

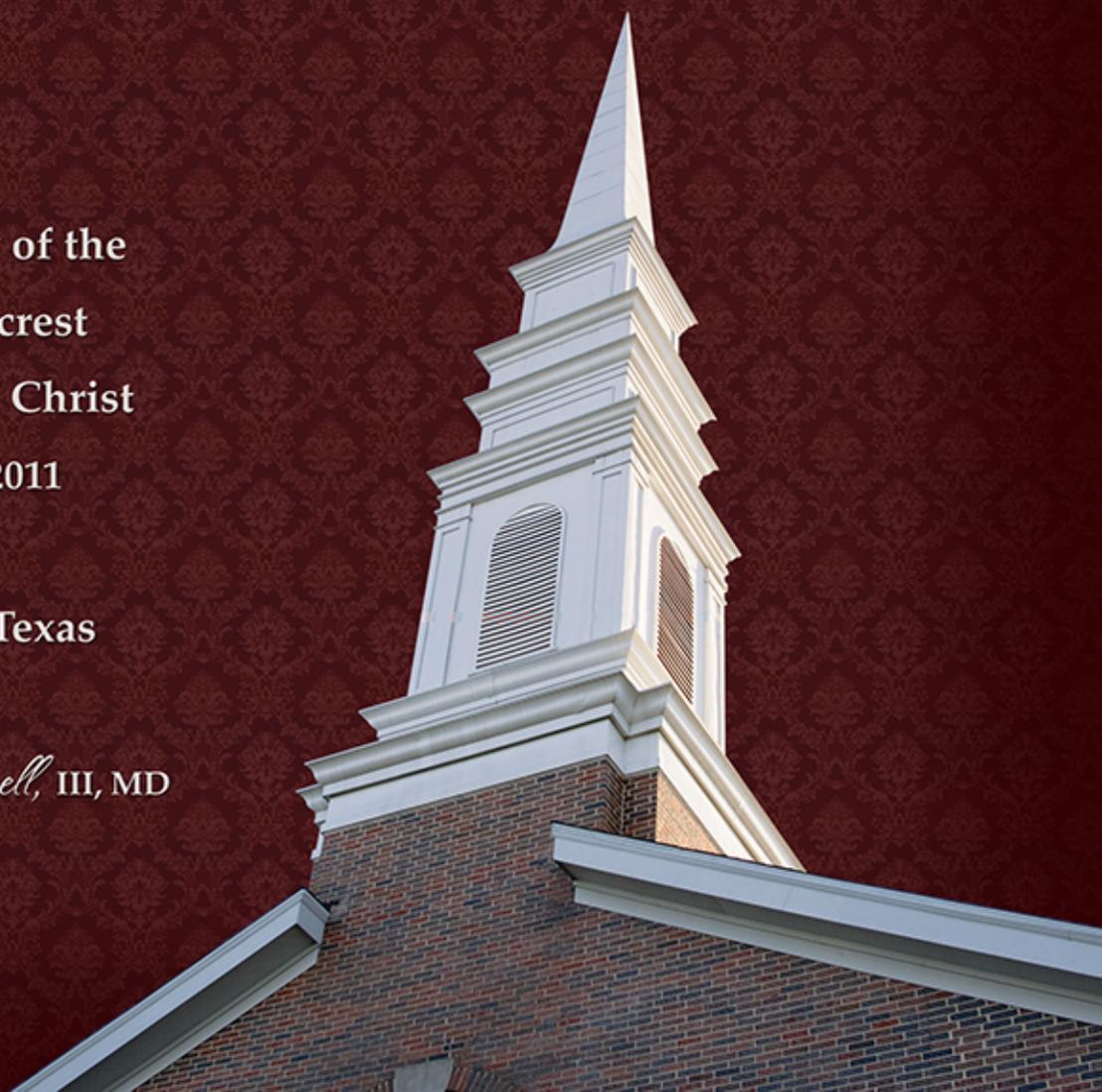
Prestoncrest

THE FIRST FORTY YEARS

A History of the
Prestoncrest
Church of Christ
1972 - 2011

Dallas, Texas

David S. Sowell, III, MD



Prestoncrest

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A History of the Prestoncrest Church of Christ

Dallas, Texas • 1972 - 2011

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with a special chapter by Gordon Dabbs, PhD

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Photographers are credited, if requested, inside the text

Prestoncrest: The First Forty Years

A History of the Prestoncrest Church of Christ

Dallas, Texas, 1972-2011

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Prestoncrest

THE FIRST FORTY YEARS

A History of the Prestoncrest Church of Christ
Dallas, Texas • 1972 - 2011

David S. Sowell, III, MD

With a special chapter on the future of Prestoncrest by Gordon Dabbs, PhD

“ There are **many people in many places**
who are *Christians* today
because of **Prestoncrest.** ”

~ *Mitchell Vick*
MISSIONARY TO STIRLING, SCOTLAND

“ *Isn't it interesting* to look at scripture
and see **how often God did things**
in increments of *40* ?
So often, those increments of 40 preceded a time
when *new beginnings* were going to take place.
I wonder what is going to **happen next** at the
corner of Preston Road & Prestoncrest Lane... ”

~ *Pat Scott*
CHARTER MEMBER OF PRESTONCREST

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T H A N K S

No truly worthwhile work was ever accomplished by one person working alone. This book is no exception.

S P E C I A L T H A N K S . . .

Our good friend, Denece Powell, has been part of our "Sunday Lunch Group" along with Bob & Amy McAfee and Hulin & Ann Fowler for many years. Denece was interested in this project when she first learned of it and volunteered to serve as my research assistant. She then spent hundreds of hours reviewing 40 years of bulletins from which she prepared a timeline of major events and extracted attendance and offering statistics.

This book would not have been possible without her assistance. The timeline she prepared is more than 200 pages long. It will be preserved in the Prestoncrest archives along with the attendance and offering statistics and various other documents she prepared. Her thorough work will serve many others over the years as they wish to learn more of the Prestoncrest story and heritage.



**DENECE, IT IS NOT POSSIBLE
TO THANK YOU ENOUGH!**

The most important contribution came from all of the men, women, boys, and girls who have been part of Prestoncrest over its 40-year history. Were it not for the dedication and unique contributions of so many, there would be no story to tell. A few of these individuals have been highlighted in the text. I chose these individuals because of the ways their stories help tell the story of Prestoncrest. I am certain no one would argue with the persons I have highlighted: Charles Wooldridge, George Bailey, Harold Duncan, Johnny Stallings, Dorothy Dagen, R.T. Tyler, Theresa Simpson, Mike Peters, Bill Moody, Dino and Debbie Roussos, Hilton and Wanda Terry, Mitchell and Isobel Vick, Prentice Meador, Don and Linda Barnett, Bob and Pat Scott, Eddie Couch, Bob McAfee, Dr. Jack McCorkle, and Gordon Dabbs. Informed

readers will likely suggest a number of others. I apologize for any obvious omissions.

The ministers and secretaries who produced the Prestoncrest bulletins and then assured their preservation have my gratitude. Bette Darrow and the late Patt McGee deserve special mention for their many years of service.

The elders with whom I served during my eight-year tenure all became my very good friends and a great source of encouragement.

The Prestoncrest staff has been most helpful. Brad Weldon helped me locate long-ago bulletins that I had feared lost, along with the very important documents Charles Wooldridge prepared during the planting of Prestoncrest. Michael Collodi provided video footage. The very gifted Angie Maddox took my manuscript, various tables and lists, and a number of photographs and skillfully produced this very attractive volume.

My niece, Kay Kersten Nickell, of Nashville, Tennessee served as my proofreader and editor. Her many constructive suggestions have been incorporated into the final product. Her talents and her work are greatly appreciated.

My wife Claudia, my daughters and their husbands Brent and Laura Dennis and Edward and Beth Moore have been good humored and encouraging through this long process, as have my grandchildren Zane, Ethan, and Abby Dennis.

David S. Sowell, III, MD

S O U R C E S

Prestoncrest first published a weekly bulletin on April 16, 1972 and weekly publication has continued to the present. These bulletins have been preserved by the Prestoncrest office staff and were used extensively for this project. Attendance and offering statistics contained in the book come from this collection of bulletins and are offered as the most accurate available. An occasional bulletin did not report these numbers but the yearly averages and trends are, in the author's opinion, still valid. Similarly, the tenures of ministers and elders were derived, in most cases, from the lists contained in the bulletins. In some situations, this may have resulted in a resignation date later than what actually occurred. Pre-printed "shells" were apparently used for bulletins in the early years and supplies already on hand were evidently used up even after a minister or elder listed in the shell had resigned.

Video interviews were conducted with the following: Don and Linda Barnett, Bill and Kay Buckley, Bob and Pam Chisholm, Barbara Cooper, Gordon and Ila Dabbs, Harold Duncan, Steven Gifford (*former moderator of the American Religious Town Hall Meeting*), Bob McAfee, George and Carolyn Miller, Todd and Suzanne Miller, Pat Scott, Mitchell and Isobel Vick, Dottie White, and Bob and Sharon Wooldridge. George Bailey was also interviewed. The interviews were a delight. These very special people all spoke freely to me and to my camera. It was wonderful to get to know all of them better, and now all the more so since both Bob Wooldridge and Bill Buckley, Sr. have passed away.

Michael Collodi and John Scott Davis conducted a number of video interviews in preparation for the 40th anniversary service on January 8, 2012. These interviews have been quoted in this work as well. The persons interviewed by Michael and John Scott were: Todd and Suzanne Miller, Bob and Sharon Wooldridge, Pat Scott, Hulin and Ann Fowler, Steven Miller, and Matt Pool. A video interview of George Bailey conducted by Philip Bailey is a part of this collection.

Becky Holloway, Bill Matheny, Barbara Meador, Mike Peters, and Dino Roussos provided helpful written statements. Leron Blanks advised me on printing matters and shared information about the “Downtown Feeding.” Nancy Blanks and Barbara Cooper gave me the recipe for “More.” Annette Cawyer and Krista Harper gave me information about Sunshine School. Don Umphrey told me about the STAR and James Groups and advised me on printing and book publishing. Robert Stolte provided information on the “Packs and Pencils” ministry. Todd and Suzanne Miller answered many questions. Carisse Berryhill, PhD, Special Services Librarian at Abilene Christian University, provided much useful advice during a visit with the author.

Footnotes are used occasionally to document the source of information. Exceptions to this practice are when the information given is generally known (or when the author did not want his grandchildren to know he had used Wikipedia!). Footnotes have also been used on occasion to clarify statements within the text. The author has a fondness for the kind of minutiae found in footnotes and hopes they are not too distracting to the readers.

P R E F A C E

Claudia and I first visited the newly organized Prestoncrest Church of Christ (then meeting at Northwood Hills Elementary School) sometime in the summer of 1972. We came to stay on September 9, 1973. We know the date because the phase I building was dedicated that day. Our daughter Laura was soon to be five. Our daughter Beth was born the following May and, in later years, both Laura and Beth were baptized at Prestoncrest. Laura married at Prestoncrest and many of our Prestoncrest friends celebrated Beth's wedding with us at Perkins Chapel. Through the years, I have served as a Prestoncrest deacon and elder. Claudia and I have been active in the education program, Friendspeak, and the Guatemala Medical Mission.

I was called as an elder in 2002. When I resigned in 2010, I told my fellow elders my wish to write the history of Prestoncrest. They were very supportive and have remained so. Many others have expressed their interest and encouragement as well. The kind words of so many are greatly appreciated.

My reasons for writing are many. This church, its ministers, its elders, and many of its members have reached out to our family and have served us in many ways. We have been part of the history of Prestoncrest for 38 of its first 40 years. History of all kinds has been a great interest of mine for most of my life and I had longed to dip my toe into historical research. Finally, 40 years is a long time in human terms and it seemed important to capture the memories of long-term members now, rather than waiting.

I now submit this work with the prayer that it has adequately captured the faith, work, and sacrifice that have made these past 40 years possible. I hope this book will be useful to others who seek to understand what makes a church successful. Finally, I pray that the title "Prestoncrest: The First Forty Years" is indeed prophetic and that this church, with the guidance of God and His Holy Spirit, will have only begun its service in the kingdom.

David S. Sowell, III, MD
APRIL 7, 2014

Chapter One

THEN AND NOW

The 40 years between 1972 and 2012 brought enormous change to Dallas and the entire world. Eight men served as president of the United States. The Dallas Cowboys played in eight Super Bowls and won five. Watergate, the Vietnam War, two Persian Gulf Wars, the fall of the Berlin Wall, 9/11, and various financial crises re-shaped our world. CB radios and eight-track tapes gave way to personal computers, the Internet, iPhone, and a host of other electronic advances.

The Prestoncrest Church of Christ assembled for Sunday worship on January 8, 2012 for the 2082nd time. It was 40 years old. During the years, its services had been in five different locations¹. A few snow and ice days occurred and one remodeling project closed the auditorium for a time, but neither weather nor construction interrupted this weekly stream of services.

The first of Prestoncrest's weekly assemblies was on the first Sunday of 1972, January 2. The front page of *The Dallas Morning News* that Sunday headlined: "Novel Lions A Mystery to UT, 30-6." The accompanying article detailed the defeat of the University of Texas Longhorns (coached by Darrel Royal) by the Penn State Nittany Lions (coached by Joe Paterno) the day before in the Cotton Bowl. Headlines in following pages included "School Busing Launched Peacefully in Little Rock" and "The Gallup Report: Nixon Tops List of Most Admired"

¹ Vickery Church of Christ, Park Central Office Building, Northwood Hills Elementary School, Prestoncrest, and The Hillcrest Church at Hillcrest and Willow. (It has since become the Dallas Campus of the Prestonwood Baptist Church.)

(followed by Billy Graham, Edward Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, Hubert Humphrey, Spiro Agnew, Ralph Nader, Pope Paul VI, Bob Hope, and George Wallace). The accompanying television schedule for the week gave viewers a choice of six channels: 4, 5, 8, 11, 13, and 39.² Sears advertised “Hi-Way Special 4-ply nylon cord” whitewall tires for as little as \$13.96 but were undercut by J C Penney advertising the same tire for only \$9.44. A and P advertised milk for 99 cents per gallon and bread for 29 cents, along with Eight O’Clock Coffee for 69 cents per one pound bag. Colbert-Volk advertised children’s shoes for \$5.00 and up, men’s shoes for \$9.00-\$14.00, and women’s shoes for \$3.00 and up. Fox and Jacobs advertised that for “\$196-\$227 a month you can be in...the new Flair...the home that isn’t built like a house.”

Two weeks later, the Dallas Cowboys, following their first regular season at Texas Stadium, would defeat the Miami Dolphins 24-3 at Tulane Stadium in New Orleans in their second Super Bowl appearance. The Washington Senators would soon become the Texas Rangers. A few weeks later President Richard Nixon would become the first United States President to visit the nation of China. His historic discussions with Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai led to a normalization of relations between the two nations.

Dallas County grew by 78%, from 1,327,321 in the 1970 census to 2,368,139 in the 2010 census. The Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington Metropolitan Statistical Area grew by 165%, from 2,424,131 in 1970 to 6,447,615 in 2009, becoming the fourth most populous MSA in the nation.

Closer to home, the neighboring Valley View Shopping Center that opened with great fanfare

² My children and their peers called channel 39 “channel U.” On television sets of the day, there were two tuning knobs, one for VHF channels 2-13 and one for the more numerous (potential) UHF channels. One tuned in the only UHF channel (39) by turning the VHF knob to “U.”

in August 1973³ was threatened with demolition by 2011^{4,5}. Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport, not to open until January 13, 1974, had become the eighth busiest airport in the world.

The religious landscape had changed as well. Nearby church neighbors of Prestoncrest in 1972 included such mainline congregations as Preston Hollow Presbyterian Church, King of Glory Lutheran Church, and Royal Lane Baptist Church. By 2012, the Watermark Church, the Dallas Campus of Prestonwood Baptist, Congregation Ohr Ha Torah (an orthodox Jewish Synagogue), and a Mormon Temple had been added.

Prestoncrest's main church building had grown over the years and, by 2012, covered the once-vacant lot at Preston Road and Prestoncrest Lane. The Preston Place office building, not constructed until the early 1980's, had been incorporated into the campus and was more than 50% occupied by Prestoncrest classrooms and offices.

The earliest Prestoncrest membership directory, dated January 16, 1972, lists 33 families. They lived in just nine zip codes, mainly those surrounding Prestoncrest, with a number in Lake Highlands, and one family each in Mesquite, Farmers Branch, and Carrollton.

Those 33 families were made up of 64 adults and 58 children and teenagers. Of these, nine families and 15 individuals⁶ are still represented at Prestoncrest, some now among

3 Steve Brown: "Fixing up Valley View is a Tough Sell." *The Dallas Morning News*: August 6, 2010.

4 Maria Halkias: "Razing Valley View Mall Part Of Plan To Revitalize North Dallas' LBJ Corridor." *The Dallas Morning News*: Jul 18, 2011.

5 Recent developments hold out hope for the re-development of the Valley View Center. See Robert Wilonsky: "Buyers Have Big Plans for Valley View:" *The Dallas Morning News*: April 24, 2012.

6 Ron Chitwood, George Dillman, Virginia Dillman, Ann Fowler, Hulin Fowler, Steven Miller, Suzanne Miller, Todd Miller, Matt Pool, Pat Scott, Michelle Scott Tucker, Brian Shiu, Alice Strickland, Sharon Wooldridge, and Tricia Wooldridge Hosek.

Prestoncrest's leadership⁷. Another eighteen, including four who were children in 1972, are known to have died⁸.

Several hundred new families were added by 2012. The nine zip codes of 1972 had become 138 zip codes in eight counties in 2011^{9,10}. Many of our families now live in Plano, Richardson, Frisco, Garland, and other suburban cities. Most of the parents of Prestoncrest's many young children had not been born in 1972.

The remarkable growth of Prestoncrest over its first 40 years confirms the vision of those who dreamed of its existence and then turned their dreams into reality. It is remarkable that, on that Sunday evening of January 8, 2012, a number of bright Chinese graduate students gathered to learn English and the scriptures at Prestoncrest. The highly successful FriendSpeak program of 2012 is, in part, the result of the 1972 visit to China by President Nixon.

⁷ Randy Tucker, husband of Michelle Scott Tucker, is now an elder. Steven Miller and Matt Pool are deacons.

⁸ Nancy Chitwood, Bill Grubbs, Irene Grubbs, Dick Hardwick, Rusty Hardwick, Terri Lynn Hardwick, Mabel Holcomb, Milt Holcomb, Faye Immel, Ralph Immel, Todd Davis Miller, John Paul Scott, Paula Scott, Robert Scott, Lai Shang Shiu, Gail Strickland, John Strickland, and Bob Wooldridge.

⁹ Membership and zip code information furnished by Michael Collodi on March 8, 2011.

¹⁰ Dallas, Collin, Tarrant, Denton, Hood, Johnson, Kaufman, and Rockwall.

Chapter Two

PLANTING: 1966-1971



MILESTONES...

1966: Purchase of Prestoncrest property by the Skillman Avenue Church of Christ.

April 2, 1967 - June 5, 1967:
Initial Prestoncrest organization efforts.

November 16, 1971:
Prestoncrest organizational meeting.

Photograph provided by Bob McAfee. Original source not known.

“ ONLY AN IDEA ”

The Prestoncrest Church of Christ began as “only an idea in three men’s heads: Bob Scott, Dr. Jimmie Shiu, and Dr. David Vanderpool,” recalls Pat Scott, Bob Scott’s widow. The Scott, Shiu, and Vanderpool families were all members of the Preston Road Church of Christ in Dallas and had, for some time, dreamed of a new congregation further north where their own soon-to-be teenage children might be part of a larger group of Christian young people.

On a Sunday in October 1971, the three couples spoke of their dream over lunch at the Scott

home. They knew the Skillman Avenue Church of Christ had purchased property at the corner of Preston Road and Prestoncrest Lane some years earlier. Their conversation led to a meeting of the three men with the Skillman eldership later that same week. They learned that the Skillman elders had met that same Sunday afternoon and agreed to re-activate their plans for the Prestoncrest property. Pat Scott observed of this apparent coincidence: “It made us think that God wanted this to happen.”

The dreams of these three families soon merged with the hopes and dreams of others and with concrete steps taken by the Skillman Avenue Church of Christ five years earlier, in 1966.

In 1966, the Skillman Avenue Church of Christ had been in existence for 55 years¹. By late 1971, when the birth of Prestoncrest was imminent, Skillman was celebrating the 20th anniversary of the completion of its own beautiful building². Skillman letterheads of this era list 17 elders, including A.M. Holcomb, one of Prestoncrest’s first elders, and 23 deacons, including R.T. Tyler, one of Prestoncrest’s first deacons and later a Prestoncrest elder.

CHARLEY

Among those 17 Skillman elders was Charles W. Wooldridge. Charley Wooldridge was influential both within the Dallas business community and among area Churches of Christ. At the time of the Prestoncrest planting he was executive vice-president of Texas Power and Light (forerunner of today’s TXU Utilities). Charley was recognized as a man of great energy

¹ Mac Lynn, *Churches of Christ in the United States* (Nashville: 21st Century Christian, 2003).

² Charles Wooldridge: Letter to Bud and Sally Chapman of Kansas City dated December 16, 1971. Wooldridge refers to the “twentieth anniversary of our moving into the new building (which, incidentally, is paid for).” This letter is among the documents later donated to Prestoncrest by the Wooldridge family. They are gathered in a loose-leaf binder with the single word “Prestoncrest” (evidently made by a Dymo labeler) attached to the front cover. This set of documents is the main source of information for this chapter.

with gifts for organization, leadership, and persuasion. He led in the planting of Prestoncrest and authored some 19 remarkable letters, memos, announcements, and other documents that preserve this important portion of Prestoncrest's history.

Charley's leadership of the project was quickly overtaken by the new congregation's own momentum and developing leadership. In the early months of 1972, he summoned Todd Miller and David Vanderpool to his home one Sunday evening to express surprise and dismay that Prestoncrest had already found itself a "big name preacher" in the person of George Bailey. Nevertheless, Charley Wooldridge remained a great supporter of Prestoncrest and was active in the transfer of the property to the new congregation.

Charles Wooldridge died on February 13, 1992. His funeral was conducted by John Bannister, long-time pulpit minister of the Skillman Avenue Church and by that "big name preacher," George Bailey. Bailey wrote of him in the Prestoncrest bulletin on February 23, 1992:

"...What a contribution he made to the church and to the world...What you and I will remember him for is what he meant to the Lord's cause! He was a charter member of Skillman Avenue and an elder for over 30 years...it was he who found the property on which Prestoncrest sits. How indebted this church is to the Wooldridges!..."

T H E P R O P E R T Y

The Skillman Church purchased the original Prestoncrest property in 1966. Todd Miller recalls the purchase price as less than \$50,000. Hulin Fowler recalls: "When we moved here (to Dallas) in 1969, there was a sign on the property that it was owned by the Skillman

Avenue Church of Christ. That was of particular interest to us because we lived only five minutes away...”

Unlike the current rectangular Prestoncrest campus, the original site was L or “boot” shaped. The sole of the boot was the then-southern boundary with the toe reaching all the way to Whitley Lane on the east. The top of the boot had the current frontage on Prestoncrest Lane. The frontage on Preston Road was 315 feet, compared to the current 520 feet.

In 1977, improvement of this original configuration occurred when the “toe of the boot” was traded to a developer for a longer frontage on Preston Road. The property then became rectangular, and single-family homes began to appear on the newly developed Sunlight Drive on the eastern border and Shetland Drive on the southern border of the newly configured property.

The bulletin of July 24, 1977 explained that, because of the greater value of the Preston Road footage, a payment to the developer of \$40,000 was required.

T H E F I R S T E F F O R T

Not long after the purchase, Charles Wooldridge mailed an “Important Announcement” to elderships of nearby churches. It stated: “several months ago Skillman Avenue Church purchased a beautiful piece of property for the location of a new congregation...just a short distance south of the LBJ expressway and the ‘Valley View Sears regional shopping center.’” Interested persons were invited to meet on Sunday afternoon, April 2, 1967.

The proposed agenda for the meeting stated that Skillman's position would be to provide the church building site, oversee the organization of a beginning group, and transfer title to the property when a group was organized that was large enough and mature enough "both financially and scripturally to finance a building program and go forward on a self-sustaining basis."

Typical of Wooldridge's meticulous preparation, a map was included with the announcement that showed the location of the property along with its distance from existing Churches of Christ-Walnut Hill 5 ½ miles, Waterview 6 miles, Lake Highlands 8 ½ miles, Preston Road 5 miles, and Skillman Avenue 9 miles.

Attending this first meeting were some who were later well known at Prestoncrest, including Mr. and Mrs. Frank Dagen, Mr. and Mrs. A.M. Holcomb, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Immel, Mr. and Mrs. L.W. King, Dr. and Mrs. David Vanderpool, and Mr. and Mrs. Bob Wooldridge.

On May 23, 1967, Mr. Wooldridge wrote to a number of individuals who had been present at a meeting the previous day. He wrote: "after diligently exploring the possibilities of finding a place where a new group could begin worshipping temporarily pending the completion of a meeting house, we came to the conclusion that none of the prospects which have been explored offered a solution satisfactory enough to warrant our proceeding in that direction." The letter then raised the possibility of obtaining a mortgage loan to begin construction of a church building with "all interested parties continuing to worship where they are now located until such building is completed."

The record of this 1967 effort ends with a memo of June 5, 1967. It states that at a meeting

of the Skillman eldership on June 2, various individuals were suggested as trustees for the Prestoncrest venture. The trail of documents then goes cold until the fall of 1971 - more than four years later.

This inactivity is explained in a later document that states: “many many months ago a Skillman-sponsored project to launch a new work in North Dallas was brought to a halt pending investigation by another church into the possibility of purchasing another piece of property in the North Dallas area. These plans did not develop and the project has been dormant for ‘more than two years’³.” According to Bob Wooldridge, son of Charles Wooldridge, the church doing the investigating was the Preston Road Church of Christ and the property investigated was on Preston Road across from St. Mark’s School.

“ T H E T I M E I S R I P E ”

The Prestoncrest project quickly moved from dreams to reality in the fall of 1971 as the Scotts, Shius, and Vanderpools learned of the renewed interest of Charles Wooldridge and the Skillman Avenue Church and as others stepped forward, eager to participate. Charter member Todd Miller observed: “The time was right... it fit us and our close associates.”

Charles Wooldridge authored a memo dated October 7, 1971, titled: “Tentative Proposal in connection with The Prestoncrest Property.” Mr. Wooldridge stated: “It is my feeling that the time is ripe... and that an effort now will bring an even better response than our initial effort.” The memo then revealed a detailed plan for a steering committee of three (Skillman)

³ In fact, more than four years.

elders and others, planning and development of a calendar by the steering committee to be approved by the Skillman eldership, a plan to write to the elders of other Churches of Christ informing them of the plan, a plan to transfer title to the property to trustees approved by Skillman, the seeking of individuals committed to participation in the new venture, the ultimate replacement of the Skillman Steering Committee with a Steering Committee comprised of representatives of the various congregations that would furnish members to the new church, and a call for the whole-hearted commitment of all Skillman members to the success of the venture.

This memo was followed by a letter to the elders of the Preston Road, Walnut Hill, Webb Chapel, Northside, Waterview, and Richardson East Churches of Christ asking that these elders announce a meeting for November 16th to begin plans for the new congregation. This mailing included a page titled: "Important Announcement" that called for members of all churches in the North Dallas area to attend. The memo stated that the purpose of the November 16th meeting would be to secure commitments for membership in the new congregation and to make preliminary plans for its organization, "the construction of a meeting house, etc."

On Tuesday night, November 16, 1971, the meeting was held at the Metropolitan Savings Community Room on Preston Road. Mr. Wooldridge prepared a summary stating that with 46 people attending, 15 families made commitments and 10 other families expressed interest in becoming members of the new church. These 25 families, with their children, were a total of 97 persons. According to Todd Miller, these families came from 5 different Churches of Christ.

Suzanne Miller recalls, "So many of the people we did not know until that first meeting and

they are now lifelong friends. I really feel that God's providence led us all together."

Those attending the meeting were asked to complete pledge cards stating they were "definitely interested" or "interested but undecided." The 15 definitely committed families included 30 children for a total of 60 individuals. These families pledged from \$11.50 to \$60.00 per week for a total of \$476.50. The 10 interested but undecided families included 17 children for a total of 37 persons. These families pledged possible weekly contributions of \$10.00-\$70.00 per week, for a total of \$340.00. The grand total of interested persons was 97 and the grand total of potential weekly contributions was \$816.50⁴.

On December 27, 1971, Mr. Wooldridge wrote to Bud and Sally Chapman of Kansas City, Missouri and told them "there are some pretty substantial people in the Prestoncrest group- both materially and spiritually."

Those "pretty substantial people" were ready to move ahead as 1972 began.

A steering committee was formed with ten men, two from each of five former congregations. The committee was approved by the Skillman eldership. The members were:

- **From Lake Highlands: *Todd Miller & Don Crisp***
- **From Skillman: *Milt Holcomb & R.T. Tyler***
- **From Waterview: *Bob Wooldridge & Ralph Immel***
- **From Walnut Hill: *Bill Wilson & Bill Wharton***
- **From Preston Road: *Bob Scott & David Vanderpool***

⁴ \$816.50 in 1971 is equivalent to \$4,400.94 in 2011. The range of \$10.00 to \$70.00 in 1971 is equivalent to \$53.90-\$377.30. Here and elsewhere, the "Inflation Calculator" found within the website of the Minneapolis Federal Reserve Bank has been used.

Pat Scott observed: “[We] had the most dynamic men on that steering committee.” The steering committee would guide the new church until its first elders were called out and installed in May 1973. Seven of the ten members⁵ of the steering committee would, in the future, become Prestoncrest elders.

On December 16, 1971, Charles Wooldridge had written the Chapmans. He told them that the first meeting of “this new church” was scheduled for 7:30 pm on Sunday January 2, 1972 “at the meetinghouse of the Vickery Church⁶ (*who have their Sunday evening services at 6 pm*).”



⁵ Immel, Holcomb, Miller, Scott, Tyler, Vanderpool, and Wooldridge. David Vanderpool would later serve as an elder at Skillman Avenue. Don Crisp later served as an elder at Highland Oaks.

⁶ The Vickery Church of Christ was located at the intersection of Fair Oaks and Park Lane. The site is now occupied by the Sam Tasby Middle School of the Dallas Independent School District.



Northwood Hills Elementary School

Photograph by the author August 1, 2012



Park Central Building 1

Photograph Provided by Bob McAfee

Original source not known.

Chapter Three

B E G I N N I N G : 1 9 7 2

MILESTONES...

January 2, 1972:

First Prestoncrest service at 7:30 PM at the Vickery Church of Christ building.

January 9, 1972 - May 1972:

Services at Park Central Building One. (exact date not known)

March 22, 1972:

George Bailey's first sermon at Prestoncrest.

May, 1972 - July 8, 1973:

Services at Northwood Hills Elementary School.

June 11, 1972:

Harold (Buster) Duncan preaches his first sermon as associate minister.

Pat Scott later wrote a poem describing the significant events of 1972. She begins:

*"Since Prestoncrest's first meeting, it has now been a year;
When at Vickery that night, joyous singing rang clear.
We really had no place to meet as a church,
So, for a facility our members did search¹."*

¹ Pat's complete poem is found in the Appendix. Pat's copy includes the handwritten note on page 1: "Given at Wyatt's 1-21-73." The new congregation was small enough that most or all of its members could enjoy Sunday lunch together after worship at Wyatt's Cafeteria, then located in the Preston Forest Shopping Center.

After that first Sunday night at Vickery, the offices of the Regional Learning Center in Building 1 of the Park Central Complex on LBJ Freeway² became available for Sunday morning, Sunday night, and Wednesday night services. In May 1972, the end of the school year made the Northwood Hills Elementary School on Meandering Way available. Services would continue at Northwood Hills until the first phase of the building at 6022 Prestoncrest Lane opened on July 15, 1973.

Critical elements for success were now in place: a temporary but stable meeting place with the promise of a permanent home in the near future, adequate financial support, a small but enthusiastic and highly committed group of charter members, and, importantly, a steering committee that would lead the church responsibly and proactively in the months before the first elders were selected. Another critical element was soon in place: the selection of George Bailey and Harold “Buster” Duncan as the church’s first full-time ministers. These two men were quickly embraced by the congregation and went on to extended periods of service. George Bailey served for 15 years and Harold Duncan served for six years in a first tenure and two years in a second tenure.

George Bailey was alone on the “prospect list” for pulpit minister. A number of Prestoncrest’s early members were acquainted with Bailey from their college days at Abilene Christian College when he was pulpit minister of Abilene’s College Church of Christ. George had since left local work and become a full-time evangelist. Todd Miller stated: “The timing was right. [The Baileys] were tired of evangelistic life. They loved Jimmie Shiu. David Vanderpool was an influence on their decision.” Todd commented further: “[the congregation] was ecstatic that Bailey would come. His decision validated the congregation. He was highly regarded in the brotherhood. As a result, a number of families coming into Dallas would visit and helped us grow.” The amazement that George Bailey would come as local minister to a small start-up congregation was reflected in a recollection of Bill Buckley, Sr. When Todd Miller told Bill that George Bailey was coming, he thought that Todd must be joking and replied: “And I suppose you have set up a Bible study with the Pope!”

George Bailey preached his first sermon to the Prestoncrest congregation on March 22, 1972³. He was 50 years old.

² Two similar buildings remain as part of the Park Central Complex. The Watermark Church occupies one of them. Prestoncrest met in the other one.

³ This date comes from the 2005 Prestoncrest Pictorial Directory. March 22, 1972 was a Wednesday.

G E O R G E

George Bailey was born April 3, 1922. He and his nine brothers and sisters were all born at home on their family's cotton farm at Ola, Texas, near Kaufman.

George was captured by the Word of God at a very early age. He has vivid memories of flannel board lessons presented by Bible School teachers during his earliest years. He commented that even though “we didn't have all this modern equipment,” the flannel board presentations “made Bible stories come alive for me.” He became anxious to hear “any good preacher” to learn more. He enjoyed preachers who would “live a Bible story.” These included C.R. Nichol and Guss Dunn. Dunn was a uniquely gifted Bible storyteller. George remembers Dunn's telling of God's command to Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. In Dunn's dramatic rendition of the story, God was very careful in choosing a particular angel to stay Abraham's hand and all of the other angels quickly surrounded the chosen one to make sure he didn't wait too long to stop Abraham.

George started his secular education in a one-room school near his home. For second grade, he transferred to the nearby town of Kaufman, an exciting move for a young boy. He was already experienced picking cotton on the family farm, and one day he touched a bell at the school, and was reprimanded by a teacher who told him to “keep his cotton-picking hands off that bell.” George was puzzled at just how the teacher could know that he had been picking cotton and was told by his mother that “cotton-picking hands” was just an expression.

George recalls that, as a boy, at about age 10, he would take along his New Testament as he picked cotton. At the end of each row, he would read a passage and then reflect on the passage as he worked his way down the next row of cotton.



Photograph from Prestoncrest files.

Gayle Oler, the long-time superintendent of Boles Home, baptized George and was very influential in his development as a preacher and minister.

He preached his first sermon at the age of 14. George recalls that the sermon, on Psalm 1, was actually written by one of his Bible School teachers: Geneva LaRoe. He says that he “just delivered (Ms. LaRoe’s) sermon.” Ms. LaRoe was a great encouragement to him throughout his career, as was Coreen Dobson, another of his early Bible teachers.

George Bailey met Ela Beth Todd when they were students at Freed-Hardeman College in Tennessee. They had two children: Dr. David Bailey of Abilene who died in 2002 and Philip Bailey of Houston. They have six grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Before coming to Prestoncrest, George Bailey held pulpits in Weatherford, Oklahoma; Corsicana, Texas; Lawton, Oklahoma; and at the Culberson Heights (now Mayfair) congregation in Oklahoma City. He went from Oklahoma City to the College Church in Abilene. After leaving the pulpit at the College Church, he began full-time evangelistic work, holding gospel meetings in many places throughout the world.

He reports that he and wife Ela Beth “thought they had died and gone to heaven” when they were invited to Prestoncrest.

The Baileys’ move to Prestoncrest was complicated by numerous longstanding gospel-meeting commitments. These commitments called for a division of his time between Prestoncrest and evangelistic duties. On December 17, 1972, the bulletin announced that George Bailey would now be at Prestoncrest on a regular basis. Pat Scott’s poem commented: “At last, George Bailey gave up his title of ‘King of the Road.’”

When the new congregation selected its first elders, George Bailey was among those nominated. He had never served as an elder and was reluctant to accept. Todd Miller, who served on the nominating committee, recalls persuading George and telling him: “We want you to be an elder and keep us right down the middle.”

Mike Peters came to share the pulpit with George on February 1, 1981, allowing George

to resume his role as evangelist while still being active in both preaching and ministry at Prestoncrest.

George served Prestoncrest as minister until May 31, 1987 and elder until April 10, 1988. He and Ela Beth remained as Prestoncrest members until their later move to Houston.

