

## OUR HERITAGE

A group of mission-minded Baptists from Gaines Street Baptist Church in Little Rock made a house to house survey in 1948 and found enough interested people in the new community of Sherwood to warrant establishing a mission. There were numbers of unsaved people living in Sherwood, and it was the prayer of Gaines Street to reach as many as possible for Christ. Because it was the trend in denominational circles to make a church community centered, Sherwood presented an excellent opportunity.

In September 1948, a tent revival was held. This was a definite answer to prayer. The people showed unusual interest from the start. Many “walked the sawdust trail,” and the mission was on its way. Fifteen people united with Gaines Street Church and were charter members of the mission. Sunday School was organized on October 10. Ninety-six people were in attendance. Services were held in the tent. The work had already grown to such an extent that it was necessary to use several nearby homes for Sunday School classes.

A lot 75 feet by 31 feet in size was bought. An army barracks was purchased from Camp Robinson and moved to the lot in Sherwood. Services were held in the building on November 7, 1948. Rev. Charles Hall was called to full-time work as pastor of the mission.

In February 1949, another army barracks, much better than the first one was acquired. The building served as an auditorium, and the old building was converted in the Children’s building with plenty of children to fill it. On October 8, 1949, the mission celebrated its first anniversary with a picnic at the church. An adult choir was organized.

Most of the work on the buildings and lot was done by volunteer labor. An interesting item appearing in the minutes of June 9, 1950, states that a motion was made to hire an “outsider” to oil the street in front of the church and pay him \$2.50.



Mable (Forrest) Seelinger in front of original building.



First Choir, February 1949

Mrs. Keihl - Piano, Hazel McClahahan, Mrs. Brockinton, Barbara Brockinton, Carolyn Forrest, Mable Seelinger, Betty Welch, Ken Griffith, A.B. Conrad, Doyle Howell, and Charles Ragland, Pastor

Sunday, August 13, 1950, was a great day! The Sherwood Mission was organized into a regular Baptist church. Forty-four persons presented themselves as the first charter members of the church. It was voted to permit all persons desiring to unite with the church during the next 30 days to be charter members. The church unanimously called Bro. Wesley Hoover as the first full-time pastor. The first church constitution was adopted September 15, 1954.

The first pastor stayed in members’ homes when “on the field” on weekends. Some housing was rented for a short period of time. An apartment was then arranged at the back of the worship building for temporary quarters for the pastor and his wife.

In May 1953, the church bought its first parsonage next door to the church property. This was occupied until a lot was purchased and a home was built on the corner of East Beverly in 1963.

A valentine banquet was held for young people in the banquet room of Sherwood Baptist Church on February 11, 1955, with 36 in attendance. Rev. Larkin Andrews was MC. A trio composed of Mable Forrest, Betty and Charlotte Alberson sang "Sincerely." Mable also joined Dennis Keith in a duet.

The first permanent building, which was planned as a temporary auditorium and later educational unit, was completed just in time for services and Barbara Conrad's wedding on December 21, 1958. The groom and members of the church worked frantically until midnight to ready the church for the wedding the next day.



Conrad Wedding, Dec. 1958  
A.B. and Lois Conrad, Barbara and Henry Bryant, Lois and Virgel Bryant

In 1963 an educational unit with fellowship hall was completed. During the



Groundbreaking, 1967

Building Committee - Francis Hill, Jo Peeples, Jimmy Jennings (Chair), Paul Peeples, J.D. Pride and Don Gray (later resigned)

construction time one of the volunteer workers, Bro. Marion Fray, fell from the roof breaking both heels. The doctor said he would never walk again, but he did – giving God the glory.

In October 1965, the church began to make plans for a new sanctuary, and on March 9, 1966, a vote was taken to build an auditorium seating 500. Harold Blackwood was selected as architect. Groundbreaking for the auditorium was in 1967.

1966 saw several things happen in the church. Among them was the hiring of a full-time church secretary, Norma Jennings.

A Committee on Committees was elected to oversee writing a job description detailing the work of each standing committee of the church. The church voted to repaint the old parsonage and delay the sale until spring. Action was taken to establish a library and the Nominating Committee was authorized to seek a librarian.

A survey was made on the feasibility of starting a child-care center and kindergarten, and the church voted to begin child-care on January 1, 1968. Child-care was provided for two years and kindergarten for three years. Louise Robinson served as the temporary director of the Child-Care Center.

The church occupied the new building in March 1968 and dedication was in April 1968. R & W Construction of North Little Rock built it at a cost of \$100,000. The building housed the sanctuary, pastor's study, church office and workroom, library, and choir room. Rev. Lawson Hatfield, secretary of the Sunday School Department, Arkansas Baptist State Convention, delivered the dedication message.

A number of improvements were made on the church property during the decade of 1970-1980. A memorial library was begun in 1970.

