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New church group needs \$10,000 down payment on building

By BECKY JORDAN
Gazette Staff Reporter

A group of black Baptists are right at the altar of buying a church for themselves — all they need is \$10,000.

Approximately 45 persons, all former members of the Lovely Hill Baptist Church in West Gastonia, say they tired of arguing with their minister and decided to start their own church.

They've named it the Christ Community Church and already have a minister in mind.

"We're meeting in homes and anywhere we can," said Mrs. Georgia Mae Harris, one of the leaders in the group. "We're holding services in an old school building in Bessemer City."

Their chances for finding a permanent church home are looking up. The members of the York Road Church of God have agreed to sell the group their church building for \$42,000.

"They've outgrown that church and will be moving to a newer one in another month," said Mrs. Willie Eskew, another of the church-hunters. "We can get a loan for the money if we come up with \$10,000 cash down payment."

She said that the church is in perfect shape and does not require any remodeling or repairs.

"We told them that if they buy the church, we'll leave our old organ in the building," said the Rev. Bobby Smith, pastor of the

Church of God. "They can start their worshipping right away."

Why did they decide to build another church instead of going their separate ways?

"Because we feel a commitment," said Mrs. Eskew. "There are between 40

and 50 of us, and we just feel like a church."

Mrs. Harris, who was involved with the Queens Street Boys Club project, said that she is most concerned with the children of the neighborhood.

"There is a real need for a

church in our neighborhood," she said. "With the right training, these children can do some wonderful work. We have the time and the patience to train them."

Both women said that they believed that getting children

involved in church activities gives them "pride" and will eventually lead to less crime.

"If we get this building," Mrs. Eskew said, "we'll do the work. We'll fill it up and run it over with people."

Both Mrs. Eskew and Mrs.

Harris said they have had training in missionary work through local churches

Questions about the group or the project should be directed to Mrs. Georgia Mae Harris, 865-9135, or Mrs. Willie M. Eskew, 864-5851.



MRS. GEORGIA MAE
HARRIS



MRS. WILLIE ESKEW