



# History Highlights

**R**oanoke  
**B**aptist  
**C**hurch  
**100 Years**  
**Serving Jesus**



Published May 2010 by  
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## Dedication

This book of highlights of the history of Roanoke Baptist Church is dedicated to the memory of all the members who have faithfully served Jesus by sharing about him “heart to heart” with the residents of the community. May God help us to continue serving him in this way until Jesus returns for us individually or in the rapture of his Church.

## Roanoke Baptist Church History Highlights

About May, 1902, a little Sunday School was organized by the residents of the Roanoke area of Kansas City, and was conducted for a while in an orchard near 41<sup>st</sup> and Wyoming streets. Afterward, they held their meetings in different homes for a while. During this time the Tabernacle Congregational Church furnished supplies and some workers for the little Sunday School. Then some workers came from the Westport Presbyterian Church and assisted in building a small chapel, into which they moved the little Sunday School. From this beginning grew the work of God's Church in this area; first, the Presbyterian, second, the Christian, and third, the Baptist. Only the Baptist work continues in 2010.

The question of establishing a Baptist church in the Roanoke area was first taken up in June 1906 by the Baptist Board of City Missions (later called the Kansas City Baptist Association, and now part of the Blue River – Kansas City Baptist Association). The idea suffered some delays and no work was actually begun until January 1908, when a Baptist Sunday School began meeting in the back part of D. E. Pinkstans' Hardware Store at 1704 West 39<sup>th</sup> Street. G. T. Neubert bought the store from Pinkstan. (Picture at right.) Chester A. Underhill, then a student at William Jewell College, led the Sunday School during this time.



About May 1908 a lot was purchased on the southeast corner of 42<sup>nd</sup> and Terrace by the Westport Baptist Church. A single story stone building, about 50 feet by 100 feet, was constructed on the lot, partly above and partly below ground. On April 6, 1910, with the help of O. P. Joyce of the Blue River Association, the members of the Sunday School began what was called the Terrace Heights Mission. Rev. Joyce encouraged them that whatever they did to be sure it was to the honor and glory of God and to the interests of the Baptists in the community. They understood that the Blue River Association would help with a pastor's salary up to a maximum of \$400 per year and that the Westport Baptist Church would continue payments for the lot. The members agreed to organize into a separate church on the second Sunday in May.

Chester Underhill continued his work until the church was officially organized by 52 members of the mission on May 15, 1910. The following is the record of that organizational meeting.

May 15, 1910

Song Service

Prayer by F. W. Eberhart

T. B. Bailey called to chair.

T. B. Bailey elected chairman.

Clyde E. Hunt elected secretary.

A committee to examine proposed articles and letters was appointed as follows: J. M. Davison, O. P. Joyce, and Rolvix Harlan.

Mrs. Lewis read an interesting history of the mission (and should be filed in record).

Committee to examine articles and letters reported satisfactorily and was adopted.

T. L. West made a soul thrilling speech in his charge to the church.

A rising vote of thanks was extended to the State Board for their great assistance.

Brother Joyce extended the hand of fellowship to the new church from the Blue River Association, Brother Eberhart from Westport Church, Brother Bailey from City Mission Board.

Brother W. T. Campbell led in prayer.

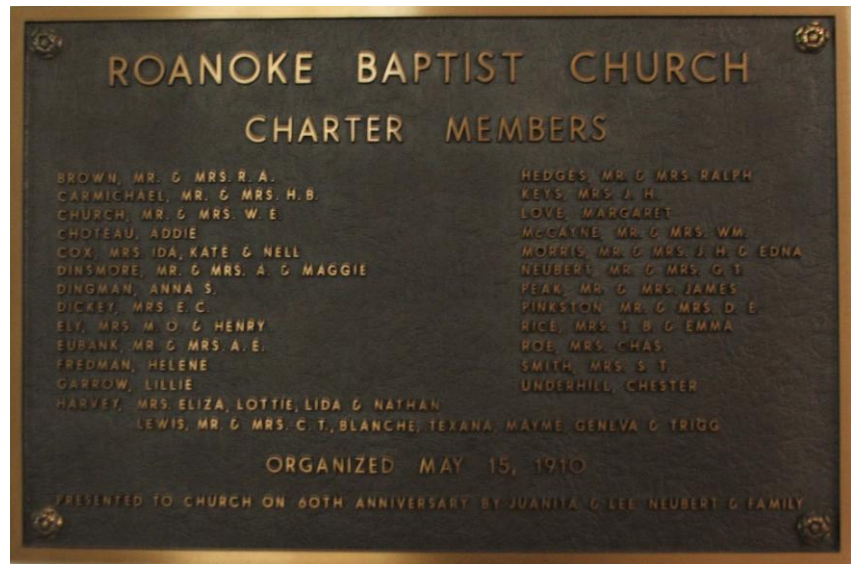
Dismissal prayer by Brother Underhill.

