



REFLECTIONS
OF A
CENTURY
SANDY BOTTOM BAPTIST CHURCH

ONE HUNDRED YEARS
1902 - 2002

KINSTON, NORTH CAROLINA
JUNE 29, 2002



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***To God be the glory
great things He hath done***

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

One hundred years! One hundred years of achievements! 100 years to celebrate! What an exciting time!

Sandy Bottom Baptist Church has recognized many milestones, but this is one of the greatest yet. The various committees started planning for the Centennial Celebration early in 2002 with Jesse Croom as chair. A Centennial Book Subcommittee was formed with members Joyce Avery, Grace Barwick, Gladys Croom, Gloria Croom, Mary Ann Croom, Dan Medlin, and Cari Gillette as chair. They started diligently in March to plan, research, and gather materials for the publication of this book.

As early as 1894, members of the Sandy Bottom community have been meeting together as a Sandy Bottom Sunday School (proof found in an old book that Horace Taylor discovered in an old trunk that belonged to his mother Betty Taylor). Many of the community people, who were meeting as a Sandy Bottom Sunday School as recorded in that book of 1894, are now known as charter members of Sandy Bottom Missionary Baptist Church of 1902.

It is a privilege and with great respect that we now compile the latest materials for this book to celebrate 100 years of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church.

We extend a “heartly thank you” to each individual who has taken the time to write family histories and provide old family pictures. It is not possible to give credit to everyone by name, but we must recognize a few for their contributions.

A group met at Eloise Croom’s home to share their special memories with the committee. This group consisted of Belle Croom, Eleanor Croom, Eloise Croom, Gladys Croom, Herman and Margaret Croom, Nettie Croom, Ruby Moody, LaRue Moore, and Helen Spence to reminisce about their early years of service in the church and community. After this, even more enthusiasm was created for the Centennial Celebration.

Many thanks are extended to Cari and Steve Gillette for their relentless research, typing, writing, and solicitation of materials to make this book a reality. We appreciate their many hours and days of hard work.

We appreciate Donna Rodwell who provided knowledge and experience to our committee. Last, but not the least, we owe our greatest appreciation to the membership of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church for their time, effort, loving encouragement, and faith in their church and community as expressed in this book.

Lola Haynes

BAPTIST BEGINNINGS¹

The First Church

In 1607, a small church migrated to the Netherlands from England. Two years later the church disbanded and reconstituted, based on believers' baptism. This was the first Baptist church. Why had the church migrated from England? Why did the church disband and reform? What was different about this church? Is there a connection with the Anabaptists?

England was Catholic until Henry VIII. Henry's wife was not able to bear him a son, so he appealed to the Pope to annul the marriage. The Pope refused, largely for political reasons. Henry then split off the English church from the Roman Catholic Church in 1534 and formed the Church of England. This church was similar to the Roman Catholic Church but was not subject to it.

By the time of the early 1600s, the winds of Reformation had been blowing on the European continent and had spread to England. There were many problems with the Church of England. Worship services were formal and elaborate. The people had no voice in church matters. The church included everyone, whether follower of Christ or not, and did little to encourage living according to biblical principles. Because of these and other problems, two groups formed. The Puritans called for reformation within the Church of England. The Separatists saw the Church of England as hopeless and separated from it. Each of these groups faced persecution from the Church of England and the government.

John Smyth was a priest in the Church of England and became a Puritan. When he was forbidden to preach in a church in Gainsborough, he joined a group of Separatists in that city and was accepted as a minister among them. The group grew, becoming large and visible enough to be dangerous in the face of the persecution. The church decided to split into two for convenience and safety. Smyth and Thomas Helwys, a well-to-do layman, led one of the two resulting groups, and they took their group to Holland in 1607 to escape persecution. The other group also fled to Holland and became the core group of the Pilgrims that migrated to America.

¹Taken from H. Leon McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage: Four Centuries of Baptist Witness* (Broadman, 1987); Justo González, *The Story of Christianity*, vol. 2 (Harper Collins, 1985); Malcolm McDow and Alvin L. Reid, *Firefall* (Broadman & Holman, 1997); M. A. Huggins, *A History of North Carolina Baptists* (General Board of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, 1967); L. Keith Harper, "A History of the Baptists" (class lectures, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1997).

Smyth began to meet with local Mennonites and came to accept their views on baptism. It is necessary here to briefly trace the history of the Mennonites. Certain leaders in the reform movement in Zurich, Switzerland in the early sixteenth century were dissatisfied that the reform had not gone far enough. They called on the leader of the reform there (Ulrich Zwingli) to continue the reform. These leaders, also called the Radical Reformers, advocated believers' baptism rather than infant baptism. Their primary concern was that the church included all people, whether or not they were Christians. Zwingli would not take the reform further, and the Radical Reformers split off in 1525 and started their own church and movement. They were called the Anabaptists. They faced terrible persecution both from the reformers and from the Catholic Church. There were probably more martyrs among the Anabaptists than in the first three centuries of the Christian church! One of the outstanding leaders of the movement was Menno Simons, and the group was renamed *Mennonites* after him.

Smyth, in response to his newfound beliefs, led his church to disband and reconstitute based on believer's baptism. He baptized himself and then baptized the others, about forty in number. This was the first Baptist church. The baptisms were by pouring. Not until a generation later did the mode of baptism change to submersion. In 1611, Helwys led the church back to England. By this time, Smyth had left the church and was seeking to join the Mennonites.

Baptist Beginnings in America

Baptists in America had similar—but separate—beginnings, coming not from the English Baptists but from the Puritans and Separatists. The Puritans and Separatists came to America for freedom—freedom to practice religion the way they saw it. As previously noted, the Pilgrims were from one of the Separatist groups that had split in Gainsborough and migrated to the Netherlands.

Roger Williams was an Anglican (i.e., Church of England) priest and a Puritan, and he served in a church in Salem, Massachusetts in the 1630s. He was also a champion of religious liberty. He was charged by a Boston civil court for teaching that there should be separation of church and state and that Christians should withdraw from the Church of England and from those who



Drypoint etching, 1936, by Arthur W. Heintzelman, commemorating the Tercentenary of the founding of Rhode Island by Roger Williams. Courtesy of Roger Williams University Archives.

remained in the Church of England. He was ordered to stop teaching these things. When government officials found out that he did not stop and that he was seeking to start another colony, they decided to ship him back to England. Before he was put on the ship, however, the governor warned Williams, and he fled into the wilderness. In 1636, Williams and others started a new colony, Rhode Island. The new colony was based on democratic principles, religious liberty, and the separation of church and state. In 1639, Williams started the first Baptist church on American soil in Providence. It is little wonder that religious liberty is a key tenet of our beliefs.

In 1814 the Baptists in America organized, primarily for foreign missions. In 1845, Baptists in the South split off for three reasons. First, Southerners wanted a different organizational approach for the denomination and its agencies. Northerners had prevailed in basing the convention on an associational model where meetings could be held whenever desired and whoever wanted to participate could. The majority of the meetings were held in northern cities. Southerners preferred a convention approach where there would be only one meeting per year for the denomination and its agencies and all, or at least many, of the churches would be involved. Second, although Southerners contributed to home missions, they felt they were not receiving a fair share of the home missionaries. Third, slavery was a factor in that the Foreign Mission Board would not appoint slaveholders to be missionaries. Representatives from Baptist churches in the South met in Augusta in 1845 and formed The Southern Baptist Convention.

Baptist Beginnings in North Carolina

Some find it hard to believe that Baptists had their slowest beginnings in the South. The slow start was due primarily to the sparse population, severe restrictions on dissenters where the Anglican Church was established, and a general spiritual lethargy. The first Baptist church in the South was First Baptist Church, Charleston in 1696—a transplant from Kittery, Maine. Baptist work in North Carolina began in the 1720s when Paul Palmer, a native of Maryland, came and preached at various places, planting a church in Chowan in 1727. The second church to be planted was at Shiloh in 1729 and is the oldest surviving Baptist church.

Of particular note was Sandy Creek Church planted in 1755 by Shubal Stearns and Daniel Marshall. Stearns and Marshall were both strongly influenced by the preaching of George Whitefield in the First Great Awakening. Within seventeen years the Sandy Creek Church was instrumental in planting forty-two other churches!

In 1794, the Kehuckee Association dismissed twenty-eight churches along the Neuse River and south of it (even to the South Carolina line) to form the Neuse

Association. The Kehuckee Association, from which the Neuse Association sprang, became anti-missionary in 1827. Adherents of the anti-missions movement believed that conversion was God's task alone, that mission organizations were mere human inventions, and that missionaries were mostly hirelings. The association issued "A Declaration Against the Modern Missionary Movement and Other Institutions of Men." The Association also voted to discard all missionary societies, Bible societies, and theological seminaries and to exclude all who favored these institutions. It was no doubt in reaction to this anti-missions movement that the charter members of Sandy Bottom chose to call it a "Missionary Baptist Church" when it was organized in 1902 and joined the Neuse Association.

There were a number of Southern Baptist churches in the area when Sandy Bottom was organized. The oldest church in the association is Union Baptist which was organized in 1828. Kinston First Baptist and La Grange First Baptist were organized in 1857. Seven Springs Baptist was organized in 1891. New Hope Baptist, which came from Kinston First, was organized in 1894.

HISTORY OF SANDY BOTTOM BAPTIST CHURCH

Records indicate that a Sunday School was in existence in the Sandy Bottom community in August of 1894. It is not known who started the Sunday School or when it was started. Many of the Sunday School members were also members of New Hope Baptist Church. Jesse J. Croom, a charter member of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church, was one of the Sunday School's superintendents. Some of the Sandy Bottom Sunday School members became charter members of either Webb Methodist Episcopal Church South (Webb Chapel) in 1901 or Sandy Bottom Baptist Church in 1902. The community Sunday School appears to have disbanded after these churches were organized.

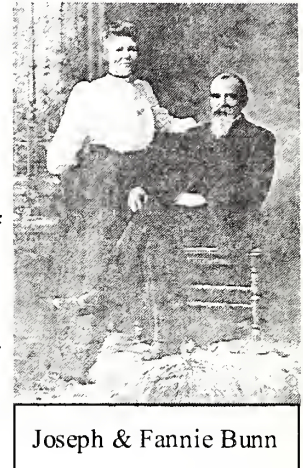
An evangelistic meeting was held in the old, dilapidated school building in the community September 17-28, 1899. Rev. J. B. Jackson of Winterville, Pastor of New Hope and Union Baptist Churches, conducted the meeting. Ten young people made professions of faith, were baptized, and received into New Hope Baptist Church. There appears to have been no organized Southern Baptist work in the community prior to this meeting.

The roads and travel conditions in those days were so bad and slow to New Hope that a group decided to organize a Southern Baptist church at Sandy Bottom. This group consisted of Susan Catherine Parrott of Kinston; her sister, Ann Mariah Croom; and her sons, Rufus P. Croom and Jesse J. Croom.

On June 29, 1902, fourteen people who loved God and were concerned for their neighbors met and organized the Sandy Bottom Missionary Baptist Church. The meeting was held at Webb Methodist Episcopal Church South. These fourteen charter members were Ann Mariah Croom; Jesse J. Croom and wife, Maude; Seth Croom and wife, Nimmie; Rufus P. Croom and wife, Meta; Vivian Croom; Joseph W. Croom; Clyde Croom; Rudolph Croom; Addie Cauley; Leona Davis; and Lizzie Haynes. Jesse J., Seth, Rufus P., and Rudolph Croom were sons of Ann Mariah Croom. All fourteen came from New Hope. Of the fourteen, thirteen were members of the community Sunday School, and nine were in the group of young people who made professions of faith at the evangelistic meeting just three years before. Rev. W. L. Bilbro was the first pastor of the new church and was shared with New Hope, Union, Seven Springs, and Ayden Baptist Churches. Jesse J. Croom and Rufus P. Croom were the deacons. Rudolph Croom was Clerk, and Jesse J. Croom was Treasurer. A building committee, consisting of all the men in the church, was appointed to plan and build a house for worship. The New Hope council members responsible for coordinating the church start were Rev. Bilbro, Jesse Jackson, Joseph H. Bunn, and W. E. Sutton. The church

requested admission into the Neuse Baptist Association and was unanimously accepted at its annual meeting, October 21-23, 1902.

The land on which the church was built was donated by Joseph R. Croom and his wife, Eliza, and Joseph H. Bunn and his wife, Fannie. The donors had many connections with the charter members and the church. Joseph R. Croom was the son of Ann Mariah Croom and brother of Jesse J., Rufus P., Seth, and Rudolph Croom. Eliza Croom was a cousin of Addie Cauley. Joseph H. Bunn was one of New Hope's council members responsible for the church start at Sandy Bottom. Fannie (Harriet Fannie Croom) Bunn was the sister of Joseph W. Croom and a cousin of the four Croom brothers, Clyde Croom, and Vivian Croom. Fannie became a member in 1903 but withdrew in 1905.



With the contribution of the land and other liberal contributions and much hard work, calling for many sacrifices, the basic structure was completed in the spring of 1903. The first sermon was preached in the new building at that time by the pastor, Rev. Bilbro. He served as pastor through the year 1903. Rev. W. P. Campbell was called during the winter of 1904 and served for five years. In the early days of the church, it annually decided whether to renew the call to the current pastor or to call another. During Rev. Campbell's pastorate, the building was completed and the church was given a beautiful, silver communion set (see Appendix 1, Donations).

On Sunday, March 31, 1907, the church building was dedicated. Rev. C. G. Wells, Pastor of Kinston Baptist Church, was the speaker. His text was taken from Zechariah 2:4, and the opening hymn was "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name." The dedication sermon was believed by some to be the greatest sermon ever heard. One member was added to the church that day by letter. "How Firm a Foundation" was the closing hymn, and Rev. Campbell, pastor, gave the prayer of dedication.

The building was one room with a vestibule that had the only door to the church. The windows were of clear glass, and wooden shingles were on the roof. Lighting was by a kerosene lamp in each window and two larger lamps that held about a half gallon of oil each, hanging down in the middle of the church. A mirror was behind the lamps in the windows to help reflect more light. During one evening service when the sermon was on the wise virgins with plenty of oil and the foolish virgins without enough oil, the oil in one of the larger lamps ran out.

The church yard had many trees, mostly oak and pine, which required a lot of raking of leaves and pine straw in the fall. The yard also supplied wood for the wood heater which was used until a coal heater was purchased about 1940. Gas heaters were installed in the fifties. In the late seventies central heat and air conditioning was installed.

The church has had many pastors (see Appendix 2, Pastors). The church had two pastors who served only briefly in 1909. A Rev. Burleson was called in the winter of 1909 and preached at Sandy Bottom once. Due to sickness in his wife's family in a far-away state, he left and never returned. A Rev. Thorne came to take Rev. Burleson's place and preached only twice. Some people felt the young Rev. Thorne was not what the church needed, so he offered his resignation and left. The remaining pastors had much longer and more distinguished periods of service, working faithfully and earnestly in promoting and carrying on the Kingdom work. Two of the pastors, Reverends B. G. Early and N. D. Blackman, served the church twice.

The church progressed slowly in the early years both spiritually and physically. A pump organ was purchased for the church, and the building was painted on the outside for the first time around 1910. In 1917, a parsonage was built by New Hope and Sandy Bottom. Jesse J. Croom was elected to represent Sandy Bottom church in the making of plans. The parsonage was built at New Hope's present location and was first occupied by Rev. Early in October 1917. A Sunday School was organized on July 4, 1920. Rev. R. P. Merritt was pastor at that time. Clyde Taylor was elected Superintendent, and Shade Aldridge was elected Assistant Superintendent. The teachers were Stella C. Taylor, Jesse J. Croom, and Meta Croom.

For many years Sandy Bottom shared a pastor with a number of other churches including New Hope, Bethel, Cabin, Union, and Seven Springs. Sandy Bottom had only one morning and one evening service each month. During the early thirties, the church was very weak spiritually and financially. Many times there were less than fifteen in attendance. The church had no budget, and all the money collected during the worship services was given to the pastor. Sunday School offerings were used to buy literature. There was no money left for physical improvements. In 1930, Rev. Blackman resigned since the church was not paying him the salary pledged to him. Rev. Early then returned in 1931. As the Sunday School began to grow in the late thirties, the church began to see the need for more room.

The wooden roof shingles were removed in 1939, and a tin roof was put on. The tin cost \$1.25 per roll, and labor was \$1 per roll. In 1954 Hurricane Hazel tore almost half of the tin off. When the insurance paid for the replacement, the men of the church did the repair.

When Rev. N. F. Arant came to Sandy Bottom in the early forties, the church building had never been painted on the inside. During his pastorate, the church was painted inside and outside, electrical wiring and lighting were installed, and the church really began to glow in the community. New windows were also purchased, and the first Vacation Bible School was held.

For many years the only musical instrument was an old pump organ. In the early forties a piano was donated, and it was used for many years. A newer piano was purchased in the early fifties and was used for many years. In 1972 an organ was donated to the church, and in 2001 a piano was donated.

During 1946 a meeting was held at Kennedy Home by Rev. E. C. Wilkie which greatly challenged the Sandy Bottom church members who attended. This resulted in building up the Sunday School attendance. The spirit of Christianity which seemed to be dead and buried, as Wilkie stated, was brought back to life. Different things were started in order to create the interest of more people in the work of the church and Sunday School. Pins were given for perfect attendance, as suggested by Mrs. Tom Croom, and socials were given at the end of each quarter. These and other things created a lot of interest, and the membership grew. In 1947, the number of members increased to fifty-four.

In 1948, when Rev. T. R. Hunt became pastor, a building committee was appointed and barbecue dinners were served to raise money for new Sunday School rooms. Up until this time, curtains were used in the sanctuary to separate the classes. The men of the church started building the desired Sunday School rooms without the benefit of blueprints or plans. The members only knew they wanted six new rooms, and Rufus Croom figured out how to build them. The men cut down trees in the church yard, and members and other people donated logs, bringing them to the church. The logs were cut in the church yard using a portable sawmill. After the lumber was cut and dried, it was carried to Scott's Sawmill to have it dressed. When the wood was brought back, the work began. The back of the church had to be torn out to gain an area for the pulpit and choir loft. The church started to use the rooms as soon as they were framed and covered. Rev. Hunt became very ill during the summer of 1950 and resigned. At this time Seven Springs withdrew from the field, leaving only Sandy Bottom and New Hope.

On December 1, 1950, Rev. R. E. Whitley of Wake Forest was called as pastor, and the church continued to grow in the work of the Kingdom. The first six rooms were completed, and the placement of the new pulpit was worked out. The church membership grew to 125 and the Sunday School to 130, thus creating a need for still more classrooms. A Baptist Training Union, Women's Missionary Society, and an Adult Choir were formed. A Junior Deacon program was instituted to train potential deacons, and six Junior Deacons were selected. Several church families started having family altars (family devotions and prayer). Many members participated in The Lord's Acre Project in which they gave the proceeds from an acre of crop to the church. A Junior Girl's Auxiliary was also organized.

The first addition to the building was dedicated in October of 1952, which was the fiftieth anniversary of the church. Rev. Hunt returned to preach the dedication sermon which was entitled "The Mountaintop Experience of Moses." Rev. Whitley, pastor, gave the prayer of dedication. This being the fiftieth anniversary, dinner was served in the yard and an evening service was held. Rev. Pessitti of Snow Hill was the speaker at the evening service, and he challenged the church to press on in service for the Master. The church goal was "Full Time in Five Years."

In December of 1952, Rev. Whitley was called as missionary for the Neuse Association. Rev. Johnie Perry was called as pastor in March and moved onto the field from Wake Forest in June 1953. The church continued to grow spiritually, physically, and financially. On one Sunday in 1954, a regular church conference was held in which there was extensive discussion on a motion put before the church. At the end of the conference, Fred Croom made a motion that church conferences be held on some day other than Sunday. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 12 noon, after which the pastor preached a short message!

The second addition of Sunday School rooms began in January 1955. Six more Sunday School rooms were started with plans for a new sanctuary in the future. The outside work on the building was completed by the end of April 1955. The trees and work donated by the members were supplemented by \$1200 raised from the Lord's Acre Project and the Lord's Hour Plan. The latter was for those not able to give through the Lord's Acre Project. If a person was making an hourly wage, he could donate the wage for one hour's work. If the person did not have anything to give, he could offer to work for someone else for an hour, such as raking the person's yard, and give the proceeds from working that hour to the church. The parallel between this approach and the widow who gave two mites was stressed.

Rev. Perry left in April of 1955 to serve as a chaplain in the military. Rev. Clyde High of Dallas, North Carolina was called in May and served until 1957 while he attended Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Rev. E. B. Booker served from 1957-1961. He retired in 1961 and went to the Baptist Retirement Home in Winston-Salem where he lived out the rest of his life. He taught the church the importance of planning for retirement and getting ready for the journey to one's heavenly home. He challenged the church to give up its half of the parsonage so that New Hope could get a loan and start its own new parsonage.

In 1961 Rev. Dwight Early, grandson of Rev. B. G. Early (1917-1919, 1931-1939), came as pastor. He moved into the new parsonage at New Hope, serving both churches until 1963. The younger Early challenged Sandy Bottom church to build a parsonage, go full time, and install restrooms in the church. (Up until this time, the church had an outhouse behind the church.) The church acknowledged that it needed the restrooms but did not have the money for them. When the bank advised that a loan for the needed \$4000 would cost the church \$500 in interest, John Croom said he would lend the church \$2,500 with no interest if others would lend the rest. The men donated and loaned the church the money, and the bathrooms were built. The money was then paid back to the lenders over time. Rev. Early left in 1963.

Rev. Edwin Carroll, the church's first full-time pastor, came in 1963. He and his wife, Dorothy, lived in Nettie Croom's parents' old home place rent-free while the parsonage was being built. The land for the parsonage was donated in 1964, and the church contracted with Joe Koonce, a contractor, to build the parsonage. Mr. Koonce built the parsonage with the assistance of Bruce Croom and other members of the church. Rev. and Mrs. Carroll were the first to live in the new parsonage, which was dedicated on October 25, 1964.

Rev. Jim Hathorn came in 1967 and served through 1972. During that time, the church was carpeted for the first time, and a new pulpit and communion table were purchased. Rev. Hathorn taught religion at Lenoir Community College while serving as pastor.

In 1973 Rev. Floyd Enzor came and served until 1977. During his pastorate, the membership grew and the WMU was strong. The brick steps at the entrance of the church were built in 1975. The church had talked and prayed about the need for a Fellowship Hall. The church decided that the fourth Sunday in May of 1976 would be a pledge Sunday for the Fellowship Hall and, if at least \$10,000 was

pledged, the church would build a Fellowship Hall. The people pledged \$14,000! The next day the construction began. Under the leadership of Rev. Enzor and with his participation, the church built the Fellowship Hall, dedicated it, and paid for it in full by November 7, 1976, the day the addition was dedicated. During the construction, Rev. Enzor and William Croom decided to place a Bible in the foundation. There was nothing special about the Bible used. The Bible was wrapped in plastic and a prayer of dedication made before the cement was poured. The hall has been used extensively for Sunday School, church fellowships, family reunions, wedding receptions, and the like. It was also used for the first meeting of the Sandy Bottom Volunteer Fire Department and as a collection and distribution center during the flooding associated with Hurricane Floyd.

The men of the church, led by Pete Croom, began to build the gazebo in 1977 but were not able to figure out how to build the top. Bruce Croom recruited James Edward "Skeety" Jones who led the men in building the roof. The men of the church, under Pete Croom's leadership, also built the baptistry that year. Before this time, baptisms were done in the Neuse River, local mill ponds, and nearby churches. The beautiful painting in the baptistry was made possible by a donation to the church.

Rev. Joe Coker came in 1978 and served until 1980. Rev. Coker's wife, Mary, kept WMU strong with Mission Friends and good programs for all ages. In 1978, new pews and carpet were installed.

In 1981 Rev. Norman Simpson was called as pastor. He was a graduate of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. The Simpson's four children were very talented. They sang and helped start Children's Church. The steeple was installed at this time.

Rev. H. T. Waits served as pastor from August 1985 until October 1995. He led the church in reorganization and in establishing a prioritized list of ten things that needed to be done. He also led the church in accomplishing most of them. He and his wife, Kathryn, led the youth group, started a youth puppet ministry, and took the youth on two mission trips to New York. He led the church in starting a new member's class and buying a church van. He served as choir director, and Kathryn served as WMU leader and organist.

In 1990, the church was incorporated as the Sandy Bottom Baptist Church, Incorporated, a non-profit corporation. The "missionary" in the church's original name was not included in this document and has been rarely used throughout the

history of the church, even in its earliest days. The minutes of almost all church conferences and the church's constitution refer only to Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. Many Southern Baptist churches that were started in the late 1800s and early 1900s included "missionary" in their names to emphasize that the churches supported missions. This was done in reaction to the anti-missions movement in the denomination in the nineteenth century. However, as the denomination became very missions-oriented in the twentieth century, many churches dropped "missionary" from their names, whether by formal action or in practice.

Rev. Thomas Jones was called as interim pastor in November 1995 before he was called as pastor in 1996. He had also served as interim pastor in 1985. During his tenure, new carpet was installed in the sanctuary, a storage room was added to Fellowship Hall, the playground equipment was built, and stained glass windows were installed. Rev. Jones retired at the end of 1998 and became more active in Campers On Mission.

Rev. Steve Gillette came in 1999. He was a student at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary when he came and finished his degree while here. During his tenure, Hurricane Floyd struck, blowing off the steeple and causing other minor damage. A new steeple was installed using money from the insurance settlement. The Fellowship Hall was used for an area collection and distribution center of food and clothing for the flood victims. A new sound system was installed, and significant repairs and upgrades were and are being made to the church. In conjunction with the Baptist State Convention, he led the church through a Sunday School revitalization process. He, his wife, Cari, Mary Ann Croom, and Ann Eubanks went on a mission trip to St. Lucia in the West Indies in 2001. This was the first international mission trip involving members of the church. Cari serves as Music Director.

As of June 9, 2002, the church has 209 members, of which 153 are resident members. There are one hundred people enrolled in Sunday School. The church has a Baptist Men's group, WOM (Women On Mission), a youth ministry, a children's choir and mission group, and a senior citizens' group called the JOY (Just Older Youth) Club.

