



70 Years Together with God

**A History
of
Nall Avenue Baptist Church
Prairie Village, Kansas**

1953-2023

THIS IS NALL AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH

THE FIRST 50 YEARS, 1953-2003

DEDICATION

To the one who was the constant source of inspiration, and who challenged us, we dedicate these 50 years. It was the undying desire for a Southern Baptist Church and a love for missions that drove her forward. Thanks be to God for Stella Stock.



Stella and Tony Stock

With great appreciation for the efforts of the following people:

Ruby Dado, Committee Co-Chair
Erma Jean Rains, Committee Co-Chair
Curtis Jones
Kevan Myers
Betty Forbes
Betty Callahan
Lori Lang
Annette Bright
Kevin Rains
Marie Clark
Janet Arnold

Thank all of you for your efforts toward advancing some of the history of our church.

Helen Pigram Elsbury, Committee Chair

[This 50 year-history compiled and updated by Kevan Myers and Curtis Jones]

NALL AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH CHARTER MEMBERS

Mrs. Lyman E. (Lola) Ashwill
Mr. Robert D. Cress and Mrs. Edith D. Cress
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Cress
Mr. Richard R. (Dick) Callahan and Mrs. Betty Callahan
Mr. Arthur Donoho and Mrs. Irma Donoho
Miss Linda Donoho
Mr. Allen Donoho
Mr. and Mrs. Hoyt S. Gibson
Mr. Paul Laughrey and Mrs. Margaret Laughrey
Mr. John Laughrey
Mrs. C.J. Mayer
Mr. and Mrs. G.W. McAbee
Miss Kathy Nelson
Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Orr
Mr. and Mrs. Omer Pruitt
Mr. George Pilgram and Mrs. Helen Pilgram (Elsbury)
Mr. and Mrs. William Rowland
Mr. William Rowland, Jr.
Mr. Don Rowland
Mr. Paige Seats
Mr. and Mrs. Norbert Stock
Mr. Tony Stock and Mrs. Stella Stock
Mr. Milo Sandburg and Mrs. Doris Sandburg
Mr. and Mrs. W.E. Tracy, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Henry Trieb
Mr. H.A. Wittenmyer and Mrs. Fern Wittenmyer
Mr. Gerald Wittenmyer
Mr. Keith Wittenmyer
Mr. Robert Wittenmyer
Mrs. Ida M. Woods
Mrs. Frank S. Woodruff and Mrs. Reba Woodruff
Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Collier

A STORYTELLING

The whole history of Nall Avenue Baptist Church is very rich, and, in the collective memory of those who have seen all or most of its years, is filled with treasured detail. And, of course, its history is not yet complete. What follows is therefor not at all intended to be comprehensive. A few of some of the most exciting stories and events are told of here. This is an attempt to portray the life of the church in just a few pages.

THE STORY OF BEGINNINGS

In the beginning of this body of Christ that is now Nall Avenue Baptist church, God moved. He moved in the hearts of great people. He moved in their overcoming obstacles and in their recognizing opportunities that He provided. God is the author of all things and He is the author of a great story that is the life of this Church. Through the winter of 1953, though it is hard to imagine today, there was no Southern Baptist Church in Johnson County. Believing people in the growing communities in the northern part of the county were attending congregations of churches of other affiliations. In some cases, these people had moved into their new community of Mission, Prairie Village, or Fairway, but continued to attend churches in the community they had left. Some of these people had longed for and been praying for God to open a way for a Southern Baptist church in their neighborhood for years. In the spring of 1953, God began to fulfill the desire of their hearts.

THE LOST BIBLE

The well-remembered and often told story has a providential start. Tony and Stella Stock, a man with a growing plumbing business and a strong woman with vision, were proud of their son, Lavell Seats, and his wife, Betty; and their work as missionaries in Africa. Paige Seats, Tony and Stella Stock's grandson, visited churches in the area to show slides and speak about his parents' work. After speaking to a gathering at Berean Baptist Church, Kansas City, Kansas, Paige inadvertently left his Bible there.

The pastor at Berean, Reverend Raymond Collier, arranged to return the Bible to Paige by giving it to Mrs. Stock. When he brought it to her, she invited him in and they spoke for a while. He and his family were from Texas. He had been a Chaplain in the Army and was a Lieutenant Colonel in the Army Reserves. He had a married daughter living in Shawnee, a son pastoring back in Texas and another son in the seminary. They pondered the similarities briefly together. The Stocks were becoming a family of missionaries and the Colliers, a family of pastors. The similarities were interesting, but perhaps their talents and efforts could be combined. The conversation became focused upon their shared desire for a new church. Their enthusiasm was great, but they would wait upon God and pray. Stella would engage three other cornerstone families, and Reverend Collier would be ready to preach God's word. Whether or not they thought the meeting was providential at the time, as the story has been told and retold, God has been and is given the glory with regard to this coincidence.

BIRTHED THROUGH PRAYER

Stella knew the importance of prayer and patience, but once she had spoken with these three other families, the waiting was all but over. If you talk to people who knew her, they will tell you that once Stella set her mind to something, it would shortly be done. She has appropriately been referred to as the matriarch of Nall Avenue, and a force to be reckoned with. So, the waiting would indeed soon be over, but first the prayer continued and intensified.

After some individual prayer and meditation, Stella got on her phone and told these families, "You're coming to my house so we can get started on a Southern Baptist church in Johnson County. We're going to need something for children, we're going to need to find a place to worship. Come with some ideas!"

And so, they did. Now gathered together with Tony, Stella, Paige, and Reverend Collier, were the Donoho family – Arthur, Irma, Linda and Allen; Hillyard and Fern Wittenmyer; Robert and Edith Cress; and a summer student worker, Joy Stephens. In essence, the church was already born. One early summer evening meeting on the Stock's patio grew into more meetings and then weekly meetings. Interested people praying on their own became committed people praying as a body.



Hillyard Wittenmyer prayed without ceasing. He was known for that. You could be at a morning prayer meeting with him and he'd begin to pray and you'd end up missing your lunch. All of these people were special in one way or many ways. These folks would study, worship and pray as one, continuing to look toward the possibility of serving more people and bringing more people together.

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

Nobody, least of all Stella Stock, intended for these meetings to be held on a patio for very long. A property and a building in which to hold church services would be necessary. God was already at work on this need.



A home on a large lot at the corner of 67th Street and Nall Avenue was going to be sold. The folks who lived there, a retiring Presbyterian missionary and his wife, were not only interested in selling the property, but were willing to let meetings be held there before its sale. It wasn't specifically a church property or building, but it was spacious and available. At the start, these fine people hosted the meetings that were held in their house. The

meetings took place in the basement and the bedroom was sometimes used as a nursery. The facility was not ideal, but the opportunity seemed to be perfect. Any other difficulties would be manageable. Get the property and start the church.

Not so fast! Not so perfect! Not so easy! Nearby property owners began to hear that that the residence might become a church. Not all of them were pleased. Not all were even accommodating. Some tried to use the zoning laws of the city of Prairie Village to block the sale of the house. There was already a church on the corner, they argued. They would fight another church at 67th and Nall. Some remember opponents saying they would rather see a drinking establishment built on the property than a church. But honorable, steadfast men persevered. They attended city meetings, met with city officials, and persuaded neighbors. Ultimately, the opposition was quieted enough that the church plan again moved forward.

And where would the money come from? A down payment would be required. Then there would be monthly obligations. Without faith regarding resources, there would not be a new church. Four of the

men, Tony Stock, Art Donoho, Robert Cress and Hillyard Wittenmyer, signed a note for the down payment on July 30, 1953. Everyone who understood the commitment that these men had made would show respect for their show of faith by working hard to grow the church, increase membership and pay the bills.

A CHURCH IS BORN

A month later the first worship service was held. A week after that, on September 6th, following the worship service, a business meeting was held and a call was issued for the person who would be the first pastor of Nall Avenue Baptist. Reverend Raymond Collier accepted the call. It would be his ninth mission undertaken through the Southern Baptist Convention, and he stated his intention that it be permanent. He wanted to finish his pastoring at this new church.



Rev. and Mrs. Raymond Collier

One more matter of importance remained before his ministry would begin. On the pleasant late summer afternoon of September the 13th, a ceremony was held on the lawn to officially constitute the church. Reverend Collier officiated and an honored guest from the Kansas Convention of Southern Baptist, its Secretary-Treasurer, Dr. N.J. Westmoreland, brought the message. The Church Covenant and Articles of Faith were read. Two weeks later, on September the 27th, only about half a year after it had been conceived, Reverend Collier preached the first sermon to the first official Southern Baptist church in Johnson County, KS.

CHARTER MEMBERSHIP

Charter memberships would be offered to all who joined the church in the first thirty days. By October 13th, fifty-three people became charter members, and as the church's fiftieth anniversary approaches, six of those charter members continue to be a part of this body. Bill Rowland, his brother Don Rowland, Dick and Betty Callahan, Helen Elsbury and Lola Ashwill are studying, praying, and worshipping here, and continuing to build this church and edify its membership.

Two weeks after the constitution ceremony, a quorum of first members voted to establish the board of deacons. The vote determined that members of Nall Avenue who had served as deacons of other Baptist churches would make up the board. Those men were Frank Woodruff, Arthur Donoho, Robert Cress, William Rowland, Sr., and Paul Laughrey. Another vote directed one tenth of all undesignated receipts to the Cooperative Program of the Kansas Convention of Southern Baptist for world missions.

