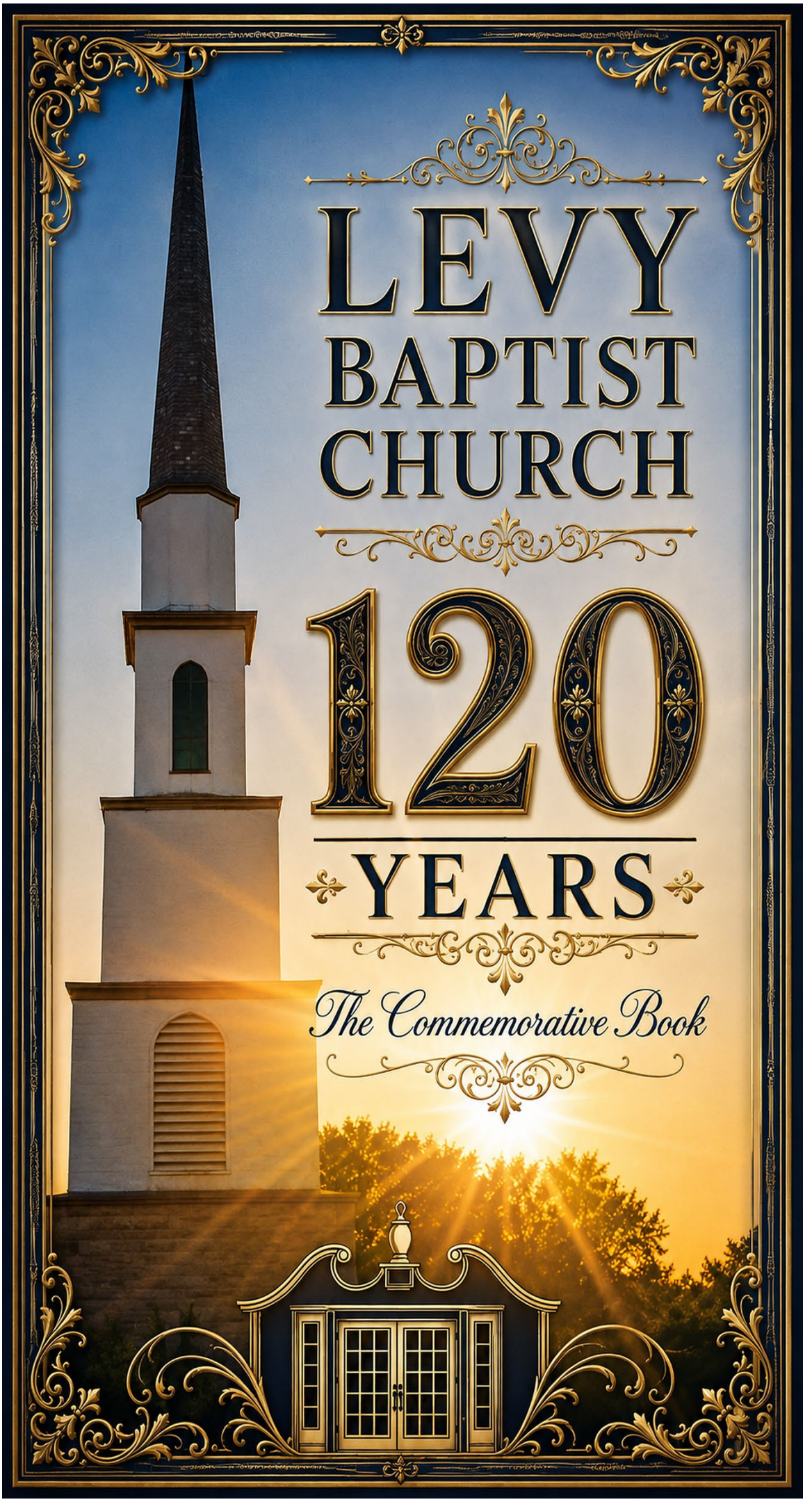

LEVY
BAPTIST
CHURCH
120
YEARS
The Commemorative Book

Levy Baptist Church

120 Years

THE PASTOR

Rev. Steven G. Tiner

MUSIC MINISTRY

Interim Minister of Music
Tommy Havens

Pianist
Angie Stone

Organist
Scott Copeland

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

Administrative Assistant
Melanie Watts

Steward of the Finances
Mike Wilkinson

FACILITIES AND HOSPITALITY

Sexton
Ulysses Baugh

Assistant Sexton
Zack Via

Chef
George Jucha

Groundskeeper
Deanna Jones

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Nursery Care Associate
Selena Anariba

Founded 1906
Celebrating 120 Years of Faith and Ministry
1906–2026

Prepared in commemoration of the 120th Anniversary of Levy Baptist Church, North Little Rock, Arkansas, September 27, 2026.



WELCOME HOME!

by the Rev. Steven G. Tiner
23rd Pastor to the Levy Pulpit

Welcome home!

It is the season for coming home. Welcome back, Ted Lasso! Welcome home, Odysseus! Across story and song, history and Scripture, we are reminded again and again of the longing of the human heart for home—and of the joy that awaits when, after a long journey, we find our way there.

So, welcome home to Levy Baptist Church! Welcome back, you who have been away this summer. Welcome home, you who may have been away for years. And welcome, perhaps for the very first time, to those discovering North Little Rock's historic Southern Baptist church.

Long ago, God's people knew something about longing for home. In the sixth century B.C., the people of Israel had experienced exile and separation, and Isaiah proclaimed a glorious vision of restoration. The Lord declared, "*Mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people*" (Isaiah 56:7).

What a beautiful description of the house of God—and what a beautiful aspiration for Levy Baptist Church.

Isaiah's vision was remarkable. The restored house of God would not be reserved merely for those who had always belonged. The Lord promised concerning the foreigner and the eunuch, "*Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer.*"

Centuries later, Philip the evangelist encountered an Ethiopian eunuch traveling home from Jerusalem. Philip climbed into his chariot, opened the Scriptures, and "preached unto him Jesus" (Acts 8:35). The Ethiopian believed, was baptized, and—how wonderfully Scripture records it—"went on his way rejoicing."

There is that word again: *joy.*

Isaiah said God would "make them joyful in my house of prayer." I have experienced that joy at Levy Baptist Church. There is joy when those whose families have worshiped here for generations sit beside those who have only recently walked through our doors. There is joy when children grow up in these halls, when the waters of baptism are stirred, when hymns fill the sanctuary, when prayers are offered, and when Jesus Christ is proclaimed.

For 120 years, that sacred work has taken place here.

Since 1906, generations have gathered at Levy Baptist Church to worship Almighty God. They have come as children and grandparents, as newlyweds and widows, in seasons of celebration and hours of grief. They have come to Sunday School and Vacation Bible School, to revivals and prayer meetings, to weddings and funerals, to the Lord's Table and the baptismal waters.

How many prayers have ascended to heaven from this place? How many hymns have been sung? How many Bibles have been opened? How many tears have fallen? How many souls have heard the old, old story of Jesus and His love?

Only heaven knows.

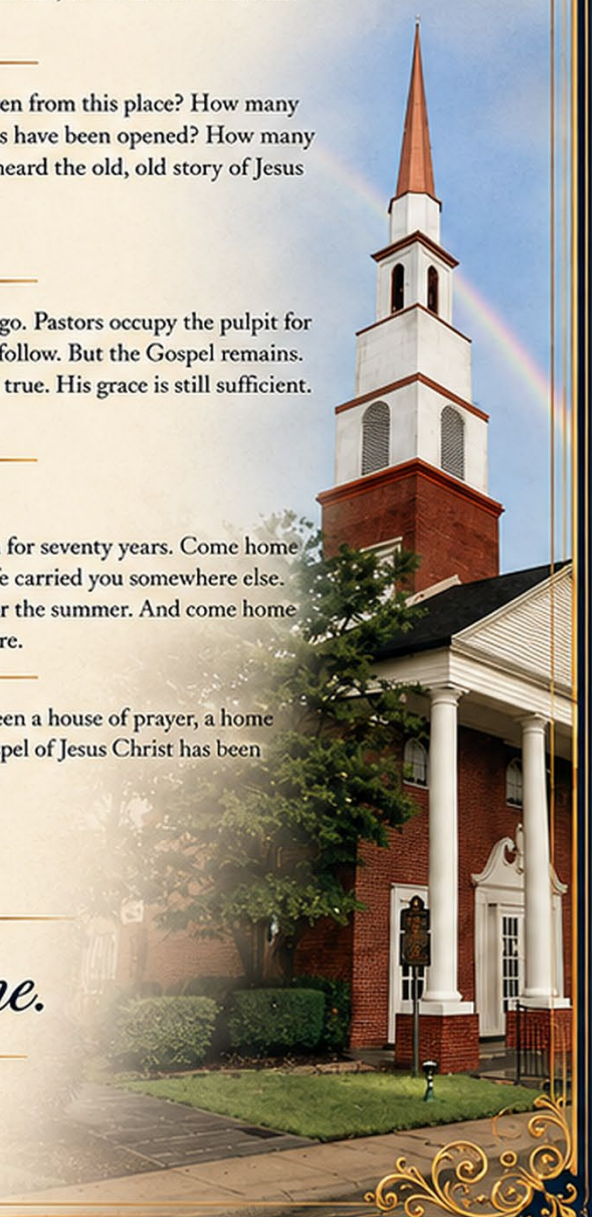
Buildings change. Generations come and go. Pastors occupy the pulpit for a season and then entrust it to those who follow. But the Gospel remains. Jesus Christ is still Lord. His Word is still true. His grace is still sufficient. And His Church still gathers.

So come home.

Come home if Levy has been your church for seventy years. Come home if you were baptized here as a child but life carried you somewhere else. Come home if you have been away only for the summer. And come home if you have never crossed these doors before.

For 120 years, Levy Baptist Church has been a house of prayer, a home for generations, and a place where the Gospel of Jesus Christ has been proclaimed.

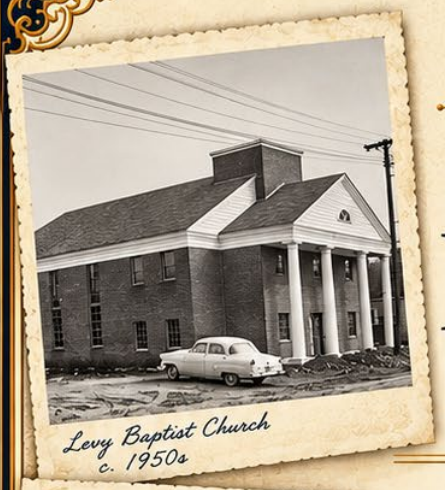
By the grace of God, may it ever be so.



Welcome home.

LEVY BAPTIST CHURCH
A HERITAGE OF FAITH
SINCE 1906

IN THE BEGINNING...



Levy Baptist Church c. 1950s

1906

THE ORGANIZATION OF LEVY BAPTIST CHURCH



Levy Baptist Church c. 1950s

The congregation known as Levy Baptist Church came to life on Sunday, September 16, 1906, through the missionary efforts of Protestant pioneer, Reverend W. M. Wright and the church he pastored, Baring Cross Baptist. Baring Cross was young in those days, having founded three years earlier in 1903. This September 16, 1906, service was held with the purpose of organizing the Levy Baptist Church. The church had its inception with the assistance of an organization council which consisted of Rev. W. M. Wright, Rev. J. T. Christian (Pastor of 2nd Baptist Church, Little Rock), Rev. R. W. Cozort, A. M. Lee, C. D. Lewis, R. E. Lee, Charles Nelson, J. E. Burroughs, and J. H. Howard.

"The best two times to plant a tree are today and twenty years ago."

A story is told about an old man who was planting a fruit tree. A neighbor approached him as he was planting the tree and said, "Don't you know it'll take 20 years before that tree will be mature enough to produce fruit? You're wasting your time. At your age you'll never taste the fruit of your labor. Why bother?" The wise old man simply got up, walked over to a large orange tree in the corner of his yard, plucked a ripe orange, and replied, "Because my father always told me that the best two times to plant a tree are today and twenty years ago."



Levy Baptist Church c. 1950s

One hundred twenty years ago, a church in downtown North Little Rock, Baring Cross Baptist, and her pastor, Rev. W. M. Wright, had the vision to plant a mission church in the community of Levy. Their foresight and envisioning in taking this step of faith brought a church to life from their small seedling. Who would have known that their tiny acorn would produce a mighty oak that has reached untold thousands of lives in her one hundred twenty years of life?

Rev. W. M. Wright was a young Ouachita College ministerial student when he came to pastor the new Baring Cross Baptist Church and to establish the Levy Baptist Church. He projected his youthful vigor and strength into all his undertakings. Despite his young age, he took charge of the jurisdiction God had assigned to him and entered upon a life of hardship, sacrifice, and unremitting toil.

DEEPER ROOTS
BRIGHTER TOMORROWS

"Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it."

PSALM 127:1

IN THE BEGINNING…





Argenta was purely a mission field, with a few scattered congregations very feeble both in means and numbers, and far removed from one another. Baptist visitations involved great labor, fatigue and exposure. Only a young man could undertake the work. The result was two churches made so very strong.

> *"If you seek Rev. Wright's monument, look around you!"*
>
> What Levy Baptist *is today is a testimony to his efforts.*

Rev. Wright had begun his work of establishing a church in Levy with a revival which he preached near the Levy Post Office. From newspaper articles reporting on his preaching, we can know that Rev. Wright had a fine speaking voice; his sermons were wonderful and inspiring, and his messages enthusiastically received.

Rev. Wright continued Levy's services at intervals until they extended a call to a first pastor. Wright then turned the church over to the Rev. W. T. King, the newly elected first pastor.

The original minutes of that meeting state that a "regular missionary Baptist Church" was being organized. The word "regular" was often used in those days in the way we use the word "Scriptural" today. The original minutes, listing those first members, separates the "brethren" from the "sisters."

CHARTER MEMBERS
LEVY BAPTIST CHURCH
SEPTEMBER 16, 1906

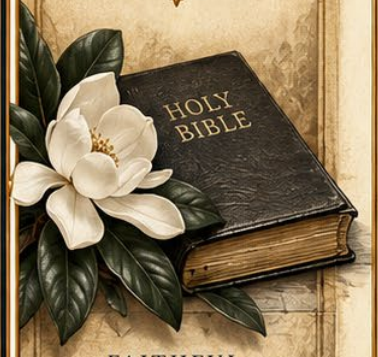
THE BRETHREN	THE SISTERS
Charles Nelson	Mrs. Charles Nelson
Carl Nelson	Myrtle Nelson
John Nelson	Nancy Smith
J. E. Burroughs	Mary Wetzler
J. H. Howard	Louise Pagel (Stockwell)
W. T. Weeks	Annie Pagel
C. F. Fountain	Caroline Pagel
P. N. Smith	Ruth Stanley
	Mary E. Stanley
	Mrs. J. E. Howard
	Mrs. C. D. Henry
	Annie Underdunk
	Mrs. E. F. Fountain
	Mrs. C. E. Fountain

The first deacons elected at this meeting were J. H. Howard, Charles Nelson, and J. E. Burroughs. The ladies outnumbered the men in charter membership, and the future would show that they were indeed a noble band of zealous workers. Although Levy has traditionally reserved the office of deacon for men, through the years the women of Levy have swung a mighty big stick.

This organizational meeting of Levy Baptist Church had Rev. John Tyler Christian as its moderator. Many Levy members today may not realize what a notable personality J. T. Christian was in his day.

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

JEREMIAH 29:11



FAITHFUL
PEOPLE
LASTING
FRUIT



REV. JOHN TYLER CHRISTIAN

Pastor · Professor · Historian

"A man of broad vision, deep conviction, and a fervent love for the cause of Christ."

