

**Article From the Frederick News Post**

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**“First Baptist Church Offers 70 Years of  
History”**

The following history of the First Baptist Church of Frederick was offered to parish members commemorating the 70th anniversary which was celebrated on Feb. 9, 1975.

The organization of The First Baptist Church of Frederick, was the direct effort of E. B. Hatcher, D.D., superintendent of State Missions. In the spring of 1904, Hatcher secured the services of Wm. Hammond Parker from East New Market on the Eastern Shore of Maryland to be a missionary on the field. Hatcher and Hammond conducted a series of special meetings in the Junior Fire Company Hall. Then in April 1904, the W.C.T.U. Hall was rented at 25 North Court Street and here a Sunday School and Sunday evening services were instituted.

In February 1905, S.L. Fraser of Hagerstown, conducted a series of meetings for the mission. These meetings were held at the Southern Methodist Church located on East Second Street. As a direct result of these meetings a church was constituted on February 9, 1905. Charter members were Rev. and Mrs. Wm. Hammond Parker, Mr. and Mrs. Singleton T. Stull, Mr. and Mrs. Robert F. Grubbs, Miss Nena M. Derr, Mrs. Annie E. Bitzer, Mrs. Nettie Notnagle, Mrs. W. H. Steinhaus, Dr. James M. Goodman, Melvin E. Watkins, and Stanley Swartz. The following persons were baptized at First Baptist Church on Sunday afternoon at 4 p.m., Hagerstown: Mr. and Mrs. George Myers, Mr. and Mrs. Marshall Fogle, Mr. and Mrs. Michael

Houff, Mrs. James Goodman, Mrs. George Miller, and Miss Maude Baker.

A parcel of land was purchased on Dill Avenue from Mrs. S.T. Stull for \$500, however, Mr. Stull contributed \$300 toward the purchase price. Application was made to the Church Extension Society for \$5,000 to construct a building. The sum of \$3,500 was granted.

The following is an excerpt taken from a paper which was put into the first cornerstone of the first church:

"The church now has a membership of 25. The Sunday School was organized with nine pupils and now has an enrollment of 108. At the services attendant upon the laying of this cornerstone, this 24th day of September, 1905, a sermon was preached by Rev. S. L. Fraser, Pastor of First Church, Hagerstown, and Rev. E. B. Hatcher made an address and officiated at the laying of this cornerstone. Written by William Hammond Parker 12:45 p.m., September 24, 1905." (At this time there were six houses west of Bentz Street.)

Rev. Parker severed his relationship on November 31, 1907.

The second pastor was F. W. Putney, who came to the church March 1, 1908. He was married soon after coming to Frederick. He served as pastor for one year. Glenn McGregor came to Frederick as YMCA director and joined the church.

On April 25, 1909, the Rev. Alonzo D. Winters became the third pastor. He was ordained to the Gospel Ministry on October 26, 1909. His pastorate was fruitful and he remained with the church

until March, 1913.

The Rev. B. A. Bowers came to the church in September, 1914. During his pastorate two additional rooms were built to the parsonage and a modern heating plant was installed to service the church and parsonage. More than 100 members were received during his ministry. On April 30, 1916, Mr. Bowers resigned to become pastor of the First Church in Baltimore. The following living members joined church while Mr. Bowers was minister: Miss Ruth Houff, Mrs. Margaret McCanner, Mrs. Mildred Fisher, Mrs. Agnes Eyster, Mrs. Ethel Crum, and Mrs. Beatrice Miller.

The Rev. William Carson Royal was called as pastor effective August 15, 1916. During his first two years a floating indebtedness of \$650 and a mortgage of \$3,500 were paid; a classroom was built onto the church. The church had a graded Sunday School, Woman's Missionary Society, Ladies' Aid Society, Sunbeam Band, Royal Ambassador Chapter, Young Ladies Auxiliary, Junior Aid and Senior Young Peoples' Societies. During the 36 years of Rev. Royal's ministry, the membership grew and strengthened, a large new educational building and church auditorium (present buildings except the larger modern education building) were built at a cost in excess of \$110,000. Vacation Bible school was started.

