

# A Journey of **FAITH**

The Memorial Baptist Church  
Greenville, North Carolina  
1827-2002

Hugh Wease



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1827–2002**

**Hugh Wease**

**Baptist History and Heritage Society  
Brentwood, Tennessee**

**AND**

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# Preface

The purpose of this congregational history is to tell the story of the journey of faith of The Memorial Baptist Church, Greenville, North Carolina. The book also meets the need to have a published history for the 175th anniversary of the church. Entitled *A Journey of Faith: Memorial Baptist Church, Greenville, North Carolina, 1827–2002*, the book follows a chronological pattern of organization and is divided into six chapters.

The first chapter is the introduction. This brief overview of Baptist beginnings in North Carolina describes the emergence of General, Particular, and Separate Baptists. Much of the eighteenth century was devoted to the union of most of these Baptist groups. The account of the interactions of these different Baptist churches is important in the development of Baptists in North Carolina, but readers who are interested in only the history of The Memorial Baptist Church can skip over the story.

Chapter two opens at the dawn of the nineteenth century with the outbreak of revivalism and moves quickly to the conflict between the missionary-minded Baptists and the anti-mission Baptists. In the struggle between these two groups, the Greenville Baptist Church was born as a missionary Baptist congregation. Chapter two traces the history of this church through its first fifty years.

In chapter three, the Greenville Baptist congregation builds a new church and takes a new name in commemoration of the founding of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina in Greenville. The church also builds up its membership and organizes a number of church programs. The growth of the church mirrors the “vigorous expansion” of Greenville over the thirty-year period from 1880 to 1910.

The range of chapter four is from church schism to the church’s decision to relocate from its downtown site, a span of six decades (1911-1970). Major markings of Memorial’s journey include the unpleasant split in the church with the departure of 37 members who organized Immanuel Baptist Church and the unsuccessful effort nearly 30 years later to reunite the two Baptist congregations. Also, the addition of a modern educational building and the agonizing decision to abandon the downtown location rather than enlarge the sanctuary on the church’s homeplace are significant etchings. Two world wars, a cold war, and a decade of depression did not make for a safe and easy journey for the pastor and people of Memorial.

The story line of chapter five is church construction. During the last three decades of the twentieth century (1970-2000), the church relocated to the suburbs and built a new sanctuary and educational building. Within two decades, a major renovation with the addition of a children's wing, fellowship hall, and an office suite provided space for a growing congregation.

In chapter six, the epilogue points to the ongoing story of Memorial's journey of faith in the twenty-first century.

In telling the story of Memorial's journey of 175 years, the author senses the need to comment on two issues. One is the capitalized article "The" used in the name of the church. The historical record is clear on the change of name in 1890 from the Greenville Baptist Church to the Memorial Baptist Church. The record, however, is not clear on the capitalized article "The." The "Rules and Covenant" (1920) omitted the word "The" on both the cover and title page and showed the name as "Memorial Baptist Church." This same wording appeared in the church minutes and on church bulletins.

In 1971, the congregation adopted a church constitution in which article I stated "The name of this organization shall be known as The Memorial Baptist Church." Subsequent revisions of the constitution-bylaws used the same name for the church. Also, the Articles of Incorporation document uses the capitalized article "The" in the name of the church. The church bulletin for Sunday, March 24, 1974, carried the article "The" in the name of the church for the first time.

The second issue concerns the tradition that Memorial is the mother church of Sycamore Hill Baptist Church, an African American church. The history of that church shows that in the winter of 1865 twenty-one persons began to meet in homes for worship. Two years later in 1867, the group acquired a lot on Greene Street and erected a church. In that same year on June 8, the Greenville Baptist Church authorized "letters of dismissal" to be granted to the "colored members desirous to sever their connection with us," when they "organized, formed, or joined another [church] of like faith and order." Who these members were and the exact number who left are unknown. Also the written record is silent on which church they organized, formed, or joined. Therefore, it can only be conjectured that the African Americans who left the Greenville Baptist Church were among the group of twenty-one who started Sycamore Hill Baptist Church.

In *Places of Worship*, James P. Wind cautions the congregational historian to avoid an overload of names, lest the history becomes a yearbook. To reduce the number of names in the story of Memorial's journey of faith, some names have been listed in descriptive endnotes. Other names have been painfully omitted altogether because it has not been possible to acknowledge every person's contribution to the church.

### Acknowledgements

The names of the people who contributed so much to the research and preparation of this book must be mentioned, however. I am indebted to the Research and Publications Committee of the Department of History, East Carolina University for a research grant from the Herbert R. Paschal, Jr., Memorial Fund to begin the research phase of this study. I wish to express my appreciation to John R. Woodard, Director of the Baptist Historical Collection, and his staff at the Z. Smith Reynolds Library, Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, for their assistance and kindness to me as I worked in the collection. I also want to thank Donald R. Lennon, Director, East Carolina University Manuscripts and Special Collections, and Mary Boccaccio for their help and insights with the sources in the collection. A special thanks is accorded Maury York, Director of the North Carolina Collection, for his assistance and encouragement with this congregational history project. A special note of thanks goes to Pat Guyette of the Interlibrary Loan Services of Joyner Library, East Carolina University. She located books in distant libraries for me and graciously extended return dates when I requested more time.

Also, I want to acknowledge the help and kindness of Rev. Ellis Fulbright and Linda Franks of the office of the South Roanoke Baptist Association. They gave me access to the proceedings and reports of the association and found a quiet, comfortable place for me to work. Thanks also go to Pastor Larry Hovis, Rev. Rick Bailey, Peggy Vaughan, Nell Godley, Terrie Bibb, and William Spell of The Memorial Baptist Church. All of them allowed me to get in their way as I searched for records in the offices and file cabinets and in the boxes stored in the attic of the church.

Without the help of people knowledgeable in the ways and mysteries of the computer, this congregational history would be lost somewhere in the recesses of my desktop. I am grateful to Barbara Wilson, Cathy Collins, and Aimee Rigsby for their assistance and am envious of what they can get a computer to do. Although Delano Wilson did not lend computer assistance, I appreciate his persistent reminders for me to finish the project.

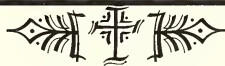
I am deeply indebted to Charles W. Deweese, Executive Director-Treasurer, Baptist History and Heritage Society, and to publisher Tim Fields for their invaluable assistance in moving the manuscript to a finished book.

I express my deepest appreciation to my wife, Cynthia. With patience and unlimited understanding, she found things to do as I worked in the Baptist Historical Collection. With greater patience, she read drafts, made corrections, and read the final manuscript. Her giftedness with language made the book much more readable. Any errors in the volume, however, are mine.

Hugh Wease  
Greenville, North Carolina

## Chapter I

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# Before the Journey

**W**hen the Greenville Baptist Church—now The Memorial Baptist Church—was organized in 1827 as the first Baptist congregation in the small town of Greenville, the Baptist movement in North Carolina was one hundred years old. This century-long period of Baptist beginnings in North Carolina is beyond the scope of the story of Memorial's journey through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and its entry into the new millennium. However, a cursory look at the emergence and union of Baptist groups in the colony—later the state—during the eighteenth century will form a backdrop for the Baptist beginnings and growth in Greenville.

Settlers in North Carolina during the era of the Lords Proprietor (1663-1729) migrated from Virginia. By 1700 approximately five thousand resided in the colony, mostly in scattered settlements along the shores of Albemarle Sound. By the end of Proprietary rule in 1729, the population had increased to approximately thirty-five thousand. Religious groupings found in the population were Quakers; supporters of the Church of England; a third group of people “something like Presbyterians”; and a fourth group characterized by one Anglican clergyman as a “sort” who have no religion. While the advocates of the Church of England believed in and worked to erect an established church in Albemarle, Quakers and the “something-like-Presbyterians” were the religious dissenters. These “something like Presbyterians” included Baptists. The eighteenth-century historian Morgan Edwards claimed that the colony had Baptists as early as 1695, but there is no historical evidence to sup-



port his assertion. The first written documentation of the presence of Baptists in the province was found in a letter written in June 1714 by John Urmstone, a missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, established in 1701 by the Church of England. He reported two of his vestrymen in the Chowan Precinct of the Albemarle Colony were “professed Anabaptists,” a sixteenth-century term used in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to characterize Baptists.<sup>1</sup>

Paul Palmer, the founding father of General Baptists in North Carolina, moved from Virginia to the Albemarle section of the colony in early 1719 and two years later began an evangelistic career of “preaching, baptizing, and laying his hands on the newly converted.” In 1727, near the end of the Proprietary era, Palmer organized in the Chowan Precinct the colony’s first Baptist church for which records exist. Although some authorities argued that this first church survived for only a few years, Shiloh Baptist Church in present-day Camden County claims 1727 as its birthday. Whether Shiloh’s date of birth is 1727 or two years later when seven religious dissenters, including Palmer, petitioned the precinct court to use the home of William Burges, located in northeastern Pasquotank, as a place for Baptists to worship, Shiloh is the oldest Baptist church in North Carolina that is still in existence today.<sup>2</sup>

The growing presence of Baptists in the colony and the evangelistic work of Palmer caught the eye of Governor Richard Everard, the last of the Proprietary governors. In 1729, he reported to the Bishop of London that “Quakers and Baptists flourish amongst the North Carolinians.” The dissenting Quakers and Baptists, intoned the Governor, “are very busy making proselytes and holding meetings daily . . . and by the means of one Paul Palmer[,] the Baptist teacher, he has gained hundreds.”<sup>3</sup> Despite the Governor’s alarm, Baptists increased and spread through the colony during the period of royal rule from 1729 to the time of the American Revolutionary War in the mid-1770s. Over this span, the province’s population grew to more than a quarter of a million. By the 1750s, sixteen General Baptist churches dotted the eastern Carolina landscape from the northern shores of Albemarle Sound, west to Warren County, and south to Craven and Sampson counties. General Baptist leaders Palmer, Joseph Parker, William Sojourner, Josiah Hart, and other itinerant preachers “gathered,” or formed, these churches. The General Baptist congregations followed an Arminian theology based on the views of the Dutch theologian, Jacob Arminius, who lived in the sixteenth century. Transmitted to the English colonies in North America and adapted to colonial condi-



tions, the Arminian doctrine of general atonement held that “the life and death of Jesus were effective generally for all persons who repented of past sins and believed in Him.” Under this emphasis of “general atonement,” Palmer and other General Baptist evangelists baptized all who responded to their preaching and who were willing to be baptized. In contrast, “Particular Baptists” held the belief that redemption is for “particular” persons chosen by God. Based on the theology of John Calvin, this view of limited atonement combined with other theological differences was in conflict with General Baptist thought and practice. From the perspective of the Particular Baptists, a crucial issue in the controversy between the two groups was the question of whether the General Baptists had experienced conversion before baptism.<sup>4</sup>

By the early 1750s, some General Baptist ministers in North Carolina had moved to the Calvinist view of theology and began to advocate Particular Baptist beliefs. These General-turned-Particular Baptists insisted on the reform requirement of converted church members. They invited Particular Baptist missionaries from the Philadelphia Baptist Association to visit the General Baptist ministers and congregations and “instruct and reform” them. These reforms included the dismissal of unconverted members, insistence on strict church discipline, adoption of Calvinistic covenants and the Philadelphia Confession of Faith of Particular Baptists. As a result, twelve of the General Baptist congregations were reorganized and “transformed” into “particular Baptist” churches during the 1750s.<sup>5</sup>

In 1761, the Colonial Assembly created Pitt County from the upper part of Beaufort County. Named for William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, statesman and British political leader, the new county had no town for a decade. In 1771, Richard Evans introduced a bill in the colonial legislature for a town to be built on property belonging to him. The bill passed, but Evans died before he could appear in court as required by law to grant permission for the town to be erected on his land. A supplementary act was passed in 1774 that finalized the establishment of the town as the county seat. The town carried the name Martinborough for Josiah Martin, the last Royal Governor of North Carolina. After the American Revolutionary War, the North Carolina legislature changed the name to Greenville for General Nathanael Greene, a hero of the War for Independence. The letter “s” was soon dropped from the name, and Greenville became the acceptable spelling.<sup>6</sup>

Although history appears to be silent on when Baptists first entered Pitt County, the new county was home to Baptist congregations in the 1750s during the transformation work of the Particular Baptist mission-

aries. Historian George W. Paschal gave 1754 as the date of the founding of the church at Red Banks Landing on the north side of the Tar River. This church, however, was constituted as a Particular Baptist Church in November 1758, with Jeremiah Rhame as the pastor.<sup>7</sup> Another early Baptist congregation was located near Flat Swamp near the boundary shared by Pitt, Edgecombe, and Martin counties. Paschal claimed this congregation was also founded in 1754 but was in a disorganized state following the transformation period. Both General and Particular Baptist pastors were active at the Flat Swamp Church from the mid-1760s through the middle of the next decade. In 1776, the meeting house was organized as a Particular Baptist Church under the pastoral care of Elder Page. Still another Baptist congregation formed in the eighteenth century was the Great Swamp Church located about eight miles from Greenville on the north side of the Tar River. Formed as a branch of the Flat Swamp Church, the membership gained dismission and became a constituted church in 1795, with Noah Tison as the minister.<sup>8</sup>

Baptist beginnings in Pitt County would be incomplete without a word about the work of Joseph Parker, founder of churches of the General Baptist order in Halifax, Greene, Lenoir, and Pitt counties. In 1748, Parker began his ministry as pastor of Lower Fishing Creek Church in Edgecombe County. Within a few years, he visited churches gathered in the 1730s by Paul Palmer in present-day Wayne, Greene, and Craven counties. Parker was impressed with what he saw and moved to Greene County in an area between Great and Little Contentnea Creek. It was there that Parker “gathered his first church in Greene County called Little Creek.” He continued a vigorous, life-long work in the region. Historian Michael Pelt noted that Parker made ministerial journeys into Pitt County and established a branch of the Little Creek Church at Gum Swamp. From Gum Swamp, he competed with Particular Baptist ministers during the 1760s for followers in the Flat Swamp and Conetoe areas. As already stated, the Flat Swamp Church was constituted as a Particular Baptist congregation in 1776. Until his death in the early 1790s, Joseph Parker held steadfastly to the Arminian principles of General Baptists, who were renamed Free Will Baptists in the early decades of the nineteenth century.<sup>9</sup>

In the midst of the transformation of General Baptists in the east to “Particular Baptist churches,” a new group of Baptists moved into the spiritually starved and largely unchurched central part of North Carolina. Spawned by the first Great Awakening in America, a period of religious revivals from the late 1730s to the 1760s, these revivalistic Baptists orig-

inated in New England and were called Separates because they had separated from the antirevivalistic Baptist and Congregational churches in that region and organized their own congregations. Infused with emotion and missionary zeal, recently converted Separate Baptist ministers used the “fire and fervor” methods of revivalists to preach for a “regenerate church membership” manifested in “feeling and conviction” and for believers’ baptism.<sup>10</sup>

One of these Separate Baptist evangelists was Shubal Stearns (1706–1771). A New Englander by birth and, upon conversion in 1745, a Separate Congregationalist by choice, Stearns became a Baptist and was baptized in Tolland, Connecticut, in 1751. Shortly afterward, he was ordained as a Separate Baptist missionary preacher. In 1755, he left his native New England to come south, stopping first near present-day Winchester, Virginia, where he met his brother-in-law, Daniel Marshall (1706–1784), also from New England. The two worked together to evangelize migrants moving down the Shenandoah Valley to the frontier regions of the South. With only limited success, Stearns led Marshall and a small band of fourteen—largely family members—to Sandy Creek in present-day Randolph County, North Carolina. In 1755, these sixteen settlers built a house of worship and constituted themselves into the Sandy Creek Baptist Church, the first Separate Baptist Church in the South. Shubal Stearns was chosen as the minister, and Daniel Marshall and Joseph Breed were selected as assistants. By 1758 these New England evangelists had planted two other Separate Baptist Churches in the region and had founded the Sandy Creek Baptist Association, the first association for Baptists in North Carolina. Led by Stearns, Marshall, and their associates, the Separate Baptists pushed into Virginia to the north and into South Carolina and Georgia to the south by the beginning of the Revolutionary War.<sup>11</sup>

After the arrival of the Separate Baptists in North Carolina, the Particular Baptists in the east took the name of Regular Baptists to distinguish themselves from these newcomers—the Separates. Thus by implication, the Separates became “irregular” Baptists. Both groups were naturally suspicious of each other. The Regulars disdained the fervid preaching of the Separates, and the Separates scorned the style of clothing of their counterparts in the east. More importantly, the Separates questioned the emphasis Regulars placed on “creeds,” namely the Calvinistic Philadelphia Confession of Faith (1742) and claimed that Regular Baptist churches had members who had been baptized before they had been converted. This charge was the same accusation that Particular Baptists had

levied against General Baptists during the transformation of General Baptist churches in the 1750s.

These suspicions and differences notwithstanding, the Regulars and Separates moved toward accommodation and union as North Carolina and the other colonies moved toward separation from the Mother Country. After the Charleston Association was organized along Calvinistic lines in 1751, Particular (Regular) churches in the east joined this second oldest association in America. Membership in the association, however, proved to be impractical for North Carolina churches, because they were too far from Charleston. Consequently, five North Carolina churches withdrew from the Charleston Association and formed the Kehukee Regular Baptist Association in 1769, the second oldest association in North Carolina.<sup>12</sup> Within two years, the Kehukee Association had grown to more than a dozen churches with three located in Virginia. As the association expanded, the Regulars sought fellowship and merger with the Separates. However, these initial efforts at accommodation and union were unsuccessful because the Separates insisted that the Regular order churches purge their membership rolls of “persons who had joined the church prior to their conversion or without any distinct conversion experience.”<sup>13</sup>

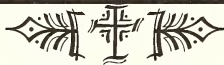
A reform group of Regulars headed by the youthful Lemuel Burkitt and David Barrow agreed with the Separates on the qualification for church membership and set out to expunge the churches of members baptized in unbelief. In 1775, the Kehukee Association divided into “reform” and “non-reform” groups over this issue. The reformers succeeded in forming a new association but continued to use the name Kehukee. This “reformed” Kehukee Association, comprised of ten like-minded Regular and Separate churches in North Carolina and Virginia, met together for the first time in 1777. More than a decade later, in 1788, after many churches—including some but not all of the non-reforming congregations—had joined the association, delegates voted to bury in oblivion the “names Regular and Separate” and to take the name “United Baptists.”<sup>14</sup> In 1790, however, the association released churches in Virginia to form the Virginia Portsmouth Association and reclaimed the name of Kehukee for the membership in North Carolina. Three years later in 1793, the Kehukee Association divided once more by dismissing churches south of the Tar River to form the Neuse Baptist Association. The geographically redefined Kehukee Association consisted of churches north of the Tar River extending to the Virginia border.<sup>15</sup>

By the 1790s, Baptist beginnings in North Carolina had spread



throughout the new state in the young nation. In 1793, Asplund reported a state-wide membership in excess of 8,000 in more than 160 churches stretching from the crystal coast in the east to the mountainous border in the west.<sup>16</sup> As the new century approached, Baptist ministers in these churches fervently prayed and confidently hoped for revival fires reminiscent of the First Great Awakening to blaze through the churches and rekindle the spiritual vigor of their congregations. At the Kehukee Baptist Association meeting of 1794, the churches resolved “to make earnest prayer to God for a revival of religion amongst us.”<sup>17</sup>

## Chapter 2



# The Journey Begins

(1800-1880)

The dawn of the new century looked good to Baptists living in North Carolina. The Separates and Regulars had discontinued the use of their distinguishing names and had moved into the nineteenth century being called simply Baptists. In 1801, the prayerfully anticipated revival erupted with volcanic force along the creek banks and in the valleys of Kentucky and roared like a mighty wind over the frontier and through the South. The feet of Elder Lemuel Burkitt carried the happy news of the revival from the mountains of Kentucky and Tennessee to the coastal plains of North Carolina. Long-time clerk of the Kehukee Baptist Association and minister of the Sandy Run Baptist Church in Bertie County, Burkitt electrified the ministers and delegates attending the Kehukee Association meeting in the fall of 1801, when he proclaimed the resurgence of revivalism in the country. From the floor of the association, delegates responded with praises to God and intoned “thy Kingdom come.” The “sacred flame” spread to the churches and “great numbers of people attended the ministry of the word . . . with two or three hundred in tears . . . crying out loudly, what shall we do to be saved?” By 1803, 1,500 baptisms were added to the churches in the Kehukee Baptist Association.<sup>1</sup> For the year 1811, the nineteenth-century Baptist historian David Benedict reported a membership of more than 11,000 in more than 180 churches located across the state.<sup>2</sup>

Concurrent with revivalism and numerical growth in Baptist ranks, a strong missionary impulse emerged in the local churches and associations. In 1803, this missionary movement began at the Kehukee Bap-



tist Association meeting when Martin Ross advocated active support of missions. For a quarter of a century, Ross and other mission-minded friends worked tirelessly to form a plan to promote missions. By 1830, they had succeeded but not without cost. Led by Joshua Lawrence, opponents waged “war” against the missionary enterprise and other “human inventions” such as theological education for ministers, Bible societies, and Sunday Schools. This Baptist donnybrook permanently split the denomination into Missionary Baptists and Primitive Baptists, caused disruption and dismission in a number of associations, and divided local churches.

In 1827, the double-edged sword of the missionary cause along the banks of the Tar River split Red Banks Baptist Church and gave birth to the first Baptist congregation in Greenville. Tradition holds that a group of mission-minded members left the fellowship of Red Banks and organized the Greenville Baptist Church, later renamed The Memorial Baptist Church. The names of the founding members for the most part were lost through the ravages of fire that destroyed church records from 1827 to 1866, when flames in the latter year engulfed the home of church clerk David Lawrence.<sup>3</sup>

Tradition also indicates that Elder Thomas D. Mason, a missionary of the Neuse Baptist Association, was a moving force in the formation of the church and served as its first pastor. Constituted on July 2, 1827, the church met for worship in an academy on the corner of Greene and Second Streets.<sup>4</sup>

Led by Mason, the congregation applied for membership in the Neuse Baptist Association and was received as a constituent member at the association meeting held on October 20-22, 1827, at Oak Grove Church in Greene County. Elder Mason, Thomas Gaskins, and Edmund A. Daniel of the Greenville Baptist congregation attended as delegates and reported a total membership of twenty-three with three baptisms in the infant church.<sup>5</sup>

The Greenville Baptist Church, like other nineteenth-century Baptist congregations, adopted a covenant and rules of decorum. Fortunately, a copy of the Covenant and Rules of Decorum, approved on May 31, 1828, survived the fire of 1866 and was reprinted in commemoration of the church’s 150th anniversary in 1977. Copies of these documents are in Appendix One. The Covenant sets forth statements of theological beliefs that bound together the believers in a community of faith. The Rules of Decorum established the procedures for the church to follow in matters of business and discipline. The church conference was usu-

ally held on the Saturday immediately preceding the Sunday set aside for the monthly preaching service, and it was during the church conferences that the congregation transacted church business, received new members, and disciplined any violators of the rules of decorum. For serious transgressions such as drunkenness or stealing, the congregation would remove the offending member's name from the "church book." Members guilty of less serious offenses such as "speaking with anger" or "neglecting to attend [church] conference" would be judged as disorderly. By 1843, the last year the church belonged to the Neuse Baptist Association, nine members had been excluded from the membership rolls, and only two names had been restored to the church book.<sup>6</sup>

In the same year the Covenant and Rules of Decorum were adopted, some dissatisfaction and disharmony developed in the infant Greenville Baptist Church. At the annual meeting of the Neuse Baptist Association in October 1828, a committee of inquiry was appointed to visit the church and report its findings at the association meeting the following year. The committee subsequently met with the Greenville congregation in church conference for four hours and heard complaints from three brethren against Pastor Mason "touching [on] his doctrine and a certain conversation . . . between Elders Dupree and Mason." The committee found and reported to the association "that the misunderstanding between brethren Dupree and Mason originated in honest mistake . . . and that the church at Greenville is in union and harmony amongst themselves."<sup>7</sup> Mason continued to exercise pastoral care of the Greenville Baptist Church for the years 1829, 1830, and 1833.<sup>8</sup>

Committed to the nascent missionary movement afoot in the region, Mason played an active role in the organization of the North Carolina Baptist Benevolent Society and one year later in the founding of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. On February 10, 1829, pastors and laymen met in Greenville to form a society with the "exclusive object to raise funds . . . to the support of traveling ministers for preaching the Gospel and administering its ordinances within the bounds of North Carolina."<sup>9</sup> Mason proposed the adoption of a constitution for the society and was selected to deliver the introductory sermon at the June meeting of the society's board of directors.<sup>10</sup> Election of officers included Reading S. Blount as recording secretary; Blount was a member of the Greenville Baptist Church. Another member, George Stokes, apparently played no significant part in the birth of the society.

One year later on March 26, 1830, the North Carolina Baptist Benev-

olent Society met in Greenville for the annual meeting. Fourteen members—seven ministers and seven laymen—assembled first at the Baptist Meeting House, presumably in the home of Dr. and Mrs. I. A. Gorham, prominent members of the Baptist Church, to hear the introductory sermon preached by Elder Samuel Wait of New Bern. The society then convened for business in the academy, where the delegates approved without dissent the resolution “That the Society be transformed into a State Convention.” A constitution prepared in advance by Elder Thomas Meredith of Edenton was adopted for the newly established Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Samuel Wait was appointed as the General Agent of the Convention with a salary of \$35 per month. Delegates from the Greenville Baptist Church were Elder Thomas Mason, elected to serve on the Board of Directors; Reading S. Blount, chosen as the Recording Secretary; and George Stokes, appointed to a committee to audit the treasurer’s account of the Baptist Benevolent Society.<sup>11</sup>

Thomas Mason also participated in the activities of the Neuse Baptist Association. In October 1827, when he led the Greenville Baptist Church to join the association, Mason played an active role in the proceedings of the three-day meeting. He was selected to write the corresponding letter to the Kehukee Baptist Association and, along with Elder Thomas Dupree, to deliver the letter and minutes to the brethren of that association. He preached one of the major sermons at the meeting and opened the morning session of the final day with a prayer. As pastor, he represented the Greenville Baptist Church at the October meetings in 1828, 1830, and for the last time in 1833.<sup>12</sup>

After Thomas Mason left the Greenville Baptist Church, he served churches in South Carolina. In 1835, he was at the Elizabeth Baptist



*Historical Marker notes the formation of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina near the site of the Memorial Baptist Church, Fourth and Greene Streets.*



Church in Mt. Croghan, Chesterfield District of South Carolina. Two years later as a delegate from South Carolina, Mason traveled to the First Baptist Church of Philadelphia to consider the “duty of the Baptist denomination to translate and distribute Sacred Scriptures.” In 1839, he helped constitute a Baptist Church in Bladen County, South Carolina, and also raised money for the cause of foreign missions.<sup>13</sup> Thomas Mason was a man of God, founder of churches, and reputedly a “handsome man and a teacher of vocal music,” who remained true, at least through the 1830s, to the missionary vision held by the founders of the Greenville Baptist Church and the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.<sup>14</sup>

Henry S. Spivey was another minister who served the Greenville Baptist Church during its infancy. Elder Spivey renewed and revitalized the congregation. In 1838 in a letter to the *Biblical Recorder*, church member J. C. Gorham wrote “. . . Through the instrumentality of his [Spivey’s] preaching, . . . our little village has undergone the most thorough change ever produced perhaps in so short a period. When he arrived here there were scarce members enough to transact the ordinary business of the church; and coldness, lukewarmness, and a want of zeal were strikingly apparent in his little flock, . . . but . . . the times have entirely changed . . . the Holy Spirit seemed to have been sent with power to the hearts of the people, who attended in crowds to hear him preach; and so eight or ten days ago a happy revival displayed itself, and yesterday he led down into the water and baptized six persons who had been happily converted during the past week. . . . Thus, we have had a time of refreshment from the Lord.”<sup>15</sup> As a result of Elder Spivey’s successful preaching, the “refreshed” church in Greenville reported nine new baptisms and an increase of nine members for a total membership of forty in 1838. The Neuse Baptist Association noted “considerable progress” of the Greenville Baptist Church in the “increase of members and [of their] piety.”<sup>16</sup>

But for the decades of the 1830s and 1840s, Elder Spivey’s strong, effective preaching appeared to be the exception rather than the rule. Tradition held that Thomas Mason, the founder and first pastor of the church, was more “gifted as a musician than as a preacher.”<sup>17</sup> In 1844 while under the pastoral care of Elder Mark Bennett, the Greenville Baptist Church experienced “. . . a wintry time” as a “feeble band . . . harassed by anti-missionism and anti-missionary preachers.”<sup>18</sup> Conditions declined even more over the next few years. In 1851, the congregation was still “in a cold state, but at peace one with the other.” Elder J. G. Barkley preached for them occasionally.<sup>19</sup>

The Greenville Baptist Church, like many other churches in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, was without a minister for considerable periods of time. Between 1827 and 1842, when the church was in the Neuse Baptist Association, no preacher was listed among the church's delegates attending the annual meetings of the association for eight of the fifteen years. Moreover, the minutes contained no reference to a preacher for the church. During periods without a minister, an itinerant missionary of the association would on occasion conduct preaching services. In 1847, for example, Brother Aaron Jones, an itinerant of the Union Baptist Association, left his charge in Goldsboro "to supply the church in Greenville once a month."<sup>20</sup> This once-a-month model for preaching followed by missionary agents of the association as well as by regular pastors enabled a minister to hold the pastoral office in as many as four churches at the same time. Because preachers were in short supply and for obvious economic reasons, the practice prevailed in many of the churches in the Neuse and Union Baptist Associations. The Greenville Baptist Church followed the custom until 1860 when its minister began to preach every Sunday and to exercise pastoral care for only the one congregation.<sup>21</sup>

In 1830 when Thomas Mason traveled monthly to Greenville, he rode into a small village with a population of 488 to preach in the Baptist Church and care for a congregation of thirty-six, an increase of thirteen over his first flock of twenty-three gathered in 1827. The growth curve increased incrementally for an average of thirty-nine members for the fifteen years the church was in the Neuse Baptist Association. Membership, however, declined during the church's eight-year affiliation with the Union Baptist Association. At its last meeting in 1851, with T. A. Gorham attending as a delegate, the church reported a membership of twenty-two whites and nine blacks.<sup>22</sup>

Since membership rolls for the beginning years were destroyed by fire, history did not preserve for posterity the names of church members. Association records, however, did include the names of delegates who attended annual meetings. Besides Thomas Mason, Henry Spivey, and Aaron Jones, already mentioned as ministers or missionaries, 18 different men were named as delegates to the Neuse and Union Baptist Associations for one or more years during the church's first 25 years. Among these names were David Lawrence and Reading Blount, who participated in the deliberations and work of the association and were, of course, active in the Greenville Baptist congregation.

From the 1830s through the Civil War, David Lawrence, an "exem-

plary Christian gentleman” and cabinetmaker, represented the Greenville Baptist Church as a delegate to many of the annual meetings of the association. In 1831, he served on the arrangements committee for preaching services of the three-day meeting of the Neuse Baptist Association. Near the end of the decade in 1839, Lawrence was appointed to represent the Greenville Baptist congregation on the association’s committee to solicit subscriptions to fund the itinerant system of supplying ministers for churches within the association. As late as the Civil War years, when the church was in the Pamlico Baptist Association, Lawrence served as a delegate to the annual meetings for the period 1863–1865. In the Greenville Baptist congregation, David Lawrence worked as a deacon to “. . . promote the peace, piety, and well-being of the church” and for years served as its clerk. Unfortunately, the records he kept were destroyed when his home burned in 1866.<sup>23</sup>

Like David Lawrence, Reading Blount provided capable lay leadership in the church’s beginning years. Proficient as a wordsmith, Blount, the recording secretary of the North Carolina Baptist Benevolent Society and the first recording secretary of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, frequently received writing assignments at the annual meetings of the Neuse Baptist Association. In 1831, he was appointed to write a letter of correspondence to the Goshen Baptist Association; and again in 1833, he was asked to pen a letter of correspondence to the Chowan Baptist Association. More importantly, he prepared the circular letter for the 1834 Neuse Baptist Association meeting held at Hancock’s Meeting House ten miles south of Greenville. In his letter to the churches, he addressed “the relative duties and discipline of the churches.” At this meeting, Blount was appointed to serve on a committee to be chaired by Thomas Meredith to review and report in writing on each church in the association. He also served on the Finance Committee in 1831 and 1833.<sup>24</sup>

In addition Blount played a leading role in the affairs of the Greenville Baptist Church. In 1832, as a trustee of the church, he purchased a half-acre lot at the corner of Fourth and Greene Streets for \$50 for the church.<sup>25</sup>

History, however, remained silent on when Greenville Baptist actually built a house of worship on the property that would serve as the church site for more than 140 years. Indirect evidence suggests that the congregation still worshiped in the Greenville Academy in 1837, for in that year, when the church hosted the annual meeting of the Neuse Baptist Association, the sessions were held in the academy.<sup>26</sup>



The date of construction notwithstanding, tradition held that the congregation erected a “little white wooden [church] building with a picket fence.” Such an edifice was a typical meeting house for Baptists in small established communities in interior regions of the South in the first half of the nineteenth century. This house of worship served Greenville Baptists until 1883 when the building was sold to the Hickory Hill Baptist Church.<sup>27</sup>

Unlike the “cold” and “wintry” period of struggle and survival during the latter years of the 1840s, a season of summertime was enjoyed by the Greenville Baptist Church in the decade preceding the Civil War. It was a time that resulted in the growth of new programs and an increase in size of the flock. In 1853, under the pastoral care of Elder E. A. Best, the church established a Sunday School with nine teachers and twenty scholars and opened a library with fifty volumes. The Sunday School grew rapidly, reaching an enrollment of eighty-four scholars and twenty-two teachers by 1860 for an average of fifty over the eight-year period. Also, gifts by the church for Christian education began to appear in the financial reports of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. In 1860 the church began to hold preaching services every Sunday, with Rev. H. S. Petty in the pulpit.

Concurrent with program development, church membership multiplied fourfold as Greenville’s population reached 823 by 1860. Sparked by the evangelistic efforts of Rev. G. W. Johnston, who baptized forty-nine in 1852, and Rev. W. R. McDonald, who baptized forty-one in 1857, the church roll increased from a low of twenty-seven in 1851, the last year the church was affiliated with the Union Baptist Association, to a high of 114 in 1859. In 1860, membership declined to ninety-four. For the first eight years the church was in the Pamlico Baptist Association (1852-1860), average church membership was ninety-one. Black members comprised approximately 20 percent of the membership.<sup>28</sup>

The social order in antebellum North Carolina kept African Americans at the bottom of the social ladder and restricted them to marginal areas in church life. In meeting houses, the two races sat apart, with the black members seated in the back or along the sides or on the window sills or in the balcony, if there was an upstairs. When taking the Lord’s Supper, African Americans received the elements after white members had been served. Moreover, blacks had no voice in the affairs of the church except in cases involving their own race.<sup>29</sup>

History does not record for us which social practices were followed in the Greenville Baptist Church. It does, however, tell us that the long

and bitter Civil War and the still longer era of Reconstruction brought major changes in the social structure of the South and created serious problems in the congregational life of churches, including the Greenville Baptist Church.

With the bombardment of Fort Sumter and the start of the Civil War on April 12, 1861, the South's social fabric began to rend. The Emancipation Proclamation hastened the rift, and the constitutional amendments in the aftermath of the war shattered the old social order of slavocracy.

The reconstruction of race relations was an insurmountable difficulty in Greenville and other communities in North Carolina and throughout the South. In churches, tensions emerged between white and black members in the congregation. Whites resisted the idea of social equality with African Americans, and conversely, blacks were unwilling to remain in white churches as second-class members. In recognition of this emergent condition, the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina in 1866 proposed "that . . . the colored members in our churches should be encouraged and assisted to organize separate and independent churches and associations."<sup>30</sup>

For black members, the proposal was an answer to their prayers. They had often prayed for God to "Grant the day . . . when we may worship . . . under our own vine and fig tree."<sup>31</sup> Their day of deliverance had arrived, and they made their exodus from the white churches.

Between 1867 and 1870, large numbers of black members departed white congregations.<sup>32</sup> Included in these numbers were black members from the Greenville Baptist Church. Records did not show the number of black members who requested their letters, but in 1865 the church reported a membership of twenty-nine African Americans and sixty whites. On June 8, 1867, the church voted to grant letters of dismissal to African American members who desired to leave, "whenever they organized, formed, or joined another church of like faith and order."<sup>33</sup>

The year the letters of dismissal were granted; only one black member was listed among the seventy-seven church members.<sup>34</sup> In the following year, that remaining black member, Sam Brown, "expressed his intention of connecting himself with a Free Will Baptist Church," and the clerk dropped him from the membership roll. The church did refuse to renew the preaching license of Austin Flood, formerly a black member, because he had "united himself to another [church]" and was "no longer considered [to be] under the jurisdiction" of the Greenville Baptist congregation.<sup>35</sup>

Although the policy of separation adopted by the Greenville Baptist

Church did not lead to rebuilt race relations in the Reconstruction decade, the actual withdrawal of black members was apparently carried out in a pleasant and mutually understanding way. When the African American members asked to be released, the church accordingly granted them letters of dismissal.

The changed social order was not the only problem faced by the Greenville Baptist congregation during the war years and the Reconstruction era. Church membership decreased. Between 1860 and 1870, membership dropped by almost 25 percent from a high of ninety-four in 1860 to seventy-one in 1870 for a loss of twenty-three.<sup>36</sup>

For the same period, the town of Greenville's population also declined by approximately 27 percent. In 1860, the census listed the town's population at 828; and for 1870, the number had declined to 601, a loss of 227. In the following decade, however, Greenville's overall population increased by 34 percent reaching a total of 912 in 1880 for a gain of 311.<sup>37</sup> During the same period, though church membership continued its downward trend with a loss of slightly more than 10 percent. In 1880, the church had sixty-three members: ten males and fifty-three females, a decline of eight members since 1870.<sup>38</sup>

The Sunday School program also suffered during the harsh war years but made slow, steady progress toward recovery in the period of Reconstruction. At the end of the war in 1865, enrollment had plummeted to twenty-five scholars and six teachers, a staggering loss of fifty-nine students and sixteen faculty from the 1860 listing of eighty-four scholars and twenty-two teachers. By 1869, the enrollment had doubled for a total of fifty students and ten teachers; and by the end of Reconstruction (1877), the Sabbath school reported an enrollment of fifty-six taught by eight teachers.<sup>39</sup> Although the gains made from 1865 reflected significant recovery during a difficult period, the Sunday School program had not yet reached its prewar enrollment.

Another important casualty of the war was the preaching program, which did not recover until the end of the decade of Reconstruction. With the departure of Rev. H. S. Petty in 1861, preaching services on every Sunday, a practice that had started the previous year, came to an abrupt end. Moreover, the pastoral office itself remained vacant until 1867, when the congregation extended a call to Brother S. S. Wallace, not yet ordained, to the "pastoral care" of the Greenville Baptist Church with the provision "to preach for the church three Sabbaths each month."<sup>40</sup>

One year later, however, he declined the church's call for another

year, but he remained a member until 1870, when he and Fannie Wallace joined “another church of the same faith and order.”<sup>41</sup>

In early 1869, Rev. T. R. Owen followed Mr. Wallace in the pulpit, but he preached only one Sabbath in each month. A well-educated former Presbyterian minister, Mr. Owen had changed his “ecclesiastical connections” and had become a Baptist in “doctrines and sentiments.” In 1859 on the floor of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina he professed, “I am now a Baptist in mind and conscience made so . . . [by] the force of truth.” Rev. Owen continued to accept annual calls issued by the church through 1873. During his four-year ministry, the congregation voted to “unite with the Tar River Baptist Association.”<sup>42</sup>

After Pastor Owen’s departure, the Greenville Baptist Church had difficulty providing pastoral care for the congregation in the mid-1870s. T. F. Simpson succeeded to the pastoral office at the beginning of 1874 and tendered his resignation in October of the same year. The church clerk immediately contacted the editor of the *Biblical Recorder* and asked for help in the search for a suitable pastor. That suitable minister was J. N. Taylor, a resident of New York. In May 1875, he accepted the call to serve as the church’s pastor at a salary of \$600 per year. During his one-year pastorate, Mr. Taylor introduced weekly offering envelopes as a collection method for the church’s financial program. Upon his resignation on May 11, 1876, the church wrote a letter of commendation for Rev. Taylor.<sup>43</sup>

For the third consecutive year, the Greenville Baptist congregation began a search for a pastor. Once more, the church turned to the *Biblical Recorder* for help. In the summer of 1876, ministers Vann and Britt, respectively, declined calls of the church, and the pastoral office remained vacant until 1877, the fiftieth anniversary of the church and the end of Reconstruction.<sup>44</sup>

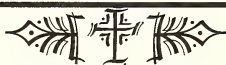
At age fifty, the Greenville Baptist Church had survived its wilderness experience. Born as a missionary Baptist Church in an area called “no-man’s land” by missionary Baptist historians, the infant church from the outset had to struggle against the forces of “anti-missionism and anti-missionary preachers.”<sup>45</sup>

Long periods without a preacher in the pulpit and frequent turnovers in the pastoral office added to the woes of the church and made the struggle for survival even more difficult. When only three years old but possessed with a vision clear enough to see far into the future, the church helped shape Baptist history in North Carolina by hosting the organizational meeting of the Baptist State Convention of North Car-



olina. This historic event was a major mark at the outset of the church's journey. Through perseverance, the Greenville Baptist community of faith actually enjoyed a brief interlude of "summertime growth" in program development in the decade leading to the Civil War. Then the wreckage of that war and the daunting task of social reconstruction caused herculean problems for a small congregation. The little church survived, however, and was ready to call a young new minister to lead it into a new phase of growth and development.

## Chapter 3



# Journey From Surviving to Thriving (1880–1910)

**“ . . . dispose of the old church building to the best advantage.”**

*Minutes of the Greenville Baptist Church, Dec. 29, 1881*

**“ . . . A magnificent structure [that] will stand as a monument to Greenville and a memorial to the Baptist State Convention for ages to come.”**

*Eastern Reflector. Oct. 8, 1890*

**The Memorial Baptist Church in “Greenville was the first real church in which I ever preached.”**

*Dr. Bernard W. Spilman, Oct. 27, 1919*

**“What do the churches mean to the town?”**

*Former Governor Thomas J. Jarvis, Mar. 22, 1908*

**T**he removal of federal troops from the South in 1877 marked the end of Reconstruction and signaled the beginning of an era called the New South. In this period of industrial and commercial growth, textile and tobacco factories appeared on the landscape in piedmont North Carolina, and railroad tracks connected towns heretofore disconnected. Mere villages became growing towns. In the east, the small village of Greenville caught the dynamic spirit and entered a thirty-year period



of growth (1880-1910) that transformed the community into a “thriving commercial, agricultural, and cultural center.”<sup>1</sup>

The year 1877 was also significant in the life of the Greenville Baptist Church not only for reaching its fiftieth anniversary but also for calling the well-educated, young, and energetic pastor, Thomas Carrick. Born April 11, 1850, near Southmont in Davidson County, North Carolina, he first attended school in Teaguetown and later went to high school in High Point. In 1875, he earned a bachelor’s degree while working his way through Wake Forest College. Carrick then enrolled in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, which was located at that time in Greenville, South Carolina. He apparently completed his studies and moved to Greenville, North Carolina, before the seminary relocated to Louisville, Kentucky.<sup>2</sup> Carrick’s seminary studies included courses in “Old Testament Interpretation, Biblical Introduction, Junior Greek, and Junior Hebrew.” The rigor of the curriculum piqued the student’s interest in the Greek language, which he loved and studied for a lifetime. During his career as a “preacher-scholar,” he amassed a library of more than two thousand volumes, with many Greek references and works in the collection.<sup>3</sup>

In May 1877, Thomas Carrick began his first pastorate at the Greenville Baptist Church, with preaching responsibilities for the first, third, and fourth Sundays of each month. For exercising the pastoral care of the church for one year, he was paid \$500 plus living accommodations in the parsonage. Near the end of his first year, the church extended a call for him to continue his work for another year. Carrick agreed to serve but with the understanding that he “would expect the hearty cooperation of all members of the church [and] with the privilege to resign when he saw it proper to do so.”<sup>4</sup> In a set of sermons delivered shortly after the church’s decision to build a new house of worship, the minister expanded on the duties of church members to their pastor and to each other. He challenged members “to love one another as Christ loves us.” Such love, he said, requires that “we visit our brethren in their afflictions, . . . pray for one another, . . . show forbearance one for another, . . . watch over one another, . . . and administer pecuniary relief to those who need it . . .” He concluded with the admonition that, “due to the authority of the church, . . . every member should submit to its discipline.”<sup>5</sup> Early in Pastor Carrick’s ministry, the congregation “decided to take up a collection for the poor connected with the church on every Communion Day.”<sup>6</sup> Today, The Memorial Baptist Church still follows the tradition of receiving a special benevolence fund offering after the observance of the Lord’s Supper.