WORKS OF J. T. CHRISTIAN

Close Communion (1892)

Americanism, or Romanism, Which? (1895)

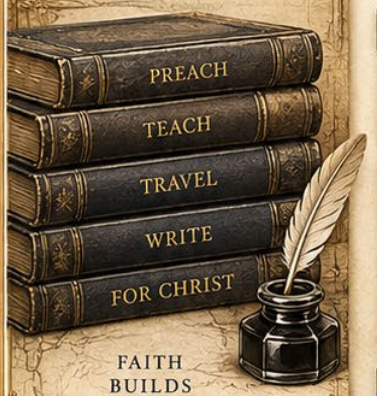
Did They Dip? An Examination of the English Baptists (1897)

Baptist History Vindicated (1899)

Baptism in Sculpture and Art (1907)

A History of the Baptists (1923)

History of the Baptists of Louisiana (1923)



FAITH BUILDS FOR GENERATIONS

IN THE BEGINNING...

The Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists refers to him as pastor, professor, and historian. A wide traveler in his day, Christian made seven trips to Europe for postgraduate work. He was ordained in 1876 and held pastorates at First Baptist Church, Chattanooga, TN, East Baptist Church in Louisville, KY, Second Baptist Church in Little Rock (where he was serving when he helped organize Levy Baptist Church), and First Baptist Church of Hattiesburg, MS. He served as secretary of missions in Arkansas and Missiisippi and was a part of the conference that met to consider the founding of a theological seminary at New Orleans, LA.

He went on to serve as Professor of Christian History and librarian at Baptist Bible Institute, New Orleans, from 1919–1925, and continued his travels in Europe and the Near East for study and the collection of books. He donated his personal library consisting of over 15,000 volumes to Baptist Bible Institute.

An active Freemason, Christian was author of *Close Communion* (1892); *Americanism, or Romanism, Which?* (1895); *Did They Dip? An Examination of the English Baptists* (1897); *Baptist History Vindicated* (1899); *Baptism in Sculpture and Art* (1907); *A History of the Baptists* (1923); and *History of the Baptists of Louisiana* (1923).

Levy Baptist Church can be proud that so notable a Baptist statesman assisted Pastor Wright in organizing this church.

Levy was born in an era of much growth in church affiliation, as membership in churches grew more rapidly than population itself. Neighborhood churches were becoming popular as a result of the nationwide interest in church attendance. This was a good period for a church to be born.

Levy had been born out of a revival meeting in the Levy Post Office, but if God was to be appropriately worshiped by this new congregation, there had to be a building adequate for that purpose. It was plain that the use of the Post Office could not continue for long. A permanent house of worship was needed. If they could secure a site, they could begin to raise the money necessary to build a church.

OCTOBER 6, 1906

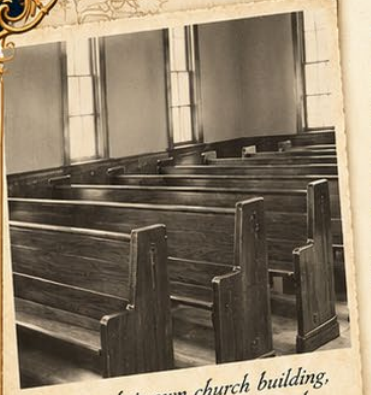
LEVY'S FIRST CHURCH BUILDING ERECTED

Rev. Wright had established a church in the best of times and under his leadership, the church set right to work; the young congregation made immediate arrangements for building a church and erected their first building on October 6, 1906. Worshipers had sat upon benches in the revival that initiated the church's organization.



Levy Baptist Church – c. 1906

THE CONGREGATION AT THE FIRST CHURCH BUILDING



Now, in their own church building, they'd replace the benches with permanent pews.

Now, in their own church building, they'd replace the benches with permanent pews.

After Wright, the church's first 25 years of existence were an epoch of short pastorates for a maturing congregation. These succeeding pastors followed a dynamic founding pastor and it put them at a great disadvantage. A sort of "revolving door" atmosphere prevailed with 15 pastors coming and going in quick succession. Little is known of the fifteen ministers who served during this time period. They were:

THE FIRST 25 YEARS

FIFTEEN PASTORS • 1906 – 1931

1. W. T. King
2. Rev. Strickland
3. J. I. Causey
4. G. W. Jones
5. Robert Dean
6. J. H. Reynolds
7. J. B. Searcy
8. S. F. Cook
9. Joseph F. Green
10. W. M. Jones
11. R. M. Best
12. J. H. Smith
13. Homer B. Reynolds
14. Lonnie Meacham
15. G. W. Blankenship

Through all these years of struggling, however, Levy Baptist Church has always respected its "outside obligations." It has faithfully supported the Southern Baptist Convention, Arkansas Baptist Convention, and local association, while contributing generously to missions.

While the church was faithful to give as they could and do as they could, these 15 men served in difficult times for the church. The church was young, and changing pastors so frequently did not help her to grow strong. Because of the absence of vacationing clergymen and the extreme heat, the church sometimes closed during the summer months. Handheld fans bearing funeral-home advertisements offered little relief from the humidity of Arkansas summers.

"Give unto the LORD the glory due unto His name: bring an offering, and come into His courts."

PSALM 96:8



Handheld fans with funeral home advertisements offered little relief from the humidity of Arkansas summers.

AND THEN THERE WAS MUSIC...

A NEW CHAPTER BEGINS

For her first 12 years of existence, Levy Baptist's worship services were dignified but without instrumental music. It is a small wonder that the pious and cultivated membership of the W.M.U. agitated for either piano or organ accompaniment and in a March 7, 1918, business meeting, requested instrumental accompaniment for worship services. The discussion that followed resulted in a request for the ladies to submit a plan of purchase and report at the next business meeting.

The first instrument was a temporary and imperfect specimen, but was later replaced by more elegant ones. Mrs. Ben Griffin served as the first church organist in 1918, but was quickly followed by Mrs. Eula Stanley who began playing the organ in 1919. Mrs. Millie Harrod became pianist in 1922. These early instruments and instrumentalists were important as they constituted the musical life of Levy Baptist in her infancy.



MUSIC
MAKES A
JOYFUL NOISE
UNTO THE LORD

PSALM 100:1

LEVY'S EARLY MUSICIANS

Mrs. Ben Griffin — *Organist, 1918*
Mrs. Eula Stanley — *Organist, 1919*
Mrs. Millie Harrod — *Pianist, 1922*



Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD.

PSALM 150:6

IN THE BEGINNING...

LEVY BAPTIST CHURCH
A HERITAGE OF FAITH
SINCE 1906

A CHURCH FINDS ITS VOICE

Hymns, Worship & the 1920s



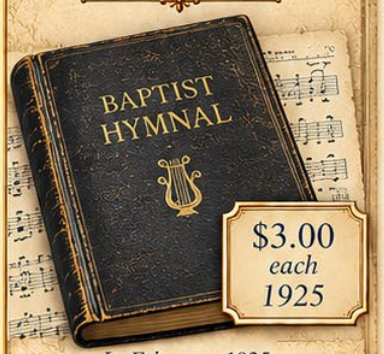
Early Levy Choir

If the church would have instruments, now they would need hymnals. In May 1924, a committee was appointed to select new hymnals. They were purchased in February 1925, at a cost of $3.00 each. They also led to the congregation's insistence on a vested choir under the charge of a competent director.

It's no wonder that the Ladies Society wanted their church to have music as a part of worship. The conditions of everyday life were changing and improving by 1918. Sunday afternoon drives and a Saturday movie at the town movie house were popular modes of entertainment. Much family life, as well as entertainment, however, was still centered around the church.

The women of the church were the primary leaders in sacred music in Levy's early days. Mrs. Thelma Halter served as pianist in 1925 and Mrs. Nora Lee Harrod was her assistant. The Disciples window in our sanctuary today is a memorial to Nora Harrod, given by Levy benefactor, Ted Harrod, And, for many years, even the commodes in the ladies' foyer restroom, were a memorial to Nora, given by Daisy Henderson.

"Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth."
PSALM 100:1



In February 1925, new hymnals were purchased for our church.

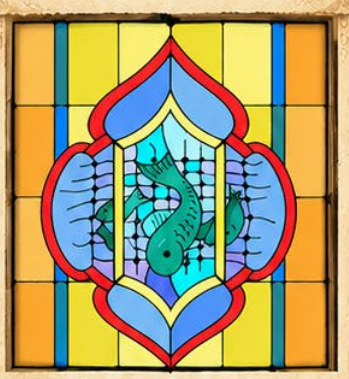
THE WOMEN WHO BUILT LEVY'S EARLY MUSIC MINISTRY

Mrs. Thelma Halter	pianist, 1925
Mrs. Nora Lee Harrod	assistant pianist, 1925
Mrs. Anna Williams	music director, 1926
Mrs. Nora Lee Harrod	pianist, 1926 – 1929; choirmaster, 1929 – 1934

The 1920s appear, on close inspection, not as roaring as musical comedy would have us believe, nor as comic as was once thought. It was a profoundly disoriented time, but most people then held jobs, raised families, and went to church on Sunday when they were not motoring to the country. This societal commitment to the church is what kept Levy Baptist Church alive despite the constant changes in leadership.

Not only was entertainment becoming more possible for Arkansans, but the homes in which people lived were becoming more modern. Electrification in houses in cities like North Little Rock was a modern convenience, and later in the period, such things as washing machines, refrigerators, and radios were making homes a place of comfort. So, it's understandable that there was a strong desire to see the same types of improvements in the church.

The roaring twenties, however, brought no great growth for they came to a screeching halt with the stock market crash of 1929. This collapse of the New York Stock Exchange meant that the next ten years would be extremely trying.



The Disciples Window

The Disciples window in our sanctuary today is a memorial to Nora Harrod, given by Levy benefactor Ted Harrod, For many years, even the commodes in the ladies' foyer restroom were a memorial to Nora, given by Daisy Henderson.

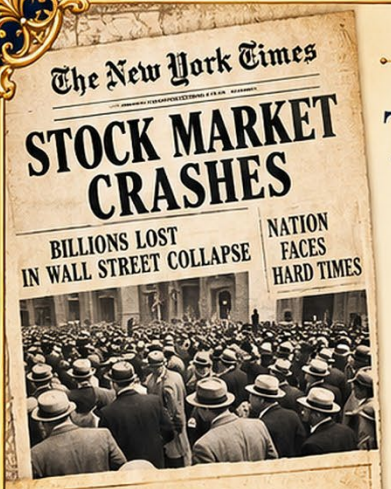
FAITH
ENRICHES
EVERY
GENERATION



YET THROUGH IT ALL...
HIS FAITHFULNESS REMAINED.

THROUGH THE LEAN YEARS

The Great Depression • 1929 – 1939



"The years of plenty had given way to years of struggle, but the people of God remained faithful."

As Arkansas entered the 1930s, an already troubled agricultural economy sank still deeper into depression. The goal became survival instead of comfort. For some in Levy, it was a time of great hardship. Others were never plunged into dire straits, but it was a time of austerity for most, and Levy Baptist Church was no exception.

Early in 1929, most Americans looked to the future with optimism. Herbert Hoover, newly elected president, praised the business policies of Calvin Coolidge's presidency, and said he wanted to carry on the prosperity of the past eight years. He also suggested they were "in sight of the day when poverty will be banished from this Nation." This had seemed to capture the hopes of middle-class America.

Unfortunately, the nation would be shocked by the swift plunge of the stock market. People owning stocks soon lost the paper fortunes they had built. Many had to mortgage their homes in order to pay back the borrowed money they had lost when the stocks spiraled downward. As over-extended industries and businesses cut back or failed, massive unemployment was added to the nation's woes.

The degrading smear of poverty touched every street with peddlers of apples and shoelaces, beggars, unfinished buildings, hungry men and children.

Not only was the local area in the midst of a depressed economy, but one of the worst droughts on record occurred in 1930. It was in the midst of this kind of difficulty that Rev. Oscar Alonzo Greenleaf commenced his duties as pastor of Levy Church, having answered a call to the same in 1931. Greenleaf was 49 years old. He remained the pastor throughout this period, providing the leadership and stability which was vital for the church during these trying years.



The 1930–31 drought was one of the most devastating in Arkansas history, leaving farmlands parched and families struggling to survive.



For many, it was a time of great hardship.

The LORD is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble.
PSALM 9:9



A STEADY HAND IN TROUBLED TIMES

REV. OSCAR ALONZO GREENLEAF

Pastor during the Great Depression
Called to Levy Baptist Church, 1931

Greenleaf was a native of Gay, West Virginia, but had lived in Little Rock since 1928. He studied for the ministry at Bingham Institute, Bingham, New York, and graduated from Moody Bible Institute in 1909 and from Ouachita Baptist College in 1912. His first pastorate was in Ohio and it was a church in Judsonia which had first brought him to Arkansas.

If Levy's pastors were one of the reasons the church experienced growth, undoubtedly Rev. Greenleaf began the trend.



LEVY BAPTIST CHURCH • NORTH LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

IN THE BEGINNING...

LEVY BAPTIST CHURCH
A HERITAGE OF FAITH
SINCE 1906

TWENTY YEARS OF STEADY LEADERSHIP

The Greenleaf Years • 1931 – 1951



"A quietly dynamic, enthusiastic, and gentle person, but very strong spiritually."

REV. OSCAR ALONZO GREENLEAF
Pastor, 1931 – 1951

He laid the foundation for the greatness of the church, combining pulpit fervor with moral passion, a combination which is more unusual than it ought to be. His twenty-year pastorate, from 1931 to 1951, brought an **unprecedented** period of stability to Levy. He would lead the church through the end of the Depression, and the Second World War.

And the church did experience growth under Rev. Greenleaf's tenure. This seemed to mandate a new and larger building. However, the church was not growing financially, which would be an enduring problem in this early period of the church's history. Rev. Greenleaf led the church through difficult economic times, and although the church did not grow financially, it did grow in number.

The position of choirmaster changed frequently in the 1930s. B.H. Ball served in 1935, leading the church to purchase a new piano during his tenure. Charles Furnell was choirmaster in 1937 and Robert George in 1938.

The first twenty-five years of Levy's history had been peppered with 15 different pastors. Now, Greenleaf would serve twenty years—a distinct contrast to the "revolving door" atmosphere that had prevailed since Levy's founding in 1906. It was obvious on the church's silver anniversary that if the church was to grow, they would have to get a minister who was willing to stay for a lengthy pastorate.

Greenleaf's tenure would produce a greater amount of stability. His life and leadership were to set the character of Levy Church for many years to come. No doubt the fact that Bro. O.A. served the church for such a long period allowed the church to grow strong. Everyone looked up to him because of his good and decent life as a true Christian gentleman. He has been described as a quietly dynamic, enthusiastic, and gentle person, but very strong spiritually. To those of the congregation who were privileged to know him, his memory is still fresh and shining and beloved.

THROUGH THE DEPRESSION...



...AND A NATION AT WAR



Through it all, he led with faith.

"BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS... FOR THE LORD YOUR GOD WILL BE WITH YOU WHEREVER YOU GO."
JOSHUA 1:9

1906 – 1931	1931 – 1951
15 PASTORS IN 25 YEARS	1 PASTOR FOR 20 YEARS

A period of stability. A church on firmer ground.

MUSIC IN THE 1930s



B. H. Ball
choirmaster, 1935
New piano purchased during his tenure

Charles Furnell
choirmaster, 1937

Robert George
choirmaster, 1938

THE ORGAN WAS TO BE COVERED!



Greenleaf was known as a "low church" pastor. He had a strong disdain for the organ in worship. After Greenleaf resigned, Hunt, who followed him, was slightly more "high church" and gave greater emphasis to the organ in worship services. Bob Moore remembered that Greenleaf tolerated this, but still gave instructions that at his funeral service the organ was not to be played—and should be covered.

