

**DRAPER'S VALLEY
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**

1832 - 1982

Virginia

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By

Sydney Painter

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Dedicated To Ann

Old Harmony

In the early beginnings of the settlement of the South-East part of Wythe County, a longing arose among the settlers for a church home. Since there were people from many faiths coming into the new land, it was impossible for any one denomination to erect its own church. The people banded together and bought land upon which to build a community meeting house.

In an early Wythe County deed book, the following is recorded:

“This indenture made the 27th day of July, 1808 between William Harrel of the County of Wythe State of Virginia of the one part, John Freeley, Joseph Russell, and John Draper Jr. of the other part, Trustees, witnesseth that the said William Harrell for and in consideration of three Hundred and Fifty dollars, hath bargained, sold and relinquished unto John Feeley, Joseph Russell and John Junr. Trustees, a certain tract or parcel of land situate in the County aforesaid on the waters of New River for the express and special purpose of erecting a House thereon for the purpose of a Seminary of learning and Divine Worship. . .”

In 1808 Harmony Church was built on the land described in the Wythe County deed book. The church was located one mile west of Draper on a small hill near where the Red Horse Tavern was built on the Baltimore Road or Great Road, as it was called at that time. The tavern, although greatly changed, still stands and is occupied by a descendant of Thomas Galbraith's, the owner.

Old Harmony, as the church came to be lovingly and respectfully called, was a large frame building covered on the outside with clapboards. There were large square windows on the sides and a huge fireplace covered almost all of one end of the room. The benches were split logs without backs.

Old Harmony not only housed religious organizations but also served as a seminary of learning and divine worship; therefore it fulfilled two basic needs, education and religion, of the people for miles around. The minister also served as the head teacher of the school which was opened each day

with a short sermon, a memory verse from the Bible, and catechism questions.

For a number of years at least four denominations — Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, and Christians — worshiped there together, harmoniously under the leadership of ministers representing the different denominations. Dr. Chester Bullard, M.D. Christian; Mr. J. W. Smith, Methodist; Mr. Washington Conner, Baptist; and Mr. George Painter, Presbyterian were some of the known ministers at Old Harmony. If a minister were unable to keep his sabbath Day appointment, he would arrive on the most convenient week day.

During the 1830's the different denominations began to separate from Harmony and establish independent churches.

In 1832 the Presbyterians, under the leadership of the Reverend George Painter, were the first to separate into an independent church group.

At this time the Christian Denomination was in its infancy of formation in this part of the country. Dr. Bullard, M.D. did much proselyting and was very successful in gathering followers from the other denominations at Harmony into the new faith. In 1896 they built the Christian Church at Draper.

The Methodist Church, which grew under the leadership of J. W. Smith, was organized in 1890. They shared the Christian Church building with that congregation for several months until they could acquire land on which to build. On September 20, 1897, they signed the deed for land south of the railroad and built their own church.

The Primitive or Old School Baptist, under Washington Conner, organized two churches — The "Old River Church" which was later changed to Pilgrim's Rest and the Bethel Church. Both of those churches are still active today.

DRAPER'S VALLEY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The first two session books from 1824-1852 have been lost. However, the reports from the records of Presbytery in

Montreat, North Carolina, show that Harmony or Draper's Valley Presbyterian Church was alive and active during those years. The records are as follows:

October 3, 1825 — Minutes of Abingdon Presbytery:

"The Reverend George Painter, a member of Union Pres., was received and took his seat as a member of Abingdon Presbytery."

First reference to Harmony Church in Abingdon Presbytery was in General Assembly Minutes for 1827. From 1808-1832, Harmony was not an organized church but a place of worship by many denominations.

October 8, 1832—Minutes of Abingdon Presbytery:

"The treasurer of Presbytery reported that he had received by Mr. Painter from Anchor of Hope and Harmony congregations \$8.00, five of which were due as a sessional tax for the year ending April, 1832, and three to be entered as a credit to these congregations for the present year."

May, 1837 — Minutes of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Church USA:

"The Reverend George Painter was listed as a commissioner from Abingdon Presbytery (pp 411 and 414). He was also commissioned in 1838.

In March, 1839, by the order of the Synod, Abingdon Presbytery was changed to New River Presbytery.

May, 1839 — Minutes of the General Assembly:

NEW SCHOOL

Note: New River Presbytery was formed by the "New School" churches of Abingdon Presbytery following the 1837 split between "Old School" and "New School" adherents.

"George Painter was listed as stated supply of Harmony congregation in Draper's Valley. The report showed 38 communicants and 3 infant baptisms."

September 30, 1846 — Minutes of New River Presbytery:

"It was resolved: that when Presbytery adjourns, it adjourns to meet in the new Presbyterian Church, near Mr.

Painter's home, on the third Friday in April, 1847, at 12:00 o'clock A.M." The meeting was held as planned.

