

HISTORY OF ST. STEPHEN'S BAPTIST CHURCH
Tye River, Virginia

The St. Stephen's Baptist Church was constituted in the year 1850. An acre of land on which the church stands was given by Stephen Turner. Little is known of the history of this church from this time to 1879. The old records were lost. The constitution in use at this time was amended and revised in 1860.

At a business meeting of the church on February 23, 1879, Rev. James M. Dillard was extended the annual call of the church and accepted. The pastors up to this time are not known. How long Rev. James M. Dillard had been pastor at this time we do not know. He was well along in years before he entered the ministry. He continued as pastor until 1884.

The deacons in 1879 were: Jefferson Mays, C.A.Dillard, A.W.Boxley, James M. Purvis, Samuel G. Bowles and G.F.Letettier, L.L.Pamplin was clerk. At a business meeting held April 23, 1879, it was voted to attempt to organize a Sunday School, but there is no evidence that the attempt was successful. The Albemarle Association met this year with Jonesboro Church and the following delegates were elected: Jefferson Mays, James M. Purvis, G.F.Letettier, Jos. M. Berkeley, A.W.Boxley, Samuel G. Bowles, L.L.Pamplin and C.A.Dillard.

In 1880 C.S.Christian was elected clerk of the church. All members were assessed ten cents a month to pay the pastor. In 1881 the church paid to St. Missions, \$2.50; Home Missions, \$1.00; Foreign Missions, \$1.50; S.S., Church and B.B. \$5.00; total \$10.00. This same year a Union Sunday School was organized at 12:30 o'clock. Jefferson Mays was the Superintendent. In 1882 rules for the Sunday School officers and teachers were adopted. Rule 6: Teachers are required to keep their pupils in doors during the two hours study, and especially see that each and every member of his or her class kneels during the prayers. The penny collection was always taken.

On June 20, 1885, Rev. J. W. Martin became pastor and continued until 1896. Rev. P.P.Massie became pastor, January 26, 1896, and remained with the church until 1901. On August 25, 1901, Rev. J. W. Martin returned for his second pastorate and remained with the church until his death June 26, 1911. Rev. J.W.Barrett was pastor from August 27, 1911 to January 12, 1913. Rev. P.P.Massie served the church then as a supply pastor from March 1, 1914 to 1917. Rev. D.A.Thomas was pastor from 1918 to April 11, 1920. Rev. C.W.Storke from October 1, 1920 to April 1, 1922. Rev. W.C.Hughes served as supply pastor from April 16, to September 1, 1922; T.E.Goad was pastor from November 1, 1922 to August 1, 1927, and Rev. Gray L. Liggan from March 1, 1928 to February, 1936. Rev. Gray L. Liggan was followed by Rev. E.W.Anderson who served as pastor until the fall of 1938.

Brother T.J.Proffitt resigned as church clerk January 16, 1927, having served faithfully since 1902. His son, J. B. Proffitt was elected to fill the vacancy, and remained clerk until 1938.

It is interesting to note the development of this church through the years. In 1879 there seems to have been more than 100 members and by 1893 there was about 125 members. At the close of 1927 the membership was 315 with the church owning its pastor's home.

On January 1, 1939 Rev. R.T.Smith became pastor and served for $4\frac{1}{2}$ years. During this pastorage improvements were made on the parsonage and the church began to recover from the slump in membership and contributions which followed the closing of the quarries at Piedmont and Phoenix. Rev. James Weaver and Rev. C.P.Cleveland served as supply pastors during the intervening period of time between Rev. Smith and the present pastorate of Rev. L.E.Dailey. Both of these young ministers rendered valuable service as supplies.

Rev. L.E.Dailey, the present pastor became pastor Dec. 1, 1945. Since he has been pastor a water system with bathroom facilities has been installed in the parsonage, and the church has been making a steady and upward climb from the slump which naturally followed the closing down of the quarries which were the two main employment agencies of the community. Under his leadership we are standing today upon the mountain peak of this Home Coming Day gazing into the promised land of a bright future. We have made a good start in gifts of money and materials toward our anticipated new church building. The outstanding gift up until now has been made by Mr. Houston B. Campbell, which consists of all the brick that will be required in building the new church.