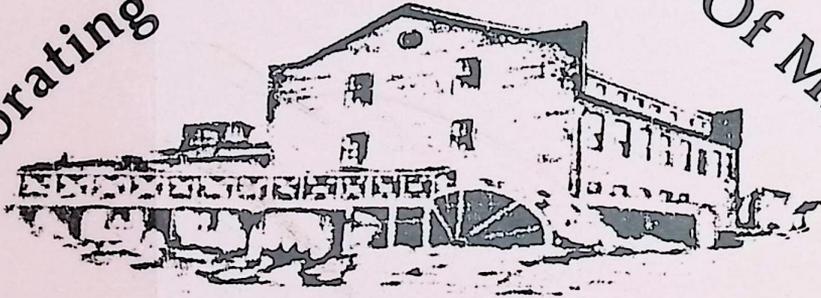
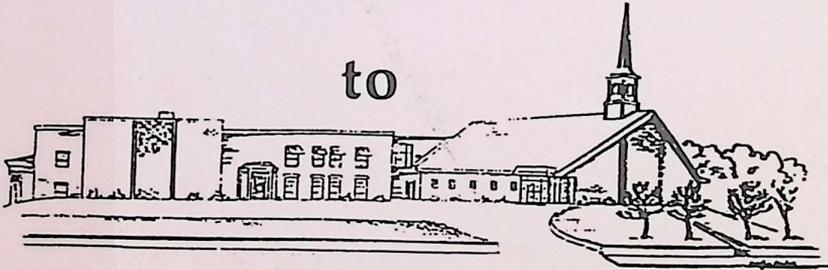


Celebrating Our First Century Of Ministry



1890

to



1990

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Woodlawn Baptist Church

Bristol, Tennessee

Celebrating
Our First Century
of Ministry

A History Of
Woodlawn Baptist Church
Bristol, Tennessee

From 1890 to 1990

by Stephen L. Playl

BRISTOL PUBLIC LIBRARY
701 Goode Street
Bristol, Virginia 24201

139763

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INTRODUCTION

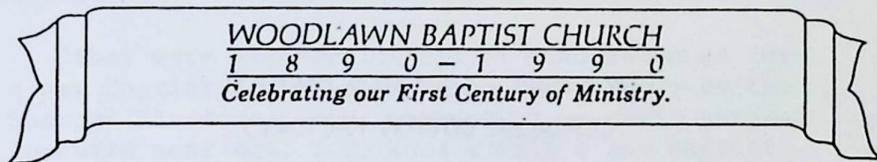
Many of the early records of Woodlawn Baptist Church (South Bristol Baptist until 1904) and Sparger Mission (in the embryonic stage - before the organization as a church in 1890) have been lost. Other records are, at best, sketchy. It has been necessary, therefore, to rely on records from the "Mother Church" (First Baptist, Bristol), register of deeds, and associational records. Also, several members whose parents and grandparents were in the church in its early days have been very helpful. Space does not permit listing all those who have offered information, but the author would like to list two who have been especially helpful: Clayton O'Dell and Edith Campbell.

Every effort has been made to verify the facts recorded in this book. Certainly every event in the history of Woodlawn Baptist Church could not possibly be included.

It is my prayer that this little book will be informative, inspiring, encouraging and entertaining - not necessarily in that order.

I am extremely thankful to Janet Ware for all the extra typing.

Stephen L. Playl



On Thursday, July 3, 1890 twenty-four members of the Bristol Baptist Church made a written request for their church letters in order to organize a Baptist church just south of Bristol. The United States of America was about to celebrate its one hundred and fourteenth birthday and the church now known as Woodlawn Baptist Church was about to be born.

Those twenty-four charter members met together on Sunday, July 6, 1890 at Sparger Cotton Factory and were constituted as the South Bristol Baptist Church. They then proceeded to extend a call to Rev. M.B. Upchurch to be their first pastor.

The twenty-four members of Bristol Baptist Church (First Baptist of Bristol, VA → TN) who formed South Bristol Baptist Church were:

J.H. Akers	W.J. Davis	Elizabeth Roberts
Maggie Akers	L.A. Davis	Sam Phelps
George Rutherford	M.M. Davis	N.R. Hicks
Maggie Rutherford	T.D. Trinkle	Martha Hicks
George Key	R.S. Trinkle	Linnie Smithson
J.D. Grose	J.A. Trinkle	Julia Deckard
Mary H. Klepper	E.M. Woods	Fannie Pruitt
B.C. Klepper	Samuel Roberts	Lizzie Ashley

This group had been meeting as a mission, planning to become an independent church in a needed area.

INCEPTION - SPARGER MISSION
(SPARGER COTTON FACTORY)

Goodson Baptist Church, now First Baptist Church of Bristol, on December 5, 1887 appointed a committee to "organize a Sunday school, Prayer meeting and an arm of this church at Sparger Cotton Factory." The members of the committee were W.S. Leak, H.W. McCarty, T.F. Wood, J.M. Trammell and John Brown.

Also, "a motion was made and seconded that this church call for a Presbytery to examine Bro. W.S. Leak and be found worthy and qualified to be set apart to a full work of the Gospel ministry. Motion carried."

In January of 1888 it was reported that in the first three weeks fifty-two had enrolled in Sunday school at the cotton mill. Obviously the committee was successful in establishing the mission work. The following excerpts from records at First Baptist Church of Bristol confirm this:

Goodson, Va. May 28th, 1888

"The following resolution was offered by Dr. J.A. Dickey which was adopted.

"Viz. - Resolved that the report of the mission work done by Bro. Leak at the Cotton Factory is very encouraging and should be sustained if possible.

"A motion was made and seconded that a committee of 3 be appointed to take charge of the mission work at the Cotton Factory and such other places as are considered necessary. Motion carried and the following committee appointed - Bros. T.F. Wood, Alson Hutton, W.W. Hamilton."

In September, 1888 following Bro. Leak's resignation, a Bro. Hart was elected to "take charge of the mission work."

For more than two years Bristol Baptist Church sponsored Sparger Mission. Again referring to records from First Baptist we learn that ...

"they were granted letters of dismissal to form a new Baptist Church at what has been known as the Sparger Mission. They announce it as their purpose to build near Bro. T.F. Wood's mill a new Baptist Church to be known as the 'South Bristol Baptist Church,' and at this writing, July 7th, (1890) these brethren and sisters have organized regularly and are under the care of Rev. Upchurch."

During this period, when Sparger Mission was being guided by the "Mother Church," Rev. R.D. Haymore was pastor at Goodson (Bristol) Baptist Church from 1885-1890 (the name was changed from Goodson Baptist Church to Bristol Baptist Church in 1888). As a point of reference, it was in 1890 that Bristol, VA was chartered by the name which matched her "twin city" across State Street. Prior to that time Bristol, VA was unincorporated and only a small part of the area was incorporated as "Goodson, VA." Bristol, TN had been incorporated in 1856. Goodson Baptist Church was organized in 1859.

