

^{forms}
 to warrant and defend all and singular the title to the above mentioned premises unto the said J. F. Foster his heirs and assigns against any person or persons whatsoever lawfully claiming or to claim the same or any part thereof. The Taxes for the year 1888 are to be paid by J. F. Foster on testimony whereof I have set my hand this the first day of December A.D. 1888.

Charles H. Jewell

By Paul Barner att in fact

State of Colorado } Before me a Notary Public in and for
 County of Arapahoe } the County and State aforesaid personally
 appeared this 7th day of December A.D. 1888 Paul Barner
 who is known to me to be the same person who executed the
 within instrument in writing and acknowledged that he executed
 the same as attorney in fact for Charles H. Jewell and that said
 execution is his free act and deed for the purposes therein
 mentioned witness my hand and notarial seal

Allan H. Cullard

My Commission expires Oct 22nd '91

Notary Public

Received and filed for record in my office on the 29th day of
 June 1892 at 9 o'clock AM and duly recorded on the 29th
 day of June 1892 at 6 o'clock PM

J. W. Nechamie County Clerk
 Gregg County Texas

Trustee Whereas on the 13th day of August 1875 The Texas & Pacific Railway
 Co. Company donated to the Christian Church of Langston Texas Lot No 15
 in Block No 12 situated in the said town of Langston and did make
 execute and deliver a deed of Conveyance to Geo D. Harlow Benjamin
 Phillips W. Hallaway & Hallaway J. S. Young Trustees and to their Successors
 in office in trust for said Church and whereas the said Deed has been
 lost or mislaid and cannot be found and the same has never been
 recorded in the records of the County in which said property is
 situated and request has been made of the said Commissioner
 of the said Railway Company by the present Trustees of the said Church
 to wit J. S. Poe J. R. Roe W. C. Hallaway that the said Company
 should execute a new deed for said property in lieu of the one lost or

List Chain
 Deeds
 F 323
 he Texas
 Pacific Ry
 Co
 Trustees
 of
 Christian
 Church
 Lot 15
 Bl 11

County

and to their successors in office in trust for the Christian Church of Langston Texas The land Lot and property described as follows to wit Lot number Fifteen (15) in Block Number Twelve (12) in the town of Langston Texas as laid down and described on the official map of said Town To have and hold the same together with all and singular the rights members privileges hereditaments and appurtenances to the same belonging or in anywise incident or appertaining in witness whereof the said The Texas and Pacific Railway Company has caused these presents to be signed by its Third Vice President and attested by its Secretary with the seal of the Corporation attached on the thirtieth day of April A.D. Eighteen hundred and ninety two (1892)

The Texas and Pacific Railway Company
 attest W. C. Sallee
 Secretary of the Texas and Pacific Railway Company
 By John A. Grant
 Third Vice President

The State of Texas Before me C. H. Beckwith a notary public in County of Gregg and for the County and State aforesaid on this day personally appeared John A. Grant, Third Vice President of the Texas and Pacific Railway Company known to me to be the said and to be the person whose name is subscribed to the foregoing instrument and acknowledged to me that he executed the same as such for the purposes and considerations therein expressed and acknowledged the same to be the act of said Corporation. Given under my hand and seal of office this fifth day of May A.D. 1892.

C. H. Beckwith Notary Public
 Dallas County Texas

Received and filed for record in my office on the 30th day of June 1892 at a o'clock a m and duly recorded on the 30th day of June 1892 at 10³⁰ o'clock a m

James Jones
 So says The State of Texas
 the State County of Harrison
 Know all men by these presents that
 James Jones of Harrison County and
 J. W. McAdams County Clerk
 Gregg County Texas

DEDICATION OF AN OFFICIAL TEXAS HISTORICAL MARKER FOR THE
FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH - LONGVIEW

Welcome and Invocation by Dr. Jim Elam. Pastor

Introduction of guests and Gregg County Historical
Commission by Dr. Black

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. As a continuation of the morning services, I would like to welcome you to the dedication of an Official Texas Historical Marker: The First Christian Church of Longview. This marker is authorized by the State of Texas and sponsored by the Texas Historical Commission and the Gregg County Historical Commission.

The County Historical Commission is an arm of the county government appointed by the county judge and the commissioners court. It is the responsibility of the Historical Commission to protect our county's historical heritage and to cooperate with and encourage others in any activity concerning the preservation of local history.

The histories of Texas and the Disciples of Christ are closely intertwined and it is only fitting that we, today, dedicate a memorial in the form of an Official Texas Historical Marker to this church which has contributed so much to the history of Longview and Gregg County.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS (If any)

Now Dr. Elam has some remarks for us...Dr. Elam.

TEXT OF MARKER

This church was organized in 1875 by 12 charter members. The Congregation met in a schoolhouse until a frame sanctuary was built later that year on land deeded to the church by the Texas and Pacific Railroad Company. James P. Holloway, a prominent area landowner, served as first pastor. A new church building, erected in 1906, was replaced with a brick sanctuary at this site in 1936. The church continues a long tradition of supporting numerous ministries by offering various worship and outreach programs and activities to the community.

Dedicate — Members of 15th C. Church
 Past, Present & Future

1st Christian founded in 1875

The First Christian Church dates back to 1875, just two years after Gregg County was organized and Longview had been selected as its county seat. The twelve charter members along with others who united with them built the first building with their own hands at the corner of East Methvin and North Green streets.

This small group met in "Mrs. Leak's School House" until land was acquired from the Texas and Pacific Railway Company and a little frame structure was built by the men of the church. James P. Holloway, one of the charter members, is remembered as the first pastor of the First Christian Church.

When growth dictated, in 1907, a larger building was constructed on the same location.

By 1934, it was known to the members that the facilities were not capable of handling the entire membership. On May 6, 1934, Ground Breaking Ceremonies were held for the new structure at a new location, the block between Sixth and Seventh Streets and Padon and Turner Streets. The block was donated by Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Hurst. In 1956, the present education wing was constructed.

The congregation has made a concerted effort to expand its outreach ministries by helping to initiate and support such community projects as the Food Box, Meals on Wheels, Habitat for Humanity, East Texas Council for Adult Literacy,

and the Longview Community Ministries information and Service Center. In 1986, First Christian Church purchased and renovated the building at 405 N. Fifth Street to house the Information and Service Center, the Food Box, and Shared Housing.

The congregation of 1,100 members gathers for worship each Sunday morning at 8:30 or 10:50. A delayed broadcast of each Sunday's sermon can be heard on KFRO 1370 AM at 9:30 a.m. Beginning at 9:30, there are church school classes for all ages. The Loyal Men's Bible Class is broadcast live over KFRO each Sunday morning.

First Christian seeks to meet the needs of all age groups. There are special programs for children, youth, adults, and single adults. That includes a highly successful Day Camp and Vacation Church School program for grades preschool through fifth with Junior High and Senior High students service as Counselors. D.M.A. (Don't Mention Age) group for senior adults meets monthly. First Christian has recently begun a program for single adults.

Dr. Jim B. Elam has completed his 13th year as minister. Staff members are: Sharman Johnson, director of children's activities and P.R.E.P. school; Elaine Hoppock, financial secretary; Kay Cook, secretary/receptionist; Gala Wink, director of music and organists; Cindy Grier, singles director; and Lyn Blount, youth coordinator.

APPLICATION FORM
OFFICIAL TEXAS HISTORICAL MARKER

This marker is for (title or subject): First Christian Church

Marker location (street address and city, or specific directions from nearest town on state highway map):
720 North Sixth, Longview, TX 75601

County: Gregg

Distance and direction of marker topic from marker site (if applicable):
Thirty feet east of Sixth St. near sidewalk on west lawn of church yard.

APPROVAL OF COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

The application and narrative history must be approved by the county historical commission before forwarding to the Texas Historical Commission.

Chair's Signature: Norman W. Black, D.D.S. Date: 11-10-94

The CHC chair automatically will receive all copies of correspondence regarding this marker project.

PERMISSION OF OWNER FOR MARKER PLACEMENT

Permission for placement of a marker must be obtained by the property owner. Please provide the name of a contact person if the owner is an institution, organization, or public entity. This section need not be completed if the marker is to be placed on right-of-way maintained by the State Department of Highways and Public Transportation.

Name: Dr. Jim Elam

Contact person(if applicable): _____

Mailing address: 720 North Sixth
Longview, TX 75601

Phone: 903-753-7611

X Owner's Signature: [Signature]

Do you wish to receive copies of all correspondence concerning this marker application? Yes No

To whom should the request for payment be addressed?

Name: Beth Dodson, 117 West Edgefield, Longview, TX 75602

(Provide contact person if payee is an institution, organization, or public entity.)

Mailing address: _____

Phone: _____

Does this person wish to receive copies of all other correspondence concerning this application? Yes No

Is there anyone else to whom all correspondence concerning this marker application should be addressed?

(One additional name and address only, please.)

Name: _____

Mailing address: _____

Phone: _____

SHIPPING INSTRUCTIONS

In order to facilitate delivery of the marker, neither post office box numbers nor rural route numbers can be accepted. If the marker is to be placed on the highway right-of-way, it will be shipped directly to the district highway engineer.

Name: ~~Beth Dedson~~

Dr. Norman Black

Street address: ~~117 West Edgfield~~

417 Mobberly Ave.

~~Longview, TX 75602~~

Longview, Texas 75602

Phone: 903-753-2940

-757-2261

TYPE AND SIZE OF MARKER DESIRED (please check one)

Subject Markers

This type of marker is solely educational in nature and conveys no legal restrictions to the property. Subject markers are appropriate for topics such as cemeteries, church congregations, businesses, persons, events, and institutions. These markers should not be attached to buildings. If the marker is to be attached to a surface other than the foundry-provided post, please provide the requested information in the space below.

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 16" x 12" grave marker (comes with mounting bar) | \$225 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 27" x 42" marker with post | \$750 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 27" x 42" marker without post (see below) | \$700 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18" x 28" marker with post | \$450 \$550 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18" x 28" marker without post (see below) | \$400 |

If not on post, to what (block of granite, gatepost, etc.) will the marker be attached? _____

Type of material? (wood, stone, etc.) _____

Recorded Texas Historic Landmark Markers

Markers conveying the Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL) designation are reserved solely for historic structures deemed worthy of preservation for their architectural integrity and historical associations. The RTHL designation does carry a measure of legal protection for the structure (see Marker Policies 13 through 18). The most commonly used marker for conveying this designation is the medallion and plate (also referred to as a building marker); however, the 18" x 28" or 27" x 42" size marker may be ordered for those who wish a greater amount of historical information to appear in the marker text. Careful attention should be paid so as not to damage historic building material if the marker is to be mounted directly onto the structure. The THC staff can provide alternate ideas for mounting upon request.

- | | |
|---|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medallion and 16" x 12" plate with post | \$350 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medallion and 16" x 12" plate without post (see below) | \$300 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 27" x 42" marker with post | \$750 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 27" x 42" marker without post (see below) | \$700 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18" x 28" marker with post | \$450 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18" x 28" marker without post (see below) | \$400 |

If not on post, to what (building, gate, etc.) will the marker be attached? _____

Type of material? (wood, stone, etc.) _____

Additional items, including paperweights, directional signs, and replacement parts for 1936 markers are available. Please contact the State Marker Program for a separate order form.

Before forwarding your material to the Texas Historical Commission, please check to make sure you've included the following items. Incomplete applications cannot be considered.

- ✓ completed application form signed by the county historical commission
- ✓ narrative history with footnotes and bibliography
- ✓ photograph of the proposed marker location
- ✓ map indicating marker location and other sites related to the marker topic
- ✓ historic photo of property and current photographs of all elevations (RTHL markers only)

Mail completed applications to:
State Marker Program, Texas Historical Commission
P.O. Box 12276, Austin, Texas 78711
512/463-6100



Gregg County Historical Commission

Norman W. Black, D.D.S.
Chairman

417 Mobberly Avenue
Longview, Texas 75602

Phone
903-757-2261

November 10, 1994

Cynthia J. Beeman, Administrator
Official Texas Historical Markers
Local History Program
Texas Historical Commission
P.O. Box 12276
Austin, Texas 78711

Re: Historical Marker application for the First Christian Church of
Longview, Texas.

Dear Cynthia:

Enclosed is the application for the aboved subject. The narrative was written by Beth Dodson, a member of the Gregg County Historical Commission and a descendent of O.H. Methvin, founder of Longview. I included a copy (incomplete) of a history of the church written in 1960.

Sincerely,

Norman

THE HISTORY OF THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
by Beth Holloway Dodson

The year was 1873, Gregg County was organized, Longview was chosen as County Seat and was becoming a flourishing little town. Utmost in the lives of these pioneers was the worship of God. Through their prayerful planning, the First Christian Church, in 1875, had its humble beginnings. It is known that there were twelve charter members but unfortunate that two of the names have been lost. The ten others are Mr. James P. Holloway, Mr. William C. Holloway, Mr. G.B. Harrison, Mrs. Sarah Holloway, Mr. B.F. Phillips, Mr. George Harrison, Mrs. George Harrison, Mrs. Eliza P. Hutchings, Mr. T.S.S. Young, Mrs. True.¹ The congregation first met and held services in a little building on North Green Street known as "Mrs. Leak's School House." Here they worshipped and gained² additional members.

As the numbers increased, the members felt the need to build their own church. So acting through their duly authorized trustees (James P. Holloway, G.D. Harrison, W.C. Holloway, Ben Phillips, T.S.S. Young), acquired by³ deed, as a gift from the Texas and Pacific Railway Company on August 13, 1875, a lot of land situated on the southeast corner of Methvin and Green Streets, Longview, Texas. The deed is duly recorded in the deed records of Gregg County stating Lot number 15 in Block number 12, of the

old Longview Town Plat as this property. This deed,
⁴
⁵
 regretfully, was not recorded until June 30, 1892.

THE FIRST CHURCH

The church house, a plain little frame structure built by the men of the church in 1875, had one large room with a high ceiling, a steep roof made of pine shingles, and a belfry. There were windows with small panes of glass on each side of the pulpit, and behind were two more panes, placed to lend more light to scripture. The rostrum was low, and the members sat on long, hand-made wooden benches.
⁶

James P. Holloway is remembered as the first pastor.
⁷
 He was a prominent citizen, land-owner and farmer. But the Lord's day found him in the pulpit of the church he helped to found.

John T. Foe-----	1876-1885
William C. Holloway-----	1887-1893
L. A. Dale-----	1894-1895
Brother Robertson-----	1896
R. H. Simmans-----	1897-1899
A. L. Conder-----	1900
A. D. Riall-----	1901
J. H. Fuller-----	1902-1903
J. A. Livsey-----	1904
J. N. Wooten-----	1905

THE SECOND CHURCH

At length the founding house became too small to house the increasing numbers. To meet this need, with vision for growth and a larger place of worship the leaders planned for spiritual growth. On the same location as the small frame building, this new structure, in 1906, took form. The building material consisted of cement stone blocks molded in a pattern that resembled natural stone. Of modified Gothic architectural design this eminent building had a commanding location near the business section of town. This house of worship had lovely stained glass windows, a baptistry basement. The entire sanctuary was burned in 1914, but was quickly restored.

Ministers serving during this time were:

J. A. Holton-----1907
 J. N. Wooten-----1908-1917
 H. C. Beckler-----1917-1918
 Clifford Weaver----- 1918
 Gerald Culberson-----1918-1919
 W. C. Jones-----1919-1923
 S. Clark Bateman-----1923-1924
 George Dickinson-----1924-1925
 James T. McKissick-----1925-1926
 William C. Jones-----1926-1928
 James Wright-----1928-1931

THE THIRD CHURCH

By 1932, the church had grown to seven hundred members

and the old church on Green Street was no longer adequate. The church property was sold and a new location was made on the present site of Sixth Street. Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Hurst sold the block of land to the church. The Ground Breaking Day was an inspirational program held May 6, 1934, with a special dedication to the charter members. The beautiful red brick building with stained glass windows, red tile roof, and vaulted ceiling with massive oak rafters was dedicated September 8, 1936. The architect was P. E. Zimmerman.

