

First Baptist Church Ravenswood, WV

1866 - 2026

215 Ann St.
Ravenswood, WV 26164



160 years celebrating
God's Word



The History of the First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV

History ... A nod to the past, a glimpse to the future

From its earliest beginnings, the Ravenswood Baptist Church, until now - 160 years strong and going - has been about community, fellowship, missions and joining together in the love of Christ. A small but faithful group of Christians have weathered storms over the decades. Our humble building stands as a testament of faith to those who had the courage and vision to follow God's calling; from its inception in 1866, the building dedicated in 1878, welcomes one and all still today 160 years later in 2026 – at 215 Ann Street, Ravenswood, WV. Join us. Become a part of the next chapter of the First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV.

IN THE BEGINNING....

Fifteen Christians came together and established the “Ravenswood Baptist Church” on November 10, 1866. The first official organized meeting, where they proclaimed their intent to found the Church, was held by Reverend J. Swiger and fifteen members: Mrs. Rachel Blackburn, Mrs. Hannah L. Haworth, Miss Alma J. Haworth, Miss Alice E. Haworth, Miss America King, Miss Virginia Long, Mrs. Nancy J. Law, Miss Kate Parker, Mr. John Rudman, Mrs. E. J. Rudman, Miss Josephine Taylor (*all of whom were baptized October 21, 1866*), Dr. S. M. Haworth, Mr. William Long, Mrs. Sarah Long and Mrs. Mary A. Parker (*whose memberships were accepted by letter*).

On December 6, 1866, the Church was reorganized by Council moderated by Reverend J. W. Carter with D.T.C. Farrow as secretary. Out of this meeting, the Sunday School program was also established and led by Dr. S. M. Haworth as superintendent, who held this position for many years to follow.

In these very early years, Ravenswood Baptist Church held services in The Old Ravenswood Academy (also known as the Union Academy), then later moved to the Charles Harpold Tannery, and later still to a hall in an old brick building owned by Robert S. Brown. Meetings were held in Mr. Brown's building, until March 1875 when it was thought to be unsafe by some resulting in a return to The Old Ravenswood Academy. Services continued to be held at the Academy until June 9, 1878 when the newly completed church building at 215 Ann Street was dedicated.

The lot where the church currently stands was purchased in June 1875 for \$200 from Henrietta Fitzhugh, daughter of Sarah Fitzhugh who was the sister of President George Washington. In the fall of the same year, the foundation was laid for a 36 x 61-foot building and in May 1876 the frame was stood up. Unfortunately, in July the framing was blown down in a storm, but the congregation was not deterred; by the first of September 1876 the framing was rebuilt and the building enclosed. Work continued slowly but steadily until it was completed, and on Sunday, June 9, 1878, at 2:00 pm, the new church building, home of the Ravenswood Baptist Church standing at 215 Ann Street, was dedicated. Rev. J. W. Carter of Parkersburg, WV preached the sermon, and the Rev. T. Allen of Dayton, OH offered the prayer.

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The total cost of the building was \$3,000; Three hundred and fifty-one dollars was arranged for the dedication leaving no debt and a fresh start for the Church. Mr. J. E. Wilkinson and Mr. Ezbai¹ Wells of Ravenswood presented the bell to the church for the bell tower, measuring forty inches in diameter and weighing 1,060 pounds. The bell can be heard still today at the beginning of each Sunday church service.

In the summer of 1914, the church was reseated with new pews. Up until this time, the church continued using the same seats from the Robert S. Brown building.

September 8, 1937, Rev. Kelley Smith appointed a committee to draft a constitution and by-laws for the Church. Committee members were: Dr. Paul Starkey, Mr. M.D. Bishop, Mr. Dana Woofter, Miss Kathryn Elder, Mrs. D.E. Cole and Mr. W.M. Jones. This would appear to be the earliest reference to a formal Constitution and By-Laws document for the Church. At that time the name of the Church was the "Ravenswood Baptist Church". In 1954, the name was changed to the "First Baptist Church, Ravenswood, W. Va."

AS WE GROW...

Between 1927 and 1929 improvements were made which included rewiring the church and remodeling the front of the building. A parsonage was purchased in 1935 on Henrietta Street, and in 1938 changes to the church included redecorating the walls in the sanctuary, purchasing and installing venetian blinds, and installing two gas furnaces. The women's Home Workers Society contributed the initial funds and initiated the work to begin redecorating the sanctuary. The gas floor heating units were purchased with funds left to the Church by Mr. Edwin H. Flynn of Parkersburg, WV, by Miss Ruby Watts, as administrator; the sorely needed heating units were installed at no cost to the Church. The cost of the furnaces and installation was \$75.50. (A copy of this check is in the church archives.)

The parsonage on Henrietta Street was sold, and a new parsonage purchased at 7 Gallatin Street between 1943-1947. In 1949 the church purchased its first broadcasting system installed in the bell tower. Between 1970 - 1973, the Memorial Fund was established and from that its first purchase being the "carillon" from Bell Industries; from this the sounds of bells and music could be heard coming from the church bell tower on the hour, every hour for decades. Fifty years later, technology improvements replaced the no longer functioning carillon with digital music, and the tradition lives on.

The first new expansion was voted on in November 1951, and construction began in April 1952, for the new educational unit. Mr. D. E. Cole was the Chairman of the Building Committee, and Mr. J. F. Moore was the Chairman of the Trustees and in charge of overseeing construction.

It was in 1954 that the footprint of the church nearly tripled with the completion of the new educational building, and the remodeled and redecorated sanctuary. The modern 2-story building attached to the back of the original church structure provided 15 permanent classrooms for Sunday school, toilet facilities and drinking fountains on both upper and lower floors, a modern kitchen on the second floor as well as an assembly / banquet hall able to accommodate up to 250 people comfortably.

¹ earliest located account of the history of FBC documents Mr. Ezbai Wells, who at the time would have been 25 years old and operating a dry good store in Ravenswood; some accounts reference Ephraim (who was his father and was a farmer) or others as Jubal Wells, of whom no records can be confirmed. Therefore, for accuracy we lend this account to Mr. Ezbai Wells. Mr. J.E. Wilkinson was a local businessman in the area; both men had ties to early families of Ravenswood and the Church.

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Office space for the Pastor, a nursery for the youngest of the congregation and another room for the choir to gather and prepare for worship was also included in this new addition. A modern baptistry utilizing the upstairs toilet facilities to provide a private dressing area was included in the design, bringing the new and old sections together.

When the baptistry is closed behind the magnificent burgundy velvet curtains, it appears only as a backdrop to the newly designed and decorated sanctuary. Improvements also included a forced air gas furnace, a new roof, wall to wall carpet in the sanctuary, and redesign of the pews.

Also in 1954, a new English Colonial style of architecture was used to remodel the exterior of the First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV. A new church steeple was purchased made of plastic, replacing the original wood frame which was removed after suffering damage in a storm in 1928. The large round pillars and changes to the front of the building as part of this redesign are similar to what we still see today in 2026 as we celebrate our 160th year.

In 1978, the parsonage at 7 Gallatin Street was sold and a new home was purchased at 617 Fitzhugh Avenue. In October 1976, the old house sitting adjacent to the church on the corner of Ann and Mulberry, which was part of the church property for many years, was sold for \$1.00 and removed. Other improvement projects included replacing the old metal roof on the main church building with a modern shingle roof; encasing the bell tower with aluminum siding, and adding insulation and air conditioning in the sanctuary. In 2023 the roof was replaced with a metal roof, a subtle nod to our past.

Approximately in the year 2000, the parsonage at 617 Fitzhugh Ave. was sold and for a few short years there no official parsonage owned by the Church; pastors owned their own homes locally, and plans were in play to eventually purchase the home at 214 Ann Street owned by Harold and Amy Bush. The home was eventually purchased in 2008 with the agreement the Bushes would remain in the home and it would transfer to First Baptist Church upon their deaths. The Old Colonial style home, built in 1880, became the parsonage in 2011. The three lots on Ann Street across from the church, plus a lot on Sycamore Street which serves as a parking lot are all part of the Church's current property holdings.

In March 1998, ground breaking and work began for the Church's second expansion with the construction of a new Fellowship Hall. The multipurpose addition connects seamlessly to the church on the right side incorporating the majority of the empty lot/side yard owned by the church. Work was completed in late fall and a dedication celebration was held December 6th with a luncheon following the service. The Fellowship Hall offers a commercial size kitchen, is handicap accessible and offers an open concept multipurpose room which accommodates up to 300 people comfortably; it is used for church dinners and wedding receptions, has been host to countless bridal showers, baby showers and birthday parties. Following the completion of the Fellowship Hall, the existing upstairs of the Educational Building was reconfigured for children and adult Sunday School classes. The inclusion of an electric chair lift now allows for access to the upper level as well.

With ever changing technology, the message is now able to be delivered from the sanctuary beyond our four walls and out to the world using the internet to stream on Facebook, You Tube and directly from our webpage. The 21st century has brought with it technology which no one in 1866 could have dared imagine.

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PEWS

The sanctuary pews, which were seated originally in the summer of 1914, were modified with decorative white endcaps, carrying this theme of dark walnut tones and bright white painted trim throughout the modernized sanctuary in 1954; in 1978 velveteen seat cushions were purchased to continue the theme of rich burgundy and provide comfort. Serving the Church well for 110 years, in 2024 new pews were purchased and fully funded through sponsorships by our Church family. The new pews, in place and dedicated in November 2024, were full at their first Christmas Eve candlelight service.

WOMEN'S CIRCLE

The Women's Mission Circle has been in existence since March 12, 1893, with Mrs. J. W. Crooks president (in 1916); by 1966, it was known as the "Women's Federation" and Mrs. Verna Burglechner was president.

The Home Workers was organized April 25, 1910 with twenty members. In 1916 there were forty-four members, with Mrs. W. B. Fleming was president. In 1966 the Circle was continuing great work in the interest of the Church under the leadership of Mrs. Kyle Hardman.

In 1954 two newly formed Women's Circle groups were established in the First Baptist Church of Ravenswood: Circle Number Two (Circle Two) was established, later being known as the Frances Crooks Circle, and Circle Number Three (Circle Three). In 1983, C.I.R.C.L.E. was created for the younger women of the Church. *Did you know "Circle" stands for Christian Involvement Radiates Christian Love Everywhere"?*

The Women's CIRCLE, as it has been simply known for many years, voted in March 2026 to changed its name to the "Wright Mission Circle", honoring past member Leila Susan Wright. Today's Circle is active supporting needs of the community and missions world-wide, and is open to all women of the Church. The current president is Mrs. Abbi Woods

LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE

.... 160 years and counting! Come join our Church family and help write the next chapter!

Ravenswood Baptist Church - over time

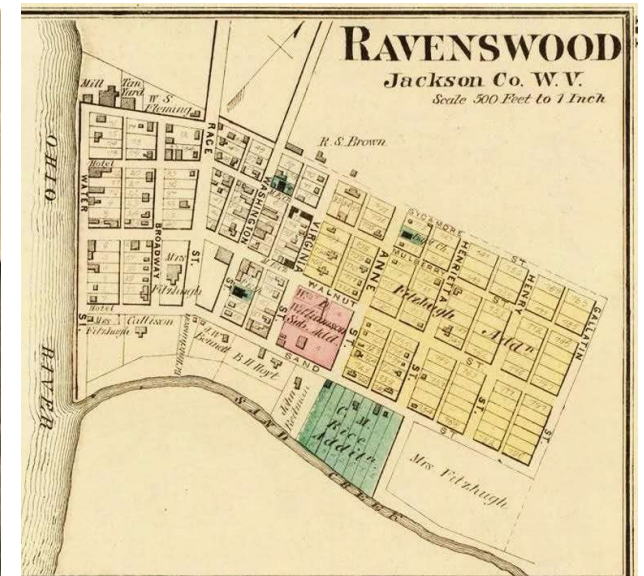


Ravenswood Baptist Church held early services at the Ravenswood Academy, also known as the Union Academy.



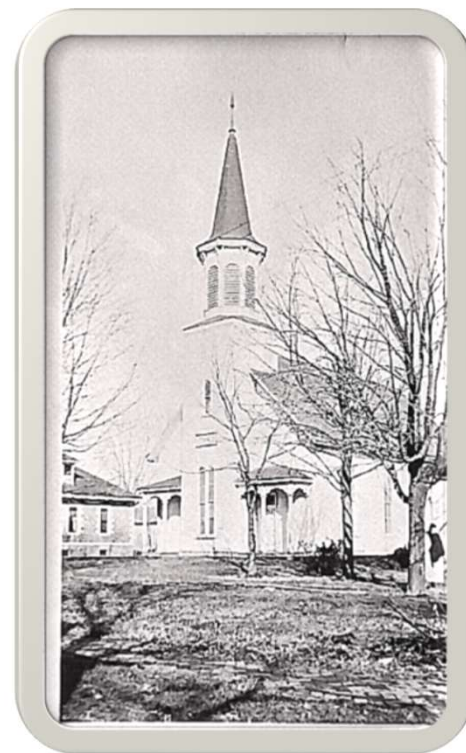
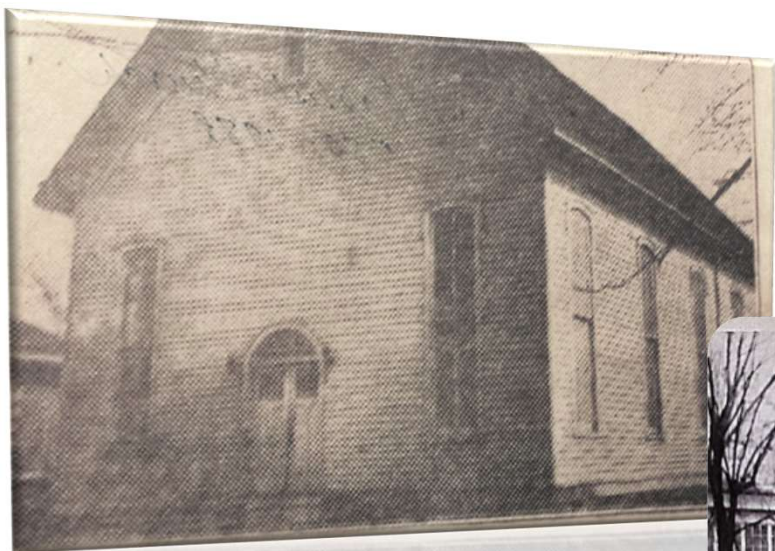
Services were also held in the Harpold Tannery and later in a building owned by Robert S. Brown (no picture found), before returning to the Ravenswood Academy.

Once the Church building was completed in 1878, the Church has been in continuous service in its present location at 215 Ann Street, Ravenswood, WV.



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Ravenswood Baptist Church - over time...

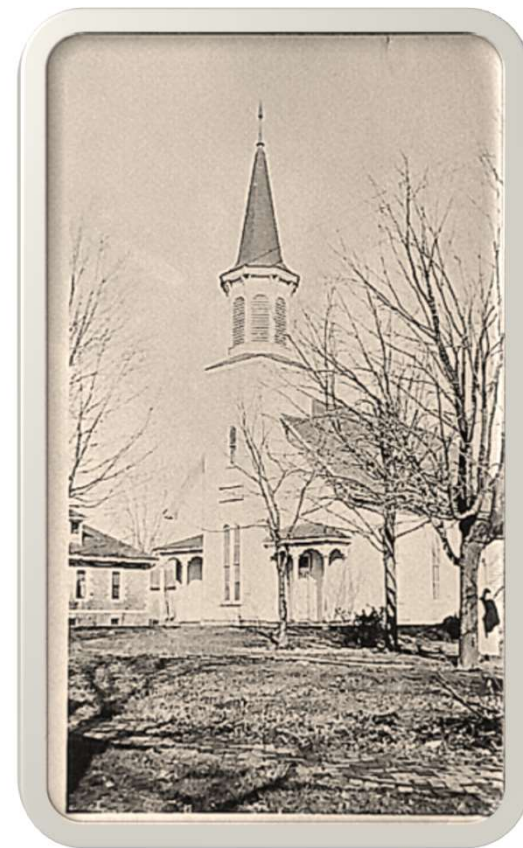


The Original building (L) circa 1900-1910; (Center) showing the old house to right of church, circa 1950; (R) 1940s seen from a view from across the street at the corner of Ann and Mulberry.

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Ravenswood Baptist Church - over time - transition.

(L-R) Circa 1927-1929 based on the remodeled front; circa early 1920s; circa 1926 before remodeled front; (R) Circa early 1930s



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Ravenswood Baptist Church - over time - transition. 1954 - 1975



(L) In December 1954 after completion of the exterior and interior remodeling, and the addition of the Educational Unit on the back of the church. (R) Circa 1975 after the old house was removed from the side lot to the right of the church.



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1954

Dedication Church remodel & grand opening of the Educational Unit



REMODELED AND REDECORATED SANCTUARY



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Pastors serving First Baptist Church through the years...

At the beginning of the 160th anniversary project, we had only a list of past ministers, handed down over generations. As was common in formality of the times, only the first and middle initials for them were used, even in available records of the Baptist convention and in other publications and sources found on the internet. The first minister documented in maintained church files with their first name was in 1936 with Rev. Kelley Smith and not again until 1947 with Rev. Robert Gillet.

The challenge was accepted to find more information on the gentlemen who served the congregation of First Baptist Church of Ravenswood. Persistence paid off and today we have not only their names, but a little about each of them.

Turn the page

Name of Pastor	Dates serving
Rev. J. Swiger	1866 - 1869
Rev. J. F. Hardwicke	1871 - 1872
Rev. M. B. Edmondson	1873 - 1873
Rev. W. E. Powell	1873 - 1879
Rev. L. E. Peters	1879 - 1883
Rev. Jonathan Smith	1883-1885
<i>* no pastor for 2 years 1885 - 1887</i>	
Rev. W. L. VanHorn	1887 - 1890
Rev. A. L. Williamson	1891 - 1894
Rev. W. L. Compere	1894 - 1895
Rev. L. D. Starkey	1895 - 1901
Rev. J. E. Hutchinson	1903 - 1926
Rev. H. U. Thompson	1927 - 1929
Rev. E. E. White	1930 - 1935
Rev. Kelley Smith	1936 - 1940
Rev. E. S. Higginbotham	1941 - 1943
Rev. C. C. Patterson	1943 - 1946
Rev. Robert Gillet	1947 - 1951
Rev. Phil Jenkins	1951 - 1952
Rev. Paul V. H. Bell	1953 - 1960
Rev. Howard L. Underwood	1961 - 1969
Rev. Michael D. Halley	1970 - 1973
Rev. Ronald Lee Stoner	1973 - 1984
Rev. James E. Cunningham	1984 - 1992
Rev. Kenneth Miller	1992 - 2004
Rev. Jon Villers	2005 - 2010
Rev. Mark Gerstell	2011 - 2018
Dr. Toby Wagoner	2018-present

Pastors serving First Baptist Church through the years...