JOHN BROWN was a member of the first committee from Goodson Baptist Church appointed to organize a Sunday school and prayer meeting at Sparger Mill. He was born in Tazewell County, VA in 1824, married Miss Mary Brent of Jonesville, VA in 1848 and moved to Bristol in 1880. He was a successful businessman, a carriage maker by trade. When he died in August 1908, one of the pall bearers was Major A.D. Reynolds.

T.F. WOOD was a member of both the committee to start the mission and the committee to "sustain" the work and "take charge of the mission work." Mr. Wood also owned the property which was to become the "Wood-lawn Addition" from which our present name was taken. Mr. Wood reportedly lived in a beautiful house at the present location of Edgemont Towers on Ash Street. His mill was located on Beaver Creek near his home, across from the "fine points" intersection. He apparently was involved in several successful business ventures besides the mill. He was very active at (First Baptist) serving as treasurer, Sunday School Superintendant and member of various committees. Mr. Wood passed away sometime between 1895-1900.

W.S. LEAK led the little mission group in the early days of Sparger Mission. However, little is known about Rev. Leak other than the above mentioned information concerning his ordination.

REV. ? HART, the second pastor of the mission, began to lead the group in September, 1888. Nothing more is known about Rev. Hart at this time.

During the time that Bristol Baptist sponsored the mission work at Sparger Mill there were frequent discussions concerning the building of a "chapel" to house the mission congregation. Locations were considered "near T.F. Wood's mill," "in the direction of the Vener Factory," and "the corner of Broad and 7th Street."

From the vision of those who hoped to build in West Bristol and others who felt the work should remain in South Bristol, two churches were eventually born: South Bristol (Woodlawn) in 1890 and West Bristol (Calvary) in 1900.



SOUTH BRISTOL BAPTIST CHURCH

In August, 1890, following the organization of SBBC as an independent church on July 6, 1890, the new church applied for membership and was accepted into Holston Association. The fact that Pastor Upchurch was also pastor of Mt. Olivet (now Bluff City Baptist) and other churches in Holston surely effected the decision to become affiliated with the Tennessee Association instead of Lebanon Association in Virginia, the association to which Bristol Baptist "belonged."

From 1890 to 1901 SBBC was a part of Holston Association. These early years were years of tremendous growth followed by disagreement, disappointment and decline.

Rev. Upchurch served as pastor from 1890 to 1893 and again in 1895. W.A. Sparger was the Sunday School Superintendent during this period. Sunday school probably met every Sunday, but preaching services were held only one Sunday per month. In 1891 South Bristol gave \$1.00 to State Missions, \$4.70 to Home Missions and \$2.75 to Foreign Missions.

In 1893 South Bristol led the association in baptisms with 78. This phenomenal evangelistic surge more than doubled the membership of the church.

E.L. Smith served as pastor in 1894 and although there were 16 baptisms and 8 additions by letter, the membership remained at 142 because the same number of members were lost as were gained.

On June 12, 1895 the church purchased from T.F. Wood, for \$50, a lot on the northeast corner of Woodlawn Avenue (now Edgemont) and Rustic Street in the Woodlawn Addition to Bristol, Tennessee in Sullivan County. In 1990 the address of that lot is 1317 Edgemont, across the Tennessee High School track from Woodlawn Baptist Church, but in 1895 Woodlawn Addition - including our church building, the lot on Edgemont, and all of Tennessee High - was outside the city limits.

J.A. Davis was pastor in 1896, but it is uncertain how long he served. In 1899 W.C. Patton was pastor. Records are not available for 1897 and in 1898 no pastor is listed in the very brief report to the association.

But no matter who was pastor at the time and whatever the reason 1898 was a year of division. That year the church lost 79 members, 60 of those were by "exclusion." With only 48 members left, the young church struggled to survive.

Apparently some of the members favored a building on the above mentioned lot, but on September 10, 1900 that lot was purchased from the church by William M. Wood and A.P. Moor, executors of T.F. Wood deceased, for \$50. L.B. Moor, W.J. Davis, J.D. Gross and C.E. Lipps were trustees of the church.

During the time that South Bristol Baptist Church was in Holston Association, N.R. Hicks served as church clerk and W.J. Davis, J.D. Gross, B.C. Klepper, Charles Lipps, S.J. Rogers, John A.M. Booher, and William F. Manuel attended some of the annual meetings of the association.

From 1899 to 1903 W.C. Patton served as pastor. In 1902 the church left Holston Association and joined Lebanon Association in Virginia. (Rev. Patton was a resident of Mendota, Va. at the time.)

In 1900 (the last year a report was sent to Holston Association) the church listed 74 members and W.A. Sparger as Sunday School superintendent.

Sometime around 1901 the church met for a short period of time at Haynes Chapel School on the Bluff City Highway. During this period the church was securing property at Southside and Cedar and erecting there our first church building.

Very likely this move rekindled resentment which had smoldered for the past couple of years so that when South Bristol joined the Lebanon Association in 1902 the church had a building valued at \$1,200.00, but membership had dropped to an all-time low of 18 members. For the next few years the struggle to survive was greater than before.

A NEW NAME, EARLY DAYS AS "WOODLAWN"

In 1904 Z.J. Edge became the pastor and in June of that year the name of the church was changed to Woodlawn Baptist Church. The new name climaxed some very significant events of the same year. On April 27, 1904 First Baptist Church voted unanimously to donate their old organ to South Bristol Baptist Church. This was the first organ in the new building. The church bell, now located in our present steeple and rung every Sunday at 11:00 am, bears the inscription "5-10-04." It was manufactured May 10, 1904 by C.S. Bell Co. in Hillsboro, Ohio. It has been in all three buildings Woodlawn has worshiped in.

The membership had grown to 55, and under the leadership of Superintendent W.L. Britt the Sunday School had grown to an enrollment of 136. In 1904 when the church paid the preacher \$50 per year and all local expenses totaled \$101.00, Woodlawn gave \$5 for Foreign Missions, \$5 for Home Missions, \$5 for State Missions and \$5 to the Sunday School Board. The previous year they reported a total of \$5.20 for all missions.

E.A. Shoecraft was pastor at Woodlawn in 1905, but it is not known how long he served. T.H. Petty was pastor in 1908. The reason exact dates (even years) are hard to pinpoint is that church records prior to 1916 have been lost and the church failed to report to the association in 1897, 1901, 1905, 1906, 1907, 1909, 1914, and 1916. In addition to Patton, Edge, Shoecraft and Petty two other pastors served at sometime during these years. They were J.F. Kenny and D.A. Gleece. Also, Patton served a second time from 1910-1912 and in 1913 W.B. Feagins, a member at First Baptist Church of Bristol, served as supply or interim pastor.

