

**PRESBYTERIAN CAMPUS MINISTRY
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
ATHENS, GEORGIA**

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The full story of the Presbyterian Campus Ministry at the University of Georgia has not been written. That story is beyond the purpose of this brief paper. The primary focus here is on some background information about the properties and facilities at 1248, 1250 and 1250½ South Lumpkin Street, Athens, Georgia. The story of the use of these facilities in campus ministry at the University of Georgia is in scattered form.

In August of 1920, under the leadership Mrs. W. M. Rowland, president of the Woman's Auxiliary of the Synod of Georgia, and fifty-three young people drew up the constitution of Synod's Young People's League.

In 1938 the Woman's Auxiliary of the Synod of Georgia decided to shift money from the Blue Blessing Boxes; and from the Ficklen Memorial Fund of Synod's Home Mission Work to that of providing Christian workers on college campuses. (The Ficklen Fund was in honor of Rev. James Burwell Ficklen (7-31-1875 - 7-18-1932), who devoted his life to Synod's mission work in Georgia.)

In 1940 Miss Margaret Friend (Mrs. William Steward) became a full-time student worker at the University of Georgia. Her salary was paid from the Blue Blessing Boxes offerings.

Among the early presidents of the Synod's Young People's League were Agnes Rowland (who became a missionary to China) and Wallace Alston (who became president of Agnes Scott College). This league evolved into the Synod's Presbyterian Student Association, with Wade Huie as the first president.

In 1946 the Council of Westminster Fellowship was organized in the Synod of Georgia. At that time, Student Work was not a part of the budget of the Synod of Georgia. The work was supported through individual gifts, congregations, and the Blue Blessing Boxes. These gifts totaled \$5,205.42 in 1946 for Student Work at the University of Georgia, Georgia Tech, Georgia State College for Women, and Valdosta State College. There were two full-time student workers in the State of Georgia.

August 31, 1955: Acting as temporary trustees for the Synod of Georgia, Reed Alexander (Central Presbyterian Church, Athens), J. N. Hartford (First Presbyterian Church, Athens), and J. Swanton Ivy (Friendship Presbyterian Church, Athens) purchased from Mrs Ellen Carithers of Clarke County, Georgia, the lot and two houses at 1250 South Lumpkin Street, Athens, Georgia for \$25,000 for use as the Presbyterian Campus Center. (See Plat Book 5, page 166 in the office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Clarke County, Georgia.)

"...Said property is to be held, managed, controlled and disposed of by the said Trustees in conformity to the authority and directions of said Synod of Georgia."

September 11, 1956: The Synod of Georgia of the Presbyterian Church U. S. approved a campaign within the Synod of Georgia to raise \$250,000 for Campus Christian Life work in the state of Georgia. \$190,000 of this amount was designated for the Presbyterian Campus Ministry at the University of Georgia for the following purposes:

- To pay off the debt on the house and property at 1250 S. Lumpkin Street;
- To build and furnish a new \$150,000 center on the property at 1250 S. Lumpkin St.

In 1956 the Women of the Church in the Synod of Georgia were asked to double their offerings in Blue Blessing Boxes to help purchase and furnish a student center at the University of Georgia.

The campaign was launched on March 26, 1957. (See "Campus Christian Life Campaign", Bulletin No. 1, March 30, 1957.) And after about five months the campaign had raised \$284,714.93.

Dr. O. C. Aderhold, President of the University of Georgia, wrote a letter (dated March 26, 1957) to Dr. Wade P. Huie, Chairman of the Campus Christian Life Campaign of the Synod of Georgia, in which he said,

"It is with great pleasure that I take this opportunity to wish Presbyterians of Georgia every success in the pioneering endeavor to build the first modern student center for religious work in this state. We are gratified that you propose to build this center at the University of Georgia.

"The Charter of the University which states that it should be 'among the first objects of those who wish well the national prosperity to encourage and support the principles of religion and morality,' clearly establishes the concern of the Institution for the moral and spiritual development of its students. To this end the University today, through its chaplain's office, strongly supports the work of the churches in their programs for students on the campus.

"We regard the building of this attractive and adequate Presbyterian Student Center adjacent to our campus as a major step in the development of the life and spirit of the University of Georgia."

The new Presbyterian Center (Westminster House) was completed at the cost of about \$213,000. It was dedicated at a meeting of the Synod of Georgia on Wednesday evening May 18, 1960, held at the Presbyterian Center. Dr. Oliver C. Carmichael, former president of the University of Alabama, spoke on the subject "The Challenge of the Churches in Higher Education."

The 1961 minutes of the Synod of Georgia state that "All concerned rejoice that the Westminster House (Athens) is now debt free."

The house and lot at 1248 South Lumpkin St. was purchased in _____ to be use as a residence ministry. It was called the Insight House. The minutes of the Synod of Georgia for 1971 state that the debt on the Insight House property in Athens has been paid.

