**The Growing of a Church**

**1890 On March 14, 1890 in the “Little Old Schoolhouse” in south part of town 8 men and women met and organized and took the name “Iowa Park Missionary Baptist Church.” One of the charter members, J.S. Allen was called as pastor. The first ordained deacon of the church was R.D. Rutherford.**

**1891 A small frame building was erected on N. Yosemite in which to worship, just west of our present building. The lots to build the structure were donated by the city. Membership of 16 reported. The close of Allen’s ministry was April 22, 1891.**

 **It is significant to note that in the earliest years of the church the practice was to automatically call a pastor, from the congregation, on a yearly basis and elect other officers of the church.**

 **The first mission organization of the church was begun and called “Willing Workers,” which included both men and women.**

**1892 J. W. Whatley succeeded Allen as pastor, serving until 1893. The Church, along with the Methodist Church of Iowa Park, held a 4-week revival which added to the churches in numbers.**

 **1893 Rev. J. W. Morgan was called as pastor the latter part of 1893.**

**1896 Church minutes from 1896 to 1904 reflect the church name as “The First Missionary Baptist Church of Christ at Iowa Park.”**

**1897 Church treasurer in conference reported in November that $101.15 was paid the pastor for salary during the year. A soliciting committee was elected for securing pastor’s salary.**

**1898 The south wing was added to the original structure at a cost of $365.05, which included cost of lumber**

 **at $225.95, hardware at $20.80 and a flue for $5.00.**

**In September the first messengers to the Texas Baptist Convention were elected.**

**1899 The first mission offering was taken in October in the amount of $31.00.**

**1901 In March a collection was taken to pay for coal in the amount of $8.60.**

**1902 William M. Hays began his pastorate January 11 and served until July 6, 1904.**

**1904 Total membership of 115 reported. Rev. J. W. Morgan again led the church until Rev. J. S. Clements became pastor in 1907.**

**At this time, “Missionary” was dropped from the church name and all minutes identify the body of believers as “First Baptist Church,” or “Iowa Park Baptist Church,” though the name was not formally changed until 1925.**

**1908 During Clements ministry, the first pastorium was erected with a $400.00 loan. The Baptist Young People’s Union was organized.**

 **Pastors following Clements were Rev. Heathington, Rev. M. L. Blankenship, Rev. W. H. McKinzie, and Rev. T. J. Deakins.**

**1909 In March the church met in regular conference and Pastor Clements discussed the importance of training a church choir. Motion was made and seconded to purchase 50 chairs from a church in Chillicothe and the explanation of song books was discussed.**

 **The first indication of Ladies Aid recorded.**

**1915 Rev. McKinley Norman was called as pastor in April 1915. The church adopted a “Church Financial Plan.”**

 **Pastors following Norman were Rev. J. L. Roach, Rev. J. T. Burnett, Rev. W. F. Ferguson, Rev. L. B. Owen, and Rev. R. C. Hooper.**

**1923 A Sunday School room 14 ft. by 28 ft. was built on the west side of the church. It was voted that year to buy additional lots adjacent to the present property for the erection of a new building.**

 **Plans were set in motion to begin effort to sell the church pastorium for the sum of $500.**

**1924 On December 14, 1924, Rev. J. C. Newman began ministry and construction of a new building began.**

**1925 Construction of the new building was completed at a cost of $40,000 at the present location of 300 N. Yosemite.**

**The church was incorporated under the laws of the State of Texas. It was voted that the name of the church be “The First Baptist Church of Iowa Park.”**

**The original white frame church was given to the community of Thrift, Texas, near Burkburnet, and was later the structure of Thrift Baptist Church. In addition, our regular church pianist moved her membership to Thrift Baptist to become their pianist.**

**1926 The church voted in July 1926 business meeting to give other churches in Iowa Park permission to use our baptistry for baptisms.**

 **In August 1926 the church voted to give permission for the City Band to practice in the church basement.**

 **In September, 1926 the church voted to have an electric cook stove installed in the basement kitchen.**

**The church was still in process of attempting to sell church parsonage or trading it for property just south of the church.**

**The Budget Drafting Committee presented a proposed budget to defray local expenses in 1927 in the**

**amount of $6,500.00 to cover the loan payment, salaries for the pastor, janitor, pianist, Sunday school and B.Y.P.U. expense, insurance, song books, lights and fuel,** **and incidentals.**

