

THE
KENTUCKY BAPTIST
HERITAGE

A PUBLICATION OF
THE KENTUCKY BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY
THE KENTUCKY BAPTIST HISTORICAL COMMISSION



K E N T U C K Y
B A P T I S T
H E R I T A G E

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The Kentucky Baptist Historical Society will meet in its annual meeting at Ghent, Kentucky, July 30, 1976. This annual meeting has been well attended the past several years. The publication of the Bicentennial Volume, BAPTISTS IN KENTUCKY, has given a new impetus to Kentucky Baptist history. As we plan for this meeting, I hope you will arrange to be present. The Historical Commission will meet at 3:00 P.M. Dinner will be served at 6:30 P.M. for all those having reservations. The society meeting will begin at 7:30 P.M.

Kentucky has a rich religious heritage. Baptists have played a significant role in that heritage. Let us be at work in recording that heritage for the future. This is a job far too complex and far too important to leave solely to the "professional" historian. It is a task which must be done by many different people at many different times in many different places.

Many have knowledge of some significant element in Baptist history. But that knowledge will be lost if it is not passed on. Kentucky Baptists now have a journal for recording our history, but we cannot do so unless Kentucky Baptists write it. Consider yourself responsible for recording the history of Baptists that you know.

Write it up. Send it to Dr. Leo Crismon at the address below so we can record for the years to come the incidents that would be forgotten otherwise.

One of my dreams for the Kentucky Baptist Heritage is that we can soon have a printed journal similar to that of other states. Kentucky's heritage is as rich as any state in the union. We need an adequate journal to preserve it.

JET

[EDITOR RESIGNS. SEE PAGE 26.]
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(Make all checks payable to
 Kentucky Baptist Historical Society)

This Indenture made this Second day of July
in the Year of our Lord Christ One thousand Seven hundred
and Eighty four, Between William Hickman of the County of
Cheshire of the one part and Leonard Cheatham and Arthur
Moody Deacons or Elders of the Baptist Church in the said
County of Cheshire of the other part (Witnesseth
that the said William Hickman for and in consideration of
the sum of five pounds current money to him in hand
paid by the said Leonard Cheatham and Arthur Moody
the Receipt whereof the said William Hickman doth hereby
Acknowledge Hath granted bargained and sold and by these
presentes Doth grant bargain and sell unto the said
Leonard Cheatham and Arthur Moody Deacons or Elders as
aforesaid and to their Successors forever to use for the Use
of the Baptist Church or Society and for no other Use
 WHATSOEVER OR CERTAIN TRACT OR PARCEL OF LAND CONTAINING
half an Acre being part of the Land whereon the said
William Hickman now lives and adjoining the Lands
of William Gates, being the Land whereon the House
belonging to the said Baptist Church or Society now stands
and is made Use of by them as a place of Divine Worship
To Have and to Hold the said Land and premises with
the Appurtenances unto the said Leonard Cheatham and
Arthur Moody and their Successors forever for the Uses
aforesaid and no other And the said William Hickman
for himself and his heirs Doth agree to warrant &
defend the said Land and premises with the
Appurtenances unto the said Leonard Cheatham and
Arthur Moody their Successors or Successors forever for
the Uses aforesaid In Witness whereof the said
William Hickman hath hereunto set his hand this
the day and year aforesaid

In presence of
James Gates
Edw. Thompson Esq

Wm Hickman Seal

Hickman

To

Christman the

Deed

1784 July 20th

Deed

Ed

At a court held for Chesterfield County July 1784
This Deed was acknowledged by William Hickman party thereto
to & was ordered to be recorded

Teste Me attornis C

HICKMAN TO CHEATHAM ET AL DEED

by Leo T. Crismon

William Hickman (born February 4, 1747, King and Queen County, Virginia; died January 24, 1834, Frankfort, Kentucky) made a journey to Kentucky in 1776, leaving his home in Virginia on February 23 and arriving at Harrodstown, Kentucky, on April 1. At Harrodstown (Harrodsburg), with Thomas Tinsley, he did the first preaching in Kentucky. He started back from Harrodstown on June 1 and arrived at his home in Virginia on June 24 (Buckingham County).

In the fall of 1776, William Hickman removed to a new settlement on the Appomattox River. He was active in preaching and new converts were made. It soon became necessary to form a church, in 1778. This church was named Skinquarter; soon a comfortable meeting house was erected.

Hickman began to think of returning to Kentucky; he made a decision to return and began planning in the summer of 1783. The date which he set to leave was August 16, 1784, by which time he had sold his farm and home.

Only July 2, 1784, he deeded one-half acre of his land to Leonard Cheatham and Arthur Moody, deacons (or elders) "and their successors forever," for the use of the Baptist Church (or Society) which had been named Skinquarter and "for no other use whatsoever." The price paid by the church for the property was five pounds.

Witnesses to the transaction were James Gates and Edward Thompson Toms. The deed is recorded in Deed Book 10 (page 366), Chesterfield County Courthouse, Chesterfield, Virginia.

Copy of the deed was provided to the Kentucky Baptist Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky, by George Beadles, a member of the Skinquarter Church, on March 13, 1976.

THIS INDENTURE made this second day of July in the year of our Lord Christ one thousand seven hundred and eighty four, between William Hickman of the County of Chesterfield of the one part and Leonard Cheatham and Arthur Moody, deacons or elders of the Baptist Church in the said County of Chesterfield, of the other part:

Witnesseth that the said William Hickman for and in consideration of the sum of five pounds current money to him in hand, paid by the said Leonard Cheatham and Arthur Moody, the receipt whereof the said William Hickman doth hereby acknowledge, hath granted, bargained and sold by these presents doth grant, bargain and sell unto the said Leonard Cheatham and Arthur Moody, deacons or elders as aforesaid, and to the successors forever to and for the use of the Baptist Church or Society and for no other use whatsoever, one certain tract or parcel of land containing half an acre, being part of the land whereon the said William Hickman now lives and adjoining the lands of William Gates, being the land whereon the house belonging to the said Baptist Church or society now stands and is made use of by them as a place of divine worship:

To have and to hold the said land and premises with the appurtenances unto the said Leonard Cheatham and Arthur Moody and their successors forever for the uses aforesaid and no other, and the said William Hickman for himself and his heirs doth agree to warrant and defend the said land and premises with the Appurtenances unto the said Leonard Cheatham and Arthur Moody, their successor or successors forever for the uses aforesaid.

In Witness whereof the said William Hickman hath hereunto set his hand and seal, the day and year aforesaid.

In the presence of:

James Gates
Edward Thompson Toms

William Hickman
(Seal)

OLD CAPTAIN -
A SERVANT OF GOD¹

by W. C. Barrickman

He and his wife were born slaves in Virginia; he was known as "old Captain;" at the age of twenty-five he was baptized and enrolled as a member of the Baptist White Church in the community where he lived in Caroline County. His wife's master decided to emigrate to Kentucky, and to avoid the separation of man and wife, traded one of his black chattels for old Captain. Arriving in Fayette County about 1785, old Captain and his wife joined the "white folks'" church known as the "Head of Boone's Creek."

The pioneers brought their slaves with them to Kentucky. Under the law they could own slaves for their own use and could bring them into the state, but they could not import them for sale as "merchandise." Old Captain had a purpose in life; he wanted to preach the gospel to the negroes, and to be a servant of God. To do this he arranged to "hire" the labor of himself and of his wife from their owner, and by energy and frugality earned the money to do so; thereafter he went among the people of his race preaching and exhorting them to become Christians; the couple went to Lexington, and through the assistance of John Maxwell, secured a lot upon which to build a cabin. Old Captain held meetings at his home and received the confessions of those who "believed and repented of their sins," but refused when they asked for baptism because he had not been ordained as a minister. Although ignorant and illiterate, he knew the requirements of the church, and wished in every way to conform to them. After he had "gathered" about fifty converts, he and his flock attended a meeting of the South Kentucky Association, and asked that he be ordained so they might establish a "Colored Baptist Church" in Lexington. This was an extraordinary request; although churches were built with galleries for the use of the slaves, and they were enrolled as members of the white congregations, separate churches had never been considered.

Gradually, however, this idea prevailed, negro preachers were ordained and encouraged to gather churches of their own; by 1861 there were 17 Baptist churches with more than 5,000 members, among the negroes in Kentucky. After due deliberation over old Captain's request, the "brethren" of the South Kentucky Association "did not consider it proper to ordain him in form," says Dr. David Rice, in his "Memoirs," "but being fully informed of his character and his good works, they gave him the right hand of Christian affection, and told him to go on in the name of their common Master."

This was sufficient for old Captain; believing he had been authorized to do so, he proceeded to baptize his converts, and in 1801 organized the "First African Church" at Lexington; feeling that their black brother had gone further than was intended, the association advised the colored "Minister" and his flock to join an established, regularly constituted white church. Old Captain, however, had by now acquired habits of command.

