

Christ Through the Centuries

A History of Central Church of Christ

Sparta, TN

1867- 2017



December 31, 2017

Table of Contents

Forward	4
Dedication	5
Our People	
Elders and Servants.....	7
Members and Friends	9
Our Future	
Slogan, Theme, and Mission.....	12
Our Past	
Camp Meetings (1790-1817)	13
Beginnings at Priestly Academy (1867-1892)	16
Relocation to 2 nd church building (1892-1927)	17
Relocation to 3 rd church building (1927-1965)	19
Central Church Budget (1952).....	22
Planting of West Sparta Church of Christ (1958).....	23
Present location (1965)	24
Support of Agape and Happy Haven	27
Helping the Needy	29
Addition of Annex (1987)	30
History of Elders and Ministers	31
Reaching the Lost	33
Influence of JR Tubb, Sr	35
A Church Directory (1941).....	38
Our Present	
Evangelism	39
Cuba	40
El Salvador	43
Education	47
Bible Classes.....	48
First Steps	52
Youth Ministry.....	56
Bible Bowl.....	59

Library	61
Fellowship	62
Ronnie Golf Tournament	65
Primetime	67
Life Ministry	75
Worship	80
Service	81
Office	82
Generous Giving	83
Our 150th Celebration	
Goal.....	84
Reflections	84
Expositor article	88
Photos	92
Tennessee Senate Proclamation, 2017	102
Our Memories	
Acknowledgements.....	104
Memories of Allene Gracey	105
Memories of Kenneth Pippin	106
Memories of Thelma Pippin	107
Memories Pinkie Hill	110
Memories of Elega Sims	113
Memories of the Cardwell Family	116
Tubb Family Newspaper Clippings	126
Poems by Horace Richardson	134
Graphical Timeline	143

Forward

The Central Church of Christ in Sparta, TN has been proclaiming the gospel of Christ Through the Centuries since 1867. I hope that one will find this church history as a faithful group of Christians who have walked with Jesus Christ for one hundred fifty years.

There have been times when Christians found themselves in the Valley and paths of difficulties lined in hardships. An example is the church building burning in 1926. This period of history was from World War I into the Depression years of 1930's. However, through dedication and prayer the trust in God with His power, the Sparta/Central Church of Christ held to Bible scriptures.

Faith as in Hebrews 11:3 gives the assurance of things hoped for, conviction of things not seen. One recognizes faith is at the heart of everything we are in the Christian life.

It is with hope that this writing of this Church history will have an impact on walking in steps with Jesus Christ for future generations.

Thelma L Pippin, History Chair

Dedication

This book, *Christ Through the Centuries*, is a brief history of Central Church of Christ in Sparta, TN. This book fulfills the goal of the 150th Anniversary Team to document a portion of Central's 150-year walk with Christ. It is our prayer that our story, with its ups and downs, will inspire future generations to continue changing lives for the cause of Christ in their world.

I personally thank the original 150th Anniversary Team for their faithfulness, cooperation, and tireless effort in making September 24, 2017, a celebration to remember – Janice Bradley, Edith Camp, Jeff Haston, Pinkie Hill, Bitsy Jones, Thelma Pippin, and Brenda Templeton. This team achieved their goals on time and under budget. Thanks to the elders for supplying needed guidance and resources. Thanks to countless special volunteers, women and men, young and old, who contributed their talents. For example, Russ Hale's expertise was invaluable. And thanks to Patrick Langford for his song leading, and to Phillip Camp and Topher Wiles for a biblical perspective of our church's past, present, and future from Deuteronomy and Philippians.

Special thanks go to Thelma Pippin who chaired the Historical Committee and led the development of this book. She courageously persevered despite many obstacles to complete this project by year end. And thanks to those who assisted her – Pinkie Hill, Brenda Templeton, Janice Bradley, Greg Pippin, and Jeff Haston.

Finally, thanks to all who provided materials for this book. This work is a collection of articles, pictures, records, and stories generously contributed by members and friends of Central. We have attempted to be factually accurate, but the careful reader may find minor errors in spelling, grammar, or dating. Sometimes, the unique writing style and spelling of contributors has been preserved.

This book is available both in written (fee) and digital form. A copy will be placed in a time capsule to be opened in 50 years – at our 200th anniversary, September 25, 2067. Mark your calendars.

We dedicate this book to Christ and the family of Christ at Central. May we embrace our past, learn from the past, never live in the past, focus on the future, and ever keep Christ and his teachings present. In other words, may we keep on walking with “Christ through the centuries.” May our numbers increase.

Les Tubb, Chairman

OUR PEOPLE

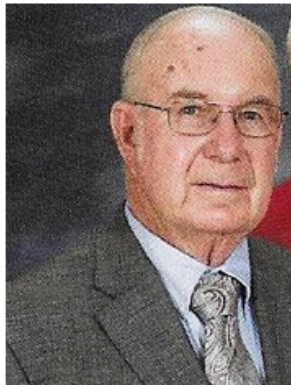
Elders



Russ Hale



John Knox



Bill Oakley



Les Tubb

**I can do everything through him
who gives me strength.**

Php 4:13

Minister

Christopher Wiles

Deacons

John Adams - Buildings

Will England - Education

Ben Gardenhire - Grounds

Tony Putman - Technology

Ty Webb - Worship

Bob Young - First Steps

Ministry Leaders

Tommy Blevins - Caring

Jim Wallace - Missions

Richard Gravely - Primetime

Dave Weber - Treasurer

Mike O'Neal - Life

Jeff Haston - Technology

Patrick Lankford – Youth

Secretary

Janice Bradley

Members and Friends

Nathan Aaron	Makenna Cravens	Jean Haston
Ashley Aaron	Lisa Crittenden	Jeff Haston
John Adams	Tommy Crosslin	Rick Henry
Starlena Adams	Karen Crosslin	Susan Henry
Rebecca Adcock	Kay England	Ruth Rhea (Pinkie) Hill
Ronald Allison	Will England	Merrill Howard
Carol Allison	Renee England	Jennifer Howard
Aline Ashley	Wayne Farris II	Hannah Howard
Rodney Baker	Hayden Farris II	Holden Howard
Carrie Baker	Ronnie Foster	Pattilou Howard
Tommy Blevins	Debbie Foster	Karyl Howell
Pat Blevins	Alma Frasier	Mike Hughes
Geraldine Bradley	Greg Frasier	Leesa Hughes
Janice Bradley	Leanne Frasier	Nancy (Bitsy) Jones
Ruth Burris	Ben Gardenhire	Ben Knox
Pat Butler	Kathy Gardenhire	Brandy Knox
Edith Camp	Mable Graham	Samuel Knox
Jim Cantrell	Elaine Geer	John Knox
Earlayne Cantrell	Denny Gilliam	Brenda Knox
Virginia Cantrell	Joan Gilliam	Barbara Lambert
Ross Cardwell	Chaz Gilliam	Mary Lankford
Brenda Cardwell	Richard Gravely	Patrick Lankford
Martha Jane Clark	Joann Gravely	Thelma Lassiter
Richard Clark	Connie Gunter	Jimmy Lee
Holly Cravens	Russ Hale	Ray Lollar
Caleb Cravens	Elizabeth Hale	Craig Lynn

Sheila Lynn	Madison Qualls	Glenda Solomon
Alexandra Lynn	Tyler Qualls	Hilda Sorrell
Morgan Lynn	Pattye Ragland	Jim Sorrell
Betty Marcom	James Rascoe	Barbara Sorrell
Cheryl Marcom	Horace Richardson	Carolyn Stults
Judy McDonald	Daphene Richardson	Virgie Stults
James McKee	Herman Rieben	Zelda Swindell
Betty McKee	Naomi Rieben	Linda Taylor
Jerry Don Nash	Billye Ross	Brenda Templeton
Elaine Nash	Louis Ross	Mary Anna Thompson
Kendra Naspinski	Jean Ross	Elaine Thweatt
Martha Null	Marc Ross	Blanchard Tubb
Mike O'Neal	Patti Ross	Falbia Tubb
Vanessa O'Neal	Mary Ross	Joan Tubb
Bill Oakley	Noah Ross	Les Tubb
Dale Officer	Shirley Scott	Becky Tubb
Heather Officer	Elega Sims	Jeffy Turner
Caelyn Officer	Kelly Sims	Ann Verble
Chandler Officer	Bruce Slatten	Jimmy Wallace
Grace Parker	Beth Slatten	Pat Wallace
Kenneth Pippin	Will Slatten	Betty Weaver
Thelma Pippin	Grant Slatten	Lee Webb
Greg Pippin	Enloit Smith	Gail Webb
Tony Putman	John Smith	Ty Webb
Laurie Putman	David Smith	Janet Webb
Riley Putman	Steve Smith	Andrew Webb
Chandler Putman	Emily Smith	Sarah Webb
Kim Qualls	Edward Solomon	Dave Weber

Betty Weber	Micah Wiles	Louise Young
Sharon Whitson	Clara Wiles	George Zahr
Christopher Wiles	Bob Young	Jennifer Zahr
Ashley Wiles	Ginger Young	Daniel Zahr
Gabriel Wiles	Drew Young	Andrew Zahr
Ethan Wiles	Katelyn Young	

But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Php 3:13-14

OUR FUTURE

Slogan: Where Christ is Central

Anniversary Theme: Christ Through the Centuries

Mission: Tell God's story – Show God's love – Be God's family

Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'

Mt 22:37-39

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Mt 28:18-20

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Ac 2:42-47

OUR PAST

Camp Meetings (1790-1817)

Looking back into history and historical records of writings, there is appreciation for worship held in the late 1700's. One kind of worship meeting was held outdoors in shelters known as a brush arbor. Brush Arbor meetings were held in many communities in White county, including the community of Sparta Church of Christ (now Central Church of Christ).

A brush arbor was set up by children believers. The structure being tree limbs and leaves for shelter. The tree limbs would support the frame and the leaves would protect from sun and rain.

The 1899's found many brush arbor meetings taking place here in White County. Some of those meetings continued until the mid-1900's. Grandparents of today told the stories of attending the arbor meetings. It was a period of worship and fellowship stated by the attendees. The singing was special as it echoed across the hillsides in White County areas. Special songs were such as "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" and "When the Role is Called Up Yonder."

People came to the meetings by covered wagons, horseback, walking, or in a horse and buggy.

The minister would stand in front of a podium made of a tree limb and deliver his soul-searching Restoration Movement sermon to sinners. He often came from several miles to preach in week or two-week meetings. He most often traveled by horseback or buggy.

At these brush arbor meetings many people turned their lives toward salvation as stated in the Bible - Acts 2. They received Christ as their Savior. Forgiveness, peace and love became their daily walk.



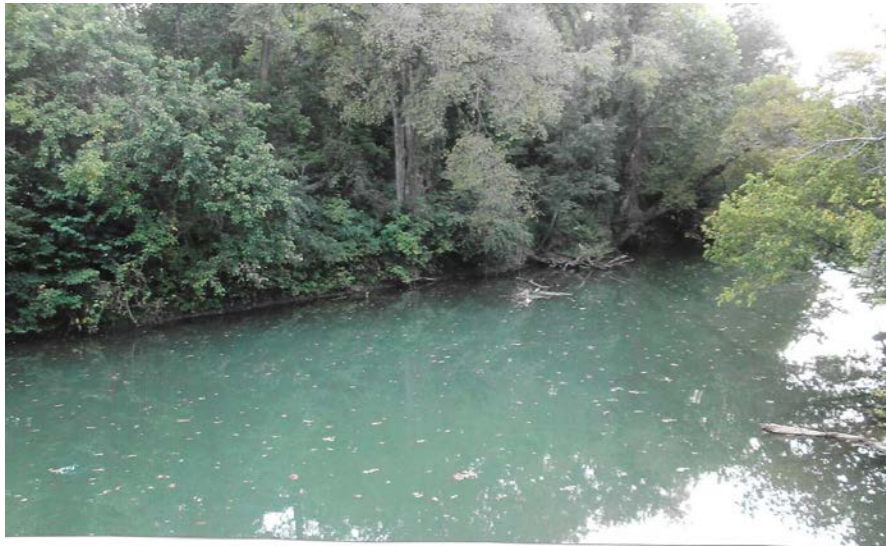
Brush Arbor Meeting



Traveling by Wagon and Mule to church

After one accepted the Gospel call, the Calfkiller river became the most convenient place for baptisms. Our heritage has proven

The Same Message – Same Gospel – The Bible



Calfkiller River, White County, TN: Rural Churches often used the Calfkiller River for baptisms. 1800's – 1950's

And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.

Acts 8:38

Beginnings at Priestly Academy (1867-1892)

Sparta and White County have a long and profound history of Christian believers with a belief of “In God We Trust.” The Central congregation of believers began to worship in 1867. There are no written records prior to the Civil War. Services were held in a school building until 1892. The building was known as Priestly Academy. It was not unusual for church members to use a school building on the first day of the week for services in 1867. Likewise, it was not unusual for a church building to provide school and educational purposes. This arrangement allowed communication, service and work together and formed a basis for Christian ethics for both young and old. However, the church was small, and opposition was with prejudice. Men such as WD Jordon, JJ Trat, WH Hooker, WD Carnes and JL Sewell laid the foundation for future growth after the civil war.



First church building – Priestly Academy, 1867-1892

Relocation to 2nd Church Building (1892-1927)

The Sparta Church of Christ stewardship purchased from the Presbyterians their interest in regard to their worship services for \$50 until 1892. Soon thereafter the church stewards purchased a lot that is now known as North Main Street. It was a corner lot and became known as the Sparta Church of Christ. The lot was purchased from CC Young at a cost of \$1000. The builders of the Sparta Church of Christ building are not known. However, it was constructed of brick at a cost of \$5000. The seating capacity was 500. The first sermon was the third Sunday in March 1893 by WH Sutton. The church served the church membership and the Sparta community well.



Second church building, 1892-1926. Building burned.

For sixteen years Brother Sutton preached and held protracted meetings without a vacation.

Through the strong solicitation and earnest persuasion of the church at Sparta, TN, he moved from Spencer to Sparta, and the church there had fellowship with him in his preaching until his death in 1905. The church at Sparta bought a tent, and Brother Sutton went out and preached under the tent where there were no congregations or houses of worship. Brother Sutton, by the power and simplicity of the gospel, converted sinners to Christ, established new congregations, and strengthened the weak churches in that county. His labors were generally confined to White, Putnam, Warren, Van Buren, and adjacent counties. He held successful meetings in Nashville, Chattanooga, Murfreesboro, Lebanon, Fayetteville and many other towns. Frequently, he was called to other States, but he preferred, as he said, to preach destitute fields where there was greater need.

Relocation to 3rd Church Building (1927-1965)

In December 1926, a fire destroyed the 1892 church building. This unfortunate event did not keep the Sparta Church Christians from worship services. The Christians met in the White County Court house in 1927. They were blessed by God and their needs were met. They were dedicated in faith, work and fellowship in the Lord's work.

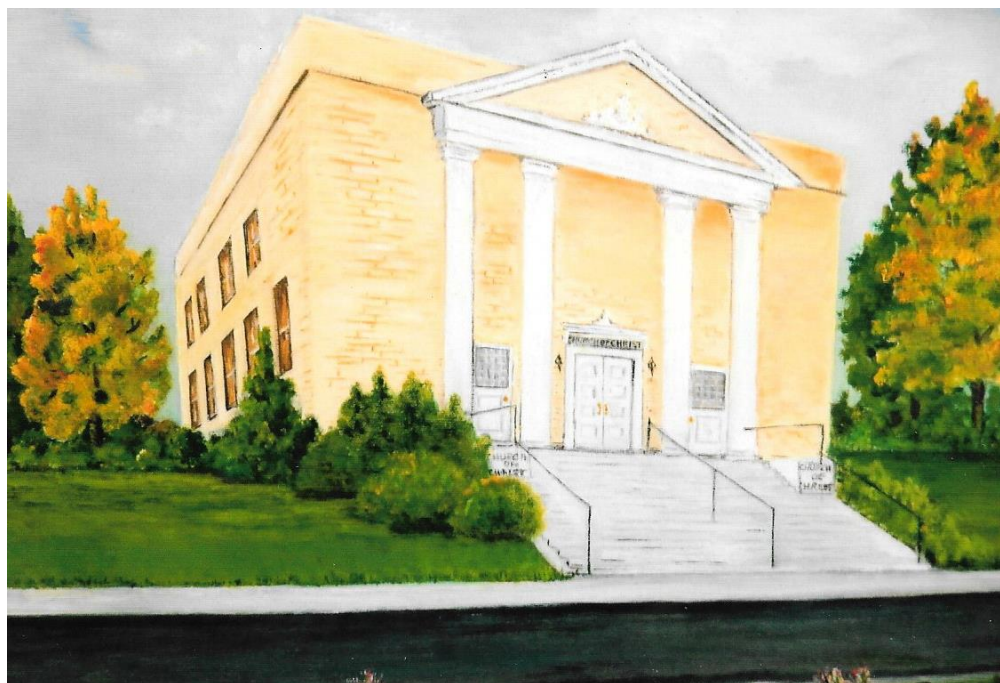
It was not many months until another building replaced the previously burned 1892 building. The new building was completed in 1927 at a cost of \$40,000. It was used for worship services, funerals, weddings and other events such as fellowship and gospel meetings. This building was built by the Lee Company whose owner was the grandfather of Central member Jimmy Lee.

Mrs. Ruth Rhea (Pinkie) Tubb Hill remembers the first wedding in the 1927 building. She served as flower girl in the wedding of Catherine Tubb and Robert Bell.

She also states that it was a blessing and with thankful hearts that the church contribution reached \$100 on a given Sunday. The church continued to grow in contribution and membership of 150 persons. JR Tubb, Sr, WW Young and GJ Spurlock served as elders. Deacons were CC Young, JD Bronson, George Tompkins and WM Young. JR Tubb stated, "By the help of the Lord, we hope to grow in every good work."



