

COMMEMORATING



Part 1: 1937 to 1987, The First Fifty Years, *written by Kenneth Russell, II*

Part 2: 1987 to 2012, The Next Twenty Five Years, *written by Ella Sue Osment*

Commemorating 75 Years

Part 1: 1937-1987, The First Fifty Years

written by Kenneth Russell, II

Part 1: The First Fifty Years, Preface

Although North Cleveland Baptist is not one of Cleveland's oldest churches, she is most certainly one of the area's most active and dynamic. In researching the history of this church, I have been challenged to discover the role played by individuals in the development and growth of God's most blessed institutions, His church. Unfortunately, most of the original written records of the church have been lost, and I have relied upon oral history to detail North Cleveland's history from 1937 – 1960. If I have omitted a name or some fact of necessary information from the finished product, I do apologize, as it was unintentional. This history is also an official one, and will concern only the positive aspects of North Cleveland Baptist Church.

In this effort, I received much help and support, which I briefly wish to recognize. First I wish to thank those who allowed me to interview them and to use their information in this history. I also want to express my appreciation to all those who offered suggestions and comments during my research and writing. I especially express my thanks to my typist, Mrs. Karen Phillips.

Ultimately, however, my greatest thanks belongs to the deacons and members of North Cleveland Baptist Church. Thank you for the faith you have placed in my abilities.

The history of North Cleveland Baptist is a very beautiful example of God's work alive and active in the lives of His people. I hope that my efforts to present it will be both a benefit and a blessing.

Kenneth Russell, II

1 Early Baptists in Bradley County

When North Cleveland Baptist's charter members gathered in a grassy meadow to organize a new Southern Baptist church, Baptist activity in Bradley County was over one hundred years old. Although Baptists were present in Tennessee before 1775, their influence in Bradley County was confined to mission work among the Cherokee Indians, who were native to this region. However, many Cherokees apparently accepted Baptist doctrine readily for they soon established churches and many became preachers. In fact, the first three Baptist ministers in this area were full-blooded Cherokee. After the Indians were removed to the West in 1841, Baptist churches in the area organized the Ocoee Baptist Association. This association was fairly successful until several Primitive Baptist Churches denied membership to Baptist churches who supported mission activity. The conflict that erupted eventually contributed to the organization's gradual demise.

In 1859, however, fifteen churches met at the Blue Springs Baptist Church and revitalized the old Association. At the time they organized, members of the new Ocoee Association resolved the former controversy by determining that the Association would be strongly Missionary. Remaining idle during the War Between the States, the Ocoee Association joined the Tennessee Baptist Association in 1874. Through the affiliation, the Ocoee Association was able to join with fellow Baptists in the Southern Baptist Convention, organized in 1845.

Bradley Baptists continued to support the Ocoee Baptist Association until 1950. One problem these same churches faced however, was that the Association included churches in Bradley, Hamilton, Meigs and Polk Counties in Tennessee, and, at one time, churches in Fannin County, Georgia. With such a large area to serve, Associational leaders were often hard-pressed to effectively minister to all member churches, even though many tried diligently to do so. As a result, during the 1947 Annual meeting, a special committee was appointed to investigate the possibility of dividing the Ocoee Association into two distinct Associations. One member of that committee was Rev. C.E. McDonald, who would later serve as pastor of North Cleveland from 1946-1957.

The committee discovered there was adequate reason to create two new Baptist Associations, and eventually left the decision-making process to various Associational leaders. In Bradley County, that leadership was assumed by the Preacher's Conference, who heard the Associational Committee's report, and decided to take action. On October 13, 1949, the Bradley Baptist Association was organized with twenty-nine churches and 5,096 resident members.

Today the Bradley Baptist Association counts some fifty-seven Southern Baptist churches as members. North Cleveland is one of those churches who has had, and will continue to have, a prominent role in Associational activities. Many North Cleveland members have held numerous Associational positions, and have aided in the Baptist cooperative effort throughout Bradley County, and in the entire SBC.

2 Rev. Lewis 1937-1945

A Dream Becomes Reality

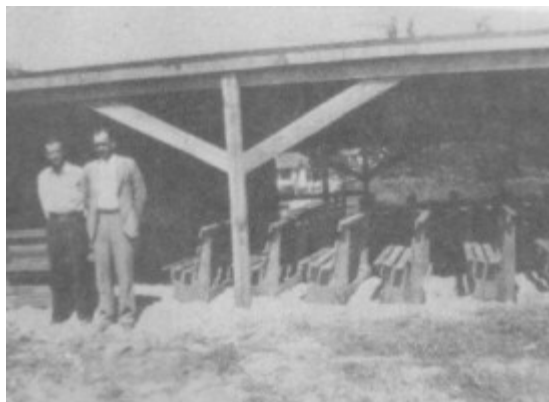
Because North Cleveland Baptist is a relatively young church, many different versions exist as to how the church was organized. In fact, many of the church's charter members still remember the events and activities that are a part of North Cleveland's beginnings. Of all these stories, two versions surface the most readily.

The first story revolves around a small mission built by Luke McReynolds on Henderson Avenue. Although several preachers held services, ministerial students of Bob Jones College were primarily in charge of conducting the meetings. The majority of people who attended these meetings were from the North Cleveland area of town, and so large were the crowds that the small mission could not accommodate them. It was reported that one could see people praying in the fields near the mission. Based on the apparent success of services at the mission, many North Cleveland residents began to feel the need for a church to be organized in the community.



Rev. H. Lester Lewis,
1937 – 1945

In addition to the Henderson Avenue Mission, one individual credited Rev. H. Lester Lewis, North Cleveland's first pastor, with contributing the major influence that led to the church's organization. Rev. Lewis, sensing a desire for a Baptist church in the community, went from home to home of religious families in the area to discuss the possibility of starting a church. Most Baptists at that time were members of First Baptist, which was located in downtown Cleveland.



The Old Shed
Rev. Kyle Shaw and Rev. Lewis

Rev. Lewis apparently found a favorable response, for after he had visited the homes, other individuals who lived in the area began to encourage their neighbors and also to raise money to purchase a suitable tract of land on which to build a church building. In fact, Rev. Lewis' work to organize North Cleveland Baptist was only one of many efforts that he undertook to establish churches. In Bradley County, Rev. Lewis' influence was instrumental in the development of North Cleveland, Waterville, and Bellefonte Baptist Churches.

Despite whatever triggered the momentum which eventually created the North Cleveland Baptist Church, it is clear that community effort was responsible for the idea of the church actually becoming reality. Once a reasonable number of people decided to organize North Cleveland, they began to raise money in order to purchase property, to construct a building, and to maintain the church program. Such was the center of North Cleveland's earliest history for its first three to four years. Initially these new members asked for donations from their neighbors, from their work associates, and often from anyone who was even familiar with North Cleveland.

Many people contributed to the worthy cause. One charter member recalled even some who were not Baptists readily donated. These efforts appeared to have been overwhelmingly successful, for the church purchased a small piece of property on April 2, 1937 for \$150.00. Located on the corners of Franklin and Farris Avenues, the church obtained the property from Mr. and Mrs. Lester Ratcliff. Later in the summer, the church members themselves constructed a small shed with a sawdust floor, which was lo-

cated where the present church Education Building now stands.

Throughout the summer of 1937, church members continued to raise funds for the welfare of the church. Two members in particular, Wilfore Stephenson and Mack J. Fox, the church's first two deacons, went door-to-door in the community. Despite their advanced age, they risked a very hot summer to help in the collection of money. Stephenson also kept a list of contributors in a small ledger book. Other members and members of the community helped make quilts and other items which were sold and the receipts donated to the church. All the work and effort came to fruition in August, 1937, when church members and several area pastors officially organized the North Cleveland Baptist Church.



North Cleveland Baptist Church building
with front facing Franklin Street

During the August 15 ceremony, probably thirty-four members unite to form the church, and to represent a Southern Baptist influence in the North Cleveland community. The pastors from area Baptist churches who also had provided financial and moral support to North Cleveland were Rev. Percy Maples (Calvary), Rev. Sam Melton (BIG Springs), Rev. John Brown, Rev. F.A. Webb, Rev. Walter Dixon, Rev. L.A. Lowery, and Rev. H. Lester Lewis. Other Baptist churches who provided assistance were Georgetown, Hopewell, and Center Point Baptist Churches. The board of pastors interrogated church deacons Stephenson and Fox with questions concerning Christian theology and Southern Baptist doctrine. The pastors also used significant Scripture passages as part of this ceremony.

Following the organizational service, the remainder of the day was devoted to preaching and singing. For many, the events of August 15 were a dream come true.

North Cleveland Baptist took her role as Christ's representative very serious. So intense was the membership in the spiritual work that the church rolls tripled in size by 1940. In fact, the church's potential was fully recognized when she was presented for membership to the Ocoee Association in October 1937. During the Annual Meeting, North Cleveland was welcomed into the Ocoee membership as one of the area's fastest growing and most spiritual churches. Much of that reputation apparently came from the spirit that reportedly was present in the worship services. Many people were openly expressive in their worship in weeping, shouting and in praying. Praising God and exhorting His guidance were both important aspects of the church in worship and in Christian service.

One year after North Cleveland members had constructed the small shed, it had become much too small to accommodate the people attending the church services. As a result, members dismantled the shed and constructed a larger building, featuring three assembly rooms, and two smaller classrooms. However, this building was also too small, and the church added additional rooms, including an auditorium and a pastor's study in 1944 and 1945 at a cost of \$4,000. The church acquired a \$7,500 loan to finance the new construction, but erased the debt by 1950.

One sign that the church was growing was the development in the church training programs. The Sunday School began with the church, and it was the largest church department which has grown in proportion to the increases in church membership. About the time the church moved from the shed to the new church building, there was a concerted effort to initiate a Training Union program. In 1938, a total of thirty adults comprised the Training Union Department, but other age groups and divisions were added

later. Many church members credit the improvements in the Training Union Program to J.C. Williamson, the first Bradley Baptist Associational Missionary. Williamson, a member of North Cleveland at one time, apparently used his Associational experience to coordinate an active Training Union into the church's ministry.

Although the Sunday School and Training Union Departments grew rapidly, the music program was probably the church's most active area. It was also one way that each member felt he had an active role in the church program. Music in the early services at North Cleveland was primarily confined to congregational singing and to choral worship. Under the direction of Felt Clayton (1937) and Thurman Pendergrass (1940-1946), who would lead the music and direct the choirs, most of the hymns and special music were selected from the old Stamps-Baxter hymnals. Often the choir would sing songs requested from the congregation. Through the choirs, North Cleveland also developed several special ensembles, like the Hamilton trio, the Jess Morrow family, and a quartet featuring John Clayton, Howard Caywood and Mr. and Mrs. T.J. Pendergrass.



Quartet with John Clayton, Howard Caywood, T.J. and Lola Pendergrass

Many of these ensembles, as well as the church choir, often sang for Rev. Lewis' radio programs. His radio shows were an important part of his ministry, and often the services at North Cleveland were broadcast live. Beginning on WDOD in Chattanooga, Lewis eventually broadcast over WBAC, Cleveland's first radio station. Many individuals remember the radio programs, and the permanent effects that the broadcasts had on the listeners. Others also thought that Lewis' radio shows enhanced the growth of the church as well.



Early W.M.U. Meeting

While Rev. Lewis was North Cleveland's pastor, the women of the church organized in 1946 a Women's Missionary Union. Although many women were actively involved in the W.M.U. organization, Mrs. J.W. Jones, Mrs. Hoyt Elrod, Mrs. T.J. Cawood, Mrs. Nor-

man Barnard and Miss Mabel Greene were among the most active workers with Mrs. H. Lester Lewis serving as the first chapter President. In 1955 the W.M.U. was divided into two chapters. The first, consisting of older women, usually met during the week at the church. The second was composed of younger and career-oriented women. Called the Ollie K. Williamson Business Women's Circle, it usually met one night a week, in a different member's home. Most meetings consisted of Scripture reading, appropriate club business, and some type of program – usually pertaining to mission work or Christian service. Named for the wife of the Bradley Baptist Associational Missionary, the Women's Circle was a very active and prominent organization for several years.



Rev. Lewis and Rev. Herbert Morgan

Another active church organization that developed out of the Hen-



Rev. Lewis baptizes Henry May and other converts during his ministry at North Cleveland

derson Avenue Mission, but grew into the Young People's Department was the Fellowship Club. Led by their teacher, Grace Stephenson, members usually met during the week for their club meetings which usually included spiritual and social activities. Often the object of some humorous criticism as a courting clique, the Fellowship Club actively supported the church. Not only did club members buy furniture for their Sunday School department, they also helped in the construction of the shed and later in the building of the church in 1938, and the additions that were built in 1944-1945. Among these activities, members recalled helping put tarpaper around the open-air shed, in order to prepare for the winter, digging out the original foundation for the 1938 church, and landscaping around the construction site. The Club later raised money to purchase the first Baptist hymnals used in the church service, which

were welcomed by many members.

The Club also performed an even more impressive task during World War II by establishing an effective correspondence with those from the church who were serving overseas in the armed forces. Club members made sure each soldier received a Bible before he left for active duty, and then wrote each soldier weekly. They also sent appropriate Sunday School materials quarterly. Often club members received letters from soldiers who weren't actually affiliated with North Cleveland Baptist, but who had heard about the club project and wanted to be included. These were soon added to the mailing list. In fact, the club's teacher remembered that the mother of



Men's Sunday School Class

one of the boys who had written and had been killed in action also wrote to express her appreciation for the club's efforts and for its continued concern in her time of sorrow and adjustments. Club members also joined in prayer, as did other members of the church, for the safety of North Cleveland's boys. Remarkably, not one of those who were from North Cleveland families was killed – all returned home safely.

Rev. Lewis led the church faithfully until 1946, when he resigned his pastorate to accept a similar position at the new Friendship Baptist Church near Charleston. His ministry at North Cleveland was characterized by both spiritual growth and by Christian integrity. Church membership increased rapidly during his tenure at the church. Between 1937 and 1945, the church grew from thirty-seven members meeting in a small saw-dust floor shed, to 417 members worshipping in a comfortable & modern facility. A spiritual congregation on the move for Jesus Christ – more growth was yet to come for North Cleveland.

