

**SALISBURY ROAD**

**BAPTIST CHURCH**

**HISTORY**

**1907 — 1977**

by

**MRS E.M. BOWERMAN**

## THE START, AND THE FIRST PASTORATE

Dr. J. H. Shakespeare having drawn the attention of the Baptist Union to the need for an Extension Movement, and for the selection of new sites throughout the country for Baptist Churches, the friends of George Street Baptist Church purchased this site in 1897. The "Century Fund" immediately absorbed attention, and it was not until 1901 or 1902 that a representative Committee was formed, empowered to look for new sites in the "three towns". After reporting, it was decided to concentrate all their energies on our building, as no provision had been made in this large and populous district, and no "Free Church" existed. In 1904, a special Committee was formed, and competitive designs were invited, with the result that that of Mr. Wiblin was selected.

The Foundation Stone was laid on December 6th, 1905, by the Mayor of Plymouth (Mr. John Yeo). A more wretched afternoon could hardly have been chosen for an outdoor ceremony. A heavy fog hung over the town and rain descended pitilessly. Yet a very large gathering, of whom the bulk were ladies, assembled in defiance of the elements, demonstrating effectively the enthusiasm which the new work had aroused. After devotional exercises, Mr. Hurrell referred to all that had taken place leading up to the present event. When complete he said the Church would seat 600, and the School provide accommodation for 750 children, in addition to which there would be eleven classrooms.

Mr. Wiblin having presented the Mayor with a handsomely-chased and inscribed silver and ivory trowel, his Worship laid the stone in position. Copies of the "Western Daily Mercury", "Baptist Times" and other papers, were placed beneath. He remarked that the Baptists of Plymouth had proved by their attendance that they were not to be damped by showers. A number of gifts were then laid on the Stone, and an offering was taken. A brief address was given by the Revd. John Wilson, ex-President of the Baptist Union (who deputised for Dr. J. H. Shakespeare). Hymns were sung, led by a cornet, and the full programme carried through in spite of the weather. Subsequently there was a public tea in the Mutley Baptist Schoolroom.

On September 2nd, 1906, the first service of the future Salisbury Road Baptist Church was held in the "Council Schools, Salisbury Road". Sunday Schools were also held in the Council School and in the Tozer Hall, which was the ground floor of the corner house of Durham Avenue in Salisbury Road.

The first Harvest Festival was held in the Council School, and the friends did their best to try and make this, the first Harvest Festival, a success - an achievement which happily has existed with every Harvest Festival since.

The Church was opened on January 21st, 1907. The total cost of the building was £10,694; the land cost £1,250, which was given by the George

Street Baptist Church, and we received £2,700 from the Baptist Union. Local donors also contributed a substantial amount.

On the opening Day, friends gathered outside the Church, and after speeches by Alderman J. T. Bond and Mr. Henry Hurrell, Mrs. Hurrell turned the key in the lock, and pronounced the usual opening sentences. Standing at the open doorway, the Revd. Benwell Bird read a passage of scripture - "Enter into His courts with thanksgiving", and invited the company to follow him into the building, singing the hymn, "Arise, O King of Grace, Arise". The little son of Mr. and Mrs. Hurrell first entered the building, which was soon filled.

At 12.50 p. m. a "Dedicatory Service" was held, conducted by the Revd. Benwell Bird, the Revd. J. Bell Johnson, M. A., and the Revd. Arthur Robinson. This was followed by a public luncheon, presided over by the Mayor of Plymouth - Sir Frederick Winnicott.

At 3.30 p. m. Dr. F. B. Meyer, B. A., London, President of the Baptist Union, preached to a crowded congregation.

Tea was served at 5 p. m. and at 7 p. m. there was a Public Meeting, presided over by Mr. Henry Hurrell, J. P. The Speakers taking part were - Dr. F. B. Meyer, B. A., Revd. J. H. Shakespeare, M. A., and others.

The catering arrangements were left in the hands of the Ladies Committee.

At the Recognition Service of the Revd. H. H. Hill, which was held on the 28th April, 1907, it was decided that the proceeds be devoted to a Fund for the Ladies Sewing Meeting, which later, in association with the Baptist Women's League, has done so much for this Church. The Preacher on that occasion was the Revd. McCaig. On the Wednesday following, tea was provided for 300 persons, and a Public Meeting was held in the evening, the Speakers being the local ministers.

The Revd. Hill came to Plymouth with a good record. While still at College he was asked to undertake the oversight of a languishing Church in Huntingdonshire, which entailed weekly journeys from Liverpool. As a result of his ministry the Church was transformed. His next ministry was at Horsham, Sussex, where in twelve months seventy were added to the Church by baptism. He left Horsham having received a call to the pastorate at the Tabernacle, Port Stanley, Falkland Islands. Unfortunately the rigour of the climate, coupled with overwork, compelled Mr. Hill to return to England, where he was invited to take up the important charge of East Kirby, Nottingham, and later at the special request of the Nottingham Association to couple with it the Mother Church of Kirby-in-Ashfield. In January 1902, Mr. Hill accepted an invitation to the pastorate of the Brixham Baptist Church, where he was minister until he came to Plymouth in December 1906, to become our Pastor.

The official formation of the Church took place on December 4th, 1907. Present were the Revd. Benwell Bird, who presided, the Revd. H. H. Hill and 58

members. After singing and prayer led by the Pastor, the Revd. Bird spoke on the duties and privileges of Church Membership, and then conducted the Communion Service assisted by the Pastor, in which all members participated, and afterwards signed the Church Roll.

In 1907 a letter was received from Mr. Andrew Carnegie, offering to give the last half of the cost of an organ for the Church, at a price of £500, when the first half had been collected by the congregation, and payment of the organ became due. Having heard that the friends at Southport Baptist Church had decided to remove their three-manual organ (which cost £1,100) and would not allow the trade to cater but wished it to go to some Church in the country, Mr. Hill communicated with these friends, with the result that he and Mr. Tucker (organ builder) visited Southport and thoroughly inspected the organ with which they were very satisfied, and so the organ became ours. Our "Organ Fund" at the time of the investigation stood at £80.

On September 2nd, 1908, the Organ was opened by Alderman John Yeo, J. P., and after a brief Dedicatory Service by the Revd. Herbert Hill, Dr. Harold Lake, Mus. Bac (Oxon) F. R. C. O., gave an Organ Recital, interspersed by sacred solos and choruses by the Choir. It proved a thorough success in every way, and not only were we able to raise the balance required to open the Organ free from debt, but we were able to report a balance in hand. The Organ had 37 stops and 1,619 pipes. In connection with the installation of the organ, the first Pastor of this Church played a conspicuous part, especially in getting contributions to the Organ Fund, and the instrument remained up to the time of the destruction of the Church, a monument to his untiring energy and foresight.

At a Church Meeting held on August 24th, 1908, a framed photograph of the first Pastor and Deacons was presented to the Church, with the hope that many there would live to look upon the same for years to come.

An outstanding event in 1908 was the Sunday School Anniversary. A report in the Church Minute Book states: "But the singing - who shall do it credit? Under Mr. Hawke's tutorship our scholars well nigh reached perfection, so that it was more like a well-balanced and perfectly trained Choir singing, than a number of Sunday School children rendering Anniversary Hymns, and many competent musical critics expressed both surprise, as well as admiration, for the remarkably good singing".

Several Organisations were formed in the early years of the Church, which catered for week-night activities for the children and young people of the Church.

From September 1st, 1909, the Church became entirely responsible for the payment of the Pastor's stipend, as the Building Committee's grant of £100 per year for three years expired on the 31st August, 1909. At a meeting of the members and seat-holders on 30th August, Mr. Hill was invited to continue his

services as Minister, and tribute was paid to the wonderful way he had carried out his duties during the three years he had been Pastor. Mention was also made of the work done by Mrs. Hill.

From then onwards much time was spent on discussing the financial position, and arranging special efforts (Concerts, Bazaars, etc.) to increase our income and reduce the debt on the building. Pew rents and a Ministerial Fund were already in operation.

The Church Anniversary was held annually in the Spring, when we were served by a number of eminent Preachers. A Tea and Meeting followed on the following Wednesday.

It is interesting to record that when arranging Church Anniversary Teas it was the custom to collect "Trays" ("Trays" 6/-; "Half-Tray" 3/-) in order to augment funds. Many friends from the other Churches helped us in this way.

The Pastor's Anniversary, held in the Autumn of each year followed a similar pattern, and the Harvest Festival Celebrations included a Fruit Banquet on the Monday evening.

Tribute must be paid to our Choir who contributed musical items on these occasions, as well as arranging many Concerts during the years, helped by outside soloists. Also our ladies did a magnificent job in arranging the various Teas and providing refreshments on other occasions. The gentlemen too, worked hard in many ways, especially in helping to decorate the Church for Harvest Festivals.

Our various Organisations each did their part in raising money to reduce our debit balance.

In February 1910, a meeting was called, when Mrs. Rose, the National President, spoke on the B. W. L. and the purposes for which the League was formed. This resulted in the formation of our Baptist Women's League.

The resignation of our first Organist (Mr. L. Liscombe) was received in March 1910, and in April of that year Mr. Leslie Warren was appointed as Organist. In May 1912, Mr. Warren also resigned, as he was unable to carry out all the duties required of him. After interviewing a number of applicants Mr. H. B. Barham was elected to the post, a position he held until November 1918.

