

First Baptist Church
HILLSBOROUGH, NORTH CAROLINA
EST 1853

1900's Ministers

Dr. Charles Edward Maddry

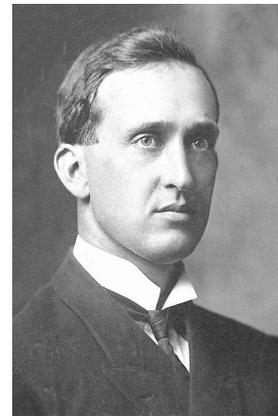
Pastor FBC Hillsborough, February 1901-1904 and 1951-1957

Charles E. Maddry has the distinction of serving twice as pastor of First Baptist Church Hillsborough. Most fittingly, his formal ministry started and ended here. On both occasions, the church needed a strong, vibrant and visionary leader.

The following is extracted from his own and others biographies:

Maddry was born on April 10, 1876 to W.A. and Julia R. Sugg Maddry. He had five sisters and three brothers. His home was located three miles north of Chapel Hill. His grandmother was a Presbyterian and his grandfather a Baptist. His grandmother strictly observed the Lord's Day. All work on the farm had to be finished by Saturday noon.

His formative education was limited to two months a year after crops were "laid by." The teachers were itinerant and boarded with local families. The curriculum was basically the three R's – reading, writing and arithmetic. With his father's consent but without financial support, Maddry left the farm to attend a preparatory school in Chapel Hill, taught by Professor J. W. Canada of Summerfield, Guilford County. At twenty years of age, he was older than the other students and had to cut wood to pay his way. He was an avid student and by 1889 was eligible to enroll in classes at the University of North Carolina. He worked several jobs to pay his way but was eventually compelled to drop out because of debt. After a year of hard work as superintendent of Orange County Schools and pastor of five churches, he was able to reenter the University and graduate in 1903. Hillsborough was one of the churches in his charge during this time.



Maddry 1903



On May 2, 1906, Maddry married Emma Parker, daughter of T. B. Parker and Penelope Alderman Parker, in the Baptist Church in Hillsborough. The ceremony was performed by Dr. Hight C. Moore, a relative of the bride, and the pastor of the church, Rev. A. C. Hamby. Dr. W. P. Powell, a seminary classmate was best man. With a loan from Edmund Strudwick, president of the South Atlantic Life Insurance Company of Richmond, Virginia, Maddry was able to attend the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary at Louisville, Kentucky, in 1906. When he sent his first loan payment, Strudwick wrote back saying no further payments were necessary; his debt was cancelled.

For a while, the young couple lived in Greensboro. On December 13, 1907, their daughter, Katherine, was born. Soon after, Maddry accepted the call to

preach at the Tabernacle Baptist Church in Raleigh. He left North Carolina for Texas in June 1916 to become the pastor of the University Church in Austin. He remained there until 1921 when he was appointed secretary of the North Carolina Baptist State Convention.

In 1933, he became the executive secretary of the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, Richmond, VA. He served in this position over 12 years. When he took over, the Board was in financial trouble and morale was low. Within a few years, the Board was financially viable, morale was high and the number of missionaries on the field had grown significantly. As part of his duties, he and his wife visited missionaries in Asia, South America, Africa and Europe. He encouraged the churches to launch worthy evangelistic programs that were self-supporting and could be replicated elsewhere. Maddry arrived in Honolulu, HI on Wednesday, December 3, 1941 to survey mission work on the island. He witness the Attack on Pearl Harbor on Sunday morning, December 7th – America's Day of Infamy.

Maddry retired as executive secretary of Foreign Mission Board in 1945. After retirement, he became "home-sick" for the pastorate. The Hillsborough Baptist Church first called him as an interim but soon decided they needed him fulltime as pastor. The congregation increased, the financial contributions of the church doubled, and many new members were baptized into the fellowship. The church raised funds and built an education building accessible from the original building built in the 1860s. In 1973, Maddry celebrated his 75th birthday in April and the church celebrated its centennial in November with the dedication of the new building. His fifty-six years cycle of ministry that began here in 1901 ended in 1957 when he retired from the ministry.^{1,2,3}

Following on the heels of Wake Forest College (1917) and the University of Texas (1920), the University of North Carolina also awarded him an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree in 1922. He became a popular speaker at university commencement events.^{2,4} Maddry wrote two books on missionary work: *Day Dawn in Yoruba Land* (1939), about mission work in Nigeria; and *Christ's Expendables* (1949), a collection of case histories of missionaries. He wrote a history of the First Baptist Church of Hillsboro, NC in 1953 and a similar history for the Mount Moriah Baptist Church, Orange County, in 1960. His autobiography was written and published in 1955. He ended his autobiography saying, "I now have come to the end of a winding trail. The sun is well past the meridian; the shadows are slowly lengthening. Soon it will be sunset and darkness, but best of all, it will be sunrise in the morning."³

Maddry died in Chapel Hill on September 17, 1962. He was 86 years old. His funeral was conducted at the Hillsborough Baptist Church on September 19 1962 with burial in the Hollywood Cemetery, Richmond, VA. His beloved wife, Emma, died on March 25, 1973 and is buried by his side. She was 92 years old at her death.⁵

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Compiled by Reginald Carter, Historian, FBC Hillsborough
Last Updated: March 10, 2011

Andrew Cleveland Hamby
Pastor FBC Hillsborough, 1904-1906

At the conference held on August 27, 1904, the church accepted Brother Maddry's resignation as pastor and called Brother A.C. Hamby "as temporary supply" who was at the "night service" and accepted. The following year on August 20, 1905, the church met in conference after Sunday School and Brother A.C. Hamby was called "to be preacher of this church for one year (till next August) at salary of 150.00 per year to preach 4th Sunday and night and 1st Sunday night." Hamby moved his membership from Cane Creek to Hillsboro on April 22, 1906. He offered his resignation as pastor on September 1, 1906.¹



PASTOR A. C. HAMBY

Andrew Cleveland Hamby was born on August 28, 1876 in Wilkes County. He grew up on a family farm, but at age 17 left the farm to attend Bethel Hill Institute. The Institute was founded by Reverend John Alexander Beam in 1888 and was located north of Roxboro, Person County, NC. Afterwards, he attended Traphill Institute, back home in Wilkes County, the Blue Ridge Academy, Hendersonville, Henderson County, NC and the Whitehead Academy, Whitehead, Alleghany County, NC. He spent nine months at Wake Forest College. In 1901, Hamby became the editor of the *Blue Ridge Baptist* paper. The paper was established the prior year by Rev. W. R. Bradshaw and F. B. Hendren in Wilkesboro but moved to North Wilkesboro when Hamby became editor. A historian notes that "The *Baptist* is a clean religious paper and speaks well for its young editor and manager." At the time (1902), Hamby was licensed to preach by his church, but not yet ordained.²

Hamby and his wife, Nannie Gertrude Lynch, had three children, two daughters and one son. One of the daughters, Lucille, married Harry Lake Brown of Hillsborough. Mrs. Brown was the organist at First Baptist Hillsborough for many years, active in the Women's Missionary Union and involved in home missions.³

It appears that Hamby was a member at Cane Creek Baptist Church when he began preaching on a temporary basis at Hillsborough in 1904. In 1905, he is listed as the Orange County superintendent of schools.⁴

In 1906, he was listed as living in Greensboro and serving as pastor of churches at Bethel, Berry's Grove, Mars Hill and Hillsboro. The membership of the Hillsboro church was 58 at the time.⁵ From 1912 to 1918, he was pastor at the Baptist Center and at the Clayton Baptist Church in Johnston County, NC. In 1921, the NC State Baptist Convention hired him to be the superintendent of the Department of Enlistment and Conservation. At the time, he was pastor of the Salem Baptist Church and living in Raleigh, NC. It was noted that "Brother Hamby is well fitted for leadership in this work. He was raised in Wilkes and Watauga Counties, and has the love and confidence of all the people. We feel that we are exceedingly fortunate in securing the services of such a man as A C Hamby to lead in the development of the country churches in North Carolina."⁶ An obituary printed in 1930 list him as pastor of the Baptist

Church in Mebane, NC.⁷ It is here that he died on January 1, 1942 and was buried in the Oakwood Cemetery.⁸ He was 66 years old at the time of his death.

