

HALL OF FAME OF FAITH
History of Second Baptist Church
1901-2001

100 YEARS of Service,
A Permanent Place for Worship, A Home for Christians

~~Dedicated to my Grandparents and Parents~~
~~Adolphus and Lydia Williams~~
~~Ellis and Jennie L. Rouse~~

Christians who traveled by Faith

EARLY HISTORY

The First Generation (Romans 1:1:18)

In 1866, a small number of Black families settled into this small village called Charleston. Records show that Milton Poet, one of the first Blacks, came to Charleston in 1867 with a General Gilmore who fought for the North in the Civil War. Poet was trained as a blacksmith. Other Black pioneers brought skills necessary to accommodate and provide a livelihood for their families. Free men came from as far as Kansas, descendants from slaves, individuals who bought their freedom arrived from Pennsylvania and West Virginia. The underground railroad led people to Oberlin from all points south to this village. Skills such as plastering, masonry, roofers, cooks and laborers were trades useful in Charleston's development.

In 1874 the village of Charleston, changed its name to Lorain.

By the year 1881, records indicate there were 65 "coloreds" in Lorain. Among those 65 listed were Milton Poet, Robert Ferguson, Tempa E Ferguson, Isaiah and Effie Chinn, Elijah and Nannie Chinn, Martha and William Gibson, Herdesos Pully, Hester and William Walker and Asa and Fannie Coleman. Out of these sixty five, a few Christians met in their homes for a short period of time and soon formed a Mission.

The descendents from families of the Poet, Ferguson, Walker, Chinn, Pulley and Coleman still live in Lorain.

Blacks had learned through Methodist or Baptist missions and teaching missionaries that spirituals, "word of mouth" and "bible talk" lead to the road to freedom. Since Second Baptist was the only Black Baptist Church registered during this time, it is assumed that most Blacks attended this Church in order to receive some form of spiritual guidance and education.

The dream of the first dedicated members and its founders was to secure a permanent place for worship- a home for christians-for the purpose of leading others to Christ and making the church an enduring influence in the village, now,community.

By the year 1890 the Black population had grown to 193.

The Church was officially recorded and recoganzed in May 1891. Records state "colored church over Charles Boing Hall, near Southwest corner of public square",on Duane street, now West Erie Avenue.

In 1893, Second Baptist Church was built on Fifth Avenue, which is now Twelfth Street. Racial connotation was deemed out of harmony with the Spirit of Jesus Christ. However, it was known that the congregation who attended First Baptist Church were

White. Second Baptist did not have a baptismal pool. The Church used Lake Erie in the summer. First Baptist Church, which was constructed in 1894, permitted Second Baptist to use their baptismal pool during the colder months. The awareness of each others needs, and the spirit of love thy neighbor readily made assistance available to help each other, was a predominant fact of life to this growing village and church.

The charter members listed for Second Baptist Church with acting pastor Rev. Richard Seymore were as follows: Scott Owens, L. Webster, S. Bunch, R. Lee, E. Morris, L. Morris, D. Lowry, J. Lowry, C. Garner; Franky Washington, M. Ferguson, M. Robinson, Nimrod and Nannie Rainbow, Alex Rainbow, H. Pulley, Elijah and Nannie Chinn, Isaiah and Florence Chinn.

The great nieces of H. Pulley (Barbara Walker Cook and Rosalie Walker Yancey) and the fifth generation descendants of the Chinn and Family (Lola J. Chinn Evans) still attend this church.

The Church celebrated its First Anniversary in October, 1901.

Second Baptist, a Missionary Baptist church, had the following Missionary Ministers in its first five years. Rev. Charles Garner, Rev. B. K. Smith, Rev. Edwards, Rev. Charles Lambert, Rev. George Smith, Rev. Thompson, Rev. J. J. Watson and Rev. P. A. Boswell. It is not known how long missionaries were permitted to stay in one location during this time.

For the Church's Fifth anniversary the following ministers were listed as speakers with their topics for the week of October 21, 1906.

Sunday Morning - Dr. Brown, "The Swamp Angel of Georgia"
3:00PM Dr. J. J. Jackson - The Anniversary Sermon
7:30PM Dr. Norris "The Black Belt of the South;
what is it?"

Monday : Rev. L. J. Cook, "Sin What is it, what it has done."

Tuesday: Rev. Dr. Bailey, Antioch Church, Cleveland

Wednesday: Rev. J. C. Kinchen, Second M. E. Church, Lorain,
"My People at the New South."

Thursday: Rev. Dr. Wilson, "He Hath Not Dealt So With Any
Nation."

