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The First Forty Four Years In The History Of The Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church Dallas, Texas

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THE FIRST FORTY FOUR YEARS IN THE HISTORY OF
THE GREATER BETHLEHEM BAPTIST CHURCH
DALLAS, TEXAS

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THE GREATER BETHLEHEM BAPTIST CHURCH
DALLAS, TEXAS

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by

Jessie Mae Jackson Richards, R. N., B.S.

a thesis

submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Counseling and Guidance
Prairie View A & M University

July, 1976

DEDICATION

To my loving and devoted parents, Mr. Wardell Jackson and
the late Mrs. Bessie Jackson.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This preparation of this " History," of Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church would have been an impossibility without the benefit of the countless hours of research and study by many devout Deciples who have contributed their work and knowledge to it. Special credit and thanks are due to Sister Mamie Jackson- (A charter member now deceased) who prepared a brief history of the church and presented it at the first Homecoming Services several years before she passed on January 30, 1963. Sister Beatrice Henderson and Sister Odessa Flewellen have added to this..

Many members and friends have added to this study. The list of unfortunate omission too great , for inclusion here.

The writer is greatly indebted to the ministers and officials of the church for almost 100 per cent co- operation in supplying data. The writer must acknowledge with deep thanks and appreciation, the invaluable aid given through personal interviews, use of old newspaper clippings and bulletins. Without the fine cooperation of all these persons, this study could not have been made.

Throughout all the work however, from the collecting of the materials, through the process of recordings, the writer is grateful to her son Wardell for his sincere interest, encouragement, criticism, and invaluable assistance.

The writer is especially thankful for the typing assistance given by Ms. Brenda Evans and to the patient and understanding guidance given her by Doctor R. E. Carreathers.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to provide for the first time, a historical account of The Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church, (a Protestant Church), from its earliest beginnings through its first forty- four years, and to site some of its contributions and future outlook.

The purpose stated above can best be shown after having studied the role of the church, the church records, newspaper clippings, church bulletins, and church newsletters. Added to these have been many long conversations and interviews with members, former members, long time residents in the community, the pastor, the heads of several government projects. Some interviews were planned and some were not.

The writer's scrap book, records, tapes, personal experiences and recollections, have also been of material aid.

The writer was a frequent visitor to the church in the evenings for five years. The writer moved into the community in 1937 and joined Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church that same year. She worked diligently with the B. T. U. and Sunday School as a teacher and sponsor of religious plays for special occasions for seven years prior to her marriage in 1944. After a short stay out of the state, she returned and continued to work in the church and assumed a leadership role as sponsor of a newly organized group of boys and girls under the title of The Carol

Choir for children under ten years, and as a Sunday School teacher.

A much needed church sprang out of the desire of people within the community to have a religious ministry for themselves and their children.

It was a matter of getting what they could and when they could to get started with a physical structure in which to worship and to use as a community resource. The first church structure was an old dilapidated building already in use for church services by another Baptist group under the name of Spring Hill Baptist Church. They willingly shared the building with the now organized Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church until such time the Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church could produce enough money to take up the notes on The Spring Hill Baptist Church. The church building was twelve feet wide and twenty four feet deep with a very low ceiling. There were not enough benches to accommodate all of the members, thus some of the members brought chairs from home for more comfort during services. This first church cost one thousand dollars. The present church has a total value of two hundred fifty thousand dollars, including all holdings and in debt free.

Seeing the church through many of its hardships, seeing it thrive and take its place in the community in spite of a polarization in June of 1971 causing it to lose approximately two hundred and fifty members at one time, the writer hopes to advance knowledge by reviewing the past and stimulating an interest in others in updating the church history and forever holding on to its golden heritage. Naturally the writer hopes this study will help the reader and all interpreters to have-----

fuller appreciation of the church's contributions to life and the community in general.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of writing this history is to preserve a record of the first forty four(44) years of an institution whose existence is co-evaluated with that of the community in which it is located. Beside writing the history of the church, the writer plans to show some contributions which the church has made and to relate the future outlook for Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is important in that it shall relate the valuable heritage of the church, awaken a more active interest in Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church and that it will stimulate church leaders to do departmental research studies in order to improve the church.

While this study can make no claim of being either exhaustive or final, it may provide a base line for other studies of the Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church. That the church deserves much more thorough study than it yet has been given is obvious.

The study was undertaken to fill a gap; for surprisingly as it may seem, it constitutes the first comprehensive study in the history of the church.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This **study** is limited to the history of the Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas covering its organization year, 1932 through 1976. Hopefully, including its history, contributions and its future outlook.

To see the church as a whole organism and organization in its setting and appreciate it more, including items and features such as leadership, organization and details of administration, finance, program of activities, religious instruction, preaching, membership and influences of contemporary institutions and agencies would be important and interesting. However- many facts of the past could not be obtained for reasons that the church has failed to keep records through all its years since organizing and facts known to persons now active in the church could not be collected because of indifference or the failure to understand the motives of the writer. The absence of charter members per death or senility is a limitation. One of the greatest limitations is the fact that the writer's experience in church investigating is limited since this is the first one undertaken. The fact that the writer had only four weeks to gather, organize and put the data together can never be overlooked as a limitation.

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

The data in this study is to be gathered through the use of church records, church bulletins, and the use of scrap books. Information related to these encounters is to be obtained through personal interviews with charter members, former church members, members of prolonged membership and long time residents in the community, the pastor, and church officials.

DEFINITION AND / OR EXPLANATION OF TERMS

For the purpose of clarification, the following definitions and / or explanation of terms have been established for the use in this study,

Baptist Training Union: The Baptist Training Union is the Agency of a Baptist Church for training all of its members in the duties and priveleges of the church membership and for developing them in Christain life.¹

History: " Knowledge of things said and done."²

¹
J. E. Lambdin, The Baptist Training Union Manual, (Nashville, Tennessee: The Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1942) p. 38.

²
Carl Becker, Everyman His Own Historian, (N.Y., 1935), pp. 233- 255.

Junior Mission : A sub division of the general Missionary

Society organized and commissioned by God.

" Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you! And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the world. A'-men."³

Conversion growth: When people come to know Jesus Christ for the first time.⁴

Biological growth: Growth by birth in families.⁵

Transfer growth: Receiving new members who were previously baptized and had membership in churches elsewhere.⁶

Church : A local congregation, housed in a specific building, taking part in the society at large.⁷

A place where people have been sustained in times of tragedy, where they have prayed to God and felt his presence, where they have gone to offer themselves up in service for others.⁸

Communicants: " Baptized members."⁹

Community: A body of persons sharing some measure of common life, and a common loyalty.¹⁰

3

The Holy Bible, St. Matthew 28: 19-20

4

Robert McAfee Brown, The Significance of the Church, (The

Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1975)

5

I bid.

6

I bid.

