

A Century Plus Six

The story of
First Baptist Church
Chamblee, Georgia
1975-1981



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Preface

IN 1975 THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH of Chamblee published a centennial history entitled *A Century in North DeKalb*. It was a marvelous collection of facts, anecdotes, impressions, and memories of the working of God in this great church.

Now, in an effort to continue the excellent work begun in *A Century in North DeKalb*, the church's history committee has prepared this six-year supplement, *A Century Plus Six*. Material for this supplement has been collected by the committee and written by Dr. Leland Thomas. It is a thorough and well-written treatment of the first six years of First Baptist Chamblee's second century.

I commend it to your reading. Here is the record of how God has worked in the life of our church in one brief six-year span. As you read, I believe it will become evident to you how God is moving this church toward a magnificent future and how He is moving us all toward His ultimate purpose. May God bless your life through these pages.

- W David Sapp

Chapter XII
1975-1981

A Century in North DeKalb

DR. EARL CRAIG COMPLETED his service of over six years as pastor of First Baptist Church of Chamblee on March 30, 1975, and became pastor of Richardson Heights Baptist Church in Richardson, Texas. At his last service the church presented a silver service and coffee urn to the Craigs. Dr. Craig's last Sunday was also Easter. Attendance at Sunday School was 638 of an enrollment of 1536; 1056 were at the morning worship service and 501 at the evening service.

At the invitation of the church, Dr. and Mrs. Craig (Beth Ann) returned to Chamblee for the celebration of the church's centennial on May 18, 1975. He had returned to Chamblee about a month earlier to preach the funeral of long-time member and deacon, W. Ben Hyde.

On Centennial Day, Dr. Craig preached at the morning service which was followed by a one hundred year birthday party at Chamblee High School at one o'clock. As a part of the service the church history, *A Century in North DeKalb*, was officially presented. Edited by Walker Knight, editor of *Home Missions Magazine*, the history was written by several members of the congregation at the request of the original History Committee composed of Miss Martha Ayers, Chairman; Mrs. Marvin Camp; Mrs. Robert Gunter; James M. Cook; W. Fred Henderson and Tom Palmer.

The Reverend Joe Frank Barton, pastor of the church from 1941 to 1956, preached the evening sermon on Centennial Day. Mr. Barton died in August 1980 in Albany, Georgia, where he had lived in retirement. Several members of the First Baptist Church of Chamblee attended the interment service in Canton, Georgia. Mr. Barton had been named pastor emeritus at Sunnyside Baptist Church in Albany on July 11, 1976.

A pulpit committee was elected on the first Sunday in April, 1975. Members were: Thomas E. Boland, Bob Bryan, Cora Lee Hyde, Tom Jack, Phil McBride, Harold Smith and Al Stewart. While they searched for a pastor it was the responsibility of the deacons to fill the pulpit each Sunday. (The church approved a pay schedule of \$100 for the preacher for both services or \$75.00 for the morning service only or \$35.00 for the evening service only.) Many guest preachers served the congregation during the interim, including Dr. Bill Lunceford, Walker Knight, Cecil Etheridge, Kenneth Day, Dr. John F. Havlik, Larry Montgomery, Dr. Searcy Garrison, Bobby Dollar, Harvey Nowland, Perrin Cook, and Arnold Smith.

Just before Dr. Craig left, the church authorized the chairman of the Stewardship Committee as an alternate check signer because of the death of the assistant treasurer, Ned Scroggins. Shortly thereafter, Claud Head was elected assistant treasurer.

In April 1975, 25 to 35 men in the church remodeled Fellowship Hall. The assembly area was enlarged by removing the Sunday School rooms. The entire hall was painted and new lighting was installed. A dedication service for the new Fellowship Hall took

place on May 7 and Dave Rogers and Dewey Carpenter were recognized for their leadership in getting the work done.

The Call had a new masthead effective April 9, 1975. It was an artist's drawing by Russell "Rusty" Johnson representing the centennial celebration showing the new sanctuary in the foreground and the white building, the former sanctuary, in the background. An inscription, "A Century in Service to The Lord - 1875-1975", completed the picture.

"Love in Action", a six-weeks program, began on April 6, 1975. Each week of the program an action was taken to emphasize the love of one church member for another.

The first two weeks were "the hands of love." Each member was asked to write a note or letter during the first week to a fellow church member expressing love for that person. During the second week each member was to write a note of gratitude, encouragement, or reconciliation to a fellow member.

The week of the "journey of love" began on April 20. Each member was asked to make at least one visit to the home of a member whom the member had not previously visited.

The fourth week was the "voice of love" during which each member was to make a telephone call a day for the purpose of saying, "Thank you", "I'm sorry", "I appreciate you", or "I love you".

The "deed of love", the following week, involved giving some expression of love to a fellow member. It could be something one could do, make, fix, bake, cook, grow, or purchase.

The final week was the "fellowship of love." Each member was requested to make a list of ten members to pray for daily and to attend a home prayer meeting that was conducted that week.

In the interim between pastors several items of business are of interest. One action in May 1975 changed the contribution to the Atlanta Baptist Association budget to 1.6% of church receipts and the contribution to the Cooperative Program to 6%. Coincidentally, this action took place about the time of the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Cooperative Program which was launched at a meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Memphis on May 13, 1925.

Mr. and Mrs. Harold Smith were elected as messengers to the Baptist World Alliance in Stockholm, Sweden. Their trip was a gift from the citizens of North DeKalb upon Mr. Smith's retirement as head counselor at Chamblee High School. Upon their return, Mrs.

Smith spoke to the Baptist Women in September about their experiences.

Also in May, Mrs. David Brown (Beverly) became director of the Youth Choir. Parent Dedication Day was held on Sunday, May 11, with 24 parents and children participating.

Vacation Bible School was from June 16 to June 20 and a churchwide picnic was held on July 2 at Mathis Dairy. The annual Camp Rutledge Sunday evening service was on July 20 following the conclusion of the two weeks of camp, one for youth and one for junior boys and girls.

With the coming of July 4, Americans began a year long celebration of the bicentennial. Charles Passman completed his fifth year of service as minister of music on July 13 and as a part of the bicentennial celebration the Adult Choir under his direction sang at Lenox Square on July 3. The theme of the week at Lenox Square was "Stay and See America in Georgia".

The announcement of new deacons who had just been elected was made in the August 6th edition of *The Call*. The following were named:

W.W. Blackwell	John Dixon	Harold Hyde
Dewey Carpenter	Claud Head	Joe Massey
Doyle Chasteen	Fred Henderson	Norman Parker
B.A. Denney	Joe Hurley	Don Wiggs
Bill Derrick		

Since he had not been ordained, Norman Parker was ordained at a special service on October 5. Lawrence Pinson was elected chairman to replace Phil McBride who served during the 1974-75 term.

On August 10, 1975, Sid Hopkins resigned as minister of youth and outreach to accept a call to the First Baptist Church of Amarillo, Texas, as assistant to the pastor for youth. His service at Chamblee was completed on August 31.

The state missions offering goal was \$300,000 and the church goal was \$500 which was exceeded.

Church goals for the new church year were adopted at the September 24 business meeting. Goals were established in five areas:

1. Developing a more spiritually vital church membership.
2. Sharing Christ with the community.
3. Performing Christ's ministry in the community.
4. Extending the church's mission throughout the world.

5. Renewing the church's life through improved operation.

In *The Call* for September 24 was the first announcement by Miss Martha Ayers asking those who might be interested in forming a senior citizens group to respond to a questionnaire indicating interest. This organization became the very successful Triple L Club, "Live Long and Like It".

In October Vera Bettis celebrated her fourteenth anniversary as church pianist and Gene Adams completed his twelfth year on the maintenance staff. Also in October, the Restorers, a Sunday School class which serves as a ministry to adults who become single by the loss of a mate through death or divorce, celebrated its second anniversary.

The Forward Program of Christian Stewardship began on October 19 to run for four weeks. During this time of budget emphasis the Reverend Dan McBride, a nationally known Southern Baptist humorist, spoke at an old-fashioned churchwide covered dish dinner at Chamblee High School on Sunday, November 2.

Mr. Passman announced that *Alleluia*, which had been presented and very well received at Rockdale Baptist Church on September 28, would be sung again on October 23 in the church sanctuary. *Jonah's Tale of a Whale* was presented by the Young Musicians Choir the following month.

On Sunday, October 26, 1975, following his sermon during the morning worship service, the church extended a call to Dr. Donald F. Parker, pastor of First Baptist Church, Chatsworth, Georgia, to become pastor. The church had voted the previous Wednesday at a business meeting to sell the pastorium at 1843 West Nancy Creek Drive and purchase another home of similar value for Dr. Parker.

Dr. Parker accepted the call and stated that he would begin his ministry at the church on Sunday, November 23. Dr. Parker is a graduate of Carson Newman College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and Mrs. Parker (Judy) have two children, Amy and Richmond.

At a reconvened business session on November 5, a recommendation of the Pulpit Committee, Stewardship Committee, and Deacon Body was approved to purchase the house at 4865 Mill Brook Drive, Dunwoody, as the pastorium at a purchase price not to exceed \$62,900 with the proceeds of the sale of the former pastorium to be applied to reduce the mortgage.

Two Money Management Seminars were held on October 26 and November 9 and conducted by Tommy Boland and Jim Branyon to

inform interested adults and answer any questions about personal finance.

November 2 was Prove the Tithes Day with \$8,292.28 given as compared to \$5,500 per week for the last year.

A "pounding" for the Parkers was held on November 16 in anticipation of their moving into the new pastorium on November 17.

As Dr. Parker began his ministry on November 23, it was announced that 95.9% of the budget of \$401,388 was pledged. The general fund budget was \$338,888 and the building fund was \$62,500. On that Sunday there were 548 in Sunday School, 572 in the eleven o'clock worship service and 371 in the evening service.

As had been the custom for several years a joint Thanksgiving worship service was held in the church sanctuary by members of The First United Methodist Church of Chamblee and The First Baptist Church of Chamblee. The Methodist minister, The Reverend Charles Duffey spoke.

The year of 1975 was closed out with emphasis on the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal of \$24,000,000 nationally and \$5200 for First Chamblee. The Youth Choir presented *Christmas Celebration* on December 14 and a Christmas party for the children was held on December 17. Other events of the Christmas season included a presentation of *The Messiah* by the Adult Choir on December 21 and a candlelight vesper service on Christmas Eve.

Fifty-two youth and their chaperones, under the leadership of Sid Jackson, who assumed much of the responsibility for youth activities in the absence of a minister of youth, went on a retreat to Gatlinburg, Tennessee, as a culmination of their activities for the year.

During the month of December the pastor emphasized the "Read the Bible Through" program for 1976 and 178 people committed themselves to this goal.

Deaths of Members - 1975

Harold A. Stamps, Sr. - January	W. Ben Hyde - April 19
Mrs. Ruby Buckner - February	Tryphena Taylor - May
Harold E. Scroggins, Sr. - March 14	Mrs. Polly Bruce - September
Mrs. Ernest (Ada Wilson) Coffey - March	Eugene Redd - November
Erby Stephens - April	

The new year began with adult promotion in Sunday School and emphasis on "Five Fabulous Sundays in February". Only three times in every hundred years are there five Sundays in February. This oddity was used as a promotional theme for encouraging

Sunday School attendance with the emphasis to culminate in high attendance day on the fifth Sunday. A goal of 700 was set and exceeded when 704 attended.

As a part of the "Five Fabulous Sundays in February" emphasis, Chip Andrews, representing the youth and young adults, challenged the adults in an attendance competition. The youth won by 222 to 218 on high attendance day. The youth had 58 more present than their average for the month of January while the adults had 54 more than their average for the same period.

January Bible Study for adults was led by Dr. Estill Jones, pastor of Dogwood Hills Baptist Church and former Southern Baptist Seminary professor. The study for adults was *Hosea*. Four other leaders taught the youth and children.

The final pledge figures for the 1976 budget were announced as 97.3% of the goal. This amount, \$390,704.36, was the largest pledge ever made by the church as of that date and the 97.3% compared very favorably with past years. For the five previous years the pledges achieved were: 1971 - 97%, 1972 - 96%, 1973 - 94%, 1974 99%, 1975 - 96.9%.