An observant and philosophical friend of mine once said that "the most autocratic of all people were teachers, preachers and steamboat captains," and old Captain continued exhorting, confessing and baptizing the negroes of his "congregation" until he had built up the membership of the "African Church" to more than 300. He "hired" himself and his wife as long as their labor as slaves was of any value, and carried on his religious service until his death in 1823 at the age of ninety years.

In 1812 old Captain sought admission for his church in the Elkhorn association, but the "fathers and brethren" refused the request, alleging that the colored church had not been properly constituted, and as old Captain was "a slave and illiterate" they thought it "improper to lay hands on him in ordination." It was true that old Captain was legally a slave,

¹Reprinted from the Oldham Era, LaGrange, Kentucky, October 7, 1938. The article was submitted by Mrs. Lemuel Felts.

but as to being illiterate, there were many in the association at that time who were no better off than old Captain.

Loudon Ferrill, a negro also born in slavery, but freed by his Master's will, succeeded old Captain as pastor of the First African Church. He was born in 1789; when he was nine years old he was sold at the death of his master, for \$600; he was baptized by Rev. Absalom Waller and received as a member of the Baptist Church. He became popular as a preacher among the negroes, but as the law denied them the right to administer baptism, they were not ordained. His white brethren, however, recognizing his ability and his popularity with the members of his race, told him to "go forth and preach the gospel, and a way should be opened into him." He converted many negroes who were baptized and received into the churches by the white preachers. His owner, being sympathetic with Loudon's efforts, determined to educate him, but died, leaving him his freedom. He emigrated to Kentucky and settled at Lexington. He associated himself with old Captain, and assisted him in his pastoral labors, but refused to join his church because, he said, "it was not in fellowship with the Baptist denomination." The leaders of the Elkhorn Association, some of whom had perhaps "grown in grace," and others of whom had died off, or otherwise, and been replaced by men more liberal-minded, decided that Loudon, being a free man, was qualified to become a minister. He made such a favorable impression that the town trustees of Lexington employed him to preach to the negroes of the town, and the white Baptist Church then waived any irregularities in the organization of the negro church, and extended the "right hand of fellowship" to Loudon and his flock.

Loudon served as pastor of the church for thirty-two years, and increased its membership, so that at his death in 1854, it numbered 1,820 members, and was the largest church in Kentucky. Loudon Ferrill was held in respect by the white people of Lexington, and "his influence was more potent in keeping order among the blacks, than that of all the police force." When the cholera raged in 1833, he was the only preacher white or black

remaining in the stricken city, and although as many as sixty people died in one day, and the scourge lasted for weeks, Loudon worked courageously in burying the dead, white as well as black, and in aiding the sick and comforting the bereaved. Loudon is said to have baptized 5,000 converts, and to have immersed on one occasion 220 people in 85 minutes. In marrying slaves he pronounced them "man and wife until death or distance" parted them.

The Baptists of Lexington would do themselves tardy honor by erecting a monument to his and Old Captain's memory on Lexington's public square.²

²For further information on Old Captain and for information on Negro Baptists in Kentucky, see Homer E. Nutter, "A Brief History of Negro Baptists," Baptists In Kentucky, ed. Leo T. Crismon (Middletown, Kentucky: Kentucky Baptist Convention, 1975), pp. 66ff.

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W. A. SMITH

W. A. Smith, the son of Joshua and Elizabeth (Fiale?) Smith was born in 1839. He married Lucy Ann Gibson. During the Civil War he served as a First Lieutenant in the 14th Kentucky Volunteer Cavalry. In January of 1868, he was licensed by the New Hope Baptist Church to exercise "his gift" and served on several occasions as Assistant Moderator of that church. He served the Booneville Association of Baptists as Clerk from 1885 to 1889, 1892 to 1893, and again in 1896. In February of 1908 he was chosen to serve as Treasurer of the New Hope Church. In 1903 he was elected as Clerk of Irvine Association and served as Assistant Clerk of the Association in 1908. He died in 1922.

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BAPTIST PREACHINGIN KENTUCKY¹*By James W. Cox*

Who preached the first Baptist sermon in Kentucky? Nobody really knows. But the first Baptist sermon we have any record of, that is, where we have at least the text, was preached by William Hickman. The place was Harrodstown -- Harrodsburg. The date was April, 1776. The text was Numbers 23:10, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be as his."

Several years later Hickman organized the Forks of Elkhorn Church in Woodford County and was pastor there for a total of forty years. This period was interrupted by a two-year parenthesis. Hickman was outspokenly opposed to slavery, and this led to a breach of fellowship with the church. Differences were composed, and pastor and people went on again together.

John Taylor, a contemporary, said of him:

This man has had a great range in Kentucky: for here, he has been a faithful labourer for near forty years; he is truly a 76 man, for in 76 he paid a visit to Kentucky, and here the same year he first began to preach. In early times, and in the face of danger, he settled where he now lives, for a number of years at the risk of his life, from Indian fury; he preached to the people in Shelby county and other frontier settlements. So he is one of the hardy fearless sons of 76.

Jeremiah Vardeman, brought up and converted in Kentucky, was a remarkably successful evangelist. Immediately after his conversion, he felt deeply "the duty of warning sinners of their danger, and exhorting them to flee the wrath to come." But his youth, timidity, and lack of education stood in his way. For two

years, however, he was faithful to the church. Then he backslid. He was drawn, as it was put, "into the circles of frivolity." This consisted mainly of dancing and playing the violin. But he was reclaimed by the preaching of an illiterate man of God, and he became a flaming evangel in Kentucky and neighboring states. He weighed 300 pounds, but was regarded as "handsome, commanding, and attractive." His manner of preaching was compared to that of George Whitefield. A contemporary said, "His voice was powerful, sonorous, and clear, his enunciation distinct, and he could be heard in the open air for a great distance."

John Taylor was a pioneer preacher best remembered for his History of Ten Baptist Churches. He was the first pastor of the Clear Creek Church, which branched off from the South Elkhorn Church. And that is an interesting story. There were four candidates for the new church -- four preachers who were members. Lewis Craig, moderator of the meeting to elect and install a pastor, queried each member as to his personal choice of the four for pastor, and all but one asked for Taylor. "Only one man objected," said Taylor, "but Lewis Craig soon worked him out of his objection, for it lay in thinking my coat was too fine."

Taylor participated in the constitution of the First Baptist Church of Frankfort and two years later of the Buck Run Church, which was his final church home.

James Madison Pendleton was one of Kentucky's most influential preachers. Along with J. R. Graves and A. C. Dayton, he was a member of the "Triumvirate" that systematized and propagandized the Landmark ecclesiology.

¹This paper was read by Dr. Cox at the Kentucky Baptist Convention as one of the Bicentennial Glimpses. It is a condensation of his chapter "Baptist Preaching In Kentucky." Baptists In Kentucky, 1776-1976. A Bicentennial volume. Ed. Leo T. Crismon (Middletown, Kentucky: Kentucky Baptist Convention, 1975), pp. 102ff.

As a preacher, Pendleton began with little promise. These were some not-so-kind comments of certain ministers who heard some of his early sermonic efforts:

"You certainly could do better if you would try."

"You are scarcely earning your salt."

"You say some pretty good things, but your preaching is neither adapted to comfort the saint nor alarm the sinner."

One layman said,

"As God is omnipotent he of course can make a preacher of that young man."

T. T. Eaton, viewing Pendleton's long ministry as a whole, said of him, "While he never dazed or dazzled a congregation, he never failed to edify and uplift them."

During his last illness, Pendleton told his daughter, "My object has been to be an accomplished debater; claiming nothing unjust, yielding to nothing unjust. My supreme purpose has been the establishment of truth."

When John A. Broadus, the president of the Southern Baptist Seminary, died, a Jewish rabbi of Louisville said, "The glory of Louisville has departed from her with the departure of John A. Broadus. The splendor the ornament of this place is gone, since the greatest and saintliest man who had dwelt in it has left it forever, never to return."

Broadus made an unforgettable impression as a person, a professor, a president, a pastor, and a preacher. The year the seminary was relocated in Louisville, after leaving Greenville, South Carolina, Broadus became pastor of the Forks of Elkhorn Church -- the church that William Hickman had founded and served as pastor. The content of his preaching demonstrated his deep love of the Scriptures and his skill as their interpreter.

Men who had heard Beecher, Talmadge, and Spurgeon regarded Broadus as the equal of any of them when he was in a congenial

atmosphere and when he was at his best. Broadus always preached without notes and with a warm, sympathetic voice. Yet some Baptists thought that by his example he was ruining a generation of young preachers, for he was teaching them to talk and plead with people instead of yelling at them or orating before them.

