

HISTORY OF THE SECOND BAPTIST CHURCH FAYETTE, MISSOURI

Christian ladies and gentlemen, I will give a brief sketch of the history of our church in Fayette, MO., formerly known as the First Baptist Church, and now known as the Second Baptist Church. First allow me to quote a few Bible passages as all Christian organizations have their beginning in the Bible. The Psalmist in speaking of the Lord's House has this to say:

“How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of host; my soul longeth, yea even fainteth for the court of the Lord. Blessed are they that dwell in Thy House; they will still be praising Thee. They go from strength to strength. Every one of them in zion appeareth before God.”

Jesus in the New Testament says this: **“Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”** These passages and others of like sentiment go to prove that the Church is of Divine origin and must be established in all the world, for Jesus on one occasion remarked: **“Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”**

The First Baptist Church of Fayette was constituted in this county seat on September 12, 1839. In January 1840, Rev. Addison M. Lewis was elected pastor. Lucy Franklin was added to the church by letter in March of that year, and she was the first addition to the church. The present house of worship, 45 x 80 feet, was erected in 1841. Succeeding Rev. Lewis have been the following as pastors or interim ministers:

Rev. A.B. Hardy, Rev. Fielding Wilhite, Rev. A.R. Macey, Rev. W.W. Keys, Rev. L.C. Harris, Rev. Noah Flood, Rev. William Thompson, Rev. B.L. F. Cake, Rev. Thomas Frestoe, Rev. S.H. Almstead, Rev. X. Buckner, Rev. Y.R. Pitts, Rev. W.R. Painter, Rev. E.W. Isbell, and Rev. M.J. Breaker.

The church membership numbered as high as 200 members at one time. In 1869, the colored members were formed into a separate church, which reduced the membership to 45, however this increased to 69 by 1881.

There were 155 colored members who constituted the first colored church. This church was located at East Davis and Louisiana Street. In 1883, the membership sought elsewhere, and under the leadership of the Rev. Shackelford, became successful in securing this spot of ground on which now stands Second Baptist Church.

Rev. Shackelford was a zealous, progressive and hard working pastor. Succeeding the Rev. Shackelford were: Rev. P.P.M. Mack, Rev. Amos Johnson, Rev. J.H. McDaniel, Rev. W.P. Brooks, Dr. J.T. Caston, and Rev. J.T. Thornley. Because of lost records, we are unable to state just how long these ministers, as well as others, remained here. Rev. Thornley was indeed a Pastor and Evangelist. Many stirring revivals were held during his administration, and many precious souls were added to the Kingdom under his leadership. The east and west wings were added to our church under his administration.

Following the Rev. Thornley was the Rev. D.A. Holmes of Paseo Baptist church, Kansas City, Missouri. He was a great preacher and a good pastor. His messages were powerful and spirit filled. Many souls came to the Lord during his administration. He redecorated our church and made possible the concrete flooring in the first unit downstairs. He stayed five years. Following Rev. Holmes was the Rev. J.W. Gordon. He had a successful administration even though it was short. Next was the Rev. W.C. Young who made additional improvements to the church. The Rev. James R. Smart pastored for a short while, and was succeeded by the Rev. R.A. Allen. Others followed: Rev. R.S. Harris, Rev. H.C. Pollard, and the Rev. C.O. Banks, under whose leadership many other improvements were made to the church as well as the parsonage.

The Rev. Banks was succeeded by Rev. William Reed, whose stay was short as he was called to the “great beyond”. Rev. P.M. Madison succeeded the Rev. Reed, and he was succeeded by Rev. E.A. Henry who proved to be a very capable minister and good administrator. Rev. Henry was succeeded by Rev. G.W. Reed who also had a successful administration, even though it was short.

The Rev. F.R. Smittick followed Rev. Reed, and he was a good pastor and very active in helping our church move forward. He was a member of the ministerial alliance of the city. Rev. Smittick was followed by Rev. Leon Hannah. Under Rev. Hannah’s leadership, the building fund was established, and many wonderful deeds were accomplished. He was very active in many organizations in Fayette as well as the work of our Mt. Zion Baptist District.

Rev. Hannah was followed by Rev. Horace Hopkins, Jr., who became pastor in March 1974. Under Rev. Hopkins’ leadership, many improvements have been made to our church, such as, carpet in both the main and lower levels, new ceiling & ceiling fans, new pews, central air & heating system, a handicap accessible ramp, enclosing of the vestibule, and the list goes on and on. In addition, he formed a Men’s chorus and established the Arise and Shine : **Page 4** Inspirational Choirs, and also our praise dance team, Dancers For Christ. Under Rev. Hopkins’ tutelage, Lue Lockridge-Lane was licensed to preach the Gospel on October 31, 2004, and Lawrence Holt was licensed in September 2007. Both currently serve as associate ministers at Second Baptist. Rev. Hopkins retired in April 2010 after leading the flock for over 36 years.

In addition to the ministers mentioned, the following men of our church were ordained to preach and accepted the call to go into the world and preach the Gospel: Rev. Taylor Brashears, Rev. William Pankey, Sr., Rev. Allen Connor, Rev. Tom Hughes, Rev. George Stapleton, Rev. Lewis Williams, and many others.

Some of the deacons who have stood by our ministers through the years of the church's existence are Bros. John Hinch, Silas Jackson, John Jackson, John Shields, Ben Pankey, Joe Boggs, William Warden, William White, George Tindall, Charlie Payne, John Basket, Ira Miller, Frank Mansfield, Dewey Coleman, Earnest Ward, Everett Tindall, Noah Douglass, Tom Douglass, Roland Bruce, Waymond Williams, Roy Turner, Russell Moore, Frederic Wayland and Cornelius Orr.

Others ordained as deacons include Bros. Edward Williams and Lawrence Holt, who later accepted his calling into the ministry. In addition, our young brothers who have worked along side our deacons are Dametrick Lockridge, Walter Lane III, Randall Wilson, Scott Wayland, and Antorie Williams.

Our current pastor is Rev. Charlie R. Wright, Sr., whom the Lord called to Second Baptist on April 24, 2011. He was installed on August 20, 2011. Under his leadership, many of our ministries have been revived, and the church body is growing in numbers as well as in the Word of God. Improvements have been made to the parking lot, we purchased new sound equipment and a computer, upgraded our telephone system and obtained wireless Internet services, and have plans to renovate the existing structure to include handicapped accessible facilities on the main level as well as stained glass windows and a steeple. We are hoping to do even greater work in the future under Rev. Wright's leadership, by the Grace of God. Thanks be to God, our church is moving on despite oppositions and obstacles.

Our membership is not as large today as it was in the days of our fathers and mothers or grandparents. Many have drifted away, many have been called by the Heavenly Father from labor to reward. However, we are here striving to keep the old ship of Zion sailing.

We have come this far by faith, but thanks be to God, our church is moving on! With the help of all of the ministers mentioned above, our church has progressed throughout the years, and we are still on the firing line, fighting for the Lord after 173 years!