

Northern Kentucky Views Presents:

Stonelick Baptist Church

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**Stonelick Baptist Church, 1796-1996:
200 Years**

By

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The Stonelick Baptist Church is located in Mason County, Kentucky, on the Stonelick Road about a mile from the Maysville-Mount Carmel Road and two miles from the village of Orangeburg. The church is remarkable, not for any period of particular brilliance, but for its long record of service. It has an active congregation and weekly services at present.

Stonelick Baptist is a Southern Baptist Church. It was constituted in 1796 by William Wood and united with the Elkhorn Association that same year. It reported twenty members, the following year forty-two were baptized. In 1838 it reported nineteen members and continued to dwindle until in 1876 it reported only nine members.

Messengers from eight churches met at Bracken Meeting House, near the site of Minerva, in Mason County, on May 28, 1799-one was Stonelick-and formed the Bracken Association. Five of these churches had been released from the Elkhorn Association. In the years 1801, 1810, 1868 and 1891, the annual meeting of the Bracken Association was held at Stonelick Baptist. In 1862 this association had twenty-six churches with a membership of 2,575. It lost about 1,000 member by the severance of African-Americans from its membership at the close of World War II.

On December 11, 1858, eleven men and women drew up and adopted a constitution, church covenant and rules for deacons. These are still used by the church today. The only addition to these is that the business meetings held at the church today are run by Roberts Rules of Order.

By viewing two deeds concerning the Stonelick property one, made in 1858, speaks of an earlier deed of October 23, 1797. The land was conveyed from Pheneas Thomas to the then trustees Aaron Houghton, James McKoy and Henry Stansel. The other deed of August 6, 1839 conveyed an

additional small parcel of land from John Bean to the Stonelick Church property.

A church book of the Stonelick Baptist Church, which is a monthly record of the church affairs from November 1879 through April 1929, was found to be similar to a record book of the Cabin Creek Church (which is now owned by the Maysville Public Library.) There were breaks in the church book in the period covered and the degree of fullness varied considerably. The main concerns of the church body seem to fall into the following classifications:

(1) Getting a minister and seeing that he was paid. Through this period Stonelick rarely had a minister for more than a month. His salary was usually around \$200 a year. Nearly every case, a motion was made for a committee to study means of increasing the pastor's salary. Money was not plentiful and generally no increase was possible.

(2) Housekeeping arrangements of various kinds. The employment of a janitor was \$12 a month, and later twenty. Also purchases were made from time to time of coal, a stove, hinges, new lamps, chairs, an organ, windows and the stiles. Frequent mention is made of painting the church, however some of these plans have fallen through because money was always a problem. In one instance the Mite Society bought paint for the church.

(3) Bracken Association. The Bracken Association was and is important in holding together the churches of its territory. It evidently helped some of the smaller churches financially. Records of selecting members to represent Stonelick at the association meetings corresponding with the association and providing a meeting place for the association appears in the church book.

(4) Disciplinary action was taken against various erring members of the fold, sometimes by a curt statement of someone being excluded from membership. In most cases, however, a committee would be appointed to call on the member for explanation of conduct. Evidently a great deal of patience was exercised by the church. One church member in particular, often in good standing and selected to represent the church at meetings of the Bracken Association and elsewhere, would continue to dance in public despite several warnings.

According to the minutes of the church record book in the years 1879 through 1929, one of the concerns of the people was the building of a new church. In August of 1881 a committee was appointed to solicit funds to build a new church. In November of 1882 a building committee was appointed to write to Brother Felix to preach the dedicatory sermon of the new church. The exact date of the dedication was printed in the *Maysville Bulletin* of November 22, 1882. The following news items concerning Orangeburg appeared in the *Maysville Bulletin*:

September 27, 1883 - A new meeting house is about completed, sinners are beginning to tremble fearing the demonstration.

November 22, 1883 - The "dedication" was quite a success financial and in point of numbers. Nearly enough was contributed to pay off the church debt. Elder Keyes employed as Pastor at Stonelick.

There is nothing in the record to indicate what happened to the old church or if the new was built on the exact site of an earlier church, but Mr. George Sedden said that the old church (built out of log) was "torn down so that the new church could be built." Originally the pulpit was at the entrance end of the church and late comers had to enter and seek their pews

in view of the entire congregation. The pulpit has now been reversed and tardy members can gain their seats without disturbing the entire service.

In 1904 there was a motion to move the church to the "pike", but this attempt failed. One might assume the "pike" is the main road in Orangeburg.

Names of ministers who served, or in some instances only preached at Stonelick include: Reverend Harry W. Mitchell, Reverend W. D. Hendrixson, Reverend J. S. Felix, Reverend W. B. Smith, Reverend C. Keyes, Reverend A. Jackson, Reverend Pollard, Reverend R. H. Tolle, Reverend Ellis, Reverend Thomas Williams, Reverend Z. W. Sturdevant, Reverend Brown, Reverend Owen, Reverend A. I. Voris, Reverend Noah Poole, Reverend A. B. Chocklet, Reverend W. J. E. Cox, Reverend Don Candy and Reverend Carlos Anderson.

There is an old cemetery adjoining the church. From the dates of the Markers, the cemetery has been used as burying ground almost from the very establishment of the church. The cemetery has been recorded by a member of the Mason County Genealogical Society and is in the organization's publication of Mason County Cemetery Records.

One of the oldest stones still standing, records the death date of Nancy Parks, who died April 1, 1819-age 40. This cemetery also contains tombstones for two Revolutionary War Soldiers-Leonard Bean and John Dye.