**Dr. G. N. Neafus was called as pastor in December 1926.**

**1928 During the December 7, 1928 business meeting the church voted to embark on effort to purchase seven lots west of the church for further expansion.**

 **The church granted the use of the church basement to the Boy Scouts every Friday night.**

 **“Curbs” were placed around the flower beds at the entrance to the basement in March 1928.**

**1929 In March 1929 the church purchased lots 6 – 12, Block 71 west of the church for the amount of $43.75. The property was sold for back taxes. This would be the future site for the Children’s Building and parking lot of the church.**

 **The fiscal year was changed to reflect October to September rather than as heretofore January to December.**

 **The church voted to pay railroad fare and Pullman for delegates to the State Convention.**

**1930 The church voted to allow the Parent Teacher Association the use of church basement to serve the Teachers Institute.**

**1931 The church allowed the use of basement and kitchen for illustration of beef by the Texas Home Demonstration Club.**

 **Dr. Neafus resigned December 1931 and Rev. Charles Spurgeon McClung became pastor, serving until June 1935. Rev. C. M. Hundley was called to be pastor but died before coming onto the field.**

**1932 In the early 30’s the Baptists of the area built a camp at Vernon (which is now the site of Vernon College). Each church, including FBC, built its own cabin for use by the young people and adults who attended the summer camps. In the beginning, tents were used and each one took his cot.**

**1936 On January 6, 1936 a fire was discovered in the building which completely destroyed portions of the edifice. Church services and Sunday school were held in the high school auditorium until repairs were made. Damages were in the amount of $9,500.00, most of which was covered by insurance. It was feared that the furniture (church pews) which had been purchased in 1925 had been damaged beyond repair; however they were taken to a shop in Wichita Falls, dismantled, repaired and refinished by the late Roy Tabor, church member.**

 **April 12, 1936 was the first service back in auditorium since the fire in January.**

**Rev. Thomas L. Kilpatrick accepted the call of the church in March 1936.**

**The church voted to adopt the plan of financing all the organizations through the Sunday School and Church Budget System.**

**The Annual Meeting on September 3, 1936 reported a Grand Total of all Receipts of $3,000.24;**

 **225 Givers of Record with 68 Tithers; Amount in Arrears on Budget Pledges of $56.25.**

**The first weekly church bulletin, The Messenger, printed by local printer, was begun.**

**The first Constitution and By-Laws of FBC were approved on July 8, 1936.**

**1939 In March a new pastorium was purchased at 106 W. Alameda.**

**1940 The Golden Jubilee Anniversary of the church was celebrated March 15-17, 1940. A Jubilee Dinner**

**was served in the basement. Original church bell was brought out of storage, placed on a temporary tower, and rang for the first time since 1925 for Sunday Services on March 17, 1940.**

**The church voted to give Superintendent of Public Schools the privilege of holding the Choral Singing contest in our church auditorium during the Interscholastic Meet.**

 **Rev. Kilpatrick resigned in October and Rev. T. Hollis Epton was called.**

**1941 Sunday, July 20th, 1941 was designated as, “Bring a Book Day” for new church library which provided approximately 500 books. Miss Lorene Farmer was elected as Church Librarian.**

**The month of July marked the beginning of the “Royal Service Program,” (Royal Ambassadors) by the Women’s Missionary Service.**

**A “Dedicatory Service” was held on November 30, 1941 at which time the church note was burned. In spite of years of difficult depression, the debt was paid in full.**

**Epton resigned in November 1941. Rev. Alfred Grigsby came on the field and served until May 1946.**

**1942 On January 14, 1942 the church voted to cooperate with the other churches in our city in entertainment and open house for Sheppard Field Cadets at Fair Park Auditorium on Sunday afternoons. The church purchased Bibles for the Sheppard Field Cadets.**

**1945 The road in front of the church was paved for first time at a cost of $447.25.**

**The church purchased a new organ at cost of $2,411.00.**

**The 1945 Uniform Associational Letter reported 37 baptisms, a total of $9,506.53 for all contributions; gifts to Cooperative Program of $2,059.72 and other missions $1,271.35 with 45 tithers. Total expenses for the year of $6,185.46.**

