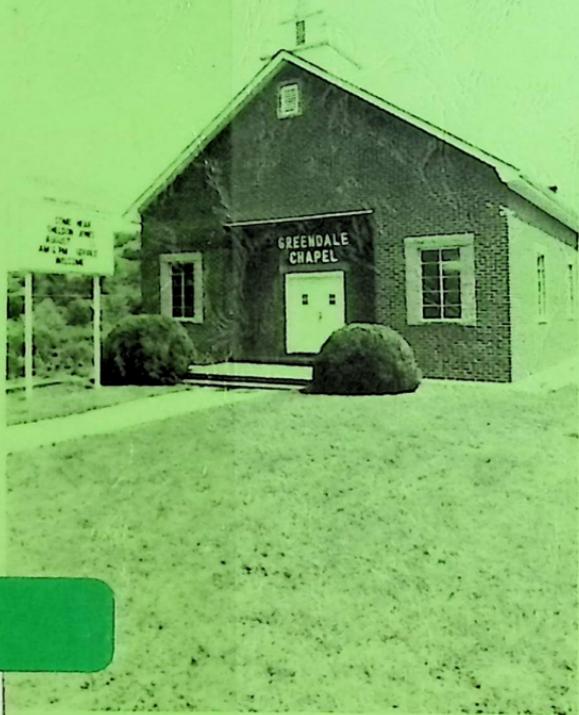


Miracle on Greendale Creek

A HISTORY OF GREENDALE CHAPEL

GREENDALE, VIRGINIA



in 1912

**Gen.
287
PHI**

By: BUD PHILLIPS, Clerk of the Church

1981

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A HISTORY OF
GREENDALE CHAPEL

Greendale, Virginia

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By: BUD PHILLIPS, Clerk of the Church

1981



MISS NINA GARRETT

She is sometimes called the mother of our church, because she arranged the meeting which finally led to its founding.



STUART LILLY

Meetings in his home finally led to the organization of a new church on Green-dale Creek.

A WORD FROM THE AUTHOR

Four miles north of Abingdon, Virginia, Greendale Creek crosses Rich Valley. Nestled among the divided hills at this picturesque location is the peaceful little village of Greendale. There, just below the crossing of Highway 19 and Route 700 is an eye-catching, red brick church with a white steeple pointing to the sky. Out front is a new, lighted sign which not only tells you that this is Greendale Chapel but also carries a frequently changed proverb for the instruction or inspiration of the thousands who daily pass the busy crossroads. Directly in back and across the meandering stream is an older church where an unusual event occurred which caused the formation of the newer congregation. A short distance below that old church still stands the large, two-story brick store building where the new congregation worshiped until the present highway-side chapel was erected. Though Greendale Chapel is a comparatively new church, it has a long, unusual, and interesting history. Many have sacrificed, labored, and prayed that this active and growing church might exist, and many now make similar, noble efforts that it may continue. This history is largely a record of those efforts. It is my sincere hope that from such an exposition there may flow new devotion, determination, and zeal to support and continue the beloved testimony of our founders.

My sincere gratitude is expressed to those who provided written records, or shared their memories for this history. Without their kind assistance, it would not have been possible.

V.N. (Bud) Phillips
Clerk of the Church
123 East State St.
Bristol, Virginia
July 31, 1981

IN THE BEGINNING

The church which we now know as Greendale Chapel came into existence because of a controversial conversion. In early 1950, a mid-week prayer meeting was to be held in the Greendale Methodist Church. Miss Nina Garrett, who still assists in many of our services, was in charge of that meeting. Desiring that the service be as effective as possible, she invited Rev. Joe Corvin, a popular radio preacher of Bristol, Tennessee, to speak to the group. The minister accepted the invitation and delivered an inspirational and stimulating message. Little did that band of faithful Christians know, as they stood and joined in the invitation song at the conclusion of that service, that they were not only inviting sinners to repentance, but were "inviting" a new church for their little village. Those sincere efforts were blest and bore fruit for a Mr. and Mrs. Cumbow from up Rich Valley were converted that night.

The pastor of the Methodist Church was not at that prayer meeting but did come for his regular appointment on the following Sunday night. Mr. Stuart Lilly, then a local merchant and song leader in the church, told the pastor the good news of the Cumbows' conversion at the mid-week meeting. Evidently though, the pastor was not thrilled by that which had been a cause of rejoicing by many of his flock. When he arose to preach, he shocked his listeners by stating that it seemed to him that the Cumbows could have waited until the regular meeting time to make a profession of faith.

At the close of the service, Mr. Lilly began to gather up his song books, preparing to permanently leave the church. A yet living witness at that scene tells of how the wife of Dr. Smeltzer (a local physician) tearfully begged the shocked song leader to

remain with them. The gates of fate swing on small hinges and one is awed by the thought that there probably would never have been a Greendale Chapel if Mr. Lilly had given heed to that sincere plea of his neighbor. However, he did not but soon began having prayer services in his own home. At that time, the Lilly home was the two story house which yet stands between the church and Route 700 and which was recently purchased by our local congregation. Those early meetings were made up of the Lilly family and many others who had left the local Methodist Church with them. In the course of time, others took a stand with them.



THE NEW GROUP FIRST MET IN THE LILLY HOME
TO THE RIGHT OF OUR PRESENT CHURCH.

In every aspect of life, the coming of spring nearly always inspires new hope, zeal, and determination. So it was with the little band of faithful Christians on Greendale Creek. When the refreshing spring of that mid-century year began to slowly, silently, yet surely spread its green mantle of new life over the Washington County hills, there was new stir-

ring in the camp of those who had dedicated themselves to the preservation of a pure testimony in their beloved community. In April of 1950, this group launched out and opened a church in an old brick store building which still stands just across the road from the residence of the late Denton H. Singleton. This building, then owned by Stuart Lilly, is within sight of our present church. The work was then known as THE GREENDALE GOSPEL CENTER and bore that name for over two years. The upper portion of this building was used for some time before the church services were moved downstairs. After that move, the upper portion continued to be used for the Sunday School.

IN THIS OLD
BRICK STORE
BUILDING,
THE NEW
CHURCH WAS
ORGANIZED
IN 1950.
IT WAS THEN
CALLED
GREENDALE
GOSPEL
CENTER.



The Board of Directors for the new center consisted of the following members:

DENTON H. SINGLETON	NINA GARRETT
ED McCROSKEY	EARL SINGLETON
CECIL KESNER	DEAN FURGERSON
STUART LILLY	

Ed McCroskey was elected Chairman with Dean Furgerson as Vice-Chairman. Denton H. Singleton was elected Welcome Chairman for new visitors. Miss Nina Garrett was elected Secretary and Treasurer with Evelyn Kesner (now Mrs. Bob Gillenwater) as her assistant. There is some indication that the organizational meeting for the Center may have occurred May 21, 1950. The first entry in the Secretary's book concerns the purchase of an oil mop for the floors of the building. It was to be paid for from Sunday School funds.

Gene Lilly, a son of Stuart Lilly, was put in charge of organizing a Sunday School for the Center. Mr. George Kesner, who was then still serving as Assistant Superintendent of the Sunday School at the Greendale Methodist Church was unanimously elected as the Superintendent for the new school at the Center. I have heard Geo. tell of how he used to take his truck and drive down the surrounding creeks and hollows to bring in students for the classes.

GIVE AND IT SHALL BE GIVEN YOU

Those who founded Greendale Gospel Center gave much of themselves to create and maintain a fundamental church in the community. Having thus given, they found that much would be given them. Help came from near and far. In the Secretary's book we find this early memo:

Gifts to Greendale Gospel Center

Mr. Denton Singleton ---	
Pans and register	\$14.00

Walters Lumber Company ---	
Lumber	\$15.00
Mr. E.H. Auter, Louisville, Ky. ---	
Sunday School Bell	
Mr. and Mrs. Harlow Singleton ---	
One Pulpit Chair	\$10.00

And there were many other gifts of merchandise, money, labor, and time.