Friday : Rev. Barnett, First M. E. Church

Saturday: Rev. Charles Garner, "Our Struggle."

Sunday Morning: Rev. A. R. Jones, Moderator of the Northern Ohio
Association. "The Right and Wrong Side."

3:00PM: Rev. B. K. Smith

7:30PM Dr. Jones

Monday night there will be a banquet at which Mayor Frank
J. King and Ex Mayor George Wickens will speak.

The Church was incorporated by the State of Ohio January 21,
1902.

Johnson Railway, one of the mainstays of employment, was expanding and changing its name to Johnson Steel, (later the National Tube Company.) The opportunity for employment was beginning to attract people to this thriving village. Black merchants, tradesmen, Physicans, laborers and other skilled craftsmen began to settle in Lorain.

The influenza epidemic, ship building industry and World War I, created limited employment opportunities for new arrivals.

The following Black families became members and or friends of Second Baptist Church between the years 1902 and 1920 and still have descendants in Lorain:

Chinn, Isaiah and Effie, (plasterer)
great granddaughter Lola Jean Evans and
fifth generation still attend SBC

Cain, Jordon and Anna Fieldsson, (laborer)
grandson "Hank" still
lives in Lorain

Francis, Deacon Sandy and Martha (trucker/landscaper)
son Cyrus former Deacon and
descendants third generation
still attend SBC

son, Lester, descendants
third and fourth generation
still attend SBC

Coleman, Asa and Fannie, grandson, Raymond still in Lorain
granddaughter Laura Findley Crooms and
fourth and fifth generation still at SBC

Williams, Deacon Adolphus and Lydia (boiler engineer)
daughter, Jennie Williams Rouse and des-
cendants third generation still attend

Findley, Robert and Edna, (trucker)
daughter, Laura Findley Crooms and des-
cendants third and fourth generation
still attend SBC.

son, Robert. still in Lorain

son, Raymond Coleman, still in Lorain

Tates, Hurndon and Emma (moving and storage)
descendants Darlene Brown and family
still in Lorain.

Walker, John and Josie Pulley (engineer)
 granddaughters Rosealie Walker Yancey
 and Barbara Walker Cook and family still
 in Lorain and SBC.

Walker, Hester and William (owned extensive property on
 Broadway and 30 street). The Walkers were
 instrumental in organizing the
 Church of Christ. Descendants: see above

Crisp, Matthew and Lillian (laborer)
 Descendants still live in Lorain and some
 still attend SBC.

Gibson, Martha and Matilda (jailer)
 granddaughter Eunice Shorts still in Lorain

Coleman, John, Delilah, (teamster)
 grandson Raymond and sister Laura Findley
 Crooms and brother still in Lorain.
 Colemans sons plastered the old Palace
 theatre. (Now the Civic Center).

Walker, James and Pearl (self employed)
 Survivors were Mrs. Coloma Bond,
 Mrs. Lawrence Walker and granddaughter
 Lois Lane. Family owned horses and did
 the grading for Streater Park on tenth
 street

Brantford, William and Julia (grave digger),
 helped organize St. Matthews African
 Methodist Episcopal Church
 in 1905. Grandchildren Jean Welch,
 Llewellyn Jones, Shirley Brantford.

Holiday, Braxton and Willeon (plasterer and interior
 decorator) graduate of Verlander-Smith
 College, daughter Mrs. Raymond (Theresa)
 Coleman, still in area. Great niece/nephew
 Laura Findley/Robt. Findley

Sutton, George, (Physican) No known survivors

Crogman, Leonidas, (Dentist) No known survivors,
 left property to Wesley Methodist Church.

Brown, George and Rebecca (foreman)
 descendant Mae Godette

Winfrey, Clarence and Della, Lewis (steelworker)

Young, Charles and Ella

The Second Generation 1920-1940)
(The Ten Commandments)

Crafts, skills, "mother wit" and religion was being taught, developed and honed into the young Second Baptist Christian teens and adults. A sense of pride was eminent in the entire bustling village, especially among young Blacks. Between 1920-1940 there were less than 1,000 Blacks in Lorain. Fellowship, youth organizations and the Church were the mainstays of the Black community. The depression "survivors" grew closer regardless of economic status or religion. "I will show you how" to accomplish your goals and wishes was a village effort. If your neighbor did not know how to do a project, help was willingly given to accomplish the goal. Many Blacks had now completed or had gone to colleges, and as had been taught in the missionary fashion, had returned to their respective homes in the village to willingly share their new experiences and education with those who would listen.

The concept of "it takes a village to raise a child" in the Black community was well established and in place. To be the best, in whatever one pursued or circumstance one was placed, the goal was to be the best. The role models were parents, extended church family members, missionaries, people within the village, and educators.