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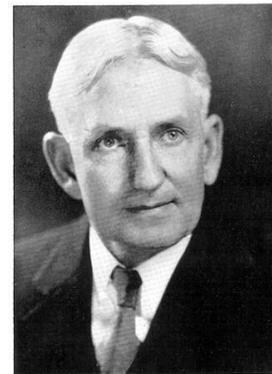
*Compiled by Reginald Carter, Historian, FBC Hillsborough
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Dr. Ira Edgerton Dwight Andrews
Pastor FBC Hillsborough, 1906-1907

In 1906, the church minutes indicate that “on Sunday the 30th day of Bro. Ira E D Andrews was invited to preach for us.” The following summer, July 28, 1907, Andrews offered his resignation to take effect the October.¹

The following brief synopsis was compiled from information found on Internet and is arranged chronologically.

Ira Edgerton Dwight Andrews was born ca 1875, parents and location unknown. He attended UNC at Chapel Hill receiving an AB degree in teaching in 1898. At the time, he was listed as being 23 years old, 5’9” tall and weighing 145 lbs.² He is also listed as being on the law class roll at UNC, but there is no indication that he graduated with a law degree.³ He served in the NC House of Representatives in 1905 as a Democrat from Chapel Hill, NC and was assigned to the following standing committees: Education, Appropriations, Judiciary, Trustees of University, Revision of Law, Institute for Blind and Insane Asylum.⁴



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When and where he was licensed or ordained to preach is unknown. He was pastor of the Baptist Church in Hillsboro from 1906 to 1907 and, at the same time, was teaching in the Orange County Public School system in Chapel Hill.⁵ He is also listed in 1907 as being enrolled in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY.⁶ In 1910, he is listed as the pastor of the Dallasburg Baptist Church in Wheatley, Kentucky. On March 4, 1914 he married Emma Whitehead Souther of Wheatley, KY.⁷ She was born on April 4, 1890 making him 39 and her 24 years old at the time of their marriage. She was the tenth child of Robert Souther and Hulda Van Deren of Owen County Kentucky.⁸ Whether they had children is unknown.

Andrews is listed as pastor of the Westminister Baptist Church in Westminister, Oconee County, SC from 1923 to 1926.⁹ He is referred to as Doctor Ira E.D. Andrews at the Westminister Church. So he must have received an honorary doctor's degree sometime prior to becoming pastor there.

The last residence noted for the Andrews is Clayton, NC. Mrs. Andrews is listed a president of the Clayton, NC Women's Club from 1933 to 1935.¹⁰ The date and location of their deaths and the site of their burial is not known.

Andrews penned the following for the *Christian Index*, Atlanta, Georgia, published on September 8, 1921. It seems a fitting tribute to his life's work.

Gentleness is a composite virtue. Its basis is love, its expression is kindness, its purpose is helpfulness. It rests undisturbed and all the conflicts that may arise for it recognize its depth. It is a characteristic of Divinity for the Psalmist has said, "Thy gentleness hath made me great." (Psalms 18:35.) It is a virtue of humanity for by it the people rejoice. It is power without noise, faith without sign, guidance without force. It entertains no worry; it yields to no haste. ... It stays the heart that is wavering and sees through the chastening of the good. It is an uplift to the beggar and a grace to the benefactor. It sweetens the draught on the wanderer's lips, and reminds him of home and mother's caresses. It shames the heart of the ingrate and moves the scorner to praise.¹¹

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*Compiled by Reginald Carter, Historian, FBC Hillsborough
Last Updated: April 5, 2011*

John Caswell Hocutt

Pastor FBC Hillsborough, 1907-1910

Church minutes indicate that on July 28, 1907 the current pastor, Ira Andrews offered his resignation to take effect in October and that on motion "Bro Jon Hocutt was called to preach for us at a salary of \$150 per year and if more was collected it should be given to him." In December 1908, a committee was appointed to "consider the advisability of having preaching at Eno Cotton Mills." {The West Hillsborough Baptist Church was not organized until 1917.} In 1909, the church purchased 60 copies of the Baptist Hymnal without and 6 with "notes." Church repairs cost \$78. After delivering his sermon on November 27, 1910, Hocutt offered his resignation which was accepted to take effect the 4th Sunday in December. The minutes note that "Many members expressed regrets at severing this relationship which has for the past three years been so pleasant and profitable. But an act of being able to locate a pastor here. It was desired wise to do so."¹ Apparently, Hocutt lived in Chapel Hill and did not use the parsonage adjacent to the church while pastor of the church.



Hocutt served as pastor of churches in Orange, Alamance and Wake counties. He was at Dayton in the Oak Grove Area of Raleigh from 1876-1883 and at Olive Branch, Mount Moriah, Cane Creek, Bethel, Burlington, and Haw River from 1887 to 1896. He was pastor of Cane Creek on three occasions, 1888-92, 1894-95 and 1907-09. He was the 4th pastor to serve the Burlington Church and helped organize and serve as the supply pastor of Glenco Baptist Church, 1893-1894. Graham called him twice as pastor of their church, 1893-1900 and 1911-1912.² Prior to coming to Hillsborough, he helped organize and served as the 1st pastor of the Union Chapel Church in 1902. The church later became the Carrboro Baptist Church in 1914. While living in Chapel Hill, he served as pastor of Hillsborough, Mt. Gilead, Mt. Carmel, and West Chapel Hill. He moved from Chapel Hill to Graham in 1912 pastoring the Graham and Haw River Churches. He died there in 1912. Hocutt Memorial Church was named in his honor when it was established by the Burlington Church in 1913.

Hocutt was born in Johnston County, NC on November 7, 1849, the son of Lucy Ligon and Lemuel Hocutt. He was the 2nd child in a family of at least 8 children. He attended Wake Forest and was ordained at age 27. Although in poor health much of the time, he worked hard for his churches.⁴ A 1900 census indicates that he was married to Mary J Hocutt and they had two children, Laura W and John B Hocutt. The estimated date of marriage was 1877, a year after he was ordained.⁵ The Biblical Recorder names Hocutt as one of the presbytery that questioned and ordained Charles Maddry into the ministry in 1902.⁶ Maddry referred to Hocutt as "my father in ministry" in a letter he wrote to the Biblical Recorder after learning of Hocutt's death. "He was everyone's pastor here and I wonder if the Master won't give him

perfection in the shepherd work over there.”⁷ Like Maddry, Hocutt also served as superintendent of Orange County Schools, 1907-1909 while serving the Hillsborough Church.

Perhaps Hocutt is best known for the letter he wrote to Washington Duke protesting the new practice of putting pictures of pretty girls in packages of cigarettes. Duke wrote to his son, James Buchanan, in October 1884:

“I have received the enclosed letter from the Rev. John C. Hocutt, and am very much impressed with the wisdom of his argument against circulating lascivious photographs with cigarettes, and have made up my mind to bring the matter to your attention in the interest of morality, and in the hope that you can invent a proper substitute for these pictures which will answer your requirements as an advertisement as well as an inducement to purchase.”

The practice ended, at least for a while. Hocutt died on August 4, 1912 and is buried in the Linwood Cemetery in Graham.⁹ A Mary J. Hocutt, born August 11, 1859, is listed as dying on September 2, 1905 and being buried in the Corinth Baptist Church in Johnston County, NC.⁹ No mention is made of her relationship to John C. Hocutt but she most certainly is his wife.

