



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
GRAND PRAIRIE SIGNIFICANT LANDMARK
Site Medallion No. 46
310 SW 3RD STREET**

In 1906 a determined group of locals met to discuss the possibility of creating a new Presbyterian Church in Grand Prairie. Though their backgrounds within the denomination were disparate, together they agreed to unite with the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. to further their common goal of an establishment in which to share their faith. On February 24, 1907, nineteen pioneering members were officially chartered by the Presbytery of Dallas, giving birth to the First Presbyterian Church of Grand Prairie. The charter members were: Miss Sadie Millar, Mr. and Mrs. Jake Jackson, Miss Ethel Jackson, Mr. and Mrs. Jim Witherspoon, Mrs. John (Winnie) Hale, Mr. and Mrs. G.V. Millar, Miss Ruth Millar, Mrs. Bert Horn, Mr. and Mrs. A.T. Horton, Mr. Lee, Mrs. E.E. Hall, Dr. H.V. Copeland, Hix Jackson, Grover Jackson, and F.M. Harris.

The church began without a permanent house of worship. Likewise, the pulpit had no pastor to call its own until the Rev. W.C. Baber was installed in December of 1911. In the same year the congregation moved from the Methodist Church to a building built by the Grand Prairie Civic Club in order to be able to hold morning services. The building had a tin roof and a grass floor which proved to be too warm for summer services. The church rented the Woodmen of the World Hall located at the corner of Jefferson and Center which was the previous site of Wyatt's Cafeteria.

In 1912 under the leadership of Rev. Baber, the church built its first sanctuary at the corner of Center and Dallas streets. The membership was still small, but with a donation from the Board of Missions and hard work, the church was completed.

The years ahead had their share of bumps in the road for FPC-Grand Prairie. Several years after the christening of the original 1912 sanctuary, the congregation was looking to build a larger meeting house. Property was purchased at the corner of Northwest Second and Church Streets and a foundation was dug and poured, but due to lack of funds the building was never completed. The contractor left town with the funds that had been raised for the project. From 1946-47, the

church underwent a major division and the pastor was investigated. He was subsequently asked to leave as the church fell under Presbytery rule.

Recovering from those less stable times, the congregation moved forward to erect the Kerr-Witherspoon Sanctuary in use today. It was dedicated December 7, 1952, with the ancillary wing constructed in 1971. In 1989, after many hours of hard work providing ball park sustenance for Texas Rangers' fans, the church was able to retire all of its old debt for building projects dating back to the original 1912 sanctuary. Through the years, First Presbyterian has supported numerous community activities by making their facilities available...for 15 years (3-1-74 – 3-1-89) the church hosted the Grand Prairie Center of Dallas County Nutrition Program, Boy Scout Troop #515, afternoon tutoring program for Grand Prairie students, and currently Parents Day Out Program, and the local Quilter's Guild Group.

During the years a number of pastors have served the congregation including W.C. Baber, W. Wilbanks, E.C. Clardy, W.R. Hodgson, J.T. Ross, Ernest Ulmer, Joe Bennett, C.C. Hines, W.P. Roberts, J.M. Dickey, B.L. Peacock, B.J. Danhof, Robert Benton, Sam Wylie, David Hubler, Robert Agnew, C. Randolph Coney, Richard E. Young, William Parrott, and our twentieth installed pastor, Jim Reinartz who leads us into the future. We acknowledge the history of the First Presbyterian Church of Grand Prairie and realize our potential to live up to the ideals of the past as we prepare for the evolving church we will become.