

Rev. R.J. Hannagan.....

A Story Of Faith In Action

By faith and at God's calling, Noah disregarded the laughter of his friends and neighbors and built an Ark which would protect his family and animals during a 40-day and night flood which would destroy the remainder of creation.

By faith and at God's calling, Moses left his home for a strange land to lead his people from slavery.

By faith and at God's calling, R. J. Hannagan came to Kings Mountain to pastor a small inter-denominational church which couldn't afford to pay him a salary, yet his needs are being met.

The first two stories, you're probably familiar with. The third, maybe you're not, so here it is:

Rev. R. J. Hannagan is an Iowa native and a former banker with an annual salary of \$15,000 per year. But he left that vocation several years ago because God called him into the ministry.

In November of last year, Rev. Hannagan and his wife left their home in Macon, Ga., where they had pastored a good-sized gospel church, to accept their second call to the Foursquare Gospel Church in Kings Mountain.

They didn't know when they left Georgia that they would not receive a salary, nor did they know that the small church here had fallen on hard times financially since they left two years ago.

After only two weeks, the Hannagans could plainly see the congregation of 25 couldn't afford to pay them a salary, but that didn't bother Rev. Hannagan, who says he has never been concerned about salaries, anyway.

"We just turned it over to the Lord," he says. "We know that this is where He wants us."

Like everyone, the Hannagans have commitments that must be made each month, things like car payments, utility bills, etc. But they've not missed a payment, and don't foresee ever having to.

Their daily bread is supplied by their members. Each Wednesday night the Hannagans bring a grocery list to prayer meeting, the members checking off what they'll supply and come Sunday morning it, and more, is there.

"God has met every need through them and others," says Rev. Hannagan. "And it doesn't just stop with groceries. One man who doesn't even attend our church recently gave me a beautiful blue suit.

But no glory comes to us. This is all God's doings.

"We're all depending completely on the Lord," he adds. "The church is providing every need we have and some extras we don't need. He's supplying them and because of their obedience to God, they're supplying our needs. It's all coming from the Master Supplier."

Foursquare, by some, may not be looked at as a big church. An attendance of 25 and an offering of \$100 would be regarded as a good Sunday, if one looks at success in that manner.

But Rev. Hannagan doesn't measure success by numbers.

"We were salaried in Macon and the church building here would fit into the sanctuary there. We had 60 to 70 in attendance each Sunday. But the size of a building doesn't have anything to do with the size of the church. We have one of the biggest churches in the country because a church's size as far as I'm concerned is measured by how great its love is."

Rev. Hannagan, who came here the first time in '72, sent in his resignation from the Macon church to Rev. Glenn Burris of Charlotte, the District Supervisor of Ministers, last fall.

"We didn't have any idea where we'd be re-appointed," he recalled. "I've never examined a church before. I've always trusted the Lord. All I have to do is obey and go where He sends me. The rest is His responsibility."

Shortly afterward, Rev. Hannagan received a call from Rev. Burris and was told the KM church was pastorless, and was asked if he'd consider returning here.

"I was a little surprised," he recalled. "I was not aware the church was open for a new pastorate."

But he knew God was leading him back here, and he accepted.

"God even provided the means to move us," he said. "We didn't have any money."

Rev. Hannagan's first term at Kings Mountain resulted in the church growing from six members to 25. The church, which had been in existence for some 14 years but had been pastorless for about four to six years, was chartered in '73.

"It was a little church," he recalled when he came, "and had only \$200 in the bank and no parsonage."

"We contacted a local real estate broker and he showed us a house he had for sale on Amhurst Drive," he recalled. "We backed the U-Haul truck up against the church building so no one could get in



Rev. and Mrs. Hannagan open wide the doors at Foursquare Gospel Church...

Story and Photos

By Gary Stewart

it and steal our belongings while we and five women from the church went to look at the house.

"He told us what the down payment would be, but we didn't have any money. We formed a semi-circle right there in the carport and laid our hands on the building and claimed the house for the Lord. He told us with that kind of faith we wouldn't have any problems and handed us the key."

The people supplied the \$1,500 down payment, never missed a house payment or utility payment and a year later sold the house and bought one beside the church on Second Street. With the profit, they installed central heat in both the church and the new parsonage.

