication.

It was climaxed in November with the dedication of the church history and a day of thanksgiving.

The largest service of the celebration, in terms of attendance, was the May 25 home-coming, which brought 360 persons together. Many were seeing each other for the first time in years. Dr. Warren Matthews, one of our church's sons who went on to the ministry, preached, and our pastor emeritus, Dr. W. E. Wisseman, assisted in the service. A picnic lunch followed the service in the church basement. One of the features of the day was a slide presentation of the history of the church.

The principal worship service of celebration was on June 1, with Dr. Wisseman and our pastor, Dr. Emmett Floyd, jointly conducting a communion service. Attendance was 259 for this service, which included the rededication and renewal of individuals in the church.

Dorothy Ballinger and Mrs. Taylor E. (Roberta) Barrow Jr. were co-chairpersons of the 75th anniversary celebration, directed by a steering committee that included Mrs. M. W. Blakey, John R. Foster, Danny Kent, Lynne Tate, Roger Gibbs, Sherrill Hall, Mrs. Austin Lane, Margaret Rowland, and Mrs. Leon Ward.

A surprise that occurred during the celebration was the installation and dedication of carillon chimes in memory of Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Truitt, a gift of their children.

EDITED BY IRWIN SMALLWOOD

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COVER SKETCH BY ERIC ZSCHIESCHE

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