

RED BANK BAPTIST CHURCH

According to information taken from "A Short Informal History of Red Bank Baptist Church," written by the church history committee, the Red Bank Baptist Church "was a very strong church at one time. Tradition says that at one time both the Baptist and Methodist people worshiped at this meeting house. One group was in charge of services one week, the other group the next, but all the people of the community attended both services. After some time the Methodist people built a church about one mile west of the church on the Pitman Center Road and gave it the name, 'Murphy's Chapel'."

"The first minutes we have' are dated October 1926. We find that in 1929 while the business world was going into bankruptcy and experiencing its Black Thursday, the members of the church had their moment of spiritual bankruptcy and experienced a Black Sunday, by which we mean that some Sunday in that year, they reached a point when they decided in their hearts, even though it is not recorded in the minutes, that the doors of the church should be closed."

In October 1944, Reverend Joel Carr sought permission to hold a revival in the name of Red Bank Baptist Church, but he was told by W. M. S pence that to his knowledge there were no deacons and that only three people had not joined other churches or had died since the doors were closed. The three people were himself, his wife, and his granddaughter, Robbie S pence Rainwater. Later it was found that there were other members.

Reverend Carr and Reverend W. T. Roberts held a revival meeting. There were several professions of faith and rededications. At the close of the revival on Sunday morning, October 29, 1944, the following people joined by baptism: Albert Blalock, Anna Lee Blalock, Nancy Blalock (Butera), Ila Blalock (Leatherwood), W. R. Elder, and John W. (Billy) Elder. Joining by letter: Viola Elder, Mary Elder, John Taffer, Mrs. John Taffer, and Vella Roberts. Reverend Carr was called as pastor. In 1946, he resigned and Reverend Henry Johnson, a 25-year-old minister from Harrison Chilhowee Baptist Academy, became pastor. After his graduation from Chilhowee, he left the church to attend college and Reverend Kellie Huskey came as pastor in 1947. leading the church to have worship services each Sunday morning instead of twice a month.

Reverend Collie O'Shields followed R. Huskey as pastor. In spite of Reverend O'Shield's loyalty, church services again discontinued, but Reverend Joel Carr talked with families of the church and with the help of the Holy Spirit, led members to see their responsibility and though the church saw some very lean years, it never discontinued services again.

Reverend Kenneth Williams became pastor December 12, 1954 with several people joining the church during his ministry. In 1955, the church was wired for electricity.

Reverend William E. Parham began his ministry March 16, 1958. He resigned February 11, 1959 when the church “voted were not willing to move to a location on Newport Highway.”

Reverend Edmond Latham was the next pastor and “under his leadership the church grew in numbers and spirituality. They formed a WMU and various attempts were made to find a suitable land on which to build a new building, but no site was selected.” After Reverend Latham resigned in September 1961 Reverend Parham came back in October 1961 as pastor. During his pastorate the church did a survey of the people, bought land, and built a new building on Newport Highway, but one year after the church moved, Reverend Latham resigned.

In August 1965, the church called Reverend Roy Berrier as pastor and under his leadership, the church grew. Reverend Berrier resigned in August 1969. After Reverend Berrier came Reverend William E. Parham as a supply. In October 1970, Reverend Carl Floyd came as pastor. Reverend Willie Ownby served until July 1972, under whose leadership many people were saved and joined the church. Curtis Wells was licensed and ordained to be a minister and Clyde Hurst and Boyd Wilson were ordained as deacons. Reverend Smelcer resigned in May of 1975 and the church called Reverend Curtis Wells who served as pastor until February 1976.

Reverend Garlon Whaley became pastor January 1977. Again, a first- time pastor led our church. There were seven baptisms, but he became discouraged and resigned July 24, 1977. In October 1978, Reverend Demo Bunch was called as pastor. During his pastorate, the loan on the building was paid in full, pews were bought, and the floor carpeted. For the first time, the church participated in and sponsored the youth to the Evangelistic Conference in Nashville. After Reverend Bunch left to pastor a church in Jackson, Tennessee, Reverend Willie Ownby served as interim from December 1978 until June 1984.

Reverend Roy Miller, Director of Missions, like Reverend W. A. Galyon, the previous Director of Missions, helped us to secure a preacher until the church called Reverend Jerry Bailey as pastor December 9, 1984. Reverend Bailey married while at Red Bank and the church learned to love him and his wife, Mollie. During his pastorate. love and concern for each other grew. Reverend and Mrs. Bailey became parents of two daughters who were accepted as Red Bank’s babies.

Reverend William E. Parham supplied for a while and was called as interim December 3, 1988. His spirit was willing but his flesh was weak. He had many illnesses, including a heart attack, but he continued to lead until he was physically unable to attend church. He made sure we had a preacher to supply. He asked Reverend Clarence Wilson to preach for a while. On May 7, 1989. Reverend Wilson became pastor.

“We truly thank God for all the blessings He has given us over the past 150 years...many blessings that are known only to Him. We truly thank Him during this

season of celebration and Thanksgiving that He sent Reverend Wilson to us. We love and appreciate him and Mrs. Wilson so much. We ask God's blessing on him in all his efforts to led us.

Information from the "Red Bank Baptist Church" book of history.