White County TN Court House, 1884-1977



Third church building, 1927-1965

Mr J R Tubb, Sr, a member of Central Church, was a man of Christian ethics. He learned of the need for the Black community to hear a gospel sermon. The noted Marshall Keeble was able to hold gospel tent meetings through the efforts of Mr Tubb. It was from the gospel preached that the present Roberts Street Church became a meeting house for members. Mr Tubb also provided materials (funds) for the meeting house building.

At this time in history it was not long until banks closed, wages were limited, and savings were important. Hourly wages were sometimes no more than 25 cents to \$1.00. Christians kept the faith, prayed and remembered:

The Gospel – The Message- The Bible

The Sparta Church of Christ elders, deacons and membership saw the need for a residence for a minister to be built. A lot was purchased in 1946 from Mr and Mrs JR Tubb, Jr for \$2500. Mr and Mrs Tubb were parents of Mrs Ruth Rhea (Pinkie) Tubb Hill who holds today the longest standing membership at Central. A nice brick home was erected on an eighty by two hundred feet lot at a cost of \$22,500. The home provided housing for church ministers until the year 2000.

Donald Earwood, 1951, was given an opportunity to do mission work in Belgium and France for a five-year period with expense \$30,000. Other areas of foreign countries include Japan, Korea, Nigeria, Ireland, Canada and Vietnam.

The Sparta Church of Christ name was changed to Central Church of Christ 1959. This change appeared to have met its mission by being centrally located in service to the Sparta community and White County, TN.

Central Church Budget, 1952

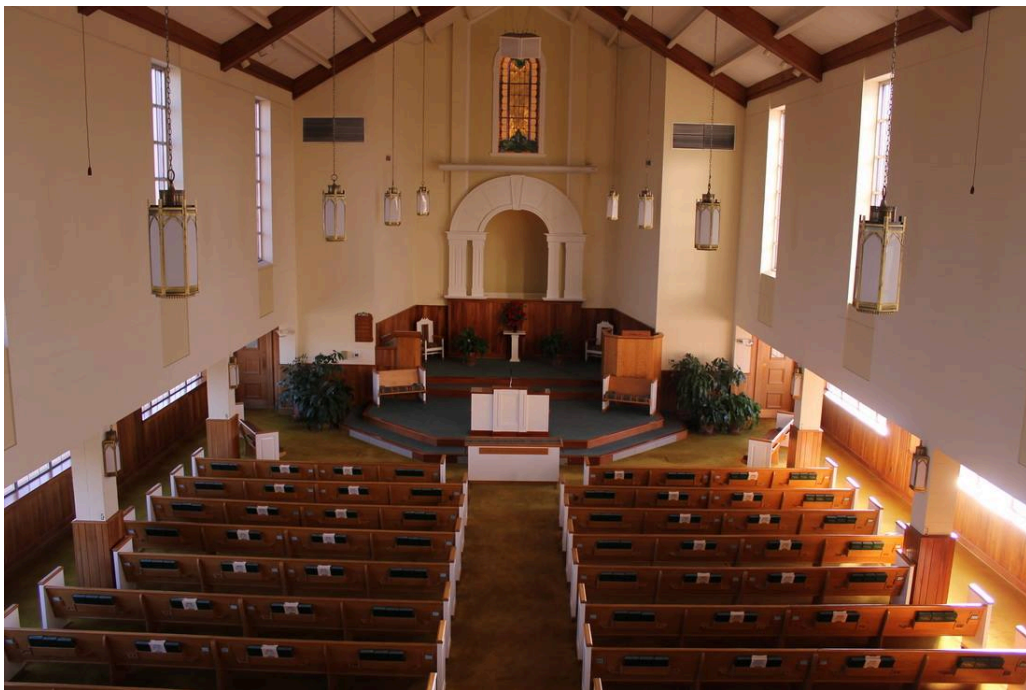
Home Preaching	4900.00
Janitor, Coal. Lights and Water	914.00
Sunday Scholl and VBS Literature	250.00
Supplies, Insurance and Postage	725.00
Meeting Expenses	500.00
East Tennessee Mission Work	300.00
General Mission Work	500.00
Foreign Mission Work	3000.00
Tennessee Orphan Home	400.00
Charity	625.00
Building Repair and Upkeep	500.00
West Side Building Fund	2000.00
Unforeseen	386.00
	<hr/>
Total	\$15,000.00

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich. 2 Cor 8:9

Planting of West Sparta Church of Christ (1958)

The Central Church of Christ has served Sparta and White County in other aspects of ministry. One aspect was mission work that involved the help in planting a new church in the western section of Sparta. The mission was to move west of the Calfkiller River. The Central Church of Christ provided membership and a minister to the West Sparta Church of Christ when West Sparta began its congregation and worship service. Central Church of Christ became the backbone of West Sparta membership and leadership with stewardship. John Snodgrass was one of the elders having a strong faith. He previously was a strong member and leader of Central Church of Christ.

Perhaps the first worship service held by West Sparta Church congregation, January 26, 1958 was a milestone in Central Church's mission work in White County.



Present Location (1965-)



The present location of Central Church was brought about by the need for additional classrooms and parking. The leadership of dedicated stewards (elders) became a historical move for the congregation. The purchase of more property south of the older building was accomplished. This property is located south along North Main Street. The planning phase for the endeavors was a three-year project. It began in 1962 with completion in 1965. A goal was accomplished!

The property in the above paragraph was purchased from Mr. and Mrs. Claude Tubb and Rhea House – owners. Along this avenue of construction were maple trees that were a great shady spot for parking. In the mid-week days, Sparta shoppers and business owners did daily parking. Today the church parking is used by different business owners who have a need for daily parking. Isn't that a service to the community of Sparta by Central Church of Christ? Isn't that a Christian attribute that Central Church provides?

One Nation Under God in 2011 was an open mission to areas in the Upper Cumberland Region. Central Church contributed \$50,000 to this mission work. Dr. Alan Cooper worked with One

Nation Under God efforts in local churches in White County as part of the overall outreach to promote the Gospel across the United States and all over the world.

According to former minister Schumann Brewer in 1974, “the Central Church of Christ is enjoying the facilities of a new commodious building at 105 North Main St. This new building was completed in September 1965. In January of 1974, we were able to make the last payment on this building, and are now debt free. As a result of this, we have now entered into an expanded mission work, and this we expect to enlarge upon as we continue to grow.



Schumann Brewer



Central Church Family Members (left to right) Louise Breeding Young, Mrs RL (Gussie) Gillen, Gillen Young, Bob Young, Mattie Pearl Gillen Breeding. Four generations are represented in the above photo at the current building – “note burning.” 1970’s

Agape and Happy Haven

Agape, in Nashville, TN, exists to strengthen children and families with the healing love of Christ through counseling and social services. Several members have used these services over the years. This agency has been supported by Central Church of Christ for many years.



Happy Haven Homes is in Cookeville, TN, is operated by Churches of Christ in the Upper Cumberland area. Central Church of Christ has supported Happy Haven many years. The home accepts children who need care in a stabilized environment. One can live in the Home until eighteen years of age or until high school graduation and one can support himself or herself. Happy Haven will assist those who want to go to college.

In May 1985 several ladies from the Central Church of Christ in Sparta visited each first Wednesday of a given month. The visit was shared with a covered dish lunch and a period of fellowship with house parents. The visit also included sewing, mending clothes, folding clothes and other needed chores. Central Church ladies no longer visit monthly. They support the Home by monthly contributions.

Happy Haven and its leadership always have expressed their appreciation for the support received by the eldership of the Central Church congregation.



The picture above is a group of ladies from Central church of Christ in Sparta.

Ruth Rhea (Pinkie) Tubb Hill and her sister, Mary Willie Smith visited Happy Haven June 8, 1992. They reported that twelve children were living in the home. However, they were impressed by the cleanliness and finding house parents providing them with a warm welcome. At this time two other houses would soon be ready for more children and more living for the children. It was learned that each child had a 4H project as well as Bible study.

It was stated by Ms Ruth Rhea (Pinkie) Tubb Hill the Social Worker reported, "The home could not operate without the help of congregations as Central Church.

Helping the Needy

The congregation prepares meals for the elderly and sick. A food bank is prepared by individuals who bring in pantry items for the needy and hungry citizens of White County.



In 1965, members preparing packages for soldiers in Vietnam during the war.

Vietnam Mission Boxes: (right) Loula Tubb, sitting, Ruth Rhea (Pinkie) Tubb Hill, Frances Camp, Marie and Schumann Brewer, and Barnett Powell, packing boxes to send to Vietnam during the war there. These went through the Red Cross.

Other uses of the building are funerals, weddings, bridal showers and special meetings.

Addition of the Annex (1987)

The Central Church members and leadership planned for the future in 1968. It was decided to provide three additional classrooms, an office for records, a kitchen, a room for fellowship, Bible classes or other needs. Dr RB Thurman was a long-time member who held property near the Central Church building. The year of 1987, the church added an annex north of the present building as well as additional parking.

Central Church leaders held a vision for the future by providing better ways to serve the congregation. The purchase of the Goff house in 1993 on the north side of College Street corner provided additional parking and an area for youth ball exchanges.

Dr. and Mrs. Robert F Baker heirs sold the church property. Dr Baker was both a doctor and business man in Sparta. He had invested in property that connected to the Central Church property. This property lies Rhea Street and North Church Street. The lot size with a building is 0.443 acres. It was purchased by Central Church in 2014 for \$70,000. The lot is a great asset. At present, 2017, the lot is only an asset for future expansions.

Church history and historical records are important. The Bible provides great history lessons for our learning. Perhaps the history of Central Church of Christ can provide our present generation and future generations the purpose of records, work and what it means to mankind to recognize.

The Same Gospel – Same Message – The Bible

History of Elders

John S Rhea	Curtis Wakefield 1964-1979
Herbert Pistol 1977-1989	Barnett Powell 1966-1990
Matt Tayler	Kenneth Dabbs 1979-1992
Dr AF Richards -1902	Bob Swindell 1980- 2004
WH Sutton 1892-1905	Russell Terry 1986-1991
JR Tubb, Sr 1895-1942	Jim Camp 1990-1999
Martin Young	Fred Rascoe 1996-2000
Harry Camp 1921-1937	Curtis White 1990-2001
Robert L Gillen 1921-1946	Bill Oakley 1996-
DD Bradley 1930's -1964	James Green 2000-2001
WA Walker 1939-1970	Les Tubb 2000-
Charles S Meek -1964	Don England 2002-2013
Murphy Dodson 1949-1965	John Knox 2005-
Barnett Powell 1960-1963	Craig Lynn 2006-2011
Cecil Smith 1963-1980	Fred Rascoe 2013-2016
Lucius Camp 1964-1970	Russ Hale 2013-
Paul Howard 1964-1977	Tommy Blevins 2013-2016

History of Youth Ministers

Woody Briggs	Jim Saunders 2000-2004
Mark Summers	Adam Daniels 2005-2008
David Straughn 1980	Daren Little 2009-2011
Bob Lloyd 1983-1984	David Schilling 2012-2016
Tim Sen 1990	Patrick Lankford 2016- present
Cary Hadley 1995-2000	

History of Ministers

WH Sutton, 1892-1905	Waldon Tarpley, 1958-1962
JD Gunn, 1905-1918	Paul W Hall, 1962-1963
John T Smith, 1918-1922	Olan Bassham, 1963-1968
RL Brooks, 1922-1924	Schumann Brewer, 1968-1981
Joe Netherland, Sr, 1924-1933	J Brian Crow, 1981-1991
AR Hill, 1933-1937	Wayne Stubblefield, 1991-1999
JE Nowlin, 1937-1941	Don Burns, 2000-2012
CJ Garner, 1941-1944	Brian McCutchen, 2013-2015
D Ellis Walker, 1944-1946	Allen & Nathan Cooper, 2016-2017 Interim
Charles Tidwell, Sr., 1947-1949	Roy Whited, 2017 – August 2017 Interim
Billy Norris, 1949-1953	Christopher Wiles, 2017-
Paul Matthews, 1953-1958 (served both West & Central until new minister found)	

Reaching the Lost

Mission Work of Central Church congregation is most appreciated by its recipients. One finds it difficult to truly give all the mission work for the cause of Christ that Central has been involved in reaching Christians in need or taking the Bible in reaching souls in hearing

The Same Gospel- Same Message- The Bible

Central Church (Sparta Church) supported other congregations in their need for a minister or financial assistance. History gives the message of Edward Nowlin, Central minister who reached to citizens outside Sparta city limits. In 1940 he preached Christ in a tent gospel meeting – Blue Springs Road. Souls obeyed the gospel in baptism. The baptisms by Minister Nowlin were held in the Calfkiller River near what is known as Bethel Church of Christ, Blue Springs Road.

Beecher Hunter Lambert and wife, Mollie Mae Davis Lambert were baptized in 1940 by Minister Nowlin. They became members at Central Church later in life. They were the parents of Thelma Lambert Pippin, also a member of Central Church.

In years after 1963 Central Church sponsored a daily radio program. This program was scheduled for 12:35 pm Monday through Friday with Bible discussions on WSMT Radio in Sparta, TN. The speaker was frequently a minister at Central.

Historically, Central Church of Christ has remained a church that follows Biblical Teachings. Every year has not been perfect; however, elders, deacons and members are reminded to be daily followers of Christ.

The Same Gospel – Same Message – The Bible

This past decade of Christian service to God and mankind stands in view of one hundred fifty years of Bible sermons, lectures and gospel meetings. The number seems almost beyond comprehension.

Children were often invited to attend a summer Bible study. This was a highlight of summer activity. All congregations in White County held a Bible School together one year. It was a huge success.

In the 1970's, Brother Gordon Smith, Minister, came to White County for a tent meeting gathering. This gospel meeting was supported by all White County Church of Christ congregations. The location was on a large lot near the White County Fair Grounds, Sparta Cookeville Highway. The meeting was held for seven days. Many became Christians during this meeting.

**For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of
God, and are justified freely by his grace through the
redemption that came by Christ Jesus.**

Rom 3:23-24

**For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is
eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Rom 6:23

Influence of JR Tubb Sr

One can relate history as history in each individual. Historical moments as discussed surely were pleasing to God and Jesus Christ. An example is from the record of March 14, 1940, by H Leo Boles, who recognized Brother JR Tubb in his audience, Central Church of Christ, Miami, FL in a gospel meeting by Brother Boles.

“I am glad to recognize in the audience tonight many new faces; some of these I have known for a long time in Tennessee. Among these I mention Bailey Tubb and other relatives. He is the son of old Brother JR Tubb, Sparta, TN, who is the senior elder of the church of Christ there.

Brother JR Tubb is one of the best men I ever knew; he has done more for the church at Sparta than any other man. He has been interested in Christian Education and has frequently made liberal contributions to David Lipscomb College while I was president of that institution. I am glad to recognize in this audience some of his children and grandchildren.”

During his leadership tenure at Central, Brother JR Tubb wrote a study guide book: “The Divisions and Books of the Bible.” He was a true man of wisdom and a Bible scholar. In 1935 Bro. Tubb served as one of the directors of Tennessee Polytechnic College. When they found it necessary to dismiss their educational goal to the State of Tennessee, the College became what is known today as Tennessee Technological University.

The divisions and books
of the

BIBLE



How to read and
UNDERSTAND THEM

When I was a boy or young man, I was very ignorant of the teaching of the Bible. I wanted to read and understand it. I did read it quite often but had such a poor conception of its teaching, and how to read it, that it was uninteresting and unsatisfactory until I heard a sermon along the line of this pamphlet, which was a revelation to me. Since then it has been very profitable reading, and a great pleasure, besides, to read it.

Now, my excuse for writing this little pamphlet is that others may by chance read it, and find a pleasing assistance in the study of the Bible.

J. R. TUBB.
Sparta, Tenn.

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE

We have often heard it said that the people (generally speaking) are not informed as to the teaching of the Bible. From my own observation I am convinced that there is much truth in the statement. People do not read the Bible very much, and when they do it is read in such a casual, careless way that they get very little from their reading. Some claim that it is a mysterious book, uninteresting and hard to be understood, so they are slow about giving it a close, systematic study.

If we will first get fixed in our minds the divisions of the Bible, and to whom they apply, then study the purposes of each book contained in the Bible, it will begin to open up more clearly to our understanding, so that we can see its beauty and simplicity, and it will become more interesting as we read and study its sacred pages.

Just here I want to offer very briefly some suggestions along these lines that I am sure will be of much assistance to us in our study.

THE DIVISIONS OF THE BIBLE

We are all familiar with the fact that there are two grand divisions of the Bible, the Old Testament and the New Testament, whether we fully comprehend the meaning of these divisions or not. However, for the present we want to direct our attention to the

THREE AGES OR DISPENSATIONS.

There are three ages or dispensations of the Bible, known as the Patriarchal, Jewish and

A Church Directory, 1941

1941 CHURCH DIRECTORY

J. Edward Nowlin, Local Minister

*

ELDERS:

J. R. Tubb, Sr.	W. M. Young
Dr. E. F. Richards	R. L. Gillen
D. D. Bradley	W. A. Walker

*

DEACONS

John Williams	W. S. Boyd
S. G. Butler	George Thom
Chas. Meek	W. T. Goff
Will Slatten	Frank Camp

J. R. Tubb, Jr., Treasurer

CHURCH OF CHRIST SPARTA, TENN.

FOREWORD

In the hope that this little booklet may serve to the mutual edification of both leaders and members in general, it is prayerfully sent forth to all.

--J. Edward Nowlin.

1941

TO THE PREACHER:

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine"

II Tim. 4:2.