January 25 was Men's Day in the church. The day began with a breakfast at 7:30 with the speaker being Harvey Nowland, who was formerly a member of the congregation. Previously, he had been a missionary to Peru and after being at Chamblee had gone to Illinois to serve as director of language missions for the Chicago Metropolitan Baptist Association.

The WMU reported that they supplied food and gifts for seven families in the Lawson Apartments during the holiday season and gave the overflow to Techwood Mission Center and Stewart Mission Center. The WMU theme for Focus Week from February 8-14 was "Concern + Action = Missions". The week culminated in a covered dish luncheon for all women to hear Mrs. Barbara McCoy, missionary to Eku, Nigeria.

Mrs. Joyce Harris, director of the church kindergarten since 1966, was elected as president of the Association of Weekday Kindergartens. Later, Mrs. Harris and two of the Chamblee teachers, Mrs. Myrtle Apple and Mrs. Joan Branyon, were honored by being asked to teach at the seventeenth annual Weekday Church Leadership School.

For several months there had been a children's worship service, but it was discontinued in February because of "problems and lack of interest in this service on the part of the parents and fellow church members".

On February 20, 1976, a churchwide spring banquet was held with a theme of the "Roaring Twenties". Later, on February 29, the Parkers held an open house at the new pastorium for all members of the congregation.

The Home Missions Study theme for the bicentennial year was, "Missions for a Third Century". The adult book, *Tomorrow Starts Today*, was taught by the Reverend James Yarborough, missionary to Nigeria. The theme for the Home Mission Week of Prayer on March 7-14 was, "A New Birth of Freedom". The Annie Armstrong Offering for Home Missions national goal was \$9,500,000, with the church goal being \$3200. As a money raising effort for this offering, thirty Royal Ambassadors hiked ten miles on a Saturday in March.

The State WMU Annual Meeting was held March 22 and 23 at Wieuca Road Baptist Church. A feature of the meeting was the presence of the actress who portrayed Corrie ten Boom in *The Hiding Place*, Jeanette Cliff George.

On the national scene in this bicentennial and election year, Jimmy Carter emerged as the front running contender for the Democratic presidential nomination beating George Wallace in Florida one week and in Illinois the next. On the Republican side, President Ford's victory over Ronald Reagan in Illinois virtually assured his nomination for the Republican Party. Much was written in the press about Jimmy Carter being a Southern Baptist and "born again" Christian.

Back at the church, Ron Buchanan, church training director, announced that five new courses were being offered, two on Sunday evening and three during the Sunday School hour.

Charles Passman announced that *The Seven Last Words* would be presented on April 11 by the Adult Choir with Cyndi Bowman working with others on the drama portion.

The "Love in Action" program that had been initiated the previous year was repeated in 1976 in April and May.

Dr. Parker authored the devotional for April 1976 in *The Christian Index*. He led a special Easter vesper service on Thursday, April 15, at which the Lord's Supper was observed.

At the April business session, the church approved the change of the promotion date for all church organizations for preschool, children, and youth from the first Sunday in July to the first Sunday in October. This was felt necessary after three years of trying the July date because of problems in getting the proper literature.

The purchase of a new piano was also approved at the meeting for

use in the sanctuary and Adult I Sunday School Department.

The sale of the house at 2867 Dresden Way, formerly occupied by the minister of music and at the time occupied by James H. Davis, superintendent of properties for the church for three years until December 1977, was approved to Mr. Davis for \$35,000 net to the church. Norman Plunkett had been considering the purchase of the home he has lived in at 4014 Admiral Drive. The church approved dialogue on the subject in May 1975, and in August 1976, the sale was approved for a net price of \$35,000, giving consideration to improvements and repairs made by Mr. Plunkett during the time of residence. The sale of these two homes left the pastorium on Mill Brook Drive and the former pastorium on West Nancy Creek Drive as the only residential properties then owned by the church.

It was also reported at the April business meeting that a quilt was presented to Mrs. Florence Galloway by the Baptist Young Women in appreciation for her work in the church, particularly as director of the church media center.

The emphasis for the first two Sundays in May was on the Christian home. The first Sunday was Family Day and a goal of 725 was set for Sunday School with 651 actually attending. Six units of the Sunday School exceeded their goals. On Family Day the pastor encouraged members to vote against Sunday liquor sales in the referendum on May 4 as part of the Presidential Preferential Primary. The second Sunday in May was Parent Dedication Day.

At the May meeting of WMU and Baptist Women, the guest speaker was Dr. Coleman Clark, recently retired after having served as a missionary in Japan and Hawaii. His discussion focused on Japanese-Americans.

Dr. and Mrs. Parker and Frances Hudson were appointed as messengers from the church to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Norfolk, Virginia.

A very successful Vacation Bible School was held in June with 347 enrolled and 292 in average attendance. Six children accepted Christ as their Savior.

Beverly Brown resigned as director of the Youth Choir the week following a fine presentation of a rock musical, *Spirit of '76*. Other June events included a presentation of *I Love America* by the Adult Choir on June 27 and the second annual churchwide family picnic at Mathis Dairy on June 30.

In the same patriotic bicentennial spirit as reflected in the church choir programs, the church participated in the Metro Atlanta Baptist Bicentennial Celebration on Sunday evening, July 4, 1976.

at the Memorial Stadium, with the theme "Freedom Thru Christ". Dr. W.A. Criswell was the featured speaker. No service was held at the church that evening but an interesting feature following the morning service was the participation of Chamblee First in the nationally promoted bell ringing as a part of the bicentennial observance. The original church bell in the white building rang from 12 to 12:15 P.M.

The Baptist Women and Baptist Young Women joined for a bicentennial celebration meeting on Tuesday, July 6, with the theme of "Missions Horizons '76". Candlelighters and flag bearers helped to make it an impressive program.

The annual camp was held again at Camp Rutledge with Junior Week being July 11-16 and Youth Week from July 16-24. The Camp Rutledge worship service was on Sunday evening, July 25. While Dr. Parker was serving as camp pastor, the Reverend E. Warren Rust, director of metropolitan missions for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, filled the pulpit.

The July issue of *Home Missions* magazine featured Cyndi Bowman for her work with small children. For over three years Cyndi served in lay renewal campaigns around the country. She specialized in teaching and entertaining the younger children while their parents were in group work sessions. During the summer of 1977, Cyndi worked with special ministries of the Home Mission Board at the Grand Canyon.

Two members of the church left during July to pursue further education at Southern Baptist seminaries. Maynard and Roberta Preston and their three children went to Louisville for Maynard to enroll in Southern Seminary in the School of Theology. Sidney and Mary Jackson and their son moved to Fort Worth where Sid entered the School of Religious Education at Southwestern Seminary. First Baptist Chamblee had previously recommended both of these men to the respective seminaries.

On Tuesday, August 3, the church enjoyed hosting and hearing the West University Singers from West University Baptist Church, Houston, Texas.

New deacons were elected for the 1976-1977 year as follows with Jim Cook to serve as the new deacon chairman:

Gerald Apple	Calvin Dickey	Tom Jack
Lee Brown	Lee Roy Eller	Lee Reynolds
Marvin Camp	James Harrington	Leland Thomas
Charles Clement, Jr.	Robert Harris	Douglas White
Monroe Dempsey		Smith Wyatt

Of the group, Charles Clement, Jr., and Smith Wyatt were ordained on October 10. The Ordination Council met before the ordination service to examine the candidates on the following:

1. Their conversion experience.
2. Their relationship to Christ through growing experience.
3. Their views on the responsibilities of the deacons of the church.
4. Their views on alcohol.
5. Their views on tithing.

The State Missions emphasis for 1976 was "Stand Up for Christ" with a state goal of \$325,000 and a church goal of \$500. The Week of Prayer for State Missions was September 12-18.

At the business meeting of September 22, Arthur Herron was extended a call by the church to serve as minister of youth and outreach. A telephone call was made to Mr. Herron during the business meeting and he accepted to come in the middle of November. Mr. Herron had formerly served as associate minister with youth in the First Baptist Church of Raleigh, North Carolina, for the past six years. He graduated from Maryville College in Tennessee and received the B.D. degree from Southern Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. He and his wife, Jane, have a daughter, Sara Janette, who was two years old at the time.

At the same business meeting the installation of a church sign at the intersection of Hood and New Peachtree was approved with the sign to be paid for with a designated gift from Mr. and Mrs. Everett W. Bray.

Church goals for 1976-1977 were also adopted and a recommendation was approved that money given for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering be designated as salary support for Missionaries Jerome and Joann Ethredge, who would be serving in Togo, Africa. The basic support for a missionary was \$5400 and that was recommended as a minimum goal. Further, the Ethredges were invited to be at the church on Saturday, December 4, and Sunday, December 5, for Foreign Mission Day in Sunday School.

Sunday, September 26, was designated as Leadership Appreciation Day and all teachers and officers of the Sunday School, and other church leaders were recognized in the Sunday morning worship service.

On October 24 the fall revival led by Farrell Fisher, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church of Winter Haven, Florida, began with the minister of music from the same church, Jimmy Smith, leading the singing.

The 1976 Forward Program of Christian Stewardship in October

and November had the theme "Bold Believers in Giving". A budget of \$395,000 was adopted (\$345,000 for the general fund and \$50,000 for the building fund) and by November 17 had almost been pledged. A pledge of \$386,899 or 97.9% of the total budget with 96.8% of the general fund and 105.6% of the building fund was accomplished by the Sunday following the close of the program. The percentage of pledges was two percent higher than ever pledged before at the comparable time in the campaign. The following Sunday the total budget was pledged amounting to \$395,562.16 or 100.1%.

The Herron family came on November 8 and the usual "pounding" was given for them on the day before. On November 21, a churchwide reception was held to give members an opportunity to meet them. On the same Sunday, the Parkers were celebrating their first anniversary at First Baptist Church of Chamblee.

Prior to the General Election in which Jimmy Carter was elected President of the United States over President Ford, Dr. Parker had been urging members to vote against a proposal to legalize "nonprofit" bingo games on the basis of its being a ploy to open the door to larger and more traditional gambling forms. His plea, along with that of many other church leaders, was unsuccessful. The proposal passed. However, it was not long before the newspapers were carrying reports of bingo games being played under questionable conditions that seemed to have known gambler connections.

The joint Thanksgiving service with the First United Methodist Church of Chamblee was held in the First Baptist sanctuary with Dr. Parker preaching. The joint Adult Choirs were led by Mrs. Janet Cauthen of First United Methodist.

The Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions, November 28 to December 5, culminated in the visit of the Ethredges. The Lottie Moon goal of \$5400, needed to sponsor the Ethredges, was exceeded by the congregation, thus achieving the aim of sponsoring the church's own missionaries.

Other activities of the Christmas season were the twelfth annual Christmas Party, the Youth Choir presentation of *Love Came Down*, the Adult Choir presentation of *Christmas Oratorio*, and the Christmas Eve vesper service.

Deaths of Members - 1976

J.B. Phillips - January
Grady S. Burns - February 1
Mrs. A.B. Baird - March

Mrs. Claude (Velvie) Wallace - July 17
David Timothy Lord - August
Mrs. W.M. Partin

Mrs. Jim F. (Martha) Gafford - October 16 Mrs. Joann Carol Lathem - November
Mrs. S.L. Price - November

The year 1977 began with January Bible Study on January 2-5 with Dr. Earl Davis, pastor of First Baptist Church, Memphis, teaching *The Book of Romans*. A total of 239 attended with 171 in average attendance.

Forty-three people reported that they had read the Bible through in 1976 and new emphasis was placed on reading the Bible through in 1977.

Art Herron announced that a major recreational activity would be planned for each month. The first seven months of 1977 began with ice skating in January and ended with a picnic and field day at Mathis Dairy on July 4.

At the January 19, 1977, business meeting a Mother's Day Out Program was approved for a three-months trial. The charge was to be one dollar per hour or fourteen dollars per month for 10 A.M. to 2 P.M. each Friday. The kindergarten staff would provide activities for the children.

Baptist Men's Day was observed on January 23 beginning with a breakfast at which Gene Wilson presented a program about Atlanta laymen's involvement in a missions project in Guatemala the previous fall.

The Youth Choir received an excellent rating and the Young Musicians Choir a superior rating at the District Festival at First Baptist Church of Avondale Estates. The Young Musicians followed up this fine rating with another superior rating at the Norman Baptist Assembly in February.

