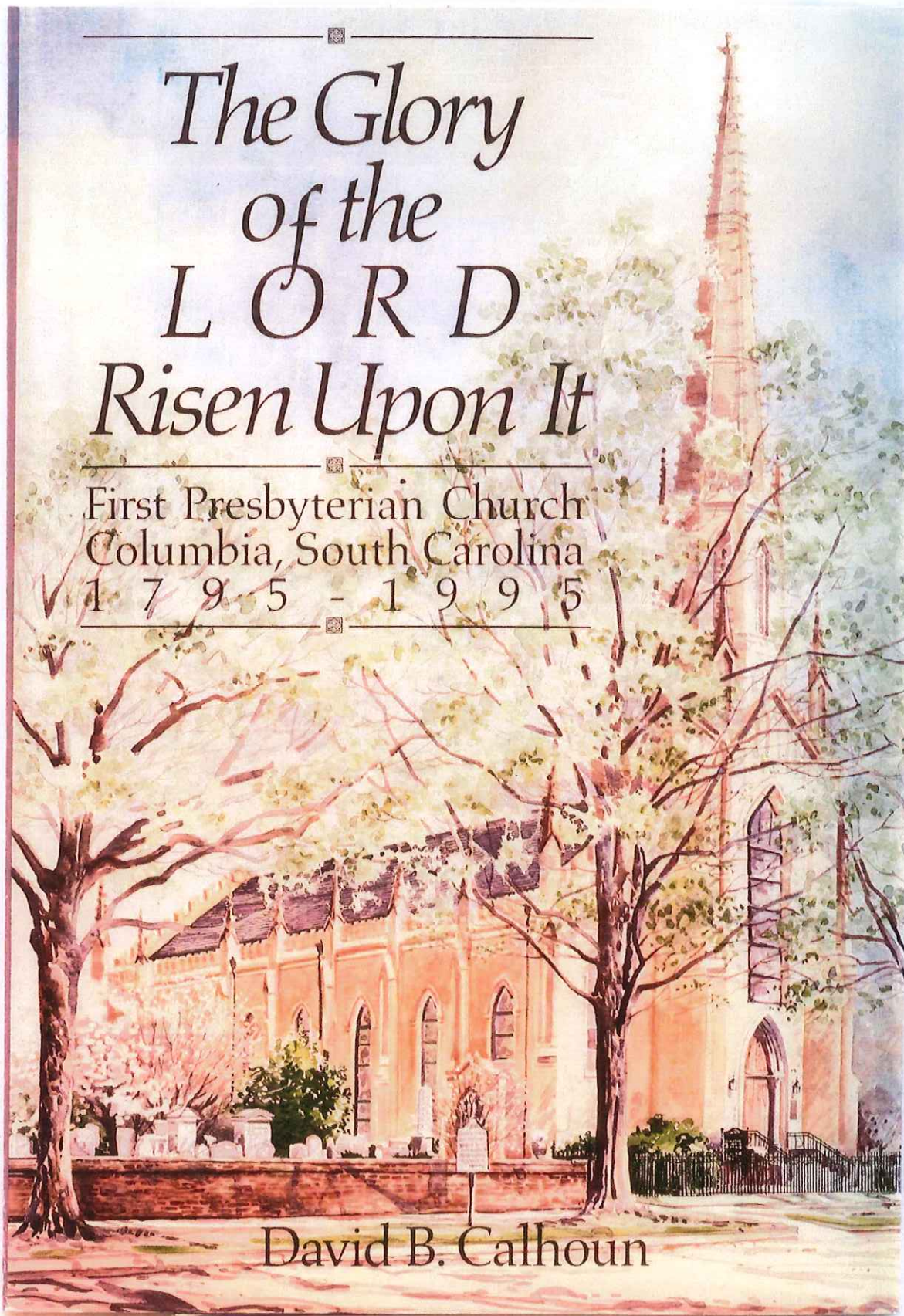

*The Glory
of the
L O R D
Risen Upon It*

First Presbyterian Church
Columbia, South Carolina

1 7 9 5 - 1 9 9 5

David B. Calhoun



The Glory of the L O R D Risen Upon It

First Presbyterian Church
Columbia, South Carolina
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DAVID B. CALHOUN

This book is a masterful blend of the church's theology and history from its founding in 1795 to its bicentennial year, as well as a chronicle of its people, "the family of God."

David Calhoun has skillfully interwoven such events as the construction of buildings with sketches of its pastors and other leaders of the church. Not forgotten are those men, women, and children who have gathered for generations at the corner of Marion and Lady streets to worship God. Throughout the book runs the author's theme — the progress of the work of God at First Presbyterian Church.

This history, as expressed by Dr. Calhoun in the Preface, is more than a mere account of the events of the First Presbyterian Church. It reflects "the glory of the Lord risen upon it."

Dust Jacket Color Illustration by Erica Hoyt



DAVID B. CALHOUN

David Calhoun is Professor of Church History at Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri. He holds Master of Theology degrees from Covenant Seminary (Old Testament) and Princeton Theological Seminary (New Testament). His Doctor of Philosophy degree is from Princeton in the field of church history. Dr. Calhoun grew up in Winnsboro and Sumter, South Carolina. He is married to the former Anne Fleece of Columbia, and they are the parents of two grown children.

Dr. Calhoun is a Presbyterian minister and former missionary. He is Dean of the Iona Centres for Theological Study in the West Indies and President of Presbyterian Mission International. He also is the author of a two-volume history of Princeton Seminary, published by the Banner of Truth Trust in Edinburgh, Scotland.

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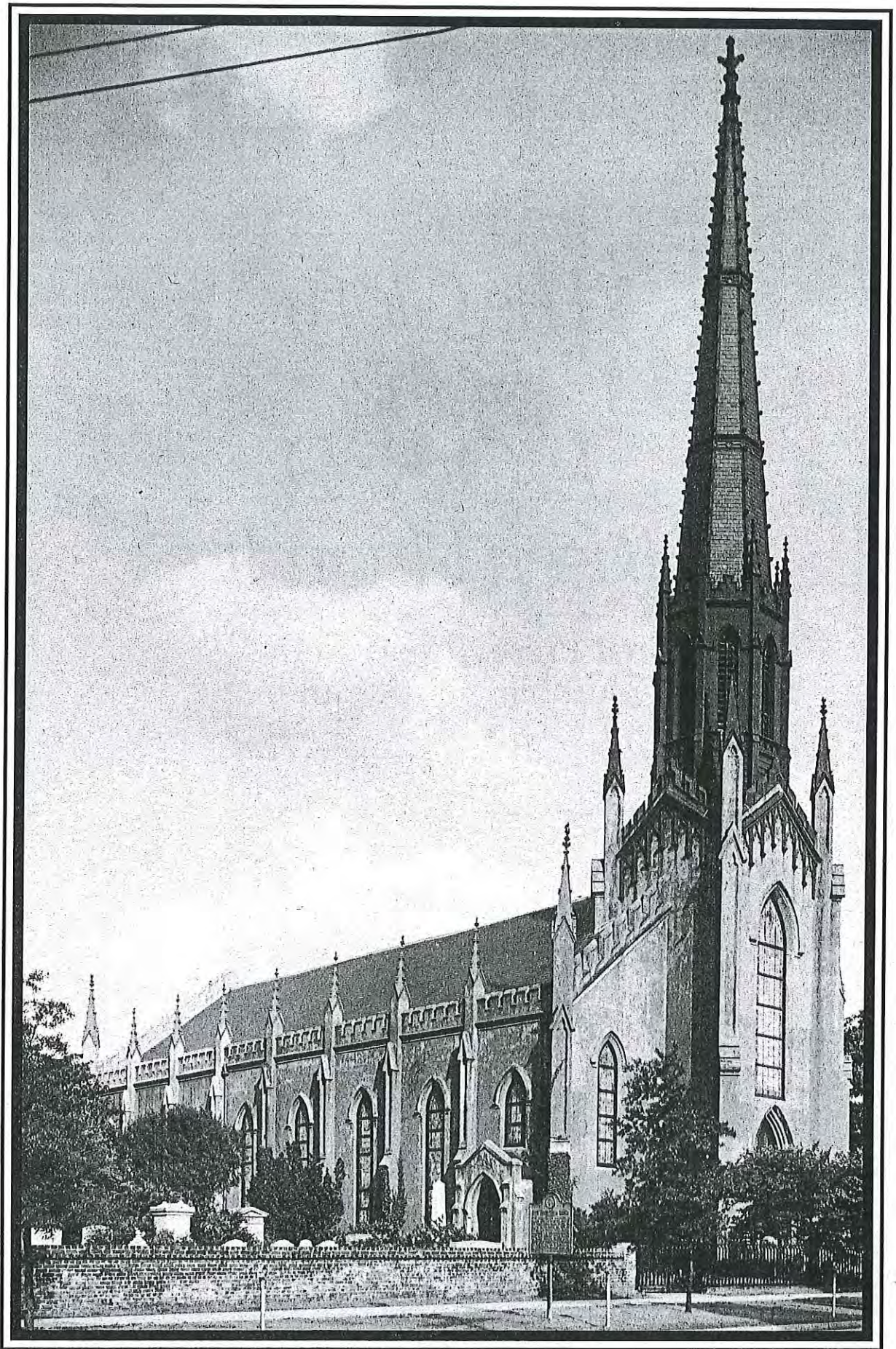
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David B. Calhoun

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Columbia, South Carolina

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The First Presbyterian Church, Columbia, South Carolina

As for this building, beautiful as it may be in our eyes, let it please us to call it only a plain Presbyterian meeting house. The glory we see in it, let it not be the glory of its arches and its timbers; not the glory of its lofty and graceful spire, pointing ever upwards to that home the pious shall find [with] God; not the glory of this chaste pulpit, with its delicate tracery and marble whiteness; not the glory found in the eloquence or learning of those who, through generations, shall here proclaim the gospel; nor yet the glory traced in the wealth and fashion, refinement and social position of those who throng its courts. But let its glory be *The Glory of the Lord Risen Upon It!* Let its glory be the promises of the covenant engraved upon its walls, which are yea and amen in Christ Jesus. Let its glory be found in the purity, soundness, and unction of its pastors; in the fidelity and watchfulness of its elders; in the piety and godliness of its members. Let its glory be as a birthplace of souls, where shall always be heard the sobs of awakened penitence and the songs of newborn love. Let its glory be the spirituality of its worship, its fervent prayers, its adoring praise, and the simplicity and truth of its ordinances and sacraments. Let its glory be the communion of saints, who here have fellowship one with another and also with the Father and his son, Jesus Christ. Let its glory be as the resting place of weary pilgrims toiling on toward the heavenly city—the emblem of that Church above—

*Where congregations ne'er break up,
And Sabbaths never end.*

from Benjamin Morgan Palmer's
sermon at the dedication of the new
church building, Sabbath morning,
October 9, 1853



To

THE PASTORS AND PEOPLE

OF

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



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FOREWORD

**"I will remember the works of the LORD:
Surely I will remember thy wonders of old."**

Psalm 77:11

Remembering is a duty we owe to God. Especially are we to remember the great works of the Lord on behalf of His people. We are to call them to mind, meditate on them, and learn from them. Doing so shows gratitude to God for what He has done, and it forms part of the worship which we offer to Him. We glorify God before others when we tell of His goodness toward us.

It also is a benefit to us. It helps us to trust in God as we remember how faithful He is to His people, and what He has done for them. It teaches us to revere Him as holy when we consider His mighty judgments. Remembering the deeds of the Lord helps us to know God as He is.

Remembering the deeds of the Lord is also a blessing to our children, and to generations yet to come. How important it is for them to know God and His faithfulness, that they too might learn to trust in Him. The book of Judges recounts the sad and shameful history of a generation in Israel "who knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel" (Judges 2:10). Forgetting what God has done is perilous to the soul.

As our church approached the 200th anniversary of its founding, the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Columbia, South Carolina, appointed a Bicentennial Committee to carry out an appropriate commemoration of this event. Our aim was to testify publicly

of God's faithfulness to us, and to review for ourselves all His wonderful deeds to us in this place, over the span of 200 years. It was determined that a history of our church should be written so that a permanent record of God's dealings with us might be set before the world and preserved for generations to come.

The Rev. Dr. David Calhoun, Professor of Church History in the Covenant Theological Seminary, was chosen for this task. We are very grateful to him. He has "mined" the depths of our history and has brought forth precious stones which cry out to the praise of God for His wonderful work in this place. We did not want a history that merely chronicled the acquiring of property and the erection of buildings. We wanted to know what God had been doing among us. Dr. Calhoun has given us this testimony. We are glad that we can now share it with others.

We publish this record of God's wonderful deeds with the prayer that those who read it may be inspired to worship and serve God. We have been blessed in this place with a heritage rich in the things of God. Giants of the faith have walked in these streets. O that God would be pleased to raise us up to the stature of those who have gone before us. May He be pleased to preserve the true religion among us, and to increase it to His own honor and glory.

We are all too conscious that a good heritage is no substitute for present obedience. If therefore, dear reader, you find yourself in awe before God as you consider His ways among us, pray for us who now receive this heritage, that we might learn the ways of God and be faithful to Him in the days which are ours. Looking back over our history humbles us and challenges us. O that by the grace of God we might pass on a heritage of faithfulness in our day to such future generations that there may be before the coming of our Lord. May the glory of it be for Him to whom all glory, power and dominion is due. Amen.

Glen Charles Knecht, Pastor
First Presbyterian Church
Columbia, South Carolina

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people have helped in the writing of this book. Direction and encouragement were provided by the members of the Bicentennial Committee of the First Presbyterian Church—John Gregg McMaster, Patrick C. Smith, Kermit Potts, Eliza (Mrs. Neill W.) Macaulay, Lucile Stuckey, Jack Graybill, John Doudoukjian, Virginia (Mrs. Ernest B.) Meynard, and Glen C. Knecht.¹ My special appreciation goes to the committee's chairman, John Gregg McMaster, who introduced me to the church and kept me supplied with important materials. Eliza Macaulay shared with me her collection of books, articles, and memorabilia. Mrs. Macaulay is a descendant of Thomas Taylor, who helped establish the Presbyterian church in Columbia. Her husband, Dr. Neill Macaulay, a dental surgeon and elder at First Presbyterian Church, was chairman of the Churchyard Committee for many years. A historian with a special love for the history of the Confederacy and for First Presbyterian Church, Dr. Macaulay was asked by the session in 1973 to write a history of the church. Dr. Macaulay died in 1984 before completing the history, but his careful records and historical writings about the church and the churchyard have been wonderful sources of interesting information. Craig Childs provided me with books on Columbia and Richland County from his library. Jack Davis was always ready to share with me his considerable knowledge of the history of Columbia and First Church. Mr. Davis's mother was descended from Presbyterian ministers of Scotland, Ireland, and Virginia. His father and John Lafayette Girardeau were

¹ Subcommittees were led by George and Katharine (Mr. and Mrs.) Haimbaugh (Events); Barbara (Mrs. Henley H.) Hurt (History and Records); John Bruton (Property); Mrs. Ann McCain (Publicity); Dorothy (Mrs. Claude) Walker (Commemorative Items); and Charles Jones (Music).

friends. Born in 1905, Jack was baptized by Samuel Macon Smith. Virginia Meynard's skillful research brought valuable help at crucial points. Her notes on various topics added significant information and confirmed or corrected my findings. Lucile Stuckey collected important materials from Columbia libraries and encouraged me and the committee with her knowledge and enthusiasm. Other people who read all or portions of the manuscript in its various stages of completion include Robert C. Walker, Katharine D. Haimbaugh, Barbara S. Hurt, Thomas E. McCutchen, J. Walker Clarke, and Larry D. Wyatt. I am grateful for their interest and valuable corrections and suggestions.

Ellen and Art Mosher graciously gave me the use of their home during the summer of 1991. Betty Jane and Glen Knecht were wonderful hosts during my July-August 1992 visit to Columbia. Dr. Knecht and the pastoral staff—Warren Wardlaw, Mark Ross, Lance Hudgens, James Turner, Harold Von Nessen, and John Hopkins—welcomed me to First Church with warm friendship and spiritual wisdom. The church staff enthusiastically participated in this project. Special thanks go to LeGrand Cooper, church administrator; Louise Carter, church secretary; and Mayme Tyler, pastor's secretary.

The members of First Presbyterian Church—with their friendliness, hospitality, and love—supported and encouraged me. I will always treasure friendships in the congregation and remember the joy of worshipping God with these dear friends.

Many hours were spent in South Caroliniana Library on the historic and beautiful "Horseshoe" of the University of South Carolina—a pleasant walk of a few blocks from First Church. Reputedly designed by Robert Mills, the famous South Carolina architect and member of First Presbyterian Church, the handsome brick building with its large white columns was the first American college library building. Crammed with South Carolina history, the library itself is an inspiration. Upstairs in the book division, I sat under the steady gaze of a distant ancestor, John C. Calhoun. Downstairs, when I worked with the manuscripts, I would often look up at the portrait of James Henley Thornwell, a man shared (as are so many in this history) by both the university and the church. The library staff—always ready to find materials and make valuable suggestions—made my time at South Caroliniana a delightful memory.

When Benjamin Morgan Palmer's grandson asked Thomas Cary Johnson to prepare the biography of Dr. Palmer (nineteenth-century pastor of First Presbyterian Church), the Virginian replied that in his

judgment, "they should find a man to do the work who had been bred in the South Carolina belt of civilization." Johnson was chosen, however, because he was believed to have "the kinship of ecclesiastical view desired in a biography."² As a South Carolinian and a Presbyterian, I have written this story with great personal sympathy and pleasure. At the same time, however, I have attempted to write with discernment and truthfulness. I have often prayed the words of James Henley Thornwell (another of the church's early pastors), "May the Lord grant that I may be guided by his Holy Spirit, that I may contend for nothing but the truth, and that in the spirit of the Gospel."

The most important source for the church's history are the many books of the session's minutes. It was often stated—even in later session minutes—that the church records, minutes, and accounts were burned in the great fire of February 17, 1865. But many of these records are extant, located in the South Caroliniana Library. The session's minutes for the early years are missing, but from 1819 to the present time there are minutes kept in careful Presbyterian style and checked from time to time by the presbytery.³ Although later minutes generally reveal decisions more than discussions, the older minutes contain full and valuable material on every topic touching the church's life. The early-twentieth-century minute books contain many newspaper articles, letters, and other interesting items. Presbytery's review on April 22, 1930, of the First Presbyterian Church session minutes stated that "extraneous matter should not be interleaved with the sessional records." Fortunately for the historian, that advice was ignored!

I am indebted to those generations of elders, and especially to the faithful stated clerks, for a record not only illuminating but edifying. Again and again, as I worked at the task of deciphering handwriting not always easily read, I came across entries that thrilled me. For example, the minutes for March 28, 1878, stated that "some conversation ensued about the gracious outpouring of the Spirit on this whole community and services were ordered to be held in this church every night next week."

² Thomas Cary Johnson, *The Life and Letters of Benjamin Morgan Palmer* (1906; Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1987), v.

³ According to Dr. Palmer's "Manuscript History," the session minutes began in the year 1819. It is highly unlikely, however, that a Presbyterian church would exist for twenty-five years without keeping session records. Those early minutes must have been lost or destroyed. All unpublished writings and documents, unless otherwise noted, are located at First Presbyterian Church or at the South Caroliniana Library.

Benjamin Morgan Palmer was the first to write a history of First Presbyterian Church.⁴ His unpublished manuscript covers the years up to 1845. Palmer noted that "it is doubtless a matter of importance that the history of individual churches should be carefully written: both because their history will serve to illustrate the general dealings of God with his own people, and because only in this way can the materials be collected for a comprehensive and accurate history of the church at large." George Howe's *History of the Church in South Carolina* is valuable for its content and its interpretation.⁵ "To understand the present, we must know the past," wrote Dr. Howe in the preface to his first volume. Howe's history is extended to 1925 by editors F. D. Jones and W. H. Mills in their *History of the Presbyterian Church in South Carolina Since 1850*.⁶ Short histories of First Presbyterian Church were written by Fitz Hugh McMaster and John M. Bateman.⁷ Carolyn Patterson Parker's *Short History of the Music at First Presbyterian Church* provides valuable material about this important aspect of the church's life.⁸ A thesis by Clare R. Arthur explores the church's early history.⁹ Douglas F. Kelly's *Preachers with Power: Four Stalwarts of the South* is an inspiring book about four great Southern Presbyterian preachers.¹⁰ Significantly, all four—Daniel Baker, James Henley Thornwell, Benjamin Morgan Palmer, and John Girardeau—served

⁴ Benjamin Morgan Palmer, Jr., "A Manuscript History of the First Presbyterian Church, Columbia, S. C., Compiled from Original Papers." The work is "affectionately inscribed" to the members of the Church and Corporation of the First Presbyterian Church, Columbia, S. C., "by their Pastor." Dr. Palmer indicated his sources as follows: "First, the memory of the older inhabitants of the town, for those events which occurred before the year 1818. Secondly, the records of the session, which commence with the year 1819, and the records of the Corporation which commence with the year 1821."

⁵ George Howe, *History of the Presbyterian Church in South Carolina*, 2 vols. (Columbia: Duffie & Chapman, 1870, 1883). Dr. Howe died in April 1883, a few days after he had sent the concluding sheets of the second volume of his history to the press.

⁶ F. D. Jones and W. H. Mills, eds., *History of the Presbyterian Church in South Carolina Since 1850* (Columbia: The Synod of South Carolina, 1926).

⁷ Fitz Hugh McMaster, *History of the First Presbyterian Church* (Columbia: The State Company, 1925); John M. Bateman, "History," unpublished manuscript, and *First Presbyterian Churchyard* (Columbia: The State Company, 1925). In his "History," Bateman states that he "attempts to record events in the history of the Church from its beginning to the year 1933, as gathered from the writings of Doctor Howe and Doctor Palmer, from minutes of the Session and from other sources."

⁸ Carolyn Patterson Parker, *A Short History of the Music at First Presbyterian Church, Columbia, South Carolina, 1795-1976* (Columbia, 1976).

⁹ Clare Richardson Arthur, "Nourishing Spiritual Darkness: First Presbyterian Church, Columbia, South Carolina, 1794-1853," diss. University of South Carolina, 1983.

¹⁰ Douglas F. Kelly, *Preachers with Power: Four Stalwarts of the South* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1992).

as pastors or stated supplies at First Presbyterian Church of Columbia. *Presbyterian Women of South Carolina*, edited by Margaret A. Gist, is an important resource for the historian of South Carolina Presbyterianism.¹¹ Ernest Trice Thompson's three-volume *Presbyterians in the South* provides both larger context and illuminating details.¹² *The Story of Southern Presbyterians* by T. Watson Street is a competent shorter history, as is Ray A. King's *History of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church*.¹³

Valuable histories of Columbia and Richland County have been produced by members of First Presbyterian Church. Edwin Luther Green, professor of ancient languages at the University of South Carolina and elder at the church, wrote a history of Richland County.¹⁴ John M. Bateman published a *Columbia Scrapbook, 1701-1842*.¹⁵ Other helpful books include *Columbia: Capital City of South Carolina, 1786-1936*, and especially the new work by John Hammond Moore, *Columbia and Richland County*.¹⁶ To all of these historians and to many others, I say "thank you."

Jonathan Smith, great-half-nephew of Samuel Macon Smith and one of my students at Covenant Theological Seminary, kindly lent me a copy of his family history, "Annals of an American Family," and other materials about Dr. Smith. Wheat Story provided me with information about her grandfather, Thomas Francis Wallace.

Dr. Warren M. Wardlaw, associate pastor of First Presbyterian Church and interim pastor during the crucial years of 1982 and 1983, prepared two valuable documents upon which I have drawn heavily for the history of that period—"Through Times of Change" and "Sanctuary Fire, March 11, 1982."

On June 4, 1956, the session read a letter from Mrs. Charles B. Elliott suggesting the organization of a historical society at First Presbyterian Church, "for the purpose of collecting and preserving for posterity as much of the history of the church as can be salvaged

¹¹ Margaret A. Gist, ed., *Presbyterian Women of South Carolina* (Woman's Auxiliary of the Synod of South Carolina, 1929).

¹² Ernest Trice Thompson, *Presbyterians in the South*, 3 vols. (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1963, 1973).

¹³ T. Watson Street, *The Story of Southern Presbyterians* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1960); Ray A. King, *A History of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church* (Charlotte: Board of Christian Education of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, 1966).

¹⁴ Edwin L. Green, *A History of Richland County* (1932; Columbia, 1974).

¹⁵ John M. Bateman, *Columbia Scrapbook, 1701-1842* (Columbia, 1915).

¹⁶ Helen Kohn Hennig, ed., *Columbia: Capital City of South Carolina, 1786-1936* (1936; Columbia: The State Printing Company, 1966); John Hammond Moore, *Columbia and Richland County: A South Carolina Community, 1740-1990* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1993).

from the wreckage of fire, sword, neglect, and the erosion of time itself." In 1977 a historical committee was formed. On April 21, 1988, the Bicentennial Committee was established, and two years later (on April 19, 1990) the session endorsed the committee's recommendation to appoint David Calhoun to write the church's history.

My wife, Anne, whose earlier life was spent mainly in Columbia, encouraged me with her interest in this project and assisted me with her faithful and skillful editing of my manuscript. My love and gratitude go to my parents, Pauline and David Calhoun of Sumter, who taught me to love God, the church, and South Carolina, in that order; and to Anne's parents, Isabel and Allen Fleece, formerly of Columbia, now of Macon, Georgia, who made me a Presbyterian.

David B. Calhoun
Covenant Theological Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri
October 1994

PREFACE

The Westminster Confession of Faith states that the “visible” church is “the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God.” To this visible church “Christ hath given the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God, for the gathering and perfecting of the saints.” Furthermore, Christ is present in the church; and “by His own presence and Spirit, according to His promise,” He effectually accomplishes His good purposes in His people.¹⁷

The history of a particular church must follow the definition of the church. What is the church? Usually we think first of the building. The quiet majesty of First Presbyterian Church in Columbia, South Carolina, is a beloved treasure. This splendid building, the second in the church’s two centuries, is indeed “the house of God.”

But the church is more than the building. It is the people—the “family of God.” This history will often turn to the members of First Presbyterian—those men and women and children who, through generations, have gathered at the corner of Marion and Lady streets to worship God their Father. Some of these members have been influential in city, state, and nation. Others—including many slaves in the antebellum period—are largely unknown to the historian but not to God.

An essential part of the Presbyterian church is its teaching and ruling elders, to whom have been given, in a special sense, “the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God.” Many of the pastors of First Presbyterian have been impressive preachers, theologians, and leaders in the religious and academic life of the community and denomination. More important, they have been faithful in “the gathering and perfecting of the saints.” Several hundred men have served First

¹⁷ Westminster Confession of Faith 25, 2.

Presbyterian Church as ruling elders. During its earlier history, before rotation of elders became the practice, sessions remained intact for years and even decades. Pastors came and went, but many of these elders served until death. The diaconate, too, played a significant role in the history of this church.

The most important part of the definition of the church, however, is neither the building nor the people nor the session, but the Lord “in their midst” (John 20:19), who, “by His own presence and Spirit,” creates the church and makes its work “effectual.” In describing this essential fact of the church’s life, the historian must be merged with the Christian, and research joined with prayer and worship. To the extent that this is accomplished, the book will be more than an account of the externals of First Presbyterian Church—as important as these are; it will also reflect “the glory of the Lord risen upon it.”

Presbyterians believe in the sovereignty of God. Generations of First Church children have learned the answer to question seven of the Shorter Catechism: “What are the decrees of God?” “The decrees of God are his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his will, whereby, for his own glory, he hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.” The history of First Presbyterian Church is an interesting story—with high points and low points, saints and sinners, faith and failure, Christ and culture. It is also the story of the working out in one place, for over two hundred years, of God’s “eternal purpose.” Consequently, this book must be both a history—what happened and when and why?—and a sermon—what is the purpose of God? The last question is sometimes difficult to answer but, based on what we know about God and His will from the Bible, an attempt must be made. We will not only look at the construction of buildings, the lives of members, and the coming and going of pastors, but we will search for that theme which will tie it all together: the progress of the work of God at First Presbyterian Church from 1795 to the present. It is my prayer that this book itself will serve to advance that work. May it teach younger members and new members the importance of the church’s history. May it help clarify for long-time members the significance of the church’s history. And may it unite us all and challenge us to greater faithfulness and service in the days ahead.

I have attempted to set forth this remarkable story accurately and fairly. I am aware that it is not perfect and join with Margaret A. Gist, who wrote in her *Presbyterian Women of South Carolina*, “Doubtless there are sins of omission and commission, else we were not good Presbyterians!”¹⁸

¹⁸ Gist, *Presbyterian Women*, vii.

PART 1



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
1795-1837

CHAPTER 1



A CHURCH FOR CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

At the corner of Marion and Lady streets, near the center of the city of Columbia (which is near the center of the state of South Carolina) stands the majestic building of First Presbyterian Church. Its steeple rises some 180 feet above the ground—once the highest structure in the town and still impressive in the modern city. The soaring, graded spire draws our attention steadily upward to the triune God—God the Father Almighty, Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord, and the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life. On all sides of the old church—in the beautiful churchyard with its flowering trees and old brick walls and walks—are the graves of college presidents and seminary professors; famous scholars and Confederate soldiers; senators and congressmen; and simple people and little children—one of these marked by the statue of a baby lamb. On the weathered tombstones there are inscriptions in English, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew—telling different stories but confessing one faith. As we wander through these paths of memories, the church takes shape again as the *people* of God. The communion of the saints links these Christians with all Christians and the church of yesterday with the church of today.

The sounds of the busy city remind us that First Presbyterian is a modern church facing the needs of today's men and women; but the peace and shadows of the churchyard recall a story of days gone by.

Before the time of the rose-tinted Gothic church building, there was a simple wooden meeting house on this ground. Before the meeting house, there were graves of a few of the town's early settlers. In a still earlier time, chuck-will's-willows called beneath the pine trees in the simple quiet of a plantation not far from the banks of the Congaree River in the Midlands of South Carolina. . . .

On March 24, 1663, King Charles II of England granted a charter to eight lords proprietor, making them the rulers of the province of Carolina (which included part of North Carolina and all of South Carolina and Georgia). The first English settlement in South Carolina was made in 1670 at Charles Town on the west bank of the Ashley River; it was moved ten years later to the present site of Charleston, between the Ashley and Cooper rivers. From its earliest days, the colony of South Carolina was dominated by this wealthy city of sophisticated social and cultural life.

By the 1740s, however, a steady flow of frontier farmers had begun to fill the South Carolina Piedmont, or back country. Some settled in the central part of the state in Pine Tree Hill (later Camden), Winnsboro, and in several places along the Congaree River. By then the native Indians—the Congarees, Waterees, Catawbias, and Saludas—had departed, leaving little behind except the names of the region's rivers.

A town called Saxe-Gotha—settled by Swiss and German immigrants and named after the north German duchy of Princess Augusta, the wife of the Prince of Wales—was created in 1733 on the western banks of the Congaree, south of the Saluda River. It quickly became an important trading center for Charleston and for the Indians of the upcountry. Another small commercial center developed in the lower part of the Saxe-Gotha Township at Friday's Ferry. This community, long referred to vaguely as "the Congarees," had, by the beginning of the Revolutionary War, become Granby. It flourished for a few years: its merchants made fortunes and lived in good style. When Lexington County was established in 1785, Granby was made the seat of the new county, and the courthouse was built. But its unhealthy location, floods, and the later growth of the new town of Columbia brought about its gradual decline. The seat of Lexington County was moved in 1818 from Granby to Lexington, and soon the old town was practically deserted.

At the end of the Revolutionary War, South Carolinians of the upcountry and the Midlands—often alienated from the government of the highly educated, wealthy English planters and merchants of

the low country—were agitating for a more centrally located capital. Several places were proposed—including Camden and General Thomas Sumter's Stateburg in the High Hills of the Santee. On March 6, 1786, John Lewis Gervais, former Charleston merchant and senator from the district of Ninety Six, introduced a bill in the House of Representatives to locate the capital near Friday's Ferry, across the two-thousand-foot-wide Congaree River. On March 22, the General Assembly approved this plan and, after further debate, named the new town *Columbia* (a feminine adaptation of the name of Christopher Columbus). The next month, five commissioners were authorized to purchase 2,471 acres from ten property owners—including Thomas and James Taylor.

Natives of Amelia County, Virginia, the Taylors had lived in the area since their childhood. Their father, John Taylor, had accumulated, by grant and purchase, thousands of acres along the banks of the Congaree. Tall, red-haired Thomas married Ann Wyche of Brunswick County, Virginia. Thomas and Ann built their house on a hill near the river, overlooking their plantation which they called "The Plains"; a clear spring splashed nearby in a beautiful grove of trees. Thomas had served in the South Carolina militia under General Sumter during the Revolutionary War. On the occasion of one unexpected British attack, his foresight spared Sumter's army from defeat and destruction. In the following decades Colonel Taylor, as he was known, became an influential man of state, frequently serving the legislature and various statewide gatherings as a member from the region between the Broad and Catawba rivers.

In 1787 the new town of Columbia was laid out in four hundred square blocks, with lots of half an acre each and a pattern of sixty-foot-wide streets. "Two principal streets [ran] through the centre of the town at right angles, of one hundred and fifty feet wide."¹⁹ Many people saw an opportunity in the new town, and sales of property were brisk. A few native Carolinians were joined by settlers from New England and Virginia. Immigrants came from England, Scotland, and Ireland, as well as from France and Germany. The first State House—a still-unfinished two-story wooden building—welcomed the legislature on January 4, 1790. It is often said that as Thomas Taylor gazed out over the new town—its streets, sometimes a foot deep in mud, bordered by a few flimsy wooden structures and an occasional well for water—he was heard to mutter, "I sold a good plantation to

¹⁹ *A Columbia Reader, 1786-1986* (Columbia: Institute for Southern Studies and the South Caroliniana Library), p. 2.

make a poor town!"²⁰ George Washington visited the town in 1791 and wrote in his diary on May 24: "Columbia is laid out upon a large scale, but, in my opinion, would have been better placed on the river below the falls. It is now an uncleared wood, with very few houses in it, and those all wooden ones."²¹ The town grew, however. Stores and wooden houses, painted grey and yellow, began to fill the empty lots. The unpaved streets were lined with pride-of-India trees. Gardens produced cabbages and sweet potatoes, and many yards had grape vines and peach and apple trees. Life in Columbia was quiet except for the four weeks in November and December when the legislature convened.



Presbyterians were among the earliest settlers in South Carolina. One of the first churches in the colony—organized in Charleston between 1680 and 1690 and called the Independent Church, or "Old White" Meeting House—was composed of Presbyterians chiefly from Scotland and Northern Ireland and of Congregationalists from England and New England. In 1732 the Presbyterian members of the Independent Church (later called Circular Congregational Church) pulled out and moved down Meeting Street to establish First (Scots) Presbyterian Church. Out in the countryside, on the Ashley River, a prominent colony of New England Congregationalists settled at Dorchester for several generations, before moving on to Liberty County, Georgia. French-Calvinist Huguenots were driven from France by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. Years earlier, in 1562—two years before John Calvin died—a small colony of Huguenots had lived for a short time on the shores of what today is called Port Royal Sound, before being overcome by the Spanish. Later Huguenots who came to Carolina became Anglicans, joined Presbyterian churches, or formed their own Huguenot church in Charleston. Low-country Presbyterian congregations, especially strong on the islands south of Charleston, were served by well-educated ministers, mostly from Ireland and Scotland. The earliest presbytery in the South was organized by the Charleston-area churches before 1722; it maintained close ties with the Church of Scotland.

George Whitefield visited the colony several times, beginning in 1738; his preaching produced a "great awakening" and contributed

²⁰ John Hammond Moore finds this story "rather unlikely" since Taylor was only one of a group of men who owned the land on which Columbia was built. Moore, *Columbia*, p. 60.

²¹ *Columbia Reader*; p. 4.

to Baptist and Presbyterian growth. By the middle of the eighteenth century, large numbers of Scotch-Irish immigrants, who poured into the Carolina Piedmont by way of Philadelphia and Virginia, founded Presbyterian churches in towns and villages of the back country. Upcountry Presbyterians had closer links with Philadelphia than with Charleston. Many of their ministers were educated at the Presbyterian college in Princeton. By the time of the American Revolution, these Scotch-Irish settlers made the Presbyterian church the largest denomination in South Carolina.

The first American presbytery was organized in 1706 in Philadelphia; it was largely the work of Francis Makemie, who came from Northern Ireland as a missionary to Virginia in 1684. In 1716 the Synod of Philadelphia was formed. The church divided in 1741 into the Old Side (Synod of Philadelphia) and the New Side (Synod of New York). The Old Side opposed the methods of the Great Awakening; the New Side was made up of enthusiastic supporters of George Whitefield and his preaching. Three years before the schism ended in 1758, the New Side Presbyterian Church organized Hanover Presbytery, which included the area from western Pennsylvania to Georgia. Four ministers and three elders were present for the first meeting; Samuel Davies, later president of Princeton College, was elected moderator. There had been decades of Presbyterian labor in the South before Hanover Presbytery was formed, but it was Hanover that was to become "the mother of Southern Presbyterianism." In 1770 Orange Presbytery was created from Hanover and included all territory south of Virginia. South Carolina Presbytery was established in 1784. In 1788 the one Synod of New York and Philadelphia became four—New York and New Jersey, Philadelphia, Virginia, and the Carolinas. The first General Assembly met in Philadelphia in May 1789.

In 1788 there were only eleven Presbyterian ministers in South Carolina. Three years later the Synod of the Carolinas sent out four missionaries to work within its bounds, directing them "not to tarry longer than three weeks at the same time in the bounds of twenty miles, except peculiar circumstances may appear to make it necessary."²² By 1799 there were fifty-seven Presbyterian congregations in South Carolina Presbytery. In November of that year, the Synod of the Carolinas used the "Broad River in its whole course" to divide the state into the First Presbytery of South Carolina and the Second Presbytery of South Carolina.

²² Street, *Southern Presbyterians*, p. 29.

The Associate Reformed Presbytery of the Carolinas and Georgia was organized at Long Cane, South Carolina, on February 24, 1790, with four ministers and forty-four congregations. This church traced its history back to two Scottish Presbyterian movements—the sturdy Covenanters of the seventeenth century, who took the name “Reformed Presbyterians,” and the Seceders of the eighteenth century, who called themselves “Associate Presbyterians.” The Covenanters stood for a Presbyterianism that honored the convictions of the martyrs of the struggle with the Stuart kings. The Seceders opposed interference with Presbyterian polity by prominent nobles or land owners and attempted to call the church back to the pure doctrines of grace against the creeping moralism of the time. The Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in the South was composed mainly of Seceders who came from Ireland after the Revolutionary War. They found homes in Chester, Lancaster, Fairfield, and Abbeville counties in South Carolina. On May 9, 1803, at the Old Brick Church in Fairfield County, the Associate Reformed Synod of the Carolinas was organized. In the little town of Due West, the ARPs would establish a college and theological seminary called Erskine—after Ebenezer and Ralph Erskine, brothers who led the “secession” from the Church of Scotland in the 1730s.

The Presbyterians were “the first religious society” established in the Richland district, according to Robert Mills’s *Statistics of South Carolina* (1826).²³ Mills stated that there was a church on the banks of Cedar Creek before the Revolutionary War, but in its first years there was no church in Columbia. Presbyterians and Baptists often staged “hymn sings” in private homes. Early in 1785 Bishop Francis Asbury of the newly organized Methodist Episcopal Church in America, came, with a group of preachers, to South Carolina. They established four circuits—one in Charleston, and three that stretched up the rivers into North Carolina: the Pee Dee, the Santee, and the Broad River circuits. During 1787 a Methodist preacher on the Santee circuit, Isaac Smith, preached occasionally in Columbia at the home of his relative, Colonel Thomas Taylor. Taylor grew up an Episcopalian, sponsored Methodist preaching in his home, but final-

²³ Jones and Mills, *History*, p. 32. John Hammond Moore states that Richland County’s first congregation was a “New Light” Baptist church near Mill Creek, where they worshiped in the county’s only church building before 1800. Moore, *Columbia*, p. 68.

ly joined the Presbyterians. Like many others of the early republic, he may have been attracted by Presbyterian patriotism during the Revolutionary War.

Late in 1793, the Synod of the Carolinas sent out a newly licensed preacher, Robert Wilson of Long Cane, to labor "in the destitute neighborhoods within its bounds." Finally, on December 15, he came to Columbia, where he preached to "a very respectable assembly." Encouraged by Wilson, "a number of inhabitants" of the town, including Thomas Taylor and Benjamin Waring, appealed to David E. Dunlap in a letter sent on March 30, 1794, requesting that he "accept the pastoral care of the church newly establishing itself amongst us." "It is greatly contrary to the interest of a young town," the letter stated, "to be growing up without the Sabbath Day's observation."²⁴ South Carolina Presbytery received the letter in its April meeting but returned it so that it could be rewritten in harmony with the Presbyterian Form of Government. It was a good exercise for Colonel Taylor to learn the requirements of Presbyterian polity because he was, in time, elected an elder of the church. The second call was sent to Dunlap on September 1, 1794, promising him a salary of 112 pounds a year.

Mr. Dunlap began his ministry as stated supply in Columbia in the fall of 1794. He was ordained by presbytery on June 4, 1795, after two days of examinations. The service, held in the State House, was moderated by Robert McCullough, teacher at York and pastor of the Catholic Presbyterian Church on Rocky Creek in Chester District.²⁵ John Brown was the clerk. The Reverend Francis Cummins preached the sermon from II Corinthians 5:20—"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." A charge was given to the pastor and his flock by the moderator, and Mr. Dunlap was solemnly ordained to the gospel ministry with prayer and the laying on of hands of the presbytery. In this way, David Dunlap—just twenty-three

²⁴ There is sufficient evidence that disregard of the Sabbath was a prevailing evil at the time in the newly settled town, as were intemperance and gambling (especially at the popular horse races).

²⁵ The session of First Presbyterian Church (on February 8, 1982) recorded the date of June 4, 1795, as the organizational date of First Presbyterian Church.

years old—became pastor of the first church organized in the town of Columbia.²⁶

David Dunlap was the son of a Presbyterian elder of the old Waxhaw Presbyterian Church of Lancaster County, a settlement which was said to have given "tone and thought to the whole upper country of the state."²⁷ These Presbyterian people had come from Northern Ireland to Pennsylvania and Virginia and finally to South Carolina. Among them were Dunlaps, Jacksons, Calhouns, and Pickenses. David Dunlap was educated at Mount Zion College in Winnsboro, a school opened in 1777 "for the education and instruction of youth" and chartered by the state of South Carolina in 1785. The college—located in Scotch-Irish Fairfield County—was predominantly Presbyterian. Of the thirty-three Southern men who entered the Presbyterian ministry by 1800, twelve were graduates of Mount Zion. David Dunlap married Susannah Ellison, the daughter of Major Robert Ellison, whose home was at Mount Pleasant near Winnsboro.²⁸ Mr. Dunlap was licensed to preach on April 16, 1793, and, for the rest of 1793 and the first months of 1794, traveled between the Presbyterian churches of the coastal islands and upcountry towns.

The new pastor not only served the Presbyterian congregation in Columbia but also preached at Granby, three miles below Columbia, until August 1799, when the Granby congregation called the Reverend George Reid. To supplement his small salary, Mr. Dunlap worked as clerk of the state senate and taught in the Columbia Male Academy, a school which began classes in January of 1798. Abram Blanding, a recent arrival from Connecticut, was the principal. In a letter to presbytery, dated October 22, 1799, Dunlap asked for permission to be absent from their meeting because of his responsibilities at the school. The Columbia church met in the State House for its services of worship; after 1801 Mr. Dunlap alternated Sundays with the Reverend John Harper, a Methodist itinerant preacher who had been ordained by John Wesley.

Little is known of the Reverend David Dunlap and the life of the Presbyterian church during these early years when he and his wife,

²⁶ Washington Street Methodist Church was formed in 1803, First Baptist Church in 1809, and Trinity Episcopal in 1812.

²⁷ Old Waxhaw Presbyterian Church is located about eight miles northeast of Lancaster between U.S. Highway 521 and South Carolina No. 9. The church takes its name from a tribe of Indians who once lived in this area.

²⁸ David Dunlap was the uncle of Dr. John B. Adger of Pendleton and Columbia Theological Seminary and the great-uncle of William E. Boggs, later pastor of First Presbyterian Church.

Susannah, labored in the heat, the mosquitos, the cold, and the rain. After ten years of faithful service, the first pastor of Columbia's Presbyterians died suddenly of "malignant fever" (probably diphtheria) on September 10, 1804, only a few hours after the death of his wife. He was thirty-three years old and Susannah, thirty. They were laid to rest side by side in the town's cemetery, the inscription on their tombstone asking the question "O Death, insatiate archer, Could not one suffice?" A more appropriate inscription might have been "They were lovely and pleasant in their lives; and in their death they were not divided." David Dunlap's property was appraised at \$5,000, plus several "lots and squares" in Columbia and six slaves. To the three Negro men, he left his clothes. The bill for funeral expenses included one item for three gallons of wine!

Edward Hooker, a young man from Connecticut who had become a member of the faculty at South Carolina College, noted in his diary in 1806 that "the inhabitants speak highly of the Rev. Mr. Dunlap, an ordained Presbyterian minister of this place, who died summer before last. He was an able and good man." Dr. George Howe, in his *History of the Presbyterian Church in South Carolina*, stated that there were persons yet living who remembered David Dunlap's "gentlemanly manners and his gifts as a preacher."²⁹

The Columbia church is not mentioned in the presbytery minutes until 1810. With no pastor after Mr. Dunlap and no church building, it is not surprising that the church was not heard from. There are hints, however, that it continued to exist during these years. John M. Bateman refers to a memoir found among Dr. Palmer's papers that states that Dr. Van de Vastine Jamison became a member of the Presbyterian church in Columbia about 1805 and attended services—especially on the occasion of the administering of the sacraments.³⁰ A single remark in David Ramsay's *History of South Carolina* (1809) mentions that the Columbia Presbyterians were "a numerous and wealthy congregation."³¹ The church continued to meet, probably irregularly, with visiting preachers taking the services. From time to time the Presbyterians may have attended the Washington Street Methodist Church, whose building at the corner of Washington and Marion

²⁹ Howe, *Presbyterian Church in South Carolina* 1:596.

³⁰ Bateman, "History," p. 5.

³¹ David Ramsay, *The History of South-Carolina, from Its First Settlement in the Year 1670, to the year 1808* (Charleston, 1809) 2:16.

streets—a plain wooden structure “out in the woods, away from the center of town”—had been completed in 1804.³² Edward Hooker, who arrived in Columbia late in 1805, noted that only the Methodists were holding regular Sunday meetings and added that “their noisy zeal” irritated some residents.

That the Presbyterian church continued to have an independent existence is shown by the fact that it called a pastor in 1809. The Reverend John Brown was the newly elected professor of logic and moral philosophy at South Carolina College. He was born in County Antrim, Ireland, on June 15, 1763, and came with his parents, in his early youth, to South Carolina. For a brief time he studied at Robert McCullough’s school in York, where he and Andrew Jackson were classmates. As a boy of sixteen, he served in the Revolution under General Sumter. After the war he studied theology and was licensed to preach in 1788; in 1793 he transferred from the Presbytery of Orange to the Presbytery of South Carolina. He educated himself so thoroughly that he was elected to the faculty of South Carolina College in 1809.

Under John Brown’s leadership, the Presbyterian church was reorganized “at a meeting held early in the year 1810.” Those present agreed “to associate themselves together as a Presbyterian congregation.” Thomas Taylor, Sr., Thomas Lindsay, John Murphy, and Zebulon Rudolph were elected elders. The church already may have elected elders but, because there are no records of the early years, it is not known who they were. Or it is possible, and more likely, that elders had not yet been elected. This would mean that in the early period there was Presbyterian preaching but little formal organization. The Columbia Presbyterians moved slowly in conforming entirely to the Presbyterian system of government as outlined in the Book of Church Order.

At a meeting on May 15, 1810, at John Brown’s home, “the members entered into and subscribed a more formal agreement.” They set aside the next Saturday as a “day of fasting, humiliation and prayer for the divine blessings on the church in general and the newly formed society in particular” and the next day, the Sabbath, for the celebration of the Lord’s Supper. The communion service took place

³² Archie Huff states that after David Dunlap’s death in 1804, the Presbyterian congregation scattered until 1810, leaving the Methodists with the only church in town. See Archie Vernon Huff, Jr., *Tried by Fire: Washington Street United Methodist Church, Columbia, South Carolina* (Columbia: R. L. Bryan, 1975). It is more likely, however, that the Presbyterians maintained some sort of connection during these years.

in the college chapel. Dr. Palmer comments that "the number of communicants was precisely the number of those who first sat down at the sacramental supper, when it was instituted by the Divine master himself."³³ Following common Presbyterian practice, communion tokens were presented to the elders by communicants, to show that they had been examined and were admitted to the sacrament.

According to Benjamin Morgan Palmer, when Colonel Thomas Taylor

saw the table spread in the chapel of the college and heard the free invitation given to God's children to celebrate their Redeemer's passion in the supper, his mind was powerfully affected. He had found the people among whom he was willing to cast his lot; and, yielding to the strong impulse of his heart, he went forward shaking with the emotions which mastered him. He bowed his head upon the table among the communicants, who were all happy that the Lord's tabernacle was established among them.

Apparently unfamiliar with the use of tokens, he slipped a coin into the elder's hand. The elder returned the coin silently and Taylor received the Lord's Supper, for "all recognized his pious emotion as the true 'token' that he was the Lord's disciple."³⁴ Howe comments that this was the way "in which 'the patriarch of Columbia' united himself, under the effectual calling of the Holy Spirit, with the Presbyterian church, of which he was so honored and useful a member."³⁵

The story is puzzling, however. Colonel Taylor had been associated with the Presbyterian church since Mr. Dunlap's call in 1794. He was already an elder, although just elected, when the communion service took place. Undoubtedly, the Columbia Presbyterians had occasionally observed communion, with elders coming from distant churches—the nearest thirty miles away—to make it possible. Colonel Taylor may have missed those infrequent communion seasons or he may not have believed himself to be qualified to partake until 1810; or the often-repeated story may not be accurate or may

³³ They were (according to Palmer's "Manuscript History") Mr. and Mrs. James Young, Mr. and Mrs. James Douglas, Mr. and Mrs. Jebulon Rudolph, Mrs. William Preston, Mrs. William Harper, Mrs. James Lewis, Mrs. John Brown, Miss Clementine Brown, Colonel Thomas Taylor, and Mr. David Gregg. This list, however, comes to thirteen, which other sources give as the number of communicants.

³⁴ Palmer, "Manuscript History."

³⁵ Howe, *Presbyterian Church in South Carolina* 1:597.

have taken place earlier. If true, it does illustrate the sincerity of Thomas Taylor and the flexibility of the church in its early days.

When the Presbyterian church was reorganized in 1810, it was represented in the newly formed Harmony Presbytery, whose lines the synod had drawn as "beginning on the sea coast where the divisional line between North and South Carolina begins and running thence with said line till it strikes Lynches Creek; thence down said creek to Evans Ferry; thence to Camden; thence to Columbia; thence to Augusta in Georgia; thence in a direction nearly south (including St. Marys) to the sea coast." In 1812 the Synod of the Carolinas (which consisted of all the presbyteries in North and South Carolina and Georgia) was divided. The presbyteries of South Carolina, Harmony, and Hopewell (Georgia) formed the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia.

With its own elders and minister, First Presbyterian Church was now a properly organized church in Harmony Presbytery and the Synod of the Carolinas. "And thus, after sixteen years of effort and of waiting on the Lord in his appointed way, the precious seed sown by the hand of Mr. Dunlap . . . appeared in a visible and tangible shape—'a vine of the Lord's planting.'"³⁶

³⁶ Centennial sermon of William E. Boggs.

CHAPTER 2



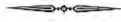
A VINE OF THE LORD'S PLANTING

The Presbyterian church services were held in the chapel of South Carolina College. Members of the congregation were seated in the galleries and the students below. Mr. Dunlap had taken an active part in founding the college, which was chartered in 1801. He was a member of the first board of trustees—together with one of his classmates at Mount Zion, Samuel Yongue; with Henry W. DeSaussure and Colonel Thomas Taylor of his congregation; and with his successor at First Presbyterian Church, John Brown. Of the thirteen members of the first board, seven were Presbyterians.

The college opened its doors on January 10, 1805. Jonathan Maxcy, a young Baptist preacher from Rhode Island who had already served as president of Brown College (his alma mater) and Union College in Schenectady, New York, was chosen by the trustees as the first president. The faculty of three taught the beginning class of nine students—all well prepared in Latin and Greek for classical studies at the college. The college's first structure, called South Building, contained classrooms, a library, and a chapel, and was flanked by two dormitory wings. North Building, three hundred feet away, was completed in 1809.³⁷ Other buildings—made of brick in the popular Federal

³⁷ Later, South Building was renamed Rutledge College, and North Building, DeSaussure College.

style—were soon added. They were designed with fireplaces in each room for heat in the winter, and with main floors above ground level to promote air circulation during the long, hot summers. The untidy campus also contained servants' quarters, chicken houses, and a collar patch or two!



Dr. Brown was elected president of the University of Georgia in Athens in 1811 and left for that new post in May.³⁸ Dr. Benjamin R. Montgomery, pastor of the Presbyterian church in Camden, followed him at South Carolina College. Received as a candidate by the Second Presbytery at Little River on April 9, 1801, Montgomery had preached to two congregations—Carmel and Hopewell—in the northwestern corner of the state. He was ordained in 1805 and moved, several years later, to the Abbeville area, where he served as supply to Presbyterian churches and taught at Cambridge Academy. On October 16, 1809, he accepted a call to the Bethesda Presbyterian Church of Camden and began his work on January 1, 1810. Late in 1811 he came to Columbia to teach in the college and serve as chaplain. Columbia's Presbyterians attended the Sunday services at the college and listened with appreciation to the sermons of Dr. Montgomery.

Sixteen male members of the Presbyterian congregation met at the courthouse in Columbia on July 19, 1812, and signed a paper agreeing to associate themselves "into a congregation for religious worship under the pastoral care of the Rev. Dr. Montgomery, and his successors, whom we may hereafter choose."³⁹ God was "graciously pleased to pour out his reviving and converting spirit upon Mr. Montgomery's labors," and the church's membership increased from thirteen in late 1810 to thirty-six in 1812.⁴⁰ The Columbia Presbyterians still worshipped at the college chapel, but as the church grew this was no longer convenient. Colonel Thomas Taylor, Judge Abraham Nott, and Major Henry D. Ward were appointed as a committee "to procure a proper place for building a church."

³⁸ John Brown, who received an honorary doctor of divinity degree from the College of New Jersey in 1811, returned to the pastorate in 1816. For twelve years he was minister at Mt. Zion Church in Hancock County, Georgia. After that he preached widely throughout the South. He died on December 11, 1842, in his eightieth year.

³⁹ The sixteen signers were: Thomas Taylor, Sr., Henry D. Ward, James Douglass, Thomas Lindsay, J. Smith, James Davis, John Murphy, H. Richardson, Henry W. DeSaussure, D. Coattes, William Shaw, John Hooker, James Young, Abram Nott, Zebulon Rudolph, and A. Mulder.

⁴⁰ Centennial sermon of William E. Boggs.

Apparently, the committee approached the legislature for land and were told they would have to incorporate. In June 1813, a letter signed by twenty male members of the church petitioned the South Carolina General Assembly for incorporation as "a religious society by the name and title of 'the first Presbyterian Church in the Town of Columbia' . . . for the purpose of celebrating the regular, solemn and public worship of almighty God, according to Presbyterian form of service and discipline."⁴¹ The senate granted the request on December 18, 1813, and the Columbia Presbyterians now turned their attention to constructing their first building.⁴²

When the town was first laid out, a four-acre square (bounded by Washington, Lady, Marion, and Bull streets) was reserved for a "public burial ground"—described by Edward Hooker as "a pleasant and retired spot east of the town surrounded on three sides by copses of native pines which serve to render it suitably solemn."⁴³ In 1805 the northern half of the block—not yet used for graves—was sold in order to buy another, more appropriately located, cemetery. When the Presbyterians and Episcopalians both petitioned for ownership of the two remaining acres of the old cemetery, the town officials divided the land between those two churches (who then each paid half the appraised value of the property to the Baptists and Methodists to assist them in building their churches).⁴⁴ According to John Bateman,

⁴¹ See Appendix E for the petition for incorporation and the names of its subscribers.

⁴² See Appendix F for the corporation charter.

⁴³ Columbia's north-south streets were named for officers who fought in South Carolina in the Revolutionary War—hence, Marion for "the Swamp Fox," Francis Marion; and Bull for Brigadier General Stephen Bull. Washington Street was named for George Washington (who visited Columbia in May 1791) and Lady Street for his wife, Martha Custis Washington.

⁴⁴ The details of this transaction are not completely clear. Most accounts are similar to the one given above, which appears to have been the intention of the legislative action of December 18, 1813. See Appendix F. Howe's marginal note states that the assessed value was \$914.88 for the entire block; \$130.50 was paid for the new burial ground. The remainder was divided into three equal parts, the three churches receiving each its share in money and the Presbyterians the land. John Hammond Moore writes that "eventually the legislature decided to sell the part of the square not used for graves, purchase another burial ground for the town, and divide any profit among the four congregations: Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, and Episcopal. However, each group still had a stake in the remaining part of the original site, and this dilemma was solved only when the Presbyterians decided to buy out the interests of all of the others concerned." Moore, *Columbia*, p. 81. Archie Vernon Huff states that when the new cemetery was purchased, one half of the block was sold to pay for it. "The Presbyterian congregation purchased the four remaining lots for a church building, and the proceeds were divided by the legislature among the four city churches 'to finish and complete' their buildings." Huff, *Tried by Fire*, pp. 20, 21.

"the Presbyterians and Episcopalians decided that they would get along better if they were not so close together, so they agreed to determine by lot which denomination should buy out the rights of the other."⁴⁵ The Presbyterians won!

James Douglass was given a contract for the construction of a building to cost \$6,000; John Calvert was the builder.⁴⁶ The congregation raised the necessary funds through pledges. Thomas Taylor pledged \$500, Wade Hampton \$400, and others gave smaller sums. The South Carolina General Assembly authorized the church to conduct a lottery (a common practice at the time), but there is no evidence that the church actually did raise money by means of a lottery. The new church building, a large frame structure with "two square towers surmounted by cupolas in front," was erected on the northeast corner of Lady and Marion streets and cost about \$2,000 more than the original estimate.⁴⁷ Many accounts state that the Presbyterians purchased the courthouse at Granby and moved the materials across the Congaree River for use in constructing their new church.⁴⁸

The church was dedicated in October 1814 (when Harmony Presbytery met in Columbia), although it did not yet have pews or window sashes. Presbyters, church members, and visitors sat on rough seats that were brought in for the occasion and heard the dedication sermon from the text "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life" (Revelation 2:10). When the building was completed, regular services were moved there from the college chapel; the students walked the several blocks to worship with the congregation in their new church.

⁴⁵ Bateman, *Churchyard*, pp. 18, 19.

⁴⁶ James Douglass was married to the daughter of John Calvert. Douglass died in 1834 and was buried in the churchyard, so near the church building that the new sanctuary, dedicated in 1853, covered his grave. John Calvert, a Revolutionary War soldier, was also buried in the churchyard.

⁴⁷ Howe, *Presbyterian Church in South Carolina* 2:258. Howe states that the Presbyterian church "perhaps was rather more tasteful and aspiring than the other churches, though it would appear not very imposing to the men of the generation now coming on the stage of action." It was "not in the highest style of church architecture," he wrote.

⁴⁸ Clare R. Arthur argues that these accounts are not accurate, because the South Carolina General Assembly records state that it was not until 1818 that the decision was made to establish a new location for the Lexington County Courthouse. Arthur, "Nourishing Spiritual Darkness," p. 11. Edwin L. Green states that the Presbyterians may have purchased the Granby Courthouse in 1822 to use in the construction of the manse and in the enlargement of the church building (*The State*, January 22, 1940). There must be some basis for the tradition connecting the old courthouse with the church, but it is impossible to state with certainty the facts.

In 1816 the church was still attempting to pay off its building debt. On May 21, a notice appeared in the *Columbia Telescope*: "The Committee for building of the Presbyterian Church will be much obliged to the subscribers who are in arrears, to pay them up, that they may be enabled to make a full report to the meeting of the members and supporters of the Church, which will soon take place." The money came in, and a bell was added in 1817 and a chandelier a year later.

Meanwhile, the town's Baptists had organized in 1809. Like many of the Baptists who settled in South Carolina, most in Columbia were Calvinistic or "Particular" Baptists in doctrine. The first person to be baptized in the Columbia church was Ann Wyche Taylor, wife of Colonel Thomas Taylor, who was by now a staunch Presbyterian. The Baptists met in the Richland County Courthouse until their first church was built in 1811—"a commodious brick meeting-house 40 feet square" facing Sumter Street on the corner of Plain (later named Hampton). A group of prominent citizens organized the Episcopal church on August 8, 1812. Services were held in the State House until the cruciform wooden Trinity Church was built on the corner of Sumter and Gervais streets in 1814. The capital of South Carolina now had four churches—their buildings close together in the little city—First Presbyterian, Washington Street Methodist, First Baptist, and Trinity Episcopal. In the 1820s, the Roman Catholic church was organized to minister to the Irish laborers who came to work on the Columbia Canal. The Methodist church had the largest membership, followed by the Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Baptists, and Roman Catholics.

In 1818 Dr. Montgomery, pastor at First Presbyterian Church, moved to Missouri. The congregation appointed a committee of seven (with Colonel Taylor as chairman) to choose a new pastor, stipulating that his term of service would be limited to three years unless renewed by all parties concerned. This procedure, adopted by the congregation "as a security against possible mistakes," would prove to be a great problem to the future peace of the church.⁴⁹



The committee called as pastor twenty-eight-year-old Thomas Charleton Henry, a native of Philadelphia. Henry graduated from Middlebury College in Vermont in 1814 and entered the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church in Princeton, which had

⁴⁹ Centennial sermon of William E. Boggs.


opened its doors two years earlier. He studied with Princeton's first two professors, Archibald Alexander and Samuel Miller, until 1816, when he left the seminary to become a missionary under the care of the West Lexington Presbytery of Kentucky. Henry was recommended to the Columbia pulpit committee by friends in Augusta and Charleston. He was ordained and installed by Harmony Presbytery on November 7, 1818, as the church's first full-time pastor. Dr. Montgomery, who was still in town, preached the installation sermon. The new pastor was provided with a house and a generous salary of \$2,000 a year.⁵⁰

Thomas Henry was a leader in establishing the Columbia Sunday School Union on February 4, 1819. Colonel John Taylor (now governor) was elected president; and Mr. Henry, Dr. James Davis, Major W. C. Clifton, and Dr. E. D. Smith became vice presidents. All were Presbyterians except for Major Clifton, a Methodist. Henry was "re-elected" pastor in 1820 and again in 1823. The second time, however, there was a significant vote opposed to extending his ministry in Columbia. He therefore declined the call and, in April 1824, became pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church of Charleston.

The text of Mr. Henry's "farewell discourse" to his Columbia congregation was Acts 20:27—"For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." The themes of this sermon illustrate the burden of Henry's five-and-a-half-year ministry in Columbia. He urged the Presbyterians to exercise a "Christian charity which knows no other difference between evangelical sects than that of a name." "The worshipping assemblies in this place," he told his people, "build the same hope on the same broad basis." He called for Christians to "make the line between the duties of the Christian and the maxims and customs of the world as visible and distinct as possible." There had been some controversy during Henry's ministry concerning Christians attending the theatre and dances. The pastor admitted that all were not agreed on these practices but strongly objected to the argument that Christians should participate in them in order to win non-Christians. Henry closed his eloquent farewell sermon with a powerful restatement of the gospel, which he had faithfully preached at First Presbyterian:

⁵⁰ The pastor's salary remained \$2,000 until 1824, when it was reduced to \$1,500. It remained at that figure until 1837, when it was again raised to \$2,000. In 1867 it became \$1,500 until 1875, when it was raised to \$2,000. It was again reduced to \$1,500 in 1880 and remained so until it was raised to \$2,100 in 1891.

Dear Brethren, God now sums up and closes the account between us. Yet before I pronounce the word *adieu*—let me once more present the Saviour to you: Let me once more refresh my soul with the sounds of the Gospel—"Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." "The Spirit and the bride say, come. And let him that heareth say, come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the waters of life freely."⁵¹



Robert Means was chosen as temporary supply for First Presbyterian Church in December 1823. He was born in Fairfield District, South Carolina, in 1796 and developed a "pure and fervent" love for his native state. Mr. Means graduated from South Carolina College in 1813 at the age of seventeen. He then studied law in Columbia but was too young to be admitted to the bar. In 1816, through the death of his godly mother and the reading of Christian books, the young man made a profession of faith and turned his attention to the ministry. He wrote in his diary: "As I have dedicated myself to God in the gospel of His Son, I will make it the ruling object of my exertions to obtain the qualifications for this office, and to exercise them in a fervent and faithful manner. May God enable me to do this for Christ's sake." He was licensed by Harmony Presbytery in 1818 and served churches in Winnsboro, Camden, and Newberry, until he was called to Columbia. Mr. Means was a tall, impressive man, a diligent student, and a good preacher with a melodious voice.

A one-acre lot on Marion Street "immediately in front of the church" had been purchased and a two-story brick manse, with nine rooms and five fireplaces, completed in 1822. Much to the dismay of the congregation, the cost exceeded the estimate of \$5,560. Various endeavors to raise the additional money (including selling burial lots and reducing the pastor's salary from \$2,000 to \$1,500 a year) failed, and in 1824 the house was sold to the church's newly called pastor, Robert Means. Some years later it became a school conducted by Robert Edmonds. The church struggled for several more years to pay off debts incurred with the manse—a "vexatious affair," according to Benjamin Palmer, which "had only been a source of anxiety and

⁵¹ Arthur, "Nourishing Spiritual Darkness," p. 83. A studious pastor and prolific writer, Henry received the doctor of divinity degree from Yale University in 1824. He died of "stranger's fever" in Charleston in 1827. In his will he left money to Princeton Seminary and the Chickasaw Indian mission.

trouble." On one occasion in 1826, an advertisement appeared in the *Columbia Telescope* reporting that the church building was for sale in order to pay the debt!

In March 1824, Mr. Means was "elected" to a three-year term (by a vote of twenty-three to thirteen). That same year the church adopted bylaws that stated that a pastor would be nominated by the session and elected by the congregation for a three-year period. At the end of that time, the session and congregation had the option of renominating and re-electing him if they so desired. Robert Means was "re-elected" for a second term but declined to serve again. He returned to Fairfield District, where he was pastor of Salem Church.⁵²

Sermons at First Church in the early years reflected the considerable education of Presbyterian ministers. Candidates for the ministry were examined by presbytery in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew; as well as "on the arts and sciences; on theology, natural and revealed; and on ecclesiastical history, the sacraments, and church government." Presbyterian pastors were expected to teach Bible and doctrine to their congregations and to contribute to the good of the denomination and evangelical Christianity by their study and writing. Robert Means's scholarly ability was put to use in his *Considerations Respecting the Genuineness of the Pentateuch*—an answer to Dr. Thomas Cooper of South Carolina College, who sought to disprove the Mosaic authorship of the first five books of the Bible. Mr. Means's reply first appeared in the *Southern Christian Herald*. He wrote, he said, to answer an "unprovoked" attack on "the authority of revealed religion," to show "that the obligations of religion are founded in truth," and to enable Christians "to furnish reasons for the belief which they cherish."⁵³

After struggling with financial difficulties and going to court to defend its right to use part of its property as a cemetery, First Presbyterian Church began to prosper. In November 1828, Abram Blanding gave the church a lot on the east side of the 1700 block of Sumter Street (between Laurel and Blanding streets); and a brick

⁵² Robert Means was a candidate for the professorship of sacred literature at South Carolina College, but increasing blindness prevented his election. He died on January 17, 1836, at the age of thirty-nine. George Howe preached a memorial sermon for Mr. Means in which he said: "His sky was indeed overcast. His sun was clouded, but flashed its radiance upon us through the gloom as it descended. It hath set in darkness, but hath risen on another shore in undying splendor."

⁵³ Robert Means, *Sermons and an Essay on the Pentateuch* (Boston: Perkins and Marvin, 1836), pp. 421, 422. Means's answer to Cooper was reprinted as a booklet in 1834 and included in his volume of sermons in 1836. The 1836 reprint is 166 pages in length.

Sunday school building or Lecture Room (as it was called) was constructed at the cost of \$800.⁵⁴ The ground level provided classrooms for white children, and the basement was used for the "oral instruction" of black people.

John Rennie served as stated supply from June 1827 until January 1828, when he was called as pastor. The call was not presented to Harmony Presbytery, however, and Mr. Rennie was never actually installed. He visited Europe during the summer of 1830, during which time the pulpit was filled by Dr. Thomas Goulding, the first professor of the Presbyterian theological seminary in Columbia. Tensions in the church developed when the session refused to renominate Rennie and the congregation re-elected him anyway. According to the 1824 bylaws, a renewed call to the pastor required not only an election by the congregation but also a second nomination by the session. Harmony Presbytery attempted to make peace and nudge the church toward a more standard Presbyterian procedure. It affirmed the people's "precious and unalterable privilege of choosing their own pastor." Presbyterian church government, it stated, holds that the pastoral relation (when regularly consummated between a minister and his people by the authority of presbytery) is, in its nature, permanent until properly terminated. The private rules and regulations of a particular church cannot affect it. But in this case, the presbytery found that the original call was never presented to presbytery and so the pastoral relations between Mr. Rennie and the congregation were never constituted. Presbytery, therefore, supported the session, which held that it had to nominate before the congregation could vote. Presbytery also stated that the session could not refuse to make a nomination but must "endeavor to promote the settlement of a pastor."

⁵⁴ The site of this first Lecture Room of First Presbyterian Church is identified by Fitz Hugh McMaster as just south of the present location of Ladson Presbyterian Church on Sumter Street (McMaster, *History*, p. 12).

CHAPTER 3

SPIRITUAL AND SECULAR CONCERNS

First Presbyterian Church followed the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Form of Government and Discipline of the Presbyterian Church in the United States as its rule of faith and practice.⁵⁵ In its “Bylaws and Regulations for Spiritual and Secular Concerns” (adopted in 1824), the church set forth additional policies. Members of the corporation—white male church members at least twenty-one years old who contributed \$100 annually—elected the “temporal affairs committee” (which was responsible for the physical and financial aspects of the church) and the ruling elders. Other members of the congregation—women, blacks, youths—participated in the worship services and received the sacraments but could not vote in the meetings of the corporation. The great Protestant doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, however, received impressive emphasis in the last of the church’s ten “spiritual” rules:

We hereby covenant as fellow Christians to give up ourselves to the Lord for mutual edification, by watching over, exhorting, reproving and comforting each other, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God,

⁵⁵ These documents were prepared by the famous Westminster Assembly of Divines in London (1643-47) and revised by the American Presbyterian church in 1789.

even our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify us unto himself, a peculiar people zealous of good works.

Church membership was taken very seriously. The session examined and "nominated" suitable persons to the congregation for its vote. Members of "all sister churches" with whom First Presbyterian Church was "in fellowship" were invited to the Lord's table. After one year's residence in Columbia, they were requested to transfer their membership to the church. Each candidate who was not a member of another church was required to "give credible evidence of repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, by operation of the Holy Spirit." When the certificate of membership from another church was more than a year old, the session sometimes required a full examination. Occasionally, even those with certificates from other churches were delayed membership if there appeared to be some question about their Christian character. One man passed his examination for membership, but because "he could not tell whether he had been baptized in infancy, it was deemed proper to delay his admission for the present."

As people joined the church, an interesting and diverse congregation developed. Fairly typical is the session notation for October 8, 1819: four persons were received from other Presbyterian churches in South Carolina; one from a church in County Down in Ireland; and Charles, a "colored man . . . now the property of Miss Smyth of this place," from the First Independent Church in Charleston.

The major source of church income was pew rent collected from members, probably instituted soon after the church building was completed.⁵⁶ Pew rental ranged from twelve dollars a year to forty dollars, depending on location. Accommodation was provided, however, for those who could not pay for their seats. The north gallery was reserved for "the people of color." Half of the south gallery was for

⁵⁶ Yearly lease for pews was required, and the pew-holder was required to sign the following form: "Know all men by these presents, That I —— have rented from the first Presbyterian Church in Columbia, the Pew in the said Church, numbered —— for one year from this date, and to hold the same from year to year, until I shall have given three months previous notice to the Treasurer of the congregation, of my intention to surrender the same. And for the same, I agree to pay the said Church, the annual sum of —— dollars in instalments, to become due on the first day of January and July, in each year: and I further agree, that in case I shall be at any time, one year in arrears of payment on this agreement, the congregation or their standing committee may declare this lease void, and may lease this pew to any other person." On one of these contracts, the clerk of session wrote in 1828 the words "went off without giving notice or paying pew rent"!

the use of the poor white members of the church; the other half was assigned to the students of the college (for one dollar a year per seat) and "strangers." Those who were declared "poor members" by the session were permitted "to worship statedly in the free pews" and were entitled "to the charitable donations of the deacons or session from the church fund."



Prominent Columbians were members of First Presbyterian Church. Colonel Thomas Taylor and his sons Thomas and John were identified with the church from its beginning. Thomas Taylor, Jr., died in 1825—"cut down, suddenly, in the midst of his days." The Reverend Robert Means gave the funeral discourse at First Presbyterian Church. It was not a eulogy but an exposition of Psalm 102:24-27 on death as "the Almighty's minister." Mr. Means reminded the grieving congregation that for the Christian, death is not "the extinction of our hopes and the termination of our joys" but their intensification and elevation. He said that Thomas Taylor's sudden death is a message to all the living: ". . . Even now, a voice seems to issue from the tomb, declaring that not the firmness of manhood in its prime; not the greatest earthly prosperity; not the affection of a parent, exclaiming in agony, 'would to God I had died for thee, my son'; not the love, and esteem, and prayers of numerous friends, could avert the inevitable hour, or save him who was destined to an early grave." The preacher pressed home his message: "Let me therefore most earnestly admonish and adjure you to prepare diligently to meet your God. . . . The time, my friends, is short. God may quickly call you to his judgment seat—and remember, that without holiness no man shall behold His face in peace."⁵⁷

Thomas Taylor's brother John, a lawyer, served as the town's first intendant and as a state representative and senator. He was elected to both houses of Congress and served as governor of South Carolina from 1826 to 1828. He was an elder of the church for little more than a year before he died in 1832. The senior Taylor died on November 16, 1833, at the age of ninety. Howe comments, "To the last he loved that country for whose liberties he fought and his heart [sang] praises to redeeming grace, when the 'daughters of music were brought low' through increasing age."⁵⁸ Colonel Taylor had seen Columbia grow from a wooded settlement on the banks of the Congaree to a

⁵⁷ Means, *Sermons*, pp. 287, 291, 295, 296.

⁵⁸ Howe, *Presbyterian Church in South Carolina* 1:597.

thriving town. More than anyone else, he had shaped and guided the town during its formative years. His twelve children and their descendants would play an important role in the history of Columbia and Richland County. He lived to see First Presbyterian Church grow from a hope and a dream to an influential congregation with its own building on a prominent street corner of the state capital.

Chancellor Henry William DeSaussure, grandson of a Swiss Huguenot who settled at Port Royal in approximately 1730, was one of the founders of South Carolina College. As a youth of seventeen, he had volunteered in the Revolutionary War and was captured by the British during the siege of Charleston. He served as head of the United States Mint during George Washington's administration. Brilliant and highly respected, Chancellor DeSaussure was one of the leading attorneys of the state. Colonel Abram Blanding and his wife, Mary Caroline DeSaussure Blanding, appear on the earliest existing membership rolls of the church (1820). Blanding, a native of Massachusetts, came to South Carolina at the encouragement of his Brown College classmate David R. Williams, afterwards governor of South Carolina. One of Blanding's teachers at Brown was Jonathan Maxcy, the first president of South Carolina College. Blanding was the first principal of the male academy which opened in Columbia in 1798. He then became a prominent lawyer in Camden and Columbia and served in numerous public offices. He planted the trees along Walnut Street, later renamed Blanding Street in his honor. He was important in the development of public works projects, including the construction of the town's water system, which was one of the nation's most advanced. Colonel Blanding's brother-in-law, William F. DeSaussure, also a member of First Presbyterian, was his partner in a law firm practicing in the districts of Lexington, Richland, and Fairfield.

Robert Mills and his wife, Eliza Barnwell Smith Mills, joined First Presbyterian Church in October 1821. He became an elder in 1824. Mills, America's first native-born and native-trained architect, was born in Charleston and studied and worked in Washington before returning to South Carolina in 1820 to become state architect and engineer.⁵⁹ During his years in Columbia, Mills planned a system of canals for the state and designed the first building of the State

⁵⁹ After ten years in South Carolina, Mills returned to Washington when Andrew Jackson appointed him government architect and engineer. John Morrill Bryan states that "the work of Robert Mills was a formative influence upon the cultural milieu of the early republic. As a student and friend of Jefferson, as the first federal architect, as the designer of prominent structures from New Orleans to Newburyport, Massachusetts, as an engineer, and as a visionary South Carolinian, he played an

Hospital, the library at South Carolina College, and a number of homes, including one on Blanding Street for Ainsley Hall, a wealthy Englishman who was also a member of First Presbyterian Church. Hall died before he could move into the house, which boasted the first gas lights in the city. The house was finished by Hall's widow, Sarah Goodwin Hall.⁶⁰

Gilbert Tennent Snowden, Jr., joined the church when he arrived in Columbia in 1821. The son of a Presbyterian minister, Snowden quickly established himself as a merchant in Columbia and a faithful member of the church. Davis Ewart was one of the pioneers in American railroad construction—helping to build the line between Charleston and Augusta, which in 1828 was the first steam railway in operation in the United States.

From its early days, First Presbyterian Church accepted black members but attempted to screen them carefully.⁶¹ The session, in July 1820, decided that every Negro applying for membership who had not been a member of another church "be under probation for three months; and that such person be prepounded to the congregation at large, in order that any defects in the character or deportment may be known to the Session."⁶² Jack, who is described as "a servant of the college," waited over a year while the session tried to determine his "moral character and deportment"—finally deciding to "postpone the admittance of this applicant for the present." Other "servants," however, were admitted to membership after an examination of their

important role in establishing the character of our surroundings." See John Morrill Bryan, *Robert Mills, Architect, 1781-1855*, p. 5. Among his notable achievements were designs for South Carolina College, government buildings in the nation's capital, the Washington monuments in Baltimore and Washington, and churches including the Monumental Church in Richmond, the Sansom Street Church in Philadelphia, the First Baptist Church in Baltimore, the Circular Church in Charleston, and the First Presbyterian Church of Augusta, Georgia.

⁶⁰ Hall was considered for the office of elder at the church but never elected. His reputation was damaged when his wife, Sarah, discovered a letter indicating that he was romantically involved with someone else. To Sarah's dismay, her husband not only admitted the relationship but defended the "other" woman. Sarah's stepfather discouraged a divorce because such a step would stain the family name. Before the issue could be settled, Hall died in 1823 at the age of forty.

⁶¹ As was true everywhere, the number of black Presbyterians in Columbia fell far short of black membership in Methodist and Baptist churches. From 1843 to 1855, the only time that session records note race in the membership lists, there were never more than thirty-four black members. During this same period, Washington Street Methodist Church had almost twice as many black members as white. A significant black Presbyterian community slowly developed, however, in Columbia and elsewhere.

⁶² McMaster, *History*, pp. 13, 14.

"religious walk and conversation." Those who transferred from other churches were often accepted immediately. Most of the blacks who joined the church were slaves, but there were some "free persons of color." Black members participated fully in all aspects of the church's worship, including communion, and were held to the same high standards of Christian conduct as whites.

The session met regularly—usually in the home of one of the elders, occasionally in the Lecture Room of the church, or (after June 1832) at the new Presbyterian seminary. The minutes contain many accounts of the session's careful concern for the spiritual life of its people. The elders attempted to demonstrate understanding and compassion while maintaining their commitment to Presbyterian doctrine and polity. On May 30, 1828, two elders were appointed "to visit such members of the Church as are known to absent themselves from sealing ordinances."

First Presbyterian Church recognized its responsibility to those close at hand and also to the greater church—the Presbyterian Church in the United States and the worldwide fellowship of Christians. Collections were taken for "relief of distress" among members of the church and community and for synodical missions. In 1820 the church sent two communion collections to the theological seminary at Princeton. Monthly concerts for prayer were held, at which collections were taken for foreign missions. On March 25, 1834, the secretary of the General Assembly's board of missions met with the session and presented a plan of organizing the churches and presbyteries as auxiliaries to the board. His presentation "met with the entire approbation of the members."

From its beginning, the Presbyterian church was a significant part of the new state capital. First Presbyterian Church and Columbia grew up together. The town's central location on a navigable river, its importance as the state's seat of government, and its promising college resulted in rapid growth in population and influence. In 1820 South Carolina was the leading cotton-producing state in the nation, and much of this business passed through Columbia. By 1826, the Columbia Canal—designed to enable boats to pass the rocky rapids on the Broad River—was opened, and soon boats were transporting

cotton and other goods to Charleston. Each year more than 30,000 bales, weighing 330 pounds each, were bought in the Cottontown area of North Main Street. Joined by stagecoach lines to Camden, Charleston, Greenville, and Augusta, the city welcomed many visitors.

With speeches and festivities, Columbia entertained the Marquis de Lafayette in 1825. George Washington had found, on his visit in 1791, "an uncleared wood with very few houses in it." But in 1825 Lafayette saw some five hundred houses—"many of them handsome"—scattered throughout the city. Times were good, the price of cotton was high, and the future looked bright indeed. Columbians were proud of their city. By 1829 a new two-lane covered wooden bridge, resting on fourteen solid granite piers, connected the banks of the Congaree River. The *Columbia Telescope* reported:

Columbia can now boast of three of the finest bridges in the United States. You can . . . take your carriage and drive a circle around Columbia, cross three beautiful rivers, the Broad, the Saluda, and the Congaree, and dash into town on the same side you set out from, and in so doing, have some of the handsomest views which the middle country of the South presents anywhere—perhaps we might say *the* handsomest.

CHAPTER 4



OUR SOUTHERN ZION

The Presbyterians of South Carolina and Georgia had contributed generously to the support of the General Assembly's seminary at Princeton. But the geographical distance of Princeton and the growing desire to have a seminary for the "Southern church" led to the founding, in 1828, of the Theological Seminary of the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia in Lexington, Georgia. Dr. Thomas Goulding, pastor of the Lexington Presbyterian Church, was chosen by the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia as its first professor of theological instruction. Thomas Goulding was born in Liberty County, Georgia, on March 14, 1786, and grew up in the community around Midway Church—the remarkable settlement with roots in South Carolina and Puritan New England. Although officially a Congregational church, Midway sent scores of its sons into the Presbyterian ministry as preachers, missionaries, and professors. Goulding, considering law as a career, pursued his studies in private. But he decided for the ministry, was licensed by the Presbytery of Harmony in 1813, and was ordained in 1816. He liked to say of himself that he was "the first native of Georgia that became a Presbyterian minister since the foundation of the world!"⁶³

⁶³ George Howe notes that Goulding's claim could apply only to the Presbyterian Church in the United States since Isaac Grier, also a native of Georgia, was ordained in the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in 1804, twelve years before Goulding's

During 1829, Dr. Goulding taught the first class of five students in his Lexington home.⁶⁴ A "thorough Calvinist of the Genevan school," Goulding often told his students, "Let every sermon preached contain so much of the plan of salvation that should a heathen come in who never heard the gospel before, and who should depart never to hear it again, he should learn enough to know what he must do to be saved."⁶⁵ Synod considered various locations for the new school, including Athens, Georgia, and Pendleton and Winnsboro, South Carolina, but decided on Columbia. Early in 1830 Goulding and his students moved to the capital city. Classes were held on Marion Street in the former manse of the Presbyterian church, but soon Abram Blanding and other supporters provided a permanent location, purchasing Ainsley Hall's home from Hall's widow, Sarah Goodwin Hall.⁶⁶ The house designed by Robert Mills and several small buildings comprised the little campus. On January 25, 1831, the seminary opened in its new location. The six students lived in the upper story and basement of the central building; the first floor was used for the lecture rooms and chapel. Later the small building—originally the stables and carriage house—on the east side of the campus became the chapel. One who worshiped there wrote:

We were comforted by remembering that our Saviour was said to have been born in a stable and cradled in a manger; and so sweet have been our seasons of religious instruction and enjoyment in that place often since, that we have forgotten that it ever was a stable at all. We have "looked," sometimes, almost like John in Patmos, "and behold a door opened" unto us also "in heaven."⁶⁷

George Howe came to Columbia in 1830 to teach Greek and Hebrew, and the next year he was elected professor of biblical literature. Howe, a native of Massachusetts, studied for the ministry at Andover Seminary. He graduated in 1825 and taught at Dartmouth College before coming to Columbia. When he declined a call in 1836 from the new Union Theological Seminary in New York, Dr. Howe explained his decision to stay in the South. "When I accepted the pro-

ordination. George Howe, "History of Columbia Theological Seminary," in *Memorial Volume of the Semi-Centennial of the Theological Seminary at Columbia, South Carolina* (Columbia: The Presbyterian Publishing House, 1884), pp. 132, 133.

⁶⁴ Thomas Goulding was awarded the doctor of divinity degree by the University of North Carolina in 1829.

⁶⁵ *Semi-Centennial of the Theological Seminary*, p. 186.

⁶⁶ Blanding gave \$8,000 of the \$14,000 required for the property.

⁶⁷ *Semi-Centennial of the Theological Seminary*, p. 146.

fessorship which I hold," he wrote, "it was with the hope that I might be the means of building up the wastes, and extending the borders of our Southern Zion." He hoped that by remaining at the comparatively small Southern school, he and his colleagues could "transmit to the men of the next generation an institution which will bless them and the world."⁶⁸ At Columbia Seminary, Dr. Howe so skillfully taught the Bible in Hebrew and Greek that, according to a later writer, "sound methods of Hebrew and Greek exegesis were disseminated by him throughout our Southern country."⁶⁹

In 1833 the Reverend Aaron W. Leland was chosen for the chair of Christian theology, and Dr. Goulding moved to ecclesiastical history and polity.⁷⁰ Aaron Leland, like George Howe from Massachusetts, graduated from Williams College in 1808 and moved to Mount Pleasant, near Charleston, South Carolina, where he taught school. He was licensed and ordained as an evangelist by Harmony Presbytery in 1812. Called to First Presbyterian Church—also known as the Scotch Church or Scots Kirk—in Charleston in 1813, he later served as pastor of the Presbyterian church on James Island. In 1815, at the age of twenty-eight, he was granted the degree of doctor of divinity by South Carolina College. In 1833 he came to Columbia Seminary to teach theology. That same year two pews at First Presbyterian Church were set aside for the use of the students of the seminary.

After John Rennie resigned as pastor of First Presbyterian Church in July 1831, over the controversy between the session and congregation concerning his call, the church was supplied for the next year and a half by seminary professors Dr. Goulding and Dr. Howe.

While the church struggled to preserve its unity and call a pastor, the state was experiencing politically explosive times. South Carolina had come out of the War of 1812 a patriotic and nationalistic state; but it turned toward an aggressive sectionalism in the face of Northern abolitionism and federal tariffs that penalized the agricultural South. In 1832 the nullifiers won control of the state government. They organized a convention that met in Columbia in November, passed an ordinance nullifying "certain acts of the

⁶⁸ Street, *Southern Presbyterians*, pp. 39, 40.

⁶⁹ John Miller Wells, *Southern Presbyterian Worthies* (Richmond: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1936), p. 258.

⁷⁰ In 1834 Goulding returned to the pastorate in Columbus, Georgia. He died on June 21, 1848, "with his harness on," which had been his often-repeated wish.

Congress of the United States" (the tariff acts of 1828 and 1832), and talked of secession. But the state was not of one mind. A Union party opposed to secession held a convention on September 10, 1832—at First Presbyterian Church! After President Andrew Jackson's threats to invade South Carolina, a compromise of sorts was achieved and the federal tariff was dropped. But hostile feelings and mutual suspicions remained. From the 1830s until the War Between the States—a time called by David Duncan Wallace "the bitter generation"—South Carolina would be obsessed with debate on nullification, slavery, and secession.⁷¹

As most of the world rejected slavery, the South moved to protect its "peculiar institution." Statesmen such as John C. Calhoun denounced the squalor, insensitivity, and spiritual bankruptcy of industrial civilization. Until about 1830 there was considerable openness in the South on the issue of slavery and strong interest in eventually ending it. However, the bitter attacks of the abolitionists, Northern politics, and two slave rebellions created a defensiveness in the South that refused to listen to criticism and advice from even its truest friends.

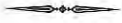
James Henley Thornwell argued that since the Bible and the Bible alone is the only rule of faith and practice in the Presbyterian church, and since the Bible nowhere condemns slavery as sinful, the church cannot do so. "When the Scriptures are silent, she must be silent too," he insisted.⁷² Thornwell saw slavery as part of the curse sin had introduced into the world—like poverty, sickness, disease, and death. It was not "absolutely a good" but it was, under the gospel, turned into the means of "an effective, spiritual discipline."⁷³ The South Carolinian defended slavery as "domestic and patriarchal" and opposed the reopening of the slave trade. He continually criticized the mistreatment of slaves and demanded the legal sanction of slave marriages, repeal of the laws against slave literacy, and effective measures to punish cruel masters. Furthermore, Thornwell strongly held to the unity of the races and repudiated the idea that the curse on Ham in Genesis was fulfilled by the infliction of slavery on the Africans. He recognized in black people "the same humanity in which we glory as

⁷¹ See David Duncan Wallace, *South Carolina: A Short History, 1520-1948* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1961), pp. 396-408.

⁷² *Southern Presbyterian Review* (January 1852): 61. The Old School Presbyterian Church agreed with this position, stating in 1845 that slaveholding was not forbidden in Scripture and that the church had "no authority to legislate on the subject." Street, *Southern Presbyterians*, p. 52.

⁷³ *Southern Presbyterian Review* (January 1852): 63.

the image of God" and was not ashamed to call them "brother[s]."⁷⁴ Thornwell and Southern Presbyterians (like most other Americans), however, did not view the blacks as equals and, despite their sympathy and concern for them, had no real program to bring them to equality or freedom. Their reading of Scripture was "hampered and twisted by the degree of fallenness which remained in their culture (as in every other culture)."⁷⁵



For a few months during 1832, the Reverend Daniel Baker, well-known and respected Presbyterian preacher, supplied the pulpit. Baker was born on August 17, 1791, in Midway, Liberty County, Georgia, and was educated at Hampden-Sydney and Princeton colleges. At Princeton he organized the few Christian students to pray "for a revival of religion in college." Revival came, with numerous conversions, and about twenty or thirty of the young men went on to become ministers of the gospel. Baker did his theological studies with the pastor of the Presbyterian church in Winchester, Virginia. After a period of itinerant preaching in Virginia and Georgia, Baker held pastorates in Harrisonburg, Virginia; at Second Presbyterian Church in Washington, D. C. (where President John Quincy Adams and General Andrew Jackson were among his parishioners); and at the large and important Independent Presbyterian Church in Savannah, Georgia. Revival came to the Savannah church in 1830 and 1831 and led Daniel Baker to return once more to his first love—itinerant preaching. Constrained by the great needs he saw everywhere, he surrendered the prestige and salary of his prominent pastorate for a moderate income, barely sufficient for the support of his family. His real compensation was the joy of winning souls for the Savior. He preached widely through the South, often holding brief pastorates until a church was built up and then moving on; thousands of people were converted through his ministry. "If my preaching was crowned with a remarkable blessing," Baker once explained, "I believe one reason was this: bearing in mind that the word of God, and not the word of man, is quick and powerful, I was a man of one book, and that book the Bible; and taking the hint from an inspired Apostle, I made Jesus Christ and him crucified my constant theme."⁷⁶

During Daniel Baker's short stay in Columbia, the city was

⁷⁴ *Southern Presbyterian Review* (January 1852): 61.

⁷⁵ Kelly, *Preachers with Power*, xxiv.

⁷⁶ Ernest Trice Thompson, *Presbyterians in the South* 1:429.

refreshed by a "gracious outpouring of God's Spirit; and a large addition was made to the communion of the church."⁷⁷ During May 1832, Methodists and Baptists joined with Presbyterians in a series of meetings. John Leighton Wilson, a student at Columbia Seminary, wrote to his sister in Sumter, on May 26, 1832:

We have an interesting season in Columbia. Mr. Baker has been here nearly three weeks and has preached almost every night during the time. . . . Deep feelings have attended Mr. Baker's preaching from the outset—upwards of twenty persons have been converted and [are] now rejoicing in Christ. About fifty are enquiring "What shall we do?" Mr. Baker has been indefatigable in his labours and I have seldom heard any minister preach the gospel in so much simplicity and power. His whole soul seems to be entirely absorbed in the work of his master. . . . O how exceedingly desirable is it that we shall have a glorious revival of religion in this town. It is the central town of the state—the centre of political influence—a wealthy community—the college here—the seminary here. O pray earnestly for this community!


The session of First Presbyterian Church met on July 31, 1832, at "the lodgings of Rev. Mr. Baker" and approved the visitation of every family by Baker and one of the elders. During his ministry in Columbia, Baker traveled to Nazareth Church in Spartanburg District and to Winnsboro for preaching missions. Many others were urging him to help them—including the churches at Pendleton, Newberry, and Walterboro. On September 7, Mr. Baker requested release from his engagement as supply at First Presbyterian in order to attend "various protracted meetings."⁷⁸

During 1833, Dr. Samuel C. Jackson and the Reverend John Fleetwood Lanneau supplied the pulpit at First Church. In September, Jackson—a New England minister who had come to

⁷⁷ Palmer, "Manuscript History." Session minutes of June 30, 1832, indicate that forty-eight people had joined the church during this time.

