

To Preach First Sermon Sunday

Dixon Intern Scott Armstrong Getting The Feel Of Being A Country Preacher

By ELIZABETH STEWART
News Editor

Scott Armstrong, 30-year-old summer intern at Dixon Presbyterian Church, enjoys what he calls "getting the feel of being a country preacher."

For a young man who moved 17 times during his school career and lived in almost as many different states, Armstrong his wife, Martha, 22, and their two boys, Scottie, age 3, and Jeremiah, a year old on June 19, have quickly adjusted to life in the Dixon Community and moved here last week just as soon as Scott completed his first year of classes at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Ga. The church congregation rented the home of the late Rob Caveny, which is close enough to the church for Armstrong to walk to work every morning, where he is training under the supervision of Rev. Graham Wood, minister for eight years.

Armstrong will fill the pulpit for the first time at 11 a.m. worship services Sunday. This week he and his wife have been teaching the youth class at Bible School, which closes on Friday evening with a congregational ice cream supper at 8 p.m. In addition to preaching at least two Sundays a month, Armstrong will also teach in the Sunday School, assisting in Adult and Youth classes, and will be learning about the Presbyterian church government via session meetings. A major part of his duties will be in visitation and evangelism in the community, inviting members and non-members to come to church and become involved in church activities.

Although he was not reared in the Presbyterian Church and attended many different denominations during his growing-up years, Armstrong is married to the daughter of a Presbyterian minister and it was meeting Martha Pflug, at the Presbyterian Church-sponsored Bachman Memorial Children's Home that changed his life and ultimately led to his call to full-time Christian ministry.

Martha takes up the story of her romance with the native of Beaumont, Texas which began in 1980.

"My dad, Rev. Art Pflug, has been director of the Bachman Children's Home in Cleveland, Tennessee for 24 years. As the youngest of five children, I was reared on the 234-acre campus which at that time included a dairy and large farm. I worked and played with the kids, 85 boys and girls of all ages who came from broken and troubled homes to find refuge and a family atmosphere. They also found love, schooling and an occupation. Scott learned about an opening in the maintenance department from his sister, Lisa, a counselor. We got married before I finished high school and moved to Evansville, Indiana. Scott graduated from Evansville University with a B.S. in Criminal Justice in June 1981 and I graduated from high school."

Scott describes his wife as a "real, people person" who can relate to anyone in any situation. Although he grew up in a close-knit family of two boys and four girls, Scott said the family traveled so much that he didn't have time to make any real lasting friendships. Because his father built nuclear power plants all over the country, the family never lived in one location for long, sometimes for as little as 13 days. He attended high school in Virginia, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania and the family also lived in Texas, Canada, California, Florida and Indiana and Mr. Armstrong's construction work also took him to



SUMMER PREACHER - Scott Armstrong, student at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Ga., is serving a 10-week summer internship at Dixon Presbyterian Church in Kings Mountain. He's pictured here in the sanctuary at Dixon.

Japan and Italy. His parents, Dean and Susan Armstrong, are now retired and live in Knoxville, Tennessee and are active in First Presbyterian Church, where he is an Elder.

Scott's father, still in the building business but as a volunteer, is constructing homes for the poor in "Habitat For Humanity", a special church sponsored project in Knoxville. Other members of Scott's family live in Missouri, Wyoming, Tennessee and Indiana.

"After our marriage Scott worked three years as a private detective with Langlois Detective Agency and then two years as a patrolman with the Indiana police department. He really hadn't decided exactly what he wanted to do but we prayed about going into full time Christian service," said Martha.

When Scottie was born, he became the first member of the Bachman Presbyterian Church on the campus of the Bachman Memorial Home, a residential treatment center for troubled teenagers between the ages of 14-19. Martha and Scott joined First Presbyterian Church, Cleveland, Tenn., about five miles from the Children's Home, and younger son, Jeremiah, was christened there.