3 **Rev. McDonald 1946-1957**

Sowing Seeds of Kindness

In 1946, after a pulpit committee composed of Jess Morrow, Hoyt Elrod and T.J. Cawood had delivered a favorable report, North Cleveland issued a call to Rev. C.E. McDonald, a McMinn County pastor, to become her second pastor. A quiet, but compassionate individual, McDonald served as North Cleveland's pastor for eleven years. Many members recall his sincerity and humility in serving the spiritual needs of his congregation. An exuberant visitor, McDonald often called on church members weekly. He was considered by many to be the finest example of a pastor who could truly minister even in times of deepest sorrow. His pastorate at North Cleveland was characterized by a period of spiritual growth and of warm Christian fellowship.



Old Church Building



Groundbreaking Ceremony of Present Sanctuary

While McDonald was pastor, the church added the present sanctuary to the church plant. On March 27, 1950, North Cleveland purchased the land behind the 1938 church, which bordered North Lee Highway. At that time, the church bought the property from H.H. Farris and T.F. McKeown for \$3,000. Having established a substantial building fund, members elected to begin construction on a new sanctuary in 1955. Supervising the building were Building Committee members Hoyt Elrod, J.L. Myers, D.M. Stephenson, Walter Townsend and Alden Harris. At this time, North Cleveland voted to borrow \$25,000 from both Cleveland National Bank and from Cleveland Bank and Trust.

In 1956, the church borrowed an additional \$2,000 from each bank. The church also commenced a massive fund-raising effort to finance the remainder of the building. Characteristic of the building drive, church members charted the fund-raising with a poster of a rising thermometer. On April 1, 1956, the church worshipped for the first time in the new red brick sanctuary. Due to the efforts of North Cleveland members, the debt of the new building quickly evaporated.

During this time, the music program at the church continued to prosper. Under the direction of T.J. Cawood, Bill Turner and John Dantzler, respectively, the adult choir grew in size as more members became interested and involved in using their musical talents. Members were also urged to take an active role in congregational worship, particularly through singing. Other church programs also increased their membership roles. For instance, the W.M.U. added more members as more women became actively concerned about the importance of Christian Missions.

In addition to the growth in programs already active, three new programs began at North Cleveland during McDonald's pastorate. Men of the church initiated a Brotherhood program in 1947, with Boyd Kibble as the first director. Beginning with thirteen members, the Brotherhood experienced a slow



Note Burning On Building

start, but it became an active church organization by 1960. Around 1946, the church also recognized the need for a properly read membership, and began the present church library. Mrs. Hoyt Elrod served the church as the first librarian. Finally, North Cleveland seeing the rapid growth of the church and swiftly increasing budget, decided to use the Baptist envelope system on June 5, 1957. In this way, each church member could exert his responsibility to the church finances and the church's monetary accounts could be adequately balanced.

In providing for McDonald's well being, in 1941 the church purchased a small pastorium near the church on Franklin Avenue for \$4,000. She also elected to provide for her pastor's future needs by joining the Baptist Minister's Retirement Plan on May 12, 1954. Since that action, the church has also provided for her pastor's annuity. McDonald seemed appreciative of such church action, and at least on one occasion, refused to accept an increase in his salary. At that time, he reportedly asked that any proposed increase be directed toward the church debt payment. This action was characteristic of McDonald's ministry, and endeared him to the hearts of his congregation.



Rev. C.E. McDonald
with grandson

When the Bradley Baptist Association began in September 1950, North Cleveland had a leading role in its organization. Rev. McDonald served on an advisory committee which found substantial need for a new Baptist Association to be formed from the older Ocoee Association. Once the Bradley Association was organized, North Cleveland members were present and active in its early years. T. J. Cawood served as one of the first Associational Trustees, and Raymond Ledford was the first Associational Training Union Director.



New Sanctuary Building, Erected 1956



Inside the Sanctuary

McDonald's humble service and dedication to North Cleveland made him a very respected and well-loved individual. As a result, in 1957, the church sadly accepted his resignation as pastor to accept the pastorate of a McMinn County Baptist church. His pastorate had fostered an atmosphere for proper Christian concern for both the church member and the outsider. Even to this day, C.E. McDonald remains one of the church's dearest and most cherished Shepherds.

4

Rev. Frazier 1957-1962

The Church Comes of Age



Rev. and Mrs. I.C. Frazier

After Rev. McDonald had departed from North Cleveland, Rev. Wayne Tarpley, Director of the Baptist Children's Home in Chattanooga, served as interim pastor from July 10 – October 23, 1957. On October 27, the church called Rev. I.C. Frazier as her third pastor. Reportedly a former army official, Frazier was probably one of North Cleveland's most scholarly pastors. During his ministry, the church continued to grow both physically and spiritually. Church membership increased from 618 to 716 while Frazier was pastor.

In 1958, the church had become large enough that a new system for electing deacons was necessary. As a result, the church adopted a rotation system, in which several men could actively serve as deacons simultaneously. At that time, ten men served the church as deacons. In 1974, church action changed that number to twelve.

Building also continued during Frazier's pastorate. In August 1958, the church voted to lease the property of Mrs. Chloe Beck, whose family had offered the property for North Cleveland's usage, at an annual rate of \$120. This agreement was to last for a two year period, after which the church had the option to purchase the property. The property was finally purchased in 1965. Located on the church's northern side, the property was basically a large tract of land and a small house, still occupied by Mrs. Beck. The church used the land primarily for recreational purposes.



Educational Building, Erected 1962

In 1960, faced with another opportunity for growth, North Cleveland decided to build an Educational Building to compliment the 1956 sanctuary. On July 31, church members approved a building plan developed by architectural specialists at the Baptist Sunday School Board. This plan apparently suggested that the proposed Educational Building wing be a two-story building with classrooms, church offices, a large fellowship hall, and room for a library and similar facilities. The church began construction on the project in early 1961. Members elected T.J. Cawood (chairman), Glen Greene, J.L. Taylor, Erwin Townsend, Raymond Scoggins and Bill Leamon as the Building Committee. The committee's responsibilities were:

- (1) Employ an architect to draw detailed plans for the building and supervise its construction according to the plans and materials adopted by the church.
- (2) Employ a superintendent of works to construct the building. Employ workmen and see that the work is done according to church-adopted plans.
- (3) Purchase or see that all materials are purchased to the best advantage of the church.

However, before the Educational Building could be constructed, the old church building, built in 1938, had to be demolished. The church had previously decided to proceed with the demolition, and during the January 1961 business meeting a committee composed of Hoyt Elrod (chairman), Walter Townsend, J.L.

Myers, Ernest Visage, and C.L. (Shan) Hamilton were designated the following duties:

- (1) To dispose of the old building for the best interest of the church.
Set date to have the building removed by April 15, 1961.
- (2) To work out suitable arrangements for Sunday School and Training Union for those now meeting in the old building during the construction of the new building.



Nursery, Vacation Bible School 1959

To finance these building projects, the church authorized the Finance Committee, composed of active deacons, to borrow the necessary money at a rate most suitable to the church's financial situation. Based on that direction, the church borrowed \$70,000 and reserved the right to acquire more funds if needed. However, the church received a large sum of money from the settlement of a church member's will. Mrs. Mattie Tucker, who had recently died, left the church \$23,608.92 to be used at the church's disposal. Due to this generosity, the church was able to effectively finance the Educational Building cost, and the new facility was completed in August 1961. In 1964, the church paid tribute to Mrs. Tucker by dedicating a special day to her memory, and by erecting a plaque on the eastern wall of the Educational Building.

While the church was building a new Educational facility, the church departments continued a constant increase in size. Sunday School enrollment reached into the 400's by 1962, and the Training Union reported gradual additions in attendance. Along with these programs, the W.M.U. and Brotherhood organizations had a time of significant growth. However, it was Church Music that seemed to experience the largest amount of improvement. This program so vital to the spiritual life and the family atmosphere of North Cleveland Baptist underwent a major transformation during Frazier's pastorate. In 1957, Jack Tullock became the church's part-time Music Director, and under his leadership, the choir grew in size and in musical knowledge. Soon after Tullock's arrival, the church also voted to use the new official convention-wide Baptist Hymnal (1956). Many North Cleveland members were excited about obtaining the new hymn books. One member, in particular, reportedly stated that he could finally recognize North Cleveland as being truly Southern Baptist.

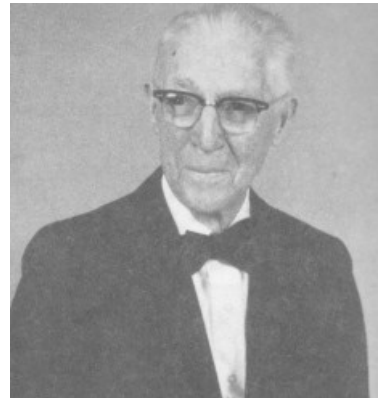
In 1959, the church also purchased an organ for \$1,700 to be placed in the church sanctuary and to be used in the worship services. This organ was replaced in 1962 with an electronic organ. Chimes were later added by an anonymous donor in 1965.

After four years of pastoral service to the people of North Cleveland Baptist, Rev. Frazier resigned his position without notice on January 28, 1962. In his resignation statement, he thanked the church for its positive attitude and for its cooperative spirit. He also called attention to North Cleveland as a church that was motivated to Christian service. Frazier was recognized as a good preacher by some members, and one member specifically mentioned his willingness to offer spiritual assistance if it was desired.

5 The Interim Pastorates of Dr. Livingstone

Not With Swords' Loud Clashing

Soon after Rev. Frazier's resignation, North Cleveland voted to call Dr. David Nathan Livingstone as an interim pastor. In semi-retirement, Dr. Livingstone had already served as a diligent pastor in several Baptist churches, especially in the Knoxville and Chattanooga areas. Even so, he continued to preach the Gospel faithfully and to humbly serve in his ministerial calling. When he pastored North Cleveland in an interim capacity in 1962, Livingstone impressed the church with his simplicity and modesty. As a result, the church often called up on him to serve as the spiritual leader when North Cleveland was without a pastor. In all, Livingstone occupied the interim position at North Cleveland four different times. Each time, all who knew him learned to respect him more.



Rev. David Livingstone

Dr. Livingstone was a skilled Christian scholar, who used simple, practical illustrations to preach the Gospel. Even though he often referred to his style as "corn bread and molasses" in comparison to some pastor's "peaches and cream" style, he always portrayed Jesus Christ and God's Kingdom without apology and without error.

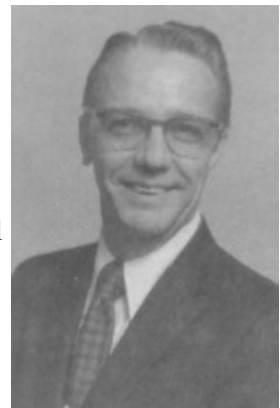
Dr. Livingstone's mastery of the Scriptures and his devotion to the Christian life were added to the spiritual life of North Cleveland during the times that he served as interim pastor. Often, the loss of a pastor is a painful and frustrating period in a church's life, and Dr. Livingstone's ministry brought healing and security to North Cleveland members. As a result, the numerous pastorates Livingstone served the church were beautiful periods in which a sweet and loving Christian spirit was evident.

In 1975, at the end of Dr. Livingstone's last interim period, the church paid special honor to his many unselfish hours of service, not only to North Cleveland, but to the Christian life as well. One speaker during the tribute recognized him as a person who truly personified the spirit of Philippians 1:21, "For me to live is Christ." Indeed, the life of North Cleveland Baptist Church has been enriched by the influence of this saintly and dearly beloved pastor.

6 Rev. Robinson 1962-1966

Fields White to Harvest

Approximately six months after Frazier resigned from North Cleveland's pastorate, the church issued a call to Rev. J. Groce Robinson to become pastor. Coming from a North Carolina pastorate, Robinson was a welcome addition to the Cleveland community. Not only do many church members remember their fourth pastor for his excellent preaching, they also recall his intense concern for the spiritual welfare of the congregation. During his first three months as pastor, Robinson reportedly made three hundred visits to the homes in the North Cleveland community.



Rev. J. Groce Robinson

One person seemingly cannot accomplish much, but Robinson was willing to do more than his share. However, the pastor believed that every member had an im-

portant duty. As he told the church on his first Sunday as her pastor:
 “Many people feel there is nothing they can do in the church. Let me say that anything you can do for the honor and glory of Christ is great, regardless of how big or little you may think it to be, and if we will look, I am sure all of us can find something we can do.”

In this same statement, Robinson also urged members to continue an active prayer life. He believed that the strength of the church depended upon a congregation on its knees. Anything less, Robinson felt, would be dangerous to a church’s spiritual welfare.



Elvis Brandon,
Music Minister

When Robinson became North Cleveland’s pastor, the church had about 761 members. As a result, many individuals, including the pastor, believed there was a sincere need for a full-time minister of Music who would also assist the pastor in his ministerial duties. Before 1963, the music program was important but not large enough to require a full-time church staff position. However, a desire for a full-time Music Minister was a current discussion topic throughout deacon meetings held during the first quarter of 1963. Little or no concrete action materialized though until July, when the church appointed T.J. Cawood, John Morrow, Lawrence Gentry, and Ralph Johnson as a committee to locate a Music Minister at a \$100.00 weekly salary. In March 1964, the committee recommended that Elvis Brandon from Nashville be called as North Cleveland’s first full-time Minister of Music. As a part of the recommendation, Brandon’s title would also include ‘Assistant to the Pastor’. The following was a list of the job duties:

1. The Minister of Music and Education Director will be under the supervision of the Pastor.
2. Will keep office hours designated by the Pastor (any deviation will be only through permission of the Pastor).
3. Will attend all church meetings and be required to be at the church at least 10 minutes before the regular starting hour. (S.S., T.U., and Others)
4. Will be on time for Youth Choir rehearsal (4:30 Sunday evenings). Will supervise fellowship for the Youth Choir from 4:30 to 5:30 P.M. Will rehearse Youth Choir, beginning no later than 5:30 PM each Sunday.
5. Will be on time for Junior Choir rehearsal (6:30 Wednesday evenings). Will rehearse Juniors and remain with them until parents arrive or until Prayer Service at 7:30 P.M.
6. Will be responsible to order all Church Literature (on time). Will see that all literature is placed in the respective departments at the proper time.
7. Will be responsible for seeing that all types of records are on hand and available to respective departments.
8. Will see that at least three visitor cards are placed in each pew no later than Saturday of week. (The cards must be clean, pencils sharpened, and offering envelopes placed with cards).
9. See that all hymn books are in proper places in Sanctuary. (Also that all Broadman Hymnals



SOARING STEEPLE: Workmen swing the new \$6,500 steeple into place atop the North Cleveland Baptist Church this morning.
 (Banner Photo — Hunter)

are in Basement Assembly Room. All American Hymnals in the Fellowship Hall.)

