

RIDGECREST BAPTIST CHURCH HISTORY

Established July 8, 1956

In 1955, the developers of Ridgecrest Subdivision, Adcock and Booth, set aside a plot of ground in the center of the community of Ridgecrest, Louisiana for the purpose of a church site. The few Baptist families, led by Bro Luther Carlisle, asked permission to hold services. On April 15, 1956, the first service was conducted in a tent across the street from the present location. The Church was organized July 8, 1956, at which time Adcock and Booth gave the deed for the property to the Ridgecrest Baptist Church. Bro Luther Carlisle was called as pastor. The charter members of Ridgecrest Baptist Church are as follows: Luther Carlisle, Mrs Luther Carlisle, Mrs Robert Thompson, Robert Thompson, Bobby Thompson, Mr Eddie F Jones, Mrs Eddie F Jones, Mrs Billy R Smart, Mrs E J Rothernel, Mrs T A Chapman, John L Baker, Mrs John L Baker, Mrs W O White, W O White, Mrs B S Crum, Mrs Gladys R Breckenridge, John R Breckenridge, Delia Jones, Mrs Virgel Webber, J B Wright, Mrs. T A Chapman, Mrs E D Benson, Mrs J B Wright, E W Benson, Mrs W J Tisdale, B S Crum, Mrs Charles Heine, Jr, Billy R Smart, Richard A White, Mrs R A White, Mrs T G Dykes, Thomas G Dykes, Charles A Heine, Jr.

1956 July 8, Bro Luther Carlisle was called as the first pastor of Ridgecrest Baptist Church. In October, a \$5,000 loan was obtained from the Louisiana Baptist Convention State Mission Board for the construction of a permanent building. This loan allowed the church to build an "L" shaped brick educational building. Part of that building was used as the auditorium for worship services. The Georgia Barnette Mission contributed \$1,000 toward the new building.

From the beginning, Ridgecrest was a full time church with Sunday School and Training Union classes. The church gave 10% of the receipts to the Cooperative Program. The first year the Sunday School enrolled 181 members. Bro Luther Carlisle, along with a few dedicated families, organized Ridgecrest Baptist Church.

1958 February 16, Bro Luther Carlisle resigned as pastor. Bro L L Morris was called to pastor. During his ministry, the church purchased a house and lot adjoining the church property located at 101 Orange Street, Ridgecrest, Louisiana to be used as a permanent parsonage. In May, a \$30,000 bond issue was sold to pay the debt of \$5,000 to the Louisiana Baptist Convention State Missions Board and build another "L" shaped educational building. Part of that building was used as the sanctuary until a new sanctuary was built. The vacant lot in the rear of the building was also purchased. Bro L L Morris resigned as pastor, no date recorded.

1961 November 1, Bro Bill Peacock of Baton Rouge was called as pastor. By this time the church was continuing to grow and registered 311 members and operated on a budget of \$21,000. In seven years the church had grown from 34 members.

1964 November 15, Bro Bill Peacock resigned as pastor.

1965 February 7, Bro Noah Langley was called as pastor.

1967 August 31, Bro Noah Langley resigned as pastor.

1968 January 21, Bro Milton Burns was called as pastor.

1973 April 11, Bro Milton Burns resigned as pastor. August 19, Bro Don Bush was called as pastor.

1974-75 The auditorium was remodeled, carpeted and pews were purchased. A new ceiling and roof were installed. December 1975, Bro Don Bush resigned as pastor.

1976 June 17, Bro J Hersholt Ford was called as pastor.

1977 Bro Mark Norwood surrendered to the Music Ministry.

1978 March 19, Bro J Hersholt Ford left as pastor. August 30, Bro Don Bush was called as pastor.

1979-80 The educational building was remodeled and a bus was purchased.

1979 In December, a Baldwin Organ was purchased.

1981 A Peavey Sound System was added to the auditorium. The carport on the parsonage was extended and a storage room was added.

1982 Bro Jeffery Goodman surrendered to the Music Ministry. A Dodge van purchased and the mortgage on the parsonage was satisfied.