Appendix 1: Donations

1. Baptistry Painting. Donated by Clara Mae Smith in memory of her mother, Ida Hill.
2. Chandeliers. The sanctuary chandeliers were donated and installed in 1995. The donations were as follows: one in memory of Lena Avery by her son Charles, his wife, Joyce, and their children; one in memory of Fred Croom by his son Frederick and his wife, Joy; one in memory of Jesse J. Croom by his son Jesse; one in memory of Alton Moody by his wife, Ruby, and their children; one in memory of Fate and Nannie Smith by their son Norman and his wife, Clara Mae; three in honor of Barbara Stroud by her sons Lemuel, Franklin, and William. The vestibule chandelier was donated in memory of Charles Avery by his wife, Joyce, and their family.
3. Communion Set. In 1907 Susan Catherine Parrott donated a beautiful, silver communion set.
4. Entrance Lights. The entrance lights were given in 1983 in memory of Joe Avery by his family.
5. Land. The land on which the church was built was donated in 1902 by Joseph R. and Eliza Croom and Joe and Fannie Bunn. The land for the parsonage was donated by Fred and Eleanor Croom in 1964.
6. Musical Instruments. In 1972, Rev. and Mrs. Jim Hathorn donated an organ. In 2001, Eloise Croom and family donated a piano in memory of her husband, Bruce.
7. Pews. The church pews were given by: Johnnie and Verdie Aldridge with Mrs. Bessie Hill and Lathie Aldridge; Charles and Joyce Avery; Joe and Lena Avery; Bruce and Eloise Croom in memory of their son Linwood; the Fred Croom family; James and Sybil Croom in memory of their grandson Michael Croom; James Bruce and Violet Croom in honor of their children, Jamie and Libbie; Jesse and Gladys Croom; John and Belle Croom; Melvin and Mary Ann Croom; William and Nettie Croom; Roy and Florence Hardison with Leroy and Vivian Phillips; in memory of Guy and Bessie Hill by their children; Reynold and Janet Hill; in memory of Plato and Fleta Howard by their children; Alton and Ruby Moody; Jerry and Becky Moody; Norman and Clara Mae Smith in honor of their children, Nannie Sue and Frankie; Bettie Taylor in memory of her husband, Heber; J. B.

and Shirley Rouse; Horace and Lacie Taylor in memory of his brother Ray; Joe and Ruth Temple in memory of her parents, Clyde and Stella Taylor.

8. Pulpit Bible. The pulpit Bible was donated by Jesse J. Croom about 1930 to replace a previous one that had become dilapidated.

9. Stained Glass Windows. The beautiful, stained glass windows were donated in 1998 in memory of Charles Avery by his family.

10. Steeple and Chimes. The steeple did not include a cross at first. Bruce and Eloise Croom donated one in 1990 in memory of their son Linwood. Gladys Croom donated the lights that shine on the steeple. The chimes were donated in memory of Fred Croom by his family.

11. Water Cooler. The water cooler in the vestibule was donated by William and Nettie Croom in memory of her brother Rev. John W. Hardy.

In addition to these items, many other items have also been donated by the faithful members of this church and their families.

Appendix 2

Pastors

W. L. Bilbro	1902-1903
W. P. Campbell	1904-1908
J. A. Snow	1910-1913
N. D. Blackman	1914 -1916
B. G. Early	1917-1919
R. P. Merritt	1920-1922
R. E. Ingram	1923-1924
F. L. Harris	1924-1926
J. C. Hough	Supply
N. D. Blackman	1930
B. G. Early	1931-1939
N. F. Arant	1940-1948
T. R. Hunt	1948-1950
R. E. Whitley	1950-1952
Johnie Perry	1953-1955
Clyde High	1955-1957
E. B. Booker	1957-1961
Dwight Early	1961-1963
Ed Carroll	1963-1966
Jim Hathorn	1967-1972
Floyd Enzor	1973-1977
Joe Coker	1978-1980
Norman Simpson	1981-1984
Tom Waits	1985-1995
Thomas Jones	1996-1998
Steve Gillette	1999-Present

1902 NEWS CLIPPINGS

BIBLICAL RECORDER

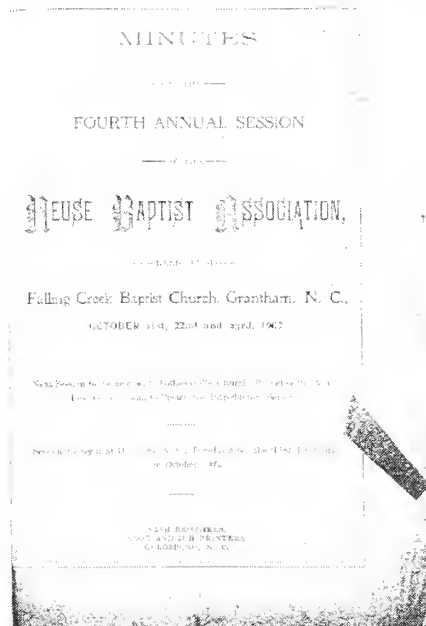
THE ORGAN OF THE NORTH CAROLINA BAPTISTS, DEVOTED TO BIBLE RELIGION, EDUCATION, LITERATURE AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

Volume 68

RALEIGH, N. C., WEDNESDAY, JULY 23, 1902.

Number 4

....Bro. W. E. Sutton writes: "A council convened at Sandy Bottom, Lenoir County, on 5th Lord's day in June, 1902, to advise and assist in the organization of a Baptist church. After prayer and reading the Scriptures, the council was organized by the choice of W. L. Bilbro as moderator and W. E. Sutton as clerk. Fourteen persons presented letters from New Hope Baptist church, and after adopting, for their rule of faith and practices, Christ's law as laid down in the New Testament, and associating themselves together in covenant relations for the worship and service of our common Lord, were recognized by the council as a regular Baptist church in Christ, and commended to the fellowship and sympathy of all sister churches. This church will be known as Sandy Bottom Missionary Baptist church, and will become a member of Neuse Association at the next session of that body."



Clippings from Minutes of the Neuse Baptist Association Fourth Annual Session October 21st 22nd and 23rd, 1902

Committee on Petitionary Letters report the following churches asking admission into this Association: Fremont, Davis Grove and Sandy Bottom and recommended that they be received, which is unanimously done and the messengers welcomed.

Lenoir county field, Rev. W. L. Bilbro, pastor. This field is composed of Ayden, Seven Springs, Union, New Hope and Sandy Bottom. Notable progress has been made at some of these churches. A church has been constituted at Sandy Bottom with 14 members. A lot has been secured, and a house is in course of erection. The work has been very satisfactory, though Bro. Bilbro has been in the field only a part of the year.

ANNOUNCEMENT.

B. W. CANADY & SON, HARDWARE,

Kinston, - - - - N. C

We are now located in our new and convenient stores on the corner, and are in better shape than ever before to supply our friends and customers with their wants in our line of business.

We are grateful for the liberal patronage that has been given us in the past and hope to merit and receive a continuance of it in the future.

We not only have larger and more convenient quarters but carry a much larger and more varied stock of all kinds of goods in hardware and kindred lines, and invite your inspection of same.

Kinston, - - - - N. C

We are now located in our new and convenient stores on the corner, and are in better shape than ever before to supply our friends and customers with their wants in our line of business.

We are grateful for the liberal patronage that has been given us in the past and hope to merit and receive a continuance of it in the future.

We not only have larger and more convenient quarters but carry a much larger and more varied stock of all kinds of goods in hardware and kindred lines, and invite your inspection of same.

Farming Implements.

We have the best makes of everything in this line. Call and examine our Plows, Castings, Hoes, Axes, Shovels and other articles needed on the farm.

We also carry a large stock of Wire Fencing of various sizes and grades.

Heating Stoves.

We have a remarkably large and complete line of Air-Tight Heaters and other Wood Stoves, also Coal Stoves—and our prices are low. There is much of winter still left and if in need of a heating stove be sure to call and examine our stock.

House Furnishings.

We have full assortments of Lamps, Knives and Forks, China and Glassware, Wood, Willow and Tin Ware, etc., in fact about everything for the house, kitchen and pantry in our line of business.

Cook Stoves.

We have a fine assortment of Cook Stoves and Ranges, and think you would find no trouble in supplying your needs from our stock. We have cheap ones as well as the very handsome and more costly kinds.

Sporting Goods.

We carry a nice line of Guns, Shot, Leggings, Shot, Powder, Loading Equipment, etc.

French & Sugg, GROCERS.

We keep anything in groceries you need.

"PROMPTNESS"
IS OUR MOTTO.

When you give us your order you know it will be filled correctly.

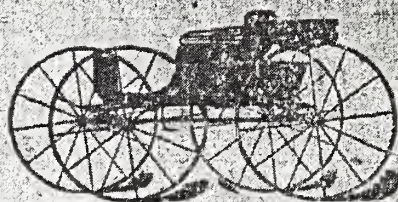
We thank you for past favors and ask a continuance of same.

FRENCH & SUGG.

We make a specialty of goods in original packages, Barrels, Bags or Cases.

C. T. RANDOLPH,

Old Reliable Carriage Builder



Still At the Front!

I use first-class material, employ good workmen and personally superintend every department of my factory.

The buggies made at my factory are excellent in every particular—in material, workmanship and finish.

When you want to get one of the very best hand-made buggies at a reasonable price, call on

C. T. RANDOLPH,

KINSTON, N. C

1902.

1902.

FERTILIZERS.

BAUGH'S

High-Grade Tobacco Guano,

The Great Leader for Tobacco.

Over 2 000 Tons sold in this section in 1901.

A number of farmers sold tobacco on the Kinston market in 1901 at 20c, 30c, 40c, 50c and 60c who used BAUGH'S HIGH-GRADE TOBACCO GUANO.

We regret that we have not the space to give certificates from hundreds of farmers like Joe and Will Moore. They have used BAUGH'S HIGH-GRADE TOBACCO GUANO for five years.

First year, 1896, from four acres, net check \$440.00.

Second year, 1897, from six acres, net check \$1,138.00.

Third year, 1898, from six acres, net check \$1,416.38.

Fourth year, 1899, from six acres, net check \$1,686.44.

Fifth year, 1900, from seven acres, net check \$1,612.50.

This is a correct statement and they will have nothing but Baugh's. We will give the names and results of a large number of farmers in a short time who have had the most gratifying results and who say they have never had a fertilizer to compare with Baugh's.

BAUGH'S COTTON GUANO cannot be excelled.

BAUGH'S ANIMAL BONE and POTASH COMPOUND — all we ask is give it a fair trial and you will be delighted. It is a Money Maker.

BAUGH & SONS COMPANY,

PHILADELPHIA, BALTIMORE and NORFOLK.

All our brands are sold at Manufacturers' prices
by J. W. GRAINGER, Kinston, N. C.

EARLY 1900s PICTURE OF DOWNTOWN KINSTON



CHARTER MEMBERS

Addie Cauley, Ann Mariah Jackson Croom, Clyde Croom, Jesse J. Croom, Joseph W. Croom, Maude Taylor Croom, Rudolph Croom, Rufus P. Croom, Seth Croom, Nancy Emily "Nimmie" Haynes Croom, Vivian Croom, Meta Haynes Croom, Leona Davis, and Lizzie Haynes.

ADDIE CAULEY



Adeline (Addie) was born July 26, 1876 to Stephen and Mahala Smith Cauley and was one of five children. On December 26, 1907, she married Alexander (Alex) Vander Murdock, who had come from Scotland by himself. She had one child, Mildred, who died in 1909. Addie, her husband, and child are buried in the Nunn-Cauley cemetery. She died in April of 1910. Her four siblings were Cora Cauley Dail, George Lafayette Cauley, Flavius Cauley, and Lindsey Cauley. She was cousin to Eliza Cauley who was Richard B. Cauley's daughter who was married to Joseph Raspberry Croom, so Addie was also cousin to Clyde Croom. Addie and Lizzie Haynes were first cousins as their fathers were brothers.

Submitted by Grace Barwick

ANN MARIAH JACKSON CROOM



Ann appears to have been the oldest of the charter members and was joined by four sons (Jesse J., Rufus, Rudolph, & Seth), three daughters-in-law (Maude, Meta, & Nimmie), and one grandson (Clyde). Ann was born April 19, 1842 to Jesse Jackson and his first wife, Emma Davis. On October 15, 1857, she married William Allen (Bill) Croom who was the son of Rev. Joseph Raspberry Croom and Nancy Hardee. Bill and Ann had ten children. After he died in 1897, she lived with each of her children part of each year. She died in March of 1919. She had been a member of the Baptist Church since early in life and was always present when physically able and gave liberally of her means to its support. She, her husband, his parents, and most of her children are buried in the Old Croom Cemetery. "Gone but not forgotten"

CLYDE CROOM



Clyde was born June 3, 1886, the 2nd of eleven children of Joseph Raspberry Croom and Eliza Cauley. He died in Wilmington, North Carolina in 1921. He was Ann Mariah Croom's grandchild and a great-grandchild of Rev. Joseph Raspberry Croom and Nancy Hardee. He was a nephew of Jesse J., Rudolph, Rufus, & Seth Croom and was Vivian Croom and Addie Cauley's cousin.

JESSE JACKSON CROOM



Jesse was born February 14, 1862, the 2nd of ten children of William Allen Croom and Ann Mariah Jackson Croom. He married first Maude Taylor and had eight children. After her death, he married Mary Moore in December 1910 and had eight more children. He was one of the first deacons in the church and was a devoted leader of the church. Five of his sons, John, Bruce, Jesse, Fred, and William, have served as deacons of the church. For many years Jesse J. was the strongest supporter in representing and in contributing to the church. There are many of his grandchildren taking leadership in the church from the influence he taught his children. He did not say, "Go to church." He said, "Come on and go with me to church." If more parents would do likewise, it would be a much better world today. He was a grandchild of Rev. Joseph Raspberry Croom and Nancy Hardee. At the ripe old age of ninety-two, he died on September 22, 1954 and is buried between his two wives in the Old Croom Cemetery. "At Rest"

Submitted by son, Jesse M. Croom

JOSEPH W. CROOM

Joseph, born about 1879, was one of seven children of Allen Croom & Rebekah (Rebecca) Croom. His older sister, Harriet Fannie Croom Bunn, helped in donating land that Sandy Bottom Baptist Church was built on. He died in a Raleigh hospital October 26, 1916. Joseph was a grandchild of Rev. Joseph Raspberry Croom & Nancy Hardee. He was also cousin to Clyde, Jesse J., Rudolph, Rufus, Seth, and Vivian Croom.

MAUDE TAYLOR CROOM



Maude (Maud) was born in May of 1869 and was the first wife of Jesse J. Croom. They had eight children. She died in May of 1910 and is buried alongside her husband in the Old Croom Cemetery. "Through quiet it gives us rest to the soul"

META HAYNES CROOM



Croom brothers and their wives taken sometime between 1926 and 1928. Joseph R., Jesse J. and second wife, Mary, William C. and Gertrude, Rufus and Meta, Rudolph and Bessie, Seth and Nimmie.

Meta, born October 2, 1881, was one of nine children of Jonathan Greene Haynes and Rebecca Holland. Meta was the Sunday School Superintendent for many years. She was the sister of Nimmie Haynes Croom and wife of Rufus P. Croom. They had three sons and one daughter that were devoted church members when they were growing up. Their youngest son, Horace, his wife and some of their children are still members. Meta died October 13, 1941 and is buried alongside her husband in the Old Croom Cemetery. "For there is no night there Thy will be done"

NIMMIE HAYNES CROOM

Nancy Emily "Nimmie" Haynes, born December 22, 1883, was one of nine children of Jonathan Greene Haynes and Rebecca Holland. She was the wife of Seth Croom and sister of Meta Haynes Croom. Nimmie and Seth had six children before she died December 14, 1940. She is buried alongside her husband in the Old Croom Cemetery. "Not dead but sleeping"

RUDOLPH CROOM

Rudolph was born July 8, 1878, the 9th child of William Allen Croom and Ann Mariah Jackson. He married Annie Bessie Nichols and had four children. He died September 6, 1939 and is buried alongside his wife in the Old Croom Cemetery. "Salvation through Christ the Redeemer" He was a grandchild of Rev. Joseph Raspberry Croom and Nancy Hardee

RUFUS PERCY CROOM

Rufus "Ruf" was born August 20, 1874, the 8th child of William Allen Croom and Ann Mariah Jackson. He married Meta Haynes and had four children. On November 27, 1931, he died of a cerebral hemorrhage just after returning to his home from Church service at the Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. He was a lifelong resident of Lenoir County; a farmer raising in particular the usual eastern Carolina crops, tobacco, corn, beans, etc. Rufus Percy Croom helped build the church. His sons, Rufus and Horace are lifetime members. He is buried in the Old Croom Cemetery alongside his wife. "For there is no night there Thy will be done" He was a grandchild of Rev. Joseph Raspberry Croom and Nancy Hardee.



Sons, Cloyde, Rufus "Pete," & Horace

SETH ENEAS CROOM

Seth was born June 15, 1882, the 10th child of William Allen Croom and Ann Mariah Jackson. He married first Nancy Emily "Nimmie" Haynes and had six children. After her death he married Martha Marie Barnes and had two children. He died January 27, 1952 and is buried alongside his first wife, Nimmie, in the Old Croom Cemetery. "At Rest" He was a lifelong resident of Lenoir County, North Carolina, a farmer, and Constable of Neuse Township. He was a grandchild of Rev. Joseph Raspberry Croom and Nancy Hardee

VIVIAN CROOM



Vianna Vivian Croom born January 6, 1878, was the 2nd of thirteen children of James Knox Allen Croom and Mary Elizabeth Allen. Vivian married J. G. (Jim) Haynes December 25, 1904 and had one child, Junius Haynes October 18, 1905. She died March 9, 1907 of pneumonia and complications of the measles.

Upon her death, Rev. W. P. Campbell wrote of her:

In early life she professed faith in the Lord Jesus and was baptized into the fellowship of New Hope Baptist Church. In 1902 Sandy Bottom Baptist Church was organized near her home, she being one of the charter members. From then until her death she remained a faithful, earnest member of that body of Christians.

Her sufferings were of short durations; she succumbed to an attack of pneumonia after all that kind friends and a skilled physician could do. She was a devoted wife and fond mother. Her home is desolate without her. Her husband and little son and a host of friends and relatives mourn her departure, but they mourn not as those who have no hope, for they hope to meet her in that land where death will not take her from them again.

To the sorrowing husband and child, and to all the other relatives and friends, the sympathies of her pastor and church are extended.

She was a great-grandchild of Rev. Joseph Raspberry Croom and Nancy Hardee, which makes her cousin to Clyde, Jesse J., Joseph W., Rudolph, Rufus, & Seth Croom. Vivian and Lizzie Haynes became sisters-in-law as Vivian married (Jim) Haynes, whose brother, (Buck,) was married to Lizzie.

Submitted by Grace Barwick

LEONA DAVIS

Not much is known about Leona Davis other than information found in church minutes and from a marriage license. She was a member of New Hope Baptist and was listed both as Leona and Lena Davis. She transferred her membership to Sandy Bottom Baptist at the same time as the other charter members of the church and was listed as Leona Davis. It was noted in the minutes that she married a Taylor in 1909, but this cannot be verified. It is most probable that she is the same Leona Davis listed on a marriage license of 1903. Justice of the Peace, D. A. Whitfield, married L. H. Taylor, age twenty-two, son of B. Taylor and Gatsy Taylor, to Leona F. Davis, age twenty-one, daughter of Anos Davis and Betsy Davis, at their home in Trent Township of Lenoir County on April 29, 1903.

LIZZIE CAULEY HAYNES



Matilda Elizabeth Cauley was born in Lenoir County May 25, 1875, the 3rd of eight children born to George Thomas Cauley and Olive Dail. She died October 24, 1960 and was buried in the cemetery at Webb Chapel Church. She was affectionately known by many in the Sandy Bottom community as (Aunt Lizzie.) She was first married to William H. (Buck) Haynes. Vivian and Lizzie Haynes became sisters-in-law as Vivian married (Jim) Haynes, whose brother, (Buck,) was married to Lizzie. He died as a young man during the great flu epidemic of the early 1900s. She later married Mr. Kennedy. Aunt Lizzie never had any children of her own. She visited in many homes in the Sandy Bottom community. She had a large extended family. I remember as a young girl her coming to spend time with us.

Submitted by Grace Barwick

PASTORS

REV. B. G. EARLY 1917 - 1919 and 1931 - 1939



Granddaddy, Mr. B. G., was pastor at Sandy Bottom in the thirties; I don't have the exact dates. They lived next door to New Hope church (on 11 I think) and I remember visiting there many times. The house has long since been gone, but I remember the high, big front porch with a swing and the wide center hall from the front porch to the back porch. It was as wide as a room and we often sat there in hot weather to catch the breezes. Family rooms – big; they seemed to be, some with two beds in them that opened into the hall. The dining room and kitchen opened onto the back porch. There was a pantry off the kitchen and a door to the outside on the church side of the house. The back screened porch was big. An old icebox sat on it and there was a daybed. Off the kitchen end was a hand pump and sink.

There were big trees in the sandy yard. There were some outbuildings, barn maybe with a place for a car to be parked. Granddaddy had a big garden and possibly grew some farm crops, but I'm not sure of this.

Grandmother mostly stayed near home. When Granddaddy went to the other churches, she went to New Hope next door. Granddaddy was the one who went to town when necessary to shop. He even brought hats for Grandmother and other clothing items she could not make at home. I never remember her being in a store until I was a grown girl—in my twenties.

They got milk from the Crooms who lived across the highway. Many times it was my job to "go get the milk." This may have only been when their cow was dry. They often had enough milk to churn. I can remember the churn on the back porch and Grandmother letting us take a turn. And sometimes I've turned a freezer of ice cream. I think banana was Granddaddy's favorite.

Where the road branched off – to go to Sandy Bottom it was a dirt road. I remember tales of getting stuck and of flat tires.

My father, W. D. (Waldo) Early, preached revivals for his father. Sometimes Mother wanted to go later after the evening meal and take Grandmother. She was so proud of her preacher son and wanted to hear him when she could. I remember one Sunday I went with Granddaddy and Daddy for Morning Service of which I remember nothing! But I do remember that we had Sunday Dinner at a house near the Moss Hill School. The house was on the Mill Pond and I thought, "These must be really rich people!" (I am not even certain if that was when we went to Sandy Bottom or another church.) Granddaddy pastored three or four churches at the same time. This was a rather common practice for rural churches in those prewar years. I also remember my father had a "field" of four churches near Broadway (Lee County) in the late 30s till December 1941. In Jan '42 we went to Fayetteville and he again had a field of four churches. This took a LOT of energy for a pastor to minister to people in four different churches. Daddy kept a tithe box for each church and gave back to each church the tithe (at least) of his salary from each one. He shared that this was a practice he learned from his father.



Then in the 60s my brother, W. D. Early, Jr. (Dwight), was called of the Neuse Association. I know he pastored New Hope and Sandy Bottom, but I do not know about other churches. He and his wife, Sarah Jane P. Early, lived in a frame house to the right of New Hope Church. Sadly, I know little of his ministry in that area. I was busy raising a family and working in my church.

Submitted by granddaughter, Jane E. Kaleel

REV. R. P. MERRITT 1920 - 1922



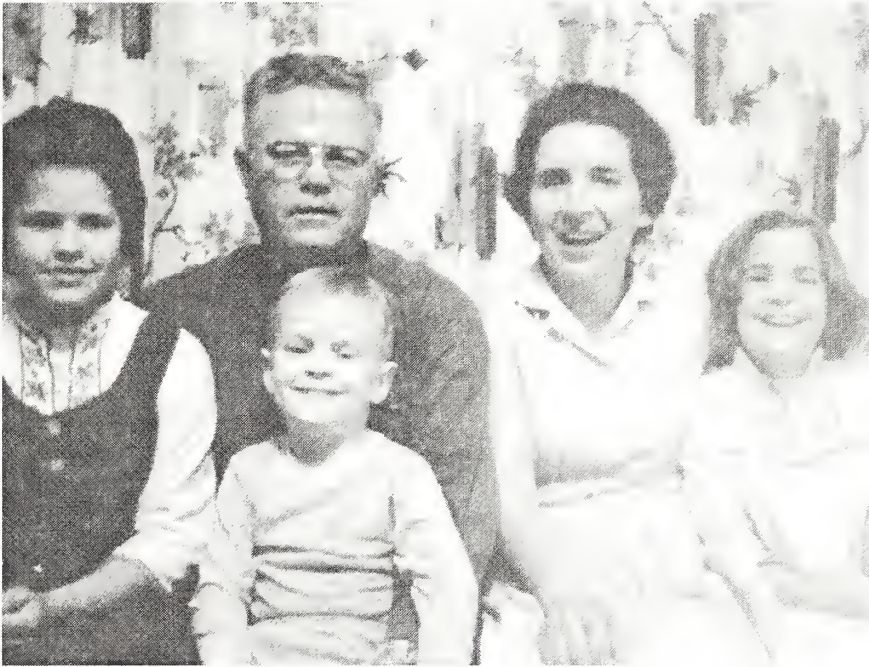
REV. T. R. HUNT 1948 - 1950



Theodore Roosevelt Hunt was born January 4, 1904. After retiring from the ministry, he built a family-owned nursing home and lived there the last seven years of his life. Though his memory was failing him, yet he still had concern for other people. His wife, Olive, died unexpectedly of heart failure on March 31, 1989 and on January 9, 1996 the Lord took T. R. home as well.

Submitted by son, Ted Hunt

REV. DICK WHITLEY 1950 - 1952



It's been a long, long time since I was there as Pastor. I remember many wonderful things about Sandy Bottom and the fine people attending it while I was there. When I recently visited there for a homecoming service, I was struck at the number of people there who were there when I was there. Somewhere we must happily have gotten some genes for long living!

Sandy Bottom and New Hope were the first churches I pastored except for a one-year interim in the place of the pastor who was a professor of mine. If I had been more mature, I probably would have been there much longer than I was. It was a great time! I conducted my first revival there and, if I remember correctly, we had many professions. I don't suppose we will live long enough to see times like that again! I recall one or more times when someone made a profession of faith after the benediction while I was greeting people in the vestibule. And, do you remember the time we sung so long during an invitation waiting for a brother Clayborne Whitley to make his profession of faith? We all knew the Holy Spirit was dealing with him—and, finally he came! There was a great spiritual wrestling-taking place in our midst. It was so wonderful when he surrendered!

Also, I remember how I was told when the Church called me (in December) that they might not be able to pay me during the summer, but that they would make sure I had enough to get by until they could make it all up in the fall. But the Lord led us to begin talking and preaching about tithing and it was wonderfully

received. People began tithing (even on the money they borrowed for their crops) and I never missed any money during the summer!

Do you remember when my car gave out and I spent a while riding a bicycle during daily visitations? Someone would come and get us and take us back home after each service. Then, at fall, you all made it possible for me to buy a car!

I have so many memories that I could write about them all day! Thank you all for them!

REV. JOHNIE PERRY 1953 - 1955



REV. E. B. BOOKER 1957 - 1961



DWIGHT EARLY 1961 - 1963



REV. EDWIN CARROLL 1963 - 1966



Sandy Bottom Baptist Church voted to call my husband, Edwin, as their first full-time pastor in November 1963. Members of the church came to Roseboro to move us into the old Hardy Family Home on December 20, 1963. Edwin pinched a nerve in his back trying to pick up a box. He was bent over and in so much pain that he stopped to see a chiropractor in Clinton on the way to Sandy Bottom in the midst of our move. Even so, he had a wedding rehearsal for David Taylor and Margie Hardison that night. The next day he performed their wedding, and that knot has stayed tied all these years!

Two things happened while we lived in the Hardy Home that we will always remember. Our younger son, Mike, came to our bedroom during the night and said a bat was flying in their bedroom. He said the bat had been there a long time, but he hadn't wanted to wake us up! Then one Sunday afternoon our boys, Mike and Jim, were playing in their bedroom with some friends. They came running across the hall to tell us they had found a snake in there. So you can understand that we were quite anxious to move into the new parsonage the church had already voted to build!

The church worked together and had the parsonage completed within a few months. We moved in near Edwin's birthday in August of 1964—Jimmy and Mike, our two sons, Esther Lynn, our daughter who was then two years old, Edwin and I. All five of us were delighted to be in our brand-new home! In a short while we had a Dedication Service for the parsonage, and it was a great day for all of us.