10. Will participate in visitation programs the same as any other member of our membership. (more often if called upon by the Pastor).
11. Will be responsible for all church fellowships, recreation, recreation equipment, and be available to assist any department in promoting this.
12. Will make bulletins and do all mimeographing for church, kindergarten and as the need or request arises from the Pastor.
13. Responsible for the promotion of the R.A. work through the Pastor and Brotherhood President.
14. Will be on time in promoting the kindergarten and responsible to see that no child comes to school before someone is available to take care of them. (Will not leave without making sure every child is taken care of or is sent home properly).
15. Will cheerfully assist the pastor in whatever way the pastor may deem or feel necessary for the promotion of the work.
16. Will be available for visitation at any time.
17. Will make visits to hospital and be on the field always in the absence of the Pastor.



Steeple destroyed by a tornado on April 3, 1974

The addition of a new staff member and an increase in the church program to accommodate a larger membership, contributed to more financial concerns. In 1962, church expenditures were over \$44,000. At this time, the church property included two buildings with a certain amount of indebtedness; two tracts of land rented for parking to the south of the church, and for recreation, to the north; and the church's expenses including local expenditures and mission contributions through the State, Home and Foreign Mission Boards of the Tennessee Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention respectively. The church had definitely undertaken a large financial responsibility. Even so, North Cleveland has always met its obligations. In 1950, the church was able to dispose of the note for indebtedness on the property where the Educational Building and a portion of the Sanctuary are located. Remarkably the church raised the money even though it was barely ten years old, and did not have a large treasury from which to draw.



Rev. Robinson and Deacons 1964-1965

With these financial concerns in mind, the church also recognized her spiritual potential and began to consider acquiring additional property. Through the foresight of her deacon body, North Cleveland gained a special interest in purchasing the two properties the church was then renting from private sources. After approximately a four-year period, the church finally purchased the land in similar transactions. The first property, owned by the Beck family, was located on the northern side of the church and had been rented by the church since 1958. In 1963, the family was willing to sell the entire property to the church under the conditions of a lifetime dowry for Mrs. Chloe Beck who still lived on the property or to sell the back portion of the property for \$20,000. At that time, the church

offered \$10,000 for the back lot, but that price was not suitable. Eventually, the church and the Beck family negotiated an agreement, and the property was purchased by North Cleveland Baptist in 1965.

The church was also interested in acquiring the property located on the south side of the church. In 1962, the church was renting a portion of the property, owned by Mr. and Mrs. H.S. Albritton, for parking space. The entire property included not only a paved parking surface, but also a large building formerly occupied by the M.C. Headrick Supermarket, a local grocery. In December 1962, the church appointed a committee of Glen Greene (chairman), J.L. Myers and Hoyt Elrod to work out a suitable financial arrangement between the Albrittons and the church. However, due to other financial matters, the church did not purchase the property until April 19, 1969. At that time, the church paid \$65,000 for the entire tract of land. Later, North Cleveland decided to lease one side of the former supermarket, and remodel the other half for use as classrooms. In 1969, after fire had gutted the interior, the church eventually renovated the entire facility for church use. Presently, the Educational Annex houses the church kitchen, a large fellowship hall, the church library, assembly rooms, and numerous classrooms.

During these property acquisitions, North Cleveland also sought to enhance the beauty of the sanctuary. For this reason, a steeple was added to the front of the building. Interest for a steeple began in 1963, and the church elected a Steeple Committee with Hoyt Elrod as chairman to investigate the church's opinion on erecting a steeple, and evaluate the financial aspects of the project. During the April church business meeting, Mrs. Virginia Tatham contributed \$1,000 in memory of her husband, Jack Tatham, to begin a Memorial Steeple Fund. This move fostered a fund drive for the steeple in which individuals contributed money in memory of loved ones. Members gave money used in the Memorial Steeple Fund in memory of the following: (given in chronological order)

J.H. Tatham, Mrs. Lillian Jones, Mrs. Marie Wheeler, Mr. and Mrs. George Clayton, Mrs. Glennie Norwood, Jess Morrow, H.L. C. Graves, W.K. Graham, Carl H. Smith, Mrs. Mary L. Visage, Ronnie McElrath, Mr. and Mrs. Vance Ragsdale, Mrs. Mae Logan, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas F. Cawood, Alden W. Harris, Dorothy June Vance, James Fox Sr., Fred C. Fuller, Rev. Joseph A. Boring, Mrs. Mildred J. Boring, and Cecil D. Edgeman.

The steeple was financed from this fund, and from other financial arrangements agreed upon by the church. In 1965, the church approved a steeple design, and authorized a local builder, Eddie Mital, to build the steeple. This steeple was later destroyed by a tornado on April 3, 1974. Later that year, members financed the building of the present steeple from insurance receipts. (The steeple is 32 feet high and weighs more than 3,000 pounds.)

In providing for her pastor, North Cleveland sold the old pastorium on Franklin Avenue in March 1963 for \$6,000. In September, she purchased a new home for Rev. Robinson for \$16,000. The pastorium was located on Pryor Drive in the East Cherokee Gardens section of Cleveland. The deacons had tried to locate land large enough upon which to build a house, but the cost was too expensive, and they purchased the Pryor Drive property instead.

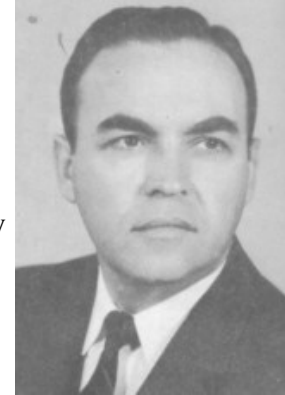
Although he had struggled with the decision to remain at North Cleveland, Rev. Robinson finally submitted to God's call to go elsewhere. Using Philippians 1:9-11 to defend his position, he also quoted the following poem: *"I hear a voice you cannot hear which says I must not stay, I see a hand you cannot see which beckons me away."* Although his resignation was not entirely unexpected, North Cleveland received Robinson's decision with great regret. He had led the church with strength and had illustrated a fine example of Christian charity.

Rev. Robinson's great spiritual leadership and dedication continued at North Cleveland until September 5, 1966, when he resigned to accept the pastorate of the Longview Park Baptist Church in Raleigh, North Carolina. In his resignation statement, Robinson told his congregation that his ministry at North Cleveland was one of his best pastoral experiences.

7 Rev. Byler, 1967-1970

Brethren We Have Met to Worship

After Rev. Robinson's resignation, an interim committee of Ralph Johnson, T.J. Cawood and Bill Hutson asked Dr. David Livingstone to fill the pulpit in absence of a pastor. During this period, a pulpit committee actively sought a pastor. It eventually settled on Rev. James E. Byler, pastor of the Moreland Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia. The church approved Byler and he accepted the church's invitation on March 5, 1967. Byler was no stranger to Cleveland for he had previously served as pastor of First Baptist approximately twenty years before he became North Cleveland's fifth pastor. A rather reserved individual, Byler taught his congregation the practicality of Scriptures, and portrayed a loving Christian attitude in his pastoral ministry.



Rev. James E. Byler

The church became more involved in ministries aimed to benefit both the church family and also the church community. Such activity created an increase in membership, and in church participation. The membership roles added some 205 new names, and Sunday School attendance increased proportionately during the three years Byler served as North Cleveland's pastor. On January 1, 1968, Sunday School enrollment surpassed the 700 mark, and church officials set aside January 14 as Soul-Winning Concern Day in Sunday School to urge members to continue setting goals in the department. The church also made other improvements in Sunday School. With the acquisition of the Annex, more classes were added, including an active Young Married Department. To provide for more adequately trained teachers, the church established a Teacher's Training Class with Associate Pastor Rev. Samuel D. Melton as director with George Johnson and Harold Reno as teachers.



Royal Ambassadors

In June 1969, the first class completed its work. Members in this class were Mrs. Ralph (Sarah) Brooks, Mrs. Alan (Carla) Cawood, Mrs. Taylor (Jean) Cawood, Mrs. Charlie (Fran) Dick, Paul McConnell, Mrs. Terry (Norma) McCoy, Mrs. Ronald (Joy) Rogers, Mrs. Kenneth (Becky) Russell, Miss Joyce Samples, Ken Tarpley and Goss Tiller. A majority of these individuals were later added to the teaching ranks, and church leaders planned more teacher training classes.

Improvements also took place in other church programs, but the Men's and Women's Mission Organizations and there various auxillaries experienced the most tremendous growth. The W.M.U. and Brotherhood became more active and provided more spiri-

tual impact in the life of the church. The various branches of each of those organizations grew rapidly as well. The Girl's Auxillaries of the W.M.U. actively pursued mission projects both locally and worldwide through planned community service and through mission-giving. A current aim used during 1966 urged girls to be aware of the need for Christian concern in missions in all areas of one's life, and stressed that girls recognize the importance of a proper Christian walk with God. The Royal Ambassadors, similar to the G.A. program, but under the direction of the Brotherhood Department, also conducted an active chapter during Byler's pastorate. Involved in mission activities, and in local projects, the R.A.'s also

attended many R.A. Congresses, including an International Congress held in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma in August 1968. In fact, in March 1969, Tony Hancock, from North Cleveland ran for State Royal Ambassador President.

Under Byler's leadership, the church also moved into several new and worthwhile endeavors. The first of these, a church kindergarten, actually initiated during Robinson's pastorate, developed and flourished during Byler's tenure. The first church kindergarten began in 1967, and soon offered facilities for a maximum forty-eight children. In early 1969, the Church Kindergarten Committee reviewed the first year of the kindergarten and decided to continue the successful program. Later the church had an opportunity to increase the size of it's kindergarten through a merger with another privately-owned facility. If this effort proved successful, church officials seriously entertained the possibility of developing a day care program. However, these plans didn't materialize, and the church continued to operate the kindergarten until 1972. In addition to an active kindergarten program, the church sponsored an Explorer Scout Troop from 1968 to 1972.



1965 Church Staff

North Cleveland also added several more staff positions in 1965. At that time, Mrs. Bill (Dot) Carson became the church's first full-time



Rev. Samuel D. Melton

Church Secretary. Mrs. Lawrence (Carolyn) Gentry also served as Church Financial Secretary on a part-time basis. Since 1965, the church has hired four Church secretaries, and four other Staff Secretaries. Mrs. Noble Crawford became the first of three Pastor's Secretaries in 1976. Elvis Brandon's resignation on March 28, 1968 left a vacancy in the Music Department which was quickly filled when Stephen Foster, a Senior Music student at Carson-Newman College, served as interim director through the summer months. He also helped coordinate youth activities, among those a trip to Training Union week at Ridgecrest, and a production of the Youth Musical 'Good News' in August 1968. During Foster's tenure, an Associate Pastor Committee composed of Glen Greene, Mrs. Bill (Mae) Ragsdale and Glen Wegner sought an individual for a more permanent position. On August 25, it presented Rev. Sam D. Melton for the church's consideration. The church approved Melton, having established the following job description as a guideline:

1. Congregational song leading in regular services. Direction of church and youth choirs in regular services.
2. Prospect visitation will belong to both pastor and associate pastor. Associate will see that file is kept up-to-date and make continuous assignments through the Sunday School.
3. Youth leadership. Act as moderator of the Youth Coordinating Council; meet and plan regularly with the youth leadership of the church. All youth activities will be planned in this way. Train youth choir which will meet Sunday at 5:00 PM.
4. New Member Orientation will be a continuous and regular part of the Training Union Program.
5. Teacher Training Class. The enlistment and training of a continuous stream of new workers for Sunday School. Course of Study-a-syllabus recommended by the Sunday School Board in Nashville. Worker enlistment is related to this program and will be the responsibility of the associate pastor, together with S.S. and T.U. Director as well as other organizations in the church, such as R.A.'s.

6. Monthly Officers and Teachers Meeting. Give assistance to the S.S. Superintendent to make this a meeting of real meaning.
7. Study Courses will be planned through Church Council Meeting. Selecting teachers will be done with the help of associate pastor.
8. Library. The committee can expect help from associate pastor in promotion, scheduling and selection of books.

Rev. Melton was primarily responsible for music and youth activities. He served the church well until July 21, 1969. After Melton had resigned from his position, Rev. Byler praised his associate as an individual upon whom he had grown quite dependent and who also went out of his way to help. Byler also expressed the feeling that North Cleveland members may not have truly realized Melton's qualities of service. After Melton's resignation, the church asked Dr. F. Dean Banta, Academic Dean at Cleveland State Community College and a North Cleveland member, to supervise the music program for the next few months.

While all these changes occurred, the church was engaged in a remodeling program. Rev. Byler recognized the need for some restoration work soon after his arrival in Cleveland, and actively brought it to the attention of the deacons and church members. As a result, On February 28, 1967, the church appointed a Building Committee consisting of Glen Greene, J.L. Haney, Mrs. Fred Hall, Mrs. Bill Carson and Jim Quinn to supervise the renovation of the Sanctuary. Built in 1956, the Sanctuary had little or not construction work performed on it since that time, and needed immediate attention. At the same time, the church selected Forrest Phillips, Roy Boring and C.L. Hamilton as the Finance Committee for this project. The following description of the necessary work was also presented:

1. Put in new ceiling and lighting.
2. Panel front of Sanctuary.
3. Raise platform and choir loft.
4. Remove false ceiling of choir loft.
5. Wainscoating the walls of choir loft, patch and paint rest of walls.
6. Draping the windows.
7. Build a new baptistry which will be raised.

Later the church also voted to carpet the entire Sanctuary.

To finance the project, the church gave the trustees the authority to establish a Building Account through Merchants Bank up to \$15,000. At that time, the bank could place a minimum amount of \$3,000 into the account and charge six percent interest on any money it placed into the account. The finance committee was then authorized to develop a fund-raising plan for the church. As a result, on March 17, the Finance Committee presented a pledge system in which contributions would be collected over a three to six-month period.