One of the urgent needs of the new church was for seats. A committee meeting on the matter was held June 8, 1950. The secretary recorded the proceedings as follows:

1. Seats for the Gospel Center --
 Motion was made by Denton H. Singleton to buy lumber to make seats, such materials to be obtained from Miller and Bradley Lumber Co. This was seconded by Earl Singleton.
2. Committee to get the lumber:
 Cecil Kesner
 Stuart Lilly
 Denton Singleton

A few days after that meeting, the secretary added a note stating that seats were purchased, painted, and put in the building. The cost of the seats is given at \$40.00. Paint cost \$11.80, making a total of \$51.80. From word of mouth information, it seems that someone found some pews in an old church which were for sale, and these were bought before any were built. (A few may have been constructed later.) Some of these "ancient" pews are still scattered about over our church and some are stored elsewhere. We who have sat upon them know that our founders and their followers who had to sit upon them at every service were willing to suffer in order to hear the gospel! However, they are sturdy and some are made of rare chestnut lumber. (They are for sale at the time of this writing.)



EARLY SUNDAY SCHOOL GROUP IN FRONT OF
THE OLD BRICK STORE, ABOUT 1952.

From the Secretary's record book, we have a list of those who gave money on the seating project. Eight people gave \$10.00 each. They were:

Maurice Mongle
Denton Singleton
Ed McCroskey
Cecil Kesner
Georgia Kesner
Nina Garrett
Earl Singleton
Lundy Singleton

It may be noted that when the old seats were found, purchased, and painted, the total expenditure was only \$51.80 which left a surplus of \$28.20 in the seating fund. To this amount, Miss Nina Garrett added \$20.00, and a piano was purchased with those funds. It is thought that the piano which is now in

our basement is the same instrument which was purchased at that time. At the same time, Miss Garrett gave an additional \$10.00 for the purchase of a needed chair.

So gift followed gift until the Greendale Gospel Center was well furnished and equipped to do the noble task to which it was dedicated.



EARLY LEADERS IN THE NEW CHURCH ON GREENDALE CREEK

From left to right:
Denton Singleton, Glenn Worley,
Stuart Lilly, Ed McCroskey, Campbell
McCroskey, and George Kesner

THE WORD IS PROCLAIMED

In those early days, various speakers filled the pulpit at Greendale Gospel Center. We have a record of some of them, including the date they preached and the amount of the offering received. That record follows:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Rev. T. B. Freeman	May 31, 1950	\$12.00
Rev. Howard Boyll	June 4, 1950	8.23
Rev. Dan Graham	June 7, 1950	10.07
Mr. E.C. Denton	June 18, 1950	8.30
Rev. T.B. Freeman	July 2, 1950	14.00
Mr. E.C. Denton	July 16, 1950	none
Rev. T.B. Freeman	Aug. ?, 1950	13.54
Rev. T.B. Freeman	Sept. 3, 1950	13.46
Evangelist Rufus Mitchell	Aug. ?, 1950	15.27

Rev. Howard Boyll conducted a Bible course for the Center June 19-25, 1950. For this work he was paid \$20.00.

No further entries are made in this early Secretary's book except a notation on page 83 and many blank pages removed from the earlier entries. In a very fine hand (no one knows whose) someone wrote, "Miss Nina Garrett is a very fine lady." Many yet agree with that long ago, unknown scribe.

In those days, Mary Archangelo and Dola Aeschliman, school missionaries, were living on the Gose farm near Gose Chapel not many miles from Greendale. Mr. Stuart Lilly asked the ladies to help in the new work. For some time they conducted a daytime Bible Club in which they would have ten to twelve students. They also helped some with the new Sunday School. In sharing their memories with me, they mentioned that there was no pastor at that time. They also mentioned that some of the local folks called the Center the Upper Room Church. It may be noted here that our present pastor was converted in a similar Bible Club which these same ladies conducted in a vacant store building on Wyndale Road near Abingdon. (That store was operated by the Pastor's aunt, now Mrs. Bonnie Nash of Bristol, Virginia.

Attendance at worship services in those early days has been estimated at sixty to

seventy-five persons by some of those who then attended. No one remembers a funeral having ever been held in the old store building. There was one wedding there--the marriage of Ruby McCroskey, daughter of Ed and Bay McCroskey, to Lee Black.

ONE BY ONE, THEY PASS AWAY

"One by one they pass away--the brothers of our adoption, the companions of our choice." So reads the lines of an ancient ritual. Those words are so true as applied to the early founders, friends, and helpers of what is now Greendale Chapel. Rev. Joe Corvin, who preached that night when the controversial conversions occurred, has long gone on to meet his maker. Stuart Lilly, who strove so hard for a free testimony in his community, fell dead in the yard between the present church and the house next door, December 2, 1966. Denton H. Singleton, the first Welcome Chairman, died about three years ago. Cecil Kesner, one of the first Directors, died in October of 1979 of injuries received a few weeks before while working in a field near his home. Ed McCroskey, the first Chairman of the Board of Directors, died in October of 1980. George Kesner, the first Sunday School Superintendent, died early on the morning of July 11, 1980, of a heart attack. Rev. Dan Graham, early friend and frequent speaker for the new work, died in January of 1975 after a long and useful life in the ministry. Mr. E.C. Denton, another early speaker here, died a short while back. And yet several remain in the land of the living. Miss Nina Garrett, called by some the mother of Greendale Chapel because she organized the meeting which led to the organization of a new church, still attends and plays music for our weekly prayer meeting. Evelyn Kesner, now Mrs. Bob Gillenwater, who was the first Assistant Secretary, still regularly attends

the services here. We are blest to have the widow of the first Sunday School Superintendent in our midst (Mrs. Georgia Kesner). Widows of some of the other first officers yet live, though some are not now members here. Among those yet members are Mrs. Stuart Lilly (now Mrs. Roscoe Hayter) and Mrs. Ed. (Bay) McCroskey. Gene Lilly, who organized the first Sunday School in the new work, yet lives but is working in another church. Some who attended that Sunday School from its first day yet worship with us including John Lilly, now a Deacon, and Sarah Scott Fields, who now is our pianist. Mary Archangelo and Dola Aeschliman, who conducted the first Bible Club for the new work, now live in Bristol, TN, and are still active in Christian work. Harlow Singleton and Dean Furgerson, early board members, are yet living but no longer attend here. There may be others who ought to be mentioned here in some manner or capacity, and we are grateful to them whoever and wherever they may be for what they did in laying the foundation for Greendale Chapel.

A NEW CONNECTION

By the year 1952, a move was on in the Greendale Gospel Center to unite with an established denomination and to build a new house of worship. Some of the members desired to unite with the Southern Presbyterian body. Overtures were made to that denomination which were answered by sincere interest. Representatives of that church wanted to buy land and then have the local congregation erect a suitable building. Their choice of sites was the knoll just across the highway from the present building (corner of Highway 19 and Route 700) and on which a large barn now stands. Mr. Campbell McCroskey, who by then had come into the new group and who was the chief negotiator between it and the Southern Presbyterians,

discovered that it was their intention to have the local property deeded to the Abingdon Presbytery. It was at that point that negotiations were broken off as this plan was not suitable to the members at Greendale Gospel Center.

It is said that these Christians learned of and became interested in the new Bible Presbyterian denomination in July of 1952. In August of that year they voted to join that body. (It is recorded that there were eighteen members voting on that merger.) Rev. William A. Marlowe became the first supply pastor. The church was officially received into the Carolina Presbytery at its meeting in October of 1952. The following officers were serving at that time:

Ed McCroskey, Clerk and Elder
George Kesner, Elder
Glenn Worley, Elder
Campbell McCroskey, Deacon
Stuart Lilly, Deacon

Early photos show that a sign was soon hung on the front of the old store building proclaiming that a Bible Presbyterian Church was within.

