

West Edgecombe Baptist Church

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WEST EDGECOMBE BAPTIST CHURCH



BY: TRACY L. TURNER

ENGLISH 152  
MONIKA SOUTHERLAND  
EDGECOMBE COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
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## THE BUILDING PROCESS

Members of a church should research the history of their church. They would find alot of interesting facts and would know exactly how the church was started. In researching the history of West Edgecombe Baptist Church, I discovered exactly when it was started, how it was started and who helped start the church. West Edgecombe Baptist Church celebrated their 50th Anniversary last October and reading the history has taught me how this church grew to be what it is today.

In 1940, the organization of the Sunday School was under the direction of Mr. B. F. Proctor, Jr. and his wife Lucy. Mr. A. L. Pollock, Pastor at Proctor's Chapel, held two services a month during Sunday School in the West Edgecombe Home Demonstration Club Building. The Club House was a long house that had a door, a few windows and had a brick fireplace. The members of Sunday School used large green curtains to divide the one assembly room into classes. Folding chairs were also used for the assembly and in the different classes. They did majority of their singing from second hand hymn books.

On October, 1944, a council composed of members of the church met with interested people of the community to organize the church know as WEBC. The church began with 30 charter members and Rev. Singletary served as the first

pastor. Rev. Singletary was born in Bladen County and further his education at Wingate Junior College, Atlantic Christian College and Duke University. He served from October, 1944 - June 1945 and in September of 1957 he died 12 years later after he left as pastor.

In 1945, there were plans being laid out for a church building that would be built near the club house. Also in July of that year Rev. P. M. Hutchinson came to West Edgecombe as pastor. Rev. Hutchinson further his education at Mars Hill College and Wake Forest College. He served as pastor from 1945-1954 and is now living in Mt. Gelead, NC. During the time Rev. Hutchinson served there was the start of building of our new church. Due to storage of supplies the building wasn't finished until third Sunday in June of 1946, where the first service was held. The new church had stain glass windows that were clear in the middle and multi color around the edge and the outside wall where made out of wood.

Also in that year Mr. George W. Proctor, who was my grandfather, became the new Sunday School Superintendent. Rev. Hutchinson baptized majority of the people of our church in Nobles Mill Pond up until our new sanctuary was built in 1973. In 1947 was an important year because the members saw many important changes in the progress of our church. The church was not yet complete. Efforts were put forth to get the church painted inside, buy pews, and pulpit furniture. In all those changes the church grew with new responsibilities. They also stated having Wednesday night

prayers meetings and by then Sunday School enrollment had grown to 271.

In 1948, one event especially stood out a new heating plant that made the winter congregation more comfortable. Four years after the organization and two years after moving into the church, a letter was approved by the church that it would be preaching on 1st and 3rd Sunday mornings and on 2nd and 4th Sunday Evenings. Home Coming-Day has been celebrated for the past three years. It is a time to eat home cooked food and fellowship with each other.

By 1949, Mr. Wilbur Edmondson became the new Sunday School Superintendent instead of George W. Proctor. They also purchased an old School bus, which was painted and put into operations as a Sunday School bus. This helped many people who didn't have means of transportation to get church services on Sunday. It also helped in the attendance at Bible School to grow larger.

In 1950, a choir picture was taken and in this picture the choir members are wearing the new robes that the Women's Missionary Society presented to them. The picture that was hanging on the back wall behind the choir was bought around Christmas of that year. Mr. Hutchinson had been with our church for 9 years when he became gravely ill. So he was not there when the bulletin for October 11, 1953 was dedicated to him. That's when Dr. J. W. Kincheloe came to help us in our time of need.

Many years has passed and West Edgecombe Baptist Church

grew to an enrollment of 262 members. After Mr. Hutchinson gave his resignation in July of 1954, Mr. Aaron Calhoun and Mr. Z. H. Horton, two member that were appointed by the Deacons to serve until a pastor was found. Our fall revival was held Nov 29-Dec 5 by Rev. Pegram. He served from January 1955-August 1964. During his time he also led the choir and junior choir was organized. Rev. Pegram and his wife now live in Littleton, NC.

