A History
Of the
Greenwich Presbyterian Church

Prince William County, Virginia

1810 - 1953
by
Charles J. Gilliss

1953 - 1977
by
Reba C. Hopkins--Michael E. Giboney
Early Beginnings

Too much credit cannot be given to Mrs. Gilbert Moxley for her untiring and successful efforts to establish a Presbyterian Church in the Greenwich neighborhood, and for her nearly sixty years of unremitting labor in that Faith.

Aminta Elizabeth Moxley, wife of Gilbert Irland Moxley, was the daughter of Benjamin Douglas, and was born at Newport, near Port Tobacco, in Charles County, Maryland, on April 1, 1777. On April 22, 1802, she was married to Gilbert Irland Moxley, and came with her husband to "The Grove", Greenwich, Virginia, where she lived until her death on December 31, 1858.

Soon after coming to Greenwich, Mrs. Moxley, herself perhaps the only Presbyterian in the neighborhood, began to hold religious services in her home, inviting in friends and neighbors. So popular became these services, that soon a small log building was erected to act as a place of worship. In 1810, a meeting took place in this little Church, in which a regular Congregation was organized, and if we are to believe certain records as found in the Library of Union Seminary, Richmond, this meeting of 1810 marks the beginning of our present Congregation in Greenwich Presbyterian Church, and comes down to us in an unbroken line, with variations of course.

By 1812, the Congregation had outgrown its place of worship, and the original log Church was torn down and its place taken by a new and larger log building, which was to serve for nearly forty-six years as a place of worship. This new log Church stood on the northwest corner of what is now the present Greenwich Church property, and at some unknown period, a well was dug close to its west wall; probably for use of the Congregation, but gradually came into use as a community affair.

In 1811, Mrs. Moxley lost her husband and was left a widow with four little daughters, which she could be seen dutifully leading to Church each Sabbath. Her entire life was devoted to the Presbyterian Cause, and when she passed away on December 31, 1858, she had lived to see the completion of the new Brick Church, and was laid to rest in the shadow of its walls, in the first grave to be made in the Church Yard.

Of Ministers who acted as supply in the second Log Church, none is perhaps so well known as Rev. Thomas Bloomer Balch, son of Rev. Stephen Bloomer Balch, founder and Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Georgetown, D. C. Born in Georgetown in 1795, Rev. Thomas Bloomer Balch was a graduate of Princeton, and in 1829, was appointed as Missionary and Stated Supply to Virginia. In this capacity, he served until 1836; from 1833 to 1835 of that time he was at Greenwich. He became so fond of the neighborhood, that he purchased a farm in this locality, on which he lived for the balance of his life. From time to time, he acted as Supply for the Log Church when the pulpit was unoccupied. He died on February 14, 1878, and is buried in the Church Yard of the present Brick Church. He is described as being a very learned but particularly eccentric man.

The following Pastors of the Warrenton Presbyterian Church participated at the second Log Church at Greenwich; Rev. J. M. P. Atkinson, 1841 to 1848, (was known to be at Greenwich in 1843), Rev. S. P. S. Wall, 1848 to 1851. Rev. J. W. R. Pugh, 1852 to 1868. It is also thought that an early Pastor was Rev. W. Williamson.

At some unknown date, probably during the time of the second Log Church, Greenwich Church came under the Warrenton Church as a mission, and this condition was to continue until 1867.

The Church is Built

In 1833, Charles Green, an Englishman from Shropshire, came to Savannah, Georgia, where in time he
established himself in business and became quite prosperous. That he was interested in Presbyterianism is shown by his attendance at the Independent Presbyterian Church of Savannah. Having a sister living in the Greenwich neighborhood, he used to visit her at times, and eventually become so fond of this part of the country that he purchased land here which he named "The Lawn", and to which he added further tracts from time to time until he had 470 acres, on which he raised English sheep. He also married at Greenwich as his second wife, Lucy Irland Hunton, a daughter of Thomas L. Hunton, and a granddaughter of Mrs. Gilbert Moxley, who had started Presbyterianism at Greenwich.

Both Mr. Green and his wife became very much interested in the efforts of the Presbyterians of Greenwich, and to further their cause, purchased for their use, three acres of land, adjoining the site of the Log Church, and set about getting funds for the erection of a large Brick Church. Mrs. Green consideredable of the funds necessary; a Mr. Wright of Savannah contributed generously, and Mr. Green made up the balance; the sum required being between $3,000.00 and $4,000.00. In 1854, the Congregation met to see the start of the foundation of the new Church, bringing with them picnic lunches. Mr. Spillman was the contractor and religious services were held in the open air by a Rev. Mr. Weems. By 1858, the new Church was completed and ready for occupancy, and the Congregation moved from the little old log building which had served their purpose for 46 years. However, in 1859, Dr. Moxley wrote to Mr. Green in Savannah, advising him that the walls of the new Church were beginning to bulge; that the steeple needed further bracing and that the roof was sagging and leaked badly.

Mr. Green replied under date of March 7, 1859, and requested that the contractor be required to brace the walls with three tie rods; to build brick foundation pillars under the floor, placing octagonal columns on them to the gallery and further columns to the base of the steeple; also to rebuild the roof in such manner that the arched ceiling could be used instead of a flat ceiling, and proper braces installed. All of these alterations were made, as may be noted in the Church today. He also notified Dr. Moxley, that matting for the Church was being shipped from Liverpool on the ship "Ann E. Hooper," bound for Baltimore.

That Mr. Green gave a deed for the original three acres of land on which the Brick Church was built, there is not the slightest doubt, even though no record of the deed can be found. The surmise is that the book in which it was recorded, was one of those destroyed when Federal troops burned the Clerk's Office at the Brentsville Court House in the early sixties. Proof that such a deed was given is shown by the fact that when the Northern troops attempted to seize the newly built Church for use as a hospital, Mr. Green objected strongly, stating that the deed therefore contained a draw-back clause, to the effect that the property should return to the heirs if it ceased to be used for religious purposes, which, said he, "would make it English property, as I am an Englishman." The Church was not molested, which is the only instance of its kind that is known in this part of the country.

The log building (no longer used as a Church), was, however, seized at this time and used as a hospital by the Northern troops, and about the end of the war was burned, whether accidentally or otherwise, it is not known.

