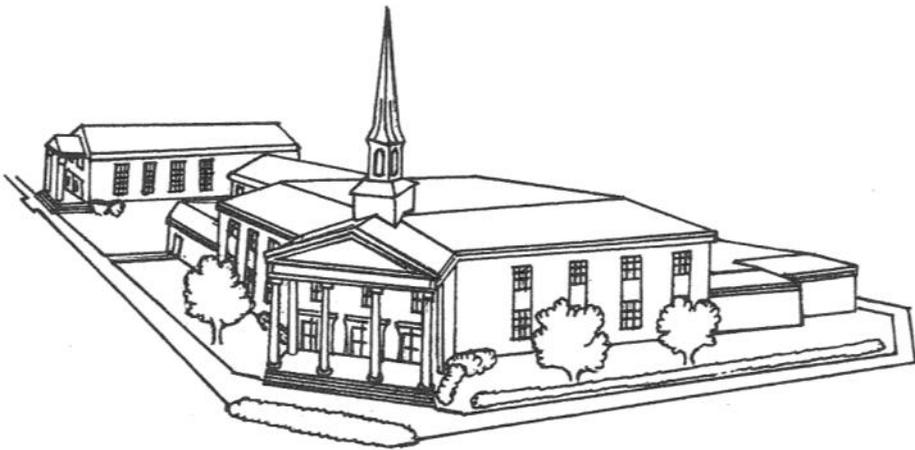


# Ivy Memorial Baptist Church

Hampton, Virginia

100th Anniversary  
1913-2013

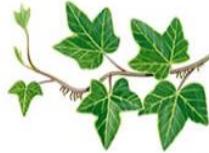


*All Glory Be to God*

*Celebration of the Past ~ Commitment to the Future*



## Ivy Memorial Baptist Church



### Our Purpose

*God has established Ivy Memorial Baptist Church to:*

*Remember, honor, and glorify God,  
Love and care for each other,  
Reach people with Christ like love,  
Change lives by making disciples.*

*We will succeed in our ministry because of  
our great faith in Christ,  
prayerful obedience to the Holy Spirit,  
and a steadfast love for all people.*

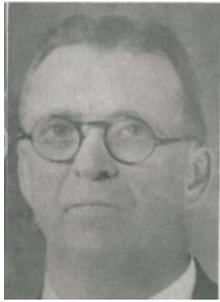
### Our Prayer

*God, make the door of this house we have raised to Thee wide enough to receive all who need human love and fellowship, and a Father's care; and narrow enough to shut out all envy, pride, and hatred. Make its threshold smooth enough to be no stumbling block to children, weakness or straying feet; but rugged and strong enough to turn back the tempter's power. God, make the door of this house the gateway to Thy Eternal Kingdom.*

## Ivy Memorial Pastors 1913—2013



Rev. Earnest E. Hemming  
1914-1916



Rev. E. C. Andrews  
1917-1921



Rev. W. M. Jamerson  
1922-1923



Rev. Preston Blake, Jr.  
1924-1926



Rev. Norman F. Jacobs  
1926-1933



Dr. Lloyd L. Jessup  
1933-40; 1944-50



Dr. Frank E. Morris  
1941-43; 1965-1973



Dr. Walter E. Farrar  
1950-1958



Rev. Charles A. Jolly  
1959-1964



Rev. Gene C. Fant  
1974-1996



Rev. J. Michael Poole  
1998-2000



Dr. William Keith Wrenn  
2002-2004



Rev. John Etcher  
2005-Present

### **Our Pastor's Message**

*From its founding a hundred years ago, our Lord and Savior has watched over and used this faithful Church to reach, care for, and disciple thousands of people over several generations.*

*Ivy Memorial Baptist Church began with a desire of a few families to provide a Sunday School for the neighborhood children on Maple Avenue. That desire became the bedrock upon which all future ministry and programs were built. As we look to the future, we are always reminded of this Godly and noble legacy which was given to us by the founders.*

*The children who have grown up in the Ivy Family have become ministers, missionaries, and have been equipped to represent Christ wherever He might send them. They have become keepers of the hopes and dreams of the founders.*

*It is an honor and privilege to serve as Pastor of this great and historic Church.*

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John Etcher".

## Ivy Memorial Pastorates

*And I will give you pastors according to mine heart,  
which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.*

*Jeremiah 3:15*

*Rev. D. M. Simmons (Supply), 1913-1914*  
*Rev. Ernest Hemming (Part-Time), 1914-1917*  
*Rev. E.C. Andrews, 1917-1921*  
*Rev. William M. Jamerson, 1922-1923*  
*Rev. Preston Blake, 1924-1926*  
*Rev. Norman F. Jacobs, 1926-1933*  
*Rev. L.L. Jessup, 1933-1940*  
*Dr. Frank E. Morris, 1941-1943*  
*Rev. L.L. Jessup (Second Pastorate), 1944-1950\**  
*Dr. Walter E. Farrar, 1950-1958*  
*Dr. Herman T. Stevens (Interim Pastor), 1958-1959*  
*Rev. Charles A. Jolly, 1959-1964*  
*Dr. Frank E. Morris (Second Pastorate), 1965-1973*  
*Rev. Nolan Houston (Interim Pastor), 1973-1974*  
*Rev. Gene C. Fant, 1974-1996*  
*Rev. David Bounds (Interim Pastor), 1996-1998*  
*Rev. J. Michael Poole, 1998-2000*  
*Rev. David W. Burgess (Intentional Interim Pastor), 2000-2002*  
*Dr. W. Keith Wrenn, 2002-2004*  
*Dr. Fred King (Interim Pastor), 2004-2004*  
*Dr. Albert Peverall (Intentional Interim Pastor), 2005-2005*  
*Rev. John S. Etcher, 2005-Present*

*\*Reverend L.L. Jessup retired from the active ministry and was elected Pastor Emeritus of Ivy Memorial Baptist Church. He served from December, 1961, until his death in February, 1973.*