After WMU was formed in 1945 the membership grew to 41. In 1955 a branch of the WMU, three G.A.'s went to camp at Chowan for their first time and only cost the church \$5.00. This would start a new event for them each year. The church added a gorge and storage room on to the paronge. In that same year the outside of the church was painted, a new piano was bought, new bookstands and an adding machine. After four years the GA's enrollment grew to 16 members.

After Rev. Pegram resinated in June of 1964, the enrollment grew to 361. In August of that year Rev. Robert Y. Thurkill came to us as pastor. He served as pastor from 1964-1970. In his time served plans were laid out in 1966 for an Educational Building and was finished in June of 1967 three years before Rev. Thurkill gave his resignation. In 1979, he served at First Baptist Church until disability retirement and later died. Mrs. Winifred M. Thurkill and their two daughters live in Hudson, NC.

The purpose of building the Educational Building was because they were running out of room for Sunday School

classes. This building would be used for the young married class, single young men and a department for the young people was growing steadily. In order to complete the new building they installed an air conditioning, floors were refinished, walls painted, and light above pulpit and choir loft. They also put down new carpet (gift from Hack Reisco family), pew cushions (gift from Carl Brake family) and curtains for choir loft. In order to make the outside safe they installed safety lights along with other improvements.

Mr. J. R. Everett came as Interim Pastor until August of that year when Rev. H. E. Marion became pastor. Rev. Marion was born in a place called Pinnacle, NC. He further his education at Campbell College, Carson-Newman College, and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. He served from August 1970-July 1985. When Rev. Marion served his time the enrollment grew to 417 members. Rev. Marion and his wife still stay in Rocky Mount, NC.

In June of 1972 Rev. Marion, former pastor; Mrs. Jeanette Johnson, WMU director; William Lynch, Brotherhood director; Frank Dupree, Chairman of the Deacons; Mike Barnhill, Contractor and chairman of the building committee; and Donley Joyner, charter member of the church, came together to break grounds for our new sanctuary. Our new sanctuary was finished in 1973. This new sanctuary was an additional building that was added on to our educational building. The new sanctuary had wooded beams in the ceiling, had pews that would set 500 people, including the choir loft,

had multi color stain glass windows and there is a wooden cross behind the choir loft. The Church Parlor was furnished by memorial gifts, which were recorded in our memorial book that was purchased. Our new sanctuary grew more and more as the years went on and by the time 1985 came the enrollment was 420 members.

After Rev. Marion retired from being pastor in April of 1985, he also served as interim pastor until July of that year. Dr. Robert Phipps was voted in as pastor on August 11, 1985. He further his education at Campbell University and Southeastern Baptist Seminary. Rev. Phipps served from 1985-1986, which for a short period of time and Rev. Felix Arnold was our interim pastor from 1986-1987. In that same year our secretary Irene Batts, who is my aunt, retired on September 30th after served 14 years.

On March 1, 1987 Rev. Donald D. Cashwell began his ministry as pastor. He was born in town called Clinton, NC and further his education at NC Wesleyan College, and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. He served as pastor from 1987-1991 and they are currently living in Wendall, NC. During that time the average enrollment stayed around 400 members. After living us Rev. Clarence Godwin came to help us as Interim Pastor until 1992.

On May 17, 1992, Rev. C. F. Boykin began as Interim Pastor and served until the end of 1993. So for about three or four months we did with out a pastor. The greatest new we had every had was in January of 1994 Rev. Randy Jetton became

our pastor. He further his education at Fork Union Military Academy, Gardner-Webb College, and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Since Rev. Jetton has been there the Church has really grown as family is concern.