The church began a puppet ministry with the introduction of "Green Frog" at prayer meeting and Mr. Herron announced in February that the youth lounge would be open every Wednesday night for recreation and Bible study.

The Sunday School leadership adopted the motto for 1977 of "Reach People - Think Enrollment" with the Sunday School enrollment policy being to enroll anyone, anywhere, anytime, who will agree. The purpose stated was to reach people, teach people, win people, and develop people. It was emphasized that there is a Sunday School law which states that "to increase Sunday School attendance you must increase the number enrolled". Most Sunday Schools will have an attendance which averages 40% of the number enrolled.

February 13-20 was WMU Focus Week. The WMU, consisting of Baptist Women, Young Baptist Women, Girls in Action, Acteens

and Mission Friends, carries out three tasks: namely, teaching of missions, engaging in mission action, and supporting missions through prayer and giving. The theme for 1977 was, "Teach Missions: To Know and To Grow". An emphasis throughout the year was a "Readathon" in which members were encouraged to read more missions-oriented books.

The church sold the former parsonage on West Nancy Creek Drive in February for \$57,000, which netted approximately \$31,177, after the mortgage of \$20,450, and other costs were paid. After this sale the church now owned only one house, the parsonage on Mill Brook Drive.

The Week of Prayer for Home Missions was March 6-13 with the theme, "Our Land for Christ." The national goal for the Annie Armstrong Offering was \$11,250,000 and the local goal was \$3400. The church gave almost \$1000 over the goal by Easter Sunday.

On March 30, 1977, Norman Plunkett submitted his letter of resignation after thirteen and one-half years as minister of education effective April 30, stating that, "The evidence that God has new plans for our entire family is clear and sure. What those plans are specifically we still do not know". Before Mr. Plunkett left, at the April 20 business meeting the church approved payment of "two months severance salary plus all benefits in consideration for his years of service to First Baptist Chamblee." Payments were to continue from the effective date of resignation for two months or until Mr. Plunkett was permanently employed whichever occurred first. Dr. Parker also announced that a love offering for the Plunketts would be received with details concerning its collection coming from the Stewardship Committee.

Mr. Plunkett and his family transferred their memberships to Briarlake Baptist Church in the interim between jobs and a short time later he joined the staff of the First Baptist Church of Atlanta.

Dr. Parker appointed a committee to search for someone to fill the vacancy of minister of education. The members were Harold Smith, Sunday School director; Tom Jack, chairman of the Personnel Committee; and Jim Cook, chairman of the Deacon Body.

The Sunday School enrollment for March 1977 when compared with March 1976 dropped from 1338 to 1292, but the attendance improved from 548 to 553.

The Adult Choir presented an Easter cantata, *The Last Week*, on Sunday, April 3. Also during April, for the third year, the church participated in "Love in Action."

Youth Week was observed April 17-24 with the theme of "Freedom to" based on Galatians 5:1 chosen by the young people. In the Sunday evening service the youth had a balloon service which ended with the release of many balloons in the sanctuary. Approximately twenty-five of the Youth and Adult Choir members participated in the commissioning service for foreign mission appointees on April 19 at the Omni. They were a part of a thousand-voice choir.

The week of May 1-8 was Christian Home Week. As previously, it ended in the observance of a parent dedication service on Mother's Day. The minister of youth and recreation urged juniors and seniors in high school to attend a conference at Mercer University in Atlanta on vocational decision making.

Many members who planned to work in the Vacation Bible School in June attended an Atlanta Association clinic at Decatur First Baptist Church.

Revival services were led by Vincent Cervera, evangelist, from May 15-20. The pastor had urged the congregation "to pray, invite, and be here" in his emphasis in preparation for the revival.

At the May 18 business meeting a proposal was made by the deacons and Missions Committee to provide a central blessing room for ten North DeKalb churches in the back two rooms of the white building. Items would be contributed and sold at minimal amounts; for example, a pair of socks would be sold at two cents and the money put back into the operation. The room would be open one day a week from 9 A.M. to 1 P.M. and staffed by a person employed for ten dollars per week and by other volunteers. The churches were Dunwoody Baptist, Dunwoody United Methodist, Northwoods Presbyterian, Northwoods United Methodist, Cross and Cross Lutheran, Saint Michael's Lutheran, Saint Michael's Episcopal, First United Methodist of Chamblee, Kingswood United Methodist, and First Baptist, Chamblee. The motion was tabled but unanimously carried at the June 15 meeting. The project later became the Chamblee Clothes Closet which opened in the fall.

The family recreation program for May was a picnic and hobby fair. Field day events were held for children and pony rides were provided for the younger children. The program closed with a Christian folk concert by a group called "Rejoice".

During May the church had been involved in the analysis phase of a self-study under the leadership of Edward Gilstrap, director of missions for the Atlanta Baptist Association. This was a project of the Long-Range Planning Committee and included a study of the

church history, church analysis, church additions, census data, the community, and such other topics as MARTA that affect the church's future. A report of the study was made to the church membership at three sessions on three Sunday evenings in July.

In June, the Young Musicians Choir presented *Zack, Jr.*, a music-drama concerning the son of Zaccheaus, the tax collector. The Youth Choir presented *Lightshine*, in which a mime searches through the beatitudes for the secret of happiness. Presentations were made in Chamblee in June and at First Baptist Church of Thomaston, Georgia, on July 31.

Following the annual recognition of high school and college graduates during the morning service on June 5, baccalaureate services for Chamblee and Norcross high schools were held in the church sanctuary on that Sunday afternoon.

The Southern Baptist Convention met 20,000 strong in Kansas City, Missouri, in 1977, with Dr. and Mrs. Parker representing the church. One of the recommendations at the meeting was a call to enlist 5000 persons, groups, or churches by 1982 who would agree to provide funding for 5,000 mission volunteers who would go for one or two years, either in the U.S. or overseas, in an effort to reach the objectives of the Bold Mission Thrust.

A Royal Ambassador recognition service was held on June 19 and Vacation Bible School was June 20-24. Dr. Harold Zwald taught the adults in the book of *Philippians*.

The annual churchwide picnic and field day was enjoyed by many at Mathis Dairy on July 4. Camp Rutledge was July 10-23 with the annual evening service following camp on Wednesday, July 27, instead of the usual Sunday evening because of the Sunday time being used for the self-study summary report.

An indication that the people served by the church are becoming more of the older age group was the report in *The Call* by the pastor that 95 members are 62 years of age or older. The Triple L Club serves this group with meetings and excursions to many places around Atlanta and such other places as Callaway Gardens, "The Grand Ole Opry" in Nashville, Tennessee, and Disney World.

New deacons were elected for the 1977-1978 church year as follows:

Jack Anthony	Roy Hall	Lawrence Pinson
T.E. Boland	James Holmes	Ernie Price
Mike Burnette	Clatie Lewis	Ralph Purcell
Wilford Denney	Vernon McLean	Harold Smith
Claud Eason		Tony Turpin

Of the above group, Tony Turpin was ordained on September 25. The annual deacon banquet was at Stone Mountain Inn on September 17. Dewey Carpenter was elected as deacon chairman for the new church year.

In August, 1977, former pastor, the Reverend John T. Widener, died. He was called to the church in November, 1930, and was reelected annually through 1936. It was the practice at that time to elect the pastor annually. During the time he was pastor he also worked for the U.S. Postal Service and gave all of the salary paid to him by the church to the church and charitable organizations.

A folk team, "Alpha", sponsored by the Georgia Baptist Convention, came to help in a four-day "Youth Festival" for youth in grades 8-12, beginning August 14.

Several times during the summer the Sunday evening services were held outdoors in the courtyard between the sanctuary and educational building.

The Adult Choir presented *God's Trombones* on Sunday evening August 28 before approximately 450 people, a good evening service crowd. Dr. Parker served as the preacher and Mrs. Parker as the prayer leader.

The annual emphasis on state missions in September had the theme, "Good News for You". The state goal was \$325,000. The first \$150,000 was committed to the regular state missions and all above to the assemblies at Toccoa and Norman Park plus BSU center buildings on state college campuses. The local goal was \$600. State Missions Day in Sunday School was observed with 557 attending.

At the Sunday School Leadership Preparation Week in September, out-of-town leaders from Avondale Estates, Rome, and Griffin taught the adult, youth, and children's programs. The leadership of all programs was recognized at the Sunday morning worship service on September 25.

The pastor reported on the highlights of the self-study at the business meeting in September. The four areas reported concerned (1) Community Involvement, (2) Reorganization and Restructuring of First Baptist Church of Chamblee, (3) Outreach, and (4) Sunday School.

Some suggestions made in the report were:

(1) Make a study of the church ministries. (2) Implement one major mission project each year. (3) Initiate three short-term mission efforts to the community. (4) Maintain information on the ties to Chamblee, Doraville, MARTA, Atlanta Regional Commission, Legal Aid Society, and the Health Center.

At the same business meeting, the following persons were elected to serve for the next year:

T.E. Boland, treasurer
 Claud Head, assistant treasurer
 Harold Smith, director of Sunday School
 Eddie Legg, member of Board of Trustees
 Frances Hudson, director of WMU
 Robert McFarland, director of Brotherhood.

The Youth Choir of First Baptist of Thomaston, having hosted the Chamblee Youth Choir previously, came on October 2 to present *The Church That God Built With Love*.

In the WMU report to the church at the September business meeting, it was noted that Gene Wilson, RA Secretary for the Georgia Baptist Convention, was the featured speaker at the program for Baptist Women. It was brought out that 52% of the people in Georgia are not members of any church and there are over 300 places where new churches are needed.

Two of the Chamblee First women, Frances Andrews and Norma King, completed training and recruited others for a new ministry which began in the Atlanta area on September 30. Called "Contact", the Christian telephone ministry seeks to serve those in the community with particular needs through telephone counseling.

In October, the beginning of the Sunday School hour was changed from 9:30 to 9:45 A.M. When the longer Sunday School time was originally set it was to provide for time lost by abolition of the usual Training Union time in the evening.

Again the church used the Forward Program of Church Stewardship in pledging the budget for the 1977-1978 church year. A fellowship dinner was held at Chamblee High School on Wednesday, October 20, with Dr. Monroe Swilley, former pastor of Second Ponce de Leon Church, as speaker. Later, in the November 2 issue of *The Call*, the pastor, in writing about stewardship, compared Christian lives and churches to the beauty of fall leaves. Fall leaves are beautiful but lifeless and church members can be the same way. He urged each person to help the church pass three tests: (1) The Stewardship Test, (2) The Bible Study Test, and (3) The Outreach Test.

On October 9, 1977, Charles Skidmore, Jr., visited the church as prospective minister of education, coming from First Baptist Church of Fayetteville, Georgia. He was extended the call at the business meeting on October 12 at a salary of \$18,000 including

housing allowance and car allowance plus other employee benefits. Mr. and Mrs. Skidmore and their three children were welcomed on November 13 with 560 in Sunday School. A churchwide reception for the Skidmores followed the evening service.

Also at the business meeting in October, the church voted to donate all the pews and hymnals from the white building to Fairmount Baptist Church in Gainesville, Georgia, which had recently burned. Eighteen plaques were still on the pews. They were removed and placed on a larger plaque in the chapel where the organ and some pews from the former temporary sanctuary are also located.

The donors of the original pews as indicated on the plaques were:

1. Mr. and Mrs. A.L. Blanton and Johnnie Blanton
2. Mrs. D.G. Chesnut
- 3, 4. Eagles Sunday School Class (2 plaques)
5. Justinian and Martha C. Evins and Thomas P. Martin
6. Dr. L.C. Fischer
7. James P. Harrison
8. Powell Edgar Hyde
9. Landrum and Almeda Johnson
10. Past, Present and Future Masons of the Church
- 11, 12. C.F. Pierce & Ella Pierce (2 plaques)
13. B.T. Sheffield
14. Emma R. Sheffield
15. Leonard Wallace
16. Emily Frances Warren and John William Warren
17. Rev. and Mrs. J.T. Widener
18. Amanda Wright and James D. Wright

The Adult Choir joined with others in the area to sing at the annual meeting of the Atlanta Baptist Association on Monday, October 17, at North Peachtree Baptist Church. The second session of the annual meeting was the next day at Jefferson Avenue Baptist Church.