At one point, after a time of conflicts related to the civil rights movement, the Vietnam War, and after the Presbyterian Student Center had been closed for about three years, the local Campus Christian Life Committee (CCLC) made a request to the Synod of Georgia for authority to sell the Presbyterian Student Center. The Synod denied the request. However, Synod gave the local CCLC authority to lease the Presbyterian Student Center. It was leased to the Mormons(March 11, 1972 - November 30, 1972). The Mormons wanted to buy the building and property and erect a large living/training center for the Southeast. Rev. Alex Williams, the new Presbyterian Campus Minister at the University of Georgia, suggested that the Presbyterian Center not be sold. After the Mormons moved out of the Presbyterian Student Center it was leased to the University of Georgia School of Social Work (November 17, 1972 until May 31, 1974).

In August of 1972 Rev. Alex W. Williams, Minister to Youth and Community at First Presbyterian Church, Atlanta, became Presbyterian Campus Minister at the University of Georgia. The Insight House at 1248 S. Lumpkin St. was renovated and the Presbyterian Campus Ministry (PCM) operated out of that building until 1975, when PCM and Athens Presbytery (in Gainesville, GA) moved into the Presbyterian Student Center at 1250 S. Lumpkin Street. In 1975, when Campus Ministry moved out of the 1248 building and into the brick building at 1250 S. Lumpkin Street, the building at 1248 was rented to a travel service; and a few years later to the Family Counseling Center of Athens.

Over the next few years, both Campus Ministry and Athens Presbytery grew. There emerged a need to clarify the use of the Presbyterian Student Center in relationship to the ministries of Athens Presbytery and Campus Ministry. Athens Presbytery clarified the priority of use of the Presbyterian Student Center by adopting the following principles related to joint use of the Presbyterian Student Center.

1. "That Presbytery adopt the following principles to govern the use of the Presbyterian Center property at 1248, 1250, and 1250½ South Lumpkin Street;
 - a. "This property will be used in community ministry of varied forms.
 - b. "The property at 1250 S. Lumpkin Street is now being used for the Campus Ministry and the Presbytery Office. We feel that those uses should continue with first priority being given to the Student Ministry, and second to housing of the Presbytery Office.
 - c. "Additional use of the buildings on this property should be conducted in light of the first two recommendations to further our community outreach ministry in Presbyterian fashion.
2. "That the Presbytery and Its Work Committee be responsible for leasing or renting the property of the Presbyterian Center under the foregoing guidelines."
(Minutes of Athens Presbytery, June 24, 1979, pages 31-32)

On Saturday, January 23, 1988, the Northeast Georgia Presbytery was organized and had its first stated meeting at the Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church, Augusta, Georgia. Athens Presbytery merged into the Northeast Georgia Presbytery.

At its first stated meeting Northeast Georgia Presbytery adopted the following related to the use of the Presbyterian Student Center at the University of Georgia, 1250 South Lumpkin Street, Athens, GA:

"That in light of the original intent in the erection of the Presbyterian Center, and the directive of Presbytery in receiving this property from the Synod of Georgia, that PCM, Inc. be granted authority over use, policy and program of the Presbyterian Student Center (the brick building and that lot) and the block house and lot behind it, known as 1250 South Lumpkin Street and 1250½ South Lumpkin Street, subject to the review of the Presbytery." (Minutes of Northeast Georgia Presbytery, January 23, 1988, p. 15)

Also, at its first stated meeting, Northeast Georgia Presbytery adopted the following:

"That the Northeast Georgia Presbytery concur with the consent of Athens Presbytery that PCM (Presbyterian Campus Ministry) incorporate as Presbyterian Campus Ministry, Inc." (Minutes of Northeast Georgia Presbytery, January 23, 1988, p. 13)

The Presbyterian Campus Ministry was incorporated on February 29, 1988. The Articles of Incorporation are in Appendix IV (pages 85 - 90) of the minutes of the second stated meeting of Northeast Georgia Presbytery (April 26, 1988).

In the summer of 1988, Northeast Georgia Presbytery moved out of the Presbyterian Student Center and into the newly renovated building at 1248 S. Lumpkin Street.

When the Synod of the Southeast (Georgia and South Carolina) was created, campus ministry was in a new Synod. After a lot of discussion and work, the Synod of Southeast asked each Presbytery, in which there was a Presbyterian Campus Ministry with property, to submit a plan by which the local Presbytery would eventually assume responsibility for that particular campus ministry. The plan would include turning the properties over to the presbyteries involved. Each Presbytery with a campus ministry with property submitted a plan, except Athens Presbytery in which the Presbyterian Campus Ministry at the University of Georgia was located. Synod of the Southeast accepted the plans submitted by the various presbyteries. Athens Presbytery told the Synod of Southeast that Athens Presbytery could not assume full financial responsibility for all of the Presbyterian Campus Ministry at the University of Georgia. The general feeling in Athens Presbytery was that if Synod pulled out of financial support of the ministry at the University of Georgia, the ministry would have to be drastically reduced. Eventually, the Synod of Southeast proposed a plan to Athens Presbytery that involved turning the properties in Athens over to Athens Presbytery, in exchange for a commitment by Athens Presbytery to the Presbyterian Campus Ministry at the University of Georgia; and that Synod would continue some financial support. The specifics of what "a commitment to campus ministry" involved were not spelled out at that time. Later, both Athens Presbytery (in 1979) and the new Northeast Georgia Presbytery (in 1985) clarified that commitment with respect to the uses of the properties. These commitments are quoted in this paper above.