

SIMS CHAPEL BAPTIST CHURCH

Sims Chapel Baptist Church began with a meeting February 8, 1902 when Reverend G. S. Houser invited charter members to come forth. Those who came were J. H. Russel, W. C. Russel, Victoria Solomon, James Sims, N. E. Sims, Nancy A. Houser, and G. S. Houser. R. S. Berry, Charles Rouser, and Belle Sims joined the new church by “experience” and baptism. Church services were set for each Saturday before the second Sunday of the month.

The next Sunday the Reverend James Trentham was called as pastor. He declared the organized body to be named “Sim’s Chapel.” For a time the church met in the school building, but on February 13, 1904, a building committee was appointed: John Solomon, J. P. Reneau, T. J. Russel, G. W. Burchfiel, W. C. Russel, J. B. Sims, and J. II. Russel. Mr. and Mrs. Sherrod Sims donated the building site. In the late 1920s, the church building was also used for schooling area children. Apparently it became difficult to have regular services, and it was largely the efforts of John Harvey, money raiser, song director, Sunday School Superintendent, and more, that kept the church functioning in those troubled times.

Trustees did the work of deacons until 1968 when the first deacons were ordained: Edward Bohanan and Delmar Worth. Ronald Murrell became a deacon in 1970.

At times income was too sparse to keep the church in repair, particularly in the 30s and 40s. In the 50s, the church started a building fund either for renovating or building a new church. The congregation built a new church across the road from the old one in January 1975. Indebtedness was retired in April of 1977. A big accomplishment was celebrated on Homecoming Day, September 18, 1977. A new picnic shelter at the rear of the church was dedicated to the Lord. The church was 75 years old and the winds of adversity had blown very hard. There were times when some pronounced the church dead, beyond recovery, but there were always the faithful who struggled onward toward better days.

To all of those original members and to the many faithful, the church owes a debt of gratitude. For today’s faithful, the message is the same: “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” I Cor. 15:58.

Pastors from 1902 through 1967: Reverends James Trentham, G. S. Houser, William Hurst, J. A. Atchley, J. N. Clabough, G. H. Grubb, and Dave Campbell. (Records from 1902 to 1922 are missing). Other pastors include Reverend Joel Carr who helped reorganize the church, Wiley Pickens, Gene Gann, Robert Cody, Otha McCarter, R. B. Bohanan, Raymond McCarter, James Duff, Henry Maples, Earl Lane, Howard Pitner, Ben Webb, O. P. Chesney, Clarence Lane, James Baumgardner, Gerald Smelcer,

Dwayne Johnson, Curtis Franklin, and Jerry Bailey. The church terminated the practice of calling a pastor on a one-year basis in 1968.

1991 pastor, Rev. Jerry Bailey.