

In the year of 1867, the Liberty Baptist Church was constituted. Services were held near the present sanctuary under a bush harbor. Services were held on the 4th Sunday of each month by visiting preachers. The bush harbor was replaced by a small log church where services were held until 1896.

The first known preacher was Rev. James C. Best. While active in the ministry, he died on Nov. 3, 1881 when he was just 24 years old, leaving a widow, Carolyn P. Best, and three children. She married J. L. Hendley and had a son by the name of W. E. Hendley. Rev. Best is buried in the cemetery behind the church. His grave is one of the oldest in the cemetery.

The records show that the membership in 1888 was 58.

In 1889 the church joined the Columbia Baptist Association by petition.

In 1895 the value of the church property was recorded as \$150. The pastors were on an annual calling. Some were pastors of several churches at the same time. In 1896 while Rev. G. W. Oliff was pastor, a stacked plank frame building was constructed which was used until 1923.

The value of the property had increased to \$600. In 1900 Sunday School enrollment was recorded in the amount of 70. The services were moved to the Pansey school building while the frame building was being torn down, and the work on the present brick building was begun. Rev. W. Curtis Kirkland was pastor at that time. The present brick church was completed valued at \$7,500. The first service was held in July of 1924.

A dedication message was brought by Rev. J. A. Etheredge. The dedication service was the beginning of a great revival service which lasted for two weeks. People traveled !

to the services on buggies and wagons filling the church each night. On Sunday afternoon, two weeks after the dedication, the largest number of converts ever received at one time here, were baptized in near by Cedar Creek. This began a great religious awakening in the church. The records show that 65 baptisms were made during the 1924

associational year.

On Sept. 21, 1929 electric lights were installed in the church.

On Jan. 10, 1938 the church voted to go on half time (services twice each month) which continued until 1959 when services began full time (services each Sunday).

On July 12, 1939 the church granted letters to 17 members for the purpose of constituting Pleasant Grove Church.

The annual calling of pastors were annulled in 1953, replaced by the calling of the pastors for an indefinite period.

On Feb. 26, 1955 the church was incorporated as Liberty Baptist Church, Inc.

A board of trustees were elected. Money was borrowed to begin construction of the educational building annex which was completed in 1956.

David E. Causey was pastor at that time. In 1960 the auditorium was remodeled. A baptistry and a new choir loft were added. In the fall of 1964, the indebtedness was paid on the mortgage, and the mortgage was burned.

In 1965 a public address system was installed. The church celebrated a Centennial Service on April 04, 1967.

A new well was drilled in 1967. New pews were installed in 1970. Carpet was put in the auditorium in 1972 and in the education building in 1975. Air conditioning was installed in the auditorium in 1973, and in the educational building in 1974. In 1978 new lights were installed in the auditorium. On Sept. 20, 1978 the church purchased a house which was moved to the church property to be used as a parsonage.

In 1980 Mrs. L. Y. Tolar gave a right of way for the purpose of having Houston County pave the road around the cemetery after a group of men from the church and community met with the county officials.

Liberty Baptist Church was host to the Columbia Baptist Association in 1906, 1924, and 1932. The largest membership recorded 293 in 1928. The largest number in Sunday School was 160 in 1931. Both were under the leadership of Rev. M. Madema.

Liberty Baptist Church has ordained the following ministers: Rev. James Aiken Etheredge, 1920; Rev. Billy Wimberly, 1929; Rev. James Beasley, 1955; Rev. Malon Collins, 1949; Rev. Wayne Walker, 1976. more have been ordained, but I don't have the information right now.

There is a historic marker located at the front of the church.

Year Pastor

1881 James C. Best

1889-1891 B. M. Joiner

1892 S. W. Lock

1893-1894 D. E. Burdeshaw

1895 W. P. Stewart

1896-1898 G. W. Oliff

1899-1903 J. L. Pate

1904 W. P. Stewart

1905-1912 D. E. Burdeshaw

1913-1916 Lamar Jones

1917 Unknown

1918 J. I. Quattlebaum

1919-1920 W. H. Black

1921 Charles H. Turner

1922 J. C. Parish

1923-1925 W.C. Kirkland

1926-1933 M. Madema

1934-1937 H. M. Givens

1938-1940 Joe Bell

1941-1942 Bill Oswald

1943-1944 H. M. Givens
1945 Joe. W. White
1946-1948 J. R. Peacock
1949-1950 Herman Greer
1951-1952 Carlos Farris
1952 Jimmy Brewton
1953 Ben Goddard
1954 David E. Causey
1955 H. Grady Wilkes
1955-1958 Henry Martin
1959-1960 James Aiken Etheredge
1961 No Pastor
1962-1964 Charles R. Meadows
1965-1969 Cecil L. Davis, Interium
1970 Bill Johnson
1971-1972 James N. Barnes
1973-1975 A. D. Arrington
1976 Wayne Walker

This is the history of Liberty Baptist Church from 1867 to 1976 with a list of Pastors and the years they served. From 1889 to present, the year shown has been recorded in the minutes of the Columbia Baptist Association. the term of service of some of the pastors extended into the following year.

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