

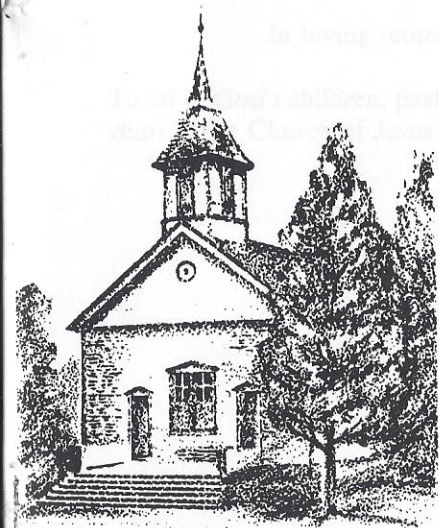
# Clifton Forge Baptist Church

*Serving the same  
God today...*



1982

*...as yesterday.*



1882

*100 Years  
Of Sharing & Caring*

## The Road We Came

Volume II

1965-1982

## DEDICATION

To our pastor, the Rev. William C. Mattox, Jr.  
and

In loving remembrance of Mr. Stanley Nichols  
and

To all of God's children, past and present who have served so faithfully our  
church, the Church of Jesus Christ.

Elizabeth H. Connor

## PREFACE

When Mr. Stanley Nichols asked me to complete the history of our church for our Centennial Celebration I felt deeply honored and have attempted to record the most important events of our church after perusing the bulletins and minutes of our business meetings of the past seventeen years. The history of a church is a story of the activities of dedicated men and women striving to build the Kingdom of God.

When Christ asked Peter, "Whom do you say I am?" and Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus answered him and said, "On this rock I will build my church, and the powers of death shall not prevail against it." This is the faith on which our church is built. It is an active, caring church where Christ is preached.

It has been impossible to mention so many people who have served and worked so faithfully in our church. The church is like a family with each member being a part of the whole; from the parents down to the smallest and youngest, each one is important. Who can say whose service has been the most important, for the widow's mite was more precious in the sight of the Lord than the larger gifts. We are partners working together for God and stepping stones for those who come after us.

Our church has sent out into the world missionaries, ministers and dedicated laymen to carry the gospel. We are proud of its past and hopeful of the future.

Elizabeth H. Corron

## INTRODUCTION

Since the completion of "The Road We Come" in 1965 many outstanding events have occurred in the life of Clifton Forge Baptist Church. It was therefore felt the Centennial Year of 1982 would be an appropriate time to update the history. Thus we can all see some of the events on the road we continue to travel. We are indeed grateful to Mrs. Elizabeth H. Corron for the devoted efforts in writing this chapter in our history.

Clifton Forge Baptist Church has a heritage for which it can be proud and grateful. The evidence of God's leadership and blessing is prominent. The church has a challenging future as it seeks to proclaim the unsearchable truths of Christ in its community and its world. Knowing what we have done will give guidance in determining what we shall do to the end that the task may be done most effectively for the glory of God.

We pray that as you read these pages you will rededicate yourself to do your part in keeping the church moving along the road of God's will and God's purpose. After all, this is our reason for being.

William C. Mattox, Jr.  
Pastor

## THE ROAD WE CAME (1965 - 1982)

Since the writing of "The Road We Came," a history of the Clifton Forge Baptist Church completed on November 6, 1965, we pick up our travel again to complete its history for 100 years.

Clifton Forge Baptist Church is proud of its link with the past as it helps to find where we have been, where we started, and where we are going, and to help guide us in the future. Let us take a look back to where we started and review some of the highlights of its history.

On March 24, 1876, the Rev. J. M. Pilcher began preaching in a school house located in what was called Hazel Hollow, where the sewer plant is now located. On July 3, 1878, a lot was purchased for the sum of \$40.00 and under the leadership of Mrs. Agnes Jordan of the Baptist faith, the first temporary church for worship for all denominations and public meetings was built on the rear of the lot where the Main Street Baptist Church now stands. The present Baptist Church was organized with 14 charter members on August 27, 1882. In 1885, a building with a "steeple" on it was erected on Main Street at a cost of \$3,000.00 and dedicated by the Rev. Samuel F. Chapman. Later the church was sold in 1894 to the colored Baptist for a sum of \$1500.00 and became the Main Street First Baptist Church.

Our present church was dedicated to God on Sunday, July 12, 1896, with the dedicatory sermon preached by Dr. F. C. McConnell of Lynchburg, Va., and the services were conducted by the pastor, the Rev. E. Pendleton Jones. The first addition to our church was built in 1912 at a cost of \$16,000.00 and became the King Memorial and Sunday school rooms in which we still meet today. The parsonage of the church was completed in 1907. The second addition on the south side of the church was built in 1937 during the Rev. W. H. Connelly's term as minister.

The pastors who have served the Clifton Forge Baptist Church are:

Samuel F. Chapman, 1882 to 1888  
R. Atwell Tucker, October 1888 to September 30, 1890  
John R. Fizer, January 1891 to July 31, 1893  
Rutherford Britt, October 1, 1893 to January 31, 1895  
E. Pendleton Jones, February 10, 1895 to October 18, 1896  
John A. Barker, January 3, 1897 to January 1, 1905  
George E. Davis, April 13 1905 to November 15, 1908  
George Green, February 7, 1909 to May 18, 1913  
R. T. Marsh, August 24, 1913 to April 1, 1918  
George Green, November 17, 1918 to October 17, 1920  
H. B. Cross, May 1921 to April 1928  
W. L. Davis, July 1928 to May 1935  
H. W. Connelly, September 1935 to 1944  
Welford Brooks, January 21, 1945 to 1952

V. W. Sears, December 21, 1952 to January 30, 1958

W. E. Farrar, August 17, 1958 to November 30, 1968

W. C. Mattox, Jr., June 9, 1969 —

As we resume our travel on "The Road We Came," many events of significance have transpired over the 17 years since the history of our church was written. The life and work of the church has continued on at a healthy level. Clifton Forge is a stable community, not experiencing rapid growth, but having a great need for diversified industry in the area to provide employment for our young people.

In 1967, the church called the Rev. T. Ivey Adams as full-time Minister of Education. He held this position for several months before leaving to assume responsibilities with the Boy's Home in Covington.

The summer of 1968 saw the completion and adoption of a new Constitution and By-Laws. This represented nearly two years of work by a special committee consisting of Bill Thompson, Chairman; Stewart Bostic and Herbie King. This document is thorough and serves as a helpful guide in our organizational life.

During this period, many memorial gifts were given to the church as expressions of love by members and former members of the church. The beautiful Bible on the pulpit was given by Mrs. Isabelle W. Matheny and her children in memory of her husband and their father. A love gift of \$1,000 was given from Brother Oscar Stinnett to go toward purchasing wall to wall carpet in the sanctuary. In a note attached to the check, Mr. Stinnett said, "I am so grateful for this opportunity because we receive so much in return give so little." The beautiful red carpet was laid in the sanctuary in October, 1967. Also, Mr. Stinnett gave sufficient funds to purchase and install a large lighted bulletin board on the lawn in front of the church in loving remembrance of his wife, Mrs. Ernestine Stinnett, who died on September 12, 1963. Mrs. Dan McCool, a faithful Sunday School teacher, gave a gift of \$1,000.00 in memory of her husband who passed away on December 21, 1965. This gift was designated for the installation of new steps and doors at the front of the sanctuary. A gift of supplies and materials for the nurseries was received from Mr. and Mrs. Robert Felton in loving memory of their daughter, Virginia May. Also given was a sum of money to be used for physical improvement of the sanctuary by Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Nichols as a memorial to Mrs. Willie E. Nichols. A valuable Bible, which was a reproduction of the original King James Bible, was given in April 1969 by Mrs. Robert C. Hill of Miami, Florida, a former resident of Clifton Forge and of this church, in honor of Dr. Roy C. Angell. It was placed in a case in back of the sanctuary by the Memorial Committee. In 1968, the lovely brass offering plates used in the worship service were a gift to the church from Mrs. John B. Mitchell and Miss Bernice Kraft of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, formerly of this city and this church. A gift of \$300.00 was given by Miss Nancy Mays in honor of her

grandmother, Mrs. W. G. Fromer. Also, a gift of \$1,000.00 was given by Mr. E. C. Westerman as a memorial to his sister, Mrs. Mary Lighter. All these gifts manifested the generous spirit of the members of our church.

Dr. Walter Farrar concluded his ministry as pastor of this church on November 30, 1968. He became pastor of Ox Hill Baptist Church in Chantilly, Virginia, where he has had a very effective ministry.

Dr. Harry P. Clause of Bedford, came to us as our interim pastor. Dr. Clause had retired from the ministry, but not really, because he had served in 12 churches after his retirement as interim pastor. Dr. and Mrs. Clause were kind, gentle people and they endeared themselves to the members of the church.

William C. Mattox, Jr. became pastor of this church on June 9, 1969. Mr. and Mrs. Mattox and three children, Larry, Joel and Melissa, came here from a pastorate in Richmond, Virginia, and is still the shepherd of the flock here. The Rev. Mattox shows that he has a deep love of Christ as he is a caring minister and visits the sick, comforts the bereaved and assists in any way that he can when one is in need. The Rev. Mattox said that his first priority was "to preach the gospel." While he has been pastor of Clifton Forge Baptist Church, it has experienced real spiritual growth, an evangelistic outreach, ties of brotherly love and a spirit of unity.