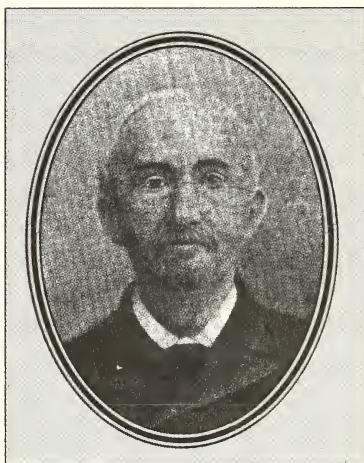
In the post-bellum period, as was the practice in the antebellum era, the church's theory of discipline reflected in the 1828 Rules of Decorum called for direct social control over the personal behavior of its members. These rules of social control were applied during Rev. Carrick's ten-year pastorate. Nine members were excluded from the fellowship. Among the members removed were the church clerk and his wife, who were expelled for ". . . the endorsement of a human society, the Methodist Church so called, with all of its appendages as a church of Christ." Also, church members withdrew fellowship from a mother and two daughters because "reports of gross immorality" against the three women circulated freely and were "generally believed by the people in the community" and because the women had "lost their Christian influence as church members." Two men were found guilty of "unchristian conduct" and were allowed to withdraw from the fellowship. Later, the church restored one of the men to the membership roll. In still another case, the congregation brought a brother before the church on charges of immoral conduct to which he confessed and asked for forgiveness. The congregation forgave and acquitted him. The church also took action against members accused of intoxication. One congregant so charged was excused of the alleged drunkenness when he appeared before the church, made a profession of penitence, and promised with God's help "not to be guilty of the offense anymore."<sup>7</sup> For the remainder of the nineteenth century, the church expelled twenty-six additional members and, for the period 1827–1900, the congregation excommunicated a total of seventy-seven members and restored about 22 percent of the exclusions to church fellowship.<sup>8</sup>

In the twentieth century, the Greenville Baptist congregation, like other Baptist churches in North Carolina, changed from a conception of church discipline based on a method of direct social control of the conduct of members to an indirect mode of control whereby members developed deportment through programs such as Sunday School and the Baptist Young People's Union. Civil authorities rather than the church congregation adjudicated cases of deviant conduct such as intoxication and stealing.<sup>9</sup>

Exclusions from the church fellowship notwithstanding, membership increased from fifty-eight to 100 members during Mr. Carrick's ten-year pastorate and grew to 118 by 1900 for an average of nearly ninety-seven for the twenty-year period. Interestingly, approximately two-thirds of the members were women.<sup>10</sup>

This upward growth curve reversed a twenty-year period of decline in membership that had started in 1860. Rev. Carrick's remarkable pastoral

ability, his lengthy stay in the pulpit, and his evangelistic work jump-started and sustained the new growth. He and his successors annually conducted protracted meetings to reach the unconverted and to grow church membership in a rapidly growing community. Greenville's population, for example, almost tripled from a village of 912 in 1880 to a thriving town of 2,565 residents by the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>11</sup> This "vigorous expansion of population" provided a large field of opportunity for Greenville Baptists and for other churches as well to sow, reap, and gather a bountiful harvest. In December 1885, Thomas Carrick had a successful harvest. He invited Dr. W. A. Nelson of Raleigh and Dr. J. D. Hufham, an able Baptist divine of nearby Scotland Neck and frequent speaker in the Greenville Baptist pulpit, as guest evangelists for a ten-day protracted meeting. They gathered thirteen people for the church roll, ten by baptism in the waters of the Tar River near the wharf and three by transfer from other churches.<sup>12</sup>



*Dr. J.D. Hufham led the effort to get the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina to help fund the construction of the Memorial Church. (Courtesy of the Biblical Recorder).*

Just as church membership increased, so did Sunday School enrollment. In Thomas Carrick's first year of pastoral service, eight officers and teachers led and taught fifty-six scholars. When he departed a decade later, enrollment had nearly doubled with 107 students and seventeen officers and teachers. By the end of the nineteenth century, the school enrolled ninety students taught by twelve teachers and officers. For the final one-fifth of the century, the program maintained an average of nearly ninety-three students and almost twelve teachers and officers.<sup>13</sup>

Behind these impressive statistics are the names and faces of dedicated Sunday School officers and teachers with exceptional abilities. Superintendents who led the Sunday School for the last twenty years of the nineteenth century were Peter P. Lawrence (1881–1883), the son of David Lawrence, a founding father and long-time clerk of the church; C. J. Hunter (1884–1885); D. J. Whichard (1886), editor of the town's weekly newspaper, the *Eastern Reflector*; J. H. Hunter (1884–1889), an attorney who moved to Asheville in 1891, where he served as President of the



Western North Carolina Baptist Convention in the early 1890s; Dr. D. L. James (1890–1891), a dentist; and C. D. Rountree (1892–1901), Pitt County school superintendent and tax collector. In 1902, Mr. Rountree became the Supervisor of the Sunday School.<sup>14</sup>

These officers enlisted a Sunday School faculty of exceptional ability. Classes taught by William H. Ragsdale, Mrs. E. L. O'Hagan, and Bettie Sutton competed for the honor of displaying banners for the highest monthly attendance and the largest monthly contribution per class member. Mrs. O'Hagan's class frequently won both banners, but on occasion Professor Ragsdale's class or Bettie Sutton's students sat under the banner for reporting the best monthly contribution per member.<sup>15</sup>

The Infant Class, however, was the "pride of the school and church." Organized by Mrs. M. M. Nelson in 1882, the class started with an enrollment of "five little boys and girls." By 1885, the class had mushroomed to an enrollment of "about forty-five students." Under Mrs. Nelson's tutelage, the children raised enough money "by selling flowers, . . . attending poultry, . . . running errands, and doing little bits of work" to purchase a double memorial stained glass window at a cost of \$100 for the new church building dedicated in 1890. One section of the window depicts Christ blessing children under which the inscription reads: "Suffer little children to come unto me." The second section shows the picture of the "Good Shepherd with a flock and a sheepfold in the background" under which is inscribed the command "Feed My Lambs." This beautiful window now resides in the foyer of the children's wing of the present church building.<sup>16</sup>

To enhance instruction and broaden the cultural opportunities of scholars in the Sunday School, the leaders purchased a "new library," added new song books, and enlisted the musically gifted twelve-year-old Loula White as organist. Three years later, when Miss White went to Hollins Institute in Virginia to begin her studies, the Sunday School presented her with an attractive silver jewelry box engraved with the words: "To our organist Loula White from the Baptist Sunday School, Greenville, North Carolina, 1893." After her schooling, Loula White returned to Greenville, married James Fleming, and served as church organist for a quarter century.<sup>17</sup>

The Pitt County Sunday School Association was another resource used to improve the teaching arm of the church. Formed in 1890, this organization served as a forum for officers, teachers, and ministers to share ideas and gain knowledge on the Sunday School system of study. In annual conventions, delegates representing the Sunday Schools in the



county reported enrollment statistics and addressed topics such as organization and class size, preparation for teaching, materials and methods of instruction, motivation of scholars by offering rewards for attendance and achievement, management and discipline of scholars—particularly unruly boys—and the desirability of teaching the converted and unconverted in the same classroom. Greenville Baptist delegates such as Pastor A. D. Hunter, D. J. Whichard, J. H. Tucker, and C. D. Rountree, no doubt, carried ideas from these discussions back to their own Sunday School.<sup>18</sup>

As already noted, competition was an important method of motivation to encourage student achievement and to promote growth of the Sunday School. In like manner, social activities were used as a means to provide fun and develop fellowship. In the mid-1880s, the three Sunday Schools in Greenville—the Baptists, Methodists, and Episcopalians—held Christmas parties, decorated Christmas trees, and gave gifts to the children. These parties were typically held in the courthouse, in Germania Hall, or in the Opera House rather than in their respective church buildings. These same Sunday Schools also held union picnics during the summer months. Other forms of entertainment included excursions on steamers plying the waters of the Tar River and on the train. Sunday Schoolers frequently booked passage on the steamer *Greenville* for trips down the Tar River to Yankee Hall, a shipping point on the river founded in 1810 and a popular place for picnics and recreation in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The steamer would depart the wharf in Greenville at 8:00 a.m. and would arrive at Yankee Hall by mid-morning. Once off the steamer, the older boys usually played baseball, and the girls and younger children enjoyed other kinds of games. At noon, picnic lunches were spread on tables located on the grounds or on the deck of the steamer. On occasion, the nearby Pactolus Baptist Sunday School would join the Greenville Baptists at Yankee Hall for a day of fun, fellowship, and recreation. For the return trip, the steamer would leave the Yankee Hall landing about 2:00 p.m. and get back to Greenville around 4:00.<sup>19</sup>

After the railroad came to Greenville in 1889, the Sunday School began to schedule one-day train trips to neighboring towns. On one trip, more than 100 people rode the rails to Scotland Neck for a party and picnic spread “in a beautiful grove” with the host Scotland Neck Baptist Sunday School. After a day of fun, the Greenville Baptists extended an invitation to the “Baptist people of Scotland Neck” to visit Greenville.<sup>20</sup>

What effect, if any, did these social activities have on the spiritual development of the Sunday School scholars? This issue was discussed at the

first convention of the Pitt County Sunday School Association when Rev. A. D. Hunter of the Greenville Baptist Church spoke on the question: "Do Sunday School picnics and parties effect any permanent good?" What he said is unknown, but the Greenville Baptist Sunday School continued to sponsor these events.<sup>21</sup>

Simultaneously with the resurgence of church growth and Sunday School development, the Greenville Baptist congregation undertook a major building project. In 1881, the members voted to erect "a new house of worship" and approved a committee consisting of "Brethren Carrick, J. J. Cherry, and Sister Lula Dancy to solicit funds for that purpose."<sup>22</sup> One year later, a drawing of the "front and side view" of the new church was ready for members to see. Early in 1883, the congregation authorized Rev. Carrick "to dispose of the old church building to the best advantage," which he did when Hickory Hill Baptist Church, a black congregation, bought the old wooden building. The last sermon preached in the old church before it was removed from the site at Fourth and Greene Streets was on the first Sunday in June 1883. Subsequently, members worshiped in the Pitt County Courthouse until 1884, when they returned and held services in the basement level of the unfinished church building.<sup>23</sup>

In June 1883, construction began and proceeded slowly and intermittently for seven years. The major obstacle in the completion of construction was the problem of money. Historically, the church had difficulty raising enough money to pay the pastor's salary. Now it faced the daunting task of soliciting funds to erect the new Baptist church that would stand as a memorial to the founding of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. The congregation authorized Pastor Thomas Carrick "to act as agent for the church . . . and allowed [him] to be absent whenever he thought best" to travel throughout the state at the expense of the church to collect funds for the new house of worship. Editor D. J. Whichard frequently used the *Eastern Reflector* to chasten church people to pay their pledges lest construction be stopped. Fellow church member I. A. Sugg, a lawyer and treasurer of the building committee, responded liberally with his money and means to the work of building the new church. Although not mentioned by name, this benefactor's generosity was acknowledged by Pastor Carrick at the first service held in the basement when the congregation returned from their year-long meeting place in the courthouse.<sup>24</sup>

At the state level, Dr. J. D. Hufham, Baptist leader and friend of the Greenville Baptist congregation, offered a resolution on the floor of the 1882 Baptist State Convention asking messengers to endorse Greenville

Baptists' plans to erect the memorial church and ". . .to commend to the liberality of our brethren in the state this effort . . ." Also, the Ladies Baptist Sewing Society of Greenville telegraphed the president of the convention to "beg that you remember our memorial church."<sup>25</sup> Hufham's resolution not only was approved but was also reaffirmed by the convention the following year. However, before the walls were up and the roof was on, the lack of funds threatened to halt construction. In 1884, Rev. Thomas Carrick and Dr. Hufham as well as others addressed the convention on the financial woes of the memorial church building program. As a response, messengers approved a resolution stating "That . . . the memorial church at Greenville ought to be completed, free of debt, as soon as possible, and that Rev. J. D. Hufham . . . [and] Rev. Thomas Carrick undertake the raising of all necessary funds of this work."<sup>26</sup>

Construction, however, continued to lag and church indebtedness grew to \$5,000. Once again, the convention grappled with the "burden" of the memorial church. In 1886, the convention referred the indebtedness "on the Greenville church to a special committee with instructions and authority to borrow, if necessary, the money and pay the debt."<sup>27</sup>

The debt remained unpaid as the convention gathered in annual session in Greensboro in 1888. The creditor, a prominent Baptist, appealed to the assembled convention for relief. In response, the convention passed a resolution that called for the debt to be paid in full by the following April, and the messengers pledged almost \$2,400 to that end.<sup>28</sup> These pledges, along with contributions made by churches participating in the Brick Book plan, enabled the convention to pay the debt and bring closure to this embarrassing matter.<sup>29</sup>

At the 1889 spring meeting of the Roanoke Union held in Greenville, Dr. Hufham reported that the Greenville church was free at last of the \$5,000 debt. Only a small outside debt of \$600 and a need to raise \$1,000 stood in the way of completing construction of the church. Before the union meeting adjourned, Dr. Hufham had raised \$1,100 of the needed funds. With the turn of these events, D. J. Whichard reported in the *Eastern Reflector* that the memorial church would be completed and the house of worship would be dedicated "to Almighty God" by 1890, the sixtieth anniversary of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. "What an occasion of praise and rejoicing it will be!" he wrote—and it was.<sup>30</sup>

Completed in 1890 after seven years of on-and-off construction at a cost of approximately \$13,000, the church was described as a "magnificent structure [that] will stand as a monument to Greenville and a me-





*The Memorial Baptist Church on Fourth and Greene Streets as it would have looked in the 1890s.*

memorial to the Baptist denomination for ages to come.”<sup>31</sup> The building measured seventy-five by forty feet and had a basement with five rooms—three for Sunday School classes, one for the library, and a main lecture room for prayer meeting and Sunday School. Completed in 1884, the basement served as the congregation’s place of worship until the sanctuary, frequently called the “upper room” was built and furnished. This main auditorium had an “open roof, frosted windows” (later replaced by windows of stained glass donated as memorials), “two entrances from the front and a back entrance to the choir and pulpit.” The choir loft was positioned behind the pulpit platform. The auditorium had “circled seats,” made in Greenville by Cox and Carrell, and chandelier lights manufactured by the Bailey Reflector Company of Philadelphia.<sup>32</sup>

To feature the dedication, the church invited the Tar River Baptist Association to hold its 1890 annual meeting in Greenville. On Sunday, October 12, 1890, at the 11 a.m. worship service, Baptists from across the state met with delegates of the association, the local congregation, and



distinguished townsmen for the dedicatory exercises. Participants on the program included Pastor A. D. Hunter; Dr. R. D. Fleming of Warrenton, who led the singing; Rev. J. W. Hundley of Tarboro, who read Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the Temple taken from the sixth chapter of 2 Chronicles; Dr. T. H. Pritchard of Wilmington, who preached the dedicatory sermon on the theme of fellowship with God; Dr. T. E. Skinner of Raleigh, who offered the dedicatory prayer; and J. D. Hufham, who "presented this house in all of its parts to God as an humble offering now solemnly dedicated to His service."<sup>33</sup> With the completion and dedication an accomplished fact, the house of worship, erected as a memorial to the founding and first meeting of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, became The Memorial Baptist Church in name and in fact. As Editor Whichard had presaged, the occasion was one of prayer, praise, and joy.

However, at the euphoric time of dedication, Rev. Thomas Carrick was absent. This young pastor was the one who had led the small Greenville Baptist congregation to take a giant leap of faith to undertake the task of building the memorial church. After a successful pastorate of nearly ten years, he had closed his work at the unfinished church on the fourth Sunday of December in 1886.<sup>34</sup>

When Rev. Thomas Carrick departed Greenville to accept a call as pastor of the Baptist Church in Lexington, North Carolina, he left a rich legacy in the Greenville community as well as a two-year-old son who had died in 1883 and was buried in Cherry Hill Cemetery. The *Eastern Reflector* reported that Thomas Carrick was a minister who has "but few, if any, equals for a man of his age . . . [That] he is a man of superior intellect . . . [and] an earnest, conscientious Christian outside as well as in the pulpit . . . whose general conduct [has] won for him the full confidence of the entire community." In civic affairs, he was an "active and efficient" member of the Board of Education for two years and was a strong voice in the local Teacher Association. He served as pro tempore of the association, helped draft its constitution, and made presentations to teachers on the "best methods of teaching morals and character building." And, he found time to act as treasurer of the Greenville Lodge. The lengthened shadow of this able minister imbued with "true Christian character" looms large in the history of The Memorial Baptist Church.<sup>35</sup>

For twenty-five years following the ten-year tenure of Thomas Carrick, the pastoral office at Memorial changed hands frequently. From 1887 to 1911, ten different pastors and numerous interim ministers

filled the pulpit. The congregation called Rev. J. W. Wildman, a native Virginian and pastor in Laurinburg, North Carolina, to the unfinished church in June 1887, effective on August 1. From the outset, the Baptist worshippers were "most favorably impressed" with him and, after hearing him deliver sermons on "Patience" on a Sunday morning and "Charity" in the evening service, they left the sanctuary hoping, "May his lot long be cast here."<sup>36</sup> However, midway in his second year, Pastor Wildman had arranged to preach in Virginia the first and second Sundays of each month and in July 1889, he resigned his pastorate and accepted a pastoral call in his native state. In the absence of a pastor, Rev. G. L. Finch frequently filled the pulpit in the Memorial Church in the latter part of 1889.

While at Memorial, Rev. Wildman traveled through the state in search for funds to complete the construction of the church. Although the sanctuary was not completed, the baptismal font in the basement was finished and on March 21, 1888, was used for the first time to baptize five candidates following the Wednesday night prayer service. He also saw the ladies of the church raise money to purchase a "handsome Wilcox and White organ." Like his predecessor, Rev. Wildman served the Tar River Baptist Association as a missionary to Pitt County. In this capacity, he organized a Baptist Church at Allen's Schoolhouse and preached there on Sunday afternoons. He and his wife also were active in the temperance movement in Greenville. On a sad note, his pastorate was besieged with an inordinate number of deaths. In a memorial service for Mrs. W. K. Delaney, Rev. Wildman, along with his congregation, lamented "Four of [our] oldest, most loved, and efficient members have died within eight months . . . . Four of the strongest and most beautiful pillars of our church have been removed."<sup>37</sup>

Thirty-three-year-old Rev. A. D. Hunter of Cary, North Carolina, followed J. W. Wildman as pastor of the still unfinished Memorial Church. Born in Apex, North Carolina, on July 15, 1856, he grew up in Wake County and enrolled at Wake Forest College for undergraduate studies. Subsequently, he prepared for the ministry at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kentucky. The Hunters had one daughter, Elsie, when they moved to Greenville and, while in the Pitt County town, a second daughter, LaRue, was born.<sup>38</sup>

When the Hunters came to Greenville in December 1889, it was a town "inhabited by about two thousand people" with six general merchandise stores, six exclusive dry goods stores, two drugstores, four millinery houses, twelve groceries, two coach shops, a harness shop,

and three shoe shops. This “delightful town of the East” had “two primary schools taught by ladies and the Greenville Institute” which prepared “the youth of both sexes to take high classes in college . . . or to impart a practical business education.” The religious community consisted of seven churches, four that served African Americans and three for the white population. The black congregations were missionary Baptists, Methodists, and Free Will Baptists; the white congregations were Baptists, Methodists, and Episcopalians. Presbyterians had no house of worship in Greenville, but the Presbyterian pastor in Tarboro came once a month to hold preaching services for them.<sup>39</sup>

A full schedule kept Pastor Hunter constantly busy. On the second and fourth Sundays, he conducted morning and evening worship services and held prayer meeting every Wednesday night in the Greenville Baptist Church. On the first Sunday morning and night, he preached at the Pactolus Baptist Church. The fourth Sunday morning and night found him in Bethel preaching at the Baptist Church. As a missionary to Pitt County, he played a role in organizing a church in Eagles and in Ayden, and he frequently appeared as a guest in the pulpit of the Baptist Church for African Americans in Greenville.<sup>40</sup>

This preacher of “great ability and zeal” delivered sermons ranging from “Practical Christianity” to the “Spirit of the Living God.” Other sermon topics periodically announced in the *Eastern Reflector* included “Reaping and Sowing,” “Parable of the Sower,” “Relation between Parents and Children,” “Honesty,” and “Moral Obligation in Education.” In a sermon based on the text “The way of the transgressor is hard,” Rev. Hunter drew content and examples from one of the sessions of Pitt County’s Superior Court. In his sermons, he typically adhered closely to the Bible to illustrate and substantiate major points.

When levity was needed, Preacher Hunter used humor to calm troubled waters. During an evening preaching service, some burners of the large chandelier flared up and flames shot out the top of the shades sending the frightened congregation in a stampede to the doors. The danger was removed by alertly turning down the burners. With quiet restored and the worshippers back in the pews, the preacher said, “People are quick to rush and get out of the way of a little fire here, but many of them show no concern about making their escape from the great fire that is to come hereafter.”<sup>41</sup>

Disturbances immediately outside the doors of the church house caused by unruly boys, however, were not handled with the same aplomb, cheerfulness, and success as the “little fire” inside the church.

These intractable juvenile delinquents made a practice of showing up on the steps of the Baptist and Methodist churches during worship and creating a disturbance. Deacons were dispatched to quell the disorderly behavior, but were not always successful. The churches threatened to bring charges against the recalcitrant teenagers who, on one occasion, forced Preacher Hunter to close the worship service before he had finished the sermon.<sup>42</sup>

In Rev. Hunter's first year in Greenville, construction on the church building was completed, and the church was dedicated. As pastor, he had to oversee the painting of the walls, the installation of the pews, the placement of windows, and the installation of the heating system. He also planned the dedication service already noted. The first service in the "upper room" was held on Wednesday night, October 8, 1890, on the eve of the opening session of the meeting of the Tar River Baptist Association.

After three years of fruitful labor, this able and beloved pastor resigned the pastoral office of The Memorial Baptist Church to accept a pastoral call at Carrsville, Virginia. He preached his farewell sermon on Christmas night, 1892. In his departing message, he noted that the church had added "sixty-five to the membership" and had raised \$5,000 for various purposes." One week later on January 1, 1893, the church in conference adopted a resolution of public recognition and appreciation of Rev. A. D. Hunter. The resolution read in part . . . "That in Brother Hunter we have had a laborious, zealous, untiring, and faithful pastor . . . [and] . . . That we recognize in him a heightened, affable, conscientious, and upright Christian gentleman and minister whose influence will long be felt here . . . ." Part of that influence, albeit not mentioned specifically in Hunter's farewell sermon or in the public resolution, is reflected in the name, The Memorial Baptist Church, for it was during Rev. Hunter's pastorate that the church house was completed and dedicated to God.<sup>43</sup>

Pastor J. H. Lambeth followed A. D. Hunter's tenure in the pulpit at The Memorial Baptist Church. Educated at Wake Forest College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Lambeth came to Greenville after an eight-year stay in Roxboro, North Carolina. He arrived in mid-February 1893 with the expectation of staying only one month. He remained, however, for two years. For the years he was in Greenville, the congregation granted him permission to be away during the summer months to do evangelistic work in both Virginia and North Carolina. During his first absence in 1893, Bernard W. Spilman, at Southern



Seminary, served Memorial as well as Pactolus and Forbes Schoolhouse as a supply minister. Fifteen years later in a letter to D. J. Whichard, Dr. Spilman, as President of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, said that "Greenville was the first real church in which I ever preached." During Mr. Lambeth's 1894 summer hiatus, Rev. R. D. Carroll of Winterville and others filled the pulpit. On the last Sunday in December 1894, Pastor Lambeth delivered his "parting sermon" and moved to a new pastorate in Mount Airy, North Carolina. In 1899, at age forty-five, Mr. Lambeth died in Roxboro. A memorial service was held for him in The Memorial Baptist Church, at which time Greenville's elder statesman, Governor Thomas Jarvis, remembered J. H. Lambeth as "a preacher" and Professor W. H. Ragsdale eulogized him as a "man and pastor."<sup>44</sup>

For the next two years (1895, 1896), two pastors, respectively, served The Memorial Baptist Church. The first was Rev. Charles Madison Billings. Born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, C. M. Billings studied at Wake Forest College, where he earned the bachelor's degree in 1894. In early 1895, he accepted the pastorate of the Memorial Church and an appointment as missionary of the Tar River Baptist Association for Pitt County. In the latter assignment, he preached at Pactolus and Forbes Schoolhouse located about four miles from Greenville. In mid-January 1896, Mr. Billings married Addie Moore of Rockingham County, North Carolina, and left Greenville to serve churches in Packsville and Timmonsville, South Carolina.<sup>45</sup>

Shortly after Rev. Billings left for his wedding, The Memorial Baptist Church suffered the loss of its records for a second time. A devastating fire destroyed the records and a silver communion service when the home of church clerk, L. W. Lawrence, burned to the ground.<sup>46</sup> One month later on February 15–16, fire bells in the cold night awakened a sleeping community to still another fire. Unlike the Lawrence house fire, this raging inferno was in the downtown business area. Started by a shattered lamp in the local barbershop, the fire spread to the Opera House and from there the hungry, greedy flames leaped from one building to the next to consume one half of the business part of Greenville. When "Greenville's big fire" was extinguished, "ten two-story brick stores, four one-story brick stores, the Opera House, and eleven frame buildings" lay in rubble and ruin.<sup>47</sup>

Ironically, the new pastor of The Memorial Baptist Church and his wife arrived in Greenville on Saturday night just hours before the big fire. What a "warm" welcome for Rev. and Mrs. E. D. Wells! The excite-

ment of the fire notwithstanding, the Wellses, who had moved from Packsville, South Carolina, were in church on the following morning and evening to conduct worship services. From the outset, however, unavoidable distractions plagued Wells's ministry. E. D.'s father died within the first month of his Greenville pastorate, and the pastor himself suffered an illness that kept him out of the pulpit and away from his congregation for two months. Even with these difficult problems, the preacher was instructive in the pulpit and productive in service to the congregation. Sermons preached on topics such as "The Wilderness Temptation," "Poverty at the Gate of Wealth," and the "Reckless Young Man," carried "conviction" and reflected an "advanced view of Christian living and life." In his last statements to the congregation, he reported seventy-seven sermons preached, 500 calls made, and 250 calls received. Rev. E. D. Wells moved to a pastorate in Georgetown, South Carolina.<sup>48</sup>

To fill the empty pulpit, the congregation called A. W. Setzer, a student at Wake Forest College. In 1897, he came as a supply pastor with the intent to stay for three months but remained for almost three years. Born June 17, 1872, this Catawba County native attended the public schools of that county and studied for three years at Penelope Academy, where he was converted and became an active church worker. After three years of teaching school and preaching, he entered Wake Forest College as a ministerial student and earned his degree in 1897.

This "rather tall" young minister with "long arms, piercing eyes, and a strong, clear voice" always delivered well-prepared sermons with "easy and graceful gestures." Sermon topics, for example, preached at Memorial and, on occasion, at the Pitt County Home included "Watchfulness," "The Wearied Savior," "Our Lord's Determination," "Faith and Unbelief Contrasted," and "The Wherefore of Doubt."<sup>49</sup> At Thursday night prayer meetings, the minister led the congregation in the study of "Distinctive Baptist Principles," and on a warm Sunday evening in June, he "baptized twelve in the river." In October 1898 after the congregation had approved the letter to the Tar River Baptist Association showing an addition of seventeen and a total membership of 113, the pastor "commended the church for what it had done" and thanked the members for their "cooperation." He further said, "there was no church in the state that he had rather serve than the Memorial Church in Greenville."<sup>50</sup>

For 1898, work and cooperation between pastor and people were essential as the church prepared to host the sixty-eighth annual session

of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. To ready the church for the long-awaited “second coming” of the convention, Sallie Lipscomb hosted an entertainment to raise funds to beautify the church’s interior, and Mrs. M. M. Nelson persuaded tobacconists to donate to the beautification project one bunch of tobacco from every pile of tobacco weighing fifty pounds or more sold on the five warehouse floors. These donated bunches were then consolidated and sold. In eight days of sales, the ladies of the church had earned enough money to have an iron fence erected in front of the church.<sup>51</sup>

The congregation also was responsible for local arrangements such as finding a sufficient number of people who would open their “hearts and homes” to the delegates for the five-day convention from December 8 to December 12, 1898. C. D. Rountree and D. J. Whichard headed a committee to find housing and to assign the messengers to their lodging.

The major reason the convention accepted Memorial’s invitation to come to the birthplace of the state’s organized Baptist work was to mark the union of the Baptist State Convention and the Western North Carolina Convention. Organized near Hendersonville in 1845, the same year the Southern Baptist Convention was founded, the western convention was formed as an auxiliary of the state convention because Baptists in the mountainous west had too far to travel to attend the sessions in the east. Twelve years later, the western convention became an independent body. By 1890, however, the railroad from east to west had reached Murphy. With the east, the Piedmont, and the west connected by rail, travel from one end of the state to the other became much easier. Thus, the need for two conventions was greatly diminished.

Baptist leaders of the western convention initiated the move to dissolve their convention and join with the Baptist State Convention. To that end, representatives came to Greenville to seek admission as delegates. The Baptist State Convention unanimously enrolled them as delegates, and they were warmly welcomed by Dr. C. E. Taylor, President of Wake Forest College. The messengers then joined together to sing “Blest Be the Tie That Binds.” Just as the crossties and rails had linked together the geographic regions of the state, North Carolina Baptists once again had joined together as one body in the Memorial Church located “almost a stone’s throw of the spot” on which the convention had been born sixty-eight years earlier.<sup>52</sup>

In the final service of this important sixty-eighth session, Dr. J. D. Hufham, who had done so much for the cause of building the church as

a memorial to the organization of the state convention, called for subscriptions to place a memorial window in the house of worship. Editor D. J. Whichard assumed responsibility for collecting the subscriptions and pledges.

As the messengers and visitors left the birthplace of the convention, many praised the townspeople for their kindness and hospitality. J. W. Bailey of the *Biblical Recorder* said, "the whole town gave its warmest hospitality to all. All denominations greeted us with genuine welcome . . . There is nothing to regret; there is much to joy in." A. E. Dickerson wrote about the convention in the *Religious Herald*: "The best meeting of the convention of the thirty I have attended." A. B. Adkins noted: "I have attended eight sessions of the Baptist State Convention, and I think this is the best I have ever attended. . . .The people of Greenville deserve our sincere and heartfelt thanks for their kind and cordial hospitality."<sup>53</sup>

In the aftermath of hosting the successful session of the convention, the congregation in church conference unanimously extended Rev. A. W. Setzer's pastorate for the third year. He accepted the call, but in mid-1899 he tendered his resignation, effective September 1. He preached his last sermon to a full sanctuary of Baptists and Methodists, who had joined together to bid farewell to the young minister. After the benediction, the Baptist and Methodist choirs sang "God Be With You Till We Meet Again." Mr. Setzer moved to a new pastoral office in Morehead City, North Carolina. Reflecting on his three-year stay in Greenville, he said " Being inexperienced to a large extent, the work . . . was more difficult to me than it would have been had my experience been wider; but from the time I took up the work, there was not a jar or discord. I shall never forget the brethren and sisters of The Memorial Baptist Church of Greenville."<sup>54</sup>

With the departure of A. W. Setzer, the pulpit committee moved quickly to call the Reverend Jasper Newton Booth, the pastor at Washington, North Carolina, to lead The Memorial Baptist Church into the twentieth century. Born in New Hill, North Carolina, and the holder of a degree from Wake Forest College, "J. N.," as he was called, began his first pastorate at the Second Church, Durham in 1889. He then held pastoral offices in Edgefield, South Carolina; Union, South Carolina; and Lumberton, North Carolina, before moving to Washington. Thus when J. N. came to Greenville on October 1, 1899, he had considerable experience in pastoral care.<sup>55</sup>

The new minister brought with him a set of initiatives to ignite in-



terest in church and to develop a higher level of spirituality among members. Like his predecessor, Rev. Setzer, J. N. exchanged pulpits with the Methodist minister, H. M. Eure. However, unlike earlier exchanges, the Booth-Eure switches were made without previous announcement and came as a complete surprise to the respective congregations. Pastor Booth also started the first church newsletter. Called *The Memorial Church* and edited and published by the minister, the small paper cost twenty-five cents per year. Its stated purpose was to “keep members informed as to the work of the church and enlist their sympathy and stimulate their zeal in the aims and objects of the church.”<sup>56</sup>

Rev. Booth preached direct and forthright sermons as he tried to get his congregation to develop Christian commitment and conviction. He entreated church members to exert their Christian influence in the community. In one sermon, he admonished church members who were “card players,” “ball goers,” and “whiskey drinkers” for they had no influence at all in bringing the unconverted to Christ. He was also concerned about parental responsibility—the family values issue that is still relevant in the early twenty-first century. Based on the text: “Is a young man safe?” Rev. Booth preached on the evils that endangered the youth and the responsibility of parents to look after and care for their children. Some parents, he exhorted, show more care for their livestock than they do for their growing boys. When animals wandered off, diligent searches were made to find them. However, at night boys were allowed to wander wherever their desires took them.<sup>57</sup>

The Booths had experiential knowledge of parental responsibility, for they had two sons, Carey and Charles. They also knew about the care of livestock. J. N. owned and milked a cow that, at times, was disposed to kick when one sat down to milk her. In one kicking episode, the cow aimed at the preacher and broke his spectacles, which kept him from reading. History is silent on the sermon he preached to the bovine. A more serious accident occurred on a cold February day as J. N. was cutting wood in his yard. As he chopped, a stick flew up and hit him in the mouth. The blow severely injured his upper lip, and the wound was painful and noticeable. Many in the congregation, no doubt, asked questions about how and why the preacher came to have such a puffed-up upper lip.<sup>58</sup>

The pastor, however, had a larger problem than the occasional accident experienced while doing household chores. Simply stated, his salary was insufficient “to support him and his family.” For the three years of his pastorate, the annual salary had remained constant at \$700.

To supplement his income, Rev. Booth worked as a salesman for the *Daily Reflector*. In the spring of 1903, the pastor submitted his resignation to the Board of Deacons and cited an insufficient salary as the reason for doing so. He accepted a call to the church in Hertford County, North Carolina, effective May 1, 1903. Before leaving Greenville by boat to take up his new charge, Rev. Booth said "it would always give him pleasure to visit Greenville, and he would come whenever there was an opportunity to do so."<sup>59</sup>

On June 6, 1903, The Memorial Baptist Church invited Rev. A. T. King to come to Greenville, and he accepted the call. He grew up in Wilmington, North Carolina, and was a graduate of Wake Forest College and Southern Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky.

The new pastor arrived in Greenville on July 4 and entered the pulpit on the following day for his first service. On the platform to welcome him were Mayor H. W. Whedbee, the pastors of the Christian, Presbyterian, and Methodist churches, respectively, and the superintendent of the Baptist Sunday School, M. A. Allen. The four congregations met together on that first Sunday in July to hear Rev. King's warm response to the cordial words of welcome. The inaugural service established a pattern and practice of unity, cordiality, and cooperation among the pastoral leaders in the community during Pastor King's two-year tenure; these same four churches—Christian, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Baptist—brought their congregations together in special services to observe the Week of Prayer. The services rotated from one church to another each day of the week. Also, these four ministers, along with the pastor of the



*The memorial window commemorates the founding of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina near the site of the Memorial Baptist Church, Fourth and Greene Streets*

Episcopal Church, wrote a letter of protest to a proposed Sunday train that would travel through Greenville and other communities on its run from Weldon to Kinston. To follow up on the opposition to the Sunday train, Rev. King preached a sermon on Sabbath desecration. He told his congregation that the Lord's day is "a day of memorial of Creation, . . . is a day of rest, and is a day for the worship of Almighty God."<sup>60</sup>

The high moment of Rev. King's short pastorate in Greenville came as he presided over the unveiling of the memorial window placed in the front of the church in commemoration of the organization of the Baptist State Convention in Greenville. At the service on Sunday, February 21, 1904, the pastor traced the history of religion in North Carolina from 1660 to 1830, the year the convention was organized. Following his remarks, Miss Hennie Ragsdale, daughter of Professor W. H. Ragsdale, and Miss Essie Whichard, daughter of D. J. Whichard, unveiled the beautiful Palladian-style window that covered a large part of the front wall of the church building. The window also commemorated two other important events in the life of the church: the organization of the church in 1827, and the erection and dedication of the Memorial Church building in 1890, the year the church's name changed from the Greenville Baptist Church to The Memorial Baptist Church. After five years, Dr. J. D. Hufham's call for a memorial window to be placed in the Memorial Church, made in the closing moments of the sixty-eighth Baptist State Convention, had been answered.<sup>61</sup> The window remained in the church building until the congregation moved to a new house of worship in 1973. Because the memorial window was too large to fit intact in the new sanctuary on Greenville Boulevard, the three main center panels were removed, restored, and adapted as a folding window covering the baptistry. Today, it provides a focal point in the sanctuary. Other sections of the memorial window depicting the three historical events in the life of the church were removed, restored, and mounted in three separate frames, and a fourth stained glass window commemorating the dedication of the new church building on Greenville Boulevard in 1973 was created and mounted in a matching frame. These four memorial windows are located in the church media center.

A. T. King had a fruitful ministry in Greenville. In his first year, membership grew from 125 to 169, and contributions increased from \$1,634.43 to \$2,077.80. He also encouraged church and non-church members to subscribe to the *Biblical Recorder*. In this effort, the Baptist paper reported that "Brother King has been doing as [much] good work for the Recorder in his church as any pastor in the state." For his



second year, the church raised Rev. King's salary from \$700 to \$800 per year; and, when he tendered his resignation in early 1905, the congregation voted unanimously to increase his income to \$1,000 per year in an effort to keep him at Memorial. However, he declined because the "Holy Spirit led him to a larger field in Richmond, Virginia." On April 30, 1905, this young pastor preached his farewell sermon on "The Christian's Hope," which ironically was interrupted by the town's fire alarm signaling a fire on nearby Washington Street. The Greenville community viewed him as a "faithful pastor devoted to his work; a cultured gentleman; a true friend."<sup>62</sup>

In the succession of ministers at the Baptist church, John Edward Ayscue followed Rev. A. T. King. Born December 15, 1873, in Franklin County, North Carolina, Ayscue received an early education in the local public school and then studied at Whitsett Institute. He earned the A.B. and A.M. degrees at Wake Forest College, after which he enrolled at the University of Chicago, where he was awarded the bachelor of divinity degree with honors.<sup>63</sup>

This "tall, stately man of unusual ability and with a striking personality" was exceptionally well-prepared for the ministry when he came to Greenville in July 1905 to serve as a supply pastor in the Baptist Church for four weeks. At the end of July, however, Rev. Ayscue accepted the call as pastor of The Memorial Baptist Church and began work on September 1. In his introductory sermon, entitled "The Man and His Message," he told the congregation that his "effort will be to advance the Kingdom of God," and he challenged the worshippers to help him "begin this very day . . . to persuade men into the Kingdom of God." To that end he practiced evangelism. As a result of one protracted meeting, for example, the pastor administered the ordinance of baptism to eight candidates, who were the first to be baptized in the new pool constructed in the choir gallery between the organ and the pulpit.

Other sermon topics delivered by the new pastor included "Seeking the Best" and "Danger of Imitation." Following the Sunday evening services, Rev. Ayscue held an informal fifteen-minute "after-the-meeting" session with the congregation. He also preached at the County Home and appeared in the pulpit of Sycamore Hill Baptist Church.

The minister also led The Memorial Baptist Church to a greater awareness of its history and heritage. Before Rev. Ayscue's arrival, the congregation apparently had never observed a single church anniversary in more than seventy-five years of its existence. In February 1906, the pastor asked a committee to plan an anniversary service for the



Sunday nearest March 27, the date some believed the church was organized in the year 1827. (There is, however, no written record that the church was formed on March 27, 1827.) Nevertheless, the Memorial Baptist Church held its "first" anniversary celebration on April 1, 1906, with the venerable Dr. J. D. Hufham as the principal speaker. In his historical address, Dr. Hufham reviewed the history of the first Baptists in the colony and their distinctive principles, as well as the history of Greenville and the Greenville Baptist Church.<sup>64</sup> The church observed subsequent anniversaries on April 7, 1907 and March 22, 1908. On the latter anniversary celebration, eight new classrooms in the newly remodeled Sunday School were used for the first time. A record number of 260 people attended the opening of the new facilities. To mark the journey of the Sunday School, short presentations were made on "The Sunday School of Olden Times," "The Present Day Sunday School," and "The Sunday School of the Future." Dr. Henry W. Battle, the noted Baptist preacher from a line of important Baptists going back to the American Revolution, preached at the 11:00 a.m. worship hour, and former governor Thomas Jarvis addressed the evening congregation on the subject, "What do the churches mean to the town?"<sup>65</sup>

The Memorial Baptist Church, like the other churches in town, was a moral force in the community. The churches mobilized the Christian people of the town to be active in the cause of prohibition, a great issue before them and the nation in the first decades of the twentieth century. Shortly after Governor Jarvis raised the question, "What do the churches mean to the town?" Pastor Ayscue entered the pulpit and made a strong appeal in his sermon for prohibition. He argued for abstinence. "Prohibition cannot save the drunkard of today," he intoned, "but [it] is the hope of the rising generation in saving boys from the evils of whiskey." Prayer meetings promoting a victory for prohibition were held in the Baptist Church at 7:00 a.m., in the Presbyterian Church at 11:00 a.m., in the Christian Church at 3:00 p.m., and in the Methodist Church at 6:00 p.m. A decade later, the Prohibition Amendment became a part of the Constitution of the United States.<sup>66</sup>

Rev. Ayscue's pastoral labors in Greenville were prosperous for the church. Membership grew from 173 to 194 during his three-year stay. In his first full year, total contributions reached \$2,874.33 and Sunday School membership escalated from 188 to 259. He closed his pastorate at the end of June in 1908 to take a special course of study at the University of Chicago. After serving churches in Wisconsin and Missouri,

he returned to Greenville as the first pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church, organized in 1915.<sup>67</sup>

Guest pastors proclaimed the Word at The Memorial Baptist Church for the remainder of 1908 as the pulpit committee composed of the Board of Deacons searched for a new minister. While on vacation from his church in Edenton, Rev. H. H. Marshburn offered to come to preach for two Sundays. Others who filled the pulpit were S. E. Garner of Raleigh, Sidney Edgerton of Wilson, R. N. Herring of Siler City, and R. R. Fleming of Newton, Kansas, who was a native Pitt Countian.<sup>68</sup>

After an exhaustive search, the church extended a call to Rev. J. B. Cook, pastor of the Weatherford Memorial Church in Manchester, Virginia. A native of Pittsylvania County, Virginia, and a graduate of Richmond College (now University), Rev. Cook began his pastoral duties in Greenville on the first Sunday in January 1909. On the second Sunday, The Memorial Baptist Church, its sister churches, the Roanoke Baptist Association, and Greenville's mayor welcomed Pastor Cook to his new field of labor. In response, the tenth pastor over the past two decades declared "I accept my task . . . and assure you that with a firm hand, a watchful eye, and a tender ear I shall endeavor to do my duty."<sup>69</sup>

Although church membership declined from 194 to 178 during the Cook ministry, which lasted fifteen months, Sunday School enrollment increased from 259 to 348. This rapid growth pattern in the Sunday School program, combined with an anticipated influx of students to be enrolled at the newly established East Carolina Teachers Training School, scheduled to open in October 1909, led the congregation to make plans to enlarge the church facilities. An architect submitted drawings that were referred to a committee for consideration.<sup>70</sup>

On January 3, 1910, one year to the day after Pastor Cook had preached his first sermon to his congregation, he tendered his resignation to be effective April 1. The church accepted the resignation and unanimously approved a "testimonial of love and esteem" for Brother Cook and family. He closed his ministry on March 20 and moved to Sutherlin, Virginia, to take up another pastoral charge. Once more the church looked to Wake Forest College for help. E. N. Johnston, a recent graduate of the college who planned to attend Southern Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, in the fall, came to Greenville as supply pastor for four months.<sup>71</sup>

These frequent changes in pastoral leadership during the past two decades did not adversely affect church program development. Major organizations at the dawn of the twentieth century were the Sunday

School, Woman's Missionary Society, the Ladies Aid Society, Baptist Young People's Union, the choir, and the deacons.

### **Sunday School Enrollment Soars**

The Sunday School was established in 1853. Except for the Civil War period, the school had experienced incremental growth until the beginning of the new century. In the first decade of the 1900s, Superintendent C.D. Rountree (1892–1901 and a supervisor beginning in 1902), M. A. Allen (1902–1903), William H. Ragsdale (1904–1908), and Claude W. Wilson (1909–1913) led the Sunday School through a period of unprecedented growth. In 1901 the enrollment numbered 102 and by 1910 it had more than tripled to 368. Superintendent Ragsdale, a professional educator, ignited and sustained the rapid growth. He reorganized the “old” school and formed new classes. He reinstated the “banner month” program used in the 1880s to reward achievement; held annual rally days to get every member of the church to attend Sunday School; conducted Sunday School mass meetings; and observed Cradle Roll day to focus church-wide attention on the babies enrolled in the school. On Cradle Roll day for 1907, the local press reported the presence of “big babies and little babies, fat babies and not so fat babies, boy babies and girl babies, pretty babies and not a single ugly baby—the whole group made a pretty scene.”<sup>72</sup>

Superintendent Ragsdale scheduled social activities for the Sunday School scholars. Annual picnics, ice cream parties, and excursions on riverboats and on the train crowded summer schedules. The round trip train fare to Raleigh to visit the state capital cost the Sunday School adult \$1.50; each youngster between age six and twelve paid seventy-five cents.

Music was also a part of Ragsdale's Sunday School curriculum. The Superintendent scheduled evening sessions for members to learn new songs, and he engaged the music teacher of the graded school to teach sight-singing classes.

Baraca and Philathea classes were added to the Sunday School during Professor Ragsdale's superintendency. These two classes can be traced to the adult Bible class movement that originated in Syracuse, New York, where Marshall A. Hudson organized a men's Bible class in 1890 as a means to get men to church. Hudson's class gave birth to Baraca classes for men and Philathea classes for women in Sunday Schools in the United States and in other countries. The Baraca class at The Memorial Baptist Church, like its fraternal classes in other

churches, exhibited an exuberant spirit, possessed a strong group identity, publicized its meetings and activities in the local newspaper, and energetically recruited new members. Effective Bible teaching by Dr. J. W. Bryan and the class's unbounded enthusiasm led to substantial growth in enrollment. When the class celebrated its fifth anniversary in 1909, the roll showed a membership of 104, which represented thirty percent of the total Sunday School enrollment.<sup>73</sup>

Unfortunately, history was silent on the work and progress of the Philathea class. In the Saturday edition of the local newspaper, however, the press did publicize the church schedule of the Baraca and Philathea classes, the Sunday School hour, and the morning and evening worship services. The record also showed that the Philathea class invited Professor Ragsdale to be its teacher, and he accepted. At the end of his first year of teaching, class president Lizzinia Moore presented a gold-headed cane to Professor Ragsdale in appreciation of his work as their teacher. In 1909, Professor Claude W. Wilson of the faculty of the East Carolina Teachers Training School replaced Ragsdale as the Superintendent of the Sunday School. In his first year, enrollment increased to 368 for a gain of twenty over the previous year's membership.<sup>74</sup>

### **Memorial Members on Mission**

In 1886, when the people of Memorial were busy building a house of worship, the women of the church formed a new organization called the Woman's Missionary Society. Like their sister societies in other Baptist churches, the women of Memorial worked to promote missions and to give financial support to missionary activities. The women met once a month to study and report on missions. Their meetings and work were publicized in the local press. One of the major projects of the society was to hold week of prayer services. Scheduled for early January, the week-long prayer service typically began on a Sunday night and concluded the following Friday. Usually, the Monday through Friday sessions were held in the afternoon in the homes of individual members. The society collected an offering on the final day of the service.

The society also sponsored a week of prayer and self-denial service in March or early April preceding Easter. The format for the self-denial week of prayer was similar to the January program. In 1907, the Woman's Missionary Society reported to the Tar River Baptist Association a self-denial offering of \$25. This contribution was in addition to the offerings reported for foreign, home, state, and association missions.<sup>75</sup>



The Woman's Missionary Society packed boxes for missionaries serving in North Carolina, on the frontier, and in foreign countries. One box containing a quilt, for example, was mailed to a missionary on the frontier. The box-packing project usually was hosted by a member, and the entire membership would bring items to place in the box.<sup>76</sup>

In 1898, the Woman's Missionary Society hosted the annual meeting of the North Carolina Woman's Missionary Union. The meeting was held in conjunction with the sixty-eighth annual meeting of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. While the men met in The Memorial Baptist Church, the Woman's Missionary Union convened in the Methodist Church. President Fannie E. S. Heck presided at the sessions.<sup>77</sup>

In 1903, the society began to submit annual reports of its work to the Tar River Baptist Association. These reports included the amount of contributions to foreign, home, state, and association missions. For 1907, the last year the church and society were affiliated with the association, total contributions came to \$245.85 compared with \$100 for 1903.<sup>78</sup>

By 1889, The Memorial Baptist Church had an active Sunbeams missionary group, which initially appeared to be within the Sunday School. In 1900, however, the Sunbeams came under the sponsorship of the Woman's Missionary Society.<sup>79</sup> Designed for children, the Sunbeams studied missions, were asked to pray for missions and missionaries, and were encouraged to earn money to put in their "mite boxes" for the support of missionaries. The children demonstrated their knowledge of missions on Children's Day with exercises performed for the congregation. Held on a Sunday night, these events always drew large audiences. The evening program consisted of songs like "Just a Sunbeam"; readings such as "William Carey, the Father of Modern Missions"; flower exercises like "Rose of Sharon" and "Little White Daisies" performed by eight girls; and recitations on topics like "Mountain of Woe" and "A Missionary Plea." A question-and-answer session, an offering for missions, a closing song, and a benediction ended the exercise. Children as young as three-year-olds participated. At the turn of the century, the participants included David and Essie Whichard, Nannie and Ethel Bowling, Hugh Ragsdale, William Tyson, Ernestine Forbes, Jamie Bryan, Eloise Cheek, Ruth Cobb, Grace Smith, and Inez Pittman.<sup>80</sup>

In October 1897 during the pastorate of Rev. A. W. Setzer, the young people of The Memorial Baptist Church organized a Baptist Young People's Union. Known as the BYPU, the newly formed group was an off-

spring of the Christian Young People's movement at the turn of the century. The aim of the organization was to help Baptist young people develop spiritually, acquire "biblical knowledge," and gain an understanding of "Baptist history and doctrine."<sup>81</sup> Memorial's BYPU had a membership of approximately seventy-five and was led by President J. D. Gwynn. Other officers were vice president Dr. W. H. Bagwell, secretary E. E. Griffin, and corresponding secretary and treasurer W. F. Burch. The young people met monthly for programs and business, and local ministers and out-of-town speakers appeared on the programs. Members also participated in recitations and reported on books they had read. For a program in 1898, E. E. Hilliard of Scotland Neck gave a talk on "John Bunyan," Julia Foley did a reading, and Hennie Sheppard and Rosa Hooker gave recitations. The choir and the Forbes Orchestra provided music.<sup>82</sup> Inactive at various intervals in the history of the church, Memorial's BYPU was replaced by the Baptist Training Union in the 1930s.

