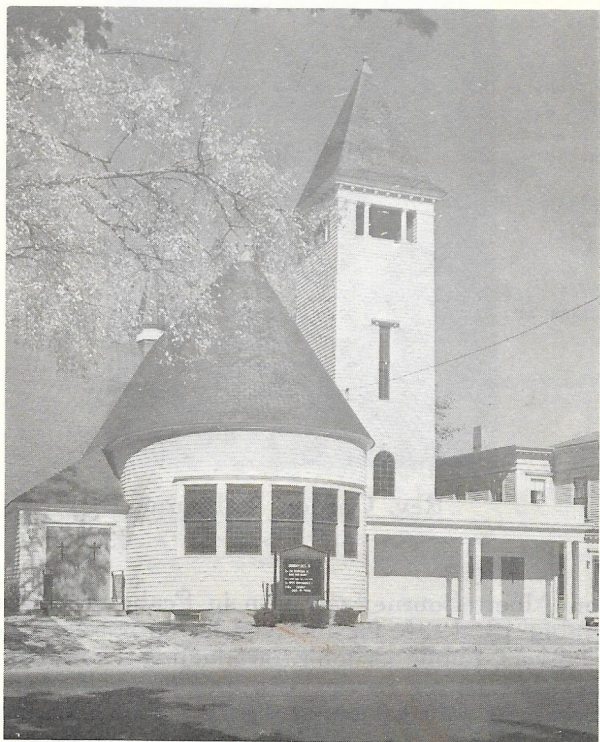


75th ANNIVERSARY
1888-1963



First Baptist Church

Westbrook, Maine



Rev. Gordon A. Bourne

Gordon Albert Bourne was born in Peabody, Massachusetts, on November 13, 1926. He received his early scholastic training in the Danvers Public Schools, graduating from Holten High School in 1944. After serving two and one-half years with the Armed Forces he matriculated at the Providence Barrington Bible College, Providence, R.I., graduating from the Pastor's Course in 1950. He graduated from Taylor University, Upland, Indiana, in 1952, with the B.A. degree. In 1956, he graduated from the Gordon Divinity School, Beverly Farms, Massachusetts, with the B.D. degree.

He has served as pastor of the Windfall Baptist Church, Windfall, Indiana, while attending Taylor University; West Lebanon, Maine, Baptist Church and the Center Lebanon Congregational Church from 1952-55; and the United Baptist Church of Madison, from 1955-60. He was called to be pastor of the First Baptist Church, Westbrook, in the fall of 1960.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

As Baptist Christians we affirm our faith in the great fundamental doctrines of historic Christianity, briefly stated as follows:

1. We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, given by divine inspiration, and that it is our only authoritative rule of faith and practice.
2. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
3. We believe in the Deity and pre-existence of Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, and in His virgin birth, sinless life, miraculous works, atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension into Heaven, priestly ministry, and personal return.
4. We believe in the personality and Deity of the Holy Spirit who convicts men of sin, and regenerates and indwells those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.
5. We believe that all men are lost by nature, and are saved only by virtue of the shed blood of Jesus Christ and the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit.
6. We believe in the resurrection of all men: those who are saved unto the resurrection of life and those who are lost unto the resurrection of condemnation.
7. We believe in the Church as a living spiritual body of which Christ is the Head and in which all born-again persons are members. We believe that a visible church is a company of believers who have been baptized on profession of their faith in Jesus Christ and are associated for worship and service.
8. We believe that the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper were appointed by the Lord and that their observance by the Church is a continuing obligation.
9. We believe that the work of evangelism, missions, and Christian education under the direction and empowerment of the Holy Spirit constitute the supreme responsibility of the Church.
10. We believe in the independence and autonomy of each local church, and in the separation of Church and State.

A BRIEF HISTORY

This brief history of the First Baptist Church in Westbrook, Maine, is written upon the occasion of the 75th Anniversary of the founding of our Church on October 25, 1888. As any condensed writing must do, it leaves many things untold, and the names and acts of many of its members and friends, both past and present, unsung; but their work, as ours, has been unto the Lord, and their glory, as ours, shall not be of men, but of God.

The Lord surely works in mysterious ways, and when, in 1885, there was still no Baptist Church in Saccarappa, he sent to Scotland for the one who would start the work to place one here. To accomplish this he made use of the needs of the Westbrook Manufacturing Company Gingham Mills for trained personnel from Scotland to instruct their people here in the textile processes.