Name of Pastor	Dates serving	Vital Statistics	
Rev. J. Swiger	1866 - 1869	Jabez Swiger	b: 1828 – d: 1887
Rev. J. F. Hardwicke	1871 - 1872	Joel F. Hardwicke	b: 4/9/1837 - d: 8/18/1895
Rev. M. B. Edmondson	1873 - 1873	Matthew Buchanan Edmondson	b: 11/26/1821 – d: 10/13/1907
Rev. W. E. Powell	1873 - 1879	William Edmond Powell	b: 7/10/1842 - d: 7/28/1901
Rev. L. E. Peters	1879 - 1883	Lewis E. Peters	b: 4/27/1843 – d: 3/18/1916
Rev. Jonathan Smith	1883-1885	Jonathon Smith	b: 8/8/1829 – d: 5/28/1913
<i>* no pastor for 2 years 1885 - 1887</i>			
Rev. W. L. VanHorn	1887 - 1890	William Lewis Van Horn	b: 1849 - d: 7/18/1925
Rev. A. L. Williamson	1891 - 1894	Allen Luther Williamson	b: 1863 – d: 1906
Rev. W. L. Compere	1894 - 1895	William Lee Compere	b: 9/24/1865 - d: 4/18/1933
Rev. L. D. Starkey	1895 - 1901	Lorenzo Dow Starkey	b: 3/9/1858 - d: 2/9/1931
Rev. J. E. Hutchinson	1903 - 1926	James Edwin Hutchinson	b: 3/10/1860 – d: 12/31/1926
Rev. H. U. Thompson	1927 - 1929	Herbert Ulysses Thompson	b: 1/21/1904 - d: 8/17/1969
Rev. E. E. White	1930 - 1935	Ethan Everette White	b: 8/21/1875 – d: 8/28/1956
Rev. Kelley Smith	1936 - 1940	Kelley E Smith* (Joshua Kelley Smith)	b: 3/15/1900 – d: 9/15/1988
Rev. E. S. Higginbotham	1941 - 1943	Ernest S. Higginbotham	b: 1903 – d: 1989
Rev. C. C. Patterson	1943 - 1946	Cecil C. Patterson	b: 4/16/1902 - d: 8/29/1974
Rev. Robert Gillet	1947 - 1951	Robert Stanley Gillet	b: 12/10/1921 - d: 10/3/1996
Rev. Phil Jenkins	1951 - 1952	Philip Mercer Jenkins	b: 5/28/1902 - d: 2/29/1972
Rev. Paul V. H. Bell	1953 - 1960	Paul V.H. (VanHorn) Bell	b: 4/2/1917 - d: 4/13/1981
Rev. Howard L. Underwood	1961 - 1969	Howard Lawrence Underwood	b: 6/9/1908 d: 1/10/1972
Rev. Michael D. Halley	1970 - 1973	Michael David Halley	b: 3/11/1943
Rev. Ronald Lee Stoner	1973 - 1984	Ronald Lee Stoner	b: 9/16/1948
Rev. James E. Cunningham	1984 - 1992	James Edward Cunningham	b: 1/20/1928 - d: 12/8/1994
Rev. Kenneth Miller	1992 - 2004	Kenneth Allan Miller	b: 8/22/1956
Rev. Jon Villers	2005 - 2010	Jonathan Lewis Villers	b: 10/27/1967
Rev. Mark Gerstell	2011 - 2018	Mark Alan Gerstell	b: 12/14/1960
Dr. Toby Wagoner	2018-present	Toby Dewayne Wagoner	b: 7/1/1974
*records link back to a birth & death registered as Joshua Kelley Smith; however all further records reflect Kelley or Kelley E Smith; we believe this to be the same man			

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Rev. Jabez Swiger **Pastor: 1866 – 1869**

Jabez Swiger b: 1828 – d: 1887

Buried in Milhoan Ridge Christian Church Cemetery, Jackson County, WV

Married Abigail Jane Harbert, November 9, 1848

Children Harriet Ann Boso; Samantha Catherine Barnhart; Martha Mindewell Swiger; Alice Lee Petty; Virginia H. Milhoan



Jabez Swiger in 1880 United States Federal Census

West Virginia > Jackson > Grant > 046

Street	House No	Dwelling	Family No	Name	Race	Sex	Age	Birth Mo	Relationship	Single	Married	Widow	Married C	Occupation	Months	Sick	Blind	Deaf and Dumb	Idiotic	Insane	Disabled	Attended	Cannot read	Cannot write	Birthplace	Birthplace of Father	Birthplace of Mother
				Mary E.	W.	F.	16		Daughter	/				At school											W. Va.	W. Va.	Pa.
				William	W.	M.	12		Son	/				At home											W. Va.	W. Va.	Pa.
				David H.	W.	M.	10		Son	/				At home											W. Va.	W. Va.	Pa.
				Charles H.	W.	M.	7		Son	/															W. Va.	W. Va.	Pa.
				Esther J.	W.	F.	7		Daughter	/															W. Va.	W. Va.	Pa.
				John	W.	M.	0		Son	/															W. Va.	W. Va.	Pa.
				Abel	W.	M.	2		Son	/															W. Va.	W. Va.	Pa.
				John	W.	M.	66			/				Farmer											W. Va.	W. Va.	Pa.
				Samuel	W.	M.	64			/				Farmer											W. Va.	W. Va.	Pa.
				Mia E.	W.	F.	20		Daughter	/				At home											W. Va.	W. Va.	Pa.
				Martha	W.	F.	22		Daughter	/				At home											W. Va.	W. Va.	Pa.
				Whitaker Mary	W.	F.	22		Daughter	/				Domestic work											W. Va.	W. Va.	Pa.
				Logan Jabez	W.	M.	52			/				Ministering											W. Va.	W. Va.	Pa.
				John	W.	M.	51			/				At home											W. Va.	W. Va.	Pa.
				Alice L.	W.	F.	19		Daughter	/				At home											W. Va.	W. Va.	Pa.
				Virginia H.	W.	F.	16		Daughter	/				At home											W. Va.	W. Va.	Pa.
				Wesley H.	W.	M.	5		Son	/															W. Va.	W. Va.	Pa.
				Wesley H.	W.	M.	25			/				Farmer											W. Va.	W. Va.	Pa.

12. JABEY SWIGER (4) — JESSE (3), ELIZABETH (2), WILLIAM (1).

Jabey, son of Jesse and Kasandra (Brown) Swiger, was born, 1828, in Sardis district, near Brown; m., Nov. 9, 1848, Abbey Harbert, of Harrison county. He was a noted Baptist preacher; lived in Jackson county, West Va., and did most of his pastoral work there: established many churches, and was considered not only a good man, but a man having superior knowledge of the Scriptures, of which he was a hard student. He and wife died in Jackson county. His children, four in number, are scattered and we have no further knowledge of them.

Children:

- 29 Erwin A. Swiger: m. Abigail, d. of Samuel Harbert, of Sardis district, Harrison county, West Va.
- 30 Harriet Ann Swiger.
- 31 One girl.
- 32 One girl.

First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV – 160th Anniversary – 1866 – 2026

Rev. Joel F. Hardwicke Pastor: 1871 - 1872

Joel F. Hardwicke b: 1837 – d: 1895

Buried Ladonia Cemetery, Ladonia, Fannin County, TX

Married Mary “Mollie” John Petty (m. 1862)

Children Emma L., Addison B., Mattie P., William Thomas

J.F. Hardwicke and his brother J.B. Hardwicke were Baptist Ministers in Virginia/West Virginia in the late 19th century. Rev. J.F. Hardwicke was a Pastor at the Baptist Church in Pt. Pleasant, WV in 1873 after serving the congregation at the Ravenswood Baptist Church. Rev. Hardwicke studied at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in South Carolina.

List of Baptist Ministers in West Virginia

B. A. **Armstrong**, Winfield; W.H. **Adkins**, Raven's Eye; F.J. **Ashburn**, West Union; G.W. **Bailey**, Pruntytown; Wm. T. **Ball**, Wayne C.H.; Aaron **Barnett**, Pruntytown; Allison **Barnett**, Holbrook; L. **Bartrum**, Fort Gay; John **Bennett**, Steer Creek; M. **Bibb**, Wolf Creek; John **Bragg**, Red Sulphur; George **Brown**, Buchanan; G.A. **Burdett**, Mountain Cove; V. **Cade**, Winfield; T.H. **Cale**, Reedy; A. **Callison**, Meadow Bluff; J. W. **Carter**, Parkersburg; John D. **Carter**, Union; George W. **Carter**, Union; I.C. **Cavendish**, Mountain Cove; J.C. **Cline**, Cloverdale; G. W. **Clarke**, Union; G.F.C. **Conn**, Laurel Point; A.M. **Coon**, Sardis; I.W. **Crowl**, Granville; G. **Davidson**, Fettermen; R.W. **Davis**, Arbuckle; William **Dobbins**, Webster C.H.; M.B. **Edmundson**, Wirt C.H.; F. **Elliott**, Kingwood; M. **Ellison**, Raleigh C.H.; H.G. **Estill**, Green Bottom; David **Frame**, Sutton; J. **Fream**, Raccoon; A.J. **Garrett**, Clarksburg; F.H. **Guinett**, Brown's Mill; James **Hawthorne**, _____; Wm. **Gilbert**, Charleston; _____ **Given**, Meadow Bluff; B. **Graybill**, Gap Mills; G.W. **Griffith**, Charleston; Daniel **Haines**, Wadeville; Jordan **Hall**, Parkersburg; J.B. **Hardwicke**, Charleston; J.F. **Hardwicke**, Point Pleasant; E. **Harliss**, Charleston; B.L. **Perry**, Cabell C.H.; J.B. **Harmon**, Winfield; Thos. **Harmon**, Jr. Red House; Thomas **Hawkins**, Mud Bridge; R.G. **Higginbotham**, Knob Fork; C. **Hoff**, Graham Station; J. H. _____
May 5, 1871 (cont.)

1880 United States Federal Census for J.F. Hardwicke. The census is for the household of J.F. Hardwicke, a Minister, living in a dwelling house. The household includes his wife, Mary J. Hardwicke, and their children: Emma L. Hardwicke, Addison B. Hardwicke, Mattie P. Hardwicke, and William Thomas Hardwicke. The census also lists other household members: George W. Carter, Union; I.C. Cavendish, Mountain Cove; J.C. Cline, Cloverdale; G. W. Clarke, Union; G.F.C. Conn, Laurel Point; A.M. Coon, Sardis; I.W. Crowl, Granville; G. Davidson, Fettermen; R.W. Davis, Arbuckle; William Dobbins, Webster C.H.; M.B. Edmundson, Wirt C.H.; F. Elliott, Kingwood; M. Ellison, Raleigh C.H.; H.G. Estill, Green Bottom; David Frame, Sutton; J. Fream, Raccoon; A.J. Garrett, Clarksburg; F.H. Guinett, Brown's Mill; James Hawthorne, _____; Wm. Gilbert, Charleston; _____ Given, Meadow Bluff; B. Graybill, Gap Mills; G.W. Griffith, Charleston; Daniel Haines, Wadeville; Jordan Hall, Parkersburg; J.B. Hardwicke, Charleston; J.F. Hardwicke, Point Pleasant; E. Harliss, Charleston; B.L. Perry, Cabell C.H.; J.B. Harmon, Winfield; Thos. Harmon, Jr. Red House; Thomas Hawkins, Mud Bridge; R.G. Higginbotham, Knob Fork; C. Hoff, Graham Station; J. H. _____.

J. F. Hardwicke in 1880 United States Federal Census

Kentucky > Christian > Hopkinsville > 002

Street	House No.	Dwelling	Family No.	Name	Race	Sex	Age	Birth	Mar	Single	Married	Married	Occupation	Months	Sick	Blind	Deaf and	Idiotic	Insane	Disabled	Attended	Cannot re	Cannot w	Birthplace	Birthplace of Father	Birthplace of Mother
				Richardson, George	M	M	22	1858	Mar	1	1	1	Servant											Mo	Mo	Mo
				Leah, George	M	F	18	1860	Mar	1	1	1	Servant											Mo	Mo	Mo
				Hardwicke, J. F.	M	M	42	1837	Mar	1	1	1	Minister											Mo	Mo	Mo
				Mar. J.	M	F	45	1837	Mar	1	1	1	Keeping house											Mo	Mo	Mo
				Emma L.	M	F	11	1868	Mar	1	1	1	at home											Mo	Mo	Mo
				Addison B.	M	M	11	1871	Mar	1	1	1	at home											Mo	Mo	Mo
				Mattie P.	M	F	11	1871	Mar	1	1	1	at home											Mo	Mo	Mo
				William Thomas	M	M	11	1871	Mar	1	1	1	at home											Mo	Mo	Mo
				George W. Carter	M	M	45	1835	Mar	1	1	1	Servant											Mo	Mo	Mo



Joel F. Hardwicke
Born 4/9/1837 - Died 8/18/1895

First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV – 160th Anniversary – 1866 - 2026

Rev. Matthew Buchanan Edmondson

Pastor: 1873 - 1873

Matthew Buchanan Edmondson b: 1821 – d: 1907

Buried in Two Run Cemetery, Wirt County, WV

Married Margaret Evaline Ott

Children Mary Lee Anna Fought; Joseph O. S. Edmondson; Fannie Wirt Edmondson; Susan A. Edmondson; Matilda Jane Edmondson; Evaline Coe; James J. Edmondson; Elmer Dickinson Edmondson; Robert Wirt Edmondson

U.S., Find a Grave® Index, 1600s-Current

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Name	Rev Matthew Buchanan Edmondson
Gender	Male
Birth Date	26 Nov 1821
Birth Place	Washington County, Virginia, United States of America
Death Date	13 Oct 1907
Death Place	Wirt County, West Virginia, United States of America
Cemetery	Two Run Cemetery
Burial or Cremation Place	Two Run, Wirt County, West Virginia, United States of America
Has Bio?	Y
Spouse	Margaret Evaline Edmondson
Children	Mary Lee Anna Fought; Joseph O. S. Edmondson; Fannie Wirt Edmondson; Susan A. Edmondson; Matilda Jane Edmondson; Evaline Coe; James J. Edmondson; Elmer Dickinson Edmondson; Robert Wirt Edmondson



L-R sitting: unidentified woman, **Rev. M.B. Edmonson**; Wife, **Margaret Evaline Ott Edmonson**

Children standing: Robert Wirt Edmonson; Mary Lee Anna Edmonson Fought



Rev. Matthew Buchanan Edmondson
Born 11/26/1821 – Died 10/13/1907



First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV – 160th Anniversary – 1866 - 2026

Rev. William Edmund Powell

Pastor: 1873 - 1879

William Edmond Powell b: 1842 – d: 1901

Buried in Mount Olivet Cemetery, Parkersburg, Wood County, WV

Married Sophi Jane Morrow Powell in 1869

Children Vida Grace; Stella; Walter E.

Rev. W. E. Powell, D.D., was appointed to direct the work of West Virginia Baptists in February, 1886. It was during his term of office that the title "Superintendent of Missions" was first used. He had been serving as a General Missionary for the American Baptist Home Mission Society, and continued this service while devoting half of his time to the General Association.

Reports indicate that Powell was a hard worker, traveling extensively over the state to visit churches, Associations, and individuals. Financial troubles continued to hinder the work, with the country going through severe economic difficulties, and the state being hit by severe floods on two successive years, 1888 and 1889. The number of missionaries employed ranged from eight in 1886 to twenty five in 1890, who served a total of 84 mission stations in 25 counties.

Powell's resignation was submitted January 1896, following a vote of the General Association to ask the Executive Board to secure someone who would devote full time to the work. His ten years marked the longest term of office up to that time.

William Edmond Powell was born in 1842 at Flemington, but grew up in Doddridge County, where he was baptized into the Victory church at the age of 14. This church had been organized largely through the efforts of his mother. He was ordained in 1866, and pastored churches in Doddridge, Wirt and Jackson Counties in West Virginia, as well as in Pomeroy, Ohio, prior to his appointment by the Home Mission Society in 1881. He also served, from 1880 to the time of his death, as the West Virginia correspondent for the Journal and Messenger, a Baptist newspaper published in Cincinnati which served the states of Ohio, West Virginia, and Indiana.

Death came to Powell July 28, 1901, shortly after his 59th birthday. In a tribute to him published in the Baptist Banner, Rev. J. W. Carter of Parkersburg said of him: "It is my firm conviction that he did more to awaken and develop missionary sentiment among the Baptists of this State than any other man. That he secured the erection and improvement of more church buildings than any other man who ever labored among us. And that he was actively instrumental in paying more church debts than any other man whom the Lord has given to us. After such a record of faithfulness and usefulness he could afford to die."

Credit: "Looking AT Our Roots" Part VI, by Bryce W. Griffith

REV. W. E. POWELL PASSES AWAY.

Well Known Baptist Minister died Sunday After Long Illness.

Rev. W. E. Powell, one of the ablest and most widely known Baptist ministers in this state, died at his home in Parkersburg, at 7:30 o'clock Sunday evening, July 28, 1901, of Bright's disease after many months' illness.

