



April 27, 1890 – The missionary vision of First Baptist Church Spartanburg birthed Green Street Church - a vision to raise funding to build a chapel in the factory community around Spartan Cotton Mill for the purpose of seeking out new settlers and inviting them to worship and Sunday school. First Baptist Church appointed the following committee: S. B. Ezell, chairman; W. I. Harris, John Montgomery, W. R. Brown, and Joel R. Goodlett.

Seven Members of First Baptist Church Spartanburg were dismissed to become charter members of Green Street Church: B.L.W. Redd and wife, G.M. Brown and wife, B.L. Woodward and wife and Mrs. T. Lanford.

Sunday, May 3, 1891 - Green Street Baptist Church, located in the Spartan Mill Village of Spartanburg, was organized. It was through the foresight and missionary vision of the Spartanburg Baptist Church-now the First Baptist Church- that the Green Street Church was organized.

May 6, 1891 - *The Carolina Spartan* states, "The new Baptist church at the Spartan Mill was dedicated Sunday with Dr. Bailey of Greenville preaching the sermon. They started with a fair membership and a large congregation, and the outlook for a lively, working church is very encouraging."

November 4, 1889 - The Sunday School was organized in a house provided by the president of the Spartan Mill Corporation and opened with 83 scholars and plans were formulated for the new church. By **November 4, 1889** six hundred dollars had been raised toward the new building.

August 18, 1891 - Green Street Church accepted into the Spartanburg Baptist Association

1891 – 1900 - During these early years of Green Street Church, under the leadership of B. J. Woodward, J. M. Bridges, J. R. Aiken, D. P. Montgomery, R. J. Blackmon, and J. E. Covington, the church grew in membership, 67 to 392 members, until the wooden structure became too small for the membership and congregation.

1900 - The old wooden building, built by the First Baptist Church was torn down and a new brick church was built on the same lot at a cost of \$4,000.

November 1, 1907 - The Good Samaritan Hospital was organized during the ministry of Dr. W. M. Whiteside. The new hospital opened with Mrs. McQuinn, a typhoid fever patient, being the first to be admitted. Dr. A. D. Cudd was elected as medical director and surgeon. Mrs. May Davis of Atlanta, Georgia was superintendent of nurses and Mrs. Etta Harmon was the dietician and housekeeper.

The reception room in the Green Street Church parsonage was opened for surgical operations done by A. D. Cudd who was deeply interested in the people of Spartan Mill and Spartanburg County. Many operations were performed in the parsonage. The deacons of the church served as the first trustees of the Good Samaritan Hospital and Dr. Cudd served as director of surgeons.

1907 - Not only was Dr. Whiteside interested in the establishment of the hospital, but he also began printing a weekly newspaper called *The Green Street Messenger*. This paper was devoted to the Green Street Baptist Church and Spartan Mill news.

1909 - Green Street Church was the home of the Spartanburg Normal which was a singing school that was held annually for 20 days and nights. The cost was \$5.00 and one could board in private homes, or, in a boarding house for \$3.00 to \$5.00 per week. In **1909**, the school had around 200 students enrolled.

January 26, 1913 - Dr. W.M. Whiteside left Green Street after serving here for nine years. He left to become Superintendent of Mill Work of the state under supervision of the State Mission Board. According to the *Spartanburg Herald* Dr. Whiteside had "one of the best organized Sunday Schools in the state." During his pastorate two rooms were added to the parsonage at a cost of \$400.00. He also organized the Green Street Cornet Band which owned \$600.00 worth of instruments.

1921 - The Good Samaritan Hospital operated successfully for fourteen years. It then merged into the Spartanburg General Hospital in **1921**. The Good Samaritan Hospital gave \$23,000 toward the establishment of the Spartanburg Hospital.

Spring 1921 - The first Daily Vacation Bible School to be held in South Carolina was held at Green Street in the spring of **1921**. Mr. C. A. Kirby, Sr., pastor, served as the principal. From that day on the Vacation Bible Schools have played a great part in the lives of hundreds of boys and girls. Green Street is indebted to Pastor Kirby and the leaders of our church of **1921** for the beginning of such a movement in South Carolina.

October, 1923 - Pastor James S. Cobb of Greenville became Pastor of Green Street Church and served until **April, 1926**.

During the ministry of Brother Cobb a new parsonage was built on Brawley Street next door to the church. This parsonage was used by the church until **1964** when a new parsonage located in Glennwood Estates was completed.

On **November 25, 1928** tragedy struck the second church building which was built around 1901. A fire broke out and destroyed the building. One member said, "There was a large group of people standing on the streets looking at the fire. When the big bell fell to the ground it seemed as if the hearts of every person also fell." The old pulpit stand was one of the things saved out of the burning building and it is being used in the sanctuary. Sacrifice was required to rebuild the church where it stands today. Green Street Church, the third church building, was rebuilt where it stands today by the Hines, McDowell and Tuck building contractors at a total cost of \$55,327.20.

1933 - The year **1933** at Green Street could be called the year of "The Great Revival," because Mr. James S. Cobb baptized 286 people into the fellowship of the church upon their profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Dr. Harold Smith was the preacher for the revival services which lasted for two weeks. Brother Smith wrote: "I remember particularly one night when the services continued until two in the morning. There was such a burden for lost souls that people would go out into the homes, wake folks up, bring them into the house of God and they would be converted. People passing by Green Street, seeing the lights on and the number of cars parked, would stop under conviction, and find the Lord."

April 1953 - The stained glass windows were placed in the auditorium in **April 1953**, at a cost of \$3,930.