On October 11, 1856, Thomas L. Fitzhugh, Michael House and B. D. G. Moxley, Trustees, purchased for Greenwich Church, from James H. Moore and Harriet C. Moore his wife, for $55.00, a tract of land estimated to be between one and two acres, and described as follows: "bounded by the Greenwich Church lot on the West and three other public roads on the other three sides." In other words, this was a narrow strip of land directly in front of and extending clear across the entire front of the Church lot, and its purchase would seem to have been extremely important. The Log Church stood in the north-west corner of this strip. Today, the Leach home is in the northeast corner, and as this belongs to "The Lawn", a part of one of the roads probably originally ran between it and the Church property. For further details regarding sale of the Moore tract, see Liber 24, folio 295 of the Land Records of Prince William County, Va.

It will be noted that Thomas L. Fitzhugh and B. D. G. Moxley had both been ordained Elders under
date of June 15, 1856. Michael House had been ordained as an Elder before October 11, 1856; the exact date not known. All of these men must have been very prominent in church affairs, for they were all Trustees on date October 11, 1856, and all are mentioned as the Elders in charge of the newly created Greenwich Presbyterian Church on its separation from the Warrenton Presbyterian Church, October 18, 1867.

Rev. John W. R. Pugh (he usually signed himself Bro. Jno. W. Pugh), came to Warrenton in 1852, probably about the time the Presbyterian Church of that place was destroyed by a tornado. He was installed November 17, 1855, which was the same year the corner stone of the new Warrenton Church was laid. He therefore saw the erection of the two Presbyterian Churches under his care; the one at Warrenton 1855-1856 and the one at Greenwich 1854-1858.

On October 18, 1867, when the Congregation of the Greenwich Church was granted permission by Rappahannock Presbytery to become a separate and independent Church, Mr. Pugh continued to act as their Pastor, in addition to being the Pastor of the Warrenton Church, until the date of his resignation on September 27, 1868.

The Church Is Organized

The following "Organization of Greenwich Church" was made by order of the Session on March 30, 1895, and placed in the beginning of the Session Book of 1894-1920. In as much as the Session Book of 1867-1894 has been lost or destroyed, we would have no certain record of the independence of Greenwich Church if it had not been for the thoughtful act of the Session in having this copy made. This also proves the loss of the old Session Book took place after March 30, 1895.

"Organization of Greenwich Church"

"The Memorial from certain Members of the Warrenton Church, living at and near Greenwich, presented at the Last Meeting of Presbytery, was taken up and on motion it was resolved that the said Memorialists, viz: G. W. Fitzhugh, Wm. McIntosh, W'. S. Blackwell, G. W. Riley, Ann Elizabeth Riley, Nathanial House, Ann V. House, Mary A. Marsteller, Ann B. Marsteller, Win. H Ellis, Jno, Reid, Bettie Low, Michael House, Julia Blackwell, Ann D. Hunton, Lucy I. Green, Hannah E. Moxley, Louisa S. Moxley, B. D. G. Moxley, Caroline B. Florance, T. L. Fitzhugh, Ann MacIntosh, C. G. Chichester, L. C. Catlett, S. G. Catlett, E. M. Catlett, Bettie Fitzhugh, G. H. Milligan, S. McCormick, A. W. Chichester, E. C. Chichester, L. A. Gordon, and M. A. Marsteller (34 in Number) be and hereby are constituted into a separate church organization, to be known as Greenwich Church & that B. D. G. Moxley, Michael House & T. L. Fitzhugh, Ruling Elders in the said Warrenton Chh. be henceforth regarded & treated as Elders in the said Greenwich Chh. & that all questions of averages of salary to their late Pastor, Rev. Jno. W. Pugh, be submitted to Ruling Elders Jas. V. Brook & B. D. G. Moxley for adjustment & discussion ---Done in Session of Presbytery of Rappahannock, Oct. 18, 1867."

A True Copy from Records Jno. W. Pugh, Stated Clerk

A true copy from the old Sessional Record Book - - - Made March 30th, 1895, By order of Session.

Teste
A. B. Carrington, Mod."

A Succession of Pastors

Mr. Pugh was followed at Greenwich by Rev. Albert B. White, who served from April 21, 1869, to November 22, 1877. Then came Rev. Uncas McClure whose term was December 1, 1878, to April 21, 1880, followed by Rev. Theodore P. Epes, June 5, 1881, to September 19, 1883.

It was during the stay of Mr. Epes that Charles Green died in 1881, and under the terms of his will dated May 27, 1880, it was found that he had left to Greenwich Church, five acres of wooded land lying directly South and adjoining the Church lot, "for the special purpose of
furnishing a sheltered approach to said Church from the South”; said land to be used for no
other purpose unless for extension of the Church building or erection of a school house in
connection with same, and under the Elders; no trees to be cut except dead ones for use as
firewood for the Church, and no land to be used for cultivation. The Executors of said will later
made a deed for the land in question, based on the terms of the will, and under date of March 24,
1884. See Liber 35, folios 49-51 of the Land records of Prince William County, Virginia.

Mr. Epes was followed by Rev. Alexander B. Carrington, who was installed October 14, 1885 and
served until April 30, 1896. This was a lean time in the finances of the Church, and matters did not
progress.

On September 7, 1896, Rev. J. Louis McClung came to Greenwich, and served there until
November 5, 1901. It was during his stay, on October 18, 1899, that with the assistance
of Greenwich Church, Oakland Church in Wise’s Chapel, Woolsey, Virginia, was organized,
with Mr. McClung as Supply. Later, due to shifting of the Congregation, Oakland Church was
moved to Haymarket, Virginia, where they held their services in the Haymarket Baptist Church.
However, Oakland did not prosper, and on July 11, 1920, was ordered dissolved by Presbytery,
and its then eleven members transferred to Greenwich Church.

It was also during the stay of Mr. McClung, and with the assistance of Greenwich Church, that
White Hall Church at Nokesville, Virginia, was organized on April 12, 1900, by order of
Chesapeake Presbytery, with Mr. McClung as Supply. Greenwich lost four members
transferred to White Hall at this time. However, White Hall did not prosper and was dissolved
by order of Presbytery on November 12, 1910, and it’s Congregation, consisting of 26
Communicants and five Non-Communicants transferred to Greenwich.

Rev. Vincent Palen Merrill came to Greenwich as Supply in April of 1901, and only stayed until
1902. He was followed in May of 1903, by Rev. C. W. Hollis, who stayed until October 18, 1906.
It was during the latter’s stay that the Moxley Memorial Manse was built.