Because of numerous health issues in later life, the Baileys moved from the Christian Care Center in Mesquite to a similar facility in Houston, near son Philip and his family. On Sunday night January 16, 2011, the Prestoncrest congregation said goodbye to the Baileys and honored them for their years of service. Among the speakers was Todd Miller who fondly recalled both Baileys as “our heroes.” Todd spoke of Ela Beth as shy but very much an influence on George. For example, Ela Beth persuaded George to tell the steering committee that the initial salary they had offered would actually be a decrease for them and to ask for “a little bit more.” The steering committee readily agreed to this request! Todd continued: “Ela Beth Bailey could change a flat tire, repair broken plumbing, and cut down trees [at their New Mexico cabin] for firewood. One Christmas, many Prestoncrest members were startled when the gift chosen for the Baileys was a chain saw!”

Todd remembered George as a humble man and as a scholar, a preacher, and a minister. As a scholar, he showed keen intellectual curiosity and spent many hours in sermon preparation. When asked why he didn’t simply re-use some of his old sermons, George replied: “I just love to study.”

As a preacher of the gospel for more than 70 years, George was known to quote as many as 100 different scriptures during a single sermon and would often conclude a sermon with a poem of 4-6 verses he had memorized. It had been suggested that George, if need be, could quote the entire New Testament from memory along with most of the Old Testament... “possibly excluding Leviticus.”

Todd described George Bailey’s role as minister:

“Yet, it was as a MINISTER where perhaps George did his most effective work. Through the years the Baileys’ lives became interwoven with the lives of our members. George has

baptized our children, performed their weddings, conducted funerals for loved ones and walked with us through our darkest times. He diligently ministered to the sick and hurting of this congregation. No one has ever been able to keep pace with George in visiting the hospitals. He was such an early riser that he usually got to the hospital before the surgeon and anesthesiologist. George was always early to bed, early to rise. On one occasion, when one of the members called him as he was getting into bed, George fell asleep while the man talked on. Ela Beth was horrified when she walked into the bedroom to see George snoozing with the telephone still against his ear. He was a minister to all of the members-at all hours of the day or night — under all circumstances — it was amazing. I once asked his son how his dad managed to do this and — even more — why he would choose to do so. He thought for a minute and then replied: ‘I just don’t think he knows any better.’”

Dottie White remembered George Bailey as a “people person” who “scouted around from person to person” after services. “He always made everybody that came feel welcome.” She said that her children would take pencil and paper to church and copy all of George’s scripture references. On one occasion, the scripture count totaled 75!

After the move to Houston, Ela Beth was admitted to a hospital and died on April 22, 2011. Her funeral was conducted at the University Church of Christ in Abilene.

B U S T E R

Because of George Bailey’s many gospel meeting commitments, an associate was needed and Harold “Buster” Duncan soon filled this role. The Prestoncrest bulletin for April 16, 1972⁴ identifies “Harold Duncan, Associate Minister of the Raleigh Church of Christ in Memphis, Tennessee” as the morning and evening speaker. (That same bulletin invited the congregation to lunch together that day at Wyatt’s Cafeteria at the Preston Forest Shopping Center). On June 11, 1972, Buster preached his first Sunday sermons as the regular associate minister.

Harold Duncan has served Prestoncrest and its members throughout its history. He began as

⁴ The April 16, 1972 bulletin is the earliest one available. Presumably it was the first one published.

“associate” minister in Prestoncrest’s earliest days. This title hardly encompassed his many duties as he was Prestoncrest’s “most consistent preacher”⁵ in the months before George Bailey was able to assume full-time preaching responsibilities and was the minister for youth, singles, and education long before those ministries could support their own ministers. Later, he earned his PhD in psychology and counseling and, as Dr. Harold Duncan, has continued to serve many Prestoncrest members. Prestoncrest’s elders and ministers have made Dr. Duncan their primary resource for referral of members with marriage and other personal difficulties.

Bill Buckley, Sr. admired Buster as a “great guy.” Kay Buckley says that their daughters, Beverly and Sharon, “loved Buster.” Todd Miller recalls Buster’s former roommate at Lipscomb saying: “You will have a jewel. I do not know anyone who has the capacity to love like Buster.”

In 1972, 23-year-old Harold Duncan was completing his master’s degree in church history at the Harding Graduate School of Religion in Memphis, Tennessee. While completing his graduate studies, he served the Raleigh Church of Christ as part-time associate minister. In this role, he led singing and worked with teenagers. He had made a tentative commitment to move to Lebanon, Tennessee to work as associate minister when he finished his degree but these plans quickly changed when George Bailey came to the Raleigh Church for a gospel meeting in March 1972. In Buster’s words: “George threw a monkey wrench into the works... One night he and I were walking up on to the podium to start the service and he just said out of the corner of his mouth: ‘hey, I want you to think about coming to Dallas’... and George can be very persuasive.”

In a hand-written letter dated April 5, 1972, George Bailey told him: “Buster, I am getting more and more excited about this work and I truly believe you would be the ideal one for my team-mate!”

On May 6, 1972, David Vanderpool, as chairman of the pulpit committee, wrote to Buster and asked him to “come to Prestoncrest as Associate Minister.” Dr. Vanderpool further stated: “Our budget for 1972 allows for a salary of \$600 a month for our ‘second man.’”

⁵ Quote from Duncan interview. 1972 bulletins verify his recollection.

Buster's very effective ministry more than justified his modest starting salary. He says that he enjoyed preaching and, during the early months of Prestoncrest, preached on most Sundays. Before he came on June 11, 1972, a number of different missionaries had stood in for George Bailey. Buster was told that the church was very glad when he came so that "they could hear a preacher more than one time."

Because of his age and interest Buster did more youth work in the early years of his ministry than anything else. Youth work was his "first love." He would go on to lead in the bus ministry and help initiate the singles ministry.

Buster resigned from Prestoncrest in May 1978. He and his family moved to Denton for him to begin doctoral work in psychology and counseling at North Texas State University. He received his PhD in August 1981 and returned to Prestoncrest in 1984 with duties in education and counseling. He resigned in 1986 to practice full-time as a counselor.

EARLY CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Fellowship and close personal relationships among members were evident from the very beginning of Prestoncrest. Fellowship meals for the entire congregation on Sunday nights in members' homes began not long after that very first worship service. Early bulletins report dinners in the Hulin Fowler, Bob Scott, John Strickland, and George Dillman homes.

Those early Sunday night dinners were followed by an amazing number, six in all, of all-congregation activities (in addition to the Sunday evening dinners and Sunday lunches at Wyatt's Cafeteria) later during the congregation's first year. These activities were a welcoming reception for the Baileys and Duncans, an ice cream feed, a hobo dinner, a two-day retreat and a holiday open house.

Pat Scott, Sharon Wooldridge, Suzanne Miller, and Carolyn Miller all have fond memories of the early days when the congregation was small but very close. Pat recalls: "We were able to have a lot of the church activities in our home...we had the Christmas party⁶ in our home

⁶ Holiday Open Houses were hosted in homes until 1983 when it was moved to the Fellowship Hall. In 1992 it was hosted by Leron and Nancy Blanks in their home. Thereafter, it returned to the Fellowship Hall until 2005, the last time a Holiday Open House is recorded in the bulletin. Numerical growth of the congregation made this activity increasingly impractical.

every year. It was so warm to be able to do this... Those early days are sweet to remember but it is really about all that has happened...all the souls that have been saved and the lives that have been changed.”

Sharon recalls: “The closeness of the [original] group is something we can’t get back to. Our Bible class is as big as the original church.” She fondly recalls weekend retreats for the whole congregation and the role that she and Alice Strickland played in purchasing and preparing food for the group. “[We used] our Girl Scout techniques.”

Suzanne remembers: “We were at the school for two summers...it was such a special time... an answer to prayer for us...we saw God’s hand in it so much...the people that all at one time were ready to embark on an adventure...the spirit of cooperation and unity and excitement...we celebrated every person who walked in the building as a visitor...so many things came together...we love this congregation...it was really special...We had to put the tables together [for cradle roll] every Sunday, 10 Porta-Cribs⁷.”

Carolyn recalls: “Those were challenging but wonderful times. We would set up the cradle roll in the classrooms at the school. Before Sunday School would start you could hear all those cribs rolling down the hall...We had it down to an art form...I remember all the joy we had in doing it.”

The bulletin of October 1, 1972 recognized this same volunteer effort and offered thanks to those who distributed songbooks, attendance cards, and set up nursery furniture each week.

BEGINNINGS OF MINISTRY

The visitation ministry was organized in April 1972. By July 16, 1972, 26 families were active in it. This ministry in which members visited the homes of visitors continued for many years until changing times and customs made it impractical.⁸

⁷ The bulletin of February 11, 1996 advertised Port-a-Cribs for \$25 each to help finance a planned renovation. The Port-a-Cribs served the congregation well and for a long time.

⁸ The last mention of a “Visitation Reorganization Dinner” is in the bulletin of September 29, 1991.

Hulin Fowler recalls a Bible Correspondence Course as another early ministry. The course was “advertised in *The Dallas Morning News*” and “there were many students in Texas and even in the prisons in Texas and Oklahoma.”

Ladies Bible Class, an important ministry of Prestoncrest throughout its history, began very early. That very first bulletin of April 16, 1972 announced that week’s meeting at the (Suzanne) Miller home on Estate Lane. On November 29, 1972 “Ladies Workday” was announced and was continued on a monthly basis. Planned projects included the House of Christian Service in West Dallas⁹, Hilltop Haven¹⁰ in Gunter, Texas, and hospital visits.

These benevolent ministries of the Ladies Bible Class soon involved the rest of the congregation in the form of “Share Boxes” in which items were collected for the House of Christian Service and for Hilltop Haven.

The missions program began with a meeting of the Missions Committee in the Dillman home on June 25, 1972. The first missionaries to receive funds from Prestoncrest were Don & Melba Dietrick who, according to the bulletin of December 17, 1972, were planning to leave soon for West Germany¹¹. The Dietricks arrived in Bremen on May 8, 1973, and it was announced that Prestoncrest had contributed to their travel expenses and had a vital interest in their work.

The youth program began with a combined Bible Class for grades 7-12. By September 3, 1972, there were a total of 33 young persons in these grades and the group was divided into a 7th - 8th grade group and a 9th-12th grade group.

Numerical growth occurred right along with these new ministries. On April 9, 1972, attendance at morning worship was 140 with offering of \$914¹². On September 17, 1972, the morning worship attendance broke 200 for the first time with 208 attending and an offering of \$1300.

⁹ An outreach then located near the government housing project on Hampton Road.

¹⁰ A Christian retirement facility, now part of the Christian Care Centers.

¹¹ It now seems quaint to refer to “West Germany” but this was 17 years before the wall came down.

¹² \$4,926.46 in 2011 dollars.

Pat concludes her poem about this important first year with a look toward the building to come (and a realization that it would not be large enough):

*“Our spirits undaunted, toward the future we gaze,
Awaiting the finish of our building’s first phase.
A rather unique building we may finally see,
Larger than the auditorium the Cradle Roll may be.”*

THE PHASE I INTERIOR

This shows a middle aisle dividing two sections of 14 rows. An estimate of 20 persons per row (both sides) yielded a capacity of 280.

Photo provided by Bob McAfee. Original source not known.



PRESENT VIEW OF PHASE I.

Stone masonry inserts were added to separate the first and second floors.

Photograph by the author August 8, 2012.



THE PHASE I BUILDING.

The five large windows mark the auditorium. The pulpit and baptistry were located at the western end, nearest the camera. Classrooms and the nursery were located in the smaller, eastern end of the building.

Photo provided by Bob McAfee. Original source not known.



1979 AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH

Dark outline shows Prestoncrest. The buildings shown are phases I and II and the "yellow house." The property is in its current rectangular shape. The star notes the future site of Preston Place.

From the collection of the Dallas Public Library

Chapter Four

G R O W I N G : 1 9 7 3 - 1 9 8 0

MILESTONES...

- July 15, 1973:**
First service at 6022 Prestoncrest Lane.
- February 18, 1973:**
First elder selection begins.
- May 27, 1973:**
First deacon selection begins.
- September 9, 1973:**
Dedication of phase I of the physical plant.
- August 5-9, 1974:**
Prestoncrest's first Vacation Bible School.
- February 5, 1975:** Bus ministry begins.
- February 16, 1975:**
Allen Huff, first Prestoncrest-sponsored foreign missionary, moves to Sao Paulo, Brazil.
- April 6, 1975:**
First Bible Class for single adults.
- February 20, 1977:**
James Voss joins the staff as Youth and Education Minister.
- March 13, 1977:** Leon Loveless & David Peeler, Sr. selected as elders.
- July 1977:** Re-configuration of the Prestoncrest property to provide additional footage on Preston Road.
- September 10, 1978:**
Leron Blanks, Gary Brantley, Jerry Hosek, Sr., James Tuggle, & Fred White added as deacons. Three of them (Leron, Gary, and Fred) would later serve as elders.
- December 31, 1978:** James Voss resigns.
- March 4, 1979:** Rodney Cox joins the staff as Youth and Education Minister.
- March 11, 1979:**
Ron Rice, second Prestoncrest-sponsored missionary, moves to Tegucigalpa, Honduras.
- November 28, 1980:**
Jim Barrett, Jeff Clevenger, David James, David Peeler, Jr., Phil Savage and Bill Shockley added as deacons. Two of them (Jim & Jeff) would later serve as elders.

The years 1973-1980 were turbulent for the nation. On January 20, 1973, Richard Nixon was inaugurated for his ill-fated second term that would end with his resignation 19 months later as a result of the Watergate scandal. Two days later, January 22, 1973, the Supreme Court, in its *Roe v. Wade* ruling, legalized abortion in the United States. The Arab Oil Embargo of 1973-1974 produced long lines at gasoline stations and great anxiety for all Americans. In 1975, the kidnapping of newspaper heiress Patty Hearst would dominate news reports for many months and, the same year, the tragic and very controversial war in Vietnam ended with victory by the Communist forces of North Vietnam. More optimistic notes occurred at the 1980 Winter Olympic Games in Lake Placid, New York when the United States amateur hockey team defeated the professional team from the Soviet Union in the "Miracle on the Ice."

The Dallas Cowboys played in Super Bowl X in 1976, losing to the Pittsburgh Steelers 21-17; in Super Bowl XII in 1978, defeating the Denver Broncos 27-10; and in Super Bowl XIII in 1979, losing to the Pittsburgh Steelers 35-31.

Other notable events include the founding of the Microsoft Corporation in 1975, the introduction of the Sony Betamax in 1975, and the eruption of Mount Saint Helens on May 18, 1980.

Prestoncrest marked these difficult years with continued growth.

The "building's first phase" was dedicated September 9, 1973, only 22 months after the organizational meeting of November 16, 1971. And, as Pat Scott predicted in her poem, those 22 months had seen growth in attendance such that Suzanne Miller remembered: "We had almost outgrown our 'little chapel' by the time we built it." Harold Duncan recalled: "When we moved into that first building we were already bursting at the seams." This brief span had seen the employment of two full-time ministers and the calling out of both elders and deacons.

Growth in membership and attendance continued through most of the 1970's. By June 1, 1975, membership had grown to 172 families-a total of 363 members. By December 12, 1976, there were 237 families and a membership of 540.

Attendance that averaged 314 in 1973 grew to 531 in 1980 after a peak of 557 in 1977, an increase of 69% between 1973 and 1980.

On September 22, 1974, a second Sunday morning worship service was added to deal with the large numbers.

E L D E R S

Elder selection began February 18, 1973, when membership had more than doubled to 85 families.

The congregation was asked for nominations and those men who received significant support were considered further, a process followed in each of the eight subsequent elder selections.

Bill Buckley, Sr., Don Crisp, and Todd Miller met with the elderships of the previous congregations of each of the nominees to seek their endorsements. A questionnaire, similar to one used by the Skillman Avenue Church, asked each candidate to consider his own views on doctrinal, moral, and personal issues.

On May 21, 1973, the new elders were honored at a dinner at the Dillman home. The first elders, with the exception of George Bailey, had all been members of the steering committee. They were: George Bailey, A.M. Holcomb, Ralph Immel, Robert C. Scott, and David Vanderpool.

These five men became the first of 31 to serve over the next 40 years. They were joined by Leon Loveless and David Peeler, Sr. on March 13, 1977. All 31 are listed in the Appendix along with their dates of service.



Photos furnished by Pat Scott.

D E A C O N S

The newly installed elders made deacon selection their first task and, on May 27, 1973, asked the congregation to give prayerful consideration to the selection of deacons. The men selected were:

*Pat Brower • Bill Buckley, Sr. • Ron Chitwood • Don Crisp • George Dillman • Hulin Fowler
Bill Garrett • John Hodge • Todd Miller • John Scott • Gene Stallings • John Strickland
Buzz Taylor • R.T. Tyler • Bill Wharton • Bill Wilson • Bob Wooldridge*

These names were presented to the congregation on July 15, 1973, at the first service in the new building. They were installed August 15, 1973, with Bill Wilson their first chairman.

These 17 men were the first of 149 to serve Prestoncrest through its first 40 years. A complete list of deacons with their dates of appointment is listed in the Appendix.

P H Y S I C A L P L A N T

This first phase of the physical plant is now the northernmost portion of the church complex. The small scale of this structure compared to the large lot on which it was located made it conspicuous to passersby on Preston Road.

Ground was broken during the winter months of 1973 and, on April 8, 1973, a drawing first appeared in the weekly bulletin. The cost of this 10,000 square foot structure was \$240,000. As with all three phases of the physical plant, Bob Wooldridge chaired the building committee.

That the building would not be large enough was already evident on July 1, 1973 when attendance was 317, the first count above 300. On that Sunday, a special offering for the building fund was \$16,245.20.

Services in the new building began Sunday, July 15, 1973. Bulletins for that Sunday and the

following Sunday headlined: “Welcome to 6022 Prestoncrest Lane.”

The September 9, 1973 Dedication Day included an open house prior to an evening service that began Prestoncrest’s first week-long gospel meeting. George Bailey preached on the theme: “The Truth Shall Make You Free.” Harold Duncan led the singing and Prestoncrest members were asked to go door-to-door to invite their neighbors.

On Dedication Day, attendance exceeded 400 for the first time with 410 persons in attendance, well in excess of the apparent seating capacity. On that Sunday, a new record offering was \$3,878. Planning for phase II began immediately. The bulletin of December 2, 1973 observed that the congregation had “a very fine building with plans for a second phase.” Construction began in May 1974 and the addition was occupied in January 1975. It provided an additional 8,000 square feet with classrooms, a foyer area, and a kitchen at a cost of \$224,000. Prestoncrest’s mortgage indebtedness now totaled \$489,000.¹

Even though office space had been included in the planning of phases I and II, rapid growth of the congregation soon forced ministers and secretaries to locate elsewhere. The first of the two “elsewheres” is fondly remembered: “the yellow house².”

The yellow (frame) house was donated by the Richardson YMCA and re-located to the Prestoncrest parking lot.

Harold Duncan recalls five rooms: a reception area, his own office, George Bailey’s office, space for the first secretary, Sue Kucera, and a work room with a “huge Xerox machine.”

The only photographs the author was able to locate of “the yellow house” are aerial photographs of the area taken in 1979. One of these is on page 26, as well as in the first pages of the photo insert section. It shows phases I and II with “the yellow house” in the parking lot. The area just to the north, where Preston Place now stands, is vacant.

¹ Square footage and costs for Phases I and II are from a May 1981 brochure prepared in anticipation of phase III. The original mortgage for phase I was for \$215,000 (based on an undated memo by Malinda Gowen, apparently written in preparation for the 20th anniversary celebration in 1992).

² The author remembers the house as yellow. Suzanne Miller remembers it as green. Harold Duncan, when presented with this disparity, opined diplomatically that it must have been “yellow with green trim.” We have not located a photograph that might resolve this highly important issue.

The February 1981 purchase of the home at 6038 Prestoncrest Lane (*now "Rory's house"*) allowed for the removal of the yellow house and recovery of the parking area it had occupied. The sum of \$105,000 was paid for this house. The "yellow house" was then purchased by Gene Stallings and moved to his farm.

Adequate office space would only become available with the later purchase of the Preston Place office building. Barbara Cooper, long-time executive assistant to Prentice Meador and Gordon Dabbs, recalls that when she began her Prestoncrest career in 2001, prior to the move of the church offices to Preston Place, "[We] officed in the church building for a time...it was very close quarters!"

B I B L E C L A S S

Bible Class attendance as a percentage of worship attendance has always been quite high at Prestoncrest, for example, 74% in 1977, 72% in 1978, and 73% in 1980.³ By June 1, 1975, five adult Bible classes, a singles class, two Bible credit courses for high school students and classes for younger children of all ages were available.

Many of the children's classes were memorable. Carol Crisp is remembered for her fifth grade class that stimulated and inspired her students. Carol's classroom was decorated with murals depicting biblical scenes. Fred and Dottie White taught the sixth graders for several years. Their former students remember being assigned a biblical question each week that required research in the Bible and concordance. The student with the best performance received a present at the end of the year. Fred and Dottie did their own research in choosing the gifts by asking the parents of the winning child what would be special and memorable to that child.

A memorable student in both Carol's fifth grade class and Fred and Dottie's sixth grade class was Johnny Stallings, son of Gene and Ruth Ann Stallings.

³ 1977, 1978, and 1980 are the only years of this decade in which Bible School attendance was consistently published in the bulletin.

J O H N N Y

A number of Prestoncrest members have enjoyed significant national and international name recognition. Preachers George Bailey and Prentice Meador were well known. Jack Evans was mayor of Dallas. George Dillman was active in Texas politics for many years. Gene Stallings, one of Prestoncrest's first deacons, had a distinguished coaching career at Texas A and M, the Dallas Cowboys, the St. Louis (football) Cardinals, and the University of Alabama. But exceeding all of these in both name recognition and honors bestowed is Johnny Stallings.

John Mark Stallings was born June 11, 1962 and was soon diagnosed with Down syndrome. His parents resisted advice that Johnny be institutionalized and made him an important part of their family. They encouraged Johnny to interact with family members, church members, and many others. His great gifts of love, acceptance, and caring endeared him to all. "[Johnny had] a sweet and gentle nature. Johnny didn't even know how to be mean."⁴

Johnny was naturally outgoing. It was said that he could not count to 10 but he knew hundreds of people by name. (He called the author "doctor" and the author's wife "Mrs. Sowell"). He was a student in Carol Crisp's fifth grade class for a number of years and then in the Whites' sixth grade class, even though he was much older than the other students.

Dottie recalls that Johnny always came to class with the correct answer to the assigned question because his parents had helped him learn the answer.

Steven Miller remembers: "I have great memories of my buddy Johnny Stallings. We always knew when the Pro Bowl was coming because Johnny would be talking about Hawaii and doing his 'hula dance.'"

Johnny was known far beyond Prestoncrest. The author was once present at a speech delivered by Coach Stallings. He spoke of a recent meeting with then-President George W. Bush. The president's opening statement was "How's Johnny?"

Johnny came to be his father's and the University of Alabama's greatest football fan. When

⁴ Gene Stallings and Sally Cook: "Another Season. A Coach's Story of Raising an Exceptional Son." New York: Broadway Books, 1997. Page 72.

asked why he liked to see Alabama win, Johnny would say, "It makes Pop happy."

Johnny worked at times at the Roden Funeral Home in Paris, Texas. He would open the door for those attending funerals and sometimes operate the tape deck that provided music for the funerals. He was friendly and consoling to those grieving.

At the RISE School in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, Johnny took special pride in the museum and would conduct tours for visitors there.

He received an honorary high school diploma from Dallas Christian School. He was given the Abilene Christian University "Change the World" Award in 2001.

Johnny Stallings' name is remembered in many ways and many places. The University of Alabama football program named its equipment room for him. Faulkner University named its playing field for him. Texas A and M University Medical School named a scholarship for him. A street in Tuscaloosa, Alabama is named for him. The Special Needs Accessible Playground (SNAP) of Morgan County, Hartselle, Alabama is named for him.

Johnny died of congenital heart disease on August 2, 2008. He was 46.

Fred and Dottie White were later promoted from the sixth-grade, all the way to the class for engaged and newly married couples originated earlier by Bob and Pat Scott. Fred and Dottie remained as mentors of this group for 18 years.

Dottie has affectionate memories of their time with these engaged and newly married couples. She and Fred frequently invited them into their home. The class emphasized successful marriages and the Whites modeled their own successful marriage for the students. Many of the earlier "graduates" of the class returned to Prestoncrest to mourn with Dottie and her family at Fred's memorial service in 2011.

Great teachers remain a constant in Prestoncrest Bible Classes but some methods have disappeared. The bulletin of September 20, 1981 announced "Bible stories in felt are now available in the workroom!" Steven Miller recalled his childhood Bible teachers using

“felt boards.” “Joseph and his many colors as bright as can be.” It is doubtful that today’s Prestoncrest children have any idea what a “felt board” is.

C H I L D R E N ’ S M I N I S T R Y

The conclusion of Pat Scott’s poem: “Larger than the auditorium the Cradle Roll may be” was prophetic. Long before the term “Children’s Ministry” became popular and long before Prestoncrest employed its first Children’s Minister, there were not only Bible classes but also a host of parties and activities for growing numbers of young children. With its children, its youth, its young professionals, and its young married couples, Prestoncrest has remained a young church.

M R S . D A G E N

Dorothy Dagen served the Prestoncrest nursery from the beginning of the congregation. She provided loving care for our babies and prepared the weekly communion service until her retirement⁵. Dorothy’s roles in the nursery and in communion preparation have now been taken over by her daughter Kathy Dagen. Two generations of the Dagen family have now served three generations of Prestoncrest babies and their parents. Their contributions have enriched us all.

V B S

Prestoncrest hosted its first Vacation Bible School August 5-9, 1974. Members were reminded of this special event beginning July 7 when the bulletin headlined: “VBS - One Month Away” and again on July 21: “VBS - Two Weeks Away.”

The youth group from the Raleigh Church of Christ in Memphis, Tennessee helped with

⁵ She now lives at the Christian Care Center in Mesquite.

a door-knocking campaign the week before the VBS. Attendance at the morning sessions peaked at 229 on Wednesday and evening attendance peaked at 67 on Tuesday.

Vacation Bible School has continued as an annual event. Members have been called on for construction of elaborate replicas of Bible scenes and role-play of Bible characters as themes have become more and more creative. VBS had to be suspended for a number of years in the early 1980's because of construction but it resumed in 1985.

Y O U T H

Harold Duncan says his "first love" was youth ministry. He remembers "great kids" in the early youth program who were supported by their very-involved parents. Bruce and Carol Huff worked with the junior high school students while Harold and his wife Rachel worked with high school students. Prestoncrest sent Harold to a youth ministry seminar in Lubbock each year to enhance his knowledge and skills.

The teenagers had devotionals in homes after Sunday night services as well as outings to Six Flags and other destinations. Ski trips were a popular and effective outreach. It was typical to have at least as many non-Prestoncrest youth as Prestoncrest youth on the ski trips.

There were summer mission trips each year in which Prestoncrest students conducted Vacation Bible Schools in smaller communities. In 1973, 18 young people went to Sabinal, Texas; in 1974, 28 went to Fort Davis, Texas, and in 1975, 32 went to Monticello, Kentucky. On these trips, Prestoncrest students would canvass the town, "literally going to every door inviting the young people to Bible School in which our young people teach." The Vacation Bible Schools were accompanied by evening gospel meetings with Harold Duncan preaching.

The youth group of the 1970's was capable of misbehavior of a sort that seems remarkably innocent today. For example, one Sunday evening two teenage boys remained in their cars in the parking lot during the evening service and talked to each other on their Citizens Band radios. Obviously, they could have spoken in person, but CB radios were a craze among teenagers and many of their parents. As the boys spoke, their radio transmission was

received by the sound system inside the church and became an unwelcome addition to the service. Two sets of parents immediately retreated to the parking lot and the CB conversation quickly ended.

Pat Scott recalls that one of the reasons Prestoncrest moved in its first year from the office building to the school might have been because of the behavior of some of the youth: "Some of our youth group got in the elevators and were a little bit destructive or dangerous and I think we got the boot!" Pat's memory is confirmed by that very first bulletin of April 16, 1972 that stated: "...we have received a rather strongly worded complaint from the building regarding the behavior of our children. This is, of course, somewhat embarrassing. More important, we must correct the situation before someone is injured or we are denied the use of this facility or both."

Harold visited each of the teens at home. He wanted to get to know them better and gain some insights on who they really were and how they really felt about things. By talking with them, seeing where they lived, and even just seeing what they had on their walls in their rooms, he learned many things. He found out that some felt they were on the "outside" and other members of the group were on the "inside" (some things never change!). He used these insights to plan activities that helped deal with these feelings of isolation.

On February 20, 1977, James Voss joined the staff as Youth and Family Minister. He was followed by Rodney Cox on March 4, 1979.

S I N G L E S M I N I S T R Y

Prestoncrest recognized the needs of single adults on April 6, 1975 with a class led by Harold Duncan and Dee Travis. On July 3, 1977, the bulletin reported a group of 65 singles and that Don Crisp had joined Harold and Dee in teaching the class.

Prestoncrest singles have historically provided the leadership for their ministry. This tradition began early when it was announced on February 13, 1977 that the single adults would be "knocking doors" to invite other singles to a Tuesday night Bible study.

LADIES BIBLE CLASS⁶

Prestoncrest's Ladies Bible Class began early in 1972. It met in the homes of members until September 19, 1973 when it moved to the new building and began a *Mother's Day Out*. In the early days, most of the Prestoncrest ladies attended.

At that first meeting in the new building, 70 ladies heard Mozelle Turner begin a new series: "Fascinating Womanhood." Ms. Turner was a frequent and popular teacher in the years that followed. She called herself "Mo." Pat Scott described her as a "dynamic little lady." Suzanne Miller recalls: "Mozelle taught for several years and brought her joyful spirit to all who attended."

Suzanne reports one especially noteworthy class in September of 1986 with the topic: "What Would Jesus Do About the AIDS Issue?" "We had two doctors from Prestoncrest present the subject in a very informative and sensitive way. We had almost 150 (a record) in attendance. This is the only time we had men in attendance other than as teachers."

A number of historic and unexpected events have occurred on Ladies Bible Class days including the January 28, 1986 explosion of the Space Shuttle *Challenger* with the deaths of all seven crew members, the conclusion of the sensational O.J. Simpson trial on October 3, 1995 with its not guilty verdict, and, on September 11, 2001, the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

Special programs have included: a Christmas cooking demonstration, the adoption of "grandmothers" from the Christian Care Center, many impromptu service projects, special Ladies Days, style shows, and the adoption of needy families during the holiday season.

Suzanne calls Ladies Bible Class "the heartbeat of the church. It meets every week. We pray. We take care of one another..." Dottie White describes Ladies Bible Class as "a great outreach for the younger girls to be associated with some of the older ladies." Suzanne later observed: "[Ladies Bible Class] has provided to women of all ages a time of spiritual enrichment,

⁶ Sources for the Ladies Bible Class section include the interviews with Todd and Suzanne Miller, Pat Scott, and Dottie White, and a written statement by Suzanne Miller.

fellowship and involvement in the life of the church. And many lasting relationships have begun on Tuesday mornings at Prestoncrest Church of Christ.”

Ladies Bible Class leaders over the years have been Pat Scott, Flossye Gagneux, Suzanne Miller, and Dottie White.

In 1984, the tradition of annual Ladies’ Retreats began. The retreats, held in nearby hotels, take the ladies away from their day-to-day jobs and family duties as they spend quality time with one another and receive inspiration and instruction from guest speakers.

B E N E V O L E N C E

The “Share Boxes” of the congregation’s first year began a long tradition of sharing with others, through both monetary support and member involvement.

The newly formed Benevolence Committee asked in the February 10, 1974 bulletin: “Do you know of anyone who needs transportation?” The same bulletin asked for old shirts that the ladies might turn into hospital gowns for the residents of Hilltop Haven.

Benevolence Committee members were Gerald Reed, John Hodge, Bill Wilson, Bruce Huff, and a man whose name became synonymous with benevolence-R.T. Tyler.

R.T.

R.T. Tyler was a man with a passion. A short acquaintance with this seemingly unassuming man was enough to learn of his passion-for people in need, especially children. R.T. had been a deacon at the Skillman church and was one of Prestoncrest’s first deacons. He later served Prestoncrest as elder, but R.T. Tyler is remembered not for title or office but for the care of people in need. He was Prestoncrest’s interface

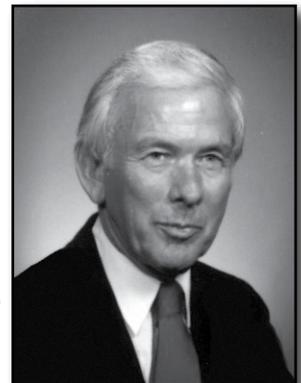


Photo from Prestoncrest files.

with brotherhood benevolence institutions and always carried a small card that detailed the church's monthly support for each of these. But he was much more than a committee chair. His involvement was personal. He said many times that "if children are involved, we should help the family" (even if the parents of the children were less deserving). He knew these families well and was often seen in the foyer at Prestoncrest holding a small child whom he would introduce to other members.

After his death, the children's wing at Prestoncrest was dedicated to his memory. A small plaque below his portrait reads: "Dedicated in memory of R.T. Tyler because of his love for children."

The March 14, 1976 bulletin gave details of the benevolence budget. Prestoncrest was giving \$100 per month to the Christian Care Center and \$100 per month to the Children's Home of Lubbock. An additional \$1,000 each month was helping families "who could not help themselves" with groceries, rent, hospital bills, medicine, and other needs.

Prestoncrest's relationship with Christian Services of the Southwest (now Christian Works for Children) began early. The November 16, 1980 bulletin announced a slide presentation by Bill Waugh to better acquaint members with this ministry that Prestoncrest already supported financially and was the source of several children whom members had adopted.

Financial support of and member involvement with such agencies increased rapidly over the years that followed. Agencies supported have included: the Albuquerque Christian Children's home, Boles Home, Central Dallas Ministries (originally the Central Dallas Food Pantry), Cherokee Home, ChristianWorks for Children, Christ's Haven, Christian Care Centers, Lubbock Children's Home, Medina Children's Home, New Friends New Life, Peak and Eastside Church of Christ, Smithlawn Home of Lubbock, Sunny Glen Children's Home, Tennessee Children's Home, Timothy Hill Children's Ranch, and the Village of Hope (in Ghana).

Prestoncrest began a long history of special contributions for human needs on June 11, 1978 with an offering of \$4,000 for members of the Walnut Village Church of Christ in nearby Garland. Walnut Village's roof had collapsed from heavy rain during a recent Sunday

morning worship service resulting in one death and several injuries⁷. There would be many more such outpourings over the years.

M I S S I O N S

Allen Huff was the first missionary for whom Prestoncrest was the sponsoring congregation. Allen and his family moved to Sao Paulo, Brazil on February 16, 1975. He had joined the Prestoncrest staff as associate minister on August 6, 1974 to become acquainted with the congregation. Earlier, he had lived and worked in Sao Paulo, Brazil where he became fluent in Portuguese. He met his wife, Lucia, a Brazilian, while they were students at Abilene Christian College. They had two young daughters, Stephanie and Jennifer.

The Huffs were forced to shorten their mission to Brazil when Allen became ill and was hospitalized. On August 6, 1978 they returned to Dallas for needed medical care. Allen then re-joined the church staff as associate minister where he remained until August 31, 1980 when he resigned to accept a position with the Village Church of Christ in Oklahoma City.

Ron Rice was the second Prestoncrest-sponsored missionary. The bulletin of March 11, 1979 announced that Ron, his wife, Linda, and their three boys were the new missionaries to Tegucigalpa, Honduras. The Rices were forced to return to the United States on August 1, 1982.

Todd Miller remembers that the Tecucigalpa church had been infiltrated by the Sandanistas and the Rices had reason to fear for their lives. Prestoncrest elders advised them to leave their possessions behind and board a plane bound for the United States. Instead, the Rices loaded their pickup and made the long and hazardous drive back to United States via Central America and Mexico.

B U S M I N I S T R Y

In the mid-1970's, it was common to see rows of brightly painted school buses on church

⁷ This event occurred during Sunday morning worship services on May 21, 1978. The following day's Dallas Morning News devoted all of its front page to the incident that resulted in the death of nine year-old Shannon Smith and injuries to 57 other persons.

parking lots. Bus ministries served children in nearby neighborhoods and were vehicles (literally!) for Bible teaching and transportation to Bible classes and worship. Brotherhood interest in bus ministry is evident from an "Area-Wide Bus Conference" at the Turnpike Church of Christ in Grand Prairie on September 6-7, 1974.

Prestoncrest joined the trend on April 28, 1974, when the bulletin announced the purchase of a new bus made possible "due to a sizeable contribution from one of our families." By November 17, 1974, more than 100 members had volunteered in this ministry, almost one-third of the membership at the time.

Kickoff was February 5, 1975. One year later, February 2, 1976, 30-35 riders were reported for the "Red Bus" and 30-35 for a second "Blue Bus." By January 30, 1977, a third, "Yellow Bus," was added.

Harold Duncan coordinated the bus ministry and credits Jim Goodnight, a Prestoncrest member and advertising executive for the unique logo: "WINGS," an acronym for "Wheels in God's Service." Goodnight donated many hours of his own time and the resources of his company to the development of this logo.



Prestoncrest teenagers with the "WINGS" bus in the background.

Left to Right: Not identified, Debbie Grubbs, Norman Taylor, Marcie Brader, Suzanne Henderson, Terri Hardwick (now deceased), Michelle Scott (Tucker), and Gary Richardson. Photo furnished by Pat Scott.