For most people, membership in a Southern Baptist church means offering your gifts, talents and time. At the beginning of a church, many gifts, talents and time are needed. The people who start a church often find themselves using more than one gift or talent, and offering anytime they can spare. Fittingly then, when Sunday School began on October 4, Bob Cress was a Deacon and also was the first Sunday School Superintendent. The Training Union, which was analogous to today's Discipleship Training, was organized the same day. It was a special Sunday evening teaching session not unlike Sunday School in the morning. It had 27 attendees that first day, and Frank Woodruff was the Director in addition to being a deacon. The church's first revival also began on this weekend. Those attending on this Sunday had seen

the first Sunday School, the first Training Union and of course, the first offering. \$197.41 may not sound like a lot, but in today's dollars [2003] it was about \$15,000.

The first baptisms could not be held at the new property since no baptistry had been built. The building had only been owned by the church for about 4 months. How long would it be before this church had a place baptize? No one knew. Baptisms, the most visible public profession of life-changing belief in Christ, would not be subject to convenience for Nall Avenue. Michigan Avenue Baptist Church in Kansas City, Kansas, hosted the first baptisms of Nall Avenue members Linda Donoho, George Pilgram, Jr. and Don Rowland on November 1, 1953. Baptisms hosted by other churches, including First Southern Baptist, also in Kansas City, Kansas, and Calvary in Kansas City, Missouri, would continue until the new sanctuary was completed nine years later in November 1962.

DECISIONS, DECISIONS

On November 4th, the church voted to sell bonds to finance the purchase of the property and elected Omer Pruitt treasurer of the Building Fund. In just over three months, \$17,500 of the bonds were sold, which would be about \$124,000 today. A Board of Trustees was elected to insure good accountability. Frank Woodruff, Tony Stock and Omer Pruitt were the board members. On December 9th, another vote secured a Charter, and permanent officers were elected. Bob Cress had signed his name to the bank note, was serving on the Board of Deacons, and now became Sunday School Superintendent. Irma Donoho became Church Clerk. Her husband, Art, had also signed the note and was serving on the Board of Trustees.

Frank Woodruff served on the Board of Trustees, was Chairman of the Board of Deacons, and was the Training Union Director. George Pilgram, Jr., Helen Elsbury's first husband, would hold the office of Treasurer. A new member, who had just recently joined the church, Berkley Bennison, was added to the Board of Deacons.

Before the month was gone, another milestone. On December 30, 1953, Nall Avenue Baptist Church was officially incorporated. A week later, on January 7, 1954, twenty ladies gathered and organized the Women's Missionary Union, then Women in Christian Service, and now is part of Women's Ministries. Not surprisingly, the ever-present Stella Stock was named as their President. The same group of ladies also that day started the Sunbeams, Girls Auxiliary, and Royal Ambassadors. These groups taught children, young ladies, and young men respectively about missions and the mission field.

A SURPRISE LETTER

By the spring of 1954, people were found in almost every corner of the church property. What had been a chicken coop was a sort of classroom for older children and teens. Over the winter, someone had put tile down and brought in a space heater to make it usable. Other classes were held in the garage. Sometimes Sunday School classes were held outside in a small orchard of fruit trees and the children would pick cherries on such mornings. The situation was far from perfect, but workable and fun.

Then without warning, one of the builders of the church, friend and pastor, Raymond Collier, took a moment in the Wednesday evening proceedings to read a letter to those gathered. It was his letter of resignation. He said that his wife was not well, and this was the apparent reason for his desire to reduce responsibilities. Respecting his wishes, the church voted to honor his resignation, and it became effective on Jun 15, 1954. Shortly after, he and his wife moved and contact with them was lost.

So, inconveniently and without official pastoral leadership, but with resolve, the first Vacation Bible School was held from June 16 to June 25, 1954, with Mrs. Irma Donoho as director. 104 children enrolled – participation that would have been considered strong even by today’s standards. And despite that it was, according to Helen Elsbury, “hotter than all get out!”, it was a very happy result. People who were part of the church were strengthened by the success.

PROGRESS AND A NEW PASTOR

Something else was going on during the time over which VBS was held. A pulpit committee was formed and the members prayed about and searched for candidates for pastor. They found and presented William G. O’Dell, formerly pastor of Maple Street Baptist Church, Wichita, KS. Then the membership affirmed the committee’s choice and voted to call Reverend O’Dell. On Wednesday evening July 21, he held his first service at Nall Avenue.

The youngest of those that come to Nall Avenue on Sunday mornings are called “bed babies”. The first “bed baby” was born on October 3rd, 1954, and so was a tradition that continues today. Roy Burton (Rusty) Callahan was born to Dick and Betty Callahan. Stella Stock visited the family at the hospital. She brought with her a New Testament of the Bible to present to the baby as a gift as is traditional in Southern Baptist churches. 50 years later, when a baby is born into the Nall Avenue family, a New Testament is still presented to him or her. Over the years, many of those children have made professions of faith in Christ and been baptized into the church.

Numbers at the end of the first year told of the progress of the young church. 16 new members came by baptism, and 96 came by letter or statement. Sunday School enrollment swelled to 146, with Training Union participation of 73. The church body had even elected and sent messengers to the annual associational meeting in its first year. Strong organization had been evident from the start. In recognition of God’s work and in anticipation of the work to come, all of the people associated with Nall Avenue Baptist Church rejoiced in His goodness and prayed for continuing guidance and strength.

“AND THE LORD ADDED TO THEIR NUMBER...”

While statistics do not seem particularly spiritual, church records can give an indication of the body’s spiritual direction.

For several years, the new fellowship at 67th and Nall Avenue increased in numbers. By September of 1954, the church had borrowed the Calvary baptistry for the baptism of 16 souls, and membership had risen from none to 105. On year later, 14 more decisions for Christ and subsequent baptisms had been recorded, and membership grew to 177. God knew that there would be another connection between these two churches three years later.

Six baptisms and membership of 212 were noted for 1956. These records suggest that even in its earliest years, the church was developing into a healthy, strong body. In each of the years recorded, the church held at least one series of revival meetings, the gospel message was seeded in many hearts, and the results came in the salvation of souls. As is typical with such workings of the Holy Spirit, some souls were harvested at or within the body of Nall Avenue Baptist, and some elsewhere. But the result was the increase of God’s kingdom and the lifting up of His name.

Receipts increased during the early years, as well. Growth in members and ministry must also be accompanied by financial growth. Contributions to the general offering grew from \$13,590.81 in the first year to \$33,459.17 in the third year of the church. To us, today, that would be like \$95,000 to \$230,000.

Gifts to missions increased from \$1613 in the first year to \$2437 in the second, and \$2874 in the third. That would be like \$47,000 over the last 3 years to us [in 2003].

From the start, the church also evidenced strong organization. Representatives had attended the annual associational meeting. The first Vacation Bible School had been a surprising success in the very hot weather, no mean feat! Some elected lay leaders responsible for the strength of those first few years have already been mentioned and some are noted in the table below. Many others, of course, were also instrumental to the growth of the church.

	1954	1955	1956
Sunday School Superintendent	Mr. R.D. Cress	Mr. R.D. Cress	Mr. R.D. Cress
WMU President	Mrs. Stella (Tony) Stock	Mrs. Stella (Tony) Stock	Mrs. Wallace Gregg
Training Union Director	Mr. H.A. Wittenmyer	Mr. H.A. Wittenmyer	Mr. Frank Woodruff
Church Treasurer	Mr. George Pilgram, Jr.	Mr. George Pilgram, Jr.	Mr. Clyde Carter

In that second church year of 1955, the larger number of people were being noticed by just about everyone. Worship, study and meeting spaces were feeling quite a bit tighter. So – follow closely now – on March 9, 1955, a building committee was appointed, on May 23, 1956, a ground-breaking was held, and on September 12, 1956, first services in the Educational Building were held. The new building would function as Sanctuary [on the second floor] and classrooms for Sunday School [on the lower level]. The original house would now be used for the overflow Sunday School classes only.

Growth is change. Good change. But other change will come around too. In the early part of 1957, Pastor William O’Dell’s responsibility to the church came to an end. Nobody today is anxious to talk about this. Whether memories fail, or tongues are properly guarded, it seems clear that it was unfortunate and one of several changes that were challenges to a young church.

THE CALL OF OWEN DAHLOR

A pulpit committee searched for and considered candidates until in November they presented the name of Rev. Owen C. Dahlor. He accepted the church’s call and on December the 15th, 1957, began his ministry. He brought with him his wife, Barbara, and two children, Kathy and Norman. His parents, Hollis and Myra Dahlor, had been members at Calvary, where some of those baptisms were performed in 1954. And Owen had grown up in that church. Now the connection only God had known had been completed. It was to be the beginning of a good season for Nall Avenue Baptist Church.



Rev. Owen and Barbara Dahlor (1988)

A HEART FOR MISSIONS

A scant five years after its organizational meeting, the new church felt God leading them to establish a mission on the far west side of the metropolitan area. In October of 1958, the Missions Committee

recommended that the church contract to buy property at 13216 West 95th Street in Lenexa. The church voted to extend an offer of \$12,000, with a down payment of \$2500, contingent on zoning to be worked out with the Lenexa planning and zoning commission. In a specially called business meeting the next month, the church approved the execution of a loan for \$8500 to be used in purchasing the property.