**1946 A fund was started which enabled the church to buy a new electric Hammond organ for the church. Mrs. O. E. Lochridge became the organist for the church, serving twenty-five years. The previous pump organ had been purchased in 1891 by the Willing Worker’s. The old organ was given to missionaries to Brazil.**

 **The possibility of purchasing an air conditioner for the church was discussed and after finding that the cost would be $950.00 it was decided “to pass on the buying at that time.”**

 **A room was built in the north part of the basement for the 3-yr old pupils of the Cradle Roll Department at a cost of approximately $75.00**

 **Rev. James N. Easterwood was called as pastor July 3, 1946.**

**1948 The church voted to purchase four additional ceiling fans for the auditorium at $66.04 each, which were a great help in such hot July weather. A punch bowl, cups, and lace table cloth were purchased for church social functions.**

**1951 Highlights for the year: Average Attendance per Sunday of 269. High Attendance of 284 in April. Total Receipts for the year $24,254.77, Total Gifts for Missions $10,330.51. Goal for the New Year to Cooperative Program Giving at 40%.**

**1952 The recommendation from the Board of Deacons was accepted namely to finance the building of a tennis court on the west part of the church lawn.**

**1953 High Attendance recorded in September of 334.**

**iHig Work began on the mission which had been recommended by the Brotherhood previously in 1943. It was decided that the south half of Block 117 be purchased for $1500. A house and garage at North Park and East Washington were torn down, lumber cleaned, and construction on the mission began.**

**1954 First services in the mission chapel were conducted on January 10, 1954, by Rev. H. M. Riek, who had become pastor upon Easterwood’s resignation. In June, Bro. George Shropshire was called as assistant pastor to help with the mission.**

**1955 Because of rapid growth of the mission chapel, an architect for planning a new building was secured. The mission, later named Faith Baptist Church, called its own full-time pastor in July 1955. On December 30, 1955, title deeds to the property were presented by L.E. Brooks to the new mission church on behalf of First Baptist Church. FBC granted the letters of 171 of its members for membership into the new church on the day it was constituted.**

**The church voted the use of “dated” offering envelopes for Sunday School offering.**

**1956 Rev. Homer W. Thompson was called as pastor and began his ministry on January 8, 1956.**

**Ground-breaking ceremony for the Children’s Building adjoining the church on the west was held on November 4, 1956 at a cost of $41,719.00 (C. & W. Construction Co.).**

**1957 In October the church voted and entered into a three-year monetary agreement to help build the Baptist Student Union Building at Midwestern State University at Wichita Falls, Texas. This support was satisfied on October 29, 1960.**

**1958 Dedication of the First Baptist Church Children’s Building held May 25, 1958.**

**Church bell was removed from the previously erected tower and placed in storage under the church steps, where it remained until 1976, to make way for landscaping.**

 **The church purchased a baby-grand piano “in good condition” in the amount of $695.00.**

**The City granted permission to use the old city light posts in front of our church and motion carried to install lights on each of them.**

**1959 A new pastorium was erected at the cost of $25,000.00 for the brick structure at 701 N. Park.**

 **The church observed “Brubaker Sunday” on September 13, 1959 for thirty-eight years he served as Sunday School Superintendent.**

**1961 The church voted to memograph the Messenger for a time as an economical measure.**

**1965 The 75th Anniversary of the church celebrated. Rev. McKinley Norman, a former pastor who had served 50 years before was the special speaker.**

**It was voted to approve a proposed plan for a new sanctuary at the cost of $200,000. Church Budget for 1965 was $54,489.36.**

**1966 Plans for the New Sanctuary were presented at the first business meeting in January 1966. Ground-breaking of the New Sanctuary on February 13, 1966.**

 **Rev. Donald Wood was called on February 23, 1966 as pastor.**

 **Paving (hot-top asphalt) of area west of Children’s Building for parking.**

**1967 On January 8, 1967 the first service in New Sanctuary was held with a record attendance of 443 in Sunday School and a full auditorium. The ordnances of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper were observed. There were 13 baptized. Glen Miller was the first candidate baptized in the new baptistry.**

