

Highlights in History

First Christian Church

(Disciples of Christ)

West Memphis, Arkansas

The history of West Memphis First Christian Church, though it has its origin in the national and state movement, began on January 12, 1956

A small group of people led by:

Dr. Frank C. Rustemeyer, pastor of Highland Christian Church, Memphis, Tennessee;

Ira D. Crewson, Executive Secretary of the Arkansas Christian Missionary Society;

Rev. C. A. Pruitt, pastor of First Christian Church, Jonesboro, Arkansas,

They met at the Employment Security Building, 116 North Missouri, for the purpose of organizing a local church.

Among those present were:

Dr. and Mrs. J. F. Alberson

Mr. and Mrs. C. R. Maxcy

Mr. and Mrs. Lee Brunet

Mr. and Mrs. J. D. Ray

Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Rasico

Mrs. J. F. Baker

Mrs. Guy Davy

Mrs. Jean Hardy

The first church service was held January 22, 1956, at West Memphis Community House on Missouri, a site now occupied by the Boys' Club. Rev. Frank Beach conducted services for 24 on this date. March 4, 1956, Rev. Beach was selected the church's first minister and he served until January of 1959. March 4, 1956, the congregation unanimously decided to call the church First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of West Memphis, Arkansas.

During the first few months of 1956 the congregation found itself without a permanent meeting place. The community house, Fellowship Hall of First Methodist Church, and Wonder City Cafe were some of the first meeting places. March 11, 1956, the church met at Citizens Funeral Home, when it was on Missouri Street across from the old post office. Church school classes were first held on that date. Mrs. John Pilkington, Mrs. R. G. Davy, and James Allen were our first teachers. Mr. Allen also served as the first church school superintendent.

CHARTER MEMBERS

The Darrel Ray family presented this church with a charter book on Easter, April 2, 1956.

The charter members of this church are:

Mrs. J. F. Baker and daughter, Peggy

Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Richardson

Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Allen

Dr. and Mrs. J.F. Alberson

Mr. and Mrs. C. R. Maxcy

Mrs. H.W. McKinney

Mrs. John Pilkington

Mr. and Mrs. R.G. Davy

Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Seymour Jr.

Mrs. Iola Evans

Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Rasico

Mr. and Mrs. J.D. Ray

Mrs. Bob Walden

Mr. and Mrs. R.L. Hardy

Mrs. Nina Mack

Mr. and Mrs. R.C. Doty

Mr. and Mrs. V. H. Edwards

Mr. and Mrs. C.H. Qualls

Mr. and Mrs. Lee Brunet

First Christian Church's building fund had its start Easter, 1956, with the R. G. Davys giving the first donation. The Walter White Bible Class of Lindenwood Christian Church, Memphis, Tennessee, presented the church with its second donation to the building fund.

First Christian Church of Jonesboro, Arkansas, donated song books at this time.

Bragg Elementary School auditorium became the meeting place for the church from April 8, 1956, to November, 1957.

The first official board was elected in September of 1956.

Those included:

Dr. Alberson, chairman

Mr. R. G. Davy, trustee

Dr. Alberson, trustee

Mr. James Allen, trustees

Mrs. J. F. Alberson, secretary

Mrs. Guy Davy, treasurer

Mr. Allen and Mr. Doty, elders

Mr. Doty, church school superintendent

Deacons:

Cecil Maxcy

Chester Qualls

Lee Brunet

Dr. Alberson

Thad DeLille

Mrs. J.F. Baker, organist

A constitution and by-laws were approved by the congregation October 21, 1956.

Rev. John W. Frye conducted the first evangelistic meeting at Bragg Elementary School in July 1957.

New members added in 1957

Mrs. Cecil Annis

Mrs. J. M. McDaniels

Mrs. William Cox

Mr. and Mrs. G. G. Williams

Irene Vaught.

Mr. and Mrs. E. T. Stockton

Mr. and Mrs. L. G. Cannon

Mr. and Mrs. John Shofstall

Virginia Vaught

PURCHASE OF FIRST BUILDING

The arrival of November, 1957, brought the purchase of a house on Belvedere at Balfour -- the first permanent meeting place for First Christian Church. This dwelling brought about many donations. Berean Sunday School Class of Lindenwood Church in Memphis gave us more hymnals; Mrs. Harry McKinney donated a communion table; the Doty family gave the first attendance board for church school; Highland Christian Church, Memphis, donated wooden chairs; Decatur Street Christian Church's youth group of Memphis donated a communion service; Lee Brunet, a pulpit; Bill Donigan, the first church sign (iron); Gordon Masterson, a pulpit and 10-foot cross atop the building; Becky Keeling, a pulpit cloth; Don Wallace, a wooden sign, and the John McHaffies, sterling candlesticks.

Rev. Edward C. Rountree began his ministry in this church, succeeding Rev. Beech, in January, 1959. He served until July of 1967.

More room was needed in the three-bedroom dwelling. A wall was eliminated to increase the seating area for morning worship. Thirty-six new metal folding chairs were purchased as well as hymnals. Burlap drapes were made and hung by women of the church.

The Christian Youth Fellowship organized and reactivated the building fund in March, 1960, by selling waste paper. Mrs. Harry McKinney served as first youth sponsor.

The Christian Women's Fellowship organized in November, 1956, with Mrs. J. D. Ray, president. In December of that year they had a fruit cake sale and collected \$112.17. In February of 1959, they reorganized with 11 members. Mrs. Ruth Shofstall was elected president.

The church's first musical instrument was a piano, loaned to the church by a sister of Mary Lou Bullock. In March of 1962 the church purchased its own piano.

Wednesday night Bible studies were started October 23, 1964. Mrs. John Pilkington is noted as our first teacher, assisted by Mrs. Juanita McKinney.

Membership in First Christian Church during the first nine years of its existence, saw many come and go. In addition to those members mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, here are other members during this time:

Mr. and Mrs. Gene York	Glen DeLille	Clara Phillips
Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Gee	Charles Craver	Mrs. J. M. Leach
Mr. and Mrs. John McHaffie	Bonnie Ross	Richard Ross
Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Brown	Mrs. Jane Woodside	Mrs. J. B. Adkins
Mrs. Maxine Grace	Barbara Priest	Patricia Rose
Mrs. Howard Rushing	Danny Bates	Mrs. Bernice Culp
Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Skaggs	Barbara Baker	Edward Thompson

The Christian Men's Fellowship was first organized in January, 1966, under the leadership of Gordon Masterson and John Shofstall. Six members were in this first CMF.

PURCHASE OF BUILDING AT 130 SOUTH 22nd STREET

On February 17, 1966, papers were signed for the purchase of the Nazarene Church on South 22nd Street at Polk. Cost was \$24,000.00.

The first church service in this newly acquired building was held Sunday, June 19, 1966, Father's Day. With this purchase the church received even more donations. First Christian Church of Osceola, Arkansas, gave us choir robes and communion and offertory trays. First Christian Church of Jonesboro gave us curtains for church school classrooms as well as communion and offertory trays. The John Shofstalls presented the church with a communion table. Gene York built a cross for the front wall of the sanctuary.

New members added in 1966

Joy and Eugie Bell Singleton	Mr. and Mrs. John Harrod
Mr. and Mrs. Bob Richey	Tommy Rountree
Mrs. B. J. Stallings.	

Rev. W. B. Newton from Osceola conducted a revival November 6-11, 1966, in the church on South 22nd Street.

In May, 1967, the church had its first student minister, Bill McDonald. He served until August of 1967. At this time Bro. Henry Hury came to us. His first official duties as lay minister came in September, 1967.

Donations received during the next few years were candlestick holders for the communion table, given by Linda Smith; Broadman hymnals by Decatur Street Christian; curtains for the sanctuary by our CWF; a cross for the communion table and picture (Head of Christ) by our CYF; and Central Christian Church, Memphis, donated four tables for fellowship hall.