TO THE ELDERS:

"Take heed therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood"

Acts 20:28.

TO THE CHURCH:

"Obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you" Heb. 13:17.

OUR PRESENT EVANGELISM

Some of our regular mission work at this time is North Augusta, S.C. \$550. per month: Bob Prater, African work, \$100 per month: Newton, MS \$100 per month: Sierra Leone in South West African work, \$50 per month; Jerry Nowlin, Tallapoosa, GA \$75 per month. In addition to the above, we have helped others with a onetime donation, and considering this, we are averaging \$1,150.00 in Mission work per month.”

One can recognize how the past and present are related - Central Church continues to maintain mission goals and aspirations in reaching lost souls.

The Central Church holds a Bible worship service for the residents of Life Care Assisted Living. A weekly Lord’s Day morning service is open for those who wish to attend. The worship hour is 8:00 am. The Bible is read, hymns are sung, and a message is given by a speaker. The Lord’s Supper is also provided. The residents appreciate these Lord’s Day Services.

**Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues,
preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every
disease and sickness among the people.**

Mt 4:23

Cuba Missions



Cuba - Map

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Rom 5:8



Cuba – Group Meeting



Cuba – Baptism

Cuba, School and Jail Time

According to Ms. Ruth Rhea (Pinkie) Tubb Hill, her grandson, Greg Johnson, in 1998, had just graduated from U.T. with a minor in Spanish. He had been to South America and Mexico to learn more Spanish. Wayne Stubblefield was taking several thousand dollars to help build a church school in Cuba and asked Greg if he could go with him. At the same time the Pope was to be there, and the government said each person entering Cuba had to have a certain white card. Wayne did not know about the card, so when their plane landed in Cuba they were immediately taken to jail and spent the night there. All the cash was taken, and they were interrogated. The next morning their money was returned to them, they were taken to the hotel to meet their contact person, taken to the airport and sent home. They were in Miami before any of us knew of this. Greg has a great grandfather and a great-great grandfather who served as Elders at Central Church. He attended Sunday school and church here when he was very young.

**For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form,
and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head
over every power and authority.**

Col 2:9-10

El Salvador Missions

And the Walls Fell Down

“The Jericho Project”

Berea church of Christ, Philadelphia church of Christ

Florence church of Christ and Central church of Christ

Joshua 6:20

So, the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.

The El Salvador mission trip was one of great excitement. There were new cities added to the list, glasses to give out, 2,000 food bags to distribute and visits to the Benjamin Bloom Children’s Hospital planned. However, God has opened a new door in El Salvador.

The problem of gang violence for years has threatened to rip the country apart. Many young men and women become involved in gang activity, with some barely in their teens joining the gangs. The gangs are heavily involved in drug trafficking, car theft, extortion and other illegal activity. The murder rate among young people in the gangs is very high with many gang members either in jail or dead.

The Principal of the elementary school in San Bartolo made a decision to try to intervene in the lives of the children by asking Armando Gamez and his son Eric to come to the school and teach

Bible as part of the curriculum. Walls are being torn down in this wonderful work and Armando has named it the “Jericho Project.” More about this later.

As usual we began the work with the preparation of the food bags at the Central Church in San Salvador.



The preparation of 1,200 food bags and 1,000 children’s bags took well into the evening, but left us ready for the week ahead.

The first day was one of anticipation as we visited the school. We arrived around 10 a.m. while classes were in session. The children were very excited to see us as it was something out of their normal routine. There are almost 1,200 students in the school and we were able to give every one of them a Bible. The Bibles were donated by Great Cities Ministries who received them from Lifeway Book Stores.



In addition to the Bibles, we were able to fit many of the children and some of the parents with glasses. The smaller children received a bag with school supplies, tooth paste and brush and toy. In the picture above, you see the Bibles and the bags being handed out. The school has three-four-hour sessions and we were able to attend two sessions. Some of our group went back to the night session and gave out Bibles to those students.

The work at the school is a great opportunity for the Gospel to be taught to children who might otherwise never hear God's word. The Principal has taken a courageous stand to teach the Bible to these children in the hope that hearts will be touched and help them avoid the entrapment of gangs. It is our goal to support them in whatever way that we can.

The rest of the week was filled with going to the towns to distribute food bags, children's bags and assist in their VBS. This year's theme was "Jesus Feeds the 5,000." The churches are very innovative in putting on skits and make an excellent presentation with very few resources.



One afternoon was taken with a visit to the Bloom Children Hospital where we were allowed to visit the children and the family member staying with them. We gave out bags of treats and supplies for the children in the wards. No pictures were allowed in the hospital as it had become a security issue because of the gangs.

Overall, we feel the trip was a success. God has opened doors and walls have been torn down. The work in the school brings great promise in spreading God's word to these children and hopefully keep them from a life in the gangs. We established new relationships with the Christians in San Juan Opioco and Cuidad Arce as well as continuing the work in El Tule, Apopa, Lourdes, San Marcos Jiboa and San Bartolo. All of us on the Missions Ministry are grateful for the faithful support of the Elders and the members of Central Church of Christ. It is our prayer that whatever is done in El Salvador and around the world will be done for the glory and honor of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

EDUCATION

Central Church building is used by members of the congregation and for worship periods. These periods include Sunday morning for both Bible classes and worship. Several classes are offered on Sunday mornings: The ladies Bible class, Men's Bible class, the youth class, including special recognition to small children for Bible introduction.

The ladies Bible class recently purchased Bibles for study groups at the White County Jail. This is a phase of community service that Central Church is involved. The ladies class also has provided funds to feed hungry children in White County with the DeRossett congregation.

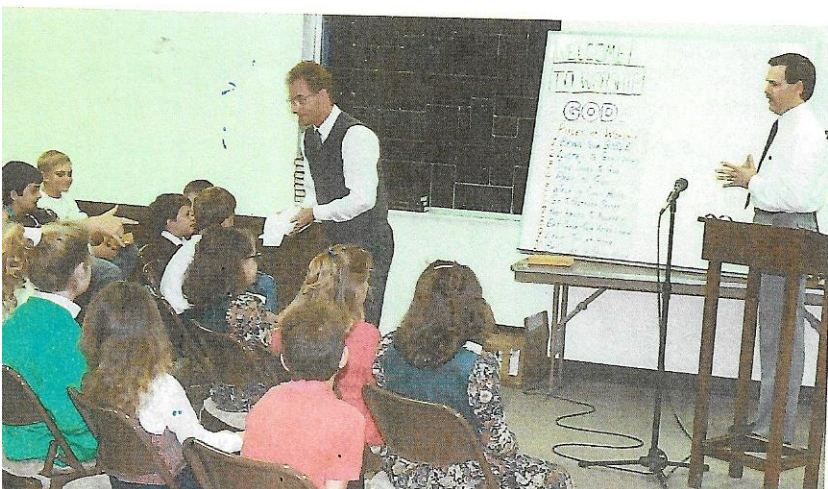
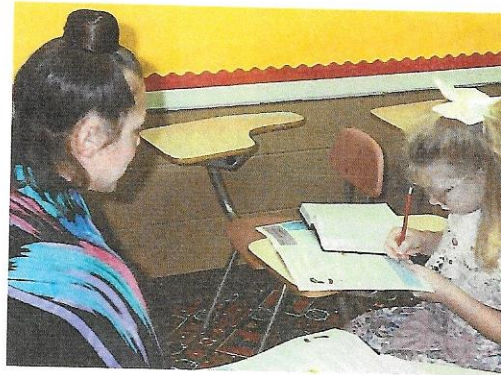
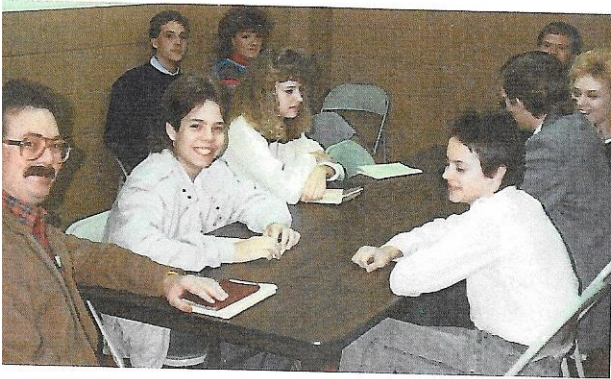


In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.

Heb 1:1-2



BIBLE STUDY





Ladies Bible Class



Dr Jeff Ross – Deacon



Young Adult Bible Class



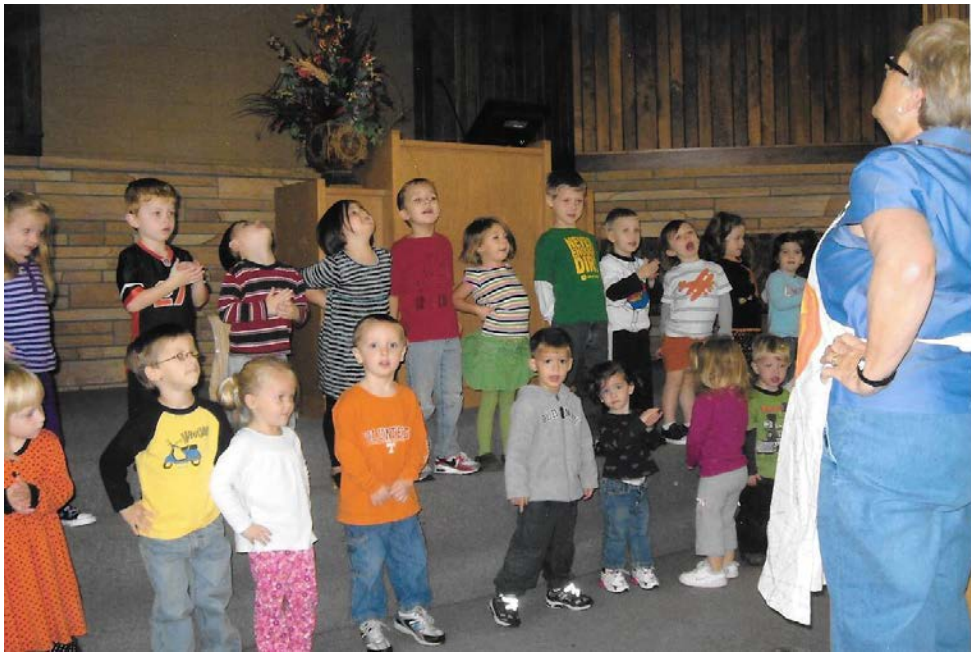
Central Bible Study

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

Mt 28:19-20

First Steps Pre-School

First Steps Pre-school is Central's Mother's Day Out program. Started in the fall of 2001, First Steps has served several hundreds of children in the White County area and will be beginning its 17th year in August. The children are taught basic school skills in hopes of preparing them for kindergarten, as well as having outside time and may play activities. Mrs Becky Tubb visits on Wednesdays and leads the children in a music program including songs and rhymes. Mrs Gail Webb is a regular guest reader and enjoys bringing books to share with children each week. A summer session was added in June 2015 with the school operating in June and July. The current staff includes Mrs. Kay England, who has been with First Steps from the beginning, Mrs Melissa Henry, Miss Kelly Sims and Director Mrs Laurie Putnam.



Music Director - Becky Tubb



First Steps – Teacher Melissa Henry



First Steps –Teacher Kay England

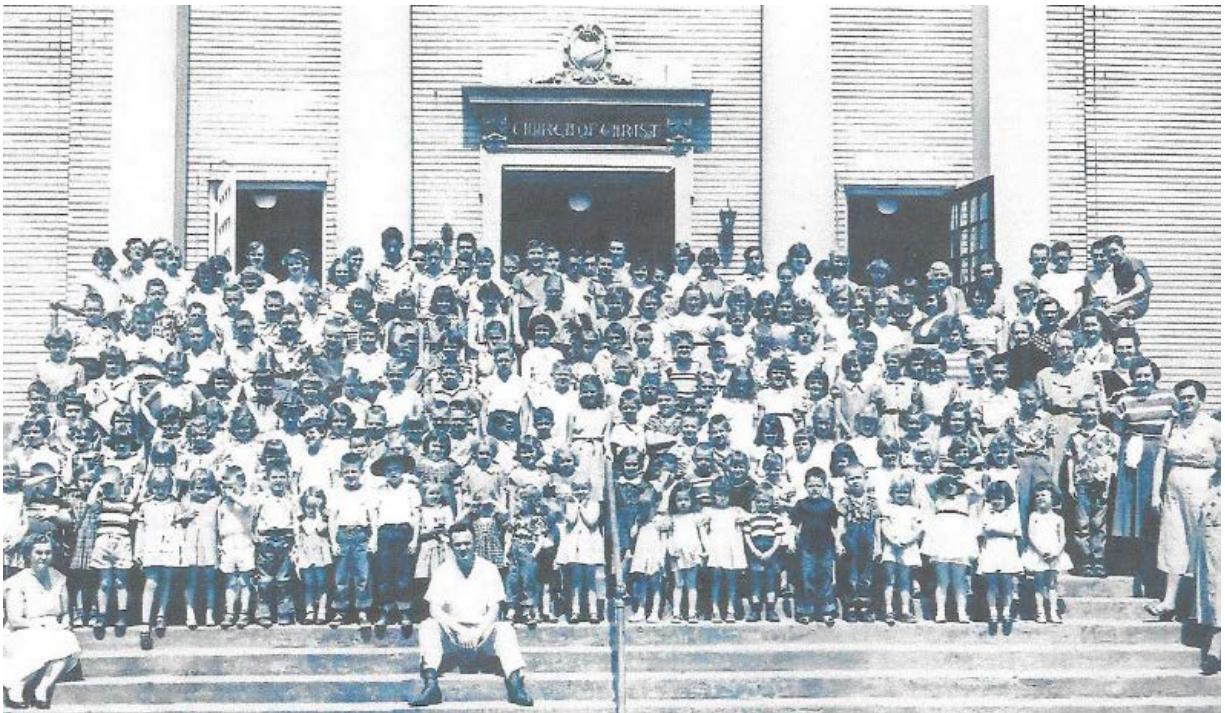


First Steps –Teacher Elaine Nash



First Steps –Teacher Laurie Putnam

Vacation Bible School



Vacation Bible School, 1950's.



Vacation Bible School Week



Elder Jim Camp – Ready for VBS

Youth Ministry

The Central Youth Group provides a place for students to begin a relationship with Jesus, through which they will discover everything God made them to be. Our students learn to live the best kind of life by caring about things that God cares about – justice, mercy, humility and love.

The Central Youth Group participates in many activities to help youth learn more about God, build new friendships and provide service to the community. Cellar is an activity before class on Wednesday night where the youth meet to either play games, make a video, or go to Lifecare to have fellowship with the residents (and maybe Bingo!) before having a meal. On the fourth Sunday morning before church, the youth conducts the church service for the Assisted Living session at Lifecare of Sparta.

The Central Youth Group is a group of loving and dedicated young people who are passionate for Christ and strive to follow Him with all aspects of their lives.

For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

Jn 1:17

Youth Ministry Report (2016-2017)

Current Youth Minister:

Patrick Lankford (July, 2016-Present)

Size:

Approximately 10 teens

Recent Events:

Teens of Christ: Starting monthly, September 2017

Challenge Youth Conference, Feb. 24-26 in Gatlinburg, TN

Christmas Gifts for Ronald McDonald House: December 2016

Youth Singing Night: November 2016

Trunk or Treat: October 31, 2016

Backpack Supply Drive: August 2016

Bible Classes:

Early Church-Wednesdays 2016 (Year Long)

The Story (book)-Sundays 2016 (Summer)

Worship-Sundays 2016 (Winter/Spring)

Searching for the Truth (WWBS)-Sundays 2017 (Spring/Summer)

Fruits of the Spirit-Wednesdays 2017 (Year Long)

Revelation-Sundays 2017 (Summer/Fall)

Mission Statement:

“To know Christ, grow in Christ, and live like Christ everyday.”

Theme Verse: Luke 2:52

“And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.”



Youth Teen Group

And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with
God and men.

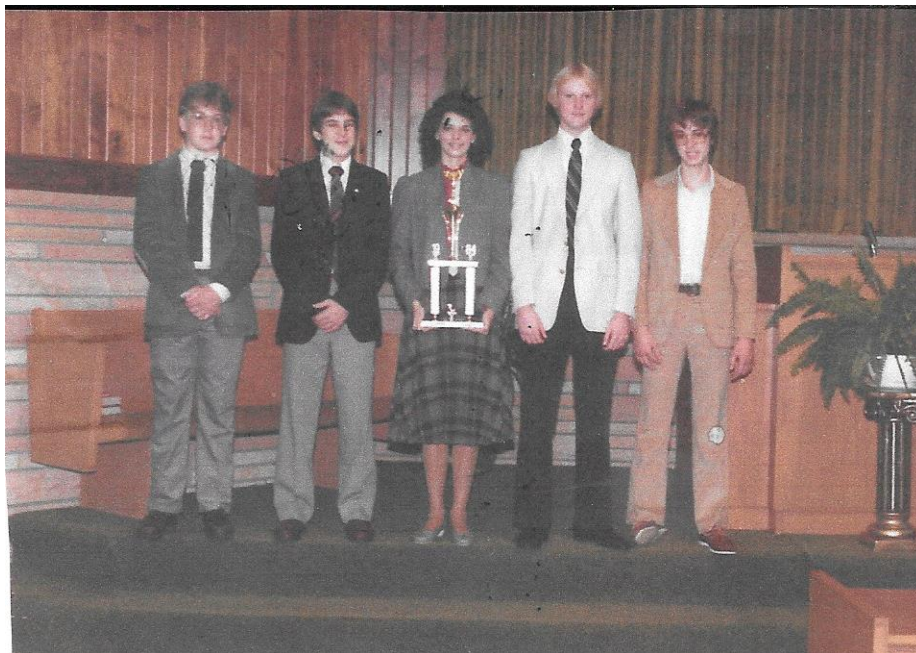
Luke 2:52

Bible Bowl

The Bible Bowl was an activity for the youth at Central Church. The activity was held annually with several congregations participating in White County and congregations in surrounding areas.