T. B. Bailey, Chairman

Clyde E. Hunt, Secretary

The following were the 52 charter members of Roanoke Baptist Church:

Mr. and Mrs. R. A. Brown  
Horace B. C. Carmichael  
Mrs. Kate T. Carmichael  
Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Church  
Mrs. Addie Chouteau  
Mrs. Ida Cox  
Miss Kate Cox  
Miss Nell Cox  
Mr. and Mrs. A Dinsmore  
Miss Maggie Dinsmore  
Mrs. Anna S. Dingman  
Mrs. E. C. Dicky  
Henry Ely  
Mrs. M. O. Ely  
Dr. and Mrs. A. E. Eubank  
Miss Helene Fredman  
Mrs. Lillian Garrow  
Mrs. Eliza Harvey  
Miss Lottie Harvey  
Miss Lida Harvey  
Nathan J. Harvey  
Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Hedges  
Mrs. J. H. Keys  
Mr. and Mrs. C. F. Lewis  
Miss Blanche Lewis  
Miss Texana Lewis  
Miss Geneva Lewis  
Miss Trigg Lewis



Miss Margaret Love  
Mr. and Mrs. William McCague  
Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Morris  
Miss Edna Morris  
Mr. and Mrs. G. T. Neubert  
Mr. and Mrs. James Peak  
Mr. and Mrs. D. E. Pinkston  
Mrs. T. B. Rice  
Miss Emma Rice  
Mrs. Charles Roe  
Mrs. S. T. Smith  
Chester Underhill

Miss Kate Cox (picture at right), who was a young lady of 18 at this time, soon married Maxey G. White and they were appointed as missionaries to Babia, Brazil by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in 1914. Their home was in Salvador and in 1931 she started the Kate White Domestic School which she directed until her retirement in 1958. When she died in 1982, Kate was the last surviving charter member.





For several years the church held services in the basement and then pulled curtains along pipes to divide the basement into spaces for Sunday School classes. In May, the church called as their first pastor George C. Monroe (picture at left), who had just completed his studies at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, KY. That summer, the church held a tent revival which resulted in 24 additions, 12 by letter and 12 by baptism. At their first annual meeting in May 1911, plans were made for a collection to raise \$535 to take the church out of debt. After the gifts and pledges were counted, it was announced that \$500 had been collected. At the evening service, they rejoiced in this and that within their first year they had grown to 121 members who had shown “such a ready and willing response to the call of duty and the love for the spreading and replenishing of the Lord’s word.” Their enthusiasm was dampened in December 1911, when Rev. Monroe submitted his resignation. He told the church that he was attracted to a call from a rural church at Harrisonville, MO, and he felt God’s call strongly to that type of work rather than to a city church. So, the church accepted his resignation and with wet eyes and full hearts, bade him good-bye and prayed for his success in the new field.

R. D. Brittain (no picture available) was called as the next pastor and he preached his first sermon at the church on January 7, 1912. He came to the church from First Baptist Church of Robinson, IL. The membership continued to grow numerically and by July it was reported that the church was out of debt. This had the wrong effect on their finances because by October they were taking special offerings to make up shortages in their operating funds. Most of the members agreed that their location at 42<sup>nd</sup> and Terrace was not as accessible as having one further north. Even if they stayed at this location, they would need to build, so they began to look for other property. G. T. Neubert favored a vacant lot on the corner of 40<sup>th</sup> and Genessee. Dr. A. E. Eubank favored a lot on the corner of 40<sup>th</sup> and Wyoming which already had some buildings on it because he had learned that the Kansas City school system wanted to sell it.