Mr. E. J. Hodge, who had been acting as Church Secretary since the Opening was succeeded in April 1911 by Mr. Charles Hudson, who held the office until February 1914, when Mr. G. Bulley was elected. In February 1916 Mr. Hodge again became Secretary.

Mr. J. W. Hawke resigned as Choir Conductor in November 1911, and in April 1912, Mr. H. P. Avery, who had been acting as Choir Secretary, was appointed as Choir Conductor, an office he held for many years.

The first Treasurer of the Church was Mr. E. Moul, who held the office from 1907 to 1911, when Mr. M. Hancock took office. In 1914, Mr. Joshua Rendle was elected Treasurer, and he held the office for many years.

In September 1914, our large kitchen, school hall and classrooms, were taken over by the Military Authorities for use as a Hospital for wounded soldiers. This affected our Organizations, two of which had to be abandoned for a period. In connection with our Harvest Services, it was agreed to hold our usual Fruit Banquet in the Church, and an application was made to the George Street Church to allow our ladies the use of the Lower Street Mission Hall for their Jumble Sale.

A National "Day of Intercession" was held on 20th November, 1914, ending with a Communion Service, and a "National Intercession Sunday" was fixed for 3rd January, 1915, and it was agreed that we hold four services on that day.

The Church also took part in a National "Come to Church Campaign" held on 24th and 31st January, 1915, by house to house visitation as allocated.

In February 1915, the Church was enrolled in the Federation for Ministerial Settlement and Sustention. In February 1916, the Church agreed to fix a time limit for our Pastor of three years.

In September 1917, it was decided to hold a Free Tea and Fraternal Gathering of the Church and Congregation, when the state of the Church finances would be fully explained, and the serious outlook before the Church made clear, and all friends to be asked to do their utmost in bringing about a change.

Early in 1918 the Deacons received a letter from the Salisbury Road Baptist Church Building Committee regarding the payment of instalments in respect of Loans from the Baptist Building Fund and the Devon and Cornwall Baptist Association. Responsibility for payment of these instalments was voluntarily undertaken by the Building Committee when the Church was formed. The Building Committee felt that the time had come when the friends at Salisbury Road should undertake responsibility for the payment of these instalments.

After a long discussion on the matter it was agreed to draw up a letter pointing out that it was clearly laid down when the Church was formed, that the Deacons had nothing whatever to do with the Building Debt, which was in the hands of the Trustees who had accepted all responsibility in this matter. The letter was duly prepared and submitted to the Church Officers before being sent to Mr. J. H. Kent, the Secretary of the Building Committee.

In order to improve the financial side of the work the Deacons agreed in July 1918, to suggest to the Church that the Envelope System be adopted for non-seatholders. They also agreed to arrange with the Bank to raise our Bank overdraft from £50 to £75.

In January 1919, Mr. Hill resigned the Pastorate of the Church as he had accepted an invitation to become Pastor of the Church at Dudley (Worcestershire). A Testimonial Committee was elected to consider what should be done in a practical way as a mark of appreciation of Mr. Hill's services during the twelve years of his ministry. The Committee, after discussing the matter, suggested to

the Church that Mr. Hill be presented with an Illuminated Address and a wallet of bank notes - an appeal for subscriptions to be made to members of the Church and Congregation and personal friends. A printed letter to be sent to each person by post. Mr. Frank Beavington was elected as the Treasurer. It was agreed that the Presentation take place on 26th February, commencing with a Tea, followed by short speeches by Deacons, interspersed with musical items. The Presentation to be made by the Secretary - Mr. Hodge.

Mr. George Bulley, who was one of the Speakers at the gathering, concluded his speech as follows:- "In your name I wish Mr. and Mrs. Hill every spiritual success in their new sphere, and although they are going from us we shall think of them, and pray that God's blessing may rest on their household, and when the history of this Church has to be written, the name of the first Pastor will figure prominently in its pages".

Thus ended the first Pastorate of our Church.

---

### THE SECOND PASTORATE

In May 1919, it was agreed to proceed to fill the vacant Pastorate.

In October 1919, the Secretary was able to report that he had written to the two Ministers who had been recommended to us, but who were unable to keep their appointments on account of the Railway Strike.

The Revd. J. Ivor Wensley preached on November 9th.

At a special meeting held on 12th November, members were asked to vote as to whether they desired either, or both, of the Ministers to visit us a second time. The ballot resulted in a majority vote in favour of the Revd. J. Ivor Wensley.

In December a unanimous invitation was extended to the Revd. Wensley to become our Pastor for a period of five years, which he accepted, and said he would hope to commence his ministry with us on February 1st, 1920. A Fraternal Gathering was arranged to welcome Mr. and Mrs. Wensley, and this was a very happy occasion.

The Recognition Service of our Pastor took place on 25th February, with the usual Afternoon Service, when the Preacher was the Revd. Albert Law of Bristol. This was followed by a Tea and Public Meeting in the evening. Our Organist (Mr. G. Reeves) and Choir Conductor (Mr. Avery) arranged a Musical Programme in the Church preceding the Evening Meeting, and the Choir rendered anthems at the Public Meeting, at which there were various Speakers.

At the commencement of his ministry Mr. Wensley mentioned several matters he wished to be considered, one of which was the use of Individual Cups at our Communion Services. He said he felt very strongly on this matter, and had introduced this method at each Church at which he had been Minister. The Church agreed, and Individual Cups were used for the first time on Easter Sunday 1920. It was agreed that the old vessels be disposed of, and a Flower Stand for the Church be purchased with the proceeds.

It was also decided to hold one week-night service only on Thursday evenings.

A great deal of time was spent in drawing up a set of Rules for the Church, "The Constitution of Salisbury Road Baptist Church, 1920" was finally adopted by the members at the June meeting.

In June 1920, it was agreed at the request of the Missionary Committee, to adopt the Birthday Scheme, and also that a Missionary Collecting Box should be placed on the table once a month at the Thursday evening Service. The Birthday Scheme met with great success, and it was suggested that we support a cot at Yakasu to be called the "Salisbury Road Cot".

In December 1920 Mr. Reeves resigned as organist, and at the request of the Choir it was agreed that Mr. Leslie Warren, A. R. C. O., be appointed to that Office.

In 1921 a "Salisbury Choral Society was formed, meeting on Tuesday evenings for practices.

The Baptist Women's League were asked to become responsible for the flowers in the Church every Sunday, and this they undertook to do.

It had been agreed to issue a joint monthly magazine with our Church at Mutley, and the first issue had appeared in January 1921.

In July 1921, it was agreed to appoint a band of workmen to suggest, and if possible carry out, any repairs or alterations considered necessary to the Church and School buildings.

In September 1921, Mr. Hodge was compelled to resign as Church Secretary on account of ill health, and Mr. G. Bulley was asked to undertake this office temporarily.

At the Annual Church Meeting in March 1922, it was agreed to create the Office of Eldership, and that Mr. Hodge be the first holder of this Office in recognition of his services to the Church.

In July 1922, after a very lengthy discussion, it was agreed that pew rents be abolished, and the envelope system generally adopted.

The question of the remaining debt of £1000 on the Church Building was discussed at great length between our Officers and the Officers of the George Street and Mutley Churches, and it was decided to hold a United Bazaar at George Street in the Spring of 1925. This proved a great success, and with donations given,

almost cleared the debt. To raise the remaining amount it was decided to hold a Garden Fete at Pounds House, Peverell, by kind permission of Mr. Henry Hurrell on June 18th, and this event proved an outstanding success. The debt on the Church buildings was practically cleared. Our ladies did a tremendous amount of work in connection with these efforts, and received the heartfelt thanks of the Church Officers. A verse appearing on the Programme for the Garden Fete read -

A little chaff is very well  
A little harmless laughter  
But patronage and L. S. D.  
Is really what we're after.

At the Church Meeting that month the following resolution was passed:-  
"The Church of Christ worshipping at Salisbury Road desires to convey by means of this resolution its intense gratitude to the original guarantors who bore the burden of the debt on the Building Fund for 16 years, to Mr. Henry Hurrell and family for their magnificent generosity; to Mr. Edward Watt and the Church at Mutley, for mothering the United Effort; to Mrs. Wilkinson Riddle and the Church at George Street, for their loyal support; to all the Baptist Churches in the neighbourhood associated with the Effort, and to all the ladies and gentlemen of the denomination for giving of their substance, resulting in the truly magnificent sum of £950 being raised to the practical extinction of that debt; all to the Glory of God and the spiritual welfare of our fellow men".

According to the conditions laid down by the Ministerial Settlement Sustentation Fund, the question of considering inviting Mr. Wensley for a further period had to be considered, and on the recommendation of the Deacons the Church agreed in May 1924 to invite our Pastor for a further period of three years.

In June 1924 consent was given to the formation of a Boy Scout Troop under the supervision of Mr. Hawkins.

The Plymouth Baptist Council suggested the issue of a United Magazine, and the Church agreed to support their recommendation provided financial loss was avoided.

The following resolution was submitted to a Special Church Meeting in October 1924:- "The necessity having arisen for providing house accommodation for the Minister, it is hereby resolved that a Manse be built, and that the Deacons be invited to act as the Manse Building Committee to proceed with the matter".

Mr. Rendle (Treasurer) offered to build a house in Coleridge Road which could be ready for occupation by 25th March, 1925.

In order to raise funds for maintenance and upkeep of the Manse, it was decided that collecting boxes be placed in the vestibule of the Church, and also that members be asked to contribute 1d. per week - four ladies to be appointed as collectors.