The activity consisted of Biblical questions in both the Old and New Testament.

The photo of 1994 provides Central Church's participants and winners who answer the most correct Bible answers to Bible questions. This includes Lee Davis, Bob Young, Kim Daniels, Phillip Camp, and Danny Camp. This activity provided the youth in learning teamwork, study periods of the Bible and associations with other youth.



Bible Bowl – Central



Bible Bowl – Central

And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

Col 1:18

Library

The Central Church Library is available to its members. It offers a collection of reference books to help study the Bible - the Word of God. The Bible is the most significant book in the library. Study is important in order to grow in spirit and in truth.



The pulpit chair that was removed from the church that burned in 1926 is now in our present building by Ms. Ruth (Pinkie) Tubb Hill.

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

Mt 28:18

FELLOWSHIP



Chef Dale Officer



Picnic



Mr. Jimmy Wallace provided transportation to a Saturday special event for K-3 children – the Easter Egg Hunt- at Ms. Pinkie’s lawn. This activity was special for children and adults also, including parents.



March 2015: “Pinkie” Hill holds love to the Easter Rabbit that arrived on her lawn on Saturday morning for the annual Easter Egg hunt for K-3 grade of Central Church of Christ

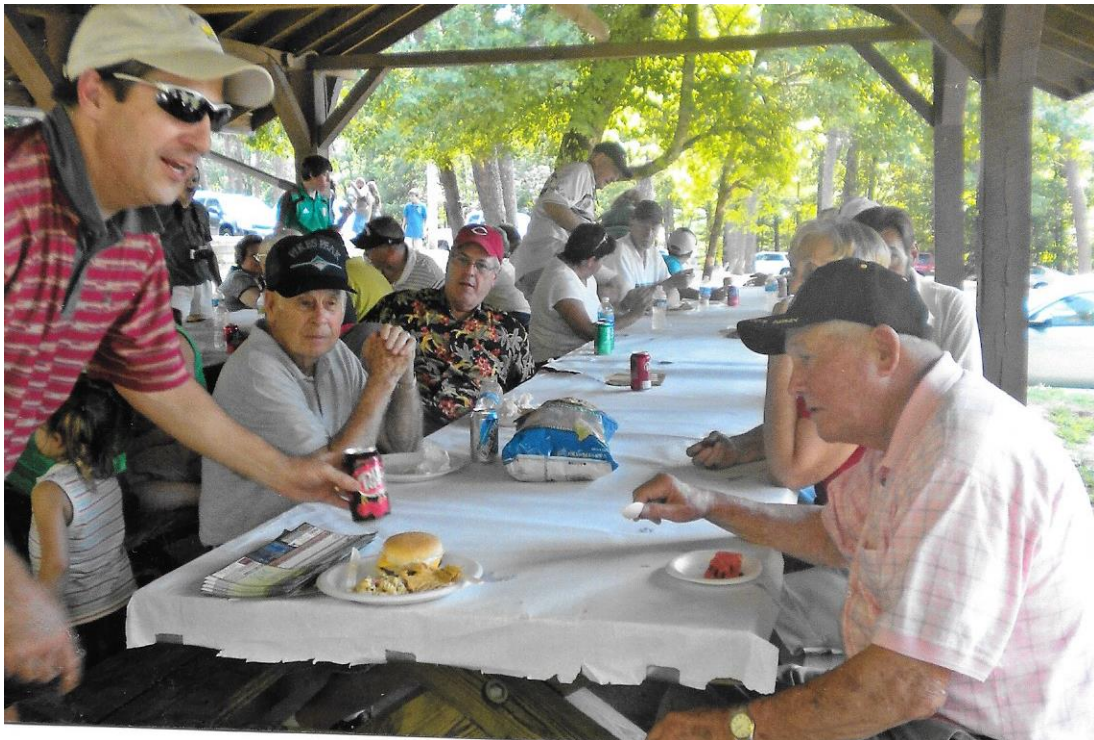
The K-3 Grades truly enjoyed the hospitality of “Pinkie” provided on Saturday before Easter.

Her lawn was full of colorful eggs as the children began their hunt. Great fellowship!

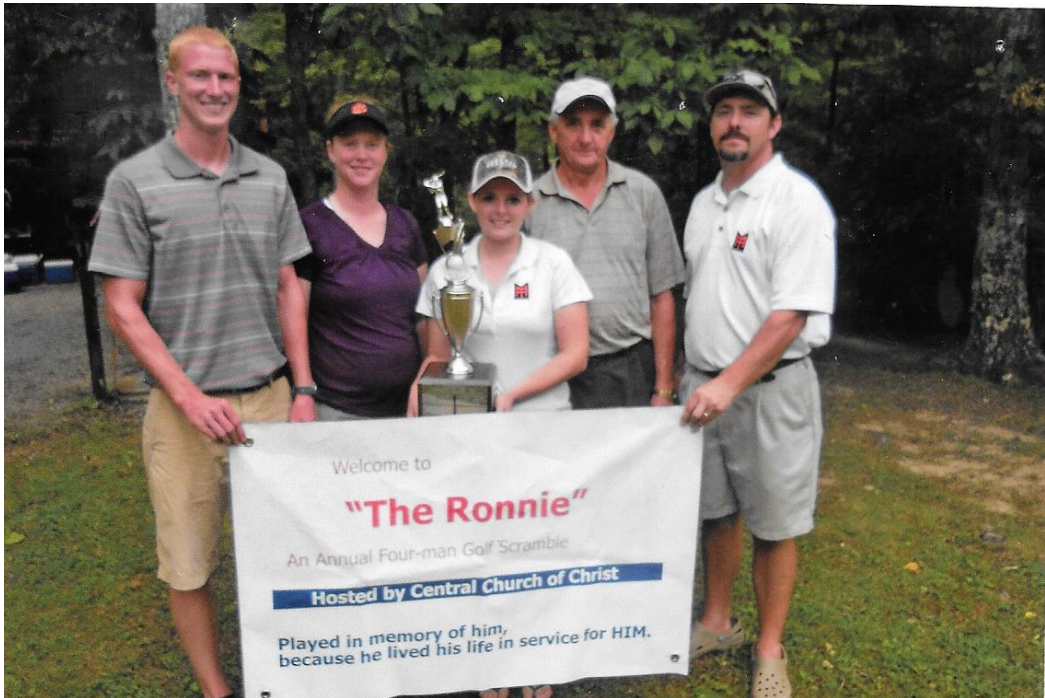
“Ronnie” Golf Tournament

The Central church gets together every year to play golf and have a picnic at Fall Creek Falls.

After the dearth of Ronnie Powell, the tournament was named after him in 2004 for his love of golf. Each year several of our members and the community play 18 holes of golf and then go to one of the shelters for a picnic. Those not playing golf join the others at the shelter to enjoy fellowship and good food.



Ronnie Golf Tournament Picnic



Ronnie Golf Tournament Winners



Ronnie Golf 2008 Winners: Daniel Tubb, Lindsey Hitchcock,
Sean Luna, Bradley Barker, Billy Buck

Primetime

Primetime was organized in the summer of 1996. Its goal was to minister to senior citizens at Central and as an outreach program to the White County community.

The organizers were Gary Hadley, Bill and Carol Oakley, Mary White, Elizabeth Stewart, Allan and Billie Stingley. Through the years several others have joined the effort to plan Primetime activities such as Steve and Emily Smith..

Once a month the Primetime group plans a trip for a Tennessee tour and two overnight trips twice a year. Individuals pay their expenses in regards. This activity is a great fellowship for seniors.

The ministry has been a success in the lives of our seniors and as a tool in bringing individuals to Christ and closer to each other. The program provides Bible teaching, fellowship, encouragement, and sharing of faith in Jesus Christ.

Love and interest of Primetime continues as it meets its weekly program of gospel singing, prayer, Bible study, meal and entertainment on Wednesdays from 10:30 till 12:30. Currently Janice Bradley provides much of the organizing in continued Primetime ministry as of 2017.



Fun at Welch's Point: Pattie Lou Howard, "Pinkie" Hill, Carol Allison, Deborah Green

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Jn 3:16



Central Primetime – Historic Ruby, TN



Primetime – Church of Christ Beersheba



Primetime trip to Miss BoBo's in 2017



Beersheba, 2002



Beersheba, 2000



Primetime Fellowship



Primetime Trip



Primetime Trip



Primetime Fellowship



Primetime Trip



Primetime Fellowship



Primetime Trip

Life Ministry

Central Life Ministry encourages members to host, participate and enjoy activities focused on being together outside scheduled church activities. The ministry “aspires to inspire” members to invite neighbors, family and friends to enjoy Christian fellowship in the hope of building the Church and spreading the good news of Jesus Christ.



Life Ministry Float Trip



Life Ministry Kayaking



Life Ministry Hike to Mt LaConte



Life Ministry Fellowship at Welch's Point



Life Ministry Meal at Mt LaConte



Life Ministry



Life Ministry Hike



Life Ministry Fellowship



Christian Life Ministry Hike

WORSHIP



Auditorium

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

Eph 1:3

SERVICE

Benevolence



Thanksgiving Fellowship Meal

In 2005, Central aids the Bay St. Louis church following Hurricane Katrina. In 2010 Central aids flood victims following the Nashville flood. In 2015 Central aids victims of ice storm in White County.

Church Office

Through the years, the office of the church has had the responsibility of keeping the members informed about members who are sick and the activities of the church. A weekly bulletin has been published for several years, going from receiving them in the mail – to having them sent out by electronic avenues. We also have run a pantry out of the office, serving the community for several years. This has been open to anyone in the immediate area. This has resulted in the members of the community being aware of our church activities (such as the annual Thanksgiving meal for the community) and having several of the community at the jail sign up for our free Bible studies. Several of our own members have been involved with the secretary work down through the years. Janice Bradley now serves as the secretary since 1992 until now.

The treasury and the office have worked together for many years, making sure the weekly contributions are secure for paying bills, mission work and other donations that we receive through the years. Dave Weber serves as treasurer at this time - making sure the elders and others have monthly financial reports.

Jeff Haston is responsible for building and maintaining Central Church website (www.spartacoc.com). He also is responsible for social media and any technology assistance or updates.

Generous Giving

Mr Ether Weaver and his sister, Miss Essie Weaver, members of the Central Church gave to the Lord's work. They were from White Oak Flatt Community, White County, TN. They had earnings from their farm and livestock. It was their desire to leave one-third of earnings to Central. The money was to be used to train ministers for the gospel to be preached.

Mr William Warren Jenkins left a memorial gift to Central to be used for the church building as needed. Dr. Jenkins and his mother were long time members of Central.

Dr Leighton Smith provided a memorial gift to honor his deceased wife, Mary Willie Tubb Smith. They were members of Central for many years.

Many memorials and gifts have been received from many members over the past one hundred fifty years for continued growth in the Lord's work. An example: A devoted Christian donated a lot or most of it to Central for additional improvements with building and parking.

OUR 150TH ANNIVERSARY

Goal

To conduct a special event on September 24 to celebrate 150 years of walking with Christ. To thank God for His faithfulness, humbly remember our history, and anticipate great things to come as God works with us to change lives in our community and world. To strengthen congregational unity, fellowship and love.

Reflections on the 150th Anniversary

Most people get a card and a coffee mug on their desk on their first day at the new job. I enjoyed a full day party complete with ice cream and cake! Now, don't get the wrong idea; this day wasn't set aside for me. The focal point was on God's grace through His Son and how that grace gives Central Church of Christ its rich (and sometimes rollercoaster-ish) history. If you don't know what a rollercoaster is, think of traveling on the roads to Burgess Falls at 140 mph. Those quick ups and downs gives you some idea of Central Church's recent history.

The 150th Anniversary celebration was an "up" day on the rollercoaster ride that is currently building slow and steady gains. The pew seats of the auditorium were packed as plenty of people joined together in song to praise the Christ who has giving this gathering meaning and purpose. The foyer was full of smiles as people rekindled the warmth of relationships that have been forged by Christ through the years. The Word of God was living and active as people opened their Biblical swords searching God's truth for the hope and the comfort the Spirit brings.

God inspired Dr. Philip Camp, a former member of Central and my professor, to give a little history review of Central during our Bible class hour. Through the Israelite history proclaimed in Deuteronomy, Dr. Camp expounded on both the appreciation of the past and avoiding the dangers of it. He called on us, like Israel, to draw on the strength of our traditions but also to not forget the failings of the past as we look forward to the future in the promised land. In the end, we were encouraged through our past to continue to ***“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.” – Deuteronomy 6:5.***

At the impetus of elder Les Tubb, a forward-looking scripture was chosen as my guide as I followed Dr. Camp in opening God’s Word with His people on the 150th. ***Philippians 3:13b-14*** gave us great encouragement as Paul shares, ***“But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.”*** Launching from Dr. Camp’s history of the past to this verse focusing on our future, I entitled the lesson, ***“McFly, Maturity, and the Morrow.”*** The McFly reference hails from a classic 1985 movie, Back to the Future, featuring the protagonist, Marty McFly. He’s a gifted person with grand hopes for the future, but a person who routinely wrestles with future fear and a guilt ridden past. We all identify with McFly in our struggles, which is what makes Paul’s wisdom apply to us in such a personal way. In verse 15, Paul encourages the ***“mature”*** to think in this forward looking way as a method of overcoming our past guilts that often hold us back from growth. Finally, the message continued to bring life as we dealt with the ***“morrow,”*** an archaic term that means, “the near future.” That morrow for Paul, as well as ourselves, includes celebrating our citizenship in heaven, anticipating a savior, and rejoicing in a bodily transformation (***3:20-21***). Finally, my portion of the message ended on a verbal reading of a time capsule note, written from me on the morning of

September 24th, to a future minister at Central Church of Christ. The letter reads as follows.

"To a future minister for the people of Central Church of Christ,

Take a breath and look down at your two feet. I imagine that where you are is Holy Ground. Why? Not because I declared it. Not because it's a church building. It is because God is a personal God who meets you where you are and makes your life holy by His Loving Grace. So slow down for a moment and praise God for the Holy Ground He has brought to you.

Let me introduce myself. I'm Christopher Wiles, otherwise known as Topher, and as of today, September 24th, 2017, I have begun an adventure as a minister of the Gospel of peace to the people of Central Church of Christ and the community beyond. That's right, today I started, on the church family's 150th anniversary. I'm a normal guy who likes dark chocolate (that's still a superfood right), plays tennis (I hope they still play that in your time), and I have more books than I have time to read (If you haven't seen one in a while, you should go pick up an old book and flip the pages. It's really quite refreshing!)

I started today struggling with the normal fears of a minister. What if they don't like me? What if I'm not good enough? What if I made a bad decision or misspeak? You may have struggled with some of the same fears today too. Today I want to assure you of a few simple things of what I believe. I believe that God can take our fears away as we press forward in our maturity to rely on Him who strengthens us. I believe that the church family of Central is one with a long history of faith, hope, and love. I believe that if you too strive to follow the example of Christ as is our mutual calling, that God will work it all out for His glory. It's faith in these beliefs that conquers my fear and I hope it conquers yours as well.

*I pray today, that your ministry to these beautiful people is blessed. I hope that my children, who may still be in the congregation, are a support to you and a boon to your faith. I pray that if I am blessed to still be above ground that we are friends that share a brotherly love. And if I am writing this letter to my future self who happens to still somehow, by the Grace of God and these good people, continue to serve as minister in the family of Central, that I have grown in maturity and that I may always **Forget what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, as I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.**"*

Take another and look down again at your two feet. May your feet be "fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace."

I love you and God loves you,

Chris"Topher" Wiles

Coffee, cake, outdoor singing, and pickled ice cream (thanks to Patrick Lankford) eaten by the four elders rounded out our fun, festive, and faith-filled anniversary celebration. The 150th

Anniversary Celebration was a day that I'll remember with fondness and thanksgiving as I

witnessed a rebirth of hope and a focus on pressing forward toward the prize for which God is calling us heavenward in Christ Jesus. Let us all continue our forward future focus with faith, hope, and love in Christ Jesus.

Sincerely,

Christopher R Wiles



Christopher Wiles greets Alma Frasier

150th Anniversary
The Story of Central Church of Christ (1867-)
(From The Expositor, August 28, 2017)

Submitted by Les Tubb

On Sept. 24, 2017, plans are being made to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Central Church of Christ. At the same time, the church will introduce to the community its new minister, Christopher (Topher) Wiles, and his family. Everyone is welcome. It is the hope of the church that all who have ever been connected to Central will join the celebration.

Central was established in 1867, the same year that Nebraska became a state and Alaska was purchased from Russia. Since Central's history touches 3 centuries, the theme for the day will be, "Christ through the Centuries." This theme reflects the aim of Central to honor its past and transform its future by following Christ in the present.

A simple program is planned. Dr Phillip Camp, professor at David Lipscomb University and son of Edith and the late Jim Camp, will teach a Bible class at 10:00 am. He will discuss how the congregation should relate to its past. Topher Wiles will preach during the worship service at 11:00, and will discuss how the congregations should relate to its future. Patrick Langford of Cookeville, the song leader, will mix in a few 1867 songs during the service. A meal, featuring a few 1867 recipes, will be served around noon. Following the meal, the celebration will close by sending a message, and the names of all celebration attendees, to future generations through a time capsule due to be opened in 50 years.

