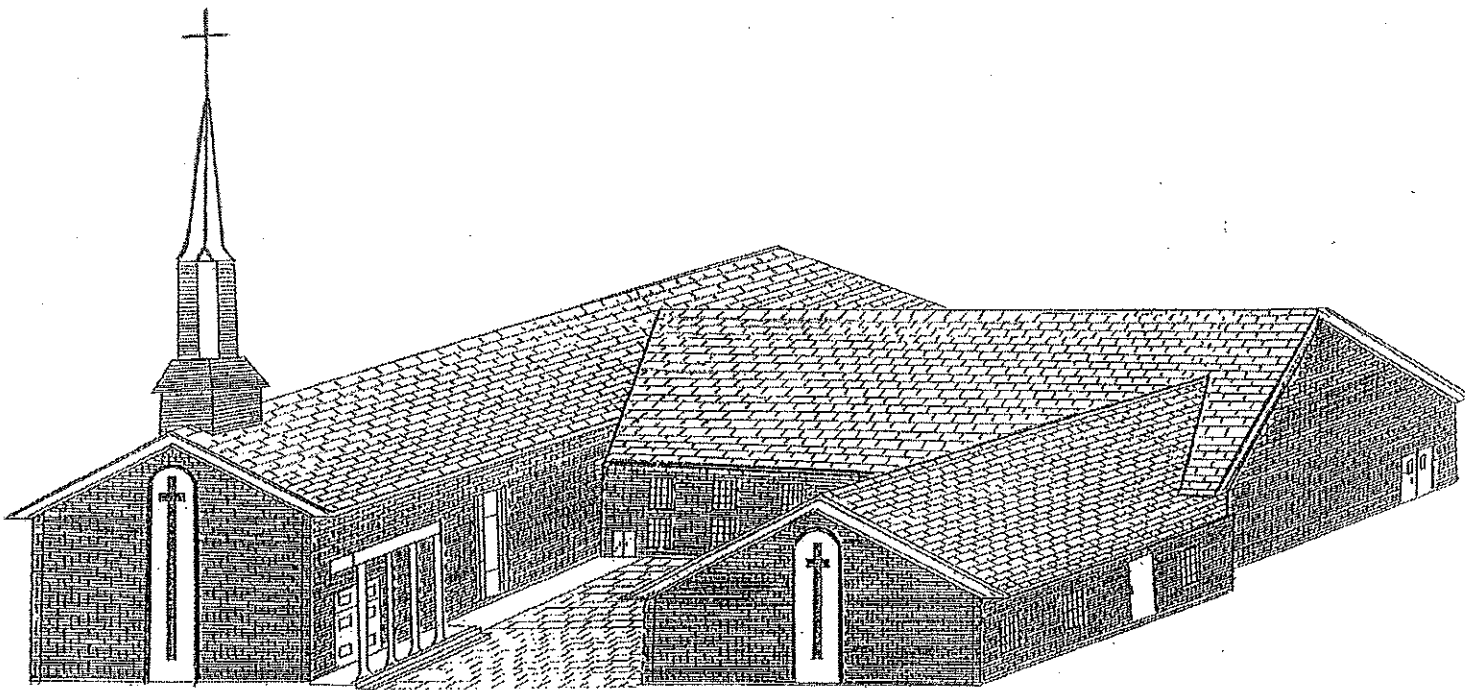


Shorter Avenue Baptist Church



SHORTER AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH
ESTABLISHED 1932

N.E. WAGNER 1990

“Forever Loving People”

SHORTER AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH: A CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

The Bible states that "where there is no vision, the people perish" (Proverbs 29:18). We are truly grateful for the truth of that statement, for we believe that it was because of a vision for lost souls that Shorter Avenue Baptist Church stands as a source of moral and spiritual strength for this city and as a servant and ensign-bearer of our glorious God.