The Secretary explained that the new house must be vested in a Trusteeship, and the following names were agreed - Mr. Henry Hurrell, Mr. G. S. Bulley and Mr. H. L. Elliott.

The official opening of the Manse took place on 17th June, 1925.

In November 1925, the Sunday School Teachers made application to form a Girls' Life Brigade. A request had also been received from the Young Women's Guild to form a troop of Girl Guides. The Girls' Life Brigade found favour, and the Church agreed that a Company be formed under the leadership of Mrs. Morris.

In November 1926, when the question of extending the Pastorate was under consideration, Mr. Wensley said that in view of the unfortunate position of the Church financially, he regretted he could not prolong his stay with us, and therefore did not wish to be invited for a further period.

Mr. Leslie Warren's resignation as organist was accepted in May 1927, and Mr. Richard Rendle was appointed deputy organist, and Miss Phyllis Avery as accompanist for Choir Practices.

Mr. Morris resigned as Secretary in June 1927, and Mr. A. F. Martin was asked to act temporarily as Secretary until the next Annual Church Meeting.

During Mr. Wensley's pastorate the Sunday School became fully graded, and the various Organizations were very active. A number of Special Efforts (Concerts, Bazaars, etc.) were held for the purpose of helping the Church finances which was a matter of great concern. The usual Church Celebrations were held annually.

It was in 1927 that certain alterations were made to the premises. Room No. 10 was enlarged by taking in two of the smaller rooms. An official opening was held, and the room was re-named "The Lecture Hall".

The Rev. J. Ivor Wensley's ministry terminated at the end of September 1927. At a Farewell Meeting of the Church and Congregation, several speeches were made by members of the Church, and also by the Revd. P. Franklin Chambers, Pastor of Mutley Baptist Church, after which Mr. Wensley was handed a Wallet containing Treasury Notes, and Mrs. Wensley an umbrella.

Thus ended the second Pastorate of the Church.

-----

### THE THIRD PASTORATE

In October 1927, the Church agreed, on the recommendation of the Deacons, that the Manse be decorated and let on a three years' tenancy.

It was also decided to make arrangements for Communion Cards to be used, commencing in 1928.

As the Church Organ needed renovation, it was decided to form an Organ Fund; the proceeds of a Band of Hope Concert to form the nucleus of the Fund. The 1928 Thankoffering also to be earmarked for the Organ Fund.

#### Twenty-first Birthday Celebrations - March 1928

The Revd. Herbert H. Hill conducted the Sunday Services. In the afternoon a United Service of the Sunday School was held, and there was a Parade of Organizations at the Evening Service. On the Wednesday there was an Afternoon Service, Tea and Evening Meeting - the Preacher being the Revd. E. W. Mills.

In June 1928 Mr. Richard Rendle resigned as Organist as he would be leaving Plymouth. A farewell gathering was arranged.

After interviewing several Organists Mr. Creedy was appointed in September 1928, and Miss Phyllis Avery as deputy.

Steps had been taken to fill the vacant Pastorate and in July 1929, the Church agreed to ask the Revd. H. J. Morgan of Usk, to preach a second time, and in September 1929, Mr. Morgan was elected as Minister for a period of three years.

The Recognition Services of the Revd. Morgan were held on Sunday, December 8th, 1929, and the following Wednesday. The Preacher on both days was Dr. T. G. Dunning, M. A. (Director of Education, Baptist Union) and also on the Wednesday evening the Revd. Philip Rogers (President of the Plymouth and District Free Church Council) brought greetings.

X There was a need for something for boys 9 - 12 years so a Life Boy Team was started in February 1931, and in November Miss Hawkins was appointed in charge of the Girls Life Brigade.

The 25th Anniversary Celebration was held on 23rd March, 1932, with an Afternoon Service followed by Tea and a Social Evening. The top table was adorned with a Silver Tree to mark the special occasion, and donations were placed on the table by the Tree. A very enjoyable evening was spent by members of the Church and Congregation.

In June 1932 it was with great joy that the Church recommended Mr. Bernard Mason as a candidate for the Baptist Ministry.

In January, 1934, the Church received Mr. Creedy's resignation as Organist with great regret. It was proposed that the position be offered temporarily to Mrs. Lockyer (nee Avery) and that advertisements be issued for an Organist. In March the position was offered to Mr. McAlistier.

In July 1934 a private meeting of the Deacons took place, when it was agreed that in view of the financial position of the Church a deputation of the Diaconate meet the Pastor putting the full facts before him, and suggesting that it would be a kind action on his part if he sought a new sphere of labour as soon as possible.

In November the Deacons received a letter from the Revd. Morgan stating that he wished to terminate his Pastorate on 30th November, 1935, the end of the current tenure.

In October 1934, the Church decided to cease publication of the "Bulletin" as from the December issue.

At the Annual Meeting in January, 1935, the following resolution was recorded in the Minutes:- "This Church hereby expresses its hearty thanks to Mr. Rendle for his services as Treasurer for the past 21 years, and records its gratitude for the excellent service rendered".

In March 1935, Mr. G. Bulley was elected an Elder of the Church.

In December 1935, at a Special Church Meeting, it was agreed to extend the Pastorate of the Revd. Morgan to February 29th, 1936, on conditions named by him to the delegation who met him on 17th November. It was agreed that gifts be invited to recognise Mr. Morgan's services to the Church, and collectors were appointed. The gift was refused, and the money returned.

In December 1935, Mr. McAlister resigned as Organist.

In January 1936, the resignation of Mr. Avery as Choirmaster was received with great regret, the Church placing on record its high appreciation of his long service to the musical side of Church life.

In February, 1936, Mr. Littlejohns was appointed as Organist and Choirmaster.

In October 1936, it was agreed to start a Young People's Meeting for those over 14 - two Sunday School Teachers were appointed to take charge, and a meeting was also fixed to consider starting a meeting for older members.

During the Revd. Morgan's Pastorate the usual Church Celebrations were held annually, and a number of special Efforts arranged for the purpose of helping to reduce the Church's overdraft at the Bank, which was causing great concern.

-----

## THE FOURTH PASTORATE

In February 1937, the Deacons recommended that steps be taken to fill the vacant Pastorate, and that the Manse be kept empty in the meantime.

Forward Movement. In July 1937, Mr. Mason was elected to represent the Church at a meeting at George Street Baptist Church in connection with this Movement. A further meeting was fixed for November 24th, and in February 1938, the Deacons decided to invite the Revd. Campbell and Revd. Thorne to attend a meeting of Church members to explain the Scheme. In April 1938, it was agreed to obtain Collecting Cards re Forward Movement in connection with St. Budeaux Baptist Church.

In November 1937, the Revd. J. Paterson was invited to become our Pastor, an invitation which he accepted - the Pastorate to commence in January 1938.

It was in December 1937 that Miss Audrey Martin was appointed Captain of the Girls' Life Brigade.

The Recognition Services of our Pastor took place on Wednesday, February 2nd, 1938, with a Service at 4.30 p. m., when the Preacher was the Revd. W. F. Grey of Mutley Baptist Church. This was followed by a Public Tea at 5.45, and a Recognition Service at 7.15 p. m. when the Chairman was Mr. C. E. Prust (President of the Devon and Cornwall Baptist Association). The Speakers were the Revd. W. F. Grey, the Revd. J. Paterson and Mr. A. F. Martin (Church Secretary).

In March 1938, the Pastor raised the question of the formation of a Contact Club, and the initial meeting was held in May.

In November 1938, Mr. Goody was presented with a wallet of notes in recognition of his services as Caretaker for 12 years.

In 1938 it was agreed that the Education Authority should have the use of our school premises - the rent received to go to Church funds.

In April 1939, it was decided to purchase the necessary felt to cover the majority of the Church seats.

In November 1939, a Special Church Meeting was called to consider the financial position of the Church, and after prolonged discussion it was decided to have several special efforts to augment Church funds.

In January 1940, Mr. Littlejohns resigned as Organist, and in June Mr. Warren was appointed Organist and Choirmaster.

It was agreed that the Church be open for prayer from 10 a. m. to 12 noon, and 2 to 4 p. m.

It was also decided that in view of the number of our members and adherents who had joined H. M. Forces, that a Roll of Honour be compiled.

In September 1941, it was reported that our Kitchen end of building would be used as a Communal Air Raid Shelter.

Up to the time of the destruction of our premises, our School Hall was used as a Rest Centre for those bombed out of their homes, and under the leadership of our Pastor and his wife, our ladies did a magnificent job of work caring for the homeless.

It was during Whitsun Week-end 1943 that disaster overtook us. Our Church and School Hall were completely destroyed. Fortunately the rooms at the far end of the building remained intact. It was nothing short of a miracle that no one was using the Kitchen end of the building as an Air Raid Shelter that particular night, or the death roll might have been serious.

Our Minister and Deacons acted quickly, and on the following Tuesday contact was made with the Education Officials, who granted us the use of the Salisbury Road Council School for our Sunday Services and occasional meetings. The Sunday School Anniversary was held on the following Sunday as had been arranged, and was a great success - everyone rallied around. It is a matter of interest that our Services were held in the same room as our first service in September 1906.

The Pavilion at the Tennis Courts in Coleridge Road proved a great asset at this time. It was later damaged through enemy action.