An updated history of the church is currently being documented and digitized. The benefits of capturing the past are pointed out by Emma Jean Loveland, a former librarian at Abilene Christian University. "Churches as a whole provide sources of meaning and hope for more people than any other single type of volunteer organization. A congregation is a cherished home, a place full of memories, traditions and meaningful associations. The action of a congregation is the oldest and most enduring form of human activity. Throughout the Bible, the story of groups of people brought together to worship have been told. And we know about them because they

have been written down and passed along with the generations. The faintest ink used tells a better story than the best memory.”

Looking back, numerous factors led to the beginnings of the Central Church of Christ in Sparta in 1867. First, people felt a deep spiritual need following Charles Darwin’s *Origin of the Species*, the devastation of the Civil War, and the assassination of Abraham Lincoln.

Second, it was a time when the American Restoration Movement was expanding throughout Tennessee, including White County. In response to a religious world plagued by rampant sectarianism and divisiveness, a unity movement was needed. Restorationists believed that unity was possible when Christians restored the first century faith in every century, when Scripture was the final authority in faith and practice, when individuals had the freedom to search out the truths of Scripture for themselves, and when the apostle’s teaching was the fixed standard for all time. The churches of Christ, as a unity movement, have the distinction of being one of the very few religious groups that did not divide over the slavery issue during the Civil War.

Third, this area was feeling the influence of Christian colleges and religious journals. Burritt College in Spencer provided Central one of its early preachers. The Gospel Advocate in Nashville, shaped the beliefs of many subscribers in this area.

Fourth, maybe the greatest factor was the hard work of pioneer preachers, such as Barton W Stone and “Raccoon” John Smith, who held evangelistic meetings from time to time in or around Sparta.

One of these preachers, the witty Raccoon John Smith (1784-1868), came to Sparta and preached at the Court House to an audience containing several lawyers and judges. He was later asked if he was embarrassed in the presence of such educated men. He replied: “Not in the least; for I have learned that judges and lawyers, so far as the Bible is concerned, are the most ignorant class of people in the world, except Doctors of Divinity.”

Some preachers who have blessed Central include Tolbert Fanning, Jesse Sewell, David Lipscomb, TW Brents, James A Harding, TB Larimore, JW Shepherd, and Burton Coffman.

In White County, the first restoration church was established in 1820, the Cherry Creek Church of Christ. A second was started in 1834, the Bethlehem Church of Christ. In Sparta, the first

restoration church began in 1867, the Central Church of Christ. Central is one of around 30 churches connected to the restoration movement in White County.

Over the years, Central has occupied five meeting places. Its first building was located at the top of the hill near the old cemetery, and was shared with the Cumberland Presbyterians until 1883, when Central bought the building outright. In 1892, a new building was built on North Main Street and used until it was destroyed by fire in 1926. After meeting in the Court House for about a year, the congregation moved into a new, yellow brick building in 1927. This building was later replaced by the current building in 1965, with an annex added in 1987.

But Central's legacy is more than time and bricks and mortar. Changed lives is Central's real legacy. Innumerable people who did not know Christ have come to know Christ. They are changed. And by changing lives, Central has helped to make Sparta, White County, and the world a better place to live.

Old churches must remain relevant. Central has sought to be relevant over the years by staying focused on five unchanging priorities while seeking creative ways to implement them. Like any congregation, Central has had its victories and defeats in each of these areas. So it is good to remember, "God sustains the church by grace just as God saves sinners by grace." Surviving 150 years indicates that Central, by God's grace, has had more victories than defeats.

Priority one, Central takes the gospel to the lost and encourages a faith response to Jesus. Through the years, Central has provided speakers, financial support, and meeting houses for many churches of Christ in White County. For example, in 1958, Central planted a new congregation, the West Sparta Church of Christ. Today, Central supports over 20 preachers and teachers in Cuba, El Salvador, and Scotland.

Second, Central teaches the saved to love, trust, and obey Christ. For instance, the First Steps ladies' day out program, within a Christian environment, fills a deep need in Sparta for preparing children for true success in school and life.

Third, Central integrates its members into the body of Christ. For example, the Primetime program continues to bless the 55 and older population in Sparta and White County. The Central

family is always looking for excuses to fellowship, whether hiking to LeConte, kayaking the Caney Fork, or just getting together to eat a meal.

Fourth, Central encourages meaningful private and public adoration of God. Over the 7,800 Sundays since 1867, its worship services have sought to submit to Jesus' instruction to worship in spirit and truth.

Fifth, Central uses its resources to meet the needs of the community and church. For example, it has provided a hand up to countless people who were down and out. Its youth are always looking for service opportunities, such as raking leaves or mowing the yard of an elderly family. Other members take annual campaigns to foreign countries, such as Cuba, El Salvador, and Mexico, to help needy children and adults.

On September 24, you are invited to join Central in celebrating its long walk with Christ. But don't expect this celebration to be an occasion of boasting. Someone has well said, "We cannot renounce our history. We renounce our history as grounds for boasting." The aim of Central's celebration is to thank God for his faithfulness, to humbly remember the past, and to pray that God will sustain Central in the future as it continues to walk with Christ through the centuries.

150th Anniversary Photos



Edith Camp is a greeter



Becky Tubb and Patty Lou Howard dress in 1867 styles



Dave Weber, Bill Oakley and Ronald Allison



Mary and Patrick Lankford. Patrick is song leader and youth minister.



Philip Camp, minister, and former Central member speaks at celebration



Janice Bradley, Janet Webb, Pat Blevins, Kendra Napinski



Bitsy Jones talks with Bobby Knowles



Jeffy Turner



Jimmy Lee



Horace (Curly) Richardson greets a visitor



Louis Ross, former deacon at Central



Congregation celebration September 24, 2017
Bob Young (front row) deacon



John Knox leads the elders and the Wiles family in prayer



Les Tubb, chairman of Christ Through the Centuries, September 24, 2017 introduces Christopher Wiles as minister



Clara Wiles makes new friend



Glenda and Edward Solomon



Fellowship meal under the tent



Fellowship meal under the tent



Carolyn Stultz, Gail Webb, Lee Webb, Alex Lewis

**When Jesus had finished saying these things,
the crowds were amazed at his teaching,
because he taught as one who had authority,
and not as their teachers of the law.**

Mt 7:28-29



Tennessee Senate

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CLERK

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the many fine churches across this State constitute an institutional foundation for an orderly and just society for all Tennesseans, and their dedicated service to God and humanity is the bedrock upon which our State and nation are founded; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that we should recognize those venerable religious institutions and their congregations who, through their unflagging capacity for love, dedication of spirit, and faith in God, strive to enrich the lives of people in their communities; and

WHEREAS, one such dynamic and historic community of faith is Central Church of Christ in Sparta, whose members will celebrate the church's 150th anniversary on September 24, 2017; and

WHEREAS, the church's sesquicentennial celebration will begin with a Bible class taught by Dr. Phillip Camp, a professor at David Lipscomb University, followed by a sermon given by the church's new minister, Christopher "Topher" Wiles, who will make his introduction to the community during the day's activities; the congregation will be led in song by Patrick Langford, with some of the songs being taken from the hymnal used in 1867, the year of the church's founding; and

WHEREAS, a meal will follow and will feature foods made from recipes from 1867; the celebration will close with the burying of a time capsule, filled with messages from current congregants and due to be opened in fifty years; and

WHEREAS, because Central Church of Christ's history touches three centuries, the theme for the celebration will be "Christ through the Centuries," reflecting the church's aim to honor its past and transform its future by following Christ in the present; and

WHEREAS, several circumstances precipitated the installation of Central Church of Christ in Sparta one and a half centuries ago; there was a deep spiritual need following the publication of Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species*, the devastation of the Civil War, and the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln; and

WHEREAS, the nineteenth century post-Civil War era saw the expansion of the American Restoration Movement; in response to a religious world plagued by rampant sectarianism and divisiveness, a unity movement was born, with Restorationists believing that unity was possible when Christians restored the first-century faith; and

WHEREAS, Sparta and surrounding areas were also feeling the influence of Christian colleges and religious journals at that time; Burritt College in Spencer provided Central Church of Christ with one of its early preachers, and The Gospel Advocate in Nashville shaped the beliefs of many subscribers in nearby areas; and

WHEREAS, perhaps the most influential factor that laid the foundation for the establishment of Central Church of Christ was the hard work of pioneer preachers, such as Barton W. Stone and "Raccoon" John Smith, who held evangelistic meetings from time to time in or around Sparta; and

WHEREAS, of the nearly thirty churches connected to the Restoration Movement in White County, Cherry Creek Church of Christ, founded in 1820, was the first; around forty-seven years later, organizational efforts were made in Sparta to begin Central Church of Christ; and

WHEREAS, over the years, Central Church of Christ has occupied five meeting places. Its first building was located at the top of the hill near the old cemetery and was shared with the Cumberland Presbyterians until 1883, when Central bought the building outright; and

WHEREAS, in 1892, a new building was built on North Main Street and used until it was destroyed by fire in 1926; after meeting in the courthouse for around a year, the congregation moved into a new, yellow-brick building in 1927, a building that was later replaced by the current church edifice in 1965, with an annex added in 1987; and

WHEREAS, throughout its existence, Central Church of Christ has sought to bring the gospel to the lost and encourage a faith response to Jesus; in addition to changing innumerable lives throughout the community, the church has provided speakers, financial support, and meeting houses for many churches of Christ in White County; and

WHEREAS, Central Church of Christ takes every opportunity to reach out to and serve the community of Sparta and communities around the world; adult congregants and youth members alike have provided help to those in need in White County, and many members have engaged in annual campaigns to foreign countries, such as Cuba, El Salvador, and Mexico, to help needy children and adults; and

WHEREAS, Central Church of Christ continues its impressive legacy of devoted fellowship and worship, serving as a testament to the enduring power of faith in action; and

WHEREAS, Central Church of Christ has become one of the great religious institutions and catalysts for positive spiritual change in our State and nation, as it has stood on the rock-solid foundation of Christian belief, service, and love for 150 years; now, therefore,

I, Randy McNally, Speaker of the Senate of the One Hundred Tenth General Assembly of the State of Tennessee, at the request of and in conjunction with Senator Paul Bailey, do hereby proclaim that we join in celebrating the 150th anniversary of Central Church of Christ in Sparta, thank the good people of this remarkable congregation for their notable service to their Lord and this State, and wish them much continued success and happiness in the future.

Proclaimed in Nashville, Tennessee, on this the 8th day of September 2017.



Randy McNally
Randy McNally
Speaker of the Senate

Paul Bailey
Paul Bailey, Senator
15th Senate District

OUR MEMORIES

Acknowledgements

September 24, 2017 was a historical event for Central Church of Christ membership. The celebration of on hundred fifty years by church members, community friends, relatives of members and visitors.

Special thanks to the Central Church elders in providing the historical event. Special thanks to Les Tubb who serves as an elder at Central. He provided the leadership as committee chairman. The elders John Knox, Bill Oakley and Russ Hale also provided support. Jeff Haston provided Central's timeline. He also provided other technology for the historical event. One hundred fifty years will be a record for future generations.

I greatly appreciate my son, Greg Pippin, for his assistance. Thanks to my husband, Kenneth for his patience as I researched church bulletins, church directories, newspaper articles and deeds.

Historical events from Central's membership included Dr Ty Webb, Jimmy Wallace, Mike O'Neal, Janice Bradley, Patrick Lankford, Ruth (Pinkie) Tubb Hill, Bill Oakley, Edith Camp, Jeff Haston, Stanton Tubb, John Smith, Brenda Templeton, Louise Young, Aline Gracey, Elega Stamps Sims, Ross and Brenda Cardwell, Russ Hale, Les Tubb, Horace Richardson, Kenneth Pippin, and Thelma Lambert Pippin.

Future generations and interested church elders in leadership may find the work of Central Church of Christ, including early history is beyond expectations. Perhaps the Same Message-Same Gospel-The Bible has been a burning light in the White county community, United States, and world mission field.

Respectfully, Thelma Lambert Pippin

Memories of Allene Kirby Gracey



Robert Luther Kirby – Irene Graham Kirby

1-30-1903-9-12-1991 11-5-1906-7-4-1991

Members of Central Church – 40 years+. Mr and Mrs Kirby active members – Mr Kirby service included leading in prayer, presiding at the Lord's Table and reading Bible Scripture. They were a happy couple who found themselves in church on the Lord's Day.

Memories of Kenneth Pippin



1930 A Model Ford Sedan – Pippin Family

Kenneth Pippin's Dad drove this identical 1930 Model A car for his family and neighbors to church in the Peeled Chestnut Community. The Oak Grove and Landsen Churches of Christ most frequent with Gospel meetings. Kenneth says he was a small boy, however his Dad never wanted to miss any service of the church. We would all file into the Model A as Dad drove with Mama, Reba, Howard, Lee, Hobart Jr. and myself. Sometimes we crowded in an extra person because my Dad loved people and the Church. I hope that I have lived up to the expectations of my dad and God by being a Christian with a Christian Dad and Mother.

Memories of Thelma Pippin

Beecher Hunter Lambert and Mollie Mae Davis Lambert



In 1929, Mr Lambert moved to White County, TN. He was born in Granville, TN and moved to White County, 1929. He met a life time friend, who became his wife in 1931. She became his wife of fifty-eight years before his death.

Church became an important part of their life in daily living for Jesus. It was a part of their home and life in White County.

The early 1960s, the yellow church building on North Church Street became their place of worship for many years.

Health problems developed in later years that prevented Mrs Lambert attending church services as past years. However she never missed the daily 12:15 Radio Broadcast that Central sponsored with other congregations as West Sparta Church.

Mr Lambert often spoke of the Men's Bible Class on Sunday services. It was a part of his life to have Christian friends and study God's Word.

Charles Kenneth Pippin Family



The Kenneth Pippin Family always found the Lord's Day on their schedule in church. Their attendance at Central Church of Christ began early in their marriage by attending in the yellow building. At this time, their son Greg was two years old.

Sixty-one years of marriage is history. However, Kenneth and I always knew God and Jesus Christ as the Giver of Life. Our worship with Christians at Central have been a blessing to us as family.

Memories of Pinkie Hill

With God's help, I am now 94 and the longest attending member at the Central Church of Christ.

I want to share some of my memories with you.

I remember – the first service in the yellow-brick building was the Robert Bell and Katherine Tubb wedding in 1928. My grandfather, JR Tubb, had given a lot of financial help to get the building finished in time for his daughter's wedding. I was a flower girl. My own wedding to Wayman Hill in 1948 was in the same church building.



I remember – my own confession and baptism for the remission of my sins when I was 12.

During this time, the Winnings took the youth on hikes on Sunday afternoons. I have tried to be a faithful Christian since.

I remember – teaching Bible classes to young people, and teaching many children in the nursery.

I remember – my friends and I would sit in front of my parents. Sometimes I think I still feel my mother punching me in the back to be still.

I remember – when Judge Camp died in church. He is the great grandfather of Doug, Phillip and Danny Camp.

I remember – when my dad was the treasurer. I helped him keep the books and account for every penny, nickel, dime, quarter, dollar, \$5, \$10, \$20. In 1940 or '41, Jim Cope was holding a meeting at Central. People were sitting in the aisles in chairs and our contribution was over \$100. We were all so excited. We were still doing a lot of mission work with this small amount.

I remember – helping Arlin Stults recruit teachers after teaching children and teenagers for many years.

I remember – when Tom Cole (Betty Weber's grandfather) was bedridden from a stroke. He wanted to be baptized. Wayman called Tommy Thurman and they took him on a stretcher to church. They let him down in the water where the preacher could baptize him.

I remember – a group of ladies wanted to go to Happy Haven Children's Home to help the house mothers do their work. We went once a month for many years. I drove the van and Gladys Howell (Billye Ross' mother) was the best and fastest ironer. This was in the 1960's and '70's.

I remember – when the elders decided to start a congregation in West Sparta. We bought a lot in the Fancher Subdivision, paid for ½ the cost of the building, sent elders and members over there with Central's blessings. Paul Matthews worked with both congregations at no cost to West Sparta until they hired Charlie Myers.

I remember – Wayne Stubblefield baptized my grandson Spence Flagg, and 3 or 4 years later Spence baptized his sister, Laura Flagg. Wayne taught Spence what to do and say. All 3 of my daughters were baptized here, and 1 was married here.

I pray these many things have brought glory to God and his Son. They have made my life a long and happy one on earth with the desire to soon have a happier life with my Savior in Heaven.

Memories of Elega Sims

Home Coming
September 2017
150 Years

My name is Elega Stamps Sims.
Eleg, add name, My Uncle Everett and
Aunt Elsie Austin took their initials
E.L. and E.G. + A their last name Austin
and came up with Eleg.



I will be blessed January 4th 2018
with 90 years on this earth. I obeyed
Christ and was baptized at the age of
thirteen

I have been a member at Central
Church of Christ for around 77 years.

Some of new members may ask why
haven't seen her. My heart was always
with you, This is home for me. My husband
Earl had dementia and finally in the
N.H.C. nursing home. Six or more years he
was there. I spent most of the days with
him. Sundays we worshiped with some
of the members from West Sparta Church
of Christ. Earl was by my side until he
could no longer go. Our children Jim and
Earlayne Cantrell and Greg and Leanne
Frasier was also by my side in the worship
I am thankful for the service that
West Sparta held at N.H.C. Now I'm back

home at Central. Earl passed away
October 2016.

As a young girl, I remember
our Big meetings, as we call them, would
last week or two not just 2 or 3 days
also we would have a service at 3:00
in the afternoon and again at 7:00. At
the night service school buses would go
out in the county and bring people to
the meeting. We had to put chairs out in
the aisle and the balcony was full.

This was at the yellow Church building
Earl and I were married July 28, 1946.