A note in the January 7, 1959, business meeting points out that Mr. Mosier was not able to present the Training Union report because, as a member of the Missions Committee, he was in Lenexa working out the purchase of property there. In April, the church approved an application for a supplemental salary of the mission pastor to be paid by the Home Missions Board. On May 24, 1959, the Missions Committee recommended that the church purchase two acres fronting Santa Fe Trail Drive in Lenexa for a price of \$10,000. This property was to be used as the site for the Lenexa Southern Baptist Chapel [that later was named Calvary Baptist Church]. The recommendation was approved. In her handwritten notes on the resolution, Mrs. Irma Donoho made mention of the interest on the 10-year note, which was to be "one percent per annum." By August, seven members were presented for membership into the church "from the Lenexa Mission."

GROWING PAINS AND GOD'S SOLUTIONS

Seven years had passed and all of the vision, coincidence, opportunity, hard work and commitment and change had been like gathering and stacking sticks and wood for a fire. Now that fire would be lit, and it could be said the spark was the arrival of Reverend Dahlor. As he and his growing congregation came together in spirit and effort, the church began a kind of coming of age. In his first three years Pastor Dahlor had led the church toward ministry, as evidenced by the commitment to missions, and toward growth.

The growing membership had begun to stretch the classroom and worship space. This was a community of believers that had worshipped without a sanctuary for its first eight years. In the fall of 1961, a sanctuary building to seat 600 was finally on the drawing board. On November the 4th, ground was broken and eight days less than one year later, the first service in the new building was held. At a cost of \$165,000, it was about as expensive as a small house in its neighborhood is now.

Membership continued to grow, reaching 516. Talk of a church library started. A committee was formed and book by book the library was put together. A limited church staff was envisioned, and Robert Hughes was called as minister of education to coordinate the Sunday School and volunteer efforts, and to handle administrative matters. The first attempt to keep a minister of music began with the call of Edward Damer to the part-time position in 1962. Now the sanctuary was beautiful and spacious, but classroom space and parking were getting squeezed.

After what this body had seen God do already, it was almost not surprising that a large residence just south of the church was received as a donation. [Several years later the "Nall house," as it was called, was later moved to the next block south and today is owned by Keith and Pam Elliott, long-time members.] That donation made the further acquisition of available property to the southeast appropriate, and so it was purchased. In the two years ending in 1963, the physical church had effectively doubled.

All was well, but it was necessary to call a new part-time minister of music, Edward Gilham. During 1964, the membership reached 637 and the budget grew to \$90,000 (about \$281,000 in 2003 dollars).

GIVING THANKS AND NEW TRADITIONS

God was unquestionably honoring the faithfulness of these people and their leadership with His blessing. Virgil and Lucy Adkins suggested that the church and its members express special thanks for such blessing. Virgil volunteered to cook a breakfast on Thanksgiving morning. It had been meant for just that Thanksgiving Day, but was so well-received and so memorable that it has been enjoyed each and every year since. When, in 1983, the Adkins moved to Chattanooga, Tennessee, Bill and Linda Wostrel assumed the leadership role in continuing the tradition. It is just such traditions, such thankfulness, and such willingness to serve that create the heart of a church. This was a maturing community, a group of people expressing themselves, spiritually – God involved and worshipped. This was a coming of age.

Before the end of 1964, again a new part-time minister of music was called as J.W.B. Chilton took a crack at it. Also, Owen Dahlor's grandfather, Dr. E.D. Owen, conducted a fall revival. During 1965, the church again reached out to and served the people of the community through the establishment of Nall Avenue Boy Scout Troop #279. Jim Dunavent served as the first Scoutmaster. Today, Dave Janner fulfills that role. Many of the boys in the church have been a member of this troop. Some of those boys are now men in the church.

By the end of 1966, Carl Yessen, still active in our church today, was called as minister of education, church membership had reached 768, mission gifts rose to \$16,288, and total receipts were \$84,219. In 1968, the first full-time minister of music was called for Nall Avenue. Harry Taylor also handled administrative duties for the church. Another first that became a regular event took place when the youth made their first trip to Glorieta Baptist Conference Center in New Mexico.

Nall Avenue members today are beneficiaries of a special New Year's Eve service. They gather and observe a distinctive Lord's Supper to reflect on the past year, pray and plan for the new year. This tradition began 34 years ago in 1969. Now, as then, the pastor and deacons create a quiet, worshipful and meaningful experience as they lead in the serving of the bread and the cup in remembrance of the Lord on a night that many celebrate away from their churches, or even without regard for their creator. As the now maturing church approached a new decade with a membership of over 1000, its unity, traditions, and growth of both the people and the house of worship were preparations for expanding influence.

GROWTH IN THE 70s

In the decade of the 1960s, Nall Avenue had seen growth of about 100%. Could the 1970s be as fruitful? The fire was burning brightly so it must be time to gather more wood, right? Continue to build, continue to grow? Well, that is about what the proverbial movers and so-called shakers of the church did. The decade would see membership rise again, though not by 100%. Membership during the decade would nearly reach 1500, and two more building projects would be completed.

During 1970, the building [on the east side] that consists of offices, classrooms and a chapel was constructed. Before the end of 1978, the Christian Life Center or "CLC" would be finished. In the four years between the two building projects, several significant events took place that demonstrated the commitment of the church to minister to the community. In the fall of 1971, the adult choir put together a presentation of "The Nazarene" that stirred the community so much in performances at the church, that strings were tugged and pulled to mount two more performances at Shawnee Mission Northwest High School. The pastor's wife, Barbara Dahlor, and Mary Jane Beal, Gary Moore and Gene Stokes played

lead roles. Later the same year, the Youth Choir traveled to Texas on a mission trip. Harry Taylor, the first full-time Music Minister was creating some excitement with his direction of the music programs. So much so, that the following year the Youth Choir again planned a mission trip of performances, but this time traveled three states – Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri.

NEW MINISTRIES AND TWO MISSIONS

Before the end of 1972, a fall Evangelistic Crusade brought 52 decisions for Christ, another mission work was started in Olathe, and John Burnham was called as the first full-time minister of education. (John is an uncle to Martin Burnham, the missionary that was killed during an attempt to rescue him and wife from an Islamic fundamentalist group in the Philippines in 2002).

Two community ministries that reached beyond the traditional church roles started in 1973 – twice a year blood drives for the Community Blood Center of Kansas City, Missouri, and a day care for area children at the direction of Nancy Zacharias.

Also at this time, the church was challenged to reach beyond its primary community to help a church which was being forced to disband. The Westport Baptist Church located at 4225 Mission Road, approached the leadership at Nall about taking control of their property. Part opportunity and part burden, the challenge would be accepted. Soon after the commitment to Westport began, the mission work in Olathe, undertaken two years earlier, came to fruition and Vista Baptist Church was born.

So, while members were focused on their ministries and getting used to the new Chapel/Office space before the beginning of the building of the CLC, ministries in many forms reached to the community nearby and beyond to other parts of the metropolitan area. Bill Reedy took on the mantle of youth minister in 1974, and Bill Lewis was called as education minister in 1975. The Women's Missionary Union put together the first "Strawberry Patch Cookbook" with recipes contributed by the congregation. This would also become a tradition, though not an annual one.

LAOS COMES TO NALL AVENUE

In December of 1975, in the wake of the Vietnam War and other conflicts in southeast Asia, Laos was sending men to the U.S. to be trained as military officers. Marith Manirajd was one such man, receiving his training at Ft. Leavenworth. He and his wife, Penn, were attending Nall Avenue, and preparing to return to Laos and to their children when Vietnam and Laos fell – and Marith's government pay ended. The church helped to relieve some of this financial difficulty and some of its members also helped them get their five children out of Laos, reuniting them with Marith and Penn. Karen Kessler was a key leader in these good works, which seemed purely humanitarian at the time, but would come to mean so much more later. The Manirajds, their family and friends, many of whom were refugees, would not forget these acts of love. In this circumstance God's ultimate ways were very mysterious, and again, Nall Avenue Baptist Church was one of His tools.

FOSTERING FELLOWSHIP

The idea of the local church as a place where families could go to do more than worship is not a brand new one. The trend that has created large properties with health clubs, community centers, basketball and volleyball courts, meeting and media facilities might have found most of its recent momentum in the form of real estate development and ready financing. But all the way back in 1976, the church on the southeast corner of Nall and 67th Street conceived of an efficient space that included a full kitchen, gymnasium, classrooms and restrooms.

While it now led the Kansas-Nebraska Convention in Cooperative Program giving, it would continue to meet its self-imposed obligation to missions and also embark upon another construction project. Completed and dedicated in 1978, the year of the year of the church's 25th anniversary, this multi-purpose facility, the Christian Life Center (CLC), hosted its first event at Christmas time. The annual Christmas banquet came off almost without a hitch in the spacious and convenient new building.

During these years, just a few other things happened. The music committee proposed a Bell Choir and three octaves of handbells were purchased. Bill Anderson came as youth minister, Lowell Clark came as education minister and yes, another minister of music was called – Ed Otto. A telephone Sunday School class was started as a ministry to shut-ins. 13 years later, in 1990, the Reader's Digest church citation was awarded to Nall Avenue for this ministry. Carolyn Orbin was the first Coordinator of a new group called J.O.Y. (Just Older Youth), which sought to emphasize activities for and ministries to those age 55 and older. This group is still active today with Ryan Hitchcock directing activities. Then, as now, they hold monthly meetings, volunteer in and outside the church, take day trips and attend conferences provided by the Southern Baptist Convention. Whether it is referred to as a tradition or not, it continues to bind people together, build relationships and help others.

