

THE FIRST 150 YEARS

A History of Shiloh Baptist Church from 1856 to 2006

Shiloh Baptist Church
13457 Kings Highway
King George County, Virginia

April 2013

First edition

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Published by Peppermill Multimedia, LLC, for
Shiloh Baptist Church
13457 Kings Highway
King George, Virginia 22485
Printed by Conquest Graphics, Richmond, Virginia

Foreword

The best history, the most meaningful history to individual lives, is local history. The events in larger arenas – state, national, world – seldom touch individuals. Cynthia King Miller has contributed to the field of local history. She has gathered the fragments and skillfully woven them together to create a history of a Virginia Baptist congregation, Shiloh in King George County. It is her family’s church; and although she writes objectively, her affection for Shiloh is evident.

From the historical records and even from the faces in the photographs – old and new – there breathes evidence of constant devotion by the church’s members across the years, generation upon generation. Because of that devotion, the church has survived despite war, fire, wind and time. From the history there are references to the many under-shepherds who led the congregation as pastors across the long past. Because of their capabilities and concerns, the congregation went from strength unto strength. The stories of the people and the pastors are told in a flowing narrative and from it emerge the personalities who shaped the church. Lavishly illustrated, the history contains a treasure trove of photographs.

The history of Shiloh Baptist Church is an historical record but it also is more. It bespeaks of the true power within one church – the power to transform human lives for the better as they seek to be Christ’s presence within the community. With such a banner before them, the people known as Shiloh indeed go forward into the tomorrows.

Fred Anderson
Executive Director
Virginia Baptist Historical Society



The original Shiloh Baptist Church structure was built in 1856 and destroyed by a tornado in 1948. The current structure was completed in 1950.

Preface

This book is intended to reveal some of the personalities and events that have shaped the history of Shiloh Baptist Church, spanning three centuries. It is not intended to be a complete history of the church nor is it a history of the Baptist denomination. It covers a period of time when God and the church were the center of every activity of our lives. It is a story of Shiloh's people who steadfastly gave their best, obeyed Holy Scripture, cared for the congregation and community, and spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ, expanding His Kingdom.

The first church building was built in 1856 and 1857. Shiloh had broken away from Hanover Baptist Church after a lengthy debate on temperance. The present church building was built in 1950. There have been two additions, including a Family Life Center, which was under construction during the 150th anniversary celebration of Shiloh and finally completed to carry on Shiloh's tradition of building and growing.

Shiloh's history begins with the pre-Civil War days and the strict Victorian Era and ends with the open society of the 21st century. Events that transformed America, such as the Industrial Revolution and two major world wars, impacted the church as well as the culture and customs of the various time periods.

Imagine life in rural King George County in 1856. The Civil War had not begun. People rode to church in a horse-drawn buggy. Their Sunday-best clothing was homemade, washed on a washboard, and pressed with flatirons. There was no electricity. A woodstove kept the congregation warm, and an outside privy met their comfort needs. The church minutes were written with pen and ink.

To keep the church going, people performed arduous tasks. They did their own repairs of the church; some covered the expenses until the congregation collected enough money.

The groundwork of Shiloh began with the Shiloh Meeting House. The old Hanover minutes book revealed Shiloh's beginnings. Church minutes from 1856 through 1876 are remiss; however, J. Cleveland Grigsby, the longest serving church clerk, authored the 100th anniversary history and linked our 19th century history to the 20th century. Lewis Howland, who served as treasurer for 30 years, documented the financial history of the church.

Julia Lumpkin carried the banner from J. Cleveland Grigsby. She compiled her own history and linked our 20th century history to the 21st century. For over 25 years, she served in capacities, such as clerk and historian, and authored significant portions of the material referenced in this book. Priceless are the church business meeting minutes recorded by other church clerks: Dorothy Rose, Betsy Altman, Gloria Tubbs, and Katrina McGinniss Minter and loose notes from former historians, Dora Inscoe and Elsie Berry. Invaluable is the detailed index that Mildred Thorne compiled and maintained of our history from 1970 to recent times and used extensively by this author to verify and cross-reference information.

Historical preservationists, Aubrey and Nancy Jennings, Ed Hastings, Dorothy Rose, and Elizabeth Lee had the foresight to archive our records for safekeeping. They delivered our treasured documents to the Virginia Baptist

Historical Society (VBHS), University of Richmond, to preserve them for future generations.

We are grateful for Dr. Fred Anderson, Executive Director, VBHS, and his staff who have dedicated their lives to historical preservation and allowed this author access to the Society's archives for conducting the research for this history project.

It became clear throughout this project that God saw to it that Shiloh had the right leaders and the right servants at the right time to follow His Word and lead us into the 21st century. We are eternally grateful for these church officials who diligently scripted month after month, year after year, decade after decade the church minutes, our only concrete connection to the early beginnings of Shiloh. We are thankful for all the men and women who gave their best to the Lord and helped preserve our heritage.

We are thankful to the present church members and officials, too numerous to name, who provided vintage photographs from their family albums and recounted events long forgotten about the faithful who centered their lives around the church to shape the Shiloh story. We are indebted to Mildred Thorne, Kimberley McGinniss Turner, and Luke Miller for contributing many of their photographs they either took or collected over the years.

At Shiloh's 150-year celebration, Pastor Richard Headley announced that Shiloh planned to publish a history of the church, detailing its fascinating beginnings through its first 150 years. This author is especially grateful for his support and encouragement.

I ask forgiveness if I misinterpreted the writings of our forefathers who so eloquently scripted 19th century minutes or if I misrepresented the writings of our later clerks who penned the Shiloh minutes. With all its flaws and imperfections, I encourage you to sit back and enjoy this easy read.

To the future generations of Shiloh Baptist Church, we encourage you to carry the banner that J. Cleveland Grigsby, Julia Lumpkin, and their predecessors carried from century to century. We challenge you to do your part in expanding Christ's Kingdom, and we ask God to bless you on your journey.

This book is dedicated to the memory of those who have gone on to their eternal reward and concludes with the words of J. Cleveland Grigsby at the 100th anniversary of Shiloh:

When we scan the list of pastors and members who have labored at Shiloh and whose influence is felt today this should be an incentive and inspiration to those of us who are living to hold up the torch of religion and keep His banner aloft and to perpetuate and keep going what our forefathers started for us. The memory of the writer is crowded with the names of the noble and faithful brethren and sisters who worked at Shiloh in years gone by and who left a wonderful heritage behind them. May we who are the Shiloh of today never allow ourselves to get into a state of complacency or allow His banner to drag in the dust.

Servants of God, well done

*Blest be thy new employ
And while eternal ages roll
Rest in thy Saviour's joy.*

Cynthia King Miller
Historian

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Hanover Baptist Church of Christ

Thos. Justice	H. Dan Coakley
David Coakley	Robert Clark
Robert Clark	John P. Myers
John D. Owen	Wm. Meddaniel
Wm. McConill	Wm. Rogers
A. Rogers	R. Coakley
R. Coakley	Wm. B. [unclear]
Wm. B. Coakley	John [unclear]
John [unclear]	Robert Coakley
Robert Coakley	A. McElanahan
A. McElanahan	A. [unclear]
John [unclear]	John [unclear]
John [unclear]	(14) above
John [unclear]	(15)
Wm. B. Rose	10

26) 780 (2	30) 780
52	25
230	

300

Thos Rogers

Hanover Baptist Church of Christ minutes book lists names of some of its members.