May 4, 1849. — Minutes of New River Presbytery:

"On motion it was resolved that what was formerly Harmony Church be here after known on our records as Draper's Valley Presbyterian Church."

On May 4, 1849, New River Presbytery met at New Dublin Church. The Rev. Mr. James McChain and Mr. Isaac Hudson were appointed to examine the records of Draper's Valley and Anchor of Hope churches. The Reverend George Painter was to examine the records of Royal Oak, South Fork, and Mount Zion churches.

April 19, 1850, the Session paid Mr. Painter \$64.50 for services rendered in the year ending June 1, 1849. The payment due was for one-third of his time. "The Session of Draper's Valley Presbyterian Church reported to Presbytery general satisfaction with pastoral services rendered by the Reverend Mr. Painter who has been unable to do full time church work because he must labor with his hands to support his family. 'The day, it is hoped, will soon come when the minister of our church will be released from this double burden.'"

December 23, 1849: Session Book of Draper's Valley Presbyterian Church:

"On Sabbath Dec. 23, 1849

The meeting of the Session was called for the purpose of dismissing those church members living in Carrol County to be organized into a church in their own neighborhood. These members should be regarded as regularly dismissed provided they wished to be organized into a separate church but otherwise as being still in regular connection with this church (Draper's Valley)."

These members organized the Bethesda Church. The first Bethesda Church, built in 1848 in Carrol County, stood at Bill Marshall cemetery. The second Bethesda Church, built in 1908-11, was near the Alfred Marshall place and was known as the "New Church." Although the Bethesda was organized as a Presbyterian Church, many other denominations held services there.

From the Bethesda Session Book

“Bethesda Presbyterian Church was organized in 1848 by the Rev. George Painter of Draper’s Valley Church. Elders were Stephen Lindsey, Stephen Bond, and Ruling Elder Daniel Mitchell under New River Presbytery.” The New Bethesda Church had fifty-six members.

The above records seem to definitely support the fact that the Draper’s Valley Presbyterian Church was organized in 1832 under the leadership of the Reverend George Painter who served the church from 1832-1862.

The Reverend George Painter graduated from Seminary in Greenville, Tennessee, in 1824 and with his wife returned to his home in Wythe County. He began work at Mount Zion in 1824. He began preaching at Harmony in 1825, at Anchor of Hope in 1827, and at New Dublin in 1833. He labored as a pastor of the last three churches for thirty-seven years and served as a teacher of day school six months each year

In 1837 new beliefs were being brought into the Presbyterian Church, and Mr. Painter belonged to the New School Presbyterians. These new beliefs were considered heresies by those who upheld the Westminster Confession of Faith. The New School modified the Westminster standards of predestination, original sin, and original guilt. Their brand of Calvinism leaned more toward man’s freedom and responsibility. It changed doctrines to fit the new revival efforts, causing loose discipline and destruction of strict Presbyterianism. These changes were vigorously opposed by the Scotch-Irish of the Old School; however, New River Presbytery went with the New School faction and so did Draper’s Valley Presbyterian Church.

Slavery was also a factor in the split. The New School was antislave. Draper’s Valley Presbyterian Church had some colored members.

These Presbyterians bought from Mr. Harvey Sheppard three acres of land, located on the Old Baltimore Road three miles west of Harmony. In 1840 they built a church and a school using hand made bricks made from the native clay. The congregation and their pastor did the building, thus establishing the first “New School Presbyterian Church” in this part of Virginia. Although the church was built in 1840, the deed was not signed until 1847.

In 1841 one mile north of the church on the old rock road, Mr. Painter built a home made from the native clay. The home still stands and is in good condition.

In 1851 Mr. Painter organized the first Sunday School or Sabbath School as it was called.

Because of Mr. Painter's ill health and heavy church work load, the Reverend Thomas Hudson was engaged to be his assistant. Mr. Hudson worked in all three churches from 1853-1855. Then in 1862 still unable to carry the heavy load, Mr. Painter asked all three churches to accept his resignation, which they did. He died February 14, 1863.

The Reverend Isaac N. Naff served as pastor during the Civil War and the Reconstruction Period. He served the three churches —Draper's Valley, Anchor of Hope, and Dublin. Since Mr. Painter had owned his home, a Manse had not been built; therefore Mr. Naff lived in Dublin. His living in Dublin left the church affiliated school without a resident teacher, thus causing concern among many parents.

The Reverend George H. Gilmer, Sr. served as pastor from 1874-1888. The Draper's Valley Academy was built in 1872, and Mr. Gilmer became its first principal. In order that the minister-teacher might be near the academy, a Manse was built on the school grounds. Mr. Gilmer, also, became the first minister to live in the Manse.

Mrs. Gilmer taught in the academy and organized the first women's work in the church.

Mr. Gilmer resigned because of failing health. W. N. Mebane (Licentiate) served as pastor from February, 1889 until July, 1889.