Among those who came over at this time from Scotland was Mrs. Roger Hilton, a woman who loved the Lord and immediately set out to work for Him here. Seeing the need in Westbrook, she started a Sunday School Class of small children in her kitchen on Scotch Hill.

Those who attended at first were mostly Scotch folks, but the class grew rapidly and soon it was necessary to transfer to larger quarters, and the Scotchmen's Football clubroom was used for a time. Several more times growth forced a move, and the old Grand Army Hall on Bridge Street, upstairs over what is now Carr's Shoe Store, and then the Oddfellows Hall, were in turn, hosts to the Sunday School.

During this time a number of those attending the Sunday School were also going to the Free Street Baptist Church in Portland, with which several united. Pastor A. T. Dunn of that Church also gave of his time in the Saccarappa work, and baptized many converts in the Presumscot River. The group, on becoming large enough, wished to establish its own Church here in Westbrook, and was able to acquire a dwelling house and the property on our present site. They tore down partitions in the house, and rearranged it to allow room for worship services and Sunday School sessions.

The dwelling, which now still stands on Cloudman Street, was soon moved off the lot; the present Church edifice, with its subsequent changes, was built at a cost of \$10,420, and the Denomination was proud to be able to state that it was dedicated free from debt.

A lovely and fitting account of the first dedication service was expressed in the Press on Friday, November 2, 1888, in part as follows:

"On Main Street, Saccarappa, on a beautiful site about half way between the Methodist and Universalist Churches, is located the new and pretty First Baptist Church of Westbrook, which was recognized and dedicated with fitting ceremonies yesterday. The structure, which was designed by architect John Calvin Stevens, is a unique and beautiful one, very cheerful and inviting inside, complete and convenient in all its arrangements. The Church is entered on either side through handsome porticoes of different design, and a square tower with pretty balconies rises from the south-eastern corner of the edifice.---J. and J. Philbrook were the builders, and Judge Bonney, Dr. H. S. Burrage, and Rev. A. T. Dunn were the building

committee. The steam heating apparatus was put in by Jones and Hitchings; the electric lighting by the Westbrook Electric Light Company, and the beautiful stained windows by Reading, Baird, and Company of Boston.---The Church starts out in its good work with twenty-eight members and a bright outlook for future growth."

Among the twenty-eight constituent members were Rev. A. N. Dary and his wife, and Mrs. M. F. Lincoln of Dighton, Mass., and N. R. Martin, M.D., from the First Church in Portland, with C. A. L. Treadwell from Buxton, and J. C. Morton from the First Church in Clinton, Mass. The other members all came from the Free Street Baptist Church in Portland, and were: Mr. Roger Hilton, Mrs. Maggie Hilton, Mr. Robert Bryson and Mrs. Elizabeth Bryson, Mr. James Boyd and Mrs. Agnes Boyd, Mr. William Thompson and Mrs. Annie Thompson, Mr. Robert Patten and Mrs. Elizabeth Patten, Miss Mary McKay, Miss Maggie McKay, Miss Agnes Ferris, Miss Lizzie Bryson, Miss Isabella Forrest, Miss Lizzie Mason, Miss Mary Canning, Mrs. Jane Murray, Miss Maggie Brown, Mrs. Mary Mossman, Miss Letitia McKay, and Mrs. Harriet Chatham.

At the first meeting the New Hampshire Articles of Faith and Covenant were approved, and a code of By-Laws adopted. Rev. Albert N. Dary was chosen to serve as first pastor, C. A. L. Treadwell was elected clerk, and Dr. Martin and Roger Hilton were chosen Deacons, and James Boyd, Treasurer.

The first pastor was paid at the rate of \$1,000 of year in monthly payments the first year, but this was reduced in 1889 to \$800 a year.

The new Church was now flourishing spiritually, but it was not an easy matter or one to be taken lightly to attain membership in the Church then. In the 1890's, candidates were called upon to relate their experience with the Lord and give testimony at a regular Business Meeting of the Church before they were accepted, as well as to maintain regular attendance and exemplary conduct after their acceptance. Attendance at the Annual Roll Call was required, or a very reasonable excuse for not being able to attend, and failure to attend or be excused was quickly followed by a visit by the Deacons to ascertain the cause of such gross neglect. If repentance was not made, the member was excluded without further delay for delinquency and failure to walk with the Lord. Then, also, were members called before the Church to account for any misbehavior that came to light, and to repent or be excluded, as some were, after a reasonable time for observance of conduct.