During construction, the congregation held Sunday morning services in the old Bradley Central High School Auditorium and the Sunday and Wednesday evenings in the Fellowship Hall in the church's Educational Building. After approximately a three-month period, members returned to worship in a more commodious and beautiful Sanctuary.

In addition to the Sanctuary renovation, the church undertook other similar projects during Byler's pastorate. The deacons recommended in July 1967 that a new choir room be constructed



Renovation of Church Sanctuary, 1967



The Annex

downstairs in the Sanctuary building, and the church approved. Upon terms of an apparent pre-pastoral agreement, Byler purchased the pastorium for \$10,000 in December 1967, with the church's approval. As a part of the agreement, the church also guaranteed the pastor a \$100 monthly allowance, plus utilities. During these developments, numerous church actions concerned work and financial arrangements on the recently acquired church annex.

Before 1969, the church leased one portion of the building, and used the other as classroom space. However, after recovering from a severe fire that destroyed the interior, the church reviewed her former decision. At that time, she also considered the then-congested conditions very evident in the overcrowded church Education Building. Ultimately, North Cleveland decided to renovate the annex and to brick the exterior of the building – with the intentions of using the whole facility for church purposes.

North Cleveland also assumed a larger role in community activity during Byler's pastorate. One important function the church performed for a brief period of time during 1967 was the housing of Cleveland State Community College. Unable to occupy its unfinished facilities, the new college used the church Educational Building to house offices and to hold classes. The church authorized a committee of T.J. Cawood, Glen Greene, Hoyt Elrod, Bill Hutson and J.P. Quinn to work out the proper arrangement. In retrospect, one member praised the good relationship fostered between North Cleveland and Cleveland State, and promised a bright future of cooperation between the two. He also expressed pride that the church had pursued such a positive step in Cleveland State's history. After December 1967, the college moved its facilities to its present campus on Norman Chapel Road.

An opportunity to continue the same spirit of cooperation came in early 1969, when North Cleveland joined an association-wide effort to organize a Baptist Student Union program at the college. Bradley Baptists, enthusiastic about the spiritual opportunity available at Cleveland State, worked together to finance the project. Having purchased the property, the Association worked in cooperation with the Tennessee Baptist Convention to raise funds to build the B.S.U. Center. In order to accomplish this, Associational leaders including Byler, chairman of the B.S.U. Committee, urged each church to contribute liberally. North Cleveland pledged to provide \$1800 of the \$16,000 needed. Bradley Baptists owed on the project, and Byler asked his members to raise at least \$400 on the upcoming B.S.U. Day in Bradley County (February 2, 1969). He believed the church would provide the additional funds over the next four years. Based on this effort, and many others throughout Bradley County, Baptists built and financed the B.S.U. Center and today the B.S.U. program at Cleveland State is one of the largest in the state of Tennessee.



Youth Council

Later in 1969, the church again participated in an associational project. On this occasion, North Cleveland helped the Bradley Association finance and modernize the recently acquired Baptist camp located in Southwest Bradley County. North Cleveland's contribution was a dining area at a financial cost of \$750 with the men of the church furnishing the labor. The committee established to supervise this project included Bill Caron, Glen Greene, C.L. Hamilton and Ken Andrews.

In addition to these associational events, North Cleveland took an active role in the formation of the Bradley County Child Shelter Home. Many area officials had grown concerned over the need for the



Brotherhood Officers

temporary housing of juveniles whose parents were apathetic, criminal or sick. This concern developed into a fund-raising project in which the churches were asked to contribute. Again, Byler encouraged his congregation to give generously to this worthwhile endeavor, and also suggested that Sunday School classes might take an active part in the Child Shelter Home project.

Several months after this massive effort, Bradley County did indeed construct and soon operate a successful Child Shelter Home, which still functions today.

North Cleveland became a very social-minded membership during the years James Byler served as her pastor. Under his leadership, the church developed a conscientious concern for Christian benevolence and for Baptist missionary enterprise. North Cleveland sadly accepted Rev. Byler's resignation on February 1, 1970. Explaining that he had followed the Holy Spirit's leadership, Byler stated that he had accepted the pastorate of the First Baptist Church of LaFayette, Georgia. He also promised the members his continued prayers for their efforts to find a new shepherd who would guide the church effectually. The church hosted a reception in honor of the pastor and his family on February 12, and The Evangel best summarized what seemed to be the sentiment held by many North Cleveland members:

"Not only will we be missing a good pastor, but a Sunday School teacher, a pianist, and leader to two choirs which Mrs. Byler so faithfully served. What great jobs they have done at our church. Needless to say we will all feel the impact and influence of the lives of the Bylers now and in the days to come."

When Byler announced his decision to resign, an interim committee, chaired by Kenneth Russell, asked Dr. Livingstone to again return for another period of service. Members welcomed Livingstone's arrival and expressed assurance in his competence which had been proved again and again by his humble ministry.

8 Rev. Bernard Campbell 1970 – 1975

Onward Christian Soldiers

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Malachi 3:10

North Cleveland called Rev. Bernard Campbell, the church's sixth pastor, on June 29, 1970, after Glen Greene, chairman of the pulpit committee, recommended Campbell's approval. Coming from the pastorate of the Georgian Hills Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee, Campbell had served in ; several Baptist pastorates in his years in the ministry. Beginning his pastoral duties on July 20, Campbell led North Cleveland



Rev. Bernard Campbell

in four years of active church growth and in a period of prominent community service. Campbell was also a skilled preacher who had a profound knowledge of the Scriptures and used simple interpretation in their application. While serving as pastor at North Cleveland, Campbell served as president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention Pastor's Conference, as well as president of the Bradley Baptist Pastor's Conference, and chairman of the Bradley Baptist Evangelism Committee.

Early in his pastorate, Campbell actively sought the support of all of the church membership. While thanking each individual for past support, he reminded his congregation: "The days ahead for our church will be busy days. The fall months are upon us and we must be back into the swing of things for our church. These days will be challenging days for all of us and we need to determine beforehand that we are going to be faithful and diligent in the performing of all of our responsibilities."

Going further in this same plea, Campbell urged each person to take an active role in Sunday School, and other church functions by their presence and through their efforts.

The church program at North Cleveland again experienced new avenues of growth. With church membership at 730 in 1970 to 875 in 1975, Sunday School enrollment also increased from 671 to 756. The Training Union Department, although growing at a slower rate than the Sunday School, also experienced a one hundred member increase during the same time period. While these two programs improved, the Mission Organizations and the Music Program fluctuated with church emphasis and member involvement. In an effort to enhance Sunday School and Training Union participation, the pastor and departmental leaders initiated the Annual Roll Call in October, 1970. During October of each year, classes contacted each inactive member and encouraged them to attend Sunday School and Training Union at least once during the month. In November, the class emphasis concerned new members who would also attend during the month. This program fostered growth in both departments, and church leaders decided to use the Roll Call as a part of the church program until 1974. During this program emphasis, North Cleveland also continued to express a profound interest in the spiritual well-being of her youth.



Mary & "Barney" Campbell with Paul Phelps



H. Lynn Blair

Although the church had a well-organized youth or intermediate department during Robinson and Byler pastorates, she experienced an apparent rebirth of interest in the youth program during Rev. Campbell's tenure. The responsibility for such increased activity probably lies in the church's decision to hire a music minister who would also plan and coordinate youth activities. Prior to this time, the church had delegated youth activities to the music minister or to the associate pastor, but did not have a youth minister per se on staff. Along with concern of his congregation, Rev. Campbell likewise felt the need of a dynamic music minister and also the pastor expressed a strong desire for an active, dynamic youth program. As a result, the church called H. Lynn Blair to serve in that capacity on October 25, 1970. Recommended by Music Committee Chairman Kenneth Russell, Blair was to begin his duties on November 18, at a salary fixed at \$11,000.00. (III) Following the affirmative vote, the Evangel encouraged every member to take an active role in helping Blair coordinate the expanded music and youth ministry.

Under Blair's leadership, the music and youth programs did prosper. In particular, the youth departments added new members, as youth became enthusiastic about the social and religious opportunities North Cleveland provided.

V.B.S. East Cleveland Mission

While Blair implemented many youth activities, a Mission Vacation Bible School, held in East Cleveland during July, 1971, proved to be the most prominent. Assisted by Blair and other teachers, twenty youth conducted a week-long V.B.S. for children from 4-16 years of age in East Cleveland, one of the city's lower economic areas, and where an active church ministry was needed. Beginning with fifty-one children on the first day, the numbers grew dramatically. The faculty included:

Greg Eidson, Principal
DeWayne Morrow, Music Director
Libby McConnell, Director
Lisa Wallace
Donna Dantzler
Suzanne Brock
Mrs. Betty Oody, Advisor



V.B.S. East Cleveland Mission

North Cleveland Baptist Church Sunday School Mission

Primary

Kathy Smith, Director
David Andrews
Marsha McConnell
Darryl Ownby
Mrs. Yvonne Blair, Advisor

Juniors

Kenny Russell, Director
Tom Oody
Donna McConnell
Natalie Andrews

Intermediates

Debbie Davis, Director
Eddie Davis
DeWayne Morrow
Wayne Hill
Eugene Oody, Advisor

Adults

Mrs. June Cawood



North Cleveland Baptist Church
Sunday School Mission

Due to the successes of the first Mission V.B.S. also convinced not only the youth, but the entire church, of the need for a strong church ministry in the East Cleveland area. The need was especially recognized

by Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Oody, former SBC missionaries to Liberia, who volunteered to spearhead North Cleveland's efforts in the area. As a result, North Cleveland decided to sponsor a small Sunday School program in East Cleveland with the Oody's in charge. Initially renting a small house in the area, the church eventually purchased a small tract of land, and constructed a small building in which to conduct its extension Sunday School program, before the church discontinued the Mission, and sold the property in March 1980.

Lynn Blair served as Music and Youth Minister until September, 1971. After his resignation, the church appointed T.J. Cawood, Buford Dantzler, Byron Eidson and Kenneth Russell as a music committee and delegated to them the responsibility of filling the vacancy. On November 28 committee submitted the name of Carlton McDowell for consideration as Music and Youth Director. During a secret ballot election, the church voted to call McDowell who served in the music and youth position from 1972 to March, 1976. Once upon the field, McDowell actively encouraged participation in the youth and music ministries.



Carlton McDowell

While reminding the church that the purpose of religious music is to provide praise and worship to God, he urged members not to ignore their God-given talents. In order to foster an active youth program, McDowell stated that the council would consider activities which would promote the spiritual well-being of the North Cleveland Youth Department. The Youth Council also considered activities that would promote the greatest amount of youth involvement.

Youth Councils from 1973-1975 planned many social and religious activities geared toward the growth of the youth department. Youth during these years attended numerous Evangelism Conferences, seminars and camps, as well as sponsoring both social and religious activities. They also participated actively in civic functions. During a local liquor referendum campaign in July 1973, North Cleveland youth exercised an active roll in the Youth Against Legalized Liquor, a religious-based organization, of which Rev. Campbell was chairman. Youth activities in this anti-liquor effort included attending rallies, circulating tracts in local shopping centers and at the polls on election days, and participating in a march through downtown Cleveland held on July 14.

Several of North Cleveland youth also submitted to a letter detailing their views to the Cleveland Daily Banner. In this letter, the youth encouraged voters to seriously consider the results of legalized liquor in Cleveland; "We cannot believe that the golden streets promised to us will ever become a reality; too much will be sacrificed for very little". Anti-liquor forces achieved success in the 1973 referendum. North Cleveland youth involvement in this campaign, as well as other church-oriented projects, illustrate the active role the youth ministry has played on the life of the church.

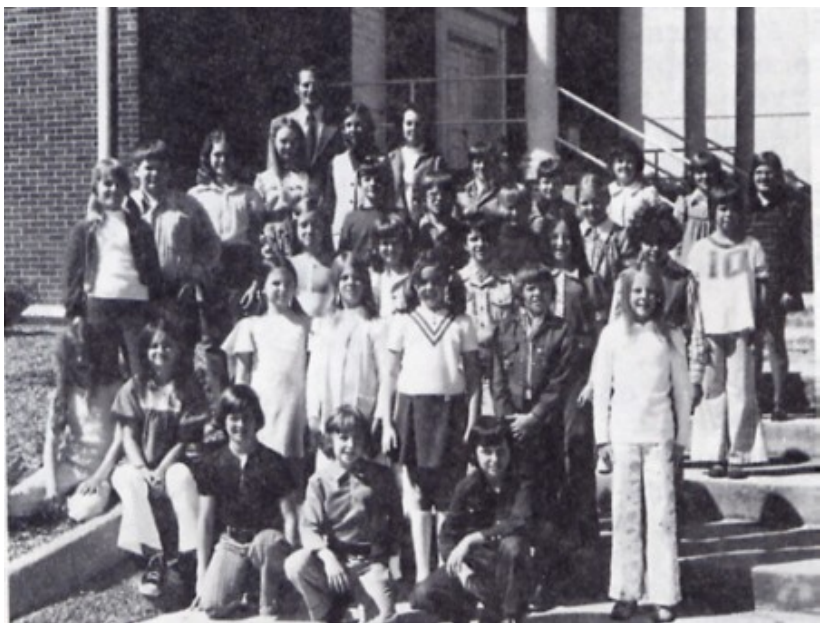
The addition of a flourishing youth program increased the church's financial responsibility. Even so, North Cleveland met the challenge of an expanded youth department, as well as changes in other church programs. Financially, North Cleveland's budget has remained one of the most ambitious, even for a church comparable to the size of North Cleveland. When Campbell became pastor in 1970, the church budget was over \$85,000 and growing rapidly due to economic fluctuations. In 1971, the budget increase amounted to \$5,436, from a \$89,532 in 1970 to \$94,968 in 1972. The deacons recognized the changes and the church remained faithful to it's financial obligations.

In spite of the financial burden, the church also continued to provide services and programs considered necessary to a proper church ministry. One primary example of this concern remains North Cleveland's

mission gifts. In 1970, North Cleveland contributed fifteen percent of her budget to the Cooperative Program. At that time, the church gave \$15,383.00 to missions including the Cooperative Program, Home Missions, State Missions, Associational Missions, and local benevolence. Such contributions, along with the increase in costs and expenses, remained consistent as the church began giving 15.5% to the Cooperative Program in 1973, and increased its overall mission giving to \$22,496. North Cleveland has always been extremely diligent to participate actively in Southern Baptist Missions.

