

Revival service

Revival services at the Hard-
in Baptist Church will begin
with the 11 a.m. service Sunday
and continue with 7:30 p.m.
services through Thursday. The
Rev. Clifford Holland, pastor of
North Linden Baptist Church in
Columbus, Ohio, will be guest
minister for the worship. The
youth and adult choirs will pro-
vide music and a nursery will
be open for pre-schoolers.

Elizabeth City Advance

Fayetteville Observer

Gastonia Gazette

~~Goldsboro News-Argus~~

Greensboro Daily News

Greensboro Record

Gaston*

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Hardin
The Gaston Gazette

Gastonia, NC

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Greater Gaston
December 20, 2001

Carolina Clipping Service
Raleigh, NC 27603

FAITH

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**Popular minister
leaves Hardin Baptist**

The Rev. Fain Farmer is known in Gaston and surrounding counties as a caring, loving, minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ. He and his wife, Sam, have served the people of Hardin Baptist Church and friends with love, loyalty, respect and faithfulness for 24 years.

Rev. Farmer seemingly never meets a stranger — he is always there, whether it is a church member, a friend of a member or someone in need of prayer or “just to talk” about a problem.



From left, the Rev. Fain Farmer, his wife, Sam Farmer, and Roger Self.

He has won hundreds of souls to the Lord, preached numerous funerals, sometime someone he

scarcely knew, but was called on at short notice. He has performed countless marriage ceremonies for members and friends, and has gone far beyond the call of being just a good pastor.

On Dec. 9, the church gave Rev. Farmer and Sam a farewell dinner, along with gifts, cards, hugs, handshakes. Roger Self, the youth pastor, presented the couple with a check for a small down payment for their love and loyalty as ministers for 24 years of faithful service.

Their ministry does not stop, they are only moving on to a different church.

B3

Gaston Co

HISTORY OF THE HARDEN BAPTIST CHURCH.

The Harden Baptist Church was founded Nov-13th, 1922. The Organization consisted of 19 men and women, of the Baptist Faith. Who were at that time residing in the mill village of Harden, and were members of various neighboring Baptist Churches. This small membership called as their first Pastor W.W. Rimmer. as supply untill a regular pastor could be obtained. Within a few months Rev. G.A. Abernethy was called as pastor and served for the year of 1923-1924. During this time the membership grew very fast. At the end of two years Rev Abernethy resigned as pastor and Rev E.N. Teague was called by the Church and served for two years 1925 and 1926. Rev. G.A. Abernethy served as Pastor again for the next two years 1927 & 1928.

During the year 1927 a wind storm wrecked the Church building being used, (which was the property of the Harden Mfg Co,) The congregation then moved their place of worship to the New school building, known as the Harden School ~~Building~~ building. At this time the members began thinking of a house of their own. A suitable lot was procured from the estate of the late J.H. Friday for the sum of one hundred dollars. and plans were made for a new church. During the year of 1928 the first car load of brick were hauled from the siding at Harden to the new church site by members of the church. also during the year 1928 Rev Abernethy resigned and Bro. Ed Brown was called as Pastor. Work went forward on the new church very rapidly, all labor being free except the Brick mason who being a member of the church labored for half price. Building was called off during the winter of 1928 and 29. Then started again in the early spring of 1929 with such vim and determination that the tired but happy membership held their opening service in August. Was indeed a happy meeting after hardships and toils of building the house in which to worship the Lord.

Many tears freely flowed as men and women gathered to thank God for this new home.

The Church's indebtedness was cared for by issuing bonds. A number of them to be retired each year under the able leadership of the Pastor Rev Ed Brown.

The Harden Baptist Church will achieve greater things in the future for the Master.

INTERPRETING THE WORD



AP PHOTO

Maxine Propst signs the song the choir is singing during worship service at Hardin Baptist Church in Dallas, N.C. Propst has been signing for 15 years, and not only interprets the church services for any deaf people who come to Hardin, but teaches a sign language class to hearing members of the church who want to learn.

