

In the beginning of January, 1943, Willie Chandler reported to Starling Avenue on behalf of the Chatham Heights Mission. On roll were 82 people with an average attendance of 50. They had \$425 in the building fund. The mission was paying for its own literature. The Sunday School had \$50 in its treasury that they were adding to the building fund.

Chatham Heights Mission tabernacle was completed in May and had its first service in the new building on June 6, 1943. The cost of the building was \$2,600. They had paid \$1,600 and were in debt for the remaining \$1000.

1944

Mrs. Scott was hired as music director at \$10 per month. The Boy Scout troop was re-registered, and Mrs. J. A. Chappell and Mrs. L. J. Morgan became leaders of the newly organized Girl Scout troop.

Willie Chandler, Superintendent of the Chatham Heights Mission, reported to Starling Avenue that the Mission had reduced its debt to \$900. At his request Starling Avenue Church made a donation of \$200 to the mission. Mr. Chandler asked that Dr. Harmon make arrangements to dedicate the newly finished mission building.

Starling Avenue Church sanctuary was remodeled at a cost of \$2,000. Walnut veneer was purchased for \$100. Indirect lighting was installed and the ceiling was painted.

The deacons recommended that the church buy a lot behind the church for \$500 from B. L. Fisher. The 50 feet by 150 feet lot became the site of the educational building and part of the parking lot.

The Chatham Heights Mission became Chatham Heights Baptist Church in a 3:00 p.m. service, August 20, 1944. The one-room tabernacle mission officially became Chatham Heights Baptist Church. That morning Starling Avenue Church met in a business session to grant a group letter listing all who wished to transfer their membership to the Chatham Heights Church.

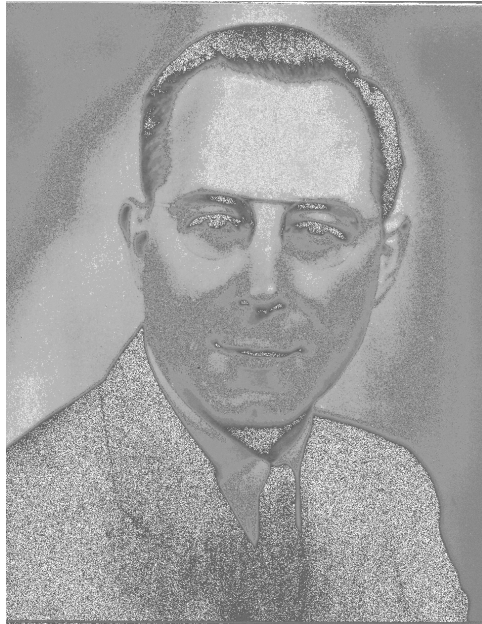
1945

In early 1945 at the monthly business meeting the deacons asked that their chairman take charge of the offering plates and prayer at each service. Mrs. Elizabeth Bowles, WMU president, asked that the WMU be granted the opportunity to receive three special offerings for missions during the year.

Chatham Heights Church requested that Starling Avenue Church sell them two lots in the Chatham Heights area. The church discussed this in a business meeting and decided that the trustees from Starling Avenue Church would

make arrangements to deed Chatham Heights Church the two lots at no charge. Chatham Heights Church had grown rapidly. In just a short time they were ready to build a larger church building.

In May of 1945 the church was asked to approve a motion to license Julian Motley to preach. Mr. Motley would be a student at Campbell College, Wake Forest College and at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. The church, believing that Mr. Motley had been truly called by God to preach the gospel, gave its wholehearted approval.



Dr. Charles Harmon



Minnie Wood, Ma Pinkard, Moss Roach, Jinx Roach, friends at Fairy Stone Park. The Blue Ridge Parkway and Fairy Stone Park were the work of the CCC in 1935.

It was in 1945 that the church approved a plan for the formation of the finance committee. The committee would be made up of three deacons appointed by the pastor plus the church treasurer, superintendent of Sunday School, Training Union director, and the WMU president and its job would be to set the budget each year.

1946

Starling Avenue Church entered into a city-wide evangelistic revival along with other churches, and this revival was to be held for two weeks before Easter.

Dr. Harmon asked the church in its February business meeting to go on record to request the Mayor of the City of Martinsville to stop the sale of alcoholic beverages from midnight Saturday night until midnight Sunday night. The church approved Dr. Harmon's request.

A letter was read from the Southern Desk Company stating that they could make the pews that the church had ordered and

have them ready in ninety days if the church would agree to have them constructed of either huckleberry or gum wood. The church agreed that the company could make them of either.