October 1932

- Need for revival felt by Rev. K. C. Baker, which was conducted in a rented building at the church's present location.
- Three successful weeks later, Rev. J. W. Southerland, then pastor of the Maple Street Baptist Church, expressed the need for organizing a Missionary Baptist Church at this place.
- The Tabernacle Baptist Church was organized on October 23, 1932. In honor of Rev. Baker, who held the first revival and became the church's first pastor, Tabernacle Baptist was also referred to as "Baker's Barn" and "The Billboard Church," because of the large billboard placed at the site of the church. Rev. Baker served for approximately two years.
- Store building in which church was meeting was purchased at a cost of \$1,350, with payments of \$13.50 per month. Such an amount was difficult to come by, and many of the payments were donations solicited by E. L. McGill in house-to-house canvas.
- First deacons were E. L. McGill (Chairman), F. J. Wallace, W. E. Childress, Carl Edwards, and R. L. House.
- First officers were C. A. Green (Clerk), R. G. Aikens (Superintendent of Sunday School), R. L. House (Church Treasurer), and W. E. Childress (Choir Director).
- Rev. J. E. Smith was elected Moderator and J. N. Crozier as Clerk. The Presbytery was composed of the following pastors and deacons from other Baptist churches:

<u>Maple Street Baptist Church</u>	J. W. Southerland, J. N. Crozier, S. A. Moak, and R. N. Wimpee
<u>Pleasant Hope Baptist Church</u>	Paul Morris, H. N. Bradshaw, J. E. Smith, and R. H. Smith
<u>Fellowship Baptist Church</u>	J. T. Wallace
<u>Pleasant Valley Baptist Church</u>	J. T. Lovell
<u>DeSoto Park Baptist Church</u>	J. F. Butler
<u>Lakeview Baptist Church</u>	K. C. Baker

- Invitation given for membership in the new church, and the following people, bearing letters in proper form, presented themselves for membership and constituted the new church:

Mrs. C. B. Millican	Miss Ruby Brock
Miss Annie Lee Millican	Luther O. Goodwin, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. L. O. Goodwin, Sr.	Mr. & Mrs. Jim Brock
Miss Helen House	Mr. & Mrs. Ralph White
Mrs. Emma G. House	Miss Estelle Payne
James Goodwin	Mrs. Eva Payne
Guy Goodwin	Mrs. Laura Fairchild
Miss Margaret Goodwin	Miss Ella Dean Goodwin
Mr. & Mrs. R. G. Aikens	

- Invitation extended and 42 more united with the church.

1933

- Application for membership in Floyd County Baptist Association made by Rev. K. C. Baker on behalf of the Tabernacle Baptist Church and submitted to a committee for investigation.
- Committee reported favorably that the church was of true Baptist faith and was, therefore, accepted and received by motion into the Association on September 7, 1933.
- 27 baptisms

1934-1936

- Rev. W. M. Slaughter and Rev. Cisero Peek each served as pastor between these years, with the Rev. H. F. Joyner serving a short term as interim pastor.
- 1934: 22 baptisms
- 1935: 5 baptisms
- 1936: 6 baptisms
- In 1936, Rev. S. M. Smith called as pastor and served for one year; during his ministry plans were made to erect the first church building.

1937-1938

- No baptisms (1937); 23 baptisms (1938).

1939

- Rev. W. O. Denson called as pastor. During his ministry several auxiliaries were organized:
 - B.Y.P.U., with 32 enrolled
 - W.M.U., including the Y.W.A.'s, G.A.'s, R.A.'s, and Sunbeams, with a total enrollment of 94.
 - Mrs. Essie Johnston was elected the first W.M.U. President; she was replaced in 1939 by Mrs. F. S. Ramsey, who served until 1947.
- 30 baptisms

1940-1942

- 25 baptisms (1940), 8 baptisms (1941), 12 baptisms (1942).