⁷⁸ In 1838 Baker was challenged by the words of a friend, "Brother Baker, you are the man for Texas." The rest of his life was spent in three long missionary tours of Texas, interspersed with brief pastorates and preaching missions back in the states east of the Mississippi River. On December 10, 1857, during the last hours of his life, Baker said to his son, "William, my son, if I should die, I want this epitaph carved on my tomb: 'Here lies Daniel Baker, Preacher of the Gospel. A sinner saved by grace.'" "Remember," he added, "a sinner saved by grace." It is said that in his early Christian life, Dwight L. Moody literally memorized many of the sermons of Daniel Baker.

Columbia for his health—was elected pastor despite a strong protest that he was a Congregationalist. When the minority deemed his election “inexpedient in the present excited state of the church,” Dr. Jackson declined the call.⁷⁹ A number of other ministers also declined calls—including Horace Pratt (who had served for almost ten years as pastor of the Presbyterian church in St. Mary’s, Georgia) and Thomas Smyth (a native of Belfast, Ireland, who became pastor at Second Presbyterian Church in Charleston in 1834). Dr. Goulding again preached at First Presbyterian. In December 1833, Mr. James Merrick—described in the session’s minutes as a “graduate of our Theological Seminary”—preached for three Sundays.⁸⁰ Dr. Leland—a man “of commanding presence, handsome features and courtly manners”—served as stated supply beginning January 1834 and was elected pastor a year later. “A prince among preachers,” with “a voice of matchless compass and sweetness,” Leland combined his professorship and his pastoral work until the end of 1836, when he resigned from the church.⁸¹



During the early nineteenth century, a large number of Northern Presbyterians were influenced by the views of some New England Congregationalists on doctrine, church polity, and slavery. Many Presbyterians, however, reacted strongly to the so-called “improvements” of Calvinism touted by the New England theology, favored Presbyterian agencies for missions and church planting instead of “independent” boards and societies, and rejected the innovative revival techniques beloved by Charles Finney and his followers. Many Northern Presbyterians were moderate on the slavery issue, but some openly sympathized with the abolitionists. These issues led to an intense struggle in the courts of the Presbyterian church, which finally resulted in a division into separate Old School and New School denominations in 1837. First Presbyterian Church of Columbia—by tradition, conviction, and geography firmly Old School—felt the effects of this struggle. The presence at Columbia Seminary of two professors originally from New England—George Howe and Aaron

⁷⁹ The allusion to “the present excited state of the church” is explained in the following paragraph.

⁸⁰ James L. Merrick served as a missionary in Persia for ten years, then as a pastor in his native Massachusetts until his death in 1866.

⁸¹ Centennial Sermon of William E. Boggs. Leland served as professor of theology at Columbia Seminary until 1856, when he became professor of sacred rhetoric and pastoral theology until his death in 1863.

Leland—caused some doubt in the South and in the church that the seminary was wholeheartedly committed to the Old School position. Howe and Leland defended their Old School “orthodoxy” but refused to champion a partisan line. “Some will not be satisfied until we enter deeply into the agitating questions of party,” they wrote in 1836, “until we cause the discordant notes of theological warfare to issue from these walls where that quiet should reign in which alone the studies of the institution can be successfully pursued. We have thus far felt that we have something more important to do.”⁸² When the division came in 1837, more than three fourths of the Southern churches adhered to the Old School Assembly; most of the churches that joined the New School did so out of displeasure with Old School tactics, not rejection of its theology.

A year after the division, the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia, meeting in Columbia, adopted a “Testimony” setting forth its Old School position and pledging that “no contrary doctrines shall be taught in [Columbia] Seminary or in our pulpits.” Professors Howe and Leland were both examined as to their teaching and, although explaining their tendency in earlier days to lean toward some New School views, strongly affirmed their present allegiance to the synod’s “Testimony.” Synod then asked James Henley Thornwell and two other ministers to draft a letter to the churches explaining the professors’ true views and reporting the synod’s unanimous resolution expressing “unabated confidence in, and affection for, these men of God, who are sedulously engaged in training up our pious young men for the office of the sacred Ministry in our Southern Church, and the world at large.”⁸³

Early in 1837, First Presbyterian Church was able finally to call a full-time pastor: John Witherspoon, minister at the Bethesda Presbyterian Church in Camden. The Camden church urged him to decline and protested the call at presbytery, but Witherspoon accepted it. He and his wife, Susan Kollock of Elizabeth, New Jersey, came to Columbia in July. John Witherspoon was born at Pembroke, North Carolina, in 1789. He was the grandson of the famous John Witherspoon of Princeton College—signer of the Declaration of Independence and leader in the formation of the American

⁸² Thompson, *Presbyterians in the South* 1:503.

⁸³ Morton H. Smith, *Studies in Southern Presbyterian Theology* (Jackson, Mississippi: Presbyterian Reformation Society, 1962), p. 336.

Presbyterian General Assembly. Mr. Witherspoon remained at First Presbyterian only two years, resigning in May 1839 because of poor health.⁸⁴

That same month, twenty-eight-year-old James Henley Thornwell was invited to serve as supply; five months later he was called to be the church's pastor. Thornwell, professor of logic and belles lettres at South Carolina College, had frequently preached at First Presbyterian Church and was well known to the congregation. Born in the Marlborough District of South Carolina in 1812, James graduated from South Carolina College in 1831 and taught school in Sumter for two years. There he made a public profession of his faith in Christ and decided to prepare for the ministry. During the summer and fall of 1834 he studied in the North—at Andover Seminary and Harvard College—but disappointment in his classes and the prospect of severe winter weather drove him back to South Carolina. In November of 1834 he was licensed to preach by Harmony Presbytery—at Tolerant Church!⁸⁵ During Thornwell's examination, Dr. Goulding is reported to have said, "Brethren, I feel like sitting at this young man's feet as a learner."⁸⁶ In 1835 Thornwell was ordained by Bethel Presbytery and installed as pastor of the newly organized Lancaster church. Soon the old mother church of Waxhaw and the church of Six-Mile Creek were added to his charge.⁸⁷ Thornwell gained the reputation of "being a little fast" as he covered his circuit on his fleet horse, "Red Rover."

On December 3, 1835, the young pastor married Nancy White Witherspoon, daughter of Lieutenant Governor James H. Witherspoon of South Carolina. She was the grand-niece of Dr. John Witherspoon of Princeton. Nancy was twenty-seven at the time of her marriage to James, who was then twenty-three. She was described as "tall, and of a large frame, with unusual force of character . . . firm as a rock and yet kind and loving."⁸⁸ A later acquaintance found her

⁸⁴ John Witherspoon later preached at Hillsborough, North Carolina, where he died in 1853. Isabel Witherspoon (Mrs. Charles Cantzon) Foster, long-time member of First Presbyterian Church, is a descendant of John Witherspoon.

⁸⁵ Tolerant Presbyterian Church was located in the bounds of the Beaver Creek congregation in the upper part of the Kershaw District.

⁸⁶ Wells, *Southern Presbyterian Worthies*, p. 19.

⁸⁷ The Thornwells owned a home place near the intersection of Highway 9 and the Riverside Road, where a sign marks the way to the Old Waxhaw Church.

⁸⁸ Kelly, *Preachers with Power*, p. 65.

"simple, kind, and yet highly refined in her manner."⁸⁹

South Carolina College noted Thornwell's promise as a teacher and he joined its faculty in November 1837. The nullification agitation and the "free thinking" of the college's second president, Dr. Thomas Cooper, had brought the school to a low ebb. People throughout the state demanded that something be done. In 1835 Robert W. Barnwell was elected president. Stephen Elliott became professor of the evidences of Christianity and sacred literature, and James Henley Thornwell was given responsibility for logic and belles lettres. Barnwell, Elliott, and Thornwell worked unitedly in their commitment to evangelical Christianity.⁹⁰ The college began to regain the favor it had enjoyed earlier. Soon new buildings went up: two dormitories called Elliott and Pinckney, a double faculty residence, and an impressive library—the first separate library building on an American campus.⁹¹

James Henley Thornwell greatly enjoyed teaching at the college, but "his ordination vow" troubled him. He had "covenanted to make the proclamation of God's grace to sinners the business of his life." He resigned in 1839 to accept the pastorate of First Presbyterian Church, stating that he believed that "the pastoral office is the most important of all other offices" and he could no longer occupy a position in which he was not "permitted to discharge the duties of a pastor."⁹²

On January 1, 1840, Thornwell was installed by the Presbytery of Charleston as pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Columbia. Seminary student Benjamin Morgan Palmer described the new pastor: His was "a thin, spare form, with a slight stoop in the shoulders . . . with soft black hair falling obliquely over the forehead, and a small eye, with a wonderful gleam when it was lighted by the inspiration of his theme. . . . From the opening of the discourse, there was a strange fascination, such as had never been exercised by any other speaker." Palmer asked a neighbor, during one of the speaker's pauses, "Who is

⁸⁹ The quotation is from Alexander T. McGill, a Northern professor who taught at Columbia Seminary during the winter of 1852-1853, during which time he met Mrs. Thornwell. See Margaret DesChamps Moore, "A Northern Professor Winters in Columbia, 1852-1853," *South Carolina Historical Magazine* (October 1959): 191. It was said that Nancy Witherspoon Thornwell was "noted for her common sense" as "her great husband, James Henley Thornwell, [was] noted for his uncommon sense." Gist, *Presbyterian Women*, p. 305.

⁹⁰ Both Robert Barnwell and Stephen Elliott were converted through the preaching of Daniel Baker in Beaufort, South Carolina, in 1831.

⁹¹ The style of the building bears some evidence of the hand of Robert Mills.

⁹² B. M. Palmer, *The Life and Letters of James Henley Thornwell* (Richmond: Whittet & Shepperson, 1975), pp. 127, 153.

this preacher?" "That is Mr. Thornwell," came the impatient answer, "don't you know him?"⁹³ He would soon become one of the most powerful influences in the young seminarian's life.

The election, late in 1840, of Stephen Elliott as bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Georgia left the college pulpit vacant. All eyes of the board were turned immediately to Thornwell, and he was elected chaplain and professor of sacred literature and the evidences of Christianity. There was statewide pressure for him to accept the position in which he would influence South Carolina's future leaders by his defense of orthodox Christianity at the college. Thornwell struggled with his decision and finally told the church:

The general principle upon which I acted—and I think that the principle will commend itself to your judgment—was this: that the dispensations of Providence are intended for our guidance and direction, whenever they do not come into collision with the express and implied precepts of the Word of God. In all other cases they are designed to try us, but in these to lead us, being unambiguous intimations of the Divine will. In the present instance you are familiar with the facts, and can apply the principle. . . . Guided by this principle, and from a spirit, as I trust, of obedience to God, I consented, after a long and painful struggle, and after much earnest prayer, to accept the appointment which was unanimously tendered to me. I can truly say, with Paul, that "I go bound in the Spirit."⁹⁴

In spite of his clear logic, the people of the church were stunned and saddened. Dr. Thornwell had been their pastor for only a year, but he had impressed them as had no one else. "Never before or since was the gospel preached to them with the eloquence and power with which it fell from his lips; and in the agony of their great loss, the question was upon every tongue, 'What shall the man do that cometh after the king?'" Benjamin Palmer later wrote.⁹⁵ Another of Thornwell's successors in the pulpit of First Presbyterian Church, William E. Boggs, reported that the disappointment of some was so great when Thornwell resigned that they "felt they could not listen to another minister."⁹⁶

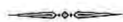
⁹³ Palmer, *Thornwell*, p. 154.

⁹⁴ Palmer, *Thornwell*, p. 218.

⁹⁵ Palmer, *Thornwell*, p. 155.

⁹⁶ Centennial Sermon of William E. Boggs.

Once more, controversy disturbed the unity of the church.⁹⁷ In January 1841 Dr. Leland and Dr. Howe were again asked to supply the pulpit. Dr. Howe was acceptable to the people; but Elder James Martin and seventeen male members of the church (still unsure of Leland's Old School orthodoxy) objected to the preaching of Dr. Leland. Both Leland and Howe declined to preach, "in consequence of existing circumstances." Many in the church wanted the two professors to fill the pulpit, but another invitation to them was turned down. Finally they did agree to preach, but the controversy over Leland continued. Presbytery's refusal to act in the situation undoubtedly indicated its opinion that the orthodoxy of the two men had already been established by the synod in 1838 and that the problem now was due largely to personal issues that the church members would have to resolve among themselves. Drs. Howe and Leland preached from January 1841 to July 1842, but the conflict plagued the church. Presbytery finally recommended that the church not use local ministers to occupy the pulpit and that it immediately obtain a stated supply or pastor. In July 1842 the church invited Benjamin Gildersleeve to serve as regular supply until a pastor could be called. Since 1826 the Princeton Seminary-trained Gildersleeve had edited the influential *Christian Observer* of Charleston, South Carolina.



The Sunday school building on Sumter Street had a basement room specifically designated for classes for black people, but not much progress was made until Charles Colcock Jones—of Liberty County, Georgia—came to the seminary as professor of church history and polity. Jones had studied at Princeton Seminary, where he responded to Professor Archibald Alexander's advice to return to Georgia and begin a ministry to the slaves. In 1832, Jones organized the "Liberty County (Georgia) Association for the Religious Instruction of the Negroes" and became one of the leading missionaries to the slaves in the antebellum South.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Palmer states that "the removal of Mr. Thornwell subjected the church once more to all the evils of a shifting bishopric." Palmer, "Manuscript History."

⁹⁸ For the life of C. C. Jones, see the remarkable family correspondence edited by Robert M. Myers, *The Children of Pride: A True Story of Georgia and the Civil War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972) and *A Georgian at Princeton* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976). See also Eduard N. Loring, "Charles C. Jones: Missionary to Plantation Slaves, 1831-1847," Ph.D. diss., Vanderbilt University, 1976; and Erskine Clarke, *Wrestlin' Jacob: A Portrait of Religion in the Old South* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1979).

C. C. Jones came to Columbia in 1836. Another great advocate of missions to the slaves, William Capers, had just completed his second appointment as pastor of Washington Street Methodist Church. Capers, the son of a wealthy planter family from the Georgetown District, had been approached in 1829 by Santee planter Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, who requested ministers for the slaves in his area. Capers responded and led in the establishment of Methodist missions to the slaves of low-country South Carolina and neighboring states.⁹⁹ Capers' time in Columbia heightened the awareness of many in the city to the spiritual needs of the Southern blacks.

Jones presented the challenge of missionary work among the slaves to his seminary students and urged the session of First Presbyterian Church to give greater attention to this urgent ministry. Under the supervision of Elder James Martin, Jones preached to the blacks of the First Presbyterian congregation on Friday nights and taught a Sunday afternoon class of over two hundred—leading the people through the study of a catechism that he had prepared for their instruction.¹⁰⁰ After Dr. Jones left Columbia in 1850, the ministry to the blacks of Columbia was continued by students at the seminary, one of whom was Benjamin Morgan Palmer.

During the 1830s there were additions and improvements to the church building and grounds. In 1832 new steps of "solid lightwood timber" were built on the front of the church. The next year a brick wall was constructed around the burial ground, at the cost of \$245.08. In the spring of 1836 the church acquired a new roof, a new floor, and a "screen on a door made for the front of the Church"—a great relief from summer heat and insects. Mindful of its obligation to the larger church, the Presbyterians of Columbia were generous in their giving to others. In 1837 they sent a gift of \$229 to help build the Presbyterian church in St. Charles, Missouri.¹⁰¹

Inside the simple frame church building, the congregation listened to solid Calvinistic sermons and worshiped God in traditional

⁹⁹ By 1854 there were thirty-two missionaries serving twenty-six mission stations.

¹⁰⁰ C. C. Jones's *Catechism for the Oral Instruction of Colored Persons* was widely used among the slaves in the South and was translated into several foreign languages by missionaries.

¹⁰¹ In January 1947 the Reverend James R. Blackwood was installed as minister of the First Presbyterian Church of St. Charles. He was born in Columbia in 1918 when his father, Andrew W. Blackwood, was pastor of First Presbyterian Church. When Andrew Blackwood preached his son's installation sermon, the St. Charles session asked

Presbyterian fashion. They sang psalms and hymns without instrumental accompaniment. Before hymn books were available, the minister or a precentor would "line out" the words and lead the singing—usually using a pitch pipe to indicate the beginning notes. Church records show that, in August 1829, Abram Blanding had been authorized to purchase a bass viol "imported for the church."¹⁰² Evidently, it never was used. In October 1836 the session received a letter from several members concerning the use of instrumental music in "public worship." The elders unanimously concluded that "it is inexpedient to permit the bass viol to be used in this church." The congregation also voted the same way and, according to Palmer, "the excitement subsided."¹⁰³

Membership slowly grew as First Presbyterian Church received transferring members from other Presbyterian churches and other denominations, added its baptized children to its rolls, and brought in new believers. In January 1839 a couple whose membership was at First Baptist Church desired to join First Presbyterian. Since the Baptists at that time did not transfer members to other denominations, the couple were examined by the session. They still held their earlier views of adult baptism—"though much weakened by their attachment to the Presbyterian church and its doctrines and discipline"—but since they did not oppose infant baptism, they were unanimously accepted.

The session, with Dr. Thornwell present, dealt with an unusual case in its meeting on March 2, 1840. The committee appointed to call on a member who was absent from communion reported that the man did not believe that he was "a child of God." The minutes record the elders' considered action:

It appearing to the satisfaction of session that this was not a case of doubt or despondency, not a case of spiritual darkness or peculiar temptation, but that there was good ground to think that Mr. Gladden had been deceived when he first made a profession of religion, they felt it their duty to dis-

Professor Blackwood to express to the Columbia session the thanks of their congregation for the gift a hundred years earlier that had encouraged them to begin their building. "The Presbyterian part of the community is still largely Southern in spirit and outlook," Dr. Blackwood reported. *First Presbyterian Church Bulletin* for April 20, 1947.

¹⁰² The viola da gamba (Italian, "viola of the leg") is also called "bass viol" or "double bass."

¹⁰³ Palmer, "Manuscript History."

solve his connection with the church, which they believe should be composed only of those who profess faith.

These Presbyterians took seriously the need for a credible profession of faith as a requirement for church membership.

First Presbyterian Church's involvement in presbytery, synod, and General Assembly grew substantially during the 1830s. In December 1839 the Richland District was added to the Presbytery of Charleston. The first General Assembly delegate from the Columbia church was Gilbert Snowden, who attended the 1836 meeting in Pittsburgh. He returned to the General Assembly in 1843, meeting that year in Philadelphia. From then on, the church was represented at almost every General Assembly. In 1845 the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia was divided. The Synod of South Carolina was organized at Pendleton on the first Thursday of November 1845 and was made up of Bethel, Harmony, Charleston, and South Carolina presbyteries.

Between June 1827 and January 1843, First Presbyterian Church had ten different ministers, six of whom were stated supplies. During these years, in the absence of pastoral continuity, the church had strong and respected leadership in its ruling elders—John Taylor, James Ewart, G. T. Snowden, J. M. Becket, Sidney Crane, Andrew Crawford, and James Martin. The clerk of the session was Mr. Snowden—who served twenty-two years, through 1853. The frequent pastoral changes, as well as underlying controversy, however, took their toll. The congregation requested that Thursday, February 10, 1842, be set apart as a day of humiliation, fasting, and prayer and that public services be held in the church. Doctors Thornwell, Howe, and Leland preached.

PART 2



OLD SCHOOL
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
1837-1861

CHAPTER 5

A PLAIN PRESBYTERIAN MEETING HOUSE

First Presbyterian Church recognized the “urgent necessity” of having a full-time pastor. Dr. Thornwell had resigned two years earlier; John Breckenridge, C. C. Jones, and other prominent Presbyterian ministers had declined calls from the church. Benjamin Gildersleeve still served as stated supply. At the end of 1842 the session “cordially and unanimously” nominated twenty-five-year-old Benjamin Morgan Palmer, and the congregation elected him as their pastor. Mr. Palmer, minister at the First Presbyterian Church of Savannah, accepted the call and moved to Columbia in January 1843.

Benjamin Morgan Palmer was born in 1818 in Charleston. His father, Edward Palmer—a Congregational pastor who traced his ancestry back to William Palmer of Plymouth Colony—served churches in the low country of South Carolina. Benjamin’s mother, Sarah, was the daughter of a Connecticut sea captain who commanded the packet “Georgia,” which sailed between Philadelphia and Charleston. Benjamin grew up as a loyal South Carolinian. Even late in life—after nearly fifty years in New Orleans—he would often say, “I am a South Carolinian, you know,” in order to explain some strongly held opinion or distinctive course of action.

In his early teens, Benjamin was sent to Amherst College in Massachusetts. He received a good education there; but, becoming unhappy with the anti-Southern feelings at the school aroused by the abolitionist movement and the nullification controversy, he left the

college abruptly without seeking the advice of his parents. For a few years he taught school in villages near Charleston. Despite his parents' faith, he was not a Christian until he was led to accept Christ through the personal witness of a cousin, the Reverend I. S. K. Axson.¹⁰⁴ "My cousin," Axson said to young Palmer one night, "you are growing up fast to manhood; is it not a good time to give yourself to the Savior, when you are soon to choose the course in life which you shall pursue?" That very night, Benjamin "took the solemn vow"—as he later put it—that he would make the salvation of his soul "the supreme business" of his life.¹⁰⁵ He completed his studies at the University of Georgia and, though at first inclined to study law, soon became convinced that "the Great Head of the Church had called him to be a preacher of the Gospel of the grace of God."¹⁰⁶

Benjamin Palmer entered Columbia Seminary in January 1839. The greatest influence on the young seminarian was James Henley Thornwell, who, soon after Benjamin came to Columbia, moved from his post at South Carolina College to the pastorate of First Presbyterian Church. The next year Benjamin transferred his membership from the Congregational church in Beaufort to First Presbyterian Church in Columbia. Put to work immediately, he was given the task of reopening "the colored Sunday School."

Benjamin began to spend time with Mary Augusta McConnell, the stepdaughter of Dr. George Howe of the seminary—much to the dismay of the professor, who thought that "Miss Augusta" could do better than to marry a poor seminarian!¹⁰⁷ Palmer, however, persisted; and because he began to show great promise as a preacher, Dr. Howe decided that the match might not be so bad after all. The young couple were married on October 7, 1841, by Dr. Howe.

Benjamin Palmer declined an invitation from the session of First Church to supply the pulpit "as a candidate for settlement" during the summer of 1841. After a short ministry as pulpit supply in Anderson, South Carolina, he was called to the First Presbyterian Church of Savannah, Georgia, and ordained and installed on March 6, 1842. He was there only a few months when the call came from Columbia. The Columbia church was small in numbers—only 128

¹⁰⁴ Axson was later pastor of the Independent Presbyterian Church of Savannah, Georgia.

¹⁰⁵ Wells, *Southern Presbyterian Worthies*, p. 143.

¹⁰⁶ Johnson, *Palmer*, p. 63.

¹⁰⁷ George Howe's first wife died on September 18, 1832, and was buried in the First Presbyterian churchyard. On December 19, 1836, Dr. Howe married Sarah Ann McConnell.

members in 1843—but, as Palmer knew, it was large in influence. In Columbia, Palmer would preach to state and community leaders, as well as to seminary and college faculty and students.

Mr. Palmer's first sermon in Columbia—preached on January 29, 1843—was from the words of Balaam to Balak in Numbers 22:38—"Lo, I am come unto thee: have I now any power at all to say anything? The word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak." The young minister set forth two main points: first, that true ministers of the gospel are called to their office by God himself and their fields of labor especially designated; second, that all true ministerial ability and authority are derived from God. Palmer told his people that the minister of the gospel is "a messenger from God to speak only the word that is put into his mouth." He may "not invent or add anything to the message. His sole care must be to inquire what God the Lord will say. The pastoral commission is no contract formed merely for the pleasure and amusement of the hearers," Palmer said. "The pastor is not called upon to cater to the various tastes which may perchance prevail among his auditors," he added; "his duty is to study God's Book, to present its promises, to recite its warnings, to declare its judgments."¹⁰⁸

The young pastor was installed on May 7. The session minutes described the service as

deeply solemn and interesting. Rev. Edward Palmer, Father of the Pastor elect, preached the Sermon. Rev. Dr. Howe Moderator of Presbytery presided and proposed the constitutional questions. Rev. B. Gildersleeve gave the charge to the Pastor and the Rev. Professor Thornwell the charge to the people, after which, the Elders and Temporal Committee as representatives of the church and congregation gave their hands to the Pastor in token of their regard and cordial reception of him as appointed over them in the Lord.

The church quickly responded to their new pastor's leadership. In a report to Charleston Presbytery less than a year later, Palmer stated that sixteen people had joined the church and that there was

a greater degree of external harmony and an increasing attendance upon the preaching of the word. Sabbath school, both class and Catechetical instruction, is faithfully

¹⁰⁸ Johnson, *Palmer*, p. 89.

attended to and the colored people connected with the congregation receive a proper share of the pastor's attention. There is a weekly Lecture for their especial benefit, which is well attended, and a Sabbath School on the plan of oral instruction in which they are taught the doctrines and duties of our religion.

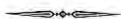
On Sundays Mr. Palmer preached to the people who made their way through the dust or mud of Columbia's streets to the church on the corner of Marion and Lady. Three times each Sunday—morning, afternoon, and evening—they listened to his sermons of forty to ninety minutes.¹⁰⁹ Quarterly communion seasons were important times in the church's life. The Sunday morning celebration of the Lord's Supper was preceded by preparatory services on Friday evening and Saturday afternoon, with additional services in the Lecture Room on Saturday morning and night. Almost always at the communion services, infants of church members were baptized. Occasionally there were special observances, as on the first Sabbath in July 1846, which was set apart by the General Assembly—because of the War with Mexico—as a day of “humiliation and confession of our national sins.” Services of united prayer for missions and for “colleges and seminaries of learning” were held from time to time.

The session was committed to its work. During the summer of 1847 it divided the congregation into districts for pastoral visitation, with the plan that the pastor and one elder would work together in each district. The church's elders were William Law, Sidney Crane, Gilbert T. Snowden, Andrew Crawford, and James Martin. Mr. Snowden was a businessman in the North until 1821, when he settled in Columbia. He had been converted in 1819 in New York City and had listened eagerly to the sermons of some of the country's great preachers—Dr. John B. Romeyn of New York, Dr. Ashbel Green of Philadelphia, and Dr. John Holt Rice of Richmond. Mr. Crane was born in New Jersey and came to Columbia in 1820. He united with the Presbyterian church in 1831, becoming an elder four years later. Mr. Law was born in County Antrim, Ireland, in 1779 and was educated by his devout parents in “the Protestant and Calvinistic faith.” At the age of twelve he arrived with his parents in Newberry, South Carolina. Becoming a successful businessman, he moved to Columbia in 1818. He joined the Presbyterian church and, two years later, was elected elder. The

¹⁰⁹ Palmer later stated that the third service was largely unprofitable, both to the congregation and to the preacher!

session usually met in the Lecture Room or in Mr. Palmer's house. On one occasion, lacking a quorum, they went to Mr. Law's mercantile store for their meeting, where a quorum was formed by the addition of Mr. Law!

As the church grew, it was necessary to enlarge the Lecture Room on Sumter Street. In the early part of 1846, the white Sunday school, which had been closed for several months due to the lack of a suitable room, was reopened. Soon the Sunday school for Negroes was also meeting again in the enlarged building.



In 1847 Benjamin Morgan Palmer, James Henley Thornwell, and George Howe founded *The Southern Presbyterian Review*—a publication destined to become one of the major theological journals in nineteenth-century America.¹¹⁰ On July 27, 1848, a huge parade and celebration was held in Columbia in honor of the return of the Palmetto Regiment from the Mexican War. Their flag had been the first American banner unfurled in Mexico City. John C. Calhoun died on March 31, 1850, and was buried in the western cemetery of St. Philip's Church in Charleston. Franklin Harper Elmore, United States congressman, president of the Bank of South Carolina, and a member of First Presbyterian Church, was appointed to fill Calhoun's vacant seat in the United States Senate; but he died after serving only a few months.

At mid-century, Columbia's population had reached seven thousand. The capital, still surrounded by dense forests, was described as "quite a handsome Southern town." The spacious, unpaved streets were well shaded, some of them having locust or pride-of-India trees along the sidewalks and a double row along the center with a walk between. There were many impressive houses "built in the Southern style, with large rooms and ample windows, and with broad porticos or verandas, sometimes on all four sides of the house, and even repeated for the second story." Most homes were "surrounded by extensive grounds filled with trees, shrubbery, and flowers." Daniel Webster, who visited Columbia in 1847, was impressed by the "ornamental trees" along the streets and in the squares and wrote that "the town is now one of the handsomest and nicest looking of our little inland cities." A student at South Carolina College, returning to

¹¹⁰ *The Southern Presbyterian Review* continued from 1847 to 1885, with a break during the war years. The journal was edited by a board until 1861 and by Dr. James Woodrow from 1866 to 1885.

Columbia in the early 1850s, wrote enthusiastically, "Columbia [is] out in its spring attire of roses and floral gems. Oh! It is a lovely and lovable place."¹¹¹

The "low and pleasing hills" around Columbia and the river scenery also impressed visitors—as did the "perfect" hospitality of the townspeople. Many were highly educated and possessed to a great degree "the charming manners of an aristocratic society." The area was touted as "a healthy region" because of its sand and pines. The sand, it was thought, absorbed "moisture so as to dry the atmosphere"; and the pine trees took out "malarious elements, so that in this region persons having weak lungs in early years have lived a comparatively long and vigorous life."¹¹²

The railroad reached Columbia in 1842. The *Robert Y. Hayne*, named in honor of South Carolina's governor from 1832 to 1834, began passenger service to Charleston on June 20. Six years later trains were running to Camden, and by mid-century the state had almost a thousand miles of track with Columbia at the center. *The Daily Telegraph* was launched on October 18, 1847—the first successful newspaper of inland South Carolina.

The town's churches and institutions were flourishing. Washington Street Methodist Church replaced its old structure—the first church building in Columbia—with a new brick church in 1832. The popular William Capers, who was appointed pastor of the church for the second time in 1831, attracted more people to the church than the old building could accommodate. The trustees decided to build "a substantial, large brick church." The old church was moved to the rear of the lot to be a Sunday school building, and the cornerstone was laid on June 14, 1831. A little over a year later the impressive sanctuary was dedicated. By 1840, Lutherans had completed their first church in Columbia—a brick building with a shingle roof and, "with exception of the chancel recess, plainly furnished." They had been helped by some generous Christians of other denominations, among whom was Richard Sondley of First Presbyterian Church. Trinity Episcopal dedicated its new building in 1846—an impressive church modeled after the Cathedral of St. Peter in York. A second Methodist congregation had its own new building—erected in 1848—facing Marion Street at Calhoun.¹¹³

¹¹¹ *A Columbia Reader*, p. 44.

¹¹² John A. Broadus, *Memoir of James P. Boyce, D.D., LL.D.* (New York: A. C. Armstrong and Son, 1893), p. 84.

¹¹³ This church was burned in 1898 and rebuilt at its present location on Main Street in 1899, where it became the Main Street Methodist Church.

In 1842 the state legislature established two military schools: the Citadel in Charleston and Arsenal Academy in Columbia. With a fine faculty and an impressive location on the crest of one of the town's highest hills, Arsenal Academy trained a growing number of young South Carolinians.

South Carolina College had become the premier institution in the South and perhaps as fine as any in the nation, with impressive teachers and distinguished alumni. Elliott, Lieber, Pinckney, Legare, and Harper colleges had been built around the "Horseshoe," where the striking library added stature to the college. A brick wall, built in 1835, separated the college from the town. Under President William C. Preston (1845-1851), the student body reached 237, the largest enrollment in the history of the college until 1905.

The Presbyterian seminary had become an important center of theological scholarship and Reformed orthodoxy, with great influence on the intellectual and moral life of the state and the city. Its library was one of the choicest in the South—holding many books from the outstanding personal collection of Thomas Smyth, pastor of Second Presbyterian Church of Charleston.¹¹⁴ According to one writer:

The Seminary faculty from the first included vigorous characters, fluent in spoken and written argument, who rapidly became leaders of the large Scotch-Irish element of up-country South Carolina. Presbyterian influence soon threatened to control Columbia's educational and cultural life to such a degree that a magazine, *The Reasoner*, was started here in 1831 to denounce it. But even the anonymous editor of *The Reasoner* did not foresee in his prophecy the long line of Presbyterian presidents and professors of the University, the outstanding Presbyterian publishers and publications, that were to give a decided tone of Edinburgh to this town set among Episcopal planters and German Lutheran farmers.¹¹⁵

South Carolina Female Collegiate Institute, for the higher education of women, opened in 1828 at Barhamville on the northeast edge of Columbia. The community was named for Jane Barham, the first

¹¹⁴ Thomas Smyth was himself author of a number of books, including *Ecclesiastical Republicanism*, *Presbytery and Not Prelacy*, and *Unity of the Human Races*, all of which were published on both sides of the Atlantic.

¹¹⁵ Hennig, *Columbia*, p. 196. *The Reasoner: or Anti-Clerical Politics* lasted only one year (1831-1832).

wife of the school's founder, physician Elias Marks. Dr. Marks—a pew holder in First Presbyterian Church—had served as principal of the Columbia Female Academy for a decade.¹¹⁶ Barhamville Academy, as it was usually called, was extremely successful. Its enrollment grew to over one hundred students, many of them from out of state. In 1850 Dr. Palmer, addressing the graduating class, recognized women's intellectual gifts and argued for the elimination of barriers that had prevented women from higher education. "Surely [women] are entitled to a joint inheritance with men in that rich legacy of literature and science which genius has bequeathed to the race," he said. In justifying the inclusion of mathematics, metaphysics, science, and moral philosophy in the curriculum of female schools, Palmer declared, "The air is free to all who have lungs to breathe it; and knowledge is the privilege of all who have minds to grasp it."¹¹⁷



In March 1850 Elder Sidney Crane died, after serving on the session for fifteen years. The minutes of March 15 memorialized Mr. Crane and added, "Truly grey hairs, failing bodies, and trembling steps forewarn us that soon we shall render back the trust which the Holy Spirit hath committed to us in making us 'overseers of the Church of God.' The solemn conviction rests upon us, that in a short while we must commit the ark of God to other hands." On February 28, 1852, the humble and modest William Law died, having served as an elder for thirty-two years. The session minutes stated that "he reached the close of a long life without leaving behind him a single enemy."

The session was reduced to four—the pastor and Mr. Andrew Crawford, Mr. James Martin, and Mr. G. T. Snowden. Dr. Palmer asked the congregation to pray "that the way may be safely opened for the nomination and election of active and spiritual men to take part with us in the ministry of the eldership." On March 13, 1852, Professor R. T. Brumby, formerly a ruling elder in the Presbyterian church in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, was nominated by the session and unanimously elected by the voting members of the church. On February 18, 1853, Elder James Martin was dismissed to Glebe Street Church in Charleston with the session's "warm Christian affection";

¹¹⁶ The Columbia Female Academy was begun by Dr. Marks in 1817; in 1822 it was located on the corner of Washington and Marion streets.

¹¹⁷ Paige Putnam Miller, *A Claim to New Roles* (Metuchen, New Jersey: The Scarecrow Press, 1985), p. 194.

nine days later, A. L. Kline, John S. Scott, and Levi Hawley were elected elders. On April 27 Elder Snowden—for twenty-two years clerk of session—died “after a lingering illness with triumphant faith.” The session’s memorial stated that when he arrived in Columbia in 1821, Mr. Snowden became “the centre of a small praying circle, amongst whom the flame of devotion was nourished at a season when infidelity was occupying the high places of learning in the town.” Grieving the loss to First Presbyterian Church, the session rejoiced that “another is added to ‘the general assembly and Church of the First Born.’”

In October 1851 James P. Boyce was called as pastor to the First Baptist Church. The son of Ker Boyce, one of the wealthiest men in South Carolina, James was born in Charleston in 1827. He was educated at the College of Charleston and at Brown College and studied for the ministry—as did a number of his fellow Southern Baptists—at Princeton Seminary. At age twenty-four, he began his ministry in Columbia. Several months after Boyce came to Columbia, James Henley Thornwell, giving up again his cherished desire to be a pastor, came from his Charleston church to become president of South Carolina College. Boyce had once visited a Presbyterian church in Charleston because he was attracted to a girl who was a member there. Thornwell was the preacher that day, and Boyce recalled that Thornwell preached so powerfully that he was held spellbound for an hour, forgetting about the girl! In Columbia, the Presbyterian college president and the Baptist pastor became friends. Dr. Thornwell’s *Discourses on Truth*, a small volume of published sermons which he had given in the chapel of South Carolina College, made a profound impression on James Boyce and other young pastors in South Carolina and beyond.¹¹⁸

On December 15, 1851, the cornerstone was laid for the new State House. Huge pieces of granite, some weighing more than fifty tons, were hauled to the State House grounds by a three-mile railroad from the Granby quarry on the Congaree River. In 1855, architect John R. Niernsee, a native of Vienna, Austria, who had lived in Baltimore,

¹¹⁸ James Boyce left Columbia in 1855 to become professor of theology at Furman College and, in 1859, helped to found the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Greenville, South Carolina. He served as professor and chairman of the seminary faculty until his death in 1888. (The seminary moved to Louisville, Kentucky, in 1877.)

moved to Columbia to direct construction of the Renaissance Revival building.

The Presbyterians also were building. The small church completed in 1815 (and described by Benjamin Palmer as "a barn-like structure of rather modest dimensions") was no longer sufficient. To secure funds for a new building was a large task for the congregation of 170 white people and 33 Negroes, but the church undertook it with faith and energy.

Seminary professor C. C. Jones wrote to his son on June 17, 1850:

The members of Mr. Palmer's congregation are proceeding with their subscription for the new church: something over \$12,000 subscribed; subscription binding when it reaches \$16,000. Hope they will succeed. They have not called on me yet. Suppose they may not, considering the fire and my present unsettled state. Can't give much anyhow. Dr. Howe gave \$400.¹¹⁹

The money was promised and, in 1851, the construction of a new building was planned. On August 18, 1851, a notice appeared in the newspaper under the title "Building Contract":

The undersigned committee now offer contracts for the erection of a church edifice in the town of Columbia, on the site of the present church: dimensions 58 by 78 feet, height of tower and spire 180 feet, order Gothic, materials brick and stuccoed, roof of tin.

All offers to be made under seal, and handed to the chairman on or before the 15th of October next. Contractors must give security for the faithful performance of the contract—name of security to accompany proposals. The whole work to be executed under the direction of the architect appointed by the building committee, and completed by the 1st of October 1852.

Plans may be seen at the hall of the Commercial Bank, and

¹¹⁹ Myers, *A Georgian at Princeton*, pp. 44, 45. The house in which Dr. and Mrs. Jones were living, and most of their possessions, had been destroyed by fire on April 23. Jones was soon to accept an invitation to move to Philadelphia to take a position as secretary of the Presbyterian board of missions.

a copy of specifications will be furnished to those who wish to contract.

J. A. Crawford
R. Latta
Dr. Fair
J. C. Thornton
R. Sondley
Dr. Howe
John S. Scott
J. I. Gracey
Charles Beck

Committee.¹²⁰

The old church building was moved by mule power to the very center of Lady Street; and the congregation continued to meet there until the new church was completed. The last service in the old building took place on October 2, 1853. Samuel Wells Leland (son of Aaron W. Leland), a young doctor in the Mill Creek community nine miles south of Columbia, wrote in his diary for that day: "As there was to be preaching in the old Presbyterian Church of Columbia for *the last time*, I made an effort and attended. The services were very solemn, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered." The original building was then sold and moved to the southeast corner of Marion and Lady, where it was rebuilt as a residence.¹²¹

The new church was dedicated on October 9, 1853. The English Gothic Revival structure of rose stucco, with arched stained-glass windows, vaulted ribbed ceilings, tracery work, and a graceful steeple, gave the Presbyterians a lovely and impressive church.¹²² Inside, a

¹²⁰ Bateman, "History," pp. 14, 15.

¹²¹ According to one report (included in Edwin J. Scott's *Random Recollections of a Long Life*), the building was sold to John R. Niernsee, who moved it to the corner of Marion and Lady streets, remodeled it as a house, and lived in it while he was supervising the construction of the new State House. When Mr. Niernsee sold the home in 1874 he recorded in the deed of sale that he had bought it already in place from James S. Guignard in the year 1858, five years after the dedication of the new church building. Mr. Niernsee sold it to Captain John Waites, who later sold the house to John H. Kinard. For years, the building was known as the "Kinard House." It was finally sold to the South Carolina Electric and Gas Company and was demolished to make room for a new building.

¹²² Some sources record that the building was designed by N. G. Starkweather, who was the architect of the First Presbyterian Church of Baltimore. The design of the two churches was similar, though the Baltimore church was much more elaborate. The Baltimore church was completed in 1859 with the exception of the spires, which were erected in 1874. Other sources claim that Mr. Starkweather designed the St. Andrews Church in Boston—also very similar to Columbia's First Presbyterian. The *Biographical*

center aisle and two side aisles lined the box pews. Chandeliers with seven lights each were suspended above the center aisle. The large marble pulpit was given to the church by Robert Latta.¹²³ A plain communion table stood directly below the pulpit at the end of the center aisle. The building cost \$35,000.

Dr. Palmer's sermon on the "Warrant and Nature of Public Worship" (from John 4: 23, 24) was a powerful presentation of the Protestant view of public worship. He closed with the words:

As for this building, beautiful as it may be in our eyes, let it please us to call it only a plain Presbyterian meeting house. The glory we see in it, let it not be the glory of its arches and its timbers; not the glory of its lofty and graceful spire, pointing ever upwards to that home the pious shall find [with] God; not the glory of this chaste pulpit, with its delicate tracery, and marble whiteness, not the glory found in the eloquence or learning of those who, through generations, shall here proclaim the gospel; nor yet the glory traced in the wealth and fashion, refinement and social position of those who throng its courts. But let its glory be *The Glory of the Lord Risen Upon It!* Let its glory be the promises of the covenant engraved upon its walls, which are yea and amen in Christ Jesus. Let its glory be found in the purity, soundness, and unction of its pastors; in the fidelity and watchfulness of its elders; in the piety and godliness of its members. Let its glory be as a birthplace of souls, where shall always be heard the sobs of awakened penitence, and the songs of newborn love. Let its glory be the spirituality of its worship, its fervent prayers, its adoring praise, and the simplicity and truth of its ordinances and sacraments. Let its glory be the communion

Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased) identifies N. G. Starkweather as "a nineteenth century architect in Baltimore, credited with the design of the First Presbyterian Church at Park Avenue and Madison Street. This venerable structure of a style known as Flamboyant Gothic, dates from the mid 1850's." See Henry F. Withey and Elsie Rathburn Withey, *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)* (Los Angeles: New Age Publishing Company, 1956). Mrs. Charles B. Elliott gave a lecture to the Men's Bible Class in 1945, in which she stated that the church tower and steeple were modeled after the Cathedral of Chartes in France.

¹²³ An often-repeated story states that the wealthy Latta, a member of the building committee, offered to give the pulpit thinking that it would not be too costly. The committee, however, sent to Italy for the elegant marble pulpit and presented Latta with a bill for \$3,000. This is said to have broken the old man's heart and he died within a year. The pulpit was afterwards called Latta's tombstone. It is impossible to know how much of this story is fact and how much legend.

of saints, who here have fellowship one with another, and also with the Father, and his son Jesus Christ. Let its glory be as the resting place of weary pilgrims, toiling on toward the heavenly city—the emblem of that Church above—“Where congregations ne’er break up, And Sabbaths never end.”

And now “To the only wise God, the King, eternal, immortal and invisible,” to God “glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders,” to God who “is a spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable, in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth”—to God the Father almighty, the maker of heaven and earth; to God the Son, the brightness of the Father’s glory, and express image of His person; to God the Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, to the service and glory of the adorable and incomprehensible Trinity—we solemnly dedicate this building, with all that appertains to it.¹²⁴

Dr. Samuel Wells Leland was back in town for this important day and described the service: “My father prayed and Dr. Palmer the pastor preached. The church was filled to overflowing. All sects were represented; even Jews, Roman Catholics and infidels were there. The discourse was a powerful one; on the warrant and nature of public worship. Roman Catholics and High Church Episcopalians were very much offended by the closing remarks.”¹²⁵ In concluding his sermon, Dr. Palmer had insisted that as Protestants, Presbyterians do not view church buildings as sacred and had stressed the spirituality of Reformed worship. He described the new building as “only a plain Presbyterian meeting house.” It was, however, “consecrated to the worship of God,” he said; and, accordingly, the session would guard its use with great care, regularly turning down requests for “orations” and other functions not in line with its spiritual purpose.

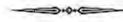
The next month, on November 13, 1853, Samuel Leland returned for another service at First Church. He wrote, “Went at night to hear a discourse by my father in the new church. It was the first time it had been opened at night. The gas lights were brilliant. Thus father has had the privilege to offer up the first prayer that was ever offered in the church, and to preach the first sermon ever delivered there at night.”¹²⁶

¹²⁴ Johnson, *Palmer*, p. 124.

¹²⁵ *A Columbia Reader*, p. 36.

¹²⁶ *A Columbia Reader*, p. 36.

While Columbia Presbyterians were paying for their new church building, they joined, by prayers and gifts, in the work of world missions. They received collections for work among the Chickasaw Indians, the Waldensian church in Italy, and Jewish missions. But their greatest effort was to reach their own community and state. A mission was established in Barhamville under the care of First Church. Dr. Palmer preached there occasionally; the pulpit usually was supplied by students from the seminary. On September 27, 1854, a collection was received for the purpose of building a Presbyterian mission church in the Sand Hills near Columbia. Another offering went to build a Presbyterian church in Barnwell.



Benjamin Morgan Palmer was becoming known as one of the greatest preachers in the American Presbyterian church.¹²⁷ He was not an imposing man in appearance—small-framed, with heavy lips and eyebrows—but hearers often commented that when he began speaking he was almost transformed.¹²⁸ William E. Boggs said that action was “the characteristic element” of Palmer’s preaching. “Not *acting*, but *action*. And thus the great truths of the Bible were poured in upon the hearer’s soul by the two great avenues of ‘ear-gate’ and ‘eye-gate.’”¹²⁹

Dr. Palmer was preeminently a biblical and doctrinal preacher. According to Thomas Cary Johnson, Palmer

gave himself to preaching [the Bible]. Whatever others might preach—science, sociology, politics, literature—he would preach the Gospel, and the Gospel only, from his pulpit. It was a thing the world needed worst of all, and that need he would fill. He preached the Westminster interpre-

¹²⁷ Douglas Kelly describes the four major features of Palmer’s preaching: (1) he drew his sermons from the biblical text; (2) he held his hearers’ interest; (3) he possessed profound sympathy allied to a realistic pastoral insight; and (4) his life and preaching were characterized by total commitment to the Word of God. Kelly, *Preachers with Power*, pp. 108-18.

¹²⁸ There is a story of Dr. Palmer’s address at Washington and Lee College on June 27, 1872. Among the distinguished men on the platform were Mr. John Randolph Tucker and Commodore Matthew Fontaine Maury. When Palmer began to speak, Commodore Maury turned to Mr. Tucker and remarked, “He is the ugliest man I ever saw, sir.” After about ten minutes, Maury remarked to Tucker again, “He is getting better looking, sir.” When Palmer was about two thirds of the way through his address, Maury—now hardly able to sit quietly under the impact of the preacher’s words—said to Tucker, “He is the handsomest man I ever saw, sir.” Johnson, *Palmer*, p. 362.

¹²⁹ Centennial Sermon of William E. Boggs.

tation of the Bible, preached it all; the doctrines of the Trinity and the incarnation, the doctrines of sin and grace, the doctrine of the atonement, the doctrines of regeneration and conversion, justification and sanctification. He even preached boldly and frequently on those points of Calvinism which have been so bitterly attacked in every generation, viz.: Total depravity, unconditional election, particular redemption, efficacious grace and perseverance therein unto the end.¹³⁰

During Dr. Palmer's ministry in Columbia, there was a sense of excitement about preaching. A student at the seminary described "the Columbia pulpit in those days." "We had Thornwell in the college chapel," he said, "and Palmer in the church. During the week we talked about the last Sunday's sermons and compared notes. On Sunday we hastened to church full of expectations."¹³¹ The seminarians were never disappointed. Sunday after Sunday they heard weighty and powerful sermons on such varied themes as "The Amount of Moral Evidence in Support of Christianity," "The Father Glorified by the Son," "The Gospel, the Power of God," "Christ in Us," "Mortification of Sin," "Practical Uses of Predestination," "Future Punishment," "God not the Author of Sin," "The Soul Lost by Attending to Trifles," "The Covenant with Adam," "Duty of Family Instruction," and "Infant Baptism Warranted by the Church Charter."

Dr. Palmer was not only a great preacher; he also was sensitive and effective in his personal witness. On one occasion a man said to the pastor, "I am bound, hand and foot, with [alcohol's] accursed chains, and there is nothing left for me but to drink and be damned." Palmer replied, "You entirely mistake the matter. What you need is a Savior to save you from your drunkenness; he shall be called Jesus, because he shall save his people from their sins. The salvation from hell is only the result of this salvation from sin. You must come to Jesus as a drunkard or not at all."¹³² In his letters Dr. Palmer, almost without fail, paused to ask, "How are you speeding in your Christian course?"

The Columbia pastor developed the art of comfort through his own sorrows. In his book *The Broken Home or Lessons in Sorrow*, Dr. Palmer told how he and his wife had been blessed with the birth of

¹³⁰ Johnson, *Palmer*, pp. 660, 661.

¹³¹ Centennial Sermon of William E. Boggs.

¹³² Johnson, *Palmer*, p. 99.

their first child. When he was about twenty months old, the beautiful little blond-haired boy became sick. "Every trace of infantile beauty was effaced," his father wrote, "only the golden curls floated over the pale brow; and the brilliant eyes which strangers in the street stooped to gaze upon, burned now with a feverish luster." Sitting by the bed of his dying son, Palmer grieved and prayed for strength to submit to God's will. At last the hope of the covenant of grace which was present in the child's baptism broke through his gloom and the father was comforted "with the strong comfort of believing that the promise of the covenant was assured to his seed forever."¹³³ From then on, Dr. Palmer possessed the ability "to comfort them which are in any trouble with the comfort by which he himself was comforted of God" (II Corinthians 1:4).

New buildings were added to the seminary campus. Simons Hall (named for Mrs. Eliza Lucilla Simons of Charleston, who left a legacy to the seminary) and Law Hall (named for Mrs. Agnes Law of First Presbyterian Church of Columbia, who gave \$5,000 to the school) were completed in 1854 and 1855.

In March 1854, Columbians turned out in great numbers to see "the panorama" of John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. On October 20 of that same year (a Friday), stores were closed in observance of a locally proclaimed Thanksgiving Day.

The next February, many crowded Washington Street Methodist Church for the funeral of Bishop William Capers, three times pastor of Washington Street Methodist, who died on January 25, 1855. He was greatly loved in Columbia. The Washington Street congregation asked Mrs. Capers to allow his body to be buried in their churchyard. She agreed, and the funeral train arrived in Columbia on February 2. The services were held at the church the next morning. Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Baptist, and Methodist clergymen served as pallbearers. The Methodist pastor preached on the text Acts 13:36—"For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep"—and then "a great many of those present of his beloved flock passed by the altar, where lay the body of the faithful shepherd. . . . It was particularly affecting to see the colored people pass before the coffin with a tear and a sigh." After "all had looked their last, his

¹³³ B. M. Palmer, *The Broken Home or Lessons in Sorrow* (1890; Harrisonburg, Virginia: Sprinkle Publications, 1981), p. 21.

body was buried in the churchyard, near the church building whose cornerstone he had laid in 1831 and marked with a stone which read 'the founder of missions to the slaves in South Carolina.'¹³⁴

Not surprisingly, Benjamin Morgan Palmer was called to a number of the country's major churches—in Charleston, Baltimore, Cincinnati, and Philadelphia—and to several seminaries. Worried Southern commissioners to the 1853 General Assembly called a meeting to express their opinion that Dr. Palmer should not leave the South. In 1854 he was elected professor of ecclesiastical history and church polity at Columbia Seminary. He had lectured at the seminary since 1851. During 1854 and 1855 he served as professor at the seminary and pastor of the church, often working thirteen hours a day. When Dr. Palmer decided for the seminary position, the session, knowing that it was hopeless to appeal to either presbytery or synod to prevent his leaving, attempted to convince him to stay at the church by calling him and Dr. Thornwell to fill the pulpit jointly. Dr. Palmer decided, however, to leave the pastorate for the seminary. Mrs. Palmer predicted that her husband would not stay long at the seminary. To those who pushed him in this direction she said, "you will soon lose both pastor and professor. Your new-made professor must be a pastor; you have, in taking him out of this church, made it inevitable that he shall soon accept a call to another church."¹³⁵

Dr. Palmer's ministry at First Presbyterian lasted for thirteen years—from January 1843 to December 1855. Membership grew from 128 to over 200. The new church building had become a landmark in Columbia. A powerful preacher and effective pastor, Benjamin Morgan Palmer taught and exhorted his people faithfully and, it was often said, became the conscience of the growing city.¹³⁶

¹³⁴ Huff, *Tried by Fire*, p. 31.

¹³⁵ Johnson, *Palmer*, p. 149.

¹³⁶ Glen Charles Knecht, in a sermon preached on March 23, 1986 (marking the bicentennial of the City of Columbia and 192 years of history of the First Presbyterian Church), summarized the Columbia ministry of Benjamin Morgan Palmer: "He was a great Puritan who came from an ancestry of preachers, and stepped like a prince into this pulpit, full of eloquence, and into the streets and homes full of compassion and sympathy."

CHAPTER 6



VINDICATING THE HONOR OF CHRIST

The Westminster Confession of Faith states:

Church censures are necessary, for the reclaiming and gaining of offending brethren, for deterring of others from like offenses, for purging out of that leaven which might infect the whole lump, for vindicating the honour of Christ, and the holy profession of the Gospel, and for preventing the wrath of God, which might justly fall upon the Church, if they should suffer his covenant, and the seals thereof, to be profaned by notorious and obstinate offenders.

“For the better attaining of these ends,” the Confession instructs the officers of the church “to proceed by admonition, suspension from the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper for a season, and by excommunication from the church.”¹³⁷

The session of First Presbyterian Church took these words seriously and attempted to practice the oversight and discipline of church members which the Confession required. On December 13, 1821, the elders met at the home of Colonel Thomas Taylor to investigate the charge of intemperance against a church member. The man pleaded guilty and was suspended until he should “give satisfactory evidence to the church of repentance and reformation.” The mod-

¹³⁷ Westminster Confession of Faith 30: 3, 4.

erator read the sentence to the defendant, "accompanied with a representation of the evil and danger of the crime, and an earnest exhortation to avoid it in the future." The meeting closed with prayer, "in which the case of the fallen member was presented to the great Head of the Church." The next summer the session was still dealing with the same man, now reported to be "grossly addicted to the vice of intemperance." When he failed to appear before the session on three occasions, he was "excommunicated from the ordinances, rights, and privileges of this church." The minutes state that it was "with deep regret" that the session took "this painful step in vindication of the honour of the Lord Jesus Christ and the purity of his church."

The carefulness and seriousness with which the session viewed its work is illustrated in a remarkable example of pastoral oversight—a letter which it sent on March 25, 1840, to one of its members reported to be "indulging too freely in wine."

Dear Brother,

We feel satisfied from your character and from your knowledge of us as men and of our duties as officers in the church of God, that you will attribute this communication to the motives of affectionate regard for your interest and of deep concern for the prosperity and moral influence of the Christian cause which have impelled us to make it. Charged as we are by the Holy Spirit with the oversight and rule of the Church in this place, we are bound to keep a watchful eye upon all that concerns its spirituality and purity. Fidelity to God as well as solicitude for the best interests of those committed to our care demand that we should not suffer sin upon any of our brethren, but should affectionately reprove, rebuke, admonish and warn, as circumstances may seem to require.

If it is an act of friendship to guard a fellow being against temporal danger, the ruin of his health, the sacrifice of his fortune or the loss of life much more kindly is it to warn him of dangers that beset the soul and threaten to separate it from the favor of God. And we sincerely trust that your own heart will respond to the sentiments of unfeigned love and Christian faithfulness which have drawn forth from us this expression of our fears and misgivings in regard to yourself and that so far from taking offence, you will really bless God that we have grace to be in any measure faithful to the interests of your soul.

From various rumours and whispers which we have heard in different quarters and from different persons, we have been led to the serious apprehension that you are falling into the habit of indulging too freely in wine especially in the afternoon, contrary to the express command of God, Eph. 5:18. We are aware of the painful circumstances in which you have recently been placed and sympathize most sincerely with you in the bitter disappointment with which you have been tried, but, dear Brother, you should remember that not a sparrow falls to the ground without the special providence of our Heavenly Father and much more is His hand concerned in all that pertains to His believing children.

Instead therefore, of seeking from the world that alleviation of calamity and that calm serenity of mind which the world can never give, our truest wisdom is to seek to be "filled with the Spirit" who alone can enable us to rejoice in tribulation. When God, by his dispensations, calls us to withdraw our affections from the things of earth, He, at the same time, exhorts us to fix these on things above, and when He blasts our earthly treasures we should rejoice that we are thus practically taught to lay up treasure in Heaven. We should never under any circumstances, resort to the cordials of the worldling, but should endeavour to evince to our fellow men the strength and support which God's grace affords us in the hour of distress.

We should be glad to learn from your own lips that the rumour to which we have alluded is groundless. We are grieved, greatly grieved at it and feel it to be a duty which we owe to you as well as to the church to deal candidly with you in regard to it. If it be false, we shall be happy to counteract it upon your own authority, if true, we beg you to pause and consider. We would earnestly entreat you to remember your position in society, your responsibility as a parent and your solemn vows as a member of the Church of God. Many would rejoice at your halting, as the fall of the righteous is always a triumph to the wicked. Your brethren in the Lord, would be deeply wounded; as your spiritual guardians we beseech you to deal candidly with us in this matter, either by a written communication or by a personal conference as you shall prefer.

That God may give you Grace to be faithful, deliver you out of all temptation, preserve your feet from falling, and uphold your goings in His paths, is the sincere prayer of your friends and Brethren in Christ Jesus the Lord.

J. H. Thornwell
Wm Law
G. T. Snowden (clerk)
Sidney Crane
James Martin

At least once or twice a year, the session was forced to deal with members who were guilty of the improper use of alcohol. In 1847, Mr. B—— was charged with drunkenness. His confession acknowledged only a “slight sense of his guilt.” So the session, “in fidelity to Mr. B——, no less than fidelity to Christ and his church,” required that he be at once suspended. Because of the public nature of the offence, the sentence was to be announced from the pulpit.¹³⁸

Sexual misconduct of members came before the session from time to time. In November 1838, a married woman was charged with “the sin of antenuptial fornication.” In a letter to the session she expressed “her deep penitence for the reproach thus brought on the church of Christ and in deep humiliation prayed the forgiveness of the church, as she hoped for forgiveness from God.” She was suspended from “the sealing ordinances” for one communion season.

An area of discipline that sometimes entangled the session in lengthy meetings and difficult decisions was that of altercations between members or with “fellow townsmen.” During the summer of 1837, many members of the church objected to taking communion with Mr. Samuel Weir at “the approaching season” because of his “assault and battery” against a stranger who had “published and circulated a libellous handbill against him.” Mr. Weir was suspended from communion “until a more full and satisfactory examination into his case.” In September the session reproved Weir “for his hasty and unchristian indulgence of his temper,” and he acknowledged that “he

¹³⁸ If the drinking habits of members troubled the session, smoking did not. Dr. Palmer himself smoked very fine cigars—a practice he had learned from Dr. Thornwell! Palmer finally gave up the practice in 1876, stating that it had caused him to experience excessive nervousness.

had acted contrary to the precepts and spirit of the Gospel of Christ."¹³⁹

During June and July of 1841, much of the session's time was taken up with the case of Mr. M—— against Mr. B——. B—— had struck M—— "with a whip of cow hide" because M—— had, B—— charged, "seduced the affections of his wife." M—— denied the charge. The session heard various witnesses and made minute examination of handwritten notes supposed to have been written by M——, before voting to sustain the charges made by B——. Excommunication would have been the proper censure; but because one member of the session believed that M—— was innocent, and because of his earlier "outward walk," the session decided to suspend him until he demonstrated sincere repentance. Mr. B——, who confessed using personal violence against Mr. M——, also was suspended from the sacrament until after the next communion season. The session had met nine times in a little over three weeks to try to deal fairly with this explosive case.

Dissatisfied, Mr. M—— appealed the session's ruling to the Presbytery of Charleston, which confirmed the decision of the session. Another appeal, to the synod, resulted in a reversal of the decision of the lower courts. The church session, although it believed that the synod did not have the full records of the case, decided that it was "expedient to do nothing further in this case" and yielded "obedience to the decision of the synod." Mr. M—— was restored to his privileges in the church—but not until December 14, 1841. The case finally went to the General Assembly of 1843, which recommended that it "be privately adjusted if possible." The church session urged both parties to drop further prosecution of the case, "submitting it to the developments of Providence." Both men professed willingness to abide by the judgment of the session, but Mr. B—— was still not prepared to forgive Mr. M—— or to sit at communion with him. Finally B—— relented and the session, on November 17, 1843, wearily and gratefully acknowledged "the Divine goodness in bringing this perplexing case to a peaceful issue."

¹³⁹ Samuel Weir was a fiery Whig publisher who had moved from Philadelphia to edit *The Southern Chronicle*. Scott reports in his *Random Recollections of a Long Life* that a bitter controversy erupted between Weir and Colonel A. H. Pemberton, editor of the democratic *South Carolinian*. When the editorials became too personal, Mrs. Weir left her husband and returned to Philadelphia. A duel was barely avoided between the two men. Julian Selby states that Mr. Weir "had a deep bass voice and his daughter, Miss Kitty Weir, sang remarkably sweet." Scott's claim that Weir was the first organist at First Presbyterian Church is erroneous; the church did not have an organ until 1866, nineteen years after Samuel Weir's death.

On June 17, 1848, David S—— acknowledged that, armed with a loaded pistol, he had publicly assaulted Colonel Summer, editor of *The Carolinian*, because of a statement Summer had made in the paper. David S—— expressed his sorrow and submitted himself to the session, which suspended him indefinitely and ordered that the sentence be read from the pulpit.

Social dancing and participation in lotteries occupied the attention of the session for a time. Late in 1847 it became known that four church members had attended a public ball (for the famous Palmetto Regiment) and that several members "countenanced and participated in" a raffling conducted by the Order of Odd Fellows. The session met on December 22 "to confer as to the best method of arresting this comparatively new tide of evil influence setting in upon the church." Dr. Palmer presented his views in a paper; but the session, after long debate, thought it best to postpone action, since the pastor's statement was "a stringent one" and bound the session hereafter to "a definite procedure." According to tradition, Palmer promptly resigned, saying that "his conscience would not permit him to be the pastor of a dancing church."¹⁴⁰ After several further meetings, however, the session modified Dr. Palmer's paper and adopted it "as a public testimony to be read from the pulpit." It condemned "unequivocally" the practice of raffling and explained that the lot is a "divine institution, appointed for the purpose of rendering a divine decision in those cases which men are unable by ordinary methods to resolve. On the part of the creature it is a solemn act of worship, as much so as prayer and praise. To use the lot with irreverence and levity is to profane the name and perfections of God." Recognizing that it is "difficult to draw accurately the line of demarcation between the lawful and the unlawful pleasures of the Christian," the session wished "it to be understood that the giving of balls and dancing parties and attendance upon these, together with the theatre, the opera and the race course will be regarded as serious offenses against the order and purity of the Church." The paper stated the "obvious principle" that "covers this whole case"—that "Christians are witnesses for God, and among other things they must testify concerning the vanity of this present evil world." To reinforce this position, Dr. Palmer later

¹⁴⁰ Johnson, *Palmer*, p. 94.

preached a sermon entitled "Social Dancing Inconsistent with a Christian Profession and Baptismal Vows."¹⁴¹

The session was no "respector of persons" when it came to discipline. Slaves, important and socially prominent members, and even officers were called upon to give an account of themselves. For several months in 1855, the session dealt with the complaint of Mr. B—— against Elder K——. There had been an altercation in Mr. B——'s store between one of his clerks and Mr. K——'s eleven-year-old son, as to whether the boy had paid for his purchase or not. B—— defended his clerk, and K—— took offence. The session decided that Mr. K—— was "unquestionably wrong, under any provocation he might conceive himself to have received, in so far forgetting his propriety as a Christian and as an officer of the Church as even hypothetically to accuse of lying a Christian brother." Neither did the session exonerate Mr. B——. "If Mr. K—— is in danger of erring through pride which will not stoop to acknowledge a fault," it stated, "Mr. B—— is in danger of an implacable spirit, which will not forgive a wrong." The session set out explicitly what it considered proper action required of the two men to effect reconciliation. It hoped that thereby "charity may throw its mantle over the past and all bitter feelings be thrown into the grave of forgetfulness." Three months after the incident, the session's minutes stated that "the difficulty between Brethren K—— and B—— was removed." The next summer, Mr. K—— resigned as ruling elder, having been licensed to preach the gospel by Charleston Presbytery.

Two years later another ruling elder, Dr. G——, experienced some difficulty with Mr. R—— over a bill the doctor gave to R—— for the treatment of his slave. When R—— refused to pay, G—— wrote "Received payment by forgiveness in full" on the bill and tried to give it to R——. When he would not take it, the doctor threw it in his face. Dr. G—— appeared before the session and admitted his fault, pleading "that fallen nature which even the grace of God does not at all times control in those who have placed their trust in Christ as their Redeemer." The session stated that the doctor exhibited a temper "in relation to the whole matter which became him as a Christian man

¹⁴¹ William E. Boggs said in 1895: "I have understood from Dr. Palmer that his views have been somewhat modified in that regard and that he now thinks it best to trust rather to enlightening the conscience by faithful preaching than to church censures for restraining our communicants from such worldly pleasures as may war against the soul, reserving censures for immorality, neglect of Christian obligations and heresies in beliefs." Centennial Sermon of William E. Boggs.

and a ruling elder" but admonished him "to be particularly on his guard in future in avoiding all occasions of strife."

Black members were disciplined for sexual sins (including one woman who was suspended for having a white man constantly visiting her house), fighting, profane language, stealing, falsehood, absence from public worship, and contumacy (refusing to appear before the session to answer charges). Often there was repentance and restoration. On January 5, 1844, Charles, "a colored member," admitted to the session that under great provocation he had engaged in a "street fight" with a "fellow servant." He was suspended until he gave satisfactory evidence of sincere repentance. On July 5, 1844, Charles was restored to good standing in the church. The minutes of August 2, 1852, stated that Elijah appeared and "the session entered into a faithful conversation with him," and noted that "it was his purpose by God's grace to lead a more watchful and consistent life." There were many similar conferences, as with Ned A——, who, on September 30, 1862, appeared before the session and expressed great sorrow that for about six years he had refused to submit to their authority.

The session struggled to find the best way of dealing with the marriage irregularities of black members. On July 9, 1847, it heard a request from Ned that he be allowed "to take a wife in Town, notwithstanding his separation from a woman in Fairfield with whom he has heretofore been living." The session discovered that Ned had never been lawfully married to the woman, who had in the meantime been unfaithful to him, and from whom he was now permanently separated by the wish of their respective owners. Ned was given permission to marry, "in consideration of the temptation to sin which beset [him] in his single state and in consequence of the desire to do right manifested in his taking counsel of the session." When church discipline involved a black person, the pastor would generally meet with the black members of the church on Sunday morning to explain the session's actions and reasons to them.

Until the War Between the States, black and white Christians worshiped together and subjected themselves to the discipline of the church, even in disputes between the races. Dr. J. B. Adger of Columbia Seminary charged his "servant" Elsy with "deliberate and injurious falsehood."¹⁴² Since she was a member of First Presbyterian

¹⁴² John Bailey Adger (1810-1899), a native of Charleston, studied at Princeton Seminary and became a missionary to Armenians in Asia Minor. He later served as pastor to slaves in Charleston (at the Anson Street Chapel) and in 1857 became professor

Church, Dr. Adger believed that the church session was the proper place to resolve their dispute. The session suspended Elsy but later honored Dr. Adger's request that she be restored so that she could move her membership to the Hopewell Church of Pendleton, South Carolina.

Church discipline—even when conducted with compassion and sensitivity—was difficult. In every case the elders examined the evidence and listened to the defendant, often sifting through complicated situations with patience and wisdom. They took into consideration motives and extenuating circumstances. Occasionally, the session examined a case and determined that there was no cause for discipline. On April 1, 1846, a slave member, Richard, appeared “to converse with session in relation to certain difficulties he had had with his former master and certain rumours alleging that he was in the habit of using spirituous liquors to excess.” After hearing him, the session “could not but regard him as innocent.” The elders looked for “marks of contrition and sorrow” in those who were found guilty and rendered their judgment with sensitivity to the spiritual welfare of the church and compassion for the sinner. When the sin was public, the session produced a statement to be read from the pulpit, setting forth the offense and punishment. Occasionally this step was omitted, as in March 1840, when a man—formerly a member of the Temporal Committee—was suspended for drunkenness. “In love to his family and out of a spirit of tenderness to himself and in hope that forbearance and mercy might bring him to repentance,” the session decided that it was “advisable that the sentence should not be published.” The usual sentence was suspension from one or more of the quarterly celebrations of the Lord's Supper. Despite the session's best efforts, its discipline—as we have seen—was not always received in a repentant spirit. One case involving “painful and scandalous disclosures” was decided by the session. Dr. Palmer was warned that if he tried to read the session's statement to the congregation, as required by the Book of Discipline, he would be shot down in the pulpit. Very quietly he read the sentence to the last word, though the enraged offend-

at Columbia Seminary. He moved to Pendleton in 1874 and was pastor of Presbyterian congregations until he retired in 1894. Dr. Adger was related to a number of prominent First Presbyterians. Elder and Mrs. William Law were his uncle and aunt; his daughter was married to the Reverend Francis Mullally, who was the church's pastor from 1860 to 1863; his cousin was William E. Boggs, pastor from 1866 to 1971.

er sat with a loaded pistol in his pocket within twenty-five feet of the pulpit.¹⁴³

The session of First Presbyterian set forth its witness and the church's position, undoubtedly at personal cost to the pastor and elders and with risk to the reputation of the church among some in the community. It recognized that it is difficult to know the exact place to draw the line between Christian freedom and worldly behavior, but it did not fail its members—and “the watching world”—by refusing to draw the line at all. These Presbyterians did not take sin lightly, but neither did they lord it over the erring. They dealt with offenders with sensitivity, and were (as they stated in their minutes of June 26, 1848, concerning a case of “indulgence” in drink) “sincerely desirous to save and not to destroy.” Suspensions and excommunications were not infrequent; neither were restorations, after confession and repentance.

The session of First Presbyterian Church took great care in receiving new members. Evidence of a real change “of heart and godliness of life” was required.¹⁴⁴ One woman was denied membership for several years until she dealt with “her feelings of hostility” toward others in the church. On June 24, 1846, a man was received on profession of faith “after a long examination”; but the “session instructed the Pastor in communicating this fact to him to state faithfully that upon one or two points his experience was regarded as defective and to urge him to pray for more increasing light in reference to the same.” In March and April 1852, the session met with Dr. Augustus F——, who came “earnestly seeking the salvation of his soul.” Not having “a sense of pardon,” however, he did not offer himself as a candidate for membership. He came back for a second meeting, stating his desire to join the church if after a frank statement of his feelings the session could advise him to do so. The session had the impression that Dr. F—— “really entertained a lurking hope of favor and acceptance through faith in Christ Jesus, which yet he was perhaps exceedingly and morbidly afraid to recognize and own.” The elders decided to admit him, “as long as he himself assumed the responsibility of the step.” They added, however, that in no case whatever “does Session feel authorized to take the initiative by distinctly advising persons to

¹⁴³ This story was told by Andrew Crawford to William E. Boggs. Centennial Sermon of William E. Boggs.

¹⁴⁴ Johnson, *Palmer*, p. 125.

join the church." The session scrupulously avoided accepting persons as members who were under discipline or censure from other churches.

The church leaders, however, knew how to deal gently with those who were weak and struggling. On January 11, 1845, the minutes read:

Mrs. Mary Ann Rowan being in the last stage of Consumption and apparently in a dying state made application to be received a member of the church upon profession of her faith and also desired that her children might receive the ordinance of Baptism before her decease. Being extremely low and weak there was little opportunity to sift the grounds of her Hope. But she expressed firmly her hope of a saving interest in the Redeemer's Righteousness and of the renewing of the Holy Spirit. She also disclaimed any belief that an outward connexion with the church would have any efficiency in the Salvation of her soul or that the ceremony of Baptism merely could benefit her children. But she desired to profess her faith in that Saviour who was precious to her and to commit her little ones in Covenant trust to Almighty God. Upon this representation of her feelings and upon the report which the Pastor gave of conversations he had held with her, session, regarding it as an extra-ordinary case, resolved to receive her as a member of the Church and the ordinance of Baptism was accordingly [administered] to her two children, Mary Elizabeth and Samuel Woods. The solemn and touching scene was closed with prayer and session adjourned.

New members were sometimes new converts who joined the church upon profession of their faith and examination. More often they came as transfers from other churches—from other Presbyterian churches in the United States, from the various Reformed bodies of Scotland and Northern Ireland, and from different Protestant denominations. Presbyterians generally recognized the baptism of other churches, but on September 29, 1847, the session of First Presbyterian ordered that Mr. Joseph Long be baptized on Communion Sabbath because he had received "no other baptism than Unitarian." Three years later a Roman Catholic who joined the church was baptized, but the session did not always require baptism for members coming from the Catholic church.

In admitting slaves as members, the session required not only letters of dismissal from another church and careful examination, but also letters from owners and character references. Membership was often deferred for some time until the session was satisfied with the sincerity and conduct of the slave. (Occasionally the same procedure was followed with white transfers about whom there was some irregularity or question.) For example, the session met with five slaves desiring membership on September 30, 1846. The elders received a good account of Olivia from her owners and, "hoping from her conversation that she was indeed born of the Spirit," received her on profession of faith and directed that she be baptized. Alexander was also received. Hannah's reception was deferred until Saturday afternoon "to afford time for inquiry into her character and history." Ellen and William were regarded by the session as being "hopeful enquirers whose reception should be deferred till some future period when they may indulge a clearer hope of being born of the Spirit." On October 3, it was reported that Hannah's "marriage relations were somewhat involved" and that more extended investigation was needed. Finally, on January 9, 1847, Hannah was received as a member of First Presbyterian Church. On June 30, 1847, Dinah, the servant of James Henley Thornwell, became a member. Two years later, Amanda, also a servant of Dr. Thornwell, presented a certificate from her master and, "after a full and more than usually satisfactory examination into the grounds of her faith and hope," she was received. About the same time, however, the session received two slaves as members "notwithstanding some obscurity in their views."

Despite the views of society concerning the status of the blacks, to which white Columbia Presbyterians freely assented, there was the conviction that the church was one and that black members had equal rights and privileges of membership. On February 14, 1844, the session unanimously reaffirmed that "all the people of God were entitled to the privileges of the Covenant and that Baptism was to be refused in no case where we could be satisfied of the Christian walk of the parent." At First Presbyterian Church, baptisms of blacks and whites occurred together in the same service. As a rule, however, session met white and black persons desiring membership separately. There were different Sunday school classes for blacks and whites, and seating was segregated within the church. The session clearly was uncomfortable with a request in 1853 from the black members that they have permission to hold their own prayer meetings and have three of their number given the privilege of "exhorting." It postponed action but several months later decided to "sanction such

meetings as were provided for by Law” and assigned two white members to be present during these gatherings. Despite the limitations of law and custom, and notwithstanding its own failure to fully apply Galatians 3:28—“There is neither bond nor free . . . for ye are all one in Christ Jesus”—the white leadership of First Presbyterian Church attempted to provide spiritual help for its black members—and those efforts were not without fruit.

Church members were expected to be regular in their attendance of church services. Those who were habitually absent, especially from the quarterly communion services, were approached by the pastor or elders for an explanation. On one occasion, Dr. Thornwell was directed by the session to call upon Mr. S—— and his servant William to “ascertain the causes of their absence from the last communion.” He reported to the next meeting that Mr. S—— was attending a Sunday school in the Sand Hills (which he would not have done if he had known it was Communion Sabbath). William was absent from Columbia “on his master’s business” and attended church in Camden that day. The excuses were sustained because the session ruled that there had been “no willful neglect.” A request for baptism of her child from a woman who had been absent from the church for two years was denied until she gave “some evidence of repentance.” In 1852 the session expressed its concern about the irregular attendance and neglect of the Lord’s table on the part of some of the black members and attempted to meet with them. It was not at all unusual for members to request session approval to be absent from church for a period of time when they were away from the city.

In approximately 1850, First Church drew up nine articles of faith and a covenant for its new members. “That the world may know what we as Christians profess to believe and engage to do,” the new members gave public assent to the articles of faith and, in the covenant, dedicated themselves to the Lord—“to lead a holy life, to cultivate the Spirit of Christ, to attend faithfully upon all the institutions and ordinances of God’s House . . . and to submit to the discipline of the Church.”¹⁴⁵

Columbia’s Presbyterians—and members of other churches of the city—took seriously the Christian principles of conduct set forth in the Bible. Church discipline was the norm, rather than the exception. By mid-century, Christian ideals, set forth in sermons and by example, had made a significant difference in the life of South

¹⁴⁵ For the full text of these documents, see Appendix G.

Carolina's capital city.¹⁴⁶ First Presbyterian Church had served God and its fellow citizens by faithfully preaching the gospel to all who would hear it, by zealously defending evangelical Christianity against its enemies, by carefully upholding Christian standards among its members, and by continually calling on the city and its leaders to honor the name of Christ in its laws, its learning, and its life.

¹⁴⁶ John Hammond Moore describes the early life of Columbia as "essentially hedonistic." See Moore, *Columbia*, pp. 148, 149.

CHAPTER 7



A CITY SET ON A HILL

In 1855 James Henley Thornwell resigned the presidency of South Carolina College for the chair of theology at Columbia Seminary. During Dr. Thornwell's brief tenure of three years at the college, he had raised entrance requirements, reinforced classical studies, replaced oral with written examinations, and effectively defended state-supported education. The Thornwell years were also marked by the "Great Biscuit Rebellion" of 1852, so called because of student-faculty confrontation over compulsory dining rules.

Preacher, teacher, editor, leader—Dr. Thornwell was a major force in the life of the city. Early in 1856, a long-standing feud between the college students and the city's policemen erupted. Armed citizens and students faced each other. When appeals for calm failed, someone had the good sense to summon Dr. Thornwell. Rushing to the scene, the former president promised to personally investigate their grievances and urged the students to return to their rooms. Then, shouting "College! College!" he led the agitated young men back to the campus.¹⁴⁷

On the departure of Benjamin Morgan Palmer in 1855, Thornwell was invited to supply the pulpit at First Presbyterian Church; so after

¹⁴⁷ In the opinion of Daniel W. Hollis (in his history of the University of South Carolina) "probably no one else in the State could have done it." See Moore, *Columbia*, p. 109.

fifteen years he returned to the church as a regular preacher. College student William E. Boggs sat with his relatives in John D. Scott's pew about two thirds of the way down the middle aisle, where he listened to Dr. Thornwell's sermons and saw "the wonderful blessings" God was giving the church. Years later he described his impressions:

As I looked up to the pulpit from Mr. Scott's pew I caught a glimpse of a figure in black that passed somewhat quickly from the side recess . . . up the pulpit steps. I saw more clearly a face thin and rather pallid. Dark hair was closely brushed across the broad forehead and down either side of the face. The spare form stooped at the shoulders. Hands small and white like a woman's turned the pages of the book. Dark eyes rather small and deeply placed in the head glanced swiftly over the congregation.

The preliminary services were conducted very quietly and with reverence. The reading was somewhat monotonous and with an up-and-down movement of the voice corresponding to the movement of the head to and fro all unconsciously. The prayers were direct and simple as a child's. No rhetorical sentences, no artificial cadences of voice.

Then came the sermon. The text was always announced simply and quietly. Not the slightest attempt appeared to catch attention and excite a sensation. The phraseology was briefly explained when occasion required. The context was referred to—that the exact line of thought should be noted. And the main truth was stated as a proposition with transparent clearness and simplicity.

Then came the exposition which was an evolution of the main proposition into various heads. Not the traditional "three heads" by any means. Sometimes four, sometimes five or more were given. This evolution of the main thought was affected by means of lucid statement and reasoning. The truth was unfolded and defended against misconception and cavil. And then as if with the thrust of Achilles' spear the application was made to the hearer's conscience.

The manner at first was marked by the monotonous movement of voice already noted in the reading. The gestures were constrained. The head oscillated. The large white handkerchief crushed in the nervous hand swayed to and fro somewhat like a signal flag seen at a distance. But as the

argument proceeded these peculiarities and constraints dropped from him like the Philistine cords from Samson's mighty arms. The slender frame erected itself to the fullest stature. The gesture swept freely through every arc of emphasis. The voice grew in tone and volume. The eye that slumbered in its depths when unmoved seemed to dilate and flash as if it would read the secrets of your sinful heart.

When you had time to think of the speaker at all, you trembled lest the slight soul would burst before your very eyes from its frail tenement. "If," said a brother in the ministry, "the roof had been suddenly lifted from the walls and I saw Dr. Thornwell like Elijah mount on a chariot of fire, it, I believe, would have seemed exactly the right thing."

And when it was all over if your position permitted you could see the passion fade from the face while a look of pallor resumed its wonted sway. The slender frame seemed to collapse.¹⁴⁸

In June 1856 the session of First Church nominated John Lafayette Girardeau as pastor, and Dr. Thornwell made an "earnest address" in his favor at the congregational meeting. But a large majority of members was opposed to the election of a pastor at this time—and the session asked Dr. Thornwell to continue to preach. Three new ruling elders were added to the session—Henry Muller, J. M. Gaston, and Fitz William McMaster. Later that year Elder John Scott resigned as clerk of session because of his conviction of his "utter unworthiness of the office." The session entreated him to reconsider, stating that his reason for resigning "only strengthens our conviction of his fitness for the duties he wishes to lay aside." In December, however, the session accepted Mr. Scott's resignation, and Mr. McMaster was elected clerk.

¹⁴⁸ Centennial Sermon of William E. Boggs. Boggs (who became pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Columbia, in 1866) concluded his description of Thornwell's preaching with these words: "It is one of the mysteries of God's providence, my brethren in the ministry, that feeblers men like us should be called to take up the work that dropped from such hands. But the preacher whom Thornwell most resembled, as I think, comforts us with the saying that God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty. And to Him be all the glory." Dr. Thornwell preached the sermon on foreign missions at the 1856 General Assembly in New York City. Robert Lewis Dabney—whose name would be linked with Thornwell's and Palmer's as the three greatest nineteenth-century Southern Presbyterian leaders—was there. Thornwell "preached a noble sermon," Dabney wrote; "he is a common-looking, little stoop-shouldered man; but he has a fine mind. His manners are very simple, friendly and natural." Thomas Cary Johnson, *The Life and Letters of Robert Lewis Dabney* (1903; Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1977), p. 163.

Benjamin Palmer remained at the seminary for only a year. He soon found—what his wife knew—that he had to have “a preaching place.” He supplied the Presbyterian church at Orangeburg—a congregation “too feeble” to support a pastor—and taught his classes at the seminary, but he was not happy. “Academic life does not suit me,” he wrote to John Adger, “as I have neither the taste nor the learning for it, and as a professor [I] am only a wretched sham.”¹⁴⁹ His students, however, did not agree with his opinion of himself as a teacher. They were impressed with his classes, admired his Christian walk, and consulted him regularly with their problems and spiritual needs. But Dr. Palmer was convinced that his true sphere was not in the classroom; his heart lay in the pastorate. Despite strong agitation in the Presbytery of Charleston and Synod of South Carolina to keep him within their bounds, the church courts finally relented and allowed him to accept a call from the First Presbyterian Church of New Orleans. According to Thomas Cary Johnson, “thus nobly did the noble Synod of South Carolina dismiss one of her noblest sons, whom she had so longed to keep, to his great field of the Southwest.”¹⁵⁰ In November 1856, Benjamin Morgan Palmer preached a farewell sermon to his former church in Columbia and, still in his early prime, departed for his new charge. Before many years his Columbia friends would see him again, but not in the best of times.

During the early months of 1857 the church held its prayer meetings in private homes because the cold of the Lecture Room caused many to stay away. Membership was now 188. A number of people who were not members but “considering the subject of religion seriously” were attending the church. In September 1857, Mr. R. L. Bryan was received upon examination. Because he did not know if he had been baptized as an infant, he was baptized a few days later during the communion service. By April 1858, the membership had grown to 210. On April 2, 1858, Tyra, a slave belonging to Governor Means, was admitted to membership. The next day, Dr. and Mrs. Joseph LeConte were received. LeConte, a Georgian and a noted physician and zoologist, taught at Oglethorpe University and the

¹⁴⁹ Johnson, *Palmer*, p. 161.

¹⁵⁰ Johnson, *Palmer*, p. 166.

University of Georgia before coming to South Carolina College in 1857. He wrote in his autobiography:

My life in Columbia was perhaps the most pleasant in my whole career. The society was the most refined and cultivated I have ever known. My wife was delighted. Three institutions of learning, the South Carolina College, the Theological Seminary, and the Military Academy (Arsenal) formed the nucleus about which gathered many intellectual men and women. Such men as Dr. Thornwell, Dr. Palmer, William C. Preston, and Wade Hampton are rare in any community.¹⁵¹

Not everyone found Columbia so pleasant. A lightning rod salesman from New York wrote home on November 10, 1859, that Columbia "is a very dull place for the size of it!"¹⁵²

The Revival of 1858 that touched churches on both sides of the Atlantic was felt in Columbia. For several weeks in the spring there was preaching every night except Sunday in First Presbyterian Church's Lecture Room—"in consequence of the awakened interest in religion which seemed to pervade the whole community." The next year, during the meeting of the synod in Columbia, a motion was made to invite a delegation of Irish Presbyterian ministers that was touring the United States to visit the churches of the synod and tell them about the revival then in progress in Ireland. Dr. Thornwell moved that the motion be laid upon the table—probably because of the well-known tendency of these Scotch-Irish brethren to protest against slavery.

Dr. Thornwell was not well and, on May 10, 1858, the church asked him to refrain from preaching until October and "to use such means as he [might] think proper for the restoration of his health." George Henry Coit, of the seminary's graduating class, was asked to supply the pulpit during the summer.¹⁵³

¹⁵¹ *A Columbia Reader*, p. 49. After the War Between the States, LeConte went to the newly established University of California at Berkeley. His *Autobiography* was published posthumously in 1903.

¹⁵² *A Columbia Reader*, p. 49.

¹⁵³ George Coit, a native of Rhode Island, came to Columbia Seminary in 1855. He spent his long vacations in missionary work among the neglected people of the Sand Hills near Columbia. He delayed beginning his ministry at the Presbyterian church in Americus, Georgia, to supply First Presbyterian of Columbia during Dr. Thornwell's absence. He served the church in Americus for eight years. In 1865 he moved to Illinois and was pastor of churches in that state until his death in Collinsville, in 1877.

In February 1860, in order to retain the ministry of Dr. Thornwell but "relieve him in a great measure of his pastoral and in part of his pulpit labours," the session and the congregation called as its "collegiate pastors" Dr. Thornwell and Francis P. Mullally. Thornwell was to divide duties with Mullally for nine months, taking three months' "rest" in the summer. Mr. Mullally was ordained on May 4, and Thornwell and Mullally were installed as copastors of First Presbyterian Church. John L. Girardeau preached the sermon on the text I Timothy 1:11—"The glorious Gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust." "The incarnation, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the mission, supernatural influence and new-creating energy of the Holy Ghost—all tending to secure the redemption of miserable sinners, to the glory of God's grace"—these, Girardeau told the crowded congregation, are the vital truths which render the gospel "the glorious Gospel of the blessed God." Thomas Smyth, pastor of Charleston's Second Presbyterian Church, gave the charges. "Oh, my dear Brothers, preach . . . Christ Jesus the Lord," he told the two ministers. "Preach this Gospel—this glorious Gospel of good news—first and last, every way and everywhere, in public and in private; in the pulpit and by the press; to the living and to the dying; to the lost and to the saved." He continued:

Let the spirit of the Lord be upon you that you may know how to speak a word to the weary, and of comfort to the afflicted, and of consolation to the bereaved; that you may be able to impart, out of a full soul, the comfort with which you have been comforted of God; to bind up the broken-hearted; to give beauty for ashes, and the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; to weep with them that weep and rejoice with them that rejoice.

Supreme love to Christ will animate you with one absorbing passion—the love of souls—and concentrate and direct your energies in seeking their salvation. Like Paul, you will joy and rejoice to be offered upon the sacrifice of their faith. As in the case of Whitefield, this predominant passion, this enthusiasm, and even frenzy of love, will beam in your face, flow in your tears, breathe in your devotions, and vent itself in the impassioned eloquence of discourse. To this it will—as with Martyn, and Buchanan, and Heber—sacrifice ambition, emolument, honour, social comfort and domestic enjoyment. Infinitely and insatiably greedy of the conver-

sion of souls as Alleine was, you will seem to your hearers as McCheyne did, "as if dying to have them converted"; as if you felt it to be a greater pleasure, like Matthew Henry, "to gain one soul to Christ than mountains of silver and gold to yourself"; and like Brainerd, "care not where or how you live, or what hardships you go through, so that you may but gain souls to Christ." Oh that you may so enter into this travail of soul that you may be able to say with holy Rutherford, "My witness is above that your heaven would be two heavens to me, and the salvation of you all two salvations to me."¹⁵⁴

To the people of the congregation, Thomas Smyth said: "May you go forward prospering and to prosper—a city set on a hill, a burning and a shining light, provoking all around you to love and liberality. May strength go out of this Zion, and may you arise and shine, the glory of the Lord having arisen upon you." The impressive service was over. The congregation, stirred and thankful, congratulated one another on the church's prospects and filed by to shake the hands of their new senior and junior pastors.

In June 1860, Dr. Thornwell made a second trip to Europe in an effort to improve his health. He wrote from Genoa, "I am greatly delighted to hear that things are going so well in the church, and I bless God that He has given me such a colleague as Mullally. I anticipate a happy time in cultivating with him the vineyard which God has entrusted to our joint care."¹⁵⁵



In 1859 the new Baptist church was built—a brown brick edifice with four large Greek Revival columns—on Plain (Hampton) Street halfway between Sumter and Marion. Former pastor James Boyce, who had left Columbia in 1855 to become professor of theology at Furman College, contributed \$10,000 toward the new building. Columbia Female College, a Methodist institution chartered in 1854,

¹⁵⁴ George Whitefield (1714-1770) was one of the leading preachers of the Great Awakening. Henry Martyn (1781-1812), Claudius Buchanan (1766-1815), and Reginald Heber (1783-1826) were missionary leaders. Joseph Alleine (1611-1681) was a Presbyterian and Puritan minister of England. Robert Murray McCheyne (1813-1843) was the saintly pastor of St. Peter's (Presbyterian Church) in Dundee, Scotland. Matthew Henry (1662-1714), English Presbyterian minister, wrote the famous *Commentary on the Bible*. David Brainerd (1718-1747) served as a pioneer missionary to the American Indians. Samuel Rutherford (1600-1661) was a pastor and theologian who was chosen one of the Scottish commissioners to the Westminster Assembly.

¹⁵⁵ Johnson, *Palmer*, p. 461.

began classes in 1859 in a large Italianate building on Plain Street at Pickens—a four-story structure with a tower nearly one hundred feet high.

In 1860 Columbia's population was 8,052, but still it was only a fifth the size of Charleston. At First Presbyterian Church, there were 253 communicant members; 34 of them were black people. The total sum raised by the church for all purposes was \$5,609.32. First Presbyterian continued its work of missions—at home and abroad. The church at Tekoah in the Sand Hills had for several years been led by the students of the Society of Missionary Inquiry at the seminary. Dr. Howe or Dr. Adger went out for communion services.¹⁵⁶ Prayer meetings for foreign missions were held in the First Presbyterian Lecture Room every night during the second week of January 1860. During 1860 and 1861, the session investigated the possibility of building another church in the city.

First Presbyterian Church's main missionary concern, however, continued to be the Negroes of Columbia. In April 1860, George Whitfield Ladson—a student at the seminary from Midway Church in Liberty County, Georgia, and graduate of Oglethorpe University—was employed by the church (for \$200 a year) to catechise and preach to the slaves and free blacks. Mr. Ladson was given permission to use both floors of the Lecture Room. His ministry was immediately successful, and a steady stream of black people began to apply for church membership. On June 27, 1860, the session admitted fourteen slaves and four free persons upon profession of faith, as well as two slaves upon letters of dismissal. On October 9, nineteen slaves and one free person joined the church upon profession of faith and three slaves upon certificate and examination.

On March 27, 1861, the black members of the church met, with Elder McMaster present by invitation, and unanimously passed the following memorial:

Whereas the Coloured members of the Presbyterian Church have during the past two years experienced great benefit from the Religious instructions imparted to them by Mr. G. W. Ladson which has added many members to the Church Roll and which they seriously believe under Providence has been the means of turning many Coloured persons from the

¹⁵⁶ The last mention of the Tekoah church in the session records is dated October 6, 1877. It reports that a "body of Baptist brethren" desired to obtain the Presbyterian church building. A committee was appointed to make the transfer.

errors of their way, and building them up in the true faith, they earnestly hope that efforts will be made to retain his services for the future.

The statement also urged the session "to use every reasonable effort to procure a more commodious place for Mr. Ladson's preaching and, if it be thought advisable, to call him regularly so that his valuable services [might] be continued to them and their children and the whole community." Mr. Ladson was ordained by the Presbytery of Georgia in April 1862 and continued his ministry with First Presbyterian Church until the summer of 1863, when he was granted leave of absence for two months because of ill health.

