

## **BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH**

According to Sevier County Baptist Association Minutes, Bethel Baptist Church was organized in 1804. It was not until 1891 that the church sent messengers (called delegates at the time), to the annual Association meeting. They were W. M. Dixon, G. C. Sharp, and John Kear. The Reverend J. W. H. Coker was pastor.

P. A. Headrick and Thomas Maples represented the church as messengers at the 1899 annual Association meeting. In 1900, the church sent the first woman messenger, Martha Kear, along with Reverend J. A. Thomas, John Kear, and A. G. W. Allen.

In 1901 Reverend Thomas, John Ferguson, T. M. Sharp, and William Dixon went with A. G. W. Allen and John Kear as messengers to the annual Association meeting which met with Bethel for one session. The 1902 annual letter reported salary for the pastor to be \$65. Reverend J. W. H. Coker was pastor and \$9.99 was given to foreign missions. In 1906 the church gave \$6.20 to foreign missions and \$5.41 to home missions.

By 1909 there were 123 members. G. C. Sharp served as church clerk and T. M. Sharp as Sunday School Superintendent. After a long pastorate by Reverend J. W. H. Coker, Reverend M. McCarter became pastor in 1910. Reverend I. N. Parrott accepted the call as pastor in 1911 while P. A. Headrick served as church clerk and W. T. Lowe as Sunday School Superintendent.

Reverend W. W. Bailey pastored Bethel from 1915 through 1920. Membership had grown to 192 when Reverend W. R. King became pastor in 1922. He led the church through 1925 and Reverend J. E. Hicks served as pastor through 1930. Reverend J. L. Carr came in 1932 followed by Reverend Walter Ownby in 1933. He was pastor through 1939 when C. E. Owens was Sunday School Superintendent.

Reverend Will Weaver became pastor in 1940 followed by Reverend Ernest Parrott who served from 1941 until 1945 when Reverend Glenn Whaley became pastor. He served the next three years.

In 1949 Reverend Ralph Galyon pastored the church for a year, Reverend L. E. Wilhoite from 1950 through 1952, Reverend John Fox from 1953 through 1956, Reverend Otha McCarter from 1957 through 1960, Reverend Robert Cody in 1961 and Reverend Walter Ownby from 1963 through 1965.

Reverend Otha McCarter came to the church as pastor in 1966 and served until 1970 when Reverend Glenn Whaley became pastor for three years followed by Reverend James Wilcox in 1973. Reverend Melvin Carr was called as pastor in June of 1974, and he remained through September 1987. In November 1987 Dr. Melvin Faulkner became pastor and served through November 1990 and Reverend Guy Milam, having accepted the pastorate in November of 1990 is pastor at this time, 1991.

Information from Sevier County Baptist Association books of Minutes and from  
Juanita Howard.