A very early membership roll of the Bible Presbyterian Church at Greendale reads as follows:

1. D.H. Singleton
2. Ed McCroskey
3. George Kesner
4. Campbell McCroskey
5. Elizabeth McCroskey
6. Glenna McCroskey
(now Glenna Staley)
7. Tommy McCroskey
8. Maxine McCroskey
(now Maxine Phillips)
9. Georgia Kesner
10. Stuart Lilly
11. Edna Lilly
12. Gene Lilly

13. Johnny Lilly
14. Carolyn Lilly
15. Janice Lilly
(now Janice Roberts)
16. Mrs. Wm. A. Marlowe
17. George Johnston
18. Margaret Johnson
19. Josephine Lewis
20. Glenn Worley
21. Mildred Worley
22. Delene Worley
(now Delene Eades)
23. Blanche Singleton
24. Arzell Warren
25. Reba Lilly
26. Bay McCroskey
27. J.R. Lilly
28. Virginia Lilly
29. Hal Smith (later pastor)
30. Allene (Polly) Smith
31. Gladys Smith
32. Martha Joan Smith
33. Ronald Hal Smith
34. Margaret Cox

(There is a notation that those from 29-34 joined on January 4, 1953.)

An old record book shows that the Kentucky Presbytery met at the new Bible Presbyterian Church at Greendale on January 13-15, 1953, for their regular mid-winter meeting. The church had been switched to their jurisdiction and was publicly welcomed at that meeting. The Presbytery ordained the new deacons and elders, and Rev. Preson P. Phillips, then president of the new Dan Graham Bible Institute in Bristol, Tennessee, was appointed moderator of the Session until the church could call a regular pastor. Rev. William A. Marlowe was invited to continue as Supply Pastor until a permanent leader could be installed.

It was noted at that time that two members of the congregation were preparing for the ministry, Hal Smith and Gene Lilly. It was

also noted that Polly and Gladys Smith (wife and daughter of Hal) were preparing for Christian service. The Smiths were students at Graham Bible Institute when I came there in the late summer of 1953. Balance in the treasury: January 1, 1953 was \$51.20.



REV. BOB COX

Rev. Bob Cox, a teacher in the Graham Bible Institute of Bristol, was soon elected as the first regular pastor. His work began on March 1, 1953. His first sermon there was based on the text of I. Corinthians 2:2. I had Mr. Cox as a teacher at the Graham Bible

Institute for several months beginning in September of 1953. He was a fine Christian and a dedicated servant of his appointed duties. He had been badly crippled by arthritis of the spine (he had to turn his entire body to turn his head), yet his affliction had not kept him from laboring diligently in his chosen field. His many acts of kindness toward me shall be long remembered.

Some of the early teachers in the Bible Presbyterian Church were: Ed McCroskey, who taught a men's class; Elizabeth McCroskey, the women's teacher; Campbell McCroskey, the young people's teacher (he still teaches in our Sunday School nearly thirty years later). Cecil Kesner was an early song leader as were Gene and Stuart Lilly.

A CHAPEL IS BUILT AT THE CROSSING OF THE ROADS

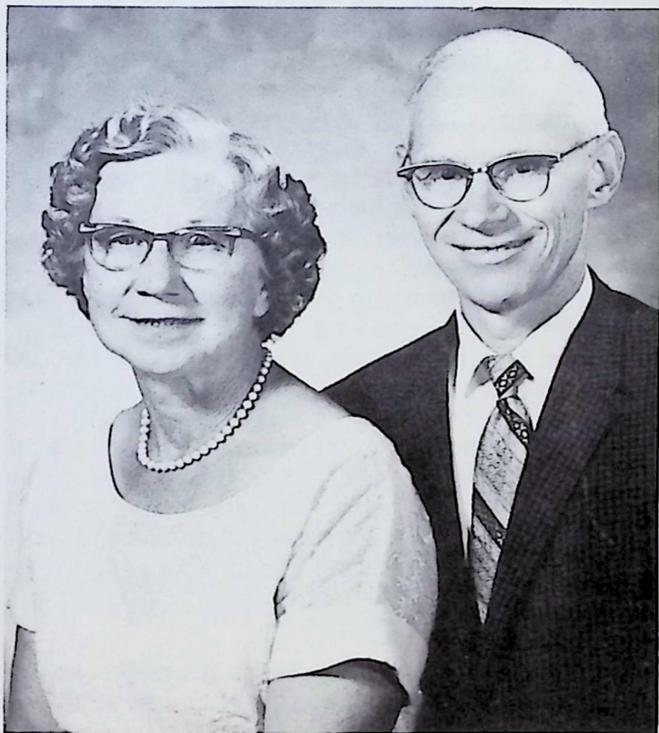
The church greatly desired to erect a new house of worship, but first land had to be obtained. Ed McCroskey offered a tract from his farm which was located a short distance down Rich Valley, and other sites may have been considered. However, the final choice was a lot offered by Stuart Lilly immediately adjoining his home yard. A deed to this lot was executed on February 5, 1954. This deed carries not only the usual specifications for certain land but also spells out the doctrines which were to be believed, practiced, and protected in the church which was to be erected thereon. Later, Mr. Lilly gave another strip of land from his backyard to be added to the first given lot. This was done after it was found that the outside basement steps actually extended onto the Lilly property. Many years later and through the efforts of Campbell McCroskey, a right-of-way leading to Route 700 was purchased from the Lilly heirs.

The first official record we have con-

cerning the new building project is dated February 20, 1954. It concerns a meeting of the church officers which was opened in prayer by Campbell McCroskey. During the meeting a building committee was elected which consisted of the following men:

George Kesner
Denton H. Singleton
Stuart Lilly
Campbell McCroskey

During the same meeting a motion was made to hire Luther Counts to supervise the building of the church and that he was to be paid \$1.25 per hour. This meeting was adjourned in prayer by George Kesner. The minutes were signed by Ed McCroskey, Secretary.



REV. & MRS. BURTON TOMS

He was pastor when our present building was erected.

It is thought that work began on the project in March of April of 1954. (The first records of work are dated in April, 1954.) Rev. Burton Toms, a teacher in the Graham Bible Institute of Bristol, Tennessee, had become Pastor sometime before the beginning of the project, and many remember how he labored alongside the men of the community as the work progressed. I had Mr. Toms as a teacher during that time and remember many of the noble Christian qualities exhibited by him. It is said that he designed and helped build the steeple over our front door.

As work on the new building progressed, many people contributed labor, materials, and money toward its completion. Fortunately, we do have a list of at least some of those who contributed time and labor, although I feel it may be incomplete. This list includes: Ed McCroskey, Campbell McCroskey, George Johnston, Stuart Lilly, George Kesner, Rev. Burton Toms (pastor), Floyd Holmes, and Harlow Singleton. During the month of April, 1954, a total of 475 hours were donated to the work. On the part of individuals and on a daily basis, these ranged from one hour to twenty continuous hours. (This latter figure was by Campbell McCroskey on April 23-24, 1954.) There is a list of those who loaned their trucks for the hauling of materials to be used on the building (it may be incomplete). This list includes Campbell McCroskey, Ed McCroskey, and Denton H. Singleton. On occasion some of the members hired others to work in their place. Three men were hired in this manner on April 19, 1954. Notations show payment of \$5.00 to Luther Counts and \$3.75 to John Price on one occasion.

A very fragmentary list of those who gave or collected cash contributions is also yet in existence. From these incomplete records we find that on April 1, 1954, Denton Singleton gave \$20.00; Campbell McCroskey had collected

\$41.00; and Pauline McCroskey (now Pauline Holt) gave \$10.00. A breakdown of the \$41.00 collected by Campbell McCroskey goes as follows: Mr. T.P. Freeman-\$10.00, Bill Debusk-\$10.00, R.C. Honaker-\$10.00, Ernest Phillips-\$5.00, Maxine McCroskey (now Mrs. Ernest Phillips)-\$5.00. No explanation of the extra dollar is given.

Some local landowners gave timber to be made into lumber and used in the new building. I have no list of the donors but it is known that Campbell McCroskey gave five thousand feet from his place while his brother, Ed McCroskey, gave four thousand, two hundred feet for that purpose. Nora Garrett DeBusk gave an undetermined amount of timber from her Rich Valley land.