Still further expansion came with the removal of a wall in fellowship hall. At this time a cabinet counter was installed in the kitchen.

This church had its first retreat at Camp Galilee, near Lead Hill, Arkansas, Memorial day weekend, 1970.

The CYF was reactivated in 1970 with Pat and Pete Hampton serving as sponsors. Through the efforts of our CYF the following projects were accomplished: upstairs classrooms completed, the church's first monthly newsletter, and a backdrop for the sanctuary. An annual Halloween carnival provided the funds for these projects.

FIRST ORGAN

Much needed property and membership came in 1970. Mrs. Ruth Shofstall presented the church with its first organ, given in memory of her husband, John; Gordon Masterson and Wanda Smith built an outside staircase leading to the upstairs classrooms; and Louise Steele donated an electric range for the kitchen.

New members added in 1970

Sue Skaggs	Mr. and Mrs. Bob Smith	Mrs. George Smith
Bob Stallings	Mrs. Louise Steele	Wendell Lynn Keeling
Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Lee		Buddy Lee
Joe Lee	Debra Warbritton	Phil Stracener

Mrs. Lucille Davy, reunited.

Throughout the year 1971 many additions and repairs were made to improve the building. Some of these additions included: lamps for the organ, piano, and pulpit; presentation flags for the sanctuary; air conditioning of fellowship hall; carpet for the foyer; a built-in cross over the front entrance leading to the sanctuary; and adequate heaters for our classrooms. Those individuals responsible for the gifts were Herman Spears, Louise Steele, Mr. and Mrs. H. D. Dupree, Bob Stallings, Ralph Lee, and memorial fund contributors.

Special recognition was given Mr. J. Herman Spears through a dedication October 10, 1971, for his assistance to this church.

Those placing membership with this congregation during 1971 were Mr. and Mrs. Danny Horner, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Smith, Doris Grapes, and Duane Pannell.

The year 1972 brought with it a continuing need to improve the inner appearance of the sanctuary. The CWF bought burgundy carpet for the sanctuary. It was installed December 22, 1972. Ruth Shofstall presented stained spectra-lite windows to place in the sanctuary in September, 1972. They were given in memory of John Shofstall. The CYF, under the sponsorship of Glenn and Emory Lee Lewis, presented a pulpit cloth and bookmark containing the chalice symbol of the church. Louise Steele presented permanent altar flowers in memory of her mother.

A new church school class was organized for young married couples and young members. The class was called Spears Class. It held its first meeting March 12, 1972.

FIRST FULL-TIME MINISTER

In September, 1972, Bro. Henry Hury began full-time nonresident ministry with a yearly salary of \$7,200.00. Financial support of \$200.00 per month from the regional office made this possible.

Monthly fellowship dinners honoring new members and numerous special worship services were incorporated during this time. Among the services were: New Year's Eve Tasting Party; Maundy Thursday, Christmas, Home Blessing, Parent-Child Dedication, and combined laity morning worship.

The Christian Men's Fellowship was reactivated September 18, 1972 by Larry Kidd and Pete Hampton. They sponsored periodic pancake breakfasts and a day of woodcutting in the fall to raise activity funds.

New members added in 1972

Ken Heffington	Mr. and Mrs. John Blanshard	Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Schooley
Eddie Skaggs	Mr. and Mrs. Larry Kidd	Mr. and Mrs. Glenn Lewis
David Rasico	Mr. and Mrs. Mike McDaniel	

Leadership development was emphasized during 1973. Deaconesses were utilized to serve communion during Sunday morning worship. More individual members were called on to assist the minister as presiding laypersons during worship.

A second mortgage held since February, 1966, was paid off August 9, 1973, by an anonymous donor. This mortgage was held by the Church of the Nazarene.

Mr. and Mrs. Herman Spears donated nine dozen place settings of Oneida silverware in January, 1973.

The Christian Women's Fellowship adopted a constitution for its organization in September, 1973.

New members added in 1973

Mr. and Mrs. Rex Jennings	Mr. and Mrs. Curtis Ashcraft
Shirley Barnett	Lili Shaw

Lucy Lee Reeder	Billie Spears	
Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Blansett	Danny Moore	
Pearl Hury	Willie Mae Calhoun	
Tina Calhoun	Kenneth Calhoun	
Mr. and Mr. Dick Dedman	Jesse Grace	
Ollie Mae Wilson	Belle Smith	Barbara Hartman

The year 1974 began with the approval of a revised constitution January 27. Due to the inadequacy of a small fellowship area, the kitchen was moved to allow more seating space during 1974. With it came a new stone floor which was installed by Mr. and Mrs. Bob Stallings and son, Mike. The CWF purchased paneling for the walls. An electric range was donated by Jean Walden and a refrigerator was given by Mr. and Mrs. Tommy Warbritton. Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Blansett donated an electric roaster.

Necessary items purchased by the church were an air conditioner for the upstairs classrooms, an electric typewriter, a mimeograph machine, and a ceiling heater for fellowship hall.

The Chi Rho Fellowship organized February 11, 1974 with Linda Brown and Pat Hampton as its first sponsors. Seven members made up this group.

A bazaar was sponsored by the CWF October 19, 1974. It was held at the West Memphis Utility building on Cooper Street. The goal was to produce enough funds to install a baptistry. Through the efforts of every member of the church, there were enough items made to net over \$700.00. The baptistry was purchased from Westwood Baptist Church in Hulbert, Arkansas.

At a special presentation during the Thanksgiving service in 1974 the Beginners Sunday School Class gave a chalice showing their thanks to God.

New members added in 1974

Mr. and Mrs. Tom Brown	E. J. Brode	Carla Mae Brode
Mr. and Mrs. Pete Beck	Nancy Kirkland	Jeannie Conger
Marie Conger	Joe Garrett	Chet Hampton
Bobbie Reeves	Grace Ice	Terry Keeling
Dennis Keeling	Ricky Warbritton	Johanna McMillian
Fay Kirkland	Mr. and Mrs. Rodger Conger	

The Christian Men's Fellowship sponsored its first Valentine's Banquet February 17, 1975. Another first was its Father-Child evening September 21. In cooperation with the CWF, they purchased six new tables for fellowship hall.

Another first in 1975 was the installation of our first woman chairperson of the official board -- Louise Steele.

More parking area was added by filling in the ditch on the south side of the church building. A light was erected on a pole at the end of this ditch for easy viewing at night.

Another new fellowship was added October 19, 1975. Children in the first through sixth grades organized a "Young Testaments" group. Ten members made up the group. Pete Hampton served as sponsor.

BAPTISTRY INSTALLED

December 14, 1975, the first baptistry was dedicated. The dedication took place during the morning worship service with William J. Shaw Jr. and Michael Shane Kidd being baptized. This was the first baptistry the church ever had in its own building.

Property donations received in 1975 were an electric mimeograph machine, given by Jerry Garrett; a hanging plant by Becky Keeling; and twenty metal folding chairs by Mr. and Mrs. Herman Spears.

New members added in 1975

Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Garrett	Pam Hulsman	Gloria McCain
Mr. and Mrs. Max Herron	Bill Shillingburg	William J. Shaw Jr.
Michael Shane Kidd	Max Herron Jr.	Kay Redd

First Church celebrated its 20th anniversary January 25, 1976 with 11 charter members returning for a day of festivities. They were: Mrs. Ida Baker, Kirk and Thad DeLille, Mrs. Ann Pilkington, Mrs. Mary Lou Rasico, Mrs. Jean Walden, Mrs. Nina Mack, Mrs. Juanita McKinney, Mrs. Lucille Davy, Geraldine and Robert Doty. All ministers who served from 1956 were present -- Frank Beach, Edward Rountree, and Henry Hury. The anniversary theme was "20 Years of Love in 200 Years of Freedom", depicting 20 years of the 200th birthday of America in which our local church existed.