The Reverend Alfred Jones served as pastor from 1890-1896. It was during Mr. Jones's leadership that the church did its first out post work and Home Mission work. This work was begun in 1891 and proved to be very successful and rewarding.

Dr. George H. Gilmer, Jr., son of the former pastor, served as pastor from 1896-1911. Dr. Gilmer was interested in Home Missions, and in 1911 he gave up his pastoral work in order that he might go into Home Mission work. He depended to a great extent upon his home church for help.

The Reverend Dupuy Holliday served as pastor from 1912-1915. He was very much interested in organizing youth work.

The Reverend James McChesney served as pastor from 1915-1926. He had several firsts in his ministry. He was the first full time pastor; received the highest salary of fifteen hundred dollars a year; organized the first youth programs; began the first Wednesday night prayer service, with special prayers for World War I soldiers (Not one man from our community was wounded or killed.); and the first telephone was installed in 1914 for him. From those years to the present (1982) the above firsts have been a continuation of blessings.

The Reverend Frank G. Hartman served as pastor from 1927-1929. He and his wife reorganized the women's work into circles.

He was responsible for a new road to the church. In the early days of the church's history, a road was built northward from the church to the old rock road. This road followed the contour of the land to make it easier on the horses to pull the surries of people over the hill on Sunday. In winter the road became very muddy and took a long time to dry because it was shaded by many trees.

When automobiles came to be used, the way over the hill was often impassible. In 1927 a shorter route was planned and everyone came with wagon loads of rock and built a new road over the hill to the church. Pulaski County black topped the road. There were no more muddy road puddles to be used as an excuse for staying home from the church service.

The Reverend D.R. Freeman served as pastor from 1929-1942. Mr. Freeman followed closely in Dr. Gilmer's footsteps in his enthusiasm for out post and Home Missions work. He brought in summer workers to lead in Vacation Bible School, both in the home church and in four nearby communities. He established out post Sunday Schools and preaching ministries to communities without churches. Schoolhouses were often used for preaching and evangelistic work. Many new members were brought into the church through Mr. Freeman's work.

The Reverend Preston Orr Sartelle, Sr. served as pastor from 1942-1957. Mr. Sartelle came in March, 1942 and in 1943 was called into the Marines as a Chaplain.

The Reverend George Murray came to the Draper Church in 1944, then he was also called into service of his country. However, Dr. Flow came later in 1944 to supply the church for two Sundays each month. He also supplied at Anchor of Hope for two Sundays each month until Mr. Sartelle's return.

When Mr. Sartelle was discharged from the Marines in 1946, he returned to Draper's Valley to continue as pastor. He conducted Sunday evening services and continued Wednesday evening services. He did out post work at Reed Creek. The building of additional Sunday School rooms that had been discussed so many times in the past by the Session were begun and completed.

During the later years of Mr. Sartelle's work here, the first Manse was torn down when the highway department demanded the land for the building of Interstate 81. The big spring which had supplied water for the old Manse, the old academy, and another house was also destroyed at this time. Thus two valuable land marks vanished from our community.

A new Manse was built on one acre of land on top of a hill overlooking the church. The land was bought from J.C. Painter, Sr. for the sum of one dollar.

The Reverend John K. Boyd served as pastor of the Draper's Valley Presbyterian Church from 1957-1960. Mr. Boyd was "Mr. Congeniality" himself. Whether he was in the pulpit delivering a sermon or entertaining little boys on the mountain "hunting bears," he was equally at home. He cared deeply for all mankind in all walks of life and was ever ready to do his share in whatever situation he found himself.

J. Strother Boyd served as supply pastor from April until November of 1960.

The Reverend Donald R. Collins served as pastor from 1961-1967. Mr. Collins, was deeply interested in young people, especially in helping them to choose vocations. He spent much time in counseling with them about their future work and their fitness to fulfill their choices.

The Reverend Hallett G. Hullinger has served as pastor from 1967-1982. Mr. Hullinger's brotherly love and compas-

sion toward all Christian ministers and his desire to live harmoniously with all Christian denominations have been outstanding. He has also shown a tremendous interest in the young people of the church.

Mr. Boyd, Mr. Collins, and Mr. Hullinger for the past twenty-five years have carried on the many good works begun in the past. Many good things have transpired during their pastorates, and each has left or is leaving his own personal impact on the congregation.

The Draper's Valley Presbyterian Church has truly been blessed to have had such dedicated Men of God to serve during its one hundred and fifty years of existence. The church has been under the care of four Presbyteries during these many years— Abingdon, New River, Montgomery, and Highland. At the present time it is under Abingdon Presbytery.

PHYSICAL VIEW OF THE CHURCH

The Draper's Valley Presbyterian Church is built of brick made from the native clay. The members themselves and their minister built the building which consisted of one large room and a vestibule at the entrance with a small room on the right. This room was used for session meetings and for Sunday School class. To the left was another small room with a stairway going to the gallery which was used to seat colored people and for one or two small Sunday School classes.