1983 The parking lot was blacktopped and the house and property at 101 Plum Street, Ridgecrest, Louisiana was purchased. A Kawai Grand Piano was purchased. Bro Richard Cullum surrendered to the ministry and was called as pastor of Hill Memorial Baptist Church on Doty Road outside of Ferriday, Louisiana.

1984 The adult educational area was completely remodeled. A Ford van was purchased. Bro Gene Chelette, an ordained minister, serving as the church music director since 1977, accepted the call to pastor at Riverside Baptist Church in Vidalia, Louisiana.

1985 A 20X24 room was added to the parsonage and the house was carpeted. A foyer was added to the auditorium. Six new pews were purchased. In February, a hand bell set was purchased and the hand bell choir was established.

1986 October 26, Bro Don Bush resigned as pastor. The front of the church was landscaped.

1987 March 1, Bro Tin Norris was called as pastor. The church began participating in the Louisiana Blood Drive. Bro Bobbie Bailey was ordained to the gospel ministry.

1988 In September, the mortgage on the property located at 101 Plum Street, Ridgecrest, Louisiana was satisfied. A new 1989 Dodge 15-passenger van was purchased for the van route and for mission work trips.

1989 May 14, Bro Tim Norris resigned as pastor. In April, a new Cannon NP 3225 copier was purchased. The old copier was donated to College Drive Baptist Church in Pineville, Louisiana where Bro Mark Norwood was pastor. September 21, Bro Don Bush was called as pastor for a 3rd tenure. In October, Bro Russell Wagoner and his wife Angela surrendered to the ministry. In November, the pastor's office was remodeled. The music director's office was moved to the choir room.

1990 In September, glass doors were installed in the breeze-way. Five ceiling fans were installed in the fellowship area. In December, Bro Bob Coy was licensed to the ministry.

1991 In January, a new lighted church sign was installed on Ferriday Drive, near Highway 84 at the entrance of Ridgecrest, Louisiana. A glass door was installed in the breeze-way entering the adult Sunday school area. In February, forty new hymnals were purchased. In March, a color television and video cassette recorder was purchased to be used for the children's choir. Plans were being made to host a one-day ladies conference in February 1992. A MCI bus was purchased for \$20,000, with repairs of \$2,500. Bro Delayne Bush and his wife Becky surrendered to the ministry.

1992 In February, a new air conditioner unit was installed in the parsonage. A small refrigerator and stand were donated to the church nursery. In August, a 5-ton Trane air conditioner was installed in the auditorium. In September, new carpet was installed in the parsonage. Vinyl siding was installed on all three buildings. The church was re-roofed. The church voted to have seven active deacons instead of five.

1994 August 28, Bro Don Bush resigned as pastor. Sidewalks were added to connect the auditorium with the fellowship building. A new sign was purchased and installed. A flag pole with the American and Christian flags were purchased and installed. A window unit air conditioner was installed in the kitchen. An upright vacuum was donated.

1995 April 9, Bro Steve Gardner was called as pastor. A new heating and cooling system was installed in the fellowship and nursery areas. A new air conditioner unit was installed in the auditorium. A new air conditioner unit was installed in the children's classroom area. A sound system was installed in the auditorium. In June, a parking lot was added on the rear of the lot at 101 Plum Street. In April, Larry Wagoner surrendered to the ministry. Denise McGuffee was called as summer minister of youth activities.

1996 October 27, Bro Steve Gardner resigned as pastor. Kathy Knight served as youth director. Carpet was replaced in the hall areas and the nursery area. A new dishwasher was installed. In July, the church celebrated 40 years with a Homecoming service. Bro Noah Langley and Bro J Hersholt Ford were

guest speakers. In June, Ann Goodman, Shelia Whittington, Lou Ann Cospers, Cathy Gamberi and Jan Armstrong surrendered to the music ministry. Their ministry is titled "Sisters in Christ".

1997 The mortgage on the church was satisfied. A dishwasher was installed in the parsonage. A food source ministry was established.

