



St. John Baptist Church
1701 W. Jefferson
Grand Prairie, TX 75051
Historic Marker #59

On the second Sunday in July 1921, a small group of thirteen inspired Christians formed a fellowship in the Dalworth community from which St. John Baptist Church developed. They were W.L. Thames, Hattie Thames, Arch Long, Allen Famon, Lula Famon, Charles Dixon, Nancy Littlejohn, Bettie Reed, Sallie Baker, Delia Terry, Romie Hill and Verna Tallie.

The church's first building was an old store purchased from funds received from a July fourth picnic in 1923. The building was moved to El Paso Street where it remained through the following nine pastors: Reverends W. Scott, C.J. Morse, Jordan (first name unknown), C.J. Gearnerett, S.G. Gooden, T.P. Thompson, J.W. Singleton, N.F. Huff, and N.R. Washington. The tenth pastor, Reverend J.V. Williams, purchased the site on Spikes Street and gave the old store building a new look. Rev. M. Davis Giles and Rev. L.A. Hancock were the 11th and 12th pastors.

The Chairman of the Trustee Board, Bro. David Daniels, was granted permission from the city of Grand Prairie to solicit funds to purchase an army chapel for worship services. The following ministers were the thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth pastors, respectively: M.R. Lester, B.E. Collie, Leonard Jordan Sr., and Emanuel Lupo. Under Rev. Lupo's administration in 1987, St. John moved from 2133 Spikes Street to the present location at 1701 W. Jefferson Street.

On May 5, 1991, God sent to the St. John Baptist Church, Grand Prairie, Texas, Reverend Denny Dwight Davis, a young, spirit-filled preacher, who wears the mantle of his higher calling magnificently, yet humbly. Under Reverend Davis' pastorate, the church has expanded to more than 60 ministries and three morning worship services.

Under Pastor Denny Davis' leadership, many building and capital improvements were completed. Improvements include the completion of the choir stand, wings, balcony, church furniture, parking lot expansion and children's building. The church purchased three passenger vans and three shuttle buses. As Pastor Davis continued to follow God's guidance, the church was able to retire a half-million dollar mortgage note in 1995. Later, renovations on the Sherman St. building (1822 Sherman Street) and

\$250,000 of parking lot expansions were completed. Still listening to God's directions, the church launched "Vision 2000", a capital stewardship program and a two-phased building expansion project planned to meet the needs of the whole man. Phase I (Vision 2000), a four level building including a gymnasium, running track, 30 classrooms, administrative facilities, video surveillance, aerobic room, game room for the children, a courtyard playground, a commercial kitchen and banquet hall, with an estimated cost of 3.5 million dollars, was completed Fall 2001 debt free.

As the church continued to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit, a second church, the St. John North Family Fellowship was established and began meeting in October 1999 at the Hilton Hotel in Grapevine, Texas. About the same time, a group of believers hosting an in-home Bible study, with the intention of planting a church along the 121 corridor, chose to merge with the St. John North Family Fellowship church. Shortly thereafter, the St. John North Family Fellowship church began meeting at the DFW Marriott in Irving, Texas.

In May 2000, the church continued to follow the direction of the Holy Spirit and moved the St. John North Family Fellowship worship services to a more permanent location in a warehouse building located in Southlake, Texas. God continued to add to the church daily.

On Palm Sunday of 2003, the church began a third worship service at NextStage Theater in Grand Prairie (now Nokia Theatre) to better serve the overflow crowds at the worship center in Grand Prairie. At which time, the 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. worship services were combined to create a 10 a.m. service at NextStage, still maintaining a 7 a.m. service at the worship center located at 1701 W. Jefferson.

With the help of God, the building program to erect the St. John North Family Fellowship campus in Southlake began in the spring of 2006 and was completed in December 2007. The campus consists of an 80,000-square-foot facility on 14 acres of land with a \$15.5 million budget. The building includes a 2,400 capacity sanctuary, gymnasium, classrooms and administrative space.

By faith, the St. John Church has grown from those original 13 charter members to more than 11,000 members, four worship services each Sunday and two worship centers located in Grand Prairie and Southlake, Texas.

