

The History of Bellefonte Presbyterian Church, USA

The Reverend Luke Dorland, the first President of Barber-Scotia College, Concord, North Carolina, organized Bellefonte United Presbyterian Church in May 1867. Prior to the establishment of the church, the Negroes of the community were members of the Rocky River Presbyterian Church. The white minister of the community refused to let the Negroes hear a speech by Reverend Dorland in an integrated audience, so the Negro ladies requested that Reverend Dorland meet with them the next Sunday to help organize a church.

The ruling Elders elected at the first formal organizational meeting was Elinor Parks, Albert Morrison, Anthony Stafford, Silas Davis, and William Caldwell. The Policy Committee consisted of Jessie Harris, George Melchor, Christopher Boger, Nathaniel Boger and Winifred Phifer. After the organization, the congregation met in a little log cabin located to the right of the present structure. In 1871, the church name became Bellefonte Presbyterian Church, which means "Beautiful Fountain".

The first minister of note was Rev. George Patterson who served from 1878-1885. Dr. Frank T, Logan of Concord, NC, served the longest term from 1890-1931. In between, professors and students from Johnson C. Smith University, Charlotte, NC served the church. The Rev. J.H. Stokes served from 1934 to 1943, the Rev. W.A. Griggs served from 1944 to 1951, and the Rev. Seth Vanlandingham served from 1953 to 1961.

Seminarians served until the calling of Rev. Samuel L Fulwood on June 1, 1966. Rev. Fulwood served for 22 years. Under his leadership, the sanctuary was remodeled, new pews and carpet were installed, German siding was applied to the outside of the sanctuary; the fellowship hall, pastor's study, ladies lounge, and rest rooms were constructed, and the grounds were landscaped.

On May 6, 1990, the church elected the present pastor, Rev. Dr. Gregory Davis. He is truly a man called by God and has been a spiritual uplift to the congregation. During his tenure, many new members have been added to the church roll as well as former members reuniting. Under Rev. Davis', leadership, a Tape Ministry, Youth Ministry, Youth Tutorial Program, Bible Study, Year-End Awards Banquet, New Members Classes, Disciple Classes, and Computerized Record Keeping, just to name a few, have been implemented.

Most recently, the following ministries were added:

- **Evangelism Ministry Team:** Their mission is to spread God's word within the church and community through established objectives. They have touched the hearts of others by assigning greeters in the vestibule each Sunday morning. In the past this ministry was instrumental in sponsoring a Karaoke and Talent Night, Fasting, Witnessing and Intercessory Prayer Workshops, the construction of our new church sign, sponsoring CD Give-A-Way Sundays, sponsoring an Annual Evangelism Sunday and hosting a table at designated church functions.
- **Information Technology Ministry Team:** Their mission is the implementation and management of all system applications, hardware and software. One of the major accomplishments of this ministry is the church's website, which can be viewed at www.bellefontechurch.org and the ability to receive on-line donations.
- **Training Ministry Team:** Their mission is to train the body of Christ in the areas of leadership and development. Sessions have been held on "How to Make Your Church More Inviting", annual Leadership Training and assistance with the development of the Church Manual.

Also under Dr. Davis' leadership, after much prayer, plans were implemented to build a new church structure. A loan was secured from United Carolina Bank and the membership launched the ground breaking on September 24, 1995 and construction began in December 1995. Being obedient to the will of God through tithes and offerings, Bellefonte burned the mortgage on this current structure on May 21, 2000.

In 2007 the congregation agreed to the construction of a new Fellowship Hall with the addition of classrooms. In 2008 upon receiving the financing and the selection of a construction company, Dr. Davis, with the concurrence of the session put the project on hold due to the economic downturn. The project was re-opened in late July of 2009 and construction began in the fall of the same year. The highlight of last year's Homecoming Celebration was the Dedication of the "George L. Govan Family Life Center.

A church grows because of the spiritual guidance through the Pastor, attendance, and support of its members. The members of Bellefonte Presbyterian Church, USA are grateful for the untiring efforts of our local membership, friends and those who are away and still remember us in special ways.