The Moxley Memorial Manse

For some years previous to 1906, it had been the custom to rent property for use of the Pastor as
a Manse. Finally, the question of a permanent Manse began to be raised, and committees were
appointed to look into the matter and bring in reports. Some available places were found, but lack of
funds prevented any real action. Finally, the third Mrs. Charles Green, then of Baltimore,
interested herself and raised a fund of about $400.00, but this amount was finally used to furnish
the Manse, and she herself gave the amount of $2500.00 necessary to pay for the land and
buildings. The following taken from a clipping from the Christian Observer of June, 1906, is of
interest as giving the details of its dedication:

Dedication
The Manse at Greenwich,
Prince William County, Virginia

Saturday, May 26th, 1906, was indeed a red-letter day in the history of Greenwich Church,
Prince William Co., Va. Chesapeake Presbytery. For ten or more years a great and deeply felt
want of the church was a manse for the pastor. The financial resources of the congregation were
so limited that it seemed an object impossible to obtain. It was math the subject of much anxious
thought and earnest prayer, especially by the oldest and most devoted of its members.
The fund was started with the small beginning of one dollar. The kind and helpful interest of Mrs. Charles Green of Baltimore, Md. (who has been a life-long friend of the church, and whose good deeds and generous charities are well known) was engaged. Mrs. Green took the dollar and interested other friends, obtained an amount of upwards of $400.00 which was set aside as a furnishing fund, and gave the entire amount, $2,500.00 needed to buy four acres of land and provide the necessary fencing and outbuildings.

The house being completed, and in large part furnished Saturday, May 26th, 3 P.M. was the time appointed for the dedication of the building as a manse.

In due time notice was given and invitation was sent to distant friends and extended to the community to attend. The dedication consisted of a hymn sung by the company present, and prayer by the Pastor, C. W. Hollis.

Likewise through the goodness of Mrs. Charles Green, by special arrangement, there was present Mrs. Layyah Barakat, a native Syrian, born in the mountains of Lebanon, and herself the fruit of Foreign Missions, redeemed to the Savior in a remarkable manner through the instrumentality of Dr. Jessup, at Bayrut, and who has been in this country now twenty-four years, her home being in Philadelphia. She gave a very thrilling and instructive account of her conversion and life until she came to this country twenty-four years ago.

A large company of friends, and almost the entire community were present and greatly enjoyed the occasion of pleasant fellowship which was a real benediction to the soul.

The Reverend J. Royall Cooke

Late in 1906, Rev. J. Royall Cooke came to Greenwich and served for two years as Supply, before being regularly installed as Pastor in December, 1908. He has the distinction of having served in this church for a period of 33 years, until his retirement on December 15, 1941.

Mr. Cooke found his congregation scattered and somewhat divided. He quietly and steadily brought them together again. The recent growth of our church rests squarely on the foundation that he built with patience and maintained in the face of many discouragements down across the years.
Mr. Cooke spoke last at Greenwich on October 10, 1948, when Mr. Winn was installed as pastor and the Sunday School Building was dedicated. He died at his home "Mt. Ephraim", near Goldvein, Virginia, on May 16, 1949.

The cherry communion table now in use in the church was given by his friends as a memorial. His most real memorial is in the grateful memories cherished in the hearts of those in the congregation who remember his ministry.

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The Reverend Thomas K. Mowbray

There was no pastor following Mr. Cooke's resignation until May 14, 1944, when Rev. Thomas K. Mowbray was installed. An expert court stenographer who entered the ministry in his mature years, Mr. Mowbray held a brief but vigorous pastorate at Greenwich. He was an untiring visitor, paying little attention to the physical handicaps under which he labored. The initial impetus toward the Sunday School Building came from him though he did not stay to see it started. He resigned on May 1, 1946.

Following Mr. Mowbray's resignation, the church was supplied by Mr. William Ramkey, a student at Union Theological Seminary. Stirrings of new life in the church were evident under his leadership, culminating in the building program described below.

The Sunday School Building

For many, many years, the church had no separate building for use of the Sunday School; the various classes of which were taught in the Church building proper. For a long period, due to bad roads in the community, it had been the custom to close the Sunday School for three months during the Winter, but with coming of the automobile, good roads came into being and the closing period for the Winter months was discontinued. By 1948, it was found that the Church building could not accommodate the number of scholars, and further accommodations would have to be found.

Another feature which gave some concern, was the absence of an adequate place to hold suppers or entertainments. It is true that the Modern Woodmen would always kindly let us have the use of their hall across the road, but this building was simply a primitive old school house, which had been roughly fitted up, and was really too small to accommodate any large gathering.

Accordingly, about February of 1948, the Congregation began to agitate the question of putting up a building on their own property, to serve the purpose of a Hall for the Sunday School. Plans were drawn up for a two story structure 36 x 60 feet; the lower floor to contain hall, kitchen and heating plant, and the upper floor to have a narrow hall running from front to rear and ending in a large room across the building. Three rooms for scholars were on each side of this hall. This building was to be located between the grave yard fence and the public road on the West, and the front was to be on line with the front of the Church. In order not to detract from the appearance of the Church by looming too
high, the lower floor was placed four or five feet below the surface of the ground. Construction was of cinder block, and allowance was made for later placing a veneer of some kind over same. The cost was approximately $12,000.00, but much work and material was donated by some members of the Congregation. Home Missions contributed $1000.00 to this cause. Dedication of the Hall was made on October 10, 1948.

The Reverend Albert C. Winn

On October 10, 1948, Rev. Albert C. Winn was installed Pastor of Greenwich Church, on the same day the Sunday School Building was dedicated. During the five years of his pastorate, the church was the center of Potomac Rural Parish, which included also the Bealeton, Brentsville, and Jehoash (Catlett) Presbyterian Churches.

Under the Larger Parish Plan, students from Union Theological Seminary alternated with Mr. Winn, enabling each of the four churches to have services each Sunday. A Parish Council was formed, and various cooperative projects were carried out. Designed to provide supervised field training for the Seminary students and to help small rural churches at the same time, this plan attracted attention all over the Assembly and was featured in the moving picture Seedtime and Harvest, which had a wide circulation throughout the South. Students who served in Greenwich Church under this plan were: Mr. William Ramkey, Mr. Charles Book, Mr. Tom Foley, Mr. Joseph Flora, Mr. Charles Barnett, and Mr. Neil Leach.