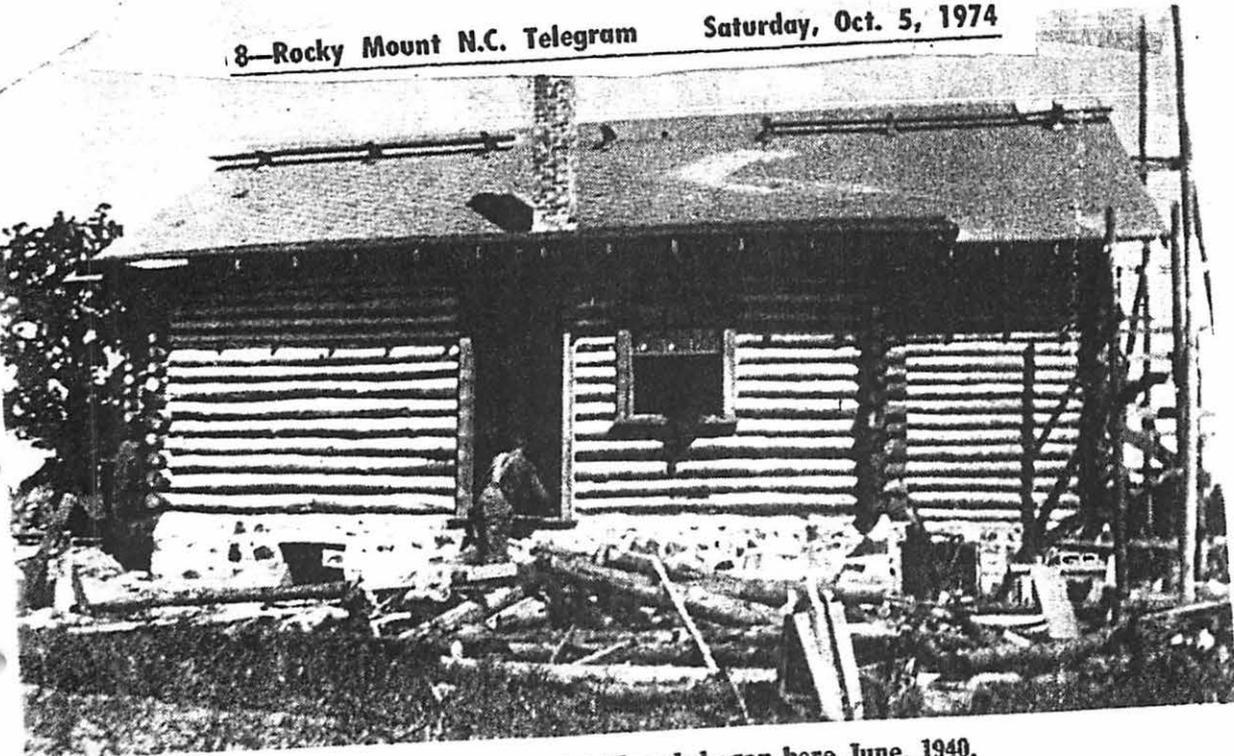
I really hope that our church can keep Rev. Jetton as our pastor.

Our church is planing to recover the pews in the sanctuary and put new carpet down. Our biggest plans are to build a new educational building, which will go behind the sanctuary. We are raising money alot of different ways. Like this Friday, the Mens I are s'elling plate and that money will be giving to the building fund. Also we are raising money by having everybody peledge so much money a month to go towards the building fund. So in about 3 or 4 years our new educational building will be finished.

In the future I hope that I will beable to learn more about the growing of my church. I really would like to research more on exactly who helps keep our church running so well. I think everybody should do a research paper to find more about a subject that they don't know much about.

8—Rocky Mount N.C. Telegram

Saturday, Oct. 5, 1974



West Edgewood Baptist Church began here June, 1940.

