

History of Galilee Baptist Church

“We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us”

Galilee Baptist Church was founded in the year, 1872 in Fluvanna County. After its organization, the first meetings were held under a brush- arbor. (Upright poles driven into the ground over which poles were laid across the top and tied together to serve as support for a primitive roof of brush or hay) The founding members were: Martha and William Edwards I, Nannie A. Arnette, Jack Shepherd, Mary Jay Locker, James Shelton I, P.B. Parrish, Frank Sutton, Joseph Shepherd and James Ware. Miss Elvira Davis donated the parcel of land on which the first church building was erected. She also suggested the name Galilee, in Isaiah it is referred to as a haven, which it bears to the present day. After twelve years of increasing membership and steady progression, the building caught fire and burned completely. The home of Peyton Shelton of Louisa County was used as the spirit meeting place under the leadership of Rev. Daniel Taylor, for approximately two years until the time of his passing. Those initial members were heavyhearted, but not dismayed and they toiled forward. Shortly thereafter, the second and present Galilee Baptist Church building was erected under the leadership of Rev. Daniel Coleman, who served for over twenty-seven years. The original detailed history of Galilee was destroyed when the home of then clerk, Sister Lucy Arnette, burned. Galilee’s roll of past pastors are: Rev. N. Smith, Sr.; Rev. D. A. Parker; Rev. N. Smith, Jr.; Rev. W. O. Mayo; Rev. H. E. Williams; Rev. C. S. McCall, Rev. C. L. Motely (served 22 yrs.); Rev. C. L. Murray; Rev D. Taylor; Rev. D.A Coleman (served 27 yrs.); Rev. W. S. Parrish, Rev. R. J. Green, Rev. F. B. Berlack; Rev. H. R. Clarke (served 10 yrs.), Rev. G. W. Christmas and Rev. O. R. Spellman (served 30 yrs.). Under the leadership of Pastor Christmas, Wednesday Night Bible teachings began and the church progressed from worshipping on two Sundays to four. Our former Pastor, Otis R. Spellman came to us in 1979 and was installed in 1980. Under Pastor Spellman’s leadership, there have been many physical changes and improvements to the structure of the church building. Most recently, we’ve added classrooms,

enlarged the kitchen and fellowship hall, and added two additional bathrooms; but, the spiritual changes far outweighed the physical ones. Souls continue to be saved and the Gospel continues to be spread. We now have the option of worshipping every Sunday either at 8:00 a.m. or 11:00a.m service. Monday Night Bible Study has become a family affair with weekly teachings of God's word. The Wednesday Night Prayer Service is an uplifting mid-week opportunity to keep a strong connection with God's word and prayer to fuel the spirit.

Our Church auxiliaries continue to grow in number and kind. We currently have sixteen Associate Ministers, each of whom is spreading the Gospel in their own God given way. In December 2011, our Youth Ministry grew to include Young Adults and the introduction of Tribes: Samuel, David, Judah and Elijah. The Youth and Young Adult Ministry inspires hearts under the leadership of Rev. Dale Bradshaw, Rev. Kimberly Fortune and Rev. Sarah Morris. Our Music Ministry under the tenure of Minister Tanya Richardson grew in praise and numbers; the music ministry continues to grow under the leadership of our senior musician, Steven Bradshaw, Sr. The jail ministry is spreading the good news of our Lord and savior to many souls under the leadership of Minister Tanya Richardson. The Food Bank Ministry, under the leadership of Rev. Edna Holt thrived throughout the 2000's. Progress occurred and new paths created. Although the Food Bank Ministry is no longer functional, we have new visions to serve the community. We have established (Oct. 2014) an Emergency Care Response Unit Ministry to assist in our physical well-being. God continues to *order our steps* with His guidance. Several of our associate ministers have moved forward on God's word, now they are the pastoral leaders of their own churches.