The windows were large with square tops and clear glass. There were three windows on each side and two at each end. A large wheel shaped window was built in the front of the church over the door.

In the early life of the church, a double row of sugar maple trees was planted to form a driveway which began at the south east corner of the Church yard and went around the east side across the back and on to the south west corner. The road has faded away; however, on the north west side several maples still stand. (1982) Scotch mint was planted on the east side of the Church.

Many changes and improvements have been made to the church since it was built; however, the original building still stands and is used regularly for worship services.

The first change was made when the two windows behind the pulpit were closed with brick to improve the lighting. Today one can see where the windows were changed. An arch and frosted glass were added. The tall steeple was also added at this time.

The beautiful oil lights have been preserved in their original state; however, in 1936 they were wired for electricity which was provided by a Delco Motor System. In March, 1941 electric power was bought from the Appalachian Power Company for two dollars a month.

Beginning in 1925, from time to time, plans were presented to the Session of the Church to build additional Sunday School rooms on the back side of the church. However, nothing definite was done until 1948 when six small rooms, two stories high and a basement were added to the north east corner of the church building. The partition between the vestibule and stairway was also removed at this time.

In 1954 the Sunday School building was extended to the east, and six more rooms were added. The basement, which has been a real benefit to the church, was divided into two rooms — one room for a kitchen and a large room for dining and activities.

The three beautiful hand made pulpit chairs, cushioned with red velvet, were given to the church some eighty years ago.

Today (1982) the sanctuary is beautiful. The benches, the pulpit, and the Communion table are all white, trimmed with brown. The floor is covered with plush cranberry carpet. A beautiful electric organ is to the minister's left and a very handsome YahaMa Grand Piano is proudly displayed on the minister's right. The large wheel shaped window at the front of the church has stained glass which was made by some of the ladies of the church.

A blending of the preserved antiquity of the church and the addition of modern conveniences have blended to make a beautiful building and a warm atmosphere.

SCHOOLS

During the early years of the church, there were no public schools. The church often provided education for its youth, and the minister usually taught in the school. Often the ministers were poorly paid and teaching provided extra income. Many times they were also better qualified to teach than any other member of the community.

When the Draper's Valley Presbyterian Church was built, a two room brick school house was built on the East side of the church. Since the records of the two Session books have been lost, we have no way of knowing how long school was taught in the brick school building nor by whom. We can only assume that the Reverend George Painter taught in the school as long as his health permitted. The school has since been torn down.

After the death of Mr. Painter, the minister did not live in Draper; therefore there was no resident minister to teach in the church school. Many parents became concerned about the education of the youth. A group of concerned citizens banded together and bought eleven and three-fourths acres of land from Mr. Sam Honaker near the Draper Mountain and constructed a school with two large rooms, one small room, and two halls. This school became known as Draper Valley Academy. Since Mr. George H. Gilmer was the pastor of the church, he became the first teacher. Mrs. Eliza Gilmer, his wife, was his assistant and taught the small children.

In order to have the teachers near the school, the first Manse was constructed on the academy grounds. Mr. and Mrs. Gilmer were not only the first academy teachers, but they were also the first to live in the new Manse.

The Academy was a boarding school, and several families in the neighborhood kept student boarders. Although both boys and girls attended the school, only one girl was known to have boarded in the neighborhood. She boarded with the Gilmers.

The school day began in the same manner that it had begun at Old Harmony. The minister-teacher preached a

short sermon; memory verses from the Bible were recited; and catechism questions were answered.

The boys and girls were divided into separated rooms and not integrated as they are today. Each child progressed as fast or as slowly as he or she was capable of working. The preacher-teacher taught the boys downstairs, and the girls and little children were taught upstairs. Older boys who brought their lunch with a sister were allowed to go upstairs long enough to eat and then leave. Older girls who were doing advanced work went downstairs to recite, then back to their upstairs work benches.

According to a flyer from the academy, the school year 1878-1879 was the sixth year of the school. The terms for tuition were reduced in all departments except primary instruction.

The terms per month were as follows:

Primary English	\$2.50
Classical Courses	\$4.00
Higher English, Math, and Modern Language	\$3.00
Music (Piano)	\$3.50
Use of Instrument	\$.25
Board	10.00
Annual Assesment	\$2.00

In 1907 Mr. C. B. Tate rented the school building for five years for ninety dollars per nine month term. As part of the contract and at Mr. Tate's request, two small rooms were added to the back of the Manse. Mrs. C. B. Tate taught the small children during those five years, often in the back of the downstairs room in which Mr. Tate taught the older children.

In 1912 the Pulaski Public School System took over the school and rented the building from the church. The academy building was torn down in 1927. The Draper Valley Academy and other church supported schools served the valley and surrounding communities well by providing quality education for the young eople.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

There was no Sunday School at the Old Harmony Church; however, there has for more than one hundred years been a Sunday School at the present church. It has been one of the strong points of the church since it was first organized in 1851 by The Reverend George Painter. It was first called Sabbath School.