This epitaph appeared in the Annual of the North Carolina Baptist State Convention 1912:

“Brother Hocutt was beloved by all who knew him. He was a man of saintly spirit, spotless character, and walked worthy of the vocation where- unto he was called. He occupied many important fields, such as Chapel Hill, Burlington, Hillsboro, and was pastor at times of country churches. He was a missionary of the Board for many years, and was ever faithful and conscientious. He was a frail man, and suffered much during the latter years of his life, but he "suffered as a Christian," uncomplainingly, and when the summons came, he was ready.”¹⁰

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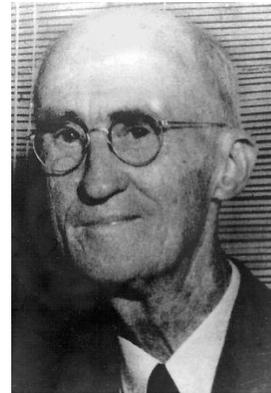
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John Robert Greene

Pastor FBC Hillsborough, 1911-1915

On November 27, 1910, Rev. Hocutt resigned as pastor “whereupon Rev J R Greene was called to begin his pastorate the 4th Sunday in January. Salary to be \$200 and the parsonage provided {if} he wished to live in it.” Greene transferred his letter in July. In November 1914, the church appointed a committee to investigate having a pastor one half time (two services per month rather than just one). The committee asked for more time since they had not been able to talk to all members to get their opinion. {Editor’s note: It appears the church did go to two services a month after Greene left and S. W. Oldham became pastor.} At the same meeting, a resignation letter from Dr. J.S. Spurgeon as church clerk was read ... and accepted with regret, “as the Church felt in the resignation of Dr. Spurgeon as clerk, the church has lost a most loyal servant in that capacity.”¹ While serving at Hillsborough, Greene was also preaching at Mars Hill, Bethel, and Berry’s Grove on alternate Sundays.



An article written by Robert P. Walker in the Bible Recorder describes a revival he held at the church for nine days in November, 1911. Thirty-two made professions of faith with eight joining the church. Later fifty people came forward, many of them young people, one dedicating his life to the ministry. Walker writes that “he is a strong young man and has a bright future”, but does not mention him by name. He goes on to describe Greene as “doing excellent work in old Hillsboro, and the people love him. He is a consecrated man and we expect great things of him.” Walker closes by saying that it was in the Hillsboro church that he first attended Sunday School and heard his first sermon delivered by Dr. W L Wright (pastor, 1880-1885). He goes on to say that he was ordained by the church and that it was good to see some of his old Sunday School teachers, Brethren Newman, Spurgeon, Jones and Smith.²

Greene resigned from the Hillsborough Church in December 1915 to become minister of the Baptist Church at Jacksonville, Onslow County, NC.

Greene was born in a log house in Cherokee County, North Carolina, on September 1, 1877. He weighed only four pounds at birth and had to be fed milk with a spoon, but survived because of his mother and aunt’s continuous care. Mountain living soon nourished and strengthen his body. He accepted Jesus at age 13 during a revival held at Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, near Murphy. At age 17, he was licensed by his church to preach. His pastor, Colonel Ledford, advised him to get an education. There were no high schools in his area and he had to travel 100 miles to Clyde, NC to attend Haywood Institute that was built by the Clyde Baptist Church with support from the Southern Baptist State Convention. He went on to attend Wake Forest graduating in 1907; he was 30 years old at the time. While at Wake Forest he pastored the Berea Baptist Church in Durham County and on July 23, 1905 he was ordained by the Baptist Church in Clyde.³ After graduation, he returned to Clyde to serve as their pastor, but soon left to attend the seminary in Louisville, where he graduated in 1910. From 1911 to his retirement in 1939, he served Baptist churches in Hillsborough, Jacksonville, Boiling Springs, Drexel, and Mebane. While in Boiling Springs, he severed also on the faculty of the Boiling Springs Junior College which later became

Gardner Webb College. During most of his ministry and after retirement, Greene lived in Chapel Hill, NC and was a member of the University Baptist Church.^{4,5}

He married Elizabeth Andrews who was born on June 16, 1895. They had two children, Mary and Phillip. His wife died on May 18, 1964. Greene died on December 18, 1969 at the age of 82. They are buried in the Bethel Baptist Church Cemetery, Orange County, NC.⁶

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Last Updated: March 1, 2013*

Sidney W. Oldham

Pastor FBC Hillsborough, 1916-1922

The call was extended to SW Oldham on January 23, 1916 and a letter was mailed to him of the church's action. A committee was appointed to get the parsonage ready for the pastor and his family. The committee reported back that they felt it would be best for Oldham to rent another house in Hillsboro and for the church to rent out the parsonage to someone else. They proposed giving the preacher an extra \$100 in salary and to furnish the rental property. On February 13, 1916, Oldham accepted the call to preach at Hillsborough, Mars Hill, and Berry's Grove. {Editor's note: It was normal at this time for pastors to serve a ministry field that included two or more churches in proximity.} No suitable rental property could be found, so the church decided to "build 2 rooms on the parsonage" and began collecting money to do so. Lumber and brick were purchased and the house was almost ready when the Oldham family arrived in May. During his pastorate, efforts continued to refurbish the church and parsonage. In June 1916, a motion was made to "check with the Power and Light Co. "to see what they could get the church lited {sic} for." The electric work was completed in 1917 by the Durham Traction Company, the same firm that owned and operated

S W & Emma Oldham, 1920ca

the electric street cars in Durham. The deacons requested that the three swing oil lamps be donated to the Efland Baptist Church. In April, the church requested that a presbytery be formed to organize “a Baptist Church at West Hillsborough.” The presbytery met on April 27th for this purpose. Oldham preached for the West End Baptist Church until a pastor could be found. From October 1918 until January 1, 1919, the church was ordered closed by the Board of Health because of the influenza epidemic.¹

Oldham resigned as pastor on January 22, 1922. The church accepted and wrote a letter of appreciation that said in part, “ We have enjoyed the co-affection and good fellowship of both he and his good wife ... (they) have at all times shown their most interest in life to be the Master’s workers and their every efforts are put forward for the advances of His Kingdom.”¹

S. W. Oldham was born in Chatham County, NC, on May 31, 1871. He studied at Olive's Chapel Preparatory School a few miles west of Apex, NC before attending Wake Forest College in 1891 to study for the ministry.² He was ordained as a minister by Lystra Baptist Church located six miles south of Chapel Hill, NC.³ While in college, he served as a supply preacher and regular pastor for several small congregations in the vicinity. He married Emma H (maiden name unknown) in 1898. According to a 1920 US census, they had six children: Mabel, Wayne and Warren (twin boys), Helen, Lois and Frances.⁴ This explains the need to add rooms to the parsonage.

Oldham pastored several small churches in the Little River Baptist Association in the early 1900s, serving pastorates in the Toisnot Township, Wilson County, NC and at Holly Springs, Wake County, NC where Mrs. Oldham taught school.² He moved to Alamance County in 1906 to become pastor of the First Baptist Church of Graham, NC, remaining there until 1911.⁵ His next pastorate was at the First Baptist Church in Mount Gilead, NC.⁶

The First World War started while the Oldham’s were in Hillsboro. The influenza epidemic occurred in 1918. Pauline and Allen Lloyd remember that “during the flu epidemic, Rev. and Mrs. Oldham served the sick and did a wonderful job. Our home was near the Baptist Church and it was great to see a couple like these working for the Lord and mankind.”² They were also active supporters of the American Red Cross during this time.⁷

Oldham continued in the ministry until age 77, retiring in 1948. He served as tax collector and town clerk for the town of Star, NC for eight years. He died at age 91 on November 25, 1962. Emma who was born on April 17, 1875 died on February 19, 1967. The couple are buried in the Lystra Baptist Church Cemetery in Chatham County – his home church that ordained him as a minister.³

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*Compiled by Reginald Carter, Historian, FBC Hillsborough
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William R Beach

Pastor FBC Hillsborough, 1922-1924

Church minutes of March 8, 1922 note that “Rev W R Beach accepted the call to this field and began work March 1st holding his first service with the church at Mars Hill Sunday March 5th. On March 12th Beach, his wife, sons Ben, WR Jr. and daughters Susie, Ina and Bertha were received into membership by transfer of letter from Mt. Tabor Church. The same month song books were ordered and Beach was granted permission to dig a new well on church property. On January 28, 1923, a committee was appointed to “establish line on west side of church and to find out if there had ever been a deed made for the church.” On May 27th Trustees reported “that the records at the court house showed the lots now owned by Brown Gordon and Gaither Collins was bounded the east by the line of the church lot on the west.” On September 23rd, Trustees reported that an attorney told them nothing more could be done that would give a better title to the church lot than a survey made by a county surveyor. Once done, the church was advised “to have the survey recorded and let the other party bring suit if they care to!” The church voted later to allow Gaither Collins “to continue to use the driveway until such time as the church saw fit to close it.” On February 17, 1924 Beach tendered his resignation following the morning service. Ten days later on February 27th, the church accepted “Bro Beach’s resignation with regret of his severing pastoral relations with the church and going to Duke Church.”¹