The site (picture at right) had a large, two-story brick building, two one-room school buildings, and outbuildings which had been the Van Horn School. The main building, with its entrance facing 40<sup>th</sup> Street, was originally called the Mellior Place School and consisted of two rooms on each of the two stories. It had been built in the 1890s and sold in 1900 when the city limits moved south of 39<sup>th</sup> Street and the school district didn’t think they needed it as a school. So the building was renovated into boarding rooms. In 1903 the school system decided they needed a school in the area, bought the lot, remodeled it back to classrooms, and named it Van Horn School in honor of Col. Robert Thompson Van Horn. In 1906, they built two one-room school buildings on the lot, along with outbuildings.



Brother Neubert agreed that Dr. Eubank had the better deal so he headed up the committee to raise funds for purchasing the property. In 1913, they sold the lot at 42<sup>nd</sup> and Terrace for \$2000 and applied that toward the purchase of the Van Horn School for \$5000. When the church moved into the buildings, they used one of the one-room school buildings as their worship center, the main building for Sunday School classes, and the other one-room school building as a meeting place for a Men’s Bible Class.

Shortly after the church bought the property and moved into it, the Blue River Association withdrew their help supporting the pastor because other churches were more needy than Roanoke now that their membership had increased to 163. In August of 1913, Rev. Brittain resigned



because of throat problems. Feeling the need for a strong pastoral presence, the church called O. P. Joyce (picture at left) who, when leading the Blue River Baptist Association, had inspired them at their founding meetings. Rev. Joyce accepted the pastorate on November 12, 1913 after receiving assurance from the church that they would solicit pledges to make it possible to pay him \$20 each week. This was a 73 1/3 % increase in the pastor's salary.

The church borrowed money in 1915 so they could participate in a Billy Sunday revival to

be held in 1916. After the revival, the pulpit (picture at right) which Billy Sunday had used during the crusade, somehow made it way to Roanoke Baptist Church where it has made it home ever since. The plaque on the pulpit reads. "Built for and used by Billy Sunday during his 1916 Crusade in Kansas City, Missouri. 'Brighten the Corner Where You Are' was the Crusade theme song." During the three months following the revival, the church recorded 55 new members which are thought to be a direct result of the revival. As an example of how close the church was operating to their income, they had to take a special collection to pay the pastor \$100 that was due him in back salary. At the same time, they increased the salary to \$27.50 weekly. On their eighth anniversary in 1918, a special offering of \$1,500 was raised to pay the Kansas City School Board the balance of what was owed on the property.



In the spring of 1920, the church again borrowed money to participate in a city-wide revival. This started as the Biederwolf Meetings, but due to unavoidable circumstances, Dr. Biederwolf was unable to come to Kansas City. In his place, Dr. Milford Lyons held the meetings and following the meetings, each church held a four or five day revival in their own church. By the time Rev. Joyce presented his resignation in April of 1921, the church membership had grown to around 300 and the need for a new building was being discussed. George W. Wise (picture at right) was called their next pastor and he arrived in early August from his previous pastorate in Pratt, KS. The church adopted a record budget of \$6,500 for 1922 and began action toward a building project in April. The Holy Spirit was certainly moving in the hearts of this group to get them to attempt what seemed to be a hopeless task.



A time of real testing for the church began in 1922 as they planned to build a new sanctuary. Along with this, they planned to move and remodel the existing building into educational space. To show their spirit, they adopted a budget for 1923 that was 80% larger than in 1922. The Sunday School classes used bazaars, suppers, doughnut sales, greeting cards, quilting, directory advertising and many other schemes to raise money to pay their building and remodeling debt.

The project required tearing down the eastern most one-room school building so that they could dig and build a rock basement that would become a fellowship hall, kitchen, boiler room, and two bathrooms. When the basement was ready, the main building was jacked up, rotated 90 degrees, moved to the northeast side of the lot, and placed on the basement. Then the sanctuary

was built and joined with the main building. At the same time, the two floors of the main building were renovated into classroom and office space and half of the attic was made into classroom space while the remaining half was made into storage space. The new building as built and renovated is pictured at left. Throughout all this activity, the membership increased in fellowship and grew in numbers with 413 being recorded in Sunday School for Easter of 1925. Rev. Wise received a call to another church and resigned as pastor in September of 1926.



William H. Fowle (picture at right) was called as the next pastor and assumed his duties in February of 1927. Sunday, March 13 saw the birth of The Beacon. By Easter of 1927, The Beacon was being delivered to 1,500 people and to 3,000 people just one year later. The Beacon provided a significant ministry by informing the community of events happening at Roanoke



Baptist Church. This was a period of excitement as ambitious, sincere workers constantly wanted to spend money to expand programs. But, due to limited finances and many commitments, hard decisions had to be made which dampened some of the excitement. One such decision concerned the church steeple above the sanctuary. They had been trying for some time to stop it from leaking but finally had to remove it. Spirit was further dampened with Rev. Fowle's resignation in December of 1928.