When Hannagan first came to Kings Mountain, he also worked for a year with the city and hospital. "But the Lord spoke to us to go into fulltime ministry and God has been providing ever since," he said.

Rev. Hannagan, was, and still is, a fund raiser, having once staged a Walk-A-Thon from Kings Mountain to Charlotte and another time climbing the tower at Radio Station WKMT to secure funds for the Foursquare ministries.

Already, the church has resumed its weekly radio broadcasts (airing each Saturday at 1:30 p. m. on WKMT) and Rev. Hannagan foresees many more programs in the near future.

For starters, Rev. Ralph Ludiam will come here the first of February as Youth Minister and a full slate of summertime activities is already being planned.

As for long range goals, Rev. Hannagan hopes to someday see a day care center to care for the children of working mothers, a Christian school for the elementary grades, a complex to provide care for the elderly and a children's home.

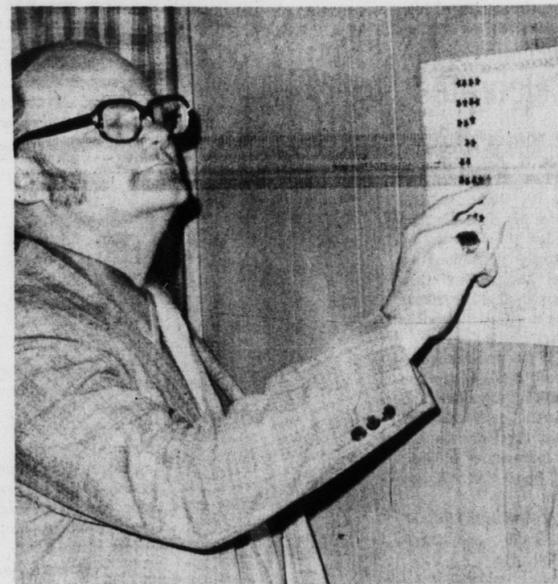
Some of the programs, he feels, can be accomplished by his congregation and others may take the cooperation of all the churches in the city.

"Our prayer is that the community will open their hearts," he says. "Everything we want is for the betterment of the community and the glory of God."

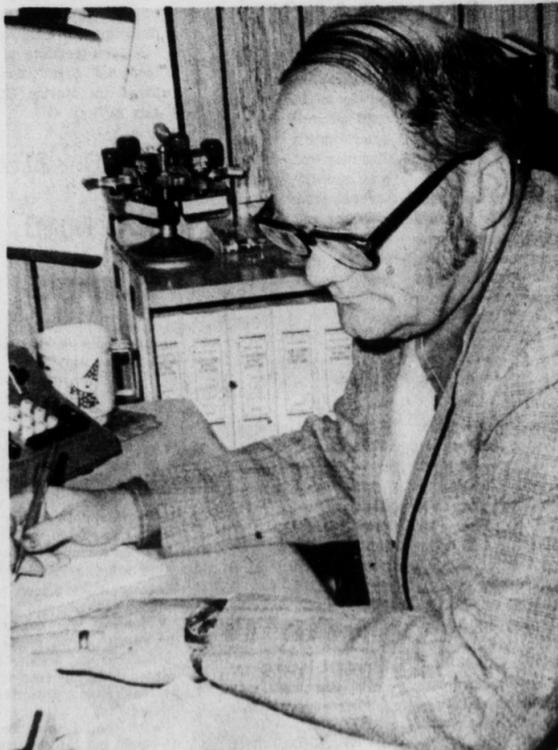
"As soon as the church (worldwide) returns to the Bible, the better off we'll be," he says. "If every Christian would be true to his calling, there would not be so many old people dying of loneliness."

Likewise, he says, there are many children in the area who have been abused, and in serious need of help.

"We'd just like the community to know that we want to help," he says. "My wife and I, and our church members, are available anytime, night or day. We've all put God first in our lives. We're human. We make mistakes, but we keep striving for the mark of the high calling. We just love Jesus Christ."



Rev. Hannagan looks over pledge card on bulletin board...



Studying for Sunday's sermon...



Rev. and Mrs. Hannagan back in pulpit at Foursquare Gospel Church...