George Douglas Childs was recommended to enter Southern Baptist Theological Seminary for full time Christian service. At the same business meeting where this action was taken in November 1977, the church approved entering into a contract for a pictorial directory.

The annual joint Thanksgiving Service was again held at Chamblee First Baptist with the pastor of Chamblee First United

Methodist, Paul V. Hall, preaching and the combined choirs singing.

A churchwide mission study was held on November 30. The adults were taught by Mrs. Nancy Yarbrough, missionary to Nigeria. This was followed by the Lottie Moon Week of Prayer with the church goal being set as \$6000. The national goal was \$34,000,000. Although the offering goal for the previous year was achieved, this time the church had given only \$5,103.79 by the end of January.

Poinsettias were requested for decorating the sanctuary during Christmas and to be given later to homebound members.

The Youth Choir presented a Christmas folk musical, *It's the Lord's Thing*, on Sunday evening, December 11, and the three children's choirs presented their Christmas music as part of the churchwide Christmas party, on December 14. The Adult Choir sang *His Love---Reaching* on Sunday evening, December 18.

The annual vesper service was held on Christmas Eve.

Deaths of Members - 1977

Hollis C. Anglin - April 18
Mrs. M.E. Smith - May 7
Miss Annie Cain - June

Mrs. Mayme Lu Church - September 13
Mrs. Marie Alexander - October 4
James F. Holmes - November 13

A project to buy enough copies of the new *Baptist Hymnal 1975* to use in the sanctuary was begun by Mr. and Mrs. Bob Harris in memory of their daughter, Karenina. Enough hymnals were given in memory of or in honor of different persons to start using them on a full-time basis in February, 1979. Those for whom hymnals were bought in memory of were:

Karenina Harris
M.H. Childress
Riley Clark
Mrs. Helen Anthony
Mrs. Emma Eaton
James Holmes
Lowell Coulter
John Lollis
Mrs. Esther Deeb
W. Ben Hyde
Wilburn J. Morris
Mrs. Pauline Chilton

J.C. Brittain
Frank A. Oglesby
Mrs. Pearl H. Young
M.B. Gentry
Thomas Wayne Jenkins
James E. Barton
Miss Frances Roberts
Mrs. Nanie Jenkins
Mrs. Christine L. Price
Mrs. James M. (Hettie) Allen
Shannon Fancher

Those for whom hymnals were bought in honor of were:

Suzanne Harrington
Mr. & Mrs. Harold Smith

January Bible Study in 1978 for adults was on the book of *Exodus* with Dr. Daniel Whitaker, pastor of First Baptist Church of Ringgold, Georgia, as the teacher. Later in the month on January 29, a preservice prayer breakfast was held "as a time set aside to share joys and sorrows and pray for the desires of our heart".

Dr. Parker began a series of sermons in the Sunday evening services in February on what Baptists believe about the scripture. He used the Baptist Faith and Message statement that was adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963 to help the congregation learn more about "who we are as Christians who are also Baptists."

Art Herron arranged for a course on campcraft which was taught by Paul McNeil from the Atlanta Baptist Association Camp. All parents interested in camping or workers in R.A.'s, G.A.'s or Camp Rutledge were urged to attend.

The recreation emphasis for adults in February was a Valentine banquet with the theme, "The Magic Moment."

Hovie Lister was the guest musician for Sunday, February 12. A good crowd enjoyed the former leader of the Statesmen Quartet at both services.

At the evening service on Sunday, February 19, Mr. Herron gave a dramatic dialogue, *The Follower*, a message relating to the Easter season.

Joe Hurley was recognized by the church in February for his thirty years of service as a Sunday School teacher. His death in October 1980 came as a shock to his family and many friends.

WMU Focus Week was February 12-18 with the theme "Teach Missions: To Be, To Do." "Laypersons in Missions" was the theme of the Home Missions Study for 1978 with the national goal of the Annie Armstrong offering \$13,000,000. The church goal was \$6,000.

At the February 22 business meeting the church approved selling all surplus inventory from the white building and the other buildings at public auction on Saturday, March 11, at 10 A.M. John Dixon was the auctioneer.

For the past year WMU had been promoting a "Readathon" to urge people to read missions-oriented books. Seventy persons participated with 325 books circulated from the media center and 92 magazines read. An award was presented to the winners in books read in several departments: Preschool, Jason Marbutt (36); Youth, Amy Parker (9); Children, Tim Hall (30); and Adults, Mrs. Florence Galloway (14). Mrs. Cora Lee Hyde read the most

magazines (36).

The choir from Carson-Newman College sang at the Sunday morning service on March 12 and the Adult Choir presented a program of Easter music, *The Drama of the Redemption*, on March 19. The production featured choruses from *The Messiah*, *The Last Week*, *Crucifixion*, and *No Greater Love*.

Dr. Dale Moody from Southern Seminary came to teach the book, *The Doctrine of Man* for three evenings beginning March 31. Dr. Parker stressed that the teaching of Biblical doctrines is essential to the strengthening of the local church.

At the March business meeting an increase in kindergarten fees was approved. Six directional signs and five regulatory signs were also approved for purchase and a resolution giving the *Christian Index* to all members was approved. The directional signs were placed at Peachtree at Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, Chamblee-Dunwoody at Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, Old Stone Mountain Road at the new underpass, Harts Mill Road at Chamblee-Dunwoody Road, Carroll Avenue at Buford Highway, and Clairmont Road at New Peachtree Road.

Mrs. Joyce Harris was selected by the Sunday School Board to teach a demonstration class for five-year-olds at both Glorieta and Ridgecrest Baptist Assemblies during the summer.

In March the Baptist Women and Young Baptist Women met jointly to hear Mrs. Novella McClung, who along with her husband serve as home missionaries at Stewart Baptist Center in Atlanta.

On April 4, 1978, Chamblee First was the "Church of the Day" on WSB Radio. This is a ministry of Atlanta Interfaith Broadcasters and announcements concerning the church were made throughout the day.

April 8 was a churchwide workday for the purpose of cleaning the buildings and preparing the grounds for the summer season.

At the April business meeting the membership approved a reduction of the Deacon Body from 42 to 36 effective October 1978 with twelve men to be elected for the new church year beginning in October instead of the former fourteen.

A Lay Evangelism School was held April 24-28 for the purpose of Bible study and practical training in witnessing and communication. As a part of the church self-study, a need for outreach was indicated. This school was a response to that need by helping people know what to say in a witness situation.

May 1978 was a busy month beginning with the visit of Dr. Claude H. Rhea, Jr., Dean of the School of Music at Samford

University in Birmingham, as guest soloist at the morning worship service on May 7 and in concert that evening.

On May 14, Mother's Day, the annual observance of Parent Dedication Day was held and that evening an old-fashioned tent revival began with Dr. Parker preaching and Irvin Pearre, minister of music at Jonesboro, Georgia, leading the music. The same day was designated as "Family Day in May" and a high attendance day in Sunday School with 490 attending. This was short of the goal of 620 but seven departments exceeded their goals and 494 contacts were made.

An interesting story told by Mr. Bryon Long was passed along by the pastor in *The Call* as he discussed the tent revival. "Mr. Long remembered the 1920's and one particular revival. As the services progressed through the week a neighbor came out each evening who lived in a frame house set on a hill across from the present white building. He did not come to the services but sat each night listening to the singing and preaching. The last night of the revival the man at the time of invitation walked across the street and made his profession of faith." This man might never have been reached for Christ in a traditional church service.

A Camp Rutledge rally was held at the church in anticipation of the 25th session in July with the Youth Week being July 9-15 and Junior Week on July 16-22.

A family camping week-end was arranged by Art Herron as a part of the churchwide recreation program at Davis Lake Campground near Callaway Gardens for all interested church campers.

A motion that carried at the May business meeting and was later rescinded at the request of the Stewardship Committee because of the close vote concerned employing the Stewardship Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention as a consultant for the fall stewardship campaign at a cost of \$11,000 consultant fees and a total cost of approximately \$18,000 for the campaign. At a called meeting on June 7, when the motion was rescinded, it was decided to have the Forward Program of Church Finance instead.

The Southern Baptist Convention met in Atlanta at the World Congress Center from June 13-15 with the theme of "Let the Church be Bold in Mission Thrust." Nine members of Chamblee First represented the church as approved messengers. They were: Dr. Parker, Charles Passman, Charles Skidmore, Tommy Boland, John Dixon, Tom Jack, W.O. Brannan, Charles Clement, Jr. and Mrs. Cora Lee Hyde.

Following the convention on Friday, the National Conference of

Baptist Men sponsored breakfasts at several locations followed by a speech by President Jimmy Carter at the Omni Coliseum. Several men from the church attended.

Many Baptists were concerned about the attention given by the media to the picketers and demonstrators attacking Anita Bryant, instead of the many positive actions at the Southern Baptist Convention. Dr. Parker commented in *The Call* on this by a story: "I am reminded of the farmer who contracted with a restaurant to supply frog legs for the menu. 'There must be thousands of them in my pond', he said. A few weeks later the farmer appeared with three frogs in hand to cancel the contract. His explanation, 'a few frogs sure can make a lot of noise'."

At the June business meeting the report of the church Self-Study Organization Subcommittee was submitted and subsequently approved in July. Subcommittees were to be formed as a follow-up to the church self-study for the purpose of studying their respective areas and recommending action plans. The Subcommittee on Organizational Structure was one of four subcommittees. The others were Sunday School, Outreach, and Community.

The approach used by the Organizational Structure Subcommittee was to (1) initiate and coordinate the study, (2) inventory all existing church bodies and procedures, (3) measure through surveys all existing organizations, (4) develop organizational alternatives, and (5) present findings with a recommended action plan.

Recommendations of the subcommittee were:

1. Establish an Administrative Resource Committee to become a permanent bylaws committee.
2. Continue to study the feasibility of a church training program.
3. Assign the Nominating Committee the responsibility of conducting an up-to-date talent survey and develop procedures for keeping it up to date.
4. Assign the Personnel Committee responsibility of developing and assisting in the administration of "called staff" salaries (excluding pastor).
5. Temporarily designate the minister of youth and recreation as the primary staff resource for the Triple L organization for administrative purposes.
6. Assign the following short-range studies to the Administrative Resource Committee to be completed within the first year.
 - a. Complete an evaluation of the media center.

- b. Complete a project definition and survey for a *Church Operations Manual*.

- c. Present a bylaws recommendation that includes a definition of terms: (1) council (2) committee.

- d. Analyze organizational alternatives and observations and evaluations of existing church committees and councils and make recommendations to the church body.

The Public Relations Committee began preparation of a brides registry for all marriages performed in the church since October 22, 1972, when the new sanctuary was completed. The registry is now complete and is displayed in a glass case in the foyer of the church sanctuary and is kept current.

The location of the annual July 4 picnic was changed in 1978 to the campus of Mercer University in Atlanta. In addition to the family style meal, many sports and field day type games were enjoyed.

Charles Skidmore announced the availability of the new Bible Book Series for adult Sunday School members. Classes were given the opportunity to decide on trying the new series or to continue with the Life and Work Series. The Bible Book Series provides a way to systematically study the whole Bible in Sunday School in a nine-year period. It was decided after the survey to wait until March 1979 before trying the new series in some classes.

Art Herron singled out Tommy Boland and Charles Clement, Jr. for their exceptional leadership in the 25th anniversary session of Camp Rutledge. Three young people from the church were recognized as star campers. Susan Boland and Paul Passman won during Youth Week and Jim Cook, Jr. won during Junior Week.

In August 1978 Dr. and Mrs. David G. Parker were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board to serve in Zambia, Africa. Mrs. Parker (Yvonne) is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W.O. Brannan and is a former member of First Baptist Church of Chamblee. The Parkers and their daughters, Melanie and Ann, were guests of the church on December 10 for a dedication service. The pastor noted at the service that the church now has firsthand contact with two families in foreign fields, the Parkers and the Ethredges.

Art Herron resigned as minister of youth and recreation on August 17, effective September 6, to go to Columbia Baptist Church in Falls Church, Virginia, as minister of youth and activities. The church approved Dr. Parker's plan to hire one or possibly two seminary students on an interim basis to fill the vacancy and study

the position of minister of youth and recreation in the meantime. The plan was not implemented although several possibilities were checked.