SAME FAITH. NEW CHALLENGES. A STRONGER TOMORROW.

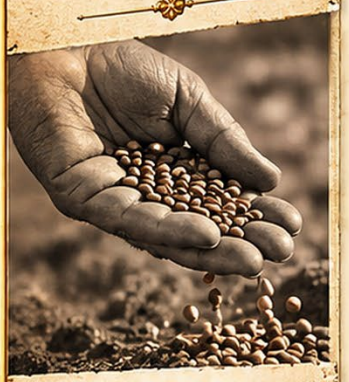
IN THE BEGINNING…

LEVY BAPTIST CHURCH
A HERITAGE OF FAITH
SINCE 1906

A MOTHER CHURCH GIVES BIRTH

Forty-Seventh Street Baptist Church • 1948

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations…
MATTHEW 28:19



From faithful roots grow new branches for God's Kingdom.

ONE CHURCH PLANTING ANOTHER



"The legacy of a church is not only what it builds, but what it helps to build in others."

Though Greenleaf did not prefer the organ, it did make debuts from time to time during his tenure. A portable organ was purchased for use in mission work in June 1947 and Gene Wetzler made a metal protective covering for use in transporting it.

Like most "low church" pastors, Greenleaf was strongly evangelistic. So evangelistic, he'd lead Levy to do what Baring Cross had done years before — give birth to a new congregation.

The posture of Levy Baptist Church changed markedly when Bro. Greenleaf led the church to establish and build the Forty-Seventh Street Baptist Church which was constituted in 1948. Greenleaf himself gave no evidence of having difficulty with the prospect of losing some of his members. He saw it as a generous gesture in the face of growth to seed a new church. Many of the "old-timers," however, demurred and were opposed to such a new church start, out of Levy. They feared that creating a daughter congregation would result in the demise of the mother church. However, exactly the opposite occurred! God continued to bless the mother church mightily as well as the daughter church — for this, we are all grateful.

Greenleaf was also looking to Levy's future. Though Hunt, who followed him, would build the new sanctuary, Greenleaf had already led the church to purchase additional property for the future. He had begun covetously eyeing property which neighbored the original white clad building. The property was owned by Mrs. Otto Houschle and on November 28, 1945, the church purchased the property.

His twenty years, 1931-1951, were marked with great prosperity for the church. His day was in the infancy of a most interesting and promising church. Regretfully, we can only touch here on even such important events, since it is obvious that one hundred twenty years of history cannot be fitted into the pages of one small booklet without serious comprehension.

He acquired many fast friends through the years. Greenleaf is the first pastor of Levy Baptist Church of whom we have personal reminiscences — memories that reveal both his character and his eccentricities. Some men are remembered for their actions; others for their character. Greenleaf seems to have been one of the latter.

THE ORGAN GOES ON THE ROAD 1947



A portable organ was purchased for use in mission work in June 1947, and Gene Wetzler made a metal protective covering for use in transporting it.

LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE

November 28, 1945



The church purchased additional property from Mrs. Otto Houschle for the future. Greenleaf had begun covetously eyeing property which neighbored the original white clad building.

"Preparing today for what God has tomorrow.



"And God continued to bless the mother church mightily as well as the daughter church — for this, we are all grateful."

47th Street Baptist Church
Constituted in 1948 through the mission efforts of Levy Baptist Church
The daughter church of Levy.

THE GREENLEAF LEGACY 1931 – 1951

"Some men are remembered for their actions; others for their character. Greenleaf seems to have been one of the latter."



FAITH EXTENDS
THE REACH OF TOMORROW.

IN THE BEGINNING...

LEVY BAPTIST CHURCH
A HERITAGE OF FAITH
SINCE 1906

WHEN THE WORLD WENT TO WAR

Levy Baptist Church • 1941 – 1945

MEMORIES OF BRO. O.A.

George West remembers that Bro. O.A. once gave a lecture to the boys one day about "how to properly use the restroom." He gave them a chiding in the sanctuary, in front of the entire congregation, about leaving the seat up on the toilet.

"Boys, put the seat down!"



REV. OSCAR ALONZO GREENLEAF
A faithful shepherd in trying times.

"Be strong and courageous… for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."
JOSHUA 1:9

George West was saved at nine years of age and remembers that in those days Levy used Baring Cross' baptistery.

Rev. Greenleaf's long tenure had begun with the Great Depression and ended with the war years. The quiet ways of Levy changed abruptly on Sunday, December 7, 1941. That morning Japanese forces attacked Pearl Harbor. Before the day was over, Americans knew that their nation had been drawn into the greatest conflict of the age.

Since wars are hardly compatible with Christianity, they present a unique problem for churches of all denominations. And so it becomes a situation of "Praise the Lord and pass the ammunition" as the old war song so aptly describes things.

The Great Depression of the 1930s, followed by the deadliest war the world had ever known, had a severe impact on Levy Baptist Church. Under such circumstances, the ordinary rhythms of church life inevitably competed with the tremendous burdens carried by Levy families.

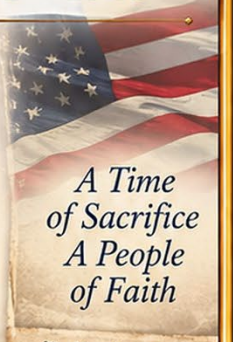
Consequently, the leadership fell on the shoulders of a few men. And these few men did yeomen work in their Church, devoting their talents and their time in great measure.

The war years would take their toll on the membership. Levy, like most churches, had young men fighting in the war, whose loved ones were worried. Reports that a son or husband was killed or missing created terrible pain and suffering.

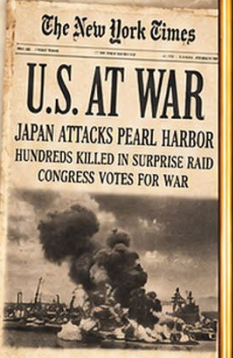
Through all this, Rev. Greenleaf served faithfully. Greenleaf announced that he would retire in 1951, realizing that a person should not wait until he declines or becomes too old for performance, to give up his daily work. Levy was his last church to serve. He had also served churches in Stuttgart, Rogers, Nashville, Searcy, Pocahontas, and Tuckerman, as well as South Highlands Baptist Church in Little Rock.

He served Levy so long, and under such trying years, that when he retired, it was as if a great pall seemed to hang over the city. But the God who had a Joshua to follow Moses, had a Harry Hunt to follow O.A. Greenleaf. The ministry of the church would continue. Greenleaf would remain a member of the church throughout Hunt's years and to his death on May 13, 1962.



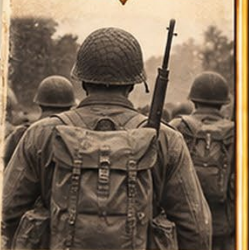


A Time of Sacrifice A People of Faith



DECEMBER 7, 1941

"Praise the Lord and pass the ammunition."



Levy, like so many churches, had young men who answered the call to serve. Their sacrifice — and the prayers of their families — were never forgotten.

LEVY'S BOYS WENT TO WAR

They served. They sacrificed. They are not forgotten.



Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.
JOHN 15:13





THE END OF AN ERA
1931 – 1951
Twenty Years of Faithful Ministry

"When one chapter ends, God is already writing the next."

GREENLEAF RETIRES HUNT ANSWERS THE CALL

But the God who had a Joshua to follow Moses, had a Harry Hunt to follow O.A. Greenleaf. The ministry of Levy Baptist Church would continue.

SAME FAITH. NEW CHALLENGES. A STRONGER TOMORROW.

HE FILLED HIS OWN SHOES

The Harry Hunt Era Begins

For the rest of his life, Greenleaf's heart would be filled with memories of the many friends whose enthusiasm over the enterprise and affectionate encouragement had helped make his years as pastor among the most delightful of his life. And, he would get to serve beside them as a fellow parishioner until his death.

He was buried in Levy's Edgewood cemetery on May 15, 1962, leaving as survivors, his wife, Mrs. Myrtle Nelson Greenleaf, a son, Rev. Nelson S. Greenleaf, and grandchlidren.



The grave of Rev. O. A. Greenleaf
Edgewood Memorial Park



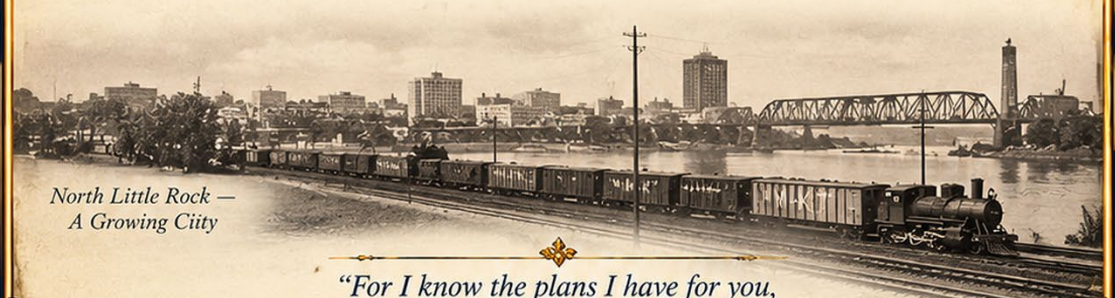
Rev. Harry Hunt and Family

Doubtless, many at Levy felt that because Greenleaf was a "low church" pastor, and he'd served so long, that it could be depended upon that the next pastor would not be a "high churchman." After all, the laymen at Levy had been ingrained with a decided objection to any taint of ritualism. Yet, when the church met Rev. Hunt, they immediately felt different. They realized, perhaps in painful anxiety, that this was the will of God.

Greenleaf himself, and all of Levy Baptist, would quickly learn to love their new pastor. Rev. Hunt combined religious devotion with civic responsibility, using his own unique grace and gaiety. His memory is still green among many in the congregation.

Some people had predicted that Hunt could not fill Greenleaf's shoes. However, as one member put it, "he filled his own shoes." A quiet, dignified man, Harry Hunt was a contrast to the animated former pastor, and the members took some time to adjust to the change. Yet, they fell in love with him.

North Little Rock was quickly changing. Numerous railroad routes had been added bringing abundant, affordable building materials and "civilization" items to what had been considered a "frontier" town. North Little Rock was no longer an outpost but a thriving city.



North Little Rock —
A Growing Ciity

"For I know the plans I have for you,
saith the LORD..."

JEREMIAH 29:11

A House of Worship Rises

The Hunt Years • A New Sanctuary

With the calling of the Rev. Harry Hunt, Levy Baptist Church embarked upon the building of a new worship center on the property purchased from Mrs. Houschle during Greenleaf's tenure. Hunt clearly possessed great vision for the church, for he called for a new sanctuary very early in his ministry. Just two years after his arrival as pastor, the building was completed and dedicated.

However, before this church could be built, an old question had to be addressed by Rev. Hunt and the members. The problem concerned the finances of the church. It was quite obvious that the church would have to overcome this handicap to build a new church structure. Fund-raising for such a project was massive by local standards. Rev. Hunt had come at a good time, however. Finances were better in America than they had been in a very long time. Prosperity produced a new, more affluent middle class, making them much more apt to be influenced by Hunt to be intent on having a house of worship that reflected the success of its members and provided greater comfort.

The building Hunt would lead the church to construct would be beautiful in its conception, beautiful in its execution, bearing in every line the beauty of colonial church architecture. Hunt was an active Freemason, and the new sanctuary was constructed facing east. The church has from the time it was completed been the crowning piece of the Levy neighborhood. Long may this noble structure stand.

Unlike many congregations that relocate as they grow, Levy Baptist Church remained on the site where her first building had stood. Her new sanctuary would continue the legacy of worship at 35th Street and Pike Avenue.

The excitement over the building project had made people generous. They had a new pastor, were embarking on building a new sanctuary, enthusiasm was high! The L. O. Jobe family was moved to purchase a Hamilton Grand Piano in November of 1952 as a gift to the church. It was dedicated to the Lord on November 30, that year.

The growth in affluence among Levy's members within a single generation can be measured by comparing her first white-clad building with this second, stately brick building. Compared to the first, this new building, with its large white columns, was imposing. A balcony was located above the main entrance.

A Gift of Music

1952



Hamilton Grand Piano
A gift of the
L. O. Jobe family
Dedicated to the Lord
November 30, 1952

"Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, and life to everything."
PLATO



"Long may this noble structure stand."

A Sanctuary Dedicated

1954

"How the Lord Builds"

NEHEMIAH 2:20

Picturesquely situated in the triangle where Camp Robinson Road and Pike Avenue come together, it features a characteristic tall steeple.

The present sanctuary, completed in 1954, was dedicated by the still new pastor, W. Harry Hunt, in a service that was deeply interesting. The church was beautifully decorated with growing flowers; and the music by a large and well-trained choir was very excellent. There were two services held, one at the morning worship time and the second at 2:30 in the afternoon. The order of service was as follows:

Morning Worship

The Doxology
The Invocation
Rev. O.A. Greenleaf
Hymn No. 1 – "All Hail the Power"
Responsive Reading No. 515
Tithes and Offerings
Hymn No. 199 – "How Firm a Foundation"
Choir Anthem – "Lead On, Lead On"
Message – "How the Lord Builds"
The Invitation

Afternoon Service
2:30 P.M.

Hymn No. 15 – "Jesus Saves"
The Invocation
The Choir – "Hallelujah for the Cross!"
Prayer of Dedication
The Pastor
Recognition of Charter Members
History of the Levy Baptist Church
Special Music
Reminiscence
Former Pastors and Members
Recognition of Workmen
Open House

Both the morning and afternoon services were most impressive and beautiful. The goals for the day included 500 in Sunday School and 225 for Training Union. Bro. Oscar Hughes was Sunday School Superintendent and Bro. Robert George was Training Union Director.



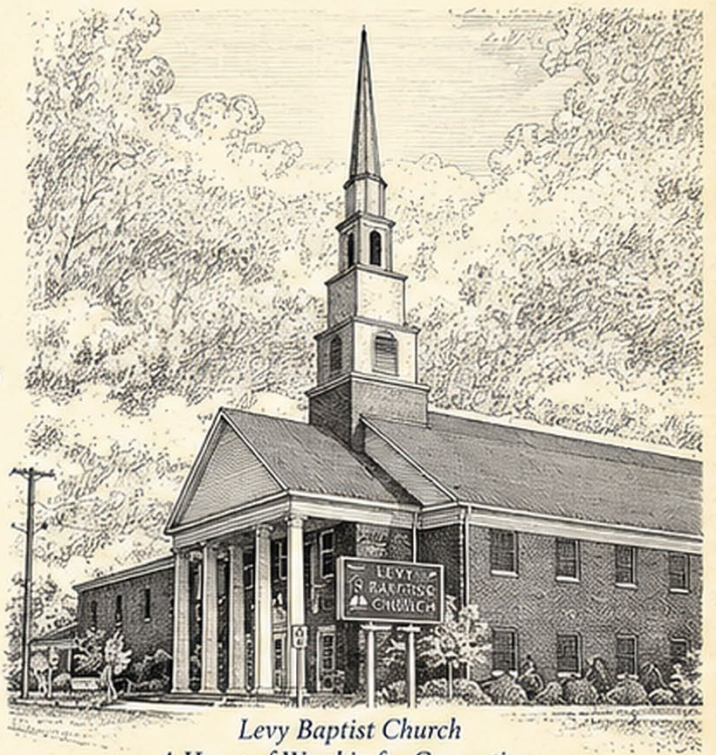
The new sanctuary of Levy Baptist Church, completed and dedicated in 1954.

THOSE WHO BUILT THE HOUSE

Faithful People. Lasting Impact.

