



**SUNSET BAPTIST CHURCH**  
**GRAND PRAIRIE SIGNIFICANT LANDMARK**  
**Site Medallion No. 43**  
**721 Manning Road**

Sunset Baptist Church was founded by Rev. Newell M. McGruder on February 15, 1952. At this time the group, which consisted of Sister Delores McGruder (his wife), Sister Norvelle Herod, and their children, held services in a small 12' x 24' building. This building was located next door where the new Education Building currently stands. Even though services were omitted during the winter months because of limited heating facilities, the small group continued to pray and hold services whenever the weather permitted.

In 1954, when the need for a larger building arose for the twenty-one member church, Pastor McGruder responded. Not only did he donate his own carpentry work and pay the church note every now and then, he would not accept a salary for a number of years.

In 1962, the site now called the Newell McGruder Fellowship Hall was purchased. The edifice was erected and dedicated on July 15, 1962. This building underwent major changes in the late 1970's including the addition a nursery and new kitchen.

On February 1, 1976, Rev. Matthew C. McGruder, Newell McGruder's grandson, was ordained as minister, under the leadership of Pastor Newell McGruder. In 1977, he was elected as the new pastor. Under his leadership, a growing spiritual fellowship has been apparent in the church.

Sunday, December 13, 1981, the dedication and cornerstone laying for the educational and fellowship building was held. The guest speaker for this event was Rev. Riley Green, Pastor of Evening Chapel A.M.E. Church.

Then on March 8, 1987, the New Sanctuary Grand Entrance and Dedication Services were held. Newell McGruder preached on this special morning.

The church has seen several new ministries added in the 1990's. The Inspirational Choir, YUCCA (Young Upwardly-Mobile Christian with a Christian Attitude), Junior Mission, the drill teams, Children's Church, and Puppet Ministries are just a few of the ministries that were created.

As of January 2002, Sunset Baptist Church had almost 500 members, three associate ministers, and sixteen deacons.

Documentation from The Year of Jubilee: 50<sup>th</sup> Church Anniversary at Sunset Baptist Church.