Many adults and teenagers are commended in bulletins of the era as bus ministry workers. Harold especially praises the families of Fred and Dottie White and Bruce and Carol Huff. Each of these families assumed responsibility for one of the busses.

The White family had been involved in bus ministry in Beaumont before moving to Prestoncrest in 1975. Dottie remembers the bus ministry as "laborious."

Volunteers would meet on Saturday and knock on doors inviting children to come...“In North Dallas you don’t get a lot.” Most of the children came from the apartment complexes on Maham Road, near Coit.

Harold views the bus ministry as an effective outreach. Unfortunately, churches were not equipped to deal with the socioeconomic and behavioral problems presented by “bus children” and their families. Bus ministry was also very “high maintenance” and required many volunteers. Many were unable to make the required time commitment.

Bulletins of 1974, 1975, 1976, and 1977 were filled with frequent and exciting news of the bus ministry and pleas for more workers. The bus ministry ended sometime after 1977. The weekly bulletins offer no explanation but the words “bus ministry” never appeared again. Those fleets of buses that once lined church parking lots have long since disappeared. Prestoncrest was not alone in being unable to sustain an effective bus ministry.

T H E R E S A

The rapid growth of the 1970’s brought many great individuals and families into the Prestoncrest community. One outstanding member came by accident. Theresa Simpson and her husband Tommy Simpson (Tommy died in 1990) were searching for the *Preston Road* Church of Christ in 1973 and instead found the *Prestoncrest* Church of Christ. This mistake has resulted in 38 years of blessings by Theresa-also known as “Big Mama,” or, in the words of her daughter Barbara Cooper, “Mother Theresa.” *Preston Road* has no idea what it missed!

Theresa has given encouragement to many. Some have called with problems and prayed with her. She has been an important part of George and Carolyn Miller’s Tuesday night small group for many years and has brought her neighbor to the group for the past six or seven years. She went with the Guatemala Mission team one year and encouraged many in that country. She has affirmed and encouraged both old and young. Blake Mazza, young son of then associate minister Matt Mazza and wife Kristen, was once told to do something he did not wish to do by his parents. Blake responded: “I wish Big Mama was here!” Theresa’s active and verbal participation in Sunday morning worship make her a welcome

addition. Having grown up in the African American church tradition of “talking back” and “encouraging the preacher,” Theresa can often be heard to say “Amen” or “Speak on Brother” during sermons and prayers. Theresa’s participation has been welcomed and encouraged by all of Prestoncrest’s pulpit ministers over the years and has been a source of inspiration and encouragement to many others.

Theresa is, as of this writing, 86 years old (*turning 87 on August 1, 2014*). She has told this author that she will not live much longer and has expressed her wish to have a single rose placed in her usual pew (second row, center, immediately in front of the pulpit) at her funeral. All of Prestoncrest hope that Theresa will be attending and actively participating in worship services for a very long time to come and that the rose will not be seen anytime soon.

Chapter Five

BUILDING: 1981 - 1988

MILESTONES...

December 28, 1980:
Bill Buckley, Sr. called out as elder.

February 1, 1981:
Mike Peters begins his Prestoncrest ministry.

February 1981: Purchase of home at
6038 Prestoncrest Lane.

April 12, 1981: Dino Roussos becomes
Prestoncrest's missionary to Greece.

1981: Rodney Cox resigns as Youth and
Education Minister (exact date not known).

May 10, 1981: David Floyd joins
Prestoncrest staff as Youth Minister.

April 4, 1982: Groundbreaking for
phase III of physical plant.

November 11, 1982: Sponsorship of
missionaries Hilton & Wanda Terry begins.

June 9, 1983: Steeple raising on
phase III of physical plant.

October 2, 1983: Todd Miller,
Fred White, and Bob Wooldridge are
called out as elders. Eighteen new
deacons¹ are called at the same time.
Five would later serve as elders.

February 12, 1984:
First service in phase III auditorium.

February 27, 1984:
David Floyd Resigns as youth minister.

March 11, 1984:
Dedication service for phase III.

May 7, 1984: Russ Bartee joins
Prestoncrest staff as Youth Minister.

August 1, 1984: Harold Duncan
re-joins the staff as Associate Minister.

¹ See Appendix for a complete list of deacons and elders over the years.

Continued on page 48...

1985: Valeriano Lanaspas is sponsored as missionary to Spanish-speaking areas.

October 27, 1985: Lloyd Mansfield begins his mission to England.

1986: Average attendance peaks at 816.

February 23, 1986:
Harold Duncan resigns after second time of ministry service at Prestoncrest.

February 23, 1986:
David and Mary Schallert begin as missionaries to Germany.

March 30, 1986: Bill Moody joins Prestoncrest staff as Associate Minister.

October 12, 1986:
Robert C. Scott resigns from the eldership.

November 16, 1986:
Leon Loveless resigns from the eldership.

January 25, 1987:
Prestoncrest sponsors Mitchell & Isobel Vick, missionaries to Scotland.

May 31, 1987:
George Bailey resigns as minister.

November 1, 1987:
Mike Peters' last sermon as Pulpit Minister.

November 1, 1987 - August 7, 1988:
The "first interim" between pulpit ministers.
Various guest ministers preached.

January 17, 1988: "Inner City Food Program" begins to provide hot meals to the homeless of downtown Dallas each Sunday.

April 10, 1988: George Bailey and A. M. Holcomb resign from the eldership. They were the last of the original elders to serve.²

April 10, 1988:
Prentice Meador agrees to come to Prestoncrest as its third pulpit minister.

August 1, 1988:
Russ Bartee resigns as youth minister.

August 7, 1988:
Prentice Meador joins Prestoncrest full-time as pulpit minister.

September 18, 1988: Steve Stoeltje joins the staff as Youth and Family Minister.

December 18, 1988:
Leron Blanks, Gary Brantley, Jerry Pierce, and R.T. Tyler are added to the eldership.

January 29, 1989:
David Peeler, Sr. resigns from the eldership.

² The resignations of Bailey and Holcomb may have occurred earlier. Please refer to "Sources" early in the book.

The years 1981-1988 were in marked contrast to those of the more turbulent 1960's and 1970's. The Viet Nam era with its many conflicts and riots was becoming a memory. Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush were inaugurated as President and Vice-President on January 20, 1981 and the 52 Americans who had been hostages in Iran for the preceding 444 days were released the same day. The severe inflation of the late 1970's began to subside thanks, in part, to some very high interest rates. The March 30, 1981 shooting of newly-elected President Ronald Reagan by John Hinckley, Jr. recalled some very bad memories of a day in Dallas almost 20 years earlier but, unlike his predecessor John F. Kennedy, Reagan survived. Reagan and Bush would go on to be re-elected in 1984 and the world would be at peace except for a 73-day war in 1982 between Great Britain and Argentina over the Falkland Islands. Cultural events of the period included the Cabbage Patch Doll and the movie "E.T." National mourning would accompany the explosion of the space shuttle Challenger on January 28, 1986.

These years were a time of growth and transition for Prestoncrest. Average Sunday worship attendance grew 37%, from 543 in 1981 to 743 in 1988 (after a peak of 826 in 1986). Bible class attendance increased by 36%, from an average of 380 in 1980 to 517 in 1988. Elders were called out who would lead the congregation well into the future. Mike Peters filled the pulpit for seven of the eight years and was followed by Prentice Meador. The final construction, phase III, of the physical plant was completed, including the present auditorium, and phases I and II were remodeled to accommodate even more babies and children.

E L D E R S

Bill Buckley, Sr. joined the eldership on the last Sunday of 1980, December 28. He joined original elders George Bailey, A.M. Holcomb, and Bob Scott and more recent additions Leon Loveless and David Peeler, Sr. Bill was Prestoncrest's longest serving elder and served alongside all of Prestoncrest's elders except Ralph Immel and David Vanderpool.

Todd Miller, Fred White, and Bob Wooldridge joined the eldership on October 2, 1983. Bob resigned on July 21, 1993. Fred served until his death on March 9, 2011, becoming Prestoncrest's third longest serving elder and making Todd the second longest serving elder.

Leron Blanks, Gary Brantley, Jerry Pierce, and R.T. Tyler were installed on December 18, 1988. R.T. resigned on November 20, 1994. Jerry resigned on August 27, 2000. Leron would serve two terms as elder. He resigned on November 2, 2003 and was called out for a second term of service on January 10, 2010. Gary has now become Prestoncrest's 4th longest serving elder.

As the newer elders matured, their older colleagues began to retire: Bob Scott on October 12, 1986, Leon Loveless on November 16, 1986, George Bailey and A.M. Holcomb on April 10, 1988, and David Peeler, Sr. on January 29, 1989. With David Peeler, Sr.'s resignation, the eldership was entirely in the hands of men whose service began on or after December 28, 1980.

M I N I S T E R S

There was a similar transition in the congregation's ministers during these years. Harold Duncan resigned, after a second time of service, on February 23, 1986. George Bailey resigned on May 31, 1987.

Rodney Cox, Youth and Education Minister, who had joined the staff March 1, 1979, resigned in early 1981. Rodney was followed by David Floyd (as Youth Minister) from May 10, 1981 to February 27, 1984. David was followed by Russ Bartee from May 7, 1984 to August 1, 1988. Russ was followed by Steve Stoeltje, who came September 18, 1988.

Bill Moody joined the staff as Associate Minister on March 30, 1986.

Mike Peters filled the pulpit from February 1, 1981 to November 1, 1987. After an interim of nine months, Prentice Meador began his 19-year tenure on August 7, 1988.

M I K E

On the first Sunday of 1981, January 4, the congregation met Mike Peters and heard him preach. That day's bulletin announced that Mike, his wife Anita, and daughters Amy (age 6) and Angie (age 4) would join Prestoncrest on February 1, 1981. Mike came from the Southern

Hills Church of Christ in Shreveport, Louisiana. He was 29 years old. Mike was, for the times, a bit of an iconoclast. Sermon and class titles often departed from more traditional themes with topics like “Discipleship,” “Friendship Evangelism,” “Ride the Wild Horses” (a film series for singles), “Roles People Play,” “Total Commitment: What is it,” “When the Prodigal Son is your Own,” and “How to Change your Life.” Mike often used materials and quotations from non-Church of Christ sources, a practice that some criticized.

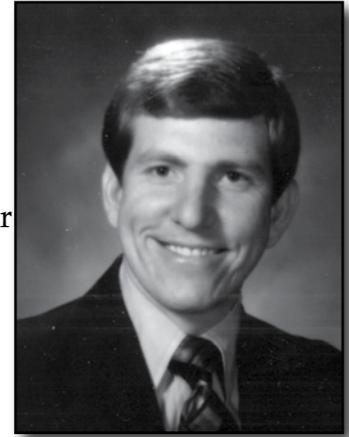


Photo from Prestoncrest files.

Mike was the first to use printed lesson sheets for members to complete during sermons. He insisted on standing as close to the congregation as possible while preaching in order to better connect with his listeners. When the phase III auditorium opened, the pulpit was on the upper tier, with the communion table below. At Mike’s request, the pulpit and communion table were reversed, placing the preacher much closer to the congregation. On Sunday nights, he moved the lectern below the platform, even closer to the congregation.

Mike was known for good humor and used humorous illustrations effectively in his sermons. He was known to laugh at his own jokes. He accepted good-humored teasing after he and youth minister David Floyd “lost” their golf cart. They were concentrating on their upcoming shots, only to discover that the cart had disappeared, having quietly rolled backward into a nearby lake where its presence was marked only by a cloud of bubbles.

Mike’s weekly columns in the Prestoncrest bulletin were optimistic and upbeat. For example, he wrote on July 28, 1983:

“Churches do develop reputations (liberal, conservative, mainline, judgmental, etc.). With all my heart, I hope this family of believers will become known for its love for one another and genuine concern for serving the needs of people. I hope we can gain a reputation for being long in patience, short in self-righteousness, slow to judge and quick to forgive, deeply committed to Christ and highly attached to one another...”

He commented on the National Football League players’ strike of 1982 that resulted in a

shortened season in an article titled “Life After Football”:

“Along with millions of fans, I mourned the demise of professional football this autumn...the truth is, however, that people are coping pretty well. Family activities, physical exercise, and even a drive through the country have replaced our preferred pastime. There is life after football.

“Most important, though, is the renewed awareness that life in Christ can never be short-circuited. ‘Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.’ (Heb. 13:5). God has written a ‘no-strike’ clause into his contract with us...

“There is life after illness, life after unemployment, and life after death. Sure, should they settle the strike, I’ll still watch...but maybe from a little different perspective.”

Bill Buckley, Sr. observed that Mike Peters was relatively young but very qualified. Bob Wooldridge recalled that he “really enjoyed” hearing Mike preach. Bob McAfee, who came to Prestoncrest with his family in 1981, recalls, “I got to know Mike well and liked his pulpit preaching.”

Mike was very popular with the majority of Prestoncrest members. Attendance grew significantly. There were some, however, who disliked his “new ways.” One family even objected to his humorous sermon illustrations.

Mike’s resignation on November 1, 1987 began an interim of nine months that ended when Prentice Meador began his ministry on August 7, 1988.

Mike and Anita Peters now have a counseling practice in the mid-cities area of the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. They provided the following e-mail, dated September 30, 2011:

Hi, David.

I’ll try to answer some of your questions. I graduated from Oklahoma Christian College in 1972. I started working as a youth minister at Memorial Drive Church of Christ in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Anita and I were already married (1970). We had both of our children,

Amy and Angela, while we lived there. I left that church and became the pulpit minister for the Southern Hills Church of Christ in 1977. I worked there until 1980 when I was approached by Prestoncrest to become their minister. Bob and Pat Scott came to Southern Hills and heard me preach. After several interviews, I accepted the job.

Our stay at Prestoncrest, for the most part, was positive. We made many good friends while we were there. When we left Prestoncrest in 1987, I became the pulpit minister for the Crestview Church of Christ in Waco, Texas. I worked there for five years and decided, with Anita, that it was time to get out of the ministry. I earned my Masters degree in Counseling, completing it in 1993. We moved to the Dallas-Fort Worth area and began a private practice in counseling. We both enjoy our work as counselors. We have a very busy practice and are grateful for the lives we enjoy with each other and serving our clients.

Both Amy and Angela are married and have two children each, meaning Anita and I are blessed with four very wonderful grandchildren. We all live in the mid-cities and enjoy spending time together when we can. I just turned sixty this past June, which didn't exactly thrill me, but it is what it is. We are both blessed with good health. I wish you well in your work with the book.

Sincerely, Mike

B I L L

The Prestoncrest bulletin of March 9, 1986 introduced Bill Moody, his wife Jane, and daughter Angela to the congregation. Jane was a branch manager for Guardian Savings and would continue with Guardian in Dallas. Angela was a high school junior and would enroll at the Dallas Arts Magnet School.

The Moodys came to Prestoncrest from Houston where Bill had served for the preceding year as preacher for the Royalwood Church of Christ. Bill had attended Texas A and M University and received his B.A. degree in Personnel Management from Saint Mary's University in San Antonio. He had worked with churches in San Antonio, Brownfield, Houston (Memorial and Royalwood), and Dallas (Highland Oaks). His ministry was anticipated as one that would

“equip the saints for service.” He was experienced with single adults and home Bible study groups. He would also work in the administration of the congregation.

Bill Moody went on to become Prestoncrest’s longest serving minister.¹ His titles were “Associate Minister (March 30, 1986-September 1993), “Education Minister”(September 1993-February 2005), and “Senior Adult Minister” (February 2005-March 1, 2009).

Bill played more roles and made many more contributions to the flock at Prestoncrest than these titles describe. He was a tireless and loyal worker. He became qualified as a hospital chaplain and spent many hours ministering to the sick of the congregation and others. He was always ready and able to take on any task just because it needed to be done.

Sunday night, March 1, 2009, was dedicated to Bill. A number of speakers affectionately recalled Bill’s many contributions with both humor and great respect. He is greatly missed as a part of the Prestoncrest team.

P H Y S I C A L P L A N T

Continued numerical growth in the early 1980’s placed even more stress on the congregation’s worship and classroom capacity. Two Sunday morning services (begun on September 22, 1974) were not enough. Mike Peters observed in the bulletin of February 10, 1983 that attendance was nearly 700. While there was still some room in the first service, in the second service there were people “stacked in all the crooks and crannies².” A third Sunday morning worship service was added on March 24, 1983 but was abandoned on May 22, 1983 after it proved impractical.

Phase III, with its much larger auditorium, was on the drawing board and was described for the congregation in a brochure that featured a concept drawing on its cover. Also included were schematics of the proposed auditorium and foyer areas, a floor plan of the first floor, and a letter signed by the six elders:

¹ Bill served 23 years (March 1986 - March 2009). Others with long tenures are Prentice Meador 19 years (August 1998 - August 2007), George Bailey 15 years (March 1972 - May 1987), John Scott Davis 15 years (November 1999 - present), Brad Weldon 13 years (July 2001 - present), Eddie Couch 13 years (August 1991 - November 2004), Bob Chisholm 12 years (August 2002 - present), and Matt Mazza 12 years (May 1998 - August 2010).

² This is what he said. No, he did not say “nooks and crannies!”

"We stand on the threshold of our greatest opportunity. God has blessed Prestoncrest with land situated at the heart of a fast growing city of souls.

"...To accomplish this task will require the financial support of every member at Prestoncrest. We must give. The heartbeat of Christianity is giving. Christ 'gave his life a ransom for many.'"

A May 1981 memo provides further detail. Phase III would contain approximately 40,000 square feet, compared to a total of 18,000 square feet for phases I and II. The 40,000 square feet would include an auditorium of 13,700 square feet, educational facilities of 9,100 square feet, fellowship space of 3,100 square feet, office space of 3,100 square feet, lobby area of 4,100 square feet, and "other" of 7,000 square feet. A proposed timetable called for construction to begin in February 1982 with completion 12-15 months later.

The cost was projected at \$55 per square foot for a total of \$2,200,000. Financing through the B.C. Ziegler Company would utilize 15-year bonds totaling \$1,500,000 with an interest rate of 15.5% (the early 1980's were a time of extremely high interest rates-a result of the inflation that began in the 1970's). Liquidation of the existing \$400,000 indebtedness was required.

In order to liquidate the existing indebtedness and minimize the required financing, May 31, 1981 was "Million Dollar Sunday" with a picnic on the church grounds following worship services. Gifts and pledges on that day totaled \$788,000.

On April 4, 1982 ground was broken for phase III, and on December 9, 1982 the bulletin announced that scaffolding was up and bricklayers were at work. The bulletin commented: "George Bailey laid the first brick, but retired to allow more qualified people to work."

A number of members gathered in the church parking lot on June 9, 1983 to observe a crane putting the steeple in place. Mike Peters commented: "(it) will give our new facility a greatly increased visibility, as well as being aesthetic."

Later, the bulletin of June 2, 1985 observed: "North Dallas has a new landmark! Now that the lighting work has been completed for the outside of the new building and the steeple, it can be seen from miles away. If you haven't driven by the building at night lately, it's worth the

trip to come and see.”

Gradual occupancy of the new building made the closing months of 1983 and the first months of 1984 very exciting. The new fellowship hall was first used on December 8, 1983 for the annual holiday reception. The bulletin of December 18, 1983 announced that furniture had been moved into the new office suite, that the single adults had met in their room on the preceding Sunday, and commented: “Very soon the new facility will be ours to use.” On January 5, 1984, the Ladies Bible Class met in the new building for the first time. As preparation was made for a move to the new auditorium, February 5, 1984 was to be the final Sunday for worship in the original auditorium. The bulletin encouraged the congregation to make this final service a “special time of singing, prayer, and study.” Finally, the long-anticipated move to the new auditorium occurred on February 12, 1984. The bulletin commented on the “beautiful singing” that day. In preparation for the dedication service of March 11, 1984, the “Aggies for Christ” came from Texas A and M University to assist Prestoncrest students in canvassing the surrounding neighborhood to personally invite Prestoncrest’s neighbors to the dedication service.

On the day of dedication, a combined adult Bible class considered the topic: “Simplicity in Christ (a look at the early Christians’ uncomplicated devotion to Christ and how it can impact lives).” Later that day, an open house was held from 4:00 to 6:00 PM with evening service following at 6:30 PM.

The first evangelistic meeting in the new auditorium was on April 1-4, 1984 with V.P. Black, from Saraland (near Mobile), Alabama. His topic was “Who is this man Jesus?” This “first evangelistic meeting” in the new space was also the last. Seminars on marriage, family relations, and other topics were held in the following years, and the gospel has been preached regularly from the Prestoncrest pulpit, but there were no more gospel meetings.

With phase III complete and occupied, phase II was soon to be improved. On January 20, 1985, the bulletin announced the renovation of the downstairs wing of the “old educational building” (the phase II addition). Three additional pre-school classrooms would result along

with the move of the “burgeoning nursery department” closer to the new auditorium. Phase I improvement followed in 1988. The August 14, 1988 bulletin announced that Facilities Manager Roy Burnham had built four new pre-school classrooms in the “chapel” (the phase I auditorium) allowing the (still burgeoning) nursery to expand into the previous pre-school classrooms.

SUNSHINE SCHOOL³

Sunshine School, a Prestoncrest ministry to children from ages 1 to pre-kindergarten, began in the 1980’s. Directors and workers of what was then called “Tuesday School” were Sandy Mack, Kelley Maynard, Teresa Renfro, and Michelle McDougal.



Since 1990, directors have been Annette Cawyer, Karen McAulay, Amber Arnold, Kristen Mazza, Krista Harper, Jolie Clevenger, and Erica Brown. Present (2012) directors are Krista Harper and Erica Brown. Krista has worked with the school since 2002 and has been co-director for 7 years. Erica has worked with the school since 2007 and began her first year as co-director in the fall of 2012.

A staff of well-trained teachers, now numbering 24, complement the directors. Leslie Jackson is the longest serving teacher and has taught three-year-olds from the beginning.

Sunshine School serves families from Prestoncrest and many from the community. As of Fall 2012, 125 children are enrolled, about 30% from Prestoncrest and 70% from the community. A number of our Prestoncrest families made their first contact with Prestoncrest through Sunshine School. Sunshine School has never advertised. Word-of-mouth referrals fill the classes

³ Information about Sunshine School is from telephone conversations with Annette Cawyer and Krista Harper and the Sunshine School section of the current Prestoncrest website.

every year.

The school's philosophy and guiding scripture are stated on their literature and webpage:

"We believe that preschool is an important part in a child's development where they can learn social skills and important foundations of academics. These skills are essential in preparing children to enter kindergarten and other educational opportunities. In addition to these skills, we also want to teach our students to love God's Word, develop positive attitudes and to treat others with respect."

You are the light of the world... Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in Heaven. ~Matthew 5:14,16

There are two school programs each year: one in the Thanksgiving season and another in the spring. For each of these, "the house [the Prestoncrest auditorium] is packed" with parents and grandparents.

Chapel is conducted each school day in the Prestoncrest auditorium. The children learn to express themselves through music and song on Mondays. On Thursdays, they have physical education.

Krista Harper comments: "It is not just a daycare." All of her four children have completed Sunshine School and their kindergarten teachers were amazed at the preparation they had received at Sunshine School.

Annette Cawyer remembers her years at Sunshine School with fondness. She says: "It was fun... I miss it!"

Y O U T H

Steven Miller fondly remembers the mission trips of the 1980's. "I don't know too many peo-

ple that can say they got to go on mission trips to Houston, Mississippi; Des Moines, Iowa; and Gloucester, Massachusetts. We had some great youth ministers.” Other trips went to Rutland, Vermont (1986) and inner city Houston (1989).

On one of the trips, the Prestoncrest students were forced to confront the lingering racism of the time. Steven recalls: “Houston, Mississippi was very interesting for the segregation issue. We were handing out flyers for VBS and there were only certain houses we could go to and we just didn’t understand that.”

Summer Work Camp was an annual event at Prestoncrest for many years. The front page of the July 8, 1986 Dallas Morning News featured a picture of Mrs. Dorothy French rejoicing in her front yard as youth from Prestoncrest, the Highland Oaks Church of Christ in Dallas and the Park Plaza Church of Christ in Tulsa, Oklahoma painted her home.⁴ Mrs. French’s home was one of 20 receiving a new coat of paint during the 1986 Summer Work Camp.

The “Youth News” in the same bulletin is typical of summers in the 80’s. It reported a recent Wilderness Trek with Raegen Lackey, Kirk Jones, Lori Onstott, Russ Bartee, Brian Bankston, and Jennifer Jordan all making it to the peak of Mount Harvard (14,420 feet above sea level) and John and Dawn Hall making it to the 14,000 foot level. The youth were to participate in camp at Iron Springs and a number had recently spent the weekend on the Guadalupe River at New Braunfels on an annual float trip. Finally, they were invited to ride the church bus to an upcoming Dallas Summer Youth Series at the Skillman Avenue Church of Christ.

In 1989, youth activities included ACU Sing-Song, a Leadership Retreat, VBS, “Soul Lift,” parent/teen fall fellowship, Camp Pettijohn Springs Fall Retreat, “Servin’ Safari,” Manna Project ’89, Fall Teen Retreat at Deer Run, ski trip to Purgatory, Colorado, work downtown feeding the homeless, and Christmas caroling to shut-ins.

Prestoncrest’s older children and teens competed with their peers from other Church of Christ congregations in the Dallas area in the Dallas Bible Quiz for a number of years. The

⁴ This is a wonderful picture. The author was told that it was “not available” when he asked *The Dallas Morning News* for a reproducible copy. It may be seen in the microfilm archives of the Dallas Public Library.

last mention of this activity is in the bulletins of 1994. "Leadership Training for Christ" (LTC) began in 1989.⁵ It includes Church of Christ young people from several states and encourages Bible Study through competitive testing, oral presentation, drama, video, and other activities. The Senior Appreciation Dinner on May 14, 1982 shows how much the economy has changed since the 1980's. The price of the dinner, at Chandler's Landing, was \$11.60 per person!⁶

D O W N T O W N F E E D I N G ⁷

The "downtown feeding" began Sunday, January 31, 1988. Nancy Blanks, Pat Scott, and Virginia Vaught introduced Dallas area Churches of Christ to the needs of people living on the streets of downtown Dallas after hearing a speech by Charles Landreth, a Prestoncrest member with special interest in the homeless⁸. The need for a Sunday meal was quickly identified since the shelters did not serve food on Sundays. Prestoncrest, alternating with other congregations, served outside the Austin Street Shelter after second service the last Sunday of each month.

Leron Blanks recalls the involvement of the entire congregation. Leron, his wife Nancy, R.T. Tyler, and Bill Bledsoe coordinated the ministry. Bill Bledsoe provided a specially equipped truck with shelves for the food. Many members prepared the casserole "More"⁹, the main course, others provided bread, and others canned peaches and homemade brownies for dessert. Many others drove downtown to serve the meal. The operation was very efficient. Once the Prestoncrest volunteers arrived, a horn was honked, as many as 200 people lined up, a prayer was said, and 45 minutes later it was all done.

The bulletin last mentioned the downtown feeding in 1994. The city of Dallas moved the

⁵ Bulletin: March 10, 1991: The "third annual" LTC.

⁶ The seniors honored that year were Lisa Blanks, Mitchell Dillman, Elizabeth Grubbs, Jackie Stallings, and Bryce Williams.

⁷ Leron Blanks provided most of the information for this section.

⁸ Charles knew whereof he spoke. He voluntarily lived among the homeless on the streets of downtown Dallas for a number of days. He is now a missionary in Russia under the oversight of another congregation.

⁹ The recipe for "More" was provided by Nancy Blanks and Barbara Cooper: 4 lbs. ground beef (cooked); 2 medium onions (chopped & sautéed); 2 cans whole kernel corn; 2 can green peas; 2 cans tomatoes; 2 lbs. mild cheddar cheese, shredded (reserve ½ lb for the top); 16 oz. spaghetti (broken & cooked); ½ tsp garlic powder; salt to taste. Mix all ingredients together (reserving 1/2 lb of cheese) and put in large pan. Bake at 370° until heated through. Sprinkle reserved cheese on top, heat until melted, and serve.

feeding from the Austin Street Shelter to a bridge under Interstate 45 and finally declined to re-issue the needed permit. Barbara Cooper fondly remembered the downtown feeding: “They were the best days...I don’t know where all the people came from.”

In what was likely the first recognition of the growing Asian population in the metroplex, a “Downtown Asian Ministry” was announced on March 27, 1988. This ministry would be in conjunction with the already existing ministry to downtown street people and Prestoncrest would serve a meal on the fourth Sunday of each month. School supplies and clothing were requested for the benefit of the persons served.

P R I S O N M I N I S T R Y

Ministry to inmates of the Walls Unit of the Texas Department of Corrections in Huntsville, Texas was first mentioned in 1984 bulletins. Those working in the ministry were James Box, Irvin McKinnon, Jim Williamson, and Ron Chitwood. On April 12, 1987 Luke Curtis and Freddie Anderson of the Huntsville prison ministry spoke at Prestoncrest and showed a film about the ministry. The Walls Unit ministry has continued to the present and Freddie Anderson has remained a frequent and popular speaker at Prestoncrest.

S E N I O R A D U L T M I N I S T R Y

The needs of the congregation’s older adults were recognized on September 23, 1984 with a noon meal provided by the younger singles for “those 55 and above.” George Bailey spoke on the topic: “Older People Can Dream Dreams Too.” This luncheon was the launch of the “39ers,” later called the “Young at Heart.”

M I S S I O N S

Missions have been important for Prestoncrest throughout its history and the 1980’s brought

a number of missionaries to us. Prestoncrest sponsored Valeriano Lanaspá from 1985 to 1987. His work among Spanish-speaking residents of Geneva, Switzerland continued for many years thereafter and he died in January 2011¹⁰. Lloyd and Gail Mansfield's ministry in Cambridge, England came under the direction of Prestoncrest in 1985. The Mansfields later moved their work to Germany where other congregations sponsored them. David and Mary Schallert went to Mannheim, Germany in 1987. They later returned to the United States to place their children in American schools and are still actively involved in ministry in Michigan.

Three very special and longstanding relationships began during these years with Dino and Debbie Roussos, Hilton and Wanda Terry, and Mitchell and Isobel Vick.

D I N O & D E B B I E

Dino and Debbie Roussos were introduced to Prestoncrest on April 12, 1981 when Dino preached for the first of many times. Dino, a second-generation Greek Christian, was then completing his Master's Degree at Abilene Christian University. He had met his American wife Debbie during his studies at ACU. They would go on to become Prestoncrest's longest serving missionaries.

The Roussos settled in Athens, Greece, a focal point, geographically and socially, between Europe, Africa, and Asia.

Their first plant, the Omonia Church of Christ, recognizes the diversity of the area with services in Greek, Russian, English, and Bulgarian. Dino has also planted a church in the Glyfada area of Athens.

Dino has extended his ministry by preaching in nearby nations including Albania. He was instrumental in starting Harding University's program in Greece that allows Harding

¹⁰ "Doyle and Barbara Kee: *Mission en Francophonie*, January, 2011.

students to study Bible, archaeology, and history while traveling in Greece, Egypt, Turkey, and Israel.

Dino is a frequent speaker at Eastern European Missions Dinners and at Christian university lectureships. His infectious and friendly personality has contributed greatly to the success of missions in his region of the world.

Longtime missions elder George Miller said of the Roussos: “They have done an incredible work planting a number of churches in Athens. Dino is all over Eastern Europe now as well as coming back to the US.”

Dino writes of his partnership with Prestoncrest: “I thank God for the Prestoncrest Church of Christ, the elders, the mission ministry, and each one of the members who are supporting us...Thousands around the world have come to know Jesus as savior through the mission work of the Prestoncrest Church of Christ.”

Dino and Debbie are frequent visitors at Prestoncrest where they have many friends and Dino is a popular speaker. They have three children:

Melody graduated from Abilene Christian University with a BA in Art. She is married to Andy Feekes, a veteran of the United States Air Force and now a firefighter in Greenville, Texas. Melody works as a web designer for Sprint Nextel. Melody and Andy live in Frisco, Texas and have two children: Jackson, now seven and Zoe, now five. They are active members of the Farmers Branch Church of Christ.

Nikki graduated from Harding University with a BA and an MA in education. Nikki is married to Matt Galley, a fellow Harding graduate (BA in Youth Ministry). They live in Athens, Greece where Matt works with Hellenic Ministries, an organization for refugees and youth camps. They work with the Glyfada Church of Christ where Matt often preaches. They have two children: Ashtyn, now four and Eden, now two.

Stephen graduated from Abilene Christian University and is now a PhD candidate in biology at Texas Tech University.

H I L T O N & W A N D A



Photo from Prestoncrest files.

Hilton and Wanda Terry joined the Prestoncrest mission ministry on November 11, 1982. Hilton and Wanda were fluent in French and had worked for many years in the French-speaking world. When Prestoncrest's oversight began, they were working in Geneva, Switzerland alongside another veteran French-speaking missionary, Doyle Kee. Doyle Kee continued as a frequent fellow-worker of theirs as they traveled to numerous French-speaking areas, especially in Africa. They also worked in non-French-speaking nations such as Scotland and Romania. The Prestoncrest bulletin identifies 22 different destinations¹¹ on four continents for the Terrys between 1982 and 1989. The Prestoncrest elders purchased a map of the world just to keep up with the travels of the Terrys!

Between trips, Hilton served at Prestoncrest where his activities included local evangelism and teaching adult Bible classes. Hilton was active for many years in the World Bible School ministry and corresponded with persons from all over the world. After Hilton and Wanda's last (recorded) trip in 1998, Hilton became "Missionary in Residence" at Prestoncrest. He served Prestoncrest until his death on November 16, 2003. He was 78 years old. Wanda died on January 30, 2008.

Prestoncrest loved the Terrys for their quiet spirit of service.

George and Carolyn Miller expressed their own respect and affection for the Terrys:

¹¹ Tahiti (1983); Geneva, Switzerland (1984); France and the Ivory Coast of Africa (1986); Rwanda (1986); India, Abidjan (Ivory Coast), Rwanda, Nairobi, Kenya, Mannheim, Germany, and Tanzania (1989); Bucharest, Romania, French-speaking areas of Canada, and Mauritius (1991); Brasov, Romania (1992, 1993, and 1994); Tanzania (1994 and 1995); "Several French-speaking areas of Africa," and Ukraine (1995); Benin (1996); Geneva, Switzerland (1996 and 1998); Belize, and Lithuania (1997); and Paris, France (1998).

George: “(Hilton and Wanda) were the great missionaries. They loved the Lord so much. That’s all they ever wanted to do. They had a passion for the French-speaking people. The people respected them because of their understanding of the culture. They made trips together until Wanda could no longer go, then Hilton and Doyle would go.”

(Speaking of the Terrys’ very simple lifestyle): “You would have to encourage them to take a little extra money. Frugal would be the appropriate word. Even when they were back here, they were frugal and would help support missionaries.”

Carolyn remembered talking with Wanda the day after she returned from a trip with Hilton: “[Wanda] teared up and said ‘I got on the plane to come home and I was going the wrong direction. I needed to stay there. It was such a wonderful work.’”

In 2004, Barry Baggott and Doyle Kee began the Hilton Terry School of Preaching in Kinshasa¹², Democratic Republic of the Congo in memory of Hilton. It trains local men (in French) as vocational missionaries. The three teachers at the school, Andre Kabeya, Gabriel Ngwanza, and Willy Mputu, are supported and directed by Prestoncrest.

M I T C H E L L A N D I S O B E L

Mitchell Vick was newly graduated from Abilene Christian University in 1975 when he went with a team to Edinburgh, Scotland for a summer of mission work. His summer’s work soon turned into his life’s work and Scotland became his home.

Isobel Vick was born in Falkirk, Scotland to a family already six generations deep in the Scottish Restoration Movement. She moved with her family to Edinburgh where she finished high school and qualified as a radiology technician. When Mitchell was asked by the Sight-hill Church of Christ to remain in Edinburgh, Isobel was there. They married a year later.

¹² Kinshasa, little known to Americans, is home to almost nine million people and is the 16th most populous city in the world. New York City, with something over eight million people is 20th.

The Vicks have three children. All are graduates of Harding University. Robin Vick is now part of a mission team based in Falkirk, Scotland. Hannah and Laura are twins. Hannah is single and living in Scotland. Laura is married to Clay Daugherty and they live in the Dallas area with their daughter Erin Rachel, born in 2011.

The Vicks began their relationship with Prestoncrest in 1986. During a fund-raising trip to the United States that year, Mitchell met George Bailey and was introduced to Gary Brantley and D.G. Wilks of the Prestoncrest Missions Committee. Prestoncrest began its oversight of their work in January 1987. They moved to Stirling, Scotland in 1990 and have worked with the Stirling Church of Christ ever since.

The church that Mitchell found in Scotland and that Isobel grew up in had been strong in the early 20th century with 75 congregations, some with as many as 200 members. The Great Depression, along with other economic reversals in the area had forced many members to immigrate to Canada, the United States, and Australia. By 1950, there were only 20 remaining congregations, and by the summer of 1975 these congregations were struggling and threatened with extinction. Because of the Vicks and others, there are now 26 active and growing Churches of Christ in Scotland.

These churches thrive in the face of the western secular thinking that grips Western Europe, promoted by such writers as Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens. Mitchell has found it rewarding to see “changed lives over and over again as people come into contact with the gospel.”