Rev. Royal initiated the Maryland Baptist Summer Assembly in 1917. This assembly was held at Braddock Heights and then later at Hood College.

Rev. Royal retired from active leadership on August 31, 1952, because of

his health. The Royals remained in Frederick. In 1957 Mr. Royal, the longest-term pastor, died.

The Rev. Robert F. Woodward was called and became pastor, September 1, 1952. In the years he was with us our church sanctuary was redecorated, a zoned heating system was installed and improvements in Sunday School department rooms were made. Because of increased Sunday School attendance, the church voted on July 17, 1955, to secure a new parsonage and use the old parsonage at 219 Dill as a Children's Building. This change was at a cost of \$30,000.

In 1957 the church called Carlton E. Winters as Minister of Education. In this year, too, the longest term pastor, William C. Royal, died, after having been confined to bed or wheelchair since August, 1951, because of a stroke. Other ministers of education have been Robert L. Sessoms and Miss Jane Fout. In 1959 a monthly newsletter was started and is still mailed each month to all church members. Also in 1959, expansion continued by purchasing the house at 213 Dill Avenue from Lloyd C. Culler for \$15,000. In August of this year a mission was started in the South End Civic Association building. Pastor, Robert F. Woodward, preached at the services of the mission until the Rev. J. Thomas Shriener was called as pastor of the South End Church on December 13, 1959. First Baptist Church bought a parsonage on Carrollton Drive at a cost of about \$15,000 and gave it to this young church, along with over fifty of our members who served as leaders and teachers in

the new church.

It was in 1961 that the church was presented another opportunity to expand and secure adjacent land. The property at 220 W. Fifth St., immediately to the rear of the Sunday School building, was purchased for \$22,000. This is now a parking lot for church members and visitors. Also, the house was modernized and refurbished for use by the Custodian's family.

John M. Grove, 215 Dill Avenue, made a favorable proposal to the church in 1961 and his property was purchased over a period of two years for \$18,000.

The year 1962 was a banner year in expansion plans. The property at 211 Dill Avenue was purchased for \$15,000, and a committee began work in earnest on planning a new building for Sunday School, Training Union and other facilities for the church.

The ministry to the deaf began in 1962 with Mr. Frank Bryan acting as interpreter. In 1963 the church sponsored a Cuban refugee family. In June, 1965 Charles F. Bowers, architect, was authorized by the church to proceed with working drawings for the new building. Construction was started May 1, 1966. On July 5, 1967, the Rev. John W. Clough was called as Assistant Minister.

The new educational building was completed in the spring of 1967 and the older educational unit was remodeled to conform to the new building. The entire project including land, building, etc., cost in excess of \$400,000. The new building was dedicated in September of 1967. A tiny garden was created between the buildings in honor of the Pastor,

Robert F. Woodward.

In 1968 the Frederick County Day Care Center was established on the lower floor of the new building. This facility is managed by the Department of Social Services. Sunday School Secretary: Russell Crist was Sunday School secretary from 1914 until his death in 1951. Taft Brandenburg then became secretary and continues to serve. Alex Bryant is his assistant.

In 1968 the organ was rebuilt by the Moller Company a memorial to the late A. B. Collmus. In 1971 a new roof was installed on the sanctuary and the old educational building. In 1972 the sanctuary was completely redecorated. In 1973 the exterior of all the buildings was painted.

In August of 1972 Mr. Paul T. Bowen was called to be the Minister of Music and Youth.

After 21-½ years Robert F. Woodward resigned the pulpit to accept a call to the First Baptist Church of Winchester, Va., effective March 15, 1974.

On October 6, 1974, the Reverend Burnis D. Barrett assumed his duties as Pastor.

Present staff members are: Burnis D. Barrett, pastor; Paul T. Bowen, minister of music and youth; Mary K. Pigeon, church secretary; Stella F. Fields, financial secretary; Sharon H. LeGore, organist; Mrs. George M. Jacobs, dietician; Mrs. Claude Knill, nursery nurse; Mr. and Mrs. George M. Mehaffie, custodians; and Mrs. Alva Michael, assistant custodian.