Even with the incomplete records a few facts are available from the early 1900's. Vinson Johnson was church clerk for at least two years beginning in 1903. W.L. Britt served as Sunday School Superintendent for at least three years, including 1904 when the enrollment grew to 136 and four Sunday school conventions were held at the church.

In 1908 E.C. Carrier was clerk, T.P. Godsey Sunday School Superintendent and 20 baptisms were reported.

From 1910 to 1916 A.H. (Abe) Goodman was the church clerk. During these years the Sunday School Superintendents were Abe Goodman, I.W. (Ike) Goodman, and W.F. Carrier. In 1911 the W.M.S. gave \$3.50 to State Missions and in 1913 the W.M.S. and Sunbeam Band each gave \$1 to training school. (This is the first record of W.M.U. organization at Woodlawn.)

In 1916 T.F. Roberts was called as pastor. As was the practice of many Baptist churches in those days the call was an "annual call." Each church year or associational year the pastor was elected by the church as were other officers and teachers. Rev. Roberts was elected each year for five consecutive years.

While Rev. Roberts was pastor at least two men in the church accepted the call to preach. A.C. Leonard and charter member George Key both announced their call in 1917.

On January 23, 1917 Woodlawn Baptist Church voted to have electric lights put in, and within a few weeks the luxury of modern electric lights was used as a tool to help point people to the Light of the World. (In July of the same year it was reported that the old lamps had been sold for \$3.00.)

The committee on wiring the church for lights consisted of W.F. Carrier and A.R. Baumgardner. A committee was also appointed to raise money to pay for the lights. In addition to Carrier and Baumgardner, W.D. Smith, I.W. Goodman, Joe Carrier, Miss Bessie Carrier and Mrs. R.L. Cross were on that committee. The cost was \$28.00 - "not including wire from the post to the church."

The \$75,000,000 Campaign was launched by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1919 and Woodlawn shared in the effort. (The goal of the convention was to raise \$75 million over a five year period to advance missions, education and benevolent causes. This campaign was the forerunner of the Cooperative Program which was introduced in 1925.) In 1920 - with only 58 members, property valued at \$1,800 and offerings for home purposes of only \$202.62 - Woodlawn recorded gifts of \$32 to the \$75 Million Campaign. Rev. Roberts annual salary (for one Sunday per month) was \$100.

During the years of Rev. Roberts' pastorate at Woodlawn, Miss Bessie Carrier was the church clerk, until she moved too far from the church with her new husband, C.T. Morris. Mr. Morris was also very active at Woodlawn serving as Chorister (song leader), Sexton (janitor), and on several committees. Two of the Morris' daughters, Mrs. J.W. (Margaret) McClellan and Mrs. Edythe Smith, are still members at Woodlawn.

W.B. Wyatt was called as pastor of Woodlawn on August 11, 1921. He was here less than two years, but during that time the church experienced modest growth. Also during this time, the church took a step forward by moving from one service per month to two. Earlier attempts to "go from quarter-time to half-time" had been short-lived, but since 1922 the church has had preaching at least twice a month.

On August 7, 1923 "the matter of electing a pastor was taken up and after several brethren had made talks was moved to change pastors. Bro. W.C. Patton of Johnson City, Tenn. and the present pastor Bro. W.B. Wyatt was also placed in nomination. The vote was taken and Bro. Patton was duly elected."

It is not clear from church records whether Rev. Patton came back to Woodlawn or not. The next recorded business meeting was held on November 20, 1923 and in that meeting Rev. E.M. Cox was elected pastor. Also, a committee was appointed to "solicit funds to pay the balance due Bro. Wyatt." Rev. Cox accepted the call, Rev. Wyatt was not satisfied with the what the church felt was owed him, and Rev. Patton is not mentioned. (The church and Rev. Wyatt finally agree - May, 1924 - to a settlement of \$60.00.)

Rev. Cox served as pastor for less than two years, but during that time membership increased from 68 to 96 and Sunday School enrollment swelled to 241. On June 20, 1925 the church elected Rev. Patton - again - to fill the vacancy left when Rev. Cox resigned. Apparently he again declined, because at the next recorded meeting Rev. Kilgore, Rev. Peoples and Rev. Mc Cracken were nominated and another "preacher election" was held.

THE KILGORE YEARS

On October 22, 1925 a committee composed of Bro. Glover, Bro. Felty, Bro. Morris, Bro. Clay Key and Sister Novella Carrier reported that new song books had been bought and paid for. In that same meeting, action was taken which helped to shape the history of Woodlawn for years to come. The church voted to call Rev. D.R. Kilgore as pastor. They also voted to pay him "\$600.00 a year for half-time or \$25.00 each trip."

For the next fifteen years Preacher Kilgore, who was known affectionately as "Uncle Fuzz", led the little flock in South Bristol to become a strong church.

In 1924, the year before Preacher Kilgore came, Woodlawn had a total of 96 members. In 1940, the year he left, membership had grown to 424. There were more than 300 baptisms during this period, including one year (1928) when 104 baptisms were recorded.

From 1902-1926 Woodlawn had met in a small, white-frame building with a "pot-bellied" stove, oil lamps (replaced by bare light bulbs) and a fence around the building. A.R. (Rex) Baumgardner, who succeeded Mrs. Morris as clerk, had recorded discussions about the need for a new building, but until Preacher Kilgore began to lead the church nothing was actually done.

In 1926 a new building was built. This new brick building had a sanctuary with seating capacity of up to 500 (packed-in), a full basement, and a beautiful baptistry. Many of our present members and others in the community remember this as "the old building."

The "old building" (of 1926) had an unusual story behind the cornerstone of the building. When the cornerstone was made and the church name "cut" into the stone, the stone masons made a mistake in spelling. The reason for the mistake is not known at this time, but for whatever the reason, they set in stone the

name "Woodlong." This understandably caused confusion at different times through the years, until the "old building" was torn down about twenty years ago. Our church has been called "Woodlong", "Woodland", and "Woodlawn Avenue" at different times, but the correct name has been "Woodlawn Baptist Church" since 1904 when it was changed from "South Bristol Baptist Church."

In 1926 Woodlawn began to hold services three Sundays out of each month. In 1927 the church was strong enough for the first time in its history to go "full time" with preaching services every Sunday.

By 1930 the church found it necessary to "cut back" to half-time again. This was probably due to the depression, and in the 30's there were a few years when Woodlawn had to "share" Preacher Kilgore with a church in Carter County. With the exception of a couple of years when the church was again able to have preaching every Sunday, Woodlawn had services on the first and third Sundays of each month.

Woodlawn Church has been located at the corner of Southside and Cedar as long as there has been a building, but it has not always been IN Bristol. When the first building was built it was in the "Woodlawn Addition" to Bristol, TN, but was outside the city limits. When the second building was built in 1926 it was still outside the town's corporate limits. This changed in 1927 when the boundry of Bristol, TN was moved "out" to Cedar Street.