In May 1889, the *Eastern Reflector* carried an announcement that the Baptist Ladies Aid Society "will sell ice cream and strawberries in the parsonage yard Thursday from 4:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m." The paper continued to publicize the work of the society through the 1890s. The press reported that the ladies held bazaars, conundrum suppers, and spelling bees. The society also held quarterly missionary teas at which time "mite boxes" were opened. Funds raised by the society were used to clean the churchyard, beautify the church, and support missions.<sup>83</sup> Regrettably, no minutes or rosters of the membership for the 1890s exist, but records for the 1903–1907 period did survive. The secretary's book for that period included a copy of the constitution; the minutes of the meetings; membership rosters for 1903, 1906, and 1907; and a record of the collection of monthly dues. The constitution set forth the name, purpose, membership eligibility, dues, officers, and meetings of the society. The official name of the group was the Ladies Aid Society, and its stated purpose was "to [give] aid to any charitable object the society sees fit." Membership requirements were to attend meetings when possible and to contribute ten cents a month. Officers consisted of the president, vice president, treasurer, and secretary. These positions were filled by Mrs. P.C. Dancy, president; Mrs. R. J. Cobb, vice president; Mrs. C. D. Rountree, treasurer; and Mrs. Robert L. Humber, secretary. Mrs. Dancy, Mrs. Rountree, and Mrs. Humber served in their respective offices from 1903 to 1907. The rolls showed a membership of thirty-one in 1903, thirty-seven in 1906, and thirty-four in 1907.<sup>84</sup>

The following selected verses from a doggerel entitled *The Ladies Aid* captured the spirit and work ethic of the Baptist Ladies Aid Society:

They'll beg and scrape and toil and sweat for seven years more.  
And they'll start all o'er again, for a carpet for the floor.  
No, it isn't just like digging out the money from your vest  
When the Ladies Aid gets busy and says we'll pay the rest.  
But when we see the sisters work to raise the cash that lacks  
I sometimes feel the church is built on women's tired backs.<sup>85</sup>

Just as the women on the churchyard cleaning committee did in the nineteenth century, the Ladies Aid Society of the twentieth century continued with the project of getting the yard cleaned. They also met on Saturdays "to get the church in order" for Sunday worship services. They did repair and renovation projects. The society worked on "getting the windows repaired and painted." They had a leaky roof repaired and finally had it replaced with a slate roof, which led the *Daily Reflector* to report that the next steps in the renovation of the church "will be to change the steeple into a tower and improve the interior of the main auditorium." However, before these improvements could be made, the ladies got "busy and paid the rest" of the bill of \$110 for the memorial window.<sup>86</sup>

It was on the "tired backs of women" in the Ladies Aid Society that money was raised to install electric lights in the church. Electric street lights were turned on in Greenville for the first time on March 20, 1905, at 7:30 p.m. When the "lights flashed and the brilliancy illumined the streets," the people watching broke out in a loud shout. One man in the crowd reportedly exclaimed, "You don't tell me this is old Greenville!"<sup>87</sup>

It was "old Greenville," and the Baptist Ladies Aid Society wanted the electric lights in their church. To get the church wired, the ladies designated all the dues for May 1905 for that purpose. They also sold ice cream each evening for one week "from 4 to 10 o'clock in the Jarvis store." On May 15, the ladies leased the merry-go-round from 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. with the proceeds designated for installation of the electric lights. Beginning on June 4, the society held a rummage sale in the Jarvis store. These enterprising women succeeded in getting "Mr. Kilo-watt" in The Memorial Baptist Church. The church was wired for electric lights in mid-June 1905.<sup>88</sup>

With the memorial window in place, the electric lights providing brilliant illumination with the flip of a switch, and a slate roof overhead,





*Front view of The Memorial Baptist Church, Fourth and Greene Streets after addition of the tower. (Courtesy of the Daily Reflector).*

the Ladies Aid Society took up the challenge to change the steeple into a tower and improve the interior of the church. A committee of the society headed by vice president Mrs. B. E. Parham reported that it would cost \$350 to build a tower and steps for the church. The society instructed the committee to have the work done “when they think best.” The steeple came down and the tower was added on the south side of the east end of the sanctuary to go along with a shorter tower on the north side of the main auditorium.

In preparation for the church’s hosting the 1909 annual meeting of the Roanoke Baptist Association, the Ladies Aid Society started “all o’er again” to improve the interior of the church. On the eve of the opening exercises of the association, the *Daily Reflector* reported that “worshippers in The Memorial Baptist Church on Sunday [October 10, 1909] were pleased to observe the improvement that has been made in the au-



ditorium by the Ladies Aid Society. The doors and interior have been newly painted and the entire floor covered with a handsome carpet adding much to the appearance.”

The Ladies Aid Society was as creative and hardworking in fund-raising as it was conscientious in undertaking difficult jobs. During the ministry of Rev. A. T. King, the society ordered 200 pin trays showing a picture of the church and pastor. Buying the trays for ten cents each and selling them for twenty-five cents each, they realized a 60 percent profit. At a meeting in May 1905, the society voted for each member to take twenty-five cents and add as much as possible to that amount by the June meeting. Lawn parties with entertainment and refreshments were another way the society raised funds. Also, Halloween parties under the direction of Hennie Ragsdale and Mrs. G. W. Baker were popular and profitable. For example, in 1905, the *Daily Reflector* reported “The Halloween party given by the Ladies Aid Society of the Baptist Church in Perkins Opera House Tuesday night attracted a large number of people and proved a great success. The drill by sixteen girls dressed as ghosts was a good feature and generously applauded. The gypsy tent and witch’s coven also afforded much amusement. The cotton candy machine exhibited by two gentlemen from New York . . . was a real novelty. The ladies were gratified at the financial results of the party.”

Annual shirtwaist sales were usually held in early spring. The shirtwaist, a woman’s blouse patterned after a man’s shirt, was popular through the 1890s and the first decade of the twentieth century. In the *Daily Reflector* for March 10, 1906, the paper informed its readers of a sale in progress. “The [Baptist] Ladies Shirtwaist sale and box party in the sample room in front of Hotel Bertha is being well patronized. The sale will continue tonight and there will be more nice boxes to be sold at auction. Refreshments will be served.”

The Christmas bazaar was the largest of the fund-raising projects. The 1906 bazaar held at Perkins Opera House was a three-day event that featured six booths, free entertainment nightly, and meals at noon and night. The first booth, called a smoking den and variety booth, was hosted by Mrs. D. J. Whichard, Mrs. J. W. Bryan, Mrs. W. T. Burton, Mrs. W. C. Hines, and Mrs. J. H. Hart. In the fruit and candy booth, patrons could find a general assortment of fruits and fine candy for the holidays. The third booth in the hall was called the cabbage patch. Decorated in green and white, the booth attracted children, who searched for articles hidden among the heads of cabbage. In the doll booth stood the Christmas tree with dolls scattered everywhere. The baby booth contained all kinds of

baby wear, and the fancy booth contained needlework and other crafts. Proceeds from the 1906 bazaar funded construction of the tower and steps.<sup>89</sup>

The Ladies Aid Society remained a major church organization until the mid-1930s. Upon the recommendation of Rev. A. W. Fleischmann, the society merged with the Woman's Missionary Society in the depression years.

### Culture of Change for Church and Community

Vast cultural changes occurred in the life of the Greenville Baptist Church between its fiftieth birthday in 1877 and one generation later at the end of the first decade of the twentieth century. If somehow David Lawrence, a founder, deacon, and long-time clerk of the church who died in 1869, and his son, Peter Lawrence, also a deacon, clerk, Sunday School superintendent, and trustee who died in 1884, could return to their home church in 1910, they would hardly recognize the church they had served so faithfully.

The most obvious change for them was the new name, The Memorial Baptist Church, which reflected the heritage of the church. The Lawrences, no doubt, would have recognized the site on which the church of 1910 was located, but they would have stood in awe of the "magnificent structure" with stained glass windows and a baptismal font inside the church building.

By talking with the congregation, the father and son of earlier generations would have learned that the church members had developed an awareness and sense of history of their church through the celebration of anniversaries. The church of 1910, the Lawrences would discover, no longer belonged to the Tar River Baptist Association but had joined the newly formed Roanoke Baptist Association as a church with many organizations and programs that provided new avenues of Christian service and development. Certainly Peter would have been pleased to learn that Sunday School had expanded to include classes for adult men and women.

The perceptive Lawrences also would have noticed that the demography of the church had undergone considerable change since their days. The proportion of male to female church members had increased from one male for every 5.3 females in 1880 to one male for 1.85 females by 1910. Although still in the minority, males had narrowed the gender gap in church membership in one generation. The adult male Sunday School class must have been getting young men to church!

The Lawrences would have observed that, despite many cultural

changes in their home church, The Memorial Baptist Church still elected only men as deacons, as it had when they served as deacons. Peter would have been amazed, but pleased, to discover that J. J. Cherry was still a church deacon, the senior deacon of The Memorial Baptist Church at the end of the first decade of the twentieth century. The two had served together on the Board of Deacons twenty-five years before.

Advances made in the music ministry would have caught the attention of the Lawrences. The church choir held weekly rehearsals and performed at the Sunday morning and evening services. Since October 1908, the Baptist choir held a special music service on the third Sunday night in each month. The full choir was supported by organ accompaniments and, frequently, there were instrumental selections with organ and violin. On occasion, talented guest musicians such as Ola, Alfred, Helen, and Della Forbes rendered special selections. In June 1908, the church decided to designate the Sunday night collection offering to purchase music for the choir.<sup>90</sup>

Changes in the church mirrored a transformation in the community. From 1880 to 1910, Greenville changed from a small courthouse village of fewer than one thousand people to a “thriving town” of more than four thousand. An emergent transportation infrastructure opened Greenville and Pitt County to the flow of commerce and trade. Until the coming of the railroad in 1889-1890, the town had relied principally on riverboats for shipping freight, mail, and passengers. Near the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, however, Greenville had two railway connections. The first line to come to Greenville was the Halifax-Scotland Neck-Greenville-Kinston branch of the Atlantic Coast Line Railway, which traveled in a north-south direction. Later, the Norfolk and Southern ran in an east-west direction through Pitt County and intersected with the Atlantic Coast Line system in Greenville, forming a railhead in the town. The water and rail arteries of transportation stimulated manufacturing and business growth. In the manufacturing sector, sawmills, woodworks, a brick manufacturing plant, machine and bicycle shops, buggy and carriage shops, bottling plants, an ice factory, cotton ginning, and tobacco processing plants made products for the marketplace and provided jobs for residents.

Wholesale establishments, mercantile businesses, and banking institutions had sprung forth, and paved streets with “vitrified brick” and “granolithic sidewalks” facilitated and enhanced shopping. Public electric, water, and sewage utilities added to the quality and safety of life, which prompted Josephus Daniels, editor of the *Raleigh News and Observer*, to

point to "Greenville as a model in conducting public utilities." Although without a hospital, Greenville had eight physicians who practiced medicine in the community. The legal profession also was represented by eight practicing lawyers.<sup>91</sup>

The growth in manufacturing and business notwithstanding, Pitt County and Greenville were still a center of agriculture at the beginning of the twentieth century. Tobacco and cotton were the principal money crops. Introduced in the county in the mid-1880s, tobacco quickly became a lucrative crop and created a tobacco culture in the county and community. In the 1890s with railway capability available, the tobacco market came to Greenville. The first tobacco sales warehouse opened in 1891, and others followed.

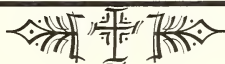
With the tobacco culture firmly in place, cotton lost its kingly position in Pitt County agriculture. Farmers, however, continued to produce this cash crop and to bring their thousands of bales each year to Greenville to be sold.<sup>92</sup>

In the cultural sphere, Greenville in the first decade of the twentieth century had good reason to be proud. In 1903, the graded school came to Greenville and took up quarters in a "modernly constructed" and well-equipped brick school building. Enthusiasm for a public library grew out of the campaign for graded schools and led to the establishment of Greenville's public library in 1907. The crown jewel of the town's cultural development was the acquisition of the state's newest educational institution: the East Carolina Teachers Training School. Established in 1907 by the legislature to prepare teachers for the state's public schools, this educational institution had the potential to raise the level of literacy and culture of the region. In October 1909, the school opened for classes on a site east of Greenville. Later that fall, President Robert Wright extended an invitation to the Roanoke Baptist Association meeting in The Memorial Baptist Church to visit the East Carolina Teachers Training School, and the association gladly and unanimously agreed to accept the invitation.<sup>93</sup>

This culture of change offered both opportunities and challenges for The Memorial Baptist Church as the congregation of 177 envisioned the future. However, an immediate concern of the church was to find a new pastor.



## Chapter 4



# Journey from Crisis to Maturity

(1911–1970)

**“We have been stirred with some strife, but all is peaceful now, and the church is doing well in her contributions and receiving new members at almost every service”**

Pastor C. M. Rock, 1915

**“Therefore be it resolved that the two churches merge their assets and charters and operate under the name of Greenville Baptist Church, retaining the charter of the religious body organized in 1827, thus preserving the history of the Baptist denomination in Greenville . . .”**

Act of Union, 1944

**“A thoroughly modern edifice”**

*Daily Reflector*, April 12, 1948

**I**n the second decade of the twentieth century, the “winds of war” roared over a tension-filled Europe, and the “guns of August” opened fire to wreak death and destruction for more than four years. At the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month of 1918, these mighty guns were silenced with the signing of the Armistice. The first of two world wars to be fought in the first half of the twentieth century had come to an end. The twenty-year interlude, 1919–1939, was generally a

period of worldwide depression that subsided with the brutal fighting of World War II, considered by many to be the defining event of the twentieth century. In 1945, a world weary from war entered an uncertain era called the Cold War that persisted until the end of the ninth decade of the century. The people of The Memorial Baptist Church, like countless other congregations, were caught up in these relentless and life-shattering events and, no doubt, found much solace and peace of mind as they entered God's house to worship and departed renewed and fortified to serve. This chapter traces the journey of The Memorial Baptist Church through these tumultuous times of conflict and crisis.

In 1909 town leaders, unmindful of what the next decade would bring, adopted the slogan, "Our Greenville: Yours if you come," to encourage factories, businesses, and people to move to Greenville. The slogan was packaged as a "booster's button" with the six words printed around the outer edge of the large button. Local merchants wore the booster's button to promote the image of a "Greater Greenville."<sup>1</sup>

Whether the pulpit committee of The Memorial Baptist Church, headed by Claude W. Wilson, made use of the town's slogan in the year-long search for a new pastor to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of Rev. J. B. Cook is unknown. The committee did, however, find Rev. Clifton Moore Rock of North Wilkesboro, North Carolina. He accepted the church's call and began his new pastoral charge on the first Sunday of March 1911. Mr. Rock had previously served churches in Mount Olive, Clinton, Warsaw, and Magnolia.<sup>2</sup>

Pastor Rock's sense of place, people, time, and work would suggest that he had grasped the mood and spirit reflected in the slogan, "Our Greenville: Yours if you come." Within a month of his arrival in Greenville, he stated ". . . I feel that I have come to the right place and [to] the [right] people at the right time for the right work. They are fine folks [sic] here if I am any judge of folks [sic]. You are going to hear from this church in the near future. . . . Keep an eye on Greenville as the people are willing to follow the leading of God and the pastor."<sup>3</sup> The pastor's feelings and judgments held true as the church in Greenville thrived for a significant time of his ministry. Toward the end of his stay in Greenville, however, a division developed in the church, which led to the departure of some members.

Rev. Rock was an "able, forceful evangelistic-type preacher," who had an impact on congregation and community. One month after preaching his inaugural sermon, he administered the ordinance of baptism to seven candidates, and two weeks later for a special Easter service, he and the

choir jointly rendered a sermon in “story and song” of the first Eastertide. Preacher Rock delivered sermons on topics such as “The Common Task and the Great Life” that appealed to the young; motivational sermons such as “As You Go, Preach,” and messages based on firsthand travel experiences such as “From Jerusalem to Shechem.” This presentation grew out of observations gleaned from a summer trip he made to the Holy Land. He made other trips to the mountains of North Carolina and Virginia and to Cuba.<sup>4</sup> The pastor also used the pulpit to praise the town as well as to speak out against deplorable conditions he saw in “Our Greenville.” In a sermon entitled “Is the Young Man Safe?” the preacher depicted Greenville as a “splendid town” with “splendid people” who lived in “good homes . . . not mere houses.” The young men and women had “bright minds.” However, like the prophets of old, he condemned things in the community that were wrong and “dangerous to the safety of the young.” He said the young frequently heard on the streets “profane language and vile stories” uttered by their elders. In the community, the growing generation saw older people betting on baseball games, going to dance halls, playing cards, using liquor, and violating the Sabbath Day. The real safety for the young generation, he exhorted, is “the soul stayed on Christ.”<sup>5</sup>

A pastor as well as a parent of five children, one of whom was born in Greenville, C. M. Rock went beyond the pulpit to effect character and civic development of the young. He served as a scoutmaster for a troop of boy scouts. To the delight of his troop, he took them on camping trips. One such outing was a ten-day camping trip to Core Banks.<sup>6</sup>

Rev. Rock also found time to preach in other churches in the community. On one busy Sunday, he delivered the morning sermon to his own congregation, then preached in the African American Baptist Church in mid-afternoon, and on the same night filled the pulpit at Jarvis Memorial Methodist Church for Pastor E. M. Hoyle, who was on vacation.<sup>7</sup>

To build up the body of believers of The Memorial Baptist Church, Pastor Rock planned and assisted in protracted meetings. In November 1911, in one of the most notable revivals in the history of the church, he worked with the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention to bring to the church evangelist H. R. Holcomb of Clinton, Mississippi, and Professor and Mrs. J. L. Blankenship of Dallas, Texas, to lead the singing. Two services were held each day, one at 3:30 p.m. and the other at 7:30 p.m., for two weeks. Rev. Rock conducted the meetings for the first three days and then filled in for Rev. Holcomb for five days when the visiting evangelist was called home upon the death of his baby daughter. Holcomb

returned to Greenville to complete the revival services, concluding with the sermon topic, "Thou shall be judged out of the book." Each person, he said, received a clean book from God at the age of accountability and, in its five chapters, people will write the record by which they will be judged by God. The chapter titles were "Sin," "Indifference," "Excuses," "Hardness of Heart," and "Lost."<sup>8</sup>

Forty people made professions of faith during the meetings, and all of the converts presented themselves for membership in the local churches. Twenty-one of the forty were baptized and joined The Memorial Baptist Church. At the baptismal service, seven other candidates for a total of twenty-eight met Rev. Rock in the baptismal water. Afterward, the minister told the new Christians and the congregation that he could baptize at the rate of two each minute when the candidates followed each other closely.<sup>9</sup>

In a show of complete confidence and enthusiastic support of the pastor, the congregation voted unanimously to increase Rev. Rock's salary from \$1,200 to \$1,500 annually even before the end of the first year of his pastorate. The Finance Committee reported the financial improvements of the church permitted the raise, and sixty-five new members added to the membership rolls under the pastor's leadership justified the salary increase. To mark the first anniversary of his pastoral work, one month later on the first Sunday in March 1912, Mr. Rock gave a "state-of-the-church" report instead of preaching a morning sermon. In this report covering the year's work, he pointed out that the church had added "sixty-six members," and the "offerings for all objects were largely increased." He also reported that, while his first duty was to the church he pastored, he had not hesitated to give aid to the needy "wherever he could be of service." The pastor also acknowledged the encouragement and support the church had given to him as he labored to "advance Christ's Kingdom."<sup>10</sup>

Just as the body of believers was built up, so were the church facilities. The installation of a "long-desired" pipe organ was the centerpiece of the improvements made in the church. It was built by the Estey Company of Battleboro, Vermont, and to meet the acoustic properties of the church, the organ builders installed the organ in the reconfigured choir gallery located behind the pulpit. It had "560 speaking pipes with crescendo pedal and pneumatic equipment." The bellows power was supplied by a water motor, and the woodwork had a beautiful "golden oak finish." Total cost of the organ was \$2,100, of which philanthropist Andrew Carnegie contributed \$1,000. In the Sunday morning worship service on June 16,



1912, the congregation heard the organ played for the first time with Miss Undine Futrell of Scotland Neck as the organist. On June 20, 1912, Professor Wade R. Brown of Raleigh gave a dedicatory recital consisting of twelve organ numbers. Two soloists and one quartet accompanied by Miss Futrell also appeared in the recital.<sup>11</sup>

To make room for the new pipe organ, the choir loft behind the pulpit had to be remodeled. A new baptismal pool also was built on the north side of the pulpit area to give the congregation a better view of the baptistry. On Sunday night, September 29, 1912, this new pool was used for the first time.<sup>12</sup>

Other improvements made to the building included the purchase of “art windows” for all of the church except the basement, the addition of “new concrete steps with wide landings” at the two front entrances facing Greene Street, and the installation of a new heating plant. Shortly thereafter, a wood sill under the concrete foundation upon which the furnace rested caught fire and forced the cancellation of a protracted meeting scheduled to be led by Rev. Charles Maddry, pastor of the Tabernacle Baptist Church in Raleigh. The fire was quickly extinguished, but the heating plant could not be used while workers built another foundation without the wood sills.<sup>13</sup>

Fortunately, this smoldering fire caused no damage to the church building. Unfortunately, however, another kind of fire broke out in the congregation and charred the ties that bound worshippers to each other and badly damaged the pastor-people relationship. That fire was strife. Ignited and fueled by human emotions, the strife led to the emergence of factions which, in turn, caused a church schism.

One faction coalesced around the leadership of S. Justin Everette, an attorney and the Sunday School superintendent for 1914. He also served as vice moderator of the Roanoke Baptist Association for the same year. In a personal interview conducted by historian John Neal Tolson, Rev. John Ayscue, pastor of Memorial from 1905 to 1908 and the first pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church, remembered Mr. Everette “as a man of high, unyielding moral principles.”<sup>14</sup> Another leader of the group was Claude W. Wilson, professor of education and bursar at the East Carolina Teachers Training School. Mr. Wilson had faithfully served Memorial as superintendent of the Sunday School from 1910 to 1913 and was chair of the pulpit committee that had recommended Pastor Rock for the Greenville pastorate. He was also active in the work of the Roanoke Baptist Association as the historian for 1910 and 1911. At times, in the absence of the pastor, this tireless church leader spoke in the pulpit of The

Memorial Baptist Church. Others in the Everette-Wilson faction included Charles C. Pierce, church clerk, 1911-1913; E. B. Thomas, church clerk, 1909, 1910, and 1914; and E. B. Higgs, a highly respected deaf man in the Greenville community.<sup>15</sup>

The second faction consisted of church members who followed the leadership of Pastor C. M. Rock. Among these members were D. J. Whichard, James C. Tyson, Robert T. Burnette, G. F. Evans, C. D. Rountree, and J. J. Cherry. They viewed their minister as a "forceful preacher" and a man with a "strong will." Oral tradition claimed that these two factions were called the "Rocks" and the "anti-Rocks."<sup>16</sup>

Intense friction between the two fractious groups led to a split in the church. The Everette-Wilson faction left the fellowship of Memorial and, on April 22, 1915, formed the Immanuel Baptist Church with 37 charter members.<sup>17</sup> What caused this blemished mark on Memorial's journey of faith? Like most problems of historical causation, the root causes of the "unpleasant event" are difficult to determine. The presence of strife, factions, and friction no doubt fueled and exacerbated the crisis. These powerful factors, however, were the sparks generated by the clash of well-intentioned, strong-willed people. These men, whose forceful personalities were in conflict, loomed large in the church schism.

The schism produced both temporary and lasting results. An immediate result was the loss of members from the rolls of the Memorial Baptist Church. In 1914 membership stood at 274, but one year later it dropped to 208. A decade passed before the membership returned to the 1914 level. The Sunday School enrollment also declined. In the year preceding the split, the church reported an enrollment of 241. In 1915, the number of scholars fell to 171, a drop of 64. One year later, however, the enrollment jumped to 225 for a quick recovery.<sup>18</sup> As the church lost members, it also incurred the loss of Pastor Rock. When it became apparent that the split in the church would be permanent, the minister resigned effective June 1, 1915. After the resignation, the church unanimously approved a resolution of appreciation to the pastor for his ministry in Greenville. Similarly, the Woman's Missionary Society expressed appreciation for the service of Mrs. Rock. The most lasting result of the schism was the birth and emergence of a new church for Greenville and for the Baptist denomination.<sup>19</sup>

In 1911, Pastor Clifton Moore Rock came to town when Greenville boosters proclaimed "Our Greenville: Yours if you come." He came with confidence, excitement, and optimism for his new town and brought that to his pastorate. On the eve of his departure four and a half years later, he

was still upbeat and optimistic about the progress of The Memorial Baptist Church, despite the schism and the resignation. In farewell remarks reported in a letter to the *Biblical Recorder*, he wrote, “Just a word to let you know that Greenville [Memorial] Baptist Church is moving along fine. We have been stirred with some strife, but all is peaceful now, and the church is doing well in her contributions and receiving new members at almost every service . . . .”<sup>20</sup>

With the departure of Preacher Rock in mid-1915, the Memorial congregation faced the immediate task of calling a new minister and of putting the “unpleasant event” of church schism behind them. A still larger problem began to prey on the congregation and the nation’s psyche as the war in Europe increasingly became a menace to our national interest. In 1915 German submarine warfare claimed American lives with the sinking of the *Lusitania*.

The Memorial Baptist Church extended a call to Rev. Henry N. Blanchard to lead the congregation through the “trying times” of the post-schism period. A graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Mr. Blanchard accepted the pastoral charge on September 20, 1915, with the high hope “that the Baptist cause [in Greenville] will be united.” Although he did not achieve this elusive goal, his short pastorate of eighteen months did result in a modest six percent gain in membership, a net increase of thirteen, for a total of 221. The Sunday School also experienced growth. Enrollment increased from 177 to 225 for a gain of forty-eight, an increase of 27 percent. Similarly, the Sunday School enjoyed qualitative growth. For the first time, the Sunday School received the standard Sunday School Award of the Southern Baptist Convention. Another indication of progress was the purchase of a parsonage, a long-desired goal of the Ladies Aid Society.

In early 1917, Rev. Blanchard resigned as pastor and subsequently served as a chaplain in the army when the United States entered World War I to make the “world safe for democracy.” The pastoral office remained vacant for only a short time.

On the third Sunday in March 1917, Rev. William H. Moore from Marion, North Carolina, filled the pulpit at The Memorial Baptist Church. From the outset of his ministry in Greenville, he worked to build a strong pastor-people relationship. As an “able preacher and earnest pastoral worker,” he won the esteem of the congregation and the people of the town. Preacher Moore also labored to build the membership and increase the church’s financial support of missions, benevolence, and various Baptist initiatives such as the Seventy-five Million campaign. To add mem-

bers, he followed the time-honored practice of holding protracted meetings. Dr. John Jeter Hurt of Wilmington, North Carolina, conducted one of these meetings. The revivalist opened the ten-day series of services with a sermon on "how to have a successful revival" and more than a week later closed the meetings with the subject: "when the roll is called up yonder." A special guest for the concluding service was Dr. B. W. Spilman, President of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. At this closing service, long-time deacon D. J. Whichard once again presented to Dr. Spilman the gavel made from timber taken from the site on which the Baptist State Convention had been organized in 1830. Earlier in 1919, Whichard had made the same presentation to Dr. Spilman upon his election as president of the convention.<sup>21</sup>

Rev. Moore's leadership in the promotion of stewardship of money led the church to new levels of giving. In a state-of-the-church report to the congregation as he began his fourth year of pastoral work, Mr. Moore compared giving records for 1916 with contributions made in 1919. For 1916, church donations for association, state, home, and foreign missions were \$354.60. Three years later in 1919 under his leadership, contributions in these four areas of mission support amounted to \$1,922.97, an increase of \$1,568.37. Benevolence also reached new heights. In 1916, the church gave \$190.60 to aid the poor, the orphanage, and ministerial relief. For 1919, the congregation contributed \$769.47, an increase of \$578.87. Contributions for Christian education soared from \$103 to \$1,760.96, an increase of \$1,657.96. This record of accelerated giving came in a good year when tobacco sold at a higher price than it ever had up to that time. In these "good times," every church member pledged to support the church and its benevolence programs for 1920.<sup>22</sup>

Rev. Moore also led Memorial's involvement in two major Baptist fundraising campaigns. The first of these was the One Million Dollar effort by the Baptist State Convention to raise money for struggling Baptist colleges and high schools. Inaugurated in 1917-1918, the fund would provide \$300,000 for Wake Forest College, another \$300,000 for Meredith College, \$150,000 for Chowan College, and \$250,000 for the high school programs. In 1920, Memorial reported its pledge to the campaign had been paid in full.<sup>23</sup>

In 1919, the Southern Baptist Convention adopted an ambitious plan to raise \$75 million in five years to carry out an enlarged program of evangelism and enlistment "to win the world for Christ." The various state conventions, including the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, were invited and "expected" to cooperate in the "united campaign"



and would share in the receipts. North Carolina's goal was set at \$6 million to be raised by 1924. North Carolina Baptists decided to merge the One Million Dollar campaign into the Southern Baptist plan of Seventy-five Million.<sup>24</sup>

For the campaign to be successful, associations and local churches would need to be educated and involved in stewardship at a level beyond what they had been accustomed. In September 1919, the Roanoke and Neuse-Atlantic Baptist Associations joined hands to set up a training school at The Memorial Baptist Church to instruct workers involved in the seventy-five million dollar project. Dr. Charles Johnson, pastor of Scotland Neck Baptist Church, served as dean, and Rev. Moore and a representative from New Bern worked as assistants. The two-weeks' training consisted of presentations, prayers, and fasting. September 24 was set aside throughout the South as a time for praying and fasting for a successful campaign. Under the tutelage of its pastor, The Memorial Baptist Church over subscribed to its first-year apportionment of \$4,872.40 by \$227.04. With the onset of an interminable downturn of the agricultural economy in 1920, local churches, state conventions, and the Southern Baptist Convention could not meet the financial goals of the five-year plan of the Seventy-five Million campaign. By the end of 1924, for example, North Carolina's collection reached \$5,174,865. The Memorial Baptist Church contributed \$13,608.50 by the end of the campaign. The total collection for the Southern Baptist Convention came to \$58,591,713.69. Nevertheless, these cash collections marked an improvement over the previous sum Southern Baptists had given to denominational causes. The campaign also served as a seedbed for the Cooperative Program.<sup>25</sup>

The high hope of the people of Memorial in the spring of 1920 gave way to surprise on July 4, when Pastor Moore announced his resignation. After the church voted unanimously for him to reconsider, he agreed to stay on as pastor. In October, however, he once more requested that the congregation release him from his pastoral duties in Greenville so that he could accept the call from Brainbridge Baptist Church in Richmond, Virginia. The congregation "reluctantly" agreed to let Mr. Moore go in time for him to take charge of his "new and large pastoral field by November 1." In farewell, Rev. Moore stated that Greenville had been the "happiest pastorate of his ministerial life so far [and] that he loved every member of the local church . . ." His departure severed a "most pleasant" relation between pastor and people.<sup>26</sup>

Dr. A. P. Pugh of Tampa, Florida, served as supply pastor while the pul-

pit committee headed by Dr. C. J. Ellen searched for a new minister. By mid-December 1920, the committee and church had tendered a call to Rev. Leland Watts Smith of Richmond, Virginia. Smith, a graduate of Richmond College (now University of Richmond) and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, accepted the call and began his pastoral responsibilities at the beginning of the new year. Ironically, twelve years earlier in 1908, he had declined a call from the church. In his inaugural sermon, Pastor Smith preached to a large congregation on the subject: "God in the midst of the church." At the evening service, a welcome ceremony was held for Memorial's new pastor. Also, the minister and congregation of Immanuel Baptist Church attended as guests. Dr. C. J. Ellen, chairman of the pulpit committee, extended a special welcome to the Smith family and introduced Dr. J. B. Turner, Pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church, who spoke words of welcome in behalf of his congregation as well as the Ministers' Association of Greenville. Pastor Smith responded with "feeling" to the cordial welcome and said that he had "already fallen in love with Greenville and the people he had met." He further promised to give the "best that is in him to the service of the church he had come to lead" and to "cooperate with the other churches in the extension of Christ's Kingdom." Later in the month, the Ladies Aid Society hosted the Smiths at a church- and community-wide reception.<sup>27</sup>

Early in his new pastorate, Rev. Smith planned and preached his own protracted revival. In preparation for the services, cottage prayer meetings were held in the homes of church members, and a Sunday School rally was scheduled to mark the beginning of the revival meeting. Morning and evening services were held over a period of two weeks. Examples of sermons preached included "Heaven and Hell," "Your Prayer Life," "Time is Short," "The Prodigal Son," "Hindrances to Prayer," and "Jesus and Judas." The meetings led six young converts to enter the baptismal pool.<sup>28</sup>

The pastor brought active leadership to church organizations. To jump-start the Baptist Young People's Union (BYPU), he formed a junior B.Y.P.U. for youth between the ages of twelve and sixteen. He and Rev. J. B. Turner of Immanuel Baptist Church jointly held a training school for the senior and junior unions. In turn, these young Baptists held interesting and innovative programs. For example, they held a mock trial of "Mary Stingy" and "John Rich," who had robbed God of the tithe. Another new organization formed by the church was the Baptist Men's Club. Organized on February 23, 1922, the group chose Dr. C. J. Ellen as the first president.<sup>29</sup>

Established church organizations continued a strong record of service to the community of faith. The Woman's Missionary Society and the Ladies Aid Society were "active and efficient." Under the leadership of Mrs. J. L. Fleming, president, the Woman's Missionary Society sponsored the traditional Week of Prayer for World Wide Missions in January and the Week of Prayer for Home Missions in March. In their monthly meetings, the women focused on specific geographic areas or themes. The society also offered mission study classes and supported a child of the Thomasville Orphanage. The Ladies Aid Society, led by Mrs. C. J. Ellen, president, published *Sweets and Meats*, a forty-eight page recipe book with "complete, simple directions for making not only delicious cakes, pies, and all kinds of baked goods, but tried recipes covering the whole field of cooking." More than forty Greenville businesses placed advertisements in the "beautiful books." Proceeds from *Sweets and Meats* were used to finance projects of the society such as the purchase of new silver for the church to use at banquets.<sup>30</sup>

A thriving Sunday School reached enrollment numbers comparable to the pre-schism years when more than three hundred were on the rolls. In 1921, the Sunday School reported an enrollment of 224. For Mr. Smith's last full year in 1924, the enrollment had climbed to 317, an increase of 45 percent. Extensive improvements were made in the classrooms, and new equipment was purchased to facilitate teaching and learning. To modernize the Sunday School program, an age-grading system extending from the cradle roll through the adults became the organizational norm. Competition within, between, and among classes stimulated interest and increased attendance. The Baraca class, taught by Dr. C. J. Ellen, outgrew its classroom and moved to a tent on the church grounds. Daylong picnics for all age groups, usually held at Amuzu Park, created a sense of family in the school. Baseball games between the Baptists of Memorial and Methodists of Jarvis Memorial developed denominational loyalties and generated spirited excitement. Teamwork between Sunday School superintendents H. L. Smith and J. B. Kittrell and Pastor Leland Smith also led to a spirit of unity in the congregation. For example, the motto for January 25, 1925, read "All the church in the Sunday School and all the Sunday School in the Church."<sup>31</sup>

During Preacher Smith's tenure, church membership grew but at a slower rate than the Sunday School. The number of members climbed from 211 to 271, an increase of sixty for a growth of 28 percent.<sup>32</sup>

After four and one-half years, Rev. Leland Watts Smith resigned as pastor of The Memorial Baptist Church with an effective date of June 1, 1925.

He made his last public appearance in Greenville on June 3, when the Laymen's Christian Federation honored him in a farewell service. He was a charter member of the federation and one of its most active members. The Smiths then moved to Fountain City, Tennessee, where the minister became pastor of the Central Baptist Church.<sup>33</sup>

About fifteen months before The Memorial Baptist Church marked one hundred years of its journey of faith, the congregation called Rev. H. Frederick Jones as pastor. He accepted and came to Greenville on the first Sunday of November 1925 to fill his new pastoral charge. A native of Mecklenberg County, Virginia, Jones earned his baccalaureate degree at the University of Richmond and received his theological education at Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Virginia. He subsequently studied abroad and, while overseas, acquired an experiential knowledge of the Holy Lands. Before coming to Greenville, Rev. Jones served three different pastorates in Virginia over a period of twenty-two years, with the last eleven years as pastor of the West Portsmouth Baptist Church. He also held important leadership positions with the Virginia State Board of Missions and Education and in the Portsmouth Baptist Association.<sup>34</sup>

Possessed with a "magnetic personality" and a strong, "splendid voice," Preacher Jones was an excellent fit for the church on the eve of its first century of work and witnessing. Within a year of his arrival, the board of deacons, consisting of Dr. C. J. Ellen, T. R. Moore, J. N. Gorman, J. C. Tyson, S. H. Graham, and C. C. Coppedge, expressed their appreciation for the faithful service of our "pastor, Brother H. Frederick Jones." In a set of recommendations to the church for endorsement, the deacons stated: First, Pastor Jones "had visited the sick, afflicted, and sorrowing . . . and [had] carried joy and sunshine into the homes of our church membership." Second, he "had worked untiringly to build the different departments" of our church work, namely young people's work, the Sunday School and church services. Third, the deacons lifted up Brother Jones "for the spiritual blessings the immediate church membership and the community at large" had received from his "earnest, frank, and spiritual sermons and faithful prayers."<sup>35</sup>

As Rev. Jones exercised these pastoral duties, he found time to research and write a brief history of the church for the centennial celebration. The congregation had asked the previous pastor, Leland W. Smith, to write a history, but Mr. Smith said records were not available to undertake such a project. Jones, however, did not let the paucity of materials deter him from piecing together "an incomplete historical sketch." Entitled "The History of The Memorial Baptist Church," the unpublished manuscript of



seven handwritten pages touched on the origins of the Greenville Baptist Church, the nineteenth century Baptist missionary/anti-missionary controversy, formation of the Baptist State Convention, exodus of African American members from the church, construction of the new church building and the change of the name to The Memorial Baptist Church, and a list of pastors who had served the church. He concluded his history by naming a few present and former members whose roots were traced to church families of the antebellum period.

On Sunday, October 23, 1927, the congregation celebrated the one-hundredth anniversary of The Memorial Baptist Church. To mark this important milestone, speakers in the morning worship service emphasized the church's past and its present and future prospects. Pastor Jones honored the enduring past of the church as he traced its history through ten decades of struggle, survival, and success. Church member Judge Albion Dunn followed with an insightful examination of the present status and future outlook of Memorial. He noted that the church's past record of accomplishments was a strong indication that the future for Memorial "holds forth the most inviting prospects." Pastor Jones read congratulatory messages from former ministers and members who could not be present, and the membership roll was called.

At the evening service, Dr. Charles E. Maddry, General Secretary of the Baptist State Convention, closed the centennial celebration with an "inspiring" presentation on "what North Carolina Baptists have accomplished in the past." He placed major emphasis on church growth, missions, and education. A choir composed of singers from the various churches in Greenville provided music for both services. Clerk L. A. Stroud recorded in the church minutes for November 2, 1927, that the "special musical selections given by the choir . . . added much to the pleasure of the day." He then turned his thoughts to the next generation and suggested that the historical sketch by Dr. Jones "be incorporated in our church records so that . . . our children will have it within reach when they celebrate the second centennial of this great old church."<sup>36</sup>

The pastor's "magnetic personality" and the excitement stirred by the centennial celebration, no doubt, contributed to the solid growth record in church membership during the three-year pastorate of Dr. Jones. For the period 1926–28, church membership climbed by 35 percent from 273 to 370 for an increase of ninety-seven members. In the anniversary year of 1927, fifty-nine members joined compared with twenty-three in the previous year and fifteen for the subsequent year of 1928. Among the new members was the family of Rev. J. E. Sawyer, who came from the Free

Will Baptist denomination. For years, Mr. Sawyer had been a minister of the Gospel and an "outstanding figure in his denomination." In his testimony, he said he felt led by God to go out as a missionary Baptist minister and desired to be ordained. A presbytery consisting of Revs. J. W. Kincheloe, Rocky Mount; J. E. Duncan, Farmville; J. R. Vaiders, Washington; D. H. Hill, Rocky Mount; and H. Frederick Jones of Greenville met on Sunday, September 21, 1928, to examine and ordain Brother Sawyer. Pastor Jones preached the ordination sermon. Apparently, Mr. Sawyer was the first person to be ordained by the church to preach the gospel since the ordination of S. S. Wallace in 1867.<sup>37</sup>

During Pastor Jones's first year in Greenville, Sunday School enrollment went over the four hundred mark for the first time. Under the leadership of Superintendent David Julian Whichard, son of the late D. J. Whichard, who also had served as superintendent of Sunday School, the enrollment increased from 387 to 426, a gain of thirty-nine from the previous year for a growth of 10 percent. The following year, however, the number dropped below four hundred and stayed slightly under that figure for the remainder of the 1920s.<sup>38</sup>

Sunday School leaders and officers also took steps to improve the quality of the teaching program. In December 1927, the church's education secretary, Mary Winbourne, organized a week-long Sunday School Institute with faculty from the Baptist State Convention in Raleigh and the Southern Baptist Convention in Nashville, Tennessee. The church minutes showed that attendance for the training course "was very good; the fellowship sweet; and many seals and diplomas were awarded as proof of the quality of work done." As outcomes of the institute, officers and teachers decided that the Sunday School should be fully graded and standardized, and the record system should be improved. Miss Winbourne, however, would not be around to put these ideas in place. She resigned at the end of 1927 and accepted a call to the First Baptist Church in Thomasville, North Carolina.<sup>39</sup>

Church organizations with major ministries maintained budgets during the pastorate of Rev. Jones. For the years 1926–28, the Sunday School, with its "reaching and teaching ministry," had an average budget of \$742 per year. The Woman's Missionary Society's average budget for the same period was \$592, and the Ladies Aid Society worked with an average disbursement of \$942. Each of these organizations had a treasurer or financial secretary to handle its funds. The operating budget for the church during the same time averaged \$7,145 per year. In 1925, the Southern Baptist Convention implemented the Cooperative Program, a

funding plan that enabled local churches to support the work of state conventions and the Southern Baptist Convention. With the arrival of Rev. Jones, the Cooperative Program undesignated contribution became a line item in the church's budget. For the 1926–28 period, the congregation's gift to the Cooperative Program averaged \$1,119.67 per year.<sup>40</sup>

Just as Mary Winbourne had left a legacy in her work with the Sunday School, H. Frederick Jones also built a lasting legacy as pastor and historian. He left a solid record of "splendid service." On November 1, 1928, Mr. Jones resigned as pastor effective January 1, 1929. With reluctance, the church agreed to let him go to the Brantley Street Baptist Church of Baltimore, Maryland, and prayed for God's richest blessings upon him and his family.<sup>41</sup>

From January to April 1929, ministers from North Carolina and Virginia conducted worship services in the Memorial Baptist Church as the pulpit committee searched for a new pastor. Headed by Dr. C. J. Ellen, the committee invited Rev. Augustus W. Fleischmann of Louisburg, North Carolina, to preach to the congregation. Following his second appearance before the church body, the members voted unanimously to call the minister of the Louisburg Baptist Church. To inform him of this action, the church clerk wrote, "It is our earnest prayer that you accept this call." After careful thought and prayer, Rev. A. W. Fleischmann accepted the call to become pastor of The Memorial Baptist Church and pledged "the best there is in me to the service of the [church] . . . for the glory of our Master, Jesus Christ." His salary was \$250 per month with living accommodations provided in the partially furnished parsonage.<sup>42</sup>

Born into one of the oldest and most influential Baptist families in America, this comparatively young pastor was a native of Newark, New Jersey. Initially, he studied at Pace and Pace School of Accountancy and Law in New York City in preparation for a career as a certified public accountant. However, he soon left this chosen field of work to prepare himself for the ministry. He enrolled and received a degree from the University of Richmond and also completed his theological education studies at Northern Baptist Seminary in Chicago. Before coming to Greenville, he served in the United States Army with a tour of duty overseas during World War I; he held a teaching position at Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Virginia; and he worked with the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. He had pastorates in Sterling, Illinois; Southside Baptist Church in Raleigh, North Carolina, and Louisburg Baptist Church.<sup>43</sup>

When Rev. Fleischmann came to Greenville in April 1929 to begin his

pastoral work, the tobacco town had approximately nine thousand people. Many of them, however, wore a "nagging worry" on their brow caused by the uncertainties in the market place. They looked and hoped for signs of better times. In September 1929, only weeks before the Great Crash of 1929, residents had good reason to think better times had indeed arrived as they flocked to the grand opening of Montgomery Ward's new three-story building on Fifth Street. In the same month, The Memorial Baptist Church in anticipation of a good year adopted its 1929-30 budget of "\$6,600 with \$4,600 for current expenses and \$2,000 for the Cooperative Program." Never before had the church budgeted this amount for the Cooperative Program.<sup>44</sup>

Two weeks later at the October church conference, Rev. Fleischmann outlined an ambitious set of plans for the congregation. Included were an invitation to the Baptist State Convention "to meet with us [The Memorial Baptist Church] March 26, 27, 1930 . . . to celebrate the centennial of the organization" of the convention in Greenville; to hold a church school of missions; to enlist workers to enlarge the program in all branches of the church; to consolidate the Woman's Missionary Society and the Ladies Aid Society; to prepare quarterly financial reports and submit quarterly statements to church members showing the status of their pledges.