1943

- Brotherhood organized with 38 members
- Q. L. Middleton elected as its first President
- 35 baptisms

1944

- First Vacation Bible School conducted with 59 participants
- Indebtedness of the first church building paid, and on the last day of the year the mortgage was burned.
- 2 baptisms

1945

- 53rd Session of the Floyd County Baptist Association held here. There were many visitors, and a wonderful meal was served to all. Rev. O. E. Rutland served as Moderator, and Rev. J. H. Holcomb served as Vice Moderator.
- During the ministry of W. O. Denson, the baptismal services were held at Denson's Lake and at Darlington School. It was at this time that the largest baptismal service in the history of the church took place, with a total of 62 candidates.

- Sunday School conducted in the auditorium of the church, which was divided into sections by means of blue denim given to the church by Pepperell Manufacturing Company. During Brother Denson's ministry, however, 10 Sunday School rooms were added on to the church.

- 13 baptisms

1946

- 12 baptisms

August 1947

- The church voted to change its name from Tabernacle Baptist Church to Shorter Avenue Baptist Church.
- Also during Brother Denson's ministry, plans were begun for a new and larger auditorium. (The new auditorium, however, was not completed until the ministry of Rev. J. H. Holcomb, who served the church from 1952 to 1963).
- 33 baptisms

1948-1951

- 14 baptisms (1948), 17 baptisms (1949), 16 baptisms (1950), 35 baptisms (1951).

1952-1963

- Rev. J. H. Holcomb served as pastor during this period.
- First pastorium, located at 112 Delwood Drive, purchased for \$7,250, and the church organ was purchased. The first paid church secretary was employed.
- New auditorium, which now serves as our Fellowship Hall, completed (1954) under ministry of Rev. J. H. Holcomb. Marvin Rogers was chairman of the building committee, and Ira Armstrong supervised the work, which was done primarily by the men of the church. W. M. Aaron donated the labor for all electrical work.
- Record attendance reached in 1956 in Vacation Bible School, with 271 present.
- In 1957, an addition to the educational building was completed, and several tracts adjacent to the original building were purchased for parking. Billy Coulter was licensed to the ministry.
- In 1958, Roland Pearce and Frank Ford were licensed to the ministry.
- In June 1960, a Mission, which is now known as the Wilkerson Road Baptist Church, was organized.
- In 1961, the pastorium at 112 Delwood Avenue was sold, and one at 38 Westwood Circle was purchased. Rev. Holcomb was the first of our pastors to reside in the new home.

- In 1962, H. E. Elliott, B. J. Chapman, and R. M. Smith were licensed to the ministry.
- In 1963, Rev. James Agan was called as pastor, and he served until June of the following year. During his ministry, the church paved the parking area and purchased a dwelling adjacent to the church at a cost of \$11,500.
- During this time the Youth for Christ was organized.
- 8 baptisms

1953-1963

- 43 baptisms (1953), 17 baptisms (1954), 45 baptisms (1955), 50 baptisms (1956), 24 baptisms (1957), 56 baptisms (1958), 44 baptisms (1959), 35 baptisms (1960), 53 baptisms (1961), 26 baptisms (1962), 16 baptisms (1963).

June-October 1964

- Rev. S. H. Pendley served as interim pastor.
- 7 baptisms

1964

- Rev. Max Tucker of Fort Payne, Alabama, was called as pastor (October). During his ministry; the remainder of the parking area was paved; additional parking area was purchased; there were 300 additions to the church, and a new organ and a baby grand piano were purchased.