"Uncle Fuzz" lived within a block or two of the church, but he was "out in the country." He never owned a car while he was here so he walked everywhere he went. Since there was no church office or pastor's study in those days, Preacher Kilgore spent his time in his home or the homes of others. And according to the memory of many people, he felt at home in anyone's home. If he went to a church member's house at lunch and found no one there, he felt comfortable fixin' his own "baloney" sandwich.

One day "Uncle Fuzz" was making his rounds in South Bristol and accidently went into the house next door to where the Henry O'Dell family lived. Not realizing his mistake he got out the coffee pot, "drew" his water, lit the stove and proceeded to make a pot of coffee. Turning around he saw a stranger standing in the kitchen door watching him and he realized he was in the wrong house. Immediately he began stammering and stumbling around for the right words to apologize.

(That may have been the only time "Uncle Fuzz" was ever at a loss for words.) As he tried to identify himself and explain his intrusion the lady of the house (a fine Methodist lady) interrupted him and put him at ease.

"No harm done, Preacher Kilgore. I know who you are. Now, do you mind if I have a cup of your coffee?"

"Uncle Fuzz" enjoyed a practical joke as much as anyone. He was known to offer a neighbor coal out of his coal pile and then call the police to report someone stealing his coal, just for a laugh. Once he had a painter to paint a neighbor's house, a different color, while the neighbor was away, without any prior instructions from the neighbor, who was very surprised when he got home. It was all done in fun, though, and when Preacher Kilgore stepped into the pulpit he used any tool available to be sure the Gospel message was clearly understood.

August 12-13, 1937 the annual session of Lebanon Baptist Association was held at Woodlawn. This was the only time in our first century as a church we were privileged to host either Lebanon or Holston Association for the annual meeting.

In 1939 there was a split within the church and many of the members left to start a new church. This new church, Open Door Tabernacle located on Tremont Avenue, flourished for a few years, but finally closed down and several who had left returned to Woodlawn.

In spite of this division, when Preacher Kilgore left in 1940 to accept Stony Creek church in Carter County as full-time pastor, he left with many fond memories and he left a warm spot in the hearts of many people in South Bristol.



W. A. SPARGER
1844 - 1916

FIRST SUNDAY SCHOOL
SUPERINTENDENT

Mr. Sparger was proprietor of the cotton factory where the church first met and was organized. He was superintendent until 1900.



MR. AND MRS. THOMAS TRINKLE

Charter members of South Bristol Baptist Church. Several of their many descendants are still at Woodlawn. One of their children, Ida Trinkle Carrier, lived beyond the age of 100 and is remembered by many who are at Woodlawn today.



Mrs. Nannie Trinkle O'Dell was teacher of this class (ca. 1908). Bessie Carrier Morris is the tall, dark-haired girl on the back row. This is the oldest available picture which shows the first building, built ca. 1902.



Men's Sunday School Class ca. 1935.



A picture from the thirties or forties of the second building, built in 1926.



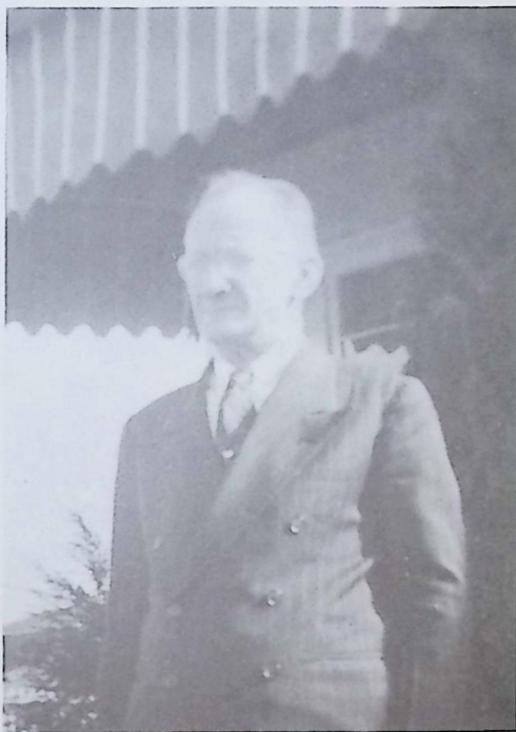
W. C. PATTON

1899 - 1903, 1910-1912

(The church voted to call Rev. Patton again on two different occasions in the 1920's, but apparently he declined.)



