

## ROARING FORK BAPTIST CHURCH

In the spring of April, 1948, the Reverend Joel Carr led a group of Gatlinburg area people into service for the Lord. The surrounding hills were filled with people who had never attended church or received Christ as their personal Savior. The first prayer meetings were held in their homes.

Mrs. Claudia Jenson volunteered a small house near Roaring Fork Creek to be used as a meeting place. It held 50 people. When the tourist season ended, she gave permission for the group to use her restaurant building on Highway 321.

The following charter members organized the church August 15, 1948:

Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Clabo, Shirl Compton. Mr. and Mrs. Carl Headrick, Betty Hickam, Billie Hickam, Myrtle Hickam, Mr. and Mrs. Curtis McCarter, Elder McCarter, Reverend and Mrs. Eli McCarter, Fred McCarter, Mrs. Barney Ogle, Mr. and Mrs. Cleophas Ogle, O. H. Ogle, R. G. Ogle, Stella Ogle, Mrs. Bill Ramsey, Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Ramsey, H. H. Trentham, Mr. and Mrs. Lee Trentham, Mr. and Mrs. Clell Watson, and Francis Wright. The 29 members began praying and working for the Lord.

Reverend Carr said that the church needed a revival and a larger place for meeting. The church purchased a tent that would hold 200 people and erected it on Roaring Fork Road opposite the Brookside Motel where the craft center is now located. The Reverend O. C. Craig conducted the revival, which lasted three weeks and four days. Many lost people were saved and lives rededicated to the Lord.

When the revival ended, the church bought the lot where now stands Roaring Fork Baptist Church. A temporary boarded building with wood shavings for the floor served as a meeting place while the new church was being built in April 1949. Reverend O. C. Craig became pastor.

The first service in the new church was held April 24, 1949. Church growth from the beginning through the 70s: 384 members, 210 of which joined by baptism, Sunday School enrollment 318, Training Union enrollment 88, 11 deacons, 11 pastors within that time span. Approximate cost of building and property was \$83,998.

Ministers ordained at Roaring Fork Baptist Church: T. Lee Ownby, H. R. Whaley, Clell King, Pat Patterson, Rellie Trentham, and Francis Wright.

Deacons of the church: Herbert Clabo, Cleophas Ogle, Lee Trentham, Shin Compton, Carl Headrick, Winfred Ogle, and George Lane.

Pastor, none listed in 1989.

Information, Mrs. Freeland Brown