The CWF started our first church library in January with a large volume of books donated by various members and friends.

Rev. Elbert Whitwell became our interim minister with the retirement of Henry Hury April 1, 1976. Rev. Whitwell served the church until November 1. While here he finished writing a book, "Up From the Cotton Patch." On October 31 Rev. Roy E. Belcher was issued a call as our first full-time resident minister. He assumed his duties December 1 with a yearly salary of \$15,000.00.

The CYF met with Central Christian Church in Memphis for its activities during 1976. They helped sponsor a child in Viet Nam. Peggy Warbritton served as sponsor.

New members added in 1976

Nathan Keeling	Linda Calhoun	Mr. and Mrs. Harley Holt
Mr. and Mrs. Buddy Welch	Joy Conner	Suzette Northcutt
Mr. and Mrs. Russell Cain	Vernon Shaw	Billie Briggs
Phyllis Hogue	Ralph McMillian	

On March 6, 1977, an installation service was held for Rev. Roy Belcher as minister.

New hymnals were dedicated July 17, 1977. They were titled "Hymns for the Living Church." Two instrumental copies and 125 hymnals were purchased for \$538.65.

Another first for the church was institution of "Hanging of the Greens" on December 4, 1977

The CYF wrote and adopted a constitution for its organization in December, 1977. Barbara and Ken Heffington were sponsors.

Louise Steele donated a vacuum cleaner to property in December.

New members added in 1977

Greg Hogue	Mr. and Mrs. Mickey Lay	Sandra Steele
Joey Bronc	Carolyn Bowman	Mr. and Mrs. James Wilcox
Louyse Dedman	Mr. and Mrs. Steve Sutton	

The church purchased a 50' x 145' lot North of the 22nd Street property February 1, 1978, adding needed space to the facility. It was purchased for \$3,000.00.

William R. Ellis Jr. of Memphis became our lay minister August 1, 1978, upon the resignation of Rev. Roy Belcher. His monthly salary was \$400.00, of which \$100.00 was placed in a minister's fund at his request.

PURCHASE OF 3.19 ACRES ON BALFOUR

Realizing decay in the surrounding area on 22nd Street, the church purchased 3.19 acres of land at 1015 Balfour on December 3, 1978, for \$37,500.00. Christian Board of

Extension provided a loan of \$30,000.00.

Michael F. Saliba of Memphis was hired December 17 as consulting engineer to design a church building that would include solar energy. At this time there was an energy shortage.

Property donations during 1978 were a coffee maker by Louise Steele; baby bed by Mr. and Mrs. Ken Heffington; mimeograph machine by Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Garrett; and play pen by Jean Walden.

New members added in 1978

Chuck Mattingly Mr. and Mrs. Randy Smith Jamie Wilcox

The year 1979 started with the purchase of a Hammond organ on February 16 for \$1,995.00 and ended with changing our church calendar year from July to January.

On March 18, the Balfour land was dedicated. Jerry Blansett led the ceremony. Twenty-two attended.

A weekend all-church family retreat was held in May at Meeman-Shelby State Park, six miles from Memphis. Thirty-six attended.

Another first for the church was the sponsorship and charter of Boy Scout Troop 727 on October 1 with Larry Kidd as scoutmaster.

Fundraising projects in 1979 resulted in a quilt sale; a bazaar sponsored by the CWF on May 5; a fashion show directed and planned by Sandy Steele on October 6; saving and selling newspapers by the CMF; and light bulb sales.

Property improvements included leveling and developing the land on 22nd Street by Joe Currie and a church friend, F. H. Griffith; purchase of a riding lawn mower by the CMF; and blackboards for Sunday school classes by Larry Kidd.

New members added in 1979

Kim Smith Wes Hampton,
Brian Keck Scott Steele

The sale of the church property on 22nd Street to the Steward Temple CME Methodists resulted in paying off the loan for the land on Balfour. The sale was finalized February 8, 1980, for \$57,000.00.

The church home from February 21, 1980, to March 29, 1981, was Ken Heffington's residence at 115 Gibson.

Two land gifts were given the church in early 1980. Gloria McCain deeded her property at Diamondhead Estates, Hot Springs, Arkansas, to the church and Mr. and Mrs. Paul Lightbody gave property at Walnut Lake Estates in Mississippi.

The congregation approved bids and plans for the first phase of a building on Balfour July 6, 1980. Mike Saliba was hired as construction manager and the church served as subcontractor.

A poetry book, "This Hundred Years...and Beyond," was written by Edward White, member, and published by the church in July, 1980. Edward contributed proceeds for three years to the building fund. Kickoff was an autograph tea in the West Memphis Utility building July 27.

Ground was broken for the Balfour church building August 30. Special guests were Dr. Frank C. Rustemeyer of Memphis, organizer of this church; Dr. James Rainwater, Arkansas regional minister; Eugene Pounds, Arkansas Northeast Assembly president; Mrs. Harold Goodwin, Tennessee District Six president; and Dr. Richard Jordan, Nazarene minister and president of the West Memphis Ministerial Alliance.

Special recognition was given Ida Mae Baker September 12 in appreciation of her service as organist and pianist since the organization of this church in 1956.

The first day of construction on the Balfour location began October 23, 1980, with preparations for the foundation. A Bible was placed and covered with cement at the

front entrance to the building by Gordon Masterson.

The Chi Rho reorganized in December with 15 youth. Pete Hampton served as sponsor. Their activities included clown ministry.

CHURCH HOME AT 1015 BALFOUR

Construction of the first phase of the church building on Balfour was completed in March, 1981. Cost was \$54,000.00.

The first worship service in this new facility was March 29, 1981, almost 25 years to the day of the church's charter in 1956.

Dedication of the building was April 26. Many guests attended from Arkansas and Tennessee.

Property donated during 1981 included: a small refrigerator, vacuum cleaner, typewriter, and camera by Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Garrett; the ground breaking shovel was plated and encased by Paul Lightbody; filmstrip projector by Louise Steele; and large refrigerator by Herman Spears. David Rikard completed kitchen facilities in the Northeast upstairs room.

New members added in 1981

Mike Mattingly

Mr. and Mrs. David Rikard

Tim Rikard

The year 1982 started with the first church disaster of note. On January 11 water pipes burst during a hard freeze and caused \$7,636.00 worth of damage. Insurance covered most of the loss.

A "49-ers" club was incorporated in January. To be a member, you had to attend church school or worship at least 49 times during 1982.

Boyd Chitwood, a student at Southwestern College in Memphis, began serving as associate student minister February 1. His service lasted one month due to college conflicts. His salary was \$200.00 a month.

A program designed for church members to receive blood, when needed, was instituted in February. Over 100 persons were listed as recipients. Our quota was for 26 donors by February 1983. This quota was met in October.

Landscaping the property resulted in many contributions. Trees, shrubs, flower beds, and bermuda grass seed were planted during April and May. Eloise Shirley and the CWF headed the landscaping project.

David and Sharon Rikard began sponsorship of the CYF in September with five members.

A weekend revival was held October 1, 2, and 3. Rev. Elbert Whitwell, former interim minister of this church, and his wife, Nevada, from Edmond, Oklahoma, led the services.

A 30' x 180' driveway was completed October 7 to be used for off-street parking. The original plans contained this driveway on the west side of the building. Members raised \$7,382.19 of the \$7,595.38 needed for construction within a three-week period.

The church's third bazaar, sponsored by the CWF, was held October 9 in Holiday Plaza Mall and netted \$1,108.00 for the driveway.

