

## **IN THE BEGINNING GOD HAD A PLAN**

### **CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH WEST ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA January 9, 1909 - January 9, 2009**

***ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF HISTORY, FAITHFULNESS, and LOVE!***  
**“It started in the year Nineteen Hundred and Nine.”**

Calvary Baptist Church of West Asheville, North Carolina, was organized on January 3, 1909 in the old Odd Fellows Hall which stood on the corner of Hanover Street and Haywood Road. There were sixty-eight charter members. Dr. A. E. Brown was moderator, and J. B. Grice acted as clerk. Rev. R. P. Walker was called to be the first pastor.

The church was the outgrowth of a mission Sunday School sponsored by the West End Baptist Church. The Sunday School was organized on September 23, 1906, with 122 present, following an organizational picnic meeting held at a field near Beecham’s Curve. St. Clair Knight was elected superintendent, and C. M. Lineberry was appointed as secretary.

The first church building was built on the west side of Hanover Street in the block between Haywood Road and Pennsylvania Avenue. On the first Sunday in July, 1909 services were held in the unfinished sanctuary. During the fourteen years this building was used, the following served as pastors: R. P. Walker, R. D. Cross, Dr. M. M. Wamboldt, John Bomar, Millard Jenkins, H. B. Killiam, J. J. Gentry, and J. B. Grice.

When Calvary was founded the only other church in West Asheville was Balm Grove Methodist, now Trinity Methodist.

During these years the church and Sunday School grew rapidly. In 1916, the lot at the present location was purchased. Due to the First World War, work did not begin on the new building until December 5, 1921. The building was first used on May 13, 1923, and the auditorium was completed in 1925. Each Sunday during the building program, a special collection was taken in an old iron pot. Money was raised through pledges, and later through the sale of bonds. The memorial windows in the auditorium and the large outside columns were given by members and families. Small memorial windows in the building were donated by Sunday School classes

and Training Union groups. The church had a Baptist Young People's Union for adults (later known as Training Union), but it was not until late 1917 or 1918 that a BYPU was started for young people. There were 60 enrolled ranging in age from 8 through 17. At this time, there was no literature for the junior group. Mabel Starnes wrote out, week by week, the program using subjects of love, faith, hope, service and prayer. It was three years later before the convention began to publish leadership materials for the Junior Union. (This information was given to John Knight, by Mabel Starnes on December 31, 1968).

The pipe organ was purchased with individual contributions in 1926.

Our church has been characterized by many, as the church of many **"firsts"**:

Mabel Starnes was the first child baptized after the organization of Calvary. The Rev. R. P. Walker was Pastor. He first baptized his wife who was a Methodist, then Mabel, and three other people.

Calvary was the first church to establish a Brotherhood in the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

Calvary was the first to have Vacation Bible School in Asheville.

Calvary was the first to have a graded choir program, perhaps in the entire Southern Baptist Convention.

Calvary was the first to have a race relations program ministry in West Asheville, thus placing us among those progressive churches in the region seeking to promote justice.

Rev. J. B. Grice served as pastor for the 27 years from 1918 to 1945. The church indebtedness was paid off in 1943. A ceremony was held, during which the note was burned, and the church also celebrated Mr. Grice 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary on that day.

Since 1945, twelve pastors have served Calvary. Dr. B. A. Bowers was interim pastor after Mr. Grice retired. Rev. C. D. Bessinger served from 1946 to 1947, after which Dr. Bowers served again as interim. J. Lester Lane was pastor from 1948 to 1960. Ralph Hensley served as interim pastor until 1961. John H. Knight served from 1961 to 1982, after which Dr. Thomas Sawyer was interim pastor. Dr. Steven C. Carreker served from 1982 to 1984 as pastor, with Dr. Ray Roberts and Dr. Page Lee

serving as interim pastors until Rev. Aubrey Folk was called in 1990. Rev. Folk served until 1990, with E. S. Morgan serving as interim until Dr. Jordan "Buddy" Corbin came to Calvary as Pastor on November 10, 1991. Dr. Corbin resigned on September 30, 2007.

Dr. Bill McMahan, was called to be Pastor beginning January 11, 2009.

On February 16, 1992, Rev. John H. Knight, pastor for 21 years, was named Pastor Emeritus.