**Dedication services of the New Sanctuary were held on January 15, 1967 at present location.**

**In May sidewalks were installed on south side of the New Sanctuary.**

**In August 1967 – the Pulpit furniture and pews, which had served 41 years through the ministry of 10 pastors, in the Old Sanctuary, were sold for $250.00 to the Monroe Baptist Church in Green River, Wyoming. When it was discovered that the church was a mission with only 32 members, the furniture was given as a gift.**

**The north wing of the Old Sanctuary which had previously been location of the church office, pastor’s study and a kitchenette, were converted into Sunday school classrooms.**

**1968 Rev. Wood resigned in September and Rev. Herb Crocker served as interim pastor until February 1969.**

**The fellowship hall of the building erected in 1925 was remodeled.**

**The end-of-year report of church to association was total baptisms 37, members by letter 59, present resident members 695 and non-resident members 324 for total of 1,019 members.**

**The church approved and sanctioned an Extension Department with Sunday school class at Park Manor Nursing Home taught by Mrs. Nelle Leath and a second Sunday school class be established at the State Hospital to be taught by Mr. L. H. Evans.**

**Because of unsafe structural conditions of the auditorium of W. F. George High School of Iowa Park, the graduation ceremonies for the 1967/1968 graduating class were conducted in the sanctuary of First Baptist Church.**

**1969 On February 16, 1969, Rev. Kenneth Flowers began his ministry as pastor.**

**The church sponsored a mission project by sending eight adults and twenty-two young people to South Texas to participate in the River Ministry at Riviera and Ricardo.**

**Again, the graduation ceremony for W. F. George High School of Iowa Park’s class of 1968/1969, was held in the FBC sanctuary.**

**The church’s first pictorial directory was published.**

**1970 FBC observed its 80th Anniversary. Rev. Kenneth Flowers used “A Look at the Past” as his sermon topic. Wendell Patterson, a volunteer for special service brought the message of “Mission: Possible.”**

**1971 July 19-24, 1971 marked the launching of a “build-a-church” mission project (later known as “Builders for Christ”). Thirty-six members of the church went to Florence, Colorado, where they constructed a 3,500 sq. ft. church.**

**1972 Bus Outreach Ministry was approved and started.**

**An intercom system was installed for communication between the church secretary and the pastor.**

**1973 New Constitution and By-Laws proposed to the church in September.**

**A second bus was purchased which expanded the Bus Ministry.**

**FBC helped to develop the Baptist camp grounds, Chaparral Baptist Assembly, located on a 132-acre site at the end of South Peterson Road on Wichita River, with monetary gifts as well as labor. The land upon which the camp grounds were developed was a gift from a member of FBC. Adequate facilities and grounds had been an associational dream for many years.**

**1975 February 9, 1975 was Organ Dedication Sunday for newly purchased church organ at cost of $13,090. Mrs. Jim Medlinger was organist.**

**The stained glass which previously hung above Old Sanctuary baptistry was moved to a lighted frame in the hallway between both the old and new buildings.**

**The church observed its 85th Anniversary.**

**1976 The original church bell from the 1891 structure was placed in a permanent stand between the building erected in 1925 and the one built in 1967. Dedication was held on March 14, 1976, which was the 86th anniversary of the church and the bi-centennial of our country. Dosia Smith, the longest term member, was the first to ring the bell.**

**The Young People conducted a VBS in Rye, Colorado, June 14-18, 1976.**

**1977 Presentation of deed to the building observed on January 3, 1977. Final payment on new sanctuary made on January 20, 1977. A Day of Praise was observed on January 23, 1977.**

**1978 After years of dreams and planning, a major renovation project to the Educational Building (Children’s Building) at cost of $260,000 on the structures built in 1925 and 1956 was completed. Open house of the remodel was held on July 30, 1978.**

**Rev. Flowers resigned October 31, 1978.**

**1979 Rev. Howell Farnsworth, Jr. was called as pastor on January 7, 1979.**

**1980 In August 1980 Children’s Church Ministry began with Jim Adams serving as pastor for four years, Ken Hines Director. These were children picked up through the Bus Ministry with the fleet of two white church busses.**

**1981 Choir robes were donated to Jefferson Street Baptist Church of Wichita Falls.**

**1984 Rev. Farnsworth resigned on September 30, 1984. David W. Jones followed as pastor and served until 1986.**

**1985 Faithful member of our church, Eleanor Bell, a four-year volunteer member of Mission Service Corp of the Home Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention, left for America Samoa for a year assignment as a third grade school teacher.**