The building committee was the deacons of the church. They were:

B.H. Hall, Chairman
J.T. Carter
Paul Fortner
W.L. Glaze
E.A. McCain
C.A. McCormack
Lynn Matchett
A.C. Murphy, Chairman in 1953
L.W. Napier
Dorris Rhoads
Earl Ridgeway
John Sanders
W.T. Springfellow
James Vail
C.E. West
E.M. Wetzler
and R.E. Williams.



Levy Baptist Church
A House of Worship for Generations

The finance committee was:
E.A. McCain, Chairman
J.T. Carter
Paul Fortner
Dorris Rhoads
and Walter Stanley.

The furnishings committee was composed of:
Joe Luker, Chairman
B.P. Elmore
Mrs. O.A. Greenleaf
Mrs. Otis Jobe
T.R. McCoy
W.K. Pouncey
and Mrs. Clarence Tidwell.

The grounds committee was composed of:
Seth Henry, Chairman
O.A. Greenleaf
Mrs. M.S. Freeman
and Mrs. E.A. McCain.

THE LIVING CHARTER MEMBERS

The living charter members at this service in 1954, were:

Carl Nelson
John Nelson
P.M. Smith
Mrs. Myrtle Greenleaf
Mary Wetzler
Louise Stockwell
and
Annie Rhoden.

Rev. Hunt was an articulate speaker and energetic young man and he'd crowned his congregation with a new building. If you seek his monument, look around you.



The sanctuary of Levy Baptist Church. The house of worship dedicated in 1954.

A Church Equipped For Worship

Any stranger visiting the new Levy Baptist Sanctuary would have been gratified and greatly surprised to note the marked improvement made in the church facilities. The congregation was so pleased with their handsome and commodious structure on the day it opened for accommodation of worshipers. Pastor Hunt extended a cordial welcome to all who desired to attend the services in the new sanctuary.

The building, as it looked in 1954, had the quiet virtue of academicism. Uninspired, but never monotonously unoriginal, its architectural elements were at once commonplace and common sense to create the unified sense of a deep and abiding piety. The outside of the building was a plain church but the ambition of its location on one of the main arteries through North Little Rock, made the structure an ornament to the city. Its exterior stated by its unassuming simplicity that humility is not the least of the Christian virtues.

It was handsomely adorned without ostentation, sincere but not banal, dignified without attempted sophistication, steadily in the best conservative taste, the whole comprised one of the noblest buildings in Levy. The new church stood much as it stands today, only the steeple being later changed to a larger one, rising high above the surrounding housetops, gleaming in the sun, and lit beautifully against the night sky. One need not exit the freeway to see proof that the Levy neighborhood has a rich place of worship. The steeple punctuates the landscape, clearly visible to vehicles passing over.

The Steeple Through the Years



The earlier steeple.



The taller steeple. November 19, 1972.

Unlike Greenleaf, Hunt desired the organ in worship music and in November 1954, the deacons recommended that the church accept an offer of an anonymous loan of $1,800, available through Twin City Bank, for the purpose of making payment in full on an organ. The church embraced the idea and made payments of $100 per month. In March 1955, the church purchased its first "Public Address System," for $400. Fred Davis became the first paid Minister of Music and Education in 1956. The salary was $3,900 annually.

Later, Hunt would lead the church to build much needed educational space. The high value that Baptists place on the role of the Sunday School is evident in the church's design today.

LEVY BAPTIST CHURCH
A HERITAGE OF FAITH

SINCE 1906

"Let's Continue to Build For Our Lord!"

The New Educational Building Dedicated May 18, 1958



The 1954 Sanctuary and the new Educational Building (dedicated May 18, 1958).

On May 18, 1958, the church dedicated the new educational building. A part of the bulletin for the morning included these words:

> *"Today we enter our new educational building. Our Sunday School and Training Union will use its facilities for the first time. At the eleven o'clock Worship service, we shall dedicate this building to the glory of the Lord. This afternoon we shall have 'Open House' from three until five o'clock that all may walk through the building and see the facilities provided. The building has 12,600 square feet of floor space that will provide for ten department of our Sunday School. This is the second of a three unit building program by our Church. The first unit, the Auditorium, was completed on June 27, 1954. The third unit will be a recreational hall and educational building to be erected just south of the new building. Let's continue to build for our Lord!"*

12,600
SQUARE FEET
TEN SUNDAY SCHOOL DEPARTMENTS

SECOND UNIT OF A THREE-UNIT BUILDING PROGRAM

to build for our Lord!"

Committees for the Educational Building

Building Committee (Church Deacons)
Under their guidance, a steering committee composed of:
E.M. Wetzler, Chairman
J.H. Sanders
B.P. Elmore
Lynn Matchett
W.A. Brown
and C.E. West

Finance Committee
E.A. McCain, Chairman
J.T. Carter
Dorris Rhoads
Paul Fortner
and Walter Stanley

Furnishings Committee
Joe Luker, Chairman
Rev. Fred Davis
Mrs. O.A. Greenleaf
Mrs. James Vail
Robert Moore
and T.R. McCoy

The old frame buildings on the Church Property have been sold and are to be removed from our lots within thirty days. They have served well but must give way to progress and expansion.

THE SAME GOSPEL. NEW GENERATIONS. A BRIGHTER TOMORROW.

A Loyalty Dinner & A Beloved Pastor

November 6, 1958

A Loyalty Dinner was held on November 6, 1958, to help raise the money needed to relieve the debt on the Sanctuary and the new educational building. Sitting down to a menu of baked turkey, dressing with giblet gravy, cranberry sauce, green beans, creamed potatoes, garden salad, rolls, butter, coffee, and apple pie, Levy's members enjoyed the following order of service with Clarence Walker as toastmaster:

The Menu

Baked turkey, dressing with giblet gravy, cranberry sauce, green beans, creamed potatoes, garden salad, rolls, butter, coffee, and apple pie.

Order of Service

Dinner Music	D.L. Rhoads
Doxology	
Invocation	
Dinner	
Group Singing	
Introduce Leadership	Toastmaster
Special Music by a Quartette	
Testimony	
Special Music by Trio	
Message	Rev. R.L. South
Pastor, Park Hill Baptist Church	
Benediction	Pastor
Postlude	

A Beloved Pastor

SCHOLAR ◆ PREACHER ◆ PASTOR



The Builder
1951-1962

Rev. Hunt was a scholarly, saintly man, a beloved pastor and a popular public speaker. In his heyday, and it was a long one, Hunt was without peer as a preacher. Those who heard him preach say that he delivered his sermons with such skill that the lateness of the evening, the length of the service, or the hardness of the pew detracted nothing from the spell that Rev. Hunt could cast as he preached.

Hunt was a Christian, a preacher, a Bible student, and loved people, therefore the principles of the Masonic Fraternity appealed to him. The "work" was fascinating, and the lessons of morality, the symbols, allegories and principles were what he had fostered for years. He didn't belong for what Masonry could do for him but for what he could do for words," he delighted in having "set" in lodge with his brethren from many places.

An active Freemason in North Little Rock, he was known as a wise leader and a caring pastor, and in the time he was here, he greatly endeared himself to the congregation. Hunt was very active and very dedicated to the "gentle craft". He was interested in the church and the mystic circle. He lived for those two things.

His pastorate was a long and fruitful one, and time will never be able to erase the stamp which his ministry left on the community. He combined a taste and sensitivity for the best of the Baptist tradition with a rare insight into the needs of the times.

SAYING GOODBYE TO HARRY HUNT

A Faithful Shepherd Who Loved His Church

Levy Baptist was comfortable with Harry Hunt and Harry Hunt was comfortable with Levy Baptist. This comfort factor made it all the more difficult for the church and for Hunt to say goodbye to each other. More than 60 years after his resignation, the church still feels the power of this man. Certainly few people have ever meant more to Levy Baptist Church than Harry Hunt — or had loved the church more than he did.



Rev. Harry Hunt
The Builder
1951 – 1962

A Memorable Sunday Morning

Jim Dancy remembered one Sunday morning during the invitation, that his son, Larry, walked the aisle and began talking to Rev. Hunt. Larry hadn't said a word to his dad about being convicted and Jim was moved emotionally that his son had "walked the aisle." Jim began making his own way down when he saw Larry exit the door behind the piano. A puzzled Jim looked at Rev. Hunt who said, "he just needed to go to the bathroom."

Music And Ministry

The church began paying the organist in February, 1960, at a salary of $40 monthly.

The End of the Old Parsonage

Harry Hunt was the last pastor of Levy to live in a church owned parsonage. Changes in the character of the population around the church made the old parsonage seem an unfit location, and it was decided that future pastors could purchase their own homes.

A New Season

With Hunt's leaving, the church would call Rev. Roy D. Bunch as pastor. Levy Baptist's assumption that its new pastor would follow in the tradition of Greenleaf and Hunt and stay for a long tenure proved to be incorrect. He would serve until 1965, just under two years.

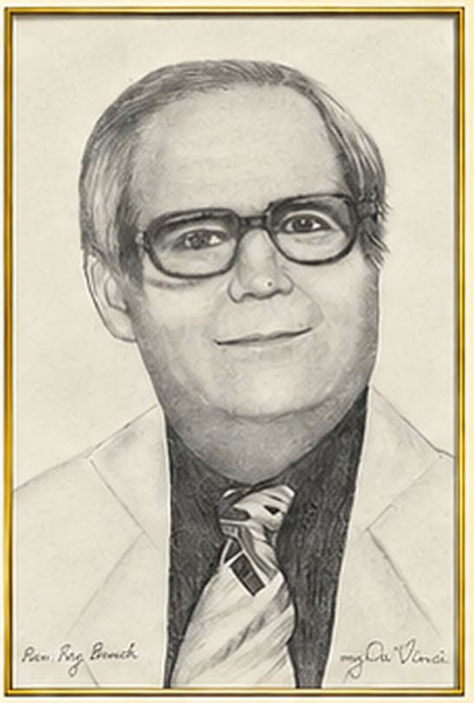
A Brief Interlude

Rev. Roy D. Bunch

Pastor, 1963 – 1965

It is almost impossible to determine what manner of pastor Roy Bunch was. After such pronounced personalities as Greenleaf and Hunt, Bunch flits through the church records like a shadow.

Bunch, having had the experience of serving in other churches, chose not to make wholesale changes but simply to sit back and see how he would fit into the picture — making no attempts to mimic Hunt's style. And, within two years, he'd be gone. In the end, it was an ethical issue that led to Bunch's departure. Many felt that his usefulness as Levy's pastor had been so impaired that the good of the church demanded his withdrawal; the people still desiring another Hunt to come on the scene.



Rev. Roy D. Bunch
Pastor, 1963 – 1965

A Remarkable Vacation Bible School

Levy did hold one of her largest Vacation Bible Schools in the church's history while Bunch was pastor. In 1964, the church enrolled 351 children in a two-week V.B.S.

351	316	308
ENROLLED	Highest Attendance	Lowest Attendance

Following the church minutes of Bunch's years is a little like reading Jane Austen. There are no disturbing overtones. One is soothed by relaxing trivia of church housekeeping.

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

Rev. Al Sparkman, Pastor, 1965 – 1977

Bunch, having had the experience of serving in other churches, chose not to make wholesale changes but simply to sit back and see how he would fit into the picture—making no attempts to mimic Hunt's style. And, within two years, he'd be gone. In the end, it was an ethical issue that led to Bunch's departure. Many felt that his usefulness as Levy's pastor had been so impaired that the good of the church demanded his withdrawal; the people still desiring another Hunt to come on the scene.



Rev. Roy D. Bunch
Pastor, 1963 – 1965

Now the church was faced with the difficult task of finding someone who would be willing to walk in Hunt's shadow—a daunting prospect for any candidate. Yet, the next pastor was the man "for such a time as this." How much the search committee dealt with the matter of personality is not known; however, it was obvious that no one could ever be a second Harry Hunt and that to expect a new pastor to try to be one would be unfair. Yet, Al Sparkman would serve Levy for the same tenure length as Hunt and the church would advance just as it had under Hunt's leadership. Soon the church realized that they had called a new pastor who would cause Levy to continue to stand like a beacon on a hill.

With the installation of Rev. Al Sparkman as pastor on November 7, 1965, Levy Baptist would not have to undergo the agony of seeking and calling a new pastor for twelve years. He would serve until 1977. Sparkman came to Levy from the First Baptist Church of Shively, Kentucky. He had preached in view of a call on September 19, 1965.

On that first Sunday in November, Sparkman wrote this word from the pastor in the morning bulletin:

> *"The Apostle Paul articulated the feeling of my heart upon our very first Lord's day together — 'Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.' I am so very thankful to God for the first gift — Jesus Christ and salvation in His name. I am also deeply grateful for the call to preach His matchless truth He issued to me on August 5, 1951, in the great Southside Baptist Church of Pine Bluff. I am appreciate beyond words to God for His daily providence and unfailing guidance in the affairs of my life.*
>
> *He, and He alone, has guided us to each other for a ministry that will bring glory to His name. I am proud to be your pastor, and I request that you do your very best to let me be pastor to every person in our church. I will not represent any group or person other than Christ Jesus, but will minister equally to all as God gives me wisdom and grace."*

A PASTOR AND A FRIEND

The Heart and Ministry of Rev. Al Sparkman

Therefore, please call upon me for assistance whenever you need me, day or night, for good or for difficulty. My address is 5605 Chandler. My phone is SK3-3551. Inform me, and I will be pastor and friend to everyone in every need or situation. Since I am not psychic, please do not expect my response to needs of which you do not inform me. Together in love, patience, and commitment we can accomplish the task God has for us and make Levy Baptist Church the best anywhere around."

Thank you for your many kindnesses already expressed since our move here. We already feel a part of you and look forward to great friendship. We appreciate deeply the young people and others who readied the house for us and the many who loaded the shelves with food and goods. What a wonderful surprise!

Now, let's move forward together. We can make these Sundays before revival vital ones and have a successful meeting November 28–December 5. Visit, pray, and attend faithfully for God's glory."

Your pastor and friend,
L. Alfred Sparkman

From the morning bulletin, November 7, 1965

Of Rev. Sparkman's noble and valuable services in the church we cannot readily speak. His work was so constant, so loving, so personal in all the details of the church life, that no pen can record it. He loved the church so truly and worked here so many years.

Rrev. Sparkman was an eloquent preacher, and he is the possessor of a warm and kindly humor. He was to be the beloved minister at Levy Baptist for twelve years. Under his tenure, there was marked improvement in attendance and income at Levy Baptist. The church increased in power and influence. The growth of the church under Sparkman's tenure is no fiction.



Levy has long been a church that loves to "fellowship" with each other before the worship service. At times, this can be a problem as people don't wish to "quiet down" when it's time for worship to begin. In the May 17, 1964 church bulletin, the minister of music put this note:

WHAT IS AN ORGAN PRELUDE?

Is it a selection played on the organ to cover up the noise and talking so prevalent in Baptist churches?

No, it is not!

Is it something at the beginning of the worship service to kill time while the Pastor and choir get ready to come into the sanctuary?

No, it is not!

An organ prelude is worshipful music played at the beginning of a worship service, chosen with the purpose of creating an atmosphere of prayer and meditation for those who seek the presence of God.

How do you use these moments of preparation?



"Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing."

Psalm 100:2

A CHURCH OF REVERENCE AND REACH

The Ministry and Impact of Rev. Al Sparkman

The note may have done some temporary good. But, it wasn't to last for long. The church moved right back into their habit of talking before worship. They had a tendency to forget Leviticus 26: 2: *"Reverence my sanctuary. I am the Lord."*

Al Sparkman, one for tradition, would not be pleased with the church being so loud and boisterous before the worship service was to begin. He wanted worship that would model the utmost elegance, decency and propriety. Layman, Jim Manning, has remembered Rev. Sparkman's insistence on reverence in the Sanctuary. He recalls Al entering the Sanctuary with the deacons for worship, and upon hearing the "roar" of worshipers visiting with one another, the pastor entered the pulpit and reminded the congregation, "this is a Sanctuary." The people took note and were much quieter from that point forward.