Dr. J.V. "Buddy" Corbin was elected as First Vice President of the Baptist State Convention for the years 2000-2003.

Two groups of members have withdrawn from Calvary to start new churches. In 1923, twenty-two members were granted letters to help organize Deaveriew Baptist Church, and two hundred sixteen members went with C. D. Bessinger to start Grace Baptist Church, in West Asheville, in 1947.

The church added several staff members through the years. Charles Jolley was the first associate pastor and music director; Mrs. Glenn Starnes served as office secretary and minister of music; Thomas O. Dekle took the position of minister of music and education in 1954; Max Sanders followed in the same position in 1958; the first full-time minister of music, Earl R. Rogers, came in 1962, the same year that Jim Smithwick was called to be the first full-time minister of education. Allan Guy came as minister of music in 1965. Robert Blankenship came as associate pastor in 1967. Lloyd R. Kindinger was minister of education from 1972 to 1976, and Dale Fisher came as minister of education in 1977. David Barton served as minister of youth and outreach from 1979 to 1982; Paula Settle was minister of education from 1983 to 1985, and Donnie Marlal served as minister of education from 1986 to 1988. Chris Shirley was minister of education from 1994 to 1997, and David Simon was minister of education from July, 1997 to 2002. Stuart Greene was called as Youth Minister in 2003, and Elmer Perry was called as Children's Coordinator in 2005. Both are still serving in these positions. Donald D. Welborn, the present Minister of Music, was called in 1969 and has served faithfully and continues to provide our church with wonderful musical presentations.

Calvary has had numerous Church Secretaries or Office Assistants through the years: Mrs. E.V. Hawkins served as Church Secretary/ Bookkeeper for many years. Others that have served are Peggy West,

Autumn Wright, Peggy Compton, Joan McCook, Mary Ruth Duyck, Freddie Hopper, Betty Chisolm, Judy Montgomery and Susan Wait, our current Secretary. Also church members have volunteered, as needed, in the Church Office.

Calvary has improved and expanded its facilities over the years. A building on Baker Avenue was purchased in 1938 and converted into Sunday School rooms, and later into a youth outreach center. This building has since been demolished to make room for handicapped parking. The Educational Building was completed on May 30, 1954 at a total cost of \$300,000. Dr. Fred Brown, the first minister ordained by Calvary, preached the dedicatory sermon, The Chapel was remodeled, and air-conditioning added in 1972. The church remodeled the auditorium in 1976. An elevator was added in 1981. Several nursery rooms were modified to accommodate the Day Care Center in 1984. In recent years, an Allen digital organ, furnishings for the vestibule, and a lawn sign were purchased, and the Peggy Compton Anteroom to the church offices was remodeled, using memorial gifts. The bell tower area was named in memory of Peggy Bolick in 1994. Also in 1994, the church started a program called "Together we Share" to provide funds for updating buildings and grounds. Over \$350,000 was raised, which was used for rebuilding the front wall, air-conditioning the Educational Building, replacing windows and doors, and a new parking lot in front of the church. In 2002 a new Family Life Center was completed. It houses the Family Life Center, as well as offices for the Pastor, Youth Minister, Children's Coordinator, Secretarial Office and a Conference Room named for Paul and Lucia Greene. The Candler Center is named in honor of Howard Candler, long-time member of Calvary. In 2007, the previous conference room in the education building was remodeled and named for John and Myrtle Lawrence. The Candler Center was completed in 2002. The Candler Center debt was paid off in June 2008. A "note burning" luncheon was held and at that time, Doley Bell, Chair of the Together We Share project along with Howard Candler burned the note.

In June, 2003, Calvary presented the Baptist Children's Home of North Carolina, \$100,000 to be used for a new home for developmentally impaired young adults. The groundbreaking was held on November 30, 2004. The Bolick Home, was named for Mrs. Alverta Bolick who donated a large sum of money for this home, was opened in 2006 and is located on a separate lot behind Calvary.

A Prayer Room, which is located in a room off of the Chapel, was completed and opened in memory of George and Frieda Williams in 2002.

Calvary has a Library containing many Christian fiction books as well as reference books. It is located on the second floor hall, behind the Sanctuary.