The First Christian Church of Longview has long been noted for its support of "self-help" groups. Few churches anywhere can equal the generous spirit of this church, the constant ministering to groups. Another outstanding characteristic which sets this church apart is their long continuing radio ministry of the Men's Bible Class from the KFRD Radio Station.

Ministers serving on this site were and are:

George Dickinson-----	1932-1936
J. E. Montgomery-----	1936-1942
W. D. Harmon-----	1942-1944
Dr. Sloan Gentry-----	1945-1960
Dr. William C. Howland, Jr.-----	1960-1965
Tommie M. Bouchard-----	1966-1975
Jim B. Elam-----	1976-Present

We are proud to honor the First Christian Church on its 120th anniversary with a Texas Historical Marker.

ENDNOTES

1. History of First Christian Church, 1875-1960, Longview, Texas, Longview: hereafter cited as History, p. 4.
2. "First Christian Church has deep roots in Longview," Longview News-Journal, March 29, 1991.
3. The History of Gregg County, Longview, Texas, Longview: University Supply and Equipment Company, 1957: hereafter cited as Gregg.
4. Deed to original church property from Texas and Pacific Railway Company recorded in Vol. L, pp. 509-510, of Deed of Records, County Clerk's Office, Gregg County, Texas.
5. Ibid.
6. "Rented Schoolhouse First Housed Congregation of Christian Church, Longview Morning Journal, May 3, 1970.
7. The Family Story of James and Sarah Elder Holloway, January, 23, 1962.
8. History, p. 43.
9. Gregg.
10. History, p. 43.
11. Deed to church property recorded in Vol. 185, p. 232, of Deed of Records, County Clerk's Office, Gregg County, Texas.
12. History, p. 17.
13. "First Christian Church has deep roots in Longview," Longview News-Journal, March 29, 1991.

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Deed Records of Gregg County, Vol. L, pp. 509-510.

Deed Records of Gregg County, Vol. 185, p. 232.

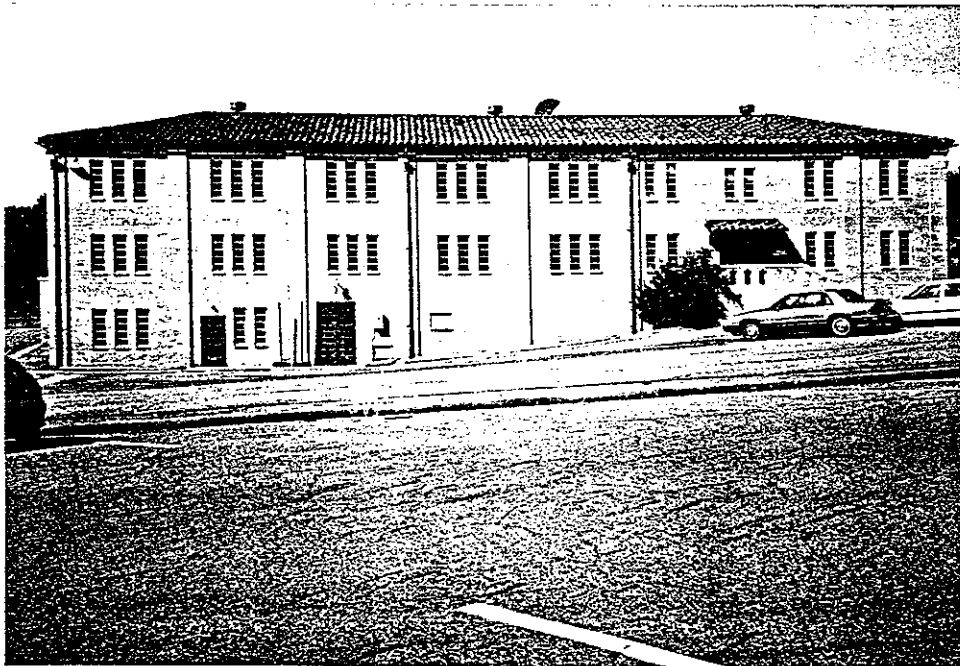
Gentry, Sloan, et. al., History of First Christian Church Longview, Texas 1875-1960, (Longview, Texas, First Christian Church, 1960), pp. 4, 17, 43.

Knox, Donna, et. al., "Rented Schoolhouse First Housed Congregation of Christian Church", Longview Morning Journal, May 3, 1970.

Longview Jaycees, The History of Gregg County, (Ft. Worth, University Supply and Equipment Company, 1957).

Swiley, George, The Family Story of James and Sarah Elder Holloway, unpub., Jan. 23, 1962.

_____, "First Christian Church has deep roots in Longview", Longview Morning Journal, March 29, 1991.



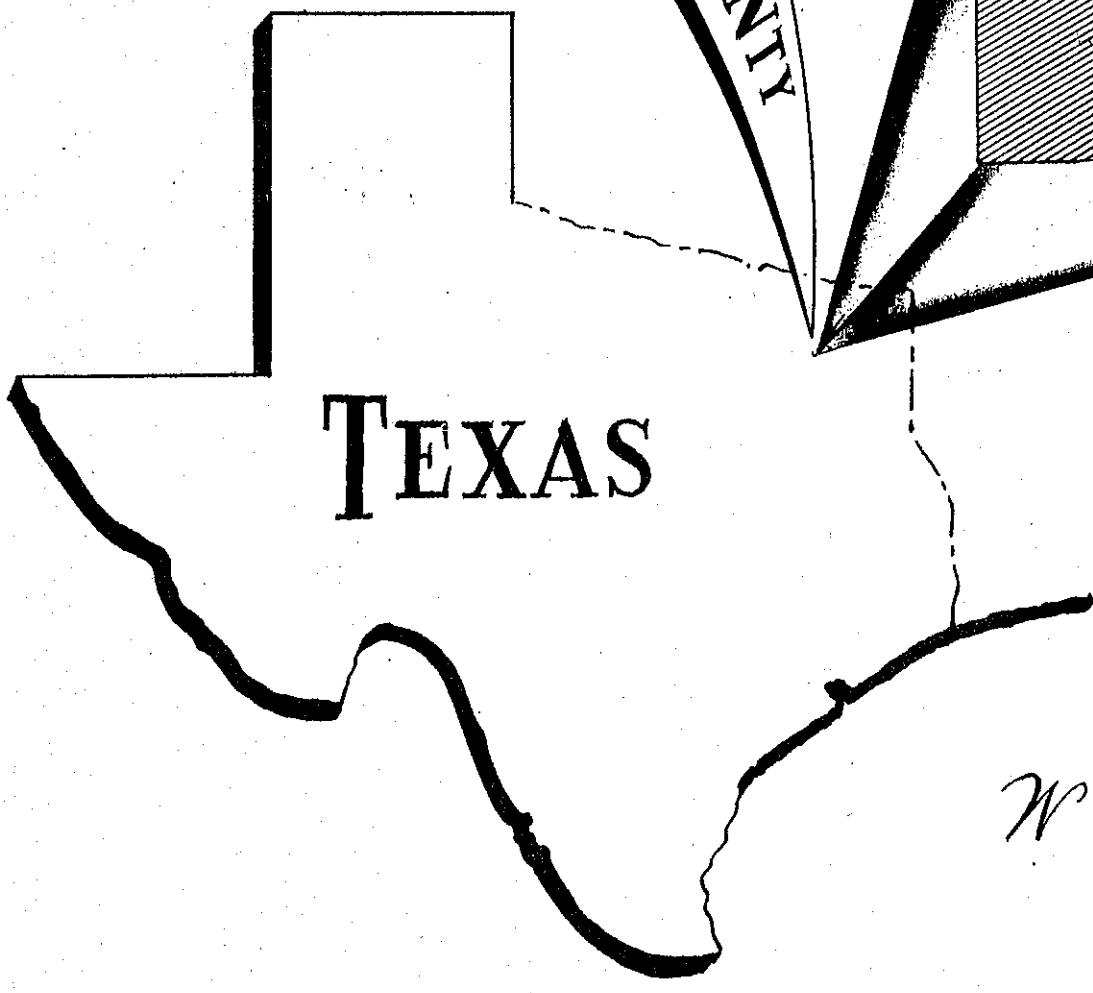
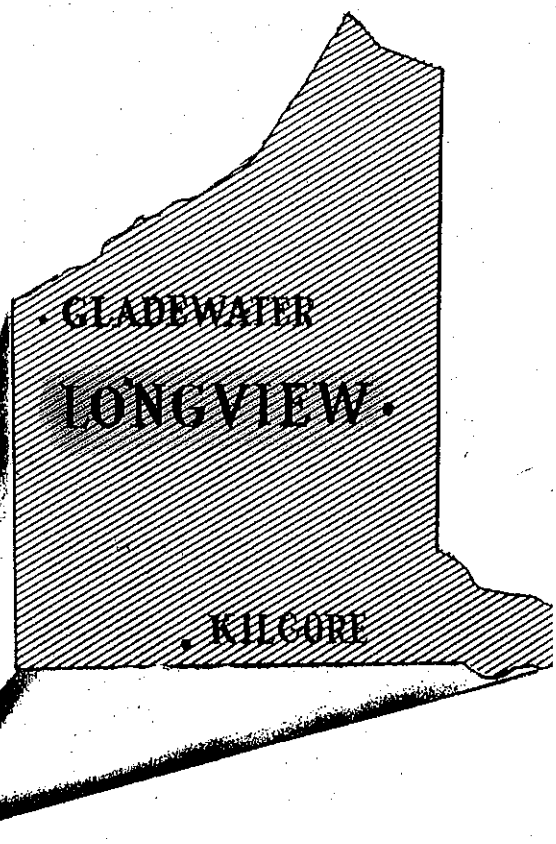
Present H.M. location

TURNER ST. EAST SIDE

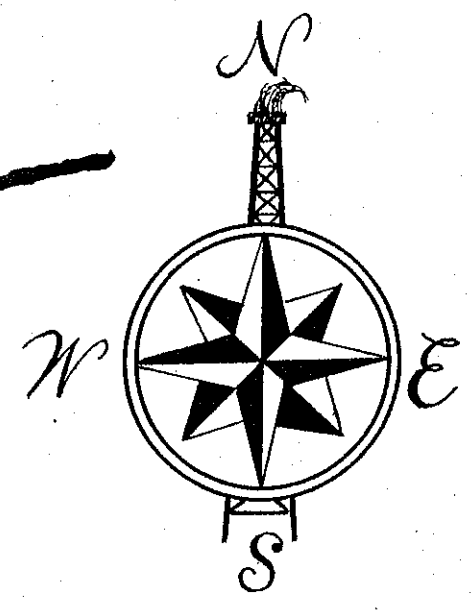
Red marks (for location of H.M.)



GREGG COUNTY



TEXAS



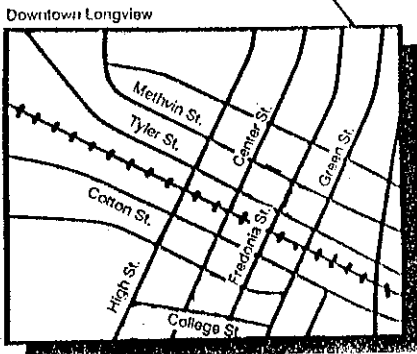
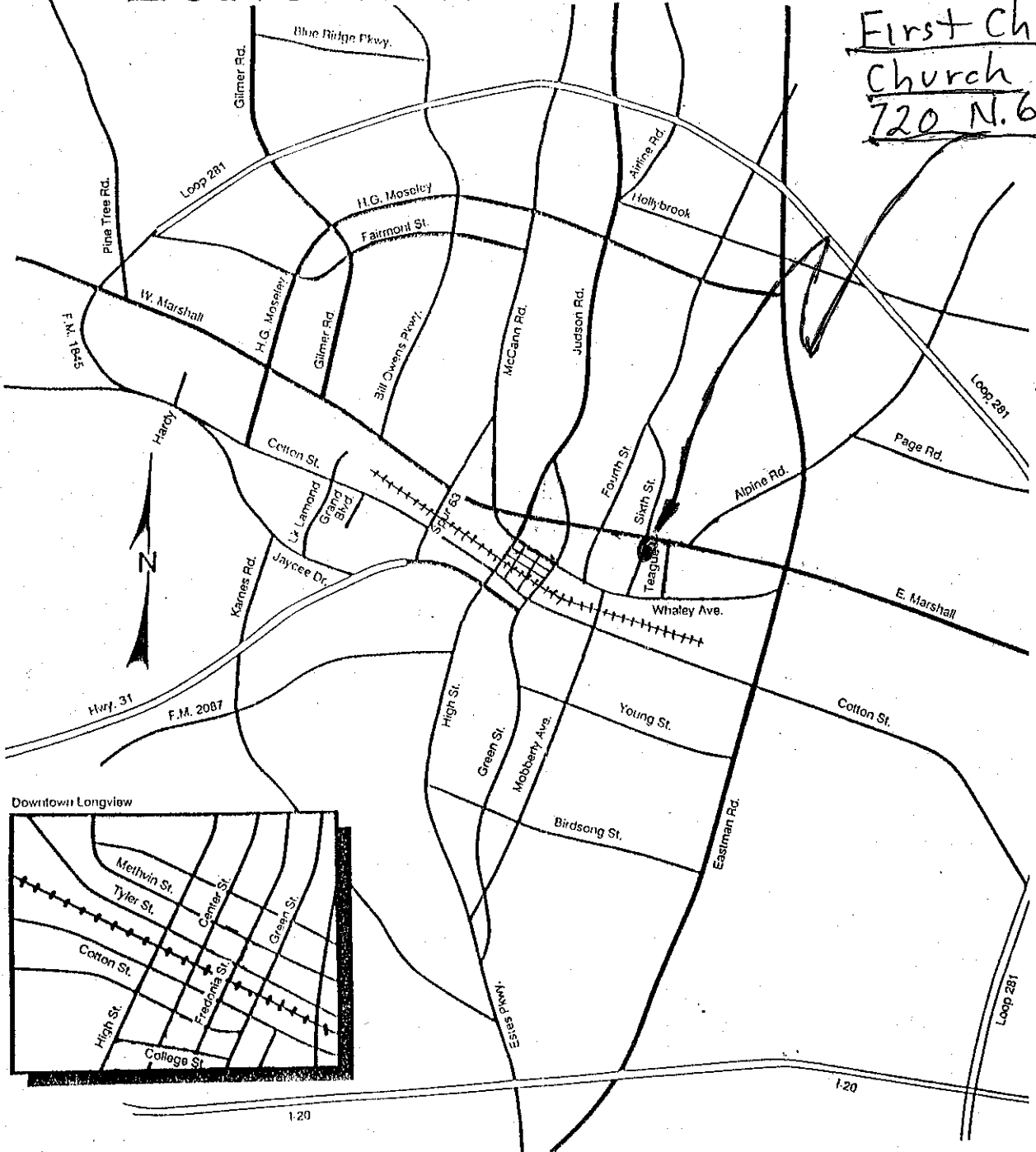
ST TEXAS OVERVIEW N

GREGG COUNTY



LONGVIEW CITY MAP

First Christian Church
720 N. 6TH St.



