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Pastors of First Baptist Shelby

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Harlan Harris - Twenty-Eighth Pastor

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HARLAN HARRIS

"Twenty-eighth Pastor"

Harlan Harris was born January 5, 1920, in Salem, Oregon, in the northwest. He graduated from Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois, where he was quite active in athletics---football, track, and wrestling. He is listed in Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities. He received the B. D. degree from the Eastern Theological Seminary, and the Doctor of Divinity degree from Wayland Baptist College, Plainview, Texas.

In 1946, Dr. Zeno Wall was in a meeting at the Metropolitan Baptist Church in Washington, D. C. There he met the young man who was leading the music for the conference of pastors and evangelists. From that meeting stemmed the decision to call Harlan Harris as assistant pastor of the First Baptist Church, Shelby, N. C. The assistantship was short for, having come to Shelby on November 2, 1947, Mr. Harris became pastor of the Church on April 4, 1948.

During his pastorate of the Shelby Church, Dr. Harris was instrumental in the reorganization of the Sunday School and the building of a new educational unit. He meant much to the youth of the church as he held Young Life Meetings in his home each Monday night and accompanied the group to camps in Colorado each summer. It was also during his pastorate that a church library was established.

Since Dr. Harris was a classmate and close personal friend of Billy Graham, he was able to secure Dr. Graham for a city meeting at the Armory which was a real blessing to this city.

Dr. Harris has served in the following capacities: Assistant Pastor of Temple Baptist Church, Washington D. C. in 1946; Pastor of the First Baptist Church, Shelby, N. C. 1947-1954; Pastor of the First Baptist Church, Plainview, Texas, 1954-1959. He has been active in Southern Baptist Life---President of North Carolina's Pastor's Conference and member of North Carolina State Board in North Carolina.

During his stay in Shelby, Dr. Harris was awarded the Junior Chamber of Commerce's "Young Man of the Year" award in 1952.

Dr. Harris has traveled in Europe, Africa, The Holy Land, and Mexico. He has preached in Rome, Italy; Cairo, Egypt; and Jerusalem.

Now living in Colorado, Dr. Harris is a full-time evangelist, a man of God and a great preacher. He is married and the father of four children; two sons, and two daughters.

Perhaps his love for people and his humility may best be expressed in his own words; "The dedication of the Shelby High School annual to Madeline and me meant much more to me than did my doctorate.

Dr. Harris left Shelby November 30, 1953 going to Plainview Texas where he served as pastor for a few years before going into full time evangelistic work. His home is now in Boulder Colorado.