The Vicks are very appreciative of the role of Prestoncrest in their work over the years. Mitchell affirmed: “There are many people in many places who are Christian today because of Prestoncrest.”

F E L L O W S H I P

David Peeler, Jr., Leron Blanks, and Phil Savage were the “fellowship deacons” of the 1980’s

and planned many activities for the growing congregation.

An ice cream supper on June 13, 1982 was one of many ice cream events over the years. Members were asked to bring freezers full of ice cream or to bring cookies or cakes. Ice cream suppers disappeared in later years, along with the home freezers that supplied the ice cream.

Other all-congregation events included “food, hayride, fun, and fellowship” at the farm of Jerry and Shirley Hosek on November 3, 1984 and a picnic at Fretz Park on January 26, 1985. On May 10, 1985, there was a “catfish fry” at the building. January 24, 1986 was “Family Film Night” in the Fellowship Hall: “popcorn and drinks provided.” An “All Prestoncrest Chili Supper” on February 12, 1986 featured “Special Attraction: Freddy and Gerbert on stage.” On July 2, 1986, a Fellowship Dinner with hot dogs and ice cream was followed by a presentation by “Acappella,” a singing group from Paris, Tennessee.¹³

B L O O D D R I V E S

Over the years, Prestoncrest members have been generous with their blood as well as with their time and money. With the opening of phase III in 1984, blood drives became a regular event at the church building. Modern technology was apparent at a recent Sunday morning blood drive. Donors received text messages when it was time to leave the service and bare their arms in the fellowship hall.

Deacons in charge of the blood drive over the years have been the author, followed by Martin Hearne and now by Hal Magee.

T H E F I R S T I N T E R I M

Mike Peters’ resignation on November 1, 1987 began a nine-month interim. John Bannister, formerly the long-time pulpit minister at the Skillman Avenue Church of Christ, preached

¹³ The “Acappella” group made a number of later appearances at Prestoncrest as well.

on many Sundays. George Tipps, Hardeman Nichols, Hilton Terry, Bill Banowsky, Freddie Anderson, Harold Taylor, Ron Carlson and others also filled in.

The year 1998 closed one significant era and began another, with the employment of Prentice Meador, Jr. as pulpit minister on April 10, 1988. Prentice filled the pulpit from time to time over the succeeding few months while commuting between Springfield, Missouri (his previous home) and Dallas. He began his full-time service at Prestoncrest on August 7, 1988. He would serve Prestoncrest for 19 years.

GROUND BREAKING FOR PHASE I

Ground was broken for phase I on a very cold day in early 1973. George Bailey was out of town and very disappointed that he was unable to participate.



Left to right: Harold Duncan, David Vanderpool, Ralph Immel, Don Crisp, Bob Scott, Bill Wilson, Todd Miller, Bill Wharton, Bob Wooldridge.



Far left: David Strickland
Foreground with striped toboggan:
Lane Wooldridge
Girl with shovel: Lisa Dillman



Ralph Immel
with shovel.
Charles Wooldridge
on the left with other
Skillman elders.

Aerial Photograph of the church building, with the "yellow house" still in the parking lot.

1979 aerial photograph. Dark outline shows Prestoncrest. The buildings shown are phases I and II and the "yellow house."

The property is in its current rectangular shape. The star notes the future site of Preston Place.

The alley shown in the center of the Preston Place property was closed when the office building was built.



EARLY PRESTONCREST AT PLAY



FOOTBALL GAME

Harold Duncan, Ela Beth Bailey
(with football), & Bill Buckley, Sr.

Photograph furnished by Bill & Kay Buckley.



ALL DRESSED UP

George & Ela Beth Bailey

Photograph furnished by Bob McAfee. Original source not known.



ENJOYING A MEAL

Harold Duncan & Bill Wilson with
George Bailey at far right.

Photograph from Prestoncrest files.



MIKE PETERS & JIM TUGGLE

Jim & Betty Tuggle were active members at
Prestoncrest. Jim often led singing. He is a
dentist in Dallas. Betty is now deceased.

Photograph furnished by Bob McAfee. Original source not known.

THE CHURCH BUILDING

Photographs on this page furnished by Bob McAfee. Original source not known.



PHASE 2 ADDED TO PHASE 1
Taken from the SW corner of the property looking NE. Grassy area in the foreground is now occupied by Phase 3 and parking.



Leon Loveless speaking at the south entrance to Phase 2, most likely on "Million Dollar Sunday," May 31, 1981. The doorway and steps were incorporated into Phase 3 and now form the south entrance to the nursery area from the foyer (opposite the north entrance to the Fellowship Hall).

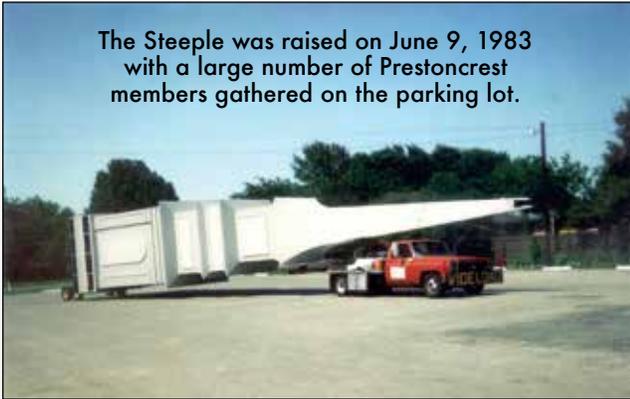


FRAMEWORK FOR PHASE 3 TAKING SHAPE
Phases 1 and 2 are in the background.



READY FOR THE STEEPLE

The Steeple was raised on June 9, 1983
with a large number of Prestoncrest
members gathered on the parking lot.



THE STEEPLE ARRIVES



Prestoncrest member Earnest Smith in the foreground.



OFF THE GROUND!



HIGHER...



ALMOST...



SAFELY ON TOP!

20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION:

August 16, 1992



Photograph below shows numerous changes to baptistry and pulpit area resulting from the 2008 remodeling.

Photograph by the author August 30, 2012.



A SPECIAL CHORUS FOR THE EVENT

The photo above shows the special chorus Betty Tuggle assembled for the event. Betty is shown leading the singers. With the good help of Todd and Suzanne Miller, a number of the singers are identified as...

Back row, left to right: Brad Jackson, Jon Sluder (now deceased), Jim Tuggle, unidentified, Len Reeves, John Pauley.

Far right at top: Phil Jackson. To his right are Dunlap Boren and Patt McGee (both now deceased).

Below Phil Jackson: Randy Tucker. Far left: Marka Bennett with Carol DeArman second person to her left.

Far right, front row: Carol Pauley.

Photograph furnished by Bob McAfee. Original source not known.

20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

all photos this page furnished by George and Carolyn Miller



Mike & Anita Peters, Angie & Amy Peters
Mike served as
Pulpit Minister from 1981-1987



Prestoncrest elder
R.T. Tyler with Mike Peters

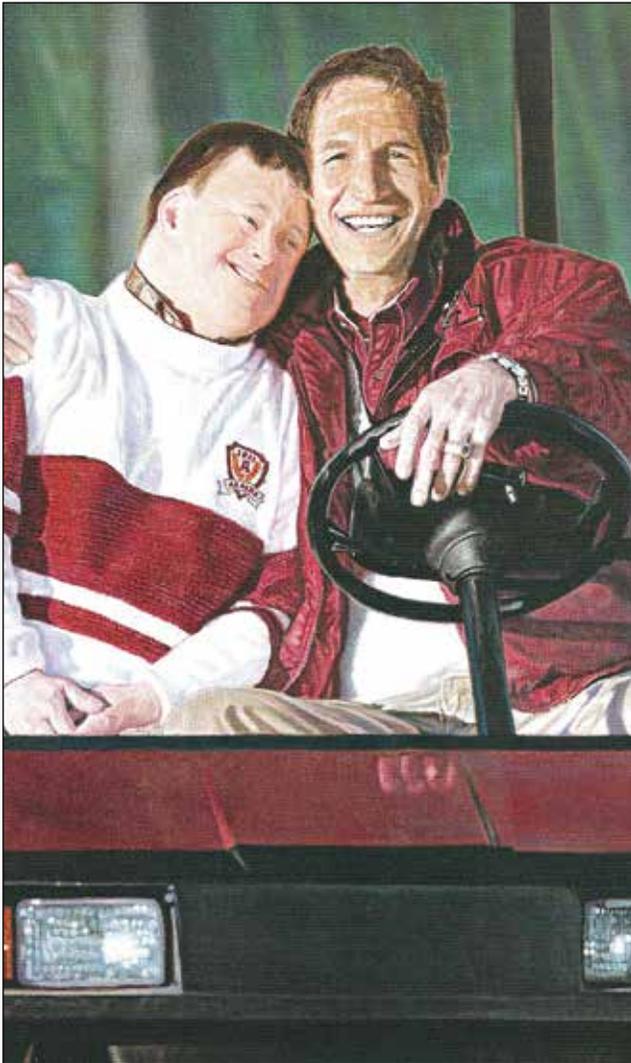


Charter Members John Paul & Pat Scott
John Paul Scott is now deceased. There were 2 ladies
named Pat Scott in the early days of Prestoncrest. They
remain good friends. They would often distinguish
themselves by adding "Jr." or "Sr." to their names.



Charter Members
Ron Chitwood & Harold Lackey

CELEBRITIES AT PRESTONCREST



"BAMA'S GREATEST FAN"
Johnny Stallings and Gene Stallings

Painting by Steve Skipper • Photo provided by Gene & Ruth Ann Stallings



BYRON & PEGGY NELSON
visit Searcher's Class
Interviewed by Dr. Prentice Meador

photo furnished by Barbara Cooper



**Searcher's Class had a large turnout for
the guest appearance by the Nelsons**

photo furnished by Barbara Cooper

ACU OPENING CHAPEL 2002

Photographs by Bob McAfee



DR. PRENTICE MEADOR SPEAKS AT OPENING CHAPEL AT ACU, SEPTEMBER 2002

Prestoncrest elders with Prentice at ACU's Opening Chapel

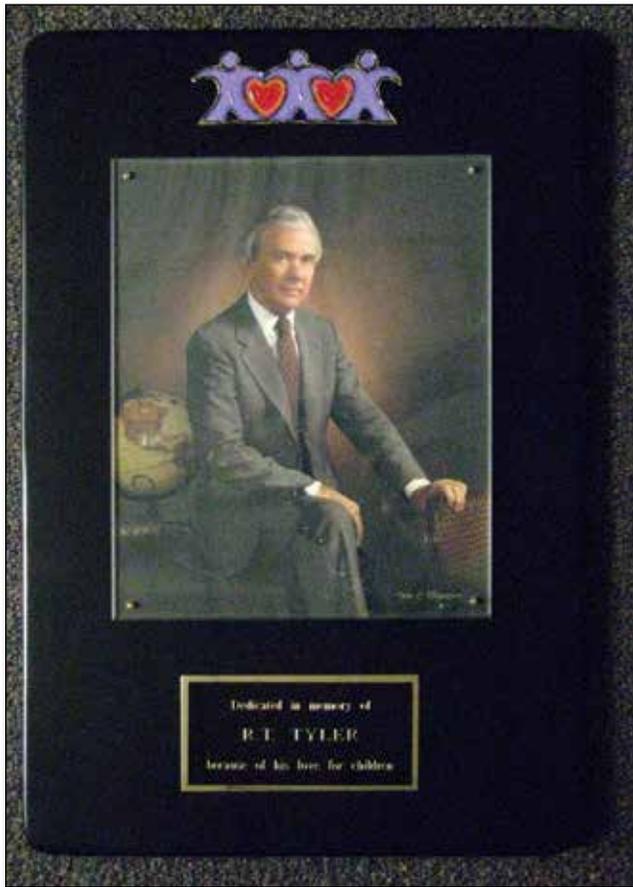
Left to right: Dr. David Sowell, Charles Johnston, Bill Buckley, Sr., Jeff Clevenger, Dr. Prentice Meador, George Miller, Fred White, Jim Burrow, Dr. Gary Brantley, D.G. Wilks



PRESTONCREST ELDERS WITH MISSIONARIES DEBBIE & DINO ROUSSOS (center)

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Photographs on this page are by the author



PRESTONCREST HONORS R.T. TYLER
with a plaque in the Children's Wing

Wording on plaque reads:

Dedicated in memory of

R.T. TYLER

because of his love for children

THE TIMOTHY HILL KITCHEN

Prestoncrest responded to the tragedy of September 11, 2001 with a generous special offering. Much of the offering went to the Timothy Hill Children's Ranch, a home for boys that serves the New York City area. Timothy Hill furnished a kitchen with the funds.

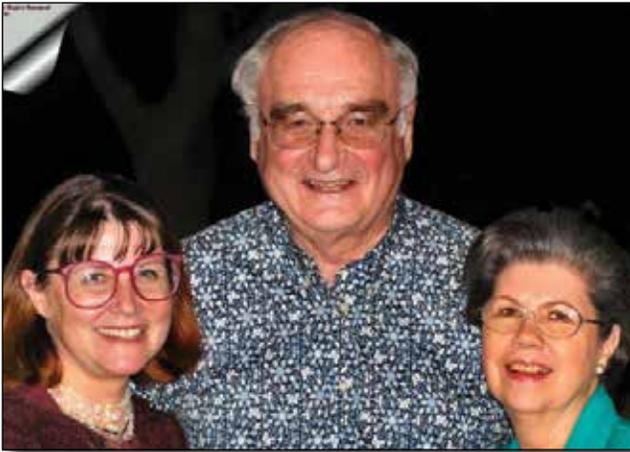


THE KITCHEN PRESTONCREST FURNISHED



PLAQUE RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTION

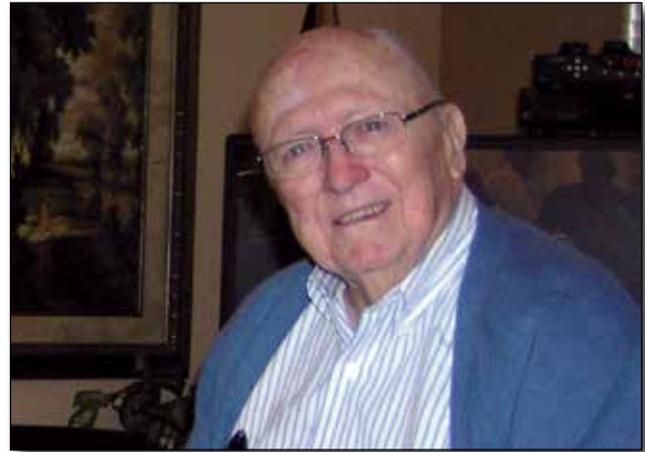
ELDERS, MINISTERS, & MEMBERS



LISA, DAVID, & ANN MALONE

Dave served as Prestoncrest's
Associate Minister from 1993-2001

Photograph by George Galdiano



FRED WHITE

Fred served as elder from 1983
until he passed away in 2011

Photograph by Charles Johnston



DR. GARY & LINDA BRANTLEY

Gary has served as an elder since December 1988

Photograph by Bob McAfee



DAVID PEELER, SR.

David served as elder from 1977 to 1989
He passed away in 2009

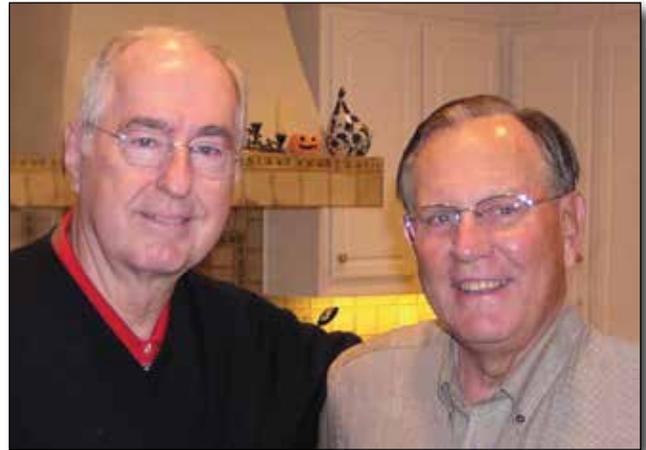
Photograph by Bob McAfee

ELDERS, MINISTERS, & MEMBERS



**MARV NORTH, BILLY TRAMMELL,
AND DAVID PEELER, SR.**

Photograph by Bob McAfee



TODD MILLER AND MARTIN HEARNE

Todd has served as an elder since 1983
& Martin served as a deacon from 1983
until he and Nancy moved in 2011

Photograph by Charles Johnston



FRED WHITE AND BILL MOODY

Bill served as a Prestoncrest
Minister from 1986 - 2009

Photograph from Prestoncrest church files, from the White's 50th Anniversary Celebration in 2007



ROBERT STOLTE & SON SPENCER

Robert has served as a minister since 2005
Shown here in costume from their performance
in the Passion Play at Glen Rose in 2007

Photograph by Bob McAfee

ELDERS, MINISTERS, & MEMBERS



MICHAEL (MIKE) COLLODI, JR.

Playing broomball with his Bible class. Mike served as the Communications Minister from 2007-2013

Photograph by George Galdiano



**BILL BUCKLEY, SR., BOBBY ORR,
DR. DAVID SOWELL, JEFF CLEVINGER**

Photograph by Charles Johnston



MATT & KRISTEN MAZZA

Matt served as a minister from 1998-2010
Kristen served as a co-director at
Sunshine School from 2001-2007

Photograph by the author



THE MEADOR FAMILY

Top: Scott Richardson, Dr. Prentice Meador, Doug Conder, Mark Meador
2nd Row: Lori Ann Richardson, Barbara Meador, Kimberly Conder, Shelli Meador
3rd Row: Chase Meador, Palmer Richardson, Hayden Richardson, Baker Richardson, Cole Meador
Bottom Row: Madison Meador, Hampton Conder, Sifton Richardson, Carson Meador, Rees Conder

Photograph furnished by Barbara Meador

ELDERS, MINISTERS, & MEMBERS



ELDERS: Jeff Clevenger, Charles Johnston, David Sowell, George Miller, Todd Miller, & Bill Buckley. Painting given to Prestoncrest by the Antigua, Guatemala Church of Christ. The entrance to the Antigua church is to the left of the painting with the Fuego ("fire") volcano in the background.

Photograph by Don Clevenger for the author



JOYCE TYLER

Widow of long time elder, R.T. Tyler. Shown here with friend and Prestoncrest member, Brenda Trammell.

Photograph by Bob McAfee.



LERON BLANKS

Leron has served two terms as elder:
1988-2003 and 2010-present.

Photograph by Bob McAfee



MARK & SUSAN WALLIS, KATY & AMY

Daughters are now Katy Byrne, Amy Wiley
Mark served as an elder from 1995-2001

Photograph furnished by Bill and Pat Wallis

ELDERS, MINISTERS, & MEMBERS



THERESA SIMPSON

Known, affectionately, by everyone at
Prestoncrest as "Big Mama"

Photograph by Bob McAfee



LINDA & DON BARNETT

Leaders in Personal Evangelism including work
with the "Navy Seals" and Bible 101.

Photograph by Bob McAfee



SANTA & MRS. CLAUS

Richard & Mary Meggs with Prestoncrest children.

Photograph by Bob McAfee



**PHIL JACKSON, TODD MILLER,
& GARY WITHERSPOON**

Phil and Todd currently serve as elders.

Photograph by Charles Johnston.

ELDERS, MINISTERS, & MEMBERS



ELDERS & WIVES ENJOYING FELLOWSHIP

L-R: George Miller, *Bill Buckley, Sr., Dottie White,
Carolyn Miller, Kay Buckley, and *Fred White

Photograph by Charles Johnston

*elders now deceased



FELLOWSHIP LUNCH

L-R: Bill Moody (minister), with elders & wives D.G. Wilks,
Dr. David Sowell, Louella Wilks, Claudia Sowell

Photograph by Charles Johnston



A TOAST TO FELLOWSHIP

Suzanne Miller is enjoying lunch with ministers,
members, elders, and other elders' wives.

Photograph by Charles Johnston



KEN POLK AND JIM BARRETT

Ken currently serves as elder, and
Jim served from 1995-2002.

Photograph by Charles Johnston.

GUATEMALA MISSION



PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

The churches of Antigua, Chimaltenango, and Solola, Guatemala have gathered to worship and hear a sermon from Prentice Meador.

Photograph from the author's collection. Original source unknown.



SIMEON, MARIBEL, & TROYCE SAPON

Simeon is the minister of the Chimaltenango Church of Christ. He and his congregation work with the Prestoncrest team during the annual medical mission to Guatemala. Pictured with Barbara & Prentice Meador.

Photograph by the author



DR. MICHELLE SCOTT TUCKER & PAT SCOTT

Michelle's pediatric clinic serves hundreds of Guatemalan children during the annual medical mission trip. She is assisted by her mother Pat and a number of other members of the team.

Photograph by the author

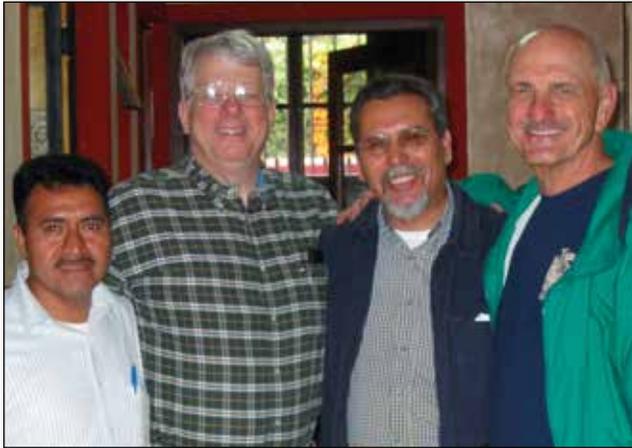


MIRIAM & ADAN BENAVENTE

Adan is the minister of the Solola Church of Christ. He and his congregation work with the annual medical mission to Guatemala.

Photograph by the author

GUATEMALA MISSION



**ALEXANDRO MARIN, DR. DAVID SOWELL,
DR. RAUL DURAN, DR. PRENTICE MEADOR**

Alexandro & Dr. Raul provide medical services to Guatemalans throughout the year at their clinics. They are active members in the Antigua church.

Photograph by the author



**DALILA DURAN, MAURA COS, &
ALEJANDRO MARIN**

Crossing Lake Atitlan for a day of medical missions. Dalila (Mrs. Raul Duran) and Maura also work in the medical clinics with Alexandro and Dr. Raul.

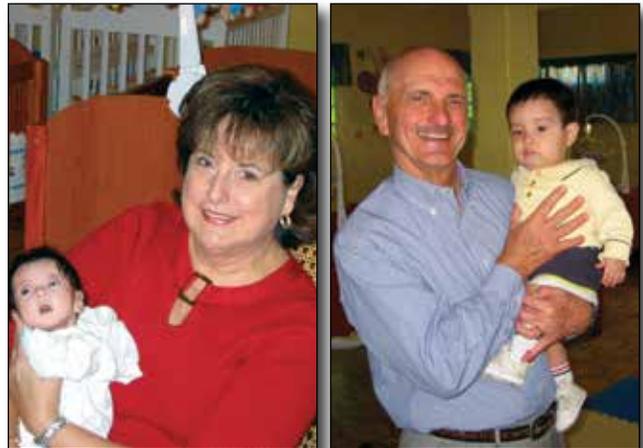
Photograph by the author



DR. PRENTICE MEADOR

Prentice in Antigua, Guatemala next to the flyer in Spanish for his upcoming lesson on family relations.

Photograph by the author



VISITING AN ORPHANAGE

With her training as an RN, and as grandparents of 10, Prentice and Barbara's time and work in Guatemala was very useful as well as enjoyable.

Photograph by the author

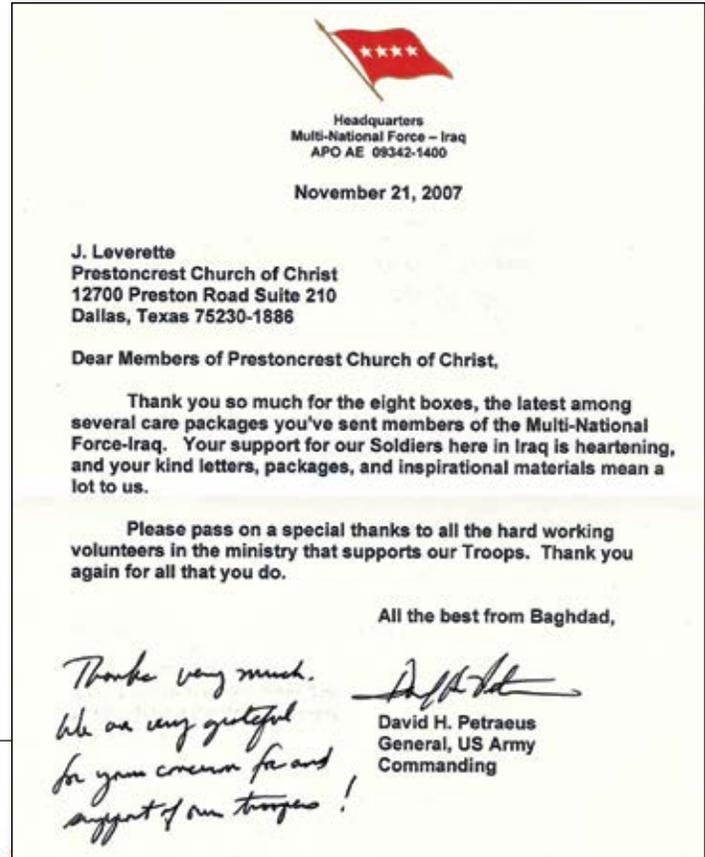
SOLDIER CARE



**ANNIE PATTERSON &
DAUGHTER, LUCY**

When Annie's husband, Jason, was deployed, Prestoncrest members were inspired to begin the Soldier Care ministry.

Photograph by George Galdiano



APPRECIATION LETTERS AND CERTIFICATES

Since it began, Prestoncrest has received many letters from soldiers, chaplains, and officers. Boxes are sent every month, and will be, until all our soldiers are brought home from the many combat zones in the Middle East.

MORE MISSIONS & OUTREACH



MISSION WORK IN SANTIAGO, CHILE
Jamie Liebl (deacon), Kelley Grant,
Dr. Gary Brantley (elder), & Will Herring (minister).
Kelley & his wife, Julie, worked 11 years in Chile.

Photograph by George Galdiano



FRIENDSPEAK READERS
Friendspeak teacher Claudia Sowell is
shown here with readers Hyeonwoo and
Hyunjin Kim from Seoul, Korea.

Photograph by the author.



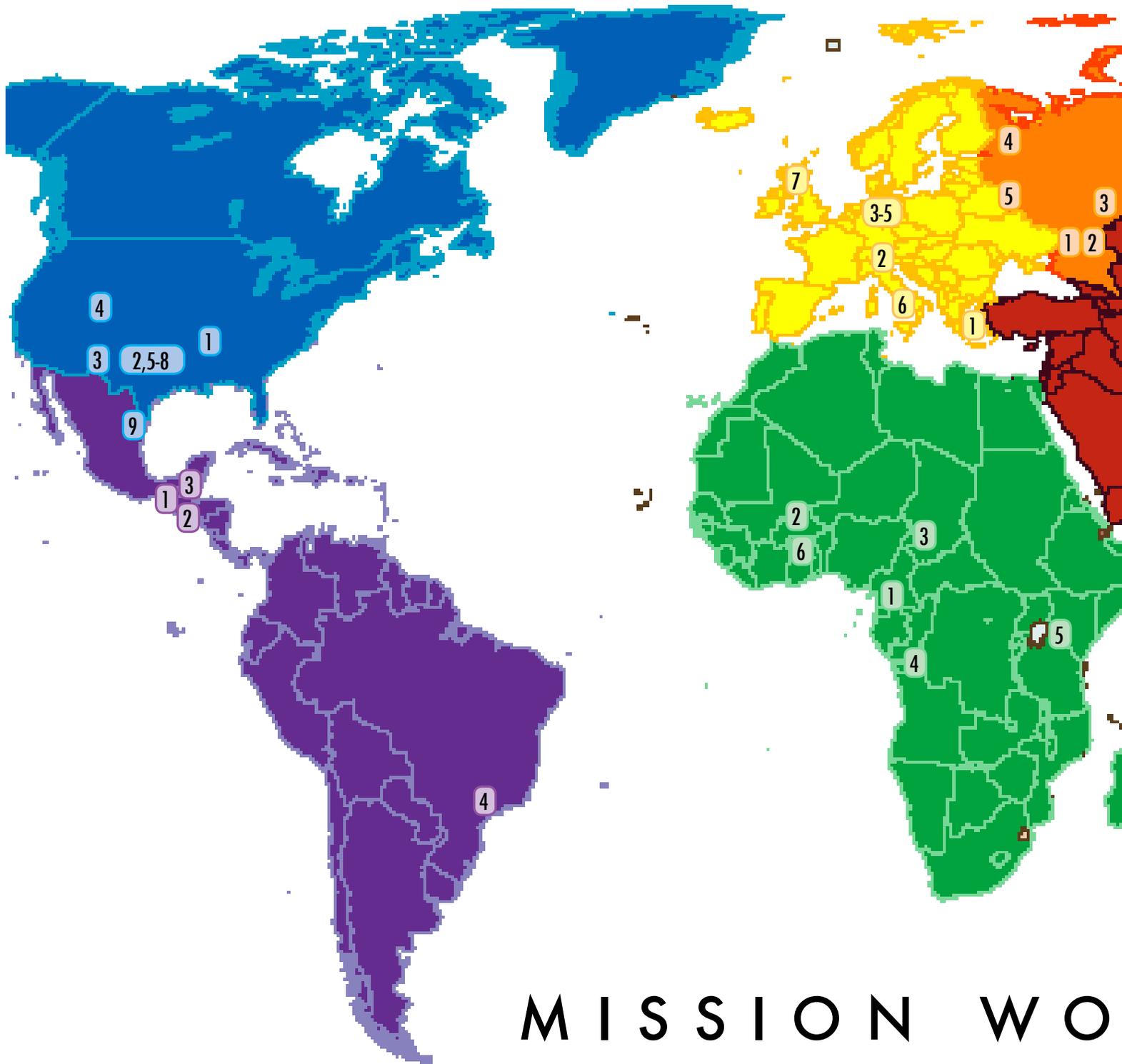
GHANA, WEST AFRICA
L-R: Ashley Ballard, Dr. Tommy & Melinda
Ballard, Dr. Gary Brantley, & Bob Chisholm

Photograph by Charles Johnston.

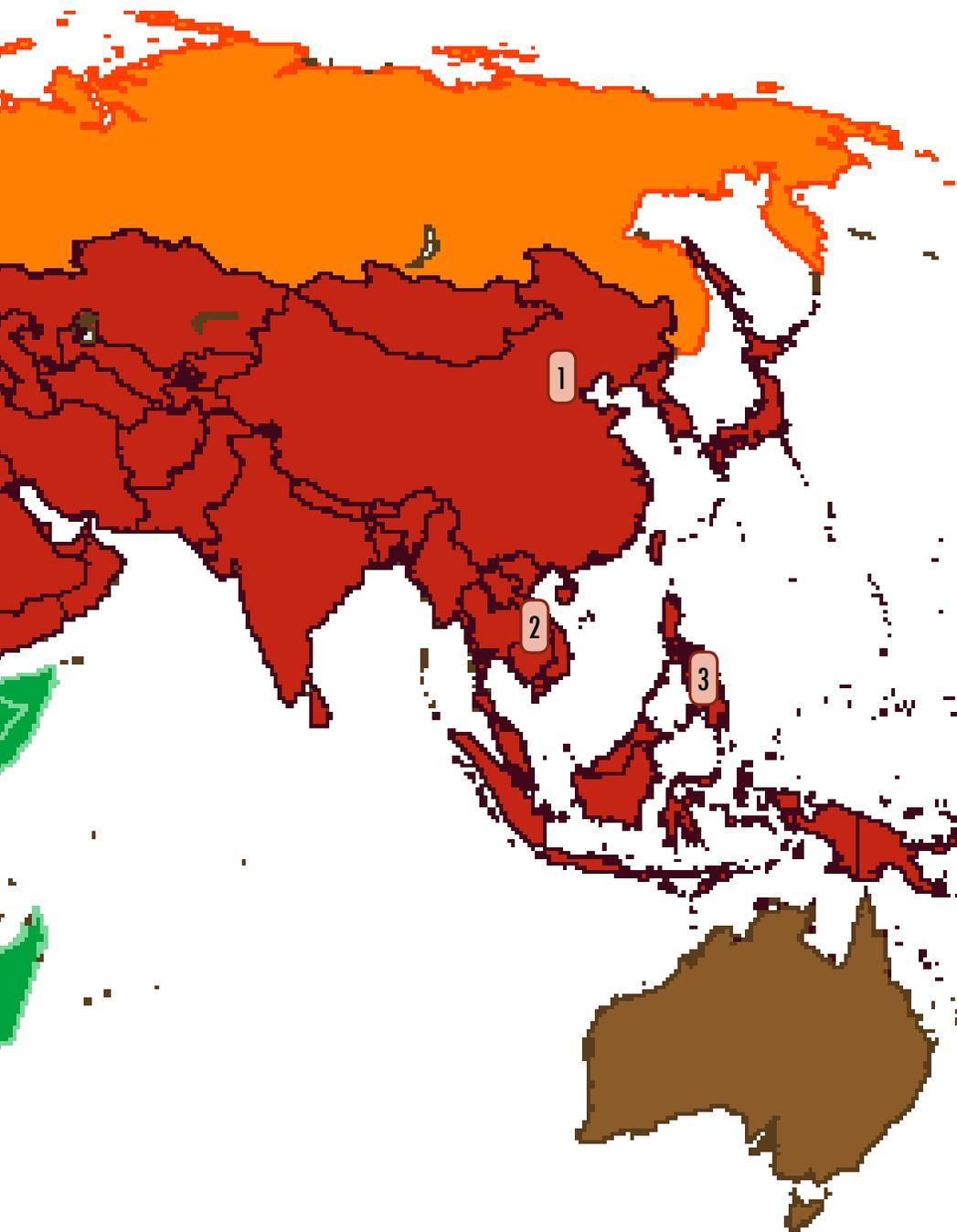


FRIENDSPEAK
Biviana (Marin) McAfee (center) and her mother Martha
Neuenschwander (far right), both from Colombia, were
among the very first FriendSpeak Readers. They are now
Prestoncrest members. Pictured with (L-R): Claudia Sowell,
Denece Powell, Patt McGee (now deceased), & Carolyn Miller.

Photograph by the author.



MISSION WO



DOMESTIC ACTIVITIES

1. Langston Braille Ministry
2. Leon Cedar Hill, Texas
3. Lawless Red River, New Mexico
4. Johnson Summit County, Colorado
5. EEM Based in Dallas, Texas
6. Hungarian camps Based in Dallas, Texas
7. Guatemala Annual Medical Mission Trip
8. Ghana Outreach & Orphanage
9. Calderon Arcelia, Mexico

CENTRAL & SOUTH AMERICA

1. Duran Antigua, Guatemala
2. Sapon Chimaltenango, Guatemala
3. Benavente Solola, Guatemala
4. Heiderich Itu, Brazil

EUROPE

1. Roussos Athens, Greece
2. Jackson Europe
3. Springer Bremen, Germany
4. Mannheim Church Mannheim, Germany
5. Antwine Germany/HIM
6. Moore Italy
7. Vick Sterling, Scotland

ASIA PACIFIC

1. Hills Beijing, China
2. McDonough Partners in Progress
3. Murrell Cebu City, Philippines

RUSSIA & EASTERN EUROPE

1. Andriasov Rostov, Russia
2. Emch Rostov, Russia
3. Lashchenov Volgograd, Russia
4. Neva Congregation St. Petersburg, Russia
5. Landreth Character for Kids

AFRICA

1. Kee French Ministry
2. Kessie Burkina Faso
3. Djonga Moundou, Chad
4. H. Terry School Kinshasa, Congo
5. Coulston Made In The Streets, Kenya
6. Northern Area Ghana

AS OF MAY 2013

R K S U P P O R T E D :

MISSIONARY SUPPORT

The Lord has blessed Prestoncrest by leading us to and allowing us to work with many, many great mission families and their congregations.

It is our prayer that many will get to know Jesus through these efforts.



**Bill & Marie-Claire
McDonough**



**Barry & Shari
Murrell**



**Andrew & Jaime
Hill**



**Artash
Andriasov**



**Paul
Lashchenov**



**Eileen
Emch**



**Charles & Linda
Landreth**



**Neva
Congregation**



**Mannheim
Church**



**Elsa
Springer**



**Mitchell & Isobel
Vick**



***Charles & Carolyn
Moore**



**Clyde & Gwen
Antwine**



**Phil & Rebecca
Jackson**



**Dino & Debbie
Roussos**



**Doyle & Barbara
Kee**



**Djonga
Feltoing**



**John
Kessie**

*Charles Moore passed away November 17, 2013.