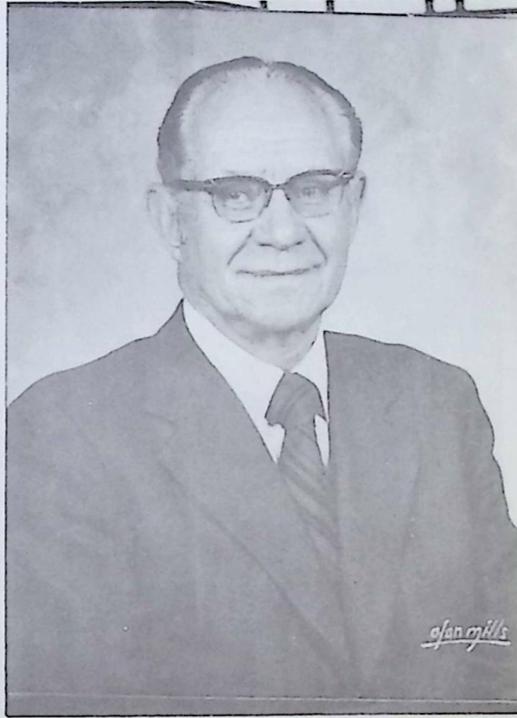
ERNEST M. COX
1923 - 1925



D. R. KILGORE
1925 - 1940



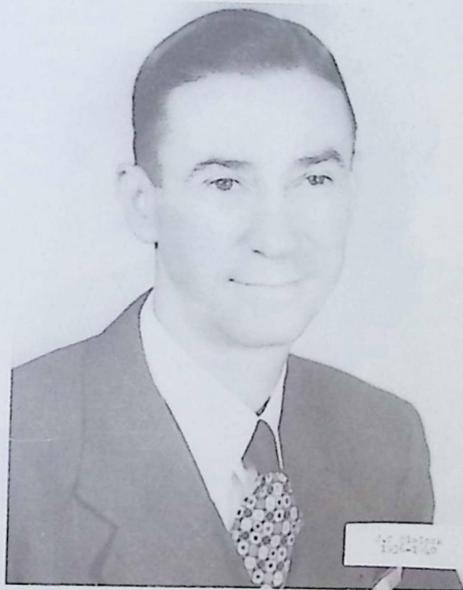
S. E. LOXLEY
1940 - 1942



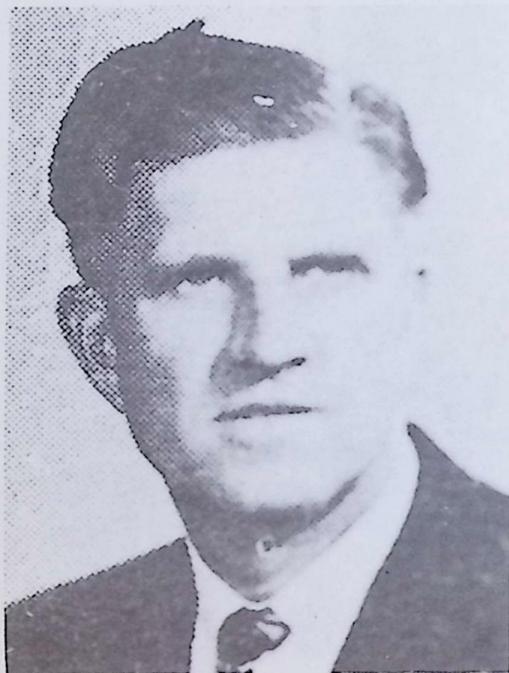
ARTHUR B. GRIFFIN
1943 - 1947



M. L. ROSS
1947 - 1951



JOHN C. BLALOCK
1951 - 1959



JOHN W. OUTLAND
1959 - 1970



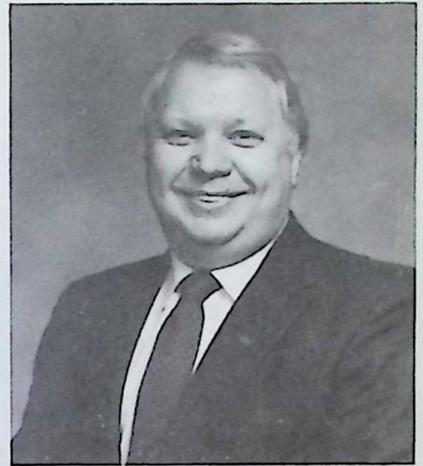
DR. J. CONALLY EVANS
1971 - 1980



JAMES A. MERIWETHER
1981 - 1986



EVERETT LERCH, SR
INTERIM PASTOR
1980 - 1981



NILES KITZMILER
INTERIM PASTOR
1986



REV. AND MRS. J. LACY BASHAM

The late Rev. Basham "filled the pulpit" numerous times. Before retirement he had pastored several great churches. Mrs. Basham is still a member of Woodlawn.



STEPHEN L. PLAYL, SR
1986 -

THE FORTIES AND FIFTIES

The ministry of Rev. S.E. Loxley (1940-1942) was especially significant for three specific reasons. First, the church became full-time again in 1940 and has continued to be full-time for the past fifty years. Second, Rev. Loxley introduced Daily Vacation Bible School. V.B.S. has been very important in the lives of untold thousands of boys and girls at Woodlawn. Third, Woodlawn came back to Holston Association.

Woodlawn "warmed up" during the early forties when a new boiler and steam heating system was installed. Purchased from the city of Bristol, TN the boiler had earlier heated Haynesfield School.

Arthur B. Griffin was the next regular pastor, but between Rev. Loxley and Rev. Griffin, Woodlawn enjoyed being "coached" by James R. Heifner. Coach Heifner was the football coach and taught at Bristol's Tennessee Junior High School (now known as George W. Vance Junior High) and was very popular with all ages. This lay-preacher is remembered as being an eloquent speaker.

A.B. Griffin came in 1943 and was Woodlawn's pastor until February, 1947. The church held a steady course during this time and saw increases in membership each of these years. Rev. Griffin left Woodlawn to accept a call to Calvary church in Erwin. He also pastored Bluff City and Holston Valley churches in our association during part of his ministry.

In 1947 Rev. M.L. Ross moved to Bristol from the Charlotte, N.C. area to assume the pastorate of Woodlawn. Rev. Ross was a close personal friend of "Uncle Fuzz." He was a large, jovial man who, like "Uncle Fuzz", enjoyed practical jokes. Brother Ross helped a small church near Nickelsville, VA (Preacher Kilgore's boyhood home) and preached revivals in churches pastored by A.R. Baumgardner, one of several preachers ordained by Woodlawn to preach the Gospel. He was the father of six including

two sons in the ministry. Paul, who serves as co-pastor of Campbell's Chapel Church in Bristol, VA, answered the call to preach while away in the service during the time his father was pastor here.

In 1952 an educational building was added to the building. It included three large assembly rooms and several class rooms plus rest rooms. This building has been remodeled and continues to receive refurbishing from time to time, but it still serves the church well. In fact it still houses the biggest part of our Sunday School space.

At the time of this expansion, John C. Blalock was pastor of Woodlawn. He was a former Associational Missionary of Holston Association. During Brother Ross's ministry, Brother Blalock had taught a study course at which time a revival "broke out." Before accepting the job of Associational Missionary, Rev. Blalock had been pastor of Calvary church in Erwin.

While Rev. Blalock was here he lived in a house which was owned by the church. The pastorium, or parsonage, was located on the northeast corner of Edgemont and Lark. Ross and Blalock were the only two pastors to occupy the stone house, which still stands at 1529 Edgemont, while it was owned by our church.

From 1951-1959 Rev. Blalock led the church in a growth pattern which had begun during the time when M.L. Ross was pastor. The Blalock years were not totally without problems and controversy, but this period should be remembered for increases in membership almost every year and tremendous growth in Sunday School. In 1958 the Sunday School enrollment reached a record high of 667 with average attendance for the year of 365. Brother Blalock baptized close to 300 people in his eight year ministry at Woodlawn.

Revival swept through the Southern Baptist Convention in the postwar /cold war years from the forties to the middle sixties, and Woodlawn was a part of those glorious years.

THE SIXTIES AND SEVENTIES

D.R. Kilgore holds the record for the longest pastorate at Woodlawn with fifteen years from 1925-1940, but the pastor who ranks second in length of ministry here also served long enough to include years in three decades. From 1959-1970 John W. Outland served faithfully as Woodlawn's pastor. Rev. Outland came here from Knoxville. He had been considered by Calvary church in Erwin, but the Lord led him to Woodlawn instead.

While he was pastor the Outland family lived in the second and last house which the church owned as a parsonage. Having traded the Edgemont Avenue property for part of the present church property, the church bought a lot on Fairfield Drive in Meadowood and built a beautiful home. After Rev. Outland moved, this house was sold to help pay for the new building. Since that time the church has provided a housing allowance, making it possible for the pastor to own his own home.