We had 70 wonderful years. Four
children and their spouses, five grandchildren
and their spouses and oh those great
grandchildren are something else

I taught Sunday School Classes for
three, four, five and six and always taught
Bible School classes many, many years
I still have a trivet that Brenda Turner
Knox gave me at Christmas.

The light has been burning in Sparta One
hundred fifty years. This light must be kept
burning for it is the light of salvation.
We at Central for the many blessings
are thankful. We have had disappointments
and trouble that may have strengthened us.
We are looking forward to better times.
We welcome the Wiles family.
"We are overcomers."

"Let us love one another"

In Christian Love
Eloise Sims

Senior writes about her five boyfriends

DEAR ABBY: Some years ago, you published a piece from a senior citizen who was bragging about the boyfriends she had in her everyday life.

It included such characters as "Ben Gay," "Arthur-itis" and others.

Both my wife and I enjoyed it immensely, and we try to quote it on occasion. Unfortunately, we can't remember the entire piece. Would you kindly run it again? Others may enjoy it, too. — **THE CLARENCE JACOBSENS, ELMONT, N.Y.**

DEAR MR. & MRS. JACOBSEN: The piece was sent to me several years ago from a reader who clipped it from a church bulletin — author unknown. And here it is:

Old Folks Are Worth a Fortune
Old folks are worth a fortune: With silver in their hair, gold in their teeth, stones in their kidneys, lead in their feet and gas in their stomachs.

I have become a lot more social with the passing of the years; some might even call me a frivolous old gal. I'm seeing five gentlemen every day.

As soon as I wake, Will Power helps me get out of bed. Then I go to see John. Then Charley Horse comes along, and when he is here he takes a lot of my time and attention. When he leaves, Arthur Ritis shows up and stays the rest of the day. (He doesn't like to stay in one place very long, so he takes me from joint to joint.) After such a busy day, I'm really tired and glad to go to bed — with Ben Gay. What a life!

P.S. The preacher came to call the other day. He said that at my age, I should be thinking about the hereafter. I told him I do — all the time. No matter where I am — in the parlor, upstairs in the kitchen or

Dear Abby



Abigail
Van Buren

down in the basement — I ask myself, "Now, what am I here after?"

I do know what I'm after and have known since I was baptized by Brother Edward Nowlin. G.W. Brewer held a Big Meeting that is what we called them. Schaman Brewer was G.W. Brewer's son. I'm after an Eternal home with my saviour Jesus Christ.

Memories of

Ross, Brenda, Jerri Lynn and Mari Anne Cardwell



James and Tillie Cardwell started their marriage going to Central Church of Christ. They sat in the balcony of the yellow brick church with their sons Ross born in 1941 and Robert in 1945. There were big tall windows to help cool the church but everyone still had to use the funeral home fans to cool off. The paper fans were on a wooden stick but constant fanning still did not help cool very much. Ross remembers his Mom driving him to Sunday school and then going back home to get ready for church. Ross would go in the front door and then out the back door after his mother drove away. He walked a block to Nelson's Drug Store and loafed until time to get back for church. He later got caught and never tried that again. Tillie was a Sunday school teacher for many years. Tillie also drove people around town to help with their errands or take them to their doctor.

James was a community leader and always doing things like raising funds for Uncle Sam during WW II. James was not always at church but Ross remembers that his Dad always read his Bible every night before he went to bed.

James became good friends with Schuman Brewer years later, when he became our preacher. James had been going to church for several years but was not baptized. Shuman would go to James's office to set and just talk to him for a while. Ross was so proud of his Dad when he wanted Schuman to baptize him. James always sat in the foyer and enjoyed greeting folks as they came to church. He was usually the one to count the attendance on Sunday.

Ross remembers being baptized in the yellow brick church with two of his friends, Benji Norris and Bud Hollingsworth. Bud had a bad case of poison ivy and they made him go last.

Ms. Ollie was Ross's Sunday school teacher and her class was on the left side of the pulpit in the yellow brick church. Ross said us kids were given a quarter and she passed a contribution plate during her class to teach us to give to the church.

Ross remembers Roy Hollingsworth and Tom Thurman taking him and the church youth group to the old boy scout camp in the Big Bottom area of the Caney Fork River. At that time there was a two story house they stayed in, a swimming hole with a sandy beach and a swinging bridge that crossed to the beautiful bluff.

Ross and Brenda were married in 1962 and both continued going to Central Church of Christ. We have two wonderful daughters, Jerri Lynn born in 1965 and Mari Anne born in 1969. Robert and Jan married and live in Berkley Lake, Georgia. They have a son Jason who lives in California.

We were in the new church building in 1965, with not only heat, but a wonderful cooling air conditioner. The auditorium was filled with tall beautiful stained glass windows, lovely cherry woodwork around the walls and had a vaulted ceiling with huge wooden beams.

We took our baby daughters upstairs to a beautiful new nursery with rocking chairs to comfort the babies, changing tables and new toys. We had good sound so we could hear the preacher and sing songs with the song leader. Carolyn Stults was the nursery teacher and I helped her and the mothers with their babies for several years. Carolyn always had little fish shaped crackers that were a great distraction for a baby that was crying.

I remember that we had a favorite pew where our family usually sat. When our daughters were little bitty girls they would stand up and use the pew as a table to draw pictures on their lesson pages. If we were not watching their every move, they would set in the floor and start to crawl under the pews in front of us. They usually got 2 or 3 pews in front of us before a friend would catch them. Our friends would hug them and hand them back over the pews to us, with a big grin.

When Jerri Lynn was about 5 years old she was so eager to learn all the Bible stories. Her Sunday school teacher said she was teaching about God and Adam one morning and asked the little kids "What did God tell Adam about the apple? Jerri Lynn raised her hand excitedly and said "to wash it first".

Mari Anne loved her Sunday school kindergarten class. Her teacher was telling about giving to the Church. The teacher had asked them to bring a coin and she passed a contribution plate around for them to put their coin in. Later when we had our Communion Service and the plate was passed for our contribution, Mari Anne said "Daddy, we have already paid".

Jerri Lynn and Mari Anne have many fond memories of those early years at Central. Our daughters were brought up in a loving church and we were all just like a big happy family to them. They would see a lot of their Granny Till's and Granny Mac's friends at church who loved them and teased them. Our daughters respected the older folks and would run open armed to give them a hug and then go running all around the church, just like they owned the place, having fun.

Jerri Lynn and Mari Anne told us that they remember recognizing the voices of people around us that were singing from the church song book. Mari Anne especially remembers the song leader that taught us to sing "Bind Us Together" which is one of our favorite songs. We all remember the old song books that were used for so many years. The books were so familiar and comfortable but became worn and a little thread bare. We loved all the old songs like "The Old Rugged Cross" and "Amazing Grace". One day we came to Church and there were bright shiny new song books. But they also had our favorite songs and more. Ross and I picked out several of the old song books and took them home for our family treasures. We still use them on trips or at our cabin on the river.

As our daughters got bigger they went on a lot of outings with the youth group. Ms. Pinky had them at her cabin on Center Hill Lake and to her home for everything from sandwiches to taco salads. They will never forget her wonderful cookies.

Ross and I took the church youth group to Pizza Hut in Smithville and they sang their Sunday school songs the whole way. Ross took a car full of the kids to Nashville to the "Great Escape" comic book store. We took the church kids skating and bowling. The youth group went to David Lipscomb University to "Sing a Rama's" and to the college basketball games. We reserved the West Sparta gym and played basketball ourselves. No matter what we were doing, we had a great time with each other.

One of our daughter's favorite memories was going caroling around the church neighborhood singing all the wonderful Christmas songs like "Silent Night", seeing everyone's Christmas trees and decorations, having hot chocolate in the Church basement and nervously giving their teacher a Christmas present hoping she would like it.

Mari Anne remembers her and Jerri Lynn getting tickled in Church. "Mommy would tell us to be quiet and it just made us giggle even more".

Easter was another of our daughter's favorite Sunday's because everybody would have lots of family with them. The pictures they colored in class were of Jesus and they would sing "Jesus Loves Me". They always got to wear a fancy new dress, shiny new slippers with lacey stockings, and Easter bonnet that had ribbons, bows and flowers on it. As everyone knows a girl can never have too many purses so they had a new one to carry their candy, in case they got hungry, which were every few minutes of course. The teachers would surprise all the kids with a big Easter egg hunt in Ms. Pinky's beautiful lawn. The kids ran around screaming and trying to find the most eggs. When Mari Anne was a little bitty girl, she followed her big sister's every

move and wanted to find an egg in exactly the same spot Jerri Lynn had found one. Somehow Mari Anne always had a basket full of candy eggs like everyone else did.

Jerri Lynn remembers when she was a little girl being very scared of a visiting preacher who was talking very loudly and pounding the pulpit with his hand. We found out later that he had been trying to pass a kidney stone all during his sermon. It was funny to us but probably not to him.

Ross was a Sunday school teacher for many years. He remembers one year during Vacation Bible School at Baker Park that he organized several fun games like whose critter could crawl over the line the fastest. Another year he organized a pew crawl to see who could crawl under the back pew to the front pew the fastest. Almost everyone scraped hot spots on their elbows speeding across the church carpet. We had great lessons, sang our heart out and had a great time thanks to all the organizers.

When Ross was teaching all those classes, I especially remember several of his study Bibles being all covered with hand written notes and underlined passages, they still are.

Ross loved the outdoors and took kids from Central on many outings over more than 10 years. Ross and I took different youth groups to Fall Creek Falls State Park on picnics, swimming in the pool and cascades, hiking the trail into the gorge to the falls, playing baseball and bicycle riding around the park.

Ross bought a big camping tent and started taking the church youth to Ragland Bottom on Center Hill Lake, sometimes. Where ever we went we set up the tent first and then carried wood for our camp fire. Ross would take the kids on a hike and show them rhythmic breathing to help climb up a hill, names of wildflowers and trees, canoeing, and fishing. He taught us how to fix breakfast over a camp fire, by cooking an egg in a scoped out onion, bacon wrapped around a stick, baked biscuits in a Dutch oven and swung a big granite pot of coffee around faster and faster causing the centrifugal force to sink the grounds to the bottom. He taught us to cook supper by roasting hot dogs on a stick or hamburgers and veggies in aluminum laid on the coals. The desserts were our favorite of course. He showed us how to bake a little cake in a scoped out orange, peach cobbler or pineapple upside down cake in a Dutch oven, and of course we made our favorite samores with graham crackers, chocolate bars and toasted marshmallows.

Someone would always want to have a “story round” by the campfire. One of the kids would start the story and pass it around to everyone. We came up with some “real doozies” on one camping trip and told them again on the next trip making them bigger and scarier each time, like the story of the Squirrel Man of Lost Creek. Ross taught us about the sky, the stars, the constellations and how to navigate at night. At bedtime it would be wall to wall kids with sleeping bags and blankets packed into that tent. The kids tried to stay awake, but it wasn’t long before they were sound asleep.

Ross took the kids on caving and overnight camping trips to Cumberland Caverns. The guided tour was very interesting, but the end of that tour did not stop us. We continued on through to the back of the cave to see even more wonderful formations. We went up the sticky mud hill of

bubble gum alley, tight chimney climbs, and on to the Crystal Place. He also taught us how important the cave critters, and bats were to the environment of God's green earth.

Ross had an old International Scout that he didn't have to worry about getting scratched or dirty. He drove us all over a wilderness called Scott's Gulf in that Scout many times. We would all pack as much junk food as we could and off we would go. Ross showed us some wild foods we could eat, went rock hopping over the river, and even rappelling over short bluffs.

One trip, I especially remember, the Scout was jam packed with 13 kids and our black lab. We went all over the river gorge on those old red mud log roads. The rougher the roads, the more the kids bounced around and screamed in delight.

We have so many wonderful fun memories of those days. Our daughters have always said they made some of their best, lifelong friends on those church youth trips.

My Mother, Maxine Lohorn started coming to Church with us and already had many friends going there so she felt right at home. Our Preacher, Wayne Stubblefield started reaching out to people who went to "Hardee's" for breakfast every morning. He made friends with some guys and one of them was my father Vernon Lohorn. He had never attended Church with us and never would talk to us about Church. But he got to coming with one of his friends Gene Alcorn. Daddy sat with us each Sunday. Ross and I got Mom and Dad to go to restaurants with one of our Elders, Herbert Pistole and his wife Ima and several other friends from Church. We were so happy that Dad was finally coming to Church with us. One day Dad started talking to us about being on a ship that was taking the soldiers into a battle during World War II. A preacher was teaching them and had improvised a huge tub of water. Dad and all the young men that understood and felt the great desire were baptized that very day. They had been afraid but went to battle knowing they were in the family of God.

Mom got to know Schuman Brewer and felt he was the one to baptize her. The Bible he gave her was a treasure. Mom and Ross together taught her brother Hubert, "Bob", Matthews and he wanted Ross to baptize him. Schuman gave Uncle Bob a Bible that he studied until his last day with us. We still have all those old family Bibles.

Maxine and Vernon were both generous and always willing to help family, friends and neighbors. Mom and Dad never went on a far away mission trip. Their mission work was always close to home. We know many stories about my parent's lives helping others. They are both gone now and it is a great comfort knowing they are in Heaven.

The Elders and many at Central joined the World Bible School effort. Ross took on the responsibility of teaching some of the people that lived in Cuba and for 10 years he sent lessons to a group that was very interested in learning about the Bible. He translated the lessons using a Spanish internet program. This often took weeks for a single lesson to get in or out of their country because of government control. Then the internet became available to them and this effort is still being continued until today.

Our Preacher, Schuman Brewer was a wonderful preacher and a great influence in our family's life. He taught us how to be a Christian from the pulpit as well as in his daily life. Schuman and Marie loved everyone. Our daughters called them Papa Shu and Mama Shu. They were always up for any fun idea that Ross and I would come up with, like taking the Church youth group to Fall Creek Falls State Park to camp out in tents. We played in the cascades, swam in the pool and cooked over the campfire. I will never forget the little boy whose mother sent him on one of our trips with the biggest baking potato known to mankind. He baked it all during the campfire and it never got done. Another little girl brought "mini" marshmallows to roast on sticks over the fire. It was a good thing that someone else had brought some big ones. We hiked some of the trails and when Mari Anne was a little girl she would look up at Schuman and say "carry me Papa Shu" and he swung her up on his shoulders and off they would go. We went home dragging our feet but we never stopped talking about all the fun we had.

Some of Schuman's friends at church helped him buy a "Rokon" motorcycle. Ross had a "Rokon" and took him all over the Scott's Gulf Wilderness along the Caney Fork River Gorge. They would take Marie and me riding the old red mud roads, racing through the big mud holes, splashing water all over each other. They rode the motorcycles as fast as they could go and Marie and I just held on tight. Our daughters went with us many times to beautiful overlooks or waterfalls. We would have a picnic and be in awe of the beautiful places that God had given us.

Ross took Schuman all over the Scott's Gulf and Lost Creek area many times. Schuman fell in love with a small farm where the Dodson brothers lived. They had lived there all their lives and the cabin, barns, orchard and spring were just like it was when they were kids. They became good friends with Schuman and told him many stories of their lives on their home place. When they got sick and had to go live with their family they offered to sell him their farm. They bought it and he and Marie never changed a thing. The farm was like living in the past. The Brewers made a lot of wonderful memories there for themselves as well as for all of us. There were many church picnics at the farm and everyone would play board games next to the big heat stove or set around on the porch relaxing, singing and telling stories.

Schuman and Marie's youngest son Bogie and some of the other guys at church would spend the night at the cabin. When it got late they went to bed or had sleeping bags on the floor. They told ghost stories from tall tales they had heard of the mountains around them. One day before the boys got there Ross and Mike Henry set up a sound system under the cabin in the basement and then hid on the mountain where they could watch them. The guys played games until they got tired and after things got quiet they went to sleep. Mike and Ross turned on the speaker that had ghostly sounds coming from the floor the guys were sleeping on. This went on for a long time and finally one of the guys came running out of the door screaming at the ghost to shut up. The ghostly legends only got bigger and scarier every time they were told.

Marie told us many stories about her kids and some of their friends at church. When their twins, Will and Amy, were young Marie had a lady that helped her when she had to go out for some reason. The kids were playing with their dog on the back porch and had put water in a tub to play in. Marie came home and the lady was so glad to see her because she said that those kids

had nearly baptized that dog to death. Another story she told was when they had found Bogie and Ben Clark swimming in the baptistery.

We had many dinners at church served in the biggest class room downstairs. Most of us sat in the little kids chairs in the smaller classrooms. The church built an annex with more class rooms and it had a bigger kitchen with more tables where we could all set together.

We had many cookouts at the homes of our members. Ross and I invited everyone to our home for a big “fish fry”. Ross, Schuman, Roy Hollingsworth, Bobby Swindell and others brought big cookers of oil and fried fish and hushpuppies all afternoon. The ladies brought all the other fixings. Then we started up the old White Mountain ice cream maker. Dale Randolph and Dale Sims brought lots of ice and salt and with lots of hand cranking time they made the coldest and best ice cream we ever ate.

Schuman loved the kids so much and they all loved him. The lessons he and the Sunday school teachers taught them were the Christian ways they wanted for their lives. Jerri Lynn and her cousin Missy asked Schuman to baptize them and even though Mari Anne was several years younger she wanted to be baptized with them. They were so joyful.

A few years later Mari Anne asked her father, Ross, to baptize her again because she had more understanding of what being baptized meant. Mari Anne’s friend Lorie also asked Ross to baptize her. In preparing to get in the water the rubber waders he put on were shorter to fit Schuman and when he lowered Lorie into the water the waders flooded and Ross nearly fell in with her. It was still a wonderful moment.