A congregational meeting on March 8, 1953, accepted Mr. Winn's resignation as pastor, to take effect the end of May of the same year.

Rev. Albert C. Winn, Out-going Pastor

The New Manse

In the Spring of 1951, it being considered no longer economical to put further repairs on the 45-year-old Manse; the Congregation decided it would be better to sell the same and to put up a new building. Other features which brought this decision, were the excessive cost of installing an adequate heating system, and also the flat ground upon which the Manse stood, which defied drainage in Winter. Accordingly a purchaser for $11,700.00 having been found, possession was given on May 1st.

A lot about a half mile further east from the site of the old manse was given by Raymond Spittle
and his wife, and on this land, a new manse was erected at a cost of $18,000.00. The manse is of stone veneer construction, a story and a half in height. Eight rooms and two baths are provided in such fashion that a pastor with a small family can have a complete apartment on the first floor, while a larger family can utilize the two upstairs bedrooms as well. Automatic heat, a pine-paneled study, a model kitchen with all the latest conveniences, a full basement and under-the-porch garage—all combine to make the manse one of the most beautiful and convenient in the South. It was dedicated with a simple service on August 2, 1951.

The Church Building Itself

Our history would hardly be complete without some thing regarding the interior and exterior of Greenwich Church

On some very early date, probably soon after completion of the new Church in 1858, a pipe organ was placed in the arched space directly back of the pulpit. Being before the days of electricity in the community, this organ had to be pumped by hand, and Elder George Wood recounts how this used to be his job when a boy. Considerable trouble was experienced by mice building nests in the organ, and soon after 1900, when a part of the ceiling fell, the organ was totally ruined. The ceiling was soon replaced with a metal one, and on November 22, 1903, the Session instructed the Ladies' Aid Society (forerunner of the Woman's Auxiliary), to purchase a new reed organ; the old organ to be taken in as $50.00 credit on same. This reed organ was used until about 1949, when its place was taken by the Hammond Electric Organ, gift of the Ellis Family.

Originally at the extreme front edge of the platform, and directly in front of the pulpit; used to be a low solid fence, back of which the Choir sat. This fence was removed early in the nineteen hundreds, and the Choir was placed in the south-east corner where the electric organ is today.

All that can be gathered about the original pulpit was that it was massive and beautiful. Why it should have been removed, we have no idea. The Session under date of October 22, 1909, extended their thanks to a Mr. Kronk for the gift of a pulpit and a reading stand. This is the pulpit in use today; the reading stand is now doing duty in the Hall.

On July 2, 1910, the Session extended thanks to Miss Mabel Wagner for her gift of two marble tablets containing the Ten Commandments. These are now on the wall, in the arch-way originally occupied by the pipe organ.

There are three marble tablets in the south end of the Church; that in the left corner being in memory of Lucy Irland (Hunton), second wife of Charles Green, and a member of the Congregation until her death in 1867. The tablet in the right corner is in memory of Charles Green, and a tablet on the west wall and near the south corner, is in memory of Jane Alexander Milligan, founder of the Ringwood Academy. A small bronze tablet, in the center and just below the Ten Commandments, is in memory of Aminta Elizabeth Fisher, third wife of Charles Green, and donor of the Moxley Memorial Manse in 1906.

On the outer rail of the balcony and facing the pulpit, used to be an extremely large circular gilt clock, which now seems to have disappeared. This clock had not run for years.

It is natural that at the building of the present Church, an opening should be made to the public roads, both on the East and the West, for hauling needed materials for construction. To the North, directly in front of the building, was a narrow strip of land, owned by James H. Moore, and while this was soon purchased by the Church in 1856, it was at the beginning not feasible to make an entrance to the north. For many years, the side entrances were used exclusively for carriages and horses, and on each side of the Church yard proper, were erected stiles modeled after doorways in England, for use of those alighting for services. A careful study of some of the large oak trees nearby, will disclose iron rings, almost grown over by the bark, to which horses used to be hitched. These picturesque old stiles still remain as they were.

On August 2, 1908, it was ordered that a new fence be erected around the Church Yard. This would indicate that there had been a previous one but evidently the Iron fence of today was
erected in 1908. It used to be customary to have "clean up day" once a year and at that time, some of the men would repaint the fence.

It was possibly about 1908, that complaint was made that the public were making a thoroughfare through the east and west gates; also that it was not possible to keep stray cows and horses out. Accordingly, both gates were permanently closed up, and a new gate was opened directly in front of the Church, which could be closed with an iron gate at will.

In 1952 a beautiful stone entrance was erected by Mr. and Mrs. John Ellis as a memorial to their only son Gordon, who gave his life in World War 11.

In the same year damage caused by termites led to an extensive repair and renovation program in the church building. The entire floor, which had been of wide pine boards, had to be removed, and new joists were laid. Most of the wainscoating had to be replaced. While the floor was removed, an automatic furnace was installed. Then new oak flooring was laid on a substantial sub-floor. A center aisle replaced the old double aisles which led directly from each door to the front of the church. The church was lightened by changing the pews and wainscoating from mahogany to ivory in color. The pulpit furniture was refinished and in some cases replaced. Carpeting and choir curtains, given by The Women of the Church, completed the redecoration. The result is a place of quiet reverence and radiant beauty.

The Future

Greenwich Church will soon enter her second century in the present building. She faces the future with high hopes and a spirit of adventure. From one woman's loyalty long ago there now stands a congregation over 200 strong with a full and vital program for all ages within the membership. Feeling that their large and widespread congregation requires more of a pastor's time than the original Parish set-up has provided, Greenwich has joined with Brentsville to seek a pastor for the two churches, without help from Home Missions. It is hoped, however, that when pastors have been found to live at Greenwich and Bealeton, a different Parish set-up can be arranged, continuing the fruitful cooperation between Presbyterians in this area.