Bachman Home, which was originally a Church of God orphanage in the 70's and was at one time co-educational, now offers a home, education, and occupation for 32 troubled boys who come from broken

regulations. We helped them learn how to do some farming and gardening and other occupations but we also offered them spiritual care and love. It's ideal if we can reunite them with their families but sometimes we can't and sometimes they don't accept Christianity but they learn discipline and they go away from the Home much better young men and better trained for life outside the Home," said Armstrong. Vocational skills, including carpentry, automotive, electric, welding, plumbing, and an all round education are offered, in addition to a church and spiritual centered atmosphere. A small church is in the center of the campus. The program is funded by numerous state agencies, in addition to the Presbyterian Church and there is a long waiting list.

Armstrong said he had been fighting God's call to the ministry for several years and felt God's direction when he finally decided to enroll at Columbia Seminary a year ago. "I was afraid I would not be accepted", he recalled. "My application was sent in late, my wife and I had not found an apartment to live in, and my financial aid papers had not been completed and here it was time for school to start.

"It took me from 1974 to 1981 to complete college because I kept changing my mind about my course of study", he recalled.

Now the Armstrongs are glad that God changed Scott's life. "I never seemed to feel my identity until I turned my life over to God and He directed me to go back to Cleveland, Tenn. to work with those kids and then to get into the ministry and full-time Christian service", said Armstrong. Scott hopes that someday, after his father-in-law retires, the he and Martha can return as directors of the Bachman Memorial Home. "And we may have to pastor a few churches in between", said Martha, who says she is looking forward to the summer ahead in the 60-member Dixon Presbyterian Church.

Twenty five years ago Martha's father was a student at Columbia Seminary and he is delighted the Scott Armstrongs' are following in his footsteps. Martha said her father commuted back and forth from Chattanooga, Tenn. to Decatur, Ga., attending classes in Decatur, Ga. and returning to his family on Wednesday night and weekend visits when he also pastored a church on Lookout Mountain. Rev. Pflug continues to drive long distances to preach and to show slides to Presbyterian congregations about the Children's Home, which has become the love of his life. His wife shares with him house parenting at the cottages on campus and son-in-law Scott opened up the farm again with 12 acres in gardens and with the young people raising beef cattle, pigs, and harvesting corn and hay, in addition to school and other activities.

The Armstrongs say the welcome mat is out at their house and at the church. Neighbors are ribbing Armstrong that he's the new mayor of the Dixon Community, a title that was given by his neighbors to the late Rob Caveny, before his death to cancer several months ago.

"His Honor" had a special chair at the neighborhood Causby Texaco Station and his home and furnishings are now being used by the young minister and his family. Caveny's grandchildren's pictures share a place of honor in the living room, along with pictures of the Armstrong families and the children's toys.

Martha and Scott Armstrong feel "right at home".

Church Facts

Name - Dixon Presbyterian
R-4, Dixon School Road
Kings Mountain

Affiliation - Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, Concord Presbytery.

Pastor - Rev. Graham Wood

Assistant - Scott Armstrong

Membership - 60

Schedule:

Sunday School 10 a.m.

Worship Service, 11 a.m.