**Charles & Darlene
Coulston**



**Paul & Maria
Dokorugu**



**Yabdow & Wassila
Alhassan**



**Fusheini & Elizabeth
Musah**



**Andrews Alhassan &
Ayashei Abdulai**



**Andre
Kabeya**



**Gabriel
Ngwanza**



**Niipaak & Victoria
Laar**



**James & Esther
Taphamba**



**David Tadili &
Gifty Wumbei**



**Willy
Mputu**



**Simeon & Maribel
Sapon**



**Dr. Raul & Dalila
Duran**



**Jerry & Gail
Heiderich**



**Adan & Miriam
Benavente**



**Augustine (& Teresa)
Calderon**



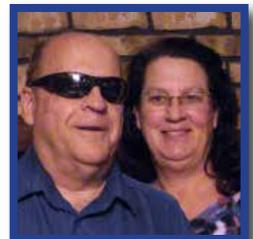
**Javier & Karla
Leon**



**Stan & Jessica
Johnson**



**Jerry & Lea
Lawlis**



**Glynn & Ann
Langston**

HONORING THE MEADORS

In 2003, Prentice & Barbara Meador were honored for 15 years at Prestoncrest and 50 years of ministry with a special surprise event at Prestoncrest.

Upon Prentice's retirement in 2007, they were also honored with a special retirement dinner at Southfork Ranch. Our church enjoyed a dinner and a night of fun memories and a good "roasting" to honor them before they moved to Nashville, Tennessee.

Prentice served as Prestoncrest's preaching minister from 1988-2007. He passed away in 2008 – just one year after leaving Prestoncrest.

Barbara still lives in Nashville near friends and family members.

All photographs on this page, and the following 2 pages, are by Stacey Collodi



ELDERS HONORING THE MEADORS
(L-R) Jeff Clevenger, Jim Burrow, Prentice & Barbara, Charles Johnston, Todd Miller, Gary Brantley, David Sowell, and George Miller.



A NICE SURPRISE FOR THE MEADORS
They were surprised with appearances by a number of their children and grandchildren that were able to come to this special event.



SPECIAL FRIENDS JOINED US
Bob Chisholm (L) and Prentice visiting with long-time friends, Royce Money & Howard Norton (R), who were part of the special event.

HONORING THE MEADORS



RETIRING, TEXAS STYLE

Associate Minister Matt Mazza MC'd the event and presented Barbara and Prentice with a few mementos to help them remember their years in Texas.



BOB CHISHOLM

Many ministers, elders, and friends told stories and memories (as well as "roasted") Barbara and Prentice at their retirement party at Southfork Ranch.



SOUTHFORK RANCH

The venue of Southfork Ranch seemed a fitting way to say farewell to the Meadors after their 19 years in Texas before they returned to Tennessee



CHURCH MEMBERS & FRIENDS

A host of friends, church members, and family turned out for this memorable event. Everyone was encouraged to wear their favorite western attire!

HONORING THE MEADORS



ANNOUNCING HIS RETIREMENT

Prentice and Barbara are surrounded by the Elders and Staff on stage as he announces his retirement.



SUPPORTING THE MEADORS

Elders, staff, ministers, and the congregation pray over the announcement of Prentice's retirement.



FINAL SERMON AT PRESTONCREST

Prentice's final sermon was preached to a full house at Prestoncrest.



A FINAL PRAYER

Elders and church members stand, hand in hand, and pray a final blessing for the Meadors and for Prestoncrest.

HONORING THE BAILEYS

AN EVENING FOR GEORGE & ELA BETH

George & Ela Beth Bailey were honored at a special service followed by a reception on Sunday night January 16, 2011. They were being honored before they moved to Houston to be closer to their family.

They had been faithful members at Prestoncrest even after George retired as minister in 1987.

George served as Prestoncrest's first full-time preacher from 1972-1987. He also served as an elder from 1973-1988.

Ela Beth passed away April 22, 2011. George currently lives in Houston.

All photographs in this section are by Bob McAfee.



GEORGE BAILEY

Sharing some words and memories at the special service.



ELA BETH BAILEY

Enjoying some kind words at the special service.



BILL BUCKLEY, SR. & BOB WOOLDRIDGE

Bill Buckley, Sr. and Bob Wooldridge were both among the elders who served during George's ministry. Both are now deceased.

THE BAILEY'S RECEPTION



PAST & PRESENT ELDERS

The Baileys with past & present Prestoncrest elders.
Left to Right: Bill Buckley, Sr., Don Witt, David Sowell, Todd Miller, Bob Wooldridge,
David Howard, Leron Blanks, Charles Johnston, Gary Brantley, Tommy Ballard,
George Miller, Ken Polk, DG Wilks, Jim Barrett, Bryan Pruitt, Jeff Clevenger, & Phil Jackson.



THE FOWLERS

Charter members Hulin and Ann Fowler enjoyed time visiting with George and Ela Beth.



BRIAN SHIU WITH ELA BETH

Brian and his family were charter members at Prestoncrest.



ALICE STRICKLAND

The Baileys with Alice Strickland, one of Prestoncrest's charter members.

THE BAILEY'S RECEPTION



THE MILLERS

Stephanie and Matthew Miller and daughters Andie and Mattie Grace with the Baileys. Matthew was the first baby born at Prestoncrest.



THE CRISPS

Charter members Carol & Don Crisp with the Baileys



THE McAFEES

The Baileys with Bob & Amy McAfee and their daughter Susan Wyatt, son-in-law Scott Wyatt, and grandchildren Tim Wyatt (between his parents) and Ben Wyatt (foreground).



VISITING WITH GORDON

Gordon Dabbs with the Baileys.

THE DABBS FAMILY

WELCOMING THE DABBS TO PRESTONCREST

Gordon began as Prestoncrest's new
preaching minister on February 1, 2009.

The Dabbs and family came to Prestoncrest
after finishing 10 years
of mission work in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Claudia was just 11 years old
and David was 8 when they moved to Dallas.

All photographs in this section were submitted by Gordon & Ila.



AS WE MEET THE DABBS

The Dabbs joined us when their children were ages
8 and 11, as seen here in their Christmas 2009 photo.



AFTER 4 YEARS AT PRESTONCREST

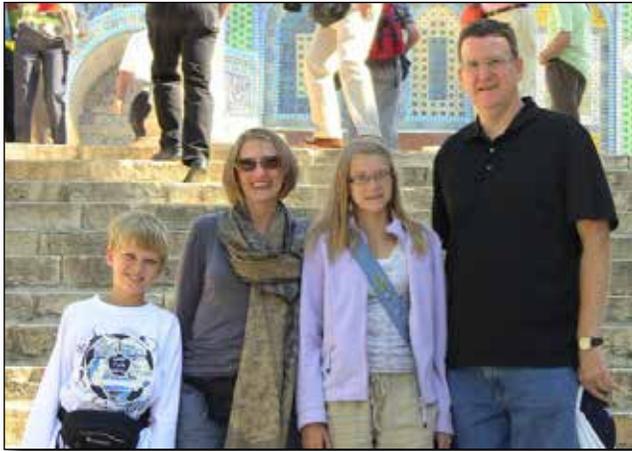
Shown at a family wedding in 2012,
Claudia (15), Ila, David (12), and Gordon



GORDON & ILA AT THE GREAT WALL

In September 2011, Gordon taught on marriage and
relationships at a conference for the churches of Christ
in Beijing where Prestoncrest supported the missionaries
Andrew & Jaime Hill and Gary & Danita Jackson.

GORDON, ILA, CLAUDIA, & DAVID



TRIP TO ISRAEL

The family enjoyed leading a tour in Jerusalem in June 2011.



DAVID'S BAPTISM

David Dabbs was baptized by his father Gordon in the Jordan River. June 2011.



PREACHING IN RIO

Gordon preaching in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 2007. He and his family lived and served as missionaries in Rio for 10 years before coming to Prestoncrest.



LAUNCHING EPIC FAIL

Photos made especially for the promotion of his most recent book, *Epic Fail*.

Photo by Stacey Colledi

STAFF • MINISTERS • ELDERS



Ministers & Staff, as of June 2013: Back Row, L to R: Robert Stolte, Roy Troutman, John Scott Davis, Dr. Gordon Dabbs, Michael Collodi, Brad Weldon, Gary Cochran, Rory Wassenaar, & Bob Chisholm
Front Row, L to R: Lisa Pipkin, Jill Firestone, Sherry Jackson, Angie Maddox, Rebecca Sutton, Leslie Scott, Anna Gscheidle, Barbara Cooper, Teresa Holifield, & Bryan Borden



Elders, as of January 2014: Back Row, L to R, Staggered: D.G. Wilks, David Howard, Randy Tucker, Jeff Clevenger, Todd Miller, Don Witt, Dr. Gary Brantley, & Phil Jackson
Front Row: George Miller, Leron Blanks, Ken Polk, Charles Johnston, & Dr. Bryan Pruitt

Chapter Six

NEW, NEW, NEW: 1989-1999

MILESTONES...

1989: John & Cecelia Kessie become missionaries to Ivory Coast, West Africa.¹

May 7, 1989: 18 new deacons installed².

January 14, 1990:
Searchers Class (for non-members and others) begins. Taught by Prentice & Barbara Meador.

April 7, 1990: "International Rally Day" at Prestoncrest, celebrating the fall of the Berlin Wall and appealing to the Churches of Christ brotherhood for support of missions to the former Eastern bloc nations.

August 12, 1990:
Prentice Meador begins as panelist on American Religious Town Hall Meeting.

November 11, 1990:
Steve Stoeltje resigns.

July 1, 1991: Larry Brown joins the staff as Youth Minister.

August 11, 1991: Eddie Couch joins the staff as "Young at Heart" minister.

June 7, 1992:
Renovation of phase I begins.

September 1, 1993: David Malone joins the staff as Associate Minister.

October 10, 1993:
Two Sunday morning services begin.

1995: Extensive remodeling project with transformation of chapel into two-story structure and expansion of the fellowship hall and kitchen areas.

1995: Will Bannister becomes missionary to Rostov-on-Don, Russia.

August 20, 1995: Larry Brown resigns.

December 3, 1995:
Jim Barrett, John Duncum, Charles Johnston, and George Miller are added to the eldership.

December 10, 1995:
David Moses joins the staff as Youth Minister.

1996: Paul Laschenov becomes missionary to Volgograd, Russia.

¹ They would later relocate to Po, Burkina Faso.

² See Appendix for a complete list of deacons over the years.

February 9, 1997:
23 deacons installed³.

September 14, 1997:
Will Herring
joins the staff as Singles Minister.

1998: Eileen Emch becomes
missionary to Brest, Belarus.⁴

1998:
Prestoncrest begins sponsorship of
Simeon Sapon, Adan Benevente, and
Dr. Feliciano Lux⁵ in Guatemala.

May 10, 1998: Matt Mazza
joins the staff as Children's Minister.

March 7, 1999:
Kelley & Julie Grant leave for
Santiago, Chile, sponsored by Prestoncrest.

March 28, 1999:
Prestoncrest's first Baby Blessing.

July 4, 1999: Jerry & Gail Heiderich,
missionaries to Brazil, sponsored by Prestoncrest.

October 1999:
Bob McAfee begins his (volunteer) service as
Office Administrator.

November 14, 1999:
John Scott Davis begins his (initially volunteer)
service as Music & Worship Minister.

November 18, 1999:
Preston Place acquired.

³ See Appendix for a complete list of deacons over the years.

⁴ She later moved to Rostov-on-Don, Russia.

⁵ Dr. Lux was replaced by Dr. Raul Duran.

The years 1989-1999 saw the end of the Cold War, the First Gulf War, and events that foreshadowed the later War on Terror. It was a time of optimism and a booming economy. The Dow Jones Industrial Average that first closed above 2,000 on January 8, 1987 closed above 10,000 for the first time on March 30, 1999, an increase of 400%.

The seemingly routine holiday season of 1988 had been interrupted by the terrorist bombing of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland on December 21, with the deaths of 259 persons including 189 United States citizens. More Americans would die from terrorist attacks in the bombing of the World Trade Center City in New York City on February 26, 1993 and the bombing and destruction of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City on April 19, 1995. Unfortunately, many more were to die in the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2011.

Westerners were delighted when Berliners tore down "The Wall" in November 1989 without

any challenge from police or military. Normalization of diplomatic and commercial ties with former Eastern Bloc nations soon followed. Christian groups quickly seized the opportunity presented by millions of persons who had been taught atheism for more than 70 years. Prestoncrest played a leading role among Churches of Christ in reaching out to the former Eastern Bloc nations.

A coalition of nations, led by the United States, fought the first Gulf War in 1991 that freed Kuwait from the grip of Saddam Hussein of Iraq. A second Gulf War would come early in the 21st century.

Other events in the news included the murders of Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman on June 12, 1994 with the subsequent trial and acquittal of O.J. Simpson, the death of Princess Diana in a car crash in Paris on August 31, 1997, and the 1998 scandal involving President Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinski that led to impeachment proceedings against President Clinton.

The year 1990 saw the invention of the World Wide Web and the first use of the Hubble Space Telescope. When Dolly the sheep became the first mammal cloned in 1996, we were all reminded of the promise of genetic engineering and stem cell research as well as the ethical challenges presented by such remarkable new tools.

Change came to Prestoncrest with a new pulpit minister, growth in attendance and giving, improvements and additions to the physical plant, and increased financial and direct member involvement in missions.

The Prestoncrest bulletin of February 5, 1989 bore the headline: “**New, New, New.**” The “new” referred in particular to a new look with the now familiar stylistic drawing of the Prestoncrest steeple replacing the older drawing of the Prestoncrest building at the top of page one. But more was new: Readers were directed to the 1989 Goals Booklet that “details our dreams and visions and the budget necessary to reach them.” With the recent coming of Prentice Meador as pulpit minister, much more would be new. There were many new members. The congregation went from one Sunday morning service to two, average weekly attendance increased from 763 in 1989 to a new high of 1389 in 1999, up 82%. Average weekly

Bible School Attendance increased from 511 in 1989 to 992 in 1999, up 94%. Average weekly offerings increased from \$37,947¹ in 1989 to \$65,559 in 1999, up 73%. Ministry staff increased from 3 in 1989² to 9 in 1999³. The remarkable increase in Bible Class attendance along with the need for more office space for staff ministers would lead to two remodeling projects and the purchase of the Preston Place office building late in 1999.

In early 1988, Prestoncrest's newest elders, Todd Miller, Fred White, and Bob Wooldridge, along with wives Suzanne, Dottie, and Sharon, traveled to Springfield, Missouri where Prentice Meador had been the pulpit minister at the South National Church of Christ for 14 years. Barbara Meador recalls:

"Todd, Fred, and Bob were immediately likeable so they were good first impressions of PC. Still we did not have anyone we knew well so we mainly relied on God's leading. We prayed fervently He would let us know his will for us. We would be empty nesters for the first time. Lori Ann was already married, Mark married in 1988, and Kimberly would move with us, making plans to attend ACU in the fall."

The Meadors' decision to move to Prestoncrest was announced to the congregation in the bulletin of April 10, 1988. The Meadors then made frequent weekend trips to Dallas for Prentice to preach at Prestoncrest and for Prentice and Barbara to begin their acquaintance with the people of Prestoncrest, and shop for a home in Dallas. Suzanne Miller later recalled these visits:

"Todd and I have had great fun remembering our times together in spring/summer 1988. Almost every weekend we would look forward to that American Eagle arriving at DFW. Often we spent much of the weekend together going to welcoming dinners, looking at houses (300+, I'm sure!), etc. Little did we know what a profound effect you both would have on Prestoncrest and us personally."

Prentice began his full-time service to Prestoncrest on Sunday August 7, 1988. His sermons

¹ These contribution figures are given in constant 2011 dollars, again with the help of the "Inflation Calculator" in the website of the Minneapolis Federal Reserve Bank.

² Prentice Meador, Bill Moody, and Steve Stoeltje.

³ Prentice Meador, Eddie Couch, Will Herring, Dave Malone, Matt Mazza, Bill Moody, and David Moses. John Scott Davis and Bob McAfee were unpaid volunteers.

were: “Here we Raise Our Ebenezer (I Samuel 7: 3-10)” (Sunday morning) and “Turning Houses into Homes (Genesis 2:20b-25)” (Sunday night). He was 50 years old.

P R E N T I C E

Dr. Prentice Avery Meador, Jr., preacher, scholar, sportsman, and Renaissance man, was born February 8, 1938 in Portland, Tennessee. In 1954, when he was 16 years old, Prentice met Barbara J. Morrell at the Hillsboro Church of Christ in Nashville. In 1960, he was awarded the Bachelor of Arts Degree magna cum laude at David Lipscomb College in Nashville, Tennessee. Prentice and Barbara married July 1, 1960 and shortly moved to Illinois where Prentice completed Master of Arts and PhD degrees at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1964. Later post-doctoral study resulted in his admission to the American Association of Marriage and Family Counselors as a Clinical Member.



Photo by Dana Maddox.

Prentice started preaching regularly while a student at David Lipscomb College. His would be a dual career as graduate student (then professor) and preacher until he moved to Prestoncrest. He served churches in Illinois and Indiana while a graduate student at the University of Illinois. He was minister for the Southgate Church of Christ, Southgate, California (1963-1966) and the San Fernando Church of Christ, San Fernando, California (1966-1971) while teaching at UCLA; various churches in Seattle, Washington (1971-1974), while teaching at the University of Washington; and the South National Church of Christ, Springfield, Missouri (1974-1988) while teaching at Southwest Missouri State University.

The Meadors have three children: Lori Ann Meador Richardson (and husband Scott Richardson), William Mark Meador (and wife Shelli Meador), and Kimberly Lynn Meador Conder (and husband Doug Conder). They have ten grandchildren.

Barbara Meador is a registered nurse. During their time in Dallas, she worked at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas developing medical policy. She used her nursing skills on a number

of Guatemala Medical Mission Trips.

The imminent theologian, Karl Barth, once advised ministers “to take your Bible and take your newspaper, and read both. But interpret newspapers from your Bible.”⁴ Prentice Meador lived out this principle. He used both secular sources and the scriptures in sermon preparation. As a result, the events that were affecting his listeners, be they of a global scale or a more personal scale, were addressed. He was not afraid to tackle social issues such as racism and the moral breakdown of our society. And he addressed the very personal issues affecting so many, such as marital breakdowns and financial reversals. Bob McAfee recalled: “I thought Prentice was as good a presenter as there is, as well-educated as a preacher, knowledgeable about the scriptures but knowledgeable about how the scriptures related to the world.”

As the terrible events of the beautiful Tuesday morning of September 11, 2001 unfolded on television screens throughout the world, Prentice immediately understood their significance and the need for grieving, for reassurance, and for healing. That very night, he led a large gathering for Prestoncrest members and others that reflected on the events of the day and prayed for those most directly affected and for the healing and consolation of our nation.

He was willing to share his and Barbara’s personal struggles and connect them with the concerns and anxieties of others. For example, when the Meadors’ 12 year-old granddaughter, Palmer Richardson, was diagnosed with leukemia, Prentice often spoke of their own struggles from the pulpit. Happily, Palmer had a successful bone marrow transplant in 2007 and is now a nursing student at Abilene Christian University. Barbara Cooper, long-time executive assistant to Prentice observed: “Prentice ...when problems came to his family, he would share with us...”

Prentice reached out to other Christian bodies over the years. He addressed more than 4,000 Catholic priests for the Catholic Homiletic Society in Los Angeles at the invitation of Cardinal Timothy Manning. In 2006 he was a speaker at the national convention of Independent Christian Churches in Louisville, Kentucky. He was a panel member of the American Religious Town Hall Meeting from 1990 until his death in 2008.

⁴ *Time Magazine*: May 31, 1963.

Pastor Steven Gifford, Seventh Day Adventist minister and moderator of the American Religious Town Hall television program from 2005-2011, spoke extensively of his love and regard for Prentice during an interview with the author:

"I was immediately impressed with him. He was such a gentleman. He was articulate. He was knowledgeable and he was open-minded...I consider him the very best panelist.

"...(We) didn't agree on a number of theological points...but it made no difference...he accepted me...when he died it was a debilitating experience in my life.

"...(He) always held high the standards of the Church of Christ...he believed it with all his heart...what made him different from most religionists was the fact that he was tolerant of other viewpoints.

"...The rabbi and Dr. Meador always came extremely well prepared...the two of them were the most articulate on the panel...the two of them really carried the program.

"...He was good at bringing people together...usually by the end (of the program) peace had been made...Prentice was the diplomat of the group.

"...I admit that I have a little bit of a quarrel with God that he was taken so young...he had so much more to give.

"...He had an impact far beyond the Church of Christ. He was truly a diplomat for his Lord."

Bill Buckley, Sr. reflected on Prentice:

"Prentice was well qualified. A great deal of experience. Could handle just about any difficult situation. For example, someone challenging a point of doctrine but Prentice could always come up with the right answer."

The author, writing to Prentice and Barbara on the occasion of their move from Dallas, observed:

“We have never seen you preach or conduct a wedding or funeral without obvious in-depth preparation. Your extensive knowledge of the biblical text, biblical and secular history, and current cultural and religious trends is indeed amazing...”

Barbara Cooper reflected:

“(Working for Prentice was) the most rewarding time of my life.

“When I started working for Prentice, we became friends...what I saw in reality was really real...(he) talked the talk and walked the walk.

“If that phone rang in his office, if we were in the middle of preparing a sermon or whatever, we had to stop because he had to go get that phone because it was a family member...He put God first but his family was right up there too.”

The Meadors were honored for their “many contributions to the brotherhood as a model Christian family” at the Pepperdine Bible Lectureship in 2000.

The destruction of the Berlin Wall in 1989 led to many opportunities for evangelism and service for Prentice Meador and for Prestoncrest. George Miller later observed:

“Who would have believed in '88 (when the Meadors came to Prestoncrest) that the (Berlin) wall would come down and our fellowship would call on Prentice to serve as the spokesman.”

Prentice made ten trips to Rostov-on-Don, Russia, preaching to thousands of people. On one of those trips, he baptized Igor Egirev, who became the minister in Rostov-on-Don and now leads the Institute for Theology and Christian Ministry in St. Petersburg.

Barbara Meador was asked, “What would you and Prentice view as your most significant contribution to Prestoncrest?” She replied:

“Along with the basic tenets of our faith, an overriding thought that came to me was ‘unity.’ Prentice believed strongly God’s word overwhelmingly taught unity as an important trait the church family needed to display. He knew the world would not believe the message if we as a body could not get along. To this end he spoke on the subject often, tried to take into account many ideas, thoughts, and beliefs of the body, all the while measuring these by God’s word.”

Prentice was a man of great passion, including his passion for sports. Barbara Meador wrote:

“Prentice’s passion for life carried over into the arena of sports. Growing up in Nashville, he was an accomplished athlete and played baseball and basketball at David Lipscomb High School. For many years, he held the state high school record for the most consecutive free throws in a season at 37. Prentice enjoyed competition and that followed him into the racquetball court with friends in Springfield, Missouri; onto the golf course in Dallas; and over the roads he ran for more than 25 years. After hip replacement surgery, he moved to relaxing yoga and indoor cycling and at the time of his death, he was exercising 4 days a week.

“Prentice was a diehard fan of the St. Louis Cardinals, the Dallas Cowboys, Byron Nelson, UCLA and John Wooden, and his beloved alma mater, the Fighting Illini of the University of Illinois. His office had a special area dedicated to sports with signed baseballs from Marty Marion and Bob Gibson, personal letters from Mr. Nelson, and encouraging notes from Coach Wooden. Sports never came before family. He readily turned off the TV when family needed him. Prentice was all about keeping things in perspective and that certainly included the place of sports in his life.”⁵

Todd Miller remembered Prentice as a great sports fan who would purchase a program at a baseball game in order to keep his own score.⁶ Todd wrote to the Meadors when they moved from Dallas: “And, just going to Ranger games, playing golf (although not frequently enough as it turned out) and sharing our common interests have provided special times and special memories.”

Prentice Meador resigned from Prestoncrest in 2007 to accept the Batsell Barrett Baxter Chair

⁵ E-mail from Barbara Meador to the author August 21, 2012.

⁶ Telephone conversation with the author August 15, 2012.

of Preaching at David Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tennessee. At Prentice's final service as Prestoncrest minister on August 5, 2007⁷, the dignitaries present included Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison and a number of his fellow panelists from the American Religious Town Hall Meeting.

Prentice continued his preaching career in Nashville, once again as both a professor and a preacher. He preached for a number of churches in the Nashville area and preached his last sermon only a few days before the onset of the rapidly progressive infection that caused his death on November 25, 2008. He was 70 years old. His memorial service was conducted on the campus of David Lipscomb University. He is buried in Nashville.

S E A R C H E R S

Prentice and Barbara Meador began the Searchers Class in 1990 to reach non-members. Class members came with many needs. Some were looking for a church home. Others were seeking refuge from the world or from earlier damaging church experiences. Some were searching for faith itself. The Meadors led Searchers until their move from Prestoncrest. Bob Chisholm joined the leadership of the class when he came to Prestoncrest in 2002.

Bob recalled that in Searchers: "religious insider language was not used. The topics were not driven by religious circle debates." The primary focus of the class was from the gospels-the story of Jesus. Searchers class reached the end of its life cycle after the Meadors moved away. Its role has been taken by the newer "C-Life" class.

" O N E A N O T H E R "

The Small Group Ministry began in the 1990's. An intimate and comfortable setting in a nearby home for Bible study, prayer, mutual encouragement, and refreshments was soon chosen by many members over the more formal and often more distant option of classes at

⁷ Only two days short of the 19th anniversary of his first Sunday as full-time pulpit minister, August 7, 1988.

the church building on Wednesday nights.

David Malone led the small group ministry after he came to Prestoncrest as Associate Minister on September 1, 1993. He chose the name “One Another Groups.” In the bulletin of May 28, 1995, he announced that there were 24 One Another Groups.

On March 31, 1996, the practice of coordinating One Another Group lessons with the Sunday sermons began, a tradition that has continued to the present.

Prestoncrest members have continued their active involvement in their small groups. Bob Chisholm has led this ministry since he joined the staff in 2002. The groups have the option of using an excellent lesson that Bob prepares for them each week or relying on members of the group to prepare and present a lesson.

Bob Chisholm reports that 700 Prestoncrest members, a significant portion of Prestoncrest’s membership, are now members of more than 50 small groups meeting throughout the metroplex.

D O N & L I N D A ⁸

Searchers and the small group ministry combined in a unique way as Don and Linda Barnett began their own outreach to non-Christians and to Christians disillusioned by difficult church experiences.

Don and Linda, both certified public accountants by training, left the business world in 1992 when Don retired from the presidency of American Liberty Oil Company. They had already contributed much: living in Irving, Texas near the DFW Airport, they had opened their home to traveling missionaries and preachers and had traveled abroad for mission surveys. After Don’s retirement, they made 13 international trips in the following three and one-half

⁸ Information on Don & Linda Barnett comes from 5 sources: (1) The author’s interview with the Barnetts, 2)The program for the Abilene Christian University Christian Service Luncheon on November 27, 2001, (3)Wendy Kilmer: “Christian Service Award-Barnett’s Unselfish Retirement Planned to Help Others in Need: *ACU Today*: Winter, 2002, (4) Don & Linda Barnett: “An Evangelistic Strategy That Works: A Searcher’s Bible Class and Small Home Groups: *Church Growth Magazine*: Volume 13, number 4: Fourth Quarter, 1998, (5) E-mail: Don and Linda Barnett to Robert Stolte, February 22, 2007.

years. A number of these trips were to Russia where they began to develop materials to teach those unacquainted with Christianity. Don said: "We were going to Russia because we didn't think that North Dallas wants much Bible study." On one trip they, along with Charles Landreth and Dr. Jack McCorkle, met Russian missionary Paul Laschenov and introduced him to Prestoncrest. Another remarkable trip was to Siberia. The bulletin of February 20, 1994 reported the temperature there at minus 35 degrees! Linda remembers Siberia for the low temperature, gas curtailment, and international phone calls by appointment only.

The work of Prentice Meador in Russia led to a move of their church membership to Prestoncrest. Don says of Prentice: "Prentice, I considered him my personal mentor." They found the material Prentice was offering to Searchers class as "right on" for use in their own Russian evangelism. They describe what happened next in a February 22, 2007 e-mail to Robert Stolte:

"Then 'a strange thing happened on the way to the forum'...because Prentice was trying to get the regular PC members out of his Searchers Class, we thought we might be able to 'get a ticket' to stay in there if we conducted a special class for some of the searchers in the class who might like a more intimate setting to discuss their questions. Prentice agreed and we conducted a class for six searchers. The results of that class were so positive that we concluded that perhaps God had been using the Russia experience to open our eyes to the many opportunities in North Dallas, that we had previously thought did not even exist."

All six searchers saw a transformation in their lives, resulting in baptism or restoration. Two of them were an unmarried couple living together and they soon married. Don says of this first small group of theirs: "After that class, we make our seventh month-long trip to Russia and we come back and we were the most amazed people in the world to find out that God used that Russia experience to open our eyes to what was right here in North Dallas. It was amazing how many spiritually needy people there were."

With this first small group and all that followed it, members were asked to introduce themselves and talk of the experiences that led them to seek a new life for themselves. Don

and Linda closed the group to outsiders to allow both frankness and comfort in this sensitive process of self-revelation. This exclusivity led one member of the group to say: "It is easier to get into the Navy Seals than to become a member of this group." The "Navy Seals" then came to lead many others to the Barnett's group and to Christ. Linda commented: "It fed itself. The group nurtured each other. We were in searchers and searchers was a funnel. We just stood at the bottom of the funnel and caught them."

Don and Linda's ministry was slowed but not stopped in 1998, when Don was diagnosed with leukemia. Many months of only partially successful chemotherapy followed. Finally, a bone marrow transplant (from Don's brother) was performed in June 2001. The transplant was successful but it took three years for Don's body to adjust to his new (and normal!) white blood cells.

Abilene Christian University presented its Christian Service Award to Don and Linda on November 27, 2001. ACU took the unprecedented steps of presenting the award in Dallas, away from Abilene, and early, rather than during the Annual Bible Lectureship scheduled for the following February. These adjustments honored the then uncertain state of Don's health and the possibility that he might not survive until February. The invocation was led by one of the "Navy Seals," Jay Magee. Tributes were delivered by Prentice Meador and another "Navy Seal," Paul Jankowski. Don recalls that during Paul's tribute: "You could have heard a pin drop." Paul recalled his own past life and then said: "But they (the Barnetts) loved me... they still loved me."

Later, as Don recovered, the Barnetts conducted a number of very well attended Evangelism Workshops for Prestoncrest members and they are now teaching a Sunday morning class: "Bible 101." Topics include: "Is there really a Trinity" and "Justification by Faith." They expected an initial attendance of 10-12 people but were surprised to have more than twice that number.

When asked to talk of the future, Don said: "Linda and I continue to be concerned how the evangelism fervor of Churches of Christ is in a pretty steep decline."

Prestoncrest and the Churches of Christ brotherhood need a lot more Don and Lindas.

T U E S D A Y N I G H T

Even as the Barnetts' ministry was slowed by Don's leukemia, their own work spawned another small group that has continued to the present. Jay Magee and Paul Jankowski opened their home for this group on Tuesday nights. The group included a number of searchers and, in 2001, invited George and Carolyn Miller to join. Carolyn remembers: "It took our hearts and I don't believe we have missed it since." A remodeling project led to a move of the group to the Miller's home where it has remained. The group included "believers, unbelievers, and people who knew very little about the Bible." It came to include the Millers, R.T. Tyler, Dr. Jack McCorkle, and Robert and Brenda Stolte (before they moved to Germany). For the first several years it was taught by Paul Jankowski who, recognizing that some in the group were unbelievers or knew little of the Bible, would read a statement prior to each lesson: "You may not believe the Bible, you may know very little about the Bible but assume what you hear is true for this one hour." This statement is still read before many of the Tuesday night lessons.

As an example of the accepting attitude of the group, the Millers recall one attendee commenting on a parable: "I just don't get that" and a regular member of the group responded: "I know just how you feel." George Miller says of the group: "Love in this room is unequal to anything we have been associated with." Carolyn recalls: "It was nothing we did. It was the group and how the Spirit led the group."

Paul Melton now leads the group and it remains very diverse, welcoming, and accepting.

M I S S I O N S : E A S T E R N E U R O P E

The 1990's saw increasing mission involvement with mission travel by Prestoncrest members and additional sponsored missionaries.

In November 1989, citizens of East and West Berlin joined to tear down the wall that had separated their city for a generation. American Christians quickly realized the opportunities for reaching people formerly trapped behind the Iron Curtain. The chancellors of the Christian universities appointed Gwynneth Curtis and Stafford North to chair a fund-raising effort among Churches of Christ for missions in Eastern Europe and asked Prentice Meador to be the spokesman for the effort. On Saturday, April 7, 1990, Prestoncrest hosted “International Rally Day” in preparation for the Sunday April 29 “Day of Prayer and Giving for Eastern Europe.” (The days of prayer and giving would be extended for the remaining fifth Sundays of 1990 as well—July 29, September 30, and December 30)⁹. The day began with a “March of the Flags” of the Eastern European nations. There were guest speakers from Eastern Europe and elsewhere.

Kay Buckley recalled: “When the wall came down and they had that big celebration with flags...everybody was so excited.”

Carolyn Miller remembered: “We had a big ceremony with all the flags and our children carried the flags and it took your breath away to see all those flags across the front of Prestoncrest and those people were going to hear the gospel.”

People throughout the Churches of Christ brotherhood attended this special event and were joined by the chancellors of the Christian universities. George Miller recalls: “There was a lot of camaraderie and unity within our fellowship.”

On June 17, 1990, the bulletin reported that more than 600 congregations and 200 individuals had donated \$1,440,000 and that numerous congregations were planning further fifth Sunday offerings for Eastern Europe.

Prestoncrest’s leadership soon came to the attention of others. The bulletin of April 28, 1991 quoted the latest edition of *Encyclopedia Britannica*:

“Churches of Christ moved to take advantage of the unprecedented changes in Eastern Europe. There was less emphasis on new physical facilities and more on missions and

⁹ This was apparently the beginning of “World Care,” fifth Sunday offerings for one-time contributions to mission efforts not included in the regular budget.

social concerns. Fifty-two individual projects ranging from Bible distribution to the training of future missionaries were funded through gifts from hundreds of churches cooperating with Prestoncrest Church in Dallas, Texas. Eastern European Missions, headquartered in Vienna, published and distributed 50,000 Russian-language Bibles and doubled production of New Testaments in 12 major languages. Facilities in Moscow were leased for worship and distribution of Bibles and other literature. World Christian Broadcasting, with new headquarters in Franklin, Tennessee, received over 1,000 responses weekly to radio broadcasts in the Soviet Union and China.”

Many Prestoncrest members, led by Prentice Meador, took advantage of the new opportunities for evangelism in Russia. In July 1991, Prentice and Barbara Meador traveled to Rostov-on-Don, Russia where Prentice preached. They were accompanied by a number of Prestoncrest members and others. Twenty-four Russians were baptized in the Don River.

In 1992, Prentice and Barbara Meador, Bill Bledsoe, and Martha Vannoy left Dallas on June 29 for Rostov-on-Don, Russia. They would join Doyle Raymond, Jack Locke, and Cian Benning who had traveled earlier. Prentice Meador delivered four lectures on “What Christians Believe About Marriage, Love, Sex, and the Family.”

In the bulletin, readers were told: “This will be no vacation trip! Food is so scarce that our people are taking food with them. Compared to America, accommodations are both backward and crowded. No air conditioning. Few conveniences. Please pray fervently for a safe trip.”

Eleven Prestoncrest members made the trip to Rostov-on-Don in 1995. New Testaments and Russian Children’s Bibles were shipped to Rostov. Dr. Paul Lanier of Prestoncrest and Bill Kidd of the Waterview Church of Christ donated medical supplies. Among those sharing the inconveniences of former Eastern Bloc nations were original Prestoncrest members Bob and Pat Scott.

B O B & P A T

The leadership of Bob and Pat Scott at Prestoncrest began long before their trips abroad. They were among the first to dream of the establishment of Prestoncrest. Bob was a member

of the steering committee that guided the congregation in its earliest days. He was one of the five original elders. Pat was a leader in Ladies Bible Class and they both taught in the Bible School program.

Following Bob's retirement from the Republic National Bank of Dallas and his resignation from the Prestoncrest eldership, the Scotts looked for opportunities to visit missionaries in the field. In 1992, they made an extended visit.

They first spent a number of months in England and Scotland. In England they worked with the Mansfields. Bob spoke several times and Pat taught the Ladies Bible Class. Next they worked alongside the Vicks in Scotland. Moving to Germany, they worked with Schallerts, and, finally, they went to Romania where they worked alongside Hilton and Wanda Terry. The Romanian visit was especially memorable and recalled the earlier words of Prentice Meador about difficult living conditions in the former Eastern Bloc.

Pat recalls: "We went to Romania...we went right after the revolution (in 1989). We went in 1992, it was still just a fresh thing...(after the revolution) they didn't have any food in their stores...We stood in line just like they did...fortunately we took peanut butter, powdered milk, oatmeal...We would stand in line and get bread...Hilton Terry was there...They were doing something like Friendspeak...They were so eager to study the Bible...they lined up... We would teach all day long and sometimes into the night..."

A tragic event ended Bob's life of service. In early 1994, a number of Dallas area residents were robbed in their driveways. News reports of these "driveway robberies" created much concern and anxiety. On the night of March 3, 1994, Prestoncrest members and friends were horrified to learn that Bob and Pat were the latest victims. The two were returning to their home after shopping for an upcoming Bible class party. Bob's efforts to protect Pat led to his being shot. He died the following day at Parkland Hospital. He was 63 years old.

