

## ZION HILL BAPTIST CHURCH

The Zion Hill Baptist Church, located about a mile off Hwy. 441, Chapman Highway, is about five miles from Sevierville in Sevier County. The church was organized and built in 1873.

The first building was made of logs and had log benches and a dirt floor. It also served as the community school and was located on what is now known as the Lewis Byrd farm. It is not known who the first pastor was or how many members constituted the first church, but H. J. Gossett was the first recorded pastor having been called to the church in 1887. The total membership at that time was 90 with preaching services held monthly on Saturday mornings and Sunday mornings and nights. People either walked, came by horseback or buggies and the pastor always chose a home to stay in each preaching weekend.

The first Sunday School was organized in 1898 according to earliest church records. J. S. Ingle was superintendent and the enrollment was 60 with an average attendance of 35.

Members built the second church building below the present site. It was a one-room wooden structure built by the men of the community. It also served as a school.

William H. Hurst served as pastor from 1900 to 1902 and again in 1906 and 1908. During this time, an additional building was constructed on the present site. There was a noticeable change in membership in 1909 while Rev. W. E. Conner was pastor. John Cutshaw was church clerk and S. H. Clark was Sunday School superintendent. In that year, 44 joined the church by baptism making a total membership of 227.

Scott Galyon, A. J. Stoner, John Cutshaw, Ben Clark, Eli Baker, and Boyd Johnson were the first deacons recorded in 1912.

W. E. Conner was succeeded by M. McCarter who served one year, J. A. Atchley served four years and S. H. Clark, ordained to the ministry by Zion Hill Baptist Church, later served as pastor.

In 1921, J. O. Hood became pastor then C. D. Martin succeeded him.

Rev. J. H. Blair served the church as pastor longer than any other over a period of 17 years, at four different times. Other ministers included Floyd Langston, Will Weaver, Roy Arwood and J. L. Helton. Reverend Glen Brooks was the first full time pastor beginning his ministry in 1954. After Reverend Brooks came Alvin Rogers, James Tilley, Clell King, Edmond Latham and the present pastor, W. A. Galyon, 1977. Membership in the early 80s was 369.

Information, Charlotte McCarter.