**1986 In October 1986, revised Constitution and By-Laws brought before the church.**

 **On December 14 1986, the church extended a call to Dr. Derrell Monday, which he accepted.**

**1988 Purchase of Annex Building (ASCS property) in September 1988 at a cost of $38,151.63.**

**1990 In January 1990, the auditorium was updated with new carpet and the pews were refurbished and reupholstered.**

**On March 23-25, 1990 the church held its 100th Anniversary celebration.**

**The Annual Church Profile Survey reported Total Membership of 1170; Total Baptisms of 30;**

**Number of Tithers 168; Total All Tithes and Offerings of $302,245.00; Cooperative Program Gifts**

**of $46,699.00; Foreign Missions of $9,975.00; and a Total Mission Expenditures of $68,691.00.**

**1991 The parsonage at 701 Park was sold for $30,000. A new parsonage was purchased at 1504 Wagon**

**Wheel at cost of $100,000.**

**1992 Remodel of Jr. High Department on 3rd floor at $4,500.00.**

**1994 Remodel of Children’s Building in three phases:**

**1st phase – 3, 4, & 5 year old rooms changed into new office area.**

**2nd phase – Change old office area into Nursery.**

**3rd phase – Change old nursery area into classrooms for 3, 4, & 5 year olds.**

**1996 Church Constitution and Bylaws revised April 10, 1996.**

**1997 Upon the resignation by Dr. Monday as pastor, Rev. Lamoin Champ served as interim pastor until the church called Rev. Steve Beckwith.**

**1998 Purchase of 1990 Ford Diesel bus at cost of $27,500.**

**In July, the church purchased land and building located at 300 W. Bank, formally known as the Food Depot, for $50,000.00. The church also voted to sell the “Chevrolet” building for $35,000.00 and use the funds to build a vehicle storage building on the north side of the “volleyball court” property.**

 **Church Constitution and Bylaws revised August 1, 1998.**

**1999 Renovations of Annex II, Food Depot property began, at a cost of $149,450.00. In August the facility was officially named First Baptist Church “First Family Center “.**

**2000 Bright Beginnings Christian Pre-School began and operated until 2008.**

**2001 February 1, 2001 marked purchase of the “green house” at 303 West Bank at cost of $10,000.**

**It was recommended and approved that a study group be formed to study the difference between the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT).**

**2002 June 12, 2002 marked the beginning of the Wednesday night meal prior to Prayer Meetings.**

**The church purchased a 2002 one ton Ford Van at cost of $22,433.00.**

**Rev. Beckwith resigned as pastor and again Rev. Lamoin Champ served as interim pastor until the church entered into a ‘Covenant of Relationship’ with Dr. W. C. Burns as Transitional Pastor.**

**2003 On April 9th, the church voted to obtain a church website.**

**The Awana program was begun which replaced the GA’s and RA’s mission groups.**

**2004 Rev. Glen Pearce was called as pastor.**

**The church voted to change our affiliated State Convention to uniquely support the Southern Baptist of Texas Convention (SBTC).**

**The sound equipment and control booth was relocated from the rear of the church auditorium to the center, elevated booth. Two viewing screens were installed on either side of the baptistery.**

**2005 In April – June, the area between the “Old Sanctuary” and the “New Sanctuary” was re-landscaped and designated as a Prayer Garden.**

**2006 A stairwell exit from the third floor to the second floor was installed for safety reasons.**

**2007 Church began participation in Great Days of Service, along with other churches in Iowa Park, as a ministry to residents and public servants of Iowa Park.**

**2008 Marked the closing of Bright Beginnings after eight years of service.**

**2011 Remodeling of sanctuary with new carpet, enlargement of podium area, removal of modesty railing, and update of sound system was completed. A new computerized sign in front of church was installed.**

**2014 Team Kids replaced the Awana program for children.**

**The church observed a one-time special offering day to raise funds for new heating and air-conditioning equipment. The Lord blessed with an offering in excess of $70,000.00, completely financing the new equipment. To God be the Glory!!!!!**

**In December, demolition of the “green house,” purchased in 2001, on West Bank was completed to make way for additional parking space.**