In the years following Bob's death, Pat became a sought-after speaker to groups across the United States and authored two books: "Batten Down the Hatches," that speaks of Bob's death and the grieving process, and "Surviving the Raging Fire, Keeping our Faith in a Time of Spiritual Decline."

She has continued her mission focus by assisting her pediatrician daughter, Dr. Michelle Scott Tucker, on Guatemala mission trips, and by learning Spanish as a student of the Christian Spanish Academy in Antigua, Guatemala. Dr. Tucker, her husband, Randy Tucker, and their two sons Scott and Grant, are members at Prestoncrest where Randy is an elder.

NEW MISSIONARY FAMILIES

By the 1990's, the Roussos, Terrys, and Vicks were well established in their respective mission fields and were soon joined by new missionary families in Europe, Africa, South America, and Central America.

John and Cecelia Kessie began their work in the Ivory Coast, West Africa in 1989. Political turmoil in that nation later forced relocation to Po, Burkina Faso. Po is a city of 17,924 in Southern Burkina Faso, near the border between Burkina Faso and Ghana.

Will Bannister worked in Rostov-on-Don, Russia from 1995-1999.

The introduction of Paul Laschenov to Prestoncrest by Don Barnett, Charles Landreth, and Dr. Jack McCorkle led to Paul's graduation from the Preston Road School of Preaching in Dallas and his sponsorship by Prestoncrest in Volgograd since 1996.

In 1998, Kelley Grant left the business world and he and wife Julie committed to a mission in Santiago, Chile. They moved to Santiago in March 1999 and planted the very successful Congregacion Providencia. The bulletin of March 26, 2006 reported the opening of the congregation's new building, a celebration attended by 360 people. They returned to Dallas in 2010 and Kelley became the Executive Director of Great Cities Missions.

In 1998, Eileen Emch began her work in Brest, Belarus and later moved to Rostov-on-Don, Russia.

The year 1998 also began the longstanding relationship with the Guatemalan ministry. Sponsorship began of Simeon Sapon in Chimaltenango, Adan Benevente in Solola, and Dr. Feliciano Lux, medical missionary working out of Antigua. Dr. Lux was soon replaced by Dr. Raul Duran, assisted by Alexandro Marin and Maura Cos.

In 1999, Jerry and Gayle Heiderich were first sponsored in Brazil in their “Christian Family Institute of Latin America.”

Longtime missions elder George Miller explains: “We have been blessed. The Lord has led us to people. Go back to 1982 when George (Bailey) introduced us to Dino. Here 30 years later, we are still working with him.”

E L D E R S

Existing elders Bill Buckley, Sr., Todd Miller, David Peeler, Sr. (resigned January 29, 1989), Fred White, and Bob Wooldridge were joined by Leron Blanks, Gary Brantley, Jerry Pierce, and R.T. Tyler on December 12, 1988.

Jim Barrett, John Duncum (resigned October 20, 1996), Charles Johnston, George Miller, and Mark Wallis were added on December 3, 1995. John Duncum later served as an elder of the A and M Church of Christ in College Station.

At the end of 1999 the elders were Jim Barrett, Leron Blanks, Gary Brantley, Bill Buckley, Sr., Charles Johnston, George Miller, Todd Miller, Jerry Pierce, Mark Wallis, and Fred White.

M I N I S T E R S

When Prentice Meador came to Prestoncrest, his only associate was Bill Moody. Youth and Family Minister Steve Stoeltje soon joined the staff on September 18, 1988 to replace Russ Bartee who had resigned on June 12, 1988.

By 1999, the ministers were (in addition to Prentice): Eddie Couch, Senior Adult Minister; Will Herring, Singles Minister; Dave Malone, Associate Minister; Matt Mazza, Children's Minister; Bill Moody, Education Minister; and David Moses, Youth Minister. John Scott Davis, Music Minister and Bob McAfee, Office Administrator were unpaid volunteers.¹⁰

Y O U N G A T H E A R T

The name "Young at Heart" for Prestoncrest's senior adult ministry was first mentioned in the Prestoncrest bulletin on September 7, 1989. Eddie Couch came to Prestoncrest to serve our older adults on August 11, 1991. He would spend the rest of his life in this ministry.

E D D I E

"Young at Heart" and Eddie Couch cannot be separated. Eddie was "the heart" in "Young at Heart." Officially, Eddie sponsored a Bible class for older members and planned many social events for them, but he did much more. He genuinely and actively cared for our older members and many others.

Eddie Couch was born March 8, 1919. He attended Freed-Hardeman and Harding Colleges and earned the BA and MA degrees in Communications from Penn State University. In addition to his local ministries, he visited 24 countries and encouraged mission work, particularly in Singapore, Germany, Austria, Ireland, Chile, and Brazil.

After Eddie's death on November 8, 2004, his ministry colleagues devoted the following Sunday's bulletin to his memory.

Prentice Meador wrote:

"Eddie Couch brought the story of God's grace to New York City, Knoxville, Jacksonville, and Dallas. He focused on Jesus with quiet humility, great humor, and genuine service. From his sick bed, Eddie was still calling shut-ins and the sick."

¹⁰ Larry Brown was Youth Minister from July 1, 1991 to August 20, 1995.

Bill Moody called Eddie “A Man for All Seasons” and wrote:

“...Unless you saw him going out daily, you would never know all the people he cared for. When his legs would not let him drive any longer, Robert Hargrove would take him to his appointments. Visiting others in need was his mission...almost to his last breath.”

John Scott Davis recalled Eddie’s unique sense of humor:

“But you would have loved to be a fly on the wall when he displayed his sharp wit. No one was safe from the occasional jab from Eddie Couch in a staff meeting...”

“My goal as a minister, a husband, and a father is to be a little more patient, a little more gentle...a little more like Eddie Couch.”

Matt Mazza recalled Eddie’s interest in him when he first began at Prestoncrest as a 19 year-old intern:

“...It was my first day ‘on the job’ as the youth intern, and I was sitting in my office when an older gentleman walked past the door...The man stopped, walked in, and in a very soft voice said ‘Hello young man, my name is Eddie Couch’...After nearly an hour of being genuinely interested in me, I was finally able to ask him about himself...”

“Eddie taught me to care for people and love them unconditionally...”

Marshall Morris wrote:

“The familiar wool fedora is gone, no longer hanging on his cubicle wall...”

“Eddie’s gone home. But for his concern for his beautiful wife, he was ready to go. My guess...is that Eddie was never really that far from his heavenly home...He possessed a remarkable relationship with God...Even when he was ribbing one of us in his genteel joking manner, none of us ever felt any doubt that Eddie loved us.”

And Will Herring wrote:

“...He demonstrated his devotion to God through his devotion to people. He never fretted over what could have been but made the best of what was before him...He was an example of a Godly husband, giving his life to his lovely wife Grace. Even when I visited him in the hospital, his primary concern was for Grace...Eddie thank you for your example...”

Social activities during Eddie’s ministry included Sweetheart Banquets (often around Valentine’s Day), frequent lunches at Luby’s and other popular restaurants, Holiday Light Tours, Thanksgiving dinners, and many others.

Occasional trips were made as well. These included trips to “The Promise” (a passion play in Glen Rose, Texas) and the Tyler Rose Festival.

Service projects included workdays at the Christian Care Center and at the Food Pantry near downtown Dallas.

After the death of Eddie Couch, the senior adult ministry was taken over by Bill Moody. The program then became the “Gold Group” and numerous activities for older members continued.

C H I L D R E N

In 1989 bulletins, children in grades 1-3 became “SONshine Kids” and grades 4-6 became “FBI (Faithful Bible Investigator) Kids.” Age specific activities continued throughout the 1990s and beyond. For example, in 1986, the SONshine Kids attended the Alvin and the Chipmunks Show at Reunion Arena and had a luncheon and game day. The FBI Kids visited the Christian Care Center and the girls had a “Dress-Up Dinner with Dad.” In 1990 the SONshine Kids enjoyed an Easter egg hunt, Halloween in the Park, and a visit to the Christian Care Center. The FBI Kids were treated to Roller Skating, a fellowship meal and a trip to see the Christmas lights.

Children's Bible Hour on Sunday night was first mentioned in bulletins in 1983. Gordon McArthur and David James were active in this ministry. In 1992, Mary Margaret Harms began her long service in the Sunday morning Bible Hour.

Saints Night Out,¹¹ now a regular Halloween tradition, began in 1993, when October 31 fell on Sunday. Since then, *Saints Night Out* is on the Sunday closest to October 31. The church parking lot has become the venue for this event and there are (often elaborate) games and treats for the children. For the 1993 event, parents were asked to have children wear costumes that were: "Funny, Bible Characters, Cartoon Characters, or Animals. Please, no scary attire."

Prestoncrest enhanced its ministry to children when it employed its first Children's Minister, Matt Mazza, on May 10, 1998. Matt was later followed in this role by John Scott Davis, Allison Harms, and Eddie Plemmons.

Prestoncrest soon reached out to its very youngest children with the first ever Baby Blessing on March 28, 1999. Matt Mazza observed in the bulletin that nearly 60 babies had been born since January 1, 1998 and: "There is no parent who would not appreciate the prayers of this church as they embark upon the long, bumpy journey of parenthood." Baby Blessings have since become a regular part of the Prestoncrest tradition. Babies (and, of course, their parents) are called to the front and prayers of blessing are said over the new babies and new parents.

Y O U T H

1990's youth ministers were Steve Stoeltje (September 18, 1988-November 11, 1990), Larry Brown (July 1, 1991-August 20, 1995), and David Moses (December 10, 1995-September 3, 2000).

Youth activities of the 1990's included mission trips to such destinations as Inner City Houston and Chicago (both 1990), Guatemala (1998), and Pensacola, Florida (1998 and 1999). There were many social events, retreats, and trips to ACU Sing Song, Six Flags, and ski trips

¹¹ In recent years it has been "Fall Festival" and "Trunk or Treat."

in addition to weekly devotionals in the homes of the teens.

The West Dallas Work Camps begun in the 1980's continued into the 1990's. On July 16, 1995, Prentice Meador wrote in the bulletin: "I'm proud of our kids!" He had spent a day with the youth in the Arcadia Park area of Dallas painting houses in the annual work camp. He concludes: "Certain scenes of last Tuesday are indelibly imprinted in my mind. As I stood on an extension ladder painting the back of a house, I could hear laughter, singing, joking, and hard work all around me. Our teens were cooperative, crazy, enjoyable, and just plain fun to be with. I'm really proud of our kids!"

S I N G L E S

Prestoncrest's ministry to single adults began in the first years of its existence. In the 1980's and 1990's, there were bulletin references to singles activities such as devotionals, game nights, dinner and movie nights, broomball, work at Boles Home and the Christian Care Center, retreats, paint ball, volleyball, skating, Bible Studies, and many others.

The coming of Will Herring as Singles Minister on September 14, 1997 enhanced the singles ministry. Will was a graduate of Texas A and M University and later, on May 11, 2002, would receive his Master of Divinity Degree from Abilene Christian University. Will's wife Jennifer was then an education major at the University of North Texas with plans to start a teaching career. The 1990's were a time when many single adults made Prestoncrest their church home. Prestoncrest's newly married classes grew alongside the singles classes as many Prestoncrest singles married each other.

With the guidance of Gary and Linda Brantley, Will encouraged the singles to continue their leadership in planning their own activities and outreach.

Prestoncrest's successful singles ministry has continued to the present. Will Herring resigned in August 2005. Gary Cochran has continued this excellent work since coming in May 2006.

J O B N E T

On September 22, 1991, the bulletin announced the creation of the JobNet ministry to help unemployed Prestoncrest members and others find work. It was led by Diane Songer, Marv North, Bill Matheney, and Carl Thomas. The ministry is now called JobLink and is led by Mike Overby.

S T A R G R O U P & J A M E S G R O U P¹²

On December 3, 1995, the bulletin announced that the STAR (*Steps Toward Addiction Recovery*) Group would begin on Monday nights. This outreach to persons addicted to alcohol and other drugs was begun by Charles Landreth, Don Umphrey, and David Pummel. Associate minister Dave Malone provided logistical support and Prentice Meador publicized it from the pulpit.

Later, in 2004, the availability of Preston Place afforded a more discrete and private location for the group and it was re-formed as the James Group. The James Group dealt with all addictions including alcohol, drugs, and pornography. Don Umphrey estimates that more than 75 people have been helped by these efforts over the years.

D M A G A Z I N E

The December 1995 issue featured Prestoncrest's benevolent works in the article: "*Our 18 Richest Churches: Doing Good-or Doing Well?*" Portions of the article were quoted in the December 10, 1995 bulletin:

"How Dallas churches practice benevolence differs immensely from congregation to congregation, even within the same denomination. We found that total benevolence as a percentage of the operating budget varies from a low of about 1% (Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship) to a high of 31% (Prestoncrest Church of Christ).

¹² Information on STAR and James Groups provided by Don Umphrey.

“Most of these churches cater to the relatively well-to-do. God demands more of the affluent, pastors say. To whom much is given, much will be required. ‘Jesus didn’t make people feel guilty, but he challenged the rich,’ says Prentice Meador, pastor of Prestoncrest Church of Christ. ‘They have more responsibility to the poor...’

“Prestoncrest Church of Christ also emphasizes local giving, with more than half-\$275,000-of its half-million-dollar benevolence budget staying at home. ‘Nowhere do we see Jesus in the gospels raising funds to take care of people in some province of the Roman Empire,’ says Pastor Meador.

“...Prestoncrest has completely or partially furnished 25 to 30 Steppington apartments, which are supplied by the city. One Sunday, Prentice Meador of Prestoncrest Church of Christ announced that a homeless single mother with two babies needed one of the apartments. By that evening, she had two beds, towels, linens, and all the baby gear she needed, plus \$2,500 to complete the furnishings...”

P H Y S I C A L P L A N T

On June 7, 1992, the bulletin headlined: *“Excuse Our Mess!”* The twenty-year-old “old wing” (phase I) of the building was to receive a facelift with new carpet, wallpaper, and paint. Sharon Wooldridge coordinated the renovation. The facelift was to include the “chapel” (the former main auditorium) and children’s classrooms.

In 1995, a two-phase remodeling project would transform the chapel into a two-story space with classrooms on both first and second floors, expand the fellowship area (by extending the east wall of the fellowship hall to the sidewalk), relocate the youth area to the second floor of the “old” auditorium, revise and improve the heating and cooling systems, and enlarge the kitchen.

Photographs in chapter 4 show the five full-length windows that marked the original auditorium now divided by stone masonry inserts marking the first and second floors. Gary Brantley, Jerry Jackson, Tom Fowler, and Gordon McArthur served as the building committee.

Pledges for the estimated \$850,000 cost of the project began Sunday, December 11, 1994 and by the following Sunday, \$327,000 had been pledged, allowing the project to begin.

A “Prestoncrest Vision for the Future” brochure included floor plans for the project along with supporting comments:

Bill Moody wrote: “Assembly is tied to Bible School attendance...For all practical purposes our assembly attendance is capped at an average of 1150. This is our potential high average until we acquire additional classes.”

Kay Buckley observed: “The two year olds of the early ‘70’s are now beginning to have their own two year olds. Yet this generation is basically using the same facilities as their parents. We must accomplish both the expansion and the updating of our facilities for these precious children.”

On October 29, 1995, the first portion of the project was complete and a dedication service was held on that Sunday. Bible classes were dismissed early that day for the dedication.

On November 12, 1995, it was announced that construction would begin on the next phase, expansion of the fellowship hall and kitchen.

H O R I Z O N 2 0 0 0

In 1996, Prestoncrest began a major planning initiative called Horizon 2000. Members were encouraged to join one of 11 focus groups. Gary Brantley wrote in the bulletin of August 18, 1996: “. . . become actively involved in the future growth of the Prestoncrest community. The more members that participate will increase the chances for us to discover new programs for Prestoncrest.”

Mary Biggers, Gary Brantley, Jeff Duncum, Stuart Hayashi, A.C. Howell, Dave Malone, Jack Martin, Pat Scott, Ken Smalling, Doug Thomson, and Prentice Meador were the oversight team. Team leaders were David Redding, Tim Maynard, Stuart Hayashi, Jack Martin,

Randy Tucker, Doug Thomson, and Dave Malone.

Among the products of the Horizon 2000 project was a new mission statement:

Our mission is to know God and exalt Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord so that all may be transformed by His Spirit into a loving family that serves its communities and the world with His good news.

The mission statement was supported by core values:

*Exalting – Celebrating God’s presence in our worship
Evangelizing – Communicating God’s message and our mission
Edifying – Building up God’s family with relationships
Equipping – Educating God’s people with training events
Empowering – Demonstrating God’s love through ministry*

P R E S T O N P L A C E

The final year of the 1989-1999 span brought a welcome surprise. Todd Miller wrote on May 23, 1999:

“Sometimes God opens an unexpected door. That has just happened. Even as the elders were trying to formulate plans for expansion, God suddenly opened up a unique opportunity...We received a phone call presenting to us the opportunity to purchase Preston Place, which is the property directly across Prestoncrest Lane...We are God’s people, and whenever God’s people in past ages came to a major decision, they always did the same thing—they sought God’s guidance. As your leaders, we are asking you in your own personal devotional life to pray and fast for the next thirty days.”

On June 27, 1999, the bulletin stated:

“After thirty days of prayer and fasting, the congregation has shown they support investigating the purchase of Preston Place. Eighty-four percent who responded said ‘yes.’ Comments were thought provoking; they were indicative of the sincerity with which you considered this opportunity. Every voice is important, and we believe God will direct our decision – we asked Him to. By no means should we cease praying as we continue to seek God’s guidance in our continuing evaluation of this acquisition. In the weeks ahead time will be given to: additional information about the property, including a vision for its use; prayer for continued guidance with praise and thanksgiving; commitment that God be glorified.”

September 12, 1999 was “Faith Promise Sunday.” Members were asked to make three-year pledges totaling \$4,500,000, with \$2,000,000 needed by the end of September 1999 to go ahead with the purchase.

The purchase of Preston Place was completed on November 18, 1999. The bulletin of November 28, 1999 announced the purchase and extended thanks to those who worked in project: Mark Wallis (who headed the project), Bette Darrow, Martin Hearne, Chuck Jennings, Bill Jones, and Bob McAfee.

Preston Place began a new era. Prestoncrest finally had adequate office space. More and larger classrooms were available. Unique among church properties, Preston Place, as a freestanding office building, allowed space that was not needed for church activities to be leased to commercial tenants.

Chapter Seven

EXPANDING: 2000-2008

MILESTONES...

June 4, 2000:

Robert & Brenda Stolte
begin mission to Dresden, Germany.

September 3, 2000:

David Moses resigns as Youth Minister.

January 19, 2001:

Marshall Morris joins the staff as Youth Minister.

February 1, 2001:

David Malone resigns as Associate Minister.

July 2001: Bob McAfee resigns as
volunteer Office Administrator.

July 8, 2001: Brad Weldon joins the
staff as Minister of Administration.

September 11, 2001:

Special evening service at Prestoncrest reflecting on
the events of the day is well attended.

2002:

Phil Jackson becomes Facilitator of European
Church Planting at Missions Resource Network and is
sponsored in this role by Prestoncrest.

January 6, 2002:

Jim Burrow, Jeff Clevenger, David Sowell, and
D.G. Wilks installed as elders.

April 12, 2002:

Bob Chisholm joins the staff as preaching associate,
with primary responsibility for small group ministry,
teaching, and team preaching with Prentice.

December 7, 2003:

29 New deacons installed¹.

November 8, 2004: Death of Eddie Couch.

February 20, 2005:

Robert Stolte returns from Germany and
joins staff as Adult Education Minister.

August 28, 2005:

Will Herring resigns as Singles Minister.

May 2006: Gary Cochran
joins the staff as Singles Minister.

March 18, 2007: Michael Collodi
joins the staff as Communications Minister.

¹ See Appendix for a complete list of deacons over the years.

July 2, 2007:
"Sister Goodnight's house"
(6046 Prestoncrest Lane) purchased.

September 16, 2007:
Chace Cobb joins the staff
as Youth Minister.

2008:
Andrew & Jaime Hill
become missionaries to Beijing, China.

2008: Javier Leon,
minister of Siempre Familia Iglesia de Cristo in Fort
Worth, is sponsored by Prestoncrest.

July-August, 2008:
Worship services are conducted Sunday afternoons
at the Hillcrest Church as the
Prestoncrest auditorium is remodeled.

September 7, 2008: Allison Harms
joins the staff as Children's Ministry Director.

The years 2000-2008 brought terrorist attacks, war, natural disasters, and financial reversals. The hotly contested 2000 presidential election between George W. Bush and Al Gore remained hotly contested even after the ballots were cast on November 7. The nation was to remain in suspense until December 12 when the Supreme Court of the United States ruled in favor of George W. Bush. During the intervening five weeks, careful examination of "butterfly ballots," "dimpled chads," and "hanging chads" in a number of Florida counties dominated the national news.

The Bush administration was still new when the terrible events of September 11, 2001 resulted in the deaths of more than 3,000 persons, the destruction of the World Trade Center in New York City, and damage to the Pentagon outside Washington, D.C. Further catastrophe was prevented by passengers aboard United Airlines Flight 93 who resisted the terrorists aboard and caused their aircraft to crash in a field in Pennsylvania.

Thousands of American military personnel were soon fighting lengthy wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and there were narrowly averted terrorist incidents (for example, the "shoe bomber"), as we all learned to walk barefoot through airport screening and have water and other innocuous liquids taken from us.

A series of natural disasters produced much loss of life along with human suffering and property damage. The Indian Ocean Tsunami on December 26, 2004 caused more than 225,000 deaths in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, and East Africa. Only nine months

later, on August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina caused more than 1,800 deaths, many billions of dollars of property damage in New Orleans and the Gulf Coast, and the displacement of thousands of persons, many to the Dallas area. The same hurricane season brought Hurricane Rita to the Louisiana and Texas coasts and Hurricane Stan to Guatemala and Central America, resulting in deadly mudslides. Cyclone Nargis, on May 2, 2008, caused more than 138,000 deaths in Myanmar (Burma).

Scientific and technological achievements included the successful sequencing of the human genome in 2003, the landing of the Mars Exploration Rover Opportunity on the surface of Mars in 2004, and the replacement of the familiar floppy disk by the USB flash drive. Digital cameras had all but replaced film-based models by 2008.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average opened at 11,501.85 on the first business day of 2000. After an all-time high of 14,164.53 on October 9, 2007, it ended 2008 at 8,776.39, a negative return for the nine-year period. The era closed with the financial catastrophe of 2008 and the election of Barack Obama and Joseph Biden as president and vice-president of the United States.

Prestoncrest ministered to many during this difficult time with an outpouring of special contributions and personal service to victims.

Numerical growth continued during the early years of the period. Average weekly worship attendance peaked at 1416 in 2000, at 1615 in 2001, and at 1630 in 2002. Some decline occurred in the later years, with an average of 1444 in 2007¹.

Bible School attendance peaked in 2000 at 1037. It peaked again in 2001 at 1167 and in 2002 at 1166. It peaked yet again in 2005 at 1180. In 2007, Bible School attendance was 1081 and in 2008, it was 1026. In 2008, the percentage of persons attending worship who also attended Bible class reached an all-time high of 77.66%².

¹ 2008 average attendance, based on available statistics in the bulletin, was 1322. This average only includes the Sundays when worship and Bible Class were at their usual times on the Prestoncrest campus. Attendance was not reported during the eight weeks when Sunday worship services were held at 2:15 PM at the Hillcrest Church due to re-modeling of the Prestoncrest auditorium. The one exception was July 20, 2008. On that date, worship attendance at the afternoon Hillcrest service was 582 and Bible School attendance on the Prestoncrest campus at 1:00 PM was 746, an astounding 128%. Perhaps either or both counts were incorrect or a large number of members were attending morning worship services elsewhere but were still loyal to their Prestoncrest Bible classes.

² See comment in footnote above.

Average weekly contribution peaked in 2000 at \$69,775³ and continued to peak each year until 2004 when the average was \$108,442. In 2008, the average was \$84,981, an increase of 22% over 2000.

Prentice Meador continued his successful ministry of the word until August 2007, when he accepted the Batsell Barrett Baxter Chair of Preaching at David Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tennessee. During the interim between Prentice's departure and the coming of Gordon Dabbs in February 2009, Bob Chisholm and Matt Mazza, assisted by other Prestoncrest staff ministers, filled the pulpit.

E L D E R S

Existing elders Jim Barrett (resigned April 28, 2002), Leron Blanks (resigned November 2, 2003), Gary Brantley, Bill Buckley, Sr., Charles Johnston, George Miller, Todd Miller, and Fred White were joined by Jim Burrow (resigned November 2, 2003), Jeff Clevenger, David Sowell, and D.G. Wilks on January 6, 2002.

At the end of 2008, the elders were Gary Brantley, Bill Buckley, Sr., Jeff Clevenger, Charles Johnston, George Miller, Todd Miller, David Sowell, Fred White, and D.G. Wilks

M I N I S T E R S

The ministers who began 2000 were Prentice Meador, Eddie Couch, John Scott Davis, Will Herring, Bob McAfee, David Malone, Matt Mazza, Bill Moody, and David Moses. By the close of 2008, Prentice Meador, Will Herring, Bob McAfee, and David Malone had all resigned. Eddie Couch died November 8, 2004.

³ As elsewhere, these contribution figures have been expressed in 2011 dollars with the help of the Inflation Calculator of the Minneapolis Federal Reserve website.

Marshall Morris, Brad Weldon, Bob Chisholm, Robert Stolte, Gary Cochran, Michael Collodi, Chace Cobb, and Allison Harms all joined the team between 2000 and 2008. At the close of 2008 ministers were Bob Chisholm, Chace Cobb, Gary Cochran, Michael Collodi, John Scott Davis, Allison Harms, Matt Mazza, Bill Moody, Marshall Morris, Robert Stolte, and Brad Weldon.

O U T R E A C H

The terrorist attacks of 9/11 and the natural catastrophes of the period were horrifying to all Americans. Prestoncrest members experienced shock and grief along with their fellow countrymen.

Shortly after the attacks on the morning of September 11, 2001, notice of a special service of prayer and encouragement went out. That evening the auditorium was filled with members and visitors from the community as Prentice Meador and others reflected on the events of the day and prayed for our nation.

Sermons that followed explored related topics: “Where is God When Our World Explodes?” and “How Do We Face Terror?” (September 16), and “The Conquest of Evil” and “A Christian Looks at Islam” (September 23). Wednesday, October 3 was a day of prayer and fasting for our nation. Members were invited to assemble in the auditorium that night for prayer.

Prestoncrest demonstrated its concern the following Sunday with a special offering of \$60,267⁴ for the relief of 9/11 victims⁵.

Hurricane Katrina made landfall on August 29, 2005 and hundreds of persons were evacuated into the Dallas area. On the following two Sundays, a total of \$115,206 was collected in special offerings. A dedicated hotline connected Prestoncrest members with evacuees in need

⁴ Special offerings in this section have not been corrected for inflation.

⁵ Generous contributions from across the nation along with actions by the federal government made this offering unnecessary for its original purpose. Most of the funds were disbursed in 2004 to Timothy Hill Children’s Ranch at Riverhead, New York to furnish two kitchens.

of household goods and other essentials. Katrina was soon followed by Hurricane Rita on September 24, 2005 and on October 16, 2005 the bulletin reported that several evacuees (from both Katrina and Rita) were attending Prestoncrest services and that two native Hondurans were participating in Friendspeak. A truckload of supplies was sent to the Park Central Church of Christ in Port Arthur, Texas and to the Ridgewood Church of Christ in Beaumont, Texas.

Other disasters of the period brought forth significant monetary expressions of concern including \$95,267 on January 30, 2005 for victims of the Indian Ocean Tsunami of December 26, 2004. On May 18, 2008, \$27,297 was donated for victims of the cyclone in Myanmar (Burma)⁶.

These kinds of generous special offerings were not new. Earlier years had seen an offering of \$4,000 on June 11, 1978 for the Walnut Village Church of Christ in Garland after its roof collapsed during a Sunday worship service. On April 15, 1979, \$6,000, along with appliances and food items, was given for victims of the Wichita Falls tornado. On October 13, 1985, \$17,982 was donated for victims of the Mexico City earthquake. On April 30, 1995, \$15,029 was given for victims of the attack on the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City.

An important portion of the Prestoncrest budget is dedicated to the needs of its own members and others of our own community. This outreach is little publicized but consumes much time for a number of volunteers who work with persons in need of short-term assistance for rent, utility bills, food, and other essentials. Leading in this ministry and many others is Bob McAfee.

B O B

Bob McAfee speaks with enthusiasm of his many life experiences: his early life and education, his service as a naval officer, his long career with Ford Motor Company, his service to his own aging parents and those of wife Amy, his family life with Amy and children Susan,

⁶ In 2012, Prestoncrest was able to serve a number of Burmese refugee children in a more personal way as they provided shoes and other needs to them at Wallace Elementary School.

Landon, and Karen, his grandchildren, his travels throughout the world with many new friendships and thousands of photographs, and his many roles at Prestoncrest. Bob's curmudgeonly sense of humor fools nobody. He really cares. For his family, his many friends, for Prestoncrest, and for people in need.

Bob and Amy grew up in Dallas and married in Dallas. When Ford transferred Bob back to Dallas in 1981, they were here to stay. On their first visit to Prestoncrest, they found so many longtime friends they looked no further for a church home. Bob's willingness to serve was soon evident. Only a few Sundays after coming to Prestoncrest, he was asked to serve communion. Not many weeks later he found himself coordinating the communion service, a role he continued for many years. He has served continuously as a Prestoncrest deacon since 1983 and is now our longest serving deacon.

His ministry to members and others in need grew out of his communion work that placed him in the church foyer for much of the time before, during, and after worship services when people seeking assistance often appear. He does not recall exactly when he first responded to such a request but does remember asking himself "how hard can this be?" He has accepted this part of his "go-to guy" role with his usual good humor and concern.

Church policy directs that such individuals will be assisted (when appropriate) with checks for rent, utilities, or other necessities payable directly to the entity demanding payment. Cash payments to individuals are made when circumstances demand it. Bob relates that he is frustrated if it appears that someone is abusing the church's assistance but tries to look at their side as well. He recalls one "nice man" to whom he gave small amounts of cash over a long period of time to "buy prescriptions." It later turned out that the "prescriptions" were cocaine and that heart surgery had resulted from the man's cocaine habit. Bob says this was the worst mistake he has made but does reflect that the man had a wife and two babies.

Bob becomes personally acquainted with the people he helps. He and wife Amy often visit such individuals and families in their homes, help with school work, provide transportation, find other sources of assistance for them, and provide Christmas presents for children (often from their own funds).

In early 1999, Bob retired from Ford and was soon sought out by Prentice Meador: “Bob, I need you to come be the administrative manager.” At his own insistence he received no salary. He became intimately involved in the financial package for the purchase of Preston Place and coordinated the remodeling of Preston Place to accommodate church offices and classrooms. He credits the expertise of former church secretary Sherry Priest for much of his own success. As Administrative Manager, Bob became involved in many of the ministries and works of the congregation and has continued as the “go-to guy” for both ministers and elders when important projects are in the works. Bob resigned as administrative manager in 2003 when Brad Weldon joined to staff as Minister of Administration.

Bob was a pioneer in the Friendspeak Ministry at Prestoncrest along with elders George Miller and D.G. Wilks. He has taught and made friends with many of the participants. Two who came very early in the program are very important to the McAfee family. Martha Neuenschwander and her daughter Biviana Marin are from Colombia. Biviana was a reporter for a newspaper in Bogota. She was in Dallas on assignment when the newspaper ended her employment. She then elected to remain in Dallas and moved in with her mother. Biviana and Marta joined Friendspeak after they saw the banner advertising Friendspeak outside Prestoncrest. When Easter Sunday came, the McAfees invited Martha and Biviana to join them along with other friends (including the author and his wife) at a restaurant for lunch. Amy made sure that Biviana sat next to their single son Landon. Biviana and Landon began dating as a result and were married in 2007. Biviana is now a teacher in the Dallas Independent School District and Martha is a teacher’s assistant in the Carrollton-Farmers Branch School District.

F R I E N D S P E A K

The bulletin of October 20, 2001 announced a “FriendSpeak Workshop” to “prepare teachers to carry the gospel to foreign people who immigrate into the United States—a field ‘white unto harvest’—teaching English using the Bible.” The first workers were D.G. Wilks, David Kennedy, David Woodward, and George Miller. Bob McAfee became an early and enthusiastic worker.

A banner inviting readers was displayed outside the church and attracted a few readers including University of Texas at Dallas graduate student Wendy Deng. Wendy showed her enthusiasm by posting an invitation to Friendspeak on the UTD electronic bulletin board. A number of Asian graduate students responded and began to tell others. Readers now come from the community and from the University of Texas at Dallas, the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School, Southern Methodist University, and other area universities-all by word of mouth. The banner and the electronic posting have long since disappeared.

George Miller estimates that readers from 35 different nationalities including Poland, Russia, Ukraine, several Latin American countries, France, Iran, China, South Korea, and Taiwan have participated. Bob McAfee commented that it is “so interesting to meet so many nationalities of people.”

Some Friendspeak readers come with knowledge of the Bible and some are members of other Christian bodies but most begin with no knowledge of the Bible and its teachings.

One outcome is typified by “a lovely couple from Iran,” in the words of George Miller, who “read the Koran but got more comfortable with the Bible. Bob McAfee worked with the man.” Many readers have formed lasting friendships with their teachers and other Prestoncrest members. It is common to see readers and their teachers seated together in worship services and at restaurants following services. Many meals have been shared both in the homes of Prestoncrest members and in the homes of readers. Quite a few baptisms have resulted. Two international marriages have come from the program-Biviana and Landon McAfee and David and Wendy (Deng) Woodward. The Woodward’s two delightful young children are an added and precious bonus.

A P P L E S O F G O L D⁷

In 2003, a number of the younger married women of the congregation approached Pat Scott wanting to benefit from the knowledge and experience of Prestoncrest’s older women. Their wish resulted in the Apples of Gold ministry.

⁷ Information on Apples of Gold comes from the George and Carolyn Miller Interview.

In weekly sessions, a 30-minute cooking class taught by master chefs Alice Strickland and May Kay Polk gives instruction in such basics as apple pie, pot roast, pie crust, and biscuits. Mentoring sessions then follow where the more mature women share their experiences. Carolyn Miller leads sessions on “Kindness,” Linda Brantley on “Purity,” Pat Scott on “Submission,” Mary Kay Polk on “Hospitality,” Yvette Hibbs on “How to Love your Husband,” and Suzanne Miller on “How to Love your Children.”

At the final session, all of the husbands are invited to attend a dinner party. This ministry has fostered numerous friendships between older and younger families as well as giving many younger women a head start on both the practical and the spiritual aspects of family life.

S O L D I E R C A R E⁸

The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq prompted a special outreach from Prestoncrest members to the military personnel serving in those areas. With the invasion of Iraq in 2003, Annie Patterson (wife of Army officer Jason Patterson) became aware of the need for prayers and support of the troops through her brother, Tim Davis, who was deployed to Iraq. Annie began the ministry by packing boxes in her living room with the assistance of her three young daughters. In 2005, after Jason Patterson was deployed, the operation moved to the home of Jim and Melinda Leverette. As the project grew from 25 boxes per month to more than 400, more space was needed. The purchase of Sister Goodnight’s house in 2007 answered the need with adequate space for both storage and an “assembly line” operation. Boxes contain snacks, telephone cards for calls home, toiletries, devotional materials, Girl Scout cookies, helmet liners and neck wraps (handmade by the “North Texas Stitchers” organization), dolls for the local children, soap, toothbrushes, Chapsticks, razors, and paperback books. All items are donated by Prestoncrest members and other concerned persons and the postage is paid by Prestoncrest.

In addition to the boxes, many members regularly pray for the troops and they are often remembered in the public prayers led during Prestoncrest worship services.

⁸ Becky Holloway provided a very helpful written history from which much of this section comes. Soldier Care was the topic for the March/April 2008 issue of *21st Century Christian*.

Many letters of thanks have been received from the service men and women receiving the boxes, as well as from their chaplains. Letters from Generals Odierno and Petraeus, as well as certificates of appreciation can be found in the photo insert **section**. Becky Holloway and Lisa Stettheimer now lead the ministry, assisted by many volunteers.

P A C K S & P E N C I L S ⁹

The Packs and Pencils ministry began in 2008. Prestoncrest purchases backpacks for school age children, members donate school supplies, and volunteers fill the packs and assist the children and parents who come to receive them. Robert Stolte reports that about 350 children have been given packs each year and expects, that in 2012, the number will be 500. Robert states: “Over the years we have developed a relationship with many families in the neighborhood. Each time we have packs and pencils we notify them and they register on a first-come first-served basis.” In 2012, 100 children will come from Wallace Elementary School, a school now “adopted” by Prestoncrest. Robert says: “Jennifer Pool directs this ministry. I simply equip and empower her.”

Offerings for such specific needs are in addition to the monthly support that Prestoncrest makes to brotherhood institutions that provide care for children and others in need.