**Members of Ivy Memorial Baptist Church  
Who Have Entered Full Time Christian/Missionary Service**

*Ivy Memorial takes pride in these members who have gone into Christian work upon reaching adulthood. Many pastors, music directors, home missionaries, international missionaries, and journeymen to foreign countries have their spiritual roots here.*

Major E. C. Andrews, Jr. (Naval Chaplain)

Rev. Chris Ball

Rev. Elizabeth Melton Bartley

Mr. and Mrs. Steve Barrett (Laura)

Rev. Vernon E. Beachum

Mrs. Brenda D. Brown

Rev. and Mrs. J.E. Carr

Rev. and Mrs. Michael Chance (Linda)

Rev. and Mrs. Larry Cashatt

Mr. and Mrs. Ed Elliott

Rev. Ronald E. Farrar

Rev. Wesley Garrett

Rev. Kenny Holt

Mrs. Ruth Hopkins

Rev. Paul Jaffeux

Rev. and Mrs. L.L. Jessup

Rev. and Mrs. Walter Jessup

Mr. George Jessup

Dr. and Mrs. Philip Johnson

Rev. and Mrs. Charles Jolly

Rev. Don and Linda Jones (Bowen)

Dr. Jerry D. Kiser

Mrs. Thelma Kiser

Mr. and Mrs. John Layton (Gladys)

Mr. and Mrs. T.E. McClland

Dr. L. Dean Majette

Dr. William Melton

Rev. John Minter

Rev. and Mrs. Robert Murphy  
(Mariana Grey)

Rev. and Mrs. Jack Nicholas

Rev. Jan and Mary Oberdick

Rev. David Parker

Mrs. Ann Snyder Pettitt

Mr. Dwayne Petty

Rev. Robert Reese

Rev. and Mrs. Ronnie Sowers

Dr. Jane W. Willey (Walker)

Rev. and Mrs. Bruce Ziegler

## Centennial Moments

- June 10, 1913 - A small group of Baptists led by O.J. Brittingham met and became the nucleus for Ivy Memorial Baptist Church.
- July 27, 1913 - Ivy Memorial was organized with 26 charter members and began meeting at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Warren Smith on Chesapeake Avenue.
- September 18, 1913 - The congregation began holding services at the Hampton Roads Christian Union building on Poplar Avenue and did so until November, 1914.
- January 10, 1914 - Mrs. Mary E. Ivy donated three lots on Maple Avenue to the church in memory of her husband, Edward T. Ivy.
- December 1, 1915 - The first house of worship, on Maple Avenue, was occupied. This small building was referred to as "the Little White Church."
- 1925 - The small church was temporarily moved to the rear of the lot while a large, new sanctuary with a basement and classrooms was constructed.
- October 8, 1939 - A modern educational building, designed by church member C.B. Kline, was completed.
- July 28, 1957 - A new sanctuary and classrooms were dedicated on Ivy's 44th Anniversary.
- 1960 - Ivy Memorial sponsored two missions which became churches: Colony Mission which later merged with Tabernacle Baptist Church, and Seaford Mission, which became Seaford Baptist Church.
- June, 1971 - Ivy Memorial purchased six acres of land in Hampton on Marcella Road, located near the former Coliseum Mall.
- January 19, 1972 - The congregation began holding services in a temporary facility on West Mercury Boulevard near Marcella Road, and did so for 18 months.

- June 18, 1972 - A ground breaking ceremony was held at the Marcella Road site. Charter member Ruth Sims turned the first shovel of dirt.
- July 8-15, 1973 - A week-long celebration was held to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the church and to celebrate the dedication of the first worship facility opened in the new location.
- 1979 - A new educational annex building was constructed.
- September 30, 1990 - A ground breaking ceremony was held for the new Worship Center. Mrs. Ruth Sims and Mr. Ralph Kemp assisted in the ceremony.
- February 2, 1992 - New Worship Center opened with 1,367 members and visitors present.
- April, 1995 - The church purchased two and one-half acres adjacent to our property for future expansion.
- June 23, 1996 - The church accepted the resignation of our longest pastorate, Reverend Gene C. Fant, Senior. He had ministered to us for 22 years.
- September 4, 1999 - Having been designated as a place of refuge by the City of Hampton, Ivy Memorial ministered to local tornado victims.
- January, 2001 - Town Hall meetings were held for the purpose of better understanding our faith.
- 2003 - In an effort to increase church membership, the G.R.O.W. program was begun. Over 800 contacts were made during the first month of the program.
- Summer, 2008 - The Oasis Summer Program with special weekly activities was held.
- 2009 - Ivy Memorial agreed to be used as a shelter for the American Red Cross Disaster Team.
- January, 2012 - Church members began a long range project to decorate the Children's Wing.
- July 26-28, 2013 - Worship services were held each day for the 100th Anniversary Celebration.

# ***Ivy Memorial Baptist Church***

## ***1913 - 2013***

### ***The Beginning***

***I was glad when they said unto me,  
Let us go into the house of the Lord.  
Psalm 122:1***

Ivy Memorial Church had its beginning in July of 1913. At that time, a new neighborhood called Hampton Roads was developing in the southeastern section of Elizabeth City County near Salters Creek. There were few homes to line the long dirt streets and not a single church. The Hampton Roads Christian Union, whose mission was to provide religious training in sparsely settled areas of the United States, owned a small concrete building on Poplar Avenue (later #109) near 19<sup>th</sup> Street. It was there that local denominational ministers and laymen took turns leading an ecumenical Sunday school that met on Sunday afternoons. Also in the neighborhood was a large, well-known home with the name of Elmwood. It was located on Chesapeake Avenue. (Later #225-227.) Long remembered for having spacious rooms that were briefly used for scholastic purposes, Elmwood was often referred to as “The Academy.”

O. J. Brittingham, local resident and member of Newport News Baptist Church, had conducted the Union Sunday school on occasion. Mr. Brittingham became interested in the local children having the opportunity to attend a Baptist Sunday school. He invited a group of local Baptists to his home on June 10, 1913, to discuss whether steps should be taken to organize a church.

