

CHAPMAN MEMORIAL FREE WILL BAPTIST CHURCH

For many years the Big Harts area was without a church. People had to travel many miles to just attend a church service. In the hearts and minds of many God placed a desire to see a church placed in the Big Harts area. Two very special people felt the call of God to bring a church to Harts, and began to work to bring the vision to pass.

On December 12, 1953, Brother L.W. and Sister Maude Chapman, deeded a parcel of land to be used by The Logan Conference of Free Will Baptist. In the deed it was further stated, "understood... Free Will Baptist Church of Harts.... will have the right to use said property.... for Church... purposes..."

On January 2, 1954, a Free Will Baptist Church was organized in an old feed store, near the present Post Office at Harts (*See minutes of organization, later*). The name was to be Chapman Memorial Free Will Baptist of Harts, W.V. The Church is also know as the Harts Tabernacle.

Brother L.W. Chapman was appointed the first Deacon; sister Bertha Adkins, Clerk; Sister Inez Adkins, Treasurer; and the first Pastor was Rev. Oliver Privett.

The following were the charter members of the Church: Brother L.W. Chapman; Brother Freeland Adkins; Sister Rinda Adkins; Sister Betty Chapman; Sister Virginia Adkins; Sister Maude Chapman; Sister Bertha Adkins; Sister Jewell Chapman Sperry; Sister Inez Adkins; and Sister Lelia Adkins.

Reverends, Oliver Privett, Wayne Damron, J.A. Rakes, and Moss Craddock were the ministers present to organize the new church. Also, the church treasury started with \$9.50.

God blessed the conference to bring about the construction of the building at Harts. Eventually the conference began using the building for conference meetings every three months, and continues today.

God blessed the church through many changes including numerous floods, through many pastors, members coming and members going, deaths, and births. Gad has continued to bless Chapman Memorial Free Will Baptist Church.

Presently, Reverend Joseph Triplett serves as Pastor, with Brother Jody Harless, Bobby Fleming, and Tommy Dent serving as Deacons, Sister Sue Davis Fitzgibbon serves as Clerk, and Sister Kathleen Vance serves as Treasurer.

Ministers who have pastored the Chapman Memorial Free Will Baptist Church are as follows:

| | | | |
|------------------------|------------|----|------------------|
| Rev. Oliver Privett | 1-2-1954 | to | 1-1958 |
| Rev. Clarence Stratton | 2-8-1958 | to | 3-5-1959 |
| Rev. Arthur Frye | 4-19-1959 | to | 3-5-1960 |
| Rev. Curtis Stollings | 3-26-1960 | to | 10-21-1961 |
| Rev. Eldon Browning | 11-9-1961 | to | 6-26-1965 |
| Rev. Author Frye | 6-26-1965 | to | 4-22-1967 |
| Rev. Glen Sparks | 4-22-1967 | to | 4-26-1969 |
| Rev. Ralph Dean | 4-26-1969 | to | 4-23-1972 |
| Rev. Arthur Frye | 4-23-1972 | to | 5-5-1983 |
| Rev. Roy Adkins | 5-15-1983 | to | 4-17-1988 |
| Rev. Kit Meade | 4-17-1988 | to | 8-9-2000 |
| Rev. Tony Vance | 11-4-2001 | to | 12-26-20007 |
| Rev. Ottie Burke | 4-9-2008 | to | 9-18-2008 |
| Rev. Kit Meade | 10-2008 | to | 1-28-2009 |
| Rev. Joseph Triplett | 2-17-20013 | to | Present (9-2015) |

The following are minutes of the organizational service of the Chapman Memorial Free Will Baptist Church . . .

Minutes: January 2, 1954

The following ministers met at Harts, W.V., January 2, 1954, at 7:00p.m. to organize a church: Rev. Oliver Privett; Rev. Wayne Damron; Rev. J.A. Rakes; and Rev. Mass Craddock

The session was called to order by Rev. Oliver Privett (Chairman). Reading of the church covenant by Rev. Rakes. The Bible was presented by Rev. Privett as the only rule of faith and practice.

Motion made by Brother Walter Chapman, seconded by Brother ??? Adkins, Jr., and carried unanimously that we accept Sister Rinda Adkins along with the other ten members and notify former pastor of her intentions to become a member of the Harts Free Will Baptist Church.

Prayer of consecration prayed by Rev. Craddock.

Right hand of fellowship was given by Rev. Oliver Privett.

The Church is to be called Chapman Memorial Free Will Baptist Church of Harts, W.V.

Brother L.W. Chapman was appointed as Deacon.

Officers elected were:

Clerk -- sister Bertha Adkins

Treasurer -- Sister Inez Adkins

Pastor -- Rev. Oliver Privett

Amount in treasury \$9.50.

Business meeting will be Friday night before the fourth Sunday in January.

Theses members organized into a Free Will Baptist Church:

1. Brother L.W. Chapman
2. Sister Rinda Adkins
3. Sister Betty Chapman Adkins
4. sister Virginia Adkins (Ginger)
5. Sister Maude Chapman
6. Sister June C. Adkins
7. Sister Bertha Adkins
8. Sister Jewell Chapman (Sperry)
9. Sister Inez Adkins
10. Sister Lelia Adkins
11. Brother Freeland Adkins

NOTE: *This information was given to the Historical Committee of the
West Virginia State Association of Free Will Baptist, in
September 2015.*