First Presbyterian Church was determined to be what Thomas Smyth had challenged it to be in his charge to the congregation in 1860—"a city set on a hill, a burning and a shining light." It reached out to the slaves of Columbia and to the intellectuals of the college, embracing both within its membership. The church's clear message of God's redeeming grace rang from the great marble pulpit and was not only heard on Sundays but talked about during the week in college and seminary halls, in places of business on Main Street, and in homes—small and great—throughout the town. Its members were a substantial force for righteousness in the capital city, the county, and the state.

Columbia

130 Mar 31 1794

A number of the inhabitants of
this Place being desirous to establish a church
for Christian worship, have formed in a
subscription for the purpose of a ^{substantial} minister.

They have unanimously agreed to give you
a call to accept the pastoral care of the church
nowly establishing in amongst us, and shall
be pleased with your assistance, if compat-
ible with your views of future usefulness.

There is one hundred and a half
Pounds subscribed, and fifteen or twenty
more may be calculated on. we wish
that your settlement here may take
place at as early a day as possible, as it
is greatly contrary to the interest of a
young town to be growing up without
the Sabbath day's observance - Please
to present the enclosed application
to the Presbytery & give it the proper
direction - we are with much
regard & esteem your most Hble Servts
on Behalf of a number of the Inhabitants

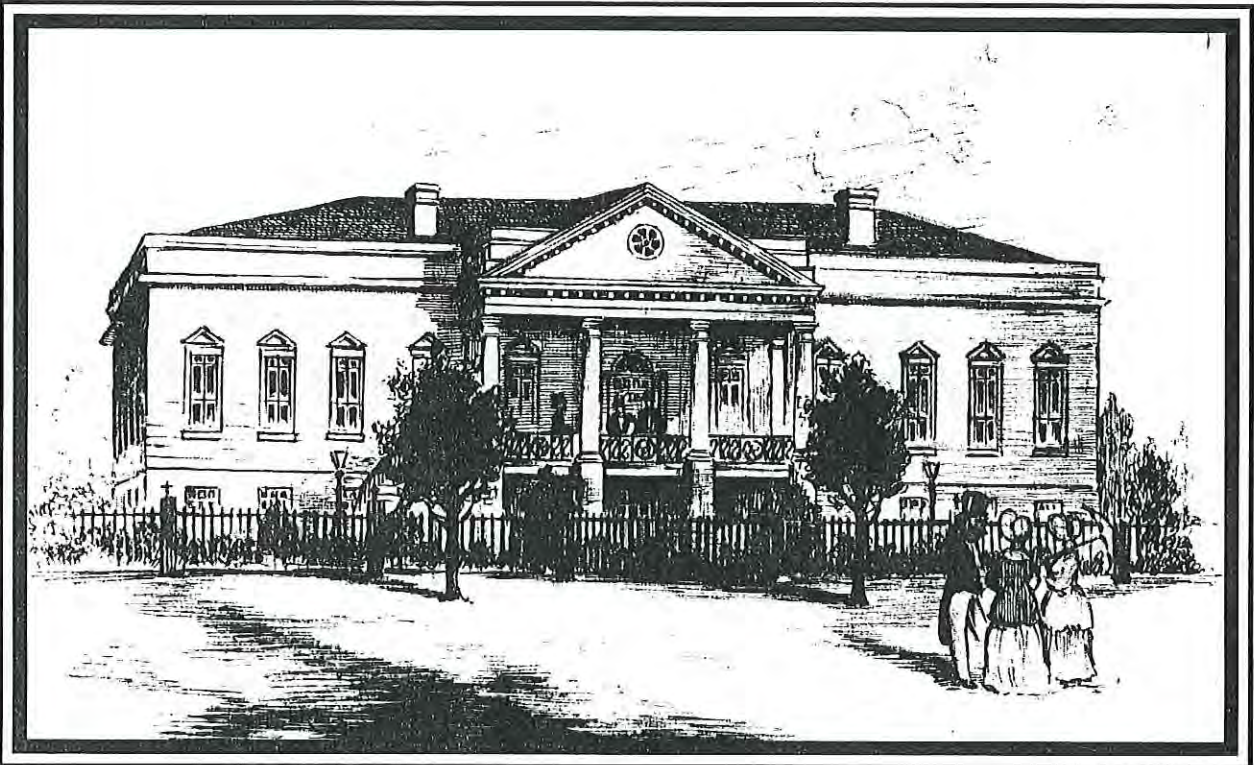
of Columbia and the vicinity.

Thos Taylor

B. Waring

March 30 1794

Thomas Taylor and Benjamin Waring urged the Rev. David E. Dunlap to accept the call to preach at First Presbyterian Church and become Columbia's first resident minister. The letter, signed by these two town commissioners, is dated March 30, 1794.



Services of the First Presbyterian Church were held originally in the wooden State House, which was built in 1790 and faced Assembly Street.

The State of South Carolina

At a general assembly begun and holden at Columbia, on Monday the twenty second day of November, in the year of Our Lord, One thousand eight hundred and twelve and from thence continued by several adjournments to the eighteenth day of December in the year of Our Lord: One thousand eight hundred and thirteen and in the thirty eighth year of the sovereignty and Independence of the United States of America

An act to incorporate the several societies therein mentioned and for other purposes Be it enacted by the honorable the Senate and House of Representatives now met and sitting in general assembly and by the authority of the same That the persons who have lately associated themselves together for the purpose of establishing a Presbyterian church between Broad & Sixth Streets in their field without & all those who may hereafter become members of that church or society shall be and they are hereby declared to be a body corporate in deed & in law by the name of the Salem Presbyterian Church in Fairfield district And be it enacted by the authority aforesaid That the persons who have formed themselves into a congregation for the purpose of religious worship according to the Presbyterian service and discipline in the town of Columbia and all those who may hereafter regularly become members of that congregation shall be and they are hereby declared to be a body corporate in deed & in law by the name and style of the first Presbyterian Church in the town of Columbia And be it enacted by the authority aforesaid That the balance of monies arising from the sale of two acres of land originally destined as sites for places of public worship but lately disposed of for the purpose of purchasing land in a location better adapted for a public use and ground after completing the payments on said purchase shall be equally divided between the following four named religious societies viz the Protestant Episcopal Church the Presbyterian Baptist & Methodist congregations of the town of Columbia for the benefit & use of the said named congregations forever

This act of the legislature in 1813 granted land on Marion Street to "the four named religious societies, the Protestant Episcopal Church, the Presbyterian, Baptist and Methodist congregations of the town . . . forever." The Presbyterians and Episcopalians paid the Methodists and Baptists one half the value of the land because they already had church buildings. The Presbyterians bought out the Episcopalians and became sole owners of the property.

To the Honorable
President of the Senate of the State of
South Carolina.

The humble petition of the sub-
scribing ^{Inhabiting Columbia} persons, That they have
formed themselves into a congregation
for the purpose of celebrating the regular
solemn & public worship of Almighty
God, according to the Presbyterian
form of service & discipline. And they
find it necessary to obtain an act of
Incorporation to enable them to give
full effect to their intentions.

They therefore pray that they may
be incorporated as a religious society
by the name & title of "the first Pres-
byterian Church in the Town of
Columbia", with the usual privileges
of such corporations -

and they as in duty bound will
ever pray

Wm. Taylor Secy

Henry M. DeGraffenreid
Garner Douglass
Henry D. Ward
John Murphy
Thomas Lindsay
Alfred Nott
John Harker
Amos Ross
B. R. Montgomery
A. T. Hall

Leah Davis

G. Chapman
H. H. McGowan
Wm. D. DeGraffenreid
Richardson
Thomas Taylor Jr.
Ben. Staley
David Coates
Sebulon Rudolph



TUESDAY, MAY 21, 1816.

The Committee for building the Presbyterian Church will be much obliged to the subscribers who are in arrears, to pay them up, that they may be enabled to make a full report to the meeting of the members and supporters of the Church, which will soon take place.

pay for any article charged to his account hence, without his verbal or written order, or pass book to that effect.
Aug. 18 255 6 J. E. DENT.

Building Contract.

THE undersigned Committee now offer for Contracts for the erection of a CHURCH EDIFICE in the town of Columbia, on the site of the present Presbyterian Church; dimensions 58 by 78 feet, height of tower and spire 180 feet, order Gothic, materials brick and stuccoed, roof of tin.

All offers to be made under seal, and handed to the chairman on or before the 15th of October next. Contractors must give security for the faithful performance of the contract—name of security to accompany proposals. The whole work to be executed under the directions of the architect appointed by the Building Committee, and completed by 1st October, 1852.

Plans may be seen at the hall of the Commercial Bank, and a copy of specifications will be furnished to those who wish to contract.

J. A. CRAWFORD,
R. LATTA,
DR. FAIR,
J. C. THORNTON,
R. SONDELEY,
Columbia, Aug. 18, 1851.

DR. HOWE,
JOHN S. SCOTT,
J. I. GRACEY,
CHARLES BECK,
[COMMITTEE.
255 1m

J. A. Kennedy

OFFERS for sale—20,000 lbs. Bacon SIDES and

This notice, which appeared in the *Columbia Telescope* in 1816, reminded members to pay their delinquent pledges to the building fund. The first church, a wooden structure, was completed in 1815.

Bids to erect a new church building of Gothic Revival architecture were solicited in *The Daily South Carolinian* on August 19, 1851.

PART 3



SOUTHERN
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
1861-1983

CHAPTER 8



FOR CHRIST AND HIS CROWN

The election of Abraham Lincoln—"a sectional candidate," according to James Henley Thornwell—as president of the United States created a frenzy in the South. Columbia's streets were filled with excited audiences listening to speeches made from hotel porches and city balconies. The South Carolina Convention was called by the state legislature to meet at Columbia's new Baptist church on December 17 and quickly passed without dissent a resolution in favor of secession. The ordinance was signed and proclaimed in Charleston a few days later, the convention having moved there when an outbreak of smallpox was reported in Columbia. By the first of February 1861, five states—Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana—had followed South Carolina; and other states were ready to join them. Delegates appointed by the conventions in the seceding states met in Montgomery, Alabama, on February 4, 1861, and framed a provisional constitution and government for the "Confederate States of America." They chose Jefferson Davis of Mississippi as provisional president and Alexander H. Stephens of Georgia as provisional vice-president.

Robert Lewis Dabney of Union Seminary in Virginia deplored the action of South Carolina and, for a time, tried to keep Virginia from following her lead; but Benjamin Morgan Palmer, now pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of New Orleans, did all he could to further the secessionist movement. His two-hour "Thanksgiving Sermon" of


November 29, 1860—a departure from his lifelong policy of refusing to deal with political questions from the pulpit—sounded the call for “Southern rights” and helped bring Louisiana into the Confederacy.¹⁵⁷ On the same day that Palmer was preaching secession in New Orleans, the Synod of South Carolina declared that “the people of South Carolina are now solemnly called on to imitate their revolutionary forefathers, and stand up for their rights.”¹⁵⁸

After secession became a reality, local military units from Columbia and other places in South Carolina went to Charleston to help defend that city. Charles S. Vedder, pastor of the Summerville Presbyterian Church, wrote in his diary on January 2, 1861: “The news from Charleston continues to be warlike. A company went down today from Columbia. Another has been sent for. Dr. Thornwell’s son has gone as a volunteer. Martial law is to be declared in Charleston tomorrow, and the channel is being obstructed by sunken boats. Great excitement everywhere.” On April 8, 1861, Southern troops opened fire on the Federal Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor. The fort surrendered on April 14, and the next day President Lincoln declared that an “insurrection” existed and called for 75,000 volunteers to put it down.

In the spring of 1861, South Carolina presbyteries elected commissioners to the (Old School) General Assembly to meet in May in Philadelphia; but after the bombardment of Fort Sumter in April, none attended. At the assembly, although some commissioners were determined to keep politics out of the deliberations, there was intense pressure for support of the Union. Finally Dr. Gardiner Spring, pastor of the large Brick Presbyterian Church of New York City, introduced resolutions asking the assembly to call on its churches and ministers to do all in their power to “strengthen, uphold, and encourage the Federal government.” Charles Hodge, the great Princeton professor, argued that the resolutions virtually declared that such allegiance of Presbyterians to the government of the United States was “a term of membership in our church” and thus usurped the “prerogatives of the Divine Master.” The “Spring Resolutions” passed, 156 to 66; a protest against this “political deliverance” was signed by Dr. Hodge and 57 others.

¹⁵⁷ Throughout “the South Carolina belt of influence,” Palmer’s sermon was praised, although some Southerners disapproved of a minister’s expressing political views in a sermon in church. It is said that Dr. Palmer later regretted preaching the “Thanksgiving Sermon,” but he never abandoned the views expressed in his sermon.


¹⁵⁸ Street, *Southern Presbyterians*, p. 54.



Dr. Thornwell had returned from Europe in September 1860 much improved in health, but by the next year he was suffering again. For some months, he was not able to carry his responsibilities at First Church. On July 10, 1861, he wrote to his colleague, Mr. Mullally, from Spartanburg (where he had gone to try to improve his health by drinking the spring waters of the upcountry):

It makes me sad at times to think of the burden that has fallen on your shoulders through my infirmities. . . . It would delight my heart to be able to join you in your ministry. The people in Columbia are very dear to me; and their spiritual interests are the burden of many a prayer. I cannot tell you how much I am attached to the congregation; and if I could serve them as in former days, it would be the joy and rejoicing of my heart.¹⁵⁹

In November, Dr. Thornwell asked the Charleston Presbytery to dissolve his pastoral relationship with First Presbyterian Church. Mr. Mullally continued alone as pastor.



By now, there was strong sentiment for a separate Presbyterian church in the South. The Methodist church had divided in 1844 and the Baptists a year later; and on June 20, 1861, the diocese of South Carolina voted to leave the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. The Presbyterian Synod of South Carolina had debated overtures calling for the organization of a separate Southern church as early as 1837 and again in 1860. Charleston Presbytery met in Columbia on July 24, 1861, and voted to withdraw from the Presbyterian Church in the United States and to appoint delegates to a convention to be held in Atlanta on August 15. Every presbytery in the seceding states severed connection with the Northern church and sent representatives to Atlanta. There they planned for the meeting of the General Assembly of a new Southern Presbyterian Church, to be held in Augusta, Georgia—a place “cen-

¹⁵⁹ Palmer, *Thornwell*, p. 493. Thornwell added the playful comment, “My wife is the only Presbyterian I have seen for so long a time, that I have almost forgotten how that sour race looks” (p. 494).

tral, retired," and "near to South Carolina," according to the *Proceedings* of the convention.¹⁶⁰

That meeting convened on December 4, 1861, at the First Presbyterian Church of Augusta, Georgia. Fifty ministers and thirty-eight ruling elders from all forty-seven presbyteries of the ten Southern synods presented their credentials and were enrolled. Most of the leading men of the Presbyterian church in the South were there, but Robert Lewis Dabney was missing. He now supported Virginia's secession and was already serving as chaplain to the Eighteenth Virginia Volunteers. Two men stood out above all the rest in the historic meeting in Augusta—both former pastors of the First Presbyterian Church in Columbia.¹⁶¹ The young stenographer at the desk, William P. Jacobs, wrote: "Dr. Palmer is beautiful, Dr. Thornwell is strong; Dr. Palmer is polished, Dr. Thornwell wonderfully earnest; Dr. Palmer is refined in thought, Dr. Thornwell is broad, deep, clear."¹⁶² The pastor of the Augusta church, who had invited the assembly to meet there, was the "tall, pale, thin, intellectual-looking" Joseph Ruggles Wilson. After a few years of itinerant ministry, he had been called to the First Presbyterian Church in Staunton, Virginia, in 1854. In 1858 he came to the church in Augusta, one of the South's important pulpits. With him came his wife, Janet Woodrow Wilson, and their three children, Marion Williamson, Annie Josephine, and one-year-old Thomas Woodrow. At the General Assembly, Joseph Wilson was elected permanent clerk and Benjamin Morgan Palmer was unanimously chosen moderator.

It was still the morning of December 4 when Dr. Palmer gave the opening sermon. His text was Ephesians 1: 22, 23, and his theme, "The Supreme Dominion to which Christ is Exalted Head of the Church, and the Glory of the Church in that Relation, as Being at Once His Body and His Fullness." He touched on no political issues and made only the briefest allusion to the current situation. Rather, he set forth the purpose of the new church. He asked the question "Do we understand, Fathers and Brethren, the mission of the Church given us here to execute?" He answered:

¹⁶⁰ Street, *Southern Presbyterians*, p. 59.

¹⁶¹ Dr. Moses D. Hoge, at Dabney's funeral service, said: "Our Southern Church has been dignified and adorned by an illustrious triumvirate. . . . No church on this continent has been more favored of Heaven than our own, in having at its very organization three such men as Thornwell, Palmer, and Dabney, each fitted, by splendid genius and profound scholarship—alike consecrated to the noblest uses—to give direction to its future life, and to enrich it for all time by their published contributions to theological science." Johnson, *Dabney*, p. 529.

¹⁶² Wells, *Southern Presbyterian Worthies*, p. 31.

It is to lift up throughout the world our testimony for this headship of Christ. The convocation of this Assembly is in part that testimony. But a little while since, it was attempted in the most august court of our Church to place the crown of our Lord upon the head of Caesar—to bind that body, which is Christ's fulness, to the chariot in which Caesar rides. The intervening months have sufficiently discovered the character of that State, under whose yoke this Church was summoned to bow her neck in meek obedience. But in advance of these disclosures, the voice went up throughout our land, of indignant remonstrance against the usurpation, of solemn protest against the sacrilege. And now this Parliament of the Lord's freemen solemnly declares that, by the terms of her great charter, none but Jesus may be King in Zion. Once more in this distant age and in these ends of the earth, the Church must declare for the supremacy of her Head, and fling out the consecrated ensign with the old inscription, "for Christ and his crown."¹⁶³

A special commission, of which Dr. Thornwell was the chairman, was assigned the task of preparing an "Address to the Churches of Jesus Christ throughout the Earth." On the eleventh day, December 14, it was presented to the assembly.

Read, and read again, amid the solemn stillness of an audience whose emotions are hushed with awe, it was finally adopted and laid upon the moderator's table; when, one by one, the members came silently forward and signed the instrument with their names. We were carried back to those stirring times in Scottish story, when the Solemn League and Covenant was spread upon the grave stone in Grey Friar's Churchyard, and Christian heroes pricked their veins, that with the red blood they might sign their allegiance to the Kingdom and Crown of Jesus Christ, their Lord and Head.¹⁶⁴

The war had already started when the commissioners met in Augusta. The assembly convened, Joseph Wilson said, "under extraordinary circumstances, when the opening roar of such a civil war as the world had not hitherto beheld was causing all the land to quake

¹⁶³ Johnson, *Palmer*, p. 261.

¹⁶⁴ Wells, *Southern Presbyterian Worthies*, p. 32.

with indefinable apprehensions."¹⁶⁵ The members of the assembly were in full sympathy with the Southern cause; but "the court of the church did not sound a call to arms, nor unfurl a flag, nor make an announcement of political principles. The assembly began its work with quiet dignity by declaring that the work of preaching the gospel in all the world is the chief work of the Southern Presbyterian Church and the great end of her organization."¹⁶⁶

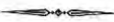
A new chair at Columbia Seminary, for the teaching of the harmony of science and the Bible, brought to the school in 1861 distinguished professor James Woodrow (brother of Janet Woodrow Wilson). James was born in 1828 in Carlisle, England, of Scottish Presbyterian parents.¹⁶⁷ His father became a missionary in Canada and later a pastor in Ohio. James Woodrow graduated from Jefferson College in Pennsylvania in 1849, served as principal of several academies in Alabama from 1850 to 1853, and then studied science at Harvard University under the renowned Louis Agassiz. In 1856, he was awarded the Ph.D. degree summa cum laude by Heidelberg University. The Germans offered the brilliant American scientist a full professorship at Heidelberg, but Woodrow wanted to return to the Southern United States—a land and people he had come to love. He became professor of natural science at Oglethorpe University near Milledgeville, Georgia. One of the students he taught was the Southern poet Sidney Lanier. In 1857 he married Felie S. Baker. Felie's earliest home was near the campus of Oglethorpe, where her

¹⁶⁵ John M. Mulder, *Woodrow Wilson: The Years of Preparation* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1978), p. 11.

¹⁶⁶ Wells, *Southern Presbyterian Worthies*, p. 156. The Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America became, after the War Between the States, the Presbyterian Church in the United States, or, more popularly, the Southern Presbyterian Church. The Southern New School Presbyterian Church united with the PCCSA in 1864. The Old School and New School branches of Northern Presbyterianism united in 1869 as the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

¹⁶⁷ According to family lore, a seventeenth-century Scottish ancestor of James Woodrow, also named James Woodrow, "was seven years old before he would speak but a few broken words." His father feared a lack of intellect, but at last James overcame his problem. "The first time he spoke [clearly] . . . he repeated the Shorter Catechism, which he had heard his brothers getting and repeating, without missing one word of it, which surprised them all with much pleasure. Evidently the silent small boy had been doing some close listening and thinking. The truth of the Shorter Catechism had stirred his heart and loosed his tongue." See Marion W. Woodrow, ed., *Dr. James Woodrow as Seen by His Friends* (Columbia: R. L. Bryan Co., 1909).

father, the Reverend J. W. Baker, was professor and pastor of the church at Milledgeville. He was ordained by Hopewell Presbytery in 1859 so that he could preach in the mission churches near the university. Dr. Woodrow held that the work of his chair at the seminary was to show that objections to the Bible based on science were founded either upon "science falsely so-called" or upon "misinterpretation of the Bible." His fundamental thesis was that "the Bible and nature are both from God. They cannot be contradictory. Apparent conflicts arise from misinterpretations of one, or the other, or of both. Remove these conflicts by ascertaining and interpreting correctly the facts of both."¹⁶⁸



Columbia was mobilized for the Confederate cause. Virtually all of the students at South Carolina College volunteered for military service, and in 1862 the college was closed and the buildings used for a Confederate hospital. The Seventeenth Regiment of the South Carolina Volunteers of the Confederate States Army was organized in Columbia in November 1861, with former governor J. H. Means as colonel and Fitz William McMaster as lieutenant colonel.

Mr. McMaster, a member of First Presbyterian Church, was born in Winnsboro in 1826. He studied at Mount Zion Institute and South Carolina College. He served at the college in various capacities—as librarian, treasurer, and secretary to the faculty. Meanwhile, he read law in Columbia, where he was admitted to the bar in 1856. Four years earlier, he had married Mary Jane Macfie, an 1850 graduate of the South Carolina Female Institute at Barhamville. At the outbreak of the War, Fitz William volunteered as a private, did military duty in Charleston, and took part in the First Battle of Manassas. Mary Jane always remembered sending her husband off to war "with his knapsack packed, and his sword buckled on."¹⁶⁹

When New Orleans fell to Commodore David G. Farragut's fleet toward the end of April 1862, Dr. Palmer—looked upon by Union soldiers as a fomenter of treason—was out of the city. Warned by friends not to return, he met his family and traveled to Columbia, where they lived with Mrs. Palmer's mother and stepfather, Dr. and Mrs. Howe. Dr. Palmer preached in a mission chapel two miles from town and taught the few students left in the seminary. This time he taught sys-

¹⁶⁸ Woodrow, *James Woodrow*, p. 15.

¹⁶⁹ *A Columbia Reader*, p. 82.

tematic theology, filling the sad vacancy left by the death of James Henley Thornwell.

Dr. Thornwell's sixteen-year-old son, Gillespie, was wounded by a saber thrust in a May 1862 battle in Virginia and came home to recover. Returning to the army, he said goodbye to his father in Charlotte, North Carolina. They would not meet again on earth.¹⁷⁰ At noon on August 1, 1862, James Henley Thornwell died in the home of friends in Charlotte. His wife arrived from Columbia just before the end and heard her husband's final words, "Wonderful! Beautiful! Nothing but space! Expanse! Expanse! Expanse!"¹⁷¹ Dr. John Adger of the seminary and Mr. Mullally conducted the funeral service at First Presbyterian Church; the burial took place in Elmwood Cemetery. On September 17, Dr. Palmer preached a memorial sermon at First Church for his mentor and friend. "Our Chrysostom is no more!" he said. "The 'Golden Mouth' is sealed up in silence forever!"¹⁷²

Historians agree that more than any other man, James Henley Thornwell "molded and reflected the mind of Southern Presbyterianism in the decades preceding the Civil War."¹⁷³ Dr. Thornwell's great concern was that the Presbyterian church should express not only in its doctrine but also in its organization and life the great principles of the Scripture. He elevated the role of the ruling elder, argued for decentralization—small committees directly accountable to the General Assembly—and championed the doctrine of the spirituality of the church. In 1847 he was elected moderator of the General Assembly (Old School) at the age of thirty-four; he was the youngest man ever to hold this office. In 1861 he was the moving force in the first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America.

In his 1986 Columbia bicentennial sermon, Dr. Glen Knecht, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, described Dr. Thornwell's life and ministry:

Every time he opened his mouth, it was as if the cross stood between himself and the audience. Each time he spoke the whole gospel was somehow compressed into a single message. Men said that to hear one sermon of Thornwell's was a life-changing experience, that nothing ever had touched

¹⁷⁰ In August 1863 Gillespie was again wounded, this time fatally, in a skirmish near Warrenton, Virginia.

¹⁷¹ Kelly, *Preachers with Power*, p. 72.

¹⁷² Johnson, *Palmer*, p. 266.

¹⁷³ Thompson, *Presbyterians in the South* 1:498.

them like that. What a man he was, a genius by nature, a gift of God, but sanctified by grace and made into a powerful instrument of the Holy Spirit. He was sent forth, unleashed upon the world. So, he was a blessing not only to this church, but to the university, to the state, indeed to the nation. He guided the life in the South for decades by his philosophy, his approach to Christian living, his godliness, his great wisdom.

CHAPTER 9



ALL THESE CALAMITIES

In May 1863, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America met in Columbia. As the elders were gathering, they received the sad news that "Stonewall" Jackson had died on May 10 of the wounds received in his last great flank movement. Sorely missing the counsel of Dr. Thornwell, the Presbyterian leaders turned their attention to bringing about "a union between the Old and New School Presbyterians in the Confederate States" and to the matter of "domestic missions" and "the religious needs" of the soldiers. They commissioned Benjamin Morgan Palmer to spend some time ministering to the army. Dr. Palmer went immediately to Tennessee, where he distributed Christian literature and preached to the soldiers. One day he was preaching in a rural church within the Confederate lines but near the Northern camp. He had begun his "long prayer," when a Federal shell exploded outside the windows of the church with a terrific crash. Dr. Palmer went steadily on with his prayer, but when he finished and opened his eyes the church was deserted!¹⁷⁴ Dr. Palmer was one of 130 ministers serving the Confederate Army; and their efforts were richly rewarded when, in 1863 and 1864, a revival came to the soldiers. The 1864

¹⁷⁴ Theodore L. Cuyler, *Recollections of a Long Life: An Autobiography* (New York: Baker and Taylor Company, 1902), pp. 221, 222.

General Assembly heard with gratitude of "the wonderful work of grace in our armies."¹⁷⁵

In June 1863 Francis Mullally resigned as pastor of First Presbyterian Church to enter the Confederate Army as chaplain in the Orr Regiment of Rifles. When General Lee and his officers were preparing for the Battle of the Wilderness in early May 1864, they heard Mullally—a very large man with a loud and musical voice—praying the Lord's Prayer as he marched in the front of General Samuel McGowan's regiment. General Lee took off his hat and, with bowed head, listened reverently until the soldiers had passed and Mullally's voice could no longer be heard. Then, turning to his staff, Lee said, "That is one of the most impressive sights I have ever seen."

When Mr. Mullally resigned, Dr. Palmer was asked to supply the pulpit. Palmer had hurried back to Columbia in July 1863 to be with his daughter, who was ill. She died a few days after he came, and "they laid her down in the beautiful [Elmwood] cemetery to sleep until the trumpet's call."¹⁷⁶ Dr. Palmer gladly took up his old place at the church—during those times when he was not in the field serving as chaplain with the armies—until the end of the war. He skillfully and patiently combined his duties as chaplain, pastor, and seminary professor. As the war went on, however, there were few students, and the seminary became mainly a place for sick or wounded soldiers.

One would know nothing about the War Between the States by reading the minutes of the First Presbyterian session. While fear and hope filled the minds and hearts of the elders and their fellow citizens, the session carried on its church work without distraction by political developments. These Southern Presbyterians were true to the conviction of their greatest theologian, John Calvin, who had written, "Christ's spiritual kingdom and civil jurisdiction are things completely distinct."¹⁷⁷ The session minutes during the war years are filled with records of the reception of new members, work with black people, baptism of infants, and church discipline. The first hint of the war does not appear until December 4, 1864, when the moderator read a certificate from the Reverend Francis Mullally, former pastor and now chaplain in the Confederate Army, stating that he had examined Captain James S. McMahon "touching his experimental knowledge of Christ," and recommending that he be received into the communion of the church.

¹⁷⁵ Street, *Southern Presbyterians*, p. 72. It is estimated that over 100,000 Confederate soldiers were converted during the war years.

¹⁷⁶ Johnson, *Palmer*, p. 271.

¹⁷⁷ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* 4, 20, 1.

Despite the trials and suffering of the war, the church continued to grow in membership. On April 1, 1864, there were 365 communicants—of whom 105 were blacks. The amount of money raised for all church purposes had increased from \$5,609.32 in 1860 to \$6,077.55 in 1864. All Presbyterians, but especially the Negroes, were saddened by the death of George Ladson on July 4, 1864. Many black members had been added to the church during his brief ministry of four years. At his funeral, his black friends crowded the place of chief mourners and begged to be allowed to bear all the expenses of his burial and to erect a monument to the memory of “their beloved friend and pastor” in Elmwood Cemetery.¹⁷⁸

During the war years, only two elders of First Presbyterian Church remained in Columbia: Andrew Crawford and Henry Muller—both too old to join the army. Almost all the students at the seminary—as well as every student at South Carolina College—left the lecture rooms for the battlefields. All males from age sixteen to sixty—with few exceptions—joined the Confederate Army. Dr. Woodrow enlisted as a private soldier, but because of his knowledge of chemistry he was assigned to assist Professor Joseph LeConte in the laboratory at the old fair grounds in Columbia. There they made medicines for the soldiers by day; and at night, in the seminary chapel, Dr. Woodrow continued this work assisted by his wife.

Presbyterian women—for years active in good works through the Ladies’ Orphan Society and the Ladies’ Benevolent Association—helped manage the Wayside Hospital, to which hundreds of wounded soldiers were brought from distant battlefields. Two leaders in this work of mercy were Sarah Howe and Sarah Peck. It was said that Mrs. Peck, a gifted teacher, taught three generations of Columbians to read and write. Mrs. James Macfie, beloved as a mother by the seminary boys, went as a volunteer nurse to the South Carolina hospital in Richmond. She helped search the battlefields for the living and prayed with many dying soldiers.

Almost every Sabbath when the congregation gathered, there were new sorrows. Colonel William D. DeSaussure was killed at Gettysburg and buried in the churchyard. One February Sunday in 1865, just before he was about to enter the pulpit to preach, someone handed Dr. Palmer a telegram that announced the death of a church member, slain in battle the day before. He was the husband of Palmer’s niece. “When the Doctor looked down from the pulpit to a seat nearby, his eyes met the wistful brown eyes of the young wife, who would

¹⁷⁸ *Semi-Centennial of the Theological Seminary*, p. 307.

for an hour listen to what he as God's minister would say, and thenceforth mourn the husband of her youth."¹⁷⁹

The year 1865 began with a gigantic bazaar at the old State House—a breathtaking, three-day extravaganza for the benefit of Confederate hospitals. Because trade was paralyzed by the Federal blockade of the coast, Columbia's warehouses, basements, and out-buildings were bursting with cotton. The city's prewar population had swollen to more than 25,000—half white, half black. A prisoner-of-war camp inside the city limits held some 1,200 Federal officers. During January and early February, General Sherman's army marched from Savannah through South Carolina. The right wing feinted toward Charleston and the left wing toward Augusta, freezing the defenders around those cities. When both wings crossed the Edisto River, it became apparent that the whole army was going to Columbia. On Thursday, February 16, the Federals reached the west bank of the Congaree, overlooking the city. Retreating Confederates had burned all the bridges into the city, but Union Army engineers needed only twenty-four hours to build a pontoon bridge. Sherman's army of 62,000 soldiers poured into the city.

The next morning—February 17, 1865—General Wade Hampton (who had been ordered home from Virginia to help with his state's defenses) realized that resistance was hopeless and advised Columbia's mayor to surrender. With great sadness Hampton turned his horse eastward and rode slowly out of his beloved city and away from his beautiful home—soon to be torched by Northern soldiers. By sundown, fires had begun all over Columbia. While some Federal soldiers pitched in to try to put them out, others smashed fire engines and cut the hoses. A large fire near City Hall lit the sky; a block away flames shot up from the offices of the Southern Express Company. Buildings downwind of burning cotton bales ignited, starting fires everywhere. By midnight, a single fire was burning over an area nine blocks long by four blocks wide. Witnesses would later compare the drone of the wind-driven blaze to the noise of a waterfall.¹⁸⁰ Liquor

¹⁷⁹ Johnson, *Palmer*, p. 287.

¹⁸⁰ This description of the fire is from Theodore Rosengarten, "New Views on the Burning of Columbia," in *The University of South Caroliniana Society Fifty-seventh Annual Meeting, May 21, 1993*, p. 12. The most recent detailed analysis of the fire is found in a book by Marion Brunson Lucas, *Sherman and the Burning of Columbia* (College Station, Texas: Texas A & M University Press, 1976). See also Chapter one ("The Destruction of Columbia") in Charles Royster, *The Destructive War: William Tecumseh Sherman, Stonewall Jackson, and the Americans* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991).

flowed freely as the fire whipped out of control. One Union soldier wrote, "It is the biggest drunk and the greatest fire I ever heard of."¹⁸¹

A modern historian describes the scene: "No one knew which way was safe. The crowds in the streets—white women and children, a few older white men, and black people of all ages—milled in different directions, at cross purposes, trying to safeguard possessions. Hundreds of yelling, smoky-faced young soldiers were enjoying themselves. They snatched bundles and blankets, stole or broke valuables, made jokes, and celebrated their revenge on South Carolinians."¹⁸²

Known to the Union soldiers as "the eloquent and violent divine," Benjamin Morgan Palmer was not safe in the city.¹⁸³ Urged by his family and friends, he had sadly and reluctantly fled. At two o'clock in the morning, his wife and children were told to leave their house because a factory nearby was to be blown up. Carrying bundles of clothes and bedding, they made their way among burning buildings and trees to the house of Dr. and Mrs. Howe on Blanding Street. When fire was set to the Howe's home, they spent the rest of the night in the streets, huddled together around the few possessions they had saved. Dr. Palmer's home was burned; all his papers, books, and possessions were ashes.

Elder Andrew Crawford, whose house was across from the church on the northwest corner of Marion and Lady, had charge of the communion silver. As Sherman's army approached, he and his sister worked for several nights removing one of the flagstones that formed the floor of the basement, dug a hole for a box containing the goblets, replaced the stone, and moved a heavy piece of furniture over the spot. Mr. Crawford then took the bonds and securities of the theological seminary, of which he was treasurer, and quickly departed on the Charlotte train for Chester. There he turned over the documents to the Reverend John Douglas, who buried them at midnight in his cornfield. When Mr. Crawford's house was burned in the great fire,

¹⁸¹ *A Columbia Reader*, p. 61.

¹⁸² Royster, *The Destructive War*, p. 22.

¹⁸³ *A Columbia Reader*, p. 61. In the fall of 1866, Dr. Palmer preached in Dr. Henry Van Dyke's church in New York City. A veteran of the Union Army asked who the wonderful preacher was. When he learned that he was Benjamin Morgan Palmer of New Orleans, he exclaimed, "The archrebel of that name! He preaches like an archangel!" Johnson, *Palmer*, 295.

the church's communion silver—though blackened from the heat—was saved.¹⁸⁴

The seventy-year-old Agnes Law (widow of Elder William Law) lived near Arsenal Hill in a three-story brick house with a slate roof and large gardens. She, her sister, and her niece were there when Sherman took charge of the city. Four guards were assigned to the Law house, apparently well-behaved and sober men. Mrs. Law gave them supper; but when the city began to burn, the soldiers took lighted candles from the mantelpiece and set the curtains in the upstairs rooms ablaze. The women fled through the burning city to the Taylor house, where they spent the night. A few days later, Mrs. Law "was found in the corner of her garden under a miserable extemporised shelter." She was taken to the seminary, where she lived the short time before her death.¹⁸⁵

Mrs. Aaron Leland was sitting in her dining room with her husband—now an invalid—the night the city was burned.¹⁸⁶ A soldier burst into the house and, rushing to the sideboard, grabbed a glass decanter. Clara Leland attempted to take it from him. As they struggled, they were startled to hear the authoritative voice of a Union officer demanding, "How dare you attack a lady?" The soldier answered in his own defense, "But she cussed me, sir, she cussed me!" The officer arrested the soldier and placed a guard at the home. When asked what exactly it was that she had said to the soldier, Mrs. Leland, a cultured English lady, always replied, "I will not tell you. I did not know I knew such words."¹⁸⁷

By six o'clock in the morning—February 18—the wind had shifted and died, and the fire was at last contained. On the mild, sunny day, smoke still rose from the rubble; occasionally a wall or chimney crashed. A large part of the city consisted only of brick shells, blackened columns, and smoldering ruins, facing streets lined with bare, blistered trees.¹⁸⁸ Four hundred buildings had burned to the ground,

¹⁸⁴ When individual communion sets replaced the old goblets during Dr. Andrew Blackwood's pastorate, General Washington A. Clark, senior elder at First Presbyterian and president of the Carolina National Bank, placed them in the vault of the bank. For years after Clark's death, no one knew where the goblets were. The two bread baskets were still in use in the 1920s.

¹⁸⁵ George Howe wrote, "She will be long remembered. In her hospitable mansion many ministers of the gospel found a temporary home in days past." *Semi-Centennial of the Theological Seminary*, p. 145.

¹⁸⁶ After the death of his first wife, Dr. Leland married Clara Blight, a native of England, in 1859. He was incapacitated by a stroke in October 1863.

¹⁸⁷ Gist, *Presbyterian Women*, p. 301.

¹⁸⁸ See Royster, *The Destructive War*, p. 29.

including the old State House. "The ancient homesteads where have gathered sacred associations, the heritages of many generations are swept away," eloquently wrote one of Sherman's aides-de-camp.¹⁸⁹ Washington Street Methodist and Ebenezer Lutheran churches were destroyed in the fire. First Baptist Church escaped, as did First Presbyterian Church, although the Presbyterian Sunday school building on Sumter Street was burned.¹⁹⁰ The communion plate was taken from Trinity Episcopal Church, and its rectory and Sunday school building were burned.

As Dr. Palmer returned and took up his ministry to the broken-hearted city, people crowded First Presbyterian Church to hear his sermons. The first meeting of the session after the destruction of Columbia was held on March 30, 1865. It began as usual with prayer; then, according to the minutes, "Mr. Thaddeus Street Burdell was now examined touching his faith in Christ, and received into the Communion of the Church." When the subject of choosing delegates to the spring meeting of presbytery was discussed, the minutes reported that no one was appointed "on account of the destruction by the enemy of the rail roads leading from Columbia." Presbytery's "narrative" (or annual report) for 1865 stated that the members of the Presbyterian church in Columbia bore their "terrible afflictions with patience, fortitude and uncomplaining submission. God has not forsaken them to despair nor given them up to rebellion in the midst of their great distress."¹⁹¹

The war took a terrible toll on South Carolina. Charleston Presbytery covered a desolated territory, with a scattered and impoverished membership and a disorganized and weary ministry. Many Columbians were homeless and without protection, wandering about the streets. A number of families quartered for days in the Presbyterian graveyard. There was little food; coffee was made from okra seeds, cottonseed, or sweet potatoes—cut up, dried, and parched. Often there was neither sugar nor milk. But the people shared with each other, and the widows and orphans were cared for. One woman said, "I never doubt God takes care of me. On one occasion when I lacked,

¹⁸⁹ *A Columbia Reader*, p. 63.

¹⁹⁰ According to local lore, Sherman's soldiers were determined to destroy the Baptist church because it was the first site of the "rebel convention." They were prevented from doing so, however, by the loyalty of the Negro sexton, who deliberately misled them by pointing to the old Baptist frame building on the corner. Other accounts state that the sexton sent the troops to Washington Street Methodist Church, which was soon in flames! See Huff, *Tried by Fire*, pp. 39, 40.

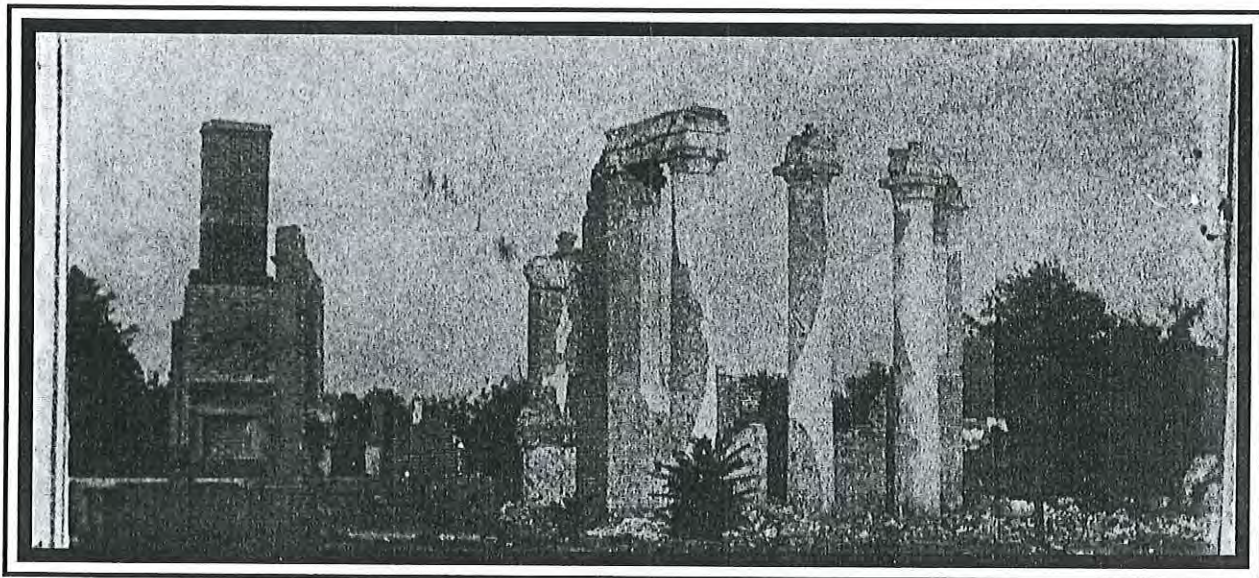
¹⁹¹ Jones and Mills, *History*, p. 106.

I earnestly prayed; and upon going into a vacant room, I found food: coffee, sugar, flour. An angel brought it." Someone hearing this story responded, "Yes and old Mrs. Howe was the angel!"¹⁹²

After a trek through the upper part of the state, Julian Selby and some fellow newspapermen found enough printing supplies and equipment to start *The Columbia Phoenix*; "from the ashes of the city," the first issue appeared on March 21, 1865. Columbia began to rebuild its homes, schools, and churches—and its hopes. Believing firmly in the sovereignty and providence of God, the people of First Presbyterian Church often prayed words similar to those of the Synod of North Carolina, that God would "overrule all these calamities for His own glory."¹⁹³

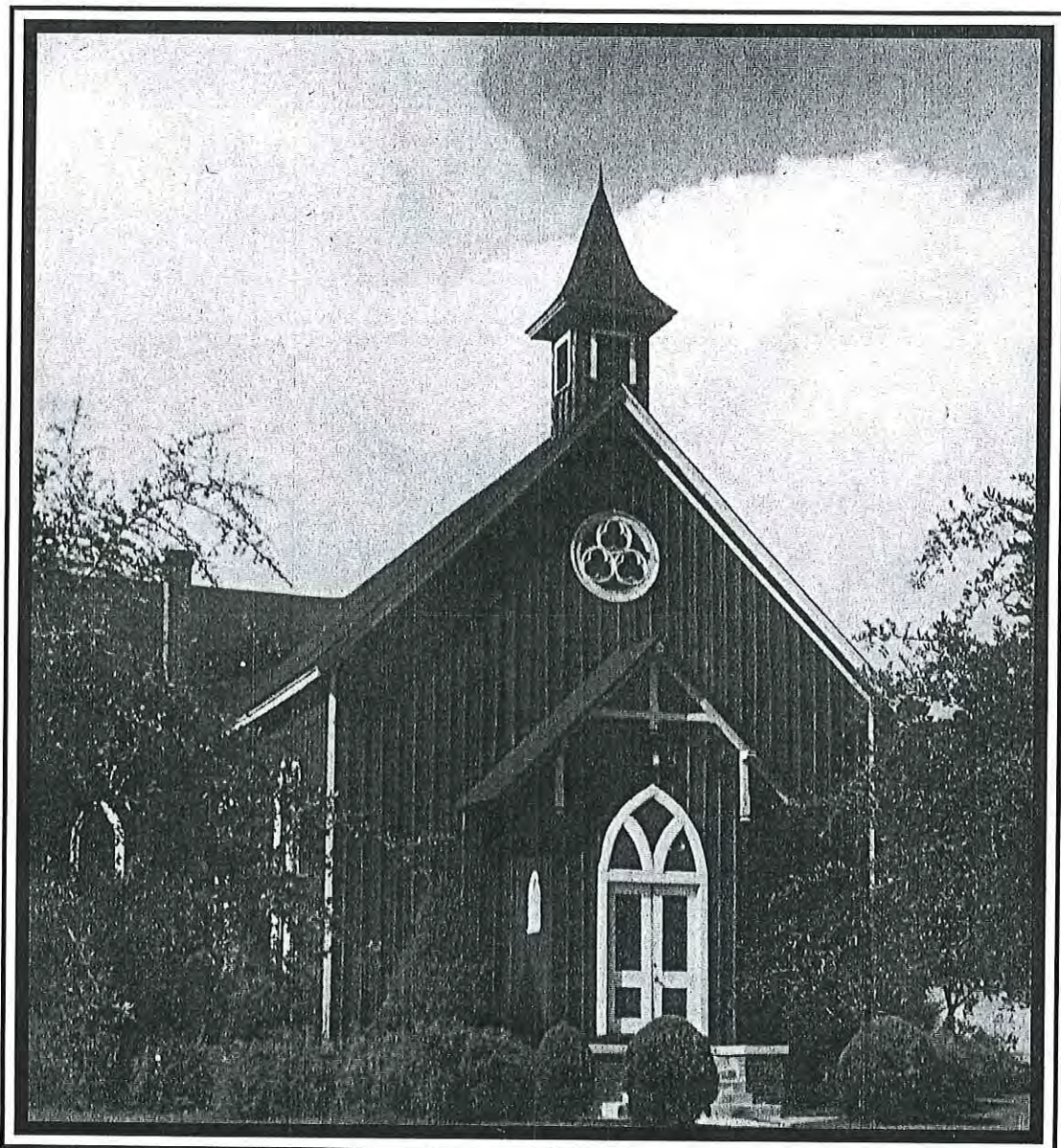
¹⁹² Mary P. Irvine and Alice L. Eastwood, *Pioneer Women of the Presbyterian Church U. S.*, p. 295.

¹⁹³ Street, *The Story of Southern Presbyterians*, p. 67.



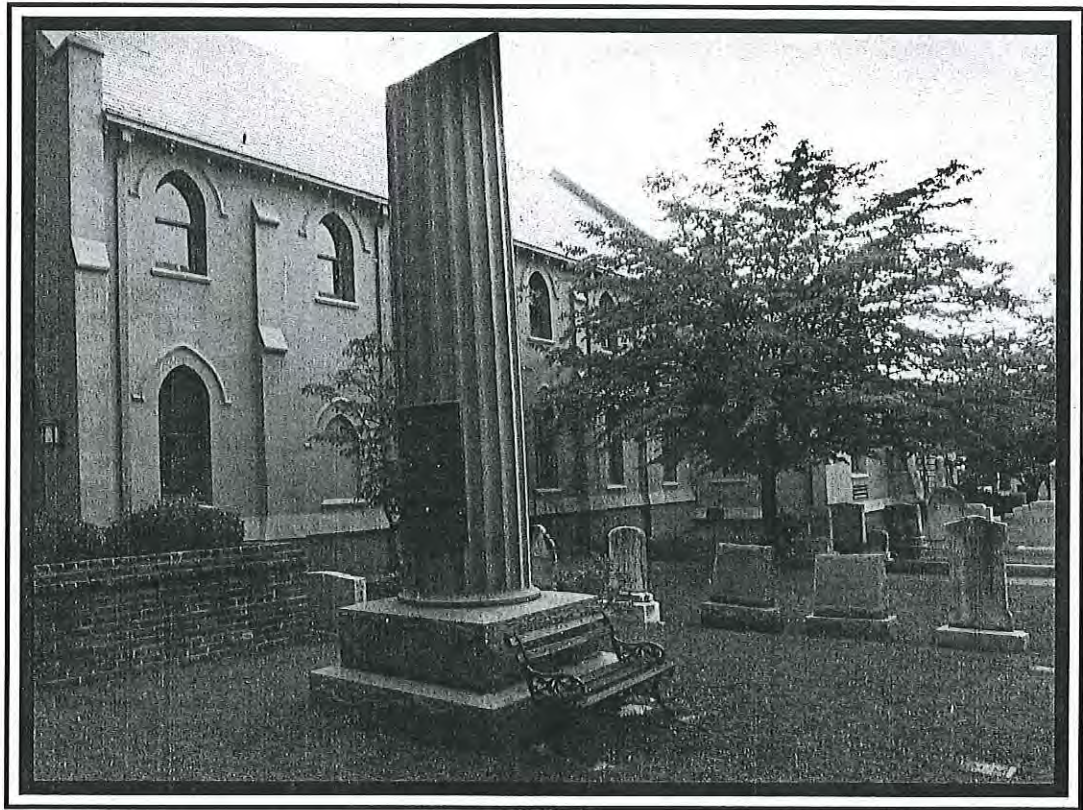
—(Courtesy of South Caroliniana Library)

The ruins of the church's first Lecture Room, in the 1700 block of Sumter Street, were photographed after it burned in the great conflagration of 1865.

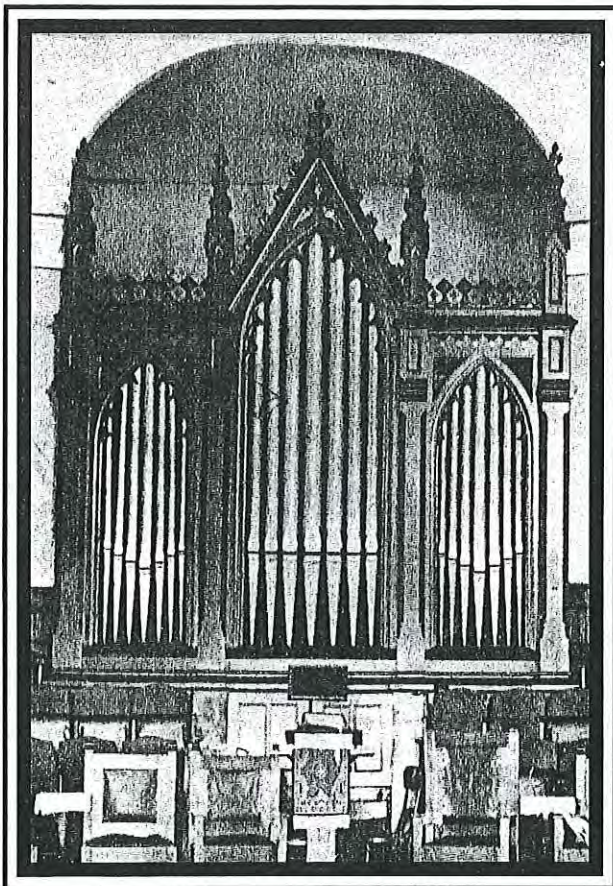


—(Courtesy of Eau Claire Presbyterian Church)

A new Lecture Room was built in 1873 behind the church on Lady Street. It was given to Eau Claire Presbyterian Church and moved there in 1912.



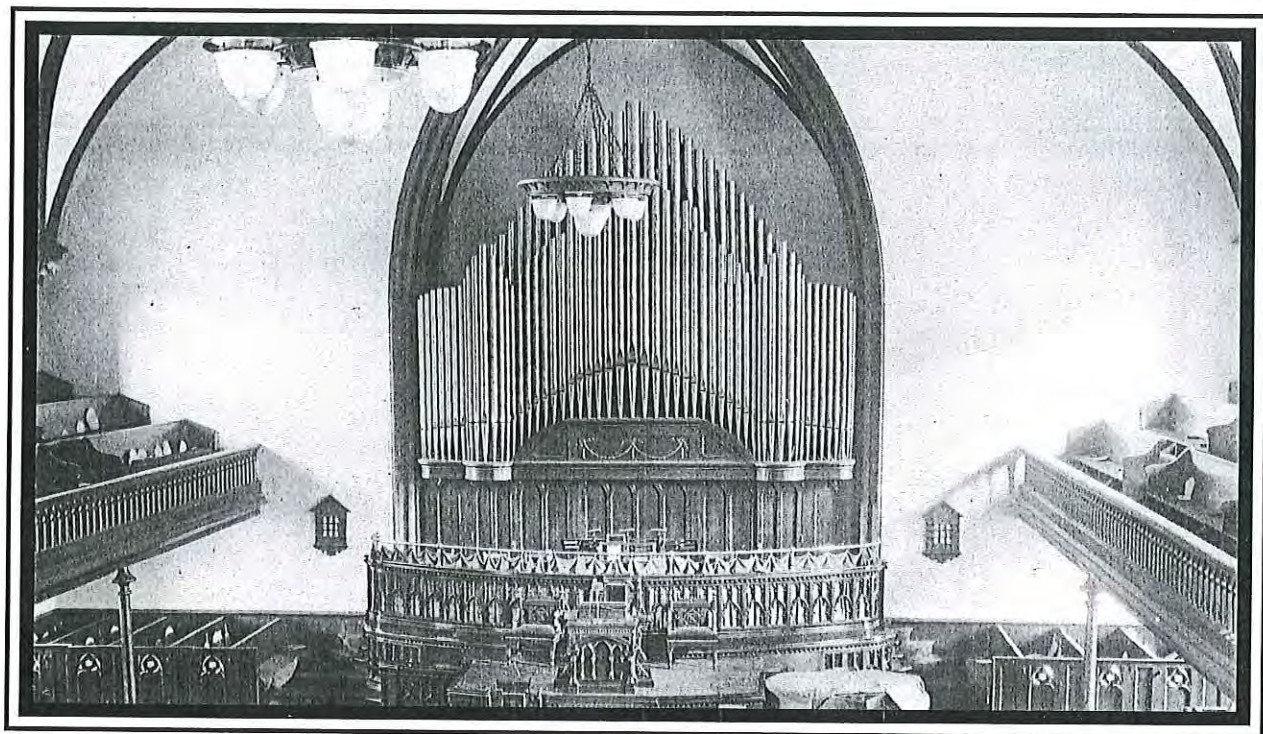
This broken column, which was retrieved from the State House grounds, was erected in the churchyard in 1920 as a memorial to the eighty-six church members who served in the Confederate Army. Twenty-four of these men lost their lives.



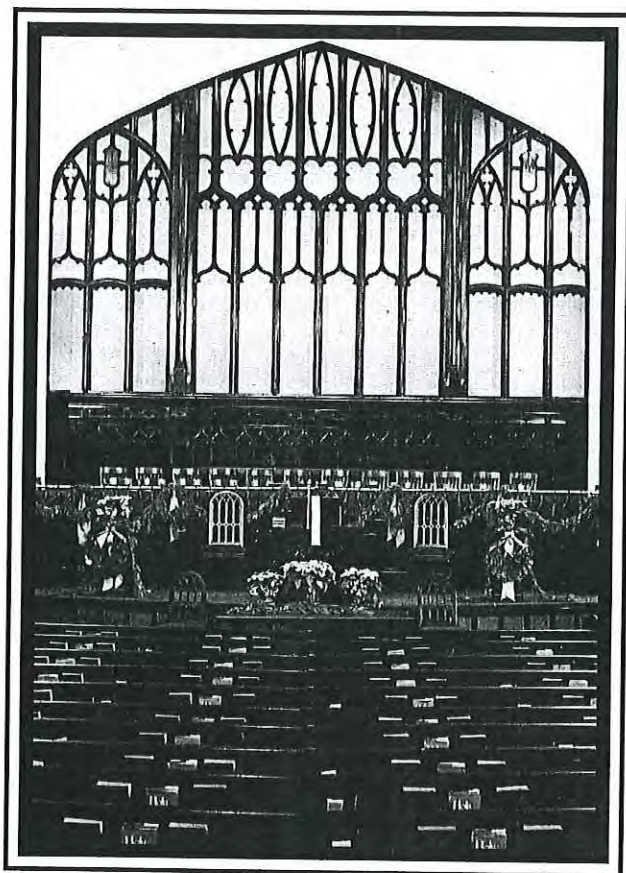
1866



1888



1922

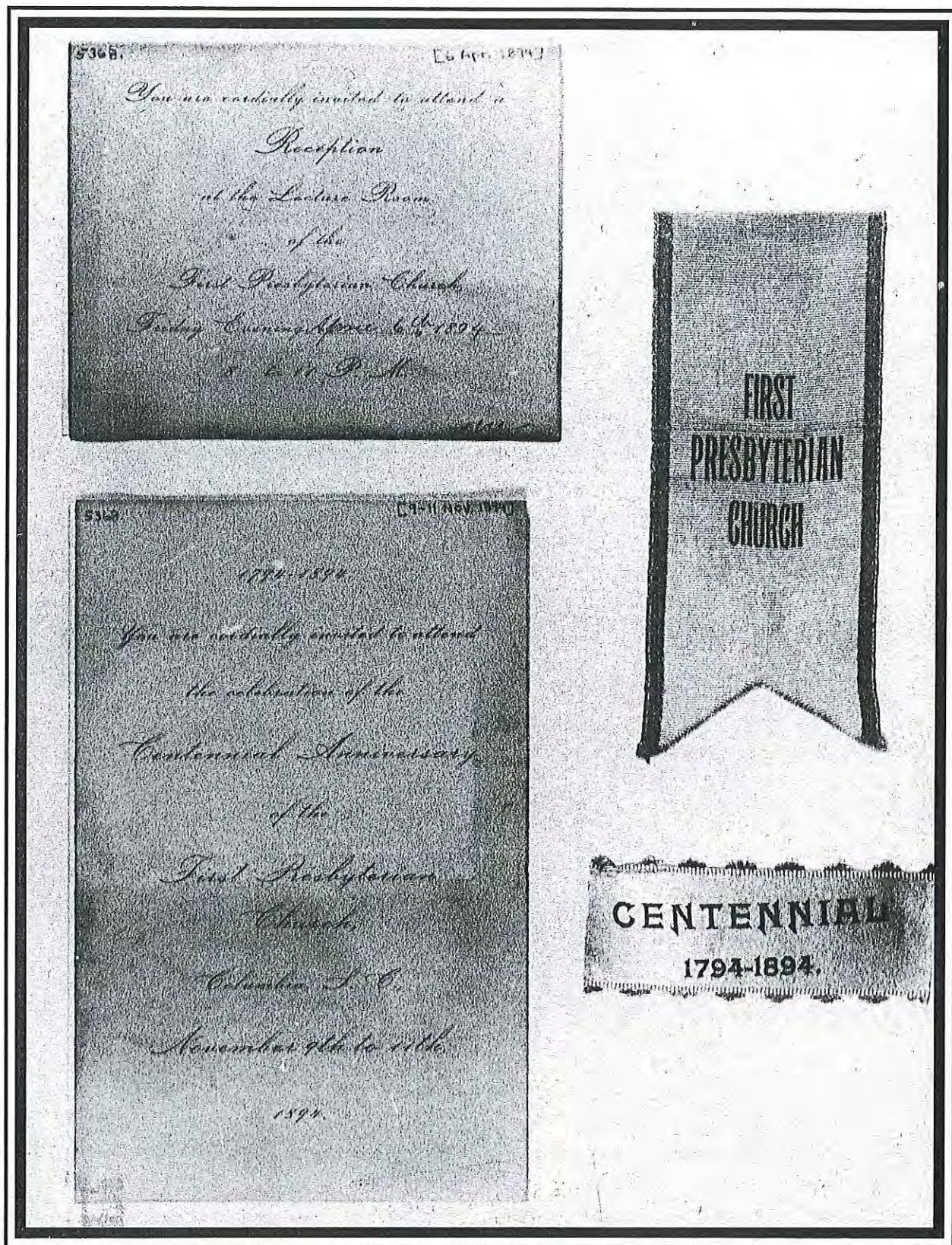


1925



1983

The first pipe organ, opposite left, was installed in 1866 in the choir loft in the rear balcony. The second one, opposite right, was installed in 1888 in the new choir loft at the front of the sanctuary. It was replaced in 1922 by a Pilcher organ, top, which was enlarged in 1925 when decorative pipes were replaced by a grill, lower left. A Casavant organ installed in 1980 was destroyed by fire in 1982 and was replaced by the present organ, lower right.



The First Presbyterian Church celebrated its Centennial in 1894. The church was organized in 1794, but because certain Presbytery requirements for church government were not completed, ordination of the first pastor was postponed until June 4, 1795.

CHAPTER 10



MANY COLORED RAINBOWS

The spring of 1865 was a time of disaster for the South. Her capital fell, her armies surrendered, and her land was plundered. The mood of Congress was retaliatory, and nearly all white Southerners were disenfranchised. The region was divided into military districts and subjected to martial law; the "Reconstruction Era" had begun. Thomas Cary Johnson, in his biography of Benjamin Morgan Palmer, called these years "the period of military rule and re-destruction."¹⁹⁴ Government, characterized largely by corruption and misrule, caused great apprehension and confusion. Of greater immediate concern, however, was the need to survive. The war's destruction and several years of poor harvests forced many Columbians of both races to think about moving elsewhere. In October 1866 half of all Richland County residents, many of whom were black, were destitute. At the end of this tragic year, the generosity of many former masters saved scores of lives of the helpless freedmen and their families.

No meeting of the Southern Presbyterian General Assembly could be held in May because of the "extremely agitated state of the country."¹⁹⁵ It was not until December, after the war was over and the Confederacy dissolved, that the assembly convened in Macon, Georgia. Dr. George Howe was elected moderator and presided with grace and

¹⁹⁴ Johnson, *Palmer*, p. 370.

¹⁹⁵ Street, *Southern Presbyterians*, p. 75.

dignity. There was a deep conviction that God had raised up the Southern church for a special witness to the "crown rights of the Redeemer." The Macon assembly adopted a new name—The Presbyterian Church in the United States—and made plans for its foreign mission work. "We can scarcely set up a claim to be regarded as a true branch of the Church of Christ, or take an honorable place in the sisterhood of evangelical churches," Dr. Leighton Wilson told the commissioners, "unless we keep this object constantly and distinctly before our minds."¹⁹⁶ The next year a mission to China was approved, and the first missionary sailed in 1867. Within a few years, Southern Presbyterians were serving in Italy, Colombia, Brazil, Mexico, Greece, and Japan. Southern New School Presbyterians had joined their Old School brethren before the war was over. Union with the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church was declined by that denomination, but its Alabama and Kentucky presbyteries joined the PCUS by 1869.

Columbians accepted defeat with dignity and courage, and the city began to put its life back together. People rebuilt their homes and businesses and cleaned up the debris from their streets. Soldiers returned, but many homes were permanently saddened with the loss of a father, a brother, or a son. Colonel Fitz William McMaster came back in August 1865 after spending four months in prison at Fort Delaware. He had been wounded at Sharpsburg in September 1862; and upon the death of Colonel Means in the Second Battle of Manassas, he had succeeded to the command of the Seventeenth South Carolina Regiment.

On December 19, 1865, the legislature called for the reopening of South Carolina College as the University of South Carolina—modeled on the plan of the University of Virginia. Columbia Seminary had already resumed its classes in September. Its able faculty—George Howe, John B. Adger, and James Woodrow—was soon strengthened by the coming of William S. Plumer, in 1867, as professor of theology, and Joseph R. Wilson, in 1870, as professor of pastoral theology and preaching. Dr. Plumer, a native of Beaver County, Pennsylvania, studied at Washington College in Lexington, Virginia, and at Princeton Seminary. He became an Old School Presbyterian leader and was elected moderator at the crucial assembly of 1838. That same year he received five honorary doctor of divinity degrees (and in 1857 the doctor of laws from the University of Mississippi).

¹⁹⁶ Street, *Southern Presbyterians*, p. 82.

Dr. Plumer had served churches in the South from 1827 to 1854, when he was called to Western Theological Seminary in Pittsburgh as professor of theology. The "nearest approach to a pacifist the [Presbyterian] church produced during the [Civil] war," Dr. Plumer was accused of disloyalty to the Union, and his connection with Western Seminary was terminated in 1862.¹⁹⁷ He then preached in churches in Pennsylvania until he came to Columbia. With his majestic stature, white hair, and long, snowy beard, he was soon a familiar and impressive figure in Columbia. Dr. Wilson, also originally from the North, came to the seminary from his pastorate in Augusta, Georgia. Students who had been Confederate soldiers moved into the seminary halls, attended lectures by day, and listened at night, as their predecessors had, to the murmur of the wind in the tall pines. Dr. Adger and Dr. Woodrow worked in the chapel—originally the carriage house of the mansion that was the seminary's main building—to put into final shape the Book of Church Order for the Presbyterian Church in the United States.¹⁹⁸

Columbia's churches carried on valiantly despite destruction and poverty. Its sanctuary and most of its "provision stores" destroyed, Ebenezer Lutheran Church met in its Sunday school room until a new church could be built in 1870. The Ebenezer choir was given psalm books by First Presbyterian Church, who also lent the Lutherans communion vessels. The congregation of Washington Street Methodist Church salvaged bricks from the ruins of its church and, using unlimed red mud for mortar, built a chapel that served them for ten years. First Presbyterian Church's Temporal Committee collected provisions and articles of clothing to distribute to the needy.

Many friends attempted to persuade Dr. Palmer to continue as pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Columbia, but he was constrained to return to his people in New Orleans—as he wrote—to "gather up the fragments of our scattered congregation, and to share with them

¹⁹⁷ Louis C. LaMotte, *Colored Light: The Story of the Influence of Columbia Theological Seminary 1928-1936* (Richmond, Virginia: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1937), p. 143.

¹⁹⁸ William Childs Robinson, Columbia native and later professor at the seminary, wrote in his history of Columbia Seminary: "Perhaps the license will be allowed, of recalling, in this connection, that the Book of Church Order for a Church which glories to acclaim Him *alone* as King who was cradled in a manger, was composed in a house built for a carriage-stable." William Childs Robinson, *Columbia Theological Seminary and the Southern Presbyterian Church, 1831-1931* (Decatur, Georgia, c. 1931), p. 94.

the poverty to which we will be reduced together."¹⁹⁹ In February 1865 he went back to New Orleans. For the next thirty-seven years he preached the gospel and served as the pastor not only of the Presbyterian church but—more and more—of the whole city.

Dr. Howe again became the stated supply pastor of First Presbyterian during 1865 and the first half of 1866. Gentle and humble, Howe—a large man who walked with a crutch—moved among the people with words of comfort and preached with love and power. On May 13, a grateful congregation expressed its appreciation to him and reviewed its own trials of the past year in a resolution adopted at a congregational meeting:

Since the destruction of Columbia by Gen. Sherman's forces in Feb., 1865, the pulpit of this church has been supplied by the Rev. Dr. Howe. Stricken as we were by the remorseless hand of the enemy, our city burnt, our means of support destroyed, our families scattered, many of us without a shelter of our own, and living under the hospitable roof of some kind friend, the struggle for existence was so great, that any effort on the part of the congregation to obtain a pastor, deprived as we were of resources to supply his wants, would have been futile.

During the whole of this period, with saddened feelings at the termination of the struggle which had elicited the hearty prayers and most earnest aspiration of our people, together with the crushing weight of our private misfortunes, when the consolations of religion were so much needed; when we needed some faithful man of God to impress upon us the vanity of human affairs, and to entreat us to build our hopes of happiness on the only safe foundation—the principles of a true and vital religion—and to point us to the Lamb of God, who alone can take away the sorrows as well as the sins of the world; Dr. Howe, with a sympathetic heart, and ample learning, Sabbath after Sabbath broke to us the bread of life. For more than a year he has continued to serve us uncomplainingly until the present time, when the congregation has been enabled to relieve him, so as to allow him to devote his energies more uninterruptedly in his appointed vocation as Professor of the Theological Seminary.

¹⁹⁹ Johnson, *Palmer*, p. 279.

While we have suffered most grievously by the war which has slain many of our people and desolated our beautiful city, as a congregation we must be devotedly thankful to God that we have been in reach of the droppings of the sanctuary, and should express our obligation to the eminent minister of the Gospel who has served us so acceptably.

Therefore, be it resolved, that the congregation of the First Presbyterian Church of Columbia do hereby return to the Rev. George Howe, D.D., their profound acknowledgment of his services in preaching to them since the burning of Columbia—a service he had to perform under great difficulties, but which we believe has redounded much to the benefit of this church and to the interests of true religion; and that in severing their connection with him as stated supply, they invoke God's choicest blessings upon him, his family, and the institution of which he has been an ornament for so many years.

Dr. and Mrs. Howe were greatly loved by all Columbians and by Presbyterians throughout the South. At their home on Blanding Street, they had taken in many friends and strangers; it was said that they had entertained and housed every missionary of the Southern Presbyterian Church!²⁰⁰



Beginning in May 1866, the Reverend William E. Boggs, pastor of the Presbyterian church in Winnsboro, filled the pulpit of First Church; in October, he became the pastor at a salary of \$1,500 a year. In order to raise this amount, pew rents were increased and some 5,000 bricks from the ruins of the Sumter Street Lecture Room were sold for \$65.00.

William Boggs was born on May 12, 1838, at Ahmadnagar, India, where his parents were serving as Presbyterian missionaries. He graduated from South Carolina College in 1859 and entered Columbia Seminary, attending First Church where he sat spellbound under the preaching of James Henley Thornwell. In 1861 Boggs joined the troops defending the coast of South Carolina after the fall of Fort Sumter. Becoming chaplain of the Sixth South Carolina Regiment in 1862, he continued until General Lee's surrender at Appomattox on

²⁰⁰ Mittie Bullock, mother of Theodore Roosevelt, was a distant relative and frequent visitor.

April 9, 1865. Boggs was impressed that Lee's eyes flashed as he rode into battle in the same way as did James Henley Thornwell's when he debated and preached!

Dr. Boggs carried on the great tradition of preaching at First Presbyterian Church. A seminarian who worshiped there for three years later described his impressions:

How almost adoringly the village boy had looked up to the young and gifted Wm. E. Boggs as he stood in that marble pulpit! It seemed to me that I would just *die* if I had to stand in that elegant old church and that grand pulpit and try to preach! I have since heard Palmer, Girardeau, Hoge, John Hall, and a host of others; but in those three years I got as much from the interesting and eloquent expository sermons of Wm. E. Boggs as from any Professor in the Seminary. He taught me "how to do it" by—*doing it*.²⁰¹



Session minutes reflected some of the difficulties facing the members of the church during these years. But they did not lose hope; bravely and with faith in God they faced the future. In January 1866 it was reported that the children of John and Anne E. Davis were baptized at home "on account of the difficulty of their being brought to the church under the present deranged condition of the country." In 1866 First Presbyterian Church purchased its first organ from Grace Episcopal Church in Charleston for \$1,400. The organ had been brought to Columbia for protection during the war. It escaped damage when Columbia was burned and was installed in "the choir loft over the front door" (rear balcony) of the church.²⁰² Its music cheered the little congregation as they gratefully worshiped God in their beautiful building—thankfully spared the destruction that marred so much of the city. On October 9, 1867, the membership of the church was approximately 150. There were 70 in the white Sunday school and 235 in the colored Sunday school.

The church faced a struggle to survive financially. During the summer months of 1868, collections were taken on Sunday evenings to

²⁰¹ Woodrow, *James Woodrow*, p. 104.

²⁰² No record of the organists who played that instrument for the next twenty-two years has been found. Nor is the make known. However, since Henry Erben of New York City had built seventeen organs in Charleston churches by 1845, it is likely that the organ from Grace Episcopal was also an Erben organ. Old photographs of the organ show remarkable resemblance to the Erben organ case in the French Huguenot Church in Charleston.

pay for the use of the gas lights; and in September the evening service was changed to afternoon to save both light and heat. The organist was not paid for a whole year. The church could not afford to purchase new hymn books. A graduated scale of pew rents was adopted to produce a \$3,000-income, although the responsible committee was careful to point out that "the valuations made in a very few instances only are more than have heretofore been customary in this church, and at less rates than obtain in the other churches of our city, and very much less than are found in the churches of our denomination elsewhere." The committee went on to state that it did not observe "any particular discouraging feature" in the financial matters of the church—"especially so, if the pew holders will but recognize in this matter the same interest, the same attention, and the same promptitude that they give to their private matters." During 1868 and 1869, several "inmates of the poor house" joined the church—the first reference to such people in the session minutes. Though impoverished themselves, the members of First Presbyterian attempted to help others. On November 25, 1866, they sent a collection to support a missionary to the destitute churches on the South Carolina coast. Money was received to help widows and orphans of deceased ministers. In 1871 First Church was giving half of each Sunday's offering to the domestic mission fund of presbytery to help its struggling churches.



Charleston Presbytery attempted to carry on its work, but in April 1867 it met with only five ministers and not a single ruling elder. Several more ministers arrived the second day, and one elder. But there were hopeful signs—the gathering of congregations, revival in several churches, and a "cheering number" of "earnest and pious" students in the seminary. The presbytery took up again its efforts among the African Americans.

Blacks—no longer slaves after Emancipation Day (January 1, 1863)—continued to be part of the First Presbyterian Church family.²⁰³ The session minutes of April 6, 1867, state that "Annie Holmes (colored)" had been visited regularly for months and found "penitent and believing." On her sickbed she was examined by the pastor and admitted to the communion of the church by vote of session. A few days later she died.

²⁰³ Prior to Emancipation, session records use *servant* (for slave) and *freeman* (for free black); after January 1863 *freedman*, *colored*, *person of color*, and (for the first time in 1869) *black* were used to designate African Americans.

Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in 1866 and met in a former sword factory on Wayne Street, then in a blacksmith's shop on Sumter Street.²⁰⁴ In 1868, Ladson Memorial Chapel was built, for black Presbyterians, on the Sumter Street property next to the lot upon which the First Presbyterian Church Sunday school building had stood until destroyed in the burning of Columbia in 1865.²⁰⁵ The church was served by a white minister and managed by him and "certain colored persons . . . annually nominated by vote of the colored members." The final authority rested with the session of First Presbyterian Church until Ladson was organized as a separate church in October 1874. Some blacks joined the new church, but others preferred to keep their membership at First Presbyterian.²⁰⁶ Southern Presbyterians soon lost their ministry among the Negroes, however, as the former slaves moved either to the new Northern Presbyterian churches that had been established in the South or to other black churches.



On June 13, 1869, W. J. Duffie and Eben Stenhouse were elected elders. The session met in the homes or shops of its members, at the chapel of the seminary, and occasionally at Ladson Church. The elders examined persons for membership, sometimes postponing action in order to give someone "further time to test his [or her] experience." Reception of new members was less rigorous than in the earlier period, but there was still the note of care and spiritual concern in the minutes. The session watched over the church services—preparing "a notice of admonition" for the pastor to read from the pulpit, correcting disorderly conduct of some persons at the Sunday evening services, and requesting that the organist shorten his preludes! Remaining displeased with the organist's performance, the session, a few months later, sent the clerk to ask him "to discontinue the voluntaries before service." Just after the war there were almost no discipline cases. Nothing of this nature appears in the minutes

²⁰⁴ The present Romanesque Revival brick structure on Sumter Street was designed by John Anderson Lankford, one of the first registered black architects in the United States. While it was being constructed, the congregation met at First Presbyterian Church.

²⁰⁵ This property had been given to First Presbyterian Church in 1831 by Mr. Caleb Barnes and Mrs. Mary Quigley. The lot where the Sunday school building had stood (given to the church by Abram Blanding in 1828) continued in the possession of First Presbyterian Church until 1937, when it was sold to the Davis Hotel for \$2,500.

²⁰⁶ Ladson Chapel was burned in 1892, and the present church was built on the site in 1896. The title to the property was transferred to the Ladson trustees in 1895.

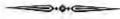
until February 28, 1870—when the old problem of “intoxication” again faced the session.



By 1870 Columbia had begun to recover from its disastrous fire. A Scottish visitor reported:

Columbia is a city of such magnificent distances that a stranger is never quite sure when he is in it or out of it. . . . The town is being built up new by degrees, and many fine brick houses have been erected since the close of the war. But what magnificent outlines of streets, sweeping spaci-ously for miles over the heights and hollows of that rich landscape, having rows of fine old trees on either side, and, intersected by other wooded avenues equally broad and long, opening up in all directions the most delightful vis-
tas!²⁰⁷

The much-loved Robert E. Lee, now frail in health, stopped in Columbia on his way to Florida late in March of 1870. “Stores were closed for the occasion and, despite rain, hundreds flocked to the Charlotte depot where a grizzled veteran, tears in his eyes, yelled, ‘General, we were overpowered, not whipped!’ Whereupon the throng took up the cry—‘overpowered, not whipped!’”²⁰⁸



In December 1870 Dr. Boggs received a call from the Second Presbyterian Church of Memphis, Tennessee. To encourage him to stay in Columbia, First Church raised his salary to \$2,500 and the Presbytery of Charleston refused to dissolve his relationship with his congregation; but Boggs “concluded it was his duty to accept the call.” The congregation regretfully concurred; and on January 7, 1871, he preached his farewell sermons—in the morning at the church, in the afternoon to the Sunday school, and at night to the people of Ladson.²⁰⁹ Joseph R. Wilson, now a professor at Columbia Seminary and

²⁰⁷ *A Columbia Reader*, pp. 77, 78.

²⁰⁸ Moore, *Columbia*, p. 261.

²⁰⁹ Boggs served the Memphis Church until 1879, when his wife’s health—shattered by an attack of yellow fever—required a change of climate. He was called to Central Church in Atlanta. From 1882 to 1885 he was back in Columbia as professor of ecclesiastical history and church government at Columbia Seminary. In 1885 he again became pastor of Second Presbyterian in Memphis. He served for one year (1889) as chancellor of the University of Georgia and in 1900 was called to the First Presbyterian Church of Jacksonville, Florida. Boggs was elected moderator of the General Assem-

an eloquent preacher, was asked to serve as stated supply. Dr. Wilson's colleague at the seminary, William S. Plumer, was elected moderator of the Southern Presbyterian General Assembly of 1871.

The summer of 1871 was so hot that the session discontinued the evening service. Preaching and worship services, baptisms, and celebrations of the Lord's Supper continued regularly, however—both at First Presbyterian and at Ladson. Dr. Wilson was assisted by William S. Plumer and other guest ministers. Sunday school enrollment averaged five hundred. Three of the elders and a number of other members taught the children the Scriptures, the Confession of Faith, and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms.

On October 1, 1871, the church joyfully welcomed Dr. Palmer back to preach both morning and evening. It was Communion Sunday. "Doubtless to many of God's children," the session minutes reported, "it was a feast of fat things." The next summer—on June 30, 1872—Dr. Palmer was again in Columbia. He preached in the morning and, in the evening, baptized Benjamin Palmer McMaster, infant child of Colonel and Mrs. F. W. McMaster.

First Church continued to face financial difficulties. In 1867 its income amounted to only \$1,167.63 (down from \$6,077.55 in 1864); by 1872 it was \$3,816.72. But in 1877, the church was in the unusual position of not being able to contribute anything to Charleston Presbytery for home missions—"being unable for some time past to meet its regular obligations." Still it did what it could locally. By 1872 members were conducting a mission chapel at Barhamville, built on a lot deeded to the church by Mrs. Benjamin Harrison in 1870.

At the corporation meeting in May 1872, the members passed a resolution asking that the session "take into consideration the propriety of the appointment of Deacons in this congregation to complete the organization of this Church on the model contained in the Scriptures and exhibited in the standards of the Presbyterian Church." Throughout its history, First Church had operated with a session and a Temporal Committee but no deacons. In 1873 the session met to consider "the repeated requests" of the congregation for deacons. Dr. Howe, who served as moderator in the absence of Dr. Wilson, read various passages of Scripture "which appear to warrant the office in the Christian Church and cited the opinions of the early fathers bearing upon the duties of the deacon." The session then

bly—the fifth pastor of First Presbyterian Church to be so honored. The others are James H. Thornwell, Benjamin M. Palmer, George Howe, and John H. Bryson. Seminary professor Charles R. Hemphill, who served as stated supply in 1883, was also moderator of the assembly.

nominated several men; and in January 1874 William Sloane, W. A. Clark, George Howe, Jr., and A. G. Brenizer were elected as deacons. The corporation continued to exist (for strictly-corporation matters); but from now on the business of the church was conducted by the session and the deacons in proper Presbyterian fashion.

Dr. Wilson continued to fill the pulpit, while the session—urged on by the congregation—took steps to call a pastor. On October 11, 1872, Wilson resigned, stating that he feared he was “in the way” of the church’s securing a regular pastor. The session accepted his resignation—with praise for his earnest preaching and “kindly and genial deportment” that had endeared him to the congregation—and asked him to continue to fill the pulpit while they took steps to call a pastor. Several ministers declined calls to First Presbyterian. Dr. Wilson resigned again in July 1873 “to relieve the Session of all embarrassment,” but apparently he resented the loss of his pulpit and its income. When Wilson and John Adger tried to institute compulsory Sunday morning chapel services at the seminary—in obvious conflict with the services at First Presbyterian Church—a battle erupted at the seminary that divided students, faculty, and trustees, and reached the General Assembly. For three days the 1874 assembly debated the issue, before finally voting, sixty to fifty-three, to recommend that attendance at the seminary worship service be made voluntary. Dr. Wilson immediately resigned from the seminary faculty and soon accepted a call to the First Presbyterian Church of Wilmington, North Carolina.

During their almost four years in Columbia, the Wilsons lived first in a house at Pickens and Blanding streets and then built a fine house on Plain (Hampton) Street, which they planned to make their permanent home. Mrs. Wilson planted tea olives, magnolias, and dogwood trees in the garden. The city, the seminary, and the church had pleased Dr. Wilson; and the family enjoyed living in Columbia. Years later Woodrow, or Tommy as he was called in his youth, remembered “[his] own very happy boyhood in Columbia.”²¹⁰ He attended classes in Charles H. Barnwell’s “select school for boys,” which opened in the fall of 1870 across the street from the Wilson’s first home. There were three students—“Thomas W. Wilson, James H. Baldwin, and one of the McMaster boys.” Young Wilson was “extremely dignified” and had “a queer way of going off by himself,” his instructor noted.²¹¹ He

²¹⁰ Mulder, *Woodrow Wilson*, p. 37.

²¹¹ Albert Davis, “Sojourn of a Future President in Columbia,” *Sandlapper*, January 1970, p. 29.

became an avid reader and was entrusted with the key to the seminary library. During vacation, Tommy Wilson and his friends spent the hot days swimming in the Congaree Canal and visiting Columbia's ice cream shops. Tommy was converted as a seventeen-year-old boy in the seminary chapel—under the preaching of a seminary student—and joined First Presbyterian Church. The session minutes stated that Thomas Woodrow Wilson and two other boys—"after a free conversation during which they severally exhibited evidences of a work of grace begun in their hearts"—were unanimously admitted into the membership of the church.²¹² In the fall of 1873 Thomas Woodrow left home to begin his freshman year at Davidson College.

Dr. James F. Latimer and Dr. Edward M. Green supplied the First Presbyterian pulpit until the Reverend John H. Bryson of Petersburg, Virginia, accepted a call. He preached in the church for the first time as pastor on November 9, 1873. In January 1874 he was installed, with Dr. John Lafayette Girardeau, pastor of Charleston's Zion Presbyterian Church, preaching the sermon and giving the charge to the minister, and Dr. George Howe charging the congregation. On April 5, 1874, there were 35 additions to the church, but the total membership was just 232. Only 154 children were now in Sunday school. The regular Thursday night prayer meeting was held at Ladson Chapel during the winter and in the church building during the warmer months. The session met at Ladson Chapel or at the stores of Mr. Stenhouse or Mr. Duffie; it commonly went to homes now to examine people for membership. There were a few discipline cases, mostly for intoxication.



On a sultry Saturday, May 1, 1875, a terrific rainstorm with wind and hail passed over Columbia at five o'clock in the evening. The Columbia correspondent of the *Charleston News and Courier* reported:

The most serious damage was done to the Presbyterian Church. Its fine steeple was blown down. The roof is a huge mass of ruins crushed by the falling timbers. The rear wall

²¹² In response to a letter from Margaret A. Gist, asking him where he had been taught the Shorter Catechism, Woodrow Wilson wrote on May 13, 1922, "To tell the truth I do not remember where I learned the Catechism. I am afraid that I never did learn it very thoroughly. My connections however with the church in Columbia were of a very intimate sort and your statement was true in spirit if not in fact." In 1967 First Presbyterian Church gave the old pew used by the Wilson family to Eau Claire Presbyterian Church for its fiftieth anniversary.

is sprung and the ornamental parts of the church badly damaged. The steeple evidently fell its full length along the top of the building and rolled off on the side where the fence and the wall were broken down. Some portions of the debris fell into the churchyard, breaking the tablets which marked the resting places of the dead. After the storm had passed, that sign which was placed in the heavens after the flood made a beautiful appearance; and a grand sunset and many colored rainbows were hailed with delight. The Presbyterian congregation today holds religious service in the opera house.

Just a week before the storm, Mrs. Douglas Plumer had raised \$999 in "a Martha Washington's Tea Party—probably the most elaborate social affair of its sort for the raising of money ever given in Columbia to that time."²¹³ (The pastor, Dr. Bryson, gave a dollar to make an even thousand!) The money was intended for a new lecture room; but when the storm damaged the building Mrs. Plumer said, "It is a providence that we have money enough to repair the church." The thousand dollars went toward repairs (which cost five thousand dollars), but in 1877 a frame Lecture Room was built behind the church—facing Lady Street near the corner of Bull.²¹⁴ Since the old Lecture Room had been destroyed by the fire of 1865, Sunday school—much smaller in size since the departure of the black children to their own Sunday school at Ladson Chapel—had been held in the church building.

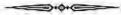
In May 1875, Ann Pamela Cuninghame died, and she was buried among the trees and flowers of the church cemetery. Miss Cuninghame—known as the woman who saved George Washington's Mount Vernon—had worshiped at First Presbyterian Church during her girlhood days as a student at Barhamville Female Academy. She had been so stirred by the sermons of Benjamin Morgan Palmer that she often expressed her wish to be buried near the old church where she had received such spiritual blessing.

The next month, across the street, the new brick and granite Gothic Revival building of Washington Street Methodist Church—de-

²¹³ McMaster, *History*, p. 13. *Presbyterian Women of South Carolina* states that "Mrs. Douglas Plummer [sic], daughter of Dr. William S. Plummer [sic] of Columbia Seminary, joined the [First Presbyterian] church in 1868" (p. 303). Perhaps she was Dr. Plumer's daughter-in-law rather than his daughter.

²¹⁴ This building was later moved and used as the first building for Eau Claire Presbyterian Church.

scribed as "an elegant building in the shape of a Methodist church costing twenty-four thousand dollars"—was dedicated.²¹⁵ Marion Street Methodist, First Baptist, and First Presbyterian churches adjourned their services for the occasion; and by 10:30 on that Sunday morning, the streets were crowded with people on their way to the new Methodist sanctuary.



In 1876 General Wade Hampton—the state's popular hero of the Confederacy—became the Democratic candidate for governor. To thousands of South Carolinians, "Hurrah for Hampton" became a byword with every greeting, meeting, conversation, and farewell. Hampton narrowly won; but it was not until the next April that President Hayes ordered removal of troops from the South Carolina State House and the Republican governor resigned his "right to the office of governor of South Carolina." With the departure of the Federal troops in 1877, the ten years of Reconstruction government in South Carolina abruptly ended.

As South Carolina Presbyterians struggled to rebuild their churches and support the causes to which they were committed, Charleston Presbytery was determined to preserve the Calvinistic theology and Reformed worship of its denomination. In discussing the revised Directory of Worship in April 1881, the presbytery expressed its disapproval of any set forms of prayer, of the use of the Apostles' Creed in worship, of any decoration of the churches with flowers, of "unnecessary vestments" for ministers, and of the excessive use of music! The annual "narratives" of Charleston Presbytery, however, were full of hope. Despite the suffering and sorrows of the recent past, there were also "many colored rainbows."

²¹⁵ *A Columbia Reader*, p. 78.

CHAPTER 11

STRINGS OF THE HARP

On February 23, 1877, Dr. Bryson resigned as pastor of First Presbyterian Church to take "a long-planned tour of foreign travel." Hearing that Dr. G. R. Brackett of Second Presbyterian Church in Charleston was "likely to seek a change to a dryer climate," the session encouraged him to consider Columbia. He declined. Dr. James Latimer, professor at Davidson College in North Carolina, again supplied the pulpit for several months; then Dr. William Plumer preached from September 1877 to June 1878. Once again the session moved slowly to find a pastor.

The church and the city were experiencing a time of revival. During the March 28, 1878, session meeting, "some conversation ensued about the gracious outpouring of the Spirit on this whole community and services were ordered to be held in this church every night next week." At the spring communion, fifty persons were "admitted to the sealing ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper." The church reported to presbytery that "regularity in attendance at public worship and at the weekly prayer meetings" characterized "the subjects of that work of grace." During the nine months that Dr. Plumer served as stated supply, there were more additions to the congregation than in any previous similar period in the church's history.

The Reverend Joseph B. Mack of the Presbytery of Bethel (South Carolina) was called on April 14, 1878, (at a salary of \$1,500 per year) and "began his labors" on June 30. He had been a chaplain during

the War Between the States and later became pastor of the Unity and Waxhaw churches—the latter of which had been served by the young James Henley Thornwell.

Also in 1878 Washington A. Clark and William Sloane were elected elders. As a cadet at South Carolina College, Washington Clark went to Charleston at the outbreak of the war to take part in the attack on Fort Sumter. He served with the Third South Carolina Calvary during the war, then returned to his native James Island, where he planted Sea Island cotton. Later he moved to Columbia and became president of the Carolina National Bank. A distinguished man, with a short white beard and wire glasses, Mr. Clark was a trustee of South Carolina College and a director of Columbia Seminary. William Sloane, a native of Scotland and member of the John Knox Free Church of Glasgow, had come to Columbia during the War Between the States. He ran the blockade, entered Wilmington, North Carolina, and came on to Columbia, where he set up a lithographing business and manufactured Confederate money. He joined First Presbyterian in 1862, becoming a deacon in 1874 and an elder in 1878.

On November 28, 1878, thanksgiving services on the national Thanksgiving Day were held for the first time in the church. The Monthly Concert for Prayer for Foreign Missions was resumed on the first Sabbath of each month. The women of the church maintained two missionary societies—one for home, and the other for foreign, missions. The church reported to presbytery that collections for the year were larger despite “the prostration and general impoverishment prevailing among the people.”

An orphanage and small college, which would be major benevolences of First Presbyterian Church for years, were founded by William Plumer Jacobs in Clinton, South Carolina. Jacobs had come from Charleston to Columbia to attend the seminary and, after graduation, had become pastor of a small church in Clinton. He found that preaching was difficult until he was finally able to say, “I lost sight of self and caught sight of Christ.” Since childhood, William Jacobs had wanted to care for orphans. He talked about his dream until, one day in 1872, a nine-year-old boy gave him fifty cents and said, “Take this and start an orphanage.” Mr. Jacobs laid the challenge before his forty-six-member congregation, which quietly resolved to undertake the project. William Jacobs and his friends then prayed the orphanage into existence. It was named *Thornwell* for the professor who had so impressed Jacobs at the seminary. Eight years later, William Jacobs founded Presbyterian College to provide further education for his orphans and for others.

Elder Andrew Crawford died on Saturday, May 22, 1880. He had served as elder of First Presbyterian for forty-five years. The session minutes noted that "the Sabbath that followed was the beginning to him of that 'rest' which remaineth to the people of God." In October of 1880 Dr. William Plumer died. The pulpit of First Presbyterian Church was "draped in mourning for the period of thirty days" as a testimony of the people's love for him. A pastor friend wrote, "If he was a son of thunder on the platform and in the pulpit, he was a son of consolation in the sick room and among the bereaved of his people."²¹⁶

After serving the church for two and a half years, Joseph Mack resigned in January 1881 to become agent for the seminary. He explained to the congregation that he was accepting the post because the seminary, as a training school for ministers of the gospel, was of vital importance to the whole Presbyterian church. In March the session invited John L. Girardeau to serve as supply pastor.



Dr. Girardeau, who had come to Columbia Seminary in 1876 as professor of theology, was born in 1825 on James Island, South Carolina, to a Presbyterian family of French Huguenot ancestry. He was baptized by Dr. A. W. Leland, then pastor of the Presbyterian church on the island. While a student at the College of Charleston, Girardeau read extensively in the Reformed theologians and came to a saving knowledge of the gospel. He attended Columbia Seminary during the period when Benjamin Morgan Palmer was pastor at First Presbyterian Church and James Henley Thornwell was preaching at the college chapel. After graduation, Girardeau served as pulpit supply for rural churches in the Charleston area. In 1849 he married Penelope Sarah Hamlin, the daughter of a wealthy low-country planter, and soon devoted his efforts to ministry to the rural black people. In 1854 he was called to Charleston as pastor of the newly formed Anson Street Church—a mission to blacks begun by the Second Presbyterian Church. When he came there were thirty-six members; but by 1860 there were over six hundred, with a regular Sunday attendance of fifteen hundred. A much larger building was needed and Zion Church (as it was now called) was built on Calhoun Street

²¹⁶ *Semi-Centennial of the Theological Seminary*, p. 213. The quotation is from Moses D. Hoge, who also said of Dr. Plumer, "The longer he lived, the more to him did life seem worth living" (p. 216).

for the growing congregation. It was, in fact, the largest church building in Charleston and possibly in all of South Carolina.