At some point, either prior to or during this meeting, Mrs. Mary E. Ivy, who lived on the western side of Salter’s Creek and who was a charter member of Second Baptist Church (Orcutt Avenue), offered to donate land for a first church building. She did this in memory of her husband, Edward Taylor Ivy, who had died the previous December, but did not stipulate that it was a memorial. Mrs. Ivy also gave the privilege of selecting the location of the lots to the church formation group. In response to this generous gift, those meeting that night determined that the proposed church would be named Ivy Memorial Baptist Church in memory of Mr. Ivy.

A committee was formed to speak with other Baptists in the vicinity and to circulate a petition to be signed by those who would be willing to join a new Baptist church named Ivy Memorial, and who would petition the Baptist Association to call a council for the purpose of

organizing this church. The petition read as follows:

*Having had the matter of organizing a Church laid heavily on our hearts, a number of Baptists living in our district gathered at the home of Brother O.J. Brittingham, Tuesday evening, June 10, 1913, to consider the advisability. We went into the matter very thoroughly and we believe we were led by the Spirit in our decision.*

*The duty seems plain and the time at hand for all earnest Baptists to rally to the Master and undertake the work. We, the undersigned members of Baptist churches, here signify our willingness to join a Baptist Church to be organized in our midst and known as "Ivy Memorial," and do petition the Baptist Association to call a council for the purpose of organizing the Church.*

Forty-three signatures were obtained from local Baptists and from other residents who wished to show their support. Mr. and Mrs. Warren Smith and their children were residing at Elmwood at that time. The organizers quickly secured the Smiths' permission to hold the sessions of the Ivy Memorial Baptist Church in the East Room of their home.



*Elmwood, Our Beginning*

A month later, July 11, a council consisting of pastors and delegates from Hampton and Newport News Baptist churches met at Elmwood. After a full discussion, the group decided that it would be wise and proper for Baptists in that section to have a church of their own. Those wishing to be Charter Members were told to secure Letters of Dismissal from their home churches. These letters gave permission to leave the home church and unite with others in organizing Ivy Memorial Baptist Church of Hampton Roads. Ten charter members came from Second Baptist, fifteen from Newport News Baptist, and one from Tabernacle, totaling twenty-six Charter Members.

## Charter Members

Adams, Mr. Joel O.  
Beazlie, Mrs. L.F.  
Beazlie, Miss Annie  
Beazlie, Miss Lola  
Brittingham, O.J.  
Burrell, Mrs. Mary  
Cooper, Mrs. G.W.  
Cooper, Miss Ruth  
Ellis, Mrs. J.H.

Gay, Mr. J.T.  
Gay, Mrs. J.T.  
Gay, Mr. Waylan, H.  
Hartman, Mr. Charles F.  
Hartman, Mrs. Charles F.  
King, Mr. George Bayley  
Kyle, Mrs. T.B.  
Saunders, Mr. C. Bernard  
Saunders, Mrs. C. Bernard

Saunders, Mr. L.B.  
Saunders, Mrs. L.B.  
Shawen, Fred  
Smith, Mr. Warren  
Smith, Mrs. Warren  
Smith, Miss Abbie  
Smith, Mr. Clark B.  
Temple, Mr. J.C.

Ivy Memorial Baptist Church was organized in the Elmwood building on Sunday afternoon, July 27. The Reverend J. T. McGlothin, D.D., professor at the Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, was visiting the area at the time and delivered the dedicatory sermon. Ministers from Hampton Baptist, Memorial Baptist, and Newport News Baptist (First Baptist) were also present. The next evening, July 28, Ivy Memorial was formally organized when a business meeting was held to fill the following church offices:

Trustees: O.J. Brittingham, J. T. Gay, and C. F. Hartman  
Deacons: O.J. Brittingham, G. B. King, C. B. Saunders, and J. C. Temple  
Clerk: J. C. Temple  
Treasurer G. B. King  
Superintendent of Sunday School: O. J. Brittingham

Reverend D. M. Simmons, pastor of Tabernacle Baptist Church, was hired as a temporary supply minister to conduct Sunday afternoon services at Elmwood, beginning at once. The church committee chose three lots, each 25 feet by 165 feet, on Maple Avenue for the location of a church, and in late August Mrs. Ivy purchased the property for \$600.00. Within a few weeks, attendance at the services grew to such an extent that it became necessary to find a larger meeting place. On Sunday, September 28, the congregation began holding services at the nearby Union Mission building and continued to do so for the next 15 months. Reverend Simmons continued as pastor, holding afternoon services after the Union Sunday school was dismissed. Ivy Memorial Sunday school was held at 9:30 a.m. Within a short time, a group of Ivy Memorial ladies were led to organize a Ladies Aid Society with Mrs. J. T. Gay as the first president.

In January, 1914, Mrs. Ivy deeded Ivy Memorial the three lots on Maple Avenue, one of which ran 165 feet along Villa Place. By spring, the beginnings of a small frame building could



*Temporary Home  
1913-1914*

be seen on the property. Laymen volunteers helped with construction, and building materials were donated by members of the church and interested business establishments in the community. In April, the trustees used Mrs. Ivy's gift of land to the church as collateral and successfully applied for a loan of \$600 from a local bank "to be used in erecting a new church house on the lot now owned by it."

Church members provided many of the new church's furnishings. Among them were chairs from Captain J. A. Buxton's furniture business, and pews from Calvary Baptist Church. Mr. Hartman built a pulpit stand, and he and Mrs. C. F. Hartman gave a large pulpit Bible which is still in the possession of Ivy Memorial.

On December 1, 1914, the first services were held in Ivy Memorial Baptist Church. The membership wished to have either morning or evening services. Reverend Simmons could only provide afternoon services because of pastoring Tabernacle Baptist, so his resignation was accepted. Reverend Ernest E. Hemming accepted the call from Ivy Memorial for half-time service and served until April 1, 1916. By this time, membership who had grown from 26 to 120 with 168 enrolled in Sunday school.