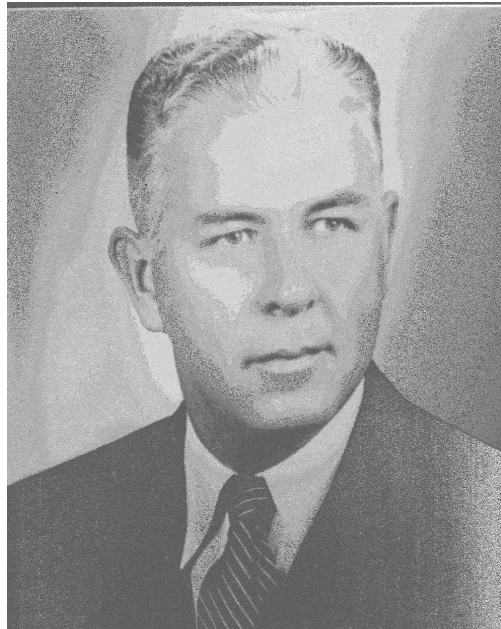
Dr. Harmon offered his resignation, effective July 1, 1946, to accept the presidency of Bluefield College in Bluefield, Virginia.

It was Dr. Harmon's desire to have the pews installed before he left. Southern Desk Company assured him they could be installed by April 8, 1946.

The church asked Dr. Harmon to appoint a pulpit committee. He stated that he would appoint the same committee that had served so faithfully before with the exception of Lester Bowles whose wife was expecting a baby shortly. The committee included Sherman

Donavant, who replaced Mr. Bowles, W. O. Minter, Edd Draper, Jinx Roach, and Annie Dillon. Julian Motley was hired as interim pastor for the summer months and was paid \$35.00 per week.

The pulpit committee reported to the church that they had visited a number of churches and heard the pastors that had been recommended, but each time they came back with the same feeling to call Reverend George E. Simmons to come once again as pastor of the church.



Dr. George Simmons

Reverend Simmons had been discharged from the Army and was pastoring a church in Norfolk, Virginia. The committee traveled to Norfolk and extended the call to him. He accepted and became

pastor on September 1, 1946. While the Simmonses were away from Starling Avenue, they had an addition to their family. Margaret had been born to the Simmonses on June 1, 1944.



Jinx Roach had a story about that trip to Norfolk. Clarence Donavant had bought a new car, and he told the search committee that he would be happy to drive them to Norfolk. On the way Mr. Donavant was stopped for speeding. He told the state trooper that they were on their way to church and were afraid that they might be late. The trooper told him that he thought that he had heard every excuse, but this was a new one. He told them where they could go and pay the fine. When they got there Mr. Draper pulled out his wallet. Mr. Donavant told Mr. Draper that he was the one speeding and that he would pay the fine. Mr. Draper responded, "Now Clarence, I was going just a fast as you were."



Edd and Fannie Draper

The church stayed busy with church improvements. Plans were drawn up by an architect from the Sunday School Board in Nashville, Tennessee, to enclose the two side porches to be used for Sunday School rooms. The sanctuary floor, vestibule, steps and landing were covered with cork tile. The bottom steps and landing were covered with asphalt tile. The cost for the complete jobs was \$2,047.

The church heard recommendations that an educational director be hired and paid \$1,800 per year; that the church order an organ from the Hamilton Organ Company; and that the church begin taking up a love offering at Thanksgiving and at Easter. All were adopted.



In December, 1946, Reverend Simmons appointed a building committee to secure plans to add two Sunday School rooms and to employ an architect to draw plans for an educational building.

1947

The men of the church organized a Men's Fellowship Club that met on the Friday after the third Sunday each month, and the ladies of the church prepared and served a supper for them.

A six-burner gas stove was given to the church for use in the kitchen by Mr. Charlie Reed. The church bought table settings for six dozen people.

Mrs. James McKee gave the church a \$200 gift. It was decided to use the money to install chimes in the belfry. The church added \$60 to the gift to pay for the chimes which were played from the organ keyboard.

It was in February that the first married couples Sunday School class was started. Most Sunday Schools until then had been segregated according to gender. Mrs. Simmons taught the class.

During this time church gave Trinity Baptist Church its old communion set.

Reverend Simmons attended Wake Forest College in Wake Forest, North Carolina, from June 9th through August 10th of 1947. He continued to hold Sunday services, and arrangements were made to have someone come and hold the mid-week services.

In November, 1947 work began on enclosing the two side porches. The \$5,400 cost was borrowed from Jefferson Standard Life Insurance Company.

The balcony was extended and elevated.

In June the church hired Mr. Bill Adams on a part-time basis as music director for the summer months, and he was paid \$60 per month.



The President Keeps a Promise
En route south for a vacation, President Truman stopped over in New Bern, N. C. to attend services at the First Baptist church as he had promised some time ago. He is pictured with the Rev. Thomas Fryer, pastor, and the later's wife.