Dallas church makes it easier for members to see signs from God

■ **Flint Groves Baptist Church** has offered Sunday services in sign language for nearly four decades

By **SHANNON CLUBB**

The Gaston Gazette, Gastonia

GASTONIA (AP) — Anyone who grew up going to church on Sundays can probably sing a few bars of a hymn that takes them back.

Ever thought about what it would be like if you couldn't hear the music or the sermon the pastor was delivering?

In the early 1960s, Flint Groves Baptist Church became one of the first churches in the area to offer services in sign language.

Patsy Huggins was a member then, and when a missionary came to town to get the project under way, she got involved.

"It's been taking place ever since then," Huggins said. "I've always felt called to interpret to the deaf and it's just been one

of those things I've tried to stick with over the years."

Huggins and a few other volunteers regularly sign for about eight people on Sunday mornings and Wednesday nights.

Huggins didn't know sign language when the project started, but she learned from the missionary when he could come in to town and teach them. Other times, the small group had to learn from hand signs drawn out on paper.

"I thought, oh, that would be so wonderful to be able to interpret to them," Huggins said.

She said her ministry helped create a special bond between her and some of the deaf members. They were always there for her when she needed it, she said.

Maxine Propst was teaching a fifth- and sixth-grade Sunday school class at Hardin Baptist in Dallas when a deaf student came into her class. She wanted to communicate with the boy and got his mother to teach her sign language.

Now Propst has been signing for 15 years, and not only interprets the church

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Church

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services for any deaf people who come to Hardin, but teaches a Wednesday night sign language class to hearing members of the church who want to learn.

"I always think to myself, it could have been my child," Propst said.

From what she's learned, she describes being deaf as being somewhat in your own world. It's difficult to communicate with people who don't know sign language, even by writing it out, Propst said.

"It just brightens their face when they find out that you're part of their world," she said.

The members of the sign language class put on a Biblical drama that strongly incorporates signing at least once a year at the church. At the first drama several years ago, Propst said the church was packed with people from all

over the state.

Propst has taught most of the sign language she knows to herself after being taught the basics by her Sunday school student's mother 15 years ago. She said it's an ongoing process.

"You never learn it as long as you live," Propst said. "You learn new words every day."

To help her keep up with the pastor and choir, she doesn't sign every single word being said, but just the gist, or the bare bones of what's being conveyed. To try and help the people she's signing for understand the context better, she purposely uses a lot of emotion and facial expressions while signing.

"This is God's will for me to do," she said. "I prayed a long time."

It's been an unexpected turn of events for her, but she says there's not denying it's her call in life.

"I didn't think I'd ever do anything like this. I honestly didn't think I was that smart," Propst said. "With God's help I can do anything. Nothing's impossible with him."

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GASTON GAZETTE
GASTONIA, N.C.

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Hardin Baptist Church congregation receives regional recognition

Church volunteers contributed to about 7,000 hours

By Danielle Deaver
Gazette Staff Reporter

DALLAS — The congregation at Hardin Baptist Church was recognized with a regional award Wednesday for the 7,000 hours its volunteers worked last year.

The Hardin Baptist Church has ministries in several areas, Rev. Fain Farmer said.

"We do woodcutting. We have a handyman ministry. We have a nursing home ministry. They go out and play bingo with the residents of the nursing home once a month. We have a prison ministry," he said.

Church volunteers and the pastor were honored Wednesday with a 9 Who Care Award presented annually by WSOC-TV to groups and individuals who make a difference in their communities.

The regional award comes after the congregation was recognized at the Gaston County Volunteer Annual luncheon on April 24.

The church was nominated by Lisa Adams.

"I nominated them because of the number of volunteer hours and number of committed volun-

teers they have to carry out the number of ministries that church does and they have a lot of devoted and dedicated members who want to give back to their community," said Adams, who works for the Crisis Ministry Baptist Association.

