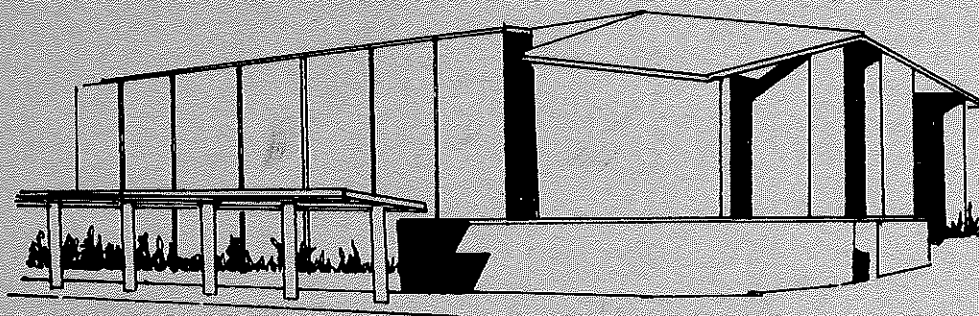


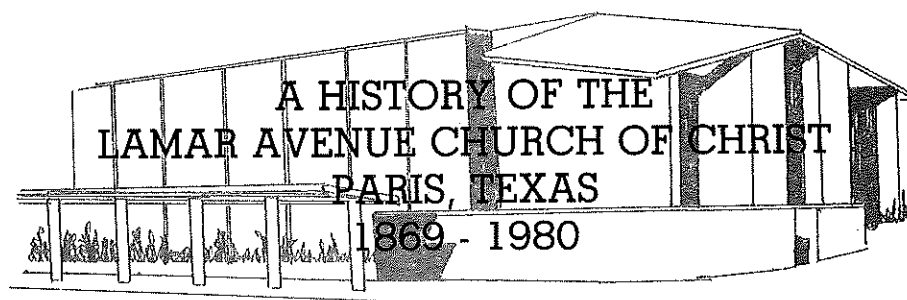
WHERE THERE IS VISION

by
JOHN H. CANNON, JR.



A HISTORY OF THE
LAMAR AVENUE CHURCH OF CHRIST
PARIS, TEXAS
1869 - 1980

WHERE THERE IS VISION



John H. Cannon, Jr.

by

JOHN H. CANNON, JR.

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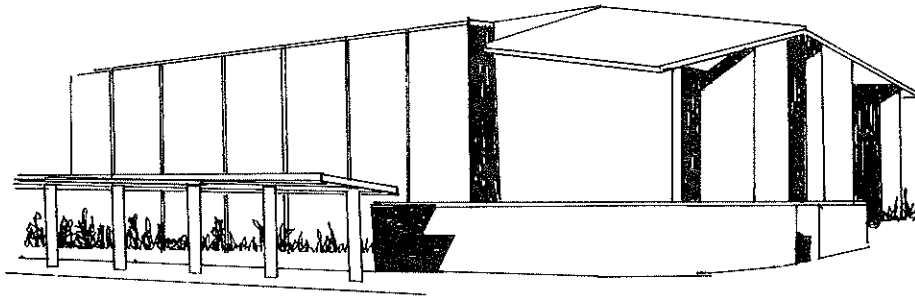
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Art work by Herb Dean

DEDICATION

To all members of the Lamar Avenue Church of Christ

Past - Present - Future



The history of a congregation is really HIS STORY. It is the story of Christ at work in the lives of people. It is the story of Christ among men. May the story of the Lamar Avenue Church of Christ always be the story of Christ.

"According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building upon it. But let each man be careful how he builds upon it. For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

(I Corinthians 3:10-11, NASV)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people have had a part in the writing of this history. I have been privileged to bring it to this final form.

I am deeply indebted to Mary Ruth Biard for her assistance and encouragement. For many years Mary Ruth collected articles for a scrapbook on the Lamar Avenue Church. With this material, and other items she had researched, my work was made much easier.

For assistance in securing many of the pictures, appreciation is extended to: Thelma Castleberry, Inez Kelley, Haskell and Hattie Mae Smith, Margaret Carlton, Fannie Sluder and Lura Cawthon.

I must also thank my elders for allowing me time to work on this project. Especially, I am grateful to Hubert Roach for the use of his library, and to Ed Carroll for his assistance in proofing.

This research was initially undertaken as a Guided Study in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Science Degree in Biblical and Related Studies at Abilene Christian University. R. L. Roberts, Assistant Librarian, gave invaluable assistance in research. Dr. F. Furman Kearley, Director of Graduate Studies in Bible, first encouraged the project. Dr. Bill Humble, Head of the Department of Bible, guided my study to its completion.

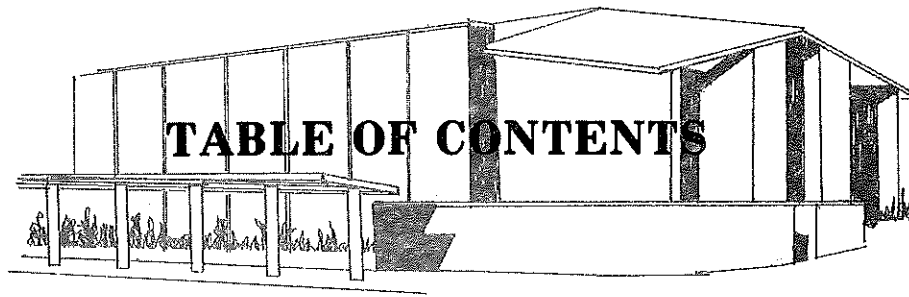
*John H. Cannon, Jr.
Paris, Texas
September 1, 1981*

PREFACE

The story of the Lamar Avenue Church of Christ is a noble one. From her early days to the present she has been a leader for the cause of Christ. Thousands of faithful Christians have called Lamar Avenue church their church home. Many staunch and godly men have served in the leadership of this good church. Capable and competent preachers have filled her pulpit to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ.

The history of this congregation spans over a century. Since the life of a church consists of the life of her people it will be impossible to chronicle all the events and personalities that have contributed to the making of this congregation. Our purpose will be to catch a glimpse of the available facts and known events.

Lamar Avenue has had her ups and downs. She has had her glorious days and her gloomy days. Through the struggles, the defeats, and the victories, she has remained "unshakable" (Hebrews 12:28). Her mission has remained undaunted, to make known, "the manifold wisdom of God" (Ephesians 3:10).



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CHAPTER I

HOW THE CHURCH OF CHRIST BEGAN IN LAMAR COUNTY, TEXAS 1836-1850



To appreciate the heritage of Lamar Avenue one has to go back to the very beginning of the Restoration Movement in Texas. Briefly, we will trace those early beginnings in Red River County, which included Lamar County until 1840. Also, we will observe the significance of the three earliest congregations in Lamar County: the old Mulberry Church of Christ at Sylvan, the Antioch Church of Christ at Biardstown, and the Roxton Church of Christ.

The First Congregation in Texas

The Restoration Movement was first introduced into Texas in the year 1836. Early during that year a wagon train arrived from Tennessee and stopped at old Fort Clark, near Clarksville, on January 17, 1836. The pioneers that composed this train were almost all members of the church of Christ. Here at Fort Clark the "church on wheels" settled, built a church building, and met regularly for worship and preaching for about four years before most of them moved on to other places. This marks the beginning of the cause to restore New Testament practice in this land that was then the Western Frontier. There were others who began to work independently for the same cause about the same time in Southeast Texas, but the main stream of influence for "the Bible and the Bible alone" was to come from this transplanted group of Christians from Alabama and Tennessee.¹

The wagon train was accompanied by the famous David Crockett as far as Arkansas. Two of the first ministers for the churches of Christ came with the group: Mansel Walter Matthews and Lynn D'Spain. Matthews was one of the first land

commissioners under Sam Houston, and D'Spain was instrumental in establishing the church in Nacogdoches.²

The church at Fort Clark, now Clarksville, has been designated the "first congregation" of the churches of Christ in Texas. "This influx of disciples ensured rapid growth of the churches of Christ so that they became a prominent religious body in Texas within a decade."³ Within a few years Lamar County was created from Red River County in 1840 and officially organized in 1841.⁴ Therefore the churches of Christ in Lamar County have roots going back to those first Christians who entered the Republic of Texas in 1836.

The First Congregations in Lamar County

Mulberry Church of Christ

The first Church of Christ in Lamar County was the Mulberry Church of Christ. It was established and a meeting place built in 1846 on land donated by Sherrod Roland near the community of Sylvan. The deed stipulates that the "Ruling Elders of the Congregation of Christ Church at Mulberry" were Joseph Gresham and H. L. Williams.⁵ In correspondence dated December 7, 1849, H. L. Williams reported the death of Joseph Gresham stating, "He has been a Bishop in the congregation I have membership in for five years or more. He was pious and zealous as an individual member, and an efficient overseer."⁶

In 1872 the Mulberry church house was sold to the Negro congregation in that area. Elder Leroy Bills was the preacher for the colored church. In 1880 a brother H. S. Holloway (colored) of the Mulberry congregation reported that "the congregation is alive to Christ's work,"⁷ and that they wanted to improve their house of worship.

The population shifted to the Moore's Springs area four miles east of Paris, and the brethren then erected a meeting house there beginning in the spring of 1877 on land donated by Levin Moore.

The church was completed and those members who are left on this earth have no greater moments than those when they recall the memories of the first services that were held in the new church and the many others held afterward. Elder (H. L.) Williams, who gave hours of his time to preaching and teaching; and Prof. F. D. Srygley, and Mr. Jim Biard, another elder of the old church stood out as some of the first leaders.⁸

In 1924 the brethren at the Moore's Springs congregation decided to relocate at Reno. A new building was erected that seated 250. F. L. Young, then minister of the Lamar Avenue Church of Christ, gave the dedication sermon on March 16, 1924. Young told of how the church had been established on the foundation laid by God, Himself, and how we as Christian men and women should build our monuments on the foundation of God. He said: "God told us that we must so live that our lights may shine out and glorify Him. The people of the Moore's Spring Church have moved their little church to Reno, in order that they may let their lights shine brighter and do a greater work for Him."⁹

Antioch Church of Christ

Among the first Christian settlers who came to Fort Clark in 1836 with the "church on wheels" were two brothers W. W. Biard and J. G. Biard. These men, along with others of their family, later settled at Biardstown 12 miles southeast of Paris on Hickory Creek. Under the activities of the old pioneer preacher, Elder Tom Barrett of Titus County, the Antioch Church of Christ was established at Biardstown in 1848.¹⁰

Mrs. Rebecca Stone Biard and her three sons, William Washington, Andrew Jackson, and John Gaines, came to Texas from Limestone County, Alabama, traveling by flat-boat on Red River and settling near Biardstown. The family members had been baptized by Alexander Campbell.¹¹

James M. Biard, Andrew's son, later wrote in his autobiography that his grandfather, John Biard "married a Miss Rebecca Stone, a cousin of the great reformer B. W. Stone."¹² Thus, the "roots" of New Testament Christianity in Lamar County go all the way back to association with the "Campbell movement" in the Virginias and the "Stone movement" in Kentucky.

The first eldership of the Antioch church was composed of T. H. R. Poteet, Edward Skidmore, A. J. Biard and W. W. Biard. Pioneer members of this church before the Civil War were: A. J. Biard, J. G. Biard, W. W. Biard, W. G. Biard, J. M. Biard, and John W. Biard, as well as other members of this same family, also Logan Stephenson, Calvin Hines, Lynn Green and William Cheatham.¹³

Early members serving the church after Elder Barrett were J. M. Biard, Harden Jones, Lynn D'Spain and others. Visiting preachers who came to hold protracted meetings were W. N. Northcutt, "Uncle Charley" Carlton, T. B. Larimore, Clint Mathis, N. H. O. Polly, Dr. Atkins, Tom Burnett, Lawrence Scott, J. W. McGarvey, Jr., J. F. Grubbs, Cap and Abe Foster, F. M. Trimble, John Denton, Walter Smith, Terrell Click, W. J. Eubank, F. D. Srygley, C. H. Barkley and others.¹⁴

The first church building at Antioch was made of hewn logs. The original building was sold and moved about one mile east. Another building was erected in 1861.¹⁵ The old church began to weaken in membership many years later because of members dying out or moving away. Finally, the congregation disbanded in 1918 with a total membership of twenty-two.¹⁶ In September 1930, R. L. Colley, minister of Lamar Avenue Church of Christ, held a protracted meeting on the church grounds at Antioch.

Ed Couch, an elder of Lamar Avenue, wrote of the influence of Antioch preacher, James M. Biard.

It is generally conceded that the preacher who did the most good for this old church, so far as pushing the building work and the education of the membership of the church of Christ in Lamar and other nearby Counties, was James M. Biard. He began the work as a boy and continued many times without any financial assistance whatever, until the time of his death.¹⁷

Roxton Church of Christ

The church in Roxton began as early as 1850, and probably a few years prior to this. The church building was located at its present site on land donated by John Woodson Denton, Sr. John and his wife, Mary, were among the first members of the congregation. They celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary January 1, 1895, and it is believed that the land on which the church was built was given early in their married life. Thus, the church at Roxton probably dates back to the middle to late 1840's.

A church record book listed 86 members in 1883. Within a few years the congregation grew to about 150. For many years the church at Roxton was a strong and vibrant rural church of tremendous influence for Christ.

Over the years many outstanding preachers conducted meetings at Roxton. These included: G. W. Gann, R. M. Gano, Joe Harding (weeping Joe), T. R. Burnett, H. C. Booth, Bro. Lashley, J. D. Borden, D. T. Carlton, Thomas E. Milholland, J. B. Nelson, J. W. Chisum, Fred Dennis, E. S. Elkins, A. LeRoy Elkins, J. C. Foster, J. C. White, F. L. Young, J. D. Tant, T. W. Phillips and C. R. Nichol.

The man who provided strong spiritual leadership in the church at Roxton for many years was evangelist John W. Denton, Jr. J. W., the son of John and Mary Denton, was born November 19, 1853 in Lamar County. He lacked opportunity for a formal education, so he educated himself through diligent study of the Book throughout his life. He began preaching in 1872 at the age of 19. In the years that followed he preached frequently for the Roxton church, held numerous debates, and helped establish congregations far and near. His influence was felt by all the congregations throughout Lamar County and Northeast Texas. Roxton was always

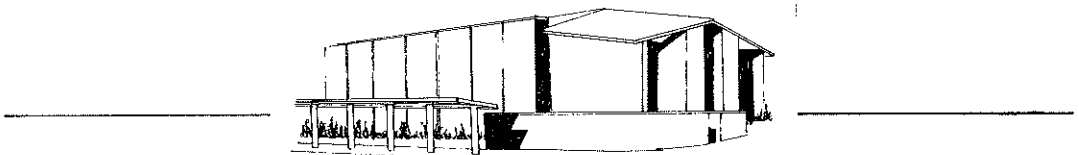
his home from which he would often travel in carrying out his evangelistic work. In February 1931 he left this life and was buried at Roxton.

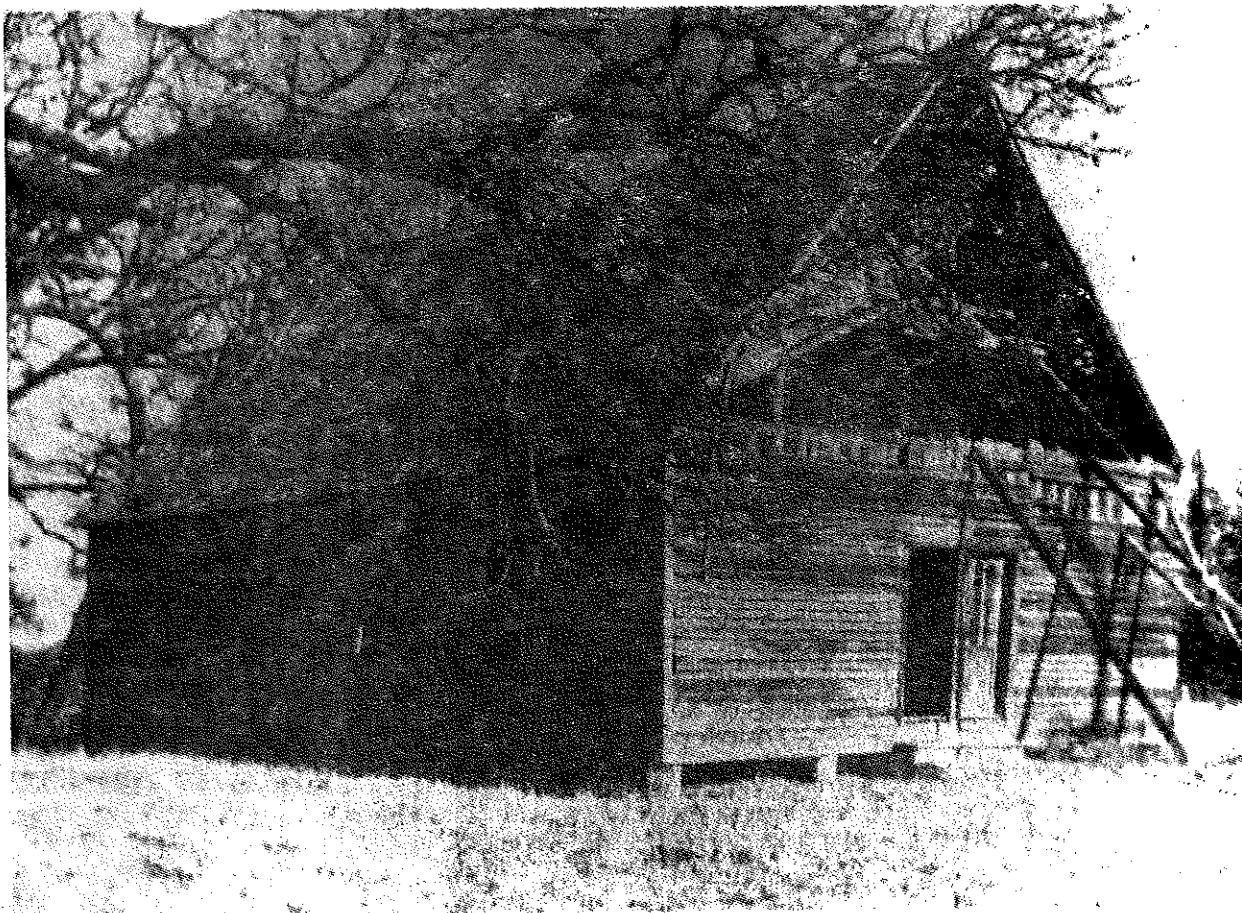
J. W. Denton formed a long and lasting friendship with well-known evangelist C. R. Nichol. He and Nichol spent much time together in evangelistic work. On one of Brother Nichol's visits to the Denton home, he and J. W. worked diligently for several weeks co-authoring the Nichol Pocket Bible Encyclopedia. The book is still in print, and literally thousands of copies have been used by young preachers and Christians over the years.

In 1911 C. R. Nichol compiled an album of pictures and biographical data on gospel preachers of the day. Later the book was reprinted and given the title Gospel Preachers Who Blazed the Trail. In this book J. W. Denton was highly praised by Brother Nichol.

J. W. Denton has been preaching for thirty-five years. During that time he has baptized a great many people and held many debates, having met in discussion some of the best talent among the Methodists, Baptists, Adventists, Mormons and infidels. . . He is actively engaged in the evangelistic work. Among the disciples there is not to be found a stronger man or more logical, forceful speaker than John Denton. The advocates of a false position have ever feared him in the field of polemics.

The energetic spirit of these pioneer Christians helped build a solid foundation for the cause of Christ in Northeast Texas. Their faith was real and alive. We owe a great debt to their untiring efforts to widen the borders of the Kingdom of Christ.





RUINS OF OLD ANTIOCH CHURCH OF CHRIST
 Biardstown, Texas 1861
 Picture taken about 1930



H. L. WILLIAMS
 Elder at Mulberry
 Church of Christ - 1846



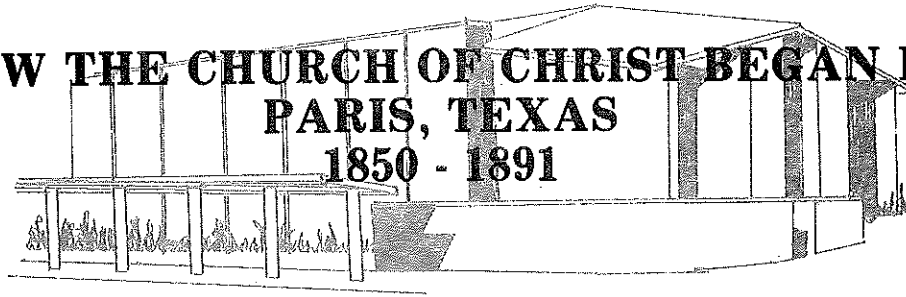
JOHN W. DENTON, JR.
 Evangelist - Age 75
 Roxton, Texas



LAMAR AVENUE CHURCH OF CHRIST
421 Lamar Avenue
1870

CHAPTER II

HOW THE CHURCH OF CHRIST BEGAN IN PARIS, TEXAS 1850 - 1891



By the 1850's the church had a strong foundation in Lamar County. Through the influence of congregations like the Mulberry Church and the Antioch Church the church in Paris had its beginning. In the 1850's James M. Biard conducted meetings in Paris under the trees in Russell's Grove on North Main Street. Converts were baptized in nearby Provine's Pool.¹⁸ Apparently, these were some of the first converts to New Testament Christianity in Paris.

In the Texas Department of the Gospel Advocate three reports sounded an encouraging note concerning the churches of Northeast Texas in 1857. Brother N. A. V. Henderson of Clarksville wrote, "the good cause is progressing slowly, but I trust surely in our region of the country."¹⁹ W. W. Biard of Antioch, Lamar County commented that if the brethren and sisters would live up to their privileges and duty "truth would soon cover this far west, as the waters the mighty deep."²⁰ In June 1857, James M. Biard announced the meeting of the North-Eastern Texas Cooperation in September at Forest Grove, seven miles west of Clarksville. He went on to state the purpose of the meeting.

At which time and place we hope to see a general representation from all the congregations in Northern Texas. Brethren, the time has come when we must arise from the lethargy into which we have fallen and work while it is called to-day, for the night will soon come when we cannot work. Brethren, we have but few preaching brethren, therefore let us come up to the work prepared to do something.²¹

The meeting convened and twelve brethren assembled including four from Lamar County: W. W. Biard and James M. Biard from Antioch, and L. V. Moore and

H. L. Williams from Mulberry. A committee was appointed to select Evangelists for the year 1858 for Northeast Texas. The committee submitted the following report:

We have succeeded in procuring the labors of Brothers Asher Gough one half of his time, and James M. Biard all his time as evangelists for the ensuing year, and assign to them the following field for their evangelical labors, to-wit: the counties of Titus, Cass, Red River, Lamar, and that portion of Hopkins included within the congregation known as the Woodlawn congregation.²²

The evangelistic fervor of these pioneer preachers contributed greatly to the growth of the Kingdom in those early days. They ceased not to preach "Christ and Him crucified." The results were inspiring. Thomas Barrett wrote from Paris on November 5, 1859 reporting on services he had conducted in East Texas at Antioch, Sulphur Springs, Mt. Vernon, Mt. Pleasant, Sturgis Mill, and Paris. He stated,

I commenced at Paris, Lamar County, (from where I write) Friday night before the fifth Lord's Day in October, continued one week and immersed three. The whole number immersed within the last three months is one hundred and six, and by recommendation fifty; total one hundred and fifty-six. During this time I have preached about fifty times. I hear good news from many sections of our country. This is a time long to be remembered. We thank God and take courage. Praise the Lord, O, my soul.²³

With a good number of Christians in Paris a special effort was organized by James M. Biard and Charles Carlton of Bonham, Texas. The result of this effort marked the official beginning of the Church of Christ in Paris. Because of the significance of this report it is included in its complete form as it appeared in the Gospel Advocate.

Bonham, Texas, July 23, 1869.

Bro. Lipscomb: I held a meeting of seventeen days continuance at Paris, Lamar County, which resulted in baptizing thirty persons on the confession of the name of the Christ, gathering

up about thirty-five others, and organizing a congregation of eighty disciples.

While there, I preached in the Baptist meeting house one week, and in the house owned by the Presbyterians during the remainder of the time. In both of these places the people gave us a fine hearing, but others failed to see that the Gospel, as preached by the Apostles, had any more claims on them than the various isms of the times.

Paris is a good field for some brother of fair ability, a small family, with qualification to teach the sciences, if necessary, and an energy that is not disheartened by difficulties and opposition. Let such a brother correspond with J. B. Bennett, Paris, Lamar County, Texas.

The Baptists here have, in one case, shut us out of their house. What this means you can best tell, but the truth will prevail.²⁴

Your brother,
CHARLES CARLTON

Carlton also reported the organization of the Paris congregation in The American Christian Review under the date of September 20, 1869. "I gathered a congregation of eighty-three in Paris, and one of thirty-three in Sherman. The religious parties in Paris, Sherman, Sulphur Springs, Pilot Point, and Roxton, gave us a fair hearing and treated us with no little kindness."²⁵ Carlton returned to Paris again in 1871 and conducted another meeting "which resulted in fourteen additions to the cause of truth."²⁶ From Paris, Brother Carlton preached at Sylvan and Antioch with fifteen more additions to the church.