Without delay, the church dusted off the slogan "Our Greenville: Yours if you come" and invited the convention to come to Greenville in 1930 to mark the one-hundredth anniversary of the establishment of the state convention. The invitation was accepted with the stipulation that no business would be transacted during the centennial session. The theme for the two-day celebration on March 26-27, 1930, was "A Hundred Years of Growth." To make local arrangements, the church appointed a steering committee consisting of R. W. Gorman, Chairman; J. B. Kittrell; D. J. Whichard; E. G. Flanagan; J. J. White; J. H. Boyd, Jr.; Mrs. J. B. Spilman; Mrs. J. L. Fleming; and Mrs. G. J. Woodward.<sup>45</sup>

On the morning of March 26 as a "cold wind whipped down from the north," an overflow crowd squeezed into the sanctuary of The Memorial Baptist Church for the opening session of the two-day centennial celebration of the founding of the convention. President J. Clyde Turner called the convention to order. Following the singing of "How Firm a Foundation," Pastor A. W. Fleischmann read the Scripture lesson from the Bible of Martin Ross, the recognized "Father of the North Carolina Baptist State Convention," and then presented the Bible to the Convention. Midway through the morning session of addresses, the convention



had to be moved to East Carolina Teachers College because the church sanctuary could not accommodate the large attendance of more than one thousand. In the presentations, contemporary Baptist leaders and scholars extolled the growth of North Carolina Baptists from 1830 to 1930 in the areas of education, organization, membership, contributions, evangelism, social services, Sunday School, women's work, young people's work, and in literature. Scholars also examined source materials for the study of Baptist history, chronicled the founding of the convention, and closed with the prospects and challenges Baptists would face over the next one hundred years. Leaders from other Baptist conventions and from other religious bodies brought greetings from their respective groups. Dr. R. T. Vann of Raleigh preached the centennial sermon, and the Greenville Merchants Association and East Carolina Teachers College hosted the centennial banquet. Upon request, the proceedings and addresses were published by the Baptist State Convention in a volume entitled, *The Growth of 100 Years of North Carolina Baptists, 1830-1930*.<sup>46</sup>

Before adjournment, messengers extended their "warm appreciation and hearty thanks . . . to the Memorial Baptist Church for arranging for the sessions of the convention and providing for our delightful entertainment." The resolution of thanks also included the other churches and citizens, for their hospitality; East Carolina Teachers College, for the use of their auditorium and for serving the banquet; the Merchants Association, for providing the centennial banquet, the servers, and the ushers; and the *Daily Reflector*, for the gift of the centennial programs and the special convention edition of that newspaper.<sup>47</sup>

The scope and sincerity of the resolution of thanks indicated that the town had kept the promise made in its slogan "Our Greenville: Yours if you come." The messengers and visitors came and, for two days, they had the cooperation and support of the churches, the citizens, the college, the merchants, and the newspaper. Pastor A. W. Fleischmann, perhaps, summed up this red carpet treatment best when he wrote in the year-end report, "Our people are to be congratulated upon the splendid manner in which this great meeting was cared for." The centennial celebration, he further wrote, was "productive of great good for the Baptist cause in North Carolina."<sup>48</sup>

In this same year-end report, Pastor Fleischmann lauded the congregation for the "material progress" made in the "various departments of our work." The church school of missions held in January 1930 had stimulated interest in the missionary enterprise, which he believed was the soul of Baptist work.

Careful attention to the financial conditions of the church through the issuance of quarterly financial reports and the status of pledges enabled the congregation to meet budgetary obligations in a timely fashion. The church, for example, made the honor roll of the Baptist State Convention for sending its Cooperative Program dollars each month. In January 1933, the church proudly proclaimed "beginning with this new year every branch of our church and Sunday School are completely out of debt." Three years later, the certified public accountant-turned-pastor led the church to adopt its first unified budget. These businesslike methods used in the Lord's work helped the church cope with the economic crisis of the depression decade.<sup>49</sup>

Just as the pastor introduced business methods to the process of stewardship giving, he applied principles of consolidation and organization to church programs. In 1930, he had proposed to consolidate the Woman's Missionary Society with the Ladies Aid Society "with one set of officers." This consolidation finally occurred in the mid-1930s. Also, the Board of Deacons was organized so that one-third of its members would be elected annually and would serve for a period of three years. Members whose term expired "in any given year" would not be eligible for reelection until one year had elapsed. The deacons also were charged with the responsibility to provide congregational care to all church members. The plan of organization used to carry out this "reach out" ministry was to divide the church membership equally among the members of the board of deacons and require each deacon to care for his group. Forty years later, the deacons of the church adopted a similar idea called the Deacon Family Ministry Plan.<sup>50</sup>

One of the high moments that marked Pastor Fleischmann's tenure at The Memorial Baptist Church was the ordination service for Nathan C. Brooks, Jr., a member of the congregation. In November 1929, the church had granted a license to Mr. Brooks to preach the gospel while he was still a ministerial student at Wake Forest College. Four years later in May 1934, the church in conference "authorized the pastor to call a Council of Representatives of the churches of the Roanoke Baptist Association to meet with [The Memorial Baptist Church] on Friday, May 25, 1934, for the purpose of examination of . . . Nathan C. Brooks, Jr., and set him apart to the Gospel ministry through due process of ordination, and shall be recommended by the Council assembled." The Council of Twelve gathered at 2:30 p.m. on May 25 and proceeded with the examination, which consisted of statements by the candidate of his Christian experience, his call to the ministry, his Christian doctrine, and his conception

of the fundamental principles of Christian truth. After the examination closed, the council by unanimous vote instructed The Memorial Baptist Church to go forward with the ordination of Brother Nathan C. Brooks, Jr. Rev. A. W. Fleischmann preached the ordination sermon; Dr. J. L. Peacock, First Baptist Church of Tarboro, gave the charge to the candidate; Dr. J. W. Kincheloe, First Baptist Church, Rocky Mount, offered the prayer; and J. H. Boyd, Jr., deacon of The Memorial Baptist Church, gave the Bible to Rev. Nathan C. Brooks, Jr.<sup>51</sup>

The hard times that gripped the nation during the Great Depression produced an overwhelming sense of insecurity and fear among people. In 1933 in his first inaugural address, Franklin Roosevelt used the pulpit of the presidency to speak directly to that frightened population, when he declared that “the only thing we have to fear is fear itself.” Pastor A. W. Fleischmann also used his pulpit to preach about the fears and anxieties of people. Sermons on “The Fear of Men,” “Storm Warnings on the Sea of Humanity,” and “Christ’s Greatest Crisis” spoke of the trauma in the lives of his congregation.<sup>52</sup>

As Rev. Fleischmann rendered pastoral care to his congregation during the trying ordeal of the global depression, he courageously battled a deadly malignancy. In 1932, the church gave him a “leave of absence of sufficient length to regain health and . . . relief from a dread malady.” Five years later in January 1937, the suffering pastor had to take another leave of absence of nearly six months to undergo medical treatment by Dr. John Humber, son of Mrs. Robert L. Humber, the church’s financial secretary. Dr. Humber had developed a national reputation in the medical field with his practice in San Francisco. When the pastor took another leave of absence shortly after Labor Day to regain his health, the church appointed Rev. Lowell F. Sodeman as acting pastor. A.W. Fleischman never regained his health and never returned to his pastorate. On December 29, 1937, he tendered his resignation as pastor to the board of deacons. Upon receipt of the one-sentence letter, Chairman J. H. Boyd, Jr. spoke “most feelingly” of the nearly “nine years of loyal and splendid service Mr. Fleischmann had rendered to our church and community.” With reluctance and sadness, the church accepted the resignation and “elected him [Fleischmann] honorary pastor.” The church permitted the Fleischmanns to remain in the parsonage and paid the honorary pastor an annuity of \$150 per month. With the full acquiescence of Rev. Fleischmann, the congregation elected Rev. Lowell F. Sodeman pastor, effective January 1938.<sup>53</sup>

On September 4, 1939, Rev. Augustus W. Fleischmann died “quietly” in Greenville and was buried in Greenwood Cemetery. The Memorial Bap-

tist Church's memoriam for their honorary pastor read ". . . Rarely is it accorded us to know a man so godly that every person with whom he came in contact could not fail but be impressed; and his influence will continue to live in our midst. He suffered much; yet, he bore his sufferings patiently, never complaining; and, through it all, he witnessed an unflinching implicit faith in the Father's will."<sup>54</sup>

At the beginning of the Great Depression, the American people stood at the dawn of a new decade and watched bewilderedly as ". . . [Their] world was about to come apart," wrote Historian David Kennedy in *Freedom From Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945*. The pastorate of Rev. A. W. Fleischmann in Greenville coincided with these difficult depression years. He, however, met the challenge of the depression decade and left a lasting legacy to the people of Memorial. Through his strong, innovative leadership, the congregation did not come apart, and the church moved ahead. He brought constructive changes to church organizations, financial reporting and budget making, and congregational care that stood the test of time. Although a firm believer in Baptist doctrine and strong Baptist missionary enterprises, he worked to promote interdenominational cooperation through union services with other churches in the community. He was also actively involved in civic development as a member of the American Legion and the Rotary Club. Augustus Fleischmann's ministry in Greenville carried on the rich pastoral tradition of his "influential Baptist family."<sup>55</sup>

As already noted, the church elected Rev. Lowell F. Sodeman as pastor upon the resignation of A. W. Fleischmann. The young pastor was a ministerial student at Wake Forest College when he came to Greenville to serve as an assistant to Pastor Fleischmann. The two months he planned to stay, however, turned into a full year. On July 17, 1938, Lowell F. Sodeman "tendered his resignation as pastor" to continue his studies at Wake Forest College. He preached his last sermon on the final Sunday in August.<sup>56</sup>

The congregation immediately elected a pulpit committee consisting of D. J. Whichard, Chairman; T. J. Swain; J. H. Boyd, Jr., Mrs. N. C. Brooks; and Mrs. J. L. Fleming. The committee, like countless others throughout the world, carried out its work against the backdrop of a "gathering storm" of war that would extinguish the Great Depression but would rain devastation, death, and destruction on a scale heretofore unknown to humankind. Japan had sent an invading army into Manchuria and had made a puppet state of this northern province of China. With illusions of grandeur, Mussolini of Italy thought in terms of a twentieth-



century Roman Empire in Africa and the region of the eastern Mediterranean Sea. In Germany, a defiant Hitler had violated the Treaty of Versailles and reoccupied German's Rhineland, had annexed Austria, and then demanded the annexation of the Sudetenland, which he was awarded by western appeasement. In October 1938, eleven months before World War II started, the pulpit committee recommended that the "church call Dr. J. D. Simons . . . as pastor." The congregation approved the recommendation and extended the offer to him at a salary of \$2,400 per year, which he accepted.<sup>57</sup>

John David Simons was a native of Bertie County in northeastern North Carolina. He earned his bachelor of arts degree at the University of Richmond and received the master of arts degree at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. When he came to Greenville, he had university teaching and pastoral ministry experience. For two years, he taught at McMaster University in Toronto, Canada, and for eight more years he pastored the Indian Road Baptist Church in the same city. He then moved to Louisburg, North Carolina, and served for two years as pastor of the First Baptist Church, the same congregation that Rev. Fleischmann led before coming to Memorial.<sup>58</sup>

Greenville was more than a third larger when the Simons family arrived than it was when the Fleischmanns had come approximately ten years earlier. By 1940, the population had grown to 12,674, an increase of 38 percent, or 3,480, during the depression decade. Church membership during the same period had increased from 308 in 1930 to 450 in 1940 for a gain of 142, or 46 per cent. Much of this numerical growth came after Pastor Simons's arrival. The membership continued to grow, reaching more than five hundred by the time he closed his pastoral ministry in early 1944.<sup>59</sup>

The numerical growth curve also moved in an upward direction for the church organizations. In the 1930s, the Woman's Missionary Society and the Baptist Young People's Union more than doubled their enrollments, with the biggest increases made during the Simons pastorate. In 1931, the Woman's Missionary Society had a membership of seventy-two, and ten years later, enrollment had climbed to 163 for a gain of ninety-one. These enrollments included members in the various groups of the organization, namely the number of women in the society, the Young Women's Association (YWA), Girls Auxiliary (GAs), Royal Ambassadors (RAs), and Sunbeams.

The Baptist Young People's Union began the decade with an enrollment of fifty-five and by 1940 had reached a membership of 126, an in-

crease of seventy-one. In 1936, the name was changed to the Baptist Training Union (B.T.U.)<sup>60</sup>

Under the professional leadership of Educational Director Louise Carter, Sunday School enrollment for the first time went over the 500 mark. In 1940, the school registered 548 compared with 373 at the beginning of the depression decade. This gain of 173 for a 47 percent increase created a problem for the Sunday School leaders. The school had outgrown its facilities. To make room for the bulging enrollment, the parsonage located across Greene Street from the church was used as an education building, and the pastor's family moved into a house rented by the church. This arrangement appeared, however, to be less than satisfactory. Sunday School Superintendent Eustace Conway, Jr.; Pastor J. D. Simons; Educational Director Velma McConnell, who had replaced Louise Carter; and the deacons wrestled with the problem for approximately eighteen months before they hammered out a satisfactory plan. Recommended by the deacons, the plan called for the "rearrangement of the church basement . . . [to] take care of the Sunday School classes held in the parsonage . . . [and the renovation] of the parsonage for our pastor's residence." The reconfiguration of the church basement to accommodate the Sunday School classes was viewed by the deacons as a temporary solution "until the war is over and materials and labor are available to [undertake] our building program."<sup>61</sup>

The Sunday School also faced a problem of "friction" among the superintendent, pastor, and the educational director. Caused by an apparent misunderstanding of what were the duties of the educational director or the perception on the part of some regarding the director's "inefficiency," the open conflict led to the August 1942 resignations of superintendent Conway and educational director Velma McConnell. The board of deacons, however, asked Mr. Conway to continue to serve as superintendent until October 1, the beginning of the new Sunday School year. The board accepted the resignation of Miss McConnell, who took a position with the National Youth Administration. Upon the request of the deacons, she remained as choir director until September 1942, when the board accepted her resignation.<sup>62</sup>

The fallout from the Sunday School spat did not appear to have an adverse effect on Rev. Simons's relationship with the congregation or the board of deacons. Throughout his ministry, he provided active leadership that resulted in "growth of all phases of church life," declared the deacons in a letter of appreciation to their pastor when he closed his ministry with the church. In the proclamation of the good news, he would organize a

series of sermons around a general theme. One such series was on the theme of practical Christianity, which included sermons on “That Vain Religion,” “The Christian and His Church,” “A Good Layman,” “Doers of the World,” and “Unoffered and Unanswered Prayers.” For a series of Sunday night services, he preached a number of sermons on significant nights of the Bible. Example sermon topics were “That Night of Dissipation,” “That Night of Repentance,” “That Night with a Medium,” and “No Night There,” the last sermon he preached at Memorial. Other organized themes were the “Christian Armor,” “Transforming Friendship,” and “Weighed in God’s Balance.”<sup>63</sup>

The professor-turned-pastor worked hard to develop close ties with Baptist students at East Carolina Teachers College. Rev. Simons used “The Messenger,” the church bulletin, to welcome students, to make them feel “they were a part of our church life,” and to impress upon the students that the Memorial Church was always ready to serve them in every way. A college department of the Baptist Training Union, for example, was organized and met at 2:00 p.m. each Saturday. On occasion, the pastor invited students to conduct Sunday evening worship services. Also, the church supported the work of the Baptist Student Union (and still does) with a line item in the budget for missions. Founded by Dr. Frank Leavell, one of the BSU’s major purposes was to help college students link up with the local Baptist church. The BSU also provided ministry opportunities for students on campus. The student ministry worked through the Baptist Student Council, which planned and carried out the ministries. During the Simons stay in Greenville, the church hosted retreats for Baptist Student Council members who returned to the campus before the beginning of the new term to plan the council’s work and ministries for the year. These retreats were usually held over a two-day period, and church families would provide accommodations for the students until the college facilities opened for the new term. Among the activities planned by the council were weekly meetings usually held on Monday nights. Pastor and Mrs. Simons frequently attended these meetings, where they were warmly welcomed and always felt comfortable. When the Simons family left Memorial, the students honored them with the book *Leaves of Gold* as a token of their love and appreciation to the couple who meant so much to Baptist students.<sup>64</sup>

Just as the pastor promoted ties with the college community, he worked to extend the influence of the church in Greenville and Pitt County. In March 1943, with the consent of the board of deacons, the pastor’s Sunday morning sermons were broadcast on the radio. The church

also joined the Greenville Council of Churches with the stipulation of no affiliation with any other council. As part of the observance of Church Month for September 1939, Educational Director Louise Carter produced "Our Church Pageant" with eight scenes depicting the history of The Memorial Baptist Church. As a spin-off of the pageant, important events in the life of the church formed the basis for the week-long training and study courses in Sunday School and Baptist Training Union respectively for the following month of October.<sup>65</sup>

On September 1, 1939, four days before Honorary Pastor A. W. Fleischmann lost his battle against cancer, the guns of war silenced the rampant rumors of war. German troops, tanks, and warplanes moved deep into Poland. Unlike previous responses to Hitler's belligerent moves, England and France declared war on Germany two days later. And the United States was swept into the maelstrom of a global war when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, "a day of infamy," declared President Franklin Roosevelt. Four months later, the church bulletin for Sunday, March 8, 1942, carried the first listing of "Our Boys in Service." That list included Ensign J. D. Bridgers; Lieutenant Grady J. Bell, Jr.; David M. Johnson; Henry Matt Phillips; Sergeant James F. Davenport, Jr.; W. Z. Morton, Jr.; A. Quinn Bostic, and Sergeant Howard Simpson. One year later, Memorial's Service Roll of Men and Women serving in the armed forces had climbed to forty-nine. Their names were placed on the church's mailing list, and they received "The Messenger" and other church literature. By war's end, eighty-five men and women of The Memorial Baptist Church wore their nation's uniform, and four of the eighty-five made the supreme sacrifice. They were Bernard Washington Spilman, Robert Lee Edwards, Owen Daniel, and Henry Matt Phillips.

A service flag with a star for each church member in the armed forces was displayed on the wall of the church auditorium. In appropriate ceremonies honoring the eighty-five members, Mrs. Johnetta Spilman and Mrs. Ed Rawl, Gold Star Mothers, removed that flag from the church wall on Sunday March 9, 1947, and the names were made a permanent part of the church records.<sup>66</sup>

The church also ministered to military personnel serving on duty in nearby areas and faraway places. "Service Men Sundays" were held, at which time the worship service was dedicated to the men and women in the armed forces. Pastor Simons preached on appropriate topics such as "Good Soldiers" and, following the service, church members invited military guests into their homes. The membership was also encouraged to correspond with men and women in uniform. Each week, the church bul-



letin carried a “prayer corner” running from Sunday to Saturday with a church member scheduled as the prayer leader for each day. It can be assumed that many prayers emanated from the prayer corner for a war-weary world. Memorial, along with other churches in Greenville, held days of prayer for the war effort and helped the community conduct a house-to-house canvass to raise funds for the national war fund and the community chest.<sup>67</sup>

Under the leadership of Mrs. B. McKay Johnson, the Woman’s Missionary Society was active on the home front during the war years. On D-Day, June 6, 1944, the society kept the church open all day for prayer and special services. The circles served refreshments to military service men. Society members also worked as volunteers for the Red Cross and at the surgical dressing room in the local hospital. As might be expected, the war effort of the Woman’s Missionary Society was not limited to local missions. The members took on worldwide projects. They did sewing and knitting for Russians; packed boxes for Italians; and shipped clothing to the Church Committee on Overseas Relief and Reconstruction “for needy people of the world.”<sup>68</sup>

The church’s civic engagement in the war effort was carried out in a spirit of unity and with a sense of patriotism. This same esprit de corps, however, did not carry over into the attempt made between 1941 and 1944 to unite The Memorial Baptist Church and the Immanuel Baptist Church. When the church schism occurred during World War I, many believed the split would be only a temporary separation. Naturally though, as each year passed, the separation became more permanent. Nevertheless, in July 1941 on the eve of America’s entry into World War II, the deacons of Memorial initiated discussions “to get the two churches to unite.” Chairman Robert L. Humber, Jr., appointed deacons Julian J. White, A. E. Hobgood, and E. S. Hamric to contact the deacons of Immanuel to explore the idea of a union of the two congregations. A few months later, Mr. White reported that the board of deacons of Immanuel Baptist Church had “favorably received” the suggestion of “consolidating the two churches.” In March 1942, White again announced “progress in regards to the churches joining together.” Upon hearing the report, the board agreed to give Mr. White’s committee more time to explore the merger, but nothing more came from the committee.<sup>69</sup>

Almost two years later on Sunday morning, January 23, 1944, Pastor J. D. Simons submitted a letter of resignation “to be effective on or before the end of February 1944,” which the church accepted. Immediately following the worship service on the same day, the board of deacons held a

called meeting at which time Chairman J. H. Boyd, Jr., announced "that the Men's Bible Class had, at its Sunday School hour that morning, passed a motion requesting the board to look into the possibilities of consolidating the Memorial and Immanuel Baptist Churches of Greenville." The board appointed a committee consisting of E. E. Rawl, Dr. McKay Johnson, and Chairman Boyd to meet with a committee from Immanuel to explore "the possibilities, if any, of uniting the two congregations." The following Friday, the deacons met again to hear from the special committee. The report was bold and far-reaching. The two churches would pool their "holdings and deed them over to the new church trustees, [and] the new church [would] be known as the First Baptist Church." Officers of both churches would resign and new officers would be elected from the combined congregations. Until a new church building could be erected, which would be after the war, the newly formed First Baptist Church would use the house of worship of either the Memorial or Immanuel Baptist Church. At this point, the board decided to present the merger idea to the church to get the sense of the members before proceeding any further with the negotiations. In conference on January 30, 1944, the church "by a large majority" authorized the board of deacons to continue its deliberations with Immanuel to unite the two congregations.<sup>70</sup>

With this vote of confidence, the deacons met jointly with the board of deacons of Immanuel and hammered out a resolution of merger that read:

"It is the consensus of the opinion of the joint boards meeting, that it would be wise and beneficial to the Baptist denomination in Greenville for the present congregations to jointly organize a new church to be known as the First Baptist Memorial Church, the present facilities of both churches to be utilized to the best advantage for the present and building program to be entered into as soon as feasible.<sup>71</sup>

This resolution was presented to the congregation in a church conference with a set of procedures that called for the resolution "to be mailed to every church member in a letter," which would also include a ballot for the members to vote in favor of or not in favor of the resolution. The letters had to be returned to the secretary of the board of deacons by Sunday, March 5, 1944, the date the ballots would be opened and counted at a church conference. Two church conferences were held on February 13 and 20. After hours of intense discussion on procedural and substantive

issues, the congregation voted to mail the letter containing the resolution and the ballot. The principal procedural matter focused on the magnitude of the majority vote required for the union to be binding on the church. The deacons had proposed an eighty percent positive vote, but the members approved a simple majority of votes in favor of the merger to be sufficient to bind the church to the union.

Dr. Robert Humber, who had served as chairman of the board of deacons when the idea of the union of the two churches first emerged in 1941, raised a significant substantive issue in the heat of the debate. He asked the deacons to revise the text of the resolution so that the union of the congregations of the two churches would preserve “the historical continuity of the older religious body organized in 1827.” His concern for and appreciation of the unbroken stream of historical continuity brought the name of the proposed new church to the foreground. Also, Mrs. L. A. Stroud conveyed a message from one of the officials of the Immanuel Church “that the members of the Immanuel Church do not wish to be considered as prodigal sons returning home, as the large majority of their present members had never been members of the Memorial Church.”<sup>72</sup>

The proposed resolution survived the debate and was mailed to the church membership. In church conference on March 5, 1944, the returned letters were opened, and the ballots were counted by R. B. Lee, H. A. Hendrix, N. C. Brooks, and J. D. Aman. The results were: 165 votes were in favor of the union; 130 votes were against the merger; and ten unmarked ballots were returned. With the simple majority rule in place, the resolution passed with a 56 percent vote of the marked ballots or 54 percent vote of the total votes returned.<sup>73</sup>

The union of the two churches, however, was far from settled. Mrs. John L. Winstead of the Memorial congregation protested two procedures used in the voting process as violations of a governing document called “Rules and Covenant, Memorial Baptist Church, Greenville, N.C., 1920.” She cited Article VIII on Alterations of Rules, which stated a “vote of three-fourths shall be necessary for adoption of amendments or alterations.” The second objection, she argued, related to Article V, section five, which stated “*Robert’s Rules of Order* shall govern this church in its deliberations.” Robert’s rules, she intoned, required the names of members of an organization to be on the ballot when the vote is received by mail. The vote in favor of merger, albeit a simple majority, was far short of the three-fourths majority required by Article VIII of the 1920 “Rules and Covenant.” Although numbered, the ballots received by mail had no name on them. Moderator J. H. Boyd, Jr., accepted the validity of Mrs.

Winstead's protest and declared that the "Rules and Covenant as well as *Robert's Rules of Order* must be followed. He further declared that "unless overruled by the conference, the vote to unite the two churches was lost."<sup>74</sup>

The two boards of deacons went to work once more to craft an act of union that would merge the two churches. The resolution addressed the substantive issue of historical continuity raised earlier by Dr. Humber. Entitled an "Act of Union," the resolution read:

We, the Deacons of Immanuel Baptist Church and the Memorial Baptist Church, believe that the best interest of the Kingdom of God and our denomination can best be served by uniting and operating under one body.

Therefore, be it resolved that the two churches merge their assets and charters and operate under the name of Greenville Baptist Church, retaining the charter of the religious body organized in 1827, thus preserving the history of the Baptist denomination in Greenville.

Be it further resolved that the present facilities be used to the best advantage until such time as a new building can be erected.<sup>75</sup>

On March 12, 1944, this resolution was presented to the congregation meeting in church conference, at which time the church agreed to vote on the proposal the following Sunday night. The church also said a vote of three-fourths shall be necessary for the adoption of the act of union. Thereafter, the church authorized the clerk to mail a copy of the resolution to each church member with the notice that the recommended merger would be voted on at the Sunday morning worship service on March 19, 1944. At the appointed hour, 80 members voted in favor of and 45 voted against the resolution. The vote of 64 percent for merger meant that the attempt to unite the two churches had failed because it did not reach the three-fourths requirement.<sup>76</sup>

The vote for union was lost, but the "fight" was not yet over. The battle shifted to the church rules printed in 1920. The board of deacons came back to the church with the recommendation, "That all rules contained in the booklet entitled *Rules and Covenant* published in 1920 be amended by abolishing all of said rules, retaining only the church Covenant." In a lengthy presentation, Dr. McKay Johnson expounded arguments for the need to repeal the said rules. The church, he intoned, "was not working together in unity." The way to correct the rift would be to abolish the existing rules and "draw up some rules that are more in



keeping with the practice of the Baptist principles of government,” he declared. After all was said and done, however, Johnson’s strong plea to abolish the rules failed to persuade enough members to join with the deacons to repeal the rules. When the standing vote was taken, 55 stood in favor of abolishing the rules and 22 voted against doing away with them for a 71 percent majority in favor of repealing the 1920 rules. Like the previous resolutions to unite the two churches, the motion to repeal the rules failed because it did not receive the required three-fourths vote. Soon thereafter, nine deacons and the superintendent of the Sunday School resigned their positions. Several of the deacons also resigned other leadership positions they held, such as chairman of the finance and budget committee, church clerk, and budget secretary. Furthermore, four of the five members of the pulpit committee that had been formed resigned.<sup>77</sup>

With these announced resignations, church leadership was in disarray and the entire church was in a state of disharmony. At this point, David J. Whichard, Jr., stepped forward with a plan that called for the church to repeal the existing rules, return the resignations and ask these leaders “to serve the church to the best of their ability,” request the pulpit committee to move forward with plans to fill the pulpit with a “permanent pastor,” and authorize the deacons or a committee to prepare suitable rules for the church. The congregation approved the Whichard plan without a dissenting vote. The unanimous vote brought an end to a painful event that was just as “unpleasant” as the church schism two decades earlier and marked the new beginning of a spirit of unity. In unity of purpose, the church could take up the twin tasks of finding a pastor and continuing the journey of faith in the postwar era.<sup>78</sup>

With Dr. Johnson as chairman, the regrouped and reinvigorated pulpit committee went to work to find a “permanent pastor.” On July 2, 1944, the 117th birthday of The Memorial Baptist Church, the pulpit committee presented the names of Rev. N. A. Thompson of Radford, Virginia, and Rev. Richard Hardaway of Arcadia, South Carolina, to the congregation for consideration as pastor or for instructions to continue its search. After a “full discussion,” the church unanimously called Rev. Hardaway. The following Sunday morning, Dr. Johnson once again appeared before the congregation to report that Rev. Hardaway had accepted the “church’s call to become its pastor and would assume his duties on September 1, 1944.”<sup>79</sup>

Memorial’s new minister came from a family of preachers. Richard was the son of Rev. J. S. and Anna Hunter Hardaway of Oxford, North Carolina. He earned the bachelor of arts degree at Mercer University in Ma-

con, Georgia, and received the master of theology degree at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky. Before coming to Greenville, Mr. Hardaway held pastorates at the First Baptist Church, Lenoir, North Carolina, and at Baptist churches in Allendale, Columbia, Greenwood, and Arcadia, South Carolina. While pastor of Ligon Baptist Church in Arcadia, he served as president of the Spartanburg County Pastors' Conference. Richard's brother, Hunter Hardaway, pastored the Baptist Church in Chatham, Virginia, for more than two decades. The two brothers were converted, baptized, and ordained together, and they also attended seminary together. Both his father and brother preached in The Memorial Baptist Church during Richard's pastorate in Greenville.<sup>80</sup>

On Sunday, September 3, 1944, The Memorial Baptist Church extended a formal welcome to Rev. Richard E. Hardaway. Chairman of the Deacons C. D. Ward presided over the service of welcome, and pastors from sister churches participated on the program. Dr. Robert S. Boyd, pastor the First Presbyterian Church, gave the invocation, and Rev. A. Hartwell Campbell, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church, read scripture, which was followed by the prayer offered by Robert Bradshaw, pastor of the Jarvis Memorial Baptist Church. Addresses of welcome by Dr. Boyd, president of the Greenville Ministerial Association, and Dr. H. R. Haney, president of the Greenville Council of Churches, made the "incoming" pastor feel much at home. Rev. Hardaway gave a response to the warm welcome he had received from the churches and the Greenville community.<sup>81</sup>

Two Sundays later, Pastor Hardaway extended his own welcome to the "boys and girls" of his congregation as they returned to Sunday School and church services after the polio ban in Greenville had been removed. Also, the church bulletin for Sunday, October 1, 1944, carried the note "College Students Welcome! The pastor and people of Memorial Church extend a cordial welcome to all the students of E.C.T.C. [East Carolina Teachers College]. We invite you to be at home with us in all of our services. Again, welcome!"<sup>82</sup>

The pastor and people also looked forward with great anticipation to the time they could extend a hero's welcome to the service men and women who would be coming home. That time came on August 14, 1945, when Japan surrendered, and World War II came to an end. "Victory has come," wrote Pastor Hardaway, "for which we thank God. Peace will soon be established, and . . . the men [and women] in service will be coming home in large numbers. Will we be ready to receive them? Are we ready . . . to meet the many problems that will be thrust upon us?" He further

wrote "The biggest thing our church can do now is to get our new educational building built, get as much money in hand as possible before we begin to build so that there will be little or no debt left upon us. And then . . . put on a program that will fill the building with people, both young and old, teaching Christ, preaching Christ, and building up his Church and Kingdom in our midst."<sup>83</sup>

As far back as the beginning of the Seventy-five Million Campaign in 1919, the proposal to erect an educational building had been before the congregation. A downturn in the economy in the early 1920s followed by the depression decade of the 1930s had militated against a major building program. In 1938, however, the congregation instructed the pastor and chairman of the board of deacons "to appoint a committee . . . to study and report to the church on the advisability of building at this time." However, the guns of war shot down this renewed interest in a building project. By fall 1944, the rapid advancement of allied forces on all fronts in the European Theater of War and the successful island-hopping campaign in the Pacific pointed to ultimate victory and removed the war as a major deterrent to the erection of the educational building.<sup>84</sup>

When Pastor Hardaway came to The Memorial Baptist Church in 1944, he saw firsthand that the "chief task before him was to build a much-needed educational building." With this long-delayed need before him, Rev. Hardaway began his pastorate in Greenville. In church conference in November 1944, the congregation approved a recommendation from the deacons "to raise as soon as possible \$25,000 for a building program." Soon thereafter, N. C. Brooks, Chairman; Mrs. L. A. Stroud; E. R. Conway; J. D. Aman; and Mrs. E. E. Rawl were appointed to a building committee. Later, J. H. Boyd, Jr., and Jesse Smith served on the committee. L. A. Stroud served as treasurer of the building fund, and he and Rev. Hardaway met with the committee.<sup>85</sup>

Within a year, the goal of \$25,000 had been reached, but that amount was no more than a third of what would be needed for the new building. The active fund-raising campaign had to continue. The church turned to the Baptist State Convention as a source of funds. In a petition to the Baptist General Board, the congregation requested a donation of \$10,000 for the building program, largely because "Memorial Church has for many years furnished a church home for a large number of East Carolina Teachers College students, providing them a place for their church, teaching, and training activities in our inadequate building . . ." In a timely fashion, the Baptist General Board approved the requested grant, but the disbursement of the funds turned out to be exceedingly slow. In



1949, some three years after the request had been approved and one year after the new building had been opened for use, the church had received only \$2,000, leaving an outstanding balance of \$8,000. This lack of commitment by the General Board to fulfill its financial obligations led the board of deacons to petition the "General Board [to] pay the balance of \$8,000 as promised at the earliest possible date." In response, M. A. Huggins, General Secretary and Treasurer of the Baptist State Convention, reassured Pastor Hardaway and the deacons that the convention would fulfill its financial pledge to the church, which it did by late 1952.<sup>86</sup>

With an ongoing fund-raising campaign in place, the building committee began to clear the lot for the building to be located in back of the church auditorium. The preparation of the lot required, however, the removal of "graves located in the church's graveyard at the corner of Fourth and Greene streets." With authorization from Greenville's mayor and board of aldermen to remove the "bodies, bones, or dust, with the stones and monuments erected thereto," the church had the graves on the churchyard moved to Greenwood Cemetery and placed in the lot known as the "Memorial Baptist Church lot." The fence that had surrounded the graves in the churchyard was donated to an African American church in southeast Greenville.<sup>87</sup>

The building committee also engaged Architect Frank Benson to render a drawing of the educational building and prepare a set of blueprints. These plans were ready by early February 1946, but the wartime shortage of materials and the inability to secure a building permit held up construction for more than a year. Finally on May 23, 1947, the building committee let the contract for the erection of the educational building to J. L. Batton and Brother, Edenton, North Carolina, for \$70,000, which did not include separate contracts for heating, plumbing, and electrical work. Local companies received these contracts. One week later ground was broken and work began. Construction took eleven months. On April 11, 1948, the church held an open house to view the new \$83,000 "thoroughly modern edifice." Planned to accommodate seven hundred people, the three-story brick, fireproof building was fifty by eighty feet in size with three entrances. The main entrance was from Greene Street; a second outside entrance led from Fourth Street; and a direct entryway came from the church building. The first floor housed the nursery, the nursery classroom, a mothers' classroom, and the beginners and primary departments. Restrooms, closet space, and a "spacious kitchen" were also located on the first level. The church office, pastor's study, choir room, and ladies parlor with a kitchenette were on the second floor. On the same



floor were restrooms, four adult classrooms, two of which could be converted into a small auditorium. On the third floor were the young people's department with an assembly room and eight Sunday School classrooms and the junior and intermediate department's assembly room and eight classrooms. In June 1948, the church basement was converted into a dining room. Although built as a departmentalized Sunday School facility, the "thoroughly modern edifice" had excellent features to enhance the social life of the congregation.<sup>88</sup>

At last, Memorial's dream of an educational building had become reality. However, the congregation had incurred indebtedness. The church had already paid \$10,500 for the John Flanagan property behind the sanctuary to provide ample space for new construction. Upon completion of the building, the church paid the contractor \$43,000 from the building fund and financed the balance of \$40,000 with a ten-year loan at 5 percent interest from Jefferson Standard Life Insurance of Greensboro, North Carolina. For collateral, the church put up its property including the parsonage, and forty endorsers from the congregation signed the note. Each endorser assumed liability limited to one thousand dollars. Pastor Hardaway, the building committee, and deacons worked to retire the debt. The pastor used the church bulletin to remind the congregation of the church's financial obligations and the members' responsibility to remove the building indebtedness. The bulletin on Sunday, May 9, 1948, for example, included the urgent entreaty for the congregation . . . "to double our gifts to the building debt if we are to meet our payments [of] fifteen hundred dollars on July 1st. Make your gift monthly in the pink envelope." This persistence and diligence paid off. With the financial help of the Baptist State Convention, the church paid the note in full on December 31, 1953, and Pastor Hardaway wrote, "We are now out of debt." To mark the feat, the congregation set the dedication of the educational building for Sunday, February 21, 1954, and invited M. A. Huggins, General Secretary-Treasurer of the Baptist State Convention, to deliver the dedication sermon. For the dedication bulletin, Pastor Hardaway wrote, "We believe the \$10 thousand invested in this building by the Baptist State Convention will pay rich dividends in the years ahead. Our total gifts to all missions in 1947 [the year before the building opened] were \$3675.16, and in 1953, they were \$6338.18." More importantly in the dedication service, the pastor and people proclaimed "We . . . dedicate ourselves anew to the worship of God, to the Christian service of men, and to a new devotion to Jesus Christ, and to the glory of His Name." With the building dedicated, Pastor Hardaway and the congregation had accom-

plished their "chief task"<sup>89</sup>

During the Hardaway years, the church also built new programs. At the outset of the new pastor's ministry, he instituted a new Christmas program. Since the Hardaways' first Christmas Eve in Greenville came on Sunday, the pastor conducted a Christmas candlelight service of "Scripture and song about the birth of Christ." Although he did not continue the practice of holding the candlelight service on the actual day of Christmas Eve, the minister did hold a "Service of Carols and Candles" on the Sunday immediately before Christmas. Near the close of this service, the minister, ushers, and congregation participated in the traditional lighting of candles and then held them aloft while singing "Silent Night." At this service, the church received a Christmas offering for the building fund.<sup>90</sup>

In 1946, a nursery was added to the church ministries. Formed and staffed by the Torchbearers Sunday School class, the members kept the nursery opened each Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to noon for parents who attended church. Church members donated playpens, cribs, and other essential items needed to furnish the nursery. The pastor and Torchbearers promoted the nursery and encouraged mothers to leave their little children in the nursery.<sup>91</sup>

Another new program started during Rev. Hardaway's pastorate was the organization of a junior Royal Ambassadors chapter. The group was formed at a "Father-Son" banquet held in early November 1945 with W. W. Finlator, pastor of Weldon Baptist Church and Superintendent of the Royal Ambassadors for the Rocky Mount division, as the featured speaker. Mr. R. C. Duffin agreed to serve as counselor and leader of the new junior organization.<sup>92</sup>

Youth week also commenced during the Hardaway years. The pastor turned over the keys of the church to youth leaders for one week, beginning with a Sunday evening worship service and ending with the morning worship hour on the following Sunday. Youth speakers delivered the sermons at each service, and youth musicians handled the music. Educational director Florence McFadden worked with the youth, many of whom were college students, as they carried out the church's work for the week.<sup>93</sup>

At mid-passage of the twentieth century, The Memorial Baptist Church had no missions-focused organization for men. In the summer of 1952, that gap was filled with the organization of the Baptist Brotherhood at a supper meeting with forty-two men in attendance. These charter members elected J. G. Gibbs, president; Larry Averette and Kenneth Mercer,

membership vice presidents; N. C. Brooks and David Whichard, III, program vice presidents; Carlton Cozart, secretary-treasurer; and Joseph Smith, Jr., assistant secretary-treasurer. The Brotherhood relied on outside speakers such as Leo W. Jenkins and Robert L. Holt for their programs.<sup>94</sup>

These new programs combined with established organizations and ministries plus a growing congregation required staff assistance. To meet this need, the church called Gwen Miles of Ellaville, Georgia, to serve as educational director and “general church worker.” The church records showed no job description of the position “general church worker,” but it most likely included secretarial duties and the preparation of the Sunday bulletin called “The Messenger of Memorial Baptist Church.” These “Messengers” were a trove of important information. They reported the order of the Sunday worship services, schedules of meetings, summarized actions of the church, a directory of leaders and committee members, lists of new and departing members, sicknesses, deaths, “marriages of interest,” births, members in uniform, and contributors to the Christmas offering for the building fund. The bulletins also reported information on the Roanoke Baptist Association, the Baptist State Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

As educational director, Miss Miles worked with the various church organizations in program development. For example, she cast young people, including college students and intermediates, for the Christmas play “They Walked in Darkness” and directed the successful performance. However, her stay at Memorial was short. She arrived in August 1950 and resigned thirteen months later to accept a position as Secretary of the Baptist Student Union at Radford College, Radford, Virginia. To fill the vacant position, the congregation called Florence McFadden of Appomatox, Virginia, to serve as educational director and church secretary, effective May 25, 1952. These two staff members worked with strong lay leaders of the church organizations to equip workers and strengthen programs of ministry.<sup>95</sup>

Leaders of the church organizations during the pastorate of Rev. Hardaway were Woman’s Missionary Union Presidents: Mrs. B. McKay Johnson (1944–46), Mrs. J. B. Spilman (1947–49), Mrs. N. C. Brooks (1950–1952), and Mrs. R. B. Lee (1953–55); Baptist Training Union Directors: D. J. Whichard, Jr. (1944), E. R. Conway, Jr. (1945–46), Aubrey Taylor (1947), and Larry Averette (1948–54); Sunday School Superintendents: W. W. Lee (1944–46), E. R. Conway, Jr., (1947–52), and J. G. Gibbs (1953–54).<sup>96</sup>



From these various organizations came one of Memorial's twentieth-century missionaries, Ernelle Brooks. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Nathan C. Brooks and the sister of Rev. Nathan C. Brooks, Jr. Ernelle attended Mars Hill College and completed her bachelor's degree at East Carolina Teachers College. She taught school in Aurora, North Carolina, before entering nurse's training. Subsequently, she studied public health nursing at Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing, Baltimore, Maryland, and served as a supervisor of public health nursing in Washington, D.C. Miss Brooks resigned from this position in 1947, when the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention appointed her as a medical missionary to Abeokuta, Nigeria. She worked as a nurse and faculty member of the Idi Aba Baptist Girls School in Abeokuta. Funded solely by women of the Southern Baptist Convention, the school had an enrollment of approximately 350 students ranging from kindergarten age through college. On the eve of her departure for Nigeria, The Memorial Baptist Church honored Ernelle Brooks at the morning worship service on Sunday, November 9, 1947. Pastor Hardaway's sermon topic was "Christ's Parting Command" and Robert L. Humber presented the missionary with a gift from the church. Miss Brooks served on the mission field in Abeokuta, Nigeria, for nearly twenty-nine years. Illness forced her to retire on April 13, 1976, and two days later it claimed her life.<sup>97</sup>

In the postwar years of Pastor Hardaway's ministry, gifts to church and missions "greatly increased." The budget grew almost threefold from approximately \$10,000 to nearly \$30,000 over the nine and one-half years he served the congregation. Giving to missions and benevolence moved from slightly more than \$2,000 to more than \$7,000 for the same period. While carrying on an active, aggressive building fund campaign, the congregation undertook a three-year project to raise \$5,000 to assist in moving of Wake Forest College to Winston-Salem. An additional goal of nearly \$1,400 to help with the erection of a new wing at the Baptist Hospital in Winston-Salem was also met by the congregation.<sup>98</sup>

Church membership and Sunday School enrollment, like Greenville's population, grew in the decade following World War II. In 1950, Greenville had a population of 16,724 compared with 12,674 in 1940, a 32 percent increase. From the time the Hardaways arrived in 1944 to their departure in March 1954, membership climbed from 506 to 680 for a net gain of 174, which represented an increase of 34 percent. Sunday School enrollment soared from 339 to 637 for a gain of 88 percent. When the new education building opened in 1948, Sunday School enrollment grew. The average enrollment for the Hardaway years was 464.<sup>99</sup>



In church conference on February 28, 1954, Pastor Richard Hardaway submitted his resignation, nine and one-half years after he arrived in Greenville and one week before he reached the age of retirement. One month later, he delivered his final sermons at the Sunday morning and evening services. His topic at 11:00 a.m. was “Standing Within the Gates” and for the evening service, he preached on “The Eternal Home.” In his farewell, he thanked the members for their cooperation in all the work of the church. He further declared, “These have been happy years of fellowship together, and they will always live in our memory, and we trust in yours. We leave with love in our heart for you all.” Finally, he paid tribute to his wife Louise for her work in the church and her inspiration. Likewise, the members held their beloved Pastor and Mrs. Hardaway in high esteem. To show their appreciation for the pastoral services of their minister, the congregation gave the retiring couple a love offering of \$500 and a two-weeks’ paid vacation. The Hardaways moved to Newman, Georgia, the hometown of Mrs. Hardaway, to spend their retirement years.<sup>100</sup>

The Hardaway pastorate left a significant mark on Memorial’s journey of faith. The pastoral leader had seen the war end and had witnessed the dawn of the Atomic age; he had extended a hearty welcome to the men and women returning from that terrible war; he had performed many of their marriages and had announced later from the pulpit and in the church bulletin the births of the first wave of baby boomers. He saw the names of the babies on the Cradle Roll and proudly watched as they became Beginners in the Sunday School. This people-focused minister had inspired and led an active, united, and cooperative congregation to expand the church’s physical facilities with the addition of a modern education wing and a renovated dining room. Under his leadership, the church budget had flourished, and contributions to special denominational matters had exceeded the amounts requested. Church membership and Sunday School enrollment had climbed beyond the six hundred mark. Leadership of the laity was strong in the church, denomination, and community.<sup>101</sup> When Pastor Hardaway left Greenville, he had, in fact, just as he had written in 1945, “put on a program that will fill the building with people, both young and old, teaching Christ, preaching Christ, and building up His Church and Kingdom in our midst.”