Property donations included: a large picture of the Last Supper by Louise Steele; a 7-foot metal cross to hang on the front of the building by Paul Matthews & Sons Glass Co.; grass edger and construction of a 12-foot diameter storage building by the CMF; and adding machine by Herman Spears.

New members added in 1982

Mrs. Joyce Deen

Mr. and Mrs. Marion Griffin

Kevin Kidd

Mrs. Eloise Shirley

The beginning of the year 1983 brought with it the first members of the "49-ers" club:

Martha and Bill Ellis

Pat, Pete, Chet, Wes and Lynn Hampton

Ken Heffington
Duane Pannell
Jean Walden

Carolyn, Larry, Shane and Kevin Kidd
Louise Steele
Jane Woodside

They celebrated with a party at Fred Gang's Restaurant in Memphis on January 9.

On Boy Scout Sunday, February 6, Shane Kidd became the first recipient of an annual "Scout of the Year" award, presented by the church to recognize outstanding achievements of Troop 727 members.

Bob Parsons became associate minister of the church April 1. He was a student at Memphis Theological Seminary in Memphis and served in this capacity until September 4. At that time, he wanted an indefinite leave of absence. His salary was \$200.00 a month.

Gordon Masterson built a 26' x 42' formica top communion table which was first used at the November 20 worship service. The CWF funded the cost of materials to build it. Other property received in 1983: a water cooler by Jerry Blansett; 50 plastic chairs purchased March 19th for \$500.00 and paid for by special contributions of the church members.

New members added in 1983

Mr. and Mrs. Buddy Griffin

Mrs. Darlene Rickard

NEW PERSONALIZED CHURCH BULLETINS

Personalized church bulletins were first used February 12, 1984. Duane Pannell designed the cover and the Christian Men's Fellowship donated the printing costs.

Cub Scout Pack 727 was chartered in October with this church as sponsor. Lee Hammett was the pack's first cubmaster.

Property received in 1984 included: a black chalkboard by Larry Kidd; vent for the kitchen by David Rikard; telephone by Tim Rikard; dual-8 movie projector by Jerry Garrett; purchase and installation of a metal covering on the front door of the building by Louise Steele.

Bill Ellis retired as minister March 31, 1985. Eugene Utterback was issued a call to minister us April 1. His salary was \$325.00 a month. On June 1 he asked for an indefinite leave of absence. Michael L. Wilson became supply minister June 2.

An "August Revival" was held August 2, 3, and 4. Mike Wilson was speaker. Our sister churches were invited from Memphis and Northeast Arkansas. Those represented during the revival were Graceland Christian Church of Memphis, Highland Christian Church of Jonesboro, and First Christian Church of Weiner.

Eugene Utterback resigned September 8, 1985 and the church called Mike Wilson to serve as full time minister on October 6. His salary was \$400.00 monthly.

The Christian Men's Fellowship sponsored a community church league basketball team. The First game was played November 18. Team members included: Gary Brown, Chet Hampton, Wes Hampton, David Johnson, Kevin Kidd, Larry Kidd, David Rikard, Tim Rikard, Mike Wilson (coach), and David Yarborough.

New members added in 1984

Mike Wilson

Catherine Henson

Jimmy Walden (reunited)

Edward and Eileen White (reunited)

Jason White

A new church sign was placed on the front lawn in 1985. Jerry Garrett donated a complete set of cassette tapes on the New Testament. Louise Steele Purchased a new 14-horse riding lawn mower for the church as well as giving storage cabinets for the kitchen upstairs. Carolyn Rikard donated a microwave for the kitchen.

Mike Wilson, minister, brought the year 1986 in with his first publication of the

"Interlinear," a weekly bulletin insert containing minister notes, announcements and Bible quizzes. It was first published January 5.

A record attendance in the Balfour Church was reached February 2 when 64 were present during morning worship. It was Scout Sunday.

Our basketball team, sponsored by the CMF, and a member of the community church league, received the good sportsmanship trophy February 26. Their win-loss record was 0-11.

Communion was enhanced with the purchase of a new brasstone service in March. The members donated \$164.52 for two bread trays, one bread cover, two wine trays and one wine cover.

The Scottish Rite Temple, located on the South service road between Rich and Avalon roads, was the site of our all-day 30th anniversary celebration on Sunday, April 6. The morning worship was attended by 75. Following a meal catered by Po Folks of Memphis, a historical program was presented by past and present members. There were 106 present for the program. Among those present were four charter members: Ida Mae Baker, Kirk DeLille, Juanita McKinney and Jean Walden. Jean was chairman of the celebration.

PHASE II OF BUILDING BEGINS

Plans officially began in August for construction of Phase II to the present building. The dome was dropped because of increased costs to the original plans. Instead a metal building 40' x 80' and just under 24' high would be built. Along with this, 28 solid oak pews were purchased from Raleigh Christian Church in Memphis for \$3,000.00 in November.

A revival was held November 21, 22, and 23 with Ron Johnson of Newport as guest speaker. On November 23, 116 were present and some had to be seated upstairs. Speakers were placed throughout the building so everyone could hear the message. This was an all-time record attendance. Also on the program were the Cupples' puppets.

Property added during 1986 were two ceiling fans, installed downstairs July 12; two double baby cribs by Gordon Masterson in September; shrubs by the CWF in September; a dishwasher donated by Duane Pannell in November; outside vapor lights donated by Louise Steele in November.

New members added in 1986

Ralph Fisher	Maryland Heffington
Tammy and Allan Hailey	Norma and Sam Simon
Charlotte Simon	Gladys Spencer

The first part of 1987 was dedicated to Phase II of the building. On April 29 a loan was approved by Church Board of Extension for \$75,000.00. A contract was signed with Frank A. Rogers & Co. May 7 for construction. Groundbreaking ceremonies were held May 31.

On June 14, the elders burned mortgage papers for Phase I and our 3.9 acres during morning worship.

The solar water tank upstairs burst June 18 and flooded the downstairs once again. This was the second water disaster, resulting in \$6,798.08 damages. The very next day, June 19, the metal building was delivered for Phase II and work began June 20. The contract did not include finishing fellowship hall or the upstairs rooms. We owe our gratitude to Larry Kidd and Will Vail for finishing fellowship hall and renovating the front part of the building into separate rooms.

Many donations were given to help finish the downstairs. Tile for the floor and paint for the inner building were donated by Louise Steele. Temple-Eastex gave sheet rock and stain glass windows were given by Eddy Scoggins.

A new baptistry was bought for \$1,378.12 from Central Manufacturing Co., North Little Rock. The church also bought 12 new pews, a pulpit, lectern, one 13' pew, two 3' pews, and communion table from them for \$6,616.00. New mauve carpet was purchased for the sanctuary for \$2,617.05. The old pews were sold for \$3,000.00.

Other property donations during this time were: refrigerator, stove and vent-a-hood, dishwasher, and formica tops by the CWF; wall cabinets by Louyse Dedman; disposal by Carla and Marvin Hixson; carpet by Southwestern Bell through Joyce Deen; A. B. Dick mimeograph and typewriter by Osceola Christian Church; pulpit Bible by Carla and Malvin Hixson; two bulletin boards by Joyce and Doug Deen; a piano by Billie Spears; two brasstone offertory plates by Pat and Pete Hampton.

The first service held in the new building was on September 25.

A bazaar, sponsored by the CWF, was held October 31 at Holiday Plaza Mall. Proceeds were \$1,078.00. They also sponsored an auction at the church September 13. This netted \$357.15.

November brought a weekend revival on the 20th, 21st, and 22nd. Chris Hobgood, regional minister, was speaker. The Lindenwood Youth Choir and Disciples Singers from Decatur-Trinity church sang for us.

