



EPISCOPAL CHURCH—The first Episcopal Church building in Pell City was built 1907. The land and the timber for the church was donated by Sumter and Lydia DeGaris Cogswell. The church stood where Gloria Robertson's home now stands.

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St. Clair church wants to

By Cindy Warner

Home staff writer

The Rev. Van Foreman of St. Simon Peter Episcopal Church in Pell City said his parish is interested in starting a Habitat for Humanity, but they can't do it without some help.

In order for Habitat for Humanity International to grant a sanction to start a new chapter, the entire community must pledge its support, Foreman said.

He said the idea to start a Habitat in Pell City actually started after a

group at the Episcopal church heard a group from Talladega speak to the church about the Habitat that was formed there.

"After listening to them, I just started thinking that there is a great need for a Habitat here in Pell City," Foreman said. "We have been discussing it for several months, but have just recently started to really do anything with it. The first step has got to be to spread the word because it will take more than just us to start it."

Charles B. Lanier will be leading the efforts to organize the Pell City

Habitat for Humanity. Lanier said that this program is there to help themselves.

"It is people helping themselves," he said. "It is people that have self respect and that is what I like."

The goal of Habitat is to provide affordable housing to needy families one day eliminating.

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1 Habitat for Humanity.

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t themselves," he said. "It gives these
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) The goal of Habitat for Humanity
t is to provide affordable, quality hous-
t ing to needy families in the hopes of
' one day eliminating poverty hous-
g ing.

7 The founder and president of Habi-

tat for Humanity, Millard Fuller, grew
up in rural Alabama, but later went on
to become a millionaire with a suc-
cessful mail order business and as an
attorney.

Fuller first started building homes
for the poor in Americus, Ga., and
then in Zaire. In 1976, Fuller and his
wife, Linda, returned to the United
States and started Habitat for Hu-
manity.

Habitat first started to gain na-
tional and international attention
when former President Jimmy Carter
and his wife, Roselynn, became in-

involved as volunteers.

Today, Habitat for Humanity is an
international, non-profit housing or-
ganization that has built homes in
more than 40 countries.

Foreman said Habitat is not a hand-
out to the needy, but more of a part-
nership.

"The person that is selected to be
a homeowner must promise to work
up to 500 hours of labor on the home
and then they must sign a mortgage."

Foreman said the mortgages are
set up to be interest free in order to

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keep the payments low, but it is a mortgage none the less.

Habitat has four committees set up to select the homeowner. These committees include the family selection committee, the building committee, the site selection committee and the fund-raising committee.

The entire community plays a role in the process, including churches, corporations, schools, civic organizations and local government, Foreman said.

The homes are constructed with tax-deductible donations and by using volunteer as well as skilled laborers.

Habitat believes that housing is a basic need that should be provided

to anyone in need. People struggling to get out of poverty often have a hard time because almost one half of their total income goes into rent.

Often the rental property is poor quality and the landlords refuse to help clean it up.

That is where Habitat comes in to help, by building simple and affordable homes.

Lanier said Habitat has 25 basic home plans and they provide the blueprints and the donated materials.

"The homes are simple and uniform in comparison to each other to keep it fair for all of the homeowners," Lanier said. "It wouldn't be fair to build a big, nice home for one and then something less for another."

"Also, they try to keep the homes

simple to avoid overspending on one and then not having any money left to build any more," Foreman added.

He said that right now the one thing needed to start a local Habitat is a commitment from the rest of the community about joining the effort.

Foreman has literature and a video tape that he would like to show to anyone who might be interested in helping. He can be reached at St. Simon Peter Episcopal Church at 884-0877.

"You can look around and visually see the need for a program like this," Foreman said. "And this program would really benefit the whole community. Not only would we be building nice homes for the people that need them, but it would help clean up and beautify the town, also."