According to listings found in various proceedings of the annual meetings of the NC Baptist State Convention, Beach served pastorates at Kings Creek (1894-1897), Granite Falls (1901-1904), Elkin (19-04-1905), Raleigh, Olive Branch, Princeton and Cary (1905-1912), Moncure (1913), Marshall (1914-1915), Bryson City (1915), Kings Mountain and Grover Church (1916-1920), Tabor City (1920-1922), Hillsboro and Mars Hill (1922-1924), Duke and Erwin (Little River Association 1924-1925), and Rowan (1928-1934).² Mrs. Beach is listed as director of WMU at a number of different church locations served by her husband. It appears that Beach and his wife founded Kings Creek School Academy in 1894 in Caldwell County.³ Reference is also made to Beach taking charge of a school in Elkin when he pastored the church there. Moncure Baptist Church, Chatham County, was organized February 23, 1913 and Beach served as their first pastor. In September 1926, Beach was hired as a field representative (agent) for the *Biblical Recorder*. The paper was losing money and needed to increase readership. Beach was hired because he “is known to many people in all sections of the state as he has done special work for the *Recorder* at the association for several past years.”⁴ {Editor’s note: He had served as a traveling agent for the *Recorder* in 1913 while living in Cary, NC.}

An appreciation of Beach appearing in the *Biblical Recorder* describes him as being progressive, urging his congregation on to those things pertaining to the Kingdom of God, yet conservative in his plans. “He

is truly a shepherd looking after his flock. He and his noble wife have been valuable citizens who have won the confidence and love of those with whom they came into contact.”⁵

Beach was born on July 6, 1872 in Kings Creek, Caldwell County NC near Lenoir. According to NC birth records, he had a daughter, Olive Ruth, born in 1892 in Kings Creek. Her mother is listed as Farie Jones born in Ferguson N.C.⁶ However, another daughter, Agnes, is listed as being born in 1895 and dying in 1903 at age 8 and buried in Granite Falls, Caldwell County. Her mother is Kate Coffey, born on June 11, 1873.⁷ Apparently, Beach’s first wife, Farie, died shortly after giving birth to Olive Ruth in 1892. Beach and Kate had two sons and three daughters when they came to Hillsborough in 1922.

By 1939, both Beach and his wife were in failing health. Kate died on September 7, 1944 and Beach died ten days later on September 17, 1944. They are buried in the Kings Creek Baptist Church Cemetery, Lenoir, Caldwell County, NC.⁹

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* Photograph scanned from reference number 4 above and then retouched (poor definition).

*Compiled by Reginald Carter, Historian, FBC Hillsborough
Last Updated: May 1, 2013*

John Roland Cantrell Pastor FBC Hillsborough, 1924-1927

The church extended a call to Rev JR Cantrell on May 25, 1924 and informed him that Mars Hill also extended the call for him to preach at their church. He accepted and began preaching the 1st Sunday in June. On June 29th letters were received from Wake Forest Church for him, his wife and daughter miss Letha. Soon after his arrival, the church voted to purchase a new piano and it took many months to pay off the debt. On October 8, 1925, the membership of the church was recorded as totaling 152. In November 22nd work began to repair the parsonage roof. Cantrell tendered his resignation on December 8, 1927 to take effect



following the first Sunday in January. He had decided to take up work with the State Mission Board. The church accepted his resignation and on December 25th letters of dismissal were granted to him, his wife, daughter Letha and son Cletus to join Pullen Memorial Baptist Church in Raleigh, NC.¹

Cantrell was born April 24, 1888 in Spartanburg County, SC. He was one of ten children of David Lafayette Cantrell and Cornelia Elizabeth Cartee. In 1909, he married Lettie Eulethia Henderson in Cherokee County, SC. Lettie was born November 16, 1892 in SC and was the daughter of William Jackson Billy Henderson and Mary Jane Mollie Horne. The Cantrells had four children, Letha V. (born 1909 in Cherokee, SC), Cletus H. (born 1913 in Cherokee, SC), John Wellford (born 1919, Boiling Springs, NC) and Grace V. (born 1929, Washington, NC). After six years of marriage, Cantrell, a poor country boy with little formal education, was called to the ministry. He loaded his family into a wagon and traveled to Boiling Springs, NC. It took him four years to finish the Boiling Springs High School, a Baptist sponsored academy. He worked hard to make ends meet. John W. was born the year his father graduated high school in 1919 at age 31.³ While a high school senior, Cantrell is reported preaching a revival at Kidds Chapel and Salem churches in Lincoln County for 10 days. The pastor, J.W.P. Hill, writes that Cantrell, “gives promise of being one of North Carolina’s foremost preachers” and that, “If any churches are looking for a good helper in a meeting they could do no better than to call Brother Cantrell, a worthy young man.”⁴ Soon after completing high school, Cantrell entered Wake Forest College determined to be an educated preacher. He had less than fifty dollars in his pocket. By preaching and working part-time, he finished Wake Forest in 1924 without debt and began his formal ministry at age 36.² While in college he preached at South Henderson (1921) and Haw River (1923).

He came to Hillsborough fresh out of college and preached here and at Mars Hill and Haw River. In October 1926, Dr. A.J. Barton, Director of Baptist Cooperative Program, visited Cantrell and the Hillsborough Church. He noted that the old town had changed since his last visit. “The cobblestones laid by Cornwallis have given place to paved streets. Many new buildings have been erected, but the old court house stands as in by-gone days, as does the Baptist Church, except that the basement of the church has been cut up into Sunday-school rooms and the Sunday school is departmentalized.” He goes on to say that Cantrell, “is the aggressive young pastor of the church and his people are loyally following his leadership.” He also notes that Cantrell is quite a farmer. “We noticed back of his home a garden with luxuriant vegetables even at this time of the year, and a stall in which was a cow that gives sufficient milk for the family.”⁵

In 1928, Cantrell became an evangelist for the NC Baptist State Convention. After four months of working on the Centennial Campaign in Gaston and Kings Mountain Associations, he held his first evangelistic service the first of May in West Jefferson.³ The *Biblical Recorder* contains numerous articles describing the meetings he held and the hundreds baptized as a result of these revivals throughout North Carolina. In 1930, he became pastor of the Baptist church in Newton, NC. While there, he also pastored the Mount Vernon Church (1933-1938) in Vale, NC. He left Newton to pastor the Calvary Baptist Church (1938-1939) in Morganton, NC. From 1939 to 1943, Cantrell served as President of Boiling Springs Junior College (now Gardner Webb University). Under his leadership, the institution underwent great campus growth, capital improvements and fundraising efforts. NC Governor O. Max Gardner became interested in the college, contributed a substantial amount of money and the college changed its name to Gardner-Webb in June 1942. Cantrell resigned the following year to allow the college to find a president with better academic credentials.² The Cantrell Society is named in his honor and is a fund-raising organization on campus.⁶

After stepping-down as president of Boiling Springs Junior College; Cantrell continued pastoring churches in the vicinity. In the 1940s he is listed once again as pastor the Mount Vernon Baptist Church

and in the 1950s as pastor of the Lattimore Baptist Church, from which he retired as pastor emeritus.^{2,7} Gardner-Webb College eventually awarded him an honorary doctorates.²

Lettie died February 23, 1965 and John died on June 25, 1967 in Boiling Springs, NC. They are buried in the Cleveland Memorial Park cemetery in Shelby, NC.⁸

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Compiled by Reginald Carter, Historian, FBC Hillsborough
Last Updated: May 1, 2013