SERVING THE HISPANIC COMMUNITY

The construction of the CLC was not the only building going on. While it was going up, the Westport project was finding direction. Ben Ortiz was called to establish and build a bilingual ministry there in 1977. The neighborhoods around 43rd Street and Mission Road, near the church building, were populated with people of Spanish and Cuban descent. Ben spoke Spanish and felt connected to the community. He had been a part of the prior church there for a short time before it disbanded, and had continued to help people in that community with things like finding work, beginning the process of obtaining United States citizenship and staying in touch with family and friends outside the U.S. These folks had largely been introduced to Christianity through the Catholic church, so committing to a Southern Baptist church was outside their experience. They gravitated towards the love they felt and help that they received, but felt that they were almost in betrayal of their 'church of origin.' Members of Nall Avenue tried to help this church and its ministries. Charles and Barbara Rocklage were among those who went over to Westport from time to time to play the piano in the worship service there.

MUSIC, SERVING, AND OTHER SPIRITUAL GIFTS

In the summer and fall of 1979, two exciting musical productions were staged. The relatively new handbells, in the hands of the Chapel Handbell Choir performed "Bells in Concert" on June 17th, which was recorded live in the sanctuary. Ed Otto conducted that performance. On September 28th, a big production of a new musical called "Just for You," written and conducted by Kurt Kaiser, involved virtually all of the music talents in the church. The Sanctuary, Chapel, and Young Musicians Choirs combined for this show.

People of the church were actively applying their talents and gifts. They were making sacrifices and serving. While acts of contribution and sacrifice could not ultimately save the Westport project, they had revived others. Not every new church started by this firm foundation thrived, but some did. The Laotian ministry had begun with the support of one family, and now had its own Sunday School being taught in its own language. It continued to serve new immigrants by providing shelter, food, interpreting and help with job hunting. As the decade of the 1970s came to a close, the heart of Nall Avenue Baptist was ever-opening to God's leading.

A GROWING HEART FOR MISSIONS

The Clear Creek Baptist Mission was in need of support, and Nall Avenue decided to provide it. Also in 1980, a special offering to relieve world hunger was proposed and was called the “Feed the Hungry” program. Giving to this effort occurred on the first Sunday of each month and was intended to be in addition to regular monthly giving. The program was considered to be a success with average monthly contributions to hunger of \$350-\$400.

In the fall of that year, the church called two staff members. The new minister of education, Robert E. (Bob) Clark, arrived in 1980 and has now served the people of our church for 23 of the 50 years in which Nall has served the community. A long-time member of the church, Ray Hildebrand, was called as minister of youth/activities.

It hardly seemed possible, but by 1982, Owen Dahlor had been pastoring at Nall for 25 years. He and the entire body of the church gave thanks and praise to God for the success and stability that had graced the church during those years. Also, that year, a stewardship committee was organized to support and insulate the office of Treasurer. The management of the church’s finances had now grown beyond the capabilities and administration of just one person.

As the church observed its 30th anniversary in 1983, the Laotian ministry continued to thrive and was upgraded to mission status. Thira Siengsukon, who was attending Central Baptist Seminary in Kansas City, was called as pastor of the work. In the coming years, a Sunday worship service began and Saturday Bible studies were organized. The worship service was held in the chapel for many years. Several hundred Laotians professed faith and were baptized.

Another mission work was started in DeSoto in 1984. Also, that year, the Western Hills Fellowship began as a Bible study at a local motel. Bill Lipe led this study. Mike Fetters took over as minister of youth/activities. Twenty percent of all receipts went to mission causes and church membership was 1534.

With all of the outreach, service, and ministry efforts going on, you’d think a body of believers would be satisfied and take a break. You’d be wrong. Mike Fetters and the men of the church, young and old, sought to volunteer together to build, repair, and/or maintain people’s homes, yards, garages and so forth. A “Prayer of Spiritual Awakening” seminar was held, apparently on the assumption that these busy people were sleeping. A tape-ministry with recordings of Sunday services was developed for shut-ins. Ethiopian famine relief received contributions under the program called “Let’s Show We Care.” The youth of the church made their first trip to Centrifuge, a national Southern Baptist retreat for spiritual renewal at Glorieta, New Mexico. The first dedication services for babies born into the church began. The benevolence committee proposed and started annual Sunday morning collections for specific items of need. Some examples were coats, sweaters, mittens, blankets, toys, fans and foodstuffs.

Whew! As 1985 faded and 1986 came into full view, the pace of developments did not slow. Finally, after four years of effort, Clear Creek Mission in DeSoto was officially constituted as a church. That summer a recreation camp was held, and the daycare offered a single parent’s day out program.

A mission was established in Louisburg, Kansas. At the time, this small town situated about 15 miles south of Overland Park was growing fast. In a little over a decade, the little town would become another rapidly growing suburb of the Kansas City metropolitan area, and the mission would become one of the greatest evidences of God’s work at Nall Avenue Baptist Church.

TOWARD A YEAR OF JUBILEE

The Stewardship Committee made an historic proposal. The suggestion was forwarded that the church might retire all of its remaining debt. A campaign called "Together We Can" was undertaken with energy and excitement. There was also excitement at two revivals – one in the spring with Harold Bryson and one in the fall with magician Felix Snipes.

The daycare ministry kept looking for ways to be an effective support to the community. At its inception, it was hoped that a daycare would be a way to introduce people to the church the body of believers of which it was comprised. It was hoped that membership would increase through this outreach. At the same time, those involved truly were attempting to minister to the children and their parents. They had offered the single parent's day out, and now, a year later, they would add a mother's day out.

As Reverend Dahlor and the church marked his 30th anniversary in 1987, yet another opportunity to help a struggling church was presented. Parkway Baptist Chapel, Kansas City, Kansas, sought support and Nall again agreed to provide it. Stan Jones was called as minister of music when Pete Butler stepped down after a four-year period of stability in the department.

1987 passed into 1988 and a ministry that was called a satellite of Nall Avenue was proposed and approved, and Steve Reed was called as pastor. This ministry later became College Heights Baptist Church.

In just two years of giving to the "Together We Can" program, the goal was met and all remaining debt attributable to Nall Avenue Baptist Church was paid. The faithful of NABC had accomplished, on their own, something like the Old Testament Jubilee year, in which all debts were forgiven. A note-burning service was held, which was an understandably happy occasion. Those gathered gave thanks to God for guiding the church along a path filled with blessings.

CHURCH HELPS ESTABLISH A LAO SEMINARY

Thira Siengsukon had now pastored the Laotian Church at NABC for five years. He and his wife, Montira, became aware that the Lao ethnic group was in desperate need of Lao-speaking pastors and lay leaders for the congregations throughout the United States, especially in the Midwest. They presented their vision of a school to develop pastors and leaders to Owen Dahlor. With his help, and under the leadership of the Kansas-Nebraska Convention of Southern Baptists, and Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, the Lao School of Ministry began. Thira and Montira were appointed to set up the school for the first two years; all seminary classes were taught right here at Nall Avenue.

The youth traveled to Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation in North Dakota on summer mission. They would return to the reservation each of the next two summers. On this first trip they would witness and contribute to the establishment of the first Southern Baptist church on the reservation.

A MONTH OF SURPRISES

In 1989, the Pony Express stewardship campaign was used to maintain the healthy financial condition of the church. Pledges amounting to 98% of budget were made. Then came the summer of 1989. The church had completed a decade of emphasis on starting new churches. Harry Taylor was back serving as interim music director...again. Pastor Owen Dahlor was in his early 60's and the assumption, by congregation and himself alike, was that God would leave him at Nall until his retirement.

But God had a big surprise in store for Nall Avenue. In September organist Neil Brown submitted his resignation. The next week Youth Minister Mike Fetters read his resignation to the congregation after accepting a call from a church in Oklahoma City. Over the next three weeks, two farewell receptions gave the church members opportunity to express appreciation and say good-byes to Neil and Mike, and Mike's family.

However, God was not yet through in this month of transition. The next week the congregation was stunned as they heard their pastor of 32 years present another emotional letter of resignation – his own. Owen and Barbara Dahlor would be moving to Sun City West, Arizona, where he would pastor the senior adult church there. Even the Dahlors were surprised by this call, but they knew in their hearts that this was God's work and timing. About a month later, on November 12, 1989, a farewell service and reception for Owen and Barbara celebrated their ministry at Nall Avenue Baptist Church, along with a multitude of hugs, thank you's, tears and well wishes.

An underlying question for some was, Why? Was there conflict, discontent, discord? The answer was no! Definitely, no! While God was writing a new chapter in the ministries of Owen, Mike and Neil, He was also setting the stage for a new era in the life of the church. And so, the church put the search for a new pastor to the top of its priority list. A new youth minister, and of course, another music minister would need to be found, but the spiritual leader of the church would have to come first. Bob Clark, minister of education for nine years already, suddenly was surrounded by three interim members on the church staff. Peck Lindsay, Executive Director of the Kansas-Nebraska Convention of Southern Baptists, became the interim pastor through August 1990.

JAMES RYNOLDS CALLED AS PASTOR

After 32 years of service, Owen Dahlor was gone, so who would now tend the fire? Peck Lindsay was standing guard, but who would answer the call to again fan the flames? God is no respecter of a person's calendar. He does not work out his will on the schedule of a group of people, or community, or a nation. So, a whole new staff would be built around the remaining pillar of the church leadership, the minister of education, Bob Clark. And it would be done at God's direction and in His time.



Dr. James and Ann Reynolds

Thankfully, God would bring this church together with its new pastor in less than a year. Peck Lindsay watched over the first Laotian Seminary graduation and the beginning of the Children's Bible Drill club. Then, Dr. James E. Reynolds was called and began his ministry which continues as the church reaches its 50th anniversary. In 1991, Dick Dearwester came as minister of youth/singles, and David L. Farris as music minister, so that by the 27th annual Thanksgiving breakfast, the new church staff was together.

