

# Church of the Week . . . Patterson Grove Baptist Church

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## A BRIEF HISTORY OF PATTERSON GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH

During the summer of 1884, a brush arbor revival meeting was held in an area which was then known as Sandy Plains. The result of this meeting was to be the formation of a new Baptist church, Patterson Grove. On November 15, 1884, a Presbytry was formed with Rev. G.M. Webb as chairman. Seventy-two membership letters were presented from three area Baptist churches, Bethlehem, Pleasant Hill and Capernaum, to form the membership of this new church. The first minutes of the new church reads: "On motion the church was constituted on the principles of the Holy Bible with name 'Patterson Grove'." Many of the names of those who presented themselves for charter membership are still common to our area: Patterson, Falls, Ross, Bridges, Thornburg, Randle, Whisnant, Harmon, Goforth, Putnam, McGill, Ormond and Morrison among others.

During her 105 year history, Patterson Grove has had 25 pastors. Rev. Philip E. Elam began his duties as the first pastor on January 3, 1885. The present pastor, Rev. Richard E. Plyler, began his tenure of service on March 24, 1963.

During 1885, Rufus and Sarah Patterson and G.J. and Eli B. Patterson deeded over four acres of land to the church. It is not known exactly when the first building was constructed, but it was prior to 1889. This original building was remodeled in the early 1920's and was torn down in 1966 to make way for construction of a new sanctuary to be joined to a three story educational building completed in 1957. This new sanctuary was completed and dedicated in March, 1967.

On September 24, 1885, Patterson Grove Baptist Church was received into the membership of the Kings Mountain Baptist Association. The membership was 68 and the annual pastor's salary was \$50.00. In 1886, the Sunday school had an enrollment of 79 with weekly average attendance of 40. During 1886, total contributions was \$81.60 with \$2.00 going for state missions and \$2.00 going for home missions.

It was not until November 1, 1954, that the church voted to go full-time. This meant there would be a worship service held every Sunday. In 1959 a pastor's home was built. Since 1965 four men have been ordained to the ministry with a fifth having been licensed to the ministry last year. In March, 1972, a weekly newsletter, The Spire, was begun and continues to be mailed to members and others. In October, 1976, the church began supporting Rev. and Mrs. Ronald B. Wilson as their foreign missionaries which continues. The Wilson's now serve nine countries of the Northwest Caribbean: Rev. Wilson as Associate Area Director and Mrs. Wilson as missionary homemaker.

Today, Patterson Grove has a resident membership of 286. Of the 74 churches which comprise the Kings Mountain Baptist Association, Patterson Grove ranks 33rd in resident membership among her sister churches; 26th in Sunday school enrollment; 19th in average weekly Sunday school attendance; 21st in total gifts received and is 10th in total gifts to all mission causes.

According to the first minutes, Rev. G.M. Webb preached the sermon of dedication at the eleven o'clock worship service on Sunday, November 16, 1884, following Sunday school. His text was from II Chronicles 2:18, "And he (Solomon) . . . set the people a work." "In his earnest manner," reads the minutes, "he impressed indelibly upon the minds of all present the well selected truths."

A church is not just buildings, budgets or mere statistics. A church is people. People who have met and responded to the call of God and His free gift of salvation through Jesus Christ as Savior. People who struggle to allow Jesus Christ to be the Lord of their lives and the living of the days. Only God can fully evaluate the full impact of all the people of Patterson Grove, past, present and future.

We are grateful for the past 105 years of our history. We are grateful for the people who have toiled for God's Kingdom. Seed has been sown. God will bring the harvest. His harvest. For His goodness and blessings we are thankful!

## PASTORS OF PATTERSON GROVE

Philip Elam . . . . .	1885-1887	I.D. Harrill . . . . .	1916-1919
C.F. Flemet . . . . .	1888-1891	A.C. Irvin . . . . .	1920-1921
T. Bright . . . . .	1892	J.O. Fulbright . . . . .	1921-1924
P.G. Hoffner . . . . .	1893	W.O. Johnson . . . . .	1924-1925
Philip Elam . . . . .	1894-1897	J. Hoyle Love . . . . .	1925-1928
J.C. Blanton . . . . .	1898-1900	G.P. Abernathy . . . . .	1929-1931
A.H. Sims . . . . .	1901-1902	John W. Suttle . . . . .	1931-1945
J.C. Gillispie . . . . .	1903-1904	W.A. Roberts . . . . .	1945-1947
R.N. Hawkins . . . . .	1905-1906	Grover C. Teague . . . . .	1948-1951
J.C. Blanton . . . . .	1907-1910	John J. Thornburg . . . . .	1951-1958
I.D. Harrill . . . . .	1911-1913	Fred F. Hicks . . . . .	1959-1962
D.E. Vipperman . . . . .	1914-1915	Richard Ervin Plyler . . . . .	1963-Present
J.P. Miller . . . . .	1915-1916		

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