Locally, the church continued to improve its own facilities. In 1970, the church renovated and bricked the Annex. Although the church began this project during Byler's pastorate, Rev. Campbell apparently urged its completion. In July, a committee of J.L. Haney, Roy Boring and T.J. Cawood supervised the work on the Annex, which also included constructing a large walkway between the Educational Building and the Annex. This project was completed within the year, but more work on the Annex has continued to be a major concern of the Building and Grounds Committee, as well as of the entire church.

During this time, the church also decided to purchase a parsonage. Having sold two previous parsonages the deacons recommended to the church on May 31, 1971, the purchase of a house located on Bow Street in the Bowman Hills section of Cleveland. After discussion, the church approved the purchase at a cost not to exceed \$37,000. Ultimately, the church again sold the parsonage on July 11, 1979, to her pastor for \$45,000. In addition, the church acquired more land near the church property.



Carlton McDowell and the Children's Choir

In August, 1970, the church purchased a tract of land, including a house, from Jack Grubb. The property was located just south of the Educational Building and the Annex on Franklin Avenue. At one time, there was considerable discussion to convert the house into a parsonage, but such action did not materialize. It eventually became the home of the Minister of Music and Education.

To finance the cost of this new property acquisition, to make necessary repairs on the church building, and to alleviate some of the church's indebtedness, the deacons recommended that the church borrow needed funds from Merchants Bank. This met with church approval and several loans were secured, the most notable being \$7,200.00 in January, 1973, and \$7,000 in May, 1974. The church also received financial assistance from the Estates of Mrs. Cleo Simmonds (\$6,000), and Mrs. Annie Montgomery (\$3,534). These funds helped the church finance several renovation projects, among them the purchase and installation of a \$2,692 sound system in the church sanctuary.

The years 1970-1975 witnessed a period of close Christian communion and of active brotherly kindness throughout the membership of North Cleveland Baptist. The church experienced growth and held a prominent place in the Cleveland community. North Cleveland also loved and appreciated her pastor.

One example of this appreciation came in September, 1972, when the church financed a trip to the Holy Land for Rev. and Mrs. Campbell. However, the church weathered Campbell's sudden resignation on March 30, 1975. An editorial in the Cleveland Banner summarized his ministry: "Through his ministry, many people in Bradley County have been converted to Christianity; through his counsel, many people have found new purpose and meaning in an existence filled with uncertainty and strife".

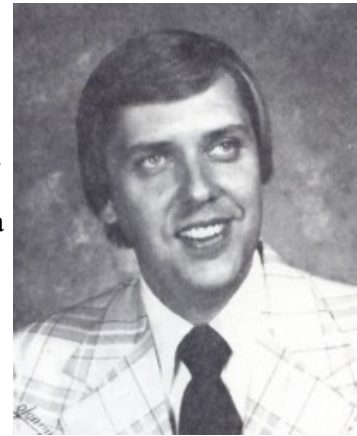
Once again, North Cleveland requested that Dr. Livingstone return as interim pastor. During this time as before, Livingstone served in the position admirably. Despite his age, he continued to preach the gospel honestly and faithfully. Livingstone filled North Cleveland's pulpit as interim from April 23-September 7, 1975. Afterwards he preached on numerous occasions at North Cleveland until his death on November 16, 1979.

9 Dr. J. Timothy Sumners, 1975-78

Love is the Theme

"But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." Galatians 5:22-23

Four months after Rev. Campbell's resignation, North Cleveland called Rev. Timothy Sumners as her pastor. One of the church's youngest pastors, to that date, Sumners, 31, came to North Cleveland from an associate pastorate at the First Baptist Church in Morristown, Tennessee. After hearing a favorable report from a pulpit committee composed of Kenneth Andrews, Bill Cochran, Kenneth Russell, Hoyt Elrod and T.J. Cawood, North Cleveland voted, by standing vote, unanimously to call Sumners. Beginning his tenure on September 14, 1975, Sumner served as pastor for three years, till August 28, 1978. While at North Cleveland Sumners received a doctoral degree from Luther Rice Seminary in Jacksonville, Florida in May, 1978.



Rev. J. Timothy Sumners

A quiet but thoughtful individual, Sumners led the church to consider several matters relating to the furtherance of the local ministry of the church. The deacons also took an active role in several of these concerns. In February, 1976, the church approved the formation of a Church Council "to coordinate and plan the activities of the church." In establishing this council, church leaders hoped the church program could flow smoother and be more effective without confusion or overlapping. Later in the year, the church approved that the following church officers serve as the Church Council: Pastor, Associate Pastor, Minister of Youth, Minister of Music, Sunday School Director, Training Union Director, Women's Missionary Union Director, Brotherhood Director, Director of Library Services, Church Host or Hostess, and the Chairman of the Deacons. While the council functioned as a planning committee, it also served as an advisory body.

Later in 1976, the church began to consider the necessity of a church constitution. Although she had operated effectively without a written statement of purpose for thirty-nine years. North Cleveland members recognized the need for defined set of guidelines and schedules. As a result, she appointed Glen Greene, Mrs. J.L. (Francine) Haney, James Hendrix, John Morrow, Mrs. Danny (Libby) : Douglas, Mrs. Earline Gannaway, Tony Teague, Mrs. Ressie Hancock, T.J. Cawood, Ralph Dean Earby and Walter Townsend as Constitution and By-Laws Committee.

Primarily the proposed Constitution would detail North Cleveland's purposes, her Article of Faith, pro-

visions for memberships, ordinances, and requirements for church organizations and church members, Organized in May, 1976, the Constitution committee worked throughout the rest of the year, and submitted a finished draft for the church's consideration in September, 1977.

Generally, the church's primary objectives are stated in the Constitution's Preamble

"We the members of the North Cleveland Baptist Church, Cleveland Tennessee, in order that we may secure to ourselves and those who come after us the rich blessings of joining our efforts together that we may better serve Christ, the living Son of God, in peace, and in love, to provide for the presentation and security of the principles of our faith, to insure that this church may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with New Testament teachings to preserve the liberties inherent in each individual member of this church, and the freedom of action of this body with respect to its relation to other churches of the same faith, to preserve and protect the highest kind of spiritual unity and Christ-love and fellowship which we seek to know and share with each other, and that we may not forget our privilege of taking Christ to the lost here and everywhere, do declare and establish this Constitution and these By-Laws. All previous action, customs, and procedures by the members of this church have either been embodied in or deleted from this Constitution and By-Laws in their entirety, and therefore became null and void upon the adoption of this article except in the case of legal obligations of the church."

After a series of revisions and additions, the church approved the Constitution and By-Laws, and agreed to implement the provisions for a ten-month trial period, Further discussion on the matter took place during church business meetings held on May 5, and July 19, 1978, when the church apparently agreed that revisions needed to be made in the By-Laws, In January, 1979, however, the deacons recommended that the 1977 Constitution be utilized for an indefinite period of time. Although the church appointed a By-Laws Revision Committee on October 15, 1979, and elected another similar committee in December, 1980, little action on the necessary alterations seems to have transpired.

The Constitution details North Cleveland Baptist's purpose as one of taking the message of Christ to mankind, of reflecting God's righteousness and honor in all matters, of providing the potential for spiritual growth among its members and for all men everywhere, and of representing Baptist doctrine and polity worthily. In that respect. North Cleveland wholeheartedly supports the "Baptist Faith and Message" statements of the SBC annual meetings in 1925, and in 1963, respectively. The church also promises to support, "insofar as it is practical," the efforts of the Bradley Baptist Association, the Tennessee Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention in their particular service and mission endeavors. In this document. North Cleveland provides for her local ministry and membership as well. Membership in North Cleveland Baptist is open to those who "believe in a sovereign, democratic, and New Testament church," who profess Christ as Lord and Savior, who are approved for membership by church vote, and have made adequate provisions concerning baptism.

Stipulating that church property and financial matters are strictly the responsibility of the entire church membership, the Constitution gives the pastor, deacons, and other appropriate leaders the authority to faithfully represent the church in making and executing church decisions. These actions, however, transpire only after some type of church approval.

In respect to committee action, the Constitution states:

The church shall elect such standing committees and special committees as it may deem necessary to carry on the various phase of the church program effectively and efficiently. All committee members and the chairman of all regular committees— unless otherwise specified.

10 Dr. Don Long, 1979 -1981

We are Called to Be God's People

"Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations." Psalm 90:1

On February 21, 1979, North Cleveland called Dr. Don Long as the church's eighth pastor. Occupying the pastorate of the Washington Pike Baptist Church in Knoxville, Tennessee for ten months. Long served as North Cleveland's pastor from March 11, 1979 to January 25, 1981. The church issued a call to Long after , pulpit committee members T.J. Cawood (chairman). Bob Rymer, John Morrow, Ed Collins and Roy Boring had presented a favorable report. At the time of his calling, the church established Long's annual salary at \$19,500.00, with four weeks annually for revivals, and three week annually for vacation.



Dr. Don Long

From 1979-1980, the church experienced growth in a majority of its programs, with the Sunday School recording the largest increase numerically from 596 in 1978 to 628 in 1980. During 1979, the church also recorded a total of fifty-two baptisms, which ranked North Cleveland forty-sixth out of 2,758 Tennessee Baptist churches in the number of baptisms. Based on that achievement, the church received special recognition from Tennessee Baptist Convention Evangelism Director Malcolm Dow in February, 1980.

North Cleveland also initiated an Evangelism Explosion Program, a Teacher Training Video-Dynamics Seminar, and several campaigns to increase active participation in Sunday School, Training Union, Music and Visitation programs. In August, 1979, an anonymous donor contributed a van to aid in the church's outreach ministry.



Dr. and Mrs. Don (Nora) Long
Pam and Donna

During Long's tenure, the church financed several renovation projects. In January and February,



Rev. Ron Bright

1980, North Cleveland once again decided to remodel the Educational Annex. Estimated to cost \$25,945, the project included the construction of a two- van garage in the rear of the Annex, as well as the renovation of the interior of the Annex. The cost of such a project created a financial bind for North Cleveland, and members alleviated a portion of the debt during special offerings on October 14, 1980 and on July 12, 1981. The church also purchased additional sound equipment for the church sanctuary in 1979 at a total cost of \$1,358, and continued to finance church ball teams which participated in Church League softball and basketball. The church had initially began to support a Men's Softball Team in May, 1976, and added other teams later. At one time, the church supported four separate teams in Men's and Women's Softball and Basketball Leagues.

In this period, the church staff continued to grow. On August 26, 1979, North Cleveland called Rev. Ron Bright from Knoxville as Minister of Youth and Associate Pastor. With this addition. Gene North's position was changed from Minister of Music and Youth to Minister of Music and Education. Bright coordinated youth activities, recreational events, the Children's Church Ministry, and assisted in pastoral

duties. Bright served in this position until March 11, 1981, when he accepted the pastorate of the Trinity Baptist Church in Knoxville, North Cleveland also continued to aid in various mission activities from 1979-81. While deciding to end the East Cleveland ministry in January, 1980, the church gave \$40,388 in annual mission gifts to Southern Baptist Program and affiliated giving. In August, the church supported several members who assisted in a Vacation Bible School held by the Westside Baptist Church in Rapid City, South Dakota. Later, North Cleveland decided to contribute \$200 a month to aid the new church in an area where a Southern Baptist ministry was desperately needed.

After two years of service as North Cleveland's pastor. Long announced his resignation on January 11, 1981. In his statement, he expressed appreciation for the church's hospitality. Long also stated he regretted "being unable to do what I feel God wants." After Long's resignation became effective on January 25, 1981, he accepted the pastorate of the Shiloh Baptist Church in Kingston, Tennessee.



NCBC Girls; Softball Team



Children's Choir



Royal Ambassadors and Leaders



Girls' Auxiliary and Leaders

Shortly after Long's departure. North Cleveland acquired additional property. During a February 11 meeting. North Cleveland voted to purchase land located next to the church's southern boundary from John Dunlap. The cost of this land which included two buildings was \$50,000.00, and required a \$10,000.00 down payment. As a part of the transaction, the church agreed to extend their payment of the balance over a ten-year period with ten percent interest. Later the church voted to borrow \$10,000.00 over a ninety-day period in order that the church might pay Dunlap the down payment by March 1, 1981. With this acquisition. North Cleveland's property encompasses an area equivalent to three-fourths of a small city block.

11

Rev. Omer Painter 1981 – 1985

To the Work

“Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.” Romans 14:19

On March 11, 1981, the members of North Cleveland voted to give Bill Houston, Paul McConnell, Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Oody, Mrs. Ronald (Joy) Rogers, Joe Reed and Kenneth Tarpley the responsibility of finding a new pastor for the church. Given the task they had before them, the committee members went to work quickly and diligently.



Rev. Omer Painter

These efforts met with success on July 5, when the Rev. Omer Painter, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Blountville, Tennessee, preached a trial sermon. Later in the day, the church voted in a secret ballot to call Painter, who accepted and began his duties on August 30, 1981.



Rev. Omer and Betty Painter

During Painter's pastorate, the church was actively involved in adding to its property. In October, 1981, the church learned that land adjacent to the church was available, and the membership decided to undertake a major campaign to acquire it. On October 14, the church voted to pursue a fund-raising effort to get the \$46,750.00 needed to purchase the Hooper and Arnold properties, located along Jackson Street, Franklin Avenue and North Ocoee Street. The approval was given at that time with the condition the church acquire a down payment for the Hooper property, and the full cash price for the Arnold property by November 18. As in many times before, North Cleveland answered the financial challenge and raised \$2,000.00 for the thirty day option on the Hooper property during a special offering held on October 18. With this impetus, the church continued to work on paying off the property debt until October, 1984.

At that time, the Bradley Baptist Association purchased a corner of the property that bordered Jackson and Franklin for \$25,000.00. This acquisition allowed the Association to build a much-needed office building, and North Cleveland used the receipts of the sale to complete its final payment of the land. In addition, the church undertook several projects aimed at renovating and restoring the church facilities.

In October, 1981, the front porch and steps of the Sanctuary were tiled at a cost of \$2,572.00. Later the church voted to renovate the vestibule of the Sanctuary, using funds collected from the Buford Dantzler Memorial Fund, and other subsequent gifts. Other projects during this period included painting and cleaning the building and steeple, and planting trees and shrubs to make the grounds more attractive.



