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First Baptist Church (Shelby, NC)

5-3-1963

May 3, 1963 - The Shelby Daily Star - Church of the Week

Jim Jolley

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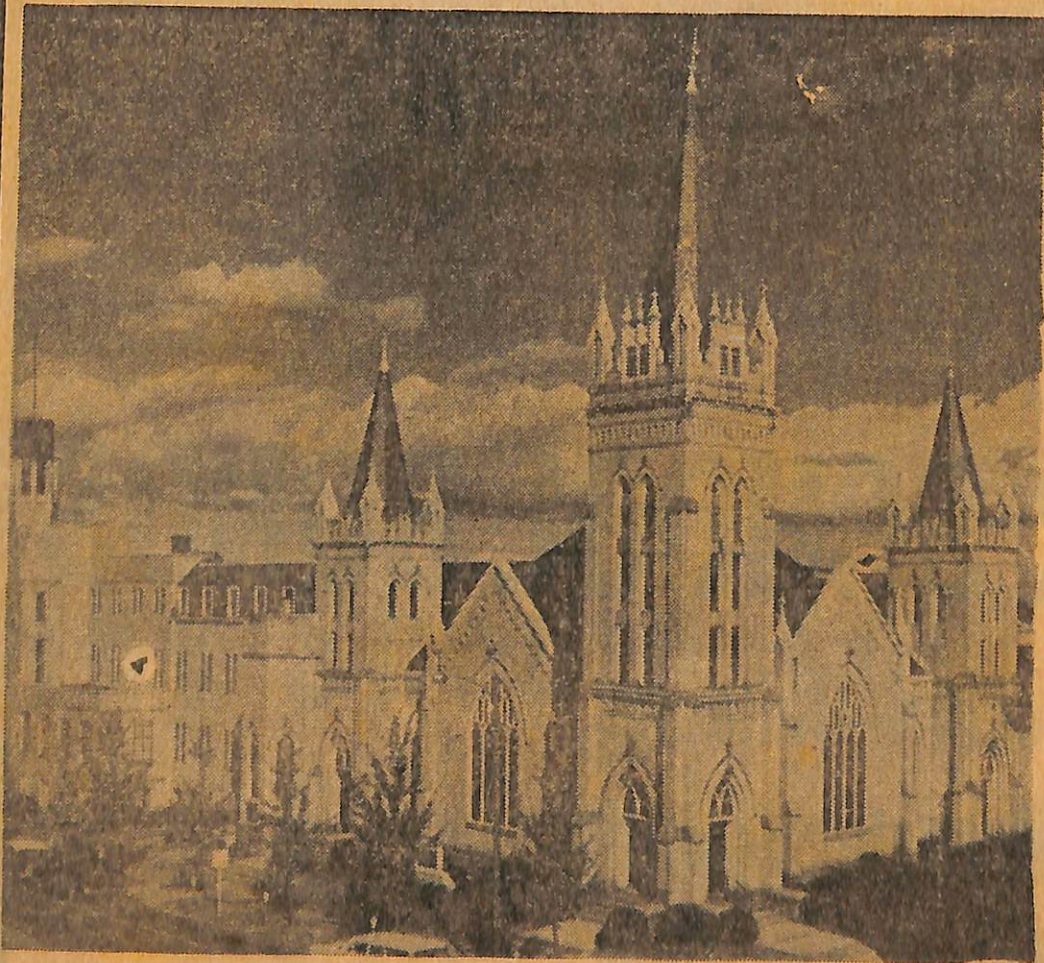
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Mrs. R. A. Hubbard Hamrick

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STRONG CHURCHES...

Church of the Week: First Baptist Church of Shelby



By JIM JOLLEY

Shelby's First Baptist Church, with the largest membership of Cleveland County churches, was organized in 1847 — just four years after Shelby was founded.

First Baptist's Sunday School

The Rev. John Lawrence has been the First Baptist pastor for nine years. His tenure has been the longest of 29 ministers, except for Doctor Zeno Wall's 23 years (1925 to 1948).

Other ministers who served First Baptist were: James Milton Webb, M. C. Barnett, Wade Hill, A. J. Conley.

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By JIM JOLLEY

Shelby's First Baptist Church, with the largest membership of Cleveland County churches, was organized in 1847 — just four years after Shelby was founded.

First Baptist's Sunday School enrollment of 2,287 ranks it North Carolina's fourth largest Baptist Church. It boasts first place in Training Union enrollment with 757 members.

Twenty-five Shelbians formed the church 116 years ago following a revival meeting conducted by the Rev. Drury Dobbins, a leading Baptist organizer in this county.

In 1846 Elder J. M. Webb, great-grandfather of Mrs. O. Max Gardner, began conducting monthly services.

There have been three First Baptist Church buildings. The first was a wooden structure, seating 200, built in 1846. In 1889 a brick church was built. It was replaced in 1911.

In 1929 the building was enlarged and remodeled and is the sanctuary portion of today's First Baptist. A four-floor educational building was added in 1929. Another three-floor educational building was added in 1953.

The Rev. John Lawrence has been the First Baptist pastor for nine years. His tenure has been the longest of 29 ministers, except for Doctor Zeno Wall's 23 years (1925 to 1948).

Other ministers who served First Baptist were: James Milton Webb, M. C. Barnett, Wade Hill, A. J. Cansler, Thomas Dixon, E. A. Crawley, Tillman R. Gains, Needham B. Cobb, A. L. Stough, J. A. White, W. A. Nelson, R. D. Mallory and W. B. Bussy.

Others were: W. H. Strickland, J. M. McManaway, G. P. Hamrick, J. L. Sproles, J. D. Huffman, R. F. Treadway, W. B. Hubbard, M. E. Parrish, C. A. Jenkins, L. W. Swope, Lee M. White Robert L. Lemons and Harlan Harris.

Roland Leath has been Director of Music and Education since 1960. Mrs. H. S. Plaster has been the church organist since 1927.

One-half of First Baptist's budget is allocated to missions. The church contributes to the support of eight missionaries, one in Nigeria, three in Japan, one in Taiwan, one in Brazil, one in Viet Nam and one in Paraguay.

First Baptist Church has been host to the North Carolina Baptist Convention four times — 1875, 1890, 1913 and 1929.

NEXT WEEK: TRINITY BAPTIST CHURCH