In May of 1929, Dr. Gaston W. Duncan (picture at left) was called to be the pastor and began serving in July. The next few years presented quite a struggle for the church. The building was badly in need of repairs and painting but the community was experiencing a depression. In the five years from 1930 to 1935, the budget declined 50% until it reached \$7,500. Dr. Duncan resigned in July of 1934.

Earl A. Riney (picture at right) was called as the church's pastor in October and arrived at the church in November. During his tenure, Rev. Riney received his Doctor of Theology degree from Central Baptist Seminary. As the financial condition of the community improved so did the spirit of endeavor at Roanoke and they were able to raise the \$8,000 needed to pay the debt from the renovation and construction. On April 30, 1944, they held a mortgage burning ceremony and rededicated the church building to the Lord's use. In October of 1944, they decided to try and raise \$3,000 above the budget for the purpose of repainting and redecorating the building. The membership reached its peak of 676 during this time. Dr. Riney served the church for eleven years until forced to resign in December of 1945 due to illness.



Merle Mitchell (no picture available) accepted the call to be the next pastor and preached his first sermon in the church in March of 1946. The years from 1946 to 1948 saw a steady increase in the annual budget and many improvements to the building. The balcony of the sanctuary was carpeted. New sinks were installed in the kitchen as well as metal tops on the counters. Rev. Mitchell resigned in August of 1948, to respond to a call from Odessa, MO. Following his resignation, the church granted 63 requests for church letters.



In May of 1949, D. Douglas Scrivner (picture at left) was called as pastor and a new venture was begun in October as the church decided to purchase the property at 3819 Genessee (picture at right) for \$8,500 so they could use it for a parsonage. To do this, they had to mortgage the church building to obtain \$7,000. In 1950, money was collected to remodel the parlor into what is known as the chapel. Rev. Scrivner resigned in March of 1952.



Ralph T. Boggs (picture at right) was called to be the pastor in July and began his work in September of 1952. Beginning at this time, nearly every business meeting mentioned the need for more space, especially for Sunday School rooms. With their spirits running high in 1953, a committee began considering the purchase of property to the west and north and investigated the cost of constructing another wing to the west of the present building. Later, they did purchase the property to the west of the church. In 1956, the membership failed to underwrite a budget of \$33,500 so it was revised to \$30,000. The average attendance for April of 1957 was 313 with over 400 attending on Easter Sunday. The plans for an addition to the building were progressing and the membership of the church was 510 in 1958. The architect's drawings had been approved and \$36,000 had been collected so that a contract with a builder for \$77,294 could be approved. Due to the failure of the church to approve the obtaining of a loan for the additional amount, the Board of Directors discontinued the building plans and refunded pro-rata to the givers the money that had been collected without even asking the church membership if this was what they wanted to do. This must have created conflict among the members because 78 people left the church that year and the next, and the Sunday School attendance dropped to 210 by 1959. The church had been told that they couldn't use the house that they had bought to the west of the building for a nursery because it had a second story, so they approved removing the second story and lowering the roof onto the second story floor, and then remodeled the first story into a nursery. Rev. Boggs resigned in September of 1958.

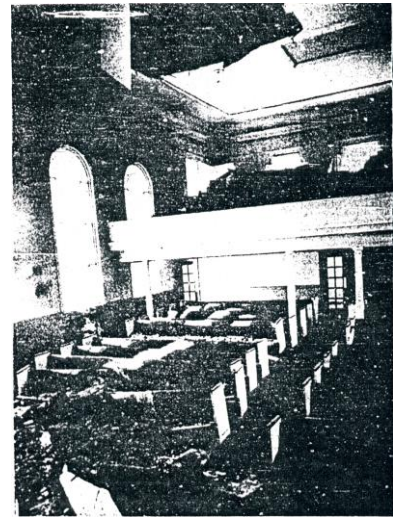


In January of 1959, Edwin L. Brown (picture at left) was called to be the pastor. A challenging budget and activity program was proposed that included paying off the church debt and doing needed work on the building. The membership responded wonderfully with many givers doubling their gifts so that \$40,000 of the \$60,000 needed was collected. Rev. Brown resigned in 1965 to assume the pastorate of a church in Pratt, KS, the place where George W. Wise had come from to Roanoke.

