



First Baptist Church
HILLSBOROUGH, NORTH CAROLINA
EST 1853

A brief history of First Baptist Church 1845 to 2021

Organizing and Steadfastness

1845

Rev. Elias Dodson purchases old wooden courthouse to use as Baptist meeting house in Hillsboro

1848

Hillsboro Sabbath School reports 28 pupils: 4,800 Bible verses are memorized during the year

1853

Presbytery meets to organize the Baptist Church of Hillsboro; founding members are from Mars Hill Church; Susannah Washington Graham, wife of W.A. Graham, former Governor of NC, is one of them

Church admitted to Beulah Association

1856

First African American, Sondo, slave of S. Moon, is received into membership; an additional 19 "servants" from Mars Hill Church are received into membership soon after

1858

Building committee and trustees receive a deed from W.J. Freeland for a lot on which to build a new Baptist church edifice; lot bordered by King Street (north), Wake Street (east) and Margaret Lane (south)

1860

Cornerstone is laid for new church brick building

1862

Church sells their meeting house to George Bishop of New Bern

Church votes to give bell to the Orange Light Artillery to be cast into cannon for use by the Confederate States Army

White and African American congregations move into basement of unfinished brick building; Whites worship on Sunday morning while African Americans worship in the afternoon

Construction on church building is halted due to poor brickwork; funds are withheld until work is rectified; work ceases and funds remain invested in Hillsboro Savings Institution

1864

Church loses funds deposited in Hillsboro Savings Institution after it is forced into failure by outcome of Civil War

1868

African-American congregation voluntarily withdraws their fellowship to form a church of their own; later to be known as the Mount Bright Baptist Church

Romanesque style brick sanctuary is completed by John Berry and a dedication service is held on October 27th.

The Baptist State Convention meets in Hillsboro

1869

Arbitrators award contractor \$1,107 for brick work done in 1862; church members can raise only \$300; Mrs. Grahams writes letter appealing for assistance from community to liquidate the balance

1870

Church meets with 12 other churches to form the Mount Zion Association; Church leaves Beulah Association to join new Association

1872

Mrs. Graham gives a verbal report to the church that the last dollar of the original church building debt was paid

1889

Church raises \$130 to have windows refurbish and walls strengthen by inserting bolts through the rafters

Providing a Firm Foundation

1900

Church membership dwindles to less than 30 individuals; preaching services held only once per month in morning and evening

1901

Charles E. Maddry becomes 15th pastor of church; membership begins to grow from 21 members to 300 in 1915

1906

Charles Maddry marries Emma Parker of Hillsboro at the church on May 2nd; She was the church's organist

1916

Electrical lights are installed in the church

1917

A Presbytery of elders from Hillsboro, Mars Hill and Cane Creek meet on April 27th at the Hillsboro Church to organize the West Hillsboro Baptist Church.

1923

The original pointed spire that covered the Church's north bell tower deteriorates and is taken down but not replaced

1926

Rev. Cantrell remodels and enlarges wooden parsonage located at the corner of Wake Street and Margaret Lane

1939

Outdoor baptismal pool is erected behind church building and named in honor of Dr. Maddry who is serving as the executive secretary of the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention

1949

A disagreement among church members results in a number withdrawing and joining the new Fairview Baptist Church located north of town

1951

Dr. Charles E. Maddry called to serve a second pastorate; rotating deacon board established; women elected and ordained as deaconesses; campaign launched to build new education building and remodel sanctuary

1952

Cornerstone laid for new education building; R.R. Markley Architect, Roy D. Crawford, Builder

1953

Church celebrates 100th anniversary; new education building is dedicated

Church dedicates the fellowship room in memory of Fred Blake who chaired the building committee

1959

The Messenger, the Church's newsletter, is published for the first time; Calvin Ray sells church lot on south side of West King Street to build a future parsonage

1960

Church holds note burning ceremony for education building

1963

Rev. E. Glen Holt holds open house in the new parsonage at 223 West King Street on June 16th