James M. Biard attributed the success of these preaching efforts to the fact that

We called the attention of the people to the love of God and the teaching of the Spirit. The result was they came, they saw, they heard, they believed the truth, they obeyed, and now they are rejoicing as babes in Christ, drinking of the sincere milk of the Word, in order that they may attain unto a more perfect stature. ²⁷

Immediately the call went forth for a preacher for the young church in Paris. In both reports of 1869 Charles Carlton sent forth the plea for good, qualified preachers of the Gospel to come to Paris and the state of Texas in general. "Paris is a good field for some brother of fair ability, a small family, with qualification to teach the sciences, if necessary, and an energy that is not disheartened by difficulties and opposition."²⁸ Because the church was young it was unable to fully support a preacher at this early date. School teaching and preaching seemed to go hand in hand during those early days. Many church buildings of the day doubled as schools during the week.

Carlton continued by emphasizing the "missionary field" of Texas. He said,

The cause of Christ in Texas needs able and faithful men to advocate its claims and exhibit its glories to the world. . . If there is a field wanted by any of the missionaries, let him turn his steps toward this land, and he will find great opportunity for the exercise of his faith, patience, and ability in preaching the Word.²⁹

The church was prospering in Lamar County. "In Lamar County we have between 400 and 500 members. The congregation in Paris has a membership of about 100 members. . . The congregation at Antioch, eight miles south of Paris, has a membership of 200, whilst there are other members scattered over the country," writes James M. Biard in 1871.³⁰ Biard also reported the membership at Sulphur Springs, four miles east of Paris (also known as Moore's Springs) at 60-80. The Roxton church also numbered 60-80. The population of Paris was about 5,000.³¹

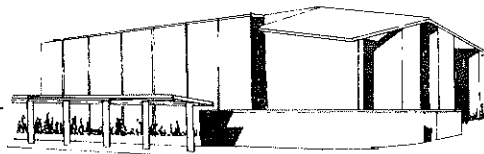
The call was still for a preacher for the Paris church. The Sulphur Springs church (Moore's Springs) was willing to "cooperate with the brethren in Paris in sustaining a preacher."³² Not just any preacher would do. "We do not want the sentimental preacher, but we want the earnest worker, the God-fearing man, men that love to preach the gospel of Christ for the good that is in it," so stated Biard.³³

Although the church was very young and struggling she managed to purchase a lot and erect a building in 1870. The location was Lot number 2 in Block number 26 on the plot of the City of Paris. The property fronted on Lamar Avenue and ran back to East Houston. The lot size was 202 feet by 216 feet, or "one acre". The purchase price was "five hundred dollars in gold". The deed designated J. B. Bennett, V. W. Hale and E. L. Dohoney as "officers and Trustees of the church of the Disciples of Christ at Paris, Texas." The church house was built on the west half of the lot. This small one room church building served the congregation until 1891. The date of the original deed was April 1, 1870. A year later, April 28, 1871, the same three men designated as "Trustees of the Church of Christ at Paris, Texas" sold the east half of the original lot to Rachel M. Dewitt for the sum of "one hundred and seventy-five dollars."

During the first twenty years a number of preachers were associated with the church in Paris. Those who preached for brief periods were James M. Biard, J. J. Williamson, W. N. Northcutt, and R. L. Downing. A more complete list of preachers is available beginning in 1880: F. D. Srygley, 1880-82; R. W. Officer, 1882-86; J. W. McGarvey, Jr., 1887-88; J. F. Grubbs, 1889; D. D. Boyle, 1890; and R. H. Fife, 1890-92.

Protracted meetings were still the order of the day. No doubt there were many notable preachers who visited the Paris church during those days. One such preacher was J. M. F. Smithson, "the blind preacher", from Tennessee. In June 1880, he preached at Paris.³⁴ In 1887 General Ricahrd M. Gano of Dallas preached a meeting December 14-27, resulting in thirty-seven additions of which thirty-one were by confession and baptism.³⁵

The fields were "white unto harvest" in Northeast Texas. God's faithful preachers were sowing the seed, and God was giving the increase. The Restoration spirit was vibrant and New Testament churches were growing in Lamar County. The future looked bright, but the dark cloud of division was on its way.



CHAPTER III



A number of controversies were raging in the brotherhood at this time. Two of the most serious issues involved, (1) instrumental music in worship, and (2) extra congregational organizations and missionary societies. The church in Paris was not immune from either of these issues.

Those in favor of such innovations were known as the "progressives". Those opposed were called "non-progressives" or "conservative".

The issue of "societies" had strong opposition in the Paris area. As early as 1871, James M. Biard spoke out against such innovations in the church.

We want men that can and will preach the gospel of Christ without the Louisville appendage, for we have no use for it. We believe it to be a bold innovation upon the gospel rights and privileges of the citizens of the Kingdom of Jesus, and if ever Northeast Texas is brought under the Louisville rule, we will have to be conquered, overpowered. We think just about as much of the Methodist Discipline as we do of it.³⁶

The "Louisville appendage" and "Louisville rule" which Biard spoke of had reference to the "Louisville Plan" which was adopted in 1869 at a national convention in Louisville, Kentucky. The plan basically called for a general convention composed of messengers from state conventions. There were to be general, state, and district boards corresponding to the several conventions. Churches were to pledge definite sums annually for missions with the

sum being divided equally with the district and the general board. Since this constituted an organization outside the local church, with authority over many local churches, opposition was very strong among those who desired to maintain the New Testament pattern of church organization. "How men of supposedly good judgment, committed to the principle of congregational freedom, could have been persuaded that this was the solution to the problems of the brotherhood continues to be a marvel."³⁷

A further indication that the issues of "societies" and "instrumental music" were causing strife in the Paris church is revealed in a report by J. M. Kidwill. Kidwill had traveled from Nashville, Tennessee, to Paris in May 1891.

The church here (Paris) is divided over the question of "progression" or the "old landmarks." A goodly number are faithful to the New Testament order, and are trying to hold up the cause under considerable disadvantage. There is perhaps more bitterness on both sides than is consistent with the Spirit of the Master.³⁸

The introduction of organs as aids to church worship produced one of the "most serious controversies that plagued the brotherhood."³⁹ Churches throughout the nation were being disrupted over such practices. Instrumental music was introduced into more and more churches, especially in the towns and larger cities.

On July 24, 1890, a church meeting occurred which was destined to bring open division to the Paris church. For fear these church minutes will not be preserved these historical records are being included in full. Hopefully, this account will help to explain the cause of the division in the Paris church.

...the clerk read the following resolutions: Whereas; there have existed and now exist certain differences of opinion concerning rules of practice and church government of the church, which have caused

useless wrangling, and created bitter feelings between many members, therefore be it resolved:

First, that we believe in missionary work in extending the gospel at home and abroad, and will heartily indorse and encourage the purposes and give them our unanimous support in what ever good work they may see proper to undertake for the benefit of the church of missionary work.

Second, that we believe that good singing is necessary in worship and in order to have good singing it is necessary for it to be accompanied by an organ. We do not believe that the organ is a hindrance to religion and a violation of the Scripture and we think that it is a great aid in church music.

Third, That we will use an organ in connection with our worship, and that the chair appoint a committee of three to raise funds to purchase an organ for the use of the church.

Fourth, That in matters of opinion not clearly set forth in the Bible, we believe in submitting to the will of the majority of the members.

Moved and seconded that they be adopted as a whole. Bro. C. N. Allen offered as a substitute, "That in case of a division of this congregation that the property be divided." Bro. E. L. Dohoney arose to a point of order claiming that under the circumstances the property could not be divided if any member of the congregation felt that they could not worship here any longer that it was their (sic) christian privilege to withdraw or stay away.⁴⁰

The chair sustained the point of order and a vote was ordered on the original resolutions. Much discussion followed for the adoption of the resolutions, and against their adoption, after which they were re-read and a rising vote taken. They were adopted by a vote of 40 to 18. After the vote was taken, division evolved in the meeting into its explicit form.

Bro. J. D. Elliot then announced that he was opposed to any progressive ideas and tendencies and would fight them as long as he lived. Bro. J. L. Bennett spoke in favor of unity and harmony. Agreeable to the third resolution the chair appointed the following brethren as a committee to raise funds and purchase an organ: ⁴¹

The year that followed was one of strife and open contention. The "division in the body" continued to fester as an open wound. The solution would be nothing

short of complete division. In less than a year, on June 1, 1891, another meeting of the congregation was called for the purpose of re-uniting and settling all difficulties. The following article edited by F. D. Srygley, former minister for the church in Paris (1880-82), appeared in the Gospel Advocate. Because of the historical significance of this article to New Testament Christianity in Paris, Texas, it is being recorded in full.

ORGANS, STRIFE, DIVISIONS, ETC.

The church at Paris, Texas, has for some time been in trouble over the organ, festivals, boards and such like. The matter has finally been settled, it seems, by an open division. The crisis came with the adoption of the following conditions of

AGREEMENT:

It is hereby agreed by the disciples of Christ worshipping at Paris, Texas, that the congregation be, and the same is hereby re-united and all difficulties settled, upon the following terms and conditions, to-wit:

1. It is agreed that the resolutions adopted by the majority July 24, 1890 be and they are hereby withdrawn and set aside, but the organ may remain in the church house as an aid in the singing, and not as a part of the worship. This agreement is intended simply as a settlement of a present difficulty and not as an article of faith.

2. It is agreed that the note of Elders E. L. Dohoney and W. H. Sluder of date Sept. 8, 1890 addressed to Eld. R. H. Fife, be and the same is hereby withdrawn.

Done by order of the congregation at Paris, Texas, June 1, 1891. Signed,

E. L. Dohoney
B. B. Sturgeon
J. R. Rutherford Elders.
R. H. Fife, Pastor.

Fifty-three members refused to accept the terms of agreement, and withdrew. They submit the following explanation or
LETTER OF WITHDRAWAL.

On Sunday morning, June 14, 1891, at the hour of morning services, we went to the Christian church on Lamar avenue and asked permission to read or have read a letter of withdrawal to the congregation then assembled. This request was refused us.

We deem it but just and right that every member of the congregation should know the reasons of our withdrawal. Therefore

we now publish herewith the paper which we would have read, had we been permitted to do so. Had the request been granted we would not appear before the public in this way.

Paris, Texas, June 14, 1891.—To the church (heretofore designated as the church of Christ) worshipping at No. 421 Lamar Avenue, Paris, Texas.

Brethren and Sisters:—Inasmuch as the majority of your number determined by ballot on Monday night, June 1, 1891, to use the organ in worship, thereby declaring that majorities must rule and govern; and inasmuch as you deliberately took that action, being aware of the fact that some of the protesting minority could not conscientiously remain and worship with it, again declaring your preference between our fellowship and instrumental music in worship, and furthermore setting the precedent for the future in taking the liberty to bind us by your opinions, when the New Testament has left us free, we therefore beg to say to you, that we believe that you have left the old platform (upon which the disciples of Christ have always claimed, and we are now claiming to stand) that is "the revealed will of God the Father, and Jesus Christ his dear Son, and our blessed Savior." Our plea has been, and now is, and shall ever be to take the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible for our creed, to take it for our guide in all things appertaining to religion, the work and worship of the Lord; and be guided by it, and it alone. We cannot but surrender our right to this plea, when we demand anything more of any man than the Lord has demanded of him; neither can we perform less, or solicit others to perform less than the law of the Lord commands and expect the sanction of heaven to rest upon our labors here below.

Every one of our number is ready now, has always been ready, and shall ever be ready, to do all things whatsoever the Lord has commanded us to do. If you had never demanded more of us than this, we would have remained with you and co-operated with you in the work but as you have sought to bind us in a matter in which the Lord has left us unbound, and futher, as you have decided once for all what the future policy and power of your body shall be, we therefore, with the fear of God before our eyes, with bitter feelings toward none, and with the fervent prayer in our hearts that you may yet rise high enough to drop every bone of contention, and pull down every bar of fellowship and not made and put by heaven's authority; we respectfully and peacefully withdraw from you.

In taking this step, we surrender and sacrifice all interest in and to the property heretofore regarded as belonging to the

congregation for the sake of peace, and we hereby declare ourselves severed from your body in fullest sense of that term.

(It seems that those who hold to the organ in this case have deliberately decided to build their religious fabric upon that instrument as the chief cornerstone. That is the thing which differentiates them. In order to enjoy fellowship with them, one must not only believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and "ever be ready to do all things whatsoever the Lord has commanded," but he must also believe that the organ may be used in the worship and ever be ready to do something in that line too. Now, whatever may he said about this organ business, we ought to hold a firm grip on the idea that a church can be a church of Christ without an organ, and that folks can be Christians and obey every command God has ever given without believing in organs in the worship. We ought not therefore to strain ourselves and disrupt the fellowship of the saints by trying to cut an extra dash and have organs when we can be Christians and go to heaven without them! — Srygley.)⁴²

Shortly after the "church split" James D. Elliott corresponded with the Gospel Advocate. "We continue to meet from house to house on Lord's day to keep house for the Lord. Have not failed to meet since we were driven from our former house of worship."⁴³ Elliott was very forthright in condemning societies and organized church work outside the local congregation. "Human organized work means disorganization of God's churches. . .the disorganizing of the churches that the truly loyal, self-sacrificing evangelists have labored so long and faithfully to perpetuate."⁴⁴ The call was for a good gospel preacher young and energetic, one who was willing to "come to us with the expectation of working, not alone, but with the elders, and every individual member of our congregation. . .We do not want a society organizer. We want an evangelist - a gospel preacher."⁴⁵

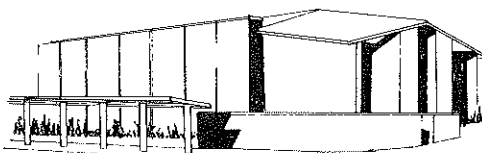
With only a handful of faithful members the church attempted to rebuild. The division had been costly. All property was lost to the "Progressives". This sad scene was repeated in many congregations throughout the brotherhood. Determined to maintain doctrinal purity this small band of Christians

did not waver in faith. "We are struggling hard to build a house of worship, have bought a good lot and paid for it, and have about four hundred dollars building fund. Have bought part of the lumber for the house. Expect to build 30 X 50 feet substantial frame, to cost about fourteen hundred dollars. We are few and financially poor."⁴⁶

In view of their tragic experience it is understandable why the deed for the newly organized congregation of the church of Christ located at 629 Lamar Avenue contained the following stipulations:

And in deeding the aforesaid property it is expressly agreed and understood the right and title to hold, control, and manage, the same shall be vested solely in that portion of the said church, who do not practice, and are opposed to the following things or practices to wit: the use of any instrumental music in congregational or church worship or Sunday-School, the majority rule in the church or congregation, the organizing of any society in the church other than the "Church of Christ," the giving or having church suppers, fairs, festivals, or like entertainments, for gain in said church, or elsewhere. Further if any time in the future any portion of the congregation, who endorse any of such things aforesaid, should attempt to introduce into or to force upon the church or congregation any of the aforesaid things or practices, then and in every such case, such person or persons making said attempts, shall have no part or parcel, in the title to, or control or management, of the said church property, either real or personal.

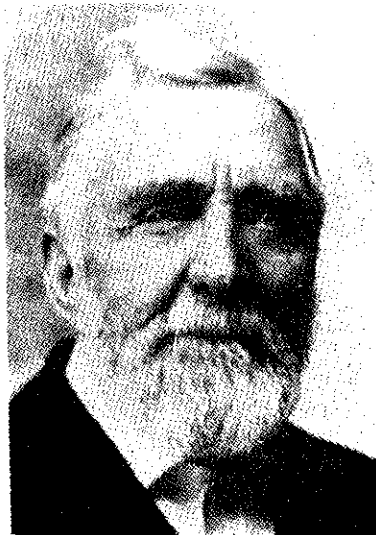
The property was purchased for one dollar and paid by W. H. Sluder, T. S. Turner, and John T. Booth, "the duly elected Elders of the Church of Christ situated No. 629 Lamar Avenue." The deed was dated January 20, 1892.



MINISTERS 1850-1890



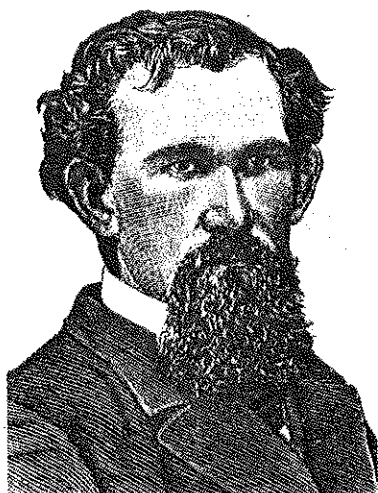
JAMES M. BIARD
1850's



CHARLES CARLTON
1869



F. D. SRYGLEY
1880 - 1882



R. W. OFFICER
1882 - 1886



J. W. MCGARVEY, JR.
1887 - 1888



D. D. BOYLE
1890

CHAPTER IV



There is little doubt that the Restoration Movement was a "preacher led" movement during the early years. Our "pioneer preachers" were men of boldness and courage. As our country expanded westward there were preachers of the gospel who journeyed west to face the challenge of converting the rugged spirits to Christ. James M. Biard wrote in his memoirs in 1898, "whatever this country is now, as regards her boasted civilization, with schools of various degrees and kinds, no man, nor set of men contributed more to the up building of this vast country than did the humble preacher, and the boarding around school teacher. Neither of them will obtain their just dues until they enter heaven."⁴⁷

Since the early records of Lamar Avenue were lost in the Paris fire of March 21, 1916, piecing together the history of those early days is difficult. Because of this, we shall attempt to trace the activity of the church through the lives of the men who served as preachers. By briefly observing their lives we will catch a glimpse of the kind of spirit that helped to mold the Lamar Avenue Church of Christ.

James M. Biard

In the late 1850's James Biard traveled to Paris once a month from Biardstown to conduct services on Sunday. He had been selected by the North-East Texas Convention to serve as a full time evangelist in a five county area, including Lamar County.⁴⁸

Biard had come to Texas in 1846 with his family from Limestone County,

Alabama. He was just a lad of twelve. He was raised in a Christian home, "as far back as I can recollect, my parents were members of the Christian or Church of Christ."⁴⁹

James M. Biard was "born to preach." He set his heart early in life to preach the gospel. His commitment to the cause of Christ lasted a lifetime.

Among the earliest inspirations of my life was to be a preacher, and the idea grew and strengthened with coming years. I can recollect that when my mother would be weaving cloth that I was generally with her to wait on her, and when she would leave the seat on which she sat while weaving I would mount it as my pulpit and go to preaching, as I then called it. And all along my young life it was my desire to teach men, to lead them to a higher, better life. And now I had rather preach than do anything else. I joined the church when I was nearly grown under the preaching of brother H. N. O. Polly, and was baptized into Christ in Hickory Creek in Lamar County, Texas, by brother Thacker Griffin.⁵⁰

For nearly fifty years brother Biard preached Christ in the Paris area until his death, May 5, 1901. He is buried in Evergreen Cemetery in Paris.

Charles Carlton

Although Charles Carlton never served as a regular minister at Lamar Avenue, he occupies a prominent place in her history.

Carlton was born August 21, 1821, in Eythorne, County of Kent, England. He came to America and enrolled in Bethany College in West Virginia. Under the scholarly guidance of Alexander Campbell and W. K. Pendleton he finished a three year course in two years and graduated in 1849. For several years he preached and taught in Georgetown, Kentucky; Lexington, Missouri; and Van Buren, Arkansas.

In 1867 Carlton came to Bonham, Texas and founded Bonham Christian

College, later known as Carlton College. David Lipscomb, editor of the Gospel Advocate in Nashville, Tennessee, endorsed the school. "We have recently referred to the character of Bro. Carlton's school as it has reached us. Our brethren, in his section of country, we feel sure cannot do better than to strengthen his hands and build up his school."⁵¹

In 1869, Charles Carlton, assisted by James M. Biard, preached for seventeen days in Paris. He reported the meeting "resulted in baptizing thirty persons on the confession of the name of the Christ, gathering up about thirty-five others, and organizing a congregation of eighty disciples."⁵² Thus, under his preaching and influence, the Lord's church in Paris was officially organized. Carlton continued to be a strong influence for New Testament Christianity in North Texas for many years. His home still stands at 803 North Main in Bonham, Texas.

During the next ten years several preachers were associated with the church for relatively short intervals. they were: James M. Biard, J. J. Williamson, W. N. Northcutt, and R. L. Downing.

Fletcher Douglas (F. D.) Srygley
(1880 - 1882)

F. D. Srygley was born December 22, 1856 in Colbert County, Alabama. He had little opportunity for education. However, he did study under T. B. Larimore at Mar's Hill Academy in Florence, Alabama.

H. Leo Boles wrote of him, "his labors were largely among the country people. No church or community was denied his services because of lack of funds. He said that the large and wealthy churches could get almost any preacher they wanted, but that the weak churches could not; so he preferred to labor with the weak ones."⁵³ Perhaps this is why he chose to come to Paris, Texas in the winter of 1880.

In November 1889, Srygley became one of the editors of the Gospel Advocate, in Nashville, Tennessee. For more than ten years he served as front page editor of the Advocate. He occupied this position until his untimely death, August 2, 1900.⁵⁴

It was during his editorship of the Advocate that brother Syrgley heard of the division of the church in Paris. Upon receiving information from the brethren in Paris, Syrgley wrote the following article. These lines tell more about the young church in Paris than anything in print. They also reveal much about the humor and the heart of F.D. Srygley, the "wit of the Advocate."

THE CHURCH AT PARIS, TEXAS

The book-keeper of the Gospel Advocate Publishing Company has just sent to my desk a business letter from a good brother at Paris, Texas. The last paragraph of the letter runs thus:

"The brethren are getting along with the new house very well, but it is going to put some of us to a great deal of cost, there being so many not able to do much. Dear Bro. Srygley, don't you and the Gospel Advocate folks want to help us some? We really need help. We had one baptism a few days since."

I moved to Paris, Texas, in Dec. 1880. I was then but a few months out of college and scarcely started in my uncertain career as a preacher of the unsearchable riches of Christ.

The Paris church of those days was small, poor, unpopular and even despised by the rich and fashionable circles of society, but faithful to the Lord and united in love. The meeting house was a plain wooden structure on a side steet in what was then an undesirable part of town. There were neither side-walks nor pavements on that street in those days. When the weather was wet we waded the mud down the middle of the street, and when it was dry we sneezed through the dust to the place where prayer was wont to be made. But whether it was wet or dry -- and it seemed nearly always on one extreme or the other -- we managed to get there on time and in full force.

Our choir was not up to the standard of a fashionable city church in the matter of fine clothes and bad manners, but the singing was, indeed, a joyful noise unto the Lord. The congregation, in the main, had good voices and fair musical education, and the few who lacked either or both were always encouraged to join heartily in the singing as an important part of the worship even if they couldn't sing

a tune. Uncle Jere Hamilton wore a home-spun shirt and said "dog-on-it" in a whisper when he lost the tune, and old mother Edgett sometimes held the book wrong end up and sang sketches of "Amazing Grace" when the rest of us were trying to read our "titles clear to mansions in the skies," but we wouldn't have exchanged them for Jenny Lind and Emma Abbott, because we loved them and they loved the Lord.

A few families there were in that town in those days which tried men's souls, who had moved there from city churches in older states, where they had organs and choirs in the churches and wore their Sunday clothes in the middle of the week, but those families gave us no help beyond a few suggestions as to the need of a finer house in a better place, and an occasional prediction that we could never "reach the masses" without an organ and a choir and a better system of "business in religion." One family I distinctly remember sang around the choir in the Methodist church, and another slept regularly in the Baptist church a few blocks away every Sunday while we with full hearts and tear bedimmed eyes broke the loaf, in memory of the Savior's death. Doubtless those pious souls bewailed their lot, pitied us in what they considered our fruitless efforts to build up the cause without the help of "systematic organization," and wrote doleful letters to their kinsmen in older states lamenting their lack of "church privileges".

Mr. Cole, in some respects, was a typical Western sinner, but withal he had a few streaks of noble stuff running at intervals through his publican anatomy. His wife was a faithful member of our little band, but he cursed habitually, drank occasionally and stayed away from the church regularly. Among his excellent qualities I remember him as a hard worker, a good carpenter and a man given to spells of noble impulses and generous liberality. By chance he waded the mud to one of our Sunday night meetings, when the weather was at its worst, and in the presence of the preacher and the middle of a puddle of water over shoe-mouth deep, he used some curse words against the town for its stinginess in not paving the street or laying a sidewalk to the little church around the corner. In cooler moments, however, he repented, and in due time apologized to the preacher, and proposed to "bring forth fruits worthy of repentance" by helping to lay a sidewalk from the public square to the meeting house. I approved the idea, the church warmly seconded the motion, and the side-walk was soon made.