**The Annual Church Profile Survey reported a Total Membership of 1180; Total Baptisms of 22; Total Giving Receipts of $571,607.00; Cooperative Program Giving of $55,152.00; Foreign Mission Giving of $9,350.00; Associational Mission Giving of $5,516.00; with Total Mission Expenditures of $79,653.00; and Undesignated Giving of $461,655.00.**

**2015 March 14, 2015 marked the 125th Anniversary of First Baptist Church of Iowa Park! Praise God, great things He has done!!**

**A two-day celebration was held on March 28th and 29th, 2015. The church was honored by previous pastors, Kenneth Flowers, Howell Farnsworth, Steve Beckwith and Dr. Derrell Monday. In addition special guest speaker, Dr. Jim Richards, Executive Director from the Southern Baptist of Texas Convention and Gene Pepitone, Wichita/Archer/Clay Associational Mission Director spoke.**

 **Among the many special guests and prior church members included were previous staff members, Ministers of Music Johnathan Whedbee, Brad Wetherbee and Janet Walker; Interim Music Directors Ed Hefti and Nancy Thompson; Youth Directors Mike Dean, Greg Sipe, and Jon Hicks. Mary Helen Schell, prior church pianist, provided special music. The FBC Anniversary Registration book contains a complete list of all attendees.**

**On the occasion of the 125th Anniversary of FBC, Fred Toler was recognized as the Oldest Member of the Church, being 97 years of age. Four other members of the church were also recognized including; Theda Voyles, 92 years of age; Louie McCarthy, 92 years of age; Louise Helms, 91 years of age; and Joe Singer, 90 years of age.**

**Louie McCarthy was recognized as the member with longest membership tenure, having joined the church congregation in the year 1936. Six other members were also recognized including Laverne Harrington and Billy James having joined in 1943; Louise Helms and Phletious Williams having joined in 1944; Robert Wilcox having joined in 1947 and David Padgett and Phyllis Davis having joined in 1949.**

**Two current “staff” members who have served faithfully for 35 + years, our church Organist and Pianist, Glena Miller Via and Nancy Miller Gholson were also recognized for their special service.**

**Special Recognition was given to the three longest serving pastors, our current pastor Glen Pearce having served 11 years, Dr. Derrell Monday having served 10 years and Rev. Kenneth Flowers having served 9 years. It was an honor to have all three of these men of God present for our celebration.**

**The two-day festivities included words of celebration from previous pastors, special music in song and instrumental renditions, recognition from the State and Associational level, a reception and fellowship meal served in the First Baptist Church First Family Center. A detailed display of church history and artifacts were presented for viewing on both days of the celebration.**

**The celebration was truly a glorious time of rejoicing at the many great things the Lord has done among His people. All Praise and Glory to God the Father!**

**2019 May 5th, 2019 - Senior Pastor Glen Pearce announced his intent to retire by November 2020. During the quarterly Church Business Meeting on May 5th, 2019 the motion was presented that the church enter into a Transition Period during which time Pastor Glen and Student Pastor, Josh Fields, would share in the responsibilities of preaching as co-pastors, and to extend the call to Josh Fields to become full time senior pastor upon the retirement of Pastor Glen. The shared preaching schedule was to begin immediately and Josh would be recognized as both Co-Pastor / Student Pastor until Pastor Glen's full retirement. Trent Murray and lay leaders were to transition into the Youth Ministry responsibilities. Vote of the church body was taken on May 12th, at which time the motion passed.**

 **June 22 - 29, 2019 - An eleven-member team participated in a Panama Mission Trip lead by Josh Fields, to Panama City, Panama. The team members included Josh and Katy Fields, Janah and Billy Price, Christi Price, Randy Lovelady, Efrain Carrion, Casey Carrion, McKenna Price, Lindy Lamb, and Kamryn Baka. The purpose of the trip was to observe and participate in multiple types of ministry and bring these ministry ideas home. The team made connections with the local Baptist churches in Panama City and one local orphanage, Casa Providencia, in Colone, Panama. They also worked with the University of Panama and an English class lead by Daniel, a senior student, with the goal of encouraging students in Bible study.**

 **July 7, 2019 - Mikey Pesqueda was Licensed and Ordained into the Gospel Ministry by FBCIP. Mikey had**

 **previously completed a 3-year internship under the tutelage of FBC's Student Minister, Josh Fields.**