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Lawrence, John Elmore (1954 – 1964)

Pastors of First Baptist Shelby

5-1964

File copy - Ten Year Achievements - John Lawrence

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Born, Scotland Neck, N. C., December 21, 1916

Educated: Scotland Neck school system
Wake Forest College, Wake Forest Law School
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Degrees: B.A., LL.B., B.D.

Experience: Practiced law with late Senator Willis Smith, Raleigh, N. C. 1939-40
Served as North Carolina State Baptist Student Union Secretary, 1940-42
Served in U.S. Navy as line officer aboard aircraft carrier INTREPID, 1942-45
Pastor, Little Flock Baptist Church, Shepherdsville, Ky., 1947-49
Pastor, Sunset Park Baptist Church, Wilmington, N. C., 1949-54
Pastor, First Baptist Church, Shelby, N. C., 1954-64

Chairman, board of trustees Gardner-Webb College, Boiling Springs, N. C., 1956

Member, board of trustees, Mars Hill College, 1961-64 (Vice-chairman, 1963)

Member, Brotherhood Commission of S.B.C., 1959-65

Vice President, N. C. Baptist State Convention, 1953-54, 1960-61

Selected to preach convention sermon, Baptist State Convention, 1964

Chairman, State Convention Committees:

1. Order of Business (Chm 1958)

2. Resolutions Chm 1953

3. Nominations (acting chairman) 1957

Chm Comm to report Gen'l
Board Report 1956

Served on committee to find successor to Dr. Douglas Branch

Moderator, Kings Mountain Baptist Association, 1963-64

Chairman, Selby Human Relations Council, 1963-64

Married, 1933, to Laura Bateman, former student secretary, WCUNC

One child, John E. Lawrence, Jr., 18

Facts and statistics of 10 year pastorate, First Baptist Church, Shelby, N. C.

Additions - ~~1636~~ 1636 / By baptism 621
/ By letter 1015

Membership - 1963 - 2274 (seventh)

Sunday Scho enrollment, 1953 - 1938 XXXX
" " " 1963 - 2259 XXXX 5th
Average attendance 1953 - 1079
" " 1963 - 1242 2nd

Training Uni enrollment - 1953 - 358 12th
" " 1963 - 690 1st
Average attendance 1953 - 206
" " 1963 - 379 1st

Budget, 1953 \$106,450

Budget, 1963 \$246,000

Mission givi 1953 - \$38,191

Mission givi 1963 - \$122,032

(1954 - 48,053)

2nd (2nd in gifts to Cooperative Program, from 6th)

Brotherhood Allment - first

W. M. U. enrent - third

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LAWRENCE MINISTRY CONCLUDED

Ten Years' Achievements

With the services of this Sunday, Mr. Lawrence's ministry among us comes to a close. Under his ten years of dedicated leadership the church has made much real progress in the areas of church administration, evangelism, stewardship, mission giving, and long range planning.

Early in his ministry the church adopted a constitution and by-laws which, beyond defining the nature and purpose of our church, set up a systematic procedure for the election of officers and committees, setting forth the duties and responsibilities of each.

During his pastorate there have been 1665 additions to the church, 635 by profession of faith for baptism and 1029 by letter. Sunday School enrollment has increased from 138, with an average attendance of 1079, to 2210, with an average attendance of 1278. Training Union enrollment has grown from 358, with ¹⁰⁶~~222~~ average attendance, to 696, with 368 average attendance. The Woman's Missionary Union, with a total membership of 588, is the third largest in the state. The Brotherhood, with a total membership of 226, is the state's largest.

The church budget was increased from \$106,450 in 1953-54 to our current budget of \$246,000, with mission giving growing from \$38,191 ^{in 1953} to \$122,032 the past church year. Over this decade, the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions has increased from \$2206 to \$11,877; the Annie Armstrong Offering for Home Missions increased from \$1478 to \$3678; The Mother's Day Offering for the Baptist Hospital increased from \$1000 to \$1600; and the Thanksgiving Offering for our orphanages increased from \$520.00 to \$2943. During this time our church moved from sixth to second place among North Carolina churches in gifts both to the Cooperative Program and in total mission giving.

Also, the church employed its ~~sixth~~ first full-time youth director, and has instituted an annual Youth Camp, a breakfast honoring high school graduates, a G. A. Coronation Service, and the past two years has had a pastor-led Youth Fellowship meeting each Wednesday during the school term. A program of weekly

visitation of new comers and prospects was initiated and has been carried on by the Fisherman's Club. For the past three years, during the fall and winter months, Mr. Lawrence had conducted a Wednesday morning Bible study.

Our sanctuary has been extensively renovated and air-conditioned, the church purchased two lots for future expansion, and has on hand \$56,000 to be used for this purpose.

Mr. Lawrence is concluding a term as Moderator of the Kings Mountain Association, as Chairman of the Shelby Human Relations Council, and a four year term as trustee of Mars Hill College. While he has been our pastor he has served as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Gardner-Webb College, Vice President of the Baptist State Convention, and as a member of the following State Convention Committees: Committee to report on General Board Report (Chairman, 1956); Committee on Nominations (Acting Chairman, 1957); Committee on Order of Business (Chairman, 1958); Committee to select successor to Dr. Douglas Branch. He is currently serving as a member of the Brotherhood Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention. Mr. Lawrence was selected to preach the convention sermon at the 1964 meeting of the State Baptist Convention in Greensboro this November.

How grateful we are for the dedicated ministry of Mr. Lawrence during this more than ten year pastorate, and we pray God's richest blessings upon him and his family as he begins a challenging new work at the Forest Hills Baptist Church of Raleigh, N. C.

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