Ted E. Farrar resigned as organist and choir director in June 1969 and was replaced shortly afterwards by Jack Hanner, adult choir director, Mrs. Leo Carter, organist, and Mrs. H. E. Teets, director of two young people's choirs.

The year 1969 saw the completion of a much needed heating system. At a cost approaching \$50,000, the old steam radiators were replaced with hot water baseboard heating elements. This was soon paid for by the generosity of our people.

An addendum to the By-Laws to our church was adopted December 14, 1969 that at least one person in the age range of 15 to 21 be placed on each



**WILLIAM C. MATTOX, JR.**

standing committee of the church. The purpose was to involve the young members of the church in active participation and to give them a sense of responsibility for the work of the church, to train young people and to prepare them for the time when full responsibility shall rest upon them. The church is interested in their young people and one week each year the responsibility of operating the church is turned over to them when they assume all the duties of the officers of the church and of taking over the Sunday services. Each summer the young people of the church conduct worship services at Douthat State Park for the campers. The church does all that it can to get young people involved in the program of the church and to help them grow spiritually. Mr. Ned Stewart was called in 1970 as the summer youth worker. His ministry was very effective and satisfactory. In 1971, Mr. Jack Hammer was hired to serve the church as director of youth for the summer. Mr. Hanner is a devout Christian and has a deep concern and interest in the young people.

Many fine young people have been reared in the Baptist Church and among them, some have entered into full-time Christian service. Many of them have been mentioned in "The Road We Came." Since the time it was written, we have had others to enter into the ministry and other fields of service.

Ronald Nicholas, son of Mr. and Mrs. O. R. Nicholas, graduated from Lynchburg College and served as pastor of several churches in the Lynchburg area. He is now working on his Doctorate at Boston University and working on the staff as an associate of Center of Educational Resources at the University of Massachusetts. He also serves as interim pastor to churches in that area.

Another one of our young people whom we love is Marcia Hambrick, now Mrs. Kenneth Wham of Greenville, South Carolina. Marcia was afflicted with polio when she was a small girl, but always showed a spirit of courage. For years she was at Warm Spring, Georgia, the same place that President Roosevelt spent time for rehabilitation. Here, Marcia said that she learned to accept her handicap and herself and realize that each person has imperfections and handicaps although some not visible. Marcia graduated from Carson Newman at Jefferson City, Tennessee and has been Minister of Music at different churches in the South, served as secretary to Minister of Music at Washington Avenue Baptist Church, and also teaches music at the church school. Marcia has returned to visit our church many times as she has many relatives in Clifton Forge. She has held concerts in our church and has sung on Sunday many times when she is visiting. All who hear her sing are uplifted spiritually and feel her deep commitment to God and her victory over her handicap. Marcia's brother, Mark Hambrick, also dedicated his life in God's service and is pastor of the Church of God in Portsmouth, Virginia. Marcia's and Mark's parents are Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Hambrick, formerly of this city, but now living in Kingsport, Tennessee.

The church was proud of Cherie Davis who was chosen as "Miss Virginia" in 1968 and later was one of the runners-up in Atlantic City for the Miss America crown. Cherie had sung in the choir of our church every since a child when she began singing in the junior choir. After graduating from Shenandoah Conservatory, she went to California and was married to Ray Allen. They returned to this area where they are members of Grace Brethren Church in Covington, Virginia. Cherie gives Christian concerts in the area and has sung in our church several times since her return. She is now the mother of two children, a dedicated Christian, and active in her church and community.

Another one of our young people to enter into full-time Christian service is Terry Green, son of Mr. and Mrs. Earl Green. He was always a faithful member of the church and dedicated his life to God at an early age. Terry was ordained to preach the gospel in our church on July 10, 1977, with the Rev. Mattox preaching the ordination sermon and several other ministers attending the service. Terry has served as pastor for 5 years of Hume and Orlean churches in Falquier County and is now pastor of the Antioch Church in Orange County. Terry held services at our church in the fall of 1980 and all who heard him were impressed with his poise and sincerity and feel that he will be instrumental in winning people for God's Kingdom.

Our church is a caring and sharing church and extends its ministry wherever it is needed. In November 1969, two homes and all the belongings of the Walter Garrett and Clifton Ewing families in Eagle Rock were destroyed by fire. Our pastor assisted them in finding houses in which to live and the members of the church gave money, groceries, clothing and other necessities to these families.

On August 19, 1969, the skies opened and 31 inches of rain fell in Nelson County within a period of five hours. The earth came undone and millions upon millions of pounds of mud, uprooted trees and boulders thundered down the mountainside and villages vanished. Survivors could not believe what had happened. The Red Cross, the Mennonites, organizations, churches, and the state and federal agencies sprang to the aid of these flood victims to give emergency aid. It seems that the storm slaughtered many people along Davis Creek where 12 families of the Huffman clan lived. Today, only four Huffman families are intact. Three were completely wiped out. Five others lost one, two or three members of their families. Russell Huffman considered himself lucky in the storm's aftermath as he only lost one child out of nine children.

Our church was quick to respond and give emergency aid to the storm victims, but they needed long-range assistance. Our members took the Russell Huffman family to help over a period of a year until they could get started again. The church members gave \$1,439.49 for flood relief to this family which was given to them in installments over a year's time. A truck full of

garden tools, clothing, food, furniture and other things was taken to this family from the members of the church. Also Sunday school classes and the Women's Missionary Union took different members of this family to remember on birthdays and at Christmas time. The Huffman family was very appreciative and attended our church one Sunday to express their thanks. They are doing well now and report that they have another son, named Danny.

In addition to the various church programs, congregation members are involved in a number of community programs. Members regularly visit homebound persons in the community, taking them tapes of each Sunday service. A crisis closet is kept where household articles are stored to be given to anyone who has a need. Food baskets are distributed at Christmas time to needy families. The members participate in the "Meal on Wheels" program where meals are taken to those shut in and ill. Our pastor, Mr. Mattox with members from the church, holds services at the Potomac and Liberty Nursing Homes on a regular basis. Our church has always cooperated with the other churches in the area and Mr. Mattox is a member of the Ministerial Association. He takes his turn at being chaplain at the Alleghany Regional Hospital and is a regular participant on the Pastor's Panel on WXCF. Mr. Mattox also conducts morning devotions on WXCF as our church reaches out into wider ministries.

The year 1970 saw the adoption of a new grouping-grading system in our educational program to conform with that being instituted throughout the Southern Baptist Convention. Old familiar names such as Juniors and Primaries were dropped and new names became part of our vocabulary.

During this time, many repairs and improvements were being made to the church property. New landscaping was given. Most of the building was painted inside. The stained glass windows were repaired and strengthened. The pipe organ was rebuilt at a cost of nearly \$11,000. Yet, in all this, the church remained strong financially.

On April 19, 1970, a recommendation was presented "that the church building be locked except during daylight hours when a staff member is inside the building and at such times when the building may be in use for regular meeting services." This is the first time in its history that our church has been locked and was the last church in the community to do so.

In August 1970, a first in the life of our church took place. The pastor and his wife became the grateful parents of a son, Nathan Blaine. So far as we have been able to determine, this was the first child to be born to a pastor of this church while serving here.

On February 9, 1971, the pastor proposed a "Deacon of the Week" program using the deacons in various activities of the church including church service and visitation. The purpose of this program was two-fold: to help church members to know their deacons better and to expand the

deacon's ministry to the church family. This practice is still used in our church and has been most effective.

One of the highlights of our church in 1971 was the opening of a much needed church library on May 2nd. Mrs. F. L. Wysor and her committee worked diligently and hard in making the library available to our church family and it is a real asset.

October 14, 1971, the deacons recommended to the church that the Pendleton property next to the church be purchased for the sum of \$17,490. The motion to buy the property was carried by a majority vote.

After much consideration as to the use of the property, a recommendation was made that the Pendleton house be removed and the lot cleared so as to be attractive to the church. It was torn down because the cost of remodeling, fire insurance, heating bill, a fire escape, and all that was needed to be done would not justify the use of the building. The risks were too high, the cost too great, and the use of the building limited.

In 1971, the need for an additional staff member was keenly felt. After literally months of praying and searching, Mr. James N. Collie, Jr. was called as Associate Pastor and assumed his duties on January 1, 1972. Mr. Collie was a consecrated Christian and a good leader. He took his ministry out into the city, was civic minded and Christian influence was felt. He coordinated "The Meals on Wheels" program in the community, taught Bible courses at Dabney S. Lancaster Community College and won the hearts of the people in Clifton Forge as well as those in our church. After being Associate Pastor at our church for 6½ years, "Jim" accepted a call as Campus Minister for southwest Virginia. A service of appreciation and commissioning was held June 25, 1978, for Jim and his family. The Rev. Michael Edwards, Campus Minister for schools in the Lexington area, delivered the sermon for the occasion and tribute was paid to Mr. Collie from the Mayor, Mr. George Goode from the city; Mr. Colin Ferguson for Dabney Lancaster Community



**JAMES NOEL COLLIE, JR.**

College; Mr. James Ayers, from the Natural Bridge Association; Father Victor DeClercq from the Ministerial Association, and Mr. Otmer Newcomb, chairman of the deacons of our church.