TORNADO ASSISTANCE RECEIVED

The year ended with a sad note. A tornado struck the East end of West Memphis in the evening on December 14. Of the members involved Connie Williams and Jimmy Walden lost their homes; Charlotte Simon and Gladys Spencer had damage to their roofs. The Week of Compassion sent a check for \$2,000.00 to assist the community. Our church added \$278.00 to that and it was given to the American Red Cross. First Christian Church in Rogers, Arkansas, also sent a check for \$611.00 toward this relief.

New members added in 1987

Malvin Hixson

Suzi Wilson

The year 1988 brought a dedication day for the new building on March 20. Highlight of the afternoon was a program by the Mississippi Blvd. Church Choir. Many dignitaries attended.

Harold Goodwin, minister of Decatur-Trinity Church in Memphis, and Ron Johnson, minister of First Christian Church in Newport, led an Easter revival April 1, 2, and 3.

Louise Steele was honored as a dedicated church member April 24 with a reception. She has served in every position as a church officer except elder and property chairperson.

The May 15th district men's meeting was hosted by West Memphis. The Carpenter's Crew of Decatur-Trinity Church in Memphis presented the program.

Lynn Hampton was the first to be baptized in our new facility on July 10th.

A "kiddies' karnival" was held July 24. Fourteen booths were set up for the fun event. Each game cost 10 cents and the church raised \$651.55.

Cheryl Diane Smith of the Division of Overseas Ministries presented a program of missions August 7.

She taught English at Osaka Junior College for Women in Japan.

A musical program was presented by Don Todd August 14. He is a Christian composer and recording artist.

A Thanksgiving revival was held November 18, 19, and 20. Harold Goodwin of Decatur-Trinity Church in Memphis was guest speaker. Others on the program were The Bradfords, a young singing group, and The Clowns, all of Memphis.

Mike Wilson resigned as minister December 31. He accepted a call to full-time ministry at First Christian Church, Osceola.

Property donations in 1988 were tablecloths by the CWF; Hammond organ by Frances Miller of Marion; 12' cross over the baptistry by Larry Kidd.

New members added in 1988:

Debbie Dorman

Lauri Faulkner

Lynn Hampton

Vickie Jarman

Robert Walden

Joe Rutland of Memphis filled our pulpit during the month of January, 1989, as our search committee sought a minister. Dr. Lawrence Semrau filled the pulpit during February.

The first all-church valentine party was held February 12.

Joe Meals of Lindenwood Church, Henry Hury of Central Church, and Arnett Winn, retired minister, filled the pulpit during March.

The regional office offered financial assistance to the church in March for securing a minister for evangelistic work. The amount was \$250.00 monthly and it was provide through CAN.

A Junior Youth Fellowship was organized March 8 with 11 youth. Pat and Pete Hampton were sponsors.

West Memphis hosted the Northeast District Assembly March 12.

Ronald D. Johnson was issued a call as interim minister April 1. His salary was \$650.00 monthly for two days a week (Sunday and Monday).

A Focus on Family film entitled "A Man Called Norman" was offered to the community September 10.

Our first church choir was organized in September with Anne Willis as director. They prepared for a Christmas cantata which was presented December 17. Members of the choir were Carol Blansett, Andrea and Chet Hampton, Pete Hampton, Maryland and Ken Heffington, Ron Johnson, Carolyn Rikard, Anne and LeRoy Willis, Colleen Willoughby.

The church sponsored a communication workshop for the community each Sunday from September 15 through October 8. Ron Johnson was leader.

A spiritual gifts workshop was held November 12. It too was led by Ron Johnson.

Donations of property in 1989 were: office desk, table, lamp and telephone by Carla and Malvin Hixson; desk chair by Dora Lena Helcel; office chairs by Tammy and Clay Davis; pine trees by Jerry Blansett; cloth towels, waste baskets and mirrors for the two baptistry dressing rooms by the CWF. a new gas heater was installed upstairs, replacing the original electric heater.

New members added in 1989

Andrea Hampton

Paula Quiles

Paula and Mark Smithson

Anne and LeRoy Willis

Colleen and J. G. Willoughby

Fundraising began in March, 1990, for an additional parking lot. On June 7th a 54' x 100' parking lot was built by Davis Paving Co. of Memphis for \$6,724.46 on the Southeast front side of the building. It consisted of six inches of limestone gravel with two inches of asphalt and two entrances from Balfour. A 25' x 3' concrete sidewalk was donated by Louise Steele leading to the front door.

The CWF hosted a ACWF spring workshop April 28, 1990. They also held a cake sale and bazaar at Holiday Plaza Mail October 20th.

Ron Johnson's interim ministry resignation took effect on May 20, 1990. Jack Wilson preached May 27 and Kyle Johnson from Little Rock started his interim June 8 for \$100.00 on Sundays. He remained with us until September 2 when the church issued a call to Gerald Sanders of Memphis as minister. His salary was \$100.00 a week on a part-time basis.

Property received during 1990: a Sony 25" TV, Emerson VCR, and entertainment center by Louise Steele in February; a chalk board by Joyce Deen; 85 new "Worship His Majesty" hymnals by the members in April; six 8' tables by Bob and Jean Walden.

New members in 1990 were:

Gerald and Ann Sanders on September 30.

The year 1991 brought with it the Gulf War. On February 24th our women passed

out over 2,000 free yellow ribbons in front of Wal-mart in support of Crittenden County troops taking part overseas

In August, the church started cleanup of a mile of the South service road along I-40 for the state highway department.

"Cafe Italia" was presented by the Chi Rho Fellowship as a fundraiser September 22. The youth sold tickets to a spaghetti dinner. Decorations were Italian style. Eleven Chi Rho's participated selling 58 tickets, resulting in \$158.00 for their activities. They purchased a ping pong table, paddles and balls, and softball bats and balls for church use.

The annual church Christmas party was preceded by the choir presentation of "Christmas! I Love to Tell the Story" on December 15th.

New members added in 1991

Linda Hampton

Jim and Brenda Mattson

"Secret pals" was instituted the first of 1992 and continued for six months. At that time new pals were drawn for another six months.

A CWF bake sale and bazaar was held in October at the Holiday Mall.

The Diamondhead property, donated by Gloria McCain, was transferred to First Christian Church in Hot Springs because of its site and cost. Our church presented it to them as a gift in December, 1992.

FIRST TIMOTHY

Jim Mattson was ordained December 20th and became our first Timothy.

New members added in 1992

Kathy Allen

Nick Allen

Pam Deer

John and Bonnie Muller

Fifteen more "Worship His Majesty" hymnals were purchased by the church in February, 1993, in preparation of hosting the Northeast District Assembly March 20th.

Our involvement in missions started another first in 1993. Food items were collected each month for the Good Neighbor Center in June.

New member added in 1993

Vanessa Bush

A new church lawn sign was donated by a former member, Ralph Lee. Cost was \$1,200.00. Gerald Sanders resigned as minister July 31, effective October 1st. Jim Mattson became interim October 1st and served us through the rest of 1993.

On March 1, 1994, Jim was called as minister with a salary of \$200.00 a month. His installation service was May 21, 1995.

A new roof over the front of the church building was constructed in December, 1995, by Horne Improvement Co. of West Memphis for a cost of \$3,900.00. This new roof slopped so water would run off.

Evangelism efforts were prominent in 1995 with the addition of seven new members.

New members added in 1995

Mitch and Connie Alford

Valerye Barnett

Susan Lansdale

Barbara Skaggs (reunited)

Tony and Kathy Wood

Collection of food items was so successful that the church started collecting personal items for the 8th Street Mission in February, 1996. These two projects continued on a monthly basis.

In June, the CWF sponsored its first "Sing-n-Sup" which included a musical program followed by a meal.

Sixteen maroon choir robes with white and blue reversible collars were donated to

our church choir by First Christian Church, Springdale, Arkansas.

In September, the annual auction of "white elephants" resulted in \$232.00 for church projects.