Our audiences gradually increased, and soon we began to receive calls for preaching in the regions contiguous to the town. We were not well provided with conveyances of our own, but our friends and relatives at the places where preaching was wanted kindly helped us to get there in considerable numbers, and many a glorious time did we have at Moore's Springs, Biardstown, at a little schoolhouse on the prairie near Dr. McLendon's, and under a brush arbor in the creek bottom, not far from Uncle Gain's Biard's house. These were points in different directions not many miles from Paris.

With a view to a better equipment for missionary work, I gave twenty dollars for a second-hand buggy, and five dollars for a horse not quite as wild as a deer and a little larger than a sheep. The buggy had no top, the cushion leaked moss, two of the wheels wobbled on the gudgeon, and the horse proved to be about an equal mixture of original sin and actual transgression, with very decided and un-yielding antimissionary convictions thrown in for good count. Fortunately, however, he had the redeeming trait of some church members of like nature, in that he delighted to graze in pastures green where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. As a missionary institution he was a flat failure, so I put him in Bro. Walker's pasture where he could have "church privileges" as we might say, and nothing to do but wait for the "snow-white angel band" to come and bear him away. Bro. Brown loaned me a horse as poor as Lazarus, as patient as Job and as meek as Moses, and I started into all the world by way of Honey Grove, to preach the gospel to every creature I could induce to hear, during the week.

Our audiences, meantime, continued to increase at Paris Sunday and Sunday night, and our hearts were often made glad by the conversion of souls to Christ. By chance a fashionable belle of the aspiring little town wandered down our way one Sunday night, with a dashing beau on her arm, when the weather was at its best and the moon was nearing its full. She afterwards gave her opinion of the preacher to a good old mother in Israel in these words, as I now remember them when they were repeated to me: "He has beautiful eyes, his voice is lovely, and if he had a fine house, an organ, a good choir, and a fashionable congregation he would be just spendid. If he could only board at the Peterson hotel and go into society, he would be a leader in the pulpit of Paris." Imagine the effect on my nerves! Visions of white-robed angels and paradise lost! And when this was noised abroad, a whole school of female loveliness came marching into the little church one Sunday night just as I was getting ready to go into the pulpit. I had all my arrangements made to preach on

faith, but when I looked at those lovely creatures and remembered that one of my main proof-texts in that sermon was "he that believeth not shall be damned," I hadn't the heart in me to do it. How could I talk to such a group of feminine loveliness as that, about the danger of hell and everlasting damnation? No, I must save that sermon for "men only", and think out something to preach more suitable for this occasion. Why not preach about the Prodigal Son? There is a wide field for gush and sentiment about the old homestead, and a splendid chance to close out with a burst of pathos over the music and dancing and glad re-union at the close. But there is that verse in the narrative which says "he would fain have filled his belly with the husks," etc. Oh, the horror of it! How can I read such language before such an audience? But stop. Why not say he would fain have filled himself with the husks? It is really not necessary to state definitely in what part of his anatomy he proposed to store away the husks anyhow. Perhaps he merely wanted to put them in his pockets and take them home to his old mother. But no. It will never do to talk to this audience about husks. Nothing coarser than the odor of choice flowers and the sentiment of a lover's dream will suit the occasion. I began to feel like the whole Bible was for "men only," and to wish I could exchange it for a copy of Byrons Poems for this once. I was all over in a perspiration. But here a happy thought struck me. I remembered a speech I had written out and committed to memory my second year in college, the title of which was "Sunshine and Shadows", and the substance -- gush! Why not hitch that old sophomore speech onto the text "Jesus wept"? I did it. The girls said it was just lovely, and I went home wondering whether I could swap my horse for a stove pipe hat, and my buggy for a Prince Albert coat with a clerical collar. But when I met uncle Jere Hamilton on the street next day, he said, "Dog on if I don't believe them gals rattled you last night." Well, uncle Jere was right, but I was young.

But why linger over these sad memories of the sweet long ago? I was not to board at the Peterson hotel, nor go into society, nor be a leader in the pulpit at Paris. God had some better things in store for me, but oh, the bitterness of it all.

I went to Paris with a sorrow-burdened heart just from a new-made little grave in a distant state, and left under the shadow of a great sorrow from another impending visit from the messenger of death. While I was there that blessed little band ministered to my temporal wants even beyond their ability or my deserts, and ofttimes

after my departure they sent me messages of love, saying the prayers of the whole church were going up as a memorial before God in my behalf, while I watched through the weary, dragging hours by the couch of a dying loved one in a distant state. And each letter from the faithful little band at Paris brought unsolicited gifts which I well knew were self-sacrifices from hearts readier to give than able to spare the few dollars so much needed and so highly appreciated by their brother in distress. In such sorrows from the chastening hand of a loving God, I soon learned to despise the fashions of the world which once so strongly tempted me, and to love the blessed ones whose faith never faltered, whose piety never failed. God only knows how much the fellowship of the faithful few at Paris was worth to me in those dark hours of bereavement.

But things have changed at Paris since those days. The church has grown in numbers till a majority of the body favor a change of methods. They now have an organ, and a choir, and some societies, and several other things, and more than fifty of the faithful old heroes who helped to build the house at a heavy sacrifice years ago, have been compelled to give up their interest in the property or participate in things which they honestly believe the scriptures do not authorize them to do. These are the ones who want to know whether Bro. Srygley and the readers of the ADVOCATE do not want to aid them. I answer for myself, with all my heart. I want to help them, and I think others want to help them. Those who are likeminded with me should write at once to W. H. Sluder, Paris, Texas, and send a contribution. May the Lord bless them.⁵⁵

F. D. Srygley.

R. Wallace Officer

(1882 - 1886)

R. W. Officer was born in Murray County, Georgia, August 18, 1845. At age twenty-five he was baptized at Salem, Tennessee by a Dr. Barris.

He came to Gainesville, Texas in 1880 with a strong desire to work with the Indians in Indian Territory just across the Red River. In 1882 he came to preach for the church in Paris. He still had plans for evangelizing Indian Territory.

Officer attended the Indian Council at Tishimingo, Chickasaw Nation in September, 1883. He went for the purpose of obtaining permission to plant a mission and establish an industrial school. Permission was granted, and Officer was supported by the two churches in Paris and Gainesville.⁵⁶

The missionary minded Paris, Texas, Church of Christ, directed by elders E. L. Dohoney and W. H. Sluder, heeded the call. It requested that churches contribute one Sunday's collection toward the erection of a meeting house in the Chickasaw nation.⁵⁷

This was the first major mission effort undertaken by the Paris church. Officer succeeded in obtaining 150 acres, and his industrial school, El Meta Christian College, became a reality in 1889.⁵⁸

Officer suffered many hardships in his mission endeavors among the Indians. His wife became seriously ill in 1899 and for twenty-two weeks he stayed by her bedside. She died January 30, 1900. In 1901 he moved to the west Texas town of Turkey. He felt that Indian Territory was becoming too settled. "I am off again for another waste, or neglected place, trusting God's promise and the brethren."⁵⁹

By 1907 Officer had disappeared from the view of the brotherhood. During his life he "baptized thousands into the Church of Christ. . . and built up several churches among the Indians."⁶⁰ West writes, "he was a rugged pioneer possessing an eccentric fondness for suffering, and he managed to do more than his share."⁶¹

Four More Preachers

(1887 - 1891)

These were not peaceful years for the church in Paris. There was sharp contention over "societies" and "instrumental music" in worship. From what is

known now it appears that the preachers of this period contributed their share to the doctrinal change in the life of the church.

J. W. McGarvey, Jr. preached for the Paris church 1887-1888. He was the son of the well-known brotherhood scholar, J. W. McGarvey. The elder McGarvey was professor and later President of the College of the Bible at Kentucky University in Lexington, Kentucky.

In August of 1887, McGarvey, Jr. held a meeting at the Antioch church which resulted in ten baptisms.⁶²

In 1888, M. T. Brown, a colored evangelist gave this report,

Paris, January 31. Christmas eve we erected our 630 pound bell and Christmas morning we broke the ice and baptized two. . . Bros. McGarvey and Biard preached for us last Lord's Day afternoon. The preaching was very pointed and forceful. We hope to have them again soon. I hope some more of our white brethren will do likewise.⁶³

McGarvey, Jr. later became a fulltime evangelist for the Christian Churches.⁶⁴

J. F. Grubbs preached for the church in Paris in 1889. Grubbs was originally from Kentucky.⁶⁵ It is not known when he came to Texas. As early as July 1887, he preached in a meeting at Antioch with thirty-eight additions, twenty-two being by baptism.⁶⁶ Apparently Grubbs was quite successful as an evangelist in Northeast Texas. In early August, 1890, he reported,

During the months of May, June, and July I have baptized ninety-three, fifty-six of which were at Roxton, the last meeting in

this (Lamar) County. I go tomorrow to Fulbright Red River to begin a meeting. We are trying to preach the gospel as the Lord directs. Several of the brethren of Paris are helping me in this work.⁶⁷

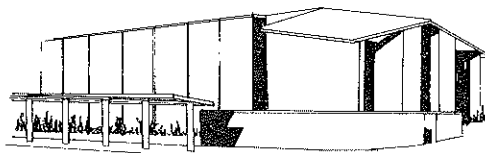
The meeting at Fulbright resulted in thirty-two additions. Grubbs also preached at Paris and Pattonville resulting in another twelve additions. At the end of August, Grubbs stated, "this makes on hundred (conversions) in the last month. To the Lord be all the praise."⁶⁸ In four months time nearly two hundred had obeyed the gospel under the preaching of J. F. Grubbs.

In 1890, D. D. Boyle preached for a brief time in Paris. He, too, was later associated with the Christian Churches.⁶⁹

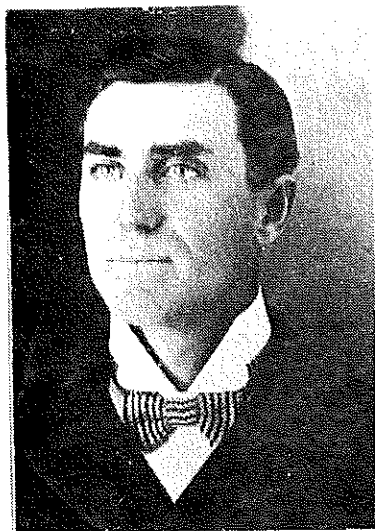
R. H. Fife came to the Paris church in October 1890. The majority of the Paris congregation had already passed a resolution on July 24, 1890, to use an organ. Elder E. L. Dohoney had "succeeded in keeping peace for several years, and as the difference grew he suggested that the church agree to install an organ 'as an aid to singing, but not as a part of worship.' "⁷⁰ On June 1, 1891, two other elders, along with minister Fife, "stipulated that the organ would remain in the house."⁷¹ Elder W. H. Sluder along with some fifty faithful members withdrew from the congregation as has been noted earlier.

There is no doubt that J. W. McGarvey Jr., D. D. Boyle and R. H. Fife were sympathetic to the progressive cause, that is they favored "societies, organized work, and instrumental music." This is apparent from the direction of their ministries after leaving Paris.

It was a sad hour for the brethren who desired to be true to the New Testament order of work and worship. It was definitely a time for starting over.



MINISTERS 1892-1916



D. T. CARLTON
1892 - 1896



W. J. BISHOP
1898 - 1899



W. K. ROSE
1900 - 1906



FOY E. WALLACE, SR.
1907



J. B. NELSON
1908 - 1910



LEE R. GARRETT
1910 - 1917



PIONEER TEXAS PREACHERS
About 1898

The two young men in the upper left corner are D. T. Carlton and W. K. Rose, both preachers for Lamar Avenue. The man seated second from the right is J. W. Chism of Lufkin, well known Texas evangelist. The man seated first from the left is probably W. N. Carter of Whitewright. The elderly man seated third from the left is probably Ed Stivman who came to Bonham with his parents in 1845. The others have not been identified. These gospel preachers were blazing the trail for Christ nearly 100 years ago.



WILLIAM J. BISHOP FAMILY

Tokyo, Japan

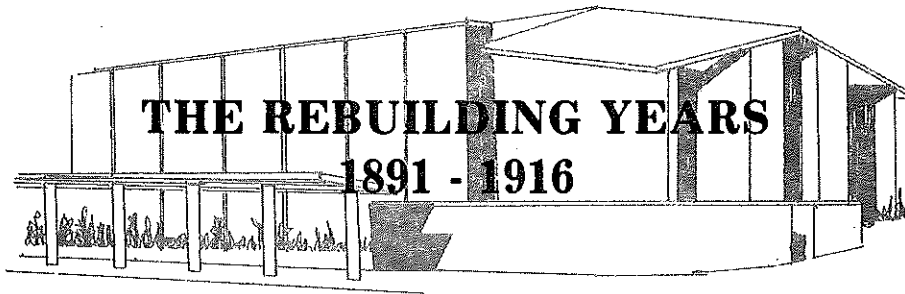
Left to right: Mary Emma, Clara May Elliott Bishop,
William J., Julia Ann and Margaret.

William Bishop was the first foreign missionary sent from
Texas by the churches of Christ, (1898-1913).



Members of Lamar Avenue at a church picnic in 1897

CHAPTER V



The rebuilding of the Lord's church in Paris was undertaken by a faithful few. Capable leadership was provided by elders W. H. Sluder, T. S. Turner, A. T. Odeneal, and John T. Booth. In a matter of months a new building had been constructed at 629 Lamar Avenue at a cost of approximately \$1,400.

D. T. Carlton moved to Paris to preach January 2, 1892. He was born June 5, 1862 near Lewisburg, Marshall County, Tennessee. He had come to Texas in 1882 where he lived in Overton and Atlanta for seven years before coming to Paris. In September 1892 he was given a year's leave of absence to attend Nashville Bible School in Nashville, Tennessee for the school year 1892-93. Upon returning to Paris he continued to preach for the Lamar Avenue Church of Christ for a total of six years and four months.

During most of his ministry with the congregation Carlton was single. In 1895, H. F. Williams of the Gospel Advocate visited in Paris in the home of J. D. Elliott. He reported, "I think they like him (D. T. Carlton) well enough to take two Carltons - that is, have D. T. duplicate himself. You see the work here is growing, and the preacher does need a helpmeet."⁷² Before Williams completed his report he added,

Just now, before I get these notes finished, comes the following bit of joyful news from Paris: Married at the Church of Christ in Paris, Texas, D. T. Carlton to Miss Katie Johnson, by A. T. Odeneal, December 25, 1895.⁷³

Apparently the rebuilding of the congregation was meeting with great success. Williams seemed to be impressed with the church during his brief visit to Paris.

I judge from all I see that the congregation here, though passing through experiences common to all churches, is not only holding its own, but slipping up a notch or two. I preached twice for them - Lord's day and night. Brother Carlton reports additions nearly every week. Among many, too, the fruits of the Spirit seem to abound.⁷⁴

D. T. Carlton remained in Paris after resigning his work with Lamar Avenue Church. He worked in the insurance business along with elder W. H. Sluder. He continued to preach at various places in Lamar County and around the state the rest of his life. He died in Paris, Texas in 1941.

The next preacher to work with the church was William J. Bishop. Bishop was born September 20, 1872 in Williamson County, Tennessee. In 1894 he entered Nashville Bible School where he roomed with Jesse P. Sewell, who was later to become president of Abilene Christian College in 1912. His association with Sewell was to prove profitable for his support for the work in Japan. It was Jesse P. Sewell who assumed the responsibility of raising funds for the Bishops.

His second wife, Clara, wrote,

I knew him first when he was minister for the Paris church in 1898. He worked in this congregation about one year. His mind had already been made up to go to Japan in the mission field before going to the Paris church. He reached this decision while a student in Nashville Bible School.⁷⁵

Sister Clara Bishop remembered the little church in Paris "during the nineties." She recalled, "quite a number of young preachers were permitted to

'practice' on our congregation at 629 Lamar Avenue, as I well remember. Many others of experience were called from time to time to hold meetings, and among this number Bro. T. B. Larimore stands out prominently in memory."⁷⁶

William Bishop left America for Japan in 1898. His first wife, Alice, died after only a few months on the mission field. In 1902 he returned to America and married Clara Elliott, daughter of James D. Elliott, one of the elders at Lamar Avenue. William and his new wife, Clara, returned to Japan arriving in Yokohama November 24, 1902. They returned to the states in 1909, and again in 1911, after Brother Bishop had a complete breakdown in health. He returned to Japan for two years, but his health became increasingly worse. Shortly after returning to the states William Bishop died in 1913, at age forty one, at Monrovia, California. He was buried in Englewood Cemetery, Los Angeles, California.

William J. Bishop was one of the earliest, if not the first, missionary sent from Texas to establish the Lord's church on foreign soil. While in Japan he was associated with the well known missionary J. M. McCaleb.⁷⁷ In addition to establishing several churches in Japan, he printed thousands of gospel tracts, and he undertook the monumental task of translating J. W. McGarvey's New Commentary on Acts into Japanese. When the translation was finished the book was published in 1909. This work represented the first brotherhood commentary to be published in a foreign language.⁷⁸

William K. Rose came to work with the church in Paris in 1900. He was born August 15, 1870, near Saulsbury, Tennessee. His father, W. K. Rose, Sr., preached the gospel for nearly forty-six years. Rose came to Texas in 1893 to teach in the high school at Detroit. He continued to teach secular education until he was called to preach for Lamar Avenue Church where he ministered for six years. C. R. Nichol said of him, "he is known to be unswerving in conviction for truth, earnest, persistent, and untiring in his work for the advancement of the Kingdom of God."⁷⁹

It was during Rose's ministry at Paris that E. A. Elam, president of Nashville Bible School and editor of the Gospel Advocate, conducted a meeting in June 1903 resulting in ten additions. The meeting came upon the "close of the recent battle over innovations."⁸⁰ The report of the meeting in the Paris News follows,

The meeting now in progress at the church of Christ, 629 Lamar Avenue under the leadership of E. A. Elam, has turned into its second week, assuming the nature of a real protracted meeting, with a deep spiritual interest manifested on the part of those who are regular in attendance. Sunday was a busy day with the little church on the hill. Three services were held, with full houses and attentive listeners, seemingly anxious to hear the truth of the gospel as it fell from the lips of this godly man, who is ever anxious and solicitous for the salvation of man. Elder Elam is in every sense a strong man. He has a strong body, a strong mind, a strong voice, a strong faith and a strong courage. . . He preaches the word of God as the irreplaceable law of the kingdom of God, teaching that from that word and law there can be no appeal or reprieve, save in doing the things therein contained. Believing and trusting God for all that He has promised, he is brought completely under the power and influence of the word of God and revels in it as a bird revels in the beautiful sunshine and the balmy breezes of heaven. . .⁸¹

Upon returning to Nashville, Elam reported on his visit to Paris. The report tells of the church's struggles, even though some twelve years had past since the division of 1891.

In Texas - the editor of this page has just returned from the pleasant work of two meetings in the Lone Star State. The first one began at Paris on the first Lord's day in June and continued through the fourth Lord's day. Ten persons were added to the church and two reclaimed. Brethren W. K. Rose, D. T. Carlton, and A. T. Odeneal, preachers who worship with this congregation, are active and earnest men. Brethrens Rose and Carlton are young men of

strong faith and courage, and devote most of their time to preaching the gospel, while Brother Odeneal - true, tried, and loyal - is older and works principally in Paris.

The brother, G. Lyle Smith, who "ministers to" the church using instrumental music and working through the societies, was present four times. The church in Paris, like many in Texas, has passed through a struggle for right; but it is in earnest and determined "to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints."⁸²

Foy E. Wallace, Sr. preached for Lamar Avenue Church during the year 1907. His stay was brief, but undoubtedly most beneficial to the church. The report he gave in 1907 told of the work being done by the Paris church.

The meeting at the Lamar Avenue Church, this city, closed on May 5, after having run over four Lord's days. Six persons were baptized and three reclaimed. The interest in this meeting grew to the close. Large audiences attended most of the time. This congregation is doing some good work now. In addition to some mission work already arranged, we are raising funds to buy a tent; then we hope to do much work in the county where we have no house to preach in. We teach two Bible classes every week in the church house - one on Sunday morning in connection with several other classes in the Bible; the other, on Tuesday night. Our Tuesday night work is especially interesting and profitable. The class is composed of adults, several of whom are teachers in the public schools and others who are competent instructors. In this way we can interest some whom we could not on Sunday morning, perhaps. Besides these meetings, we meet on Wednesday evening for prayer and Bible study; Friday evening, for song practice; and Sunday night, for preaching. This, in addition to our regular Lord's day worship and work, keeps us busy in the Lord's work.⁸³

Before coming to Paris, Wallace had already gained the high respect and esteem of the brotherhood. In the spring of 1903 F. W. Smith met Wallace in Denton and wrote, "Brother Wallace is one of Texas' favorite preachers. He is not

only a splendid preacher, but is also a very lovable man."⁸⁴ In 1905 G. W. Savage met him and stated, "Foy E. Wallace is one of the best preachers in Texas and one of the best men as well."⁸⁵ Foy E. Wallace was definitely an inspiring preacher and leader for the cause of Christ until his death in Tyler, Texas, November 21, 1949.

In 1908 James Bridges (J. B.) Nelson came to serve as minister at Lamar Avenue Church. Nelson had attended Nashville Bible School in 1899 and Dawson Institute, Dawson, Texas in 1900. Prior to coming to Paris he had labored for a number of years in Western Oklahoma. Kiowa and Comanche county was rapidly building up. He wrote in 1901, "I hope to establish the cause in all of the new towns. . .The cause of Christ is spreading in this country; new congregations are being started up in several localities."⁸⁶

Nelson gave the following report about the Paris church in 1908. This detailed report speaks highly of the spirit of the young church in those days.

MISSION WORK DONE BY THE
CHURCH AT PARIS, TEXAS.
BY J. B. NELSON.

I feel proud of the work done by this church during the past eighteen months. Brother Foy E. Wallace spent the year of 1907 with the Paris church. The church had not done much before Brother Wallace came to Paris. He spent much time teaching the church. During the year there were quite a number of additions, and one new congregation was planted at Fort Towson, Okla., with something over thirty members. No missionary board helped Brother Wallace; the church at Paris stood by him—God's only missionary society. Brother Wallace did much toward teaching the church the true missionary spirit. The "digressives" cannot begin to compare with the church of Christ as to true apostolic work. It is true the "digressives" have a better house and more money, but they cannot compare as to additions and true apostolic missionary work. Brother Wallace resigned on January 1 last, to take up work on the Monitor.

I began work with the church as evangelist the first of this year. I am not their pastor, for elders are pastors. I do not have charge of the church, for they have charge of me in a sense; that is, they call, send, and support me to preach the gospel. I spend three Sundays (or weeks) of each month with this church, except two and one-half months of the summer. They supply my needs during the time I am with them.

I put in three months the first of the year developing the church. I taught them the importance of the Lord's-day meeting, sacrificing to feed the poor, and sounding out the word of God in and around Paris. I made house-to-house visits, urging each member to not forsake the work. The church did much last winter toward feeding widows and orphans, bought wood for those who were unable to buy.

Brother Wallace had already worked up a fine Lord's-day attendance, but it continued to improve until the house is about filled each Lord's day. Our membership is about one hundred and sixty-five—all poor, save two or three families, and they are just moderately well fixed. In proportion to our membership we have the best attendance in town.

Last April the church, by the help of Moore's Springs Church, near Paris, bought a good tent from Brother W. G. White, of Nashville, Tenn. I began holding meetings under the tent on April 6. Our first was at the handle factory, in Northwest Paris. We had six additions—three Methodists, one Baptist, one "digressive," and one wanderer came back. This was the first meeting ever held there. Our second meeting was in West Paris. Brethren Wallace and Carlton helped me in both meetings. Brother A. E. Findley was with me most of the time in the second meeting and rendered valuable service, singing and preaching. There was only one baptism during the last meeting, but on Sunday night following three persons took membership with us and two came over from the "digressives" and acknowledged their wrongs and that they were ashamed they had ever been with the Christian Church. The people in West Paris were worked up. We made a mistake in closing when we did. Heavy rains hindered much in the tent work.

We have had twenty-one additions since January 1, and prospects are flattering for several more at an early date. The church is now furnishing Longview the tent for a meeting, as they have no house. The "digressives" in Paris know that we are there. They may support the board work, have shows, suppers, etc., but we go

right on in the Lord's way. "And let our people too learn to set a good example in following honest occupations for the supply of their necessities, so that they may not live useless lives." (Tit. 3:14, M.S.) The "digressives" may blow about us being antimissionary in Texas, but that proves nothing. They boast of numbers in order to make a show. I am not afraid to say, and am perfectly willing to put the matter to a test, that the loyal disciples of Texas baptize five persons where the "digressives" baptize one. Brother Burnett kept an account one year, and it was ten to one. We are building more meetinghouses and supporting more preachers in evangelistic work than they. Are they ready for the test? Hundreds are baptized by the loyal brethren that are not reported. Meetinghouses are built and no mention made. Blowing is not work. I am sick and tired of their everlasting misrepresentations of the Lord's true people. In Paris I am willing to compare with them. In proportion to wealth, the church of Christ gives far more than they. I have their last year's report. I am ready to compare with them. They have a larger membership, but we have two to one in attendance at Lord's-day meeting. While I am out in meetings this summer, the church expects to do about two hundred dollars repairs on the house. This fall I will begin work again in Paris, holding three more tent meetings in different parts of Paris; besides, we expect to hold a mission meeting at Grant, Okla. The church is free from wicked men, immoral men, and hobbyists. All have a mind to work. We need more preachers of the true type in Lamar County.