Hardin has about 125 volunteers who contributed about 7,000 volunteer hours last year, Adams said.

The church also contributed about \$55,000 last year to local missions.

Farmer said he's very proud of the work his congregation does.

"I'm very, very proud of the people. They're such great caring people. They have a Christ-like love of doing and giving to people," Farmer said.

"We do these ministries in a physical way that allows us to share Jesus' saving grace with other people," he added.

The church beat out nine other nominees in the group category.

"It was really exciting and I was real tickled for them because I know they have a real hardworking group that deserved to be recognized for that. It's just real heartwarming when you do have a hardworking group like this," Adams said.

Members of the church were invited to attend Gov. Jim Hunt's volunteer luncheon later this month, Adams said.

GAZETTE
GASTONIA, N. C.
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291 Group helping tornado victims

By Bob Hallman
Gazette Sunday Editor

Friday, while you were still in bed, a bus loaded with 50 youngsters and lots of tools lumbered toward McColl, S.C. to repair what nature tore apart last month.

By 8 a.m. they were at their destination, a town of 3,000 people not far from the North Carolina border, and less than 20 miles from Bennettsville, S.C., where vicious tornadoes cut a swath of damage on a march through eastern North Carolina.

Yesterday they used chainsaws to cut up fallen trees, rakes and shovels to clear yards, and hammers and nails to replace roofing and loose boards. Lots of arms and legs carried debris away.

When the day ended, they bunked out in a school gymnasium after visiting some of the residents still digging out of the damage from the vicious whirlwind.

Today will be a repeat of Friday but at the end of the day they'll come home.

The youngsters are from Hardin Baptist Church, Hardin, and Roger Self, a department store security manager and former Gastonia policeman, is their adult advisor. He's keeping them busy.

"They had been looking for a project," Self said. After the storms did so much damage, he made inquiries to the Red Cross, was put in touch with a minister at McColl and made arrangements for his group to go.

A Gastonia businessman paid for the bus and the church paid for other expenses.

Fifty youngsters giving up their weekend to become part of a two-day work detail is uncommon, but not as rare as their cling-together cohesiveness week after week. That's because the 400-member Hardin Baptist Church is located in a sparsely-populated area north of Dallas that became economically depressed when its only industry, a textile plant, closed several years ago. Workers left the village in search of other jobs. Church membership suffered from this drainoff.

When Self walked on the scene as the unpaid youth director three years ago, there were 10 youngsters coming to the Sunday evening meetings. Now he has 65 and 70 from all demoninations and the church is trying to raise money to expand its youth activities.

How does Self do it, how does he maintain interest?

Self, who once aspired to be a minister, says there is no secret to it. He shows an interest in the youngsters and they respond.

"At our first meeting I asked them to write down their problems. It became clear that most of them concerned peer pressures," he said. "Then we began to talk about them and deal with them. I told them that wrong people doing the wrong things can lead to trouble."

His group, composed of youngsters from 12 to 20-year-old adults, began to grow. They came from Dallas, Bessemer City and

subdivisions in the immediate area, not necessarily members of the church, but to be part of the youth group. At almost every meeting they talk about drugs and alcohol or plan an outing. Once a year he and the five counselors who assist him takes them on a

full-week outing to the mountains. "This is my vacation," he says.

One of Self's disciples is Ronnie Ledford, a 22-year-old man who broke his neck in a wreck and was given little chance to live. Today he travels in a specially-equipped van, moves about in a wheel chair

and has some arm control in monitoring security system screens at Matthews Belk.

Self says Ledford is living testimony that it does matter if a person is in the wrong place with the wrong people and doing the wrong thing. Ledford supports

Self's statement.

Self grew up in Dallas and graduated from North Gaston High School. He attended Gardner-Webb College then worked for Duke Power Co. before joining Matthews Belk as security manager.



Roger Self loads truck with sleeping bags and tools
... youth of Hardin Baptist Church prepare for trip

Gazette photo by Robert Lahser

OCT-04-86

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Rev. Fain Farmer has served Hardin Baptist Church for nine years.