The old time Sunday School was held only six months of the year due to muddy roads, cold weather, and poor heating facilities. The classes met at eight o'clock in the morning and were dismissed at eleven o'clock in time for the preaching service to begin.

The constitution for the Sabbath School of 1851 is very interesting:

“Article I: this Sabbath School shall be known as the Draper’s Valley Sabbath School.

“Article II: the design of this school is the moral, spiritual and intellectual improvement of the young.

“Article III: there shall be no less than two nor more than four superintendents whose duty it shall be to open and close the school by reading a suitable portion of scripture with singing and prayer. Also take a careful and measured oversight of the school and see that all the children are provided with a teacher and there be perfect decorum in the house during the hours of school. Also to expell all persons refusing to come under the regulations of the school.

“Article IV: there shall be a librarian appointed whose duty it shall be to call the roll at the regular meeting of the school and to keep an accurate account of all the books belonging to the school to loan to no one but the teachers such books as they need for their scholars and to all persons interested in the school until further regulations are adopted.

“Article V: there shall be teachers appointed whose duty it shall be to teach their respective classes and to give them such instructions as they need and also to keep an account of all books loaned to the scholars in a teacher’s book where he may record the names of all his scholars and also an account of the progress of each scholar in his studies until other regulations are adopted.

"Article VI: the constitution shall not be changed nor altered in any way without a concurring vote of two-thirds of the officers and teachers present at a regular meeting of the school.

"Resolved that the above constitution be adopted.

"Resolved that George Painter, Holbert Allison, Joseph Howe and Thomas Wood be appointed superintendents whose duty it shall be to arrange the scholars into classes and select teachers.

"Resolved that

Elizabeth Graham

Eliza Crockett

Isabella G. Painter

Susan C. Graham

Susan J. Oglesby

Luisa C. Crockett

Margaret B. Howe

Frances A. Oglesby

James T. Crockett

Charles C. Painter

Jaohn C. Allison

Eliza L. Howe

Robert G. Painter

Thomas S. Graham

Sam L. Painter

Sidney M. Painter

be appointed teachers whose duty it shall be to comply with the requirements in the above constitution."

"Resolved that this meeting adjourn."

Hamilton Sayers, Librarian

Holbert Allison, Clerk

An interesting record of the early Draper's Valley Sunday School is as follows:

"Aug 24 1851 School organized

Aug 31 school opened at 8 o'clock and closed at 11

Sept 7 school opened at ½ before 9 by singing a hymn Reading a portion of scripture and prayer and closed at 11 by singing and prayer by Thomas Wood Sup

Sept 14 No school divine worship commencing at an earlier hour than was expected interfered with the appointment made for school - - -

Sept 21 School commenced with an hymn and reading Psalm 139 and prayer by Thomas Wood Sup Closed by singing 7th Hymn reading a chapter and prayer by Thos Wood Supt

Nov 2 1851 School opened by reading a psalm prayer and singing

Closed by H. Allison Sup
Nov 9 School opened and closed by same
Nov 16 School partly attended
Nov 23 School partly attended
Nov 30 School closed for the year to 1852"

In 1936 When Dr. George Gilmer, because of ill health, had to give up his active Home Mission work, not wanting to be laid on the shelf, he asked the Session of the church to give him permission to teach an Adult Bible Class made up of both men and women in the Draper's Valley Presbyterian Church. The permission was granted, and each Sunday morning during the Sunday School hour the middle section of the church was filled with those who wanted to hear the Bible taught by Dr. Gilmer.

The Sunday School has been and still is an active part and an important part of the church's work.

YOUTH WORK

The Callie Ewing Missionary Society was probably the first organized youth group in the Draper's Valley Presbyterian Church. It was organized in 1918 under the guiding hand of Miss Mary Sue Oglesby. It followed the same constitutional lines as the Ladies' Missionary Society and was made up of girls from the upper teens through early college age. They were interested in all forms of church work and foreign orphanages. They gave much support to French orphan children. This organization was short lived because of the age group. The girls went to college, married, or joined the Ladies' Society. The society is not mentioned in the Session records after 1922.

On a Sunday in May, 1921, a youth day was held at the Draper's Valley Presbyterian Church to present to the youth the joys and advantages of organizing a Christian Endeavor. Plans were made for a youth organization in the near future. Two delegates were selected to attend the summer Christian Endeavor Conference at Stonewall Jackson in Abingdon, Virginia.

In the spring of 1922, the Christian Endeavor was organized with an enrollment of forty members. At first meetings were held only during the summer months. Muddy roads, cold weather, and lack of heat and lights made it impossible for the young people to meet during the winter months.

In 1930 the youth work was organized under the Young People's Presbyterian League with a membership of twenty-five. One young person was sent to the youth conference.