I hope other brethren will report work done through the church, separate and apart from boards, so the brethren may be encouraged who are not doing such work. I suggest that Brethren J. S. Dunn, L. S. White, C. E. Woolridge, Price Billingsley, John E. Dunn, S. H. Hall, John Lewis, and many others report, whom I cannot mention. Do this, brethren. We want to hear from you.⁸⁷

Nelson left Paris to work with the West Dallas church in Dallas, Texas. Some years later he served as superintendent for Boles Orphan Home until his life was taken in a fatal accident in 1940.⁸⁸

In January 1910, Lee Roy Garrett accepted the work with the Lamar

Avenue Church. Garrett entered Lockney Christian College in 1901. Soon after he was baptized someone asked him: "What will be your life work?" He replied: "I am determined to preach the Gospel of Christ."⁸⁹ This he did, and for about six or seven years he preached in Paris. After he resigned the pulpit at Paris he remained a member of the congregation and took secular employment. Lee Garrett was serving as an elder at Lamar Avenue and a board member of Boles Home when he died in 1926. He is buried in Evergreen Cemetery in Paris.

It was during Garrett's ministry that the Great Paris Fire occurred, March 21, 1916. Lamar Avenue Church of Christ lost her building. All the property was destroyed, and all church records were lost. The church had known setbacks before. She had lost her first building to a spiritual catastrophe, now she had lost her second building to a natural catastrophe.

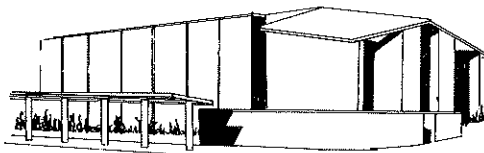
A few days after the fire the front page of the Gospel Advocate appealed to the brotherhood, "Let Funds Go Forward to Paris, Texas." A. B. Lipscomb earnestly implored that all readers of the Advocate "from one end of the country to the other hasten their contributions to the distressed saints at Paris, Texas."⁹⁰ A message from minister Lee Garrett stated,

Our city is today one great mass of ruins. Last night a fire swept over sixty percent of it, completely destroying the business section, our church building, and rendering the majority of our members homeless. Words cannot express our distress. Fortunately our home did not burn and today is filled with refugees.⁹¹

Although it was a time of disaster and calamity the brethren maintained an optimistic outlook. They stepped out in faith from an impoverished condition and proceeded with plans to build new facilities. Outside assistance was received from other brethren which helped alleviate part of the burden. Minister Garrett wrote,

We deplore deeply our condition, but despondency finds no place with our congregation just now. We hope to have our forces entirely rallied within a few weeks and by cold weather have a neat and commodious building erected.⁹²

The "rebuilding years" had been just that. The church had been served by outstanding preachers, men of prominence among the brethren of Texas and elsewhere. The membership had grown from fifty-three members in 1891 to 268 by 1915.⁹³



MINISTERS 1917-1928



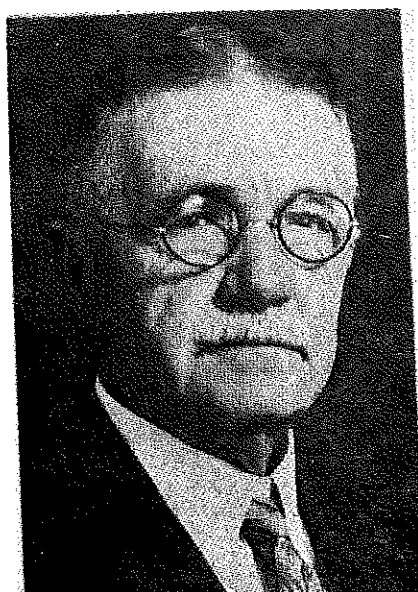
ROBERT ALEXANDER
1917



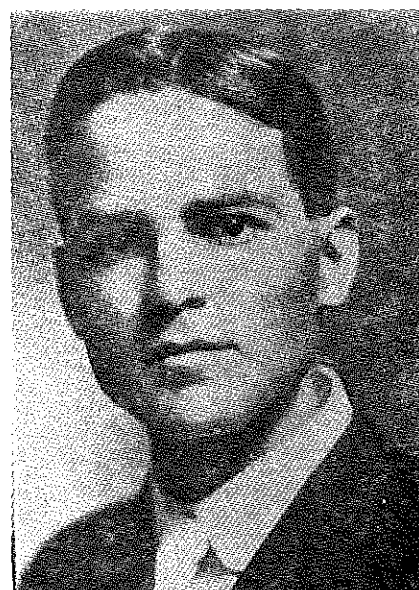
J. W. DUNN
1917 - 1918



R. A. ZAHN
1926



F. L. YOUNG
1919 - 1925



TOM WALKER
1927 - 1928

MINISTERS 1928-1941



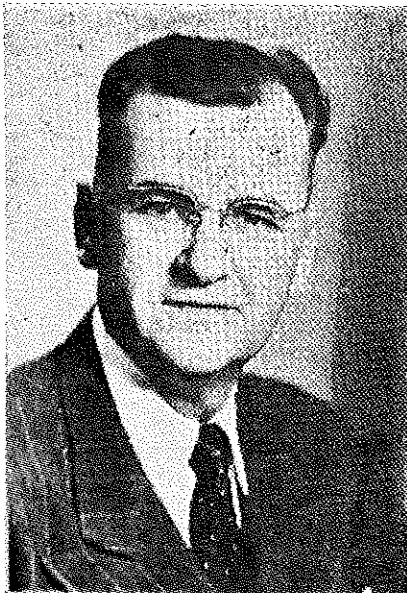
W. M. DAVIS
1929 - 1930



R. L. COLLEY
1930 - 1933



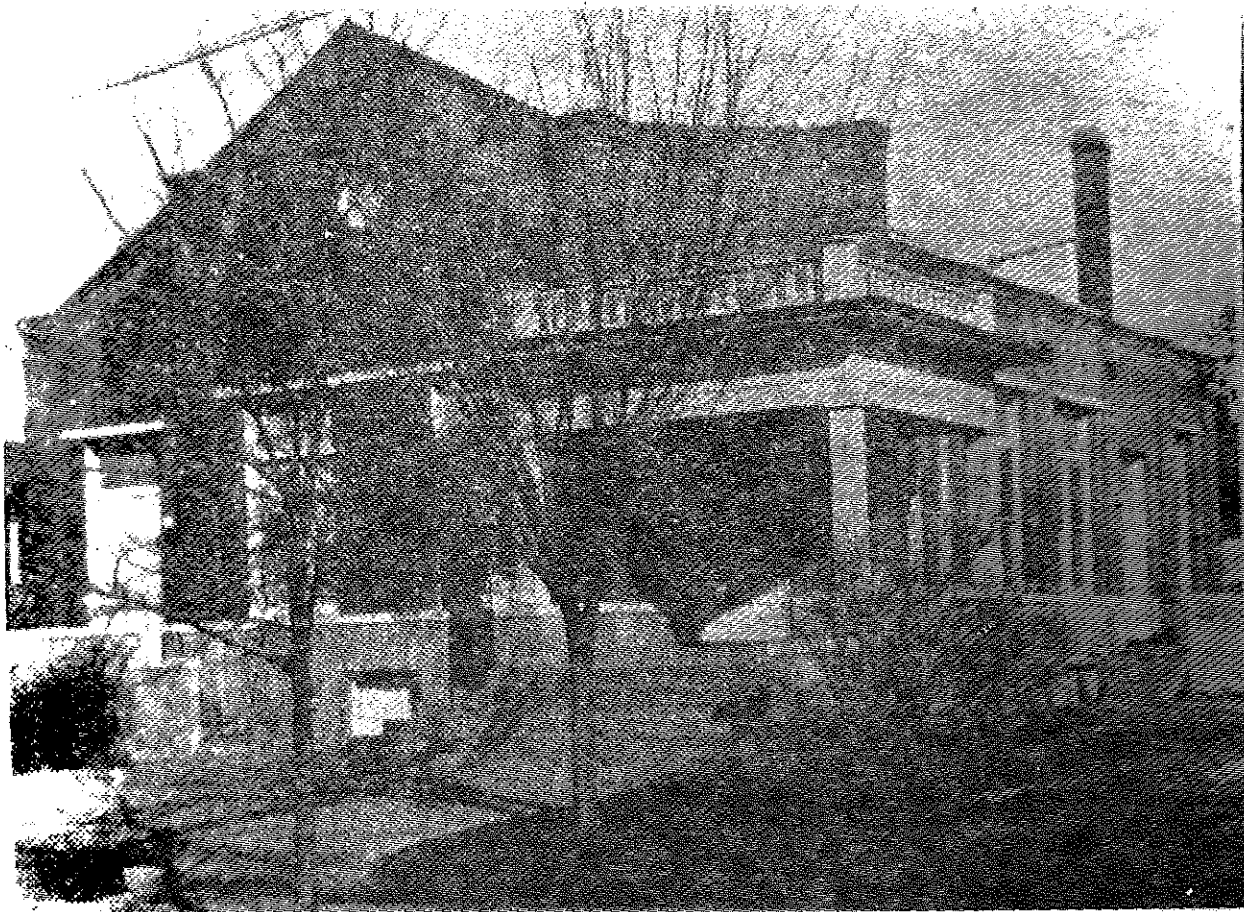
C. M. STUBBLEFIELD
1935 - 1937



FLOYD DECKER
1933 - 1935

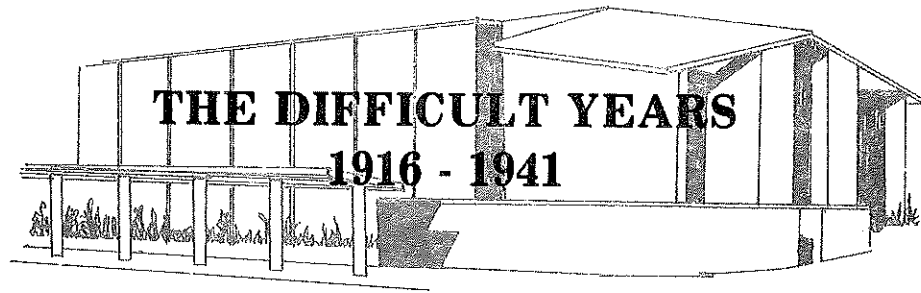


OSCAR SMITH, SR.
1937 - 1941



LAMAR AVENUE CHURCH OF CHRIST
629 Lamar Avenue
1916

CHAPTER VI



After the 1916 fire the church built a new brick building at a cost of approximately \$10,000. This new building was substantially larger than the one destroyed by fire, with a seating capacity of close to 400. The building had an indoor baptistry and several rooms for Bible classes. In May 1916, the vacant lot east of the church building was purchased for \$500. The lot was purchased to be used for summer meetings. Elders serving the church were: T. S. Turner, J. M. Carpenter, and R. G. Cook.

Several members of Lamar Avenue Church of Christ began a new congregation in Paris in 1916. The West Paris Church of Christ (Bonham Street Church of Christ) began meeting in the West Paris elementary school. Charter members were: Robert G. Cook, Mrs. Walter Dale, Mrs. Jasper King, Mac Roach, Mrs. Jennie Spikes, and Mrs. Tom White. Robert Cook served as the minister at the West Paris Church until 1925.⁹⁴

During the summer of 1917 Lamar Avenue was without a regular preacher. Robert Alexander, a student at David Lipscomb College, served as interim minister. J. W. Dunn was secured as the next minister. He preached at Lamar Avenue for a little over a year.

Fountain Livingston (F. L.) Young was the next preacher at Lamar Avenue coming in 1919. He was an older man, in his mid sixties. His years of experience and spiritual maturity were a great asset to the Paris church.

Young graduated from Add-Ran College in Thorp Springs, Texas in 1881. Young was recognized as "the first preacher in Texas to earn the B.A.

degree."⁹⁵ He married Mattie Higgins on December 2, 1880. To this union thirteen children were born, seven boys and six girls.⁹⁶

Before coming to Paris, F. L. served as one of the Bible teachers of the newly formed Southwestern Christian College in Denton in 1905. Here he was associated with Foy E. Wallace, Sr., who also served as a minister at Lamar Avenue.⁹⁷ Young also had been instrumental in establishing the church in Amarillo.⁹⁸

F. L. Young had been influenced by great spiritual giants of his day, men like T. B. Larimore, David Lipscomb, J. W. McQuiddy, James A. Harding, and Addison Clark. These men made a great impact on his life.⁹⁹

In 1919, while minister at Lamar Avenue, F. L. Young presented an address at the Abilene Christian College Lectureship. His closing statement was, "I have resolved never to make anything a test of fellowship which the Holy Spirit has not made a condition of salvation."¹⁰⁰

Some years later Young's grandson and name sake, Fount W. Mattox, was preparing to be a preacher. F. L. wrote to his grandson, "your grandfather has never regretted putting his all into the Master's cause. Disappointments and clouds sometime obscure the light - but he has said, 'I'll never leave you or forsake you.'"¹⁰¹ That grandson was one day to become a great Christian educator serving at Harding College for a number of years and as the first President of Lubbock Christian College.

A month after F. L. Young's death the September 19, 1933, issue of the Firm Foundation was a "memorial to F. L. Young." More than twenty gospel preachers wrote of their association with him and of his influence on their lives. Brother Young and his wife are buried in Evergreen Cemetery in Paris, Texas.

In 1926 R. A. Zahn preached for the Paris church. The year began on a sad note. Church minutes reveal, "the official family of the church being incomplete at this time, because of the death and removal of all the elders."¹⁰² However, by

August three new elders were selected: T. J. Quinn, G. B. Stuart, and Ed Couch.

Tom Walker served as minister for two years, 1927-28. Tom had a great evangelistic spirit. He was vitally interested in the rural churches of the county, and he spent much time holding meetings for the county churches. Bible classes averaged 155 at Lamar Avenue during these two years.¹⁰³

In May 1929, W. M. Davis came to preach for Lamar Avenue. He moved to Paris from the Broadway church in Lubbock. Davis was one of the great preachers in Texas at that time. The elders wrote Davis, "we believe that you will be able to get the cooperation of practically all the church, because they all have confidence in your ability, zeal, and past work."¹⁰⁴ He served the church a little more than one year. Davis later became front page editor for the Firm Foundation in Austin, Texas.

R. L. Colley of Houston moved to Paris the summer of 1930. His ministry proved very fruitful. The Firm Foundation carried the following report in 1932:

One of the strongest and most influential of the many strong churches of Christ in North Texas is the Lamar Avenue Church of Paris. For a number of years it has waged a strong fight for simple New Testament teaching. . . At present Brother R. L. Colley is doing a very fine work. Clean in life, dignified in bearing, eloquent in presentation of the gospel and loyal to the New Testament, we anticipate good reports from this good preacher. . ."¹⁰⁵

Colley conducted a young men's training class beginning in 1931. Several "preacher boys" went through this program including Hubert Roach and Delmar Owens who became faithful gospel preachers.

Lamar Avenue secured the services of Marshall Keeble of Nashville, Tennessee, and Luke Miller of Valdosta, Georgia, to hold a meeting for the colored people of Paris in 1932. There was not a member of the church of Christ in Paris,

among the colored people, before the meeting started. The meeting continued from October 16 through November 10, 1932. When the meeting ended there had been ninety-two additions, of which eighty-six were baptisms. Luke Miller moved to Paris to preach for the newly formed congregation. Lamar Avenue furnished half of his support. Marshall Keeble's preaching was described by R. L. Colley,

M. Keeble is a general in the Lord's army, he knows the gospel of Christ, and at all times conducted himself in harmony with its teachings. . . he is well grounded in the truth and can apply it instantly, but he is very humble.

He was cool and deliberate at all times, though the battle waxed warm and the darts thick and fast; he was never confused or had to wait for an answer. His replies were withering yet were kind, giving respect to his opponent, but crushing his doctrine. I have never heard a man that could preach the gospel with more simplicity than M. Keeble.¹⁰⁶

R. L. Colley resigned in February 1933. The church regretted his leaving. The men present at the open business meeting expressed admiration and appreciation for the "good work" done by Brother Colley.¹⁰⁷

The church secured the services of Floyd A. Decker as minister in the summer of 1933. Shortly after coming his wife died leaving him with two young girls to rear. In June of 1935 he married Miss Barbara Couch, daughter of elder Ed Couch.

The church was growing. Crowded conditions were common and there was discussion of expanding the auditorium. Eventually additional chairs were purchased and situated around the pulpit. In April of 1934 a 40' X 60' tent was purchased for \$370.¹⁰⁸ The tent was used by Brother Decker for evangelistic work in the rural districts. The tent was also rented or loaned to other churches for

meeting work. In 1936 Brother Decker bought the tent from the church for continued use in his evangelistic efforts.

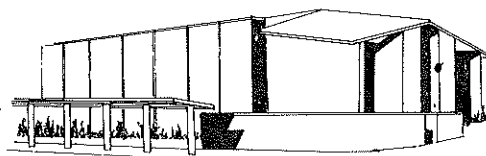
C. M. Stubblefield labored at Paris from 1935-1937. The membership stood at 275 and Bible classes averaged 185. Marshall Keeble returned for a three week meeting the summer of 1937. Radio broadcasts over KPLT began in 1937.

As early as October 1937, tentative plans were being discussed for a new building. Oscar Smith, Sr. began work with the church about this time. The building fund began in 1938, and by the end of 1941 over \$8,000 was in the fund.¹⁰⁹

Between 1916 and 1941 Lamar Avenue had become one of the leading churches in Texas. Her reputation for having a willing spirit and a missionary mind brought many request for aid in missions. During this period she assisted the West Paris church and the colored congregation in Paris. Assistance was given to build church buildings at Blossom, Deport, and Direct. Tent revivals and meeting work in the county resulted in many conversions. Out-of-state aid was given to missions in Oklahoma, Arkansas, Wyoming, and Mexico.

Many excellent preachers came to Lamar Avenue in this era to hold gospel meetings. Such preachers as Jim Dunn, L. S. White, F. B. Sheppard, Foy Wallace, Jr., George A. Klingman, Harvey Scott, E. W. McMillan, Roy Cogdill, Horace Busby, I. A. Douthitt, and John T. Smith, held meetings in Paris with many conversions to Christ.

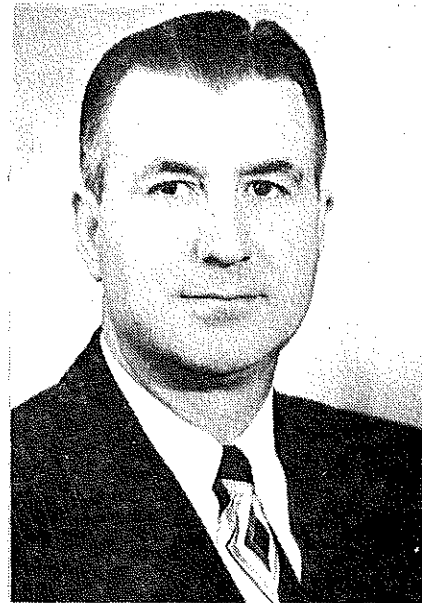
These had been "difficult years." The Paris fire, World War I, and the Great Depression had their impact on the times. The Lamar Avenue Church had been blessed with outstanding leadership in the pulpit, but in many instances their stay was brief, often less than a year. However, the church continued to make strides of progress. The dawning of a new day was approaching in 1941.



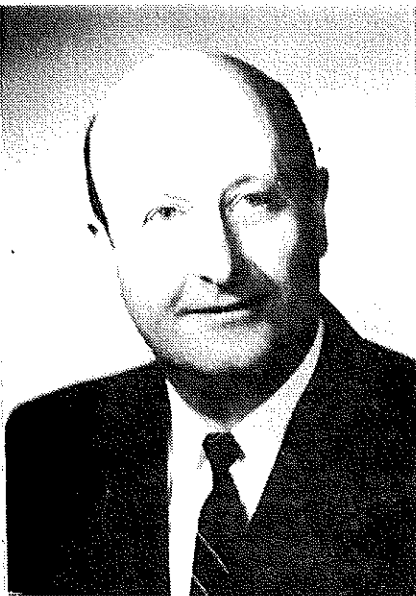
MINISTERS 1941-1964



CLEON LYLES
1941 - 1945



C. C. ABBOTT
1945 - 1947



PERRY B. COTHAM
1947 - 1953



ELMER L'ROY
1953 - 1964

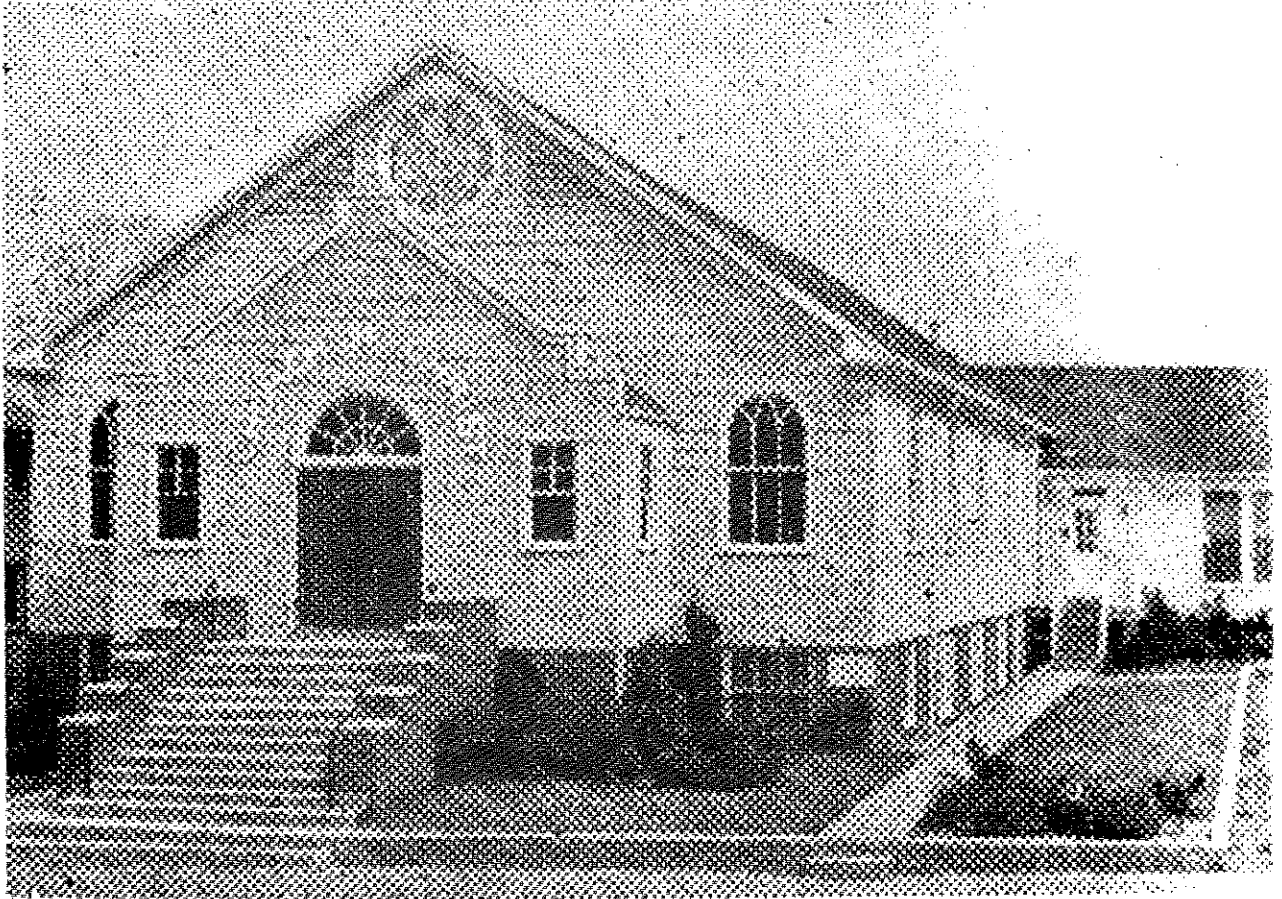


**YOUNG MARRIED COUPLES CLASS
1946**

- Row 1: Bessie Walker, Mr. and Mrs. George Wortham, Pauline McElyea, Leon Kelley holding Connelle, Haskell Smith.
- Row 2: M. A. Mazy, Margaret Carlton, Inez Kelley, Lloyd Barnett, Ward Cox, C. C. Abbott, Mrs. C. C. Abbott.
- Row 3: Mrs. M. A. Mazy, Guy Grigsby, ?, Cathrine Howard, Bill Pinson, ?, Mart Salter.
- Row 4: Leah Adams, John Adams, Mrs. Maurine Burgess, Mrs. Lucille Busby, Roy Busby, Mrs. Mart Salter, Evelyn Misso, Morris Misso.
- Row 5: Kelley Stroup, ?, ?, Mrs. Elmer Burgess, Elmer Burgess, James Rheudasil, Ethel Rheudasil, Mr. and Mrs. E. L. Lightfoot.
- Row 6: Mrs. Robert Preston, Leon Howard, Mr. and Mrs. Buddy Faught, ?, ?, ?, ?, Lois Barnett, Harrell Barnett.