During the War Between the States, Girardeau served as chaplain of the Twenty-third Regiment of South Carolina. He then returned to Charleston and became pastor of Zion Glebe Street Church. For some years after the war, the old Zion Colored Church was part of the pastorate of Zion Glebe Street, and each Sunday Dr. Girardeau preached once in the white church and once in the black church. He became increasingly well known across the South as a great preacher and a profound scholar. When the controversy at Columbia Seminary led to the departure of two of its professors—Dr. Adger and Dr. Wilson—many saw Dr. Girardeau as the only man who could restore the school's reputation.²¹⁷ He was unanimously elected by the General Assembly of 1875 to the chair of systematic theology to replace Dr. Plumer, who was transferred to pastoral and historical theology.²¹⁸ Believing himself to be unqualified for the post, Girardeau declined until the Synod of South Carolina repeated the call. He began his duties at the seminary on January 18, 1876. At his first lecture, he was "anxious almost to sickness," he wrote, "but the Lord helped me."²¹⁹

Dr. Girardeau—who was called "the Spurgeon of America"—was in great demand as a preacher.²²⁰ On one occasion he was called to preach before the legislature of South Carolina, with the specific request that he preach his sermon on "The Last Judgment." He did so in First Presbyterian Church. Robert A. Webb, Girardeau's son-in-law and later professor of theology at Louisville [Presbyterian] Seminary, wrote:

²¹⁷ See page 142.

²¹⁸ Columbia Seminary had been controlled by the General Assembly since 1863. In 1881, control was restored to the Synods of South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama, with Synods of South Georgia and Florida cooperating and the General Assembly retaining the right of review.

²¹⁹ George A. Blackburn, ed., *The Life Work of John L. Girardeau, D.D., LL.D.* (Columbia: The State Company, 1916), p. 173.

²²⁰ Joseph B. Mack, who served as Girardeau's associate in the ministry in Charleston after the War Between the States, wrote that his first meeting with Dr. Girardeau was in 1860 when Mack was a student at Columbia Seminary. It took place in the home of Dr. Adger. Pointing to Dr. Girardeau, who was on the other side of the room, Adger said emphatically to Mack and several others, "There is the Spurgeon of America, the grandest preacher in all our Southland." "This statement," wrote Mack, "then seemed to me a very extravagant one, and provoked the criticism, 'See how these South Carolinians love one another.' But afterwards I often realized that it was strictly and entirely true." Blackburn, *Girardeau*, p. 52.

A great congregation was present, crowding both the floor and galleries, which were then on three sides of the building. The preacher was fully up to himself, in voice, gesture and spirit. Contrary to his general custom, he delivered [the sermon] from the manuscript. It was an hour and a half long. Attention was tense from the first. But when the flute-like voice rose to its best, reinforced by the silent language of gesture and face, many of the hearers stretched themselves forward as far as they could reach. Tears poured down cheeks. . . . When the preacher's voice hushed the multitude fell back into position with an audible heave, which sounded as if it had come simultaneously from every breast.²²¹



It is not surprising that First Presbyterian Church was anxious to engage Dr. Girardeau as its regular preacher. Girardeau, who was opposed to the use of instrumental music in the church, stated in writing that in accepting the position as supply, he wanted it distinctly understood that he "disclaim[ed] before God and men any participation in the responsibility growing out of the use of instrumental music in the public worship of the church." Dr. Girardeau believed that in the New Testament period the use of musical instruments in the worship service lacked divine authority and so could not be allowed.²²²

For over a year, the congregation of First Presbyterian listened to the great preacher. Mary Jane Macfie McMaster wrote to her son John on March 17, 1881:

We are enjoying the most delightful preaching now. Dr. Girardeau is our stated supply and will preach for us until next September. Our church is packed on Sunday mornings and our prayer meetings are well attended. Oh! how often do I wish you were here to hear him.²²³

Among the themes that sounded from the Columbia pulpit during these months was the great doctrine of adoption. Although given a separate chapter in the Westminster Confession of Faith, this impor-

²²¹ Blackburn, *Girardeau*, pp. 208, 209.

²²² See John L. Girardeau, *Instrumental Music in the Public Worship of the Church* (Richmond, Virginia, 1888).

²²³ *A Columbia Reader*, p. 84.

tant teaching (that "all those that are justified, God vouchsafeth, in and for His only Son Jesus Christ, to make partakers of the grace of adoption, by which they are taken into the number, and enjoy the liberties and privileges of the children of God") received scant attention in Reformed theologies.²²⁴ Dr. Girardeau recovered this biblical teaching, and his people often heard the wonderful message that when God extends his grace to us in Jesus Christ, he not only releases us from our guilt but also receives us into his family.²²⁵

On November 4, 1881, friends and alumni of Columbia Seminary gathered at First Presbyterian Church to celebrate the semicentennial of the school and Dr. George Howe's fifty years of service as professor. Dr. Girardeau described the scene:

The Presbyterian church edifice was crowded with an intelligent and distinguished assembly. The music was inspiring. An eloquent opening speech, which thrilled all hearts, was pronounced by the Rev. Dr. B. M. Palmer. That veteran preacher of the gospel, the Rev. J. H. Saye, a member of the graduating class of 1837, delivered to [Dr. Howe] a congratulatory address, while he courteously stood to receive it. It was a picture for the brush of a painter. The light fell upon a grand and massive head which had grown white in the service of his Master and the Church. Sainly and venerable was his appearance. The dense auditory was hushed into profound silence, and many an eye was dimmed with tears, as with unaffected humility and grace, in rich and melting tones, and in a manner simple, but sublime, he acknowledged the kindness of his brethren, and dwelt upon the wisdom and the goodness of that holy providence which first led him to cast in his lot with theirs, and had conducted him through all the vicissitudes of so protracted a term of labor to that auspicious hour.²²⁶

²²⁴ Westminster Confession of Faith, chapter 12.

²²⁵ The major book on this topic is by Girardeau's son-in-law Robert A. Webb, *The Reformed Doctrine of Adoption* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1947). In *First Things* for May 2, 1993, Dr. Glen Knecht wrote: "There have been moments in the history of the Christian church when Columbia, South Carolina, and specifically the church we love, was the only place that lifted up certain aspects of Christian doctrine. Not that doctrine was developed in our church, but that it was re-discovered and reapplied from our pulpits and classrooms. Much of this revived teaching centered around the truth of our 'adoption' into the family of God."

²²⁶ *Semi-Centennial of the Theological Seminary*, pp. 393, 394.

On November 7, the board of directors announced that Columbia Seminary, closed because of its financial problems, would reopen on September 20, 1882.

Dr. Girardeau ended his preaching at the church in October 1882. He had written the session declining an invitation to continue and added, "I have received unbounded kindness from you, my brethren. May the Master supply [the members of First Presbyterian Church] with a tenderer and everyway better shepherd than I have been." Girardeau was followed in the pulpit by former pastor William E. Boggs and Charles R. Hemphill, both professors at the seminary, who served jointly as supply pastors for a year.

Dr. Girardeau now devoted much of his time to a new Columbia congregation that had begun as a mission Sunday school in 1883, when a few members of First Presbyterian Church met in a building on the old fair grounds. Thomas Kinkead and his son supervised the school; and after Sunday school, Dr. Girardeau preached. Methodist minister Dr. J. M. Buckley and a pastor-friend stopped over one Sunday in Columbia. Buckley wrote:

We arrived in Columbia on Saturday evening. After being settled at the hotel we walked through the city and were charmed with it. After a walk of two or three miles we went into a book store to make a few purchases. I said, "Sir, whose church would you advise a stranger, who wished to hear the best preacher, to visit tomorrow?" Without a moment's hesitation he answered, "Dr. Girardeau's Mission," and a gentleman standing by looked acquiescence.

Never was there a more beautiful day than [that] Sunday . . . in Columbia. There have been days as fine; none finer; the perfection of a spring day. . . . Every window was open; the trees were full of birds, the streets of children; the peach and other fruit trees in blossom and many flowers in bloom.

On reaching "Dr. Girardeau's Mission" we found every seat occupied and some of the congregation standing. Perceiving that we were strangers, an usher procured chairs and placed us very near the pulpit. As we were about to enter, one of us said to the other, "We don't get the chance to hear

others preach often. I would like to hear something that would *move my soul*."

The first thing noticed was the character of the congregation. It was the most refined and intelligent congregation of its number that I had ever seen in the South—and I do not remember to have seen it surpassed in the North—more solid-looking gentlemen and ladies of striking appearance. And the young people were of the best sort. Never did I see an assembly that looked so little like a "mission."

I have now to say that, having heard Thomas Guthrie of Edinburgh, James Hamilton of London, and Mr. Spurgeon six or eight times, it has never fallen to my lot to hear a more absorbing, spiritual, eloquent and moving sermon on an ordinary occasion. . . . It made all the preaching I have ever done, and nearly all I have ever heard seem like mere sermonizing. Looking around to catch the eye of my friend, I saw that two thirds of all men in the audience were in tears. It was no rant or artificial excitement or mere pathos, but *thought* burning and glowing. None but a man of equal intellect, learning, piety and eloquence could preach such a discourse without notes.²²⁷

On the first Lord's Day in April 1883, Dr. Howe received communion at First Church. On his way home, his carriage broke down at the corner of Bull and Taylor streets, and Howe fell and suffered a fractured leg. Two weeks later he died. On Tuesday, April 17, his body was carried to the First Presbyterian Church where a large congregation had assembled. The funeral service was conducted by the members of the faculty of the seminary—Professors Woodrow, Hemphill, Boggs, and Girardeau. He was buried in the churchyard near the tombs of his first wife and his children who had died and not far from the grave of his colleague Dr. A. W. Leland. Dr. Girardeau reminded the large crowd of George Howe's generous spirit. "All God's people, of whatever name, he owned as his Father's children,"

²²⁷ Blackburn, *Girardeau*, pp. 56, 57. Thomas Guthrie (1803-1873) was a minister of the Church of Scotland and, after the Disruption in 1843, of the Free Church of Scotland; his preaching attracted rich and poor in great numbers. Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892), Baptist minister of London, is recognized as one of the greatest preachers of all time.

he said; "every servant of Jesus he recognized as a brother beloved." But his love for First Presbyterian Church was special. "How often in times of sorest need did he come in his own calm way to her help," said William Boggs.

In May 1883 Elders Duffie and McMaster and Mr. R. L. Bryan went to Fort Mill, South Carolina, to hear the Reverend Luther McKinnon preach. They brought back a favorable report, but the session delayed action until they could make some inquiries "in reference to Mr. McKinnon's habits as a student." Mr. McKinnon was finally called and, in October 1883, came as pastor. In 1885 the church purchased a house on the southwest corner of Washington and Marion streets for a manse.

The session divided the congregation into areas for better oversight, began new Sunday schools at the seminary chapel and the fair grounds, and, in February 1884, requested the Presbytery of Charleston to organize a church at "Barhamville in the suburbs of this city."²²⁸ At First Presbyterian Church, "household meetings" on the afternoon of each of the quarterly communion Sundays were a time for infant baptisms and family nurture. There was a sermon for children and a special children's offering for foreign missions.



In early June 1885, Woodrow Wilson joined his parents for three weeks in Columbia at the home of his sister, Annie Howe. On June 23, the Wilson and Howe families went to Savannah for the wedding of Woodrow and Ellen Axson. The bride's grandfather and pastor of the Independent Presbyterian Church, Dr. I. K. Axson, and Woodrow's father, Joseph R. Wilson, shared in performing the ceremony—held in the double parlors of the manse—in the presence of the immediate families and a few close friends. Accompanied by the Howes and the Wilsons, the bride and groom left Savannah that same evening for Columbia, where they were the guests of Woodrow's sister until July 1. En route to Arden, North Carolina, for a six-week honeymoon, Woodrow stopped for most of a day in Augusta, Georgia, to show his wife the scenes of his boyhood. Later that summer Woodrow's father left his pastorate in Wilmington, North Carolina, and moved to Clarksville, Tennessee, where he took up a teaching position at the new Southwestern Presbyterian University.

²²⁸ Nothing of the Barhamville church remains. It was located about two hundred yards east of Two Notch Road, about six tenths of a mile north of Taylor Street. There is a little cemetery there; its oldest gravestone bears the date 1881.

Dr. McKinnon resigned from First Presbyterian Church in August 1885 to become president of Davidson College. Visiting preachers filled the pulpit; Dr. James D. Tadlock of Columbia Seminary did most of the preaching. On January 3, 1886, Elder W. J. Duffie was chosen clerk of session to succeed Mr. Stenhouse, who was dismissed to assist in the organizing of Second Presbyterian Church.²²⁹ On March 1, twenty-two members were dismissed to Second Church. Others followed. At its chapel on Richland Street, the new church was organized on February 21, 1886. Under Dr. Girardeau's guidance, the church stood for simplicity of worship, without the use of musical instruments, and for opposition to worldly amusements.

In 1886 the General Assembly met again in the First Presbyterian Church—"under the ancient oaks"—in Augusta, Georgia, to observe its quarter-centennial. Former pastor Joseph Ruggles Wilson gave the memorial address; the principal sermon was given by the denomination's first moderator, Benjamin Morgan Palmer. Dr. Palmer reiterated the themes he had preached from that same pulpit twenty-five years earlier:

The historic basis . . . upon which stands this dear Church of ours, the special feature by which she is distinguished from others, is this testimony for Christ's kingdom, as a free, spiritual Commonwealth. . . . It is no unimportant mission to which we have been assigned in the adorable providence of God—not lightly entered upon in 1861, not lightly to be abandoned in the future. May grace be given us "to preach this Gospel of the Kingdom," until the captive bride of Christ shall exchange the "fetters of brass" for "clothing wrought of gold"; when "the light of the moon shall be upon her as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of the people, and healeth the stroke of their wound."²³⁰

²²⁹ The session "reluctantly" accepted Mr. Stenhouse's resignation, but the historian has some reason to rejoice. The brown ink and the beautiful, but at times illegible, script of Stenhouse is replaced in the session books by the black ink and the clear handwriting of Mr. Duffie!

²³⁰ Street, *Southern Presbyterians*, pp. 92, 93.

God had blessed the Southern church, and its leaders and people looked forward to a future of continued growth in grace and in numbers.



In May 1886 the Reverend Neander M. Woods, pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, North Carolina, was called to Columbia. Born in Harrodsburg, Kentucky, September 4, 1844, he attended the University of Kentucky in 1859 and 1860. He entered the Confederate Army in 1861 and served with the cavalry until 1865. Woods graduated from the University of Michigan in 1867, then studied law at Washington University in St. Louis and theology at Union Theological Seminary in Richmond. He was ordained in 1873 and served churches in Virginia and Texas before going to Charlotte in 1881 and to Columbia five years later.

Attempting to reach out to Columbians and visitors, First Church placed "suitable advertisement" in the newspapers (except for "the Sabbath editions"), inviting "strangers who spend the Sabbath at our hotels" to the church's services. Union services were held with Washington Street Methodist Church and First Baptist Church three times a year.

The church used for its congregational singing *The Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs* by Charles S. Robinson. A little later a book of gospel hymns was added, and both were used in Sabbath worship and the weekly prayer meeting. The session directed "the chorister . . . to sing the tunes on the page with the words." By 1888 Mrs. Gustaveous Walker was the "chorister" and Mrs. Ida Folk the organist. From time to time others would play the organ, but for years Mrs. Folk would be the leader of the church's music. The session allocated \$100 to procure and pay singers, with preference given to church members.

During the year ending March 31, 1887, there were seventy new members added to First Church. Twenty-seven were received on dismissal from "sister evangelical churches" and forty-three on profession of faith—including twenty persons who were brought to a decision chiefly through the evangelistic services held in Columbia during the spring of 1886 by the famous evangelist D. L. Moody and his song leader, Phillip Bliss.

Despite a year of unprecedented business depression and financial losses, three years of crop failures, and the Charleston earthquake of 1886 (which toppled chimneys in Columbia), the church reported encouraging financial support. Almost \$5,000 had been given during the fiscal year (ending March 31, 1887), but still it was necessary to

borrow \$500 from the bank to meet expenses. Pew rents now brought in about \$1,500 yearly. The goal for the next year for each Sunday's offering for church work was \$31, and seven offerings were designated to special causes and benevolences. The Ladies' Church Society contributed funds for the repair of church property. The 1887 Church Manual acknowledged gratefully that the three societies "composed of ladies" did "a great deal to help the church and encourage their pastor in his labors."²³¹

In the mid-1870s, South Carolina College had both black and women students for a short time and then was closed for three years. In the fall of 1882 the college reappeared, becoming a university again in 1887, and once more a college in the early 1890s. Columbia College had reopened in 1873 in its Plain (Hampton) Street building. Two colleges for African Americans located in Columbia: Benedict Institute was founded in 1870 by the American Baptist Home Mission Society; and Allen University, a Methodist school, moved to Columbia in 1880. Columbia Theological Seminary, rocked by internal dispute and financial problems, closed from 1880 to 1882.

In 1886, Dr. Woods and two of his elders—Washington Clark and George Howe, Jr.—founded the South Carolina Presbyterian Institute for Young Ladies. Four years later it opened in the old Hampton-Preston mansion on Blanding Street and was known as the Presbyterian College for Women. Dr. W. R. Atkinson served as its president until 1895. The board of directors was made up of nine presbyters from the Synod of South Carolina—the president, four elders from First Presbyterian Church in Columbia, and four elders from other Presbyterian congregations in the state. When Dr. Atkinson resigned because of his health, the school continued under Dr. Robert P. Pell, assisted by Miss Euphemia McClintock. Dr. Pell became president of Converse College in 1902, and Miss McClintock succeeded him in Columbia—the first woman to serve as president of a college in South Carolina.

Another school for women was founded in 1886 by David Bancroft

²³¹ In the early history of First Presbyterian Church, there is no special record of women's organizations. This "does not mean that woman's work was negligible but proves that the work of the church was broad in that it knew no line of division between man and woman, it was like Adam and Eve—'one flesh.'" Gist, *Presbyterian Women*, p. 299.

Johnson, superintendent of the Columbia city schools and elder at First Presbyterian Church. The nineteen students of the first class of the new training school for teachers met in the chapel of Columbia Seminary. The school was named for Robert C. Winthrop, chairman of the board of the Peabody Fund, which gave a \$2,000-grant. After one year in the seminary chapel, Winthrop Training School held classes in a small frame building on Washington Street. In 1895 Winthrop moved to Rock Hill, when that town offered \$62,000 in cash and bonds and twenty acres of land.²³²

First Presbyterian Church was badly in need of repairs. The steeple had been in ruins since the storm in 1875. The iron fence was broken down, and the church building needed painting. The 1887 Manual acknowledged the "dismantled and shabby appearance" of the building and stated that it was "not creditable to Christian people." During the alterations of 1887 and 1888 the new steeple was built (at 188 feet, it was the highest structure in the city); and the marble pulpit was taken down and replaced by "one of more modern design." In 1888 the organ was sold to Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, and a new organ was purchased for about \$3,000 and installed in the new choir loft at the front of the church, behind the pulpit.

In 1888 the Ladies' Missionary Society began under the leadership of Mary (Mrs. John S.) Verner. At first the group raised money by sewing, then by pledges and gifts, for benevolent purposes. The women "adopted" a young Japanese student, by the name of Takada, who came to Columbia Seminary for training. After he returned to Nagoya, Japan, they contributed fifteen dollars a month to his support.

During the years of Dr. Woods's ministry, the church, the seminary, and the entire Southern Presbyterian denomination were agitated greatly by the "evolution" controversy arising from the views of Dr. James Woodrow. The brilliant and in many ways lovable Woodrow had been professor of Natural Science in Connection with Religion at

²³² The seminary chapel—the first home of Winthrop College—was taken down and reconstructed brick by brick on the Rock Hill campus in 1936. The chapel became the final resting place of Dr. Johnson, who had died in 1928. Later a replica was built in Columbia on the original site.

Columbia Seminary since 1861. Dr. Woodrow faithfully worshiped at First Presbyterian, generously paying for two pews even though his small family did not require all of one. Later Dr. Woods commented that in all his ministry he had never had "a more devout and attentive listener" than the great scholar, who was twenty years older than the young pastor. Although Dr. Woodrow presented evolutionary views during the first two decades of his tenure at Columbia, he inclined against the theory. Gradually, however, he was swayed by what he believed to be scientific evidence in its favor. In 1884, at the request of the seminary board of directors, Dr. Woodrow delivered an address on evolution, stating his views as to its probable truth and its relation to Bible teaching. He explained that evolution was a hypothesis as to the mode of the creation of plants, animals, and man's body—subjects on which the Bible is silent, he said. Where the Bible is silent, Woodrow argued, the Christian is free to seek information in the only place where it can be found—in God's work in nature. Dr. Woodrow held that although the soul of man was immediately created, his body was made from "the dust of the ground"—and so may have descended from an animal ancestor.

A storm of protest arose, and the church was divided. Both sides held to the inerrancy of Scripture but differed on how to understand the Bible's teaching on creation. One party—led by Dr. Girardeau and Dr. Dabney—held that the theory of evolution did contradict the Bible's teaching on creation, especially the creation of man's body. Furthermore, evolution was a serious error, they believed, because accepting it required abandoning "the doctrines of the federal headship of Adam, the descent of all men from Adam, etc."²³³ The other party sided with Dr. Woodrow and argued that the Bible is silent on the mode by which God created Adam's body out of dust, or earthly material, although very few committed themselves to the view that evolution was true. Woodrow argued that the issue was scientific, not theological, and that just as the church had no business making political deliverances, it had no right to make scientific declarations.

In 1884 Woodrow and Girardeau met in a tremendous debate at the meeting of the Synod of South Carolina. Dr. Woodrow spoke for five hours and Dr. Girardeau only slightly less. After a complicated controversy in presbytery and synod, the matter came to the General Assembly of 1886 by overture. The assembly firmly declared that "Adam and Eve were created, body and soul, by immediate acts of

²³³ Street, *Southern Presbyterians*, p. 96.

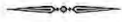
Almighty power"; that Adam's body was created "without any human parentage of any kind"; and that any method of biblical interpretation that led to denial of these conclusions would eventually "lead to the denial of doctrines fundamental to the faith." Dr. Woodrow was dismissed from the seminary by the controlling synods—South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama; a majority of South Carolina Synod, however, stood by him. He was tried by his presbytery and acquitted of heresy by a three-fourths vote. Dr. Woodrow, therefore, remained a regular minister in good standing in the Southern Presbyterian Church. His presbytery sent him to the 1889 assembly; he was nominated—though not elected—to the office of moderator. Dr. Woodrow continued to worship at First Presbyterian Church, where he was revered as an "elder statesman."



In 1888 Benjamin Morgan Palmer's wife, Mary Augusta, died. Dr. Palmer replied to a letter of sympathy from a friend with words that indicated his spiritual depth and pastoral wisdom:

I will not speak, my brother, of my pain—let that be; it is the discipline of love, having its fruit in what is to be. But I will tell you how a gracious Father fills this cloud with Himself—and covering me in it, takes me into His pavilion. It is not what I would have chosen; but in this dark cloud I know better what it is to be alone with Him; and how it is best sometimes to put out the earthly lights, that even the sweetest earthly love may not come between Him and me. It is the old experience of love breaking through the darkness as it did long ago through the terrors of Sinai and the more appalling gloom of Calvary. I have this to thank Him for, the greatest of all His mercies, and then for this, that He gave her to me so long. The memories of almost half a century encircle me as a rainbow. I can feed upon them through the remainder of a short, sad life, and after that can carry them up to Heaven with me and pour them into song forever. If the strings of the harp are being stretched to a greater tension, it is that the praise may hereafter rise to higher and sweeter notes before His throne—as we bow together there.²³⁴

²³⁴ Cuyler, *Recollections of a Long Life*, 223.



Dr. Woods resigned in April 1889 to go to the Second Presbyterian Church of Memphis, Tennessee. He thanked the church members for their "exceedingly generous and cordial" support and told them that with their "beautiful house of worship, numerical strength, oneness of sentiment and purpose as a people," they needed only "humble reliance upon Divine guidance" to ensure "continued prosperity."²³⁵ Since the end of the War Between the States, First Presbyterian Church had experienced many trials. At times the difficulties and disappointments of life had brought it low; but, like its great preacher of earlier days, it knew that in God's providence "the strings of the harp" were being stretched so that sweeter music might come from First Presbyterian Church of Columbia.

²³⁵ Dr. Woods served Second Presbyterian Church in Memphis from 1889 to 1902 and Second Presbyterian Church in Louisville, Kentucky, from 1902 to 1905. He was chancellor of Southwestern Presbyterian University from 1905 to 1908. In 1908 he became the pastor of Central Church in Montgomery, Alabama. He died in 1910.

CHAPTER 12



TELL THE TOWERS THEREOF

The Reverend Samuel Macon Smith of Washington, North Carolina, came as pastor in September 1889. He was descended from Virginia families that traced their roots back to the German Calvinists of the Palatinate, to the Huguenots of France, and to Scotch-Irish Presbyterians. His father, Jacob Henry Smith, was a Presbyterian minister. Jacob was born in Lexington, Virginia, in 1820. He studied at Washington College (now Washington and Lee University), where he became great friends with a fellow student called "Jack"—later to become famous as "Stonewall" Jackson. After Jacob Smith studied law for several years, a sermon preached by his fellow Virginian Archibald Alexander (founding professor of Princeton Theological Seminary) decided him in favor of the ministry. In the fall of 1843 he entered Union Seminary (then at Hampden Sydney College) and received his certificate three years later. He was ordained on July 31, 1847, and installed as minister of the Presbyterian church at Pittsylvania Courthouse, Virginia. The next year he married Catherine Malvina Miller of Powhatan County. From 1850 to 1854, Smith served the Samuel Davies Institute, in Halifax County, as principal and professor of Latin and Greek.

In 1851 Samuel Macon was born to the Smiths. Samuel's mother died in 1854, and Jacob Henry Smith moved to Charlottesville to become pastor of the Presbyterian church there. In 1857 he was married to Mary Kelly Watson, in his bride's grandmother's home, by Dr.

William H. McGuffey—professor at the University of Virginia and author of the famous *McGuffey Readers*. In 1859 Mary and Jacob Smith, eight-year-old Sam, baby Mary Lynn, a family slave named Pocahontas—called “Poky”—and Poky’s brother Jim Henry moved to Greensboro, North Carolina, where Jacob Smith took up his duties at the First Presbyterian Church. He would serve that church—as eloquent preacher and beloved pastor—for over thirty-seven years. He died in 1897.

Samuel Macon Smith was the oldest of the five “Smith Brothers of Greensboro.” He was educated at the University of Virginia and studied for the ministry at Union Seminary, before serving the church in Washington, North Carolina, and First Presbyterian Church in Columbia. His four half-brothers also had distinguished careers. Dr. Henry Louis Smith became president of Davidson College in 1901, then president of Washington and Lee University in 1912. Dr. Egbert Watson Smith succeeded his father as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Greensboro. He then served the Second Presbyterian Church of Louisville, Kentucky, until 1911, when the General Assembly made him the executive secretary for foreign missions. Dr. Charles Alphonso Smith taught English at Louisiana State University and the University of North Carolina and, in 1909, became the first Edgar Allen Poe Professor of English at the University of Virginia. In 1917 he accepted an invitation to be the head of the Department of English at the United States Naval Academy. Dr. Hay Watson Smith, the third son to become a Presbyterian minister, served Congregational churches in New York and the Second Presbyterian Church in Little Rock, Arkansas.²³⁶


Ella Friend Daniel was born October 1854 at her father’s plantation at Banks of Twitty, Virginia. In 1879 she married Samuel Macon Smith. They lived in Washington, North Carolina, until the call to Columbia came in 1889.

Mr. Fitz William McMaster wrote to his son George Hunter at West Point on August 23, 1889:

Our new minister has not yet put in his appearance. We are anxiously awaiting him. He is a far superior man to Dr.

²³⁶ Applying to Arkansas Presbytery, Hay Watson Smith acknowledged his belief in the theory of organic evolution and his rejection of the doctrine of the inerrancy of scripture, total depravity, and other teachings of the Westminster Confession. Heresy charges against Smith circulated for years, but his presbytery did not deem him sufficiently out of line “not to be accepted as a minister in good standing in the church.” Appeals to synod and General Assembly failed, and in 1934 the case was finally closed.

Woods and I think much more spiritually minded. It is of the greatest importance to have such a man in our midst to encourage his church to look upwards for the rewards of the righteous, instead of the perishable gains of this world.²³⁷



The Columbia to which Ella and Samuel Smith moved in 1889 was a town of 15,000 people. Its fashionable streets were lined with comfortable homes—usually built of wood on brick pillars. Front porches with ornate posts and bannisters and well-swept yards, flowers, and picket fences welcomed friends and visitors.

The town was a cottonseed market with two of the largest cottonseed oil factories in the United States. Textile manufacturing was attracting mill workers from the hardscrabble farms of the Piedmont. In 1891 Olympia Mills, the world's largest textile mill under one roof, was built. The canal was enlarged; and locks, gates, and a spillway were added. On November 21, 1891—after years of frustration and disappointment—Columbia celebrated the completion of this project. Shortly after noon Mayor F. W. McMaster made a short speech, bells rang, whistles shrieked, and the cannon on Arsenal Hill roared as the gates opened and the water began to flow. Water power converted into electricity soon operated the textile mills, bringing new growth and prosperity to the city. In 1894 Columbia's "Duck Mill" was the world's first electric-powered textile operation.²³⁸

Six train lines served the city, and by 1900 there were 144 arrivals and departures every day—74 of these passenger trains. In 1883 a new depot had opened on Gervais Street, and in 1902 Union Station—a grand Jacobean-style building—was built near the southern end of Main Street. Streetcars were still horse-drawn, but electric trolley cars would go into operation in 1893. Many Columbians commuted to work or went to the stores on bicycles. There were no paved streets or sidewalks, and at times it was almost impossible to cross Main Street because of the mud. By 1888 Main and Sumter streets had street lamps, and all the churches were lighted with gas.

The State House, begun in 1851, was still incomplete. Since 1879, the Confederate soldier in his gray marble uniform had been saying to all who passed his way that "these were men whom power could not corrupt, whom death could not terrify, whom defeat could not dis-

²³⁷ *A Columbia Reader*, p. 85.

²³⁸ This building is now the home of the South Carolina State Museum.

honor." There were nine hotels and four banks in town. Rooms at the Congaree Hotel, near the State House, were rented for a dollar a day—and sidewalk chairs were free. The president of the Carolina National Bank was General W. A. Clark, and the president of the Central National was Dr. James Woodrow.

There was no hospital in Columbia until 1892, when the United King's Daughters of Columbia—led by First Presbyterian Church member Mrs. D. R. Flenniken—formed the Columbia Hospital Association. The cornerstone was laid May 3, 1893, and in November the hospital opened at Hampton and Harden streets.²³⁹

There were town, factory, and college baseball teams. Columbia fielded a professional baseball team—in a league with Winston-Salem, Charlotte, and Charleston—but it did not last beyond the 1890 season. The first intercollegiate football game played in Columbia matched Furman and Trinity (later Duke University) on October 14, 1891. On Christmas Eve, 1892, Furman rolled over the University of South Carolina 44 to 0, in a game played in Charleston. In 1894 Carolina played its first scheduled football game in Columbia, at the state fairgrounds on Elmwood Avenue—losing to Georgia, 40 to 0. But it was the local firemen, not baseball or football players, who were the true athletes of the era. Bravely battling real flames or smartly going through competitive drills, they were idolized by little boys and their older sisters.

The 1880s—a period of calm between the turmoil of Reconstruction and the populist upheaval of the "Gay 90s"—brought to Columbia the telephone, home mail delivery, electricity, streetcars, graded public schools (the result of hard work by F. W. McMaster and like-minded Columbians), and spectator sports. Residential communities outside the city began to grow. The first was Waverly (perhaps named for Sir Walter Scott's novels), to the east along the road to Camden; then came development in North Columbia and, later, Shandon—Columbia's first planned suburb. Suburbs to the south and New Brookland to the west across the Congaree were mill villages, with rows of often-identical houses for the hundreds of workers who flocked to Columbia for jobs in the city's great textile plants.²⁴⁰

For many, life in the capital city was easier and more desirable than ever, but Columbia and South Carolina were entering a difficult period politically. In 1890, "Pitchfork" Ben Tillman overthrew the Wade Hampton political order and led a "populist revolt" to the governor-

²³⁹ The hospital was taken over by a group of twenty-six doctors in 1909.

²⁴⁰ New Brookland changed its name to West Columbia in 1938.

ship. Racial segregation became law. "White" and "Colored" signs, such as those designating separate water fountains and train-depot waiting rooms, became part of life. The University of South Carolina was reduced to a struggling liberal arts college, its technical department and equipment dispatched, in the words of F. W. McMaster, "to an obscure part of the state to foster an institution that exists in name only."²⁴¹ Enrollment at South Carolina College dropped to sixty-eight in 1894, when there were only twelve graduates. Later the governor reversed his policy toward the college, and under the presidency of Dr. James Woodrow it began to recover. Beginning in 1895, a few young women were admitted as full-time students; three years later, one of these became Carolina's first female graduate. In 1906 the college again became a university—in a movement led by two distinguished professors, E. S. Joynes and George A. Wauchope, and supported by *The State* newspaper.

The State was founded in 1891 by Cuban brothers Ambrose and Narciso Gonzales, to fight Governor Tillman's policies. The paper urged Columbians to advertise the city "in some better and pleasanter way" than continually bringing up the catastrophe of 1865. Sherman had died on February 14, 1891, causing *The State* to comment that since his death occurred before its first issue, it was spared the ordeal of making remarks! Other newspapers came and went, but by 1898 *The Columbia Record* was providing citizens with an afternoon paper.

The Columbia that welcomed Ella and Samuel Smith in 1889 was a vibrant, growing community, but in many ways it was still a small town. Everybody knew everybody and shared each other's joys and sorrows, remembering the hardships they had endured together.

First Presbyterian Church prospered under Samuel Smith's ministry. Sunday by Sunday he preached; during the week he made pastoral visits on his bicycle. By April 1890, membership approached 400. The "narrative" for 1891-1892 reported that "our beloved pastor has been entering in the Master's work as the goodly number of accessions with additions by profession of faith at each quarterly celebration to the membership attests." Candidates for membership attended a class taught by the pastor—"to prepare all such as are the subjects of converting grace for an intelligent confession of Christ, and to enable all such as are mistaken about themselves to discover

²⁴¹ A reference to Clemson!

their error before they shall have injured themselves and the church by being unwisely admitted to the Lord's Table as full members." There was an increase of interest in Sunday school, which now had sixteen classes. The catechism was taught regularly in Sunday school, and, the "narrative" continued, "we trust that its study is encouraged by the heads of families." Parents were urged to "see that the children not only attend the [Sunday] school regularly, but have their lessons well prepared beforehand." Family worship was "generally observed" by church members. There had been no recent cases of intemperance, but "worldly amusements" were a concern to the session. The 1892-1893 "narrative" reported that the congregation was "thoroughly and heartily united" and stated that the church "seems to command the respect and favor of the community."

Missionary interest increased, with the Monthly Concert of Prayer, the work of the Ladies' Foreign Mission Society, and the Girls' and Boys' mission bands. In 1890 First Presbyterian Church contributed to the support of five missionaries—Ruth Buckland in Nagoya, Japan; John Morrison in Luebo, Africa; Genevieve Marchant in Varginha, Brazil; Berta Murray in Texas; and W. L. Cooper in Kentucky. In 1890 the General Assembly established a mission on the banks of the Congo River in central Africa, with Samuel Norwell Lapsley and William Henry Sheppard beginning the new work. Lapsley was born in Selma, Alabama, in 1866 and, from childhood, had a special interest in the welfare of black people. Sheppard was a remarkable black Presbyterian from Virginia. He had felt called to go as a missionary to Africa since his student days at Stillman Institute in Tuscaloosa, Alabama; but the Southern Presbyterian Church would not send him overseas until Lapsley volunteered to accompany him. They established the mission at Luebo in the Kasai region, before Lapsley died of a sudden fever on March 26, 1892. Sheppard continued the work. For his exploration of Bakuba territory, he was made a Fellow of the Royal Geographic Society of London—the only Southern Presbyterian to receive this honor. In 1909 William Sheppard wrote:

When we first came here none of the people had ever seen a book. Now many of them can read and write well and are teaching others. Instead of the heathen war hoop and noisy dance which formerly rent the air at eventide, we now hear the sweet Gospel hymns being sung by native Christians.

The Southern Presbyterian General Assembly of 1865 had expressed the hope that black and white people might continue "united together in the worship of God" but recognized that the Negroes

were no longer "crowding the courts of the Lord."²⁴² Presbyterians attempted various strategies—all largely unsuccessful. Many favored the establishment of separate black Presbyterian churches with their own ministers and sessions and organized in separate presbyteries, synods, and, finally, a separate General Assembly. The First Presbyterian Church session, however, opposed the proposal to create a separate "African Presbyterian church." During the 1890s First Church carried on no special work among the African Americans, but supported Tuscaloosa Institute "and heartily sympathize[d] with every effort in behalf of the Christian welfare of the Negro." The black members of First Church had, in 1874, organized themselves separately into Ladson Presbyterian Church. When Ladson's building burned in 1892, the church wished to build "a better and more convenient house of worship." The Sumter Street property was deeded to Ladson Church by First Presbyterian Church in April 1895, and a new church was built on that site.

In 1892 Columbia Seminary attempted to bring back Dr. Palmer to teach. In the spring of 1881, the board of directors had elected him to the chair of pastoral theology; and the General Assembly heartily endorsed the election. Palmer gave the call careful consideration but declined. On April 16, 1892, he received another call from the seminary to come as professor of pastoral theology, sacred rhetoric, and English Bible. A long letter, signed by the entire faculty, made its case. By returning to his native state and to his alma mater, it argued, Dr. Palmer could crown his "long and useful life" with "a fine opportunity to form and fix the views of many of our future ministers in an age of unrest, and of departure, in some quarters, from 'the old paths.'"²⁴³ Once again Dr. Palmer declined the call. But he never lost the deep affection he had for Columbia—seminary, church, and city. Columbia was dear to him as the place of his early ministry—where his old friends who "bore with me in the greenness of my youth," he wrote, were, one by one, "passing through the gates into the city [of heaven]"—and where his first two children had lived and died. He wrote to a friend in 1890 that he had "almost a passionate wish to be [in Columbia] . . . with a longing something like that of a pilgrim for some holy shrine."²⁴⁴

²⁴² Street, *Southern Presbyterians*, p. 81.

²⁴³ Johnson, *Palmer*, p. 542.

²⁴⁴ Johnson, *Palmer*, pp. 598, 607.

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In 1894 First Presbyterian Church celebrated its centennial, with special programs November 9, 10, and 11.²⁴⁵ The highlight was the centennial sermon by William E. Boggs—a lively account of the church's first hundred years by a man closely associated with it, first as a member, then as pastor, and finally as a frequent guest preacher. Dr. Boggs's text was Psalm 48:12-14—"Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death." John Bateman reported that the centennial was celebrated "not with elaborate ceremony, but with gratitude to the Giver of all good for His blessings and protection in the past and with trust and hope for the future."²⁴⁶ In its centennial year, the membership of First Presbyterian stood at 440.

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Despite its reputation as the "Gay 90s," this decade brought some difficult years. On February 18, 1895, Helen G. McMaster, daughter of Fitz William and Mary Jane McMaster, wrote to her brother George Hunter:

This has been an awful week for Columbia. The thermometer began to fall . . . falling as low as 4 degrees and several days not reaching 18 degrees which is bitter cold for us. Then the snow was 9 inches on a level. . . . It has been a terrible year for our state—no money, no food, and the cold has been desperate. The town has been giving food and a soup kitchen has been opened for the starving. If you could see the numbers of tottering old Negroes your heart would ache for them.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁵ First Presbyterian Church's bicentennial was celebrated in 1995—two hundred years after David Dunlap was ordained and installed as the first pastor. The centennial was marked in 1894, probably reflecting Mr. Dunlap's coming to the Columbia church as stated supply.

²⁴⁶ Bateman, "History," p. 25.

²⁴⁷ *A Columbia Reader*, p. 86.

In 1895 Mrs. Thomas J. ("Stonewall") Jackson visited Columbia. Several years later, in the fall of 1897, the great Presbyterian theologian who had served as an officer under Jackson and written the *Life and Campaigns of Lieut-General Thomas J. Jackson*—Robert Lewis Dabney—came to town. He gave lectures at Columbia Seminary on "Christ our Substitute and Sacrifice for Imputed Guilt." Old and blind, Dabney spoke with precision and power to the faculty, students, and citizens of Columbia. On Sunday he preached at First Church. *The State* newspaper reported, "As Dr. Dabney sat in the pulpit of the First Presbyterian Church, the other day, and preached a sermon long to be remembered by those who heard it, his appearance was both venerable and patriarchal."²⁴⁸ While in Columbia, Dr. Dabney visited his old friend, John Lafayette Girardeau, who was now stricken with partial paralysis. Dr. Girardeau had retired from the seminary in 1895 but continued to serve Arsenal Hill Church, and Dabney preached for Girardeau on Sunday morning. George A. Blackburn, Girardeau's son-in-law and biographer, described the scene:

When the service was over the two came down the aisle together; they were men of imposing presence, each like the son of a king. . . . Dr. Girardeau said: "Doctor, that was a glorious sermon this morning." Dr. Dabney replied, "This has been a sweet service to me, and this singing carries me back to old Tinkling Spring." Dr. Girardeau said: "But what will it be in heaven?" The answer of Dr. Dabney was lost in the tramping of the congregation. And so, blind and lame, these princes in Israel walked on, talking of the past and future worship of God. A few months after this meeting they both joined the general assembly of the church of the first born in the majestic worship of their God and Saviour.²⁴⁹

A little over six months after the death of Robert Lewis Dabney on January 3, 1898, John Lafayette Girardeau died. His funeral services were conducted in Arsenal Hill Church, and he was buried in Elmwood Cemetery near the grave of his beloved teacher, James Henley Thornwell. All his life Dr. Girardeau was a member of Charleston

²⁴⁸ *The State*, January 9, 1898.

²⁴⁹ Blackburn, *Girardeau*, p. 368.

Presbytery and the Synod of South Carolina. When a wealthy and distinguished church in Atlanta once issued a strong call for him to be its pastor, a friend pressed him as to why he was declining the call. With some agitation, Girardeau replied:

I will tell you now why I cannot accept that call, though I never expected to tell anyone. By the grace of God I was born in this State, through the mercy of God my home all my life has been in this State, and it is my heart's desire and prayer that my lifeless body shall sleep beneath its sod until the resurrection morn. South Carolina is my mother. She now needs the service of her sons. I would rather accept \$400.00 and a cabin in a country church of South Carolina than the \$4,000.00 and the splendid manse in the magnificent city of Atlanta.²⁵⁰



Associate Reformed Presbyterians conducted services from time to time in Columbia, mainly for their people who had moved from the upcountry to the capital city; in 1843 they were meeting occasionally in Ebenezer Lutheran Church. They began a mission in Columbia in 1896, in the YMCA Hall on the corner of Lady and Main streets. Presbytery organized a church in 1897 with a minister, two elders, and eighteen people. The congregation purchased a lot on Laurel Street and built a red brick church with a pulpit at the front where the people entered. They named their church *Centennial* when they moved into it about the time the Associate Reformed Synod of the South was celebrating the hundredth anniversary of its founding at the Old Brick Church in Fairfield County in 1803.²⁵¹

²⁵⁰ Blackburn, *Girardeau*, p. 61.

²⁵¹ The present Greek Revival granite church building of Centennial ARP Church was erected during the ministry of Charles E. Edwards and used for the first time in 1954. The church was dedicated ten years later when it had paid off the last of its indebtedness.

CHAPTER 13



SOWING ABUNDANTLY

The pulpit of First Presbyterian Church had in Dr. Smith a worthy successor to James Henley Thornwell and Benjamin Morgan Palmer. He gave prominence to the sermon—always carefully prepared. “His Hebrew Bible and his Greek Testament were his constant companions,” said a professor at the seminary, “and he knew how to use them in his pulpit work as very few preachers have ever been able to use them.” His sermons appealed especially to men—and occasionally there were more men than women in the church. Students flocked to hear him. When he was called to another church, he was overwhelmed by an appeal sent by the students of the city asking him to stay at First Presbyterian. He was so intensely devoted to the congregation of First Presbyterian Church that, though often called to larger churches, he refused to leave. He always said that he only wanted to live and die among his people in Columbia. Dr. Smith was an important figure at the University of South Carolina—the chosen counselor of both the faculty and the students. In 1898 he began to serve as lecturer at Columbia Seminary in pastoral theology and sacred rhetoric.

Dr. Smith was in demand as a speaker for special occasions. He gave the opening address to the Presbyterian College for Women each fall and a farewell benediction to the graduates in the spring. He spoke at the opening of the Winthrop Library in Rock Hill and at the unveiling of the monument to Narciso G. Gonzales in Columbia. Gonzales, editor of *The State*, had been shot and killed by James H.

Tillman, lieutenant governor and nephew of Ben Tillman, on January 15, 1903. On the afternoon of December 12, 1905, some two thousand people gathered at Senate and Sumter streets for the ceremony. The chairman of the monument's fund-raising committee was General Washington A. Clark of First Presbyterian Church. The principal speaker was Dr. Smith, who concluded with the words, "So leave we this shaft here today to stand perpetual, typical in its granite strength, symbolic in its figure, oriented to the points of the compass, four square to every wind that blows, pointing ever upward, mute but eloquent memorial of the dead, inspiration to the living, saying to all who pass by: 'N. G. Gonzales died on the field of honor.'"


Dr. Smith was soon recognized as the leading preacher of the Synod of South Carolina, and those who heard him often declared that he had few equals in the Southern Presbyterian Church. When the General Assembly of 1897 met in Charlotte, North Carolina, a number of leading Southern Presbyterian preachers and scholars gave addresses to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the adoption of the Westminster Confession of Faith. Dr. Smith spoke on "The Westminster Symbols Considered in Relation to Current Popular Theology and the Needs of the Future."

Samuel Smith believed in and taught the old Calvinism. He admired James Henley Thornwell and was asked by the editors of the *Library of Southern Literature* to provide selections from the 2,738 pages of Thornwell's *Collected Writings* for the publication.²⁵² He had little patience with the newer theological ideas that were just beginning to be discussed in Southern Presbyterian circles. In his 1897 address on the Westminster Confession of Faith, he gave a perceptive description of "modern" theology—as "a sort of theological cave of Adullam into which every man that hath any quarrel with his creed doth resort with great gladness and not seldom with some noise." The new theology professes great reverence for the spirit of Scripture, Dr. Smith said, but makes scant appeal to its letter. It opposes all systematic theology in general and Calvinism in particular. It abhors exact definition and minimizes the miraculous. It holds to a progressive revelation which amends, corrects, and improves the Scripture. Against these ideas Dr. Smith set the Westminster theology, with

its coherence of thought; its compactness of logical structure; its definiteness and clearness of statement; its unswerv-

²⁵² See *Library of Southern Literature* (1907; New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1970), Volume 12, pp. 5309-26.

ing loyalty to God's word; its constant resort to that word as its ultimate appeal, its final and infallible authority; its exaltation of God as sovereign; its humbling influence on the pride and prejudice of man; its emphasis of the doctrines of divine grace—all fit it to serve both as a test of truth and as a bulwark against error, at once the safe guide and the safeguard of pure, scriptural doctrine.²⁵³



The session of First Presbyterian Church continued its work. George Howe—son of seminary professor George Howe and his wife Sarah—was a prominent Columbia physician. He was married to Annie J. Wilson, the daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Joseph R. Wilson. He became an elder in 1887. William Sloane had served on the session since 1878. George Howe and William Sloane both died in 1895. Another elder, Professor David Bancroft Johnson, had moved to Rock Hill with Winthrop College. In January 1898 two new elders were elected: J. S. Muller and D. Latham Bryan.

In 1899 Fitz William McMaster died. Colonel McMaster, as he was usually called, was once mayor of Columbia and the city's leader in public education. He was a member of First Presbyterian Church for forty-seven years, an elder for forty-three years (clerk of session from 1856 to 1871), and superintendent of the Sunday school for twenty-five years. He resigned from that office in 1894, "praying God's blessing" on his "co-presbyters and the dear old school." Just the year before Mr. McMaster's death, Dr. Palmer had visited his old friend in Columbia. Dr. Palmer now wrote to McMaster's sons and daughters, "He has left the record of a noble life as the heritage of his children."²⁵⁴

Fitz William McMaster and his wife, Mary Jane Macfie McMaster, had a large family of fourteen children. One of them, Virginia Lee, recalled: "We had family prayers before breakfast every morning around the family altar in the parlour. We always sang a hymn too—we knew them from the time we were born—and whenever my father was away, mother would take his place in leading the prayers." Mr. McMaster had built his tall frame house—yellow with green shutters—on the northwest corner of Laurel and Bull streets. Its yard was enclosed by a neat hedge-banked fence with a white picket gate; its

²⁵³ *Memorial Volume of the Westminster Assembly*, pp. 222, 223, 253.

²⁵⁴ Johnson, *Palmer*, p. 590.

short front walk ended in high steps onto a wide, welcoming front porch. Church people and others visited often, and there was always a Christmas evening open house.

Sometimes a doctor would come to the McMaster home and beg Mrs. McMaster to go with him "to look at a little sufferer." One evening she visited an apparently dying baby. The doctor said, "You can only make it comfortable," and she replied, "I never give up a sick baby." Coming back the next morning, the doctor saw the recovering baby and exclaimed, "What miracle is this?" That baby—known as "Mrs. McMaster's miracle"—was Andrew Crawford Clarkson, who became a deacon at First Presbyterian Church.

On December 17, 1901, W. J. Duffie died. A member of the church since his conversion in 1852, he had been elected elder in 1869 and had served as clerk of session since 1886. D. Latham Bryan was chosen as the new clerk. Elected deacon in 1887 and elder in 1898, Mr. Bryan worked in the bookstore of his uncle, R. L. Bryan, until he joined the Southern Railroad, becoming head agent in Columbia in 1894. He was married to Sarah Jane McKenzie, whose father was a prominent merchant and, for two terms, mayor of Columbia.

In 1901 the session abandoned the old system of pew rents and declared that all seats were free at all services. Collection bags were used to receive the weekly offerings, until finally replaced by plates in 1912. Income for the year ending in April 1901 came to \$5,104.64. A year later total income reached \$6,392.36, and the "voluntary subscription" plan was judged successful. There were no longer private pews, but the session acknowledged that regular worshipers preferred their usual seats and requested all persons "to accept the service and suggestions of the ushers."



In 1898—on Tuesday, January 25—it seemed that the whole city of New Orleans paused to celebrate the eightieth birthday of Benjamin Morgan Palmer. An evening reception was held at his home from four until ten, during which time some ten thousand people called on him! The previous winter, Miss Agnes McMaster of Columbia had been in New York City and was struck, one day, with the voice of a young woman who waited on her in a store. "You are not a Northerner?" said Miss McMaster. "No," was the reply, "I am from New Orleans." "I do not know anyone in New Orleans but Dr. Palmer," answered Miss McMaster. "Why," exclaimed the clerk, her face beaming

with delight, "I am an Israelite and we do not let the Presbyterians claim Dr. Palmer; we all claim him."²⁵⁵

Several years later, on May 25, 1902, Dr. Palmer died in New Orleans, from injuries he had suffered when he was struck by a streetcar. People in New Orleans and all over the South mourned his death. The newspaper reported that the city had not seen such a large gathering for a funeral since the death of the Confederate president, Jefferson Davis. The streetcars stopped running, businesses closed, and the flag on City Hall floated at half-mast, as thousands of people of all classes and denominations filled the church and overflowed into Lafayette Square. In South Carolina, Governor M. B. McSweeney paid tribute to the state's most famous preacher:

The news of the death of the venerable Dr. Palmer has been received in his native State with expressions of sincerest sorrow. . . . [He] was one of the many bright stars of the firmament of learning produced by the Palmetto State. His name will go into our history with those of Calhoun, McDuffie, Hayne and Rutledge. In Columbia, where Dr. Palmer served for fourteen years at the opening of his brilliant career, he was most dearly loved, and to the members of his congregation he served so faithfully here the news of his death brought the deepest sorrow. Dr. Palmer undoubtedly ranked as one of the greatest preachers of the Gospel and exponents of theology that the United States has ever produced.²⁵⁶

Joseph Ruggles Wilson died in January 1903—one month before his eightieth birthday—in Princeton, New Jersey. After leaving Columbia, Dr. Wilson had served First Presbyterian Church in Wilmington, North Carolina, until 1885. When a teaching position opened at the struggling theological school of the Southwestern Presbyterian University, he moved to Clarksville, Tennessee, where he taught until 1893 (and where his wife died in 1888). He continued as stated clerk of the Presbyterian Church in the United States—a position he had held since 1865—until 1898. The clerkship did not carry much power in the decentralized Southern church, but it was often said that Wilson "could kill an unwise overture by the way he would read

²⁵⁵ Kelly, *Preachers with Power*, pp. 98, 103.

²⁵⁶ Johnson, *Palmer*, p. 636.

it and then glare at the Assembly as if lost in wonder that any such thing had ever been thought of!"²⁵⁷ Dr. Wilson's increasingly poor health necessitated his moving to Princeton in the spring of 1901 to live with his son Woodrow who was then President of Princeton University, and his family. As Dr. Wilson's body rested in a coffin in the bay window of Woodrow's study, Ellen Axson Wilson told her daughters to look at their grandfather's now serene and "beautiful old face," so that they could remember him with dignity rather than as a helpless, sick old man.²⁵⁸ After a brief service in Princeton, Woodrow Wilson accompanied his father's body to Columbia for the funeral and burial next to his wife in the graveyard of First Presbyterian Church. The son provided the epitaph:

Pastor, teacher, ecclesiastical leader. For thirty-four years Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States. Steadfast, brilliant, devoted, loving and beloved. A master of serious eloquence, a thinker of singular power and penetration, a thoughtful student of life and God's purpose, a lover and servant of his fellow men, a man of God.

In 1904 a number of First Presbyterian Church organizations and ministries were active. The Ladies' Church Society, with Mrs. Samuel M. Smith as president, enrolled over a hundred members and set about "putting in order" the churchyard. The next year it provided tiling to cover the church vestibule floor. The Ladies' Missionary Society was led by Mrs. D. L. Bryan, and three "bands" were organized for the girls and young women of the congregation. The Men's Auxiliary had ninety members. Its president was Mr. Patterson Wardlaw.

The Sunday school met on Sunday afternoons. Professor Andrew C. Moore resigned as superintendent because of his heavy load of work at South Carolina College, and Mr. J. S. Verner succeeded him. Two mission Sunday schools were being taught—one for poor white children at Gervais and Huger (in a "very neat building" erected for its use) and another for black children near the corner of Richland and Huger. Additional Sunday schools were planned at Shandon and Waverly.

²⁵⁷ Mulder, *Woodrow Wilson*, p. 26.

²⁵⁸ Frances Wright Saunders, *Ellen Axson Wilson: First Lady Between Two Worlds* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), p. 146.

An Auxiliary to the Door of Hope was organized with thirty-seven members; Mrs. N. G. Gonzales was president. Serving as a home for young women, it so quietly and humbly carried on its work of "redeeming wrecked womanhood" that few, even in Columbia, knew of its existence. In 1905 two "hospital circles" were organized by women in the church to furnish and maintain a room in the city hospital (known as "The First Presbyterian Church Room"), to provide a library for the hospital, and to visit patients and "such as are strangers or friendless."

The session fretted over "the disorganized condition of the choir" and appointed a committee of elders to supervise its work. They decided that the church could not afford to continue to pay choir members and should experiment with a voluntary choir. The plan failed, and the session returned to its earlier practice of paying singers—two dollars a week. Mrs. Folk, the organist, requested that an electric motor be installed to pump the organ, but the deacons replied that there was no money. Columbia Presbyterians felt strongly about their music. It was said that on one occasion an elder "picked up his hat and stalked out of the church" when the choir began the second stanza of "a sprightly and unfamiliar" hymn tune.

There were Sunday morning and evening services and prayer meetings on Wednesday nights. Mrs. Smith, Mrs. T. S. Bryan, and Mrs. D. R. Flenniken prepared the elements for the communion services, cared for the linen, and saw to the collection and washing up of the silver and glasses. The Monthly Concert for Prayer was observed regularly. Nine special offerings were received during the year—for mission work at home and overseas, and for Thornwell Orphanage, Columbia Hospital, and the American Bible Society.

Early in 1905, First Presbyterian officers and members participated in two special events: on January 8 the centennial celebrations of South Carolina College began, and the dedication service for the new Arsenal Hill Presbyterian Church was held on March 19. Originally called Second Presbyterian Church, the church grew out of the mission work of First Presbyterian. Its first building was on Richland Street; a new church was built in 1904 on the northeast corner of Laurel and Assembly streets. In February 1906, First Presbyterian Church was made available to the Confederate veterans for their annual sermon. "Protracted services" were held in the church during March 1906, conducted by the synod's evangelists, Wardlaw and McLees. On June 17, 1906, the Reverend W. H. Sheppard, black missionary to Africa, spoke at the church.

The South Carolina State House, after fifty-six years of construction, was finally completed in 1907. Early in that same year—on January 17—Dr. James Woodrow died at his home on the corner of Washington and Sumter streets; he was seventy-nine years old. Despite the earlier controversy over his views of evolution, Woodrow was an honored and beloved man. He had taught for many years at Columbia Seminary until the General Assembly removed him from the faculty. Without bitterness, he continued to serve the denomination he loved. On one occasion, he mortgaged his Columbia house to raise \$4,000 needed to pay the salaries of Southern Presbyterian missionaries in various parts of the world. He was professor at South Carolina College from 1869 until 1872, resigning in 1872 when the Reconstruction government took over the college. When the college reopened in 1880, Dr. Woodrow was again made professor. In 1891 he became president, taking office during the trying time of political commotion under Governor Tillman. Dr. Woodrow loved Columbia, South Carolina, and the South. “The Confederate government,” he once said, “was the only human government that [I] ever loved.”²⁵⁹

On May 10, 1908, the Woodrow Memorial Presbyterian Church was dedicated. The Reverend Melton Clark, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Greensboro, North Carolina, and son-in-law of Dr. Woodrow, preached from I Chronicles 22:16 (“Arise and be doing; and the Lord be with thee”). Dr. Smith, in the name of the session, received the keys to the handsome building from Deacon David W. Robinson of the Building Committee.²⁶⁰ Several members of First Presbyterian Church had conducted a mission in the Waverly suburb since 1899; Mr. Robinson and Dr. R. C. Reed of Columbia Seminary were leaders in this work. In 1906 the mission was turned over to the

²⁵⁹ Woodrow, *James Woodrow*, p. 82.

²⁶⁰ David and Edith (Childs) Robinson were the parents of William Childs Robinson. Born in Lincolnton, North Carolina, in 1897, William Childs Robinson grew up in Columbia. He went to Roanoke College and then returned to Columbia, where he attended the University of South Carolina and Columbia Seminary. He earned the master of theology degree at Princeton Theological Seminary and the doctor of theology degree at Harvard University. After serving for a time as a pastor in the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, he became professor at Columbia Seminary in 1926. He taught at the seminary—first in Columbia and then in Decatur, Georgia—until his retirement in 1967. Beloved as “Doctor Robbie,” he championed orthodox Calvinism and the Southern Presbyterian traditions during a time when many were abandoning these historic distinctives.

session of First Presbyterian Church. The Men's Auxiliary raised money and purchased a lot for a church building in 1907. Mrs. Woodrow became interested in the project and gave \$15,000 as a memorial to her husband. At the dedication of the new church building, Mr. Robinson ended his historical sketch with a tribute to Mrs. Woodrow, who had provided the church—"its furniture and furnishings complete, from the foundation stone to tower cap"—as a "worthy memorial of the distinguished scholar and minister whose name it honors and bears."²⁶¹ Dr. Reed and seminary student G. M. Wilcox worked together in the new church. Within a year, there were twenty-four communicants and over two hundred enrolled in the Sunday school.

First Presbyterian Church struggled to meet its financial obligations. Badly needed renovations to the building were postponed in 1907 because of lack of funds. Benevolent giving increased, however, with an average of one hundred dollars a month going to both home and foreign missions. Income for the year 1907-1908 was \$8,819; the pastor's salary was \$2,400. Membership was growing, from 490 members in 1907 to 520 in 1908—the first time the church had counted more than 500 members. The "narrative" for 1907 reported that "family worship [was] not as well observed as it ought to be, not as general we fear as in the days of our fathers." The Lord's Day, the "narrative" continued, was generally observed, "tho' we fear there is an increase of travel on the Sabbath." Having established a new work in Waverly, the church now turned its attention to Eau Claire, where a prayer meeting was being conducted by L. T. Wilds, a member of First Presbyterian Church and a candidate for the ministry. Late in 1909 the deacons proposed the construction of a new Sunday school building and chapel "to harmonize" with the church building. Deacon Charles C. Wilson was selected as architect; bonds in the amount of \$20,000 were sold to church members, and the work began.

Dr. Smith died suddenly on Monday morning, January 10, 1910. On Sunday, January 2, he had preached on the words of the Apostle Paul, "None of these things move me" (Acts 20:24). The next morn-

²⁶¹ Woodrow, *James Woodrow*, p. 190.

ing he met seminary professor Henry Alexander White on the street. Dr. White described their conversation:

We stood together at the edge of the sidewalk and the conversation turned at once to his sermon. He spoke of a certain part of the sermon and told me about the source from which he drew the material for it. This source he had found in some books, a loan to him from my private library, containing accounts of the advances made by Federal soldiers against the Confederate position at Fredericksburg, and the advance by the division of Pickett and Pettigrew against the Federal works on Cemetery Ridge at Gettysburg. These bold advances were described by Dr. Smith in his sermon and then applied to his theme as illustrating the steadfastness and aggressiveness of the Apostle Paul in his campaign of evangelistic work.

Even thus, while we were speaking still of Paul and Stonewall Jackson and other heroes of the faith, we parted, even as pilgrims part on the highway, and now I shall see him no more until we meet again face to face in the Father's house. And verily we shall meet. Heaven seems now not very far away. Our dear friend has been translated in a moment of time, and has already found his place in the presence of Him to whom he gave the service of his life.

In the evening of January 9, Dr. Smith's text was "He that soweth abundantly shall reap also abundantly" (II Corinthians 9:6). The next morning he died. He had sown abundantly at First Presbyterian Church for over twenty years and was held in high esteem by all Columbians. The day after his death a full page of letters appeared in *The State* with the title "Samuel Macon Smith, D.D.—Men of Many Creeds and Callings Pay Tribute to the Memory of This Great Presbyterian Who Died Yesterday." Governor Ansel wrote that "a prince and a great man" had fallen "in Israel." Presidents of Columbia colleges, professors at the seminary, elders of the church, and his fellow townsmen expressed their love for Dr. Smith. The pastor of the First Baptist Church, the Reverend W. C. Lindsay, said that he was overcome with grief; and Washington Street Methodist Church adopted a resolution expressing its "deep sense of loss" and "high appreciation of Dr. Smith as a scholar-preacher and Christian gentleman." The Columbia Ministerial Association wrote that Samuel M. Smith gave "evi-

dence to the world that he had been with Jesus"; he sought in his preaching "to save the souls of men and to build them up in their Christian experiences through the instrumentality of the blessed gospel."

The people of First Presbyterian Church would long remember Dr. Smith's bubbling sense of humor, his vigorous sermons, and his beautiful use of the English language. When he preached for a week at his father's church in Greensboro, the English teacher in the local public school asked her students to attend the services to hear proper and elegant English spoken. Professor W. M. McPheeters of Columbia Seminary said, "To hear him preach from Sabbath to Sabbath was itself an education in the use of the English language. And what shall one say of his prayers? Who that ever heard them will forget them? They came upon our hearts like rain upon the mown grass."

Dr. Smith was buried in front of the church right at the corner of Marion and Lady streets. At the dedication of the impressive monument, Elder W. A. Clark presided and Dr. Thornton Whaling of the seminary gave the address. A later pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Robert A. Lapsley, once made the point of how people should live lives of "thoughtful and loving service." He said:

In front of the First Presbyterian Church of Columbia, South Carolina, there is a granite monument. It marks the final resting place of Dr. Sam Smith, pastor of that church for twenty years. He left an impress upon the life of the capital of South Carolina that will last as long as time shall last. After a life packed with useful service, the members of his church laid his body to rest in front of the church he loved, beneath its lofty spire. It is a sacred spot. . . . And they carved into the granite monument their estimate of Dr. Smith's life and character:

"More lasting than this stone is the memory of his genial personality, the heritage of his steadfast example and the benediction of his victorious life—as a Preacher he recognized but one authority, that of Christ: as a scholar he sought but one good, that of truth; as a friend he pursued but one aim, that of helpfulness; as a citizen he championed but one cause, that of justice; as a man he forgot but one claim, that of self."²⁶²

²⁶² Robert A. Lapsley, Jr., *Like As We Are* (Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press, 1939), pp. 34, 35.

Ella Smith lived on in Columbia until her death in 1932. She was the prime mover in the organization of the Columbia Young Women's Christian Association and was active in charitable organizations, including the Door of Hope, Carolina Home Rescue Orphanage, and Traveler's Aid. "No woman that has lived in Columbia," *The State* reported at the time of her death, "did more for such institutions than Mrs. Smith." For many years she was the head of the Women's Auxiliary of First Presbyterian Church. Her last prayer was one that her husband prayed so often—"God, prepare me for that which Thou hast prepared for me."²⁶³

²⁶³ Ella Smith was buried beside her husband in the southwest corner of the First Presbyterian Churchyard.

CHAPTER 14



THE PROPHET'S CALL AND THE SHEPHERD'S HEART

A newspaperman returning home from his night's work on February 23, 1910, noticed a glow of light inside the belfry of the First Presbyterian Church. The building was being repaired and painted, and a fire—probably caused by the spontaneous combustion of the painters' oily rags—had crept up the inside lattice. As flames burst from the seams of the lofty spire, fire engines could not throw water high enough to save the steeple. The newspaper reported that “the flames leapt heavenward and the entire city looked on with wonder.” As the iron framework of the steeple weakened, more than half of the upper portion fell, with a terrific crash, to the slate roof below. By the autumn of 1910, the steeple was replaced and a new bell given by Felie Baker Woodrow.²⁶⁴


The First Presbyterian Church spire—once so prominent in the town—was now challenged by tall buildings on Main Street. The twelve-story National Loan and Exchange Building was built at the corner of Main and Washington in 1903.²⁶⁵ Ten years later the fifteen-

²⁶⁴ During October 1933, Professor Robert L. Sumwalt and the students from the university's civil engineering department calculated the height of the First Presbyterian Church steeple to be 173.53 feet above the pavement and 498.40 feet above sea level. The steeple was said to have been 180 feet high when constructed in 1853, but it was rebuilt twice—in 1888 after it was blown down in a storm and again after the fire of 1910.


²⁶⁵ Long known as the Robertson Building, it is now called the Barringer Building.

story Palmetto Building—decorated with the palmetto tree motif—stood also at Main and Washington. The next year, Columbia's third "skyscraper"—the Columbia Building—went up at Main and Gervais. The old town of Columbia was rapidly becoming a busy city. First Presbyterian was determined to adjust to the changes and maintain its witness from its strategic downtown corner.

In 1910 the pulpit of First Church again was filled by seminary professors, and membership was just over five hundred. The church participated in evangelistic services sponsored by the ministerial union. City pastors were at their churches each afternoon to meet those wishing to talk with them about church membership. Dr. R. C. Reed acted for First Presbyterian. A search committee was appointed—three elders, two deacons, and two members from the congregation—to "canvass the field" of possible pastors and present their names. The Reverend C. C. Carson of Bristol, Tennessee, declined a call. Dr. James O. Reavis, secretary of foreign missions in Nashville, Tennessee, was next recommended by the committee—and called by the congregation. He accepted the call and was installed as pastor on April 23, 1911. His salary was \$2,700 per year, plus the use of the manse. The new pastor, with his friendly smile and sense of humor, soon won the hearts of his people.



Woodrow Wilson, now governor of New Jersey, came to Columbia on June 1, 1911. Addressing the annual meeting of the South Carolina Press Association, he was introduced by Thomas S. Bryan, who predicted that Wilson would carry the Democratic banner in the next presidential election. Governor Wilson also spoke at the cornerstone ceremony of the Young Men's Christian Association building on the Sumter Street lot that had been donated by his aunt, Mrs. James Woodrow. Woodrow Wilson said that the site of the new building was to him a beloved spot: next to the house of his aunt and uncle, it was his old playground and brought back memories of his boyhood days in Columbia. Social affairs in Woodrow Wilson's honor during his short visit to Columbia included a tea at the McMaster home on Laurel Street and a garden party at the Presbyterian College for Women, where hundreds of lights burned among the trees and rose arbors.



The new First Presbyterian Church Sunday school building was dedicated on June 25, 1911—and named the Samuel Macon Smith

Memorial Chapel. Plans for the building had been drawn by Charles C. Wilson. Architects were Wilson & Sompayrac, and the contractors were McCullough and Rutherford of Columbia. Requests for use of the church buildings were frequently received, and the session dealt carefully with each. The "Miriam Society," a church organization for young women, was allowed to use the Lecture Room to "hold entertainment," as long as "nothing be sold." After "a free discussion," use of the church building for an organ recital was granted to Professor Gillman of the College for Women. Both Columbia Seminary and the College for Women used the church for their commencement exercises. The YMCA met at First Presbyterian Church for its annual address on June 14, 1911, in the morning; and that evening the University of South Carolina held its baccalaureate service.

First Presbyterian Church was growing. By 1912 there were 586 communicant members. A few blacks still attended the church, sitting in the balcony. A Chinese family, which operated a laundry on Main Street, sat on the main floor. The income for "local expenses" was \$10,745; gifts for benevolences came to \$5,138 (\$3,400 of which went to missions). The next year the church, for the first time, attempted to raise as much for benevolences as for current expenses. With the membership now at 679, the congregation gave \$8,388 for church expenses and \$10,248 for benevolences.

The Men's Auxiliary was founded "for the promotion of God's Kingdom and the progress of that branch thereof known as the Presbyterian Church in the United States." In 1912 the auxiliary was headed by G. A. Wauchope and was organized under four large committees. The Lookout Committee was assigned the duty of being on "the 'lookout' for all strangers moving into Columbia who [were] Presbyterians by membership or by preference, or who [had] no Church associations or predilection." The Welcome Committee was "to meet and welcome all strangers" attending services and introduce them to church members. The Committee on Sickness expressed the interest and sympathy of the congregation to those who were sick and shut in. The Social Service Committee gave "practical expression of fellowship" to people in distress because of protracted illness or loss of employment.

New ministries within the church included the Christian Endeavor Society and the Boy Scouts. Christian Endeavor had been founded by a Congregationalist minister in Maine in 1881, "to promote earnest Christian life" and to provide training for Christian service. "Trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for strength," read the simple

pledge, "I promise Him I will strive to do whatever He would have me do." Christian Endeavor groups met weekly for devotions before the Sunday evening service and held special monthly meetings.

Until 1912, the offerings had been taken in small velvet bags attached to rings at the end of five-foot-long wooden handles. After much discussion and many postponements, the session finally decided to "discard the bags" and use offering plates. The bags were cumbersome to handle in the crowded church with its narrow aisles and, with the use of weekly offering envelopes, unnecessary. Mr. Richard B. Bryan, son of R. L. Bryan, gave a set of "beautiful silver collection plates."²⁶⁶

On April 11, 1912, "a group of the [Presbyterian] Church's most consecrated and intelligent women," from the seven South Carolina presbyteries, met in the First Church in Columbia and drew up an overture to the synod asking permission to organize the Women's Auxiliary of the Synod of South Carolina. As we have seen often, women played a significant role in the history of First Presbyterian Church from its beginning. They attended services faithfully and prayed, they supported pastors and sessions through the years, they were the first to organize for ministry to the hurt and helpless in the city and for support of missionaries at home and abroad. For many years there had been a number of different women's societies in First Church and in the denomination; but not until 1912 was there a statewide organization for the women of the Presbyterian church in South Carolina. Dr. Reavis presented the overture to synod; and the auxiliary—or synodical, as it was called—was organized in Columbia in the Ladies' Parlour of the Smith Memorial Chapel at First Presbyterian Church. Mrs. J. O. Reavis, the pastor's wife, was elected as the synodical's first president. Shortly after the forming of Congaree Presbytery in 1914, Mrs. Reavis called a meeting to organize the Presbyterial Auxiliary. Dr. Reavis and, later, Dr. Blackwood provided assistance and encouragement; but many presbyters questioned the move. According to one source, there was "an ominous silence" throughout the presbytery on "the woman question."²⁶⁷ The Presbyterial Auxiliary was approved, however. From now on women of First Presbyterian Church enjoyed fellowship and worked with women from other churches on the presbytery and synodical levels.

²⁶⁶ These plates were used for about twelve years. When larger, wooden plates were acquired, the silver offering plates were used for the bread at the Lord's Supper.

²⁶⁷ Gist, *Presbyterian Women*, p. 350.

Colorful pastor and preacher, Samuel A. Steel, was attracting large crowds to Washington Street Methodist Church. One Sunday morning he compared the church bells. "Why is it," he asked rhetorically, "that the bell of First Presbyterian sounds so deep and full—'dong, dong, dong'—while the bell at Washington Street goes 'ding, ding, ding'?" The Methodist congregation laughed at the pastor's humor and acknowledged that its Presbyterian neighbors were indeed impressive in their commitment to deep biblical and theological learning. A stream of outstanding Christian scholars, preachers, and leaders came to Columbia to speak at the seminary and the church, including Robert E. Speer, secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions in New York, who lectured in 1912.

On October 23 and 24, 1912, the Synod of South Carolina celebrated the centennial of the birth of James Henley Thornwell. It was held at First Presbyterian Church in Columbia—the church, synod noted, "which Dr. Thornwell had twice served as pastor, and in the city where nearly all his eminent services to the Church had been rendered." Large congregations, including the president, faculty, and students of the university, the members of the theological seminary, the congregation of First Church, and the people of the city, gathered to hear three special addresses. Dr. Thornton Whaling, president of Columbia Seminary, spoke on "Dr. Thornwell as a Theologian" and Dr. A. M. Fraser of Staunton, Virginia, on "Dr. Thornwell as an Ecclesiologist." Dr. Thomas H. Law, pastor in Spartanburg, South Carolina, who had studied under Thornwell at the seminary and had listened to his sermons at First Church, addressed the synod on "Dr. Thornwell as Teacher and Preacher." He concluded with the words, "Let us cherish tenderly and sacredly his memory, as we learn the many lessons of his illustrious career; and let us fondly and devotedly conserve the grand and noble work which he performed for our State and for our Church."²⁶⁸

During October 1917, Dr. Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield of Princeton Seminary gave lectures, sponsored by Columbia Seminary, in the church auditorium. The church bulletin announced that the Smyth Lectures were "the scholastic event of the year in Columbia" and invited everyone to "hear this profound and brilliant theolo-

²⁶⁸ *Centennial Addresses Commemorating the Birth of the Reverend James Henley Thornwell, D.D. LL.D* (Spartanburg, South Carolina: Band and White Printers, 1913), p. 21.

gian." This was one of the few times Dr. Warfield traveled from Princeton to teach. His topic was "Counterfeit Miracles"; he defended the New Testament miracles as "part of the credentials of the Apostles as the authoritative agents of God in founding the church." With solid erudition and commitment to Reformed evangelicalism, he went on to set forth massive objections to "patristic and medieval marvels," "Roman Catholic miracles," and modern "faith-healing," then ended with a discussion of Christian Science.²⁶⁹

Again as in the past, First Church was embarrassed by the condition of its churchyard. And, again as in the past, the session referred the matter to the deacons. A Church Yard Endowment Fund was established with the provision that these funds be kept separate from other church funds! T. S. Bryan, C. H. Baldwin, and John T. Melton were elected trustees.

In 1913 the superintendent of First Presbyterian Church Sabbath school was R. L. Moore, who had replaced the Reverend S. Hugh Wilds. Mr. Wilds had resigned in the summer of 1912 to go to Africa as a missionary. Mrs. T. H. Dick was superintendent of the primary department. Mr. T. S. Bryan served as treasurer, Mr. A. C. Squier as librarian, and Mr. J. R. Sheppard as secretary. The teachers met each Wednesday evening, an hour and a half before prayer meeting.

The church conducted three other Sabbath schools. Mr. D. B. Green was superintendent of the Eau Claire school, which was meeting in the Hyatt Park School. Dr. and Mrs. R. C. Reed of the seminary helped with the teaching. Mr. J. Y. Scruggs was superintendent of the Rose Hill school. Classes were taught by members of First Presbyterian Church—including Miss Emily Dick, Miss Gwyn Dick, Miss Pamela Moore, Mrs. Reed Smith, Mr. Lana Sims, Mr. Geddings Crawford, and Mr. Elmer Waring. Mr. Thomas S. Kinkead was superintendent of the "colored mission" Sabbath school on Pulaski Street, which was "in prosperous condition." One of the teachers was Mrs. Ella Nissen Keels; she had prayed for a long time for "some real work to do for her master." Mr. Samuel L. Miller worked there faithfully despite serious deafness. Black missionary Dr. W. H. Sheppard was invited to conduct a series of services in the mission in May 1914.

Thomas S. Kinkead died early in 1915, just after resigning his work with "the colored mission." Mr. Kinkead had come to Columbia from Brooklyn, New York, when he was twenty-five years old and soon

²⁶⁹ See B. B. Warfield, *Counterfeit Miracles* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1918).

joined First Presbyterian. He was elected deacon in 1904 and elder in 1913. For ten years, the session wrote, he "continuously and lovingly carried on the Sunday School mission of our church for the Colored Folk." "Having himself felt the gracious influence of our Saviour's love," his fellow elders reported, "his sympathy for others crossed lands as far as those which separated Samaritan from Jew."

There were four societies for women, each meeting monthly. Mrs. Samuel Smith was president of the Woman's Church Society and Mrs. J. J. Robb, of the Woman's Missionary Society. There were also the Westminster Society and the Felie Baker Woodrow Society, led by Miss Dora Gray, and the weekly Sewing Circle. Miss Emily Dick, always active in good causes, organized a series of Bible classes—with instruction also in homemaking skills such as cooking and sewing—in the Columbia-area mill districts. She enlisted Miss Margaret Childs, a member of Washington Street Methodist Church, to help in this work.

The president of the Men's Auxiliary was A. C. Moore. The Senior Christian Endeavor Society met every Sunday night before the church service and the Junior Society, on Sunday afternoon at four. Wyatt Taylor was president of the seniors and J. C. Morrison, the juniors. The Boy Scouts met every Wednesday; John Hay was the scoutmaster.

On January 25, 1914, clerk of session D. Latham Bryan died—just a week after his signature appeared for the last time in the "beautifully kept" session's minutes. Mr. T. S. Bryan was elected clerk to fill his brother's office. The "narrative" for 1914 surveyed the life of First Presbyterian Church. "The Lord's Day," it reported, "is generally observed according to Christian standards by the members, ordinary and unnecessary work being laid aside and the day largely devoted to religious worship and instruction." Attendance at the Sunday morning worship service was large, especially during the sessions of the University of South Carolina and the College for Women, when students almost filled the galleries. Nearly all the children of the church attended Sunday school, where they were taught the Scriptures and the Shorter Catechism. Almost two thirds of the church families, however, the "narrative" stated, did not practice "family worship"—because of "the stress of modern life" and "diffidence on the part of the heads of families." Although there were "no cases of scandalous conduct among the congregation known to the session," there was "a partial neglect of spiritual things and more or less conformity to worldly standards in determining aspirations, conduct and outlook upon life." There was good hope, however, that "the prayer of Our

Lord that we be not so conformed" was "being gradually and constantly fulfilled in and among us." Members' increased interest and activity in outreach resulted in work in "mission and other Sabbath Schools" and in "small visiting groups to extend the knowledge of the Savior to others in the community, including the poor and otherwise neglected, the prisoners or chain gangs, the Negroes who work in our households and at our doors, and a few strangers of other races who have come within our gates."

In 1914 a new presbytery was formed from central South Carolina churches belonging to Charleston, Harmony, and Bethel presbyteries. It met for the first time on the second Sunday in May at the Woodrow Memorial Presbyterian Church in Columbia, adopting the name *Congaree Presbytery*. First Presbyterian of Columbia was the fourth oldest church in the presbytery—following Lebanon (1775) and Mount Olivet (1780) in Winnsboro and Aimwell (1790) in Ridgeway.

The minutes of Congaree Presbytery reported in 1914 that "the mission work around Columbia has been kept up by the First Church of that city." A congregation was organized in New Brookland and a church built on grounds given by the Guignard family, Episcopalians of long residence in the area. Students from Columbia Seminary preached there, and elders and members of First Presbyterian Church led the Sunday school work. Mr. L. T. Wilds, an elder at First Church, gave a lot for the building of a church in Eau Claire; and the First Presbyterian Church Lecture Room was moved from Lady Street to the Eau Claire site and dedicated on October 20, 1912. Eau Claire Presbyterian Church was formally organized in 1916. The hills of Shandon, with their farms of cotton, grain, and vegetables, changed as fashionable bungalow-houses and shops appeared. A Presbyterian mission had been sponsored and conducted by First Presbyterian Church for several years in the Shandon area. Dr. G. A. Blackburn and Dr. Reavis helped in the work, preaching long-remembered "earnest gospel sermons." Then Dr. Randolph Bryan Grinnan, the pastor of the Woodrow Memorial Presbyterian Church and a former missionary to Japan, divided his time between the Shandon mission and his own church. Minutes of Congaree Presbytery reported that in 1915, First Presbyterian Church had "arranged to meet the financial needs" of the Shandon work, as well as the missions in Eau Claire and New Brookland. A building lot at the southeast corner of Wheat and Maple streets was deeded to First Presbyterian by Dr. W. B. Bur-

ney of the University of South Carolina. It became the church site for the Shandon mission, which was organized with fifty-two members in 1916.

In May 1914, Dr. Reavis resigned to become professor of pastoral theology, sacred rhetoric, and English Bible at Columbia Seminary. During his time at First Presbyterian Church, Reavis—the former secretary of foreign missions for the Southern Presbyterian Church—had brought the cause of world missions before Columbia's Presbyterians. He preached on missions; he lectured at the seminary on missions; he brought missionaries to the church. In 1912 he participated with the Laymen's Forward Movement, holding meetings in Texas and Kentucky in behalf of missions to Africa. William D. Love, in a farewell poem dedicated to Dr. Reavis, wrote, "Thou hast stirred us in that work! Our song: the Gospel give to every needy one!" One of those challenged by the missionary appeals of Dr. Reavis was Aurie Lancaster, daughter of Robert Alexander Lancaster, beloved doctor and faithful elder at First Presbyterian. She married Columbia Seminary student James Montgomery, and they went as missionaries to China late in 1917.

In September 1914 a call was extended to the Reverend Andrew Watterson Blackwood, pastor of the Sixth United Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He was installed on November 1 by a commission from the new Congaree Presbytery.

Andrew Blackwood was born on August 5, 1882, in Clay Center, Kansas. His father's parents were Reformed Presbyterians (Covenanters) from Northern Ireland. His mother was of Associate Presbyterian (Seceder) stock from Scotland. Isabella and Thomas Blackwood dedicated Andrew to the Christian ministry the day he was born; but, not wanting to impose their plans on him, they did not tell him until after he was ordained. Family prayer was conducted "both night and morning," and his parents encouraged "regular attendance at church."²⁷⁰

Andrew grew up in Kansas, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. He attended Franklin College, a nondenominational school with Presbyterian

²⁷⁰ Biographical material on Andrew Blackwood is from Jay E. Adams, *Studies in Preaching*, Vol. 3, *The Homiletical Innovations of Andrew W. Blackwood* (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1976).

background, in New Athens, Ohio.²⁷¹ There his studies centered largely around mathematics, languages, writing, and debate. He went to Harvard University in 1903 to study English. Harvard, especially the English department, was at the height of its "golden age." Blackwood studied under George Lyman Kittridge—the most learned scholar at Harvard—and George Pierce Baker—the university's famous debate coach. In 1905 he received his second B.A. degree, awarded, as the first had been, magna cum laude.

At first Andrew considered law as a career, but when he "learned more about the law," he decided that he would prefer to teach English. The possibility of a ministerial career was always in the back of his mind, but he believed that he would fail at this because he was not "a good mixer." While he was a student at Harvard, working on a debate about education in France, Blackwood suddenly felt "an inner call to the ministry." From that time on he never had any questions concerning his future.

In the fall of 1905 Andrew Blackwood began his ministerial studies at Princeton Seminary—known for its outstanding faculty and conservative theology.²⁷² At Harvard, he had moved far from his Covenanter-Seceder upbringing toward liberal theological beliefs. He decided, however, to study at Princeton to see "the other side." There he came under the influence of Princeton's president, Francis Landey Patton, and the seminary's teachers, especially Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, Geerhardus Vos, and John Davis. At Princeton, Blackwood's personal theological convictions returned to the historic Christian orthodoxy of his childhood; but he was disappointed in what he believed to be the rather mechanical and ineffective teaching of homiletics at the seminary. Blackwood studied only one year at Princeton; he transferred in 1906 to Xenia Seminary, nearer his home in Ohio—forced to make the change because of what he called a "nervous breakdown."

Andrew Blackwood was ordained in the United Presbyterian Church on May 18, 1908.²⁷³ He worked as a home missionary in Oklahoma and served several small congregations in Kansas. On April 10, 1910, he married Carolyn Phillips. In their rural community,

²⁷¹ Franklin College was later merged with Muskingum College, a United Presbyterian school located in New Concord, Ohio.

²⁷² See David B. Calhoun, *Princeton Seminary: Faith and Learning. Volume One (1812-1868)* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1994) and *Princeton Seminary: The Majestic Testimony. Volume Two (1869-1929)* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1995).

²⁷³ This denomination was formed in 1858 as a result of the merger of Covenanter and Seceder churches.

where the farmers went to bed at dark, there were few evening meetings; and "all that first winter," Carolyn wrote, "I could hem napkins or embroider linen" while Andrew read aloud from Lamb's *Essays* or Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*. "Often I said to myself," Carolyn continued, "This is the life! How grand to have married a minister!" But Andrew was called to the Sixth Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh in 1912 and, in that busy city, the idyllic life of the country pastorate came to an end. Blackwood faithfully served his city congregation and, for three months in 1913 (during the absence of a professor), taught Old Testament at Xenia Seminary—"very successfully," declared the faculty minutes.



First Presbyterian Church flourished under Andrew Blackwood's ministry. By 1916, there were 758 resident communicants (and 79 non-residents) and 998 enrolled in Sunday school.²⁷⁴ Dr. Blackwood later described his congregation: "The president and a third of the faculty of the State University were active in our church. Also the Columbia Theological Seminary was there. All the professors but one, and all the students came to our church. The Presbyterian College for Women was there. The president, the professors, and the students attended with us. In addition we had a good congregation of people from the city." The church maintained a bulletin board at the Southern Railroad passenger station on Lady Street, to announce its services and activities to visitors. The Sunday morning crowd was "taxing the capacity of the building." Sunday evening open air services were held in the churchyard during the summer. "Cottage prayer meetings" met in twelve locations throughout the city.

For some years the church had attempted to maintain a budget that included an equal amount for local expenses and benevolences. Once it succeeded, and for several years it had come close. In 1915, income for local expenses was \$8,200 and for benevolent causes, \$7,482. The tithe was promoted as the best way of supporting the church. The deacons stated that "we do not know that the tithe is prescribed in the New Testament, but we are certain that modern Christians should do no less than ancient Hebrews." From time to

²⁷⁴ By this time, Presbyterians in Columbia had fallen far behind other denominations in numbers. According to a 1916 survey, seventy-four per cent of Richland County residents over the age of ten were church members. There were 15,884 Baptists (12,479 were black) and 9,301 Methodists (3,878 were black). Far behind, with less than 1,600, were Lutherans, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Catholics in that order. Moore, *Columbia*, pp. 329, 330.

time, the session expressed concern about various schemes to raise money used by some of the church's organizations. It recommended "pure giving" for the support of "distinctly religious work," while recognizing that other "worthy means" might be appropriate for social and philanthropic purposes.

Under President McClintock, enrollment at the College for Women reached three hundred; but financial support was precarious. After an attempt to unite the school with the University of South Carolina failed, the twenty-five-year-old college—and its eighty-thousand-dollar debt—was taken over by the Synod of South Carolina and, in 1915, merged with Chicora College of Greenville on the Columbia campus. This brought back to Columbia the Reverend and Mrs. Samuel Craig Byrd. Wilhelmina Cozby grew up in Sumter County, South Carolina, where her father, a native of Liberty County, Georgia, was pastor of Mount Zion Presbyterian Church. She studied at Augusta Female Institute (later Mary Baldwin College) in Virginia and came to the College for Women in Columbia as its first professor of Latin. There she met Samuel Byrd, a student at Columbia Seminary. They were married and moved to New Orleans—where Samuel became assistant pastor to Benjamin Morgan Palmer at First Presbyterian Church. Later, Samuel Byrd taught at Columbia Seminary and served as pastor of the old Sion Presbyterian Church in Winnsboro. In 1906 he was elected president of Greenville's Chicora College, and Mrs. Byrd served as dean and professor of Bible. Many friends welcomed them back to Columbia in 1915. Samuel filled the pulpit at First Presbyterian from time to time, and Wilhelmina conducted Bible classes in the church and throughout the state. The College for Women had a special place in the life of First Presbyterian. Its faculty and students were part of the church family. Its baccalaureate services and other special functions were held at the church. In one of her letters of thanks to the session, President McClintock stated that she realized that it was "asking much of some of the members to ask them to give up their pews"!

United States President Woodrow Wilson returned to Columbia on September 18, 1916—not as president but as a sorrowing brother—to bury his only sister, Annie Josephine (Mrs. George) Howe. He stopped at the chapel of the seminary, where he had accepted Christ as a boy back in 1873. "I feel as though I ought to take off my shoes,"

he commented. "This is holy ground."²⁷⁵ President Wilson talked early in his administration of establishing a winter White House in Columbia—at his boyhood home on Hampton Street—but nothing ever came of the idea.²⁷⁶

In the spring of 1917, after much discussion and considerable opposition, the women of First Presbyterian Church decided to disband their existing societies and organize a new Women's Auxiliary according to the General Assembly's plan. Mrs. J. O. Reavis was its first president, followed by Mrs. N. G. Gonzales. When Mrs. Gonzales went into YWCA war work, Mrs. O. Y. Owings became leader of the auxiliary, then Mrs. G. A. Wauchope. During 1918 the Westminster Society, which was the young women's organization, became a chapter of the Women's Auxiliary. The auxiliary became active in the Red Cross and in social work among the soldiers at the new Camp Jackson. It played a leading part in a citywide movement for systematic Bible study. One of the women active in the former Ladies' Church Society and the new auxiliary was Gustavia Jones (Mrs. Jacob) Gray. For years Gussie Gray visited new mothers and babies with love and greetings from the Sunday school and church. It was said that "she loved all babies—sick or well, clean or dirty, rich or poor." All her life she continued this work, filling out her last cradle roll certificate as she sat propped up among her pillows.

During the summer of 1917, union services were held with Washington Street Methodist Church. J. H. McConkey and S. D. Gordon (famous for his devotional books entitled "Quiet Talks") were guest preachers at First Presbyterian Church during the year. In December, R. L. Moore resigned as superintendent of the Sunday school; he died early in January. A medical doctor, Moore, according to the session, possessed the "ability to win the love of little children." Mr. J. W. Simpson replaced Dr. Moore as superintendent.

Andrew Blackwood was a popular preacher, although he had maintained what he called "one unfortunate tendency" from his debating days in college. A teacher at the University of South Carolina who regularly heard Blackwood preach told him that he was "arguing"

²⁷⁵ Mulder, *Woodrow Wilson*, p. 38.

²⁷⁶ Helen Graham McMaster led a movement that resulted in saving, restoring, and furnishing the house as a memorial to Woodrow Wilson.

with his people. "So I was," Blackwood said, "until I learned better." In 1914, Andrew Blackwood wrote an article on homiletics, entitled "The Social Message of Micah," for *The Union Seminary Review*. It related the message of Micah to his times and issued an appeal for similar preaching to meet modern needs. "Woe to us if we sit with voices dumb while all about us the poor are crying out beneath burdens," the young minister wrote. "The age demands the social prophet." This was the first of a number of articles published during his Columbia time—writings which proved to be the beginnings of his numerous books on Bible exposition, preaching, and pastoral theology.

Andrew Blackwood's first book, *The Prophets: Elijah to Christ*, was published in 1917. He later described an experience which led to this book. Writing in the third person, he explained:

One day the parson was preaching about heavenly recognition. He insisted that in the other world we shall not only recognize those whom we have known and loved on earth; we shall likewise know and love the men of the Bible, such as Hosea and Amos. The next day one of the deacons said to the minister: "Don't you think it will be embarrassing for me to meet the Minor Prophets and have to confess that I have never read one of their books? I wish you would tell me how to read Amos and Hosea."

"The parson" prepared a series of evening sermons on the prophets for his Columbia congregation, which he delivered again at the Montreal Bible Conference and then published in a book for lay people.

Dr. Blackwood studied the great preachers of the past and their sermons, "seeking the source of their power." Aware of the preaching heritage of First Presbyterian Church, he wrote, "In Columbia we often ask the secret of the power of the three mighties, Thornwell, Palmer, and Girardeau." One of their secrets, he discovered, was that "each of them was a doctrinal preacher." Benjamin Palmer, especially, impressed his successor. "If we study the sermons of Palmer themselves," he wrote, "we quickly agree that this man adorned his doctor's degree."