The Church, with SS Building at Right
A History
Of the
Greenwich Presbyterian Church
1953 – 1977

Resource Material:

Sessional Reports
W.O.C. Histories
Church Bulletins
Memorial Records
Preface

This is a simple narrative of 24 years of worship, work and fellowship at Greenwich Presbyterian Church. It is intended as an addition to the admirable work of Mr. Gilliss who so very ably pioneered the original effort to record our history. Review of various written records in the church provided the foundation of facts upon which we have tried to create a truthful account. It is recognized that no two people will see things in exactly the same light. For instance, there are events in our history which appeared insignificant at first, but which seemed otherwise after they were viewed for their contribution to the pastorate tenures, the addition of facilities, devotion practices, fellowship, and most importantly, the faith of the congregation. This narrative will have served an interesting historical purpose if it provides a glimpse of the unique characteristics of the congregation. The diversity of our membership, such as long-standing family membership, new families from across the country, a full variety of occupations and hobbies, and a generous share of independence to serve God in our individual ways, perhaps contribute to our relatively informal and close-knit character.

This continuing history of our church following Rev. Winn’s ministry, embraces the tenures of five full-time pastors and is in segments dated accordingly. Intervals between pastors are also significant because during these times good leadership with the support of the congregation was evidenced by continued steady attendance at both Church School and Morning Worship. Laymen have conducted entire Worship Services and participated in others, such as reading the Scripture and making the Offertory and Morning Prayers.

Dedicated students from Union Theological Seminary and area ministers have also played an important role in the times without a pastor. Students, regularly supplying the pulpit on Sunday, have worked for us during the summer months and on week-ends during the school year. Ministers have filled the pulpit, conducted quarterly Holy Communion, Marriage Services, Congregational meetings, and acted as Moderators for the Session.

1954-1956

Having been in the Greater Parish Plan for five years with three smaller Presbyterian Churches, in which Greenwich had shared the services of the pastor, and a year having lapsed since Rev. Winn’s departure, the congregation came to experience the real need for one who would serve full-time. Rev. Robert J. Blumer was ordained and installed as pastor at Greenwich on June 20, 1954. Once again Greenwich Church had its own full-time pastor!

Rev. Blumer had served Greenwich as student pastor previous to his ordination and installation so he was acquainted with the church and its needs. One particular need was met by the organization of a Young Adult Class in the Church School. Today its participants contribute to a strong Church School Program.
At this time, more frequently than ever before, Family Night Suppers were held and it was felt that they added very much to the life of the church. All ages were brought together and particular programs on World Missions, Stewardship, etc. were presented. These suppers have continued through the years, and are now, as then, very well attended - a tribute to delicious food and the congregation's deep sense of fellowship.

In 1954 we departed from the usual custom of using bulletins published by the General Council of the Presbyterian Church, U.S., and designed our own. It features a picture of the church on the front and the church directory on the back. A very active Youth Fellowship partially funded the purchase of a mimeograph machine to publish the new bulletin, with the church supplying the needed balance.

It was also during this time that a more active recreation program was started. Ping Pong and other games were held in the basement and softball was played on the grounds.

Instead of the customary pageant of readings and Nativity Scene on Christmas Eve, a candlelight Communion Service was initiated with special music by both choirs and a Meditation by the pastor. This type of service proved to be a very worshipful experience and continues today.

Beginning in September 1955, our pastor conducted Worship Services at Brentsville Church until a minister was secured. This service on a once-a-month basis was set at a time which did not interfere with our own Worship Service.

Due to growth in Church School attendance, it was realized that more space was needed for classrooms. Two classes were meeting in the church; another in space near the furnace. This need was referred to the Session for study.

The need for a church sign had been discussed for some time. The Earnest Workers Class (Adult) chose this as a project and was responsible for its erection. Also at this time the church parking lot was graveled, the grounds were graded and grass was sown.

Until 1956 the Church Cemetery had been cared for through church funds. At a congregational meeting in December 1955 it was voted to set up the Permanent Fund for Perpetual Care of the Cemetery with five Trustees. In March 1956 the full plan was disclosed and Trustees elected. This plan has since proved an effective method of cemetery care.

In December 1972 there was begun an effort to obtain a platted record of the cemetery. This record was completed in 1977 and is used to locate new gravesites.

Race Relations Sunday was observed in 1956 by the visitation of a group of local Negro children singing at Morning Worship Service. This marked the first time a Negro group had been invited to participate in our Worship Service. It is to be noted that Rev. Winn had resigned this pastorate three years previously to become Professor of Bible at Stillman - our Southern Presbyterian Church’s only Negro college. He was very sensitive to the needs of this minority group and taught five years in this college. Was Greenwich Church beginning to share to a small degree his empathy?

After almost two years of ministry, Rev. Blumer resigned on May 6, 1956 having accepted a call to Newton, North Carolina.

1957 – 1959

Rev. James M. Ammons was installed as pastor of this church on January 13, 1957, having served several pastorates before coming to Greenwich. He had been called previously by this church after Rev. Cooke resigned, but the church he was then serving would not accept his resignation. Besides his duties as pastor, and because of his great love for music, Rev. Ammons very ably served as Senior Choir Director. He also served as Junior Choir Director during his last year.
Rev. Ammons initiated the practice of having as many church meetings as possible on a given Sunday evening preceded by a family night supper. Though some meetings are still held on Sunday evening, they are not now usually preceded by family night suppers.

A lovely stone walk complementing the stone manse was laid in 1957. As mentioned before, the need for additional space in the Educational Building was under study. Plans were approved for two additional rooms, a new front entrance and brick veneer. This work completed in 1959 was a great improvement in many ways. The brick veneer identified the building more clearly with the Sanctuary since it is of brick; with additional space and lovely entrance, both practical and worshipful purposes are served.

A major change was made in the method of election of officers when we voted on November 3, 1957 to go on the Rotation System for officers as stated in the Book of Church Order. This system was put into effect in December 1957 with officers serving for three years only, and ineligible for reelection for one year after expiration of term. This system allows broader representation on both the Session and Diaconate.

In order to better acquaint members with the work and program of the church, the Presbyterian Survey, official church magazine, was sent to each family. This practice was continued for several years. At present officers of the church receive this publication and others subscribe individually.

Rev. Ammons submitted his resignation as pastor on October 18, 1959, having accepted a call to the Bouldin Presbyterian Church in Stuart, Virginia.

1960- 1964

Rev. Richard C. Mizell was ordained and installed at Greenwich on June 26, 1960. He came here following graduation from Union Theological Seminary. His experience prior to Seminary included several years in the business world.

Rev. Mizell, being sensitive to the needs of such a group, conducted services at the nearby prison road camp for some time.