In mid-March 1954, the congregation selected a pulpit committee consisting of J. G. Gibbs, chairman; Ercell S. Webb; D. J. Whichard, III; Mrs. R. W. Tyson; and Mrs. Nathan C. Brooks. The committee began work immediately and by early May reported on several good prospects in a meeting of the deacons. In the meantime, the deacons decided to rely on sup-

ply pastors to fill the pulpit for Sunday services rather than employ an interim pastor. Deacons agreed to conduct the prayer meeting on Wednesday night. One of the "good prospects" in the net cast by the pulpit committee was Rev. Percy B. Upchurch, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Mullins, South Carolina. He received and accepted the call to become pastor of The Memorial Baptist Church in Greenville, effective September 1, 1954.<sup>102</sup>

The new pastor was a native of Apex in Wake County, North Carolina, where he attended the public schools. He earned the bachelor of arts degree at Wake Forest College. For graduate studies, he attended two Ivy League universities. The promising scholar received the master of arts degree in Biblical literature at Brown University and earned the bachelor of divinity degree at Yale Divinity School. Upon graduation from Yale in 1933, Mr. Upchurch was awarded the Two Brothers Fellowship to study archaeology at the American School of Oriental Research located in Jerusalem. Before leaving the United States for Palestine, he was advised by Professor W. T. Albright of the school to "brush up your German and French . . . A good knowledge of French and German will be invaluable to you next year." While in the Middle East, he attended lectures, engaged in archaeological excavations, and traveled in Palestine, Egypt, and Syria. In 1935, Rev. Upchurch took his first pastorate at the First Baptist Church in Nashville, North Carolina. He also enrolled at Duke University for studies leading to the Ph.D. degree. Two years later, he and his family moved to Monroe, North Carolina, where he pastored the First Baptist Church from 1937 to 1943, when Pastor Upchurch gave up his church to enter the United States Navy as a chaplain. When discharged from military service in 1946, he accepted a call to become pastor of the First Baptist Church in Mullins, South Carolina, and remained there until he came to Memorial.<sup>103</sup>

At his first deacons' meeting in early September 1954, the well-educated and experienced pastor pledged his "untiring efforts to make the church the best possible" and asked for the cooperation of the deacons and church members. From the outset, the work would require the "untiring efforts" of strong, energetic leadership. Immediate problems emanated from the Roanoke Baptist Association. One month before Pastor Upchurch began his ministry at Memorial, the associational missionary, Rev. Grady Burgiss, appeared before the deacons and urged Memorial and Immanuel Baptist Churches to work together to form a Baptist Council in Pitt County to do missionary projects. The following spring, the two churches appointed a committee consisting of three from each con-

gregation and the two pastors to plan Baptist work in the community. L. A. Stroud, J. H. Boyd, Jr., and Mrs. Nathan C. Brooks, along with Pastor Upchurch, represented Memorial. One year later, the two churches established a mission church in the Hillsdale subdivision located in southwest Greenville. In the first year of the Hillsdale mission, the Memorial congregation donated a Christian flag and the American flag as well as financial assistance. The church continued to contribute financial support until 1961, when the mission church said it no longer needed financial help. In May 1957, the new church held a groundbreaking service on a donated lot on Arlington Street, and the church took the name Arlington Street (now Boulevard) Baptist Church.<sup>104</sup>

In Pastor Upchurch's first year, the church also played a major role in the organization of the South Roanoke Baptist Association. In October 1954 at the annual meeting of the Roanoke Baptist Association, the messengers voted to divide the association of ninety-four churches into a northern area of forty-eight churches and a southern division with forty-six churches. The messengers also elected a committee of ten consisting of five people from each division to plan for the two new associations. Mrs. Nathan C. Brooks of Memorial was selected to serve on the committee of five for the southern area. This committee held preliminary meetings to draft a constitution and bylaws and to plan the organizational meeting of the proposed new association. Meanwhile, local churches had to give assent to the organization of the new Baptist association. In a church conference on April 6, 1955, Memorial gave its approval. As the Greenville Baptist Church had hosted the organizational meeting of the Baptist State Convention 125 years earlier, the historic Memorial Baptist Church served as host for the organizational meeting of the South Roanoke Baptist Association on May 2, 1955. Memorial's messengers were J. H. Boyd, Jr.; J. G. Gibbs; E. R. Conway, Jr.; Dr. B. McKay Johnson; Mrs. R. B. Lee; and Mrs. L. A. Stroud. David J. Whichard, Jr., and Mrs. Ruth Garner were selected as alternates.<sup>105</sup>

A more arduous and labor-intensive task than associational business awaited the new pastor. The growing congregation of The Memorial Baptist Church needed a larger sanctuary. As Rev. Richard Hardaway's first and chief task was to build an educational building, now Pastor Upchurch's principal project was to enlarge the space for worship. He came to Memorial with the expectation to build a new church and a suitable parsonage.<sup>106</sup>

To start the building program, the congregation in church conference on October 16, 1955, approved a plan to raise funds to "clear the



current church indebtedness” of \$15,000 incurred by the purchase of the Hinton Best property. This property had been acquired “to provide more adequate space for worship.” Mr. E. E. Rawl was appointed to lead the building fund campaign. He went before the board of deacons in early spring 1956 to ask for authority to enlist the pastor, chairman of the deacons, church secretary, church treasurer, chairman of the building and grounds committee, and J. D. Aman to work with him on the campaign to raise building funds. He also outlined plans and assured the deacons that the campaign would not fail. However, the plan did not move forward.<sup>107</sup>

After the traditional summer lull of 1956 and two full years after Pastor Upchurch had arrived, the board of deacons expressed a strong sense of urgency for the congregation to proceed with the building program by “retiring the existing indebtedness of the church and, without delay, taking steps toward securing a large auditorium.” To jump-start the seemingly stalled building program, the board of deacons requested that the finance committee secure an architect to make recommendations on the enlargement of the church. By 1957, the need to move forward became even more urgent. For the first worship service of the new year, Memorial had the largest crowd ever. Even after two rows of chairs were placed in the aisles, many people were turned away due to a lack of seating space. After the pastor and board of deacons consulted, the church began holding two worship services on Sunday morning, the first one at 8:45 followed by the second service at 11:00 a.m. Except for the summer months of June, July, and August, the two-service schedule continued through the calendar year of 1960.<sup>108</sup>

As the church moved to the two-service schedule, the board of deacons in unmistakably strong language virtually ordered the building fund committee to get busy with its work. In a letter to Mr. Rawl, who had earlier assured the deacons that the campaign would not fail, the board wrote, “A motion was made and passed unanimously that you be instructed through the power of the board to start immediately in raising funds for the ultimate construction of the new Memorial Baptist Church.” The letter further noted that the “board approached this motion enthusiastically, and we feel that this [action] represents the feelings of the majority of the church.”<sup>109</sup>

Unfortunately, Pastor Percy Upchurch suffered a heart attack within weeks after the board of deacons had “instructed” the building fund committee to start its work and was out of the pulpit until the end of April 1957. For the remainder of the decade, emphasis and energy shifted from the proposed new church to a suitable parsonage for the pastor’s family



of four. Located on the east side of Greene Street across from the church building, the parsonage had been home to Memorial's ministers since World War I except when used as an educational building for part of Rev. John D. Simons's pastorate. After a considerable search, the parsonage committee found a desirable lot located on East Rock Spring Road for \$6,000. On May 4, 1958, the church approved the purchase of the double lot with a combined frontage of 150 feet and 150 feet deep. In consultation with the Upchurches, the parsonage committee recommended an eight-room, two-story house and engaged an architect to draw the plans. Construction on the parsonage began in May 1959 and was ready for occupancy the following spring. On the last Sunday in May 1960, the Upchurches held an open house in the new parsonage, which had been completed at a cost of \$35,812.16.<sup>110</sup>

After almost six years, one of Pastor Upchurch's expectations had been realized. The expectation of an enlarged sanctuary, however, was no closer to realization than it was when he first came to Greenville. Meetings, motions, and words had achieved nothing. The church had used the two-service worship schedule to accommodate the overflow of churchgoers. In November 1959, the pastor suggested to the deacons that the early morning worship service be discontinued, but it was not dropped until the Christmas season of 1960.

The debate over the early morning church service revived the dormant discussion of the proposed new church. In early 1961, J. H. Boyd, Jr., reported to the deacons that the C. J. Ellen Bible Class had passed a resolution to "start serious consideration of enlarging the sanctuary." Later in the same year, the board of deacons brought up the need for a special campaign to raise funds for a church sanctuary and took the position that, inasmuch as the "church in conference had voted for such a campaign" and, regardless of the "pros and cons of the matter" the board "must implement the congregation's instructions." On that basis, the board requested that the "finance committee begin at once the planning of a special campaign to help finance the building of a sanctuary at the earliest possible date."<sup>111</sup>

In church conference on January 1, 1961, the congregation approved the formation of a long-range planning committee consisting of fifteen members plus the chairman of the board of deacons and the pastor. Officers of this committee were Donald R. Calloway, chairman; J. H. Boyd, Jr., vice chairman; and Jack Whichard, secretary. One year later, this committee recommended to the board of deacons and the board without dissent adopted the resolution "That we, the fellowship of Memorial Baptist

Church, commit ourselves to a building program; [and] such a program [is] to begin as soon as the church feels that it is in a position to do so." The resolution further stated "That the purpose of the building program . . . is to provide adequate worship facilities for the church." In church conference on July 8, 1962, the congregation unanimously approved the resolution.<sup>112</sup>

With the long-range planning committee at work and the board of deacons and congregation in support of building new church facilities, the 1960s appeared to be the decade that Memorial would get its new, enlarged edifice. Instead, the church gave birth to a new congregation. On April 3, 1964, twenty-five members of The Memorial Baptist Church "respectively requested their church letters" to establish "a new church as an outgrowth from Memorial Baptist Church." The departing members sensed an urgent need to provide more adequate worship facilities for the "rapidly increasing population of Greenville." On the last Sunday in April, this group of Baptists of Greenville held the organizational meeting of the new Baptist Church for east Greenville, with Pastor Percy Upchurch of Memorial presiding. Dr. Robert L. Holt presented the resolution to organize the church, and it was approved without dissent. Called Oakmont Baptist Church, the new congregation met temporarily in the auditorium of the Rawl building on the campus of East Carolina College.<sup>113</sup> Unlike the church schism of 1915, the separation of the members who formed Oakmont Baptist Church was amicable. An esteemed member of Memorial sagely advised the congregation to let the departing "brothers and sisters" go in peace.

What effect, if any, did the departure of these families have on Memorial's decade-long plan to build a new, enlarged sanctuary? None! The church reaffirmed its "united determination to expand its facilities for worship" on the downtown site. It also empowered the board of deacons to start a fundraising campaign to purchase adjacent land needed for expansion and to name a committee to select an architect to prepare plans for a new edifice. Also, the trustees were instructed to negotiate with the property owners of adjacent lots and try to purchase these parcels of land not already possessed by the church. By October 1965, the church had acquired all of the desired properties including the Loula Fleming residence. Through purchase, the church owned the entire city block bordered by Fourth Street on the south side, Greene Street on the east side, Third Street on the north side, and Pitt Street on the west side. The new planning committee named by the deacons and approved by the church consisted of Jack Whichard, chairman; Henry Dunbar, vice chairman; and Donald Cal-

loway, Mrs. Ruth Garner, Mrs. Pauline Roberson, Mrs. Peggy Stevens, Stacy Evans, D. G. Nichols, and Bill Whedbee. Upon recommendation of this committee, the church retained Albert C. Woodroof of Greensboro, North Carolina, as architect and asked him to prepare plans for a new sanctuary that would accommodate approximately seven hundred people. The new structure would be built alongside the present sanctuary and tied to the educational building. When completed, the 1890 building would be demolished. Total cost of the building was calculated to be \$722,190, which did not include demolition of buildings, landscaping, pews, chancel furnishings, and other needed items.<sup>114</sup>

As the congregation reflected on the estimated construction costs and other factors such as emergent migration and growth patterns in Greenville, urban renewal and redevelopment, prospect of Greene and Pitt Streets being widened, and limited parking, church leaders began to have second thoughts about carrying out a major enlargement program for the downtown site. The parking issue, for example, had long been a matter of concern. As early as 1957, L. A. Stroud had raised the question about parking facilities at the new church. When church planners for the Southern Baptist Convention reviewed architect Woodroof's plans, they too raised the question about limited parking spaces available on the church grounds.<sup>115</sup>

This apprehension stalled the work of Whichard's planning committee and, eventually, these major concerns derailed plans to build on the downtown site. As the congregation's enthusiasm waned, Mrs. J. H. Boyd, Jr., offered a tract of land containing slightly more than fifty-five acres on the south side of U.S. Highway 264 (now NC 33) to the church at a "generous" price of \$60,000. Ownership of an entire city block notwithstanding, the congregation approved the purchase of the Boyd property on September 15, 1968, and publicly expressed to Mrs. Boyd "its appreciation and gratitude for her generosity in making this property available to the church at the stipulated price." Memorial now owned two places on which to build. The following spring, however, the church voted to move from the downtown site for the reasons noted above and the fear that prospective members would be "unimpressed with the . . . [older] location." At the same time, the congregation asked the chairman of the board of deacons to appoint a church site committee, with the charge "to report to the church not later than the Sunday following Labor Day 1969" on a suitable site. Appointed were Larry Averette, chairman; Mrs. J. B. Spilman, Sr.; Mrs. Arthur Alford; C. D. Ward; Phillip Carroll; Bob Allen; and Homer Compton. The committee, however, was unable to meet the



Labor Day deadline and asked for more time to find a suitable location for the church to build its new facilities. In mid-1970, the group recommended a site.<sup>116</sup>

Meanwhile on September 7, 1969, one week after the completion of fifteen years of service, Pastor Percy B. Upchurch announced his resignation to become effective on December 31, 1969. He cited plans to retire and stated the church's need for new leadership to carry out the "move to a new location, to build up a larger congregation, and to enlarge the church program."<sup>117</sup>

Although Rev. Upchurch gave "extended and untiring effort" to the ministry and mission of The Memorial Baptist Church, he was unable to lead the cautious congregation through an ambitious building program to enlarge the sanctuary. He did, however, succeed in preparing, nudging, and guiding the church down the zigzag path of decision-making entailed in the church's decision to move from a home of almost 140 years to a new, yet undetermined church site. That decision to move from the downtown location was a significant marking on Memorial's journey of faith.

The building program notwithstanding, Mr. Upchurch exercised pastoral leadership in all phases of church life at Memorial. From the pulpit, he consistently fed his congregation with strong spiritual food rich in biblical, theological, and moral fiber applicable to mid-twentieth century living. Examples of sermons preached in the historic church at Fourth and Greene streets were "The Right Aim," "The Price of Discipleship," "Beware of Emptiness," "Being Ready," "Our Influence," "The Shadows We Cast," and, as one might expect, "The Cost of Building."<sup>118</sup>

A highlight of his pastorate was the ordination of Dwight R. Fickling to the Christian ministry. On March 9, 1965, the church's board of deacons, upon recommendation of the pastor, authorized Rev. Upchurch to call an ordination council to examine candidate Fickling for the ministry. Twelve days later, this council consisting of Rev. Charles D. Edwards, chairman; Rev. Upchurch, secretary; and seven other members examined and recommended the candidate be approved for ordination to the ministry. Two weeks later in a service led by Pastor Upchurch, The Memorial Baptist Church ordained Dwight R. Fickling, Baptist Student Union secretary and chaplain to the Baptist students enrolled at East Carolina College. Rev. L. D. Munn, a former pastor of Mr. Fickling, preached the ordination sermon. The newly ordained Christian minister was a native of Badin, North Carolina, and earned the bachelor's degree at Catawba College, the master of arts degree at Appalachian State Teachers College, and the bachelor of



divinity degree at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.<sup>119</sup>

Other leadership roles performed by Pastor Upchurch included service as president of the Greenville Ministerial Association (1960) and as the moving force for the formation of the Fishermen's Club, an organization of men of the church to carry out a visitation program. Mr. Upchurch served as the club's adviser. He also led the deacons and the church to increase the size of the diaconate from sixteen to twenty members. In late 1968, the church formed a committee of seven to prepare a constitution and bylaws.<sup>120</sup>

Membership growth and program development and expansion are quantitative measurements, albeit inadequate benchmarks, of a successful pastorate. Nevertheless, in the first year of the Upchurch pastoral ministry, church membership climbed to the 700 mark for the first time and reached its apogee of 744 in 1963, the year immediately before the departure of the members who organized Oakmont Baptist Church. Average membership for the fifteen-year period (1954–55 to 1968–69) was 721 members, with about seventy percent listed as resident members. Surprisingly, average membership for the post-Oakmont years of the Upchurch pastorate exceeded the average membership before the departure. For example, from 1963–64 to 1968–69 average membership was 725 compared with 717 for the period of 1954–55 to 1962–63.<sup>121</sup>

Sunday School enrollment showed an altogether different pattern of growth from church membership. In the long history of the program, 1957 was the only year that the school's enrollment reached the 700 figure, topping out at 715. From that historic high, the numbers plummeted to a low of 260 in 1966. The dramatic divide between high and low enrollment figures came in 1964, when enrollment dropped from 586 the preceding year to 348, a difference of 138 for a decline of nearly 25 percent. Put differently, for the period 1954–55 to 1962–63, average enrollment was 631 compared with 354 for the last six years of the Upchurch pastorate. The departure of enrollees to Oakmont was obviously a factor, but the decline in enrollment of college students was also a contributing cause. More students with cars on campus meant that many were going home or other places for the weekend. Also, by the mid-1960s, turbulent times on college campuses had supplanted the placid period of the 1950s. How much this activism on campuses contributed, if any, to the decline of college student enrollment in Sunday School is difficult to say.

The Woman's Missionary Union, unlike the Sunday School program, maintained steady enrollments through the second half of the 1950s

and all of the 1960s except for 1969. Led by Mrs. R. B. Lee (1953–1955), Mrs. Larry Averette (1956–1957), and Mrs. Ruel Tyson (1958–1959), enrollment for all units of the WMU, Young Woman's Association (YWA), Girls Auxiliary (GAs), Sunbeams, and the Woman's Missionary Society (WMS), climbed to an all-time high of 241 in 1958. Directors Grace Smith (1960–1962), Mrs. Dorothy Paschal (1963–1964), Mrs. Walter Thompson (1965–1967) and Mrs. Ruth Garner (1968) kept the number above two hundred until 1968, when it dropped to 182. In 1969, membership fell to 119, a 35-percent loss of members. A decline of fifty-seven members in the Woman's Missionary Society largely accounted for the sharp decline in this overall enrollment of the Woman's Missionary Union. Despite the skewed figure for 1969, the average enrollment for the Upchurch years was 207.<sup>122</sup>

Church membership, the Sunday School program, and the Woman's Missionary Union weathered the storms of social upheaval of the 1960s; however, the Baptist Training Union (BTU) appeared to be a casualty of the turbulent times. The South Roanoke Baptist Association showed no reports for the church's Baptist Training Union after 1968. Formed in 1936, when the name of the Baptist Young People's Union was changed, the Baptist Training Union provided education and training in Baptist beliefs and practices for churchgoers ranging from the nursery to adults. Led by directors Quinn Bostic (1955–1957), Arthur "Ott" Alford (1958–1960), Milam Johnson (1961), Stacy Evans (1962–1964), John Daniels (1965–1966), and David Gordon (1967–1968), the Sunday evening program rarely showed an enrollment of one hundred members. From 1954-55 to its apparent demise in 1968, average enrollment was eighty-three with an average attendance of fifty-three.<sup>123</sup>

During the Upchurch years, the music program continued to be led by part-time staff, many of whom held faculty positions at East Carolina College. From 1954–1969 seven adult choir directors and nine organists served Memorial. On occasion, turnovers of the music staff led to problems. In 1956, for example, the deacons instructed Pastor Upchurch and the music committee to work together to "accomplish the best possible [outcome] relative to the positions of choir director and organist." The vacancy problem had developed when Professor and Mrs. James Simpson, choir director and organist, respectively, left Greenville for the summer and did not return as expected in the fall for the new academic year. In October 1956, the church employed A. H. Laube as choir director and Herbert Joyner, the summer organist, continued in the fall. The following year, Mrs. Esther Kidd filled in as an assistant choir director and or-

ganist and, upon the termination of Mr. Laube's contract on September 1, 1958, she became the choir director. Later, she appeared before the deacons to discuss "ways to improve the carol and adult choirs and enlist new members." The church also terminated Herbert Joyner's contract as organist and appointed Frances Johnson, an East Carolina College student, to that position. Both Mrs. Kidd and Ms. Johnson, later Mrs. Frances Johnson Cain, served two years. For the decade of the 1960s, Professors Charles Stevens (1960–1965), Edmund Durham (1966–1968), and Ralph Verrastro (1969–1972) directed the adult choir. Ms. Lana McCoy (1962–1963), Larry James (1964–1965), and Mrs. Betty Aldridge (1966–1969) served as organists. In the mid-1950s, the church employed Ms. Jean Pritchard to work with juniors and intermediates in the music program on Fridays and Saturdays.<sup>124</sup>

No church organization worked any harder than the board of deacons during the more than fifteen years of pastoral service of Rev. Upchurch. Both large and small matters came before the deacons for discussion and action. Viewed as the board of deacons, these elected leaders acted primarily as administrative officers of the church. In carrying out their responsibilities, the board of deacons made recommendations, and the congregation in church conference approved or disapproved them. Without question, the most important and most time-consuming matter was the building program and the purchase of properties. Church finances such as the annual budget, the every-member canvass for pledging the budget, and a monthly review of the budget received much attention and discussion. The deacons also reviewed and approved the expenditure of money for church and community benevolence. The board exercised supervisory responsibilities for the various church organizations and for the maintenance and upkeep of the church facilities. The sub-committees of the board took on the jobs of finding extra chairs for the young people's Sunday School department, painting the classrooms, and for installing floodlights in the parking lot. They even considered the pros and cons of adding air conditioning in the church buildings but decided to postpone it until the church made a decision on building a new parsonage. At one meeting, Dr. Robert L. Humber spoke about the need to improve higher education facilities for Baptist students. At another meeting, the board of deacons considered at length the question of dancing at Baptist colleges, but the deacons took no action on the issue. In another meeting, the chairman appointed a sub-committee "to speak to Mr. Aman about the distribution of candy during the worship service." Still further, the noise of



communion glasses being returned to the holders came before the deacons for discussion. Also, the board members thought the music at the evening worship service left much to be desired.<sup>125</sup>

Social relations were an important factor in the interactions between the board of deacons and the pastor. To enhance these complementary relationships, the Upchurches hosted a number of dinner meetings for the deacons and their wives. For one of these social gatherings, Mrs. Upchurch and wives of several deacons served "a delicious dinner of ham and quail." The pheasant, no doubt, was provided by deacon D. G. Nichols and Mr. Upchurch. Both were avid bird hunters, and the preacher had a reputation of being an excellent marksman.<sup>126</sup>

To mark Rev. Percy Upchurch's years of faithful and devoted service as pastor of The Memorial Baptist Church, Jack Whichard, chairman of the board of deacons, proclaimed Sunday, March 15, 1970, as "Upchurch Day." The congregation honored Percy and Mildred Upchurch in a day-long series of activities beginning with Sunday School and culminating with a reception in the afternoon. The Adult Sunday School departments had the Upchurch couple as their special guests and honored them with a special program of "Memories of Memorial." Following the morning worship service, the congregation presented an engraved silver bowl to Mrs. Upchurch and an inscribed plaque to Rev. Upchurch. On behalf of the church, Chairman Whichard gave a monetary gift to the Upchurches to be used for landscaping their new home located in Williamston, North Carolina. At noon, the board of deacons and their wives entertained the Upchurches at a luncheon. For the afternoon reception in the church parlor, Professors J. P. Distefano and Ralph Verrastro of the East Carolina College music faculty rendered special music. When the Upchurches left Greenville for their new retirement home, this couple had served Memorial longer than any previous pastor. Both of them gave "unstintingly of their time, their talents, and their treasure" to the cause of Christ and to the "furtherance of Christian work" at Memorial and in Greenville. Mr. Upchurch's strong, steady leadership guided the congregation as it journeyed on the road of faith step by step to the difficult decision to leave the downtown church site and search for a new location.<sup>127</sup>

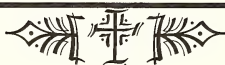
From the presidency of William Howard Taft to the inauguration of Richard M. Nixon, ten pastors served The Memorial Baptist Church. They ministered to their congregation through six decades of world-shattering events including two world wars, worldwide economic depression, the onset of the nuclear age, and the Cold War with its maddening arms race between the super powers of the United States and the Soviet Union. In



their community of faith, these ten pastors and the congregation experienced a church-shattering schism, economic hard times, an abortive attempt to unite mother and daughter churches, two centennial celebrations, birthing of new churches, the erection of an educational facility, a vision for an enlarged sanctuary that was not built, and the difficult decision to relocate from the downtown church site. With these markings of the journey etched in the marrow of their being, a new generation of Memorial Baptists peered down the corridors of the final third of the twentieth century with three immediate imperatives in front of them: to search for a new pastor, to find a suitable church site, and build a house of worship for a church population to carry on Memorial's journey of faith into the twenty-first century.

## Chapter 5

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# Journey from Reluctance to Resurgence (1970–2000)

**“We do not have money, but we do have property.”**

D. G. Nichols

**“From the old . . . to the new.”**

Memorial Baptist Church bulletin, October 7, 1973

**“Let this church be God-centered, person-centered, and community-centered.”**

Rev. C. Norman Bennett, Jr.

**“to begin again”**

Rev. E. T. Vinson

Over the last three decades of the twentieth century, Greenville experienced significant change. A dream for a four-year medical school at East Carolina University became a reality and transformed the city and university community into a major medical center for eastern North Carolina. The medical school, combined with the Pitt County Memorial Hospital, brought large numbers of healthcare professionals to Greenville. The Pitt County Development Commission also brought “premium industries” to Greenville. Industries such as Bur-

roughs-Wellcome (subsequently relocated to the Research Triangle Park and known as Glaxo-Wellcome), NACCO Materials Handling Group, Catalytica, Grady-White Boats, and Vermont American Corporation added to the economic base and growth of the city. Tobacco continued to be important to the economy of Pitt County, but by the end of the century the tobacco culture had begun to wane. Greenville's population, however, did not decline. The number of residents more than doubled over the thirty-year period, from a population of 29,063 to a total of 60,476 by the century's end. This chapter charts the course followed by The Memorial Baptist Church through thirty years of Greenville's sea change.

The Memorial Baptist Church also experienced major changes during the last three decades of the twentieth century. The congregation bid a nostalgic farewell to the grounds on which stood the Greenville Baptist Church, the town's first Baptist house of worship. They left the stately Victorian Gothic church house completed in 1890 that had been dedicated as a memorial to the founding of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. From this place at Fourth and Greene streets where clouds of witnesses had worshiped through ages past, the membership of the 1970s would journey to the suburbs to build the church's third house of worship. Before century's end, the new church on a new site with a new beginning expanded its facilities to meet the spiritual needs of a growing membership whose worship and ministry reached into the twenty-first century.

### **The Church Calls C. Norman Bennett, Jr., as Pastor**

In 1970, the congregation was full of important questions and short on answers. Who would be the new minister? Where would the new church be located? When would the new house of worship and educational building be erected? The answer to the first question came near the end of May. The pulpit committee, led by D. G. Nichols, recommended C. Norman Bennett, Jr., as pastor of The Memorial Baptist Church, and the congregation voted unanimously to extend the call to Rev. Bennett. He accepted the church's invitation and agreed to begin his ministry in Greenville "no later than September 1, 1970." He also wrote "That with God's guidance and leadership and [with] the cooperation and prayerful support of the members of the church, we shall go forth . . . together . . . with a dynamic witness in the community to the glory of God."<sup>1</sup>

Like many of the earlier ministers of Memorial, C. Norman Bennett, Jr., was a Virginian. Born in South Boston, he attended grade school there and graduated from Hargrave Military Academy in Chatham, Virginia. He earned his undergraduate degree at the University of Richmond. For his

seminary studies, he enrolled at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, North Carolina, where he received the master of divinity degree. Mr. Bennett also completed the master of science degree in education at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia, and subsequent to his ministry in Greenville was awarded the doctor of ministry degree by Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Like his predecessor, Rev. Percy Upchurch, Mr. Bennett was a veteran of the United States Navy. Ordained by Moffett Memorial Baptist Church, Danville, Virginia, Rev. Bennett held pastorates in Oxford, North Carolina; Altavista, Virginia; and Azalea Baptist Church in Norfolk, where he served until called by The Memorial Baptist Church. He was also a published writer with articles in *Training Union Magazine*, *Religious Herald*, and *Survey*. He developed curriculum materials for adults for the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, Tennessee, and had sermons published in *Proclaim*, a quarterly journal circulated primarily among Southern Baptist ministers.<sup>2</sup>

As the pulpit committee successfully searched for the new pastor, the selection site committee continued to look for the most desirable location for the new church site. By mid-summer 1970 and before the new minister arrived to take up his pastoral duties, the committee had found the new location for The Memorial Baptist Church. On June 14, 1970, in church conference, the congregation approved the purchase of ten acres of land from the Robert Starling family. Located behind the Starlings' residence on Fourteenth Street, the property bordered U.S. 264 (Greenville Boulevard) to the north, Red Banks Road to the south, and the Dellwood subdivision to the west. The church agreed to sell the Boyd farm and the downtown property as soon as possible and to start immediately with a building program. Still further, the congregation directed the finance committee to initiate "a planned campaign" with a start-up in the fall to raise funds for building new facilities. These new facilities, declared the congregation, will include a church library to be "named [the] Boyd Library to honor Mrs. J. H. Boyd, Jr., and her late husband for their contribution to our church's future."<sup>3</sup>

With the "who" and "where" questions answered, the congregation appeared to be ready and eager to start with the actual relocation and construction of the new church facilities. When the new minister began his pastoral work in September, however, he sensed an attitude of reluctance on the part of the membership for moving ahead with the daunting task of building on the new church site. In February 1971, the necessity to take action became obvious, when the heating system failed, and the church had to meet in the Eastern Elementary School for worship serv-



ices. Rather than replace the old furnace with an expensive new system, the congregation in a business session chose to repair the old heating plant. In this emergency, D. G. Nichols challenged the church membership "to move forward on the work of building the new church." He further stated, "We do not have money, but we do have property." Soon thereafter, the church named a twelve-member planning committee with Phil Carroll as the chairman. In July 1971, the church voted to sell the Boyd farm, which jump-started the building fund program. Also, the church terminated the contract that had been made with architect Albert Woodroof in the 1960s to enlarge the sanctuary at the downtown site. The deacons held a meeting the following month at a local restaurant, where they pledged to do "all they could to go forward with an ambitious and challenging program." This chain of events was the turning point from reluctance to resolve in Memorial's move from the Fourth and Greene streets location to the spacious tract of land at 1510 Greenville Boulevard. Before year's end, the church engaged the architectural firms of Freeman-White Associates and Wilber, Kendrick, Workman, and Warren of Charlotte, North Carolina, to provide plans and blueprints of the new edifice. The congregation also decided "that the sanctuary would face Greenville Boulevard" (U.S. Highway 264) and approved a building committee of twenty-one with Phil Carroll as chairman. At the same time, the church announced plans to sell the downtown property.<sup>4</sup>

The new year provided strong evidence that Memorial's stay at Fourth and Greene streets would be coming to an end. In March 1972, the congregation authorized Rogers Construction Company of Smithfield, North Carolina, to build the new church and, on the cool spring Sunday of April 9, 1972, church members gathered at the new site shortly before noon for the groundbreaking ceremony. Meanwhile, the congregation went to work to raise approximately \$150,000 over a one-year period to augment the building fund. The church also borrowed \$350,000 from Planters National Bank & Trust Company at 8 percent annual interest to construct the sanctuary and the adjoining educational building. The total cost of the relocation and rebuilding project including land, construction, and the pipe organ came to almost \$900,000.<sup>5</sup>

During the summer and early fall of 1973, church members awaited with anticipation the move from the downtown property to the new facilities on Greenville Boulevard. A special committee was formed to study and publicize the immediate and future needs for the new church building and to coordinate the acquisition of the identified necessities. The church also authorized the negotiating committee to sell the Fourth

and Greene streets property for a "minimum of \$125,000." Finally, moving day came on Saturday, September 29, 1973, and members provided helpful hands to move things large and small from the old building to the new location. On Monday, October 1, 1973, three years and one month from the date of the new minister's arrival, Pastor Bennett and the church secretary, Mrs. Colleen Patton, occupied the suite of offices in Greenville's newest church building for the first time.<sup>6</sup>

For the worship service on October 7, the Sunday church bulletin boldly proclaimed "From the Old . . . To the New." That historic transition service began at 9:45 a. m. as the last act of worship in the historic Baptist church on the corner of Fourth and Greene streets. The choir sang "Surely the Lord Is in This Place" as the anthem, and Dr. Herbert R. Paschal, Jr., chronicled the history of the church as the final message delivered in the sanctuary that had been in use since the first service was held on October 8, 1890. Following the benediction, the congregation, carrying their personal memories and *Baptist Hymnals*, said goodbye and drove to 1510 Greenville Boulevard to worship for the first time in the sanctuary of the new church. Organist Joseph Goodwin played the organ prelude "Thanks Be to God" to mark the beginning of the worship service. Under the direction of director Danny H. Tindall, the choir once more sang "Surely the Lord Is in This Place" for the morning worship. After the members gathered at the Lord's Table for communion, Pastor C. Norman Bennett, Jr., delivered the morning meditation on "Why Are We Here?"<sup>7</sup>

Three weeks later on Sunday, October 28, 1973, the church family and friends gathered to celebrate the dedication of the "new site, sanctuary, and educational building to the glory and use of God." In the morning dedicatory worship service, former pastor Percy Upchurch offered the prayer of dedication and Pastor Bennett gave the dedicatory sermon entitled "The Church's Mission and Message." Following a church-wide picnic for families and friends, the cornerstone ceremony began at 2:30 p.m. Herman D. Phelps, chairman of the board of deacons, opened the program by reading a brief history of The Memorial Baptist Church. After the church trustees accepted the buildings from the building committee, the pastor and congregation participated in the vows of dedication, which were followed by the address of Dr. W. Perry Crouch, executive secretary of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Arthur "Ott" Alford, chairman of the dedication committee, and Norman Little, chairman of the building and grounds committee, placed the white marble cornerstone into the base of the church tower.

Rev. Bennett offered the prayer of dedication and Rev. John Moore, as-

sociational missionary of the South Roanoke Baptist Association, gave the benediction prayer.<sup>8</sup>

The American colonial-style brick sanctuary and adjoining educational wing, combined with the ninety-two foot tower of classical design towering above both roof lines, emanated an aura of mystical beauty. The



*This white marble cornerstone is located in the base of the ninety-two-foot tower of the church on Greenville Boulevard.*

sanctuary wing with a balcony seated 515, and the two-story educational building held 538. A new pipe organ was installed in the church. Other features of the church facility included the Boyd Library, parlor, choir room, nursery, prayer room, bride's room, fellowship hall, kitchen, and Sunday School assembly and classrooms to accommodate the various age groups. Memorial's "big bell" dating from the 1880s was moved from the old church and placed in the tower. Also moved were the stained-glass memorial windows including the memorial to the founding of the Baptist State Convention in Greenville.<sup>9</sup>

One week after the dedication of the sanctuary and educational building, organist Joseph Harrison Goodwin presented a program of organ music for the dedicatory recital of the new Casavant pipe organ. After Pastor C. Norman Bennett, Jr., opened the service with the Litany of Praise and Dedication, Mr. Goodwin presented the organ recital of music by composers extending from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries. Selections were "Medio Registro alto de Primer Tono" by Francisco Peraza; "Basse et Dessus de Trompette" by Louis Nicholas Clerambault; two German preludes, "Nun Bitten Wir" by Dietrich Buxtehude; and "Durch Adams Fall" by Gottfried August Homilius; "Tocatta in D Minor and Fugue in G Minor" by Johann Sebastian Bach; "Trois Meditations sur le Sainte Trinity," Jean Langlais; and Ralph Vaughan Williams' "Rhosymedre."

Constructed in Saint Syacinthe, Quebec, Canada, by the Casavant brothers, "the organ is a two manual and pedal instrument of twenty-two stops and thirty-one ranks divided into three divisions [namely]

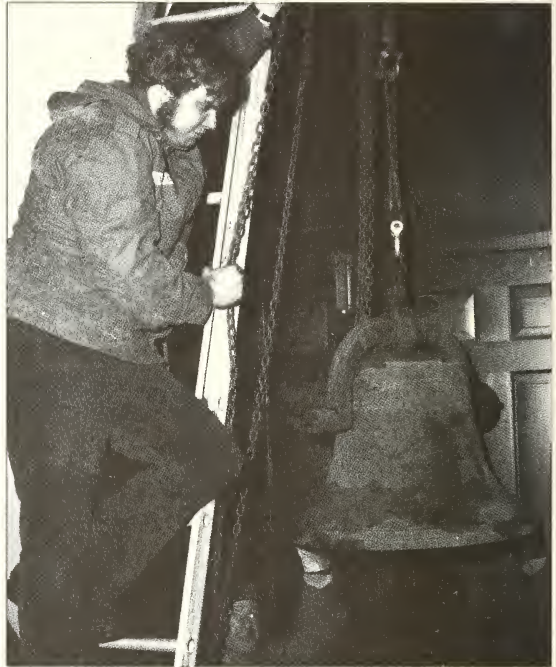


great, swell, and pedal.” It has more than 1,600 pipes. Visiting organists reportedly said that Memorial had “an instrument that may well be unequaled in this part of the state.”<sup>10</sup>

Born in Wenatchee, Washington, and reared in Charlotte, North Carolina, Joseph Goodwin was a Spanish teacher by profession and a gifted church organist by avocation. His organ mentors were Dr. Richard Peek of Charlotte, Professor Dwight Meynard, Northwestern University, and Dr. E. Robert Irwin, East Carolina University. Mr. Goodwin also attended masters classes taught by Jean Langlais

and E. Power Biggs; and he held membership in the American Guild of Organists. In 1970, he succeeded Mrs. Betty Aldridge as Memorial’s organist and served in that position until his untimely death on December 27, 1994, in a fire that destroyed his home located a few blocks from the church’s original site. In recognition of this talented organist’s “twenty-four years of faithful service” and in honor of his memory, the church dedicated and named the music suite the Joseph H. Goodwin Music Suite.<sup>11</sup>

After the dedication services, the church moved quickly to dispose of the furnishings left in the old buildings and to sell the downtown property. The pews in the sanctuary were donated to the Grimesland First Free Will Baptist Church; the organ was publicly auctioned; and the stained glass windows not moved to the new church were sold at a closed auction to church members only. The city of Greenville purchased the church lot and buildings and later demolished the sanctuary that had



*Pictured is the removal of the 1886 bell from the tower of the church at Fourth and Greene Streets. The bell is now in the tower of the church at 1510 Greenville Blvd. (Courtesy of Jim and Edith Davenport).*



been described more than eighty years earlier as a “magnificent structure [that] will stand as a monument to Greenville and a memorial to the Baptist denomination for ages to come.” Left standing on the lot purchased by the church in 1832 were the educational building and the historical marker noting the organization of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina at the Gorham home.<sup>12</sup>

For more than three years, the young minister from Virginia had given singular effort to the goal of leading and assisting the church in its “relocation and rebuilding” program. With the new facilities in place and the grounds and church buildings dedicated, Pastor Bennett challenged the congregation to redirect The Memorial Baptist Church toward matters of “the spirit.” He wrote, “Let us walk in a new direction. Let this church be God-centered, person-centered, and community-centered” through the exertion of a religious influence on “community life . . . and on the family.” He further remarked to the board of deacons that the church needed to “expand its ministry in regard to quality and content.”<sup>13</sup>

This change in direction began with congregational interest expressed in a program of visitation to the confined. Training sessions were scheduled to train interested members to visit the confined in their homes or in other places such as prisons, mental hospitals, and group homes. Drivers volunteered to transport residents who didn’t have transportation to community centers for lunch and recreational activities. Community and church leaders led forum-discussion groups on topics of interest. Problems of drugs, individual and family legal issues, and husband-wife relationships were examples of forums held on Wednesday nights.<sup>14</sup>

The board of deacons also shifted its focus from a single administration function to an expanded ministry. Under the leadership of Eugene Prescott, the deacons developed an orientation program to familiarize fifty-five new members gained between October 1, 1973, and September 30, 1974, with the “historical, doctrinal, and operational aspects” of church life at Memorial. In November 1974, the deacons adopted the Deacon Family Ministry plan as a method of personally ministering to every family in the congregation. Under the plan, each deacon assumed personal responsibility for visiting and ministering to a specific number of church families. The biggest change for the diaconate, however, came with the election of Mrs. Johnetta Webb Spilman as the church’s first woman deacon.<sup>15</sup>

Mrs. Spilman was a native of Chowan County, North Carolina, and attended Elm Academy in her home county and continued her schooling at Franklin Institute in Franklin, Virginia. As a young woman, Johnetta enrolled in Strayer’s Business College in Baltimore, Maryland, to study

business. In 1916, she came to Greenville to teach history in the local high school. One year later, she married John Barham Spilman. Shortly thereafter, Mrs. Spilman taught in her own business school for eight years and then became the assistant treasurer at East Carolina Teachers College. After her husband's death in 1935, she accepted the position of commissioner on the North Carolina Unemployment Compensation Commission and served until 1941. At the time of her resignation, she was the only full-time female commissioner in the United States. Subsequently, Mrs. Spilman became the first director of the North Carolina Mental Health Association. In 1932, Johnetta Webb Spilman became the first woman in the state to run as a candidate for the North Carolina Senate.

Mrs. Spilman was the mother of three children and was active in church and civic affairs. She taught the college Sunday School class at Memorial for fourteen years, served as president of the Woman's Missionary Society for three years, and was the first woman selected as a trustee of the church. She was appointed to serve on both the planning and building committees of the new church facility. Mrs. Spilman held membership in the church's Ladies Aid Society, and in 1932 represented her church in the joint meeting of the Southern and Northern Baptist Conventions. In civic affairs, she was active in the Pitt County Mental Health Association, the Pitt County Tuberculosis Association, and was honored as Greenville's Bicentennial Queen in 1974.<sup>16</sup>

The youth program at Memorial Baptist Church also showed signs of change. In 1973, the church employed Danny Tindall, the part-time choir director, to work fourteen hours each week with the youth. Under Danny's mentorship, the youth program became a vital force in pointing the church in a new direction. The week after Joseph Goodwin's inspiring dedicatory recital, the youth group directed by Mr. Tindall presented "Lightshine," an exhilarating drama and musical production. The young singing group then gave performances of the same production at Immanuel Baptist Church and in churches in the nearby communities of Ayden and Robersonville. Before Danny left Greenville in August 1974, he succeeded in convincing the church to form a youth committee composed of adults and youth who would help plan and coordinate youth activities. Established first as a special committee, the church changed it to a standing committee. Lindy McCombs served as chairman of the special committee. Robert W. Craft, Jr., followed Mr. Tindall as choir-youth director, but he served for only a short time. In September 1975, Lanny Peters was employed as part-time youth director. Lanny came to Memorial with work

experience as a public school teacher and as a part-time youth director in a Baptist church. The youth responded well to Lanny's leadership. On Sunday nights, the youth met for their programs, which included discussion groups, films such as the "Parable," and making plans for Youth Sunday and out-of-town retreats. Camp New Hope near Chapel Hill, North Carolina, was a favorite place for the retreats. In 1974, the youth group held its first three-night live nativity on the front lawn of the church. Dressed in "dazzling costumes," the youth braved sub-freezing temperatures as they played the roles of Joseph, Mary, shepherds, wise men, and angels in the reenactment of one of the founding moments of the Christian faith. The cast sang traditional Christmas carols throughout the scene. The live nativity scene continues to be one of the major events of Christmas at Memorial and is enjoyed by the entire community.<sup>17</sup>

The successful work of Danny Tindall and Lanny Peters laid the foundation for the church to move in the direction of later employing a full-time minister in the area of youth and education.

A children's church program also was added. Established in the fall of 1974, the age-level program consisted of a mini-church for the four- and five-year-olds and a junior church for children ages six, seven, and eight. The younger group did not come to the sanctuary during the worship hour but met with the mini-church workers. The junior group, on the other hand, came to the sanctuary and remained until the choir sang the anthem at which time they left for junior church.<sup>18</sup>

When Rev. Bennett came to Memorial, he found the "music department and program to be outstanding." He attributed the success of the music ministry to the "dedicated talents" of the musicians and to the "excellent job" of Dr. Ralph Verrastro, director of the choir and music program. On August 1, 1972, however, Dr. Verrastro resigned his part-time position as director. In the same month, the church appointed Mr. Danny Tindall as part-time director of music. After Danny's departure in 1974, the music program had two quick turnovers in directors. Robert W. Craft, Jr., served from August 1974 to December 1974, and Steve Miller's employment at Memorial began in February 1975 and ended in July of the same year. Jim Rodgers, Steve Cook, and others filled in from time to time. Once more, however, the church looked to the faculty of the East Carolina University School of Music for its choir director and hired Professor Harold A. Jones for the part-time position. A member of Memorial and chairman of the church's music committee, Harold restored stability to the music program and brought a high level of professional competence and commitment to the position. Harold and organist Joseph



Goodwin were an excellent team. Worshippers at Memorial were especially feted with Joe's organ music during America's bicentennial year (1976). He rummaged through music libraries and collections to find examples of early American organ music to play for the congregation "to aid [their] worship and boost [their] enjoyment of our two-hundredth birthday."<sup>19</sup>

Fourteen days after the nation's two-hundredth birthday, Rev. C. Norman Bennett, Jr., announced his resignation as pastor of The Memorial Baptist Church "to pursue a full-time course of study leading to the doctor's degree at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary." He preached his final sermon on September 19, 1976, on the topic: "This I Believe." In closing his ministry he said, "I wish to express my warm, heartfelt thanks and personal gratitude to any and all who in any way have contributed of yourself, time, talent, and treasury. My hope and prayer for each member of the church is none other than God's blessings and God's will for your life. My final benediction is a phrase from Pauline thought: 'For I am persuaded that [nothing] shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.'"<sup>20</sup>

Six years earlier, Pastor Bennett's inaugural sermon was "Why I Have Come to The Memorial Baptist Church." Other sermon topics preached included "Two Gardens: Eden and Gethsemane," "The Ministry of Christian Giving," "A Church Fulfilling Its Mission in the World," "The Priesthood of Parents," and "A New Beginning." These sermons as well as the others delivered from the pulpit at Memorial were organized, clear, substantive, and stylistic. Rev. Bennett was effective in the proclamation of the Gospel.<sup>21</sup>

The growth curve for church membership was flat during the Bennett pastorate. In 1971, membership consisted of 501 resident and 200 non-resident members for a total of 701. The following year, however, 130 non-resident members were dropped from the church roll. With the exclusion of the inflated number of non-resident members in 1971, average membership before the church moved to the new location in 1973 was 503. After the relocation, average membership climbed to 527, with the largest increase in 1974, the first year in the new church. In that year, the church gained fifty-five new members compared to fifty-nine new members for the combined three previous years in the old church.<sup>22</sup>

Unlike church membership, Sunday School enrollment actually decreased after the church moved to its new location. For the last three years in the downtown church, average Sunday School enrollment was 263; for the first three years in the new church, average enrollment was



only 219. This downward slope of the growth curve of Sunday School at Memorial was the continuation of a trend that began in the late 1950s.<sup>23</sup>

In the bicentennial decade when the church built a new house of worship, the congregation framed a constitution and a set of bylaws. The constitution-bylaws were only a work in progress when the new pastor arrived in 1970. A committee appointed in 1968 to develop the document did not complete its work until a year after Rev. Bennett's coming and more than twenty-five years after the church repealed the 1920 Rules in the struggle to merge Memorial and Immanuel churches. In late 1971, the church approved the constitution-bylaws. The constitution consisted of the preamble, name of the church, affiliation, purpose, church covenant, and statement of faith. The bylaws, on the other hand, contained articles on membership, church officers and staff, meetings, church finances, committees, educational ministries, adoption and amendment processes, and review procedures.

Rev. C. Norman Bennett's legacy to The Memorial Baptist Church was the gentle but determined leadership he provided in the relocation and rebuilding program. Although the difficult decision to move had been made prior to his arrival, he faced the formidable task of carrying out the decision to relocate. He challenged, encouraged, and unified the congregation around the singular effort to relocate and rebuild. He even empathized with members who had misgivings about the relocation. To move a church from its homeplace of nearly a century and a half was a major accomplishment and an enduring legacy.

### **The Church Calls E. T. Vinson as Pastor**

Before Mr. Bennett's departure, the congregation organized a seven-member pulpit search committee consisting of Jack Whichard, chairman; Arthur "Ott" Alford, Mrs. Irma Overton, Ms. Karen Gordon, Julian Rawls, Charles Forbes, and Mrs. Pauline Roberson. As the committee conducted its search, the church called on Dr. Wilkins B. Winn, an ordained Baptist minister, a member of Memorial, and Professor of History at East Carolina University, to serve as interim pastor. On April 24, 1977, The Memorial Baptist Church extended a call to Rev. E. T. Vinson, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Scotland Neck, North Carolina, to become pastor. He accepted the call and on July 31, 1977, began his pastoral duties in the mother church of the Baptist State Convention.<sup>24</sup>

Born in Swansboro, North Carolina, E. T. Vinson attended the local public schools and graduated from Swansboro High School. As a senior in 1950, he sensed the call to enter the ministry. To follow this call, he en-

rolled at Wake Forest College and earned the bachelor of arts degree with a major in history. E. T. then entered Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, where he received the bachelor of divinity degree. Subsequently, he completed training in pastoral counseling at Dorothea Dix Hospital in Raleigh, North Carolina, and Duke University Divinity School. Later, he pursued graduate studies at Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Virginia, in pursuit of the doctor of ministry degree and also did graduate work at East Carolina University. Ordained by the Piney Grove Baptist Church near Swansboro, Rev. Vinson held pastorates in Oxford, Newport, Wilmington, and Scotland Neck, North Carolina, before coming to Greenville.