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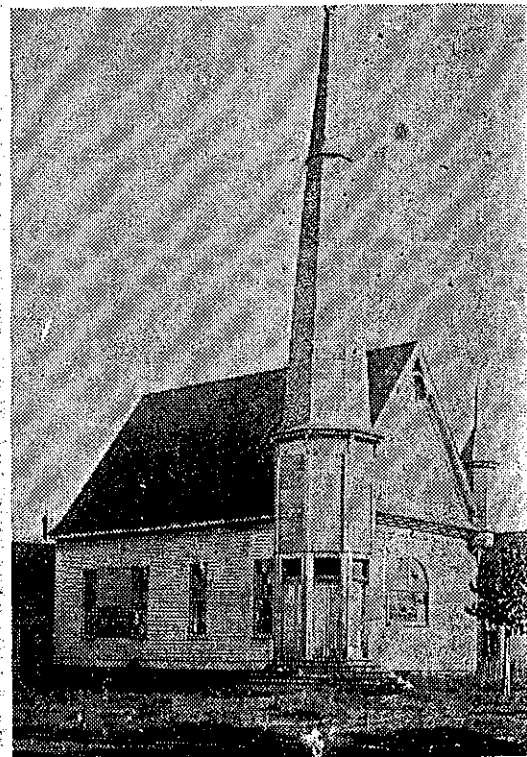
I-20

First Christian Church



The First Christian Church of Longview was founded in 1875 with twelve charter members. The ten known names of the original twelve were, G.P. Harrison, James P. Holloway, Mr. and Mrs. George Harrison, William C. Holloway, Mrs. Eliza Hutchings, B.F. Phillips, Mrs. Sarah Holloway, Mrs. True, and Mr. T.S.S. Young. This small group first met in Mrs. Leak's school house located in the present 200 block of North Green, and when the church role had swelled to twenty, resolved to build a meeting house.

Having been deeded land by the Texas and Pacific Railroad at the corner of North Green and Methvin, the men of the church cut and hauled wooden foundation blocks and lumber to construct one large high ceilinged room covered with a steep roof of pine shingles. The room contained a low rostrum, hand made dark stained benches, and a wooden stove to provide warmth. Summer heat was combatted with open windows and hand fans, while light was provided by oil lamps. A bell in the belfry called the faithful to worship as the church opened on August 18, 1875. The structure was later adorned with the circular steps and an imposing spire erected by a member, Mr. J.F. Pidgeon.



1875 building

As Longview grew, so did the church and the turn of century found new construction going up on the same site tractor, Mr. J.M. Mobberty, employed local labor, including church members.

Fire destroyed the interior of the church in 1914 but was completed and the church went forward to provide space for the ever increasing enrollment by adapting the parsonage for class rooms and building a new home for Still lacking sufficient space, it was necessary for some meet in the Bruner home across the street and for rev held at the old air dome theater.

Continuing to grow, the congregation constructed a wooden building adjoining the property. Known as the this building afforded space for classrooms and was used center for the members.

The church suffered economically as the general de the area in the late 1920's but prospered along with the community as a result of the discovery of the Eas fields in 1931.



1906 building

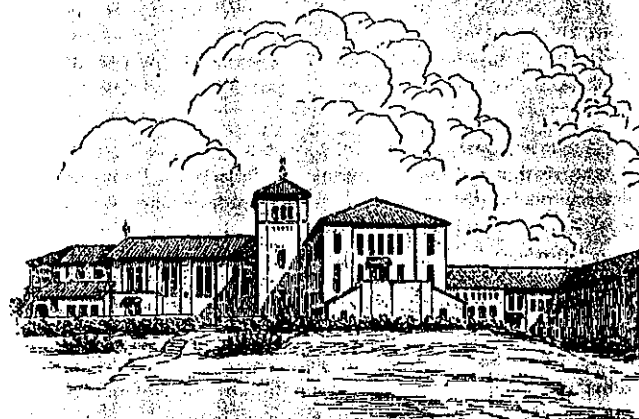
The gift of a block of land on North 6th St. by Judge and Mrs. Will C. Hurst made it possible for the church to construct its present building which was dedicated on September 8, 1935. The pulpit from the old church is in use in the Men's Bible Class room and one of the old pews may be seen in the second floor hall.

The past 35 years has seen much growth and many changes in the life and work of this congregation. First Christian church leaders have participated in the creation of other Disciples of Christ congregations in the area.

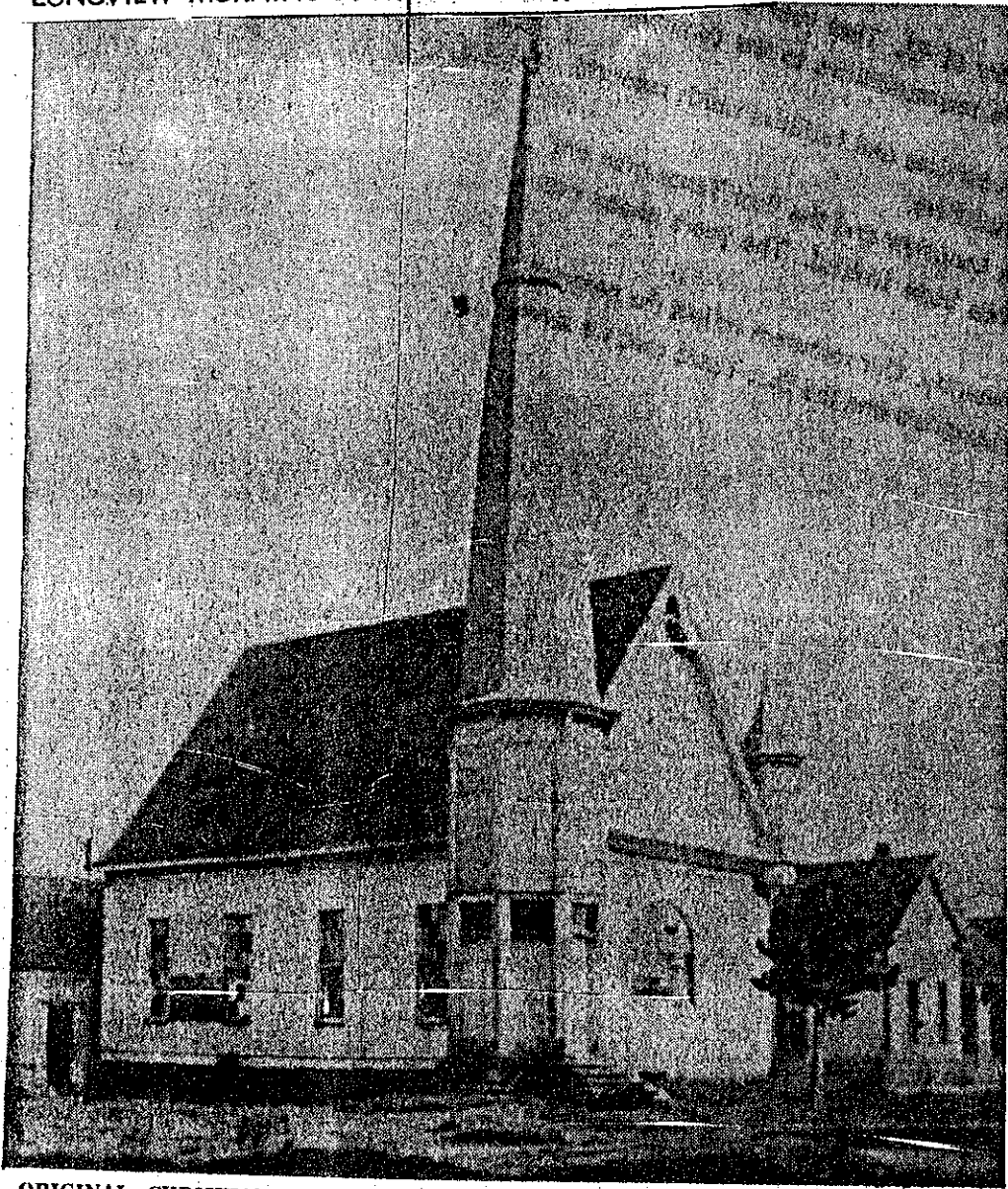
The physical properties of the church now include the sanctuary and educational buildings as well as two nearby parsonages and a large paved parking lot. Parked on this lot may be seen the mobile facility used in the Drive-In worship service introduced by the church in 1967. The service, held each Sunday between Easter and early fall at a local drive-in theater, provides a unique service to the community.

A nursery school for 2 - 5 year old children has been sponsored by the church since 1967. In the fall of 1970, the church will assume operation of the Play Therapy School, a school for the retarded child, ages 3 - 8, that has been held in the church for several years.

(Compiled by Sara Rickie Whitehurst)



1936 building



ORIGINAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH. — This frame building at the corner of Methvin and Green Streets was the first home of the

Christian Church in Longview. It was constructed in 1876 and used until 1906. Photograph contributed by Lowell Holloway Jr.

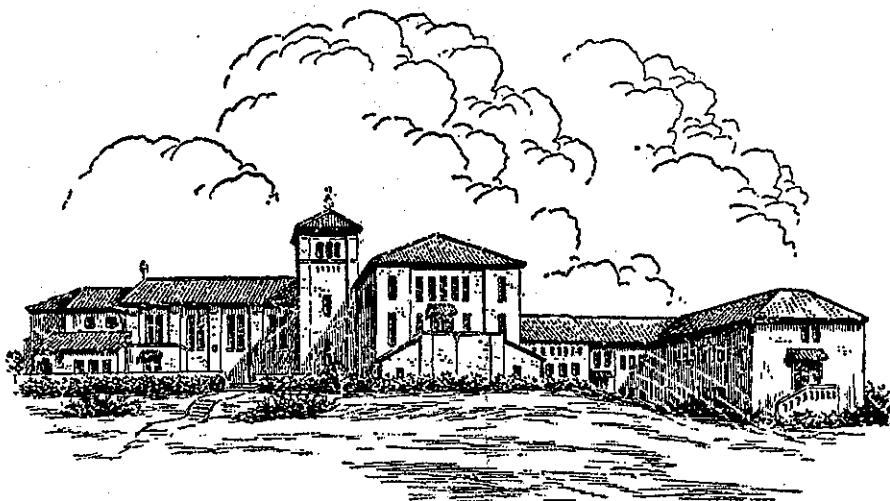
History

of

First Christian Church

Longview, Texas

1875 - 1960



Contents

Eighty-Fifth Anniversary Edition Of First Christian Church

(DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

Longview, Texas

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Foreword . . .

A history of the Church is the story of man's concept of God and their relation to each other. The history of a Church is a very personal thing to a particular group of people, and is the story of their relationship to each other and of their group to God.

The First Christian Church in Longview has been a very personal thing to a long procession of people, to each of whom it has been "my Church". I am among those who has so claimed it. It is well that men—and women—even children, claim a Church. It is so much better that the Church also claims people—that it has the power to reach out among the passing throng and claim the hearts and lives and talents and gifts of humankind. It is good that the call of the Church, spoken though it may be in a whisper deep in the conscience of man, still may be, and is, heard above the tumult and the shouting that mark our march through life. It is good that a softly spoken "Follow Me," can be and was, heard and heeded by a Matthew.

"Our Church" has been to me the place where my great grandfather, pastored; where my grandfather pastored; where my mother taught Sunday School nearly half a century; where my father was Deacon, Elder and one of the first two Elders Emeritus.

"Our Church" has been to me—and to many—the place where we first learned to "Fear God and

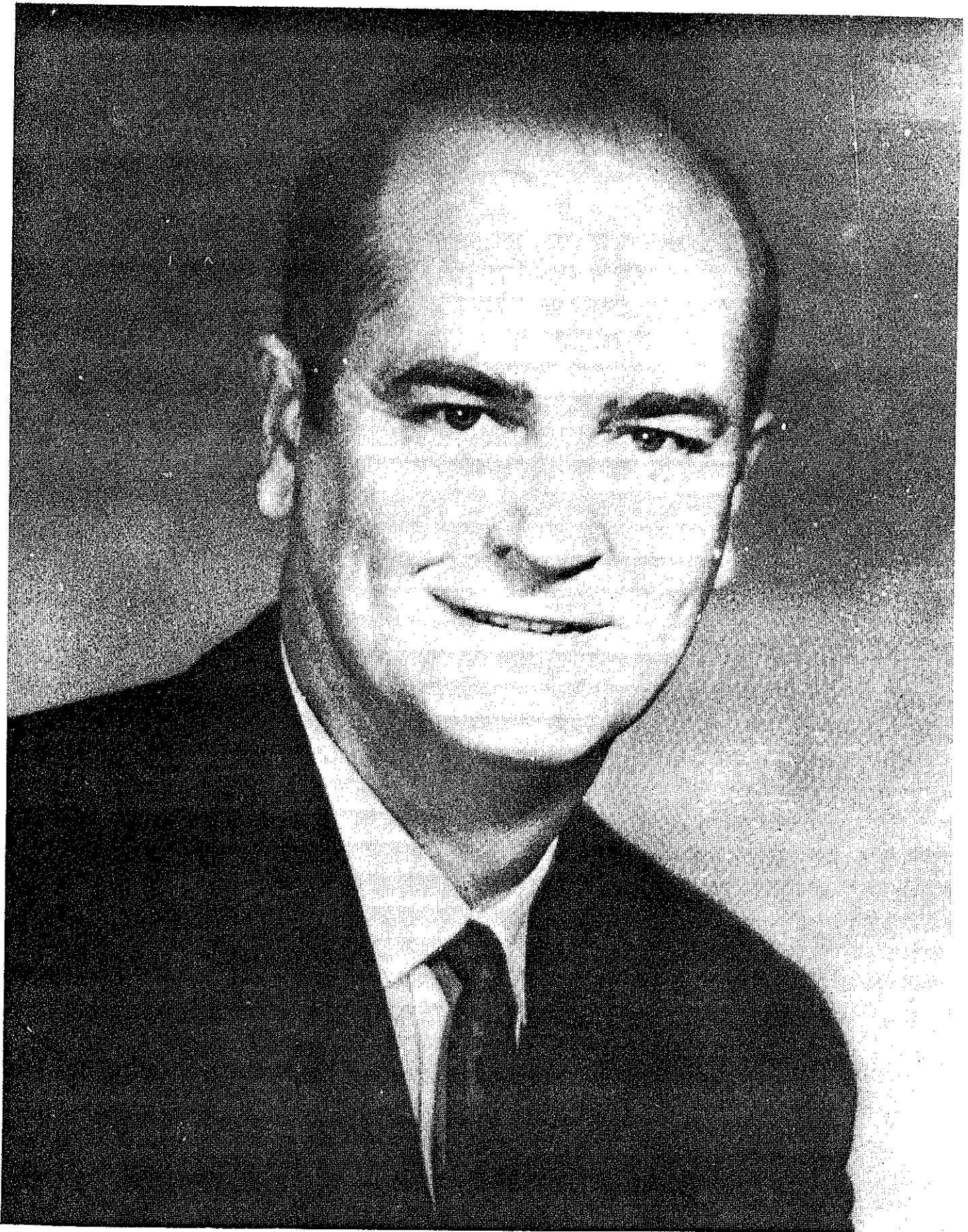
Keep His commandments"—to "love . . . Him because He first loved us"—and to ". . . love one another . . ." It has been the place where we gained our first and lasting belief that man is endowed with an immortal soul, salvaged from things of earth through the miracle of the Virgin birth, the sacrifice of the Crucifixion, and the wonder of the Resurrection of God's own Son.

"Our Church" has been the place where we found a faith that has endured; a faith sufficient to withstand the latter day efforts to dilute Christianity to mere ethics; to reduce Jesus Christ to a mere teacher of ethical conduct; and to cast the whole in the atmosphere of a country club—all for the sake of being modern. "Our Church" has symbolized a faith that is neither modern nor obsolete—only everlasting. It is where we first gained these things without which life is without meaning, and death is without mercy; but with which we ". . . can do all things . . .".

It is well that the story of "Our Church" be recorded. It may serve at least as a candlelight to others. It will always be a bright and shining star to us.