New members added in 1996

Vickie Ice Jay, Sheila, Amber, and Kristle Southard
Stacey and Debbie Morris

The Northeast District Assembly once again met here March 6, 1997. That same month Sandy Garrett and Clara Miller painted Noah's Ark with numerous animals on the nursery wall. They completed it March 31st.

June brought with it the second Christian Women's Fellowship "Sing-n-Sup".

Leaks in the stone outside the front of the church building prompted a professional sealant be applied in July. The cost was \$2,000.00. The contractors also painted parking lines on both parking areas free of charge.

Our first Vacation Bible School was held July 21-25 with 23 youth ages 4 through 12. Debbie Morris was director..

The church hosted its first "Fall Fandango" October 10-12. Forty-nine Chi Rho youth and counselors from our region gathered here and presented "Shine," a musical, on October 12. The community was invited.

Completion of two large classrooms in the front upstairs area took place in October. Cost was \$1,458.31. Carpet was laid for \$1,300.00.

The ladies organized a prayer group in October that would meet every Monday night.

A Hewlett-Packard 120 color copier was purchased for \$727.25 to replace the old Cannon copier which wore out.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

The first children's sermon during Sunday morning worship and children's church began in November. David Hagstrom and Monica Malone were the first to teach children's church. The upstairs great hall was used for their meeting place.

Sandy Garrett decorated the sanctuary for the annual Advent service and "Hanging of the Greens" and the Poole family placed three wooden angels in front of the church for Christmas.

Property donations in 1997 were: new communion sets by Pete and Pat Hampton; an 8' folding table by Stacey and Debbie Morris; baby swing and toys by Mitch and Connie Alford; a Mr. Coffee 10-cup percolator by Kathy and Margie Poole; three wooden angels for Christmas yard decorations by the Pooles; two electric grills by the region Chi Rho; a ping pong table by Monica Malone.

New members added in 1997

Pat Alford	Kevyn Barnett	Teresa Foster
David and Stephanie Hagstrom	Monica Malone	Bob and Donna Newman
Walter and Kathy Poole	Margie Poole	Phillip Powell
Richard and Ruth Smith		

The year 1998 brought with it the purchase of Beige Krinklglas from Dimensional Plastics Corp. for \$2,263.50 to cover the front glass windows. It was installed April 18.

In the spring, termites were discovered in a bookcase containing church history, many books, and a set of encyclopedias. Many things were lost, including the church's charter book, minutes of previous years, and many old documents. One-third of the library was lost. The bookcase was ruined since it was made of wood and Larry Kidd built a new one.

Most of 1998 was dedicated to remodeling the church building and grounds. A 29' steeple was installed for \$3,385.00 on May 29. Leaks in the roof were repaired in

February. The downstairs bathrooms and kitchen were dressed up with decor in September. The area around the outside church sign and the front flower bed was landscaped in September by Kathy Poole and Sandy Younger.

Property was enhanced with the purchase of 20 more "Worship His Majesty" hymnals bought in February for \$211.00 from Word Music; a basketball goal; six new 6' folding tables, donated by anonymous; a wooden rocker for the nursery, donated by Kathy and Tony Wood; a computer and accessories, donated by Stacey and Debbie Morris; a video player and 7-1/8" chalice with the Disciples symbol, donated by Pete and Pat Hampton. The PA system was improved and a speaker added for the nursery, donated by Jim and Brenda Mattson.

Activities flourished monthly during 1998 as the functional committees kept the church active through fellowship, Bible study, special services and worship.

The children's sermon on Sunday mornings was dropped in late December to create more time for children's church.

Vacation Bible School was another success in July with 25 youth attending. Debbie Morris was leader.

With the increase in younger age levels, two new Sunday school classes were started, making a total of five classes.

The Christian Men's Fellowship reorganized once again in late December with 14 men. Scott Younger was elected president.

New members added in 1998

Ruby Bardot	Daniel Ezell	Arron Hagstrom
Donald and Amy Maxwell	Clint Nassar	Bryan and Margaret Simpson
Brenda Stacy	Scott Younger, Lennie Younger, and Genny Younger	

The year 1999 began with designating our Week of Compassion offering (\$402.00) to the Arkansas Tornado Relief Fund when a tornado struck Arkadelphia, Arkansas. Our Jesus birthday offering, taken in December, 1998, totaling \$212.00 also was included.

Our great room upstairs was finish with lights, paneling, a storage room, and carpeting in May. Also, new carpet was installed on the balcony.

The CMF paid for and supplied the labor for replacing the ceiling lamps and covers in the sanctuary on March 13.

The youth group reorganized with Scott Younger as sponsor. Nineteen were present at its first meeting in April.

Another first, an International Day of Pancakes breakfast was held May 22 by our CMF to raise funds for the Inman Christian Center and All Peoples Center. This project was an international men's mission. Our men raised \$300.00.

The Midsouth LifeBlood plan instituted a guardian angel program in May in which each blood donor from the church could give and include the name of someone else. The whole church was covered. It was the largest donor drive ever in the church.

On May 15 the ADW (formerly CWF) had a cake sale at Wal-mart netting \$880.00 for their service projects. The youth had a car wash on the same date and at the same location and netted \$600.00. Thanks to Wal-mart for their \$500.00 matching donation to these auxiliary groups.

The Vacation Bible School held in July drew 36 youth to our doors. Monica Malone was director.

ADDITIONAL PARKING ADDED

Budget Construction Company was hired to add a 100' x 60' concrete parking lot and drive around the building for \$19,900.00. It was finished July 2. This added parking for 17 more automobiles.

The ADW's 4th annual "Sing-n-Sup" was August 8. Also on this date, 12 youth took a trip to the Children's Museum in Memphis.

Also on August 8, the church voted to revise our constitution. The changes were

to eliminate the terms deacon and deaconess and change them to diaconate.

A church auction of "white elephants" was held August 23. Carol Blansett was auctioneer. Profits went to the church treasury.

Vance Moore, lay minister of Sherwood Christian Church in Sherwood, Arkansas, presented "People of Chalice" September 23-October 3 on Sunday evenings. This was a study of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

A carnival was held October 30 to raise money for a new awning to cover the outside entrance to the sanctuary. The metal awning was erected by Air-Vent Awning for \$1,200.00 on November 8.

Property donated in 1999: 2 coffee makers and 10 children's chairs by Kathy and Walter Poole; television and stand, two video cassette players, 40 folding metal chairs by Pat and Pete Hampton.

New members added in 1999

Travis Conrad	Shannon and Mitchell Lucas, Alex Lucas	
Lindsey Malone	Betty and Evert Stacey	R. J. and Anne Stone
Norma Wall	Donna Wardlow	Melissa Warren
Samantha Warren	Samantha Wheeler	

BEGINNING OF THE NEW MILLENNIUM

In February of the year 2000, the Midsouth Regional Blood Center (LifeBlood) presented the church with the 1999 LifeGiver Award (shadow box plaque) for highest percentage of participation by a church (153%).

On April 16 the church voted to give the City of West Memphis a 15' easement on the extreme West property line for Avondale Elementary School drainage. We will be allowed to tie into it for drainage.

On Easter Sunday Sandy Younger presented the church with a painting she did of Jesus Christ kneeling in prayer. It was hung on the sanctuary West wall.

The ADW bake sale and youth car wash were held in May at Wal-mart.

A mini-revival was held at the church May 19, 20, and 21. Rev. Tommy Carney, minister at First Christian Church in Blytheville, Arkansas, was speaker.

The CMF held its International Day of Pancakes breakfast in early June. They netted \$315.50 for its cause. They also started sponsoring two people in the community Meals on Wheels program each month.

Nine ladies represented our church at the Arkansas Disciple Women's state retreat June 9-11. This is the largest number every to attend. Our women are still doing mission work by selecting a needed project each month in our community.