Dr. Blackwood soon became one of the best-known preachers in Columbia and in the Southern Presbyterian Church. Students especially were attracted by his preaching. He did not speak particularly to them, he wrote, "but tried to address them as ordinary human beings"—adding that the "experience of trying to make preaching clear to boys and girls and helpful to university students was a postgraduate school in the significance of simplicity"! His early sermon titles re-

vealed his attempt to attract attention and interest—including “Is the Whale the Hero in the Book of Jonah?” and “A Wild Young Fellow’s Temptation.”²⁷⁷

First Presbyterian’s pastor also took seriously the work of visitation and counseling. Every weekday, from nine in the morning until two o’clock, he gave himself to his study and books. The afternoons he spent in calling—but not until after the late South Carolina dinner, which was the main meal of the day. He observed what he called “the pastor’s hour,” when he would be present in his study at the church for people to come with their problems and needs.²⁷⁸ Dr. Blackwood took an interest in the life of the city—visiting principals of schools, city librarians, and those responsible for the maintenance of playgrounds, as well as newspaper editors and city officials. He called on new pastors in town or sent a friendly letter of welcome. Mrs. Blackwood worked with girls and businesswomen. She formed groups for Bible study, which also sponsored socials, and became involved in community service.

Dr. Blackwood taught at Columbia Seminary as “Special Lecturer on selected portions of the English Bible.” Often the seminary students would confer with him about their sermons. He also taught Bible at the University of South Carolina, which awarded him the honorary doctor of divinity degree in 1918.



War with Germany was declared on April 6, 1917. Four months later a group of Columbia businessmen pledged \$50,000 toward the purchase of a large area of wooded sand-hill land five miles east of the city, for a Federal military site. Called Camp Jackson (in honor of Andrew Jackson, who was born on the North Carolina-South Carolina border), the hastily constructed army base eventually had over 40,000 soldiers. Downtown Columbia was filled with khaki-clad men, and military parades entertained young and old. The city joined in fundraising drives and Red Cross work and entertained the troops, many of whom joined the American expeditionary forces under General John J. Pershing. First Presbyterian Church adopted a “War Time Membership Affiliate Plan” and ministered to the soldiers. A Sol-

²⁷⁷ Jay Adams writes that Dr. Blackwood at a later time doubtless would have disowned these titles for their somewhat sensational quality, their length, and their lack of emphasis upon God. Adams, *Blackwood*, p. 66.

²⁷⁸ For Dr. Blackwood’s ministerial practice, see his *Pastoral Work: A Source Book for Ministers* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1945), and his many other books.

diers' Room was opened, with reading and writing material, and every Saturday evening an open house was held in Smith Memorial Chapel. Evening collections during the winter of 1917 were given to "war work."

The winter months of 1917-1918 brought the coldest weather in two decades. As spinal meningitis spread to Columbia in early 1918, schools, theaters, and churches were shut tight during February. May 30, 1918, was observed as a day for "public fasting and prayer" for the city, state, and nation. An influenza epidemic closed all churches in October. Early in 1919 the First Presbyterian Church building was used by a doctor for a lecture on health. During 1919 a number of the church's offerings went to "the Armenian sufferers." On June 14, 1919, the Honorable William Jennings Bryan gave an address at First Presbyterian. Evangelist Gypsy Smith preached on December 21, 1919. At Christmas, the church held a "White Gift Christmas Program" and sent gifts to the children of various South Carolina orphanages. In February 1920 the Women's Auxiliary gave a reception for the Reverend and Mrs. Pierre W. DuBose before their departure for mission work in China.

First Presbyterian Church conducted special evangelistic services April 13-20, 1920. Dr. Blackwood's Sunday sermons and daily prayer meetings prepared the congregation for the coming of Dr. John McNeill, noted Scottish preacher, now pastor of the South Highland Presbyterian Church of Birmingham, Alabama. The meetings were advertised, the session recorded, in "an effective but dignified way." A large choir, which included some of the best musicians from the various churches of the city, was trained. The church was packed—the aisles were filled with chairs and the steps of the gallery occupied. Dr. McNeill, described as "a man of the bearded and leonine type, of massive form like Moody and Spurgeon," charmed the congregation with his Scottish accent and anecdotes. The session believed that Dr. McNeill's preaching brought "scores to a saving knowledge of Christ" and quickened "the religious life of hundreds of professing Christians." Dr. Blackwood, always a student of preaching and preachers, described McNeill as "perhaps the greatest living preacher of biographical sermons." Dr. McNeill's sermons in Columbia, Dr. Blackwood commented, were "all powerful and more than a few masterly." Dr. Blackwood was impressed that in each sermon but one, McNeill "drew his theme directly from his chosen passage"!

In the summer of 1920, Dr. Melton Clark—after pastorates in the Carolinas—came to Columbia Theological Seminary as professor of English Bible and Pastoral Theology. He was welcomed by the First Church session back “to the church of his boyhood.” His father was Washington A. Clark; his mother was Virginia Melton. He was married to Mary Charlotte Woodrow, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. James Woodrow. In September Dr. O. Y. Owings, after long and faithful service, resigned as superintendent of the “Colored Sunday school.”

The old church building was showing signs of deterioration. There were new cracks in the walls, and the window frames and sashes were in bad condition. An architect reported to the deacons that the building was “inferior in design, workmanship and material” and recommended only “the necessary, temporary repairs.” From June until November 1920, while this work was undertaken, the church met in the nearby Columbia High School auditorium.

For years after the portico of the new State House was completed in 1907, several unused weather worn columns were left on the grounds. In 1920 Helen McMaster, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Fitz William McMaster, collected funds needed to move one of the broken columns to First Presbyterian Churchyard as a memorial to those men from the congregation of First Church who had served in the Confederate States Army. “Dedicated in pride to those who died, in gratitude to those who survived,” the monument recorded the names of eighty-six soldiers, twenty-four of whom died in the war. Mr. Fitz Hugh McMaster was the chairman of the program at the unveiling of the memorial on March 22, 1921. Dr. Thornton Whaling gave the prayer and Dr. Melton Clark, the address. The military band from Camp Jackson played “America.” Dr. R. C. Reed pronounced the benediction, and the impressive ceremony ended with the playing of taps.



In January 1921, Dr. Blackwood was called to the Indianola Presbyterian Church of Columbus, Ohio. He wrote to the Columbia congregation:

I rejoice that I have been counted worthy to labor in such a field as this, and my loftiest hope for the new field of labor is that in time it may command such an influence in the State of Ohio as this beloved First Church has long had in the State of South Carolina. I am glad that I came to be your pastor and I am finding it increasingly hard to go away. . . .

CHAPTER 15



LENGTHENING THE CORD

By 1921, First Presbyterian Church had almost nine hundred members. Its budget was nearly \$40,000, almost half of which was used for benevolences. Many of the Sunday school teachers were Chicora College faculty and students and University of South Carolina professors. In addition to the regular Sunday school classes, there was a Bible class for men taught by Professor Wardlaw and another class for young men taught by President Melton of the university. Mrs. Byrd of Chicora College taught a class for women. Church organizations included the Women's Auxiliary and circles, men's and women's Bible classes, Christian Endeavor societies for children and young people, a men's club, Boy Scouts, and, a little later, Camp Fire Girls. Boy Scouts had been a part of the church program at least as early as 1913. Troop 15 of First Presbyterian Church was chartered on February 18, 1922; G. Raymond McElveen was scoutmaster.²⁸⁰

In April 1921, a motion to sell the lot on Sumter Street (for one dollar) to Ladson Presbyterian Church—"to be used for church purposes only"—was tabled; but Ladson was given permission to use the property. In June 1921, the Committee on Church Property report-

²⁸⁰ It is believed that Troop 15 was the earliest church-sponsored Boy Scout Troop in Columbia. The Troop Committee comprised G. Raymond McElveen, S. B. McMaster, J. P. Thompson, and Wyatt Taylor. First assistant scoutmaster was Benet Poliakoff.

ed that there was inadequate space for the First Presbyterian Sunday school classes, even with the use of the now-empty manse. Alexander and George Taylor, who owned the property east of the manse on Washington Street, were willing to sell their house and lot to the church for \$22,500. The committee recommended buying the Taylor house for the manse and keeping the present manse for a Sunday school annex. "We believe that at some future time," the report read, "our successors in office would be glad to have so fine a property at their disposal." The property was purchased and the house was remodeled, at the cost of \$7,000, as the manse for the new pastor. The availability of the old manse for Sunday school classes did not solve the problem of space, however. Another committee reported to the session in 1923 that every branch of the work of the church was crowded into wholly inadequate quarters "with absolutely no room for growth."

From March 1921 to May 1922, Dr. Melton Clark served as stated supply. The church was filled for its morning services—the north gallery with the young ladies of Chicora College and the south with university and seminary students. Evening attendance averaged about five hundred. The April 1921 communion service was so large that it was necessary to continue it in the evening service. A committee of three women was appointed to assist the clerk in preparation for the quarterly communion. In 1915—after numerous discussions and delays over a period of years—the session had finally abandoned the common cup and adopted individual communion glasses. A half-gallon of wine, the women discovered, would fill 720 glasses!

The Rose Hill Presbyterian Church building was completed—on a lot given by Dr. William D. Melton, an elder at First Presbyterian and president of the University of South Carolina—and dedicated on July 3, 1921. The church had been organized on October 31, 1919, with thirty charter members. First Presbyterian was "a true Mother-church." For several years, First Church continued to support the Rose Hill church financially. A number of students and teachers from the new Columbia Bible School attended Rose Hill and helped in its Sunday school.



In February 1922 the congregation called as pastor Robert Albert Lapsley, Jr., of Tarboro, North Carolina. Robert Lapsley was born in Charleston, South Carolina, on September 19, 1884. His grandfather was Judge James Woods Lapsley of Selma, Alabama—the first ruling elder to serve as moderator of the General Assembly of the Southern

Presbyterian Church. His father was a pastor in South Carolina and Virginia and became editor of *The Earnest Worker*, a Presbyterian paper published in Richmond for teachers in adult Sunday school classes. An uncle, Samuel Norwell Lapsley, was one of the heroes of the Southern Presbyterian Church's mission in the Congo. Robert Lapsley graduated from Washington and Lee University and Union Theological Seminary in Virginia and was pastor of churches in Newton and Clarkson, North Carolina, before being called to Tarboro in 1915. In May 1922, Dr. Lapsley arrived in Columbia and began his duties at First Church.



During 1921, Presbyterian women throughout South Carolina were praying daily for a statewide revival. The synodical, meeting in Clinton in early October, overtured the synod in session at Greenville "to unite with us in an earnest campaign of prayer for a revival throughout sin-sick and blood-stained South Carolina." Urging ministers "to preach at an early date upon the sacredness of human life," the overture continued:

We believe if South Carolina is convicted of her sinfulness before God in her general lawlessness, bloodshed and varied crimes, the contrition of heart of our beloved commonwealth will be followed by a fleeing to the only Refuge and a great religious awakening will follow. If prayer is the power that we profess it to be, why not put it to the task of moving this mighty blot that rests upon our State?²⁸¹

The women added good works to their prayers. In 1922 they urged interracial ministry and harmony—far sooner than most people in the state, and even in the church, were thinking of definite action in this tense arena. The synodical reported in 1923 that "many reports showed increased interest and courage in meeting the call for help of the Negro race." The women planned a conference for black women but discovered that their proposal met with much disapproval and required "most tactful handling." They persevered, however, and in 1924 the first conference was conducted at Benedict College in Columbia. For a number of years the outstanding achievement of the synodical was this annual conference for African-American women. The South Carolina Synodical also engaged in White Cross work, pro-

²⁸¹ Gist, *Presbyterian Women*, p. 766.

viding surgical dressings, garments, and other supplies to the two Ellen Lavine Graham hospitals in China and Korea.

First Presbyterian had organized six mission churches in Columbia—Arsenal Hill, Woodrow Memorial, Eau Claire, New Brookland, Shandon, and Rose Hill. The Waverly neighborhood around Woodrow Memorial had become increasingly occupied by the growth of the two black colleges, Allen and Benedict. There was some discussion about the possibility of establishing a black Presbyterian church in the Woodrow building; but Ladson Church, which had several members in Waverly, opposed the move. Finally, in the spring of 1923, Woodrow Memorial was closed and sold to the African Methodist Episcopal denomination for \$10,000. The session wanted to use the money to perpetuate, in some suitable way, Dr. Woodrow's memory; but Mrs. Woodrow, who had provided the church building as a memorial to her husband, said that she would rather it go into the church treasury undesignated.

Beginning February 26, 1923, the famous evangelist Billy Sunday preached in Columbia twice a day for six weeks, in a specially built wooden tabernacle—known as the "Pine Temple"—south of the State House at Green and Main streets. Crowds of up to six thousand people, black and white, came day after day to hear the eight-hundred-voice choir sing and Billy Sunday preach. *The State* newspaper printed in full the evangelist's sermons, and its circulation grew by five thousand; people wrote from all over the country to subscribe. Billy Sunday's graphic content and untraditional style of preaching gripped Columbia audiences. In a sermon which was long remembered by Dr. Lapsley, Billy Sunday described what might have happened in hell one day:

A meeting was being held in a certain community, and men and women were being saved. The devil was very much perturbed over the situation and called a council of his imps to plan something to offset the work of grace. He asked for suggestions. One imp arose and said, "Your majesty, I will go into that community and tell them that it is all false. I will tell them that there is no God, no heaven, no hell, no hereafter." Satan said, "No one would believe you. You need not go." A second imp arose and said, "Your majesty, I will go

into that community and tell the people there that the Gospel is partly true, and partly false. I will tell them that there is a God and a heaven. But I will tell them that there is no hell, that God is a God of love and that He could not possibly punish the creature that He has created. I will tell them that there is nothing to be afraid of or alarmed about." The devil said, "You might find a few who would believe you, but only a few. You need not go." A third imp arose and said, "Your majesty, I will go into that community and tell the people that the Bible is true from beginning to end, that there is a God, and a hereafter, and a heaven and a hell, that there is only one way to be saved and that is by accepting Jesus Christ as Savior. But I will suggest to them that there is no hurry about it. I will suggest that they put it off." And the devil said, "Go."

As Billy Sunday pressed the gospel message upon the hearts of Columbians and South Carolinians, many responded. The "narrative" of First Presbyterian Church reported that Billy Sunday's "preaching was in the Spirit and with power . . . and in the providence of God many souls were won for Christ." The First Presbyterian elders and deacons sent letters to Billy Sunday expressing appreciation for the meetings; copies went to the Presbyterian churches in Louisville, Kentucky, where the evangelist was scheduled to preach soon. Billy Sunday replied on April 25, 1923, "The Columbia Campaign will remain one of the brightest spots in my career as an evangelist and I realize how much you and your church and your university contributed to its success." Elder Cyrus H. Baldwin helped found the Business Men's Evangelistic Club, to continue the work of the Billy Sunday meetings. Miss Mabel Briggs, who taught the Ladies' Bible Class at First Presbyterian Church for many years, began a similar club for businesswomen.

While Billy Sunday was preaching in Columbia, a small Bible school was in its second year. In the fall of 1918, Miss Emily Dick of First Presbyterian Church had gathered a group of friends, including Miss Mabel Briggs, and Miss Margaret Childs and Mrs. Pearl Stone of Washington Street Methodist, to pray for such a school. Soon another, Miss Mary Dibble, who, with her sister, had opened a letter shop in Columbia, joined the group. In May 1921, they rented a house on College Street and opened the Southern Bible Institute, finding a

leader in Dr. Robert C. McQuilkin, a minister in the Northern Presbyterian Church. After operating briefly in the Main Street Methodist Church, Columbia Bible School (as it was now called)—with seven students enrolled—moved in 1923 to one rented room in the Colonia Hotel on Hampton Street.²⁸² Dr. McQuilkin often preached at First Church and sometimes moderated session meetings in the absence of the pastor. His family joined the church. Columbia Bible School, later named Columbia Bible College, became an outstanding interdenominational school for the training of foreign missionaries.



For years, Thomas S. Bryan had been a prominent citizen of the city and a devoted worker in the church. When he was sixteen years old, he went to work in his Uncle Richard Bryan's bookstore—a landmark in Columbia that grew into one of the largest bookstores in the South. In 1900 Thomas became president of the R. L. Bryan Company. Active in the various enterprises and organizations of Columbia, he was for many years a member of the board of trustees and treasurer of Columbia Theological Seminary. At First Presbyterian Church he served as deacon, treasurer, and ruling elder, and succeeded his brother, D. Latham Bryan, as clerk of session—"the most honored position within the gift of the church," according to a session minute. His last meeting with the session took place in the state penitentiary, where the elders had gone to receive a prisoner into the membership of the church. Mr. Bryan had a special love for the Sunday school, which he served in various capacities. On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of his connection with the Sunday school, Fitz Hugh McMaster presented Mr. Bryan with "a gold-headed ebony walking cane." He said, "The Sabbath school presents to Mr. Bryan this staff, not for his support for he hath a heavenly one stronger than any that might be devised by man, and an earthly one in the love and esteem of all who know him. But as a golden symbol of the golden deeds which adorn his life and as a baton of power in the years of service which we all hope are to come."

A handsome man, with white hair and a large moustache, Thomas Bryan was married to the former Fannie Jordan of Winnsboro, where her father, the Reverend D. E. Jordan, was for twenty years pastor of the Old Sion Church. Fannie Bryan was a leader in Sunday school

²⁸² Until 1905 the Colonia Hotel was the home of Columbia College; then it became a winter haven for wealthy Northerners.

and in the devotional and prayer life of the women of First Presbyterian Church. She served as financial secretary of the Congo Building Fund. She wrote different groups and individuals throughout the church and collected \$40,000 to build homes for missionaries in the Southern Presbyterian station in the Congo. Missionary children often lived in the Bryans' large home on Pendleton Street. Later Mr. and Mrs. Bryan built a "handsome bungalow" on Marion Street, in the shadow of First Presbyterian, so that they might be close to the church. It was said that under no circumstances would Mr. Bryan "talk business, get his mail, or even open a special delivery letter on the Sabbath." He died in April 1923.

Fitz Hugh McMaster, now in frail health, thought it best to decline re-election as superintendent of the Sunday school for another year, but the church was not about to dispense with his services. When Thomas S. Bryan died, Mr. McMaster was elected clerk of session. As clerk, Mr. Bryan had prepared for the communion services. "No member of this church," the session minutes recorded, "will ever forget [Bryan's] face as he went about preparing for the communion service." "The methods I followed," Mr. McMaster later wrote, "were those practiced by him, whose loving ministrations have never been excelled."

In September 1923, Mrs. D. L. Bryan stepped off a curb and was struck and killed by a car. Daniel Flenniken, long-time elder, died that year. As a boy of fifteen, Flenniken had joined the Confederate Army and fought in the principal battles of the war, from Gettysburg to Fredericksburg. *The State* reported, "Gallant Soldier Hears Last Call," commenting that "from his entrance to the close of the Confederate tragedy he never had a furlough nor missed a day's duty." Mr. A. C. Squier also died in 1923. He had worked in the Sunday school for more than fifty years.

Dr. Lapsley was a fine preacher. His sermons appealed to all, especially young people. He loved to preach to different groups—once commenting on how thrilled he was when preaching at a Nazarene church because of its love for the Word of God. He often preached sermons on Bible characters, showing how "they [found] their help where we must find ours, in the supernatural grace of the living God."²⁸³

²⁸³ See Robert A. Lapsley, Jr., *Like as We Are* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1939).

Early in 1924, Dr. Lapsley preached a series of sermons on "Presbyterian Distinctives." He explained that as a rule, the teachings presented from the First Presbyterian pulpit were those upon which all Christians agreed. These, he said, are the gospel facts that we consider of supreme importance. There are other teachings that, though not necessary to salvation, are of concern to Presbyterians. "Some of these principles we share with other churches," he said, "but we believe we can truthfully say that they are stressed by that branch of the Presbyterian church to which we belong, more than by any other denomination." There were seven sermons in the series: Loyalty to the Whole Bible as the Word of God, Government by Elders, the Sovereignty of God, Baptism by Sprinkling, the Household Covenant, Simplicity in Worship, and the Spirituality of the Church.

Dr. Lapsley's sermons reflected his study of John Bunyan, Joseph Hall, Alexander Maclaren, George Matheson, Alexander Whyte, Clarence Edward Macartney, and G. Campbell Morgan. He especially loved Matthew Henry, a Puritan whom he considered "one of the oldest and best of Bible commentators." He was proud of his copy of Matthew Henry given to him by his father. "It went through the Charleston earthquake," he explained, "and its calfskin binding still bears the mark of that catastrophe."²⁸⁴

Dr. Lapsley was a conservative and an evangelical. He held to the teachings of the Bible and the Westminster Confession. He had no use for the teaching of evolution. "I take the Bible words at their face value," he said. "I think it happened just as the Bible says it happened. I believe God made man out of the dust of the ground; and I believe that God made the first woman out of a rib taken from the side of the first man." He regretted that ministers—even Presbyterian ministers—no longer preached about sin "as we used to preach about it." He believed that there was "no possibility of acceptance with God until our sinful hearts turn to His cross."

²⁸⁴ John Bunyan (1628-1688) was a Puritan preacher and author of the famous *Pilgrim's Progress* and other books. Joseph Hall (1574-1656) was a Church of England bishop. Alexander Maclaren (1826-1910) was the Baptist "prince of expository preachers" at Manchester, England. George Matheson (1842-1906) was a Scottish minister and hymnwriter ("O Love that wilt not let me go"). Alexander Whyte (1836-1921) was a Scottish minister, often described as the "last of the Puritans." Clarence Edward Macartney (1879-1957) was a Northern Presbyterian minister and champion of conservative theology in the denomination's fundamentalist-liberal controversy. G. Campbell Morgan (1863-1945) was the Congregationalist minister at London's Westminster Chapel. Matthew Henry (1662-1714) was author of the influential seven-volume *Commentary on the Bible*.

As the First Presbyterian Church congregation grew, it was increasingly difficult to keep up with pastoral work. The bulletin for October 14, 1923, included a notice which stated: "The congregation can help a great deal if they will come to the pastor or send for him instead of waiting for him to come to see them. As you consult your lawyer about legal affairs, and your physician about your health, take your pastor into your confidence in spiritual matters." A "church visitor" was now added to assist the pastor. The elders attempted to do their part. On November 5, 1922, Mr. W. A. Clark made six visits between 3:30 and 7:30 p.m.; a week later, he was joined by Dr. O. Y. Owings, and the two men made seven visits. They reported carefully to the pastor the situation in each home.

In 1924 the membership of First Church passed one thousand for the first time, rising to 1,135 from 992 in 1923. There were 834 students enrolled in Sunday school. The church's facilities had become worn and inadequate for its growth and ministries; the sanctuary could no longer seat the congregation; Sunday school classes were meeting in halls and stairways. During the summer, for the first time, a Daily Vacation Bible School was held at First Presbyterian Church.

Dr. Egbert W. Smith—of the Southern Presbyterian mission board and brother of former pastor Samuel Macon Smith—was in Columbia in January 1924 for the seminary's Smyth Lectures. The session invited delegates from the city's black churches to attend Dr. Smith's Sunday-night sermon at First Presbyterian Church. For thirty-five years First Presbyterian had conducted a Sunday school class for black children in the Pulaski Street section of Columbia. In 1924 there were forty-six members.

In January 1925, a special committee recommended to the session the enlargement and remodeling of the church building, the converting of Smith Memorial Chapel into an assembly hall and recreation building, and the construction of a new Sunday school building—with the cost to be financed by sale of bonds to church members. Elders and deacons immediately promised to purchase a total of \$53,700 in bonds. A congregational meeting was called for January 22 to consider the matter. Dr. Lapsley preached on Isaiah 54:2—"Lengthen Thy Cords"—and Dr. William Melton presented the report of the special committee. There was no discussion; and when

the question was called, the congregation stood without exception to adopt the plan. Later the bond issue was abandoned and funds were raised by cash donations; the session gave \$75,000. Although there were some who felt strongly that a local architect should be used, R. H. Hunt and Company of Chattanooga, Tennessee, was selected. LaFaye & LaFaye of Columbia were supervising architects; and the contractor was J. C. Heslep.

The Columbia Record reported on July 10, 1925, that Columbians watched as a "steeple jack" began at the top—"up against the very clouds"—and painted down the "tallest spire in town." He was from Darlington, the paper added, because "no Columbia painter would agree to do the job"! A serious drought plagued the South through the summer of 1925. The congregation of First Presbyterian Church petitioned the governor, Thomas G. McLeod, to call for the people of the state to unite in prayer for rain. The governor asked for prayer on Sunday, September 6, that, if consistent with God's will, "the rain shall speedily come to relieve the present distressing condition." The rains came suddenly, and many churchgoers were drenched as they left their services!

The east end of the First Presbyterian Church building was lengthened by thirty-eight feet, which necessitated building over burial plots of the DeSaussure, Elmore, Morgan, Law, Adger, and other families; permission was received from representatives of these families. Whenever the new wall covered a grave, a concrete sill was laid across the grave to support the wall. The whole area within the extended building was covered with a sheet of concrete; and a small marble tablet was placed over each grave, bearing the name of the deceased and the date of death. The gravestones and monuments were preserved and placed against the walls of the church as near as possible to their original sites. One marble grave slab was found inside the wall of the church, at the southwest corner, when the old floor was taken up. It was allowed to remain there. The inscription read: "To the memory of Mrs. Nelly Parker, the daughter of Sam. and Nelly Owings of Baltimore, who died Oct. 11th 1803, aetatis 23. She was the wife of Mr. Thos. Parker, Late of Sheffield England, now merchant in Charleston. Three years previous to her death she experienced the pardoning love of God and being faithful to her call departed in full assurance of a resurrection to Eternal Life."

The enlarged church building seated 1,250 in the main auditorium and galleries (as compared to 800 before). The floor of the auditorium was raised at the church's main entrance and sloped toward the pulpit. Granite steps were added to the front to accommodate the

raised floor, which was covered with "noiseless cork carpet." The two smaller Gothic-arched doorways flanking the tower and the main entrance were closed, leaving the lancet windows above a plain wall. New entrances were added near each of the corners in the north and south walls. The wide center aisle was replaced with two narrow aisles along the north and south walls and two main aisles to the right and left of the pulpit. The rear gallery was extended forward and the side galleries were supported by iron columns standing on brick piers. There were new windows of art glass set in metal frames. The old box pews and wooden pulpit were replaced.

On Saturday, October 3, 1925, after meeting for almost a year in the Columbia High School auditorium, the congregation returned to its church building for a special service conducted by Dr. Lapsley. *The State* reported that "unmindful of the business bustle and pleasure whirl that ordinarily characterizes a Saturday evening in Columbia, heeding not shop and moving picture and joy ride," hundreds of members and friends flocked to the remodeled First Presbyterian Church "after ten long months of exile." Under the "mellow glow of the newly installed lights suspended from the noble Gothic roof," the congregation listened as Dr. Lapsley characterized the event as a homecoming, a time of thanksgiving, an occasion for consecration, and a preparatory service. The pastor hoped for a return of the reverent attitude that the members of the congregation always had shown in the house of the Lord. He urged that all sin be put out of their lives in order that the fullest blessing might come from the special meetings to begin the next day with Charles L. Goodell of New York City—a Methodist minister and executive secretary of the Commission on Evangelism and Life Service of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America.

Dr. Goodell's plea, according to a newspaper account, "was simply for the religion of love and service centering around the Gospel of Christ." He preached the "fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man," the account continued, "in terms of culture, tolerance and warmhearted affection." Goodell stressed ecumenism—stating that there are twelve gates to heaven—enough for all. "Our Episcopalian friends will want a churchly gate," he suggested; "and I suppose you Presbyterians will want a stately gate; the Baptists will have the river gate—and if I have left anybody out they are welcome to come in at the straight and narrow gate of the Methodists!" The church was packed for the final service—with people standing in the aisles and along the walls. Dr. Goodell told the congregation that "religion isn't a matter of creed; it's a matter of life." Even though Charles

Goodell's preaching was not what First Presbyterian members were accustomed to, and certainly a far cry from the sturdy Calvinistic sermons of its nineteenth-century ministers, the session was pleased and noted that "a feeling of unusual interdenominational harmony has been fostered."

Different messages and emphases were being heard from the pulpit of First Presbyterian Church and throughout the denomination—from the ecumenical liberalism of Charles Goodell to the flamboyant revivalism of Billy Sunday and Gypsy Smith. The revivals undoubtedly did great spiritual good but tended to divorce the gospel message from theology and to separate personal piety from business, educational, and social/cultural life. The liberal message, however, replaced the gospel of sin and salvation with an emphasis on personal and social behavior. The time after World War I was a critical period in the history of American Protestantism and Southern Presbyterianism as the churches struggled to resist or embrace the new liberal teaching.²⁸⁵

A new organ built by Henry Pilcher's Sons of Louisville, Kentucky, had been installed at First Presbyterian Church during the summer of 1922. It cost \$7,000; the old organ was sold to Columbia College for \$500. In 1925, the Pilcher organ was enlarged by the M. P. Moller Company, a three-manual console added, and the pipes hidden from view by "a beautiful screen of wood carved with Gothic tracery"—the lower portion paneled and the upper portion glazed with frosted glass. The newspaper reported that it would "rank among the best in the state." An organ recital by David A. Pressley of Washington Street Methodist Church, on Thursday evening, October 15, 1925, introduced the new instrument. A chorus of thirty-six voices, accompanied by Mrs. L. B. Folk of First Presbyterian Church, sang "Glorious is Thy Name" (Mozart); "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded" (Bach); and "Unfold, Ye Portals" (Gounod).

The session now turned its attention to renovating Smith Memorial Chapel and constructing a new Sunday school building. The cost of

²⁸⁵ Douglas Kelly writes that many "churches lapsed into a broadly evangelical, man-centered type of soteriology, a lack of serious church discipline, and an all-too-frequent separation . . . between personal piety and business, educational and social/cultural life. Much of this decline from sound Calvinism in the Southern denominations occurred between approximately 1870 and 1930." Kelly, *Preachers with Power*, xxv.

remodeling the church building came to \$77,000; the cost of changes in the Samuel Macon Smith Chapel and construction of the new building was estimated at \$140,000.

The new Sunday school building was planned for the corner of Marion and Washington streets—occupied by the old manse (more recently used for Sunday school classes). To make room for the new building, the old manse was demolished and the wing of the present manse—containing the pastor's study—was moved to the rear of the manse. The cornerstone for the new building was laid on Saturday, February 20, 1926; Elder William Currell, former president of the University of South Carolina, presided. After the singing of hymns and addresses by Governor Thomas G. McLeod and Dr. Lapsley, the congregation—organized by Sunday school classes and other church groups—proceeded, singing "Onward Christian Soldiers," to the building site. Elder Washington Clark then described the articles placed in the cornerstone box—a Bible, a copy of the Westminster Confession of Faith, and various items related to the church's history.

From time to time the elders discussed the fate of the old marble pulpit that had stood in the church for many years. The architect for the new building presented a plan whereby the old pulpit could be placed as a memorial in the first-floor hallway of the new Sunday school building—at the cost of \$100. Elder S. B. McMaster donated the money, telling of "the tender memories which were associated with this pulpit from which Dr. Thornwell, Dr. Palmer, Dr. Girardeau and others had preached."

During the construction of the Sunday school building, the chairman of the Building Committee, William Davis Melton, died early on Monday, May 3, 1926. Flags at the capital flew at half-mast as the "entire State mourned the loss of one of its biggest men." Dr. Melton served as the president of the University of South Carolina from 1922 to 1926. There he "laid the groundwork for a modern institution capable of serving the interests of the entire state."²⁸⁶ Dr. Melton was a faithful member of First Presbyterian and had been active in the Billy Sunday revival—"a cause near his heart." On Tuesday afternoon, the faculty and student body marched from the university to First Church for the funeral service. Mrs. Melton gave her husband's religious library—some one hundred books—"to his beloved church for the use of the Sunday school teachers."

The new Sunday school building was first used on September 9, 1926, and a "housewarming" took place on October 15, 1926. The

²⁸⁶ Moore, *Columbia*, p. 356.

session wanted to name the building for Dr. James Woodrow, but Mrs. Woodrow did not think it best. The session then decided to call the new building simply "the First Presbyterian Sunday School" and named the chapel in the new Sunday school building for Samuel Macon Smith. The old Samuel Macon Smith Chapel was remodeled as an assembly hall and recreation building and was in use by the spring of 1927. Plans for an arcade to connect the old chapel to the new building were abandoned. The cost of the entire project—remodeling the church building and the chapel, and constructing the new Sunday school building—came to \$201,992.57: \$15,000 less than early estimates.

First Presbyterian Church could now be proud of its beautiful, functional plant. But the church would learn, in the next years, the importance of greater diligence and effort on the part of its leaders and members. Preserving, in its teaching and preaching, the truth of the Bible and maintaining Christian standards of life among its people would require enormous commitment in a time when evangelical truth was beginning to appear to many as old-fashioned and unnecessary. In 1923 the *Presbyterian Standard* warned that "there is an epidemic of heresy, not only in churches where it has shown itself at intervals in the past, but also incipient in our own ranks—and with the least encouragement it will break into open rebellion." In the next few years, a growing number of pastors and teachers within the Presbyterian Church in the United States would begin to challenge conservative views of the Bible and to abandon the doctrines of the Westminster Standards.

CHAPTER 16



THE LIGHT SHINES

In 1926 First Presbyterian Church had 22 elders, 30 deacons, and 1,210 members. Dr. Lapsley was the pastor, Mrs. Andrew Bramlett was the "pastor's assistant," or, the session minutes noted, "church secretary if you prefer the latter term." The Sunday school roll reached 849. The catechism was still taught in the Sunday school, but teachers found that it was "not usually" taught by parents to their children at home, as it was in the earlier period of the church's history. Attendance at morning worship averaged 900 (seventy-five per cent of the membership). There were 300 in the evening service and 100 at prayer meeting. Expenses came to \$68,000; only a little over \$16,000 went to benevolent causes.

With over five hundred missionaries—one of the largest missionary forces of any denomination—the Southern Presbyterian Church continued to stress the work of foreign missions. First Presbyterian, however, had not given the full asking of presbytery for foreign missions for a number of years. Dr. Lapsley suggested that instead of supporting "foreign missions" in general, as in the past, the church select individual missionaries to support, thereby providing a "personal touch." The session decided that the church would contribute to the support of Mr. and Mrs. George Hudson in Kashing, China; Miss Ruth Buchland in Nagoya, Japan; Mr. John Morrison in Luebo, Africa; and Miss Alice Genevieve Marchant in Varginha, Brazil. Miss Marchant, who had lived in Brazil during her childhood, was called

home to Columbia to care for her sick father but returned to Brazil in 1917. Mrs. Osmond Young Owings organized support for Miss Marchant as a special project of the Congaree Presbyterial Auxiliary. The need for a steamer to transport the missionaries up and down the Congo River produced an outpouring of money from the children of the Presbyterian church, and the *Lapsley* (named for Dr. Lapsley's uncle who had died pioneering the Congo mission) was provided. When the ship was wrecked, the children again responded and a new, larger *Lapsley* steamed into service.

On February 16, 1926, all the schools in the city were closed for the funeral of First Church member Miss Fannie McCants. Born in 1850, Miss McCants had become, when she was nineteen, one of the pioneer teachers in Columbia schools.

The session, on March 8, 1926, "covenanted with each other to pray for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit and for the addition of at least fifty members to the congregation" on Communion Sunday in April. The "rescue mission evangelist," Mel Trotter, came for a two-week meeting, beginning Sunday, November 14, 1926. Singing was led by Homer Hammontree, and Mr. Trotter preached twice each day, at 3:30 and 7:30 p.m. A number of people were converted during the meetings and joined the church. On Sunday, December 19, 1926, Dr. R. A. Torrey—who was in Columbia conducting a series of meetings for the YMCA—preached at First Church. Revival meetings had become an annual feature of First Church's life; but some, including Elder Fitz Hugh McMaster, had reservations about them. His objections were not recorded in the session minutes, but Mr. McMaster may have detected a different theological emphasis in the preaching of the evangelists and a willingness on the part of members to depend on these annual meetings to do the work of evangelism for the church.

In the fall of 1926, Fannie Jordan (Mrs. Thomas S.) Bryan—who had already established a mission station in Africa in memory of her husband—presented a carillon to the church as another memorial.²⁸⁷ The \$12,000-carillon was the largest single gift ever made to the church. Installed in the steeple, the chimes sounded the standard Westminster quarters and the hours. They could be played also from a small keyboard beside the organ console. "There is no tugging at

²⁸⁷ The Tubular Bell Carillon was manufactured by the J. C. Deagan Company of Chicago. Out of the five hundred carillons produced, about one hundred were still being used in 1985.

ropes," the session minutes noted, but the music is produced with "the aid of the world's great servant, electricity." The chimes were dedicated on January 16, 1927, and a bronze tablet honoring Mr. Bryan placed in the vestibule. Hymn tunes were played at mid-morning, at sunset, and on special occasions. "Old Hundredth" rang the hour of the morning service on Sunday.

The chimes marked the hours all night until the church received some complaints from neighbors. The clerk wrote the manufacturer to ask if it would damage the chimes to turn them off at night. When the company answered that there was no danger of any "burning out" if the chimes were "set to silence during the night," the session decided to shut them off from ten o'clock until seven in the morning. The operation and timing of the chimes continued to be a problem, and by 1930 they were not being used. Mrs. Bryan wrote to the session that she had given the chimes in memory of her husband and for the glory of God, and since "no silent chimes ever proclaimed the glory of God," the "tablet might better be taken down." A plan for daily playing of the chimes that satisfied Mrs. Bryan—and the neighbors—was worked out.

Music was important in the church's life. The First Presbyterian Church quartet was composed of Mrs. L. Strasburger, soprano; Miss Mary Chreitzburg, contralto; Dr. P. V. Mikell, tenor; and Mr. Irwin Sutphen, bass. There was considerable competition among the Columbia churches for outstanding singers. On one occasion, session members met with representatives of "the musical interests in the four congregations in the heart of Columbia" to discuss the problem of one church negotiating directly with a singer already employed by another. The Music Committee of the session had frequent advice for the choir, on one occasion requesting that it include at least one "gospel hymn" at each Sunday morning service. After considerable discussion, the session gave permission for the use of a violin and cornet in the Sunday school.

At the end of 1926, Ida Hendrix (Mrs. L. B.) Folk resigned after almost fifty years as the church's organist. She had sung in the choir as a girl of fifteen and had become organist when she was seventeen—replacing Mrs. Tappan, whose husband served as choir director. (The Tappans lived in the North but came to Columbia every winter for Mrs. Tappan's health; accomplished musicians, they gave their time to the church without cost.) The gifted Ida Folk could play or transpose music at sight. She often performed with the local symphony and also worked as the organist in a theatre on Main Street. The most popular hymns at First Presbyterian Church during Mrs.

Folk's time were "Nearer My God to Thee," "Rock of Ages," and "Lead, Kindly Light."

Mr. Fred Howard Parker, of the music faculty of Chicora College, became organist and choir director at First Presbyterian Church on January 1, 1927. Fred Parker grew up in Johnston in Edgefield County, where, at age fourteen, he became organist at the Johnston Baptist Church. He earned several degrees—a bachelor's degree in science, a master's degree in art from the University of South Carolina, and a bachelor's degree in music from Chicora College, under the tutelage of Dr. Henry Bellaman. He later studied at some of the outstanding music schools in the United States and Europe, including the School of Sacred Music at Union Theological Seminary in New York City. In 1930 he became chairman of the Department of Music at Columbia College. When, in July 1934, Fred Parker married Carolyn Patterson—voice teacher at Chicora College and later at Columbia College—the session and the diaconate voted "to co-operate in a movement to give him a wedding present." Just after their marriage, the Parkers moved their membership to First Presbyterian Church.

Mr. Parker began immediately to build a volunteer choir around the solo quartet. This was a valuable addition to the worship service, except for the distracting effect of bright, colorful dresses and large flowered hats that faced the congregation each Sunday. Several discussions about a "vested choir" divided the session; the majority approved the change. The problem was money. Finally a petition from twenty-one choir members asking permission to use robes—which they themselves promised to provide—was approved unanimously. Two choir members—Mrs. Charles J. Cate, Sr., and Mrs. Irwin Sutphen—borrowed enough money to buy academic robes and mortarboard caps, which they paid for by renting them each year to University of South Carolina seniors at commencement time. Crisp white cotton cottas were purchased to wear over the black robes. Mrs. Wheeler, a dear, gentle woman with a large family, came to Mr. Parker one day and said, "I haven't much money to contribute to the church, and I cannot sing in the choir; but I can wash and iron well, so I would like to keep the cottas clean." Mrs. Wheeler boiled the cottas in a big iron washpot in her back yard, lightly starched them, hung them in the sunshine to dry, and returned them spotless and freshly ironed. One choir member—Miss Alice Lee Burkette—loved the choir robes so much that she requested that she be buried in her robe—and left a bequest for its replacement! Mrs. Cate and her daughter Geraldine organized a youth choir, which had twenty-four active members in 1930.

In addition to its usual items of business, the session dealt with various occasional topics. Declining the gift of hand fans with advertisements for use in the church, the elders requested the deacons to buy a sufficient number of plain fans. A few years later, it was decided to permit the use of fans with advertising if the advertisement was suitable for a church! A variety of views on the use of fermented wine in the communion service were expressed, but no one opposed grape juice.

In 1927 there were 1,145 members. An incomplete analysis revealed that among the women members, there were forty-eight stenographers, forty-eight teachers, sixteen businesswomen, and nine nurses. Sixty-seven First Church men were owners of businesses; forty-eight were clerks; thirty-three were salesmen; twenty-three, professors; twenty-two, lawyers; seventeen, railroad men; sixteen, doctors; fifteen, mechanics; and four were farmers.

The Women's Auxiliary conducted mission-study classes and held prayer days for missions. They sent 4 surgeon's coats and 108 three-yard bandage rolls to the Ellen Graham Hospital in Korea. Fifteen circles held meetings and engaged in social work. The Good Fellowship Club for men met regularly. The recreation building was the site of many basketball games between the First Presbyterian team and other church teams. When the church men were not playing, the "boys from the Bible school" were allowed use of the building.

On Friday afternoon, March 4, 1927, women of the churches of Columbia met at First Presbyterian to pray for one hour for "the evangelization of the world"—part of a day of prayer "to girdle the earth with a band of intercession." On Sunday, March 27, J. Gresham Machen of Princeton Theological Seminary, who had come to Columbia to give the seminary's Smyth Lectures, preached at the morning service. Beginning on Monday night, Dr. Machen delivered his lectures on "The Virgin Birth of Christ" in the Smith Memorial Chapel.

The last commencement of Columbia Theological Seminary in Columbia took place in 1927. The seminary was ending its ninety-ninth year of existence, ninety-seven of which were spent in Columbia. When the seminary was founded, South Carolina and Georgia had formed one synod of five presbyteries. There were now five synods—Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, and South Carolina—which owned and operated the school. As early as 1887, there were proposals to move the seminary to Atlanta. In the early 1920s the

Synod of South Carolina had discussed the possibility of relocating the seminary or merging it with Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Virginia. First Presbyterian Church did all it could to prevent such a move. A resolution from the session to the seminary directors on October 21, 1923, stated:

It is with profound regret that we, the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Columbia learn of the movement to remove from our bounds that time-honored and beloved institution, the Columbia Seminary. The Seminary is virtually a child of this congregation, and is strongly rooted in the memories and affections of all our people. To remove it from its present location would be a disastrous blow to Presbyterians in our church and capital city.

In 1924, however, the Synod of South Carolina—facing the financial pressures of keeping the school open—approved the move of the seminary. Presbyterians in the Atlanta area donated a site of forty acres and provided \$250,000 for buildings; the Synod of Georgia promised an additional \$250,000. During the school year 1926-1927—its last year in Columbia—the seminary enrolled sixty-two students.

The First Presbyterian Church bulletin of April 24, 1927, announced, "with heartfelt and mingled feelings, . . . the last commencement service of Columbia Theological Seminary that will be held in this church." The next Sunday, May 1, Dr. W. M. McPheeters presided at the baccalaureate. That evening the annual missionary address was given under the auspices of the Society of Missionary Inquiry. On Tuesday evening, Dr. Richard T. Gillespie—who had been serving as president since January 1925, succeeding Dr. John M. Wells—was inaugurated as president of the seminary. (Wells had followed Dr. Thornton Whaling, who was president from 1911 to 1921.) On Wednesday, May 4, commencement exercises were held as usual in First Presbyterian Church. A reception for the faculty, students, families, and friends followed in the newly renovated recreation hall, which was decorated with pink roses, hollihocks, and pine boughs. Receiving guests were Dr. and Mrs. Lapsley, Dr. and Mrs. Gillespie, Mr. Fitz Hugh McMaster—clerk of the session—and Mrs. McMaster, Mr. E. S. Cardwell—chairman of the board of deacons—and Mrs. Cardwell, and Mr. W. A. Clark—senior elder. Nostalgia and sadness accompanied the old seminary's move away from Columbia. For many years, the church had given a reception each fall for the seminary faculty and students. It had supported the seminary with its

prayers and money. It had drawn on the seminary for supply preachers and Sunday school teachers. Lectures and special services of the seminary were held in the church's buildings—enriching the congregation and the city with solid Bible teaching and historic Reformed theology.

In August 1927 the seminary moved to its new campus in Decatur, Georgia. The Columbia campus was used as a school for missionary children for a few years, until it was purchased by Columbia Bible College, which already owned the old Colonia Hotel a block away.²⁸⁸



Elder J. A. Stoddard, professor at the University of South Carolina, was now Sunday school superintendent at First Presbyterian Church. The session elected both the officers and teachers of the Sunday school. Among the teachers in the young people's department was Dr. Havilah Babcock, the noted English professor and author.

First Presbyterian Church continued to conduct services for black children in its mission on Pulaski Street. The superintendent was Samuel Livingstone Miller, who, "with what assistance he could get, gathered a group of children every Sunday afternoon and instructed them in the Christian religion." A number of these "scholars" showed "an intelligent grasp of their duties and responsibilities." The session discussed whether or not several of these children might become members of First Presbyterian, but most of the congregation thought that it was better for them to join Ladson until a church could be established at Pulaski Street. The Pulaski mission, however, did not flourish; the work was closed and the building sold for \$800 in 1932.

On October 4, 1926, the deacons signed a petition to City Council for the paving of Washington Street. The Church Property Committee decided to remove the iron hitching posts in front of the church. In June 1927 the deacons signed another petition for the paving of Lady, Marion, and Bull streets. On March 4, 1929, they requested that the city move sidewalk dirt from the high place on Bull Street to fill in the low place on Lady Street. The streets were eventually paved and property owners assessed for the work. In February 1932 the church still owed \$1,092.46.

²⁸⁸ After 1959, when Columbia Bible College moved to a 300-acre campus on Monticello Road, three miles north of Columbia, the old Ainsley Hall building, which had housed both Columbia Seminary and Columbia Bible College, was beautifully restored by the Historic Columbia Foundation. It is now known as the Robert Mills House.

During 1927 and 1928 a number of long-time members of First Presbyterian Church died. Mrs. Albert M. Withers died on October 4, 1927. For many years she had brought flowers for the pulpit and taken them to the sick after the Sunday services. The session placed an inscribed tablet at the front of the pulpit, where her flowers had always stood, which read: "In memory of Lidie Heyward Withers. She bore flowers to His altar." Later that month, Captain "Boney" Chase died. For over forty years he had been the passenger conductor on the Southern Railroad train between Columbia, Spartanburg, and Asheville.

Threats of city life became more obvious when, on January 23, 1928, thirty-three-year-old attorney William D. Dickey stepped "from a jitney which had stopped on the opposite side of the street from his home, started across the street, and was struck by a car." Dr. Lapsley conducted his funeral. On June 13, 1928, General D. W. McLaurin died. He had served for four years with Lee's army in northern Virginia during the War Between the States and was wounded three times. He was an elder in the Presbyterian church for over fifty years but a member at First Presbyterian Church in Columbia for a short time only. Louis T. Wilds died on June 29, 1928. Developer of the town of Eau Claire, Mr. Wilds was an elder at First Presbyterian for over thirty years. Mr. and Mrs. Wilds had thirteen children, many of whom went into the full-time service of the Presbyterian church as ministers and missionaries. On September 8, 1928, Frank E. Sims died. Mr. Sims, who at one time served as a member of General Wade Hampton's bodyguard, was described as "a gentleman of the old school, a true type of the old Southern aristocracy." On September 17, 1928, Dr. Andrew Charles Moore died. He had been a distinguished biologist at the university, former dean and twice acting-president, and chairman of the Columbia City School Board for twenty-five years. City schools closed and the university postponed its opening until after the funeral. *The State* reported that Dr. Moore, a long-time elder at First Presbyterian Church, was "a Christian who practiced his religion in his everyday life." The funeral was at the old Nazareth Church in Spartanburg County. A delegation from Columbia, including Dr. Lapsley, went up for the service on September 19 and caught "the Carolina Special" train back home.

Felie Baker Woodrow, the ninety-one-year-old widow of the late James Woodrow and the aunt of Woodrow Wilson, lived in her house on the corner of Sumter and Washington streets.²⁸⁹ Years earlier

²⁸⁹ The Woodrow house became the Columbia Public Library in 1929.

when electric lights came into use, Mrs. Woodrow had given a light for the northwest corner of the churchyard. Now confined to her home, she smiled and said, "I am so glad my light shines to light other people to prayer meeting, and I have made provision in my will that it shall shine for many years to come." On December 10, 1928, Mrs. Woodrow died. According to *The State*, she was "one of Columbia's best beloved women." Her daughter, Jennie Wilson Woodrow Woodbridge, one of the first women admitted to South Carolina College, served with her husband as a missionary in China.

In 1928, sessional committees included pulpit supply, church music, church attendance, welcome, religious education, visitation of the sick, evangelism, college relations, and young people's work. The church was facing pressing financial needs, having struggled to pay the interest and installment due on its bonds. Nonetheless, the session voted to raise \$1,660 for Presbyterian College "if possible"—part of the \$48,000 needed to keep the college open for another year. An every-member canvass was adopted, as the session attempted to make a more earnest effort "to lay the matter of stewardship upon the hearts of our members." The church "has not one penny of income except what is contributed," the minutes stated. The church debt (as of April 1, 1930) was \$176,884.59.

First Presbyterian Church invited Baptist evangelist Gypsy Smith to hold meetings in Columbia for two weeks, beginning November 25, 1928. During the first week, Mr. Smith preached every morning at the educational institutions of Columbia and at First Presbyterian in the evenings. There were noon meetings at the Imperial Theater and evening meetings at the church during the second week. A special meeting for Negroes was conducted at First Church. Dr. Lapsley welcomed the 1,600 people who jammed the church, apologizing that he did not have more time to tell them "how much we welcome you here." Gypsy Smith preached on "the new birth" from John 3:3. *The State* newspaper reported that "the evangelist was preaching with so much fervor that a woman screamed and a few others cried out 'amen.'" When people began looking around to see what was happening, the evangelist said, "There is no need of any one here putting on airs. If any one wants to give vent to his feelings let him cry out. Let him shout. If it is right to shout in shacks back yonder in your communities it is just as right that you praise God right here in the First Presbyterian Church of Columbia. Don't turn up your nose and sneer because some would praise God here in their own way. The doctrine of the new birth that Christ taught Nicodemus is being preached today and all of us, if we are to see God's kingdom, must be born again."

Late in 1928 the session began to discuss the possibility of the rotation plan for church officers. Some elders vehemently resisted the proposed change as inconsistent with the Form of Government. The number of elders was increased to 27 and deacons to 32, with elections held from a session-approved list of male members of the church. Membership in 1929 reached 1,266. There were 1,015 enrolled in Sunday school. The Business Women's Circle of the Women's Auxiliary had more than a hundred names on its roll. The church budget was \$56,021; \$11,025 of this amount was designated for benevolences.

In November 1928, Dr. Lapsley received a call to the First Presbyterian Church of Chattanooga, Tennessee. He told the Columbia session "how perplexed he was by the call and disturbed in spirit." The elders recommended that he make a quick trip to Chattanooga before deciding and expressed their hope that he would decline the call, "to stay with us and continue the great work [you have] been doing for [your] Master and ours in our church and the whole community." Dr. Lapsley visited the Chattanooga church and preached twice. He was impressed with "the size of the field." When he declined the call to Chattanooga—with its \$7,500-a-year salary—most of the elders and deacons voted to raise his salary from \$5,000 to \$6,000. Some dissented, however; and there was considerable discussion of the matter in the congregation, until Dr. Lapsley requested that his salary remain \$5,000—the amount he received during his entire ministry at the church.

On Sunday, January 20, 1929, afternoon vesper services from First Presbyterian Church were broadcast over the radio—the first time in the history of the city that such a broadcast had taken place. Over 250 phone calls and letters reached the church from listeners as far away as Kingstree and Florence. Mr. Parker gave a half-hour organ recital, without compensation, after each vesper service, reducing the cost of the radio broadcast to ten dollars a service. The Wednesday evening prayer meeting, now held in the Smith Memorial Chapel, was well attended. One faithful member was overheard saying to a friend, "We had better hurry or we will not get a good seat."

The church grounds had been much neglected. In the spring of 1915, a churchyard committee of women had taken matters in hand, planning and directing work to reset gravestones, build a new wire fence, remove some dozen large trees, and plant crepe myrtles, oleanders, dogwood trees, and running roses. The \$300 the session had appropriated for the churchyard was cut to \$100, however, and the grounds were again neglected. In 1929 a women's organization was

formed, with forty members contributing six dollars a year to create a perpetual-care system. Mrs. David Reid Flenniken took a personal interest in this project until her death at the age of eighty-seven in 1933—the result of a fall as she supervised work in the churchyard.

Late in 1928 Mrs. Bramlett, the church secretary, resigned; and the next May the Reverend John MacEachern was chosen as the pastor's assistant and paid \$150 a month. Mr. MacEachern, a graduate of Columbia Seminary in 1911, had served as a missionary in Kunsan, Korea, from 1912 to 1928. He supplied the New Brookland church while working at First Presbyterian. His report to the session for the 1930-1931 church year indicated that he preached 94 times, conducted 48 prayer meetings, and made 141 hospital calls and 1,282 pastoral visits. He apologized for his report, saying that ten days of illness had hindered his work! The session noted the marked decrease of church attendance by university students. Causes for the decline, it decided, were availability of other activities, lack of visitation by pastors and elders, and "antitheological intellectualism."

The old church building which had suffered from storm and fire faced another problem. Termites made news in the July 16, 1929, issue of *The State* paper: "Ants Eat Floors Away in Presbyterian Church. New Section of Edifice Torn up for Repairs as Flying Insects who Thrive in Decaying Wood Take Charge of Historic Building." These "ants," the paper reported, are "apparently kin to the destructive white ants of the Southern Hemisphere." The old part of the church was not affected; but the new part, constructed in 1925, was "almost eaten away." The church was again closed as contractors repaired the damage and attempted "to eradicate the pests with new materials."



After the war, a false prosperity introduced the hectic boom of the twenties. Columbia's youth—like young people in the rest of the country—"seemed totally serious about the pursuit of pleasure." A vast construction project was begun in April of 1927, which would, in three years, create Lake Murray. The huge dam and one of the world's largest power reserves cost twenty million dollars and provided employment for thirty-five hundred workers. But with the "Great Depression"—which came to South Carolina early because of falling cotton prices and the destructive boll weevil—thousands throughout the state struggled to survive. On October 24, 1929—"Black Thursday"—prices collapsed on the New York Stock Exchange. Because only a handful of Columbians "had the wherewithal to dabble in

stocks and bonds," most, probably, paid more attention to the "Big Thursday" football game at the state fair, won by Clemson, 21 to 14!²⁹⁰ But the hard times were soon felt by almost everyone, including the members of First Presbyterian Church.

On December 12, 1929, the church Christmas concert was given by the University of South Carolina Symphony Orchestra (the session stipulating that all music, including carols, be "of a churchly type"). During the first week of 1930, Presbyterian minister Homer Hammontree, the song leader during the Mel Trotter meetings of 1926, preached each evening at the church, in meetings especially planned for the young people.

On February 24, 1930, Porter A. McMaster, Columbia attorney and son of Colonel F. W. McMaster, died; three days later his sister Helen Graham McMaster died, also of pneumonia. Miss Helen, as she was called, carried on with her usual vigor and love of life until the end. She was a teacher who always included in her teaching, *The State* reported, "the Bible and the Confederacy"!

Economic depression greatly affected the church's ability to carry on its ministry. Dr. Lapsley's request that the session authorize purchase of four electric fans for use in the sanctuary in the hot summer weather barely passed, five votes to four; the minority argued that all church bills should be paid first. The session explored every possible way of saving money. Dr. Reed Smith argued, though, that the choir budget should not be cut. It had taken five years to build up the choir, he said, and First Presbyterian now had the best music in the city.

Chicora College also was experiencing difficulty. The First Presbyterian Church session attempted to help despite its own problems. Chicora began a two-million-dollar campus in Shandon but, after building a few homes for professors, abandoned the project and merged, in 1930, with Queen's College in Charlotte. On October 6, 1930, an appeal was made to the session for Presbyterian College. The state of South Carolina had already lost Columbia Seminary and Chicora College within a few years, and now Presbyterian College was threatened.

In September 1930, Dr. Lapsley was called to the First Presbyterian Church of Roanoke, Virginia. He accepted the call, leaving Colum-

²⁹⁰ Moore, *Columbia*, p. 336.

bia on October 26 with deep regret after eight and a half years of ministry. "I have never found in my experience as a minister such faithfulness and support," he said, "as I have found in the session of this church." During Dr. Lapsley's ministry, First Presbyterian was probably the most popular and influential church in the city. A civic-minded pastor who was interested in all aspects of the city's life, Dr. Lapsley rarely missed the "Big Thursday" football game between Carolina and Clemson each October during "Fair Week." His jolly personality appealed to young and old. More important, Dr. Lapsley was a good minister who preached the Bible without compromise and worked hard to uphold the Reformed faith.²⁹¹

A committee of three—clerk of session, chairman of the board of deacons, and president of the Women's Auxiliary—selected twelve church members to conduct the search for the next pastor. Dr. John McSween, president of Presbyterian College; Dr. Robert C. McQuilkin, president of Columbia Bible College; Dr. Davison McDowell Douglas, president of the University of South Carolina; Dr. Thornton Whaling, professor of theology at Columbia and Louisville seminaries and now retired in Columbia, supplied the pulpit while the committee looked for a new pastor.

²⁹¹ Dr. Lapsley served the First Presbyterian Church of Roanoke, Virginia, for more than twenty-one years. He became the city's best-known radio preacher and, after his retirement, conducted a popular Sunday morning radio program called "Grandfather's Chair." He died on May 22, 1953.

CHAPTER 17



THE OLD FIRST

In February 1931, Dr. James Wyly Jackson, pastor in Greenwood, South Carolina, was called to First Presbyterian Church in Columbia. James Jackson had been born in Gate City, Virginia, on July 10, 1893. He graduated from Emory and Henry College in 1914 and became a high school teacher and coach in Lynnville, Tennessee. After serving in the army in World War I, he enrolled at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary—wearing his army uniform! In 1920 he married Alice Victoria Stewart of Metropolis, Illinois. Alice, a graduate of the University of Wisconsin, taught school in Oklahoma and then in Lynnville. After completing seminary in 1921, Jackson served Presbyterian churches in Tennessee and Florida before coming to First Presbyterian in Greenwood in 1926. A scholarly preacher, he studied for several summers at the University of Chicago Divinity School. On June 3, 1930, he was awarded the doctor of divinity degree by Presbyterian College.

When First Church called Dr. Jackson, Mr. Fitz Hugh McMaster wrote urging him to accept the call, explaining that “our congregation is strictly fundamental.” A few days later, Dr. Jackson received a letter from Mrs. Thomas S. Bryan, stating that she had belonged “to the Old First” for more than forty years and that she knew “no more united body of believers.” “Should you answer our call in the affirmative,” she continued, “I feel sure you can lead us as willing sheep into new pastures and beside still waters.” Dr. Jackson accepted the call.

The Jacksons did not move into the old manse on the church property but rented, and later ²⁹²purchased, a house at 2903 Millwood Avenue in the Shandon area.

Early in Dr. Jackson's ministry several long-time elders died. *The State* reported on August 19, 1931: "Death Takes Six Elders in Seven Months"—adding, in a subtitle, "All of them Substantial, Upright Citizens." Asa C. Squier died on January 21, 1931. A member of First Presbyterian Church since his baptism in 1851, Mr. Squier served as a deacon and elder and for over sixty years was an officer in the Sunday school. Washington Augustus Clark, an elder for forty-five years, died on March 7. The session's minutes noted that "in every sense he was a true elder, in brotherly love, in the entertainment of strangers, as a doer of the Word, in keeping himself unspotted from the world, patient under suffering, pure in heart, merciful, letting his light shine, but not letting his right hand know what his left hand did. He walked in the perfect law of liberty."

Jacob T. Gray died on April 3; and on June 20, Walter S. Neil was found dead in his automobile submerged beneath the waters of Pelion Mill Pond in Lexington County. He had left his office to "see how the bream were biting," promising to be back in a short time. A heart attack apparently caused him to lose control of his car, which plunged into the pond. An avid sportsman, Mr. Neil loved fishing and was the star player of the Neil baseball team, an organization composed entirely of Neils!

Davison McDowell Douglas, president of the University of South Carolina, died on August 1. Dr. Douglas came to the university from the presidency of Presbyterian College. He worked to beautify the Carolina campus and to improve the quality of the university's education. T. Hasell Dick died on August 15. Born in 1861 at his father's Sumter County plantation, Myrtlemore, Mr. Dick was a hearty supporter of Columbia Bible College. He died in Asheville, where he had gone hoping the mountain climate would be beneficial to his health. A few days before his death, a group of elders had made the trip to Asheville to visit their friend.

Eight new elders were elected in 1933 and ten more the next year to serve with Dr. Jackson on the session of First Presbyterian Church.

²⁹² In 1958 the Jacksons bought the house at 3024 Kershaw Street, a few blocks from their first Columbia home on Millwood Avenue.

Columbians trekked to the new farmers' market on Assembly Street during the spring and summer to get fresh corn, beans, sweet potatoes, peaches, and watermelons. On June 9, 1931, the session held its regular monthly meeting at the Goodwill Plantation of Elder S. B. McMaster "on the third story open air piazza of his lodge." The occasion was the twenty-first annual fish fry that Mr. McMaster provided for the elders and deacons of First Presbyterian Church.

The session conducted its business faithfully; as always, special problems came to its attention. In June 1931, the clerk was requested to write a letter to the City Council asking that airplanes not be permitted to fly over the church building during vesper services! The propriety of a Sunday school teacher's playing golf on Sunday was discussed at a later meeting in 1931. The session took no action, "but it appeared to be the sense of those present that it was inadvisable." The prohibition debate raged in Columbia as elsewhere. Allied Campaigners, a group advocating prohibition, was given permission to use the church, but, in a letter dated February 13, 1932, Dr. Pinkney V. Mikell protested. "No one believes in temperance more than I do," he said, "but I must again protest to the session against letting any political issue [be] discussed in our house of worship." The session attempted to adhere to its rule of conducting no business during its Sunday morning meetings; these were devoted entirely to devotional exercises and the receiving and dismissing of members.

Dr. Jackson had no assistant; Mr. MacEachern had accepted a call to the Presbyterian church in Whitmire in 1931. Repeated efforts to get the elders to visit the congregation had failed. One elder stated that he believed that "official, or perfunctory, visiting was now obsolete." First Presbyterian members taught Sunday school classes at their church and also helped at other churches. Dr. Reed Smith—son of former pastor Samuel Macon Smith and dean of the graduate school of the university—taught at Rose Hill Presbyterian Church. A Sunday school class for "the Greeks of the city" was meeting in the recreation building. An "excellent orchestra" had been organized by Deacon P. V. Mikell to play for the Men's Bible Class, an organization now flourishing under its president, R. L. Sumwalt. At Christmas, "white gifts" were collected from the Sunday school for the children at Thornwell Orphanage. A truck from *The State* took the parcels to the railroad station, where they were transported to the orphanage in Clinton without charge. In 1930 and again in 1935, First Presbyterian

won the championship of the YMCA Sunday School Basketball League—first under coach L. P. Russell and then under Thomas B. Scott.

During the early 1930s the country was experiencing serious hardships, and First Presbyterian suffered along with its people and its city. In 1932 the church struggled to pay its debts and meet its obligations. It borrowed \$8,000 to make the annual payment of principal and interest on the church bonds. The deacons carefully investigated prices for coal—from \$4.85 to \$5.49—before ordering forty tons. Pulpit-supply honorarium was cut from \$50.00 a Sunday to \$25.00. The session debated the elimination of paid singers in the choir, which would save about \$400. A lively discussion on the topic during the November 13, 1932, session meeting resulted in a vote of fourteen to twelve in favor of discontinuing the paid quartet. The choir director was apprehensive that this would result in the collapse of the volunteer choir, but the paid singers indicated their willingness to continue to serve without salary. Reconsidering its earlier action, the session voted, nine to eight, to allow \$40 per month for the choir quartet. The budget for 1933 was \$42,000; \$8,000 of that amount was for benevolences. The Sunday bulletin was now mimeographed, not printed, in order to save money. The proposed budget for 1934 was set at \$30,680—with the pastor's salary reduced from \$4,500 to \$4,000, fuel from \$500 to \$300, and repairs from \$2,200 to \$200. Benevolences were maintained at \$8,000, with fifty-one per cent going to General Assembly, thirty-seven per cent to synod, and twelve per cent to presbytery causes.

There was no money to repair the "unsightly condition" of the church ceiling, nor to replace the dilapidated hymn books. The chimes were out of order. Radio station WIS raised the broadcast cost for the vesper services to \$15.00 an hour; but when the session decided it could not afford the charge, the station agreed to broadcast thirty minutes of each services for \$6.25 a week, accepting Mr. Parker's organ recitals as payment of \$2.00 toward that amount. The elders pledged to raise the remaining \$4.25. Despite the session's efforts to cut costs, it realized that the church was not meeting its "just obligations"—including a bill of \$21.89 owed to the Columbia Piggly-Wiggly grocery store for at least six months.

The house at 1410 Washington Street was rented for income. A small house on the church property was remodeled (at the cost of \$700) so that it could be occupied by the sexton and his family for a

nominal fee. The church attempted to collect the balance owed by Allen University on the Woodrow Memorial property and planned to sell its Pulaski Street and Sumter Street properties. The Pulaski Street property sold in December 1932 for \$800. It was not until 1937, however, that the church sold the Sumter Street lot next to Ladson Church, for \$2,500, to Ethel R. Davis; on this site the Davis Hotel was built.²⁹³ This was the land given in 1828 by Abram Blanding, on which the old Sunday school building had stood until it was destroyed in the fire of February 17, 1865.

The church was unable to pay the interest on its bonds due April 1, 1933. "A lady's foot broke through the floor" during the Bible conference in January, but there was no money for repairs. The Richland County Relief Fund provided men to work at the church and women to scrub floors. The collections now produced a large number of coins. The session directed the deacons to place the money from the collection baskets into the bank bag in the vestibule, out of the congregation's hearing, because the coins "caused an objectionable jingle" during the morning service.

A special committee appointed to evaluate the work of the church presented its recommendations to the session on January 17, 1933. A plan for visitation of members—by teams composed of an elder, a deacon, and two women—was approved. Also approved was a plan for three weeks of special meetings annually—for prayer, Bible study, and evangelistic preaching. A proposal for a Wednesday fellowship meeting with a fifteen-cent meal was discussed but a decision postponed. A call for the pastor to wear a robe "somewhat in keeping with the choir" was voted down. A request that regular members sit in the front of the church to leave the rear open for "strangers" was judged worthy but impractical to enforce. Recommendations that the congregation be trained to give and that a special Easter offering be received were approved. The idea that the pastor preach an evangelistic sermon one Sunday morning each month, with an invitation to join the church, was laid on the table in order to leave the pastor free to make his own choice of subjects for his sermons.

A major change was introduced at this time—the rotation of deacons and elders. A congregational meeting on February 14, 1933, voted to elect officers to a three-year term, with no re-election permitted until the person had been out of office for one year. On March 12, a second congregational meeting adopted the concept of

²⁹³ The two buildings of the Davis Hotel were razed in 1994; the property is now a paved parking lot.

rotation "in principle," with the understanding that "ruling elders and deacons, once ordained, shall not be divested of their office when they are not re-elected for active service, and, if re-elected, shall not be re-ordained." Some members feared that the change would bring discord to the church. A further congregational meeting on April 23 produced a motion by Mr. J. W. Wassum, seconded by Dr. W. S. Currell, to reconsider the matter of rotation. Mr. Fitz Hugh McMaster said that he had difficulty making up his mind on the issue but now favored rotation. So did Mr. W. T. Love, who believed that it would bring new life to the session and the board of deacons. Dr. Reed Smith favored rotation. Mr. E. T. Burdell opposed it. Mr. C. B. Elliott was in favor of rotation for deacons but not for elders. When the vote was taken, Mr. Wassum's motion lost, seventy to sixteen.

New officers were now elected in order to bring the total to thirty elders and thirty-six deacons; and by the casting of lots, each board was divided into three classes. Two of the new deacons were Heyward Brockington and Frank McGowan, who were paired together in receiving the offering during their first Sunday of service. The church newspaper noted that both men had attended Carolina—where they were roommates—both took up law and worked in the same office, and they had been elected officers in the church on the same Sunday.



Charles C. Wilson died January 27, 1933. A student of the life and works of Robert Mills, Wilson designed buildings throughout the South, including LeConte and Davis colleges and Thornwell and Woodrow dormitories at the University of South Carolina, and many of the finest homes in Columbia. Mr. Wilson served as treasurer of the Board of Deacons of First Presbyterian Church and drew the plans for the first Samuel Macon Smith Memorial Chapel, which was dedicated in 1911. On July 16, 1933, James Spencer Verner died at age fifty-six. An elder and "a persistent student of the Bible," Mr. Verner often taught the Men's Bible Class. He was a lawyer many thought to be destined for the Supreme Court. Samuel L. Miller, Sr.—for many years an elder and faithful worker in the Pulaski Street mission—died on November 20, 1933, when he was struck by a car at Pickens and Lady streets. His wife, Mary Wylie Miller, died the next morning without knowing of her husband's accident.

An article appeared in the newspaper on November 27, 1933, entitled "Former Sexton Here Passes in Baltimore." Isom Gatlen, sexton at First Presbyterian Church, had lived in Columbia for many years,

where he was highly respected "by both whites and blacks for his integrity and proper living." When Woodrow Wilson came to Columbia in 1916 to attend the funeral of his sister, Isom shook hands with the president and later related the incident with pride. He told President Wilson that he had often served him in the ice cream garden run by the McKenzies next door to Lachicotte's jewelry store.

Dr. P. V. Mikell—elder and leader in the Men's Bible Class—was fatally injured in August 1934 when his car en route to Edisto Island ran off the road. Judge William Hay Townsend died on August 16, 1934. Described by his colleagues as "a gentleman of the Old School, and the ideal judge," Townsend, an elder at First Presbyterian, was the son, the grandson, and the great-grandson of ruling elders in the Presbyterian church.

Dr. Jackson's beautifully crafted sermons treated such topics as "Restoration," "Faith and Depression," "Certainty," "Seeking the Highest," "The Young Man's Psalm," "Steadying the Ship," "The Voices of Motherhood," "Stimulants," "Creative Pioneers," "Jesus and the Inferior," and "Decisions."

"One ought to steadily see and contemplate the true and the gracious, and the better side of your own self," Dr. Jackson told the congregation. "If a man is at one with his fellow men, if his relations with his fellow men are marked by love and unity and concord," he said, "then that man is on his way to being a man of God." Speaking on "God and Our Needs," Dr. Jackson explained that God "is ever helping men to make a fresh start. He is that infinite energy at the heart of the world that is always seeking to repair damage and bring the world and man to their perfection."

The great appeal of Jesus, Dr. Jackson said, was not based on "penalty and punishment," but on the invitation "Look what you are missing if you do not take up my way." When Jesus enters the life, he brings "a new quality, a new thrill, a new brightness, a new zest and tang." Jesus encouraged "a healthy self-respect." "The value of a great man is that he increases the value of all men," Dr. Jackson said. "Christ has immeasurably increased the stature of manhood. He wants to make us great. Let us say to Him, 'I will live for Thee and live like Thee.'" In a sermon on "The Power of the Spirit," Dr. Jackson identified "interest and enthusiasm in one's work and living" and "a cause to serve" as "a manifestation of [the] spirit."

Predestination, Dr. Jackson told the congregation, means that God is "our Heavenly Father who cares for the least among us." He wrote

in the church bulletin for March 31, 1935, "God has a just claim upon our lives. But He does not force that claim against our will. He doesn't want us, if we don't want to belong to Him. Hence, he puts the matter up to us. To make God's ownership real, we must recognize it and ratify it."

Dr. Jackson's applications were inspirational in tone. He concluded his sermon on August 11, 1957, with advice from a country doctor: "Live each day as it comes. Don't worry about next week. Learn to live instead of trying to get rich. Never remain angry. Begin each day by liking everyone you meet. Take a nap after lunch. Don't quarrel at home. Go to church, practice your religion, and live a quiet and serene life." On November 10, 1957, he ended by saying that "all over the country this gorgeous autumn there are sights of foliage which demand that we call people's attention to their beauty." On February 16, 1958, he told the congregation that "the warmth of kindness is the greatest force in the world." The next Sunday, February 23, 1958, he said that "no man can entirely condemn beliefs which make a man a good man."

Dr. Jackson kept abreast of modern theological developments. "Whenever the need arises for an expression of Christian thought and life," he maintained, "we are obligated to meet the need not by the instruments of one hundred years ago, but by those of the hour." He did not often refer to the Westminster Confession of Faith, and the older theologians and the Puritans did not please him. He found Thomas Goodwin typical of the Puritans. "A good deal of it is dry reading," he wrote in his journal. He told his people that there were three great movements in which the kingdom of God could be seen entering and meeting the needs of human life. One was the teaching of Karl Barth, which was "something like the message of Protestantism in the 16th century"; but Barth was not an obscurantist, Jackson said, for he accepted "the latest findings of biblical criticism." The second movement was led by Toyohiko Kagawa in Japan. It stood for "the cause of labor, the cause of the farmer, the cause of world peace." The third of these spiritual movements was the Oxford Group (later called "Moral Re-Armament"), which was emphasizing such Christian objectives as purity, unselfishness, and honesty. These are modern ways in which people can see the kingdom of God, Dr. Jackson said.

Dr. Jackson often preached on social issues. "In these days when we are striving to build a better social order," he said, "here is the governing thought we need in the universal love of God for mankind."

He stated that the racial problem in South Carolina had to be "met and solved." Spiritual power was needed, he said, to build a new South. He believed that the answer to the problems of the day—crime, divorce, pornography, mental disorders, and breakdowns—was to be found in simpler living, intelligent cooperation, and "the social and ethical teachings of Jesus." The decade of the 1930s was a time of intense debate among Americans concerning the country's involvement in war, and Dr. Jackson expressed himself strongly. War, he said, was unpatriotic, stupid, and costly. He called upon the church members to support neutrality legislation and to read magazines that opposed war. "Blessed are the peacemakers of today," he told them, "even though some of them are called all manner of evil names unjustly. These are they who are being used by the Spirit of God for the needs of humanity." On January 17, 1937, First Presbyterian vesper services were canceled for discussion on the topics of neutrality and peace, in combined afternoon and evening meetings with Washington Street Methodist Church. Dr. Jackson presented a very positive review of the book *Realistic Pacifism*, stating that "it deserves the reading of all interested in this modern Christian crusade for peace." He praised "the missionary enterprise of the church" as "one of the forefront answers to atomic energy and to the meeting of the problem of building 'one world.'"

Dr. Jackson encouraged ecumenical thinking and called upon Christians to solve the perplexing questions that had created denominational divisions. "We would be startled to be told," he said, "that a Unitarian might have standing in Christ's kingdom." He deplored heresy trials—"which never make for progress"—and called for reunion of Presbyterians because of the need for a greater outreach.

Despite some inroads of liberalism, the Southern Presbyterian Church was still largely a conservative and evangelical denomination. Dissatisfaction with the Federal Council of Churches' position on social problems and political issues led Southern Presbyterians to withdraw from the council in 1931. The 1939 General Assembly stated that the ordination vow for teaching and ruling elders required "the acceptance of the infallible truth and divine authority of the Scriptures, and of Christ as very and eternal God who became man by being born of a virgin, who offered Himself as a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice and reconcile us to God, who rose from the dead with the same body in which He suffered and who will return again to

judge the world.”²⁹⁴ More liberal forces were at work in the denomination, however. In 1941 the PCUS voted to re-enter the Federal Council and shared in the formation of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America in 1950. Tensions in the denomination were reflected in independent church papers. The *Presbyterian Outlook* supported the liberal trends in the Southern church. The conservative *Southern Presbyterian Journal* was established in 1942 to “wave the banners which our heroic fathers lifted in the name of God.”²⁹⁵ While some Presbyterians adopted liberal positions out of conviction, and others drifted almost unconsciously away from orthodox theology, some quietly prayed and patiently waited for a better day.

²⁹⁴ Street, *Southern Presbyterians*, p. 115.

²⁹⁵ The feature article of the first issue of *The Southern Presbyterian Journal* (May 1942) was entitled “Our Southern Presbyterian Banners.” Written by William Childs Robinson, a son of First Church, it stressed four great themes—“the blue banner of covenanted loyalty to Christ as the only King in Zion, the only Head of His body the Church; the banner of His holy Word; the banner of the Westminster Standards which testify to His saving grace and sovereign glory; the banner of missions as the mission of the Church.”

CHAPTER 18



MANY ANCIENT TIES

At First Presbyterian Church the sacrament of the Lord's Supper continued to be observed on first Sabbaths quarterly, but the months were changed from January, April, July, and October—when many people were away—to March, June, September, and December. In 1935 the youth choir was again organized, with Mrs. Fred Parker as pianist and director. Belks Department Store furnished cotton material and Mrs. Parker made robes and cottas for the choir in time for the 1935 Christmas service.

Thomas Francis Wallace came as assistant pastor in 1937. Born in 1905 in Heath Springs, South Carolina, Wallace grew up in Seneca. He graduated from Presbyterian College and from Columbia Seminary, moving with the seminary from Columbia to Decatur, Georgia, in 1927. In 1929 he married Margaret Copeland, and they went to the First Presbyterian Church of St. Matthews, South Carolina, where they served until they came to Columbia.

The Presbyterian Student League was organized on September 26, 1937, and became part of the church's ministry. In April 1938 the session disapproved, "for the present," the minister's wearing a robe in the pulpit. They thought it best to first "sound out" the congregation and make no change if a "considerable minority" opposed the use of the robe. On May 22, 1938, Dr. Andrew Blackwood, former pastor and now professor of homiletics at Princeton Theological Seminary, preached at First Presbyterian Church on "The Christian Secret of Radiance."


For a number of years South Carolina Presbyterian churches attempted to raise \$75,000 to pay the Chicora College debts. First Presbyterian Church was allotted \$2,692. Money was desperately needed in 1939 to pay interest on the college debt, but the churches were reluctant to act until the property had been sold. In 1939 First Presbyterian Church faced its own serious financial situation, needing \$80,000 to take up its outstanding bonds (\$13,000 was already in default as to principal) and pay the premium on the bonds soon to mature. A new loan was secured from the Citizens and Southern Bank of South Carolina at four and a half per cent, with a repayment schedule of \$7,500 per year plus interest. Members gave sacrificially to enable the church to continue its ministry and pay its debt. The session noted that Elder Edward L. Craig led others in financial assistance to the church; his name was at the head of the list "at interest-paying time."

On April 22, 1939, the deacons wrote to Professor Henry C. Davis of the University of South Carolina, granting permission for him to use lot twenty-six in the cemetery. After careful investigation they had decided that he, as the great-grandson of the Reverend Robert Means—who was originally given permission to use that space—was entitled to it. There have been no "burials in this lot in more than a century," they wrote; "the descendants of Rev. Robert Means are widely scattered; and you are the only direct descendant who is a member of this church." Professor Davis was grateful. He replied, "Many ancient ties bind me in loyalty to the First Presbyterian Church. I assure you that possession of the lot will result in improvement of its appearance and substantial assistance in projects for beautification of our churchyard, already impressively dignified and beautiful."


During the summer of 1939, Sunday school classes for children were discontinued as a precaution against the spread of infantile paralysis. The church steeple needed repairing. There were numerous structural problems, including an unequal settlement of as much as three inches. The four wooden beams that carried the weight of the steeple were decayed; and the bell, forty-eight inches in diameter, and the chimes constituted a great weight. The steeple was straightened and strengthened during October at the cost of \$1,964.20.

On November 2, 1939, Elder Samuel Buchanan McMaster died. "Buck" McMaster had been a friend to the boys of the church and a leader of the Boy Scout movement in Columbia. From time to time he entertained the scouts with a venison supper at Goodwill, his plantation on the Wateree River, where the elders also made an annual

visit for a fish fry. (The deacons were invited each May to Mr. and Mrs. J. Edwin Belser's Edisto Island home for a day of fellowship and food.) Mr. McMaster's funeral was attended by a large number of friends, including Negro tenants from Goodwill. A marker in his memory was placed on the marble pulpit in the downstairs hall of the Sunday school building. Elder Roy A. Little died on January 15, 1940. The deacons' resolution stated that their "hearts [were] grieved, but they [were] not saddened." Clerk of session John M. Bateman died on August 5, 1940, and Fitz Hugh McMaster was elected clerk. The city's first electrician, and founder of two of the oldest ice companies, Mr. Bateman was described as "a fine type of the old Southern gentleman, tempered with the modern spirit." He had served as clerk for ten years and had written a history of the church.



In 1940 the United States government reactivated Camp Jackson—which had seen little military use since World War I—as Fort Jackson. It became America's largest training camp as the United States mobilized for its entry into World War II. Early Sunday morning, December 7, 1941, Columbians and all Americans were shocked by the tragic news of Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor. On June 24, 1942, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill came on a secret mission to have a firsthand look at Fort Jackson. "The train drew up, not at a station, but in the open plain," he wrote; "it was a very hot day, and we got out of the train straight onto the parade ground, which recalled the plains of India in the hot weather."²⁹⁶ He was encouraged by what he saw, however, and went back home with new hope that the war could be won. The city of Columbia was all but overwhelmed by the numbers of soldiers, larger than its own peacetime population. There were "soldiers to the left of you, soldiers to the right of you, behind you, in front of you, coming and going," wrote one Columbian in 1943.²⁹⁷



Hundreds of soldiers from Fort Jackson worshiped at First Presbyterian Church during the war years. In February 1941 the church began a program for servicemen. Church members regularly invited visiting soldiers to dinner after the Sunday morning services (inviting one hundred soldiers on May 4, 1941). The Fellowship Hall (the old

²⁹⁶ *A Columbia Reader*, p. 142.

²⁹⁷ *A Columbia Reader*, p. 144.

Smith Memorial Chapel) was open three nights a week and on Sunday for music, games, food, and conversation, and two nights a week for dancing "under careful and adequate supervision." "The young women of the church and university" were invited.

"Young ladies" were selected to participate in the program "as dance partners and as hostesses"; they were trained and expected to follow certain rules. They could not wear sweaters to the parties, nor chew gum. They could not leave the building until it was time to go home. They could not give their telephone numbers to servicemen. If a girl wanted to see a serviceman outside the church recreation program, it was suggested that she ask him home to meet her parents. Girls without hostess cards were allowed to visit only once.

A visiting Presbyterian minister wrote to his congregation in Potsdam, New York, to describe the work of First Presbyterian for the soldiers:

Four nights and two afternoons a week, their Fellowship Hall has "open house," with ping pong, badminton, dancing (except Sundays), singing, reading, writing and just plain loafing. There are always plenty of cookies ("help yourself"), people to talk to, and iced tea or lemonade. Night after night, week after week, the people of the church support and carry on a carefully planned program which has been described as "more like home than anything else in Columbia."

While many were praising the Soldier Recreation Program, a complaint was sent to the Synod of South Carolina by the Reverend John C. Blackburn of West Columbia Presbyterian Church, who described it as "a lawless secular program" that "tolerated a condemned form of amusement, and suffered scandal to circulate to the shame and dishonor" of the church.²⁹⁸ Synod refused to receive the complaint but approved a study of church recreation programs within its bounds.

One of the leaders in the Soldier Recreation Center work was Thomas Smyth Flinn. Thomas Flinn, born in Columbia in 1891, was the son of Dr. John William Flinn, Presbyterian minister and professor of Bible at the University of South Carolina. He joined the Grenfell Medical Mission in Labrador, but, suffering the amputation of his

²⁹⁸ John C. Blackburn was the son of the Reverend George A. Blackburn and Annie Williams Girardeau Blackburn, and the grandson of Dr. John Lafayette Girardeau. The elder Blackburn had succeeded Dr. Girardeau as pastor of the Arsenal Hill Presbyterian Church.

leg, was forced to return home. He became a deacon and later an elder at First Presbyterian Church. Another man active in the center was John Harrill Haynes. Jack, as he was called, taught Sunday school for many years and organized the first softball team in the church league. He played or coached for nineteen years, playing a full game at the age of sixty-nine. His teams won three city championships.

A newsletter called "Chimes," edited by the Men in Service Committee of First Presbyterian Church, began in 1942 to give news of Columbians, especially church members, in service. The church bulletin for May 9, 1943, with United States and Christian flags in red, white, and blue, listed 133 members in military service. Northern Presbyterian ministers stationed at Fort Jackson for short assignments as chaplains often preached at First Church. In a letter home, one described wartime conditions in Columbia: "high rents, crowded buses, and train accommodations requiring long advance notice" and "intense, continuous heat, day and night."

E. Stanley Jones, Methodist missionary to India and spokesman for peace, racial brotherhood, and social justice, preached at First Presbyterian for a series of meetings sponsored by several churches in 1942. An "outdoor changeable bulletin board" was placed in front of the church so that "strangers, especially, visiting the city might be advised of time of services." The "every-member canvass" for 1942 was canceled because of the rubber shortage and other war emergencies. The treasurer simply renewed the last year's pledges. The elders' annual Goodwill Plantation trip was canceled. Wartime regulations required government approval for proposed salary increases. Dr. Jackson, after talking it over with Mrs. Jackson, refused his \$500-increase in 1943. The government allowed a \$150-increase (instead of \$200) for the assistant pastor and \$52 (instead of \$60) for the sexton.

In 1942, Miss Jane McKinnon was appointed director of religious education. Session committees in 1943 included communion, fellowship, missions, music, pulpit supply, spiritual life, visiting new members, soldier recreation, and young people's activities. The deacons concerned themselves with the budget, the cemetery, heating, termite, Christmas gifts for the pastor and staff, and entertainment for the soldiers. The Women's Auxiliary continued its active work. Four hundred and sixty members met in fifteen circles, and on the third Monday of each month they met as a whole in Smith Memorial Chapel. The Men's Bible Class met weekly, and the Men's Club met once a month for fellowship, supper, and "a speech."

During the summer of 1943, three elders who were distinguished faculty members at the University of South Carolina died. George Armstrong Wauchope, who joined the faculty in 1898, was author of the USC alma mater ("We Hail Thee, Carolina") and assistant literary editor of the *Library of Southern Literature*. William Spencer Currell of Davidson, North Carolina, came to the university from Washington and Lee in 1914 and served as president, dean of the graduate school, and professor of English. He was a regular Sunday school teacher and lay preacher. His lectures on John Calvin to the men's class were said to have been "masterpieces." Reed Smith died in his sleep at his summer home on his beloved Pawleys Island. He was the son of Dr. Samuel Macon Smith and was, according to the session's resolution, "nurtured on the finest traditions of the followers of the covenant." He earned a doctorate at Harvard and became professor and dean of the graduate school at the University of South Carolina. He was a noted writer of English textbooks and a folklorist of international reputation. Dr. Smith was the ablest teacher in the Young People's Department and often taught the Men's Bible Class. He served as Music Committee chairman and presented new hymnals to the church in 1936, as a memorial to his parents, and an echo organ in 1938 in memory of his wife, Margaret Dick Smith (1891-1937)—"a daughter of the church." The echo division was placed in a room to one side of the tower, and the celestial harp was located in the great-choir division in the main organ. These additions and an eight-foot trumpet that was added at the same time made the organ "a complete instrument." The dedication of the echo organ took place on Sunday afternoon, April 17, 1938. Fred Parker presented a recital, assisted by the First Presbyterian Chorus Choir and the Ebenezer Lutheran Choir. Dr. Smith also funded the Reed Smith Quartet, so the church now had a double quartet of paid singers.

The marble baptismal font presented by Mr. and Mrs. Hayward T. Baylis was used for the first time on October 10, 1943. A few weeks later, water from the Jordan River—brought by parents of another baby—was used in the sacrament of baptism. In 1944, membership stood at 1,650. Some servicemen had been admitted as members on their profession of faith in Jesus Christ.

The condition of the churchyard continued to be a problem—as did its management. The church requested that before preparing for a burial, persons confer with the clerk of session in order to determine the ownership of the plot. A self-perpetuating committee was appointed to supervise the sale of lots and deal with other matters concerning the churchyard. On October 7, 1942, the Churchyard Committee received a letter from Miss Mary H. Dargan, which read, “Dear Sirs. It is my desire to have removed the iron fence from around my family lot in the churchyard to give as scrap in the nationwide drive to help defeat our enemies. I am the last member of the family so there is no other person concerned. Will you give the necessary permission to have this done?” Her request produced a great deal of agitated discussion in the committee—and in the church. A few weeks later, Miss Dargan’s lawyer wrote to the Churchyard Committee explaining that she had dropped the request. She had no idea, the letter explained, that “a controversy would arise when she asked permission to remove [the fence].”

In 1944 the Graveyard Trust Fund contained \$2,250; the church contributed \$100 a year. Spaces were sold for \$30 each and funds were invested in war bonds. Six or seven church members gave free labor to maintain the churchyard, as did the city street department. The Churchyard Committee sought to find the living heirs of those who had purchased vacant lots—not surrounded by copings or fences. The committee planned to sell burial rights for those lots in which there had been no burial for fifty years and for which no descendant who wanted to use the lot could be found. In 1951 Mrs. Charles Wallace provided brick walks in the churchyard in memory of her husband.

On December 11, 1944, Stated Clerk Fitz Hugh McMaster asked to be relieved of all active duties except the Churchyard Committee. The session replied, “Though your retirement leaves a vacancy very hard to fill, we feel that you have indeed earned the rest which you have requested.”



During Dr. Lapsley’s time, and for several years after Dr. Jackson came, the relationship between First Presbyterian Church and Columbia Bible College was friendly. Dr. McQuilkin, the Bible College’s president, was a frequent preacher at the church; and Bible College activities were regularly held in the church and its recreation building. The college’s annual Bible and Christian Life Conference—with

outstanding preachers and missionary leaders including J. Oliver Buswell (president of Wheaton College) and James M. Gray (president of Moody Bible Institute)—was held at the church, as were the college's baccalaureate sermons and commencement exercises. The McQuilkin family worshiped at First Presbyterian, and Mrs. McQuilkin taught in the church's Daily Vacation Bible School. Many church members were involved with the college in prayer and financial support.

Although Dr. McQuilkin was a Presbyterian minister, the Bible College was interdenominational; and charges were brought against the school that it was out of harmony with Presbyterian doctrine. These were answered by Dr. McQuilkin in a meeting of Congaree Presbytery. Dr. Jackson wrote in his private journal on April 15, 1942, that the meeting "was made uncomfortable because of the Columbia Bible College matter," and complained that "something of the kind is forever popping up in this presbytery." On January 2, 1944, Mrs. Robert McQuilkin and her two daughters were dismissed to Arsenal Hill Presbyterian Church. She explained that she was leaving First Church because "the session has done nothing about the dance question" [dancing in the Fellowship Hall as part of the Soldiers' Recreation Program]. The church's relationship with the Bible College continued to deteriorate. After years of cordially granting similar requests, the session in 1947 refused to give the school permission to use the church basketball court, because "such use of church property by outside organizations would interfere with the regularly scheduled religious and recreational activities of the church." The church and the college—though close neighbors in Columbia—went their separate ways; and for years there would be little contact between the two.

In 1944 there was another controversy in Congaree Presbytery, resulting from an overture by the Reverend Wick Broomall (a Southern Presbyterian minister teaching at Columbia Bible College), concerning a book written by a professor in one of the Southern Presbyterian seminaries. Dr. Jackson stated that he was "weary of all the turmoil that we have in our presbytery created largely by a party of schismatics," most of whom "are engaged in activities outside the jurisdiction of the church." Dr. Jackson had not read the book but argued that the presbytery should not injure the good name of "one of our beloved teachers in one of our seminaries." "It is a serious business," he said, "to bring a charge of unorthodoxy against a man in his position."