During our tenure at Sandy Bottom Baptist Church our older son, Jimmy, graduated from South Lenoir High School and entered East Carolina University (then still East Carolina College) as a freshman.

I can't remember any really significant accomplishments during our years at Sandy Bottom—we just tried to live our Christian faith and reach out to all the families in the community. We loved you and felt your love for us. And that's why we are looking forward to being back with you to celebrate 100 years of church history.

After forty years in the ministry, Edwin and I retired and moved to Youngsville, North Carolina to be near our children and grandchildren. We are active members of the Harris Chapel Baptist Church, and Edwin does supply preaching and interim work.

Jim and his wife, Emily, live in Cary, North Carolina and their one daughter, Kelly, is a sophomore at UNC-Greensboro.

Mike, his wife, Marianne, and 16-year-old son, Eric, live in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. They also have two adult children Michael, twenty-five and Katy, twenty-three, who both live nearby.

Esther and her husband Edward and a four and a half year-old son Bobby, live in Wake Forest, North Carolina (about ten miles from our home in Youngsville). They are expecting another baby boy in July.

REV. JIM HATHORN 1967 - 1972



Jim & Mary with daughter, Susan, and grandson, Erin

I arrived at Sandy Bottom on 20 February 1967. We had traveled two days from Houston, Texas in a U-Haul truck and a trailer trailing behind. It had taken us days and many hours to pack for the trip. As we drew near to Sandy Bottom, the thoughts of unpacking our possessions weighed heavily on my imagination. All the problems we could encounter, I thought would be real.

As we parked in the driveway, voices came with bodies out of the house and in a short time we were moved in and our clothes were hanging in closets. I heard a lady by the name of Gloria Croom gasp at the sight of so many white shirts. I had to take a look to see if she was looking at my clothes or Mary's. She was correct. I had too many white shirts and few coats to go with the trousers I had brought. The next week Dave the Clothier outfitted me with some suits and ties.

Seven days later, I celebrated my 32nd birthday. The church participated in a delightful way. We knew the trip up from Texas had been the Lord's will. Fred Croom made a fish stew and invited us. It was delicious. The first of many to come.

The help we received that day was the kind of help we could and did count on for all our days at Sandy Bottom. On our first Christmas, I managed to set the sage in the backyard on fire with matches and wrapping paper. And, just to prove I could do it, I did it again the next Christmas. Jesse and Gladys had fun with us

. . . Jesse asked me if I intended to do it again next Christmas . . . I suggested we try the woods in front of his house next time. When he did not laugh, I promptly discarded that notion. Do you remember Gordon Conklin preaching our revival and the speaker amplifier catching on fire? Now, William Croom moved with grace and speed of a dancer to fetch that machine and sent it streaking through the darkness into the middle of the highway where it sputtered its last bit of life. Meanwhile, back in the revival crowd, we were wide awake and ready to go home.

Some time later someone asked me how things were going at Sandy Bottom. I could honestly reply, during my ministry the fields were on fire.

We have two daughters, Becky and Susan. Becky is the eldest and teaches at North Lenoir High School. She is married to Tim Mooring.

We love you all and thank you for happy times and lasting friendships.

DR. FLOYD ENZOR 1973 - 1977



Announcement as it appeared in the church bulletin June 1, 1975.

Everyone is invited to attend the wedding service for Floyd Enzor and Juanita Mooring, which will be held at The Sandy Bottom Baptist Church on June 7th at 12:00 Noon . . . A Bar-B-Que will be held at the "Shelter" at 5:00 PM. Everyone is invited to attend.

In the fall of 1976 William and Nettie Croom traveled with us to Washington, D.C. where I had the opportunity as the pastor of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church to offer the following prayer at the House of Representatives on Tuesday, September 21, 1976 at twelve o'clock noon:

“O give thanks unto the Lord; call upon His Name, make known His deeds among the people.” (Ps. 105:1)

Let us pray:

We thank Thee, our Heavenly Father, for this solemn occasion: for these who represent the peoples of our nation; for our position in world leadership; for our predecessors who endeavored to begin and continue the deeds of government, designed for the governed, and for Thy smile upon our Nation.

We acknowledge that Thou art God.

We ask Thy blessings upon our National leaders so our national objectives may be reached, and our needs met.

We desire for ourselves a vision so man will not perish from the earth. We ask for tolerance of each other in our varied opinions of life and religion.

Accept this our prayer today that Thy Kingdom may come and Thy will be done on earth as it is done in Heaven, in Jesus' name. A-Men.

Mr. Jones of North Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for one minute to revise and extend his remarks.

Mr. Jones of North Carolina: “Mr Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure to welcome the Reverend Floyd Enzor, Pastor of the Sandy Bottom Baptist Church, Kinston, North Carolina, to the House of Representatives today. I am sure we were all impressed with his sincerity and inspiring prayer. With us here today are his wife, Mrs. Enzor, and their friends, Mr. and Mrs. William Croom. I am sure the members join me in extending a warm welcome to these fine people.”

REV. JOE COKER 1978 - 1980



Joe and Mary Coker live in Raleigh, North Carolina and have two children. Their daughter, Sharon, married Brian Burke while at Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. They now have twin daughters. The Cokers also have a son, Brian.

REV. NORMAN SIMPSON 1981 - 1984



Since moving along we have seen our entire family grow to adulthood with an expansion fueled by six grandchildren (even some of them are nearly adults). Doris and all of the family are well.

The Lord has privileged us to be involved in a variety of ministry opportunities which include pastoring, teaching, singing, revivals, renewal teams, etc. Daughter Brenda traveled for a couple of years with a children's evangelistic musical theater. Currently, she is very active with a really great worship band called "Jasper City."

You remain in our hearts and prayers as you seek diligently to serve our God in this world of needy people.

REV. TOM WAITS 1985 - 1995



There are so many memories of the ten years that Kathryn and I served the Lord through Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. The first thing that stands out in our lives was October 13, 1985 when we were married by Dr. Floyd Enzor. The church provided a reception for us following the ceremony.

We were soon settled in the pastorium and developing a variety of ministries. New Year's Eve was time for fun, food, skits, and the observance of the Lord's Supper as we entered a new year. Then in January we always had the Baptist Men's Day program that included the Men's Choir directed by Fred Croom. This was closely followed by Ladies' Day in February when the ladies had charge of the service.



February was always a happy time for our church family because of Valentine's Day. The Senior Ladies provided the music for the evening and they were so good we had them back every year. Ruby Moody could always be counted on for surprise entertainment.

We soon enlisted the aid of some of my favorite people, the BSU at Campbell University to bring together a Youth Fellowship. In addition to the youth, Kathryn started a children's choir that entertained and blessed us each year with "Down by the Creekbank," "Kid's Praise," and other children's musicals.

The "JOY Club" was organized with the help of Joyce Avery and Clara Mae Smith and soon grew into an active group of Senior Adults.

Our missions organizations were always busy. We had Mission and we held the first Acteen's Recognition Service with three receiving their crowns.

The youth of the church made two mission trips to Brentwood, Long Island, New York to provide some leadership for summer activities such as Vacation Bible School and Day Camp activities in Washington Avenue Baptist Church. They also held VBS at Farmingdale Baptist Church in New York. We had a clown ministry and puppet team within the group. Here you see the second group with their leaders in front of the vans.



There was also the annual trip to White Lake where we held our Youth Vacation Bible School each summer with the Youth Leaders in charge.

There were so many activities that it would be impossible to remember them all. We saw the Sunday School average attendance go from forty-two in the fall of 1985 to around 107 in the fall of 1995. However, these SS Enlargement Campaigns at times led

to a pie in the face for the pastor. There were some sad memories, of course, as Fred Croom, Charles Avery, Johnnie Aldridge, Lena Avery, Barbara Stroud, and others who left us to be with their Lord. But there were so many wonderful, happy memories that we will carry with us for the rest of our lives.

REV. TOM JONES 1996 - 1998



I first came to Sandy Bottom Baptist Church in 1985 to serve as interim pastor and did for six months. I soon learned that the congregation of this church was one that was easy to love and one that would love you back; I believed I was destined to come back as pastor.

In 1995, my wife, Shirley, and I had left home to go out of state for a few days. A few miles from home we had automotive problems, so we returned home to have the problem taken care of. A few minutes after arriving back home, Melvin Croom knocked on our door. We invited him in, and he told me that Sandy Bottom Baptist Church needed me (surely the Lord was in this). That November, I came back as interim pastor and a short time later was called as pastor, and served for three and one half years before retiring from the pastorate. During that time the Lord and I led the church to:

1. build a playground for the children
2. add an edition to the fellowship hall for storage
3. improve the sound system
4. replace the carpet in the church
5. with the leading of the Lord, we began *A Deacon Ministry That Works* by Herbert L. Pederson which has added greatly to the ministry of the church
6. praise the Lord we had a number of people come to know Him; many are still active in church today.

My wife and I are still active members of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church and praise the Lord for the opportunity He gave us to serve Him there. Our prayers are that He will use this congregation to multiply His body in this community.

REV. STEVE GILLETTE 1999 - PRESENT



We came to Sandy Bottom at the beginning of January 1999. When we saw the number of men helping to move us from Goldsboro to the parsonage, it was heartwarming. Many of the women were at the parsonage when we arrived, and much had been done to spruce it up. The men and women of Sandy Bottom helped us move in and feel at home.

You have been warm and friendly to us, and it was easy for us to love you. You have always been receptive to our family, including our children, their spouses, our grandchildren, and two of Cari's sisters. You have encouraged us and been generous with us, especially at Christmas time. We appreciate all that you have done for us. In addition, thank you for working with me as I finished seminary training.

Things that have been especially meaningful to me include the deacons who went with me when I was examined by the ordination council, the many members who attended my ordination, the excellent participation in the Holy Spirit Inspired Sunday School (HIS) process, and your words of encouragement. Most significant is your faithfulness to the Lord and His work. You have responded to

sermons. You have served the Lord and this church faithfully in many ways. You have responded when called upon to serve. You oftentimes have inspired me.

We have been impressed with the cooperation in the church. In business meetings, people listened carefully to proposals. If there was discussion, it was brief and courteous. After the church voted, the people readily accepted the results and pressed on. This is how things should be! The church was also willing to take actions that improved the church's facilities and its ministries. You generously supported the four of us who went on a mission trip to St. Lucia in 2001.

I pray that God will use us, the people of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church, in reaching the people in this community and that we will be found faithful in responding to Him.

FAMILIES PAST AND PRESENT

JOHNNIE AND VERDIE ALDRIDGE



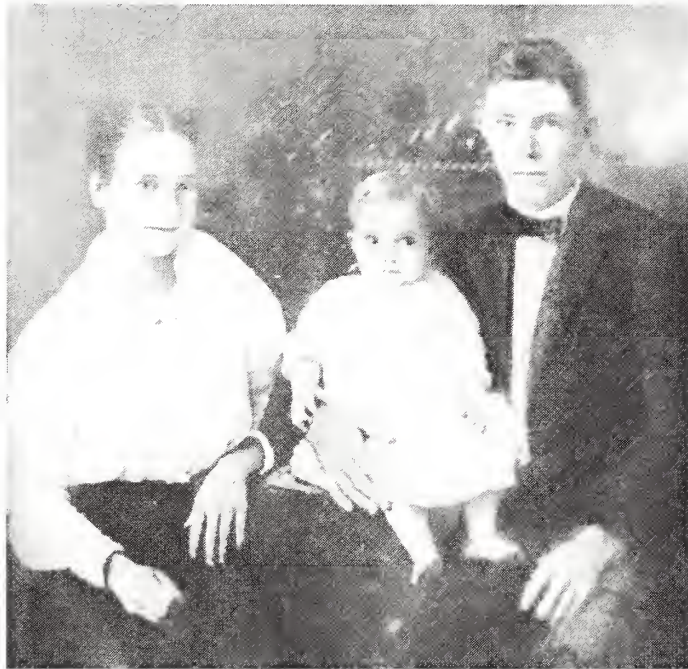
Judy Hardy, Lloyd, Danny, Vance, and Clifton with Verdie and Johnnie

Johnnie and I were married October 20, 1935; he was member of Sandy Bottom Baptist at the time, as he had joined there by letter in 1920 having been baptized earlier in the Neuse River. He was born October 11, 1904 the second child of Kincheon Aldridge and Josephine Cavanaugh who eventually had six boys and three girls. On July 25, 1916, I was the first child born to Bruce Skinner and Lillie Mills who later had four more children, two girls and two boys. We had five children, Clifton, Vance, Lloyd, Judy, and Danny. We now have ten grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren.

Johnnie was a faithful member of the church until the Lord called him home February 25, 1989. He loved to joke and he loved the church. One day he said he was going to quit work early and go to church for a revival. The church was his second home. He was a loyal choir member and a deacon for many years and was elected honorary deacon September 10, 1988.

Clifton was baptized in October 1948 and Danny and I were both baptized November 15, 1964 at First Baptist Kinston, as Sandy Bottom didn't have a baptistry at the time. Sandy Bottom Baptist has meant a lot to me over the years and I have loved all the people. I know everybody, as I lived in the Sandy Bottom area for many years in the past.

SHADE ALDRIDGE, SR. FAMILY



Shade & Lathie with Ellen

I remember Sandy Bottom Baptist Church as a warm and friendly place. Bible School was lots of fun. The teachers made the classes interesting and the refreshments were always great. I memorized many verses of scripture that I can still quote today.

Those who wished to study and learn more about God's Word were offered diverse opportunities. Sunday School, Bible School, lectures, study courses, and inspiring sermons by many qualified pastors offered each member an opportunity to grow in wisdom and knowledge of the Lord. Members who were willing and eager to serve God were asked to do so in various capacities.

Perhaps this is why Shade, Sr. and Lathie Aldridge chose to join Sandy Bottom. Shade was Assistant Sunday School Superintendent in 1920. Mrs. Lathie never held an office in the church; however, she was faithful to God and trained her children according to the scriptures. All eight children along with many of their spouses eventually joined Sandy Bottom and most became avid workers.

Ellen and Bob Hardison held many different jobs. Bob was an usher and a deacon. Ellen acted as Bible School director and taught Sunday School. Together they served as treasurer.

Florence and Roy Hardison also enjoyed working and attending Sandy Bottom. Roy was an usher and a deacon. Florence was a Sunday School and Bible School teacher.



Grace and Haywood Hill (pictured on the left) sang in the choir. Haywood was the treasurer, a deacon, and Sunday School Superintendent. Grace taught Sunday School and served as Bible School director.

Jeanette and Ralph Canady attended Sandy Bottom for a short time where Jeanette taught Sunday School. Carl, Felix, Henry, and Shade Aldridge, Jr. left Sandy Bottom before they married and became active in church work.

Eventually, all the children moved their memberships to churches in their own communities.

Mr. and Mrs. Shade Aldridge, Sr., Ellen and Bob Hardison, Roy and Florence Hardison, Carl, Henry, and Felix Aldridge are now deceased. The rest of the family along with their children strives to serve God and their fellow man to the best of their ability.

I'm sure that all of the family is grateful for the friendship, fellowship, and training they received at Sandy Bottom Baptist Church.

Submitted by Jeanette Canady



Front: Florence Hardison, Ellen Hardison, Grace Hill
Back: Shade Aldridge, Felix Aldridge, Carl Aldridge,
Henry Aldridge, Jeanette Canady

VANCE AND SHERI ALDRIDGE



Vance, born August 3, 1941, is the son of Johnnie and Verdie Aldridge and Sheri, born April 4, 1947, is the daughter of Ransonne Carroll and Mildred Hart. Vance and Sheri have two children: Michael Aldridge, born November 2, 1968, and Kim A. Baker born April 29, 1972.



Kim married Cleveland Baker, III and they have two sons, Logan Baker born April 15, 1998 and Coleman Baker born November 11, 2001.

Sandy Bottom church has always been very special to me. The people have been very special to me and my family and the church will always seem like home to me. The reason I started to Sandy Bottom was because my father and mother in-law, Mr. Johnnie and Verdie Aldridge, were going there. I picked a wonderful church. I have had some wonderful times there!

CHARLES AND JOYCE AVERY FAMILY



Charles Ray Avery was born on July 24, 1930 in Lenoir County. He was the son of Joseph Pollock Avery, born June 27, 1901, and Lena Civils Avery, born August 10, 1903. In 1950 Charles married Joyce Hardy, born on February 25, 1931. She was the youngest daughter of James Romulus (Jim) Hardy, born November 3, 1887, and Bessie Amelia Oast Hardy, born September 8, 1895. Later she moved her membership from Holy Innocents Episcopal Church to Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. She was baptized in 1953, the only one at that time, by Rev. Johnie Perry in the Neuse River at Hardy's Bridge.

They have three children, Larry Ray, Joy, and Chris Charles. Larry and Joy accepted Christ as their Savior on October 18, 1960 during a revival with visiting pastor Rev. Edward R. Boyd. On November 27, 1960, they were baptized by our pastor, Rev. E. B. Booker, at the First Baptist Church in Kinston. Chris accepted Christ as his Savior at a youth Sunday service on May 15, 1977. Our pastor, Dr. Floyd Enzor, baptized Chris on May 22, 1977 at New Hope Baptist Church. Granddaughter, Heather Lynn Avery, accepted Christ as her Savior at our revival and was baptized on September 28, 1986 by our pastor, Rev. H. T. Waits, at Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. To our family, attending church was very important and we were all very active. Larry sang, Joy played piano for the youth choir and church for several years, Chris sang, and Heather was in the children's choir. On October 28, 1984, when Chris was eighteen, he became the youngest assistant director of Sunday School in the church history. Today Chris is still a member

with the others having moved memberships to other churches, Larry and Heather to an Episcopal church and Joy to a Methodist church.

Larry is married to Patty Broglio and they and their son, Michael Joseph Avery, live in Matthews, North Carolina. Chris is married to LeAnne White and they live at the Avery home place. Joy is married to Leland Heath, Jr., a Methodist minister, and they live near Hardy's Bridge on the site of the old Hardy home place. They have a son, Leland, III, a daughter-in-law, Josie Saunders, and a granddaughter, Elisabeth, living in Washington, North Carolina. Larry has a daughter, Heather Lynn Avery, who lives near Atlanta, Georgia. Heather is engaged to Brooks Sorensen and their wedding is planned for September 7, 2002.

I was always there helping where needed in Vacation Bible School and taught Sunday School for forty-three years. On May 15, 1977, I planned a special youth Sunday service in our church. I organized the JOY Club for Seniors in September 1989. I served on the food bereavement committee for over twenty years and also served on many other committees.

Charles joined the church by baptism in November 1955 and was a lifelong member of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. He was devoted to the church where he served as a deacon, chairman of the deacons for many years, chairman when the parsonage was built, trustee of the church, a member of the choir, teacher of Sunday School for forty years, Sunday School director, a member on the building and grounds committee, and also on other various committees. Charles had strong values and wisdom when it involved the church, as well as in his daily life.

Sandy Bottom Baptist Church has many memories for our family. When Heather was five months old, during a worship service I carried her to our pastor, Dr. Floyd Enzor, and dedicated her life to God. On May 4, 1996, Chris and LeAnne were married in the church by former pastor Dr. Floyd Enzor. On August 30, 1993, Charles was called to his heavenly home and



his memorial service, with Rev. H. T. Waits, was on September 1, 1993 in the little country church that Charles loved and served so faithfully with an overflow capacity of people in the sanctuary, Sunday School rooms, and many on the church grounds. This truly reflected his love for God, for people, and their love for him. In 1998, when Rev. Thomas Jones was pastor, all the stained-glass windows were given to the Glory of God in loving memory of Charles by his family.

Sandy Bottom Baptist Church has been through the years for our family a blessing from God for which we are grateful and thankful, and we pray our lives reflect God's love.

JOE AND LENA AVERY



Lena and Joe Avery moved to the Sandy Bottom area – Route 4, Highway 55 – in 1941. They moved from the other side of Kinston where they had lived for many years. Both of them came from the Dover/Cove City area originally and for the most part were strangers in a different land when they moved to the Sandy Bottom area. However, thanks to many good neighbors, they did not remain strangers for very long.

Lena and Joe were farmers who worked hard to earn a living for their family and the respect of their neighbors.

Lena and Joe had six children – Lizzie, Gaynelle, W. A. (Buddy), Clifton, Charles, and Monzell. Lizzie, Gaynelle, and W. A. went to the Kinston city schools and graduated, while Clifton, Charles, and Monzell were all graduates of Moss Hill High School.

Although both of them were active in various programs that were going on at the Sandy Bottom Baptist Church, Lena was more active than Joe. Both of them worked hard for the church and participated in fund-raises for the church. Joe worked along with all the other men of the church when it came to building additions to the church or other improvements over the years. Both of them supported the church by giving of their time and resources.

Lena taught Sunday School, Vacation Bible School and sang in the choir when time permitted. She loved her flowers and often put flowers in the church for Sunday services that she had raised.

Clifton, Charles, and Monzell were the only children who really attended church since the others had moved away. Charles was the only one of their children who remained a lifelong member of the church. Only Gaynelle and Monzell are still living. Clifton died in 1953 (age 25), Lizzie in 1967, W. A. in 1992, and Charles in 1993. Joe died in 1983 and Lena died in 1991.

When the Averys arrived at Sandy Bottom, Mr. Arant was the minister who also served two other churches – New Hope and Union Baptist. Mr. Hunt followed him and then Richard Whitley came. Dick Whitley was probably the youngest minister whoever came to Sandy Bottom. Although many might not agree, Dick Whitley brought to the church a breath of fresh air and the people of the church responded making the church grow and become a vital part of the community.

The present church building and fellowship hall and grounds are a testament to the people of the church who worked hard and gave of their time and money to make it what it is today.

Submitted by Monzell Avery

GRACE BARWICK

I started coming to Sandy Bottom Baptist Church in the late 90s and later on joined the church by letter in February 1996. I have received many blessings from attending this church. I am a member of the Co-ed Class.

As a child I came to church here with my uncle and aunt. I was a member of Webb Chapel however until I married James Barwick. Then I became a member of Union Baptist Church and was a member there for forty-three years. We moved to Sandy Bottom and I was encouraged by my two sisters, Annie Heath and Lola Haynes to go to Sandy Bottom Baptist Church because they are members. Mr. Waits was pastor when I started coming. Mr. Jones was pastor when I joined.

WESLEY AND SHEILA BURKETT



Wesley Lee Burkett was born July 6, 1943 to Thomas Burkett and Emmie Jenkins Burkett. He had one sister, Hazel Burkett, and one brother, James Burkett. He also had one half-brother, William Hedgepeth.

Sheila Burkett was born October 20, 1946 to Ira Smith and Ora Moore Smith. She had one brother, Walter Smith, one sister, Shirley Smith. She also had two half-brothers, Henry and Orion Meready.

Wesley and Sheila were married December 28, 1965. They have one son, Jerry Wayne Burkett that was born November 16, 1967.

Wesley, Sheila and Jerry Burkett started attending Sandy Bottom Baptist Church January 1980 on an invitation from Bobby and Gloria Croom. Joe Coker was pastor. His loving and godly spirit was so warm and caring it made you know that was what you needed in your life. Wesley and Sheila were baptized on May 25, 1980 and are very thankful for their Church family.

ROGER AND TAMMIE CLEMENTS



My sister, Pam Daughety, was a member at Sandy Bottom Church, when she asked me to visit. I was looking for a church. From the moment I walked in the doors I knew that was where I belonged. I was welcomed by some of the most loving people that I had ever met. I joined the church August 8, 1993 along with my daughters, Kim and Ashley Wiley. Kimberly was baptized on August 8, 1993 and Ashley was baptized here on March 29, 1995. We love our church and our church family very much.

My husband Roger and I were married at Sandy Bottom on July 25, 1998 by our minister at that time, Rev. Tom Jones. Rev. Jones, and his wife Shirley, helped Roger become the Christian he is. At this time, Roger serves as an active Deacon and serves on other committees, along with occasionally teaching Sunday School. I along with Roger teach children's church, teach Vacation Bible School, and serve on other committees. My daughter Ashley also helps with children's church and with the nursery.

Anyone looking for a loving church, this is where they need to be. Everyone in our church loves God and loves their church family so much.

Our Sunday School class is very special. Mrs. Gloria Croom is a wonderful teacher and is such an inspiration to both Roger and me. She is always there for any need we may have as well as anyone in our church. That is why our church is so special. I hope my family will continue to grow in love and faith and will always be a member of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church.

BOBBY AND GLORIA CROOM

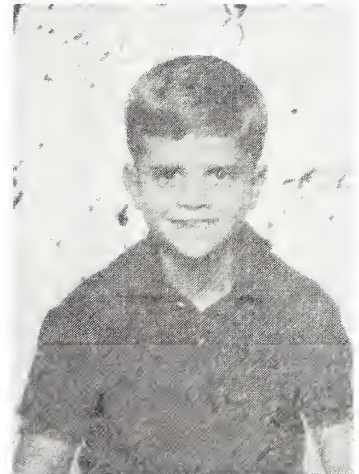


Bobby Carroll Croom is the middle son of James Earl and Sybil Grimes Croom. He was born February 1, 1944. Bobby has attended Sandy Bottom Baptist Church since he was a small boy. He was baptized in November of 1955, and credits much of knowing the Lord to Mr. and Mrs. Joe Avery. Bobby has enjoyed serving God as a deacon, Sunday School teacher, youth leader, Treasurer of the church, choir member, Sunday School Director, active Men's Fellowship member, and on various committees. He has been a great influence setting a godly example for God, to his family, friends, and community..

On June 23, 1962, Bobby married Gloria Farmer, daughter of Helen Marie Westbrook and Wilburn Lester Ingram, II. Gloria was born April 23, 1944. She attended New Hope Baptist and was baptized August 5, 1956. She transferred her membership by letter to Sandy Bottom Baptist Church August 8, 1962. The joy, friendliness, and love of the church family gave her a great feeling of acceptance. She has served as youth leader, children's choir leader, assistant adult choir leader, Treasurer of the church, Mission Friends' leader, choir member, Sunday School teacher, and has served on many committees. She loves serving God.

On March 4, 1968, Bobby and Gloria were blessed with a daughter, Pamela Hope Croom. She was the first granddaughter in the James Croom Family. Everyone was delighted! She has attended church since birth. She was baptized April 4, 1979. She has a son, Waylon Lee Minton born December 21, 1994. Pam

is married to Garland Smith of Trenton, North Carolina where they reside. They attend Kinston Pentecostal Holiness Church.



On February 25, 1975, Bobby and Gloria were blessed with a son, Bobby Carroll Croom, Jr. He has attended church since birth. He was baptized June 1982. He is married to Monica Lago from Gastonia, North Carolina. They reside in Raleigh, North Carolina where they attend Forest Hills Baptist Church.

We are thankful to God for watching over us all these years. We are truly blessed and happy that God has allowed us to be part of the celebration of the 100th year anniversary.