Since there were less than 1,000 Blacks in the community between 1920-1940, learning and teaching by example and scripture came naturally: individuals felt they were representatives of the Church, church family and the village. Economic status, education or profession was not significant, but how you conducted yourself as a representative of your Church, church family or community imaged the environment from which you came.

The changing of the immigration laws, influenza epidemic, World War I, and the stock market crash drastically changed the employment picture in Lorain. Jobs were plentiful and people arriving from the south and other geographical locations were finding good paying jobs in a now multi-culture environment.

Homes were being bought mainly on the west side of Lorain and in other areas of the city. Family members and church members had a tendency to revert to tribal instincts and move close to a church leader or member. Many black students were finishing high school and sent to or were returning from colleges or the "World War", to eagerly share their new experiences with their families, church families and community.

The Black Methodist churches (the African Methodist Episcopal Church on west 24th were established.

Second Baptist during the 1920's started many out reach programs. Auxiliaries such as BYPU, BTU, Deacons and Deaconess Boards, Choral groups, Morning Star Club, Usher Boards, Trustee Boards Pastors Aide. Willing Workers Club, the Jolly Club, and Christian Education (Sunday School) was organized in the Church to assist the needs of the congregation, missionary auxiliaries needs and the needs of the village.

The following ministers served Second Baptist during this time:

1920-1924 Rev. W.H.Smith
1925-1930 Rev. Sol B.Beauford

Inter religious marriages were becoming more common and there was a great deal of church fellowship and visiting of each others churches. Other than scriptural/religious differences the Black community was a very closely knit group. The concept of it takes a village to raise a child became prevalent since members of this population were so closely bound. Perfection, pride and the Ten Commandments were the lessons of this era. You were taught to be the best at what ever endeavor you persued, and the best way to teach, was to set the example. Hypocrisy was the eleventh commandment."Thou shall not be a hypocrite".

In 1930 Blacks were locating from 14th to 25th street on both sides of Broadway and Elyria avenues. A railway ran down the middle of Broadway and people settled near a means of transportation. From 30th and 34th Street between Broadway and Dallas Avenues. A small number of Blacks lived in South Lorain close to the National Tube and other industries and south of the Nickel Plate Railroad, between 17th and 20th streets.

"Love your neighbor" and "I'll help you and show you how" were the attitudes of the day. Records show that the following ministers served in the 1930's :

1930-1933 Rev.Clarence Smith
1934-1935-Rev.A.J.Paine,
1935-1940 Rev.James Smith.

The Third Generation
(Leviticus 18:20)
IT Takes a Village

In the early forties under the leadership of Rev. J.Lee Sawyer the church enjoyed the rare experience of community pride and worship. The grandchildren and children of the first two generations were being groomed biblically with the ten commandments and indoctrinated with Leviticus 18:20. Sunday schools, christian education, educators, job information and

community role models were common place within the church. Members of the congregation assumed the responsibilities and obligations of leadership and rose to meet the challenges of the 40 years plus of existence in the community.

The Church had established a permanent status of honor and virtue among cleric institutions and had established itself in both the political and business community, as a medium of expression of leadership through which the Negro, could exert and receive what was due him/her in Church, local government and business circles for recognition.

There was community respect for Second Baptist Church. There were continuing growing pains like any family church.

Then the Second World War! A population expolsion of new settlers brought families from various cultural backgrounds and ethnic origins and vocations, whose skills were needed in the various industries located in the area.

New arrivals from all geographical locations thoroughly diversified Second Baptist Church and the community.

The ministers after the Second World War were as follows:

1948-1951	Service Ministers
1951-1956	Rev. G.W.Henderson
1956-1957	Rev. John Whiteside
1957-1960	Rev. Benjamin Davis
1960-1964	Rev. Benjamin Davis
1964-1976	Rev. David B. Banks
1976-1977	Rev. David B. Banks
1977-1989	Rev. James Williams
1989-1991	Rev. Marc.L.Neal

Rev. Benjamin Davis held the pulpit during the latter fifties, and early sixties.

The Social Revolution of the Sixties, when social and economic injustices were being acted out, brought unparalleled confusion and unrest to the community:but Second Baptist Church held steadfast and managed to finance, design build and complete their congregations vision of a new and larger ediface, dedicated at the current location on thirteenth street in 1962. Rev.David B. Banks held the position as Minister during this time.

The seventies, when African Americans were seeking more of the American dream and pie began to slowly see the beginning of the disintegration of both the actual family and the extended Church family. Due to the uncertainty and civil unrest of this era carnal and worldly actions began to affect the Word and scripture.