

SHADY GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH

G. R. Atchley and Benjamin Langston directed the organization of the Baptist Church of Christ at Pleasant Hill March 24, 1871. The name was changed the first Saturday in 1872 to Shady Grove. Charter members were John Townsend, Mary Townsend, James Townsend, J. W. Townsend, Angellety Townsend, Nancy McMahan, Nancy C. McMahan, Ellender Manes, Gilbert McMahan, Mary McMahan, and Thomas Manes.

In 1884 Gilbert McMahan and W. B. Watson, trustees, were asked to see if the land on which the church was built actually belonged to the church. No specific location was mentioned in those minutes. November 1887 the church met to decide whether to "move up the creek to Sulfer Spring or not." Sunday School had been organized the third Sunday in April 1884, with Lovi Branson as superintendent and Abijah Blalock as secretary.

October 20, 1894, church gave R. G. Shield permission to join his mill to the church if he would be responsible for damages. At the same meeting, it was agreed that a free school would be taught at the church. A Mr. Caton has been given permission to teach.

April 19, 1890, the old church was sold to N. C. Green for \$3. Church services were held in a new church house half of the time commencing on "...Saturday before the third Sunday each month." Apparently, the house was shared with another denomination.

A building committee made up of G. R. McMahan, J. L. Brown, William Wilson, David Watson, R. C. F. McMahan, James Clark, and R. S. Shields, was told to sell the church in 1896 for whatever they could get for it. The right to meet in the building until a new church was erected was retained.

The new building site adopted September 21, 1897 is described as being at the corner of Brother D. C. Watson's fields between the forks of the public road and the graveyard. Levi Branson, J. W. Trentham, and J. L. Smith served on the fund-raising committee. D. B. Watson took the "oversight of building for a dollar a day for half time or fifty cents a day for all the time he worked on the church." He built the house for \$15 and donated the rest of his labor. The old church ceiling and lights were traded to Reverend J. W. Trentham for seven days work and the old flooring went to D. B. Watson for \$2.50 labor. R. G. Shields paid three dollars for the remainder of the old church. D. B. Watson was allotted \$9.50 to run stovepipe out of the new house.

The church body moved into the new building in 1901 but "there was no preaching because of the big snow." (In April).

The new building was dedicated June 21, 1903 and two years later M. C. Green and W. Williams supervised building a tall white steeple with pine shingles.

From 1871 to 1883 the following pastors served: Reverends R. G. Atchley, Wesley Townsend, R. S. Atchley, Mark Roberts, J. W. Townsend, G. W. Dinkins, A. B. McCarter, Iven Hurst, Eli Ogle, S. G. Paine, E. N. Johnson, James Clabough, J. W. Trentham, Levi Branson, Middleton McCarter, W. M. Hurst, L. M. Seagle, R. S. Ogle, A. P. Valentine, and H. S. Webb.

The church ordained Amasa Connatser, Levi Branson, J. D. Connatser, and W. M. Townsend to the ministry during the first fifty years. Deacons were James Townsend, A. D. McMahan, M. C. Green, W. D. Campbell, W. R. Watson, G. R. McMahan, W. S. Shields, and W. R. Smelcer.

(Shady Grove lettered with the Sevier County Baptist Association through 1975).