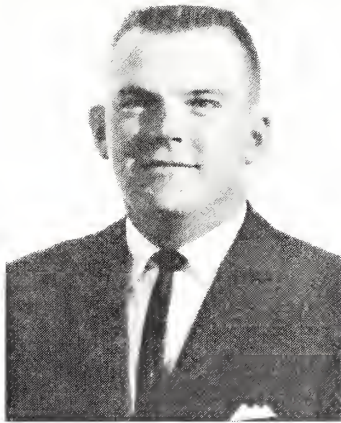


BRUCE AND ELOISE CROOM FAMILY

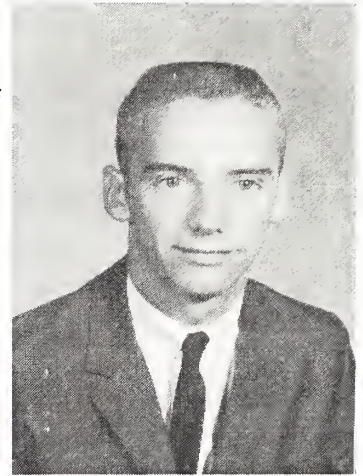


Abner Bruce Croom was the son of the late Jesse Jackson Croom and Mary Moore Croom. He was born September 21, 1913, and was one of eight children. He joined Sandy Bottom Baptist Church in 1930. While attending Moss Hill High School, he met Eloise Hardy. She was the daughter of the late James Romulus (Jim) Hardy and Bessie Amelia Oast Hardy. Eloise was born May 5, 1917 and was the oldest of five children. Bruce and Eloise dated for four years in High School. They both graduated from Moss Hill on April 20, 1934. They were married at her parent's home on December 19, 1934. After their marriage, Eloise moved her membership from Holy Innocents Episcopal Church and they both attended Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. They walked to church for several years. They both worked for the church on different committees. They served on the food bereavement committee for twenty years. Bruce was chairman of the building and grounds committee when they built the parsonage. He helped to cut down the trees on the church ground to provide space for new Sunday School rooms which he helped build. Eloise taught Sunday School for many years. During this time they had two sons, James Bruce Croom and Linwood Lee Croom.

James Bruce joined the church in October 1948, at the age of twelve. The Rev. Fredrick Jones was the pastor. Linwood Lee joined the church in October 1952 at the age of eight. The Rev. Johnie Perry was the pastor. In 1964 Bruce helped to build the parsonage, and in 1976 he helped build the Fellowship Hall, which



James Bruce also helped to build. Bruce was an ordained deacon and he was secretary of the Men's Sunday School Class for many years.



The family attended church on a regular basis and received many perfect attendance pins. Bruce received a pin for seven years. Eloise received a pin for fifteen years. James Bruce received a pin for twelve years, he then

went into the Army. Linwood received a pin for thirteen years until his death. The family was very active in the church doing whatever was needed.

Bruce and Eloise have two granddaughters, Libbie Croom Rogers and Jamie Croom Dixon. They are the daughters of James Bruce and Violet Croom. Libbie was the first to be baptized in the new baptistry. Both girls were married at Sandy Bottom Baptist Church by Dr. Floyd Enzor: Libbie to Harry Rogers and Jamie to Jay Dixon. Bruce and Eloise are also great-grandparents to Harry Staten Rogers, III and Alex Cameron Rogers, sons of Libbie and Harry and to Cassie Ann Dixon, daughter of Jamie and Jay, who are expecting another child in November.

Bruce and Eloise were married for sixty-six years. They donated the cross on the church steeple in memory of their late son, Linwood Lee Croom, on his birthday July 8, 1990. When Bruce passed away on April 22, 2001, Eloise and family donated a piano to the church in his memory. They were both very active in the church along with their family until disabling health.

CLIFTON AND SUE CROOM



Clifton is the son of Rufus H. (Pete) and Nona Croom. Clifton stayed in Lenoir County and attended Sandy Bottom and still does today. In 1979, he met Sue Rouse and they married and moved into the community. They have two children. Jason Pike was active in church and the youth group. He met Susie Herring and they were married. They moved to Fayetteville, and have a son, Hunter, who was born in 2001. Clifton and Sue's other child is Heather, who is currently attending Lenoir Community College. She was active in Sunday School and the youth group.



Clifton and Sue have been active in the church; Sue as a teacher and serving on various committees and Clifton as a teacher, deacon, and also serving on various committees. Our family has had its low points and its high points, and through it all we have found we could lean on the church.

DURWOOD AND DOROTHY CROOM



The picture above was taken in February 1998 during the Sunday morning worship service when Rev. Tom Jones gave all the married couples the opportunity to renew their wedding vows. (Durwood and Dorothy married June 7, 1985 at the church.)

The picture includes Mark, on the right, and his wife, Susan, their children, Adam Croom and Megan Halso; Steven, on the left, and his wife, Crystal Stroud. Mark and his family live in Goldsboro and attend First Pentecostal Holiness Church. Steven and Crystal live in Snow Hill and attend Jackson Heights Baptist Church.

FRED W. CROOM & FAMILY



Fred W. Croom was born on May 5, 1918 to Jesse Jackson and Mary Moore Croom. From birth, Fred attended Sandy Bottom Baptist Church, and in 1930, at the age of twelve, was baptized and officially joined the church.

He left Sandy Bottom April 13, 1942 when his country called him to serve in World War II. He served in the 153rd Heavy Field Artillery Battalion, VII Corps in the United States Army. Leaving stateside, he traveled through France, England, Belgium and Germany. He received the EAMET Campaign Medal with 5 Bronze Stars for engagements at Normandy, Ardennes (Battle of the Bulge), Central Europe, Northern France and the Rhineland. He was also awarded the American Theater Campaign Medal, Good Conduct Medal and Victory Medal. After his honorable discharge November 19, 1945 from the United States Army, Fred returned to Sandy Bottom.

On January 16, 1946, Fred married Eleanor Hardy, daughter of James Romulus (Jim) and Bessie Amelia Oast Hardy. Fred and Eleanor began their family in 1949 with the birth of Linda. Louise and Frederick were to follow in 1951 and 1953 respectively. From their birth, it was important that the church be an integral part of their children's lives.

Fred was always active, serving in many leadership capacities in the church, including; Trustee, Deacon, Chairman of the Deacons, Sunday School Director, church secretary, Treasurer and teacher. Less traditional but extremely important,

Fred would always make sure the gas heaters were 'lit' and the building always warm for all services. He loved music and was always active in the choir, and from 1975 until his illness he served as Minister of Music.

Fred was relentless about serving his Lord, and about being in church. He was proud of his forty-six years of Sunday School pins for perfect attendance. Not because of the pins, but for their significance. It was all about a promise he had made on a Sunday morning in 1944 from a frozen foxhole with enemy mortar shells and anti-personnel bombs exploding in every direction - If he made it back - he WOULD be in church on Sundays.

Eleanor taught in the nursery for over twelve years and the Junior girls for five years. She also played an active role in the annual two weeks of Vacation Bible School, as she recalls, "*at a time when there was NO in-door plumbing - Many kids, and many trips to the outhouse!*" Her most important credit, I believe, was her diligence in making sure her children were always active and frequent participants in church activities, learning the Christian values that are so important. A benchmark of her accomplishment came in 1959 when Linda, Louise and Frederick all joined Sandy Bottom Baptist Church, and were baptized by the Reverend E. B. Booker. Results of her unwavering commitment can also be seen today as her three children try to emulate that same diligence in raising their kids with those same Christian values.

In 1964 when Sandy Bottom was ready to build its first parsonage, Fred and Eleanor decided to provide the needed land. Initially, when brought before the church on March 8, 1964, it voted unanimously to purchase a lot for the sum of \$600.00. The transaction was finalized and monies received were given back to the church. A deed dated March 26, 1964, was presented to the church on April 15th for the property. The parsonage was completed in October 1964.

Fred W. Croom, a lifelong member of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church, died on November 29, 1988. A music stand and plaque were given in dedication for his service to the church and his servitude as Music Director from 1975-1988. The Fred Croom family had chimes installed at Sandy Bottom Church in 1990, in his loving memory.

Surviving him at his death, was his wife, Eleanor Hardy Croom, his three children and their spouses; John and Linda Rouse, William D. (Danny) and Louise Ratley, Frederick and Joy Williamson Croom. Three *grandchildren* at his death were Dana Jo Rouse, Jason Marc Ratley, and Stacey Danielle Ratley.

As of this writing, there are two additional grandchildren; Denisen Elizabeth Croom and Anna Lane Croom. The first great-grandchild is expected October 2002 to Jason and Brandy Keller Ratley.

WHEN THE ROLL WAS CALLED UP YONDER

in Precious Loving Memory of:

FRED W. CROOM

(May 5, 1918 - November 29, 1988)

Ever since I can remember,
 my dad was always there
 he talked with me of Jesus
 and the cross He had to bear.
He told me all about His love -
 of how He lived and died -
 And said if we would ask Him,
 He would never leave our side.

Every day my dad would pray
 and his Bible he did read
 of how the Lord would keep us
 and answer every need.
He served his Lord with gladness,
 with songs that filled his heart.
 He kept his eyes on Jesus -
 from His ways he would not part.

My dad was not a rich man,
 yet the richest I have known
 Earthly wealth - he may not have reaped -
 but was for heaven, that he had sown
Like the crashing waves and 'sands of time',
 our lives here come and go,
 There was not time to harvest here
 just for his Lord to sow.

My daddy had the answers
 To this life and its end.
 He knew that leaving here
 was but to round one final bend.
His Jesus would be at the gate,
 to heal and make him whole -
 I KNOW THE LIFE - That my Daddy Lived -
 His name was on the ROLL!

*Now he's gone from these shores of life, onto those streets of gold
His Jesus met him at the gate- he's been added to the fold.
The pain, the tears and the cross he bore - his Jesus took away
Exchanged it for a crown of gold, and a soul made whole that day.*

Frederick L. Croom

HILDA TAYLOR WHITFIELD CROOM



Hilda and William Whitfield

Hilda was born August 26, 1916. She was the first child of Clyde Taylor and Stella Croom Taylor. Hilda grew up in the Sandy Bottom Community and was a member of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. She was a graduate of Moss Hill School and attended East Carolina Teachers College (now ECU) in Greenville for three years. Hilda married William Haywood "Shag" Whitfield of the Moss Hill Community on March 30, 1941. After her marriage she moved to the Moss Hill Community and also moved her church membership to Holy Innocents Episcopal Church. Hilda and Shag were blessed with three children: Willard Winston Whitfield born February 17, 1943, Margaret Ann Whitfield Becton born October 28, 1946, and William Haywood Whitfield, Jr. born November 23, 1948. They had five grandchildren: Tammy Whitfield Parker, Misty Whitfield Jarman, William Bryant Becton, Tracy Scott Whitfield, and Kimberly Whitfield Johnson. Hilda was a homemaker and a very loving devoted mother and wife. Shag was called to be with his Maker on July 23, 1968. After his death, Hilda continued to be a devoted mother and was also very active in her church and community. She remained a widow for seventeen years. On December 6, 1985, she married Rufus "Pete" Croom. She and Pete grew up together in the Sandy Bottom Community and he also was a member of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. Hilda was a devoted wife to Pete until she was called to be with her Maker on October 31, 1991.

Submitted by daughter, Margaret W. Becton

HORACE AND IRENE CROOM



Horace is the youngest child of charter members, Rufus Percy Croom and Meta Haynes Croom. His oldest brother, Julian Cloyde Croom, was a Sunday School teacher for several years. Irene is the daughter of Leonard Parks Hardy and Mamie Jane Barwick. Horace and Irene have five children, H. C., Jr., Donald, Jimmy, Becky, and Barry. Along with their parents, H. C. and Becky are still members as well as Becky's daughter, Kristi. This church has meant a whole lot to Irene, as it has helped her really understand and learn about the Bible, which her Episcopalian upbringing didn't do. Horace, on the other hand, was raised in this Baptist church.

Pictured below Barry, H. C., Donald, Becky, and Jimmy



JAMES AND SYBIL CROOM



James is the son of John H. Croom and Lilly Belle Spence. Sybil is the daughter of Robert Grimes and Dora Bowen. James and I accepted the Lord and joined Sandy Bottom Baptist Church in March of 1951. The Sunday School rooms were being built at that time, so we helped along with everyone else and have attended this church ever since. It has been such a blessing to support the ministries, programs, and building plans of the church. When the Fellowship Hall was being built, we gave logs for it. We have three boys that are members too: Melvin, Bobby, and Durwood Croom who have all attended this church ever since each one was young. James has served as deacon and all three sons have too. They also served on many committees. We love the Church very much; it has been a blessing to us. Sandy Bottom Baptist Church is a loving Church, and the Lord has blessed us over and over again. We have seen many pastors come and go and we loved them all. We pray for this church in our prayers every day, praying that the Lord will keep blessing it on and on as the years go by. Each one of our daughters-in-law is a member too. Each one of our grandchildren is or has been a member here. Some are still here and some have moved to another town and moved their membership.

JESSE AND GLADYS CROOM



Jesse has been attending the Sandy Bottom Baptist Church all of his life. He joined the church in September of 1930, and was baptized in Jackson's Pond. He has been active in all the programs of the church except for the year and a half he was in college at Mars Hill.

He has taught the Adult Men's Sunday Class since he was twenty years old. He has served as Sunday School Superintendent for several years. He has served as Baptist Young People's Union (BYPU) president and also as a deacon of the church and sometimes as chairman.

He has served on the Executive Board of the Neuse Baptist Association for the church for over fifty years. He has given a brief history of the church at many of the Homecoming services. He also has served as *Biblical Recorder* representative for many years.

He is a member of the Baptist Men's group and helps people in the community. He also has kept the shrubbery trimmed for the last several years at church and has taken his turn in mowing the grass every year.

He has served the church in many other ways, and he praises the Lord for giving him the ability and strength to continue. He is chairman of the Centennial Committee.

Jesse and Gladys Baker were married December 18, 1940. Jesse was already a member at Sandy Bottom Baptist Church, and Gladys joined the church in May of 1941. Both have been active in the church ever since, taking part in most of the organizations of the Church, both in presence and financially. They have six children, three girls and three boys. Each has been active in the church while at home, before marriage and after leaving home each has taken an active part in the churches they attend.

Jesse Moore Croom, born March 21, 1917, was the fifth child of Jesse Jackson Croom and Mary Moore Croom. Jesse Moore was the first child born in the second house of J. J. and where Nettie Croom lives now at the second home place at Sandy Bottom.

Jesse married Gladys Baker, daughter of Chancey Baker, Sr. and Hattie Jones from Pitt County. Her parents lived in Kinston and worked at Glen Raven Cotton Mills. After their fifth child was born, they moved back to the country in January of 1921 on Strawberry Branch Rd. Six months later, on July 11, 1921, Gladys was born, that means she was city bred and country born. She was their sixth child and second daughter.

Jesse and Gladys met going to church, Sunday School, and social activities at Webb Chapel and Sandy Bottom. They went to church at Sandy Bottom on December 10, 1939 and were married December 18, 1940. They both have served and held many offices at church. Jesse was baptized in 1930 by Rev. Blackman in Simon Jackson's pond at age thirteen. Gladys was baptized on May 27, 1941 by Rev. Norman Arant in Gordon Street Christian Church's baptistry where her mother was a member. She was nineteen. Today is 2002; they have three sons and three daughters, twenty grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and stepchildren.

They have been married for sixty-one years and live in the same house where Mr. J. J. started keeping house the first time. He built the house with three rooms and a kitchen. As the family increased, he added more rooms.

The house was built with green lumber. When they came here, the lumber had dried out and cracks were in the floor as wide as your finger. They put new flooring in to close the cracks. They have made many changes since 1940, when they first moved here. This was a hospitality house for the church. They fed pastors and families on Sundays during revival, during sickness, and when the electricity went off. God has blessed them in so many ways and has been good to them, all the time.

They have had prayer meetings and WMU meetings here, Youth meetings and socials for the Jr. Department, and Backyard VBS. Before the church got a fellowship hall, their house was a busy place. They kept the visiting VBS worker and the Hunt's twin boys and daughter while he was sent to Fort Caswell to recuperate for two weeks. They also had Scout meetings, GA's and YWA's.

Their six Children:

Their first child was Mary Ann, born November 27, 1941. Mary Ann was baptized at age nine. She went up to the altar three times, then finally at a revival Rev. Whitley said, "Mary Ann knows what she is doing, let her be baptized." She married Melvin Croom when she was a Senior and all her grades went up five points. She was the "Popularity and Beauty Queen" in her class the first year she started to school and also the year she graduated. She studied piano six years at Moss Hill School under the direction of Mrs. Roland Davis. She is a wonderful musician at Sandy Bottom, playing the organ and the piano. She worked with Sprint thirty-two years. They live at Sandy Bottom and they are very active in church work. She is the musician and secretary. Melvin is an active deacon, and was Sunday School Superintendent, and serves on many committees as chairman. They were baptized by Rev. Dick Whitley. They have one daughter, Melissa Ann, now sixteen years old, a rising junior at South Lenoir. She is very active also in church.

Their second child, Betty Lou Croom Jones was born January 2, 1943. She was baptized by Rev. Johnie Perry at age ten. Betty attended Atlantic Christian College in Wilson, North Carolina, where she studied business. She worked as a secretary for Pitt County Transportation Company, keeping books for fifty-five trucks and drivers, also as a realtor for Conway Realty. At the time of her auto accident she had one hundred and five listings. Sandy Bottom helped her to keep her faith through her bad times.



She is married to Paul E. "Buck" Jones. They attend Rainbow Methodist Church at Snow Hill. They have four sons, four daughters-in-law, and six grandchildren. Betty was in a terrible automobile accident in October 1988, with severe head injuries. She was in Pitt Memorial Hospital for a total of seven months. She is able to walk with a walker. They praise God for her recovery and her spirit.

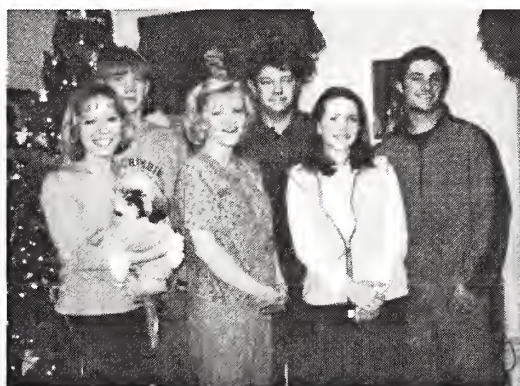
Third child, Jesse Lee Croom was born May 27, 1944. Lee was our first son and Jesse was so proud to have a son. He has always loved sports, and he begged for three years for a little brother to play ball with and when he was ten years old he had one. God still answers prayers. Lee was baptized by Rev. Johnie Perry. He served as Assistant Sunday School Superintendent. He served in the United



States Army Reserves. Lee worked at DuPont, during that time he was playing golf and met some people who worked for Farm Bureau and he started working for them and was transferred to Whiteville, North Carolina. He is manager of Columbus County Farm Bureau. His memories and influence of Sandy Bottom have made him a son his parents are very proud of.

He is married to Gail Rouse. They live in Whiteville and are active members at Smyrna Baptist Church.

Fourth child, Ricky Moore Croom was born April 17, 1954. Ricky was that little brother Lee started begging for at age seven to play ball with. He was such a joy with a big brother and two older sisters to help care for him. He graduated from South Lenoir High School with high honors and with the Citizenship award. He attended North Carolina State University, as Jesse always wanted a son to graduate from State College. Sandy Bottom has a great influence with great memories for him. Rev. Floyd Enzor baptized Ricky. He has been a deacon and done many other services around in the churches where he attended. He is now living in Tullahoma, Tennessee, repairing the hospital in Nashville, Tennessee.



He is married to Pam Searcy. They now live in Tullahoma, Tennessee. They are very active members at First Baptist Church in Tullahoma, where Pam's brother is a Minister of Music. They are involved in many activities in the church. They do dramas, pageants, concerts, mission trips, revivals, musicals, and parades. The membership is 1000 and the choir has seventy members, with instruments. Rick and Pam have two sons and two daughters, and a son-in-law. It's a wonderful family. Jesse and Gladys have received several cards and letters from the members of Rick's church during Jesse's sickness. They praised Jesse and Gladys for having such a wonderful son and family, and for the wonderful impression they had made on him and his family. The church is enjoying having them out there with them.

Fifth child, Melony Gladys, was born January 17, 1961. She died suddenly in the Dr.'s office on April 26, 1961, when she was three and a half month's old. The doctor said she just was not a healthy child and died from a heart attack. It was a terrible time in their life, but God helped them through it with all their church family. They helped them to survive and God gave her back to them two years

later with another daughter and two years later, a son. They really did do the work for them. Only God knew how to care for them and He did.



Sixth child, Tammy Louise Croom, was born July 2, 1963. She was such a blessing and carried them to the highest points of life that they could have never reached without her. Tammy attended Mount Olive College, Lenoir Community College, and East Carolina University.

She is married to Timmy Moyer, of Stantonsburg. She worked for BB&T as a trust officer and she now works at home for Moyer Fence Company. They have three daughters and a son-in-law. They are very active in First Free Will Baptist of Wilson. It is a brand-new church. She is a toddler's Sunday School teacher, plays the piano, and is music director for the Youth. She sings in the choir, many specials, and sings in a Praise team. In a tape they made, Tammy sings in nine of the ten songs. God really blessed them again.

Steve Jones Croom, born September 9, 1965, is their seventh child. He sang in a trio with Chris Avery and Al Hill, and some times Andy Croom sang with them, too. They would sing "Just A Little Talk With Jesus," "Jesus Is Coming Soon" and "Step Into the Water." Mary Ann played for them. Steve attended Lenoir Community College. He has worked at Buehler Products, Frigidaire, and currently working at Catalytica Pharmaceuticals in Greenville, North Carolina.

He is married to Melissa Ann Daughety, from British Chapel Church from the Sand Hill community. She came with Steve to Sandy Bottom and the first sight in the church thrilled her and she said, "This is what I want." Steve and Melissa were married at Sandy Bottom, June 7, 1992. It was a beautiful service. Melissa sang to Steve. Gladys was so thrilled that Steve had found such a wonderful bride. She moved her membership after they were married. Melissa is a very talented person, musician and church worker. They have two precious little girls, Maecy Carter, six, and Katie Ann, one and a half. They are serving at Armenia Christian Church, where Melissa is the musician. They serve in many other positions. While attending Sandy Bottom, Melissa started the Children's Church, and that was a blessing to their church and the children really enjoy it. They are so excited as they march out to Children's Church each Sunday. They have a nice group of team leaders to help lead them. Again, God blessed Jesse and Gladys so wonderfully and Steve and Melissa helped to do this. Praise the Lord, thanks a million.

JOHN AND BELLE CROOM



John was retired from the Navy where he had served for twenty-five years. Since his father left him a small farm, John came back and built him and Belle a home and became an active member of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church with Belle, who had moved her membership there. He served on the Deacon Board, also on the building and grounds committee. He built the ramp to the church and helped build the fellowship hall. He cut the grass when necessary. He helped build the parsonage. He wanted the baptistry put in the church so he worked very hard to get it done. He serviced the baptistry as long as he was able. He donated a pew and a table and chairs in the fellowship hall. He was a faithful member and when he was called on to do anything for the church, like doing repair, he was always ready. Belle was always faithful also. She taught the Junior girls for three years then moved up to the Intermediate class. She served on the food committee for twelve years. She was very active in the church as long as she was able.

JUDY CROOM



I married into this community. After starting my family, I started going to this church. My husband, Albert, and I started going to Sunday School and church here; he was a member already, and I moved my membership here. Both of our children, Rose and Andy, became members here. I have always been able to get any kind of guidance here. All the people are really nice; I can depend on them for everything. They are all dear to me. My children have moved on with their lives and are married and living with the Lord as their Savior. I have three grandchildren who are very dear to me. I have had a lot of trying times, but I have always survived. I love this church and all the people in it. May the Lord bless and keep you!!

KEITH AND DEBRA CROOM



Keith was born July 23, 1957. In December 1957 he was adopted by William and Nettie Croom, whom he loved and they loved him.

His life was spent in Sandy Bottom. He volunteered twenty-three years with the Fire Department. This was his way of serving his community.

On July 26, 1996, he married Debra Griffin from Jones County. It was obvious to everyone these two were made for each other. They both loved God, each other and "their" families which blended into one big family.

Keith would look so happy and proud walking in church with Debra and their four grandchildren, Taylor, Dustin, Daisy and Chelsea (pictured at right).

Keith had one son, Keith, Jr. Debra had two daughters, Nichole and Stephanie, and two sons-in-law Jeffrey and Jimmy, Jr. "Eubanks."



Debra and Keith usually worked as a team; they helped with the nursery, children's church and Bible School. Their work in the church together was just getting started when our Lord called Keith home. On June 25, 2001, he was killed in a tragic accident on his job with the City of Kinston. On June 28, 2001, a memorial service was held here at Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. The church was

packed. Over 400 friends and family members came to say, "we love you" and "we care," to a grief-stricken family. The service ended with the volunteer firefighters from every department in the county standing to attention as the last call came across the pagers for Keith Croom.

Debra continues to live in Sandy Bottom and attend Sandy Bottom Baptist Church.

MELVIN AND MARY ANN CROOM



Melvin started coming to Sandy Bottom Baptist Church when he was about ten years old. He went to church with Mr. Joe and Mrs. Lena Avery, who lived nearby. He would go to their house to buy milk for the family, and Mrs. Avery would ask Melvin every week about going to Sunday School and church with them. After much encouragement, Melvin and his brother Bobby started going with them, and later his whole family started coming, too. Melvin attended regularly with his family. He was baptized in 1955.

He is the oldest son of James and Sybil Croom, and a brother to Bobby and Durwood.

As he grew older, his interest turned to a particular girl, Mary Ann. They were in the same Sunday School class and Baptist Training Union class. Melvin started

singing in the choir so he could see Mary Ann more often. They were married on November 28, 1959.

Melvin served in many positions of the church. He was the Sunday School teacher for the Junior boys in 1976 and 1977. In the fall of 1977 he was elected as Sunday School Director, he served for more than ten years. He has served as Deacon, Chairman of Deacons, Chairman of Pastor Selection Committee, Lay Renewal team member, Baptist Men and various other committees. He was ordained as deacon in September 1971, by Rev. Jim Hathorn. Melvin is currently serving as a Trustee and an active deacon and Assistant Sunday School director.

Mary Ann has been going to Sandy Bottom Baptist Church since she was only a few weeks old. She is the oldest child of Jesse and Gladys Croom. She is a sister to Betty Lou Croom Jones, Jesse Lee Croom, Ricky Moore Croom, Tammy Croom Moye, and Steve Croom. She joined the church in 1951 during a revival service. She was baptized April 1, 1951, at First Baptist Church in Kinston along with fifteen others, including Rev. R. E. Whitley's wife, Mary Love. The Sunday School was giving pins for perfect attendance, and Mary Ann had perfect attendance for sixteen years until 1964. She was active in GA's, YWA's, and WMU. She has served in the church in many positions: Adult Choir, Children's and Youth Choir leader, Primary Class Sunday School teacher, Adult Ladies Assistant teacher, Church Clerk, VBS teacher, Lay Renewal team member, Pastor Selection Committee, Pianist, Organist, and Secretary. She also types and prints the bulletin each week.

The church voted to buy an organ if there were someone to play it. After a little encouragement from her mother, Mary Ann started taking organ lessons. She has been playing the organ since 1972, and she plays the piano for choir specials.

After many years of marriage, Melvin and Mary Ann were blessed to have a child, Melissa Ann. She has been going to Sandy Bottom since before her birth. She has been a blessing to our family. Everyone was very happy that we finally had a baby, since we use to tell everyone else how to raise theirs.