At one time the youth organization was known as Kingdom Highways. There were thirty members and seven went to a youth conference held in Banner Elk, North Carolina.

The youth work was greatly helped in 1936 when a furnace and electric lights were installed in the church. The young people could now meet during the winter months. However, transportation remained a problem because there were many children in the neighborhood who needed transportation to the youth meetings and to Sunday School. In order to meet these needs, two station wagons were bought by the congregation in 1956. "Uncle Nat" Kelley and E.C. "Ted" Painter became the official drivers. This work continues today (1982), and "Ted" Painter is still the faithful driver.

In the seventies for four consecutive years, a Day Camp was conducted in the church. It was led by three of the older youths. Many enjoyable activities were engaged in and many "far away places" were reached in day long hikes. The young people also engaged in religious activities. These "fun days" were conducted two days each week for the summer months.

A good beginning in guidance and teaching love for God and respect for his house of worship has been begun in Draper's Valley Church by the mothers of the small ones. The Children's Church is conducted by various mothers each Sunday morning in the basement. It begins after the Worship service and continues through the Adult Church Services. Many activities are used to teach love and respect to these little ones from the first school grade through the fifth grade.

Mrs. Virginia Allison keeps the very tiny children in a well-equipped nursery up stairs in the far east room of the

north east corner of the church. This service is greatly appreciated by mothers and by the congregation.

Although the name of the youth organization has changed several times within Presbytery, the youth work is still active under the title of Young People's Work. In addition to the Children's Church and the nursery, there are three divisions of the Young People's Work — Juniors, Pioneers, and Senior Highs.

The enrollment has also changed greatly from time to time because children have a way of growing up, going away to college, and getting married. There are not always enough small ones to fill the vacancies and work may lag for a time; however, the work has a way of springing back with the ebb and flow of youth and time.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

The first Bible School was held in 1930 under the direction of Mr. Freeman. In order to better conduct Daily Vacation Bible School music, the first piano was bought for the church in 1930, also.

Bible Schools were not only conducted in the home church but were also conducted in other communities. In 1939 Bible School was conducted on Reed Creek. In 1940 four Bible Schools were conducted by Mr. Freeman and Mrs. Margaret Hamilton of the Richmond Training School. In 1941 three Bible Schools were conducted.

Vacation Bible Schools have continued through the years as an important part of the church work. They have at times been conducted by the Sunday School teachers and at other times by other adult members. At times other women have been brought into help. Then, too, the upper teenagers have rendered valuable assistance.

There is no way we can ever know the extent of the impact of the Sunday School, the youth work, and the Bible School on the lives of the young people who have attended one or all three. These three organizations are the most im-

portant works of Draper's Valley Presbyterian Church. We cannot do too much to guide the footsteps of our youth.

OUT POST AND HOME MISSION WORK

Draper's Valley has had the joy and the privilege of having three "Home Mission Minded Ministers" to stimulate our thinking of the needs of "others."

The first urge to do out post and Home Mission work came to the church under the leadership of the Reverend Alfred Jones in the 1890's. In 1891 Mr. Joseph Kelley organized a Sunday School in Conner's Valley. In the same year Mr. Charles Rogers conducted Sunday School in the first Oglesby schoolhouse (now Midway Service Station). Preaching services were conducted in both places in the afternoons and evenings.

In one such evening service the Session of the Draper's Valley Presbyterian Church met, and George H. Gilmer, Jr. presented himself to the Session and asked that they take him under their care to study to become a minister. His request was granted, and four years later he became our second "Mission Minded Minister."

After fifteen years of ministering in Draper's Valley, Mr. Gilmer felt the call to go into Home Mission Work. He depended to a great extent upon his home church for support, both money wise and physical labor from the youth of the church. Young people, both boys and girls, taught in out post Sunday Schools during the summer months. Four out post schools were established and taught in during the summer for several years. Two young men took teaching positions in communities where they could be of service in Sabbath School work over the week ends. Three young people taught and worked in the orphanages in Banner Elk, North Carolina and in Grundy, Virginia.

The Reverend D.R. Freeman was the church's third "Mission Minded Minister." He followed closely in Mr. Gilmer's footsteps in his love and enthusiasm for Home Mission work. He organized the first Vacation Bible Schools and

brought in summer workers to assist in the home church and in the out post communities. Where there were no church buildings available, school houses were used. Preaching services were conducted where there were no established churches.

The Reed Creek store was rented for seven years (1948-1955) and renovated into a small chapel at the cost of four hundred dollars. At the end of the seven year period, the building was returned to its original owner.

FOREIGN MISSIONS

The desire to spread the good news of the gospel grew from the home church to the foreign fields.

In 1873 the Reverend G. Whitfield Painter, son of the Reverend George Painter, went to China as a missionary. He remained in the foreign field for thirty years, coming home on furlough only once. Ill health forced him to come home permanently in 1912. He spent the next thirty years telling of China's great need for the gospel. He spoke in churches in Abingdon Presbytery and other Presbyteries and encouraged the congregations to send missionaries to China.