Sidney Latham

Dallas, Texas
July 6, 1960



SLOAN GENTRY, MINISTER



In Memory of

CHARTER MEMBERS

G. B. Harrison
 James P. Holloway
 Mrs. Sarah Holloway
 Wm. C. Holloway
 B. F. Phillips

George Harrison
 Mrs. George Harrison
 Mrs. Eliza Hutchings
 Mr. T. S. S. Young
 Mrs. True

PIONEER MEMBERS

Mrs. Ann Prothro
 Anne Prothro
 Lena Prothro
 Mrs. C. C. Morgan
 Mrs. Lou Patterson
 Mrs. Joe Laird
 Mrs. Bettie Buchanan
 Mrs. Laura Hoyler
 Mrs. J. P. Pridgeon

Mr. S. M. Holland
 Mrs. Genia Harrison
 Mrs. S. E. Scott
 Mrs. Martha Frederick
 Mrs. Jane Wooten
 Mrs. M. M. Honea
 Mrs. Etta Scott
 May McHaney
 Mrs. Laura Oden

The John T. Poe Family
 The J. G. Roe Family
 The Akin Family
 Mr. and Mrs. W. E. McHaney

Early Members of First Christian Church



PICTURE OF FIRST BUILDING OF THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Mrs. M. A. Shoopman

Mr. S. A. Scott

Mr. M. E. Scott

Mrs. L. Richkie

Mrs. E. J. Mustain

Mrs. T. J. Dean

Mrs. Annice Pliler

Mrs. Wiley Pliler

Tom Dean

Charlie Morgan

Jerry Harrison

Tressie Harrison

Daisy Pridgeon

Bird Pridgeon

Nina Brown Fenner

Mrs. Callie Green

Jeff Watson

Mrs. Alice Plyler

Alton Mackey

Lila Brown Johnston

Mrs. J. R. Bruner

Miss May Bruner

Lorene Bruner

Annie Lea Holloway

Annie Belle McHaney

Miss Emma Craycroft

Miss George Prothro

Billie Boyd

P. P. Boyd, Sr.

Miss Dollie Bunt

George Tate

Dee Plyler

Emmette Alston

Nellie Wooten

Mrs. W. M. Dawson

Mrs. Tom Dawson

Annie Dee Hoyler

Mrs. Evie Lane

Elvie Lou Cunyus

Vallie Cunyus

Mrs. John W. Scott

Thelma Brown Clifford

History of The First Christian Church

Longview, Texas

1875 - 1960

by George Swiley

Before the Civil War days, when virgin forests of oak, pine and gum clad the hills of East Texas, pioneers came by boat and covered wagon to build their homes. Some settled in Rusk County at Camden (near Easton) which was near the landing of a chartered ferry on the Sabine River. Here they farmed and prospered and Camden, a small stage-coach stop, became a thriving village.

Important in the lives of these pioneers was the worship of God and the spread of His kingdom. They sought culture and a righteous, peaceful atmosphere where they could rear their children. A few miles west of Camden on the Peatown and Danville road they worshipped at a frontier church known as Christian Union. It was a typical rural church where the members came from miles to worship there. Here the families would enter together but the women would sit on one side and the men on the other, as was the custom at that time. The slaves in this community were members of the same congregation, and they sat in the rear where their seats were raised like steps and nailed against the back wall. They were all a part of the same service.

Life was full and they prospered in this Camden neighborhood until National discord came. Here the families bore the heartaches of Civil War days and survived the reverses of reconstruction.

Loyal slaves worked and shared their burdens as they toiled in the fields to raise food, corn and cotton. Faith in God and a will to go forward inspired these settlers onward.

About 1870 men came with swinging axes and cut a lane through the towering forest of East Texas. They blazed the way for workmen who made the grade and laid the rails for the Texas and Pacific Railway. The 'Iron Horse' spelled progress and man recognized the advantages. Many moved their families to the little towns of Hallsville and Longview.

In 1873 Gregg County was organized, and Longview was chosen as the County Seat and was soon a flourishing little town while Camden slowly diminished.

Soon Christians who moved here from Christian Union and others who moved in from elsewhere made up the local group who became the founders of the Longview Christian Church. Within the hearts of these founders, in 1875, through earnest prayerful planning, the church had its humble beginning.

It is known that there were twelve charter members. Two names are uncertain, or have been lost. The ten others are well known and the pictures of some of them are on display in the church library. The congregation first met and held services in a little building known as 'Mrs. Leak's School House.' It was located on North Green Street where the Bazzell Building, once a home, now stands. Here they worshipped and gained additional members by converts and members by transfer.

When their numbers were increased to about twenty they felt the need and decided to build their own church house. Thus the church, acting by and through its duly authorized trustees, namely: James Holloway, George D. Harrison, Wm. C. Holloway, Ben Phillips and T. S. S. Young on August 13th, 1875, acquired by deed, as a gift from the Texas and Pacific Railway Company, a lot of land situated at the corner of what was later known as East Methvin and North Green streets in Longview, Texas. This deed was not recorded and was later lost. However, on May 5th, 1892, the Texas and Pacific Railway Company made a quit claim deed to J. T. Poe, J. G. Roe and William C. Holloway, trustees of the church at that time, and this deed was recorded in the Deed Records of Gregg County, Texas, and a photostatic copy is now in the archives of the church.

This church house, a little frame structure, was built by the men of the church. Some of them did carpenter work, while some cut sections of large trees in the forest for foundation blocks and hauled these and also the lumber for the building. The house had one large room with a high ceiling, and a steep roof made of pine shingles. There were windows with small panes of glass in each side

of the building and behind the pulpit two were placed to lend more light for the scripture reading. The rostrum was low, and the long benches were placed in the center with short ones on either side, with aisles in between. These could easily be tilted for sweeping and dusting. They were hand made and stained a dark color.

The building was heated in winter by a wood stove, and in summer cooled by open windows and palmetto fans, and dainty folding fans in the hands of the ladies. At night oil lamps were used. On the outside, instead of parking space for cars, hitching posts for horses were in common use. There was a bell in the belfry and the duty of ringing it was assigned to small boys who took turns at the task.

At first the church was plain and simple, with the door in the center of the west wall, but later this was closed and circular steps were put on the northwest corner at the new entrance. Mr. J. P. Pridgeon, a carpenter and member of the congregation, did this work, and a very tall steeple or spire was added, which gave it a more church-like or spiritual appearance. In design it was then typically American. The early churches with spires and steeples reflected the faith and culture of the people.

These Christians were justly proud of their church and all took pride in keeping it. There were no florists in that day but to make the interior attractive and inviting blossoms from the yards of some members were often by the pulpit. The bouquets were simple and made of flowers in season. Sometimes they were crepe myrtle or roses with wood fern or stripped grass. Again they were fragrant with honeysuckle or cape jasmine or made airy with Queen Anne's lace.

"This do in remembrance of Me" was the ritual that was faithfully practiced, and each Sunday the table was laid with a white linen cloth in preparation for communion service. The first communion set used in this church was a gift from Mr. Young, one of the charter members. It consisted of a tankard, chalice, and plates, and was probably made of silver or pewter. Bread for the communion on each Lord's Day was made at home by some of the women of the church. The loaf was always a thin wafer of unleavened bread. (The communion wine was also often brought from the pantries of these faithful women.)

In time the church built a parsonage. It was located on the same lot, and just south

of the church building. The lumber from which it was made came from an abandoned Christian church building in Pirtle, a settlement between Kilgore and Henderson. As had happened at Christian Union, the membership at Pirtle had moved away from the village. Mr. W. E. McHaney who had lived and worshipped at Pirtle got permission from a former member, a Mr. Lacy, to move the church building. He and his sons, and Mr. Wylie Plyler, tore it down and hauled the lumber to Longview where it was rebuilt into a four room cottage. Though it was small, it served the purpose and was convenient to church and town.

"Repent and be Baptized for the remission of your sins" was another command from the scriptures that the Christian church believed in and followed. Baptismal services in those early days were held in streams, ponds or pools in the vicinity. While the church occupied the first building about five different places were used for their baptisms: a branch and pool on South Green Street at Pickle, one on Mobberly at Melton, at Young's pond on South Green, where the Round-Up Club is now located, and a pool known as Terry's Pool off of North High Street, between Whaley and Highway 80. This was evidently a privately owned public swimming pool. It had a high closed fence around it, with many small dressing rooms and steps that led down into the water. Another was the Texas and Pacific pond, which is still east of the Railway Station and north of the tracks.

It was in 1894 that the first resident pastor was secured when L. A. Dale was called. He was a young man not long out of college, and he came with ideas of better organization and new inspiration for a greater church. Under his guidance the Christian Endeavor for the young people and the Ladies Aid were organized. There was talk of putting in the organ to help in the worship of song. These things were different from what they had done before and many in the congregation seriously objected. It was not just a local problem but a State and National problem as well and had to be faced at some time. It was in January that the organ was voted in and the congregation was divided. The eighteen members who withdrew from the congregation then established the first Church of Christ in Longview. Several of these churches are active here today and are doing a worthwhile work.

Though most weddings of that period were in the homes there was one of note in

PASTORS IN THE FIRST BUILDING

1875

the early Christian church. In 1901 Miss Jerry Harrison, sister of the late P. P. Boyd, was married to Dr. G. W. Nibbling in a beautiful church ceremony. As the church had no pastor at the time a preacher came over from Marshall to perform the ceremony. It is recalled that Crawford and Charlie Morgan and Judson McHaney served as ushers.

Other weddings were solemnized here, perhaps, and happy families worshipped together. At Christmas, Easter and Thanksgiving special programs gave praise to the Master. From 1875 to the year 1906 these Christians met at the little frame church and heard the gospel preached.

The Christian church at Peatown was organized in 1871, and in 1951 the old frame building was replaced by a brick one. It is beautiful and complete in every detail, and stands as a symbol of faith and loyalty, honoring those who have worshipped there through all the years. The graveyard is one of interest and great sentiment. It is always well kept and lovingly cared for.

From this Peatown church have come some of the most consecrated and dependable workers of the Longview church. A few of the families, the Watsons, Cunyus, Whittingtons, Mercers, Alstons, Butts and Owings have contributed all through the years to the success of the local church.

Growth of the Longview church was always measured by its leaders. From its beginning the different departments nobly performed their part of the task to further the church's progress. The responsibility of the early church was borne by the first two Elders, James P. Holloway and C. D. Harrison, and the first two Deacons, Wm. C. Holloway and B. F. Phillips.

After his return from college Crawford Morgan became the first Superintendent of the Bible School. By 1902 thirty-five or forty members had enrolled in the classes. A call to the ministry was also answered by one of the local boys. Tom Dean received inspiration, and began his training, at T.C.U., while the first building was still in use. He became the pastor of the Christian church at Jacksonville and served there a number of years.

The pastors of this early church worked tirelessly to save souls and increase church membership. Their sermons were stirring gospel messages that exhorted the member to "seek first the Kingdom of God". By friendly calls and fervent prayers they led many to accept Christ as their Savior.

James P. Holloway is remembered as the first pastor. He came to Texas from Georgia in 1859 and settled with his family in the Camden neighborhood, Rusk county. They worshipped at Christian Union, one of the early Christian churches in this area, where he served as Elder, as he had formerly done in a Christian church in Georgia.

In 1872 he with his family moved to Longview and he assisted in the organization of the church here. He and his wife were charter members, and he was named as one of the two Elders. He was a land owner and farmer but the Lord's Day found him at church where he filled the pulpit, at home or wherever he felt he was needed.

He was also a prominent citizen and active in civic affairs. When Gregg County was organized in 1873 and Longview became the County Seat, a citizen's committee was named and a place for a temporary courthouse was selected. In this temporary courthouse the first court convened on Sept. 9, 1873. James Holloway was appointed to confer with the Texas and Pacific Railway Company Land Agent at Marshall, Texas, concerning the location of a new courthouse. Through his efforts a lot was selected and donated by the Railway Company, and deeded to Gregg County. It is the site of the present beautiful courthouse and where two former court buildings have stood. He made his home in Longview until his death in 1884, and was buried at Peatown where the well-kept churchyard is the last resting place of other Christian pioneers.

John T. Poe was pastor from 1876 to 1885. Mr. Poe came to Longview as a businessman and owned a jewelry store. He and his family made a valuable addition to the church. He was an outstanding member of the church over the state, and served on committees as he attended District and State meetings. He contributed articles regularly to some of the church papers and had some literature printed. He became one of the leaders in the movement after the "Church of Christ" was organized in Longview.

William C. Holloway was pastor from 1887 to 1893.

Billy Holloway was born in Georgia and came to Texas with the family in his early teens. He worshipped at the Christian Union church and entered the War Between the

States from this Camden neighborhood. In 1870 he married Miss Rebecca Bassett in Upshur County, and in 1872 he, with his wife and one small son, moved to Longview where he bought the farm which was his home for the rest of his life. He, like his father, was a land owner and farmer, and he did his preaching where ever and when he could.

He was one of the charter members when the church was organized in Longview and was named one of the two first Deacons.

A quotation from "The Disciples of Christ in Texas" written by Chalmers McPherson is as follows: "William C. Holloway, familiarly known as 'Billy' was one of the genuine consecrated preachers of the gospel in East Texas. None knew him but to admire and trust him. His home was in Longview and his field of labor was in that section of the state.

"Members of his family are now pillars of strength for the cause of primitive Christianity in the same vicinity where he lived and labored and died. Although he has been gone from the earth for years men and women frequently speak of him and his memory is a hallowed one."

He died at his home in 1898 and was buried at Peatown.

* * * *

L. A. Dale was pastor 1894-1895.

Mr. Dale's pastorate here covers a period of historic value to the local church. He came as a young man just out of college from Lake Charles, La., and he came with ideas of better organization and new inspiration for a greater church. He was really the first resident pastor, giving his full time to church activities. He and Mrs. Dale lived on South Green Street.

During his ministry the women were organized into the Ladies' Aid and the young people formed the first Christian Endeavor Society. Though some people were opposed to these activities, they created interest and increased church growth and attendance. Later Mr. Dale was listed among the successful evangelists of Texas.

* * * *

Mr. Robertson was the next pastor, serving during 1896. He and Mrs. Robertson had a large family of boys and girls, and he and his family created much interest in the young people's work in the church. They lived on West Tyler Street.

* * * *

R. H. Simmans was the pastor from 1897-1899. He had just graduated from Texas Chris-

tian University where he had met and known some of the Longview boys. Soon after his arrival he was married to Miss May Miller, also a T.C.U. student.

Mr. Simmans' term of service here covers a period of special significance to the history of the local church for it was during his stay that The Christian Woman's Missionary Society was first organized. It was an Auxiliary to the new National Society known as the Christian Women's Board of Missions, familiarly called The C.W.B.M. With the Ladies' Aid already organized this gave to the ladies of the church a new and important inspiration for their work. (It is remembered that the regular dues were fifteen cents each month, five cents going to the State work and ten cents being sent to the National Headquarters.) Mr. Simmans died a number of years ago and Mrs. Simmans died March 4th of this year. She had made her home with a son near Houston.

* * * *

A. L. Condor served as pastor during 1900. He came to Longview as a young man and there are few records of his stay here.

A. O. Rial was part time pastor during 1901. He divided his time with the church at Carthage. He was later pastor at Palestine, and is listed among Texas Evangelists.

* * * *

J. H. Fuller was pastor 1902-1903.

After Mrs. Fuller's death his sister, "Miss Mary", had lived with him and she came to Longview as hostess in his home. He was the father of one son, Everette. They occupied a cottage on Magrill Street. From here he accepted a call to the church in Sherman. He later married Miss Bertha Mason, daughter of J. C. Mason, and he and his wife went as Missionaries to Mexico. Upon their return he served as Pastor of the Oak Cliff Christian Church in Dallas. Later they went to Arkansas where he was Secretary for the State Board and Mrs. Fuller served as Secretary for the Women's Work. (Mrs. Fuller was an ordained minister.)

* * * *

James Alton Livsey was pastor during 1904.

Mr. Livsey divided his time through this period with the church at Peatown. He was born in Rusk County in 1861, and was married in 1884 to Miss Betty Major, whose father, E. F. Major, was one of the charter members of the Peatown church. He was their minister for thirteen years. After his death, Alton Livsey became their spiritual leader, and

under the influence of his beloved friend Chalmers McPherson, who often preached at Peatown, he was ordained in 1885, preaching regularly thereafter each third Sunday at Peatown for about thirty-five years.