Memorial's new minister was active in denominational work in the association and the Baptist State Convention. He served as moderator of the North Roanoke Baptist Association and as vice president of the Rocky Mount Baptist Pastors' Conference and the North Roanoke Baptist Association Pastors' Conference. At the state level, Rev. Vinson served on the General Board of the Baptist State Convention and was a member of the stewardship committee, the committee on committees, and the resolutions committee. He also served the convention as a trustee of Chowan College and Meredith College. In addition, he was a member of the Board of Trustees of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and was the seminary's first alumnus to serve as chairman of the Board.<sup>25</sup>

Unlike previous pastors Bennett, Upchurch, and Hardaway, who took charge of their pastoral field in Greenville after the "summer slump," Rev. Vinson preached his first sermon in the midst of summer on July 31, 1977. In the afternoon of the same day, Dr. W. Randall Lolley, President of Southeastern Theological Seminary, and local church and civic leaders gathered in Memorial's sanctuary to participate in the Service of Installation. Dr. Lolley read the charge to the new pastor. Other participants on the program were Bruce Thompson, chairman of the board of deacons; John S. Whichard, chairman of the pastor selection committee; Percy R. Cox, mayor, City of Greenville; Rev. Ralph G. Messick, president of the Greenville Ministerial Association; John A. Moore, missionary of the South Roanoke Baptist Association; Irby B. Jackson, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church; Dr. Wilkins B. Winn, interim pastor, The Memorial Baptist Church; Mrs. Ruth Garner, past director, Woman's Missionary Union of the South Roanoke Baptist Association; James H. Bailey, pastor, Jarvis Memorial United Methodist Church; and Robert E. Clyde, director, East Carolina University Baptist Student Center. Following the installation, the congregation had a reception in honor of Pastor E. T. Vinson, his wife

Katherine, and their two sons, Gregory and Anthony.<sup>26</sup>

With the ceremonial installation service behind him, the new pastor had the church's sesquicentennial celebration in front of him. Celebrated on October 16, 1977, at the church's annual homecoming, the 150th anniversary was a memorable occasion for the pastor and people of Memorial. In homage to the long history of the church, the congregation exhibited pictures, documents, and other memorabilia. The church also reprinted and distributed copies of the 1828



*This cake was made to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Memorial Baptist Church, October 16, 1977.*

Covenant and Rules of Decorum, the only extant pre-Civil War records of the church. Organist Joseph Goodwin composed an original composition for organ called "Shofar for a Memorial Jubilee" and gave the premiere performance of the work for the morning offertory. Centered on the old American hymn, "On Jordan's Stormy Banks," the tune, according to the organist, was "most probably sung by the early Greenville Baptists." Featured in the anniversary worship service were five intergenerational church members who spoke on the topic of "What Memorial Means to Me," and the minister followed with comments on "What It Means to Be Your Pastor." At the homecoming dinner, the senior church members cut the birthday cake.<sup>27</sup>

The 150th anniversary year, no doubt, gave the pastor a sense of perspective on the history and heritage of the church, and his pastoral experience of more than twenty years provided him with the understanding and know-how to build up a church with a flat growth curve and a Sunday School program in decline. When he arrived, worship attendance was so small in number that the balcony was closed and the back pews on the



main floor of the sanctuary were roped off. To Rev. Vinson, what it meant to be pastor of The Memorial Baptist Church was to open the closed areas of the sanctuary to a larger attendance; reverse the downward curve in Sunday School enrollment; add full-time ministerial positions; and expand church ministries.

The pastor went to work immediately to expand Memorial's ministries. In 1978, a weekday early education program was established for preschoolers. Opened in the mornings for three days each week, the school started with nine three-year-olds and one teacher and, before year's end, the enrollment grew to ten. Under the leadership of Marcia Pleasants, an early childhood educator, the preschool grew rapidly and added four-year-olds. After a few years, the program moved to a five-day schedule and added a kindergarten class. After nine years, Marcia Pleasants stepped aside as director in 1987, and Joyce Crapps, also a specialist in early childhood education, became the director. She added a mom's-morning-out program for children as young as fifteen months old. In early 1993, Sherry Dendy, an early childhood education teacher, was appointed director and served in that position for eight years. As the weekday early education program entered the twenty-first century under the leadership of interim director Kay Godwin, its enrollment had climbed from ten at the outset in 1978 to more than 200.

The tuition-based program is economically self-sufficient. Salaries, instructional materials, resources, and food items are funded by the preschool. The church provides classrooms, office space, and utilities for the school. The church's weekday early education committee serves as the liaison between the preschool and the church.

With the increased emphasis placed on the importance of preschool education, the weekday early education ministry has met a crucial church and community need for nearly a quarter century. Church families with young children have found a caring preschool that teaches Christian values, and many families in the larger community have developed a relationship with the church through the weekday early education ministry.<sup>28</sup>

In 1982, the church added an outreach ministry. This ministry program evolved from the church's standing committee on visitation and membership authorized by the bylaws of 1971. Later, this committee's name was changed to the outreach committee and charged with the responsibility to see that newcomers to the community were visited and to recruit new church members. To maintain continuity in the visitation and recruitment program, the director of the outreach ministry also served as chair of the outreach committee. In the early 1990s, the out-



reach ministry was rejuvenated with “outreachers” meeting weekly for a snack supper and a brief meeting before visiting prospects. A vital lay-led outreach program continued to function throughout the 1990s.<sup>29</sup>

Another ministry initiative was the Chinese ministry of the South Roanoke Baptist Association. Started in January 1993 by Yuanzhang Yan, a student at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, for the Chinese congregation in Greenville, this Chinese group meets on Sunday mornings in a classroom at Memorial for Bible study. Church members Alice Fleming and Christine Tripp offered English instruction for some in the group. In less than a decade, the Chinese congregation at Memorial has grown from eight to thirty.<sup>30</sup>

In the 150th anniversary year, the new minister saw program development and additional staff as imperative needs of The Memorial Baptist Church for the remaining decades of the twentieth century. The Sunday School program, for example, was a sick patient in need of aggressive treatment. For twenty years, the enrollment trend had pointed downward, and average attendance for 1976 barely reached one hundred. The prescribed treatment to build the atrophied program was to grow classes and employ a full-time minister with a specialty in religious education. Before the church actually called the new staff member, the Sunday School added a new class of young married couples, recruited largely by Arthur “Ott” Alford. He and wife “Bet” taught the group. Although not the first couples class in the church, the young married couples class experienced immediate growth. The success of Ott and Bet’s class inspired Eugene “Gene” and Adell Prescott to reinvent the Sunday School class for college students. Started in September 1978 with the Prescotts and Harold and Shirley Stroupe as the leaders and teachers, the collegiate Sunday School class became another success story. A weekly newsletter filled with high interest information kept the students well informed of class and church events and opportunities. When the Stroupes were transferred to Wilmington, Delaware, David and Gwen Gordon and later Bruce and Neta Thompson worked with the Prescotts in the collegiate class. By 1981, attendance had grown to nearly sixty, and the newsletter’s circulation reached as many as four hundred students. Faces of university students once again graced the 11 a.m. worship service and the mid-week family night supper and prayer meeting. The collegiate class reinstated the Collegiate Sunday program, whereby college students took responsibility for teaching all Sunday School classes and for conducting the entire morning worship service for one Sunday each year. Monthly social events and annual retreats kept the leaders and students busy from

September through May. Through the decade of the 1980s, university and college students continued to be a vital part of the ministry of The Memorial Baptist Church.<sup>31</sup>

In early 1979 when the collegiate class was still in its embryonic stage, the church called Hal Melton to fill the position of minister of education with youth responsibilities. A native of Lancaster, South Carolina, Hal earned the bachelor of science degree at Clemson University and the master of divinity degree with a specialty in religious education at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. While in the seminary, Hal served as minister with youth and music at Greenwood Forest Baptist Church in Cary, North Carolina. In the spring of 1979, Hal and wife Roberta moved to Greenville and, by mid-summer, he was off to a good start in his work at Memorial. Pastor Vinson told the deacons that the young staff member's performance "had been excellent . . . [and that] . . . he had excellent ideas and was very creative." In 1980, Sunday School enrollment climbed above 400 with an average attendance of 207. Nearly 45 percent of the total enrollment came from the young marrieds, young singles, and collegiate classes. For Mr. Melton's four-year stay at Memorial, the average Sunday School enrollment was 486, and the average yearly attendance remained above 200. The "sick patient" Pastor Vinson found in 1977 was on the road to full recovery.<sup>32</sup>

Church membership, like Sunday School enrollment, increased. By 1980, the number of resident members climbed to 624, and the 100 non-resident members listed on the church rolls brought the total membership to 724. This total was the largest number on roll since the late 1960s. With the upswing in worship attendance, the back pews and balcony were opened for worshippers.<sup>33</sup>

As Memorial moved into the 1980s, the pastor issued a clarion call to the congregation "to begin again." He wanted the people of Memorial in the late twentieth century "to continue to develop the spiritual life of our church; to reach out to the unchurched and spiritually impoverished; to work together . . . to reactivate the inactive; and to strengthen and enlarge our Bible teaching program." In his "begin again" call, the pastor started the new year of 1980 with the sermon "The Bible . . . A Miracle of God." He conducted training sessions and held retreats for deacons and yoke-fellows to advance their work with church families. To strengthen the bond with university students, the church organized the adopt-a-student-family ministry program. A variation of the deacon family ministry plan, church families "adopted" university students for the school year and, in turn, students embraced the families. Through these family ties and in-

teractions, family members enjoyed relationships with students for one or more years and, in some cases, these enduring ties extended beyond the college years. In 1981, thirty-eight church families shared their lives with fifty university students.<sup>34</sup>

"To begin again" resonated with the youth of Memorial. Under Hal Melton's mentorship, the youth continued their successful Youth Sunday program. Hal's first youth pastors were Bruce Thompson and Jeff Prescott (1980). They were followed by Becky Garner (1981), Loretta Grantham and John Whichard (1982), and Bruce Thompson and Loretta Grantham in 1983, the year Mr. Melton left Memorial.<sup>35</sup>

The congregation called Rev. Richard "Rick" Bailey to fill the vacancy of minister of education and youth, effective January 8, 1984. Born in Washington, D. C., Rick attended schools in Virginia and later in Alabama and Tennessee. He earned the bachelor of arts degree with a major in history at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tennessee, and the master of divinity degree with a specialty in religious education at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Ordained at Fall Creek Baptist Church in Bennett, North Carolina, Rick had served as minister of education, youth, and music at that church as well as at Central and Mount Home Baptist Churches in Lenoir and Morganton, North Carolina, respectively, before coming to Greenville.<sup>36</sup>

In 1984, Memorial's new minister of education and youth called on Bruce Thompson to serve as youth pastor. Others selected were Kelly Jones and Richie Murphy (1986) Michael Thompson and Richie Murphy (1987), Lisa Moore and Michael Thompson (1988), Hollis Gunn and Rocky Thurston (1990), and Claudia Long and Christian Porter (1992).<sup>37</sup>

Beginning in 1986, Mr. Bailey added annual summer mission projects to the repertoire of youth activities. These week-long mission assignments typically alternated between out-of-state and intrastate projects. The mission trips took the youth as far away as Cobb Island, Maryland; Daytona Beach, Florida; Gatlinburg, Tennessee; and Syracuse, New York; and as close as Rocky Mount and Chocowinity, North Carolina. Work experiences included renovation of church buildings such as painting and roofing. The youth also conducted backyard vacation Bible schools.<sup>38</sup>

Adults also became involved in home and foreign missions. In 1984, Suzanne Allred accepted a mission assignment to Togo, West Africa. Near the end of the 1980s, John Artois and Glenn Sanders joined a team of North Carolina Baptist Men who traveled to Montana to build a church. The Evangelical Crusade of the Southern Baptist Convention invited Rev. E. T. Vinson to participate in a mission to Nairobi, Kenya, from Septem-



ber 8–16, 1989. During the 1990s, Drs. Stuart Lee, Richard and Janice Rawl, and Richard J. Murphy, a former Youth Sunday pastor, made short medical mission trips to Africa. Rev. Rick Bailey went to Brazil on a mission project. Closer home and in the sunset of the twentieth century, the Baptist Men of The Memorial Baptist Church, led by Carl Grantham, sponsored a disaster relief trailer that was used to build ramps for senior citizens in the community and do other types of home repairs for the needy and disabled. The trailer was in constant use during the relief and recovery phases of the epic flooding in the aftermath of Hurricane Floyd that roared through eastern North Carolina on September 15–16, 1999. The torrents of Floyd killed fifty-two people, damaged 57,000 homes with 17,000 beyond repair, and displaced 18,000 families in the coastal plain counties. In Pitt County, nearly 60 percent of the total land area was under water. Churches, agencies, and civic groups responded quickly to this unprecedented disaster. The Memorial Baptist Church served as a food station for the flood victims of Greenville and Pitt County. For nearly one month, members of Memorial and other churches worked with the Missouri Baptist Disaster Relief Ministry and the American Red Cross to prepare and deliver approximately 140,000 meals for residents in shelters, displaced persons, and volunteer relief workers. This feeding mission was a first-time hands-on mission experience for some Memorial Baptists, who had supported missions for years through prayer, study, and money.<sup>39</sup>

The Woman's Missionary Union of The Memorial Baptist Church, however, was the organization that had missions as its central purpose. For a century, the WMU had supported missions through education, prayer, and money. In 1986, Woman's Missionary Unions in Baptist churches across North Carolina proudly celebrated their centennial birthday. To mark this important milestone, the Woman's Missionary Union of The Memorial Baptist Church presented a parade of fashion through the years 1886 to 1986 and held a centennial birthday party. Entitled "Historic WMU Facts and Fashions" and narrated by Edith Davenport, the fashions were modeled by women of Memorial. The models were Ida Grantham, Marcia Pleasants, Lois Vicars, Connie Sanders, Gina Prescott, Marlene Holland, Cathy Marsh, Sherry Dendy, Christy Godley, Kim Jones, Edwina Bailey, Kathy Artois, Sarah Harris, Kelly Jones, Adell Prescott, Beth Harman, and Carol Hignite. The birthday party with the traditional cake-cutting followed the fashion show.<sup>40</sup>

The music ministry also had a new beginning in the 1980s. In April



1987, the church added handbells to its music program. In that same month, however, Harold Jones submitted his resignation as director of the chancel choir after twelve years of "faithful and commendable service." With his resignation, the congregation named a special committee, headed by Sue Creech, to study the need for a full-time minister of music. Initially, the church accepted the committee's recommendation to continue with a part-time staff position for the music program, but later approved "an additional full-time staff person whose ministry will include music combined with another area of ministry needs . . ." Still later, "children" was identified as the second area of ministry. To fill this dual position, the congregation called Randall A. Bayne, a native of South Carolina. Mr. Bayne received the bachelor of arts degree in music education at Lander College, Greenwood, South Carolina, and he pursued graduate studies at the University of Georgia and the University of South Carolina. He earned the master of music degree at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and came to Memorial in January 1990 with four years of experience as a public school teacher. On January 6, 1991, The Memorial Baptist Church ordained Randall A. Bayne, after the ordination council, which met in the First Baptist Church of Tarboro, North Carolina, recommended ordination.<sup>41</sup>

Under the new choirmaster, Memorial's music ministry expanded in size and scope. The chancel choir outgrew the rehearsal room and choir gallery in the sanctuary. To cope with the space constraint in the choir loft, the organ console was moved to the west side of the main floor of the sanctuary. Participation also increased in the youth, children's, and preschool choirs as well as in the adult and children's bell ringers. The church offered ensembles and individual voice lessons. The church's musicians staged major performances at home and away. For example, over a period of four Sundays in December 1991, the chancel, youth, and children's choirs and a cast of performers in costume presented a four-part drama of the birth of Christ entitled "The Promise." The musical depicted Christ as "The Wonderful Counselor," "The Mighty God," "The Everlasting Father," and the "Prince of Peace." Two years later, the chancel choir, Adoration and Exultation ensemble groups, and Praise Ringers performed at Bruton Parish Church in Colonial Williamsburg during the Christmas season. On other occasions, Adoration sang in Carnegie Hall and the White House. To augment the music ministry, guest artists and local musicians appeared in concerts at the church. On consecutive Sundays in November, organist Joseph Goodwin and pianist Fran Wilson presented a sacred keyboard recital, and singer and guitarist Lisa Moore gave

a concert. Guest musicians appearing at Memorial included Dr. Jeri Graham, Artist in Residence at Oklahoma Baptist University; Dr. John Blizard, recording artist; and Dr. Charles Gatewood, director, North Carolina Baptist Singers.<sup>42</sup>

For the congregation of Memorial, the pastor's call "to begin again" made in 1980 would, before the end of the decade, mean starting a major building program for the third time in the twentieth century. In 1948, the church constructed a "thoroughly modern" educational building on its downtown site. Twenty-five years later, new worship and educational facilities were erected at the new church location on Greenville Boulevard. In the mid-1980s, the congregation needed more space for the educational program. An ad hoc committee composed of Carroll McLawhorn, Leon Worrell, Jerry Creech, W. C. Flake, Dillon Watson, and Bill Clark began a quest to find that space. Their work led to the installation of accordion-fold doors in the fellowship hall and other large rooms that created additional classrooms. The church also purchased three modular units for Sunday School use. These measures, however, were only temporary solutions to the space problem faced by the Sunday School that began to report an enrollment in excess of 600 and weekly attendance of more than 400.<sup>43</sup>

Other areas of church life also were cramped by inadequate space. Office space was hardly sufficient for new staff members. The weekday early education program and children's ministry had severe space problems. Space constraints impeded the youth activities, and the mid-week family night supper group had outgrown the seating capacity of the fellowship hall. Even the bookshelves and cabinets in the Boyd Library were bulging with books and media equipment.

Faced with these space limitations, the congregation embarked on a challenging building program. In January 1988, the congregation formed a survey, planning, and building committee composed of a chair, vice chair, secretary, and six sub-committees for church growth, programs, furnishings, finance, plans, and construction. Elected to serve were Carroll McLawhorn, chair; Bruce Thompson, vice chair; and Phyliss Broughton, secretary. Sub-committee chairs included Sherrill Duncan, church growth; Fred Lilley, programs; Barry Chesson, furnishings; Eugene Prescott, finance; Leon Worrell, plans; and David Gordon, construction. With the charge "to study and make recommendations for future building expansion," the committee with a full complement of sub-committee members concluded after two years of study that "all areas of church life from children through senior adults had shown a need for ex-

pansion.”<sup>44</sup>

With the need to expand substantiated, the church authorized the survey, planning, and building committee to develop building plans by the end of 1990. In mid-July of that year, the committee submitted a two-phase master plan. The first phase called for a children’s wing and the renovation and expansion of the pulpit and choir loft at an approximate cost of \$1.2 million. Phase two consisted of the addition of new administrative offices, fellowship hall and kitchen as well as the renovation of the educational building to include a music suite and library. The cost approximated \$800,000. In church conference, the congregation accepted the master plan and approved the committee’s recommendation to begin phase one of the expansion. The church also agreed to proceed with both phases concurrently if funds pledged in a three-year capital stewardship campaign were sufficient to limit building indebtedness to one million dollars.<sup>45</sup>

An estimated two-million-dollar building project was a big challenge for The Memorial Baptist Church in the sunset decade of the twentieth century. However, it was an opportunity, even an obligation, for the congregation to carry the church’s rich heritage of always building for the future into the twenty-first century. To meet the challenge before the church, the congregation retained Resource Services, Inc., of Dallas, Texas, for counsel and training on how to plan and carry out a major capital stewardship campaign. Peter McLeod of Resource Services came to Greenville as the on-site consultant. To get started, the church developed a title, logo, theme, and steering committee for the campaign called Forward by Faith. The logo depicted the words of the title tilted forward to represent the stretching required of the congregation over the three-year period to meet the goal of the campaign. The theme “Not Equal Gifts, but Equal Sacrifice” was grounded on the bedrock principle of proportionate giving. Contributions would, of course, vary according to one’s means, but members would be expected to endure a common level of sacrifice. Appointed in December 1990, the steering committee for the three-year Forward by Faith program consisted of E. T. Vinson, senior pastor; Eugene Prescott, campaign director; Gay Israel, promotion director; John Artois, audiovisual director; Jim Pleasants and Hugh Wease, commitment directors; Bill Brown, advance commitment director; Richard Rawl and Tommy Little, spiritual emphasis directors; Jennie Powers and Bonnie Porter, hospitality directors; and Sylvia Brown, banquet director. In early January 1991, consultant Peter McLeod conducted a six-weeks training course for the steering committee and workers, which was followed by in-



formation visits in the homes of church families. An intensive communication blitz culminated with a church-wide banquet and multimedia presentation on April 21 at the Hilton Inn in Greenville. Nearly 360 members attended the inspirational event, at which time Bill Brown, the advance commitment director, announced that 20 percent of the church members had pledged \$536,000. This amount exceeded the leadership goal of \$500,000. Two weeks later on May 5, 1991, Victory Sunday was a day of celebration as the congregation gathered and reveled in the victory of the commitment program.<sup>46</sup>

The positive response to the sacrificial three-year commitment to the Forward by Faith campaign enabled the congregation to undertake the entire building project. Dropped from the master plan, however, was the renovation of the sanctuary and choir loft. On August 18, 1991, groundbreaking ceremonies took place following the morning worship service and, shortly thereafter, the membership and friends enjoyed "dinner on the grounds." For three years, the journey on the road of expansion had been marked by surveying, reporting, and planning. Now, the journey had reached the construction site. It was time to build the children's wing, the fellowship hall and kitchen, and office suite and to convert the old fellowship hall, kitchen, and nursery into a music suite and the old offices and music room into the J. H. Boyd Library. In mid-October C. A. Lewis, the general contractor, began to put bricks and mortar to the architectural plans of W. T. Bayer and Associates. During the eleven-month period of construction, the congregation continued to use the sanctuary, major parts of the educational wing, and the modular units with minimal disruptions. When completed in late summer 1992 at a cost of approximately \$1.5 million, the congregation gathered in the fellowship hall following the morning worship service on September 27, 1992, for the service of dedication. Rev. E. T. Vinson, in the fifteenth year of his pastoral service to Memorial, presented the dedicatory remarks, led the congregation in the litany of dedication, and offered the prayer of dedication. The choir rendered the hymn, "Surely the Lord Is in This Place," as the choir had done nineteen years earlier at the first worship service held in the new sanctuary. After the celebration of dedication, Memorial's members and friends remained for the homecoming festivities. C. A. Lewis provided the meal. The Forward by Faith campaign and building expansion program were significant markings on Memorial's journey of faith toward the twenty-first century.<sup>47</sup>

Concurrently with the expansion of facilities, the church enlarged its



staff of full-time professional ministers. As noted earlier, the congregation employed Randall Bayne as the full-time minister of music and children. When he began his employment in January 1990, the position of minister of education and youth was vacant. In October 1989, Rev. "Rick" Bailey had resigned from the position to become youth minister at Pritchard Memorial Baptist Church in Charlotte. Through God's leadership, Mr. Bailey returned to Memorial as minister of education and youth in April 1990. As a result, The Memorial Baptist Church had three full-time professional ministers for the first time in its history.<sup>48</sup>

The three-member team of ministers began the 1990s with a strong sense of optimism and excitement. The senior pastor wrote, "The new excitement and enthusiasm in our music ministry is ushering in a new day." Under the leadership of Rev. Bailey, Sunday School attendance climbed and hovered around the 400 mark. Also, the church profile for 1991 showed eighty-six additions to the membership roll. These successes, combined with the energy and united effort devoted to the building program, bespoke a productive and pleasant journey through the last decade of the twentieth century.

However, the unity of spirit and sense of achievement during the first third of the 1990s quickly succumbed to divisive discord. The first public display of disruptive conflict occurred in a special church conference called to discuss the proposed budget for 1994. A deacon elected for the first time to the diaconate only two months earlier openly declared that "it was time for the senior pastor to move on." The group that was dissatisfied with the senior pastor had coalesced around the minister of music. The senior pastor also had a core group of supporters in the congregation. This unfortunate conflict, albeit larger in scope than the two ministers, was viewed primarily as a staffing problem. The deacons, therefore, intervened to resolve the conflict and restore harmony. In June 1994, the congregation observed a reconciliation Sunday. Later, a mediation team made up of active and inactive deacons met with the ministers on a weekly basis, and the director of the Center of Congregational Health at the North Carolina Baptist Hospital in Winston-Salem provided counsel on several occasions. These efforts, however, failed to resolve the conflict. In conference on April 26, 1995, the church brought resolution to the conflict between the two ministers. The congregation approved October 1, 1995, as the date of resignation for the minister of music, with the stipulation that he could resign earlier. The church also accepted the senior pastor's retirement of January 26, 1996. The last day of service for the minister of music and children was July 9, 1995. On Sunday, October 1,

1995, Rev. E. T. Vinson delivered his last sermon as senior pastor of The Memorial Baptist Church and retired from the “active pastoral ministry” on that date. In his departure from the pulpit, he intoned, “I have given you the very best years of my earthly journey. I came to you knowing it was God’s will. I have served you knowing it to be His will, and I retire from this place of leadership with the same conviction. I love you, and I love this church. Both will always be in my prayers, thoughts, and concerns . . . I will always be your friend. May the Good Lord bless you . . . as we continue the journey.”<sup>49</sup>

That journey began for E. T. Vinson when he heard God’s call to proclaim the Good News as a senior in high school. In response to the call, he prepared for the ministry and pastored Baptist churches in eastern North Carolina for forty-two years. The last eighteen years of his pastoral ministry were in The Memorial Baptist Church. The Baptist denomination that claimed E. T.’s loyalty in the early 1950s changed through the five decades of his pastorates. Denominational loyalties and identities were, for example, no longer as strong and binding as they were at mid-passage of the twentieth century. The struggle for control of the Southern Baptist Convention between the “moderates” and “conservatives” during the last quarter of the century was a concern of Baptist people, including Rev. Vinson, who feared for the unity of the convention and its kindred fellowship. Specifically, Memorial’s minister eschewed the use of labels to characterize Baptists and to categorize them. He also opted for a non-involvement policy when the fallout from the political activity at the convention level began to be felt in the state convention and local church. Avoidance of the politics of the annual conventions, however, did not suggest in any way that he took basic Baptist principles lightly. He held firmly to the bedrock Baptist beliefs of the priesthood of the believer and the autonomy of the local church under the lordship of Christ. Rev. E. T. Vinson left a rich legacy for The Memorial Baptist Church. His tenure as pastor of the oldest Baptist congregation in Greenville is the longest of all the pastors who have held the pulpit during the church’s 175 years of ministry. The happiest moments of his pastoral career were the times in the pulpit. As pastor, he built up the congregation by challenging Memorial’s family of faith “to begin again.” The members responded to that call with growth in every area of church life. He also led the church family to build new facilities for Memorial’s children of the twenty-first century. And the members, like the cloud of witnesses who built church facilities for their Memorial Baptist children, responded to that visionary leadership. Rev. E. T. Vinson’s larger and more lasting

legacy is, no doubt, the calling from God that he received and the calling from God that he fulfilled. That calling fulfilled with its longest and last chapter in The Memorial Baptist Church is a significant marking on Memorial's journey of faith.<sup>50</sup>

### **Church Calls Anthony Gurganus as Interim Pastor**

For the period between the retirement of the senior minister and the call of the new pastor, The Memorial Baptist Church decided to use the intentional interim ministry. Designed as a process, the plan provides a way for congregations to use the interim time to address salient tasks in the life of the church before the arrival of the new pastor. These tasks are to study the church's history in order to give perspective to the work of the former pastor and to allow for healing of any sensed "tension and grief"; to develop a new identity; to examine leadership and decision-making in the church; to clarify denominational relationships; and to make a commitment to new pastoral leadership. This developmental process appeared to be tailor-made to meet the needs and circumstances of Memorial as the congregation prepared to enter the third century of ministry in Greenville. In October 1995, the congregation adopted the plan and formed an intentional interim search committee headed by Jim Pleasants. Other members on the committee were Jackie Bond, Sylvia Brown, Todd Rouse, Pat Stansell, Hugh Wease and Eugene Prescott, representing the stewardship committee; Tommy Little, chair of the diaconate; and Rev. "Rick" Bailey, minister of education and youth. Upon recommendation of this committee, the church extended a call to Rev. Anthony "Tony" Gurganus to lead the congregation through the intentional interim process.<sup>51</sup>

A graduate of Wake Forest College (now University) and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Rev. Gurganus was an experienced minister, who had pastored Baptist churches in North Carolina for 41 years. In 1993, he left the pastoral office of the local church to work as a full-time intentional interim pastor. He heard God's call to enter this special ministry and, as a result, he earned certification in interim ministry at Alban Institute. Rev. Gurganus held intentional interim pastorates at Spilman Memorial Baptist Church in Kinston, North Carolina, and Beulah Baptist Church, Lynchburg, Virginia, before coming to Memorial.

On April 1, 1996, Tony, as he was fondly known, arrived at the church to lead the congregation through the intentional interim process and to serve as senior pastor with responsibilities for the Sunday morning worship service, the Wednesday night prayer meeting, administration of the



two ordinances, visitation of church members in crisis, and other duties performed by the senior minister of a Baptist church.<sup>52</sup>

In the interim time, Rev. Gurganus also led the congregation in the formation of a transition committee and guided the group through the essential tasks of the intentional interim process. Elected to serve on the committee were Bill Brown, Richard Brown (who resigned a few months after the committee began its work), Edith Davenport, Stacy Evans, Jo Ann Jones, Bill Lee, Tommy Little, Carroll McLawhorn, Richard Murphy, Jim Pleasants, Ed Porter, Eugene Prescott, Howard Robertson, Todd Rouse, Pat Stansell, Hugh Wease, and Barbara Winn. At its organizational meeting, the committee elected Howard Robertson as chair and Jim Pleasants as secretary. Five sub-committees were organized to work through the developmental tasks in the process. Upon completion of each task, the sub-committee presented a written report, which had to be approved by the full committee. In the compilation of these reports, the committee used findings of church and community surveys and the Pastor Search Inventory designed by the Hartford Seminary Center for Social and Religious Research, and information gathered at town meetings. Rev. Gurganus led a full-day conflict management seminar for the transition committee, diaconate, the church council, and other church members. This seminar led the diaconate to appoint deacon intercessors to manage incipient conflict in the church. Presentations also were made to the congregation on the significant events in the history of the church and on the multiple plans of mission giving included in the annual budget of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. After the presentation on mission giving, church members chose by secret ballot which mission plan they preferred. Tabulated results showed a cross section of support for the plans outlined in the budget of the convention. This finding along with other gleanings from the surveys and town meetings indicated the diversity of the Memorial congregation.<sup>53</sup>

In May 1997 after a year-long study, and after thirty-five meetings of the transition committee and numerous meetings of the sub-committees, the transition committee reported to the church council and diaconate and, later, to the congregation that it had completed the essential tasks outlined in the intentional interim process and recommended that a search committee be formed. The intentional interim pastor also announced to the deacons that the church was in a "maintenance mode" until the new pastor arrived.

Although no new program startups took place during the commitment to the new leadership phase of the intentional interim process, the



church did employ Mrs. Peggy Vaughan as the full-time director of music and children's activities. A native of Virginia, Peggy graduated from Phoebus High School, Hampton, Virginia, and earned the bachelor and master of music degrees at Meredith College, Raleigh, North Carolina. She is an accomplished soprano soloist and has wide experience as a director, conductor, and teacher of music. At Memorial, Peggy directs four children's choirs, the youth choir, a senior adult choir, chancel choir, and three adult vocal ensembles. She also supervises and, on occasion, directs two handbell choirs. As director of children's activities, Peggy plans, coordinates, and implements activities for Memorial's children from birth through the sixth grade.

With the green light from the transition committee and the intentional interim pastor, the church's nominating committee began to prepare a list of nominees for the pastor search committee. On June 22, 1997, the congregation elected Jim Pearce, Jim Pleasants, Eugene Prescott, Janice Rawl, Pat Stansell, and Hugh Wease as members of the committee. Beth Harman, chair of the stewardship committee, served as an *ex officio* member. At the organizational meeting, Jim Pleasants was chosen as the chair and Pat Stansell as secretary.<sup>54</sup>

As the committee searched for a new minister, Rev. Gurganus continued to serve Memorial as the intentional interim pastor. After two years in that role, he resigned for the purpose of retirement. In April 1998, the congregation called Dr. Glenn Jonas, professor of religion at Campbell University, as interim pastor with responsibilities for Sunday worship and the Wednesday night prayer meeting. He served in this capacity for ten months. Finally, the long-awaited recommendation came from the pastor search committee. In church conference on Sunday, January 10, 1999, the congregation approved the committee's recommendation and, without a dissenting vote, extended a call to Dr. Larry C. Hovis as senior pastor of The Memorial Baptist Church. He accepted the call and set March 1, 1999, as the beginning date of his pastorate at Memorial.<sup>55</sup>

Dr. Hovis, a native of Charlotte, North Carolina, attended the public schools of that city and earned the bachelor of arts degree in psychology at North Carolina State University in Raleigh. He received the master of divinity degree at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and in 1995, Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Virginia, conferred on him the doctor of ministry degree. After ordination by the University Baptist Church in Charlotte, Rev. Hovis served pastorates in Washington, Virginia; Richmond, Virginia; and Mocksville, North Carolina, before coming to Memorial.

A formal installation service for Dr. Hovis, Memorial's thirty-eighth pastor, took place on March 28, 1999, with Dr. Richard Wayne "Jack" Causey, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Statesville, North Carolina, as the speaker. Others on the program were Rev. Rick Bailey, Edwin Gray, Jim Pleasants, Dr. Glenn Jonas, Rev. Ellis Fulbright, Dr. Tony Cartledge, Laura McCoy, Dr. Janice Rawl, Todd Rouse, and Dr. Gregory Rogers. A reception for Dr. Hovis, wife Kimberly, and daughter Lauren followed in the church fellowship hall.

Within a year, the new pastor had initiated a strategic planning process called "Building Our Ministry." This new ministry plan included salient statements from earlier planning documents on the church's identity, mission, and responsibilities of members. Added to these basic statements were six core ministry values. In a weekend retreat led by Rev. James Baucom of the Rivermont Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Virginia, the congregation put together the list of core values that formed the acronym LOVING, which is the first word of the church's mission statement: "Loving God and our neighbors from Greenville to the ends of the earth." The core ministry values are:

- Life-sharing fellowship
- Outreach to the unsaved and unchurched
- Vital congregational worship
- Intentional disciple-making
- Needs-focused missions and ministry
- Gift-based stewardship

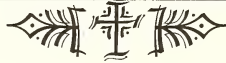
Six general ministry objectives and twenty-five specific goals and action plans evolved from the core ministry values and were approved as Memorial's new strategic ministry plan in July 2000. This plan commits the church to:

- Establish and nurture Christ-centered relationships within our congregation;
- Share the message of Christ confidently and effectively with those we encounter;
- Lead people to a deeper personal relationship with Jesus Christ by providing God-focused worship opportunities;
- Prepare God's people for growing, developing, and becoming more Christ-like;
- Offer multiple channels for giving of time, talents, and resources, both material and spiritual.

“Building Our Ministry” is Memorial’s guidepost on its journey into the twenty-first century.

Significant changes marked Memorial’s journey through the last three decades of the twentieth century. Relocation and church construction were at the top of the list. The church landscape changed from downtown to a suburban setting, and the congregation moved from a nineteenth century house of worship to a new church facility. Within two decades, the membership had to expand and renovate the 1973 building to provide space for the children and youth of the baby boomers and for growing church programs. The congregation not only increased in size but also in diversity. The church elected and ordained women deacons; sponsored a Chinese Sunday School ministry; and, by the end of the century, chose multiple plans of mission giving. The professional ministerial staff, likewise, changed in size. Full-time professional ministers had increased from one in 1970 to three in 1990. The presence of computers and photocopying machines in the church offices made typewriters and the mimeograph machine relics of the past. These changes grafted to the achievements of past congregations propelled The Memorial Baptist Church to the dawn of the twenty-first century.

## Chapter 6



# Epilogue: Pressing Toward the Mark

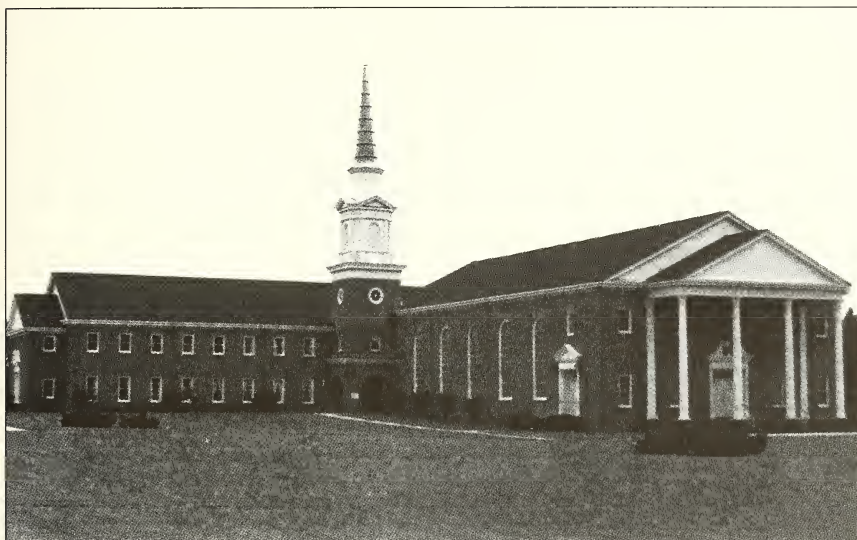
In 2002, the second year of the twenty-first century, The Memorial Baptist Church commemorated its 175th anniversary. A year-long celebration of special services and events was centered around the theme, “Marking the Journey,” with a special emphasis on honoring the past, ministering in the present world, and envisioning the future.

Indeed, much in the church’s past should be honored. Born as a missionary Baptist church in the first third of the nineteenth century in a region of strong anti-missionary sentiment and later honored as the mother church of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Memorial has remained a missions-minded church throughout its history.

An effectual preaching ministry marked Memorial’s journey of faith. Thirty-eight pastors have occupied the pulpit. In the early years, the preachers came from the ranks of itinerant missionaries in the employment of Baptist associations. These itinerants were not available every Sunday for preaching. For a short period before the Civil War, however, Memorial had a full-time preacher who held preaching services each Sunday of the month. Since the last quarter of the nineteenth century, with only a few exceptions, the preachers were well-educated, seminary-trained pastors, who were effective preachers in the pulpit.

Concern for religious education and biblical literacy of children in the mid-nineteenth century led the church to organize a Sunday School. The centerpiece of the church’s teaching ministry, the Sunday School





*View of the Memorial Baptist Church from Greenville Blvd.*

relied on lay people to provide instruction and to administer the program. By the end of the century, Memorial's Sunday School workers were actively involved in the Pitt County Sunday School Association, organized in 1890 as a forum for officers, teachers, and ministers to learn about the Sunday School system of study. Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Memorial's Sunday School produced exemplars of teaching who left an enduring legacy for the teaching ministry of the twenty-first century.

From the 1890s, the church emphasized a sophisticated and, in some instances, a varied music ministry. Staffed mostly with part-time musicians, the congregation was fortunate to have talented choir directors, organists, pianists, and, at times, instrumentalists, who built a tradition of an exemplary music ministry.

Blessed with a laity strong in faith and resolute in purpose, the small missionary Baptist church in Greenville survived periods during the nineteenth century without pastoral leadership, suffered the hardships of the Civil War, and patiently persevered through a seven-year church construction project. In the twentieth century, the congregation, with a full complement of church organizations and programs, also faced crises of schism, economic depression, global war, societal and technological change, relocation and rebuilding, and denominational and congregational conflict. Pastoral and lay leadership working within God's will led

the church through these perilous times and left Memorial with a rich heritage.

In the church's 175th anniversary year, Memorial is continuing her commitment to be a ministering body of believers. In the late summer of 2001, the church partnered with Oakmont Baptist Church for a one-day, hands-on mission blitz called Operation Inasmuch. Together, the two congregations went out into the Greenville community "to be God's hands and feet." More than 500 people ministered to neighbors in Greenville's neighborhoods on that September day. Each Wednesday women gathered at the church to knit caps and blankets for cancer patients receiving treatment at the Leo Jenkins Cancer Center as well as for patients in other healthcare facilities. Ministers and church members contributed sweat hours for the Pitt County Habitat for Humanity. Baptist Men continue their handyman ministry, and WMU organizations engage in numerous ministry projects. A well-organized benevolence program provides assistance to the needy within the local community.

On October 7, 2001, the congregation called Mr. Craig Morrison as minister of students and missions. He is a native of Harnett County in eastern North Carolina and earned the bachelor of arts degree in religion at Mars Hill College, Mars Hill, North Carolina. He will receive the master of divinity degree from the Divinity School of Campbell University in December 2002.

Envisioning the future is no small task; for a church in the present age, it is a daunting challenge. Memorial has many hopes and dreams for the future, and already the church has begun to take steps to make those dreams become reality. In early 2001, the congregation launched a three-year capital improvements campaign called "Grow God's Love." The aim is to generate sufficient funds to make interior and exterior improvements of the physical facilities, to increase the number of parking spaces, to upgrade the lighting and sound systems, and to retire the church indebtedness. Before year's end, the first fruits of Grow God's Love were a face-lift for the sanctuary, a repaired and refurbished organ, and a state-of-the-art security system. Recommendations for phase two and phase three of Grow God's Love are under study and are forthcoming. Also, the church experimented with a second worship service and will continue to explore options that will meet the needs of future congregations.

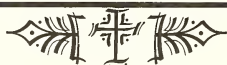
Discipleship training will be part of Memorial's future. With the calling of a full-time minister of students and missions, Rev. Rick Bailey, former minister of youth and education, will become minister of educa-

tion and discipleship development. He is now enrolled in a doctor of ministry degree program to equip him for new responsibilities.

As Memorial looks ahead to the 175th anniversary of the founding of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina in 2005, it does so with concern about the church's future relationship with the Southern Baptist Convention. A political struggle has existed in the convention for more than two decades, and while Baptists are no strangers to conflict and controversy, the exclusionary practices emanating from the *Baptist Faith and Message* as revised in 2000 are cause for concern for many Baptists. Individual churches as well as some state conventions have chosen to sever ties with the national body. This decision concerning denominational affiliation may well be one the Memorial congregation will have to face.

Regardless of difficult decisions and challenges, The Memorial Baptist Church has high aspirations for the future. A rich inheritance from the past and a strong commitment to its core ministry values as a guide for the present will enable the church to continue its journey of faith, spreading the Good News with the zeal that marked its beginning in 1827.

# Notes



## CHAPTER 1

1. William L. Saunders, ed., *The Colonial Records of North Carolina*. 11 vols. (1887; reprint, Wilmington: Broadfoot Publishing Company, 1993), 1: 600–603; 2: 131. J. D. Hufham, “The Baptists in North Carolina,” *North Carolina Baptist Historical Papers* 1, No. 3 (April 1897): 153–155.

2. George Stevens, “Paul Palmer,” *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, ed. William S. Powell (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 11. George Washington Paschal, *A History of North Carolina Baptists*, 2 vols. (Raleigh: The General Board, North Carolina Baptist State Convention, 1930), 1: 140–147.

3. Saunders, ed., *The Colonial Records of North Carolina*, 3: 48.

4. Saunders, *The Colonial Records of North Carolina*, 5: 1165. Stevens, “Paul Palmer,” *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, 5: 10. Hugh Talmage Lefler and Albert Ray Newsome, *North Carolina: The History of A Southern State*, 3rd ed. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1973), 77–78. M.A. Huggins, *A History of North Carolina Baptists, 1727–1932* (Raleigh: The General Board, Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, 1967), 40–42.

5. Paschal, *History of North Carolina Baptists*, 1: 210–211. Sidney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of The American People* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), 318.

6. Henry T. King, *Sketches of Pitt County* (1911; reprint, Greenville: Era Press, 1976), 41–45. Thomas A. Williams, ed., *A Greenville Album: The Bicentennial Book* (Greenville: Era Press, 1974), 5–6.

7. Paschal, 1: 549. Lucy Jane Mills Hart, “Red Banks Primitive Baptist Church,” *Chronicles of Pitt County–North Carolina*, executive ed., Elizabeth H. Copeland (Winston-Salem: Pitt County Historical Society, Incorporated, in cooperation with Hunter Publishing Company, 1982), 122.

8. Lemuel Burkitt and Jesse Read, *A Concise History of The Kehukee Baptist Association From Its Original Rise Down to 1803*, revised and improved edition, Henry L. Burkitt (1803; reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1980), 216–226.

9. Michael R. Pelt, *A History of Original Free Will Baptists* (Mount Olive, NC: Mount Olive College Press, 1996), 53; 102–107. Mrs. Eugene James wrote that the original church was established in the late 1750s and that the “founder of the church was proba-



bly William Parker," a relative of Joseph Parker. Both Parkers provided pastoral work for the Gum Swamp congregation. Mrs. Eugene James, "Gum Swamp Free Will Baptist Church," *Chronicles of Pitt County*, 130.

10. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of The American People*, 318–320.

11. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of The American People*, 330.

12. Huggins, *A History of North Carolina Baptists*, 74.

13. Robert M. Calhoun, *Religion and The American Revolution in North Carolina* (Raleigh, NC: Department of Cultural Resources, Division of Archives and History, 1976), 52.

14. Burkitt and Read, *A Concise History of The Kehukee Baptist Association from Its Original Rise Down to 1803*, 45.

15. Cushing Biggs Hassell and Sylvester Hassell, *History of The Church of God, From The Creation to A.D. 1885* (1886; reprint, Conley, GA: Old School Hymnal Co., Inc., 1973), 710–713.

16. John Asplund, *The Universal Register of The Baptist Denomination in North America for the Years 1790, 1791, 1792, 1793, and Part of 1794* (Reprint; New York: Arno Press, 1980).

17. Hassell and Hassell, *History of The Church of God*, 713

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1. Burkitt and Read, *Concise History of The Kehukee Baptist Association*, 145.

2. David Benedict, *A General History of The Baptist Denomination in America and Other Parts of the World*, 2 vols. (1813; reprint, New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1971), 2: 524–528.

3. H. Frederick Jones, "History of The Memorial Baptist Church of Greenville," "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church, 2 Nov. 1927. [This paper was presented by Pastor Jones at the Centennial of The Memorial Baptist Church celebrated on October 23, 1927.]

4. Book HH, *Pitt County Records*, 98. A statement in the deed transferring a half acre lot from Joseph B. Judkins to Reading S. Blount, a trustee of the church, for \$50 records that the church was constituted on July 2, 1827.

5. *Minutes of The Neuse Baptist Association*, 1827, 4.

6. *Ibid.*, 1827–1843.

7. *Ibid.*, 1828, 1829.

8. *Ibid.*, 1830, 1833.