Charles Augustus Caldwell Pastor FBC Hillsborough, 1928-1937

In January 1928 the church called Brother O. W. Triplett to be pastor, but he declined and the offer was then extended to Charles Augustus Caldwell who accepted and moved to Hillsborough on May 30, 1928. The following month, Caldwell, his wife and three daughters, Gladys, Modena and Rosetta moved their membership from China Grove to Hillsborough. One of his first tasks was to exclude from the rolls individuals who “willfully absent themselves for the house of God and fail to support the church without a reasonable excuse.” The Great Depression began in 1929 and lasted throughout his time in Hillsborough. Even so the church



membership grows and the debt on the parsonage is paid off in installments. In September 1930 a committee was appointed to write the church's history. Membership was 151, the Sunday School had 260 members with an average attendance of 126 and 50 new members had been added to the roll, six by baptism.¹ Upon learning that Wake Forest College was considering allowing dancing on campus, Caldwell wrote a letter to the *Biblical Recorder* published on August 12, 1936 opposing it saying that it was shocking, "to us as Christian ministers who have tried to keep our churches from the evil of the dance halls ... I have never known a dancing church member who was a soul winner ... It is the carnal minded who love those things."² After worship service on December 27, 1936, Caldwell offered his resignation as pastor to take effect the fourth Sunday in May 1937. The church accepted.¹

Caldwell was born at Maiden, NC on February 27, 1879. He attended a Baptist Boarding School, the South Fork Institute at Maiden. The institute was an academy which had a reputation of training rural Baptist preachers. He was ordained into the ministry by the First Baptist Church at Lincolnton, NC in August, 1906. He would have been 27 years old at the time. From 1906 to 1927, Caldwell served churches close to home in Lincoln, Catawba, Gaston and Burke Counties.³ Over a span of twenty years, he preached at Corinth, Bethel, Providence, Second, Thessalonika, Lenorad's Fork, Hickory, Alexis, Mt. Zion, Catawba Valley, Smyrna, Mt. Ruhuama, Antioch, East Morgaton, Enon and McAdenville where he served as minister on three separate occasions from 1913 to 1927. As often the case in rural communities, Caldwell simultaneously served as pastor of two or more churches at a time.⁴ A note in the *Biblical Recorder* describes a meeting held at Catawba Valley and says that though Caldwell was a young man he, "is one of our leading preachers. He preached with great power and with wonderful effect. This is a mission point two miles north of Morganton; just organized a little more than a year ago. A new house has just been completed and this is the first meeting since the church was organized."⁵ In 1927 Caldwell moved his family from McAdenville, Gaston County to China Grove, Rowan County and the following year he moved from China Grove to Hillsborough, Orange County. While at Hillsborough, he also preached at Mars Hill, Berry's Grove, and finally Haw River.³

Regrettably, another article appeared the following year in the *Biblical Recorder* saying that Caldwell's young wife Sue, the mother of five children ages 2 to 12 years old, had died in Maiden, her former home, after being brought there from McAdenville. She was the daughter of Daniel Brinkely of Clairmont {Claremont} NC. The article indicates that the young couple had been married about 15 years (ca. 1897) and that for the past 9 years she had been a faithful co-worker in the ministry; serving as president of the Women Missionary Society; Sunday School teacher; a true helpmeet {helpmate} in the Lord's work. She is also described as a loving, devoted wife and a sweet, tender mother.⁶



Caldwell remarried within a year and half of his first wife's death. His second wife was **Mary Hester Order** born on January 17, 1887. They got married on June 16, 1914.⁷ A 1920 federal census indicates that the household included five children ranging in ages from 1 to 13 years in age.

After stepping down as pastor of the Hillsborough Church, Caldwell continued preaching at Haw River until 1939 when he moved back to Gaston County to serve as pastor of the Hickory Grove and Mount Holly Baptist Churches in Gaston County. He died in Mount Holy on October 28, 1943 at the age of 64.⁷ Mrs. Caldwell moved back to Hillsborough and is listed on a 1953 membership list of the church. In 1963 she is said to be living in a house near her daughter, Modena Blackwelder.³ Modena had married W R Blackwelder and remained a member of the Hillsborough church after her parents moved away. The Hester Caldwell Sunday School

class is named in honor of Mrs. Caldwell who died on June 29, 1980. She is buried in the Hillcrest Gardens Cemetery, Mount Holly, Gaston County, NC.⁷

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Compiled by Reginald Carter, Historian, FBC Hillsborough. Photographs from Larry Caldwell Holt Ancestry website (see reference 7 above).

Last Updated: February 4, 2013

Aubrey Kenneth Cheek, Sr. Pastor FBC Hillsborough, 1937-1943

A call was extended to Rev Cheek on May 16, 1937 to preach 2nd and 4th Sunday Morning's beginning in July. The same month, new sidewalks were installed from the front of the church and the parsonage to the steps leading down to the street. The first finance committee was appointed to develop a budget and offering cards were first used. A unified budget was approved on December 12, 1937. The budget approved for 1939 totaled \$1,925 of which \$600 was paid to the pastor with the cooperative program and orphanage getting \$350 and \$200, respectively. On April 16, 1939, the deacons and trustees made a motion to "erect a baptismal pool in honor of Dr. Charles E. Maddry and a suitable marker be placed thereon." The membership that year totaled 233. The church started a building fund in 1941 and Brothers CC Hancock and JR Frederick were licensed to preach by the Church. Cheek resigned on July 11, 1943 to take effect on September 1, 1943 – ending



six years as pastor.¹ He left Hillsborough to attend the seminary in Louisville, KY to advance his education.

Cheek was born on August 11, 1911 in Durham NC, a son of the E. G. and Myrtle Rigsbee Cheek. He attended Durham schools, graduating later from Wake Forest College (1935) and the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY (1946). He married Hilda Mae Hill. She was born August 15, 1914 in Knoxville, TN. They had one son, Aubrey K. Cheek, Jr., and one daughter, Rilda Jessie Cheek.³ He was pastor of many churches in NC including Hillsborough (1937-43), Marshville (1946-48), South Fork in Winston-Salem (1948-52) and West Point in Kannapolis (1952-58). He died while serving as pastor of Fairview Church in Gastonia where he served 12 years (1958-1969).⁴

In May 1939, Charles Maddry, a former pastor and Secretary of the Foreign Mission Board, was invited to preach a revival at Hillsborough. Chief of Police, J.E. Sharpe, wrote to the *Biblical Recorder* noting that over 50 were added to the church's role of whom 31 were by baptism.⁵ In turn, while Maddry was serving his second term as minister at Hillsborough, Cheek returned to preach the sermon for J G Goodwin's ordination in to the ministry by the church on May 1952.⁶

Cheek died on March 29, 1969 at the young age of 57. Funeral services were held at the Unity Baptist Church in Gastonia with the pastor, Rev. W. F. Woodall officiating.² Graveside services were held at the Maplewood Cemetery in Durham. Hilda lived to be 74 years old, dying in 1988, and is buried in the same cemetery next to her husband.⁷

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*Compiled by Reginald Carter, Historian, FBC Hillsborough
Last Updated: May 1, 2013*

William W. Abernathy
Pastor FBC Hillsborough, 1943-1947

After listening to his trail sermon on October 24, 1943, the Church voted unanimously to extend the call to Rev. William W. Abernathy of Calvary Baptist Church, Gastonia, NC. Abernathy began his full-time pastorate on December 1, 1943. {Editor's note: He is the first minister to be called full-time by the Church}. The Church's Library was established in April 1944. In May 1944, a recommendation was made to increase the Church's holdings in the Building & Loan to 100 shares. The pastor's salary was increased to \$35 per week in October 1944. In April 1945, the Church voted to raise \$10,000 within the next 3 years "to build the outside wall of Sunday School rooms, cover room and install heating system. When \$5,000 is paid into church treasury - have plans drawn and begin building." {Editor's note: Additional educational space was not built until 1952 during Dr. C. E. Maddy's second pastorate}. On September 19, 1945 the church voted to begin securing the services of supply pastors and to continue calling a pastor full-time. The Church minutes indicate that a letter of dismissal was granted to Abernathy and his wife and that he left the church in September, 1947.¹