Mr. Warren's appointment as Organist was terminated in the circumstances, and Mrs. Lockyer was appointed pianist, Mrs. Dotson as Deputy, and Mr. E. Cann as Choirmaster.

On May 27th, 1944, the renovated Lecture Hall and classrooms were officially opened. The Chair was taken by the Deputy Lord Mayor (Alderman J. W. Modley). The Dedication Service was taken by Mr. Stanley L. Gould (President of the Devon and Cornwall Baptist Association), and the Speakers were the Revd. C. A. Martin (Vicar of St. Andrew's Church) and the Revd. J. T. Gillespie of the Presbyterian Church. Our ladies were responsible for the Tea.

Negotiations were soon entered into with a view to the re-building of the large Hall and Church, and this greatly encouraged all workers who carried on magnificently under the circumstances.

On October 12 1944 a Boys Brigade Company was formed. This catered for the boys of 12 - 18.

A Young People's Fellowship was held after the Sunday Evening Service, and this proved a great success. A goodly number of young people attended, and even some older friends supported the meetings, which were addressed by various speakers.

Our Church Celebrations were held as far as possible, and Special Efforts to augment Church funds. The Church also gave contributions to various outside objects, although some requests could not be entertained.

In November 1945, the Deacons approached Mr. Vanstone with a view to his becoming Architect for the reconstruction of School Hall and Church.

In December 1945, it was reported that the Restoration Fund stood at £1021 6s. 1d., and the following resolution appears in the Church Minutes:- "This Church places on record its appreciation of the faithful and unremitting services rendered by the Treasurer of the Restoration Fund - Mr. H. Rich - during the year 1945".

In January 1946, Mr. Rendle was elected an Elder, and the following resolution recorded:- "This Church places on record its appreciation of, and thankfulness for, the service rendered to this Church for the past 32 years, by Mr. Rendle, in his capacity of Treasurer". Mr. Cecil James was elected to succeed him.

In February 1946, the Church agreed to take over Pastoral oversight of our Efford Church - Mr. Bowerman to act as liaison officer.

In March 1947, the Church celebrated its 40th Anniversary with an Afternoon Service, Tea and Evening Meeting. The Preacher was the Revd. H. D. Hilliard of George Street Baptist Church. Birthday gifts were received by the Elders.

In March 1947, Mrs. Dotson resigned as Deputy Pianist, and Mr. D. Beavington, L. L. C. M., was elected to the Office.

At the Annual Church Meeting in 1948, the Pastor presented Mr. Bowerman, then acting as Lay Pastor at Hooe, with a book token in recognition of his services.

In January 1948, Mr. and Mrs. Hitt were appointed on the Efford Committee, and they undertook to collect monies promised. It was also agreed to release our Pastor periodically to serve Efford provided the other Churches fell into line.

In July 1948, Mr. Rendle handed over the Deeds of the Tennis Courts to the Church, and once again the Church's thanks to him were recorded.

In February 1949, Mr. D. Beavington was elected Treasurer, and in September 1949, Mr. R. Bray became Captain of the Boys' Brigade.

Since the destruction of the premises many hours of discussion took place between the Deacons and the Architect (Mr. Vanstone) regarding the new building.

In June 1950, as Mrs. Willmott had resigned as Pianist and Mr. Cann as Choirmaster, Mr. Littlejohns was appointed Choirmaster and Accompanist - duties to commence on 1st October.

After a prolonged discussion it was decided that the new School Hall when completed, should be used for Sunday Services, but that if the experiment proved unsuccessful, Services be resumed in the School Chapel.

In August 1951, Mr. and Mrs. Paterson had the honour of representing the Baptist Ministry when ten clergymen of varying denominations, who had endured enemy bombing and whose churches had been wholly or partially destroyed, were

given a six weeks' holiday in Switzerland, arranged between the English and Swiss branches of the European Christian Reconstruction Committee.

The New School Hall was officially opened on 15th December 1951, by Lady Astor, who was handed the key by Mr. G. Bulley. A Guard of Honour was formed by the Boys' and Girls' Brigades. The Hall was crowded for the Dedication Service which was conducted by the Rt. Hon. Ernest Brown (Ex-President of the Baptist Union). Greetings were brought by representatives of all Denominations. About 250 friends gathered at the tea tables at the close of the Service, and in the evening the Choir rendered Handel's "Messiah", thus completing another red letter day in the history of the Church.

In January 1952, Mr. F. Beavington and Mr. F. Scott were elected as Elders. On the 23rd March 1952, the Morning Service was broadcast.

In April 1952, Mr. Rendle presented the Church with a Communion Table which now stands on the rostrum of our Church, and in May Mr. Beavington gave a clock which is now at the back of the Church.

The Revd. Paterson having accepted an invitation to the Pastorate of Payton Street Baptist Church, Stratford-on-Avon, his resignation as our Pastor was received with great regret. At a Farewell Gathering on the 7th May, 1952, members from all Organizations paid tribute to the work done by Mr. and Mrs. Paterson, and the Church Secretary presented Mr. Paterson with a Wallet and Cheque in appreciation of his 14 years' service to the Church. Mrs. Paterson received a bouquet from Mrs. J. Rendle.

Thus ended the fourth Pastorate of the Church.

---

#### THE FIFTH PASTORATE

In July 1952, the Church agreed to the following insertion in the Minutes:-

"This Church places on record its gratitude to Almighty God for the gift to the Fellowship of Mr. Joshua Rendle, who served the Church faithfully for so many years. His advice was freely given, his financial gifts many, and his business acumen of great value. We thank God for every remembrance of him".

Steps having been taken with a view to filling the vacant Pastorate, the Church agreed in July 1952, that the Revd. Lewis Merrett of Bewdley, Worcestershire, be invited to preach for the second time, and in August 1952, Mr. Merrett was invited to become our Pastor, ministry to commence on 4th January, 1953.

The Recognition Services of our Pastor were held on 14th January, when the Revd. H. H. Pewtress of Taunton, conducted the Afternoon Service. At the Tea which followed, greetings were received from the Lord Mayor and representatives of the Free and Anglican Churches. At the Evening Meeting the Revd. Merrett was inducted to the Pastorate by the Revd. Pewtress, and the Charge to the Church was given by the Revd. G. W. Haden, B.A., of Falmouth. All the meetings were well attended, and another phase in the work of the Church commenced.

In July 1953, the Church decided that, subject to the agreement of the Charity Commissioners, we dispose of the Tennis Courts at Coleridge Road, and that the proceeds, plus the sum in the Tennis Court Account, be held in Trust for a purpose in keeping with Mrs. Rendle's wishes. When the money was received from the sale of the Tennis Courts, it was added to the Tennis Account and re-named "Rendle Trust Account".

At the Annual Church Meeting in January 1954, the Pastor gave a report on the year's work - thanking members for their support and co-operation.

It was in November 1954, that Mr. J. Stapleton was appointed Captain of the Boys' Brigade in succession to Mr. R. Bray.

It was decided to ask Messrs. Osmonde & Co. to remove the remnants of the Organ, and to state what they would allow in part exchange. If the Church decided to purchase a pipe organ, it would be through them. The approximate value of the salvaged parts was £300.

In October 1954, the Church gave a Communion Table and three chairs to the new Efford Church.

In January 1955, Mr. Littlejohn's resignation was received with great regret. Mention was made of the services of Mr. D. Beavington and Mr. K. Mills in acting as deputies.

Mrs. Willmott having offered to fill the post of pianist, and Mr. K. Mills as Choirmaster, these offers were gratefully accepted.

Arrangements were being made for the Church Jubilee Celebrations in 1956, and the Pastor outlined the proposals at a Church Meeting in June 1955.

It was in March 1956, that the Golden Jubilee Celebrations took place. Special Services were held on Sunday, March 18th, and on the Monday evening the combined Choirs of Mutley and Salisbury Road rendered Mendelssohn's "Hymn of Praise". The Celebrations continued on the Wednesday when an Afternoon Service was conducted by the Revd. H. Cook, D.D. (President of the Baptist Union). This was followed by Tea and an Evening United Service conducted by the Revd. N. Jenkins, B.D., the Speaker being Dr. Cook.

In March 1956, it was decided to form an Organ Fund Committee - one representative from each Organization - Mr. Keast to act as Secretary, and Mr. D. Beavington as Treasurer.

A letter had been sent to the Baptists of New Plymouth, Massachusetts, U.S.A., asking for their support in connection with the Organ Fund, and in July 1956, the Pastor was able to report that a gift had been received. A further donation was received in October of that year.

On July 24th, 1957, the Memorial Stonelaying Ceremony took place. The Stonelaying Service was led by the Revd. L. H. Merrett. Mr. G. Reburn, M. B. E. (President, Plymouth District of Baptist Churches) read the Scripture Passages. The Stones were laid by the Revd. Charles Dyer on behalf of the Trustees (Devon and Cornwall Baptist Association) and by Mr. A. F. Martin on behalf of Church Members. The Prayer of Dedication was led by the Revd. A. J. Westlake, B. A., D. D. (Vice-President, Plymouth District Baptist Churches).

The Service of Thanksgiving at 7.45 was held in the School Hall. The Chair was taken by the Revd. E. L. Knight (Secretary, Plymouth District Baptist Churches) and the Preacher was the Revd. Abraham Cutts of St. Budeaux Baptist Church.

At the Church Meeting in May 1958, the following Minute was recorded:- "That this Church places on record the valuable work done by the late Mr. A. F. Martin for the Church, and that his passing had been deeply regretted by all".