A loan of \$5,000.00 was obtained from Mr. Willis Engle on May 11, 1954, in order to complete the building. This was set up to be repaid over a five year period and consisted of five individual notes each dated to mature over the following five consecutive years. There was an interest rate of 5% included in each note, but Mr. Engle would never accept payment of that provision. (Mr. Engle was a brother-in-law of Campbell McCroskey, Ed McCroskey, Pauline Holt, and Mildred Worley of the local congregation.) It is estimated that the actual cash cost of the building was about \$8,000.00.

As the men labored through that long and very hot summer of 1954 (it was a record-breaker, heat wise), the women were also very active. They desired to furnish the new chapel in a manner that would glorify the Lord and be pleasing to man. A women's organization had early come into existence in the new group of which Mrs. Elizabeth McCroskey was president. This organization turned its attention toward securing pews and determined to have them installed by the time the building was completed. By various means these

ladies worked faithfully toward that goal. Old and yellowing papers still show the names of many who labored in that effort and the amounts they collected: Mrs. Mildred Worley-\$115.00, Mrs. George (Georgia) Kesner-\$163.00, Mrs. D.H. Singleton-\$64.00, Mrs. Virginia Lilly-\$164.80, Mrs. Ed McCroskey-\$180.00, Mrs. Campbell McCroskey-\$301.00, Mrs. Stuart Lilly-\$119.50, Mrs. Burton Toms (wife of the Pastor)-\$35.00, Delene Worley-\$5.00, and a Mrs. Stallard-\$47.00.

From the recollections of some yet living, we have pieced together a partial listing of those who donated the price of a complete pew for the chapel (the listing may be incomplete). Among them we find: Mrs. Ratcliffe, Mr. and Mrs. Campbell McCroskey, Tommy McCroskey, Maxine Russell, Herbert Ratcliffe, Mrs. Stuart Lilly, Stuart Lilly, Ida Stallard, Dr. Hugh Smeltzer, Mr. and Mrs. George Kesner, and Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Phillips.

The pews were purchased from a factory near Greenville, Tennessee. Rev. Dan Graham made the recommendation that they be bought there, and Mr. and Mrs. Campbell McCroskey made a trip there to complete the final arrangements. When the pews were ready, Mr. McCroskey transported them to the new church in a truck which he had borrowed from his brother-in-law, Herbert Ratcliffe.

A communion table which is still in use in our sanctuary was given by Rev. and Mrs. Burton Toms. Mr. Will Clapp made and gave the pulpit which was used for many years (up through the first few months of the term of our present pastor) in our sanctuary. It is now used in the young people's classroom in our church basement.

Brick by brick, timber by timber, plank by plank the building grew so that by late summer the new furnishings could be moved in. A short time later (most think it was Sept., 1954) the congregation moved from the old brick

store building to the new location at the crossroads. Rev. Burton Toms continued on as Pastor for a considerable time after the move (probably until sometime in 1957). Soon after the move into the new building, Rev. Dan Graham held what is believed to have been the first revival there. For that revival, a new organ was borrowed from the McClister Music Company of Bristol, Tennessee. Nina Garrett, Gene Lilly, and Stuart Lilly decided during that revival to purchase the organ, each of them paying one-third of the total cost. The lovely tones of that organ still inspire us during our worship services.

The Trustees of the new church were:

George Kesner
Campbell McCroskey
Harlow Singleton
Gene Lilly
Lawrence Stallard

Some think that either the marriage of Betty Sue Trent (daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Trent of Smith Creek) or Glenna McCroskey (daughter of Campbell and Elizabeth McCroskey) was the first to be held in the new church. Some think that it was not until 1966, twelve years after occupancy, that a funeral was conducted there. This was the funeral of Stuart Lilly, one of the founders of the church. An all-night wake was held for him in the sanctuary. I believe that his funeral was conducted by Rev. Sheldon Jones of South Carolina who had traveled all night in order to be there for the service. Others had part in the rites including: Rev. Hal Smith, Rev. Dan Graham, and Rev. Hinnant.

I first visited and spoke in the new church in the late winter or early spring of 1956. I recall that the building and furnishings still had a very new appearance at that time. Especially do I remember the finely sanded and polished hardwood floors. That section of pews to the right of the front door as one

enters the sanctuary was nearly filled that day, and there was a "sprinkling" of folks on the other side. The old piano which is now in our basement was used along with the new organ in the song services before my message. Rev. Burton Toms was still Pastor at that time. That Sunday he had to be away at some other church in the area (Alvarado, I think), so he drove me to Greendale (I had no car at the time before continuing on to his special appointment. After the service, I was invited to the Stuart Lilly home next door to have lunch and to await the return of Rev. Toms. Mrs. Lilly prepared a fine meal which included canned pears from the tree which stood between our church and the house next door until about two years ago. At that time, I never faintly imagined that I would ever be pastor of that fine church. However, the pen of fate writes on, and one never knows what may be written on the pages of tomorrow.

The beautiful and substantial chapel which those faithful and determined Christians labored so long and diligently to build and into which they poured untold labor, gifts, and perhaps a few tears still stands at the crossroads. Its doors are still opened to those who would come aside from the toils and cares of life to refresh themselves in a house of God. Its ministry is still offered to the spiritually thirsty and sin-wounded masses of the land. Its quaint, white steeple still steadfastly points to better things above. We who worship there today honor and hold in grateful remembrance those whose selfless labors of love made our beloved place of worship possible.

AT THE TOP OF THE FOLLOWING PAGE
IS A PICTURE OF THE INTERIOR OF
THE NEW GREENDALE CHAPEL BUILDING.



A LONG-TERM PASTOR COMES TO GREENDALE CREEK

In the thirty-one year history of our church there have been only six regular pastors. One pastor, Rev. Hal Smith of Bristol, Tennessee, served nearly half the time our work has been in existence. He became pastor in 1957, probably in the autumn of that year. During his term as pastor, the church was freed of debt and a dedication service was held on Sunday, September 3, 1961. I am fortunate to have a copy of that day's program. On the front cover, it is stated that the church was then a member of the American and International Council of Christian Churches. Also that it was affiliated with the 20th Century Reformation Movement. The Session is listed within and contains the same members as in the beginning of the work. The Board of Deacons at time of the dedication consisted of J.R. Lilly, Stuart Lilly, and Denton H. Singleton who was then Chairman of the Board. The opening hymn for that day's program was

"All Hail the Power of Jesus Name". Later, a trio consisting of Carolyn Lilly, Janice Lilly (now Mrs. Wilbert Roberts), and Sarah Scott (now Mrs. Roy Fields) sang "The Church's One Foundation". The dedication message was delivered by Rev. James Pond, and the dedication prayer was by Rev. Hal Smith. After the noon meal the afternoon service opened with "When We All get to Heaven" followed with prayer by Ed McCroskey. The afternoon message was delivered by Rev. Dan H. Graham.

On the back of that day's program is a writing entitled, "We Dedicate this Building". I believe it was composed by Rev. Hal Smith. It is still a grand statement of our plan and purpose. The text follows:

"We dedicate this building to be used for the glory of God.

May it be a place for those who mourn to be comforted.

May it be a place for those who fear to become brave.

May it be a place where the poor will be welcome.

May it be a place where the unreached will be reached for Christ.

May only the true gospel go forth from its pulpit.

May this gospel go forth not in word only, but in power and in the Holy Ghost.

May from its pews go men, women, boys, and girls to be consecrated workers for our Lord until Jesus comes."

The years rolled on after that dedication with the usual victories and defeats which are the common lot of any church and its pastor. There were high days and low days. The attendance and interest remained commendable for the most part. At one time, a study

course of some sort was used in the prayer meeting for a long period. During that time, many came from near and far to study the word. The attendance at those study meetings is estimated to have reached the seventy mark and more.