1965

- 37 baptisms

1966

- The 74th Session of the Floyd County Baptist Association was held here.
- Part of the church office and part of the educational building were destroyed by fire, resulting in over \$8,000 in damages.
- John C. Hicks; William Young, Jr.; and Bobby Stowers were licensed to the ministry.
- 40 baptisms

1967

- Ray Baldwin, Marvin Horn, and Michael Freeman were licensed to the ministry.
- 46 baptisms

1968

- 32 baptisms

1969

- The church purchased additional property for parking and paid for it in full.
- Church indebtedness paid 11 years in advance.
- Plans were begun for the construction of a new sanctuary.
- 47 baptisms

1970-1971

- Present sanctuary, which has a seating capacity of approximately 700, was constructed at a cost of \$136,499.44; contractor was A.D.E. Church Builders, Inc., of Marietta, GA. Features include 30 tons of air-conditioning equipment and an Omnipresent sound system, which was designed by M. G. Turner, comprised of University and Altec-Lansing equipment.
- New sanctuary dedicated on March 21, 1971.
- 23 baptisms (1970), 28 baptisms (1971).

November 1971-1973

- John I. Smith, an evangelist, called as pastor.
- Bus ministry begun (1972), and the bus purchased; a minister of music was added to the staff. Dave Hudson was elected as the first music director.
- Milton Graves, Jr. was licensed to the ministry (1973).
- 92 baptisms (1972), 27 baptisms (1973).

May 1973-June 1974

- Rev. A. B. Cash served as interim pastor. Following his resignation, Raymond L. Harvey and H. E. Elliott served as supply pastors.
- Robert Weaver; James Gaylor, Sr.; Jerry Little; and Randy Hardin were licensed to the ministry.
- 4 baptisms (1974)

September 1974

- Comer Gerald Rogers, then pastor of the Union Hill Baptist Church in Cleburne County, AL, was called to serve as pastor.
- During first seven months of his ministry, some 60 new members were added to the church.

1975

- First pictorial directory made.
- Additional storage area added to pastorium.
- 30 baptisms

1976

- Pastor Gerald Rogers named "Pastor of the Year" by the Kiwanis Club of Rome
- Mrs. Elsie Stowers elected as the first Hospitality Chairman
- Paving at rear of the church completed
- Church sponsored trip to the Holy Lands for pastor and his wife
- Church purchased May Street and Dempsey property on Piedmont Avenue, with the Piedmont Avenue house being sold and relocated
- The Cooperative Program offering was increased to 5% of tithes and offerings.
- The halls of the educational building were carpeted.
- A "Golden Age" club was organized for the senior members of the church.
- Church began its sponsorship of a Wisconsin Mission.
- Gary Sunrich, Ray Tolbert, and David Hyde were licensed to the ministry.
- 24 baptisms

1977

- First "Judas Day" offering held, with a total received of \$2,659.94.
- Mr. Pat Zondervan, owner of Zondervan Publishers, donated "Great Gospel Hymnals" to the church.
- Church began sponsorship of a Cub/Boy Scout Troop.
- The youth of the church held a week-long summer camp at Tanner's Beach and, in December, attended the first Youth Evangelism Conference in Atlanta, GA.
- Mrs. Nell Stansell donated funds to construct wheelchair ramps at the church.
- Walter Alexander was ordained to the gospel ministry.
- 20 baptisms

1978

- The 86th Session of the Floyd County Baptist Association met here, with Pastor Gerald Rogers being elected as Moderator of the Association.
- Church began a radio ministry
- Pastor Gerald Rogers participated in a revival crusade in Korea, with 781 conversions under his preaching.
- Recreation area on Piedmont Avenue paved, and a utility building was constructed at the rear of the church.
- Jerry Little was ordained to the gospel ministry.
- 11 baptisms

1979

- Largest Lottie Moon offering received (\$1,000)
- Acteens and their leaders, Mrs. Diane Swafford and Mrs. Gwen Cordle, attended the National Acteen Conference in Kansas City, MO, during the summer.
- Stanley Smith ordained to the music ministry
- 13 baptisms

1980

- Hired first paid youth director
- Erected new sign in front of the church
- Installed new intercom system
- Began reconstruction of front of the fellowship hall
- Erected activity equipment on area across railroad and dedicated the activity area "to the glory of God."
- Installed new church sign (February).
- 31 baptisms; 9 deaths