P H Y S I C A L P L A N T

The purchase of Preston Place in the fall of 1999 began a series of physical plant expansions and improvements that lasted almost to the end of 2008. On October 8, 2000, the bulletin reminded the congregation of its obligation under the “Faith Promise” program begun at the time of the Preston Place purchase. A total of \$1,100,000 was needed for refurbishment of the existing building, expansion of the nursery, construction of a bridal room¹⁰, expansion of the fellowship hall with relocation and expansion of the kitchen, expansion and improvement

⁹ Robert Stolte provided the information for this section.

¹⁰ The “Bridal Room” has also been called the “Family Room” and the “Cornerstone Room.” It is used for bridal parties, for bereaved families awaiting the start of memorial services, for the elders to meet with newly baptized members for communion and instruction, and for prayer and counseling of members during services and at other times. It is beautifully decorated and comfortably furnished, thanks to the planning of Nancy Blanks and Ann Davis.

of restrooms, re-location of staff offices and to begin retirement of the mortgage on Preston Place.

The following year, the bulletin of November 18, 2001 gave an update on the fund. Of the original goal of \$4,500,000, \$3,900,900 had been pledged and \$3,100,100 contributed. These funds had allowed classroom construction at Preston Place and the move of staff offices out of the main church building and into Preston Place (the more-than-30-year need for more and better office space was met at last).

On January 27, 2002, the bulletin invited members to “come and see our marvelous new kitchen.” The new kitchen, relocated to space formerly occupied by offices and classrooms was a fully equipped restaurant-style kitchen designed with the help of members in the restaurant business.

On March 10, 2002, the bulletin reported that actual contributions to the building fund totaled \$3,269,000 and that \$500,000 had been applied to the Preston Place mortgage.

On August 11, 2002, nursery renovation was “almost complete” and access was limited to the north end of the nursery for security reasons.

On March 9, 2003, an upcoming remodeling of the children’s wing (the Phase I building) was announced. A classroom would be removed to allow less crowding for those going and coming from the main building to Preston Place.

On August 14, 2005, there was an Open House and Dedication of the new Youth Area in Preston Place. This well-equipped area was later called “The Zone.” This move of youth activities to Preston Place freed all of the phase I building for children’s education and activities, and on July 9, 2006, the new children’s area was formally dedicated.

The expansion continued. On December 11, 2005, the elders announced “Seeing the Unseen” with a challenge of \$2,000,000. Of this amount, \$500,000 was to be set aside for renovation of the main auditorium with new pews and new carpet. The remainder would be applied to the existing \$1,500,000 mortgage on Preston Place. One year later, on December 17, 2006, it was

announced that \$516,766.77 had been given and applied to the Preston Place mortgage.

The purchase of “Sister Goodnight’s house” at 6046 Prestoncrest Lane (next door to “Rory’s house”) on July 2, 2007 provided needed space for the soldier care ministry.

By the summer of 2008 the “new” auditorium had been in continuous use for more than 24 years. Plans to replace the worn carpet were complicated by the decrepit condition of the original particleboard pews. Considerable maintenance was already being expended and removal would result in enough breakage to make them unusable. New solid wood pews were essential. Fresh paint, improved lighting, and a new sound system were needed. Architects were consulted and recommended design changes, including new trim designs in the pulpit area, revision of the baptistry window from its original irregular shape to a more graceful arch, and the addition of doors opening on to the rear center aisle. Bill Matheney spent many hours heading the project and in an e-mail to the author, he gives generous credit to others:

“Working directly with me through the complete project was Phil Phillips, and of course Rory (Wasenaar), as our Facilities Manager. Rory did some of the actual contracting carpentry, and assisted with managing the sub-contractors. Phil and I functioned as both Designers/Architects and General Contractors. We did seek the input of others on occasion as to function and approvals of course. We did work with other staff members, i.e., getting the new Sound System identified, Michael Collodi, and the IT functions team.

“For special design functions would also include wife, Velda (Matheney), and Sharon Wooldridge, and Nancy Blanks on some design items, and Mike and Lisa Pipkin when we added the foyer furniture.”

(Bill also gave credit to the eight deacons serving on the Facilities Management Committee.)

Remodeling was completed in only eight weeks and the result was a beautiful and functional space for worship and fellowship that will benefit the congregation for years to come.

Further improvements to be completed by the end of 2012 include the update of all security

and information management technology and automated management of all electrical, mechanical, and plumbing systems via an energy management system.

During the eight weeks of the remodeling, Sunday worship services were moved to the nearby Hillcrest Church.

T H E H I L L C R E S T T I M E

During the remodeling, Prestoncrest members attended their regular Bible classes at 1:00 PM at Prestoncrest and then made the short drive to Hillcrest for worship at 2:15 PM. While attendance declined during this brief interim, those attending on these very hot summer afternoons were rewarded with a rich worship experience. Attendance quickly rebounded once services were restored to their usual time and place.

M I S S I O N S & M I S S I O N A R I E S

The mission commitment of Prestoncrest grew during 2000-2008 as additional foreign missionaries were added and members made mission trips to Guatemala, Ghana, Honduras, and Ukraine.

In 2000, Robert and Brenda Stolte with children Spencer, Alex, and Mary Ellen moved to Dresden, Germany, a city formerly part of East Germany. They returned to Prestoncrest in 2004 and Robert became an associate minister.

In 2002, Phil and Rebecca Jackson and their children Alexandra and Sam returned to Dallas from mission work in Romania. Phil joined Missions Resource Network as Facilitator of European Church Planting with the support of Prestoncrest, and the Jacksons became Prestoncrest members. In 2008, Troy and Tabitha Snowbarger became missionaries to Cambodia, Javier Leon was sponsored as minister of the Spanish-speaking Siempre Familia Iglesia de Cristo (formerly Rosemont Church of Christ) in Fort Worth, and Andrew and Jaime

Hill began their mission in Beijing, China.¹¹

Many Prestoncrest members became short-term missionaries and traveled at their own expense to distant locations. Dr. Jack McCorkle's services were exemplary.

D R . J A C K¹²

Dr. Jack McCorkle was a family physician for 15 years and a radiologist for 30 years. He served for decades in medically needy regions of the world. Don and Linda Barnett first met Dr. Jack when Don served with him on the missions committee at the Webb Chapel Church of Christ. One of their cherished memories is of Dr. Jack traveling to the Ivory Coast of Africa to treat leprosy. Don Barnett recalled: "(Dr. Jack was) a real unsung hero." Linda added: "He would go anywhere with his black bag...one of the most incredible people I have ever known." George Miller recalled: "(Dr. Jack was) not only involved in Guatemala but Cambodia. Where there was a need in the world, he was there."

Dr. Jack's medical mission trips took him to six continents. He led the first group of Christian physicians to Hanoi, Vietnam. Longtime missionary Bill McDonough reported to the Barnetts: "(they) should have seen Dr. Jack going to lunch on the back of a motorbike in Hanoi." His many talents and willingness to travel prompted the International Christian University in Vienna, Austria to name Dr. Jack their president in 1994.¹³

Dr. Jack introduced Prestoncrest to Guatemala with an appeal for funds "to help with the purchase of a mobile clinic van for Dr. Feliciano Lux" (the predecessor of Dr. Raul Duran) in the January 5, 1997 bulletin. Drs. Lux and Duran and evangelists Simeon Sapon and Adan Benavente all received the endorsement of Dr. Jack as Prestoncrest assumed their support. Despite advancing age, Dr. Jack treated many patients every day during the annual

¹¹ Other missionaries (as of 2011): Under the oversight of the Prestoncrest eldership: Djonga Feltoin, Moundou, Chad; Charles and Carolyn Moore, based in Dallas, who publish printed materials for use in Italy; Paul Laschenov, Volgograd, Russia; and Andriasov Artash, Rostov-on-Don, Russia. Receiving partial support from Prestoncrest: Bill McDonough, Nom Phen, Cambodia; Charles Landreth, Character International in Eastern Europe; Doyle Kee, French-speaking nations of Africa; Clyde Antwine, Germany; Elsa Springer, Germany; Charles Coulston, Nairobi, Kenya; and Augustine Calderon, Arcelia, Mexico.

¹² Information on Dr. Jack McCorkle is from interviews with Don and Linda Barnett and George and Carolyn Miller, the program from Dr. Jack's funeral on April 12, 2008, and the author's own experience with Dr. Jack in Guatemala.

¹³ Prestoncrest Bulletin: August 28, 1994.

Guatemala Medical Mission Trip. Each year, one day is reserved for team members to rest, visit the “Mercado,” and act as tourists rather than missionaries. Some years, Dr. Jack traveled on this day to a ranch near Chiquimula, many miles away, where he treated hundreds of people, many of whom had never before seen a doctor.

Dr. Jack suffered a stroke during the 2006 Guatemala trip. He was admitted to a Guatemalan hospital where his medical teammates, led by Dr. Mitch Huebner, cared for him 24 hours a day. Dr. Huebner then assisted him on the flight back to DFW and arranged for his admission to Presbyterian Hospital in Dallas. Dr. Jack’s mission travels had ended but his service to others had not. He was attentive to the needs of his disabled wife Madelon until his death. He died on April 7, 2008 as he was “greeting his wife of 60 years with an afternoon kiss.” He was 83 years old.

The Barnetts recalled Dr. Jack not just for his service to the medically needy but also for his personal service to them. Linda recalled that she would often call Dr. Jack during Don’s long illness and he would soon drive up, ready to answer all of her questions in a kind and reassuring way. Don recalled: “Jack was such a fine person in every way...I didn’t realize (until later) how many cards of encouragement he had sent me over the years.”

Dr. Jack’s family wrote in his funeral program: “He truly let the beauty of Jesus be seen in his life by his concern for those less fortunate. We will fondly remember his twinkling eyes and his million-dollar smile. Our gentle giant has gone to be with his Lord.”

A “gentle giant” he was indeed!

G U A T E M A L A

Dr. Jack, D.G. Wilks, Bill Bledsoe, and George Miller traveled to Antigua, Guatemala in February 1998 on a medical and evangelism trip. In August 1998, Bill Bledsoe and Robert Cano led a group to participate in a “Youth of Guatemala for Christ” rally in Antigua. One thousand teens from across Guatemala were expected and Prestoncrest members furnished ID wristbands, t-shirts, food, and 1,000 Bibles.

Annual mission trips to Guatemala began the following year, 1999, and were led for several years by Robert Cano, whose heart for the Guatemalan people and skill in Spanish greatly facilitated the work of the team. Later leaders were Matt Mazza, Jerry Hosek, Jr. (who also excelled in Spanish), and John Scott Davis.

The relative ease of travel (3 ½ hours from DFW Airport) along with the appreciation of the Guatemalan people has made this the most popular mission destination, beginning the first year when 41 members went. In later years, there were as many as 80. In the early years, Prestoncrest singles formed the core of the group. Participants serve the Guatemalans through medical services and construction projects-usually the construction or re-construction of a home for a Guatemalan church member.

The medical team serves several hundred patients each year. Drs. Mark Ray and Tommy Ballard have made every annual trip and are the core of the medical team. Dr. Ray offers dermatologic and general medical care and Dr. Ballard does vision testing to match Guatemalans with glasses no longer needed by American donors. Dentists are a valuable and greatly needed part of the team and, in recent years, Dr. Courtney Winters has done hearing testing, hearing aid prescription,¹⁴ and the all-important removal of earwax. Gary and Linda Brantley manage the pharmacy on every trip and dispense vitamins, antibiotics, medicines for parasites and amoebas, and other drugs.

The children's ministry, guided by Janet Ray, performs elaborate dramatizations of Bible stories for children as they and their parents wait their turn for the doctors. The construction team improves the dwellings of Guatemalan church members and others by adding space and improving homes with wood framing, concrete foundations and concrete block walls. They often improve and make the electrical service safer as well.

Translators are essential. In more remote areas, Spanish-English translators work alongside local translators who translate from local Indian dialects into Spanish.

Clinics and construction projects are held in various locations in the Antigua area, in

¹⁴ Dr. Winters collaborates with *Sonrisas que Escuchan* (Listening Smiles), directed by Patricia de Munoz, an audiologist in Guatemala City, to provide hearing aids to Guatemalan children.

Chimaltenango, and, in some years, in Solola. In 2006, the team went to Panabaj, located across beautiful Lake Atitlan from Panajachel, near Solola. Hurricane Stan had devastated Panabaj with mudslides the previous fall. Many of the residents had been asleep and were trapped by the mud and died. Homes and other structures throughout the village were still filled with mud and survivors were living in a tent city with minimal amenities and toilet facilities.

Many Prestoncrest members have traveled to Guatemala at least once. Others participate on a Sunday night before each year's trip and dine on pizza in the fellowship hall as they repack pharmaceuticals from bulk packaging into small envelopes for dispensing to Guatemalan patients.

Prestoncrest team members and Guatemalan church members have reached across language and cultural divides to form close friendships and good working relationships. Team members appreciate the many good works done throughout the year by Dr. Duran, Alexandro Marin, Mara Cos, Adan Benavente, Simeon Sapon and their families, as well as many other Guatemalan church members.

G H A N A

Associate Minister Bob Chisholm introduced Prestoncrest to the work in Ghana, West Africa when he came to Prestoncrest in 2002. Unlike Guatemala travelers, those going to Ghana must cross five time zones, spend two days in airplanes and airports, and accept less than luxurious accommodations on their arrival. Despite these difficulties, Bob Chisholm estimates that 20-25 Prestoncrest members have served in Ghana since he came to Prestoncrest in 2002 and introduced us to the Ghana work.

The work of Churches of Christ in Ghana began long before Prestoncrest's involvement. It began with American volunteers drilling water wells to provide clean and reliable water supplies to Ghanaian villages. George E. Chisholm, Bob Chisholm's father, was an early worker in the water well ministry. The ministry now includes the Village of Hope, an orphanage that

is home to more than 200 children, and Heritage Christian University.¹⁵ Graduates of Heritage Christian University have founded more than 800 Church of Christ congregations in Ghana and West Africa. The VOH orphanage is viewed by the Social Services Department of the Ghanaian government as the model orphanage for the country.

Samuel Twumasi is President of Heritage Christian College and preaches for the Nsawam Road Church of Christ in Accra, Ghana, West Africa, the largest Church of Christ congregation outside the United States with a membership of 1,397 and average attendance of 1,500¹⁶. Fred Asare is the executive director of the Village of Hope Orphanage. Tommy L. Chisholm, Bob's brother, is president of Ghana West Africa Missions (GWAM).

Bob Chisholm's own passion for Ghana began in 1989 when he joined the ongoing work of his father.

Bob credits Charles Johnston as an early and enthusiastic worker. His travels to Ghana were first mentioned in the bulletin in 2003 and he has made many trips since. He has since branched out from the Village of Hope to organize support for evangelists in the northern part of Ghana.

Dr. Tommy and Melinda Ballard have taken a special interest in the medical needs of the Village of Hope and have donated a residence for visiting medical personnel.

Other frequent Ghana travelers are Dr. Gary Brantley, Kent Jackman, Pat Jackson, Joan Miller, Ron Moore, Janet Randolph, D. Schieferstein, Randy and Dr. Michelle Tucker, Rachael Wise, Robyn Wise, and Rodney Wise. All have found unique and special ways to use their own skills and talents. Bob Chisholm comments on the work of all of these volunteers: "I just needed to get out of their way."

Mark Kwandwo was an orphan helped by the Village of Hope. In 2008, the *New York Times* published a photograph of Mark, in ragged clothes, with a look of hopelessness in his eyes.¹⁷ Oprah Winfrey, host of the Oprah Winfrey television show, saw the photograph

¹⁵ Heritage Christian University has a very informative and attractive website found at hcuc.edu.gh.

¹⁶ Membership and attendance information provided by Charles Johnston in an e-mail to the author on December 18, 2012.

¹⁷ Mark's photograph can be found on the *New York Times* website: "Africa's World of Forced Labor, in a Six-Year-Old's Eyes."

and dispatched a crew to find Mark and free him from his wretched conditions. What the crew found was that the Village of Hope had already intervened. They found him in school, “wearing a bright school uniform and an equally bright smile.” Mark’s rescue was financed by Pam Cope of Neosho, Missouri who also saw the *New York Times* photograph. Ms. Cope was later interviewed on the Oprah Winfrey show. Ms. Winfrey told Ms. Cope: “I’ve interviewed thousands of people, famous people rich people...but never has anybody deserved a standing ovation more than you today.”¹⁸

H O N D U R A S & U K R A I N E

In July 2007, 65 Prestoncrest singles traveled to Tegucigalpa, Honduras to work with the Baxter Institute, two clinics, and a home for street children.

Prestoncrest bulletins have reported three trips to Ukraine. In June 2005, Sharon Williams, Cheryl Prude, Hattie Fowler, Shawnda Corker,¹⁹ and Lance Atchison traveled to Mariupol, Ukraine to work with orphans, do construction work, and teach the Bible.

In 2006, Robert and Gail Hargrove, Lori Turnbow, Debra Reymundo, David Woodward, Janie McGinty, Tetia Stroud, and Molly Stroud went to Ukraine along with a number of Christians from Los Angeles and Alabama and the Aggies for Christ.

In June 2007, Robert and Gail Hargrove made their second trip to Mariupol and stayed two months. They worked with a children’s home and with Let’s Start Talking.

Y O U T H, C H I L D R E N, & S I N G L E S

Prestoncrest youth went to Mexico in 2002 and again in 2004 where they helped build church buildings in Monterrey. On their return, they spoke enthusiastically of their hard work

¹⁸ Information about the Oprah Winfrey show, including the direct quotations, came from Erik Tryggestad: “Oprah Winfrey Puts Ministry’s ‘Magnificent Seven’ In Spotlight.” *The Christian Chronicle*: September 27, 2008.

¹⁹ Now deceased.

with rebar and concrete. To help finance these trips, the youth served spaghetti suppers to the congregation. Marshall Morris challenged the congregation to pay generously for their spaghetti on April 25, 2004:

“We learned long ago the value of “free will” donations. There is no set price for this meal—you decide what it’s worth. Please remember though, when you’re doing your calculations to consider the love and hard work with which it has been prepared. The same hands that serve it will finish concrete and lay cinder block walls on Mexico Church of Christ buildings this summer! Each participant is trying to raise up to his or her \$750 fee for this trip and all money collected will go toward their trip expenses.”

Not to be outdone, the junior high school youth made a mission trip to Pensacola, Florida in 2000.

Other youth activities of the period included Wilderness Trek, ACU Camp Kadesh, Work Camp, the Dallas Area Wide Youth Series, Sunday night devotionals, and many more.

Prestoncrest’s children continued their active involvement with Leadership Training for Christ, Bible Bowl, ACU Learning to Lead Camp, OCU Camp Impact, and many other activities.

Prestoncrest’s singles were also very active during this time with retreats, work at area children’s home, seminars, and many social events.

T H E S E C O N D I N T E R I M

Prentice Meador’s final Sunday, August 5, 2007, began an eighteen-month interim between pulpit ministers. Unlike the first such interim, between Mike Peters and Prentice Meador, there was no need to seek outside speakers for Sunday worship services. Bob Chisholm, an already experienced preacher, stepped in immediately, assisted by Matt Mazza, another very gifted preacher. Other members of the ministry team filled in as well.

The elders launched an extensive search for a new pulpit minister. As suggestions came in from members, recordings of sermons were obtained and reviewed. A number of members listened to recordings and ranked the candidates. The elders made numerous trips to observe candidates in their home settings. Desirable candidates were contacted for further discussions but none wished to move.

In the fall of 2008, Kelley Grant, Prestoncrest's missionary to Santiago, Chile, suggested his colleague Gordon Dabbs for the Prestoncrest pulpit. Gordon and Ila Dabbs and their children Claudia and David, lived in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and had planted a growing church there. The Dabbs had completed 10 years of service in Rio de Janeiro and were planning to return to the United States. After a number of telephone conversations, Gordon and Ila were invited to Dallas for further discussions. Their passion for the work, their temperaments, and Gordon's considerable educational accomplishments made them an excellent fit. The elders were drawn to his teamwork experience in the mission field. Their selection was announced to the congregation on October 5, 2008. On that date, the Dabbs were introduced to the congregation by way of a video interview. Forty days of prayer for the Dabbs family began on December 23, 2008 and on February 1, 2009 they began their ministry at Prestoncrest.

Chapter Eight

YOUNG AGAIN: 2009-2011

MILESTONES...

2009: Troy and Tabitha Snowbarger become missionaries to Cambodia.

February 1, 2009:
Gordon Dabbs' first Sunday as pulpit minister.

March 1, 2009: Bill Moody retires after 23 years of service as Associate Minister. He is Prestoncrest's longest serving minister to date.

September 30, 2009:
Marshall Morris resigns as Youth Minister.

January 10, 2010:
Tommy Ballard, Leron Blanks, David Howard, Phil Jackson, Ken Polk, Bryan Pruitt, Randy Tucker, and Don Witt installed as elders.

January 24, 2010: Allison Harms resigns as Children's Ministry Director.

April 18, 2010:
Eddie Plemmons joins the staff as Children's Minister.

August 8, 2010: Matt Mazza resigns as Family Minister.

October 17, 2010:
17 new deacons installed.¹

July 17, 2011:
Chace Cobb resigns as Youth Minister.

¹ See Appendix for a complete list of Deacons over the Years

The years 2009-2011 began on a heroic and uplifting note on January 15, 2009 as Captain Chesley B. "Sully" Sullenberger landed U.S. Airways Flight 1549 in the Hudson River after its engines were stopped by a flock of geese. Captain Sullenberger's skill and the prompt response of boats in the area resulted in the rescue of all 150 passengers and 5 crew members as their aircraft slowly disappeared into the river.

In October 2010, people throughout the world watched with relief as 33 Chilean miners were brought to safety through a specially drilled shaft 68 days after an explosion trapped them 2,300 feet underground.

Other encouraging events were the “Arab Spring Movement” beginning in January 2011 and the death of Osama Bin Laden at the hands of U.S. Navy Seals on May 2, 2011.

Less encouraging were the re-election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as president of Iran in June 2009, the shootings at Fort Hood, Texas on November 5, 2009, and the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico in April 2010.

Natural disasters included an earthquake in Haiti in January 2010 with the death of 200,000 (estimated) and an earthquake in Chile the following month with an estimated death toll of 750 and displacement of 1.5 million people.

The financial reversals of 2008 caused pain throughout the world, with the greatest unemployment in a generation and the foreclosure of many homes. Social media, enthusiastically adopted by many Prestoncrest members, had a global impact as citizens of Middle Eastern dictatorships communicated their frustrations and plans for rebellion. Time Magazine named Mark Zuckerberg, founder of Facebook, its Person of the Year for 2010.

Widely reported celebrity events included the death of Michael Jackson on June 25, 2009 at the age of 50 and the marriage of Prince William to Kate Middleton on April 29, 2011.

At Prestoncrest, the leadership and the ministry team grew younger as 39 year-old Gordon Dabbs became Prestoncrest’s fourth pulpit minister in February 2009 and eight new elders and seventeen new deacons were added in 2010. Average weekly attendance was 1322¹ in 2008 and 1224 in 2011. Bible Class participation remained very high with more than 75% of worship attendees also attending class. Average weekly contribution decreased somewhat from \$84,981² in 2008 to \$76,047 in 2011.

¹ Excluding the weeks at the Hillcrest Church.

² Corrected for inflation. The actual figure is \$80,934.

G O R D O N

Gordon Dabbs began his first Prestoncrest sermon series, *“Reignmaker: Studies on the Sermon on the Mount,”* on February 1, 2009. Gordon came with a wealth of academic preparation and extensive experience in the mission field.

Gordon grew up in Neosho, Missouri in a Christian family: “[I] went to church from when I was in the nursery. My dad was an elder... Sunday morning, Sunday night, Wednesday night. Back in those days you didn’t have ‘innovations’ like small groups... I have two older sisters and all three of us are still members of Churches of Christ.”

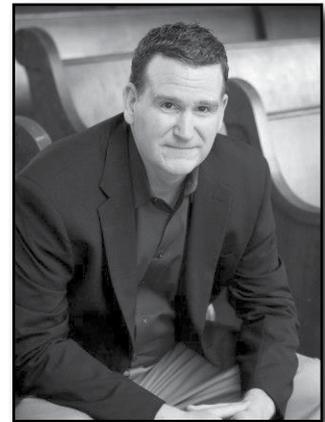


Photo by Stacey Collodi

Gordon’s family is highly educated. His father is a physician. His mother has a masters’ degree in counseling and psychology. One sister is an attorney. Gordon earned his bachelor’s degree in speech-communication with a minor in Bible at Oklahoma Christian and an MA in Ethics and PhD in philosophy at the University of Oklahoma. He later received a masters’ degree in Biblical Interpretation from Lubbock Christian University³. He observes: “education opens doors; it doesn’t shut doors.” When asked about his choice of philosophy he says it was “my favorite class at Oklahoma Christian” and it was “the most fun!”⁴

His goal was to be a professor at a Christian college and preach on weekends. He gained ministry experience as a youth intern at his home church in Missouri. Later, as a graduate student at OU, he served as campus minister intern at the Alameda Church of Christ in Norman, Oklahoma under Dan Archer⁵ and then became the campus minister when Dan retired. He enjoyed campus ministry because he found young people who were “excited by faith” and participated by choice (unlike youth ministry in which the decision to participate is often driven by parents). He says that the ministry “doubled or tripled in size” under his direction. The Dabbs have many happy memories of their time at Alameda. Importantly, daughter Claudia was born while they were there.

³ Gordon’s degree in Biblical interpretation has served him well. His sermons present scripture with amazing depth and understanding.

⁴ Gordon’s very positive views about education are worth considering by young people planning their futures.

⁵ Dan was one of the author’s college roommates.

Gordon met Ila in Bible class at the Alameda church. She became a Christian while dating Gordon. Ila's background is quite different from Gordon's. She was born in Texas and her parents divorced when she was six months old. During school years she lived in Enid, Oklahoma with her mother. She spent summers with her father. "I come from somewhat of an abusive situation with my Dad." When her mother later re-married, she "did some fostering out" to another family for her last two years in high school. She then attended Oklahoma University and transferred to Oklahoma Christian for her last semester. She received a masters' degree in human relations from OU.

They first went to Rio de Janeiro with a Let's Start Talking group in 1993. Gordon remembers that experience as "the hook that God used to call us into missions." Soon after their return they were invited to a dinner meeting of a Brazil mission team being recruited by the Continent of Great Cities⁶ ministry. Gordon's reason for attending the dinner was: "Max Lucado was there and it would be fun to meet him." After the dinner meeting, they began thinking seriously about a mission to Brazil.

Their move (five years later) came after a time of decision, prayer, and preparation. Ila recalls: "(it) took us a while to make the decision. That never crossed our minds, even after we did Let's Start Talking. We were not all of a sudden 'we are going to be missionaries.' Things just kept happening that called us back to Rio...maybe that was God calling us...we spent a year praying about it."

Gordon views their 10-year mission to Brazil as "such a rich experience-highs and lows... unique experiences we are not going to have here. The church is there and virtually on its own (with weekly attendance more than 200)...Our marriage and family is better and different than it would have been."

The Dabbs recruited the other members of the Rio team. There was some tension in the new team that resolved over time and the group became very close. They have remained close, even after the Dabbs moved to Dallas.

The team learned some Portuguese before leaving for Brazil and then studied Portuguese

⁶ Continent of Great Cities is now Great Cities Missions.

intensively once in Brazil. Gordon's Portuguese became so fluent that he successfully hosted a weekly television program in Portuguese, a role he enjoyed. Some programs were filmed on the beach where the best lighting was at 5:30 AM and, if one waited till later in the day, "people would be walking behind you in bikinis and Speedos and that doesn't do well in an evangelical TV program." He became something of a celebrity from his television exposure. In restaurants or other public places, people would say: "That's 'Pastor Wesley'"; my wife and I watch you on television." The Dabbs planned their departure from Rio well in advance so that Brazilian Christians and other missionaries would have time to prepare to take over their roles.

Gordon did not know that Prestoncrest was looking for a pulpit minister as he prepared to leave Rio but was told of the opening by Kelley Grant who then told Prestoncrest about Gordon. A telephone call from George Miller was followed by a call from four elders that resulted in an invitation to visit Prestoncrest for a week in the fall of 2008.

That week was a positive experience for both the elders and for the Dabbs. It began with a Saturday night dinner in the fellowship hall catered by Babe's Fried Chicken Restaurant. The elder couples were immediately taken by the friendliness of the Dabbs⁸ and their obvious "fit" for Prestoncrest. The Dabbs were equally impressed. Gordon recalls: "It [our interview week] was a really good week...there was no question but what God was calling us." Ila recalled: "One of the elders came over and prayed with us during prayer time and that meant a lot to me...some of the songs were songs we were accustomed to singing in Portuguese [and that] made it all the more special."

Ila further recalled: "When we were interviewing, I went to Ladies Bible Class and then to lunch afterwards...I loved the transparency that I saw in that group. I felt that there was a real openness; in Ladies Bible Class we can talk about hard-to-talk-about issues and still love each other. This was another confirmation that this is where God wanted us to be."

Gordon and Ila Dabbs have confirmed those first impressions by their level of service and commitment. They both have a heart for reaching out to others. Ila connects her care and feeling for others to her own difficult background. "Me not feeling cared for growing up

⁷ Wesley is Gordon's middle name. Gordon means "fat" in Portuguese.

⁸ And they had just arrived from an overnight flight from Brazil.

is part of my personality. I really do want to help people who hurt." Ila's degree in human relations from OU was obtained, not as a career move, but as a way to learn more about counseling people in need. She can often be seen at worship services speaking and praying with others. Claudia was 11 years old and David was eight years old when they came to Prestoncrest. Claudia and David⁹ have become a very important part of the congregation and of their respective age groups.

Gordon and Ila commented further on Prestoncrest during their interview with the author:

Gordon: *"[Prestoncrest is] a generous church, a loving church.
It is a church that has a good grasp of who it is."*

*"It is a loving church and that is a big deal.
There are things you can get wrong but if you get that wrong there is no way to fix it."*

*"In my role I get a lot of encouragement...they take care of our kids...
a month ago an older couple called and said 'We want to bring dinner by'...
that stuff happens all the time...a lot of churches will take care of you in your hour of
need but this church goes beyond that."*

Ila: *"We have felt nothing but welcome and love from Prestoncrest...
overwhelmingly...to extend that love to others I really feel like is my mission here."*

"My heart is in helping people."

Gordon's ministry colleagues appreciate his leadership. Bob Chisholm commented:

*"He created a second staff meeting of just ministers: very open, safe, gut-level place to
be, able to share ideas, frustrations. Gordon doesn't dominate but he definitely leads.
It has pulled us tightly together. He has not made the assumption that he can read the
church in terms of what sermon material is needed. He wants other ministers to help
with this. Takes all kinds of notes of others' ideas and comments."*

⁹ The author (David) and his wife (Claudia) were (of course) impressed by the names of the Dabbs' children. Claudia and David Dabbs have been very patient with our naming them "the other Claudia" and "the other David."

Bob observes that he was 15 years younger than Prentice Meador and is 15 years older than Gordon. Gordon consults Bob frequently for advice and counsel.¹⁰

M I N I S T E R S

Gordon's first Prestoncrest associates were Bob Chisholm, Small Group and Spiritual Formation Minister; Gary Cochran, Singles Minister; Michael Collodi, Communications Minister; John Scott Davis, Worship Minister; Allison Harms, Children's Minister; Matt Mazza, Family Minister; Bill Moody, Equipping and Empowering Minister; Marshall Morris and Chace Cobb, Youth Ministers; Robert Stolte, Adult Education Minister; and Brad Weldon, Minister of Administration. By the end of 2011, Chace Cobb, Allison Harms, Matt Mazza, Bill Moody, and Marshall Morris had resigned and Eddie Plemmons had joined the staff as Children's Minister.

E L D E R S

Nine Prestoncrest elders began 2009: Gary Brantley, Bill Buckley, Sr., Jeff Clevenger, Charles Johnston, George Miller, Todd Miller, David Sowell, Fred White, and D.G. Wilks. In early 2010, the eldership almost doubled in size as eight new elders were added: Tommy Ballard, Leron Blanks, David Howard, Phil Jackson, Ken Polk, Bryan Pruitt, Randy Tucker and Don Witt. David Sowell resigned on April 18, 2010 and Fred White died on March 9, 2011.

Bob McAfee commented: "I'm glad that we have expanded the eldership. I'm glad that we have more diverse opinion in the eldership than we have had..."

S P I R I T U A L F O R M A T I O N

Bob Chisholm began his spiritual formation ministry on a small scale when he first came to Prestoncrest. Michael Collodi (*then working at Texas Instruments*), Jamie Liebl, and James

¹⁰ With the resignation of Prentice Meador and then Bill Moody, Bob became Prestoncrest's oldest minister. Subsequently, when Matt Mazza resigned, Bob became Prestoncrest's longest serving (current) minister.

Gray were his first spiritual formation group. They met weekly in the early morning for one year. Bob then led one or two groups each year and shared preaching duties. The ministry expanded in 2009 when Gordon Dabbs came to the pulpit. Some men's groups now meet at 5:30 AM, some at mid-day, and some mixed groups meet in homes at night. Bob emphasizes the need for a group of no more than four or five.

He defines spiritual formation as "to nurture a person's inner life and practice the spiritual disciplines." It recognizes that change is a slow process. Bob prepares books for his groups with an anthology of spiritual readings from writers both ancient and modern, scriptures, hymns, and prayers with space for each participant to write his/her own thoughts. Each week, a different discipline is emphasized such as silence, solitude, meditation, fasting, spiritual reading, and journaling. Sessions begin with a single question: "What inspired, puzzled, or troubled you this week [from the assigned readings]?"

Bob was recently pleased to have two elders tell him they could tell which of the men of the church were in his spiritual formation groups by their conversation in the church foyer. These men "weren't just talking about the Cowboys or the Mavericks. They were talking about spiritual things."

Gordon Dabbs, a number of elders, and the author have all been part of spiritual formation groups.

B I B L E S T U D Y

Robert Stolte's leadership of the adult education program resulted in new Bible classes such as 24/7 and C-Life. Sunday morning classes were re-named "Connections." Retired Men of the Congregation enjoy a weeknight class taught by Wayne Williams. James Prather¹¹ shared his extensive knowledge of Jewish history, customs, and scripture and their connection to the New Testament with a number of Bible classes. Prospective Prestoncrest members learned more of the congregation through the "PC Connect" class.

¹¹ James is now a graduate student in theology at Abilene Christian University.

O U T R E A C H

Outreach to people in need became a greater focus of the singles and youth ministries who found many ways to serve others.

The singles ministry, led by Gary Cochran, reached amazing levels of service to the community during these years. Examples include the Cover Dallas With Love ministry in which singles and other Prestoncrest members donate coats and blankets for people in need. They assisted GriefWorks, assisted in upgrading the building of the Rosemont Church of Christ (Siempre Familia Iglesia de Cristo) in Fort Worth, assisted victims of Hurricane Ike¹² in Galveston, worked with Justice Revival Dallas, raised funds for the Dry Bones Ministry, played kickball and ran a marathon to support the Mercy Project in Ghana, assisted at Camp Erin for young people who have lost loved ones from death and Camp of the Hills for inner city youth in the Austin area, served as Big Brothers and Big Sisters for teens aging out of foster care, met with CitySquare to seek opportunities to serve the city, worked with the Support the Kid event for children with cancer, sponsored outreach to the Oak Cliff Community, gave Angel Tree Christmas gifts for children, and supported the New Friends, New Life Fundraiser.

The high school youth took the Texas Eagle train to Chicago in 2009 to participate in an inner city outreach, and the junior high school youth made a mission trip to Galveston to work with the singles in the Hurricane Ike relief effort.

As Prestoncrest's singles and youth worked in service and evangelistic activities, our children were prepared for their own lives of spirituality and service. The children's ministry was organized into the Nursery for ages 0-2, the Backyard for 2 year-olds to PreK/age 5, "The Clubhouse" for Kindergarten to third grade and "The Attic" for grades 4-6 ("the Tweens").

Children 3rd grade and older and their parents were invited to "Jump Start," a 45-minute

¹² Hurricane Ike hit Galveston on September 13, 2008.

class to learn about baptism and a personal relationship with Jesus. Older children participated in Leadership Training for Christ, Bible Bowl, and Learning to Lead Camp at ACU. Other outreach included the ongoing Packs and Pencils and Soldier Care ministries. Thanksgiving food baskets were distributed to needy families each year and there was an annual toy drive. The 2009 toy drive served more than 1,000 children.

The JobNet ministry became the Joblink ministry on November 25, 2007, led by Bill Matheney, Don Flatt, and Jorrie Wages. It meets on Monday nights at Preston Place and an elder often joins the meeting to lead a prayer and express support to the job seekers. Special programs that covered interview and job search skills have been presented by James Box, Jack Patterson, Mike Overby, Lisa Miller, John Nosal, and Rodney Anderson.

F I N A L C O M M E N T S

Prestoncrest's first 40 years are now history. The author hopes these pages have captured the story in a way that will inspire those, many of them yet unborn, who will take us into the next 40 years and beyond. With this in mind, I close with a number of quotes from my interviews that were not included in the preceding chapters but that I believe are helpful as we look to the future.

Bill Buckley, Sr.:¹³ *"I am optimistic (about the future). Real happy about the slates of new elders and new deacons; they seem to be working together very well. An abundance of talent and abundance of spiritual depth."*

(The challenge): "To seek God through his word with a spiritual perspective."

