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History of Rev. James B. Sides - Youth Director

James B. Slides

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The History of the Work of the Reverend James B. Sides as Youth Director of the First Baptist Church of Shelby, North Carolina, June 1, 1958-August 23, 1959.

On June 1, 1958, the Reverend James B. Sides began a new ministry at the First Baptist Church of Shelby, North Carolina. Although there had been various planned activities for the youth of the church, these activities taxed the time and energies of an already overly-taxed church staff. The Reverend Mr. Sides accepted the call of the church to become its first full-time Youth Director, and promptly resigned as the pastor of Mull's Chapel Baptist Church, which he had served for nearly two years. It was understood at the time of Reverend Sides' acceptance that he would serve only until the late summer of 1959 at which time he would resign to begin his studies at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

The specific purpose of the youth ministry was to develop a yearly program of activities to aid in the religio-social development of the youth of the church. These activities were to be so developed that they would be perpetuated on the basis of a full-time staff youth worker.

Following are many of the features and activities developed:

1. Annual Youth Camp. The planning and direction of the camp were turned over to the Youth Director with the pastor and educational director serving as advisers.
2. The Fifth Baptist Youth World Conference. () Although this activity was already primarily planned before the work of Reverend Sides began, he was fully involved in the supervision and direction of the group in travel. The group of forty-three young people and four adult counselors attended the conference in Toronto, Canada, and engaged in a travel experience that took thirteen days from departure to return.

3. Youth Council. This council was elected by the youth, and officers were appointed within the council for the first year. The second youth council was nominated by the first council with the privilege of added nominations from the other young people. The young people elected their officers for the youth council. Each year a very meaningful installation service for these officers was conducted as a Sunday evening worship service.
4. Conferences and Retreats. Conferences at Ridgecrest, North Carolina Baptist Assembly by the Sea, and Fruitland Baptist Camp were planned for individuals and groups when interest and participation prompted such. A pre-school retreat was held at Lake Lure in August of 1958, for combined high school and college students. Reports from these activities were always given by participating individuals the first evening worship service following the group's return.
5. Drama. These features were planned on the basis of one-per-quarter or as seasonal or special emphases demanded.
6. Afterglows. This activity was a short period of fellowship, recreation, inspiration, and refreshment following the evening worship service. A bi-monthly basis was used for both senior high and junior high school ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ groups.
7. Spotlighting Youth. A few minutes were set aside each Sunday evening at the worship service to promote youth activities and/or to give recognition to worthy youth accomplishments.
8. Banquets. An annual Sweetheart Banquet was begun. Other banquets were planned for special occasions.

In addition to his planning and promotional work, The Youth Director also carried on visitation and counseling ministries. The many activities were planned on a foundational system that would allow for both additions and dileniations as seemed advisable under existing conditions.

The work among the youth progressed well during the service period of Reverend Sides. The church felt very strongly about the importance of the youth work and decided to continue the staff work.

On August 23, 1959, the Reverend James B. Sides concluded his work as Youth Director. He then entered Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Respectfully submitted,

James B. Sides