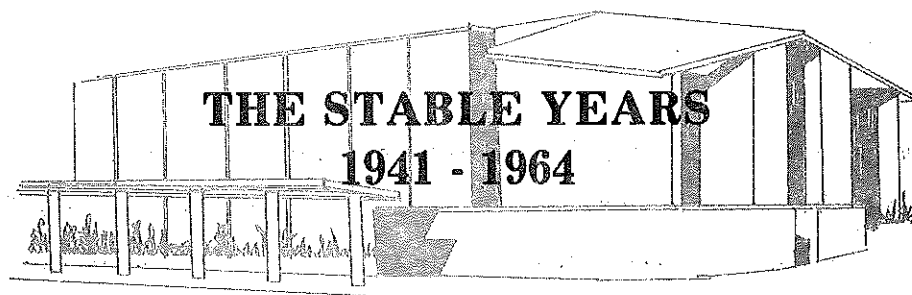


Vacation Bible School in the early 1950's



LAMAR AVENUE CHURCH OF CHRIST
637 Lamar Avenue
1942

CHAPTER VII



The next quarter century of the Lamar Avenue church was to be bright. Four men of great faith occupied the pulpit. Men of vision and foresight were added to the church leadership. Lamar Avenue was to continue her tradition of being a leader among churches of Christ.

Under the capable leadership of minister Cleon Lyles the church began to show visible signs of progress and growth. In 1942 Elder Ed Couch wrote,

Less than a year ago, Cleon Lyles, of Muskogee, Okla., came to Paris to work with the church, and unafraid of building programs, he started right in to help put this one through. The leadership thought a good job would be done if the beginning point were set for sometime inside the next two years, but Lyles wanted to begin earlier. So now, in less than one year, the building has been completed, seated, and air-conditioned for winter and summer.¹¹⁰

The new building was erected at a cost of approximately \$25,000. During the ten months of its construction nearly one hundred new members were added. The contribution more than doubled. The membership stood at almost 500. Elders of the church at this time were Ed Couch, T. J. Quinn and Holmes Rowan. In eighteen months the last payment was made on the building.¹¹¹

Cleon Lyles was a motivator and a builder. He believed in doing things right. Cleon began the first church bulletin at Lamar Avenue in 1944. His preaching

was simple and powerful. He had great dreams for the Lord's church. He wrote in the bulletin, "In fact everything we do should be BIG. But it takes BIG men to do BIG THINGS. It takes people who are willing to use themselves for the Lord. I believe we can count on you - there are BIG days ahead."¹¹²

When Cleon Lyles left Paris he left many friends in the church and in the community. His ministry at Lamar Avenue had been most successful. He moved to Little Rock where for twenty-three years he served the Sixth and Iward church, perhaps the most influential congregation in Arkansas.

Lyles was followed by Cornelius C. Abbott. Abbott had been trained at David Lipscomb College and American School of Chicago. He came to Lamar Avenue at a very good time. The church directory for 1946 reported, "The Lamar Avenue Church at this time, is enjoying a season of steady growth. Spiritual and financial prosperity are now blessing them in a measure seldom surpassed by any congregation."¹¹³

In 1947 Perry B. Cotham became the minister at Lamar Avenue. Cotham had been educated at Freed-Hardeman College in Henderson, Tennessee and Murray State College in Murray, Kentucky. He came to Paris from Wewoka, Oklahoma. Cotham was well known for his evangelistic work.

Perry Cotham had a prosperous six year ministry at Lamar Avenue. Bible school attendance increased from an average of 246 to 372. Cotham wrote,

Closing six years of work with the good people who worship at Lamar Avenue is by no means a pleasant thing to do. It is hard to part with friends so dear. . . This church has been known for years as one of the best in the brotherhood. Truly, it has been. Some of the finest people on earth compose its membership. Peace and harmony has prevailed within; the preachers have been loved and respected. My prayer to God is that it may continue to so be in the years that lie ahead.¹¹⁴

Elder Ed Couch, on behalf of the church, praised Cotham for his good work. "He is a preacher, above the average, and his wife is an ideal preacher's wife. They come no better."¹¹⁵ Cotham moved to Duncan, Oklahoma to become the first minister for the newly organized Northside congregation.

Elmer L'Roy became the minister at Lamar Avenue November 1, 1953. Elmer attended Oklahoma A & M College, Southwestern State College, Harding College, and East Texas State Teachers College, receiving B. S. and M. S. degrees.

Lamar Avenue had supported L'Roy for five years in mission work at DeQueen, Arkansas before he came to Paris. He was also the Associate Editor of The Gospel Light, a church publication from Delight, Arkansas.

In 1954 a new congregation, College Church of Christ, began in Paris. The first service was conducted November 14, 1954. Most of those beginning the new work were from Lamar Avenue. Bible School attendance for the three churches in Paris that Sunday totaled 688: College church 98, West Paris 215, and Lamar Avenue 375.¹¹⁶

The work at Lamar Avenue continued to prosper. By early 1956 plans were being discussed to build additional classrooms. In June of 1956 the announcement was made calling for an addition of twelve classrooms. This expansion program cost almost \$25,000.¹¹⁷

God continued to bless the efforts of the brethren. A spirit of harmony and unity prevailed in the congregation during the fifties and early sixties. In 1960 Elmer L'Roy wrote in the Churches of Today, "An expansion program to erect a new building is in progress. Two locations have been bought - one adjoining the present building and the other in a fast growing section of Paris."¹¹⁸ This dream would not become a reality for nearly six years. The plans were in the making, and the church was looking to the future. Those ten acres on the east edge of town had

already been claimed for God's work.

Elmer L'Roy's work with Lamar Avenue Church ended August, 1964. He announced his intention to move to Arlington, Texas to be the minister for the Hillcrest congregation. L'Roy's ministry had spanned eleven years, the longest tenure of any of the preachers who have served this good church. The church bulletin noted,

In the eleven years since his coming there have been 528 responses to the "gospel invitation." Contributions have doubled with this year being unusual in that the largest church budget in history was set and at no time through the eight months thus far has the church been under the budget.¹¹⁹

During this era (1941-64) mission work continued to increase. Pennsylvania mission points were strengthened. Support began for the new Bible chair work at East Texas State University. Churches in Clarksville, Honey Grove, DeQueen, Arkansas, and Shreveport, Louisiana, were strengthened by support from Lamar Avenue. The Herald of Truth radio and television ministry of the Highland Church in Abilene received regular support from Lamar Avenue. Foreign mission work was stepped up in Germany, Japan, South Africa and Italy. Perhaps the greatest undertaking of the Paris, Texas, church was the oversight of work in Paris, France. In July 1953, the decision was made to "assume the sponsorship" of the Claxton Wilsons. This was certainly a step of faith since all funds for this work would have to be contributed over and above the budget commitments for the year. The elders announced,

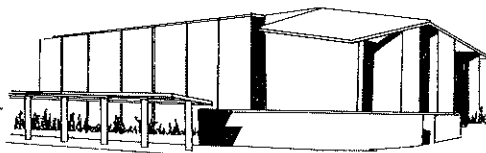
This is the first time that this congregation has undertaken such a project. Added responsibility will doubtless require that we call upon you to assist in many ways, financially and physically, but as a church of our Lord we can be proud that we are sending a gospel preacher to France, where near 50,000,000 souls have never heard the gospel, and surely it would be grand if one day, in heaven, a Frenchman would say, "Thank you, Brother, you see, I'm here because of what you did."¹²⁰

Lamar Avenue continued to assist the colored brethren in Paris. Since the 1932 meeting with Marshall Keeble the Lamar Avenue church had played a vital part in helping the work have a solid foundation. Keeble visited Paris several times over the years. In 1954 he spoke for the colored church in Paris. On that occasion he announced that the Lamar Avenue Church of Christ had supported the educational program among the colored people in Nashville Christian Institute the second longest time of any white church. This fine record was exceeded only by the Union Avenue Church of Memphis.¹²¹

Another major mission undertaking began in 1961. The Lamar Avenue church assumed the oversight of the Lowell Worthington family in Johannesburg, South Africa. The congregation there grew substantially in the seven years Lamar Avenue sponsored the work. Efforts in Johannesburg would eventually lead to greater mission involvement in South Africa in the sixties and seventies.¹²²

Gospel Meetings continued to be annual events in the life of the church. Much work was done each year to assure the success of these efforts. Speakers during these years included men like: Preston Cotham, Perry Cotham, Jack Meyer, Cleon Lyles, Willard Collins, C. E. McGaughey, John Banister, Reuel Lemmons, Boyd Taylor, James Willeford, Foy Smith, Don H. Morris, and Hubert Plumlee.

The "stable years" were such because of the spirituality, maturity, and stability of powerful preachers, loyal leaders, and faithful hard working members. Growth had been steady. Men of faith and vision in the leadership assured that the stage was set for greater things at Lamar Avenue Church of Christ in the closing decades of the twentieth century.



MINISTERS 1964-1980



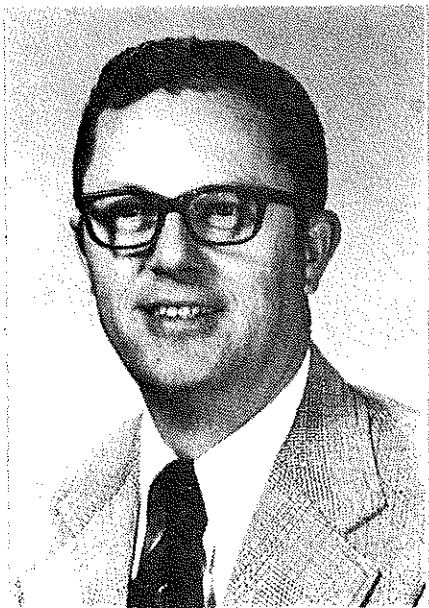
R. JACK GRANT
1964 - 1969



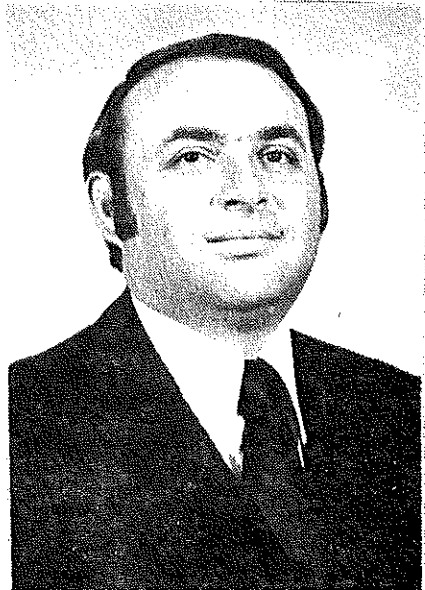
TOM W. PICKARD
1969 - 1972



HUBERT ROACH
1976 - 1977

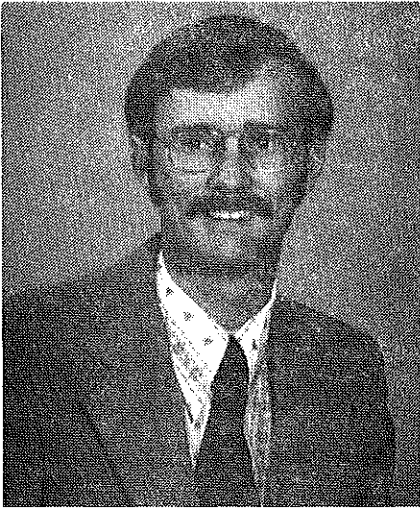


MAX PATTERSON
1972 - 1975

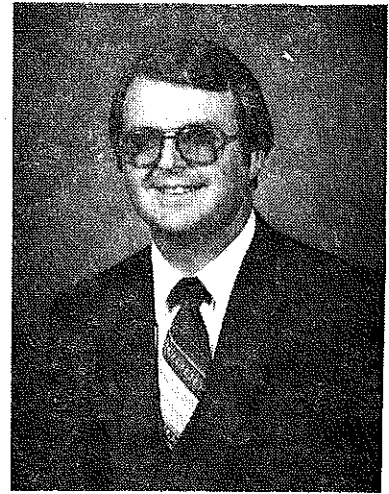


JOHN H. CANNON, JR.
1977 to present

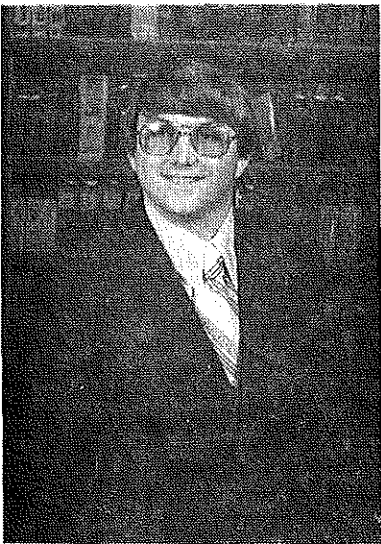
ASSOCIATE MINISTERS



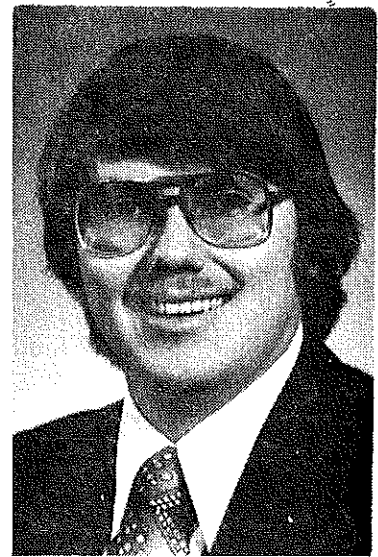
GARY GRADY
1972 - 1973



WAYNE BURRESS
1973 - 1975

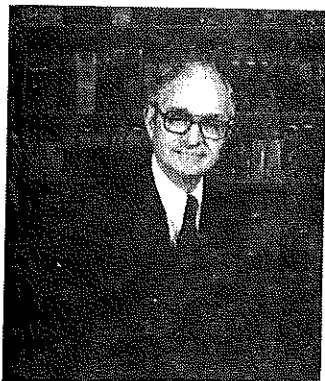


STEVE ELKINS
1977 - 1978

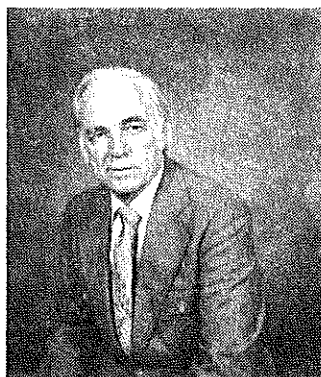


MIKE BISHOP
1978 to present

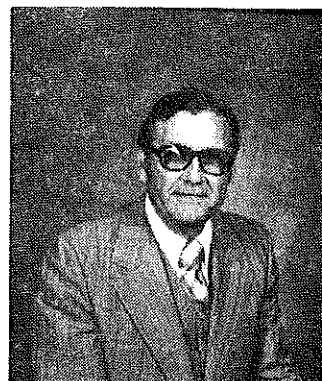
ELDERS - 1980



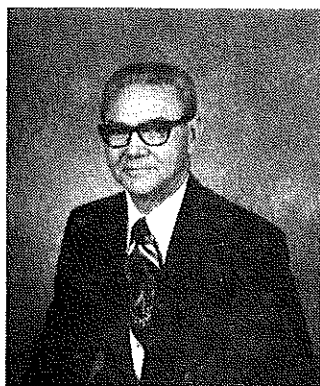
L. W. BASSETT



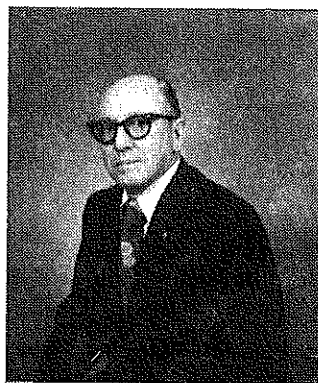
ED CARROLL



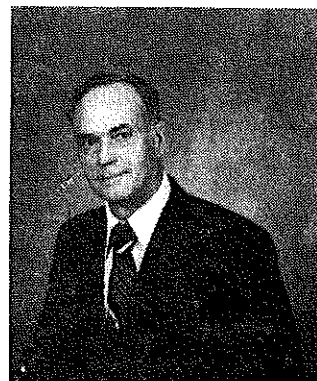
EDMOND CASTLEBERRY



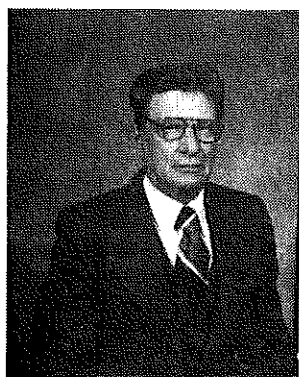
DR. LEON KELLEY



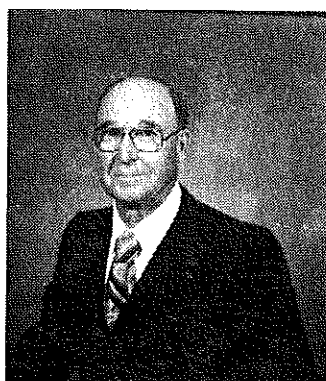
RAY KENNEMER



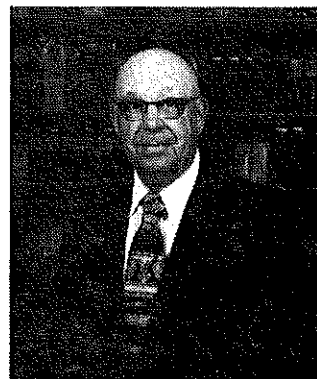
WAYNE McFADDEN



JOE PERRY



ALBERT ROACH

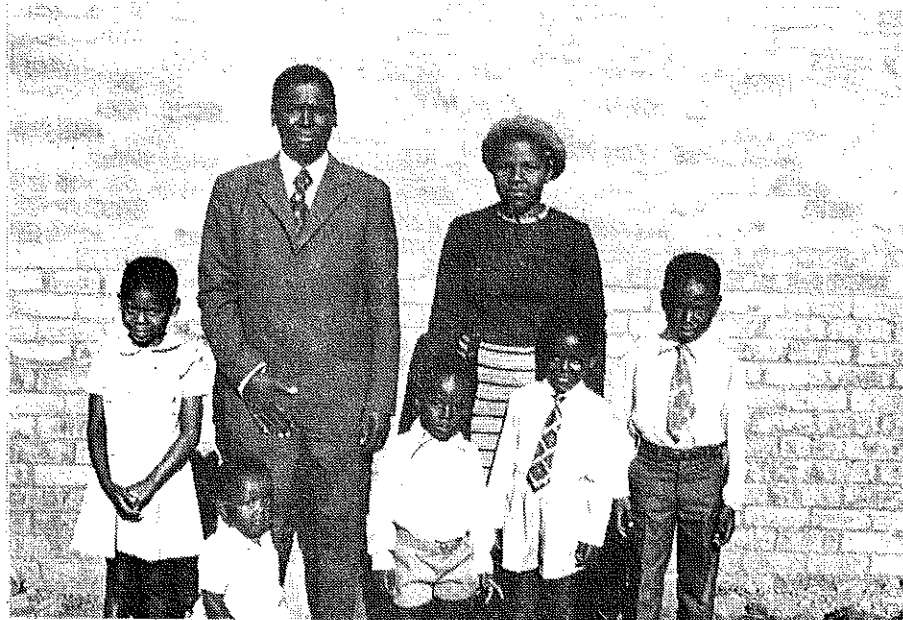


HUBERT ROACH

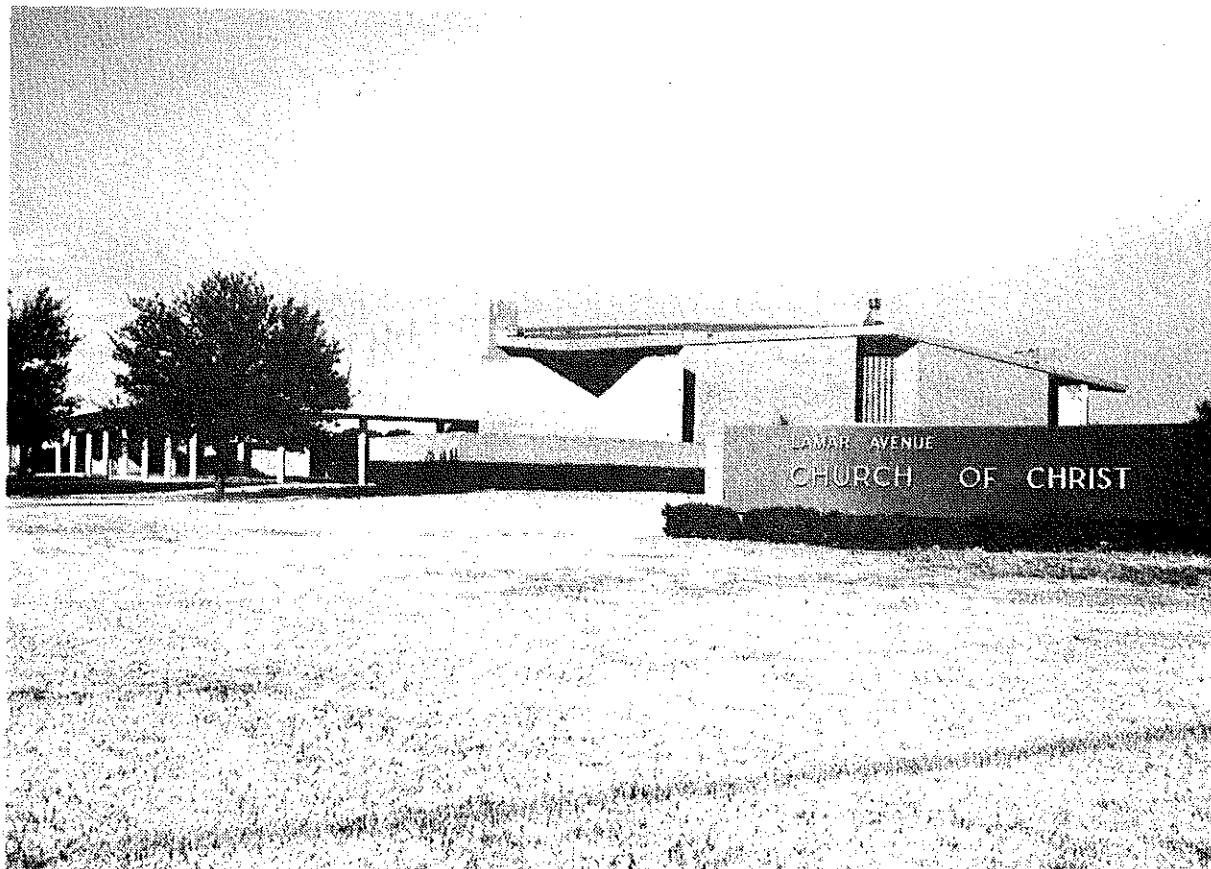
MISSIONARIES



M. LeCARDINAL AND WIFE
Paris, France

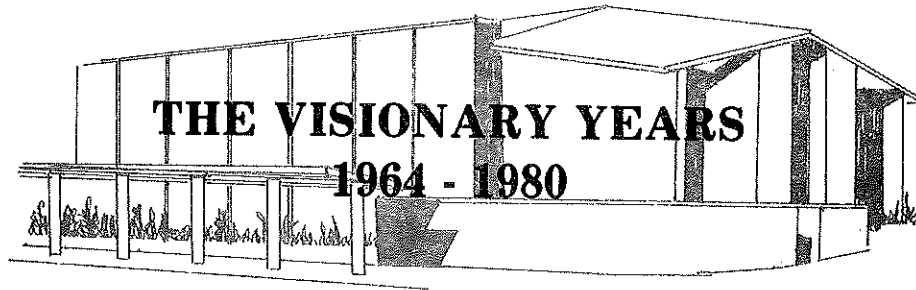


SAMSON PETERS' FAMILY
Natal School of Preaching
Pietermaritzburg, South Africa



LAMAR AVENUE CHURCH OF CHRIST
3535 Lamar Avenue
1966

CHAPTER VIII



This is perhaps the most difficult period of Lamar Avenue's history to record. It is certainly "recent" history. Because it is so current it is difficult to realize that what is happening now, in the life of Lamar Avenue, is continually shaping the history of this great church.