Youth Bible Study, 7 p.m. each Monday

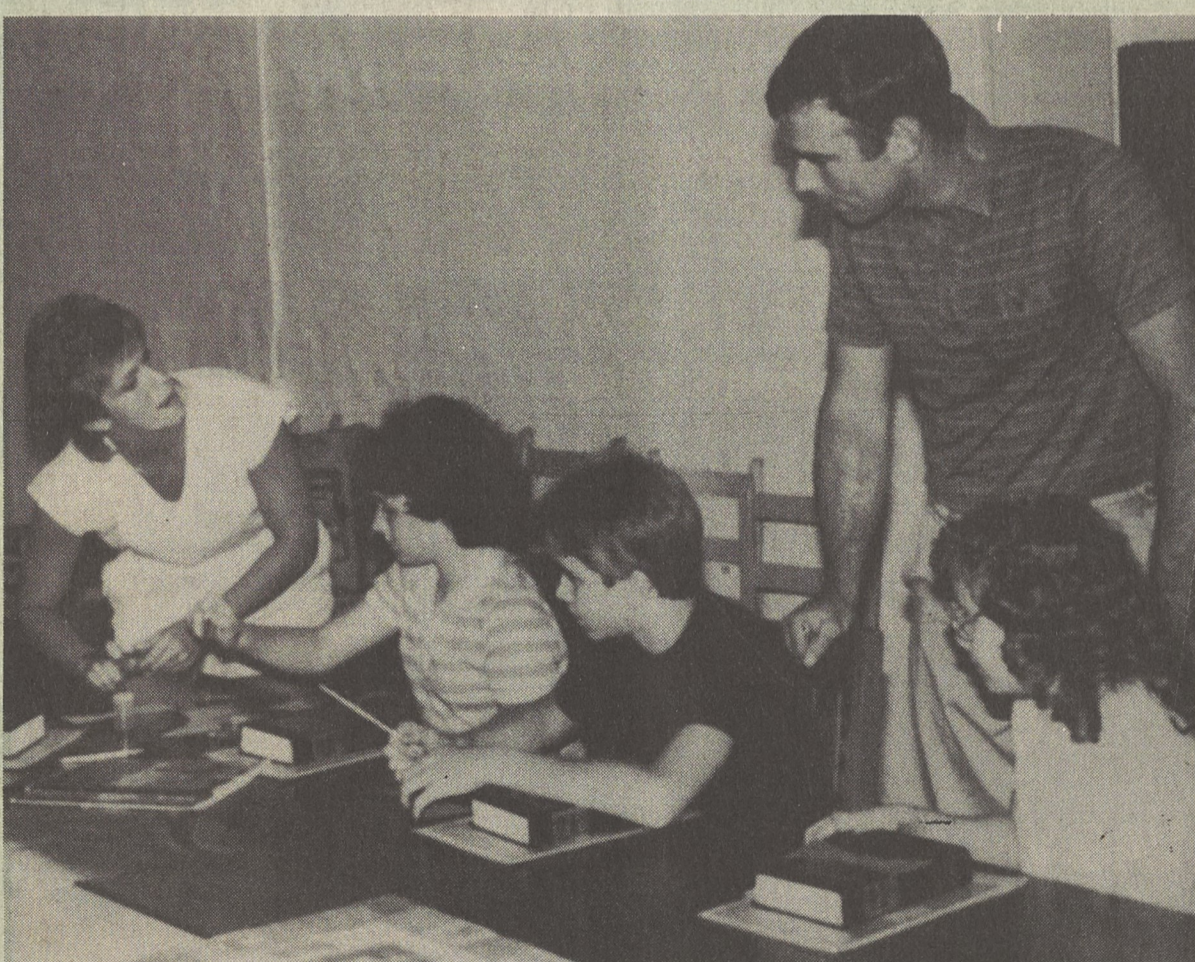
Choir, 7 p.m. each Wednesday
Women's Circle, First Tuesday each month.

Senior Citizens, Second Tuesday each month.