1981

- Purchased a church van
- Voted to send \$100 a month for remainder of year to Briar Hill Baptist Church in New York to help them get organized (June).
- 18 baptisms; 10 deaths

1982

- Purchased a tape duplicating machine at a cost of \$695
- Voted to allow Covington Bible Seminary to use church for training purposes (May)
- Bro. J. Howard Holcomb was presented a plaque designating him "Pastor Emeritus" of this church (May).
- Deacons recommended that we make Bro. L. L. Murphy, Howard Wallace, and W. B. Whatley "Deacon Emeritus" for outstanding job they've done in past service (August).
- 20 baptisms; 5 deaths

1983

- Purchased first air-conditioned church bus
- 19 baptisms; 6 deaths

1984

- Rev. Gerald Rogers resigned (June).
- Rev. Charles Edens called as interim pastor (July)
- Dr. Tony Weaver called as pastor (September)
- 10 baptisms; 7 deaths

1985

- Long-range planning committee named to study and recommend improvements in church facilities
- 23 baptisms; 3 deaths

1986

- Dr. Tony Weaver resigned (November 1)
- Rev. Clifford Chandler came as interim pastor (December).
- 34 baptisms; 0 deaths

1987

- Dr. Woody Lee called as pastor (April)
- New church directory (update)
- Church purchased a Canon copier
- Marvin and Gwen Barton called as youth directors
- 9 baptisms; 9 deaths

1988

- Remodeled educational building—added 6 Sunday school rooms, new offices, and enlarged the fellowship hall (cost over one-half million dollars)
- Purchased new chairs for educational building
- Purchased newer church van
- Sold Westwood Circle property (February)
- Mrs. Kathleen O'Bryant retired at end of year after many years as church secretary.
- Martha Butler came as church secretary (December)
- Remodeled auditorium—installed new carpet, new pews, and lighting
- 15 baptisms; 6 deaths

1989

- Dedicated new/remodeled facilities
- Dr. Woody Lee resigned as Pastor.
- 28 baptisms; 5 deaths

1990

- Diane Swafford called as youth director (March)
- Rev. Charles Edens came as interim pastor and served until August
- Dr. Charles Drummond called as pastor (August)
- 14 baptisms; 7 deaths

1991

- Church purchased newer bus
- Bro. Stanley Smith resigned as music director (June) to accept a pastorate.
- Bro. Stanley Smith ordained to the gospel ministry (June).
- 26 baptisms; 0 deaths

1992

- Purchased a new church organ
- Bro. Bob Jones called as interim minister of music (March)
- Church voted to call Bro. Bob Jones as Minister of Music (October)
- 12 baptisms; 11 deaths

1993

- Purchased new Baptist hymnals
- Purchased new piano (December)
- 10 baptisms; 12 deaths

1994

- Had May Street house removed (May)
- 16 baptisms; 11 deaths

1995

- Installed new heating and air system in auditorium at a cost of \$14,692
- Church voted to install vinyl siding on outside of church at a cost of \$9,176 (August)
- 8 baptisms; 11 deaths

1996

- Voted to upgrade/install computers in church office and pastor's office (December)
- Church voted to begin having Children's Church on Sunday mornings
- Updated church directory
- Bro. Mike Jones ordained as a youth minister (April)
- Paved back lot at cost of \$9,000 (May)
- Began debt-retirement plan
- 11 baptisms; 12 deaths

1997

- Had "Walk Through the Old Testament" Seminar with Dr. Bruce H. Wilkinson (June)
- Church voted to add an outreach minister to staff (December)
- 5 baptisms; 11 deaths

1998

- Began AWANA children's program
- Purchased new refrigerator for kitchen (September)
- Began Wednesday suppers (September)
- 7 baptisms; 7 deaths

1999

- Installed new sound system
- Installed new commercial-type stove in kitchen
- Bro. Larry McCoy called to fill position of outreach minister
- Purchased dividers to be used in the fellowship hall
- Recarpeted and repainted the fellowship hall

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