When Melissa was eleven months old, Rev. Waits had planned a Christmas candle light service. Melvin was going to keep her at home that night because I would be playing the piano for the service. Melissa cried to go to church so Melvin brought her, in her pajamas. When we were standing in a circle having prayer, Melvin was holding her in the circle also, her eyes sparkled just like stars. Rev. Waits said he would never forget the expression in her eyes that night.

Kathryn Waits was Melissa's Primary Sunday School teacher. They talked about inviting your friends to Sunday School, and when she came home from church on

Sunday, we would have to call her friends before we could eat lunch. We called but none of her friends were at home, most of them were at church.



Melissa was seven years old when Charles Avery passed away. I had sent her to get a box from the closet. When she finally returned with a box, it was a box that had a new boy doll in it. She was so happy when she returned with the doll. I asked what she was going to name him. She said "Charles" after Mr. Charles Avery. She took "Charles" to church every Sunday for the next six months. He went more than some of the members and sat on the front row.

Melissa joined the church along with fourteen other youth in the fall of 1995, and was baptized in September by Rev. Tom Waits. She is active in the Youth Group, serves on the Youth Council, and was a member in the Children's Choir.

On Sunday afternoon, January 27, 2002, five days after her sixteenth birthday, Melissa and her friend, Jonathan Dixon, were coming home from Youth Bible study. When Jonathan was turning off the road at our house, a lady ran into the back of his truck. The truck overturned in our driveway, and the truck was a total loss. By God's grace they both crawled out of the truck and they were not hurt. Praise God.

RUFUS H. AND NONA CROOM FAMILY



Rufus H., (although no one knew him as that, everyone called him Pete), and Nona Croom lived and raised their family on a farm in Sandy Bottom. Pete was a farmer who raised tobacco, corn, and soybeans. During the time when farming was not taking up all his time, he worked and took on jobs in the neighborhood as a carpenter. His wife did not work outside the home, but had a full time job helping to raise two children, Rufus and Clifton. On Sundays, there was little question where the family would be found, and that was at Sandy Bottom Baptist Church, the church we could almost see from our back door. I can even remember walking one Sunday morning when there was snow on the ground. I don't know if I can remember a lot of the sermons or what happened, but I do remember that almost every Sunday momma would have a great Sunday dinner cooked.

Pete had an active role in the church as a teacher and a deacon. In addition, he would help by lending his expertise as a carpenter on projects at the church, which included renovations and additions, including the gazebo and fellowship hall. Nona was also active and participated by doing what she could, which included cleaning the church, which at that time was done by the ladies of the church. She really loved her Sunday School class, and attended as often as she could until she became ill and could not go any more. Still, her Sunday School class supported her and continued to call and visit. Pete continued going to Sunday School even after Nona passed away. He could often be found at men's meetings telling jokes or stories of fishing and hunting, two things that he really

enjoyed. Most Saturdays in the winter Pete would be quail hunting, and most days in the spring he would be at the river, checking his nets for shad and rock. Still, he missed very few Sundays, and would always have a story to tell.

The eldest son, Rufus, attended Sunday School until his job moved him away from the area. His job first moved him to Clinton, then to Snow Hill, where he met Amy Liles. They married in 1977 and eventually had to move to Plymouth, where he is today. They have two sons, Jeremy and Josh, and are active in the church in Plymouth.



Submitted by son, Clifton Croom

STEVE J. AND MELISSA D. CROOM



Steve Jones Croom was born September 9, 1965. He is the son of Jesse Moore Croom and Gladys Baker Croom. Melissa Ann Daughety Croom was born January 16, 1971. She is the daughter of Thomas B. Daughety and Sallie Ann Davis Daughety.

Steve and Melissa were married on June 7, 1992, at Sandy Bottom Baptist Church.

While at Sandy Bottom Baptist Steve was treasurer for the Men's Fellowship Group and sang in a trio during his younger years. He also shared his love for children by being a part of Children's church. Steve has fond memories of times spent bowling with Mr. Charles Avery's Sunday School class and riding motorcycles with Melvin Croom on the Parrot Farm. He also remembers the skiing trip, beach retreats and lay renewal weekends.

Steve will always remember the walks with his Daddy to and from church. He will always remember how proud it made him feel to see his Daddy and his uncles very active in church. Steve learned a lot from the elders at Sandy Bottom Baptist. They taught him the importance of working together on church work days to get a job done such as the building of the fellowship hall and shelter, painting and many other task that had to be done. He will never forget how Melvin Croom always turned his overalls inside out whenever he painted to keep them looking clean on the outside.

Melissa loved to sing and shared many songs with the congregations. She taught a Sunday school class, sang in the choir and played the piano some during her time at Sandy Bottom Baptist. Melissa enjoyed helping with Bible School and loved being a part of Children's Church at Sandy Bottom Baptist. She will always remember how welcome everyone made her feel when she first attended Sandy Bottom, especially Gloria Croom. Mrs. Gloria always had a way of making you feel so loved.

On April 10, 1996, Steve and Melissa were blessed with their first child, Maecy Carter Croom. On January 18, 2001, a second child was born, Katie Ann Croom.

Although Steve and Melissa moved from the area and no longer attend Sandy Bottom Baptist, they will always remember the wonderful people and the special times spent there.



WILLIAM AND NETTIE CROOM FAMILY



The Sandy Bottom Missionary Baptist Church has been and continues to be the very center of life for William and Nettie Croom. "We both needed the church," states Nettie. "The church nurtured us and connected us to the community. It gave our lives purpose and meaning. It made us feel useful. Over the years we have known many fine preachers and church members. We didn't just worship together. We visited each other and got involved with one another. We really enjoyed having folks in our home. Through the church we shared with each other the joys and challenges of life. We celebrated each other's good times and helped each other pull through the tough times. The church has been and still is a blessing. I can't imagine our lives without Sandy Bottom Missionary Baptist Church."

William Asbury Croom, born May 8, 1922, was the youngest of eight children born to Jesse J. Croom and Mary Moore Croom. William was a lifelong member of the church. A tobacco farmer and carpenter, William enjoyed participating in the many building and maintenance projects over the years. He was very proud of his family's history with the church. It was especially meaningful for William, during his lifetime, to have shared in the expansion of the church building to include the Sunday School wing and the Fellowship Hall. William also served as Sunday School and Training Union teacher, a deacon, and choir member. William loved Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. He knew what it meant to him and he was committed to serving the church.

Like her husband, Nettie was the youngest child in her family. Nettie is the daughter of William Lofton and Eula Barwick Hardy. Like William, Nettie was raised in the church having been a faithful member of Holy Innocents Episcopal Church in Moss Hill. Upon her marriage to William on February 2, 1941, she was baptized in 1951 and moved her membership to Sandy Bottom. Nettie became a devoted wife, mother, and homemaker. For many years, she worked as a nutritional specialist serving low-income families through the North Carolina Extension Service. Like her husband, Nettie became very involved with the church, serving as Sunday School teacher, WMU member, WMU president, and choir member. Nettie especially enjoyed her fifteen years of service as the church pianist.

In addition to their separate roles of church service, William and Nettie enjoyed their opportunities to serve together. William and Nettie always enjoyed visiting friends on Sunday after church. To have the opportunity in later years to participate in the Tape Ministry to shut-ins and to work in the Lay Witnessing Program was a source of great fulfillment for William and Nettie.

William and Nettie are the parents of three sons. They are: William Hardy Croom, who died as an infant; William Henry Croom, (1949-); and Keith Lofton Croom (July 23, 1957 - June 25, 2001). They are the grandparents of Keith Lofton Croom, Jr. (February 15, 1984 -). All are members of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church.

“Through the church, we became involved in the lives of many people in the community. I hope we have been able to give back a small portion of that love and support we have been given by the church,” states Nettie.

Sandy Bottom Missionary Baptist Church blessed William and Nettie Croom. The church was and continues to be the source of strength and inspiration. William and Nettie committed their lives to passing along this blessing to others through their church ministry.

PAM DAUGHETY



My sister Tammie Clements and I were born on New Years Day, and we have an older sister, Terry Jones, who lives in Snow Hill. I married Larry Daughety in 1977, and we have two wonderful children, Jamie, who is in nursing at Pitt Memorial, and Christopher who will be a senior at South Lenoir High School in the fall of 2002.

I remember so well my first real Sunday visiting Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. My cousin, Dorothy Croom, whom I love with all my heart, and Mrs. Gloria Croom, whom I also love so dearly, had been asking me on several, several occasions over time to come and visit and I just never did.

I remember waking up one Sunday morning and laying in bed thinking how I should have my two children in church. I got up and dressed the children and it just so happened that morning, Dorothy called and asked what I was doing. I told her I was going to be meeting her at church and from that Sunday on we have been going to Sandy Bottom and oh how it has changed our lives forever.

I joined the church by letter on April 4, 1993 and Jamie did, too. She was baptized on that date and later Christopher was on March 25, 1995, by Rev. Tom Waits, who had been an important part of their lives. Both Jamie and Christopher have been active in Sunday School and also in the Youth group.

I was a Sunday School teacher for a while for the Youth, which I loved. I learned so much about the Bible and about the children and I became very close to them. I have served on multiple committees since I have been here. I can say, from the bottom of my heart, that I could search the world over and not find a church that I could love more than Sandy Bottom.

Our church family is a big part of our lives. There is not one person in our church that has not touched the lives of my children and me in one way or another. They are the most loving people and God loving that you could ever meet. My children and I are proud and honored to call you our family. We will always cherish your love and our memories at Sandy Bottom. Dorothy and Mrs. Gloria, thank you for not giving up on me and for continuing to encourage us. We love you.

CARRUS AND MARGIE DAVIS FAMILY



As a young girl, I always wanted to attend Sunday School, but I didn't know which church I wanted to attend. When I was fifteen or sixteen years old, my girlfriend and her family started going to Sandy Bottom Baptist, so I asked Daddy to take me. After a few weeks, my brothers, Lewis and Buck, and my sisters, Tony and Audrey, started attending. Over the next few years, my brothers and sisters and I gave our lives to Christ. My Mama had been a Christian for years and she moved her membership from Deep Run Free Will Baptist. About ten years before he passed away, my Daddy gave his life to Christ.

Many people in this congregation of believers have meant so much to me. Since it would be impossible to list them all here, I'll thank the people who just invited me to attend Sandy Bottom, Katie Mae Stroud Heath and her late parents, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Stroud. They brought my family and many others to Sandy Bottom.

I thank God for allowing Carrus and me to raise two daughters, who now attend churches in Greensboro and Beaufort. I'm especially thankful that Vicky and Bennie have devoted themselves to raising our grandchildren, Hunter and Meredith, in the church and a Christian home.

As I continue to serve in a few positions in the church, I pray I will be an asset to Sandy Bottom Baptist Church.

CLARENCE AND ANN EUBANKS FAMILY



We were introduced to Sandy Bottom Baptist Church in 1964 by our best friends, Gloria and Bobby Croom. We became members and were baptized in 1968. Our children[, Tammie and Jeff,] and grandchildren[, Danielle, Cody, Sydney, and Alexis,] were born and raised here and have become members also.

The people at Sandy Bottom Baptist Church have become our family too. They have been very inspiring to us. They are so awesome.

BOB AND ELLEN HARDISON



Robert C. Hardison and his wife Ellen Aldridge Hardison, whom everyone knew as “Bob and Ellen,” strongly supported Sandy Bottom Baptist Church for many years, for they believed unquestioningly in the Bible and its teachings. Unless providentially hindered, every Sunday found them in their chosen place of worship prepared to give their time, service, and money. Bob was an ordained deacon, having all the Biblical requirements and assuming all duties and responsibilities of that office. Bob also frequently served as usher. People arriving for services found him standing at the door, waiting to extend a friendly hand, a warm smile, and a welcoming word. When asked, he passed the collection plate with unassuming dignity. Although he lacked the opportunity for much formal education, Bob had a subtly insightful mind that favored simplicity; he was more comfortable perhaps in a straw hat and overalls than in the dark suit, white shirt, and tie he wore to church. What he may have lacked in complexity, however, he more than compensated with pride, dependability, and determination. He loved his family and his church, working diligently to care for both. Bob Hardison’s presence at Sandy Bottom was as dependable as the pews.

Bob’s wife Ellen had the same solid character. She tied her home and her church inextricably together, and love was the cord that bound them. Ellen worked beside her husband in the fields, and she worked no less than he did for Sandy Bottom Church. She was a revered Sunday School teacher for adult ladies’ class, facing these classes with sincerest conviction. In her view, right was right and wrong was wrong, compromise between the two was out of the question. When

she served as church treasurer, she handled the church's money as responsibly as she handled her own. Hard work did what it could, but her faith in God gave her life direction and purpose. During many summers, she was the principal of Sandy Bottom's Vacation Bible School. Leaving her housework, her garden, and the demands of farm life, she often gave half her days to the young people of Sandy Bottom in that role. For many boys and girls, year after year, she was the familiar figure behind the pulpit, reading from the Bible and telling character stories. Bible School was important to her, the young people who attended were important to her, and she brought to her service there the same caring diligence she brought to her washing, cooking, and ironing.

Bob and Ellen had four children, who were active in Sandy Bottom Church. All still attend church regularly as adults, though none presently attend Sandy Bottom. Many older members of Sandy Bottom will remember Bobby, Marjorie, Neal, and Mary Ellen as youngsters growing up at Sandy Bottom. They involved themselves in their appropriate classes in Sunday School, Training Union, and Vacation Bible School. Bobby, the oldest, eventually became a deacon, the first unmarried deacon at Sandy Bottom, a controversial election at the time since the Bible states that deacons should be married. He also sang in the choir and taught a Sunday School class of junior boys. Every member of that class became a Christian while he was its teacher. His sister Marjorie, who had an exceptional soprano voice, also sang in the choir. Moreover, people frequently asked her to sing on special occasions, weddings, and in other special services. Sometimes she helped her mother in Bible School, a benefit she greatly enjoyed even more than the refreshments served during break. Everyone looked forward to those refreshments because they were more than a few Jack's Cookies and Kool-Aid. Sandy Bottom had the good Stuff—Peter Pan peanut butter, Ritz Crackers, and Pepsi Cola. The family left Sandy Bottom before Neal and Mary Ellen were old enough to involve themselves in adult activities, but they participated in special activities and Christmas programs whenever a shepherd, wise man, or angel was needed.



The Christmas plays were great fun for all, especially the rehearsals. Not many folks could find as much humor as they did in rehearsing the line "I see the star!"—A line that on the surface doesn't seem comical at all. But young people often see humor where others do not. After the Christmas programs always came the presents under the tree and the paper bags of fruit and treats. Each member of the Sunday School, when his name was called, went to the front of the church,

received a paper bag, and walked across the front while the deacons dropped oranges, apples, walnuts, a box of raisins, and Tootsie Rolls in his bag. Bags were even delivered to church members who were unable to attend the program. Sometimes someone even dressed up as Santa and handed out the presents given in each class by “drawing names” among its members. Another favorite during Christmas was the caroling, bundling up for a cold night’s ride to visit folks, especially the sick and shut-ins, to sing carols in frosty a Capella.

Church services and social activities in the church gave the Hardison family experiences they fondly recall. Mary Ellen remembers singing in the choir and the fellowship she found there. Once her voice made one of a duet with Lillian Pittman. The church gave them their only opportunities to go to the beach. Mary Ellen remembers her trip to Carolina Beach with her Sunday School class, a rare pleasure even though the surf swept away her glasses. Marjorie remembers several Sunday School outings to White Lake. On one of these she had her first lessons in floating from Mrs. Eunice Taylor, her Sunday School teacher at the time and her future mother-in-law. Neal also remembers the beach trips, especially the huge blisters from sunburn he had from one of them. Other social contacts came with visiting evangelists and missionaries, for the Hardisons invariably invited them as guests in their home for a good home-cooked meal with all the trimmings. Sandy Bottom’s minister was a frequent guest at the Hardison’s table, but visitors from distant places were very special. The outings and the church’s special visitors allowed this family, especially the children, to experience people and places rarely visible on a tobacco farm. They are thankful to Sandy Bottom for these special times.

Bob and Ellen are both dead now. A heart attack took Bob in 1972, and cancer took Ellen in 1994. All the children, however, are doing well. All four are grandparents. Bobby, as many at Sandy Bottom know, still works with CarQuest; Marjorie retired as a state employee from Caswell Center; Neal retired from the state’s community college system; Mary Ellen works at Monk’s Furniture near LaGrange. Bobby, Marjorie, and Mary Ellen live in the Kinston area while Neal lives in Clinton. All regularly attend churches near their homes. Bob and Ellen would surely be proud of them.

Submitted by daughter, Marjorie H. Taylor

MIKE AND SANDY HARDISON



In 1966 Jerry and Bernice Moody adopted my sister and myself. As small children we attended Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. We regularly participated in Sunday school and were members of the children's choir. As we grew older, we joined Mr. and Mrs. Charles Avery's youth group. The Averys were very dedicated, people and took a genuine interest in the young people in our community. They took us bowling, skating, and on picnics at there home quite a few times. They took the time to keep us active in our church and community.

As children we also attended another church for a short time. This church was Daly's Chapel Church. In this church we were also involved in the choir and we participated in Bible drills. In 1972 at the age of ten I was baptized. In 1975 we returned to Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. During my childhood my sister and I began to sing as a duet and later we sang with some friends as a quartet.

Sometime during my teenage years my family stopped attending church. This eventually led to a divorce between my parents. At the age of sixteen I met and fell in love with Michael Hardison. We were married August 8, 1980. I was still not going to church. I had my first son in November of 1986. I was so very proud of Joshua Adam Hardison. In 1986 my paternal grandmother, and Mrs. Mary Ann Croom kept telling me to return to the church. Thank God that they were persistent. They would call me every Sunday, wanting me to take my family to church. One day I gave in and went back. My family and I have been attending

church annually since that day. In fact my oldest son, Josh, was dedicated to the church by Mr. Tom Waits in 1986 and baptized March 26, 1995.

I am very proud to say that my husband, Mike, was baptized in 1989. Since that time, he has held several positions in the church. Some include deacon, Sunday School director, R A advisor, Baptist Men Association member, youth group worker, VBS director, choir member, and worker on several committees. Mike has grown a lot in the Lord since becoming a Christian.

Our daughter, Kayla Hardison, was born in 1991 with a facial and skull problem. She has had to go through some surgeries in order to correct the problems. The church stood by our side through this heartbreaking ordeal. Mike and I are truly blessed to have the church family that we have. The Lord has truly healed and blessed Kayla. In 1991 Kayla was dedicated to the Lord and on May 7, 2000 she was baptized. She has grown in the church and has been active in Sunday School, Mission Friends, and is a member of the children's choir. Sometimes she helps in the nursery. I think of Kayla as our miracle child.

In 1996 God blessed Mike and myself with another child. Jonathan was dedicated to the Lord in 1996 and was baptized October 28, 2001. As a small child, Sandy Bottom Baptist church played an important role in my life. The church continues to play an important role in my life and the life of my family today. I am very thankful for the support that the church gives to my children.

Back in 1986, when Mike and I started going to Sandy Bottom Baptist Church, I asked the Lord to give me some kind of a sign of what He wanted me to give back to the church. Because of the many blessings that I have received, I felt that I needed to give something back to the Lord. That week, Mr. Waits came to my house and asked me if I would like to work with the youth program. There was my sign. I began working with our youth group that very week. I have never regretted this job. I have been blessed over and over again by some wonderful young people. I've been on quite a few trips with these young people. We have been to places such as; The Carowinds, Busch Gardens, King's Dominion, White Lake, New York, and have visited several colleges. There has never been a dull moment. I have had a lot of fun with our youth group. I have been blessed once again with a lot of wonderful memories. We have laughed, cried, sung, and yes played jokes on each other. Working with these young people has helped me to live a better, fuller life. It has helped me to grow spiritually.

I can truly say that God knew what He was doing when He put me in Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. I want to say thank you to those people that have passed on and to those of you that are here today. Thank you so much for the love and support that you have shown to me and to my family. You will never know what

a difference that you have made in the Hardison family's life. I hope that God will continue to bless you and our church.

LOLA HAYNES



Annie Ray, Wilber, Lola, and Grace

Lola Rouse Haynes was born October 11, 1942 to Wilber Green Haynes, Sr. and Lena Rouse.

Wilber grew up in the Sandy Bottom area and had three aunts, Meta Haynes Croom (Mrs. Rufus P.), Nancy Emily "Nimmie" Haynes Croom (Mrs. Seth), and Lizzie Cauley Haynes (Mrs. William Henry "Buck" Haynes) all of whom were charter members of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church.

Today Wilber and Lena have three daughters who are members of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church: Annie Ray Haynes Heath, who joined in 1972; Lola Rouse Haynes, who joined in the early 1990s; and Evelyn Grace Haynes Barwick, who joined in the mid 1990s. Today Grace is the most active.

Lola moved her membership to Sandy Bottom Baptist Church in the early 1990s when Tom Waits was Pastor. She immediately started to work as a G. A. leader. Melissa Ann Croom, Heather Croom, and Aimee Rouse were regular members. Other community young girls joined from time to time. We met twice a month on Sunday nights. We were active in the Neuse Association G. A. events

participating in sleep overs and other G. A. activities. Later Crystal Swinson, Samee Jo, and Sarah Smith and Kayla Hardison joined before I gave it up. At this same time Ann Eubanks had Mission Friends. I enjoyed my years as G. A. leader remembering the early years at Union Baptist Church as a G. A. member.

In 1998 when I retired from teaching in the Kinston-Lenoir County Public Schools, my interest changed and I wanted to do something with older adults. When Steve and Cari Gillette came to our church in 1999, I along with others re-created the JOY Club (Just Older Youth). We continue to meet every fourth Monday with ten to twelve members.

Some of my fondest memories at Sandy Bottom Baptist Church are my membership in the Adult #1 Sunday School Class with Clarence Eubanks as teacher; serving on the committee with Durwood Croom, chairman, when we selected new carpet and new stained-glass windows for the church; participation in Women on Mission and of course sleeping on the floor with the G. A.s on associational trips.

It is a joy to be a member of an active Baptist church.

EUNICE FOY MERCER HILL



May 18, 1904 - May 23, 1991

Eunice was born in Maysville, Jones County to James Henry Mercer and Fannie Anne. They later moved to Lenoir County in the Sharon Church section. Eunice married William Parrot Langston April 13, 1925. Children by their marriage - Cynthia Joyce Kemper, born March 8, 1927, married Raymond Anderson Kemper of Wheelerburg, Ohio - Frances Winifred Tilghman, born May 23, 1929, married Luther Elmer Tilghman and resides in Richmond, Virginia - Charlotte Ann Jarman, born January 14, 1931, married Elwood Franklin Jarman, Sr.

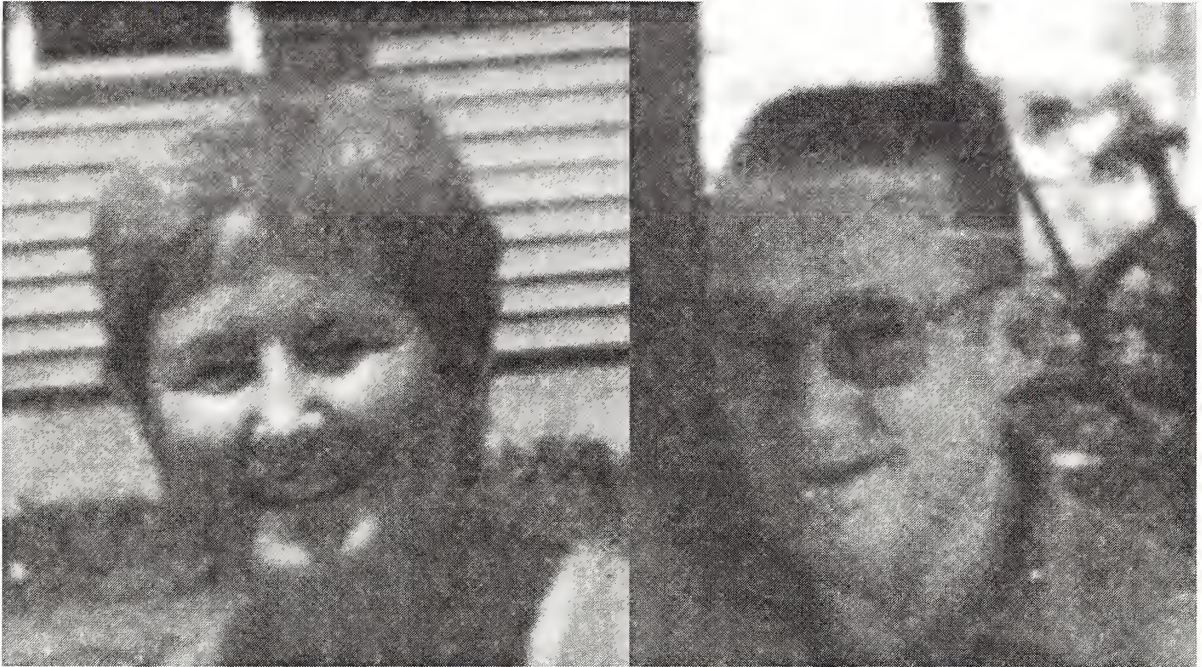
She later married Sammy Hill on April 13, 1949 and moved to the Homeplace in Sandy Bottom in 1950. She became a member of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church in 1953 and was baptized by Rev. Johnie Perry.

She loved her church and the members of her class; the JOY Club was a special place to be. She rarely missed church unless she was fishing at the beach or visiting family.

We miss her and her outgoing personality.

Submitted by daughter, Charlotte Jarman

JOHN AND ELAINE HILL



In March of 1984, right after we moved into our new home in Sandy Bottom, we were welcomed into the neighborhood by several people, but one family, Bobby and Gloria Croom, were different somehow. I kind of knew her because she was a teacher assistant at Moss Hill school where our son D. W. attended. Her son Bobby Jr. was also in his class.

Gloria asked us to come to church several times and D. W. started riding with Bobby, Gloria and Bobby Jr. to Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. He liked going and gradually got involved in the youth group. In the meantime, Gloria and her daughter Pam started inviting my husband John and me to church. I soon began riding with them to church. I too enjoyed going there and I began working with the youth group and in the Vacation Bible School the following summer. I also was asked to sing in the choir and I loved to do that as well. Everyone at the church was so friendly and encouraging.

Gloria and Bobby never gave up on John. He finally started going to church; I am so thankful that they never gave up on him and kept encouraging him to go. John and D. W. both joined the church on the same day, June 6, 1985, and I was received by letter from Daly's Chapel on June 6, 1985. John and I have been going to Sandy Bottom Baptist ever since.

I have been involved in teaching Sunday School classes for about fifteen years now. D. W., after getting a job and later moving out on his own, got married and

he has two beautiful boys, D. W. Jr., who is three, and Ethan, who is one. Both are attending church with us. We have a step-granddaughter Brandi Howard, who is six, she is also attending church with us. They have been going since they were born.



Not only do we have good friends all around us, we have a loving, caring and encouraging church family who is always there in time of need and support, always ready and willing to serve. It's the most wonderful feeling of security and most of all love that I have ever known. Thank you, Bobby and Gloria for all your love. Without it, I would not have learned nor been a part of the WOM, that I thoroughly enjoy.

Without Bobby, and his brother Durwood, John would never have been a part of the Men's Fellowship and working with the men on other projects at the church. We give God the glory for all these blessings. God has been good to us.