In 1973 the church recognized the need for expansion and purchased the house and lot adjoining the church property on the north for \$25,000. The property on the south was purchased in August 1977 for \$21,500.



Groundbreaking, July 13, 1975

Jimmy Jennings, Chairman; Rev. John H. Colbert, Pastor  
Building Com. - Bill Matthews, Paul Peeples, Dorothy Lovell, Joy Faucett

In March 1974, the church approved plans to build an additional educational space adjacent to the auditorium. July 4, 1976 the addition, with office space, six new departments, kitchen, and fellowship hall was dedicated. A potluck lunch was held with program following. The pastor, Rev. John Colbert, was the speaker. The “old facilities,” including classrooms and nursery, was renovated and redecorated at this time.

The church voted to start serving meals on Wednesday night at a nominal fee. In August 1976, a bus was purchased and appropriately named the “Blue Goose.” It was used to take the youth on choir trips, tours, and other activities.

In March 1977, the church purchased a Hammond organ, aided by memorial gifts in memory of Mrs. Fannie Pond.



The “Blue Goose”. Air Conditioners were added to the top at a later date.



Youth Choir, July 1971

August 24, 1980, the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary was celebrated. After lunch in the fellowship hall, there was a presentation of the drama, “Time.” The drama was written and directed by Mary Courson.

As the community grew, the church saw the need for expanded ministries. Senior citizens’ activity group was organized in 1982 under the direction of Jim Shirley. January 20, 1983 the Men’s Brotherhood was organized under the direction of Neal Guthrie, Director of the Brotherhood Department, Arkansas Baptist State Convention. May 1983, the church with a vision for missions, voted to increase giving to the Cooperative Program.

An audio-visual system with sound booth was purchased, which added to our church music program and services. Pew cushions were installed in the sanctuary in 1980 through a fund started to honor the memory of Mrs. Wanda Blain and Mrs. Lois Conrad.

The 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration was held August 24, 1975 with a potluck lunch and homecoming service and ordination of deacons in the afternoon. The week prior to this, the church was in revival, with former pastors preaching each night.



Children’s Choir, 1981

Rachel Childers, Ginny Colbert, Corie Burchfield, Jeff Childers, Greg Burns, Mac McMurry

On April 10, 1985, the church set a new record in Sunday School attendance. The average attendance was 292 for March. The previous high 286 was set in 1974.

The land at the back part of the lot at 201 Beverly, which adjoined the church property, was purchased in 1986. The church also purchased a baby grand piano during this year.

In 1987, on the recommendation of a missions committee, a mission was started at Royal Oaks Mobile Home Park. July 8, 1987, Rev. Elbert Warren was called to be pastor.

The Growth Challenge Committee and the Finance Committee recommended that offers be made on four properties to be purchased by the Church. Offers were made to purchase the Ratcliff property, 106 Fairway; the Farris property, 108 Fairway; the Mitchener property, 703 Country Club; and the Campbell property at 705 Country Club. June 1984, the Ratcliff property was bought for \$43,000. Two lots and the Campbell property were purchased in July 1988.

The church on May 11, 1998 voted at the recommendation of the Mission Development Council and the Church Council to sponsor a mission trip to Manaus, Brazil, to build a church building and to do witnessing. This trip was a great success, and several people have been back to Brazil to continue this ministry.

On September 13, 1989, the deacons, the Church Council, Growth Challenge Committee and Finance Committee, made a joint recommendation that the church begin a building program and a fund raising campaign. The capital fundraising program was what the Southern Baptist Convention Stewardship Commission called "Together We Build." Cost was \$14,680. Scott Farrell was hired as architect.



Adult Education Building, Built 1994



Ribbon Cutting, Adult Education Building, January 9, 1994

The church voted to spend approximately \$1,000,000 to construct a 22,000 ft., two story educational building and to completely renovate portions of two existing buildings used for preschool classes and to install additional parking on the west side of the new building when the two houses were removed. Dedication ceremonies for the new education building was Sunday, January 9, 1994.

In the years 1990-1999, the church continued to see steady growth. April 1990 saw the church coming together in Solemn Assembly to pray about purchasing more property and moving forward in faith to achieve the church's purpose- to reach people for Christ and to see lives transformed.

The church continues to be a mission-minded church as in the beginning. Royal Oaks Mission was donated to a new mission church. A partnership was formed with the International Baptist Church of Vienna, Austria. Paul and Jo Peebles served as on-site coordinators in Germany for the Arkansas-European Baptist Convention Partnership. Dr. and Mrs. Scott Hinton, former pastor and his wife, were approved by the International Mission Board as associate missionaries to Berlin. A partnership with Baptist Memorial Hospital was established to offer the Wellness Clinic. The church entered into a partnership agreement with Bethany Baptist Church, North Little Rock.