1955 - The Cobb Hall Educational Building was added to Green Street Church. C. E. Parris constructed the building for the sum total of \$59,033 and work was completed in March of that year. The building was dedicated to Reverend Cobb who had served the church the longest of any preacher.

During the 50s, 60s, and 70s the church continued to serve as a beacon of light for the community. As the community changed, and Spartan Mill eventually closed, the church began to seek different ways to survive. Many times it seemed that the light at the corner of Green Street and Brawley Street would go out. Members bought new homes, joined churches closer to their new homes and the membership declined. The following Pastors led the church through this period; John L. Bray, J. J. Johnson, J. Ray Batson, Everett Crook, O. Virgil Turner, and Thomas C. Moore.

Various improvements were made to the building during this time. They managed to raise the funds for each improvement even though the congregation was shrinking.

1991 - Green Street Church celebrated the 100th birthday of the church. It was an exciting year as a special area of the life and work of the church was highlighted each month. The Centennial Scripture Psalms 127:1, "*Except the Lord build the House, they labor in vain that built it,*" challenged the members at Green Street to remember those who contributed throughout the years, and, of God who has so graciously blessed this church through His rich and abundant mercy and grace.

The community surrounding Spartan Mills reflected the economic strength of this industry. At the present time the community reflects the loss of this industry. In 2011, the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine selected the old Spartan Mills site to build their medical school and invest in the Northside Community. This was the trigger for the development of The Northside Initiative.

The City of Spartanburg formed the Northside Development Corporation (NDC) which is working to improve the quality of life in the community. The Northside Neighborhood Public Workshop was held in Cobb Hall at the church, and participants from the community came to listen and share their visions for the community.

Saturday, December 26, 2015 *Go Uptate.com* - Work began nearly five years ago on an effort to revitalize the Northside neighborhood in Spartanburg. The neighborhood was once a vibrant area that represented nearly 10 percent of the city's population during the 1980s. The Northside Initiative aims to restore infrastructure, and seeks to recover the quality of life and hope for residents. This means providing better opportunities for education, job training, new recreational amenities for healthy living and access to high-quality health care and social services.

Mitch Kennedy, the city's Community Services Director, said, "The Initiative is providing a chance to create a community of choice that offers residents the amenities which every neighborhood deserves."

"It presents a unique opportunity where individuals that could choose to live other places, choose to live in the Northside," he said. "It can create a really attractive urban village that we don't necessarily see today, which this area once had."

April 2015 - God led Pastor Elliott "Ell" Hamrick to Green Street Baptist Church to shepherd the congregation at GSBC through a soul-searching final year. Prayers were lifted up by the people seeking God's Will for Green Street.

February 2016 - Green Street Baptist Church and the Edward Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine, which is located on the old Spartan Mill site, held a *Good Samaritan Health Fair* for the surrounding community. The Health Fair held at Green Street Baptist Church was well attended by people from the community.

April 11, 2016 - The **Come Closer Leader Luncheon** was held at Green Street Baptist Church. Forty-five plus churches and ministries met to plan how they could Come Closer to "love our city to life" together. This was the largest Come Closer meeting up until this date as Green Street Baptist Church hosted over 60 visitors to this luncheon.

After many months of praying Pastor Hamrick presented several options regarding the future of Green Street Baptist Church. The option that the church selected was for Pastor Hamrick to contact the local church, First Baptist Spartanburg, who gave the money and land for the first Green Street Baptist Church to be planted. First Baptist Spartanburg had been praying for a location to move their community assistance outreach ministry to increase spiritual influence within the inner city.

May 3, 2016 – Green Street Baptist Church celebrated 125 years of ministry.

May 4, 2016 - First Baptist Spartanburg church-wide conference: Unanimously voted to accept their offer and Green Street Baptist Church's land was returned to First Baptist Spartanburg to use as they deemed fit to minister to the surrounding community. The members at Green Street were absorbed by First Baptist Spartanburg, or the church of their choice.

As Green Street became a struggling church Rev. O Virgil Turner, former R. A. leader and Associate Pastor, often remarked that, "**Green Street's ministry should be alive and well for Christ.**" And, indeed it will be.

2017 – Green Street Baptist Church became *The Bridge at Green Street* – a community center comprising a food pantry, after school Bible training program, job training, clothing closet and many other ministries intended to celebrate relational evangelism.

Green Street Pastors:

Rev B J Woodward.....May 1891 - 1893

Rev J M Bridges.....1893 - June 1894

Rev J R Aiken.....1894 - 1897

Rev D P Montgomery.....1897 - 1899

Rev R J Blackmon.....1899 - 1900

Rev J E Covington.....1900 - 1903

Rev W M Whiteside.....Jan 1904 - Jan 26, 1913

Rev J L Hodges.....Oct 1913 - Oct 1917

Rev C A Kirby.....Jan 6, 1918 - 1923

Rev J S Cobb.....Oct 1923 - Apr 1926

Rev J L Willis.....1926 - 1928

Rev J S Cobb.....Mar 1929 - Jun 30, 1958

Rev John L Bray.....Jul 1, 1958 - 1959

Rev J J Johnson - *Interim*.....Oct 25, 1959 - Feb 1962

Rev J Ray Batson.....Feb 14, 1962 - 1968

Rev Everette D Crook.....1968 - 1986

Rev Thomas Moore.....1987 - 2010

Rev Larry Fleming - *Interim*.....2010 - 2015

Rev Elliott Hamrick.....Apr 2015 - May 2016

Info taken from:

Diamond Jubilee History 1891-1966 J. Ray Batson

1991 Directory of Green Street Baptist Church

1991 Memories Under This Roof

Go Upstate.com