Teaching as well as preaching in the same community, he took his place among the leaders of his profession as an educator, and it was in the schoolroom that he was the most influential in impressing upon young girls and boys the real responsibilities of life.

His enthusiasm for the enrichment of lives was extended to the Negro schools of the community, and he was instrumental at one time in bringing George Washington Carver to the Greenville School for a two-day conference with teachers and students.

He died in 1921 at his home in the Elder-ville neighborhood and was laid to rest in the Peatown Cemetery. Dr. Chalmers McPherson

of Texas Christian University conducted his services.

He always lived on his farm and was never what you might call a resident pastor.

* * * *

Mr. J. N. Wooten was pastor during 1905.

He came to the Longview church from Huntsville, Texas, and he and Mrs. Wooten did a great work in the church here. He not only was a beloved pastor of his church but he was much admired and loved by the people of other churches in town. Mrs. Wooten was outstanding as a musician for she organized the first choir in the church and served as organist.

At the end of one year Mr. Wooten received a call to the Christian church at Hereford. Without even knowing that he was making history he proved to be the last pastor in the old first church building.

The Second Church Building

A living thing will grow. The early Christian church in Longview was an active working body and in keeping with the progress of the community, their program likewise grew. By the turn of the century Longview had become a thriving agricultural and lumbering center. Our forefathers not only strived for the material things while our vast natural resources were being developed and utilized but their souls also groped for the things eternal. At length the founding church became too small to house the increasing numbers. To meet this need, with vision for the future, the leaders planned for spiritual growth and a larger place of worship.

On the same location as the small frame building, this new structure took form. The building material consisted of cement stone blocks which were molded in a pattern that resembled natural stone. It was unique in that it was the first building of its kind in this entire region. Of modified Gothic architectural design this eminent building had a commanding location near the business section of the town.

The building committee of the board gave the contract to Mr. J. M. Mobberly and local labor was used in the construction. Some of the church members donated their time to the work and it is said that excepting a few hundred dollars the building was paid for by the time it was completed. The cement blocks were made on location. The sand for these blocks were given by Mr. W. E. Mc-

Honey and hauled in wagons by his sons, Will Eanes and Dee. It was obtained along a creek on his farm which was just west of the present site of the LeTouneau plant.

When the building neared completion, the stained glass windows gave spiritual elegance to its appearance. Three of these windows were memorials honoring the memory of Ann E. Prothro, Eliza Hutchings and William C. Holloway, and a small one presented by the Christian Endeavor. This house of worship not only had memorial windows but it also included a baptistry, basement and pipe organ. The basement added much needed space for educational purposes. It was used for primary Sunday School classes, and for many years Mrs. Elbert Morgan was Superintendent of that department. The new reed, or pump, organ created much interest but the pipes which served as decorations gave it only the name and appearance of a real pipe organ. It could be operated by the one who played, but usually some small boy pumped the air that produced the power.

Progress in the mode of transportation not only encouraged the growth and development of Longview but along with this development came the expansion of the churches in the area. The First Christian Church was ideally located on the only street car line in town. The car was at first drawn by mules and was known as the "mule car". In 1912 it was electrified. At that time Longview consisted of two rather dis-

tinct sections or divisions as Longview and Longview Junction. The Junction station was at the junction of the Texas & Pacific and the International & Great Northern railway systems. The town had only one post office but two railroad depots and two business sections. The up-town depot of the Texas & Pacific Railroad was located on the site of the parking lot of the Glover-Crim building on Fredonia Street, and the Junction depot was on the present location of the Texas & Pacific and Missouri and Pacific Railroad station. The distance between these stations was one mile and the street car connected the two. This and the automobile which came into use about 1908 helped to increase church growth and attendance. Thus the church and its program continued to expand.

About 1914 a disaster occurred which brought distress to the members of the church. A fire, originating at night, burned the interior of the sanctuary. It was a hardship to rebuild but many times before this group had known and faced reverses. With undaunted spirits and a will to continue in the work of the Lord, they soon had the damages repaired and the church was in use again.

A living working church is constantly expanding. Soon more space was needed for the Sunday School. Then the small parsonage, just south of the church, was converted into Sunday School classrooms and a new parsonage was purchased.

According to the Deed Records of Gregg County, in 1918 the home formerly owned by Dr. and Mrs. Howard M. Lawrence was purchased and became the new parsonage. This property is now a part of the location of The Longview News and Journal office. The ever-growing church continually seemed to be filled to overflowing. Rooms for Sunday School use were secured at the Bruner home on Methvin, across the street from the church. At one time classes were given permission to assemble at the old Air Dome Theatre, where a revival meeting was also held. This tabernacle-like structure was located on Methvin Street between the Post Office and where the Longview Hotel now stands. It was an early day silent film picture show.

It served well as a temporary meeting place for Sunday School classes though in some respects it was not ideal. Curtains divided the different classes and the sound effects lent to confusion. This fact proved, however, that the desire of these Christians to hear and study the word of God was strong

and sincere, and with unfailing courage they continued their worship services.

In time the church was remodeled and the interior was changed to yield more useable space. The folding doors between the Men's Bible classroom and the sanctuary were removed and the sanctuary was enlarged. The Green Street door on the west was closed and the baptistry was moved to the east side. The pulpit and choir were then located next to the south wall and a balcony was built above the back pews on the opposite side of the building. This gave additional room for worship services and was also used for Sunday School classes.

While W. C. Jones was pastor of the church a two story frame building, called the Men's Hall, was constructed on Green Street at the south end of the church lot. It had a large room upstairs which was used for the Loyal Men's class and as a Social Hall. In one corner a small room was partitioned off and was equipped for a kitchen. Rooms for Sunday School classes were located on the first floor of this building. Many dinners and luncheons were served in the Social Hall. Women's organizations often served men's business and service clubs of the city. In this way, and by other projects, they helped pay debts and running expenses of the church.

Generally from its beginning the church experienced a rather gradual but steady development. However, it met some reverses. When the Texas & Pacific Railroad division was transferred to Mineola the church membership declined. Following this move and during the depression years, until 1931, it was difficult to meet the current expenses and in any way to expand the church program. It was often wondered from month to month how enough money could be obtained to be able to pay the preacher. The membership roll reveals, however, the names of many who were faithful and struggled on knowing that "all things work together for good to them that love God". Like Paul they felt that they were at liberty because they were slaves in Christ and the work of His kingdom moved on.

Then in 1931 the discovery of a vast natural resource brought sudden changes to the area that occasioned the most phenomenal growth the church had ever known. The discovery of petroleum and the development of the great East Texas Oil Field came during the nationwide depression and people flocked to Longview and the surrounding territory from many states of the Union, from

Canada to Mexico. Gregg County, the center of the field, was the only bright spot on the economic map of the nation. The population spiraled and church buildings could no longer house the enlarged congregations. The First Christian Church felt growing pains that it had never experienced before, and even the church lot seemed to have shrunk in size with the growing demand for more room. Parking space for automobiles became very limited and because of the great rush of oil field business in the county seat town it became increasingly difficult. With the development of the oil field and the rapid growth of the church, the leaders realized a move to a new location and a larger lot was the only solution to their problem. It was then that Judge and Mrs. Will C. Hurst, seeing the need and having the desire to serve the church, offered the lot on Nugget Hill for the location of the third and present church building.

Moving was pondered and discussed at length by the members. Much sentiment was attached to this church "on the corner" and some were opposed to the change for that reason. Some of the older people did not welcome the change, and some thought the location on Sixth Street was too far from town. The move became a delicate subject but finally when the question was skillfully presented to the congregation by Sidney Latham a majority of the members voted for the change.

After the decision to move was made, plans for the project began. On January 26th, 1935, the trustees of the church, L. P. Guice, George W. Tate and C. D. Freeman conveyed the property, including the church building, to J. H. McWilliams and J. M. Garrett. The building was sold to Dr. Rushing and it was soon dismantled. This beloved temple of worship had now become a rubble of stones. Soon, however, the cement stone blocks were removed to Myrtle Street where they were used in the construction of two Spanish type houses. The pulpit is now in the Loyal Men's Classroom as the teacher's Bible stand and one of the old short pews was given to Miss Gladys Crews and is now in the hall on the second floor of the present church building.

On this same lot today stands the six story office building, known as the Southwest Reserve Life Insurance Company Building, the ground floor being occupied by McWilliams Furniture Co.

Many dear names and memories are as-

sociated with the second home of the Longview Christian Church. Ten pastors had been the devoted leaders of this congregation. Through the years, with reverence they preached and prayed and shared the sorrows as well as the pleasures of the members.

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J. A. Holton was the first pastor to fill the pulpit in the second church building. He and his family came from Kentucky to Longview while the concrete block building was being erected. The congregation was then meeting in the old Cumberland Presbyterian Church which was located on the corner of Green and Cotton Streets. The Holtons lived in the little parsonage next to the church. They watched the construction and Mr. Holton planned for renewed interest and church growth when they occupied the new building. They were a happy family with twin daughters who had the Biblical names, Mary and Martha and an older daughter, Jessie.

* * * *

J. N. Wooten was the beloved pastor who served the church in 1905 and returned in 1911 for a second and longer ministry. He was born at McMinville, Tennessee, June 17, 1873, and moved to Texas in 1877. Mr. Wooten was a graduate of Texas Christian University and held a degree from the University of Texas. He also attended the University of Chicago for further study. He married Miss Maude Manning at Frost, Texas, in 1901.

The first pastorate held by Mr. Wooten was the Christian Church in Huntsville, Texas. He came with his young wife from Huntsville to Longview. Mrs. Wooten was a talented musician and an able helpmate who assisted her husband in all of his church work. Together they did a great work in the Longview church. Mr. Wooten was much admired by the people of other churches of the town. His spiritual influence was such that when he was in the pulpit, on the streets, or visiting in the homes, the abiding presence of God was always felt.

After serving in Longview, Mr. Wooten was pastor of churches in Paris, Temple, Hereford, and Eastland where in each place he did a great work. Mr. and Mrs. Wooten and children, Louise, J. N., Jr., Courtland and Jack moved to Lufkin in 1942. He served as pastor for 18 years and retired in 1942. Pastor emeritus of the Lufkin church he succumbed following a heart attack on February 20, 1946. The Lufkin daily paper wrote of him, "During the occupancy of the local pulpit he had come in contact with the young

and old, the rich and poor, the high and low, and all counted him a friend."

* * * *

H. E. Beckler was from Ohio. He and his wife came to the Longview church with great interest and enthusiasm. He had a great many ideas for progress and church activity. Mr. Beckler was the first to publish the church paper, The Messenger. Mrs. Beckler was reserved but friendly and is remembered especially by her prayers.

* * * *

Clifford Weaver was pastor in the summer of 1918. He and his wife came when the church was at a low ebb. They found rooms and lived on North Green Street. Mr. and Mrs. Weaver were returned missionaries who had seen service several years in Japan. The Longview church felt fortunate in securing him as minister but his ministry was short-lived.

After three months he accepted the call to become president of his Alma Mater, Eureka College, Eureka, Illinois.

* * * *

Gerald Culberson came to the church from Indiana. He and his family were the first ones to occupy the second parsonage which was located on Methvin Street. Mr. and Mrs. Culberson had a daughter, Ruth, and two sons, Gerald and Gary. He was here for only a short pastorate and then moved his family to West Virginia.

* * * *

Wm. C. Jones, in 1919-1923, followed Mr. Culberson. He was a young man not long out of college and came with great enthusiasm and consecration. It was during his first stay with the church that the frame building called the Loyal Men's Hall was erected. He was active with the young people, and met with a ready response in their various activities. It was then that the congregation presented to him the car, which was an expression of the love and esteem in which he was held. Mr. Jones was born in England, but had come to the United States for his education. It was while he was here that he married one of his own congregation, Miss Emily Belle Utzman, of one of the pioneer families of East Texas, and dependable workers of the church. He accepted a call to a Christian church in Honolulu in 1923.

* * * *

S. Clark Bateman, 1923-1924, followed Mr. Jones as minister. Soon after his arrival he returned home to be married and brought his bride to live among us. While they were

here they served the church well, and many are the activities remembered during his ministry here.

* * * *

Reverend George D. Dickinson, a native of Arkansas, was pastor of the First Christian Church in 1924-1926. This was Mr. Dickinson's second pastorate—the first being the Royce City Christian Church. After leaving Royce City he resumed his education at T.C.U., and from there accepted the call to the Longview church.

Mr. Dickinson will tell you that that during his ministry, he enjoyed the finest choir in the State of Texas, under the excellent leadership of Mr. Elbert Morgan.

During Mr. Dickinson's pastorate, he was invited to conduct his own revivals for this two-year period, and the minutes record that he was extended a "Life Call to the Pulpit" of the First Christian Church of Longview.

During this ministry Dr. H. A. Ross was Chairman of the Board.

On account of the serious illness of Bobbie Dawn Dickinson, infant daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Dickinson, they moved to Alameda, California, where Mr. Dickinson preached in the Alameda Christian Church.

Later the Dickinson family moved to Garland, Texas, and while he was pastor of the Garland Christian Church, the Longview Choir left the Longview Church on a Sunday morning and visited in the Garland church, giving them an hour of excellent music.

* * * *

1925-1926. James T. McKissick followed George Dickinson as pastor. He was the minister here for one year, and accepted the call to be president of Randolph College at Cisco, Texas.

He was a very enthusiastic preacher and evangelist. His energy never seemed to run low. He had a keen intellect and his messages, all gospel in content, flowed freely from an unending well of memory as he quoted numerous passages of scripture. He could be termed a pioneer minister of the Christian Church and had at the time of his death baptized more than 7,000 people and had 10,000 additions to the church since he had entered the ministry in 1895. Dr. McKissick died in Alibene, Texas, in November, 1957, at the age of 83.

He was married to Miss Elizabeth Murphy, in Tennessee, and they were the parents of nine children, five daughters: Florence, Olivia, Elizabeth, Helen and Ruth, and four sons: John, James, Robert and Charles.

While in Longview Mrs. McKissick was active in the work of the church and was one of the able teachers of the Loyal Daughters Bible Class. She was a kind, understanding leader and a good helpmate for her husband.

* * * *

1926-1928. W. C. Jones returned for his second ministry with the church in 1926, after his return from Hawaii. With his familiarity with conditions it was easy for him to go forward. He and Emily Belle lived in the same parsonage and were accorded a warm welcome.

He was evangelistic in his efforts and received many new members into the church. Besides his ministerial duties he was active in the work of public education, and helped to advance educational standards in the schools here. Once again he was interested in the young people and established a Young People's Conference which met in the Social Hall once each week with an average attendance of 75.

He answered a call to minister to the Mt. Auburn Christian Church in Dallas, and was later pastor of the Central Christian Church there.

He and Mrs. Jones are parents of two children, Alfred, who is Dr. Alfred Jones of Tulsa, who has his own clinic and is a Psychology Consultant, and Gwendolyn, who is Mrs. B. H. Evans whose husband is instructor at Texas A. & M., and an able worker in the Christian Church at College Station.

Mr. and Mrs. Jones now live at Dallas where he ministers to the South Cliff Christian Church, in Oak Cliff.

* * * *

1928-1931. In 1928 James Wright began his ministry in the Longview church and served until 1931. He was a beloved pastor and remained longer than some others had done. Mrs. Wright was his talented helpmate and they labored faithfully together in the work of the church. Mrs. Wright worked with the choir and also served as teacher in the Bible School.

They had two children, Mary Elizabeth, who now lives in Fort Worth, and a son, James Robert, who is at present the minister of the Christian Church at Fulton, Missouri.