In 1948 Rev. Fryer was serving as pastor of First Baptist Church, New Bern, NC. President Truman, being a good Baptist, stopped on his way to vacation in Florida to worship. Truman had met Fryer earlier and broached the idea of Fryer serving in some capacity in his administration, but the pastor continued in the ministry.

In September the deacons recommended that the church call Miss Ruth Pace as its music director and pay her \$100.00 per month. Miss Pace, who grew up in Ridgeway, had recently completed her bachelor's degree in music at the University of Kentucky where she had accompanied the university choir. She would begin a forty year career as a teacher at Martinsville High School and a lifetime of mentoring others in musical excellence. For seventeen years she served Starling Avenue.



The church approved the purchase of a Baldwin piano for \$1,646.00, a \$500.00 discount from the original price of \$2,146.00.

On June 30th Reverend Simmons presented the recommendation that the church buy the property owned by Dr. J. P. McCabe adjacent to the parsonage. When Reverend Simmons and Edd Draper had spoken to Dr. McCabe about the purchase, he had told them that upon searching his records, he felt a fair price would be \$5,500.00. He asked Reverend Simmons to discuss it with the church, but when that was done, Dr. McCabe could not remember that he had ever talked about the matter with them. The property was not purchased.

1949

In 1949 the seats were bought for the balcony along with one hundred additional hymnals. Mr. Bill Adams was called again to serve as music director since Miss Pace was returning to school for the summer.

While removing dirt from behind the church, the sewer line was damaged. The deacons asked that the line be lowered to street level. With the dirt removed, a cement wall was constructed and the foundation for an educational building poured. At the same time the property was graded and a twenty foot driveway poured between the church property and the Parcell property on Bridge Street (now Memorial Boulevard).

In August the church approved the purchase of stained glass windows for the sanctuary for a cost of \$23.40 each. An anonymous friend of the church contacted Mr. Trotter Dillon to donate all the windows.



GA coronation. Shirley Beane Stegall is Queen

The story was told that Trotter Dillon, a short man and avid church greeter, fell asleep at a Sunday evening worship service. When his slumber grew audible the deacon next to him applied a discreet elbow. He awoke with a start, thinking he had just been alerted that the pastor had called on him. Mr. Dillon quickly rose to his feet saying, "Let us pray" which ended the service a bit earlier than the pastor had planned.

The deacons were increased from twenty-one to thirty-three members in 1949.

Miss Martha Hartness of Kannapolis, North Carolina, became the minister of music September 1, 1949. Her salary was \$200 per month. She resigned three months later, saying that religious education secretarial duties were too much for her to do satisfactorily in addition to the job as minister of music.

Mrs. Juanita Polk, Mrs. Theresa Critz, Louis Eanes, and W. O. Minter worked with the music committee to find a minister of music and a church secretary.

Fluorescent lights were installed in the sanctuary and the basement. Kennon Whittle donated shrubs to plant around the church.



1950

The cement wall from Bridge Street to the steps outside of the Fellowship Hall was poured in 1950 in cooperation with Russell Clark who owned the Barber Shop on Starling Avenue next to the church.

In March, the committee to secure a minister of music asked that the church once again call Ruth Pace to fill the position from April, 2nd until the second week in June. Her salary was \$100.00 per month.

In June, 1950 the recommendation was brought to the church that the board of trustees negotiate a loan for \$63,000 to build the educational building. That loan would be paid back at the rate of \$475 per month which would include principal and interest with the balance coming due at the end of ten years. When negotiations for the loan were complete, the church decided to borrow \$65,000.

In November, the church sent out love offering envelopes to each of the members for the Thanksgiving love offerings. They were also mailed pledge cards to be signed and turned in to the church on the anniversary

Sunday, November 19, 1950. The deacons visited anyone who had not signed a pledge card and requested them to do so. The church membership was divided into thirty-three groups and each group assigned to a deacon.

The worship service was broadcast live over WMVA FM radio for thirteen weeks in the spring of 1951.

Reverend Simmons was asked to hire a part-time secretary until the church could secure a person that would serve both as educational director and secretary.

Mr. Minter gave the financial report on the new educational building.