State Missions Day in Sunday School was observed on September 10. The goal for state missions was \$375,000. The theme was "Baptists Witnessing Boldly to Every Georgian".

The Church Council met on Saturday, September 16, to set goals for the church for 1978-1979. Areas considered were: (1) Developing a more spiritually vital church membership, (2) Sharing Christ with the Community, (3) Performing Christ's Ministry in the Community, (4) Extending the church's mission throughout the world, (5) Renewing the church's life through improved operations.

A sacred music drama, *Who Is My Neighbor?*, was presented by the Adult Choir on Sunday evening, August 27. At this time the children's choirs had a roundup to get youngsters back into the choir program after school started for the new year.

To get the new year in Sunday School off to a good start, "Preparation Week 78" began on September 27 with emphasis on "Witness to Win." The Reverend Roger Miller of the Sunday School Department of the Georgia Baptist Convention spoke at the dinner that was held before the study sessions.

Promotion day was October 1 with High Attendance Day on October 29 with 551 present. The month of October was designated by the Southern Baptist Convention as Outreach Month to encourage churches to begin the new church year with emphasis on reaching persons for Jesus Christ.

The church voted at its September business meeting to build a cover over the entranceway to the educational building foyer at a cost of \$9,000. The project was stimulated by Jack Anthony in the establishment of the Helen Anthony Fund in memory of Mrs. Anthony who died on February 26, 1978. Later, Bob Harris gave an additional incentive to make the project a reality and others assisted in final funding. This cover enables persons to load and unload their cars in inclement weather.

The church also approved a new salary administration plan which had been presented by the Personnel Committee for nonministerial staff. The new plan features a combining of merit and cost-of-living increases.

Deacons elected for the new church year were:

E.C. Andrews	Robert Bryan	James Cook
Rulon Ayers	Charles Clement, Sr.	Larry Dodson

Robert Earnshaw	Robert McFarland	Harold Stamp
Nick Maxey	Dave Rogers	Al Stewart

Three of the men, Larry Dodson, Robert Earnshaw, and Harold Stamps were ordained on Sunday, September 24, in the evening service. The examining council met that afternoon. Another deacon elected at this time, Rulon Ayars, died following an extended illness in early 1981, while he was still an active deacon. Tom Jack served as the new deacon chairman.

Highlights of the annual letter to the Atlanta Association were noted at the business meeting on October 18. Total membership was 2012, a decrease of two for the past year. There were 31 baptisms during the year compared to 27 the preceding year and there were 54 additions by letter each year. The Association met on October 16 at Rehoboth Baptist Church and October 17 at Hapeville First with a theme of "Let the Church Reach Out".

Stewardship emphasis began under John Dixon's leadership on October 15 with the budget adopted on the following Sunday. Prove the Tithe Day was most successful with a total of \$10,981.80 being given. This would have amounted to approximately \$150,000 more than the annual budget if given each week in 1979.

An interesting part of the budget emphasis was "Almost Anything Goes" and barbeque on Saturday, November 4, with Big John Moore (now becoming Little John Moore as a result of his highly advertised dieting) of WSB Radio as master of ceremonies.

After the completion of the budget campaign on November 21 the total budget of \$405,000 (\$355,000 general and \$50,000 debt retirement) had almost been pledged. A few pledges came in later but 97.7% was pledged or \$395,868 by that date.

Evella Scroggins, the senior church employee in length of service, since November 1958, resigned as church secretary.

Two deacons were elected to committees of the Georgia Baptist Convention at Jekyll Island on November 13-15. Tommy Boland was elected to the Georgia Baptist Endowment Committee and Leland Thomas to the Education Commission for three-year terms.

Dr. Ralph West, liaison representative from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board to the Home Mission Board, led the Foreign Mission Study for all Baptist women on Thursday, November 16. The study was on "Brazilian Obsession", telling how Brazilian Baptists are boldly overcoming obstacles to witness.

The Adult Choir as in the past several years joined with the First United Methodist Church of Chamblee to bring the music for the

joint Thanksgiving service on Wednesday, November 22, at the First Baptist sanctuary. Dr. Parker brought the message. The choirs also had a joint retreat at Georgia Baptist Assembly in Toccoa to prepare for their joint presentation of *The Messiah*, which was given at each of the churches on December 17 and 18.

During the month of November the Sunday School emphasized "Single Aware", a program to make the membership more aware of single adults as persons with needs and talents who can participate as members of the congregation. An inventory of single adults in the membership was taken and a search was made of the church area for prospects for this ministry.

Activities of First Chamblee during the Foreign Missions Week of Prayer, December 3-10, which had a theme of "Tell It Out With Gladness", included a speech to the Baptist women by Mrs. Sandra Mason, former missionary to Gambia, and gift boxes sent to the Ethredges by the Baptist Women Night Study Group. The national goal for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering was \$40,000,000 and the church goal was \$6000 which was exceeded by more than 20%. This was likely due to the fine work of the many missions organizations in the church.

The need for emphasis on foreign missions in the Southern Baptist Convention at this time was shockingly brought to everyone's attention by the report of the mass suicide and murder of 409 men, women, and children, followers of the Reverend Jim Jones in Guyana. Following the murder of Representative Leo J. Ryan, Democrat of California, and four others, the religious sect called "The People's Temple", followed Jones in a demonstration of blind devotion to his teachings.

In December, a committee was appointed by the pastor to search for a minister of youth. Members were Tom Jack, Deacon Body chairman; Larry Dodson, Youth Committee chairman; David Hyde, Personnel Committee chairman; Phil Brown, Youth Adult Council chairman; Harold Hyde, Youth coordinator; plus Trez Hancock and Paul Passman who were selected by the youth.

Activities that occurred in completing the Christmas Season and the year 1978 included a Youth Christmas luncheon on Sunday, December 17, for Youth and Young Adult I Department members; an "Evening of Christmas Music" presented by the Graded Choirs, Youth Choir and Reflections; the presentation of "*The MESSIAH*" by the combined Adult Choirs of First United Methodist and First Baptist on December 17 and 18; the now traditional Christmas Eve

candlelight service; and a trip to Gatlinburg for a winter weekend for the young people. Probably the last event for 1978 was the mailing out of monthly offering envelopes for the first time instead of a package for the entire year as was done formerly.

Deaths of Members - 1978

Mr. Herman Childress - January 16	Mrs. Wilson (Lorine) Pruitt - May 10
Mrs. James M. (Hettie) Allen - February 18	Miss Frances Roberts - July 9
Mrs. James A. (Helen) Anthony - February 26	Miss Helen McMillan - July 25
James D. Reese - April 20	

January Bible Study for Adults for 1979 was on *Mark: The Savior for Sinners*. It was taught by Dr. Duane E. Davis, assistant professor of religion at Mercer in Atlanta.

A "Phone Mate" was installed in the church office in January for persons who call the church office after 5 p.m. and on weekends to receive and give messages. Its primary use is to get a report of members in the hospital or deaths in the church family, to receive news of special programs or events, or to leave messages.

To encourage members to come to the Sunday evening service on January 21, the date of the Super Bowl, the pastor arranged to have the second half of the game videotaped and shown in Fellowship Hall after the service. An additional enticement was that refreshments were served.

The State Evangelism Conference was held at Wieuca Road Baptist Church from January 22-24, 1979, with the theme being "The Doctrines of Salvation: Essentials for Bold Evangelism."

At the January 24 business meeting Tommy Boland, church treasurer, reported that the church was in excellent financial standing at the end of the 1978 year. The deacons recommended (1) a one-time debt payment of \$50,000 utilizing funds received from the prior sale of homes; and (2) a special reserve of \$20,000 for contingencies be established for emergency repairs, always replacing any funds used with the next regular budget funds available. The funds were to be derived from the sale of houses (\$8,244.58) and from other building fund amounts held (\$11,755.42).

By applying the \$50,000 toward the debt on the sanctuary the church in the long run would realize a savings of \$147,000 and reduce the payoff date by nearly two years. This reduced the debt for the first time to a figure below the million dollar mark, but the church still would have to pay about thirteen more years from the 1979 date.

In *The Call* of January 24, an announcement was made that the church pictorial directory was ready. It had been so long in coming (since late 1977) that the church voted the next January to print a nonpictorial directory to update the membership list.

In the community, it was noted in the January 31 edition of *The Decatur-DeKalb News Sun* that the City of Chamblee was 71 years old. The underpass on Old Stone Mountain Road that had been a goal of Mayor Woodie Malone was finally completed and the City Council later named it in his honor. DeKalb-Peachtree Airport was announced as the state's second busiest and 57th busiest in the nation. The Federal Aviation Administration allotted \$1,273,580 for improving facilities in the north terminal area.

As a result of these events at the airport and increased activity of jets, a group of people living north of Carroll Avenue formed the Cumberland Estates Civic Club to try to protect their property values. Although the church took no action at that time the airport development is of continuing interest to First Chamblee because of its proximity.

It was announced at the church that plans were being made for the 1979 and 26th anniversary edition of Camp Rutledge under the leadership of Charles Clement, Jr. Tommy Boland, after many years of leadership, had asked to be relieved of this responsibility because of schedule difficulties. Mr. Clement had served in a lead role for several years and agreed to assume the directorship. During the 1979 year, First Baptist of Tococca and Rainbow Park Baptist of Decatur joined in the camping program.

A survey was taken in February to determine whether members wanted a day or night Vacation Bible School in June and who would help in either time. It was decided that the time would be each evening from seven to nine o'clock from June 18-22.

An analysis of the first quarter Sunday School attendance of the 1978-79 church year showed an average increase of three persons, a new enrollment increase of seventeen, an average of fifteen visitors a Sunday, and 129 visits and 340 contacts reported each week. Charles Skidmore emphasized the importance of enrollment in Sunday School in reaching people for Christ and church membership.

W.M.U. Focus Week was February 11-17 and Home Mission Study was February 21 and 28 with the topic being "California Journey" led by the Reverend Kenneth Glen, a former pastor in California and missionary to Iran.

To celebrate the 104th anniversary of the church, an exhibit of church memorabilia was displayed in the foyer of the sanctuary for two weeks during February. Also, copies of the history of the church were on sale in the church media center.

Only fifteen people showed up for services on Sunday, February 18, because of snow during the previous night. In his comment concerning it in *The Call*, the pastor said, "I like the description I heard on the radio this morning, a Delta flight inbound for Hartsfield broke through the overcast. The captain remarked, 'This is Atlanta, but it can't be snow. the grits factory must have exploded!'"

The Atlanta Baptist Association sponsored its first Adult Choir Festival on Friday, March 16, and it was limited to fifteen choirs. First Chamblee was one of those participating and as a part of their participation learned two anthems. Mr. Passman was very pleased to announce that the choir had received a superior rating.

On February 26, Ralph Purcell, a deacon and Adult Sunday school teacher, died suddenly after having been recognized as Deacon of the Week at the Sunday morning service the day before. His family and friends gave a number of King James Version Bibles in his memory to place in the pew racks. Other persons made memorial contributions or purchased Bibles in honor of others. The pastor announced on September 19 that the goal had been reached and the Bibles would be dedicated on September 30 at the morning service.

Those persons in whose memory Bibles were purchased are:

Ralph Purcell	Robert E. White
Mrs. Mary Etta Gunter	George W. Ray
Mrs. Pearl Dove	Melvin Green
James Hubert Meek	Martha Gafford
Mrs. J.C. Grimes	E.B. Malone
J.C. Grimes	Fred C. Werndle
Keith Cameron	Mrs. C.D. Champion

Those persons in whose honor Bibles were purchased are:

Mr. and Mrs. P.W. Harris
Keith Dodson
Jo Jo and Peaches Coughlin
Mr. and Mrs. G.T. Hall

The Week of Prayer for Home Missions was March 4-11. The Annie Armstrong Easter Offering goal was \$15,000,000 nationally

and \$4500 locally.

Mrs. Phoebe Odum Settles, a member of the music faculty at Mercer University in Macon, gave a sacred concert on March 25 in the evening service. She also sang several selections at the morning worship service. Other music activities during this time included singing by the Preschool, Music Makers, and Young Musicians Choirs on Sunday evening, April 1, and the presentation of *Easter Celebration* by the Adult Choir on April 8 at the evening hour.

The church gave some of its old hymnals to the Atlanta Union Mission which is under the leadership of J. Harold Kelly as director.