Ross and I have visited the Brewers at their Church and home many times since they left Sparta and later retired to Franklin. We have thanked them for all they taught us from the Bible and how much they both meant to us in our family’s life. Schuman and Marie helped us teach our kids that you can be a Christian and have fun to. We will never forget all the fun times we had with the Brewers. In the spring of 2017 Schuman had his 100th Birthday and one of his favorite memories is of his and Marie’s lives in Sparta.

Ross and I especially remember the Christmas Teachers parties that Waymon and Pinkie hosted at their cabin on Center Hill Lake for many, many years. They wanted to thank the teachers for their hard work and the love they shared with their classes. The Hill’s always had beautiful decorations and a special dinner catered for everyone. We sang Christmas carols and told fun stories. Then everyone looked forward to playing “Secret Santa”. We would each draw a number and number one would start picking out a gift, the second one could take that gift or pick out a new one. It was so funny to see friends who were normally so nice and quite and now they were arguing with one another over an especially beautifully wrapped gift. This could go on for a long time, but was so much fun.

Our Church was always very active in helping folks that were in need for various reasons. We have a pantry filled with food to help them. We had a big closet that was kept filled with clothes for all seasons. When there was a tragic event in a family’s life such as a fire, tornado, or flood,

we were always there gathering furniture, household items like lamps, pots and pans, dishes, sheets, towels, etc. I especially remember a story of an orphanage in Russia where they did not have enough covers for the children in the coldest of winters, so we sent lots of blankets. I remember bags of all kinds of personal items prepared to be shipped. I remember sending packages of diapers that were being taken to Gatlinburg after that huge fire. There are many stories of our Church always having a big generous heart and setting a wonderful example for our children.

Ross was always taking our kids, parents, and hiking friends into the Caney Fork River Gorge and the surrounding valleys in the south east part of White County. We were in the Tennessee Trails Hiking Club and Ross's and Bonnie Green's hikes were always a favorite because they could take the organization groups from across the state into places they had never heard of. Several of our friends from church and surrounding areas started talking about how this area should be preserved as a park. A "grass roots" group was formed and after a few years the owner of this land, the Bridgestone-Firestone Company, gave the State 4,000 acres to preserve for the citizens of Tennessee.

Ross got permission to design a hiking trail system and it was approved by the State of Tennessee. Ross and I got a few of our hiking friends from church and White County along with Carl Cude and some of his TWRA friends and we cleared 26 miles of trails.

In the year 2000 Bridgestone-Firestone celebrated their 100th Birthday with the tire company giving the State of Tennessee 6000 more acres. These 10,000 acres of land became the Bridgestone-Firestone Centennial Wilderness. Ross and I were invited to their celebration and we told them the 26 miles of hiking trails was our way of giving back to show our appreciation to them for preserving this beautiful wilderness.

Ross and I continued these preservation efforts and became local advisors to the Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation. Along with the staff and a small army of us volunteers, which also includes private donations by members of our church, the State of Tennessee has preserved many more acres along with many more miles of trails in our area.

When the Middle Tennessee Boy Scout Council started their search for land, to use as a large high adventure camp, they asked Ross and others to help find a suitable location. Ross found this beautiful place in White and Van Buren Counties. He took their search committee on several trips there and they all fell in love with this beautiful land. This land was purchased and the facilities built with funds donated by people across the state that had great memories of the scouting program. Our family and friends were very proud when they named one of the hiking trails, the Ross Cardwell Trail. The Latimer High Adventure Reservation is now open to Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, church youth groups and all types of youth organizations. Sparta Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops and many church youth groups, including Central Church of Christ groups, have been to this exciting and inspiring reservation. One of God's most beautiful views is from the Scott's Pinnacle over looking Bee Creek and Scott's Gulf.

Ross and I have a special place in our hearts for this wilderness area. We have seen this as an extension of our local mission work and one of the most rewarding and meaningful efforts of our lives. It means so much to us knowing that this is part of our legacy to children, now and in the future. We are so proud of the citizen's of Tennessee and their good stewardship of the beautiful land that God entrusted to us.

Submitted by Brenda Cardwell

“Sparta on Parade” 1941-1963
 A Historical Film of Sparta Tennessee
 Filmed by James Cardwell and Produced by Ross Cardwell

This major historical document of Sparta has a small section showing the Central Church of Christ in the yellow brick building. There were tall front columns and long steps up to the front door of the Church. The film has many of the Church members of this era walking down the steps to the sidewalk. They were laughing and talking to their friends as they started home. The ladies were all wearing dresses hemmed just below the knees, with shoes and bags to match and all wore stylish hats. The men all wore sharp suits, white shirts with ties, most had the “spiffy” hats of the era setting to the side and they all were looking “swell”. Many of the men had a cigarette hanging out the side of their mouth. These folks are not identified but many would be familiar to us even today.

Ross and Brenda Cardwell would like to include a copy of “Sparta on Parade” in the Central Church of Christ Time Capsule in 2017.

Ross Cardwell was given a treasure from his Father, James Cardwell, both long time members of our Church. This treasure was several hours of old movie film taken in and around Sparta Tennessee. Ross had kept this film protected for many, many years. He found that there was much interest in seeing this old film but it needed to be preserved. Ross produced this preservation project with the help of a \$35,000 local grant and with the help of the City of Sparta found a film company in Hollywood California that had preserved many of the old time movies of the past. This company preserved it in a new film and in VHS format. The film was running too fast and he had to find a way to slow it down. A friend, Ted Day had the perfect equipment. In looking at this old film Ted had found the only movie film of his mother. Ted slowed the film down, helped Ross identify most of the buildings in the film and added music to the background. They found a company that put the film on DVD's and made a package to sell them in. Ross's dad was filming some of the first commercials and was selling tickets so everyone in Sparta could see themselves on the big screen, shopping in one of the stores, coming out of one of the factories, schools, churches, or marching in one of Sparta's parades. Mr. Cardwell never knew he was filming part of Sparta's history.

Ross gave the proceeds of the “Sparta on Parade” sale to the City of Sparta to save in a separate account and one day when they rebuild the old theatre they will build something in honor of James and Tillie Cardwell.

**Communion Cups
Central Church of Christ**

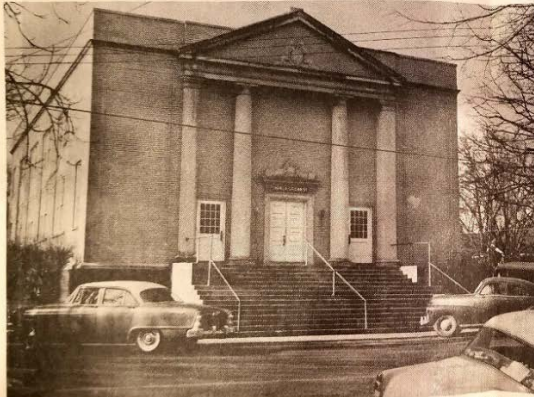
Our Church at one time used only one cup for the Communion Service. Later Central started using small individual glass cups to help keep from spreading germs. We took turns washing, rinsing and drying the glass cups in the Church kitchen after each Communion on Sunday. These were used until plastic communion cups came along.

Ross and I found a box of the little glass cups in the kitchen of the yellow brick Church. We asked one of the Elders if we could keep several cups for our family. We still take these glass cups on trips and still use them for our family communion, sometimes on a beautiful overlook that God gave us.

Tubb Family Newspaper Clippings

Article, 1969

Central Church of Christ, Founded in 1867,



BUILT IN 1927 after fire destroyed their building, this plant was used by the Central Church of Christ until 1965.

The following article, concerning a 102nd anniversary of the church and a homecoming event, as well as a history of the church since its organization in 1867, was written by a member of the congregation.

To preserve the effect of the article, the words and expressions of faith of the writer have been preserved in the article in their original form.

On Sept. 14, 1969, plans are being made to celebrate the 102nd anniversary of the Central Church of Christ. On that date it is hoped that all people who have at any time in past or present been associated with the Central Congregation be present for the anniversary. There will begin on that day a series of gospel meetings to be conducted by Joe Sanders of Nashville along with Howard Wakefield of Cookeville, leading in the song service.

People who have moved

from Sparta to being contacted by other means; this one of the full events in the Central Church.

The will be served in the New Sparta School. Two of the teachers of the school will give brief talks. The teachers are Olan B. Asham and A.

The Sparta Central Church of Christ, at any written meeting as a worship in its worship first held in located on above the present and near it. This church was jointly both the Cumberland Presbyterians and the Central Church of Christ until 1927. The church was purchased by the Cumberland Presbyterians.

1867, to Observe 102nd Anniversary on Sept. 14

ers, conversary recoming a his-nce its aswri-he con-

ffect of and ex-the wri- original

plans are rate the the Ce- ist. On that all ytime in associa- l Congr- or the an- will begin s of gos- conducted Nashville Wakefield ng in the ive moved

from Sparta to other areas are being contacted by letters and other means in order to make this one of the most successful events in the history of the Central congregation.

The will be a basket lunch served in the cafeteria of the New Sparta-White County High School. Two former ministers of the congregation will give brief talks after the luncheon. The two are Olan B. Asham and A. R. Hill.

The Sparta Central Church of Christ, as far as there is any written record, began its meeting as a congregation for worship in September, 1867. Its worship services were first held in a brick building located on top of the hill above the present county jail, and near the old cemetery. This church building was owned jointly and was used by both the Cumberland Presbyterians and the Church of Christ until 1883. At that time, the Church of Christ members purchased the interest owned by the Cumberland Presbyter-

ians for \$50 and continued to worship until 1892.

During the year 1892, the church members purchased a lot 103 feet x 105 feet from C. C. Young, for \$1,000. This lot was located at the west intersection of North Main Street and College Street. A building was erected and used for worship services until it was destroyed by fire in December, 1926. The courthouse was used for worship services for almost a year, until a new building could be erected in 1927, at a cost of \$40,000.

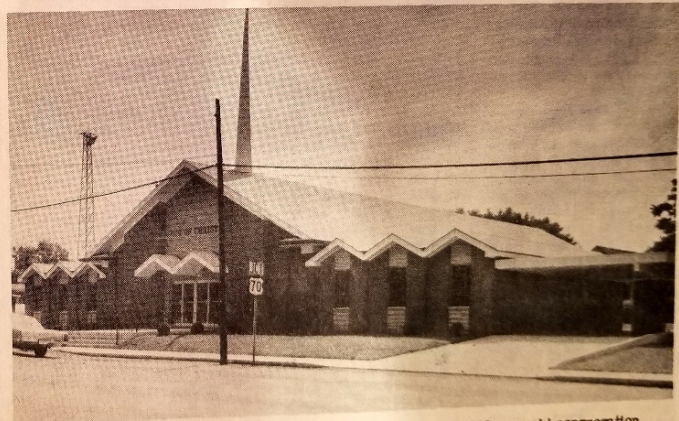
Up to 1951, the congregation's missionary work had been in White County, and the United States. However, in that year, the congregation decided to send a missionary, Donald Earwood, to work in Belgium and France for a period of five years, at an expense of about \$30,000. Since that time, the congregation has helped in a number of other foreign countries, some of which are Japan, Korea, Ni-

geria, Ireland, South Vietnam and Canada.

By 1954, the congregation had grown in numbers. The elders and deacons began to

think and plan for the establishment of a congregation in West Sparta. A lot was purchased in the Fancher Subdivision at a cost of \$4,000,

and a brick building was erected at a cost of \$60,000. The members of each congregation were to pay one-half (Continued on Page 2a)



THE PRESENT Central Church of Christ, which houses the 102 year old congregation.

Central Church of Christ Anniversary Is Set Sept. 14

(Continued from Page 1a)
the amount of the lot, and one-half the cost of the church building. On Jan. 26, 1958, the first worship service was held by the West Sparta Congregation, with Paul Matthews, the Central Church of Christ minister, serving both congregations, until a minister for the West Sparta Church could be located. Since that time, they have enlarged their building and parking space, also, increased their membership, and have an enthusiastic and hard working congregation. The Central Church of Christ is happy to have had a part in the establishment of this wide-awake congregation.

Central Church has continued its zeal for missionary work, in helping a number of congregations. Some of these have been located in Tennessee, Georgia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, New York, and Colorado. The church has helped in support of their building programs, and ministers to carry on their work at home, also in preaching the gospel in destitute places.

By 1962, the building was in need of some repair work. The heating system was poor. The windows and front steps were in dire need of repair. More classrooms and parking space were needed. After much thought, discussion and planning, it was decided to purchase more property south of our present property along North Main St., enlarging our parking space, and erecting a new commodious brick building at a cost of \$150,000.

The congregation began its worship services in the new building in September, 1965. They are so very thankful to God, who has blessed them in obtaining these facilities by which all members of the church can honor, praise and glorify His name, now and in the future.

Some of the members of the congregation in 1867 have

Gillen, Dr. E. F. Richards, and Charles S. Meek. James R. Tubb, Jr., though not an elder, made an excellent treasurer for a number of years. These men have passed on to their reward.

The ministers, who have served the congregation over the past seventy-five years are: W. H. Sutton 1892-1905; J. D. Gunn 1905-1918; John T. Smith 1918-1922; R. L. Brooks 1922-1924; Joe Netherland, Sr. 1924-1933; A. R. Hill 1933-1937; J. E. Nowlin 1937-1941; C. J. Garner 1941-1944; D. Ellis Walker 1944-1946; Charles Tidwell, Sr., 1947-1949; Billy Norris, 1949-1953; Paul Matthews 1953-1958; Waldon Tarpley, 1958-1962; Paul W. Hall 1962-1963; Oland Bassham 1963-1968 and Schumann A. Brewer 1968 to the present.

The congregation is so very thankful to their Heavenly Father for the many blessings that they have received over the past one hundred and two years.



descendants living here, and are members of the congregation at the present time. John S. Rhea was one of the first elders. He was the grandfather of Mrs. Loula Tubb, and Mrs. Ruth Lee. R. L. Bronson was one of the first deacons. He was the grandfather of Dr. C. E. Tubb, and Mrs. S. G. (Jessie) Butler. Mary L. Young was a member of the congregation at that time. She is the mother of Mrs. Herbert West, and the grandmother of Mrs. John K. Keisling, also the grandmother of Young and Will Ed Pearson. These people, along with others, were very dedicated members of the congregation during its early history, and were responsible in a large measure for establishing it on the firm foundation that it has maintained over the past one hundred years.

Some of the elders of the congregation, who were dedicated men, and meant so much to the congregation during their lifetime were J. R. Tubb, Sr., Matt Taylor, Dr. A. F. Fichards, Billy Young, W. M. Young, Judge L. D. Hill, Judge Harry Camp, Sr., R. L.

THE FIRST CHURCH of Christ building was shared with the Presbyterians, and was located on the hill behind the present jail, and near the old cemetery.



DESTROYED BY fire in 1926, this building was the first of three on the present site of the church.

Article, 1927

The new church edifice is an ornament to the town and a monument to the zeal and faithfulness of the congregation. The building was erected by contributions from the congregation and no assistance was solicited from other sources. In the spring it is planned to put down a new concrete walk around the property and this walk will be about a foot higher than the present one. The yard will be graded off and sodded and flowers and shrubbery will be put out.

At the evening service Sunday Elder Netherland's subject was the proper division of the word of God. He pointed out that it was impossible to understand the Bible without this proper division, but with the scriptures properly divided much of the mysticism and division in the religious world would disappear.

Bro. Netherland is assisted in his meetings by A. J. Veteto of Memphis, Tenn., who will have charge of the song service. Mr. Veteto has been a teacher of vocal music for several years and has had several years' experience in the evangelistic field with most of the leading preachers of the brotherhood.

Elder Netherland has been with the church here for about two years. He is an able speaker and his discussions always command attention. The revival will continue indefinitely with services at 2:30 in the afternoon and 6:45 in the evening.

BRIEF HISTORY CHURCH OF CHRIST AT SPARTA

The elders of the Sparta congregation decided early in October to have the opening services in their new building on Sunday, Nov. 27th, with Brother A. J. Veteto, of Memphis, and other invited ministers.

Since the time for this opening is near, we thought a brief history of the work and growth of the congregation would be interesting to the citizens of the town who have given their support to the work.

This work was started in a small house on Old Cemetery Hill nearly 75 years ago, and moved to the present location more than 30 years ago. The work was carried on by such men as Kidwill, Elam, Larrimore, Harding, and our beloved and lamented Brother Sutton, who lived and died among us.

The church records show that the contributions for all purposes by the early congregation was around \$30.00 per year, which went to the preacher holding their annual meeting. The records of last year, being the first year of Brother Netherland's ministry, was about \$6,000.00 in freewill offerings by its membership for church purposes in its varied work. The burning of the church house early in the year created an emergency that brought forth contributions from the members of the church, and the citizens of Sparta of approximately \$30,000.00, most of which has been applied toward the construction of the new building, however, sufficient funds have been available for carrying on the regular work of the congregation. We might say that the local church has solicited no contributions for this building outside of its membership, but a number of freewill offerings have come from the citizens of Sparta in appreciation of the work done, and the character of building erected.

Brother J. L. Netherland was called by the Sparta congregation the first of 1926 and will continue with the church at this place throughout the year 1928. He is well known by the people of our town. The attendance and interest in the church work has greatly increased under his preaching. His gentle and forcible manner in presenting the Word of God draws people to him. The church loves him for his example of a pure life, and desire for the Truth. He has exerted a good influence toward all, and reserves no ill-will to any. He is always glad for an opportunity to serve mankind, and in recognition of this fact, the elders and members of the Sparta congregation are pressing him into the meeting that begins next Sunday. He will be assisted in the song service by Bro. A. J. Veteto, of Memphis, who has a national reputation as a church singer. You are invited to take a part, or listen in, to these services.

—Contributed.

Article, 1905

MAY 16, 1905.

CHRISTIAN LEADER

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST, SPARTA, TENN.