*Ivy Memorial's  
First Church Building*

As a result of the ever growing population in neighborhoods near the church, citizens of the local community petitioned the Elizabeth City County Circuit Court to become incorporated as a town with the name of "Hampton Roads." However, that name was denied. The second choice, "Kecoughtan," was approved. In 1916, Ivy Memorial became part of the fast growing town of Kecoughtan and in a position to share God's word with many. The time had come to find a full-time pastor who would help advance Ivy Memorial's mission of saving souls. Arrangements were made with the Baptist State Mission Board to provide a salary supplement.

### *A Time of Expansion*

*For those who wait on the Lord  
Shall renew their strength;  
They shall mount up with wings like eagles,  
They shall run and not be weary,  
They shall walk and not faint.  
Isaiah 40:31*

Just as America was preparing to officially join the World War I effort in 1917, Reverend E. C. Andrews accepted Ivy Memorial's call to be pastor. The church held a successful revival in October, but since the little church had no baptistery, candidates wishing to join the fellowship of the church at that time were baptized at the Newport News Baptist church in downtown Newport News. Reverend Andrews' ministry was marked by growth in both membership and prosperity. In 1919, an educational wing was built on the north side of "the Little White Church" providing classroom space and an enlarged sanctuary. The Buxton Bible class, named for its teacher J. A. Buxton, built its classroom on the east side. The ladies' Fidelis Class built its own room too and named it "Smith Room" in honor of Miss Lois Smith, church pianist, who raised the most money toward the cost.



*Little White Church, with Additions  
1919*

While the population in and around the town of Kecoughtan was steadily increasing, the little white church was becoming overcrowded. If Ivy Memorial members wanted enough space to accommodate new members, then a much larger building would be needed. Planning for a new sanctuary was just beginning when Reverend William M. Jamerson arrived in 1921. He immediately went about organizing Ivy Memorial for greater efficiency. Being a dynamic speaker, he drew a large audience and also promoted the organization of the Baptist Young People Union, missionary activities, and growth of stewardship. In 1923, the Ladies Aid Society and the Woman's Missionary Society consolidated to be known as the Missionary Aid Society. Two years later their name changed to Woman's Missionary Society. Mrs. Jamerson, the pastor's wife, helped form three women's circles.

In March, 1924, Reverend Preston Blake, Jr., was called to pastor Ivy Memorial. The community was expanding, the church was self-supporting, and the future looked bright. The congregation committed to building a new church with a large auditorium, basement, and Sunday school rooms, and the construction began in June of 1925. The wooden church was moved to the back of the lot and was used there until November when the first services were held in the new auditorium. Afterwards, the small building was sold and torn down, having served its young congregation for ten years. The new structure was quite stately, having been built of brick veneer which contrasted with large white columns. The congregation had assumed a great deal of indebtedness in order to meet the \$28,000 cost of the building and an additional \$7,000 for furnishings. Their faith was rewarded upon learning in the summer of 1926 that membership had grown to 237, and nearly 400 were enrolled in Sunday school.

About this time, Ivy Memorial changed its address, though not its location. The town government of Kecoughtan was no more. Its citizens had successfully petitioned the Elizabeth City County Circuit Court to permit the city of Newport News to annex the town from Elizabeth City County. Due to the proximity of the city of Newport News, better services such as fire protection and mail delivery were extended to residents of the former town. Maple Avenue and Ivy Memorial became part of the city of Newport News on January 1, 1926.

When Reverend Norman F. Jacobs came to Ivy Memorial in 1926, the church was experiencing financial prosperity, organizational expansion, and spiritual growth. During the early years of his seven year tenure many were added to the church roll, bringing the membership to over 300 with the Sunday school enrolling nearly 600. Reverend Jacobs and his wife took an active part in the mission program of the church and felt that all women should belong to the Woman's Missionary Society. However, the Great Depression, which began in August of 1929, lasted for several years. The Peninsula area of Virginia was particularly hard hit. Church members were faithful in stewardship, and the church was able to give 25% of its income to missions. Nonetheless, as time passed Ivy Memorial had seen a loss of membership and dwindling contributions before Reverend L.L. Jessup was called to serve as pastor in 1933. In earlier years

Mr. Jessup had been an active member of Ivy Memorial and had been ordained to the ministry from the church.



*1925 Church Building*

Under Reverend Jessup's leadership, the church membership grew from 275 to 451, the Sunday school enrollment was over 600, and the Women's Missionary Society almost doubled in membership, as did the Training Union. The first church bulletin was published in June, 1934, to promote Vacation Bible School. The next year, Ivy Memorial's Vacation Bible School had the largest enrollment in Newport News. Due to a swelling membership, plans were drawn and approved to build a modern educational building which would include a pastor's office and a small library. Construction began in early 1939, and the new facility opened Sunday, October 8, 1939. The addition with equipment cost \$22,000.

The Women's Mission Society was particularly active in the years 1933-43. The ladies directed their efforts to nearby Baptist churches where they organized Women's Missionary Society groups and encouraged the participants to become leaders in their work. The Ivy Memorial group also furnished needed supplies for those churches and assisted in their Vacation Bible Schools. Beyond the immediate neighborhood, the Woman's Missionary Society aided the Weaver Orphanage in Elizabeth City County, the Newport News city jail, Whitaker Hospital, City Home, and City Farm.

While Reverend Frank E. Morris was pastor during the early years of World War II, membership reached over 700 with the addition of the 113 members who came by baptism. When Reverend Morris left in 1943, an electric Hammond organ had been installed in the sanctuary, and a comfortable home at 110 Greenbriar Avenue in Wythe purchased for the use of the pastor. The church also began the employment of a full-time secretary, Mrs. Sadie Suddith, who served the church until her retirement in 1965.