An Outing of the JOY Group

Another area of ministry was developed during Rev. Painter's tenure at North Cleveland. The JOY (Just Older Youth) group was organized in March 1984, and featured a Senior Adult Choir, along with several seasonal trips and socials. The program was the result of an interest in developing a Senior Adult emphasis at the church, and JOY membership grew rapidly. On May 5, 1984, the JOY choir joined with a similar group from the First Presbyterian Church to present a musical, "The Best Times of Our Lives."

Later in the year the same group, along with the Senior Adult Choir from Stuart Park Baptist Church, present "An Old-Fashioned Christmas."

The music program of the church also underwent some changes during this time. Upon the resignation of Gene North in 1984, Dr. F. Dean Banta assumed the responsibility of leading the congregational singing and of the adult choir. Banta was assisted in this endeavor by Mrs. Bill (Nancy) Paul, and other church members who conducted the children and youth choirs. In addition, North Clevelanders continued their efforts to serve the youth in the church by employing Tom Gibson and LaMar Ervin as part-time Youth Ministers in 1982 and from 1984-1986, respectively.

While North Cleveland was involved in improving its church program and facilities, the membership continued its outreach to the community and the world. Several programs emphasized an active participation in convention, state, and associational plans and preparations. In April, 1983, the church decided to participate in a simultaneous revival effort with sister Baptist Churches in the Bradley Association. A similar event also took place in April, 1986, with Rev. Doyle Suits and J. Groce Robinson providing the preaching, and Duane Connor serving as Music Evangelist. In addition, Rev. Painter encouraged the church to help with the effort of the Tennessee Baptist Convention to assist Carson-Newman College in its scholarship campaign. Church members also continued to attend the various annual meetings of the TBC and the SBC throughout the years 1981-1986. The church was saddened in July, 1985 when Rev. Painter announced his resignation as the church's pastor in order to become the Director of Missions for the Tennessee Valley Baptist Association. Painter had brought a somber, conscientious attitude to the church, and members will always appreciate his loving devotion to North Cleveland Baptist and to the ministry.



Rev. Doyle Suits

Soon after Rev. Painter had resigned, an interim pastor committee presented the name of Rev. Doyle Suits for consideration. Suits, a well-known Bradley County pastor, had previously served in the ministry for 42 years and was then in retirement. Committee chairman DeWayne Morrow made the motion that the church approve Suits, and the church did so unanimously. Suits assumed the pastorate quickly and served North Cleveland well during his year's tenure. In the Cleveland Daily Banner announcement of his acceptance, Rev. Suits said, "We are very pleased to be a part of the fine fellowship that is so evident at North Cleveland. We want to encourage you to come and to worship God with us. You will find a warm welcome awaiting you."

While Suits was interim, several members of the church began to see the need to replace some of the windows in the Sanctuary. A suggestion was soon made that the church consider installing stained glass windows. Ultimately the church did vote to undertake this project on August 27, 1986, based on a motion made by Clifford Plemmons, chairman of the Building and Grounds Committee. A special offering was received on October 17 to finance the cost of the windows, and many gifts were given in memory and honor of loved ones. The church jubilantly dedicated the stained glass windows on January 4, 1987, with a sermon given by the new pastor Rev. John Fred McCluskey.



Part 1– The First Fifty Years, Epilogue

“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith...” Hebrews 12:1-2a

On August 17, 1986, North Cleveland issued a call to the Rev. John Fred (Jay) McCluskey to become her tenth pastor. He accepted this call and assumed his duties on September 7, 1986. John Peters was later called to the church as Minister of Music and Youth on July 19, 1987. With the coming of a new pastor and Minister of Music and Youth, North Cleveland enters a new era of divine ministry. Established by individuals who desired God’s will and took an active hand in the fulfillment of that process, the church is composed of people with the same spirit and inspiration. From a crude wooden shed to a red brick building, a strong body of believers with an influence in worldwide Bold Mission Thrust, North Cleveland has always worked to promote Christ’s Kingdom, and has been careful to give Him the credit. As the church looks into the future, she will continue to serve Christ faithfully as His beacon in a world filled with darkness.

Commemorating 75 Years

Part 2: 1987-2012, The Next Twenty Five Years
written by Ella Sue Osment

Love Is Alive

Twenty-five years is only a brief moment in God's eternity, but here at North Cleveland Baptist Church the years provided us with a multitude of opportunities to do the work with which God entrusted us. With years of rich heritage behind her, North Cleveland Baptist Church concluded the celebration of her first fifty years and joyfully embraced the next twenty-five. As we celebrate the 75th Anniversary---even as plans and visions are forming for the future---let us pause and remember the ways God has worked through us.

On September 7, 1986, the Rev. John Fred "Jay" McCluskey preached his first sermon as the tenth pastor of North Cleveland Baptist Church. His capable and faithful ministry continues to lead our church twenty-six years later.



Dr. Jay McCluskey

One of the goals our young pastor set for himself was to visit, with the assistance of a deacon, in the home of every church family. Then the McCluskeys reciprocated by holding an open house in their home for the church. Later, as director of his first of many children's musicals---*Sunshine and Snowflakes*, *Bones* and *The Great Late Potentate*, he commented, "How can I lead them to Christ if I don't know them, and they don't know me?" Then we understood the initial home visits and now comprehend why he accompanies the youth to Florida camp, why he plays on the church's softball team, why he shares fall cruises on the *Southern Belle* with adults, why he participates in J.O.Y. activities, why he is an honorary member of WMU, and why he walks a mile with the children to get yogurt. By example he taught us McCluskey lesson number one.



In 1988, McCluskey coined the phrase "Love is alive at North Cleveland Baptist Church."¹ This phrase was modified to "Where Love Is Alive" and remains our theme twenty-four years later. His explanation was simple: "We are people who recognize God's wonderful gift of love in our lives and wish to model that love with one another."²

In fulfilling another of his goals, McCluskey received his Doctor of Ministry in December 1991 from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. From then on the members of the church have referred to him simply as "Dr. Jay" because of our deep respect and love for all he does each day.



Church Staff- Tommy Gray, Brenda Harris, John Peters, Jean Cannon, Jay McCluskey

In expressing his love of missions, he has taught and inspired us not only to give financially but also to give our time and talents through church-led mission trips and the local Ocoee Outreach, which is sponsored by the Bradley Baptist Association.

In 1987, McCluskey's first full year as pastor, the offering for Annie Armstrong totaled \$3,549.75; the Lottie Moon offering, \$8,250.00. through the years, by traveling on

mission trips or hearing about them, members have felt led to increase their giving to missions. A year-round emphasis on mission has led North Cleveland Baptist Church to reach an all-time high in 2006 with offerings to Annie Armstrong totaling \$9,591 and Lottie Moon \$27,717.³



September 1996.
Celebrating 10 years at NCBC.



September 2006.
Celebrating 20 years at NCBC.



September 2011.
Celebrating 25 years at NCBC.

New Beginnings at North Cleveland Baptist Church

"Let everything that has breath praise the Lord." Psalm 150:6

With a mission to provide a loving Christian environment for young lives, on August 22, 1988, the North Cleveland Baptist Church began her Childcare Ministry. The program was open five days a week to the general public for children ages six weeks through 10 years. A waiting list existed for all classes almost immediately. This new ministry was originally meeting a need of 30 families in the North Cleveland community. Becca Peters served as the first NCBC Daycare director. With the development of after school programs by the school systems and the YMCA, Daycare now is available for ages six weeks through four years olds. In 2012, 53 children from 45 families are served by the daycare.⁴



Fishers of Men

“The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore to send workers into the harvest field.” Matthew 9:37-38

Having always been a mission-oriented church, members have responded to opportunities to share the Gospel. During his nine years at North Cleveland Baptist Church, Youth Minister John Peters led yearly trips to Edgewood Baptist Church in Hillsdale, Michigan. Twenty-four youths and adults participated in the July 1988 trip. Team members offered a morning VBS, an afternoon Team Outreach Bible Study, and an evening adult and youth VBS. Upon a return trip in 1989, attendance in the morning VBS increased from 171 to 207; youth attendance increased from 45 to 85. The outreach efforts established contacts, which benefitted the mission team as many of the same children, youth, and adults returned each year.

In July 1995, an adult mission team of twenty-one adults led by Dr. Jay traveled to Bangor, Maine, to minister to the community of River City Baptist Chapel, a new church started by Home Missionary Mark Bryant. Two Backyard Bible Clubs were taught daily in different locations, and after the team spent a Sunday afternoon canvassing the neighborhood, forty-five children attended the first day. Because it was raining, the men found ropes and tarps and “rigged a makeshift shelter between two trees down in a field.”⁵ Later in the day, team members learned the North Cleveland Baptist Prayer Chain had been called and was praying for “our flexibility---it worked!!!!”⁶ Twenty-nine adults returned to Bangor in July 1996. The total number participating in all of the 1996 summer mission trips was 50---about 15 percent of an average Sunday morning attendance.

Another adult mission team, led by Dr. Jay, traveled in July 1992 to the Alexandria/Washington, D.C. area for a week of ministry to children and for repair work at the Johnning Baptist Center. Subsequent teams returned to this area in 1993 and 1994.

Uberlandia, Minas Gerais, Brazil, was the destination of a team of ten led by Dr. Jay in June 2000. The mission had two objectives: to present a program in local schools to 5 to 7 thousand children between the ages of 6 to 17 and to help construct a worship facility for a new church started by Chris and Lori Heil. This young couple from North Cleveland Baptist Church had worked for two years as Journeyman Missionaries through the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. A return trip to Uberlandia was made in 2001 and a second sanctuary was constructed. In 2010, thirteen members affiliated with the student ministry traveled to Amparo, Brazil, to serve with the Heils while ministering to the area in which the Heils serve. A fourth trip to Brazil is being planned for 2013.

North Cleveland Baptist missions touched international soil again in March of 2011. A team from our church joined with others from Bradley Baptist Association doing work in Haiti. They ministered by helping the Haitian people rebuild in their facilities and in their faith after the devastating earthquakes of 2010.



First Adult Mission Trip in 1992 to Alexandria/ Washington, DC area. Subsequent trips in 1993 and 1994.

This followed North Cleveland Baptist's initial response sending over 100 "Buckets of Hope" containing relief food items to Haiti.

The KOA Campground in Townsend presents an opportunity for entire families to participate in sharing the Gospel. Chilhowee Area Ministries sponsors camps which reach hundreds camping in the Great Smoky Mountains. For one week, North Cleveland Baptist Church members conduct day camps for children of all ages and present family programs in the evening. In the summer of 2009, twenty-two adults, youth, and children made the first trip; in the summer of 2011, thirteen others chose to serve the Lord through this mission. A third trip is planned for the summer of 2012.⁷



1996 Adult Mission to Bangor, Maine. Jean and Joe Cannon conducted VBS class under a tarp because of rain.

Verlin Tucker, Minister of Education, led a team of six men to Gulfport/Pass Christian, Mississippi, in June 2008. These men built the inside of the house for a Vietnamese family who lost their home three years earlier during Hurricane Katrina. Another team of nine did Backyard Bible Club ministry in this same area in 2006.

In June 2000, sixteen youth and adults traveled to Indianapolis. The youth group conducted backyard Bible clubs and worked with the Metropolitan Baptist Center in Downtown Indianapolis doing food and clothing distribution.

Over Labor Day Weekend in 2004, six members of North Cleveland Baptist Church trekked to Crofton, Maryland, to provide aid to David Tucker and his church plant---Journey Fellowship. A return trip to Crofton to do VBS work occurred in 2005.

Blessings have been bestowed on all teams that participated in these mission trips. Not mentioned previously are other mission trips that were equally blessed, such as a Smoky Mountain Mission Trip, an Appalachian Mountain Mission Trip, and a Mindenmines and Iantha, Missouri, trip and many, many others.

In addition, dozens of church members have been given sponsorship for their individual mission trips all over the world.



Church constructed on mission trip in 2000 in Brazil.



Haiti Mission Trip- Bob Deloach, Shawn Bramblett, Lanny Green, Dave Olson

Prayer

“The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.” James 5:16

One inherent quality of the life of the church is prayer. Bible studies and discipleship classes as well as committee meetings and staff meetings began with prayer. Each Sunday school class has a list of prayer needs. In 1996 a few members of the church began a Ladies Prayer Group, which met on Thursday morning to “pray for the church and whatever else God laid on their hearts.”⁸ The group now focuses on prayer requests from the Wednesday night Prayer Meeting, needs of the church and community and Ocoee Middle School.⁹

Our partnership with Ocoee Middle School also provides another opportunity for outreach. Prayer partners have spent a school year communicating with and praying for their chosen teacher and his/her prayer requests. Since its beginning in January 2005, Dr. Jay’s 7:00 a.m. Tuesday morning breakfast Bible Study Group also shares prayer requests. In addition, the Women on Mission pray for missionaries and their work, and they host a Season of Prayer for International Missions. Faithful prayer warriors compose a Prayer Chain, which is available day and night for the immediate needs of church members. Each year special prayer programs are held for DiscipleNow. Prayer walks and labyrinths are undertaken to seek God’s wisdom concerning the needs of the church and each Capital Stewardship Campaign.¹⁰



2007 NCBC Became the Church Partner of Ocoee Middle School. Pictured are OMS staff enjoying annual breakfast hosted at NCBC prior to first day of school. Principal, Ron Spangler, stands in the background.



Prayer Garden, In Memory of Ruby and Richard Hillard, Dedicated May 9, 2010.



Ladies Prayer Group



Silent Christmas Eve Service serves as a time for remembrance and reflection.

Music

"Sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God." Colossians 3:16

Music is an integral part of worship at North Cleveland Baptist Church. In addition to the church's sanctuary choir and youth choirs, our church soloists, duets, trios, quartets and ensembles volunteer their talents in the praise of God. Our church is also blessed with talented percussionists and string instrumental players, who help prepare our hearts to receive the Word of God. Preschool and children's music directors have a tremendous influence on children and youth, not only in teaching but also in identifying and developing God-given talents. Youth choirs---from the Spiritens of the 1980s to the Praise Band of 2012---learn music is a vital part of worship. They incorporate these talents in their regular Wednesday night Bible study.