Our purpose in this history has not been to record every event in the life of Lamar Avenue ; that would be impossible. We have attempted to present enough of the facts and personalities to gain insights into how this congregation has developed over the years. The temptation is strong to give more detail to this last period because so much of it is so recent and fresh on our minds. We will try, as best we can, to present the highlights of the "Visionary Years."

The R. Jack Grant family came from El Paso to work with Lamar Avenue in October 1964. Jack had been educated at Pasadena Playhouse School of the Theater, Abilene Christian College, Oklahoma City University, B.A., and Harding Graduate School of Bible, M.A. Jack began his ministry with the church with an air of expectancy.

We are standing on the threshold of a great building program. I am sure that many of you feel that you have, in a manner of speaking, sunk deep roots in this church. And our feelings toward a church are always, to some extent, transferred to its physical

location. God forbid that I should be a party to removing those roots too harshly. That part of the old which is good and right must be carefully transferred to the new. I welcome the opportunity to work with you while you are at the old location that I might better understand your feelings as we transfer to the new. And I already share with you the joy that we are still going to be the Lamar Avenue Church of Christ.¹²³

Building fever seemed to be the order of the day. In March 1965, construction on a new minister's home began at 525 Laurel Lane. This beautiful and spacious home in Johnson's Woods was to serve as a gracious dwelling for Lamar Avenue's preachers for years to come.

In August 1965, the announcement was made that construction on the new building was to begin immediately at 3535 Lamar Avenue. Ground breaking ceremonies were held Sunday, August 29, at 4:00 P.M. with former minister Elmer L'Roy as the featured speaker.

Morris Misso, a member of the congregation and owner of Misso Construction Company, was awarded the contract. The cost of the building, land, and furnishings totaled \$491,500. A loan of \$285,000 was secured at First Federal Savings and Loan in Paris. The congregation raised an additional \$135,000 in the months prior to construction to assure the success of the building program. The land had already been paid for at a cost of \$65,000. God's people at Lamar Avenue had taken a giant step of faith and vision.¹²⁴

June 1966 saw the beautiful, functional building and spacious parking lot finished. June 12, 1966 the first Sunday services were held in the new building. Bible class attendance was 435, and 562 were present for worship. The dedication service on July 10 was attended by 616. James W. Willeford, president of York Christian Foundation, was the speaker for the dedication service, and also for the gospel meeting that was in progress that week.¹²⁵

The "visionary years" were beginning in a big way. With some ten acres of property, a worship facility to seat over 1,000, educational facilities composed of twenty-six classrooms, teacher's workroom, library, and conference room, and an office complex, the church was well equipped to grow for the Lord. Elders serving the church in 1966 were: Harrell Barnett, Edmond Castleberry, Arthur Cawthon, George L. Cullum, Dr. W. L. Kelley, and Ray Kennemer.

Jack Grant's ministry with Lamar Avenue covered four years. It was an exciting time in the life of the church with the transition from 635 Lamar Avenue to 3535 Lamar Avenue, at the intersection of Highway 82 east and Loop 286. The Grant's last Sunday was January 26, 1969. Grant became minister for the Polytechnic church in Fort Worth. He had aspirations to study law, and later he received his law degree from Southern Methodist University. He now serves as Assistant District Attorney for Taylor County, Abilene, Texas.

The year 1968 closed with a combined worship service of all the churches of Christ in Paris at Lamar Avenue's building on Sunday evening, December 29, 1968. Congregations cooperating included: Bonham Street, Westwood, College, Tudor Street, and Lamar Avenue. What may well have been the largest assembly of the Lord's people ever to assemble in Paris for a Sunday evening service resulted. There were 544 present.¹²⁶

In August 1969, Tom W. Pickard became the minister at Lamar Avenue. Tom and his family came from the Edgefield church in Dallas. Pickard received his education at the University of Oklahoma and Abilene Christian University, B. A. He was to effectively serve Lamar Avenue for three years.

The Lord's work was prospering at Lamar Avenue. Shortly before Pickard's arrival an all-time record attendance was set at a special one night service. Fausto Salvoni, a converted Catholic priest and former professor of language and Bible in

the Roman Catholic University in Italy, came to Lamar Avenue, August 9, 1969. Seven hundred and ninety-two people from a fifty to sixty mile radius gathered to hear Salvoni speak.¹²⁷

The month long attendance drive in March 1970 resulted in a five-Sunday average of 447 in Bible classes and 478 in morning worship. A record of 517 in Bible classes was set on March 29, 1970.¹²⁸

The year 1971 saw a shift in emphasis to a "team ministry" at Lamar Avenue. Gary Grady came to work as an intern minister the summer of 1971. Upon graduation from Oklahoma Christian College, Grady became Lamar Avenue's first associate minister in January 1972. Since that time three other men have filled that position of ministry. Wayne Burrese, a graduate of Harding University, was associate minister, 1973-75. Steve Elkins, educated at Paris Junior College and the University of Arkansas, served 1977-78. Mike Bishop, graduate of Lubbock Christian College, came to Lamar Avenue in November 1978.

The decade of the seventies brought the development of a strong Youth Ministry at Lamar Avenue. With the capable leadership of associate ministers, and the cooperation of willing parents, Lamar Avenue's youth ministry furnished an excellent program for the development of youth; spiritually, physically, intellectually, and socially. The congregation began to sponsor an annual session at Pettijohn Springs Christian Camp near Madill, Oklahoma. Youth rallies, Bible bowls, retreats, devotionals, and other youth activities drew youth from all over Northeast Texas. With Lamar Avenue having the only "youth minister" among the churches of Christ in Lamar County, and most of Northeast Texas, strong leadership has been provided for the Christian youth of the Paris area.

Max A. Patterson and his good family moved to Lamar Avenue in September

1972. Max attended Freed-Hardeman College, Harding University, Memphis State University, and Harding Graduate School. He had preached in Mississippi, Illinois, and Kentucky before moving to Paris from Atlanta, Texas. After a ministry of over three years Patterson accepted the pulpit work for the College congregation in Henderson, Tennessee.

The mid-seventies brought the beginning of the annual Northeast Texas Teacher's Workshop. Lamar Avenue cooperated with other Northeast Texas congregations each spring to provide an excellent training program for Bible teachers and church leaders.

The fall of 1975 a program called Thursday School began. The school is designed for children, nursery through age 5. The program is staffed by competent Christian women of the congregation. The Lamar Avenue Pre-School is an excellent outreach to the families of the community. Over the years the school has averaged 50-75 students during the regular school term.

For an interim period of over a year, 1976-77, Hubert E. Roach served as minister of Lamar Avenue. Hubert, then a member at Lamar Avenue, was well-known to the congregation. He had been raised at Lamar Avenue, his father, T. A. Roach, having served as a deacon for many years. Hubert was educated at Freed-Hardeman College and Abilene Christian College. He served churches in Oklahoma City and Hugo, Oklahoma, before moving to Bonham Street in Paris in 1954. After preaching in Paris for twenty-one years he retired and became a member of Lamar Avenue. The elders asked Hubert to preach "until a new minister could be secured." This he did for fifteen months. The work progressed nicely, and the spiritual climate of the congregation was in good shape for the coming of a new preacher in early 1977.

At age thirty, John H. Cannon, Jr., became one of the youngest ministers in recent times to occupy the pulpit at Lamar Avenue. John and his family came from the Northside church in Duncan, Oklahoma. This was the congregation Perry Cotham had moved to when he left Lamar Avenue in 1953. Cannon was the son of veteran gospel preacher John H. Cannon of Arkansas. Cannon was educated at Christian College of the Southwest, A.A., Arkansas College, Harding University, B.A., Harding Graduate School, and Abilene Christian University, M.S.

The year 1977 was a year of "renewal, rededication, and revival." During the year there were over 200 responses to the invitation of Christ with 47 being for baptism.

Growth in giving characterized the Lamar Avenue church in the closing years of the seventies. During the decade the weekly budget more than doubled, from \$1,513 in 1970 to \$3,249 in 1980. In addition to regular giving, two special contributions occurred in 1978 and 1979. The "Victory Day Contribution" of July 2, 1978 totaled \$36,430. The "Vision Day Contribution" of May 20, 1979 was \$50,893.85. These represented the largest single Sunday contributions of any churches in Northeast Texas. Monies received from the first special contribution went toward the reduction of the building mortgage. Funds from the special contribution of 1979 were used for increased missions, benevolent work and mortgage reduction. All of this special giving was "over and above" the required budget. Truly the heart of a great people began to show as many sacrifices were made to accomplish great things for Christ.

The mission program of the church continued to expand. Full support of Samson Peters in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa began in 1969. Samson teaches fulltime in the Natal School of Preaching, a training school for native

preachers. Through the efforts of the school and the Edendale congregation hundreds have been baptized annually and scores of congregations have been established and strengthened. Other mission involvement during this period included Japan, Kewanee, Illinois, Uruguay, and Mexico. The church continued the support of the Paris, France work under the direction of French preacher, M. LeCardinal.

Outstanding preachers came to Lamar Avenue in the sixties and seventies. Most came for gospel meetings. Others were invited for special workshops and seminars. The list included: Paul McClung, George H. Stephenson, James W. Willeford, C. E. McGaughey, Willard Collins, Silas Shotwell, Delmar Owens, Dr. Thomas Cunningham, Leonard Mullens, Jim Bill McInteer, George Bailey, Hubert Roach, Dr. Jimmy Allen, Pat Abbananto, Ed Sanders, Bill D. Oakley, Dr. Joe Barnett, Bert Mercer, Dr. Kenneth Dye, and John H. Cannon, Sr.

Lamar Avenue has always been a big supporter of Christian education. Over the years encouragement has always been given to the Christian colleges of our brotherhood. Choruses have visited, presidents have spoken, and annual fund raising programs from the colleges have been presented to the congregation. Southwestern Christian College, Christian College of the Southwest, Fort Worth Christian College, Ibaraki Christian College, David Lipscomb College, Freed-Hardeman College, Oklahoma Christian College, Lubbock Christian College, Harding University, Abilene Christian University, and perhaps others have received helping hands from the brethren at Lamar Avenue. Many sons and daughters from Lamar Avenue have furthered their education at these Christian institutions. The brethren of Lamar Avenue have not only been on the giving end, but the receiving end as well. Many of her preachers, leaders, and teachers were formally trained by Christian scholars at these colleges and universities.

Lamar Avenue began the decade of the 1980's with renewed determination to be an aggressive, serving, growing church. The highest attendance figures in ten years were recorded in the spring of 1980: 443 in Bible Classes, April 6; 346 on Sunday night, March 30; and 513 on Sunday morning, May 25.

Whatever Lamar Avenue Church becomes in future years, before the Lord should return, will not be left up to chance or accident. The brethren are thinking, praying, and planning for the future. In the providence of God we move forward with vision.

The leadership of the church in 1980 included elders: L. W. Bassett, Ed Carroll, Edmond Castleberry, Dr. Leon Kelley, Ray Kennemer, Wayne McFadden, Joe Perry, Albert Roach, and Hubert Roach; and deacons: Ken Brewer, Shelby Coker, Fred Crenshaw, Cleve Fendley, Jack Francis, Howard Holmes, James Miers, and Clifford Secest.

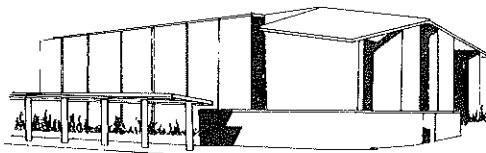
In 1931, Minister R. L. Colley penned the following words at the end of the first fifty years of the congregation's life. They are just as meaningful and appropriate some fifty years later.

This congregation is not unlike other congregations of the people of God. There have been times of sorrow and times of gladness. Their portion of trials have come that engaged the best thought and earnest prayers for the guidance of the Lord to lead the way to right and victory for the saints of the Lord. Though it has not all been a mantle of gloom and darkness. There have been the hours of the greatest gladness that has ever come to many hearts. Many have obeyed the gospel and rejoiced in the blessed promises of the Master, as a result of the truth for which this Church has stood and proclaimed through these years. Many have begun and finished their course in the work of the Lord in this congregation and have now passed to their reward. The influence of their lives still live in the hearts of those who knew them best and were by them pointed to the ways of the Lord.

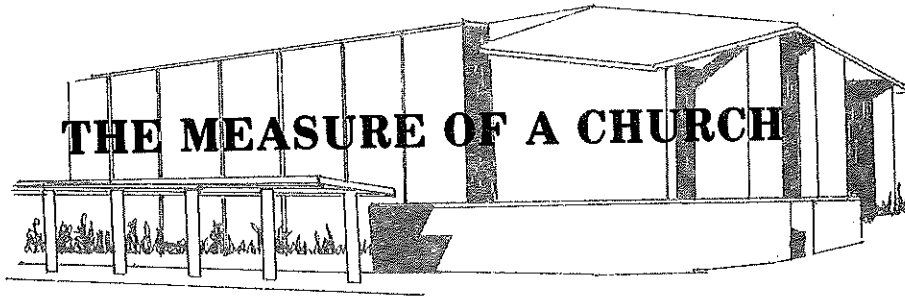
We do not claim that there have not been mistakes made; but think that there is as good a record as we generally see made by the feeble efforts of humanity. Through all these years the Church has, with the help of the Lord, striven to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; in spite of errors there are many Christian virtues to which we look with spiritual pride and a hope that they will serve to help us over the same mistakes in the future. To this end we strive and pray that the Lord will lead and that His name will ever be exalted in this place.¹²⁹

There are many "unsung heroes of the faith" whose names and deeds have not appeared in this history of the Lamar Avenue Church of Christ. Their names are written in heaven. Their works follow after them.

Through the years the Lamar Avenue Church of Christ has loved her preachers, been loyal to her leaders, ministered to the community and the world, served as a shining beacon in the brotherhood, and remained faithful to her Lord and Savior. As we stand on the brink of the twenty-first century may we continue to plant and water the precious seed, the word of God. May our prayer be that God will give the increase and cause the growth.



CHAPTER IX



The Lamar Avenue Church of Christ is a grand, old church. Her history speaks a glorious message of the days that are past. Her present is vibrant and alive as the Lord's church should be. Her future is bright in every respect as long as her members follow God's blueprint.

With the pages of history behind us it seems fitting to "step back" and take a look at Lamar Avenue from a different perspective. We leave the historical and turn to the practical in an attempt to analyze the "visible" aspects of her growth and development.

BIBLICAL BASIS FOR CHURCH GROWTH

In I Corinthians 3:4-9 we find a biblical foundation for church growth. When the Apostle Paul wrote these inspired words he spoke the authoritative words on church growth. He reminds us that in church growth man has a part and God has a part.

Man's part in church growth involves an awareness of four concepts:

1. Men are servants through whom others believe in Christ (vs. 5).
2. Men are to plant or sow the seed of the gospel (vs. 6).
3. Men are to water or cultivate the seed (vs. 6).

4. Men are to rely completely upon God, for they are God's fellow-workers, God's field, and God's building (vs. 9).

God's part in church growth revolves around two great principles (vs. 5-7).

1. God works through the lives of men. Paul and Apollos were both used by God to "plant" and "water" the seed of the gospel. If these men had not allowed God to use them as chosen vessels the church at Corinth would not have existed! God works through His people as Paul reminds us in Philippians 2:13, "For it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure."

2. God causes the growth of His church. Men do their part, but God causes the growth. Regardless of what man does in planting and watering the word, it is always God who brings about the increase and the growth. The credit always goes to God. When men believe that all the credit goes to God it is amazing how much they are willing to be used. Great things happen when men, used by God, let God do His work through their lives.

Therefore, in attempting to evaluate over one hundred years of Lamar Avenue's development and growth it is easy to get sidetracked and devote too much emphasis to the efforts and the abilities of mere men. We must not lose sight of God's involvement in the affairs of His people through the life of the church.

THE MEASURE OF A CHURCH

Lamar Avenue is an old congregation as churches of Christ go. Because the Restoration Movement is still fairly young there are very few of "our" congregations that can trace their beginnings back over a century or more. Many of our older churches have literally died. In many instances death was due to community changes and decline. In other instances death could have been avoided.

Old churches do not have to die. A case in point is the Broadway Church of Christ in Lubbock, Texas. This congregation began in 1890 with a meager membership. By 1906 they had constructed their first building, and by 1919 the membership numbered 175. Today the Broadway church numbers 3,000 members.¹³⁰ She is one of the strongest churches in the brotherhood. Much of her strength and growth can be attributed to her:

1. Innovative ideas and changing methods.
2. Aggressive attitude toward growth.
3. Outstanding pulpit men with long tenure.
4. Specialized ministerial staff.
5. Generous and dedicated membership.
6. Challenging and visionary leadership.

Joe Barnett, former Broadway minister, quotes Dewey and Dakin on the principle of church growth, "Every growing organism grows to maturity, levels off and dies unless there is new life...new blood...new ideas and...new activity." Barnett adds, "Churches are no exception. They usually grow old like people, get tired, get sick, and die."¹³¹ This does not have to be the case with churches that desire to be vibrant and alive.

A church like Lamar Avenue would do well to learn from the experiences of other older congregations. Learning these lessons well could furnish answers that will lead to further growth and development, and that will prevent costly mistakes.

THE MEASURE OF MEMBERSHIP

In 1871 there were approximately 400-500 members of the church of Christ

in Lamar County. Lamar Avenue represented about 100 of those with the balance of the members in rural churches throughout the county. The population of Paris was about 5,000 and the population of Lamar County was near 16,000.

Today, 1980, the membership of the churches in the county totals between 1500 - 1700 with Lamar Avenue having nearly 500. The population of Paris is over 26,000, and the county population is near 40,000.

In 1871, 75 - 80% of all New Testament Christians worshipped in the churches in the outlying communities of the county. In one hundred years the figures have reversed. Now 80% of the members of the churches of Christ are in seven Paris congregations. Lamar Avenue was the original "mother" congregation in Paris. Her membership in 1871 represented 20 - 25% of the total membership of the county. Today her membership represents 30 - 33% of the total membership of the county. The church of Christ officially began in Paris in 1869 with 83 members. Today there are some 1,200 members in the Paris churches. In 1871, 1 out of 50 residents of Paris were members of the church. In 1980 approximately 1 out of 22 residents of Paris were members of the church.

THE MEASURE OF MISSIONS

The measure of a church is not determined by membership only. The church's mission is to "make known the manifold wisdom of God," (Eph. 3:10), and to "preach the gospel to every creature." (Mk. 16:15). The church then has the responsibility of leading others to Christ, and thus, reproducing herself through the establishment of other congregations.

During her early years Lamar Avenue was a "mission church" herself,

receiving support and strength from churches like Antioch at Biardstown. In a few short years, by the 1880's, Lamar Avenue was reaching out to the lost in Indian Territory through the efforts of R. W. Officer. Foreign mission work was undertaken in the late 1890's by supporting former local minister William J. Bishop in his work with J. M. McCaleb in Japan.

During the first half of the twentieth century most mission work of the church was concentrated on local efforts. Many churches in the county were strengthened through the evangelistic efforts of Lamar Avenue ministers. Protracted meetings were the order of the day with brush arbors and large tents being used successfully to the saving of souls.

Other local congregations have grown out of Lamar Avenue which is also a sign of a healthy church. The first was the West Paris or Bonham Street church in 1916. The black work, Tudor Street church, began in 1932 under the oversight of Lamar Avenue. The College church began in November of 1954 with a considerable number leaving Lamar Avenue to begin the new work. Although these congregations are independent, autonomous, and self-supporting, they owe their beginnings to the "mother church" of Paris, Lamar Avenue.

Missions, both stateside and foreign, have been supported by Lamar Avenue all along. Much of this support has been "partial support" of good works sponsored by brethren elsewhere.

The two most successful efforts in foreign missions fully supported by Lamar Avenue have been those in Paris, France and South Africa. The support of the work in Paris, France began in 1953 with the Claxton Wilson family. This was the first major effort to be fully sponsored by Lamar Avenue. When the Wilson's work ended support was given to M. Le Cardinal, a native French preacher. Through the efforts of Brother Le Cardinal and the Northside church in Paris, France, many souls have been led to Christ and numerous French speaking congregations have resulted in the past twenty-five years.

In 1961 Lamar Avenue sent the Lowell Worthington's to Johannesburg, South Africa. This work continued for seven years. Then in 1969 the work in South Africa continued with full support of Samson Peters in Pietermaritzburg. Samson teaches full time in the Natal School of Preaching, and he also serves as an elder of the Edendale congregation. He became one of the first black elders in the church in Africa in 1977. In recent years this work has been responsible for an average of 300 baptisms annually, the establishment of scores of congregations, and the training of dozens of native preachers.

Lamar Avenue has not existed for herself alone. Her outreach has been far and wide. Her missions program has been a true extension of her strength and influence in the brotherhood.

THE MEASURE OF THE PULPIT

Lamar Avenue has been blessed with ministers of sterling quality and character. Since 1880 she has been served by twenty-eight full-time ministers. Another half dozen or so served as interim preachers and part-time preachers especially during the early years.

Average Preacher Tenure	
<u>Dates</u>	<u>Average Tenure</u>
1880-1900	2.85 years
1900-1926	4.33 years
1926-1941	2.14 years
1941-1964	5.75 years
1964-1980	3.75 years

The average preacher tenure for the past one hundred years has been 3.57 years. Twenty-two men stayed four years or less. Only six were with the church for more than five years. In nearly every book on church growth the point is usually made concerning preacher tenure. The churches that are growing keep their ministers ten, twenty or more years.

Nearly all of Lamar Avenue's ministers have been college trained. Over half of her ministers received their training in Christian Colleges. F. L. Young was recognized as the first preacher in Texas to earn the B.A. degree. At least four possessed masters degrees. The Christian schools from which these men have come include: Bethany College, Kentucky University College of the Bible, Mars Hill Academy, Add-Ran College, Gunter Bible College, Freed Hardeman College, Harding University, Harding Graduate School of Bible and Religion, and Abilene Christian University.

Of the twenty-eight ministers who have served Lamar Avenue eight are still living. These eight reach back to 1941 in years of service to Lamar Avenue.

THE MEASURE OF LEADERSHIP

I am convinced that the "back bone" of the Lamar Avenue church over the years has been her elders. Lamar Avenue has had elders almost since her beginning. The first list of elders appeared on the deed of the church property in 1871. They were: J. B. Bennett, V. W. Hale, and E. L. Dohoney. When the church divided in 1891 the new elders were: W. H. Sluder, T. S. Turner and J. T. Booth.

Since 1871 the church has been served by thirty-four known elders. The amazing thing is that nine of these thirty-four are still in the leadership.

Eight men served for twenty years or more. Six men served for ten years or more. Among the present elders three have served over twenty years, and another

three have served ten years or more. There is a combined total of 106 years experience and service among the present nine elders. This represents an average of nearly 12 years per elder. It is the author's opinion that such long tenure among the elders has contributed greatly to the stability and unity of the Lamar Avenue church over the years.

THE MEASURE OF GIVING

The earliest contribution figures indicate an average weekly offering of \$50-\$60 in the late 1920's. In 1927 the average contribution was about twenty-five cents per member. By the late 1940's the contribution stood at about \$400 per week, or nearly one dollar per member.

The first \$500 weekly budget was in 1951. The first \$1,000 weekly budget was in 1966. Ten years later, 1976, the weekly budget doubled to \$2,000. The first \$100,000 year was 1975. By 1980 the weekly budget topped the \$3,000 mark.

THE MEASURE OF EVANGELISM

New members are added to the church in three basic ways: (1) Conversion growth, (2) Transfer growth, and (3) Biological growth.

Conversion growth includes the number of baptisms, the number converted from the world and brought into the church.

Transfer growth includes members who move in from another community or church and "place membership" or "identify" with the congregation.

Biological growth includes the children brought up in the homes of members who become Christians at the age of accountability.

Flavil Yeakley, Jr., addresses all three of these areas of church growth when he says,

Research indicates that congregations are now having an average of only one baptism per year for every 20 members. Christians' children make up 75 per cent of those being baptized and about half of them drop out of the church after they grow up and leave home . . . In the typical congregation, 75 percent of those who are added to the membership come by transfer from another congregation, not by baptism.¹³²

The kind of church growth that really exhibits the fruits of effective evangelism is conversion growth or baptisms. A large percentage of new members every year should fall into this category if the church is healthy.

The great need of the hour at Lamar Avenue is for a restoration and revival of evangelistic zeal and fervor. During the decade of the seventies Lamar Avenue averaged one baptism per year for every 40.2 members. In 1975 congregations across the brotherhood were averaging one baptism per year for every 20 members.¹³³ The spirit of soulwinning must be restored! The church that does not evangelize will sterilize. The church that does not reach out will die out.

Give us a watchword for the hour
A thrilling word, a word of power;
A battle cry, a flaming breath,
A call to conquest or to death;
A word to rouse the church from rest,
To heed the Master's high behest.

The call is given, ye hosts arise,
The watchword is EVANGELIZE.
To fallen men, a dying race,
Make known the gift of gospel grace.
The world that now in darkness lies,
O Church of Christ, EVANGELIZE!

LESSONS FROM HISTORY

What practical lessons result from this church history? What can be learned from the past that will assure a bright future? Five observations follow.

