



First Baptist Church Newsletter

One Body, Many Members

Feb 18, 2007

In 2006 the First Baptist Church family experienced many highs and lows. Yet, through it all, with faithful prayers and love for one another, we rose above the clouds in new glory. Here are some good details for our **2006**.

First Baptist choir performed at several functions last year with the climax of Christmas caroling in the local neighbor on December. Early in the year the choir was reorganized and Brother Matt Mosby was hired as musician. Sister Joyce Sanchez was elected choir president. In February, the choir had a gospel program at Sims School, called "**Jammin for Jesus**." Various gospel groups performed at this spirit-filled program, including the special guest **Community Independent Methodist Church**. Hip Hop Sunday in February was again a success with the college students and area youth, featuring Min. Chris Johnson, of Du-Rag Ministries. Mother's day brought us a special treat in the singing styles of **Unconditional** from New York City.

The first half of 2006 also saw the loss of several First Baptist Church members. Brother Joe Williams, Sister Pam Davenport, and Deaconess Mary Fairfax went home to be with our Lord and Savior. Bro. Joe was a lead vocalist in the choir and Sis. Pam was a member of the Usher board and hospitality committee. Deaconess Fairfax was for many years a leader of the Deaconess Board, and also sang in the choir, and was the church historian. Memorial services were held for Bro. Joe and Sis. Davenport, and a home-going service was held at Lindsay's funeral Home for Deaconess Fairfax.

Rev. Walter A. Ghant was our pastor at the beginning of 2006. He made the statement "this is the year of the man." We had no idea how true this would be. During Rev. and Sister Ghant's tenure we had several baptisms and new members join the church. We also started a media ministry to reach the sick and shut-in. Minister Richard Pannell joined with First Baptist to serve and study under Rev Ghant. In April, Sister Pat Blakey coordinated an event called "**Everybody's Birthday**." We had fellowship and fun as we celebrated the birthdays of congregation members. Then in June of 2006, due to unforeseen circumstances, Rev. Walter Ghant tendered his resignation as pastor, saying "I have taken First Baptist Church as far as I can."

In July, a Pulpit Committee was formed to find a new pastor; Sister Pam Bailey was the chairperson. It was a difficult time, but through our prayers and commitment our church body never gave up. During the transition, Rev. Kenneth Nichols preached for us on several Sunday's along with other guest ministers. Rev. Clarence Williams was asked by Sister Elaine Blakey to prepare our deacons-training for ordination (Bro. Anthony Bailey and Bro. Larry Rogers). It was by divine favor that Rev. Williams had been so moved to help us because First Baptist was about to suffer a great loss. Our beloved Deacon Conard Washington went home to be with our Lord. He had served as chairman of the Trustee and Deacon Boards. Also, Rev. Elaine Washington passed away during this time. In September, Deacons Rogers and Bailey were ordained. At the same time we also consecrated a Deaconess, Sis. Mary Hayes. In October, another tragedy struck the community and church family, when Bro. Paul "Fu" Jackson went home to be with our Lord.

After careful consideration Rev. Clarence E. Williams was elected as the new Pastor of First Baptist. Rev. Williams was introduced as Pastor the first Sunday in October at our morning service. Rev. Williams has a vision of "**kingdom building**" which means getting back into the community to win people back to Christ. Since Rev. Williams arrived, we have had a "**Friends and Family**" program in which three souls were baptized. Another was baptized in early December. Also the Church celebrated its 135th anniversary on December 3, 2006. During this time two new trustees were selected, Sister Dorothy Dickerson and Brother Terrence Hearn, Sr. Also, three new ushers were added to the ranks, two junior and one senior. We also found out that our musician was leaving in December to pursue educational fulfillments. Instead of the annual **Christmas candlelight service**, we decided to celebrate **Advent** during worship services in each Sunday in December. The Pastor's Installation was December 17, 2006. **Dr. Charles Wormly** from Mt. Zion Baptist Church was guest speaker. On New Year's Eve night we held **watch service** in which four people were baptized. All in all, First Baptist went from highs to lows to highs, but God was with us all the way.

Who is Dr. C.E. Williams? He was born in Front Royal, VA. He is married to Rev Linda Allen Williams of Luray, VA. They were blessed with three children: Michael (Spotsylvania, VA); Valerie (Denver, CO); and Rodney (deceased). Rev. Williams served 23 ½ years in the U. S. Army (Retired First Sergeant) and currently works for the Homeland Security Department. He attended several seminaries including Colorado Christian University World Religion & Biblical Studies, and received his Doctor of Divinity from American Institute of Holistic Theology. He has traveled the world and was pastor for several congregations worldwide. He is the Former pastor of Macedonia Community Baptist Church in Woodford, VA. Pastor states "I firmly believe that Jesus is our Shepherd and a pastor is only the Under-shepherd who guides the flock and loves each member as one of his own family. I firmly believe in Bible study, visitation, and outreach ministries, not only for the pastor but for every leader and member of the church."

Submitted by Bro Terrence Hearn Sr
Assisted by Deacon Anthony Bailey