REV. AND MRS. HAL SMITH

In early 1967, I resigned the pastorate of the New Hope Presbyterian Church near Batesville, Arkansas, and re-entered the evangelistic field. After meetings in Florida, I began to move northward in the spring. As I preached up through Georgia and the Carolinas, I saw the dogwood bloom five times, but they had blossomed and long faded when I reached Greendale Creek in late May that year. Rev. Hal Smith was still pastor and set a revival for me sometime around Memorial Day. The

meeting was very well attended, and interest was intense. Many who attended that revival are faithful attendants of our services now. On Sunday afternoon and not long before service time at the church, there was a tragic accident at the crossing above the church. As I recall, two people were killed and others severely injured. There was a marked solemnity in the service that night. Rev. Smith strongly emphasized the need to be prepared to die at any time. The J.R. Lillys were then treasurer of the church. I remember drafting a thank you note to them to be presented to the church for the \$67.00 which I received for my services there. At the time, Rev. Smith was also serving as pastor of Sugar Grove Church near Benhams and of Union Hope near Bristol. As I later conducted revivals in those churches, some of the members from Greendale Creek drove down occasionally for the services. A high night of the Union Hope revival was that one when a granddaughter of Rev. Smith's was converted.

STORM CLOUDS GATHER OVER GREENDALE CREEK

The continuing miracle of the chapel at the crossroads is that though it has on occasion been beset by "stormy weather", it always has well stood the stress and has come through to sunny days again, sometimes brighter than ever before.

The dawning of the decade of the 70's saw storm clouds gathering over our beloved place of worship on Greendale Creek. Most of the members there were not in harmony with some of the doctrine believed and taught by the Bible Presbyterian Church. The doctrine which seems to have been the most serious source of contention was that of unconditional election. The contention grew into open conflict, so that by mid-summer of 1971 we find records of efforts to withdraw from the Pres-

bytery and to install new leadership. The conflict continued on for a time until many if not most of the members left the church to attend elsewhere. The desire to those who went to worship elsewhere was strong to return and reorganize their home church.

Then one day, Rev. Burton Toms, a former Pastor, and his wife stopped in their travels to spend a night at the J.R. Lilly home in Rich Valley. Learning of the desire of the group to withdraw from the Presbytery, this couple talked of the matter long after they had retired to their room. Next morning, Rev. Toms revealed the plan which had formulated in his mind during the night. He knew the constitution and by-laws of his denomination well and had remembered a clause concerning local congregations and their right to withdraw from the Presbytery when it was deemed advisable.

Later, at a meeting of the Presbytery in Nashville, Tennessee, to which Mr. Campbell McCroskey (and perhaps others) went to tend to the matter, the church was surrendered to the local congregation. This, of course, was the foundation stone for the new, independent church which now exists on Greendale Creek.

On the first Sunday in September, 1971, an effort was made to begin anew. It was a small beginning. Seven people attended that meeting including Glenn and Beulah Eggers who yet work with us. Over the following weeks and months, many of the old congregation returned. Also during that period, several from the Abingdon Bible Church came to assist in the new work. Among this number we find H.S. Fogleman (our present Sunday School Superintendent) and Leola, his wife, and Jerry and Dorinda Eggers.

For months after that new beginning, Sunday School was conducted regularly but only now and then was there a worship service. Beulah Eggers was one of the early teachers in

the new Sunday School. Occasionally, there were visiting ministers who conducted services. Among them may be named Lester Sharpe (present pastor at the Paperville Baptist Church near Bristol), Dr. Kyle Barr (president of the Graham Bible College in Bristol, TN.), Rev. Howard Boyll (who had been a speaker in the old brick store building some twenty years before), and Jerry Eggers (our present pastor.)

That small Sunday School had a fine Christmas program that year. For this, Mr. Glenn Eggers bought and supplied the treats.

It is remembered that much work needed to be done on the building. The basement especially was in a sad state of repair. Some of it was flooded with water, it was very musty, and old paint (where there was any) was faded and peeling. Repair and remodeling work began soon after Christmas of 1971. One of the great needs was for restrooms. Mr. Glenn Eggers had an accumulation of tithes which he used to install those which presently are in use in our basement. Soon the young people's classroom was paneled and carpeted. Chairs for that room were secured from Campbell Funeral Home of Abingdon. The Glenn Worley family paneled and carpeted the nursery where their son Paul's wife was teacher. One improvement called for another until most of the basement had been changed to a marked degree. (Recent work has improved it even a greater degree.) There were only a few men in the church at the time, but some of them just about worked through that winter of 1971-72 on various repair and remodeling projects.

One day as some of the men were working at the church, Rev. W.L. Odum of the Spring City Baptist Church near Lebanon, Virginia, stopped by to encourage them in their efforts. While he was there, arrangements were made with him to conduct a revival there the following summer. His was a successful meeting, with several conversions and re-dedications. For

that meeting, a piano was borrowed from a Bristol music firm. The model was chosen by Nina Garrett and Sarah Scott Fields. As in the case of the organ, the congregation decided to buy the piano. It was paid for by contributions from various members of the group and is still used in our worship services.

Through the spring and summer of 1972, the pulpit was often filled by students from the Southland Bible Institute of Pikeville, Kentucky. They did a splendid job for the work here and no doubt benefited themselves by a practice of their gifts in the ministry.

In the summer of 1972, serious efforts at formal reorganization began. The first official record is that of a meeting which was held at the home of George and Georgia Kesner, July 11, 1972. Suggestions for officers at that meeting included Jerry A. Eggers for Clerk (which office he faithfully filled until he was elected Pastor in September of 1976); Glenn Eggers for Elder (which office he later accepted); J.R. Lilly, Paul Worley, Tommy McCroskey, and Jimmy McCall were suggested for Deacons. J.R. Lilly of the suggested group of Deacons accepted that office and served until he was elected Elder. Glenn Worley became Treasurer. Rev. Howard Boyll was designated as Supply Pastor.

THE PASTOR FROM PILGRIM'S KNOB

Rev. Byron Dye became the first regular Pastor for the newly organized congregation in the chapel at the crossroads. He was called while serving as Pastor of the Pilgrim's Knob Church near Grundy, Virginia, and began his work at Greendale in August of 1972. Rev. Dye and his family lived in a rented house on Smith Creek during his tenure here. Several men of the congregation, including Jerry Eggers, Campbell McCroskey, and J.R. Lilly, took trucks and moved the Dyes from Pilgrim's Knob to their

new location near Greendale.



REV. AND MRS. BYRON DYE

The session records for October of 1972 lists the teachers and officers of the Sunday School as follows:

SUPERINTENDENT	CAMPBELL MCCROSKEY
CRADLE ROLL	BRENDA LILLY
PRIMARIES	VIRGINIA LILLY
JUNIORS	BEULAH LILLY
HIGH SCHOOL	JIMMY MCCALL
YOUNG ADULTS	JERRY A. EGGERS
ADULTS	GLENN EGGERS
FLOATING SUBSTITUTE	MRS. BYRON DYE
SECRETARY	DORINDA EGGERS
SONG LEADER	OPEN
PIANIST	OPEN

At the December Session Meeting of that

year, a bus fund was started but no bus was ever purchased. By the following August the fund had only reached \$195.00. The then struggling church showed its generosity at that meeting by granting the Pastor a \$100.00 cash gift for Christmas. The financial condition of the church seems to have improved a little by the beginning of the year 1973. At the Session Meeting of January 10th that year, a balance in the treasury of \$309.93 was reported to the Session.

The Pastor resigned by the time of the August 22, 1973, meeting of the Session. His final sermon to the church was on the first Sunday in September of that year.

HE LOOKS FOR A STRANGER BUT FINDS A FRIEND

The first Sunday in September, 1973, was a bright, hot, late-summer day. I was then living at 307 Park Street in Bristol, Virginia. Along about mid-afternoon, there was a knock at my door. As I answered the call, I recognized Glenn Worley standing on the porch. I had become acquainted with him during my revival at Greendale in 1967. He was very surprised to see me as he had looked for a stranger but found a friend. He and his wife were visiting her sister, Mrs. Pauline Holt, who lived just around the corner on Oak Street. While at Mrs. Holt's, he had mentioned that the church at Greendale was looking for a pastor. She told him that a Presbyterian Minister lived just around on Park Street, and that he was serving no church at that time. Mr. Worley then decided to come and request a trial sermon for the next Sunday.