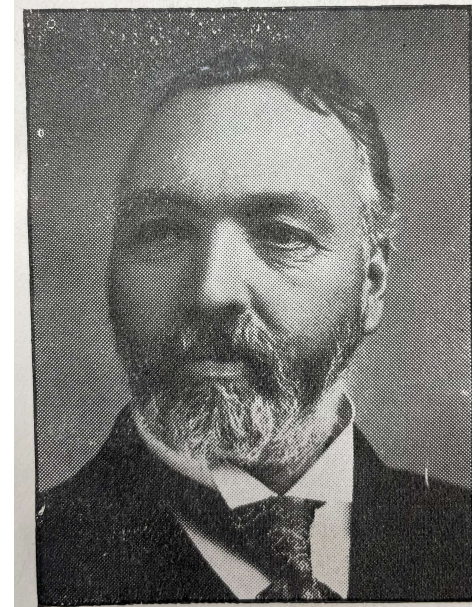
The deceased was born on Wiseman's run, a tributary of Buckeye, near Victory church in Doddridge county July 10, 1842. His father died when he was quite young and it devolved upon him to support the family. In early life he did ministerial work in the neighborhood of his birth, but at the age of 27 years moved to Parkersburg, where he has since resided. For the past 32 years he has been engaged in missionary work in the Baptist denomination throughout West Virginia. He traveled extensively and established many missions and churches. In carrying on his work he made frequent visits to many districts and became known to everyone. He was district secretary of the American Baptist Home Mission Society, and State editor and manager of the Baptist Journal and Messenger, published at Cincinnati. He was ever earnest, zealous and conscientious in his work and the denomination owes a great deal of its growth and success to him. Possibly no minister has done more in the state for the Baptists than Dr. Powell. He was a loyal republican, though never taking an active part in politics. He was a member of the board of regents of the West Virginia University under the Atkinson administration.

Rev. Powell had a commanding personality and was an impressive and magnetic speaker. In his death the church loses a strong and able worker and the state a citizen of great influence.

The aged wife, two daughters and one son survive him. The children are Miss Stella M. Powell, Miss Grace V. Powell and Walter E. Powell, all quite well known here. They have the sympathy of all their Clarksburg and Harrison county friends.

Rev. Powell was a brother of D. G. and E. P. Powell and Mrs. Allen Varner, of Salem.

The funeral was held at Parkersburg Wednesday morning, Revs. J. W. Carter, L. E. Peters and John S. Stump officiating. Interment was made at Mt. Olive Cemetery near Parkersburg.



W. E. POWELL, D. D.

Rev. William Edmund Powell
Born 7/10/1842 - Died 7/28/1901
Ordained December 9, 1866



First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV – 160th Anniversary – 1866 - 2026

Rev. Lewis Edwin Peters Pastor: 1879 - 1883

Lewis Edwin Peters b: 1843 – d: 1916

Buried in Odd Fellows Cemetery, Clarksburg, Harrison County, WV

Married Deborah Praither (1855-1878 m. 1869); Margaret LeFavor Chapman (1836-1895 m. 1882); Martha "Mattie" Collins (1861-1926 m. 1899)

Children Carrie, Edna Blanche, William, Olla Kay

CLOUD OF WITNESSES

The Rev. "Dr." Lewis Edwin Peters, twelfth pastor of Clarksburg Baptist Church, was born at Forest Hill, Monroe County, Virginia (now W. Va.) April 27, 1843, and was a son of George Washington and Margaret (Vass) Peters. He became a Christian at the age of seventeen and was baptized into the fellowship of the Mouth of Greenbrier Baptist Church by Rev. Rufus Pack. He served in Co. C, 36th Virginia C.S.A., 1861-1865, and was wounded in the battle of Piedmont June 5, 1864. He was ordained to the Baptist Ministry in 1869, and was married to Miss Deborah Praither the same year. Four children were born to this union: one son and three daughters. The son died years ago; the three daughters, Olla, Carrie and Blanche were all living in California in 1942. Evidently, death has invaded the ranks of these sisters since then. Olla married a Mr. Johnson, a relative of the Rev. T. C. Johnson, who was pastor of Charleston Baptist Church forty years and also a relative of Hon. John T. Johnson, Commissioner of Agriculture of West Virginia. Miss Carrie was unmarried and Blanche married Guy Merritt, who served in an executive capacity while living in Clarksburg. Carrie and Blanche were active in the church and Sunday School and sang in the church choir before removing from Clarksburg.

"Dr." Peters taught school in his early life and served as pastor of Baptist churches in W. Va. for about twenty-one years as follows: Winfield, 1870; Union, 1870-1872; Mt. Vernon, Hurricane Ridge, 1871-1873; Harford City, 1873-1882; Ravenswood, 1879-1883; Simpson Creek Baptist Church, 1887-1890; Clarksburg, 1883-1890. He also preached at Mason City and New Haven.

After serving seven successful years as pastor of the Clarksburg church, "Dr." Peters resigned to accept a call of the American Baptist Publication Society as Sunday School Missionary. His resignation reads as follows:

"To The Clarksburg Baptist Church:

Dear Brethren and Sisters:

Whereas in the Providence of God, I have been called to a larger field of usefulness in our Master's cause, and Whereas, upon a careful and prayerful examination into the matter, and extensive advice upon the part of my brethren and friends, which advice is singularly almost unanimous, I am forced contrary to personal preference to the conviction that it is my duty to accept said call, and therefore ask you to dissolve the relation between us as pastor and church, to take effect on the last day of the seventh year of this relation, which will be March 31, 1890.

Yours affectionately,
L. E. PETERS."

—Walter M. Elliott

(Continued)

CLOUD OF WITNESSES

"Dr." L. E. Peters—continued

Under this new appointment of American Baptist Publication Society "Dr." Peters was sent to Texas as Sunday School Missionary for that state, but owing to climatic conditions he was forced to return to West Virginia, and continued his work in the Publication Society, as Sunday School Missionary and Director of Sunday School work in West Virginia from November 1, 1890 to September 1, 1914, almost twenty-four years. He retired on account of failing health and turned the work over to Rev. A. B. Withers, his assistant.

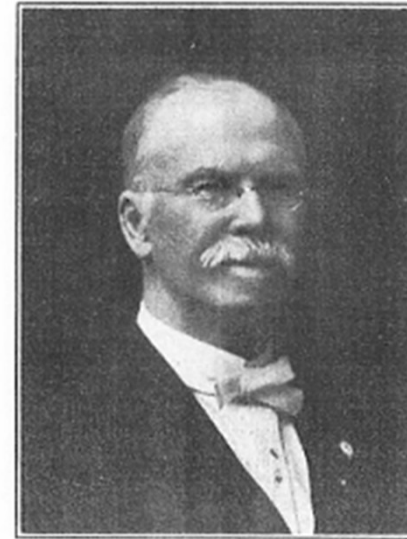
"Dr." Peters was a great student, though not a college-bred man. By constant and never-ceasing study he became a well educated man. The writer has heard "Dr." Peters say on more than one occasion, "I never had a vacation in my life." He was a graduate of Chautauqua Scientific and Literary Circle in the year 1888. His title of "Dr." was not conferred by any school, but was given in honor by the people. He lectured at Chautauqua Assemblies and was recognized as a Sunday School specialist. He was a delegate to many state and national Sunday School conventions. "Dr." Peters was a candidate on the Prohibition ticket, twice for State Senate and twice for Congress.

For many years he was a regular attendant at Baptist associations and conventions and was a power in the meetings. The late Dr. E. J. Woolter, the grand old minister of West Virginia, in a letter several years ago, told the following story of "Dr." Peters:

"One story about him is from personal knowledge. The first General Association I ever attended was at Grafton. It was hot in the afternoon, the congregation had been fed too well, and they were drowsy, when Rev. Henry Langford got up, he seemed greatly agitated, and in a trembling voice said, 'Bro. Moderator, I am in distress. I have been lied on by some of my brethren, men whom I have trusted, yet they are circulating lies about me and it breaks my heart.' Everybody was awake and sitting on the edge of the seats. The moderator said 'Bro Langford tell us who is guilty and they shall be reprimanded. What is it they are saying?' Langford replied 'I hate to say this, but I just cannot lay under the thing any longer. They have been telling around that I am the ugliest man in West Virginia. I deny the charge. Stand up Bro. Peters.' For one time Peters had nothing to say, and the yell that went up from the congregation sounded like an old time Methodist Camp Meeting."

—Walter M. Elliott

(Continued)



REV. L. E. PETERS

Rev. Lewis Edwin Peters
Born 4/ 27/1843 in Monroe County, VA -
Died 3/18/ 1916 in Clarksburg, WV

He was a Confederate Soldier, Company C
36th Cavalry Virginia Battalion,
Confederate States of America "C.S.A."; he
was wounded in the battle of Piedmont
June 5, 1864.

He taught school and later became a
minister being ordained in 1869.

Rev. L. E. Peters Dies at Clarksburg

WELL BELOVED PASTOR PRACTICED HIS DOCTRINE OF CHEER-FULLNESS TO THE END.

Rev. L. E. Peters, widely known throughout the state and more familiarly called "Uncle Peters" died on Saturday evening at his home at Clarksburg after a lingering illness. For a year he had been confined to his bed and prior to that time had been in failing health which had necessitated his retirement from active work. He was a member of the Baptist Ministry and had served the state association in official capacity as a Bible colporteur and a institute worker for many years.

He had visited perhaps every church of the denomination in the state of West Virginia and his work also reached out gratefully on interdenominational lines. As an institute worker he was especially successful and his black board lessons on such occasions will linger long in the memories of his hearers. At the conclusion of the lesson he always was wont to inscribe the text "Keep Sweet" which admonition coupled with Rev. Peters' smile and went a long way toward furthering his gospel of sunshine. Friends and relatives who were with him through the long days of his suffering affirmed that he practised his doctrine until the end, came bearing his suffering with the greatest patience and fortitude.

Rev. Mr. Peters was born in Greenbrier county but spent the greater part of his young manhood in Raleigh county. He was a Civil war veteran having enlisted as a Confederate soldier at the outbreak of hostilities.

He was thrice married, his second wife having died more than twenty years ago when the family were residents of Parkersburg. Several years ago he survived him. Several children later he married Miss Mattie Collins by the first marriage survive him, namely: Mrs. S. G. Johnson of Prescott, Ariz., and Mrs. W. Guy Merritt, of Delta, Colo., and Miss Carrie Beech Peters, at home. The son, W. D. Peters, resides at Delta, Colo.

Funeral services are announced to be held Tuesday at 2 o'clock in the First Baptist Church in Clarksburg. Interment will be made in the I. O. O. F. Cemetery at Clarksburg.

First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV – 160th Anniversary – 1866 - 2026

Rev. Jonathon Smith
Pastor: 1883 - 1885

Jonathon Smith: b: 1829 – d: 1913

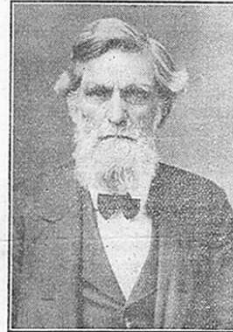
Buried near Clendenin, WV

Married Lydia Stump, February 27, 1851

Children 8 children, raised 2 brothers and 3 grandchildren

In an autobiographical sketch written near the end of his life, Smith reported that he had preached 8,028 sermons, baptized near 1,000 persons, married about 300 couples, assisted in the ordination of 29 ministers, and been pastor of 22 churches. He had part in the organization of Mt. Pisgah, Kanawha Valley, and Harmony Associations, and was a part of the organizational meeting of the Baptist General Association of West Virginia in 1865.

In addition to serving as Corresponding Secretary from 1872 to 1874, he was elected President of the General Association in 1893 and preached the Annual Sermon in 1891. He served at various times as a missionary for the General Association of Virginia and the American Baptist Home Mission Society, as well as for the General Association of West Virginia.



Rev. Jonathon Smith.

(Written by request of friends.)

I was born (one of thirteen children) August 8th 1829 (so says the record I don't remember it) in Randolph county now Barbour county I was born the second time in Gilmer county now Calhoun county in October 1846. I was baptised by Rev John Bennett into the fellowship of Bethlem Church 2nd Sabbath of October 1850.

I was married to Lydia Stump, Feb 27th 1851. I was licensed to preach by said church August 16th 1851. I preached my first sermon the last Sunday in August 1851 in answer to a call of Flat Fork Church, Kanawha County now Roane County. I was ordained July 1854 by the following presbytery viz: John Bennett, John Woofter Josiah Hindman, J A Wright, J A Petty and Joseph Smith, all of whom have passed on to the great beyond.

Since receiving license to preach I have preached 8,028 sermons, I have baptized since ordination near 1,000 persons, I have married about 300 couples, I have assisted in the ordination of 29 min-

isters, I have been Pastor of 22 churches longest terms of service have been 12—12—14—22 years.

I aided in the organization of Mt Pisgah, Kanawha Valley, Harmony and General Associations of the latter I was a charter member. So far as I know only four of us who organized the General Association, are now living viz: D Huffman, D T C Farrow, L J Huffman and myself. I labored as a missionary of the General Association of Virginia, West Virginia and the Home Mission Society.

Most of my ministerial life I was only partially supported by my ministry. My secular employments was working on the farm, teaching school, surveying land and etc. I was surveyor of Roane County two terms, County Superintendent of Schools one term, I was commissioner in chancery of the Circuit Court of Roane County four years and Notary Public twenty five years.

My domestic responsibilities have been raising eight children of our own, partially raising two brothers, and raising from infancy three grand children.

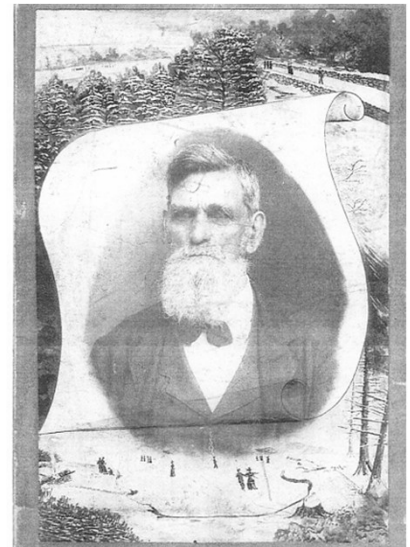
I am still preaching three Sundays in each month, my health is fairly good.

The credit for what I have accomplished is due to the grace and providence of God and the help of one of the best wives which have ever been granted to a gospel minister who is still with me although in her seventy-eighth year.

After meeting all my responsibilities, making my sacrifices and sustaining all my losses the Poor House is not yet in sight.

I have tried to be liberal, and I have found that as I shoveled out the Lord shoveled in and that his shovel is larger than mine.

Jonathan Smith.



Rev. Jonathon Smith
 Born 8/8/1829 - Died 5/28/1913
 Ordained July 1854

Superintendent State Missions 1872-1874
 President General Association 1893



**No official pastors between
1885 - 1887**

Did you know?

- ☐ The Ohio River Rail Road officially reached Ravenswood in 1886, as well the Ravenswood, Spencer & Glenville Railroad was established allowing a boost in the local economy, trade and agriculture.
- ☐ The 1887 School was commissioned by builder H. O'Blennes on land donated by Henrietta F. Bare. The "1887 School" (later commonly referred to as the 1887 Building) stood at the corner of Sycamore and Henry Street and continued to be home to students until 1968.

First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV – 160th Anniversary – 1866 - 2026

Rev. Allen Luther Williamson

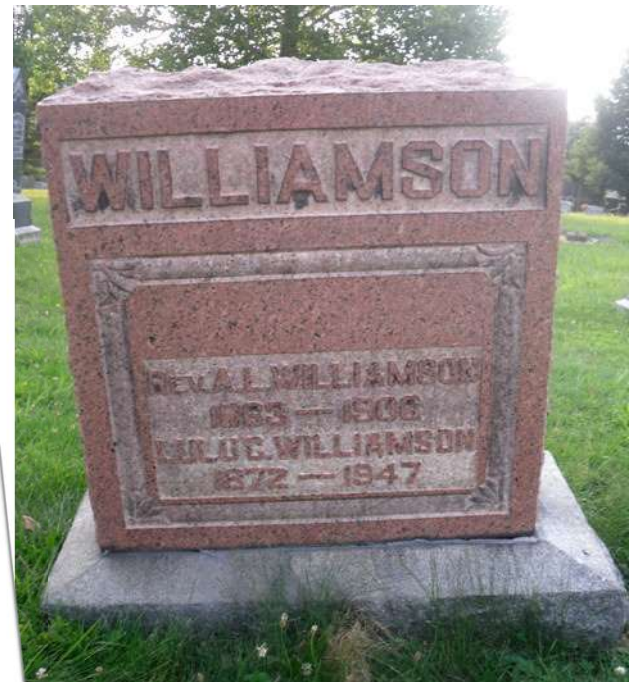
Pastor: 1891 - 1894

Allen Luther Williamson b: 1863 – d: 1906

Buried in Bethel Baptist Church Cemetery, Parkersburg, Wood County, WV

Married Lucelia “LuLu” C. Leachman (m. 1898)

Children Dollie Isabelle; Gladys M.; Alan L



West Virginia > Wood > Lubeck > District 0132

Line num	Street	House N	House S	Family N	Name	Relation to Head	Race	Birth Year	Sex	Age	Marital St	Years M	Children	Birthplace	Father's Birthplace	Mother's Birthplace	Immigrant	Years in U	Naturaliz	Occupation	Months Attended	Can Read	Can Write	Can Speak	Owned or Leased	Owned or Leased	Farm or Other	Farm Sch
1					John	Head	W	1863	M	33	M	0	0	West Virginia	West Virginia	West Virginia				Farmer	0							
2					John	Head	W	1863	M	33	M	0	0	West Virginia	West Virginia	West Virginia				Farmer	0							
3					John	Head	W	1863	M	33	M	0	0	West Virginia	West Virginia	West Virginia				Farmer	0							
4					John	Head	W	1863	M	33	M	0	0	West Virginia	West Virginia	West Virginia				Farmer	0							
5					John	Head	W	1863	M	33	M	0	0	West Virginia	West Virginia	West Virginia				Farmer	0							
6					John	Head	W	1863	M	33	M	0	0	West Virginia	West Virginia	West Virginia				Farmer	0							
7					John	Head	W	1863	M	33	M	0	0	West Virginia	West Virginia	West Virginia				Farmer	0							
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50					John	Head	W	1863	M	33	M	0	0	West Virginia	West Virginia	West Virginia				Farmer	0							

Rev. William Lee Compere
Pastor: 1894 - 1895

William Lee Compere b: 1865 – d: 1933

Buried in Jones Cemetery, Amity, Clark County, AR

Married Sarah Ione Phelps (m. 1892)

Children William L, Ralph M, Therma E, Ruth C, Josephine I, Don OL, Sarah R

Rev. W. L. Compere was born William Lee Compere, one of nine children born to Ebenezer Lee and Josephine Isabella (Mullins) Compere. William Lee and brother James Seth became third generation Baptist ministers. Their grandfather was the pioneer Baptist missionary Lee Compere who came from England by way of Jamaica then to the United State settling first as a missionary in the Creek Nation.

