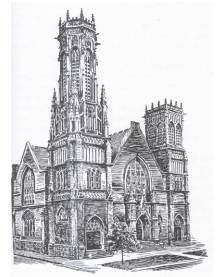




# Walnut Street Baptist Church Heritage



The First Baptist Church of Louisville organized in 1815 by the Rev. Hinson Hobbs, at the home of Mark Lampton, on the north side of Chestnut Street near Campbell. There were 13 charter members. In 1810 the population of Louisville was 1,357 and by 1820 it was 4,012. The church by then had 72 members. In early years, the church met in the homes of members.

In 1842, with the free Masons, a two-story structure was built on the southwest corner of Fifth and Green Streets. The first floor belonged to the church with the Masonic Order on the second floor.

In 1849 the First Baptist Church united with the Second Baptist Church, which had been formed in 1838. Together they erected a new church building on the northwest corner of Fourth and Walnut Streets, dedicating the new structure in January, 1854. The new congregation thus became known as Walnut Street Baptist Church.

The church sold this “downtown” property for \$115,000 in March, 1900. A new church building was constructed in the “suburbs” on the southeast corner of Third and St. Catherine Streets, at a reported cost of \$120,000. The new structure was dedicated on November 16, 1902 and is the present home of Walnut Street Baptist Church.

By late 1950’s the community around Third and St. Catherine Streets was no longer considered the suburbs of Louisville. It was now inner city. These years were times of turmoil for the inner city communities. Residential and commercial patterns drastically changed. Residents fled the area for the new suburbs. Many churches followed and moved from the inner city. Primarily due to a housing shortage during WWII, most of the larger homes in the area had been converted into rooming houses or multi-unit apartments, eventually becoming rented to low income families. During the late ‘60’s, Walnut Street Baptist Church voted to remain in the inner city and renewed its commitment to minister to all people.

Walnut Street thus expanded its facilities and programs to include spiritual, social, physical and psychological ministries to the surrounding neighborhood and larger community of Metro Louisville.

Over the years, Walnut Street has been the mother church of more than 50 churches in Louisville and Southern Indiana.

The church commemorated its 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2015 with celebrations throughout the year.

Presently the Sunday morning service is seen on WHAS-TV at 11:00 am. In addition to worship services there are many opportunities in which to learn and to serve. The church has entered the social media age with Facebook, Twitter, Blogging and has information also on the church website and *Foundation Newsletter*.