It appears that Abernathy attended the Baptist Bible Institute in New Orleans, LA prior to accepting a call to become pastor of the Huntersville Baptist Church (1925-1927) located in Mecklenburg County, NC.² After leaving Huntersville, he pastored churches in Pineville (1927), Lowell (1929-1930), Mooresville (Southside 1930-1932), Lumber Bridge (1933-1935) and Gastonia (Calvary 1936-1942). After leaving Hillsborough, he pastored Mountain Creek (1948-1956) near Rutherfordton, Newland (1956-1958), Walls Creek (1958-1961) in Bostic, and Piney Grove (1961-1964) in Statesville, NC.^{3,4}



William W Abernathy was born in 1900. He married Mae V Bell who was born in 1901. Both were born and reared in NC, but the exact locations are unknown. They had a daughter, Betty Frances Abernathy, born March 27, 1926 in Cool Spring, Iredell County, NC. In 1940 the family lived in Gastonia, but in 1935 their residence was rural Robeson County, NC.^{5,6} An article in the *Biblical Recorder* in 1951 indicates that their daughter, Betty, had accepted the position of minister of music and education at the Midwood Church in Charlotte and that she was a graduate of Coker College, Hartsville, SC and had done graduate work at the School of Church Music, Southern Baptist Seminary, Louisville, KY.⁷

Abernathy is described as a zealous worker for Christ, preaching the plain Gospel.² He was said to be filled with the Spirit and having a way of speaking that went to the heart. His wife is described as taking an active role in the church and being loved by all.⁸

The dates of the Abernathy's deaths and where they are buried is not known. No references appear for him in the *Biblical Recorder* after 1964.

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* Abernathy is also spelled Abernethy in some sources

First Photograph from Biblical Recorder Article; 2nd Photograph from Church Archives

Compiled by Reginald Carter, Historian, FBC Hillsborough
Last Updated: May 1, 2013

Thomas Paul Deaton

Pastor FBC Hillsborough, 1948-1950

The church minutes dated September 19, 1947 indicate that the church was searching for a supply pastor while continuing to look for a full-time minister. The minutes end abruptly after January 8, 1947 and do not continue being recorded until October 8, 1952.* However a note of explanation is added to the minutes later covering the time between September 1947 and January 1948. "Rev. Raul Deaton was called from Parkton Baptist Church and began his pastorate on January 11, 1948. The note adds that "Bro. Deaton resigned January 31, 1950. During this time very little progress was made. In short, there was much friction among members. Church offerings were in such condition that we requested Dr. Charles Maddry, former pastor, to come meet with us and help reorganize."¹ An article in the *Biblical Recorder* written by John Clayton, moderator of the Hillsboro Church confirmed Deaton's resignation to become pastor of Mount Carmel Church near Asheville, NC on January 1, 1951. Clayton describes the Deatons as being of sterling character. "Mr. Deaton is a faithful pastor, an aggressive promoter of the work, and a sincere preacher of the Gospel. "Mrs. Deaton has rendered an efficient service in the music, WMS, and other phases of our church program. They are graduates of our Seminary and Training School in Louisville, KY, in the class of 1944." He closes by commending them to their new work and offers his prayers and good wishes.² Dr. Maddry is asked to serve as interim pastor until another full-time pastor can be secured.



Deaton was born April 23, 1917 near Wadesboro, Anson County, NC. He was the son of William Deaton and Mary Maldin. He graduated as a ministerial student from High Point College in 1941 and went on to attend the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY, graduating in 1944. On June 6, 1944 he married Jewell Futch in Jacksonville, FL. They apparently met as students at the Seminary. Jewell was born February 8, 1919 at New Haven, CT, the daughter of Freeman H. and Adelaide Colvin Futch. The Deatons had two sons, Thomas Paul Deaton, Jr. and Timothy Futch Deaton.³

Prior to coming to Hillsboro, Deaton was pastor of two churches in Robeson County, Lumber Bridge Baptist Church and Parkton Baptist Church (1944-1948). Upon his leaving, the Parkton Church wrote that “Mr. and Mrs. Deaton have faithfully served three years and three months during which time our church has grown spiritually and financially. The letter of appreciation describes Deaton as “an excellent preacher whose whole heart is in his work.”⁴ After Hillsboro, Deaton spent one year at Mount Carmel Baptist Church near Ashville and then moved his family to Jacksonville, FL where he and Jewell had been married. Deaton served as pastor of Ortega Baptist and Normandy Village Baptist in Jacksonville from 1951 to 1969. He also taught school from 1955 to 1973, continuing as a substitute teacher until his death.³ Jewell served as secretary in Discipleship Training Department of Florida Baptist Convention for 25 years. As a pastor’s wife, she taught Sunday school, sang in the choir and taught discipleship courses.⁵

Deaton died on June 13, 1994 in Jacksonville, Duval County, FL. Jewell died on December 18, 1998 in Hickory, NC where her son lived at the time. Both are buried in Riverside Memorial Park, Jacksonville, FL. They were members of the Avondale Baptist Church.⁵

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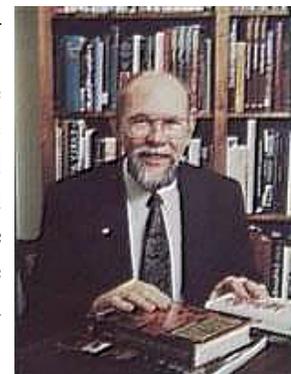
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** It is difficult to tell if the minutes ended or if they are missing. There is a letter written by one of the deacons indicating that church meetings had been disbanded until further notice – underscoring the strife amongst members at this time.*

*Compiled by Reginald Carter, Historian, FBC Hillsborough
Last Updated: May 1, 2013*

Dr. Bruce Collins Cresson Pastor FBC Hillsborough, 1957-1961

Dr. Bruce C. Cresson became the church’s assistant pastor in October 1954 while Dr. Charles Maddry was pastor. Upon Dr. Maddry’s resignation in 1957, he became pastor and served in that capacity until September 10, 1961. While pastor, he decided that the church needed a monthly newsletter. The newsletter’s title was suggested by his wife, JoAnne. The newsletter listed all church activities and organization meetings for the upcoming month and contain news of general interest, records and notes from the Pastor’s Desk. The newsletter continues to be called the Messenger. With the consent of the Church, he attended graduate school at Duke University eventually becoming a full-time student and earning a Ph.D.¹ Subsequently, he resigned his position as



pastor to pursue a teaching and research career in religious education. While pastor and attending graduate school, Cresson served part-time as instructor in Old Testament at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (1957-58:1958-59) and part-time as an instructor in the Department of Religion at Duke University (1961).²

Cresson was born on October 27, 1930 and reared in Lenoir, Caldwell County, NC. He decided to go into the ministry and was licensed to preach by Avenue Baptist Church. He entered Wake Forest University and graduated in 1952 with a BA degree. While in college, he served as an assistant pastor at Baptist Church in Black Mountain, NC in the summer of 1951. After college, he attended Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, NC in 1952, graduated with B.D. in 1954 and served as an interim pastor of the Southport Baptist Church, Southport, NC in 1954. He then served as the assistant pastor, First Baptist Church, Hillsborough. He married Betty in 1955, became pastor of the Hillsborough Church in 1957, eventually resigning to accept a Rockefeller Doctoral Fellowship leading to a Ph.D. from the Duke University Divinity School in 1961.



From 1962 to 1966, Cresson served as instructor of Hebrew at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and instructor of Religion at Duke University. He then joined the faculty at Baylor University⁴ eventually becoming W.W. Melton Professor of Religion and continued there until his retirement in December 2000. While at Baylor, he held several directorships, was Dean of the University's School of Religion from 1984-1987. He spent 25 summers excavating in Israel while Director of archaeological excavations. Cresson has authored and coauthored many books, chapters and journal articles pertaining to the Old and New Testaments and archeological findings that provide insight into the culture of Palestine during Biblical times. He was honored by his peers in 2000 with the John Gammie Award, given annually to the outstanding scholar in the field of religious studies in the southwestern region of the United States. Baylor University has a scholarship named in his honor for his work as the founding director of University Scholars and founding director of Baylor's Phi Beta Kappa chapter. For several years, Cresson served as Baylor's Director of International Programs.⁵

He and JoAnne currently reside in Waco, Texas and are active in the Columbus Avenue Baptist Church. They have two grown children, Joanna Lynn and Bruce II.