John Robert Steers (picture at right) was called as the next pastor. In 1967 the church sold the parsonage. Then in 1968, on the Wednesday evening before Easter, an event occurred that was almost tragic. Just after the choir finished practicing in the sanctuary and had left the building, about half to three-fourths of the sanctuary ceiling crashed to the floor. A committee had just finished meeting in the library room when the tremendous crash occurred. Members ran to and opened the closed sanctuary doors, but they could see nothing but grey because the dust was so thick. It was several minutes before they could see what had happened. The noise of the crash was so



loud that nearby neighbors came to the church to see if something had exploded and if they could be of any help. The crash and a picture of the fallen ceiling even made it into the Kansas City Star newspaper (Picture at right.). After an initial feeling of dismay, the spirit of Roanoke was charged with optimism and strength. No one was hurt and the damage could be repaired. Even though the loss was not covered by insurance, the members gave sacrificially to make the repairs. Rev. Steers resigned in 1974.



Following Pastor Steers departure the church was led by two interim pastors: Dr. Leslie G. Christian served from 1974 to 1977 and Dr. V. Lavell Seats, Professor of Missions at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, was interim from 1977 to 1978. During this time membership was stable at 304 (with 122 members on the Sunday School rosters), and the church experienced an average attendance of 75 in worship and 68 in Sunday School. Roanoke discontinued its bus ministry in 1975 because of the small number of riders. But that didn't stop them from pouring their energy into other outreach activities. From 1976 – 1979, Roanoke members held Backyard Bible Clubs during summer, and in 1977 and 1978 they partnered with Roanoke Christian Church (located on the opposite corner of the intersection of 40<sup>th</sup> and Wyoming Streets) to conduct Vacation Bible School. New outreach and fellowship efforts were started, including a Senior Citizens Club called “Triple L” (Live Long & Like it) and a teen club at the church to provide a place with a Christian atmosphere where teens could gather. The church considered the possibility of having a Service Center to provide emergency food assistance.



During the mid-1970s, Roanoke members enjoyed participating in summer reading clubs and a church league basketball team. They also continued to desire connections with the community. Efforts to reach out and increase attendance included the formation in 1977 of “House Church” (small group) meetings during the week, but by 1978 this ended when they had difficulty getting people to host groups. In 1978, Roanoke had a church renewal evaluation led by John Dowdy, Director of Metropolitan Mission Board. A new pastor, Allen Lee Phillips (Picture at left.), was called, and the reenergized congregation set a goal in 1979 to increase worship attendance to 85. They also began to experiment with different worship services on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of each month. To help reach another growing demographic within the neighborhood, the church agreed to let the Kansas City Baptist Association Director of Language Missions lead a Spanish-speaking Bible study and worship each Sunday afternoon at Roanoke.

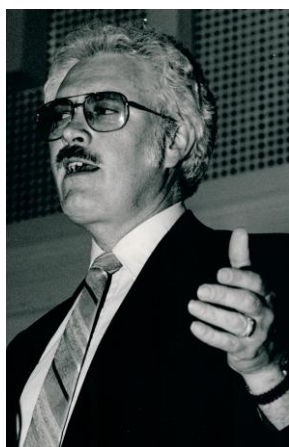
Pastor Phillips remained at Roanoke until 1980, and then Max Dale Windham (Picture at right.) was called as pastor later that year and served through 1987. Under his direction, the members of Roanoke remained committed to reaching their neighborhood for Christ. In 1986, the church newsletter was renamed “The Link” to emphasize linking members to members and members to people in the community. Much time and energy was focused on the community. For instance, in just one summer (1980) they held five Backyard Bible Clubs and a Vacation Bible School, plus they hosted college students as summer missionaries to work with junior high young people and to visit shut-ins. In 1982, they participated



in “Bold People Search,” a survey to locate people not attending a local church. And the following year they participated in “Lifestyle For Growing Churches,” a program for learning growth principles and ways to grow through evangelistic relationships and friendships with unchurched people.

Roanoke members handed out New Testaments to households in the neighborhood as part of the 1984 Southern Baptist campaign “Good News America.” And in 1986, the church participated in “Good News – God Loves You,” the Southern Baptist campaign of evangelistic revivals throughout the United States. That same year, the church also took part in a PACT study that assisted churches in urban or transitional areas to understand their community and discover how they could change and reach out to those people. Using what was learned in the PACT study, Roanoke developed a mission statement in 1987 to guide the vision of the church as it sought ways to reach out the community. In 1989, the members participated in a Witness Training clinic and conducted a “Reach a Friend for Roanoke” outreach campaign.

