



Meadowbrook First Southern Baptist Church Celebrates 75 Years

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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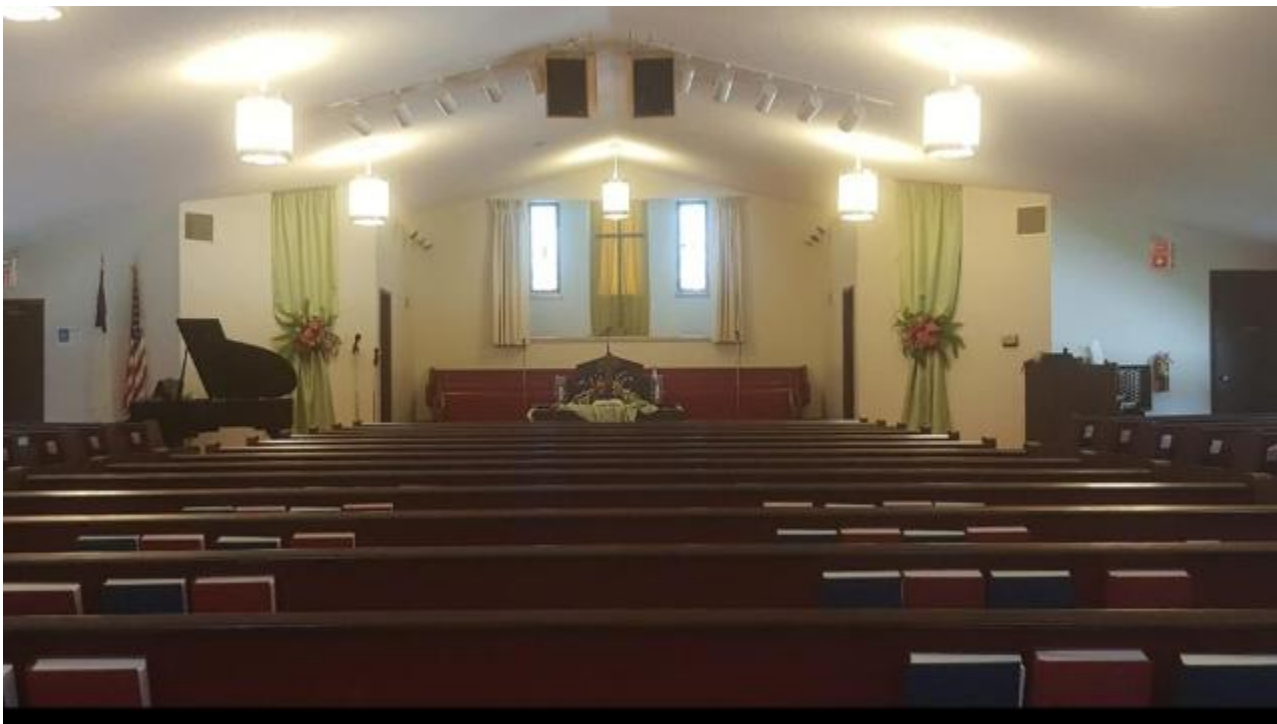
ALTON - On Sunday, March 20, 2022, Meadowbrook First Southern Baptist will celebrate 75 years as a constituted church. The church is located at 105 Fairway Drive in Moro, on Highway 140, across from the Casey's General Store.

The church was a mission church, that was started in 1945 by Calvary Baptist Church in Alton, under Pastor Guy P. Hall. Meadowbrook First Southern Baptist Church existed first in the prayers and hearts of people that felt a need for mission work in Meadowbrook.

Rev. Kevin Auten said he anticipates a large crowd for Sunday, March 20, services and celebration.