In October 1972, the church voted to make a token gift of \$300.00 a year for municipal services as we did not feel it was right for the city to support our church. Also, a recommendation was made to the church by the deacons that \$10.00 be donated to the Baptist Children's Home as a memorial to deceased in lieu of sending flowers to the funeral of any church member.

The church roll was revised and brought up to date in 1972 and the total membership of the church was 943 with an average attendance of 281 at the worship service.

The biggest event of 1972 was our 90th Anniversary celebration with many friends and former members joining us in this celebration.

A meaningful week beginning June 24, 1973 was held in our church when a youth-led revival was led by members of "Festival," the 1973 Virginia Baptist Student Union Revival Team.

Our church participated with all the other churches in this area in a community-wide evangelistic crusade held September 26-30, 1973, in the Clifton Forge High School Auditorium. The Rev. Eddie Martin, a full-time evangelist was the speaker for the Key "73" Crusade.

What a day took place in our church on December 30, 1973, when a note-burning ceremony was held and all the indebtedness of our church was paid in full. We were debt-free, a grand way to finish the year.

In June 1973, Mr. Mattox was privileged to attend the Billy Graham School of Evangelism in Atlanta, Georgia. One of the major areas of emphasis of the Baptist church is evangelism.

On September 30, 1973, Mrs. Richard Sandy replaced Jack Hanner as choir director. Mr. Hanner's leadership was a real blessing to our church. Mrs. Sandy was an excellent choir director and her service to our church was a meaningful addition to our worship service. Mrs. Sandy resigned in August 1975 because her husband was attending Michigan State University to acquire his doctorate in mathematics. It was with deep regret that the church accepted her resignation. She was a faithful and consecrated Christian and the contribution she made to our church through music was to honor Christ and contributed to the enrichment of worshiping God. A farewell reception to show our appreciation was held for Mrs. Sandy at the close of the evening worship service September 7, 1975. Mrs. Frank (Lois) Clark was called to direct our adult and youth choirs and began her duties on October 5, 1975. Due to her husband assuming a new position in Newport News in January 1976, the church was again without a choir director. Mrs. Helen Carter, our organist, and Mr. Jack Hanner agreed to direct the choirs temporarily until a music director could be found.

It has always been felt that the music program of our church was very important as it contributed to the enrichment of worshiping God and was meaningful in the education and evangelistic activities of the church. Therefore, the music committee with Mr. Marvin Swaim as chairman, made the recommendation that the church call a full-time minister of music and establish a full choir program for all ages. The church was in full accord with this recommendation and voted "yes".

God was surely leading and guiding our church in this effort as one of our former residents, Mr. Barry Crutchfield, was moving back to this area to work at Westvaco and his wife, Kathy, was a dedicated Christian, had worked in other churches as minister of music and had a major in voice and minor in piano. Mrs. Crutchfield accepted the call and began her ministry June 15, 1978. Her work has been fruitful and glorious for our Lord. Choirs for all age groups with good attendance have been active up to the present time. Special programs of music with all choirs participating at Easter and Christmas are presented and the choir program has helped the church members grow in Christian character. Services of recognition and appreciation are held each year for the choirs and certificates given to each member.



**MRS. BARRY CRUTCHFIELD**  
*Minister of Music*

Our outreach ministry in other areas continued as our Deacons took turns holding services and preaching at Rich Path Church the second Sunday of each month. Often a deacon would also hold services at the Iron Gate Baptist Church and this has been rewarding. Another outreach program was begun in 1974 when our congregation responded in making contributions in feeding the hungry of the world. The gifts of money for emergency relief are administered through the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board without any administrative cost.

Our beloved Polly VanLear was home on furlough during 1974. The church is proud and grateful to Polly for serving so effectively as a missionary in Nigeria Africa. Sunday, February 24, 1974, was observed as "Polly VanLear Day" when she brought the messages at both services telling about her work and the great need in Africa to hear the word of God. Polly was

home again for a short furlough in 1981. Unfortunately, Polly was not well and had surgery while here, but due to the shortage of help and great need in Nigeria, she returned to Africa in December 1981.

An unusual and most inspiring revival was held for a week in our church beginning May 5, 1974, led by the Rev. Howard Baldwin, a chalk artist and evangelist who presented his sermons with illustrations in art. All the choirs participated in "The Crusade Choirs" in this revival with Rev. Baldwin leading the singing. This was a fine and inspiring week in the life of our church for the presence of God was strongly felt and much spiritual exuberance was shown.

During 1974, three classrooms for our pre-school children (bed babies, toddlers and three year olds) were refurbished and made in first-class condition for the use of our younger children. This was made possible with special gifts, memorial funds and contingency funds. Open House for these pre-school departments was held in October so that parents and all who were interested could see how comfortable and beautiful these quarters were. This work was Phase I of several renovation projects planned to give us maximum use of our space.

The year 1974 did not see any large numerical growth in our church but it "Held Its Own." Financially, we had the best year ever.

One of the nicest programs in our church in 1975 was a presentation, "Celebrate Life" the life of Christ set in music, by our Youth Choir under the direction of Mrs. Richard Sandy. So much praise and appreciation was shown that the choir was invited to give the program at the Clifton Forge Presbyterian Church, the White Rock Gap Church, the Ridgeway Baptist Church in Salem, Virginia and several outdoor presentations were given at Linden Park.

Another high point in the life of our church during 1975 was a revival team of four young people, traveling all over Virginia, called "Breath of Life" leading young people and church members in experiencing Christ as "Breath of Life" from July 6 through July 9th.

Several out-reach ministries were begun in 1975 when Sunday School classrooms were made available, with volunteer help, each day to keep children of house-bound mothers. Much had been heard about abused children and it was felt that tensions and frustration of mothers who could not leave their children for a minute would be relieved if they could get out of the house for a while. This program was coordinated by Mr. Jim Collie and Mrs. David Fields with help from the Welfare Department, but was discontinued after several years due to lack of interest. Also a list of people was provided who were willing to transport people who had no means of getting to the Doctor, hospital or to do their shopping. This has been taken over by the Senior Senior Citizen's Club at this time.

Also, Mr. Jim Collie and Mr. David Fields started a Baptist Student

Union called "Agape" at The Dabney Lancaster Community College. Agape started with 10 young people but soon grew in numbers as the students met for a time of fellowship, to grow in their Christian life and to learn how to share Christ with others on the campus.

The Ministry of our church is extended beyond the walls of our building as we entered into broader areas of service in our church during 1975. The year 1975 in many ways was a victorious year. During the year we surpassed our church budget by over \$5400.00 in budget receipts; received the largest Thanksgiving offering ever and surpassed our Lottie Moon Foreign Mission offering goal. There was a deeper commitment to God by our church members and more involvement in Christian Witnessing.

In the next several years many improvements were made to our church building. Phase 2 in our renovation program was completed when facilities for the Children's 2 Department in Sunday School was made possible with volunteer help from the men and even young boys. This remodeling was done to make class rooms larger and to utilize space unused and going to waste. Also a much needed and long awaited choir room was provided.

In 1975 the paint from the exterior of our church building was removed by sand blasting and restored to its natural and mellow appearance. The bricks were repointed with new mortar and clear waterproofing was put on them. Also the wood trim on the outside of the church was painted at this time. The work was done by the Conley Brothers of Virginia Beach for the sum of \$12,730. This was a wonderful improvement to our church building and it was more beautiful than ever and also structurally sound. Several other churches in town after seeing how much better our church looked had their buildings restored to their natural state with sand blasting also. In addition to this improvement to our building the old slate roof, which had been on our church for over 80 years, making repairs imposible, had to be replaced. The contract for this work was given to I. N. McNeill Roofing Company of Roanoke for the sum of \$23,274.00.

In January, 1976, a contract was given to Mr. Carroll Richards to paint the sanctuary and vestibules for the sum of \$4041.00 and this price was a saving of two or three thousand dollars because the work would be done during the "Off Season." While the painting was being done, two worship services each Sunday were held in the King Memorial; one at 8:30 and the other one at 11:00. Every one cooperated beautifully and the inconvenience was soon forgotten when worship services began again in the freshly painted and clean sanctuary.

In addition to these repairs and painting to the church, many repairs were made at the parsonage, and the interior was painted, as no major work had been done to the residence of our pastor and family for over 15 years. Mr. and Mrs. Mattox held Open House, Sunday afternoon on September 26 of

this year in order that the members of the church and friends might see the redecorated Parsonage.

The church is thankful to the Building and Grounds Committee and the Chairmen for giving so much of their time in overseeing the building and trying to keep it in good condition for future generations. This is an obligation. The chairmen of the committee from 1965 to the present date have been Mr. E. C. Westerman, Mr. Bernard Evans, Mr. John Dobbins, Mr. R. S. Littrell and Mr. Dempsey Bostic, who is present chairman and had served once before in this capacity.

A glorious and exciting time in the life of our church resulted when the church made it possible for Mr. and Mrs. Mattox to join in an Evangelistic Crusade in England, held September 14 through the 21st, 1975. The crusade consisted of 110 pastors, song leaders and laymen from the United States who were stationed in different churches throughout England. The crusade was coordinated by the Rev. Howard Baldwin who had previously held a revival in our church. Prayer meetings were held in many homes during this time praying for God's blessing on this crusade and that many people might be won to Christ.