The youth were active in the summer. Three attended summer youth camps. They made another trip to the Children's Museum in Memphis and had an evening out at the local Hog Pen playing miniature golf and games.

Two seminary students were hired for summer youth programs in our Northeast District of Arkansas. Jeremy Moore and Joe Blosser worked with our children during July and August. They helped on Wednesday nights at youth meetings and during Vacation Bible School July 17-21 where 42 children attended. Norma Wall was director of VBS. Our part of the seminary students service cost \$1,200.00.

The Walnut Lake Estates property, donated to us by Paul Lightbody, was listed to sale with Gordon Stone Realty in Mississippi for \$2,500.00 in July.

The youth held its own "Sing-n-Sup" August 26. It featured music and Mexican food. The meal and setting was called "Jesus Casa". The ADW gave this annual event to the youth.

The ADW published a 100-page cookbook entitled "Feeding the Flock" in November through Fundcraft Publishing in Collierville, Tennessee.

CHURCH MORTGAGE BURNED

November 19th was a big day for the church. The elders burned the church building mortgage following Sunday morning worship which included a fellowship dinner. The mortgage was held by Christian Board of Church Extension.

"Hanging of the Greens" was November 26.

Fifteen of our children attended a LaCoterie breakfast with Santa December 1.

The church choir presented "2000 Decembers Ago" December 17th, followed with an all-church Christmas party.

Property donated in 2000 consisted of a computer by the Alford families.

New members added in 2000

Wanda Bentley	Buddy Martin	Ralph and Sue Mote
Mildred Russell	James and Esther Williams	Nancy Stone

A functional committee planning session started the year 2001. All committees met to plan for the year on January 13.

A special presentation of the Heifer Project was given by Judy Johnson at the ADW meeting January 14. Other churches in the community were invited.

Our church was recognized once again for giving to LifeBlood. A plaque for LifeBlood Life Giver Award was presented at a luncheon in Memphis February 4th. We had the highest percentage of donations in the Memphis area with 191%.

Norine Westerbeck presented a concert of Christian music for the benefit of National Camps for Blind Children March 4th in our church.

An eldership training workshop led by Vance Moore was held March 10th. It was a one day affair.

Our ADW hosted the district spring workshop March 24th.

The church constitution was completely revised April 1st as some articles were outdated.

Eight women attend the state ADW retreat at Piersol group camp in June.

Six youth attended summer camps in June-July.

Thirty-eight youth attended Vacation Bible School in July.

The fifth annual "Sing-n-Sup" was held August 19.

We hosted the all-church Northeast District "Fall Festival" October 6th.

Norine Westerbeck presented our program as we hosted the district men's meeting in November.

"Hanging of the Greens" was December 2nd.

The annual choir Christmas musical and Christmas party was December 16. The musical was "Come Let Us Worship the King".

New members added in 2001

Tim and April Ballard	Michael Boggs	Cy Brockman
Amanda Carter	Keith Dickey	Lesla Pickle
Tommie Walden.		

Our thoughts turned to the Afghanistan war in 2002. Three members of our church served in the military during this war: Lennie Younger and Robert Walden, U.S. Navy; and Buddy Martin, U.S. Army. During this time candles were burned in the sanctuary each Sunday reminding us of them and to pray for their safety.

The CMF Valentine Banquet was held February 16, 2002, in fellowship hall. Twenty couples attended.

A website was created in March by Jim Mattson. It is maintained by GEWeb Publishing (Gene Bagley). The site is www.fccdocwm.org.

Two events were held April 27 -- the CMF annual pancake breakfast and ADW annual bake sale. Both raised funds for their missions projects.

Six youth attended summer camps during June-July.

Thirty-four youth attended Vacation Bible School in July.

The Arkansas Christian Church was changed to the Great River Region September 1st. Our voting delegates were Teresa Foster and Debbie Morris. The region now includes Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi.

Two church thefts were recorded in 2002. The first was October 1st and second in November. All electronics were stolen each time even after we replaced them -- sound

system, 2 karaoke machines, 2 TVs, 2 video cassette recorders, 4 portable CD-cassette players. Even the bath towels used for baptisms were taken. Everything was replaced by insurance.

December 1st was "Hanging of the Greens".

"Best Gift of All" was the title of the Christmas musical December 17. The all-church Christmas party followed. Also on this date, the Walnut Lakes Estate property in Mississippi was sold to Doug Martindale for \$1,000.00. It was hard finding a buyer so the board agreed to this price.

Property purchased in 2002 was a refrigerator to replace the drink machine by the CMF, new kitchen cabinets were installed, and another electric stove (giving us two) for fellowship hall.

New members added in 2002

Thomas Dill	Don and Sue Fisk	Blake Goodman
Betty Thompson	Erika Tucker	Brooke Alford
Jim and Jan Burton	Kathryn Stone	James Allen Warren

The ADW held its installation of officers for 2003 on January 12.

A new Hewlett-Packard Officejet d135 copier was purchased January 20, 2003 for the office. The old copier was placed upstairs for the youth and Sunday school classes.

The church building was broken into again March 30. The thief entered into the building by kicking out a stain glass window in the sanctuary. Thanks to a neighbor across the street, who called the police, the thief was apprehended inside the building. Because of this break-in we had to replace the stain glass and replace the sanctuary carpet.

Holy Week services were held April 14, 15, and 16, beginning with a day of prayer. Bro. Mattson washed feet of each participate in the day of prayer. The services ended April 17 with the Maundy Thursday service.

Sandy Younger presented the church with another painting for Easter. It shows Jesus holding a large cross and hangs on the West side of the sanctuary.

Four youth attended summer camps in June.

Vacation Bible School was held in July and 32 children participated. Monica Malone was leader.

The annual ADW auction was held in August. The proceeds went to the Heifer project. Over \$700.00 was raised.

Sunday night worship services started September 7th with an informal setting.

At the September meeting, the official board approved the purchase of new screen and projection equipment for the sanctuary. Cost was around \$3,000.00.

Chet Hampton, an elder at Springdale First Christian Church, presented a contemporary worship service during the morning October 14 so members could see what it entailed.

At the official board meeting in November, the church voted to give \$1,000.00 to the community Meals on Wheels program. Because of lack of contributions the program was in a financial bind and eventually had to close its doors after December. Our ADW and CMF both had given to them for several years.

The new screen was used to show scenes for "Hanging of the Greens" November 30th.

"I'll Be Home for Christmas" was the Christmas musical December 21st, utilizing the sanctuary screen for showing Christmas scenes during the presentation.

Four coffee pots were incorporated for use during Sunday school and dinners. One was purchased by the church and the Poole family donated the others. Two more vapor lights were installed on the back side of the building, giving us five lights.

New members added in 2003

Micheal and Erica Charlton	Terry and Kelly Lamb
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Rick Hamilton, associate regional minister, presented a program on evangelism in

January, 2004.

The CMF Valentine Banquet was held February 14 with 30 couples.

Due to the cancellation of Meals on Wheels last December, the CMF adopted a new mission -- to work on the youth services building in Marion which needed painting and repairs.

Holy Week revival services were held April 4-7. On Maundy Thursday, April 8, the evening began with a dinner followed by a service.

RECOGNITION OF JIM MATTSON'S DOCTORATE OF MINISTRY

Our minister, Jim Mattson received his Doctorate of Ministry from Colorado Theological Seminary and was recognized May 2 with a service presented by our church; Barb Jones, executive regional minister; and Rick Hamilton, associate regional minister. Jim was presented with his doctorate robe and stole.

Sunday evening worship was terminated in May due to poor attendance.

Peggy Warbritton started a Dr. Phil weight loss support group in May. Ten attended the first meeting..

Ten youth attended summer camps in June.

