

MES-HERALD

Sunday, April 25, 1954



This is historic Leesburg Presbyterian Church, whose 150 years will be observed in ceremonies May 1 and 2.

Old Leesburg Church Plans Pageant on Its Anniversary

LEESBURG, Va., April 24.—A pageant depicting episodes from the history of the Leesburg Presbyterian Church will be a feature of the 150th anniversary celebration of the church to be held Saturday, May 1, at 8 p. m. in the Education Building. The pageant will be directed by Mrs. Jack Milliken.

Among the scenes will be the auction sale in 1802, when a committee from the Presbyterian Society bought for \$80 the lot where the church now stands. Another scene will show part of the first service held in the church on Sunday, May 5, 1804.

At this first service, Dr. James Hall, moderator of the General Assembly, had charge. He was traveling over the old Carolina road which ran through Leesburg en route to Philadelphia to preach the opening sermon at the Assembly. He stopped in Leesburg on Saturday, May 4, and assisted the "Society" in organizing its church. The next day, he dedicated the building, installed three elders, received 27 members of the society into the church and administered communion.

The man most responsible for establishing the Presbyterian Church in Loudoun County was Rev. Amos Thompson, preacher, patriot and farmer. He was sent to the County in 1764 by New Bruns-

wick (N. J.) Presbytery. Rev. Thompson organized and preached at the Catoclin and Gum Spring Presbyterian Churches but took a leave of absence to serve as chaplain in the Continental Army.

He died on September 8, 1804, a few months after the Leesburgh Church was completed, and was the first person buried in the graveyard surrounding the church.

Dr. Frank Price, moderator of the General Assembly, will preach the sermon at the 11 o'clock service on Sunday, May 2. On Sunday afternoon, there will be an informal service at which former pastors will speak.

Rev. David C. Crawford, Jr., the present pastor, is the church's twenty-sixth preacher in its 150 years of continuous existence.

The church now has an active membership of 200 and several score nonresident members, a Sunday School enrollment of 146, and a high attendance record. Leading organizations are the Women of the Church, dating from a society formed in 1870, and the Men of the Church.