

NORTHERN KENTUCKY VIEWS PRESENTS:

The Gratz Baptist Church

by
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**A History of Owen County Baptist
Association and Its Churches**

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THE GRATZ BAPTIST CHURCH

The Gratz Baptist Church was organized and constituted (as Mint Springs) on January 10, 1846. Deacons were: William Threlkeld and James Goodrich. There is little known of the church history in that long ago period.

It is stated in J. W. Waldrop's History of Concord Association "that Gratz Church was received by letter from Franklin Association in August 1882. J. A. Head was pastor and they had 150 members.

Owen County churches were members of different associations until Owen County Association was formed in 1924 and Concord Association came to an end. Concord Association came out of Franklin Association in 1821. Evidently, Gratz (as Mint Springs) was a member of Franklin Association for many years before asking for membership in Concord Association. It is not known just when the name changed from Mint Springs to Gratz.

"I remember my mother (Nannie Minish Massie) telling me she remembered when the present church was being built about 1878 to 1880. Church members helped with the construction of the building, and the women fed the workers. It was built in a grove of trees in the town of Gratz. My grandparents, Josie and Thadeus Minish and Mr. J. V. Rankin were charter members.

For years the pastors were mostly students from the Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, and they would come by Boat on Friday afternoon and hold services on Saturday and Sunday. My grandfather being a deacon, and living near the wharf and church building, met many of

these ministers and they would spend the week end in his home. My mother often remarked that she was sorry she did not keep a list of these preachers for there was quite a number of them.

(Signed) Joan Minish Massie

Some of the pastors known to have served at Gratz are: Rev. J. S. Ransdell (1905); C. W. Rees (1910); E. H. Curry (1911); L. H. Gardner (1912); F. M. Huggins (1913); A. G. Prestage (1916); Levi Kemper (1919); Perry F. Webb (1920); W. C. Harrison (1922); E. R. Sams (1926); Everett Cobb (1926); J. G. Prather, who served for six years (1927-1932); C. W. Whitton (1953).

"My husband, Walter W. Oliver, called to Gratz Baptist Church, as pastor in 1935 and remained pastor until his death November 21, 1953. The church had quarter time for 3 years then went to half time." Grace Lee Noel Oliver.

Later pastors have been C. B. Drake (1954); Wayne Kelley (1958-1963); Harry Puryear (1964).

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