There is no record of the planting or work of the church in this community prior to the Civil War, yet, from other sources of information, it is known that the "plea for the restoration of Apostolic Christianity" was presented here at an early date, and that a small band of Disciples met together in Sparta to worship, before the year 1840. Soon after this the Disciples, together with the Baptists, bought a brickhouse, built for school purposes, and converted it into a commodious meeting-house. Later on the Disciples purchased the interest of the Baptists, and this house met the demands of the congregation until 1893, when it was sold, and a new house erected, which will be spoken of more fully further on.

For years the church was small, the opposition was great, and the prejudice bitter, but by the preaching of such men as Talbert Fanning, Wm. D. Jordan, J. J. Trott, W. H. Hooker, W. D. Carnes, J. L. Sewell, and others, the seed was sown and the foundation laid for the future success of the cause.

After the Civil War, there was a re-organization of the church. Nathan Trogden and John S. Rhea were appointed elders, and R. L. Bronson and John Downy, deacons. Thirty names were enrolled. Under this leadership the cause prospered. Such men as D. Lipscomb, E. G. and J. L. Sewell, Dr. T. W. Brents and J. M. Kidwill were called to labor for the church from time to time. Bro. Kidwill's labors were especially fruitful in removing prejudice and commanding the attention of some of the most intelligent people of the community. He added several to the church, and prepared the way for a large ingathering in the near future. Bro. E. A. Elam followed Bro. Kidwill and did a great work, adding many to the saved, and greatly edifying the church and encouraging and directing the brethren in every good work. Brethren J. A. Harding, T. B. Larimore, F. B. Srygley, J. W. Shepherd, J. E. B. Ridley, F. W. Smith and M. C. Kurfes have all held successful meetings with

the church. In the year 1890, Bro. W. H. Sutton moved to Sparta, and has since made his home here. He has done a good work among us, preaching for us during the winter months and evangelizing at other seasons. Bro. J. D. Gunn, a young



preacher, located with us in 1899 and has labored some for the church here and devotes himself to evangelistic work in the surrounding country.

In 1892 and 1893, the old house failing to meet the demands of the rapidly growing congregation, a new brickhouse was erected and furnished, at a cost of about \$5,000. It is heated by a furnace, and lighted by electricity, and has a seating capacity of 500. The first sermon was preached in it on the third Lord's day in March, 1893, by W. H. Sutton.

J. R. Tubb, W. W. Young and G. J. Spurlock are the elders at the present time, and C. C. Young, J. D. Bronson, George Tompkins and W. M. Young are the deacons. The present membership is about 150. The church has never been disturbed over modern innovations, but is contented to work and worship as it is written. While the congregation is not doing all it ought, yet it has done considerable mission work in the surrounding country, and also contributed to the independent missions, abroad. The congregation is planning for a greater work in the future. By the help of the Lord, we hope to grow in every good work.

J. R. Tubb.

THEY HAVE JOURNEYED FIFTY YEARS TOGETHER

Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Tubb were pleasantly surprised when a large crowd called at their home Sunday night. It became known Sunday that this day was the 50th wedding anniversary of Mr and Mrs. Tubb and after church services Sunday night a large crowd went from the church to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Tubb to congratulate them upon their 50th anniversary and to wish for them many more years of happy association together.

H. Camp made a talk in which he presented a beautiful set of dishes, a gift from the church, and a breakfast room suit, a gift from the children of Mr. and Mrs. Tubb. Mr. Tubb responded to Mr. Camp's remarks and expressed appreciation for the tribute of esteem and friendship. A musical program was rendered and Elder Netherland dismissed the callers in a word of prayer.

This tribute of love and esteem upon the part of the church toward Mr. and Mrs. Tubb could not have been more worthily bestowed. During their residence of almost fifty years in Sparta the church has not had more faithful members and no man has done more for the congregation than Mr. Tubb, and it might be added that no citizen of Sparta has done more for the town than he and there are hundreds of people who will join The News in wishing for Mr. and Mrs. Tubb many more years of happiness together in this life.

FIRST SERMON DELIVERED IN NEW CHURCH

To an audience of almost one thousand people, Elder J. L. Netherland on last Sunday delivered the first sermon in the new church building, which marked a beginning of a revival for the Church of Christ. The large auditorium and balcony were filled and chairs were put in the aisles in an effort to seat all who came. The evening services were attended by almost as many people.

The weather was ideal and the church had been looking forward to this day when the congregation should assemble in the new building. Many people from out of town attended the services Sunday, some of them seeing the new building for the first time, and many compliments were passed on the new home of the church. Elder Netherland announced that Bro. Shaw of Central Church, at Nashville, had presented the congregation with a large, handsome Bible and that the Lee Lumber Co., local contractors, who erected the building, had donated a water set and vases. Dr. E. F. Richards gave a large gong which is used to announce the dismissal of the Sunday school classes.

At the conclusion of the morning services W. L. Patterson, local photographer, made a picture of the building with the audience standing on the steps and sidewalk.

At the morning service Elder Netherland gave a brief history of the Church of Christ at Sparta from the time of its meeting in the little brick church on the old cemetery hill down to the present time. He mentioned some of the pioneer preachers that had labored with the congregation here, among them being "Raccoon" John Smith, the Kidwells and later on Elam and Sutton. Elder Sutton preached the first sermon in the church building that burned a few months ago.

The Bible.

This book contains — the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, doom of sinners, and happiness of believers. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter. Here paradise is restored, heaven opened, and the gates of hell disclosed. Christ is its grand subject, our good its design, and the glory of God its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet. Read it slowly, frequently, prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure. It is given you in life, will be open at the judgment, and be remembered forever. It involves the highest responsibility, rewards the greatest labor, and condemns all who trifle with its holy contents.— Selected.

n | Elder Joe S. Warlick. of Dallas,
se | Texas, closed his remarkable meet

JR Tubb consults EA Elam about songbook issue, 1900

Tubb & Butler,
Manufacturers of *Question Submitted to Bro Elam*
Oak and Hickory Spokes.

J. R. TUBB.
 S. G. BUTLER.

Sparta, Tenn., Nov 1st 1900

Last fall a question arose between some members of the Church whether to use both or one of two song books The Christian Hymns or Voice of Praise, some preferring one and some preferring the other. The Elders decided to use but one book, Christian Hymns.

My contention is that if using the two books will satisfy all, it was wrong for the Eldership to rule harshly in the matter, disrespecting the wishes of a greater portion of the congregation who take an interest in the singing, as well as the leader who leads the song service. Knowing that such ruling will produce dissatisfaction. I also contend that while the Elders agree that the songs in both books are equal scripturally and in every way and refuse the congregation the privilege of singing out of but one book, is Lording it over Gods heritage, when the Elders agree it is scriptural and right to sing out of either book, thus placing themselves as Lord, commanding where the Lord has not spoken, suppressing the congregation from doing a thing that is right.

J. R. Tubb

Bro Elam says we ought to respect the wishes of the congregation.

And that the action of the Elders was arbitrary ruling

Poems by Horace Richardson**Elders**

Have you ever thought of where your money goes
When you put it in the tray
or do you leave it to the Elders
To spend it their way?

When you put them in office
You gave them your trust
So just leave it to their judgment
And don't ever make a fuss.

When you put your money in
And give as you prospered, too
The Elders will take care of the rest
You've done all you're supposed to do.

So, leave the spending to the Elders
And if you're still not satisfied
Put your mind on being an Elder
And start getting qualified.

Horace Richardson

Front-Row Seats

Wouldn't you want a front seat to hear Charlie sing,
Or see the Oak Ridge Boys do their thing?
Wouldn't you pay extra to be up front- say
Just to see Alabama sing and play?

Wouldn't you pay a lot to have a good seat,
When your favorite team turns on the heat?
How much would it cost to be at ringside
When two heavyweight boxers collide?

How much would it cost, probably a great roll,
To see your favorite golfers play a hole?
It would cost a lot, you can bet,
To see the Dallas Cowboys and Tony Dorsett!

I can tell you a place, and it won't cost a dime,
Where you can get a front seat anytime
To hear the most wonderful words in all creation-
Just go the Lord's congregation!

Horace Richardson

Hiring a Preacher

I'll never forget that day
When I dialed a number far away
The answer sounded loud and clear
He said Wayne Stubblefield here.

I told him who I was and what
I wanted, the best I could
We need a preacher down here
If you can come. He said he would.

He said he would come and preach for free
Just to get his family back to Tennessee
He said my mom and dad don't live far away
If I get the job, I could see them every day.

So he came on down to try out
Full of ambition and pride
With his pretty wife right by his side
He stepped to the pulpit, confident and cool
Opened up his Bible, got upon the stool.

He gave us all he had, told us all he knew
Everybody liked him, all but a few
The Elders hired him, gave him the job
Things work out, ain't that right, Bob.

Horace Richardson



Our Team at Central

I've written a little poem
About each one a little bit
and just like the saying goes
if the shoe fits wear it.

This is a humorous sarcastic poem
I hope you will take it with a grin
We have to have a little fun throughout our lives
I've enjoyed writing this as your friend.


We have Russell Terry at the back of the plate
You'll have to give him a big hand
He's playing a little over his head
because Shugs is in the stands.

And then there's Pappy Dabbs on the mound
he's had a bucket full of saves
You couldn't expect nothing else
After all, he plays for the Atlanta Braves.

Then there's big Ronnie Powell
He is such a jolly man
When he is fielding those flies
He does the best he can.

Then there's Jim Camp on the mound
fierce, courageous, and bold
I've tried to tell him time and time
That he is entirely too old.

On second base there's Tim Richardson
trying to do his thing
Though a few gets by, it's not his fault
His mind is paying for that ring.



Then there's Robert Earl on third
Just as busy as a bee
He would play a whole lot better
if he could see.

There's big Dale Randolph on first
Giving it his all, believe me
but the birds won't leave him alone
they think he is a tree.

Then there's Tim Turner running the bases
but I'm afraid that he won't last
I think he's going to get a ticket
because he's going too fast.

Out in left field there's Brad Turner
he don't stand very tall
He's just out there waiting
Waiting on the ball.

Then there's Scotty Kirby
very quiet, doesn't make a sound
but when he's going around the bases
he's running like a hound.

Randy Anderson is on short
he is one of our elite
he missed a grounder the other night
because his eye was on Miss Thweatt.

Now we have Eric Swindell
A good player, never fearing
he's always there when we need him
although he's a little hard of hearing.

Mr. Matthews is out in right field
he's way out there with the cows
he caught one the other night
and wouldn't stop taking bows.

Wayne McNeal is our pitching ace
he never gives us any lip
he always does a fantastic job
especially with a youngin on his hip.

Jonathan Anderson is a roving fielder
he's pretty swift, just like a deer
he catches all the balls that come his way
especially the ones that are near.

There is Terry Swindell in the field
he never gives us any sass
he's in such a hurry to get to the game
he never stops for gas.

Gary Dick plays many positions
he'll probably change to another soon
there's only one thing that I hope
wherever he is he will be in tune.

Phillip Camp is out in right field
he fields the balls as no other
but you would expect him to do so
his athletic ability comes from his mother.

Jeremiah Crow is playing second base
a very fine fellow is he
but when a ball is hit, he's quick to admit
the he can't stoop no lower than his knees.

Bob Young has recently joined our team
he is real good at his position
he is polite and kind, and too free hearted
sometimes he helps the opposition.

Now we have the coach
That pretty little filly
she thinks that she
can coach like Billy.

And then there's the fans
in number quite a few
cheering for their favorite team
Tammy telling them what to do.

Young mothers with squalling kids
and others playing in the sand
Young people and old grandfathers, too
Tammy still telling them what to do.

I love you all
I'm not making fun
You're a pretty good ball team
for a bunch of bums.

Horace Richardson

Something to Do

My preacher asked me to write a poem
I told him I would do my best
I thought of many things to say
I really put my mind to the test

Then I thought of our congregation
of the many good people who are here
And of the way they help each other
And if you need them they are near

I thought of all we had done
for families who are in need
that can't pay their clothes bills
And have hungry mouths to feed.

We help people who are sick
And have major operations
Also helping local missions
And other congregations

We help the widows who are needy
We help the orphans, too
Always giving thanks to God
In everything we do.

Our congregation does many things
Fearing God with every step
If you don't think you've doing enough
Just ask how you can help.

Horace Richardson

Gittin Older

We are in that Golden Age
where we live from day to day
we're a little older and wiser
now, but that's for us to say.

We're in our second childhood
and loving every minute of it
we have so many things to do
we don't even have time to sit.

We're thinking about others now,
and what we can do for them
our mind is now more on God
and yearning to be with him.

We have so many friends in church,
can't hardly wait for time to meet
to see the children running around,
and all our friends to greet.

I like to come to church
a little early so I can mix and mingle,
to be with all by Christian friends,
it almost makes me tingle.

There's sister Lee in her favorite pew,
and Jimmy and his wife, just to name a few,
and sister Burgess, she is such a dear
all my best friends seem to be right here.

The Elders are mixed throughout the crowd,
and what a devout crew:
Curtis White, Bob Swindell, and Jim Camp,
they have such a big task to do.

There's Wayne and his family up front in
plain view
Mrs. Breeding, Mrs. Young and Bob too.
There's Dale and Brenda, Charlie Rogers and
his wife, all waiting for Wayne to bred the
bread of life.

The it's time to go home again
and there we meditate
just God and I all alone,
this time is really great.

We have so much to look forward to,
can't wait for the next day to roll around,
and we will savor every moment
until we're homeward bound.

So good night, you lovely people
see you all again next fall,
when we can all come together,
I love you, sleep tight you all.

1790-1889

Camp Meetings

held in homes, tents & brush arbors
(1790-1867)



Tennessee becomes a state.

Sparta established as county seat

Tennessee has 32 churches in 16 counties

Racon John Smith preaches in Sparta sometime between (1832-1834)



1796

1809

1812

1820

1832

1834

1848

1861

1867

1881

1883

1889

1820
Cherry Creek Church of Christ is established

1834
Bethlehem Church of Christ established

1848
Tennessee has 141 churches in 48 counties
Burnit College opens in Spencer, TN

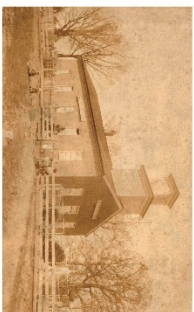
In 1867 Sparta Church of Christ was established, shared with the Presbly Academy School and Cumberland Presbyterian church.

1883
Central buys Presbyterian interest in schoolhouse

James Garfield, COC member becomes US President, 1881



Barton W. Stone preaches in Tennessee (1812-1814)



1889
William Howard Sulton of Burnit College becomes preacher



1890-1927

Struggle: Red-Brick Dutch Reformed



1892: Sparta Church relocates to new church building at N. Main St

God is discovered in Alaska

Census Bureau shows division of Church of Christ & Christian Churches

Central's 50th Anniversary

Central loses members to newly formed First Christian Church

First Christian Radio Broadcast



Harding College founded



1927: Central meets in White County Courthouse while rebuilding

1892

1896

1905

1906

1908

1917

1918

1921

1924

1926

1927

Billy Sunday begins preaching revivals.

1905: Death of William Howard Sutton



Freed-Hardeman College founded



US enters World War I

WW I ends, Influenza pandemic kills 500,000

1926 Building burns



1927-1965

Growth: Yellow-brick Neoclassical



Move to rebuilt yellow brick neoclassical church building

United States enters WW2 after Pearl Harbor attack

Mission work begins in Belgium & France



Move into new Contemporary Red Brick Building

Annex construction

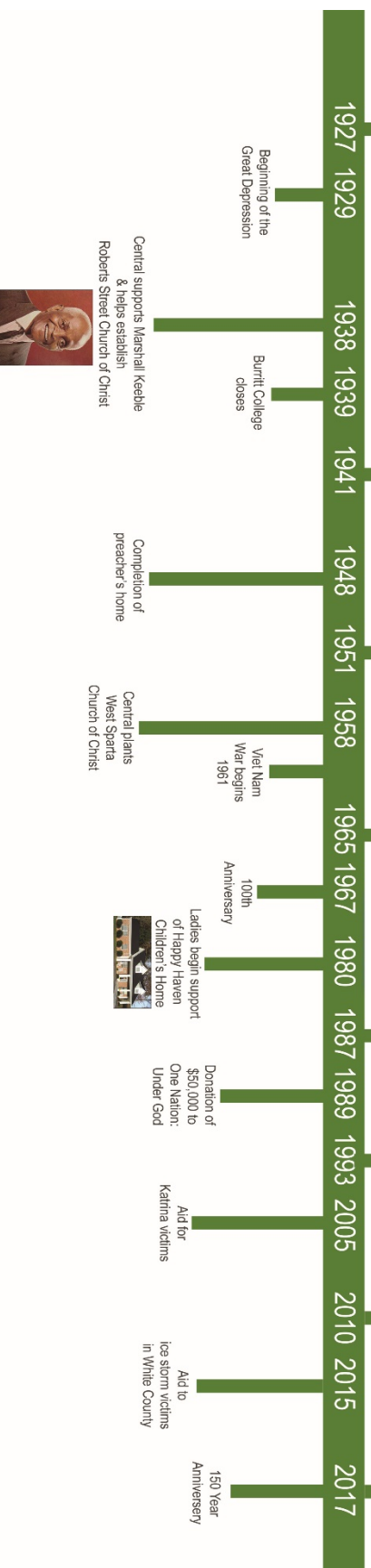
Donation of \$50,000 for mission work in Cuba

Aid to flood victims in Nashville

Pastor Christopher (Topher) Willes 2017

1965-2017

Transition: Red-brick Contemporary American





December 31, 2017

Central Church of Christ

45 North Main, Sparta, Tennessee 38585

(931) 836-2874

office@spartacoc.com

www.spartacoc.com