Church sets new facility dedication

Hardin Baptist grows as its people show loving concern and share God's good news

By Elsie Hamilton

Gazette Lifestyle Reporter

DALLAS — The man who preaches from the pulpit at Hardin Baptist Church seldom entered a church for the first 19 years of his life.

"I lived a pretty rough life, and I spent a lot of time in Charlotte nightclubs," said the Rev. R. Fair Farmer. "I never did do well in school."

But conversion to the Christian faith changed the lifestyle of young Fain Farmer who grew up in Dallas. He and wife Sandra, after their marriage moved to Gastonia and became members of Bethlehem Baptist Church.

"I fought the call to enter the ministry," Rev. Farmer said. "But once I surrendered my will to the Lord, I entered Fruitland Bible Baptist Institute in Hendersonville. There I did much better with books than I did in school."

And Rev. Farmer hasn't done bad at all at Hardin Baptist Church, his first and only pastorate. For nine years the Hardin community has been home to the Farmers' three children: 12-year-old Dusty; Mandy who was only two weeks old when her father preached there the first time; and Ashley, who is 4.

"What I appreciate most about this church and what contributes to the congregation's strength is the members' concern for one another," Rev. Farmer said. "This allows new people to come in and im-

YOUR RELIGIOUS HERITAGE

Your religious heritage is a feature devoted to the many places of worship in this area. Each week, *Gazette Lifestyle* reporter Elsie Hamilton takes a look at one church or synagogue and its leaders, history and congregation.

mediately become a part of the congregation.

"Because of this, our members talk the church — in the mall, the supermarket and other places they go. We try to build on this word-of-mouth sharing — it lets others know what is going on and how God has blessed us."

The pastor said the members also demonstrate their love for people outside the church.

"They have reached out in many ways to a young man in our community who is paralyzed from a car wreck," Rev. Farmer said. "Not long ago our Royal Ambassador boys took him a color television."

The people of Hardin Baptist also have a deep sense of stewardship, paying off the church debt of almost \$45,000 in 1983. In January, 1985, the congregation sold \$390,000 in bonds in just nine days to finance the construction of a new educational building.

The building, to be dedicated Oct. 12, contains eight classrooms, an office complex and a fellowship hall. The congregation will celebrate at a picnic lunch following the 11 a.m. service and an open house for friends and former members.

"We have also expanded the sanctuary from 300 seats to 500," said Rev. Farmer.

This stewardship extends also to the sharing of time and talents in the church program.

"Our music director, Pam Grooms, has the school-

ing and ability to work as a full-time director," Rev. Farmer said. "Instead she devotes her time to providing a music program for all ages here."

"Her husband Ray laid the groundwork for the reorganization of our Sunday School. He worked so hard he's having to rest for a while."

The minister is full of praise also for youth director Roger Self.

"Our youth program reaches about 65 junior and senior high youth — some of them aren't even members here," he said.

The church has a senior citizens group which meets monthly. As the older adult population grows, Rev. Farmer sees a need to expand the ministry serving senior citizens.

"We have established a singles again ministry through a Sunday school class," the minister said. "It may be that they will want to meet more often. The divorce dilemma is with us, and we have to deal with it."

The church, with a current membership of 575, dates back to Nov. 13, 1922 when the Presbytery met at Worth to organize a Baptist church. That church, with 19 charter members, was named Hardin Baptist Church. In December 56 members were added to the congregational roll.

The first building, destroyed by a high wind storm, was replaced with a brick building in 1928. The bell from the first church was installed in that building and later in the church built in 1970. The cross which hangs over the baptistry is made from wood used in the original church.

Revival services will be held at 7 p.m. Sunday-Wednesday at the church. The Rev. James Smith of Sharon Baptist Church, Kannapolis, will be guest preacher.

Harden Ch, Rte 1, Dallas

Bible Rec May 19, 1951 p. 23.

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