William Lee Compere was born September 24, 1865 in Copiah County, Mississippi and died April 18, 1933 in Little Rock, Pulaski County, Arkansas. He married Sarah Ione Compere on April 7, 1892 in Greenwood, Arkansas. He is buried in Jones Cemetery in Amity, Arkansas. Together he and Sarah raised eight children.

To date we are not quite clear how he came to Ravenswood, WV for his brief tenure as pastor at the Ravenswood Baptist Church (1894 – 1895), but research will continue. His father died in November 1895, and may explain in part his return to Arkansas.

PROHI RALLY AT STAR CITY.
 Special to the Gazette.
 Star City, Nov. 6.—A temperance rally was held at the high school Friday. The Rev. W. L. Compere spoke against Act No. 2.

The Arkansas Gazette
 Little Rock, Arkansas · Tuesday, November 07, 1916

(below) The Mena Star
 Mena, Arkansas · Wednesday, June 01, 1898

Rev. W. L. Compere tells what might be called a pretty good joke on himself. Last Sunday morning while driving from his home with his family to fill his appointment as pastor of the Baptist Church here, he was met by one of the balloon men who politely informed him that there was no use of his going to town as the balloon ascension would not take place that day, consequently he could not see it and would have his trip to town for nothing. Mr. Compere decided, however, to drive on and fill his appointment even though he would be disappointed by not seeing the balloon go up on Sunday.



Rev. William Lee Compere
 Born 8/24/1865 – Died 4/18/1933



Rev. Lorenzo Dow Starkey Pastor: 1895 - 1901

Lorenzo Dow Starkey b: 1858 – d: 1931

Buried Clarksburg, Harrison County, WV

Married Louise Hoff (m. 1879)

Children Flora M., Harold A., Maggie F., Ira D., Emma S., Hugh V., Ruth H., Harlan



Division of Vital Statistics
West Virginia State Department of Health
Certificate of Death (Form State and Use Only)
(To be completed by local authorities)

1. PLACE OF DEATH (Dist. No. 3501-913) Series No. 101
County: Ohio
District: Triadelphia
Town or City: none

2. FULL NAME: Lorenzo Dow Starkey
Residence: No. 101, Peters Run, West Virginia

3. DATE OF DEATH: February 9, 1931
Age: 72 years, 9 months, 9 days
Sex: Male
Color: White
Married: Yes

4. CAUSE OF DEATH: Lobar Pneumonia
Physician: J. H. Harrison, M.D.
Retired Minister

5. PLACE OF BURIAL: Harrison Co., W. Va.
Burial Place: Harrison Co., W. Va.
Burial Date: 2/10/31

6. SIGNATURE OF DECEASED: Enoch Starkey
Signature of Next of Kin: Jane Cunningham
Signature of Minister: J. H. Harrison

7. SIGNATURE OF LOCAL AUTHORITY: J. H. Harrison, M.D.
Signature of State Health Officer: J. H. Harrison, M.D.

TWELFTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES
SCHEDULE No. 1.-POPULATION.
Enumerated by sex on the 1st day of June, 1900.

NAME	RELATION	PERSONAL DESCRIPTION	RACE	SEX	AGE	EDUCATION	INDUSTRY OR OCCUPATION	VALUE OF REAL ESTATE	VALUE OF PERSONAL ESTATE	INDUSTRY OR OCCUPATION	VALUE OF REAL ESTATE	VALUE OF PERSONAL ESTATE
Starkey, Lorenzo D.	Head of Family	White Male 72 yrs	White	Male	72	None	Retired Minister					
Hoff, Louise	Wife	White Female 51 yrs	White	Female	51	None	Housewife					
Starkey, Enoch	Son	White Male 18 yrs	White	Male	18	None	Student					
Starkey, Jane	Daughter	White Female 15 yrs	White	Female	15	None	Student					
Starkey, Harold A.	Son	White Male 12 yrs	White	Male	12	None	Student					
Starkey, Emma S.	Daughter	White Female 10 yrs	White	Female	10	None	Student					
Starkey, Hugh V.	Son	White Male 8 yrs	White	Male	8	None	Student					
Starkey, Ruth H.	Daughter	White Female 6 yrs	White	Female	6	None	Student					
Starkey, Harlan	Son	White Male 4 yrs	White	Male	4	None	Student					
Starkey, Flora M.	Daughter	White Female 3 yrs	White	Female	3	None	Student					
Starkey, Maggie F.	Daughter	White Female 2 yrs	White	Female	2	None	Student					
Starkey, Ira D.	Son	White Male 1 yr	White	Male	1	None	Student					

First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV – 160th Anniversary – 1866 - 2026

Rev. James Edwin Hutchinson Pastor: 1903 - 1926

James Edwin Hutchinson b: 1860 – d: 1926

Buried in the Ravenswood Cemetery, Ravenswood, Jackson County, WV

Married Martha Ann Berry (m. 1894)

Children Mildred M; Edwin Berry; Helen F.

1 PLACE OF DEATH (Dist. No. 1881) Series No. 17012 Division of Vital Statistics
County **JACKSON** (To be inserted by local Registrar)
District **RAVENSWOOD INDEPENDENT** West Virginia State Department of Health
Town or City **RAVENSWOOD** No. **17012** (For State Use, use only)
2 FULL NAME **JAMES EDWIN HUTCHINSON**
(a) Residence, No. **214** **GALLATIN** St. **Ward.**
(b) Date of death (month, day and year) **Dec 31 1926**
(c) Length of residence in city or town where death occurred **75** years **How long in U. S. A., if foreign birth?** **75** years **How long in U. S. A., if foreign birth?** **75** years

PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS
3 SEX **Male** 4 COLOR OR RACE **White** 5 Single, Married, Widowed, Divorced (write the word) **Married**
6a If married, widowed or divorced **HUSBAND of**
6b (or) WIFE OF **MARTHA ANNE BERRY**
7 DATE OF BIRTH (month, day and year) **MARCH 10 1860**
8 AGE **66** Years **9** Months **21** Days
9 OCCUPATION OF DECEASED **MINISTER**
(a) Trade, profession or particular kind of work
(b) General office of industry, business, or service (for example, **RAVENSWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH**)
(c) Name of employer
10 BIRTHPLACE (city or town) **FORRESTHILL W. VA.**
(State or country)
11 NAME OF FATHER **JAMES ALEXANDER HUTCHINSON**
(city or town) **VIRGINIA**
(State or country)
12 MAIDEN NAME **MARY SANDIE WOODSON**
(city or town) **VIRGINIA**
(State or country)
13 SIGNATURE OF INFORMANT **Martha A. Hutchinson**
(Address) **Ravenswood W. Va.**
14 SIGNATURE OF REGISTRAR **John S. Hester**
(Address) **Ravenswood W. Va.**

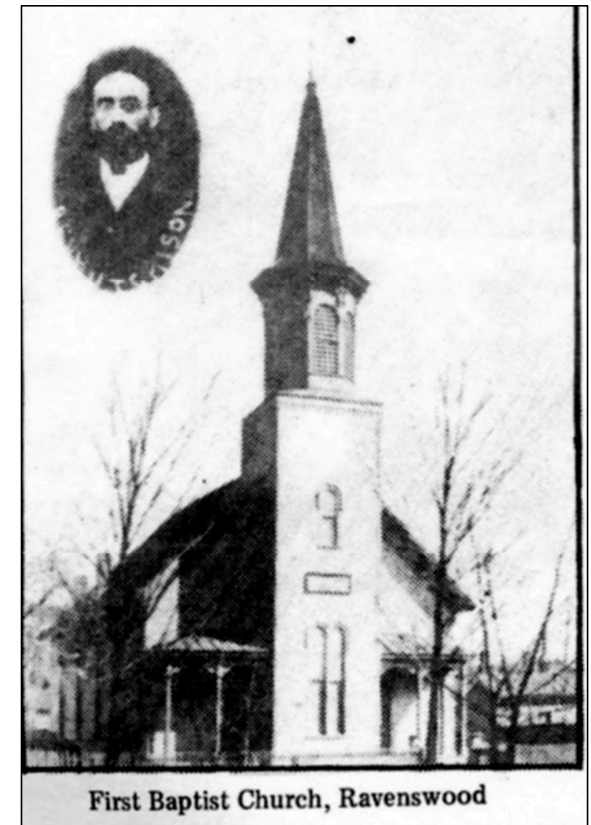
MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH
15 DATE OF DEATH (Month, day and year) **Dec 31 1926**
16 I HEREBY CERTIFY that I attended deceased from **Dec 30 1926** to **Dec 31 1926** and that I last saw him/her alive on **Dec 31 1926**
17 CAUSE OF DEATH (Primary or leading cause) **Senile Degeneration**
18 Where was disease contracted, if not at place of death? **At home**
19 PLACE OF BURIAL **Ravenswood Cem.**
20 Date of Burial **Jan. 2, 1927**
21 Undertaker **R. J. Horn**
22 Address **Ravenswood W. Va.**

MARRIAGE LICENSE
THE VIRGINIA, COUNTY OF BRAXTON, TO-WIT:
You are hereby authorized to join together in the holy state of Matrimony, according to the Rites and Ceremonies of your church or religious denomination, and the laws of the State of West Virginia, **James E. Hutchinson** and **Martha A. Berry**
Given under my hand, as Clerk of the County Court of the County of Braxton, on **21st** day of **December** **1894**
Wm. H. Hester
Clerk of the County Court of Braxton County

CLERK'S CERTIFICATE
I, **James E. Hutchinson**, Minister of the Gospel, do hereby certify that the above named parties, **James E. Hutchinson** and **Martha A. Berry**, were by me joined together in the holy state of Matrimony, according to the Rites and Ceremonies of their church or religious denomination, and the laws of the State of West Virginia, on the **21st** day of **December** **1894**, at **Ravenswood**, in the County of **Braxton**, State of **West Virginia**.
The full names of the parties are as follows:
James E. Hutchinson, of the County of **Braxton**, State of **West Virginia**, and **Martha A. Berry**, of the County of **Braxton**, State of **West Virginia**.
The place of residence of the parties is **Ravenswood**, in the County of **Braxton**, State of **West Virginia**.
The names of the witnesses, giving the foregoing information, are **James E. Hutchinson** and **Martha A. Berry**.
Given under my hand this **21st** day of **December** **1894**.
Wm. H. Hester
Clerk of the County Court of Braxton County

MINISTER'S RETURN OR ENDORSEMENT
I, **James E. Hutchinson**, Minister of the Gospel, do hereby certify that the above named parties, **James E. Hutchinson** and **Martha A. Berry**, were by me joined together in the holy state of Matrimony, according to the Rites and Ceremonies of their church or religious denomination, and the laws of the State of West Virginia, on the **21st** day of **December** **1894**, at **Ravenswood**, in the County of **Braxton**, State of **West Virginia**.
Given under my hand this **21st** day of **December** **1894**.
James E. Hutchinson
Minister of the Gospel

Rev. Hutchinson was Pastor of the Sutton Baptist church from August 1893 – July 1903, then serving in Ravenswood from 1903 until his sudden death in 1926



Rev. James Edwin Hutchinson
Born 3/10/1860 in Braxton County, WV
Died 12/31/1926 in Ravenswood, WV

First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV – 160th Anniversary – 1866 - 2026

Rev. Herbert Ulysess Thompson Pastor: 1927 - 1929

Herbert Ulysess Thompson b: 1904 – d: 1969

Buried Roane County

Married Ora Medeta Carpenter (m. 1930)

Children Herbert M.,

Rev. Herbert U. Thompson was pastor in Ravenswood, later serving at the First Baptist Church of Shinnston in the 1940s, and the First Baptist Church of Hinton in the 1950-1960s.

We can see from newspaper articles, his wife was also very active in the community. He appears to have held long service to his communities spanning three decades between Shinnston and Hinton churches.

He died in August 1969 at the age of 65. Rev. Thompson retired in February earlier that same year.

Funeral Wednesday For Rev. Thompson

HINTON (RNS) — Funeral services for Rev. H. U. Thompson, 65, will be at 11 a.m. Wednesday in the First Baptist Church at Hinton with Rev. Delvin Elwell, Rev. Ross Evans, Rev. Don Loudermilk and Rev. Robert McCoy in charge.

Burial rites will be at 4 p.m. in the Odd Fellows Section of the Spencer Cemetery at Spencer.

Thompson died Sunday in a Beckley hospital.

The body will remain at the Ronald Meadows Funeral Parlor and will be placed in the church at 9:30 a.m. Wednesday.

[illegible]

Rev. Ethan Everette White

Pastor: 1930 - 1935

Ethan Everette White b: 1875 – d: 1956

Buried in Mt. Olivet Cemetery, Parkersburg, Wood County, WV

Married Dollie Dickson (m. 1896)

Children Mildred Mary; Grace Dickson; William Walden

The Rev. Ethan E. White of 701 30th St., Vienna, former pastor of the Dudley Avenue Baptist church, died yesterday afternoon at the Marshall Nursing home after a six-year illness. He was 81. The Rev. Mr. White was the son of Lanson and Mary Ann White and was born near Zanesville, Ohio Aug. 21, 1875. He attended public schools in Ohio; continued his education in Ohio Northern University and took his theological work in the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.

On January 2, 1902, he was ordained a Baptist Minister and for a time was Pastor of several churches in southeastern Ohio. For four years, he was a state evangelist for the Ohio Baptist Convention following which he was pastor of a church in Bethesda, Ohio until 1909.

His first work in West Virginia came at Sistersville where, for three years, he was pastor of the First Baptist Church. A new church was built during his pastorate. After that, he was pastor of the Loraine Street church in Ironton, Ohio and religious and social work director of the Railroad Y.M.C.A. at Russell, Kentucky.

In 1914, he relocated at Weston and during his pastorate built a new church. In 1917, he became pastor of the Central Baptist church in Columbus, Ohio serving two years. In 1919, he was called to Chicago as executive secretary of the Moody Bible Institute Alumni Association.

From 1921 until 1923 he was pastor of the Dudley Avenue Baptist church in Parkersburg. From 1923 to 1925, he was pastor of the Spencer Baptist Church.

During each of these pastorates, the church edifice was remodeled. In July 1926, he was called to the pastorate of the Mt. Hope Baptist church where there the first Baptist church was built. For five years, he was church edifice director for the West Virginia State Baptist Convention.

Survivors include his wife, the former Dollie Dickson, to whom he was married in 1896; three children, Mrs. Mildred Williams of Charleston, Miss Grace White, at home, and William White of Parkersburg; seven grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

Also surviving are two half brothers, James Bay of Buckhannon and Fred of Columbus, Ohio and a half-sister, Mrs. Grace Carticle of Delaware, Ohio.

Final rites will be held at 2 p.m. Thursday from the Vaughan funeral home. Officiating Ministers will be the Rev. F.M. Tolbert, the Rev. C.C. Caverlee, the Rev. Robert A. Moore and the Rev. Hugh Pickett Sr.. Burial will be in Mt. Olivet Cemetery.

Published in the Parkersburg Sentinel, August 1956.



Rev. Ethan Everette White
Born 8/21/1875 – Died 8/28/1956
Ordained 1/2/1902



Rev. Kelley E. Smith*

Pastor: 1936 - 1940

Kelley E. Smith b: 1900 – d: 1988

Buried in Sutton Cemetery, in Sutton, Braxton County, WV

Married Agnes Mae Moore (m. 1931)

In 1930, Kelley was a student at Broadus College and working as a Minister. He married Agnes Mae Moore 8/16/1931 in Philippi, Barbour County, WV. In Ravenswood Baptist Church records, Rev. Kelley E. Smith was ordained in November 25, 1936 at Ravenswood Baptist Church. Based on timing and his ordination date, it would be reasonable to conclude he came to Ravenswood shortly after leaving the Seminary. **Interestingly his birth record shows his birth name as *Joshua Kelley Smith, but all records further have him simply as “Kelley” or “Kelley E.”** Rev. Smith left Ravenswood Baptist Church in the fall of 1940 to become chaplain of the Boy's Industrial School in Pruntytown, WV. Further records show the rest of his career in and around Sutton, WV, as shown in the 1950 census he is married and working as a Minister in Sutton, WV. He died in 10/12/1988. *Our conclusion is this is the same individual.

REGISTRATION CARD

SERIAL NUMBER 1034 ORDER NUMBER 1785

1. NAME: Kelley Smith

2. PERMANENT HOME ADDRESS: Sutton, Braxton Co. W. Va.

3. AGE IN YEARS: 18 DATE OF BIRTH: March 15, 1900

4. RACE: White

5. SEX: Male

6. COLOR: White

7. NATIONALITY: U. S. Citizen

8. NATURALIZED: Yes

9. DECLARED: Yes

10. PRESENT OCCUPATION: Minister

11. EMPLOYER'S NAME: Broadus College

12. PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS: Broadus College

13. NAME: Kelley E. Smith

14. ADDRESS: Sutton, Braxton Co. W. Va.

15. STATEMENT THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE: Kelley E. Smith

Name: Kelley Smith

Birth Year: abt 1900

Gender: Male

Race: White

Age in 1930: 30

Birthplace: West Virginia

Marital Status: Single

Relation to Head of Household: Student

Home in 1930: Philippi, Barbour, West Virginia, USA

Map of Home: Philippi, Barbour, West Virginia

Street Address: Broadus College

Institution: Broadus College

Dwelling Number: 173

Family Number: 175

Attended School: Yes

Able to Read and Write: Yes

Father's Birthplace: West Virginia

Mother's Birthplace: West Virginia

Able to Speak English: Yes

Occupation: Minister

Industry: Baptist Church

Class of Worker: Wage or salary worker

Employment: Yes

Neighbors: View others on page

MARRIAGE LICENSE

West Virginia, Barbour County, West:

This is hereby authorized to join together in the Holy Bonds of Matrimony, according to the rites and ceremonies of your Church or religious denomination, and the laws of the State of West Virginia, the following persons:

1. Kelley E. Smith

2. Agnes Mae Moore

Witnesses: J. B. Smith, J. B. Smith

Clerk's Certificate: J. B. Smith

Minister's Return or Endorsement: J. B. Smith

Kelley Smith in 1950 United States Federal Census

West Virginia > Braxton > Sutton > 4-10

Household	Serial	Name	Relation	Code A	Race	Gender	Age	Marital St	Birth Place	Code B	Citizen	Occupation	Worked Last Week	Seeking Employment	Hour Work	Occupation	Industry	Worker C	Code C	Code C	Code C
1	9	Smith, J. E.	Head	M	W	M	43	Mar	West Va.	1	C	Physician and Surgeon	100			Physician and Surgeon	Doctor	1	100		
		Agnes Mae	Wife	F	W	F	40	Mar	West Va.	1	C		100					1	100		
		John	Son	M	W	M	12	Mar	West Va.	1	C		100					1	100		
		John	Son	M	W	M	10	Mar	West Va.	1	C		100					1	100		
		Ben	Son	M	W	M	9	Mar	West Va.	1	C		100					1	100		
19	10	Smith, Kelley E.	Head	M	W	M	44	Mar	West Va.	1	C	Minister	100			Minister	Church	1	100		
		Agnes Mae	Wife	F	W	F	38	Mar	West Va.	1	C		100					1	100		
20	11	No one at home	Sublet				72	Mar	24 to 26												
21	12	Smith, John	Head	M	W	M	28	Mar	West Va.	1	C	Teacher	100			Teacher	School	1	100		
		John	Son	M	W	M	7	Mar	West Va.	1	C		100					1	100		
		John	Son	M	W	M	41	Mar	West Va.	1	C		100					1	100		
		John	Son	M	W	M	46	Mar	West Va.	1	C		100					1	100		



First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV – 160th Anniversary – 1866 - 2026

Rev. Ernest Stanley Higginbotham Pastor: 1941 - 1943

Ernest Stanley Higginbotham b: 1908 – d: 1989

Buried Dale Memorial Park, Chesterfield County, VA

Married Naomi Ardis Wright (m. 1928)
Children David Allen, Josef Ernest

January 1941, Rev. E. S. Higginbotham accepted the position as pastor to Ravenswood Baptist Church, having previously been pastor at the Cheshire Baptist Church, Cheshire, OH. In the 1944, 1945 and 1946 "Year Book of the Northern Baptist Convention" Church Directories, in the West Virginia conferences, Rev. E. S. Higginbotham is listed within the Goshen Association – serving Albright, Hopewell, Kingwood and Masontown.

