

# REFLECTIONS ON THE HISTORY OF SHILOH BAPTIST CHURCH

Reflections on the history of Shiloh Baptist Church. 2011.

Today we proudly celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Shiloh Baptist Church. Shiloh was formed June 1, 1936 which was during the time that American was in the middle of the Great Depression. Yet, 14 saints gave their time and what little money they had to form another place of worship in Kingsport, TN. Churches have always been the backbone of our black communities and have made it possible for black people to survive and thrive.

It is well documented that these saints not only formed a church, secured a building, hired a minister, provided housing for him, but also gave their time and money to help needy people in what was then called the Walnut Street Community.

The historical committee was given the task to document the 75th year history of Shiloh. The committee members are; Deacon Jennabell Bristol, Sis. Judy Phillips, Bro. James Stukes and myself.

We begin our task by using resources available from the church such as past anniversary programs and photo albums. Then we made an appeal to the members and friends of Shiloh to loan us any documents and photos that they may have they would help document the early history of Shiloh as well as the greater Kingsport Community.

The very first document we received was an anniversary program of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary that was held in 1961. This document provided details of the names of the first members, pastor, and first baptism. We also have pictures of the first building and we were loaned pictures documenting the 1972 dedication of the building that we now occupy.

We also have a copy of the 50th anniversary program celebrated in 1986.

Then we began to receive packages of photos, church programs and bulletins, funeral programs, wedding programs, community programs, family photos and the like. All of the documents help to tell the story of Shiloh and the members who worshiped and served here over these past 75 years.

We also sent out a survey to members who grew up in Shiloh and moved away. We asked them what impact Shiloh and their religious upbringing have had on their lives. We received several responses from people who said Shiloh made a significant impact on their lives. Most everyone also said that they continue to serve God and attend church with their families.

Our committee received documentation this week of the first families who made up this community and the name of a black man Enos Flack who made it possible for Kingsport to have a city water system.

All of the photos and documents we have received have been copied and will be organized into the complete history of Shiloh. What you have seen today on the on PowerPoint and pictures posted in the hallway, is just a sampling of all of our rich historical information we have received. We appreciate all of you who have loaned us your documents and we are willing to accept even more. We would like to receive documentation regarding each decade from the 1930's to the present.

At the present time we are lacking information from the 1940's, 50's, 60's

and 70's. Some of you may have documentation of family members who served in various wars, were involved in the Civil Rights movement and other community events.

This is going to be an ongoing project that may take a while to complete but once it is completed we hope that it will become a document that will be preserved and possibly become a part of our Kingsport public library.

As I stated previously, Shiloh was formed by humble beginnings and humble saints. We have seen how God has blessed and prospered Shiloh over the years and we believe God will continue to bless us with growth if we remain humble and honor him.

Thank you