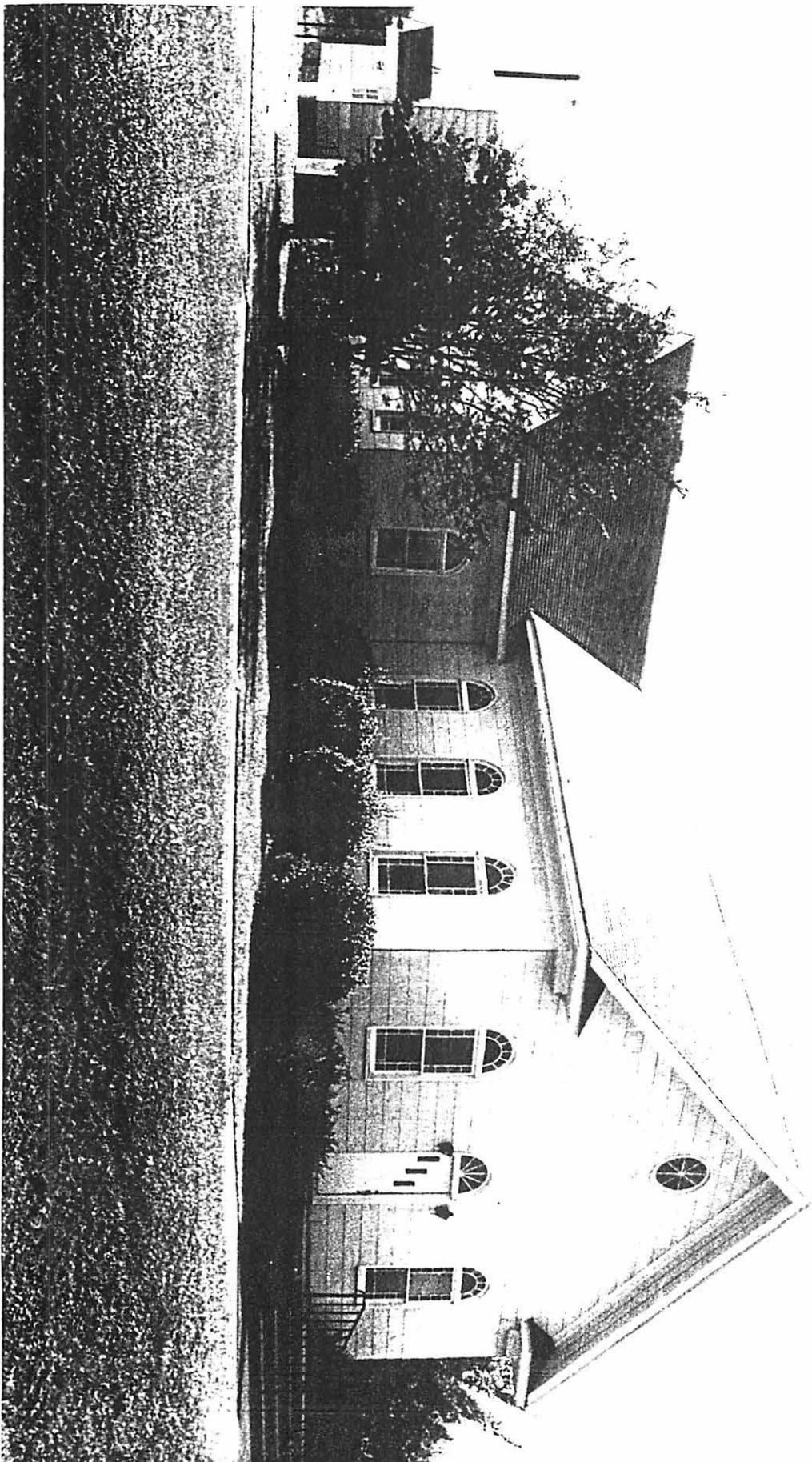


**G. M. SINGLETARY**  
**First Pastor**

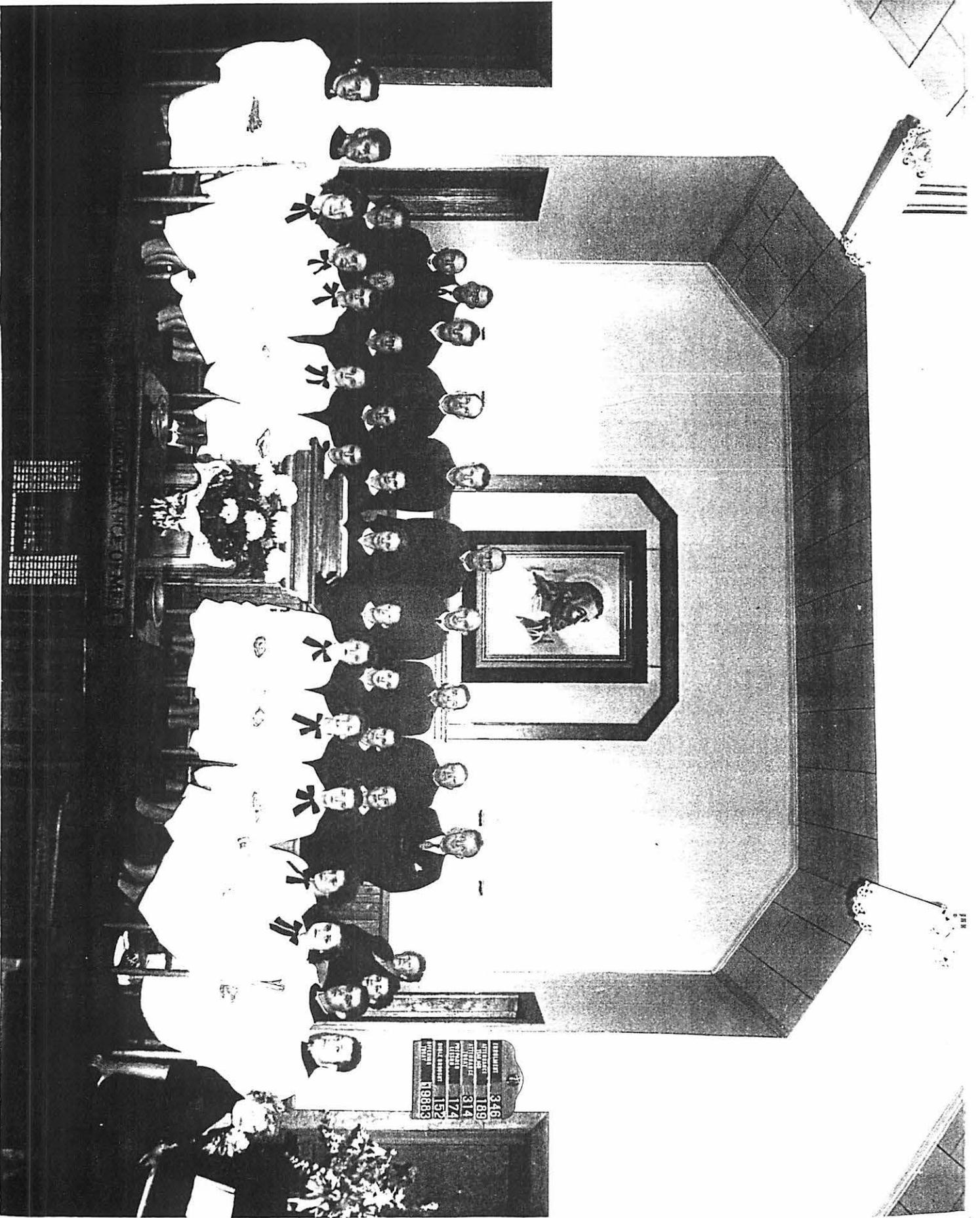


P.M. HUTCHINSON  
Second Pastor









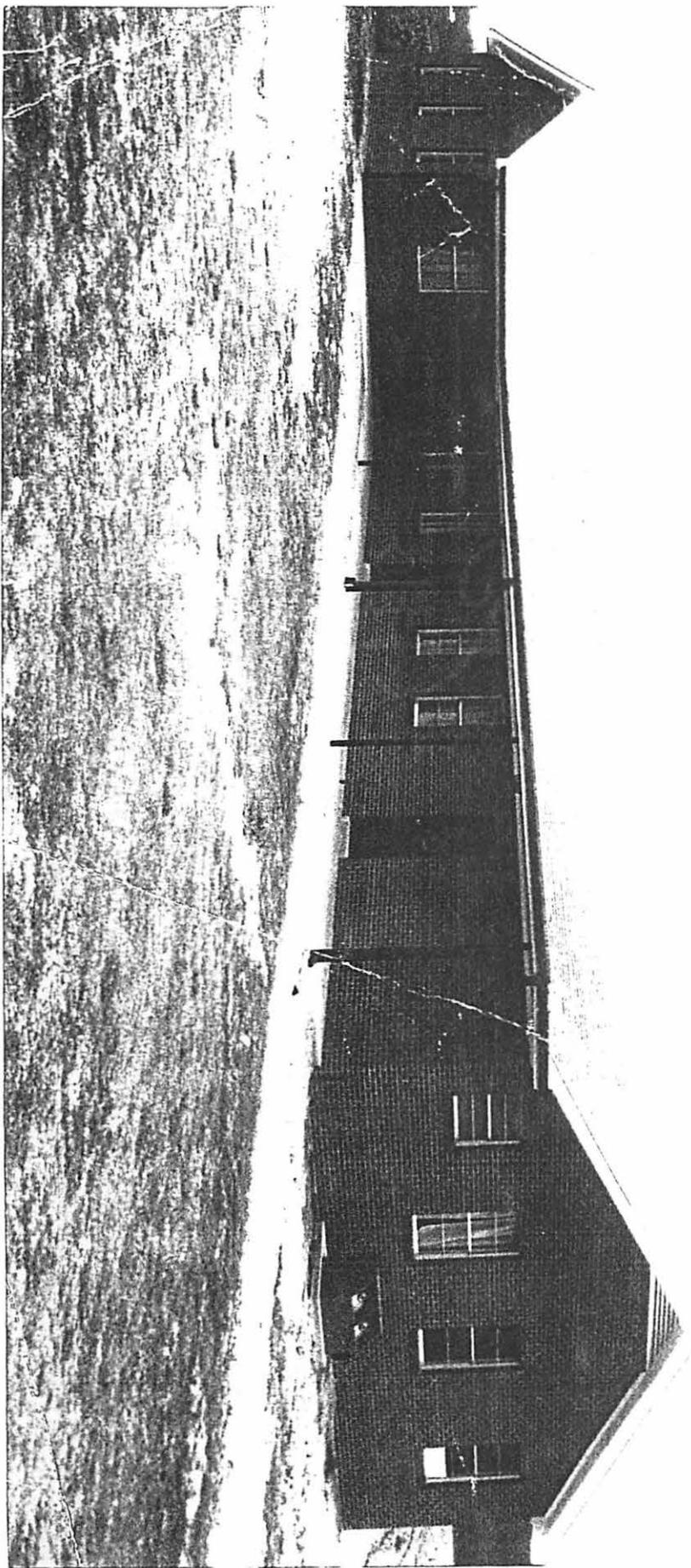
REVEREND	346
CHURCH	189
WOMEN	314
CHILDREN	174
WORLD CHURCH	152
