

## History of New Zion Baptist Church ~ October 5, 2008

In 1905 New Zion Baptist Church was founded with 14 charter members. One and a half acres of land was donated by Sam Fussell to build the church on. At this time, the only other churches in the area were Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church (founded in 1890), and Fitzgerald Methodist Church (founded in 1882). Through additional acquisitions, the church now has 14.45 acres, including cemetery.

The first building was an unpainted barn-like structure just west of the site of the present education building. As church membership grew, a white frame building was built west of the present fellowship hall. Then later a white slate structure was built on a new site in front of the old building. The old building was torn down and the material from that old building was used to build the new structure. This was done in 1953 under the leadership of Bro. N.H. Pulling. This building was bricked in the 1970s under the leadership of Bro. Bobby Rush and Bro. Dwight Geist. This new structure was remodeled in the early 1990s under the leadership of Bro. Billy Edwards and is now the present fellowship hall and educational building. As membership increased a need was felt for more Sunday School rooms. An educational trailer was purchased and placed next to the church building under the leadership of Bro. James Garner. This added six Sunday School rooms and two restrooms.

A new parsonage was built up the hill from the church building in the 1960s, under the leadership of Bro. J.W. Taylor, replacing the first one that was built in the 1940s, under the leadership of Bro. J.E.. Crutchfield. A mobile home for the youth minister was purchased in the 1980s, under the leadership of Bro. James Garner and placed down the hill from the church building.

In 1995, under the leadership of Bro. David Fleming, additional room was needed and a new sanctuary and balcony to seat 500, four additional classrooms and restrooms, four new staff offices and a secretary's office was built. At this time the old sanctuary was renovated into a fellowship hall and more Sunday School rooms. In July 2000, under the leadership of Bro. Dwayne Boudreaux, another education trailer was purchased due to the need of additional Sunday School rooms.

Under Bro. Kris Chenier's leadership, in 2002 the parsonage was converted into an administrative complex. New Zion now has a beautiful sanctuary, 23 plus classrooms, 14 restrooms, a fellowship hall and kitchen, as well as an administrative complex. In July 2004, under Bro. Kris Chenier's leadership, a Steering Committee, a Capital Funds Team and a Construction Advisory Team was elected to pursue plans for a Family Life Center with additional educational space and a commercial kitchen. These teams presented a proposal to construct a \$1.5 million dollar education/family life center. Proposal passed on September 24, 2006 with 91% in favor. Construction to begin on receipt of 35%. Fund raising campaign began in April 2007. In June 2007, Bro. Matt Smith was brought on full-time as minister of students and recreation and moved out of the church furnished trailer which was then converted to Sunday School rooms. God has richly blessed New Zion with 40 former staff members to lead the ministry of the church.

## FORMER PASTORS

1. Rev. D.A. Booth
2. Rev. George Reviere
3. Rev. John Schilling
4. Rev. Tom Bennett
5. Rev. Toney
6. Rev. Dean
7. Rev. Ackers
8. Rev. Simpson
9. Rev. Smith
10. Rev. Harvey Taylor
11. Rev. Herman Wilkerson
12. Rev. J.E. Crutchfield
13. Rev. Murray Hall
14. Rev. Alvin Clark
15. Rev. E.D. Richardson
16. Rev.. Nathan Pulling
17. Rev. J.W. Taylor
18. Rev. John Rawlins
19. Rev. Bobby Rush
20. Rev. Dwight Geist
21. Rev. Glenn Davis
22. Rev. James Garner
23. Rev. Art Guyton
24. Rev. Billy Edwards
25. Rev. David Fleming
26. Rev. Dwayne Boudreaux
27. Rev. Kris Chenier

## FORMER SUPPORT STAFF

Howard Peak, Minister of Youth & Education  
Ron Fitts, Minister of Education  
Bunnie Fitts, Youth & Children Director  
Tommy Gillon, Minister of Music & Youth  
Charles Little, Minister of Music & Youth  
David Brown, Minister of Youth & Music  
David Fleming, Minister of Youth & Music

Shelvin Lamb, Minister of Music & Youth  
Mark Knight, Youth Minister  
David Cook, Youth Minister  
Scott McMurrian, Minister of Music & Youth  
Butch Reviere, Worship Leader  
Anthony Orzo, Minister of Youth  
Rick Henderson, Student Minister

## CURRENT STAFF

Rev. Clark Stewart, Senior Pastor

Dr. Ken Sterling, Associate Pastor, Education

Rev. Toby Hughes, Associate Pastor, Music

Rev. Matthew Smith, Student/Recreation

**Other support personnel:**

Sheila McKee, Custodian,  
Lynn Sharp, Pianist,  
Ginny Durr, Organist,  
Robert Hatten, Groundskeeper,  
Janine Dupre, Secretary