"It will be a celebration for what God has done for the church in the past, and what He is going to do at Meadowbrook in the future. They are planning a big reunion celebration, with Sunday Worship at 10:45," Rev. Auten said. "Lunch at noon Sunday, and then an afternoon service at 2. Pastor David Denton, who grew up in the church, and now pastors at Bethesda Baptist in Granite City, will be preaching in the morning service. Pastor Jeff Hemken, who was the church's youth minister in the 1970s, is now the Pastor at Calvary Baptist in Hillsboro. Pastor Hemken will be preaching in the Sunday afternoon service and will be bringing the gospel quartet that he sings with to sing at the end of the service.

The church invites any and everyone to attend their celebration. The church will also be hosting the local Gospel quartet "The Wanda Mountain Boys" at 6 p.m. the following Sunday, March 27.



A meeting was held on February 6, 1945, in the Meadowbrook School basement, by the Calvary Church Brotherhood, with Claude Evans as a leader, to see if enough interest would be aroused in the community, to start a Baptist Mission there. On February 11, 1945, the first prayer meeting was held in the school, with Brother Claude Evans, his family, and 24 people from the community attending.

In May 1945, a revival meeting was conducted by Pastor Guy P. Hall, the pastor of Calvary Baptist Church. Sixteen professions of faith were made at that time. Continued meetings were held in the School, until a basement was built on the same grounds which they still occupy, on Highway 140, across from Casey's.

The church's new basement building was moved into on September 8, 1946, with 44 in attendance for their first Sunday School. Most of the seats had been bought from an old theater. A second-hand piano and handmade pulpit were used, and very much appreciated. The basement was all one room, and the classes met in various parts of the room, with curtains dividing them.

The work then continued to grow, Rev. Auten said. Brother Evans, who had been acting as mission superintendent for Calvary Baptist, was ordained to the ministry on January 12, 1947. On March 30, 1947, the church was officially organized and constituted into a self-supporting institution, with 41 members. The church continued to prosper and grow to have good fellowship, holding revivals, Sunday School, preaching services, and Vacation Bible School. Pastor Evans resigned as Pastor Aug. 24, 1949.

The second building program began on September 1, 1949. On April 16, 1950, a new auditorium over the original basement was completed. Attendance in Sunday School then was 108.

In March 1961, a building program of extending the sanctuary, and providing new educational space began. The work was done by members of the church, except on the brickwork and plastering. New pews were bought by individuals to match the old ones and new altar furniture was purchased. The entire remodeling project was completed and dedicated in March 1962.

In the spring of 1966, excavation started behind the church for a future sanctuary. It was decided to build the basement, and use it for educational space, which was greatly needed.

By September 1980, Rev. Auten said the Lord began to stir in the heart of Pastor Vernon Dodson and the people, about completing the sanctuary on top of the newer basement educational space. On September 20, 1981, the church's current auditorium was completed and dedicated.

In March of 1985, Calvin Reynolds the Pastor of the Meadowbrook First Southern Baptist Church, the Director of Missions of the Alton Industrial Baptist Association, and

a consultant from the Baptist Sunday School Board, started a Bible Study in the home of some members of the church, in Holiday Shores. The Bible study grew into what is now Holiday Shores Baptist Church.

Meadowbrook First Southern Baptist has had 12 pastors since the beginning, with several wonderful interims in-between times. The current Pastor is Kevin Auten from Godfrey, who was ordained at Calvary Baptist in Alton in Feb. 2010. Pastor Auten is now in his twelfth year at the church.

Pastor Kevin Auten says, “We are thankful for the vision of Calvary Baptist, and those who have gone before us and worked so hard to grow and establish what we have here today in Meadowbrook. We are excited to see what God is doing, and going to do, with our church in the future. We have been working diligently toward future growth both on our building and grounds, and on ourselves Spiritually.

"Our motto as a church is *“A Great Commitment to the Great Commission and the Great Commandment”*. We are a conservative, traditional church that still meets for Sunday School, Sunday morning and evening worship services, and Wednesday evening Prayer Meetings.

"We also have Thursday morning Coffee & Donut Fellowship every week, plus our Youth and Children’s activities. Our desire is to minister to people, and introduce them, not to religion, but to a relationship with Jesus Christ.”