Dr. William P. Gilmer, nephew of G. Whitfield Painter, asked in 1922 to be sent to Korea as a Medical Missionary. In 1923 he went to Korea; however, he was there for only a short time. His wife died and left him with a little girl to rear. He felt it necessary to bring her back to Draper's Valley to be cared for by her aunts and grandmother.

He then took up residence in the hospital at Clifton Forge where he married again. He continued to teach the Bible in his chosen church and to broadcast Bible lessons by way of the radio for many years.

In July, 1979, Sarah Allison Goad and her husband Steve Goad left for Kenya, Africa, and will probably be there for three more years. At this time (1982), they are engaged in a literacy teaching mission which is intended especially for the purpose of teaching natives to read the Bible.

In June, 1981, Donna Cox Scalise and her husband Eric Scalise joined Youth For Christ and will be in training for a year. They are training to work with problem youth and to train young counselors. They hope to go to a foreign field at the end of their training.

The Draper's Valley Presbyterian Church has a heritage of being Mission Minded. That heritage is alive today because the church helps support Mission work. Many members of the congregation support privately the Missionary or Mission of their own choice.

WOMEN'S WORK

The first Women's work in the Draper's Valley Presbyterian Church was called the Women's Missionary Society. It was organized in 1874 by Mrs. Eliza Gilmer, wife of the Reverend George Gilmer, Sr.

The first meeting was held in the home of Misses Jane and Lucy Graham. There were ten women present. Miss Lucy Graham was president of the organization for several years. The meetings were held in the homes of the members as the weather permitted. Their aims were to increase interest in church work and study missions near at home and on the foreign field.

The Women's work later became known as the Auxiliary Society and the membership was divided into circles. At first there was a feeling of loneliness for the old way; but as time passed, the circles came to be accepted and enjoyed.

Mission books were studied in individual circles and then reviewed by the entire membership as they met together as a group. In time portions of a whole book of the Bible were studied under the guidance of the pastor; however, in later years individual members began teaching.

Today (1982) the Women's Work is called Women of the Church, and every lady member of the church is considered a member of a circle; however, many of the ladies are not active members. There are three active circles that meet at

different times to meet the needs of the ladies. One circle meets at ten A.M.; one meets at two P.M.; and one meets at seven thirty P.M.

The Women's work is organized with a council which is made up of the president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, historian, the three circle chairmen, and four committee chairmen. Most of the time the women teach their own lessons, support missions, help support a child at the Children's Home in Wytheville, support the Birthday work and White Cross, host most meals at the church, and support the Joy Gift offering and program are some of the activities of the Women of the Church through the circles.

THE MEN'S WORK

The first attempt to organize the men of the church was in 1927. The first officers were R.B. Shelor, President; John C. Allison, Secretary; and J.H. Pratt, Treasurer. This organization was short lived because of lack of interest.

The men were organized again in the early 1950's. Interest has been kept alive until the present. Today the men are very active. They have interesting programs; sometimes they have a guest speaker and a dinner meeting. They are responsible for many church ground improvements and are always willing to help with whatever projects that need their help. They are supportive of the Women's Work.

CHOIR

No one seems to know when the first choir was organized nor when the first organ was bought.

At one time the organ was in the gallery and the choir sat there too. At a later date the choir moved down to the front of the church on the left of the Minister with the organ in front of the choir.

There have been four organs in the church. The first two were pumped by foot pedals, the last two were electric. The one in use now has a full set of pedal notes.

Today there is a beautiful YahaMa Grand Piano in front of the present choir which is on the Minister's right. It was the gift of Ernest Oglesby of Charlottesville in memory of his Great Grandparents who were the first Oglesbys in Draper's Valley.

Edmund P. Allison, a graduate musician, is the church organist. He is the first man to serve as organist.

Mrs. Robert Ingram is the choir director. Although the church has had several choir directors, she is our first live-in for years.

The choir renders beautiful selections each Sunday as well as presenting special musical programs for special occasions.

Down from His Glory was beautifully presented for the 1981 Christmas program.

Hallelujah, Christ Lives proved to be a very inspiring and worshipful musical program on Easter Sunday, 1982.

Both of these presentations included singers from neighboring churches as well as the Draper's Valley Presbyterian choir members.

Two youth choirs have been organized — The Celestial Choir and The Chancel Choir. The Celestial Choir sings an anthem about once a month for Sunday Service.

LIBRARY

The church library was instituted in the early 1970's with an annoyomous gift of one hundred dollars. An accessable room was chosen for the library, and books for children to twelve years of age were bought.

Through the years the library has grown to include books for all ages as well as references, Christian novels, tapes, and records. The library is supported by memorial gifts and through the church budget.

CEMETERY

The first church related cemetery in Draper's Valley was located on the land due west of the church about three-fourths of a mile from the church building. The land belonged to Mr. John Thompson Sayers.