Rev. E. S. Higginbotham is again mentioned conducting services, funerals and weddings in the Rock Island, Illinois in 1947, and between 1949-1953 as Pastor of Shiloah Baptist Church in Suffolk, Virginia, and Nelson Park Baptist Church in Norfolk.

He and wife Naomi settled in Farmville, Virginia.



Rev. Ernest Stanley Higginbotham,
Born 10/8/1908 – Died 9/8/1989

Below, Rev. Higginbotham and wife Naomi



First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV – 160th Anniversary – 1866 - 2026

Rev. Cecil C. Patterson Pastor: 1943 - 1946

Cecil C. Patterson b: 1902 d: 1974

Buried in Crescent Hill Cemetery, Ceredo, Wayne Country, WV

Married Anna Lois Pinson (m. 1924)

Children Ezra "Pete" Preston; Cecil H. "Buzz"; Jack Lee "Jackie"

Seated: Anna & Rev. Cecil Patterson
L-R standing: sons "Buzz" & Pete
Patterson. [Their son "Jackie" died at
age 10 in 1944.]

REGISTRATION CARD—(Men born on or after February 17, 1897 and on or before December 31, 1925)

SERIAL NUMBER 1. NAME (Print) **209** **Rev. CECIL** **PATTERSON** ORDER NUMBER **112244**

2. PLACE OF BIRTH (Print) **Elizabeth Wirt W. Va.**

3. PLACE OF RESIDENCE GIVEN ON THE LINE ABOVE WILL DETERMINE LOCAL BOARD JURISDICTION; LINE 2 OF REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE WILL BE IDENTICAL

4. MAJORS ADDRESS **Same**

5. TELEPHONE **Yes** **39** **Wayne Co.**

6. DATE OF BIRTH **April 16, 1902** **West Virginia**

7. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PERSON WITH WHOM ALWAYS KNOWN YOUR ADDRESS **Mrs. Harriett Riggs (mother) Ceredo, W. Va.**

8. REPORTED NAME AND ADDRESS **Elizabeth Baptist Church Elizabeth, W. Va.**

9. PLACE OF REGISTRATION ON BIRTH **Elizabeth Baptist Church Elizabeth Wirt Co. W. Va.**

10. I declare that I have taken these steps and that I am a member of the church of the First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, W. Va.

11. SIGNATURE OF REGISTRANT **Cecil Patterson**

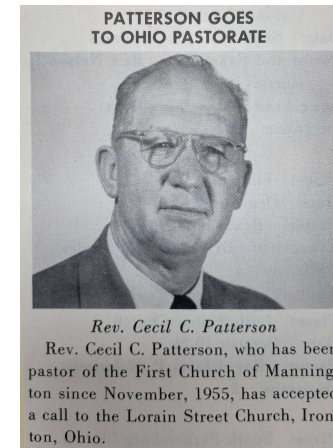
12. SIGNATURE OF LOCAL BOARD **Anna C. Pinson**

13. DATE OF REGISTRATION **February 16, 1926**

14. LOCAL BOARD SELECTIVE SERVICE **ELIZABETH BAPTIST CHURCH, WEST VIRGINIA**



Rev. Cecil C. Patterson
Born 4/16/1902 – Died 8/29/1974



First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV – 160th Anniversary – 1866 - 2026

Rev. Robert Stanley Gillet Pastor: 1947 - 1951

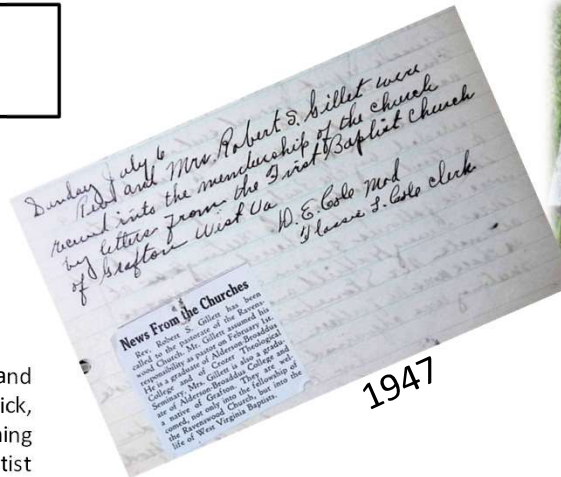
Robert Stanley Gillet b: 1921 d: 1996

Buried in Morefield Cemetery, Hermitage, Mercer County, PA

Married Dorothy Dean Proudfoot (m. 1945)

Children (unconfirmed)

Robert Stanley Gillet was born in Louisville KY to Stanley Adrian Gillet and Mary Lu Capps on 12/10/1921. He died 10/3/1996 in Frederick, Maryland. He married Dorothy Dean Proudfoot in 1945. Prior to coming to Ravenswood Baptist Church, he was a member of the Grafton Baptist Church a graduate of Alderson-Broaddus College and Crozer Theological Seminary. Rev. Gillet's father was the Baptist Minister, Rev. Stanley A. Gillet of Philadelphia, PA and his grandfather was a Baptist minister in Iowa. Rev. Robert S. Gillet was very active with the youth while serving in Ravenswood and is frequently commended for his work in this regard.



Robert Stanley Gillet b: 12/10/1921 d: 10/3/1996

Robert S Gillett in 1950 United States Federal Census

West Virginia > Jackson > Ravenswood > 18-4

Line No.	House or Dwelling	Farm	Acres	Question	Name	Relation	Code A	Race	Gender	Age	Marital St.	Birth Place	Code B	Citizenship	Work Last Week	Seeking Employment	Hours Wk.	Occupation	Industry	Worker C	Code C	Code C
183	70				James Cook L	Head	W	M	27	27	Mar	W. Va.	W	U.S.	40			Road Worker	County School	B	193	1
184	70				Landman Paul W	Head	W	F	47	47	Mar	W. Va.	W	U.S.	40			Road Worker	County School	B	193	1
185	70				Paul B	Head	W	M	43	43	Mar	W. Va.	W	U.S.	40			Road Worker	County School	B	193	1
186	70				Wagner Sam J	Head	W	M	28	28	Mar	W. Va.	W	U.S.	40			Road Worker	County School	B	193	1
187	70				James Carroll S	Head	W	M	44	44	Mar	W. Va.	W	U.S.	40			Road Worker	County School	B	193	1
188	70				John J	Head	W	F	38	38	Mar	W. Va.	W	U.S.	40			Road Worker	County School	B	193	1
189	70				John B	Head	W	M	14	14	Mar	W. Va.	W	U.S.	40			Road Worker	County School	B	193	1
190	70				Charles K	Head	W	F	7	7	Mar	W. Va.	W	U.S.	40			Road Worker	County School	B	193	1
191	70				Thomas H	Head	W	M	4	4	Mar	W. Va.	W	U.S.	40			Road Worker	County School	B	193	1
192	70				Samuel M	Head	W	F	45	45	Mar	W. Va.	W	U.S.	40			Road Worker	County School	B	193	1
193	70				Samuel E	Head	W	F	45	45	Mar	W. Va.	W	U.S.	40			Road Worker	County School	B	193	1
194	70				Charles E	Head	W	M	36	36	Mar	W. Va.	W	U.S.	40			Road Worker	County School	B	193	1
195	70				Robert A	Head	W	F	34	34	Mar	W. Va.	W	U.S.	40			Road Worker	County School	B	193	1
196	70				Charles J	Head	W	F	11	11	Mar	W. Va.	W	U.S.	40			Road Worker	County School	B	193	1
197	70				John B	Head	W	F	3	3	Mar	W. Va.	W	U.S.	40			Road Worker	County School	B	193	1
198	70				Charles	Head	W	F	56	56	Mar	W. Va.	W	U.S.	40			Road Worker	County School	B	193	1
199	70				Charles	Head	W	F	34	34	Mar	W. Va.	W	U.S.	40			Road Worker	County School	B	193	1
200	70				John	Head	W	F	46	46	Mar	W. Va.	W	U.S.	40			Road Worker	County School	B	193	1
201	70				Robert L	Head	W	M	29	29	Mar	W. Va.	W	U.S.	40			Road Worker	County School	B	193	1
202	70				Charles B	Head	W	F	31	31	Mar	W. Va.	W	U.S.	40			Road Worker	County School	B	193	1
203	70				Thomas	Head	W	F	62	62	Mar	W. Va.	W	U.S.	40			Road Worker	County School	B	193	1

THE QUESTIONS BELOW ARE FOR PERSONS LISTED ON SAMPLE LINES

FOR ALL AGES

What country was he or she born in?

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Rev. Philip Mercer Jenkins Pastor: 1951 - 1952

Philip Mercer Jenkins b: 1902 d: 1972

Buried Pittsylvania County, Virginia

Married Anna Ruth McCollam

Children Ruth, David, Barbara, Stewart, Marcia



Christmas Card 1948

REGISTRATION CARD—(Men born on or after February 17, 1897 and on or before December 31, 1921)

1. NAME (Print) **PHIL MERCER JENKINS** ORDER NUMBER **7.11151**

2. PLACE OF BIRTH (Print) **1957 BUCHANAN AVE. S.W. GRAND RAPIDS, KENT, MICH.**

3. PLACE OF RESIDENCE (Print) **GRAND RAPIDS, KENT, MICH.**

4. MAILED ADDRESS **SAME**

5. TELEPHONE **GRAND RAPIDS 54091** DATE OF BIRTH **MAY 28 1902** PLACE OF BIRTH **PARKERSBURG, WEST VIRGINIA**

6. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PERSON WHO WILL ALWAYS KNOW YOUR ADDRESS **MRS. RUTH JENKINS, 1957 BUCHANAN AVE. S.W. GRAND RAPIDS, MICH.**

7. BAPTIST NAME AND ADDRESS **SCRIBNER AVE. BAPTIST CHURCH, GRAND RAPIDS, KENT, MICH.**

8. PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS **SCRIBNER AVE.**

9. I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE

D. N. S. FORM 1 (Revised 1-1-42)

MEMBER'S REPORT

NAME **PHIL MERCER JENKINS** AGE **46** CONFIRMATION **1921**

LOCAL BOARD NO. **4**

DATE OF REPORT **February 15, 1952**

REPORTED BY **Philip M. Jenkins**

Phil M. Jenkins Dies in Danville

Phil Mercer Jenkins, retired pastor of Laurel Hill Baptist Church, Pittsylvania Association, died recently in Danville.

He was a native of Parkersburg, W. Va., and a graduate of Oberlin College and Eastern Baptist Seminary.

Jenkins served also as pastor in Texas, South Carolina, West Virginia, Michigan and Georgia.

He is survived by his wife, three daughters and two sons.

Funeral services were conducted by Dr. Victor Mantiply, pastor of Danville's Moffett Memorial Church, and Edd Calhoun, who is present pastor of Laurel Grove.

July 20, 1922.

THE BAPTIST BANNER

5

Three Of The Baptist Banner Scholarship Students

Mr. Philip Jenkins, of Parkersburg, is one of the best known young Christian workers in this section of the state.

and has a host of friends who are beginning to show an interest in his behalf. District No. 3, which is composed of Parkersburg, Pan Handle, Harrisville and Good Hope Associations, is expected easily to supply the five hundred new subscribers Philip will need to put him over for a scholarship at Broadus this fall. He already has a nice start and his first hundred mark undoubtedly will be reached soon. He is worthy of the support of five hundred of them. Send in one or more new subscriptions for Jenkins and become a charter member of The Friendly Hand Club in this district.



Philip Jenkins

Rev. Philip M. Jenkins

Born 5/28/1902 - Died 2/29/1972



First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV - 160th Anniversary - 1866 - 2026

Rev. Paul V.H. (VanHorn) Bell
Pastor: 1953 – 1960

Paul V.H. (VanHorn) Bell b: 1917 d: 1981

Buried in the Ravenswood Cemetery, Ravenswood, Jackson County, WV

Married Loma Luella Haines (m. 1936 / div.); Juanita Hildegard McElwain (m. 1946)

Children Driscoll Kent; Princess Kay



Rev. Bell (in suit) assists the young men of the Church to bring chairs outside for (what we presume) a good ole' fashioned meeting under the trees!

The **Rev. Paul Van Horn Bell**, 64, of Ravenswood, died Monday evening in Jackson General Hospital after an extended illness. He was born April 2, 1917, at Morgantown, son of the late Homer and Bessie Van Horn Bell. He was a retired Baptist minister, a graduate of Baptist Seminary and was ordained in April 1940.

For the past 41 years he served churches in Parsons, Cowen, Toll Gate, Silver Springs, Maryland and Ravenswood. For several years he served as interim and supply and counselor and served at Baptist camp at Cowen. He was past president and zone chairman of Ravenswood Lion's Club and charter president of Kiwanis Club at Parsons.

Surviving are his wife, Juanita McElwain "Ni" Bell (whom he married in 1946), who died in 2008; his daughter, Mrs. Kay Warren of San Juan Capistrano, Calif.; his son, Driscoll K. Bell, of South Bend, Ind.; his brother, Jesse Bell, of Clearwater, Fla.; and seven grandchildren.

Services were held on Thursday, 2 p.m. at Straight-Tucker Funeral Chapel, Ravenswood with Rev. Ronald McCauley officiating. Burial was in Ravenswood Cemetery.



Rev. Paul VanHorn Bell
 Born 4/2/1917 - Died 4/13/1981

L-R – Rev. Paul Bell, daughter Kay, wife Juanita*, son Driscoll – at the parsonage on Gallatin St. – Ravenswood, WV

** Mrs. Bell opened a private Kindergarten schooling children in Ravenswood for a total of 36 years.*



Rev. Michael David Halley

Pastor: 1970 - 1973

Michael David Halley b: 1943

Married Carmen Blair (m. 1964)

Children David, Jeffrey



Commander Michael David Halley, Chaplain Corps, U.S. Navy
and wife Carmen – Celebrating their 30th wedding anniversary
August 21, 1994 ~ Chapel in the Woods Naval Air Station, Norfolk, VA

COMMANDER MICHAEL DAVID HALLEY CHAPLAIN CORPS, U. S. NAVY

Chaplain Halley was born in Barboursville, West Virginia, March 11, 1943. He graduated from public schools in Saint Albans, West Virginia, received his B.A. from Marshall University, Huntington, West Virginia, in 1965 and his M.Div. from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, in 1970.

From March, 1970, to June, 1973, Chaplain Halley served as pastor of First Baptist Church, Ravenswood, West Virginia. In October, 1971, he was sworn into the Naval Reserve as a chaplain endorsed by the American Baptist Churches, USA. He served on inactive duty through June, 1973, with a Reserve SeaBee Battalion in South Charleston, West Virginia.

Chaplain Halley's duty stations on active duty include Naval Chaplains School, Newport, RI; USS JQUETT (DLG/CG-29), San Diego, CA; 2d Marine Division, FMF, Camp Lejeune, NC; Administrative Officer, Office of the Chief of Chaplains, Washington, DC; Postgraduate Study, Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, PA; USS PUGET SOUND (AD-38), Flagship of the U. S. Sixth Fleet, Gaeta, Italy; Pastor, David Adams Memorial Chapel, Naval Station, Norfolk, VA; Command Chaplain, USS CORAL SEA (CV-43), Norfolk, VA; Armed Forces Staff College, Norfolk, VA; Plankowner, USS GEORGE WASHINGTON (CVN-73), Newport News, VA; History Project Officer, Chaplain Resource Board, Norfolk, VA. He retired from active duty on July 1, 1993.

His military awards include the Meritorious Service Medal, Navy Commendation Medal, Meritorious Unit Commendation, Navy "E" Ribbon, Navy Expeditionary Medal, National Defense Service Medal (2 awards), Sea Service Deployment Ribbon (7 awards), and Expert Pistol Shot Medal.

In 1987 the American Baptist Churches named Chaplain Halley the Outstanding Military Chaplain at the biennial convention in Pittsburgh, PA.

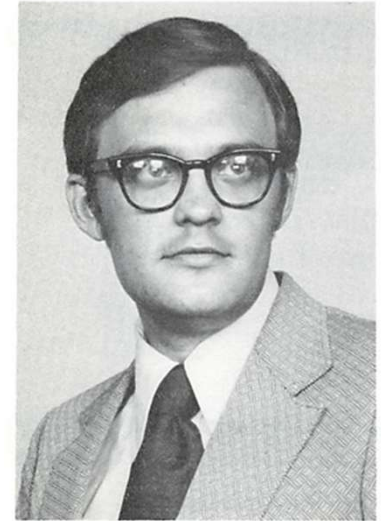
He is a member of the USS CORAL SEA CVA-43 Association, AmVets, the National Association of Life Underwriters, and the National Association of Professional Financial Planners. While serving as the Chaplain Corps History Project Officer, Chaplain Halley compiled and wrote Volume X of the Chaplain Corps History Series, biographies of chaplains on active duty 1982-91.