<i>Transfer from savings account</i>	\$ 1,383.15
<i>Transfer from regular church treasury</i>	\$4,000.00
<i>Gifts from friend</i>	\$50.00
<i>Gifts from Building Supply Company</i>	\$300.00
<i>Borrowed from Piedmont Trust Bank</i>	<u>\$65,000.00</u>
<i>Total</i>	\$70,733.15
<i>Total cost of the building</i>	\$63,461.33
<i>Loan paid Jefferson Standard Life Insurance</i>	\$4,046.67
<i>Equipment for Building</i>	<u>\$2,351.76</u>
<i>Total Disbursements</i>	\$69,859.65
<i>Balance in Bank November 1, 1950</i>	\$ 2,139.81
<i>Outstanding Bills: Hampshire Corporation of Roanoke, Virginia</i>	\$ 1,266.00
<i>Actual cash on hand in Building Fund</i>	\$873.50

1951

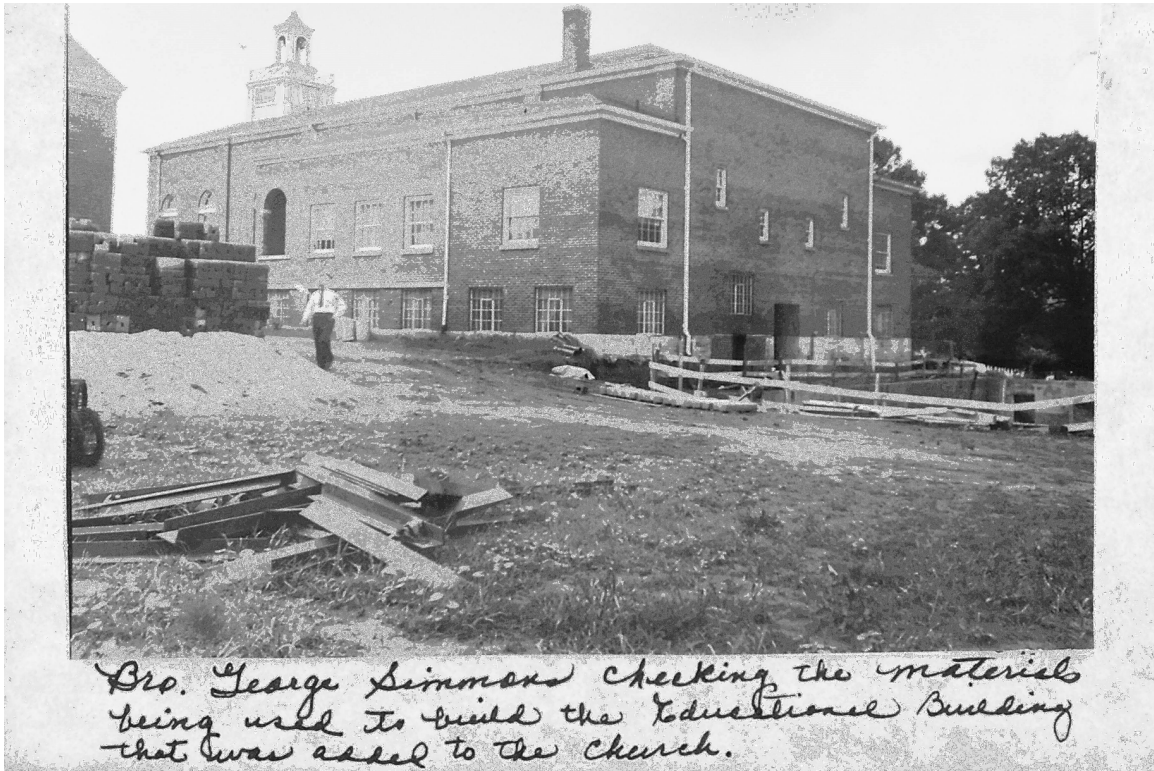
Miss Jeannette Aderhold was employed as the educational director June 15th. Miss Aderhold was a graduate of Westhampton College, University of Richmond.

The church was enjoying the added room that the educational building brought plus the large fellowship hall in the basement

The WMU and the church contributed \$415 toward a study room to be dedicated to the memory of Dr. J. P. McCabe at the University of Richmond.



The foundation has been layed for the Educational Building that was added 1951-52



Bro. George Simmons checking the materials being used to build the Educational Building that was added to the church.



1952

The year began with the church looking forward to its spring revival. Reverend Grey Saunders of Covington, Virginia, was asked to preach the revival services. Spring and fall revivals were important in the church growth. They had been regularly held each year since the establishment of the church.

1953

The hand rails on the front steps were installed in the spring of 1953.

A committee was formed to find a new educational director. Mrs. Maggie Ivey, Mrs. Emma Washburn, Mrs. George Simmons, L. C. Lancaster, and Mack Bouldin made up the committee.

An asphalt driveway was poured from Bridge Street to the parsonage at a cost of \$159.00.

It was in 1953 that the WMU President, church treasurer, and church clerk began taking office January 1 instead of October 1 when other church officers did.

On Sunday morning, November 29, 1953, Rev. Simmons resigned, effective December 31, 1953. He had accepted a call to become pastor of First Baptist Church in Wadesboro, North Carolina.