From Calvary's membership have come 20 ordained ministers: Fred F. Brown, Edward J. Ingle, Herbert Brown, Vaughn Johnson, Nane Starnes, A. J. Buckner, Wallace Parham, Clyde Meredith, Ted Gaze, Howard Knight, Dale Hooper, Grant Hodgson, W. T. Lane, Thomas Dekle, James Ballard, Jackie Gentry, Dale Fisher, Cecil Hopps, Donald Welborn, David Barton and Butch Stillwell. Of these, Hooper, Knight and Ballard became missionaries. Four other affiliated with Calvary; Cloyes Starnes, Charles A. Leonard, Paula Settle, and Tami Ruckman, have served in mission work.

Calvary first approved female deacons in 1982. Katherine Hyde was the first female deacon to be elected to the Deacon Board in that year.

At the end of each year a Deacon Emeritus is selected from those Deacons who have shown outstanding leadership as a Deacon during that year. The following names are shown on a plaque outside the Library:

John Lawrence 1993	Tom McCurry 2003
Horace Robison 1996	Leonard Hopps 2004
George Williams 1997	Ed Beale 2005
Stella Fox 1999	Luke Atkinson 2006
Earl West 2000	Howard Candler 2007
Charles Buckner 2001	

SWOT, a Strategic Plan, was introduced to our Deacons on April 4, 2003. Dan Bradshaw, Chairman of the Deacon Board, at that time, introduced this proposal. A SWOT team was selected. The goal of this committee was to improve communications, through goals and objectives.

In 1994 Calvary's fellowship was challenged by our pastor, Dr. Buddy Corbin, to develop a practical application for our preaching and teaching. This program was called Together We Share (TWS). This program of financial development would enable the church to renovate our church facility and much more.

Together We Share was an opportunity to celebrate our togetherness, and create a new era of church growth and develop better equipped disciples to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The objective of the Together We Share program was to provide \$500,000 in commitments over a three year

period to pay for structural aesthetic and capital improvements. This was an opportunity to celebrate our togetherness.

In addition to the support given to the Cooperate Missions of the North Carolina Baptists, the Southern Baptist Convention, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and the Buncombe Baptist Association, our church has supported the work of the Asheville-Buncombe Baptist Christian Ministry and the Western Carolina Rescue Mission through donations and volunteer aid. Volunteer groups have served in Belgium, West Virginia, Kansas City, Oklahoma, Florida, Boston, New York, and Poland, while others have given their ministries, the Drama Group, and Habitat for Humanity. A Mission Group, led by Bruce and Linda Farlow has served each summer since 1989 Vacation Bible School for churches in New Hampshire, New York, Mississippi, Connecticut as well as various other projects, such as church and home repairs, as needed. Many others volunteer their time to a variety of projects of individual interest, including the Promise Keepers and The Room in the Inn.

The church has also instituted church-based outreach programs. The Logan family operated the Child Garden School, a private school, whose kindergarten moved to Calvary in 1963. The Calvary Kindergarten was a half-day school, which operated until 1981. A day-care program was instituted in 1984, and is now a part of the Smart Start program, receiving a four-star rating from that program. Calvary has also opened its doors so that others may worship; the Korean congregation met in the Chapel from 1992 to 1998. They dedicated their own church in 1999. The Hispanic Baptist Mission of Asheville started in 1999 and continued to hold services on Thursday and Sunday evenings in the Chapel until 2008.

For many years Calvary has held Vacation Bible School each morning for a week, during the summer, giving children and young people a chance to study more about Jesus and have time for fellowship.

Calvary members are proud to support the Adult IV Autism Sunday School Class started in 1994 by Isabelle Shirley, Dorcas and Bobby Moffitt . This group meets in the Candler Center on Sunday morning and the group ranges in numbers from 35 to 110. They come from various group homes in the Asheville area. They enjoy music, crafts, a Sunday School lesson and refreshments.

Calvary also supports the homeless ministry. At least twice a year, for a week, homeless women need a place to sleep at nights. Calvary

welcomes them to stay in our fellowship. Meals are prepared for them in the evenings, by our Mission groups.

Brian Allen, a member of Calvary provides homeless men with hot meals several times a week. The church members support Brian in this effort.