PLATO AND FLETA HOWARD



In 1948 Plato and Fleta Howard and daughters, Catherine and Janet, became members of the Sunday School at Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. A couple of years later, in 1951 their baptisms made them church members. Until his death in 1971, and her death in 1977, Plato and Fleta were individually staunch church leaders and workers.

Catherine and her daughter, Holly Hoffman, have been members of churches in Kinston and others in Lenoir County. Holly resides in Raleigh, North Carolina.



Janet and her husband, R. A. "Buck" Hill, were very active church leaders until she died in 1989 and he died in 1992. He was a Lay Renewal Team member and was the Ag Missions Coordinator for North Carolina Baptist Men of the North Carolina Baptist State Convention and made a trip to Antiqua with them. Their children, Al and Ginger, are individually involved in their own churches today. Ginger, her husband, Brent Holland, and son, Peyton, attend church in Wayne County.

Submitted by daughter, Catherine Hoffman

BERTHA LOU HILL HOWELL



October 27, 1920 - February 12, 2002

MARRIED

Phil Howell: April 5, 1960

CHILDREN

Timothy W. Hill: September 2, 1951; spouse: Judith Hill

Phil Howell, Jr: July 24, 1961; spouse: Vickie Howell

Teresa H. Smith: August 11, 1962

GRANDCHILDREN

Timothy J. Hill

Kelly A. Smith

Jessica R. Howell

Phil Howell, III

HER LIFE

Mrs. Bertha Howell grew up in the Deep Run community. She was saved when she was young at Deep Run Free Will Baptist Church and was baptized at Deep Run Creek. When she was married, she moved her membership to Sandy Bottom Baptist Church.

Mrs. Bertha was a godly Christian lady who cared and loved for her family first. She dearly loved the Lord and her husband, her children, and their spouses and

her grandchildren. She accepted the greatest calling in the world to be a wife, mother, and to keep her home with all of her life. (Proverbs 31:10-31; Titus 2:5) Then she was always looking for ways to care and encourage others in the church and the community, by way of prayers, cards, letters, phone calls, and visits. A smiling face, a laugh, a word of encouragement, a card to let you know that someone cares about you and what you may be going through is what Mrs. Bertha loved to do.

To know Mrs. Bertha was to love her, for she had a loving heart that cared for others more than herself.

Now she is encouraging us to keep pressing on as she leans over the portals of glory waiting for all of us to be reunited once again. Nothing in this life can compare to the glory that she is experiencing over there.

Submitted by daughter, Teresa H. Smith

ELWOOD AND CHARLOTTE JARMAN FAMILY



Elwood and Charlotte reside in Sandy Bottom. They are members of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. Charlotte became a member in 1981 and was baptized by Rev. Norman Simpson. Elwood became a member on October 27, 1991 and was baptized by Rev. Tom Waits.

Elwood served in the US Army Air Force in Guam, the Philippines, and Japan until 1950.

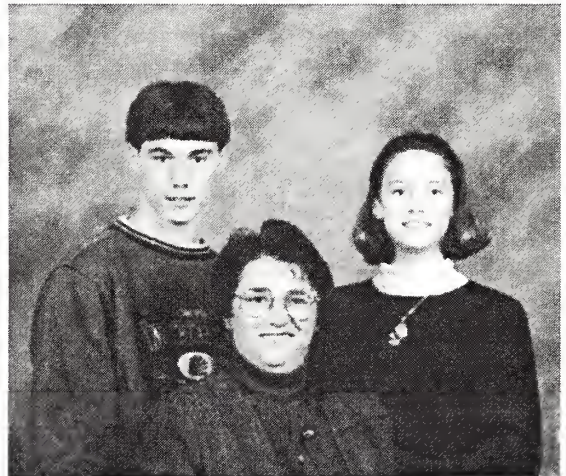
They were married October 12, 1949 and have three children, Cynthia Frances Ellis born December 17, 1950, Elwood Franklin Jarman, Jr. born July 10, 1953, and Patricia Ann Whitley born July 16, 1955. They have eight grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, and two step greats.

Charlotte was born in Kinston on January 14, 1931 to William Parrott Langston and Eunice Foy Hill and is the stepdaughter of Sammy Hill. Elwood was born in Kinston on July 26, 1928. The family originated from the plantation near Trenton in Jones County. He is the son of Claude Franklin Jarman and Hester King.

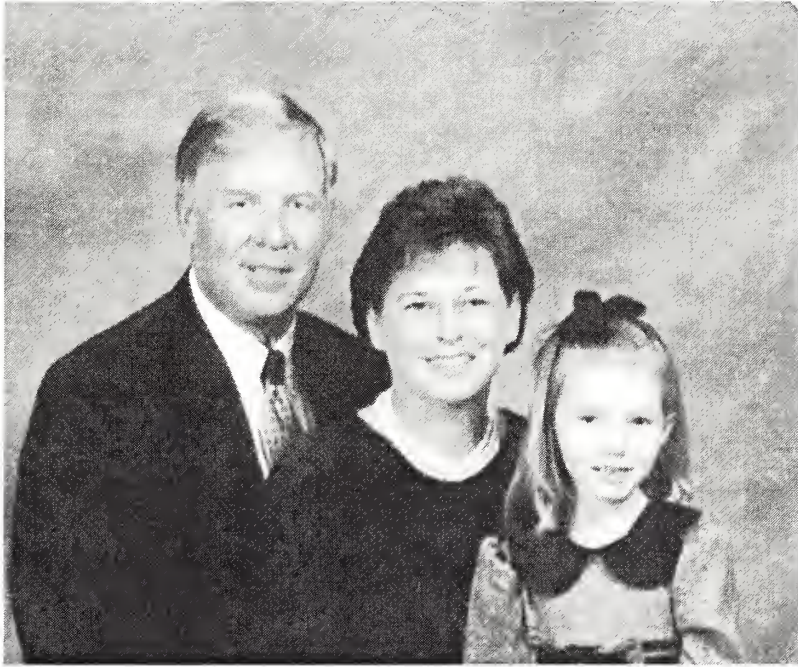
DAN AND JOYCE MEDLIN FAMILY



Grayland Dan Medlin and Joyce Cooke Medlin purchased the remainder of the old Felix Croom farm that Smoky Smith had not developed in the Sherwood Development. We built a home and had our church membership moved from the Spilman Baptist to Sandy Bottom Baptist in mid-late 80s. Since then, homes have been added on the property for daughter Diane Medlin (Children, Heath and Dana Chapman), Son Grayland Perry Medlin and wife Lenore (Children, Daniel and Lyndsay), and Joyce's mother and stepfather Mae and Doug Cooke (Doug now deceased). Grayland Dan Medlin was born in Franklin County, North Carolina on April 30, 1935 and Joyce Cooke was born in Nichols, South Carolina on September 12, 1937.



JERRY AND REBECCA MOODY



Jerry Moody is the son of Alton and Ruby Moody. His mother was always very active at Sandy Bottom Baptist Church.

On September 27, 1986, Jerry married Rebecca Davis Moody who all her life went to Webb Chapel Methodist Church. She is the daughter of Robert and Nannie Ruth Davis and granddaughter of Sybil Croom Davis and Leon Davis. Rebecca became a member at Sandy Bottom Baptist Church on April 4, 1989. On February 9, 1995, Jerry and Rebecca were blessed with a wonderful daughter, Haley Davis Moody.

Jerry and Rebecca help with the nursery during church and Rebecca helps during Vacation Bible School.

Jerry and Rebecca have been so blessed with three daughters and four grandchildren.

“God Is Good All The Time”

RUBY MOODY



I was married to Alton Moody September 14, 1935. Two weeks later they had revival at New Home Free Will Baptist Church which was about five miles from where I lived, and I joined the church during the revival. I organized the first Vacation Bible School there and taught Sunday School for about two years. As time passed we had five children, three boys and two girls, and tended a small farm in that community. We needed more income, so Alton rented a farm from Jim Parrott which was right across the field from Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. We moved on the farm the fall of 1955.

Since it was close by, I decided we would go there to church. I liked the church so I moved my membership there. Alton joined the church later. When we came to the church, they didn't have any bathrooms, so that was the first thing we had put in. In 1976 we were asked to pledge what we would give to build a fellowship hall. We got enough that they started building. When we got it finished, it was paid for. I was on the building and grounds committee at that time. Therefore, I graciously had to supervise and look after what was going on. Because a lot of the women and men had public jobs, I had to meet with the workers to see what they were doing and keep them informed about how we wanted things done. The stove was donated by Ruth Temple's family. When Charles Avery was Chairman of Deacons, he got up one Sunday and asked who would donate chairs and tables; he got all the chairs and tables donated that Sunday and a rack to put the chairs in. During this time, I asked how many would donate \$185 for a pew for the sanctuary, and I got all those donated but one.

I was asked to teach the Senior Ladies Sunday School Class, so I said I would do the best I could. On Homecoming Day in 1976, I dedicated the pews. We had lunch in the fellowship hall. There were twelve in my class to start with. Mrs. Sasser moved in the neighborhood and she joined our class. Then Mrs. Chase and Estelle Aldridge joined our class, which made fifteen. Not long after that, they both went up and joined the church.



Some of the senior ladies loved to quilt. Some had arthritis in their hands and couldn't quilt. They would fix lunch and snacks for the rest to quilt. We worked together in love as a family trying to serve the Lord. When people in the neighborhood found out we were quilting, they wanted us to quilt for them. Some ladies from other churches came and helped us quilt for the fellowship. If someone passed away in the church and community, we always helped feed the family. We always fixed a meal for the revival preacher. We always gave to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and other things that came up in the church out of our quilting money. We gave several donations to help pay for the heating and air conditioning in the fellowship hall. We quilted a quilt and sold tickets on it; we raised eleven hundred and fifty-two dollars. We took it to a lady in the community to help pay doctor bills for her son who had cancer. We kept on quilting and decided we would rent a van and take a trip with some of our money. We went to Fayetteville to see the Christmas decorations and had lunch. We also went to Maggie Valley, North Carolina and Pigeon Forge, Tennessee along with Gatlinburg, which was just 7 miles away. In Pigeon Forge we went to Dollywood and to the Christus Gardens in Gatlinburg. We went inside and saw Christ's life depicted from the time He was twelve years old until He ascended into heaven. You would never dream they could make those people look so real. Then when we came out in the garden, a headstone of Christ was there with His eyes shining. You could walk over the garden and, no matter what part of the garden you were in, it looked like Christ was looking you right in the eyes. In 1992 the church bought a van, and we continued our trips. We went to the coast several times. We would have a nice seafood lunch. I took nine head to Florida. We went to Disney World, Cypress Gardens which is a beautiful place, and to Marineland. Mrs. Barbara Stroud went although she couldn't hold out to walk very far so I pushed her all over Disney World in a wheelchair. Eloise was sick and couldn't go with us, so Belle stayed home to look after her. Belle and Eloise were both sick and not able to go to Sunday School.

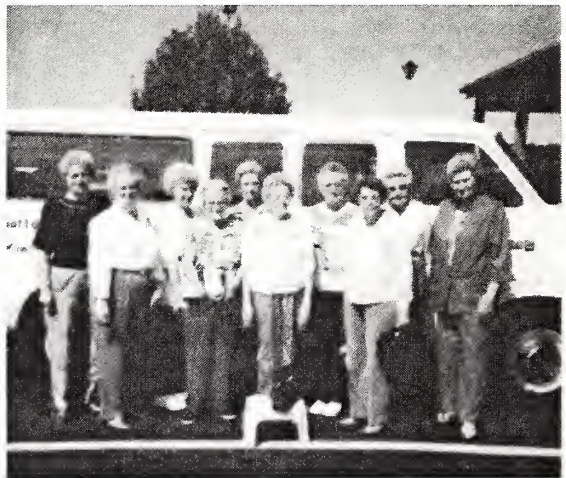
Eight of my members passed away: Mrs. Lena Avery, Mrs. Eliza Croom, Mrs. Barbara Stroud, Mrs. Ina Mae Rouse, Mrs. Nona Croom, Mrs. Bessie Hill, Mrs.

Eunice Hill, and Mrs. Fleta Howard during the thirty-five years I had been teaching, so I decided I would resign. They needed more classrooms, so I decided someone else could use the room that had more members. Belle and Eloise had painted the chairs in our room and put cushions in the seats in 1995.

When I gave up the class, the class gave me a plaque which I cherish very much. They were always good to me. We went out to eat and somebody in the church paid for our lunch. Mr. Waits said he was not supposed to tell.

The Plaque
In appreciation for your dedicated service
as a
Sunday School teacher for 35 years
For helping your class in so many ways
and
For all the good times we have enjoyed
We present this plaque to
Ruby Moody
from
Your class members with love
and sincere thanks for your devotion

Several people in the church asked me, "Aren't you afraid to take these ladies on trips?" I said, "No, we take the Lord with us." I know the Lord is real, and He did take care of us. In all our traveling we had one flat tire, the gas gave out one time, but we were close to a gas station. This man and his wife came along and stopped and I happened to know the lady. They took me to get gas. We filled up at the station and went to see the Azalea Gardens in Wilmington, North Carolina. I hit a Bantam rooster which flew up and cracked the grill on the van. I didn't know grills were made out of plastic.



I want to thank Joyce Avery for being so nice to the class. My prayer is I want God to bless her.

LARUE MOORE



In 1981 I became a member of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. Mr. Norman Simpson was the pastor there. In 1985 I started teaching children in Sunday School. Joyce Avery and I worked together for about eight years. We had a good group of children to work with, and we felt led of the Lord to try to win as many as we could to the Lord. Joyce was a wonderful person to work with. In 1985 we got a new pastor, Rev. Tom Waits, who we enjoyed very much. In 1995 I left and went back to New Hope, my former church. I left a lot of sweet people at Sandy Bottom.

FRANKIE RAY SMITH

Frankie started coming to Sandy Bottom when he was a small boy about five years old. He was baptized in 1969 by Rev. Jim Hathorn, along with his sister, Nannie Sue Smith and Keith Croom, Sr.

He was ordained as deacon by Rev. Tom Waits in 1989. He has held many leadership positions in the church. He has served as assistant Sunday School director, Sunday School Director, Chairman of Deacons, Pastor Search Committee, Building and Grounds, and is a Trustee. He also is a member of the Men's Fellowship.

He has three daughters, Aimee, baptized 11-17-91, Samee Jo, baptized 1-25-98, Sarah baptized 12-27-98, and Frankie Ray, Jr. baptized 11-17-91.

He is the second son of Norman, Sr. and Clara Mae Hill Smith, and brother of Norman Smith, Jr. and Nannie Sue Smith Winborne.

NORMAN AND CLARA MAE SMITH



Clara Mae has been a member of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church since March 1956, coming by letter, from New Hope Baptist Church. She has taught Sunday School for many, many years and has served on several committees. As a teacher of small children, she recalls Chris Avery coming into class each Sunday

saying, "Mrs. Clara Mae, I got something to tell you!" She always looked forward to this kind of love and laughter that only comes from a child. Clara Mae's favorite phrase is, "I like to go to church to hear my Preacher pray." She is the daughter of Ida Smith Hill and Frank Hill.

Norman followed in joining the church and being baptized in July of 1975. He is the son of Lafayette "Fate" Smith.

They have two sons, Norman Jr. and Frankie, and one daughter, Nannie Sue. Norman Jr. is married to Sallie Hurd. They have two children, Tripp, twenty-three years old who graduated from UNC Chapel Hill and Amanda, twenty years old who is a junior at Meredith College. They are all active members at Muir Chapel United Methodist Church in Greensboro, North Carolina.

Frankie, who has been a member since 1969, being baptized into the church. He has served on many committees and served as a Deacon. He has three daughters Aimee Rouse who attends LCC, Samee Jo and Sarah. He has one son Frankie Ray Jr. graduating from Wilmington High School this year. All the children are members of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church.

Nannie Sue was also baptized in 1969. She is married to George Winborne. They have a daughter, Ashley. Nannie Sue remembers Rev. Floyd Enzor being a great influence on her and her dad's life.

MY CUP HAS OVERFLOWED

I've never made a fortune and I'll never make one now,
But it really doesn't matter, 'cause I'm happy anyhow.
I go along my journey, reaping better than I sowed.
I'm drinking from my saucer, 'cause my cup has overflowed.

I don't have a lot of riches, and sometimes the going's tough.
But while my kids still love me, I think I'm rich enough.
I'll thank God for the blessings that His mercy has bestowed;
I'm drinking from my saucer, 'cause my cup has overflowed.

If you'll give me strength and courage when the way grows steep and rough,
I won't ask for other blessings, I'm already blessed enough.
May I never be too busy to help bear another's load.
I'm drinking from the saucer, 'cause my cup has overflowed.

Author Unknown

BARBARA STROUD



April 1905 - August 1994

She was a very special person who worked very hard for her family especially in her early years when times were very hard. Barbara was a good daughter, wife, mother, grandmother, and was loved and respected by all.

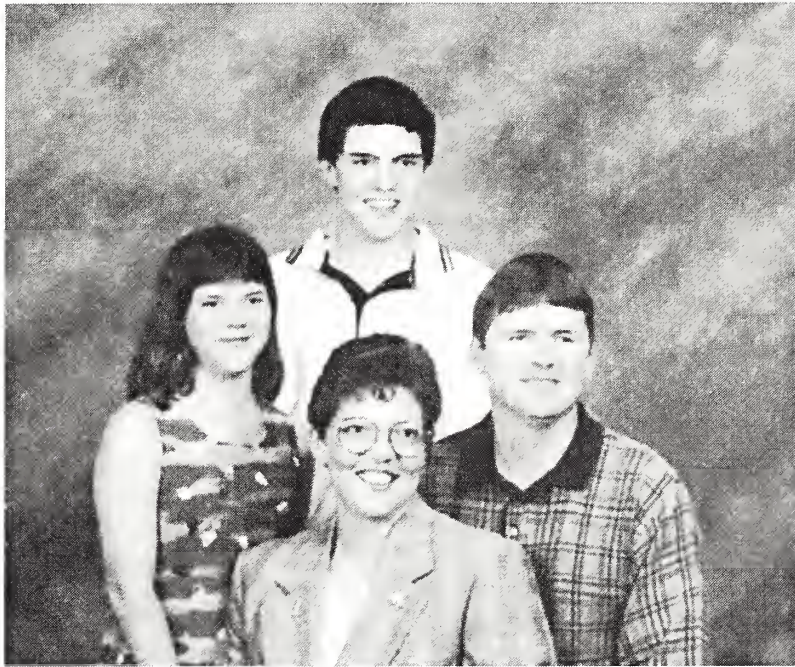
She started to church in her later years; she always saw that her children went while she stayed home to cook those good meals. When she started to church, she would not go to Sunday School; she had a son that would leave Sunday School and go bring her to church; this was something he was proud to do for her.

This church and the people in it were very special to Barbara; even as much as she loved this church, the most important in her life was her love for her Lord and Master! Three men really had a great influence in her Christian life; she would want to tell Fred, William, and Melvin Croom a special thank you!

Barbara was saved under the ministry of Preacher Booker in 1959. Barbara's family misses her here but will see her in heaven one day!

Submitted by her granddaughter, Joyce Stroud Moore

LADONNA SWINSON FAMILY



I was born in Dallas, Texas to Leonard O. Spence, Sr. and Carole Parker Spence on February 9, 1961. I have two sisters, Deborah (Debra) A. Barwick and Juanita M. Martin, and a brother, Leonard (Lenny) O. Spence, Jr. On September 18, 1982, I married Terry L. Swinson, Sr. of Kinston. We have two wonderful children, Terry (T. J.) L. Swinson, Jr. born September 26, 1982 and Crystal C. Swinson born December 14, 1985.

Due to the loving persistence of Gloria Croom and Sandy Hardison, I started coming to Sandy Bottom Baptist Church in 1980. The first time I attended, I felt the warmth of a very friendly group of people here and after hearing the music, I was sure this was the place the Lord wanted me to be. After attending for a few months I joined the church and was baptized by Rev. Coker in 1980. Both T. J. and Crystal accepted the Lord as their Savior and were baptized in March of 1995 by Rev. Tom Waits.

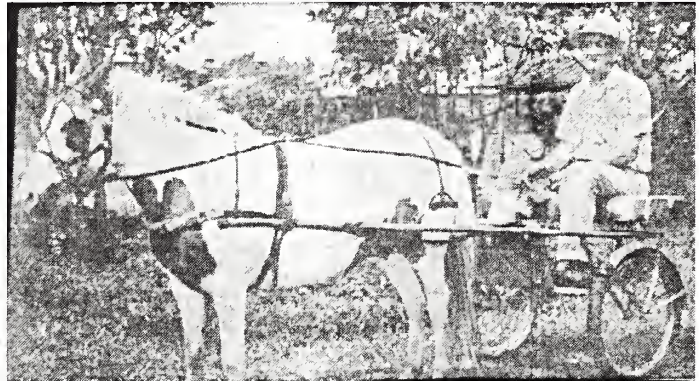
I continue to enjoy teaching 4th - 6th grade Sunday School with Bobby Croom, singing in the choir, serving on numerous committees, VBS, and being part of the youth ministry. Different members of this church have been an encouragement to me; after my oral surgery, Mary Ann and Sybil Croom and Cari Gillette encouraged me to stay in the choir. I did! Praise the Lord!

CLYDE AND STELLA TAYLOR



Clyde Taylor was born August 10, 1886 in Sandy Bottom Community near Kinston to Council Bryan and Nannie Holland Taylor. He was educated in a one-room schoolhouse in the same community and the building still exists.

During Clyde's adult years, he was an active member of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. He took his family there almost every Sunday. He was willing to help with any task and he served as a deacon and also a Church Clerk.



Stella Croom, Clyde's first wife, was born December 5, 1891 to Jesse Jackson and Maude Taylor Croom of Sandy Bottom. She also attended the one-room schoolhouse and during her adulthood she taught there for several years. After she married Clyde, she was also active in the church. She taught a Sunday School Class and helped with other activities in the community. She always looked forward to going to the annual June picnic held at Webb Chapel.

Clyde and Stella were parents of four children: Hilda, Herman, Wesley, and Ruth. Stella died at an early age. Clyde later married Irene Gray. They had one son and

named him Jerry West. Irene died when Jerry was ten months old. Later Clyde married Willie Taylor. They had a child but it died as an infant.

Hilda married William "Shag" Whitfield. Herman married Eunice White. Wesley married Arlene Sanderson. Ruth married Joseph B. Temple, III, Jerry married Judy Rouse but he is currently married to Lucille Tyndall.

Stella died September 4, 1937 and Clyde died October 23, 1968. The family members have fond memories of their parents as active church participants and as educational promoters.

Submitted by daughter, Ruth Taylor Temple

HERMAN AND EUNICE TAYLOR



My parents, Herman and Eunice Taylor, were already members of Sandy Bottom when I was born, so one might say I dropped from my mother's womb into the church. Between them, they held at one time or another, every position in the church except pastor and choir director. They both taught Sunday School; they both sang in the choir; Herman was a deacon and Sunday School Superintendent while Eunice was the church treasurer; so to my young eyes, the church and they formed the bulk of my small world. Mom gave me my first whipping in the shadow of a huge oak that grew in the churchyard, or so she told me. My offence? Crying in church. I was too young to consciously remember it, but subconsciously I believe the punishment left its mark. I remember having to sit in the sanctuary during choir practice and play with the hymnals while they sat in the choir loft to practice next Sunday's special music. At Sandy Bottom, I heard Mom sing the only solo she ever sang in church, "In the Garden." I'll never forget it. I often wondered why she never sang another.

Submitted by David B. Taylor

HORACE W. AND LACIE TAYLOR



Horace was born October 10, 1922 to Heber Taylor and Betty Croom Taylor. His mother was the daughter of Jesse Jackson Croom and Maude Taylor Croom. His mother said she played with the scrap block from the Church as it was being built in 1902.

Horace went to Sunday School and Church and joined the Church in 1936. He and several others were baptized in the Neuse river where the King Street bridge crosses and the water was very cold.

He later became a Sunday School teacher and later was appointed Director for which he served three or four years. He was later elected Deacon and is still one but is inactive at this time. He has served on several committees and still enjoys doing the things that he is able to do.

Horace was drafted in the Army in December of 1942 and served three years and nineteen days of which twenty-five months were spent in China, Burma, and India treating wounded horses and mules. He was discharged December 25, 1945.

He met Lacie Pearce, daughter of Hosea Pearce and Annie Williams, in January 1946 and they married November 7, 1946.

Their first child, Roland West, was born December 1, 1947; their second child, Kathy Susan, was born November 14, 1949; their third child, Dale, was born

December 14, 1950; their fourth child, Donna Lee, was born July 15, 1953. All four children joined the Church and went regularly until they all married and moved away. Lacie joined the Church by letter.

The children are all married and we have three granddaughters and one great-grandson.

Lacie and I are still active and hope we have a few more good years.

I'm seventy-nine years old and sleep in the room I was born in. God is so good!

JERRY WEST TAYLOR



Jerry is the son of the late Clyde and Irene Gray Taylor. He attended Sandy Bottom Baptist Church until he moved from the Sandy Bottom community.

Jerry's mother died when he was ten months old. He credits his sister, Ruth, and his brother, Wesley, for helping to raise him. Also, he is very appreciative to many members of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church for helping to instill the morals and values he learned during his early years.

He is a graduated of Moss Hill High School and received a Bachelor of Science Degree and a Master of Arts in Education Degree from East Carolina University. He retired from the Onslow County School system as Principal of Trexler Middle

School in Richlands, North Carolina, where he had a career spanning thirty years. Upon his retirement, the Richlands Little League baseball facilities were dedicated in his honor.

During his career, Jerry was a dedicated teacher, coach and administrator. He served as a mentor to countless students, parents, and co-workers. He was Onslow County's first Recreation Director. He served in this position for thirteen years and is credited for bringing youth sports to the rural areas of Onslow County. He was also active in Scouting for many years and served many civic and professional organizations in Onslow County and in the State of North Carolina.

He and Judith Ann Rouse are the parents of one child, Jerry West Taylor, Jr. West is a graduate of East Carolina University, and is employed as the End Services Manager at Dimon International in Farmville, North Carolina. He is married to Susan Helena Rigsbee and they reside in Greenville.

Jerry is presently married to Lucille Banks Tyndall of Trenton. They reside in Swansboro and they attend Swansboro First Baptist Church.

Submitted by Ruth T. Temple

WESLEY AND ARLENE TAYLOR



Clyde Wesley Taylor was born March 17, 1921. He was the second son of Clyde Taylor and Stella Croom Taylor. Wesley, as he was known, grew up in the Sandy Bottom area of Lenoir County on Highway 55. Wesley was a typical mischievous boy. He enjoyed fishing and hunting. He attended Moss Hill School and joined the Sandy Bottom Baptist church. When he grew up, he farmed with his father.

Wesley served in the Army from June 1944 to June 1946. He took his basic training at Fort Mc Lellan, Alabama and served in Rhineland and Central Europe.