* * * *

Memories of movements and activities of the members in the old stone church are al-

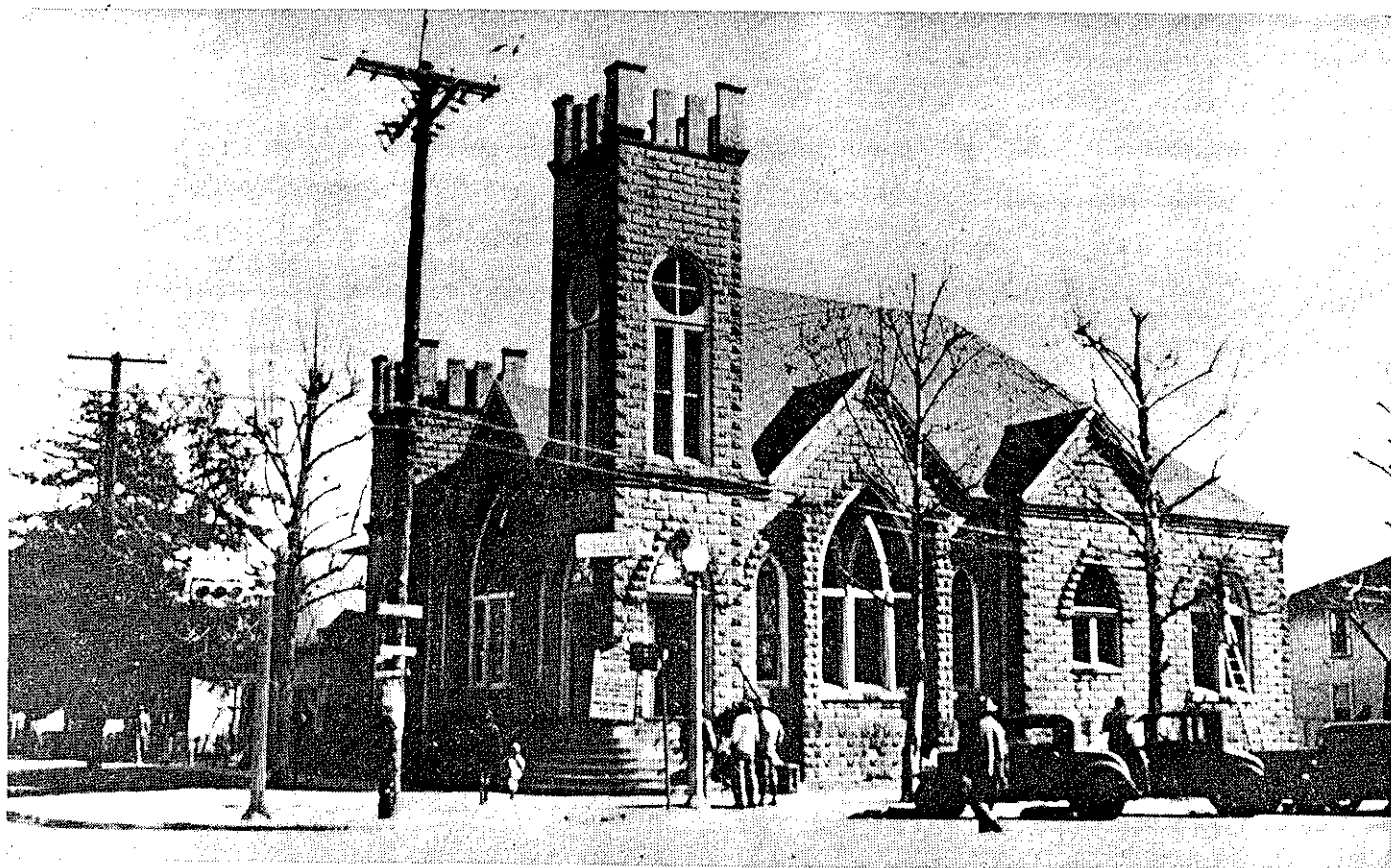
ways pleasant to recall. The Loyal Daughters Sunday School Class had its beginning in that building. The widespread loyal movement at that time also influenced other Bible classes to adopt such names as Loyal Women, Loyal Men and Loyal Sons. T. C. Morgan helped organize and became the teacher of the Loyal Men's Class which at one time was said to have been the largest Men's Bible Class in town.

Elbert Morgan taught a class of boys, twelve to sixteen years of age, called the Loyal Sons. During a revival at Easter time, thirteen of the fourteen members of his class who were not Christians went forward and made the confession. What a challenge to Sunday School teachers today!

It was in this building that Mr. H. H. Watson served as Sunday School Superintendent from 1907 to 1919. Judge J. H. McHaney taught the Women's Bible Class for years and many others taught classes or served wherever they saw they were needed. Mrs. C. D. Freeman often led the women's missionary work and had a leading part in the remodeling of the stone church. Mrs. W. R. Owings, Sr., was one who often acted as chairman of foods when dinners and luncheons were served.

In those days Mrs. Annie Lee Latham worked with the beginners Sunday School Department but later became the teacher of the Loyal Daughters Class, and inspired others to serve as teachers. The voices of many leaders reverberated within the walls of this stone building as they worked and sang, taught and prayed. The church rolls also attest the faithfulness of many more who simply by their presence could be counted as ones who loved the Lord.

The members had spent many happy hours in this church where they had met to break bread, make their offerings, and hear the scriptures read. It had been the scene of weddings. Young and old had been converted and baptized, and services for departed loved ones were held in the sanctuary. With a few last pictures, some misgivings, and a host of golden memories, the church gave up the old stone building on Methvin and Green Streets for a new and more spacious one. As their forefathers had done with prayerful hearts they set themselves to the task to build a new and nobler temple than the last. Thus the growth of His kingdom moved forward.

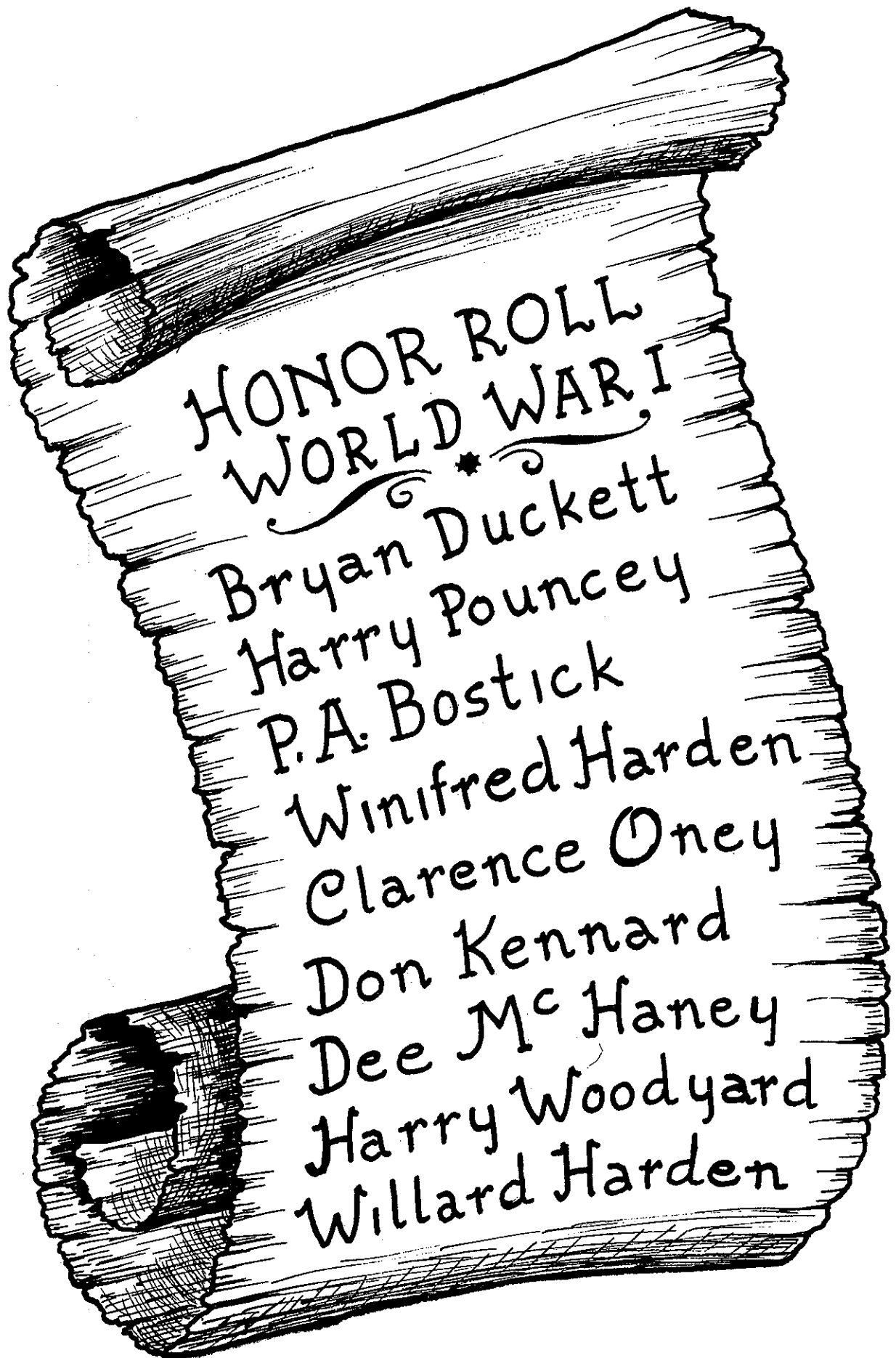


Some Members of Church In Old Stone Building

Mr. and Mrs. Crawford Morgan
 Mr. and Mrs. Walter Holloway
 Mr. and Mrs. H. H. Watson
 Mr. and Mrs. H. W. Alston
 Mr. and Mrs. A. P. Hardin
 Mr. and Mrs. H. W. Lawrence
 Mr. and Mrs. B. B. Plier
 Mr. and Mrs. T. S. Smelker
 Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Germany
 Mr. and Mrs. Bill Meason
 The F. A. Stewart Family
 The Will Stewart Family
 The A. S. Latham Family
 The Behymer Family
 Judge Will C. Hurst and Family
 The J. Matt Owings Family
 The Will R. Owings Family
 Mrs. George Utzman and Family

The Merritt Moseley Family
 The C. D. Freeman Family
 The Buckingham Family
 The George E. Adams Family
 The E. O. Kuydendall Family
 The Zack Evans Family
 The Bert Espy Family
 The Weaver Family
 Mrs. Frank Rodeick and Family
 Mr. and Mrs. J. H. McHaney
 Mr. and Mrs. G. O. Cunyus
 Mr. and Mrs. Elbert Morgan
 Mr. and Mrs. Albert Morgan
 Mr. and Mrs. Ed Nelson
 Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Davis
 Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Hurst
 Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Garner
 Mr. and Mrs. H. N. Roberts
 Mr. and Mrs. W. Y. Crockett

The C. C. Eaker Family
 The Van Orden Family
 Mrs. Alice Hardin and Family
 The Hudgins Family
 The I. L. Brown Family
 The Clopton Family
 The E. B. Penicy Family
 The John L. Smith Family
 The Jack Munden Family
 The T. L. Prothro Family
 The E. Sperling Family
 The R. A. Crews Family
 S. W. Mathews Family
 The T. C. Denton Family
 The J. F. Martin Family
 The George T. Hill Family
 Mr. and Mrs. B. M. Carter
 Mr. and Mrs. I. Isley



HONOR ROLL
WORLD WAR I

Bryan Duckett

Harry Pouncey

P.A. Bostick

Winifred Harden

Clarence Oney

Don Kennard

Dee Mc Haney

Harry Woodyard

Willard Harden

The Third Church Building

GEORGE D. DICKINSON (1932-1936)

George D. Dickinson was called for a second ministry to the Longview First Christian Church in 1932. It was through his inspiration and capable leadership that the present church building was planned and constructed.

The church had grown to 700 members and the old church on Greet Street was no longer adequate. The church property was sold and a new location was made on the present site of Sixth Street. Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Hurst donated the block of land on which the new church was to be constructed.

During the construction of the new church, worship was held in the Longview High School building, which is now Foster Junior High School.

Miss Jessie Hawkins served as choir leader and educational director.

May 6, 1934, was Ground Breaking Day for the new church. An inspirational program

was rendered before a gathering of several hundred people.

The program consisted of:

Call to Dedication by George D. Dickinson, minister.

"Faith of Our Fathers," sung by the choir.

Mrs. A. S. Latham gave a brief history of the Christian Church in Longview.

The lighting of four bonfires was a spectacular feature.

First, in memory of the charter members of the church. This fire was lighted by Tom Landers, Jr.

Second, honoring the past pastors of the church. This fire was lighted by Best Espy, Jr.

Third, fire in honor of pioneer members of the church, lighted by James Leak Hurst.

Fourth, complimented the 303 new members of the church, lighted by George Logan Dickinson.

The Ground Breaking Service was closed with the choir singing, "Lead On, Oh King Eternal" and the closing Prayer of Dedication was given by the pastor, George D. Dickinson.

★ ★

September 8, 1936, the new church was dedicated.

On that eventful day the program was as follows:

Invocation by J. N. Wooten (a former pastor).

Scripture Reading, Mr. Sidney Latham.

Opening Prayer by Rev. George D. Dickinson, Pastor.

Solo, Mrs. Elbert Morgan,

Presentation of key to the church by Architect P. E. Zimmerman.

Accepting the Keys, Judge W. C. Hurst.

At 2:30 in the afternoon, an informal gathering enjoyed music and impromptu speeches by friends of the church and friends of the Dickinson family who had come from each of the pastorates of Mr. Dickinson.

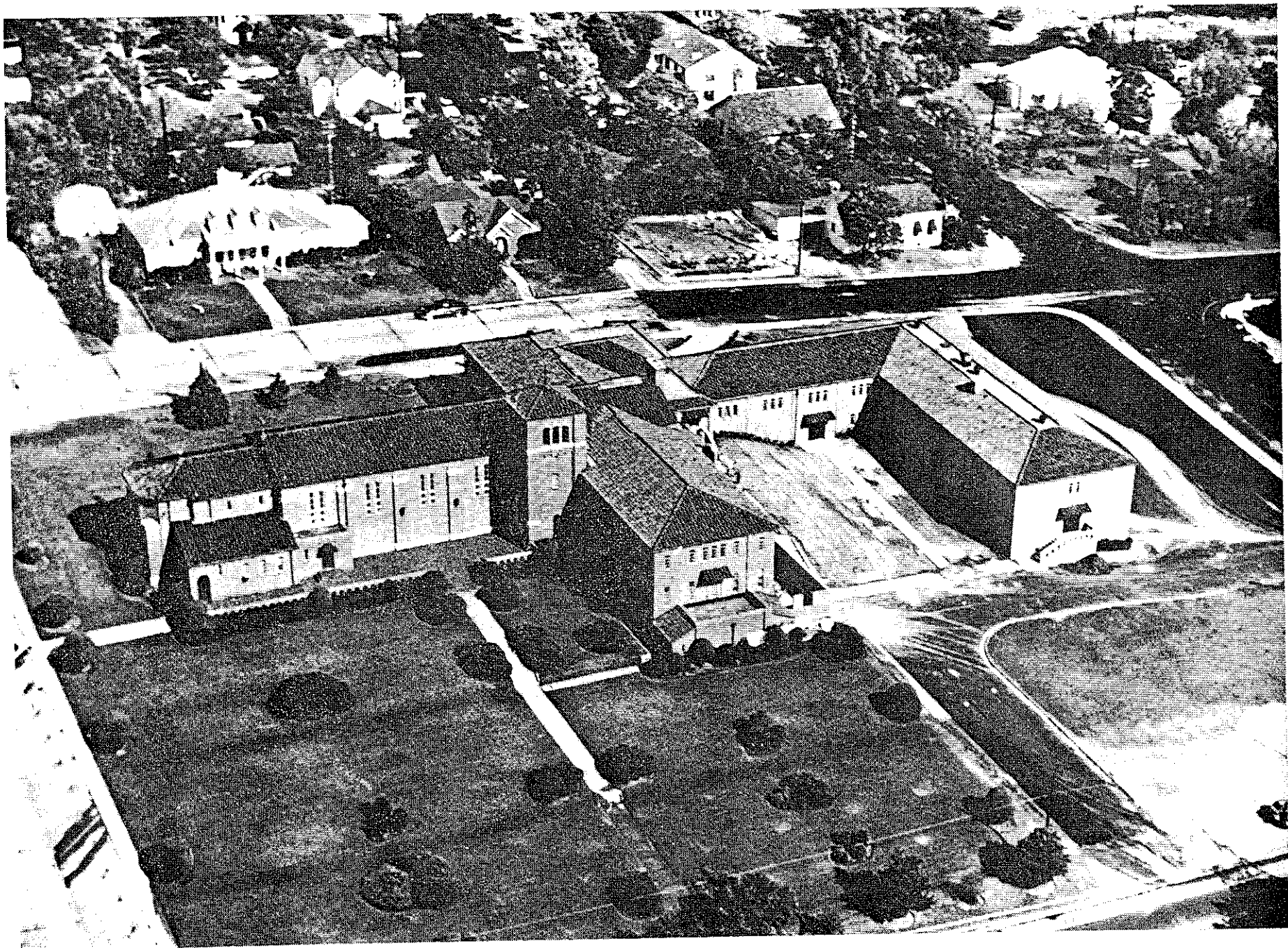
A delicious chicken dinner was served in the social room of the church for all visitors under the supervision of Mrs. C. D. Freeman.