7

I bid. p. 45

8

I bid. p. 45

Dallas County Nutrition Program : A federally funded program using Title VII funds from the Older Americans' Act through the Governors' Committee on Aging.

11

SUMMARY

Besides the family, the church is the most basic institution in our society for developing a person's potential in all its many aspects: emotional, intellectual, social, and siritual, as well as physical. It is within the church that its members must learn to curb his desires and accept rules that define the time, place, and circumstances under which highly personal needs may be satisfied in socially acceptable ways.

Research findings have indicated that the church structure, the contacts among its members and the surrounding community can increase or diminish the potentials for the church growth and its service to the community as a whole.

⁹ James M. Gustafson, Treasure In Earthen Vessels, (New York, Evanston, and London: Harper & Row Publishers, 1961), p. 14

10

Tetsunao Yamamori and E. LeRoy Lawson, Introducing Church Growth, Cincinnati, Ohio: A Division of Standard Publishing 1975), p. 45.

11

Boggen, Mollie, Dallas County Nutrition Program, Dallas, Texas: (Interview by telephone, June 23, 1976).

OUTLINE OF THE REMAINDER OF THE STUDY

Chapter 2 will cover the history of the church, Chapter 3 will cover biographical sketches of all of the pastors who have pastored Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church, Chapter 4 will cover a review of related literature and Chapter 5 will cover the presentation and analysis of data, summary, conclusions, and recommendations.

Bibliography

Interviews

Appendices

Chapter 2

HISTORY OF GREATER BETHLEHEM BAPTIST CHURCH

The history of Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church is the history of a historical landmark in East Dallas since 1932. The history of the church is the history of people- an unfolding pageant of life with joys and heartaches, work, and play, worship and fellowship- a continuing drama played in a setting of church hours,

The Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church was organized in January of 1932 with Rev. C. C. Choice as pastor, five deacons and a membership of thirty five including three ministers, (Rev. Jones, Rev. Henderson, and Rev. J. R. Westbrooks, Sr.) in the home of a Ms. Wilson in the 4500 block on Collins Avenue near Le Clerc Street. This group worshipped in the Old Fair Park School house (which was where The Magnolia C.M.E. Methodist Church now stands on Collins Avenue), and Duckett Hall before purchasing and occupying the Spring Hill Baptist Church on the corner of Wahoo and Foreman Avenue later in 1932. This first church was a run down store front building badly in need of repairs.

The members were confronted with legal matters when they took over the note which had been assumed by Spring Hill Baptist Church. Rev. Choice had Attorney William J. Durham of Sherman, Texas to come and settle the problem which he did in a splendid manner.

With the stirring messages delivered by Rev. Choice and the faith and fervent prayers to God, the church grew rapidly. The people had a mind to work and did. Many hands were busy placing their personal

belongings in the church in an attempt to make their place of worship more comfortable until such time that they as a group could become financially able to make improvements. Theirs was a love for missionary work- winning souls to Christ.

The names of the chartered members as remembered by those who were interviewed are:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Sister Ella Robinson | 12. Helen Jackson |
| 2. Bro. C.D. Robinson | 13. Clarence Jackson, Jr. |
| 3. Sister Beulah Griffin | 14. Effie Knotts |
| 4. Juanita Coker Ford | 15. Square Knotts |
| 5. Ruthie D. Smith | 16. Henry Whiting |
| 6. Willis Green | 17. Callie Whiting(wife) |
| 7. Elizabeth Green (wife) | 18. Sherman McGriff |
| 8. Lillye Esters | 19. Ruth McGriff (wife) |
| 9. James Weathersby | 20. Frank Smith |
| 10. Clarence E. Jackson | 21. Mary Smith (wife) |
| 11. Mamie Jackson (wife) | 22. Roxie Cain |

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Most of the members live within a radius of twelve miles(12) of the church. They represent literally all rungs of the social and economic ladder and their work world is massive and extensive.

Very early in 1932, Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church became a part of the Northwestern District Association, Baptist Missionary and Educational Convention of the State of Texas, Northwestern District

Sunday School and Baptist Training Union Congress, District Congress and the National Convention.

Construction of a new frame church building began in 1937, to accommodate the membership and friends of the community.

A much needed Baptismal was installed in an annex- behind the choir stand.

This church was dedicated in 1938 with A. Maceo Smith, the Bronze Mayor of Dallas and an outstanding missionary, Mrs. C. A. Benford as guest speakers. Seven years later (March 1944) the mortgage burning ceremony was held and the note burned with the late Dr. E. C. Estell delivering the message. The late Mrs. C. A. Benford and A. Maceo Smith participated in the ceremony. Pastor C. C. Choice served this church for sixteen years as pastor and evangelistic minister.

The first cornerstone was laid in 1938 and is shown on the next page . The corner-stone is on the right side of the church and the second cornerstone is on the left side of the church. Both can be seen as you enter the church by the front entrance.

THE GREATER BETHLEHEM BAPTIST CHURCH

Built in 1938

Deacon Board

C. E. Jackson, Chairman

E. Knott	-----	C. Woodard
O. J. Fullylove	-----	C. D. Dawson
J. Bradley King	-----	W. W. Wilson
J. S. Fore	-----	N. E. Ingram
A. L. Leary	-----	W. M. Shepherd
E. T. Buckner	-----	J. W. Jones
I. Herring	-----	J. Weathersby

Trustees

C. E. Jackson	-----	E. Knott
C. D. Robertson	-----	O. J. Fullylove

T. A. Fletcher

C.C. Choice	-----	Minister
O. M. Flewellen	-----	Church Clerk

The second and last corner-stone was laid after the major remodeling of the church in 1952, changing it from a frame building to a beautiful red and white brick building.. The corner-stone is shown below:

Rebuilt 1952

Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church

Board of Deacons

C. E. Jackson, Chairman

C. J. Fullylove	-----	C. Woodard
C. D. Robertson	-----	T. A. Fletcher
W. W. Wilson	-----	J. S. Fore
E. T. Buckner	-----	I. Herring
A. H. Hornage	-----	E. G. Rayson
W. T. Wallace	-----	A. E. Franklin
O. Franklin	-----	W. Smith
C. W. Sanders	-----	A. J. Mooring
O. Peters	-----	L. Jenkins

A. Colbert

Board of Trustees

C. E. Jackson	-----	J. S. Fore
C. D. Robertson	-----	T. A. Fletcher

C. J. Fullylove

G. A. Hobart Sheppard, D. D. , Minister

O. M. Flewellen, Church Clerk

Oscar B. Roan, Contractor

Another addition was made in 1955 when the educational annex was built and dedicated.

BAPTIZING

Baptizing in the early days was quite an occasion, both because of the meaning to the life of the "candidates", and their family members, and because of what it meant in recruits to a small struggling slow growing church. The announcement of such a service was usually made by the statement, "We will baptize at the Wahoo Lake Stream", on a certain date and time. The occasions were largely attended, because of the interest of the members and the curiosity of others. The ordinance was administered whenever there was "much water".

