

CHURCH HISTORY

The Taylor Creek Baptist Church was organized Sept 28, 1880. There is no written record of any information from 1880 to 1884. The name was changed to The Baptist Church of Christ at Kempner, Texas in June 22, 1884 with a 13 charter members. The first pastor was Elder E. Berry. The church held services in the Kempner schoolhouse. Later that year the first church was built on land donated by Mr. Will Whitis. This land was located west of the Kempner school building. In 1905 funds were solicited to build a Baptist Church House. The church was dedicated on December 9, 1906. This church was used till 1930 when it burned down early on Easter morning, cause of fire unknown. It is assumed that many church records were destroyed by the fire. The last services held in the church were funeral services for Mrs. Rosie Patterson, mother of Robert Patterson. After the fire the church met in the Methodist church until a new building could be built. On June 2, 1930, Mr. Bufford Taylor deeded a city block south of the railroad tracks to the Kempner Baptist Church. The church bought 4 additional lots from Mr. Todd Briggs for \$100. Robert Patterson moved the rock in the old church foundation to be used in the new church foundation. He moved the rock with a wagon pulled by mules. E.H. Hughes constructed the building with most of the labor donated by church members. Dedication of the new building was in October 1930. Cost was \$1926.36, which included the pews.

Several more construction projects occurred over the years, to include the parsonage which was built and dedicated in 1954 and is still in use today. In 1963, a red brick building was constructed by Robert Hallmark and Arnold Iverson, with the help from the church members. That is the

sanctuary we are in now. Total cost was \$14,000 which included the air conditioner and pews. The trustees; Lamar Adams, C.E. Smith, and Bill Henderson borrowed the money to build this building from Fulton Brown.

The 1930 building was sold and moved away in 1971 and is being used as a home in Lampasas today. Again the original rock foundation was used when the education building was built – this is the current fellowship hall and nursery area. In 1979 the additional classrooms were added that lead off the fellowship hall. Art Adams drew the plans for this wing.

May 12, 1987 Kempner First Baptist Church established a missionary church at intersection of FM 2657 and Boy's Ranch Road in a trailer house located on land owned by church members Mr. & Mrs. W.K. Lightfoot. The first year only Sunday School was taught there. Members returned to Kempner FBC for worship services. On June 12, 1988 worship services were also started with Rev. William L. Hamlin as the first Pastor of Oak Hills Baptist Church. The land was purchased from Mr. & Mrs. W.K. Lightfoot. In 1989 Oak Hills received a \$40,000 loan from the Baptist General Convention of Texas to build a church and educational building. August 27, 1989 Oak Hills Baptist Church separated from Kempner First Baptist to stand on their own.

March 1990 Oak Hills Baptist Church moved into the new 2882 square foot sanctuary and education building.

1994 the Youth building that currently sets behind the sanctuary was built at Kempner First Baptist Church with donated labor.

Feb 12, 1997 A New Association, Greater Fort Hood Association, was formed. Kempner First Baptist Church gave vote of intent to remain with Lampasas Association.

Nov 1, 1999 There was a Special called business meeting to replace the roof and all trusses on the Sanctuary due to structural failure. Worship services were held in the fellowship hall during repairs.

Jan 12, 2000 The remodeled sanctuary was dedicated. Total cost of roof repairs and remodeling was \$17,000.

This church has had a total of 66 pastors during the past 120 years with many staying on the job less than one year. However, many were seminary students from Baylor.

Through the early years, the church withdrew fellowship from members who drank, swore, played cards, danced, gambled, played ball on Sunday, and in one instance, where one spoke disrespectfully to a deacon.

Memorials made to the church over the years have included the pulpit which was purchased as a memorial in honor of Beulah Goodwin. The communion table was purchased in memory of D.C. Herring. The mirror in the foyer was purchased as a memorial to Nita Adams. Also the donation of an organ by Dr. Jim and Doris Lambert in memory of his Father and Mother, Clifford Lewis and Voyce Gilbreath Lambert. Cliff Lambert attended church here in the 1940s. He told his son how the Methodist church and Baptist church

shared services – meeting one Sunday at one church and the next at the other church.

The church was a wood structure with a tabernacle on the north side. Highway 190 was a gravel road out front between the church and the railroad. The railroad station was nearby.

Today, our pastor is Roger Fancher, who has served since April 1, 1996. The deacons are Lamar Adams, Gene Isenhour, Charlie Morse, DUBY Todd, Ray Slaydon, and Larry Herod. Our Music Director is Ray Slaydon, and we are blessed to have as instrumentalist; Marilyn Brown, Sue Walker, Joyce Slaydon, Aubrey Williams, and Bob Liberty. Our current membership is 159 resident members with 72 active.

As we look to the future, the church recently purchased 16 acres of land as a future building site. The land is located on a hill just northeast of here. When we build, the structure should be visible to anyone traveling either direction on HWY 190. The land was purchased from Harold Rahm, nephew of former members Sam and Willie Mae Brown.

This history was compiled from several sources to include old church minutes and memories of former and current members. The church's original minutes beginning in 1884 are on display under glass on the table to my right. A copy is also located on the table for you to look through. More detailed historical notes are available on the front pew for you to take with you when we break for lunch.