Thus it was that I drove to Greendale on Sunday, September 9th, and surprised many of the arriving congregation by calling them by name. They too had expected a stranger but found one who not only knew most of them

by name but could point out the location of their homes. It was interesting and somewhat amusing to me to discern that I was viewed with more or less cautious suspicion that day. It was well known that I was and am a Presbyterian, and it was feared that I might preach some of the doctrines to which most of the congregation objected. The truth was that I had long before disagreed with many doctrines of my denomination and had openly preached against them. Denominational affiliation is never a sure indication of what one truly believes. If it were, it would be a certain sign of a mind in a mental straight jacket. (Alas, too many minds are in those straight jackets.) I will say here that I have never found a denomination with which I wholly agree, neither indeed do I ever expect to find one. If I should find one on my present beliefs, I would likely be at variance with it in a short time. One cannot follow light while standing still! I preached that day on Genesis 26:25: "And he builded an altar there and called upon the name of the Lord. And he pitched a tent there, and there Issac's servants digged a well",--A Life of Consecration. After the service that day, I was asked to return on the following Sunday. I remember that the Glenn Worleys had me to a lovely lunch that day. As the heavy rains refreshed the earth that afternoon, I thought long of the refreshing service I had enjoyed on Greendale Creek.

I did preach that next Sunday, the text being from Proverbs, "There is a lion in the street, a lion is in the way", and on through that lovely, golden autumn. I was paid twenty dollars for each service; and when no one invited me home for lunch, the Treasurer (Glenn Worley) would give me an extra three dollars for cafe money. Yes, three dollars in those days would buy more than I could eat!

Sometime during that fall, a movement began to call me as a regular pastor. One

Sunday afternoon after a bountiful feast at the J.R. Lilly home (theirs was the 1100th private table at which I had dined since the beginning of my ministry), several of the men met at the church to discuss the matter with me. After some questioning as to experience and belief, I was requested to take the church. Actually, I was very reluctant to do so. When I had resigned as pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Harrison, Arkansas, in early 1973, I had not intended to pastor again. Rather, I had intended to confine my efforts to evangelism and other type ministries. (I had operated a teaching ministry in Bristol through the summer of 1973.) Yet, for sometime I had developed a growing feeling that I might be profitable to the church in an indirect manner. So it was that I agreed to take the church, but first I would have to go to Florida to fulfill some prior obligations there. Plans were made that I should return as soon as those obligations were met. On November 25, 1973, I preached the last sermon for that period and left for Lake Worth, Florida, the following day.

The journey from Florida back to Greendale began on February 28, 1974. Those were the days of that first cruel hoax called a gas crisis. Travel had to be undertaken with the faith that once the tank was full, more might be found (and sometimes it did require quite a search) before the tank became empty again. Sometimes it was a close call especially in South Carolina which seemed to be the driest state of the entire journey. Once, near Blacksburg, South Carolina, a critical point was reached. Coming to a narrow side road, I developed a feeling that if I drove out a short distance I would find gas. A turn was made onto that road and sure enough, a short way out, there was an ancient country store with gas pumps. There I was allowed \$3.00 worth (about six gallons) which took me on into North Carolina where the situation was not so

critical. Call this fortunate find the result of following a hunch if you will--I like to think it has something to do with Psalm 23:1.



V.N. (BUD) PHILLIPS
PASTOR 1974-1976

Present Clerk of the Church and Author of this book.

Be all that as it was, I did arrive in Bristol on March 4, 1974, after having preached at Hudson, North Carolina, the day before on, "I Am Not Ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for IT Is the Power of God Unto Salvation". I assumed my duties at the beautiful roadside

church on Greendale Creek on March 10, 1974, preaching a message on the rejected gospel of Christ. On the 15th of that month, I moved into an apartment over the Jack Atwell Store and within sight of the church. There is a certain regularity with which cooling breezes drift up Greendale Creek from the river below on hot summer nights. I reached the point to where I looked forward to their refreshing passage just as many now look forward to the regular times of spiritual refreshment in the chapel at the side of that beautiful stream. The soothing murmur of that brook as it gently passed over the rocks at the back of my apartment so clearly audible on those long hot nights of '74 (and there were some in which there was little or no sleep), still flows through memory now and then.

I could write volumes on those next two and one-half years, but I choose to hasten along to the goal toward which I have long been writing. (My daily diary of that period records both tragedy and triumph.) Perhaps though, it will give us a greater appreciation of our present flourishing church if I here briefly review its condition back in 1974. The attendance then ran from 25-35 people. If we had 40, we considered it a great crowd. I remember how we all rejoiced and talked of it for weeks when once we had over fifty. There was no Sunday night service. There was a Wednesday night prayer meeting (later changed to Tuesday so that we might have a musician and song leader), but it was poorly attended. I recall one low night when only two people came for the service, who with myself made a crowd of three. We proceeded with the service anyway! Around that time, I seriously thought of asking the church to discontinue that part of our worship program.

Because the summer of '74 was very hot, we sometimes moved the prayer meeting to the basement where things were a little cooler.

The next winter, we began having that service around in various homes in order to save heating fuel. Not only was the heating problem solved in that manner, but the prayer meeting "heated" up a bit also. Many of us recall some of those spiritually beautiful cottage meetings. Outside friends of the church would sometimes invite us to their homes for meetings, some from as far away as Bristol and Chilhowie.

Offerings in those days were meager when compared to our present financial support. A hundred dollar collection was considered very good (it was usually less). The Pastor's salary was \$50.00 per week, plus the rental of the apartment at \$50.00 per month. It took a special effort and sacrifice on the part of some to do any remodeling or make any additions or do any repairs to the church. Someway though we did manage to put the first insulation in the attic on July 6, 1974. Janitorial service was by the members of the church who were designated for a certain week. A list of these names was kept posted near the front door. Members often mowed the yard in summer.

There was a revival with Rev. Ray Lindsey of Chilhowie, Virginia, which started on September 30, 1974. There may have been spiritual fire in Greendale that night, and there certainly was real fire--perhaps in two ways. The night was sharply cold and many fires were lighted in the village homes, and the old house two lots back of the church on Route 700, remains of which still stand, caught fire and partially burned just after the evening service at the church.

The extendable record book of our Session was bought and placed in service in November of 1974. Today it has grown to be much thicker than at the beginning. As that book grows thicker by the addition of page after page of our necessary records, and no doubt will continue to grow, so do the benefits and blessings of the miracle on Greendale Creek enlarge and

increase and doubtless will become greater in the years ahead.

PROPER IDENTIFICATION

Though the church at Greendale had been free from the Presbytery for three years or so, it bore the name Bible Presbyterian up through the year of 1974. Actually, including myself, there were probably no more than a half dozen Presbyterians in the entire congregation. It had been long felt by most of the members and many friends of the church that the old name should be dropped. Many feared that the denominational name would identify them with doctrines which they did not accept, believe, or practice. I, as the Pastor and though a Presbyterian, was very much in favor of the name change. I felt that no group should be "saddled" with a name of which it cannot be proud. For sometime there had been private discussion among the members and friends concerning that question, but no real action had been attempted.

I had bought a house in Bristol on December 16, 1974, and had moved there on January 2, 1975. A Session Meeting had been scheduled at the home of George Kesner on the night of January 3rd. So it was that I drove back there on that wet and dark night for the meeting. As dark and wet as that night was, a warm sun arose in it for the future of our church. Quite suddenly and unexpectedly, Campbell McCroskey presented a motion that we drop the Bible Presbyterian name. Immediately the motion was seconded by George Kesner; and even Georgia Kesner, who was working in an adjoining kitchen, could not help but exclaim a verbal approval of the proposed action. The rest of the Session voted unanimously for the motion. It was the beginning of a new day for the church on Greendale Creek.

