

BARING CROSS BAPTIST CHURCH
TO OBSERVE 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Baring Cross Baptist Church, located at 13th and Parker Streets in North Little Rock, will observe its fiftieth anniversary during the week of October 18-25. One of the outstanding features of the anniversary celebration will be a tea honoring all the former pastors of the church. The Anniversary Committee with Lloyd Cameron as chairman is doing an excellent job of whetting the interest of the membership in the church's historical background. Old pictures showing scenes from the early days of the church, portraits of former pastors, and other similar items have been collected. Every week some of these pictures are displayed on a large bulletin board in the front of the auditorium. Most of the church minutes and other records are still on file in the church office, and are being diligently studied in preparation for the anniversary observation.

At the time of the organization of the church, Baring Cross was a separate city, and the church was called the First Baptist Church of Baring Cross, Arkansas. Later, when Baring Cross became a part of North Little Rock, the name of the church was changed to Baring Cross Baptist Church.

From the minutes of the first meeting, we read: "A Presbytery consisting of Elders B.N. Brooks, T. W. O'Kelly, and J.U.H. Wharton met a number of brethren and sisters of Baring Cross in Bauman's Hall on Tuesday evening, 8 o'clock, October 20, 1903, for the purpose of organizing a regular Missionary Baptist Church." Bauman's Hall still stands on the corner of 8th Street and Pike Avenue. The room used for the meeting was the only hall in the locality that could accommodate large crowds, and was used as a town council room and as a meeting place for clubs and other groups.

The first minutes continue: "Elder B. N. Brooks was chosen for moderator and J. U. H. Wharton secretary of the Presbytery. Elder T. W. O'Kelly read a scripture lesson and led in prayer, after which the following brothers and sisters presented "Letters of Dismission" from regular Missionary Baptist Churches, which were read by Elders B. N. Brooks and T. W. O'Kelly, viz: Brother and Sister A. M. Lee, Sisters P. C. Lee, Julia Lee, Sallie O. Lee, Inez Lee, Brother and Sister J. W. Mitchner, Brother and Sister C. J. Lee, Brother Attie Mitchner, Brother and Sister W. H. Gill, Brother and Sister C. D. Lewis, Brother and Sister R. E. Lee, Sisters M. S. Moore, Mary Muse, L. A. Finnegan, Kate McCutcheon, Sarah Baumgardner, L. V. Pollack, J. T. Vann, Bela Vann, Brother and Sister W. Vann, and Brother J. L. Lee." For many years following, the designations Brother and Sister appear on the church books instead of Mr., Mrs., and Miss.

Twenty pastors have served the church. They are: Thomas J. Baker, G. S. Daugherty, W. M. Wright, W. T. Fortner, W. L. A. Strongerg, L. C. Vermillion, Earl A. Delaney, Chris Dean, W. H. Love, J. S. Pate, A. J. Ashburn, J. D. Norris, Guy Jenkins, Mr. McGraw, W. E. Corder, M. A. Treadwell, L. O. McCracken, Taylor Stanfill, Harvey A. Elledge, and Dr. D. David Garland. Invitations have been extended to all of these men to attend the anniversary celebration.