

## **St John Baptist Church**

### **History**

In the fall of 1945, the St. John Baptist Church was organized. A group of concerned Christians met in the home of Bro. and Sis. Vaughn and they were responsible for the organization of St. John Baptist Church as the first church in this community. The first officers of the church included: Pastor C.A. Burns, Sis. Lela Vaughn, Secretary; Bro. Charlie Reed, Sam McDonald, and Sam Major, who made up the first Deacon Board with Bro. Charlie Reed serving as the Chairman of the Deacon Board, Church Treasurer, and acted as Superintendent of the Sunday School. Morning Worship was held in a building located at East 29th Street and Quirt Avenue. Church service was also held in a building located at East 27th Street and Quirt Avenue. The first church building was erected at East 27th Street and Weber Avenue. This was the first church home for St. John Baptist Church. Pastor C.A. Burns served for four years before moving away. After which Pastor Miller served for a year and a half. The first musician was Sis. Clara Morgan. In October 1952, Reverend E.D. Toines (deceased) was called to Pastor St. John. Under his pastorate, the church demonstrated tremendous growth. In 1957, the second church building was erected at East 27th Street and Weber Avenue. Worship services were held there until January 1964, when the church building was erected at the present location of 1712 East 29th Street. Under Reverend Toines' pastorate, two ministers were ordained: Rev. Leon Woods and Rev. Leon Patton, both of whom are deceased. Reverend E.D. Toines served as Pastor for almost 20 years. In November 1972, Reverend James E. Moore (deceased)

was called as the Pastor of St. John Baptist Church. During this time, the church grew both in membership and in spiritual growth. Under his leadership in 1974, the cornerstone was laid, and the adjacent lots were purchased for parking. In 1976, the church mortgage was paid in full. Pastor Moore ordained one minister during his pastorate: Rev. Robert Taylor. In November 1993, Reverend Moore retired as Pastor of St. John after 21 years of service.

Reverend Moore served as Pastor Emeritus until his passing in December 2003. On March 6, 1994, Reverend Solomon E. Fields was called as the Pastor of St. John Baptist Church, proclaiming it to be “A Place of Worship and Praise”. Since Pastor Fields and his family joined the St. John Family, we have all witnessed great strides in spiritual growth and development within ourselves and with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The Lord has blessed St. John with a new air conditioning and heating system, steam table, copier machine, new roof, two new church van, organ, electric piano, new sound system with CD duplication, all of the Sunday School rooms carpeted, a remodeled restroom facility, the atrium and inside of the sanctuary remodeled in August 2004, and the repainting of the outside bricks of the church. During Pastor Fields’ pastorate, he has ordained eight deacons: Bro. Arvis Flowers (deceased), Bro. Robert Bass, Bro. Raxon Mosley Sr., Bro. John Paul Daniels (deceased), Bro. Ray Mosley, Bro. Michael Horton, Bro. George Love and Bro. Leonard Gilliard. Deacon Garfield Griffin and Deaconess Relita Griffin, and Sis. Laura Trimble has joined the Deacon and Deaconess staff. Deacon Raxon Mosley Sr. accepted his call to preach the gospel, and he was licensed and ordained as a minister. Other ministers licensed by Pastor Fields include Helen Fitzgerald (deceased), Connie Williams (deceased), and Lew Coleman

(Pastor at New Jerusalem Baptist Church, Littlefield, TX). Ministers who have joined the St. John ministerial staff under Pastor Fields include Geraldine Thompson and Harry Powell. In 80 years, we can genuinely say that tremendous progress has been made from 1945 in a small black building where it rained inside and the floors were cracked, to the present building that we worship and praise today. 1st Corinthians 12:12(NIV) states: The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is in Christ.