In 1960 there was a Mission of Friendship Program in the church. Each church family was given another family to visit within a certain time. Also cottage prayer meetings were held and members were encouraged to become more sensitive to problems of others within their groups. This was a period when much was heard of sensitivity groups and perhaps these meetings reflected this movement somewhat.
Messrs. George A. Wood and William A. Bodine were given the honor of Elder and Deacon Emeritus, respectively, on December 11, 1961, both having served faithfully in these offices through the years.

Until 1963 the church School had used uniform lesson materials. At this time graded materials known as the Covenant Life Curriculum were approved and utilized. This material was used through 1977 when it was decided to use other Presbyterian approved literature, which is Christian Education: Shared Approaches.

Until Jan. 20, 1964 wine was traditionally used in the Sacrament of Holy Communion. At that time the Session voted unanimously to use grape juice.

Rev. Mizell submitted his resignation on November 8, 1964 having accepted a call in Richmond, Virginia.

1965 – 1973

Rev. Homer T. Cornish was installed as pastor of this church on March 28, 1965 following a pastorate of nine years at Front Royal, Virginia. It is to be noted that he remained at Greenwich for nine years also, the longest tenure since Rev. Winn’s.

Like Rev. Ammons, Rev. Cornish was trained in music, and along with his duties as pastor, assumed the directorship of the Senior Choir. From time to time, he with youth who were or had been in the school band, rendered special music on various instruments at the Worship Service.

A Maundy Communion Service was begun at this time and has continued to this date. Prayer meetings were held from time to time - usually preceding Easter.
A Memorial Fund was set up in 1965 for persons wishing to make a contribution to the church in memory of friends and loved ones. Monies from this fund are being used for capital improvements unless otherwise designated.

A pamphlet on Christian funerals was approved by the Session on November 8, 1965. Practical suggestions for Christian funerals are outlined.

A building committee had been serving for some time and plans for additions and other changes had been made, but nothing had been done to carry out these plans. Because of the rapid growth in population in this area it became apparent that our plans should look forward to the church's future expansion and meet the challenge of ministry to a rapidly growing community. On October 31, 1965 the congregation, at the recommendation of the Session, voted to elect a new building committee who would hire an architect to draw up a Master Plan for the church's future expansion. It was to include plans and specifications for a Social Hall and/or Educational unit and long-range future development plans for the church property.

A church Kindergarten was approved on September 12, 1966 and served the community until 1975 when Kindergarten became a part of the county's public school system. For several years during this time it included 3 - 4 year olds and was staffed by a Director and aides as needed. For the past two years a group of teachers has rented the facility for use as a Nursery School.

Women began serving as officers in our church in October 1966. They have continued to serve to this date, both on the Diaconate and Session.

Certain gifts to the church are being mentioned in this history because of their obvious permanence or unique contribution to a worshipful experience. One of these gifts is the Sanctuary Worship Center given in 1967 as a memorial to Larry Beard by Herbert Miller, Pioneer and Senior High Fellowships, and others through the Memorial Fund.

A pamphlet on Christian Weddings was approved in 1967. This pamphlet which expresses the views of the Presbyterian Church on marriage has proven invaluable to many contemplating marriage in this church.

A much-needed new lighting system for the Sanctuary was dedicated in memory of loved ones on March 23, 1967. These lights fill a practical need and greatly enhance the beauty of the Sanctuary. The steeple was repaired this same year.

Because it was felt that the need existed, this church and the Brentsville Church sponsored an Outpost in the Westgate Subdivision of Manassas called the Sinclair Presbyterian Outpost. This was an exciting undertaking and ministers from each church alternated monthly in Worship Services beginning June 2, 1968. These services were held in Sinclair Elementary School for two years before they were discontinued due to lack of sufficient support.

Beginning in 1968 the work of the church was organized under Sessional Committees, with a member of the Session serving as chairman of each. Currently the following Sessional Committees plan and coordinate all phases of church activities: Worship, Commitment, Witness, Service, Strengthening the Church and Church School Council. These committees include willing members of the congregation.

After 158 years our church finally had its first member enter into full-time Christian service when Gerald W. Hopkins, who had attended since childhood, was ordained and installed as Assistant Pastor at the Rockville Presbyterian Church in June 1968. Gerald came under care of Presbytery and was accepted as a Candidate for the Ministry prior to his attendance at Davidson College and Princeton Theological Seminary.

One of the major changes occurring at our church recently was the adoption of a Unified Budget in 1969. Previously, all organizations had set their budgets and disbursed funds. Now with a central church treasury, all budgets are included in it and all funds disbursed by the central treasurer.

Hoping to meet religious needs of those incarcerated in the county jail, the pastor and an elder visited there the second Sunday of each month for some time.
Facility improvement made in 1969 from Memorial funds included installation of fluorescent lights in the Church School and replacement of the red with gold velvet altar curtains.

Carillon Bells and Deagan Chimes were given to the church in 1970 by Mr. and Mrs. Henry Hoff. Beautiful hymns played on the bells each day are enjoyed by the community. The chimes lend a special dignity to Worship Services when used. The wooden holder and back for the chimes were crafted and installed by Newman Hopkins and Lee Wales.

Sandblasting and restoration of the outside of the Sanctuary were accomplished between October 1970 and May 1971. This greatly improved the appearance of the old brick which had been painted over with a red paint. It was now restored to its original appearance when built in 1858.

In May of 1971 a gift of a lot and old cottage adjoining church property was received by this church from Charles G Mackall. This land is located in the corner of the intersection of Burwell and Vint Hill Roads. The cottage has been torn down.

In January of 1972 a gift of land was received by this church from Charles and Carol Rector. This land is situated on the southerly side of U.S. Route 55 west of Haymarket.

As a result of the October 1965 Building Committee efforts and later congregational approval of the Master Plan, the congregation voted on March 28, 1971 to implement Stage I of the Master Plan for the building program at a cost of $110,000 including the architect fee. The completed addition, dedicated on September 10, 1972, included a large fellowship hall, kitchen, office, one classroom, two bathrooms and two closets. The new building was partially funded by generous memorial gifts and pledges from members.

Since its dedication the fellowship hall has been used for church and community activities suggestive of its future use such as congregational dinners, recreation, wedding receptions square dancing classes, electric cooperative meetings, Church School services, clothing drive collections, social hour following church, Men of the Church monthly suppers, and Bible Studies.

A Memorial Book was given in 1972 by Mrs. Wilhelmina Rust in memory of Albert B. Rust, Jr. Newman Hopkins crafted the Memorial Table which holds this book.