The spring meeting of the Atlanta Baptist Association was held April 9 at Second-Ponce de Leon with the theme of "Beginning in Jerusalem." Dr. R. Kirby Godsey, then executive vice-president of Mercer University in Macon (now president) was guest speaker.

Instead of having one overall high attendance day in Sunday School, the different divisions had a high day on different Sundays in April and then culminated the emphasis with a Sunday School-wide day on May 6 with 477 in attendance with twenty visitors.

In April Chester King resigned after six years of service as church organist effective April 30. Mr. King stated that additional corporate duties in recent weeks made the resignation necessary. He was replaced by Mrs. George Parker (Judy) and upon the resignation of Vera Bettis after more than twenty-two years of service as church pianist because she and her husband were moving out of town, Mr. King began new service as interim church pianist. On his last day as organist, Mr. King played a mini-concert as part of the evening service.

On Saturday, April 21, the youth had a Camp Rutledge rally with the youth from Mt. Zion Baptist in Snellville. The purpose was to inform the Mt. Zion group about Camp Rutledge and encourage them to attend camp that summer.

A church revival was held May 6-9 with Dr. Nathan Porter, pastor of First Baptist Church, Arkadelphia, Arkansas, as the preacher and Hovie Lister as song leader. As special guests on Sunday night, the Statesmen Quartet caused many visitors to attend and got the revival off to a great beginning.

A Parent Dedication Service was held on May 13, Mother's Day. May 20 was Senior Adult Day; senior adults led in prayers, read the scripture, and sat in a reserved section to be recognized. At the evening service on May 20, the RA's were honored.

On Sunday, May 27, the Young Musicians Choir presented *Barbecue for Ben*, based on the parable of the prodigal son.

In the May 23 issue of *The Call*, Dr. Parker informed the membership that a prospective minister of youth and recreation would meet with the young people of the church on the following Saturday at Keswick Park for a time of fellowship and dialogue. On Wednesday, May 30, at the business meeting a unanimous call was extended to the Reverend James Robert Williamson (Bob) to become the minister of youth and recreation. Mr. Williamson previously served at Bull Street Church in Savannah. He and his wife, Margie, have a son, Scott. The new staff member reported for duty on July 1 and immediately became involved with Camp Rutledge.

On Sunday, June 3, the church again hosted two baccalaureate services for area high schools, Chamblee and Sequoyah.

Mayor Malone informed the Long-range Planning Committee that MARTA would be purchasing right-of-way in the Chamblee area by 1980 and the completion of the north line was anticipated four years later. That was before the recent cut back in funding and subsequent delays in the MARTA system. At least it was exciting that friends in Avondale and Decatur were receiving new train service upon the opening of the East-West Line the first of July.

In June Dr. and Mrs. Parker represented the church as messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention in Houston, Texas. Later in *The Call*, Dr. Parker urged support for President Adrian Rogers and expressed disappointment "in the political campaign waged by the ultra-conservative element".

Renae Stewart, who was then a music major at Samford University in Birmingham, organized a singing group of young adults for the summer while the members were at home from college. On August 19, they sang at the evening service before disbanding to return to their respective colleges.

Again the churchwide July 4 picnic was held at Mercer in Atlanta from 5 to 9 P.M. The children enjoyed the pony rides and games while everybody enjoyed the magician.

The Youth Council and Youth Committee met with Bob Williamson in July to plan activities for the next six months. Activities planned ranged from fellowship times at the church to a canoe and raft trip to a Six Flags trip to a ski retreat at the year's end at Boone, North Carolina.

A Day Camp for 52 children and youth in grades one through

twelve was held on August 20-24 at the church.

As during the previous summers, outdoor services were held on several Sunday evenings in the courtyard with churchwide fellowship following. One Sunday evening homemade ice cream was shared and on another there was watermelon.

To begin preparing Sunday School workers for the new church year in October, an Atlanta Baptist Association Workshop was held at First Chamblee on Monday and Tuesday, August 27 and 28. Conferences were held each night for workers and officers at all levels.

Roundup days for the children's choirs were held to get the choir program back on a regular schedule during the school year.

Twelve deacons were elected to serve for the new church year under the leadership of Tommy Boland as the new deacon chairman. Of the group, Chester King was ordained at a special service on Sunday evening, September 30. Those elected were:

Warren Blackwell	Ronald Dowling	Jerry Hyde
Michael Brown	Fred Henderson	Chester King
B.A. Denney	Joe Hurley	Norman Parker
John Dixon	Harold Hyde	Don Wiggs

The deacon banquet was held on September 15 at Northlake Hilton Hotel. Mr. W. Lee Burge, chairman of the Board of Equifax, Inc., was the featured speaker.

State missions were again emphasized during State Missions Day in Sunday School and the Season of Prayer for State Missions. An offering goal of \$400,000 was set on the state level.

The Adult Choir presented *Alleluia* on Sunday evening, September 16.

On September 19 at the business meeting, the church adopted goals in the following areas: (1) The church worshipping, (2) The church evangelizing, (3) The church in Bible study, (4) The church in missions.

In September of 1979 Hurricane Frederick struck the Mobile, Alabama, area. Several Georgia churches helped rebuild Alabama churches and furnished other assistance. Alabama Baptists thanked Georgia Baptists through *The Christian Index*.

By 1979, the church's kindergarten had become international and the teachers were having trouble communicating with parents of students who had come from India, Taiwan, and various nations. Because the mothers of kindergarten children were in need of learning English, Bob Harris decided something should be done. In

October of that year, he called on Vondelle Moxley and Ann Lawton to start a class in "Survival English".

The first class was made up of one lady from India, two from Taiwan, and one from Indonesia, who were picked up at their apartments and driven to the church for English class. Dr. Parker was supportive of this home missions activity in the church and made it known to the members. The four original students began to tell friends of the class and soon other church members were needed to help with this growing project. Beth Ann Boland, Frances Andrews and Dot Camp answered the call to teach and Brenda King and Betty Legg volunteered to play the piano, for the students loved to sing and easily learned English songs. The church furnished the first texts, "*English 900 Series*". By Christmas of 1979, the class had grown to about twelve.

The stewardship program emphasis was planned differently in 1979. It was decided to have a covered dish lunch following the morning worship on October 14 and "listen to the people." Following the session in which the people spoke the Stewardship Committee considered their comments in making the final budget to present to the church.

The church voted at the October business meeting to use the results of the previous deacon election to fill five vacancies on the Deacon Body. Four vacancies for a one-year term and one for a two-year term were filled by Lee Bracewell, Doyle Chasteen, Coy Coan and Claud Head for one year and Irvin Bramlett for two years.

The annual Atlanta Baptist Association meetings were held on October 22 and 23 at East Point First Baptist Church and Decatur First Baptist Church. Charles Passman and Melba Franklin were elected as messengers from First Chamblee.

Sunday, October 24 was designated as "A Day of Challenge" in the stewardship emphasis and Sunday School Roundup or High Attendance Day with a goal of 581. A total of 527 attended with three departments exceeding their goals and three others meeting their goals.

An idea of the possibilities for church growth was indicated in an article in the *Decatur-DeKalb News Sun* that stated that the greatest gain in employees in the Metro Atlanta area from 1970 to 1978 was in the section of DeKalb County north of I-85. Chamblee climbed from eighth to third in the "share of total Atlanta region's employment".

In the national election, Jimmy Carter was defeated by the former governor of California, Ronald Reagan. Following his election, Reagan was later challenged in an editorial published in *Church and State*, the official magazine of Americans for Separation of Church and State located in Washington, D.C. The editorial, republished in *The Christian Index*, challenged President Reagan to preserve separation of church and state and asked the government not to tamper with the religious lives of school children. The same *Church and State* praised former President Carter because he opposed moves in Congress toward prayer in public schools and opposed tax aid to sectarian private schools.

Nearly 150 Baptist men met for a dinner meeting on Monday November 19, with Dr. James H. Smith, executive director-treasurer of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission as speaker. The purpose of the meeting was to reestablish the Baptist Men's Organization.

Bob and Margie Williamson represented the church at the Georgia Baptist Convention in Savannah.

The joint Thanksgiving service again was held at First Chamblee with both First United Methodist and First Baptist Adult Choirs singing and the Reverend Paul Hall bringing the message. This was to be the last of several consecutive years of the joint service being at the Baptist church because the new Methodist sanctuary was being built and would be ready for the next year.

The churchwide Foreign Mission Study on Wednesday, November 28, featured Mrs. Betty Smith, missionary on furlough from Israel teaching the adults *Baptist Trade Winds*. Other age groups were taught by members of the church. The Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions was observed from December 2-9 and the Lottie Moon goal was \$40,500,000 for the convention and \$6500 locally, a new high which was exceeded before Christmas by \$1000 and reached \$12,119.58 by January 6, 1980.

As a part of the Lottie Moon emphasis, a telephone hookup was arranged to let the congregation listen to a conversation between the David Parkers in Zambia, Africa, and Dr. Parker, the pastor. Since it was Yvonne's birthday, the congregation sang "Happy Birthday" to her. Also her parents, the W.O. Brannans, were able to speak with them privately before and after the special service.

The Children and Youth Choirs and the Ladies Ensemble brought a special evening of Christmas music on Sunday, December 9. The Adult Choir presented *Down From His Glory* the

following Sunday evening.

The pastor and Mrs. Parker hosted the deacons at an open house at the pastorium on December 16 following the evening worship service.

The annual Christmas Eve service was held and the young people went on a winter retreat for skiing in the mountains of North Carolina.

As the year was ending Dr Parker began emphasis on the Read The Bible Through Campaign for 1980.

Deaths of Members - 1979

Ralph Purcell - February 26	Robert White - July
Roy Adams - April	James M. Allen - August
Riley Clark - April	Mrs. Paul (Bertie Lou) Pierce - September
Ross L. Cochran - April	J.E. Barton - September
Thomas T. Butts - June	Mrs. C.D. (Harriette) Champion - October 12
E.B. Malone - July	Mrs. C.E. Jameson - December

January Bible Study for adults was led by Dr. J.J. Owens on the book of *Ephesians: God's New People*. An average of 249 people attended the three sessions.

The youth of the church completed a study of *Revelation* on Wednesday after prayer meeting and then began a series on death and dying. The study was prompted by their questions about death, resurrection, and heaven as a result of studying *Revelations*.

In his sermon on Sunday morning, January 6, Dr. Parker said, "Fifty years from now when you write of D.F. Parker, I want certain things remembered. I love things. I love my family, I love my wife. I love God. Whatever I do that pleases or displeases, I love God. I love God's word, the Bible. It is God's book of revelation ultimately through Christ. I think I can summarize my feelings through the song 'Holy Bible Book Divine' and 2 Timothy 3:14-17." He then quoted from the song and the scripture.

The men of the church had been singing for some time on the first Sunday evening of each month and the ladies on the third Sunday evening. Mr. Passman announced that henceforth the men's group would be called the "Singing Churchmen."

The Baptist Men met on Thursday, January 17, 1980, and had a meal of country fried chicken. Ernie Johnson, announcer for the Atlanta Braves, spoke.

The Young Musicians Choir sang at the District Music Festival on Saturday, January 19, at Briarlake Baptist Church and received a superior rating. Then they went to the State Festival at Norman Baptist Assembly in February and again received a superior rating,

getting grades of 90, 92, and 93 from the three judges.

This Is the Message was the theme of the program presented by the Youth Choir on Sunday evening, March 9. It featured anthems with scripture background.

The B.S.U. Choir from Samford University sang for the morning worship service on March 16. Renae Stewart was a member of the choir.

The deacons held a winter retreat at the Georgia Baptist Assembly at Toccoa on January 25 and 26.

At the January 23 business meeting, a committee was appointed to study a full-time day care ministry for the church and to report back later at the conclusion of the study. (The initial thrust was to answer three questions: (1) Is day care a ministry which should be endorsed by the church? (2) What requirements would we need to conform to existing health and fire department regulations? (3) Is there a need?) A progress report was made at the business meeting in March and an additional report later. A final committee report was not submitted to the church apparently because of lack of unanimity expressed in the reporting sessions.

Mr. Skidmore and the Sunday School leadership undertook another challenge, an "Adult Challenge," from February 10 to May 4 with the purpose of involving adults in Bible study and reaching them for Christ and church membership. The challenge was to reach its culmination in the revival beginning May 4. Challenges were set up with Young Adult 2 versus Adult 1, Adult 2 versus Adult 5, Adult 3 versus Adult 4, and Adult 1 to better its best.

