

Testerina Primitive Baptist Church History

ROLL OF PASTORS SINCE 1871

1871 – 1890 Elder Moses Vaughn

1890 – 1932 Elder Henry Johnson

1933 – 1948 Elder Clifford T. Hillyard

1949 – 1957 Elder G. W. Hill

1957 – 1963 Elder Culbert W. Williams

1963 – 1992 Elder G. W. Hill

1992 – to Present Elder L. Austin

Testerina Primitive Baptist Church was first organized in a brush arbor about one-half mile east of its present location just a few years after the Emancipation of the Slaves. In 1871, a small group of Christians chose Elder Moses Vaughn as the Pastor and organizer of Testerina Primitive Baptist Church. Little is known of him other than the fact that he was an Ex-Slave and a native of Leon County. He served from 1871 until his death in 1890. The following Deacons were selected and ordained under Elder Moses Vaughn: Deacons Burden Clack, Henry Wilken, and Alford Austin. Along with Elder Moses and the Deacons, a few unconverted persons served faithfully as Trustees, Mr. Caleb Hawkins, Mr. John Davis, and Mr. Malachi Barnes, Sr. The unconverted persons later converted and became members of the church. In 1884, the members came into possession of the present spot of land and built a wooden building.

After the death of Elder Vaughn, the church later elected Elder Henry Johnson in 1890. He baptized and received more members in the church than any Minister of his time. Under his pastorate, the church was enlarged, and several additions were made. Elder Johnson served until his death in 1932.

During the period 1933-1948, Elder Clifford T. Hillyard served as Pastor. In 1942, the building was destroyed by fire, and a new building was constructed in 1943. Under his pastorate, the first Usher Board was organized.

During the period 1949-1957, Elder G. W. Hill served as Pastor. Under his pastorate, the first choir was organized. From this group, two choirs were formed a Junior and Senior. Many additions were made to the building, including the choir stand and choir room. Also, the church obtained a clear title of deeds, and a cornerstone was laid.

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During the period 1957-1963, Elder Culbert W. Williams served as Pastor. Under his pastorate, the cafeteria was constructed, and a cornerstone was laid.

In May of 1963, Elder G. W. Hill was again elected and served as Pastor until his death in August 1992. Under his pastorate, a male choir and additional mixed choirs were organized, the restrooms and Pastor's Study were modernized, and the choir rooms were expanded.

Elder Larry Austin was elected as Interim Pastor after the passing of Elder G. W. Hill in 1992 and elected Pastor on April 25, 1993. Elder Austin is the first Pastor to be elected to serve as a full time Pastor at Testerina Primitive Baptist Church on November 1, 2007. Under his pastorate, progress has continued in spirit, membership, and auxiliaries. The cafeteria and restrooms were remodeled, new furniture and appliances purchased, installed new pews, new stain windows, carpet and custom curtains placed in the sanctuary. The church also purchased 8 acres of land adjacent to the original land, started a transportation ministry in 2008 after purchasing our first church van, purchased and installed TV monitors and an audio and video entertainment system. The following Deacons has worked and/or is working alongside Pastor Austin: Deacons Elkins Austin, Ernest Proctor, Elbert Ferrell, Jeff Washington, James Ferrell, Crosby Whitaker, and Obediah Rhodes.

Many accomplishments have been made and we look forward to expanding the building structure, along with many other long-range goals.

We must ensure that this growth continues for those who will succeed us. Of course, our greatest reward is to receive the glory of eternal life with our Father in Heaven.