Rev. Outland baptized close to 200 converts while he was at Woodlawn. He was quite active in the association serving as moderator in 1969. He was also a leader in the community. Two of his sons are professional musicians. Before leaving to become pastor of First Baptist Church, Fall Branch, TN, Rev. Outland led the church as it started the building program which resulted in the present building. Early in 1971 the new building was completed and Brother Outland was invited back to participate in the dedication services.

The first regular pastor in the new building was Dr. J. Conally Evans, a Bristol native who was pastor of First Baptist Church in Ocala, Florida at the time of his call to Woodlawn. Dr. Evans left a church much larger than Woodlawn and accepted a substantial decrease in pay to follow the Lord's leadership to come here.

While serving as pastor in Ocala, Dr. Evans was chaplain of the police department. This experience gave Bro. Evans an understanding

and respect for law enforcement which he brought with him when he returned to his hometown. This helped him to establish a special relationship with the Bristol law enforcement community.

Dr. Evans has assumed the role of devoted husband in much of his ministry. Mrs. Evans (Naomi) has suffered poor health for the past twenty years and Bro. Conally has lovingly, willingly accepted the responsibility of caring for her.

In 1980 Conally Evans left Woodlawn and accepted a church in Texas. He and Mrs. Evans continue to reside in Texas.

Beginning in the late sixties and throughout the seventies, Woodlawn experienced a period of decline in attendance and spirit. This decline was stopped temporarily by the excitement of new building/new pastor when Conally Evans came. Several factors probably affected this downward trend (e.g. - some members left to help start new churches, society in general became more transient, some may have objected to the new building, etc.), but no one person or group can be blamed. The truth of the matter is that our whole nation was in an era of social and political unrest, and an attitude of spiritual apathy was lulling the Church to sleep throughout the Western World. VietNam, drugs, cults, and materialism all were a part of the overall picture. Woodlawn benefited from the national revival in the late forties and fifties. In the sixties and seventies Woodlawn suffered as the nation experienced spiritual decline.



THE EIGHTIES
(LAST DECADE OF OUR FIRST CENTURY)

Rev. Everett Lerch, Sr. was the man of the hour when Dr. Evans left for Texas. Preacher Lerch served as interim pastor until the next full-time pastor answered the call to Woodlawn. Having pastored a number of churches and being involved in mission work and a tremendous tract ministry, Bro. Lerch had the needed experience to guide the church in the right direction. As a retired minister he continues to work as a member of Woodlawn. He teaches a men's Sunday School class, is active in the Senior Adult Group and is an encouragement to many. Bro. Lerch is widowed and has three daughters - two of them married preachers - and a son, Everett, Jr., who pastors in Kansas.

James A. Meriwether came to Woodlawn in February, 1981. Another Tennessean ministering in Florida, this Nashville native was Minister of Education at First Baptist Church in Hialeah. He had also pastored churches in Texas, Ohio, and Georgia. Brother Meriwether brought with him a heart for Sunday School and a deep conviction about the importance of a well-organized church program. In addition to being a hard working pastor, he was a great administrator. In February, 1986 Preacher Meriwether left Woodlawn to become the Director of Missions in the Lebanon Baptist Association just across the state line in Virginia.

While pastor at Woodlawn, Rev. Meriwether "got things organized around here," an accomplishment for which the present pastor is extremely grateful. Rev. Meriwether's concern for mission work was also apparent through his encouragement and participation in mission trips and special offerings.

In November of 1986 the present pastor, Stephen L. Playl, accepted the call to come to Bristol. Between the last two pastors the church was nurtured by Rev. Niles Kitzmiller. Brother Niles is

very popular as an interim in this part of the country and also ministers to untold numbers of bereaved as Funeral Director at Weaver Funeral Home. He is presently the bi-vocational pastor of Sunrise Baptist Church in Bluff City.

The present pastor, came here from Nashville. He has pastored churches in Kentucky and Tennessee. Mrs. Playl (Sammie) is a great asset to our pastor. She attended Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville with Bro. Steve and continues to be his most faithful and supportive encourager. The Playls have four children.

In the past decade many significant things have taken place here at Woodlawn. Attendance has fluctuated in the '80's with Sunday School averages going from 104 in 1979 to 144 in 1982 down to 112 in 1985 and back up to the 160's for the past two years. The average for this year should be above 170 with enrollment of close to 400.

Discipleship Training (formerly Church Training) has grown with a variety of subjects being studied, children participating in state Bible drills and study courses in many areas. In 1988-89 Woodlawn ranked in the state in Study Course awards in three areas: eleventh in Bible Studies, sixteenth in Baptist Doctrine and second in Deacon Ministry and Pastoral Ministries.

Woodlawn has seen an increase in its vision for missions with mission trips to Newberry, Michigan in 1982; Houghton, Michigan 1985; Rome, N.Y. in 1987; and a project at North Fork Baptist Church near Abingdon in 1988. Total gifts to missions in 1989 was over \$16,000. This compares very favorably to 1980 when gifts to missions totaled less than \$6,000. In 1979 we gave \$2,000 through the Cooperative Program. In 1989 we gave \$7,273.

Membership records from 1980 to 1989 cannot be compared, without a brief explanation. Total membership was 726 (the most since 1961) with 277 listed as "resident members." Total membership was listed as 634 with resident membership of 451 in 1989. For the past three years an attempt has been made to update the membership files. It was learned that many members had joined other churches or passed away through the years, but their names had not been removed, hence the decrease in total membership. We also found that many who were previously thought to be "non-resident" did indeed

live in the community, but needed to be reclaimed. This accounts, in part, for the increase in resident members. Also, there were 84 additions to the church from 1987-1989.

As we celebrate our first century of ministry, we praise the Lord for His sustaining grace. The eighties have witnessed "a turn around" as we have learned once again that "God still moves in the hearts of His people."



The church van has just been loaded by: (Kneeling) Jim Dugger & Vernon Barker (Standing) Ralph Harkleroad, Gene Hicks, Richard Wampler, Mary Wampler, Audrey Wilson, Juanita Harkleroad, Sammie Playl, Carylton Nobles, Stephen L. Playl (Sr. & Jr.) with food and supplies for victims of the 1989 hurricane HUGO in South Carolina.

THE NINETIES
(ENTERING OUR SECOND CENTURY OF MINISTRY)

As we enter a new century as a church and approach the Twenty-first Century, let us remember that God "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us." (Ephesians 3:20)

Woodlawn is moving onward and upward. Our building has undergone recent renovations with a new heating and cooling system and remodeling of the educational building about three years ago and more recent remodeling in the office area and sanctuary. A beautiful lighted sign and message board, complete with flower box was placed in front of the church in memory of Mrs. Chris Thomas. Shrubbery has been placed around the church as a living memorial to a great number of loved ones. The baptistry has new drapes and a painted mural in memory of Todd Harkleroad. A picnic shelter has been erected, also in memory of Todd Harkleroad. And, the church has just voted, without dissent, to purchase the house and two lots across Rustic Street from our property (corner Southside and Rustic) for much needed expansion and parking space.