While World War II was being fought, the church displayed a service flag in the sanctuary. Over 160 young men from the church went into the service of our country. Of this number only one, Cecil Reed, was killed in action. He died on the beaches of Normandy, June 6, 1944.

Upon returning for a second pastorate in 1944, Reverend L. L. Jessup led the church in liquidating the building debt and establishing a new building fund, the Unified Budget Plan of Finance. The last indebtedness of the church property was paid in June of 1945. On July 22 of that year, the church held dedication services for the educational building, which had already been used for nearly five years. Additional construction plans were already being made for adding a third story to the educational building and enlarging the church auditorium as soon as possible, as the church membership had increased to 767 with 700 in the Sunday school. Thinking of returning military men, a new Sunday school class was established for young adult men and women. It met for the first time on Sunday, February 6, 1946, with 21 present. In 1948, the church purchased the property of G. B. Nicholls at nearby 24 Park Avenue for a pastorium.

Reverend Walter E. Farrar began his ministry at Ivy Memorial on October 1, 1950. Under his leadership, mission work was encouraged and the membership passed the 1,000 mark. In addition, a new sanctuary was constructed adjacent to the 1925 building at a cost of \$265,000, including furnishings. Adding a new Allen electronic organ and air conditioning made the total cost over \$300,000. The new building consisted of a beautiful brick sanctuary which would seat 800 people, along with a three story educational section. It was dedicated on the forty-fourth anniversary of the church, July 28, 1957. A year later, the newly renovated sanctuary in the 1925 building was dedicated to the memory of Mr. O.J. Brittingham, Ivy Memorial's organizer and promoter, and was afterwards known as the Brittingham Memorial Chapel.



*New Sanctuary  
Dedicated July 28, 1957*



*Brittingham Memorial Chapel  
Dedicated 1958*

Mr. Farrar resigned on October 1, 1958, and Dr. Herman T. Stevens came to be our Interim Pastor. His vast experience as a longtime minister on the Lower Peninsula was very helpful to us, and his ministry was marked by the strengthening of all organizations of the church. His wise and devoted service was much appreciated by the congregation.

### ***Missions in Action***

***My little children, let us not love  
in word or in tongue, but in deed and truth.***

***1 John 3:18***

Rev. C. A. Jolly began his pastorate on June 29, 1959. A few months later, the first Educational Director, Mrs. Mildred Oaks, joined the staff. Membership continued to grow in all phases of the church's activities, as did the income. Reverend Lloyd L. Jessup retired from active ministry and was elected and made Pastor Emeritus of Ivy Memorial on December 31, 1961. In 1963, the church reached an income of \$91,000.00 and gave a record \$22,291.00 to missions. Family Night Suppers began on Wednesday evenings as did Thanksgiving breakfast after the early morning sermon.

Mr. Jolly was instrumental in encouraging Ivy Memorial to sponsor two mission churches, Colony and Seaford, which became churches. Colony Mission later merged with Tabernacle Baptist Church, and Seaford Baptist Mission became Seaford Baptist Church. We also provided assistance to the East Hampton Baptist Church. In addition, Ivy Memorial assisted in establishing a church at Thule, Greenland, which led to establishing five other churches in that country.

On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the church in 1963, it was noted that no record of Ivy Memorial could be complete without mentioning the missionary spirit which has prevailed throughout its history. The product of a missionary spirit itself, the church never failed to support the Cause of Christ around the world. Both gifts and prayers to missions have been liberal. During days of financial strain, Ivy Memorial kept faith with the Mission program and never borrowed from it. There can be no doubt that this church has made a real impact upon its community, upon the hearts of many lives touched by its ministry, and around the world where it has ministered to lost souls through sharing its prayers and worldly goods. Half of the anniversary offering went to the Seaford Mission to help pay for their new property.

## *Led by Faith*

*For God has not given us a spirit of fear,  
but of power and of love and a sound mind.*

*2 Timothy 1:7*

Mr. Jolly resigned In October of 1964. The next year, Dr. Frank E. Morris returned for a second pastorate. His wise leadership was employed many times during the following years. The note for the new sanctuary was burned on November 24, 1968. It was at this time the leadership of the Church became aware that the ministry of Ivy Memorial Church seemed to be approaching its end at the Maple Avenue site. Changing neighborhood patterns, along with social changes, made it apparent that the church could no longer grow in its present location.

Seeking the will of God, the congregation elected a Planning Committee to lead the church in finding a new field of ministry. In June of 1971, the church purchased six acres in an undeveloped area of what would become Hampton's busy Coliseum Central area. Plans were drawn with the concept that construction would take place in stages culminating with a large worship center. The initial work started in the middle of a field without a road leading to it. The church property was reached by proceeding down Marcella Road until it ended and then proceeding approximately one-half mile down a dirt path. Soon after Ivy Memorial's purchase of land, Ivy Avenue Baptist Church of Newport News approached the church with an offer to purchase our buildings. Eventually the amount of \$175,000 was accepted and the sale of 50 Maple Avenue took place in December.

After serving as a stabilizing influence for good in its community for 58 years, Ivy Memorial moved away on January 19, 1972. On the Wednesday night before, the church voted on a motion relative to the future name of the church and agreed to keep the name Ivy Memorial after the move. The church was able to rent space in the former Grace Covenant Presbyterian building, located at 1006 West Mercury Boulevard near North Armistead Avenue. The congregation shared the building with the Wedgewood Dance Studio for 18 months, while conducting normal worship activities, including holding Vacation Bible Schools at the site.

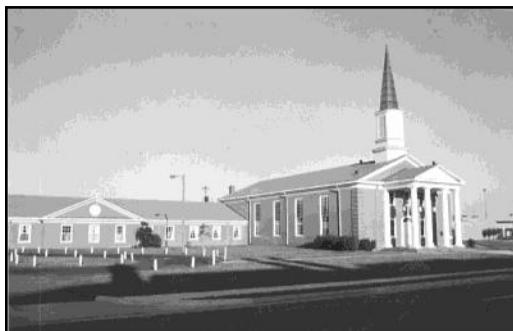


*Temporary Home  
1972-1973*

Around this same time, the names of the Woman's Missionary Union organizations changed. The Woman's Missionary Society became the Baptist Women/Baptist Young Women; Girl's Auxilliary became Girls in Action, and the Sunbeams became Mission Friends. A Recognition Service took the place of coronation ceremonies.

