

## THE HISTORY OF GREAT OAKS CHURCH OF CHRIST CONGREGATION

In February of 1992, E.L. & Sue Whitaker were involved in a home Bible study with three other families at the home of Ronnie & Debbie Martin. They met for several weeks and at the conclusion of these meetings, they started talking about a need for a congregation in the Brunswick area. It was also during this time that E. L. Whitaker and David Looney had been discussing plans along the same line. Several other families met with them and talked about how they could begin this new work. Those involved were Larry & Pattye Jackson, Ronnie & Debbie Martin, Rick & Carol Martin, Marvin Mann, and David & Kay Looney. As a result of those meetings came forth a plan of action. The process soon began – they needed to secure a meeting place, pick out a name, and set up a budget. The name Great Oaks church of Christ was decided upon and the first budget of \$1,200 a week was set. Tommye Jo Jamison told them to talk to Ellen Davies Rodgers and see if she would allow them to meet for worship services in a building she owned in the Davies Plantation area. The foundation had been laid and many miles were covered as they began the hard work of turning this dream into a reality.

On Father's Day, Sunday, June 21, 1992 with five charter families, Great Oaks held its first service in Hill's Barn. It soon came to be known as "The Barn". David Looney was the first pulpit preacher. There were 111 people present that first Sunday morning and the rest, as they say, is history!

After almost four years from its inception, they saw the construction of a new building, the purchase of 11 acres of land, and the addition of two elders and five deacons. On January 22, 1995, they met for their very first service in their new building that we currently meet in today. They were excited to have 212 in attendance for Bible Study and 297 for morning worship service. The membership had grown from 5 families to over 110.

On June 17, 2007, Father's Day, we passed our 15 year milestone. The congregation has continued to grow. We have seen a new addition added to the existing building with a gym and kitchen for fellowship as well as 10 classrooms, 2 restrooms, and a youth room. We currently have five elders and twenty deacons and a full-time staff of four - a pulpit minister, an associate minister, a youth minister and a secretary. Our average attendance for 2008, as of July 16, is 248 for Sunday morning Bible Study and 384 for morning worship service. Our weekly budget is \$12,886 and we have more than 180 families on the church roll.

Truly, we have been richly blessed by the Lord and He is given all the glory. Over the years, we have been joined in our efforts by many wonderful families who have taken seriously the glorious opportunities to build up the kingdom in this area. Yes, this church did have very humble beginnings and that is the story behind our name. As Kay Looney once said, "We will start small, but I know what we will become; from little acorns grow great oaks!"