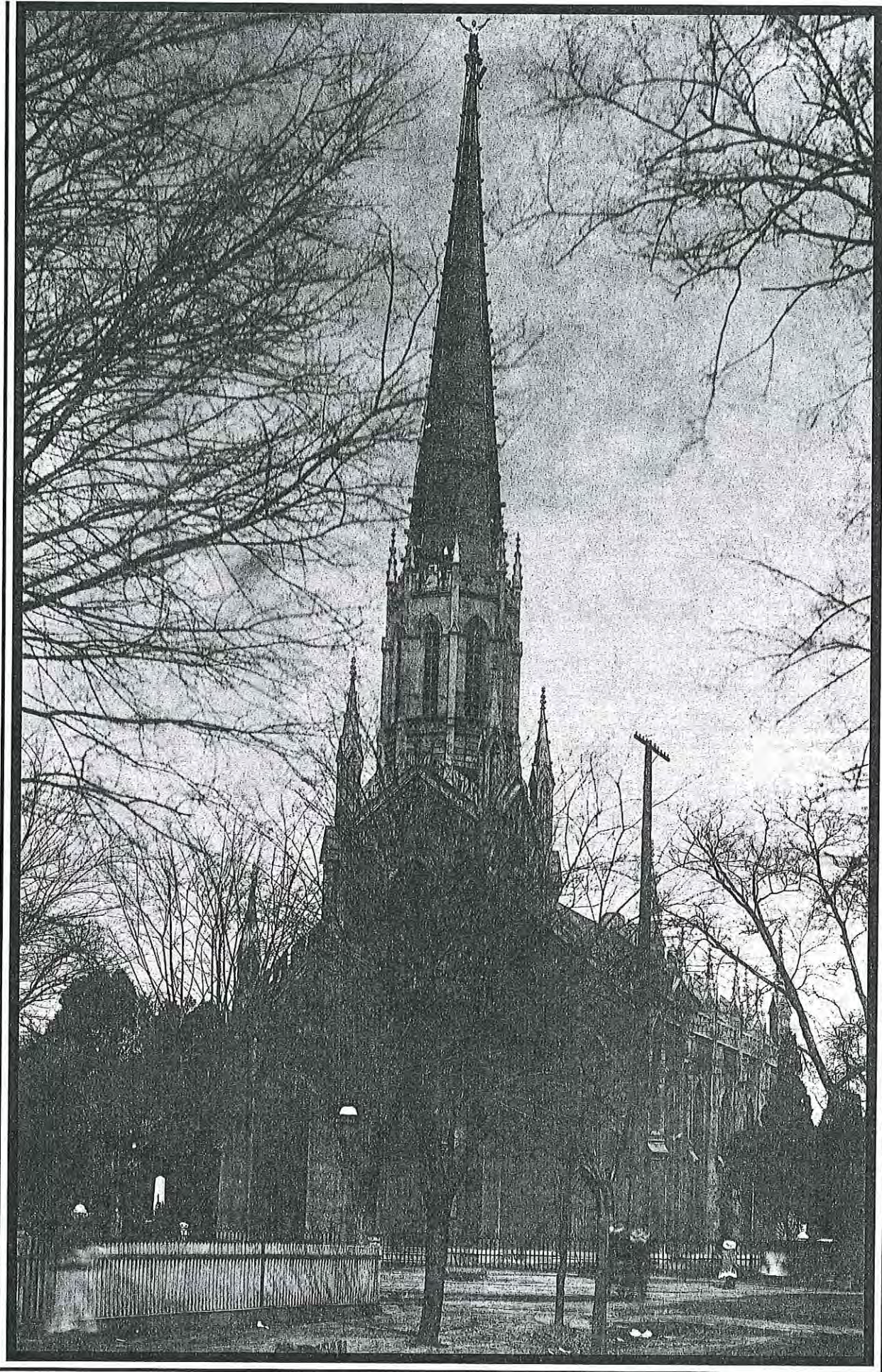
The Jacksons were loved at First Presbyterian Church and popular with the people of Columbia. Dr. Jackson often was invited to speak to civic groups and to give commencement addresses at colleges and high schools in the city and state. He was a member of the American Legion and the Democratic party and joined many local clubs, including the Executives' Club, the Kosmos Club, and the Heptagon Club. The last, composed of Columbia pastors, featured dinner and book reviews. Dr. Jackson was a member of the Columbia YMCA and one of its most enthusiastic handball players. He was an expert magician (a member of the South Carolina Society of Magicians) and often entertained children with his rope-and-coin tricks. Mrs. Jackson was a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Novel Club. She enjoyed reading, especially the books of Sir Walter Scott, but her great love was opera. She never missed the Saturday afternoon broadcast of the Metropolitan Opera.

Dr. Jackson had one of the best private libraries in the city. He prized the writings of William James, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and the poets. He was interested in drama and the stage, and he often quoted inspirational poems in his sermons, such as "to every man there openeth a high way and a low. And every man decideth the way his soul shall go." For several years Dr. Jackson was an associate editor of the *Presbyterian Outlook*. Once, in a prolonged emergency, he filled the chair of psychology at the University of South Carolina. The session was pleased with Dr. Jackson's ministry and, in 1945, raised his salary to \$6,000.

First Presbyterian Church members were proud of their beautiful buildings and noble history. Some families had been part of the church for generations; loved ones were buried in the old churchyard. Like Professor Henry C. Davis, they were bound to First Presbyterian Church by "many ancient ties."



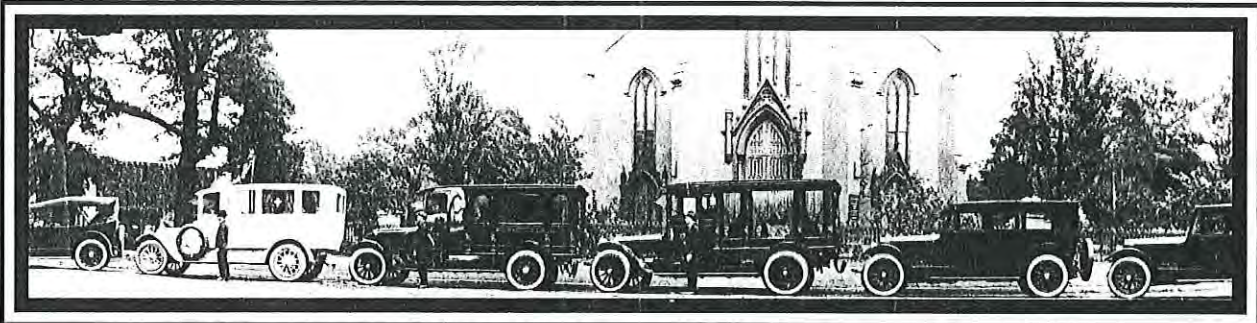
A fire in 1910 was confined to the upper part of the steeple, which had to be replaced.



A worker stands on top of the steeple after repairs were completed in 1911. The Lecture Room can be seen behind the church, at right.



Dedication of the monument over the grave of Dr. Samuel Macon Smith, pastor of the church from 1889 until his death in 1910, took place in 1911. In the background is the original wooden church. It was moved across Lady Street in 1851 and later remodeled for a private residence.



This Van Metre Funeral Home procession pictured in front of the church in about 1923 shows the entrance with the three original doors.



F. H. McMASTER



J. A. STODDARD



C. F. PIPER



J. C. LOTT



W. F. CLEVELAND



C. F. WILLIAMS



G. A. WAUCHOPE



J. T. SLOANE



J. A. NEAL



L. A. LORICK



D. R. HOPKINS



W. B. GUY



B. C. CHURCH



E. T. BURDELL



R. G. BELL



H. T. BAYLIS

Elders serving in 1938 were honored when their photos were assembled in one frame which was hung in Jackson Hall. (Not pictured are W. J. Bristow, C. J. Cate, P. A. Jamieson, H. S. Johnson, S. L. Latimer, Sr., W. J. Taylor, and W. S. Currell.)



E. S. CARDWELL



D. S. MATHESON



T. M. WATTS



GEO. MCCUTCHEM



H. W. SHANNON



C. P. ROBINSON



MARION RICH



J. M. RAY



S. B. McMMASTER



J. H. ELEAZER



E. O. DEPASS



E. L. CRAIG



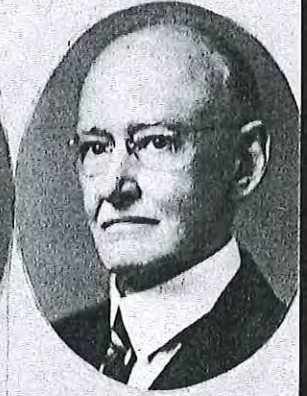
C. H. BALDWIN



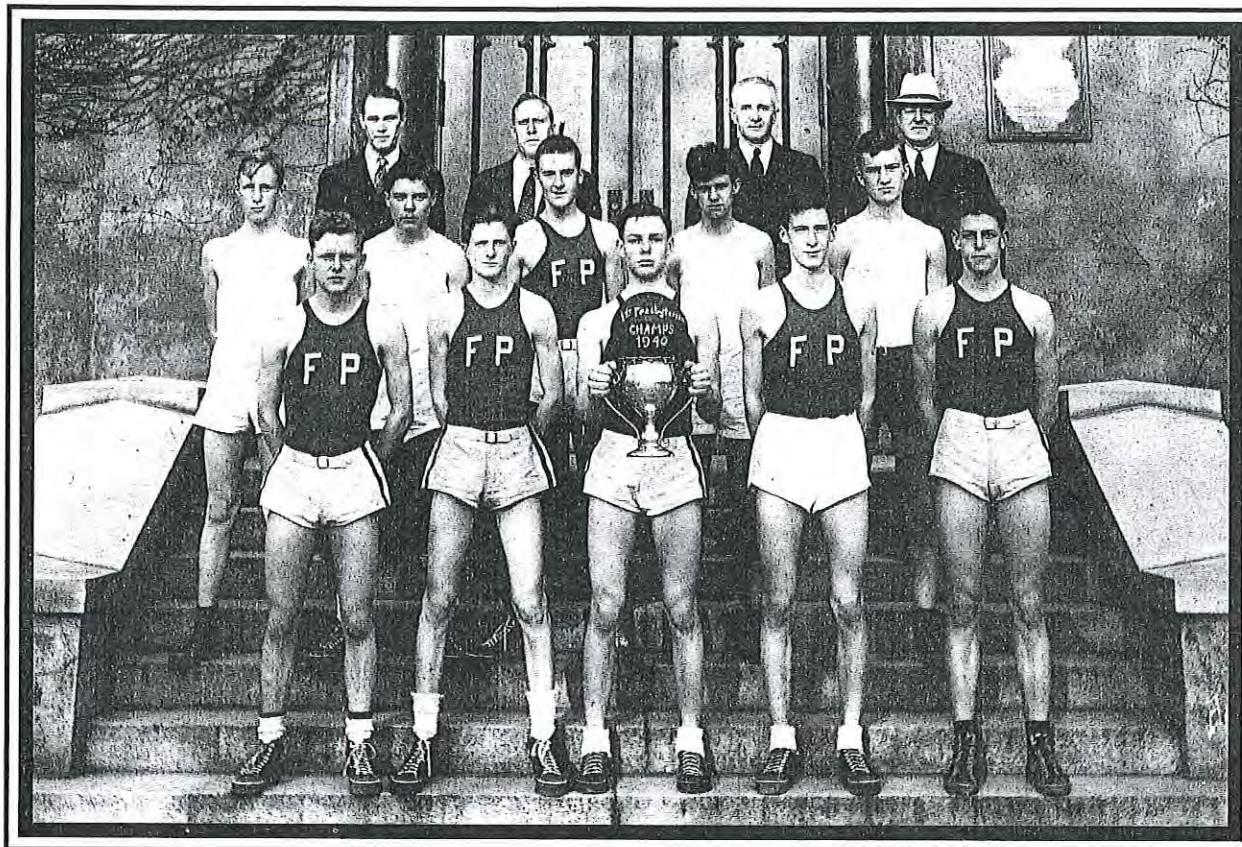
REED SMITH



E. L. GREEN



JOHN M. BATEMAN, Clerk



The church's basketball team won the city's Sunday School League championship in 1940, repeating its 1939 win. Shown above, *front row*, are Charlie Outen, Elliott Dodson, Jim Jackson, Cantey Smith, Buzz Huggins. *Second row*: Tom Pitts, Bennie Outen, Johnny Walker, Theron Woodward, Jr., Jack Walker. *Third row*: Tommy Scott, team coach; Lawrence Russell, church scoutmaster; Dr. J. W. Jackson, pastor; and Joel Elcan.



Boy Scout Troop No. 15 was chartered in 1922 with G. Raymond McElveen, Sr., as first scoutmaster. The church continued sponsorship until 1975. Shown above are troop members in the 1940s. Kneeling, left to right, are Rodney Russell, Bobby Milling, Connie Faucette, Hal Crosswell, Powers McElveen. Standing are Roscoe Stevens, chief scout executive; W. F. Dibble, post advisor; John M. Gantt, assistant advisor; Copeley Smoak, Jimmy Cathcart, Eugene Payne, Maxie Collins, Larry Houk, an unidentified scout executive; Dr. J. W. Jackson, pastor; and Joel Elcan.

CHAPTER 19



COLD COCA-COLAS AND HOT COFFEE

On October 6, 1944, Assistant Pastor Thomas Wallace resigned to become pastor of a church in Montevallo, Alabama. The next October, the Reverend Claude McIntosh came as Dr. Jackson's assistant. A native of North Carolina and graduate of Columbia Seminary, Mr. McIntosh had served at the New Brookland Presbyterian Church before holding other pastorates and the military chaplaincy. After a few months at First Presbyterian, however, Mr. McIntosh resigned (on March 11, 1946) to become pastor of Eau Claire Presbyterian Church. First Church could not find an ordained minister to replace him. Dr. Jackson suggested that they secure a "properly qualified, consecrated layman," but the deacons urged the session to call an ordained man.

By 1945 the budget had risen to \$41,874, of which \$8,650 went to benevolences. The church debt had been greatly reduced—from about \$250,000 in 1925 to \$30,000. The 150th Anniversary Committee proposed paying off the remainder so that the church would be free of debt when its 250 members in the armed services returned. The session discussed the need to raise the amount being given to benevolences. Two elders donated money for purchasing "a movie machine" for use in the Sunday school.

The educational building was used by the Synod of South Carolina, the space having been offered by Dr. Jackson as a gesture of cooperation and goodwill. The clerk of synod, the pastor reported to the

worried deacons, "has been able to get along without any heat and uses the light in his room very infrequently if any at all!" Still, the deacons believed that it was unwise to donate space for synod use on a permanent basis.

The end of World War II came on August 14, 1945. By early morning, Columbia's Main Street was the scene of a noisy celebration—a jam of cars, soldiers, sailors, shouting civilians, and the noise of sirens, cow bells, firecrackers, auto horns, and youths beating on tubs. Through the bedlam came the sound of the university's chapel bell, joined from time to time by the bells of First Presbyterian and other city churches.

On April 7, 1946, 52 people were admitted into membership of First Presbyterian Church, all by letter. There were 7 transfers from other Columbia churches; 15 were from non-Presbyterian churches. During the 1945-1946 church year, 138 new members were added—31 on profession of faith and 107 on certificate or reaffirmation. Communicant membership stood at 1,760. Sunday school enrollment was 691. The church was now out of debt; the pastor's salary was raised from \$6,000 to \$7,000. The session looked to increase its benevolence giving in 1947-1948 to \$20,000, including \$1,000 for the support of an additional foreign missionary. The Committee on Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church, however, responded to the church's request by stating that there was no available missionary for the church to support!

Walter Paul Baldwin, Jr., served as assistant pastor during the spring of 1946. From Clinton, South Carolina, Mr. Baldwin was a graduate of the University of South Carolina, Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, and Princeton Theological Seminary. In September 1946, the church opened a kindergarten. Tuition was set at \$75 a year for church members and \$90 for others. The session was concerned that the school offer religious instruction to the children. The kindergarten director, Martha Bradley, supported the idea of religious teaching, she said, but stressed that "only through honest inquiry can one come to real belief." We try never to be dogmatic or conclusive, she told the pastor, but we emphasize the "practical elements" of religion—being wise, kind, friendly, and helpful—rather than the "belief elements." In 1947 the deacons passed a motion that the Kinder-

garten Committee "be thanked for their splendid work and that they continue their good work provided that they stay within their budget." The minutes continued, "Upon reconsideration the last clause of the motion was deleted"!

In December 1946 and 1947, the 150 singers of the Columbia Choral Society presented the Christmas section of Handel's *Messiah* to capacity congregations at First Presbyterian. Mrs. Parker was director and Mr. Parker, organist. Over 1,250 people received communion on October 5, 1947. A joint evangelistic meeting was held with Washington Street Methodist Church during November.

"Cold Coca-Colas" in the summer and "hot coffee" in the winter were made available between Sunday school and church at no charge. During 1947, First Presbyterian Church and the YWCA operated a Junior Teen Canteen on Friday and Saturday nights in the Fellowship Hall. About 150 young people came weekly for music, dancing, talent shows, games, and food.

The Women's Auxiliary engaged in a number of ministries and benevolences. During 1946 and 1947 the women gave money for foreign missions in India and for home missions among Italian and Chinese immigrants, sent supplies to an African hospital, provided clothing, Christmas, and birthday boxes for children at Thornwell and Carolina orphanages, presented Christian books to the church's high school and college students, and sent boxes of homemade cookies to church members attending college out of town. The circles worked in a different Columbia agency each month, including the Confederate Home and the black and white YWCAs. In 1948 the auxiliary changed its name to Women of the Church.

In November 1947 the Reverend Thomas Robert Fulton came as the assistant pastor. Fulton had studied at Hampden Sydney College and Union Theological Seminary in Virginia and was pastor of the Presbyterian church in Leesburg, Virginia. A new six-room house was rented for him and his family for \$77.50 a month. The church staff had grown to two ministers, two secretaries, a director of religious education, a minister of music, a church hostess, and two student workers. The budget now exceeded \$70,000, with a little over \$20,000 designated for benevolences. Over \$12,000 was pledged for foreign missions during January 1948. Offices were furnished by the church for the use of Congaree Presbytery and the Synod of South Carolina. Church Secretary Elizabeth Cheatham (Mrs. Fred H., Sr.) Gantt visited new members. Most, she reported, had come from smaller towns and smaller churches and were finding it difficult to adjust to Co-

lumbia and First Presbyterian Church. "They are lonely and feel hurt that they have not been visited," said Mrs. Gantt, who made 743 visits between November 5, 1947, and March 6, 1948.

Eastminster Presbyterian Church, which began as a mission of First Church, first met at Dreher High School on October 29, 1947. During February 1948, the church was organized. Seventy-nine members of First Church transferred their membership to the new church, and Eastminster called Mr. Fulton, the assistant pastor at First Church, as its first minister.

By 1948 the First Presbyterian Church Sunday School was experiencing problems. Average attendance—about half of the enrollment—was around 360. Young people were leaving their classes to go uptown to get Coca-Colas, and "maybe they then come back to church and maybe they do not," it was reported. During the summer of 1948, Sunday school was temporarily discontinued because of a polio epidemic in South Carolina.

University of South Carolina functions continued to be held at the church, including the baccalaureate service and commencement exercises in May 1948. Elder Fitz Hugh McMaster was pushing the session to consider the establishment of a "home for old people." On November 7, 1948, the session endorsed the Billy Graham crusade in Columbia. On January 23, 1949, Alice Sawyer Waring was baptized. She represented the sixth generation of her family connected with First Presbyterian Church. Membership for the year ending March 31, 1949, stood at 1,388. That summer—after an absence of many years—a Daily Vacation Bible School was held. Among the new elders ordained in 1949 was Samuel Lowry Latimer, Jr., editor in chief and publisher of *The State* newspaper.

Henry Sloan Coffin, former pastor of Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, former president of Union Seminary in New York City, and a leading proponent of the Social Gospel, gave a lecture at the church on February 20, 1949. During April 1949 Dr. Donald Miller of Union Seminary in Virginia and President Green of Wofford College were the speakers for a special week of preaching. "Bareness of ground" around the Fellowship Hall and Sunday school building worried the elders. In September 1950 the session suggested that the Lott Memorial Gate be placed in the Bull Street entrance to the cemetery. A trust fund was set up by Joseph Walker and his family to assist First Presbyterian children who had educational and medical needs. In 1953 the sum of \$10,000 from the will of John C. Lott was used to establish the Lott Memorial Trust Fund.

For several summers, beginning in 1949, Mr. and Mrs. Parker and a quartet from First Presbyterian Church presented music for each of the August conferences at Montreat, the Southern Presbyterian conference center in the mountains of North Carolina. The quartet consisted of Mrs. Boyd Johnson, soprano; Mrs. A. G. Bradford, alto; Mr. Eddie Williams, tenor; and Mr. Maynard Carrere Salley, Sr., bass.

On March 7, 1950, Columbians gathered at First Presbyterian Church for the funeral of Fitz Hugh McMaster. "Mr. Fitz," who was eighty-two years old when he died, was born in Winnsboro in 1867 and always considered his beloved Fairfield County home. A lawyer-journalist, he worked with *The State* and Charleston's *Evening Post*, before becoming editor of *The Columbia Record*. In 1892 he married Elizabeth Waring of Columbia. He was known for his "courtly manners of the old South" and his loyal service to First Church; he served as clerk of session for thirteen years. As his body was brought into the church and again as it was carried to the churchyard, Fred Parker played the hymn "My Faith Looks up to Thee" on the organ and the chimes. Mr. McMaster was honored by an eight-page resolution in the session's minute book!

In February 1950 Billy Graham came to Columbia. Meetings were held in the Township Auditorium, and forty thousand people attended a Sunday afternoon rally at Carolina Stadium. *The State* newspaper gave Graham extensive and sympathetic coverage, greatly furthering his career.

In 1951 the old manse was renovated—the first floor for Sunday school classes and the second for synod offices. On March 3, 1952, a motion to name the house "Calvin Hall" lost, but it was later named "John Knox House." Apparently the elders preferred the Scottish reformer to his Genevan teacher! The church organ acquired a new three-manual console and stop additions; several sets of pipes were added. The old black academic choir robes were discarded for off-white robes and caps, with scarlet stoles to match the carpet and choir rail. The robes were obtained through Elder Boyd B. Johnson's tailoring shop in the Arcade Building.

On April 28, 1951, the Soldiers' Center was reactivated in the recreation building—with an average of 350 men and women attending the Saturday night programs. There was basketball early in the

evening, then dancing with a live orchestra from eight until eleven o'clock. Refreshments were served continuously throughout the evening—with an average of 40 dozen doughnuts, 300 cups of coffee, 25 gallons of punch, and large quantities of cookies consumed!

In 1952, \$25,000 was given to benevolences; the amount rose to almost \$38,000 when all the gifts from the various church organizations were included. Westminster Fellowship Room for college students was established in the John Knox House. Membership in 1952 was 1,287—a loss of 471 members from the highest membership level, which was reached in 1947.

A plaque listing missionaries from the church was placed in the narthex in 1952. Aurie Lancaster, the daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Robert A. Lancaster, long-time members of First Presbyterian, was "reared and educated in the shadow" of the church. She married Columbia Seminary graduate James Montgomery in 1917; they left Columbia on Thanksgiving day 1917 for China. The Montgomerys served in China, Korea, Japan, and Formosa. Three of their five children became missionaries—in Korea, Japan, and the Belgian Congo. Margaret Lancaster married Harry Bryan in 1929. They sailed for Japan in August 1931 and served there until the work was closed in 1941 because of the international situation. Samuel Hugh Wilds grew up with black playmates on a farm in Longtown, South Carolina. He graduated from the University of South Carolina and Columbia Seminary and went, in the summer of 1912, to the Belgian Congo. He served as preacher, dentist, and river-steamer captain. Hugh's sister Mamie Wilds went to China in 1918, where she served until illness brought her home in 1923.

Susan Currell was born in Davidson, North Carolina, where her father was a professor. She was called to foreign missions through the influence of her grandmother. She went to Japan in 1921, ministering through evangelistic work and Bible teaching. Walter Baldwin graduated from Union Seminary in Virginia and served for a few months in 1946 as assistant pastor at First Presbyterian, before further study at Princeton Seminary. He was pastor of the Presbyterian church in Brevard, North Carolina, until 1949, when he and his wife, Julia Claire, went to Japan. Elizabeth Tarrant studied at Columbia Bible College and Wheaton College. In 1942 she married Samuel Hugh Moffett, son of Presbyterian missionaries to Korea. After the completion of Sam's doctoral studies in history at Yale University, the couple served for two years on the staff of the Presbyterian Board of

Foreign Missions. The Moffetts went to China in 1947. When they were forced out by the communists in 1951, they planned to go to Korea. When this became impossible, Dr. Moffett accepted a position as missions professor at Princeton Seminary. Elizabeth died at Princeton, on January 17, 1955; she was thirty-six years old.

Other missionaries who were members of First Presbyterian Church were Jennie Woodrow Woodbridge (China), Palmer C. DuBose (China), Genevieve Marchant (Brazil), Philip Verner (Africa), Mary Brockman (China), Addy Burney Wilson (China), Geraldine Cate (Philippines), Susan Lobenstine (China), Virginia McQuilkin Bowers (Africa), and Amie McQuilkin (South America).

Westminster Fellowship was sponsored by the Synod of South Carolina and First Presbyterian Church, but student work in Columbia proved to be difficult. Jane Chamblee, the student worker for the fellowship, reported in October 1952 that we are "not losing ground at present but I do not feel we have gained any." She described the problems as lack of personal contacts with the students and "programs that are not too strong in their Christian implications." To strengthen its ministry to students in Columbia, synod called the Reverend Thomas Hoover to this work and designated First Presbyterian Church as the student center for the city. The church provided an office for Westminster Fellowship, served a Wednesday fellowship supper, and conducted a Sunday school class for students.

Two youth choirs sang for Sunday evening services and later joined the church choir in the morning services—the junior choir in the north balcony and the youth choir in the south balcony. They sang with the senior choir in the "Call to Worship" and the "Amen" and presented an occasional anthem. On Mother's Day the youth choirs replaced the senior choir and provided the special music, as well as the flowers in the sanctuary.

On June 15 and 16, 1952, the Religious Education Committee of the Synod of South Carolina sponsored a ministers' convocation at First Presbyterian Church; noted liberal John Sutherland Bonnell was one of the speakers. Dr. Felix Gear of Columbia Seminary conducted a week of special meetings from October 26 through November 2, 1952. Special guest of the church during that time was Hugh McClure, a student at Columbia Seminary and later pastor of First Presbyterian Church.

In 1953 the John Knox House was remodeled for small committee meetings and informal get-togethers. It also provided offices for the

Westminster Fellowship student worker and rooms for Brownie and Girl Scouts. The church's annual report for 1953 showed signs of decline. No new members were added on profession of faith, and total membership dropped slightly to 1,268. Sunday school enrollment was 692, and attendance was much less. The church was not involved in any mission work in Columbia. Benevolences went largely to Presbyterian College, the Soldiers' Center, and Columbia Seminary. The Business Women's Circle of First Presbyterian petitioned the session to begin investigating the feasibility of the establishment of a home for the elderly by the Presbyterian churches of the city.

The church again searched for an assistant pastor to relieve the pastor's load. Dr. Jackson reported that he attended at least 25 meetings each month, delivered 150 sermons and talks a year (requiring at least 40 hours of study each week), made 800 yearly visits, and conducted numerous weddings and funerals. The Reverend Elmer D. Woods, pastor in El Campo, Texas, was called as the new assistant in December 1954 but resigned April 2, 1955, because of health problems.

In 1953 the First Presbyterian Church building was one hundred years old. *The State Magazine* featured a cover photograph of the church on its May 9, 1954, issue, with an article entitled "Graceful Centenarian" by Neill W. Macaulay. It had survived war, storm, fire, and termites! On February 7, 1955, the session discussed air conditioning for the sanctuary. The old fans were inadequate and noisy and had to be turned off during the sermon. The deacons did not believe it wise to "interfere with" the present budget, so a committee was appointed to raise \$30,000 for air conditioning. When it failed to raise the entire amount, the money was refunded to donors. But the hot weather was too much—even for the thrifty deacons—and in 1956 a loan was secured and the church was air-conditioned—an action reported in *The State* newspaper! The writer noted that "ducts in the air-conditioning system will be put under the balcony and will not mar the Gothic beauty of the church." During 1956 the church also converted its heating system from coal to gas.

The Reverend Francis B. Mayes of the Park Circle Presbyterian Church of North Charleston, South Carolina, came in August 1955 as assistant minister. Mr. Mays, a native of Greenville, South Carolina, studied at Presbyterian College and Columbia Seminary. He had served in a number of pastorates in the South Carolina low country, and during the Second World War he was a chaplain. Mrs. Fred Parker was the adult choir director. For twenty years she had been soprano soloist and choir director at Ebenezer Lutheran Church. Now

she gave her full time to First Presbyterian. The church, during 1955, observed Worldwide Communion Sunday, Youth Sunday, Christian Student Night, and Boy Scout Week. A visiting preacher was the Reverend Llwyn Williams, a member of the British Parliament and pastor of London's largest Congregational church.

The 1955 budget exceeded \$100,000: \$67,735 for current expenses and \$34,550 for benevolences. First Church gave \$12,000 in cash and pledges for the new Presbyterian retirement home in Summerville, South Carolina. The cornerstone was laid on October 9, 1956, by First Church Elder William L. Heinz, one of the primary promoters of the home. Women of the Church continued its active work, "trying to draw all women unto Christ." Organized in seven circles, WOC engaged in Bible studies and stewardship; gifts went to world missions, orphanages, the Negro branch of the YWCA, and to the ladies of the Confederate Home. The Scout Council of First Presbyterian Church sponsored Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, as well as Cub, Brownie, and Senior Scout groups.

Shortly after the beginning of radio station WIS ("Wonderful Iodine State") in 1930, the services of First Presbyterian Church were broadcast—the first church in Columbia to regularly broadcast its morning services. The radio station also carried Mr. Parker's weekly organ recitals from the sanctuary, with an opening and closing theme by J. S. Bach—"Now let every tongue adore Thee." Sunday, February 12, 1956, marked the thousandth broadcast of this program. On that day the adult choir of First Presbyterian and the Columbia College Choir assisted Mr. Parker. Parker completed 1,040 programs before the series came to an end in 1957. He wrote the station to thank them for carrying the organ recital for so many years—and to complain about "the cheap, juke-box type of music" that now dominated the radio station's programming, even on Sunday mornings!

A special service on Sunday, February 12, 1956, marked the silver anniversary of Dr. and Mrs. Jackson's ministry in Columbia. Later in June, the Fellowship Hall was rededicated as the James Wyly Jackson Hall. A portrait of Dr. Jackson by Charles Mason Crowson, well-known Columbia artist, was unveiled. Dr. Jackson was praised for his "serenity of spirit, his profound scholarship, and his consecration and dedication." Mrs. Jackson's teaching was an inspiration to many people. She was the regular teacher of the Philathea Class from 1933 to 1958—a class that eventually became known as the Alice Stewart Jackson Class. Mrs. Jackson taught leadership training courses for Sunday school teachers and often addressed presbyterials and other women's groups throughout South Carolina.

At the January 7, 1957, session meeting, Elder Baylis spoke about a wave of evangelism throughout the country and the need for revival at First Presbyterian Church. Membership continued to decline, however, reaching 1,177 at the end of 1957. Sunday school attendance averaged 511 for the year. Joint Sunday evening services with Washington Street Methodist Church were held during the summers. During 1961, Sunday evening services were canceled for June, July, and August.

Dr. Norman G. Dunning, a Methodist minister from England, held preaching missions at the church in 1958 and 1959. In 1959 his theme was "A Faith for the Times." He argued that science and religion must be seen as allies and not enemies. He asserted that the Bible must be held as the Word of God but explained that Christianity is not a book religion. "We didn't get Christianity out of the New Testament," he said; "we got the New Testament out of Christianity." He described how God's "first concern for His children is not their happiness; it is their holiness."

Dean of the school of engineering at the University of South Carolina, Robert L. Sumwalt, became president of the university in 1958. In testimony to him as a leader, teacher, and administrator, the school of engineering was renamed for him. Dr. Sumwalt was succeeded by Thomas F. Jones—the eighth president of the university associated with First Presbyterian Church: James Henley Thornwell, Charles F. McCay, James Woodrow, William Spencer Currell, William Davis Melton, Davison McDowell Douglas, Robert Llewellyn Sumwalt, Sr., and Thomas Franklin Jones, Sr.

Dr. Jackson retired on July 15, 1958, having served First Presbyterian for twenty-seven years—longer than any other pastor. In his last sermon at First Church, preached on April 20, 1958, he called for the people to face the problems of life with "the heroism of going on." Dr. Jackson was made pastor emeritus—the first minister of First Presbyterian to be so honored. The church continued to provide financial help for the Jacksons, with special gifts whenever there was hardship or need. Dr. Jackson died on December 13, 1963. The session's memorial commented on the "great company of his beloved congregation and friends who gathered for the [funeral] service, who knew and loved him for the kindly man he was." He was buried in the graveyard of the church he served so long.²⁹⁹

²⁹⁹ Mrs. Jackson lived on in Columbia until 1982, when she moved to the Presbyterian Home in Clinton, South Carolina. At her death, Mrs. Jackson's body was buried in the First Presbyterian Churchyard next to her husband's grave, near the brick walk between Jackson Hall and the sanctuary.

Mr. Mayes was asked to continue as assistant until a senior pastor was called. The session recommended a search committee of fifteen, including three women, and the congregation added three additional women. Mr. Mayes resigned on July 15, 1958. Dr. John McSween became interim pastor, beginning May 1, 1959. Dr. McSween, seventy-one years old, brought to the church the experience of a long career as home missionary, pastor, military chaplain, and president of Presbyterian and Tuscaloosa colleges.

Back in November 1951 the Education Committee of the session reported that it could not "escape the conclusion that there is a feeling on the part of a rather large group in the church that something is lacking in our setup or in our services and that this indefinable 'something' is responsible for so many of our younger people's losing interest in the church and ceasing to attend any of its services."

CHAPTER 20

LOOK TO THE ROCK

Nearly every seat in the sanctuary was filled on November 8, 1959, when Dr. Joseph Sherrard Rice preached his first sermon as pastor of First Presbyterian Church. *The State* newspaper reported that “the youthful looking Virginian stood in the pulpit and recited the names of some whose presence he sensed—‘heroes of faith’ who have proclaimed Christ from the same sacred desk. He mentioned Witherspoon, Palmer, Thornwell, Blackwood, Lapsley, and Jackson as among those watching the start of a new ‘pilgrimage’ in the church’s history.” “This is a great church, the first church of any denomination in this city,” Dr. Rice said. “Its spires have reached heavenward lo these many years, pointing men to [God]. We are here in the shadow of the state capitol, near the university, located where we can minister to the men of Fort Jackson. And what is our mission? Is it not to point them to Christ?” He led the congregation in prayer. “Bind us together in one great fellowship of the Spirit,” he prayed, “and then thrust us forth into the world to be Thy witnesses to what Jesus Christ can do for those who love him. . . . Pour out thy Spirit upon those of every race, every language, every tongue, who are gathered through the world to seek thy face.” Dr. Rice was installed by Congaree Presbytery on November 17 in Smith Memorial Chapel.

Joseph Sherrard Rice was born in Richmond, Virginia, where his

father, Dr. Theron H. Rice, a native of Wetumpka, Alabama, was professor of English Bible at Union Theological Seminary. Andrew Blackwood, former pastor of First Presbyterian Church, said that Sherrard Rice's father was "on the whole the best man spiritually" he had ever known. As a child, Sherrard often visited his "grandparents' home in the little town of Crozet, Virginia, nestled at the foot of the Blue Ridge mountains." "My grandparents were very old, very dignified, and very calm," he later recalled. "I loved them dearly and I derived things from them that are timeless, things which are seldom found in homes today." Sherrard graduated from Davidson College in 1939 and entered Union Seminary. He married Molly Wagener, with whom he had grown up in Richmond.

Sherrard Rice received the bachelor of divinity degree from Union Seminary in 1943 and served as a chaplain in the United States Navy for two years. After the war he went to Princeton Seminary and completed his master of theology degree in 1946. At Princeton he studied with Andrew Blackwood, who remembered the young student for his ability and charm. After teaching Bible for a year at the Presbyterian School for Christian Education in Richmond, Sherrard Rice became pastor of the Beverly Hills Presbyterian Church in Huntington, West Virginia. Since 1952 he had been a pastor in Tyler, Texas. In 1957 he was awarded a doctor of divinity degree by Austin College. His book on Genesis, *Let There Be Light*, was published by John Knox Press for use in study groups throughout the church. Dr. and Mrs. Rice and their three children—Joseph, Elizabeth, and Hunter—were warmly welcomed into the life and fellowship of First Presbyterian. The church rented a house at 1419 Devonshire Road for the Rice family (and purchased it for \$33,000 in 1961 as a manse).

For some time the session had discussed the possibility of acquiring as much of the church's city block as possible for parking. On May 5, 1959, it authorized purchase of the Lyles Bisset Carlisle and Wolfe property for \$20,000. A year later—on May 2, 1960—the elders, in a joint meeting with the deacons, considered purchasing, for \$40,000, the Kendall Nursing Home property at the southwest corner of Bull and Washington streets. There was some opposition to the purchase of the Kendall property, because it was "two full blocks' distance from the church door." Most of the elders and deacons, however, were favorable; and the church took possession of the property on August 1. The offices of Congaree Presbytery and the Synod of South Carolina were moved to the Kendall house—renamed the John Knox House—

and the old John Knox House was dismantled to provide for parking. Office space also was made available in the John Knox House for the pastors of new churches in the city. While the church was expanding its property, it was also contributing money to help an old friend. In 1959, pledges amounting to \$130,655 were received (toward a goal of \$181,000) for Columbia Theological Seminary.

As Columbia entered the decade of the sixties, its population for the first time exceeded 100,000—including more people from out of state than South Carolina natives. Membership at First Presbyterian began to climb slowly upward; by the end of 1960 it stood at 1,234. The budget for 1961 totaled \$131,638, with \$36,484 of that amount for benevolences—almost equally divided among General Assembly, synod, and presbytery causes.

For years, student work at the University of South Carolina had been carried on by First Presbyterian Church. Later the Synod of South Carolina sponsored the Westminster Fellowship, but First Church continued to be a major supporter. In 1960 the synod purchased Westminster House on Pickens Street and called a full-time minister to this work.

First Presbyterian sponsored, with Congaree Presbytery, a new church in the Dutch Fork area. Westminster Presbyterian Church was organized on February 12, 1961. First Presbyterian Church Kindergarten—the first Protestant weekday church school in Columbia—declined to an enrollment of twenty-eight and closed on June 1, 1961. More than five hundred children had attended during its fifteen years of operation. Miss Caroline Sutphen, director since the school's second year, had taught every one of the five-year-olds. Through the years, the kindergarten children had looked forward to singing Christmas carols in the church choir loft, riding the train to Camden, bringing clothes for orphans, helping Eunice get the juice and cookies, going with Willie to open the church for chapel service, and celebrating "graduation" at Heathwood Park.

The Southern Presbyterian Church celebrated its centennial in 1961. A book, *Look to the Rock*, was published by John Knox Press, with pictures and brief histories of one hundred antebellum Presbyterian churches of the South. First Presbyterian of Columbia not only was included but its picture graced the book's cover. The title was a reference to Isaiah 51:1—"Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn." The text was written by Dr. Daniel Walker Hollis, professor of

history at the University of South Carolina and deacon of First Presbyterian Church; photographs were by Carl Julien. A presbytery-wide banquet to celebrate the centennial was held on October 3, 1961, in the Wade Hampton Hotel. The crowd was smaller than expected; only 350 people came to hear Dr. J. McDowell Richards, president of Columbia Seminary. Dr. Richards told his fellow Presbyterians that "our church has exalted the Word of God," but he added an ambiguous note when he stated that it "has based its teachings, *so far as possible*, on the Scriptures as the only infallible rule of faith and practice." On October 15, Centennial Sunday was observed in all churches throughout the denomination. At First Church, the choir sang the anthem "Built on the Rock, the Church Doth Stand" (S. D. Wolff), and Dr. Rice preached on Isaiah 51:1 and 9. Verse one calls us to "look to the rock" of our Christian heritage, he said; verse nine is a challenge to present and future faithfulness—"Awake, awake, put on strength, O Arm of the Lord; awake as in the days of old, the generations of ancient times."

Columbia was a racially segregated town under the state constitution of 1895, until court decisions after World War II began to break down the old system. In 1954 and 1955 the United States Supreme Court ruled that racial segregation of students in the public schools was unconstitutional. Implementation came slowly, but Columbia's transition was remarkably peaceful. For years the Southern Presbyterian denomination had expressed concerns about the relationship between the races in the South. In 1947 the Synod of South Carolina, meeting at First Presbyterian Church in Columbia, adopted a report condemning "racial antipathies as incompatible with the Spirit of Jesus." "We have a long way to go," the report stated, "and the solution is not easy."

On November 13, 1960, Dr. Rice preached a notable sermon at First Church, entitled "A Pastor Speaks from his Heart." His subject was "The Challenge of the Negro to the Southern Church"—the topic of Rice's master's thesis at Princeton Seminary in 1946. Dr. Rice told the congregation that he had been born in Virginia and that his grandfather fought under Stonewall Jackson as one of the Liberty Hall Volunteers. He told of his "Negro mammy" and the "Negro cook" that worked in his home and said, "I love the Negro, like you do—in that way which Southern white people have always loved him, a way that outsiders never can quite understand." Rice then turned to Acts 11:1-8 and explained that this was a passage in which God

dealt with Peter's prejudices. Change is coming, the pastor said, and we need not fear this change; the Christian gospel is "at the heart" of much of it. He continued, "We must get communication re-established between white and black in our community, and we must learn anew, daringly, creatively, what it means to love our neighbor in this particular context where we find ourselves, not just as the white man loves the darky, but as one man made in the image of God loves another." Dr. Rice concluded with prayer: "O God, our Father . . . take possession of us; take possession of our Southland; take possession of our country. May the Spirit enable us to shake off the bondage of fear and to move forward into a new day, into the glorious liberty of all the sons of God. In Jesus' Name. Amen."

Dr. Rice noted in his sermon on July 2, 1961, that as new laws were changing the traditional way of life in the South, there seemed to be "a firm determination" that things be done in decency and in order in Columbia and in South Carolina. "It continues to be one of my most constant prayers that this may always be so," the pastor added.

The *Presbyterian Survey* published a sermon for Race Relations Sunday, February 11, 1962, by Dr. Rice, entitled "Each in His Own Way." In that sermon he told a true story which may have happened at First Presbyterian Church in Columbia, although he identified neither place nor persons. He said:

There was no recrimination, no ugliness one night when an issue involving segregation was before one particular church session. Two years earlier the matter had been overwhelmingly defeated without any open discussion. Now, after a limited period of debate which could be described as more prayerful than impassioned, the affirmative motion carried. Immediately following the benediction, the elder who had been strongest in his opposition shook hands with his pastor, saying, "Well, sir, you won." And that was the end of it. The decision of the session was carried out; the walls of the church still stood; the life of the congregation went forward as usual.

On June 16, 1963, Dr. Rice returned to this topic in his Sunday morning sermon, "A Change of Heart in a Changing South." Preaching again from Acts 11—the story of the founding of the new Gentile church at Antioch—the pastor invited his people to move with him "rather abruptly from the Biblical story to the current scene." "Let me say that I do not intend any remarks today to be controversial," he continued, "and I hope they will not be. But I am sure that no

thoughtful Christian would expect the Church, of all institutions in our society, to have nothing to say about the implications of this racial situation in our Southland, which has become so much a part of our thoughts and (I trust) of our prayers night and day." Dr. Rice stated that he believed very strongly and definitely that "the Lord has been at work" in the events of the past ten years. Furthermore, he said, "there have been many Barnabases abroad in our land"—like the great-hearted and generous man who brought Paul to Antioch. He praised the "wise, farsighted leadership" in South Carolina. "Instead of giving the world another Little Rock or New Orleans," he said, "we have been able to contribute a Clemson. And I pray that it may have formed a pattern for what will shortly take place at our own University of South Carolina, just outside our front doors." The pastor gave much credit to "the selection of nonviolence on the part of our Negro leadership" and called that decision "one of the great blessings in our Southland in the past ten years."

In his sermon on February 9, 1964, Dr. Rice stated:

When one of our neighbors of darker hue becomes a Christian, when he is truly born again by the Holy Spirit (and many of them have, just as genuinely as any one of us), then he becomes my brother in Christ, if I have been truly born again; and hard though it may be for me, in "obedience to the truth" I must learn to love him earnestly from the heart, as I am loved of Christ. The Southern white man has a head start on the rest of the world in this. There has always been a love between the races in the South that other peoples do not understand. When we get these present painful adjustments worked out, when perfect love casts out all fear, then we may emerge into a new day, better than we have ever dreamed. The world may yet marvel at the example of Christian brotherhood that we can display.

Dr. Rice became president of a new association of white and black ministers—the Columbia Ministerial Fellowship. On May 14, 1962, he asked the session to invite the fellowship to hold its June 19 meeting in Smith Memorial Chapel. The question was discussed "but no action was taken." The session later acknowledged that the Columbia Ministerial Fellowship had doubtless played a part in keeping racial disturbances at a minimum in Columbia and agreed to grant any request from the group to hold its meeting at the church—as long as no meal was served and the meeting was not held in the sanctuary or Jackson Hall. The University of South Carolina choir and orchestra

requested use of the sanctuary for its Christmas concert on December 13, 1964. When it was discovered that the choir included three blacks, the request was denied. Dr. Rice, the moderator, "very earnestly requested each member of the session to read Ephesians 2 and tell him what they thought it meant." In January 1966, however, the statewide ministerial association—an interracial group that also included Roman Catholics—was invited to hold its meeting at First Presbyterian Church.

In 1962 the church engaged in its first major building program since 1925. A goal of \$400,000 was set to renovate and remodel Jackson Hall, the Sunday school building, and Smith Memorial Chapel—"to accomplish the final ecclesiastical blending of the Church's physical facilities into an effective and harmonious whole." Improved classroom space and facilities were especially needed. "In our historic sanctuary we have the best of the old," Dr. Rice told the congregation; "now in our educational buildings we want to provide the best of the new." The campaign was led by Silas C. McMeekin and W. G. Edwards, with Joseph Walker as honorary chairman. A booklet, *Growing Together . . . to the greater glory of God*, challenged the church members to "undertake this work and lay it in the hands of Him who once fed thousands with a loaf or two." With six vice-chairmen, nineteen "majors," and more than five hundred workers, the goal was surpassed; \$407,137 was committed in just eleven days.

Work began on Jackson Hall during the summer of 1962. The high smokestack behind the building was taken down, and the hall was stuccoed and painted to match the church building. There was discussion of joining the church's three buildings with covered walkways, but some members of the congregation opposed "anything that would disturb the historic churchyard." Next, the Sunday school building was remodeled, during which time Columbia High School's classrooms were used by the Sunday school.

In January 1963 the Building Committee recommended that the church construct a separate chapel, facing Washington Street, next to the Sunday school building. This was formerly the site of the church manse that later became the John Knox House. The new chapel was built—the third Smith Memorial Chapel.³⁰⁰ The old marble pulpit

³⁰⁰ The first Smith Memorial Chapel (1911-1926) is now Jackson Hall. The second Smith Memorial Chapel (1926-1963) was in the present Thornwell Building, where the library and children's classrooms are now located.

that was used in the sanctuary from 1853 to 1887 was placed in the wall behind the central communion table as a reminder of the centrality of preaching in the Protestant, especially the Reformed, tradition.³⁰¹ The stained glass windows of the chapel set forth biblical truth and Reformed history. The chancel window exalts the cross of Christ and its radiant influence around the world through all the centuries. The side windows illustrate the history of the Christian church. The first two symbols on the east side represent the Old Testament—the ten commandments and the harp of praise. The second two represent the ministry of Christ—the crown of thorns (his suffering) and the cross and crown (his death, resurrection, ascension, and victorious reign). The third two represent the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and the anchor of hope (Hebrews 7:19). The window on the west side contains the seal of the Presbyterian church (adopted in 1891). The shield represents the church. The burning bush signifies its indestructibility and the lamp sets forth its mission and witness. At the head of the shield is the star setting forth Christ as the Lord of the church, and above is the dove symbolizing the Holy Spirit. The laurel wreath surrounding the seal speaks of the church triumphant. The motto on the scroll is translated “the light shineth in darkness.” These symbols have special significance in the churches of the Reformed tradition—the dove in the Presbyterian churches of Scotland, England, and Hungary; the star, the lighted lamp, and the motto in the Waldensian church of Italy; the burning bush in the Church of Scotland, the Spanish Reformed church, and the Reformed Church of France. The laurel branches are reminiscent of the wreaths on the seals of the Swiss Reformed church and the Westminster Assembly.

The doors on the pews were made to be similar to those on the box pews of the old church building. Two of those original doors were placed in the foyer to the chapel. One of these doors belonged to the pew of the Fitz Hugh McMaster family. The other door was from the pew of the James Gregg family. Colonel Gregg was the son-in-law of Dr. Jonathan Maxcy (first president of South Carolina College) and the father of General Maxcy Gregg of the Confederate Army. A gas chandelier taken from the choir loft of the old sanctuary was placed in the chapel foyer.

³⁰¹ The arrangement of the chapel, however, with its central communion table and side pulpit, did not restate the Reformed tradition architecturally. Part of the old pulpit not used in the chapel was stored at the home of Elder Neill Macaulay; later it was brought to the church and placed behind the education building.

The new Smith Memorial Chapel was dedicated November 3, 1963. Dr. Cecil Lang, assistant minister, read the Scripture—I Kings 8: 22, 23 and 27-30; the prayer of dedication was given by Dr. Rice. Mr. Thomas E. McCutchen, chairman of the Building Committee, brought greetings. The words of the choir's anthem came from Jacob's response to his vision of God at Bethel—"Surely the Lord is in this place. This is none other than the house of God. And this is the gate of heaven."

Mr. Parker and the adult choir had donated the sizable sum that had accumulated from the original "robing" fund, begun by Mrs. Cate and Mrs. Sutphen, toward the purchase of an organ for the new chapel. Mr. Parker and the choir secured additional pledges; and on Sunday evening, October 4, 1964, the new chapel organ, built by the M. P. Moller Company of Hagerstown, Maryland, was dedicated. A memorial marker on the organ states that the beautiful tubular chimes were given "In memory of Florence Spinks Cate, Nov. 30, 1877-Dec. 25, 1963." In 1962, Mrs. Cate had given her piano to the Ladies Bible Class. Later Mr. and Mrs. Cate's children gave the church a three-octave set of Schulmerich handbells. Soon there were two handbell choirs—the "Cate Memorial Handbell Choir" and the "Parker Bells."

The building program—including the addition of the new chapel—cost half a million dollars. The church also committed itself to \$60,000 for Presbyterian College and \$40,000 for the General Assembly Development Fund during 1963 and 1964. First Presbyterian Church ranked seventh in per-capita giving (\$216.96) during 1962, among eighty-three churches with membership between 1,000 and 1,499. (By 1967 it had fallen to twenty-second out of eighty-nine churches in this category.)



Dr. J. Ernest Somerville, pastor of the historic First Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia, conducted preaching missions in 1961 and 1962. The Scottish preacher pleased his hearers, *The State* newspaper reported, with his "rich, resonant sermon delivery" and his poetic style. Dr. Louis H. Evans of First Presbyterian Church of Hollywood, California, and minister-at-large for the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, came for a preaching mission in March 1963 and again in October 1964. In March 1966 Dr. James W. Clarke, a Scot who had served as professor of homiletics at McCormick and Princeton seminaries and as pastor of several prominent churches, came to preach. Dr. George F. MacLeod, another

Scot and founder and leader of the Iona community, also preached at the church.

Elder Boyd Benson Johnson died on June 4, 1962. He had been particularly active as a member of the Communion Committee and of the Greeters Committee. His fellow elders noted that he "fully lived up to the inscription now on his tomb, 'I would rather be a doorkeeper in the House of the Lord.'"

Dr. Cecil H. Lang began his work as assistant minister on September 1, 1962. Cecil Lang was born in Texas on March 18, 1891, and ordained on June 1, 1916. He served six pastorates in Texas and Tennessee and held four administrative positions in the Presbyterian Church in the United States. For ten years he was pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Knoxville, Tennessee. A chaplain during World War I and World War II, Lang made eight round trips across the ocean. He was the first Presbyterian minister to become a full colonel in the armed services.

On January 13, 1964, the Sacraments Committee reported to the session that some members judged the new communion bread "horrible" and wanted to go back to the old kind. The session decided not to make a change because, they said, all "unleavened" bread tastes the same! Some elders urged a return to the earlier practice of a preparatory service.

The new denominational Covenant Life Curriculum generated considerable discussion and some differences of opinion. It began to be used by First Presbyterian on a trial basis in October 1963. The session was satisfied to continue use of the curriculum, having found "nothing detrimental to the creed or theology of the PCUS," but it voted on the matter each year.

Frank Gary Vance resigned as treasurer in 1963 after "27 years of unselfish and faultless service." Vance, assisted by his wife, had served in this position longer than anyone else in the church's history. Mr. and Mrs. Patrick C. Smith accepted the same positions, beginning January 1, 1964.



President John F. Kennedy was assassinated on November 22, 1963. On Sunday, November 24, Dr. Rice laid aside the Thanksgiving sermon he had prepared and spoke on the tragedy. "America is, in truth, on her knees," the pastor said. "We pray for America this day," he continued, "and to America on her knees the word of the Lord comes: 'Be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations. I will be exalted in the earth.'" An organ and choral concert

at First Church was dedicated to President Kennedy's memory; and a memorial service was held on Monday, November 25.

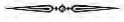
In 1964 the work of the church was organized under six session committees. The session explained:

We have in operation a Church. It is essential that if it functions, there be a plan for *administration*. The first business of the church is *evangelism*, reaching people for Christ and the church. When people are brought into the church they, if they become active and develop in the Christian life, must have *pastoral care*. The means through which they remain active, enlightened, and growing church members is through *education*, learning, and practicing *stewardship*, and engaging in corporate *worship*.

In 1964 Dr. Rice was the church's pastor; Dr. Lang was assistant minister. John Allen Johnson, a member of First Presbyterian Church who had just completed Columbia Seminary, was ordained and installed as assistant pastor in the summer of 1963. In the fall he left for Edinburgh, Scotland, on study leave. He returned to First Presbyterian but went to Seneca Presbyterian Church as its pastor in August 1964. Fred Parker, assisted by Mrs. Parker, was First Presbyterian Church's minister of music. The Reverend Jerry Hammet was synod's campus minister, and Miss Ruth Farrior was director of Christian education. Other members of the church staff were Mrs. Fred H. Gantt, Sr., church visitor; Mrs. W. F. Blackburn, church secretary; Mrs. C. M. Gittinger, pastor's secretary; Patrick C. Smith, church treasurer; Mrs. A. D. Estill, church hostess; and Thomas L. Ruff and Willie Samuels, sextons. In March 1964 Willie Samuels resigned. He and his wife had lived on the church premises in a small frame house for many years. When they desired to move away, the house was turned over to the Boy Scouts for their use until it was torn down in June 1966. Willie Samuels continued to work at the church as yardman. When he became ill in 1970, the church continued his salary. The deacons donated ten pints of blood, and the elders visited him at Columbia Hospital.

The session expressed concerns about certain activities in the city: "obscene literature and lewd entertainment," "the growing practice of Sunday merchandising," and "the attempts to legalize betting and horse races." Overseas, First Presbyterian Church helped to support six missionaries—Miss Charlotte Taylor and Mr. and Mrs. John W.

Davis in Brazil, Miss Mary McBee in Mexico, and the Reverend and Mrs. Walter Baldwin in Japan.



In his preaching, Dr. Rice emphasized the great themes of the Christian gospel—God's love, the necessity of repentance, forgiveness of sins, and the Christian life.³⁰² "The Bible speaks often of God's great love," he said. "But because he loves us, he brings us to judgment, that we may repent of our sins and then go free in the true liberty of the sons of God. There is no short cut to that process. There is no forgiveness; it is wrong to talk about the love of God for all men, until men have come to judgment." On January 29, 1961, Dr. Rice preached on Galatians 2:20—"I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." "I have been trying to preach on this text for over fifteen years," he told his congregation. "I never come to it without feeling anew how far short we come."

Sometimes Dr. Rice spoke on doctrinal topics. In a sermon on "Why I Believe in the Virgin Birth" (preached on December 13, 1964), Rice stated forthrightly, "I believe in the Virgin Birth, not because I understand it, but because the Bible teaches it, and because I believe the Bible to be the Word of God." In a sermon on predestination he said, "Our young people are confused about it, our adults prefer to avoid the subject, and even our officers are told they do not have to believe it." He criticized the "scholasticism" that entered the church by the time of the Westminster Confession of Faith, which, he said, "moved beyond Calvin's more guarded teaching." Calvin's doctrine, Dr. Rice believed, was altered to a "hard double-predestination," which states that "by the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life; and others foreordained to everlasting death." "That is not what the Presbyterian church teaches," Dr. Rice said, "and it is certainly not what we come to proclaim today." He went on to emphasize that predestination means God's infallible purpose in our salvation. "Every student of the Word of God," he said, "knows that the Bible leaves abundant room for the free will of man. . . . Let us realize that somehow these two things work perfectly together: our free will and his sovereign purpose."

³⁰² For a selection of sermons preached at First Presbyterian Church, see J. Sherard Rice, *Favorite Sermons* (1966).

Even though he was uncomfortable with the confession's teaching on predestination, Dr. Rice stressed God's role in our salvation and sanctification. In preaching on "Turning Temptation to Victory," the pastor said, "Desire, decision, determination: these are the human elements that point toward victory; but deliverance comes from God. It is our natural tendency to stress man's part too much; actually, the power of God lies behind them all. It is God who gives the desire; it is God who leads us to decision; it is God who strengthens our determination; and in God we find deliverance."

Dr. Rice preached relevant sermons, addressing issues and topics of the day. As we have seen, he did not avoid sermons on race relations. He dealt with "the drinking problem." After presenting statistics and stories about the problems and tragedies of drinking, he said, "You get the feeling after awhile, like Dwight Moody, [that] 'whiskey is all right in its place; but its place is in hell.'" Rice acknowledged that the Bible doesn't state that drinking is a sin, but it does talk about our responsibility to others—our weaker brothers. "There's one very clear and simple way to avoid all the dangers and complications of alcohol," he said. "Just don't drink." In preaching from Ephesians 5:21-33 on "The Case for Chastity," Dr. Rice criticized the modern attitude toward sex. He quoted from Dr. Egbert Watson Smith's *Creed of Presbyterians*—"God's command must be obeyed; God's will must be done. Not is it pleasant, or popular, or profitable, but is it right? Is it what God would have me to do? This is Calvinism's first question." Dr. Rice's patriotic sermon, "Lest We Forget," preached at First Presbyterian Church on July 5, 1964, won the 1964 Freedom Award given by the Freedoms Foundation of Valley Forge, Pennsylvania.

In August 1961 Dr. Rice gave four messages at the Church Extension Conference at Montreat, North Carolina. He told the audience that about three months earlier he had been in a meeting with Dr. L. Nelson Bell, former missionary-doctor to China and leader among the Southern Presbyterian conservatives. "Having a high respect for his spiritual insights," Dr. Rice said, "I passed him a note saying that I had the opportunity of preaching four nights at Montreat and asking his suggestion as to my choice of subjects." A week later, Rice received a letter from Dr. Bell suggesting the topic of *Secrets of Power* and listing: "The Power of Prayer," "The Power of the Holy Spirit," "The Power of the Word of God," and "The Power of the Surrendered Life."

In a sermon on the twenty-third Psalm, delivered March 3, 1963, on the television program "South Carolina Television Pulpit," Dr. Rice ended with the following story:

A man on his sick bed once confessed to his minister that, although he loved the Psalm, he did not have any personal assurance that it applied to him. The minister told him to stretch out the five fingers of his left hand, and to count on them the first five words of the Psalm. "Now," he said, "hold tightly on to the fourth finger of your left hand. The Lord is *my* shepherd! When you can say that, the promises are all your own." A short time later the man died. When the minister called at the home, the daughter said, "Father died with a smile of childlike peace; and we noticed that he was holding tightly in his right hand, the fourth finger of his left." As he met death face to face, he was saying to himself with quiet trust, "The Lord is *my* shepherd."

Dr. Rice's priorities for the church were clearly set forth in a sermon he preached on May 31, 1964 (repeating a message he had delivered four years earlier), "A Call to Prayer for the Church." There were ten points! He called on the people, first, to "pray for a spiritual revival that will sweep through our lives, our church, and the world"; then, for "a new consciousness in your own heart of the presence and power of Christ." Next, pray "for a growth of grace in every heart and every home in our church." Then, pray "for a genuine concern for all who do not know Christ as Lord and Savior." Pray, he told the congregation, "for a more effective pastoral ministry, by minister and members alike"; "for a growing teaching ministry" among the children, youth, and adults of the church; and for "a new vision of stewardship that will lead our people to know the joy of giving sacrificially to the Master's service." "And now, having prayed earnestly for the church of which we are a part, we move out in our concern to the waiting community around us," Dr. Rice continued. We must pray "for more practical manifestations of our love for others by daily deeds of kindness; for the breakdown of all barriers that separate believers; for a united Christian witness that will make the total impact of the church felt in the life of the community; and, finally, for the intervention of the Holy Spirit in the affairs of men, that God may make us fit to fulfill His commission to be witnesses to all the world."



The church continued to grow, reaching a membership of 1,406 by the end of 1964—a gain of 118 members during the year. Attendance at Sunday morning worship averaged seven hundred—one hundred of whom were visitors. A salary increase for Dr. Rice, from \$11,600 to

\$12,000 in the 1964 budget, was refused by the pastor. Though loyal to the denomination and its agencies, the session fretted about new directions the Southern Presbyterian Church was taking, such as were reflected in the General Assembly's booklet *New Wineskins*. The elders denied a request, however, from the new and conservative Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi, to have its representative speak to them. Matters of church discipline—so common a hundred years earlier—were now absent from the session's minutes. Problems with the churchyard, however, continued. The February 7, 1966, minutes noted that "Elder Macaulay, chairman of the Churchyard Committee, requested approval for pruning a cherry tree in the churchyard, in view of previous difficulties with another tree!"

Dr. Andrew Blackwood died on March 28, 1966. First Presbyterian Church had sent congratulatory messages to Dr. and Mrs. Blackwood on their fiftieth wedding anniversary, April 4, 1960. Dr. Blackwood replied in a letter to the "brethren of the session" on June 23, 1960: "The Lord continue to bless all your worship, your teaching, your work, and your influence," he wrote, "so that the future of the dear old First Church may be more than worthy of the best in her past." The letter was typed, but Dr. Blackwood added, in a shaky hand, "Phil. 1: 3, 6." ["I thank my God upon every remembrance of you. . . . Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."] Dr. Blackwood had once written to the Columbia church, "Among all the congregations I have known, the old First stands out as the best of all."

On April 11, 1966, Dr. Rice resigned to take a position as secretary of evangelism for the Board of Church Extension in Atlanta. "I never would have anticipated that I would go into work like this," Dr. Rice told *The State* newspaper, "but the need is so great at the present time that I have come to feel that it is what the Lord wants us to do." "We have already told friends that we will miss a pastorate," he said, "and are homesick about leaving Columbia." Dr. Rice preached his last sermon as pastor of the church on July 31, 1966. That afternoon a "departure party" was given for the Rice family in Jackson Hall.

The church had grown under Dr. Rice's ministry. His courageous leadership during the civil rights movement enabled First Presbyterian Church to respond as well as it did to the new situation. His sermons presented the gospel clearly and described faithfully what God

expects and demands of His children. First Presbyterian Church again looked "unto the rock" from whence it was "hewn."

CHAPTER 21

AS A TALE THAT IS TOLD

William Kendrick Borden, recent graduate of Columbia Theological Seminary, began work as assistant pastor on June 10, 1966. After Dr. Rice's departure in August, Mr. Borden, Dr. Lang (who had retired on June 1, 1966), and guest preachers filled the pulpit. Lang served another two years, finally retiring on March 18, 1968—his seventy-seventh birthday—after fifty-two years in the ministry. "Although my wife is a Virginian, and I'm a Texan," Dr. Lang said, "we fell in love with Columbia when we came here, and we've decided to stay here forever." In December the session elected Dr. Lang minister emeritus.

At a congregational meeting on July 30, 1967, the nominating committee put forth the name of the Reverend Hugh Walker McClure III, pastor of the Hidenwood Presbyterian Church in Newport News, Virginia. The vote was unanimous—555 to 0. The pulpit supply of the day (and frequent supply for the past year), Dr. Wade Huie, Jr., who was professor of homiletics at Columbia Theological Seminary, stated that having known Hugh McClure for twenty-two years, he considered him "one of the most talented and dedicated advocates of the church and the gospel."

Hugh McClure was born on April 11, 1931, in Washington, North Carolina. His father, a life insurance sales manager, was a Presbyterian elder and long-time Sunday school teacher. His mother was a "homemaker and Christian lady." Hugh grew up mostly in Mobile,

Alabama, and graduated from Georgia Military Academy Junior College and the University of Florida. He "learned the faith," as he once said, "on the knee of a mother, from the voice of a father, from some Sunday School teacher from North Carolina, to Alabama, to Georgia, from preachers up and down the line." He prepared for the ministry at Columbia Theological Seminary, graduating summa cum laude in 1954 with the bachelor of divinity degree. The year before, he had married Beverly Anne Cason of Atlanta, Georgia. Hugh McClure was pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Wetumpka, Alabama, until 1960, when he was called to Hidenwood Presbyterian Church.

Mr. McClure conducted his first service as pastor on September 10, 1967. He said that it was a high privilege to be called to First Presbyterian Church but added that he found two significant blank spaces in the data form that the church had furnished to prospective ministers: (1) What is the special emphasis in the work of this church? and (2) What program has been adopted to accomplish it? First Presbyterians were warned that the new pastor was not willing to allow the church to proceed without careful re-examination of its practices and plans. The next January, he asked each newly elected officer three questions: (1) How did you come to know Jesus Christ as your personal Savior? (2) What does He mean to you today, particularly in the area of Lord and Master? and (3) What are your regular habits which aid your growth in Christ? Almost all attributed their knowledge of Christ to birth and training in a Christian home.

During the 1950s and 1960s, major changes had affected the PCUS—the Southern Presbyterian Church. Strong belief in the authority of Scripture and faithful adherence to the Westminster Standards had weakened. A more liberal theology was taught in its seminaries and preached from many of its major pulpits. The old emphasis on missions and evangelism was giving way to advocacy of political and social issues. Increasing pressure for union with the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America—the Northern church—was being felt throughout the denomination. The UPCUSA adopted a new Confession of 1967 and recast its confessional stance with the compilation of a Book of Confessions. The Council on Church and Race of the UPCUSA sent a contribution to the defense fund set up on behalf of Angela Davis, a philosophy professor at UCLA. Davis was a member of the Black Panthers and a self-avowed Communist who had been indicted on conspiracy charges.

Union presbyteries and synods were created, allowing PCUS and UPCUSA churches to unite locally in presbyteries and synods. In 1972 the PCUS General Assembly restructured the synods and replaced the boards of the church with one general executive board. Conservatives correctly saw both moves as an attempt of the liberals to gain control of church machinery for the purpose of advancing the union movement. Further erosion of Presbyterian church polity occurred when the denomination allowed unordained delegates to debate on the floor of General Assembly and to debate and also vote in the standing committees that reviewed and approved the business coming to the assembly.

These developments troubled the session of First Presbyterian Church. Elder Thomas E. McCutchen addressed Congaree Presbytery on September 23, 1969, asking "Where Should the Emphasis Be?" "The church can be viable, dynamic, and attentive," the First Church elder said, "but its doctrine and focus should not be a surging, changing, unknown element."

One matter that introduced an "unknown element" into the life of the Southern Presbyterian Church was the growing possibility of merger with the Northern Presbyterian denomination. The first mention of a discussion of merger in the session minutes of First Church appeared on January 8, 1940; but this matter had occupied churchmen on both sides since the end of the War Between the States.

Nineteenth-century Southern Presbyterian Church leader Benjamin Morgan Palmer—for many years the beloved pastor of First Presbyterian—constantly spoke out against closer relations between the Northern and Southern churches in the years following the War Between the States. He felt that the Northern church had allowed political judgments to compromise its Presbyterianism and had weakened its Old School theology by its reunion with the New School. Overtures from the 1869 Northern assembly for "the speedy establishment of cordial, fraternal relations" with the Southern Presbyterian Church were too soon for Dr. Palmer and most Southerners. Dr. Palmer wrote seventeen articles opposing such a move, in the fall 1869 *Southwestern Presbyterian*. The Southern Presbyterian General Assembly, meeting in Louisville in 1870, rejected union with the Northern church by a vote of eighty-three to seventeen. Dr. Palmer, chairman of the Committee on Foreign Correspondence, explained the assembly's action in a pastoral letter: "Wishing them prosperity and peace, so far as they labor to win souls for Christ, we feel it a higher duty and a grander privilege to testify for our Master's kingship in his

Church, than to enjoy all the ecclesiastical fellowship which is to be purchased at the expense of conscience and truth."³⁰³ He fought any attempt to bring the two churches closer together; but fraternal relations were finally approved, and in 1883 there was an exchange of official delegates. In 1900, Dr. Palmer, as an old man, was willing to say that if the Northern church split on the great questions dividing Calvinists from Arminians, "organic union might possibly occur with the sounder wing."³⁰⁴ Palmer was undoubtedly influenced both by bitterness at the treatment of Southern Presbyterians during, and especially after, the war and pride that the Southern church was the most spiritual and faithful body of Reformed Christians in the world. But Dr. Palmer also feared—quite correctly, as it turned out—that the Northern church would become so broad that it would tolerate a wide variety of theological views, including those that had little resemblance to the historic Reformed faith.

As early as May 5, 1947, the session of First Presbyterian had discussed the issue of church union. Dr. Jackson read an article supporting reunion, and Elder-for-life Fitz Hugh McMaster argued that the Southern Presbyterian Church should remain separate. He was afraid that the Southern church would lose its identity "in a body controlled from distant centers" and disappear "as a tale that is told." He added, "I waive mention of possible differences of doctrine, the Auburn Affirmation and the like. . . . I would rather the First Presbyterian Church of Columbia would become independent of all Presbyteries, Synods and Assemblies than that it should be lost in an organization, great and wealthy and mighty, in which it would have little companionship."³⁰⁵ That same year Congaree Presbytery voted overwhelmingly against union and sent an overture to the General Assembly of the Southern church "asking that body to discontinue all efforts toward union."

Again and again the First Presbyterian Church session went on record as being opposed to union with the Northern church. On January 19, 1954, Congaree Presbytery voted by an overwhelming majority to overture the General Assembly to desist from further negotiations toward union. The 1954 assembly, however, approved union

³⁰³ Johnson, *Palmer*, p. 327.

³⁰⁴ Johnson, *Palmer*, p. 546.

³⁰⁵ The Auburn Affirmation was a 1924 statement drawn up in opposition to the conservative movement within the Northern Presbyterian church. It was signed by 1,274 ministers and stated that the church should accept a broader interpretation of doctrines, and practice greater tolerance toward diversity of views, within the denomination.

with the PCUSA. On July 6, 1954, the session of First Presbyterian Church voted, 17 to 2, against the union. The congregation voted on September 10, 1954, 126 to 31, to oppose the union. When a substantial number of presbyteries voted against the union, it was defeated.

The session was critical of some of the General Assembly causes—such as the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches—and of the practice of “equalization,” by which funds were distributed to the different agencies according to set percentages. First Presbyterian Church had tried to avoid having its benevolent funds subject to equalization by selectively supporting only certain causes of the Southern Presbyterian Church; but part of the church’s benevolence support was still subject to equalization. In 1968 the elders of First Church devised a plan by which members could avoid equalization—thus not supporting the causes to which they objected. The pledge cards for the every-member canvass for 1969, however, could be marked “old way” by those who wished to continue to have twenty per cent of their donations sent to Atlanta undesignated and so subject to equalization. When the denomination moved support of these controversial ecumenical agencies to the General Assembly tax account, the congregation of First Presbyterian Church withheld its General Assembly tax!

The session expressed its disapproval on September 8, 1969, of a black militant’s speaking at Montreat and the General Assembly’s giving its boards and agencies freedom “to operate as they pleased.” About this time, the session began to receive and study communications from the Concerned Presbyterians—an organization formed in 1965 by Presbyterian ruling elders including Dr. Nelson Bell. The group’s purpose was “to return control of the Church once more to those who feel that the primary mission of the Church is to lead the unsaved to Christ, who believe in the integrity and authority of the Bible, who consider loyalty to the Confession of Faith and the catechisms vital and essential, and who are not willing to have our Church destroyed by merger with bodies not committed to these beliefs.” On November 3, 1969, Elder D. C. Brooks reported on his attendance at one of their meetings, which was addressed by the group’s president, Miami businessman Kenneth S. Keyes. This organization is concerned about the “same things the session is concerned about,” he told his fellow elders.

The leadership of the senior pastor was crucial in laying the groundwork for the church’s informed understanding of the denominational issues of the day. Dr. McClure was one of the few conservatives appointed to the General Executive Board and had firsthand in-

formation concerning the operation of the PCUS. He kept the session apprised of denominational directions and, each January, delivered a state-of-the-church address to the congregation. In 1969 Dr. McClure joined the Covenant Fellowship of Presbyterians—"a group of ministers interested in influencing church policy, but neither to the right nor left." He told the session on November 3 that he had attended a meeting in Memphis and asked permission to be out of town at least two days each month in connection with his work with this new organization. Hugh McClure, Andrew Jumper (pastor of Central Presbyterian Church in St. Louis), and others worked hard to try to influence the Southern Presbyterian Church toward a more conservative position.³⁰⁶ Soon First Presbyterian Church was supporting the Covenant Fellowship through designated gifts.

The session struggled with issues related to the decoration and use of the sanctuary. After many discussions, the elders finally decided not to paint, but to refinish, the mahogany woodwork and pews. For over a year they debated the merits of placing a cross in the church as a memorial to Hugh Frank Blackburn, who was killed in 1967 in Vietnam. In January 1968 a vote resulted in 18 affirmative votes, 10 negative votes, and 4 abstentions. Finally in May 1968 the cross was rejected on the grounds that its "design and location were out of keeping with the balance of the sanctuary." A motion that the United States and Christian flags on the pulpit level be placed on the main floor was tabled. Surprisingly, with little discussion, the Masonic Lodge was granted the use of the church sanctuary for a religious service.

From time to time, the deacons and elders discussed problems concerning the care of the grounds and buildings—such as pigeons in the church tower and moths in the organ. In 1968 a lot on Lockwood Lane was purchased for \$15,000 and a new manse built for \$43,000; Dr. McClure and his family moved there. In 1969 the Churchyard Committee turned over \$10,000 in its account to the church; from now on, funds for care of the churchyard were to be included in the annual church budgets.

In October 1968, Mr. Borden resigned to accept a call to the Winter Park Presbyterian Church in Florida, and Dr. Joseph Norton Dendy became assistant pastor. Norton Dendy was born on Septem-

³⁰⁶ "Yes, Andy and I stood together. I do miss him," McClure wrote to the author in a personal letter, December 21, 1993.

ber 23, 1911, at Walhalla, South Carolina. He graduated from Presbyterian College in 1933 and from Union Theological Seminary in Virginia in 1936. He served churches in North Carolina and Alabama, including First Church, Dothan, before organizing Hillwood Presbyterian Church in Nashville, Tennessee. He had been described to the Columbia session by people who knew him as "one of the best visitation men" in the denomination, as "moderate in his approach to the issues of the day . . . not by temperament a crusader," as "a good preacher," and as a man with a "pleasing personality." Dr. Dendy was installed as assistant minister on October 13, 1968. (He was called as associate pastor June 29, 1975.)



In 1967 the session disapproved proposals to amend the charter of Thornwell Orphanage to permit the acceptance of black and illegitimate children; but a year later it voted to continue support of the Wee-Care Kindergarten for retarded children—sponsored by First Presbyterian Church, the Columbia Association for Retarded Children, and the Richland Women's Club—even though it was understood that Negro children could be included.³⁰⁷ In 1968 Congaree Presbytery voted to authorize the use of presbytery's Camp Longridge by church groups without regard to race; it also adopted a resolution that civil disobedience (sanctioned by the General Assembly) be condemned, overturing the assembly to cease supporting the Southern Christian Leadership Council.

The session of First Presbyterian Church passed a motion on October 7, 1968—by a vote of twenty to nine—to appoint a committee of five elders to study the issue of racial integration and recommend policies for church ushers and the use of church buildings. In November the session took up the matter again. Two motions—one to table and another to weaken the report of the committee—were defeated. The committee's recommendations, however, lost (ten to sixteen) and were returned for more work. In December the report came back, and the session approved the guidelines with only three dissenting votes. The report stated:

1. Membership in the First Presbyterian Church of Columbia, South Carolina, is open to all who profess their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; to those who reaffirm their

³⁰⁷ The kindergarten moved from First Presbyterian Church to larger quarters in 1968.

faith in Jesus Christ and those who present a transfer of membership from another church as defined in the Book of Church Order.

2. Attendance at worship services in the sanctuary and the chapel is open to all regardless of race or national origin as stated in the Book of Church Order.

3. The use of Jackson Hall is under the direction of the Activities Committee of the Board of Deacons; however, the use of Jackson Hall shall not be denied because of race, color or class.

4. All members of the First Presbyterian Church of Columbia, South Carolina, shall be afforded all the privileges of membership.

5. Notwithstanding the above, anyone who endeavors to join the First Presbyterian Church of Columbia or to attend any of its services for the purpose of creating a scene and attendant publicity or to interfere with the normal functions and services of the Church shall be denied membership and refused attendance privileges.

Although the fifth statement revealed a continuing anxiousness, not entirely without cause, the church moved through this crisis with commendable grace. If it did not lead in the movement for racial justice and harmony in South Carolina, neither did it impede progress. Like almost all churches, not only in the South but nationwide, there were failures and un-Christian attitudes and practices in its history. But there was also much to praise in the study, growth, and change marked by these years of tension and struggle in the life of the old downtown Columbia Presbyterian church.

Symbolic of the church's new attitude was the dual action of the session on February 1, 1971, to offer Jackson Hall for a meeting of the children of members of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, and to invite the Reverend Miles O. Smith of the Ladson Memorial Presbyterian Church to conduct the Wednesday services in the chapel on March 3, 1971.



In the fall of 1968 the Walter Bedford Moore house at 1424 Washington Street—one of three remaining unacquired properties in the block—was purchased for \$79,100. In June 1969 the Junior League of Columbia was given the use of the house as a foster home for young girls who were first-time offenders. First Church also cooper-

ated with other Columbia Presbyterian churches in supporting a day-care center at Hendley Homes, a low-income housing project.

Church membership in 1968 was about the same as in 1950—approximately 1,430. From 1950 to 1960 the trend had been down; there were only 1,158 members in 1958. Some First Presbyterian Church members had moved to Eastminster in 1948 and to Forest Lake in 1956, when those new churches were organized. After Dr. Rice's coming in 1959, membership slowly increased. When Rice resigned in 1967, there were over 1,400 members. Sunday school enrollment had fluctuated since 1940, with highs of about 800 to 850 in the late 1950s; from 1962 there had been a downward trend, with about 600 enrolled during 1966 and 1967. Benevolent giving had increased from \$5,000-\$6,000 in the early 1940s to \$75,000-\$95,000 in the late 1960s. A long-range planning committee reporting these items stated that "our church should strive to increase the amount of yearly benevolent giving until it equals that of current expenses." Current expenses for the last several years had reached \$120,000. Value of the land and buildings was placed at two million dollars. There were various suggestions as to what First Presbyterian Church needed to stress—but the committee agreed that "great preaching is first and foremost."

Following the resignation of Mr. Borden, Robert E. Herrmann became minister of Christian education in April 1969. After graduating from Virginia Polytechnical Institute, Herrmann served with the United States Army in Korea for two years and worked for four years with Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company. He then studied for the ministry at Union Seminary in Richmond and, after graduation, was called as pastor to First Presbyterian Church of Ripley, West Virginia. Elizabeth C. (Mrs. Fred Hay, Sr.) Gantt, long-time church visitor, retired on March 31, 1969.

By 1969 an Easter sunrise service was a regular feature of First Church, as was the union Thanksgiving service with Arsenal Hill Presbyterian. A new order of worship was inaugurated in May 1969 for the purpose of giving "a more logical and orderly sequence to the various elements of worship, namely, confession, adoration, commitment, singing, reading, and the preaching of God's Word." The 175th anniversary of First Presbyterian Church was held on Sunday, May 31, 1970. Dr. McClure spoke on "Vision Through Faith."

In the summer of 1970 a new full-time position for a superintendent of maintenance and property was created; and Robert W. Horne, Sr., a member of First Presbyterian Church who was retiring from the army in September, was hired. The Property Committee's

report stated that Mr. Horne possessed "aptitude for the work and love of the church."

On September 12, 1970, the session accepted "with deep and profound regret" Elder Fred Parker's resignation—effective May 31, 1971. Mr. Parker, ably assisted by his wife, had served First Presbyterian Church as organist and minister of music for over forty years. He was ordained as a ruling elder in March 1948. In 1965 the Parkers had retired from their faculty positions at Columbia College but continued their ministry of music at First Church, where Mrs. Parker was choir director. On January 27, 1971, the Fine Arts Committee of First Presbyterian produced "Surely the Lord is in this Place," a phonograph record that featured organ music by Mr. Parker, the adult choir directed by Mrs. Parker, and the Youth, Junior, and Cate Memorial Handbell choirs, directed by Mrs. Beverly Thompson. On May 20 the church honored Mr. and Mrs. Parker with a dinner in Jackson Hall.³⁰⁸

On June 13, 1971, Arpad Darazs directed the choir for the first time, and Ronald Miller began his ministry as organist at First Church. Dr. Darazs was the internationally known director of the University of South Carolina choir. His Palmetto Mastersingers toured Europe on several occasions; and in 1976 the university choir, under his direction, won a number of honors and awards at the Bela Bartok International Choral Competition in Debrecen, Hungary. Ronald Miller had served as organist and director of music at the First Presbyterian Church in his home town of Blytheville, Arkansas. After moving to Columbia to become organist at First Presbyterian Church, he taught English at Hillcrest High School in Dalzell for two years and then at Eau Claire High School. In 1974 Miller married Henrietta Sanders of Columbia. He completed a master's degree at the University of South Carolina in 1976.

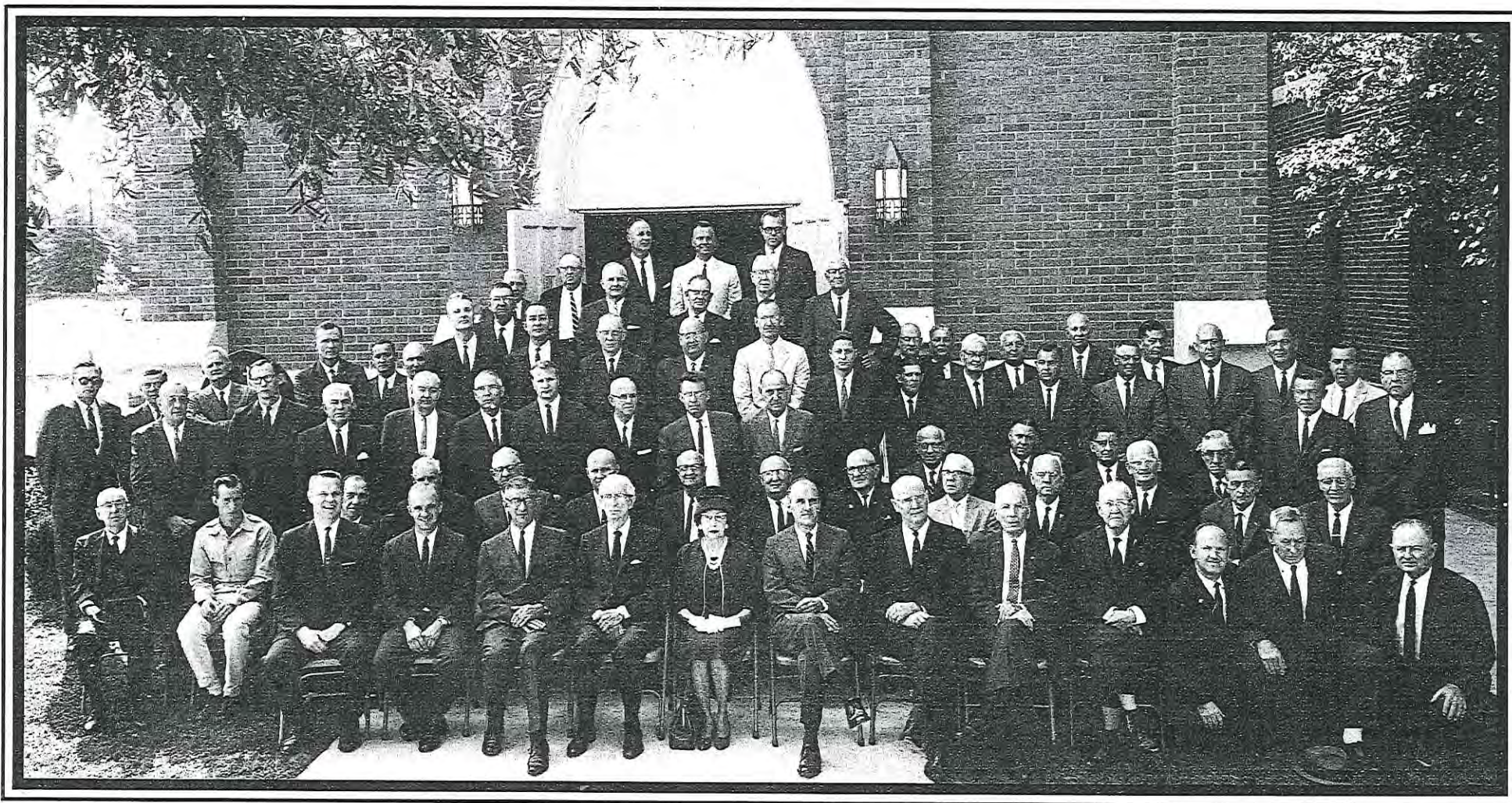
³⁰⁸ Mr. Parker served eight terms as elder before his election to elder emeritus in 1980. He died on August 24, 1988, at eighty-nine years of age. The session memorialized him as "a loyal dedicated Christian, who loved his church and its music and worship," and praised his "musical excellence, good-will, kindness, love, gentleness, dedication and knowledge." Fred Parker left the church his hymnology library and his Steinway grand piano. From 1945 to 1981, Mr. Parker wrote a weekly column in *The State*, entitled "Beloved Hymns."



From April 1951 until the end of the Korean War four years later, servicemen from Fort Jackson were entertained every Saturday night with refreshments, games, and dancing in Fellowship Hall (present Jackson Hall). The orchestra was a composite group of musicians representing the Baptist Training Union and the Eighth Division at Fort Jackson. Young ladies from the congregation served as junior hostesses and were supervised by an adult committee headed by Pete Dibble.



Children who attended the church's kindergarten played outside the Education Building. It was the first church-sponsored kindergarten in the city and operated from 1946 to 1961.



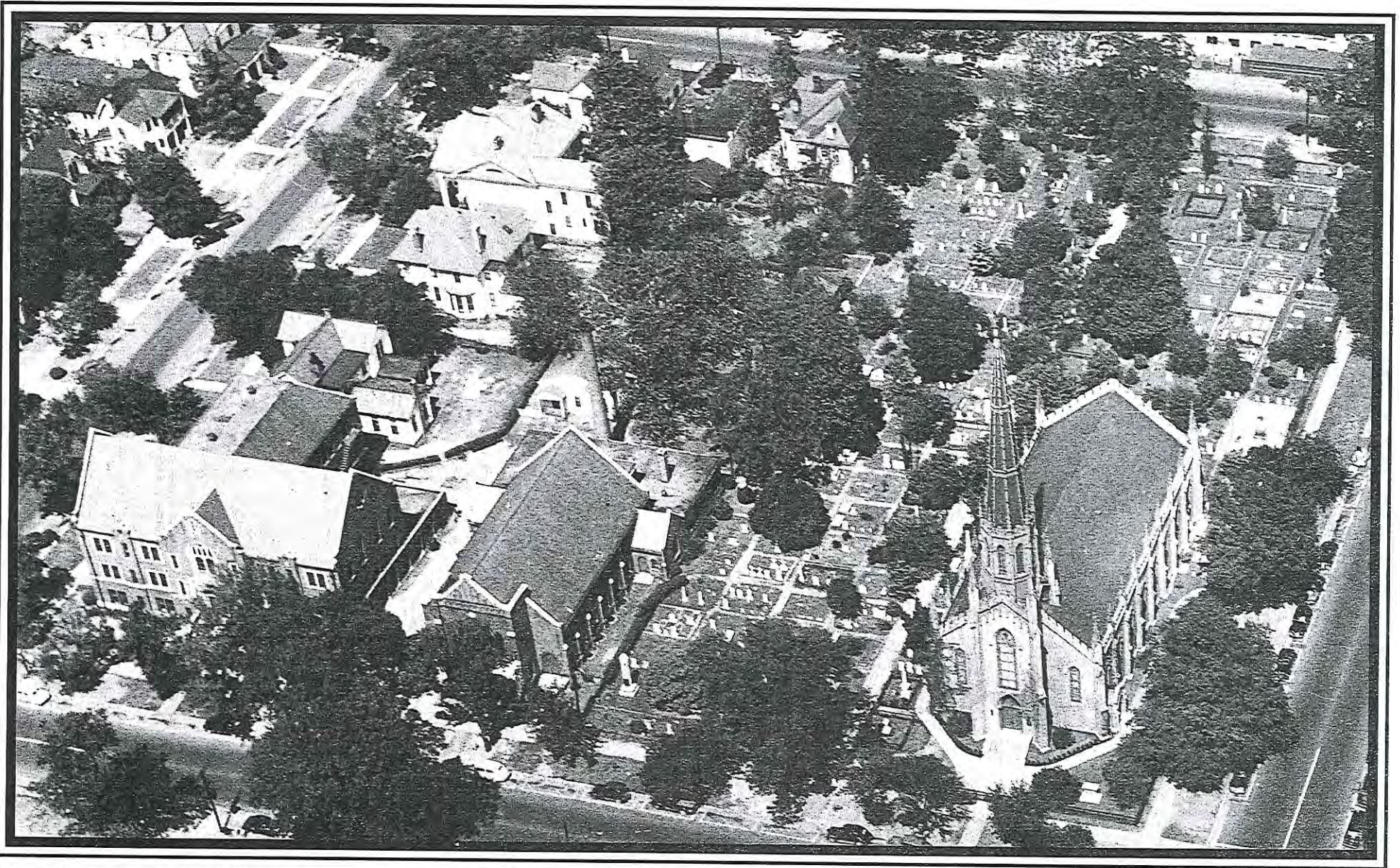
The Men's Bible Class was photographed in front of the new Smith Memorial Chapel in 1964. Miss Mae Cleveland, center, was the class's pianist. Members are, *top row*: R.B. Wilson, J.G. McMaster, D.W. Hollis. *5th row*: Sam Clarke, T.B. Scott, F.P. McGowan, W.F. Taylor, C.D. Floyd, H.S. Johnson, W.N. Cork. *4th row*: C.M. Gittinger, H.M. Shannon, W. Waring, G.E. Lipscomb, B.E. Aughtry, C.E. Law, J.N. Caldwell, A.D. Graham, F.M. Joye, S.F. Lever, R.C. Walker, E.C. Salley, W.T. Linton, L.H. Bohm, G.T. Harmon, E.O. Hunter. *3rd row*: D.H. Stanton, W.N. Geiger, Y.A. McLeod, D.M. Bankhead, W.B. Fowler, F.H. Gantt, E.B. King, J.H. Haynes, G.C. Richey, J.S. Graybill, W.F. Blackburn, O.D. Adair, R.J. McCarmac, C.H. Bistline, C.W. McCants, C.E. Lowder, G.R. McElveen, Jr. *Right from center*: D.R. Hopkins, J.E. Kinard, W.E. Gore, F.S. Smith, W.F. Dibble, R.C. Aiken. *2nd row*: J.I. Rice, visitor, W.D. Fulton, A.R. Hafner, O.P. Newman, R.A. Little, J.H. Little, J.H. Laffitte, R.H. Richey, C.F. Elliott, J.M. Fitzgerald, J.S. Agnew, G.E. Crossland, J.A. Neal. *1st row*: J.S. Rice, C.H. Cate, C.J. Cate, Jr., C.J. Cate, Mae Cleveland, C.M. Walker, E.D. Foster, J.C. Dozier, F.G. Vance, C.A. Jennings, T.W. Davies, T.R. Bethune.



Over eighty children attended the summer Bible school in 1957.



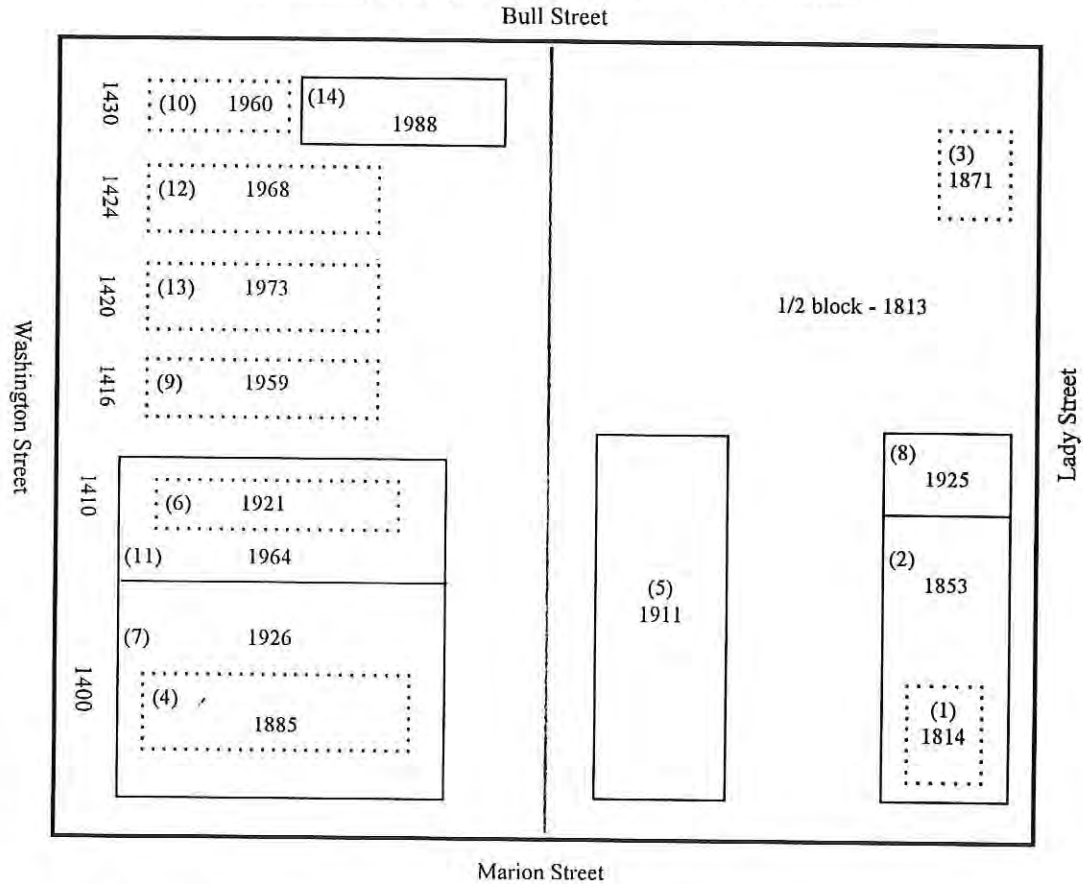
Members of the congregation gathered for a social in Jackson Hall before the 1968 renovations when the stage and balcony were removed.