A challenge contest attendance contest began on February 2 between the Youth and Adult Choirs. Points were based on percentages of enrollment present for rehearsal and services with bonus points for new members. The contest ran until July 6 with the adults winning. The Youth Choir had to serve and clean up at the joint ice cream and cake social held afterwards.

The adult challenge winners in Sunday School were Young Adult 2, Adult 5, and Adult 4. Young Adult 1 exceeded its goal by averaging twenty persons each Sunday during the contest. A banquet for all adult members and Sunday School leadership was held on Thursday, May 29.

February 10-16 was WMU Focus Week and Home Mission Study was February 27 with the Rev. Huey Perry teaching adults the book *Just Folks From America's Heartland*. The Annie Armstrong Easter Offering goal for the church was \$3500. By April

I the goal had been exceeded with an offering of \$3640.

In the February 20 issue of *The Call*, Dr. Parker referred to the considerable interest nowadays in the "electronic church" and quoted an article by Bob Terry, editor of the Baptist *Word and Way* of the Missouri Baptist Convention. In the article, Mr. Terry stated that reportedly the top eight independent religious fund raisers gleaned slightly less than \$300 million in 1978 with Oral Roberts leading the list with approximately \$60 million.

Terry compared this with Southern Baptists. The Baptists took in slightly more than \$300 million in their state and nationwide offerings in 1978. Southern Baptists operate six seminaries. One of every five seminary students in the United States is enrolled in a Southern Baptist seminary. Southern Baptists operate 67 colleges, schools, and Bible schools. Campus ministers serve over 1100 colleges and 6000 full-time missionaries serve in the United States and 93 countries around the world. Mr. Terry states that the top eight independent fund raisers all have extensive media ministries and among the group there are three churches, five schools, one hospital, and assorted mission ministries.

Mr. Terry further stated that his intent in the story was not to brag but rather to illustrate God's blessings on Southern Baptists and the way Southern Baptists do things together through the Cooperative Program.

Sunday, March 2, was another of those ice and snow days in Atlanta. Eighty-two attended Sunday School and Dr. Parker said that "sixty odd (pun intended)" attended a record setting short sermon. The College/Career Department spent that same weekend on a retreat in the North Georgia mountains and waited to return safely on Monday.

The Baptist Men had a breakfast meeting on Sunday morning, March 9, at which they heard Bobby Sunderland, director of Mass Evangelism of the Home Mission Board, speak.

In March and April the deacons surveyed the Johnson Ferry East Apartments for the purpose of establishing a Bible study class under the leadership of Mr. Skidmore and the Sunday School. In September the Johnson Ferry East Mission Sunday School was started. Those who have been most responsible for its operation are Jim Gafford, Ed Waters, W.W. Blackwell, Helen Lowe, Dan Sheppard, and until he moved to another area, Larry Hennessey. Others have assisted from time to time. Attendance averaged fifteen or sixteen persons plus the leaders. These same members also either

transported or arranged transportation for the mission participants to attend the morning worship services at the church.

Worthy is the Lamb was presented by the Adult Choir on Sunday evening, March 30.

An inspiring group of young people sang on April 13 at the evening service. The choral group from the Georgia Retardation Center, some in wheel chairs, gave a most inspiring performance.

Another spring workday was held on April 12 with a barbecue lunch served at noon.

A week later, the church hosted a health fair in cooperation with WSB-TV. Over fifty volunteers from the church helped in the processing of over 600 participants who could take eight tests plus a special blood chemistry test if they desired. Several serious health problems were diagnosed. The fair was so successful that it was repeated in 1981. In spite of the fact that another fair was held the same day at Dunwoody Baptist Church, over 400 still were given tests during the day.

At the April 23 business meeting, the church approved spending \$1,763.61 toward the purchase of new robes for the Adult Choir out of a total of \$3594 needed. The choir itself raised the money not given from the budget. The new robes were dedicated at the morning service on June 29.

The church also approved a bylaws change to add a recreation committee and named a committee of six members with another member, Duane Maxey, named by Bob Williamson as youth representative.

A Vacation Bible School Clinic was held at Wieuca Road Baptist Church on April 29. Members of the church were urged to attend and assist in the church Vacation Bible School on June 22-27 from 7 to 9 P.M.

Dr. Bobby Sunderland preached in revival services from May 4 through 7. Ron Hatchett, minister of music at Beech Haven Baptist Church in Athens, Georgia, led the music.

A cake baking contest for men followed the evening service on May 4. Cakes were judged in the following categories: most unusual, best tasting, most colorful, tallest, longest, and ugliest.

A Seminar on "All you ever wanted to know about marriage and were afraid to ask" was held Saturday, May 10, for single young adults. It focused on marriage and family, the economics of marriage (budgeting) and young adult couples at the church.

May 11 was a doubly important day in that mothers were

honored in the morning service since it was Mother's Day and the Jerome Ethredges were present for the evening service. At the morning service, Dr. Parker recognized the oldest mother present. She was the mother of Joe Massey who was visiting from Thomasville, Georgia. The church had been gathering tools and other agricultural equipment for several weeks and they were presented to Mr. Ethredge to take to Africa to use in his mission work there.

The parent dedication service which had always been held on Mother's Day was held in 1980 and 1981 on the Sunday following Mother's Day because of the number of families who wished to participate but would be out of town.

Mr. Skidmore announced the *Focus on The Family* film series to be shown for four consecutive Wednesdays in May and June after prayer meeting. The films were primarily about preparing for adolescence and husband-wife relationships. Following the series, on June 23-27, a study of salvation was held for adults as a part of the Vacation Bible School.

The Search Committee to find a replacement for Dr. Searcy Garrison, executive secretary of the Georgia Baptist Convention, met at the church on Friday, May 16. Dr. Garrison retired and Dr. James Griffith, formerly pastor at Beech Haven Baptist Church in Athens and immediate past president of the Georgia Baptist Convention, was elected to replace him. Dr. Griffith spoke at First Baptist Church, Chamblee, on July 17 at a Baptist Men and Ladies Night.

Dr. and Mrs. Parker attended the Southern Baptist Convention in St. Louis, Missouri. Upon his return, Dr. Parker commented in *The Call* that it would take a while to sort out his feelings about the convention. In many of the decisions there was a shift from positions of moderation which have characterized past conventions. He felt that the greatest loss was the shifting of interest away from Bold Mission Thrust and that Southern Baptists should be uniting their strength to win the world instead of turning upon themselves.

The Mayor of Chamblee since 1948, W.B.(Woodie) Malone died suddenly from a heart attack on June 22, 1980. Mr. Malone was a member of First Baptist Church of Chamblee. Acting mayor following his death was Thomas Dodd until the election which was won by now Mayor Johnson W. Brown. As previously mentioned, the underpass on Old Stone Mountain Road was named for Mr.

Malone. Malone Drive had been named for him earlier.

A class to train church members to teach English to non-English speaking people was conducted on July 28, 31, August 1, and 4 under the leadership of a representative of the Home Mission Board, Mrs. Sodderman. From the women attending, Dee Dee Sanderson, a member of Northwoods Methodist Church volunteered to teach and play the piano after Brenda King moved. After this seminar, the text was changed to "English for a Changing World". Vondelle Moxley has led this ministry at the church level, and in 1980, the Baptist Women began to sponsor the class and help with its needs.

Charles Passman completed ten years of service as of July 13, 1980, and is now the senior member of the ministerial staff in service at First Chamblee.

The annual Camp Rutledge service of July 27 followed the two weeks of camp. Bob Williamson served as camp director. Dr. Parker served as camp pastor during Junior Week. Young Adult I went to Camp Rutledge for a weekend retreat August 19 and 20.

Again during the summer of 1980 a series of outdoor services was held.

An enjoyable evening service was held on August 17 as a "Praising" with music and singers selected by the congregation. There were solos, duets, quartets, a ladies ensemble, and congregation singing. Favorite hymns included, "Amazing Grace", "Victory in Jesus", "In the Garden", "Sweet, Sweet Spirit", "Pass It On", "He's Everything to Me", and "How Great Thou Art".

Dr. and Mrs. Charles Shirley, former missionaries to Argentina, joined the church in August. Dr. Shirley filled the pulpit on several occasions in the absence of the pastor. Mrs. Shirley led the adults in the Foreign Mission Study for 1980 by teaching the book, *Missions For Tomorrow*. As a member of the staff of the Christian Council of Metropolitan Atlanta, Dr. Shirley ministered to ethnic groups and assisted in refugee resettlement in the Atlanta area.

A day camp was held at the church on August 18-22 for children in grades 1-6. Bible study, music, games, crafts, and a field trip to the zoo were enjoyed by the fifty children who attended.

Three training opportunities were available for members who work in the various church programs. On August 25 a "Getting Ready Clinic" was held for WMU, GA, Brotherhood, and RA workers at First Baptist Church of Tucker. Preparation Week, including training in outreach, for Sunday School workers and

adult members took place at the church on September 21, 22, and 23. All Sunday School workers were asked to attend "Ridgecrest Comes to Atlanta" at Dunwoody Baptist Church on October 13 and 14.

Miss Dorothy Pryor, executive-treasurer of Georgia Women's Missionary Union, spoke to the women of the church at a combined meeting of the WMU on September 8. Her emphasis was on the church's responsibility in missions.

In August, the church media center, under the leadership of Mrs. Florence Galloway, received a certificate of recognition for having reached advanced achievement as measured by the *Church Media Center Achievement Guide*.

Deacons elected for the 1980-81 church year with Andy Andrews serving as chairman were:

Marvin Camp	James Harrington	George Parker
Charles Clement, Jr.	Bob Harris	Lee Reynolds
Monroe Dempsey	Tom Jack	Leland Thomas
Calvin Dickey	Jim Marbutt	Ed Waters

Among the new deacons, George Parker and Ed Waters were ordained on Sunday evening, September 21. The annual deacon banquet was held at Aunt Fanny's Cabin on September 5 with Dr. William Tanner, executive secretary-treasurer and chief executive of the Home Mission Board, as the speaker. All ordained deacons and their wives were invited.

In September, the graded choirs used the "kick off" theme to get back into the regular choir program with the new school year. The Adult and Youth Choirs joined to present a most inspiring patriotic musical, *Ring All the Bells of Freedom*.

On September 6, eight men left from Hartsfield Atlanta Airport for a Dominican Republic mission trip. They were given a sendoff from the church with a breakfast prepared by the GA's, Linda Reynolds, and Melba Franklin. Then twenty-two GA's, their leaders and others went by bus to the airport to see the men off. Dr. Parker left on Monday to join the other men on their mission of building furniture for the kindergarten and making repairs on the missionary housing. They also had opportunities to participate in nightly services by sharing their testimonies.

The men paid their own transportation to the Dominican Republic but the church helped to purchase project materials and food by taking a collection each Sunday in the morning worship

service from July 20 through August 31. Each member was requested to give his/her loose change and \$150 for each Sunday was the goal which was exceeded.

When the men returned they shared their experiences in a special service which included personal testimonies and a slide presentation. Then on October 30, the men prepared a Dominican meal for the Baptist men and showed more slides about their experiences.

Those going on the mission trip, in addition to Dr. Parker, were Chip Andrews, John Dixon, Tom Jack, Dave Rogers, Charles Clement, Jr., Bob Harris, Bud Maswell, and Harold Hyde.

While Dr. Parker was away, the Sunday morning pulpit guest Dr. Don Hammer, director of the Metropolitan Missions Department of the Associational Missions Division of the Home Mission Board. Dr. Julian Pipkin, director of Church Services and Development Division of the Georgia Baptist Convention, preached at the evening service.

The Forward Program of Church Finance was used again in pledging the budget for 1981. Under the leadership of Robert Prator, a schedule to pledge the budget of \$435,000 began with Acknowledgement Day on October 19, budget adoption on October 26, Prove the Tithes Day on November 2, Commitment Day on November 9, and Victory Day on November 16. The amount pledged by December 2 was approximately the same as the previous year's pledge, \$389,231.96 or 89%.

