

IN GOD'S GOOD PROVIDENCE

A History of Avondale Presbyterian Church

Beginnings...

From *The Charlotte Observer*, Sunday, August 12, 1944:

Organization of a Sunday school at the newly-built Avondale Presbyterian Chapel at 2805 Avondale Avenue was announced yesterday. Preaching services will begin at the Chapel on August 27, with the Rev. John R. Rosebro acting as supply pastor.

From *The Charlotte Observer*, Monday, November 6, 1944:

Avondale Presbyterian Church was organized last night by a Commission of Mecklenburg Presbytery.

Additional quotes about Avondale history:

"Now we were on our way to prosper in the work of the Lord," commented G. Douglas Aitken. Many gatherings took place – on the stoop of the J.B. Meacham's home or Wayne Smith's back porch or even an official meeting under an apple tree – before their dreams of the church became reality. It was suggested that it be named *Avondale* for its location on Avondale Avenue, now Park Road.

In the beginning, a lot was given by W.H. Belk of the Mecklenburg Presbytery's Home Missions Committee. It was wartime.....materials were unavailable. But one day a stack of old lumber was placed on the church property. Mr. Belk had given materials from an abandoned schoolhouse near Waxhaw. This building would serve as a chapel with an assembly room and four classrooms.

A vacation Bible school was offered by the Home Missions Committee but because of the polio epidemic, children were not allowed to gather.

A Sunday school was started in 1944, with G.D. Aitken as superintendent. This Sunday school with an attendance of 60 grew in 1945 to over 100.

As one member said, "We were a Sunday school, building a church."

On November 5, 1944, a church was organized. Earlier, on Oct. 5, 1944, a petition had been submitted with 52 signatures. "Beginning on August 27, 1944, there was preaching every Sunday," writes Elder Reid Ellis. Thomas MacLean accepted the congregation's call as pastor in 1946. Construction of the first sanctuary was already underway. Nettie Johnson reports:

"Sometime about 1944-47, we realized that the lot given would not be large enough for growth. We bought two lots on the corner of Park Road – then Avondale Avenue – and Lilac Road. They were purchased from Lillian F. Crosland for \$3,000. The new sanctuary was completed in 1947."

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