Also remembered that year, a revival with evangelist Roy Buckelew and musician John Montgomery; the second graduation of the Laotian Seminary; Thira and Montira Siengsukon were commissioned to Mission Service Corps; three Laotians were licensed to preach; and Clifford Bennett was called to pastor the Louisburg Community Church. Dr. Larry McSwain directed an evangelism conference titled "God's Plan for the Future," and an estate and budget planning seminar was held for the benefit of members.

1992 was the first year that the youth went to an event called Super Summer, a youth camp sponsored by our state Baptist convention. 50 young men and women and their sponsors took the trip. The youth also sent a contingent to Louisburg for a mission trip. Later in the year a potluck meal was organized bringing together the Nall Avenue and Laotian congregations.

RELIEF IS SPELLED G-I-V-I-N-G

The next year was wet and windy. It was the spring and summer of flooding such as had not been seen in over a century here in the Midwest. In our nation, it was the beginning of a long recovery from one of the most devastating hurricanes in modern times – Hurricane Andrew. People along the Mississippi from Iowa to Arkansas lost their homes or were forced to leave, not knowing what they might come back to. Food, water, and medicine were among important commodities in short supply, even severe shortage. Devastation and debris were strewn mile after mile. Immediately following the hurricane, water was the most critical need. Food, medicine, tents, wood, clothing and much more was shipped from all over the United States as caring people reached out to those affected.

Nall Avenue pitched in with relief drives for people caught in either disaster. In addition to their giving, many Nall people got their hands dirty, too, helping local flood victims. They gave to those causes, they gave clothes, toys, food, and blankets on Sunday mornings, and they gave to the church, which had a budget of \$602,660. After they had given, they gave more and sponsored a “Christmas in August” to benefit Wyandotte Baptist Ministries.

The Youth/Singles took a mission trip to Plainsville, KS, and later that year they sponsored a revival by Terry McIlvain, Ray Hildebrand, and Paul Land. 67 youth and sponsors went back to Super Summer. The daycare conducted “Operation Holiday” for single parents. Two fall revivals were held, one with Roy Moody and Terry Brooks, and one with Harold Bryson and Harry Taylor. Some may have wondered if Harry was coming back to be minister of music again, but he was only here for the revival. David Farris was still minister of music – though he would step down a year later.

A 40th ANNIVERSARY AND NEW LIFE

NABC had given, gone, conducted, and been revived. Now it would celebrate its 40th anniversary with a banquet, praise and thanksgiving worship service, open house, alumni choir, exhibits and food drive. The 40th anniversary was followed by the 30th annual thanksgiving breakfast, and the decade was not even half over.

A New Life arrived in 1994. The Laotian congregation continued to grow and the mission adopted the name New Life. Their congregation had other nationalities too, but the one thing they all had in common was “new life in Christ.” The adult choir changed places with Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Kansas City, Mo. Goals for the Annie Armstrong, Viola Webb and Lottie Moon Missions Offerings were exceeded. There was a men’s rally with Les Reed and a ladies’ brunch with the music group “Three for One.” Mary Jo Troughton was called as minister of missions, starting a multi-housing emphasis, and Steve Holt was called as minister of music/senior adults. 69 youth and sponsors returned to Super Summer.

Now the decade was half over. Ed and Diana Stuckey came as co-ministers of missions responsible for the multi-housing ministry. Mack Roark, Jerry Cain, Harold Bryson, and James Harper spoke on four “Festival of Faith” Sundays in the spring. \$53,000 to supplement the budget was raised in the “Working Together to Improve the Picture Campaign.” The money was applied to building repairs. Youth/Singles traveled on mission to Craig, Colorado.

In 1996, Steve Holt discovered a spoken word and musical Easter composition that captured the imagination of those involved and the leadership of the church. Free tickets were distributed throughout the community and two performances played to a full sanctuary. In the fall, Nall conducted free distribution of batteries for smoke alarms for Daylight Savings time change with a note about Jesus as the Power of Light.

When Dick Dearwester was called away to serve part-time as an employee of the Kansas-Nebraska Convention of Southern Baptists, he continued to serve Nall part-time as well. Grant Mong was called to serve alongside Mr. Dearwester. So closed 1997.

MIRACLES IN LOUISBURG

One of the recent mission thrusts in which Nall Avenue Baptist Church has been involved has been helping the mission in Louisburg build its own meeting facility. In 1998, the pastor of the mission, Rev. Cliff Bennett, led the body at Louisburg to search for property on which to build. He contacted Jerry Simmons, the man who owned a piece of land the mission desired. Mr. Simmons wanted a Bible-preaching church in the new subdivision he was developing, and had a piece of property in mind, which fronted on Kansas Highway 68. The property was choice because Highway 68 was a main street in Louisburg, running directly through the town.

Dr. Don Reed was the associational Director of Missions at the time. He had led the Kansas City Kansas Baptist Association (KCKBA) Layman's Foundation to set money aside for aiding area missions to purchase property. A grant from this fund was approved for the mission to be used when God led them to find property.

Brother Bennett and Dr. Reed requested to meet with the land owner at a Louisburg restaurant to discuss the property. While the owner agreed to the meeting, he did not want to sell the property to the association for a price too low. The property was prime and the Kansas City suburbs were creeping steadily into the area, driving property prices high.

Reaching the restaurant a few minutes early, he thought and prayed about the matter and wrote a figure on a piece of paper which he shoved into his pocket. Inside, the three of them discussed the matter. After much consideration, Dr. Reed and Brother Bennett offered to buy Mr. Simmons' property for \$40,000. Mr. Simmons pulled the piece of paper out of his pocket and showed them the figure he had written. The three men agreed that it must be God's will for the church to acquire the property, since the figure revealed on the piece of paper was \$40,000. It was clear that God had set the price.

The congregation subsequently began to develop plans for the new building. The church would need a road leading to it from the highway, an expensive proposition for a small, struggling Christian body. Shortly thereafter, just about on cue, the city publicized plans for a new high school to be built directly across the planned street from the new church and a swimming pool just beyond. To meet the city's needs, the land owner put in a road for the pool and the school, coincidentally, down the west side of the church property, saving the church a great deal of money. Money that, essentially, they did not have.

Another expense miraculously avoided was getting utilities to the church facility. Normally, the utilities would be constructed in the center of the new roadway. In this case, though the high school requested that the utilities be run down the church's side of the roadway to accommodate their expansion plans. The church gladly agreed, and the school district was grateful for the cooperation.

In another amazing set of events, God brought Builders for Christ, an organization of volunteers who built church buildings across the country for churches needing help. This group was looking for a big project to fill up their schedule. Instead, they accepted a first-time challenge of combining two smaller projects. Peart Street Baptist Church in Paola and the Louisburg mission, about ten miles apart, were both ready to build facilities that summer. So, during the summer of 1998, one-week waves of construction crews descended on the work sites for ten consecutive weeks.

For a project of this kind to work, sleeping arrangements had to be made in advance, facilities had to be provided for meals, and a host of other details had to be organized. When they learned about the need, nuns from a Catholic convent in Paola volunteered their facilities for the workers for only \$5 per room per night. Though they were not air conditioned, and the schedule called for working during ten weeks of hot summer, the facilities were judged adequate, including laundry facilities and a large kitchen with commercial-quality appliances.

Local church members from NABC, Pearl Street Baptist, and the Louisburg Mission furnished the labor to clean and use the commercial kitchen to feed the crews of workers every day for ten weeks. The work proceeded without significant problems, and both facilities were completed within schedule. Influential NABC members included Bill and Linda Wostrel, and Dan and Helen Redmond. Both couples had given much of their time and efforts weekly to grow the mission after it was established. Charles Rocklage and Ross Marshall helped organize the construction effort.

The dedication service of the new Louisburg mission facility found quite a collection of people in attendance. The local mission members attended the service, along with representatives of the NABC missions committee, NABC members at large, and their pastor, Dr. Reynolds. Even the nuns who had extended the use of their facilities, and the land owner, who had provided the property at an unreasonably low price, attended.

With its attractive new meeting structure, the mission in Louisburg was well-positioned to effectively minister the gospel of Christ to its. Community.

FORWARD WITH FAITH

Every year does not bring so obvious a victory for God's kingdom. 1999 did not. It was simply another year of steadfast service watching and waiting for God to reveal His plan.

But it was also the year the church launched a new, ongoing approach to outreach and evangelism – the *FAITH Sunday School Evangelism Strategy*. Participating members make a commitment to a 16-week semester that includes weekly training sessions in evangelism and ministry, plus weekly visits in three-person teams. That first semester started with six teams, meaning 18 people were involved every week in evangelistic outreach and ministry visits. One of the best parts of FAITH is the report time each week as the teams return from their visits. One team may not find anyone at home that evening, but they rejoice with the whole group as another team reports an encounter with a single mom who needed encouragement or with a teen who listened to how to become a Christian and asked searching questions. When a team reports that someone heard the gospel and accepted Christ that night, there may even be spontaneous applause for what God has done in that life.

A fall and a spring semester are scheduled for each year. Nall Avenue members have formed six to ten teams for the past eight semesters. Some members participate only one semester, while others have

been part of FAITH for five or more semesters. The 5th year of FAITH was kicked off on August 10, 2003. As a result of FAITH, we have seen people led to Christ and seen people join the church and Sunday School. In addition, over 75 people have learned an effective and natural way to share their faith whenever the opportunity arises.