Our sister church in England was the Lightfoot Grove Baptist Church with a membership of 85 members. Rallies had been held in Glasgow, Edinburg and Newcastle before the revivals began. Mr. Mattox preached each night at the church in Stockton-On-Tees in Cleveland County, England and during the day spoke in homes, schools and industrial plants. This was the major evangelistic thrust of our church in 1975.

Mr. and Mrs. Mattox with their friendly personalities and love of God won the hearts of the people they met. A strong bond of friendship was formed between our church and the Lightfoot Grove Baptist Church. Mr. and Mrs. Mattox gave a good report of the success of the crusade in England. Many people were won to Christ and the Christians made a dedication to a fuller Christian life.

1976 was the Bicentennial Year of our nation and all across the land there were celebrations with thankfulness to God for the blessings bestowed on America. Our church entered into the birthday celebration of our country with praise, thanksgiving and prayers for her welfare.

April 7th the Library Committee with Mrs. Jennie Wysor as chairman presented a Bicentennial exhibit and book fair. The program depicted "The Way It Was" during the first 100 years of our Country's life. "Reading Rings The Bell" was the theme of Church Library Week and on display were handcrafts, cooking equipment, tools, silver, brass, pewter and a collection of bells used in the period from 1776 to 1876. Also on display and of special interest was "Our Baptist Heritage," a history of Baptist in Virginia.

July 4th of our Bicentennial was on Sunday and it was fitting to celebrate

the 200th birthday of our nation in the house of the Lord with a special service. Mr. Mattox's sermon for that day was "A Nation Under God" and the service was a "Celebration of Christian Citizenship" which included the Lord's Supper and the dedication of our new flags presented by various persons. The United States flag was dedicated to the memory of those from this church who gave their lives in the service of our country. The Christian flag honored those from our church who had gone into church-related vocations. It was a moving service as we worshiped God and celebrated our Christian citizenship.

One of the high points in 1976 was the presentation of "Daybreak" by the Virginia Baptist Student Union June 20th through June 23rd. This team was made up of four young people who led in worship each night and conducted a Worship Workshop.

We were privileged to have a musical treat on Sunday evening, September 18th, when Mrs. Marcia Hambrick Wham, a lovely Christian lady with a magnificent voice gave a concert of sacred music. Her life and voice are a real testimony to her dedication and love of God. Marcia is not a stranger to us as she was reared in this church and lived in Clifton Forge until her adulthood and had sung for us on many occasions when visiting relatives in the area.

All during the year 1976 preparations were being made for the company we were expecting Lightfoot Grove Baptist Church in Stockton, England. They arrived in the city September 27th after being met in Roanoke by a large delegation from the church. On their arrival they were met on the courthouse steps and given a key to the city by Mayor Goode and then were taken to the church where an excellent supper had been prepared for them and the entire church. They were given a warm welcome.

The team of eleven fellow Christians led in revival services from September 27th - October 3rd with Paul Clarke, a lay Preacher and coordinator of the team, and Peter Laing bringing the messages each evening and the other visitors giving their testimonies. Two of the young men provided special music. An extra special feature of the revival services was a children's choir, singing songs that English children loved to sing, taught by Mrs. Sandra Costello. It was a thrilling and wonderful week.

The red carpet was really laid down for these friends from England and they were entertained with teas, luncheons and meals by different members of the church, invited to speak at the schools and other civic clubs. During their last week they were taken on sightseeing trips to places of interest in Virginia, a tour of the capital, Washington, D.C., where they stopped over night as guests of members of Dr. Farrar's Church, Ox Hill Baptist Church in Chantilly and conducted services there on Wednesday night. On Friday they had a day of shopping in Roanoke.

A farewell reception was given to our guests after the services, Sunday night, October 3rd to honor them and express our love and gratitude to them for sharing their lives with us. Many lasting friendships were formed with these members of our sister church in England.

Our Bicentennial year was over and it had been a year with many high points and a few low, but we were all more aware of our rich heritage as Americans and Baptists. During this year our attendance "held its own" and it was a good year financially.

The year 1977 was a busy year in our church with many decisions made and many activities.

Friday, January 14th was set aside as Jim Collie Day in appreciation for his ministry among us. A time of fellowship was had at a covered dish supper and a gift from the church was given to him.

Another event took place when our church joined together with other churches in our area for a "Pulpit Exchange Day" on January 30th.

As we went into the year 1977 there was a great fuel crisis in our nation. Gas stations closed early in the day and most of them on week-ends. One could only get gas on certain days according to odd or even numbers on his license plate. There were long lines of cars at the gas pumps. The Government asked everyone to cooperate in the fuel shortage, to keep their thermostat set back to 65 degrees, and declared a state of emergency. Therefore our Deacons took action to curtail all possible activities in the church for the duration of the state of emergency. For that reason all meetings except morning and evening worship services on Sunday and Prayer meeting on Wednesday were canceled.

Beautiful red velvet pew cushions were installed in our church in March of this year. Not only did they add to the comfort of the worshipers but enhanced the looks of our sanctuary. The cost of the cushions was paid for with a Memorial Fund and extra gifts from the generous members.

A very important motion was made to the church on March 13th at our quarterly business meeting. A committee, composed of John Corstaphney, T. L. Reynolds, Earl Green and Herbie King recommended that the parsonage be sold to Mr. Mattox, our pastor. The motion was "It is recommended that the parsonage be sold to Mr. Mattox for the sum of \$28,500, the cost of the sale to be borne by the church and that the church approve a housing allowance of \$350 monthly." The motion was adopted by a large majority.

The main reason for selling the parsonage, which had been built in 1907, were that the churches were going out of the real estate business and wanted to be relieved of the responsibility of maintaining property. Also, most pastors would prefer to furnish their own housing, thus building an equity and providing some measure of security for later life.

A special business meeting was held on Sunday, March 27th to re-elect Mr. Earl Green as trustee and Mr. Herbie King to fill the vacancy due to the death of Mr. E. A. Huntington, Sr. in 1976, a faithful worker in our church and a trustee. This was necessary in keeping with our By-laws that they might be certified. Our other trustee, Mr. John Corstaphney was already certified.

On April 17th, at the business meeting of our church, Mr. Clyde Griffith made a motion that we purchase 100 Bibles at a price of \$190.00 to distribute through the churches to the people involved in the flood in Southwest Virginia. The motion was approved by the church.

A letter of appreciation was received from Mr. Winfrey Durrett, Director of Missions of the New Lebanon Baptist Association. He expressed his gratitude for this meaningful gift as hundreds of families had lost everything, especially in the Grundy area, the hardest hit by the flood.

A group of our members, composed of Mr. R. S. Littrell and daughter, Sarah; Mr. Marvin Swaim and daughter, Debbie; Mr. and Mrs. John Corstaphney, Mr. Ed Strong, Mrs. Richard VanLear, Mrs. Richard Sealey and Mrs. Ada Mattox left June 24th for a visit with fellow Christians at our sister church in Stockton-On-Tees, England. They took a token gift and a letter of greeting from our church and many messages from friends here to the church there. The group returned with glowing reports of their trip to friends in Christ in England.

On May 15th, the Rev. Benn Baker, pastor of Lightfoot Baptist Church in England, brought the message from God at our morning worship service. He and his wife, Kaye had been on a six week speaking tour in the United States. They came to visit in Clifton Forge for several days because of their ties with our beloved friends in Stockton, England and received a gracious welcome while here.

Our church had a spiritual treat on Tuesday, June 23rd when Mr. and Mrs. Dan Nicely came to our church with the Kirk Singers Youth Choir of 19 girls and 16 boys from the Westminster Presbyterian Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan and gave a concert. Dan and his wife, Ruth, were not strangers as Dan had grown up in this area and he and his wife were with us for a service of music in 1971.

Another musical entertainment was held in our church on Thursday night, March 30th by the Bluefield College Choir and we were proud to see our Larry Mattox in this choir.

A real opportunity for mission service arose in our church when the Nettleton Bible Church, which had begun as a mission of our church some 50 years ago, asked that we assist them with some workers and teachers as they sought to recognize and reestablish Sunday School and Worship Service at their church. We supplied teachers and a pianist for Sunday School which

began on August 7th and Mr. Jim Collie our associate pastor conducted the worship service which began in September under the auspices of our church. But, due to the lack of response, the Nettleton group themselves decided to close the church again on December 11th.

On August 7th at the worship service, a tribute and honor was paid to Mr. J. W. M. Paxton on his 86th birthday. He had been a member of this church longer than any other person, remembering his dad carrying him into the sanctuary while it was still under construction. Mr. Paxton had served the church in many positions through the years, including service as Deacon, treasurer and on virtually every committee of the church at some time or other. He also served the city well, having started our Rescue Squad. His entire family was with him on this day at the worship service. The death of this Christian in June, 1979, brought deep sorrow to all who knew him.

We are grateful that our church is involved in the overall spiritual care and ministry of our city and area. In September, 1977, our pastor had the honor of being elected President of the Clifton Forge Ministerial Association. Mr. Mattox was also serving as Secretary of the Natural Bridge Pastor's conference at this time.

