

## **The First Service**

The group of laypeople who were to lead the first service were busy making their arrangements. A meeting room at MacGregor Downs Youth Center had been reserved. Public notification of the service had been made by mailings and telephone calls. The order of worship had been planned, and bulletins were printed. The service was scheduled for Dec 4 at 2:30 pm and was to be preceded by a business meeting. On the day of the service, just prior to the business meeting, Jim Watkins of Orange Presbytery called Gabriel and stated that the worship service could not be held. He explained that he felt it best to delay the first formal service of the new church until after Presbytery officials met with officials of another area Presbyterian church. Gabriel asked if the Presbytery would object to the group meeting as Christians gathered to worship God rather than as a formal church. Watkins replied that he would have no problem with that and that he would simply excuse himself after the business meeting. On that basis the group proceeded with the service. Rev. James W. McGinnis led this first devotional service which 23 people attended. The sermon was entitled, "God So Loved the World", and the scripture reading was John 3: 1-17. Rev. Bill McCorkle gave the offering prayer, and Edward H. Wilson Sr. passed his hat for the collection.