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Compiled by Reginald Carter, Historian, FBC Hillsborough; Photographs are courtesy of FBC Hillsborough, NC Archives.

Last Updated: January 26, 2013

Dr. Edward Glen Holt
Pastor FBC Hillsborough, 1962-1966

E. Glen Holt was called as pastor on April 22, 1962.¹ In his acceptance letter dated April 24, 1962, he wrote, “This is certainly a very challenging opportunity, and I look forward to working with you.” He expressed his desire to move to Hillsborough the week of May 27th, having resigned as pastor of Grassy Creek Baptist Church, Oxford, NC.² He came at the height of the civil rights movement in the South and a question arose as to what action the church would take if “a number of colored people visit our church.” The matter was referred to the deacons and on July 10, the deacons recommended and the church approved the motion that “all persons who come to church to worship be seated.” When he moved to Hillsborough, the Church was in the process of building a new parsonage. The Holts hosted an open house in the new parsonage on June 16, 1963.¹ At a church conference held on May 15, 1966 a letter of resignation was read for “our pastor, Glen Holt, effective June 15, 1966.” The call was to Mt. Olive Baptist Church, Mt. Olive, NC. In the letter, he says, “You have given me the freedom and the responsibility to be your minister and I have tried to serve to the best of my ability ... you are a wonderful people to serve.”³ Holt’s service to the Church has continued through the years. He became a prime resource for pastoral search committees who sought his advice and recommendations of candidates.



Holt 1962

Holt was born in Smithfield, NC on May 21, 1932. He attended Mars Hill Junior College for two years before transferring and completing his BA degree at Wake Forest University in 1954. He received his masters of divinity degree from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1958. On July 26, 1959, he married Joyce Smith of Selma, NC. While at the seminary, he served as student pastor at Sardis and Hephzibah Baptist Churches in Smithfield, NC. After seminary, he served from 1959 to 1962 as pastor of Grassy Creek Baptist Church, Oxford, NC until he was called to First Baptist Church, Hillsborough in 1962.⁴ After four years in Hillsborough, he spent three years as pastor of First Baptist Church in Mount Olive, NC before becoming senior pastor of the First Baptist Church in Fayetteville, NC. He remained in Fayetteville from 1969 to 1999 as the longest serving minister in the Church’s history. He was named pastor emeritus of FBC Fayetteville in the spring of 2000 for his outstanding service to the Church and community.⁵

Holt received his Doctor of Divinity degree from Methodist College in 1993. He is recognized as an outstanding denominational leader having served as president of the Baptist State Convention of N.C., 1991-1993 and president of the General Board of the Baptist State Convention of NC 1989-91 (3 terms). He has served also on many councils and committees of the General Board and has been on the Board of Directors of Fruitland Seminary and a Trustee of Campbell University.

Glen and Joyce have two children, Mark Holt and Amy Neill and four grandchildren. The Holts currently reside in Athens, GA. Mark established a scholarship at the Wake Forest University Divinity School in 2006 to honor his father's service to the North Carolina Baptist community.⁶

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Compiled by Reginald Carter, Historian, FBC Hillsborough
Last Updated: July 26, 2011

George Epsy Simmons Pastor FBC Hillsborough, 1966-1973

The church approved the recommendation of its pulpit committee to call Rev. George Simmons on September 18, 1966. Simmons accepted the call by sending a letter to the church dated Sept. 22, 1966 saying, "My work with First Baptist Church of Wadesboro will be terminated on October 15, 1966. I will assume my duties as your pastor on Sunday October 16, 1966." Simmons had served as pastor of the Wadesboro church for nearly 13 years, beginning his work there in January 1954.¹ During his time in Wadesboro, he served on the General Board of the NC Baptist State Convention for four years, as first vice president of the State Convention for two years, and as a trustee to Campbell College (now University). In his resignation statement to the Wadesboro Church, Simmons said, "Your generosity, patience, kindness and affection have made us forever your debtors." Simmons succeeded Glen Holt as pastor of the Hillsborough congregation. Holt left Hillsborough to become pastor of the First Church in Mount Olive, NC.²



During his pastorate, the church raised money to fill in the gully adjacent to the "new" parsonage and make it into a parking lot. New carpet was placed in the sanctuary and pews were cushioned and the educational building constructed in the 1950s, was air conditioned. The parsonage debt was retired and the alley behind the church was paved. In November 15, 1972 the church voted to encourage and support a Christian Youth House in Hillsborough but not to be formally recognized as its sponsor. Many of the church's youth were involved with this ministry which sponsored an interdenominational Youth Revival held at the Daniel Boone Amphitheater from July 16 to 20, 1973. During his last year at Hillsborough, a space committee was appointed to assess needs and make recommendations that were eventually acted

upon during Dr. Thomas Denton's pastorate several years later. In addition, the church supported a Billy Graham Crusade held in Raleigh, NC.¹ Simmons was an active member of the Hillsborough Exchange Club and spoke often to groups about the club's emphasis on "God and Country."



Simmons was born October 8, 1904 in Chattanooga, Hamilton County, Tennessee. He was the son of John Robert Simmons and Eula Moyers. His father was a master carpenter by trade. He had two older brothers and two older sisters. At age 16, he is listed in a 1920 census as living in his parent's household and working as a soda dispenser for a local drug store.³ Simmons was ordained at the St. Elmo Baptist Church, Chattanooga, TN during the pastorate of Rev. Luther Wilson Clark - sometime between 1925 and 1935.⁴ He married Ruth Rymer, the daughter of William Hughes Rymer, a much loved and highly respected Baptist minister from Polk County, TN. They had two daughters, Margaret Rymer and Ruth Ann both graduates of Meredith College. Margaret became an accomplished pianist and recently retired as a professor of music from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale IL.

One of Simmons' first pastorates was at the Arlington Baptist Church in Knoxville, TN. He was pastor of the Starling Avenue Baptist Church, Martinsville, VA when he enlisted and served as a Lt. Colonel in the US Army Chaplain Corps during the Second World War. In 1946, he was elected president of the Chaplain Association of the Southern Baptist Convention while serving as pastor of the Spurgeon Memorial Baptist Church in Norfolk, VA.⁵ In a brief article appearing in the *Biblical Recorder* in June 1969, Simmons recounts how surprised he was to see the Liberty Ship on which he sailed home from the War anchored in a harbor in New Orleans. The name of the ship was the Sea Gull.

Simmons read his letter of resignation and retirement after 11 AM worship service on Sunday, October 7, 1973 ... effective December 31, 1973. He and Ruth continued to live in Hillsborough after his retirement from the ministry. The church wired him flowers July 17, 1974 when he was a patient at Womack Army Hospital, Fort Bragg, NC.¹ He died the following year on July 10, 1975 and is buried at the Montlawn Memorial Park Cemetery in Raleigh, NC. He was 70 years old.

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Compiled by Reginald Carter, Historian. Photographs are courtesy of the FBC Hillsborough Archives.

Last updated on January 25, 2013.