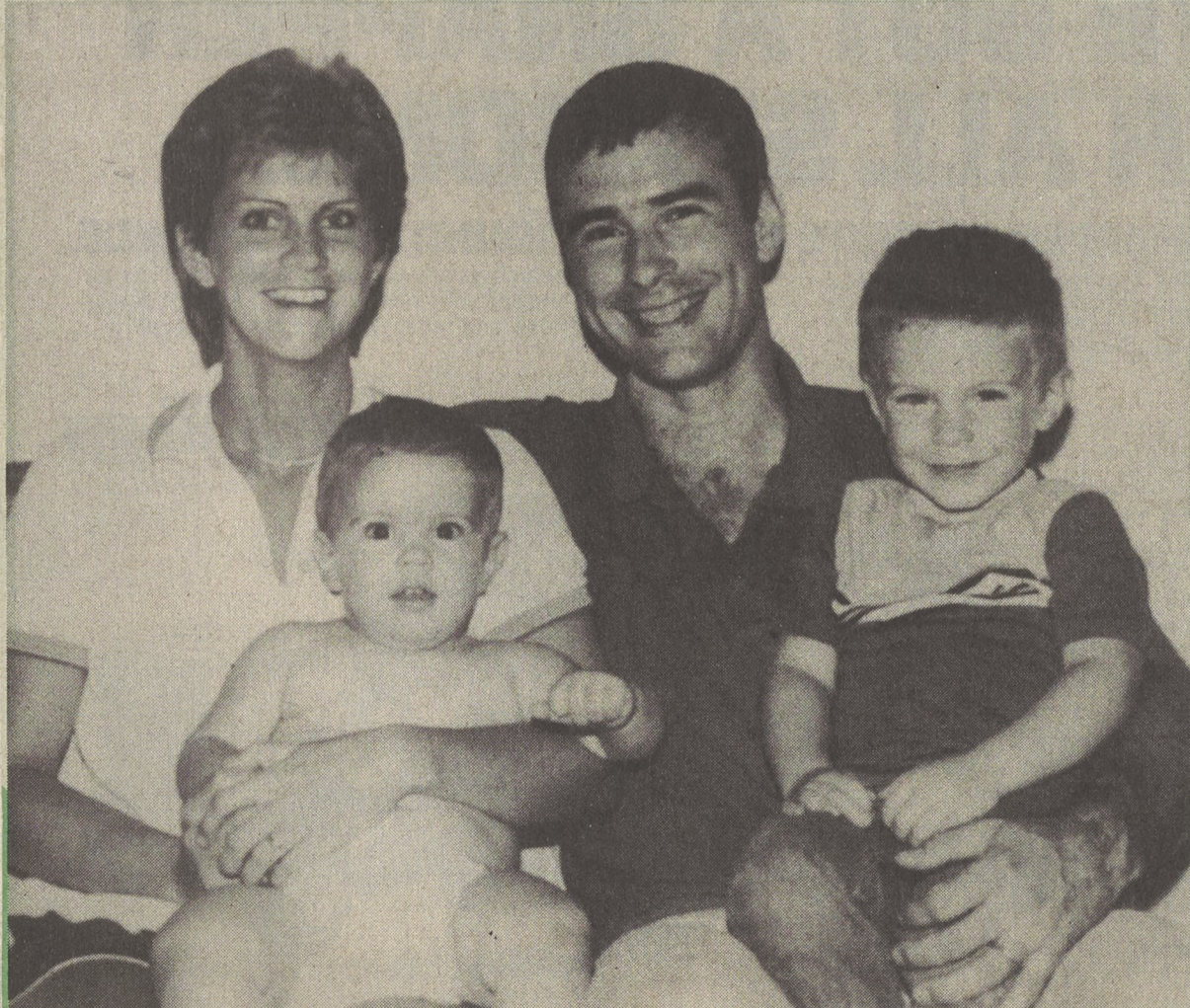
homes, street kids who are sent there for rehabilitation through the criminal justice system.

"It takes a long time to build these kid's confidence", said both Scott and Martha. Scott said he learned patience, a virtue he never had before he went back to work at Bachman with Martha's father and mother who supervise a 21 member staff.

Four years before he accepted God's call to the ministry Scott worked at Bachman Home and he said he learned what it was like to be a servant of God. "We saw kids who had never lived by any rules and



TEACHING BIBLE SCHOOL - Scott and Martha Armstrong, standing, are pictured teaching a youth class at Dixon Presbyterian Church's Vacation Bible School. Students, left to right, are Leigh Anne Stewart, Chris Leigh and Kim Gower.



ARMSTRONG FAMILY - The Armstrong family relaxes in the living room of their summer home in the Dixon Community. Martha holds Jeremiah, who will celebrate his first birthday June 19, and Scott holds three-year-old Scotty.