Greenwich Church found itself very much a part of the Union Presbytery movement in which the 1969 General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church, U.S. and the United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., resolved to seek means for the eventual reunion of these two churches. Occasional theological differences, the Civil War and contrasting life styles had produced a schism resulting in differing church policies and procedures. To some there was little hope for mending this regrettable division.

Following variations in expressions of understanding of this matter and variations in its desirability in the life of the church, the Session on January 2, 1972 adopted a formal statement of position which essentially recognized the decision of the Presbytery of Potomac, PCUS, to merge with the Washington City Presbytery of the UPCUSA, and as such, together, to be known as the National Capital Union Presbytery. The Session position further urged the membership to constructively and harmoniously study the matter of Presbytery and church reunion and to do so without harm to the integrity of our church and presbytery. On January 6, 1972 Greenwich participated in the first meeting of the new NCUP and today continues its support.

For the first time in the history of our church a Pictorial Directory was made in 1972. Another was printed in 1976. They have proven of value in this growing church, helping put names and faces together, as well as easy referral to addresses and telephone numbers.

Rev. Cornish was awarded his Doctor of Ministry Degree at Union Theological Seminary on May 13, 1972. He had taken courses several years to obtain this degree.

Evangelism as a Good News program has been a continuing Greenwich venture. Now organized by the Witness Sessional Committee and closely aligned with NCUP leadership, as well as our own initiative, accomplishments include small Bible Study groups, visitations to families, the receiving of new members, an increase in attendance, and an increase in choir membership.
In September 1973 Ruling Elders began to greet worshippers at the two entrances to the Sanctuary, where, along with the pastor, they may welcome newcomers more readily. This practice continues today.

A lovely Advent Table was crafted by Paul Smith in 1973 and presented by him as a gift to the church.

In 1974 our church helped organize a Boy Scout Troop. Meetings were held in the fellowship hall and members of the church and other adults in the community served as leaders. For some time as many as 10 boys were in attendance, but after over two years it was discontinued due to the competition of two earlier established and nearby troops.

Since 1969 Greenwich has joined Oak Dale and Vint Hill Military Reservation in making the Easter Sunrise Service a community venture. Breakfast is served at Vint Hill facilities. Traditionally through the years, Greenwich and Oakdale celebrate together a Thanksgiving Morning Service with our pastors' alternating the sermon in the other's church.

Rev. Cornish resigned on March 24, 1974 to take a pastorate at Timber Ridge Church in Lexington, Virginia.

1974- 1977

Rev. Jeff M. Archer was installed as pastor of our church on November 24, 1974 and remains with us at the writing of this history. He came to Greenwich after pastorates in two other churches.

Rev. Archer has conducted evening Bible Studies twice a year since the beginning of his ministry here.

In the greater community sense, Greenwich through the years supported as a budget item the County Council of Churches whose main function was the funding of Religious Education in the county public schools. After Religious Education was phased out in the schools, Greenwich Church adopted as an item in the budget another county organization - SERVE - (Securing Emergency Resources Through Volunteer Efforts), whose purpose is to give assistance to the needy during emergencies, some of whom may later be assisted by county agencies.

Gary L. McMichael became the second Candidate for the Ministry from this church when he came under the care of Presbytery in 1975. Gary, having attended Greenwich since childhood, is a graduate of Muskingum College. New Concord. Ohio and is presently a senior at Princeton Theological Seminary. His present plans include graduate work at Princeton.

On January 4, 1975 at the Men of the Church Annual Ladies Night, James Cooke, a resident of Greenwich, representing the Prince William County Historical Commission, presented a brass plaque to the congregation which designated the Sanctuary as one of 25 historical sites in the county. The plaque
was gratefully received and was mounted on the exterior of the Sanctuary between the two front entrances.

In 1976 the Prince William County Historical Commission erected (with permission) a Revolutionary War marker on the corner of the church property off Vint Hill and Burwell Roads. This marker notes that in January 1779 British and Hessians captured at the Battle of Saratoga came through this village on their way to prison near Charlottesville. It further states that on June 5, 1781 General Anthony Wayne brought a brigade of the Pennsylvania Line over this same route on the way to support Lafayette in the final campaign of the Revolutionary War.

On the Bicentennial of our Nation - July 4, 1976 - there was added to the area behind the pulpit the flag of our Nation and the flag of the Christian Church. The Christian Flag was given by Mrs. Gilbert Smith in her husband's memory; the American Flag in memory of a loved one (given anonymously).

A Men's Choir organized in 1975 participates in occasional Worship Services. Its members usually number seven to ten.

Further improvements to our property over a three-year period include a new roof for the manse in 1973; in 1976 repairs again made to the Sanctuary steeple including the weather vane, and repairs to the Church School roof.

A gift of landscaping around the Church School building in 1975 by Mr. and Mrs. Stuart McMichael is truly a pleasant and welcome addition to our church property.

Our Sanctuary was made further worshipful by the gift of a brass cross in 1976 in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Pembroke T. Fitzhugh by their children. This cross completes the Worship Center.

A Conn Organ given by the Raymond Ellis Family in memory of John W. Ellis was dedicated and a concert given after a congregational noon dinner on April 24, 1977. This organ with its lovely tones lends itself to quiet dignity and reverence in all Worship Services. The wooden shelf for the organ pipes was crafted and installed by James Cooke.

Thanks to the efforts of our Church School Council, dedicated teachers and staff, we have been able to maintain a high attendance of both adults and youth through the years.

The history of our church would not be complete without a tribute to the dedicated organists and choir. When it has become necessary for organists to resign, replacements have always been forthcoming from the church membership. Many choir members and directors have served faithfully a number of years, and new members are occasionally added.

As with other denominations, there have been certain movements within our church from time to time aligned with popular religious ideals throughout the Nation. Though we have had only a few participants, these movements may have served a good purpose by influencing us to take a closer look at our own church's nature and mission.

Though times have changed, problems sometimes linger on through the decades. Consider Mr. Gilliss' account of horses and cattle invading the grounds of the church and the fencing erected in 1908. Today the animals have been replaced with transient trucks, cars, tractor-trailers, mobile homes and modular homes. In April 1976 a committee designated by the Session began the active study of entrance and exit to our parking lot. Many alternatives have been considered. Today the stone Vint Hill entrance has been widened and it is planned to have it blacktopped. Further plans include closing the Greenwich Road entrance, installing a split rail fence along Greenwich Road and maintaining the Burwell Road entrance between the county historical marker and baseball field. Some problems come and go, others .... We still get an occasional cow, and sometimes horse with rider.