Kay Buckley: *"Plus a lot of prayer."*

"It [Prestoncrest] is a wonderful place to be. To make friends. I love it."

¹³ Now deceased.

*“Spiritually uplifting. Worship services are wonderful.
Great involvement of our members.”*

Bill Buckley, Sr.: *“That’s not just our opinion;
it is the opinion of a lot of people at Prestoncrest.”*

Barbara Cooper: *“I’ve never been in a community like this...
when I hurt, you hurt...and that’s the way it’s supposed to be.”*

“My brother died in 1995 [in Washington, DC]. I was working at Texas Instruments in McKinney when I got the call. I left McKinney and Hulin Fowler was standing there [at her mother’s house] with a round-trip ticket to go to Washington to be with Mom [Theresa Simpson].”

*“Howard Wilson¹⁴ came forward and said he had AIDS.
The outpouring of love and people who just came to him that Sunday.
[Howard] came forward hurt but we helped to heal that hurt by embracing him.”*

“The people, the teaching, the service projects... you find everything here.”

Dottie White: *“Fred and I came to love Prestoncrest...I have such a love in my heart for Prestoncrest...When I lost Fred, Prestoncrest continues to wrap its arms around me. Food, visits, calls...I can’t tell you what all...the most caring, giving, loving church.”*

(The future): “I would like to see more growth spiritually...Sunday night as full as Sunday morning...that people would want to be there...more new Christians because we are light to them...strong families...everyone so eager to be there because of what is offered...to be better when they leave than when they came.”

Harold Duncan: *(The Prestoncrest Church):
“On the right track and has been for many years.”*

¹⁴ Now deceased.

Bob Chisholm: *(The future): "We have a very close staff. Very optimistic about the current staff. We need to speak the language of our culture. Our community is changing around us as it grows north."*

Pam Chisholm: *"The Valley View Mall planning could be such an opportunity to reach out."*

Pat Scott: *(What she would tell her grandchildren's generation): "I would like them to listen for God's prompting and not get ahead of Him so much with your own plans and look for the areas that need the Lord. Need to learn to be sensitive to situations and the times. Our culture moves so fast that our young people have a hard time slowing time and being sensitive."*

(Future of Prestoncrest): "I am praying that God's hand is still very much in it. I am praying that our leaders will keep it biblically oriented. One of the things that elders are charged with is sound doctrine."

"Never quit trying to spread His word and His will."

Bob Wooldridge¹⁵: *(For the future): "I just hope we can continue to have a good solid eldership. Todd [Miller] used to say: 'Just keep it down the middle of the fairway. Don't get over in the woods somewhere.' I am not saying that nothing changes. I am not against that at all. You get weak elders and you are in trouble."*

Sharon Wooldridge: *"You can learn that you can disagree and it's ok. It does not have to be a killing thing to have differences of opinion."*

¹⁵ Now deceased.

Chapter Nine

LOOKING FORWARD

Thoughts from Prestoncrest's current Preaching Minister, Gordon Dabbs PhD

There are far too many men and women who have been a part of our history of a congregation to count. Just think about it! Hundreds at Prestoncrest have led ministries, have taught Bible classes, have served as elders, deacons, and have represented the kingdom all over the world as Prestoncrest missionaries.

Maybe it's a good thing that we can't list every individual who has been an important part of our story. Perhaps the impossibility of such an undertaking does us the service of pointing to the One who is behind it all. After all, the architect of the Prestoncrest experiment has been none other than Almighty God. All of the glory, after all, belongs to the Lord of Lords. Anything good, anything of worth that has happened in the history of this church, and anything praiseworthy that will happen in our future together, is due to the One who has saved us by his grace and empowered us with his own Holy Spirit.

In my view, our best days are ahead of us. Despite all the good that has been done, I believe that the Lord has many more chapters yet in the life of this congregation. Why such optimism? The most important is the fact that we serve a mighty God! This church belongs to him and he will surely do great things in coming days. Also, I am optimistic because Prestoncrest remains a very, very, young congregation. The number of young adults at the congregation is growing. Young couples and their children fill the pews on Sunday mornings. The nursery is busting at the seams. Yes, the future appears to be a bright one for Prestoncrest.

Part of moving forward — an essential part — is looking back. As the prophet Jeremiah encouraged, *"Set up road signs; put up guideposts. Mark well the path by which you came"* (Jeremiah 31:21). We mark the path by which we have come because we understand that it marks our trajectory into the future which the Lord has prepared for us.

Let's be honest and acknowledge that a lot of churches do not care much for marking the path of their past. Some ignore the past. Others pretend they do not have a history. Some congregations are, to be honest, ashamed of their past. Others have become congregational chameleons — constantly changing and adopting all the latest fads and fashions of other churches. But at Prestoncrest, we mark the path by which we came because we believe it reveals where God is leading us.

As Dr. Sowell has faithfully documented in this book, Prestoncrest has a history of being a place that feels like home to people. This church is more than a dynamic worship service — *it's a family*. Prestoncrest has, and will continue to be, a spiritual home where life-giving relationships flourish. As we move into the next chapters God is writing through our lives, we are looking for old and new ways to connect with each other as brothers and sisters in Christ. Our mission field is, first and foremost, Dallas, Texas. We will go out into our neighborhoods, places of work, and schools, to share the message of Jesus with the lost, and welcome them into our warm fellowship.

One final marker from our past that is pointing the way is the love of Scripture that was a lamp to our feet since the beginning. Men like George Bailey, Mike Peters, and Prentice Meador opened God's word to challenge, inspire, and at times, correct us. In the pages of the Bible, we encountered the *Passion for God* and *Compassion for People* that evolved into the clear vision that we have as a church today.

As we are looking back on our first forty years, we are also moving forward in faith. Together, the body of believers at Prestoncrest are doing just that — *believing*. We believe that GOD IS NOT DONE WITH US. We believe that the Lord's church at Prestoncrest is just getting warmed up. We believe that Jesus has big, big, plans for the future of this congregation.

With gratitude for the past and great expectations for the future,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gordon Dabbs". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gordon Dabbs, Ph.D.

Preaching Minister, Prestoncrest Church of Christ

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MINISTERS & INTERNS OVER THE YEARS

Pulpit Ministers:

George Bailey

March 22, 1972 - May 31, 1987

Mike Peters

February 1, 1981 - November 1, 1987

Dr. Prentice Meador, Died November 25, 2008.

August 7, 1988 - August 2007

Dr. Gordon Dabbs

February 1, 2009 - present

Associate Ministers:

Harold "Buster" Duncan

Associate: Jun 11, 1972 - May 7, 1978
& Aug 1, 1984 - Feb 23, 1986

Allen Huff

Associate: Aug 6, 1974 - Feb 16, 1975 &
Aug 6, 1978 - Aug 31, 1980 (*Missionary to
Brazil: Feb 16, 1975 - Aug 6, 1978*)

James Voss

Youth & Educ: Feb 20, 1977 - Dec 31, 1978

Rodney Cox

Youth & Education: Mar 4, 1979 - early
1981 (*exact date not known*)

David Floyd

Youth: May 10, 1981 - Feb 27, 1984

Hilton Terry, Died November 16, 2003.

Associate Minister & Missionary in
Residence: 1983 - 1989 (*Made many trips to
French-speaking regions & other mission fields.
Between trips he served as Associate Minister*).

Russ Bartee

Youth & Family: May 7, 1984 - Aug 1, 1988

Bill Moody

Associate: Mar 30, 1986 - Sept 1993
Education: Sept 1993 - Feb 2005
Senior Adults: Feb 2005 - Mar 1, 2009

Steve Stoeltje

Youth & Family: Sep 18, 1988 - Nov 11, 1990

Larry Brown

Youth: Jul 1, 1991 - Aug 20, 1995

Eddie Couch, Died November 8, 2004.

Senior Adults: Aug 11, 1991 - Nov 8, 2004

David Malone

Associate: Sept 1, 1993 - Feb 1, 2001

David Moses

Youth: Dec 10, 1995 - Sept 3, 2000

Will Herring

Singles: Sept 14, 1997 - Aug 28, 2005

Matt Mazza

Children: May 10, 1998 - Jan 1, 2004
Family: Jan 1, 2004 - Aug 8, 2010

John Scott Davis

Music & Worship (*volunteer*):
 Nov 14, 1999 - Jan 1, 2004
 Music, Worship, & Children:
 Jan 1, 2004 - Sept 7, 2008
 Worship & Adult Education:
 Sept 7, 2008 - Nov 14, 2010
 Worship: Nov 14, 2010 - present

Bob McAfee (*volunteer*)

Office Administrator: Oct 1999 - Jul 2001

Marshall Morris

Youth: Jan 19, 2001 - Sept 30, 2009

Brad Weldon

Administration: Jul 8, 2001 - present

Bob Chisholm

Small Group, Spiritual Formation, &
 Preaching: Aug 4, 2002 - present

Robert Stolte

Adult Education: Feb 20, 2005 - present
 (*Missionary to Germany: Jun 2000 - Feb 2005*)

Gary Cochran

Singles: May 21, 2006 - present

Michael Collodi

Communications: Mar 18, 2007 - June 30, 2013

Chace Cobb

Youth: Sept 16, 2007 - Jul 17, 2011

Allison Harms

Children: Sept 7, 2008 - Jan 24, 2010

Eddie Plemmons

Children: Apr 18, 2010 - Aug 31, 2012

Rebecca Sutton

Children: October 2012 - present

Ministry Interns:¹

Tim Richardson, *Youth, Summer 1973*

Eric Fridge, *Youth, Summer 1990*

Darin Hollingsworth, *Youth, Summer 1994*

David Clevenger, *Minister, 1995 - 2000*

Matt Mazza, *Youth, Summers 1995 & 1996*

Children, Summers, then part-time, 1997 - 1998

Paul Wood, *Youth, Summer 1997*

Will Herring, *Staff Intern for Singles, 1997*

Gary Albritton, *Youth, Summers 1999-2002*

Mark Wylie, *Singles & College, 2000 - 2003*

Robby Day, *Youth, Summer 2001*

Amber Holley, *Youth, Summers 2002-2004*

Collin Packer, *Summer Preaching Intern 2003*

Chace Cobb, *Youth, Summers 2004-2007*

Anna Tinius, *Youth, Summer 2005*

Colin Carroll, *Youth, Summer 2010*

Morgan McCarty, *Youth, Summer 2010*

Haley Weldon, *Children, Summer 2010*

Blake Baxter, *Youth, Summer 2011*

Natalie Bressert, *Youth, Summer 2011*

Holly Howard, *Children, Summer 2012*

Jacob Groves, *Youth, Summer 2012*

Morgan McCarty, *Youth, Summer 2012*

Michael Pipkin, *Children, Summer 2013*

Mary Ellen Pipkin, *Children, Summer 2013*

April Young, *Youth, Summer 2013*

Dan Dudney, *Youth, Summer 2013*

¹ These names were taken from bulletins. There may have been others.

ELDERS OVER THE YEARS

May 21, 1973:

Installed:

George Bailey
A.M. Holcomb
Ralph Immel
Resigned June 30, 1974. Died July 23, 1998.¹
Robert C. Scott
David Vanderpool

March 13, 1977:

Installed:

Leon Loveless
David Peeler, Sr.

Existing:

George Bailey
A.M. Holcomb
Robert C. Scott
David Vanderpool
Resigned November 6, 1977.²

December 28, 1980:

Installed:

Bill Buckley, Sr.

Existing:

George Bailey
A.M. Holcomb
Leon Loveless
David Peeler, Sr.
Robert C. Scott

October 2, 1983:

Installed:

C. Todd Miller
Fred White
Bob Wooldridge

Existing:

George Bailey
Resigned April 10, 1988.
Bill Buckley, Sr.
A.M. Holcomb
Resigned April 10, 1988. Deceased.
Leon Loveless
Resigned November 16, 1986.³ Deceased.
David Peeler, Sr.
Robert C. Scott
Resigned October 12, 1986. Died March 4, 1994.

December 18, 1988:

Installed:

Leron Blanks
Gary Brantley
Jerry Pierce
R.T. Tyler
Resigned November 20, 1994. Died January 8, 2004.

Existing:

Bill Buckley, Sr.
C. Todd Miller
David Peeler, Sr.
Resigned January 29, 1989. Died July 13, 2009.
Fred White
Bob Wooldridge
Resigned July 21, 1993. Died January 3, 2014.

¹ The dates of death are given, when known.

² David Vanderpool later served as an elder at Skillman Church of Christ.

³ Leon Loveless later served as an elder for the Holly Lake Church of Christ.

December 3, 1995:

Installed:

Jim Barrett

John Duncum

Resigned October 20, 1996.⁴

Charles Johnston

George Miller

Mark Wallis

Resigned April 22, 2001.⁵

Existing:

Leron Blanks

Gary Brantley

Bill Buckley, Sr.

C. Todd Miller

Jerry Pierce

Resigned August 27, 2000.

Fred White

January 6, 2002:

Installed:

Jim Burrow

Resigned November 2, 2003.

Jeff Clevenger

David Sowell

D.G. Wilks

Existing:

Jim Barrett

Resigned April 28, 2002.

Leron Blanks

Resigned November 2, 2003.

Gary Brantley

⁴ John Duncum later served as an elder for the A&M Church of Christ in College Station.

⁵ Mark Wallis later served as an elder of the Littleton Church of Christ in Colorado.

(Existing elders 2002, Cont'd...)

Bill Buckley, Sr.

Charles Johnston

George Miller

C. Todd Miller

Fred White

January 10, 2010:

Installed:

Tommy Ballard

Resigned June 24, 2012.

Leron Blanks

David Howard

Phil Jackson

Ken Polk

Bryan Pruitt

Randy Tucker

Don Witt

Existing:

Gary Brantley

Bill Buckley, Sr.⁶ Died November 29, 2013.

Jeff Clevenger

Charles Johnston

George Miller

C. Todd Miller

David Sowell

Resigned April 18, 2010.

Fred White

Died March 9, 2011.

D.G. Wilks

⁶ Bill Buckley, Sr. is distinguished as Prestoncrest's longest serving elder: his term was one month shy of 33 years at the time of his death. He served alongside every Prestoncrest elder except for Ralph Immel and David Vanderpool.

DEACONS OVER THE YEARS

A total of 149 men have served as Prestoncrest deacons. The longest now serving is Bob McAfee who was appointed on October 2, 1983. Eighteen deacons later served as Prestoncrest elders. Two Prestoncrest deacons are known to have later served other churches as elder: Don Crisp at Highland Oaks in Dallas and Tim Maynard at Park Plaza in Tulsa.

Deacons, past and present, are listed alphabetically along with their dates of appointment. Those marked with * are serving as of October 9, 2013. Those marked with # later served as Prestoncrest elders. *Deacons listed in italics are now deceased.*

Those listed as “original” were installed on August 5, 1973. Bill Wilson was their first chairman.

Dane Altman*	5/7/1989	John Cawyer*	2/9/1997	John Duncum	12/13/1992
Mark Anthony	12/7/2003	Justin Chamblee*	10/17/2010	Kirk Ellison*	10/17/2010
Wade Arnold	12/7/2003	Richard Chance	10/2/1983	Scott Farrell	2/9/1997
Tommy Ballard #.....	12/13/1992	Ron Chitwood.....	Original	Jim Faulkner.....	5/7/1989
Buddy Barnes*	2/9/1997	Don Clevenger.....	12/7/2003	Don Flatt.....	12/7/2003
Jim Barrett #.....	2/28/1980	Jeff Clevenger #.....	12/28/1980	Hulin Fowler	Original
Scott Biggers*	12/7/2003	Matt Coats*	10/17/2010	Tom Fowler	5/7/1989
Jeff Blanks.....	2/9/1997	Michael Collodi.....	12/7/2003	Greg French*	10/17/2010
Leron Blanks #.....	9/10/1978	Tim Couch	5/7/1989	John Fuller*	2/9/1997
James Box	10/2/1983	Don Crisp	Original	Larry Galbraith*	12/7/2003
Gary Brantley #	9/10/1978	Mark Culwell.....	12/13/1992	Jamey Gallemore*	12/7/2003
Terry Brantley*	12/7/2003	Brian Davis*	10/17/2010	Bill Garrett.....	Original
Pat Brower	Original	Jerold Davis	5/7/1989	Don Garrett.....	12/13/1992
<i>Bill Buckley, Sr. #.....</i>	<i>Original</i>	John Scott Davis.....	2/9/1997	Jimmy Garrison	5/7/1989
Bill Buckley, Jr.....	10/17/2010	Ron DeArman.....	10/2/1983	James Goode*	12/7/2003
Jim Caldwell	12/13/1992	Randall DePriest	12/13/1992	Drayton Green*	12/7/2003
Robert Cano	2/9/1997	George Dillman.....	Original	Jim Griffin*	12/7/2003
Don Carroll*	10/17/2010	John Douglas	10/2/1983	Jack Griggs	10/2/1983

Chris Grubbs* 10/17/2010
 Darryl Halbert..... 2/9/1997
 Scott Harper* 10/17/2010
 Bobby Harrison* 2/9/1997
 Ron Head..... 12/13/1992
 Dale Hearn 12/7/2003
 Martin Hearne..... 10/2/1983
 Stan Henry..... 10/2/1983
 Jack Hestand..... 10/2/1983
 Kevin Hinds..... 5/7/1989
 Ken Hird 5/7/1989
 John Hodge..... Original
 Terry Hooten 12/7/2003
Jerry Hosek, Sr. 9/10/1978
 David House..... 5/7/1989
 David Howard # 2/9/1997
 Bryant Huckabay 5/7/1989
 Darren Hughes* 10/17/2010
 John Immel..... 2/9/1997
 Brad Jackson..... 2/9/1997
 Jerry Jackson 5/7/1989
 Phil Jackson # 12/13/1992
 David James 12/28/1980
 Chuck Jennings 5/7/1989
 Charles Johnston # 10/2/1983
 David Kennedy..... 12/7/2003
 Matt Kimball* 12/7/2003
 Paul Lee* 2/9/1997
 Jamie Liebl* 12/7/2003
 C.B. Luce..... 12/13/1992
 Steve Mack..... 5/7/1989
 Michael Maddox* 10/17/2010
 Hal Magee* 12/7/2003

Bill Matheny* 5/7/1989
 Tim Maynard 5/7/1989
 Bob McAfee* 10/2/1983
 Gordon McArthur..... 5/7/1989
 Alan McAulay* 2/9/1997
 Mark McClure* 10/17/2010
 George Miller # 5/7/1989
 Chris Miller 12/7/2003
 Steven Miller* 12/7/2003
 C. Todd Miller # Original
Todd Davis Miller 2/9/1997
 Ron Mitchell 12/7/2003
 Brad Moore..... 10/17/2010
 Marvin North* 5/7/1989
 Kris Oliver 2/9/1997
 John Pauley 5/7/1989
 David Peeler, Jr. 12/28/1980
 Mike Pipkin* 2/9/1997
 Ken Polk # 10/2/1983
 Matt Pool* 10/17/2010
 Joel Porter 12/7/2003
 Eric Powell 12/7/2003
 Bryan Pruitt # 12/7/2003
 Joe Ramsey..... 2/9/1997
 Mark Ray 12/7/2003
 David Redding 12/13/1992
 Len Reeves* 12/7/2003
 Russ Renfro..... 5/7/1989
 Ernie Richardson* 12/7/2003
 Phil Savage..... 12/28/1980
 Robert Savage..... 10/2/1983
John Paul Scott..... Original
Bill Shockley..... 12/28/1980

Ken Smalling 2/9/1997
 Ernest Smith 10/2/1983
 Mike Smith, III* 10/17/2010
 David Sowell # 10/2/1983
 Gene Stallings..... Original
 Steve Stegall* 2/9/1997
John Strickland..... Original
Richard Tarrant..... 12/7/2003
 Buzz Taylor Original
 Gerald Taylor 5/7/1989
 Michael Taylor* 10/17/2010
 Jeff Thomas* 12/7/2003
 Randy Tucker # 12/13/1992
 James Tuggle 9/10/1978
R.T. Tyler #..... Original
 Doug Walker 2/9/1997
 Mark Wallis # 10/2/1983
 Brad Weldon 2/9/1997
 Jack Wells 5/7/1989
 Bill Wharton..... Original
Fred White # 9/10/1978
 Don Wilks # 10/2/1983
 Bill Wilson..... Original
 Don Witt # 2/9/1997
 David Woodward..... 10/17/2010
Bob Wooldridge #..... Original
 John Wooldridge 10/2/1983
 Tim Young..... 5/7/1989
 Larry Yurcho 10/2/1983

* = Currently Serving, as of 10/2013

= Also Served as Prestoncrest Elder

STAFF OVER THE YEARS

Office Staff:

Sue Kucera, *Administrative Assistant*
(Prestoncrest's first "Church Secretary")
1974 – September 1979

Gail Taylor, *Administrative Assistant*
1974

Charlotte Vess, *Administrative Assistant*
1975

**Bette Darrow, *Accounting*
& *Administrative Assistant***
1975 – September 2004

**Patt McGee, *Administrative Assistant*
& *Church Bulletin***
1976 – September 2004
(Died March 28, 2011)

Malinda Gowan, *Administrative Assistant*
January 1987 – December 2000

**Sharon (Sherry) Priest, *Office Manager,*
*Administrative Assistant***
May 1987 – August 2010

Jennifer Liebl, *Administrative Assistant*
January 1995 – June 1996

Donna Fritz, *Administrative Assistant*
1996

Elaine Bent, *Administrative Assistant*
1998

Nancy Fowler, *Administrative Assistant*
June 1998 – July 2001
(retired, rehired Dec 2010 – see next column)

Leslie Dennis, *Administrative Assistant*
1999

Kathy Johnson, *Accounting*
January 1999 – May 2000

Karen Griffin, *Administrative Assistant*
June 1999 – July 2000

Teresa Holifield, *CPA, Accounting (p/t)
June 2000 – present

Jill Firestone, *Administrative Assistant
July 2000 – present

***Sherry Jackson, *Accounting &*
*Administrative Assistant***
November 2000 – present

Jean O'Toole, *Administrative Assistant*
November 2000 – May 2003

Barbara Cooper, *Administrative Assistant
January 2001 – present

Hayley Jennings Eoff,
Administrative Assistant
May 2001 – December 2001

Lori Neville, *Administrative Assistant*
January 2002 – July 2002

Lisa Phillips, *Administrative Assistant*
December 2001 – November 2002

Angie Maddox, *Graphic Designer (p/t)
June 2004 – present

**Betty Moore, *Accounting,*
*Administrative Assistant***
June 2004 – May 2013

**Sharon Reed Taylor, *Receptionist,*
*Administrative Assistant***
September 2004 – January 2005

**Tammi Isham, *Receptionist,*
*Administrative Assistant***
April 2005 – May 2011

***Jennifer Mynhier, *Church Workroom*
*Supply Manager (p/t)***
July 2005 – present

Nancy Fowler, *Database Manager (p/t)
December 2010 – present

Erica Brown, Children's Ministry
Assistant (p/t)
March 2011 – December 2012
(see also *Sunshine School Co-Directors*)

***Leslie Scott, Receptionist,**
Administrative Assistant
June 2011 – present

***Lisa Pipkin, Children's Ministry**
Coordinator, (K – 6th Grade, p/t)
September 2012 – present

***Anna Gscheidle, Children's Ministry**
Coordinator (Ages 2 - PreK, p/t)
February 2013 – present

Sunday Morning Nursery Staff:

Dorothy Dagen, 1974 – 1991

Viola Alexander, 1974 – 1975

Geneva York, 1975 – 1976

Paula King, 1993

Daniela Robledo, 1997

***Gretchen French**

***Kathy Dagen**

Facilities Staff:

Frank Dagen: 1974-1975

Dorothy Dagen: 1975-1977

Felton "Scotty" Wainscott, 1977

Roy Burnam, 1982 – 1991 (Died Oct 13, 2002)

James, 1986

Mike, 1986

Michael W., 1989

***Rory Wassenaar, Facilities Manager,**
September 1991 – present

Bobby Blakey, 1994

Antonio (Tony) Perez, September 1996 –
May 2008 (Died March 3, 2013)

David Antwine, January – November 2001

Guy Allaith, 2001

Gary Shaw, March 2002 – December 2003

Carroll Bass, March – November 2003

David Chisholm, Summer 2003

Roger Howard, December 2003 – June 2005

Hortencia Samano, April 2004 – March 2005

Andrew Harms, October 2005 – January 2007

Jeff Pangerl, September 2009 – May 2011

Scott Tucker, Summer 2010

Austin Jackson, Summers of 2011 & 2012

Roy Troutman, August 2011 – March 2014

Cameron Mynhier, Dec 2012 – March 2013

Sunshine School Co-Directors:

Sandy Mack, (Died Sept 25, 2011)
through September 1990 ("*Tuesday School*")

Kelli Maynard,
through September 1990 ("*Tuesday School*")

Annette Cawyer, September 1990 – May 2001

Teresa Renfro, September 1990 – May 1991

Michelle McDougald, Sept 1991 – May 1993

Karen McAulay, September 1993 – May 2001

Amber Arnold, September 2001 – May 2005

Kristin Mazza, September 2001 – May 2007

Jolie Clevenger, September 2007 – May 2012

***Krista Harper, September 2005 – present**

***Erica Brown, September 2012 – present**

Much of this information had to be gathered by interviewing current and former church staff, ministers, and founding church members. We apologize for any errors/omissions.

Listed in order by hire dates. Dates of service (as specific as possible) are noted.

(p/t) = part time employee

*The asterisk designates staff members currently employed (as of April 5, 2014).

CHARTER MEMBERS FROM 1972

Family Name	Adults	Children AS OF 1972	Status as of March 2014 IF KNOWN
Allen	Silas & Evelyn		
Brader	Jerry & Faye	Jerry Glen, 13 Marcia Sue, 11	
Brower	Pat & Jeanette	Cindy, 21 Briggs, 9	
Brown	Gary & Sara	Leslie, 3	
Cartwright	E.O. & Julia	Edwin, 21 John, age not given Steve, 19	
Chitwood	Ron & Nancy	Rachel, 6 Douglas, 3	Ron is a member at Prestoncrest Nancy is deceased and was a member at Prestoncrest at the time of her death.
Colcott	Billie Jo	Lisa, 15 Tom, 13	
Crisp	Don & Carol	Lisa, 7 Brian, 5 Brad, 7 mos	Don later served as an elder at Highland Oaks Church of Christ
Dillman	George & Virginia	Leesa, 9 Mitchell, 7 Louise, 5 Laura, 1	George Dillman and Virginia Dillman are members at Prestoncrest.
Drummond	Bill & Tessie	Temple, 12	

All names are taken from a list of members dated January 16, 1972.

Fix	James & Barbara	Skipper, 17 Lori, 15 Stacey, 6	
Fowler	Hulin & Ann	Lynn, 13 Richard, 6	Hulin & Ann are members at Prestoncrest
Grubbs	Bill & Irene	David, 12 Debra, 11	Bill and Irene are both deceased and were members at Prestoncrest when they died.
Hardwick	Dick & Dusty	Terri Lynn, 12 Bill, 9	Dick & Dusty are both deceased and were members at Prestoncrest when they died. Terri is deceased.
Holcomb	A.M. "Milt" & Mabel		Both are deceased and were members of Prestoncrest when they died.
Howell	Joe & Jeane	Julie, 13 Chris, 10	
Immel	Ralph & Faye		Ralph was one of Prestoncrest's first elders. Both are deceased.
Lackey	Harold & Carole	Reagan, 8 months	
Little	James & Sue	Kristina, 9 months	
Manly	Dorothy	Mary, 19 Holly, 16	
May	Glen & Bobbye	Kevin, 15	

Family Name	Adults	Children AS OF 1972	Status as of 2012 IF KNOWN
Miller	C. Todd & Suzanne	Todd Davis, 5 Steven, 3 Chris, 8 weeks	C. Todd and Suzanne are members at Prestoncrest. C. Todd is an elder at Prestoncrest. Todd Davis is deceased and was a member at Prestoncrest at the time of his death. Steven and his family are members at Prestoncrest. Steven is a Prestoncrest deacon.
Pool	Phil & Carolyn	Matt, 1	Matt and his family are members at Prestoncrest. Matt is a deacon at Prestoncrest.
Reed	Gerald & "Mrs. Gerald"	Laura, 4 Angela, 3	
Scott	John Paul & Pat	Paula, 4 Suzanne, 2	John Paul and Paula are deceased. Pat lives in Arlington.
Scott	Robert C. (Bob) & Pat	Michelle, 11 Keith, 10	Bob was one of Prestoncrest's original elders. He is deceased and was a member at Prestoncrest at the time of his death. Pat is a member at Prestoncrest. Michelle & family are members at Prestoncrest. Her husband, Randy Tucker, is an elder.
Shiu	Dr. Jimmie & Lai Shang	Bingiee, 10 Brian, 8	Lai Shang is deceased and was a member at Prestoncrest at the time of her death. Brian and his family are members at Prestoncrest.

Strickland	John & Alice	Gail, 16 Jill, 13 John, 11	John is deceased and was a member at Prestoncrest at the time of his death. Alice is a member at Prestoncrest. Gail is deceased.
Vanderpool	Dr. David & Margie	David, 12	David is an elder at Skillman Church of Christ.
Williams	Dave & Jewell		
Wharton	Bill & Beverly	Jeannie, 13 Jeri, 12 Janet, 9	
Wilson	Bill & Natalie	Melinda, 15	
Wooldridge	Robert (Bob) & Sharon	Patricia, 10 Lane, 6	Bob is deceased and was a member at Prestoncrest at the time of his death. Sharon is a member at Prestoncrest. Patricia ("Tricia") Wooldridge Hosek is a member at Prestoncrest.

HOW PRESTONCREST BEGAN

By Pat Scott, 1973

Since Prestoncrest's first meeting, it has now been a year;
When at Vickery that night, joyous singing rang clear
We really had no place to meet as a church,
So for a facility our members did search.
With urgent voices we got on the phone,
Trying everything from schools to Savings & Loan.
At last, the Regional Learning Center we did find;
The manager there seemed cooperative and kind.
In a make-shift facility, of course, no one expects perfection.
So it was no surprise that furniture ~~and supplies~~ was dragged every direction.
Into each little room, at least two or three classes were squeezed;
Even with overturned tables as dividers, some teachers weren't pleased.
The call went out for teachers with soft voices;
With such qualifications, there weren't many choices.
It was such a scriptural-sounding place---there, in that "upper room",
Who would have thought that expulsion did loom!
While at the Learning Center we had moments of laughter and frowns;
It was clear when it ended, we'd had our "ups and downs"!
One of our first tasks had been a preacher to find.
Everyone wanted his own special kind.
Almost every Sunday, a different one would come and go;
At times nerves grew shakey, hoping some preacher would show.
Finally, one came by who was the "transient, itinerant" kind;
If he'd settle down, he would be the perfect find!
It took the Lord's help, and some time to lighten his load,

*Given at Wyatt's
1-21-73*

But at last, George Bailey gave up his title of "King of the Road".
We needed a nice young man, the preaching duties to share,
When along came Buster Duncan, tall, charming and fair!
He spoke so softly he couldn't be heard above Dr. Vanderpool's beeper.
Even with a microphone, he wouldn't disturb the lightest sleeper!
Northwood Elementary School became our new meeting place,
Like a true Gypsy-tribe, we began our new pace.
To our transient type preacher this life did appeal,
Even the teachers mustered new zeal!
Right away supplies were hauled in and out with no fuss.
Our cribs have more miles than a Greyhound bus.
It's all been so great: parties, retreats and general hub-bub;
But several have asked Bill Wharton about the Weight-Watchers Club.
Love and generosity to new families did always so richly flow.
One lady even gave away her refrigerator - complete with dead crow!
While at the school we've enjoyed a population boom,
But take great pride in having only one class per room!
There are a few quirks about our facility to remember;
Wear your woolens in July and your sheers in December!
A great visitation program was successfully begun.
Prizes like sour grapes and snickers just add to the fun.
For several baptisms we have gone to Waterview
It is such a joy to see a soul born anew.
After mug shots and much waiting, there appeared at last
A pictorial Directory ---Whoever said John Scott was fast?
Ground-breaking for our building was a few months ago,
Since then not much building---but lots of nice snow!
Our spirits undaunted, toward the future we gaze,
Awaiting the finish of our building's first phase.
A rather unique building we may finally see,
Larger than the auditorium the Cradle Roll may be.

ATTENDANCE OVER THE YEARS

Year	Average Attendance	% Gain Year Over Year	Bible School Avg Attendance	Bible School as a % of Worship
1972	173		NA	
1973	314	81.65%	NA	
1974	396	26.11%	NA	
1975	443	11.96%	NA	
1976	515	16.11%	NA	
1977	553	7.42%	420	75.91%
1978	546	-1.13%	398	72.76%
1979	548	0.29%	NA	
1980	531	-3.11%	380	71.53%
1981	543	2.25%	NA	
1982	615	13.32%	NA	
1983	634	2.99%	478	75.44%
1984	707	11.52%	505	71.45%
1985	768	8.66%	517	67.34%
1986	824	7.27%	535	65.00%
1987	816	-0.90%	558	68.41%
1988	743	-8.99%	517	69.56%
1989	763	2.70%	511	67.00%
1990	802	5.10%	586	73.02%
1991	840	4.77%	631	75.12%

Year	Average Attendance	% Gain Year Over Year	Bible School Avg Attendance	Bible School as a % of Worship
1992	900	7.13%	655	72.72%
1993	1021	13.46%	711	69.60%
1994	1100	7.75%	784	71.29%
1995	1083	-1.56%	737	68.04%
1996	1141	5.30%	811	71.08%
1997	1199	5.11%	897	74.82%
1998	1267	5.68%	932	73.56%
1999	1389	9.63%	992	71.44%
2000	1416	1.93%	1037	73.21%
2001	1615	14.03%	1167	72.30%
2002	1630	0.99%	1166	71.48%
2003	1591	-2.42%	1134	71.28%
2004	1595	0.22%	1132	70.99%
2005	1534	-3.79%	1180	76.91%
2006	1543	0.55%	1139	73.85%
2007	1444	-6.42%	1081	74.88%
2008*	1322	-8.45%	1026	77.66%
2009	1303	-1.43%	963	73.94%
2010	1282	-1.59%	970	75.63%
2011	1224	-4.54%	958	78.26%

*Worship attendance in 2008 is available only for those Sundays when services were held at their usual times at the Prestoncrest building. Because of a remodeling project, worship services were held on Sunday afternoons at the Hillcrest Church for eight weeks that summer.

OFFERINGS OVER THE YEARS

Year	Average Offering in Actual Dollars	Inflation Correction	Average Offering in 2011 Dollars	% Increase Year Over Year
1972	\$1,152	5.39	\$6,212	
1973	\$2,224	5.07	\$11,278	81.56%
1974	\$2,965	4.57	\$13,552	20.16%
1975	\$3,624	4.19	\$15,186	12.06%
1976	\$4,096	3.96	\$16,221	6.82%
1977	\$4,896	3.72	\$18,215	12.29%
1978	\$5,148	3.45	\$17,761	-2.49%
1979	\$6,063	3.11	\$18,855	6.16%
1980	\$6,840	2.74	\$18,742	-0.60%
1981	\$9,583	2.48	\$23,765	26.80%
1982	\$11,641	2.34	\$27,241	14.63%
1983	\$14,751	2.26	\$33,337	22.38%
1984	\$18,285	2.17	\$39,678	19.02%
1985	\$19,625	2.09	\$41,016	3.37%
1986	\$20,337	2.05	\$41,691	1.64%
1987	\$19,157	1.98	\$37,932	-9.02%
1988	\$18,514	1.91	\$35,362	-6.78%
1989	\$20,850	1.82	\$37,947	7.31%
1990	\$22,028	1.73	\$38,108	0.42%
1991	\$21,373	1.66	\$35,479	-6.90%

Year	Average Offering in Actual Dollars	Inflation Correction	Average Offering in 2011 Dollars	% Increase Year Over Year
1992	\$24,299	1.61	\$39,122	10.27%
1993	\$27,535	1.56	\$42,955	9.80%
1994	\$29,190	1.52	\$44,369	3.29%
1995	\$31,310	1.48	\$46,339	4.44%
1996	\$34,327	1.44	\$49,430	6.67%
1997	\$38,413	1.4	\$53,779	8.80%
1998	\$44,556	1.38	\$61,487	14.33%
1999	\$48,562	1.35	\$65,559	6.62%
2000	\$53,263	1.31	\$69,775	6.43%
2001	\$59,236	1.27	\$75,230	7.82%
2002	\$63,773	1.25	\$79,717	5.96%
2003	\$69,334	1.23	\$85,281	6.98%
2004	\$91,128	1.19	\$108,442	27.16%
2005	\$83,086	1.15	\$95,549	-11.89%
2006	\$82,988	1.12	\$92,946	-2.72%
2007	\$85,516	1.09	\$93,213	0.29%
2008	\$80,934	1.05	\$84,981	-8.83%
2009	\$77,111	1.05	\$80,966	-4.72%
2010	\$76,381	1.03	\$78,673	-2.83%
2011	\$76,047	1	\$76,047	-3.34%

Note: Year over year increases are expressed in 2011 dollars. This leads to paradoxical results for some years. For example, the 1978 actual contribution increased even though the inflation corrected contribution decreased.

Prestoncrest Church of Christ
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