Youth Trip, Panama City Beach, Florida, 1999

In May 1999, Rev. Paul McClung came as pastor of FBC Sherwood. Under his leadership the FAITH Sunday School Evangelism strategy program was begun and is continuing to reach the lost.

The year 2000 has marked another milestone for First Baptist Church of Sherwood. It brings us to the 50th anniversary and marks the setting of a new attendance records with each month's average being over 400. February saw all records shattered with an average attendance in Sunday School of 481.

God has blessed First Baptist Church in the past because His people acted in faith in order to provide the physical tools needed to reach people and minister to them. the church has grown spiritually and physically. It is all because we love one another and love those around us and around the world.



Youth Trip, Panama City Beach, Florida, 1999

As we move into the next 50 years, let us be mindful of our true meaning and purpose:

*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even until the end of the world. Amen*

Matthew 28:19-20

As the 30th Anniversary book closed, so we close:

### **God Builds No Churches**

God builds no churches. By His Plan  
 That labor has been left to man,  
 No spires miraculously arise;  
 No little mission from the skies  
 Falls on the bleak and barren place  
 To be a source of strength and grace  
 The humblest church demands its price  
 In human toil and sacrifice.

Men call the Church the House of God,  
 Toward which the toil-stained pilgrims trod  
 In search of strength and rest and hope  
 As blindly through life's mists they grope.  
 And there God dwells, but it is man  
 Who builds that House, and draws its plan;  
 Pays for the mortar and the stone  
 That none need seek for God alone.

The humblest spire in mortal ken  
 Where God abides was built by men.  
 And it the church is still to grow,  
 Is still the light of hope to throw  
 Across the valley of despair,  
 Men still must build God's House of Prayer.  
 God sends no churches from the skies;  
 Out of our hearts they must arise.

Edgar A. Guest

## Pastor's Tenure of Service

Rev. Charles Hall .....	1948 - April 1949
Rev. Wesley Hoover .....	Aug. 1950 - Sept 1951
Rev. James Johnson .....	Sept 1951 - Jan. 1953
Rev. Ben Kyzer .....	March 1953 - May 1954
Rev. Larkin Andrews .....	Oct. 1954 - 1956
Rev. Charles Ragland .....	June 1956 - April 1961
Rev. Charles LoCicero .....	May 1961 - Nov 1961
Rev. Mel Mintz .....	Dec. 1961 - Sept. 1962
Rev. Jerry Don Abernathy .....	Dec. 1962 - Sept. 1964
Rev. Gerald Taylor .....	Dec 1964 - Nov 1969
Rev. John Colbert .....	March 1970 - Sept. 1982
Dr. Mickey Anders .....	Feb. 1983 - Aug. 1990
Dr. T. Scott Hinton .....	June 1991- March 1998
Rev. Paul McClung .....	April 1999 - present

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### Surrendered to Christian Service at First Baptist Church of Sherwood

Mark Andrews	James Turpin
R.M. Blackwood	Wayne Pipkin
Glen Tyson	Nora Mae Hamby
Glen Tyson Jr.	Bob Frasier (Christian Counseling)
Eddie Jeter	David Wiley
Ron Hatch	Mark Lawson (ordained here)
Doyle Howell	Rodney Raines
Terry Fortner	Ken Shaddox (ordained here)

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### Charter Members

Mr and Mrs. C.E. Adams and Donald	Mr. and Mrs.H.R. Middlebrooks and Madolyn
Mrs. T.R. Andrews and Mark	Bruce Middlebrooks
Alice Barrentine	Mr. and Mrs.Clyde P. Milam
Mr. and Mrs. Ivan Bell	Carolyn Meador
Mrs. Katie Bruner and Fred Bruner	Mr. and Mrs. G.E. Nicholas and John
Martha Brannon	Mr. and Mrs.L.C. Nesbitt
Mr. and Mrs. Glenn Clark and Mary Ann	Patricia and Frances Perrien
Mr. and Mrs. J.R. Davidson	Mr. and Mrs.Roy Ridings
Mr. and Mrs. E.H. Eastridge, Glenn and Robert	Mr. and Mrs.Oscar Ridings, Oneal and Derrell
Mr. and Mrs. O.L. Farris	Mr. and Mrs.H.R. Robinson
Mrs. R.J. Gillen	Mr. and Mrs.Shelby Stephens
Mr. and Mrs.Everett Hamby and Nora May	Mr. and Mrs.Charles W. Smith
Rev. and Mrs. J.W. Hoover	Mr. and Mrs.O.R. Sperry, Jimmy and Catherine
Mrs. C.W. Jetton	Glenn Salley
Mr. and Mrs.E.J. Keele	Mr. and Mrs.L.B. Wiley
Mrs. H.B. Lee	Mrs. Oren Wright, Eddie and Bernice
Mr. and Mrs.Tom Lovell	Mr. and Mrs.Crawford Welch
Mr. and Mrs.Jesse Lairson	