After Broadus gave up the pastorate, John R. Sampey carried on the pastor-professor tradition in the Forks of Elkhorn Church. He served there for a total of 23-1/2 years from 1885 to 1926. He said of his experiences there and in the Glen's Creek Church:

When I stood in one of my pulpits preaching to an attentive congregation, I felt that there was nothing finer in human experience, and when I sat at the teacher's desk in the Seminary lecturing on the Old Testament or on the art of preaching, I thought nothing more important and thrilling could be offered to a servant of Christ Jesus.

As a teen-age lad, I heard Dr. Sampey preach a stirring sermon in the First Baptist Church of Knoxville, Tennessee, on the theme, "Seventy-five years with the Bible." Sampey was then seventy-five years old and preached with conviction and vigor. It was an unforgettable experience for me.

An important preaching ministry has taken place in the mountains of Kentucky. Regrettably this important service is often unrecognized. Some of the preachers have had limited public school education; some have supplemented their scanty schooling with excellent training offered by the Clear Creek School in Pineville; and others, like L. O. Griffith, have had college and seminary degrees. But all alike they have seen God's challenges in the hills and hollows. Much of the heroism and sacrifice of these men has gone unnoticed, simply because no one recorded it.

In one of Griffith's summer camps, a boy by the name of James Robb, from the mining

town of Jenkins, was converted, led his father to baptism, and later, as an engineer, helped to start more than twenty missions which became strong churches in different parts of the nation. I have served as interim preacher in two of those churches -- the Manhattan Church in New York City and the Pittsburgh Baptist Church in Pennsylvania.

An important aspect of Kentucky Baptist preaching is that of the college and seminary students who, through many years, have ministered effectively and unforgettably to churches in the open country, in villages, in towns, and in the cities as well. Their number is enormous and their influence for Christ is incalculable.

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God has had many Giants to walk the hills of Southeastern Kentucky, sowing the seed of God's love and ministering to the needs of the mountain's people. Many of these go unnoticed, save in the eyes of God, yet, their accomplishments stand today as a living testimonial to their perseverance, strength, and dedication to their calling.

One such Giant was The Reverend Doctor John Ward. Dr. Ward was born at Bowling Green, Kentucky on February 19, 1809. During the early years of his childhood he and his family migrated to North Carolina where Dr. Ward was brought up to manhood in Buncomb County of that state. He returned to Kentucky in 1832, joining the Mount Pleasant Baptist Church of Clay County and was ordained into the ministry eight years later.

Dr. Ward's success as a minister is evidenced by his many accomplishments. The minutes of the Irvine Association of Baptists for 1893 credit Dr. Ward with the gathering of 21 churches. John H. Spencer, in his History of Kentucky Baptists, declares John Ward to have been

a "useful and active" preacher in the South Fork Association. Indeed, Dr. Ward was a useful preacher, covering territory as a Circuit Preacher, he reached into Owsley, Jackson, Clay, Lee and Estill Counties. Dr. Ward served as Moderator of not only South Fork Association but also of Irvine Association in 1867 and 1889-92. He was appointed missionary by the General Association of Baptists in 1854 at a salary of "\$1.00 per day, one half to be collected by himself on the field." The report of Dr. Ward at the end of that year showed that he had worked 130 days preaching 130 sermons, witnessed 55 professions of faith and baptized 36. He had traveled more than 900 miles and, for this work he collected \$23.75.

A robust man, Dr. Ward often walked 12-15 miles to fulfill appointments and to serve his pastorates.

Spencer, in his History of Kentucky Baptists, makes this note: "John Ward was quite an active and useful preacher in this association (South Fork) and one of the most influential preachers in that portion of the state. But, he finally commenced the practice of medicine -- that curse of many mountain preachers -- which greatly diminished his usefulness."

Nevyl Shackleford, whose wife Gladys is a direct descendant of Dr. Ward, said recently in an article for the Lexington Leader, "The old report seems to indicate that he abandoned the ministry but, he didn't. What actually happened, according to some of his descendants, was that he started doctoring out of necessity. He was indeed a poor man."

Whatever the case, Dr. Ward certainly gave evidence to where his heart truly belonged. His tombstone, bearing the emblem of masonry beneath his name, bears the epitaph, "Rev. John Ward, MD; Baptist Minister of the Gospel and practicing doctor of years, this is my request, A SINNER SAVED BY GRACE."

God has had many Giants to walk the hills of Southeastern Kentucky and Dr. John Ward was one of these.

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THE BAPTIST CONTRIBUTION TO
RELIGIOUS LIBERTY¹

by R. Dwayne Conner

(Leviticus 25:10; Luke 4:16-19)

INTRODUCTION

The Bicentennial of the United States offers us a special and significant opportunity to become more informed about and appreciative of our heritage of religious liberty. To a great extent, we enjoy this liberty because Baptists struggled for the right of every man to worship God as his conscience dictated. Since their appearance in England almost three-hundred and seventy years ago, Baptists have repudiated any attempt by church or state to coerce the religious beliefs or actions of a person. Baptists have always been the champions of religious liberty, not only for themselves, but for all others as well. For this reason, we can rightly be proud of the Baptist contribution to man's struggle for freedom, both religiously and politically.

So as we reflect upon this great heritage of ours: first, let us take a brief look at the historical background of the Baptist struggle for religious liberty; second, let us examine the principles involved in religious liberty; and third, let us probe some of the implications of religious liberty for our day.

I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Struggle in England

Baptist churches emerged out of the Puritan Separatist movement in England which longed for the reformation of the Church on a more biblical basis. This movement sought to reconstitute the Church as a regenerated, disciplined spiritual community, free of state support or control. For these non-conformist views, Baptists, and other Separatists, were persecuted by

the state. In the public mind, to oppose the state church was to oppose the state. Consequently, Baptists were persecuted by imprisonment, loss of property, and sometimes, even death. They were looked upon as radicals and anarchists contributing to the political and social chaos of seventeenth century England.

Early Baptist pastors, such as Thomas Helwys and John Murton, advocated full liberty of conscience for every person. In 1612, Helwys published his treatise, A Short Declaration of the Mystery of Iniquity. Addressed to King James I, Helwys argued for universal religious liberty and freedom of conscience. He declared that government has no power to punish heretics, Turks, Jews, or whoever for their views or to be intolerant of them. Helwys sent King James a copy of his book, with these words written on the flyleaf: "The king is a mortal man and not God, wherefore he has no power over the mortal souls of his subjects to make laws and ordinances for them and to set spiritual lords over them."² The king responded with fury. Helwys was put in Newgate Prison where he remained until he died. This treatise by Helwys was the first on universal liberty of conscience ever to be published in the English tongue. His strong stand for the purity of the Church and for the right of every person to worship God according to his own conscience became one of the foundation stones of Baptist convictions.

By 1689, conflicts between the pro-Catholic kings and Anglican parliaments, socio-logical upheavals, agitation by Baptists, and the advent of the constitutional monarchs, William and Mary of Orange, brought about the passage of the Act of Toleration. Though this was a great step forward, it still did not grant full religious liberty. This idea would not find broader acceptance until the American experiment, and only then after a long struggle.

¹An address given to the Northern Kentucky Baptist Association held with Crescent Springs Baptist Church on September 9, 1975.

²Thomas Helwys, A Short Declaration of the Mystery of Iniquity, flyleaf.

The Struggle in America

The pilgrims who settled at Plymouth were Separatists, the same group from which England Baptists had sprung. Like the Baptists, they too had suffered religious persecution in England. Yet, when they arrived in New England, they set up the same kind of system from which they had fled. Church and government were bound together as one. The Puritans who came later to Massachusetts had never separated from the Church of England and so they proceeded to establish a theocracy --a church state--from which there could be no deviation. Both the Pilgrims and the Puritans were intolerant of full religious liberty. They wanted freedom of religion for themselves but not for those who differed with them. Their treatment of Roger Williams demonstrated this.

When Roger Williams arrived from England and refused to accept a call to the pastorate of the Puritan church in Boston on the grounds that the church was not separated from the Church of England or from the state, he was eventually banished in 1634 from the colony. His main objections to the Puritans' rule in Massachusetts were their coercion of religious conformity upon every person and their unjust treatment of the Indians. He fled to Rhode Island and established a colony dedicated to absolute liberty of conscience, calling it Providence. In 1637, Williams was joined by John Clarke. Clarke had also been banished from Boston for sympathizing with Anne Hutchinson, with whose views he did not agree, but felt she had a right to her beliefs. In 1663, Williams and Clarke secured from King Charles II a new charter. This charter became, in many ways, the foundation for American democracy and the United States Constitution's Bill of Rights which provided that: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Among other things, the charter declared.