In 1993, he joined Metropolitan Life Insurance Company as an Account Representative and Registered Securities Representative. He is now an Area Marketing Representative for the American Mutual Funds Group in Norfolk, Virginia.

Since 1964, Chaplain Halley has been the proud husband of Carmen Blair Halley, an accomplished piano teacher and chapel organist. They reside in Virginia Beach, Virginia, and are the parents of two adult sons, David and Jeffrey.

808 WOODBRIDGE CT
VIRGINIA BEACH VA 23464-2730
804-495-8644

OCT 12, 1994
Michael Halley



Rev. Michael David Halley
Born 3/11/1943

Rev. Ronald Lee Stoner

Pastor: 1973 - 1984

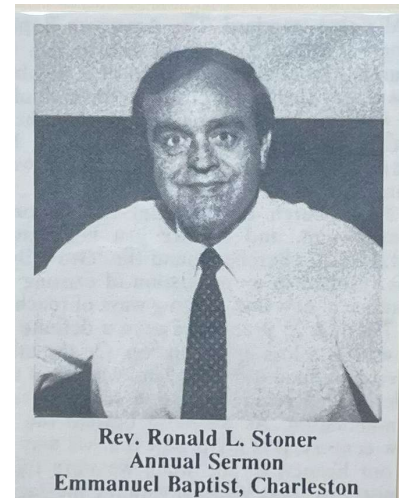
Ronald Lee Stoner b: 1948

Married Janice (Jan) Carole Dolin (m. 1970)

Children Rhonda, Shane

Rev. Ron Stoner, a graduate of Marshall University and Southern Baptist Seminary, was ordained at the 20th Street Baptist Church in Huntington, WV on September 30, 1973. He was the Pastor of First Baptist Church, Ravenswood, WV; Emmanuel Baptist Church, Charleston, WV; and First Baptist Church of Hurricane, WV.

Rev. Stoner had a profound influence and a natural way of connecting with the youth while at First Baptist Church of Ravenswood; a legacy which continues to give generation over generation.



Rev. Ronald Lee Stoner
Born 9/16/1948
Ordained 9/30/1973



Jan and Ron Stoner - During Rev. Stoner's tenure at First Baptist Church Ravenswood, they were both very active with the youth group. Jan led the teen girls with a class called the "Pioneer Girls". She also operated a nursery school, which operates still today; "Humpty Dumpty Nursery School" is still going strong under the leadership of Connie Staats, a member of First Baptist Church of Ravenswood.



Rev. James Edward Cunningham

Pastor: 1984 - 1992

James Edward Cunningham b: 1928 d: 1994

Buried in Cunningham Memorial Park, St. Albans, Kanawha County, WV

Married Jean Ann Denny (m. 1956)

Children Ramona, LeeAnn, Joy, Judy

Wednesday, May 9, 1990--The Jackson Star News--B-1

ATTITUDES

Health problems don't stop minister's work

The Rev. Jim Cunningham of the First Baptist Church of Ravenswood says kidney transplant surgery sounds serious, but compared to the hell of kidney dialysis machines, "It's a piece of cake."

Cunningham, 60, ought to know since a transplanted left kidney was placed next to his diseased one in July of 1983 at Pittsburgh's Presbyterian Hospital.

It's going on seven years, and Cunningham hasn't experienced any signs of rejection by the donor organ.

"It sounds serious, and I guess it's serious in the sense it can kill you," Cunningham said.

Cunningham, a tall, angular 6-4 today, was born in Charleston, WV, and grew up in the Calvary Baptist Church in Charleston. He was part of the 1948 graduating class at Stonewall Jackson High School, the last mid-year graduating class in the school's history.

A then 155-pound Cunningham played basketball for the old Charleston Reds youth team under Coach Frank Polk. A forward on offense and a guard on defense, Cunningham learned through the youth organization that involvement between adults and young people was a cornerstone toward building a better world. It is the cornerstone he still uses today.

He had intended on studying for the ministry at Alderson-Broadthus College at Philippi, but ended up getting a degree in English and in the early 1950's, he was ready to go out into the world.

However, there was a Korean War going on and Cunningham was tempted to join up and go into the service.

Advisors said he needed to get a seminary degree in order to serve as a chaplain in the military. He did get that degree at Crozer Theological Seminary at Chester, PA, in 1955, but the Korean War had wound down and instead of finding himself on the battle lines, Cunningham found himself at the First Baptist Church of Hubbard, OH, outside of Youngstown.

"I worked with the young people and the Sunday school," he recalled. That was where he found his formula for youth ministry: "You build relationships with kids, that establishes trust, and then you share Christ with them—friendship, fellowship and followership."

In June of 1956, Cunningham met and married the former Jean Ann Denny of South Charleston, who was the director of children's work at the Weirton Christian Center.

In 1957, he took over the pastorate at the First Baptist Church of Cowan in Webster County. The experience dispelled any stereotypes he might have had of rural folk.

"You usually think of (rural) people not willing to change and not wanting things new and different, but (here) we bought a new organ, had a new youth program and special summer services." One of new programs was an outreach to youth in the community. "Several teenagers made decisions (for the Lord) after that, which was rewarding."

In 1958, Cunningham accepted a call from the First Baptist Church of South Charleston to work as an associate pastor. "I preached Sunday night and I had 60-70 kids for junior church, grades 1-4. It really challenged me to get on their level."

It was at that time that Cunningham's health began to falter. "I remember a Thursday night about 12:30 in the morning when I had a pain that wouldn't quit." It was a kidney stone and Cunningham was first faced with polycystic kidney disease, a hereditary ailment which sees abnormal cyst growth in the kidneys.

"I had a grandfather who died with it, but at that time, they didn't know anything about it."

Cunningham went to Richmond, VA, and explored the side effect of high blood pressure the disease was causing in his body. By 1977, the disease had a strong hold on his thin body.

"The only thing that kept me going was just sheer determination and faith," he recalled.

In 1965, before that dark passage of his life began to be written, Cunningham left the South Charleston church and accepted a call at the Milton Baptist Church, where he stayed until March of 1973.

He really enjoyed Milton, and was told once by a parishioner, "Preacher, when you leave that church, you'll say this was the best church you've ever been at."

It was at Milton that Cunningham began an in-service summer training program for ministers-to-be, where the young people those young people have gone on to pastor their own churches, including the Rev. Conrad Lowe at the North Parkersburg Baptist Church.

"Out of that church, we had five people who made full-time stay at the church for three months and work."

See "Minister" On Page B-7

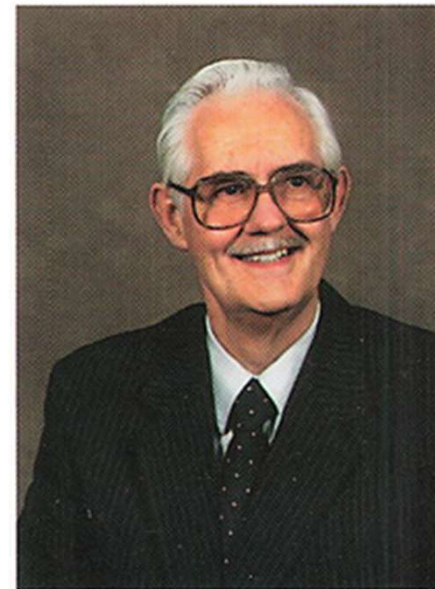
CUNNINGHAM ACCEPTS NEW POSITION



The Rev. James Edward Cunningham, pastor of the Milton Church since 1965, has accepted the position of Minister of Conference, Camping and Youth for the West Virginia Baptist Convention and will begin his new duties March 1, 1974.

Mr. Cunningham, a native of Charleston, is married and has four children at home. His wife is a graduate of Alderson-Broadthus College and completed one year at Yale. At one time, she was a staff member of the Weirton Christian Center. Presently she is National Vice-President of Interpretation for American Baptist Women.

Jim, as he is known to his many friends, is a graduate of Alderson-Broadthus College and Crozer Theological Seminary and has considerable experience in the field of Christian Education, Youth evangelism and Camping. He will carry the portfolio of Minister of Conference, Camping and Youth and is responsible for the development of a program of camping and conferences for all age groups, with special emphasis on the West Virginia Camp at Cowen, the West Virginia American Baptist Conference Center at Parchment Valley, Ripley, and the youth program.



Rev. James Edward Cunningham
Born 1/20/1928 Died 12/8/1994

First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV – 160th Anniversary – 1866 - 2026

Rev. Kenneth Allan Miller
Pastor: 1992 - 2004

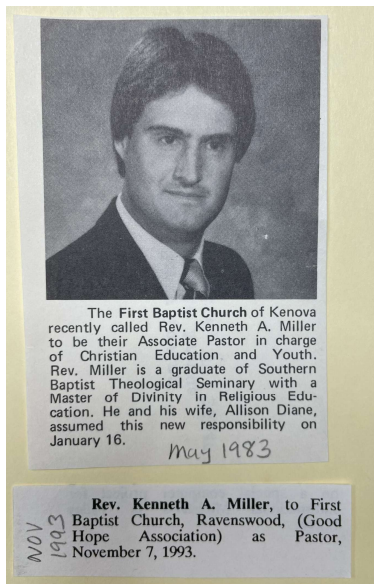
Kenneth Allan Miller b: 1956

Married Allison Diane Washburn (m. 1980)

Children Nolan, Mallory



Rev. Kenneth Allan Miller
 Born 8/22/1956



Rev. Miller graduated from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY with a Masters in Divinity; he received his undergraduate from University of Louisville, Louisville, KY.

Now retired, the Ohio native served as Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Weston, WV; the First Baptist Church of Kenova, WV; First Baptist Church of Marietta, OH; and the First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV. He is a former WVBC annual speaker, and has served on a variety of boards, committees and local ministerial associations throughout the West Virginia Baptist Convention.

Rev. Jonathan Lewis Villers
Pastor: 2005 - 2010

Jonathan Lewis Villers b: 1967

Married Koreen Mellquist (m. 1989)

Children Caleb, Allison, Thomas, Bobby

Rev. Jon Villers , son of Rev. Lewis and Louise Villers, grew up in Wirt and Calhoun Counties in WV. He has served as the Southeast Area Minister for the West Virginia Baptist Convention, working in the Elk Valley, Fayette, Greenbrier-Raleigh, Hopewell and Rockcastle Associations.

While still in college, he held a ministry internship, later continuing his education at Alderson Broaddus College in Philippi, WV, earning a double major in Accounting and Management Information Systems. He holds a Master of Business Administration from Averett College and a Master of Divinity degree from Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Rev. Villers is currently pursuing his Doctor of Ministry degree from Palmer Seminary.

Throughout his 30 plus career, he has served parishioners in Wood, Mercer, Monroe, Kanawha, Jackson and Barbour Counties as well as being an adjunct professor at Alderson Broaddus and an interim chaplain at Alderson Broaddus. Rev. Villers helped start a Christ-centered 12 step program "Celebrate Recovery Barbour County".

Jon is married to Koreen, who has served as the WVBC Director of Discipleship. He and Koreen are the parents of 4 children and are eagerly awaiting the birth of their 6th grandchild!



Rev. Jonathan Lewis Villers
Born 10/27/1967

Rev. Mark Alan Gerstell

Pastor: 2011 - 2018

Mark Alan Gerstell b: 1960

Married Susan (m. 1984)
Children Holly



Rev. Gerstell and his wife Susan spend their spare time loving on their grandchildren, thanks to the blessing of daughter Holly and son-in-law Jesse Nowery.

(R) Mark & Susan Gerstell, (L) Jesse & Holly (Gerstell) Nowery, the grandchildren Theo & Addie (2026)

Son of Rev. Joseph E. and Norma K. Gerstell, Mark grew up in Keyser, WV. Now retired, Mark served as the Senior Pastor at First Baptist Church of Ravenswood from 2011 – 2018. Following his retirement, he continued to serve in leadership roles within the congregation, still graciously fills in at the pulpit when the need arises, and blesses the congregation with his beautiful baritone voice.

First Baptist Church of Ravenswood was his first and only church, in which he was called to full-time ministry. Before moving to Ravenswood, he had pastored Meadowdale Baptist Church in Sandyville, WV, in a bi-vocational capacity. He was ordained while at Meadowdale from the Good Hope Association. Mark graduated from Palmer Seminary – Eastern University with a Masters in Divinity in 2016.

Prior to the Ministry, Mark was a WVU graduate in Business Administration; a degree he put to good use having been the General Store Manager at Hardman's Home

Center in Spencer, WV for 22 years. Very community minded, while living in Spencer he established and organized the Community Family Day and All Faith Celebration for the City of Spencer. Additionally, he spearheaded the founding of the Library at Spencer Primary School and was selected as Outstanding Community Advocate of the Year by the Roane County Board of Education.

First Baptist Church of Ravenswood continues to benefit from Mark's civic mindedness. He envisioned the church motto of "Reaching Out, Inviting In, and Growing in Christ Together" –which is still being used today. He started the Roving Revival and a Good Hope Scholarship Fund to assist those going on mission trips; developed the Memorial Day Service Recognition Program for members who had passed the previous year and the Maundy Thursday Service.



Rev. Mark Gerstell
Born 12/14/1960



Rev. Toby Dewayne Wagoner
Pastor: 2018 - present

Toby Dewayne Wagoner b: 1974

Married: Jennifer Violet Dixon (m. 1999)

Children: Andrea, Samantha, Aaron, John, Hannah

Prior to becoming a pastor full time, Rev. Wagoner grew up in Spencer, WV, where he began working as a radio broadcaster while still in high school; a profession he continued for over 15 years. He later parlayed his communication skills to become a public information officer in WV state government while beginning his bi-vocational ministry services.

He has served in official ministry capacity beginning in 2008-2014 at the Love and Kindness Independent Church in Spencer, WV; came to First Baptist Church, Ravenswood, WV as Youth Pastor in 2014, later accepting the position of Senior Pastor in 2018.

Rev. Dr. Toby D. Wagoner received his Doctor of Ministry- Biblical Studies from Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA ; a Master of Arts – Biblical Studies from Moody Bible Institute, Chicago, IL; and graduated with a Bachelor's Degree from WVUP, Parkersburg, WV.

He was ordained by the American Baptist Churches, USA Good Hope Association, WV in January 2018.



Jennifer & Toby Wagoner, married 8/6/1999 shown here in 2026

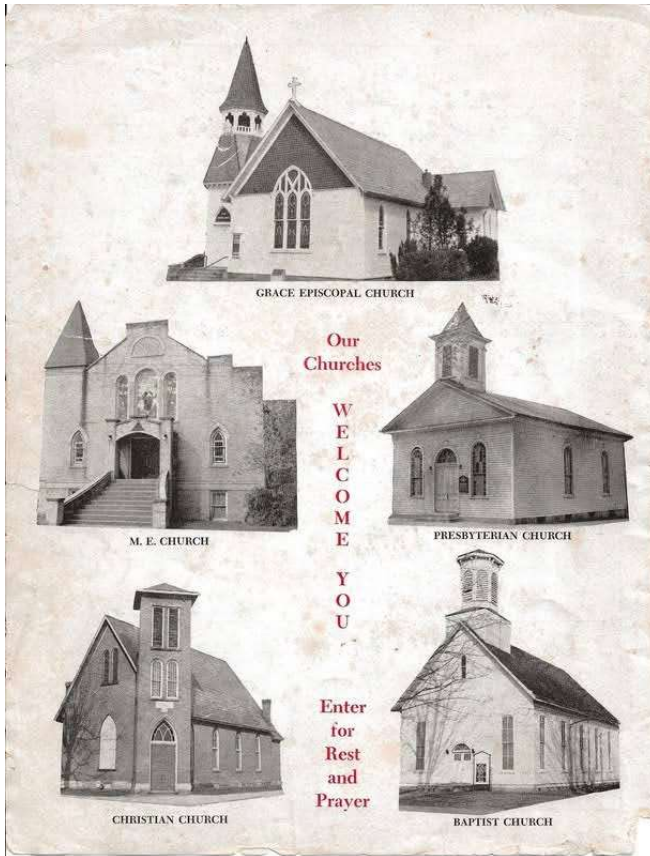


Rev. Toby Dewayne Wagoner
Born 7/1/1974



First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV – 160th Anniversary – 1866 - 2026

Historical Churches in the City of Ravenswood



In 1952 the churches are shown here as part of Ravenswood's Centennial celebration. Today, in 2026, **Grace Episcopal Church** (top) and **First Baptist Church** (bottom right) still actively hold services in the same buildings; while the **First United Presbyterian Church** (middle right) meets in a "new" building.

Grace Episcopal Church, located at 405 Walnut St., building dedication was in **1902** having been rebuilt after a fire in 1900; the church began when organized in **1851**.

First Baptist Church Ravenswood, located at 215 Ann St., building dedication was in **1878**, after being organized in **1866**.

M.E. Church located at the corner of Henry & Walnut streets originally a Methodist Church, later became the "Our Savior Evangelical Lutheran Church" (where Mrs. Juanita Bell once held private Kindergarten classes in the basement classroom; she was also the wife of Rev. Paul V.H. Bell, Minister at FBC 1953-1960-), today serves as home for BASE Athletics Cheer & Tumbling Classes.

The **Presbyterian Church** building located at the corner of Virginia & Mulberry sits empty for decades. The "First United Presbyterian Church" relocated to a newly completed building in 1963, located at the end of 601 South Ritchie Ave., where services are still active. The church was organized in **1847**.

First Christian Church located at the corner of Sand & Gallatin is no longer an active church, however in recent years the building owner has welcomed new & growing congregations to utilize its sanctuary & classrooms as an interim church home. Today it operates as "For Him Ministries" meeting needs of those in community, as well as home for "Liberty Academy" a micro-school.



Shown here in July 2026, (top) **First Baptist Church Ravenswood** and (middle) **Grace Episcopal Church** are the two oldest active churches still holding services consecutively within the same church buildings in Ravenswood.



The **First United Presbyterian Church** (bottom), established in 1847 is the oldest congregation active within our community.

Historical Churches in the City of Ravenswood (May 1960)



Presbyterian Church,
corner of Virginia &
Mulberry St.

Grace Episcopal
Church, Walnut St.

First Christian
Church, corner of
Sand & Gallatin St.