Throughout the 1980s, the congregation sought to remain good stewards of their property. A St. Pat’s dinner was held in 1980 to raise money for a sanctuary repair fund. 1981 was a busy year: the Hammond organ was repaired again, the nursery building was re-roofed, the trim around the church was repaired and painted, and the Men’s Class building was also repainted. In 1986, they painted the brick exterior of the church using a special paint.



Unfortunately, the water problems with the basement remained a cause for concern, as the constant moisture allowed for mold formation. Due to the mold exacerbating his allergies, Pastor Windham tendered his resignation December 31, 1987, and after many months of prayer and searching, the church called Robert D. Sisney in September 1988 to be their next pastor (Picture at left.).

The 1980s were difficult years for the church family, as membership slowly dropped from 304 to 263, and Sunday School enrollment went from 118 to 76. Average attendance in worship decreased drastically from 74 to 35 and in Sunday School from 62 to 38. But members continued to serve others, including visiting a nursing home monthly until it closed in 1987. The church remained dually aligned with the Southern Baptist Convention and the American Baptist Churches USA. But in 1982, Roanoke voted to stop supporting the Westport Cooperative Mission Inc. because it recognized and accepted into membership the Metropolitan Community Church, a group that openly accepted the homosexual lifestyle as normal.

By the late 1980s, the declining attendance brought additional concerns, as the congregation experienced difficulty raising enough money to meet the budget and care for the building. In 1988, a dehumidifier was installed to help with the water and mold problems in the basement, and in 1989 they repaired basement walls which had been damaged by water. But the budget continued to remain strained. Although the budget was raised from \$50,267 in '88 to \$54,065 in '89, the mission percentage was reduced to 10 %, and as a further cost savings measure the church voted not to allow the facility to be used by any outside groups or organizations.

In the spring of 1992, Pastor Sisney resigned, and Alan Cobb came in April 1992 to serve as interim pastor. It wasn't long before the search committee asked Pastor Cobb to consider taking the post permanently. He agreed to submit his candidacy, and the church voted to call him as

their pastor in October 1992. Dr. Cobb remains pastor of Roanoke at present. (Picture at right.)



Membership in the 1990s dropped to just over 100, but attendance at worship remained stable at around 40 and Sunday School around 35. Members talked of closing the doors and disbanding. But after Pastor Cobb arrived, Roanoke did a “Vision Study” which led the church to affirm that God was calling them to remain an active congregation and attempt to reach out to their community in whatever ways became possible. Traditional activities such as Vacation Bible School and door-to-door evangelism were utilized, often with the help of summer missionaries. Children’s carnivals, a block party and participation in the 39<sup>th</sup> Street Craft Festival all held the same goal – to meet neighbors and make evangelistic contacts.

Further evangelism efforts included member participation in the Billy Graham Crusade which came to Kansas City and a partnership with the Evangelism Response Center to follow up with people who contacted them for spiritual guidance. The church also tried a variety of non-traditional activities and events designed to spark the interest of the community, such as a seminar on evolution, a lecture entitled “Christianity and Extraterrestrials,” and formation of an art gallery called “Mellior Place” to display local artists’ work to establish evangelistic contacts.

Seeking to help meet the practical needs of others, Roanoke’s members began preparing “blessing bags” of food, hygiene items and gospel tracts for homeless who came by the church. They began offering help and training for single mothers. Throughout the year, members stocked a food pantry and annually held a special Thanksgiving food drive and a collection of warm clothing in December. These activities continue today.



Another special collection which Roanoke began in the 1990s and holds dear even today is the Operation Christmas Child “Shoebbox” ministry in conjunction with Samaritan’s Purse. Members decorate shoeboxes (Picture at left.) and fill them with gifts such as toys, candy and hygiene items. These boxes are given, along with a gospel storybook, to needy children all over the world.

During the 1990s, Roanoke also established a relationship that continues today with a local Alcoholics Anonymous group, providing space for the group to conduct its daily meetings. Another ministry that continues even today is a weekly worship service at the Summit Nursing Home.

