

## **KNOB CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH**

Though no organization date is known, first minutes are dated June 5, 1868. Charter members were Joseph Tipton, William Davis, Andrew Cusick, John Cusick, Donald Reed, Calvin Johnson, William H. Dreke, W. M. Burnett, Jerome D. Bowers, Samuel Johnson, William Maze, Deborah Long, Shadrach Boling, Jane Evans, B. J. Tipton, and Lucy Thompson.

In early minutes, the church is called "United Church of Christ," "Baptist Church of Christ at Knob Creek," and "Knob Creek Baptist Church."

First pastor was William M. Burnette and John Cusick was the first clerk. Early deacons were William Davis, Calvin Johnson, M. S. Thomas, and W. H. Drake. William Davis, Calvin Johnson, Andrew Cusick, John Cusick, and Joseph Householder served as trustees.

A description of the first of three buildings housing the church is not available, but in July 1868, a site near the first building was selected for building a new church.

Minutes of September 12, 1868, states: "We, your committee on a situation for A CHURCH, REPORT THE FOLLOWING: From three to four acres of land embracing the present house, extending to the public road, at \$10 per acre with title to said land..."

Joseph Tipton and Donald Reed assisted the building committee. The church would be 50 ft. long and 36 ft. wide. Twenty-three years later the church was remodeled for \$300.

Knob Creek first joined the Sweetwater Baptist Association, transferring to the Little River Association, to Chilhowee Association, and the Sevier County Baptist Association. These Associations grew out of each other as numbers multiplied.

Sunday, March 4, 1870 minutes: "...by move and second, the male members retired from the house and proposed Brother Atchley and Brother Burnette for pastor and a vote was taken, each one receiving the same number of votes, then returned back into the house and explained the matter to the sisters. They also took a vote, giving Brother Burnette one of a majority which was agreed to by the church."

Sixty-three people joined the church during 1870. For several years after organization, members were excluded for various unchristian activities.

Pastor D. F. Manly moderated a July 7, 1894 meeting with J. R. Davis as clerk. Evidently, all records of church activities were lost through February 1911.

The second church building was used until 1942 when, under the leadership of Pastor W. W. Stockman, a committee was appointed to get the consensus of the people

concerning building a new church. In 1943, a building committee was appointed: Leonard Davis, Elmer Cusick, John Mize, W. M. Norton, Roy Owenby, Fred DeLozier, Burton Rogers, and M. H. Blazer.

The third building was built after the second structure was torn down. Services were held in Union Academy School while construction proceeded. The building was completed in 1947, first service held in the new building May 18, 1947.

Pastor W. E. Conner delivered the first sermon. Alfred Wolfe, choir director, led the singing of "Praise Him, Praise Him," with Elizabeth Davis playing the piano. H. T. Tarwater was first Sunday School Superintendent and Roy Graves was treasurer. W. M. Norton served as church clerk and Eugene Catlett as church custodian.

Many improvements were made after 1947... .purchased a piano and organ completed a nursery, added classrooms, and others.

Financial reports of the early church are interesting: February 1, 1874, "I propose to do that pertains to proper care of the house for sum of \$11, one dollar of which I donate, also I would have \$2 in advance, the balance in 6 & 12 months." The following year sexton's (janitors) were paid in corn, wheat, or bacon at country prices.

In 1889, the total collection was \$269.74. The treasurer paid pastors salary and other expenses with \$269.27, leaving a balance of 47 cents at year's end. In 1914, \$48.95 was donated for building Pigeon Forge Baptist Church. Offerings were also given to build churches at Cold Springs and Mill Creek and \$60.50 for a school at Mossy Creek. Missions collection was \$2.25 in 1912 and in 1921; the pastor's salary was \$300 per year. In 1977 the church gave \$930 to the Children's Home, the most given by any church in the Sevier Association.

Credit goes to many dedicated and faithful members of Knob Creek Baptist Church down through the more than 100 years of history. "We who labor and worship in this church in this present generation should strive to preserve the tradition and heritage handed down to us by those who formed the 'arm' of Knob Creek Baptist Church.

PASTORS: W. M. Burnett, Isaac Hynds (Hines), John W. Sutton, G. W. Brewer, P. B. McCarroll, E. L. Tittsworth, J. R. Dykes, D. F. Manley, W. E. Conner, S. C. Atchley, W. A. Masterson, W. E. Watson, J. E. Hicks, Jason Baker, J. H. Blair, C. N. Warren, James H. Lowe, J. L. Helton, W. W. Stockman, A. C. Wadley, Lester Young, Millard Reed, Theron Johnson, Clell Gibson, Orville Valentine, Robert Cody, Fred C. Self, T. Phillip Hill, Ben Webb, Ulyss Thomas, Andy Ball, Ben Webb (first full time pastor), Ben Knisley, Jim Tomlinson, W. A. Galyon, John Smith.

Pastor, Reverend John Smith, 1989.

Information from Elizabeth and Laura Davis, News Record... "Looking Back".