The leaders of this church, the trustees and deacons, have become great visionaries of Galilee's future. The trustees under the tenure of Nettie Frye, brought us into the 21st century; in 2012, we became incorporated we are now Galilee Baptist Church Louisa. Galilee has beautiful wooden pews as we sit and listen to the word of God and hear songs of praise to God. We have light dancing

through bits of colored glass. Tilt your head to your left or right and catch the glow through new stained glass windows, singing praises to our God on high. In September 2012, Galilee's visionaries, under the leadership of Thomas Waddy, Jr., were inspired to continue to beautify this church by replacing the old weather worn windows in the sanctuary with new stained glass windows. The new windows were born of sand and fire comes to life in frozen beauty and fragile strength by the grace of God.

Today, Galilee Baptist Church Louisa has its own web site kept up to date by, our web developer, Lisa Gilliam who turned the reins over to Sheila Waddy in 2014, and our own newsletter, written and distributed by Sister Lolita Bland. Our Sunday school meets each Sunday morning, thirsting for greater wisdom and understanding of the word of God, under the leadership of Superintendent Kimberly Gaines, and our Children's Church, seeks to guide our children in the knowledge and understanding of God's expectations of how we are to be of service to others, under the leadership of Sister Gracie Quarles. The Deacon Board has nine spirit-filled members under the leaderships of Deacons from Lewis Shelton, Sr., to Roger Parrish who stepped down and turned the reign over to Steven Bradshaw Sr. in 2014. We have five faithful trustees, under the leadership of Trustee Thomas Waddy, Jr. The gatekeepers, our ushers, always greet members and visitors with a smile; have eleven joyful members, happy to serve, including three junior members, under the leadership of Sister Kathryn Johnson. Our Deaconess, always ready to serve; have six members under the leadership of Deaconess Frances Parrish. It is through God's grace and mercy Galilee now has the following additional ministries: Men of Promise (under the leadership of Deacon Henry Bradshaw), Women to Women (under the leadership of Deaconess Dorothy Burruss-Martin), Beautification Ministry (under the leadership of Sister Kathryn Johnson), Kindred Vessels Praise Dancers and the Bible Alive Drama Ministry (under the leadership of Rev. Sarah Morris), God's Little Angels and Perfected Praise Dancers (under the leadership of

Minister Dory Martin), and a great reviving of our Missionary Ministry, that has been growing under the leadership of and vision of Sister Clara Aheart.

Galilee Baptist Church Louisa is fully staffed with a Financial Administrator, Shelia Waddy; Secretary and OSHA coordinator, Diane McKnight; Treasurer Clyde Quarles; Clerk of the Church Lola Richardson; and a Custodial Staff, under the leadership of Frances Parrish. It is interesting to note, that in 142 years, Galilee has grown in membership from 10 founding members to 350 + members, the physical building has more than triple in size. Galilee has had sixteen pastoral leaders and four Clerks of the Church: Lucy Arnett, Margaret Nelson, Virginia James, who served for over 50 years, (Linda Tyler volunteered to read the announcements for Sister James when she became too ill to perform this duty) and Lola Richardson. In September 2004, Galilee hired its first secretary, Diane McKnight. During 2012 God sent us, a new visionary to tend is flock, Ruben Lewis, Jr., and on April 27, 2013, we installed our seventeenth pastoral leader, Pastor Ruben Lewis, Jr. Today, under Pastor Lewis' spiritual leadership, we have three new ministers: Dory Martin, Susan Lewis, and Brenda Smith, and one newly ordained Associate Pastor, Rev. Sarah Morris. God has inspired our spiritual leader, Pastor Ruben Lewis, Jr., and associate pastors, to continue to lead us in an uplifting Monday Night Bible Study, Tuesday Mid-day Bible Study, Thursday night Deacon and Deaconess Calling and Responsibilities Growth Through Education Series, and Friday Morning Bible Study.

We ask the continued blessings of our heavenly Father that we keep the vision that He has given us to carry on according to His will. In accordance to the word, we may reach our destiny - which is, the establishment of the Kingdom of God on this earth and in our lifetime. We know that Galilee was born in the season of a gentle breeze with the colors of nature leaves that speak to us as the streams of water flow. Galilee, has been the fruit upon the trees another gift of love; to see, to hear, to smell and taste all gifts from God above. We feel the love surrounding us from those God sent to pave our way. There are no words that say enough, but thank you, God, for 142 years of Galilee today.