The ritual was usually held early in the morning at sunrise or around three o' clock in the afternoon. The younger people were emersed first.

The Baptismal added to the church in 1938 solved many problems like not being able to baptize because there was not enough water in the stream, because of inclement weather and not having the necessary privacy for dressing and undressing for all persons involved in the ritual.

ORGANIZED YOUTH GROUPS

- | | | |
|----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Youth Choir | 3. Boy Scouts | 5. The Young People's
Department |
| 2. Carol Choir | 4. Junior Usher Board | 6. The Church School |
| | | 7. The Baptist Training
Union |

A sincere search was made to get the names of some of the first officers of the church and some of the interesting happenings or noted events. What was revealed will be found on the following page.

President of Baptist Young Peoples Union -----J. Bradley King
 Superintendent of Sunday School-----Clarence Jackson
 President of Choir-----Clarence Jackson
 President of Usher Board-----Lillye Esters
 President of Missionary Society-----Roxie Cain
 Pianist and Music Directors-----Teamed by Juanita Ford and
 Clara Wilson
 Chairman of Deacon Board-----C.D. Robertson
 First wedding in church-----Ruth Griffin and Harold Tabb
 First to be baptized in the new pool after 1938--Olen Flewellen
 To be funeralized-----Rev. Josh Jones
 Custodian-----Frank Smith
 Hymnal-----Gospel Pearl
 Hammond Organ-----1955 (Pipes)
 Participation with The National Baptist Convention in Houston, Texas, 1936.
 Dedication of the Greater Bethlehem Baptist Education Annex--9-18-1955.

According to the clerks' records, these twenty ministers were
 ordained by pastors of Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church while they
 were members of The Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church but the dates
 were not specified:

1. Rev. J. R. Westbrook, Sr.
2. Rev. J. R. Westbrook, Jr.
3. Rev. N. E. Ingram (late)
4. Rev. B. J. Bradford, Sr.
5. Rev. B. J. Bradford, Jr.

6. Rev. Lufell Jenkins
7. Rev. Ozell Franklin
8. Rev. E. T. Buckner
9. Rev. Vanard Givens
10. Rev. Johnnie Givens
11. Rev. Dewey Woods
12. Rev. A. Leary
13. Rev. James Edwards
14. Rev. Walter Gailand
15. Rev. J. D. Mooring
16. Rev. J. H. Jones
17. Rev. Marvin Griffin
18. Rev. G. T. Britt
19. Rev. Lockland Allen
20. Rev. Buford Allen

The Boy Scout program became a part of the church activities in 1945. The charter was granted the church that same year. Professor Hall was the Executive Director of The Boy Scouts (for Negroes) at that time and a great deal of credit is due him for the organization of this movement in The Greater Bethlehem Church and for its continued service to the community.

The following members attended classes to prepare themselves to work effectively in this program:

Junior Fore	Charlie Smith
Willie B. Mooring	V Virlee Smith
Wesley Smith	E. A. Rayson

Issac Herring

Bertha Fore

Julia Smith

Beatrice Henderson

Awards Presented:

Silver Beaver in 1972 E. A. Rayson

Silver Beaver in 1973 Willie B. Mooring, Sr.,
Rev. G. A. H. Sheppard

Silver Fawn in 1973 Mrs. Bertha Fore

Garden County W. B. Mooring, Jr.

Scout Key Junior Fore

Garden County Award Issac Herring, Sr.

The Homecoming Celebration originated in the Mother's Club in 1966 and Rev. B. J. Bradford, Jr. (a product of Greater Bethlehem) preached their first sermon. This is a yearly affair bringing back into our church and community many of the older members who have left the city and state.

Rev. G. A. H. Sheppard was called to the pastorate of the church in October, 1948. He served in the capacity for seventeen years (17 years) before his passing, February 24, 1965. Under his leadership, the church was remodeled three times and then bricked. New pews and church furnishings were bought in 1952. In 1955, a new church front and an educational building were added. The Hammond Pipe Organ was installed and the church sanctuary area was air-conditioned later the same year the spiral was added to the church. This new building was dedicated on Sunday, October 23, 1955.

Being the kind of man and pastor he was, he was a firm supporter of Bishop College, and encouraged others to do likewise. The church continues to be involved in supporting this institution to the tune of as much as \$6,000.00 a year to be distributed between The Little Chapel, Bishop College, and the Scholarship Fund. The church believed that no student who wanted to get an education, live a good life, a Christian life, need not be denied this because of the lack of finances. No less care is given this worthy cause, today.

Evangelism was a carry over from the date of the organization.

The Missionary Society took on a new look with an extended outreach program, including the entire community.

The Junior Mission was organized by Dr. Sheppard. Some of its activities and goals will be mentioned later in this study.

The Vacation Bible School continues to be held in the summer, one week after public schools close. This youth and evangelistic program holds for one week culminating in a picnic and an educational tour. All activities, materials and snacks are furnished by the church.

Rev. Sheppard passed away suddenly in February, 1965.

A loyal, devoted and capable church member and minister shouldered the responsibilities of the church as an interim pastor in the person of Rev. E. T. Buckner. He served well until a replacement could be made.

Rev. U. S. Cornelius accepted the call to the pastorage on June 6, 1965 but because of illness was unable to begin until August

1, 1965. While the church awaited his coming, our first parsonage was purchased approximately one mile from the church on Southland Ave. in South Dallas.

The idea of having yearly banquets originated within the Junior Mission in 1969, and was considered to be a great means of bringing Christians and Non-Christians together in fellowship in a Christian atmosphere, while raising funds for other mission projects.

The proceeds from the first three banquets were used to finance educational tours for church members and people of the Dallas community.

The first tour focused on points of interest in Texas. The second tour went to historic points in Virginia, Washington, D. C. area. The third tour went to the Grand Canyon, Arizona, and Los Angeles, California area.

The goal was set for setting up a scholarship fund from the proceeds from the fourth and fifth banquets.

The plan originally was for the speakers to be a young person from the church who is attending college for two reasons: the first to encourage the young person speaking, as well as to furnish a source of inspiration and motivation to other young people to seek the finer things in life; and second, financial assistance to the speaker, for a donation was made to the individual speaker.

For the sixth banquet a need was felt to bring to the Dallas community a man who has contributed much to the civil rights movement through his own quiet efforts, as well as through the losses he has suffered; not a bitter man, but a man who continues to love,

contribute, and give himself in service to others in the person of Dr. Martin Luther King, Sr.

Proceeds from the seventh and eighth banquets went to the scholarship fund.

