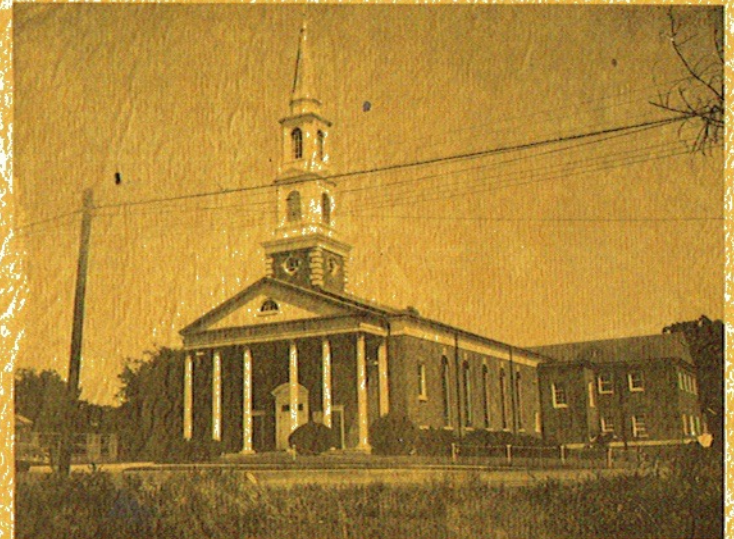


FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

SCOTTSBORO, ALA.

CELEBRATES 100th BIRTHDAY

1868 — 1968



**A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PAST
ONE HUNDRED YEARS**

The Story of
THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
of
Scottsboro , Alabama

1868 - 1968

This year, 1968, marks the one-hundredth anniversary of the First Baptist church of Scottsboro. We hope to exemplify in this brief history the progress made by the dedicated men and women of the Scottsboro Baptist church during its one-hundred years existence. Before a true history of the church can be written it is necessary to briefly discuss the events which led to its establishment.

This year marks the 160th anniversary of the beginning of Baptist work in Alabama, and the 145th anniversary of the founding of the Alabama Baptist Convention. The first Baptist church in Alabama was the Flint River church located near Huntsville. This first church was founded on October 2, 1808. The Alabama Baptist State Convention was organized on October 28, 1823 at the Salem Church near Greensboro, Alabama. The messengers who attended this convention came from small churches in widely scattered pioneer communities throughout the state. The first act of the newly founded convention was to begin the work of state missions by appointing fifteen missionaries to travel throughout the newly developed state preaching the Gospel and founding churches in the pioneer communities. This was the beginning of state missions and the expansion of the Baptist cause in Alabama.

With the re-discovery a few years ago of the original minutes of the first fifteen sessions of the Tennessee River Association of Baptists we can begin the study of the history of the First Baptist church of Scottsboro. This record of two-hundred pages, well written in long-hand, begins with the year 1853. In this year at the Friendship Church in Jackson County, the Tennessee River Association of Baptists was formed. Delegates representing eleven churches were present at the first session of which Joseph A. Martin was moderator and D. Brooks clerk.

In September, 1868, the Missionary Baptist church was organized in Scottsboro, by the Rev. J.J. Beeson, a missionary from the Tennessee River Association. The church was first organized as a mission in affiliation with the Centre Point Baptist church. The Scottsboro Baptists were represented at the eleventh session of the Tennessee River Association at Mr. Nebo in October 1868. The delegates from the Scottsboro church were William Trammel, John Whitfield, and J.O. Robertson. The minutes of this session states that the interest of the people in the Scottsboro church was high but that many difficulties had arisen. The church also asked for more frequent visits from the preachers of the Association.

When the Baptist church was organized, there was only one church building in Scottsboro. The building was the property of Rev. T.J. Wood, who allowed the different denominations to worship in that building, free of charge. In July, 1869, the editor and publisher of the *Southern Industrial Herald* in Scottsboro, Alexander Snodgrass, furnished the following plan for the erection of a new church building in Scottsboro: "Let each denomination furnish all the means possible to build one church first, to be used, under proper regulation, indiscriminately by all denominations for a stipulated time, say two years after completion with the further stipulation that at the expiration of that time the denomination having the largest amount of investment shall extinguish the claims of the others by refunding the amount of means furnished to enable them to erect churches of their own." This suggestion, in part, was later utilized by the churches.