1. The church must be a real, living body not just a building. The Lamar Avenue church has occupied five buildings in her one hundred-plus years. Not once has her mission been hampered or held down by "church building" religion. Even when one building was lost to division and another to fire her purpose was not thwarted. Today, Lamar Avenue is blessed with a fantastic facility to be used as a tool to the glory of God, but a building does not make a church. Anyone can build a church building, but only God can build a church.

2. The church must be evangelistic in spirit. Nothing can take the place of conversion growth or baptisms. This is the life-blood of a congregation. When a church loses its evangelistic fervor and zeal it is headed for decline and death. The mandate of the church is the great commission. It is imperative that the local church evangelize its community.

3. The church must have capable, spiritual, visionary leadership. Leadership sets the pace for congregational development. Leaders must not only serve long, but well, and with their eyes open. Preachers need to stay longer. The great Sixth and Izard church in Little Rock, Arkansas has had only three preachers in her long history. The influential Broadway Church in Lubbock, Texas has had only ten preachers in the last ninety years. Churches, preachers, and elders need to learn to work together longer so that more lasting good can be accomplished.

4. The church must be challenged. Whether it be a new building, a special contribution, a higher budget, a record attendance, or an aggressive mission program, the church must be challenged. I believe this is where visionary leadership and enthusiasm and imagination in the pulpit plays a vital part in congregational growth

and development. The church that is not challenged becomes lethargic.

5. The church must not allow time to tire her. God has given His church a timeless task that is to continue until His son returns. Churches need not grow old and die. There is life even for the most lifeless church. That life is in Christ. (Col. 3:4). Older congregations like Lamar Avenue would do well to be reminded of their source of life. Men and members grow old and die, but churches live on because of the living Christ.

CONCLUSION

The Lamar Avenue Church of Christ has attained a remarkable past and a glorious history. She has been responsible for an effective mission program. She has reproduced herself by establishing other congregations and strengthening weak ones. She has experienced a spiritual stability and unity as the result of the longevity of service of her elders. She has maintained her strength and vitality in a community that, for the most part, has not been conducive to phenomenal church growth.

The measure of a church is very elusive. The measure of a church is not always determined by facts and figures, numbers and statistics. How do you really measure lives changed and souls saved? How do you really measure services rendered and influences exerted? How do you really measure lessons taught and sermons preached? How do you really measure spiritual maturity?

It may well be that a church is measured by:

1. The dreams it dreams.
2. The values it redeems.
3. The truth it speaks.
4. The destiny it seeks.

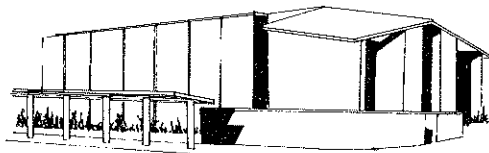
Lamar Avenue must dream great dreams for the future. She must not let the future just happen. Deeds must first live in the thought of a congregation before they ever make it to reality. The congregational expectations for the future must be high.

Lamar Avenue must value those things which characterize a great church: spirituality, service, evangelism, soulwinning, and faithfulness. The heart and attitude of the congregation must be right to be blessed of God.

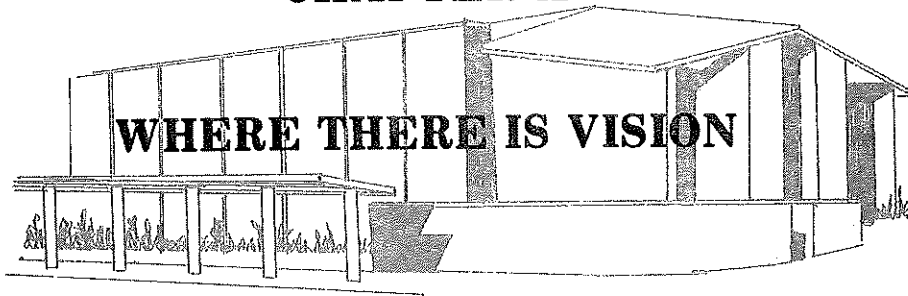
Lamar Avenue must continue to speak the truth. The Bible, God's word, must be boldly proclaimed without compromise, coloration or shading. She must constantly preach the word. In everything she does the first concern should be, "Is it Biblical?"

Lamar Avenue must never lose sight of her eternal destiny. God's church is heavenward bound! May our ultimate goal be to build a great and glorious church to present to Jesus when He returns.

There is no point in spending our time sighing for the church that was. Neither should we settle down in the church that is, satisfied with a status quo. We should make our goal the church that ought to be, even though we disturb all who rest at ease in Zion. We shall never attain it completely down here, but we can work toward it until that day that we join the church triumphant, the church that shall be!



CHAPTER X



Vision! God's faithful few have always possessed it. Vision has often meant the difference between victory and defeat, success and failure, triumph and tragedy. Vision is a desired quality needed among God's people in the twentieth century.

Solomon identified the key role of vision when he wrote, "Where there is no vision, the people perish; but he that keepeth the law, happy is he." (Proverbs 29:18). When the wise man speaks of "vision" he probably has reference to "revelation" or revealed knowledge from God. I Samuel 3:1 says, "And word from the Lord was rare in those days, visions were infrequent." God was not speaking to His people through the prophet. When there is no "vision" or "word" from the Lord the people perish. They suffer loss. They go unrestrained. So there is that kind of vision from God to man. When man is obedient to God's revelation he experiences happiness and victory!

God has spoken to man in the most visionary book of all times — the Bible! When Christians are in tune with the word of God they should be the most visionary people on earth. Man's vision for God springs forth from the foundation of faith, trust, reliance and confidence. Therefore, when one thinks of vision it should be considered from two standpoints: (1) The vision from God to man, and (2) The vision of man for God. We will attempt to deal with vision from both standpoints, but our primary emphasis will be on man's vision for God and His work.

THE DEFINITION OF VISION

What is this magic ingredient called vision? Webster defines vision as “the act or powers of seeing; something supposedly seen by other than normal sight, such as a dream; the ability to foresee or perceive; the force or power of the imagination.” Jonathan Swift called vision “the art of seeing things invisible.”

From the Christian perspective vision is the ability to see with the spiritual eye of faith that which is impossible to see with the physical eye of sight. For that reason vision is closely akin to faith. Even though Jesus was complimenting faith in John 20:29 he also gave a good definition of vision when He said, “Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed.”

THE VOICES OF VISION

Men of faith speak words of vision. In the Bible God has recorded the visionary words of great men of faith. As we listen to their words we come to better understand the necessity of vision among God’s people.

Moses was God’s chosen leader for delivering Israel from Egyptian bondage. He had led them as far as the Red Sea, and they became frightened and cried out to the Lord. Moses addressed the multitude, “Do not fear . . . the Lord will fight for you while you keep silent.” Then the Lord told Moses, “Tell the sons of Israel to go forward.” (Exodus 14:10-15). Forty years later the children of Israel were camped on the eastern frontier of Canaan, and God again spoke through Moses, “You have stayed long enough at this mountain . . . go in and possess the land . . .” (Deuteronomy 1:6-8). It was time for the people to make a move. The proper motivation came in the challenge of words of faith and vision.

Joshua and Caleb are names synonymous with faith and vision. Of the twelve spies selected to spy out the land of promise they were the only two who reported, "We shall surely overcome." (Numbers 13:30). If the congregation of Israel had listened to their advice they would have been spared much hardship and even death in the wilderness.

Isaiah the prophet described the enlarging of post-exilic Israel by using the illustration of a bedouin tent. "Enlarge the place of your tent; stretch out the curtains of your dwellings, spare not; lengthen your cords, and strengthen your pegs. For you will spread abroad to the right and to the left. And your descendants will possess nations, and they will resettle the desolate cities." (Isaiah 54:2-3). The prophet had visions of better, more prosperous days for Israel.

Jesus himself was visionary in outlook. He challenged His disciples with the vision of evangelizing the entire world in the words of the Great Commission. (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16). He built His church with the vision and assurance that she would be triumphant and victorious in spite of the powers of hell. (Matthew 16:18).

The Apostle Paul walked in the footsteps of the visionary Christ. He possessed the ability to see the unseen through the eye of faith. "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." (II Corinthians 4:18). "For we walk by faith, not by sight." (II Corinthians 5:7). "Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen." (Ephesians 3:20-21).

These voices of vision from God's men of the past should inspire us to greater heights for God. As their words ring clearly through the centuries we find

ourselves “caught up” in their visionary outlook. Their faith and vision inspires us to take courage in our present tasks for God.

THE DEMANDS OF VISION

It is one thing to be inspired to act, and it is another thing to act! Yet, that is what vision calls on us to do.

1. Vision demands that God’s people run the risk! There comes the time when each of us must do like Peter — step out of the boat to meet the Lord! (Matthew 14:22-23). There will always be obstacles to our faith, but we cannot afford to wait until all the roadblocks are out of the way. Andre Gide said, “Man cannot discover new oceans unless he has courage to lose sight of the shore.”

On June 6, 1944 General Dwight D. Eisenhower took a high risk when he ordered the allied forces to cross the English channel and invade the beaches of Normandy. General Eisenhower told General Montgomery, “You will not attack until the odds are overwhelmingly in your favor, and you know you will win. I will attack even when the odds are against me.” God never promised His people that the odds would be in their favor. For this reason churches must be led by men of vision who are not afraid to run the risk. The church needs men like Joshua who won the battle of Jericho with a ridiculous battle strategy. He ran the risk simply because God told him to, and it worked! God still promises victory to the people who have the vision to run the risk!

2. Vision demands that God’s people step out in faith! The watchword for the church is still II Corinthians 5:7, “For we walk by faith, not by sight.” When J. C. Penney was in his eighties he was asked by an interviewer how he was feeling.

The aging gentleman responded with vigor, "My eyesight is failing, but my vision is better than ever." Spiritual "sight" or vision is not dependent on physical sight but on faith. The one quality God has always required of His people is faith. "But the righteous man shall live by faith." (Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38). Do we walk by faith? Do we live by faith? In our daily lives, and in the ongoing of the church does faith stand out as the guiding force? "And this is the victory that has overcome the world – our faith." (I John 5:4).

3. Vision demands that God's people think BIG! "No man that does not see visions will ever realize any high hope or undertake any high enterprise," stated Woodrow Wilson. God's people are doing some big things these days because there are some among us who dream dreams. Some churches are experiencing daily conversions. Some churches are giving one million, even two million dollars on one Sunday for the Lord's work. Today, we have several congregations that number 1,000, 2,000 and even 5,000! Some churches have entered million dollar building programs debt free because of the generous spirit of their members. There is no limit to people of vision!

I like these words of Daniel H. Burnham. Burnham was a Chicago based architect and city planner. In 1907 he wrote,

Make no little plans . . . they have no magic to stir men's blood and probably themselves will not be realized. Make big plans, aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble, logical diagram once recorded will never die, but long after we are gone will be a living thing, asserting itself with evergrowing insistency. Remember . . . our sons and grandsons are going to do things that would stagger us. Let your watchword be order and your beacon beauty. Think big. Remember that when you create a situation that captures the imagination, you capture life, reason, everything.

If God is your partner think big! The first century world felt the impact of a people who were captured by a cause greater than themselves. The twentieth century world can experience that same impact when God's people of vision begin to move mountains!

4. Vision demands that God's people possess a different spirit! God commended Caleb "because he has had a different spirit and has followed Me fully." (Numbers 14:24). Yes, there was something different about Caleb, and it is that same "difference" that God is looking for today among His people. Caleb was positive while others were negative. (Numbers 13:30-33). Caleb remembered what others had forgotten. (Numbers 14:22-23). Caleb believed when others doubted! Caleb was strong and courageous while others were weak and cowardly. (Numbers 14:6-9). Caleb was active while others were passive. Caleb was obedient when others were rebellious. He "followed the Lord fully." (Numbers 14:24).

Bite off more than you can chew — then chew it!
 Arrange for more than you can do — then do it!
 Plan for more time than you can spare — then spare it!
 Take on more than you can bear — then bear it!

May the church be permeated with a "different spirit." May it spread from the leadership to the membership, from the pulpit to the pew, from the youngest to the oldest.

5. Vision demands that God's people rely on Him completely for help. God has always stood by His people in all their undertakings for good. Elisha encouraged Israel in their battle with Syria by saying, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." (II Kings 6:16). When the walls of Jerusalem were being rebuilt under the supervision of Nehemiah the people took courage knowing that "Our God will fight for us," and "The God of heaven will give us success." (Nehemiah 4:20; 2:20).

The Apostle John recorded words of reassurance and reliance when he said, "You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world." (I John 4:4).

True, spiritual vision never takes a man beyond God! The church must con-

tinually rely upon God. If, in our plans and dreams for the future, we leave God out we make a tragic mistake. If we fail to seek God's will, God's guidance, and God's wisdom in making our visions reality we will ultimately know failure. Joe Barnett says, "... faith demands that we step out and take the risk. Whenever a church becomes so totally business-like that it depends on its own strength and never leans on God, that is the beginning of the end." (The People Who Tested God, p. 109). In our mission as a church, and in our fight against Satan, let us constantly look to God.

CONCLUSION

The need of the hour is for God's people to catch the vision! Just think what can be accomplished by a people of vision. It is difficult to say what is impossible, for the dream of yesterday is the hope of today and the reality of tomorrow.

The past is gone, the present is rushing by, and the only thing we can change is the future. We can change the future of souls, homes, the church, and the world through faith in Jesus!

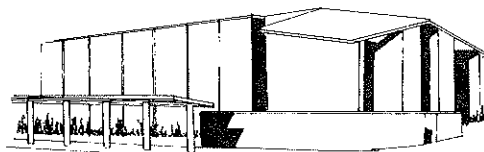
Do we have the vision? Where there is no vision the people know defeat and sadness. Where there is vision the people know victory and happiness.

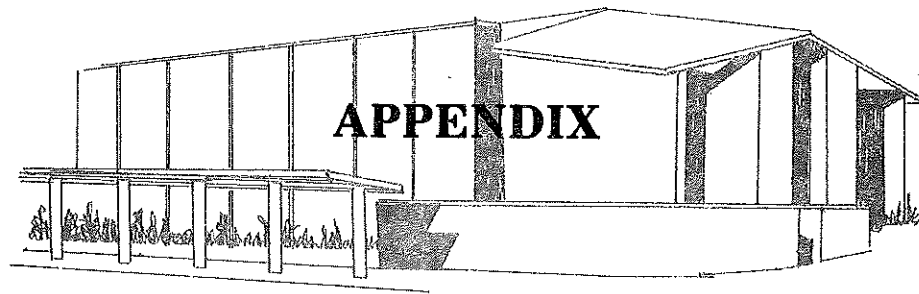
A vision without a task is a dream.

A task without a vision is drudgery.

A vision and a task are the hope of the world!

*This sermon was delivered by the author at the Lamar Avenue Church of Christ on Vision Sunday, May 20, 1979. The congregation gave a record special contribution that day of over \$50,000.





- APPENDIX A: Lamar Avenue Church of Christ - Ministers
- APPENDIX B: Lamar Avenue Church of Christ - Elders
- APPENDIX C: Population Figures
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- APPENDIX E: Lamar Avenue Church of Christ - Weekly Budgets
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- APPENDIX G: Membership Roll, 1876
- APPENDIX H: Membership Roll, 1915
- APPENDIX I: Fifty Year Members
- APPENDIX J: Churches of Christ - Lamar County, Texas

APPENDIX A
 LAMAR AVENUE CHURCH OF CHRIST
 Paris, Texas
 MINISTERS
 (1869 - 1980)

1869-1880	James M. Biard	1930-1933	R. L. Colley
	J. J. Williamson	1933-1935	Floyd Decker
	W. N. Northcutt	1935-1937	C. M. Stubblefield
	R. L. Downing	1937-1941	Oscar Smith, Sr.
1880-1882	F. D. Srygley	1941-1945	Cleon Lyles
1882-1886	R. W. Officer	1945-1947	C. C. Abbott
1887-1888	J. W. McGarvey, Jr.	1947-1953	Perry B. Cotham
1889	J. F. Grubbs	1953-1964	Elmer L'Roy
1890	D. D. Boyle	1964-1969	R. Jack Grant
1892-1896	D. T. Carlton	1969-1972	Tom W. Pickard
1898-1899	W. J. Bishop	1972-1975	Max Patterson
1900-1906	W. K. Rose	1976-1977	Hubert Roach (interim)
1907	Foy E. Wallace, Sr.	1977-present	John H. Cannon, Jr.
1908-1910	J. B. Nelson		
1910-1917	Lee R. Garrett		
1917	Robert Alexander (interim)		
1917-1918	J. W. Dunn	ASSOCIATE MINISTERS	
1919-1925	F. L. Young	1972-1973	Gary Grady
1926	R. A. Zahn	1973-1975	Wayne Burress
1927-1928	Tom Walker	1977-1978	Steve Elkins
1929-1930	W. M. Davis	1978-present	Mike Bishop

APPENDIX B
LAMAR AVENUE CHURCH OF CHRIST
Paris, Texas
ELDERS
(1871 - 1980)

C. R. Allen	V. W. Hale
Harrell Barnett*	Frank Howard
L. W. Bassett*	Dr. W. L. Kelley**
J. B. Bennett	Ray Kennemer**
J. W. (Buster) Biard	Glynn Lowe
J. T. Booth	Wayne McFadden
J. M. Carpenter	W. J. Minick
Ed Carroll*	Floyd Myatt
Edmond Castleberry**	A. T. Odeneal
W. A. Cawthon*	Ed Owsley
W. A. Cawthon, Jr.	Joe J. Perry
S. O. Cochran	Thomas J. Quinn*
Robert G. Cook	Albert Roach*
Ed Couch**	Hubert Roach
George L. Cullum**	Holmes Rowan
E. L. Dohoney**	W. H. Sluder**
James D. Elliott	C. B. Stuart
Lee Garrett	T. S. Turner**

* Ten years or more

** Twenty years or more

APPENDIX C
POPULATION FIGURES

<u>Date</u>	<u>Paris, Texas</u>	<u>Lamar County, Texas</u>
1850	1,003	3,978
1860	1,500 (estimate)	10,136
1870	5,000 (estimate)	15,790
1880	3,980	27,193
1890	8,254	37,302
1900	9,358	48,627
1910	11,269	46,544
1920	15,040	55,742
1930	15,649	48,529
1940	18,678	50,425
1950	21,643	43,033
1960	20,977	34,234
1970	23,441	36,062
1980	25,139	41,475

SOURCE: Texas Almanac and State Industrial Guide, (Dallas, Texas: A. H. Belo Corporation, 1971), pp. 158 and 164.

APPENDIX D
LAMAR AVENUE CHURCH OF CHRIST
Paris, Texas

MEMBERSHIP FIGURES

1869	83
1871	100
1891	53
1908	165
1915	268
1927	222
1931	250
1936	275
1942	500
1946	450
1954	560
1955	448
1961	438
1966	462
1969	465
1973	469
1974	467
1977	481
1978	480
1979	469
1980	471

APPENDIX E
LAMAR AVENUE CHURCH OF CHRIST
Paris, Texas

WEEKLY BUDGET

<u>Year</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Budget</u>
1927	\$ 52.40	1958	\$ 699.98
1928	\$ 52.72	1959	\$ 825.98
1929	\$ 60.38	1960	\$ 803.15
1930	\$ 59.15	1961	\$ 827.25
1931	\$ 65.44	1962	\$ 866.61
1932	\$ 89.05	1963	\$ 879.09
1933	\$ 63.02	1964	\$ 930.80
1934	\$ 67.30	1965	\$ 942.58
1937	\$ 76.44	1966	\$1,268.73
1943	\$ 250.00	1967	\$1,112.65
1944	\$ 288.46	1968	\$1,308.00
1945	\$ 326.92	1969	\$1,346.00
1946	\$ 384.62	1970	\$1,513.00
1947	\$ 337.00	1971	\$1,517.00
1948	\$ 423.00	1972	\$1,702.00
1949	\$ 486.35	1973	\$1,771.00
1950	\$ 486.35	1974	\$1,792.00
1951	\$ 560.00	1975	\$1,949.00
1952	\$ 536.92	1976	\$2,017.00
1953	\$ 531.00	1977	\$2,266.00
1954	\$ 655.51	1978	\$2,533.00
1955	\$ 839.26	1979	\$2,813.00
1957	\$ 697.60	1980	\$3,249.00

APPENDIX F

LAMAR AVENUE CHURCH OF CHRIST

CHURCH BUILDINGS

1870	Location:	421 Lamar Avenue
	Cost:	Unknown
1892	Location:	629 Lamar Avenue
	Cost:	\$1,400
1916	Location:	629 Lamar Avenue
	Cost:	\$10,000
	Seating:	400
1942	Location:	637 Lamar Avenue
	Cost:	\$25,000
	Seating:	750
	Classroom addition (1952)	
	Cost:	\$25,000
1966	Location:	3535 Lamar Avenue
	Cost:	\$491,500
	Seating:	1050

APPENDIX G
MEMBERSHIP ROLL
MAY 14, 1876

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Arnold, Dr. A. E. | 20. Cox, Wm. |
| 2. Arnold, Mrs. V. C. | 21. Dohoney, E. L. |
| 3. Bennett, J. B. | 22. Davis, Mrs. H. P. |
| 4. Bennett, Mrs. Emily | 23. Hamilton, J. J. |
| 5. Bennett, Miss Bettie | 24. Hamilton, Mrs. N. M. |
| 6. Bennett, Miss Alice | 25. Hamilton, Chas. C. |
| 7. Bennett, J. D. | 26. Hale, Mrs. Sarah J. |
| 8. Bennett, Dr. W. M. | 27. Johnson, Mrs. A. M. |
| 9. Bennett, Mrs. Adella | 28. Johnson, Mrs. A. E. |
| 10. Barry, John E. | 29. McRea, Mrs. L. |
| 11. Barry, Mrs. Hattie | 30. Sluder, W. H. |
| 12. Berry, Mrs. Mary E. | 31. Sluder, Mrs. Mary |
| 13. Burnett, Mrs. Susan | 32. Shearon, W. H. |
| 14. Burnett, Miss Lutie | 33. Towery, Mrs. F. M. |
| 15. Bonham, Mrs. M. A. | 34. Towns, Mrs. Lutie |
| 16. Bradshaw, Mrs. Mary F. | 35. Tompkins, Asa |
| 17. Bland, Mrs. Catherine | 36. Tompkins, Mrs. Asa |
| 18. Cummins, Mrs. Amanda | 37. Walker, Mrs. Elizabeth |
| 19. Clement, Mrs. Dr. W. M. | 38. Walker, Miss Belle |

APPENDIX H
LAMAR AVENUE CHURCH OF CHRIST

MEMBERSHIP ROLL

1915

Allred, J. W.	Clarksville St.
Alexander, J. O.	N. Wall St.
Alexander, Mrs. J. O.	N. Wall St.
Bailey, Mrs. Rita Mayfield	Pine Bluff St.
Barry, Miss Fannie	N. 27th St.
Beasley, R. F.	Pine Mill Road
Beasley, Mrs. Belle	Pine Mill Road
Beasley, Frank	Pine Mill Road
Barry, Frank B.	S. 25th St.
Burge, W. A.	N. 28th St.
Burge, Mrs. Stella	N. 28th St.
Billings, J. F.	Pine Mill Road
Bone, Mrs. Willet Tom	
Bills, Geo. F.	Lamar Ave. Road
Bills, Mrs. Lena	Lamar Ave. Road
Bills, Ruie	Lamar Ave. Road
Bills, Sue	Lamar Ave. Road
Biard, Jas. W.	S. 26th St.
Biard, Mrs. Lillian	S. 26th St.
Biard, Dudley	S. 26th St.
Biard, Miss Corinne	S. 26th St.
Biard, Rafe	S. 26th St.
Biard, Teddie	S. 26th St.
Biard, Rebecca	S. 26th St.
Boyer, Miss Hattie	33rd St.
Brazile, Mrs. Annie Hearn	Cor. Cherry and 29th St.
Barton, Mrs. Bernice Ethel	
Booth, Mrs. J. T.	Wall and Cherry St.
Bennett, A. G.	E. Price
Bennett, Mrs. A. G.	E. Price
Bennett, Miss Joe	E. Price
Bradshaw, W. W.	W. Houston

Crawford, Mrs. Margaret	N. 28th
Crawford, Brother	
Crawford, J. D.	E. Houston
Crawford, Mrs. J. D.	E. Houston
Cook, Robert G.	S. 30th St.
Cook, Mrs. Willie	S. 30th St.
Cook, Miss Martha	S. 30th St.
Cook, Denton	S. 30th St.
Carpenter, John M.	E. Price St.
Carpenter, Mrs. John M.	E. Price St.
Carpenter, Eleanor	E. Price St.
Carpenter, Josie	E. Price St.
Carlton, D. T.	S. College or 35th St.
Carlton, Mrs. Katie	S. College or 35th St.
Carlton, Elizabeth	S. College or 35th St.
Carlton, Hattie Mae	S. College or 35th St.
Crawford, John	N. 11th St.
Clapp, Mrs. Willie	
Clark, Mrs. A. E.	
Cunningham, Mrs. A. E.	Country
Cunningham, Miss J. O.	Country
Craig, O. T.	
Craig, Mrs. O.T.	
Cox, Miss Mollie	13th St.
Cothran, J. H.	E. Cherry
Cothran, Mrs. J. H.	E. Cherry
Cothran, Villa	E. Cherry
Caldwell, Miss Fay	N. 30th
Cross, Mrs. M. E.	Lamar Ave. Road
Campbell, Miss	Bonham St.
Donnell, Mrs. Bonnie Gullick	
Davidson, Mrs. Mary	Cherry and 29th St.
Dowty, J. R.	Oak Street
Dowty, Mrs. J. R.	Oak Street
Dowty, Miss Lee	Oak Street
Denton, A. E.	N. Booth St.
Denton, Mrs. A. E.	N. Booth St.
Denton, Edith	N. Booth St.
Denton, William	N. Booth St.
Denton, Gwendolene	N. Booth St.
Denton, Amos	N. Booth St.