That no person within the said colony, at any time hereafter, shall be anywise molested, punished, disquieted, or called in question for any difference in opinion

in matters of religion which do not actually disturb the civil peace of said colony, but that all and every person and persons may from time to time, and at all times hereafter, freely and fully have and enjoy his and their own judgments and consciences in matters of religious commitment: . . . they behaving themselves peaceably and quietly, and not using this liberty for licentiousness and profaneness, nor to the civil injury or outward disturbance of others."¹

As the movement for independence from England spread, Baptists pushed for religious freedom throughout the colonies. John Leland, the leading Baptist spokesman for religious freedom in Virginia and a personal friend of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, helped to influence developments there. In December, 1785, a constitutional provision guaranteeing religious freedom was drawn up by Thomas Jefferson, advocated by James Madison, and passed by the Virginia Assembly. This was largely the product of the combined efforts of persecuted groups such as Baptist, Presbyterians, Catholics, and Quakers. Then, in 1787, under the sympathetic leadership of James Madison, Patrick Henry, and Thomas Jefferson, the Episcopal Church was dis-established as the state church in Virginia. Though the First Amendment guaranteeing freedom of religion was adopted in 1791 through the influence of George Washington and James Madison, at the insistence of Baptists, some of the New England states continued to give preference to "churches of the standing order" and taxed the people to support them. It was not until 1833 that the last of these laws was abolished in Massachusetts. Thus, a cardinal principle of Baptists was finally established as law throughout America. In America, people found the religious liberty for which man had struggled so long.

II. THE PRINCIPLES OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

At the First Baptist World Congress in London in 1905, J. D. Freeman proclaimed the principles of religious liberty which are dear to the heart of every Baptist:

¹Records of the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations. Cf. Anson Phelps Stokes, Church and State in the United States, Vol. 1, p. 205.

Our demand has been not simply for religious toleration, but religious liberty; not sufferance merely, but freedom; and that not for ourselves alone, but for all men. We did not stumble upon the doctrine. It inheres in the very essence of our belief. Christ is Lord of all . . . The conscience is the servant only of God, and is not subject to the will of man.

.

We have never invoked the sword of temporal power to aid the sword of the Spirit. We have never passed an ordinance inflicting a civic disability on any man because of his religious views, be he Protestant or Papist, Jew, or Turk, or infidel."¹

Thus, religious liberty is a great deal more than toleration. It is the fountain of all true freedom. It is rooted in the very nature of God and man created in the image of God.

God and Man

The Bible declares that God created man with freedom to choose.² God does not coerce man against his will though man is responsible for his choices. Man is not a thing, but a person. Thus, religious liberty is a right under God and He alone is Lord of man's conscience. As The Baptist Faith and Message puts it: "God has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it."³ Therefore, when man's commandments conflict with God's will, the Christian is to obey God and not man.⁴ For true liberty is found only in Christ⁵ under the control of His Spirit.⁶ Liberty in the New Testament, then, means not merely the power of choice, but the use of that power of choice to enter through Christ into the life of the Spirit.⁷ Man is free in Christ, free that is, to be what Christ wants him to be.

Man and Community

The fact that man's freedom is limited can be seen not only in relation to God, but also in relation to society. The commun-

ity of man has legitimate claims upon the loyalty and obedience of its members. Man is to render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's⁸ and unto God the things which are God's.⁸ Again, The Baptist Faith and Message says: "Civil government being ordained of God it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God."⁹ Christians are citizens as well as disciples and discipleship involves participation in the life of the community. Like light and salt,¹⁰ Christians are to penetrate the world, including government. But the church and state are to be institutionally separate.

Church and State

A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.¹¹

These words from The Baptist Faith and Message point out that the relationship between church and state are bound up with the Baptist doctrine of the Church. Only the regenerate are to be church members. Thus, only those old enough to exercise their freedom of choice can enter into a personal relationship with God and become responsible members. For this reason, Baptists insist that every person must be free to think and act for himself, and his belief must not be forced by the state or a church. Every individual must be given the opportunity to worship

¹Baptists of the World, 1905-1970, pp. 91-92.

²Genesis 1:27; 3:1-13, 22-23.

³The Baptist Faith and Message, Article XVII, "Religious Liberty."

⁴Acts 4:18-20; 5:29.

⁵Luke 4:18-19; John 8:36; Romans 8:1-21.

⁶Romans 8:5-9; II Corinthians 3:17.

⁷Romans 6:18; 8:2, 11, 15-17; Galatians 2:20; 4-5.

⁸Matthew 22:21.

⁹The Baptist Faith and Message, op. cit.

¹⁰Matthew 5:13-14.

¹¹The Baptist Faith and Message, op. cit.

in his own way and to express his God-given gifts for the well-being of the whole community. Religious freedom is essential to a free state. A free church in a free state is a blessing to both.

III. IMPLICATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

In his definitive study of American church-state relations, Anson Phelps Stokes paid glowing tribute to the historic role of Baptists in religious liberty: "No denomination has its roots more firmly planted in the soil of religious freedom and Church-State separation than the Baptists."¹ Nevertheless, Stokes observed, the principle of religious liberty has been less descriptive of Baptists in recent times than their early espousal of the principle might suggest. Baptists today, Stokes wrote,

"are typical of those groups who have fought heroically to secure their own freedom from State interference and would fight again to maintain it; but in freedom of thought and teaching, or even freedom for certain other groups, such as Roman Catholics on the one hand, and liberal theologians on the other, their record has not been so uniformly good."²

In other words, as long as Baptists were a persecuted minority, they insisted on religious freedom for everyone. However, today Baptists are part of the establishment. They are the largest Protestant denomination in America, comprising approximately one-eighth of the total population. This change in status has contributed to a more sectarian attitude among some toward liberty of conscience. Baptists today are generally regarded as politically and socially conservative, defenders of the status quo. Seventeenth century Baptists, by way of contrast, were disturbers of the status quo. As William R. Estep expressed it: "Far too easily Baptists lost their radical stance only to become captive to a culture and too often the uncritical advocates of a folk religion they helped to create."³

Religious liberty has been the concern primarily of the persecuted and disinherited, not powerful and dominant

majorities. Baptists of the United States today particularly need to be vigilant in reaffirming with renewed appreciation their witness to religious liberty, specifically in the areas of church-state relations and in the mission and ministry of the Church.

Church and State

Baptists maintain a Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs with headquarters in Washington, D.C. This committee seeks to keep a sharp watch on laws and judgments which might infringe upon American religious liberty or endanger the wall of separation between church and state. Because of the strong emphasis on this principle, Baptists are found opposing legislation which would open federal, state, or municipal treasuries to church institutions. History shows that state support brings state control. Baptists have also given support to controversial Supreme Court decisions such as that which banned Bible reading and prayers in our public schools. Baptists have defended the freedom of religious beliefs such as refusing to salute the United States flag, opposing Sunday closing laws, and refusing to participate in war. They have protected the religious rights of citizens in prison or military academies against forced chapel attendance. In the years ahead, the issues of taxing church owned property, the religious rights of Black Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, and conscientious objectors will call for the best wisdom Baptists can offer as they remain true to their heritage of liberty of conscience and community responsibility.

Mission and Ministry

Baptists have historically fought not only every form of political tyranny, but also religious tyranny. For religion itself can be a tyranny, as the legalism of the Pharisees in the New Testament and the state churches in Europe and the colonies demonstrate.

¹Anson Phelps Stokes, Church and State in the United States, Vol. 3, p. 485. Cf. James E. Wood, Jr. "Religious Liberty and Public Affairs in Historical Perspective, Baptist History and Heritage, Vol. IX, No. 3, p. 154.

²Ibid., p. 762.

³William R. Estep, "New England Dissent, 1630-1833: A Review Article," Church History, Vol. 41, Mo. 2, June, 1972, pp. 246-252.

Luke made it clear in Acts that one section of the Church was trying to impose its ideas on another. Jewish Christians were convinced that Gentile Christians could not be Christians in the fullest sense unless they kept the law of Moses. The apostles themselves did not escape this estrangement.¹ Fortunately, Paul had a deeper insight into the mind of Christ and fought vigorously for the equality of every disciple, whether Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female.² In the fellowship of the Church, every Christian is to be free to express his faith and spiritual gifts in a way that will benefit the whole body.³

Baptists have insisted that man is free to choose or change his faith and to teach the truth as he sees it, always with proper regard for the rights of others. God is not the author of confusion, but neither is He the author of religious totalitarianism. "Where the Spirit of Christ is," Paul said, "there is liberty."⁴ And where there is liberty, there is a warm, dynamic, developing body of Christ. This means Southern Baptists must not allow a few persons in the Convention to push them into making their confessions of faith into creeds whereby a person or a church or a denominational agency is accepted or rejected on the basis of their conformity to a particular biblical interpretation. This means there must be freedom in the pulpit for the man of God to proclaim the Word of God, even when it contradicts the biases, prejudices, and traditions of the local community. If a church becomes so culturally conditioned that it pressures the preacher to preach only the values which its members approve, then that church is ceasing to believe in or to practice liberty of conscience. Religious freedom will be viable only as long as it is exercised within the life of the Church. This means also that in seeking to convert people to Christ, the freedom of non-Christians to believe or not to believe must be respected. Again, The Baptist Faith and Message states: "It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by personal effort and by all other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ."⁵ Invitations to Christian discipleship should never minimize the biblical demands. Tricks of mass psychology, manipulation of individuals, and cheap schemes

are an abuse of man's God-given freedom. New Testament evangelism is always God centered and person oriented. God's concern is with people, not things, not even religious institutions.