The young people who spoke were:

1. Diane Wright
2. U. Sidney Cornelius, Jr.
3. Cherri Jo Richards
4. Yvonne Wright
5. Elmer Guinn
6. Peggy Guinn
7. Marsha Taylor

Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church truly has influenced the lives of these young people as evidenced in their accomplishments, their dedication to leadership roles in the church working with the youth and their places in the work world. Their roles range from lawyers, medical doctors, teachers and commissioned officers in the United States Marine Corps.

Rev. Cornelius resigned June 20, 1971.

Rev. E. T. Buckner conducted services with the co-operation of the trustees, deacons and all, took care of church business until another pastor was called. Rev. J. R. Westbrook, Sr. continued to preach on his designated Sunday.

On October 10, 1971, Rev. Fulton Bradley accepted the call to pastor Greater Bethlehem on a part time basis while finishing his

course of studies at Southern Methodist University. At the same time he was on the faculty at Bishop College. He preached every other Sunday and met regularly with some of the organizations. This was acceptable with the church. Later when Rev. Bradley accepted a grant to further his education in Michigan, he found his studies and other duties too heavy to return every other weekend to render service and a leave of absence was requested and granted.

"The Light of Truth", the churches' first newsletter was edited under the auspices of the Junior Mission while Rev. Bradley was pastor; Rev. Charles E. Reese - a product of Greater Bethlehem and Bishop College was officially appointed interim pastor. Besides being a capable minister and administrator, Rev. Reese had a wealth of knowledge and experience in working with youth. He had worked as a teacher and counselor for the Dallas Independent District. He busied himself with activities that would boost the moral of the church. Knowing most of the members, the community and what the church stood for made his work easy.

He set up a counseling program with the open door approach.

He reactivated the youth groups and organized a basketball team known as the "Knickerbrockers".

He organized a Bible Study Course which was needed and well attended.

The First Pictorial Directory was published and distributed to members without charge.

With the churches' understanding that Rev. Bradley was returning in June, 1973, Rev. Reese was relieved of his duties on June 10,

1973. On June 22, 1973, Pastor Bradley resigned from the Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church in order that he might further his education at Wayne University, leaving the church again without a pastor.

Thank God for a man like Rev. E. T. Buckner who again served so graciously as Interim - Pastor until another pastor could be called.

During the search for another pastor, the church members realized that a larger and more modern parsonage was needed and purchased its second one located on Hunnicutt Road.

Rev. Johnny K. Bryant accepted several invitations to preach at Greater Bethlehem before saying that he would give up his duties as pastor of The Gay Tabernacle Baptist Church in Columbus, Ohio where he had been for nine years.

Rev. Bryant became the fifth pastor of Greater Bethlehem, taking over officially January, 1974.

He brought to his task great qualifications. Pastor Bryant has shown that he is an effectual leader, a dynamic preacher, a renowned evangelist, a teacher, a counselor, and a pastor dedicated to his task.

When Johnny K. Bryant came to Dallas he knew the kind of church he wanted Greater Bethlehem to be with the Holy Spirit the Captain, the Pastor as the First Mate, the members of the fellowship as the crew.

A major part of Rev. Bryants' program called for making the historic Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church a family church, a viable church: a church that is interested in the welfare of all and not the vested few. He wanted a total church ministry, one that kept evan-

gelism and christian training at the center, secondly he wanted a church that is prayerful and full of the Holy Spirit and thirdly, he wanted a church committed to stewardships. He said, " If our investment pays off, then let it pay off in big dividend for the consecration of our time, worship, study, and fellowship."

He further advocated members to be concerned and involved with issues. He urged them to be voters and government scholars.

Through his wise leadership, many innovations have been made to enhance all phases of church life.

1. The institution of the unit method of keeping in close contact with each other has resulted in stronger holding power in membership. Through this innovation and many others, members have drawn together and feel a keener sense of belonging.

2. The annual study course series foster intellectual development and self improvement.

3. Preparation of the Study Guide in Evangelism for each church member.

4. For the first time in the history of the church, a proposed plan of activities, services and projected goals for a full year was put in book form, adopted by the church and given to each member. The first one was for the year 1974. This book lists all officers of the church, all auxiliaries and their officers.

5. The church purchased a new 1974 Chevrolet station wagon.

6. The church is presently involved in a big fund raising drive, hopefully to remodel the down stairs facilities. (The area presently housing the Dallas County Nutrition Program.)

7. The church houses one of the nineteen Dallas County Nutrition Programs. These programs are sponsored by: The County of Dallas who is the prime contractor.

The major goals are to promote independence and self reliance with dignity in people sixty years and older.

The center operates on a five day week bases from nine o' clock A.M. to one o' clock and all services a without cost.

The food is catered in for the noon meal. Coffee is served through out the operating periods.

The center manager is Ms. Guilda M. Bryant. The other paid staff members are a senior aide and custodian.

The average daily attendance is forty-five.

This activity began in March of 1974. All utilities and upkeep are assumed by the Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church.

As you see by the activities discussed in the history of Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church, Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church can easily be the leading church in all church activities in the City of Dallas, no matter how it is classed, Black or White.

The future outlook of the church is so stated in a three page letter "FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK" taken from the PROPOSED CHURCH PROGRAM FOR 1976.

The letter begins on the next page.

"FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK"

"I wish that there were some wonderful place called, The Land Of Beginning Again. Where all our mistakes, and all our heartaches, and all our poor selfish grief, could be dropped like a shabby old coat at the door and never be put on again."

These words by Louise Fletcher are deep reflections of our past as we prepare to face our uncertain future. The situation that the world is in looks bleak and frustrating. The situation of the country with its high unemployment rate, inflation, and high prices are despairing. The situation of the church as she faces the many problems that beset her are disturbing. On the lips of many there is the question, "What will happen next?"

These are certainly critical times, but these are also times for immeasurable greatness, challenge, and opportunity.. The Church of Jesus Christ cannot lay the quaint let down and give up or recant from her position of helping men to face the future with God. God has not left us without a ray of hope or a witness to His truth. If Greater Bethlehem is to live up to the general theme of proclaiming and witnessing, then she must act decisively and responsively. There is salvation nowhere else but in the church under the name of Jesus Christ.

The early church, with many witnesses, went everywhere proclaiming the "good news of God." They were as sensitive as we are about world conditions, but it made them all the more aware and anxious to

introduce Jesus to those who did not know him. The early church and the missionary careers of Paul, Phillip, Peter, John, Barnabus, and many others left an indelible impression on those who came in contact with them, and their teaching.

Proclaiming and witnessing were not peripheriai things. These were the mainstay of what the church was all about. While we put proclaiming and witnessing on the rim of things, the early church made it imperative. There was an urgency about them that they felt obligated to carry the word of life to all mankind.

I am deeply concerned when christians do not, will not, or feel they cannot win others to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. The city of Dallas is a great challenge for Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church. There are over 100,000 Blacks, 50,000 Mexican Americans, and 250,000 Whites in the metroplex without Jesus, These people need a proclamation and a witness for these times. Let us not be complacent or prejudice, but forthwith and honest in declaring one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism. The opportunity to labor with God for salvation of men is thrust upon us. We dare not walk away from such a great undertaking as this.