When he returned home, he farmed with his father. In May 1948, he and his future father-in-law, Thomas William Sanderson, purchased Blackwood's Associate store in Clinton, North Carolina. On June 16, 1948, he married Arlene Sanderson and they moved to Clinton, North Carolina. They operated the store and Mr. Sanderson was a silent partner. Several years later, they changed the name of the store to Taylor & Sanderson and added appliances and electronics. His wife taught school and resigned to work full time at the business and to start their family. They had four children: Vonda Evelyn Taylor, a graduate of Campbell College and a teacher in Sampson County Schools; Richard Wesley (Ricky) Taylor, a graduate of King's Business College; Randy Clyde Taylor, a graduate of Sampson Community College; Robert Thomas Taylor, a graduate of Cape Fear Technical College. The three sons now own and operate Taylor & Sanderson.

Wesley had eight grandchildren; Ronnie Warren Williams, Laura Michelle Williams, Bethany Nicole Williams, Wesley Neil Taylor, Richard Steven Taylor, Ryan Thomas Taylor, Darby Leigh Taylor, and Reid Mattocks Taylor.

Wesley went to be with his Maker January 22, 2002. Arlene is still working for their three sons at Taylor & Sanderson.

JOE AND RUTH TEMPLE



Ruth Taylor Temple is a daughter of Stella and Clyde Taylor. She was born October 2, 1924 in the Sandy Bottom Community near Kinston. Joseph B. Temple, III, better known as "Joe," was the son of Joseph Burrell Temple, II and Irene Broome. He was born May 6, 1918.

Ruth grew up in the Sandy Bottom Community and she was a member of the Sandy Bottom Baptist Church since 1936. She was educated at Moss Hill School.

Joe grew up in Kinston and attended Queen Street Methodist Church. He was educated in Kinston city schools and at Edwards Military Institute at Salemburg. He later joined the church in 1950 and both he and Ruth received pins for fourteen years of perfect attendance at Sunday School.

Ruth and Joe were not blessed with any children of their own. Yet, Ruth "mothered" her younger brother, Jerry, because his mother died when he was only ten months old. She loved and cared for him, just like he was her own.

Ruth worked with children at Caswell Center for twenty years. She loved her work and also "mothered" the children. She often carried some of them to her summer home so they could enjoy the water.

Joe was a farmer, an insurance salesman, and a tester for a tobacco factory. He also owned a "CB" radio shop. He often talked for hours on the "CB" and on short wave radios.

Ruth and Joe were the first couple to be married at Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. Pastor Norman Arant married them. They were married for fifty-three years before Joe's death on November 10, 2000.

GOD'S GIFT

I ASKED GOD TO TAKE AWAY MY PRIDE . . .

And God said "No."
He said it was not for him to take away, but for me to give up.

I asked God to make my handicapped child whole.
And God said "No."
He said her spirit is whole, her body is only temporary.

I asked God to grant me patience.
And God said "No."
He said patience is a by-product of tribulations. It isn't granted, it is earned.

I asked God to give me happiness.
And God said "No."
He said he gives me blessings, happiness is up to me.

I asked God to spare me pain.
And God said "No."
He said suffering draws you apart from worldly cares and brings you closer to Me.

I asked God to make my spirit grow
And God said "No."
He said I must grow on my own. But he would prune me to make me fruitful.

I asked God for all things that I might enjoy life.
And God said "No."
He said I will give you life, that you may enjoy all things.

I asked God to help me LOVE others, as much as he loves me.
And God said, Ah, finally you have the idea.
Amen!!!

Author unknown

TERRY AND DONNA SUE WAY



Donna Sue first came to Sandy Bottom with her sister Judy R. Croom and became a member of the Co-ed Adult Sunday School class. A few years later Terry started coming with Donna and Alex in 1989. Together as a family, Terry, Donna, and Alex, then ten years old, joined the church by baptism March 14, 1999. They were the very first members baptized by Rev. Steve Gillette, who was the new pastor at Sandy Bottom.

Terry was ordained a deacon in August 2001 and is presently serving a three-year term. He is the assistant teacher for the Co-ed Adult Sunday School class. As Youth Director, he, along with LaDonna Swinson, assistant Youth leader, and the youth group have planted rosebushes and flowers around the church to help beautify it. He took the youth on their first ski trip to the North Carolina Mountains and they all came back with no broken bones. He and Donna Sue are currently serving on the Fellowship Committee and have been for several years. Alex is an active member of the youth group.

CURRENT MEMBERS

as of June 9, 2002

RESIDENT MEMBERS:

Everett & Kathleen Aldridge	Pam Daughety (Jamie & Christopher)
Rachel Aldridge	Carrus & Margie Davis
Verdie & Danny Aldridge	Eric & Stacie Davis
Jimmy Alphin	Kathie Davis
Ruby Alphin	Haywood & Barbara Edwards
Chris Avery	Clarence & Ann Eubanks
Joyce Avery	Jeff & Jeneé Eubanks
Joe Mike Baker	Peggy Forrest
Evelyn Grace Barwick	Jean Garvey (Linda)
Marlyn W. Barwick	Rev. Steve & Cari Gillette
Chuck Benson	Bobbi Jo Hamilton
Denise Best	Michael & Sandy Hardison (Josh, Kayla, & Jonathan)
Wesley & Sheila Burkett	Lola Haynes
Roger & Tammie Clements (Ashley Wiley)	Annie Ray Heath
Mae Cook	Ken & Betty Heath (Erica Rouse)
Belle Croom	Melinda Joy Heath
Bobby & Gloria Croom	D. W. & Tracy Hill
Clifton & Sue Croom (Heather)	John & Elaine Hill
Debra Croom (Keith, Jr.)	Susan Hill (David)
Durwood & Dorothy Croom	Timothy Hill, Sr.
Eleanor Croom	Becky Hines
Eloise Croom	Kim Wiley Jackson
H. C. Croom	Elwood & Charlotte Jarman
Horace & Irene Croom	Tammy Johnson (Danielle Baker)
James & Sybil Croom	Ashley Jones
James Bruce Croom	Tina Martinez Jones
Jesse & Gladys Croom	Rev. Tom & Shirley Jones
Judy Gray Croom	José & Pam Martinez (Joey)
Judy R. Croom	Dan & Joyce Medlin
Melvin & Mary Ann Croom (Melissa)	Diane Medlin
Nettie Croom	Jerry & Becky Moody
Steve & Melissa Croom	Ruby Moody
Anna Cunningham	Joyce Moore
Cynthia Cash Daughety	Bobby & Karen Mazingo (Jennifer)

Rev. Charles & Marguerite Oglesby
Virginia Holland Riccolo
Mary Daniels Rice
Libbie Croom Rogers
Faye Rouse
Amanda Seymour Sawyer
Becky Schaub (Kristi Price)
Margaret Seymour
Nina Smith
Norman & Clara Mae Smith
Frankie Smith (Frankie Ray, Sarah)
Susan Smith (Samee Jo & Aimee
Rouse)
Lunell Stroud
LaDonna Swinson (T. J. & Crystal)
Horace & Lacie Taylor
Martha Taylor (Derrick)
Roland & Melissa Taylor
Ruth Temple
Harold & Jeanette Thompson
(Elizabeth)
Jim & Linda Turner (Brent)
Terry & Donna Sue Way (Alex)
Clarence & Frances Whitfield
Nannie Sue Winborne

NONRESIDENT MEMBERS:

Clifton Aldridge
Estelle Aldridge
Charles Alphin
David Ray Alphin
Kim Aldridge Baker
Jennifer Barfield
Connie Barnette
Wyatt Barwick
Ralph Bennett
Ashleigh Bland
Sue Hathorn Brinson
Karen Byrd
Elizabeth Chase
Henry Croom
Annette Davis

Annie Mae Pike Dawson
Shelby, Daina, & Rachel
Gasperson
Anthony Harris
Billy Ray Heath
Larry Hill
Teresa Huffman
Kathy Jones
Sherry Jones
Ann Kelly
Georgia Carol Kelly
Lonnie Wade Kelly
Wilma Kay Kelly
Dennis Edward King
Thurman King
Maria Robinson Lee
Mary McDaniel
Valerie Minatel
Jimmy Nicholson
Jennifer Lancaster Parrott
Jason Pike
Tad & Rose Piner
Louise Croom Ratley
Robin Rogers
Benjie Rouse
Bernice Sanders
Wanda Alphin Seiben
Carolyn Small
Carol Alphin Stein
Steven Stroud
Donna Taylor
Julie Taylor
Kathy Taylor
Barbara Thompson
Penny Thompson
Kim Tolston
Deborah Aldridge Tripp
Gerald Whitley
Lloyd Jack Wisener

REFLECTIONS

When I was growing up, I visited Sandy Bottom Baptist Church one time on a Sunday night. Mr. Early was the Pastor at the time and the light was provided by oil or gas lamps hung from the ceiling. It was during the mid-forties that I started to Sunday School at Sandy Bottom Baptist Church.

Sunday School met in the sanctuary and I was in the Sunday School with Younger adults. The Sunday School enrollment was small. I usually walked from home to the church on Sunday morning.

The expansion on the Sunday School started before I left to go to college when Mr. Hunt was still Pastor. Mr. Whitley was called to be Pastor. I believe I was in college when he came and the Sunday School rooms built.

The heating system was a big stove in the front of the church. There was not a choir loft for a choir as it is currently.

I remember most of the Pastors from B. G. Early through the current one. In the earlier times we did not have worship service every Sunday as we do currently. The Pastor had three churches he preached in every month – Seven Springs Baptist Church, New Hope Baptist Church, and Sandy Bottom Baptist Church.

J. D. Croom

How does anyone harness so many fond memories and put them into words? It takes a lot of discipline not to wander on page after page about the people you've met at the church and the joys of those many memories which are some of the treasures of your life. Those people are the church.

I've been away from the area since 1945 but from the many sporadic visits to see my family; my parents, Joe & Lena Avery, and my siblings, those visits were greatly enhanced by my attendance at Sandy Bottom Baptist Church.

I can remember a visit at Christmas time when Bruce and Eloise Croom insisted that my two oldest children should attend the visit from Santa and receive their very own bag of goodies. I understand that it is still a wonderful tradition and one that should always stand.

And can anyone who has ever been on a "Bus" trip with the "JOY Club" ladies forget those delightful jaunts up to the mountains to see changing of the seasons,

to great places for good food but most important of all the friendships and camaraderie enjoyed by all. I am sure I will never forget my first trip when we had not even gotten out of Lenoir County before hitting an old rooster that ruined the air conditioning on the bus! What a “hot” time we had on that trip. But I get carried away with memories. My mother telling one often of the lively band she participated in and how much she loved it. The quilting with the ladies of the Club and my good fortune to be able to see and have some of their handiwork. Her Sunday School Class was the true “Joy of her life!” I look at the pictures of those dear friends and believe it was the best years of her life. She loved playing the games and regaled me, over the phone, with laughter at some of the days she spent up at the Fellowship Hall. What a wonderful place to keep elderly hearts so happy and full of life.

I remember so well Pastor Thomas Waits and his wife, Kathryn, who were such an integral part of Sandy Bottom for ten years. They still remain a part of my life because of the joys they have extended to my family and me. Their dedication to so many in the community was deeply appreciated by all of us.

I could never forget such staunch and good friends as Bruce and Eloise Croom, William and Nettie Croom, John and Belle Croom, Fred and Eleanor Croom, Mrs. Ruby Moody, and so many others too numerous to name—all who have been the pillars of this lovely church as well as the community. The help extended to my loved ones in times of need and illness of my late brother, Clifton, my father, Joe, as well as my mother can never be forgotten. They were always there like the good Christians they are and were.

I must not forget how much Sandy Bottom Baptist Church meant to my brother, Charles Avery, and still does to his wife, Joyce. I can truly say it provided a strong cornerstone for the life the two of them shared together. I am sure it has for many others as well.

The church has grown. It has been improved upon both inside and outside. It has gone through many upheavals, but it has always been a “beacon of light” for those in need of having their spirits renewed and their faith strengthened in God. It brings me a warm feeling of still belonging to my roots. As Oliver Wendell Holmes once said:

“Where we love is home—Home that our feet may leave but not our hearts.”

Part of my heart will always be with the Sandy Bottom Baptist Church and my many special friends there. It is and always will be a pillar of strength for me.

Gaynelle Hayes (Avery)

Sandy Bottom Baptist Church is my foundation. Even though I have not been a member since 1980, Sandy Bottom will always be a very important part of my life. Oh, the memories I have growing up in this church. The people have played such an important part in my life – Mrs. Nona Croom and the love that she had for me; she always made me feel so good about myself – Mrs. Clara Mae Smith teaching me Bible stories and showing me God's love – Bobby Jean Gray teaching me the books of the Bible and loving me – Bobby and Gloria Croom, who happen to be the fortunate ones to be my teachers when I was a teenager, I thank you for your patience and guidance and also for the fun times spent at your home and at White Lake – Mrs. Nettie Croom and Mrs. Ruth Temple were not my teachers but were always there for me; so many happy times were spent with these two Christian women.

I would like to thank all the people of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church for being my foundation. Congratulations as you celebrate this very historical event; my prayers are with you.

Vicky Davis Corbett

In the early 1950s the Junior girls Sunday School class met in the vestibule, Mrs. Eunice Taylor was my Sunday School teacher. I remember on one particular Easter Sunday morning she taught the class the chorus to "He Lives." Every time that I hear that song now I always think of her. I saw her at a restaurant a few years before she passed away and told her about that song and how I always thought of her when I heard it.

I will always remember dad because he always went to church and made sure that we all went, too, and as teaching the Adult Men's Sunday School class for all his adult life. He is still teaching at age eighty-five.

I will always remember Uncle Fred for keeping the church comfortable, by keeping the heat and air-conditioning set, and for being the music director and leading the choir. I remember giving him a songbook to use and he kept it in his truck. When I would go by the "Freezer Locker" in my car on my lunch hour going to the mall, I would see him in his truck under a shade tree with that songbook. He would have a new song picked out for Sunday night service for me to play. If I could not play the song, he would sing the song a Capella.

He was also my Sunday School teacher when I was in the Young Adult Sunday School class. At the time, the Young Adult class included anyone that had graduated from high school to twenty-five years of age. Well, I'm sixty years old and I'm still in that same Sunday School class because they keep moving the age

limit up. Over the years the other Sunday School teachers for that class have been, LeRoy Phillips, Charles Avery, and currently Clarence Eubanks. The name of the class has been changed to the "Any Age Class."

I will always remember Uncle William for spending his Sunday afternoons making copies of the morning worship service tape for shut-ins and taking the tapes to them.

I will remember Uncle Bruce singing "At the Cross" and "When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder" with his four brothers, John, Fred, Jesse and William on Baptist Men's Day, and sometimes he would sing with Rev. Tom Waits.

I remember Mrs. Barbara Stroud when she would come to Sunday School. She brought her son William, and daughters Carol and Judy, and granddaughter Joyce with her. As years passed, her health began to fail and for as long as she was able she would come with Joyce

I remember on Sundays in the mid to late 1950s I would go home from church with Audrey Hill, the youngest sister to Buck, Toni, and Margie Hill Davis, to spend the afternoon. Sometimes when Mrs. Bessie was sick, Audrey and I would cook dinner and make biscuits, and how Mr. Guy would eat them and make out like they were good. The next Sunday she would come home with me.

I well remember in 1974 when I started playing the organ, Aunt Nettie, who was the pianist, and we would practice for hours together getting ready for Sunday morning. We played together for about six years.

In the early 1980s Martha Jones and her family started coming to Sandy Bottom and she could play the piano. She relieved Aunt Nettie of some of her responsibilities with the piano because Uncle William was sick. Martha helped me so much when we would practice.

Aunt Nettie's health had also started declining and when Martha moved away, I started playing the piano and Tammy, my sister, started playing the organ. When Tammy got married and moved away, Kathryn (Mrs. Tom) Waits came in 1985 and started playing the organ. Cari (Mrs. Steve) Gillette came in 1999 and I started back playing the organ again and she played the piano. Currently she is the Music Director and I play the piano or organ which ever is needed at the time.

Mary Ann Croom

Rev. T. R. Hunt served here from 1948-1950. He had a daughter, Carol, and twin boys, Teddy and Heber. Mrs. Hunt was Olive Jackson from Ayden. She attended Mars Hill College where she met Mr. Hunt who was from that area. Mrs. Hunt was tiny, modest, and thought handshaking was unnecessary.

They helped us to get started in our building program. Rev. Hunt told us that we needed Sunday School rooms and we needed to have church dinners to raise money to help get them. He said when we tithed we had not done anything because that was already God's and we needed to give over and above our tithe. He was a very smart man and got Seven Springs Baptist to go full time and build a new parsonage. While he was teaching at Deep Run School, he got them to start Deep Run First Baptist Church. We were blessed to have them.

His health started declining so he went back home to the mountains and built a ninety bed nursing home, "Haven in the Hills." The twins continued to operate the nursing home after Mr. and Mrs. Hunt's death, but have since sold it. Carol is married to a doctor and they live in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Gladys Croom

I began attending Sandy Bottom Baptist Church as an infant. I am the youngest daughter of Jesse and Gladys Croom and absences from church and its activities were very rare during my childhood years.

The first pastor I remember at the church was Mr. Carroll. We lived next door to the church parsonage and I vaguely remember playing with their daughter, Esther Lynn.

Next came Mr. And Mrs. Jim Hathorn and their daughters, Becky and Susie. While they were at the church, I remember the church getting an organ and my sister, Mary Ann, began playing it regularly for the church services.

Floyd Enzor was the next pastor I remember. He used to throw the baseball with my brother and me. It was Mr. Enzor who baptized me on May 22, 1977 at New Hope Baptist Church when I was thirteen years old.

During Mr. Enzor's tenure at the church, the fellowship hall was built. It was also during this time the church had a bicentennial celebration. Some of the costumes I remember most from the celebration were worn by Mr. Enzor, Clarence Eubanks, Mary Ann Croom and Nelson Phillips, who was dressed as Uncle Sam.

Mr. and Mrs. Joe Coker and Brian were the next to serve at the church, followed by Mr. and Mrs. Norman Simpson and their children, Brian, Linda, Brenda and Dawn. While the Simpson's were there, I remember the Lay Renewal weekends we had at the church. I was in college during this time. Not long after this I met my future husband, Timmy Moye, and we were married in May 1985 and I moved to Stantonsburg.

I will always remember the following people and how they served the church: Aunt Nettie playing the piano, Uncle Fred leading the music, Martha Jones playing the piano and leading the youth choir and Melvin Croom as Sunday School Superintendent.

Some of the Sunday School teachers that I remember most were: Florence Hardison, Clara Mae Smith, Gloria Croom, Joyce Avery, Linda Stillwell and Horace Taylor.

I will never forget when I was in the third grade; I was in the hospital for twenty-five days with a kidney disease and out of school for three months. I wasn't even allowed to go to Sunday School and Church, so my Sunday School class came to my house on Sundays until I was well enough to return to church.

When I was in junior high school, I was an assistant musician at the church. I will never forget the first hymns I had to play on the organ, "Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross" and "Jesus, Lover of My Soul." Every time that I was needed to play the organ, we always had to pick out hymns that were written in the same key so that I could play them. After much practice and with much patience from my sister, Mary Ann, we were finally able to begin playing some different hymns. Later I became the regular organist at the church and Mary Ann was the pianist. When I was in college, Union Baptist Church, located a few miles down the road, was without a pianist, so they asked me to play for their Sunday services. I would come to Sunday School at Sandy Bottom and would leave after the first bell to get to Union in time for the worship service.

Music was a very important part of the worship service at Sandy Bottom and I will always remember some of the choir favorites and the special music presented at the church. I always enjoyed hearing Sybil, Gloria and Judy "Albert" Croom singing "Remind Me Dear Lord" and "One Day at a Time." Mark and Durwood Croom singing "I'll See You in The Rapture." Steve Croom, Chris Avery and Al Hill singing "They're Holding Up The Ladder." I also enjoyed singing in the youth choir and Martha Jones teaching us the song, "Pass It On." The first song I ever sang as a solo in church was "One Day Too Late."

Vacation Bible School was always something I looked forward to at Sandy Bottom. I enjoyed the crafts, music, refreshments and playing “Red Rover, Red Rover” during break time. Some of the youth that I grew up with at church were: Rose Croom Piner, Tammy Eubanks, Phil and Teresa Howell, Libbie Croom, Gwen Davis, Terry Jones and Nelson Phillips, to name a few.

I have very fond memories of the annual Christmas Program at the church. As a child I always looked forward to the program, but most of all I remember all the presents that were under the tree. I just couldn’t wait to hear my name called out. And of course, you did not leave the church without a fruit bag containing two apples, oranges, tangerines, raisins, chewing gum, and some Hershey Kisses.

While my memory is foggy on some details and I am unable to remember all of the messages or the Sunday School lessons taught at Sandy Bottom, I know that all of them had an impact on my Christian walk today. I am grateful to my family, Sandy Bottom Baptist Church and its members for their influence they had on my life. As of result of these influences, my family and I are active members in Wilson First Free Will Baptist Church. I have served as a Sunday School teacher, VBS worker and served on various committees. I am currently the children’s music leader, assistant musician and Praise and Worship song leader for our Sunday morning worship service. I have also co-directed our children’s Christmas musical programs for the past several years. My husband serves on various committees and serves as an usher and greeter. My children, Tanya and Chelsea, are very active in the Team Kids program also.

Tammy Croom Moyer

Sandy Bottom Baptist Church was my church from my birth in 1951 until I left the area around 1972. I have many pleasant memories there. My parents, Fred and Eleanor Croom, were faithful members and because of that I attended regularly. I was taught the Bible and God’s plan for us in Sunday School, Training Union, GA’s, Vacation Bible School, and the worship service. I also enjoyed being part of the choir and learning great songs and hymns. I am thankful that Sandy Bottom Baptist Church helped me to develop my spiritual life and taught me Bible basics and principles. Also, a special thanks to all my teachers and leaders for all their time, efforts, and hard work.

I am also thankful for what the church did for me after I left home. In the fall of 1976, I had been married a little over two years and my husband and I were living in Fayetteville, North Carolina. As is the case with many couples in their first years of marriage, we were trying to buy all the necessary things we needed for our home and found this very difficult. However, this was also an exciting time for

us-I was pregnant and we were expecting our first child the next spring. Now with a baby on the way, we were also faced with purchasing essential baby items.

In the midst of all this, we returned home one afternoon to find that our house had been robbed. Even though we thought we had so little, we discovered we now had a whole lot less. We were renting a house at the time and had no insurance to cover our losses. Now instead of focusing on baby items we were trying to figure out how to replace some of our lost items. I was filled with despair, but I was also filled with anger and rage. I was overwhelmed with an urge to find the robbers and punish them severely for every single item they took from us.

A week or so later, I checked my mailbox and there was a letter from Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. My dad had told members about our break-in. The church sent me a check for \$50 with a note stating you were thinking of us and wanted to help us recover from our break-in. The note went on to say that even though it was not much, you hoped it would help us. Did it help?—Yes it did!!! At the very moment I read the note, all the anger and rage that I had for the burglars disappeared. Don't ever underestimate the impact a good deed can have. The check and note meant more to us than \$5,000. You helped me to get focused and to realize that yes, there are bad people in the world, but there are also a lot of very good, caring people.

Thanks for being there in my childhood, and thanks for continuing to care after I grew up and moved away. Sandy Bottom Baptist Church will always have a special place in my heart.

Louise Croom Ratley

Sunday School. Vacation Bible School. Training Union on Sunday nights. Choir practice. Trips skating (two trips and I sprained my ankle both times). Finally getting old enough to sit on the back row in front of the fans. The trees in the parking lot. Memorable sermons. People coming to know Jesus. The joy of new Christians. The sorrow of losing a loved one.

All of the above are memories I have of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. Growing up there was really no option as to what to do on Sunday mornings.

Clifton Croom

I have many warm memories of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to grow up in a church with a loving and caring church

family who were dedicated to the Savior and the work of the church. As a youth I was fortunate to have Sunday School teachers who loved God and were willing to take the time to prepare a lesson and be present to teach and answer questions. As a parent I now know the importance of Christian education and the difference that it can make in the lives of young people.

I also am grateful for the music ministry at the church. I always enjoyed the choir, and I appreciate now as an adult, the amount of time and preparation that goes into a single worship service on Sunday morning, not to mention all the other programs. I learned the words to many of the great old hymns of the church, and those words are still with me today; words of encouragement that give me a lift in hard times; words that no one will ever be able to take from me; words that will never be outdated or worn out.

I remember the opportunity to participate in Vacation Bible School. One year in VBS I learned all of the books of the Bible. Little did I know that nearly forty years later I would participate in a musical production and recite each book of the Bible telling how Jesus was present in each one. Preparing for that event reminded me of those days at Sandy Bottom and VBS. It is impossible to place an earthly value on the training and encouragement that I received. I am so grateful for everyone who planned, volunteered, and supported the VBS programs at Sandy Bottom.

I also recall the opportunity to speak at several worship services as a teenager. At the time, I really did not understand what was happening in a spiritual sense. As I look back now, I can see that through those individuals who gave me a chance to speak, God was helping me see that I could have a ministry in teaching Sunday School and speaking at churches. As I began to write this letter, I tried to remember the numerous churches in which I have had an opportunity to speak in various programs, services, or revivals, and honestly there are so many that I simply cannot remember them all. I have even had the opportunity to speak in Puerto Rico and in Africa. The message of Jesus Christ and His salvation that I first heard in Sunday School, in the sermons, and in VBS has traveled far beyond the walls of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. It really has been amazing. However, I am not sure if any of it would have happened if someone had not asked me to speak at Sandy Bottom one Sunday morning in the spring of 1969, a day that I will never forget. A seed was planted in my heart that day; a seed that was nurtured by loving and caring people who took a chance and let me speak on Youth Sunday.

As you will notice, I have not mentioned any names in this letter for fear that I will leave someone's name unmentioned, for so many wonderful Sandy Bottom members were an inspiration to me. However, I'm not worried about that, for those who read this letter will know who they are, and those who are no longer

with us are looking over the sapphire sill of heaven at this very minute reading every word. To all of those very special people, all I can do is say thank you for loving Jesus enough to care about me.

Finally, I want to say how much I appreciate the way that Sandy Bottom Baptist Church loves my family and cares for them. Your prayers, presence, and support in these recent years have meant a lot to me. I cannot begin to express the feelings that accompany a smiling face from Sandy Bottom in a hospital room visit or at home when your family is going through a difficult time. It is that Jesus kind of love, from people who love Him deeply and follow His leading, that adds comfort and support like nothing else on earth can.

Thank you Sandy Bottom Baptist Church for planting seeds in my heart and for being a rock in my life. May Jesus Christ continue to add His blessing to all your efforts.

Norman Smith, Jr.

I doubt that my memories of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church would have any special historical significance for anyone but me; but for me, what happened to me there, the people I knew there, and the activities I met there have been profound influences for good and ill, for Sandy Bottom Baptist Church formed the foundation of my moral and spiritual life.

Sunday morning began with Sunday School, each person going to the class for his age group or sex. We rarely missed Sunday School because yearly perfect attendance was rewarded with a pin, then a wreath, and then the yearly bars that hung down one's chest like slats in a shade. My Sunday School class, the earliest one I can remember, met in the church's vestibule. At times it met in the teacher's car. Little people don't take much space. In these classes I learned to navigate the Bible, to pronounce *Leviticus* and *Deuteronomy*, and to understand the Bible's basic teachings, presented in lessons written for children. Among the first ones were the Golden Rule, John 3:16, the Ten Commandments, the Twenty-Third Psalm, and the Lord's Prayer—not a bad beginning. Classes for older boys and girls sometimes went on field trips, as the public schools would call them, to places like White Lake or the Cliffs of the Neuse for swimming and picnics. Moreover, the children and young people were often featured in special programs and plays given at Easter and Christmas. The older youth sometimes even went to churches in other towns for sword drill competitions. On one Sunday School outing to the Cliffs, the minister at the time held a hot dog while I bit off one end and the girl I married bit off the other. But more about that later.

