

MORNING STAR FREE WILL BAPTIST CHURCH

The Morning Star Free Will Baptist Church was organized on September 13, 1941, at the Lee Dingess School, near Chapmanville, W.V.

The following article was submitted to me by Carl Lilly, and was written by Lakie Dale Gore Dingess, in the summer of 1994.

"NOSTALGIA"

Our Church building Condemned? How sad those words,
Tear down our church -- Is that what I heard?
This is our landmark -- The house of God,
A memorial to many, now sleeping neath the sod.

Like a T.V. screen, flashing pictures so fast,
They kept coming before me, these scenes from the past.
I sat there weeping, with tears flowing down,
Looking at the rubble, now lying on the ground.

My thoughts went back to days long ago,
To a little white Church by the side of the road.
Built by people with willing hands,
On property given by a dear old man.

Saints and sinners, worked side by side,
From morning till late eventide.
Like Nehemiah of old, they had a mind to work,
No thought in their mind of trying to shirk.

Money was scarce, but each did their part,
Working and giving with a cheerful heart.
With no modern tools, the work was slow,
But we soon had a Church where corn used to grow.

The Morning Star Church, said a sing over the door,
This name was given by Brother Lee A Gore.
Like a bright shining star in a very dark night,
This Church was a light house, giving out much light.

We had no pews, just rough benches for seating,
But we were all anxious for revival meeting.
Brother Lee Gore came with a heart full of love,
Filled with the Spirit - Anointed from above.

"Why have you come?" Was the question we heard,
As he took his text and expounded God's word.
With tears in his eyes, he told of God's love,
Why Jesus came down from heaven above.

He then gave an invitation, Asked all to stand,
As he stood with outstretched hands.
To our surprise, down the aisle he came,
This dear old gentleman - Uncle Elbert by name.

Many prayers had been prayed for this special one,
Year after year he had faithfully come.
Our Church now stood on land he had given,
Now he was ready to go with us to heaven.

This was the beginning of our Church long ago,
We labored and rejoiced as we watched it grow.
Our Church family increased as our people were saved,
The building made more comfortable, as improvements were made.

New babies were born, older saints passed away,
There were revivals, baptizing, and homecomings days,
Funerals, and weddings, Christmas plays and such,
O so many things we enjoyed so much.

How does one tell all the things the mind holds,
Deep down inside, like a story to be told?
Of people, events - of sorrows and trails,
All the joys and blessings - It would take quite awhile.

There's been many burdens - valleys to walk threw,
Many mountains top experiences, more than a few.
Blessing after blessing I've enjoyed on the way,
With God's great love, and mercy to guide me every day.

New mercies every morning, grace for every need,
Walking close to my dear Savior, for He will safely lead.
He will never, ever leave me - Praise His Holy Name!
For Yesterday -- Today -- Forever -- Jesus is the same.

I'm looking for that city, like Abraham of old,
Where mansions are now waiting, and streets of purest gold.
Foundations will not crumble, and we shall never die,
In that Eternal City - Yonder in the sky.

Epilogue - Written April, 1995

Months have passed since the Church was torn down,
The rubbles all gone - there's gravel all around.
It's hard to believe with completion so near,
That a new Church has been built in less than a year.

With a loving Pastor and many willing hands,
We now have a Church built on the same land.
More beautiful and much larger than before,
And the name "Morning Star" will still be over the door.

We have a fellowship hall, with rooms up above,
Where the children are taught as they learn God's love.
We have plenty of room for our Church family to grow,
To win others to Jesus should by our main goal.

As we enter our sanctuary on our special day,
We'll sing and rejoice, we'll kneel down and pray,
We'll thank Him for blessings, both present and past,
We'll praise and adore Him as long as time lasts.

Lakie Dale Gore Dingess

***NOTE:** This information was given to the Historical Committee of the
West Virginia State Association of Free Will Baptist, on
December 1, 2017, by Carl Lilly, State Promotional director.*