The projection of this year's program will say much to our community. We want to do all in our power to make Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church a church that cares and is concerned about the lost, the unfortunate, and the crisis laden people of Dallas.

We seek the support, prayers, and goodwill of every member of the church as we continue our program of service.

Your shephard,

Johnny K. Bryant
Johnny K. Bryant

Chapter 3

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

This history has necessarily focused primarily upon the church and its historical development. However, this chapter is devoted to the ministers who have served Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church as Pastors and Interim- Pastors.

The CHOICE YEARS 1932-1948

Who could think of Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church without thinking in the same breath of Rev. C. C. Choice?

To shepherd such a flock as Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church, and to administer its many affairs was no easy task.

The spiritual care of Greater Bethlehem is a staggering responsibility for any man. Rev. Choice accepted the task seriously, for the shepherd's heart was strong in him. He knew his people and called them by name. He spent as much time with them as possible. His love for people was genuine, and they knew it and returned his affection in full measure.

He preferred preaching and shepherding the flock to the business and administrative work of the church. However, his administrative abilities and his dreams for the church were known by his followers and succeeding pastor.

Very little if anything is written about Rev. Choice but the writer and persons interviewed agreed that he was a man of good moral character and one of the best and most pious leaders in his day.

Rev. Choice was born in Henderson, Texas and graduated from Bishop College (Marshall, Texas). He was a liberal supporter of that college until his death. He died at age of 67 years in Dallas, Texas while still pastoring the church he organized in 1932.

He was active in the Northwestern District Baptist Association, Northwestern District Congress Sunday School and Baptist Training State Association.

Rev. Choice lived in his own home next to the church he loved and supported for sixteen years. He willed his home to a neice who after his death, sold the property to the church for expansion purposes.

The Sheppard Years 1948 - 1965

The son of Andrew D. and Susie Sheppard married Ms. Bertha Mae Watson Ford in 1938.

He was secretary of the American Bible Society in Dallas in 1943 and was instrumental in distributing the largest volume of scriptures on the record.

Rev. Sheppard wrote "ON MAKING LIFE COUNT ANYWAY."

He is listed in "WHO'S WHO IN COLORED AMERICA." edited in 1960 by Venchael Booth.

He was ordained in 1927 and served as pastor in three main cities before coming to Dallas, Texas. These cities were New Haven, Connicut, Mexia, Texas and Texarkana, Texas.

He was president of the B. M. & E. State Congress of B. T. U. and Sunday School from 1936 to 1965.

Rev. Sheppard was presented the Silver Beaver Award by the Circle Ten Council of Boy Scouts of America in Dallas, Texas.

The dedicated minister enjoyed fishing, hunting, and reading, but most of all his pleasure was helping the needy and winning souls to Christ.

He was one of the two who shouldered major roles in getting Bishop College moved to Dallas(1961), and was Chairman of the Instruction Committee of The Board of Trustees of Bishop College, Dallas, Texas.(The other person shouldering major roles in getting Bishop College moved to Dallas was the late Dr. Ernest C. Estell, Sr.).

The Cornelius Years 1965-1971

The Rev. U. S. Cornelius had pastored Bethlehem Baptist Church in Bonaham, Texas in the fifties(1950). He came from Witichia Falls, Texas to become the third pastor of Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church in Dallas at the request of Rev. Sheppard before he passed. Rev. Cornelius became pastor in 1965.

He was a human dynamo in the life of the church and established the first systematic record of recording finances and new members.

Presently he is pastoring the Mount Sinai Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas which he organized in 1971 after leaving Greater Bethlehem of Dallas, Texas.

The Bradley Years 10-71-----1973

Rev. Fulton O. Bradley was a teacher in the Department of Religion and Philosophy at Bishop College when he was called to the pastorate of Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas.

He was a great preacher, lecturer, and servant of God. He won the hearts of the congregation by his congenial manner, wise counsel, and spirit of churchmanship.

Rev. Bradley accepted the call to pastor Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church with these words in his message. "As we stand looking back, let us also look ahead; for we are now challenged, to serve this present age, which is our mandate to fulfill, then may we all engage ourselves to do our Master's will." He served as pastor in a fine dignified manner until he resigned to enter graduate studies at Wayne State University at Detroit, Michigan in 1973.

The Rev. E. T. Buckner- Interim- Pastor

The Reverend Mr. Buckner is a long time member of the Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church. He has a kind spirit. He is very cooperative, works well with others, and exemplifies a great spirit at all times.

He was awarded the Layman Award for Distinguished and Faithful Service on the first Mens' Day Services held at Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church in 1973.

The Rev Charles E. Reese- Interim- Pastor November 5, 1972- June, 1973.

Rev. Charles E. Reese was born to the parentage of Morris and Gladys Reese who saw to him growing up in a Christian home and having many opportunities of exposure to a religious education.

He is a member and product of Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church.

He graduated from Lincoln High School and Bishop College, both in Dallas, Texas.

He is presently attending Southern Methodist University and pastoring the Saint Andrews Missionary Church which he organized in 1973 in the City of Dallas, Texas.

The Bryant Years 1974-----(Still pastoring Greater Bethlehem 1976).

Rev. Johnny Kirk Bryant was born to Mr. Ernest and Mamie E. Bryant (Ms. Mamie E. Gilliard), on July 13, 1932 in the City of Jasper, Hamilton County, Florida.

He attended Dillard Elementary and High School and graduated in the class of 1950.

He was very active in high school activities and church activities, and served on the Jr. Deacon Board of The New Mt. Olive Baptist Church. From all indications he showed a desire of becoming a dynamic leader at a very young age.

His educational background is very extensive having received a Master of Divinity in 1973 from The Methodist Theological School, Delaware, Ohio.

AWARDS AND HONORS 1957 - 1964

Outstanding Person in Religion Omega Psi Phi Fraternity
 Distinguished Service- The Tuberculosis Association- Florida
 The Florida East Coast District Sunday School and B. T. U. Congress
 One of West Palm Beaches' Most Outstanding Citizens
 The Human Relation Council of West Palm Beach

Since coming to Dallas in 1974, Pastor Bryant has been elected to the following:

The Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance.

The Baptist Missionary and Educational Convention of Texas.

The Baptist Pastors Conference of Dallas and Vicinity.

The Northwestern Baptist Association - Bible Teacher.

The Board of Directors, The Urban League.

The Board of Directors, Dallas Alliance For Progress-(a mechanism leading and(uptlifting) unifying Dallas, an instrument of the Dallas Community to bring about urban solutions through community leadership.

Teacher, The Interracial Institute. (a Dallas Seminary in christian training of dedicated men and women for service to their church and community).