On December 16, 1869, the English brick masons who were constructing the first Jackson County courthouse in Scottsboro were contracted by the Missionary Baptist to build a brick church. All persons who had subscribed for the purpose of building this church were asked to advance one half of the amount subscribed to pay for the brick and other materials that had already been purchased. On April, 1870, the Baptist church awarded a \$1200.00 contract to W.M. Miller and the English brick masons for the addition of one foot to the first story and to erect a second story on their church building. Several months later the stockholders of the Church and Hall Building Association of Scottsboro purchased the Baptists interest in the building. The stockholders of this association were Miles Moody, John Snodgrass, W.H. Robinson, James Minton, Jasper J. Jones, and John W. Parks. The new building was ready for use on January 1, 1871. The managing committee of the stockholders stipulated that the building would be rented to the highest bidder for one year, the basement would be reserved for a school, and the top floor would be reserved for general church purposes on Saturdays and Sundays. The town's people soon adopted the name of "The Brick Church" for the new building, and here the Baptist worshiped for the next seven years along with the other denominations. The following is from the church directory found in the *Alabama Herald*, a Scottsboro newspaper, for August, 1872: "The Brick Church is occupied on the first sabbath in each month by Rev. J.J. Beeson, Missionary Baptist; the second and fourth sabbaths by Rev. E.J. Stockton, Cumberland Presbyterian; and on the third sabbath by Rev. W.T. Andrews and Rev. M.P. Brown, Methodist."

In January, 1878, the Baptist began construction on a new church in Scottsboro on the site of our present church. The contract called for the erection of a building thirty by fifty feet with a basement eight feet high to be used for school purposes. The church was fourteen feet high from ground level. This new Scottsboro Baptist church was completed in October, 1878. The first service was held in the new church on October 6, 1878 by Rev. A.J. Hardin. Rev. Hardin was filling the pulpit in the absence of the regular pastor, W.J. Couch. After the completion of the new church the membership gradually began increasing. The church received its first organ in November, 1883. By 1900 the Baptist church was considered to have one of the largest memberships of all the churches in Scottsboro. This church served the Baptist in Scottsboro until May, 1906, when the church voted in favor of a mass renovation of the building. Construction began in June of the same year and was completed in February, 1907. Rev. W.T. Davis preached the first sermon in the new church on February 10, 1907. The Baptist held worship services in the Cumberland Presbyterian church in Scottsboro during the time their building was under construction. On November 22, 1906, the Baptist purchased the Kirby home thereby creating the first Baptist parsonage in Scottsboro.

In February, 1901, the Rev. W.Y. Quisenberry came to the Scottsboro Baptist church with a proposition from the General Board of Missions of the Southern Baptist Convention to purchase the Tri-State Normal University from the city of Scottsboro. The church voted to make contributions toward the purchase of the university and on July 24, 1901, Virgil Bouldin and W.B. Campbell completed transactions whereby the Southern Baptist Convention purchased the Tri-State Normal University for \$4,000.00 and the name was immediately changed to the Baptist Institute. The first principal of the Baptist Institute was J.C. Dawson, later president of Howard College (now Samford University) in Birmingham. Other principals of the school until 1907 were M.L. Yarbough and J.M. Bledsoe. In June, 1907, the Baptist Institute was purchased by the city of Scottsboro and in turn was given to the State of Alabama for the location of the county high school.

On November 16, 1949, a fire, which evidently started in the furnace room, virtually destroyed the church, all the furniture and equipment. Many valuable church records were also lost in this fire. The coals of the fire had not yet cooled when the Baptist had already adopted plans for the erection of the present church building. Shortly after the fire, several other churches in town offered the First Baptist congregation their own church facilities. The Jackson County High

School in Scottsboro, however, was accepted for the emergency use because it would not inconvenience other congregations and would also allow the regular hours of service to be continued by the church. This arrangement was used until the completion of the church in 1953. In March, 1950, the First Baptist church let the contract for the new church building to Kermit Bryars of Albertville, Alabama. The new church was dedicated on April 7, 1954. Dr. O.L. Minks laid the cornerstone for the \$225,000.00 structure. A new \$35,000 pastorium was dedicated on this date.

The present staff members include Rev. Thomas Mansell, Pastor; Rev. J. Homer Philpott, Associate Pastor-Minister of Education; Mr. Russell Herrington, Minister of Music-Youth. Mrs. Doris Sizemore serves as the Church Secretary and Mr. Derwood Rodgers as the Church Keeper.