On June 18, 1972, a ground breaking ceremony for a new sanctuary and educational wing took place near the corner of Marcella Road and what would become Coliseum Drive. The congregation and guests first attended services at nearby Thomas Eaton Junior High School, and then walked to the groundbreaking ceremony site where Charter member Mrs. Ruth Sims, the former Ruth Cooper, turned the first shovel of dirt.

After the resignation of Dr. Morris in January, 1973, the Reverend Nolan Houston was called to be our Interim Pastor. The last services in the rental property were held June 27, 1973, and the first service in the new facility was the next week, July 1. Pastor Houston presided over the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as well as the dedicatory services of the first sanctuary and education wings on the new property. A month of celebration commemorated the anniversary and dedication of the church. The Maple Avenue cornerstone was opened July 8, and the Cornerstone Laying Service for the new sanctuary took place the next Sunday, July 15.



*First Mercury Central Sanctuary  
1973*

On September 1, 1974, Reverend Gene C. Fant began his 22 year ministry with us. The church experienced growth in all areas under his leadership. In January, 1976, the church voted to start an 8:30 a.m. worship service. It began in March of that year. In 1979 an educational annex was built to accommodate the increasing number of young people and young adults. By adding a portion of the building funds to the generous gifts of the congregation, the annex was completed without any indebtedness.

In 1983, the Church Planning Committee was given the responsibility of recommending changes that would enhance or improve the church property. Among the projects initiated and implemented by this committee were extensions to the parking lot, lighting of the church steeple, and landscaping the property. This group was renamed the Church Properties Committee.

During the 1980's, Ivy Memorial's youth organizations grew in numbers, enthusiasm, and mission interest. Adults and youth participated in several annual summer mission trips to New York State.

In 1985, a Long Range Planning Committee was created to analyze the church's ministries, facilities, and needs and submit a report on the findings. A year later the committee reported that progress was indicated in the following areas. An aggressive evangelistic effort; expanded senior and single adult ministries and fellowship; active Wednesday night Bible study; investigating the feasibility of weekday ministries; Ivy Memorial's constitution and by-laws being revised; and the Church Property Committee actively studying the long-term needs of the church facilities.

In 1987, Ivy Memorial's congregation supported the financial program of the church with the amount of \$441,763. At that time, the church property was valued at \$1,110,000. Twenty per cent of undesignated receipts were placed in the Cooperative Program. Five percent went to the Peninsula Baptist Association in support of local missions. That year the church's budget provided \$107,081 for mission causes. At that time Ivy Memorial's contributions to mission causes since the church was organized totaled \$1,769,547. Ivy Memorial celebrated its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary in July of 1988. Former pastors Reverend Walter Farrar, Dr. Frank Morris, and Reverend Charles Jolly were here to participate in the week long activities.

No longer in a remote area, the church was in one of the most rapidly developing areas of the Virginia Peninsula. By 1989, Ivy Memorial needed more space for its congregation. Sunday school classes were being held in the choir room, choir loft and church library; renovations were needed in the nursery and pre-school department; the choir room had limited space for the music ministry, and the kitchen needed remodeling. That year a stewardship plan, "Continuing Our Dream," was launched to finance a new worship center and educational space. The theme was "Not Equal Giving, but Equal Sacrifice." By November of that year, the victory goal had been surpassed with pledges amounting to \$864,147.00. Pledges for the annual budget totaled \$487,515.00.

At this time, more than 35 servicemen from Ivy Memorial were serving in the Middle East War. During the summer of 1990, the Music Ministry presented a patriotic musical, "One Nation Under God." The program was advertised widely with free tickets and several

performances were held near the Fourth of July. It was well received and continued to be performed for several years, along with other special musical programs conducted by Dr. Philip Johnson, the Minister of Music at the time. That fall, a groundbreaking ceremony marking the start of construction of a new Worship Center took place September 30. Many members contributed their time, talent, and effort to save money by completing interior jobs themselves. The cornerstone for the new building was laid the next year on Anniversary Sunday, July 28, 1991. Mrs. Ruth Sims and Mr. Ralph Kemp assisted. In 1992, when the new Worship Center opened on February 2, an overflow crowd of 1,367 members and visitors attended the first service. A record attendance of 1,071 took place on Easter Sunday in 1993.



*One Nation Under God*

The early 1990s found Ivy Memorial to be flourishing. Out of 60 local Baptist churches and missions, Ivy Memorial was listed as 4th highest in both 1990 and 1991. That fall, the church sent Pastor Fant and his wife Ramona on a mission trip to Yugoslavia. Ivy Memorial's float won First Place in the 2004 Coliseum Christmas Parade. Previously, the church had received the Mayor's Civic Award in 1992. Sadly, we lost our last living charter member of the church, Mrs. Ruth Sims, formerly Ruth Cooper, in August of 1993.

In April, 1995, the church paid \$350,000.00 for two large lots adjacent to our property in anticipation of future expansion. That fall a capital stewardship campaign with a three year commitment began. Its theme was "Together We Grow AGAIN". Its purpose was to provide funding for building a new 16 classroom education annex and finish paying for the property bought in April. A total of \$524,189 was pledged by November.



*Reverend Fant and Reverend Poole  
1998*

Ivy Memorial was actively serving the Lord at Mercury Central by ministering to the growing community and continuing its support and encouragement of mission efforts. In October, Pastor Fook Wong of the Chinese Promise Baptist Church in Brooklyn, New York, visited and thanked us for the mission groups from Ivy Memorial who conducted Vacation Bible Schools at his church. Ivy women and young people traveled to Brooklyn several summers to carry out this mission work.