9. "North Carolina Baptist Benevolent Society." *North Carolina Baptist Historical Papers* 1, no. 2 (January 1897): 126–129.

10. *Ibid.*, 127, 128.

11. *Proceedings of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina* (New Bern, NC: John I. Pasteur, 1830), 18–20. Thomas Pittman, "The Event and Its Personnel," *The Growth of 100 Years* (Raleigh: The General Board of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, 1930), 29.

12. *Minutes of the Neuse Baptist Association*, 1827–1830, 1833.

13. *Biblical Recorder*, 14 Oct. 1835: 3; 14 June 1837: 1; 16 March 1839: 3; 24 Aug. 1839: 3.

14. J. D. Hufham, "Notes, Queries, and Criticisms," *North Carolina Baptist Historical Papers* 3. No. 2 (April 1899): 115.

15. *Biblical Recorder*, 16 June 1838.

16. *Minutes of the Neuse Baptist Association*, 1837, 1838.

17. Pittman, *The Growth of 100 Years*, 33.
18. *Minutes of the Union Baptist Association*, 1844, 12. The Union Association was formed in 1843 with churches from the Goshen and Neuse Baptist Associations including the Greenville Baptist Church.
19. *Ibid.*, 1851, 11.
20. *Ibid.*, 1847, 14–15.
21. *Minutes of the Neuse Baptist Association*, 1835–1839. *Minutes of the Union Baptist Association*, 1844–1851. See also Benedict, *A General History of the Baptist Denomination*, 2: 93–94.
22. *Minutes of the Neuse Baptist Association*, 1827–1842. *Minutes of the Union Baptist Association*. 1844, 1847, 1851. The Greenville Baptist Church did not send delegates or letters to the meetings of the Union Baptist Association for the years 1845, 1846, 1848, 1849, and 1850.
23. *Minutes of the Neuse Baptist Association*, 1831–1842. *Minutes of the Pamlico Baptist Association*, 1852–1865. “Minutes of the Greenville Baptist Church,” 2 Oct. 1869: 13.
24. *Minutes of the Neuse Baptist Association*, 1831, 1833–1835.
25. *Book HH, Pitt County Records*, 98.
26. *Minutes of the Neuse Baptist Association*, 1837, 4.
27. The description of the first church building was found in a brief chronology of events in the history of The Memorial Baptist Church. Church records, n.d. David Benedict, *Fifty Years Among The Baptists* (1860; reprint, Little Rock, Arkansas: Seminary Publications, 1997), 70–74.
28. *Minutes of the Pamlico Baptist Association*, Tables, 1852–1860.
29. John Spencer Bassett, *Slavery in the State of North Carolina* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1899), A: 52, 56.
30. *Proceedings of the Thirty-Sixth Annual Session of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina* (Raleigh: Biblical Recorder Book and Job Printing Establishment, 1866), 19.
31. Rev. J. A. Whitted, *A History of the Negro Baptists of North Carolina* (Raleigh: Presses of Edwards and Broughton Printing Co., 1908), 15.
32. John L. Bell, Jr., “Baptists and the Negro in North Carolina During Reconstruction,” *North Carolina Historical Review*, 42, no. 4 (Autumn, 1965), 400–402.
33. “Minutes of the Greenville Baptist Church,” 8 June 1867: 1–2.
34. *Minutes of the Pamlico Baptist Association*, 1865, 1867. Apparently, the church did not file a report with the Pamlico Baptist Association in 1866.
35. “Minutes of the Greenville Baptist Church,” 14 March 1868: 5; 4 April 1869: 10; 1 May 1869: 11.
36. *Minutes of the Pamlico Baptist Association*, 1860, 1870.
37. Thomas A. Williams, ed. *A Greenville Album* (Greenville, NC: ERA Press, 1974), 13.
38. *Minutes of the Tar River Baptist Association*, 1880.
39. *Minutes of the Pamlico Baptist Association*, 1865; 1869. *Minutes of the Tar River Baptist Association*, 1877.
40. *Minutes of the Pamlico Baptist Association*, 1861–1865. “Minutes of the Greenville Baptist Church,” 7 June 1867: 1. Three ministers examined and ordained Mr. Wallace on the third Saturday and Sunday, July 1867. *Ibid.*, 2.
41. *Ibid.*, 17.
42. *Proceedings of the Baptist State Convention*, 1859, 15. “Minutes of the Greenville Baptist Church,” 27 Sep. 1873: 20.

43. "Minutes of the Greenville Baptist Church," 18 May 1875: 28; 11 May 1876: 32.
44. *Ibid.*, June 11, 24, July 12, Aug. 1, Aug. 29, 1876.
45. Huggins, *A History of North Carolina Baptists*, 178

## CHAPTER 3

1. Williams, *A Greenville Album*, 14.
2. *Enterprise* [High Point, North Carolina], 8 Jan. 1961. Thomas Carrick's son, Dr. D. B. Carrick, told the staff reporter that the seminary moved after his father's graduation.
3. *Biblical Recorder*, 26 April 1876. *Enterprise*, 8 Jan. 1961.
4. "Minutes of the Greenville Baptist Church," 26 Feb. 1878: 41.
5. Thomas Carrick, "Sermons," MS, Greenville, NC, Feb. 26, 1882, Thomas Carrick Papers, Ethel Taylor Crittenden Collection in Baptist History, Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, NC, Box 1, pp. 175–186.
6. "Minutes of the Greenville Baptist Church," 29 Jan. 1878: 40.
7. *Minutes of the Tar River Baptist Association, 1877–1886*. "Minutes of the Greenville Baptist Church," 21 Apr. 1878: 42; 5 May 1886: 87; 1 July 1885: 81; 1 Feb. 1881: 57.
8. *Minutes of the Neuse, Union, Pamlico, and Tar River Baptist Associations, 1827–1900*.
9. Henry S. Stroupe, "Cite Them Both to Attend the Next Church Conference: Social Control by North Carolina Baptist Churches, 1772–1908," *The North Carolina Historical Review* LII, no. 2 (Apr. 1975): 170. See "Rules and Covenant," art. VII, Memorial Baptist Church, 1920, for the code on church discipline in the early twentieth century.
10. *Minutes of the Tar River Baptist Association, Tables, 1877–1900*.
11. Williams, *A Greenville Album*, 13.
12. *Eastern Reflector*, [Greenville], 16 Dec. 1885: 3. "Minutes of the Greenville Baptist Church, Dec. 1885: 83.
13. *Minutes of the Tar River Baptist Association, "Sabbath School Tables," 1877–1900*.
14. *Daily Reflector*, [Greenville], 5 Jan. 1902: 1. *Ibid.*, 1881–1901. *Eastern Reflector* [Greenville], 23 July 1884: 3; 1 Nov. 1893: 2.
15. *Eastern Reflector*, [Greenville], 25 Feb. 1885: 3; 1 Apr. 1885: 3; 6 May 1885: 3. Mrs. O'Hagan, the wife of nationally known physician E. L. O'Hagan, taught class number four consisting of Nellie Godwin, Ella King, Manda Williams, Lillie Cherry, Jennie James, Roy Flanagan, Clarence Whichard, and Sammie White. Professor Ragsdale, Principal of the Male Academy, instructed class number 2, and Bettie Sutton taught class number six.
16. *Ibid.*, 1 July 1891: 3.
17. The newspaper reported that in two Sundays the Sunday School raised more than \$50 to purchase a new library. *Eastern Reflector*, 28 Apr. 1886: 3. One year later the paper noted that new songbooks for the Sunday School had improved the singing in the school and church. *Eastern Reflector*, 16 Oct. 1887: 3. In 1890, the newspaper reported that "little Loula White has a splendid talent for music . . . and frequently presides as organist for the Baptist Sunday School." *Eastern Reflector*, 23 Apr. 1890: 3. James Fleming, Jr., *Friends and Neighbors* (Greenville, NC: Williams & Simpson, Publishers, n.d.), 7.
18. Greenville's leading citizen, former governor, diplomat, and statesman Thomas Jarvis was elected as the first president of the Pitt County Sunday School Association, and D. J. Whichard served as the secretary. *Eastern Reflector*, 26 Feb. 1890: 3. In 1892, Mr. Whichard, a member of The Memorial Baptist Church, served as president and presided at the third annual convention. *Eastern Reflector*, 2 Mar. 1892: 3.

19. *Ibid.*, 18 July 1886: 3.

20. *Ibid.*, 11 July 1894: 3.

21. *Ibid.*, 26 Feb. 1890: 3.

22. "Minutes of the Greenville Baptist Church," 29 Dec. 1881: 62.

23. *Eastern Reflector*, 30 Aug. 1882: 3. Mr. Jones, a contractor, who was building stores for the T. R. Cherry and Company, did the drawing. "Minutes of the Greenville Baptist Church," 28 Feb. 1883: 67. *Eastern Reflector*, 18 June 1884: 3.

24. "Minutes of the Greenville Baptist Church," 2 May 1883: 68. *Eastern Reflector*, 6 June 1883: 3; 30 Jan. 1884: 2; 12 Mar. 1884: 2. On occasion, construction did stop. Late in November 1887, Editor Whichard notified his readers that work had resumed on the church building, which he hoped would be "entirely completed at no far distant day." *Eastern Reflector*, 23 Nov. 1887: 3; 18 June 1884: 3.

25. *Minutes of the Fifty-second Annual Convention Meeting of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina* (Raleigh: Edwards, Broughton & Company, Steam Printers and Binders, 1882), 27.

26. *Ibid.*, 1884, 41.

27. *Ibid.*, 1886, 38.

28. Noah Biggs of Scotland Neck had advanced a large sum of money so construction of the Memorial Church would go forward. The principal and interest amounted to \$5000. *Ibid.*, 1885, 32-33. The prevailing view was that the debt must be paid by the Convention because "our brethren in Greenville . . . were encouraged to hope for aid from their brethren throughout the state." Some, however, believed that it had been a mistake for the convention to endorse the erection of the Memorial Church and thus become morally bound for any indebtedness incurred in its construction. *Ibid. Biblical Recorder*, 54 (Nov., 1888), 2. For the amount of the pledge and collection made at the 1888 Baptist State Convention for the debt retirement of the Memorial Church, see the *Eastern Reflector*, 21 Nov. 1888: 3; 19 Dec. 1888: 2.

29. The Brick Book Collection was a plan for donors to pay for bricks used in the construction of the church building. The Brick Book receipts were frequently reported in the *Biblical Recorder*. For example, see *Biblical Recorder*, 54 (Nov. 28, 1888) 3; 19 Dec. 1888: 2.

30. *Eastern Reflector*, 3 Apr. 1889: 3.

31. *Ibid.*, 8 Oct. 1890: 3. At the dedication ceremony of the church on Oct. 12, 1890, Dr. J. D. Hufham put the total cost of the church at nearly \$13,000 with "\$7,000 raised in and around Greenville." *Ibid.*, 15 Oct. 1890: 3. The church's parsonage on Greene Street was sold for \$1,050 to help pay for the new church, and the Hunters moved to the Morrill house on Dickinson Avenue. *Ibid.*, 26 Mar. 1890: 3; 7 May 1890: 3.

32. *Ibid.*, 15 Oct. 1890: 2.

33. *Ibid.*, 15 Oct. 1890: 2. The Tar River Baptist Association responded to pleas for financial help to complete the construction of the church. In 1887, the association, for example, pledged \$1,200 toward construction of the church. *Minutes of the Tar River Baptist Association*, 1887, 15.

34. *Biblical Recorder*, 56, Nov. 10, 1886. Mr. Carrick continued to preach at the Pactolus Baptist Church until Apr. 10, 1887, when he resigned after seven years as minister. He filled the pulpit in Pactolus on the Sundays when preaching services were not held in his church in Greenville. Cited in John Neal Tolson, "A History of The Memorial Baptist Church," (Unpublished M. A. Thesis, East Carolina University. 1966). 48.

35. *Eastern Reflector*, 5 Jan. 1887: 3; 27 Apr. 1887: 2; 14 July 1886: 3; 4 July 1883: 3; 14 Feb. 1883: 3.



36. *Ibid.*, 30 May 1888: 3; 17 Aug. 1887: 3; 15 June 1887: 3.
37. *Ibid.*, 19 Dec. 1888: 1. In Apr. 1888, Dr. John G. James, a dentist and owner of the Macon House (Hotel) and described by Editor Whichard as a "shining light" in the Baptist Church, died. James, no doubt, was one of the four deaths lamented by Pastor Wildman. *Ibid.*, 11 Apr. 1888: 3; 1 Feb. 1888: 3; 21 Mar. 1888: 3.
38. Tolson, "A History of The Memorial Baptist Church," 54. *Eastern Reflector*, 7 May 1890: 3.
39. *Eastern Reflector*, 21 May 1890: 1.
40. *Ibid.*, 22 June 1890: 4. Tolson, "A History of The Memorial Baptist Church," 55.
41. *Eastern Reflector*, 22 Apr. 1891: 2.
42. *Ibid.*, 17 Dec. 1890: 3; 5 Aug. 1891: 3.
43. *Ibid.*, 4 Jan. 1893: 3, 2. In preparation for the move to Carrsville, Virginia, A. D. Hunter ran the following notice in the *Eastern Reflector*: "As I am going to move soon, I offer for sale a good pony of heavy weight, also a buggy, road cart, single wagon, and some furniture, such as wardrobes and bureaus." *Ibid.*, 21 Dec. 1892: 3.
44. *Daily Reflector*, [Greenville], 3 June 1899: 1. The *Daily Reflector* reported that Rev. Lambeth accepted a call to Mount Airy, North Carolina, when he left Greenville. 26 Dec. 1894: 3. However, Thomas J. Taylor noted that Mr. Lambeth moved to Person County, North Carolina. *A History of the Tar River Baptist Association, 1830-1921* (Published by order of the Association, n.d.), 271. Dr. Spilman had an occasion to write D. J. Whichard on Oct. 27, 1919, to give him biographical information to be used at the 1919 Baptist State Convention of North Carolina at which time Mr. Whichard was to present Dr. Spilman with a gavel made from a piece of timber taken from the site on which was located the Greenville Baptist Church, the place the Baptist State Convention was organized in 1830. Mr. Jack Whichard, grandson of D. J. Whichard, gave a photocopy of Dr. Spilman's letter to the author.
45. Taylor, *Tar River Association*, 202. *Eastern Reflector*, 13 Mar. 1895: 3. Tolson, "A History of The Memorial Baptist Church," 59. *Eastern Reflector*, 14 Jan. 1896: 1.
46. *Daily Reflector*, 16 Jan. 1896: 4. In 1866, church records were destroyed when fire burned the home of church clerk David Lawrence, father of Lewis.
47. *Ibid.*, 17 Feb. 1896.
48. *Ibid.*, 17 Feb. 1896: 4; 19 Mar. 1896: 1; 13 July 1896: 5; 5 Sept. 1896: 4; 19 Sept. 1896: 4; 22 Feb. 1897: 4; 31 Mar. 1897: 4.
49. *Ibid.*, 7 Jan. 1898.
50. Taylor, *A History of the Tar River Baptist Association*, 306. *Daily Reflector*, 5 Aug. 1898: 1; 20 June 1898: 1; 22 June 1898: 4; 3 Oct. 1898: 1.
51. *Daily Reflector*, 9 Dec. 1898: 4; 1 Oct. 1898: 1.
52. *Ibid.*, 9 Dec 1898: 1-2. Huggins, *A History of North Carolina Baptists*, 252-253.
53. *Biblical Recorder*, 64 (December 19, 1898), 3.
54. *Daily Reflector*, 12 June 1899: 4; 28 June 1899: 1; 11 Jan. 1900: 1.
55. Taylor, *History of the Tar River Baptist Association*, 205.
56. *Daily Reflector*, 16 Feb. 1903: 4; 6 Oct. 1900: 3. The author was unable to find any copies of the church newsletter.
57. *Ibid.*, 4 June 1900: 4; 26 Sept. 1901: 4.
58. *Ibid.*, 9 Sept. 1901: 4; 13 Feb. 1903: 1.
59. *Minutes of the Tar River Baptist Association*, 1900, 34-35; 1901, 26-27; 1902, 33-34. *Daily Reflector*, 20 Mar. 1901: 1; 2 Apr. 1903: 1; 27 Apr. 1903: 1.
60. *Daily Reflector*, 6 July 1903: 1; 4 Jan. 1904: 1; 29 July 1903: 1; 10 Nov. 1903: 1.
61. *Ibid.*, 20 Feb. 1904: 1.

62. *Minutes of the Tar River Baptist Association*, 1904, 24. *Daily Reflector* 28 Feb. 1905: 1; 1 May 1905: 1.
63. Taylor, *History of the Tar River Baptist Association*, 193–194.
64. *Daily Reflector*, 15 Feb. 1906: 1; 2 Apr. 1906: 1.
65. *Ibid.*, 8 Apr. 1907: 1; 23 Mar. 1908: 1.
66. *Ibid.*, 23 May 1908: 1.
67. *Minutes of the Tar River Baptist Association*, Tables, 1906, 1907. *Minutes of the Roanoke Baptist Association*, Tables, 1908, 29. Taylor, *A History of the Tar River Baptist Association*, 194.
68. These ministers were listed in the *Daily Reflector* through the summer and fall months, 1908.
69. *Minutes of the Roanoke Baptist Association*, 1909, 12. *Daily Reflector*, 11 Jan. 1909: 1.
70. *Minutes of the Roanoke Baptist Association*, 1909, 29. *Daily Reflector*, 11 Mar. 1909: 1.
71. *Daily Reflector*, 6 Jan. 1910: 1; 25 Sept. 1910: 1.
72. *Ibid.*, 6 May 1907: 1.
73. *Ibid.*, 26 Apr. 1909: 1.
74. *Ibid.*, 29 Dec. 1910: 3; 20 Sept. 1909: 1. *Minutes of the Roanoke Baptist Association*, 1910, Sunday School Table.
75. *Eastern Reflector*, 7 Apr. 1886: 3. *Minutes of the Tar River Baptist Association*, 1907, 38.
76. *Daily Reflector*, 15 Oct. 1908: 1.
77. *Ibid.*, 9 Dec. 1898: 4.
78. *Minutes Tar River Baptist Association*, 1903, 1905, 1906, 1907. No report was submitted for 1904.
79. *Eastern Reflector*, 6 June 1888: 3. *Daily Reflector*, 20 Sept. 1900: 1.
80. *Daily Reflector*, 18 Sept. 1903: 1; 16 Sept. 1907: 1.
81. Robert Nash, "Baptist Young People's Union," *Dictionary of Baptists in America*, ed. Bill J. Leonard. (Downers Grove: Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 53. *Daily Reflector*, 4 Oct. 1897: 1.
82. *Daily Reflector*, 2 Feb. 1898: 1.
83. Minutes of church conferences from June 1867 to May 1886 showed that women served on the church yard cleaning committee, which had the responsibility for superintending the cleanup of the church yard. The Ladies Aid Society assumed the job by the 1890s. The date the society was organized cannot be verified, but it appears that the society was formed before May 1889. The *Eastern Reflector* and later the *Daily Reflector* reported on the work of the society during the 1890s.
84. "Minutes of the Ladies Aid Society," 1903–1907.
85. *Daily Reflector*, 30 Jan 1906: 3.
86. *Ibid.*, 20 Nov. 1905: 1.
87. *Ibid.*, 21 Mar. 1905: 1.
88. Minutes of the Ladies Aid Society," 1903–1907. *Daily Reflector*. 15 May 1905.
89. *Daily Reflector*, 4 Dec. 1906: 1; 5 Dec. 1906: 1; 6 Dec. 1906: 1.
90. *Ibid.*, 8 June 1908: 1; 19 Oct. 1908: 1.
91. Josephus Daniels, "Model Town of East Carolina," *News and Observer* [Raleigh] *Daily Reflector*, 5 Jan. 1909: 1. *Daily Reflector*, 10 Dec. 1909: 2.
92. *Ibid.*, 20 July 1907: 2.
93. Henry T. King, *Sketches of Pitt County* (1911; reprint, Greenville, NC: Era Press,

1976), 199. Mary Jo Bratton, *East Carolina University: The Formative Years, 1907–1982* (Greenville, NC: East Carolina University Alumni Association, 1986); 37, 89. *Minutes of the Roanoke Baptist Association*, 1909.

## CHAPTER 4

1. *Daily Reflector*, 3 June 1909.
2. *Ibid.*, 24 Feb. 1911: 1. *Biblical Recorder*, 17 Mar. 1915: 6.
3. *Biblical Recorder*, 5 Apr. 1911: 7.
4. *Daily Reflector*, 24 July 1911: 3; 3 Oct. 1912: 3; 13 Jan. 1915: 3.
5. *Ibid.*, 26 June 1911: 1.
6. *Ibid.*, 27 July 1912: 1.
7. *Ibid.*, 10 June 1912: 3.
8. *Ibid.*, 4–22 Nov. 1911.
9. *Ibid.*, 27 Nov. 1911: 1.
10. *Ibid.*, 29 Jan. 1912: 3; 4 Mar. 1912: 3.
11. *Ibid.*, 15 June 1912: 5; 20 June: 1912: 1; 21 June 1912: 1.
12. *Ibid.*, 27 Apr. 1912: 5; 30 Sept. 1912: 1.
13. *Ibid.*, 17 June 1912: 1; 25 Nov. 1912: 3.
14. *Minutes of the Roanoke Baptist Association*, 1914:1. Tolson, *A History of The Memorial Baptist Church*, 73.
15. *Ibid.*, 1909–1913. Mrs. Maggie Stroud, interview with author, 6 Aug. 1982. Mrs. Stroud joined The Memorial Baptist Church in 1913, when she moved to Greenville with her husband from Kinston, North Carolina. Tolson, *A History of The Memorial Baptist Church*, 74.
16. Tolson, *A History of The Memorial Baptist Church*, 74–75.
17. Elizabeth Bridgers Wilkerson, “Immanuel Baptist Church: History Talk,” 85<sup>th</sup> Church Birthday Celebration. Greenville: 23 Apr. 2000. Mrs. Wilkerson noted that on Sunday morning, Mar. 16, 1915, when the group of thirty-seven departing members came to Memorial to ask for their letters, the church clerk met them at the door and presented the letters.
18. *Minutes of The Roanoke Baptist Association*, 1914, 1915–1924. See tables.
19. Mr. Rock accepted a call to a church in Biltmore near Asheville, NC. He later moved to Arizona and, for many years, served as pastor of the First Baptist Church of Phoenix. The author is indebted to John L. Humber for the information on C. M. Rock’s pastoral work in Arizona. *Biblical Recorder*, 17 Mar. 1915: 7; 28 July 1915: 7.
20. *Biblical Recorder*, 2 June 1915: 7.
21. *Daily Reflector*, 20 Apr. 1920: 1; 1 May 1920: 1.
22. *Ibid.*, 22 Mar. 1920: 1. Williams, *A Greenville Album*, 28.
23. *Ibid.*, 22 Mar. 1920: 1. Huggins, *A History of North Carolina Baptists*: 342–343. When the Board of Trustees of Chowan College considered moving the school to a new location, The Memorial Baptist Church passed a resolution in support of bringing the college to Greenville. D. J. Whichard, Dr. C. J. Ellen, and J. C. Tyson were appointed to a committee to work with the Greenville Chamber of Commerce to bring about the move. *Daily Reflector*, 5 Jan. 1920.
24. Huggins, *A History of North Carolina Baptists*, 344. Robert A. Baker, *A Baptist Source Book* (Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman Press, 1966): 192–194.
25. *Daily Reflector*, 15 Sept. 1919: 1. *Biblical Recorder*, 19 May 1920: 2. Baker, *A Baptist Source Book*, 193. *Annual Baptist State Convention of North Carolina*, 1920–1924.

Huggins, A History of North Carolina Baptists, 354–355.

26. *Daily Reflector*, 6 July 1920: 2; 4 Oct. 1920: 1.

27. *Ibid.*, 30 Nov. 1908: 1; 3 Jan. 1921.

28. *Ibid.*, 23 Mar. 1921: 1; 25 Mar. 1921: 1; 29 Mar. 1921: 1; 4 Apr. 1921: 1. *Biblical Recorder*, 16 Mar. 1921: 3.

29. *Daily Reflector*, 22 Jan. 1921: 1; 21 May 1921: 5. Tolson, *A History of The Memorial Baptist Church*, 83. "Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletin], 12 Mar. 1922.

30. *Daily Reflector*, 9 Apr. 1921: 1. Committee, *Sweets and Meats*, n.d., 1. The date of the recipe book would be between 1921 and 1925 because Mrs. Leland W. Smith, wife of the pastor, was listed as a member of the Ladies Aid Society. The Smiths left Greenville in June 1925.

31. *Minutes of the Roanoke Baptist Association*, 1921–1924. In 1923, the Roanoke Baptist Association Sunday School statistical table showed enrollments for the cradle roll, beginners, primaries, juniors, intermediates, seniors, and adults. The church bulletin's calendar for the week indicated classes for all ages. "Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletin], 18 Jan. 1925. *Biblical Recorder*, 16 Mar. 1921: 13. *Daily Reflector*, 18 May 1921: 1; 29 Nov. 1924: 5.

32. *Minutes of the Roanoke Baptist Association*, 1921–1924.

33. *Daily Reflector*, 4 June 1925: 1. Tolson, *A History of The Memorial Baptist Church*, 84.

34. *Daily Reflector*, 3 Sept. 1925: 1; 14 Sept. 1925: 1.

35. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 6 Oct. 1926.

36. *Ibid.*, 2 Nov. 1927. *Daily Reflector*, 24 Oct. 1927.

37. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," Aug.–Sep., 1928.

38. *Minutes of the Roanoke Baptist Association*, 1925. Annual Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, 1926–1929.

39. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," Dec. 1927. Based on available written records, Miss Winbourne was the first paid staff member other than the pastor of the church.

40. *Ibid.*, "Financial Reports, 1 Oct. 1925 - 30 Sept. 1928. *Annual Baptist State Convention of North Carolina*, 1926 - 1928.

41. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 1 Nov. 1928. *Daily Reflector*, 2 Apr. 1929: 1.

42. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 31 Mar. 1929. L. A. Stroud, letter to Rev. A. W. Fleischmann, 1 April 1929. A. W. Fleischmann, letter to L. A. Stroud, 3 Apr. 1929. *Daily Reflector*, 2 Apr. 1929: 1; 8 Apr. 1929: 1.

43. A. W. Fleischmann's grandfather, Dr. Conrad Anton Fleischmann, served as a missionary among the early German settlers in America and organized many churches. Two of the largest churches were the Clinton Hill Baptist Church in Newark, New Jersey, and the Fleischmann Memorial Baptist Church in Philadelphia. An uncle, Dr. Jacob Heinrichs, was president of the Baptist Seminary at Ramapatanam, India, for twenty-seven years and later served as dean of Northern Baptist Seminary in Chicago. J. H. Boyd, Jr.; J. D. Simons; and Mrs. L. A. Stroud, "Memoriam for A. W. Fleischmann," The Memorial Baptist Church, n.d. *Daily Reflector*, 8 Apr. 1929: 1; 5 Sept. 1939: 1, 6.

44. Williams, *A Greenville Album*, 28. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 18 Sept. 1929.

45. A. W. Fleischmann and L. A. Stroud, letter to North Carolina Baptist State Convention, 3 Nov. 1929. *The Growth of 100 Years of North Carolina Baptists, 1830–1930* (Raleigh: The General Board of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, 1930), 3.



"Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 8 Jan. 1930.

46. *Proceedings of the First Centennial Session of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina*, 26–27 March 1930: 3–9.

47. The Growth of 100 Years of North Carolina Baptists, 11–12.

48. "Report of the Pastor to the Members of Memorial Baptist Church," Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 8 Oct. 1930.

49. Charles E. Maddry, letter to Rev. A. W. Fleischmann, 30 Jan. 1930. *Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church*, 6 Dec. 1936; 25. "The Messenger of Memorial Baptist Church," 1 Jan. 1933.

50. "Report of the Pastor to the Members of Memorial Baptist Church," Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 2 Oct. 1929; 8 Oct. 1930.

51. *Ibid.*, 27 Nov. 1929; 15 May 1934: 10; 25 May 1934: 12–13.

52. "The Messenger of Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletin], 4 June 1933; 21 Jan. 1934; 13 May 1934.

53. "Report of the Pastor to Memorial Baptist Church," Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 4 Jan. 1933; 24 Jan. 1937: 27; 6 June 1937: 29; 8 Sept. 1937: 29; 19 Sept. 1937: 30. A. W. Fleischmann, letter to Christian Brethren, 29 December 1937. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 2 Jan. 1938: 34–35.

54. J. H. Boyd, Jr., J. D. Simons, and Mrs. L. A. Stroud, "Memoriam for A. W. Fleischmann," Memorial Baptist Church, n. d.

55. David M. Kennedy, *Freedom From Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929–1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 42. *Daily Reflector*, 5 Sept. 1939: 1, 6.

56. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 17 July 1938: 42. *Daily Reflector*, 27 Aug. 1938: 1.

57. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 5 Oct. 1938: 5.

58. *Daily Reflector*, 26 Oct. 1938: 1; 24 Jan. 1944: 1.

59. Population figures for Greenville were cited in Williams, *A Greenville Album*, 13. *Annual Baptist State Convention*, 1930. *Minutes of the Roanoke Baptist Association*, 1931–1944.

60. *Minutes of the Roanoke Baptist Association*, 1931–1940.

61. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 5 Jan. 1943. *Minutes of the Roanoke Baptist Association*, 1931–1940.

62. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 16 June 1942; 14 July 1942; 4 Aug. 1942; 20 Aug. 1942; 28 Sept. 1942.

63. "The Messenger of Memorial Baptist Church," 1938–1944. *Daily Reflector*, 23 Feb. 1944: 8; 26 Feb. 1944: 2.

64. "The Messenger of Memorial Baptist Church," [Church Bulletin], 24 Sept. 1939; 26 Sept. 1943; 3 Oct. 1943; Dec. 1943. *Daily Reflector*, 28 Dec. 1941: 4; 24 Feb. 1944: 3. C. W. Deweese, "Baptist Student Union," *Dictionary of Baptists in America*, ed. Bill J. Leonard; 51.

65. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 3 Feb. 1942. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 13 June 1943: 73–74. "The Messenger of Memorial Baptist Church," 24 Sept. 1939.

66. "The Messenger of Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletin], 18 July 1943; 24 Oct. 1943. "Service Roll of The Memorial Baptist Church," n.d.

67. "The Messenger of Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletin], 27 June 1943; 24 Oct. 1943; 7 Nov. 1943. *Daily Reflector*, 30 Dec. 1942: 1.

68. Charles W. Davis, Secretary, Board of Deacons, letter to Mrs. B. McKay Johnson,

President, Woman's Missionary Society, 8 June 1944. "Minutes of the Woman's Missionary Society," Jan. 1943; Feb. 1943; May 1943; 12 June 1944; Sept. 1945; Feb. 15, 1946.

69. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 8 July 1941; 29 July 1941; 4 Nov. 1941; 3 Mar. 1942.

70. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 23 Jan. 1944: 79; 30 Jan. 1944: 80. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 28 Jan. 1944.

71. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 7 Feb. 1944.

72. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 13 Feb. 1944: 81-83; 20 Feb. 1944: 84-86.

73. *Ibid.*, 5 Mar. 1944, 87. In a joint meeting of the two boards of deacons held on Feb. 22, 1944, Deacon C. W. Willard of the Immanuel Baptist Church reported that the Immanuel congregation had passed the resolution calling for the merger of the two churches, but in amended form. The minutes of the joint meeting did not show the amendment. He further reported that there was some objection to the name of the new church. "Minutes of the Joint Board Meeting," 22 Feb. 1944. (The author could not find in writing any reference to a vote in the minutes of Immanuel Baptist Church.)

74. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 5 Mar. 1944: 87-88. "Rules and Covenant," Memorial Baptist Church, 1920.

75. "Minutes of the Joint Boards of Deacons of Memorial and Immanuel Baptist Churches," 10 Mar. 1944.

76. *Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church*, 12 Mar. 1944: 89-90; 19 Mar. 1944: 91.

77. *Ibid.*, 95-96. The following deacons submitted letters of resignation to the church between April 25 and 30, 1944: C. D. Ward, B. McKay Johnson, W. H. Hardee, H. A. McDougle, E. R. Conway, A. C. Howard, John Welch, C. W. Davis, and E. E. Rawl. Davis also resigned as church clerk; A. C. Howard resigned as financial secretary; E. E. Rawl resigned as chairman of the finance and budget committee. Members of the pulpit committee to resign were M. McKay Johnson, Mrs. H. Rivers Goodall, A. C. Howard, and C. W. Davis. H. A. Hendrix resigned as Sunday School superintendent. The three deacons who did not resign were J. H. Boyd, Jr., W. W. Lee and A. E. Hobgood. Mrs. L. A. Stroud did not resign from the pulpit committee.

78. *Ibid.*, 30 Apr. 1944: 97-100.

79. *Ibid.*, 2 July 1944, 101; 9 July 1944: 102.

80. *Daily Reflector*, 21 Aug. 1944: 1, 6. "The Messenger of the Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletin], 22 July 1945.

81. "The Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletin], 3 Sept. 1944. Beginning in September 1944, the Sunday church bulletin's title was changed to "Memorial Baptist Church."

82. *Ibid.*, 17 Sept. 1944; 1 Oct. 1944.

83. *Ibid.*, 26 Aug. 1945.

84. *Daily Reflector*, 19 Feb. 1954: 3. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 16 Mar. 1938: 39.

85. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 12 Nov. 1944, 112-113. "Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletin], 21 Feb. 1954.

86. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 13 Jan. 1946. Copy of the petition to the Baptist General Board of North Carolina was inserted in the church minutes between pages 120 and 121. "Memorial Baptist Church, [Church bulletin], 9 Nov. 1952.

87. Petition, Board of Deacons of Memorial Baptist Church to the Mayor and Board of Alderman of Greenville, North Carolina, July 31, 1945. Statement to the church, Aug. 26,

1945. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 1 Aug. 1945; 26 Aug. 1945; 8 Jan. 1946.

88. *Daily Reflector*, 12 Apr. 1948: 2; 13 Apr. 1948: 1. "Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletin], 6 June 1948.

89. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 8 Feb. 1948: 141–142; 2 Feb. 1947: 126–127. *Daily Reflector*, 19 Feb. 1954: 3. "Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletin], 3 Jan. 1954; 21 Feb. 1954.

90. "Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletin], 24 Dec. 1944.

91. *Ibid.*, 14 Apr. 1946; 12 May 1946.

92. *Ibid.*, 11 Nov. 1945.

93. *Ibid.*, 16 Nov. 1952. Speakers for Youth Week held from November 11–23, 1952, were Jack Painter and Bobby Lee, respectively. Music for the week was under the direction of Gerald Murphy and Evelyn Eury.

94. *Ibid.*, 6 July 1952.

95. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 5 June 1950. "Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletin], 10 Dec. 1950. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 30 Sept. 1951: 160; 27 Apr. 1952: 162.

96. *Minutes of the Roanoke Baptist Association, 1944–1954*.

97. Ernelle Brooks Papers, East Carolina University Manuscript Collection, East Carolina University, Greenville, North Carolina, Boxes 341.1–341.2.

98. "Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletin], 7 Mar. 1954.

99. *Minutes of the Roanoke Baptist Association, 1944–1954*. Williams, *A Greenville Album*, 13. "Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletin], 7 Mar. 1954.

100. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 28 Feb. 1954, 162. "Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletin], 28 Mar. 1954. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 14 Mar. 1954. *Daily Reflector*, 1 Mar. 1954: 1.

101. Robert L. Humber, a Rhodes Scholar, served as a church trustee and frequently handled the technical matters related to borrowing money from financial institutions. He also was elected as the second vice president of the Baptist State Convention in 1947. On the world stage, he received an international award for the "person who had done the most to promote world government" during 1947. "The Messenger of Memorial Baptist Church," 24 Nov. 1946; 25 Apr. 1948. J. H. Boyd, Jr. and Nathan C. Brooks were active deacons and both held elected office in municipal government. Boyd was elected Mayor of Greenville, and Brooks won a seat on the Board of Alderman in the spring of 1945. *Ibid.*, 13 May 1945.

102. "Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletin], 14 Mar. 1954. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 5 May 1954. *Daily Reflector*. 3 Aug. 1954: 1, 12.

103. Mrs. Mildred Upchurch, interview with author and Professor Joseph W. Congleton, 21 Mar. 1996. Professor W. T. Albright, letter to Mr. Upchurch, 3 May 1933. Church archives. *Daily Reflector*, 3 Aug. 1954: 1, 12.

104. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 10 Aug. 1954; 7 Sept. 1954; 30 Mar. 1955; 7 Mar. 1961. "Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletin], 19 May 1957.

105. "Minutes of the Southern Area Roanoke Baptist Association," 3 Feb. 1955; 10 Mar. 1955. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 6 Apr. 1955. *Proceedings of the South Roanoke Baptist Association, 1975*: 50.

106. Mrs. Mildred Upchurch, interview with author and Professor Joseph W. Congleton, 21 Mar. 1996.

107. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 16 Oct. 1955; 10 Jan. 1954. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 3 Apr. 1956.

108. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 9 Oct. 1956; 8 Jan. 1957. "Memorial Baptist

Church," [Church bulletin], 1 Sep. 1957; 6 Sept. 1956; 11 Dec. 1960.

109. D. R. Calloway, Secretary of the Board of Deacons, letter to Mr. E. E. Rawl, 12 Feb. 1957.

110. "Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletin], Mar. 10 1957; 31 Mar. 1957; 28 Apr. 1957. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 4 May 1958; 12 Apr. 1959. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 5 May 1959; 3 May 1960.

111. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 3 Jan. 1961; 5 Sept. 1961.

112. *Ibid.*, 3 Jan. 1961; 4 Oct. 1960; 7 Feb. 1961; 2 July 1962. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 8 July 1962. In addition to the officers, the long range planning committee consisted of Ed Cain; E. E. Rawl, Jr.; Jimmy Lee; Arthur "Ott" Alford; Elwood Edwards; Jimmy Wells; Howard Wilson; Mrs. J. B. Spilman; Eleanor Mercer; Ruth Garner; Margaret Richardson; and Mrs. G. J. Bell.

113. Mrs. Ruel W. Tyson, *et al*, letter to Mr. Arthur S. Alford, chairman, board of deacons, Memorial Baptist Church, Apr. 3, 1964. Letter is in the church minutes. In addition to Mrs. Tyson, the other members were Mrs. E. E. Rawl; Ed. E. Rawl, Jr.; Mrs. Ed E. Rawl Jr.; Eddie Rawl; Robert L. Holt; Mrs. Robert L. Holt; Becky Holt; Susan Holt; Thomas J. Haigwood; Mrs. Thomas J. Haigwood; Gay Haigwood; F. Milam Johnson; Mrs. F. Milam Johnson; Kenneth H. Mercer; Mrs. Kenneth H. Mercer; E. R. "Pete" Carraway; Mrs. E. R. Carraway; Ernest Carraway Jr.; Robert Carraway; Mrs. Harroll D. Weaver; Betty Lee (Lilly) Carr; Dan M. Barton, and Mrs. Dan M. Barton. For the organizational meeting, see *Daily Reflector*, 28 Apr. 1964: 12.

114. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 25 Oct. 1964; 9 May 1965; 10 Oct. 1965; 24 Apr. 1966. John S. "Jack" Whichard, letter to Mr. Jack Bagwell, May 19, 1965. Albert C. Woodroof, architect, letter to John S. Whichard, Nov. 18, 1966.

115. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 8 Jan. 1957. Paul M. Johnson, Architect, Southern Baptist Convention, letter to Percy P. Upchurch, January 1967. Williams, *A Greenville Album*, 38-41.

116. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 16 Sept. 1968; 20 Apr. 1969. Larry Averette, letter to church members, Oct. 20, 1969.

117. Percy B. Upchurch, letter to members of the congregation, Sept. 7, 1969.

118. "Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletins], 1954-1969.

119. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 9 Mar. 1965; 21 Mar. 1965; 4 Apr. 1965.

120. *Ibid.*, 4 Sep. 1955; 17 Nov. 1968. "Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletin], 17 Apr. 1960; 24 Feb. 1957. Members of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee were David Gordon, chairman; Barbara Winn; Walter Lewis; Thelma Nichols; William Hoots; Stacy Evans; and Doris Thompson. The work of this committee continued after the departure of Rev. Upchurch.

121. *Minutes of the South Roanoke Baptist Association*, 1954-55 to 1968-69.

122. *Ibid.*

123. *Ibid.*

124. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 18 Aug. 1955; 9 Apr. 1956; 3 Sept. 1957; 3 June 1958; 9 Sept. 1958; Aug. 1960. *Minutes of the South Roanoke Baptist Association*, 1958-1969.

125. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 9 Oct. 1956; 5 Feb. 1957; 5 Nov. 1957; 3 Jan. 1959; 3 Jan. 1961; 5 Sept. 1961.

126. *Ibid.*, 3 Jan. 1961. Mrs. Anne Nichols Moore, telephone interview with author, 4 Sept. 2001.

127. *Daily Reflector*, 16 Mar. 1970: 2. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 9 Mar. 1970.



## CHAPTER 5

1. John S. Whichard, letter to The reverend C. Norman Bennett, Jr.; May 25, 1970. C. Norman Bennett, Jr., letter to Mr. John S. Whichard, May 27, 1970.
2. "The Messenger," [The Memorial Baptist Church newsletter], Sept. 1970.
3. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 14 June 1970.
4. *Ibid.*, 8 Feb. 1971; 25 July 1971; 26 Sept. 1971; 17 Nov. 1971; 8 Dec. 1971. See also Pastor Bennett's presentation to the congregation on Sunday, Oct. 6, 1974, the day designated as Religious Heritage observance by the Greenville bicentennial celebration. The pastor entitled his remarks "A New Beginning." Members of the new sanctuary planning committee were Phil Carroll, chairman; Eugene Prescott; Arthur "Ott" Alford; Dr. John Winstead; John S. Whichard; Jimmy Wells; Stacy Evans; Mrs. Ruth Garner; Mrs. Carolyn Hoots; Mrs. Pauline Roberson; Mrs. John B. Spilman; and Kathy Williams. The twenty-one-member building committee consisted of Phil Carroll, chairman; Jim Granger; Jimmy Salisbury; Larry Averette; D. G. Nichols; Ruth White; Mrs. J. H. Boyd, Jr.; Mrs. J. H. Davenport; Lee Bennett; Eugene Prescott; Mrs. Pauline Roberson; Stacy Evans; Bobby Fleming; Mrs. John B. Spilman; Mrs. Ruth Garner; Kathy Williams; John S. Whichard; Jimmy Wells; Francis Worsley; Russell Rogerson; and Mrs. Carolyn Hoots.
5. *Ibid.*, 12 Mar. 1972; 30 Apr. 1972. "Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletin], 2 Apr. 1972.
6. *Ibid.*, 29 July 1973; 23 Sept. 1973.
7. "Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletin], 7 Oct. 1973.
8. "Minutes of the Dedication Committee," n.d. "Dedication of the Sanctuary and Education Building of The Memorial Baptist Church," Greenville, North Carolina, Sunday, Oct. 28, 1973.
9. "Dedication program booklet," Sunday, Oct. 28, 1973.
10. "Dedicatory Recital of the Casavant Organ," Sunday, 4 Nov. 1973. "Messenger", [newsletter], Nov. 1973.
11. Adell T. Prescott, "Joseph Harrison Goodwin," [Insert for church bulletin], 18 May 1997.
12. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 9 Jan. 1974. "Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletin], 3 Feb. 1974. C. Norman Bennett, Jr., "A New Beginning," mimeographed copy of sermon, 6 Oct. 1974.
13. "Dedication," 28 Oct. 1973. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 7 Oct. 1973.
14. "Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletins], 26 May 1974; 8 Dec. 1974; 29 Sept. 1974.
15. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 11 Sept. 1974; 14 Nov. 1974. "Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletin], 13 Oct. 1974.
16. Johnetta Webb Spilman Papers, East Carolina University, Manuscript Collection, N. 97.1-97.7.
17. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 11 Oct. 1972. "Dedication," [Program booklet], 28 Oct. 1973. Members on the youth committee included Jack Whichard, Betty Lu Bennett; Margaret Little; Robert Wease; Hank Dunbar; Jackie Whisenhunt; Rachel Hoots; Karen Gordon, and Lindy McCoombs. "Messenger," [Church newsletter], May 1974; Nov. 1974; Oct. 1975; Jan.-Feb. 1975. "Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletin], 18 Jan. 1976; 25 Apr. 1976.
18. "Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletins], 27 Oct. 1974; 3 Nov. 1974.
19. Ralph Verrastro, letter to R. T. Rogerson, July 3, 1972. Norman Bennett, "Statement of Appreciation to Dr. Verrastro," n.d. "Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bul-

letins], 25 Aug. 1974; 15 Dec. 1974; 23 Feb. 1975. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 7 July 1975. Hugh Wease, letter to Harold Jones, July 14, 1975. "Messenger," Feb. 1976.

20. C. Norman Bennett, Jr., letter to members of The Memorial Baptist Church, July 19, 1976. "Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletin], 19 Sept. 1976.

21. "Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletins], 6 Sept. 1970; 13 Sept. 1970; 20 Sept. 1970; 17 Oct. 1971; 8 June 1972; and 7 Oct. 1973.

22. *Ibid.*, 6 Oct. 1974. *Minutes of the South Roanoke Baptist Association, 1971–1976.*

23. *Minutes of the South Roanoke Baptist Association, 1971–1976.*

24. Hugh Wease, letter to church members, Aug. 9, 1976. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 24 Apr. 1977. Bruce Thompson, letter to church members, July 15, 1977.

25. Vita, E. T. Vinson. [Personnel file, The Memorial Baptist Church].

26. "Service of Installation for Rev. E. T. Vinson as Pastor of The Memorial Baptist Church," July 31, 1977.

27. *Daily Reflector*, 14 Oct. 1977: 5. "Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletin], 16 Oct. 1977. Church members who spoke at the morning anniversary worship service were Mrs. J. B. Spilman, a member for fifty-nine years; Howard Wilson, member for twenty-three years; John and Carolyn McCalmont, members for six years; and Karen Gordon, a high school student and member for six years. D. J. Whichard, Jr., cut the birthday cake.

28. Marcia Pleasants, Sherry Dendy, and Kay Godwin, interview with author, 23, 24 Oct. 2001.

29. Church bylaws. Art. VI, sec. 6 (amended 6 Apr. 1982). The "outreachers" in the early 1990s were Glenn Duncan, Jeff Gledhill, Lillian Shelton, Richard Ebbetts, Rick Bailey, Davis Lee, Bill Howard, Nancy Robertson, Beth Harman, Laura Neal, and Ann Maynard. "The Memorial Baptist Messenger," [Church newsletter], 10 Jan. 1991. The name of the church newsletter changed in the 1980s.

30. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 27 Jan. 1993. "The Memorial Baptist Messenger," [Church newsletter], 10 Feb. 1993.

31. *Minutes of the South Roanoke Baptist Association, 1957–1977.* The first couples class in The Memorial Baptist Church was the Progressive class, formerly called the R. B. Lee class. The Collegiate class published a weekly newsletter, "The Collegiate," during the academic year of East Carolina University, which extended from September to May. The first issue appeared in September 1978 and the last issue was dated April 26, 1990.

32. "Vita," Mr. Hal Melton, [Personnel file, The Memorial Baptist Church]. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 4 Apr. 1979; 6 June 1979. *Minutes of the South Roanoke Baptist Association, 1977–1983.*

33. *Minutes of the South Roanoke Baptist Association, 1968–1980.*

34. "The Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletin], 29 Sept. 1982. "The Memorial Baptist Messenger," [Church newsletter], 4 Jan. 1980.