A new program, called the Christian Development Hour was begun in our church on October 2nd with more than 50 people present at the first meeting. Those in attendance had the privilege of selecting the topic to be studied. The purpose of C. D. H. was to help Christian people of every age grow in church membership, Christian life-style, service and in every area of life.

In our church bulletin on October 1st, a tribute of appreciation was paid to Mr. Roy Reynolds who retired as Secretary of the Adult 3 Sunday School Department after 50 years of faithful service in that capacity and seldom being absent.

The year 1977 was a good year for our church in many ways. Financially it was a fine year; also, we had several new folks come into our fellowship and we had fewer losses during this year than in previous years. The Christian Development Hour resulted in a spiritual growth for all those who participated.

We went into the year 1978 with our Polly Van Lear, our missionary in Nigeria, being home for her furlough and bringing us the message on February 12th at our worship service. She told of her mission work in Africa and of our responsibilities and opportunities at home. Our hearts were touched by her dedication and love for the mission field where God had called her to serve.

The goal for our special Easter offering for the year 1978 was set at \$3000.00. Half of it was designated for Phase 3 of our church in relocating our library and the other half was to go toward establishing a mission church

in Highland County. There was not a Baptist Church in Highland County and many new families had moved into this area as VEPCO started work on the Back Creek Project which employed nearly 3500 people.

The Highland County Mission in Monterey was sponsored by the Natural Bridge Association and help was received from the Virginia Baptist General Board and the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. The Natural Bridge Association reported that it would take contributions of \$10,000 yearly to keep this mission going but hoped that it would become self-supporting and a permanent Baptist Church.

Out of this mission a Baptist Church was ordained and the Rev. Jerry Ginn was called. On July 27th, a reception and "Pounding" for the pastor, his wife and family of five boys were held when they moved into their uncompleted house. Another special offering of \$1593.35 was given in 1980 by our members for this mission church in Highland County.

Finally, on April 2nd of this year our new organ console was played for the first time after replacing the old one which had been installed in 1953. The old console had been in bad condition for a long time and replacement parts were no longer available. Our new console had several improvements over the old one and even the chimes would play again. These chimes were added to our pipe organ in 1948 and were given by Mrs. Cora Everett and Miss Birdie Smith in memory of Mrs. Everett's son, Herman Everett. For many years the chimes were played 11 times in the morning service to call the congregation to worship and helped to create a reverent attitude.

A problem had existed for many years for the choir directors as the members of the choir had difficulty in seeing the director. Some wanted to move the organ but after much discussion and planning this proposal was voted down by the congregation in a democratic way. The problem was satisfactorily solved by building a platform next to the organ.

Revival services were held in our church in May of this year with the Rev. Brunner of Lynchburg bringing the messages.

It was with deep regret that we received the resignation of Jim Collie as our associate pastor in May. But we rejoiced with him as he answered the call of God to serve in a larger field of service as Campus Minister of Southwest Virginia.

Sunday, July 23rd was a glorious day in our church as we received 6 new members into our fellowship. This was the largest number uniting with the church in one day for a long, long time. Seventeen members had been received into our church since January of this year and was a cause of rejoicing.

This year we again had ten visitors from our sister church in Stockton, England for two weeks. They were given a warm welcome from our church members and while here they were taken on sightseeing tours to places of interest. On July 30th we had preaching by "Peter and Paul" two of our guests,

Mr. Peter Laing and Mr. Paul Clark. The other guests participated with special music and testimonies in our worship services. We have received many blessings and much joy from these Christian friends and a strong bond of love and friendship has been formed between them and us.

At our July business meeting, a motion was made and passed that our church send a donation of \$500.00 to the Fairlawn Baptist Church of Radford, Virginia, to be used in rebuilding their church which was destroyed by fire earlier in the year. In addition, it was recommended that our church participate in the volunteer Chaplaincy Program at Alleghany Regional Hospital with our pastor or any future pastors serving for one week, two or three times a year. Our church is indeed a caring and sharing church and the congregation was in full accord with these motions which were made.

The church was stunned to hear of the sudden death of Mr. R. S. Littrell on September 21, 1978. Mr. Littrell had been a dedicated and tireless worker in our church, filling many places of leadership. He had been a Sunday School Director, a Deacon, Chairman of the Building and Grounds Committee and chairman of the kitchen Committee for many years, responsible for many receptions and good meals of Christian fellowship.

This year our pastor was elected Vice-Chairman of the Service Committee of the Virginia Baptist Board, and also to membership on the eleven-member Executive Committee of the General Board. Mr. Mattox was also appointed by the President of the Baptist General Association of Virginia to membership on the Committee on Orientation of new Board members for 1979. These added responsibilities show the esteem that the Virginia Baptist Board had for our pastor.

In our church bulletin on November 5th the congregation was urged to go to the polls and vote "No" to pari-mutual betting, horse racing and gambling in Virginia. This was our duty as Christians to use our influence against sin in our state. The proposed referendum for Pari-mutual Betting was defeated as the people spoke against this encroachment of evil.

The inflationary spiral had hit our church as our budget for 1978 had increased from \$90,000 to \$100,000 and had been amended in May with an additional \$15,000. We believed that God was the source of all our needs and we met this increase with faith that it would be supplied.

The year 1978 was in many ways a good year and we ended this year in a stronger, better position than the way we began it.

At our regular business meeting in January 1979, a recommendation was made to the members that the roll-up doors between the sanctuary and the King Memorial be replaced with wooden folding door. The cost for this project would be approximately \$5,000.00. The old roll-up doors had been installed in 1911 when the Sunday School rooms had been added to the north side of our church. They were in bad repair and were dangerous as one had

fallen and broken the previous Easter when they were rolled up to accomodate the overflow of people in the King Memorial. The motion was carried and passed.

The project was completed in March and the new folding doors were beautiful. Gratitude was expressed to Mr. Bernard Evans and to those who worked with him for doing such a splendid job. Mr. Evans is a real craftsman and uses his God-given talent so often in our church.

When the report of the Building and Grounds Committee was read in January 1979 for the year 1978 at our annual business meeting it was apparent that they had been very busy. An office room had been fixed for our music director, many class rooms and offices had been painted, carpets installed in several rooms, drapes hung in many rooms, storm windows installed, dark shades put in assembly rooms so film strips could be shown, shrubs were planted on the south side of the Educational Building, wiring was installed in Sanctuary for Christmas lights, rachets put in ceiling to permit lamps to be lowered for replacement of bulbs and a dusk to dawn light was put at the entrance of the Educational Building.

Our Church business meetings are important for our church is governed only by the congregation. A good spirit always prevails and someone said, "They start out as a business meeting and end as a love feast."

February 4th was observed around the world as Baptist World Alliance Sunday and we of the Southern Baptist Convention are part of this world wide fellowship of Baptists. They meet every five years for worship, praise and fellowship and the objectives of Baptist World Alliance are: To win people to Christ; to encourage Bible study; and to care for each other.

Mr. and Mrs. Mattox accompanied by a group from our church left for England on April 6th to hold his second revival in the Lightfoot Grove Baptist Church. The revival expenses were paid by that church for Mr. and Mrs. Mattox. Prior to their arrival for the revival extensive preparation had been made with prayers, visitation and advertising.

Those who went with Mr. and Mrs. Mattox were their daughter, Melissa and son, Nathan; Mr. and Mrs. Gilmer Fauber, formerly of our church; Miss Sherry West; Mrs. Harvey Chittum, Sr.; and Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Swailm.

On their return back home on April 20th, Mr. Mattox reported that the revival services were well attended, had a good response with several conversions and felt that the time was well spent and much fruit would come from the revival in the future.

We warmly welcomed back to our church Jim and Sherry Collie and sons, Billy and Ricky for our Easter Services on April 15th as Mr. Collie preached at both of the services while our pastor was away.

Mr. Mattox's tenth anniversary, as pastor of our church was an occasion for a celebration by the entire church family on June 10th, 1979 of this year. The Deacons planned the observance of his ministry to us with a luncheon immediately after the morning worship service. Expressions of thankfulness for God leading Mr. Mattox and his family to us were given. Also a generous gift of cash was given to them in appreciation for their service and leadership. After lunch we assembled in the Sanctuary for a time of singing hymns and a brief devotional.

From the report of contributions given from the churches of the Natural Bridge Association for the first six months of this year, our church in comparison with others refutes the complaints from some of our members that we do not give enough to causes outside of our own church. Our church reports 16.6% of total membership in the Association with 27.9% of the total mission gifts of the churches; and 27.9% of the total Cooperative Program gifts. Contributions to missions and other causes outside our church were 26.5% of our total regular and special offering. These figures are encouraging and gives us reason for rejoicing for in these inflationary times it is easy to cut our gifts to the Lord.

Mr. Earl Green resigned as church trustee and Mr. Dempsey Bostic was unanimously elected to succeed him.

On August 12th, 1979, we had a worship service which was unique as it followed the New Testament pattern as closely as possible. The service centered around an outdoor baptismal service in the river, followed with a fellowship meal, and singing of hymns and a devotional message by the pastor. The service took place at 3:00 in the afternoon at the John Dobbin's camp with about 75 people present in spite of less than perfect weather and was a highlight in the life of our church.