Pastor Gene Fant's resignation was accepted June 23, 1996. He and Ramona had ministered to us for 22 years. Three weeks later our church secretary, Jackie Byrum, retired after 33 years of service. Reverend David Bounds was called as interim pastor in August. His sermons revealing the Bible were appreciated, and he visited all who needed him. He felt the following Bible verse was particularly appropriate for the church membership while it sought a new pastor.

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart,  
And lean not on your own understanding;  
In all your ways acknowledge Him  
And He shall direct your paths.  
Proverbs 3:5-6*

The note on the lots purchased in 1995 was paid off in 18 months, half the time expected. In 1998, Wes Garrett, a former member of our church, became director of the Johanning Baptist Community Center in Washington, D. C. We sent the Center school supplies for a "Christmas in August" program and did the same for our local Friendship House. Pastor Bounds left to take another pastorate a week before the Reverend Michael Poole arrived to be our pastor on August 16, 1998. At Christmastime, Pastor Poole made arrangements for the congregation to have a special telephone call from Philip Johnson, our former Minister of

Music, and his wife, Peggy, who were in Honduras as missionaries. The mission gifts from Ivy Memorial in the period 1997-1998 totaled \$93,504.

January of 1999 began with a new campaign entitled "Standing on the Edge of Tomorrow." Its purpose was to learn where we were as a church and where we wanted our church to go in the future. In May, a special message was brought to us by Mike Chance, a former Minister of Education at Ivy.

Our church had previously been designated a place of refuge in cases of emergency by the city of Hampton, so when a tornado struck On September 4, 1999, our church building was quickly opened. The violent windstorm directly struck apartments and a retirement community located near Ivy Memorial. Several hundred displaced people began arriving who needed care until further arrangements could be made for them. Our members quickly came to minister to the victims, especially to the seniors who were brought to us by bus. Later, those who remained were taken to a nearby motel where church members helped them get settled.

In the late fall of 1999, the men of the church planned and carried out a special program for Christmas giving. An Angel Tree, for children whose fathers were currently in prison, was placed in a specified location of the church. The men obtained the names of children along with an idea for a gift each child would like. Then information tags were hung on the Christmas tree for selection by church members. After presents were bought, wrapped, and deposited under the tree, the men delivered them to the homes of the children.

## ***Transitions***

***Finally, my brethren be strong in the Lord  
and in the power of His might.  
Jeremiah 29:10***

Pastor Poole left in January of 2000 after being called to a church in Richmond, and Reverend David Burgess came to be our Intentional Interim Pastor in July. Pastor Burgess had taken special training in order to help churches such as ours whose pastor had resigned before a new one had been called. He led the congregation in examining the characteristics of the church family and helped form a Transitional team whose purpose was "to gain an understanding of the impact our church heritage, previous pastors and staff, and congregational interaction had on the attitudes of church members and the future of the church." On February 10, 2002, the Transition team presented their final report, and the Pastor Search Committee began their mission of selecting a person for pastor of Ivy Memorial. Pastor Burgess gave his resignation at the time the Pastor's Search Committee prepared to call a candidate. Dr. Keith Wrenn came as our new pastor on September 22.



*Making a joyful noise*

Dr. Wrenn initiated a new program for Ivy Memorial which began in 2003. It was called G.R. O. W. and meant Church Growth in membership. Over 800 contacts were made the first month of the program. Carol Martin, the church's Education Ministry Assistant, retired from her office duties after 25 ½ years. Dr. Wrenn resigned in 2004.

Mr. Lamar Black, who had been the Minister of Discipleship since 1999, was ordained in 2001. He served the church as a spiritual leader and administrative supervisor for the congregation and staff until Dr. Fred King came as an interim pastor some weeks later. Unfortunately, Dr. King died unexpectedly in December, 2004.

Dr. Albert Peverall, an Intentional Interim pastor who followed Dr. King, led the membership in many Town Hall discussions concerning the matter of continuing its membership and support of the Peninsula Baptist Association, the Baptist General Association of Virginia, the Southern Baptist Convention, and the International Baptist Convention. After much discussion and prayer, the church decided to retain our membership in all four organizations.

The church's constitution and by-laws had already been studied carefully and had undergone some major changes. After the establishment of a Mission statement and the determination of a focus for the future, new Councils evolved to handle church responsibilities. Ministry became the emphasis for the Deacons, setting goals the emphasis for the Leadership Council, and carrying out the goals the emphasis for the Administrative Council. Next a Faith Statement, Constitution, and Bylaws were developed and accepted by the membership.

In October, 2005, the Pastor Search Committee presented Reverend John Etcher to be our Senior Pastor. He and his wife Philinda were warmly welcomed. Pastor John soon initiated a men's group which began by meeting for fellowship at the church on Saturday mornings.

Ivy Memorial had a membership of 1,087, including 143 non-residential members, in 2006. An energetic summer activity that took place in 2008 was the Oasis Summer fest which was held in the church parking lot. Weekly activities of Bible study, volleyball, softball team games, exercise, and special events that included dodge ball and volleyball tournaments were very popular. The beginning of financial crises for many individuals and institutions also took place in 2008. As a result, the church's income declined, but the church stayed committed to missions. The next year's budget for Mission and Ministries was \$68,600.



*Our Future*

Men, women, and young people from Ivy Memorial have personally taken part in mission trips to faraway places which included China, Yugoslavia, Haiti, Africa, Cuba, Brazil, and England as well as those closer to home: Bland County, Virginia, Brooklyn, New York, Pennsylvania, building projects where needed, and hurricane assistance. In 2009, Ivy Memorial agreed to be used as a shelter for the American Red Cross Disaster Team.