Coordinator of Education for Bishop College, the Baptist Missionary and Education Convention of Texas.

He is an elegant speaker and has traveled widely spreading the gospel.

He is a writer and several of his papers have been published: " The Work of The Holy Spirit", and " Evangelism Now For The Black Church."

He is a family man, married to Ms. Guilda M. Mizell. They married in 1956 and to this union three children were born. They are Johnny K. Bryant, Jr., Angela J. and Wendell A. Bryant.

He is a democratic pastor and for the first time in the history of the church, women(two) have been added to the Trustee Board.

He organized the Johnny K. Bryant Angelic Choir in 1974.

After the writer reviewed his credentials, served under him for two and one half years, observing and evaluating him concludes, that he is a pastor for these times when there are so many social changes. He has made many contacts with the city fathers(government) and he has brought members to take a closer look at what is happening in urban renewal ant to gain an understanding of the role they are called upon to play.

Chapter 4

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

It is interesting to note how extensively the historical societies have gone to reconstruct the past and putting the old out front for our countrys' Bicentennial Celebration this year, 1976.

In looking up materials for this study, many church histories specified by name and denomination were found stored in the City of Dallas Public Library, down town Dallas. The review of this literature revealed that some of the histories were of churches one hundred years or older and some were of churches who had their beginnings less than forty years ago. All were interesting, but no two histories were treated the same way but each showed an interest in church growth and its contribution to mankind.

The remainder of this chapter will briefly summarize some of the studies done and problems closely related to the one at hand.

Sixteen early studies, under the direction of Warren H. Wilson covering the years 1912 and 1916, followed the pattern of: detailing physical environment, history, economic bases, population and social life of the country and examining the church as a social institution and its interactions with its environment.

Other materials covered the history of religions and studies sponsored by the Division of Home Missions and the Bureau of Research and Survey of the National Council of the churches of Christ.

E. Franklin Frazier in his book, *The Negro Church in America*

(1964) gives a perceptive account of the history and role of religion in Negro life. Frazier finds the church important in Negro life because it has given the Negro an Opportunity, While the white churches remained segregated, to exercise his organizational abilities and to act in a restricted society.

The general literature agree that the Negro had to find a place for his religion by creating his own church since the doors of most white churches were closed to him, but with intergration procedures in other facets of American life it seems inevitable that the churches will be affected as well. In a well documented study, by Willis D. Weatherford, the historical development of the relationship of white and negro churches in American Churches and the Negro (1952), show deep concern of the white church for the negro. A concern which can be shown in the actions of the clergymen in recent intergration attempts.

The Negro Press is considered as a reflector of middle-class values and a protector for the negro, and so can the Negro Church be considered as having more than one principle function. "It serves not only as an alternative (sometimes voluntary, more often not) to the white dominated religious community but also as an institution providing opportunities for the development of leadership."¹²

Earnest T. Campbell and Thomas F. Pettigrew examine the role of Christians in *Racial Crisis: The Study of Little Rocks' Ministry* (1959). They review the response of ministers to the 1957 school integration crisis and concluded that the more stable the church the less chance that it will participate in intergration attempts. They agree that the church has the possibility of becoming a strong integrating force. Kyle Haselden, a southern Baptist Minister, provides an introduction to the attitude of the church toward race and brief history of the development of race and religious relations.

According to McKibbon, the main objective of the church is to bring about the development of Christ like persons and a more Christian society. ¹³ This can only be achieved by the process of education. The church is one of the oldest institutions for training in moral and spiritual growth. Since this is so and generally recognized as responsible for such, it is important that leaders of the church will from time to time evaluate its program in order to make recommendations and proposals for improvement of the program in Christian Education.

The baptists believe in, encourage, and practice evangelism (protracted meetings) as the chief means of making converts, and do not hesitate to appeal in the most realistic way to fear of eternal torment

as a motive to lay hold upon Christ by faith as the only means of

14

escape.

Protracted meetings are routinely scheduled soul saving meetings filled with songs and sermons. They are usually held during the summer months, opening on a Sunday by choice and usually has a dinner spread following the noon service. This means that many families bring food from home and serve outside the church.

14

Newman, Albert Henry, History of the Baptist Church in United States, p.531.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to provide for the first time a written history of the Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church from 1932 to this date, July, 1976, and to reveal some of its contributions and future outlook.

In the concluding chapter of this study, an attempt will be made to examine some of the limitations of the study, to summarize the findings, and to suggest recommendations which will aid in future research as it relates to the church. To accomplish this, some of the more special findings are incorporated, and the analysis is extended to areas not originally suggested in the over all coverage in the introduction. These details will be shown by charts, and possibly by graphs.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

There are a number of limitations recognized by the writer in an attempt to evaluate the findings presented in the study. The more serious ones are lack of documented data and completed or updated data that would give a more vivid description of the organism under discussion. The uncertainty of the responses given by persons about events essential to the church presented a limitation. The task of preparing this study has been difficult because the records nor files were kept in a systematic order until an attempt was made to do this in 1965-

1971 when Rev. Cornelius, the third pastor (considered to be a finance magnet) tried to set up the system. Even so, present day records are not being kept current. Because of the big business of the church today, more efforts are being directed towards having more clerical help to update and keep records accurate and current.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. The data revealed that Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church had its early beginnings in 1932 - 1933 during the depression years causing a lot of insecurity in the family and its members, when faced with economic reverses.
2. The functions of the church are: The maintenance of membership; Social intercourse and amusements; The setting of moral standards; Promotion of general intelligence and efforts for social betterment.
3. The history is revealing but could have been more interesting if a more indepth study had been done. The events and dates were not arranged in the order in which they happened.
4. The church has had the best leadership that is available or was available and equal to that of leading colleges and churches in Christian Education. This is a fact that no one can be ashamed of when represented any time or any place in these United States or all over the world.
5. The contributions are many as shown in, (a) financial and moral support to colleges, missions and improvements to the church building, (b) members serving in public and private agencies and others

spreading the gospel through missionary work, (c) and the church serving the community through physical and human resources.

6. The highest peak for membership growth was between 1948 and 1965.

7. Records show growth in membership gain but do not tell us how or when we lose members, other than by death.

8. The General Financial Account figures were not available for analysis, but from all indications the income exceeds the disbursements.

9. The future outlook for the church looks good as the faithful members work for the good of all mankind.

10. There are no immediate plans for the church to relocate.

11. Greater Bethlehem Baptist remains in a deprived area and with the Out Reach Program, we as a church family plan to bring healing and redemption to this community.

12. A total of 300 registration forms were passed out to the communicants by the church clerk at the beginning of the year as by routine to obtain the most recent information on each. Only 258 returned theirs. Some 42 members did not return theirs and some expressed their actions on the basis that the information is too personal to release. (especially their telephone numbers)

The analysis of the information obtained will be shown by tables on the following pages.

