



'I SAT HERE' — Four who worship at Hill Road Baptist Church sit where they sat as pupils in the same building decades ago. From left are Jay Hewitt, 1272 Sharp Rd., near Swartz Creek; Mrs. Earl Muchler, 3124 W. Hill

Rd., Mundy Township; David Hewitt, 3417 W. Hill Rd., Mundy Township, and Mr. Muchler. The church is in a fund drive so it can put up a building like the model. (Journal Photo)

## Church Once Was School

# They Used to Study Where They Worship

When some members of the Hill Road Baptist Church worship on Sunday mornings, their minds might understandably stray half a century.

Five decades ago four Hill Road members were pupils there — in what is now the church.

Then it was the old Hill School, a little frame building near the corner of Hill and Jennings roads in Mundy Township and was already about a half century in age.

Later, it became a house. Now, as a church, it may be in its last form of existence for, if eventual building plans of the congregation come about, it will be torn down for a new sanctuary.

**THE FIRST STEP** in construction is expected to begin this summer. A fund drive is under way now for \$40,000 toward an \$80,000 first unit for the two-year-old congregation. The first section will include a chapel and a multipurpose room for community use and classrooms.

A loyalty dinner to kick off the drive will be held at 5 p.m. Sunday at Community Christian Church, 1320 W. Hill Rd., Grand Blanc Township.

Present plans for the old school are to continue its use as a youth center — which seems appropriate for a former school.

**DAVID HEWITT**, 3517 W. Hill Rd., across the road from the church, likes to reminisce about the old school.

Now 70, he received eight grades of education in the old Hill School. His brother, Jay R. Hewitt, and his son, Donald, also went there.

So did Mr. and Mrs. Earl L. Muchler of 3124 W. Hill Rd.

**MRS. MUCHLER** spent just one or two years there, sitting in the desks that held two pupils. As a student in the chart class (now called kindergarten), she was too short to touch the floor so a teacher put a block of wood under her feet.

She and Hewitt remember the potbellied wood stove near the front door. There were outhouses then, no electricity, four blackboards on the front of the classroom and a world map that could be pulled down from the ceiling.

And there was the punishment corner. Some teachers made recalcitrant pupils stand in the corner; one made them sit under a desk. Some men teachers were a bit rougher in punishment, Hewitt recalls.

Hewitt remembers "we had to run outside to the well to get a drink. We had to furnish our own cups if someone had measles or mumps."

**AS FAR** as Hewitt can remember,

there were no lights in the school house. "Each person brought his own lamps for meetings at night," he said.

Hewitt still corresponds with one teacher, who lives in Minneapolis. At least one, Mrs. Rosalie Lamburn, remains in the area.

At times there were only six to eight pupils in the entire eight grades, Hewitt said. Thus it was to be expected that, in the interests of efficiency, the school was sold.

Hewitt bought it about 1944 and turned it into a four-room house. In 1967 the old school and the five acres on which it stands were bought by American Baptist churches of the area for the new mission.

**ALL THE PARTITIONS** were ripped out and paneling was installed. The attached wood shed was turned into a nursery and a classroom added.

Now there are indoor plumbing, electricity, forced air heat and an office for the pastor. Where the pulpit stands, there used to be seats. One corner is now set aside for the choir. There are draperies at the window and folding chairs.

But still the outer shell and the floor remain — and lots of memories.

Mrs. Muchler is organist now. "Sometimes I sit there playing, and I remember . . ."