Dr. Thomas Millard Denton
Pastor FBC Hillsborough, 1974-1987

In August 1974, Dr. Thomas (Tom) Denton began what would become a 13-year ministry in Hillsborough. During 1976, the Church began developing plans and raising money to expand and renovate the education building with a Day Care in mind. The new building was dedicated on April 3, 1977 and the steeple that had been taken down in 1923 was finally replaced with a new one purchased by pledges of various individual church members. The new spire was dedicated in honor of Mr. John Clayton on November 17, 1978 in time for the church to celebrate its 125th anniversary on November 19, 1978. The Church's child care program began in March 1979 and continued until April 2003 when it was forced to close because of loss of children to the public school day care programs. In March 1979, the Church raised money to purchase a new organ to honor Mrs. Lucille Brown, church organist for many years. When it became available in 1983, the church purchased the Gordon-Barfield property on West King Street. In 1985, James Rae and Jamie Freeland purchased the Collin's property on Margaret Lane and gave it to the church thereby uniting the church with the parsonage property, providing more room for parking and future growth. Ms. Wanda Hardee Kidd was ordained in 1983 being the first woman candidate to be recommended for ordination by the Mt. Zion Baptist Association. Lee Ray Greene was ordained in 1983 and Kaye Williams Crawford was ordained in 1984. Many of the churches' current outreach ministries began during Denton's ministry. The church began to participate in CROP walk to raise funds for local and world hunger in 1977. Orange Congregations in Mission (OCIM) originated in May 1984 from discussions held earlier by the men's prayer group.¹



Denton was born in Clinton, NC on May 26, 1947. His family farmed and operated a country store. He attended Mars Hill College and graduated from Wake Forest University in 1969 with a BA degree in Colonial American History and Political Science. He holds two degrees from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, a Masters of Divinity (1972) and a Doctor of Ministry (1974).² While in the seminary, Denton served as youth director of the First Baptist Church Fayetteville, NC. At the time, Dr. Glen Holt, a former pastor of ours, was senior pastor. While working on his doctorates, he served as Associate Pastor at Lakeside Baptist Church in Rocky Mount, NC. After Hillsborough, Denton next served twelve years as senior pastor of First Baptist Church, New Bern, NC. While there, the church installed a new pipe organ, purchased adjoining properties and built a family life center. In addition, he served as President of Religious Community Services, an ecumenical Christian service organization, similar to OCIM. Denton served as chairman of the Board of Social Services in both Orange and Craven counties during his pastoral tenure in Hillsborough and New Berne, and as Moderator of both Baptist Associations in which the churches were located.³

He served two terms on the General Board and the Executive Committee of the NC Baptist State Convention and was a member of the Executive Director Search Committee in 1997 and chaired the State Convention's Long Range Planning Committee for 1996-2000.²

Denton is remarried. His former wife, Connie lives in Wilmington, NC. From 2000 to 2015, Denton served as the Eastern Area Manager with the NC Baptist Foundation. He and his wife, Rita, live in New Bern and between them have four children - Josh, Whitney, Alex and Erin – and five grandchildren.

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Compiled by Reginald Carter, Historian, FBC Hillsborough; portrait photograph by Kent Murrary Studios, 2001. Other photograph is courtesy of FBC Hillsborough, NC Archives.

Last Updated: March 6, 2018

Dr. Brightie Elkanah White, Jr.
Pastor FBC Hillsborough, 1989-1996

Dr. Brightie E. White, Jr. was called to be the senior pastor of the church on March 5, 1989. He arrived on the scene in April and in May, he, his wife Billie, and their three children, Julie, Mark and David joined the church by transfer of membership from First Baptist Church, Elizabeth City, NC. He came at a challenging time in the life of the church. An effort to establish a mission church south of Interstate 85 had not materialized. The conservative movement to take control of the Southern Baptist Convention and especially Southeastern Seminary at Wake Forest caused tension and alienated a congregation who supported the ordination of women as deaconesses, missionaries and ministers. Accordingly, the church was hesitant to call a senior pastor for more than a year. It needed a “seasoned” pastor of White’s stature and leadership capabilities.¹



In many ways, White’s ministry paved the way for the beginning of a new millennium for the church. Soon after his arrival, the church decided to end efforts to establish a mission church south of town and to refocus efforts on home missions. The Alamance-Orange County Prison became a formal outreach Ministry in 1990. In May 1991, the church paid off its education building debt and held a note burning. The church withdrew from the Mt. Zion Baptist Association and joined the Yates Baptist Association headquartered in Durham in October 1991. For legal protection, the church became incorporated on February 18, 1993. Discipleship training was enhanced by White’s teaching, membership stabilized and grew, and major improvements were made in the church’s children and music programs.¹

Brightie White Jr. was born on August 5, 1931 and reared in Thomasville and Morganton, NC.² His farther managed “dime” stores and later owned one in Marion.³ White attended and graduated from Wake Forest College in 1953. He was an outstanding student, president of the Baptist Student Union, member of the Omicron Delta Kappa fraternity and senior class speaker at commencement. White was ordained into the ministry on June 14, 1953. The ordination service was held at First Baptist Church, Morganton,

NC. The church's pastor, Rev. John D. McCready, presided.⁴ White continued his education by attending and graduating twice from Southeastern Seminary with both master and doctorate degrees.



His pastorates include First Baptist, Snow Hill, Green County, NC (1955-1958 while in seminary); Park View Baptist Church, Durham, NC (1958 to 1974); First Baptist Elizabeth City, NC (1974- 1989); and FBC Hillsborough, NC (1989-1996). Under his leadership, the Snow Hill Church grew to the point that they were able to call him as their first full-time pastor and build an addition to the church's physical plant. The church expressed its appreciation saying, "for those accomplishments under his leadership which are not easily visible, which we cannot express in words – those spiritual advancements – individual and as a church" and to Mrs. White, "who has contributed much to the progress of the church – especially to the music program."⁵ Park View was a young church when White became their pastor and grew under his leadership, adding members and new facilities. It was a dynamic community with a large turn over in families; much different from his next church in Elizabeth City, historic with a stable community and families that went back many generations.⁶

White married Billie Curtis of Granite Falls, a schoolteacher and church organist at the time. They have three married children: Julie, Mark and David. Billie passed away in 2005. Since then Brightie has written a book, *A Funny Thing Happened*, about his humorous experiences in the ministry. It was edited by his second wife, Frances Westbrook White. They are retired and live in Hillsborough and Wilmington, NC.⁶

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Compiled by Reginald Carter, Historian, FBC Hillsborough; portrait photograph by Kent Murrary Studios, 2001. Other photograph is courtesy of FBC Hillsborough, NC Archives.

Last Updated: January 25, 2013

Dr. Jeffery Allen Porter
Pastor FBC Hillsborough, 1996-2001

The Church welcomed Dr. Jeffery (Jeff) Porter to the pulpit in October 1996. He, Susan and their 15-year-old son, Bradsher, arrived in Orange County on the heels of Hurricane Fran. Trees littered the streets and people were grieved by the damage. He soon discovered the sacrificial work ethic of the congregation, and for the next five years labored with them in the ministry of the church with the same zeal they used to rebuild their hometown.¹ After the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, Porter again had to lead the congregation through the tragedy's aftermath that evening and the following Sunday.²



During his time as pastor, the Baptist men's group launched "Operation Inasmuch" in October 1997 using the talents of church members to build ramps, make carpentry repairs, cleanup yards and weatherize homes in the area. In June 1999, a group made their first trip to Venezuela to partner with and assist the Luz y Verdad (Light and Truth) Baptist Church in Maiquetia to construct a new building. Additional trips have been made routinely. The prison ministry expanded to purchase Christmas gifts for inmates to give to their children and money was raised to build a religious service center on the prison campus. The Porters were instrumental in recruiting Doug Newell from Roxboro, NC to serve as the church's organist and Director of Music. Newell enhanced the music ministry of the church and assisted with the church's refurbishment. On October 22, 2000, the church voted to establish two back-to-back Sunday Schools to meet the growing needs of children and young adults. In 2001, the church began a major restoration of the sanctuary, adding new carpet, refurbishing woodwork and chairs, replacing balcony and choir seats, installing a sound system and having a mural painted in the baptistery by Peggy Lee Mead. A new organ was purchased and dedicated during this time.³



Porter was born on November 7, 1963 and spent his formative years in East Point Georgia. He graduated from Mercer University in Macon, GA in 1985 and received his Master of Divinity degree from the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1988. Jeff was pastor of Pisgah Baptist Church, Fayetteville, NC at the time of his call to First Baptist Church, Hillsborough in October 1996. Prior to that, he {add other positions held at other churches and their locations}.

While at Hillsborough, he received his Doctor of Ministry degree from Emory University. Porter left Hillsborough in December 2001 to become the senior pastor of the First Baptist Church, Statesville, NC. In his final sermon to the Hillsborough congregation, he said, "Where I go, you go with me. I will always remember the lessons that you have taught me brothers and sisters in the word of God. I am here this morning to say thank you."¹

The Porters enjoy spending time at their place in the Banner Elk, Boone area. Bradsher Wilkins and his wife Jennifer live in Hillsborough, North Carolina and have two children.

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*Compiled by Reginald Carter, Historian, FBC Hillsborough; portrait photographs by Kent Murrery Studios, 2001.
Last Updated: January 26, 2013*