Table 1

Age Distribution and Marital Status of
Registered Female Members

Age	Number	Single	Married	Divorced	Widowed
0 - 10	5	5			
10 - 20	31	30		1	
20 - 30	38	17	21		
30 - 40	22	1	16	4	1
40 - 50	17	1	15	1	
50 - 60	15	2	9	3	1
60 - 70	20		13	2	5
70 - 80	7			1	6
80 - 90	3				3
Totals..	158	56	74	12	16

Table 2

Age Distribution and Marital Status of
Registered Male Members

Age	Number	Single	Married	Divorced	Widowed
0 - 10	8	8			
10 - 20	32	30	2		
20 - 30	6	4	2		
30 - 40	14	1	12	1	
40 - 50	9		8	1	
50 - 60	5	1	4		
60 - 70	16	1	13	1	
70 - 80	8	6	6	2	
80 - 90	2	1		1	
Totals	100	46	47	7	

Table 3

Membership Growth Shown For Years Each
Pastor Served

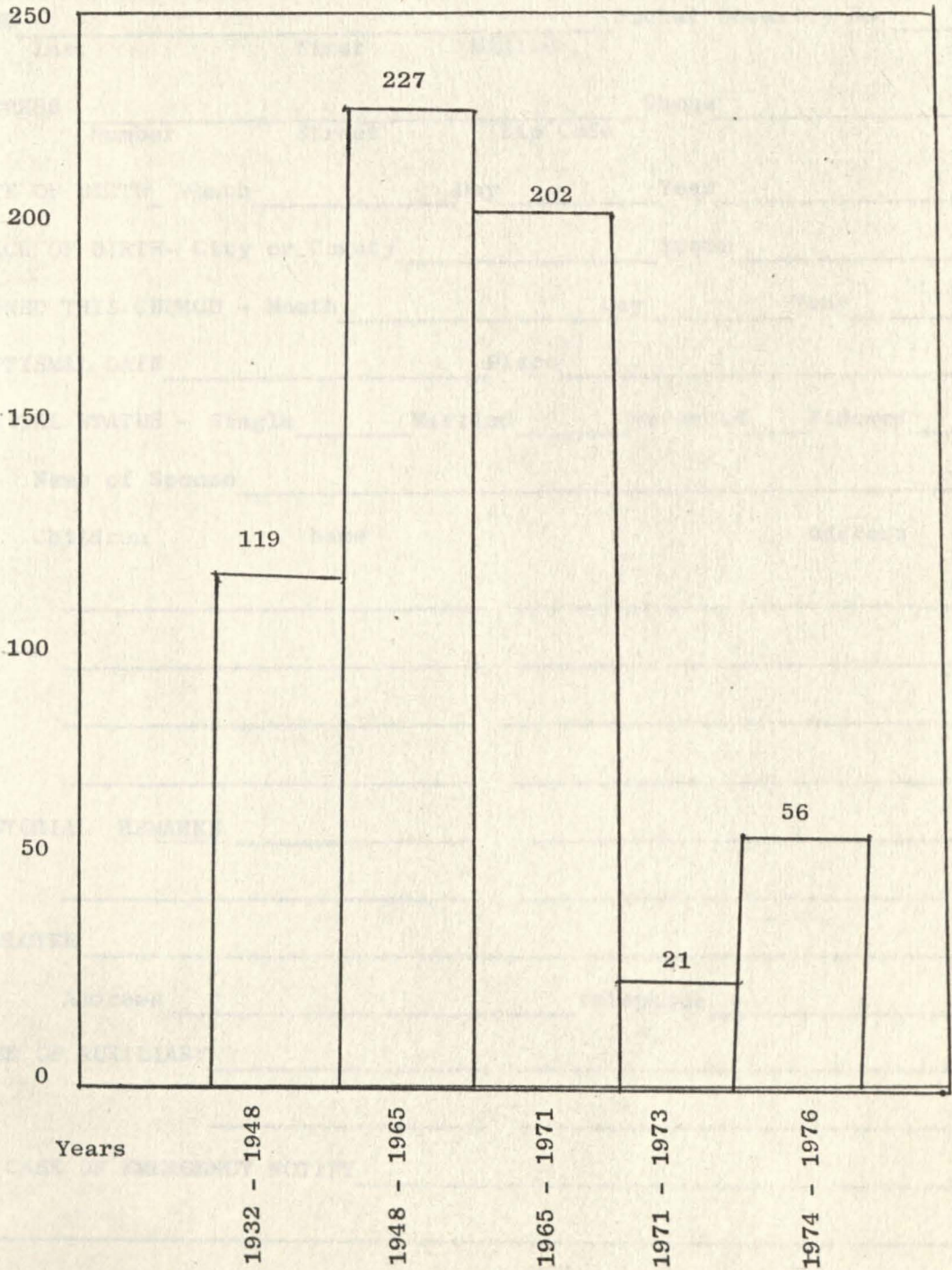
Years	Male	Female	By conversion	By transfer	By biological birth
1932 - 1948	37	82	19	99	1
1948 - 1965	97	130	121	100	6
1965 - 1971	84	118	108	84	10
1971 - 1973	8	13	13	8	
1974 - 1976	22	34	13	43	
Totals	248	377	274	334	17

Table 4

Summary Of Membership Growth

Years	Totals
1932 - 1948	119
1948 - 1965	227
1965 - 1971	202
1971 - 1973	21
1974 - 1976	56
Totals	623

Graphic Representation Of Membership Growth
Based On Data From Preceding Page



THE GREATER BETHLEHEM BAPTIST CHURCH
4401 Spring at Foreman Avenue
Dallas, Texas. 75210

M E M B E R S H I P R E G I S T R A T I O N

NAME _____ Social Security No. _____
Last First Middle

ADDRESS _____ Phone _____
Number Street Zip Code

DATE OF BIRTH - Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

PLACE OF BIRTH - City or County _____ State _____

JOINED THIS CHURCH - Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

BAPTISMAL DATE _____ Place _____

MARITAL STATUS - Single _____ Married _____ Divorced _____ Widowed _____

Name of Spouse _____

Children	Name	Address
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

PASTORIAL REMARKS _____

EMPLOYER _____

Address _____ Telephone _____

NAME OF AUXILIARY _____

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY NOTIFY _____

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are several areas which the investigator feels should be pursued further:

1. Any further study of the church should evaluate each department, especially the groups promoting religious education.
2. If another study is done, an attempt should be made to get a better response and be done by a committee over a longer period of time than this study was done.
3. That a copy of this study become a part of the church library.

In addition to the above factors, a survey of attitudes of church members towards the "Church Today," should be done.

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Westbrook, Sr. Rev. J. R. : Has lived in the community for forty five (45) years. A charter member and presently pastoring Corinth Baptist Church, Greenville, Texas. (a total of twenty nine years). (June 6, 1976). Interviewed.