In October of this year our library was again ready for use after being relocated. The church is indebted to Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Jameson and Mrs. F. L. Wysor for placing the books on the shelves. Mrs. Wysor was instrumental in establishing our library in 1971, and since that time many new books have been bought and given as memorial gifts. This library is a big asset to our church. Mrs. A. L. Jameson was director of the library from its beginning until 1980 when she resigned on account of her health. Miss Nancy Mays who assisted her, was elected as the new librarian with Mrs. Preston Thompson as assistant.

During this time the room next to the library was renovated for a classroom and a multi-purpose room. There had been much discussion of making this room into a ladies parlor, but after further study by the Building and Grounds Committee, it was decided that it was not needed for this purpose and the extra cost would not be justified.

In September our pastor became ill and it was necessary that he undergo serious surgery. With his deep faith in God, the skill of his surgeon, and the

prayers of his people, he was able to resume his active duties on December 2nd after a two and half months sick leave. Needless to say, he was greatly missed, and on his first Sunday back to preach God's word, he was welcomed with a large attendance at the worship service.

While our pastor was ill and recuperating, we were grateful to have Jim Collie supply the pulpit for two Sundays and the Rev. John Wilmer for the remaining time.

The motto of our state, "Virginia is for lovers" must be true. A romance had developed between two of our friends from England and they came all the way to our city to be married by our pastor because of the love and high regard they had for him. This was a first in many ways, as it was the first time a marriage had been performed in the chapel of the Alleghany Regional Hospital with a patient performing the marriage ceremony.

Mrs. Lillian Stephenson and Mr. Paul Clark were united in marriage on October 15, 1979, by Mr. Mattox in the presence of a few friends with Mrs. Curtis Sealey as the bride's attendant and Mr. John Corstaphney as best man. Mr. and Mrs. Clark were entertained with a reception in the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Corstaphney and spent their honeymoon in their home. The Clarks returned the following year to celebrate their first wedding anniversary with the Corstaphneys.

Our erratic heating system was again giving us problems. Several meetings at the church were canceled due to the lack of heat as our heating system was being repaired and up-graded in November. We were able to resume our service on a regular schedule by the middle of November and in time for our Thanksgiving service.

Our church started out in 1980 with challenges, many opportunities and hopes of great things for the Lord. It was good news to hear that we had surpassed our budget for 1979 and were in good shape financially. Emphasis was placed on reading the entire Bible and 57 people signed up to read the Bible this year. In 1981, certificates were given to 20 members of the church who had completed the reading of the Bible the preceding year, but the real reward was in gaining more knowledge of God's word.

Among the enjoyable and spiritual events in our church this year was a sacred concert given by Mrs. Marcia Wham on February 3rd. Her messages in song have always been a blessing to us. Another musical treat was a concert presented by the Blacksburg Baptist Student Chorale of 30 young people, some were members of the New Virginian Group, on March 19th. Our Tom Reynolds, son of Mr. and Mrs. LeRoy Reynolds, who grew up in this church was the director of this group which was in great demand in churches throughout Virginia. We were proud of our Young Musician Choir, children in grades 4 through 6, when they presented the Musical "Hey Joshua," the story of Joshua and the Battle of Jericho, on November 23rd.

Mr. and Mrs. Peter Laing from England were visiting us again and it was

a pleasure to have him bring us the message on July 13th.

Easter Sunday, April 6th was a great day in our church and we set some records. We had 460 in the morning service and almost 300 in Sunday School and the total offering for the day was \$6226.65, a record for the church. It was a glorious Easter Day with music and drama, "The Upper Room" given by the Adult 2 Class.

On April 28th we observed a day of special prayer for our nation. The church was open all day for private prayer and a service was held that night for the whole community.

Beginning May 18th, Jack Hanner became our organist as Mrs. Leo Carter, who had served faithfully in this capacity since 1969, had moved to Charleston, South Carolina. Jack had served our church in various positions through the years and his many talents have been dedicated to the Lord.

During the summer of this year our area was hard hit economically as the Back Creek Project in Highland County, which had employed over 3,000 people closed down to a minimum capacity and a fire had destroyed the fiber plant at Hercules and they decided not to rebuild. For years Clifton Forge had depended on the C & O Railway, but due to a great decline in Railroading every since 1950 the economy was bleak. The area was encouraged when VEPCO announced the starting up of their project again in the spring of 1982. The three largest industries in the Alleghany Highlands; VEPCO, Hercules and the C & O Railroad reported that they were going to invest more capital in their plants, employ more people and are looking to the future with optimism.

Our church was richly blessed when Mr. and Mrs. David Fields of our church were appointed Missionary Associates by the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention to serve in Taiwan. August 10th was set aside as a special day of recognition, dedication and to commission them to their work. The morning worship hour centered around our mission tasks and obligations. In the evening service, David and Marian Fields shared their testimonies with us. A reception was held for them following the worship service. Mr. and Mrs. Fields left for Taiwan on January 3rd, 1981, after completing the Missionary Orientation Program. God had again reached into our church and selected persons for special full time service.

At our quarterly business meeting in July of this year, 1980 Mr. Marvin Swain addressed the congregation on the subject of our hundredth year celebration in 1982. We made the suggestion that plans be started for this event and as Mr. Stanley Nichols had been a member of this church for many years that he be the logical person to head up this committee for this auspicious occasion. This motion was passed unanimously that Mr. Nichols be chairman of this committee with the liberty of selecting other committee members to work with him.

During this year the classrooms above the King Memorial were remodeled and refurnished. Also our public address system was improved and updated with the Thanksgiving offering being used for this purpose.

Our Church Office Secretary, Mrs. J. A. Entsminger (Corinne), who had served us well for over 23 years, retired on August 15th, 1980. In our worship service on August 31st, Mrs. Entsminger was acknowledged and given a gift of appreciation for her faithful service. Mrs. C. B. Faidley (Peggy) is now serving as our Church Secretary.

Rally Day was held in our church on September 14th and was one of the finest days we had experienced in a long time. At this service all the church elected workers were recognized and dedicated for their work. Special music was provided by Mrs. Cherie Davis Allen and the new Men's Chorus. The activities of this special day were planned by Mr. Stanley Nichols and Mr. Clyde Griffith.

In the latter part of September, Mr. Mattox conducted a revival service in the Carribean Baptist Church in Gatun, Panama. This is one of the countries where Southern Baptist have foreign missionaries. After his return home, Mr. Mattox said that it was a small church with many army personnel attending the services. The seed was sown with the hope it would yield a harvest in the future.

David Wilkerson, the author of "The Sword and the Switchblade," a well known and dynamic preacher was in our area for a one night crusade at the Alleghany County High School in the fall of this year. Mr. Wilkerson had worked for many years in the slums of New York among the young people. This event was sponsored by the Clifton Forge and Covington Ministerial Association and was attended by a large crowd.

The entire church membership was invited to a reception for our former pastor, Dr. Walter E. Farrar, held at Ox Hill Baptist Church in Chantilly, Virginia, where he was pastor at that time. The occasion was held on November 30th to honor him as he retired from the ministry of our Lord after 45 years of service. Several of our members attended the reception.

December 14th was observed in our church as "Oscar Stinnett Day." He had been faithful and active in this church for many years. He was born and raised in Buchanan, Virginia, served in the U.S. Navy during World War I, was a telegraph operator on C & O Railway, Mr. Stinnett had served as a Deacon and other offices as well and had been generous in his support of the church. He celebrated his 90th birthday December 1st. The church and community was saddened by his death on February 13, 1981.

In many ways the year 1980 was the best year our church had experienced in a long time. Attendance remained good throughout the year. But most important was the unusual growth in our church with a total of 40 additions during the year.

Our church started out the Year of 1981 with thankfulness for the blessings of the previous year and with a Worship Service the first Sunday in January calling for new commitments to God by the church members for the New Year.

At our annual business meeting in January of this year, Mr. LeRoy Reynolds made a motion that memorial gifts on hand and any received in the future be used to purchase 325 of the 1975 editions of the Baptist Hymnals. If this amount of money would not cover the cost of the number of hymnals needed, to allow individuals to purchase a hymnal and give it to the church as a memorial gift or in honor of living members. The hymn books given in this way would have a sticker with the appropriate information and names. The vote was unanimous for this proposal. Our new hymnals were first used on March of this year after a brief dedication.

Also at this business meeting after the pastor read his report for the year 1980, the Holy Spirit must have moved Mr. Stanley Nichols to speak for the entire congregation. He arose and thanked Mr. Mattox for his fine report and accomplish and then said, "We all love you."

One of the most impressive services to take place in our church was the presentation of a musical drama "The Witness" at the evening service, on January 25th by the Youth Choir of Ox Hill Baptist Church, Chantilly, Virginia. This was a dynamic musical portraying the life of Juesus as it would have been told by Peter. Following the service a reception was held for the group and all the congregation.

Also in the spring of this year a Gospel Hymn Sing was held at our church with the Announcers and The Cardinal State Quartet presenting a concert. An offering was taken for Jody Kern, age 3, who had cancer, to help his parents with their high medical bills.

Another special music program was given in our church by the Rockingham Male Chorus on October 25th. This group is made up with men of all vocations, faiths and all ages under the direction of Mr. Nelson T. Huffman of Bridgewater, Virginia. They had been in our city before and had presented their music at the Presbyterian Church the previous year. We were happy to have them in our church, where they were warmly received for they are an inspiration to all who hear them.