More meetings followed in quick succession.

The first meeting after that January 3rd surprise was at the home of Campbell and Elizabeth McCroskey on January 8, 1975. It was a called congregational meeting and had been duly announced in the church on Sunday, January 5th. There was a large crowd present. The recommendation of the Board was presented and Mr. H.S. Fogleman made the motion that the name change be approved by the congregation. The motion was seconded by Mrs. H.S. Fogleman and easily won approval without a dissenting vote. Though some thought had been given by several of the congregation during those days toward joining another Presbyterian body, it soon became evident that this was not desirable. So it was that at a meeting held at the home of Jerry and Dorinda Eggers on January 15, 1975, a motion was presented by Campbell McCroskey that the church go forward totally unaffiliated. This motion was seconded by H.S. Fogleman and was easily approved. The Pastor then appointed a committee to receive and recommend suggestions for a new name for the church. That committee was to report its choice at the next congregational meeting.

A little concrete block house clings to a steep hillside just below the Campbell McCroskey home in a sharp curve of the road. It was then, and is now, occupied by Orvis Leonard. It was in that house on the night of January 22, 1975, that the name Greendale Chapel was chosen for our church. The name was suggested by our present Pastor, Jerry A. Eggers. Elder George Kesner, who could not be present that night, sent word that the name was very pleasing to him. Shortly, a new sign appeared over our doorway, and the old name was removed from the board in the front yard. It was fitting that Jerry Eggers, who had suggested the chosen name should be in charge of placing the new sign. At last the church as the crossroads was properly identified.

Through days and weeks that followed a new constitution was adopted which was based

on that of the Abingdon Bible Church with certain amendments. Form letters were sent to members informing them of the change in name and organization and requesting that they inform the Clerk if they wished their names carried over to the new roll. Most answered in the affirmative. We did lose two, perhaps three, members in the process of the change.

On February 2, 1975, we published a special bulletin which was the first to carry the name, Greendale Chapel. In it was a statement which may be called our declaration of independence. The text follows:

WE ARE ONE

Our church now has no denominational ties whatever. We are free and independent. Greendale Chapel is merely a place where a part of the family of God meets. You are welcome and invited to meet with us. We recognize that all Christians are begotten and born of the same Spirit. That there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism. We are added to the church by the Lord, baptized into the body of Christ by the Spirit, and redeemed by the blood. We all came from a common condition (sin), we share a common blessing (salvation), and we all shall have a common end (Heaven). Why then should we be divided into opposing church bodies. To do so is to sow discord among brothers. I want no part of such discord and I am thankful that Greendale Chapel has chosen not to be a part of it. NOW WE ARE ONE!

Later, at the March 9th congregational meeting, it was voted to start a regular bulletin service in the church. The motion to do so was made by Beulah Eggers and seconded by Virginia Lilly. I still write and publish our bulletin which is distributed in the church weekly. The surplus is saved and sent out to various places across the

nation for use in devotional and special services by several laymen, Christian workers, teachers, and pastors. Some of these bulletins have been translated into Spanish for use in Old Mexico. By request, they have recently been supplied to a Professor at the University of Alabama for use in his class there.

Soon it became necessary to select a new treasurer for the church. At a meeting at the home of Frank and Mae Trent on the night of February 5, 1975, Mr. J.R. Lilly, then our only Deacon, was elected to that vital office. He and his wife handled our financial affairs in a most commendable manner until their retirement in 1980.

New interest and zeal was certainly inspired by the change in the "Revolution of '75". On February 23 of that year, I noted in my diary that we had 38 in attendance. This was considered a great increase. Then, the prayer meeting which is usually a good indicator of the degree of interest in the church picked up in attendance. I recorded that 25 attended a prayer meeting which was held in my home on February 26, 1975. Attendance held close to that number over the following weeks. On April 29th there were 20 present when we met at the E & L Salvage Store.

The remainder of the year of '75 passed along uneventful for the most part. We did elect a new elder (H.S. Fogleman) on June 10, 1975. He was elected at a prayer meeting which was held at the home of Russell and Pearl Jones in Bristol, Virginia. In the summer of that year, Rev. W.L. Odum and Doug Rowland conducted our annual revival. The financial strain which had often plagued our church seems to have reared its ugly head again in September, 1975. On the 29th of that month, it was reported to the Session that there was a balance of only \$25.82 in the treasury. I was to go on vacation in the coming October, and the church was not able to pay a visiting

speaker. (Jerry Eggers filled the pulpit while I was away.) Compare this to the commendable generosity which is now shown to visiting ministers who speak here.

Then came 1976, and for months that year things were just about the same. It may be noted though that the Session received a little better financial report. The treasury then contained a total of \$156.88. (Jan. 1, 1976)

Things began to stir in July of '76. The need for revival was great. The Session Meeting that month devoted a great deal of time discussing who ought to be called for revival. Finally, I mentioned that we had as good an evangelist as needed right in the membership of our local congregation, Brother Jerry A. Eggers. Before that meeting adjourned, we had set up a meeting with him to begin on July 20th. The revival with him was a great success, and many of the group took this to be proof of the call of God in his life. A man standing outside the door one night said to me in half jest, "If you're not careful this preacher (Jerry Eggers) is going to take your place". I replied that if I thought he'd accept the pastorate of Greendale Chapel, I would resign that very night.

A regular congregational meeting was held on the night of August 18, 1976. One big item on the agenda that night was a proposal to put city water in the building. Another was to increase the amount of insurance on the property. A third was a request from an Elder that a special invitation to join the church be extended to certain baptismal candidates. All these were very symbolic for another item that night would bring the living water into the building as never before. The real value of the church was going to be greatly increased, and many would both be saved and join the church as the result of it.

After all the other business was dispensed with, I spoke on the current state of the church

which indeed had improved to some extent. This, in my opinion, was largely because of the real revival (not just another meeting) which we had so recently experienced.

(The Revival of '76 has never really left our church, but has continued until this day.) Attendance was up, financial support was much better, and general interest had increased. Then I stated that I had long been in the work of supplying advice for a fee (I was doing private counseling at the time), but I was going to give the church a word of advice without charge. It had been my duty as a counselor to discern and point out trouble spots and to offer a solution for them. Now I proposed to tell the church of its greatest trouble area and to offer a solution for it. The need, I pointed out, was for a new and different type of ministry. The solution offered was that I resign and allow the church to search for a minister who might lead it to greater victories. (To a lesser degree, I had offered the same advice to the Session as much as a year before and a time or two just prior to that August 18th meeting.) The resignation was then officially offered along with the advice that Brother Jerry Eggers would make them a good pastor, though I did not feel that he would accept the calling. At that time I still thought it more than I could hope for that the one whom I now often refer to as "The Tall Shepherd of Greendale Creek" would become pastor there. However, a few days later as we sat conversing near a furniture plant at Atkins, Virginia, he gave me indication that he would accept the church if called.

On my birthday (August 25th), the Session officially extended a call to Jerry A. Eggers to be the shepherd of the flock on Greendale Creek. The time for congregational voting was set for Sunday, September 12, 1976. The first two votes cast for the new Pastor were absentees cast by Mr. and Mrs. George Kesner and

given to me as I visited in their home. On the appointed day the vote was made unanimous in favor of Brother Eggers. Jerry and Dorinda had excused themselves from the morning service so as not to be present when the vote was taken. The marked ballots are still here in my Bristol, Virginia, home.

After the voting, I hastened to the Harold Fleming home near the head of Greendale Creek to call and tell Jerry of the unanimous vote. I arrived there a little ahead of the Flemings; and as I drove into the yard, two young burglars quickly exited from the house fleeing into the nearby woods. There was need for a strong gospel voice in the river hills.

At a called meeting on September 19, 1976, the church voted approval of the ordination of Jerry Eggers. Sunday, September 26th, was heavily overcast and rainy. Nevertheless, a large and expectant crowd assembled for the ordination service which was set for 2:00 p.m. I presided over the service with Rev. W.L. Odum delivering the principal message. Rev. Howard Boyll offered the prayer of consecration as hands were laid on by the clergy with Elders and Deacons present. It was a most impressive service which many of us will vividly remember as long as we live.