While Al Sparkman emphasized the beauty of the service, he never allowed it to overshadow the 'foolishness of preaching.' While truly pious, he was also evangelical. Being evangelistic in nature, he believed the church to be 'fishers of men,' and this being the case, he didn't adorn the rod and neglect the bait. While Evangelical has come to be a synonym for Low Church, this is not what is meant by Sparkman. Instead, Sparkman's "evangelical" was glad tidings, the spread of the good word of man's redemption through Christ. He could be this kind of Evangelical and still have worship services becoming of the highest praise.

Levy Baptist has never been in better condition than during Sparkman's years. The congregation increased and the attendants were enthusiastic in the support of the services.

Rev. Sparkman's pulpit was his throne and right regally did he occupy it. His sermons were known to be masterpieces of clearness of thought and power and beauty of expression. His limpid eloquence and graceful rhetoric presented the truths of the Gospel in so fair a setting that all who heard him were eagerly attent. Under Sparkman, Levy became the most fashionable among all the churches in North Little Rock.

> *"Reverence my sanctuary. I am the Lord."*
>
> Leviticus 26:2

> *"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season."*
>
> 2 Timothy 4:2



A Man of Many Gifts

The Enduring Legacy of Rev. Al Sparkman



The Beloved
1965–1977

"He has a smile as warm as his heart."

Kind, energetic, and sociable, he was not only a dynamic preacher, but also a poet and a public figure who was much in demand for participation in civic functions, and he was not above enjoying them. He was asked for many years to return to Levy to preside at funeral services.

After meeting Rev. Sparkman, Pastor Tiner was asked what he thought of him. He responded, "he has a smile as warm as his heart."

Levy celebrated its 70th Anniversary in 1976, while Sparkman was pastor. He invited Rev. Hunt to preach on this day. A new pictorial church directory was commissioned and dedicated to Hurshel Ball. The church purchased 450 new Baptist hymnals, a new church van, and remodeled the north foyer room for use as a Bride's room.

Sparkman, a real supporter of missions work, led the church in giving mission offerings to Jim and Nancy Jordan (missionaries in Bolivia) helping translate the Bible into the native language. Money was also allocated to Saltillo Heights Church, Conway, to purchase property.

The church also expanded their own property ownership while Sparkman was pastor. In October, 1977, three lots and houses were purchased and the parking lot was thus expanded. A ten-phase remodeling and renovation program began.

The first steeple upon the Levy sanctuary was considered by many to be much too short. Sparkman knew that the choice of a steeple, large and prominent, pointing beyond and upward, would effortlessly and inevitably orient the congregation toward a primary emphasis on worship that would be visibly written into the very fabric of the building. He, therefore, led the church to purchase the steeple which sits atop the sanctuary to this day. John Harper and Bob Moore flew in Bob's airplane to Texas to pick out the new steeple. This new, taller steeple, not only more proportionately fit the building, but it also invoked certain reverential feelings.

Rev. Sparkman ended his ministry at Levy in January, 1978. The decision to go, he said, was not startling, sudden, or sensational. Though there were rumors to the contrary, Sparkman insisted that there was never a break between him and the deacons of the church.

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."
Psalm 119:105

A BRIEF BUT LASTING MINISTRY

The Leadership of Dr. James L. Ryan



The Evangelist
1978 – 1979

Their relations had always been close and cordial. His farewell reception was held January 1, following his last sermon, "God's Way for a Happy and Prosperous New Year." The morning bulletin on January 1, was dedicated to Rev. and Mrs. Al Sparkman.

When a popular clergyman leaves a parish, a drop in attendance often follows. The task of maintaining the spirit of the people and building for the future is difficult. Levy Baptist had to find a man to replace Al Sparkman – at first glance, an almost impossible task.

R.H. Dorris served as Interim Pastor after Rev. Sparkman until the name of the Rev. James L. Ryan was placed in nomination and he was elected the church's 20th pastor. Unfortunately for the church, his ministry was to be of only a few months duration. He was a dramatic and colorful preacher, a civic-minded person. These qualities would soon make him prominent in national church affairs.

Not since before Rev. Greenleaf's tenure, which began in the early 1930's, had a pastor left so soon. The young pastor had so endeared himself to this congregation in his few months of service that there was tremendous protest over the idea of his leaving. The church thought at first they could convince him to decline the offer. Being unable to ignore the greater opportunity for service offered him in the larger denominational work, however, he accepted the call.

James Ryan was young and spiritual and had a charming wife. The church was rejoicing over their good fortune in securing such a man, but alas, their rejoicing turned to sorrow when he announced his resignation.

Dr. Ryan's short time at Levy had produced outstanding results. The precedents he set were far more reaching than his short tenure would indicate. Like all men of his overshadowing natural gifts and acquirements, James Ryan was an originator. He initiated the "One More Than Ever Before" campaign, seeking an attendance of 761 on October 29, 1978. The church televised services for the first time under his tenure.

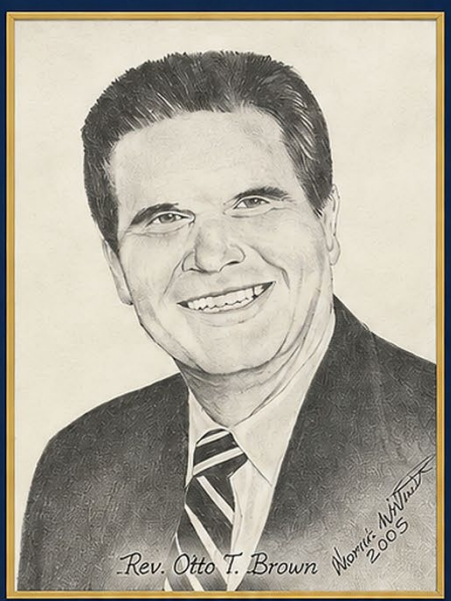
It was under Dr. Ryan's leadership that the church first established the program, "Together We Build." The result of this program was the erection of a new fellowship hall. The church had adopted the architectural design in January of '79, not knowing that Pastor Ryan would be leaving just seven months later.

> *"Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass."*
> *Psalm 37:5*



A FRIENDLY CHURCH WITH A CHRISTIAN MINISTRY OF LOVE

The Long Pastorate of Rev. Otto Brown



The Shepherd
1980–1998

When, on August 26, 1979, the congregation of Levy Baptist found themselves placed with the task of replacing an eloquent and dynamic young pastor like Dr. Ryan, for a time they were at a loss of where to turn. However, following a short interim pastorate with Dr. W.T. Holland, and after considering many possibilities, and hearing many sermons, their choice fell upon the Rev. Otto Brown of Illinois.

Dr. Ryan's leaving had left the church a little lifeless; a general lethargy prevailed. It could be said that the church was in depression at losing so faithful a minister. The answer would be to call a clergyman who could bring new life into the church. As a sign of this "new life" pastorate, Rev. Brown began his ministry at Levy on Easter Sunday, April 6, 1980. Rev. Otto Brown was God's man "for such a time as this." This capable pastor, assisted by his wife, Gloria, effected a smooth transition. Otto and Gloria Brown quickly endeared themselves to the whole church and provided a graceful and orderly transition.

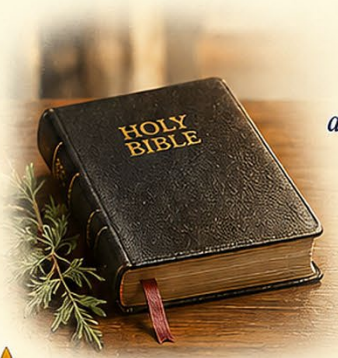
Brown soon adopted the slogan, "A Friendly Church With A Christian Ministry of Love." The Sara Ann Dunlap Nursing Scholarship Fund was established at the beginning of Brown's ministry and continues to this day. A new sound system was installed and the "Together We Build" program was concluded. Six parking spaces for the handicapped were completed.

With 18 years of service, Rev. Brown served the second longest tenure among Levy's former pastors. Otto Brown put his love and life into this place. Rev. Brown believes in the 'gospel of shoeleather' on the theory that a house-going pastor makes a church-going people…the doors of the rich and poor alike swung open on willing hinges to welcome him.

His long tenure was no doubt due in part to his dedication and his ability to understand and work with people. He was always ready to answer a call, day or night, not only from his own church members, but anyone who needed him.

The "Link", a newsletter, was begun under Brown's tenure to keep members informed of activities. It proved to be a much needed and helpful means of communication.

The church added a new educational building and a fellowship hall to the church facilities while Otto was pastor in 1982. New communion ware was purchased in 1983.



"Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works."
Hebrews 10:24

A CHURCH MEETING NEW CHALLENGES

Ministry, Change, and Continued Faith Under Rev. Otto Brown

The church purchased its first IBM Computer System in 1984. The envelope service was begun under Rev. Brown's tenure in 1985. Robert George was honored on May 14 that year with Robert George Day, to recognize his untiring service as Interim Music Director.

Rev. Brown's tenure, however, was not without its problems. Levy was a transitioning community. Population movement was beginning to become a matter of consideration for area churches in the latter part of Brown's ministry. It resulted in the movement of the more affluent population into the Indian Hills and Lakewood divisions of the city, sections of North Little Rock that did not have to contend with the railroad. They had moved "up and out", thus breaking geographical bonds with their church. Many of these more affluent members would continue to drive in to their home church. Others would move their membership to closer churches. The influence of this would be painful, and to a degree injurious upon the church's work.

These attendance problems seemed irreversible…yet, they were due to no fault of Brown or to the church. The church was simply a victim to that which it could not control. It was becoming more and more obvious that if Levy was determined to stay in her founding location, then she would no longer be a church for any one neighborhood, but would have a constituency representative of the whole city.

The church would need to work both to reach those in the surrounding streets as well as try to reach its members's neighbors in other parts of the city. They would have to be impressed enough with the church to want to drive the distance. If they would, then Levy could maintain its historic position and continue to minister to the class of people who had given the church its position and influence in the past.

Levy's one strength in its location is that the land upon which it was built afforded the opportunity for Levy to be the focal point for the surrounding neighborhood and for traffic traveling east and west on I-40. It stands in a triangle formed by Camp Robinson Road and Pike Avenue.

The declining of the surrounding neighborhoods would also lead Levy to begin a sack lunch program. It was a ministry of necessity, as the knock at the door by those requesting food became an almost common occurrence. The sack lunches consisted of non-perishables. It's a ministry of necessity for downtown churches, for you always have a large number of "down-and-outers," men out of work and those struggling with alcohol and drug addiction.

"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

Galatians 6:9



A LASTING IMPRESSION

Faithful Service, Enduring Fruit

To the time of his passing, Rev. Brown made such a pleasant impression on those who meet him. He possessed the kind of missionary spirit needed throughout Baptist life. Under his ministry, the work of the church prospered; his love and charity were contagious. One Levy member remarked, "He is my kind of pastor."

The pastorship of Rev. Otto Brown was a long and fruitful one, and time will never be able to erase the stamp which his ministry left on the community. After his retirement, the decline in number of members began at once, gradual but steady.

Of these long-serving, humble servants, we are reminded of the Scripture, "*They were very able men for the work of the service of the house of God.*"

I Chronicles 9:13

In 1999, Pat Tyler compiled a history of the music ministry of the church. She dedicated the volume, in part, to "Daisy Lawless Henderson, whose grandmother and mother were the pillars of Levy Baptist Church, serving as choristers, pianists, and whatever else needed to be done." She included this personal note, "Daisy, you certainly take after them, and are dedicated to serving God's Body in the same manner as they."

> *"They were very able men for the work of the service of the house of God."*
>
> **I Chronicles 9:13**

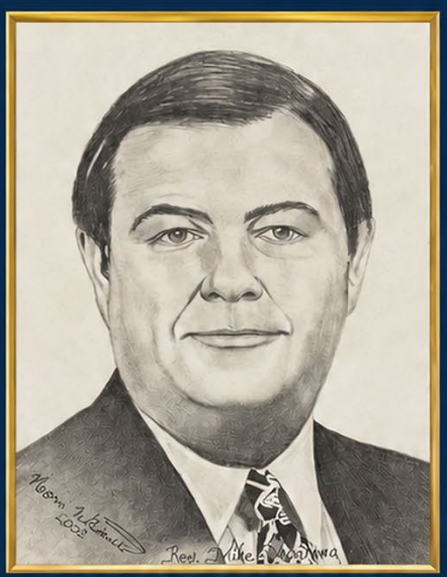
She also recognized Robert George and Bobbilyn Mitchell for their time, effort and love they had contributed to the growth and development of Levy Baptist. She wrote, "your dedication, faithfulness, and love has not gone unnoticed."

Rev. Mike Manning was elected pastor of Levy Baptist on September 26, 1999, in a called business meeting after the Sunday evening worship service. He received a 100% vote approval. There was a reception for he and his wife, Leslie, after the meeting. He would serve until the end of 2002.

For some, a renewed sense of vitality now pervaded the congregation. However, it was tempered in the minds of others by an increasing realization that circumstances weren't going to improve. The surrounding neighborhood was going to continue to deteriorate. The scattered congregation that left in the first "split" upon Otto Brown's leaving, was not going to return. However, Levy was still located in one of the most visible areas of North Little Rock. And, it was easily reached by transportation, right off the Interstate.

A Season of Change

The Ministry of Rev. Mike Manning



The Teacher
1999–2002

It could, perhaps, serve as a vibrant "downtown" Southern Baptist Church. Opinions varied on just where the church would go.

Mike Manning's short time at Levy would not be completely happy. He had been eager to introduce changes "without regard to tradition," and had met opposition from long time members. One member said that Rev. Manning "got off on the wrong foot."

Mike came to Levy when much of the church's leadership had been devoted for more than 50 years. Levy was nothing more, nothing less, than a staunchly traditional Southern Baptist church. Yet, while these men freely gave to their church, one significant fact was prominent in Rev. Manning's mind — old Father Time was picking their pockets. He believed that they were neglecting to look ahead and realize there would be a time when they would not be there to "run the church." This belief led him to attempt a complete restructure of the church's organization.

Manning was more rigid than Brown, very much inclined to stand upon his rights and dignity, and something of a martinet. He seems to have taken a certain delight in battle throughout his career. It is not to be denied that soon after Manning had entered upon his duties at Levy, feelings of dissatisfaction were evinced by some members of the congregation, which gradually increased and strengthened till they assumed the form of a faction and determined opposition.

Conflict and conflagration, storm and fire, had disturbed the peace of Levy Baptist Church for nearly a decade. A large number of families withdrew upon the leaving of Pastors Brown and Manning and the tokens of sudden decline were painful and mortifying.

Before moving on to the current years, let it be said that Rev. Manning is remembered as a great Bible teacher. But like many a civic, church, or political leader before him, he attempted to move a little too far, too fast, and things snapped in the middle. Ironically, Mike Manning is the only Pastor of Levy Baptist whose arrival was officially cheered by the congregation.

With the departure of so many young people upon Mike's leaving, the inevitable came to pass and the church was left with older leaders who have been departing the scene and there remained no young leaders to take their place. The whole matter set Levy Baptist Church on a drift into complacency that led to a low ebb in its existence.

> *"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."*
>
> Jeremiah 29:11

STILL HERE BY HIS GRACE

Resilience, Renewal, and a New Chapter

Yet, despite the church's narrow escape of two church-wide splits, it still had healthy vital signs.

With so many having left the church and so many others who had moved to other parts of the city and were "driving in" to church, there would have to be a certain genius in the staff to hold together a flock which mostly had to pass at least one other Baptist church to attend. This proved to be a tremendous work load. Yet, those who are still at Levy would quickly tell you that they are far the richer for having passed this way, proof positive that the Holy Spirit is still leading and guiding Levy Baptist Church.