This year, woodboers were found infesting our building and this matter was taken care of immediately by the Orkin Exterminating Company. It was also necessary to put some needed bracing and support under the floor of our Sanctuary to strengthen a split wooden beam. In addition, the Communion table and chairs were refinished to their natural state and the general maintenance of the church was carried on as usual. Also, in 1981 our 28 stained glass windows were covered with lexan unbreakable covering by the Continental Art Glass Company of Blaine, Minnesota at a cost of \$8395.00.

This was necessary to protect our windows from accidental breakage and vandalism. It would also serve the same purpose as storm windows in conserving energy.

We were happy to welcome Mrs. Joanne Hayslett into the fellowship of our church. She is an accomplished musician and accompanies Mr. Jack Hanner on the piano in our morning worship service, which adds much to the service. She also plays for the Youth Choir and is a great help in our music program.

The sudden death of Mr. Stanley Nichols on March 25th of this year was a severe loss to our church, as Stanley had been the backbone of our church for many years. He had been a Deacon and served the Lord in any capacity needed in the church. This writer remembers him leading the singing for our revivals and as a member of the choir from early adulthood. He often sang solos, and I recall that he often sang "This Is My Task," with deep feeling. He was devoted to his church and told me, "If it were not for my love of Clifton Forge Baptist Church, I would move to Covington where my business is located."

We had something new in our church on Mother's Day, as forms had been passed out the previous Sunday at the worship service for the members to select the Mother of the Year. Mrs. Ada Mattox was voted the Christian Mother of the Year for 1981, and Catherine Marshall's book, "Meeting God at Every Turn" was inscribed with the name of the mother of the year and placed in the library.

The same procedure was followed for Father's Day in choosing the Father of the Year and our pastor was chosen. Mr. and Mrs. Mattox are the parents of four children, Larry, Joel, Melissa and Nathan. Mr. and Mrs. Mattox have always set a Christian example for their children, bringing them up in a home with love, being good companions and interested in all activities and fulfilling the God given role of mother and father.

On August 23rd, Mr. Vernon Hudson was elected to replace Mr. Stanley Nichols as chairman of the Centennial Committee to make plans for the church's 100th year in 1982.

Congratulations were extended to the Clifton Forge Presbyterian Church as they celebrated their Centennial on August 30th of this year.

A Youth Fellowship was formed November 22 with a supper and fellowship and the making of plans for their activities. This Youth Group is under the leadership of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Van Lear and is getting involved in Christian activities and is a new ministry of our church.

A good year, 1981 ended, and a New Year has begun and we are preparing for the 100th birthday of our church.

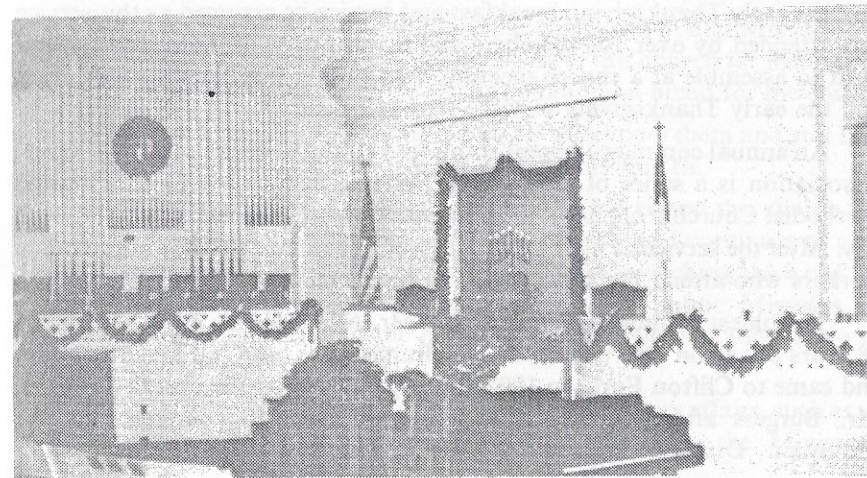
The year 1982 came with the worst weather we had experienced in

decades. We had frigid weather with below zero temperature, snow, freezing rain, and winds at 75 miles per hour. Therefore many activities at the church were canceled in January and February.

There was some concern over the increase in our heating bill as the gas budget had increased from \$488.00 per month in 1981 to \$595.00 for 1982. For that reason lock type thermostat covers were installed by Mr. Dempsey Bostic and Mr. L.L. McCutchen to try to conserve heat and every one was pleased to help in this effort. Also, Mr. Dempsey Bostic, chairman of the Building and Grounds Committee proposed that the choir room be closed and moved down stairs to the Fidelis Class room and this class moved to another location. This motion was approved by the church to conserve energy.

The custodian of our church since July 5, 1975, has been Mr. L. L. McCutchen and we are fortunate to have him. One can tell that he has a great love for the church in the way he keeps the church and the pride he takes in his work. Many people remark on the sparkling clean appearance of our church rooms. He also goes the second mile and performs many duties outside his work. The church budget for 1982 is \$120,000.00 but has been kept to the minimum amount necessary to keep the church operating efficiently. Mr. John Corstaphney is our church treasurer and has served the church well in this capacity for over 20 years. The other general Officers for 1982 are: Church Clerk, Mr. V. C. Hudson, Assistant Clerk, Mr. L. J. Chiles and Financial Secretary, Mrs. O. M. Newcomb.

Each year we have annual events and the music programs at Easter time and Christmas by our choirs are uplifting and high points in our church activities. The members of the flower committee use their artistic talents in decorating the sanctuary at Christmas time with Poinsettias, wreaths and garlands. It creates a beautiful setting as we worship God in the midst of beauty and love.



SANTUARY AT CHRISTMAS; 1981

Since 1945, one of the most social events has been the annual Sweetheart Banquet, which was begun during the ministry of Rev. Welford Brooks. Our young people sponsor the banquet and it is a fine evening with a program, good food, and fellowship. The King Memorial room is always beautifully decorated in the spirit of Valentine's Day and this is a big event in our church each year.

The annual observance of Baptists Men's Day is an event we look forward to all year. They start the day with a prayer breakfast and have charge of the morning worship service when several of the men bring the messages and men fill the choir loft and present special music. The men in our church are a vital asset as we look to them for encouragement, support and leadership.

Another yearly occurrence held between Mother's Day and Father's Day is a service of baby recognition and Parents Dedication Day with emphasis put on the home as a place to witness for the Lord and where children are brought up in a Christian environment.

We also have annual Bible School for children 3 years old through 6 graders. Bible School provides the equivalent of several weeks in Sunday School, provides music, activities, handwork, fun and fellowship with worship. The Bible School for 1980 was a tremendous success with an enrollment of 118 and an average attendance of 113.

Also the community wide Thanksgiving Service is held each year in different churches with pastors of each church taking their turn in leading the services. This is an outstanding highlight of life in our community.

Our church had observed Thanksgiving Day with a fellowship breakfast and service of praise and thankfulness for many years but some members of the church objected and it was discontinued for several years. But at a business meeting of our church in 1979, Mr. Vernon Hudson made a motion that the early Thanksgiving breakfast and service be resumed as this service was attended by over 100 members and it was not right to deny them their right to assemble at a church meeting. The motion was unanimously carried and the early Thanksgiving services were resumed.

An annual community event sponsored by the Clifton Forge Ministerial Association is a series of Holy Week Services held at the Central United Methodist Church from noon to 12:30 with different ministers speaking each day. After the services a light lunch is served at a nominal cost to accommodate workers who attend the services during their lunch hour.

The oldest member of our church is Mr. Alfred Henry Burgess who was 98 years of age on February 20th. Mr. Burgess was born in Fluvana County and came to Clifton Forge in 1905 and began work on the C & O Railroad. Mr. Burgess after years of work, was promoted to conductor on the Mountain Division and many people will remember the courteous,

gentlemanly conductor. He now resides at the Potomac Nursing Home, has a sister, Mrs. Agnes Kelly, who is a member of our church and a foster daughter, Mrs. Peggy Maydian of Selma.

Mrs. Nell Smith of Low Moor is another one of our older members and is 93 years old. She made her profession of faith at the age of 14 in the Covington Baptist Church where she was baptized by the Rev. Hundly. As well as Mrs. Smith can recall she and her sister, Mrs. Lucy Furlong started attending the Clifton Forge Baptist Church while Dr. Sears was the pastor.

Another member, Miss Susie Fridley was 93 years old on February 2nd. She might be old in years but not in spirit and it is always uplifting to be with her. She joined our church around 1907 when Rev. Marsh baptized her and 61 others in the church baptism. She is very active and attends church regularly. She, Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Furlong are all first cousins. Lokeel and Bill Fridley of this church are a niece and nephew.

Two sisters, Miss Mary Gibbs and Mrs. Lucy Lawler are the oldest members in continuous membership in our church, Mrs. Lucy Lawler, a resident of Liberty House Nursing Home, will be 92 years of age in July of this year. She was baptized at the age of 12 by the Rev. J. A. Barker and has been a continuous member here for 80 years. Mrs. Lawler was the first pianist when a piano was purchased for the church sanctuary.