Musical offerings vary from Old Fashion Gospel Singings to the 1998's "A Smoky Mountain Christmas Story" (a dramatic musical set in bluegrass style) to "Reflections on Christmas" (four suites on the birth of Christ). God must surely smile when He recognizes the joy we feel as we lift our voices in praise to Him.

In the summer of 1995, a summer music camp was provided for children. The camp has been offered many times since.



One of the many ensemble groups at NCBC. Pictured are Jay McCluskey, Trish Phillips, Nancy Paul, Jan Schroll, Lanny Green



NCBC Handbell Choir Formed in Early 1990's.



Lanny Green,
Minister of Music
2003-present



The Gift Goes On, one of twenty three children's musicals directed by Dr. Jay McCluskey. 1989



2010 Children's Cantata

Fellowship

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.”

Psalms 133:1

An important ingredient in spiritual growth is fellowship with one’s brothers and sisters in Christ. As membership steadily increased during McCluskey’s pastorate, opportunities for fellowship encompassed a variety of activities. With the exception of one year between 1990 and 2005, the men of the church enjoyed retreats at Myrtle Beach that included golf and Bible study. On two different occasions, members from Waterville Baptist and Westwood Baptist joined them in this annual event.¹¹ Royal Ambassadors, Girls Auxiliary in Action and other youth have enjoyed annual autumn hayrides. Winter retreats for middle school as well as high school youth incorporated Bible study with cold weather fun. Church-wide picnics have been held at Hoyt and Jeanette Elrod’s home on the river, Deer Park, and Tinsley Park. The Annex has hosted back-to-school bashes and Wednesday night dinners. Even the Youth SNAC---Sunday Night After Church---offers Christian fellowship with opportunities for members to invite friends. We watch the Vols, Lookouts and Braves play, and we cheer our own basketball and softball teams. More recently, Dr. Jay has led some of the members on hikes up Mount LeConte and Easter morning Resurrection Runs. Over the years deep, lifelong Christian friendships have been cemented through such events.



Max Patterson with Kevin Hicks, Minister of Education and Sunday School teacher.



2000 Memorial Day Picnic at Deer Park. Singing “Tater Pie” from left to right: Ed Collins, Kenneth Russell, Claude Climer, Bobby Jones, John Morrow, Jean McDonald



Purchases

"O Lord, our God, even this material we have gathered to build a Temple to honor your holy name comes from you! It all belongs to you!" 1 Chronicles 29:16

Two years into McCluskey's pastorate, there was a need for a vehicle larger than a church van. With the growth of the youth department, the participation of the membership in mission trips, and the fellowships of Sunday school classes and organizations within the church, the necessity for a larger vehicle was obvious. The church voted in the August 1988 business meeting to purchase a new thirty-passenger bus for \$40,000. Through this purchase the underlying commitment by the congregation was the belief in North Cleveland Baptist Church and an anticipation of greater ministries and challenges in the future. Over the years the bus served its purpose well, and, as it approached its last days of usefulness, was sold on eBay.

In October 1999 the church purchased a house on Franklin Street that adjoined the northern-most corner of the campus. After repair and renovation, the house has been provided as a rent-free residence for missionaries who are home on furlough or for a stateside assignment. Most recently the house has been utilized by missionaries with direct links to the church: Frank and Cindy Dawson and their family, Chris and Lori Heil and their family, and Forrest and Emily Renner. When needed, the house is also utilized by summer missionaries working in Ocoee Outreach.

In a special business meeting Sunday evening on August 6, 2000, the congregation voted to purchase the one acre Brooking property adjacent to the north parking lot and facing North Ocoee Street. It is now utilized for parking. This purchase enabled the church to petition successfully the city government to close the section of Farris Avenue that run thru the church campus. In a special business meeting on October 21, 2001, the church voted to demolish the building on the "Dunlap Property" just south of the Annex. The land now provides additional parking.



Church Bus Purchase 1988. Traveling to Alexandria, VA on First Adult Mission.

WMU

*"For we are laborers together with God, ye are God's husbandry,
Ye are God's buildings." 1 Corinthians 3:9*

WMU (Women Missionary Union) is a vital and active aspect of the ministry of North Cleveland Baptist Church and offers a choice of two monthly meetings: Monday at 6:30 p.m. and Tuesday at 1 p.m. Even though much has changed since its founding in 1888, WMU remains as an "auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention."¹² It strives to develop an awareness of the work of missionaries at home and abroad and the programs that fund their work and also encourages mission work locally. Women on Mission, Mission Friends, Girls in Action, and Royal Ambassadors fall under the umbrella of WMU.

GA's and RA's not only study about missionaries and their work but also actively participate in raising money for the church's annual contributions to Annie Armstrong and Lottie Moon. RA's offered themselves for the Ugliest RA Fundraiser and raised \$561.91. In 1996, the GA's created a churchwide cookbook in memory of Clara Hutson and in honor of the many years she devoted to the children of the church. The proceeds were given to Ocoee Outreach.

One mission outreach adopted by the Women on Mission is providing snacks for the Christian Women's Job Corp, which is also a WMU sponsored program. North Cleveland Baptist Church opened its doors to this Christian-based program designed to educate women and enable them to secure a job. The Bradley Baptist Association provides the administrative leadership and secures the teachers. In 2012, Women on Mission provided a graduation reception for the graduates, many of whom have no church home.

The Military Prayer Board was created by the Women on Mission and has mushroomed from cards and letters of encouragement to care packages shipped into war zones. Soldiers around the world expressed their appreciation for North Cleveland's prayers and letters.¹³

*Below is a sampling of the thank you notes
from some of our Military Care Boxes sent to
Iraq in 2005.*

25 April '05

Mrs. Bettis,
Please pass my appreciation onto all that took part in sending the Goodie Package containing the wonderful items from TN! I shared them with my friends and shipmates here in CA. Believe it or not, some of them had never experienced the joy of a Moon Pie! Your support is appreciated more than you know.

Respectfully,
Paul Phillips LT, MSC, USN

Subj: Thanks

Date: Fri, 15 Apr 2005 13:23:59+0400

To: drjay@ncbctn.com

From: Jason.crisp1@us.arm.mil

Hello, Sir,

You don't know me and I don't know you, but my daughter Haley attends day care at your church. I don't know if you know it or not but your church sent me a package that will come in handy; it gives me honor to serve my country knowing that I have people back in the United States that don't know me sending me a package and praying for me. I know you pray for all the soldiers here in Iraq. Please, tell whomever sent this package to me that I hope GOD will bless them many times over for their kindness to a stranger. We need more churches like yours to set examples of how Christians and friends really should be. I just am really grateful for the package, and what I don't use some soldier will. As a pastor you must be herding your flock in the right direction for them to do such an act of kindness. Thanks again.

Sincerely,
Sgt. Chad Crisp

Men on Mission

*“Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this:
To visit orphans and widows in their trouble,
And to keep oneself unspotted from the world.” James 1:27 (NIV)*



Men on Mission

2009 Townsend Mission Trip
NCBC men in the photo are: Lanny
Green, Gene Heffington, Charlie
Hysinger, Ed Boring, and Bill Paul

A Baptist Man on Mission is a Christian who has experienced God in his life and who is called to take the Great Commission personally. Men on Mission exemplify the theme “Where Love Is Alive” by utilizing their talents and skills to meet the needs of the church facility and the needs of widows and orphans within the church. They also assist the community outside the walls of the church when needed. As the church has undertaken renovations, Men on Mission has helped with the Sanctuary makeover, the Prayer Garden, and the playground. They also built The Shed---an acknowledgment to the humble beginnings of North Cleveland Baptist Church. This area on the north property of the church and the amphitheater provide a location for summer worship services and a central gathering point for block parties.

Bible study is incorporated into their ministry. In addition to Sunday school and Bible study courses, these men gather for regular devotionals and Christian fellowship.¹⁴



Men on Mission members working on renovations to our Sanctuary in the Spring of 2007.

Men on Mission 2007 sanctuary renovation. Pictured are Joe Cannon, Dennis Franks, Charlie Hysinger, Tommy Gibson



Each year, Men on Mission volunteers work to maintain our church landscaping.



Youth

“See to it that you complete the work you have received in the Lord.” Colossians 4:17

In the last twenty-five years, many youth of North Cleveland Baptist Church have been led to enter some form of ministry. For some this walk began as they eagerly anticipated February’s DiscipleNow, a weekend of spiritual growth, fellowship, and outreach. Church members open their homes to a weekend “family” consisting of an adult leader and a group of teens. Adult Sunday school classes, host homes and co-hosts provide food, transportation and encouragement as the youth spend time in intense Bible study.

The Youth Department continues to show “Where Love Is Alive” by participating in mission trips including youth-led Sand ’n Surf Clubs in Daytona and helping in Ocoee Outreach. End-of-School “fun” trips to an amusement park in Ohio and Florida camp are now traditions. Each minister of youth and interim minister of youth minister has added his/her individual touch to the youth program. Youth ministers/leaders have included John Peters (1987-1996), Jeff Elliott (1997 interim), Tim Bryant (1998-2000), Matt Moore (2002), Kyle Whiltshire (2003-2006), Nathan Brown (2006-2008), and Jason Cox (2008-present).

College students meet on Monday evenings for Bible study and fellowship.



Jason Cox, Youth Minister
2008-present.



Ocoee Outreach Project with Richard and Brooke Bates



Youth prepare to depart on 1989 mission trip to Michigan with John Peters



DiscipleNow Annual Winter Youth Bible Study
Weekend - Since 1989



Traditional Annual Youth Trip to Florida Camp- Since 1988

Case Solved: The Mystery of the Missing Bell

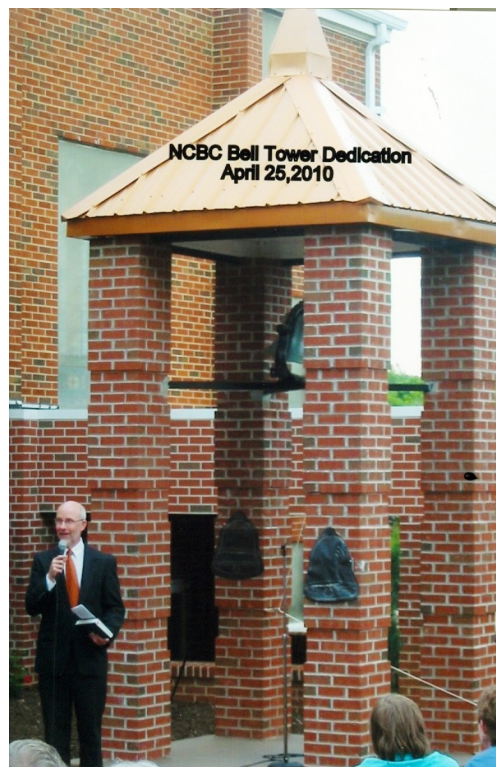
On a Sunday night in 2009, a handbell mini concert opened the worship service and was followed by a sermon on bells. During his sermon, Dr. Jay commented on the disappearance of the bell from the original Sanctuary. He remarked that the bell had vanished and surmised it would be wonderful if that piece of North Cleveland Baptist Church's heritage returned home. During the remainder of the sermon Dot Franks, a longtime member who had transferred from another church and had no idea we had "lost" a bell, began connecting the dots...until the mystery of the missing bell was pieced together.

The story goes that in the early 1960s a decision was made to clean out the attic, which was filled with pews from the original Sanctuary. Common sense deemed it wise to name one person in charge so "several men would not be promising the same item" to interested parties.¹⁵ Hoyt Elrod, longtime member and deacon, was given the task.

In 1962 Goodwill Baptist Church in southwest Bradley County burned, and members sought help in refurbishing their church. Elrod met Lee Ownby, deacon at Goodwill Baptist, to donate the pews in the attic to the sister church. After loading the pews in the attic, Ownby spotted an old bell and inquired about it. Elrod's response was that North Cleveland Baptist Church had no use for the old bell, and if Goodwill Baptist needed it, she could have it. Ownby said his church did not need it, but he would like to have it. Two things were accomplished: Elrod had finished his task of clearing the attic and Ownby had an old bell displayed prominently in his front yard.

Monday morning after the sermon on bells, Dot and Dennis Franks went to the home of Zetta Franks Ownby, widow of Lee Ownby, and retrieved the bell.¹⁶

The bell had originally been on an old train. In the early days of the church, T. J. Cawood and Jack Stewart had traveled to "somewhere around Knoxville" and got the bell from "either an old schoolhouse or old church."¹⁷ Upon initial installation, Jack Stewart, who lived on Franklin Street, rang the bell every Sunday morning until the old church was demolished.¹⁸



Dedication of Bell Tower on April 25, 2010
performed by Jay McCluskey.

Outreach

*“And He said unto them: ‘Go ye into all the world,
And preach the gospel to every creature.’” Mark 16:15*

“The church exists for those who do not attend it” proclaimed a poster placed in the Education Building. This poster challenged us to be resourceful in our daily Christian walk among non-believers. In addition to seasonal visitations, the church continues to be imaginative in reaching out to our “Judea and Samaria” as we obey the Great Commission. In the autumn of 2009, drawings were held for an autographed football signed by the then Tennessee Volunteer championship winning football coach Phil Fulmer. Annual yard sales in the church parking lot have provided clothing and items for those who are looking for a bargain while allowing the church to make contact with potential new members. In 2004 one outreach goal for the year was to compile a list of one thousand non-church attending individuals along with their addresses, phone number and/or email addresses. These individuals were lifted up in prayer and sent special invitations to key events at our church. That same year North Cleveland Baptist Church hosted a health department flu shot clinic, which allowed several thousand Clevelanders a chance to visit and see North Cleveland Baptist Church for the first time. More recently, “Chariots of Faith” and “The NCBC Salvation Riders” provide Christian fellowship with others who enjoy motorcycling.

A ministry of North Cleveland Baptist Church always held in high esteem by children is the summer Vacation Bible School held on the church campus. Early records show a total enrollment of thirty with an average daily attendance of twenty during the first VBS in 1939. In more recent years, the average attendance has been 310. VBS is the biggest outreach program of the church, and personal contact is made with every non-NCBC family represented in VBS. The weeklong program is a success because of the dedicated work of many members---including women and men who use their vacation time to teach in classrooms, create fun activities during recreation, serve snacks, and even direct traffic. The traditional Parent Night has evolved into a block party format complete with inflatables, face painting, games, and food. In 2009 and 2010, a youth version of VBS was popular among the teenagers. In 2012, VBS was offered for middle school students.



