**History of Lees Chapel Advent Christian Church**

It was about the year 1916 when a few families decided they wanted an Advent Christian Church close by and in this community, so they got permission from the School Committee Men of Stanley School to have services in the school until we could built a church. We had different ministers to preach for us at the school, one being a blind minister, Rev. Heath Hatch. There were about 14 charter members: J.W. Lee, Elizabeth Lee, Claude W. Lee, Essie Lee, R.M. Baker, Lizzie Baker, Rev. W.C. Barbour, Susan Barbour, Z.C. Barbour, Cronnie Barbour, W. Robert Barbour, Hector Strickland, Emily Strickland, Z.D. Lee. Our first pastor was Rev. W.Y. (Yancey) Moore, assisted by Rev. W.C. Barbour and Rev. S.J. Massengill. The first deacons were: J.W. Lee, R.M. Baker, and Claude W. Lee. The first clerk was Robert Barbour.

In the same year (1916), Mr. Ambrose R. Lee gave us land to build a church. People gave timber and helped build the new church. The church was given the name ***Lees Chapel Advent Christian Church*** after Mr. Ambrose R. Lee and J.W. Lee (father of Geneva Lee Blackmon).

Then to our sorrow, in September 26, 1926 the church burned up. With the Lord’s help, our members went to work and built another church. In 1947, seven Sunday School rooms (two upstairs and five downstairs or underground) were added to the church and a dedication service was conducted by Rev. George Saunders. Years later we added three more Sunday School rooms, a kitchen, two bathrooms and a fellowship hall and on October 6, 1968 a dedication service was held with the Rev. James J. Ellis.

Within a few years, the church decided that we didn’t have quite enough space in our sanctuary, fellowship hall and kitchen. We felt it was time to build another church on one level. In 1979, the church voted to build a new church and educational unit. On July 15, 1979, the congregation broke ground for a new edifice. On March 1, 1981, services were moved to the new facility. An auction sale was held on May 12, 1981 to sell the old church building and contents. The church building was not sold on this date, but at a later time. With the sacrificial giving of money, effort and time on the part of some and many, many donations from other members and friends, the new ***Lees Chapel Advent Christian Church*** was dedicated on July 19, 1981 to the service and Glory of God. The actual cost for this sanctuary was $196,000.00 and the entire debt was retired within two years. Rev. James J. Ellis was our Pastor at this time.

On March 27, 1985 Lees Chapel purchased the parsonage for $60,000.00 which is located on Green Pasture Road, Four Oaks, North Carolina.

The Church decided we needed more space, so in March of 1996, the construction of the balcony was competed with the help of our Pastor, Rev. Al Hutchings and other members of the church.

In 1997, the construction on a new Fellowship Hall was begun. With generous support, encouragement and contributions from church members, families, friends and neighbors our new Fellowship Hall was dedicated on Sunday, November 8, 1998. Rev. Lorne Ross was serving as our interim pastor.

In need of more land for a cemetery and other uses, Lees Chapel’s membership voted to purchase land surrounding the church that was going to be sold. On November 16, 2013, Lees Chapel did purchase 20 acres of land beside the church and behind the Fellowship Hall at the cost of $110,000.00.

Special Dates for Lees Chapel Advent Christian Church to Remember

1916 – First Lees Chapel Church Built

September 26, 1926 – First Church building was destroyed by fire

1926 – Rebuilt Lees Chapel Church

1947 – Sunday School rooms added to Church & Dedication Service

October 6, 1968 – Sunday School rooms, kitchen, bathrooms & Fellowship Hall were added to the Church and

Dedication Service was held

January 18, 1979-Church membership voted to build a new Church building

July 15, 1979 – Ground Breaking for New Church building

March 1, 1981 – Services moved to the new facility

May 12, 1981 – Auction Held to Sell Old Church Building & Contents

(Church Building was sold at a later date)

July 19, 1981 – Dedication service for new Church was held

March 27, 1985 – Purchased parsonage on Green Pasture Road

March 1996 – Balcony was built in the Church

July 2, 1996 – New carpet installed in the sanctuary

July 1997 – Construction began for Fellowship Hall

November 8, 1998 – Dedication of Fellowship Hall

November 16, 2013 – Lees Chapel purchased 20 acres of land beside

the Church and behind the Fellowship Hall