Also in 1999, “Kids Sunday Night Adventure Zone,” which started in 1998, continued to be popular. The youth had been to Lampe, Mo, the prior year and now traveled to Greeley, Co. on mission. Ryan Hitchcock was called as minister of music/senior adults. Ryan continues to serve NABC to the present time.

The year 2000 (the year before the new millennium) brought more service, activities, and innovation. John Leonard was called as minister to single adults. 75 people traveled to Glorieta, New Mexico for Centrifuge and Sunday School Week programs. The trip to Glorieta had become so anticipated for several years that it might have been called a pilgrimage. In the fall, as an alternative to secular celebrations on Halloween night, NABC started “Hallelujah Night.” Instead of going house to house for candy in sometimes gruesome outfits, a children’s carnival was held in the safety of the CLC. The children and their parents enjoyed costumes, games, food, and fun all in one safe place.

ANOTHER BLESSING

Through the late 1990s, various possibilities for placing the Lao congregation in their own building were explored, but available funds were limited and no location was found to be desirable. Then in late 2000, Nall and New Life started the Lao building fund. The objective was to raise \$50,00 by June 1, 2001. The goal was reached and the New Life congregation also raised nearly \$40,000 on their own. The search for a building resumed.

But while the search had been going on, the Lord had been working in ways that no one would have dared to dream. At Ridgeview Baptist Church at 134 South Ridgeview Street in Olathe, the handful of remaining members had decided that the property should be disposed of. However, at the same time they expressed a clear desire that the building and property should remain available for Southern Baptist work. With the assistance of the Baptist Association, a plan was developed whereby the Ridgeview Baptist Church would transfer the building and property and all existing equipment and supplies to NABC for the use of the New Life mission congregation. Ridgeview voted to do that, and Nall voted on July 29, 2001, to accept the property. This meant that the approximately \$90,000 that had been raised during the Building Fund campaign was available for building maintenance and upgrading as well as general start-up expenses for this new mission facility.

A five-member steering committee was elected by Nall and New Life consisting of Dick Callahan, Randy Gowler, Somsamay Khounthasenh, Kongsang Phommachan, with Ross Marshall as Chair. A work day on Saturday, August 25, was the first day after the title of the facility was officially transferred to Nall. After cleanup, repair and maintenance work, and some upgrades, it was time for New Life’s first services, held on September 30. A Day of Dedication was set for Sunday, October 14, 2001.

Other highlights of the millennium year of 2001 were the Youth mission trip to Crawford, Nebraska, and another “Hallelujah Night” on Halloween. Bryan Hutchings was called as director of youth ministries and Heidi Hildebrand Knappen was called as director of childhood ministries.

The Louisburg mission was constituted as a church on May 8, 2002. The Missions committee had recommended constitution not quite two years earlier in July. By the ninth of June, charter memberships were official. The Louisburg Southern Baptist Church was becoming a fixture of the community.

Back at Nall in 2002, Carolyn Barnette was called as director of singles and collegiate ministries. The Youth mission trip, as part of LifeWay Ministries new M-Fuge program was to Denver, Colorado. M-Fuge, like Centrifuge, is a retreat focusing on spiritual renewal, but has added emphasis on missions.

THE 50th ANNIVERSARY

Nall's final steps toward its 50th anniversary in September of 2003 were similar to all of the other "walking" in God's will that it had done since 1953. In an effort to make Vacation Bible School an experience that more could enjoy, both as teachers and students, Vacation Bible School was held in the evening with programs for adults for the first time. 37 adults joined in a class designed for them, while other adults and older youth taught children's classes. Everyone began each evening with a snack supper. A youth band and singers were among special presentations. Jennifer Abercrombie was called as director of youth and childhood ministries. The Singles and Youth took a combined mission trip to Tyler, Texas. 24 people traveled to Green Lake, Wisconsin, for a week of Sunday School training. Then, in September, the 50th anniversary celebration included a Saturday afternoon open house, a banquet at the Ritz Charles Hotel, and a worship service of praise and thanksgiving. The traditional Thanksgiving Breakfast was just around the corner.

THE FIRE STILL BURNS

Nall Avenue Baptist Church continues to seek God's will as a body of believers and walk in His direction. This church family also anticipates and welcomes more growing, building, and serving. Perhaps 50 more Thanksgiving Breakfasts are in its future.

50 years ago, a house on the corner of 67th and Nall was home to a group of people worshipping together, praising God, and always ready to serve. East of the sanctuary of the church in 2003, the same house is still home to a group of people seeking God's will. At the beginning, the house was the meeting place for all of the members. As the property grew and buildings were added, it became the meeting place for just the youth. The youth moved out and the young marrieds moved in. Now the singles occupy the space. Whatever the group, they walk the same floors that hundreds of others have for five decades. They volunteer at the K.C. Rescue Mission, and for Southern Baptist Ministries, among other projects. Like people in the other departments in the church, they look for ways to benefit the community. They worship together, praise God and are always ready to serve. For members of Nall Avenue Baptist Church, the 67th Street house has been, and is, hallowed ground.

THE NEXT 20 YEARS

2003-2023

The church history of these next twenty years will seek to give a big picture perspective of life at Nall Avenue Baptist Church, but will not have details from every year. Several events are explored in detail because of their significant impact on the church.

[This 20-year update compiled by Marie Clark]

A JOURNEY FROM THE 1950s INTO THE 21st CENTURY

In Southern Baptist life, long-time members used to proudly describe their church as a “4-Star” Church. This meant they had Sunday School, Training Union, missions organizations, and music/choirs. Sunday School was the Sunday morning Bible study time for all ages, not just children. Training Union, again for all ages, usually met on Sunday evenings just prior to evening worship. Missions education programs met at various times during the week or month: Brotherhood for men; WMU (Women’s Missionary Union) for women; Girls’ Auxiliary (GAs) and Royal Ambassadors (RAs) for children and youth; and Sunbeam Band for preschoolers. Finally, choirs were often formed for children and youth as well as adults.

Nall Avenue Baptist Church was organized from the “get-go” – Sunday School and Training Union in the first week for all ages, and WMU and age-group missions organizations within the first three months. By the end of the first decade, choirs had been organized for adults, youth and children. This 1950’s structure, in various forms, defined Nall’s church life through most of the 20th century. Meanwhile, our nation’s changing culture was impacting church life and “how we did church.” Gradual changes in the church began to meet the changing needs and ages of the congregation.

Which of these changes do *you* remember?

VISITATION AND OUTREACH. From the beginning, outreach to the community had two primary avenues. First, the annual Vacation Bible School reached not only our own church children but also friends and neighbors. VBS was held the first year and has been conducted every succeeding year of our existence – initially held in the mornings but later changed to an evening VBS.

Second, for the majority of the first 50 years, Monday (or Tuesday) nights were set aside for members to make visits to prospective members, shut-ins, and other members. In 1999, the primary plan became the FAITH evangelistic visits. All of these visitation efforts were drop-in visits –appointments were rarely made ahead of time. By 2008, because people in general were concerned about safety and were hesitant to open their doors to people they did not know or were not expecting, visits of this type had to be discontinued.

MUSIC. Sometime after construction of the “new” sanctuary in 1962, the church installed a beautiful pipe organ that added to the beauty of the music from the full choir and grand piano. Through several organists, the congregation began to assume we would always have organ music. However, by 2000 organists were becoming scarce; there were none available to hire. During the 2005 remodel of the sanctuary, the organ was removed; it had sat unused for five years because there was no one to play it.

By the early 1990s, weekly Children’s Choirs were no longer meeting a felt need in families with children. Their children’s extra-curricular activities were filled with sports, dance lessons, or gymnastics. Though the young choirs no longer meet weekly, some years our children have enjoyed music through their Sunday School classes as they banded together to prepare and present Christmas programs.

With changing tastes in types of music among younger adult members, the Adult Choir struggled to maintain a critical core. Contemporary Christian music was prevalent on the radio and a blend of contemporary choruses and traditional hymns began to be used during worship. Depending on the current music minister and the availability of musicians, guitars, keyboards, and later drums accompanied congregational singing. By 2000, a worship team of singers along with the worship band led us in worship. One plus was that several instrumentalists now had a place to serve in the music ministry for the first time.

DAY CARE. The Nall Avenue Baptist Day Care was established in 1973. It had a strong ministry to many families in our community for 35 years until its closure around 2007.

CHURCH PROGRAMMING. Church programs and activities continued to evolve to meet the needs of the church members. With most families having both parents working outside the home, they could not attend as many weekly activities as families had in the past. Culturally, Sunday evenings became an important family time and church families were no different. They expressed a desire to move a majority of activities to Wednesday nights.

- Initially, Sunday evening worship became a vespers service for the senior adults who still came. By 2009, Sunday nights changed again and were used a couple of times each month for business meetings or special music or mission programs.
- The hour before Sunday night worship at first changed from Church Training to short-term discipleship studies for adults and youth; children were involved in TeamKID or AWANA. Later, about 2010, all of these were moved to Wednesday evenings, replacing what had been called Prayer Meeting for adults and RAs and GAs for children.
- The name of Sunday morning Sunday School was changed to Core Group. Here is the reasoning: When encouraged to become part of a Sunday School class, new Christians and guests who did not grow up in a Baptist church often resisted, because in their minds Sunday School was only for children. The new name – Core Group – seeks to communicate that this is the primary place for members to experience Bible study with others and develop nurturing relationships.

These shifts in “how we do church” recall a slogan Nall Avenue used in the 1990s: *“Bringing a Heritage of Faith to a Changing World.”* The congregation and staff leadership recognized that in our changing world it was important to find new ways to bring the good news of Jesus to our community, all based on the never-changing foundation of our faith in God.