CONCLUSION

Baptists fought for and won at a great price the principle of religious liberty. Eternal vigilance is the price of freedom and this is especially true of religious liberty. The concern of Baptists historically, has not been simply the proclamation of religious liberty, but the exercise of religious liberty. To this principle Baptists must remain firmly committed and forever faithful.

As Christians, we are in a war for the lives of people enslaved by the forces of economic, social, and religious tyranny. Christ the great Liberator has already won the decisive battle on the Cross and in the Tomb. The fruits of His victory await those who are willing to march with Him into the future. He is calling you and me to be faithful soldiers in His campaign of liberation.

For man cannot be truly free, he cannot be genuinely liberated, until Christ has set him free. What a glorious mission God has entrusted to us. So, "proclaim liberty throughout all the land to all the inhabitants thereof." LET CHRIST'S FREEDOM RING NOW! FOR ALL MEN, EVERYWHERE!

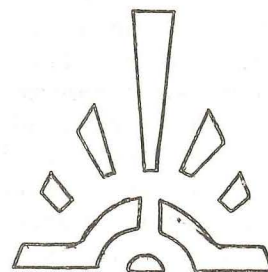
¹Galatians 2:1-21.

²Ibid., 3:28.

³I Corinthians 12:1-30.

⁴II Corinthians 3:17.

⁵The Baptist Faith and Message, Article XI, "Evangelism and Missions."



BEATTYVILLE
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CHURCH

A HISTORICAL SKETCH

Compiled by

Dennis L. Brewer,
Minister

THE BEGINNINGS

Beattyville Baptist Church was constituted on July 15, 1861, with 12 members entering into the covenant. The Church Covenant, in part, is as follows: "Having been, we trust, brought by Divine Grace to embrace the Lord Jesus Christ, and to give ourselves wholly to Him, we do solemnly and joyfully covenant with each other to walk together in Him with brotherly love....." There were twenty-two articles in the "Rules of Decorum" the nineteenth of which reads as follows: "That the names Regular and Separate be buried in oblivion and henceforth be known as United Baptist Church of Beattyville, Kentucky." The following twelve members signed the church covenant: Decatur Beatty, Patience Beatty, Ann F. Beatty, Rhoda Beatty, T. F. Gray, Samuel Houndshell, Sarah A. Hall, Martisia Cole, Hiram Mahatha, Malinda Thompson, and America C. Hunter. In August, 1861, James Jessee was chosen Deacon and Decatur Beatty was chosen Clerk.

Elder S. V. Potts served as the first pastor and is recognized as the one who gathered the church. Elder Potts served as Missionary for the Irvine Association. He served the church until August, 1862, when Elder John Ward assumed the pastorate. Brother Potts again assumed pastoral duties of the church in October, 1863, serving then for one year when he was excused from the pastorate of the church "owing to the condition of affairs." Elder J. J.

Edwards accepted the care of the church in November, 1864, and remained with the church until October, 1866. In May of 1866, B. W. Cole was ordained as a Deacon for the church.

In April of 1867, Harvey Hall, the "Pillar of Zion Church" assumed pastoral duties of Beattyville. Brother Hall served as the first Moderator of the Booneville Association of Baptists. In March of 1867 the church requested the General Board of the Association to furnish a horse for Elder I. C. Williams so that he might continue his missionary work within the mountains. In August, 1872, a motion was made and seconded that all members be granted a letter to join themselves to the Rock Springs Church. This is the last entry into the records until June 30, 1888, when the church was reorganized with the following eight members: John H. Beatty, Patience Beatty, W. B. Cole, R. H. Davis, Alford York, Samuel Lutes, Charles A. Quillen, and Rhoda E. Davis. At this meeting R. H. Davis was elected Church Clerk and the church appointed a committee to raise funds for the erection of a house of worship. In August, 1888, messengers were appointed to attend the Booneville Association which was to meet at Ellis Branch. A house of worship was not erected at this time. After August, 1888, there are no records of the church until June 19, 1893, when the church was once again reorganized with the election of a Clerk and Deacons. On November 2, 1893, the church arranged to hold services in the storehouse of H. A. Beatty and on that date, G. B. Thacker became their pastor with Deacons and Trustees being elected on November 26 of that year.

A series of meetings was held in 1894 which resulted in 46 additions by experience and baptism, 14 by letter, and 36 by restoration. That same year the church membership roll was revised by the exclusion of 5 and the erasure of 53, leaving a membership of 90. The church was received into Boone's Creek Association this same year.

After being received into the Boone's Creek Association, the church requested the Association to supply financial assistance in cooperation with the State Board to erect a house of worship at Beattyville, with the cost to be \$1,500.

From this date there is but one more record of the proceedings of the church until April 4, 1896, when they met for the first time in their new building. George Kincaid was called as supply pastor of the congregation.

On April 1, 1897, the church appointed a committee to take up the matter of having a Baptist School located at Beattyville but the idea was abandoned due to financial reasons. However, at the last session of the Annual Meeting of Boone's Creek Association in September, 1922, J. W. Mahan, Pastor of Beattyville, stated that he had good reasons for believing that certain men of means were considering contributing largely toward the securing of a Baptist school at Beattyville and he suggested that the Association appoint a committee to look into the matter. The Moderator appointed J. W. Mahan, J. T. Turpin, J. B. Conkwright. Brother Conkwright declined the position and Judge J. M. Stephenson was appointed in his place. Needless to say, any efforts to place a Baptist school in Beattyville eventually failed.

1904 was the first year the church reported a Sunday School to the Association. Beattyville has remained a member of Boone's Creek Association until 1959 when it became a member of the Red River Association. A new house of worship was constructed in 1958 on a pleasant hill overlooking Beattyville.

Many of the records of Beattyville were lost during the fire which destroyed the old building which was located in Beattyville. A picture of this building is found in "A History of Boone's Creek Baptist Association."

Available records do, however, verify the statement that at one time Beattyville served as the mission point of the State Board for all of Eastern Kentucky. During its history, Beattyville has served as the mother of several Baptist churches in this area and as sponsor of many other mission points. Among recent mission ventures of the church are included Lower Creek, Eager, Lynam's Creek, Pinnacle.

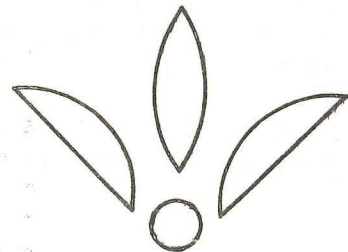
In the latter part of the 1940's, E. R. Sams, Pastor of Beattyville, preached in

the former Green Hill Baptist Church, located at Lower Creek. The building in which he preached was constructed about 1865 on a tract of land given by "white" people for the purpose of building a "colored" church. The church had been closed for a number of years until E. R. Sams conducted services and a Vacation Bible School. In the early 1950's John Hatcher conducted revival services at the mission and reactivated it. Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Norman, members of the mother church, became greatly interested in the work and Mr. Norman served as Sunday School Director of the mission until his death in 1962. The last service of the mission was conducted on January 18, 1967, by David Tomlinson, Mission Pastor.

Eager Mission was located on a tract of land purchased from Dewy and Kathleen Samples by the General Association of Baptists on June 28, 1948. A second tract was later purchased on July 9, 1948, with a house of worship to be constructed at a later time. On November 3, 1962, Eager Mission became Faith Baptist Church of Crystal, Kentucky, with Carrol Buchanan called to serve as first pastor.

Lynam's Creek Mission, located at Lone, Kentucky, became a mission of the church on March 29, 1964, with services being held in the Lynam's Creek School House. Mary E. Roberts became the first member to join the mission two months later. The first Sunday School was conducted on August 30, 1964, with 17 in attendance. On January 6, 1966, the mission moved into a new block structure. The mission was closed on January 17, 1975, with the church voting to sell the mission property.

On September 23, 1956, the Zion Baptist Church voted to ask the Beattyville Baptist Church to accept the Zion Church as a mission since the church was run down, did not have many active members and was not able to support a pastor. Thus, the membership of the Zion Church was joined with the Beattyville Church.



