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Allison Creek Presbyterian Church Growing In It's Second Century

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Large white church with columns landmark in Allison Creek area

By MARVIN EURY
Herald Area Editor

ALLISON CREEK — Motorists traveling Highway 274 can't miss the large white church with the slender columns that is as much a landmark in the Allison Creek community as the creek from which the area takes its name. An eye-catching sign announces that the church is one of permanence, too.

In large black letters, the inscription reads: "Allison Creek Presbyterian Church. Organized in 1854."

The design of the church dates it, for it is architecture of pre-Civil War days with its high-ceilinged portion being supported by four slender columns.

Location of the church is a wooded hill with the backwaters of Allison Creek behind it.

There is no recorded history of the early members and how they have survived the more than a century that has passed since its organization.

But tradition is that Allison Creek Church was a "daughter" of the old Bethel Presbyterian Church and the Ebenezer Pres-

byterian Church.

Before its organization, people of the community traveled the many miles on roads that were hardly more than "pig paths" to worship in two distant churches, Bethel and Ebenezer.

In 1854 the church was organized and has been in existence since, although it didn't become self-supporting or call its first full-time minister until three years ago.

Before then, the church had supply pastors from neighboring churches.

Following construction of the Catawba River dam early in this century, it is said an epidemic of

fever struck the neighborhood, causing entire families to flee homesteads and plantations on the Allison Creek.

Allison Creek Church weathered the epidemic and has been a strong link in the chain of Bethel Presbytery since.

The church's first full-time minister is Rev. Grant M. Sharp, a native of DeLand, Fla., called in 1959. Mr. Sharp, 27, is a graduate of Davidson College, and Union Theological Seminary.

He is married to the former Miss Carolyn Herman of La-Grange, Ga., and they have a daughter, Emily Allison, 18 months old.

Mr. Sharp said Friday that the congregation hopes to embark on a building program in the near future although "nothing formally" has been done so far. He said more educational space is needed.

The last building program was in 1955 when a church school wing was completed and in 1959 when men of the congregation did most of the work on the church's \$25,000 manse.

The congregation had its homecoming recently and at that time the Cemetery Association was reviewed.

Clerk of session at the church is T. G. Cook, and T. B. Jackson Jr. is chairman of the board of deacons. Mrs. W. Marvin Martin is president of the Women of the Church.

Present church membership is 130 and church school attendance is 135.

The early church of Allison Creek Presbyterians was a favorite subject of York's John R. Schorb and a number of Schorb's pictures of the church are in York County Memorial Museum. The pictures were taken in the 1850's.



Allison Creek Presbyterian Church, founded in 1854.

Herald photo — Garrison