The village of Greenwich and surrounding area have shared in Prince William's rapid growth in population during the past decade. With a church membership of 255 at the end of 1977, perhaps we may look forward to further implementation of the Master Plan for our church property in order to minister to all who seek this place to worship.

In reading Mr. Gilliss' history we became very appreciative of his concern to preserve for us the
rich history of Greenwich Church. With the realization that events since then are perhaps equally significant, we felt that members participating at sometime during these 24 years, those who have recently joined us, and future generations would be interested in this continuing history. Our hope is that others will also feel this same desire to record the on-going history of our church. It has now been 167 years since a congregation was organized in a small log cabin which served as a place of worship. It has been 119 years since the construction of the present sanctuary. It has been 110 years since Greenwich was separated from Warrenton Presbyterian Church and became an independent church.
Women of the Church

The women at Greenwich Church have been organized for about 70 years according to a "Historical Sketch of the Greenwich Presbyterian Church" written by the Women's Auxiliary Historian in 1939. The following is an excerpt from this sketch: "Missionary Society organized in May 1908 with about nine members, with Mrs. Armstrong coming up from Washington to organize them. It seems that later on with more members, a Ladies Aid was begun, the two societies working in the church until in September 1923 both merged into the Woman's Auxiliary. Before the Auxiliary days, the first Home Mission work of the ladies seems to have been helping build the manse at Bealeton. (Note: now coming to date - 1939) Very few attend the monthly meetings - eight being the best we can do. Our Auxiliary contributes to all causes of the church."

Auxiliary meetings were held at the manse and at this time consisted of Bible Study, circle of prayer, monthly emphasis, business and fellowship. With so small a membership it was necessary for some of the women to serve as officers and one-member committees in order to carry out the program of the women.

Beginning with a 1936-1940 History of the Church and All Its Organizations, the women have kept on file a year-to-year history. These histories are also on file at our General Assembly's Historical Foundation at Montreat, North Carolina.

The 1941-1942 history marks the beginning of a steady growth in active participation of members of the church in women's work. It also gives a glimpse of the deep dedication of the few who carried on this work as shown by this excerpt: "It was indeed quite an inspiration to begin our new church year of April 1941 with two of our members attending Auxiliary for the first time and a full attendance of the faithful few who always come. One of our oldest members - 75 years old - had walked two miles to this meeting."

In 1943 our Women's Auxiliary helped organize an Auxiliary at the Brentsville Church and through the years they have worked cooperatively in many ways.

The name of the women was changed again in 1948, this time to the "Women of the Church." This name remains in use today.

By December 1955 membership had grown enough to adopt the circle plan. The women were divided into two circles - afternoon and evening. In 1959 another evening circle was formed. All circles come together for General meetings; two particular programs - the Birthday Program in the spring and Joy Gift Program in December - are emphasized each year.

The women established a Scholarship Fund in 1963 to assist any young member of this church studying for full-time Christian Service. To date two young men have been recipients of this scholarship which not only aided them financially, but encouraged them in their chosen field of the ministry by this demonstration of love and concern.

One of the major changes made by the women was a standing rule put into effect about 10 years ago that their budget should be met only by free-will offerings. Funds derived from suppers served the Men of the Church and a community civic organization since that time have been used for projects only. This ruling is in line with our General Assembly's emphasis on free-will offerings for the support of the church rather than moneymaking projects.

Our women have presented four of their members with Honorary Life Memberships because of long years of faithful service.

Many of our women have attended Women's Synodical Training School to learn more about Women's Work and the church itself. Several have served as officers and committee chairmen at the Presbyterial level. Three have served as District Chairmen.

Today's 32 active participants in the women's work not only attempt to meet current needs within their own circles and church, but show their love and concern for others through varied community and overseas relief projects. For the church their many activities include staffing the
church nursery, furnishing flower arrangements each Sunday for the Sanctuary, serving dinner to the Men of the Church and meals for the sick; for the community, financial support and work hours are given to community organizations, and a dinner served each year to a civic club; for overseas, health, sewing and school kits have been sent besides quilts, clothing, and other necessities. Today's challenges are many and today's women are seeking to meet these challenges.

**Men of the Church**

The Men of the Church had its origins in a meeting on November 29, 1950 at which time Greenwich was a member of Potomac Rural Parish along with three other Presbyterian Churches - Bealeton, Brentsville and Catlett. Officers were elected from the four churches and supper was served preceding the meeting by the women of the host church. When the Parish was terminated, the Brentsville and Greenwich Men held meetings together monthly, alternating between the two churches with the women's group of the host church serving the meal.

On January 28, 1959 it was determined that there was sufficient support within Greenwich to organize its own group. These meetings were continued on a monthly basis with our Women serving supper. From the beginning, an annual dinner has been served the Women by the Men. Since 1957 this has been designated "Ladies Night" and most recently was held on New Year's Eve. Entertainment is provided after these dinners.

Throughout the years time during the meeting has been set aside for devotion. In addition, Bible Studies or some other educational programs have been presented. Attendance varies from 20 to 25 members at this time.

There have been several Father and Son outings and fishing trips from time to time. Some of the projects completed by the Men are as follows: a partition in the Sunday School building for an additional classroom and enclosing of the kitchen in the old Sunday School building, 1951-52; hat and coat rack for the vestibule, 1955; painting the Sanctuary, 1967; painting the manse, 1974.

A softball team organized in 1959 continues as one team which participates in a local church league. Another team known appropriately as the "Odds and Ends," which play pick up ball with various Prince William and Fauquier County teams, was organized in 1974. After some games it has become the custom to enjoy homemade ice cream and cake made by various participating families.
Each year the Men collect clothing and other useful articles for the Lynchburg State School.

**MEMORIALS (Since 1953)**

The following is a listing of recorded memorials not included in the foregoing history. In some instances the gift may have been mentioned previously, but not those for whom it was a memorial because of the lengthy list of names. These memorials have been made possible by bequests from the deceased or funds given in their memory.

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<th>Gift</th>
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<td>New Building (Fellowship Hall, etc.)</td>
<td>William S. Armstrong</td>
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<td>Sabina Hopkins</td>
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<td>Testamentary Gift</td>
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1972 Addition to Educational Building