Our music program is growing with the addition of Wayne Fortner as Minister of Music. Wayne follows Kent Hales who guided the music for more than two years as volunteer music director. Kent continues to serve as a Sunday School teacher, deacon and a member of various important committees. Kay Burnette, Gloria Harkleroad and Dennis Greenwell provide instrumental accompaniment. Dennis also leads an enthusiastic youth group in many activities.

Attendance in Sunday School and Worship Services has been good and we are working and praying for our outreach program and increased attendance. Roger Powers has directed the Sunday School program for the past four years and with information and inspiration gleaned at Ridgecrest Conference Center in North Carolina he continues to gain momentum.

Under the leadership of Richard Wampler the Discipleship Training program is staging a comeback after several years of uncertainty.

A graded mission program under W.M.U. Director Faye White and the various age group leaders plus the Baptist Men with President Jim Harkleroad help Woodlawn to be involved in missions. Some on-going mission projects include: meals on wheels, Bristol Food Pantry, feeding migrant workers in Unicoi County, a Bible Study at the Rescue Mission taught by Ben Talley, special mission offerings, and a clothes closet here at the church. In addition, the Benevolence Committee, chaired by Ralph Harkleroad, helps to aid many needy families. Ralph's other jobs are too numerous to mention.

Jim Dugger is the President of the Senior Adult Group and also drives the church van to bring people to church. Juanita Harkleroad leads the Homebound Ministry.

These are only a few of the ministries at Woodlawn and many fine workers are not named here but are certainly in line for rewards in heaven for the many hours they have labored here.

In addition to the Pastor and Minister of Music, Woodlawn regularly employs three other workers, all on a part-time basis. They are Church Secretary - Janet Ware, Custodian - Howard Dugger, and Nursery Worker - Diane Harr.

From Sparger Mission in the old cotton factory to where we are now - we've come a long way. But there is still farther to go. We've come this far by faith, let us continue by faith to serve our Lord in this place and wherever He leads. God can do great things through us ... "unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen" Ephesians 3:21



This is the lot where Haynes Chapel School stood. The Church met in the school for a short time CA. 1901. The deed to property restricts the building of any structure except Church or School.

CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

KAY BURNETTE
GLORIA HARKLEROAD
JAY BLEVINS

MADELINE RYAN
HOPE BRAY
EDITH CAMPBELL

KEN HALL
STEVE PLAYL

ACTIVE DEACONS

FRED HARKLEROAD
T. J. HARKLEROAD
RALPH HARKLEROAD

VERNON BARKER
JIM DUGGER
KENT HALES

KEN HALL
DON TALLEY
BEN NOBLES (CHM.)

MEN WHO PREVIOUSLY SERVED AS DEACONS AT WOODLAWN

H. J. O'DELL
I. W. GOODMAN
ABE GOODMAN
NOAH CARRIER
ALVIN S. MOORE
WALTER CAMPBELL
W. F. BROWN
MR. SHEPHERD
L. S. BROWN
H. J. HARKLEROAD
CLAY KEY
W. E. GLOVER

E. J. HOBBS
D. A. SMELSER
FRED JONES
EMERAL BEVERLY
H. FRED MOORE
W. P. GODSEY
H. L. JOHNSON
HOWARD DUGGER
JAMES NEWMAN
BRAINARD CROSS
FRANK CUNNINGHAM
CLAYTON O'DELL

I. B. LAUGHRUN
I. B. LAUGHRUN, JR.
BUCK BRAY
RAYMOND JESSEE
JOE KERR
BILL HUTTON
G. C. AUSMUS
ROB ROWLEY
ED JOHNSON
CHARLES CANNON
JAY BLEVINS
ALLEN BURNETTE
ROBBIE POLLARD

TREASURERS

H. J. O'DELL
CLAY KEY
WALTER CAMPBELL
L. S. ("PET") BROWN

E. J. HOBBS
FRED MOORE
JAMES NEWMAN
CLAYTON O'DELL

BUCK BRAY
TRUETT MILLER
JAY BLEVINS
T. J. HARKLEROAD

SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS (DIRECTOR)

W.A. SPARGER
W.L. BRITT
T.P. GODSEY
A.H. GOODMAN
I.W. GOODMAN
W.F. CARRIER
H.J. O'DELL
GEORGE POOLE
MR. BURKE
A.R. BAUMGARDNER

MR. SHEPHERD
A.S. MOORE
RALPH HICKS
ARTHUR BRAY
C.W. O'DELL
FRED JONES
JOHN LEONARD
H.L. JOHNSON
FRED MOORE
HERBERT DEARMOND

W.P. GODSEY
GERALD CROSS
J.D. HUGHES
FRANK CUNNINGHAM
HAROLD HARTLEY
CLAYTON O'DELL
WAYNE FELTY
RICHARD HAGY
ETHEL HICKS
JUANITA HARKLEROAD
ROGER POWERS

DIRECTORS OF B.Y.P.U./B.T.U./CHURCH TRAINING/DISCIPLINESHIP TRAINING

HALL SMITH
ARTHUR BRAY
RUTH ODUM
HAGY CLAYMAN
MRS. E.J. HOBBS
ED BURNETTE
MRS. ED GRUBBS
C.W. O'DELL
W.P. GODSEY
HERBERT DEARMOND

ERNEST WORLEY
JAMES DECKARD
HENRY JOHNSON
JAMES NEWMAN
VINCENT LADD
V.B. PENLEY
JOHN HOLBROOK
MABEL O'DELL
RUTH ODUM
HERBERT RILEY

HAROLD FRANCE
GERALD CROSS
CLAYTON O'DELL
ED JOHNSON
CONNIE SMITH
HOWARD DUGGER
KATHY WILLIAMS
KEN HALL
RICHARD WAMPLER

W.M.U. DIRECTORS

MRS. R.J. HICKS
MRS. D.A. SMELSER
EVELYN LEWIS
MRS. CLARENCE LEWIS
MRS. JOE BAYLESS

ETHEL HICKS
BESS HOBBS
MRS. ALFRED PENLEY
MRS. VINCENT LADD
BETTY MUSSELMAN

MARY OUTLAND
EDITH CAMPBELL
CATHERINE ROBERTS
CARYLON NOBLES
FAYE WHITE

BROTHERHOOD DIRECTORS/BAPTIST MEN PRESIDENTS

CLYDE GODSEY
JOHN LEONARD
HERBERT DEARMOND
J.D. HUGHES

HOWARD DUGGER
VERNON BARKER
FRED HARKLEROAD

BEN NOBLES
RALPH HARKLEROAD
KEN HALL
JIM HARKLEROAD

CLERKS AND SECRETARIES

N.R. HICKS
VINSON JOHNSON
E.C. CARRIER
A.H. GOODMAN
BESS (CARRIER) MORRIS
A.R. BAUMGARDNER
CLAY KEY
H.J. O'DELL
LAWRENCE CROSS
EDITH BROWN (CAMPBELL)

