

A BRIEF HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE UNITED BAPTIST CHURCH of Concord, New Hampshire

The United Baptist Church of Concord, New Hampshire is located at the corner of South and Fayette streets. It is a merger of the Curtis Memorial Baptist Church and the Pleasant Street Baptist Church. The pastor is the Rev. David B. Howe.

The Curtis Memorial Baptist Church was first established in 1844 as the Free Will Baptist Church. It was located at the corner of South State and Concord streets. After a brief history marked by "financial difficulties, divisions and dissensions, a few who had borne the burden of the heat of the day laid the whole matter before God whom they still trusted". As a result of their humble confessions and openness to the leading of God, the Rev. Silas Curtis, an outstanding clergyman in the denomination, was called to the pastorate. He was able to lead the people in the reorganization of the church and open it to a new life in Christ. After his pastorate the Rev. Mr. Bradeen continued the ministry. He was instrumental in leading the congregation to relocate the meeting house to the corner of South and Fayette streets and to build a church edifice adequate to meet the needs of the people. From that time on "the Curtis Memorial Baptist Church continued to enjoy an almost unbroken era of prosperity and usefulness."

The Pleasant Street Baptist Church was organized in 1853 when thirty members, ten of whom were men, severed their connection with the First Baptist Church of Concord and erected a new meeting house. The Rev. Ebenezer E. Cummings, who had been the pastor of First Baptist for eighteen years but had left Concord three years before, was called to return to Concord as pastor of the new Pleasant Street church. He did so and remained with the church for fourteen years and continued as a member and local resident for some eighteen years after this until his death. The meeting house was soon paid for through various enterprising efforts and sacrificial giving. The church grew to be one of Concord's leading churches and a strong link in the mission program of the denomination. One of its members, the Rev. Joseph C. Robbins, won an enviable reputation in the foreign field both as a missionary and as an executive of the Northern Baptist (now American) Convention.

On the first Sunday of January 1932, after a few short months of consultation, the Pleasant Street church and the Curtis Memorial church merged to form the United Baptist Church. Rev. Ernest A. McKenzie, pastor of the Pleasant Street Baptist Church for the three years prior to the merger, continued on as pastor of the United Baptist Church until his death in 1946. The church grew in its new relationships and finally consolidated its worship, education, and witness at the present site on the corner of South and Fayette streets. From that time to the present the following pastors have served the church: Rev. M. Eugene Levy, Rev. Rollin Tingley, Rev. William E. Garabedian, and presently the Rev. David B. Howe. During these years the church planned, prepared, and entered into a multi-step Redevelopment Program designed to erect an educational building, renovate the church building, and program itself "in order to house and expanding parish and more effectively serve the spiritual needs of a growing Concord.

Throughout the years of the United Baptist Church and its two parent bodies, this church has been blessed with many dedicated, courageous, faithful, and sacrificial members who trusted in God and were not ashamed to witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in every walk of life. Today this witness continues as Christian men and women and youth accept the challenge to be the Church of Christ in the world.

August 14, 1965