The first person buried there was little Sally Sayers. The family wanted her buried on the hill in sight of the home for fear the Indians might steal the body. It seems that Indians had used the same hill top for a burying ground. Indian relics have been found in the ground when other graves were being dug. Buttons and buckles from the uniforms of Revolutionary soldiers have also been found.

In 1908 at a meeting of the Session of the Draper's Valley Presbyterian Church, the cemetery was officially named "Oglesby Cemetery."

In 1918 the congregation felt the need for another cemetery to be more conveniently located near the church. Land was bought just across the road from the church building.

The first people to be buried in the new cemetery were Mary Sue Wood Painter and little Katherine Painter, daughter of J.C. Painter, Sr. and Maude Miller Painter. Both died in the flu epidemic of 1918.

Into His Service

There have been many young men and women, who have some family or sentimental relationship to The Draper's Valley Presbyterian Church, who have gone into full time Christian service.

Sons who have gone into full time service:

Charles C. Painter	James McChesney
James Crockett Painter	Graham McChesney
G. Whitfield Painter	Robert Orr Freeman
George H. Gilmer, Jr.	David Freeman
Graham (NMN) Gilmer, Sr.	James A. Allison
Graham (NMN) Gilmer, Jr.	Richard B. Shelor
Preston Orr Sartelle, Jr.	John P. Sartelle
Charles McChesney	Mike Sartelle

Daughters who have gone into full time service by marrying ministers:

Edith Freeman	J.W. Pstton
Pat Sartelle	Cortez Cooper
Susan Sartelle	Calvin Jett
Mary Sue Oglesby	Christopher Doyle
Louise Felts	Robert Crumpler
Martha Poarch	Thomas Farmer
Martha Allison	Sam Shumate

Two daughters and their husbands have gone into full time mission work:

Sarah Allison	Steve Goad
Donna Cox	Eric Scalise

Church descendants in full time service who have not been members of Draper's Valley Presbyterian Church:

William Lee Painter
Betty Jean Gilmer Young
Blair Gilmer Meeks

"They also serve who sit in the pews and listen
Who sit in the classes to be taught
Who take part in church activities as directed
Who come to be a part of the crowd."

The harmonious good will toward all men which was found in the Old Harmony Church in 1808 has continued to bind the schools and the churches of Draper's Valley Community together in love and fellowship through the years, harmoniously, to 1982.

MINISTERS WHO HAVE SERVED THE DRAPER'S VALLEY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

George Painter (Founder and First Pastor) . . .	1832—1862
Thomas D. Hudson (Assistant)	1853—1855
Isaac N. Naff	1862—1873
George Hudson Gilmer	1874—1888
W.N. Mebane (Licentiate) Feb. 1889—July 1889	
Alfred Jones	1890—1896
Dr. George H. Gilmer	1896—1911
Dupey Holliday	1812—1815
James McChesney	1915—1926
Frank G. Hartman	1927—1929
D.R. Freeman	1929—1942
Preston Orr Sartelle, Sr.	1942—1957
George Murray, III (Supply)1944
Dr. Flow (SUPPLY)	1944—1946
John K. Boyd	1957—1960
J. Strother Boyd (Supply) April, 1960—Nov., 1960	
Don Collins	1961—1967
Hallett G. Hullinger	1967—1982

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Southwest Times

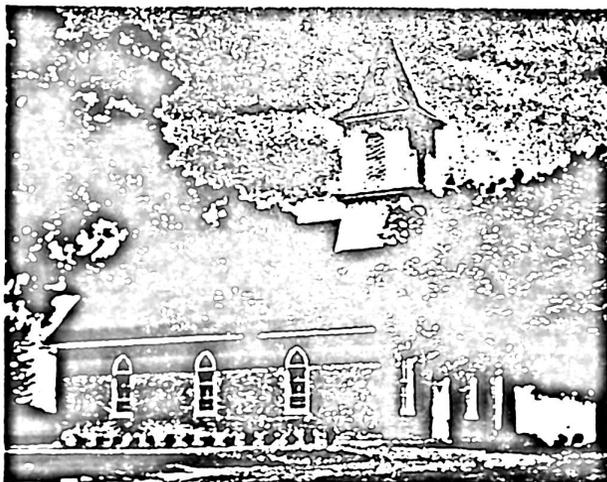
Sunday Records for Draper's Valley Presbyterian Church



*Draper Valley Academy
1872 — 1924*

*Draper
Valley
Presbyterian
Church*

*Built in 1840
of native clay
formed into
bricks by
local labor.*



Present Manse — 1982



*Draper Valley Academy
1872 — 1924*

*Draper
Valley
Presbyterian
Church*

*Built in 1840
of native clay
formed into
bricks by
local labor.*



Present Manse — 1982

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Painter, Sydney
Draper's Valley Presbyterian
Church, 1832-1982

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