Mr. Martin had held the office of Church Secretary for 30 years.

During the early part of 1958 arrangements were being made for the official opening of the new Church, which took place on the 28th June. This was indeed a red letter day in the history of the Church. The congregation assembled in the Church. The Opening was performed by Mr. H. G. Hurrell, M. A., J. P., whose mother opened the original building in 1907. Mr. Hurrell, together with the Lord Mayor of Plymouth, the Revd. Dr. Henton Davies, visiting Ministers, Church Officers, and representatives of Church Organizations, proceeded from the Lecture Hall in the old building to the main door of the Church. An amplifier had been fitted to relay the opening ceremony to the congregation in the Church.

The Revd. L. H. Merrett led in prayer, after which the Architect presented the key of the door to Mr. Hurrell, who opened the door with the words - "To the Glory of God I declare this Church open as a House of Prayer for all people, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Peace be to this Church, and all who worship therein. Peace be to those that enter, and to those that go out therefrom. Peace be to those that love it, and that love the name of our Lord Jesus Christ".

Those engaged in the Opening Ceremony proceeded down the aisle of the Church to their places during the singing of the hymn "Praise my soul the King of Heaven". Prayer was offered by the Revd. E. L. Knight (Secretary of the Plymouth District of Baptist Churches) and the Scripture was read by the Revd. A. J. Westlake, B. A., D. D. (President of the Plymouth District of Baptist Churches). The Act of Dedication was conducted by the Revd. L. H. Merrett,

and the Sermon was preached by the Revd. Dr. G. Henton Davies, M.A., B.D., B. Litt (Principal Elect of Regents Park College, Oxford).

A Public Tea followed, presided over by Mr. R. Bray (Church Secretary) who was appointed at the death of Mr. Martin. Greetings were brought by the Lord Mayor of Plymouth and other friends.

After Community Singing in the Church, the Service of Thanksgiving was conducted by the Revd. C. Dyer (Secretary of the Devon and Cornwall Baptist Association) who gave the Address. The Choir contributed with an Anthem. The Sermon was preached by Dr. Henton Davies.

The Services on the Sunday were taken by the previous Ministers - the Revd. J. Ivor Wensley, M.A., B.D., of Bournemouth, and the Revd. J. Paterson of Stratford-on-Avon.

This was indeed a never-to be forgotten week-end in the history of the Church.

The following was recorded in the Church Minutes:- "That the Diaconate place on record its appreciation of the untiring efforts of the Revd. L. H. Merrett in the work involved in the building of the new Church, and for the way in which he has dealt with the Architect and Builder through many long protracted difficulties".

It was agreed that monthly Guest Services should be held - the first being on 19th October, 1958.

After prolonged discussions the Church agreed to the recommendation of the Sunday School that the Family Church be brought into being. The Pastor explained that this would probably be in the Spring of 1959.

The official Opening and Dedication of the new Organ took place on 21st January, 1959. After opening devotions the Organ was opened by Mrs. E. E. Martin. Then followed a programme of Organ and Choral Music. Dr. Harold Lake gave an organ recital, and it is interesting to record that he was the recitalist when the original organ was opened in 1908.

The Organ was built and installed by Messrs. G. Osmonde & Co., Ltd., of Taunton. Many of the pipes and other parts salvaged from the old organ, which was destroyed with the Church, were used in the new instrument. This greatly reduced the cost. A number of Stops had still to be provided, but provision had been made for their installation as funds became available.

The value of the Organ was over £4000, but its cost was less than £3000. Of this sum less than £200 remained to be raised. In March 1960, Messrs. Osmonde were instructed to install the next Stop in the Organ at a cost of approximately £100.

In October 1960, the Baptist Women's League received a letter from the Church expressing good wishes and congratulations on the occasion of their Golden Jubilee.

At a following Church Meeting the Pastor intimated that provisional plans were being made for a Students' Mission from 9th to 16th September, 1961.

In March 1961, the Revd. Merrett intimated that he felt the time had come when the Church would benefit from a change in leadership, and that after the

Mission might be an appropriate time. He had been invited to preach at Sheffield with a possible view to the Pastorate there.

Mr. Merrett was able to give further details regarding the Students' Mission - Ford and Efford Churches, as well as ourselves, were to take part.

In July 1961, it was agreed that steps should be taken towards filling the Pastorate as soon as Mr. Merrett was able to announce his departure, in order to avoid any unnecessary delay and interim period. It was hoped Mr. Merrett would not move until he was certain as to where it was intended he should go, and that there was no need to hurry seeking settlement. It was agreed to call one Minister at a time and take a decision, rather than call two or three before inviting any to come on a second visit.

Student Mission. At the end of September 1961, the Pastor spoke on the success of the Mission and said that the Plymouth District were considering a large scale Mission in 1962. The present Mission had acted as a pilot scheme. Thanks were expressed to the ladies who cooked and served the Students' meals, as they were given hospitality on our premises.

The value of the House Groups held was stressed, and it was hoped these might continue. Visitation within the district to be continued as far as possible.

In September 1961 the Revd. Merrett informed the Church Members that he had accepted the call from the Beauchief Baptist Church at Sheffield, and would terminate his ministry at Salisbury Road on 31st December. The Church Secretary said that the Diaconate hoped there would be only a short interval before calling a new Pastor, and that further details would probably be available by the next meeting. Sincere appreciation was expressed of Mr. Merrett's ministry which had extended throughout the district. Mrs. Merrett had done good work amongst our ladies and the ladies of the Plymouth District, having held the office of President of the Women's Free Church Council in Plymouth.

The Revd. Merrett concluded his ministry with us on 17th December, 1961. Friends met in the Lecture Hall after the Evening Service for a Farewell Gathering. Sincere appreciation was expressed to Mr. and Mrs. Merrett for the way they had led the Church during their stay with us of eight years. It had not been an easy Pastorate, but much had been accomplished.

Mr. Merrett was presented with a cheque in appreciation of his services, and the best wishes of all present were expressed for Mr. and Mrs. Merrett in their new sphere of service.

During Mr. Merrett's ministry the Church had progressed greatly. With the completion of the new School Hall and the new Church, the various Organizations were able to increase their activities, and were able to hold special efforts to help Church funds. The usual Church Celebrations were held annually; also Concerts and Bazaars to augment the financial position.

## THE SIXTH PASTORATE

It was agreed that the Manse at Coleridge Road should be sold.

In May 1962 it was agreed that the School Hall be let to the Education Authority for the use of the Salisbury Road Senior Girls' School on four days a week. The Secretary was able to report in May 1962, that the Manse had been sold for £2000.

Manse. In June 1962, Mr. Hitt made an offer of his house in Seymour Avenue, and after discussion it was arranged that three Deacons visit the house with Mr. Hitt. In September 1962, the Church agreed to accept Mr. and Mrs. Hitt's offer of 18 Seymour Avenue as a Manse, with grateful thanks for their generous offer.

New Baptist Hymn Book. The Secretary reported on the cost of the new Hymnal, and it was agreed that we proceed with the purchase of same. Mrs. Bowerman was thanked for her offer to provide music books for the Choir in memory of Mr. Bowerman. The new Hymn Book was brought into use at the end of October 1963.

The Secretary reported in September 1962, that the Revd. K. N. Missen would be preaching on 19th November with a view to the Pastorate.

At the same Church Meeting the Secretary reported that he regretted Mr. Stapleton had to relinquish the post as Captain of the Boys' Brigade, and wishing him a speedy recovery after his operation. The Secretary was instructed to write Mr. Stapleton thanking him for his services over the past years. Mr. Raymond Bray had been elected as Captain in his place.

At a Church Meeting on 22nd November 1962, it was suggested that the Revd. Missen be invited to become our Pastor without a second visit, but as Mr. and Mrs. Missen had not seen the Manse it was suggested that they be asked to come on Thursday, January 3rd, for a Service and a talk over a cup of tea. It turned out to be a very unfortunate evening from the weather standpoint, but a good number of friends were present, and a very pleasant time was spent.

At a Special Church Meeting on 7th January, 1963, members unanimously agreed with the Deacons' recommendation that the Revd. Missen be invited to become our Pastor. The Secretary reported that he would probably be preaching on 14th February. The Secretary also stated that if Mr. Missen accepted the Church's invitation to become our Pastor he would not be able to commence until April or May.

Having accepted our invitation the Induction Service was held on 4th May, 1963. The Service was conducted by the Revd. Charles Dyer (President of the Devon and Cornwall Association). After a statement by the Church Secretary (Mr. R. Bray) and a response from the Revd. Missen, the Revd. H. H. Pewtress (Superintendent, Western Area) performed the Act of Induction and gave the Charge to the Minister. The Charge to the Church was given by the Revd. E. H. Robertson, M. A., B. Sc. of Yeovil Baptist Church. The Service was followed by a Welcome

Tea and Greetings in the School Hall. A letter of introduction from the Revd. Missen had been issued to all members and friends prior to the Induction Service. At the following Deacons' Meeting the Secretary referred to the inspiration of the Induction Service, and again assured the Revd. Missen of the loyalty and whole-hearted support of the Deacons in the future.

In July 1963, the Deacons appointed a Committee to explore and examine the possibilities of a Budget Scheme to cover all Church expenses and donations to outside objects, etc.

In September the Committee's recommendations were reported and in October the Scheme was explained in detail to the church members. Considerable discussion took place before the recommendation of the Diaconate that the Budget Scheme be adopted was placed before the members who agreed that such a Scheme be adopted. Members were informed that full details would be circulated in due course.