Miss Mary Gibbs will be 87 years old in August 1982. She made her profession of faith at age 12 during revival services at the old Cary Street Market House in Richmond, Virginia. She and her three brothers were all baptized in this church by the Rev. George Green. Miss Mary raised her niece Eleanor Miller from age 7, and David Moore from age 6, and through the years has helped to raise 13 other great nieces and nephews.

Mrs. Lawler and Miss Mary have been faithful to this church and their service has meant much to the life of the church.

Mrs. Lawler and Miss Mary are the daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Edward Gibbs who were also faithful members of this church for many years and at one time her mother made all the communion bread for the church.

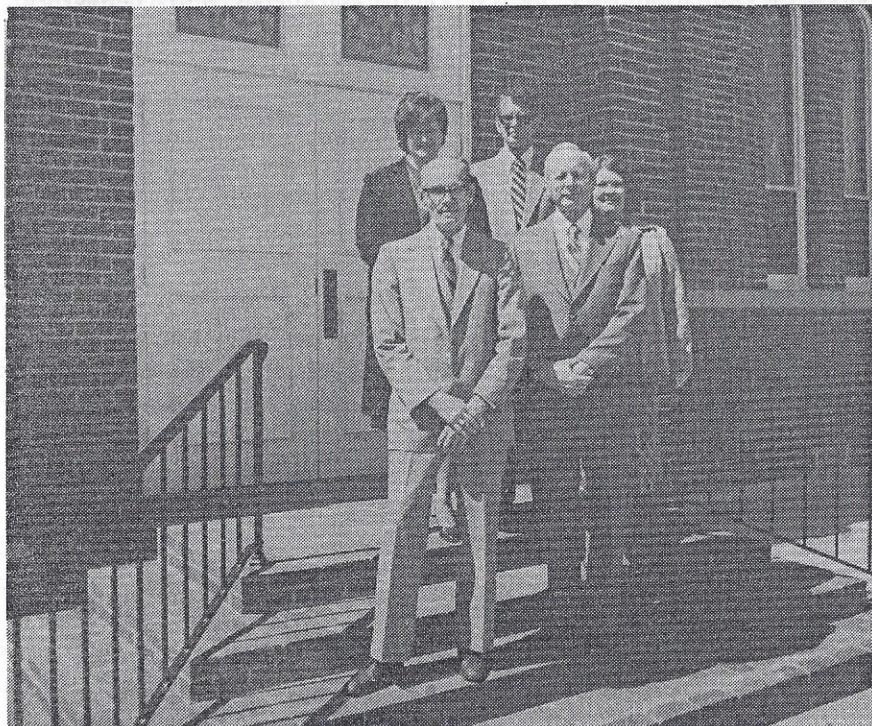
These members are an inspiration to all who know them and still have their wonderful enthusiasm for their Lord and his church.

Our pastor, the Rev. William C. Mattox, Jr. has served this church well for over 13 years and the church is united spiritually and continues to grow under his leadership. Our pastor is a man of God, preaching the word and placing emphasis on evangelism, reaching out to the public; Missions and pastoring; and ministering to the needs of the congregation and also to the community at large.

Mr. Mattox also represents our church in community affairs, such as the Kiwanis Club, the City Library Board, the Y.M.C.A., the Ministerial

Association and recently became a member of the Clifton Forge Rescue Squad where he is able to minister to the physical needs as well as the spiritual needs of those with whom he comes in contact.

There is great promise and eager hope as we begin the celebration of the Centennial Year of our church. God has truly blessed this church these 100 years. God is the same today as yesterday and we pray that God will continue to pour his blessings on us. We are proud of the church's link with the past. It is a friendly, caring and sharing church and we continue "On the Road We Came" under the leadership and inspiration of the Holy Spirit for the everlasting Glory of God.



**CHURCH STAFF — 1982**

## SUNDAY SCHOOL

As far back as 1884 our present Sunday School was organized with Mr. W. H. Powell as Superintendent. Strong emphasis is placed on the Sunday School Ministry of our church with departments which teach every age group. The Sunday School has an enrollment of approximately 504 and had an average attendance of 231 in 1981. This was an increase over the 1980 attendance and continues to grow under the leadership of Mr. Clyde Griffith as director at the present time.

The Men's Bible Class is very active in all phases of our church work. Mr. Ernest Huntington, Jr. is the teacher of this class, having taken over in this capacity when the former teacher, Mr. William Thompson moved to Mississippi in 1970. Mr. Huntington, Jr. has followed in the footsteps of his parents and is a dynamic speaker and has done a significant amount of supply preaching.

The Adults and young people in our church began using the New Bible Book Curriculum in Sunday School on October 1, 1978. This study was designed to cover the entire Bible over a period of nine years and was endorsed by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board in response to many churches all over the convention.

A new Sunday School Class for young women began October 2, 1980 at the request of the Baptist Young Women's Missionary Society with Mrs. Ada Mattox as the teacher. Soon the women asked if they could bring their husbands and this class became a mixed class for young adults. When they first organized they had an enrollment of 12 which has grown to 40.

This Young Adult Class began a new ministry for our church in providing religious services in the City Jail each Sunday evening at 6:30. Services had not been held at the jail for a long, long time.

The purpose of Sunday School is to teach the Bible, to help a person to grow in Christian character and to go out and serve.

Our dedicated teachers in Sunday School will never know how much influence they have had in moulding lives and helping members to become better men and women by accepting Christ as their Savior.

Congratulations was extended to Mr. Michael Griffith on October 30, 1981 for having a ten year perfect attendance in Sunday School. As far as this writer knows he is the only one in church who has this record.

Our Sunday School Directors since 1965 have been as follows:

Mr. Earl Green	Mr. O. M. Newcomb
Mr. Ashton Trice	Mr. R. S. Littrell
Mr. R. S. Littrell	Mr. Clyde Griffith

## THE WOMAN'S MISSIONARY UNION 1965-1982

The Woman's Missionary Union was organized in our church November 10, 1885 with Mrs. A. M. Jordan as its first president. This is the only organization in our church whose primary purpose is to foster missionary work.

The W.M.U. sponsors a Week of Prayer in December and promotes the Lottie Moon Christmas offering for foreign missionaries; and the Week of Prayer for home missions and the Annie Armstrong offering in March. Our Home Mission Board has over 3000 missionaries who are working diligently to bring Christ to our land. Our W.M.U. has always met it's goals in offerings for missions and often goes over their allotted amount for our church. We also have two mission study courses each year and each circle member is asked to read mission books to be more knowledgeable about the work being done by our missionaries. Often, bandage rolling is held by the members for White Cross and the bandages are sent to hospitals where needed. The ladies of the W.M.U. assist in the Meal on Wheels program, keep the crisis closet stocked, promote visitation to the nursing homes and visits to the shut-ins. During these seventeen years they have sent Polly Van Lear, our missionary to Africa, Sunday School teaching material; helped in a church-wide visitation program made an afghan for the Baptist Home in Culpeper, cooperated in the transient project and every circle made an afghan to give to each one of the guests from England.

Some of the high points during these years were the W.M.U. Prayer Retreat and workshop held at Douthat State Park Lodge in September, 1974; Annual Day in 1976, when the W.M.U. was host to our friends from England; The "Love Thy Neighbor" banquet in 1975 for all the members of the church and a Bicentennial program given July 15, 1976, which included patriotic songs by the choir, lighting of candles on America's birthday cake and a fellowship hour after the meeting.

Also the W.M.U. conference led by workers from the State W.M.U. in Richmond was held in our church October 31 through November 3, 1976. We were joined in this conference with other Southern Baptist Churches in the area with different missionaries speaking each night. The W.M.U. also had as guests Mr. and Mrs. David Fields of our church, who had been accepted by our Foreign Mission Board as missionaries to Taiwan, at our Annual Day meeting and banquet in September, 1980. The Fields were given many gifts by the members of the church and a large carton of tupperware was given to them by the W.M.U. with best wishes and prayers for God's blessing on their mission work.

The year 1975 saw some new changes in the organizational structure of W.M.U. as the circles were divided into three kinds, Mission in Action,

Prayer and Stewardship and Bible Study. At this time the W.M.U. consists of six circles with one daylight circle, the Gwendolyn McPerson Circle, the newest one which was formed in 1975. The W.M.U. also sponsors the youth organizations and the G.A.'s. At this time the W.M.U. has 83 members enrolled and there is room for growth in the area of membership.

The ladies of the church had a wonderful time on a gray, rainy day on February 17, 1982 sharing hobbies, crafts and fellowship at a tea given by the W.M.U. during Focus Week. Mrs. Frank Woolwine was in charge of the tea and Mr. Clyde Griffith gave the program, leading the group in singing which he accompanied on the guitar.

The presidents of the W.M.U. since 1965 have been:

Mrs. Kent Ford (1966-1967)	Mrs. Harvey Chittum, Jr. (1969-1970)
Mrs. Clyde Griffith	Mrs. Herbie King (1974-1977)
(Mar. 1972-Sept. 1972)	Mrs. Cletus Lawler (1970-1972)
Mrs. E. A. Huntington, Sr. (1967-1970)	Mrs. Gene Mason (1977-1981)
Mrs. E. E. Fliess (1972-1974)	Mrs. Milton Cahoon (1981- )

The future looks bright for our Woman's Missionary Union with a great host of women praying, giving, studying and nuturing future missionaries by serving God through the W.M.U.