The doors of the church opened to a wider view of ministry to our neighbors when the Peninsula Agency on Aging became the first outside group to use the church building for fellowship, exercise, crafts and lunch three days a week. Since then, Ivy Memorial has become a distribution point for Meals on Wheels. Our members manage a weekly Food Pantry which helps 20-25 families at a time. Ivy Memorial takes a turn providing hosts, meals, and lodging for Hampton's homeless during the winter months as part of H.E.L.P.'s "A Night's Welcome" annual program. Every Friday during the school year, 150-200 participants of the homeschooling organization PAGE use the church for several hours, allowing them to participate in a group learning environment with a Christian atmosphere. A women's Bible study group consisting of over 200 members has also utilized our building.

The Children's Ministry at Ivy Memorial is currently using Awana, a world-wide non-denominational biblical program for our youth, which has been in place since 2003. Praise Time (PT) for the younger children on Sunday mornings has been well received as has the children's singing performances lovingly led by dedicated lay members. In January, 2012, church members began a long range project to redecorate the children's Sunday school hall walls with cheerful, religious artwork.

In 2013, Ivy Memorial has a membership of 971. Ivy Memorial actively serves the Lord at Mercury Central by sharing God's love and sponsoring several activities throughout the year that are open to all. Each occasion is well advertised beforehand. Annual community events sponsored by the church include an Easter Egg Hunt, Vacation Bible School, a Sports Camp for 1-6 grade children, a family-oriented Fall Festival, and Children's Christmas Parties.



*Our Worship Center opened in 1992*

As we celebrate the first one hundred years of the life of Ivy Memorial Baptist Church, may we all pray that the foundation stones of faith, courage, sacrifice, and love for Christ which have already been laid, be only stepping stones to greater things as our church enters a new century of service in the Master's name.

*Sources of information: Ivy Memorial Commemorative Booklets and Scrapbooks; [The History of First Baptist Church of Newport News, Virginia, from 1883-1933](#) by Lewis Peyton Little; [Times-Herald](#) and [Daily Press](#) newspapers; [First Baptist Church of Newport News](#); [Orcutt Avenue Baptist Church](#); [Hampton and Newport News Public Libraries](#)*

# Ivy Memorial 100th Anniversary Committee

Chairman - George Morgan

Vice Chairman - Sharon Tanner

## Members

Willard and Virginia Bauserman, Wayne Blanks, Ralph and Margaret Bundick, Gertrude Burks, June Clark, Etta Cross, Murphy and Lois Davis, Joy Ewell, Helen Foster, Carolyn Hawkins, Paul Jaffeux, Dawn Montgomery, George and Laura Morgan, Helen Morris, George and Helen Oden, Betty Ray, Sharon Rossman, Bob and Sharon Tanner, Jim and Ruth Thomas, Margaret Wilson, Peggy Wolfley

## Subcommittees

Audio/Video: Wayne Blanks, Lisa Davis, Tim Davis

Bulletin Board: Bobbi Morris

Cookbooks: Donna Garrett, Margaret Wilson

Decorations: Bob and Sharon Tanner

Events for Children: Sharon Rossman

Flowers: Joy Ewell, Julie Lloyd

History Subcommittee: Etta Cross, Carolyn Hawkins, Bobbi Morris, Helen Morris, Jeanette Morris, George Oden, Ruth Thomas

Hospitality: Virginia Bauserman, Joy Ewell, Margaret Wilson

Hostesses: Elizabeth Wells, Chairman. Linda Crawford, Carol Gwaltney, Bobbi Morris, Yolanda Oakley, Jeannette Parsell, Ruth Thomas, Peggy Wolfley

Invitations: Willard Bauserman, Bobbie Lockwood, Pastor John Etcher

Logo: Bob and Sharon Tanner

Mementos: Margaret Bundick, Sharon Tanner

Parking: Ralph Bundick

Proclamation: Jim Thomas

Program: Willard Bauserman, Pastor John Etcher, Jeanette Morris

Publicity and Promotion: Virginia Bauserman, Bernie Conner, Ginny Hopkins, Sharon Tanner

A special thanks to Gertrude Burks, Vicky Cox, Helen Foster, Bill Grey, Brian Lockwood, Dick Parsell, Ivy Memorial Baptist Youth, Parkview Baptist Youth, Clean-Up Committee, Parking Lot Specialists, Ivy Staff Members: Rev. John Etcher, Ginny Hopkins, Henriette Lambert, Bobbie Lockwood, Dr. Bill Melton, Billy Moore, Michelle Munger, Karen Poplin, Shannon Walker, Gina Zeigler, and to all others who have helped in planning and carrying out our 100th Anniversary activities.

## **Ivy Memorial Baptist Church 100th Anniversary Events**

### **Sunday, July 7**

Proclamation from the City of Hampton in honor of our 100th Anniversary, presented by Councilman Billy Hobbs at our Worship Service

### **Sunday, July 14**

Recognition of all 50 years and longer members of Ivy in the morning worship service

### **Friday, July 26**

6:30 pm Worship Service

- Reverend Michael Poole, former pastor and guest speaker
- Special music by Ramona Fant (Mona Faith)
- Testimony shared by Reverend Mike Chance
- Celebration of the Lord's Supper
- Ice Cream Social to follow

### **Saturday, July 27**

2:00 pm Worship Service

- Reverend David Bounds, former interim pastor and guest speaker
- Special music by Ramona Fant (Mona Faith), the Children's Choir, Ivy's Praise Band, and Peggy Johnson and Steve Coombs
- Dedication of the Children's Wing and Playground
- Social to follow

### **Sunday, July 28**

10:00 am Worship Service

- Reverend Gene Fant, Senior, former pastor and guest speaker
- Testimony shared by Dr. Philip Johnson and his wife, Peggy
- Special music by the Celebration Choir under the direction of Dr. Philip Johnson, and solo by Shannon Walker

12:00 noon Lunch by reservation



*The influence of Ivy Memorial is like a mighty river bed which is a conduit for the Water of Life. Many wonderful disciples have preceded us, guarding its purity and sharing it with a world which is spiritually thirsty.*

*We owe much to them.*

*The challenge belongs to us today to faithfully preach Christ and practice His teaching until He comes again.*

- Former Pastor Gene C. Fant, Senior