In 2005 Dr. Buddy Corbin suggested that our church consider the Stephen Ministry program. The program required 50 hours of training in order to serve as Stephen Leaders and Ministers. Peggy Brown and Freddie Hopper traveled to Pittsburgh PA for a week of training to become Stephen Leaders. They returned to begin training those who wished to serve as Stephen Ministers. There were twenty members (three of which were from other churches) who took this training for two hours every Sunday afternoon for seventeen weeks. **At the completion of this training, they were recognized as Stephen Ministers and would serve those with problems and the need for a caring person to listen, support them, or find other outside assistance as needed.**

Christmastime has always been a special time for Calvary members. The church is decorated with trimmings and two trees with ornaments representing missionary symbols. For many years, Mrs. O. E. Hendrix donated trees from her yard at Christmas time. Evelyne Maney started the "Hanging of the Green" in the early 1980's. This program consists of decorating the Sanctuary and other areas of our church. On the first Sunday evening in December a program is held and members take part by giving the meaning of the Symbols of the Season. Chrismons are made by Evelyne Maney, Frankie Thornton and the decorating committee as well as other volunteers.

Woody Griffin, a member of Calvary since 1951 is one of our oldest deacons. (Mr. Griffin passed away in October, 2008). He stated that the reason he came to Calvary, Myrtle Lawrence invited him. Rev. Lester Lane was Pastor and Mr. Hooper was his Sunday School teacher. When asked about his thoughts about Calvary: friendly, large attendance, we have always had a great choir program. Mr. Griffin had been a Teacher of Youth, Superintendent of Young People's Sunday School Department, and served for many years as a Deacon.

Mr. Griffin had a humorous story to tell: When his son and daughter went to Vacation Bible School, for their first time, and returned home, his daughter proceeded to tell her parents, "my brother is going to be the only person that was ever expelled from Vacation Bible School". Obviously, she thought he had misbehaved.

Calvary's membership is currently 1228, this includes active and inactive members.

The history of Calvary Baptist has been recorded by various members through the years. Peggy West, served as a Church Secretary and also spent many volunteer hours working on our History. The Deacon Board brought a recommendation at the June, 2008 meeting to name the history room in memory of Mrs. West and call it "The Peggy West History Room".

Through the years there have been numerous people who have contributed their time, energy and monies to make Calvary the strong church that it is today. And a special thanks to all members contributing to, or being a part of the ***History of Calvary!***

Calvary Baptist Church has always practiced solid Christian Stewardship.

In 1968 Calvary issued this statement: ***Calvary Baptist Church throughout its 59 year history has proved itself both progressive and spiritually. She can always point to many worthwhile accomplishments.***

The Dogwood Cross, located in the sanctuary, was given to Calvary by a church member. It not only is beautiful but it reminds those who enter Calvary's sanctuary, of its meaning.

History updated from previous histories by Peggy West, May 1999.

Current update by the History committee, 2008 - 2009:

Freddie Hopper, Historian

Woody Harton

Juanita Clark

George Lindsey

Howard Candler

Mary Ruth Duyck

Jane Lanford

Melody Bell

Other members have participated with the History by providing input and proof reading. Thanks for everyone's assistance.

fmhopper  
(January, 2009)

***What our members see for the future of Calvary:***

REVITALIZED CONGREGATION WITH YOUNGER FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

A REGIONAL CHURCH

CONTINUED INVOLVEMENT IN MISSIONS

CHURCH TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR INCREASED INVOLVEMENT

EXCITEMENT AND ENERGY IN WORSHIP PROGRAMS

SUNDAY SCHOOL AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES/PROGRAMS

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS/ACTIVITIES USING THE CANDLER CENTER FOR RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES, OR A SEPARATE RECREATIONAL BUILDING (GYM, ETC.)

LEADERS WITH VISION AND MOTIVATIONAL SKILLS

A MEMORY GARDEN

**CHURCH COVENANT**

Having been led, as we believe by the spirit of God, to received the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and, on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines: to contribute cheerfully and regularly to support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children: to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger, to abstain from the sale of, and use of, intoxicating drinks as a beverage; to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior. We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God’s Word.

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**Mission Statement: To provide quality, God centered, age group ministries by fostering inter-dependent relationships between persons so that age boundaries will be maintained when appropriate, but bridged whenever possible.**