GEORGE SMITH
D.L. GOODMAN
ARDIS MOORE (DEARMOND)
CLAYTON O'DELL
ARTHUR BRAY
JOHN C. THOMAS
HOPE BRAY
LOIS ANN CROSS
ARDELLA FRYE
EDITH PIPPIN

DOROTHY LUSTER (DALTON)
ANN MERIWETHER
KATHY WILLIAMS
HELEN TALLEY
AUDREY WILSON
JEAN BURNETTE
JENNIFER SHARPE
CHARLOTTE ROUSE
JANICE PATRICK
JANET WARE

SONG LEADERS AND MINISTERS OF MUSIC

LOWE MOODY
FRANK FELTY
ALFRED KITE
GEORGE POOLE
C.T. MORRIS
H.L. CLAYMAN
E.J. HOBBS

HARRY CONNORS
MACK FLETCHER
CLAYTON O'DELL
DR. PEGGY JENNINGS
KERMIT LILLY
LOWELL MCKEE
CLYDE WILSON

JOE KERR
RON KIMBERLIN
JIM BURNETTE
DON GREENE
KEITH YOUNG
KENT HALES
WAYNE FORTNER

ORGANISTS AND PIANISTS

MR. BAUMGARDNER
NOVELLA CARRIER (LYTZ)
OPAL CLAYMAN (BRAY)
EVELYN LILLY
SHIRLEY LEONARD
RACHEL MOODY

KAY BURNETTE
DENNIS GREENWELL
MRS. J.M. MULLINS
RUBY COMBS
NOLA FRAZIER
MRS. J.H. CLAYMAN

LUCILLE GOODMAN
MARGARET O'DELL (PENLEY)
RUTH HOUSTON (RUTTER)
BETTY WORLEY (WALKER)
BETTY DIXON
GLORIA HARKLEROAD

THESE WERE CALLED TO SERVE

WILLIAM AKERS was listed in the 1893 association records as being licensed to preach. He was probably related to (perhaps son of) J.H. & Maggie Akers, two of the twenty four who started South Bristol Baptist Church in Sparger's Cotton Factory.

GEORGE M. KEY, a charter member of South Bristol Baptist Church and thought to be a decendant of Francis Scott Key, was licensed November 14, 1917 and later ordained by Woodlawn and preached in various churches, including his home church.

W.A. KEY, possibly a brother of George Key, was also a preacher who came from Woodlawn. No other information was available to the author at the time of this writing.

A.C. LEONARD was ordained in October 1917. He pastored Palestine Baptist Church in Lebanon Association for many years.

A.R. (Rex) BAUMGARDNER was a very active leader at Woodlawn who was ordained in the late 1920's. He pastored several churches including River Bend, Bethel (VA), Rosedale.

ED BURNETTE was not ordained until after he left Woodlawn, but he had taught and served as Training Union Director here. He preached at the "South Bristol Preaching Mission" and later pastored churches in Carter Co. and in western North Carolina. He presently resides in Elizabethton.

T.B. FREEMAN was at Woodlawn for a short time and has pastored several churches in Florida.

JAMES HOWARD CLAYMAN, like Ed Burnette preached at "South Bristol Preaching Mission" and was ordained after leaving Woodlawn. He recently retired from a lengthy pastorate at Washington Avenue Baptist Church in Evansville, Indiana and continues to reside in that city.

CLAYTON O'DELL was ordained in June, 1943 at Woodlawn and served for a short time as Assistant Pastor at Rosedale Baptist Church in Abingdon. Feeling called of the Lord to return to Woodlawn he has served as clerk, treasurer, teacher and deacon (including chairman) here.

FRED STROUTH was ordained in about 1947. He attended Clear Creek School in Pineville, KY and graduated from King College. He was pastor of Snow's Chapel (now Snow Memorial) in Johnson City on two different occasions for a total of 15 years. He also pastored Sulphur Spring in Jonesboro, River Bend and East Watauga.

GLEN GODSEY was baptized at age 12 at Woodlawn. In June, 1948 he surrendered to preach at Woodlawn. A graduate of Wayland Baptist University he has pastored several Spanish speaking Baptist Churches in Texas and has served as Director of Missions in two Texas Associations including Permian Baptist Associations in Seminole where he presently serves. His wife, Mary, is believed to be the first Hispanic member of Woodlawn.

PAUL ROSS answered the call to preach while serving in the armed forces. At the time his father was pastor here at Woodlawn. Bro. Paul pastored at Virginia Avenue in Bristol after several pastorates in North Carolina. He is presently co-pastor of Campbell's Chapel Baptist Church in Bristol, VA and lives right down the street from Woodlawn.

DR. CHARLES HOBBS has taught English at Carson-Newman College since 1965. He was ordained in 1953 and pastored churches in TN and KY before returning to Carson-Newman to teach. He holds degrees from Carson-Newman, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and University of Tennessee. He continues to preach regularly through numerous interim pastorates throughout East Tennessee.

DEWEY MILLER was ordained at Woodlawn in December 1952. He pastored in N. Wilksboro, North Carolina and then for about 20 years was pastor of State Line Baptist Church in Laurel Bloomery. He still lives near Woodlawn and for the past 20 years has been the pastor of Willow Branch Baptist Church in Bristol, VA.

DR. JAMES McREYNOLDS preached his first sermon in 1956 on the front lawn at Tennessee High School following a football game between the Woodlawn Royal Ambassadors and Haynesfield School. As a high school student he served as associate pastor - youth director at Woodlawn. Dr. McReynolds has studied at numerous colleges and universities including Carson-Newman College, University of Missouri, Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and Baylor University. He has pastored several churches and has preached in 47 countries. He has written several books and presently is a Professional Counselor in Omaha, Nebraska.

I.B. LAUGHRUN was a deacon at Woodlawn working for a pharmaceutical firm when he felt called to the ministry in 1972. After being ordained at Woodlawn, he attended Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C. He pastored two churches then worked on staff at Campbell University and was Director of Missions at Little River Baptist Association - all in N.C. - until his death in 1988.

BRIAN, HOLLIE and LINDA WILSON. All four of Leonard and Audrey Wilson's children (Susan included) were saved and baptized at Woodlawn. Brian is Minister of Music and Youth at Siam Baptist Church in Elizabethton. Hollie is Minister of Music at White Oak United Methodist Church in Red Bank (Chattanooga.) Linda is a Journeyman Missionary appointed by the Foreign Mission Board, SBC, to Mali in W. Africa. Brian, Hollie and Linda are all graduates of East Tennessee State University.

FOR REFERENCE

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