St. Jude's and District Council. Mrs. Bowman and Mr. Hellyer were appointed to represent the Church on this Council. The meeting had been fixed for January 1964.

It was reported to the Church in July 1963, that the Ter Jubilee Fund had reached its Target of £150, and Mr. Lidstone was thanked for his work in acting as Collector.

It was in 1963 that Miss Veronica Campbell commenced training as a Home Teacher for the Blind.

Young People's Fellowship. A great deal of discussion had taken place regarding the Youth Work. In July 1963, the Pastor reported that he had undertaken the Leadership from September to the end of the year. He outlined to church members the proposed new Declaration of Purpose and Rules. Considerable discussion followed, and approval was voiced at the steps that had been taken. In October the Pastor was able to report that the work was going on successfully, and that he was willing to continue as Leader.

In January 1964, our Pastor was able to report that the Church Finances were most encouraging. He was in no doubt as to the success of the Budget Scheme, and was in no doubt that we would receive the required weekly offering.

At the Church Meeting in March 1964, Mr. Missen explained the Covenant Scheme, and expressed the hope that members who could would help in this way.

Our Pastor outlined his proposed plans for the future organization of the Young People's Fellowship with which the church members agreed.

The Secretary reported on his recent visit to Stratford-on-Avon. Mr. Paterson was improving in health and was home from hospital. The recommendation of the Deacons that the Church invite Mr. and Mrs. Paterson to be the guests of the Church for a fortnight's holiday was unanimously approved. It was

felt that this would be a tangible expression of our appreciation for their years of service during a very difficult period of the Church's history.

At the Church Meeting in June 1964, Mr. Missen reported on the House Groups which were now operating. He also outlined plans for the reorganization of the Church Week, and considerable discussion followed.

The Revd. and Mrs. Paterson had written accepting the Church's invitation and saying it would be "the holiday of their lives".

In September 1964 Mr. Harold Rich was appointed a Life Deacon.

Mr. Missen outlined the suggested plan for a Stewardship Campaign with the aim of "Each one reach one":-

- To September 1965 - Preparation
- 1965 to 1966 - Major Effort
- 1966 to 1967 - Consolidation

Preparation would include prayer and training. A prayer meeting to be held on the last Sunday of each month at 6 p.m. From January there would be a monthly letter for circulation in the district.

The Action to consist of personal invitations with special monthly services. The letters to the district to be continued.

Consolidation, Church membership and baptismal classes. Most important the centrality of Christ, bringing people to Christ, not only to church. Stewardship was talent, and all have at least one talent.

At the December church meeting in 1964 Mr. Missen outlined further details of the Stewardship Campaign, and indicated the kind of Guest Services he was planning. It was hoped that these would provide an opportunity to introduce an outsider to the fellowship of the Church.

The members stood as a pledge of support, and to dedicate themselves in the work.

Mr. Missen spoke of the progress being made in the work amongst the young people, and asked for some friends to be willing to entertain the young people for an hour of fellowship on Sunday evenings after the service.

In January 1965, it was with great regret that the Church received the resignation of Mr. Mills as Choirmaster.

In June 1965, the Church heard with great interest that Miss V. Campbell was seeking an opportunity to widen her sphere of service, and that she would shortly be interviewed by the Baptist Missionary Society.

Stewardship Campaign, Mr. Missen reported on the progress being made. Monthly letters were being distributed around the district. Details were given of proposed Sectional Church Conferences and dates arranged.

The Pastor felt that at least two points had emerged -

1. The district does know of the Church.
2. The Church was beginning to realize its responsibility to the people of the district.

In January 1966, the Deacons met the Choir Committee, and after discussion it was agreed that Mr. D. Popplestone be approached. He did not accept the invitation and the position was resolved by the Revd. Missen taking over the duties of Choirmaster.

In connection with the Campaign a Guest Service was held on 20th February, followed by refreshments.

At the Church Meeting in February, the Secretary reported on the steps taken by Miss Veronica Campbell in offering herself for service with the B. M. S., and read a letter received from Miss Madge, Secretary for Women Candidates. Many loving tributes were paid to Veronica, and there was in many members' minds the firm conviction that God was speaking both to Veronica and the Church at Salisbury Road. In March Veronica was accepted by the B. M. S. for service after two years training at Birmingham.

Street Groups. The possibility of the formation of Street Groups, or Christian Calls, was agreed in principle, and the meeting was prepared to support a Pilot Scheme as an experiment.

It was in May 1966, that Mr. D. Beavington informed the church members that he would not be prepared to be nominated as Church Treasurer at the next Annual Meeting. Tribute was paid to Mr. Beavington for his loyal service as Deacon and Treasurer for 18 years, and regret was expressed at his decision.

In November 1966 members were informed of the proposed arrangements for the Diamond Jubilee Celebrations in 1967.

Saturday, 18th March - Social evening with choral items and supper.

Sunday, 19th March - Special Services with Revd. L. H. Merrett and Revd. J. Paterson participating.

A visit to Drake's Island to be arranged during the summer.

At the Annual Church Meeting in 1967 Mr. H. Porter was elected as Treasurer in succession to Mr. D. Beavington, who was presented with a portable typewriter in recognition of his services.

It was reported that the Revd. L. H. Merrett would be unable to take part in the Diamond Jubilee Services. It was agreed that the day's Services be left in the hands of the Pastor, with the suggestion that various members of the Church take part.

The Revd. Missen also reported that a legacy had been left to the Church by the late Miss Young, which would probably be between £1200 and £1300. (The final figure notified by the Solicitors was £1477). Discussion took place on the disbursement of the legacy and it was agreed -

1. To investigate a system of amplification for use in the Church.
2. To install three additional stops to the Organ.
3. That the remaining fund be invested.

At a Church Meeting in March 1967, tribute was paid to Mr. Raymond Bray who would shortly be leaving for Taunton. In presenting Mr. Bray with a Nest of Tables Mr. Missen spoke of the years of service Raymond had given to the Church. Mr. Bray suitably replied saying how much he would miss the Fellowship at Salisbury Road.

Organ. In June 1967 Mr. Missen was able to report that the three stops had been installed, and that the Organ was now complete. It was agreed that the completion should be celebrated with a Concert by the Clarion Male Voice Choir. The Organ Fund was now closed.

In September 1967, the Pastor reported the deaths of our Life Deacon Mr. Harold Rich, and Mr. Cecil James a former Deacon and Church Treasurer.

At the Annual General Meeting in February 1968, Mr. Harry Bray was elected a Life Deacon in recognition of the services he had rendered to the Church. Mr. W. Hellyer was elected as Secretary.

A Valedictory Service for Miss Veronica Campbell would be held on 21st September. The Service to be conducted by the Pastor and Miss Irene West of the R. M. S. Refreshments to be served at a social gathering afterwards.

Stewardship Campaign. The Pastor once again emphasised that the Church must face the challenge of how it could use Time, Talent and Treasure. A Brochure was being prepared under the headings:-

"What the Church is willing to do"

"What will you do for the Church?"

The Campaign would include Church Members, Members of the Congregation and Organizations, and Parents of members of the Junior Church. It would be launched by holding a Family Meal. A frank discussion followed regarding the necessity for the meal. An amendment was put forward, but on putting it to the vote it was lost.

In connection with the Campaign it was decided in June 1968, to hold a Prayer Meeting at 6 p. m. on the first Sunday of the month, and at 7.45 p. m. on the third Wednesday.

In September 1968, the final arrangements were outlined. The Campaign would be launched on 18th February 1969. The Visitors would be commissioned on 9th March, and the Fellowship Meal would be on 12th March at the Dartmoor Restaurant at Dingles. A Service of Thanksgiving would be held on Easter Sunday, 6th April. Our Pastor was able to report that an anonymous gift of £75 had been given towards the cost of the Meal.

At the Church Meeting in December 1968, a letter was read from Veronica asking the Church to undertake the financial support of educating two children. The Deacons had approved, and the Missionary Council were prepared to support.

The Pastor reported further on the Stewardship Campaign and said that if the response was as good as expected, the only other appeals would be Boys' Brigade and Girls' Brigade Weeks, Veronica's Appeal and Spurgeon's Homes.

At the Church Meeting in April 1969, Mr. Stapleton moved that the Church should record its appreciation of the work undertaken by the Pastor in carrying the Stewardship Campaign through to a successful completion of its first phase. Many members paid tribute to the untiring manner in which Mr. Missen had led, inspired, trained and organized the helpers to achieve such good results.

Appreciation was also expressed on the assistance given by the Revd. P. Withers, Younger Women's Fellowship. In July 1969 it was reported that a Committee had been formed, and that the first meeting would be held on 11th September.

It was also reported that the Prayer Meetings had been re-arranged, and would now be held on the first Wednesday and third Sunday each month.

Mention was also made of the fact that the Boys' Brigade would be celebrating their 25th Anniversary on 12th October, and that the Revd. Merrett had accepted an invitation to attend.

It was also decided that Church Members' Meetings and Fellowship Meetings should combine and be held on the second Wednesday each alternate month, commencing in December.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The St. Jude's and District Council would be holding an "Agape" in the large hall on 21st January 1970.

