

Holly Bluff Baptist Church

Location: Vertical Files at B.S. Ricks Memorial Library
of the Yazoo Library Association | 310 N. Main
Street, Yazoo City, Mississippi 39194

Yazoo's early churches

Holly Bluff Baptist Church

In 1913 W. H. Yankie and A. A. Stampley realized the need for a Baptist Sunday School in the community. They began talking to people of the community concerning the establishment of a Sunday school. Then they began gathering up the families and carrying them across the Sunflower River to the Sharkey County side to a small one room school house about one mile from Holly Bluff. Until this time there had been no action by Baptists in the community. The Methodists had previously organized a church and people of all faiths worshipped there.

On August 30, 1917, Rev. D. R. Grantham, assisted by Rev. D. I. Young, organized the Riverside Baptist Church in a one room school house. Rev. D. R. Grantham was called to pastor the church. He came from Satartia on Saturday evening in a buggy each fourth Sunday. He preached at morning and evening services and the church enjoyed dinner on the ground. There were only a few members when the church was organized—five came by letter, eight by statement, and six by Baptist immersion.

The pastor's salary was \$12 per month in 1917. Mr. Stampley was made senior deacon, W. H. Yankie, junior deacon, and W. F. Beresford church clerk. The church grew by conversions and baptisms. During the early developmental years, back-waters, once or twice a year, disrupted church activities for months at the time, but with population

growth, better ways to travel and better schools the church.

In 1918, Rev. Grantham held a summer revival and Bro. Olander assisted him. Each were paid \$30. In 1918 and 1919, the enrollment grew and in 1920 Rev. Bullard pastored the church and experienced more conversions. Baptisms occurred in the Sunflower river.

On Feb. 24, 1921, the church's senior deacon, Mr. Stampley died. Several church services were missed in 1921 because of high waters but services were continued in May after waters receded.

In September 1922, Rev. Tom Tomlinson was called to pastor the church. Delegates elected to go to the Association in Rolling Fork that year were W. H. Yankie, A. A. Hood, R. C. Screws and J. G. Martin. On Sept. 24, 1922, Clair Screws and J. G. Martin were ordained deacons and E. L. Screws was made church clerk. The pastor's salary at that time was \$15 a month. In Dec. 1922, Rev. Tomlinson resigned.

In Jan., 1923, Rev. M. I. Woods was called as pastor at a salary of \$20 per month. On July 1, 1923, the church observed the Lord's Supper for the first time. A revival was held in July and August 26, Rev. Woods resigned.

The years 1923 and 1924 were Associational meeting years. On August 29, 1923, A. E. Robinson was made church clerk. In February 1924, the Riverstide Baptist Church voted to buy a land site in Holly Bluff to build a

church. The church bought two lots paying \$300 for the two. The deed was placed in R. J. Hatchett's safe and church members voted in 1924 to change the name from Riverside Baptist Church to Holly Bluff Baptist Church.

On March 1, 1925, the Trustees elected were F. H. Stanley, F. B. Hart and W. H. Yankie. The trustees were given authority by the church to borrow \$1000 to build a church and put in cane bottom chairs to seat the people. The two lots and the building were mortgaged for the \$100 borrowed from the Citizens Bank in Yazoo City.

Rev. Dan Powell was pastor in 1925 and held a summer revival with Rev. W. N. Hamilton preaching, Bro. Rushing leading the singing and Juliet Hatchett playing the piano.

Rev. Dan Powell resigned on Nov. 29, 1925, at which time Rev. W. N. Hamilton was called to be pastor for one year. Preaching Sunday was changed from the fourth Sunday to the second Sunday, starting Jan. 10, 1926. On this Sunday, a committee was appointed to propose a budget for church expenditures for the year 1926.

On April 25, 1926, the church appointed delegates and alternates to go to the County Association to be held at Black Jack Church. Delegates were: Mr. and Mrs. F. B. Hart, Mr. and Mrs. A. A. Wood, Mrs. R. J. Hatchett, with Mrs. Robinson, Mr. Conner and Mr. Yankie as alternates. The church clerk was asked to send a written

report to the association.

At the Sept. 26 meeting Rev. Hamilton was called to pastor the church at a salary of \$420 per year.

On Dec. 11, 1927, the church decided to have services on the second and fourth Sundays of each month. The 1927 flood had done much damage to the church building and furniture. On Jan. 7, 1928, the Church Board gave Holly Bluff Baptist Church \$400 to repair and replace the piano. Mrs. Charlie Burkes was made church clerk and treasurer. She served until 1953.

On Dec. 21, 1930, Rev. Hamilton was called again to serve as pastor. In January 1931, he died after a short illness. Rev. Patridge of Isola was called to fill the vacancy.

Rev. D. I. Young was called as pastor on May 15, 1932. He has pastored this church three other times for short periods. Other pastors serving in Holly Bluff have been Don Lank, R. L. Jordan, A. Smith, Mack Bommer, B. E. Padgett, Martin Smith, J. S. Scarborough and Jim Spencer.

From 1932 to 1974 the church grew very rapidly. Today the six deacons are: Oren Nichols, chairman; Hugh Dorris, Sr. deacon; Jim Sumerall; Russell Hatchett; Sam Huff; and Franklin Adcock. A growing Sunday School membership has as its director Oren Nichols. Training Union director is W. C. Dorris Jr. An active W.M.U. and other organizations characterize the Holly Bluff Baptist Church. Aubrey Jones is

the pastor, Thelma Majors, Church clerk and Sam Langley, treasurer.

The church has grown from a few charter members to a church enrollment of 283. There is now a large brick building consisting of a sanctuary, Sunday School office, fifteen Sunday School rooms, a kitchen and two rest rooms.

The church has purchased two more lots; one lot has the brick parsonage on it and the other is a parking lot. The church owns a cemetery one mile from Holly Bluff on the Sharkey County side of the Sunflower river, which was deeded to the church by Mrs. Lewis Shannon.

In 1973, flood waters got up several inches in the church and damaged the floors and walls badly. Much of the furniture was stored upstairs and carpet and pews were moved so there was no water damage. The Baptist Board gave the Church \$1000 to help with repairs and the men did most of the repairing, replacing panelling, and other jobs.

While the water was up, Holly Bluff Baptist Church held one service each Sunday, in the afternoon, in Yazoo City. The people at the Calvary Baptist Church were generous to allow use of their building.

The church will continue to grow with the Lord's help. After each set back God has let it come back strong.