35. "The Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletins], 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983.

36. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 30 Nov. 1983. "The Memorial Baptist Messenger," [Church newsletter], 7 Dec. 1983. Rick Bailey, telephone interview with author, 20 Nov. 2001.

37. "The Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletins], 1984, 1986, 1987, 1988; 1 April 1990; 31 May 1992.

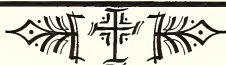
38. "The Memorial Baptist Messenger," [Church newsletters], 27 May 1992; 1 July 1987; 28 July 1993; 11 Feb. 1992.

39. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 6 July 1984; 5 Apr. 1987. "The Collegiate," 7 Sept. 1989. "The Memorial Baptist Messenger," [Church newsletter], 13 Feb. 1991. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 27 Oct. 1999.

40. *Daily Reflector*, 8 Jan. 1986.
41. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 29 Apr. 1987; 27 Jan. 1988; 24 May 1989. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 5 Dec. 1991. "The Memorial Baptist Messenger, [church newsletter]" 1 Apr. 1987; 18 Jan. 1990; 3 Jan. 1991.
42. "The Memorial Baptist Messenger," [Church newsletter] 17 May 1990; 27 May 1991; 26 Feb. 1992; 26 Sept. 1993; 27 Oct. 1993. "Colonial Williamsburg Christmas Season," 17 Dec. 1993.
43. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 5 Sept. 1984. "The Memorial Baptist Messenger," [Church newsletter], 6 Mar. 1991.
44. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 27 Jan. 1988; 27 Apr. 1988; 11 July 1990.
45. *Ibid.*, 25 Oct. 1989; 11 July 1990.
46. *Program Manual, Level II* (Dallas, Texas: Resource Services, Inc., n. d.). "Forward by Faith," n.d. "The Memorial Baptist Messenger," [church newsletter], 20 Dec. 1990.
47. "The Memorial Baptist Messenger," [church newsletter], 14 Aug. 1991. "The Memorial Baptist Church," [Church bulletin], 27 Sept. 1992.
48. "The Memorial Baptist Messenger," [church newsletter], 18 Oct. 1989; 8 Mar. 1990.
49. *Ibid.*, 9 Oct. 1991. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 9 June 1994; 7 Nov. 1994, 7 June 1995. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 26 Apr. 1995. E. T. Vinson, "Retirement from The Memorial Baptist Church," n.d.
50. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 4 June 1986. E. T. Vinson, "Retirement from The Memorial Baptist Church," n.d. Since retirement Rev. E. T. Vinson has served as interim pastor of several churches in the region. If he continues to serve churches in this capacity until 2003, he will have been in the pulpit for 50 years.
51. "Intentional Interim Ministry Notebook," The Memorial Baptist Church, 1996–1997. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 5 Oct. 1995. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 5 Dec. 1995; 2 Feb. 1996.
52. "Letter of Agreement between Anthony Z. (Tony) Gurganus, intentional interim minister and The Memorial Baptist Church," 14 Apr. 1996. "Intentional Interim Ministry Notebook," 1996–1997.
53. Sub-committee reports were made on "The church's history" (Hugh Wease, chair; Edith Davenport; and Pat Stansell); "New identity" (Todd Rouse, chair; Ed Porter; and Bill Brown); "Leadership and Decision-making" (Tommy Little, chair; Eugene Prescott; and Jim Pleasants); "Denominational relationships and linkage" (Richard Murphy, chair; Stacy Evans; and Barbara Winn); "Commitment to new leadership" (Carroll McLawhorn, chair; Jo Ann Jones; and Bill Lee). Tony Gurganus, "My Assessment of The Memorial Baptist Church," 5 Aug. 1997.
54. "Minutes of the Transition Committee," 5 May 1997. "Minutes of the Board of Deacons," 9 June 1997. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 22 June 1997.
55. "Minutes of The Memorial Baptist Church," 29 Apr. 1998; 10 Jan. 1999.

# Appendix One

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## THE MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH Covenant and Rules of Decorum of 1828

[The Church Covenant and Rules of Decorum of 1828 with an introduction were issued by The Memorial Baptist Church of Greenville, North Carolina, in commemoration of its 150th anniversary, 1827–1977. The Introduction and documents are presented below.]

### INTRODUCTION

On July 2, 1827, twenty-three persons, whose names are largely lost to us today, met and organized the Greenville [now The Memorial] Baptist Church. Apparently the leading spirit in this undertaking was the Reverend Mr. Thomas D. Mason, missionary of the Neuse Association, who subsequently served the young church as its first minister. From its organization until about 1832, the church met in the two-story Greenville Academy building at the corner of Greene and Second Streets.

Undoubtedly during the first months after its organization, the members of the new church were busy with the innumerable problems that always confront a new organization. Nothing would have occupied more of their time and prayers than the development of a church covenant and rules of decorum. Finally on May 31, 1828, the completed documents were brought before the church and adopted. The important place these items held in the life of the early church is clearly demonstrated by the fact that these are the only pre-Civil War records of the church that survived.

These records are presented here as a testimony of appreciation to the small band of Christians who founded The Memorial Baptist Church in 1827. It is hoped that the devotion and concern of these Witnesses for Christ will be an inspiration to all future generations.



## CHURCH COVENANT

1st. We believe in the existence of one ever loving and true God. Holy, Just, and Merciful, having all power, all wisdom, all glory, and all perfection centered in Him, by whom all things were made and do exist.

2nd. In the trinity of persons in the Eternal God-head.

3rd. The fall of Adam, by which fall, sin hath passed upon all his posterity, consequently, the corruption of the human family, and their entire inability in a natural state to do what is pleasing in the sight of a Holy God, who cannot behold sin with the least degree of allowance.

4th. The electing love of God, free and unmerited by man, the Covenant of grace, redemption by the blood of Jesus Christ alone, justification by faith in the imputed righteousness of the Son of God, pardon and reconciliation through his blood, regeneration and sanctification by the influence and operation of the Holy Spirit; final perseverance of the Saints in grace, the resurrection from the dead, and final judgment, the eternal happiness of the righteous, and endless punishment of the wicked.

5th. Believers are the only true subjects of Baptism according to the word of God, which says, "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized both men and women, See Acts, Ch. 8, vs. 13, 35, 36 and 37. Then Philip opened his mouth and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus, and as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water; and he said, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, if thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest, and he answered and said, I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

We see plainly from these scriptures and many others, that the Apostles required faith in the Lord Jesus Christ before Baptism, therefore, in imitation of these examples we do likewise. As to the Mode, we believe immersion the only true mode which is scriptural according to Romans Ch. 6, v. 4, "Therefore we are buried with him by Baptism, wherein ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." These two passages show that believers in the days of the Apostles were buried; which we all know signifies a covering all over in the water and we believe it to be our duty to follow the same example in Matt. Ch. 3, vs. 16, 17. "And Jesus when he was baptized went up straightway out of the water, and lo! A voice from Heaven saying, this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased."

The Almighty Father was not only well pleased with his beloved and only begotten Son at that time; but he has been well pleased with myriads of his adopted and believing children who have followed the same example from that time until the present day.

In token of our consent to, and belief in the Covenant we all subscribe, or cause our names to be subscribed thereto, and agree to comply therewith, so

far as in us lies; hoping and trusting in the Lord at all times; that he by his good spirit, will enable us so to believe and live, that we may glorify his name, and be useful in his Church and Kingdom while we live in the world; hoping when we die and are gathered to our Fathers, our souls will be received into our Heavenly Father's triumphant Kingdom to dwell with him forever and Ever.

### **Rules of Decorum Adopted at the Same Time, May 31, 1828**

1st. Conference shall be composed of members of the church only, unless any members from our sister churches are present: in which case it will be the duty of the moderator to invite them to take seats and assist us in our business.

2nd. Bro. Patton of the church shall preside as moderator unless some other person shall be nominated.

3rd. Conference shall be opened and closed by prayer.

4th. Any person wishing to speak in conference shall rise from his seat and address the moderator by the appellation of brother moderator.

5th. The name of each member shall be enrolled on the church book and called at every meeting, and a significant mark set to the name of those who are not present. And should any member be absent at two successive meetings, on the third they shall be called on to give a reason of their absence: and if any member shall be absent three successive meetings a committee shall be appointed to make enquiry (respecting the same) and report to the church.

6th. A door shall be opened at every monthly meeting for the reception of new members, and none shall be received into fellowship unless by unanimous consent of all the members present. When the whole church is satisfied to receive the candidate either by letter or experience, the moderator in behalf of the church shall give to him, or to her, the right hand of fellowship. See I Peter 3:15.

7th. Complaints of a private nature shall not be brought into the church (against any member) until the ajoined few shall have complied with the directions given in the 18th Chapter of Matthew 15-16 and 17 verses. (The next line is unintelligible) . . . stealing, and drunkenness being of and . . . of the common rules of morality and religion, shall be censored and condemned by the church openly and publicly that others may learn to fear, and avoid his crimes.

8th. But one person shall speak at the same time and that person must not wander from the subject under debate.

9th. Every motion made, and seconded, shall come under consideration of this conference, unless withdrawn by the person who made it.

10th. If the minority "at any time" is grieved or dissatisfied with the conduct of the majority, they must make it known before the rising of the conference, and satisfaction must be obtained with all parties as far as possible. But if the minority pass over their grievances in silence and complain of the same after

conference is dismissed, they shall be censored and dealt with by the church for disorderly conduct.

11th. All questions and debates in the church shall be decided by a majority—Except the receiving of members, choosing officers, and the calling of a Pastor to the church which three last named things must always be done by unanimous consent of the church.

12th. Any member of the church who is seen intoxicated with spirituous liquors and good evidence thereof is brought before the church, this name shall be removed from the church book without further hesitation and be no longer considered a member among us unless he will come to conference and publicly confess his fault and promise (in future) to do better.

13th. It shall be a duty binding on any member of this church to report to conference any member that he or she may see intoxicated or guilty of any one of the above named public offenses that we may strive to support the family of the church.

14th. Before conference is dismissed the proceedings of the meeting shall be read by the clerk and corrected if any be needed.

15th. Any member neglecting to attend conference, the same is disorderly.

16th. Any member absenting him or herself from conference without leave is disorderly.

17th. Any member speaking, whispering, or laughing in time of public speaking is disorderly.

18th. If two or more attempt to speak at the same time or any speak without rising from his seat and addressing the moderator is disorderly.

19th. No member shall speak more than “three times” on one subject without leave.

20th. Any member speaking or acting with anger, wrath, or in a degrading manner so as to bring reproach upon religion and wound the tender feelings of the brethren is disorderly.

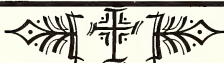
21st. Any member transgressing either of these rules shall be reprovod by the moderator.

22nd. Females are permitted to speak in the church in cases of grievances or when called upon by the moderator.

23rd. These rules may be altered or amended whenever the church may think proper to do so.

24th. These rules shall be read at every quarterly meeting and oftener if requested.

# Appendix Two



## THE MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH Service Roll of Honor—Members in The United States Armed Forces in WWII

According to church records, eighty-five Memorial members served in the military service during World War II. Their names were listed on the Service Roll of Honor, and a service flag with a star for each member in military service was displayed on the wall of the church. In a special ceremony on Sunday morning, March 9, 1947, the church removed the flag from the wall and paid tribute to the four Memorial men lost in service. They were Bernard Washington Spilman, Robert Lee Edwards, Owen Daniel, and Henry Matt Phillips. The Service Roll of Honor for World War II is shown below with an asterisk by the name of the men killed in service.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Francis Worsley (Discharged)            | L. Earl Shuff (Discharged)              |
| Clem Garner (Discharged)                | Grady J. Bell, Jr. (Discharged)         |
| James Henry Whichard<br>(Discharged)    | *Robert Lee Edwards                     |
| *Bernard Washington Spilman             | David Johnson                           |
| John Barham Spilman<br>(Discharged)     | W. Z. Morton, Jr. (Discharged)          |
| Walter E. Lewis (Discharged)            | *Owen Daniel                            |
| Gregory O. Moss (Discharged)            | H. R. Goodall, Jr. (Discharged)         |
| John Collins, Jr. (Discharged)          | James S. Wells (Discharged)             |
| Robert D. Whichard, Jr.<br>(Discharged) | *Henry Matt Phillips                    |
| Earl W. Hellen, Jr. (Discharged)        | John David Bridgers (Discharged)        |
| Robert Troy Riddle (Discharged)         | Quinn Bostic (Discharged)               |
| Francis E. Brooks (Discharged)          | Ernest W. Wells (Discharged)            |
| Glenn W. Brooks (Discharged)            | Miss Mary Phelps                        |
| W. L. Michard (Discharged)              | Mrs. Carrie M. Holliday<br>(Discharged) |
|   | Paul W. Brooks (Discharged)             |
|   | R. D. Harrington, Jr. (Discharged)      |



Spencer W. Hudgins (Discharged)  
 Rufus G. Skinner (Discharged)  
 Warren Parrish (Discharged)  
 Jesse Ray Howard (Discharged)  
 Robert Troy Burnette (Discharged)  
 Howard J. Simpson (Discharged)  
 William E. Beddard (Discharged)  
 Ennis P. T. Blanchard (Discharged)  
 James F. Davenport, Jr.  
 (Discharged)  
 Charles S. Forbes, Jr. (Discharged)  
 Jack H. Boyd, III (Discharged)  
 E. L. Ballenger  
 John M. Wells (Discharged)  
 James J. Smith  
 James L. Fleming, Jr. (Discharged)  
 Joseph Smith, Jr. (Discharged)  
 Russell Rogerson (Discharged)  
 Ed E. Rawl, Jr. (Discharged)  
 Jack W. Teel, Jr.  
 Herbert White Lee (Discharged)  
 Henry L. Andrews, Jr. (Discharged)  
 Clyde Milton Howard (Discharged)  
 Walter H. Bond (Discharged)  
 Henry V. Barnhill (Discharged)  
 Sidney P. Johnson (Discharged)  
 Clarence Whichard, Jr.  
 (Discharged)  
 Elmer M. Cox (Discharged)  
 W. W. Lee, Jr. (Annapolis)

Perry King (Discharged)  
 Larry Averette (Discharged)  
 Theodore A. Hardaway  
 (Discharged)  
 John S. Hardaway (Discharged)  
 William G. Brooks (Discharged)  
 Charles E. Nichols (Discharged)  
 David J. Whichard, Jr. (Discharged)  
 Jones Pryor Moss, Jr. (Discharged)  
 John Cherry Briggs  
 Kenneth Paschal (Discharged)  
 Stanley M. Kenin (Discharged)  
 Joseph Culbreth (Discharged)  
 William Roy Phelps  
 Clyde Kimball Brown (Discharged)  
 Kenneth Walker Brown  
 (Discharged)  
 Melton Lamm (Discharged)  
 Norman F. Little (Discharged)  
 Ernest Allen Murray (Discharged)  
 Paul Alton Scott, Jr. (Discharged)  
 James Bryan Spell  
 Aubrey Bentley Taylor  
 (Discharged)  
 Bill M. Brantley (Discharged)  
 Marshall L. Evans (Discharged)  
 Evelyn H. Hart (Discharged)  
 Wallace Odum (Discharged)  
 Charles Odum (Discharged)  
 W. K. Whichard (in regular army)

# Appendix Three

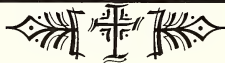


TABLE 1  
GREENVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH STATISTICS  
1827-1839

| CHURCH MEMBERSHIP: | 1827 | 1828 | 1829 | 1830 | 1831 | 1832 | 1833 | 1834 | 1835 | 1836 | 1837 | 1838 | 1839 |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| TOTAL NUMBER       | 23   | 34   | 36   | 36   | 33   | 45   | 45   | 54   | 48   | 35   | 31   | 40   | 36   |
| BAPTISMS           | 3    | 10   | 3    | ~    | ~    | 16   | 4    | 1    | ~    | ~    | ~    | 9    | ~    |
| BY LETTER          | ~    | 4    | 2    | 2    | 2    | 3    | 1    | 3    | 1    | 1    | ~    | ~    | ~    |
| EXCLUDED           | ~    | 2    | 1    | ~    | ~    | 1    | ~    | 3    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    |
| RESTORED           | ~    | 1    | ~    | ~    | ~    | 1    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    |

SOURCE: PROCEEDINGS NEUSE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, 1827-1839

TABLE 2  
GREENVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH STATISTICS  
1840-1849

| CHURCH MEMBERSHIP: | 1840 | 1841 | 1842 | 1843 | 1844 | 1845 | 1846 | 1847 | 1848 | 1849 |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| TOTAL NUMBER       | *NA  | NA   | 48   | NA   | 39   | 39   | 39   | 32   | NA   | 39   |
| BAPTISMS           | NA   | NA   | 3    | NA   | NA   | NA   | NA   | ~    | NA   | 0    |
| BY LETTER          | NA   | NA   | 2    | NA   | NA   | NA   | NA   | 1    | NA   | ~    |
| EXCLUDED           | NA   | NA   | 2    | NA   | NA   | NA   | NA   | 1    | NA   | ~    |
| RESTORED           | NA   | NA   | ~    | NA   | NA   | NA   | NA   | ~    | NA   | ~    |

\* NOT AVAILABLE

SOURCES: PROCEEDINGS NEUSE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, 1840-1842  
PROCEEDINGS UNION BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, 1844-1849

TABLE 3  
GREENVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH STATISTICS  
1850-1859

| CHURCH MEMBERSHIP: | 1850 | 1851 | 1852 | 1853 | 1854 | 1855 | 1856 | 1857 | 1858 | 1859 |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| # WHITE MEMBERS    | ~    | 22   | ~    | 61   | 65   | NA   | 59   | 83   | 87   | 86   |
| # BLACK MEMBERS    | ~    | 9    | ~    | 12   | 12   | NA   | 15   | 27   | 25   | 28   |
| TOTAL NUMBER       | 39   | 31   | 70   | 73   | 77   | NA   | 74   | 110  | 112  | 114  |
| BAPTISMS           | ~    | 2    | 49   | 2    | ~    | NA   | 8    | 41   | 5    | 3    |
| BY LETTER          | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | 5    | NA   | 3    | 3    | 4    | 1    |
| EXCLUDED           | ~    | 1    | 1    | 2    | ~    | NA   | ~    | 3    | 5    | 4    |
| RESTORED           | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | NA   | 1    | ~    | 1    | ~    |
| SABBATH SCHOOL     |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| TEACHERS           | ~    | ~    | ~    | 9    | 8    | NA   | 14   | 10   | 10   | 13   |
| SCHOLARS           | ~    | ~    | ~    | 20   | 41   | NA   | 65   | 40   | 40   | 60   |

SOURCES: PROCEEDINGS UNION BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, 1850-1851  
PROCEEDINGS PAMLICO BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, 1852-1859

TABLE 4  
GREENVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH STATISTICS  
1860-1869

|                    | 1860 | 1861 | 1862 | 1863 | 1864 | 1865 | 1866 | 1867 | 1868 | 1869 |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| CHURCH MEMBERSHIP: |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| # WHITE            | 66   | 61   | 61   | 56   | 54   | 60   | NA   | 76   | NA   | NA   |
| # BLACK            | 28   | 28   | 28   | 18   | 18   | 29   | NA   | 1    | NA   | NA   |
| TOTAL NUMBER       | 94   | 89   | 89   | 74   | 72   | 89   | NA   | *77  | NA   | 72   |
| BAPTISMS           | 2    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | 5    | NA   | 4    | NA   | ~    |
| BY LETTER          | 3    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | NA   | 3    | NA   | 5    |
| EXCLUDED           | 5    | 1    | ~    | ~    | ~    | 1    | NA   | ~    | NA   | ~    |
| RESTORED           | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | NA   | ~    | NA   | ~    |
| SABBATH SCHOOL     |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| TEACHERS           | 22   | 16   | ~    | 6    | 8    | 6    | NA   | NA   | NA   | 10   |
| SCHOLARS           | 84   | 46   | ~    | 28   | 30   | 25   | NA   | NA   | NA   | 50   |

\* THIRTY-ONE DISMISSED BY LETTER

SOURCE: PROCEEDINGS PAMLICO BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, 1860-1869

TABLE 5  
GREENVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH STATISTICS  
1870-1879

|                    | 1870 | 1871 | 1872 | 1873 | 1874 | 1875 | 1876 | 1877 | 1878 | 1879 |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| CHURCH MEMBERSHIP: |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| # WHITE            | NA   | 77   | NA   | NA   | 65   | NA   | 62   | 58   | NA   | ~    |
| # BLACK            | NA   | 0    | NA   | NA   | 0    | NA   | 0    | 0    | NA   | ~    |
| MALE               | ~    | ~    | NA   | NA   | 13   | NA   | 9    | 8    | NA   | 10   |
| FEMALE             | ~    | ~    | NA   | NA   | 52   | NA   | 53   | 50   | NA   | 53   |
| TOTAL NUMBER       | 71   | 77   | NA   | NA   | 65   | NA   | 62   | 58   | NA   | 63   |
| BAPTISMS           | ~    | 9    | NA   | NA   | 4    | NA   | ~    | ~    | NA   | ~    |
| BY LETTER          | 4    | 2    | NA   | NA   | ~    | NA   | 4    | 1    | NA   | 1    |
| EXCLUDED           | ~    | ~    | NA   | NA   | ~    | NA   | 4    | ~    | NA   | ~    |
| RESTORED           | ~    | ~    | NA   | NA   | ~    | NA   | ~    | ~    | NA   | ~    |
| SABBATH SCHOOL     |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| TEACHERS           | NA   | ~    | NA   | NA   | 12   | NA   | NA   | 8    | NA   | 10   |
| SCHOLARS           | NA   | ~    | NA   | NA   | 64   | NA   | NA   | 56   | NA   | 66   |

SOURCES:

PROCEEDINGS PAMLICO BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, 1870-1871

PROCEEDINGS TAR RIVER BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, 1872-1879

TABLE 6  
GREENVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH STATISTICS  
1880-1889

|                    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| CHURCH MEMBERSHIP: |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| MALE               | 10   | 10   | 13   | 20   | 17   | 21   | NA   | NA   | NA   | 12   |
| FEMALE             | 53   | 53   | 54   | 58   | 58   | 66   | NA   | NA   | NA   | 74   |
| TOTAL NUMBER       | 63   | 63   | 67   | 78   | 75   | 87   | 100  | 94   | 94   | 86   |
| BAPTISMS           | ~    | 4    | 3    | 7    | ~    | 12   | 12   | ~    | 15   | 4    |
| BY LETTER          | ~    | ~    | ~    | 6    | ~    | 3    | 4    | 4    | 1    | 1    |
| EXCLUDED           | ~    | 1    | ~    | ~    | ~    | 3    | 3    | ~    | 2    | 1    |
| RESTORED           | ~    | ~    | 1    | ~    | ~    | 1    | ~    | ~    | 1    | 1    |
| SABBATH SCHOOL     |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| OFFICERS/TEACHERS  | 9    | 11   | 11   | 11   | 14   | 14   | 17   | 15   | 16   | 13   |
| SCHOLARS           | 60   | 60   | 65   | 95   | 80   | 106  | 107  | 100  | 99   | 94   |
|                    | 1880 | 1881 | 1882 | 1883 | 1884 | 1885 | 1886 | 1887 | 1888 | 1889 |

SOURCE:

PROCEEDINGS TAR RIVER BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, 1880-1889

TABLE 7  
THE MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH STATISTICS  
1890-1899

|                    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| CHURCH MEMBERSHIP: |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| MALE               | 28   | 33   | 50   | 39   | 47   | 43   | 38   | 46   | 37   | NA   |
| FEMALE             | 64   | 67   | 81   | 75   | 75   | 76   | 67   | 71   | 76   | NA   |
| TOTAL NUMBER       | 92   | 100  | 131  | 114  | 122  | 119  | 105  | 117  | 113  | NA   |
| BAPTISMS           | 10   | 12   | 13   | ~    | 6    | 3    | ~    | 7    | 12   | NA   |
| BY LETTER          | 5    | 13   | 7    | 1    | 11   | 7    | 6    | 12   | 5    | NA   |
| EXCLUDED           | 4    | 2    | 1    | 3    | 1    | 6    | 4    | ~    | 1    | NA   |
| RESTORED           | 5    | ~    | ~    | ~    | 3    | ~    | ~    | 1    | ~    | NA   |
| SABBATH SCHOOL     |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| OFFICERS/TEACHERS  | 14   | 14   | 10   | 9    | 8    | 8    | 8    | 8    | 10   | NA   |
| SCHOLARS           | 100  | 100  | 80   | 80   | 80   | 80   | 104  | 100  | 100  | NA   |
|                    | 1890 | 1891 | 1892 | 1893 | 1894 | 1895 | 1896 | 1897 | 1898 | 1899 |

SOURCE:

PROCEEDINGS TAR RIVER BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, 1890-1899



TABLE 8  
THE MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH STATISTICS  
1900-1909

| CHURCH MEMBERSHIP: |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| MALE               | 39   | 39   | 43   | 42   | 62   | 64   | 66   | 71   | 70   | 63   |
| FEMALE             | 79   | 78   | 78   | 83   | 107  | 107  | 107  | 114  | 124  | 115  |
| TOTAL NUMBER       | 118  | 117  | 121  | 125  | 169  | 171  | 173  | 185  | 194  | 178  |
| BAPTISMS           | 3    | ~    | 12   | 14   | 25   | 11   | ~    | 8    | 3    | 5    |
| BY LETTER          | 8    | 4    | ~    | 5    | 5    | 3    | 7    | 8    | 10   | 19   |
| EXCLUDED           | 1    | 1    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | 17   |
| RESTORED           | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | 1    | 1    |
| SUNDAY SCHOOL      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| OFFICERS/TEACHERS  | 12   | 10   | 12   | 14   | 15   | 17   | 18   | 21   | 19   | 17   |
| SCHOLARS (PUPILS)  | 90   | 98   | 115  | 110  | 150  | 159  | 170  | 174  | 240  | 331  |
| TOTAL ENROLLMENT   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | 259  | 348  |
|                    | 1900 | 1901 | 1902 | 1903 | 1904 | 1905 | 1906 | 1907 | 1908 | 1909 |

SOURCES:

PROCEEDINGS TAR RIVER BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, 1900-1907  
MINUTES ROANOKE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, 1908-1909

TABLE 9  
THE MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH STATISTICS  
1910-1919

| CHURCH MEMBERSHIP: |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| MALE               | 62   | 87   | 90   | 94   | 109  | NA   | 96   | NA   | 82   | 87   |
| FEMALE             | 115  | 118  | 152  | 160  | 165  | NA   | 125  | NA   | 120  | 106  |
| TOTAL NUMBER       | 177  | 205  | 242  | 254  | 274  | *208 | 221  | 215  | 202  | 193  |
| BAPTISMS           | ~    | 7    | 30   | 9    | 12   | 6    | 9    | 2    | 23   | 5    |
| BY LETTER          | 6    | 20   | 14   | 10   | 19   | 25   | 14   | 17   | 15   | 12   |
| EXCLUDED           | ~    | ~    | ~    | 1    | ~    | 4    | ~    | 2    | 50   | 1    |
| RESTORED           | ~    | 1    | 4    | 1    | 2    | ~    | ~    | ~    | 9    | 1    |
| SUNDAY SCHOOL      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| OFFICERS/TEACHERS  | 18   | 19   | 21   | 22   | 21   | 17   | 18   | 17   | 18   | NA   |
| SCHOLARS (PUPILS)  | 350  | 184  | 216  | 240  | 220  | 160  | 207  | 218  | 177  | NA   |
| TOTAL ENROLLMENT   | 368  | 203  | 237  | 262  | 241  | 177  | 225  | 235  | 195  | NA   |
|                    | 1910 | 1911 | 1912 | 1913 | 1914 | 1915 | 1916 | 1917 | 1918 | 1919 |

\* SIXTY-FIVE DISMISSED BY LETTER

SOURCE:

MINUTES ROANOKE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, 1910-1919

TABLE 10  
THE MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH STATISTICS  
1920-1929

|                    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| CHURCH MEMBERSHIP: |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| MALE               | NA   | NA   | NA   | NA   | NA   | NA   | NA   | NA   | NA   | NA   |
| FEMALE             | NA   | NA   | NA   | NA   | NA   | NA   | NA   | NA   | NA   | NA   |
| TOTAL NUMBER       | 211  | 225  | 235  | 261  | 271  | 273  | 296  | 355  | 370  | 288  |
| BAPTISMS           | 12   | 15   | 5    | 27   | 12   | 13   | 12   | 22   | 9    | 2    |
| BY LETTER          | 11   | 12   | 19   | 9    | 9    | 9    | 21   | 41   | 26   | 11   |
| EXCLUDED           | 10   | 4    | 1    | ~    | ~    | ~    | 1    | ~    | ~    | ~    |
| RESTORED           | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | 4    | 1    | 1    | 2    | 1    | ~    |
| SUNDAY SCHOOL      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| OFFICERS/TEACHERS  | 18   | 18   | 23   | 19   | 20   | 18   | NA   | NA   | NA   | 28   |
| SCHOLARS (PUPILS)  | 148  | 206  | 198  | 325  | 297  | 369  | NA   | NA   | NA   | 397  |
| TOTAL ENROLLMENT   | 166  | 224  | 221  | 344  | 317  | 387  | NA   | NA   | NA   | 425  |
|                    | 1920 | 1921 | 1922 | 1923 | 1924 | 1925 | 1926 | 1927 | 1928 | 1929 |

SOURCE:

MINUTES ROANOKE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, 1920-1929

TABLE 11  
THE MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH STATISTICS  
1930-1939

|                       |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|-----------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| CHURCH MEMBERSHIP:    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| TOTAL NUMBER          | 308  | 339  | 340  | 358  | 362  | 326  | 349  | 355  | 359  | 418  |
| BAPTISMS              | 22   | 25   | 1    | 15   | 2    | 14   | 23   | 3    | 11   | 27   |
| BY LETTER             | 21   | 20   | 15   | 22   | 7    | 21   | 11   | 12   | 10   | 45   |
| STATEMENTS            | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | 1    | ~    | 1    | 8    |
| RESTORED              | ~    | 1    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    |
| ERASURES              | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | 30   | ~    | ~    | ~    | 1    |
| SUNDAY SCHOOL         |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| OFFICERS/TEACHERS     | 32   | 29   | 23   | 33   | 20   | 22   | 34   | 24   | 24   | *6   |
| SCHOLARS (PUPILS)     | 367  | 344  | 393  |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| TOTAL ENROLLMENT      | 399  | 373  | 416  | 447  | 381  | 359  | 382  | 289  | 401  | 369  |
| VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL | ~    | 132  | NA   | NA   | NA   | NA   | 350  | NA   | NA   | 107  |
| WMU                   | ~    | 72   | 105  | 73   | 96   | 169  | 155  | 145  | 132  | 168  |
| BTU                   | ~    | 52   | 54   | 60   | 18   | 25   | NA   | 37   | 40   | 133  |
|                       | 1930 | 1931 | 1932 | 1933 | 1934 | 1935 | 1936 | 1937 | 1938 | 1939 |

\* OFFICERS ONLY

SOURCE:

MINUTES ROANOKE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, 1930-1939

TABLE 12  
THE MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH STATISTICS  
1940-1949

|                       |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|-----------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| CHURCH MEMBERSHIP:    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| TOTAL NUMBER          | 450  | 470  | 521  | 518  | 506  | 507  | 538  | 567  | 582  | 603  |
| RESIDENT              | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | 404  | 437  | 407  | 414  |
| NON-RESIDENT          | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | 135  | 125  | 134  | 130  | 175  | 189  |
| BAPTISMS              | 6    | 11   | 20   | 15   | 5    | 12   | 25   | 13   | 31   | 30   |
| BY LETTER             | 51   | 37   | 40   | 27   | 12   | 24   | 43   | 35   | 30   | 25   |
| STATEMENTS            | 2    | 2    | ~    | 3    | ~    | 2    | 12   | 2    | ~    | ~    |
| RESTORED              | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | 3    | 1    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    |
| ERASURES              | ~    | ~    | ~    | 21   | 2    | 8    | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    |
| SUNDAY SCHOOL         |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| OFFICERS/TEACHERS     | *4   | 31   | *6   | *5   | *5   | 12   | *4   | *5   | *5   | *5   |
| TOTAL ENROLLMENT      | 548  | 439  | 382  | 352  | 339  | 350  | 362  | 255  | 423  | 520  |
| VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL | 150  | 135  | 100  | 400  | 113  | NA   | 85   | 285  | 105  | 90   |
| WMU                   | 163  | 201  | 156  | 162  | 179  | 174  | 192  | 200  | 178  | 199  |
| BTU                   | 126  | 99   | 80   | 84   | 46   | 66   | 89   | 85   | 75   | 81   |
|                       | 1940 | 1941 | 1942 | 1943 | 1944 | 1945 | 1946 | 1947 | 1948 | 1949 |

SOURCE: MINUTES ROANOKE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, 1940-1949

TABLE 13  
THE MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH STATISTICS  
1950-1959

|                       |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|-----------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| CHURCH MEMBERSHIP:    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| TOTAL NUMBER          | 641  | 649  | 664  | 678  | 691  | 701  | 706  | 705  | 717  | 729  |
| RESIDENT              | 460  | 435  | 462  | 487  | 480  | 488  | 504  | 503  | 505  | 517  |
| NON-RESIDENT          | 181  | 214  | 202  | 191  | 211  | 213  | 202  | 202  | 212  | 212  |
| BAPTISMS              | 20   | 20   | 21   | 18   | 20   | 8    | 16   | 13   | 6    | 30   |
| LETTERS               | 35   | 21   | 41   | 39   | 32   | 49   | 41   | 36   | 36   | 24   |
| SUNDAY SCHOOL         |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| OFFICERS              | *5   | 4    | 5    | 5    | 4    | 4    | 5    | 5    | 5    | 4    |
| TOTAL ENROLLMENT      | 512  | 464  | 545  | 572  | 637  | 660  | 641  | 715  | 670  | 658  |
| VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL | 105  | 95   | 90   | 135  | 196  | 157  | 162  | 124  | 159  | 119  |
| WMU                   | 199  | 154  | 164  | 167  | 191  | 228  | 178  | 219  | 241  | 220  |
| BTU                   | 82   | 86   | 60   | 126  | 142  | 130  | 64   | 66   | 63   | 129  |
| MUSIC MINISTRY        | ~    | ~    | ~    | ~    | 30   | 30   | ~    | ~    | 37   | 47   |
| BROTHERHOOD           | ~    | ~    | 54   | 44   | 44   | 44   | NA   | NA   | NA   | NA   |
|                       | 1950 | 1951 | 1952 | 1953 | 1954 | 1955 | 1956 | 1957 | 1958 | 1959 |

SOURCES: MINUTES ROANOKE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, 1950-1954  
MINUTES SOUTH ROANOKE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, 1955-1959

TABLE 14  
THE MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH STATISTICS  
1960-1969

| CHURCH MEMBERSHIP:    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|-----------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| TOTAL NUMBER          | 711 | 724 | 720 | 744 | 725 | 715 | 733 | 739 | 725 | 715 |
| RESIDENT              | 499 | 512 | NA  | NA  | NA  | NA  | NA  | 500 | 500 | 499 |
| NON-RESIDENT          | 212 | 212 | NA  | NA  | NA  | NA  | NA  | 239 | 225 | 216 |
| BAPTISMS              | 11  | 14  | 17  | 12  | 20  | 8   | 28  | 11  | 10  | 7   |
| LETTERS               | 15  | 35  | 43  | 50  | 46  | 26  | 30  | 18  | 11  | 3   |
| SUNDAY SCHOOL         |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| OFFICERS              | 4   | 5   | 5   | 4   | 4   | 4   | 4   | 4   | 3   | 4   |
| TOTAL ENROLLMENT      | 626 | 627 | 560 | 586 | 348 | 496 | 260 | 286 | 364 | 367 |
| VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL | 114 | 117 | 103 | 118 | 168 | 85  | 112 | 118 | 95  | 68  |
| WMU                   | 211 | 234 | 209 | 233 | 213 | 212 | 204 | 202 | 182 | 119 |
| BTU                   | 85  | 71  | 81  | 68  | 97  | 73  | 76  | 78  | 77  | ~   |
| MUSIC MINISTRY        | 46  | 25  | NA  | NA  | NA  | 20  | 12  | 68  | 27  | 38  |
| BROTHERHOOD           | NA  | NA  | NA  | NA  | NA  | NA  | NA  | 57  | 61  | NA  |

1960 1961 1962 1963 1964 1965 1966 1967 1968 1969

SOURCE:

MINUTES SOUTH ROANOKE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, 1960-1969

TABLE 15  
THE MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH STATISTICS  
1970-1979

| CHURCH MEMBERSHIP:    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|-----------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| TOTAL NUMBER          | 707 | 701 | 500 | 510 | 542 | 524 | 515 | NA  | NA  | 574 |
| RESIDENT              | 500 | 501 | 430 | 442 | 476 | 461 | 455 | NA  | NA  | 574 |
| NON-RESIDENT          | 207 | 200 | 70  | 68  | 66  | 63  | 60  | NA  | NA  | NA  |
| BAPTISMS              | 5   | 10  | 3   | 5   | 14  | 4   | 5   | NA  | NA  | 12  |
| OTHER ADDITIONS       | 14  | 8   | 9   | 24  | 41  | 15  | 14  | NA  | NA  | 54  |
| SUNDAY SCHOOL         |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| OFFICERS              | 4   | 12  | NA  | 5   | 4   | 5   | 5   | 4   | 5   | 6   |
| TOTAL ENROLLMENT      | 316 | 258 | 246 | 285 | 238 | 204 | 216 | 281 | 280 | 318 |
| VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL | 60  | 55  | 133 | NA  | 81  | 227 | NA  | 150 | 68  | 100 |
| WMU                   | 139 | NA  | NA  | NA  | NA  | 145 | NA  | 127 | 153 | NA  |
| MUSIC MINISTRY        | NA  | NA  | 20  | 83  | NA  | 54  | NA  | 64  | 75  | 112 |
| BROTHERHOOD           | NA  | 6   | NA  | 36  | 36  | 41  | 107 | 107 | 52  | 63  |

1970 1971 1972 1973 1974 1975 1976 1977 1978 1979

SOURCE:

MINUTES SOUTH ROANOKE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, 1970-1979



TABLE 16  
THE MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH STATISTICS  
1980-1989

|                       |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|-----------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| CHURCH MEMBERSHIP:    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| TOTAL NUMBER          | 724  | 584  | 519  | 454  | 573  | 646  | NA   | NA   | 651  | 677  |
| RESIDENT              | 624  | 486  | 519  | 354  | 573  | 595  | NA   | NA   | 584  | 598  |
| NON-RESIDENT          | 100  | 98   | NA   | 100  | NA   | 51   | NA   | NA   | 67   | 79   |
| BAPTISMS              | 8    | 18   | 8    | 9    | 18   | 9    | NA   | NA   | 8    | 11   |
| OTHER ADDITIONS       | 63   | 8    | 33   | 4    | 8    | 39   | NA   | NA   | 26   | 32   |
| SUNDAY SCHOOL         |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| OFFICERS              | 6    | 6    | 6    | 5    | 7    | 7    | 6    | 6    | 5    | 5    |
| TOTAL ENROLLMENT      | 404  | 369  | 606  | 665  | 523  | 525  | 569  | 566  | 539  | 516  |
| VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL | 100  | 124  | 130  | 76   | 149  | 125  | 168  | 150  | 167  | 182  |
| WMU                   | NA   | NA   | 99   | NA   | 114  | 128  | 146  | 166  | 132  | 145  |
| MUSIC MINISTRY        | 76   | 124  | 130  | 134  | 81   | 81   | 64   | 116  | 114  | 207  |
| BROTHERHOOD           | 63   | 45   | 55   | 109  | 56   | 63   | 47   | 42   | 57   | 90   |
|                       | 1980 | 1981 | 1982 | 1983 | 1984 | 1985 | 1986 | 1987 | 1988 | 1989 |

SOURCE:

MINUTES SOUTH ROANOKE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, 1980-1989

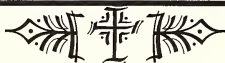
TABLE 17  
THE MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH STATISTICS  
1990-2000

|                       |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|-----------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| CHURCH MEMBERSHIP:    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| TOTAL NUMBER          | 720  | 786  | 816  | 935  | 919  | 857  | 817  | 940  | 910  | 888  | 881  |
| RESIDENT              | 640  | 706  | 736  | 695  | 750  | 722  | 683  | 766  | 725  | 692  | 619  |
| NON-RESIDENT          | 80   | 80   | 80   | 240  | 308  | 135  | 134  | 174  | 185  | 196  | 162  |
| BAPTISMS              | 22   | 27   | 18   | 29   | 12   | 18   | 11   | 17   | 10   | 16   | 26   |
| OTHER ADDITIONS       | 48   | 61   | 50   | 56   | 21   | 20   | 25   | 22   | 13   | 23   | 41   |
| SUNDAY SCHOOL         |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| OFFICERS              | 5    | 6    | 6    | 5    | 5    | 5    | 7    | 7    | 7    | 8    | 7    |
| TOTAL ENROLLMENT      | 567  | 657  | 673  | 713  | 539  | 464  | 596  | 480  | 523  | 488  | 536  |
| VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL | 130  | 175  | 140  | 157  | 145  | 120  | 110  | 120  | 149  | 120  | 85   |
| WMU                   | 259  | 158  | 164  | 150  | 144  | 63   | 75   | 81   | 99   | 54   | 92   |
| MUSIC MINISTRY        | 235  | 254  | 261  | 260  | 207  | 180  | 120  | 141  | 176  | 156  | 169  |
| BROTHERHOOD           | 36   | 63   | 38   | 55   | 44   | 43   | 41   | 67   | 61   | 45   | 40   |
|                       | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 |

SOURCE:

MINUTES SOUTH ROANOKE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, 1990-2000

# Bibliography



Church records and documents were basic in compiling this history of The Memorial Baptist Church. Church conference minutes for the periods 1867–1886, 1925–1953, and 1971 to the present were available in their original form at the church. Minutes of the Board of Deacons (1937–1961 and 1971–present), Ladies Aid Society (1903–1907), and the Woman's Missionary Society (1937–1959) were also on file in the church. Church bulletins noting the order of worship and reporting demographic information such as names of new members, marriages, births, deaths, and a calendar of church meetings and activities were in the church files. These bulletins date from the early 1920s, but wide gaps exist in the holdings except for a complete set of bound copies for the period 1944–1954. Church newsletters over the last three decades of the twentieth century were informative, but the file had missing issues.

Primary sources away from the church building were the proceedings and minutes of the Baptist associations of the Neuse (1827–1842), Union (1844–1851), Pamlico (1852–1871), Tar River (1872–1907), Roanoke (1908–1954), and the South Roanoke (1955–present) as well as the annual meetings of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. These sources were located in the Ethel Taylor Crittenden Collection in Baptist History at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. These records provided church statistics on membership, baptisms, deaths, additions, and losses. Other records examined at the Baptist history collection included the James Dunn Hufham Papers, the Thomas Carrick Papers, and the *Biblical Recorder*.

The Johnetta Webb Spilman Papers and Ernelle Brooks Papers in the East Carolina University Manuscript Collection in Greenville, North Carolina, yielded helpful biographical information about these two twentieth century women. The Ernelle Brooks Papers revealed the work of a missionary on assignment to Africa.

Newspaper sources consulted were the *Eastern Reflector* for the period 1882–1894 and the *Daily Reflector* from 1895 to 1915 and from 1919 to the

present. Both of these Greenville papers are available on microfilm in the North Carolina Room, East Carolina University.

Personal interviews were held with long-time church members Maggie Stroud and James F. Davenport, Jr., and with Mildred Upchurch, widow of Rev. Percy B. Upchurch, on events in the life of the church. Combined, their remarks extended from the World War I era to the 1990s. Also, telephone interviews were conducted with Anne Nichols Moore, Marcia Pleasants, Sherry Dendy, and Kay Godwin on specific topics and church programs.

There are two unpublished works on the history of The Memorial Baptist Church. One is a handwritten seven-page "History of the Memorial Baptist Church of Greenville, North Carolina," prepared by Pastor H. Frederick Jones for the centennial anniversary in 1927. The second work is John Neal Tolson's master's degree thesis, "A History of The Memorial Baptist Church" submitted to the Department of History, East Carolina University in 1966. Tolson traced the church's history to 1954, the end of Rev. Richard Hardaway's pastorate.

Secondary sources on Baptists in North Carolina used in the preparation of this congregational history included George Washington Paschal's two volumes on the *History of North Carolina Baptists* (1930, 1955); M. A. Huggins, *A History of North Carolina Baptists, 1727-1932* (1967); and a recent forty-page publication entitled *Like Drops of Morning Dew: A Concise History of North Carolina Baptists* (1999) by Don Y. Gordon. Also used was *The Growth of One Hundred Years of North Carolina Baptists, 1830-1930*, a publication of the addresses made by prominent Baptists at the centennial session of the Baptist State Convention held in Greenville, North Carolina, on March 26-27, 1930. Robert M. Cahoon's documentary essay on *Religion and the American Revolution* (1976) showcased three eighteenth-century documents relating to Baptists. *The North Carolina Baptist Historical Papers* published between 1896 and 1900 by the North Carolina Baptist Historical Society included a trove of information on the early Baptists from the colonial period through a portion of the nineteenth century. Week's study of the *Religious Development in the Province of North Carolina* (1892) was helpful in highlighting reasons for settlers migrating to the colony. The first few chapters of *A History of Original Free Will Baptists* (1996) by Michael Pelt noted the differences between general and particular Baptists in eighteenth-century North Carolina. These sources notwithstanding, a history of North Carolina Baptists in the twentieth century is sorely needed.

Periodical literature helpful in this congregational history included Henry S. Stroupe's insightful study of social control exerted by North Car-

olina Baptist churches from 1772 to 1908. The article entitled "Cite Them Both To Attend the Next Church Conference" (1975) provided a broader context for the analysis of the Rules of Decorum adopted in 1828 by the Greenville Baptist Church and enforced throughout much of the nineteenth century. Also, the article by John L. Bell, Jr., on "Baptists and the Negro in North Carolina during Reconstruction" (1965) was instructive in an examination of the relationship between white and African American members in the Greenville Baptist Church in the post-Civil War years.

For the anti-mission Baptists, Byron Cecil Lambert's study, *The Rise of the Anti-Mission Baptists, 1800-1840* (1959; reprint, 1980) was valuable in terms of the leaders and temper of the movement. In North Carolina, Sylvester Hassell included *The History of the Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association* in the large work on the *History of the Church of God* (1886; reprint, 1973).

General reference works on Baptists used in this congregational history were the *Dictionary of Baptists in America* (1994) and the multi-volume *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography* (1994). Succinct articles on eighteenth-century Baptist preachers in the latter dictionary were helpful. The three-volume *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists* (1958, 1971, 1982) included sections on the history, organization, and work of Baptists in North Carolina.

Sidney E. Ahstrom's seminal survey entitled *A Religious History of the American People* (1972) was especially valuable for general background knowledge on religion as a main current in American culture and thought. It was particularly useful for comparatively viewing Baptists in the different geographic regions of the country at different time periods as well as seeing Baptists in relationship to other religious movements.

Anyone who wants to write a congregational history would do well to keep close at hand James P. Wind's *Places of Worship* (1990). Published by the American Association for State and Local History, the book is full of questions for the historian to ask of the materials and sources and practical suggestions on how to proceed with the research and writing. It is a how-to book with substance and suggestions.



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