My final service at the church was on Tuesday night, September 28, 1976.

MIRACLE ON GREENDALE CREEK

The Tall Shepherd of Greendale Creek took charge of his flock on the first Sunday in October, 1976, (October 3rd.). Since that beautiful, balmy, early autumn day, the church has truly been led to green pastures. Those of us who knew the condition of the church before that balmy first Sunday in October and have kept a close and prayerful watch on it since, cannot help but recognize that a

miracle has indeed occurred on Greendale Creek.



REV. AND MRS. JERRY EGGERS AND LAURA BETH

There was an instant increase in attendance. Within a few weeks the number had doubled. Then over the following months and years, it tripled and is now near four times the average attendance in those years immediately before 1976. All special events have also been very well attended. Several successful Daily Vacation Bible Schools have been held. Today, when I have the pleasure of attending a service at Greendale, I virtually look upon a new congregation. Yet among the multitude I see and recognize the faces of many who faithfully carried on when the pastures were not so green. There are usually new visitors each Sunday and some become regulars and perhaps members in time.

Along with the great increase in attendance also came a very marked improvement in the financial condition of the church. Whereas

a year before in October, 1975, there had been only \$25.00 in the treasury reported to the Session, at the meeting in October, 1976, the total stood at well over \$600.00; and the up-swing continues. On a typical Sunday now, the per capita giving will average from five to seven dollars or more. From time to time, there have been several large special donations received from individuals ranging up to four thousand dollars. Some have commented that our church treasury now is very much like the widow's cruse of oil. As the flow goes out more flows in so that there is always plenty and to spare. Other than regular expenses, the church has from time to time given large amounts to those in special need. There have also been some expensive additions and remodeling projects, yet the balance in the church treasury remains near a surprising level. Over the past five years, several more missionaries and mission projects have been added to the roll of those receiving regular financial support. Truly, there has been a financial miracle on Greendale Creek.

Soon after the tall shepherd took charge of the flock on Greendale Creek, he originated a program to improve the "sheepfold". By the beginning of 1977, city water had been brought into the building. This eliminated many of the problems we had long had with our local spring connection. Soon a new and larger oil tank was placed underground at the back of the church. In the summer of 1977, a vast remodeling and redecorating project was executed in the sanctuary. Carpeting was installed, the pulpit area rebuilt, and the interior painted. Later that same year some extensive rewiring took place in the basement. By June of 1978, the church had agreed to add an electric guitar with amplifiers to our musical ensemble and air conditioning was on the way. After a summer of great accomplishment, the treasury still showed a balance of nearly a thousand dollars in October. In early 1979

a new lighted sign was erected near the front of the church. It reaches thousands daily with its mini-sermon.

It had long been felt that the "green pasture" needed enlarging. So it was that at a special congregational meeting of the church on August 14, 1979, a plan was presented to purchase the former Stuart Lilly home next door at a cost of \$15,000.00. The official motion to do this was made by Mrs. Beulah Eggers with seconds by Janice Lilly Roberts and Elizabeth McCroskey. Arrangements were made with Mr. Jack Atwell to pay the building off over a period of four years. However, through the generosity of the church family, the note was paid in full in September, 1980, one year later. In the autumn of 1979, we were connected to the world by a telephone which was installed in the church basement. It has been a great blessing to many. After all the heavy expenditures of 1979, the year 1980 began with a treasurer's balance of nearly \$5,000.00.

The new year (1980) began with proposals for a church sponsored gospel broadcast on a local radio station. An official motion to go forward with this plan was made by Troy Johnson at the March, 1980, congregational meeting. The second was by Charles Lawson. Actual broadcasts began soon after that meeting. The voice of the tall shepherd of Greendale Creek now reached out to thousands who were not of this fold.

New light came to the church in the late autumn of 1980 when a set of beautiful chandeliers were installed in the sanctuary. This "new light from above" is of great benefit to us now and no doubt will be a blessing to many through the years ahead.

The church made a good start in the new year of 1981 by giving \$1,000.00 toward the purchase of a building for the use of the Southwest Virginia Christian Academy. Thus the miracle on Greendale Creek reached into

the lives of countless young people both now and in the future. Our Pastor serves on the Board of this very worthy school.

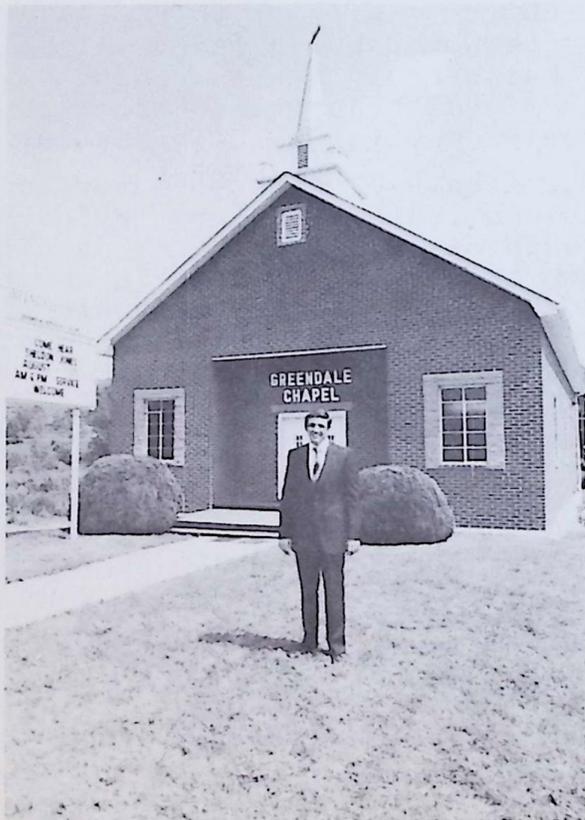
In the late spring and early summer of 1981, a renovation of the church basement began. The ceilings were textured and new and better light fixtures were installed. There was also some work on the walls in that area. This project still continues to the present time.

Now last, and certainly greatest, is the miracle of spiritual growth and accomplishment in the church. Without this, all other accomplishments would be in vain. Actually, the church has been in the power and spirit of revival since the present Pastor conducted his special meeting here in the summer of 1976.

There have been many conversions and rededications in the regular services. The membership has tripled in the past five years. Fourteen members were added in one two-week period, nine of them during a single Sunday of services (regular). Several baptizings have been conducted by the Pastor. These are usually done in the North Fork of the Holston River near Holston, Virginia. Every service is pervaded by a spirit of eager expectancy. Folks come regularly from as far away as Bristol to worship in the beautiful chapel at the crossroads. The Pastor is ever busy ministering in some manner among us and to others not of this fold. He is much in demand, both far and near, for funerals, weddings, and other special services. Many times he has proven his willingness to arise at any hour of the night and go quickly to the aid of those who need him. The Lord has truly blessed his ministry and has given him many spiritual rewards for his faithful service. He is faithfully supported in his noble work by his capable and devoted wife, Dorinda Branson Eggers. Their daughter, Laura beth Eggers (born June 30, 1978) is a "little chunk of sunshine" for our church.

The miracle on Greendale Creek is very much like that of the multiplied bread and fishes as recorded in the Bible. The multitudes have been given the spiritual bread again and again and yet there is more. In ever widening circles the living bread is regularly offered freely to the spiritually hungry, and none need go away empty. Those who give it are as full as those who receive it.

This history is closed with an invitation: "Come thou with us and we will do thee good."



THE TALL SHEPHERD OF GREENDALE CREEK INVITES YOU TO THE WEEKLY SERVICES OF THE CHURCH.

OFFICERS OF GREENDALE CHAPEL-1981

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V.N. (BUD) PHILLIPS. . . . CLERK
TROY P. JOHNSON. TREASURER
JOYCE SULLINS. ASSISTANT TREASURER

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GARY FORAN
MIKE MCCRAY
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GARY TODD

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