On the day of dedication Gov. James V. Allred taught the Men's Class on the invitation of their wonderful teacher, Sidney Latham.

During Mr. Dickinson's ministry in Longview, he preached regularly at the Gum Springs Christian Church and the Peatown



GEORGE DICKINSON



AERIAL VIEW OF FIRST CHRISITAN CHURCH, 1956



TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
P.O. BOX 12276 AUSTIN, TEXAS 78711-2276 512/463-6100

December 13, 1994

Dr. Norman Black, Chair
Gregg CHC
417 Mobberly Avenue
Longview, TX 75602

RE: FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF LONGVIEW
18" x 28" marker w/ post
Job # 08995 Received: 11/14/94

Dear Dr. Black:

We have received the above-referenced marker application. The application will be reviewed and evaluated by the Texas Historical Commission staff in the order in which it was received. Currently, there is a three to four month wait between the time subject marker applications are received and evaluated. Should additional information be needed for the review, we will contact you and any parties listed below at that time. After any deficiencies have been corrected, we will send copies of the application to the members of the State Marker Review Board, who will make the final determination of the topic's acceptability for marking.

We will notify all parties as soon as the Board makes its decision. If the topic is approved for marking, payment will be requested at that time. If not approved, the application will be returned along with a letter of explanation.

Because of the variables involved in the marker process, and because we must coordinate our orders with the schedule of the contracting foundry, we suggest that the date of the marker dedication not be set until the completed marker is received.

We appreciate the effort made to record this topic. Should there be any questions about the status of this marker application, please contact me at 512/463-5853.

Sincerely,

Egina G. Kaase
Office Manager
Local History Programs

pc: Beth Dodson



CURTIS TUNNELL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

P.O. BOX 12276

AUSTIN, TEXAS 78711-2276

(TELEPHONE) 512-463-6100

(FAX) 512-463-6095

(RELAY TX) 1-800-735-2989 (TDD)

February 15, 1995

Beth Dodson
117 West Edgefield
Longview, TX 75602

RE: FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF LONGVIEW
18" x 28" marker w/ post
Job # 08995, Gregg County

Dear Ms. Dodson:

I am pleased to notify you that the State Marker Review Board has reviewed and approved the above-referenced topic for an Official Texas Historical Marker.

Payment for the marker, in the amount of \$550.00, is now due. Please complete and return the enclosed payment form at your earliest convenience. Once payment for the marker is received, the application will be placed in line to have the marker inscription written. The inscription will not be written until after funds have been received. When the text is prepared, a copy will be sent to you and any parties listed below for review and approval.

The Texas Historical Commission congratulates you on your efforts to record and preserve Texas history.

Sincerely,

Cynthia J. Beeman, Administrator
Official Texas Historical Markers
Local History Programs

pc: Dr. Norman Black, Gregg CHC



TEXAS
HISTORICAL
COMMISSION

George W. Bush • Governor
John L. Nau, III • Chairman
Curtis Tunnell • Executive Director

The State Agency for Historic Preservation

November 8, 1995

Dr. Norman Black, Chair
Gregg CHC
417 Mobberly Avenue
Longview, TX 75602

RE: FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF LONGVIEW
18" x 28" marker w/ post
Job # 08995 Inscription Revision

Dear Dr. Black:

Enclosed is the revised inscription for the above-referenced historical marker. I have tried to incorporate most of the changes that you suggested, but various style and spacing requirements may have required some compromising.

If you approve the inscription, please sign and return the enclosed copy of the text. If not, please let me know and I will work on it further with you. Again, to avoid any unnecessary delays, please consult with all parties listed below before returning your approval or submitting any suggested revisions.

The marker will be ordered when a version is approved by all parties. Thank you for your recommendations. I hope this inscription meets with your approval.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cynthia J. Beeman".

Cynthia J. Beeman, Administrator
Official Texas Historical Markers
Local History Programs

pc: Beth Dodson

Texas Historical Commission Staff (RMO), 5/27/95, revised 10/25/95

18" x 28" Official Texas Historical Marker with post
Gregg County (Job #08995)
Location: 720 N. Sixth St., Longview

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH*
OF LONGVIEW*

THIS CHURCH WAS ORGANIZED IN
1875 BY 12 CHARTER MEMBERS, THE
CONGREGATION MET IN A SCHOOL-
HOUSE UNTIL A FRAME SANCTUARY
WAS BUILT LATER THAT YEAR ON
LAND DEEDED TO THE CHURCH BY THE
TEXAS & PACIFIC RAILROAD COMPANY,
JAMES P. HOLLOWAY, A PROMINENT
AREA LANDOWNER, SERVED AS FIRST
PASTOR. A NEW CHURCH BUILDING,
ERECTED IN 1906, WAS REPLACED
WITH A BRICK SANCTUARY AT THIS
SITE IN 1936. THE CHURCH CONTINUES
A LONG TRADITION OF SUPPORTING
NUMEROUS MINISTRIES BY OFFERING
VARIOUS WORSHIP AND OUTREACH
PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES TO THE
COMMUNITY. **
SESQUICENTENNIAL OF TEXAS STATEHOOD 1845-1995***

*1/2 inch lettering to contrast with text
**1/2 inch lettering
***1/4 inch lettering

PLEASE CHECK ONE AND SIGN:

- I approve this text as written.
 Please consider the revisions as
noted on this copy.

Norman W. Shep 11-21-95
(signature)



TEXAS
HISTORICAL
COMMISSION

George W. Bush • Governor

John L. Nau, III • Chairman

Curtis Tunnell • Executive Director

The State Agency for Historic Preservation

December 8, 1995

Dr. Norman Black, Chair
Gregg CHC
417 Mobberly Avenue
Longview, TX 75602

RE: FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF LONGVIEW
18" x 28" marker w/ post
Job #: 08995; Shipment to your attention

Dear Dr. Black:

We have ordered the above-referenced marker for casting. Due to a backlog at the foundry, it is currently taking about 16 weeks for delivery. However, this is just an estimate; a final shipment date will depend on the foundry's workload. A copy of the final inscription as it was sent to the foundry is enclosed for your files. According to our records, the marker should be shipped to the address above. If these instructions have changed during the marker process, please let me know as soon as possible so that I may notify the foundry.

If you have not already done so, this would be a good time to begin planning the marker dedication ceremony. However, please avoid setting the dedication date until the marker is received. The estimated shipping date above does not take into account potential shipping problems or other unforeseen delays, and the best laid dedication plans could be upset if planned around this time estimate. We will notify you and all parties listed below once the marker has been shipped from the foundry. A guide to planning a dedication ceremony is available from our office upon request. Since this is a state program, we suggest that your state senator and/or representative be included in the program, as well as your county judge and commissioners who have appointed your county historical commission.

Enclosed is a form for announcing the dedication in the THC's bi-monthly newsletter, The Medallion; in the marker dedication calendar, which is distributed to agency commissioners and staff; and in the monthly News for County Historical Commissions, once details have been finalized.

Again, please let me know if there has been a change in the shipping address, or if you would like a marker dedication guide.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Egrina G. Reyes".

Egrina G. Reyes
Office Manager
Local History Programs

pc: Beth Dodson



Gregg County Historical Commission

Norman W. Black, D.D.S.
Chairman

417 Mobberly Avenue
Longview, Texas 75602

February 12, 1996

Phone
903-757-2261

FAX
903-753-5337

Cynthia J. Beeman, Administrator
State Historical Marker Program
Local History Programs
Texas Historical Commission
P. O. Box 12276
Austin, Texas 78711

Re: First Christian Church of Longview Historical Marker, Job #08995.

Dear Cynthia:

Enclosed is a check for \$60.35 for the cost of an inscription strip to be attached to the back of the above marker. The inscription should read: In memory of Mae Beth McHaney Holloway and William Alton Holloway by their daughters. I don't know how this can be done on the back of the marker. It may be that you and the foundry might decide that it must be on the front bottom land (margin). If this must be the case it will be alright.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Enc. - 2.

P.S. Cynthia, I have had some experience in affixing these inscription strips to historical markers but I haven't done one on the back. The foundry has always been very helpful to me in these technics and I feel confident that if they say it can be done...I can do it.



TEXAS
HISTORICAL
COMMISSION

George W. Bush • Governor
John L. Nau, III • Chairman
Curtis Tunnell • Executive Director

The State Agency for Historic Preservation

February 23, 1996

Dr. Norman Black, Chair
Gregg CHC
417 Mobberly Avenue
Longview, TX 75602

RE: Incising Order for First Christian Church of Longview marker
Job # 14696

Dear Dr. Black:

We have received payment and approval for the above order and have placed it with the foundry. According to our records, the order will be shipped to the above address. If these instructions have changed, please contact me as soon as possible so that I may notify the foundry.

We will contact you again once the order has been shipped. Thank you for interest in the Local History Programs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Egina".

Egina G. Reyes
Office Manager
Local History Programs



TEXAS
HISTORICAL
COMMISSION

George W. Bush • Governor
John L. Nau, III • Chairman
Curtis Tunnell • Executive Director

The State Agency for Historic Preservation

April 10, 1996

Norman Black, Chair
Gregg CHC
417 Mobberly Avenue
Longview, TX 75602

RE: Incising Order on Plate for attachment to back of 18" x 28" marker
Job # 14696; Date Shipped: 03/29/96; Shipping Company: UPS

Dear Dr. Black:

Your order has been shipped to the above address, on the above-referenced date. If it has not yet been received, please contact the Southwell Company at 210/223-1831 so that it may be traced. Please be prepared to give the job number, date shipped, and shipping company name.

Thank you for supporting the Local History Programs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Egina".

Egina G. Reyes
Office Manager
Local History Programs

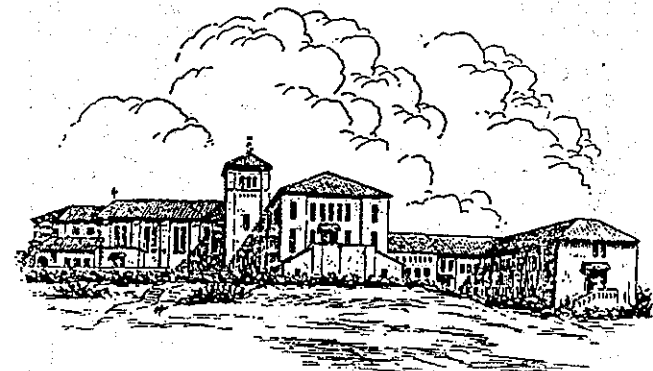
Pastors of the First Christian Church

James P. Holloway 1875
John T. Poe 1876-1885
William C. Holloway 1887-1893
L. A. Dale 1894-1895
Bother Robertson 1896
R. H. Simmans 1897-1899
A. L. Conder 1900
A. O. Riall 1901
J. H. Fuller 1902-1903
J. A. Livsey 1904
J. N. Wooreen 1905
J. A. Holton 1907
J. N. Wooten 1908-1917
H. C. Beckler 1917-1918
Clifford Weaver 1918
Gerald Culberson 1918-1919
W. C. Jones 1919-1923
S. Clark Bateman 1923-1924
George Dickinson 1924-1925
James T. McKissick 1925-1926
William C. Jones 1926-1928
James Wright 1928-1931
George Dickinson 1932-1936
J. E. Montgomery 1936-1942
W. O. Harmon 1942-1944
Dr. Sloan Gentry 1945-1960
Dr. William C. Howland, Jr. 1960-1965
Tommie M. Bouchard 1966-1975
Dr. Jim B. Elam 1976-Present



Dedication of an Official Texas Historical Marker

First Christian Church Longview, Texas



Sunday, April 28, 1996
9:30 a.m.

Sponsored by
The Texas Historical Commission
The Gregg County Historical Commission

Program

Welcome and Invocation Dr. Jim Elam
Pastor, First Christian Church

Introduction of
Gregg County Historical
Commission and Guests Dr. Norman W. Black
Chairman, Gregg County Historical Commission

Remarks Dr. Elam

Dedication and Reading of Marker Dr. Black

Unveiling of Marker Beth Holloway Dodson
Gregg County Historical Commission

Benediction Dr. Elam

Gregg County Historical Commission

Dr. Norman W. Black, Chairman
Mrs. Mildred Wood Barker
Mr. Jack Buchanan
Mrs. Pauline Cox
Mrs. B. W. Crain, Jr
Beth Holloway Dodson
Dr. Ken Durham
Carol Morris Little
Mrs. Nelda Lewis

Mrs. H. L. Long
Anne P. Mackenzie
Nauty Byrd Mayer
Amanda Pratt Nobles
Dr. W. D. Northcutt, III
Mrs. John W. Osteen
Ben Reynolds
Mrs. Nancy Ruff
Mr. Joe White
Mr. W. A. Williams

Helen Mc Haney Griffin



FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF LONGVIEW

THIS CHURCH WAS ORGANIZED IN 1875 BY 12 CHARTER MEMBERS. THE CONGREGATION MET IN A SCHOOLHOUSE UNTIL A FRAME SANCTUARY WAS BUILT LATER THAT YEAR ON LAND DEEDED TO THE CHURCH BY THE TEXAS & PACIFIC RAILROAD COMPANY. JAMES P. HOLLOWAY, A PROMINENT AREA LAND OWNER, SERVED AS FIRST PASTOR. A NEW CHURCH BUILDING, ERECTED IN 1906, WAS REPLACED WITH A BRICK SANCTUARY AT THIS SITE IN 1936. THE CHURCH CONTINUES A LONG TRADITION OF SUPPORTING NUMEROUS MINISTRIES BY OFFERING PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES TO THE COMMUNITY.

This marker is given in loving memory of
Mae Beth McHaney Holloway
and
William Alton Holloway
by their daughters

The First Christian Church

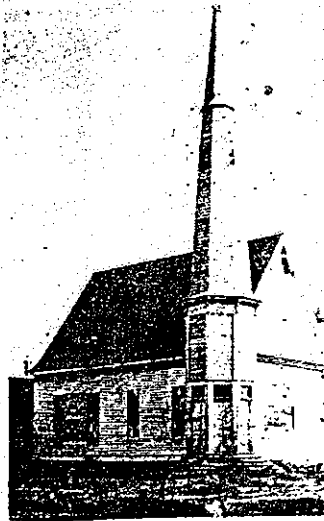
Longview, Texas

The year 1871 marked the coming of the railroad to East Texas. O. H. Methvin had deeded one hundred acres of his cornfields to the Southern Pacific Railroad for the price of one dollar. In 1873 the County of Gregg was organized and the flourishing little town of Longview was chosen as the county seat.