Eubank, Walter	S. 25th St.
Eubank, Mrs. Walter	S. 25th St.
Ewer, Mrs.	Country
Ewer, Miss Lottie	Country
Edwards, Mrs. Maggie	
Elam, Miss Minnie	Woodlawn Ave.
Easton, Mrs. Mary	Hubbard St.
Edwards, Miss Vera	W. Houston St.
Foster, W. H.	E. Sherman St.
Foster, Mrs. W. H.	E. Sherman St.
Foster, J. C. (Jake)	S. 35th St.
Foster, Mrs. J. C.	S. 35th St.
Grigsby, Sylvester E.	Booth and 28th St.
Grigsby, Mrs. Sylvester E.	Booth and 28th St.
Grigsby, Miss Katie	Booth and 28th St.
Grigsby, Bailey	Booth and 28th St.
Grigsby, R. D.	Woodlawn Ave.
Grigsby, Mrs. R. D.	Woodlawn Ave.
Grigsby, Miss Roberta	Woodlawn Ave.
Grigsby, Archer	North Main St.
Grigsby, Mrs. Nina	North Main St.
Grigsby, Guy	Woodlawn Ave.
Grigsby, Margaret	Woodlawn Ave.
Grigsby, Louise	Woodlawn Ave.
Graham, W. W.	S. 25th St.
Graham, Mrs. W. W.	S. 25th St.
Grubbs, E. B.	North Main St.
Grubbs, Mrs. E. B.	North Main St.
Gullick, Mrs. W. H.	
Gullick, Miss Daisy Denton	
Garrett, Lee (Minister)	Lamar Avenue Road
Garrett, Mrs. Eula	Lamar Avenue Road
Gibson, Denton	Paris Bottling Works
Gain, G. F.	E. Wash. St.
Griffin, Mr.	S. 30th St.
Griffin, Mrs.	S. 30th St.
Griffin, Ivy	S. 30th St.

Hearn, L. Y. (Dock)
 Hearn, Mrs. L. Y.
 Howard, C. W.
 Howard, Mrs. C. W.
 Howard, B. F.
 Howard, Mrs. B. F.
 Howard, Lottie
 Howard, Myrtle Lee
 Head, Bro.
 Head, Mrs.
 Head, Miss
 Head, Miss
 House, J. W.
 Hankins, R. L.
 Hankins, Mrs. R. L.
 Henderson, Mrs. Allie
 Hopper, J. H.
 Hopper, Mrs. J. H.
 Hopper, Miss Josie
 Hutchings, F. E.
 Hutchings, Mrs. F. E.

Jordan, Mrs. Fannie
 Johnson, Archie
 Jack, Mrs. S. A.
 Jack, Miss Lou
 Jack, Ollie
 Justiss, N. C.
 Justiss, Mrs. N. C.
 Jones, Mrs. E. B.
 Jenkins, Mrs. Mary

Keener, Mrs. Bettie

Lindsay, W. J.
 Lindsay, J. W.
 Lindsay, Mrs. Mollie
 Lusby, Mrs. C. M.
 Lyon, R. L.
 Lyon, Mrs. R. L.

Cor. Cherry and 29th
 Cor. Cherry and 29th
 W. Sherman
 W. Sherman
 Love Avenue
 Love Avenue
 Love Avenue
 Love Avenue
 N. 20th
 N. 20th
 N. 20th
 N. 20th
 Clarksville St.
 Lamar Avenue Road
 Lamar Avenue Road
 S. 30th

S. 22nd St.

E. Houston
 W. Cherry
 Maple Ave.
 Maple Ave.
 Maple Ave.
 Pine Mill Road
 Pine Mill Road
 Lamar Avenue
 Pine Mill Road

E. Houston

N. 29th St.
 Evergreen St.
 Evergreen St.
 31st St.
 Pine Bluff St.
 Pine Bluff St.

Laws, C. W.
 Laws, Mrs. C. W.
 Lewis, E. F.
 Lewis, Mrs. E. F.
 Lynn, J. C.

Mowery, Mrs. Sallie H.
 Moseley, Mrs. Nannie Hearn

McKnight, J. W.
 McKnight, Mrs. J. W.
 McKnight, Miss Allene
 McKnight, Wilburn
 McKnight, Clyde
 Moore, Miss Allie
 Martin, Miss
 McCown, Bob
 McFadden, Mrs. Lillie
 McKee, Mrs. Lena
 Miller, G. D.
 Miller, Mrs. G. D.
 Mayfield, Mrs. Mattie
 Mayfield, Miss Vessie
 McGee, Prof. and wife
 Moore, Mrs. Maggie
 McGlasson, Miss Mattie

Nixon, Mrs.
 Nixon, Daughter

Odum, Mrs. Jeffir
 Owen, Miss Merle
 Owens, J. B.
 Owens, Mrs. J. B.
 Owens, Jessie
 Owens, Ruby

Page, J. H.
 Page, Mrs. J. H.
 Poteet, T. P.

Brown Ave.
 Brown Ave.
 W. Cherry
 W. Cherry
 Lamar Avenue Road

Grove St.
 Cor. Lee and Cherry

Lamar Avenue Road
 Lamar Avenue Road
 Lamar Avenue Road
 Lamar Avenue Road
 Lamar Avenue Road
 Lamar Avenue Road
 Pine Mill Road
 Pine Mill Road
 Evergreen St.
 Lamar Avenue
 Brown Avenue
 Brown Avenue
 Pine Bluff St.
 Pine Bluff St.
 Paris Commercial College
 Lamar Avenue
 N. Main St.

N. 18th
 N. 18th

N. 22nd
 Pine Mill Road
 N. 33rd
 N. 33rd
 N. 33rd
 N. 33rd

Pine Bluff
 Pine Bluff
 S. 25th St.

Pettigrew, J. F.
 Pettigrew, Mrs. J. F.
 Pettigrew, Miss Cassie
 Pettigrew, Miss Grace
 Pettigrew, Mrs. Will
 Pegues, Miss Lizzie
 Pegues, Sister
 Price, Mrs. Harry
 Pritchett, Willie
 Pinson, Mrs. Eula
 Phillips, Mrs.

Quinn, G. W.

Roach, W. M.
 Roach, Mrs. W. M.
 Roach, Miss Ruby
 Rhodes, Mrs. Nellie
 Roberts, M. O.
 Roberts, Mrs. M. O.
 Rohatsch, Mrs. Arthur
 Rohatsch, Ruby
 Rich, Miss Sarah
 Roberts, H. H.
 Rodgers, Mrs.

Sluder, Mrs. Mary
 Sluder, Ed
 Sluder, Will
 Sluder, Mrs. Will (Fannie)
 Sanders, Mrs. M. D.
 Simms, Mrs. Mattie
 Stewart, Mrs. W. F.
 Saylor, J. J.
 Saylor, Mrs. J. J.
 Smith, Mrs. R. A.
 Spradling, Miss May
 Smith, R. J.
 Smith, Mrs. R. J.
 Smith, Lorton

Pine Bluff Road
 Pine Bluff Road
 Pine Bluff Road
 Pine Bluff Road
 Pine Bluff Road
 33rd St.
 33rd St.
 E. Houston
 S. 23rd
 32nd St.
 Lamar Ave.

Pine Mill Road

N. 15th
 N. 15th
 N. 15th
 Cedar St.
 S. 35th
 S. 35th
 Scott St.
 Scott St.

Garretts Ferry Road
 W. Shiloh

S. 25th St.
 S. 25th St.
 S. 25th St.
 S. 25th St.
 E. Sherman
 Morgan Hotel
 N. 11th
 Pine Bluff Road
 Pine Bluff Road
 S. 28th St.
 Love Ave.
 Love Ave.
 Love Ave.
 Love Ave.

Smith, Mrs.
 Smith, Miss Bertha
 Smith, Miss
 Sanderson, Mrs. Mary
 Sanderson, Miss Ola
 Sanderson, Jim
 Spikes, Mrs. Jennie
 Stratton, R. H.
 Stratton, Mrs. R. H.
 Stratton, Katie Mae
 Spann, Mr.
 Spann, Miss
 Stacey, Miss Nellie
 Turner, B. E.
 Turner, Mrs. B. E.
 Turner, T. S.
 Turner, Miss Effie
 Turner, Herbert
 Turner, Mrs. Herbert
 Thomas, Mr.
 Thomas, Mrs.
 Thomas, Arthur
 Thomas, Floy
 Thomas, Eunice
 Thompson, Mrs. Myrtle

Voss, Mrs.
 Vestal, J. W.

Wiseley, Mrs. Eva
 Williams, Mrs. Cora
 Whitlock, Mrs. Sarah
 Whitlock, Mrs. Daisy
 Wilson, Mrs. C. Roy (Lizzie)
 Williams, John C.
 Williams, Mrs. John C.
 Wilburn, J. W.
 Wilburn, Mrs. J. W.
 Wilburn, Miss Clara
 Wilburn, Matoka
 White, Mrs. Tom (Lena)

W. Graham
 W. Graham
 W. Graham
 Rusk and Kaufman
 Rusk and Kaufman
 Rusk and Kaufman
 S. 1st St.
 W. Kaufman
 W. Kaufman
 W. Kaufman

Clarksville St.
 Lamar Avenue
 Lamar Avenue
 Clarksville St.
 Clarksville St.
 Pine Bluff St.
 Pine Bluff St.
 Pine Bluff Road
 Pine Bluff Road
 Pine Bluff Road
 Pine Bluff Road
 Pine Bluff Road
 Washington St.

33rd St.
 N. 18th St.

Booth and 28th
 N. 28th
 W. Cherry
 S. 23rd
 Clarksville St.
 Lamar Avenue Road
 Lamar Avenue Road
 S. Main
 S. Main
 S. Main
 S. Main
 S. 4th St.

White, J. H.
White, Mrs. J. H.
Wilson, Mrs. M. L.
Wilson, Mrs. S. W.
Wiegand, Bro.
Walker, Mrs. J. S.
Wynne, Mrs. Hattie Sluder
Waits, Mr.
Waits, Mrs.

Bonham St.
Bonham St.
Pine Bluff Road
S. 27th St.
S. 25th St.
Jefferson Road
Jefferson Road

SOURCE: This 1915 membership roll was given to Hubert Roach by Jack Brazile.

APPENDIX I

FIFTY YEAR MEMBERS

1980

Mrs. Mary Ruth Biard
Miss Ruie Bills
Mrs. Lena Braswell
Miss Margaret Carlton
Mrs. Thelma Castleberry
Mrs. Kate Cullum
Mr. & Mrs. Wilburn Faught
Miss Martha Hankins
Leon Howard
Mr. & Mrs. L. Z. Jack
Dr. W. L. Kelley
Mr. & Mrs. O. J. McFadden

Mrs. Josephine Millsap
Mrs. Vashiti Minick
Mrs. Sue Ormsby
Mrs. Mary Belle Patterson
Mrs. Margaret Pierce
Albert Roach
Hubert Roach
Mrs. Fannie Sluder
Charley A. Smith
Mr. & Mrs. Haskell Smith
Mrs. Gwen Stull
Mrs. Ruby Wilburn

APPENDIX J

CHURCHES OF CHRIST

Lamar County, Texas

1980

<u>Congregation</u>	<u>Membership</u>
Lamar Avenue	500
College	350
Bonham Street	200
Tudor Street	150
Westwood	50
Blossom	50
Pattonville	75
Powderly	75
Roxton	25
Direct	25
Reno	25
Lamar Road	75
Thirteenth Street	50
	<hr/>
	1,650

FOOTNOTES

Chapter I

¹R. L. Roberts, "History of the Restoration Movement in Texas," Christian Journal, (Dec. 14, 1962), p. 8.

²Ibid.

³Stephen Daniel Eckstein, History of the Churches of Christ in Texas, 1824-1950, (Austin, Texas: Firm Foundation Publishing House, 1963), pp. 8-10.

⁴Texas Almanac and State Industrial Guide, (Dallas, Texas: A. H. Belo Corporation, 1971), p. 300.

⁵Lamar County Court Records, Book D, (Jan. 14, 1846), pp. 11-12.

⁶Alexander Campbell, ed., Millennial Harbinger, Series III, Vol. 7, (Bethany, West Virginia, Feb. 1850), p. 118.

⁷C. M. Wilmeth, ed., The Christian Preacher, Vol. 3, No. 48, (Dallas, Texas, Nov. 14, 1880), p. 5.

⁸Paris Morning News, Sunday, March 30, 1924, p. 8.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰E. Couch, "Interesting History of Old Church of Christ at Antioch is Related," Paris Morning News, Sunday, Sept. 21, 1930.

¹¹Paris News, (Centennial Issue) Sunday, Oct. 26, 1969, p. 8.

¹²James M. Biard, Autobiography, (unpublished), 1898, p. 2.

¹³Couch, "History of Antioch Church."

¹⁴J. W. DeWeese, "History of Antioch Church of Biardstown, Texas," (typewritten) Paris, Texas, 1948.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Antioch Church of Christ Records, Biardstown, Texas, (1887-1918),
p. 47.

¹⁷Couch, "History of Antioch Church."

Chapter II

¹⁸Paris News, Oct. 26, 1969, p. 8.

¹⁹Gospel Advocate, III (April 1857), p. 126.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Gospel Advocate, III (August 1857), p. 268.

²²Gospel Advocate, III (Nov. 1857), p. 363.

²³Thomas Barrett, "Report from Texas", Gospel Advocate, VI (March 1860), p. 93.

²⁴Charles Carlton, Gospel Advocate, XI (Aug. 18, 1869), p. 782.

²⁵Charles Carlton, American Christian Review, XII (Oct. 19, 1869), p. 321.

²⁶James M. Biard, American Christian Review, XIV (Sept. 19, 1871),
p. 299.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Carlton, Gospel Advocate, p. 782.

²⁹Carlton, American Christian Review, p. 321.

³⁰James M. Biard, "Correspondence," American Christian Review, XIV (Nov. 14, 1871), p. 363.

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid.

³³Ibid.

³⁴H. Leo Boles, Biographical Sketches of Gospel Preachers, (Nashville, Tenn.: Gospel Advocate Company, 1932), p. 382.

³⁵From the personal record book of more than forty years preaching of General Richard M. Gano on file at Abilene Christian University Library, Abilene, Texas. Responses 2980-3016, pp. 87-88.

Chapter III

³⁶Biard, "Correspondence," p. 363.

³⁷James DeForest Murch, Christian Only, (Cincinnati, Ohio: Standard Publishing, 1962), p. 184.

³⁸J. M. Kidwill, "Texas," Gospel Advocate, XXXIII (May 13, 1891), p. 301.

³⁹Murch, p. 157.

⁴⁰Minutes, July 24, 1890, First Christian Church, Paris, Texas as quoted by: Carter E. Boren, Religion on the Texas Frontier, (San Antonio, Texas: The Naylor Company, 1968), pp. 132-133.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²F. D. Srygley, "Organs, Strife, Divisions, Etc.," Gospel Advocate, XXXIII (July 22, 1891), p. 454.

⁴³James D. Elliott, "Letter from Paris, Texas", Gospel Advocate XXXIII (Sept. 9, 1891), p. 574.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Ibid.

Chapter IV

⁴⁷Biard, Autobiography, p. 5.

⁴⁸Gospel Advocate, III (Nov. 1857), p. 363.

⁴⁹Biard, Autobiography, p. 4.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹David Lipscomb, "Schools", Gospel Advocate, XI (Aug. 18, 1869), p. 783.

⁵²Carlton, Gospel Advocate, p. 782.

⁵³Boles, pp. 427-428.

⁵⁴Ibid., pp. 428-429.

⁵⁵F. D. Syrgley, "The Church at Paris, Texas", Gospel Advocate, XXXIII (Oct. 21, 1891), pp. 658-659.

⁵⁶Earl Irvin West, The Search for the Ancient Order, Vo. 3 (Indianapolis, Indiana: Religious Book Series, 1979), p. 133.

⁵⁷Eckstein, p. 203.

⁵⁸West, p. 333.

⁵⁹Ibid. p. 134.

⁶⁰Laurence W. Scott, ed., Texas Pulpit, (St. Louis, Missouri: 1888), p. 385.

⁶¹West, pp. 134-135.

⁶²Antioch Church Records, 1887.

⁶³Colby D. Hall, Texas Disciples, (Fort Worth, Texas: Texas Christian University Press, 1953), p. 331.

⁶⁴Christian Standard, XXXXII (Jan. 26, 1907), p. 36.

⁶⁵Gospel Advocate, XXXII (Nov. 5, 1890), p. 706.

⁶⁶Antioch Church Records, 1887.

⁶⁷J. F. Grubbs, "Church News", Gospel Advocate, XXXII (Aug. 20, 1890), p. 531.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 563.

⁶⁹Christian Standard, XXXVIII (June 27, 1903), p. 930.

⁷⁰Donald E. White, A History of First Christian Church, Paris, Texas 1868-1968, p. 14.

⁷¹Eckstein, p. 246. cf. Gospel Advocate, XXXIII (July 22, 1891), p. 454.

Chapter V

⁷²H. F. Williams, "Field Findings", Gospel Advocate, XXXVIII (Jan. 16, 1896), p. 39.

⁷³Ibid.

⁷⁴Ibid.

⁷⁵Clara Elliott Bishop, Memoirs, Unpublished notes on work in Paris, Texas and Japan. Taken from files at Abilene Christian University, Abilene, Texas. p. 1.

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷Ibid.

⁷⁸R. L. Roberts, "A Great Scholar Takes Up His Pen," 20th Century Christian, Vol. 42, No. 12, (Sept. 1980), p. 27.

⁷⁹C. R. Nichol, Gospel Preachers Who Blazed the Trail, (Austin, Texas: Firm Foundation Publishing House, 1911), no page numbers.

⁸⁰West, p. 137.

⁸¹Ibid. pp. 98-99.

⁸²E. A. Elam, Gospel Advocate, XLV (July 30, 1903), p. 481.

⁸³Foy E. Wallace, Sr., "Texas Notes", Gospel Advocate, XLIX (May 23, 1907), p. 332.

⁸⁴West, p. 211.

⁸⁵Ibid.

⁸⁶Ibid. p. 132

⁸⁷J. B. Nelson, "Mission Work Done by the Church at Paris, Texas," Gospel Advocate, L (July 16, 1908), p. 462.

⁸⁸The Boles Orphan Home Magazine, Vol. 15, No. 6, (Greenville, Texas: June 1940), p. 2.

⁸⁹Nichol, no page numbers.

⁹⁰A. B. Lipscomb, "Let Funds Go Forward to Paris, Texas," Gospel Advocate, LVIII (March 30, 1916), p. 303.

⁹¹Ibid.

⁹²Lee Garrett, Gospel Advocate LVIII (April 6, 1916), p. 341.

⁹³Church membership roll, 1915.

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⁹⁴Paris News, "History of Paris Churches," 1936.

⁹⁵William S. Banowsky, The Mirror of a Movement, (Dallas, Texas: Christian Publishing, 1965), p. 81.

⁹⁶Nichol, no page numbers.

⁹⁷West, p. 213.

⁹⁸Nichol, no page numbers.

⁹⁹Irene Young Mattox, 20th Century Christian, (Jan 1959), pp. 31-33.

¹⁰⁰Ibid.

¹⁰¹Ibid.

¹⁰²Lamar Avenue Church of Christ Minutes, April 19, 1926.

¹⁰³Lamar Avenue Church of Christ Records, 1927-1928, pp. 150-152.

¹⁰⁴Church Minutes, Feb. 22, 1929.

¹⁰⁵Firm Foundation, XXXXIX (March 29, 1932), p. 3.

¹⁰⁶R. L. Colley, "Keeble-Miller Meetings," Firm Foundation XXXXIX (Nov. 22, 1932), p. 7.

¹⁰⁷Church Minutes, Feb. 21, 1933.

¹⁰⁸Church Minutes, April, 1934.

¹⁰⁹Church Minutes, Dec. 15, 1941.

Chapter VII

¹¹⁰E. Couch, Lamar County Echo, Friday, July 24, 1942.

¹¹¹Ibid.

¹¹²Cleon Lyles, Lamar Avenue Church News, Vol. 1, No. 12, (March 1945),
p. 1.

¹¹³Lamar Avenue Church of Christ Directory, 1946, p. 7.

¹¹⁴Perry Cotham, Church News, Vol. 8, No. 34, (Sept. 2, 1953), p. 1.

¹¹⁵Ibid.

¹¹⁶Church News, Vol. 9, No. 48, (Dec. 1, 1954), p. 190.

¹¹⁷Church News, Vol. 11, No. 23, (June 13, 1956), p. 89.

¹¹⁸Batsell Barrett Baxter and M. Norvel Young, Churches of Today, Vol. 1
(Nashville, Tenn.: The Gospel Advocate Company, 1960), p. 287.

¹¹⁹Church News, Vol. 19, No. 35, (Aug. 26, 1964).

¹²⁰Church News, Vol. 8, No. 30, (July 29, 1953), p. 3.

¹²¹Church News, Vol. 9, No. 47, (Nov. 24, 1954), p. 187.

¹²²Lowell Worthington, ed., Johannesburg Journal, 1961-1964.

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¹²³Church News, Vol. 19, No. 44, (Oct. 25, 1964), pp. 1-2.

¹²⁴Church News, Vol. 20, No. 37, (Sept. 16, 1965), p. 4.

¹²⁵Church News, Vol. 21, No. 28, (July 14, 1966), p. 3.

¹²⁶Church News, Vol. 24, No. 1, (Jan. 2, 1969), p. 4.

¹²⁷Church News, Vol. 24, No. 33, (Aug. 14, 1969), p. 3.

¹²⁸Church News, Vol. 25, No. 14, (April 2, 1970), p. 4.

¹²⁹R. L. Colley, Lamar Avenue Church of Christ Yearbook and Directory, 1931, pp. 12-13.

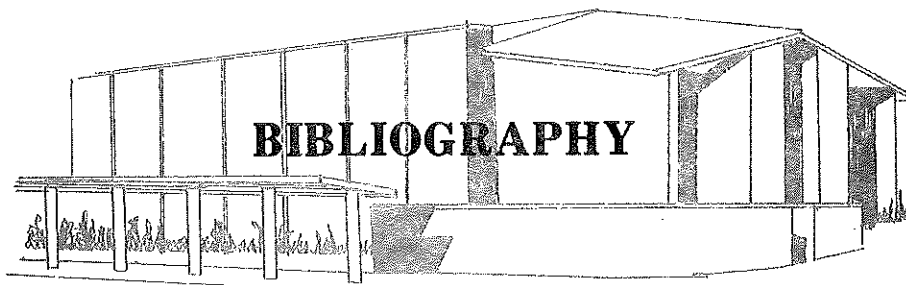
Chapter IX

¹³⁰Joe R. Barnett, The People Who Tested God, (Austin, Texas: Sweet Publishing Company, 1979), pp. 71-80, p. 98.

¹³¹*Ibid.*, p. 108.

¹³²Flavil R. Yeakley, Jr., Why Churches Grow, (St. Louis, Missouri: Anderson's, 1977), pp. 6-7.

¹³³*Ibid.*, p. 6.



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1. The first part of the document is a list of the names of the members of the committee who have been appointed to the various sub-committees. The names are listed in alphabetical order of the last name.

" Where there is

no vision,

the people perish "

Solomon, Proverbs 29:18

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



John H. Cannon, Jr., was born February 9, 1948 in Hope, Arkansas to John and Christine Cannon. John's father has been a gospel preacher for some forty years.

John has been awarded an A.A. in Bible from Christian College of the Southwest (1970); a B.A. in Bible from Harding University (1972); and a M.S. in Biblical Studies from Abilene Christian University (1981). In 1976 he was named one of the Outstanding Young Men of America. He serves on the Advisory Council on Evangelism for Harding University.

During the last fifteen years Cannon has served in youth ministry and preaching for churches in Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas. John began his ministry with Lamar Avenue March 13, 1977.

John and his wife, Linda, have three children: Jay (13), Patrick (9), and Melissa (4). In June, 1981, John and Linda made an extensive tour of the Bible Lands.