WOODLANDBAPTIST CHURCH

Middletown

A HISTORICAL SKETCH

By C. Ford Deusner

The Woodland Baptist Church was the result of a feeling that developed in the early 1960's among some of the members of the First Baptist Church, Middletown, that another Baptist church was needed to serve the areas adjacent to that community. Douglas Hills, Woodland Hills, and Cross Creeke subdivisions had been opened and were being rapidly populated.

In the spring of 1963, the First Baptist Church purchased the Hewey Dairy property located at the junction of the Pope Lick and Tucker Station Roads. Here a mission was started, the first services being held on Sunday, January 5, 1964, with 58 in attendance in Sunday School. The mission was named Woodland Baptist Chapel. Gordon Sather, an associate in the Sunday School Department of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, was called as interim pastor and served in this capacity until July, 1965.

Woodland Baptist Chapel became Woodland Baptist Church on March 14, 1965, when the church was formally constituted, with a charter roll of 57 members. On May 7 of that year, a deed conveying the mission property was received from the mother church.

In July, 1965, Peter Rhea Jones, a graduate student in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, was called by the church as pastor. During his more than three years of ministry the church:

- became affiliated with the Long Run Association of Baptists (October, 1965)
- employed an architect and adopted a master building plan
- broke ground for the first unit in a long range building program on October 10, 1967

- purchased the lots north of the church property and extending to the Echo Bridge Road (June-July, 1968)
- grew in membership and in what was becoming known as "the Woodland Spirit"

The degree of Doctor of Theology was conferred upon Peter Rhea Jones by Southern Seminary at its May 31, 1968, Commencement. Almost immediately thereafter he was invited to become a member of the Seminary faculty. He accepted this position offered him, and on June 23, 1968, tendered his resignation as pastor of Woodland.

Five weeks later the church extended a call to Daniel F. Laird, then pastor of the First Baptist Church, Venice, Florida. He accepted the call on August 7, 1968, and moved on the field the first week in October, 1968.

Construction of the new church building was completed early in 1969, and on March 16 of that year the uniquely contemporary styled structure was dedicated. On that occasion Pastor Laird preached a memorable sermon in which he beautifully interpreted the symbolism designed in the church's architecture. The sermon was entitled "The Building of a Challenge." The occasion also marked the fourth anniversary of the founding of the church.

Pastor Laird was an insightful and innovative leader. For the first time, the 1969 church budget provided salaries for the church secretary and the church custodian. In January of the following year the church began paying a salary to its youth director, Rick Stovall. He was the first of six staff ministers, exclusive of pastors, to be employed by the church from that time to the present. A one-day-a-week Tend-A-Tot program, sponsored by the women of the church, was inaugurated in the fall of 1969. Children's Church was started on February 14, 1971. In accordance with the master building plan, the Memorial Garden and Cross was dedicated on September 12, 1971. Later that fall a prison ministry was begun, sponsored by the men of Woodland. From the days of the church's infancy, its deacons had sponsored a Thursday night visitation program. Through its varied ministries the concept of the church as

a servant body was kept before its members

On December 19, 1971, Dan Laird resigned, and for seventeen months the church was without a pastor. However, the pulpit was ably filled during this period by two Louisville Seminary professors, Drs. Gordon Clinard and John Polhill, who served in that order of succession as interim pastors. Their strong preaching contributed much to the church's fellowship and to the attendance upon the Sunday services. The church was blessed also in retaining Grey Saylor as its minister of music and youth during this entire interval.

On July 1, 1973, Marshall E. Phillips became pastor of the church. Previously he had served under the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention for twelve years as a missionary in Kenya and Tanzania. Before his appointment as a missionary he had been pastor of the Highland Baptist Church in Shelbyville.

Shortly after the new pastor came an attractive, informational brochure on the church was published. It has been used in the visitation programs, and has proved helpful in advertising the church and its services.

During almost three years of ministry with Woodland, Marshall, as he is familiarly known, has given support and encouragement to all the services offered by the church prior to his coming. He has followed the denominational calendar closely, and has strongly promoted especially the January Bible Study and the Weeks of Prayer for State, Home, and Foreign Missions. A WIN School held in the spring of 1974 did much to deepen the spiritual life of the church. Shortly thereafter the church approved the appointment of a building committee to study and recommend the necessary procedures in launching a program for the construction of an educational building. In October, 1974, an architect was employed. The following February a building plan was approved which represented some modifications of the original master building plan. At the same time, the church authorized the borrowing of a sum not to exceed \$210,000, and the securing of bids for construction. In April, 1975, a contract was signed for the construction of an educational building at a cost of \$200,000. Ground was

broken on Sunday, May 11, 1975, and by the end of that year the building was virtually completed. It was fully occupied for the first time on Sunday, January 18, 1976. In the final stages of its completion, and in the remodeling of the nursery building into a church office building, there was invested many hours of free labor by some of the members of the church. The esprit de corps was wonderful to sense and to behold.

The church now has a membership of 354 (April 15, 1976), and a budget for this year of \$79,213, which is almost double the budget of five years ago.

Today, May 2, 1976, the members of the Woodland Baptist Church are meeting to dedicate their new educational building to their Lord. This is a day for thanksgiving. Let it be also a day of recommitment to Christ and to His church. The days of mushroom growth have ended. The spirit of exhilaration and enthusiasm that marks the beginning of any worthy enterprise has subsided. Now the church needs members who are consistent, who are compassionate, who are committed. Given these, the prospect of Woodland Baptist Church is as bright as the promises of God.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CHURCH MINUTES

"I found with the clerk of Gilbert's Creek the old Church book from Spotsylvania, that was of about twenty years standing. It is probable that the clerk of that old Church in Virginia, had brought that book with him to Kentucky; I was much amused at times in looking over the records of this old book--the curiosity of their decisions, a mere cap border or garments, cut in any but a plain style, was matter of complaint and expulsion--one I remember was entered by a preacher against sister such a one, for delusion, without any other explanation. This delusion whatever it might be, cost this sister her membership --all this manifested the great zeal the Baptists had in early times against the appearance of sin--it has also taught me ever since, the great care Churches should take in their records, that nothing foolish should be committed to record, or at least the whole be made so explicit that after ages may understand it....."

John Taylor, A History of Ten Baptist Churches, 1823, pp. 40-41.

 FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Frankfort

A HISTORICAL SKETCH

By Rev. Herman Bowers

(Read at The Kentucky Baptist Historical Society meeting at Frankfort on August 1, 1975)

Thank you for allowing me to share this material on the history of First Baptist Church with you in this manner. The sources of the material I am to share with you are: A History of Baptists In Kentucky, by Frank Masters; History of the Franklin Baptist Association 1815-1912, by U. V. Williard and F. W. Eberhart; Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists, Johnson's History of Franklin County; William Hickman's account of his life and travels which is to be found in the Kentucky Historical Society Library; three pamphlets by Dr. Williard Rous Jilson entitled "Paul Sawyer-American Artist," "Paul Sawyer and his Paintings," and "Early Frankfort;" and minutes of First Baptist Church. I am also indebted to Mrs. Adna Garrett and Miss Ray Robinson for materials collected in preparation for our Sesquicentennial celebration in 1966.

It is interesting to note that through William Hickman, First Baptist Church can trace its heritage to George Whitefield and through John Taylor, to James Ireland. Both Hickman and Taylor were men of outstanding influence in the development of this area. William Hickman first saw and heard Baptist preachers in 1770 and in April, 1773, he was baptized by Reuben Ford. Reuben Ford was converted at the age of 20 in a meeting led by Whitefield. John Taylor at 17 years of age heard the gospel preached by William Marshall who later settled permanently in Kentucky. Taylor began to read the Bible and pray. Under the preaching of Joseph and Issac Redding, Taylor was under great remorse and agony. At the age of 20, he at last found peace and was baptized by James Ireland. Taylor first visited Kentucky in 1780. He soon returned

to Virginia and engaged in ministerial labors there until 1783 when he decided to move to Kentucky. A little before Christmas, 1783, he and his party arrived in Craig Station and began a long ministry in Kentucky. In 1784 John Taylor settled in Woodford County and after preparing for winter, he began to hold meetings in little cabins in the woods around Clear Creek. A revival resulted, and the Clear Creek church was organized. Taylor was called as pastor. The only objection was by one member who thought his coat was too fine. His salary was fixed at \$70. The next year it was raised to \$170. Of the \$170, \$40 was paid. He continued to minister to the church until the spring of 1795. After this he moved some 20 miles to a farm in Franklin County, which is now owned by A. W. Macklin. Some of you visited the farm this afternoon. From this location, he became very active in establishing new churches in Franklin County. William Hickman says, "About this time, Brother Taylor moved among us being an entreprising good servant of Christ and famous for planning new churches. A church was planned in Frankfort. We dismissed about a dozen for that." William Hickman had accepted the invitation of a small settlement and established the Forks of Elkhorn church in 1788. It was from this church that the majority of those who organized First Baptist Church came. It was at a meeting of a number of Baptists in the home of Simon Beckham here in Frankfort that the propriety of establishing a church in Frankfort was discussed. Silas M. Noel acted as Moderator of the meeting and J. Dudley as clerk. It was decided that it was expedient to prepare without delay that the suitable arrangements for the constitution of a Baptist church in Frankfort. The group agreed to meet again on the 28th of January in 1816. At the January meeting, again at the home of Simon Beckham, the committee reported on the church covenant which was unanimously adopted. It was agreed that Sunday, the 25th of February, would be fixed as the date for the constitution of the church. Invitations were extended to the churches at Big Spring, Mt. Pleasant, Forks of Elkhorn, South