IN FAITH ARISE AND BUILD

Shortly after Nall Avenue’s 50th Anniversary celebration, leadership began to explore a building project to remodel the sanctuary and expand its surrounding space. After the church voted in 2004 to proceed, a building committee was chosen and plans made for fund-raising. The theme was “In Faith Arise and Build” with two fund-raising banquets in 2004 and 2005 marked by celebration. The energy and excitement of the congregation was evident at the groundbreaking in June, 2005, as members united in this venture; many gifts were truly sacrificial.

During construction, all adult classrooms were unavailable because the sanctuary building plus the original sanctuary building were off limits. The solution? All adults met together in the Christian Life Center (CLC) for Sunday School taught by pastor Jim Reynolds. After a short break, everyone came back into the CLC for worship. That meant every Saturday chairs and a movable platform were set up for

worship. After services, many volunteers worked quickly to stack, pick up, and store chairs for another week. No one complained. One memorable event during the CLC worship was a baby-parent dedication for Kate DeMint and her parents Ty and Kristi. In place of Sunday evening services, members were encouraged to go to one of several small groups that met in various homes.

In July, 2006, just 13 months after groundbreaking, construction was complete! What a day of celebration to see what God had done through His people. The benefits were evident. The complete renovation of the sanctuary enabled much-needed new technology to be used. The expanded foyer truly became the “Fellowship Foyer” as named by the architect in the blueprints; the old foyer had been small and cramped, barely allowing folks to walk past each other to exit the sanctuary. Members and guests appreciated the welcoming new main entrance, an elevator, a library and classrooms adjacent to the foyer, and new church offices relocated to the upper level of the original building. Faithful and sacrificial giving for “In Faith Arise and Build” led to a celebratory note-burning on September, 19, 2010 – just five years after groundbreaking – on the church’s 67th birthday. Pastor Joe Funderburk and former pastor James Reynolds joined campaign co-chairmen Harold & Doris Barris and Larry & Jean Rosenow to burn the note.

In 2007 Kenny Warren followed Ryan Hitchcock as minister of music and served for 10 years.

UPWARD

In 2007, Nall Avenue members were challenged to come together for a completely new venture – Upward Basketball. Childhood/youth minister Jen Abercrombie and several young adults explored this children’s basketball league as an outreach effort – a ministry to families in the church and in the community. Co-directors Neil Andersen and Shana Rains had an army of volunteers as the first two-month season launched in January, 2007. People of any age or skill level were needed: coaches, snack-bar workers, referees, timekeepers, half-time devotional leaders, greeters, setup and tear down, and more. Once again, Nall members stepped forward. Upward continues to serve families in the church and area each year, up to the present (2023).

In the fall of 2007, Jennifer Abercrombie resigned to join the staff of her home church, First Baptist Church of Raytown, as their children’s minister. Joey Lang was called as minister of youth, and member Lori Andersen was called to lead the childhood ministries.

JAMES REYNOLDS RETIRES AS PASTOR

Dr. James E. Reynolds and his wife Ann had come from a church in Cushing, Oklahoma, with their daughter Amy, a high-schooler. They planted their lives in this Prairie Village church for 18 years from 1990 to 2008. In September, 2008, Jim read his resignation letter announcing his retirement and their plans to move back to Oklahoma to be nearer their family. Jim had led the church during a challenging transition time; he came to a church that was primarily a traditional Southern Baptist church, yet by the time of his retirement Nall Avenue was in the process of adapting to the demands of the 21st century. A special service and dinner were held to celebrate the long-time ministry of Jim and Ann. Hugs and well wishes mingled with tears of sadness as members said goodbye.

Dr. Bob Mills, on staff at the Kansas-Nebraska Convention of Southern Baptists was called as our interim pastor. Bob drove from Topeka on Sundays for morning worship and on Wednesdays to be available for staff meetings, Wednesday night dinners, and to provide guidance to the pastor search team. Youth

minister Joey Lang led Sunday night vespers services. A couple of years later when Joey resigned to become pastor of Grace Baptist Church in Gardner, Kansas, Joey Himes became the new youth minister.

JOE FUNDERBURK CALLED AS NEW PASTOR

After more than a year of diligent work, the pastor search team brought a recommendation to call Rev. Joe Funderburk, who was currently pastoring in Burleson, Kansas. In the fall of 2009, Nall Avenue welcomed Joe, his wife Angie (Angela) and their 2-year-old daughter Laura; soon son Max and daughter Jackie were added to the family. The church enjoyed having a pastor with very young children for the first time. Joe coached an Upward team several years, once dressed as a clown for Trunk or Treat, and shared his love of baseball with his kids and anyone else who wanted to talk baseball.



Joe and Angie Funderburk, Laura, Max & Jackie

BOB CLARK'S RETIREMENT

Bob Clark had served as minister of education and administration for more than 29 years – October 1980 to January 2010. Bob and Marie had arrived with son Tom, a 7th grader, and son Bob Jr., a high school senior. 29 years later, Bob and Marie had interacted with scores of families, including watching three of their own grandchildren grow up in the church.

The hallmark of Bob's ministry was a strong Sunday School that not only taught the Bible, but created a place to reach out to new people and to grow friendships. It was undergirded by leader training, both from within the church and through the Baptist association. One enjoyable tradition that developed was traveling to Glorieta Conference Center in the mountains of New Mexico for Sunday School Week at least 15 of the summers. Groups of five to thirty leaders and their families enjoyed a week of vacation combined with training and fellowship.

Bob had postponed his retirement to continue serving Nall through the process of finding a new pastor. With the arrival of Joe Funderburk as pastor, the time was right. Bob's retirement dinner was a celebration of 29 years of working together, friendships, thank you's, and hugs.

Other Staff Changes. The decade of 2010-2020 saw these staff changes during Joe Funderburk's time as pastor. Bob Clark briefly overlapped with Joe before Bob's retirement the following year; Rich Murrell followed in 2010 as church administrator until his death in 2015. After Lori Andersen's resignation, Kelly Jackson was called as childhood and family minister in 2013. In 2018, Mark Miller followed Kenny Warren as minister of music. Finally, in the area of youth ministry Joey Lang was followed by Joey Himes (2011), Kimberly Jeffers (2015), and then Lewis Jones (2017).

EMPHASIS: MAKING DISCIPLES

Our church's Vision Statement reads: We will glorify God and make disciples by transforming lives, building relationships and impacting communities through Jesus Christ. Here are ways the church sought to live this out during the decade of 2010-2020.

During his 12-year pastorate, Joe Funderburk emphasized the importance of individual members learning how to disciple others – from leading them to Christ to helping them grow in the Christian walk. Small home groups were formed that meet on weekdays and were to include unbelievers. Joe quietly modeled the heart of disciple-making: one-on-one mentoring.

Nall sponsored a Good News Club that met for four and a half years at Apache Elementary School. The weekly after-school Bible club, directed by Shana Rains, launched in January, 2010. Since classrooms could not be used by outsiders, the creative leaders utilized corners of hallways for the different grade-level groups. When the Bible story was told to the large group, children and leaders sat on the wide indoor staircase that provided arena-like seating. Volunteers from nearby Breakpoint Church had begun helping and in 2015 Breakpoint requested to assume the leadership.

Family minister Kelly Jackson perceived a need among people and families in our community for short-term support groups for life crises, and she led the church to host groups on Monday nights to meet some of these needs. A revolving GriefShare class had met for several years led by DeAnna Lang, and a chapter of AA (Alcoholics Anonymous) was already meeting in our building. Church members were enlisted in the areas of mental illness, DivorceCare, and others in succeeding semesters. Four eight-week semesters reached folks both in and beyond our church.

In the July 2019 *Nall Call* (the church newsletter) a headline “Summer Missions Was a Success!” reported: “This June teams spent time serving at Mission Southside, City Union Mission, and Its Sew Easy. The Mission Adelante collection of school supplies was brought by VBS children, and backpacks will be packed this Thursday.”

Other new or continuing ways to serve in our community included:

- The energy and excitement generated by Vacation Bible School continued to draw people each year. Some years classes were offered for adults and youth as well as for children.
- MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers) began and continues to meet twice a month during the school year.
- Halloween’s Trunk or Treat grew into a Fall Festival for the community, including inflatables, games, and the ever-popular Chili Cook-off.
- For three consecutive years, Nall folks ranging from preschoolers to senior adults showed up for a “packing party” for Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes.
- Nall continued Coat and Sweater Sundays, an annual collection of gently-used cold weather gear donated for the Johnson County Christmas Store, and Peanut Butter Sunday, collected for the annual Prairie Village peanut butter food drive.
- A partnership was formed with Santa Fe Trail Elementary School – the closest one to our church building. Since 2018, the Missions Committee and Gerrie Orr have assisted church members to be involved in many ways such as volunteering and/or donating for the Christmas Gift Store for parents to shop; teacher appreciation carts; annual school carnival; back-to-school supplies; and more.

Various mission trips were taken through these years, by adults, youth, and/or single adults. They included trips to Kamloops, British Columbia, Canada; Mission Arlington, Texas; Mexico; Hawaii; Jamaica; Nebraska; and many more.

Closer to home, NABC partnered with a new church start in North Overland Park simply called the Neighborhood Church. It launched in 2016, meeting in the home of the church planters, Dave and River Partin. As attendance increased, they began meeting at nearby Pawnee Elementary School; on Mother’s Day, 2017, they had 80 in attendance. Nall Avenue was faithful to provide financial support, and during the first year our church also helped with children’s leadership. When First Southern Baptist Church of Overland Park disbanded, Neighborhood Church gained a permanent home and constituted as a church about 5 years after its start.