To help reach the younger generations now living in the neighborhood, Roanoke integrated praise and worship songs with hymns to create a blended worship style. Computers were installed and email addresses were established for the church and its pastoral staff. To promote a younger presence and fresh approaches, local college students with a desire to gain ministry experience were encouraged to volunteer at the church in various ways, such as playing an instrument for worship, helping with adult or children’s choirs, or teaching children’s Sunday School classes.

Upkeep of the aging building could not be put off. In the 1990s, major repairs included re-roofing the original Van Horn school portion of the church building, tuck pointing the main chimney (Picture at right.), moving the library and remodeling the space for offices, replacing most of the church windows with energy efficient ones, repairing and repainting lower sanctuary walls, beginning renovation of second floor space as finances allowed and expert help was available, painting the exterior of the Men's Class building, and remodeling of space for children's classes.



Maintenance and ministry activities all require the commitment of time, talent and also treasure. The church's budget began at \$54,320 in 1990 and was allowed to slowly increase until it reached \$109,000 in 2008 even though the income from sacrificial giving didn't cover the budget. This was done because of bequests from estates that were granted with specific instructions that the money be used to reach out to the community. Through God's provision, those bequests lasted until the end of 2009. Accordingly, the budget for 2010 has been reduced to \$75,014, and projected giving for the remainder of this year indicates income totals will exceed budget by the end of the year. God continues to provide.

During the most recent decade, many of the ministry activities which began in the 1990s have continued. Evangelism remains a focus, with continued activities such as door-to-door religious interest surveys and evangelistic discussions (assisted by Midwestern Seminary evangelistic teams) and continued partnership with Evangelism Response Center to follow up with people who contacted them for spiritual guidance. Easter Egg hunts and back-to-school supply distributions (Picture at right.) were conducted annually and garnered positive attention and participation from the community.



Many other strategies and activities have been tried, including sponsoring a seminar on stem cell research, offering "Movies on the Lawn" during the summer and conducting Friday night swing dance classes. The "blessing bags" for the homeless continued to be prepared, plus the concept was adapted to a new outreach effort: members prepared "blessing bags" for Christmas and Valentine's Day (Picture at left.) with candy and a gospel message which were distributed to employees of businesses along 39<sup>th</sup> Street. Longstanding partnerships continue with the Summit Nursing Home and Alcoholics Anonymous, and new partnerships have formed, such as the church serving as host for a MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers) group.

Roanoke has enjoyed a fruitful partnership with a number of seminary students who have served as associate pastors over the years, and their contributions to outreach and discipleship have been of great value. Many of the ministry activities tried by the church were prompted by the creativity of those students. Whether playing basketball with neighborhood kids, using street corner and bus stop evangelism, or starting Bible studies in homes and apartment complexes, the

seminary students served as role models and coaches to help Roanoke's members continue reaching out to the community.

Roanoke was ushered into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century by starting a website ([www.roanokebaptist.org](http://www.roanokebaptist.org)) and installing an audio-visual system in sanctuary. The worship leader began using guitars and a praise band in worship. But while the sights and sounds may change, the congregation remained grounded in its commitment to solid, biblical teaching. Unwilling to compromise their beliefs, in 2000 they voted to drop their dual alignment and support of American Baptist Churches USA to be solely aligned with Southern Baptist Convention, because American Baptists failed to take a strong, biblical stand that homosexuality is not acceptable to God. The congregation also remained committed to supporting missions, and throughout the 1990s and 2000s they have annually voted to allocate 10% of the church's budget to missions.

The church building continues to require significant care. Major repairs within the last 10 years included replacing the boiler heat system, painting the white trim on the exterior of the sanctuary, painting the exterior of the Men's Class building, re-roofing the sanctuary (Picture at right.), and continuing work on second floor remodeling when finances allowed and expert help was available. In 2008 the Hammond organ was sold because it no longer worked. And in 2009, the one-room school building that had served as the meeting place of the Men's Bible Class was demolished (Picture below.).



The congregation has recently completed another "Vision Study" which confirmed God's leading to remain an active congregation reaching out to the community in whatever ways become possible. One hundred years have passed, and much has changed. But much remains the same. A heart for reaching the lost, a desire to make disciples, a commitment to love and support fellow believers. At Roanoke Baptist Church, even after 100 years, faithful servants are still responding to the charge by Rev. Joyce in 1910 that all they do be "to the honor and glory of God."

*Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift! (2 Corinthians 9:13-15)*