After Sunday School came the morning worship service. I spent most of the hour looking at a hymnal trying to follow the note patterns when the congregation sang and trying to make sense of the lyrics. "Here I raise my Ebenezer . . ." (What is an "Ebenezer"? Do I have one?) Now I know what that means in the musical context, but at the time no one explained these words to me; of course I never asked anyone about them either. I had sensed early that one doesn't ask questions about such matters; a notion, by the way, I discarded long ago. The worship service became more interesting with the visits of new personalities from other churches or colleges, or perhaps a missionary come to tell about the Gospel's progress in Africa or Arizona. I remember one missionary, a man nearly seven feet tall. He said, "You may not remember a thing I say, but you will never forget my height." He was right.

During bright summer days, what kid wants to be trapped in a church every afternoon for a week or two? I certainly didn't. But like many other situations, more than I knew was happening there. The lessons I had heard in Sunday School and worship services were reinforced on those summer afternoons and familiar Biblical truths were mortised in granite. But those lessons were least desired when sunlight flooded the stained glass windows and my fellow heathens romped in woods and pastures. Besides, how was I to know that the lady who stood behind the pulpit, Mrs. Ellen Hardison, the only VBS principal I remember, would be my mother-in-law? Life's greatest blessing and its greatest curse is that the future remains unknown. But whether I saw it or not, Vacation Bible School brought good experiences. The songs, the refreshments, the character stories, and the projects were fun and beneficial. For example, I learned something about carpentry during the summer my class built birdhouses with Mister Carl Pittman. "Always cut the same kind of piece from the same pattern," he said; "Otherwise the house won't be square." That principle applies to much more than birdhouses. I think he knew that.

No history of Sandy Bottom would be complete without a mention of the greatest division of the church's membership that I can remember. Most major actors in this drama are dead now, but a few remain. Tempers flared, accusations were made, feelings were hurt, and people were offended; in fact, if I remember correctly, some members left the church permanently. The cause of the hostilities was the pine paneling that covered the walls behind the pulpit. This pine paneling, complete with knots, had covered the walls for years, but somebody suddenly found this paneling disturbing and wanted it replaced. Others, however, loved the paneling and objected to its removal. Each group found vocal allies, and the battle was joined. I was too young at the time to play an active role even had I wanted one; moreover, I don't remember what my parents thought about it. I do remember, however, the animosity generated by this disagreement. Friends became enemies; families were divided—all over a few pine boards. Now it may

be that I exaggerate; young eyes often magnify what they see happening among adults. But this I know: during one of those heated exchanges, a certain business meeting, I heard the first and only profanity I have ever heard in a church sanctuary. The effect echoed like a gunshot. The congregation sat stunned in disbelief. With this fight began my realization that no matter how pious one may appear, from the pope to the lowliest layperson in the smallest church, that underneath that piety lives a human being with all the foibles and frailties of the species, and that touching the right nerve will reveal an unspeakable depravity.

Years later, my parents left the farm and moved from Sandy Bottom. I must have been in high school at the time. We didn't attend Sandy Bottom Baptist Church anymore; in fact, we didn't attend church at all. However, late one Wednesday afternoon, two visitors, Bobby Hardison and his sister Marjorie, came with an invitation for me to ride with them to Sandy Bottom's choir practice each Wednesday night. Now Bobby and Marjorie weren't strangers. The three of us had grown up together, with our families, in Sandy Bottom Baptist Church, often involved in the same classes and activities, although no deep association had developed. Nevertheless, I accepted the invitation, not that I was interested in the choir, or the church for that matter, all I saw as a raging adolescent was the weekly chance to be in the company of a young woman who I greatly admired but considered hopelessly out of reach. How amazing and frightening it is that one seemingly unimportant decision often charts the course of one's life, that whether one turns to the right or left may be the difference between life and death. I went to choir practice, and strange to tell, later became the choir's director until I left home for college. I think I was the choir's first director who wasn't a minister's wife or the pianist. Since leaving Sandy Bottom, I've directed the choirs at Jackson Heights Free Will Baptist Church, New Hope Baptist Church, and Neuse Baptist Church; and in each one, Marjorie Hardison sang lead soprano. Those choirs, however, knew her as Marjorie Hardison Taylor, for we had been married in Sandy Bottom Baptist Church on December 21, 1963. From that marriage Charlotte gained a pharmacist and Greenville gained a licensed land surveyor. And all I saw in the invitation that Wednesday night was the chance to ride with a pretty girl.

The real history of any church must be found in its emotional and spiritual impact upon its members, not in its calendar or its cold records of names and dates, although such information has its value; therefore, a church has many histories, one for every person who joins or visits. I was a member of Sandy Bottom for many years. I grew up in the community, with the church and its people. My wife and I were married at Sandy Bottom. Consequently, Sandy Bottom Baptist Church shaped my spiritual and moral identity, a large part of who I am; its doors open to me at every corner, around every bend. Sandy Bottom is truly my home church.

David B. Taylor

Thanks to Mr. Jesse Croom for the times he has shared the history of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. May we hear it many more times!

Fond Memories:

Mr. Johnnie Aldridge, Mr. Fred Croom, Mr. William Croom, Mr. John Croom, Mr. Bruce Croom, Mr. Pete Croom, Mr. Charles Avery, and Keith Croom, Sr.

Sandy Bottom Church and its people mean a lot to me. There are some special people that were my Sunday School teachers that were very good in leading me to helping me to live a closer walk with my Lord. I was baptized at Sandy Bottom when I was about fourteen years old under the ministry of Preacher Booker. I just want to thank everyone who has prayed for me and given me love and kindness over the years. I love this church, the people, but most of all my Jesus who saved me and loves me just as I am.

Joyce Moore

When three sisters, Eloise, Eleanor, and Joyce Hardy, now members of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church, were growing up in Holy Innocents Episcopal Church, we never had a thought that one day all three of our husbands-to-be, Bruce Croom, Fred Croom, and Charles Avery, would be in Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. Wonder was it them or the church that won us over? It was them and then the church. We have great memories of both!



When I think of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church, I remember how our family was always present and the many ones that Charles and I taught through the years. Many of these, if not in this church, are now active in other churches. We taught them God's word and the importance of living their lives daily for God. It is very rewarding when I see them and they have a big smile and hug for me telling me about their memories of our teaching them.

When Mrs. Lena Avery, my mother-in-law and also my friend, would tell about the church, she had many interesting stories. She told how she would sell milk, butter and eggs and save the money to buy some of the first electric lights for the church. Now there are better lights, some of which are given in memory of Joe and Lena Avery by their family. She helped to organize the first Vacation Bible School at Sandy Bottom Baptist Church. Mr. and Mrs. Avery were loyal to the

church and taught their children and their families to be also. She was always happy when she could do something to improve the church she loved so dearly.

I remember how Charles and I would prepare for the church's Valentine banquets at restaurants. We would crown a king and queen which was a fun time for all who attended.

Another memory is Melvin Croom's black lab dog, Tipper, following him to church and waiting for him. Melvin trained him well. Melvin had a religious dog! He was like his master, Melvin.

It has been very rewarding for me teaching so many years. Some of these years I enjoyed teaching with LaRue Moore, Clara Mae Smith, Nancy Stroud, and Gail Croom. We knew how important it was to love each child and teach them the Bible letting them know that God loved them and Jesus was the greatest friend they could ever have. Teaching from college age through the nursery has been an experience I will always remember.

A special youth Sunday service was on May 15, 1977 when I planned a program for our youth with Martha Jones, pianist and Tammy Croom, organist. Doing all the things that the adults usually did, they taught Sunday School classes and presented the morning worship service. Those who presented the program were Chris Avery, Steve Croom, Tammy Croom, Rose Croom, Tammy Eubanks, Al Hill, Phil Howell, Jr., Teresa Howell, Cathy Jones, Terry Jones, Sherry Jones, Nelson Phillips and Penny Thompson. Martha and I were happy and thankful for our youth. The church was grateful for our youth having a wonderful service showing that they could be the leaders of tomorrow. When our pastor, Dr. Floyd Enzor, gave the invitation, many of our youth were standing in line for him to receive them and were later baptized. This was a most glorious Sunday. I will always remember at the close of the service the youth surprised me with a gift of red roses.



This picture was made on Men's Day, Sunday, February 12, 1984. The five Croom brothers, all members of Sandy Bottom Baptist Church are, left to right, Bruce, William, Fred, John, and Jesse Croom.

I remember and am grateful to Rev. Steve and Cari Gillette for all the endless hours and dedication they have given to the Centennial Committee,

helping us take a journey through years from 1902 to 2002 and searching through our history that it may be an inspiration and a treasure of enjoyable moments for all.

When Ruby Moody decided after teaching Sunday School for thirty-five years that she would teach no longer, I began to think of all the hard work and time she had devoted to the church. I had served on many committees with her and we always enjoyed accomplishing good things for the church.

I wrote this poem for the Senior Ladies' Class before I was a senior lady in honor of her dedication.

A WONDERFUL TEACHER, OUR FRIEND

There was a good teacher, for thirty-five years,
She had enough students to give her some cheers;
But then too they weren't all the time dears,
Which could have almost caused her tears.

Like the Old Woman who lived in a shoe,
She couldn't spank them all
because she didn't want to hear them all bawl.

They sometimes did cause her to worry and frown,
And this would sometimes get her down.
She soon again would bounce right back,
And always get on that good old track.

She taught them the Bible with all her heart,
And tried to get them to do good right from the start.
She lived by the golden rule indeed,
Because she knew this was the example they would need.

She was not only a good teacher,
But she could have well been a great preacher.

Remember the good times and driving all those miles,
This caused us all to have great big smiles.

She always did everything well,
So we all could go and tell,
The world she was a good teacher and friend,
And we will love her until the end.

God Bless you, Ruby Moody.

Joyce Avery

After Bruce and I were married, we walked to attend Sunday School and church for a number of years. It was during this time that Mrs. Meta Croom was Sunday School Superintendent. Some Sundays when she was unable to attend, I was the only woman present. The congregation was very few and men and women were in the same class.

I also remember the quilting parties we all had and enjoyed so much. It was a lot of fun. This picture is showing some of those who liked to quilt.



Eloise Croom

Recently, I started attending a small church in Beaufort. The church is less than ten years old and has a small, but deeply committed congregation. It makes me think of what Sandy Bottom Baptist Church was like in 1902. All those years ago, a group of people with a belief in God and a desire to come together as a congregation started this church.

I can't help but think of the many souls that have passed through the door of Sandy Bottom Church. Many of them have been a big influence in my life. Some of them were relatives, Mama and Daddy, Vicky, Grandmama, and aunts and uncles. Many were dear friends and excellent role models. I couldn't possible mention all of them here. The following are a few very special recollections.

For me, music has always been a very important part of the Baptist service. Favorite old hymns sung during the Sunday morning service, Sing-spirations during the Sunday evening service, special music during the holidays were made even more special by Mrs. Nettie Croom, Mr. Fred Croom, and Mary Ann Croom.

My childhood memories are many, but the most vivid are of Mrs. Nona Croom tying my shoes and reading Bible stories, Mrs. Sybil Croom helping a nervous nine-year-old during her baptism, and soft, sweet voice of Mrs. Joyce Avery saying a prayer.

In later years, I sought the guidance and friendship of Mr. Horace Taylor and Bobby and Gloria Croom. They loved and guided me through the sometime difficult teen years.

I thank these folks and many others that have meant so much to me. You made Sandy Bottom, the church and the community a wonderful place.

Annette Davis

When I think about my childhood, I have very happy memories of the times I spent with family and friends in Sandy Bottom. My family attended church and Sunday School every Sunday. We *never* missed.

When I was in the ninth grade, I had appendicitis. I went to the doctor one Monday morning. My appendices were out by noon. I was released from the hospital the following Sunday morning. Guess where my first stop was? That's right! Sandy Bottom Baptist Church, just in time for Sunday School.

Many other things that happened in my childhood will be remembered forever. Another vivid memory I have of Sandy Bottom Church was the day Hurricane Hazel made her historic visit in 1954. I remember Daddy was sitting in his favorite chair and I was standing beside him. We were looking out the window, watching Hazel's wrath bearing down on us. I heard my daddy say, "There goes the top off the church." We saw the tin roll up and blow off, right before our eyes. It was an unforgettable experience for me. I also remember watching from that same window as the men of the church replaced the top with new tin a few days after the storm passed.

I am very thankful for my Christian foundation. I thank God for growing up in a Christian home and for all the wonderful memories I have of family, friends, and Sandy Bottom Church.

Linda Croom Rouse

On April 12, 1936, Easter morning, God sent a little baby girl to some good Christian parents, Richard B. and Callie H. Croom. They named her Virginia Elizabeth and called her "Jink." My parents were members of Webb Chapel Methodist Church. They took me there and I remember many wonderful times. When I became a teenager, all my friends and classmates at school were at the Baptist Church. I asked my parents if I could start going there and they said I could; they just wanted me to be in church. The pastor was Rev. Whitley and during a revival service I accepted Christ on April 1, 1951. I was baptized at First Baptist in Kinston. There have been times that I was not totally committed to the Lord, but isn't it wonderful to know we have a forgiving God. I am married to Walter Vance Pate and we were blessed with two children, and two grandsons.

We are members at Neuse Baptist and attend regularly where I sing in the choir. The Lord has truly blessed my life and family; I thank Him for accepting me just as I was. My desire is to live for Him daily, to be a good example for others, and to encourage. My prayers are with you at Sandy Bottom; may our Lord continue blessing you. "When He was on the Cross, there was one drop He shed just for me."

Proud to say "I am from Sandy Bottom," Happy to say I am a Christian.
Jink Pate

MEMORIES OF SANDY BOTTOM

by Ricky Croom

As I look back at the letters that spell Sandy Bottom Baptist
I am reminded of the following:

- S** - salvation for my soul
- A** - answered prayers, "ask any thing in My name"
- N** - Noah's ark and Nativity, and to be nice
- D** - duty - to do right and be good
- Y** - youth and our responsibilities

- B** - blessings from God and all we have
- O** - others, oranges at Christmas and our organ
- T** - tithe-God's portion and our duty to give
- T** - Timothy, the scholar
- O** - offerings and sharing our wealth
- M** - missionaries, money we have worked for

- B** - Bible, brothers in Christ, baptism
- A** - Adam the first man, Acts of the Apostles
- P** - Paul, paths of righteousness, and path to the outhouse
- T** - testimonies, testament, and talent
- I** - "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me"
- S** - sweet, sweet spirit in this place
- T** - time is valuable, don't waste it, use it to glorify Him

GROUPS

JOY CLUB (Just Older Youth)



In 1989, the Lord revealed to me that it was time for our church to have some activities for the Seniors to enjoy themselves with others in fellowship. This was a need that I saw that could enrich their lives, and sometimes I tried to put it out of my mind, but God would not let me forget it. After much prayer, I finally, one Wednesday night after Bible study and prayer meeting, went to our pastor, Rev. H. T. Waits, and asked him did he think it would be all right to start a club for our Seniors. He told me he thought it would be good and we would have to talk to the deacons about it. This I did and they said that it would be fine. So then I knew that I would need another person to help me. I began praying again this time for God to reveal to me someone that could help me. In the middle of the night, Clara Mae Smith's name came into my mind. I could hardly wait to ask her and she accepted. In September of 1989 we had our first meeting on the first Wednesday afternoon in the month at 1:30. She and I would do everything for each meeting. We named ourselves the JOY Club (Just Older Youth). Our highest attendance ever was twenty-four. We began our meetings with devotion and prayer. We sang our theme song, "God Is So Good." We took trips to interesting places. We played games and had a fun time with also good food and fellowship. After six years, on September 6 of 1995, we had our last meeting. Later, others decided to reorganize the JOY Club again. The time has changed to the 4th Monday of the month and is still at 1:30 P.M. It is an enjoyable afternoon for those who attend.

Submitted by Joyce Avery



The first JOY Club was started by Joyce Avery and Clara Mae Smith. They did a great job serving for several years while Rev. Tom Waits was the pastor. When he left, they decided to take a break until a new pastor came. There were about forty different people attending during that time.

In January of 1999 Rev. Steve Gillette and wife, Cari, were called to come and serve as our pastor. Then Lola Haynes and Martha Taylor volunteered to be the leaders. They asked for Gladys Croom to come and help. A meeting was called with the pastor and Chairman of Deacons to discuss and set guidelines for the organization. It was decided for meetings to be held on the fourth Monday each month at 1:30 P.M. Joyce and Clara Mae were asked to come and help get the club reorganized. On February 22, 1999, a JOY club meeting was held with nine ladies in attendance: Lola Haynes, Martha Taylor, Gladys Croom, Joyce Avery, Clara Mae Smith, Margie Davis, Cari Gillette, Mary Ann Croom, Betty Lou Jones, and Rosella Wetherington.

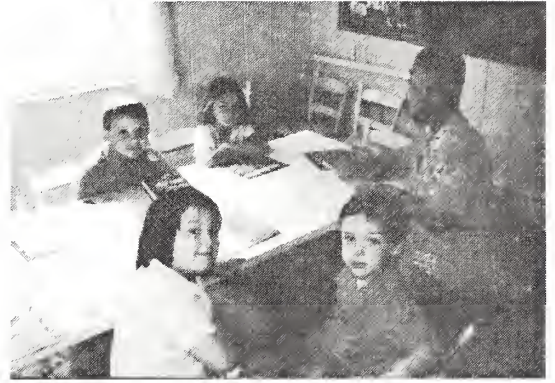
Each meeting starts with a devotion and a time of sharing and prayer for those in need. Then business is discussed, games like bingo are played, and refreshments are served. Sometimes there is singing praises to the LORD or group projects such as quilts. Occasional trips are taken to see dramas like ones about Ruth & Boaz, or the apostles Paul and Peter. As of February 25, 2002, the JOY Club has grown to twenty-seven members, some who come in wheelchairs or walkers. A wonderful time is had by all, as everyone cooperates, loves and respects each other, and shares in the responsibilities of the meetings. Sometimes we also think our JOY Club stands for **J**esus **O**thers and **Y**ou.

Submitted by Gladys Croom

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES



Nursery



Preschool - 3rd Grade



4th Grade - 6th Grade



Youth



Co-ed Class



Any Age Class



Senior Ladies' Class



Adult Men's Class



S. S. Superintendent
Mike Hardison



Baptist Men



WOM (Women on Mission)

OUR MUSICIANS



Choir



Music Director & Pianist
Cari Gillette



Organist, Pianist, & Secretary
Mary Ann Croom



Gazebo and Playground



Parsonage

CENTENNIAL HISTORY QUESTIONS

Now that you have read this book from cover to cover, see if you can answer the following questions.

- Which pastor used a bicycle for visitation when his car broke down?
Answer: Page 36
- Why didn't the rooster make it across the road?
Answer: Page 112
- The song "Give Me Oil in My Lamp" reminds me of the time when . . .
Answer: Page 6
- What did Hazel do when she visited our church?
Answer: Page 8
- What do the words "one door and only one" refer to with respect to our church?
Answer: Page 6
- A Bible + the Fellowship Hall = what hymn?
Answer: Page 11
- Of the fourteen charter members, how many were Crooms?
Answer: Pages 5 & 21

Answers:

- R. E. Whitley used a bicycle for visitation when his car broke down.
- Ruby Moody, on a trip with her Sunday School class, hit a bantam rooster with our church van, cracking the grille.
- Lighting in the early days of the church was by a kerosene lamp in each window and two larger lamps hanging down in the middle of the church. During one evening service when the sermon was on the wise virgins with plenty of oil and the foolish virgins without enough oil, the oil in one of the larger lamps ran out.
- When Hurricane Hazel visited our church in 1954, she rolled half the tin off the roof in all her fury.
- The church building consisted of only a sanctuary and vestibule until the late 40s. There was only one door to the church building.
- "Standing on the Promises" is the hymn. A Bible was placed in the foundation of the Fellowship Hall, allowing us to physically stand on its promises.
- There were eleven Crooms: Ann Mariah Jackson Croom, Clyde Croom, Jesse J. Croom, Joseph W. Croom, Maude Taylor Croom, Meta Haynes Croom, Nimmie Haynes Croom, Rudolph Croom, Rufus Croom, Seth Croom, and Vivian Croom.

OUR CHURCH



PAST

1903 -1940s

PRESENT

2002



The years may change buildings and people, but God never changes.

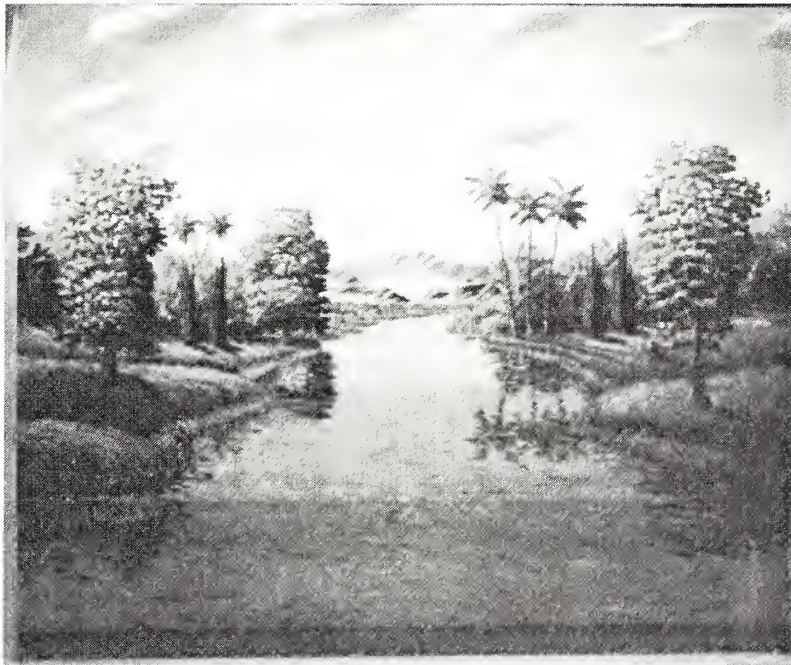
Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever. Hebrews 13:8



I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the LORD
Psalm 122:1



Communion Table with Offering Plates,
Old Bible, and Old Communion Set



*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the
Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost
Matthew 28:19*

CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior
and to become members of this church,
we now, in the presence of God and this assembly,
freely and joyfully enter into this covenant with one another.

We will, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, walk together in Christian love,
seek the advancement of this church, promote its spirituality,
and support its worship and ministries.

We will contribute cheerfully and regularly to its expenses,
its ministries, and the ministries it supports.

We will endeavor to grow in our knowledge of and love for our Lord,
to religiously educate our children, and to walk uprightly in the world.

We will seek the salvation of our families and acquaintances.

We will abstain from anything
that would hinder the advancement of the Kingdom of God.

We will watch over each other, pray for one another,
and help those in need.

We will guard our tongues, be slow to take offense,
and always seek reconciliation without delay.

We will, upon moving to another location,
join another church where we can serve the Lord
in the spirit of this covenant and the principles of His Word.

ABCs OF SALVATION

Admit that you have sinned

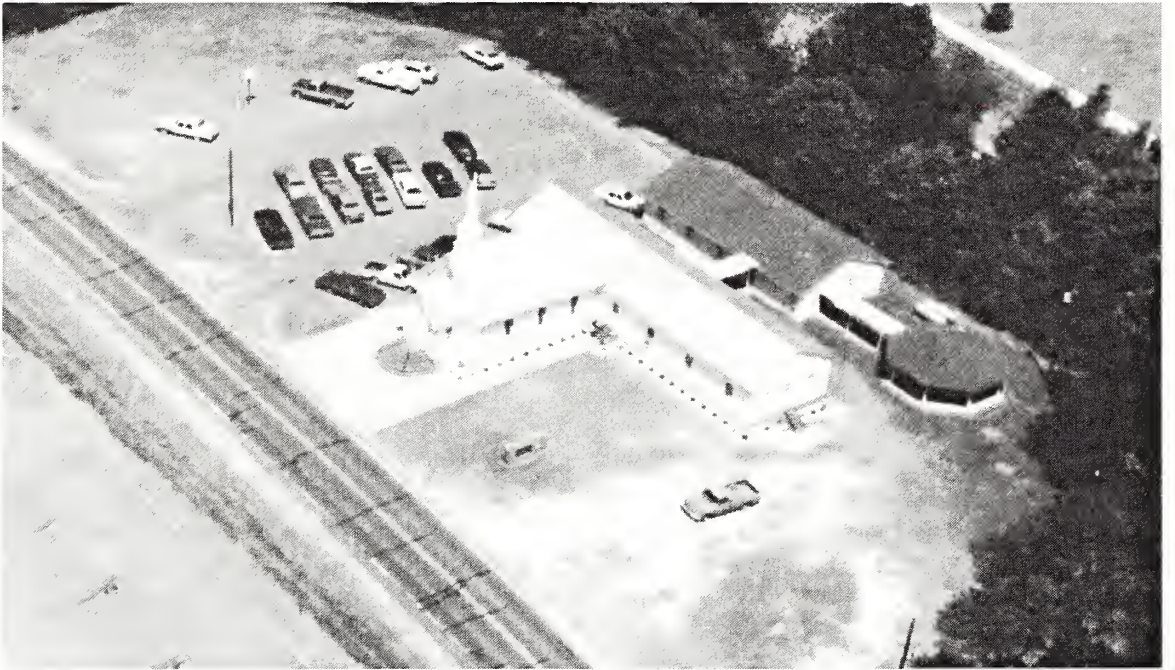
Believe in Jesus Christ

Confess Jesus as Lord

Admit that you have sinned. (Acts 3:19) The Bible says that we have all sinned. (Rom. 3:23) What is sin? It is failure to do what God has told us. We sin both in doing things He has told us not to do and in not doing things He has told us to do. It is common in these days to not accept the blame for something wrong. Sometimes we will hear politicians say that “mistakes were made.” But God insists that we own up to and accept the responsibility for our sins.

Believe in Jesus Christ. (Eph. 2:8-9) Jesus is the sinless Son of God, and He died for our sins. He died as our substitute. We deserve to be punished for our sins, but Jesus took our punishment for us. He also rose again from the dead, attesting to these truths. We must trust in Jesus alone for our forgiveness. (Jn. 3:16)

Confess Jesus as Lord. (Rom. 10:9) This means to confess before others that Jesus is our Lord. This is done verbally, and it is done symbolically in baptism. But it is not enough to say He is Lord. To make Jesus Lord is to choose to follow Him to the best of our ability. Yes, we stumble from time to time and go the wrong way, but when we recognize that we are on the wrong way, we confess our sins and return to the right way. (1 Jn. 1:9)



*As God looks down from heaven above,
we look up to Him
and pray that we may be found faithful
in our service and love toward Him.*

“NOW ABIDETH
FAITH, HOPE, LOVE,
THESE THREE;
AND THE GREATEST OF THESE
IS LOVE.”
1 CORINTHIANS 13:13

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