Clearly, what Levy needed was a revival to lift up its spirits. It needed an engine to propel the train. So, the pulpit committee set out on a whirlwind to do just that. Dub Waymack, often referred to by Pastor Tiner as "Mr. Levy Baptist" would serve as **pulpit** committee chairman.

The once proud edifice of Levy Baptist had become a dark, brooding hulk, presiding over commercial buildings and – the crowning insult – now had a check cashing establishment at its side. The Levy faithful waited for a pastor, who would join with them in making Levy Baptist a jewel once again.

The last few years had experienced their share of turmoil. While tumultuous times in a church is appalling, it certainly spices up the annals of Levy and witnesses to the strength of the church to weather a serious storm. The storm did inflict damage. However, there were membership and attendance gains, allowing Levy to rebound with strength.

If one wonders why Levy Baptist was able to rebound, it might be explained by saying that every church organization has its catalytic agents, filled with passion, eager and able to lead. When those people are encouraged, and when others are there to assume equally important leadership and creative roles, miracles occur.

Steven Tiner arrived in November of 2003 as Levy's 23rd Pastor. The biggest concern in Tiner's coming had been his age. He was 28 at the time. Many felt that the deacons, a good deal older than he, would appear a formidable group to the young pastor. However, he was elected with only one dissenting vote. He came from Dermott where he served the Dermott Baptist Church.

> *"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."*
> Jeremiah 29:11



A CALL OF CONVICTION

Steven Tiner and a New Beginning at Levy

The decision to come to Levy had taken Tiner some time and some at Levy thought he would not accept the church's call. In Dermott, the youthful pastor served a church situated in a neighborhood of residences. Dermott is a wealthy church, well endowed, and like Tiner, has an appreciation for the best in worship traditions. Tiner couldn't have been happier in Dermott and frequently returns for worship services and to preside at funerals.

Dub Waymack had called Tiner from the church office to notify him of his election and to congratulate him with the hopes that Tiner would give an immediate "yes" and he could report it to the church before they dismissed that night. Rev. Tiner graciously replied that he would need several days to reach a decision.

Tiner contemplated the opportunities the downtown Levy church would allow him in developing his ministry. He knew the recent history of the church and had learned that the rapid expansion of North Little Rock to other areas had left Levy Baptist stranded. Some of the old families had died or moved to other parts of the city. Many of the homes in Levy, once abodes of respectability, had been turned into boarding houses by residents that stay short tenures. The crowds that had filled the Sanctuary in the days of Hunt had drifted away.

He counseled with Dr. Rex Horne of Immanuel Baptist Church in Little Rock about the challenges he would face in a downtown environment. In the end, he knew that God was leading him to Levy. He envisioned an opportunity for a more intensive pastoral relationship, greater opportunity for preaching ministry, and some part in the life of the whole community. Convinced God was in it, he accepted the call to pastor the church. With that conviction of heart, he called Dub Waymack, pastor search team chairman and said, "I will come to you with a glad heart and mind ready to give you all everything that I have in loyalty and devotion."

In Tiner's first few weeks, a parishioner asked him, "just what do you intend to do to help our church rebound?" He responded, "we'll just do our best when wind and tide are against us to make this church what it ought to be, counting on God to give the increase."

Tiner knew that changes at a church as old as Levy would be effective only if tactfully introduced. Therefore, his mind-set was to proceed slowly at first, not wishing to offend Levy's oldest members.

"Commit your work to the LORD, and your plans will be established."

Proverbs 16:3

TRADITION, TRANSITION, AND TOMORROW

Early Days, Enduring Faith, and a Distinctive Worship

If he hadn't already known this, he would soon learn it. His second week at Levy, a member came to his office and said, "I understand that in your previous churches, you have preferred to take up the offering at the end of the service and I'm here to tell you that YOU WON'T BE DOING IT THAT WAY AT LEVY." Tiner later commented, "what a way to start your tenure at a new church!"

The church's Minister of Music, Bruce Rodtnick said to Tiner in his first staff meeting, "if you think you were in the frying pan at your last church, you've jumped directly into the fire at Levy." Tiner replied that he had never been in the frying pan at Dermott Baptist Church. The congregation there had treated him like family.

Tiner, however, has frequently offered thanks for those faithful people who have increasingly rallied to his support to overcome obstacles so that Levy could continue to be a fellowship of the Holy Spirit and a beacon-light for our Lord in spite of all the forces of darkness.

For Levy's 99th Anniversary, Pastor Tiner asked Rev. Sparkman to return. He preached on "The Importance of 99." During the sermon, he gestured to Tiner and said, "I expect to be invited back next year to the Centennial Celebration, to add my mite to the reminiscences." Tiner assured him he would be invited to return.



Today, Levy Baptist Church is the oldest Southern Baptist Church in the city of North Little Rock. The church is distinguishable in that worship at Levy is not entertainment. The choir, while excellent at what they do, are not on the stage to entertain those in the pews. Worship is something we all participate in and are a part of. It's a great drama; it's a pageant. It's a play in which we are all participants. There's direction. There's movement. There's purpose. We are not the audience. God is the audience.

Those who appreciate fine worship find themselves uncomfortable in many other local churches. The reason for the uncomfortableness can be summed up in one word: class. But there is much to be considered here. That is, many Levy Baptist members have no more status in the eyes of the world than the members of other local churches. However, for many members here of varying levels of education and income, there is a profound need for dignity, reverence, beauty, learning, tradition, and a sense of the numinous. Few other churches in our area are designed to satisfy the needs of such people. Unattractive buildings, sobbing pop gospel soloists, garish theatrics, shouting preachers, and boisterous worshipers could not appeal to many of them. There is no sense in attempting to gloss over what amounts to a basic incompatibility among equally devout Christians. Levy Baptist is designed for these Christians and its style of worship meets their needs.

"Let all things be done decently and in order."

I Corinthians 14:40

MUSIC, WORSHIP, AND AN OPEN DOOR

A Heritage of Beauty, Dignity, and Welcome

Those who attend Levy's services offer compliments to the beauty and dignity of the choristers, presented in their robes and collars, and the music they bring. Levy's music is lead in a way that is becoming of Christian adoration to the Heavenly Father; not with music that encourages unseemly enthusiasm. Far too many meetings of Christians today have become little more than theaters in which spiritual pride, ambition, and ostentation indulge their unhallowed aims, and excite those violent emotions of animal sensibility.

A vested choir of men and women augmented with vocal ability provides our musical services. Proper and well-directed, the choir adds much to the dignity and solemnity of the service of the church and produces good effects which may be expected to arise from it in exciting and animating the zeal of the congregation.

Levy Baptist can boast of her distinguished musical director, and outstanding organist and pianist supporting the service. Tommy Havens leads and Scott Copeland and Angie Stone play musical selections that are rich in poetry and theology and that bring to the Levy Baptist Choir and congregation much of the sturdiness and dignity characteristic of the architecture of the church.

Together, the pianist and organist at Levy bring music, always supportive – emphasizing, never competing with worship.

> *"Music makes people kinder, gentler, more staid and reasonable. I am persuaded that after theology there is not an art that can be placed on a level with music; for besides theology, music is the only art capable of affording peace and joy of heart… the devil flies before the sound of music almost as much as before the Word of God."*
>
> – Martin Luther



They bring a musical ability and integrity for which we can be grateful. The sweet tones of music here are historical. Other area churches have bowed to a form of music that is regrettably inadequate. Levy's music gratifies in a high degree the feelings and taste of the congregation. In short, all of Levy's worship leaders add immeasurably to the beauty and class of the services.

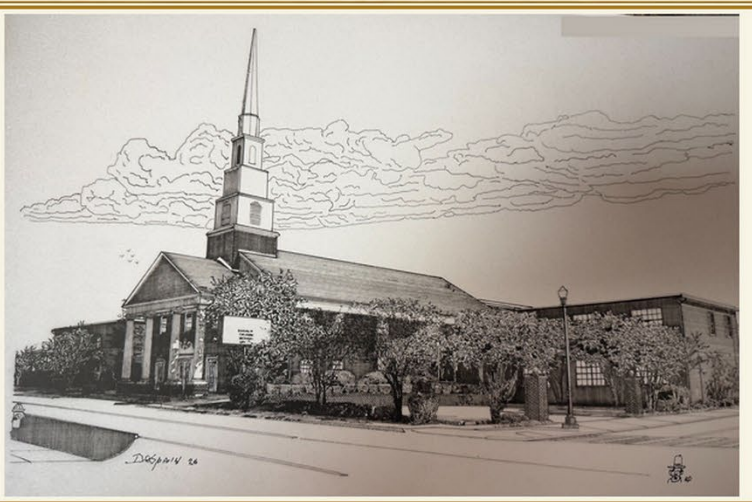
Martin Luther once wrote, "Music makes people kinder, gentler, more staid and reasonable. I am persuaded that after theology there is not an art that can be placed on a level with music; for besides theology, music is the only art capable of affording peace and joy of heart…the devil flies before the sound of music almost as much as before the Word of God." Levy Baptist music staff bring music that fulfills the requirement that we worship in the "beauty of holiness."

Pastor Tiner believes that the worship service should make it easy for a man to find God difficult for him to forget God. The sermon and music should cause the curtain to be drawn aside so that a congregation may see God while the preacher and musicians are concealed in the folds of the curtain.

Tiner had been impressed with Levy's front doors on the day the pastor search team gave him a tour of the facilities. He liked the open glass doors more than the typical oaken church doors because open glass symbolized that this was an open church. He felt that glass panels in the front doors were necessary that all might see inside and feel welcome. Glass doors give a more open appearance. Thus, the front doors became the inspiration for the newsletter. The Open Door, is read by "opening" the front doors of the church.

THE OPEN DOOR

A Symbol of Welcome and a Vision for the Future



The first issue to appear in this way was January 18, 2004. In that first Open Door issue, Pastor Tiner wrote the following newsletter column, explaining the new design:

"When Levy's pastor search team invited me to tour the facilities, one feature in the building impressed me more than anything else. You might expect that I was most impressed with the baptistry window, featuring Christ as the Good Shepherd. You may suppose that it was the commercial kitchen or the large and beautiful fireplace in the fellowship hall. Each of these are nice and left an impression but they were not what 'grabbed me' as I walked through the facilities.

That which left an impression was the front door to the Sanctuary. No, it wasn't the beautiful, white, colonial pediment above the doors that impressed me. Nor was it the brass hardware used to open and close them. Instead, it was the glass panels that allow those on the outside to see within."

There are as many different styles of church entry ways as there are churches. A church in Spoleto, Italy has wooden doors, carved in the 13th Century, depicting 28 scenes from the life of Christ. It is considered the greatest achievement of Romanesque woodcarving. In Hartford, Connecticut, a famous church sports massive bronze doors. Chartres Cathedral in France has a mob scene of biblical figures. Dr. Horne humorously told me of a church he visited that had a door knocker on the door!"

Up against these priceless works of art, the front doors at Levy Baptist would win no prize. But I wouldn't trade them for any of those doors previously mentioned. Why? Because the open glass doors on the front of Levy's Sanctuary symbolize an open church rather than a closed one."

At Levy Baptist, the glass panels in the front doors of the church allow the world without to see inside and feel welcome. For this reason, I name our newsletter, ***The Open Door***."

My prayer is:

"Oh God, make the Doors of this House wide enough to receive all those who need human love and a Heavenly Father's care; and narrow enough to shut out all envy, pride, and hatred, and smooth enough to be no stumbling block to children and straying feet, but rugged enough to turn back the tempter's power."

A CONTINUING STORY

The Open Door, Special Days, and a Lasting Witness

And, with those words, ***The Open Door*** newsletter made its debut to Levy's members. Members and visitors alike comment on the beautiful design of the newsletter.

In 2005, ***The Open Door*** published its first April Fool's day edition. The church office phones were ringing off the hook as members began receiving their newsletter, but had failed to read the disclaimer explaining it was the April Fool's Edition. By the 2006 edition, members were wiser as to the staff's "fooling" on April 1, and enjoyed the newsletter rather than being alarmed.

Levy Baptist makes much of special days. The church observes Pentecost Sunday, 50 days after Easter, remembering the Day of Pentecost recorded in Acts 2. The congregation is marvelously adorned in red on this Sunday, to the delight of our pastor's eye.

Because Levy has never had any archive, Pastor Tiner undertook efforts to find pictures of former pastors. Photographs were sketched by artist, Naomi Whitmer, and elegantly framed and hung, as money was available. The sketches are now completed and they hang in the church's history room.

Many Southern Baptist Churches have left the older parts of North Little Rock. First Baptist and Central Baptist moved years ago to a more prosperous area. Central chose a neighborhood, off the beaten path, getting their worship center away from the crowd's ignoble strife, remote from the dust and clamor of the city streets. Baring Cross Baptist, Levy's mother church, moved to Sherwood and Pike Avenue Baptist merged with Crosspoint Baptist which is now closed. 16th Street Baptist Church, Amboy Baptist Church, and Indian Hills Baptist Church have also expired.

Levy, however, has remained. For 120 years she's been offering worship to God from this triangle of land where Pike Avenue and Camp Robinson Road merge together.

The Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department estimates that some 28,000 - 30,000 cars pass by Levy Baptist Church on Camp Robinson Road in a 24-hour period. So, Levy's location is one to be congratulated. The heart of the city is an appropriate place for a church. Yes, Camp Robinson Road is lined with buildings which house the commercial and financial interests of the community. But, there is also a great church on this busy corridor. Thousands of workers rush past her doors every day, but her doors stand ready for them on Sunday to come and enjoy the respite of worship and prayer. Levy sits on an ideal site for a church in terms of visibility.

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

Romans 10:17

A FAITHFUL DECISION

Rooted in History, Building for Tomorrow

Levy is not the largest church in North Little Rock. Nor is she the most prestigious of all the congregations. She stands today, though, as a monument to those who founded her, and as a tribute to all who have improved this place and worshiped in it.

When Tiner came to the church for a tour with the pastor search team in the late Summer of 2003, he noticed that much of the church space was not particularly inviting, both aesthetically and practically. The church seemed to be somewhat burdened with large buildings in a run-down condition.

Carl Sandburg once wrote, "Nothing happens but first a dream." How true is! Every great accomplishment in history has started with a vision of what could be. But, ideas are fragile things. When Pastor Tiner, in mid-2004, proposed to the Deacon Body that the church begin to look into improvements to the church Sanctuary, it was not a conviction - just an idea. If those men had discouraged the idea, Pastor Tiner may have dropped it. They nurtured it, however, and what began as a fragile idea eventually became a proposal, was endorsed by a faith-filled congregation, and finally became a reality.

There were some, of course, who suggested moving out of the area and building a new church. Tiner believed however, that it would be unwise for the church to attempt that kind of change. The congregation was mostly senior in age, and he felt they would be loathe to leave a building rich in the tradition and history of North Little Rock. They were not apt to embrace such a move. It would also mean the sale of the church property at a sacrifice, the purchase of new grounds elsewhere, the building and equipping of a new and handsome church. Then, the congregation would have to begin anew the struggle to pay off a large and burdensome debt which might keep new members from the fold and cause anxiety and embarrassment to the church. By remaining at the current location, Levy will always be centrally located in North Little Rock and there will always be a large population within easy distance.

Today, most members feel that Levy made the right decision to stay. This means the church is not a place of worship for any one neighborhood, but rather has a constituency representative of the whole city. The buildings are old but are kept in working order.

There were also those who objected to building improvements, believing that money could be spent on more pious ventures. It is indeed frustrating, and one can quickly get sick and tired of those who belittle bricks and mortar in churches, as if the beauty and efficiency of God's House could not be more conducive than shabbiness to the nurture of the Christian spirit. A place where God's work is carried on, should have the most meticulous care and supervision. Tiner emphasizes that the decoration of a church is an act of homage.

"Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain."

Psalm 127:1

BEAUTY, STEWARDSHIP, AND SACRIFICE

Renewing Our Sanctuary for Generations to Come

Others complained the church might not be able to afford the improvements. Tiner responded, "Be thankful that we are not a rich church and that we have to make demands on each other for this renovation. Remember the value of giving to the giver and the strange paradoxes that echo through history: 'What I spent, I saved; what I kept, I lost; what I gave, I kept.'"

Many in the church, however, believed that it was necessary for them to be good stewards of the facilities they had inherited from a previous generation and this led them to respond generously to the "Doors to the **Future**" campaign.

Tiner was careful, though, to say that Levy must be a place not only of beauty, but a place known to be filled with faithful Christians who love Jesus and His church and proclaim the full-blooded Christian faith, without apology.

A renovation committee, consisting of Bob Moore, Diana Harper, Charles Cox, and Don McGee was appointed by Pastor, Steven Tiner, to begin the hard work of refurbishing our Sanctuary and to create a new entrance from Camp Robinson Road. The pews were dismantled and removed on September 12, 2005, the day after the church's 99th Anniversary. They were refinished while other remodeling work was begun.



Architect, Burt Taggart designed Levy's renovated sanctuary with a traditional look with a view to the future. Mr. Taggart said at an early meeting that he felt it might be wise to go with a more contemporary look. Rev. Tiner, however, said that he believed the modern style was unsuitable for churches and should be confined to buildings which had no link with the past, such as movie theaters and department stores. Tiner wanted the colonialism outside the building to come to the inside. Mr. Taggart said at this early meeting that he didn't favor designs of red brick and columns. At that, Pastor, Steven Tiner spoke up, "I told him, 'We're Southern, and Southern people just have to have columns,'" he said. "When I said that, he looked at me and I could tell his wheels were turning." Today, interior columns grace the Sanctuary.

When asked, "just what do you want?", Tiner responded, "a Sanctuary that is commodious and comfortable as well as artistically beautiful." Taggart would design a splendidly beautiful room, that today is proof of the faith and sacrifice of the people of Levy Baptist Church. The committee demanded high quality of materials and methods of renovation which, one can boast, makes Levy Baptist the most beautiful Baptist Sanctuary in North Little Rock.

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

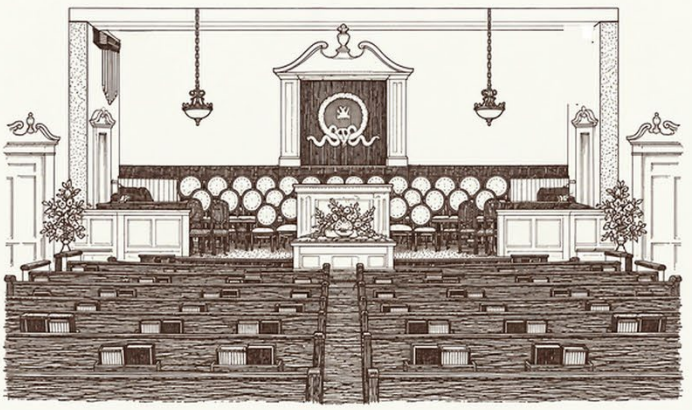
Matthew 6:21

LEVY BAPTIST CHURCH
A HERITAGE OF FAITH

SINCE 1906

A SANCTUARY RENEWED

Honoring the Past, Enriching the Present, Inspiring the Future



Levy Baptist Church After Renovation

The design of a Sanctuary reveals the type of worship for which a church is intended. The previous design was a business-like, assembly-room type of church. Favoring a more traditional service, Tiner sought a renovation that would be in keeping with the type services he would design. The result is a structure that boasts all the modern improvements in every department, while holding a splendid link to the past.

While many modern church sanctuaries are but a shadow of their former selves, Levy's Sanctuary is more beautiful today than it was when first built. The outside, though, retains the same picturesque profile admired at its dedication on June 27, 1954.

The members of the Renovation Committee hold the high esteem and respect of every member of Levy Church, which they have deservedly won by their earnest and devoted work in this body of Christ. Our beautiful church edifice will always remind us of our great obligations to them; it will remind us of their efforts, perseverance, trials, and sacrifices.

Levy members appreciate the many hours spent in prayer and planning that made the renovation of our church home possible. The entire project was a labor of love. Within Levy Baptist Church are sacred halls. This place is the centerpiece of the Levy neighborhood. Souls have been nourished here and memories resonate. This project was one which deserved only the very best.

When the renovation project was begun, the thought that Bob Moore and Charles Cox would not be around to finish the second phase of the project, did not occur to anyone. As the old song so aptly described it, "Those were the days, my friend…we thought they would never end."

But end they did. The church was stunned at the unexpected deaths of Bob Moore and Charles Cox (just two weeks apart). Every church generation has resident benefactors - usually in terms of fiscal responsibility; Moore and Cox filled this role. They were both good businessmen; they were good churchmen, and they had the foresight to see what was coming. So loved were they by all the city of North Little Rock, that their memorial services swelled the interior of Levy's Sanctuary. The floral displays filled the chancel, presenting the appearance of a paradisiacal bower.

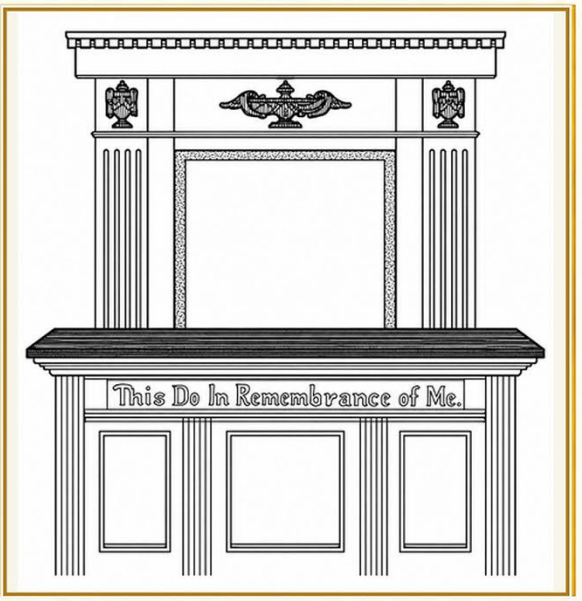
Charles Cox was known as the church encourager.

Because Bob Moore's memorial service was scheduled for a Thursday, Bro. Steven requested of the family that Bob's visitation service be held during the regular church Mid-Week Bible Study time on Wednesday in the Sanctuary. The body lay in state before the altar and the congregation passed by the coffin to look on the benefactor's calm and peaceful face. Later, Bob's only son, Lynn, would thank Pastor, Tiner, saying, "Thank you for paying my dad the honor of his body lying in state in the sanctuary he helped renovate."

THE SAME GOSPEL. NEW GENERATIONS. A BRIGHTER TOMORROW.

BEAUTY IN THE DETAILS

Thoughtful Touches, Lasting Memories



The current facility was built in 1954 and initially consisted only of the sanctuary. Subsequent additions added classrooms, offices, and a fellowship hall, creating a courtyard.

Doris and Dub Waymack installed a beautiful, iron gate at the entrance to the courtyard in memory of Charles. This gate became the inspiration for Pastor Steven Tiner's quarterly devotional book, titled, "Enter His Gates."

A beautiful concrete angel was installed by his sisters in his memory.

Dena Sowell, daughter of committee member, Charles Cox, and an interior decorator, made all the difference in the appointments for the renovated sanctuary. Tiner said of Sowell, "she did a work of interior decorating that was completely in keeping with the sumptuousness of the architect's drawings and the work of the stained glass artists. Because of Dena Sowell, the congregation of Levy Baptist Church meets in the most fashionable church building in North Little Rock. She is highly conscious of style."

Tiner said, "I shall never forget a particular Sunday when Theresa and I were having lunch with Charles and Jeanne Cox and Mark and Dena Sowell at Ashley's Restaurant, Capitol Hotel. Charles was telling me about Dena's decorating ability and I asked, 'Dena, what would you do if you were let loose in Levy's Sanctuary to do anything you wanted? What look would you lean to?' " Tiner couldn't have been more pleased with how Dena answered him.

Dena wanted to express a modern traditional style, freshening up traditional features rather than breaking them completely. This led her to refinish the pew centers, but to add new colonial pew ends. The communion table was kept, but painted white, and a black granite slab tops it. The entire decorating project was one of freshening up traditional features and, in many cases, elaborating them.

Pastor Tiner remembers that Dena would bake a different cake, pie, or cobbler every day for the employees of Apartment House Builders, who were commissioned to do the renovation work. The workmen who labored on this renovation project found distinct pleasure in their work. No bodily injury of any kind occurred to anyone and a great deal was accomplished for the sum spent.

At first, Dena wished to keep the baptistery plain, only ornamented with the moldings suggested by the architect, but the back wall left only painted. Requests from the congregation, however, for a prominently expressed baptistery, led her to add a circular wreath and dove. They are elegant appointments for this place of sacred ordinance.

The renovation committee asked Pastor, Steven Tiner, if he would like to custom design the pulpit. Tiner was thrilled and picked elements from three different pulpit styles he wanted incorporated into the new Levy custom pulpit. No other church in the world has a pulpit exactly like Levy's. It was crafted in the shop of Apartment House Builders on Scenic Hill in North Little Rock.

"How lovely is Your dwelling place, O LORD of hosts!"

Psalm 84:1

THE SACRED PULPIT

A Place for the Proclamation of God's Word

While today, there's a movement toward the neglect of the pulpit, Tiner still considers it to be the most important piece of furniture in the church.

Many ministers are coming down out of their pulpits. They say there is a positive symbolism in being on the same level as the people. Yet, beyond that symbolism, there is wisdom in staying in the pulpit and doing there that for which the pulpit was designed, and they were called to do.

The movement against the pulpit has derisively referred to them as "the clergy crutch," "the coward's castle," and the "parson's palace." These preachers say that they want to give the impression of being "with the people" so to open up the possibility of dialogue rather than strict monologue.

There are several reasons, though, why the minister should not leave the pulpit. The bulk of the congregation doesn't have a good view of the pastor at floor level, and likewise his vision of the congregation is impaired from the floor, so he tends to preach to the worshipers in the first four pews.

The Levy pulpit invites a more formal style of preaching for which the minister must devote hours of preparation and give up settling for telling a hodge-podge of folksy stories and calling it a sermon. This pulpit is a sacred place, dedicated to the preaching of the Word. It was designed and built for preaching. It is a genuine work of art that seems to call out, "This is a special place given up for the hearing of the Word of God."

One who sees this pulpit for the first time is overwhelmed at its massive size. It is a "preaching station." It was built with the thought in mind that Levyites are rooted with a desire to hear a good, well-prepared sermon from their shepherd-preacher.

The first sermon preached from this new custom pulpit was delivered by Pastor, Steven Tiner, on Christmas Day, December 25, 2005. May it ever be a sacred vessel of the gospel and may it never become dark and empty. Pastors are the only members of the congregation called to preach in the true sense of the Word. Levy Baptist Church has provided a wonderful place for that holy act.

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine."

2 Timothy 4:2

WINDOWS OF FAITH

Brilliant Colors, Eternal Truths

Church members had been drastically dissatisfied when the Krinklglass windows were installed. Krinklglass contains no lead, is a plastic material, and is much more suitable for an industrial building than a church. Today, the church has massive brilliantly colored windows.

From the outset of the renovation project, the view of many in the church was that whatever else was done, the krinklglass had to go! Their thought prevailed that this renovated Sanctuary must have stained glass. Today, we're thankful for those who thus persisted. We enjoy the fruit of their labor. Not only would this building have stained glass, it would have very large and beautiful pieces. Lending cheerful touches of color, they give a worshipful ambience to the Sanctuary.

No one can step inside Levy's Sanctuary without feeling a sense of awe at the beauty of the stained glass. People of all faiths throughout North Little Rock admit that this is some of the finest glass of any house of worship in the city.

The student of stained glass knows that new and special features of the various windows can be uncovered by looking at them from different angles, at different times of the day and under different sky conditions. Those who attend here also explain how the stained glass can "come alive" during worship and prayer.

These windows, from which you cannot turn your eyes, are at once highly poetical and artistic representations of the life of Christ. Seventeen stained glass windows grace this fine building. The windows are marked memorials to the church and bear the name of their memorial. The list is a roster of the families of Levy Baptist. Each window could tell a life story.



Most of the windows are situated so that the sun shines through the brilliantly colored glass and creates a rainbow, a re-enactment of God's covenant to mankind.

Those who pass by the church in the evening, when the interior lights are illuminated, know that it is not merely the light that shines through into the edifice that is beautiful. In the dark hours, the inside lights reverse the sight lines so that the church shines out into God's creation. This view of the church at night, is indeed awe-inspiring.

One of the favorite windows for many people is the Baptismal window which graces the center of the South wall. This window, with its cascading blue waters, is symbolic of Christian initiation. The window includes a dove, the Holy Spirit, who descended upon Jesus at His baptism. When one looks upon the window, he can almost hear the voice of the Father who said, "This is my beloved Son…"

"The heavens declare the glory of God;
the skies proclaim the work of His hands."

Psalm 19:1

A Beautiful Temple

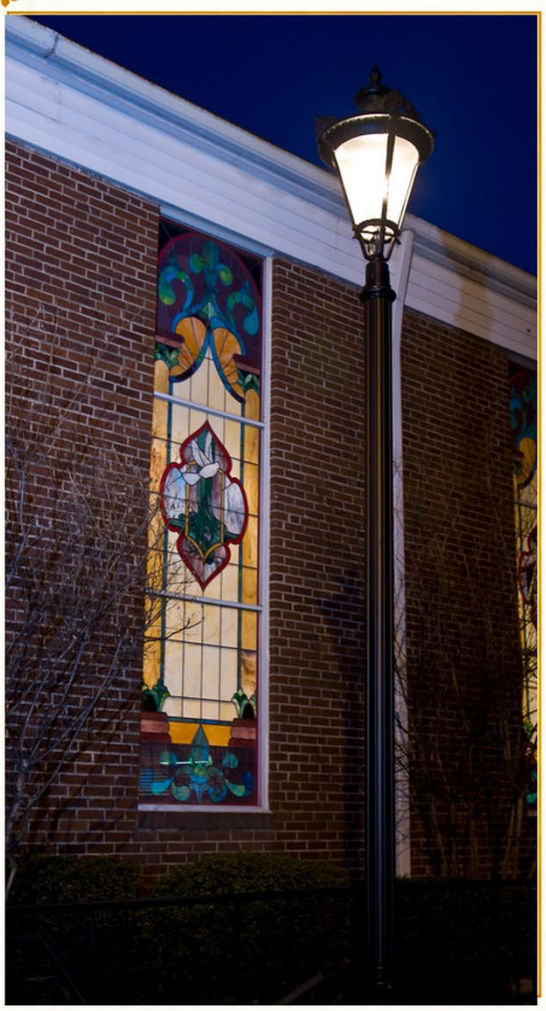
A Lasting Witness in Our Community

Levy's commitment to a beautiful temple of worship is to be commended because our modern day has seen metal buildings being used for houses of worship. This modern style is entirely unsuitable for churches and should be confined to buildings that have no link with the past, such as movie theaters and department stores. Today's renovated Sanctuary is not lacking in either class or beauty. This class and beauty is owing to the current congregation and its leaders who, prior to beginning renovation, had determined that it would be nothing less. They wanted a house of worship that would exceed the sumptuousness of their own homes.