An aerial view of the church block in about 1960 shows the old manse behind the Education Building, at left. The houses along Washington Street were replaced by Smith Chapel and parking lots.

First Presbyterian Church Buildings*

This chart shows the evolution of church buildings 1814-1988.
The sanctuary is at right. Dotted line structures are not extant.



- | | |
|---|--|
| 1) Wooden church - 1814
(Moved across Lady Street - 1853) | 8) Extended sanctuary - 1925 |
| 2) Gothic church - 1853 | 9) Bought boarding house, 1416 Washington Street - 1959. Torn down for parking. |
| 3) Lecture Room - 1871
(Moved to Eau Claire Church - 1912) | 10) Bought Kendall Nursing Home - 1960
Used as second John Knox House. Torn down. Lot used for parking. |
| 4) Bought Scott home at 1400 Washington Street - 1885. Used for manse. | 11) Built third Smith Chapel on site of former manse - 1964. |
| 5) First Smith Chapel - 1911
(Renovated into Jackson Hall - 1926) | 12) Bought Moore house, 1424 Washington Street - 1968. Rented to tenants until house sold and moved. Lot used for parking. |
| 6) Bought Taylor home, 1410 Washington Street - 1921. Used as new manse until 1931, then rented to tenants. Used by SC Synod as John Knox House 1951-1961. Torn down. | 13) Purchased Fleming vacant lot at 1420 Washington Street for parking - 1973. |
| 7) Education Bldg. with second Smith Chapel - 1926. Named Thornwell Bldg., 1988 | 14) Bought Bar Association bldg. at 1321 Bull Street - 1988. Used for staff offices. Named Palmer Ministries Bldg. |

*Dotted line structures not extant.

CHAPTER 22

WALKING THROUGH THE FIRE

Dr. McClure's preaching was well received at First Presbyterian Church. "You understood what he was saying," commented one church member. In a sermon preached on June 1, 1975, Dr. McClure said:

People assembled here, who have been coming here for years, still have no clear answer to the question, Who is Jesus Christ? At least you have never come to the point of saying, as Peter did, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God, and upon you, and you alone, I stake my life."

Oh, I know you are responding to me by saying, "But, sir, we really do not have to do that do we? I was brought here as a child. I joined the church when I was a teenager and I have been coming here ever since. My grandfather and my grandmother are buried here in the churchyard and even I have a plot there."

"That's not the answer," Dr. McClure said. "The answer is different, and many of us have never given a clear answer."

In another sermon called "What is a Christian?" Dr. McClure defined a Christian as "a person who has a relationship to Jesus Christ." The pastor went on to say that there are five different kinds of relationships to Christ, "and all are important in following him." First,

"we must have a doctrinal relationship with Christ." We must know that he is "the Christ, the Son of the living God." Then, "there is a second relationship, what I would call a redemptive relationship," Dr. McClure said. I must not only know "who Christ is, but what he did for me." Thirdly, there is a devotional relationship—"and that's a big word for 'reading the Bible and saying your prayers.'" Then comes "an institutional relationship," which brings us into the fellowship of Christ's church. Finally, "the Christian must have an ethical relationship to Jesus Christ." "It is a form of idolatry to single out good works as all there is to discipleship," the pastor said. "I don't accept this because I believe ethics, or good works, or behavior, or service, or whatever you want to call it, is the fruit, not the root, of Christian experience."

On September 23, 1979, Dr. McClure preached on "Life After Death" from John 14:1-7. He began by saying, "In the bulletin this morning are listed six persons who in the course of five days have died. Six times I read this Scripture, four times in our own beloved churchyard, twice in other sacred spots." He ended the sermon with these words:

If something happened this afternoon to you or to me, do we believe with absolute certainty that Jesus Christ died on a cross for my sins and yours, and that by His death and glorious resurrection opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers? If you say yes to that question, then yours is a home in heaven with God, Christ, with your loved ones—to know them, to see them, to fellowship with them. So let me ask you the question one more time. If you were to die tonight, would you go to heaven?

Dr. McClure's vision for the church was set forth clearly and constantly. In his sermon for December 31, 1972, he said:

I told the Men's Bible Class this morning that a professor from Union Seminary told me that the mark of a true church is where preaching, teaching, and pastoral care go on. I want to add to that this morning for this congregation. I am convinced that a true church is where preaching the gospel takes place, where teaching the gospel takes place, where caring for people takes place, where evangelizing the community takes place, and where service to the community in the name of Christ takes place.

Knowledgeable about denominational developments, Dr. McClure kept the church alert and informed. In his sermon "The Church: Voice or Echo?" (from the story of Micaiah in I Kings 22:1-28), he asked the question "Will the church be a false prophet or will the church be the voice of God? That's the choice that confronts the church today. Will the church stand for Christ or will the church simply be another echo of mankind, watering down His person?" Dr. McClure was aggressive in his approach to issues; it was said by friends at Columbia Seminary that he brought the rule book with him to softball games! He hated to lose. At First Presbyterian Church he had good support for his approach, but there was opposition, too.

The church moved cautiously. The session (by a vote of seventeen to eight) denied the request of the conservative Presbyterian Churchmen United to meet in the church sanctuary on January 8, 1971.³⁰⁹ In September of that year, Dr. McClure told the session that he had met with Dr. L. Nelson Bell and that Dr. Bell's position was the same as his—he would not be part of any plan to withdraw from the PCUS, but he would continue to fight church union from within. On June 25, 1972, during the morning worship service, Dr. McClure reported on the 1972 General Assembly. Dr. Bell—Billy Graham's father-in-law—was elected moderator. The tone of the assembly was moderation and reconciliation, Dr. McClure said. A motion affirming that "all men are lost apart from the grace of God" passed—but there were 138 negative votes. The Covenant Fellowship of Presbyterians was a positive force, Dr. McClure told the congregation, and was working for proper change through the church courts. Dr. Bell appointed the Columbia pastor chairman of a committee of five to work toward reconciliation in the denomination.

First Presbyterian Church continued to support Presbyterian College and Columbia Seminary. Forty thousand dollars was pledged to the seminary in 1972, to be paid over two years. Presbyterian College awarded Hugh McClure an honorary doctor of divinity degree in June 1972. The church also continued to support the Presbyterian student work at the University of South Carolina and contributed to-

³⁰⁹ A Presbyterian Ministers' Prayer Fellowship began in 1967 to promote prayer within the denomination for the strengthening of Presbyterian faith and polity; in 1969 it began to take a more prominent public role in the conservative movement and changed its name to Presbyterian Churchmen United. John Richards, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Macon, Georgia, became part-time executive director.

ward the purchase of land and the construction of a building for the Westminster Fellowship (when the old Westminster Fellowship House was demolished in 1972 to make way for the new school of nursing). Three elders of First Presbyterian Church—F. DeVere Smith, Charles C. Foster, and James N. Caldwell—were long-time leaders of the campus ministry.

In 1973 the church added to its property by purchasing the vacant lot at 1420-22 Washington Street—the Fleming property—for \$130,000. By 1973, church membership reached 1,512 (above 1,500 for the first time since 1947)—allowing two additional elder-representatives at presbytery and synod. Robert Herrmann resigned as assistant minister—effective September 1, 1973—to accept a call to the pastorate of the Arsenal Hill Presbyterian Church. In 1974 Lillian (Mrs. Edward C.) Salley and Elizabeth (Mrs. Allen Izard) Josey were elected the first women deacons of the church. In 1976 Mayme (Mrs. Earle G.) Tyler joined the church staff as pastor's secretary and Louise (Mrs. Charles F., Jr.) Carter as church secretary.³¹⁰

On April 9, 1973, Dr. McClure and members of the Church Affairs Committee attended an information meeting about the Continuing Presbyterian Church at Eau Claire Presbyterian. When the liberals abandoned their agreement with conservatives to allow an "escape clause" in the Plan of Union, some Presbyterians decided that the time had come to leave the denomination. The Continuing Presbyterian movement became a new denomination—the National Presbyterian Church (and a year later the Presbyterian Church in America). The first General Assembly met at Briarwood Presbyterian Church in Birmingham, Alabama, December 4-7, 1973. There were 382 commissioners present, representing 50,000 communicant members and 250 churches. With the departure of so many to the PCA, the conservative cause within the PCUS was weakened, making union with the UPCUSA even more likely. In November 1973 the First Presbyterian Church session studied documents from the PCUS Ad Interim Committee on Causes of Unhappiness and Division in the church. Dr. McClure offered "corrections" of several statements in the denominational material. In September 1974 the moderator reviewed the actions of the General Assembly and discussed the proposed Book of Confessions and the proposed changes in the Book of Church Order. On September 9, the session voted unanimously to affirm its confidence in the leadership of Dr. McClure.

³¹⁰ In 1994, Mrs. Carter and Mrs. Tyler had the longest terms of service of any church staff members, with the exception of Arthur Henry, who began his work as church gardener in 1971.

In February 1975 it was decided to send *The Presbyterian Survey* and *The Presbyterian Journal* to every elder. In March 1975 Dr. Murdo E. Macdonald, a native of the Outer Hebrides and professor of pastoral theology at the University of Glasgow, conducted a series of services at First Church on the topic "The Gospel and Secular Culture." Samuel L. Latimer, Jr., died in 1975. In 1907, when Sam was fifteen, he had answered a want ad in *The State* for an office boy. He retired in 1961 as the paper's editor. Beginning in the summer of 1975, a Korean Presbyterian congregation met every Sunday afternoon in the chapel of First Church. On December 19, 1976, Peter Agbor Tabi of the Presbyterian Church in the Cameroons was received into First Church—the first black member since the Reconstruction period. Church member John M. Warren was awarded scholarship money from First Presbyterian to study at the new, conservative Reformed Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi.

During May of 1976—the United States bicentennial year—First Presbyterian Church was one of twelve historic churches of Columbia to be included in tours marking "Faith '76." On May 2 Dr. Daniel Hollis, an elder at First Presbyterian Church and professor of history at the University of South Carolina, gave an address at the church entitled "Counting our Bicentennial Blessings."³¹¹ He said, "The Revolutionary generation has made its contribution. Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, and Adams are dead. It is for us the living to take increased devotion to the things they bequeathed to us. We, too, can nobly win or meanly lose our battle with the problems we confront in the world today. Let us dedicate ourselves to preserving and improving the 'last best hope of earth.'"

Beginning in 1977, the service of the "Kirkin' o' the Tartan" was held annually, alternating between Trinity Episcopal Church and First Presbyterian. The St. Andrews Society—its members dressed in kilts—and bagpipe bands added the right Scottish flavor to the special service. This practice, instituted in America by Dr. Peter Marshall, Scottish pastor of the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church in Washington, D. C., symbolized the blessing, or "kirkin'," of the various tartans or families represented. A First Presbyterian Church bulletin explained that the prayers of the church were "for all the families represented in our service, not just those who descend from Scottish forebears." It noted, however, that "as a Presbyterian congregation, it is especially appropriate that tartan should be used to express

³¹¹ Dr. Hollis was the author of the two-volume *University of South Carolina* (Columbia, 1951, 1956).

these prayers of petition and thanksgiving, for Presbyterianism in America principally derives from Presbyterianism in Scotland."

The Reverend James H. Barnes, son of Mr. and Mrs. Harris Barnes of First Presbyterian Church, was called as associate minister on January 23, 1977. Born in Clarksdale, Mississippi, Jim graduated from Mississippi State University and studied for the ministry at Reformed Theological Seminary. He married Jane Ellen Thompson of Jackson, Mississippi. Jim started a "one-on-one-discipleship" program at First Church, which was very effective, especially among the young adults. Many future leaders at the church were trained through his ministry. Jim and Jane Barnes opened their home for small-group Bible studies and extended their hospitality to many individuals and church groups. They were greatly appreciated by the people. Through their examples and ministry, Beth and Will (Mr. and Mrs. William G.) McMaster—and others—committed their lives to Christ.

On April 11, 1977, Hugh McClure was forty-six years old. The session met that evening, and the minutes stated that "the moderator recognized Elder Carter Redd who came forward and presented the moderator with a small fig newton cake." Two candles were placed on the cake and were lighted. The session rose and sang "Happy Birthday" to the moderator, who "was almost overcome."

The session carefully followed developments in its denomination. On January 9, 1978, the elders expressed their disapproval of the statement on the Panama Canal made by the PCUS Council on Theology—because this, in the elders' opinion, was not "a church issue." The session also sought to set the spiritual tone for First Presbyterian Church. In June 1978, the elders stated that in the election of officers "special attention" should be given "to the spiritual qualifications taught in the Scripture and in the Book of Church Order, to the quality of a person's spiritual life, and to a person's church activity."

On July 1, 1978, Dr. Dendy retired and was elected associate pastor emeritus of First Presbyterian Church. He had served as a Presbyterian minister for almost forty-two years, ten of which were in Columbia. On March 19, 1979, Elder Charles B. Elliott was buried in the churchyard. He was ninety-three years old and the last of the "elders for life"—an office which had been created after rotation began in 1933.³¹²

A capital fund drive in 1978 raised \$400,000 for repairs to the church buildings and the chimes and for the installation of a new

³¹² The first elder designated "elder for life" was S. L. Latimer, Sr., in 1938. The last was in 1957. The designation "elder emeritus" began in 1960.

organ. The work was completed in the fall of 1980. From April to October 1980, the Sunday morning worship service was held at Washington Street Methodist Church at 9:30. Sunday school met at 11:00 in the educational building, along with a second worship service in the chapel. The first service in the refurbished sanctuary was held on Sunday, October 5, 1980. Church organist Ronald Miller and the organ committee—in consultation with Richard M. Peek, organist and music director of Covenant Presbyterian Church of Charlotte, North Carolina—had recommended the Canadian firm of Casavant Freres Limitée of St. Hyacinthe, Quebec. The 3,400-pipe organ with a solid oak console was presented in a series of three dedication concerts in November and December of 1980. The congregation appreciated the new organ and enjoyed special musical events. Each December the people looked forward to the annual Christmas concert by the University of South Carolina choir.

Warren Martin Wardlaw came as associate minister in August 1979. He was officially received on October 9. Warren was born in the Midway community, a few miles from Marietta, Georgia, in 1927. He grew up in the Midway Presbyterian Church, where his family had worshiped since the church was organized in 1850. "There is where I learned to love Jesus Christ and know Him," he said. He studied at Presbyterian College and Columbia Theological Seminary. For two years he served churches in Dothan, Alabama, and in 1955 became pastor of the Yeamans Park Presbyterian Church in Hanahan, near Charleston, South Carolina. The next year, Warren Wardlaw and Mary Louise Wood were married in Smith Memorial Chapel of First Presbyterian Church in Columbia by the assistant minister, the Reverend Francis B. Mayes, Sr. Mayes had recently come to First Church from the Park Circle Presbyterian Church of North Charleston, where he had been Mary's pastor. In 1964 Mr. Wardlaw was called to the Darlington Presbyterian Church in Darlington, South Carolina. Presbyterian College awarded him an honorary doctor of divinity degree in 1976.

In 1980 John Price joined the First Church staff as youth director, and Dorothy (Mrs. Donald E.) Hoshaw was named church hostess.³¹³ The session approved changes in the Sunday school curriculum. For kindergarten through eighth grade, Gospel Light materials were replaced with the Christian Reformed Church curriculum; classes in the Westminster Catechism were added to this program. The High

³¹³ Johnny Price remained at First Presbyterian until 1987, when he became youth director for the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Synod.

School Department was free to choose its own material, but one course on Presbyterian doctrine and the Confession of Faith—developed under Dr. McClure's direction—was to be included. These changes represented an important return to the earlier use of the Westminster Confession and catechisms in the educational program of the church.

The results of the 1981 pledge campaign exceeded those of 1980 by \$68,866—even though the number of people making pledges was increased by only eight. The fifty-per-cent benevolence goal, however, had been slipping for some years; but direct contributions, it was noted, were not included.

An evaluation committee had been appointed “to take a thorough look into each and every aspect” of the the life of First Presbyterian Church. In September 1981 it presented its report—a thirty-five-page document—to a joint meeting of the session and the board of deacons. Evaluating the facilities and ministries of the church, the committee recommended a gymnasium for youth activities, more traditional music rather than “heavy classical,” a better new-member orientation program, and once again set before the church the elusive goal that benevolence giving should comprise at least fifty per cent of the total church budget. The committee concluded its report with the statement: “We feel that it is of the utmost importance that elders, deacons, and ministers of First Presbyterian establish and nourish the spiritual atmosphere of our church. We can have the most impressive physical facilities, the most talented congregation and ministers, and the most active programs; yet if the central and very clear goal is not to glorify God, then it is all in vain.”

Columbia Theological Seminary's “Commitment to Excellence” campaign asked First Presbyterian Church to contribute at least \$81,000 over a period of three years. When some elders expressed lack of confidence in the seminary, the session requested members of the Benevolence and Finance committees to visit Columbia Seminary and investigate its positions. Acknowledging the difficulty of their assignment, the group reported to the session in September. They recommended that the money given by First Presbyterian Church to the seminary's campaign be used as “seed money” for an endowed chair in Old or New Testament, to be filled by “an outstanding conservative scholar-teacher.” The church would then attempt to raise elsewhere the \$400,000 needed to endow the chair. The recommendation was approved and sent to the president of Columbia Seminary, who informed the session that he could not accept their proposal restricted as it was.

On July 17, 1978, at a joint meeting of the session and the board of deacons, Dr. McClure gave a lengthy report on the rise of liberal power in the PCUS, the drastic changes in the seminary faculties, the move toward church union, the origin of the Presbyterian Church in America in 1973, and the present situation in the PCUS in which the "liberal establishment" was changing the Book of Church Order "illegally and unconstitutionally" to advance church union. "The one thing that now bothers me the most is that we are a dishonest denomination," he said. "The General Assembly has violated the constitution of the church. We have no security. I am ashamed of my denomination—God will not bless dishonesty." Dr. McClure stated that "union will pass" and offered four alternatives. The church could go into the union, join the Presbyterian Church in America, join the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, or form a new denomination. Independency, he told the elders and deacons, was not an option for a Presbyterian church.

Three years later, in an address to the Women of the Church on March 2, 1981, Dr. McClure deplored the fact that the PCUS had become "a denomination of government, not doctrine." He predicted that union would pass at the General Assembly of 1983 and stated that he would not serve as a minister in the united church. "My only hope," he said, "is that somehow, someday God will intervene." He said that in the new church, all property would be held in trust for the denomination. "I will not live under that kind of control," Dr. McClure said; "some may choose to do so—that's their business." Up to now, Presbyterian philosophy of government had been one "where the power rose, not one where the power came down," McClure stated. He went on to explain to the women why he was opposed to union. In 1967, he said, the UPCUSA "broadened its body of creeds and loosened up the vow required of new clergy." Furthermore, the Confession of 1967, he charged, is not a Reformed doctrinal statement. Dr. McClure told the First Presbyterian Church women that the new Book of Church Order "mandates everything" for church officers—age, sex, color—"except spiritual qualifications."

"I have been very much involved in something that has been extremely exciting," he went on to say. A new Presbyterian denomination, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, was coming into existence. He was pleased that this church would probably adopt the new edition of the Westminster Confession of Faith—produced by Philip

Rollinson, Associate Professor of English at the University of South Carolina, Douglas Kelly, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Dillon, South Carolina, and Hugh McClure.³¹⁴ Dr. McClure was scheduled to give the keynote sermon at the Constituting Convention of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, planned for March 24 and 25, 1981, in St. Louis. He regretted that so many churches were going into the PCA; he wished that they had waited for the EPC.

After the union, Dr. McClure said, "The PCUS will cease to be. I'm not abolishing it; I'm not asking to leave it; it's not going to exist. None of you will be PCUS after union is voted." He set forth the choices facing First Presbyterian Church: (1) To go into union with the UPCUSA. (2) To go into the ARP Church. ("I do not find that as a viable alternative," McClure said.) (3) To go into the PCA. ("I did not choose to go to the PCA in 1973," McClure said; "I do not choose to go tomorrow.") (4) To go into the new denomination—the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. The last was Dr. McClure's choice for First Presbyterian.

Three days later, on March 5, 1981, Mary Verner (Mrs. Edward M., Jr.) Schlaefer sent a letter to the session requesting that the Women of the Church be permitted to call a meeting with the moderator of the General Assembly of the PCUS to discuss problems threatening "the peace and harmony of the church." The session denied her request.

On March 9, Dr. McClure read a "personal position paper" to the session, repeating what he had told the women on March 2. The debate was so vigorous that McClure told the session, "We cannot survive such debate" each month. He admitted that some wanted him to "keep quiet and not cause any more trouble," but he was convinced, he told the session, that he must "take a stand."

At the session meeting on June 8, 1981, Dr. McClure presented a paper calling attention to the fact that the recent General Assembly had passed—by a vote of 295 to 63—a new position that stated that "the property of the particular church would be held in trust for the PCUS." If the property change received approval of thirty-one of the sixty presbyteries, it would go back to the next General Assembly for final approval. This issue, plus the likelihood of positive votes on union in 1982 and 1983, led Dr. McClure to recommend that the church withdraw from the PCUS, in unison with other churches, before May 1982. It is the "safe and secure decision," he told the elders.

³¹⁴ *The Westminster Confession of Faith: A New Edition*, edited by Douglas Kelly, Hugh McClure, and Philip B. Rollinson (Greenwood, S. C.: The Attic Press, Inc., 1979).

To wait until after union and use the "escape clause route" carried "very high risks." Three committees—the Administration Committee under the chairmanship of F. Lockhart Mays, Jr.; the Committee on Church Affairs, chaired by John C. B. Smith; and the Ad-Interim Committee on Church Property, chaired by Raymond McElveen—were asked to deliberate separately and jointly and report back to the session.

A group of church members opposed to withdrawal from the PCUS began to meet and send material supporting their position to the congregation. A letter dated July 1, 1981, from former pastor Sherard Rice—now pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Baton Rouge, Louisiana—to "concerned leaders in the First Presbyterian Church, Columbia, South Carolina," urged the church to "see the folly of another secession." "A church as historic as First Church," Rice wrote, "is so deeply involved in the life of the denomination that what happens to her is of great concern to a wide spectrum of Presbyterians." Dr. Rice recognized the many problems in the PCUS but pointed to a renewal beginning to take place. "I hate to think of your being cut off from this new wave of growth," he wrote. He mentioned Columbia Seminary, Thornwell Orphanage, and the missionaries from First Church, stating that "you will be forsaking a great heritage if you cut yourselves off from these." Dr. Rice supported union and argued that people should not "damn a whole denomination because of the Kaseman case."³¹⁵ The UPCUSA reaffirmed its belief in the deity of Christ in its 1981 General Assembly, he said. Conservative theologian John Gerstner had withdrawn his charge of apostasy and pledged to do all he could to persuade others to withdraw the charge and not to leave the church.³¹⁶ Dr. Rice pled with First Presbyterian to have an open meeting with speakers from each side, suggesting J. McDowell Richards as a representative of the PCUS.

On July 13, 1981, J. Norton Dendy, former associate minister, wrote from Montreat, North Carolina, expressing his "great sadness" at the thought of First Presbyterian Church withdrawing from the PCUS. "I think this will dig up more problems than it will solve," he wrote.

³¹⁵ Mansfield M. Kaseman, a United Church of Christ minister, was accepted by a UPCUSA presbytery in 1979 to serve a Maryland congregation belonging to both the UCC and the UPCUSA, even though he refused to affirm that Jesus is God. In a second examination he denied the necessity of believing in the bodily resurrection of Christ. He asserted that "the God worth knowing is found more in the quest of liberation than in the pursuit of orthodoxy." The presbytery again approved Kaseman.

³¹⁶ John Gerstner, who had served as professor of church history at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary for many years, later left the Presbyterian Church (United States of America) and joined the Presbyterian Church in America.

On July 18, a letter with twenty-seven signatures expressed strong disagreement with the proposed withdrawal from the PCUS and requested permission to invite Ben Lacy Rose, professor at Union Seminary in Virginia, to meet with the congregation in an open meeting. A few days later (July 24) a letter with fifty signatures of First Presbyterian members—calling themselves the “Committee of Loyal Presbyterians”—was circulated, along with the letters from Dr. Rice and Dr. Dendy and a pastoral letter from Congaree Presbytery. A letter from Elder Lockhart Mays, chairman of the Administration Committee, on August 4, 1981, attempted to “clear up some of the confusion” regarding the session’s proposal and reiterated that the final decision would rest with the congregation.

On August 25, 1981, Dr. Rose spoke to a full audience in Jackson Hall. It would be a great pity, he said, for First Presbyterian Church to remove itself from its history. The PCUS is not perfect, he admitted, but it is a long way from being an apostate denomination. He suggested that Presbyterians avoid the “sin of self righteousness.” Dr. Cortez A. Cooper, Jr.—formerly pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Nashville, Tennessee, and now pastor of a PCA church in that city—was invited to conduct an educational meeting, on October 1, to give a different perspective from that of Dr. Rose. Meanwhile, the first General Assembly of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church took place on September 23, 1981.

In attempting to withdraw unilaterally from the PCUS, McGregor Presbyterian Church of Columbia had encountered great difficulties resulting in a lawsuit by Congaree Presbytery, which claimed ownership of the church property. First Presbyterian Church watched these developments with concern. In September 1981, the Ad-Interim Committee on Church Property reported that the proposed change concerning property in the Book of Church Order would set forth unequivocally the denomination’s control of the local church’s property. South Carolina legal precedent, however, would make unilateral withdrawal unwise, if not impossible, the committee stated. Dismissal by the presbytery was recommended as the safer procedure; but because of the emotions stirred up by the McGregor situation, it was generally felt that presbytery would not now dismiss First Presbyterian Church under any circumstances.

Congaree Presbytery, at its October 6, 1981, meeting, encouraged churches to remain in the PCUS until church union was decided. By a sixty-three-to-seven vote, the presbytery assured churches that they would be dismissed with their property if church union passed and a congregation then requested dismissal with a two-thirds majority.

The session of First Presbyterian was careful to designate 1982 funds contributed to the presbytery in such a way that none of this money could be used by the presbytery to pursue its lawsuit against McGregor Presbyterian Church. Elder Mays read to the session I Corinthians 6:1-8, a passage in which the Apostle Paul rebukes the Corinthians for going to law against one another—"and this in front of unbelievers."

The Administration Committee asked for more time to complete its work. A subcommittee was formed to study three Presbyterian denominations: the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, and the Presbyterian Church in America. A report from the subcommittee was made to the Administration Committee in late November 1981. The three committees—Administration, Church Affairs, and Church Property—reported to the session on December 14 that "it would be ill-advised to pursue withdrawal from the PCUS at this time." It suggested that "every effort be made by the session to reverse the current trends in the PCUS with which it finds itself out of accord." This conclusion, the report continued, "should not be construed to imply agreement with, or support for, the proposed changes in the Book of Church Order relating to church property, movement toward union with the UPCUSA, or any variance from established doctrine as expressed in the Westminster Confession." The committees suggested that if union with the UPCUSA occurred, the session should "recommend to the congregation that this church withdraw from the PCUS by complying with and exercising the assurance of withdrawal with property as expressed in the resolution passed by Congaree Presbytery." Such a recommendation to the congregation would be accompanied by "a thorough, updated study of denominational alternatives." The report of the three committees passed by a vote of thirty to four.

A little after one o'clock in the morning of March 11, 1982, a police officer making his routine rounds discovered that the First Presbyterian Church sanctuary was on fire. The fire had already spread to the attic above the organ pipes, and the steeple was acting as a chimney. The fire department arrived about two minutes after the alarm was sounded and fought heroically to save the historic building. Firemen entered the attic through an opening that had been cut the year before when the new organ was installed. From that vantage point they were able to contain the fire until it was extinguished at about 1:45 a.m. The fire chief indicated that if they had been fifteen minutes later, it would have been impossible to stop the fire. As news

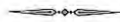
of the fire spread during the morning hours, church members and others came to see the damage. Some wept when they saw the condition of the grand old building; but one of the newest church members encouraged the others by saying, "We'll just rebuild it." The church had survived the 1865 fire of Columbia, a tornado in 1875, and two fires in the steeple. It would also survive the fire of 1982. The structure of the sanctuary was not damaged, but the room behind the choir loft was totally gutted and the pipes of the organ were destroyed. The pulpit, pews, and furniture were not burned, although parts of the sanctuary were scorched by heat and damaged by water.

A churchwide committee of fifteen, with Mr. Robert C. Walker as chairman, was nominated (by the chairman of the Administration Committee, the chairman of the board of deacons, and the minister) on March 14, 1982. This committee would work with the Church Property Committee of the board of deacons, headed by Mr. Henry Nelson, and with Mr. Robert Horne, the business manager, to prepare for the restoration of the building. On March 15, Dr. McClure set forth the situation to the church officers. He spoke of the many changes that had taken place in the sanctuary through the years. The earliest pictures of the interior do not show a definite Gothic style, he said, as the exterior does. "Although we have some strange mixture of Georgian and other architectural designs, what we had before the recent fire was superior in appearance to anything the earliest pictures showed," he claimed. He then set forth three possibilities: (1) remodel the sanctuary to produce a consistent Gothic design, (2) repair the sanctuary precisely the way it was before the fire, or (3) repair the sanctuary generally the way it was but with some changes and improvements. Dr. McClure recommended the third option, mainly because of the need to be financially cautious in the light of the coming decision on affiliation and the possibility of losing members. A straw vote indicated that most of the officers agreed with him—thirty-five voting for plan three, twenty-eight for plan two, and one person voting for plan one.

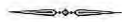
Insurance covered the damage to the building; on August 18, 1982, the church received a check from the Lumbermens Mutual for \$955,755.99. (The total amount paid by the insurance company was \$1,041,741.) Donations of over \$150,000 were given by church members and others for changes and improvements. One of the first communications the church received after the fire was a letter from the Korean Community Presbyterian Church with a check for \$200. A letter and generous gift came from First (Scots) Presbyterian Church in

Charleston. The architectural firm of Henry D. Boykin of Camden, South Carolina, was chosen for the restoration. Known for its work on historic buildings, the firm had restored the Holy Cross Episcopal Church in Stateburg and the pre-Revolutionary St. David's Episcopal Church of Cheraw. The reconstruction of the church was done by the Sumwalt Construction Company, whose president, Robert L. Sumwalt, Jr., was one of the elders of First Church.

For some weeks, the two Sunday morning worship services were held at Washington Street Methodist Church and in Smith Memorial Chapel. On Easter Sunday—April 11, 1982—services were held in Jackson Hall and in the churchyard. After Easter, Sunday morning services were held in Jackson Hall. In September the main worship service was moved again to Washington Street Methodist Church and held at 9:30 a.m. Sunday school met at 11:00, and a second worship service was held in the First Presbyterian Church chapel at that time.



At the meeting of the session on April 12, 1982, Dr. McClure surprised the elders by submitting his resignation, effective June 30. The pastor told the session that his decision—not an easy one—had been reached in February. The denominational struggle over church union during the past several years and the division in the First Church congregation concerning the church's future had taken its toll, Dr. McClure admitted. He was not angry with the congregation, he said, but he was “tired of church politics.” For the past eighteen months especially, McClure said, his intense involvement in the Southern Presbyterian struggle meant that he could not do justice to his church, himself, or his family. Hugh McClure, now fifty-one years old, had been at First Presbyterian Church for fifteen years. He needed a fresh start, he told the session. Elder John Gregg McMaster made “a moving response to the news of the minister's resignation, in which he commended Dr. McClure for his service to and leadership of the congregation.” The session then accepted Dr. McClure's resignation with regrets and called for a congregational meeting to concur with his request. Dr. McClure was granted the month of June as vacation, and his services to the church ended on May 31.



More than once during these years of ecclesiastical uncertainty and theological confusion in the Southern Presbyterian denomination, and again in its own trial by fire in 1982, First Presbyterian Church turned to Isaiah 43:1, 2 for support.

But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passeth through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.

CHAPTER 23

MY EYES AND MY HEART

The first vote on union with the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America was now scheduled for the 1982 General Assembly, with the second vote to be a year later. First Presbyterian Church passed a motion to ask Congaree Presbytery to make an overture to the General Assembly to amend the Book of Church Order in such a way as to protect the ownership of church property by the local congregation. The motion was defeated at presbytery, forty-three to thirty-eight.

First Church had been a major contributor to denominational causes. Most of the church members preferred to designate their benevolence gifts, so that they would not be subject to equalization, but some continued to mark their pledges "old way." Even at the time the church was considering leaving the PCUS, the congregation enthusiastically entered a campaign to build a new Presbyterian retirement home in the Columbia area. There were now Presbyterian homes in Summerville, Clinton, and Florence. The First Presbyterian Church session often had urged that a retirement home be established in central South Carolina. When the synod decided to act, the campaign office was located at First Church; and the congregation exceeded its goal of \$198,000 by over \$60,000 in money and property.

Following Dr. McClure's resignation, the session wisely felt that the church needed to decide its direction before a new minister could be called. The Administration Committee, on April 23, 1982, recommended to the session that First Presbyterian Church seek dismissal to the recently formed Evangelical Presbyterian Church. The session was unable to reach a decision in its called meeting on April 26 and met again on May 2. Dr. McClure presented a comparative analysis of five Presbyterian denominations—PCUS, PCUSA, ARPC, PCA, and EPC. On May 5, representatives of the Presbyterian Church in America—the Reverend Kennedy Smart and Mr. Jack Williamson—made a presentation; and on May 6 the session met with the Reverend Edward Davis, a representative of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. Some elders wanted First Church to become independent, but it was learned that a PCUS church could not be dismissed to independency.

Finally on May 10, 1982, the session met to decide whether the church should withdraw from the PCUS. Cecil D. Brearley, Jr., executive presbyter of Congaree Presbytery, had urged the session by letter not to take "precipitous action." But, claiming that "the PCUS as a denomination has gradually drifted away over the years from basic doctrinal positions of our Reformed faith," the session stated its belief that First Presbyterian Church could "better serve Jesus Christ as an active and vibrant body of believers in another denomination." The vote to seek dismissal from the PCUS passed, twenty-nine to three. The session, however, changed the Administration Committee's recommendation for affiliation from the EPC to the PCA and voted, twenty-six to seven, to seek dismissal to Calvary Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in America. The Presbyterian Church in America, established in 1973, now had approximately 90,000 members in 500 churches—50 in South Carolina. In 1973, five churches withdrew from Congaree Presbytery and joined the PCA; another joined in 1976. Some churches within Congaree Presbytery had divided, with conservative members leaving to form additional PCA churches.³¹⁷

A congregational meeting to consider the session's proposal was called for Sunday, May 23, at 2:30 p.m. The bulletin for the day—As-

³¹⁷ In May 1983 a "joining and receiving" was approved by the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod, and the Presbyterian Church in America—which added to the young denomination Covenant College of Lookout Mountain, Georgia, and Covenant Theological Seminary of St. Louis, Missouri.

cension Sunday—included a brief message from the minister: “I ask you to pray for God’s will to be done at First Presbyterian Church.” A telephone campaign had urged members loyal to the PCUS to be at the congregational meeting on Sunday afternoon and vote against “pulling out.”

Since the sanctuary of First Church had been badly damaged by fire, the congregational meeting was held at First Baptist Church, the site of the opening meeting of the South Carolina Secession Convention in 1861. Dr. McClure, still pastor until the end of the month, was moderator. An observer from Congaree Presbytery, Executive Presbyterian Cecil Brearley, was present. Active members sat downstairs; guests and visitors were in the balconies. Six elders—F. Lockhart Mays, G. Raymond McElveen, Jr., Thomas E. McCutchen, William Randolph Folks, Jr., Henry D. Foster, Jr., and W. Patrick Dorn, Jr.—were seated at the front of the sanctuary to respond to questions. After the meeting was called to order, a motion was made by Dr. F. DeVere Smith that First Presbyterian Church not proceed with plans for withdrawal unless a two-thirds vote was received. The motion passed, 326 to 297.

The presentation on behalf of the session’s recommendation was made by Elder John Gregg McMaster. He set forth the history of the PCUS and explained why the officers recommended that the church join the PCA. Others spoke in opposition, describing the move as “ill-timed and ill-advised,” and criticizing the “narrow rigidity” of the PCA. After discussion, the moderator called for the vote; and the motion to request dismissal from the PCUS to the PCA carried by a vote of 372 to 307. Since the motion did not receive the necessary two-thirds majority, it was declared lost. Nothing had been settled; there was considerable dissatisfaction on both sides of the issue. Even the motion to adjourn barely passed—327 to 294!

There were a number of reasons why the move to join the Presbyterian Church in America failed. Some members were content to see First Presbyterian Church become part of the new united church. Since church union had not yet passed the two general assemblies, some—still not believing that it would—preferred to remain in the PCUS. Others favored withdrawal but did not want to go into the PCA—citing difficulties with an “ultra-conservative group” within the PCA. Some expressed concern that an overture to the 1980 PCA General Assembly had recommended the position of total abstinence. The overture was answered in the negative; but it demonstrated, they said, that “there is something less than perfect harmony in the PCA.” It was rumored (falsely) that some PCA sessions pro-

hibited women meeting together “unless the pastor and an elder are present.” Some pointed out that two prominent PCA ministers in South Carolina were graduates of the fundamentalist Bob Jones University. A few members were concerned about other issues—for example, the possibility that the Presbyterian Home in Columbia would no longer admit members of First Presbyterian if the church left the denomination.

Dr. McClure preached his last sermon on May 30, 1982, the Sunday following the congregational vote. Despite his constant concern with the theological move toward liberalism in the PCUS, and his time and energy invested in finding ways to bolster the conservative cause in the denomination, Dr. McClure saw good response to his ministry in Columbia. The congregation grew from 1,145 to 1,730 members; and the church’s annual budget increased from \$180,000 to more than \$600,000, with total giving exceeding \$800,000.

On June 6, 1982, the congregation accepted Dr. McClure’s resignation. Elder Walker Clarke read a statement expressing “approbation and esteem for the work and ministry of Dr. McClure.” His remarks “were warmly applauded by a standing congregation.” Dr. McClure had served the church for fifteen years—a time of “remarkable growth and spiritual revival,” according to a resolution from the Women of the Church. It stated that his ministry at First Presbyterian had been characterized “by strength, honesty, sincerity, and courage,” and added, “he has taught and inspired us, challenged and encouraged us, grieved and rejoiced with us, and prayed with and for us.” A farewell dinner for Dr. and Mrs. McClure was held on Wednesday, September 1. The McClures continued to live in the manse until the summer of 1983.³¹⁸

The session asked Associate Minister Warren Wardlaw to assume the pastoral leadership until a new minister was called. His sermon the next Sunday was entitled “I Believe in the Church,” from the text of Matthew 16:18—“On this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” Dr. Wardlaw told the congregation that he wanted to affirm that he believed in the church for three reasons: it is the church of Jesus Christ; it is indestructible; and it is vic-

³¹⁸ Dr. McClure had several interim pastorates in South Carolina and Pennsylvania from 1982 to 1986. In 1987 he became pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Beaver, Pennsylvania.

torious and triumphant. "But what does that mean for you and me in our relationship to First Presbyterian Church?" he asked. Dr. Wardlaw answered:

I believe we are the church of Jesus Christ in this community. We've been called into this fellowship to worship and serve our Lord and Saviour. Certainly there have been things happening in First Presbyterian Church which do give us concern. We've had some adversities this year: the fire in our sanctuary, although it has caused us to be a little disorganized, has not destroyed our church. I remember what one elder remarked after our sanctuary was burned. Someone asked how the church was and he replied, "The church is fine, but our sanctuary has been damaged by fire." That is the true nature of the church of Jesus Christ. Certainly we have had other adversities. Our minister has resigned. Dr. McClure has served well in First Presbyterian Church and we are thankful for his service. . . . We have had divisions within our congregation over issues within our denomination. I don't know what the future will hold for us. . . . But there is a need for us to become the church that Jesus Christ would want us to be in this community.

Dr. Wardlaw served as interim pastor for the next fifteen months. In a paper entitled "Through Times of Change," Wardlaw described the tumultuous events of this crucial period in the history of First Presbyterian Church. He wrote, "My desire throughout was to keep the unity of the Church insofar as possible, and to discourage any major deterioration of membership." Dr. Wardlaw's efforts were widely appreciated. Dr. Sherrard Rice wrote to Mrs. Edward Schlaefter on October 24, 1982, that he was distressed about the church but that "reports indicate that Warren Wardlaw is doing a splendid job and is trying to put the pieces back together." The former pastor added, "My prayer is that God will lead the church into a new unity and a fresh vision of its work and that all our labors will not have been in vain."

The Reverend James H. Barnes, associate minister for youth and young adults, shared in some of the preaching during the interim period. Neither he nor Dr. Wardlaw was eligible (according to the Book of Church Order) to become the senior pastor in a church they had served as associates.

The General Assemblies of the PCUS and PCUSA approved the Plan of Union in June 1982 and asked their presbyteries to vote in February 1983. The General Assembly of the Southern church, meeting in Columbus, Georgia, voted 344 to 30 for union and 308 to 67 on the property issue—stating that the local congregation holds legal title to the property but that it is “held in trust nevertheless for the use and benefit of the PCUS.” In 1968, courts in the state of Georgia had rejected the “doctrine of implied trust” and declared the majority of a Savannah congregation the owners of its property. In 1975, however, the Supreme Court of South Carolina upheld the “doctrine of implied trust” in the case of First Presbyterian Church of Rock Hill and gave the property to the “loyal minority.” In preparation for merger, the UPCUSA and the PCUS planned to make the “doctrine of implied trust” clearly explicit by writing it into the denomination’s constitution.

The Plan for Reunion, the proposed Book of Church Order, and the Book of Confessions were distributed to the churches for study. In 1967 the UPCUSA had replaced subscription by its clergy to the Westminster Standards with a promise to be “instructed” and “continually guided” by a book consisting of nine creeds and confessions. The session of First Presbyterian Church was especially disturbed by “The Confession of 1967,” because of its weak view of Scripture and its reorientation of theology toward social action.

The session requested Dr. Wardlaw and Mr. Barnes to preach a series of sermons about the theological issues confronting the church. On October 11, 1982, Elder W. Patrick Dorn reported on the meeting of the Synod of the Southeast, September 21 and 22, in Augusta, Georgia. He concluded by stating that “the tone of the synod was political in nature. Our church is emphasizing extremely difficult and controversial national and international problems rather than the issue of winning souls for Jesus Christ.”

The remainder of 1982 was a time of uncertainty for First Presbyterian. Several members left because they did not want to go through the controversy which was still ahead. The main worship service was being held at 9:30 a.m. at Washington Street Methodist Church, and there were fewer visitors. At the end of the year, membership statistics showed a gain of 56 members and a loss of 110 (22 by death). Pledges for 1982 were not fully paid, which necessitated cutting programs and expenses. The every-member canvass, in the fall of 1982

for 1983, resulted in pledges of \$492,000, which was \$52,000 less than the previous year.

Congaree Presbytery met on February 1, 1983, and voted against the Plan of Union by a vote of fifty-six to forty. Five of the seven presbyteries in South Carolina also voted against union; but fifty-three of the denomination's sixty-one presbyteries approved—well over the necessary three fourths.

On March 6, 1983, the first service in the restored sanctuary was held—one year after the fire. Flowers were given by Washington Street Methodist Church, which had so graciously accommodated its Presbyterian neighbors during the past year. With thanksgiving and joy the congregation re-entered their house of worship. The ceiling in the organ chamber had been raised, and a memorial rose window above the pulpit greeted the delighted congregation. The window was "dedicated to the glory of God and to devoted parents Joseph Walker and Claudia Sadler Walker by a grateful son and his family." A triple Gothic arch adorned the front of the church, and arches had been added over existing doors. A new marble-faced pulpit with a brass cross stood in its accustomed place. The chandeliers were replaced, and the entire ceiling of the sanctuary had been replastered.³¹⁹ The ribs in the ceiling were accented with a contrasting color. The pews were refinished and divided into new sections in order to fit the arrangement of a center aisle—restoring the original configuration of aisles and pews. New carpeting was placed throughout the sanctuary and a modern sound system installed.

The litany of rededication began with words read by Dr. Wardlaw:

Dearly beloved: Forasmuch as it pleased Almighty God to put it into the hearts of his servants in days past to build this house for his worship, and forasmuch, in His providence, the structure of this building was spared from destruction by fire, and forasmuch as we have been privileged to restore this house as a place of worship, let us now fulfill the godly purpose for which we are assembled of dedicating it to the honor of God's most holy name. To the glory of God the Father, who has called us by his grace; To the honor of his Son,

³¹⁹ The most difficult part of the restoration was the plaster work. An expert from Memphis, Tennessee, was hired to assess the damage and plan the restoration. Almost all of the ceiling had to come down because the heat had changed the chemical nature of the plaster.

who loved us and gave himself for us; To the praise of the Holy Spirit, who illumines and sanctifies us.

The offertory anthem was "How Lovely Is Thy Dwelling Place." Dr. Wardlaw preached from I Kings 9:1-9 on "Setting Our Objectives," and the recessional hymn was "Now Thank We All Our God." Dr. Wardlaw's text included the words "And the Lord said unto [Solomon], I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me: I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put my name there forever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually."

The people of First Presbyterian Church could rebuild the building, but only God could hallow it—identifying Himself with it by putting His name there. And His heart was there, because He loved the old church. But His eyes were also there, because He observed its walk. If the church walks before God "in integrity of heart and uprightness," keeping His "statutes and judgments," God will establish it. But if the church "shall at all turn from following me, ye or your children," God says, then "this house which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight." And it will become "a proverb and a byword among all people." First Presbyterian Church of Columbia, South Carolina, had a beautifully renovated sanctuary. But for God's name to be there, the church must live before Him and "the watching world" in integrity and uprightness.

PART 4



ASSOCIATE REFORMED
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
1983-1995

CHAPTER 24



STEADFAST COMMITMENT

The special committee of thirteen elders (the Administration Committee and the Church Affairs Committee) appointed to advise the session of First Presbyterian Church decided that to preserve the unity of the congregation, First Church should not remain in the PCUS—and thus go into the union—but should seek membership in the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church. A paper outlining the special committee's recommendations, "Report of the Administration and Church Affairs Committees Summarizing Recommendations Regarding Denominational Affiliation," was prepared by Elder W. Randolph Folks for presentation to a called meeting of the session on March 7, 1983. The report contained a discussion about the Confession of 1967—its "low view of the authority and inspiration of Scripture," its minimizing evangelism and discipleship as the work of the church in favor of "social and political action," and its advocacy of universalism. The report reviewed some of the recent political activities of the UPCUSA and deplored the fact that the new union denomination would practice "direct or indirect collaboration with left-wing political groups and involvement in radical causes." The government of the united denomination will be "a top-down form of government," with ultimate control of church property residing in the presbyteries, the report continued. It recognized the drastic reduction of missionaries in the UPCUSA and its sizable membership losses.

The special committee's report stated that the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church provided "the desirable and acceptable alternative to the union denomination." It compared the ARPC and the "union denomination" positions on doctrine—confessional statements, view of Scripture, purpose of the church, and salvation—and church government. "It is expected," the report stated, "that [in the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church] the tradition of local church responsibility and limitation of the powers of higher courts will continue." It concluded:

Union is upon us, and with it the death of the denomination which means so much to many of us. In making this recommendation, we find no cause for rejoicing in the death of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. We do not believe, however, that God's will for us is to affiliate with a denomination whose very constitutional documents cast doubt on the believability of His word and the necessity for proclaiming it in the world. Rather, we believe that God's will is for us to become a part of a denomination which for two centuries has retained steadfast commitment to the principles of Reformed belief and Presbyterian government.

Thirty-one active, and sixteen inactive, elders and a majority of the board of deacons were present at the session meeting to hear the report of the special committee. (Five active elders were absent.) Elder E. Chandler McNair made the motion on behalf of the special committee: "The session recommends that the congregation request Congaree Presbytery to dismiss the First Presbyterian Church with its property, from the Presbyterian Church in the United States to the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, Catawba Presbytery, and to implement necessary proceedings with the two presbyteries and congregation to make the change." The Reverend Ronald Beard, principal clerk of the General Synod of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church and minister of the Sherwood Forest (ARP) Church, had been invited by the committee and was present to answer questions. After a discussion, the motion was passed by a vote of twenty-nine to two. Clerk of the session John Herin submitted his resignation because of his objection to the vote, and Roy A. Little, Jr., was elected clerk. Later the deacons added their endorsement of the session action by a vote of twenty-three to two.

Some church members who favored withdrawal preferred the EPC or the PCA. Associate Pastor Barnes said that the ARPs "are very hard to describe." "Apparently they have a little of everything but nothing

in a proportion to be consumed by it," he stated. The denomination is not liberal, but neither is it evangelical; it is "simply conservative." Mr. Barnes, who preferred the PCA, saw joining the ARP Church as a "lateral" move rather than a "progressive" one. Many, however, praised the new direction. Elder Henry D. Foster earlier had favored the PCA but now supported the move to the ARPC. The doctrinal statements of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church "appear to be Biblical," he said, and "I feel that this is an action that might move the body of this congregation away from making a tragic error—that of union."

The committee's report was mailed on March 8—the day after the session meeting—to the congregation, with an explanation of the session's action to recommend that the congregation seek dismissal from the PCUS to the ARPC. The Administration Committee presented the session's position to various groups within the church. Another letter, of March 15, from the clerk of session and the chairman of the Administration Committee, noted that congregational response to the session's recommendation of March 7 was "almost uniformly positive" and stated that "one reason may be that many of you are already familiar with the ARP Church."

Response was not as one-sided as the session's letter implied, however; another letter signed by fifty members (including seven elders and five deacons) who opposed the session's decision was mailed on March 24 to "Fellow Members of First Presbyterian Church." It urged the church to maintain unity with the reunited denomination—waiting and using Article Thirteen of the Plan of Reunion for later dismissal if necessary. It also defended the Confession of 1967 as orthodox. Another letter, from the clerk of session and chairman of the Administration Committee (March 25), attempted to clear up rumors and answer questions. The letter urged quick action and defended the decision to go into the ARPC rather than the PCA, putting forth the argument that the unity of the church would be better preserved by this approach than any other. Attached was a comparison of the positions of the new union denomination and the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church on major points of doctrine and polity.

A letter was sent to the congregation on April 1 by Dr. Neill W. Macaulay, elder emeritus and an influential leader in the church for many years. Dr. Macaulay had opposed the attempted move the year before to the PCA but endorsed the plan to join the ARP Church. Other letters, disagreeing strongly with the UPCUSA's political-social involvement and agenda, were mailed.

A paper entitled "Questions and Answers about the Union and ARP Churches" set forth the session's position. One question presented was: "Will we be changing denominations if we go to the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church?" Answer: "Yes. Keep in mind, however, that we will be changing denominations regardless of what we do. If we go to union, that is a new, greatly changed denomination." Another question: "Who will own the church property?" Answer: "We, the local congregation will, if we go to the ARPC. If, however, we go to union then our church property will be held in trust for the new union denomination."

A meeting of the congregation to consider the proposal was called for April 10, 1983, at 2:30 p.m. The session made it clear that all sides would be heard; any group in the church could invite anyone it chose to speak to the congregation about the issue. The congregational meeting was called to order by Elder Roy A. Little, Jr., and Dr. Wardlaw was elected moderator. Mr. George Ropp, observer from Congaree Presbytery, was present. The motion to join the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church was placed before the congregation by Elder E. Chandler McNair. Nine members spoke in favor of the motion and eight against it. The vote was taken by secret ballot as required by presbytery. The moderator, after appealing for restraint and unity of the church, announced that the motion had carried by a vote of 663 to 157—a margin of over eighty per cent. (Just under half of First Presbyterian's total membership voted.) The session met the next day (April 11) to express its "highest regard and respect for the very sincere convictions of those who were opposed to its recommendation" and its hope that "none will leave us because of this change in our denominational affiliation." The next Sunday Dr. Wardlaw preached on "The Challenge of First Presbyterian Church."

A called meeting of Congaree Presbytery was held in the sanctuary of First Church on April 26, 1983, to act upon the requests of seven churches for dismissal: First Presbyterian and Arsenal Hill churches of Columbia and Johnston Presbyterian Church in Edgefield County to the Associate Reformed Presbyterian denomination; and St. Matthews, Edgefield, Longtown, and Rose Hill to the Presbyterian Church in America. Mr. John Doudoukjian, elder of First Church, was the moderator. The motion was made to dismiss the seven churches according to their requests, and it passed without debate. The occasion was solemn and sad. Presbytery thanked the withdrawing churches and ministers for their past contributions and wished them well. Dr. Wardlaw requested Congaree Presbytery to dismiss him to the Catawba Presbytery of the Associate Reformed Presbyte-

rian Church, and his request was granted. Mr. Barnes, who had preferred that First Church join the PCA, chose to remain temporarily in Congaree Presbytery. He was granted permission by the presbytery to labor outside its bounds at First Presbyterian.

First Presbyterian Church left its former denomination with grace and courtesy. Dr. Wardlaw told the presbytery that it was welcome to keep its headquarters at First Church as long as it needed to do so. The session accepted a goal of \$200,000 for the Presbyterian Home in Columbia, to be paid over a three-year period.³²⁰



On May 3, 1983, the Commission on the Minister and His Work of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church met with the elders of First Church and voted to recommend to Catawba Presbytery that the church be received. A called meeting of Catawba Presbytery was held May 17, 1983, at the Union ARP Church at Richburg, South Carolina. Elder Thomas E. McCutchen, Jr., who had given a moving speech during the congregational meeting in favor of withdrawing from the PCUS and joining the ARPC, was selected by the session to make the request for the reception of First Presbyterian Church. The congregation was received by a unanimous vote, and Dr. Wardlaw was approved and received following his examination. Mr. Barnes was given permission by the session, and the approval of Catawba Presbytery, to continue his ministerial relation with the church without joining the ARP denomination, for one year. Mr. Barnes remained at First Presbyterian until May 1984, when he was called to First Presbyterian Church (PCA) of Kosciusko, Mississippi.

The Associate Reformed Presbyterian denomination held a special service of reception and consecration for their two new Columbia churches—First Presbyterian and Arsenal Hill. The service was held at seven o'clock in the evening on June 26, 1983, in the First Church sanctuary. The Reverend Robert J. Robinson, pastor of the First ARP Church of Rock Hill, preached on "A Church for All Seasons," and the choirs of the ARP churches in Columbia joined together for special music. The Lord's Supper was administered by the Reverend Robert E. Herrmann and Dr. Warren Wardlaw, assisted by the elders of Arsenal Hill and First Church.

First Presbyterian, with about 1,700 members, became the largest Associate Reformed Presbyterian congregation in the United States.

³²⁰ In October 1984 a plaque was presented to First Presbyterian Church by the Presbyterian Home of South Carolina, expressing its appreciation for the church's long interest in the home.

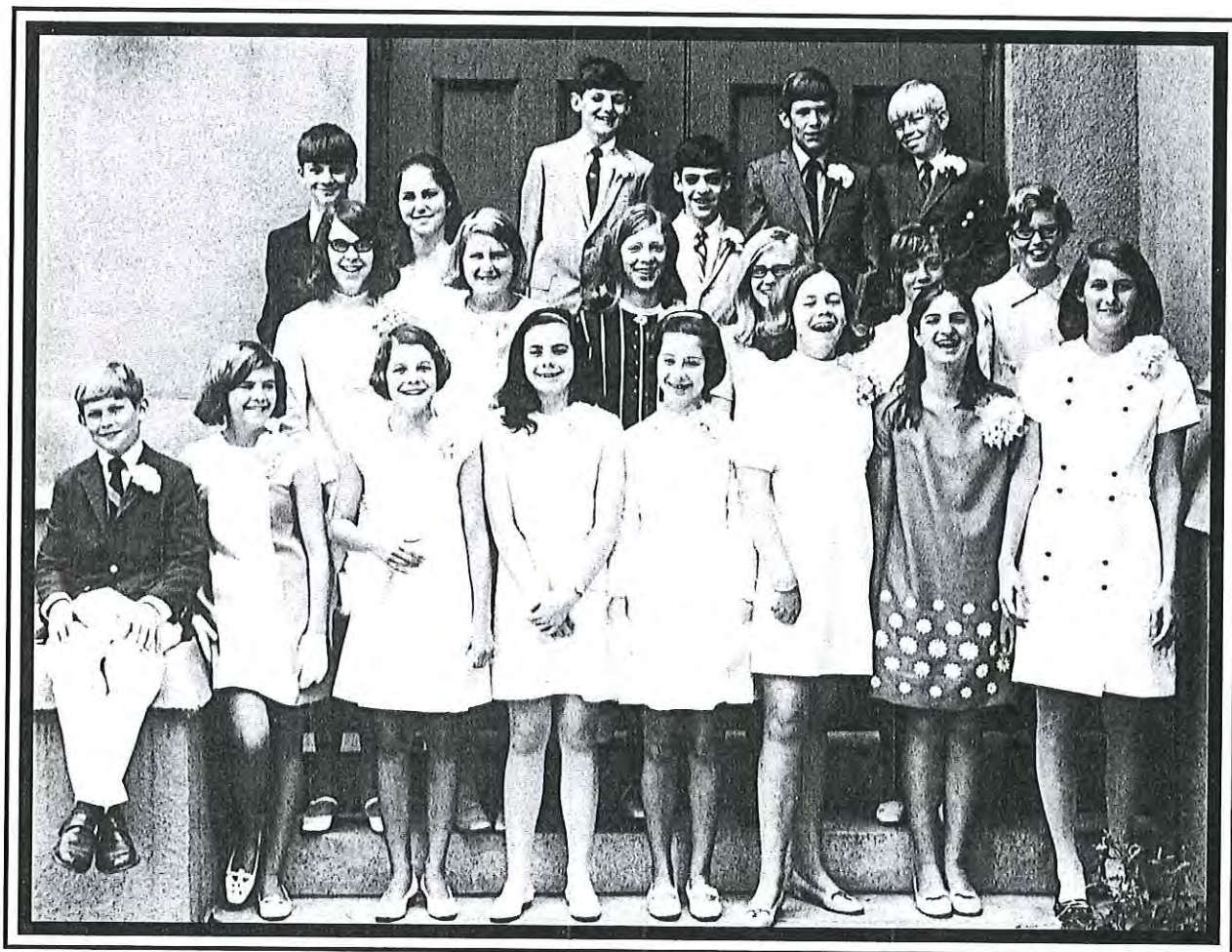
With several institutions and many congregations in South Carolina, the ARPC was a Presbyterian denomination with a long, honored history in the state. The church had approximately 28,300 members, organized in 158 churches. There were seven presbyteries, and the highest court of the church was its General Synod. The denomination operated Erskine College and Erskine Theological Seminary in Due West, South Carolina, and a retreat center, Bonclarken, in Flat Rock, North Carolina. The ARP Church supported thirty-one missionaries in Pakistan and Mexico. The denominational office was located in Greenville, South Carolina. First Presbyterian, Arsenal Hill, and Centennial, the downtown-Columbia Presbyterian churches, were now all three members of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church.

Eighty-three members of First Presbyterian transferred to other churches (mainly Eastminster and Shandon) within a period of three months after the congregational vote on April 10—most of them before the reception of First Church by the ARP denomination on May 17. Three active members and one inactive member of the session resigned. On May 9, 1983, the session passed a resolution in special recognition of the members who left. During the next year a few more members left because of the denominational change; but members of other Columbia churches—Presbyterians from Shandon and Eastminster churches, members from other Presbyterian denominations, and non-Presbyterians—joined First Presbyterian Church. For the year 1983 there were 154 members gained and 154 lost (not counting 103 names that had been placed on the inactive roll before the membership totals were submitted to Catawba Presbytery). After these changes, membership on May 31, 1983, stood at 1,520. By the end of the year it had risen to 1,580. Eleven new members joining the church in 1983 had been elders in their previous churches. If First Presbyterian had remained in the Southern Presbyterian Church and gone into the union, it certainly would have lost many more members—especially younger couples with children. The decision to join the ARP denomination undoubtedly preserved more of the membership than would have been the case if First Presbyterian had become PCA or EPC. A number of members who had opposed the PCA move in 1982 supported the effort to join the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in 1983.

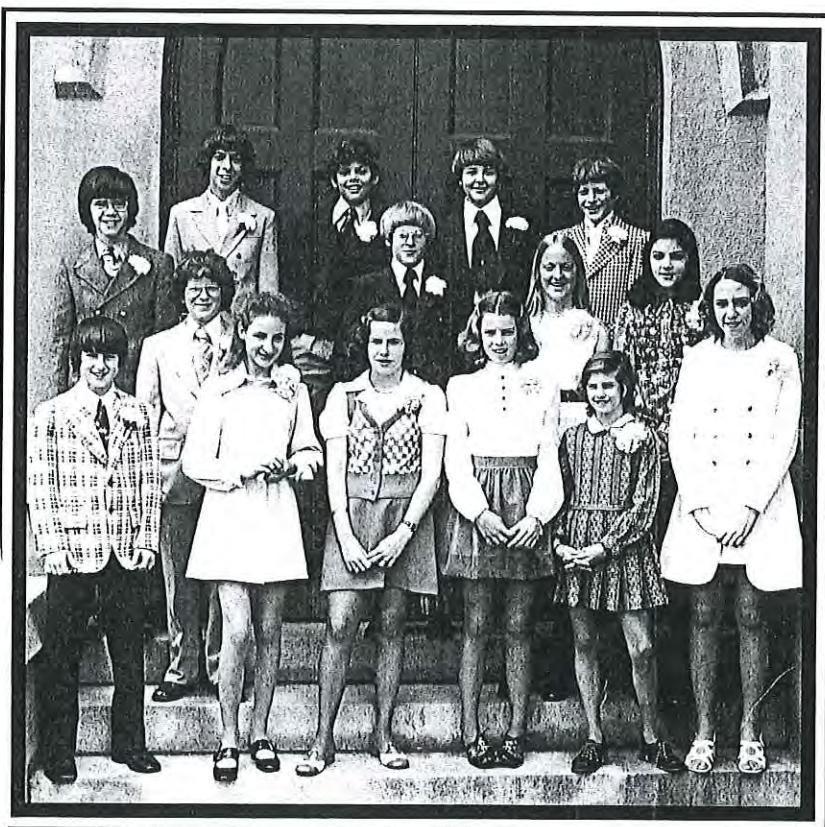
The session decided to keep the name *First Presbyterian Church*, with the addition *Associate Reformed Synod*. The church was the first Presbyterian congregation in Columbia and for years the only one. The state of South Carolina had issued a charter to the church bearing the

name *First Presbyterian Church in the town of Columbia*. For this reason, the session believed that it was not necessary for the church to change its name.

First Presbyterian Church had demonstrated its "steadfast commitment" to Presbyterian polity and Reformed theology by its words and deeds. With the identity of the church and its mission clarified, its people were ready to face the future with confidence and joy. In a historical report of the events between June 8, 1981, when Dr. McClure recommended withdrawal from the PCUS, and September 1, 1983, when the Reverend Glen Knecht began his ministry, Elder Thomas McCutchen, chairman of the Committee on Church Affairs for 1983, stated that the discussions of those crucial months were "frank, wholesome, and penetrating," and that "out of it all came calmness, unification, good feelings, renewed vigor, expectation and relief."

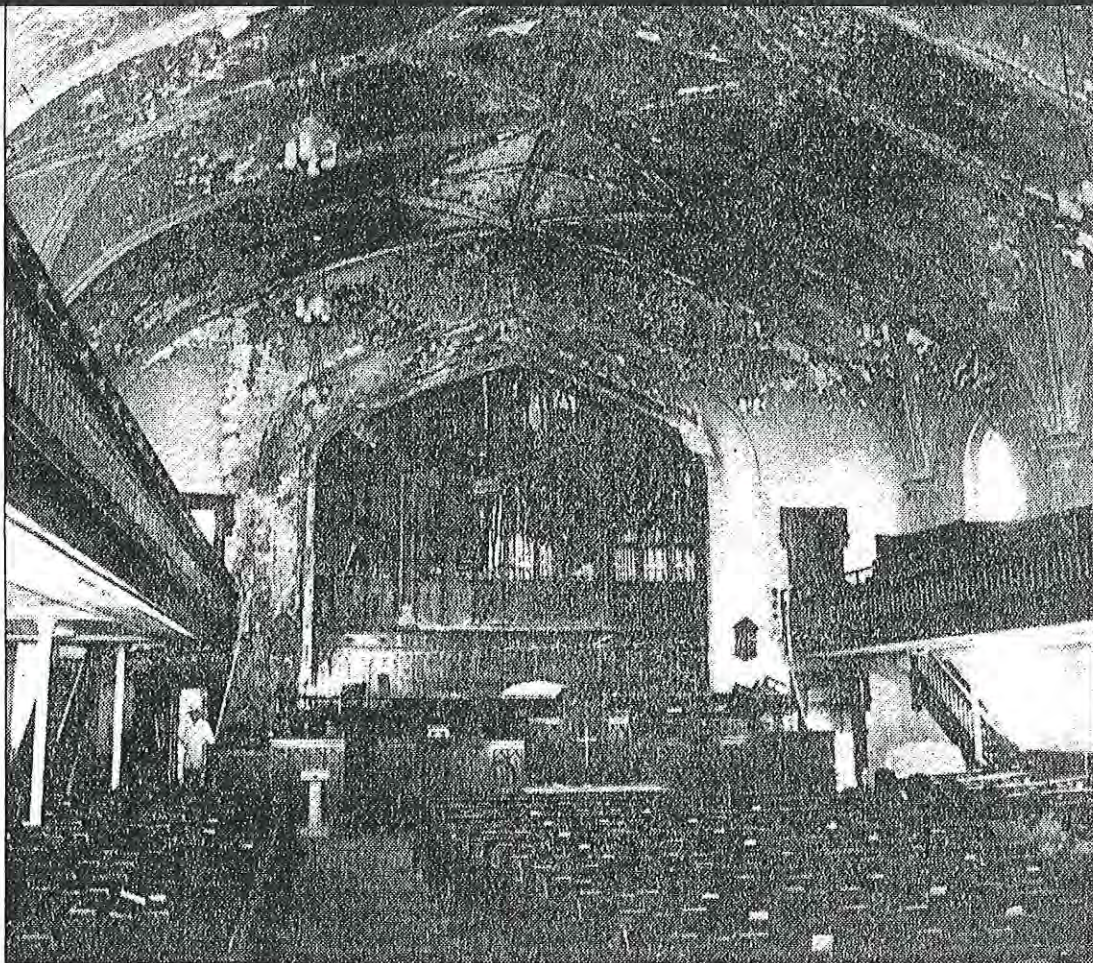


Members of the Communicants Class of 1969 were, *front row*, left to right, Chuck Salley, Mary Wells Walker, Dorothy Townsend, Carolyn Reynolds, Lucy Graybill, Claire McCants, Ellen Schlaefter, Elizabeth Mays. *Second row*: Susan Godfrey, Mary Vance Thompson, Elizabeth Lipscomb, Lila Wyman, Marion Cooper, Mary Benson. *Back Row*: Robert Sumwalt III, Debbie Hoshaw, Jimmy Hopkins, Patten Watson, Clark Borgstedt, "Dunk" Grosbal.



Dr. and Mrs. Fred Parker are shown above at their Retirement Dinner in 1971. Dr. Parker was Minister of Music and organist for forty-five years. Mrs. Parker was choir director for sixteen years.

Members of the Communicants Class of 1972, left were, *front row*, left to right: Joe Miller, Libby Lee Gantt, Susan Jennings, Allston Chapman, Tracy Nelson, Adair Floyd. *Second row*: Chris Hammett, Louis Birch, Roy Little III, Elizabeth McClure, Georgia Strickland. *Top row*: John Doudoukjian, Jr., Joe McMaster, Sam Herrin, Boyd Jones.



Maxie Roberts/The State

The sanctuary of the First Presbyterian Church was scarred by a blaze early Thursday morning.

Church Damaged By Fire

By LIBBY BERNARDIN
State Staff Writer

First Presbyterian Church, which survived the burning of Columbia during the Civil War, was damaged Thursday by fire.

The blaze destroyed the church's \$200,000 pipe organ. Chief Harvey W. Evans of the Columbia Fire Department said the cause of the blaze, which was reported shortly after 1 a.m., is "still under investigation." When asked if arson is suspected, Evans responded, "Let's say at this point, we have an open mind as to the cause."

Evans estimated the damage at \$400,000-\$450,000, including the \$200,000 Casavant organ, which church officials said would cost about \$300,000 to replace. The organ was built by Casavant Freres at St. Hyacinthe, Quebec, and was installed during renovations at the Marion Street church nearly two years ago.

Assistant Fire Chief R.J. Boykin said officials probably would not determine the cause of the blaze, which started in the choir room, until today.

"The fire was primarily in the organ, choir and pulpit area," said the Rev. Dr. Hugh W. McClure III, pastor of the church. "The rest of the sanctuary is scarred, but there is no structural damage."

McClure estimated it would cost "from one-half million to three-fourths million" dollars to restore the century-old structure, which was built in the 1850s and enlarged in 1925.

The fire was reported at 1:00 a.m. by a city police officer who said he was on patrol when he saw flames coming from the church.

A congregation member told McClure he saw nothing when he left the church at 8:25 p.m. Wednesday, but fire department investigator L.L. Morse estimated that the fire had smoldered for at least six hours before breaking into flames.

The fire chief said firefighters arrived at the church at 1:10 a.m. and had the blaze under control by 1:45. "By 'under control,' I mean the fire was out," Evans added.

Firefighter Jerry E. Tankersley was overcome by smoke, fatigue and the intense heat of the fire and became "semi-conscious" for a few minutes, according to Assistant Chief Claude C. Stewart. Tankersley, 25, was treated at the scene and given oxygen at Baptist Medical Center, then released.

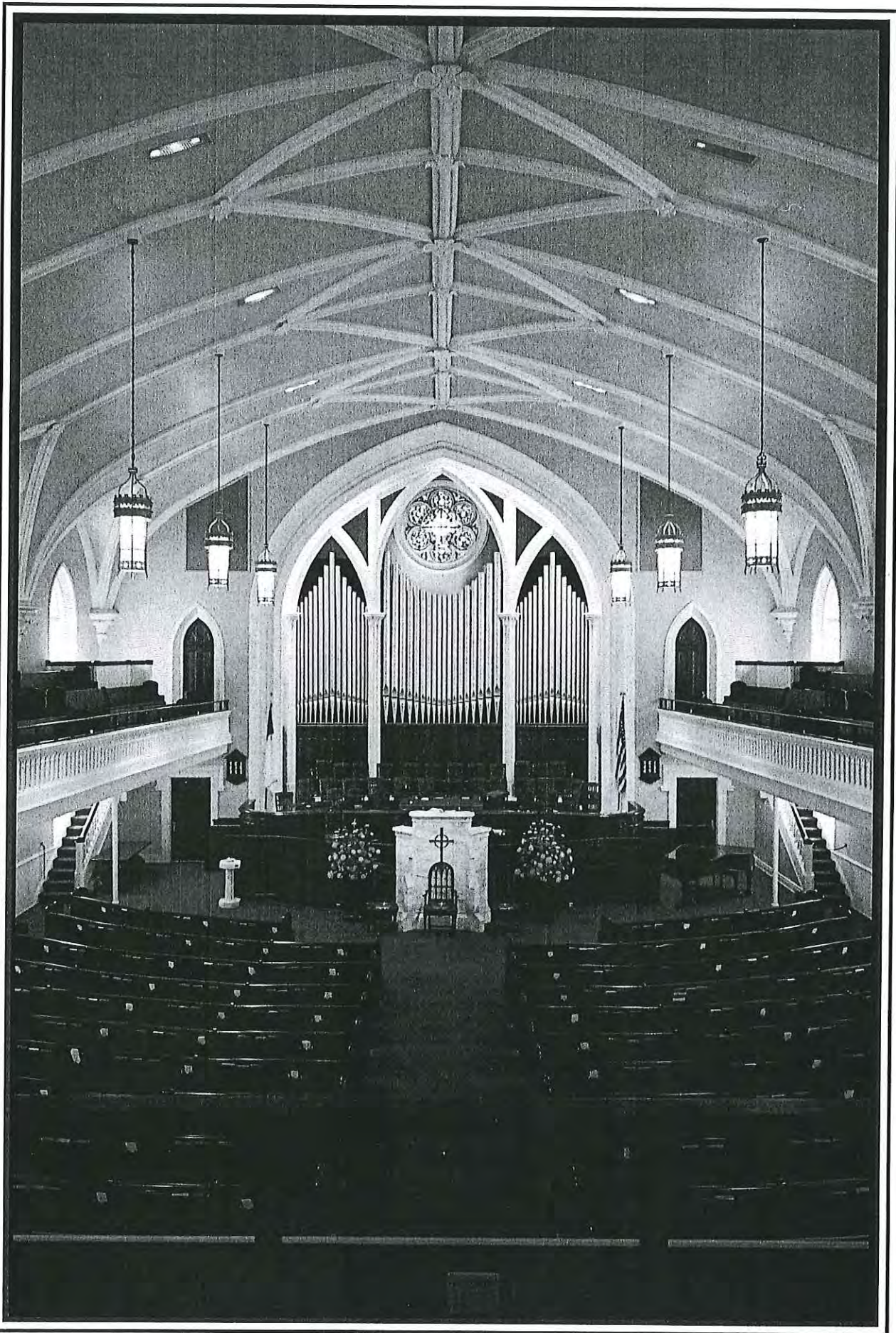
Though shaken by the news of the fire, McClure was optimistic that the church, which was fully insured, would be restored as soon as possible.

McClure said worship services will be held at 9:30 a.m. Sunday at Washington Street United Methodist Church. At 11 a.m., a service will be held in First Presbyterian's Smith Memorial Chapel next door to the church.

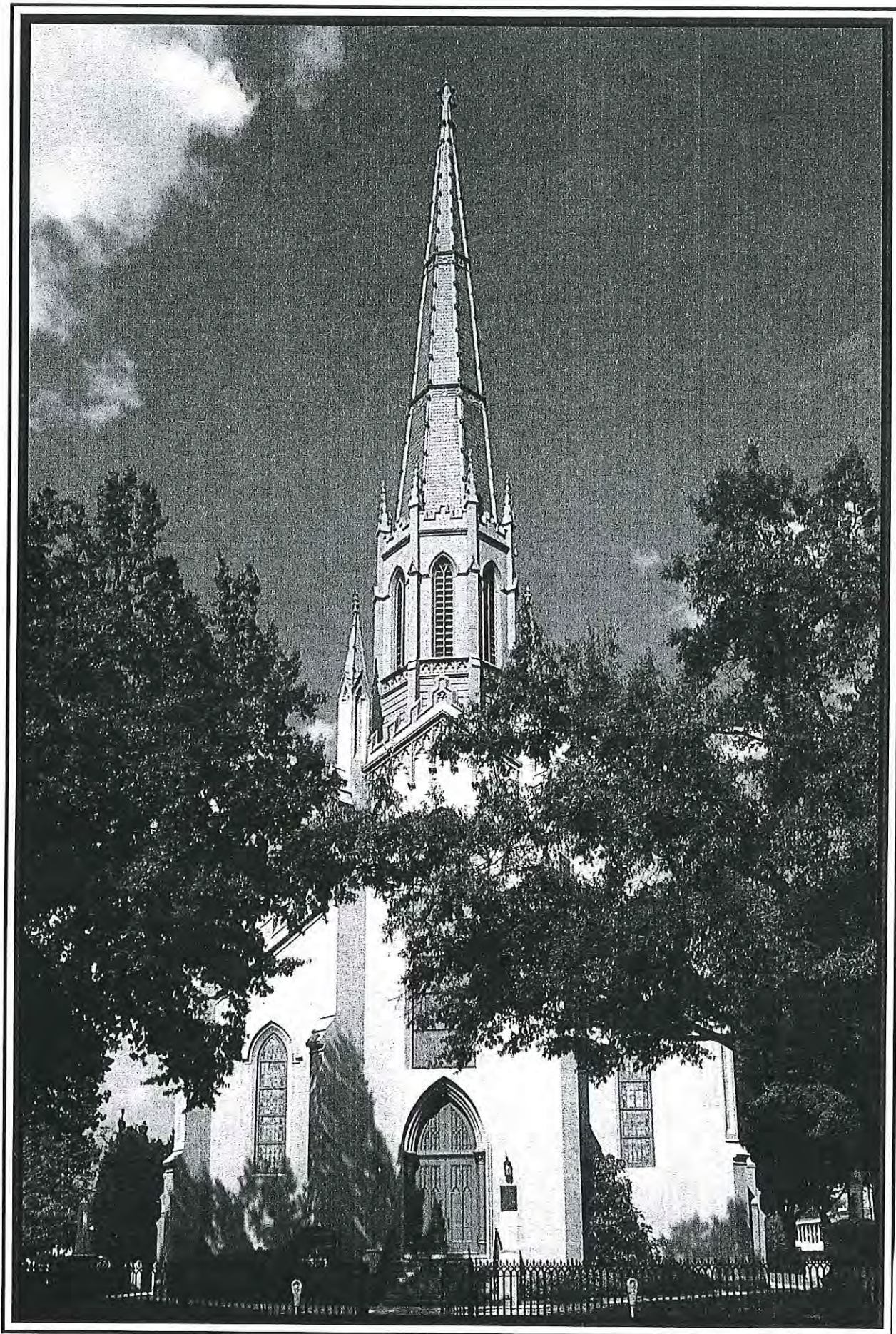
"We don't know about Easter," he said. "We just might

(See FIREFIGHTER, 5-A, Col. 1)

After the devastating fire in 1982, damage to the newly installed Casavant organ and the sanctuary was so great that renovations, including a new organ, totaled over \$1 million. Funds from the insurance settlement and gifts from members covered the costs.



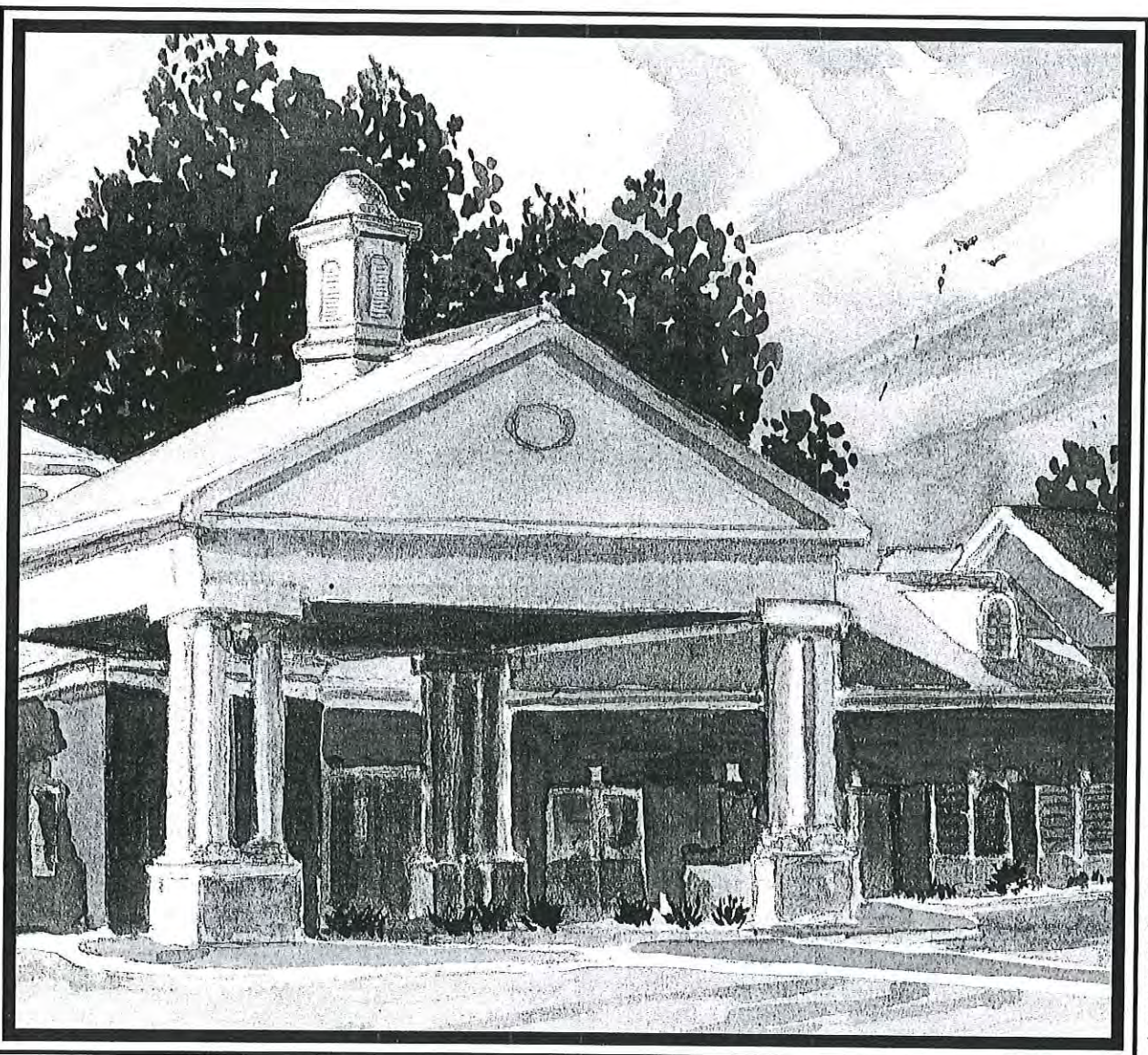
Renovations to the sanctuary were completed in 1983. The rose window over the organ, enlarged Gothic arch, chandeliers, marble-faced pulpit, and center aisle were added.



The church's appearance changed after the 1925 renovations when two of the front doors were eliminated and doors were added to the north and south sides. The narthex was raised, and higher steps were built.

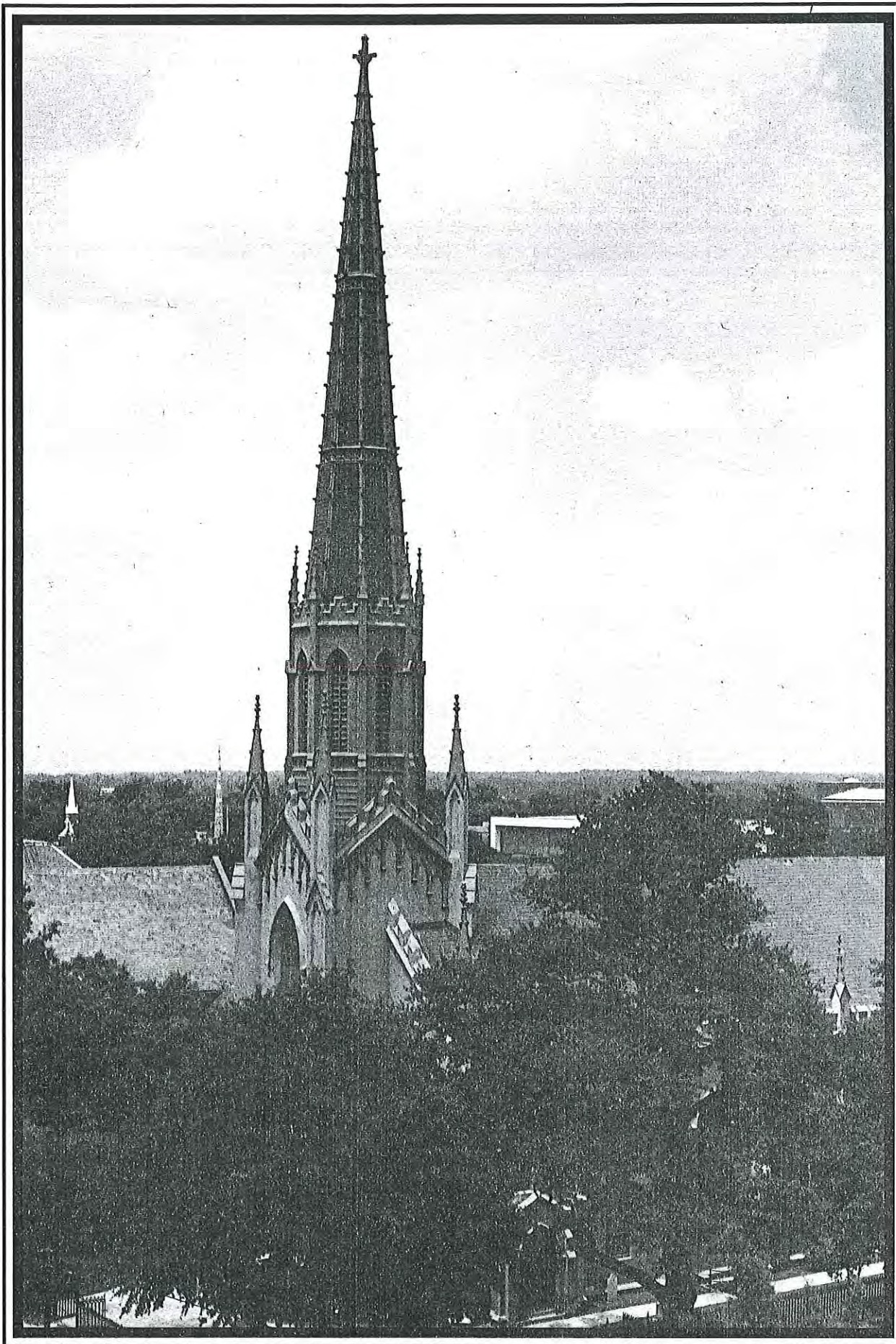


Individual communion service was adopted in 1915 when the four communion goblets were replaced with individual glasses. The service used today is shown above. Many of the sets were given as memorials to members.



—(watercolor by Guy Lipscomb)

Laurel Crest, First Presbyterian Church's retirement center overlooking the Congaree River in West Columbia, opened in August 1994. It offers apartments, cottages, and on-site nursing care.



The First Presbyterian Church steeple has long been a landmark in the town. It appeared in engravings of Columbia's skyline as early as 1856.



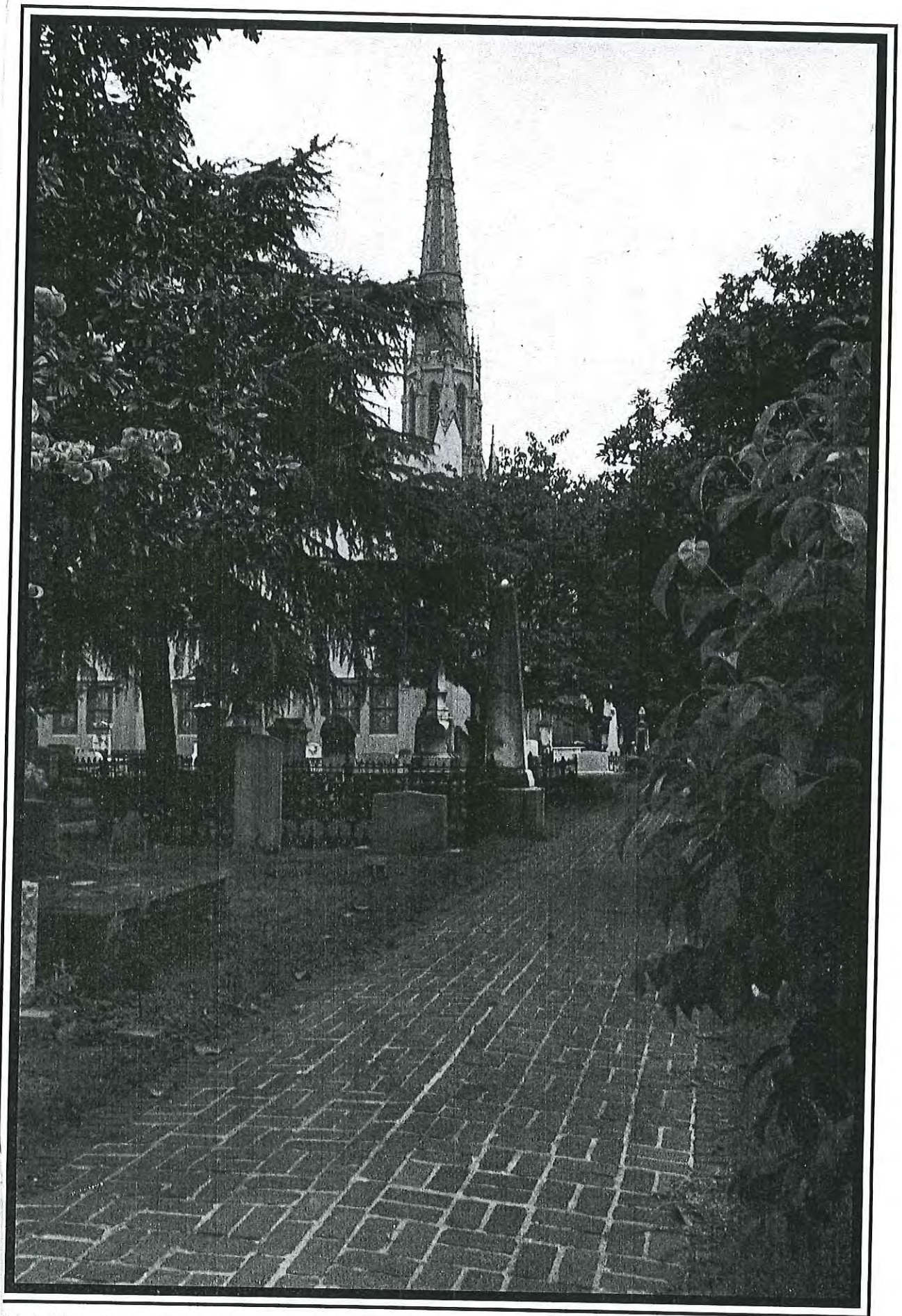
The high marble pulpit that dominated the new sanctuary in 1853 was imported from Italy. It was the gift of Elder Robert Latta and now stands in Smith Memorial Chapel.



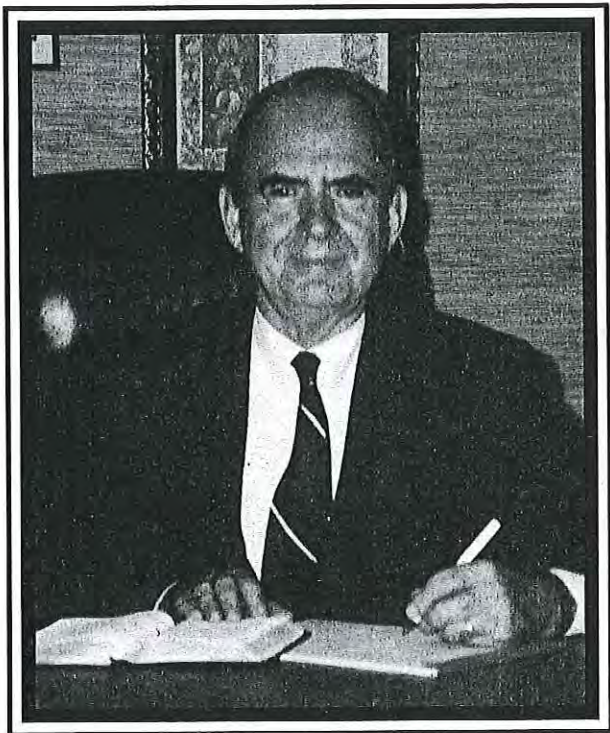
Many First Presbyterian Church pastors and South Carolina statesmen are buried in the churchyard adjoining the sanctuary. The earliest surviving marker is dated 1804.



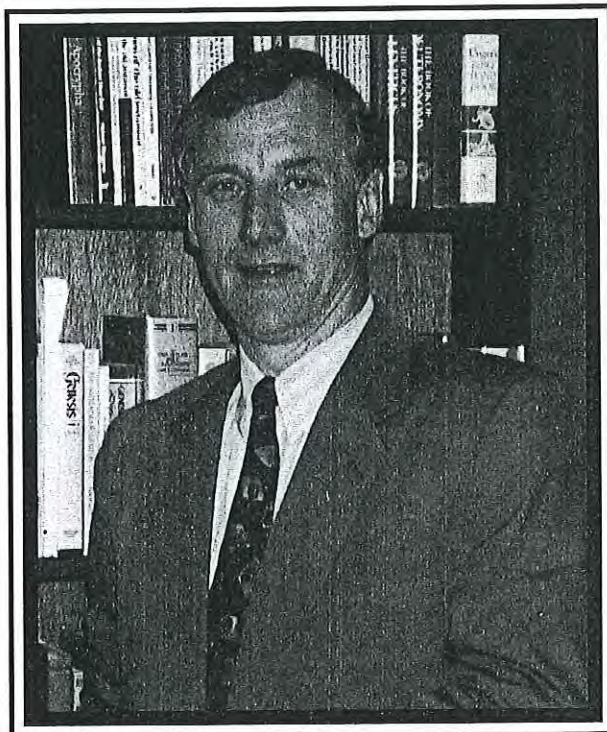
Among the early graves in the churchyard are those of David E. Dunlap, first pastor of the church, who died the same day as his wife in 1804; Jonathan Maxcy, first president of South Carolina College; Ann Pamela Cunningham leader in preserving Mount Vernon; Henry W. DeSaussure, Superintendent of the U.S. Mint appointed by President George Washington; Franklin H. Elmore, who succeeded John C. Calhoun as U.S. Senator; and the parents of President Woodrow Wilson.