First Baptist Church,
Ann St.

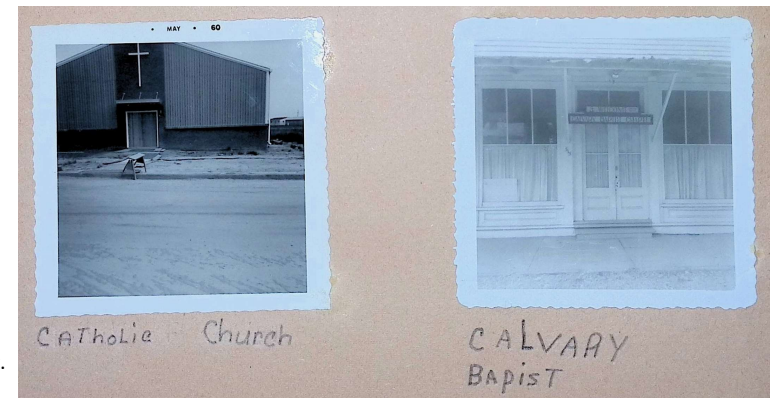


Methodist Church,
corner of Henry &
Walnut St.

Second Baptist
Church, Elwood
St.

Catholic Church,
Elwood St.

Calvary Baptist
Church, Sand St.



First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV – 160th Anniversary – 1866 - 2026

Historical Churches in the City of Ravenswood (May 1960)



Pilgrim Holiness

Pilgram Holiness

Lutheran

Lutheran, Sand St.



First Baptist Church Ravenswood, circa
1960s

First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV – 160th Anniversary – 1866 - 2026

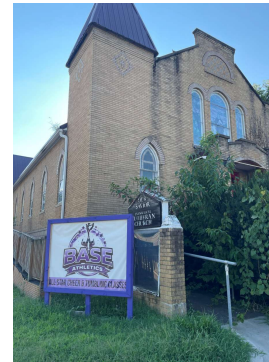
Historical Churches in the City of Ravenswood (July 2026)



Former Presbyterian
Church, corner of
Virginia & Mulberry St.



Former M.E. Church
(Methodist), corner of
Henry & Walnut St.

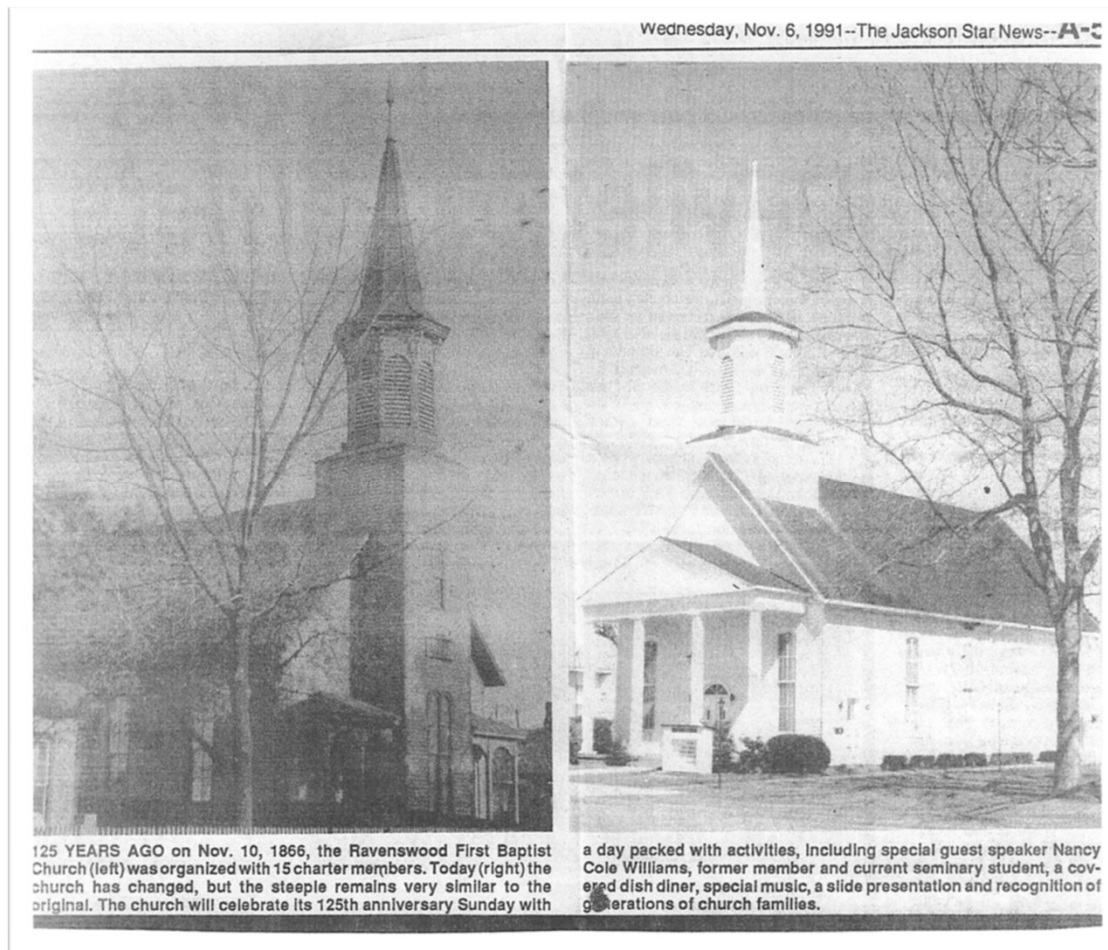


Former Christian
Church, corner of
Sand & Gallatin St.



First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV – 160th Anniversary – 1866 - 2026

Ravenswood Baptist Church - over time.



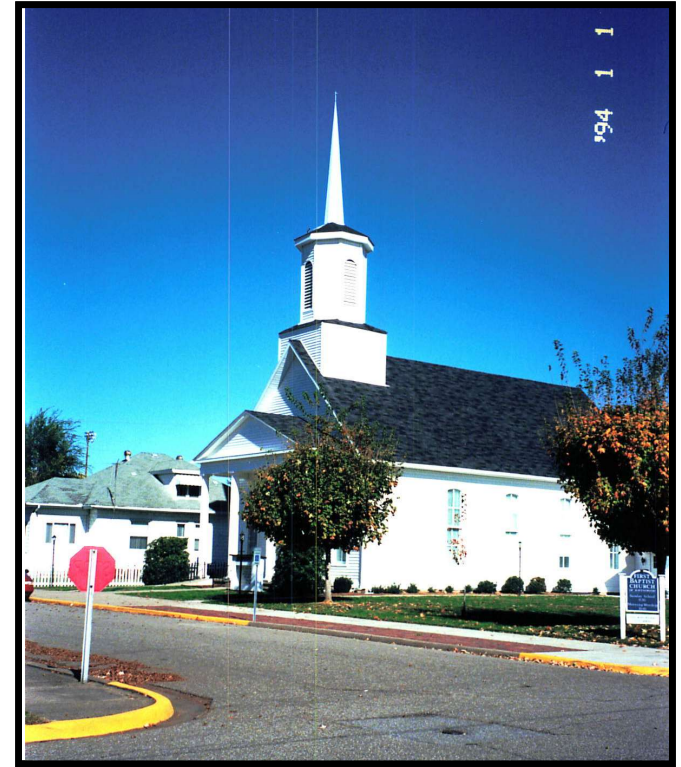
September 20, 1980
Suck-Barb wedding

First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV – 160th Anniversary – 1866 - 2026

Ravenswood Baptist Church - over time.



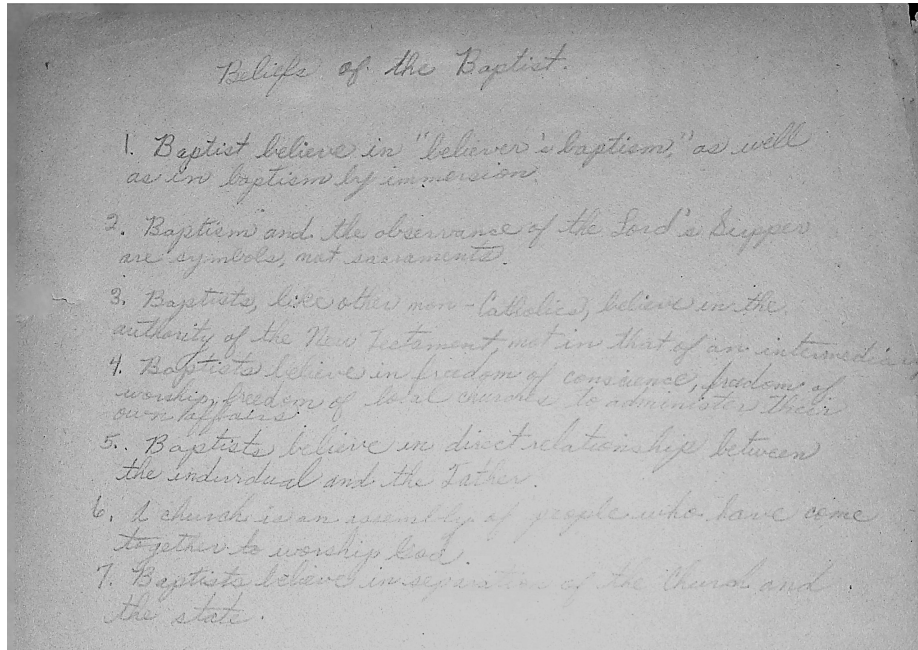
First Baptist Church Ravenswood, circa
1980/1990s



Steeple repair before – during after –
1993/1994

First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV – 160th Anniversary – 1866 - 2026

What Baptists Believe – scrapbook from 1960



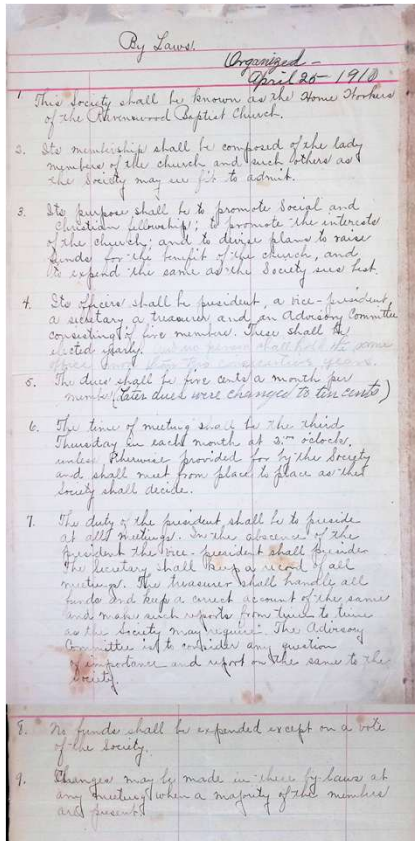
In the church archives is a big blue very delicate scrapbook... it's unclear who prepared it, but it does appear to be a school project.

To the left is a picture of the handwritten in pencil. Transcription is found below

Beliefs of the Baptist.

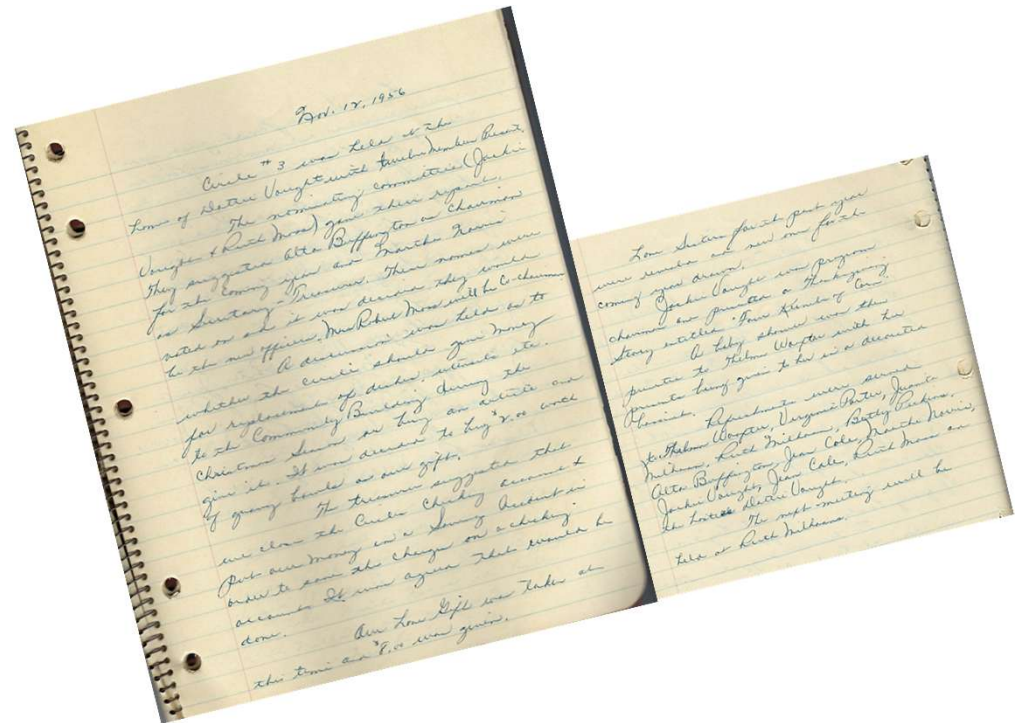
1. Baptist believe in "believer's baptism," as well as in baptism by immersion.
2. Baptism and the observance of the Lord's Supper are symbols, not sacraments.
3. Baptists, like other non-Catholics, believe in the authority of the New Testament, not in that of an intermediary.
4. Baptists believe in freedom of conscience, freedom of worship, freedom of local churches to administer their own affairs.
5. Baptists believe in direct relationship between the individual and the Father.
6. A church is an assembly of people who have come together to worship God.
7. Baptists believe in separation of the Church and the state.

Women of First Baptist Church



(L) Women's Homeworkers Society was established at the Ravenswood Baptist Church in 1910 and outlined their By-Laws

(R) On November 12, 1956 the The Women's Homeworkers Circle #3 meeting was hosted at the home of Mrs. Dottie Vought (Connie Vought Staats mother); the nominating committee included Jackie Vought (Debby Vought Bashaw's mother) & Ruth Moss (Robertta Moss Miller's mother) provided a report.



Women of First Baptist Church



(Circle I (Home Workers Society), 1972)



The Women's Circle gathers monthly for fellowship & refreshments. Above is from 2025 held right after church and was well attended women of all ages.

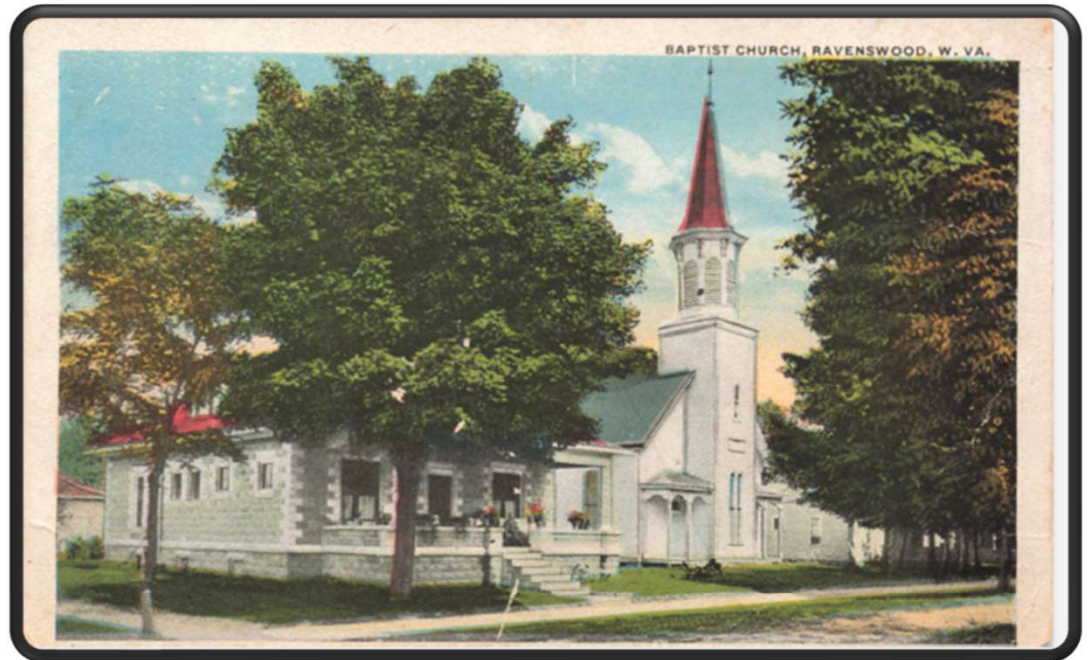


Left – annual end of year Christmas party sponsored by the Women's Circle – starts out at one house for appetizers and ends at another for desert & an ornament exchange Which gets competitive. Rules: someone can 'steal' your ornament rather than picking from those yet to be opened.



September 25, 2022 (L-R) Helen Johnson, Carolyn Brown and Geraldine Wright where bestowed the honor of Deaconess Emeritus . Collectively these women have served the Lord and the congregation of First Baptist Church of Ravenswood for nearly 150 years. Rev. Toby Wagoner is pictured on this special occasion.

The Church is blessed to still have these ladies with us still in 2026.



Post card from 1941 showing a rendition of Ravenswood Baptist Church - 215 Ann St, Ravenswood, WV

Notice the house to the left at 217 Ann St. built in 1900 & still stands today; present owners Mick & Susan Price. Look closely to the right where the old house once stood and now is part of the church courtyard.

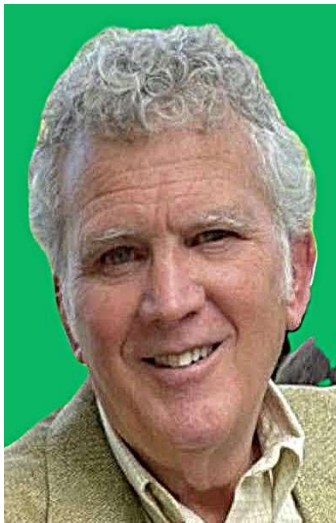
Membership Milestones

First Baptist Church Ravenswood is honored to have among its congregation three individuals holding the longest memberships, and each by baptism. They truly have been representative of both our history and our future!