The church leaders are as follows:

Trustees:

John Will Gay, W.B. Armstrong, H.O. Weeks

Active Deacons:

Doyle Maynor, Chairman	Bill Richardson
Waco Derrick	Ken Devers
John Maples	Johnny Gay
Sentell Dobbins	Bill Akin
J.W. Gay	H.O. Weeks
Jim McGinty	Cleve Childress
W.A. Murrain	Jack Livingston
Bill Hawkins	

Sunday School Superintendent: John C. Harris

Training Union Director: Mrs. Mary B. Brewer

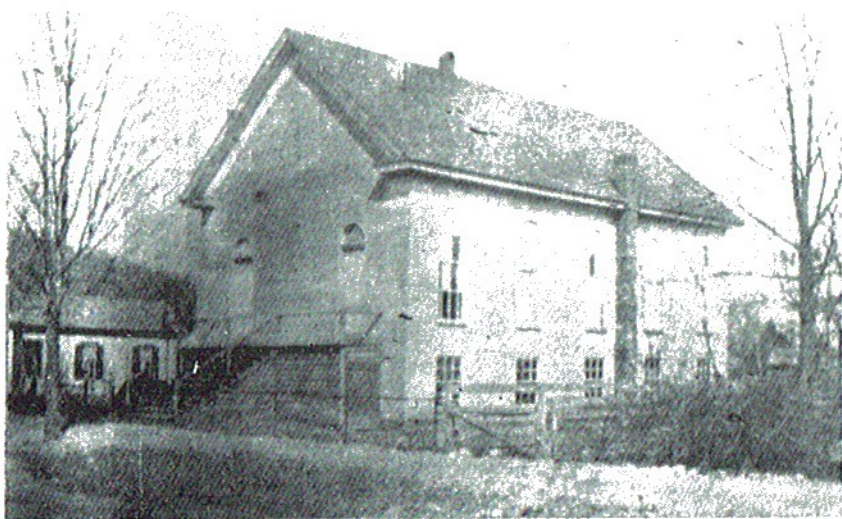
Brotherhood Director: Bill Akin

Woman's Missionary Society President: Miss Lilly Porter

Treasurer: Hoyt Bramblett



Rev. Jonathan J. Beeson
First Pastor



First Church Building
1868 to 1877



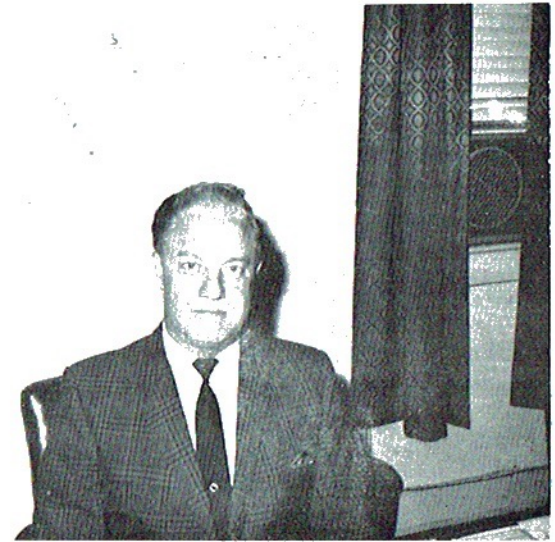
Second Church Building
1878 to 1949



Present Church Building
1950



Rev. Thomas Mansell
Pastor



Rev. J. Homer Philpott
Associate Pastor and Minister of Education



Mr. Russell Herrington
Minister of Music - Youth



Mrs. Doris Sizemore
Church Secretary



Derwood Rodgers
Church Keeper

The following is a list of the pastors who have served the First Baptist church of Scottsboro since its origin:

Rev. Jonathan J. Beeson	Rev. J.J. Justice
Rev. G.H. Moring	Rev. W.H. Pettus
Rev. T.B. Espy	Rev. W.R. Poindexter
Rev. J.O. Robertson	Rev. J.E. Williams
Rev. W.J. Couch	Rev. M.L. Harris
Rev. H.H. Horton	Rev. W.F. Brooks
Rev. Preston Brown	Rev. Burson
Rev. W.W. Lee	Dr. O.L. Minks
Rev. W.T. Davis	Dr. Talmadge Amberson
Rev. M. Brisco	Rev. Thomas Mansell
Rev. Winfield	

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