The roots of the First Christian Church can be traced back to families who were members of the so-called Christian Union Church near the village of Camden. A small group of worshippers, who called themselves simply "Christians", began to meet in Mrs. Leak's school house on Green Street. Of the 12 charter members, the 11 known names are Mr. James P. Holloway, Mr. William C. Holloway, Mrs. Sarah Holloway, Mr. G. B. Harrison, Mr. B. F. Phillips, Mr. and Mrs. George Harrison, Mrs. Eliza P. Hutchings, Ann Holloway Protho, Mr. T. S. S. Young and Mrs. True.

When the numbers swelled to twenty, they resolved to build a meeting house and on August 13, 1875, acting through their duly authorized trustees, the church acquired a gift from the Texas and Pacific Railway Company of a lot of land situated at the corner of East Methvin and North Green Streets.

The first church house was a plain frame structure built by the men of the church in 1875. It contained one large room with a high ceiling, a steep roof made of pine shingles, and a belfry. There were windows consisting of small glass panes on each side, with two such windows behind the pulpit to lend more light to the scripture. The rostrum was low, and the members sat on hand-made wooden



1876

benches. Circular steps and an imposing spire were added later. James P. Holloway, a prominent land-owner & farmer, is remembered as the first pastor.

By 1906 the congregation had grown to 75 members, so on the same location a new building was constructed of cement stone blocks molded to resemble natural stone. Of modified Gothic architectural design, this eminent building had a commanding location near the business section of town. The new building contained lovely stained glass windows, a baptistry, basement and pipe organ. The entire sanctuary burned in 1914, but was quickly restored.



1906

By 1932 the church had grown to seven hundred members and the old church location on Green Street was no longer adequate. Judge and Mrs. W.C. Hurst donated the block of land on Sixth Street that is the present location. Ground breaking was held May 6, 1934, with a special inspirational program dedicated to the charter members. The beautiful red brick building with stained glass windows, red tile roof, and vaulted ceiling with massive oak rafters was dedicated September 8, 1936. The Children's Building was dedicated in 1956.

The Texas Historical Commission and the Gregg County Historical Commission are proud to honor The First Christian Church on its 121th anniversary with an Official Texas Historical Marker.



First Christian celebrates 121 years of faith

By Glenn Evans
Staff Writer

In 1936, the First Christian Church of Longview already was 61 years old, its congregation debating whether to resettle "way out in the country" on Sixth Street near the present-day Good Shepherd Medical Center.

The stone church building at Green and Methvin streets stood in the center of Longview's action. Mule-drawn street cars had been electrified since 1912, and members had sacrificed so much to rebuild the sanctuary when it burned in 1914.

But the congregation had swelled from its original dozen, who first gathered in 1875 in a school house on Green Street, to 700. They needed more room, and a green hill outside downtown afforded space to grow.

Today the electric street cars have gone the way of their mule-drawn predecessors, and that hill way out in the country seems practically in the center of town.

"It makes you wonder what kind of changes will take place, will happen, in the next century," the Rev. Jim Elam told congregation members and friends who attended ceremonies Sunday dedicating a Texas Historical Marker set in the grass in



Glenn Evans/Longview News-Journal

The Rev. Jim Elam exhorts members of the First Christian Church during dedication ceremonies Sunday of a Texas Historical Commission marker noting the congregation's 121 years in Longview.

front of the 1936 sanctuary.

Elam recalled those debates over the short

exodus to that location, and asked a show of hands from any who had worshipped in the

old stone Gothic edifice.

Of the 100 gathered on the lawn Sunday, about one dozen hands went toward heaven. Minutes earlier, Elam had recognized the descendants of the charter members who established the congregation in Leak's one-room school.

"I feel a sense of pride and joy to be a part of such a congregation," Elam said. "While the times have changed, this congregation uses the same Book that our founding fathers used."

He added that the congregation also displays the same care for each other, and espouses the same values that it developed 121 years ago.

"There is truly an honor roll of saints in our history," he said. Those included First Christian's first pastor, the Rev. James F. Holloway, whose great-great-great-granddaughter, Lauren Dodsor, helped unveil the marker.

The marker itself was given in memory of Mae Beth McHaney Holloway and William Alton Holloway, a grandson and granddaughter-in-law of the first pastor, by their daughters who were present at Sunday's ceremony.

Norman W. Black

From: "Dan Utley" <dan.utley@thc.state.tx.us>
To: "Norman W. Black" <norman.black@co.gregg.tx.us>
Sent: Tuesday, February 05, 2002 3:46 PM
Subject: Re: Marker relocation

I look forward, as always, to seeing you at TSHA. I might even see you earlier in Texarkana for ETHA.

Dan

At 03:28 PM 2/5/2002 -0600, you wrote:

Dear Dan,

Thanks for the permission to move the marker to the Turner St. side: it is 1000 Turner. However, since I sent the request one of our valuable GCHC members, Beth Dodson (a right hand to me), and a member of this church, correctly pointed out that the original site is the correct site because it is on the front side of the church. I agree with Beth on this. I certainly will keep you informed. This church has an expansive and beautiful campus and the marker on the original site really looked good. The church is building a sort of garden, on the next terrace behind the historical marker, with a statue in the middle and in the installation process they damaged the sewer line, I have been told. (excuse the poor sentence)

Dan, I may see you in Corpus at the TSHA meeting in March.
Norman

----- Original Message -----

From: Dan Utley
To: norman.black@co.gregg.tx.us
Sent: Tuesday, February 05, 2002 2:55 PM
Subject: Marker relocation

Dr. Black:

You have our permission to move the marker as shown on the photo you provided. If you would, send us the Turner Drive street address and we'll update our files. Thanks.

Dan

From: "Norman W. Black"
<norman.black@co.gregg.tx.us>
To: <cynthia.beeman@thc.state.tx.us>
Subject: First Christian Church - Longview -
H.M. location change

2/5/02

Norman W. Black

From: "Dan Utley" <dan.utley@thc.state.tx.us>
To: <norman.black@co.gregg.tx.us>
Sent: Tuesday, February 05, 2002 2:55 PM
Attach: First Christian Church - Longview.jpg.jpg
Subject: Marker relocation

Dr. Black:

You have our permission to move the marker as shown on the photo you provided. If you would, send us the Turner Drive street address and we'll update our files. Thanks.

Dan

From: "Norman W. Black" <norman.black@co.gregg.tx.us>
To: <cynthia.beeman@thc.state.tx.us>
Subject: First Christian Church - Longview - H.M. location change
Date: Tue, 5 Feb 2002 10:41:23 -0600
Organization: Gregg County Historical Commission
X-Mailer: Microsoft Outlook Express 5.50.4133.2400

Dear Cynthia:

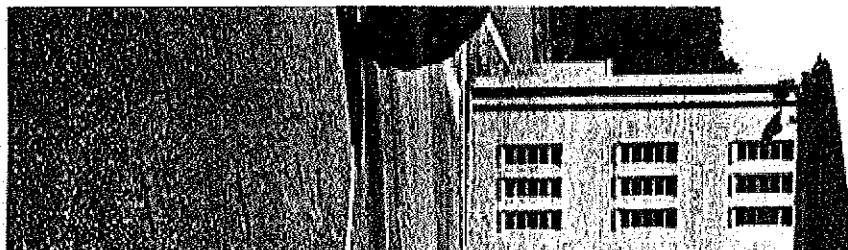
Recently a sewerline leak and cave in required the temporary removal of the 1995 OTHM, Job #08995. The church would like to relocate the marker to a more visible site of the Turner Drive (north side). More people enter the building this way than any other. The attachment has a red "X" for the new site but I doubt the transmission will show this.

Does this change meet with your approval?. If so, I would like to reset the marker this Friday.

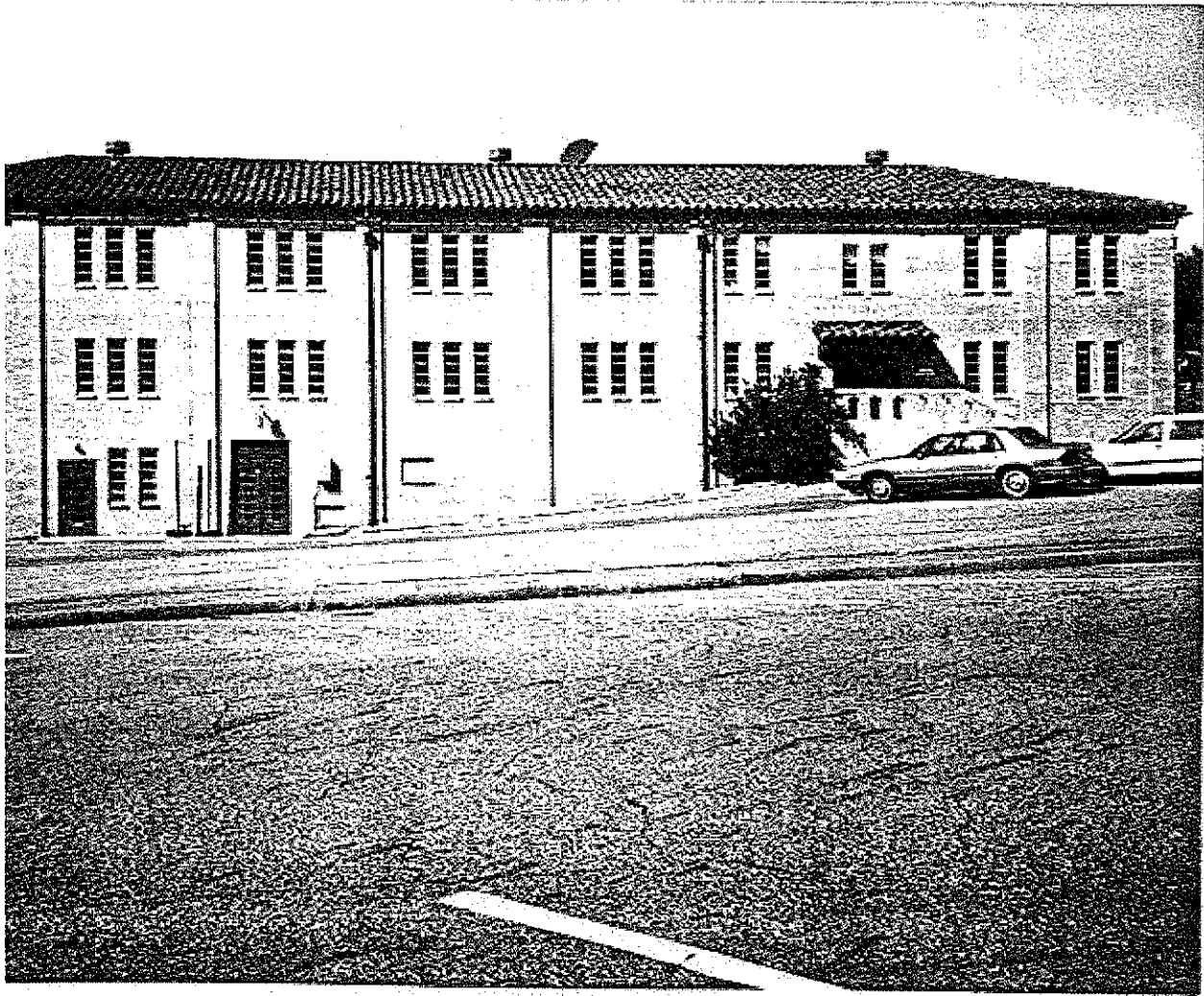
Thanks very much.

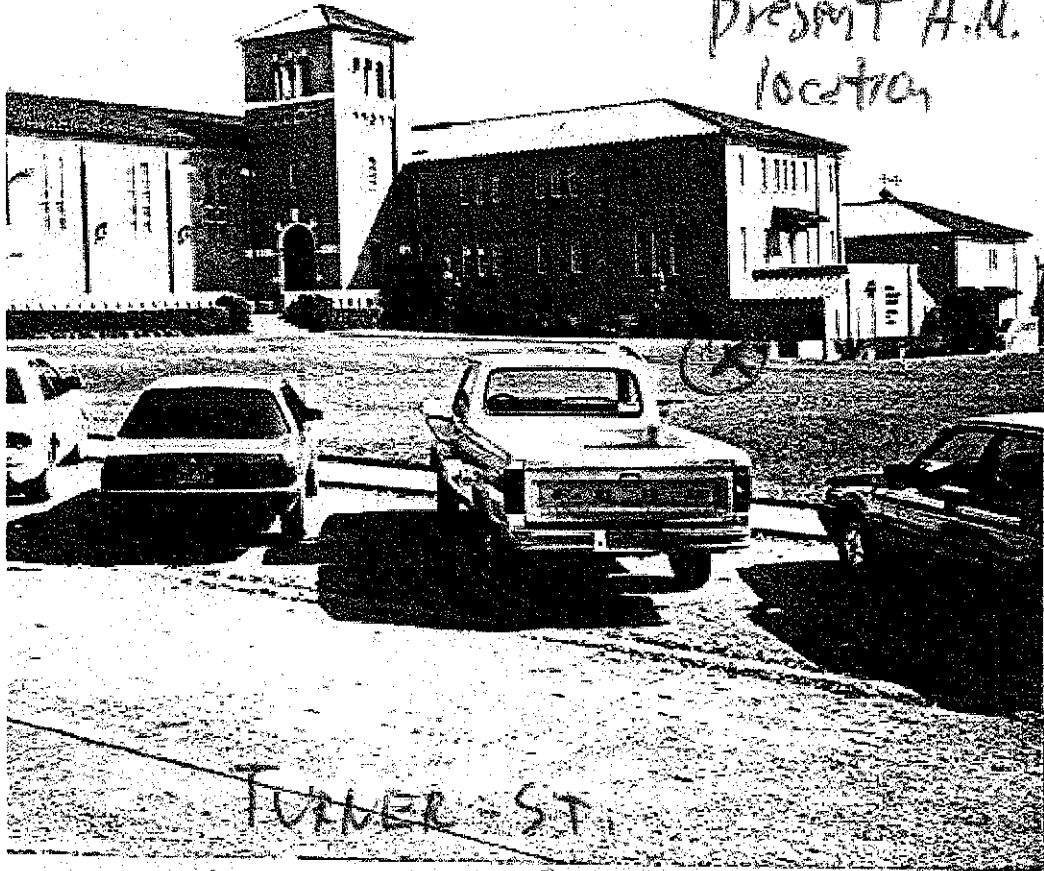
Norman Black, D.D.S.

ch
urch by Xthis route than any other



2/5/02





PRESENT A.M.
LOCATION

TURNER ST.
EAST SIDE

First Christian dates back to 1875

Special to the News-Journal

The First Christian Church dates back to 1875, just two years after Gregg County was organized and Longview had been selected as its county seat.

The 12 charter members along with others who helped them built the first building at the corner of East Methvin and North Green streets. This small group met in "Mrs. Leak's School House" until land was acquired from the Texas and Pacific Railway Co. and a little frame structure was erected by the men of the church. James P. Holloway, one of the charter members, is remembered as the first pastor of the First Christian Church.

When growth dictated, in 1907, a larger building was constructed in the same location. This building was made from cement stone blocks molded in a pattern resembling natural stone. It was the first building of its kind in the region.

By 1934, it was known to the members that the facilities were not capable of handling the entire membership. On May 6, 1934, ground-breaking ceremonies were held for the new structure at a new location, the block between Sixth and Seventh streets and Adon and Turner streets. The block was donated by Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Hurst. In 1956, the present education wing was constructed.

The congregation has made a concerted effort to expand its

outreach ministries by initiating and supporting such community projects as the Food Box, Meals on Wheels, Habitat for Humanity, East Texas Council for Adult Literacy, and the Longview Community Ministries Information and Service Center.

In 1986, First Christian Church purchased and renovated the building at 405 N. Fifth St. to house the Information and Service Center, the Food Box, all of which are under the umbrella organization of the Longview Community Ministries.


Dr. Jim B. Elam has completed his 13th year as minister.

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