

The religions of Franklin County

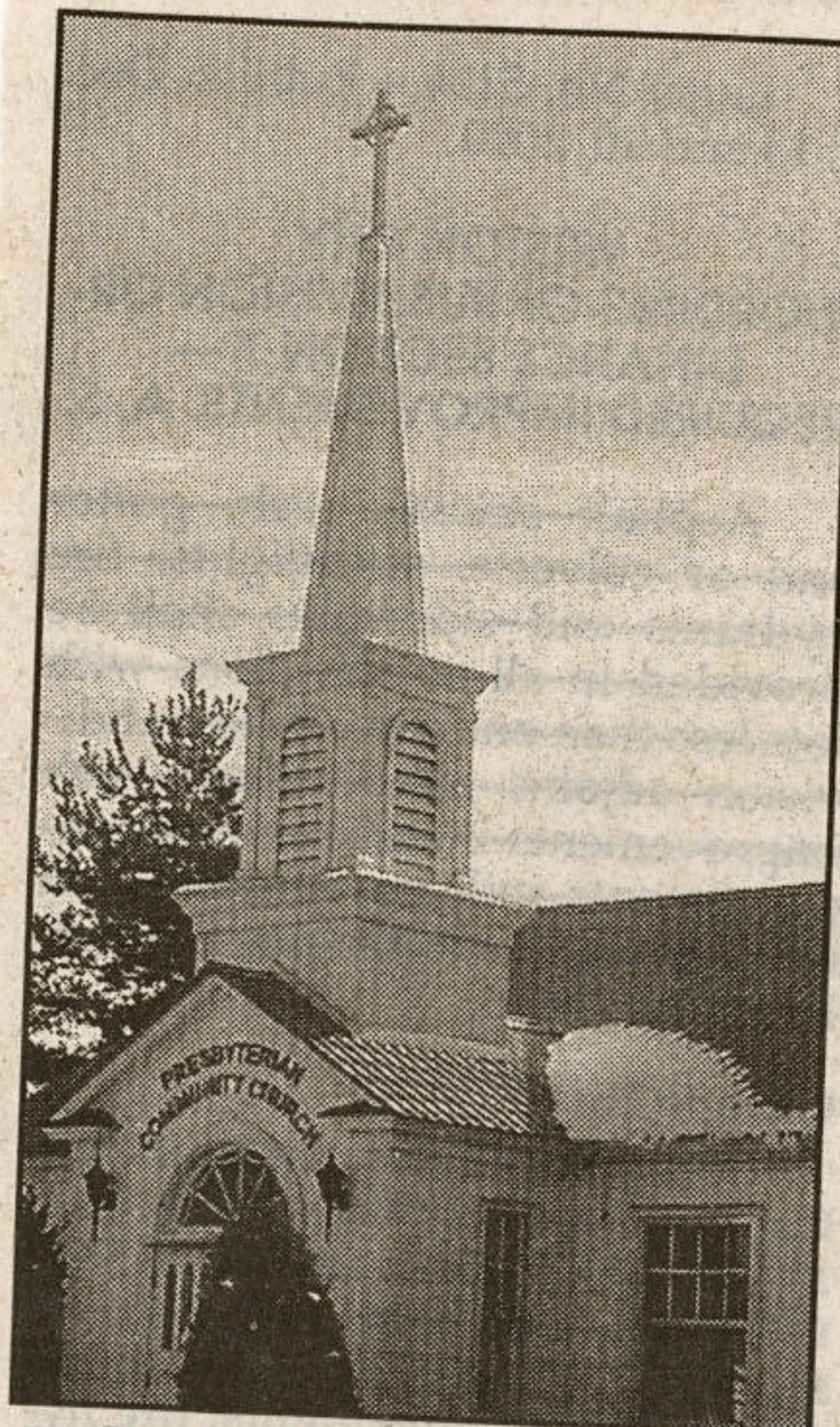
Within a Presbyterian church are two stands or lectern's — one for reading directly from the Bible and another for the pastor's interpretation.

Missionary work is also a part of the church. Missionaries, generally college-educated, enter the mission field with a particular vocation but a common goal. "Some

go as clergy or doctors or teachers," said Johnke. "But they all go out in the name of Jesus Christ to spread the Good News that through Jesus Christ we are saved."

Johnke explained the influence of Calvin's predestination doctrine this way: "The belief that God is all-knowing and all-powerful is very strong, but there are a variety of viewpoints on predestination."

The Presbyterian congregation meets at 9 a.m. on Sundays.



Presbyterians value a democratic congregation and the right to interpret scripture themselves.

Baptism and communion, or Lord's Supper, are the two recognized sacraments.

Johnke numbered Presbyterians in the United States at 3.5 million. When topics need to be discussed on a national level, there is a General Assembly. Groups from around the country will send representatives to these meetings and have an equal voice.

Although the Bible is their primary source of scripture, another book exists to record "statements adopted by the church at a specific time to address an issue." It is called the Book of Confessions.

"Presbyterians are reformed Protestant," Johnke explained. "This means we believe each person has the right to read and interpret scripture."

Presbyterian

Though there are various schisms throughout Presbyterianism, the majority trace their foundation to two men: John Calvin and John Knox.

