

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MIDDLE VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH

In the spring of 1932, the families of Sam Raulston and H.H. White canvassed the community to determine the interest in beginning a Sunday School. Apparently the response was good; and on Easter Sunday of that year, the first Sunday School was held in a building directly across the road from our present office building at the northeast corner of Crabtree and Middle Valley Roads. The structure was known simply, although perhaps prophetically, as the "Sheep House."

The Sunday School, which was interdenominational, continued to meet throughout the summer, but there was a growing interest in forming a full-fledged church. From the entries made in the membership rolls for that period, it appears that the church was established October 9, 1932, with seven members received by letter and eight others received as candidates for baptism having made profession of faith. These were not baptized until November 6, 1932. Total original membership was fifteen. Of those original charter members, it is believed that all have gone home to be with the Lord.

There is no written record of the constituting of the church, and the first entry into the official minutes is dated October 30, 1932. At this time the pastor and two deacons were elected and ordained. The deacons were Sam Raulston and E.T. Henson. The pastor, Jeff Moore, was elected to serve one year. (The custom of electing a pastor for one year at a time persisted until September 1945, which probably explains why there were fifteen pastors in the first thirty years of the history of the church and only six in the last thirty years).

In the summer of 1933, a frame building was erected and occupied on a lot donated by Mr. Sherman Raulston. The building stood directly in front of what is now our office suite at the northwest corner of Middle Valley and Crabtree Roads. It probably stood until about 1963 when our present sanctuary was completed.

A bell which still hangs in our present steeple was one that had called children to a one-room school house that stood at the corner of Middle Valley and Daisy-Dallas Roads. The school was known as "Number 7." The bell is one that the railroad had used on a steam locomotive and had donated to the school. When the school was later consolidated with another, the bell somehow made its way here.

The Church joined the Ocoee Baptist Association, predecessor of Hamilton County Baptist Association, in October of 1935, and has been a cooperating church in the Southern Baptist Convention since that time and has been active, both at the associational, state, and national convention levels.

Electricity and new pews were installed in the summer of 1936. Six new classrooms were added in the early 1950's. (These have since been converted into our present office complex). Eight additional acres of property were acquired in March 1952; and in September 1954, a building which is now the Fellowship Hall was erected and served as our worship center until 1963 when our present sanctuary was completed.

The decade of the 1960's saw an upswing in prosperity, albeit a decline in moral values, and a weakening of the family. It was a time that presented this church with some of its biggest challenges in ministry. During this decade the population began to shift to this end of Hamilton County, and we recorded some of our best numerical growth.

A pastorium and sanctuary were completed in that era. But something that had far reaching influence was the establishment and operation of a kindergarten for four and five year olds from 1964 to 1975.

The church and Sunday School continued to grow in the decade of the 70's, and two building programs resulted in additional classrooms constructed to the rear of the sanctuary building on the ground level and then the second story level. The Family Life Center was built, and the balcony in the sanctuary was opened.

The youth program became well established in the 70's. In September 1988, the renovation of our sanctuary was begun and was completed February 1, 1989. A new organ was purchased in 1989.

The new ministry center and educational building was built and dedicated in 2002. Our current pastor Dr. Greg Lindsey was called to Middle Valley Baptist in March 2004.

We are now in a new century; and under God, plans are being laid to insure future growth spiritually as well as numerically. **TO GOD BE THE GLORY!!**