

# “SO BUILT WE THE WALLS”

I want to tell you how God has blessed Friendship Church of the Nazarene. The early days were filled with struggle; but God had shown me what the church would be like, and I kept trusting in His promises.

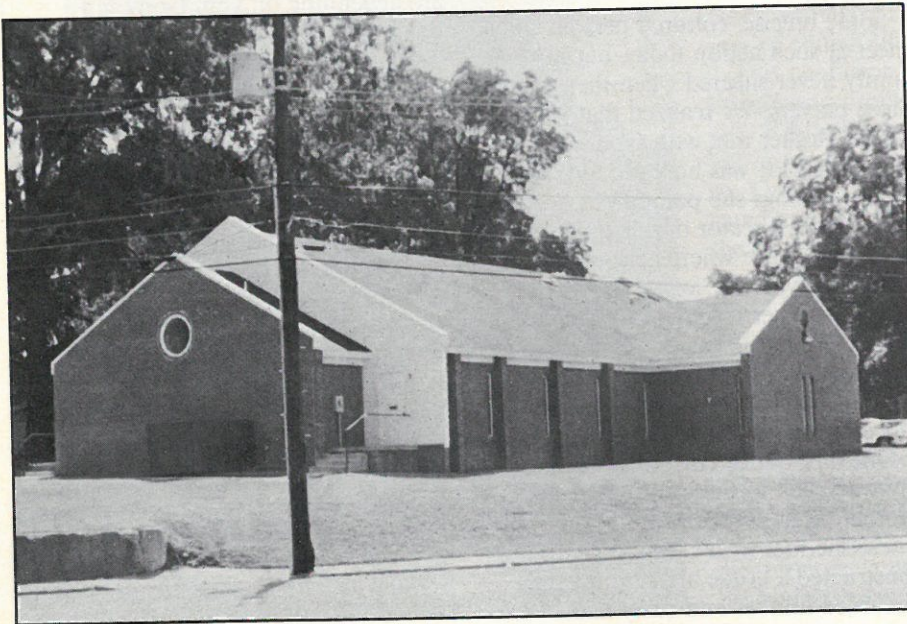
In 1936, as a young woman, I worked for a Mrs. Martin, who talked to me about the Lord. Through her testimony I came to know Christ as my Savior and Lord. Later, I was able to witness to my husband and sister, and they were saved.

After a while we needed a place to worship. I asked Mrs. Martin if there was a Church of the Nazarene where blacks could attend. She helped by writing to the board, and this was when our church was born in my heart.

The Lord gave my husband the name for it—Friendship. We were happy with that name because we wanted always to be friendly to everyone who came through our doors. We wanted to possess all the qualities a friend should have according to the Lord Jesus Christ. I recall often the words spoken by my husband about friendliness.

The first Sunday School was started in my home. In 1954 we had 4 members, and in 1955 there were 35. The first church we organized was located at 1341 Richard Street, South Memphis. Things began to change, and it seemed that Friendship Church would not survive.

We had ups and downs from 1955 to 1973 and even closed the church



for three months in 1973. My husband died in 1970. Pastors came and went, but through it all God was faithful. One day I sat thinking about how good the Lord had been to me and how much I owed Him. I paid my tithes, but what about my time?

I began the minister's course of study and became a qualified teacher under the Christian Service Training program. The Lord enabled me to be "Teacher of the Year" in 1963, and I received a number of other awards.

In 1973 the Lord blessed us with a wonderful pastor, Brother Griffin, who showed real love for us. The church responded with appreciation and began to grow. I recall that his first message was on prayer. He told us how important it was to spend much time in prayer. God worked many miracles under his ministry. Brother Griffin said he never wanted to leave Friendship. After his wife's death, however, he felt that he could not remain, and we were without a pastor again. After a while the Lord sent Brother and Sister Rufus Sanders to us.

The vision given to me by the Lord became a reality. On August 5, 1984, at 3 P.M., Friendship Church dedicated its new building to the Lord.

What a joy it is to see the church growing with lovely people who love the Lord! They are willing to work and help bring the kingdom of God to the hearts of men, women, and children. Recently, when our pastor was sick for three months, most of that time in the hospital, we all banded together and worked untiringly. The Lord is supplying all our needs. Our budgets are all paid. We are reaching out to help others. Among other things, we give food each month to the needy.

I love the Lord with all my heart. He saved me, sanctified me wholly, and put a mind within me to do His complete will.

I raised a niece, whom I love very much. When I see her and her family at worship in our church, what a joy it is! Both she and her husband have been saved, baptized, and brought to the church. Such victories make the work, prayer, and sacrifice worthwhile.

**BY ORA M. JACKSON**

*Treasurer of the Memphis, Tennessee Friendship Church.*