

A HISTORY OF NORTH OAKS BAPTIST CHURCH

North Oaks Baptist Church began in the heart of God as He looked upon the masses of unchurched people in north-west Harris county who needed His love.

God called Pastor Fred W. Wiesen of Park Heights Baptist Church in San Angelo, Texas to resign and move to this area to begin a work that would reach out to those who were without a personal knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Since Union Baptist Association had been unable to find an area church willing to provide support for the new work, Pastor Wiesen, and his wife Nancy, realized that God expected them to step out in faith and depend upon Him to provide for their needs.

When Pastor Wiesen resigned Park Heights Baptist Church on July 27, 1980, God acted immediately to provide His resources to meet their needs. When the Park Heights members accepted his resignation, they also chose to become a part of what God was doing by voting to continue salary support for the remainder of 1980. God channeled additional help through others to demonstrate to the Wiesens that simple obedience and trust allow Him to meet needs.

God also moved in the hearts of a young couple named Dwight and Gloria Fern to take a similar step of faith and touched the hearts of several individuals to become His channel of support for them. The Wiesens moved to north

Harris County on August 15, 1980, and the Ferns joined them a short time later.

Having no nucleus of Southern Baptists to begin with, and knowing none in the area, made it easier for them to understand that they must simply ring door bells and locate the people that God intended for them to reach. Visiting more than 13,000 homes, the Wiesens and Ferns gained some valuable insights about the make-up of the people in their area, such as: only 2% of the people were Baptists; 65% were Catholic; 85% of the residents had moved into the area from the Midwest or the northeast; and 80% had never been presented the Gospel.

On September 29, 1980, Pastor Wiesen started a Bible Study in his home on "How to Study The Bible." October 5, 1980, marked the first worship service in the Wiesen home attended by fifteen people. As the number grew, larger facilities were required. A vacant store was available at the corner of Louetta Road and Champion Forest Drive, but the rent was more than the little church could afford. This required another step of faith. God met this need by His timely provision of a sponsoring church, Forest Cove Baptist Church of Humble, which gave North Oaks \$1,000 per month. It was the precise amount needed!

The next step of faith concerned the purchase of a church site which had become available. Feeling strongly that the present site was the place where God wanted the church to be located, four men, Bob Doughtie, Sid Williamson, Dwight Fern, and Fred Wiesen, agreed to take a giant step of faith and signed the contract to purchase the land in January 1981, although no help was visible to provide the necessary finances. By the time the purchase of the land was consummated, God had led the Baptist Church Loan Corporation of the Baptist Convention of Texas to provide the necessary loan.

As God continued to add new families, it became obvious that plans must be made to construct a church building. Each member began praying to determine what God would provide through them. Then they assembled at a banquet in December of 1981 to gather their commitments. A minimum of \$100,000 was needed. Since God had revealed what He wanted to provide through each member privately, each of them turned in their cards unsigned, with the figure that God had revealed to each of them. That night, the gifts and pledges from less than two dozen families totaled \$121,420!

God then provided His resources through friends who came to help construct the building. First, Ed and Ruth Lynn Armstrong, long-time friends of the Wiesens, came to supervise the laying of the foundation. Then, under the leadership of Olen Miles, thirty-six couples of the Texas Baptist Retirees moved their travel trailers to the church site in April of 1982. These men and women gave of their time and labor to construct the building out of their love for the Lord Jesus Christ.

The first services were held in the beautiful new building on May 23, 1982, and the building was dedicated to the Lord when the church was formally constituted on September 19, 1982. Significantly, at the organizational service, the people of North Oaks made the decision to sponsor two new missions. The building provided the opportunity for growth and by the end of 1982, the membership, attendance and giving of the people had doubled that of the previous year.

As God had used persecution to scatter the members, and their zeal for the lost, in the early church of Acts 8:1, He used the economic recession to move the majority of faithful North Oaks members to other places to share their faith. Starting with 1983, a large portion of the membership of North Oaks moved away each of the following three years. Seemingly, they went to other places to find work, but, in reality, they were simply God's missionaries from North Oaks.

The strength and size of North Oaks was affected, but God poured out His blessings and soon more building space was needed. Following the pattern established in 1981, the members sought to know God's will regarding what He wanted to give through each of them. Another banquet was held in April, 1989, to gather the gifts and commitments of the members which totaled \$70,000. This made it possible to complete the next building

debt-free.

In August of 1989, Mike Doughtie was added to the ministerial staff as Minister of Music and Youth. Since that time, North Oaks has been blessed by significant growth in both areas of ministry. With excitement and anticipation, the people of North Oaks look forward to experiencing God's blessings in the future.