Benson, and Great Crossing to participate in the constitution. The charter members were: John Taylor, Benjamin Edrington, John Epperson, Elijah Stapp, Simon Beckham, Jephtha Dudley, Elizabeth Loufboro, Polly Hickman, Elizabeth Taylor, Sally Cunningham, Patsy Ransdale, Sally Bacon, and Jane Daniel. Silas M. Noel, a member of the Big Spring church was Moderator of the organizational meeting, and Jephtha Dudley was the first church clerk. The church covenant was read and unanimously adopted. John Taylor and his wife, Elizabeth, were among the charter members. The church invited him to "exercise his privilege as a gospel minister among us." This he did until February, 1817, when Henry Toller became pastor from 1821-23. Jacob Creath, Sr. and Phillip S. Fall preached alternately. Fall, while pastor at Walnut Street church in Louisville, led many in the Campbellite movement. From 1823-25, Silas M. Noel served as pastor. Silas Noel was a great leader among Kentucky Baptists. Under his splendid leadership, Campbellism was met and overcome in the Franklin Association. Noel had been converted about 1810 and was baptized by William Hickman. Largely under the influence of the Franklin Association led by Silas Noel, the Kentucky Baptist of the Convention was organized at Bardstown. This was a mission organization and was bitterly opposed by some. The last meeting was held in Frankfort in 1835. The brief existence of this society helped to unite those who opposed missions and led to separation. The separation culminated in the organization of the General Association. Silas M. Noel was a leader in the organization of First Baptist Church, Franklin Baptist Association, the organization of Kentucky Baptists, and the founding of Georgetown College. There are still many descendants of Silas Noel in the congregation of our church. Silas Noel served again as pastor in 1835, followed by Porter Clay, brother of Henry Clay, as pastor.

George Blackburn served as pastor from January through November, 1836, at a salary of \$400, and George Sedgewick from 1837-38 at a salary of \$500 per year. William Hurley was pastor from March to July, 1839.

J. M. Frost served as pastor from December, 1839 to March, 1841.

Due to the absence of church records, there are no dates for the following pastors: Abner Goodell, J. Chadburn, John W. Goodman, Cadwalider Lewis, S. W. Seeley, Joseph W. Warder, Andrew Broadus, Joseph Butler Tharp, and T. C. McKee. J. W. Porter served from October, 1863 to December, 1864. W. S. Germaine served from December, 1864 to July, 1867 and was followed by Lyman W. Seely.

Green Clay Smith was called as pastor July 3, 1872. He graduated from Transylvania University in 1850 and represented his county in the Kentucky Legislature and his district for two terms in Congress. He volunteered as a private in the 4th Kentucky Federal Cavalry and was promoted to Major-General for meritorious conduct in the engagement with General Morgan at Lebanon, Tennessee, May 5, 1862. He was Governor of Montana and nominated for President of the United States on the Prohibition ticket. He practiced law for several years before entering the ministry. He was followed as pastor by J. M. Lewis. George Franklin Bagby was pastor from 1886-1890. Will Carson Taylor from 1890-1897. M. B. Adams from 1898-1910. Frederick W. Eberhardt from 1910-1914.

Fred F. Brown from 1915-1916. He went to the First Baptist Church, Knoxville and later served as President of the Southern Baptist Convention.

James T. McGlothlin from 1916-1921. Chesterfield Turner from 1922-1932. Ross E. Dillion from 1933-37. Fred T. Moffatt 1937-1961 and Herman M. Bowers from 1961 to the present.

The church records reveal the following men who have been ordained: Porter Clay, a person identified only as Brother Kirtley, Henry Western, A. R. Macey, Brother Perry, John W. Warder, Nevil M. Garrett, Jr., Elroy Lamb, Herman Marx, Elmer Lee, Orville Threlkeld, Ted Wigglesworth, Charles Updike, and Frank Farley.

When the church was organized, there was in Frankfort a house of public worship which had been built on the old Capitol grounds under an act of the legislature in January, 1810. Funds for the building

were raised through public lottery. At first the Baptists met in the homes of members. Later they met on the fourth Saturdays in the house of public worship. When the building burned, the Baptists erected a building on Lewis Street just behind the present Hudson's store. The first service in that building was in November, 1827. That building burned in 1867. In 1868 another house of worship was erected on this present site. That building composed the main part of our sanctuary. Later Miss Penelope Wingate built a chapel just behind the main sanctuary on the site now occupied by the east wing of our educational facilities. Also on that site was located the church pastorium. In 1903 the church undertook to renovate and enlarge the sanctuary adding the balcony and area under the balcony which was called Wingate Chapel to commemorate the contribution of Penelope Wingate to the church. Also added at this time were the baptistry and the rooms to either side of the baptistry. In 1958 the North Wing of the Education Building was completed and dedicated. Under the pastorate of Dr. Fred T. Moffatt in 1966, the sanctuary was renovated and the pulpit and choir loft redesigned.

One outstanding member of First Baptist Church was the artist Paul Sawyer. His mother was Ellen Wingate, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Wingate. Henry Wingate had been extremely influential in the Franklin Baptist Association and Frankfort church. It was his wife, Penelope, who had built Wingate Chapel and given it to the church. About 1900, Paul's father developed health problems and later had to be placed in a nursing home. The family experienced some difficult days financially. The Frankfort church, mindful of the outstanding contributions of the Sawyer and Wingate families, appointed a committee to visit with Paul and his mother Ellen, and offered to them rent-free the pastorium located behind the sanctuary. While many pastors had lived in the pastorium -- at this time Pastor Eberhardt suffered from asthma and had asked for permission to live in south Frankfort.

First Baptist Church has been active in the organization of missions and churches. About 1909, under the influence and guidance of Deacon W. S. Farmer, a mission work was started on Wilkinson Street. This work was supported by a group in the church called the Philathea-Baraca Club. Sunday School

was conducted at 2:00 P.M. and preaching services in the evenings on Sundays. Mr. Farmer would lead his workers as they walked to the mission and they would gather children along the way. The first pastor of the mission was Neville M. Garrett, Jr. He was succeeded by George W. Redding, J. K. Fulton, Elroy Lamb, Hugh Shelton, and Herman Marx. When urban renewal purchased the property and razed the building in that area in preparation for what became Fountain Place, First Baptist Church invited those who worshipped at the First Baptist Chapel on Wilkinson Street to worship here on St. Clair Street. Some accepted the invitation; however, many desired to maintain a separate location of worship and eventually in 1967, Faith Baptist Church was organized. In 1920 First Baptist Church borrowed \$3,000 to build a Sunday School building at Thornhill and in 1923, First Baptist Church led in the constitution of the Thornhill Baptist Mission Church. In 1928 the property was given to the new church. A Sunday School was organized on Holmes Street by the J.O.Y. Class of our church and members of our church, and in 1942 the church assumed responsibility of the Holmes Street Sunday School and its expenses. The J.O.Y. Class was under the leadership of Mrs. R. L. Pogue and Deacon B. W. Wright. Elroy Lamb was the first pastor. The Memorial Church was constituted in 1945. In 1946 our church was invited to sit in council in the House of the Bellepoint Baptist Sunday School. The Bellepoint Church was organized May 26, 1946. In 1961 the church appointed a mission committee with Norman Duley as chairman to arrange for the establishment of a mission in the Louisville Road area. The mission was constituted into Immanuel Baptist Church in 1961.

Other churches which came out of First Baptist Church, 201 St. Clair Street, are First Baptist Church, Clinton and High Street, which is primarily a church with black constituency. The records of our church reflect the baptism of certain individuals as a woman of color or a gentlemen of color. It appears that while the membership was in our church, the black members had a separate

meeting place perhaps as early as 1833. In July, 1859, the minutes of our church show "the colored congregation of our church and their pastor preaching three or four times per week." In June, 1865, there were 124 white members of our congregation and 600 blacks. On June 26, 1867, our church passed a motion extending the right and belief of independent church organization to the African race of our church. The church remained for a short time as a member of the Franklin Baptist Association. They later withdrew to plan an organization of Negro Baptists.