Vacation Bible School Kick-off in 1990's

Capital Stewardship Campaigns

*"You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way,
Which through us will produce Thanksgiving to God." 2 Corinthians 9:11 (ESV)*

In the early 1990s, the need for a facelift of the church campus, the acquisition of modern and more efficient office equipment, and the desire to retire the church debt led to a three-year Capital Stewardship Campaign. The goal of "Forward in Faith" was \$225,000. The approximate total cost of non-budget projects was \$153,500, and the current church debt was approximately \$50,000. The congregation's commitment to make financial gifts above and beyond their regular gifts led to the retirement of the church debt and greatly needed improvements to our church's facility and equipment capabilities. Some of these improvements included the purchase of a new copier, enhancement of church landscaping, renovation of educational space in the annex, pavement of gravel parking area on the north side of the church, enclosing of the breezeway, and the purchase of new baby beds.

At the January 1996 business meeting, the church voted to conduct a capital stewardship campaign "Keeping the Faith" to provide financial funding for a number of additional improvements to the church and its ministries. As always this campaign was enveloped with prayer by church members. Gifts to "Keeping the Faith" were utilized to create a scholarship fund, purchase an organ, and complete facility improvements, which included renovating the annex, enhancing the ceiling and lighting in many areas of our buildings and constructing the plaza in front of the sanctuary. Even though the Hallelujah Goal was \$275,000, over a four-year period the church family gave more than \$300,000 over and above their usual tithes and offering contributions to the Lord.

The scholarship fund was placed under the financial management of the Tennessee Baptist Foundation. In 1999 the scholarship was named in memory of Amber Harris Cannon, an elementary school teacher from our congregation who had died of leukemia earlier that year. The first scholarship was awarded that very year. Scores of students have benefited from this assistance.

In the autumn of 2000, a "Faith for the Future" campaign was conducted to retire the indebtedness the church acquired in purchasing the Brooking property. This endeavor enabled us to successfully retire this debt at the earliest possible date. In the spring of 2007, "For a Future Generation" Campaign began for a new activities building featuring student classrooms, a student worship area, and an elevator, which would meet fire and safety codes. The campaign began in the spring of 2007. The ground was broken in July 2008 with a special ceremony. Members representing each generation tilled the new soil with an old farm plow, which symbolized our original heritage. The new building was occupied in June 2009. The Multi-Purpose Building Dedication service was held on June 7, 2009. A self-guided prayer walk preceded the dedication. In September 2011,



Construction of arch over opening to baptistery— Early 1990's.



Members wrote scripture on the floor of sanctuary prior to 2007 Sanctuary renovation.

in dedication to his faithful service this building was christened the McCluskey Activity Center (the MAC).

“His Vision...Our Purpose Campaign” was held in the spring of 2010 with \$600,000 pledged to retire our construction debt.

During the business meeting on December 16, 2009, the Building and Grounds Committee asked the church's blessing on plans to develop a Prayer Garden and Bell Tower. Funds for these projects were donated. The project was approved by a hand vote.



July 2008 Groundbreaking for new multipurpose building, christened the McCluskey Activities Building in 2011. Charter member, Norman Barnard directs the plow as other senior members assist.



MAC building dedicated June 7, 2009



Aerial view prior to construction in 2008.



“For A Future Generation”
Aerial View Taken On
May 31, 2009

Gifts

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above.” James 1: 17

During the evening service on Mother’s Day, May 9, 2010, a dedication ceremony was held for the Prayer Garden, which connects the Sanctuary, the Annex and the MAC. The garden design and plantings were donated in memory of Richard and Ruby Hillard. In 2011 and 2012 Easter Sunrise Service was held in the Garden. Benches in the Prayer Garden and trees around the church campus also have been placed in honor or memory of loved ones.

An anonymous donation in 2010 provided for the construction of the Bell Tower located in the Prayer Garden. The Tower houses the bell, which rang from the original Sanctuary. After a concert by the handbell choir on Sunday night, April 25, 2010, a special service was held. The Bell Tower was dedicated to the memory of Chris Leggett, a Cleveland native who was killed in West Africa in 2009 while doing humanitarian work there.

At the business meeting on April 13, 2011, the church voted to accept an offer from anonymous donors to upgrade the church sign in the front lawn near North Ocoee Street. The upgrade consisted of replacing letter panels with two electronic signs.



Adaspera

“Let this be written for a future generation, that a people not yet created may praise the Lord.”

Psalm 102:18

As the 75th Anniversary Celebration concludes, we embark on a future that includes a Facebook page for North Cleveland Baptist Church, worship services on webcast, emailed prayer requests and the ringing of an old bell that still tells us it is time for Sunday school. As new apps are created, our church will use these devices to fish for souls in need just as our ancestors exemplified in the original shed.

May our faith grow deeper, our deeds more numerous and our witnessing more intense. Let us continue to teach our children and youth to appreciate His grace and mercy because as one of His children says, “It’s all about grace.”¹⁸

End Notes

1. McCluskey, Dr. Jay. Evangel, 1988.
2. Ibid.
3. Godfrey, Kathy, interview by Ella Sue Osment. NCBC Financial Secretary (May 15, 2012).
4. Ibid.
5. Cannon, Jean. "Mission Trips of North Cleveland Baptist Church." Michigan Journal, 1995.
6. Ibid.
7. Hicks, Kevin, interview by Ella Sue Osment. KOA Campground Mission (May 8, 2012).
8. Ivy-Haron, Pam, interview by Ella Sue Osment. Prayer at NCBC (May 11, 2012).
9. Wolgamot, Frankie, interview by Ella Sue Osment. Prayer at NCBC (May 9, 2012).
10. Elliott, Emily Lynn, interview by Ella Sue Osment. Prayer at NCBC (May 13, 2012).
11. Goins, Jim, interview by Ella Sue Osment. Fellowship (May 20, 2012).
12. Woman's Missionary Union. 2011. <http://www.wmu.com/> (accessed May 15, 2012).
13. Duggan, Ann, interview by Ella Sue Osment. WMU (May 15, 2012).
14. Tayloe, Lanny, interview by Ella Sue Osment. MOM (May 21, 2012).
15. Barnard, Norman, interview by Ella Sue Osment. Charter Member of NCBC (May 23, 2012).
16. Franks, Dot, interview by Ella Sue Osment. Missing Bell Case Solved (May 23, 2012).
17. Barnard, Norman, interview by Ella Sue Osment. Charter Member of NCBC (May 23, 2012).
18. McCluskey, Dr. Jay.



A special thank you to Mrs. Floyd (Dianne) Phillips, Dr. Jay's mother-in-law, for sharing her 1,250 Evangel, which were packaged by year and secured by blue yarn. These served as the primary source for our remembrances.



A special thank you to Ella Sue Osment, for compiling the history of "The Next 25 Years."



Charter Members

Miss Evelyn Ragsdale
Mr. and Mrs. Vance Ragsdale
Mrs. Kenneth Russell *
Mrs. Rosa Lee Simpson
Miss Grace Stephenson
Mrs. Stella Stephenson
Mr. and Mrs. W.A. Stephenson
Miss Vesta Trotter
Mr. and Mrs. Lee Walker
Mr. and Mrs. James Watson *
Mrs. A.J. Barnard *
Norman Barnard *
Mrs. Roscoe Beck *
Mrs. George Clayton
Mr. and Mrs. Howard Caywood
Mrs. Clara Ellis
Mrs. Sam Ellis
Mr. and Mrs. Carter Fields
Floyd Fields
Mr. and Mrs. James Fox
Mr. and Mrs. Mack J. Fox
Glen Greene *
J.T. Greene
Miss Mabel Greene
Mrs. Thomas W. Greene
Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Hudson *
Mrs. J. Wiley Jones
Mrs. Maude Gentry Lacy
Rev. H. Lester Lewis
Luther McReynolds
Mr. and Mrs. * Thurman J. Pendergrass

* Probable charter members (joined between August 1937 and August 1938) but records are indefinite.

NCBC Staff 1937 - 2012

Rev. H. Lester Lewis	Pastor	1937
Rev. Kyle Shaw	Associate Pastor	1937
Felt Clayton	Music Minister	1937
Thurman J. Pendergrass	Music Minister	1941
T.J. Cawood	Music Minister	1946
Rev. C.E. McDonald	Pastor	1946
Betty Caywood Harmon	Church Musician	1947
John Dantzler	Music Minister	1947/1950
Bill Turner	Music Minister	1948
Esther Myers	Church Musician	1952/1956
Charlotte Ware	Church Musician	1955
Rev. Wayne Tarpley	Interim Pastor	1956
Jack Tullock	Music Minister	1957
Mary Morrow	Church Musician	1957
Elizabeth Kubitzky	Church Musician	1957
Rev. I.C. Frazier	Pastor	1957
Sandra Griffith	Church Musician	1959/1965/1972
Cecil Newman	Music Minister	1961
Virginia Tatham	Church Secretary	1962
Dr. David Livingston	Interim Pastor	1962/1966/1970
D.W. Picklesimer	Music Minister	1963
Rev. J. Groce Robinson	Pastor	1963
Elvis Brandon	Music Minister	1964
Ozella Vincent	Church Musician	1964
Nancy Paul	Church Musician	1965
Rev. James Byler	Pastor	1967
Dot Carson	Church Secretary	1968
Stephen Foster	Interim Student Minister & Music Minister	1968
Rev. Sam Melton	Music Minister & Student Minister	1968
Carolyn Gentry	Church Secretary	1970
Jean Cannon	Church Secretary/Membership Secretary/Financial Secretary	1970/1990/2004
H. Lynn Blair	Music Minister & Student Minister	1970
Dr. F. Dean Banta	Interim Music Minister/Music Minister	1970/1984
Rev. Barnard Campbell	Pastor	1970
Rev. C.R. McDowell	Music Minister & Student Minister	1971
Betty Oody	Church Secretary	1972
Betty Gibson	Church Secretary	1974
Audrea Townsend	Church Musician	1975
Dr. J. Timothy Sumners	Pastor	1975
R. Eugene North	Music Minister & Student Minister	1976
Dan Alderman	Music Minister	1976
Norma Crawford	Church Secretary	1977
Naomi Gibson	Church Secretary	1978
Steve Kirkpatrick	Church Musician	1978
Rev. R.T. Roberts	Interim Pastor	1978

Rev. Ron Bright	Associate Pastor & Student Minister	1979
Shelia King	Church Secretary	1979
Glen Delashmitte	Custodian	1979
Anita Bates	Church Musician	1979
Dr. Don Long	Pastor	1979
Melanie Morgan	Church Secretary	1980
Gloria McNeil	Church Secretary	1980
Clara Hutson	Preschool Director	1980
Betty Gibson	Church Secretary	1981
Rev. Omer Painter	Pastor	1981
Tom Gibson	Student Minister	1982
LaMar Ervin	Student Minister	1984
Rev. Doyle Suits	Interim Pastor	1985
Kurt Schnebel	Custodian	1986
Dr. Jay McCluskey	Pastor	1986
Rev. John Peters	Minister of Students & Music Minister	1987
Pernell Ownby	Custodian	1988
Carla Manley Brown	Membership Secretary	1989
Don Sparks	Custodian	1992
Tommy Gray	Music & Worship Minister	1993
Larry Duckett	Custodian	1994
Jean Tucker	Custodian/Pastoral Secretary	1995/1997
Brenda Harris	Education Director/Membership Secretary	1995/2000
Tim Edwards	Interim Music Minister	1996
Kathy Sweatman	Preschool Director	1996
Verlin Tucker	Custodian/ Education Minister	1997/2006
Bobby Jones	Music & Worship Minister	1997
Tim Bryant	Student Minister	1998
Lacy Goins Tite	Membership Secretary	1998
Franklin Sparks	Custodian	1998
Judy Bryant	Preschool Director	1999
Jeanne Franklin	Preschool Director/Membership Secretary/Financial Secretary	2000/2004/2006
Jeff Elliott	Student Minister	2000
Matthew Moore	Student Minister	2000
Larry Sharo	Custodian	2000
Rev. Michael Gunter	Education Minister	2001
Keri Murphy Miles	Membership Secretary	2002
Janelle Martin	Music Minister's Assistant	2002
Bill Choate	Interim Music & Worship Minister	2002
April Hutson	Preschool Director	2002
Kyle Wiltshire	Student Minister	2003
Phillip Haynie	Church Musician	2003
Rev. Lanny Green	Music & Worship Minister	2003
Saundra Randolph	Preschool Director	2003
Nathan Brown	Student Minister	2006
Nolan Rumble	Student Ministry Intern	2006

Stephanie Valadez	Student Ministry Intern	2006
Richard Bates	Student Ministry Intern	2006
Barbara Holt	Membership Secretary	2006
Emily Lynn Elliott	Student Ministry Associate	2007
Shirley Boring	Membership Secretary	2007
Amanda Holder	Preschool Director	2007
Nancy Smith	Financial Secretary	2008
Jason Cox	Student Minister	2008
Patrick Wooden	Church Musician	2008
Chris Kugler	Student Ministry Intern	2009
Whitney Barton Stevison	Student Ministry Intern	2009
Kathy Godfrey	Financial Secretary	2009
Rachel Brew	Custodian	2009
Kevin Hicks	Education Minister	2010
Vickie McGaha	Preschool Director	2010
Amy Wilkins	Preschool & Children's Director	2010
Nancy Sharo	Custodian	2011
Chrystal Bates	Preschool & Children's Director	2012

Frances Ellis	Church Musician	*
Mattie Sue Hudson	Church Musician	*
Grace Wheeler	Church Musician	*

* Exact dates not available

NCBC CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER DIRECTORS 1988 TO 2012

Becca Peters	August 1988 – January 1990
Lisa Earby	February 1990 – July 1993
Tina Couch	August 1993 – August 2001
Kathy Godfrey	August 2001 – February 2004
Susan McCormick	February 2004 – September 2004
Lana Green	September 2004 – January 2005
Martha Gould	February 2005 – October 2005
Rachel Brew	October 2005 – June 2006
Saundra Randolph	June 2006 – January 2007
Kathy Godfrey, <i>Interim Director</i>	January 2007 – March 2007
Amanda Holder	March 2007 – August 2010
Vickie McGaha	August 2010 – February 2012
Elizabeth Wells	March 2012 - current