1998 February 4, Bro Bobby Cruse was called as pastor. A new 1998 Ford van was purchased. Carpet was added in the halls and the Sunday School rooms in the fellowship area. Plans were made for a prayer room. In July, the AWANA program was established.

1999 The prayer room was completed. Faith Bible Institute classes began. New carpet was added to the sanctuary. A new computer was purchased for the church office. A new heating unit was installed in the parsonage. New shingles were added to the church. The handicap parking was expanded.

2000 A building fund was established and plans for a new kitchen and fellowship area began. Furnishings were purchased for the church foyer. New duct work was installed in the parsonage. A new lighted sign was purchased. Bro Tony Whittington was called as youth minister. The parsonage was remodeled.

2001 Bro Tony Whittington resigned as youth minister. The church voted to continue with five active deacons.

2002 August 18, Bro Bobby Cruse resigned as pastor. A 32 passenger bus was purchased. In July, the church celebrated 46 years with a Homecoming service. The guest speaker was Bro Don Bush. In December, Bro Richard Barrett surrendered to the ministry. Construction for a new building was discussed.

2003 Plans were submitted to the state for a new fellowship building. The house at 109 Plum Street was sold and removed from the property. An annual senior appreciation fish fry was started to honor all seniors 65 years and older.

2004 January 11, Bro Preston Holder was called as pastor. A new lighted church sign was installed on Highway 84 near the entrance to the Ridgecrest subdivision on Ferriday Drive. Bro Denny Braswell was called as youth director. In May, construction began on a new fellowship hall and kitchen area. The property ditches were filled and parking was added on the Plum Street side of the property. The back fence was removed from the parsonage yard and parking was added. Ridgecrest Baptist Church received an award for the most baptisms, 33 total, in the Delta Association.

2005 A new fellowship area was completed and dedicated on November 18. Children's church and the puppet ministry was established and led by Bro Denny Braswell and the youth group. Children's church will be held every Sunday during morning worship. A children's choir was established. The Jail ministry was established. Volunteers began helping at the Store Front Mission in Ferriday, Louisiana. Ridgecrest Baptist Church received an award for the most baptisms, 18 total, in the Delta Association.

2006 A media center was added to the sanctuary. Parking was added to the rear of the church property. A church member pictorial directory was produced by Olan Mills. A 2005 Ford Van was purchased. In July, the church celebrated 50 years. Ridgecrest Baptist Church received an award for the most baptisms, 14 total, in the Delta Association.

2007 Ceramic tile was installed in the halls of the educational buildings and foyer bathrooms. A television was installed in the nursery to transmit the live church service. Ridgecrest Baptist Church began participating in the neighborhood watch program.

2008 New interior doors were installed. A women's conference was held. A celebration was held to honor Bro Preston Holder and his wife Mrs Ruby for 50 years in the ministry. Plans to add more parking are being made. A 2007 Ford Van was purchased.

2014 September 1, Bro Preston Holder resigned as pastor of Ridgecrest Baptist Church and from the ministry. The sanctuary was vacated due to instability. Services were held in the fellowship hall. Plans were made for the construction of a new sanctuary.

2015 February 1, Bro Dennis Baker was called as pastor. In December, the new sanctuary was completed and the first service was held on December 13.

2016 A memorial courtyard was constructed, complete with a fountain, landscaping, engraved brick pavers, sidewalks and benches. The courtyard serves as a memorial to the family and friends of Ridgecrest Baptist Church.

Pastors serving at Ridgecrest include; Bro Luther Carlisle, Bro L L Morris, Bro Billy Peacock, Bro Noah Langley, Bro Milton Burns, Bro Don Bush, Bro J Hersholt Ford, Bro Don Bush, Bro Tim Norris, Bro Don Bush, Bro Steve Gardner, Bro Bobby Cruse, Bro Preston Holder and Bro Dennis Baker (present).

Interim pastors include; Bro J E Chandler, Bro Walter Barnard, Bro W A Green, Bro W C Stagg, Bro Grady Welch, Bro D L Goodman, Bro M A Fields, Bro Franklin Haire, Bro Claudie Jenkins and Bro Preston Holder.