1974

Dr. Thomas Denton begins 13-year ministry

1976

Cornerstone laid for new educational wing; Jon A. Condoret, Architect; Bob Hardee, Chairman of Building Committee

1977

New educational wing is dedicated

1978

Steeple is installed replacing one taken down in 1923 and is dedicated in honor of Mr. John Clayton; Church celebrates its 125th anniversary

1979

Child care program begins at church and continues until 2003

1983

Church purchases the Gordon-Barfield property on West King Street; Wanda Hardee Kidd is ordained by church and becomes first women recommended for ordination by the Mount Zion Association

1984

Orange Congregations in Missions (OCIM) is organized from discussions held earlier by men's prayer group

1985

James Rae and Jamie Freeland purchase and give the Collin's property on Margaret Lane to the church providing adjoining land for parking and future growth

1989

A number of valued members withdraw membership to help Dr. Crawford, the church's associate pastor, establish the Hillsborough United Church of Christ south of town

1991

Church holds note burning ceremony for educational wing; church withdraws from Mount Zion Association and joins Yates Baptist Association

1993

Church becomes incorporated for legal protection

Growing and Acting in Faith

1997

Baptist men's group launches Operation Inasmuch as outreach ministry to community

1999

First trip made to Luz y Verdad Baptist Church in Maiquetia, Venezuela to assist with construction of church building

2002

The sanctuary is renovated and restored with new carpet, chairs, sound system and baptistery mural painted by Peggy Lee Mead

Peggy Berryhill develops and launches church's first website

2003

Church celebrates it's 150th anniversary with four former pastors, Bruce Cresson, Thomas Denton, Brightie White and Jeff Porter, assisting current pastor, Randy Carter, with services

2007

Church hires the architectural firm of Tise-Kiester to develop a facility and land use master plan for the church

2010

Church hires Cargill Associates to help conduct a pre-campaign feasibility study to build phase one of the master plan; project is down-sized based on study and church launches capital campaign to obtain commitments of \$600,000 – about half of the cost to renovate existing structures and add a connector with elevator for future expansion

2011

The parsonage, vacated by the Carter family in 2009, is renovated to house the church's administrative offices, library, archives and meeting room.

Hispanic speaking congregation meets first time on March 13th to worship in church; they name their mission, Mision Bautista Cristo La Solucion (Christ the Solution Baptist Mission)

Work begins to renovate sanctuary and education building to improve handicap accessibility and add a connector with elevator for future construction of an education building

2012

A Leadership Renewal was held on Saturday, August 25th to launch the new church year; plans are to hold it annually.

The renovation and elevator tower addition are dedicated during services conducted on September 16th. Betty Ann Dickerson chairs the building committee with Tise-Kiester as architects and C.T. Wilson Construction Company as builder.

2015

The church begins to develop a partnership with missionaries Chaouki and Maha Boulos in Beirut Lebanon to meet the physical and spiritual needs of Syrian refugees. Several Lebanon Mission Trips to help with refugee work are undertaken by members of the church in the following years.

Church restores equipment and begins erosion control work on the playground in memory of Miriam Dobbins who directed the church's children ministry for several years.

2018

The Church approves and begins a 3 year "pay off the debt campaign" to eliminate the church's building loan by November 2021. Church members commit to donating \$300,000 over three years for this purpose. The campaign's slogan is "**faithfully finish** what we started, **and** then move **faithfully forward** to do God's work here in Hillsborough and beyond."

2019

Randy Carter resigns from FBC Hillsborough in February to become pastor of New Hope Baptist Church in Raleigh. He was pastor for 15 years and 5 months - the church's longest serving minister.

2020

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the church closes its facilities in April for public worship, bible study, on-site meetings and other related events. The Diaconate appoints a Regathering Task Force to adopt plans for regathering in a safe and responsible manner. Worship Service, Bible Study and RA events continue via Zoom conferencing software.

2021

The "Pay off the Debt" campaign is successful. The building loan is paid off seven months ahead of schedule in April.

Dr. Matthew Riggsbee is called as senior pastor. His first sermon is delivered via Zoom on Sunday May 2nd.