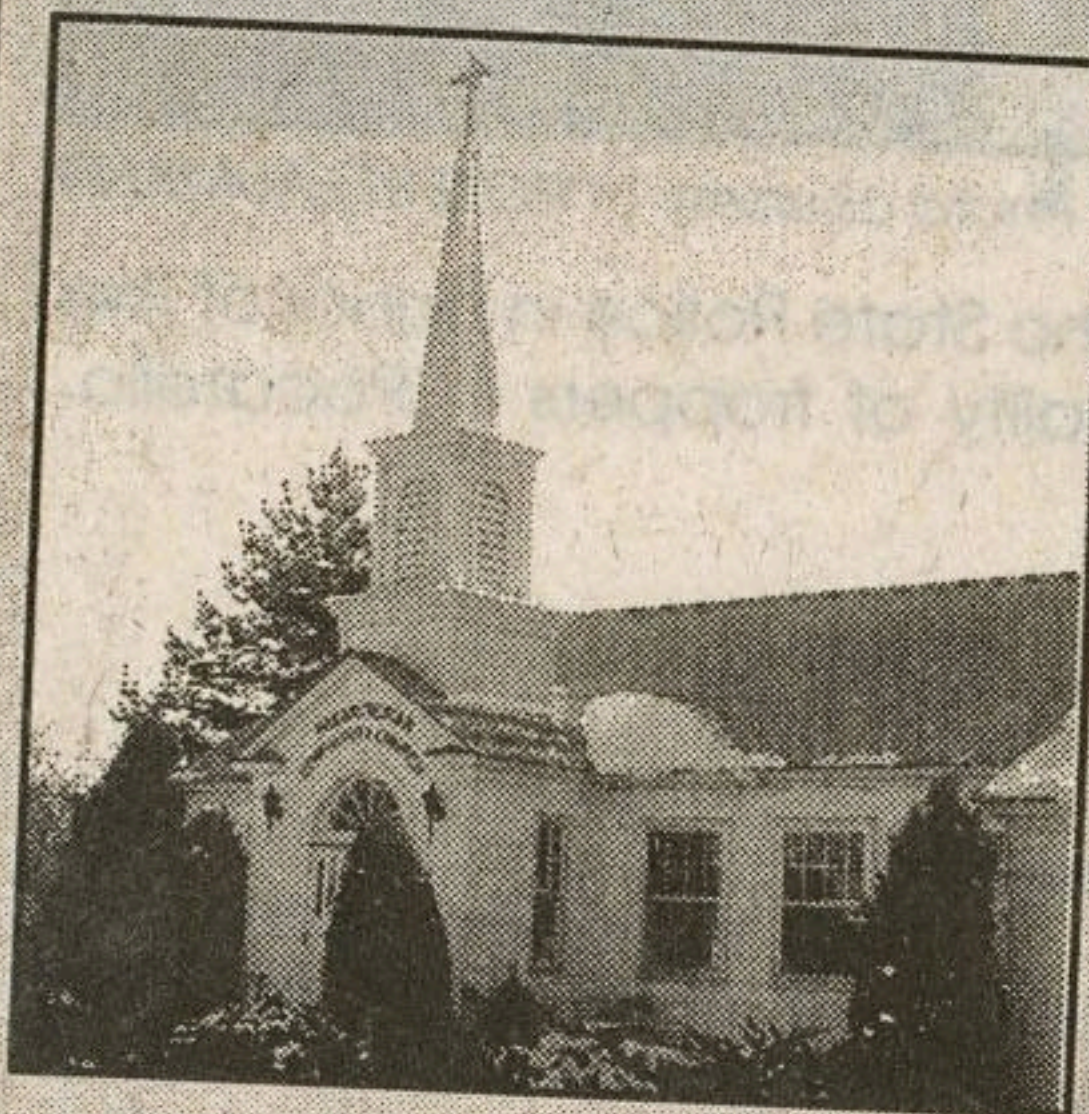
Calvin, a French/Swiss theologian, was a key player in the 16th century Protestant Reformation started by Martin Luther, which "protested" against the Catholic Church and resulted in a plethora of new Christian churches. Calvin's doctrine of "predestination" — where God has already determined a soul's fate regardless of its conduct on Earth — influenced many of these churches, including the Pilgrims and Puritans.

John Knox of Scotland studied with Calvin and brought the latter's influence to Scotland's battle for reformation. The Presbyterian church traces its ancestry back primarily to Scotland and Switzerland.

Currently, Frank Johnke of Logan, Utah, is the interim pastor at the Preston church. He estimates an overall membership of 35-40 people. "There's some debate, but Dec. 13, 1953, is the date most quoted for the establishment of this church," he said. "I understand the congregation met earlier in homes and the courthouse. The Logan church is over 120 years old. People from Franklin County used to go down there as well."

Johnke described the democratic administration of the church as one of its fundamental principals. "We're very inclusive," he said. "There are offices of elder, deacon and pastor. We believe each has a specific purpose, but they are equal offices. I'm set apart, but with no more authority. Women are ordained, and children can receive communion. We embrace baptism at any age."

INSIDE



Sharing the faith

Local religions explain their beliefs.

Page 8 & 9