The Revd. Missen reporting on the year's work said that 1969 had been a year of preparation for outreach which had been carried through with a great deal of success. It was important now to maintain contact. Numbers had increased in Church Membership, Baptist Women's League, and the formation of the Younger Women's Fellowship. One important value had been the visitation, and this should continue. Mention was made of the varied forms of worship on Sunday mornings, catering for all thoughts of the congregation. Having had the experience of the Stewardship Campaign, it was now the time for a Renewal Campaign to coincide with the Harvest Thanksgiving.

In January 1970 a Committee was elected to plan and report at the next Church Meeting. The decisions made by the Committee were approved. The Family Meal would be arranged to include the Harvest Supper on 30th September. The Pastor outlined the Programme which received unanimous approval.

Approval was also given to the Deacons' recommendations re increased Insurances in respect of the Manse, Church Buildings and Contents.

Church Rules. Draft copies of Sections 1 and 2 had been circulated to all members previous to the meeting. The Pastor explained that the Rules could only be changed or accepted at the Annual General Meeting. In order that careful

consideration could be given to the Rules, it was decided to consider each section at Church Meetings during the year, and prepare them for acceptance at the Annual General Meeting. The Church Covenant which was included in the original Membership Rule Book was read by the Pastor, and it was agreed unanimously that it was fitting that this should be included in the new Rule Book. It was also agreed to include a preface to the Rule Book - "The Responsibilities of a Church Member" - an extract from the Baptist Union suggested Rule Book.

Baptist Women's League. It was agreed in May 1970 that the Church record a minute congratulating the ladies on their Diamond Jubilee, and giving thanks for the wonderful way the League had supported the work of the Church over the past 60 years.

Stewardship Renewal Campaign. The Pastor reported that preparations were well in hand, and he outlined what was arranged, and appealed for the members to support it with their personal prayers.

Roll Book. In January 1971, it was reported that a new Roll Book was being prepared, which all members would be requested to sign. The Book would be available for signing on Thankoffering Day and three following Sundays. The Communion Service in May would also be a form of re-dedication.

Church Rules. At the Annual Meeting in February 1971, the Rules which had been considered in detail at Church Meetings during 1970 were accepted, and would supersede all previous Rules. These would be printed and each member would receive a copy.

It was at this meeting that Mr. K. Mills was again elected as Choirmaster.

The Pastor also reported on the work amongst the young people. Quite a large number were now attending the Church Services. He asked that Church Members would support this work with their prayers.

In July 1971 consideration was given as to the Church's contribution to the Baptist Missionary Society. The Deacons recommended that a realistic figure should be budgeted each year and that for 1971 this should be £200, to include various gifts and results of special efforts including the sale of Christmas Cards. The Deacons' recommendation was approved.

A Guest Service was arranged for 19th September and the programme was outlined.

In November 1971 the Church were informed that Veronica would be leaving for East Pakistan on 15th November. She was assured of the Church's prayers and support, and the Pastor wished her God's richest blessings.

At the Church Meeting in March 1972, the opening service of worship was conducted by the Revd. Philip Withers, who had requested the opportunity of fellowship with the Churches of the District while President of the Plymouth District of Baptist Churches.

In May 1972, appreciation was expressed of the services rendered by our late brother, Mr. H. Porter, for several years a Deacon and Church Treasurer. Mr. D. Beavington was nominated as Deacon, and approval given to his appointment as Treasurer. Mr. Beavington was thanked for his services since the death of Mr. Porter.

It was on the 19th July, 1972, that before the morning service the Pastor read a letter to the Deacons resigning from the Pastorate. This came as a shock to the Officers as it was to the congregation when Mr. Missen read the letter. At the Church Meeting on the following Wednesday Mr. Missen said he felt his resignation from the Ministry was the correct one, and that he would be serving God in a practical Christian service as a Voluntary Help Organiser at the Moorhaven Hospital. The letter of resignation, which had been read at the morning service on the previous Sunday was again read. The Secretary reported that the Diaconate had considered the letter and would move its acceptance with much regret, but with grateful thanks for a happy and successful pastorate of over nine years. This was approved by the members.

It was unanimously agreed to seek a new Pastor immediately - the help of the Area Superintendent had been sought.

In September 1972, the Church Secretary outlined the procedure that the Church would pursue to call its new Pastor. This was the accepted suggestion of the Baptist Union. He informed the members that the Deacons had invited the Revd. G. Alex Potts of Perry Beeches, Birmingham, to meet for a discussion with the Diaconate on the 27th September, and the members of the Church and Congregation would have an opportunity of having fellowship with him the next evening.

Appreciation was expressed to the Revd. Missen for his leadership and especially for the manner in which he had conducted the Fellowship Meetings when the members met to seek God's guidance and blessing on their working together. After the singing of a hymn the Pastor commended the Church to the care of the Father, and all joined in saying the Grace together.

The Church and Congregation bade farewell to Mr. Missen at the Harvest Supper on 25th September. The Secretary, in presenting him with a cheque from members and friends, once again expressed appreciation and thanks for his leadership and guidance during the time he had been with us.

During the Revd. Missen's ministry the Church had made good progress. All Organizations were very active, and supported the Church in many ways.

The celebrations of Pastor's and Church Anniversaries were not held during this Pastorate, but many other events took place.

## THE SEVENTH PASTORATE

At a Special Meeting in October 1972, the Church Secretary, acting as Chairman, introduced the recommendation of the Diaconate that the Church should invite the Revd. G. Alex Potts to visit the Church for the second time with a view to the Pastorate. The recommendation was accepted unanimously, and Mr. and Mrs. Potts visited us on the last Sunday in October.

As Mr. Hellyer would be acting as Chairman while we were without a minister, the Church appointed Mr. J. Stapleton as Minute Secretary.

In November 1972, the Church Members agreed by unanimous vote that the Revd. Alex Potts be invited to become our Pastor, and the invitation was accepted.

The Induction Service was held on 10th March 1973, presided over by the Revd. Philip Withers, B.D. The sermon was preached by the Revd. Abraham Williams, B.D., Minister of The Church of the Good Shepherd, Sutton Coldfield, and the Revd. Ralph Darvell (General Superintendent) performed the Act of Induction. Statements were given by the Church Secretary (Mr. Hellyer) and the Revd. Alex Potts, after which the Act of Induction took place. The Service was followed by Tea in the Large Hall, presided over by the Revd. J.R. Blanshard (Secretary, Devon and Cornwall Association). Greetings were received from local ministers and friends. Friends from Perry Beeches, Birmingham, were also present and brought greetings, and so commenced our present Pastorate.

In May 1973, approval was given to the formation and constitution of a Boys' Brigade and Girls' Brigade Parents' Association, and this has proved a very successful Organization.

In July 1973, it was agreed that in connection with the Harvest Festival Celebration members of the Junior Church be asked to bring gifts of fruit etc., and that the older friends be invited to contribute a monetary gift for the work of Operation AGRI.

The Pastor in reporting on the Youth Work, said that there were thirty interested young people, and that a Youth Council had been formed, with representatives from all the Youth Organizations. A Special Youth Service had been arranged for the morning of 16th September, when the Jesus Revolution Group would be visiting us.

It was also reported that the Church had agreed to support the Don Summers' Mission to be held in 1974.

A Welcome Home Service for Veronica Campbell was fixed for 8th December. There would be Tea, followed by a Service in the Church. An invitation would be extended to the Plymouth Baptist Churches.

Devon and Cornwall Association Assembly, 1975. As this was to be held in Plymouth, it was thought that we ought to extend an invitation for the Assembly to

meet at our Church. Mention was made of our inadequate kitchen facilities, but after a rather lengthy discussion it was agreed to invite the Assembly to meet at Salisbury Road. The Pastor said that in the meantime the kitchens should receive attention.

Church Duplicator. This needed repairs which would cost £30. The firm had recommended a new machine at a cost of £90, the old duplicator to be taken in part exchange. After some discussion the Deacons' recommendation that a new machine be purchased was agreed to.

At the November Church Meeting in 1973 the Pastor asked members to think, talk and pray about the unity of the Christians of the district. He had been in conversation with the minister of Mount Gould Church, and they had agreed that the members of both Churches be asked to enter into conversations with a view to the two Churches joining together. Many questions were asked about the mechanics of joining. The Pastor said he did not want any decision at this meeting, but would like members to consider the matter and be prepared to vote at the next meeting as to whether the conversations should take place. At the Church Meeting in January 1974, the members unanimously supported the proposition that this Church should enter into conversations with the Mount Gould Church and the St. Simon's Parish Church, to discuss ways in which we could do things together, thus establishing a more united Church.

Magazine. The first edition was issued in January 1974 - Mrs. Potts acting as Editor. It would be known as the "Go Between".

The Veronica Campbell Fund would in future be known as "The Shikha Fund" - Shikha being the Bengali word for "Education".

Reports of Organizations. These had been duplicated and issued to all members prior to the Annual Meeting. Thanks were expressed to Mrs. Potts for the excellent way these had been prepared.

It was reported in March 1974 that the conversations with Mount Gould Methodist and St. Simon's Churches were proceeding at Ministerial level. In June a report was given of the United Meeting held, which included the following resolution:-

"The three Churches should meet with each other every Sunday evening in rotation (except where Special Services had been arranged)".

The resolution failed to obtain a proposer and so was withdrawn. The meeting did approve that the following recommendation be submitted to the other two Churches:-

"That in addition to the joint service arranged by the St. Jude's and District Council of Churches, the Church would be happy to meet in the other two Churches (Mount Gould Methodist and St. Simon's) with another Service in our own Church, once during the year".

