

HillSong Church History

Settler William Barbee was granted 585 acres in 1753 from the Earl of Granville in what is now the Chapel Hill-Durham area. Chapel Hill sits atop a hill that was originally occupied by the Anglican New Hope Chapel in 1752 where the Carolina Inn now stands. In 1819, the town was founded to serve the University of North Carolina and grew along with it.

A mile to the west of Chapel Hill was a land grant that was originally called "West Chapel Hill". As the railroad was laid for the benefit of the University, textile and flour mills helped to form the community that became Carrboro. Mr. Thomas Lloyd, who owned much of the land and the mills, deeded some land to four denominations for their churches. Only the Baptists and Methodists decided to proceed with building. They joined together to build a 20' x 30' structure that was used on alternate Sundays.

With the assistance of seventeen charter members from various churches in the Chapel Hill area, the Baptists organized on October 30, 1902. Given the name *Union Chapel*, the Weaver Street building proved to be much too small. At this time the Methodists decided to construct their own building.

When the community incorporated in 1911 and became known as Venable, named for UNC President Dr. Preston Venable, the church changed its name to *Venable Baptist Church*. When the Lloyd Mill was bought by Julian S. Carr in 1913, the town became Carrboro and the church's name was changed to *Carrboro Baptist Church* in 1914.

By the early 1920s, the original facility became inadequate so a new brick building was completed in 1924 on the corner of Greensboro and Main streets. As an act of faith, \$50,000.00 was borrowed to pay for this construction. Through the years of the Great Depression and World War II, the church employed creative methods to pay off this debt that included taking second mortgages on their houses, selling Brunswick stew, giving up luxuries, and naming the church as beneficiary in their wills and life insurance policies. On Sunday, November 1, 1942, the church celebrated paying off their debt.

As the church outgrew its building, alternative solutions to more construction was used for a time, such as renting a building and purchasing a house next to the church. Eventually, renovation was begun in 1962 to add an educational building and remodel the sanctuary, which was completed in 1964.

Once again the church needed more space. Since there was no room to expand, land was sought in Carrboro without success. In 1995 the current Culbreth Road property in Chapel Hill was purchased for a new building and in 1997 the old structure was sold to the Town of Carrboro. In April 1998 the church began meeting in McDougle Elementary School until January 2000, when the new facility was ready. The church again changed its name; this time to *HillSong Church, A Baptist Fellowship* based on Isaiah 55:12.