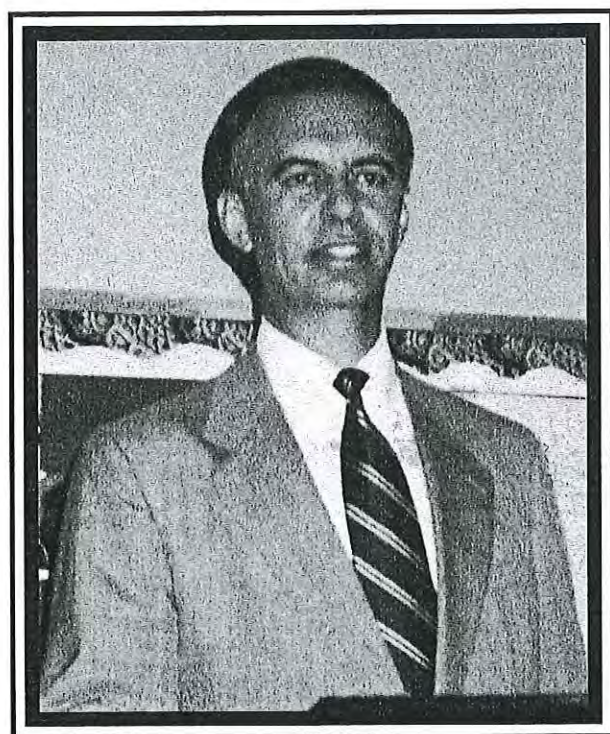
This brick walkway was once the carriage road through the old cemetery.



Glen C. Knecht



Mark E. Ross



Lance E. Hudgens



John H. Hopkins

Dr. Glen C. Knecht celebrated his 10th anniversary as senior pastor at First Presbyterian Church, and forty years in the ministry, in 1994. Dr. Mark E. Ross, Minister of Pastoral Teaching, came to the church in 1984. The Reverend Lance E. Hudgens, Minister of Christian Education, joined the staff in 1986, and the Reverend John H. Hopkins became Minister of Pastoral Care in 1992.

CHAPTER 25



THE WORKS OF THE LORD

First Presbyterian Church was proud of its grand old sanctuary—now wonderfully restored after the fire. The elders, deacons, business manager, and others involved in planning for the rebuilding of First Church decided to preserve much of what was there before, restore some things to what they had been in the past, and add new touches as well. The result was an improved and beautiful place of worship. With a renovated building preserving the best of the old, First Church now faced the task—already well begun—of getting its spiritual house in order so that it could look ahead to new days with fresh opportunities and different challenges. The congregation gratefully realized that much of the credit under God for the successful negotiation of the last several years was due to Dr. Wardlaw. On August 8, 1983, the session “extended their thanks and praise” to him “for the leadership he [had] given First Church in their trying times.”



Following the reception of First Presbyterian Church by the Associate Reformed Presbyterian denomination, the pulpit search committee proceeded to find a senior minister. In a report to a called meeting of the session on July 5, 1983, the committee, under the chairmanship of Elder J. Walker Clarke, nominated the Reverend Glen Charles Knecht, pastor of the Wallace Memorial Presbyterian

Church in Hyattsville, Maryland. The committee reported that it had first received Mr. Knecht's name on August 31, 1982, and that since that time his name had come to them a number of times through several different sources. "He is forceful, loving and very Presbyterian," the committee stated. "He speaks with polish and dignity from Scripture," heartily subscribes to the Westminster Standards, and appreciates the great Reformed theologians, such as Augustine, Calvin, Thornwell, and Dabney. Glen Knecht's lovely wife, Betty Jane, will be "a shining example for our congregation," the report continued, and she will be "a supportive Christian wife and mother to her family." The Knechts, the committee added, have six children: Thomas Robert Knecht, Elizabeth Anne Knecht Myers, Wendy Jane Knecht Higgins, Janet Lynn Knecht, Glen Charles Knecht, Jr., and Amy Carol Knecht—"all committed Christians." The search committee concluded its report by listing the needs that it believed Glen Knecht could meet—"he can tend our flock, feed our spiritual hungers, supply our saints, and equip us with the preached, taught, and lived word." Furthermore, it added, he "can help our whole community." The session enthusiastically approved the call.

On July 10, 1983, the congregation extended a unanimous call to Mr. Knecht. On July 19 he was examined and received by Catawba Presbytery, meeting at the Bethel ARP Church in Winnsboro. He began his ministry at the church on September 1, 1983.

Glen Knecht was born March 19, 1930, in Ogdensburg, New York, a town on the St. Lawrence River. His grandparents had come to the United States from Europe—his father's family from Switzerland and his mother's from Germany. Glen's grandfather had operated a silk mill, but the business was lost in the Depression, and the family endured hard times. Glen's father, who had spent part of his boyhood in Switzerland, and his mother were godly parents to Glen and his sister and two brothers. They were members of the Apostolic Christian Church, a group born out of the nineteenth-century revival that enriched and enlarged Protestantism in France and Switzerland. When Glen was sixteen years old, at a summer youth camp in Bloomington, Illinois, he sensed God's grace and call and responded with faith and repentance. Two evening messages, one on Ezekiel 47 and the other about the martyrs of the early church, were used by God to speak to his heart; he walked in the woods crying out to the Lord for peace and forgiveness. "My own rebellion against the Lord was ended," he later said, "and I was brought by His grace into a sweet fellowship with

Him." Before that day, he had lacked "life purpose and goals," but now he desired "to glorify Jesus Christ." How happy he was and how excited to be part of "a world-wide movement" as a follower of Jesus Christ!

By this time Glen had graduated from high school in Syracuse, New York, and was on his way to Maryville College in Tennessee. The school had been recommended to him by a Presbyterian minister in New York who had befriended the young boy and urged him to study for the ministry. Glen arrived at Maryville having surrendered to the Lord a few days before. His goal was to be an English teacher. At Maryville, he joined a small group of students who met regularly to study the Bible and pray. Glen soon became one of the leaders of the group. Before long he found himself hitchhiking out to Pine Grove Church to preach. At Maryville Glen met Betty Jane Greenwald; soon they were dating. It was Betty Jane who asked Glen, "Have you ever considered going to seminary?" Glen graduated from Maryville and began his theological study at Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, California. The next year Glen and Betty Jane were married. While she attended Pasadena College, Glen continued his studies at the seminary. Fuller had been founded a few years earlier but already boasted an outstanding faculty—Everett Harrison, Wilbur Smith, William LaSor, Gleason Archer, George Ladd, and Edward Carnell. At Fuller the young preacher was grounded in orthodox doctrine, including that of the inerrancy of the Bible.

Glen was interested in missions. Because he and Betty Jane had joined a Presbyterian church in Los Angeles, he wrote the Presbyterian board for advice. The board recommended that he transfer to Princeton Seminary to complete his studies. Princeton's president, Dr. John McKay, said to Glen that it would take two years to put their stamp upon him! His Fuller studies enabled Glen to identify teaching at Princeton that was not fully orthodox, but Princeton made a positive contribution to his preparation—especially in churchmanship, worship, and missions. The special missionary inspiration was Professor Christy Wilson, Sr., who had served for twenty years as a missionary in Iran. Glen enjoyed classes with Emile Caillet, including one on the minister's lifestyle, and with New Testament professor Bruce Metzger. Glen's last class, a homiletics class with Dr. Edward Roberts, made a great impression. Roberts urged the students to preach without notes. He challenged them to go back to their rooms, get down on their knees, and promise God that they would preach without notes! Glen did just that, setting a lifelong pattern.

Glen completed his bachelor of divinity degree in 1954. He later

returned to Princeton and earned the master of theology degree in pastoral care. During his first pastorate he did additional theological study at Conwell School of Theology in Philadelphia. There he had classes with Dr. Andrew Blackwood, who had been, from 1914 to 1921, the pastor at First Presbyterian in Columbia. The saintly Blackwood, now in his eighties, had become the most prominent American homiletician and the author of a number of practical books on pastoral theology.³²¹

Glen Knecht was ordained on July 13, 1954, by the Presbytery of Donegal of the PCUSA. He and Betty Jane were still planning to become missionaries, but the board suggested that they first gain some practical experience in this country. From 1954 to 1957 they served a rural congregation, the Union Presbyterian Church, near Kirkwood, Pennsylvania. Then in 1957 the Knechts went to Tabriz, Iran, as missionaries under the mission agency of the PCUSA. They studied Persian and Turkish and began a ministry in Iran that continued for five years. On some days, Mr. Knecht preached in English at 9:30 a.m., in Turkish at 11:00 a.m., and in Persian at 6:00 p.m.! As their first term came to an end, Glen realized more and more that his heart was, as he put it, "a pastor's heart." "You really can't be a pastor on the mission field," he decided. "The nationals have to be the pastors." The Knechts loved the work in Iran but decided that God was leading them to a pastoral ministry in the United States.

In 1963 Glen Knecht became pastor of the Oxford Presbyterian Church of Oxford, Pennsylvania, and in 1971 he was called to the Wallace Memorial Presbyterian Church, near Washington, D.C., in Maryland. He sadly observed theological liberalism growing in the denomination and the presbytery, culminating in the 1979 Kaseman case—in which the presbytery accepted a minister who openly denied cardinal Christian doctrines. Mr. Knecht led conservatives within the presbytery in an appeal that resulted in a second examination of Kaseman a year later. Kaseman was again approved by the presbytery. "Our worst fears were more than confirmed," Glen Knecht said. Increasing pressure was brought by the presbytery for all the churches to ordain women as elders. Mr. Knecht and other evangelicals felt more and more unloved and unwanted at presbytery. It was a time of discouragement and depression for Glen Knecht and his elders, until March 30, 1981, when the congregation of Wallace Memorial voted to withdraw from the UPCUSA. Remembering those difficult years, Mr. Knecht said, "I think the Lord would only ask a man to go through

³²¹ Dr. Knecht has said that he has found Andrew Blackwood's books particularly helpful in his Columbia ministry.

that once!" After a few months as an independent church, Wallace Memorial joined the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod, on October 17, 1981. The next May the RPCES became part of the Presbyterian Church in America.

The Knechts loved the people at Wallace. Although they were not actively seeking another call, they shared a sense that they had perhaps finished a cycle of work there. Mr. Knecht turned down a call to a large church, but they remained open to a move if God so indicated. Then the call came from Columbia on a Thursday night in April 1983. One of the elders was on the phone. "We've got three problems down here," he said, "the church has burned; the pastor resigned; we're in a new denomination—and we need a shepherd." "He just put it right out," Mr. Knecht said, "and something about that grabbed my heart." After further contact with First Presbyterian Church, the Knechts accepted the call. Glen Knecht had served as a minister in the PCUSA and UPCUSA for 27 years and, for a short time, in the RPCES and the PCA—and now he would become ARP!³²²

Mr. Knecht was installed by the Presbytery of Catawba on September 25, 1983. Dr. William C. Brownson, Jr., a pastor in the Reformed Church of America and director of the Words of Hope radio ministry, preached the sermon. He described the relationship of pastor and people as "a partnership for the Gospel." Dr. David E. Tribble, ruling elder of Columbia's Centennial Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, gave the charge to the congregation—urging them to support the pastor and church with attendance, talents, money, prayers, and service. Dr. Luder G. Whitlock, president of Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi, gave the charge to the minister. Dr. Whitlock urged Glen Knecht, as pastor of "a landmark church for Southern Presbyterians," to be a missionary pastor like the Apostle Paul. After the service, church members and guests walked through the old churchyard to a reception in Jackson Hall, at which the Knechts were honored and welcomed to Columbia and to First Presbyterian Church. Mr. Knecht said that he didn't know "if it's the love of the South or the church," but that their first days in Columbia had been "fabulous." His goal for First Presbyterian, he told *The State* newspaper, was "to place the claims of Jesus Christ on the agenda of this city." Soon the new pastor brought a series of Wednesday noon messages on "The Welfare of the City" from Jeremiah 29:7—"Seek the

³²² The PCUSA joined with the United Presbyterian Church of North America in 1958 and became the UPCUSA.

peace and prosperity of the city. . . . Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper."

There was an air of excitement at First Church that was "almost incredible," according to Elder Henry D. Foster, Jr. The church was worshiping in its fresh, bright sanctuary. It was now part of the ARP denomination, in which it felt at home and began to assume a leadership role. The new pastor was present for the session meeting on September 12, 1983. He listed his goals for the church—New Testament evangelism, Christian nurture, household religion, church friendliness, community betterment, and national and world missions.

Pastor Knecht began his Sunday morning preaching ministry at First Presbyterian Church with a series on "The Ladder of Faith" from 2 Peter 1:5-7. Walking on the beach during a few days of vacation before beginning his ministry in September, Glen was guided to this topic. For weeks he took the congregation through the great themes of Peter: "For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love." To restore preaching to its primacy in the church—to make it what "the Bible, the Westminster Confession, and our Reformed heritage" call it to be "will require determination, sacrifice, and change," Mr. Knecht told his congregation. His biblically based and doctrinally accurate sermons strengthened members and drew a steady stream of visitors to the church. In his messages, he quoted the Reformers, the Puritans, the Westminster Confession of Faith, and American Presbyterians, including the great pastors at First Church. Associate Pastor James Barnes spoke for many when he described the blessing of Glen Knecht's preaching and teaching. Elder Foster summed up the new pastor's ministry as "an emphasis on the mission of the church and on correct doctrine followed through to its correct conclusion—a changed life."

In 1984 the session duties and responsibilities were reviewed and organized under eight standing committees—Administration, Christian Education, Church Affairs, Corporate Ministry and Evangelism, Pastoral Care, Worship, Church's Mission, and Ministerial Relations. Three continuing committees—Investment, Historical, and Churchyard—were also established, with members appointed annually. In December of 1983 the new Casavant organ was installed. It was for-

mally dedicated on Sunday, April 1, 1984. Organist Ronald Miller presented a recital, accompanied by the University of South Carolina Faculty Brass Quartet.

On June 21, 1984, Mark Edwin Ross was called as associate minister for education. Mark and his wife, Connie, and their two children, Stephen and Emily, moved to Columbia from Pennsylvania. A graduate of the University of Pittsburgh and Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Mark received the Ph.D. degree in philosophy from England's University of Keele in December 1984. He brought to First Church experience in youth work, teaching, counseling, and pastoral visitation. He had served on the staff of Presbyterian churches in Pittsburgh and Uniontown, Pennsylvania, and worked with innercity youth in the Young Life Movement in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. He was involved in student ministry and directed a youth program for minority children in Pittsburgh's Hill District. Dr. Ross was ordained and installed on March 23, 1985. His father, Ralph Ross, Sr., a ruling elder at Third Presbyterian Church in Uniontown, Pennsylvania, took part in the service. Mark Ross supervised the educational staff and program at First Presbyterian Church.

Harold Von Nessen was called by the session in 1985 to serve as assistant minister with major responsibility in pastoral care. Harold, a native of New York, came to study at Columbia Bible College in 1962, after retiring from the United States Army as a lieutenant colonel. He had served as pastor of West Columbia Presbyterian Church from 1962 to 1980. The Reverend Von Nessen and his wife, Minnie, contributed faithful and loving service to the congregation.

First Presbyterian Church attempted to put into practice the historic Reformed "regulative principle" in worship. This principle, according to Pastor Knecht, "is that Christians are to worship God in the ways that He has set forth and only in those ways." That being the case, Knecht added,

we are kept from embellishing our worship with innovations which may seem effective to us, but which are not given to us by God. Preaching is established and preserved by this principle, since it is one of the elements of worship in which God takes pleasure, along with music, prayer with thanksgiving, and the sacraments.³²³

There was concern to guard the teaching ministry of the church. Glen Knecht declared to the session on June 3, 1985, that only the

³²³ Glen C. Knecht, "Reaffirming the Primacy of Preaching," *The Associate Reformed Presbyterian*, February 1991, pp. 6, 7.

doctrines of the Reformed faith would be preached from the pulpit or taught in the Sunday school. The session decided that all teachers must conform to the requirement imposed on elders, acceptance of the Westminster Confession of Faith and catechisms. A commission of elders (of the Christian Education Committee) and Mark Ross were named to examine and approve teachers.

Beginning January 1, 1985, Anne Harley began her work as assistant to the minister of education. Anne, who grew up in Columbia, joined First Presbyterian Church in 1979 and served during the summer of 1981 as director of Christian education. She was a graduate of Furman University and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. She came back to First Presbyterian from her work as director of Christian education at Trinity Presbyterian Church in Montgomery, Alabama.

Business Manager Robert Horne retired September 30, 1985. At his appreciation dinner on September 17, the women presented him with a life membership in the Women of the Church, for his many contributions to their organization and to the church at large. He was the only man to be so honored by the women of First Presbyterian. On March 12, 1987, LeGrand Cooper, Jr., was added to the staff as church administrator.

At a congregational meeting on September 21, 1986, Lance Edwards Hudgens was called as minister of evangelism and missions; he was installed November 23, 1986. Lance, from Peoria, Illinois, studied for the ministry at Princeton Seminary. After graduation and ordination, he became assistant pastor to Glen Knecht at Wallace Memorial Presbyterian Church. In 1976 he was made associate pastor and served as interim pastor when Mr. Knecht left for First Church in Columbia. Lance and his wife, Jacque, and their children, Jonathan, Gregory, and Kristin, were soon part of the church family. Lance's key verse for his ministry was John 13:34—"A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."

Arpad Darazs, director of music at First Presbyterian Church for fifteen years, died on December 17, 1986. Dr. Darazs had received the Elizabeth O'Neil Verner Award for 1984-1985, given to the person judged to have made the most outstanding contribution to the arts in South Carolina. In 1984, the Palmetto Mastersingers—conducted by

Dr. Darazs—had placed second in international competition at Llangollen, Wales. As the congregation gathered for a memorial service in January 1987, selections of Arpad Darazs' recorded music were played; and Dr. Knecht spoke on "A Fruitful Bough Hanging over the Wall," from Genesis 49: 22.

As in the past, special services and observances enriched the life of First Presbyterian. Beginning in 1984, joint Thanksgiving services were held with Centennial and Arsenal Hill ARP churches. Thanksgiving 1988 was celebrated with a service at First Church and a sermon by former pastor Sherrard Rice. A tradition of Reformation Day services was inaugurated, with outstanding invited preachers. In 1984, Dr. Roger Nicole, professor of theology at Gordon-Conwell Seminary, was the speaker. Dr. Sinclair Ferguson, Church of Scotland minister teaching at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, came in 1986. Episcopalian John Guest conducted evangelistic services at the church in April 1986. (When Guest came to Columbia in May 1990 for a citywide crusade, Dr. Knecht was chairman of the Pastors' Advisory Committee.)

By the end of 1984, membership had reached 1,651. On August 31, 1985, it was 1,700. In June 1985 the church welcomed its thousandth family—Mr. and Mrs. Thomas A. Russo. By May 31, 1986, membership was 1,802. By the end of 1986, it reached 1,853.

During these years some old contacts were maintained, but new ministries and associations developed. First Presbyterian Church now supported Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship at the University of South Carolina while continuing assistance for the Presbyterian Student Center until 1986. Support continued for Thornwell Home. Bethany Christian Services and South Carolina Citizens for Life were added to the church's benevolences. The old friendship with Columbia Bible College was restored. College music groups contributed to the church's worship from time to time, and staff and students attended the church. Bible College faculty taught Sunday school classes, and Dr. Ross lectured in theology at CBC's graduate school—Columbia Biblical Seminary. Cordial relationships developed with the pastors and congregations of the PCA churches in the Columbia area. In 1986, Glen Knecht received an honorary doctor of divinity degree from Covenant College, the PCA college at Lookout Mountain, Georgia.



The First Presbyterian Church steeple, a Columbia landmark since 1853, was repaired at the cost of \$34,000 in December 1985, just in

time for the bicentennial of the city. The sermon preached by Dr. Knecht on Palm Sunday, March 23, 1986—"I Will Remember the Works of the Lord"—marked Columbia's bicentennial and the 192 years of history of First Presbyterian Church. Dr. Knecht read Psalm 77:1-12 and said:

Here in Psalm 77, Asaph, the poet, finds himself on the edge of despair and depression. He cannot seem to salvage his soul from sorrow. What does he do? "I will remember the works of the Lord. I will meditate on them. I will speak about them." Asaph knew that history and prophecy are the great sources of the church's comfort. History is what God has done, and prophecy what he will do; and God wants us to retrace both of these wondrous sources.

Dr. Knecht traced some of the "works of the Lord" and "his wonders of old" in the history of First Presbyterian Church, from the initial call of David Dunlap in 1794 to the ministry of Samuel Macon Smith. Describing how the Psalmist not only remembered the works of God but meditated on them, the pastor drew lessons from the history of the church—"the ministry of Christ as a gift from his hand to us," "the wonder of our doctrines of Reformed theology," and "the centrality of the Lord Jesus Christ and of the Word of God." Dr. Knecht concluded his sermon by stating:

Two ministers have no shrine to their memory in our city, and I would like to suggest one today. I would propose today the beginning of the Thornwell Memorial Lectureship, in which distinguished Christian scholars are invited to bring addresses on sacred themes from this pulpit to be disseminated to the world.

I would also like to propose the Benjamin Palmer Sabbatical Fund, so that ministers of our denomination, young and promising, may be given the opportunity to study and hone their gifts that they might come into the power and influence of the men of old. We have dwarfs behind giant pulpits. There were giants in those days, and we need giants again. Let this congregation, in the name of these venerable men of old, begin to place those giants in the field.³²⁴

³²⁴ The Thornwell Lectureship was established and has brought an outstanding speaker to First Church each year; the Benjamin Palmer Fund, however, did not actually come into existence.

CHAPTER 26



A DYNAMIC CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

At the beginning of 1987, Dr. Knecht restated the church's vision: "the goal is a city famous for God—a city reaching the world," he told the congregation. "We get there by being a vital, loving church at the heart of [Columbia]. We believe God has put us right where He wants us. We have an Antioch location and an Antioch calling, to be a center for Christian growth and missionary activity."

On Easter Sunday, Dr. Knecht spoke on "The Resurrection of Christ and the Revival of a City," as preparation for the Billy Graham Crusade which began on April 25 and continued through May 2 at Williams-Brice Stadium. First Presbyterian Church, with six hundred other churches in South Carolina, supported the crusade. Banners advertising the meetings decorated the brick wall on Lady and Marion streets. First Presbyterian Church ministers and members were active in the crusade. Steve Deller, who served as crusade chairman for the church, said, "Our church's presence and participation was highly visible throughout the Crusade—on the speaker's platform, on the playing field, in the stands, and under the stands very late each evening."

On July 16, 1987, Larry D. Wyatt was named director of music, and Organist Ronald Miller became associate director of music. Dr. Wyatt, a native of Kentucky, studied music at Murray State University, the University of North Texas, and Florida State University, where he earned the Ph.D. degree in 1974. From 1973 until 1987 he was choral

director at Loyola University in New Orleans. Larry and his wife, Susan, moved to Columbia in 1987, where he became director of choral studies at the University of South Carolina. Dr. Wyatt continued the Christmas music traditions at First Church. On December 6, 1987, he directed the University of South Carolina Concert Choir in its Christmas concert and, on December 13, the Palmetto Master-singers concert—both in the sanctuary of First Presbyterian.

In September 1987 the Reverend James Albert Turner became minister of youth education. Jimmy was a graduate of Belhaven College and Columbia Theological Seminary. He had served as minister of youth in the First Presbyterian Church of Jackson, Mississippi, assistant pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Columbus, Mississippi, and, for ten years, in campus ministry with Reformed University Fellowship at the University of Mississippi. Jimmy and his wife, Ellen, and their three children—Elizabeth, David, and Mary Katherine—became an important part of First Church.

First Presbyterian, from the beginning of its membership in the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, was generous in its support of the denomination's ministries. On July 10, 1983, it began to support the James Coads—ARP missionaries in Mexico. In 1984 the church made a five-year pledge of \$128,200 to the Church Extension Campaign of the ARP denomination. During 1985, the church supported Dr. and Mrs. Thomas M. Oates in Pakistan. Other missionaries and Christian workers receiving support from First Presbyterian Church included Miss Susan Layman in India; Miss Kim Jacobs in Ecuador; Mrs. Paul Kemp in Turkey; Mr. and Mrs. Mike Kirchner with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship at Georgia Tech; and Miss Carol Fullerton, who was conducting a ministry among women on the professional tennis tour. Paul A. Pepin, First Presbyterian's first ministerial contribution to the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Synod, was called to the church in Mayesville, South Carolina, in 1988.

When they became part of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, the women of First Presbyterian were organized according to the denominational plan, with officers, circle chairmen, and Bible moderators. They participated in the Catawba Presbyterial Union and in the Women's Synodical Union of the ARPC. Henrietta (Mrs. Fred H.) Gantt, president of the Women of the Church for 1985, thanked the women for their many activities during the year:

You have encouraged missionaries with your notes and remembrances. You have encouraged new churches and

helped them financially. You have made the international students aware that you care about them through your donations of food and time. Providence Home, Daybreak Maternity Home, Harvest Hope, Carolina Children's Home, Thornwell, and Babcock Center all have been the recipients of your generosity, love, and interest. Our members, with difficulties of all kinds, have seen your love for them shown by the many visits and casseroles received. New babies have been welcomed and students remembered.

Church giving exceeded all expenses for 1986. Over ninety-seven per cent of pledges were fulfilled. The budget for 1987—\$1,230,107—was adopted on January 15, 1987, with a "prayer of thanksgiving and praise."

The church was again experiencing the need for more space. Church offices and meeting rooms were located on the first floor of the Sunday school building. Preschool children were taught on the second floor of the building, not on the first as the fire marshal required. Late in 1975 the building at 1321 Bull Street—the only part of the block not owned by the church—had been offered for sale, but the session decided not to purchase it. This building, the headquarters of the South Carolina Bar Association, became available again in 1987—for \$495,000. The bar association was moving to a new center at the corner of Taylor and Park streets, which they expected to have ready in a year. The building seemed ideal for the church; it would complete its ownership of the entire block and would provide badly needed office space. But where would the money come from? On April 14, 1987, Robert L. Sumwalt, Jr., chairman of the Administration Committee, wrote a letter to the church members. "It seems to us, the session, that this purchase fits in with the vision of a downtown church, vibrantly alive with learning and growing opportunities for people of all ages," he wrote. He continued:

We have decided to put the matter before you and before God in this way. Let each one prayerfully consider what we could give for this work between now and May 1, 1988. We will gather these intentions and see whether or not we are being led by God to the acquiring of this property. This will enable God to withhold the property from us if He chooses to do so or to give the property to us if that is His will.

Elder Sumwalt proposed that canvass cards be filled out, brought to the church on Sunday, May 3, 1987, and dedicated to God. "Let us join together in prayer for this effort," he concluded. "We want to be a living illustration of God's power. God wants to exhibit to the world that He exists and that He is able to meet the needs of His people."

The sanctuary was "substantially occupied" when on August 16, 1987, the congregation met (in a corporation meeting) to decide whether to purchase the building. There was only one negative vote. Pledges had amounted to \$330,000; later more money came in. A bequest was dedicated to this purpose, an old van was sold, and two pieces of real estate were turned into cash. The money was in sight but not yet in hand. A few days before the closing date, the church was still \$12,000 short of the purchase price. Then a representative of the bar association asked that the closing be delayed for two or three weeks so that their new parking lot could be paved. During that time the additional money came in! On May 19, 1988, the property was purchased. Staff offices were moved from various locations in the educational building to the new building, named the Benjamin Morgan Palmer Ministry Center. A special, large gift of \$100,000 from a church member provided for the remodeling of the first floor of the educational building—now named the James Henley Thornwell Education Building.

Membership at the end of 1987 was 1,893. The budget for 1988 was \$1,394,090. Once again, a goal of fifty per cent for benevolences was established (benevolence giving was averaging about twenty-two per cent of the total giving). Average Sunday school attendance had risen from 380 in 1984 to 524 in 1988. Attendance during March 1989 averaged 609—the first time all Sundays in the same month had had 600 present. A new high attendance was reached on November 5, 1989, when 708 people were present for Sunday school.

Solid preaching and Bible study characterized First Presbyterian Church. During 1987, Sunday morning themes included the Miracles, the Cross Revealed and Applied, the Key Words of Christ's Atonement, Scriptural Principles of Renewal, the Ten Commandments, the Doctrine of the Church, Knowing our Enemy—Satan, the Doctrine of the Word of God, What the Bible Teaches about Wealth, Advent from the Prophet Zechariah, and the Advent Names of Christ. At the Wednesday services, members and visitors heard messages on the Sermon on the Mount; the Lives of Joseph, Moses, David, and Jonah; and the Supernatural Birth of Christ.

Dr. John Gerstner, for over thirty years professor of church history at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, was the first Thornwell Lecturer, November 22-24, 1987. "It is with deep thanks to God for what He has given to us through the life and labors of James Henley Thornwell that we inaugurate this memorial lectureship," the church announced. "We do so with the prayer that it may be used of God as was Thornwell, in the defense and proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ." Dr. Gerstner's four lectures were on the topic "The Bible: the Word of Life." Dr. David Wells of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary came as Thornwell lecturer in 1988 and Dr. Douglas Kelly of Reformed Theological Seminary, in 1989. Dr. J. Richard de Witt, pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church of Memphis, Tennessee, spoke on "The Doctrines of Grace" in 1991. The 1992 lecturer was Dr. Art Lindsley of the C. S. Lewis Institute in Washington, D.C. His topic was "A Critique of the New Age." In 1993 Dr. Robert Norris, pastor of Fourth Presbyterian Church in Bethesda, Maryland, set forth the main points of the Reformed system of thought in a series on "The Shepherd and His Sheep," based on the first twenty-eight verses of the tenth chapter of John's Gospel.

On January 24, 1988, Dr. Richard Halverson, chaplain of the United States Senate, preached at First Presbyterian Church. Dr. Leighton Ford led evangelistic services at the church April 29-May 1, 1988. Dr. Knecht preached at the Banner of Truth Conference held in Grand Rapids, Michigan, May 24-27, 1988.



Dr. and Mrs. Knecht's missionary years gave them a strong commitment to overseas missions. Dr. Knecht traveled to Pakistan to preach at the annual Muree Christian Conference and to visit the mission stations of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church.³²⁵ The church's high school students went each year on a mission trip to help conduct vacation Bible schools in Appalachian mountain towns. Others went to Mexico to help ARP missionaries there. The church added to its list of overseas missionaries. With an annual international friendship dinner, it reached out to students and others from foreign countries living in Columbia.

³²⁵ By 1994 Dr. Knecht had made five missions trips to assist ARP missionaries in Pakistan. In May 1994 the Reverend P. Frank van Dalen, chairman of the ARP Mission in Pakistan, wrote to the session and congregation of First Presbyterian Church: "Rev. and Mrs. Knecht have become more and more special to the Pakistan Mission as each year passes. Their insight and encouragement have meant a great deal to us. We are grateful for their willingness to make the difficult and tiring journey in order to be a blessing to us. We are also grateful to you for your blessing to us through them."

First Presbyterian also joined in ministry with the Reverend Victor Kulbich and the Reverend Ivan Borisovich Mazur, pastors overseeing the work of church planting in Ukraine. A church in Vinnitsa, a city of 400,000 people halfway between Kiev and the Romanian border, became First Presbyterian's sister church. During the years of Nazi and Soviet oppression, no building permits for churches had been issued; so when the opportunity materialized, this group of Christians seized it. With the help of gifts from First Church, the congregation of the Vinnitsa Church began to build—with their own hands—an impressive building seating 1,500 people. Elder Kenneth Wingate and Pastor Knecht visited the church and ministered in the city during June 1992. Later that summer, on August 9, Pastor Kulbich preached at First Presbyterian Church. Associate Minister John Hopkins and Elder Henry Foster visited the Vinnitsa church during the summer of 1993, and Elder Wingate and Deacon Stewart Rodman went in the fall (Mr. Rodman visited the church again in March 1994). These teams from First Presbyterian Church have joined in preaching at jails, hospitals, schools, homes, the marketplace, parks, the university, and village mission churches, as well as in the Vinnitsa church's four two-hour services each week. After his visit to Ukraine, John Hopkins wrote, "The First Presbyterian teams have seen many people come to acknowledge Jesus as Savior and Lord during their brief stays with the most hospitable Vinnitsa believers."³²⁶ By the fall of 1994, the nearly one thousand believers in the Vinnitsa congregation completed their new church, the largest Protestant structure in Ukraine. Pastor Ivan Mazur wrote to First Presbyterian Church of Columbia, "We don't even know the words which would constitute a fitting thank you. Without your immense help our construction would have stopped, or would have moved forward very slowly. Truly, this is also your new church, into which you have invested your graciousness." In November 1994 Dr. Knecht and Neal Mathias, associate minister of missions, visited First Church missionaries Andrew and Nannette Howard and Ron and Pam Brunson in Russia and then traveled to Ukraine to meet with the pastors and people of the Vinnitsa church.



The 1989 budget reflected the church's goals and priorities. The total budget of \$1,322,893 was divided among public worship and pastoral care, education and growth ministries, music ministry, general

³²⁶ John Hopkins, "First Columbia's Ukrainian Sister," *The Associate Reformed Presbyterian*, December 1993, p. 9.

support of ministries, facility operations, food service ministry, employee benefits, and missions. Support for foreign missions went to missionaries with World Witness—the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church's board of foreign missions—in Pakistan, Mexico, and Tanzania, and to missionaries in India and Turkey. A large portion of the budget for national missions was designated for denominational and presbytery church extension. There was support for Erskine College and Erskine Seminary, but also money was designated for the Presbyterian Home of South Carolina, King College, Montreat Anderson College, and Thornwell Children's Home. Local ministries in the city of Columbia supported by the church included Bethany Christian Services, Daybreak Crisis Pregnancy Center, Salvation Army, and Young Life. In presenting the 1989 budget to the congregation, Dr. Knecht said, "Ours is a faith ministry, in that we depend upon God's providing the funds week by week to enable us to do what we set out to do."

First Presbyterian Church attracted people from many different backgrounds. Thirty-three new members were received on February 12, 1989. Four of these came on reaffirmation of faith and two on profession of faith, the rest by letter of transfer. Ten were from Presbyterian churches—five from the PC(USA), two from the ARPC, two from an independent Presbyterian church, and one from the PCA. Nine transferred from Baptist churches, six from Methodist churches, and two from Bible churches. There was a great increase in men received under care as candidates for the ministry, as a growing number of First Presbyterian Church members were called into Christian service and went off to Erskine, Reformed, Westminster, and Covenant seminaries to prepare.³²⁷

In 1989 a popular Sunday evening seminar program, begun earlier by the Reverend James Barnes, resumed. Classes were offered in such areas as "The Unfolding Mystery: Seeing Christ in the Old Testament" (taught by Mark Ross); "James" (taught by Warren Wardlaw); "For Women Only: Issues for All Ages" (taught by Cynthia Hamilton, Ellen Turner, Connie Ross, Mary Jane Finney, and Anne Harley); "Marriage, Divorce and Re-marriage: What the Bible Says" (taught by Glen Knecht); and "Being a Dad and Loving It" (taught by Lance Hudgens). Other seminars were offered by elders and guest teachers.

³²⁷ Ministers of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church who came from First Presbyterian in Columbia are Paul A. Pepin, John C. Dorr, Jr., Joel S. Gillespie, Bryan J. Jurkowski, David H. Lauten, J. Mark McClamrock, Andrew K. Putnam, Charles H. Roberts, and H. Mark Wright.

In September 1989, Hurricane Hugo devastated the South Carolina coast and cut a path of destruction across the state. Columbia escaped the brunt of the storm, but Charleston was directly hit. First Presbyterian Church made a contribution of \$500 to First (Scots) Church of Charleston. (After the First Presbyterian Church fire in 1983, one of the first gifts received was from First Scots.) Total gifts from First Presbyterian for Hugo victims came to \$30,000. Deacons, Women of the Church, and others worked tirelessly to assist those in need in Mayesville, South Carolina, a community with an ARP church, which was badly damaged.

On November 16, 1989, the session adopted a new mission statement for First Presbyterian:

In keeping with the Great Commission, First Presbyterian Church of Columbia aspires to be a dynamic Christian community within the heart of South Carolina, centered in the worship of God and bearing witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord.

As Christ's disciples we strive to build vibrant lives, strong families, and a fellowship in which members care for and love one another and together seek the well-being of our city, state, nation and the world.

By the power of the Holy Spirit we seek to develop a vital preaching and teaching ministry, aimed at drawing men and women to Christ; healing, comforting and nurturing them in the faith; equipping them for service, and deploying them effectively into all walks of life.

About this time an effort was made to take more seriously the examination of persons for membership—reflecting a desire to return to the earlier practice of the church. The session studied the matter for months, supplied with theological and biblical papers written by Mark Ross. In his first paper—"The Role and Responsibilities of Elders in Admitting Persons to Church Membership"—Dr. Ross explained that laxity in the admission of persons to membership in the church was not a kindness to the people involved. Furthermore, he stated, it was actually unfaithfulness to Christ and His church. Dr. Ross pointed out that "the role of the elders in admitting persons to membership in our church is that of acting in the name of Christ to mark out publicly those who are His people in the world." "We are

not able to look upon the heart," he told the session; "only God can do that." But "we must look upon the outward signs, the fruits," he said. "What fruits must we find?" Dr. Ross answered the question: "Our Form of Government specifies three as essential"—a knowledge of spiritual need, faith in Christ, and intention to be obedient to Him. Some session members thought that Dr. Ross was imposing conditions for membership beyond those found in the Form of Government. In a second paper he clarified his intention not to add conditions for membership but to ensure that the examination of candidates for membership be conducted carefully and effectively.³²⁸

The session then adopted a number of guiding principles for admission of new members. It would attempt to admit only those people who had "a saving relationship with Jesus Christ," as evidenced by a knowledge of their spiritual need, personal faith in Christ, and a commitment to follow Him in obedience. This would presuppose personal knowledge of a candidate's faith and commitment. It was decided that the concurrence of two or more elders should be required before receiving a person into membership.³²⁹

A renewed emphasis on the role of church officers, both elders and deacons, revitalized the church. Too often in Presbyterianism the management of the church's funds has been the main—and in some cases the only—work of the deacons. The primary duty of the deacons, according to First Presbyterian Church's Form of Government, "is attending to those within the church who are in material need and distress." "This is a work so important that it must not be neglected," Mark Ross wrote. "Without it the preaching and teaching of the Word of God will be much less effective, for then we will lack the concrete demonstrations that make the message credible before an unbelieving but watching world."³³⁰

Public worship in an appropriate manner and with serious but joyful hearts was a goal constantly placed before the congregation. The

³²⁸ In his second paper, Mark Ross stated that he believed that at one point the Form of Government went beyond what was required for membership. One of the seven questions to be asked of those seeking membership, according to the Form of Government, is: "Do you accept the doctrines and principles of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, so far as you understand them, as agreeable to and founded on the Word of God?" Dr. Ross argued that people should not have to accept all the doctrines of the church in order to become members and pointed out that this question was not even asked of persons seeking membership in First Presbyterian Church. The church had been given permission not to use this question, when Dr. Knecht had objected to it when he was being examined in 1983 by the presbytery's Commission on the Minister and His Work.

³²⁹ For a statement of the "Summary of Principles" adopted by the session, see Appendix H.

bulletin for the Lord's Day, June 23, 1991, contained the words: "How serious a thing it is when we propose to worship God! Not at all a light and casual undertaking, rather worshiping the true God is the most important, the most weighty enterprise of our week." Communion services were times of special worship and thanksgiving as the congregation celebrated the gift of the body and blood of Christ for the forgiveness of sins and the feeding on Him by faith. Since 1985, Virginia Draffin (Mrs. Thomas A., Jr.) Waites had been making the communion bread for the church, using a recipe for Scottish shortbread (containing flour, butter, margarine, and sugar) that had been followed for ARP communion services since 1850. After Mrs. Waites attended her first communion service at First Presbyterian, she asked Dr. Knecht if she could bake the bread for the service. She later heard what happened when the elders sampled her shortbread. "They took the bread and passed it around," she said, "and then they passed it around again, and then they passed it around a third time and said, 'We'll take it!'"

Fellowship was another major part of the church's life. During 1989 it was noted that the condition of the kitchen—"center of warmth and nourishment for the church family"—was badly in need of repair and new equipment. There was nothing in the budget for such an expense, so the deacons and elders decided to wait until the year's end and use whatever surplus remained for this project. Some years had indeed produced a surplus but never one so large as was required for the kitchen renovation. The church leaders waited and prayed. When the year 1989 ended, there was a greater surplus than ever before, and, in the summer of 1990, the long-needed work was done.



Having been instrumental in the forming of two retirement centers in South Carolina, First Presbyterian Church once again turned its attention to this important work. Aileen S. and David M. Pennington became members of First Presbyterian in May 1983, the same month in which the church was received into the Associate Reformed Presbyterian denomination. They were interested in founding an ARP retirement center in Columbia and made a generous contribution in 1984 that led to the establishment of a fund for this purpose.

By June 1985 a retirement center study committee was active, with Joseph Walker Clarke, Sr., serving as chairman. Early in 1986, a gift

³³⁰ Mark E. Ross, "Deacons: Their Role in the Overall Mission of the Church," *The Associate Reformed Presbyterian*, October 1992, 11.

of fifty-six acres relatively near the church was received from David W. Robinson. When the property did not prove to be suitable, the Retirement Center Board, which had been formed by the church session to succeed the study committee, was authorized to sell or exchange it for another property, if a desirable one became available. In August 1988 the board announced plans to purchase the Dixon property, a seventeen-acre tract—filled with majestic hardwood trees, the Spanish moss of the low country of South Carolina, and mountain laurel of the upcountry—on the west bank of the Congaree River. The board and the church were greatly encouraged when Alice Robinson Johnson left a sizable bequest for the retirement center. In December 1989 the board set a goal for the congregation of \$2.3 million for the retirement center, Laurel Crest.

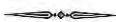
The first action of the Retirement Center Board when it was formed in 1987 was to charter a separate corporation. Wilson W. Farrell, Sr., was named chairman of the board and led the early stages of the development of the project. In July 1988 Richard H. deMontmollin was elected president, so that daily attention could be given to the work. In 1990 Mr. Farrell moved to Cincinnati, and Mr. deMontmollin was named chairman to succeed him. Mr. Robert C. Walker became president. Charlene S. (Mrs. William B., Sr.) Wells continued as secretary and Aileen (Mrs. David M.) Pennington, as treasurer until early 1991.

The firm of Van Scoyoc of Arlington, Virginia, was retained to guide the development of Laurel Crest. This relationship continued until the project obtained its financing through an issue of tax-exempt bonds early in 1992. At this time Wilson Farrell returned to Columbia and was hired as director of development, joining Marketing Director William E. DeLoache, Jr., on the Laurel Crest staff. Board members and staff offered a variety of talents and served with steadfastness and loyalty while acknowledging God's blessings and His perfect timing.

On May 23, 1993, a ground-breaking service was held on the property. Dr. Knecht brought a message entitled "God at the Beginning." Construction was begun on June 1 by M. B. Kahn Construction Company. The first phase included seventy-eight independent-living apartments, eight cottages, a community building, a health-care wing, and an activities building. Future plans include a residential-care wing of ten units, ten additional nursing beds, and six additional cottages. The completed Laurel Crest Retirement Center will be a \$17 million project, the largest single ministry ever undertaken by First Presbyterian Church.

Banyan Retirement Services of Greenville, South Carolina, was selected to manage Laurel Crest, and Diana B. Jones was named executive director. The first residents moved in on August 29, and ground was broken for the first of the cottages in late September. A little later construction began on the Jennie Feagle Residential Care wing, with completion scheduled for spring 1995.

Climaxing ten years of prayer and work, the dedication of Laurel Crest took place on October 2, 1994. Master of ceremonies was chairman deMontmollin. The Chancel Choir of First Presbyterian Church, directed by Mrs. Charlotte Kirby, sang. In his dedicatory sermon "God: The Refuge of the Retired," Dr. Knecht called for Laurel Crest to be "a symbol of God as the Rock to the aging" by treating the elderly with dignity, by upholding the sacredness of life, by strengthening family ties, and by becoming a center of worshiping Christians. "We have a vision of service from this place," the First Church pastor told the residents and friends of Laurel Crest. "This community of gifted and dedicated persons will be to the church and community a great resource of wise and able people who can teach and serve and work and make Columbia a city known for God." Dr. Knecht concluded by reminding his hearers that "the Saviour's last picture is in the Book of Revelation. There His hair is white and He is called the Ancient of Days. He has reached His full glory is that picture. And the prayer we offer today is that our aging friends here may reach their fullest glory on these lovely grounds, and mirror forth the glory of the Lord."



In 1990 the ministerial staff at First Presbyterian Church comprised Glen Knecht, pastor; Warren Wardlaw, minister of congregational care; Harold Von Nessen, assistant in congregational care; Mark Ross, pastoral teacher; Lance Hudgens, minister of evangelism and missions; Jimmy Turner, minister of youth; Anne Harley, coordinator of women's ministries (in May 24, 1990, Anne Harley was granted a leave of absence for further study); Ellen (Mrs. James H.) Turner, director of preschool education; Kathy (Mrs. William Randolph, Jr.) Folks, director of elementary education; Larry Wyatt, director of music; and Ronald Miller, associate director of music. In 1991 Mark Ross was named associate pastor with special responsibility for teaching, and Lance Hudgens was made minister of Christian education. Dr. Ross's Bible study classes—the Thursday morning Bible survey class (later with a Wednesday evening section) and the Friday morning breakfast study for men—became popular. As interest grew, a

Thursday morning men's Bible study was added. These Bible studies deepened the lives of members and brought new people into the church.

Average Sunday school attendance rose from 547 in 1989 to 605 in 1990. The year 1990 also produced \$76,000 over expenses. Dr. Knecht, in his "State of the Church Address" for 1990, said that he saw "a new sense of family emerging" at First Presbyterian. "I am amazed at the network of relationships that I see building within the congregation," he added, "and this not by any master plan of mine but as a genuine operation of the Holy Spirit as He intertwines our lives with one another."

In 1991 the membership of First Presbyterian Church exceeded 2,000 for the first time in its history—reaching 2,075 at the end of 1991. During the year, the church had welcomed 161 new members. Average attendance for Sunday school was 650, with over 700 people in Sunday school for fifteen Sundays. On September 8, 1991, a new high for Sunday school attendance was recorded: 890 were present. The church ended the year 1991 with a surplus of \$181,000. In October James Turner left to become associate pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Clarksdale, Mississippi.

During the early 1980s, as the Vacation Bible School grew, a day camp was begun for the elementary-age children. The camp met at the old Girl Scout Camp, then at the Boy Scout Camp, and next at the YMCA Family Center in Lexington. Led by Kathy Folks, the 1991 day campers studied John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, which had been developed into a curriculum called *The Wicket Gate*.

Women of the Church, under the leadership of Beverly (Mrs. Robert) Taylor, and Men of the Church continued active ministries in 1991. In October, the first Festival of Creativity—suggested by Dr. Larry Wyatt—allowed church members and friends to appreciate each other's talents in the performing arts, the fine arts, and crafts, and to give thanks and praise to God for His gifts.

The music program continued to grow under the direction of Dr. Wyatt; the children's choirs, supervised by Charlotte (Mrs. James M.) Kirby, and the chancel choir contributed regularly to worship. A Sunday-evening choir was formed under the direction of Bonnie Hoyt. During the worship service on June 30, 1991, the church recognized Ronald Miller's twenty years as organist. In his response in *First Things*, First Presbyterian's weekly publication, Mr. Miller wrote that it had been "a most spiritually and musically rewarding experience for me to have served the Lord in this wonderful church during these years."

In 1992 Dr. Warren Wardlaw retired and was named minister emeritus. Thirty-six years of his ministry had been in South Carolina, the last twelve at First Presbyterian Church. In the summer of 1992 the Reverend John Howard Hopkins II came as associate minister for congregational care. A native of Pennsylvania and son of a Presbyterian pastor, John was called into the ministry while working as a missionary intern in Ethiopia. He graduated from Fuller Theological Seminary and served Presbyterian churches in California and Pennsylvania, and the Union Church of Manila, Philippines, before joining the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Synod in 1982. He was a pastor in Melbourne Beach, Florida, and a mission developer in Charlotte, North Carolina, and then came to First Presbyterian. John and Kathy Hopkins and their three children—Erin, Evan, and Elliot—moved to Columbia and happily joined the church family.

At the installation service for John Hopkins on July 26, 1992, Dr. Knecht preached on "The Apostolic Vision of Pastoral Care" from Acts 20:28—"Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you guardians, to feed the church of the Lord which he obtained with his own blood." "The whole work of nurture in the church," Dr. Knecht said, "is to ensure that believers come to the end of their days having endured and not fallen by the wayside." "When you look at salvation that way," he continued, "you get very interested in pastoral care." Dr. Knecht reminded the congregation that although "the function of tending the flock" was concentrated in the work of the new minister of pastoral care, "it exists in all of the elders as well." John Hopkins' father, Dr. Joseph M. Hopkins, former professor at Westminster College in New Wilmington, Pennsylvania, and now a missionary, gave the charge to his son.

First Presbyterian Church had found a happy home in the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church—and made a significant contribution in turn. After a period of doctrinal decline, the ARPs began to recover and reassert their historic orthodoxy. First Presbyterian Church's Associate Minister Mark Ross was the fraternal observer from the General Synod of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church to the General Assembly of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, meeting at Second Presbyterian Church in Memphis, Tennessee, June 26-29, 1992. The two denominations were attempting to

move beyond the traditional exchange of fraternal greetings to closer fellowship. Dr. Ross told the EPC commissioners that "in the days of our [ARPC] wandering we had murmured against the Lord's provision for us within the defined boundaries of the biblical and Reformed faith. We cried out for meat in addition to manna; and God gave us meat to eat, but He sent leanness into our souls." For some time, loss of vision and declining membership marked the denomination. But then "God in His saving mercy" applied "His reviving grace" to the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, Dr. Ross said. "God preserved us and brought us new health. By 1979 we were able to adopt a firm statement on the authority of the Bible in all that it teaches." Further actions of the General Synod, year by year, demonstrated that the old denomination increasingly was committing itself to the faith of its mothers and fathers—and First Church of Columbia was a significant part of that renewal.

Dr. Ross wrote an article entitled "Revival Purifies Theology" in *The Associate Reformed Presbyterian* in September 1992, in which he said:

As one looks closely at the ARP Church, it is obvious that God has been at work among us. There is much cause for rejoicing and thanksgiving. But we cannot be content with what we are now. . . . We must press on to greater understanding of what God would have of us, and we must do it with all our might. God's Spirit could as unexpectedly depart from us as He has come upon us, if we show ourselves slack in obedience and indifferent toward God.

During 1992 First Presbyterian received 134 new members, bringing membership to 2,127. Harold Von Nessen retired at the end of 1992, but he later returned to serve temporarily as missions pastor (as First Presbyterian Church continued its efforts to become what Dr. Knecht described as a "missions-active" congregation). In addition to John Hopkins, Paul Cook joined the church's staff in youth work and William Schmidt, in singles ministry during 1992. Attendance at Sunday school classes continued to grow—with 732 an average attendance for the year, compared with 650 in 1991. The Sunday school met the needs of an increasing number of people of all ages.

In the fall of 1992, First Church established the Reformed Fellowship of the Southeastern United States, "to provide support, instruction, spiritual nurture, and fellowship for pastors, elders, teachers, and students so that their service to the Lord in Reformed churches

and institutions [might] be more effective to the glory of God." Members of the Reformed Fellowship accept the inerrancy of the Bible, the doctrines of grace, and subscribe to one or more of the Reformed confessions—the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Belgic Confession, the Canons of the Synod of Dort, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Second London Confession of 1689. Speakers such as Jay Adams, Mark Ross, R. C. Sproul, Ligon Duncan, Jerry Bridges, and Robert Norris have presented helpful, challenging lectures and sermons to the Reformed Fellowship.

The First Church tradition of strong preaching and great music continued during 1993, with special care to focus the praise and attention on God. Each Sunday there were about fifty visitors. Six cycles of the Inquirers' Class brought 124 new members. The total membership as of December 31 was 2,191. Twice during 1993 over one thousand people attended Sunday school classes; the average number of students for the year was eighty more than in 1992. Giving in 1993 exceeded any year in the history of First Presbyterian Church—with over two million dollars for Christ and His kingdom. More than two hundred adults took part in the seminar training sessions during Sunday evenings. The Bible survey classes taught by Dr. Ross continued to attract many students, and a new men's morning Bible study was added. The church library, under the direction of Ellen (Mrs. Arthur D.) Mosher, made an increasingly valuable contribution to the life of the congregation. Leona (Mrs. Gordon S.) Query joined the church staff as Coordinator of Women's Ministries, and Bill Schmidt continued to supervise the Singles' Ministry. Deacon James H. Easterby III managed the church's ten sports teams, assisting the athletes in developing character and Christian fellowship. The church continued to reach out in ministry to the city and the world. Twenty-five adults and forty-five young people participated in mission trips to Ukraine, Pakistan, Mexico, and Appalachia.

An increasing number of First Presbyterian women attended the August Adult Bible Conference at Bonclarken and assumed leadership roles in the denomination's Women's Synodical Union. In 1993, Dot (Mrs. David) Tribble served as Synodical president (and as vice-president in 1994). Kathy (Mrs. W. R.) Folks, Jr., was Leadership Training Chairman, and Harriett (Mrs. John T.) Moore was Youth Chairman for 1993-1994. Phyllis (Mrs. Henry S.) Hastings served as a member of the Literature Committee in 1993 and became chairman of the committee in 1994.

During August 1993 Associate Pastor Mark Ross brought sermons based on Benjamin Morgan Palmer's book *The Threefold Fellowship and*

the Threefold Assurance. In September, Dr. and Mrs. Ross represented First Presbyterian Church at Westminster Abbey in London for the celebration of the 350th anniversary of the convening of the Westminster Assembly. In appreciation for this opportunity, Connie and Mark presented to the church a limited-edition print of a painting of the Westminster Assembly, which was placed in the church's redecorated small dining room. Later in 1993 Dr. Ross gave a series of Sunday evening lectures on the significance of the Westminster Assembly's work. Dr. Ross, with Philip Rollinson, was the author of *The Children's Catechism: A New Modern Version*—"a theologically accurate, modern version of the 1840 *Catechism for Younger Children* by Joseph P. Engels, designed as an introduction to the Westminster *Shorter Catechism*."³³¹

Reflecting First Presbyterian Church's steadily growing commitment to local, national, and world missions, the Reverend Neal R. Mathias began his work as associate minister of missions on August 1, 1994. Born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1951, Neal graduated from the University of Pittsburgh with a B.A. in religious studies in 1974. He earned the master of divinity degree from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in 1979. He served as youth director of a church in Ohio from 1979 to 1981, when he was called as pastor to the New Hope Presbyterian Church (Associate Reformed Synod) in Tampa, Florida. In 1986, he became director of candidate ministry for World Witness, the ARP board of foreign missions. Neal and his wife, Anne, have three children—Sarah, Andrew, and Peter.

In his morning message for September 12, 1993, Dr. Knecht reviewed the church's long-range plan adopted in September 1991, adding "insights and convictions that have developed since then." He set forth nine goals. (1) The church should be a growing church—"not to make an empire but to bring glory to God and strength to His body." (2) The church must remain committed to historic Christianity. "God honors His Word, and unless our church is true to that, there is no hope of being a real church." (3) "Household religion" must be practiced. (4) "The centrality of worship" must be maintained. (5) There must be New Testament evangelism. "We believe that men and women are lost without saving faith in Jesus Christ, and God has commissioned us to tell His Good News to them." (6) First

³³¹ Philip Rollinson and Mark E. Ross, *The Children's Catechism: A New Modern Version* (Signal Mountain, Tenn.: Summertown Texts, 1988).

Presbyterian Church must "aspire to be a teaching center not only for our own people but for the city and the denomination." (7) The church must be a missions-minded church. "We must rearrange our priorities and our schedules for the sake of world evangelization." (8) "God has called us into a loving and caring family. We seek to bear each other's burdens." And (9) "our goal is to see where God is working in the city and to be there with Him. . . . In the process of reaching out to the hurts [of the city] we shall be transformed. Our self-centeredness will disappear when we become servants of God in the midst of Columbia."

First Presbyterian Church continues its strong teaching and preaching ministry—setting forth clearly the truths of the Bible and applying them strongly and accurately to the lives of its people. In its teaching ministry and in special activities such as the Thornwell Lectures and the Reformed Fellowship, First Church advances the cause of biblical thinking and Reformed theology among its people and many others. Laurel Crest Retirement Center is rising impressively on the banks of the Congaree. A strong missions program, with financial support of missionaries and personal involvement in mission projects, includes assistance to a bold and flourishing sister congregation in Vinnitsa in Ukraine. Plans are underway for a Christian counseling center, to provide "clinical counseling to the members of First Presbyterian Church, the community of Columbia, and leadership within the ARP denomination." And the church is committed to its historic goal, set forth in the past by the long line of First Presbyterian Church pastors, elders, and people, and now often repeated by Dr. Knecht: "The vision of this Church is to make Columbia a city known for God."

On February 1, 1994, Dr. Knecht closed his "State of the Church" address with the words:

God remembers the day when David and Susannah Dunlap moved to Columbia and amid the heat and disease and the newness of the place, they established this congregation. He remembers the buildings, the fires, the weddings, the souls saved and the farewell services. And He will rejoice to see us remember it too in the Bicentennial Celebration which will have its beginnings in this year of 1994.

CONCLUSION

Former pastor Andrew Blackwood wrote to the session of First Presbyterian Church on June 23, 1960, expressing the hope that “the future of the dear old First Church may be more than worthy of the best in her past.”

Present pastor Glen Knecht said on January 21, 1992:

Many challenges await us in this new year. We must be willing to change, yet firm in our commitment to Christ and orthodoxy. We must be zealous to seize the time when it is ripe and not let it pass. We must be positive and contagious in our attitudes about Our Lord and His Church. Above all we must be faithful to Him in our worship, our conduct, our willingness to serve, and in our stewardship. May we not rest on the laurels of a good year, but move on to what lies ahead. We haven't seen anything yet. The best is yet to be!

These words sum up fittingly the first two hundred years of the life of First Presbyterian Church—and introduce the church's third century. The challenges to an evangelical church in the years beyond 1995 will be immense, but First Church has learned that God is faithful—and patient, and loving, and forgiving. Most of all, it has learned that God is sovereign. That sturdy, biblical Calvinistic emphasis sounds from pulpit and classroom of the grand old church on the

corner of Marion and Lady. Once again, the glory of the Lord has risen upon it!



This book is a history of one of the most important churches of the South. It is also a long sermon! It reviews the faithfulness of God who calls His people, justifies them, and adopts them into His family. It looks at the work of God in sanctification, as He shapes and uses men and women in His church and in the world as His witnesses. It warns us that church membership alone does not guarantee obedience and faithfulness. But it also teaches us that "if we are faithless, He will remain faithful, for He cannot disown himself" (2 Timothy 2:13). And it encourages and challenges us as we see how God has developed the fruit of the Spirit and the life of faith in thousands of people during the two hundred years of the existence of First Presbyterian Church of Columbia, South Carolina.

It may be that God will use this story to bring people to faith in Jesus Christ. He may use it to call some to greater appreciation for the treasures of our Reformed faith. He will use it, I pray, to bring all who read it to greater love for Him and His church, deeper commitment to His cause, and stronger obedience to His will.

APPENDIX A

PASTORS (bold print) AND SUPPLY PASTORS OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH with dates of service (based on church records and session minutes)

David Ellison Dunlap (September 1794-September 1804)

John Brown (April 1810-May 1811)

Benjamin R. Montgomery (January 1812-July 1818)

Thomas Charleton Henry (November 1818-January 1824)

Robert Means (January 1824-March 1827)

John Rennie (June 1827-July 1831)

Thomas Goulding and George Howe—joint supply pastors
(July 1831-January 1833)

Daniel Baker (Summer 1832)

Samuel C. Jackson (January 1833-May 1833)

John Fleetwood Lanneau (May 1833-September 1833)

Aaron Whitney Leland (January 1834-January 1837)

John Witherspoon (July 1837-May 1839)

James Henley Thornwell (May 1839-January 1841)

George Howe and Aaron Leland—joint supply pastors
(January 1841-July 1842)

Benjamin Gildersleeve (July 1842-January 1843)

Benjamin Morgan Palmer (January 1843-December 1855)

James Henley Thornwell (February 1856-November 1861)

Francis P. Mullally—co-pastor with Thornwell (May 1860-November 1861) and pastor (November 1861-June 1863)
Benjamin Morgan Palmer (August 1863-February 1865)
George Howe (February 1865-May 1866)
William Ellison Boggs (May 1866-January 1871)
Joseph Ruggles Wilson (February 1871-July 1873)
James Fair Latimer (July 1873-August 1873)
Edward Melvin Green (August 1873-November 1873)
John H. Bryson (November 1873-April 1877)
James Fair Latimer (June 1877-September 1877)
William Swan Plumer (September 1877-June 1878)
Joseph Bingham Mack (June 1878-January 1881)
John Lafayette Girardeau (March 1881-October 1882)
William E. Boggs and Charles R. Hemphill—joint supply pastors
(November 1882-October 1883)
Luther McKinnon (October 1883-September 1885)
James D. Tadlock (October 1885-June 1886)
Neander Montgomery Woods (June 1886-April 1889)
Samuel Macon Smith (September 1889-January 1910)
James Overton Reavis (April 1911-June 1914)
Andrew Watterson Blackwood (November 1914-March 1921)
Melton Clark (March 1921-May 1922)
Robert Albert Lapsley (May 1922-October 1930)
John MacEachern—assistant pastor (May 1929-December 1930)
James Wyly Jackson (February 1931-July 1958)
Thomas Francis Wallace—assistant pastor
(February 1937-October 1944)
Claude McIntosh—assistant pastor (October 1945-March 1946)
Walter Paul Baldwin, Jr.—assistant pastor (April 1946-June 1946)
Thomas Robert Fulton—assistant pastor
(November 1947-November 1948)
Elmer Donovan Wood—assistant pastor
(December 1954-April 1955)
Francis Borel Mayes—assistant pastor (August 1955-July 1958)
John McSween (May 1959-October 1959)
J. Sherrard Rice (November 1959-October 1966)
Cecil H. Lang—assistant pastor (September 1962-March 1968)
William Kendrick Borden—assistant pastor
(June 1966-October 1968)
Hugh Walker McClure III (September 1967-May 1982)
Joseph Norton Dendy—assistant pastor; associate pastor
(September 1968-July 1978)

Robert E. Herrmann—associate pastor (April 1969-August 1973)

James H. Barnes—associate pastor (January 1977-May 1984)

Warren M. Wardlaw—associate pastor; interim pastor
(August 1979-January 1992)

Glen Charles Knecht (September 1983-)

Mark E. Ross—associate pastor (July 1984-)

Harold Von Nessen—assistant pastor; missions pastor (1985-)

Lance E. Hudgens—associate pastor (November 1986-)

James A. Turner—associate pastor (September 1987-October 1991)

John H. Hopkins—associate pastor (May 1992-)

Neal R. Mathias—associate minister of missions (August 1994-)

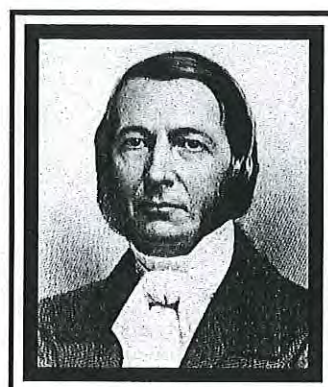
Pictorial Collection of Some Former Pastors of First Presbyterian Church



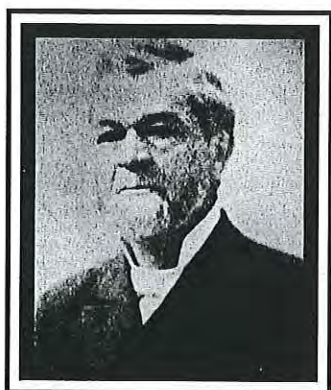
***George Howe**
1831-33, 1841-42, 1865-66



Aaron W. Leland
1834-1837



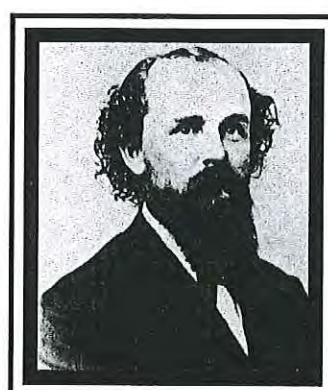
James H. Thornwell
1839-41, 1856-61



Benjamin M. Palmer
1843-1855



William E. Boggs
1866-1871



John H. Bryson
1873-1877



Joseph B. Mack
1878-1881

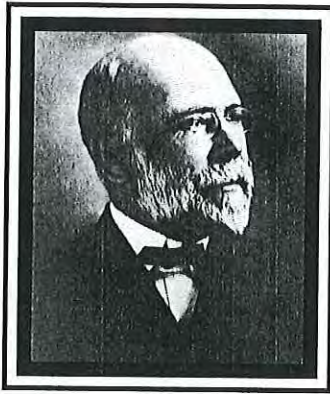


***Charles R. Hemphill**
1882-1883



Luther McKinnon
1883-1885

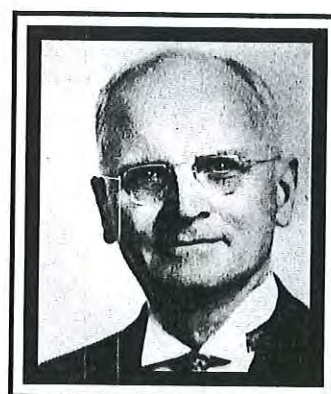
***Supply pastor**



Samuel M. Smith
1889-1910



James O. Reavis
1911-1914



Andrew W. Blackwood
1914-1921



Robert A. Lapsley
1922-1930



James W. Jackson
1931-1958



*John McSween
1959



J. Sherrard Rice
1959-1966



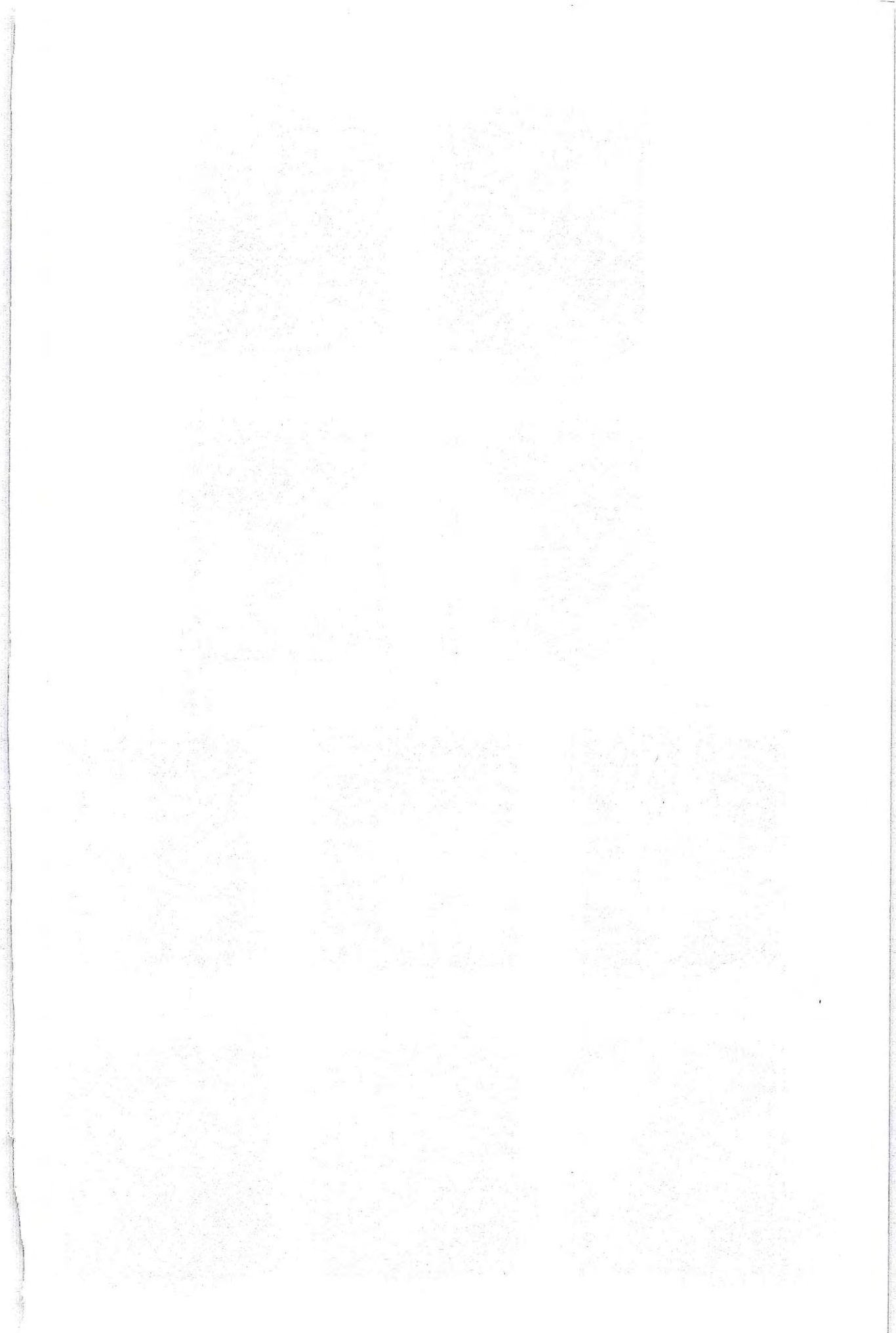
Hugh W. McClure, III
1967-1982



Warren M. Wardlaw
Interim pastor
1982-1983



Glen C. Knecht
1983-



APPENDIX B

ELDERS OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH with ordination date or date installed at First Presbyterian Church (based on church records). Two honorary categories—*Elder for Life* (used between 1947 and 1957) and *Elder Emeritus* (first given in 1969)—are indicated by an asterisk and date. The three ruling elders (ordained elsewhere) who did not serve on the session of First Presbyterian Church, but who were elected elders emeriti, were David M. Pennington (1984), David W. Robinson (1990), and Thomas Waites (1991).

Thomas Lindsay (1810)
John Murphy (1810)
Zebulon Rudolph (1810)
Thomas Taylor (1810)
V. D. V. Jamison (1820)
William Law (1820)
Edward D. Smith (1820)
Robert Mills (1824)
Thomas Wells (1824)
James Young (1824)
J. M. Beckett (1831)
James Ewart (1831)
G. T. Snowden (1831)
John Taylor (1831)
Sidney Crane (1835)
Andrew Crawford (1835)

James Martin (1835)
R. T. Brumby (1852)
Levi Hawley (1853)
A. L. Kline (1853)
John S. Scott (1853)
J. McF. Gaston (1856)
Henry Muller (1856)
Fitz William McMaster (1856)
W. J. Duffie (1869)
Eben Stenhouse (1869)
Washington A. Clark (1878)
William Sloane (1878)
D. F. Bradley (1887)
D. R. Flenniken (1887)
George Howe, Jr. (1887)
David B. Johnson (1887)

Douglas McKay (1887)
 D. Latham Bryan (1898)
 J. S. Muller (1898)
 T. S. Bryan (1903)
 R. A. Lancaster (1903)
 A. C. Moore (1903)
 J. S. Verner (1903)
 G. A. Wauchope (1903)
 L. T. Wilds (1903)
 T. S. Kinkead (1913)
 R. L. Moore (1913)
 W. H. Townsend (1913)
 F. F. Whilden (1913)
 W. S. Currell (1915)
 Charles J. Cate (1915)
 B. M. English (1915)
 J. T. Gray (1915)
 W. D. Love (1915)
 Fitz Hugh McMaster (1915)
 David Cardwell (1919)
 S. B. McMaster (1919)
 John W. Simpson (1919)
 J. A. Stoddard (1919)
 Cyrus H. Baldwin (1922)
 Hayward T. Baylis (1922)
 T. Hal Dick (1922)
 William D. Melton (1922)
 A. C. Squier (1922)
 Wyatt A. Taylor (1922)
 John M. Bateman (1925)
 L. W. Jarman (1925)
 S. L. Miller, Sr. (1925)
 Thornwell Muller (1925)
 B. L. Parkinson (1925)
 C. Fred Williams (1925)
 E. S. Cardwell (1929)
 Percival Jamieson (1929) *
 (1957)
 George McCutcheon (1929)
 W. S. Neil (1929)
 C. F. Piper (1929) * (1950)
 John T. Sloane (1929)
 Reed Smith (1929)
 James S. Verner (1929)
 J. W. Wassum (1929)
 Robert G. Bell (1933)

E. L. Craig (1933)
 E. P. Davis (1933)
 J. H. Eleazar (1933)
 Lee A. Lorick (1933)
 P. V. Mikell (1933)
 J. M. Ray (1933)
 H. M. Shannon (1933) * (1949)
 E. T. Burdell, Sr. (1934)
 W. F. Cleveland (1934)
 W. B. Guy (1934)
 F. M. Hair (1934)
 David R. Hopkins (1934)
 Henry S. Johnson (1934)
 James A. Neal (1934)
 Marion Rich (1934) * (1948)
 C. P. Robinson (1934)
 W. L. Williamson (1934)
 E. L. Green (1936) * (1947)
 J. C. Lott (1936)
 D. S. Matheson (1936)
 U. R. Updike (1936)
 Thomas M. Watts (1936)
 B. C. Church (1937)
 S. L. Latimer, Sr. (1938)
 Walter J. Bristow (1939) * (1976)
 E. O. DePass (1939)
 William Peter Beckman (1940)
 William C. Morton (1940)
 Neill W. Macaulay (1940) * (1980)
 Frank P. McGowan (1940)
 James M. Smith (1940)
 Joel E. Elcan (1941) * (1952)
 Charles B. Elliott (1941) * (1955)
 S. R. Spencer (1941)
 M. E. Tatem (1941)
 R. B. Cunningham, Jr. (1942)
 Harold M. DeLorme (1942)
 Job H. Little (1943) * (1976)
 Clarke W. McCants, Sr. (1943)
 Eugene H. Salmon (1943)
 W. P. Baldwin (1944)
 Fred H. Gantt (1944)
 David M. Bankhead (1945)
 Nicholas Peay (1945) * (1949)
 L. Welford Pollard (1945) * (1972)
 Charles C. Foster (1946) * (1990)

- Joe H. Miller (1946)
Jesse S. Agnew (1947)
C. Mays Earle (1947) * (1970)
Charles F. Elliott (1947)
Lucius B. Lee (1947)
Robert B. Cunningham, Sr. (1948)
Fred Howard Parker (1948) *
(1979)
John C. B. Smith (1948) * (1984)
Roy G. Smarr (1948)
J. Theron Woodward (1948)
E. Dex Goodwin (1949)
Sam L. Latimer, Jr. (1949)
Colin C. Murchison (1949)
W. Frank Taylor (1949) * (1971)
William L. Heinz (1950)
Sam A. McPherson (1950)
J. Lester Perkins (1950)
Charles J. Cate, Jr. (1951) * (1982)
Walter T. Love (1951)
J. M. Harris Fitzgerald (1952) *
(1972)
William D. Fulton (1952)
Boyd B. Johnson (1952)
Guy F. Lipscomb, Sr. (1952)
George E. Prince (1952)
Wingate Waring (1952)
Otis W. Livingstone (1953) * (1973)
Thomas D. Temple (1953)
James C. Dozier (1953) * (1969)
Thomas B. Whaley (1953) * (1991)
William T. Linton (1953)
Guy F. Lipscomb, Jr. (1953)
John D. MacRae (1953)
William N. Cork (1954)
Walter G. Edwards, Sr. (1954) *
(1982)
Arthur B. Everett (1954) * (1972)
Edward C. Salley (1954) * (1984)
T. Clyde Whetsell (1954)
T. Smyth Flinn (1955)
Robert J. McCarley, Jr. (1955) *
(1990)
F. DeVere Smith (1955) *
(posthumously 1990)
Lester H. Bohm (1956)
James N. Caldwell (1956)
J. F. Diggs (1956)
Karl M. Lippert (1956) * (1984)
John Gregg McMaster (1956)
Lewis F. Robinson (1956)
Jack M. Scoville (1956)
Robert L. Sumwalt (1957)
John C. Heslep (1958)
Manly E. Hutchinson (1958) *
(1977)
S. C. McMeekin (1958)
E. S. Cardwell, Jr. (1959)
Henry C. Garrett (1959)
Alex. D. Graham (1959)
Theodore J. Ledeen (1959)
Patrick C. Smith (1959) * (1992)
Richard C. Strachan (1961)
Eddie M. Williams, Jr. (1961)
Richard B. Wilson (1961)
Samuel Clarke, Sr. (1962) * (1990)
John I. Rice (1962) * (1971)
D. C. Brooks (1963)
C. M. Gittinger (1963)
John H. Laffitte (1964)
Clarke W. McCants, Jr. (1964)
John Thompson (1964)
Frank G. Vance (1964) * (1969)
Robert C. Aiken (1965)
Robert C. Walker (1965)
James N. Caldwell, Jr. (1967)
Wilton B. Fowler (1967)
Jack S. Graybill (1967)
James McIntosh (1967)
William E. Gore (1968)
John H. Haynes, Sr. (1968)
M. Tucker Laffitte, Jr. (1968)
Frank S. Smith, Sr. (1968)
Claude M. Walker (1968) * (1993)
John C. Floyd, Sr. (1968)
Rollin E. Godfrey (1969)
Thomas E. McCutchen (1969)
Roy A. Little, Jr. (1970)
O. P. Newman (1970)
O. Wilson Farrell (1970)
Kermit H. Potts (1971)
Daniel W. Hollis (1971)

- Fred H. Gantt, Jr. (1972)
 F. Lockhart Mays (1972)
 Joseph H. Miller (1972)
 John S. Walker (1972)
 William F. Blackburn (1973)
 John H. Doudoukjian (1973)
 H. Bronson Smith (1973)
 Charles H. Cate (1974)
 John M. Cooper, Jr. (1974)
 Joseph M. Cunningham, Jr. (1974)
 George M. Floyd (1974)
 Hugh McMaster Chapman (1975)
 Alexander Grant Donald (1975)
 Edward O. Hunter, Jr. (1975)
 John Samuel Herin (1975)
 Carter Lee Redd, Jr. (1975)
 Harold C. Reynolds (1975)
 W. Patrick Dorn, Jr. (1976)
 Walker L. Hudson (1976)
 John R. McPherson (1976)
 J. Thomas Smith (1976)
 William C. James, Jr. (1977)
 G. Raymond McElveen, Jr. (1977)
 E. Chandler McNair (1977)
 Charles A. Jones (1977)
 J. Walker Clarke (1978)
 John H. Haynes, Jr. (1978)
 Robert W. Horne, Sr. (1978)
 Robert L. Sumwalt, Jr. (1978)
 Barton K. Yount III (1978)
 Joseph W. Taber, Jr. (1978)
 Kaufman Bell (1979) * (1991)
 Clarence H. Bistline (1979) *
 (1990)
 Charles A. Jennings (1979)
 Harris Barnes, Jr. (1980)
 Charles E. Carpenter, Jr. (1980)
 Karmy Murdichian (1980) * (1991)
 Philip Rollinson (1980)
 James H. Turner (1980)
 Clarence D. Bellamy (1980)
 Wilson W. Farrell (1981)
 William Randolph Folks, Jr. (1981)
 T. Mack Crawford (1981)
 Henry D. Foster, Jr. (1982)
 Gordon S. Query (1982)
 Wallace L. Reed (1982)
 Jerry C. Whitley (1983)
 John C. Floyd, Jr. (1984)
 Donald L. McLaurin (1984)
 Henry C. Nelson, Jr. (1984)
 William B. Curtiss (1985)
 R. Davis Howser (1985)
 Robert E. McElveen II (1985)
 Walter G. Edwards, Jr. (1985)
 S. Calhoun McMeekin, Jr. (1985)
 Curtis C. Jones (1985)
 David E. Mynatt (1986)
 J. Key Powell (1986)
 David E. Tribble (1986)
 John O. Bumgardner (1986)
 Richard deMontmollin (1986)
 Zeke H. Montgomery (1986)
 A. Eugene Groves (1987)
 Harry G. Salley (1987)
 O. Jack Kaneft, Jr. (1987)
 Arthur D. Mosher (1988)
 Charlton E. Law (1988)
 Otis Jack Matthews (1988)
 Pride G. Ratterree (1988)
 William E. DeLoache, Jr. (1989)
 Leif E. Maseng (1989)
 Marion E. Burns (1990)
 James M. Kirby (1990)
 Leroy L. Phaup (1990)
 Robert L. Dargan II (1991)
 William B. DePass, Jr. (1991)
 Kenneth B. Wingate (1991)
 Stephen G. Deller (1991)
 Roy R. Schneider (1991)
 Eric W. Ruschky (1992)
 William O. Sweeny III (1992)
 James R. Augustine (1992)
 Robert H. Philp, Jr. (1992)
 Denis Yeo (1992)
 B. Palmer McArthur (1993)

APPENDIX C



WOMEN OF THE CHURCH PRESIDENTS from 1935-1982

Mrs. David Hopkins
Mrs. W. C. Abel
Mrs. L. W. Pollard
Mrs. L. M. Milling
Mrs. Clyde S. Mattison
Mrs. J. M. Ray
Mrs. F. DeVere Smith
Mrs. L. W. Pollard
Mrs. S. B. McMaster
Mrs. Austin Butler
Mrs. Bruce C. Baker
Mrs. Boyd B. Johnson
Mrs. W. P. Backman
Mrs. Frank W. Smith

Mrs. J. M. H. Fitzgerald
Mrs. Dixon B. Brown
Mrs. C. H. Bistline
Mrs. E. C. Salley
Mrs. Samuel Clarke, Sr.
Mrs. R. Patten Watson
Mrs. Richard B. Wilson
Mrs. Jack Scoville
Mrs. Eddie M. Williams
Mrs. M. Tucker Laffitte, Jr.
Mrs. W. Powers McElveen
Mrs. Charles A. Jones
Mrs. Harris Barnes, Jr.

WOMEN OF THE CHURCH PRESIDENTS (ARP) from 1982-1995

Mrs. F. Lockhart Mays (Miriam)
Mrs. Raymond Spagnolo (Marian)
Mrs. John S. Walker (Dolores)
Mrs. Fred H. Gantt, Jr. (Henrietta)
Mrs. Ann R. McCain
Mrs. Henry S. Hastings (Phyllis)
Mrs. George D. Haimbaugh, Jr. (Kay)

Mrs. G. Raymond McElveen, Jr. (Harriet)
Mrs. Henry D. Foster (Marshall)
Mrs. Robert R. Taylor (Beverly)
Mrs. Hardwick Stuart, Jr. (Rose)
Mrs. William B. Wells (Charlene)
Mrs. James M. Kirby (Charlotte)
Mrs. Gordon S. Query (Leona)

APPENDIX D

WOMEN OF THE CHURCH HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS (with date of election)

Miss Genevieve Marchant (1940)	Mrs. L. W. Pollard (1970)
Mrs. James W. Jackson (1942)	Mrs. M. B. Robinson (1970)
Mrs. W. L. Dunovant (1947)	Mrs. Raymond C. Lynch (1971)
Mrs. C. J. Hill (1948)	Mrs. William L. Heins (1972)
Mrs. Charles Wright (1952)	Miss Elise Heriott (1972)
Mrs. Leslie H. Patterson (1957)	Mrs. Elliott E. Dodson (1973)
Mrs. A. B. Everett (1959)	Mrs. Boyd B. Johnson (1973)
Miss Elizabeth English (1959)	Mrs. Neill W. Macaulay (1974)
Mrs. James Montgomery (1960)	Mrs. S. R. Spencer (1975)
Mrs. F. S. Brockman (1960)	Mrs. C. Wilmot Brown (1975)
Miss Susan McD. Currell (1960)	Mrs. Samuel Clarke, Sr. (1976)
Mrs. Virginia McM. Foard (1960)	Mrs. Joseph A. Neal (1976)
Mrs. H. W. McCreight (1960)	Mrs. F. DeVere Smith (1976)
Mrs. Fred Gantt (1962)	Mrs. C. Mays Earle (1977)
Mrs. Arthur Martin (1962)	Mrs. T. R. Bethune (1978)
Mrs. Hayward Baylis (1966)	Mrs. Fred H. Parker (1978)
Mrs. E. T. Burdell (1966)	Mrs. Jack Scoville (1978)
Mrs. G. F. Lipscomb, Sr. (1966)	Mrs. Wm. F. Blackburn (1979)
Mrs. John C. Lott (1967)	Miss S. Frances Taber (1979)
Mrs. T. Smyth Flinn (1968)	Miss Ella Sloan Wyman (1979)
Mrs. Ralph K. Foster (1968)	Mrs. E. O. Hunter (1980)
Mrs. Clarke W. McCants (1968)	Mrs. Charles A. Jones (1980)

Mrs. C. V. Salmond (1980)
Miss Clara Albergotti (1981)
Mrs. Arthur Laird (1981)
Mrs. E. M. Schlaefer (1981)
Mrs. Job H. Little (1981)
Mrs. E. C. Salley (1982)
Mrs. Patrick C. Smith (1982)
Mrs. Clarence Bistline (1983)
Mrs. Robert McCarley (1983)
Mrs. Andrew Norgan (1983)
Mrs. Herbert Racoff (1983)
Mrs. Harris Barnes (1984)
Mrs. M. E. Hutchinson (1984)
Mrs. Robert C. Walker (1984)
Mrs. H. S. Hastings (1985)
Mr. Robert W. Horne, Sr. (1985)
Mrs. F. M. Joye (1985)
Mrs. S. C. McMeekin (1985)
Mrs. Warren M. Wardlaw (1986)
Mrs. R. Patten Watson, Jr. (1986)
Mrs. Charles C. Foster (1987)
Mrs. M. Tucker Laffitte, Jr. (1987)
Mrs. W. Powers McElveen (1987)

Mrs. John S. Walker (1987)
Miss Elinor F. Fisher (1988)
Mrs. Fred Hay Gantt (1988)
Mrs. J. Smith Harrison (1988)
Mrs. Raymond Spagnola (1988)
Mrs. Lockhart Mays (1989)
Miss Sadie Snowden (1989)
Mrs. Claude Moore Walker (1989)
Mrs. Glen E. Craig (1990)
Mrs. Walter G. Edwards, Jr. (1990)
Mrs. George Dow Haimbaugh
(1990)
Mrs. Donald Hoshaw (1990)
Mrs. Samuel Lever (1990)
Mrs. Gordon S. Query (1991)
Mrs. Marion W. Dantzler (1992)
Mrs. Ann R. McCain (1992)
Mrs. Dave M. Pennington (1992)
Mrs. Harold W. Von Nessen (1992)
Mrs. O. L. Ussery (1993)
Mrs. John F. Hooker (1993)
Mrs. William H. Mapp, Jr. (1993)
Mrs. W. Randolph Folks, Jr. (1993)

APPENDIX E

PETITION FOR INCORPORATION (June 1813)

To the Honorable
President of the Senate of the State
of South Carolina

The humble petition of the subscribers inhabiting Columbia sheweth,

That they have formed themselves into a Congregation for the purpose of celebrating the regular solemn & public worship of Almighty God, according to the Presbyterian form of service & discipline. And they find it necessary to obtain an act of Incorporation to enable them to give full effect to their Intentions.

They therefore pray that they may be Incorporated as a religious society by the name & title of "the first Presbyterian Church in the Town of Columbia," with the usual privileges of such corporations.

John Hooker
Ainsley Hall
B. R. Montgomery
Robert Haile
James Davis
G. Chapman
H. T. McGowan
William F. DeSaussure
J. Richardson
Thomas Taylor, Jr.

Thomas Taylor, Sr.
Henry Wm. DeSaussure
James Douglas
Henry Dana Ward
John Murphy
Thomas Lindsay
Abram Nott
Ben Haile
David Coulter
Zebulon Rudolph

APPENDIX F

CORPORATION CHARTER GRANTED BY THE SOUTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY (December 18, 1813)

. . . And be it enacted by the authority aforesaid that the persons who have formed themselves into a congregation for the purpose of Religious worship according to the Presbyterian service and discipline in the town of Columbia and all those who may hereafter regularly become members of that congregation shall be and they are hereby declared to be a body corporate indeed and in law by the name and style of the first Presbyterian Church in the Town of Columbia. And be it enacted by the authority aforesaid that the balance of monies arising from the sale of two acres of land originally destined as sites for places of public worship but lately disposed of for the purpose of purchasing land in a situation better adapted for a public burial ground after completing the payments on said purchase shall be equally divided between the following four named religious societies viz, the Protestant Episcopal Church, the Presbyterian, Baptist & Methodist congregations of the Town of Columbia for the benefit and use of the said named congregations forever. . . . And be it enacted by the authority aforesaid that the lots no. thirty seven, thirty eight, thirty nine and forty being the one half of the old burying ground in the town of Columbia be appraised by Col. Thomas Taylor,

Judge Gaillard, and Judge DeSaussure and as soon as such appraisement shall be made the Intendant and Wardens of the said Town are authorized and are hereby required to convey the said lots to the first Presbyterian Church in the Town of Columbia and to the Protestant Episcopal Church in said Town and their successors in office forever for the purpose of erecting churches thereon and the said appraisors aforesaid are hereby required to divide the said lots between the said churches in equal proportions in such manner as in their opinion will be most advantageous to the said churches for the purposes aforesaid. Provided nevertheless and it is hereby enacted that before the title shall be executed so as aforesaid the said first Presbyterian Church and the said Protestant Episcopal Church shall pay to the Methodist and Baptist Churches established in the said town the one half of the sum to which said lots shall be appraised as aforesaid to be equally divided between them for the purpose of enabling them to finish and compleat their said Churches.

In the Senate House the eighteenth
day of December in the year of our
Lord one thousand eight hundred
and thirteen and in the thirty
eighth year of the American Inde-
pendence.

Savage Smith President of the
Senate

John Geddes Speaker of the House
of Representatives

APPENDIX G

ARTICLES OF FAITH AND THE COVENANT OF THE (FIRST) PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, COLUMBIA, S. C. (1850)

That the world may know what we as Christians profess to believe and engage to do, I read for your public assent and approbation the following summary of our faith and covenant engagement:

1. We believe that there is one living and true God, the Creator, Preserver and Governor of this and all worlds; and that this God subsists in a wonderful, mysterious, incomprehensible manner, in three persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who are equal in all perfection and but one God.

2. We believe the Sacred Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the inspired Word of God and the only infallible rule of faith and practice.

3. We approve of the Confession of Faith, of the Larger and Shorter Catechisms and of the discipline of the Presbyterian church as adopted and ratified by the church in these United States, and we adopt these standards as the rule of our faith and practice, so far as they are consistent with the Word of God.

4. In a particular manner, we believe that God made man upright, but that he, by sin, broke covenant with God, and thus brought him-

self and all his posterity under the awful curse of God into a state of total corruption and infinite guilt and misery.

5. We believe that God in his boundless mercy, out of his mere good pleasure, hath sent his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, in union with our nature, into our world to redeem and save sinners. That this Saviour, by his obedience, sufferings and death, as made under the law, hath made an ample atonement for sin, and wrought out a perfect righteousness: so that whosoever believeth on him is now perfectly justified, shall be more and more sanctified, and will persevere in faith and holiness, being kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

6. We believe that all mankind in their native fallen sinful state are so depraved and such determined enemies to God, that they never will repent and seek the salvation of the Gospel, until their hearts are renewed by the Holy Spirit.

7. We believe that it is the office and work of God, the Holy Spirit, to apply the redemption of Jesus to the souls of the perishing children of men.

8. We believe that the Holy Law of God is still the rule of the Christian's duty to God and to his neighbour and to himself.

9. We believe that at the end of the world there will be a resurrection of all the bodies of the human race, both of the righteous and the wicked. That there will also be a day of judgment when Christ the Judge will sentence the wicked to eternal punishment and receive the righteous to the full enjoyment of life eternal.

Do you thus believe?

THE COVENANT

You do now in the presence of God the searcher of hearts, and before the church and the world, profess to dedicate yourself to the Lord Jehovah and to choose him, so far as you know your own heart, to be your God, your Saviour and Sanctifier—renouncing all the ways of sin and choosing the ways of God as your greatest happiness and privilege and desiring to love and serve him forever. You engage in dependence on the grace of God to lead a holy life, to cultivate the Spirit of Christ, to attend faithfully upon all the institutions and ordinances of God's House, as administered here, and to submit to the discipline of the church so long as you shall remain in the place and continue to be of the number of its members—and should you leave us in the course of Divine Providence, it will be your duty to ask for, as it will be ours to give, a certificate of membership and regular dis-

mission, for henceforward you belong to the Lord, and cannot any more go back to the world.

You also promise to study the peace and purity of the church and to treat all its members with all that Christian charity and kindness which are so becoming the disciples of Jesus Christ, ever remembering that "of Him the whole family in Heaven and Earth are named."

Thus you engage in the strength of your Lord and Saviour. You do now profess your cordial approbation of Infant Baptism and, while you feel grateful to your parents for their dedication of you to God by baptism in your infancy, you do now, as adult believers, take your baptismal engagements upon yourself; and those of you who have not been baptized in infancy now express your desire to be baptized in this faith which you have thus publicly professed.

In consequence of this your public profession and covenant, I do in the name and by the authority of the Head of the Church receive you into the number and give you a right to all the privileges of its visible members.

APPENDIX H

SUMMARY OF PRINCIPLES ON RECEIVING APPLICANTS INTO COMMUNICANT CHURCH MEMBERSHIP ADOPTED BY THE SESSION (1990)

1. The ways in which people are related to the church (as non-members, communicant members, or non-communicant members) are to reflect the ways in which people are related to God (as lost, saved, or as children of believers who have yet to profess faith).
2. Admission to communicant church membership is to reflect that a person has a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.
3. A saving relationship to Jesus Christ involves three basic elements: (a) a knowledge of one's spiritual need; (b) personal faith in Jesus Christ; and (c) a commitment to follow Jesus Christ in obedience.
4. Elders have the responsibility under Christ to act in His name in receiving applicants into communicant church membership.
5. Elders must exercise this responsibility according to the teaching of the Scriptures.
6. Elders must admit to communicant church membership only those who, according to the criteria mentioned in (3) above, have a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.
7. To make such a determination about a person requires elders to have personal knowledge of an applicant's faith and commitment.
8. The concurrence of two or more elders should be required before receiving applicants into communicant membership.

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