At a Members' Meeting in June 1974, a presentation was made to Veronica Campbell who would shortly be returning to Bangladesh.

In July the Pastor reported that Veronica had received a letter from Simson (one of the two young people we were supporting) stating that he was in financial difficulty owing to the death of his father, and could we help, otherwise he may have to give up further training. The amount involved was approximately £37, and it was agreed this be paid out of the Shikha Fund, but this was paid by personal donations.

"Shikha Day" would be held on 12th October, and the Pastor outlined the proposed Programme.

Conversations with Mount Gould and St. Simons. The Pastor reported on a recent meeting held. There had been a very lengthy discussion, and Mr. Potts outlined the various suggestions which had been put forward.

Power for Life Mission - March to April 1976. The Pastor reported on the recent meeting held at Old George Street Church, and gave details of the various Committees appointed to organize the Mission.

Junior Church. The Pastor appealed for helpers for the Junior Church as these were urgently needed.

At the Church Meeting in September 1974, a letter was read from St. Simon's Church withdrawing from the conversations, as they had decided to concentrate again on the church life at St. Simon's.

Power for Life Mission 1976. The Pastor urged members to pledge support to this Mission in some way between now and April 1976, and to this the members gave unanimous support. The Inauguration Service would be the first meeting we could support, and our Church would be represented by two elected representatives.

On the recommendation of the Deacons Mr. J. Stapleton was co-opted on the Diaconate to act as Secretary pro-tem during Mr. Hellyer's illness.

Conversations with Mount Gould. At the Church Meeting in November 1974, five members were elected to meet with five members from Mount Gould during the first three months of 1975, in order to consider some concrete proposals to bring before the Church.

Praise for To-day. The Pastor spoke on the new Hymn Book which had been published, and suggested that we as a Church should purchase copies for use in our Services. After a lengthy discussion regarding the expense involved, it was agreed that members could purchase a copy for their own use, or give a donation. Mr. Albert Symons was appointed collector. At the meeting in January 1975, it was reported that gifts had been received for 40 copies for church use, and 40 for personal use.

It was also reported that a Tape Recorder had been purchased, and that some of our sick members had already heard a Service that had been recorded.

The Church agreed in January 1975 to appoint Mr. E. Hitt as a Life Deacon, Power for Life Mission. The Pastor outlined the Speakers at meetings to be held during Lent at Mutley Baptist Church.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. An Ecumenical Communion Service was to be held in our Large Hall on 20th January, arranged by the St. Jude's and District Council.

In February 1975, a Boys' Club was started for boys of 6 to 8 years of age, under the leadership of Mrs. Jean Parsons. This was later known as "The Salisbury Road Wombles".

It was in February 1975 that the Church agreed to conduct hymn singing in Wards 7 and 8 at Mount Gould Hospital on the fourth Sunday in each month at 4 o'clock.

In March 1975, the Church appointed Mr. J. Stapleton as Assistant Secretary, and Mr. H. Harrison as Assistant Treasurer.

At the Church Meeting in July 1975, letters were read from the Revd. John Blanshard and Mrs. Ashworth, expressing their appreciation for the excellent arrangements made for the Association Meetings which had been such a great success. The Pastor thanked everyone for all the work and many hours of service rendered by members of the Church and Congregation.

Mount Gould Conversations. At the September Church Meeting the Pastor reported that copies of the Draft Document produced by the Committee representing both Churches was available for all members. A Church Meeting would be held on 24th September to consider, discuss and vote on the acceptance of the Document. This being of such importance that acceptance of the Document would require a two-thirds majority of those present and able to vote.

At the September meeting a lengthy discussion took place, and the meeting was adjourned until 15th October. At this meeting there was another lengthy discussion before voting took place, which resulted in the Document not being accepted in its proposed form.

Power for Life Mission. The Church agreed at the meeting in November to support the Final Rally on Sunday, 4th April, 1976. No Service would be held that evening at Salisbury Road.

Also in November 1975 the Boys' Brigade Company recommended that Mr. Albert Symons, a lieutenant in the Company should be appointed Captain. The Chaplain thanked Mr. Stapleton for over 20 years' service to the Company.

The Pastor brought forward a recommendation from the Deacons that a Coffee Bar Mission be arranged in February 1976. Mr. Tony May of Youth for Christ would lead the Mission. The cost would be approximately £150, and it

was hoped that Members and Organizations would contribute to this cost. The recommendation was approved by the Church Members.

It was reported in November 1975 that the St. Jude's and District Council had decided to discontinue for twelve months. The Clergy would meet as a fraternal, and consideration would be given at a later date as to whether to reconstitute the Council.

In January 1976, Mr. R. Jenkins was elected as Church Treasurer in succession to Mr. D. Beavington who had resigned.

In March 1976 the Church agreed that an Earphone be purchased to replace the one that had been taken; also that a typewriter be purchased. Gifts towards the cost of the typewriter would be appreciated.

The Pastor reported on the recent Coffee Bar Mission when about 150 had attended each evening. The Coffee Bar meetings would continue on Wednesday evenings, and an After Church Fellowship on Sundays.

In April 1976 the Girls' Brigade celebrated their 50th Anniversary with a large gathering of parents and friends.

Ten Points of Unity Commission. In connection with the visit of Dr. West on 11th June, transport would be available to convey friends to Hope Baptist Church, and it was hoped a number would avail themselves of this opportunity to hear Dr. West.

In July 1976 it was decided to start a Fabric Fund, and Mr. D. Beavington was appointed as Chairman of the Fabric Committee which would consist of a representative from each Church Organization.

Owing to the water shortage, it was agreed to hold a baptismal service in the river near Plym Bridge on 18th July. A number of friends were conveyed by car, and a very impressive service was held. The Boys' Brigade arranged a tent for changing purposes.

70th Anniversary Celebrations. In July Mr. Stapleton reported on the arrangements. The Celebrations would be spread over seven days. The two former ministers of the Church (the Revd. Lewis Merrett and Revd. Keith Missen) would share in the Celebrations. Copies of the booklet "One Step Forward" would be purchased for each member. The theme of the Anniversary would be based on this book. Each member would be visited by the Pastor or a Deacon before Christmas. Gift Day would be during the Festival, and it was hoped £500 would be raised.

Our Missionary Sunday this year was held a week earlier on 10th October, when both services were conducted by Veronica Campbell, assisted by Mr. Martin Hdhikary, B. A., a student from Bangladesh studying at Bristol Baptist College. Veronica returned to Bangladesh during the week.

The Plymouth and District Missionary Rally was held at Salisbury Road on Saturday, 16th October. Films and Slides were shown of B. M. S. work in Zaire. There was a good attendance, and a very pleasant evening was enjoyed by all. Musical items were rendered by young people from Hooe Baptist Church.

Visit of Team from America. In November the Pastor reported on the District Meeting when the Scheme was explained. The visit would be in June 1978, and the Churches participating would only be responsible for hospitality. The Members agreed to support the Mission.

Shika Fund. The Pastor explained that Veronica had expressed the desire that the Church be asked to support Stephanie, Simson and Sudhir (an additional student) for the next two years at a cost of £180 per year. After discussion the Church agreed that the Missionary Council should endeavour to raise the amount required for the two years, and then the question of further payment should be reviewed.

-----

This history cannot be ended without referring to the many gifts of money, furniture and effects that have been given in memory of loved ones called to higher service during the seventy years. These gifts have helped the Church in many ways.

Also mention must be made of those ladies and gentlemen of the Church who have given so much time and labour in numerous ways over the years. One name is indeed outstanding - that of Mr. Hitt, who has organised much of the manual work, and spent many, many hours working on the premises with his other helpers.

We now go forward with great hopes for the future, praying that this Church may continue to be a good witness for Christ in this district for many years to come.

We thank you for the memories that fill our minds today;  
For the Church that once received us and kept us in your way;  
For the ones that introduced us to Jesus Christ our Lord;  
For the saints who have known and loved us, our God you  
are adored.

We thank you for the future to which your Spirit leads,  
That in every moment of it he will satisfy our needs,  
Your love can never fail us through all eternity;  
So may we, and all your people, fulfil our destiny.

(David J. Harding. No. 92 Praise for Today)

SALISBURY ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH

Ministers of Our Church during the  
past 70 years

1906 - 1919	Rev. Herbert Hill
1920 - 1927	Rev. J. Ivor Wensley, M.A., B.D.
1929 - 1936	Rev. Henry Morgan
1938 - 1952	Rev. John Paterson
1952 - 1961	Rev. Lewis Merrett
1963 - 1972	Rev. Keith Missen, B.A., B.D.
1973 -	Rev. G. Alex Potts

### CHURCH SECRETARIES

Mr. E.J. Hodge	1907-1911
Mr. C. Hudson	1911-1914
Mr. G. Bulley	1914-1916
Mr. E.J. Hodge	1916-1921
Mr. G. Bulley (temporarily for few months)	
Mr. Morris	1921-1927
Mr. A.F. Martin	1927-1958
Mr. R. Bray	1958-1967
Mr. W. Hellyer	1967 to date

### CHURCH TREASURERS

Mr. E. Moul	1907-1911
Mr. M. Hancock	1911-1914
Mr. J. Rendle	1914-1946
Mr. C. James	1946-1949
Mr. D. Beavington	1949-1967
Mr. H. Porter	1967-1972
Mr. D. Beavington	1972-1976
Mr. R. Jenkins	1976-1977