David Moore – by Baptism on July 3, 1955

Roberta (Moss) Miller – by Baptism June 10, 1956

Ellen (Wheeler) Emmerson – by Baptism in April 1958



David Moore



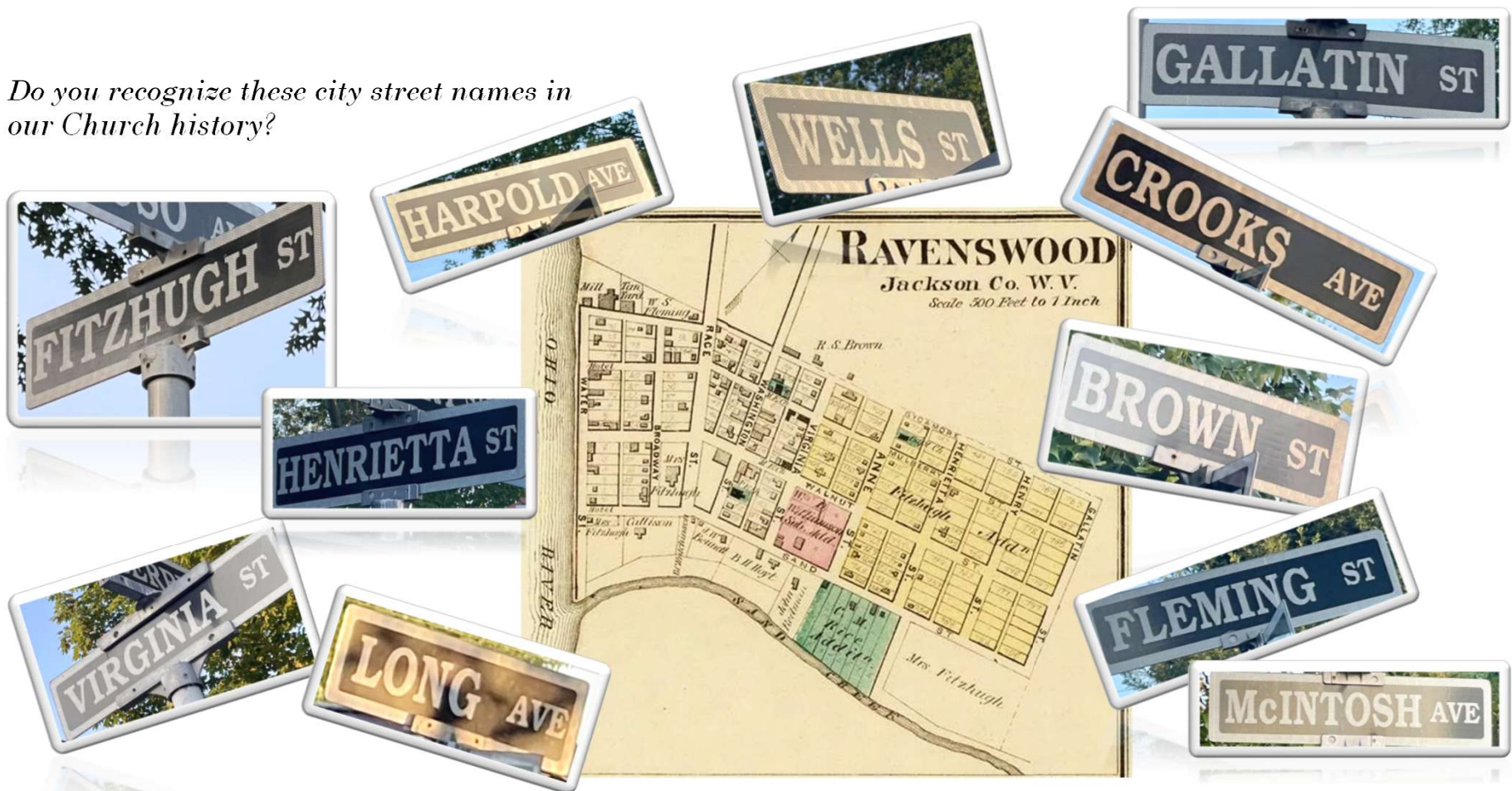
Roberta (Moss) Miller



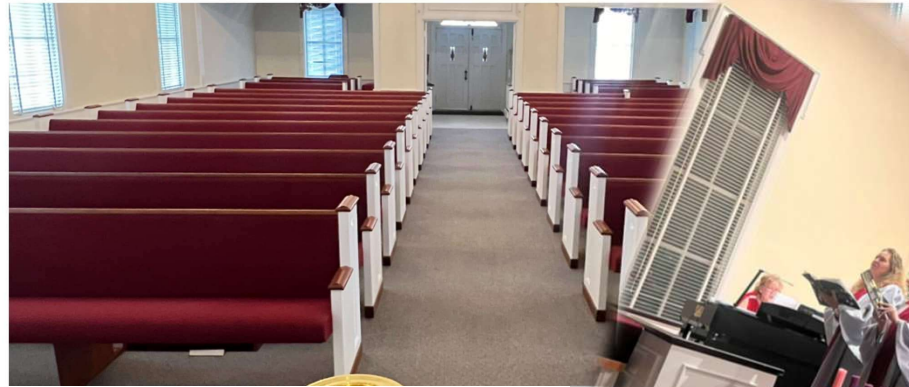
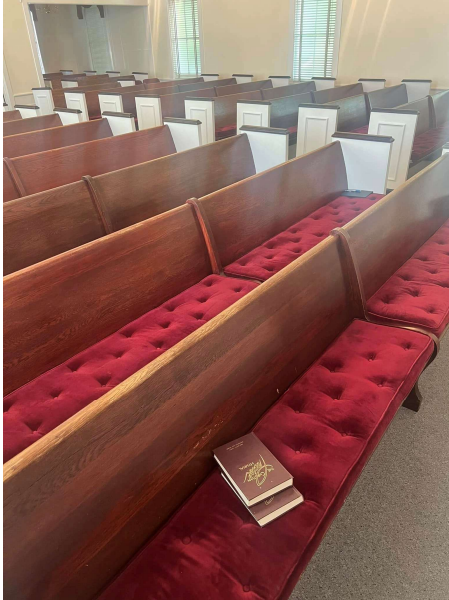
Ellen (Wheeler) Emmerson

First Baptist Church family ties to the foundation of the City of Ravenswood

*Do you recognize these city street names in
our Church history?*



First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV – 160th Anniversary – 1866 - 2026



In 2024, the pews which were originally seated in 1914 were replaced. (L) pews dating back to 1914 were updated in 1954; (Center) New pews in 2024 sponsored and fully funded by friends and family of the church. (R) Christmas Eve service 2024, the new pews were full and new battery powered LED candles used in lieu of traditional wax. (Insert) The Choir sings their annual Christmas Cantata.



First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV – 160th Anniversary – 1866 - 2026

First Baptist Church in 2026



The TEN COMMANDMENTS monument was set in the courtyard at the end of 2022. It offers an opportunity for all those passing by to take a moment and reflect. It is a focal point, a conversation starter....and a built-in witness platform.

First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV – 160th Anniversary – 1866 - 2026

First Baptist Church – picturesque



January 2022



September 2021

First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV – 160th Anniversary – 1866 - 2026

Kids and Youth



First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV – 160th Anniversary – 1866 - 2026

Kids and Youth



The Ugly Sweater Party has gained traction in recent years. The elders often beat out the youth ... experience perhaps?



Spaghetti fund raisers for the youth group are popular and well attended. In 2025 they raised \$1,400 to help fund their activities.

Sometimes we get them to gather and sing!



Men of First Baptist Church

In 2025, The Good Hope Association hosted the annual American Baptist Men's Prayer Breakfast and was held at First Baptist Church Ravenswood with 49 men in attendance.



FBC's Men's Service Sunday 2026

First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV – 160th Anniversary – 1866 – 2026

Gatherings



First Baptist Church is a church of generations. Kids grow up here - adults return here - children are born here - friends reunite here.



First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV – 160th Anniversary – 1866 - 2026

Outreachreaching out to kids and families ... here and across the Globe



Summer outreach at the city park – free food and drinks and an open invitation to come visit us at the church across the street with the big white steeple!

Samaritan's Purse - Operation Christmas Child – reaching kids worldwide through this mission project. FBC fills hundreds of boxes each year and has served as a regional drop off location for the county. We are blessed to have OCC volunteer coordinators in our congregation & such generous parishioners lending their support.

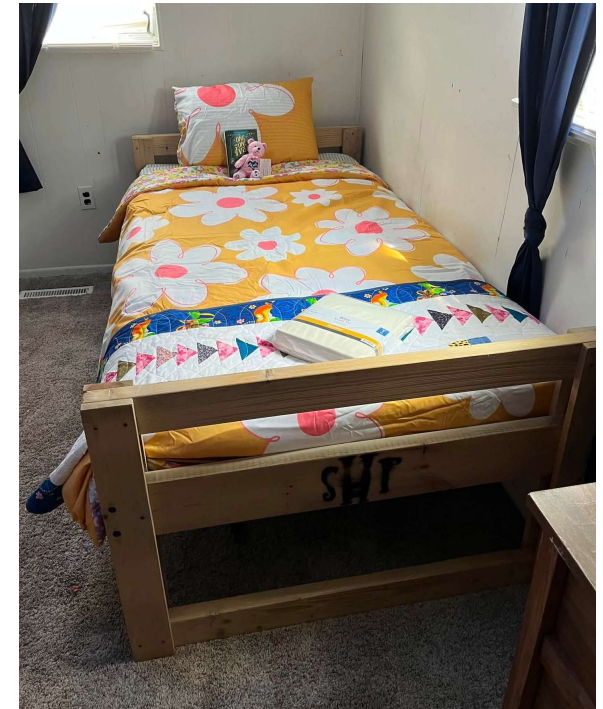
First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV – 160th Anniversary – 1866 - 2026

Outreachreaching out to kids and families ... here and across the Globe



Sleep in Heavenly Peace is a non profit in Jackson County, WV providing new, hand made beds and bedding to children in need. First Baptist Church as well as the kids attending Vacation Bible School in 2026 helped fund, build and deliver beds.

Proverbs 3:24 *"When you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, you sleep will be sweet."*



Weddings over the years . . .



Ellen Wheeler & Ronald Emmerson – wedding, 1968

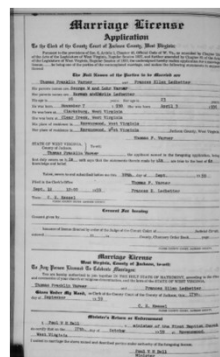
(L-R) Macel Wheeler, Clyde Wheeler, (back) Rev. Howard Underwood, Ellen & Ronald Emmerson, Doris Wheeler



Frances Ledbetter & Tom Varner – wedding, October 17, 1959

(Top right L-R) Jennie Griffith, Frances & Tom Varner, Dick Lantz

(L-R) Lohr Varner, Frances & Tom Varner, Darlie Ledbetter



First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV – 160th Anniversary – 1866 - 2026

Weddings over the years . . .



(L-R) Annabelle & Brooks Flesher / Carl & Dorothy Varney (R) – July 25, 1982 at their children's wedding, July 25, 1982



Venisa (Varney) & Jeff Flesher – Mr. & Mrs. Jeff Flesher – July 25, 1982

Jeff, Venisa and Annabelle Flesher today



Weddings over the years . . .



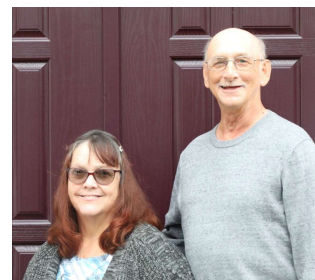
Sharon Adkins & Kerry Wines
– wedding day
June 26, 2026



Sarah & Mitchell Hoffman, (top)
wedding day 1980

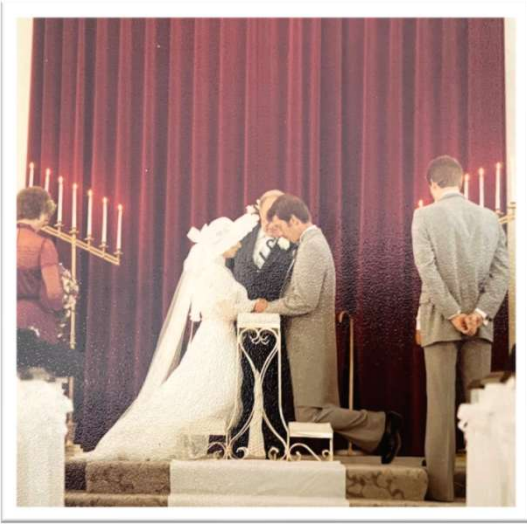


Pam Withrow & Gary Balser –
wedding, April 5, 1975



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Weddings over the years . . .



Janet Suck & Doug Barb -
wedding September 20, 1980



Audrey Lindley & Ted Suck -
wedding 1961



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Weddings over the years . . .



Leigh Ann Staats & David Kerns –
wedding November 28, 2009



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Weddings over the years . . .



Katie Ferrell & Taylor Woods –
wedding October 26, 2024



First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV – 160th Anniversary – 1866 - 2026

2026 First Baptist Church leadership

Deacons:

Alan Arrington
Gary Balser
Dan Dzierzanski
Jim Frazier
Matt King
Jon Moore

Trustees:

Debby Bashaw
Mike DeLong
Brent Ritchie
Ron Starkey
Tom Stephenson
Phil Walker

Deaconesses:

Gusta Arrington
Sherry Dzierzanski
Robin McGoskey
Jane Moore
Ellen Varner

Board of Christian

Education:

Tanya Cole – Chairperson
Shawn Cole – Youth
Brittany Pistelli – Children
Tammy & Bill Harpold –
Family Life
Amy Starkey – Missions
Debra Lyons – Sunday School
Kristi King – Adult Life

Bev Stephenson – Sunday
School Clerk
Connie Staats – Financial
Secretary
Jo Hendricks – Treasurer
Rhonda Ritchie Samples –
Church Clerk

Abbi Woods – Music
Director/ Pianist
Ann Johnson –
Organist/Worship Song
Leader

Jon Moore – Head Usher

Susan West – Church
Secretary

Toby Wagoner – Sr. Pastor



Jane & Jon Moore



Amy & Ron Starkey



Dan & Sherry Dzierzanski



Gusta & Alan Arrington



Matt & Kristi King



Shawn & Tanya Cole



Debby Bashaw



Mike DeLong



Brent Ritchie



Jim Frazier



Tom Stephenson



Phil Walker



Robin McGoskey



Ellen Varner



Debra Lyons



Bill & Tammy Harpold



Brittany Pistelli



Rhonda Samples



Connie Staats



Bev Stephenson



Jo Hendricks



Abbi Woods



Ann Johnson

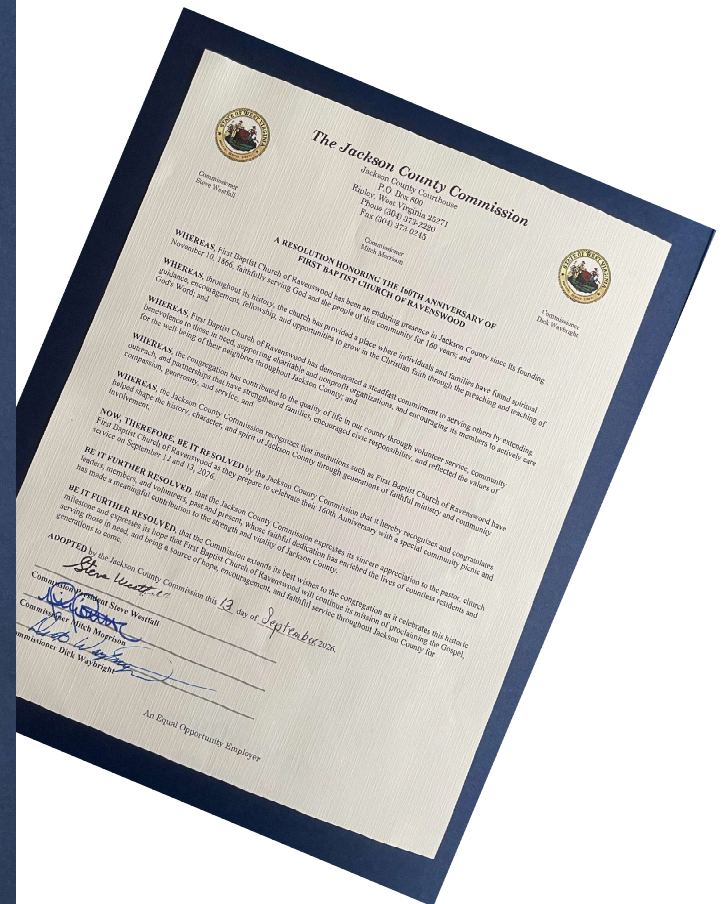


Susan West

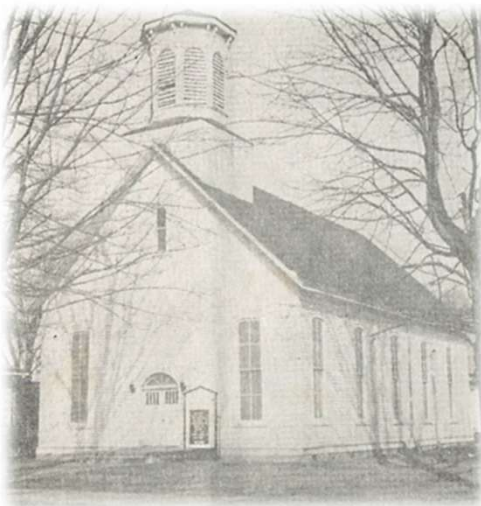


Rev. Dr. Toby Wagoner

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Sources:

Materials used to prepare this historical 160th anniversary booklet were obtained from publicly available materials online and through services such as “Ancestry.com”, other publicly available online data, public domain newspaper articles, publications owned or in the personal possession of the author or First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV, and archive files found at the West Virginia Baptist Historical Society – Parchment Valley, Ripley, WV; other submissions provided by friends, family and members of First Baptist Church Ravenswood, WV. Materials and data were used as reference and have been compiled in an attempt to provide an accurate depiction of the history of our Church and the past Clergy serving as Ministers/Pastors of First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV.

Disclaimer:

While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, historical records are naturally limited and prone to unintentional errors or conflicting accounts. The author has made reasonable attempts to clarify discrepancies, though readers should note that early records and retellings may contain minor inaccuracies.

Author: Ellen Marie Varner – Member of the First Baptist Church of Ravenswood, WV



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