

In 1936, the Roodepoort Baptist Church decided to do expansion work by reaching out into the neighbouring township of Florida. Roodepoort then released one of their deacons, Mr. W.J. Kerr, to open a Sunday School in the Scout Hall, situated on the present site of the Telecommunications Centre in Goldman Street between Kantoor Street and Seventh Avenue. This began on the first Sunday in July, 1936, and proved to be a good procedure. By dint of much prayer, visitation and faithfulness of the workers the Sunday School progressed.

By 1938, the Roodepoort Church felt it had now made some worthwhile contacts in Florida to make it possible to commence church services. The Roodepoort Church then approached the Municipality of Roodepoort-Maraisburg, as it was then known, for a church site. Stand No. 423, Goldman Street, valued at £135 was donated to the Florida Baptist Church. This property was at that time on the Eastern outskirts of Florida, and there were some folk who questioned the advisability of building a church out in the "bundu".

On Saturday, 19th April, 1938, some 100 people representing many Reef churches from Roodepoort in the West to Springs in the East gathered at the site to witness the laying of three foundation stones. Behind one of these stones is interred a sealed bottle containing the signatures of the Pastor and all the deacons of the mother church, Roodepoort.

The building was completed in an amazingly short time and was officially opened on 21st May, 1938.

The builder, Mr. R. Powell, had succeeded in building the church for the ridiculously low price of £1292. About 150 people were present and proceedings commenced with the singing of the well-known doxology - "Praise God from whom all blessings flow".

And so the infant church at Florida was set on its course, but it was never an easy course. There were times when it struggled to keep going - times of heart-searching when the little group became discouraged and could easily have been persuaded to close the doors. At the church's Annual General Meeting held on 25th August, 1943, reports showed that membership had increased from 22 to 41; that the outstanding debt on the church building had been reduced by £110 to £32.

At the end of 1945, Rev. Hendricks received and accepted a call to Kingwilliamstown.

At a Special General Church Meeting on 23rd January, 1946, with 15 members present, it was decided to call a certain Rev. Neil Methven-Gordon at a salary of £50 per month.

It was reported at the A.G.M. on 17th August, 1950, that the membership was now 108.

A special service on 28th June, 1953, was addressed by the famous Corrie Ten Boom from Holland who had experienced the horrors of World War II in Europe.

In view of the growing number of branch Sunday Schools under the aegis of the Florida Church, it is recorded that the Pastor and his wife, who always did things together, attended no less than 12 Christmas functions within the few weeks before 25th December.

The dedication and opening of the new church took place on 29th April, 1961, Rev. N. Methven Gordon presided and Mrs. G. Methven Gordon unveiled the foundation stone inscribed -"A Witness to the Faithfulness of God".

The total cost of the building and furniture was R22 436. Currency is now quoted in Rands as this new currency was introduced in South Africa on 12th February, 1961.

There was fantastic growth of the Sunday Schools and in 1970, there were 6 European Schools, with 36 staff and 379 pupils, while there were 7 Coloured Schools with 42 staff and 587 pupils.

Towards the end of 1974, Rev. and Mrs. Methven Gordon felt that their ministry at Florida was drawing to a close. On Sunday, 26th January, 1975, Rev. Trevor Swart graciously commissioned Rev. and Mrs. Methven Gordon who had been set aside by the church as their Travelling Evangelists.

Then for the Florida Church there followed a traumatic period when for two years the Call Committee looked in vain for the someone to take over the work. The church eventually extended a call to Rev. Harold J. Peasley, who was then Director of the Baptist Youth Department of South Africa. Rev. Peasley brought with him all the zeal and enthusiasm of a young energetic Evangelist, some call him "Mr. E.E."

By 1985 Harold Peasley had realised that he could not possibly continue as Pastor of the Florida Baptist Church and at the same time give proper attention to his new responsibilities as National Director of Evangelism Explosion III Southern Africa.

At this time the church had 370 members.

Pastors who followed were:

Errol Wesson 1986 to 1991

Andre Broodryk 1994 to 1998

Norman Schaefer 1999 to 2005

Trent Eayers 2005 to 2017