During this decade, Nall Avenue rejoiced at the addition of new members – especially younger families. However, the growth was not sustained during and after COVID.

COVID PANDEMIC

And then abruptly everything changed. Our nation – even the world – was in disbelief.

All meetings ceased on March 20, 2020 – not only at our church, but across our country. The crisis of the COVID pandemic had effectively shut down activities that required interaction outside of family groups. Nall Avenue’s tech support team scrambled to stream live services, something we had never done before. The worship team provided music and pastor Joe preached; no one else was in the building.

When CDC guidelines allowed groups of 30 or less to meet, Adult Sunday School classes began to meet at varying times of the week so they would not all be in the building at the same time. For example, a median adult group met on Saturday afternoons, initially on a member’s patio, while one senior adult class chose to meet on Tuesday afternoons at the church. That summer, a women’s Bible study met online using the Zoom app. Zoom meetings allowed committees and other Bible studies to meet, as well.

When larger groups were allowed to gather outdoors – observing “social distancing” (6 ft. apart) – kids experienced a “Parking Lot Vacation Bible School.” Portable canopies became shaded “classrooms,” and tables and chairs were brought out from the CLC.

Some of what we missed during COVID included no corporate worship, Thanksgiving Breakfast, Upward, mission trips, youth and kids’ camps, Wednesday night fellowship dinners. When Sunday morning worship services resumed, sanctuary chairs were set up for families to sit together, but space was maintained to limit exposure to other worshippers. Initially people were asked to make reservations to attend worship to insure there was no overcrowding. Of course, masks were strongly encouraged. We discovered that masks take some of the joy out of singing!

An unexpected surprise was that adult Sunday School classes meeting on week days discovered it provided a more casual atmosphere with no time constraints to stay within an hour. Relationships were strengthened as members were able to “do life” together during this time of restrictions,

After restrictions were lifted in the fall, worship attendance slowly increased, but like many churches it has not regained pre-COVID pandemic numbers. Some members chose to continue watching the worship service online, and others simply got out of the habit of church attendance. Caution to avoid potential exposure continued to keep others at home. However, many members soon realized that worshipping via video could never replace worshipping in person with other believers.

STAFF CHANGES

After several stable years of staff leadership, changes were afoot in 2021. Kelly Jackson, minister of family life and operations since 2013, had asked the church to go from full-time to part-time in order to help her incapacitated mother with her local ice cream business. When the business demanded more and more of her time, Kelly regretfully submitted her resignation in early March of 2021. Then in May the church sadly accepted Mark Miller’s resignation when he accepted a call from a new church starting in Wichita. Mark had brought a lot of energy to the music ministry during his almost 3 years as minister of worship and administration.

For children’s ministry, summertime was almost upon us, with the demands of Vacation Bible School, Children’s Camp and planning for fall events. The personnel committee began an immediate search for an interim minister of children, and in late March, 2021, they recommended Lizzy Bishop to begin

immediately. She hit the ground running, but God had already been paving the way. You see, she already knew the church and many of the members because Lizzy Clark Bishop had grown up at Nall Avenue from birth and was a product of the children's and youth ministries. After college she served at First Baptist Church of Raytown as assistant children's minister with Jen Abercrombie, another sign of God at work. Jen had been Lizzy's youth leader when Jen served on Nall's staff. What a blessing to see God's weaving of relationships that began fifteen years earlier.

....AND ONE MORE CHANGE

There was one more major change just around the corner. In October the congregation was stunned after a morning worship service when pastor Joe Funderburk read his resignation; he had accepted a call to a church in Connecticut to become their minister of discipleship. A farewell dinner in December allowed members to say thank you not only to Joe but also to Angie and their three children. Many strong friendships had grown over the twelve years.

Lewis Jones, Minister of Students, was the only remaining permanent staff member. For long-time church members, the situation was reminiscent of the unrelated but quick succession of resignations in 1989 of pastor Owen Dahlor, youth minister Mike Fetters, and previously the music minister, leaving only one permanent staff member, Bob Clark, minister of education and administration.

THE INTERIM TIME

Dr. Bob Mills, now retired from the Kansas-Nebraska Convention of Southern Baptists, was called as our interim pastor for a second time, and he began January 1, 2022. Again, Bob drove from Topeka on Sundays for morning worship and on Wednesdays to be available for staff meetings, Wednesday night dinners, and to provide guidance to the pastor search team.

In early 2022, both a pastor search team and a search team for a permanent childhood and family minister were elected. It was felt that the search for a minister of worship should be delayed until the new pastor arrived. After a couple of short-term interims, we discovered God had already placed another interim worship leader for us in an unexpected place – our church office coordinator, Bri Nicoletti. Completely unrelated to her office work, she was also a music theater major in college who was also active in worship music in her own church. That spring she began as interim worship leader, providing some stability and continuity for music in our worship services. In August, Lizzy Bishop was called to transition from interim to permanent minister of family life. The pastor search team continues to work faithfully even after encountering some "closed doors."

While praying for the work of the search team, members have also prayed that we will be found faithful in serving. Here are some current glimpses of our "church at work."

- In the 16th year of Upward at Nall Avenue, Upward continues to be a key outreach in the community. In early March of this year (2023), the church hosted a Celebration Night to end the Upward Basketball season. Co-directors Clint and Danica Stull reported: "220 players ranging from Pre-K to 4th grade participated this year, and so many families came to celebrate that the Sanctuary was completely filled and overflowing. It was a joy-filled night as kids entered to win raffle prizes, received cookies and basketballs, and enjoyed time with their coaches and teammates."
- During this past summer, the Kansas City area experienced a devastating storm that resulted in major damage to many homes, and massive trees and limbs toppled in the high winds. Some of the men and at least one teen young man stepped in to clean up storm debris that at least two of the members were unable to manage.

- A group of fifteen from our church will be part of a team of twenty that is going on a mission trip to Ecuador October 23-29, 2023. They will be serving with Filter of Hope, an organization that works alongside their Ecuadorian staff and local church pastors in order to build up the local church as they share clean water and the gospel with people in the Otavalo area.
- Throughout 2022 and into 2023, members have remained faithful in giving their tithes and offerings, with gifts continuing to average at least 90% of budget. In addition, the church has maintained its commitment to missions giving through the Baptist association, the Cooperative Program, and through individual contributions to mission trip scholarships.

A FIRM FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE

Nall has enjoyed a unique longevity of pastoral leadership. Since year three, the church has had only three pastors spanning 62 years (plus three interims totaling 4 years): Owen Dahlor, 32 years; James Reynolds, 18 years; and Joe Funderburk, 12 years. The stability of church life is easily explained with these three long-time pastorates, plus Bob Clark's almost 30 years of ministry that overlapped portions of each pastorate.



James Reynolds, Owen Dahlor, Bob Clark



Joe Funderburk

We are trusting God to once again lead us to the man He has chosen to lead Nall Avenue Baptist Church into our next season of ministry.

NABC HISTORY by LISTS (for people who like lists!)

STAFF

Pastor

Raymond Collier 1953-1954
 William G. O'Dell 1954-1957
 Owen Dahlor 1957-1989
 James E. Reynolds 1990-2008
 Joe Funderburk 2009-2021

Education/Administration

Robert Hughes 1962
 Carl Yessen 1966
 Bill Lewis 1975
 Lowell Clark 1977
 Bob Clark 1980
 Rich Murrell 2010

Music

Edward Damer 1962
 Edward Gilham 1963
 J.W.B. Chilton 1964
 Harry Taylor 1968
 Ed Otto 1978
 A.L. "Pete" Butler 1983
 Stan Jones 1987
 David Farris 1991
 Steve Holt 1994
 Ryan Hitchcock 1999
 Kenny Warren 2007
 Mark Miller 2018

Youth

Bill Reedy 1974
 Bill Anderson 1976
 Ray Hildebrand 1980
 Mike Fetters 1984
 Dick Dearwester 1991
 Grant Mong 1997
 Bryan Hutchings 2001
 Jennifer Abercrombie 2003
 Joey Lang 2007
 Joey Himes 2010
 Kimberly Jeffers 2014
 Lewis Jones 2017

Children

Heidi Hildebrand Knappen 2002
 Jennifer Abercrombie 2003
 Lori Andersen 2007
 Kelly Jackson 2013
 Elizabeth (Lizzy) Bishop 2021

Singles

John Leonard 2000
 Carolyn Barnette 2002

BUILDINGS

1953 Purchase of red brick house at 67th & Nall – later painted and called "the yellow house"
 1956 Educational Building – sanctuary was upstairs, classrooms below
 1962 Sanctuary Building
 1963 "Nall House" – south of sanctuary; received as a donation
 1970 Offices, Classrooms, & Chapel Building – on east end of property
 1978 Christian Life Center, Children's Classrooms & joining all buildings together with enclosed central hall
 2006 Sanctuary Building remodel & expansion -- "yellow house" removed for parking

MISSIONS

1959 Calvary Baptist Church, Lenexa
 1974 Westport Baptist Church (restart)
 1974 Vista Baptist Church, Olathe
 1977 Bilingual mission started in Westport
 1981 Clear Creek Baptist Mission, DeSoto
 1983 Laotian Mission
 1986 Louisburg Baptist Mission/Church
 1987 Parkway Baptist Chapel/Church, KCK
 1988 College Heights Baptist Church
 2015 Neighborhood Church, Overland Park