TOTAL	19883



**M.A. PEGRAM**  
Third Pastor



R. Y. THURKILL  
Fourth Pastor





**H. E. MARION**  
**Fifth Pastor**

June 18, 1972

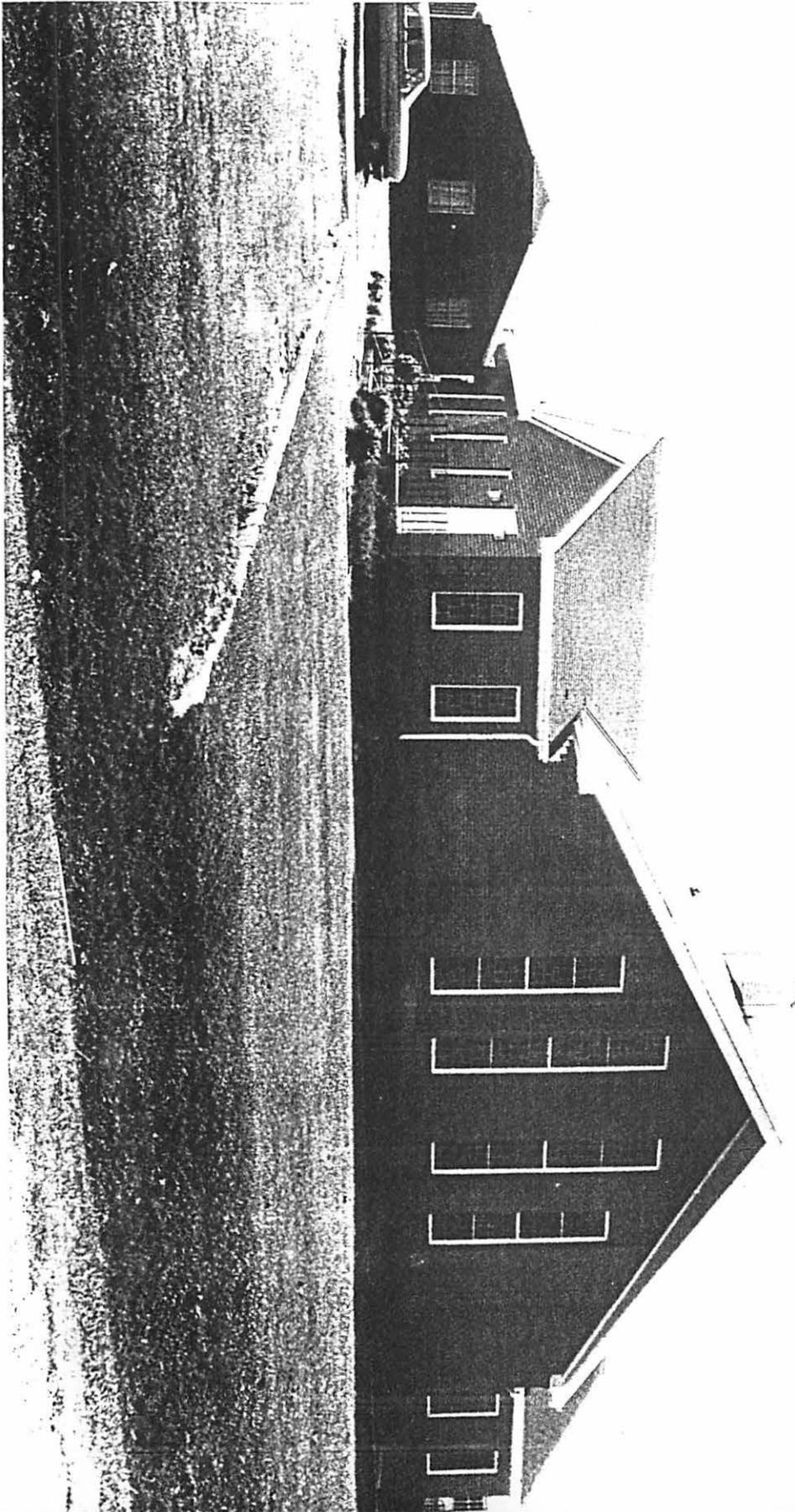


**CHURCH GROUNDBREAKING** — Taking part in groundbreaking for a new sanctuary at West Edgcombe Baptist Church are (left to right) Mrs. Jeanette Johnson, W. M. U. director; Rev. H. Everett Marion, pastor; William Lynch, Brotherhood

director; Frank Dupree, chairman of the Board of Deacons; Mike Barnhill, contractor and chairman of the Building Committee; and Donley Joyner, charter member of the church. (Telegram Photo by Killebrew)

## ***W. Edgcombe Baptist Church Is Building New Sanctuary***

Groundbreaking



The Phipps'



Sixth Pastor



Donald Cashwell, Sr.  
Pastor



Randy Jetton  
Pastor

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