

Meadowbrook Baptist Church  
Rockdale, Texas

Our church History 1954-1999

### **General History**

On June 10, 1954, Rev. L>B> Jones, Pastor of First Baptist church, Rockdale, Texas appointed a committee composed of J>R> Fuller, Chairman, T>L. Austin, Jr., and Dale Cockrell to initiate the organization of a new church. A new church was urgently needed in town due to the increase in population brought on by Alcoa and the Industrial Generating Company locating in Rockdale. First Baptist Church lacked the space to enlarge at that time. Therefore, a mass meeting was held in the auditorium o First Baptist Church, Rockdale, Texas on Tuesday evening, June 15, 1954, at eight o'clock by those interested in the formation of a new church. One hundred fourteen signed the petition at this meeting; thus, the fact was established that another Baptist church was desired in Rockdale. It was decided at this original meeting that the period for receiving charter members would be extended until September 1, so that those unable to attend this meeting might have a chance to sign the petition. Those present began laying plans for organizing and establishing the new church.

The Deacons of First Baptist Church recommended to their congregation that their Building Fund be donated to the new church. The congregation unanimously approved this recommendation.

The Church was organized on Thursday, June 17, 1954, with District Missionary, R.R. Lloyd, presiding. O.H. Whitmire was elected as temporary Clerk and J.R. Fuller was elected as temporary Treasurer.

The **name of Meadowbrook Baptist Church** was suggested by Mrs. Dale Cockrell and accepted by the group to be the name of the newly organized church. The New Hampshire Articles of Faith were approved. The motion was made and approved that the church be affiliated with Milam Association of the Baptist General convention of Texas and of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The **first Sunday School and Church Services** were held on June 20, 1954, in the Rockdale Elementary School Cafetorium with 161 in attendance. Baylor ministerial student, Bill Grissom, delivered the messages for the day. Sunday School Was held in the adjacent gymnasium. Mr. B.F. Cook taught the Sunday school lesson to the general assembly.

The **first Deacons** of the church were elected on that day. They were: J.R. Fuller, Chairman, Hoyt Whitmire, John V. Holder, George Nelson, H.S. Woods, Jr., Wendell Dyer, Robert C. Orr, J.M. Coffey, and Dale Cockrell.

The Nominating Committee composed of T.L. Austin, chairman, J.M. Coffey, Mrs. Douglas Parker, Mrs. Jim Gebhart, and J.R. Fuller selected the first officers of the church.

On August 1, 1954, the Pulpit Committee recommended that the church extend a call to Rev. A.L. Gatewood of Columbia, Mississippi to serve as our first pastor. His salary was \$350 per month. A house on West Bell Street was secured for the parsonage.

A site of a full block was selected on Colorado Street in the Meadowbrook Addition, near the building site of the new Rockdale High School, for the new church building. On August 18, 1954, the building committee recommended that Mr. Frank Dill of Houston be selected to draw up plans for the church building. The plans were accepted by the church on October 6, 1954. On February 9, 1955, the church voted to award the building contract to Barnes-Jones Lumber Company for the sum of \$66,480.00. In the meantime, the church met in school facilities and in a home on Bell Street.

Groundbreaking ceremonies were held on Sunday, March 6, 1955, at the sight on Colorado Street. The first unit was completed, and the first service was held in it on August 28, 1955. Plans were approved for a second unit on May 8, 1957. The new educational annex was brought into use in the spring of 1958. It was built at a cost of \$33,414.

In October 1963, the church voted to purchase the A.T. Weydell home at 2006 Murray for the church parsonage. It was secured at a cost of \$12,500. The Agee family moved into the parsonage in December 1963.

**Ministries of Meadowbrook over the years include:**

- A.M.E.N. – Adults Meeting Every Need; our senior adults meet once a month for fellowship and ministry to one another.
- Prison Ministry- involvement at Bartlett State Jail and the juvenile justice center in Rockdale.
- Meadowlarks – a string band that ministers to several area nursing homes.
- Scholarships for seniors entering college or technical schools who have been faithful in Sunday School attendance.
- Wednesday Women's Bible study
- Blood and Water – a praise band formed by two of our youth, Travis Carey and Shawn Davenport.
- Mother's Day Out Program – Monday & Wednesday – beginning Fall of 1999.

**Current Ministries of Meadowbrook:**

- Monetary support of Place of Hope, Eway (Ukraine), Milam Association, And Then There Were None, Southern Baptist Convention, Rockdale Food Pantry, Street Ministries, SBTC, MPact youth group, TreeHouse Children, Trail Life and Campus Crusade.

**PASTORS SERVING IN OUR 70 YEARS.....**

Rev. A.L. Gatewood.....August 1, 1954-July 1, 1957

Rev. Clem Hardy (interim).....July 10, 1957-September 15, 1957  
Rev. Roy Cooper.....September 22, 1957-December 3, 1958  
Rev. W.J. Wimpee(interim).....October 29, 1958-December 3, 1958  
Rev. William P. Davenport.....December 10, 1958-October 8, 1962  
Rev. William D. Agee.....January 13, 1963-January 24, 1965  
Rev. Clem Hardy (interim).....March 17, 1965-July 1965  
Rev. N.A. Mills.....July 18, 1965-September 1981  
Rev. Ron Holtz(interim).....September 1981-April 1982  
Rev. James Featherstone.....April 25, 1982-October 31, 1983  
Rev. Edwin Crawford (interim)....December 1983-January 1984  
Rev. Jack Gilliland.....January 2, 1985-May 1994  
Rev. Jim Lafferty (interim).....October 1994-June 1995  
Rev. William Smith.....September 1995-March 1996  
Rev. Bob Hendrick.....March 1996-April 2001  
Rev. Mike Habermehl.....June 2001-July 2002  
Rev. Glenn Pipes.....August 2002-June 2004  
Rev. Carl Hudson.....August 2004-May 2008  
Rev. Rick Hertless.....June 2008-May 2012  
Rev. Russ Willis.....July 2012-April 2016  
Rev. Ron Boswell (interim).....June 2016-May 2017  
Rev. Stephen Ammons.....May 2017-present

### **Youth Ministers**

Charles Debney, Randy Mobley, Morris Cook, Mark Noblitt, Don Norris, Matt Moore, Jeff Chambers, Doug Taylor, Scotty Patton, Darrel Johnson, Michael Wiley, Jason Huffman, Rick Hertless, Stephen Alfred, J.J. Burgett, Tim Berg, Bret Dillon, David Matthews, Ryan Warner, Cody Landers, Shawn Bradshaw, and Collin Brickhouse(current).

### **Notes of Interest**

- The first deacon ordination service was June 23, 1954. J.M Coffey was ordained.
- The first person to be baptized in the new church was Shirley Brown on September 11, 1955.
- The first wedding was on September 30, 1955, when Barbara Joyce Smith became the bride of George Weldon Swearingen.
- The youngest charter member of the church was Candace Wallace. The oldest member, Mrs. Daisy Brown, who until her death on February 15, 1971, received the corsage each Mothers' Day service for being the oldest mother present.
- On April 2, 1978, Meadowbrook had a note-burning ceremony as they dedicated the debt free facilities to honor God. Rev. N.A. Mills, Pastor, Rev. A.L. Gatewood, former pastor, and D.D. White Trustee and note co-signer, presided.