All of the black members of our congregation did not unite with the Black First Baptist Church. Some remained with us. Later they that remained with us withdrew and joined some from the black First Baptist Church to organize the Corinthian Baptist Church. The Corinthian Baptist Church was located on Mero Street until urban renewal purchased the building and razed it. Charles N. King was pastor at that time. He and the pastor of our church, Herman M. Bowers, arranged for the Corinthian congregation to meet for Sunday school and worship in the east wing of the educational facilities simultaneously with the congregation of our church. The congregation of First Baptist Church unanimously approved the arrangement and for about two years, the two congregations met separately in the building of our church. Upon completion of the educational facilities of the Corinthian church, on Second and Murray Streets, the Corinthian congregation moved from this building. The close relationship between this church and Corinthian church and between the two pastors continued through the years. The pastor of First church while serving as moderator of the Franklin Baptist Association in 1967 arranged for the inclusion of the Corinthian church in the Franklin Association. The pastor of First Church asked the pastor of Buck Run Church, Robert Jackson, to present the matter to the Executive Board of the Association in the spring of 1967, and with the Board's approval appointed Robert Jackson to contact all the churches in the Association for their sentiment in relation to including Corinthian church in the Association. Pastor Jackson first contacted First Baptist Church. The matter was presented to the Deacons, and the pastor encouraged the Deacons to give a

favorable response. The Deacons and church responded favorably. Most other churches responded favorably. There was some opposition. When the matter was voted on the final night of the 1967 session, there were only two negative votes. With the inclusion of Corinthian church in the Association, the pastor of First Church approached Charles King and encouraged him to attend the Southern Baptist Convention in Houston. King said that he could not go -- he did not have the money and his church could not send him. The pastor of First Church made a contribution himself contacting the Deacons of First Church, securing contributions from them and approached an influential family in Corinthian church and asked their assistance in raising the necessary funds to send the pastor to the convention. The funds were raised, and Charles King flew to Houston. One of the memorable events of that session was when the Convention was discussing a resolution relating to race relations. There was much tension. Charles King walked down the aisle and said to the convention, "I just came down here to add a little color to the convention." This broke the tension. He then said, "This resolution has been prepared after much study by many honorable men. I move you to pass it without further discussion or change." The discussion ended, and the resolution passed.

The Pastor of First Baptist Church as Chairman of the Association Nominating Committee nominated Charles N. King for Vice-moderator of the Association, and the Association reported to the Executive Board of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

The Pastor of First Church in 1971 at the Kentucky Baptist Convention in Lexington nominated Charles King for the office of Second Vice-president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention. This nomination followed a resolution of the convention reprimanding the Sunday School Board for excluding an integrated picture from one of its publications. It would have been very difficult for the convention to fail to elect Charles King. He was elected. In 1972 in Philadelphia, the pastor of First Baptist Church nominated Charles King for Second Vice-president of Southern Baptist Convention. It was reported by those who knew the tabulations of the

Homer E. Nutter, "A Brief History of Negro Baptists in Kentucky"

The volume will be cloth bound and in 10-point type. Eleven chapters are in with 4 to be in by August 15. The volume will be available by the November Kentucky Baptist Convention which meets at Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown, Kentucky, November 11-13.

10. Dr. George Jones nominated Leo T. Crismon as President. He was elected unanimously. O. C. Marcum nominated C. Ford Deusner as Vice-president. George Jewell moved that he be elected by acclamation. Motion passed. Jim Taulman was nominated for Secretary. Wayne Ward moved he be accepted by acclamation. Motion passed. James E. Taulman moved that Frank Owen be elected Treasurer. Motion carried.

11. Leo T. Crismon indicated that his chapter on "Theological Education in Kentucky" drew heavily on the chapter by W. C. James, "Western Baptist Theological Institute," in Kentucky Baptist Society Publication No. 1. He asked for approval of the Society to abbreviate and edit James' material for the forthcoming Bicentennial Volume. Wayne Ward moved and George Jones seconded the motion. Motion carried.

12. Leo T. Crismon appointed the following persons to serve as the Nominating Committee for 1976: Gifford J. Walters Chairman; Mrs. Lemuel Felts; Ronald Deering.

13. Frank Owen reported that the pamphlet on Baptist History which was planned for distribution to the Convention may not be prepared because of the illness of Dr. Chester Durham, to whom the assignment for preparation had been given. There is the possibility that this might be assigned to someone else.

Frank Owen also indicated that there are plans to have two sessions of the Kentucky Baptist Convention in 1976; one is proposed for Harrodsburg, April 19; the other for Lexington, November, 1976. The Kentucky Baptist Liberty Bell has been scheduled to

ring at this "Day of Preaching," April 19. Attempts are being made to have present the Mississippi Liberty Bell, which rang at the Southern Baptist Convention.

14. Leo T. Crismon presented the invitation of Rev. Floyd Baker, Ghent Baptist Church, Ghent, Kentucky, for the Kentucky Baptist Historical Society to meet with them July 30, 1976. The church will celebrate their 176th birthday next year. James E. Taulman moved that we accept their invitation. Motion passed.

15. Mrs. Lemuel Felts reported regarding the marker for the Beargrass Baptist Church. It is hoped that the marker will be ready by October. The marker will read as follows:

BEARGRASS BAPTIST CHURCH

Site of first church in greater Louisville area; formed Jan. 1784, by John Whitaker, aided by James Smith. It served until 1842, when members dispersed among Beargrass Christian Church and other churches. Whitaker helped organize most early churches near city. He and son Aquilla, were in George R. Clark's campaign against Indians, 1780.

Presented by Ky. Historical Society

Cost will be \$318.00. The marker will be located near the Shelbyville Plaza, Shelbyville Road, Louisville.

16. James E. Taulman questioned the availability of John Taylor's History of Ten Churches. It is available through Art Guild Publishers, Cincinnati.

17. George Jones moved that we express our thanks to Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Macklin, Route 6, Frankfort, and that the secretary send them a letter expressing our appreciation.

18. Rev. Herman Bowers displayed some prints of Paul Sawyer, Kentucky artist and former member of First Baptist Church, Frankfort. He then presented a paper on the history of the First Baptist Church, Frankfort.

- 19. Mrs. Charlie Nichols asked for information on Benjamin Lynn regarding when and where he became a Christian. Anyone having information regarding Mr. Lynn, please contact Mrs. Nichols, 106 East Forest Avenue, Hodgenville, Kentucky 42748.
- 20. C. Ford Deusner led the closing prayer.
- 21. The meeting adjourned at 9:20 P.M. EDT. Next meeting will be on Friday, July 30, 1976, at Ghent Baptist Church, Ghent, Kentucky.

Madison Avenue Baptist Church, Covington, Kentucky, A Century For Christ.

The Oklahoma Baptist Chronicle. Spring and Autumn, 1975.

Russell County (Kentucky) Baptist Association, Minutes, 1975.

James C. Porter, Ed., History of Russell County Association of Missionary Baptists in Kentucky, 1916-1976.

Respectfully submitted,

James. E. Taulman
Secretary



E D I T O R R E S I G N S

On Sunday, June 20, I submitted my resignation as pastor of the Fort Mitchell Baptist Church, thus concluding nearly nine years as pastor of the church. We will be moving to the neighboring state of Ohio. The Reynoldsburg Baptist Church, Reynoldsburg, Ohio (a suburb of Columbus) has called us to serve as pastor of their church.

We leave our adopted state of Kentucky after nearly eighteen years. Seminary; a student pastorate at East Bend Baptist Church, Burlington; two years at New Salem Baptist Church, Cox's Creek; and nine years at Fort Mitchell have made our stay in Kentucky a most enjoyable one. I have enjoyed my work with the State Convention and with the Historical Society and Historical Commission. Kentucky has such a long, rich Baptist heritage, that it has been a pleasure helping to preserve it.

Thank you for the opportunity of editing the Kentucky Baptist Heritage. It has been a very rewarding experience. I have enjoyed working with all those who have submitted articles. I do regret that we could not have developed it into more of a journal that our state Baptist work deserves. But that will be for the future

James E. Taulman

B O O K S A N D

P E R I O D I C A L S R E C E I V E D

The following have been received by the KENTUCKY BAPTIST HERITAGE. We express our thanks for these and encourage churches, associations, organizations, and individuals to send historical materials to the KENTUCKY BAPTIST HERITAGE. We would like to exchange publications with other historical societies also.

Red River (Kentucky) Baptist Association, Minutes, 1975

Dennis L. Blewer, "Upon This Rock. A Brief History of New Hope Baptist Church. Booneville Association."

"A Historical Sketch of Beattyville Baptist Church."

J. W. Singer, A History of the Baptist Church at Stamping Ground, Kentucky, 1795 -

History of the First Baptist Church, Bowling Green, Kentucky, 1818-1968

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Leo T. Crismon, "Kentucky Baptist History, 1950-1976"
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