On Sunday, October 19, Mr. Skidmore, Harold Smith, director of the Sunday School, and Tom Jack, director of the Adult Division, introduced the program of growth adjustment to the Adult Division by having Jim Neyland, minister of education of Second-Ponce de Leon Baptist Church, speak to all adults during the Sunday School hour.

As a followup, the Adult Division was totally reorganized and effective January 11, 1981, began under the new structure with the purpose of using "Flakes' Formula" for Sunday School growth to reach more people in the Chamblee area for Bible study and worship.

Later in January 1981 many of the Sunday School teachers and officers attended the Growth Spiral Clinic at Second-Ponce de Leon to be instructed by Andy Anderson of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

Dr. Parker completed his fifth year as pastor at the November 25

services. The membership presented two rockers and a silver tray to Dr. and Mrs. Parker.

The joint Thanksgiving service with the First United Methodists held in their new sanctuary on Wednesday, November 26, with Dr. Parker preaching and the combined choirs singing.

The previous Sunday at the evening service another "Praising" and Thanksgiving service was enjoyed.

The Georgia Baptist Convention met at Rehoboth Baptist Church in November with the Reverend Ches Smith of First Baptist Church, Tifton, being elected president. Prior to the convention, the Pastors Conference met and several men from Chamblee assisted by ushering. Dr. Parker, as president of the Pastors Conference, presided. Dr. J.J. Owens, professor of Old Testament at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, brought the message, "A Study of Phillipians." Dr. Parker was elected chairman on Order of Business for the 1981 session of the Georgia Baptist Convention which will meet in Roswell Street Church in Marietta on November 9-11, 1981.

The Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions was November 30 to December 7 with the theme, "My World, My Life, My Witness". The church goal was \$6500 and national goal was \$45,000,000. Although the collection didn't reach the tremendous success of the previous year, over \$7000 was given. On the national level the goal wasn't quite reached. A collection of \$44,700,339 or 99.3% was received when books were closed on May 31, 1981. As a part of the emphasis, the pastor again talked to David and Yvonne Parker over the phone to Zambia, Africa, and had wanted to also talk with the Ethredges but they were not readily accessible.

Another missionary family became friends of the First Baptist Chamblee membership through the mission trip to the Dominican Republic. Millie Douglas and her daughter, Ann, with whom the men from First Chamblee stayed while in the Dominican Republic are now remembered along with the Parkers and Ethredges. The Douglasses have recently decided to return to the states for Mrs. Douglas to attend school.

W.O. Brannan was added to the active deacon group to fill a vacancy.

As the Christmas season approached, the annual Christmas party was held for the children on December 10. The Young Musicians Choir presented *Once Upon A Night*, a dramatic presentation of the Christmas story, on December 14. The Adult Choir sang *Unto Us A*

Child Is Born on December 21. Adult and Youth Choir members who were in town were asked to sing at the annual Christmas Eve candlelight service.

In the midst of all the Christmas activity the congregation was shocked by the resignation of Dr. Parker. After the evening service on December 21, he read his letter of resignation, stating that he had accepted a call to become pastor of the First Baptist Church of Brunswick, Georgia. He also asked that his responsibilities end following the morning service on January 11, 1981.

In Dr. Parker's sermon the Sunday following his resignation he challenged the congregation to three charges:

1. Rally around. Lend strength to the Sunday School. Change is never easy. The record of the last thirteen years is not good. The church lost twenty-five people each year for thirteen years.

2. We are ready to do something about the white building. It is time to resolve that situation. It would be nice to restore it if we had \$100,000 but that is not the best usage of money. As a witness to the community it needs to be moved. I urge you to settle this.

3. Be open to new ideas. The MARTA station won't make the difference. A new pastor won't do it. My dream is that housing for senior citizens be built on this property. It could be done for almost \$10,000 of your own money. The area is already zoned for high rise buildings. It is not in the way of the airport. It would be adjacent to MARTA for transportation and the church for worship."

In added comments Dr. Parker said, "Give the pastor a fair chance. If this is to be the church God wants it to be, you have to pay enough. Don't misunderstand, I'm not talking about money. I've been happy in a church that pays \$50 a week but pay needs to be in prayers. Pray for your preacher. He won't stay unless you pray for him. When I talked to the new church I told them: Pray for me and my family. Pay me by being my friend. Ask me to come to your home and speak to one another."

He continued by saying, "I believe in 1981 you can have as the Bible says, a new song." In referring to his scripture for the morning, Revelation 21, Dr. Parker concluded by saying, "God will give you a new life and new spirit if you will trust him."

An answer to prayer was the news on December 31, 1980, that the Housing Authority of DeKalb County approved use of the community center at 2248 Johnson Ferry Road for six months beginning January 11, 1981. The mission Sunday School had been meeting at any place it could, in apartments, outside, or on the bus.

This news of permission was greatly welcomed particularly by those working closely with the mission.

The treasurer's report for the year, January-December 1980 showed a church debt at the end of the year of \$857,105.03. The membership as of Dr. Parker's leaving was 1979.

Deaths of Members - 1980

Donald Garmon - January 6
Mrs. Anna Tatum - January 23
Mrs. Sue King - May
Robert Taylor - April
Mrs. Maggie Sexton - May

W.B. Malone - June 22
Joe Hurley - October
N.C. Williams - November
Dawson Lord - December

A special business meeting was held after the morning worship service on January 19 to elect a pulpit committee. Those elected were E.C. Andrews, T.E. Boland, John Dixon, Fred Henderson, Mrs. Cora Lee Hyde, Tom Jack, and Harold Smith.

January Bible Study was taught by Dr. Charles Lloyd, pastor of First Baptist Church of Marietta, on *Phillipians: Rejoice in the Lord*. The youth had January Bible Study in February at Atlanta Baptist Assembly. Their study was led by Rick Dill, minister of youth for Wieuca Road Baptist Church.

At a special business meeting on February 4, a motion was passed to tear down the white building. The contractor was to remove the building completely and grass the area. A work day was held on Saturday, February 7, to remove the shrubbery and the materials stored inside the building. Interested members were also given the opportunity to get a part of the building as a memento. The work was completed by March 8. The bell in the white building had been removed in August 1980 and placed in the church foyer until a decision is made on where it will be placed.

The Atlanta Association Home Mission Study 1981 for adults was taught by Carolyn Mobley, missionary for the Home Mission Board and field work coordinator for the Atlanta Baptist Association. The subject was "Mission Possible."

Twenty-two persons were awarded certificates for having read the Bible through in 1980. It was especially noted that Mrs. A.J. Turpin has read the Bible through for each of the last twenty-one years.

Charles Skidmore presented his letter of resignation as minister of education on February 15 to be effective March 1, 1981, to become an associate in the Sunday School Department of the Georgia Baptist Convention. Since the staff would have been down

to two members, Mr. Skidmore consented when called on April 8 to serve as interim minister of education on a part-time basis until a new pastor comes on the field. Because of some of the Sunday School leadership being on the Pulpit Committee and because of the reorganization of the Adult Division of Sunday School it was felt that Mr. Skidmore's expertise was particularly needed at this time.

The Brotherhood and WMU sponsored a churchwide home missions roast beef dinner on March 2. Eddie Gilstrap, director of missions for the Atlanta Baptist Association spoke. This was a part of the observance of the Week of Prayer for Home Missions. The goal of the church for the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering was set at \$3750 which was exceeded. The national goal was \$17,250,000.

A BSU Impact Team from Georgia State University led the evening service and afterwards youth fellowship on March 8 as a beginning of Youth Week Activities. The youth had other study and recreational activities on three other nights.

On Wednesday night, March 11, the church called Dr. Clarence Sessions to serve as interim pastor. Dr. Sessions had recently served in the same capacity at First Baptist Church of Snellville. Dr. Sessions is a native Georgian, a graduate of Mercer University in Macon and Southern Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. He had served pastorates in Georgia and Kentucky and was pastor at Woodland Hills and Beecher Hills in Atlanta for nearly thirty years, serving Beecher Hills from 1945 to 1968. Other interim pastorates he has served are Norton Park and Green Acres in Smyrna, Sylvan Hills of Atlanta, and Mountain Park of Stone Mountain. Dr. Sessions agreed to serve First Chamblee on Sunday plus two other days a week plus special occasions when needed.

Others who preached after Dr. Parker left were Dr. Charles Shirley; Dr. J.N. Evans, retired from the Home Mission Board; Dr. Frank Crumpler, director of the Specialized Evangelism Department with the Home Mission Board; Dr. James P. Wesberry, retired former pastor of Morningside Baptist Church; and Dr. Don Hammer and Dr. William Tanner from the Home Mission Board.

The Youth Choir and Youth Puppet Group presented *Jesse's Boy: The Story of David and Goliath* at the church on Sunday, March 22, and at Clear Springs Baptist Church in Alpharetta. The pastor at Clear Springs is the Reverend Bill Sperry, a former member of First Chamblee.

The Adult Choir presented *Celebration of Easter* as a part of the morning service on April 12, the Sunday before Easter.

The annual spring meeting of the Atlanta Baptist Association was held at Columbia Drive Baptist Church on April 13 with Dr. John Havlik from the Home Mission Board bringing the message.

Under the leadership of Mr. Skidmore and the Sunday School officers, an action campaign was conducted in the residential areas near the church from May 3-10. Members, following lunch and a training session on Sunday, went out to seek to enroll as many persons as possible in Sunday School. Those visits not completed on Sunday afternoon were made during the week. Referrals from the visits were made to the appropriate Sunday School departments. Later in June, several members returned to the prospects' homes to seek additional information and/or enroll as many as possible.

A parent-child dedication service was held on Mother's Day, May 10.

Dr. W. David Sapp was the pulpit guest for the morning worship service on May 17 at the invitation of the Pulpit Committee. The committee had voted unanimously to extend a call to Dr. Sapp to become pastor of First Baptist Church of Chamblee and following the service the call was approved by the membership. In his letter of acceptance, Dr. Sapp indicated that he and his family would be in Chamblee for his first service as pastor on July 12, 1981.

Dr. Sapp is from Savannah, Georgia, a graduate of Mercer University in Macon and holds the Master of Divinity and Doctor of Philosophy degrees from Southern Seminary in Louisville. Dr. Sapp is presently the director of organization for the Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention. He and Mrs. Sapp (Linda) have two-year-old twin sons, Matthew and Benjamin.

Dr. Dale Moody, professor of theology at Southern Seminary came again to lead Bible study on "The Doctrine of the Church." He taught three sessions on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday and preached at the morning service on Sunday morning, May 24.

The Young Musicians Choir presented *The Story-Telling Man*, a children's musical about the parables of Jesus on Sunday evening, May 31. The Youth Choir gave a fine presentation of *Bright New Wings* the following Sunday evening.

The first half of 1981 closed out with Vacation Bible School from June 22-26 with classes for all ages. Dr. J. Estill Jones, ethics consultant for the Georgia Baptist Convention, taught the adults.

Beginning in July another reorganization of the Sunday School program was to take effect. A middle school organization was approved by the church following the recommendation of a study committee that had been at work for several months.

In the morning service on June 24, Father's Day, Dr. Sessions recognized the oldest father, Byron Long, long-time member of the church. Dr. Sessions was the second oldest father present.

At the Sunday Morning service on June 29, Dr. Sessions said, "I want to say some things for those of you who may not be able to be here next week on my final day as your interim pastor. Sometimes the work of the ministry is lonely work. Knowing that you expect us to be something more than others, sometimes we are lonely people. As you look forward to the coming of Dr. Sapp, I urge you to support him. Tell him your name a half dozen times and he will appreciate it. Pray for him. May God bless you and him as he comes to lead you as God's undershepherd."

Dr. Sessions went on to preach on the topic of "Ye Must Be Born Again." Stressing that "It is better that a man not have been born at all except he had been born again", Dr. Sessions added, "It only takes a moment. It is a definite experience. I preach on it because you must be born again."

In the immediate days ahead, the membership looked forward to honoring Dr. Sessions for his service at the annual churchwide picnic on July 4 at Mercer University in Atlanta, and with great anticipation, the coming of Dr. Sapp on July 12 to begin his ministry as pastor of the First Baptist Church of Chamblee.

Deaths of Members - 1981

Rulon Ayars
Mrs. Pauline Chilton - June
Jack Lowe - June

Frank Harwell - July
Roy A. Wilson - September 10
Jim Gafford - December 18

First 
Baptist Chamblee

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