Vacation Bible School was not held in 2004 due to lack of leadership.

Two women attended the ADW retreat July 11-13.

A new water tank was installed to heat the baptistry. It was ready for use August 15. Cost was \$757.00. The old heater wore out.

Josie Orlando was called to be our new youth leader August 22 following a congregational meeting. She will begin September 12, 2004 with a salary of \$125.00 weekly. Her duties are to hold children's worship each Sunday, start a new youth fellowship, and work with youth in all their endeavors.

The ADW auction was held August 22. They netted \$769.50. Thirty-five attended to eat and bid.

A day of prayer was held August 28. The theme was personal commitment.

A central heat and air conditioning unit was installed upstairs November 8 for \$5,500.00.

December 19th was the choir's Christmas musical called "Emmanuel, Celebrating Heaven's Child".

Donations in 2004 were 40 new chateau sterling place forks for the kitchen by Pat and Pete Hampton and 6 six-foot tables and 6 eight-foot tables for fellowship hall by members of the congregation.

New members added in 2004

Gloria Conner

Connie Fisk

Tyler Thompson

Mason Malone

Taylor Malone

Jonathon Hollis

Rheba Morris

Billy May Jr

Tina Williams

Jack Echol

Michelle Younger

Six of these were by baptism.

The year 2005 began with a sermon during morning worship January 2 by Rick Hamilton on evangelism.

A local minister, James Dollahite, presented a nine-week series on "Humanity". This study on the Bible dealt with the concept of man's relationship with God. First study was February 20.

The congregation met March 5 to discuss where the church has been and where we're going; seeking better ways to serve in our community. Norma Wall volunteered to start a monthly newsletter, "News of the Pews" and Jerry Blansett volunteered to be in charge of publicity. The youth sponsored a hot dog dinner, followed by a movie after this meeting to raise money for summer youth camps.

The ADW worked for three weeks preparing bibs and blankets for the Health Care and Rehabilitation Center of West Memphis. They presented them March 7.

Flock III, Norma Wall leader, invited Flock II, led by Peggy Warbritton, to a St. Patrick's day dinner and fellowship March 17.

March 19 was another day to raise funds for youth summer camps. They sponsored a spaghetti dinner.

Josie Orlando resigned as youth leader March 20 due to increased work as a teacher at Lindenwood.

The two air-conditioner/heating units for the sanctuary had to be replaced March 31. Cost was \$6,959.25.

Mac's Air Conditioning Service did the work.

A "red hat society" (Sassy Red Roses Chapter) was organized in April by Norma Wall. This women's group wore red hats and purple dresses when they went somewhere together.

CHURCH ADOPTS MISSION PROJECT

The church adopted the Health Care & Rehabilitation Center of West Memphis as a mission in April. The ADW bought birthday gifts for the patients' birthday party held once each month. The church members provided bingo prizes for their monthly game.

Another vandal entered the church in the early hours of April 28 by breaking the glass on the west side of the building. Only thing taken was monies from the men's drink machine, about \$30.00.

The ADW bake sale April 30 at Wal-mart netted \$627.15. They took orders for sweets, etc., throughout the month. Total was \$2,713.30.

At the May 15th board meeting it was voted we send \$50.00 a month to the Health Care & Rehabilitation Center for their use.

Eleven youth attended summer camps in June.

Another break-in occurred July 10th, taking drink machine money only. This prompted the church to install nonbreakable glass in the front and side doors. Security alarm decals were placed on the doors.

Vacation Bible School was held July 18-22 with 34 youth. Monica Malone was in charge. Theme was "Market Place".

Members assisted in gathering needed food and other items for the Katrina hurricane victims across the Gulf Coast September 17th. Items were turned in to our church from the community.

Connie Alford took over as church choir director October 19.

Monica Malone hosted a church Halloween hayride and weiner roast October 29. A new sign was installed by Adkins Sign Co. in front of the church building in December. Cost was \$3,200.00.

The choir cantata, "Repeat the Sounding Joy", was presented December 18 followed by the church Christmas party.

A new air-conditioner/heating unit had to be installed in Fellowship Hall in December. Cost was \$3,850.00. Mac's Air Conditioning Service did the work.

New members added in 2005

Mike and Margaret Phillips

Sarah Kitchens

James Sullivan

Elizabeth Bobbitt

Heather, Jessica, and Christopher Steed

The year 2006 began with a sermon during morning worship January 1 by Rick Hamilton. Rick comes to the West Memphis church on the first Sunday of each year.

A spaghetti dinner was held January 29 to raise money for youth summer camps in 2006. They raised over \$1,000.00. They also received donations toward a television giveaway scheduled for February 12.

The annual CMF sponsored Valentine banquet was held February 11. Thirteen couples attended.

Our building was used by the Proctor Volunteer Fire Department for presentations and studies during February, March, and April. Surrounding area volunteers also

attended.

Richard Smith built two low stairs leading to the altar in the sanctuary for the handicapped.

The youth sponsored a fish fry March 4 to raise fees for summer camps. Terry and Kelly Lamb provided the fish.

Rededication through baptism was held March 5 for Eloise Shirley, Jane Woodside, and Peggy Warbritton.

Our new regional minister, Vivian Bryant, delivered the sermon March 19.

50th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

The church celebrated its 50 years of existence April 2. It happened on the same date the charter was signed in 1956. The ADW hosted the event and presented a 50th Anniversary banner and paraments for the lecture and pulpit. Former members were invited along with regional and district churches. Former members attending were Teresa Foster, Ken Heffington, Diane and Danny Horner, Larry Kidd, Emorylee and Glenn Lewis, and Carolyn Rikard. Nina Mack was honored as our only surviving charter member. Martha Jane Rountree represented her father and former minister, Edward Rountree, who is now deceased. Ron Johnson, another former minister, sent his regards because he was unable to attend due to preaching that day in Clinton, Arkansas. He is the only surviving former minister besides Jim Mattson, our present minister. Jerry and Sue Garrett presented by mail a handcrafted wooden cross. A historical display was set up for the month of April thru June 11.

A Crittenden County American Red Cross Disaster Preparedness meeting was held April 8 in our church for the community.

Also on April 8 Chet and Karen Hampton from the Springdale church served a traditional Indian dinner for 20 of their supporters from here. A slide presentation on their missionary work in India was presented following the dinner.

Maundy Thursday service was held April 13th.

A survey was presented at a congregational meeting April 30 to help decide what the congregation wanted to do concerning building expansion. Thirty-five members attended. These findings were presented to the official board at the May meeting. No action was taken at this time.

Four women attended the Regional ADW Retreat June 2-4.

First Christian continued its 50th anniversary celebration June 11 with a "Family Day". It featured morning worship, lunch, and a two hour outdoor special music presentation by the Turners, a bluegrass gospel group from Mountain View, Arkansas. Following the music, games were played. Cake, cookies, watermelon and homemade ice cream were served to end the event. Attending the celebration were four more former members: Sue Lee and Barbara Langley from Missouri; Peggy de Peralta from California; Debbie Gollihue from Tennessee. Norma Wall organized this event.

Twelve youth attended regional camps during the summer of 2006.

James Brogdon filled the pulpit June 25 as Brother Jim was on vacation.

Vacation Bible School was held July 10-15. Its theme was centered on animal stories from the Bible.

Attendance averaged 24. Carol Blansett was leader.

Sharie Coats from Pulaski Christian Church filled the pulpit August 6 as ministers in Arkansas swapped churches for a Sunday. Bro. Jim was in Maumelle.

August 20th was a day of recognizing Pat and Pete Hampton as elder emerituses. Fourteen family members were guests.

New members in 2006 were Francis Morris, Nellie Newman, and Harold and Crystal Pardy.

This history contains only highlights though there were many other events, activities, etc. through the years.

This is a History in Progress.