Lived there all her life and is a member of the school and church. She is a member of a Sunday school at Greenville Baptist Church, Greenville, Texas. (June 13, 1976). Interviewed.

Hall, Rufus: A charter member has lived in the community for fifty years. (June 23, 1976) Interviewed.

Bryant, Rev. Johnny E. : Pastor of the Baptist Church since 1974.

Davis, Mrs. Sula : A member since the early 1930's, she is active with the Senior Citizens Program, the Baptist Ladies Club (located on 1st Avenue). (June 18, 1976) Interviewed.

Griffin, Sister Beulah : A charter member and member of the Christian Church longer than any other present member. She is member of the Missionary Society for more than twenty years. She holds a B.S. in Theology (dated May 2, 1957) from the Baptist Theological Seminary, Institute of Extension Department of the Baptist Theological Seminary. Awarded Certificate of Appreciation by the Baptist Theological Seminary, Institute of Extension, Baptist Theological Seminary. Certificate of Appreciation of the Baptist Theological Seminary, Institute of Extension, Baptist Theological Seminary. (June 15, 1976) Interviewed.

Sampson, Sister Beulah : A member since 1935, she is active in the church. Is a member of the church choir and is presently serving as the Assistant Clerk. (June 22, 1976) Interviewed.

King, J. Bradley : Member since 1935, he is active in the church. Has lived in the community for more than forty years. (June 21, 1976) Interviewed.

Marlowe, Union Jackson : A charter member of the church, he is active in the church. Clarence Jackson and Union Jackson are brothers. (June 22, 1976) Interviewed.

Smith, Mr. Archie D. Smith : A member since 1935, he is active in the church. Work with the men's group. (June 22, 1976) Interviewed.

Smith, Brother Maston : A member since 1935, he is active in the church. Moved his membership in 1974. Moved his membership in 1974. The deacon went to the church. Their son he was baptised. Interviewed. (June 22, 1976) Interviewed.

INTERVIEWS

Bell, Attorney Nona: Wife of Rufus Bell grew up in the community and has lived there all her life and is a constant visitor of the church school and church. She is a member of a Methodist church but attends Sunday School at Greater Bethlehem every other Sunday. (June 12, 1976). Interviewed.

Bell, Rufus: A charter member. Has lived in the neighborhood close to fifty years. (June 12, 1976) Interviewed.

Bryant, Rev. Johnny K. : Pastor of the Greater Bethlehem since 1974.

Davis, Ms. Lela : A member since the early thirties. She is working with the Senior Citizens Program(The Martin Luther King Center on Forest Avenue). (June 12, 1976) Interviewed.

Griffin, Sister Beulah : A charter member and has served in the Missionary Choir longer than any other present member. Was president of the Missionary Society for more than seven years. She holds a Diploma in Theology (Dated May 18, 1967.) from The Inter- Racial Baptist Institute- an Extension Department of Bishop College of Dallas, Texas. Awarded Certificate of Achievement May 23, 1963 by the above mentioned Institute. President of Missionary Choir. Received Certificate of Recognition of Long Time Dedicated Service to North-western District Baptist Association August 6, 1975 in Sherman, Texas when the Association celebrated its 100th Annual Session. (June 15, 1976) Interviewed.

Henderson, Sister Beatrice : Forty-three resident in th community. Is a member of Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church and serves as the Assistant Clerk. (June 11, 1976) Interviewed.

King, J. Bradley : Former member and deacon of Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church. Has lived in the community for more than forty-four years. (June 11, 1976) Interviewed.

Mathews, Helen Jackson : A charter member and the daughter of the late Clarence Jackson and Mamie Jackson. (June 10, 1976) Interviewed.

Smith, Ms. Ruthie D. Smith : A charter member. Was very active in church work when she was a member at Bethlehem. Has moved her membership from Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church.

Smith, Brother Wesley : Has lived in the community for forty three (43) years, and lives within one block of the church now although he has moved his membership. A former member and deacon, who continues on the deacon board where he is a member. He was also President of the choir when he was a member at Greater Bethlehem.(June 15, 1976). Interviewed. (June 20, 1976) Interviewed.

APPENDICES

The first is the... contradiction of... The following space is... space is also to... the history of the...

Appendices

PERSONAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX A

AMENDMENTS

From time to time authentic information may be found that will contradict or correct information already recorded in this manuscript. The following space is to be used for recording such corrections. The space is also to be used to register any additional knowledge concerning the history of the church from 1932 to June of 1976.

1. What was the total cost?
2. Do you have a picture of the first church?
3. What was the original building torn down and the first one replaced with?
4. List as many first events that happened in the history of the church. List others of interest and importance.
5. What do you think the role of the church is in the community? Do you think that should be changed? If so, how?
6. What do you think the church has contributed to the community? What would you like for it to contribute?
7. When was the first church built? How many members were there?
8. Do the pastors sign a contract?
9. Do the hour of services fit in with your schedule? If not, what changes would you like to see made?
10. Are you satisfied with the manner in which the church is being run? If not, what changes would you like to see made?

PERSONAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What can you tell me about the history of Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church ?
2. Who organized the church?
3. Who were the first officers and charter members?
4. Were you a charter member?
5. Where was it organized and where were meetings held while waiting to purchase a meeting place?
6. Who was the owner of the original church purchased and what was total cost?
7. Do you have a picture of the first church?
8. When was the original building torn down and the first new structure erected and who was the carpenter?
9. List as many first events that happened in the history of the church. List others of interest and importance.
10. What do you think the role of the church is in the community ? Do you think that Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church is filling its role well?
11. What do you think the church has contributed to the community? What would you like for it to contribute?
12. When was the first salary paid to a Greater Bethlehem Pastor and how much was it?
13. Do the pastors sign a contract?
14. Do the hour of services fit in well with your home life or would you like some changes made?
15. Are you satisfied with the number of communicants at Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church? How well do you think members are working together?

APPENDIX C

CHURCH DECORUM

I

Never walk across or in front of the Pulpit after services begin.

II

Heads should be bowed in reverence during prayers.

III

Chewing gum is a private room affair and should never be indulged in church.

IV

Talking during services is out of place unless absolutely necessary.

V

It is the duty and pleasure of the ushers to find seats for congregation.

VI

If one must sneeze or cough, please use a handkerchief for the protection of others.

VII

It is impolite to come to church late or leave the church before the services are over. In either case quietness should predominate.

VIII

In this day of short dresses-- ladies will do well to cover up as much as is possible when they are sitting down.

IX

Face the speaker at all times.

X

Quiet should reign for the benefit of those who wish to hear for edification of their souls.

XI

Remember that the services are not over until the benediction has been completed. (Do not begin to gather your belongings or make ready to leave before the benediction has been given.)

XII

Leave silently after services.

XIII

Remember the Golden Rule: Matthew 7:12.