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DeKalb's First Alliance

Church Marks 100th Year; First Met In People's Homes

The First Alliance Church, 2512 N. Druid Hills Rd., will celebrate its 100th anniversary on Oct. 27-28 with Dr. Paul Alford, president of Toccoa Falls College, as one of the guest speakers. Also speaking will be the Rev. Gordon G. Copeland, superintendent of the South Atlantic District of the Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA).

These long-time friends of First Alliance will speak at the 6:30 p.m. Saturday service. On Sunday, at the 11 a.m. service, guest speakers will be the Rev. Richard W. Bailey, vice president of C&MA, and Dr. Roy S. LeTourneau, president of the LeTourneau Foundation, which was instrumental in saving the church during the depression of the 1930s.

NOTING THAT First Alli-

ance began with a small group of believers in homes in what is now downtown Atlanta in 1890, Pastor William B. Leetch said the church has survived "time, wars and depressions."

First known as the Atlanta Gospel Tabernacle, the church met 100 years ago in a converted home on Capitol Avenue in Atlanta and then in a 1,500-seat "auditorium," complete with a sawdust floor and plank seats.

Overflow crowds came from all sections of Atlanta in the 1920s as the church flourished. In 1930 the church moved into a new brick building at the northwest corner of Euclid Avenue and Druid Circle, near Edgewood Avenue, but then during the depression, it fell on hard times, was unable to meet its mortgage payments and was almost padlocked.

HOWEVER, A timely gift from R.G. LeTourneau, a Christian businessman, saved the church. Dr. Roy LeTourneau is his son. First Alliance moved from Euclid Avenue to its present location on N. Druid Hills Road in DeKalb County in the early 1960s.

The Rev. Ted Spier, 84, pastor of First Alliance from 1943-1948 and then superintendent of the South Atlantic, C&MA, will come from New Smyrna Beach, Fla., where he has retired, to participate in the Sunday service.

The Rev. Henry Grosh, minister of music at First Alliance, and the First Alliance choir will be joined by the musical group Potter's Clay from Liburn Alhance Church, the choral group from DeKalb Christian Academy on LaVista Road and by the congregation in performing

music for the services.

HARRY BELLE ISLE, a 57-year member of the church, will show a slide presentation on the history of the church at the service Sunday evening. James Vaught, headmaster of DeKalb Christian Academy, will also speak on Sunday. The Rev. Paul Henry, who served twice as interim pastor, also will be participating.

Programs are planned for children and young people with nurseries being provided for babies and toddlers.

First Alliance is a member church of the Christian & Missionary Alliance, an evangelical protestant denomination with emphasis on missions. The C&MA has more than 1,200 missionaries in 64 countries around the world.