Today's membership desires something very special for this holy house of God. They didn't want to continue the impression of a business-like, assembly-room type of church of which our world has seen far too many. Instead, they wanted the space to be given warmth and personality. This new sanctuary was to be "the" Baptist sanctuary in North Little Rock and every detail had to be planned to perfection.

We can be grateful to today's members who argued for "taste" in this Sanctuary. It is entirely understandable that the membership would desire such a fine building to house this family of faith. After all, this was their centennial year. Only the best for the God who had sustained this church for one hundred years would do. This Sanctuary, far more attractive than other houses of worship in the area, provides a solid anchor in the neighborhood. It is an expression in brick, wood, and glass of the glory of God and the dignity and creativity of man.

This is not to say that all are not welcome in this place. The entire gamut of the North Little Rock social environment is sounded. All sorts and conditions of men sit in the stiff square pews of Levy Baptist each Lord's Day. All are as welcome and as much a part of this church and its worship as the benefactor who nods in privacy.



In the early stages of construction projects, plans ttends to be more grandiose than the constraints of future budgets allow. Those members of the congregation who were determined to see the epitome of architectural perfection despite any concern with something so mundane as money or the amount of it that was required to renovate the edifice, however, made sure that only the best was put into the "new" Levy Sanctuary.

> *"O LORD, I love the habitation of Your house, and the place where Your glory dwells."*
>
> Psalm 26:8

A Sanctuary of Excellence

Careful Stewardship, Lasting Beauty



Make no mistake, however, cost was carefully watched. This was achieved through the architect's directions to use manufactured foam covered with dryvet, instead of solid wood for moldings. The interior decorator also went fast to work, searching far and at home, for the very best prices on all furnishings. Bob Moore first estimated the renovation project to cost around $250,000. Fiscally speaking, this was an overly optimistic estimate. Bob stressed though, the importance to future generations of moving forward with this act. Renovating an old church takes money. Some of the members of the church had plenty, but, as is ever the case in churches, it is not easy to obtain. Levy was surprised though. Her people were extremely generous in their giving, her committee had been very cautious, and the result is an outstandingly opulent Sanctuary that was without the cost of its look.

Appropriate lighting comes in the form of three beautiful overhead chandeliers. They are both practical and beautiful, providing the necessary light for the worship services. These breathtakingly beautiful chandeliers are a reminder of Jesus Christ, the Light of the World.

The organ speakers were moved from above the baptistery to more appropriate spacing on each side of the Sanctuary, causing the music to come down with sweet influence and fine effect.

The sanctuary's high ceiling is now visually supported by white fluted pillars. In order that the building might portray the dignity it deserves, the church proper exhibits splendid white wood, the communion table and pulpit topped with black granite. They are examples of fine wood craftsmanship, and they enrich the Sanctuary. They are all most suitable to the style of the interior.

The pews, while old, and refinished, had new pew ends installed on them. They are the finest of colonial design. The pews were ordered along with other accessories, and, although beautiful examples of craftsmanship, were of relatively low cost. They are of good, honest, solid design and construction, and in the best of taste; quiet and unobtrusive, but well conceived and executed to match the pulpit and communion table.

There is simply no other Baptist Sanctuary in our city more stimulating and exciting than Levy Baptist Church. Visitors express their joy at discovering such a gem in Levy. This church is indeed one of North Little Rock's most remarkable treasures.

"How lovely is Your dwelling place, O LORD of hosts!"

Psalm 84:1

A LIVING LEGACY

Honoring the Past, Proclaiming the Future

Levy Baptist is fortunate in those who have cared for it in these days. The renovation committee, architect, and interior decorator, showed such respect for the original colonial design, while greatly enriching it. Former members who returned on the day of the centennial celebration rejoiced that their former spiritual home is still tended and loved, and that a people of a later generation still find in it that source of strength which springs from the ministry of Word and Ordinance, and the fact that a man made building can be the outward and visible sign of God's presence with His people.

Two image magnification projectors enhance the quality of Worship Services in the renovated Sanctuary by displaying graphics and words to hymns, choruses, and special music. It is also used for announcements. Projection began to be used in spring, 2006.

The fallen Communist leader, Ceausescu, built a $7 billion palace in the capitol of Romania. Using the people and their finances, the dictator erected a colossal building with hundreds of rooms lit by thousands of chandeliers as a monument to himself. God removed him from power, however, before the palace was completed.

In spite of its extravagant beauty, the palace is hollow and joyless - like a person's life without Christ.

Not so with the Levy Baptist Sanctuary! Its beauty points to the beauty of the blessed Savior! Those who enter here know that this is a place dedicated to the worship of God and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. This place was renovated with the exaltation of the name of Jesus in mind. It shows forth the "beauty of holiness" and offers the experience of the transcendent.

The interior renovation was a project conceived, materialized, and celebrated in a year's time. All on the renovation committee will admit that it was not an easy endeavor. Replanning an old structure presents problems not faced by congregations building new worship centers. In the end, however, it was worth the effort.

The project was not accomplished overnight, and there was considerable inconvenience to the congregation. Both Tiner and the committee labored, though, to keep the congregation as comfortable as possible through the process. For the first time since the building was constructed, services were not held in the sanctuary. They were held in the fellowship hall while workmen renovated the sanctuary.

"Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain."

Psalm 127:1

"The former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare."

Isaiah 42:9

A NEW ERA DAWNS

The Rededication of Our Sanctuary

Finally, on Sunday, June 25, 2006, came the culmination of the hopes and plans of the committee and congregation. Levy Baptist was formally rededicated for the purpose of worship. The congregation officially took possession of a Sanctuary of exceptional beauty, adorned with all the adjuncts of splendid worship. Members and guests experienced the awe of being in God's presence as they lifted up their voices to sing the first hymn of praise, (also the first sung when the building was dedicated in 1954), "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name!" As glorious as the sunrise, a new era had dawned for Levy Baptist Church. It was the day of the re-dedication of the Levy Sanctuary!

Pastor Tiner reminded those who attended the re-dedication service, that we're not to see just the splendor of the "new" Sanctuary, but we're to see Calvary. He shepherded his congregation through a major renovation but wanted all to remember that, "Had this house been covered with gold, it would not be good enough for Jesus," he declared from the pulpit. "Had we given all our money and put mortgages on our homes as in the days of Nehemiah, it would be so little when put down by the Cross." He reminded them of the stateliness of their "new" temple for the worship of God but warned them that however noble the temple might be, unless it were visited by the presence of God it could not be compared with the humblest abode where the footsteps of His goodness and mercy have been manifested.

"All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name!"



For 120 years, on this ground, in both unostentatious worship spaces and most elegant ones, this congregation has realized the truth of HIS promise, "where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them…"

Finally, when all things were back in their places, the congregation faced the task of phase two. This phase called for new construction of an entrance to the church off Camp Robinson Road. It just seemed appropriate to the church that following a major renovation of the inside, that work should be done on the outside, addressing all of the facilities' problems at one time. The creation of additional handicapped, visitor, and expecting mother parking, the building now signals that Levy Baptist wishes to welcome all.

"For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them..."

Matthew 18:20

A CENTURY REMEMBERED

Faithful Yesterday, Living Today, Reaching Tomorrow

Today, the congregation's spirit is lively in every way, and the church is indeed surviving, and slowly growing against difficult odds.

On Sunday, September 10, 2006, Levy Baptist met to celebrate her centennial. Part of the day's activities included the unveiling of an historical marker on Pike Avenue near the Sanctuary entrance. The historical marker was crafted by Sewah Studios, Inc. of Marietta, Ohio. Bradford Smith, President of the company, is a native of North Little Rock, graduating in the Northeast Class of '87. The company is also working with the city of North Little Rock to install a Sewah marker at the Old Mill. Levy's is the first Sewah marker in North Little Rock.

INSCRIBED ON THE HISTORICAL MARKER

Organized on September 16, 1906, this is one of North Little Rock's oldest churches. For more than a century, this ground has been sanctified by the worship of God. The first house of worship was erected October 6, 1906. The brick building, which stands today, was dedicated on June 27, 1954.

Following extensive renovation, the Sanctuary was re-dedicated, June 25, 2006, the centennial year.

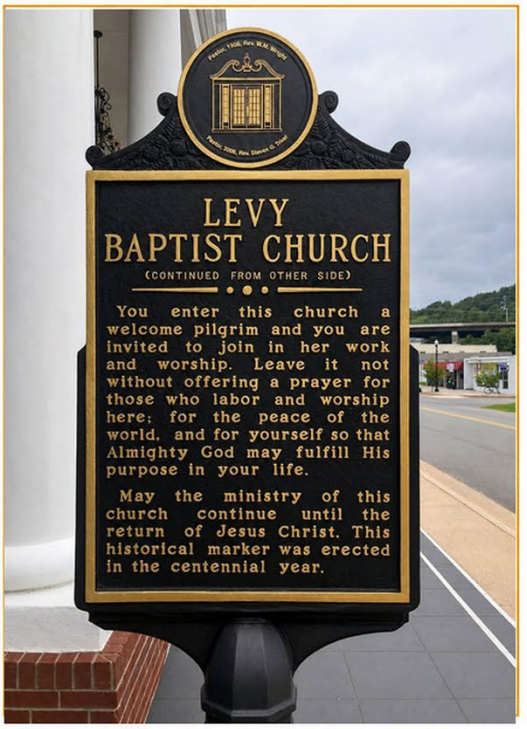
You enter this church a welcome pilgrim and you are invited to join in her work and worship. Leave it not without offering a prayer for those who labor and worship here; for the peace of the world, and for yourself so that Almighty God may fulfill His purpose in your life.

May the ministry of this church continue until the return of Jesus Christ.

This historical marker was erected in the centennial year.

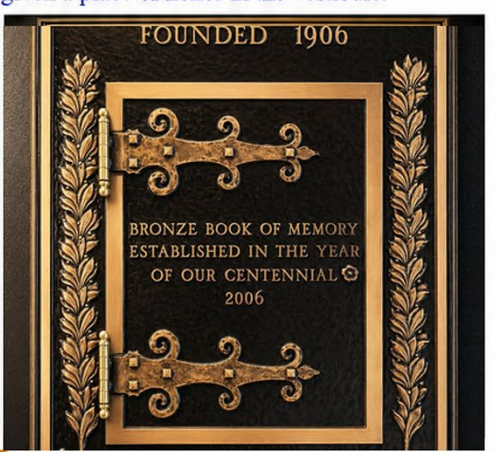
"Generations shall praise Your works, and declare Your mighty acts."

Psalm 145:4



The church gathered at the grave of O. A. Greenleaf, a former pastor of holy memory and saintly life and laid a wreath. He was lovingly remembered by those who gathered as one who had more virtues and fewer faults than most other men. The second quarter of Levy's history was made rich because of Greenleaf's presence.

Pastor Tiner commissioned Newman Brothers of Ohio, to build a bronze book of memory. With five bronze pages enclosed, it was installed in the renovated sanctuary on Thursday, June 22, 2006, and given a place of honor in the vestibule.



THEN AND NOW

The Same Mission. A Brighter Tomorrow.

Many changes have taken place since the founding of Levy Baptist Church in 1906. In the annals of time, 120 years isn't long - only a drop in the ocean of destiny. But when one ponders what has transpired in this wondrous world since Levy Baptist was established in North Little Rock in 1906, it may cause us, as a church, to feel ancient indeed.

Levy Baptist has lived through 5 major wars, World War I, World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam War, and Gulf War, having given members to each, directly or indirectly.

And while time opens the door, it also has a tendency to dull the memory, for it is difficult to realize that Levy Baptist Church was organized 'away back when' Theodore Roosevelt was president; cellophane would not appear until 1912; the military tank wouldn't come into use until 1918, just in time to save many a Yank in the war against the Kaiser's men; radio broadcasting was only four years old, having come into use in 1902, and TV was not even a dream, being first tried in 1926.

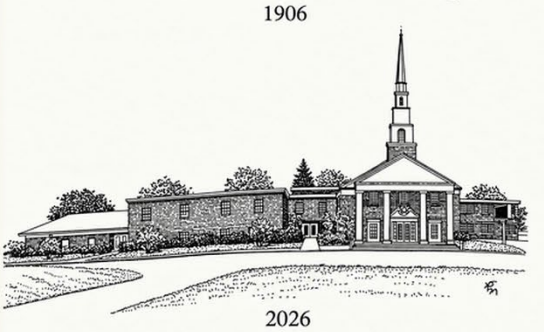
Since Levy Baptist was founded, science, hygiene and athletics have opened many a door. No longer do our people die of diphtheria, smallpox, cholera, influenza, appendicitis - fewer and fewer of 'consumption' - and other ailments that plagued humanity at the turn of the 20th Century have about vanished in spite of, or because of, the multi-colored 'vitamin pills' - and in spite of our worry over 'calories.'

"One generation shall commend Your works to another, and shall declare Your mighty acts."

Psalm 145:4



1906



2026

Since September of 1906, when Levy Baptist was born, our people have learned much, endured much and given much; they have become kindlier, more charitable, healthier and happier. And they will continue to grow, develop and prosper - physically, spiritually and mentally as our church grasps her golden opportunity for growth and Christian service.

Of course there can be no epilogue to history because history will continue even after there is no one left to record it.

In 1906, a dream was given wings - a church called Levy Baptist Church. But what if the idea of a small mission church in the community of Levy had been vetoed by the Baring Cross Baptist family in 1906? What if the church had rebelled at Rev. Hunt's dream of a new sanctuary? What if the church had refused to make the statement that she is determined to live by refusing to renovate her outdated Sanctuary? Time after time, year after year, decade after decade, God's people have lived by faith - expecting great things from God, attempting great things for God. And throughout our century long history the graceful hand of sovereign God has been visible as our church has been blessed "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Ephesians 3:20).

LEVY BAPTIST CHURCH
A HERITAGE OF FAITH

SINCE 1906

PEOPLE OF A LIVING FAITH

Standing Together for the Next Generation



A denomination cannot have a dominating influence upon a city unless in addition to residential churches it also has a virile and vital downtown church. Levy is that church for Southern Baptists in North Little Rock.

Levy Baptist today is demonstrating her ability to function in a spirit of cooperation. Diverse opinion is accepted and all points of view are considered before action is taken. As a result, personal conflicts are minimal, most church members participate, and growth continues.

There will be periods of success, such as the renovation of a Sanctuary and addition of a new entrance off Camp Robinson Road, and periods of disappointment, but God's work in our church continues.

Who knows what the next century will bring? Will it also bring spiritual growth along with the temporal? Only time and the involvement of the congregation will tell.

This 121st year, of which we are only on the threshold, promises to bring exciting times. This history work, is not simply a preoccupation with the past, but a preparation to move forward in unison.

Our prayer is that this work will give sojourners and newcomers some sense of where we've been. They may gain some understanding of the pilgrims who have gone before and an appreciation that evangelism and sharing God's gifts may not always be easy. Those of us who have participated in this pilgrimage will have an opportunity to reflect on what we have learned and what opportunities to serve may lie ahead.

As Levy begins her 121st year, may we be reminded that we are an organization established to worship the Lord and to do His will. The mission is holy, but the missioners are all too human. As Flannery O'Connor noted, "The operation of the church is entirely set up for the sinner, which creates much misunderstanding among the smug."

Levy Baptist Church is devoted to the glory and worship of Almighty God and service to the community. Faith in Jesus Christ, Redeemer and Living Lord, has been set forth through Gospel and Ordinances in this same church for 120 years. May its ministry continue until the return of Jesus Christ. Levy Baptist's future is only limited by her ability to dream. May Levy Baptist Church live and prosper for the lifetime of the city of North Little Rock and may God keep her in the hollow of His hand.

"Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think…"

Ephesians 3:20

THE SAME GOSPEL. NEW GENERATIONS. A BRIGHTER TOMORROW.