In 1891, there were no services held for many weeks due to coldness when the boiler burned out. There was also much difficulty in these years in raising money. Even when the heating plant was finally in operation again, it was only with considerable difficulty that it was reached because the basement was not finished, and for a number of years it was necessary to put on rubber boots or other wear, and slog through the mud and clay of the very wet ground to reach the heater.

It was not until May, 1930, that the men of the Church got together and dug out the basement and finally poured concrete on the floor. Active as leaders among the men were Leo Bixby, Leslie Timberlake, Charles Stokes, and Perley Plummer.

This, as good as it was, did not completely stop all the dampness, and several subsequent attempts have been made to stop water from coming out onto the basement floor. These include putting drainage tiles along the length of the outer walls, surfacing the concrete floor with tile, and sinking a sump pump into the lowest corner of the basement. But to this day, what is affectionately known as "Dan Spiller's Spring," for he holds that there is a spring under the center of the basement, continues to present occasional manifestations of its presence.

The 1890's also brought other woes to the young Church. The shutting down of the Gingham Mills, and the coming of hard times caused many of the best supporting members to remove to other places for employment, and thereby not only the finances, but the spiritual life of the Church was greatly diminished. For several years in the middle 1890's, it was a severe trial to uphold the regular services.

Among the various ones who supplied the pulpit on Sunday afternoons, mention should be made of Brothers E. A. Isaac, W. B. Whitney, from Newton, Rev. J. B. Bryant of Deering Center, Missionary Nathan Hunt, Harvey Bishop, Jr., of Paris, Pastors Wilson, Ayers, Green and Foss of Portland, and also the Westbrook Pastors.

In bringing the Church out of this state of foundering, much credit belongs to the State Convention for sending Evangelist J. W. Hatch and his wife in the Spring of 1900, and to the grand work he so earnestly performed by encouraging the members in repairing the meeting house and securing a new pastor. The call was given on September 16, 1900, and accepted on October 3, by Pastor George Illsley who came from Bangor to begin his work on October 7.

Much of the early strength and power in the Church is attributed to a dedicated group of men, among whom was Joseph Burgh, for whom the once active Burgh Brotherhood was named. Mr. A. A. Morrison, Joseph Eaton, Vance Porter, Harvey Bishop, Fred Alden, and Donald Wight were but a few of the outstanding men, as was Thomas D. Smith, whose far-reaching activities in organizing and leading singing groups and Christian Endeavor groups is most noteworthy.

There once existed a most helpful and untiring group called the Ladies' Aid Society, to which the Church frequently turned for all sorts of help, cheerfully given throughout the organized life of the group. Some of the most notably active ones in this Society were Mrs. Lizzie Burgh, Mrs. Emma West, Mrs. Mina Mitchell, Mrs. Beckwirth, Mrs. Sarah Bailey, Mrs. Anna Morse, Mrs. Sarah Meserve, Mrs. Alice Alden, Mrs. Ada Timberlake, Mrs. Jessie Jones, Mrs. Maud Cobb and Mrs. Hattie Smith.

Our present Ida J. Bishop Philathea Class is named in honor of one whose inspiring activity will long be remembered. Miss Gladys Tilton and her work have left their indelible impression on the Church and Sunday School, as well.

In the year 1923, with changing times, it became clear that it would be advantageous to the Church to form a Corporation. Proceeding with this forward legal step, the Church accomplished this purpose with representation before Justice of the Peace Horace H. Towle, Jr., on April 12, 1923. The name of the Corporation thus formed is the First Baptist Church in Westbrook, Maine. In 1923, also, the home at 65 Stroudwater Street was purchased for a parsonage and has continued to serve this purpose.

Changes in the structure of the Church edifice have been many, although not many of them have been too obvious. Some of these include excavation of the basement, removal of an entrance to the rear of the building, and its stairway, several changes in the type and number of heating furnaces and boilers, addition of the large left rear room adopted by the Philathea Class of the Church, deletion of the left front entrance to the Church, and several reconstructions of the basement rooms, with still other changes mentioned later.

In December of 1947, a fire broke out in the night from the chimney of the front furnace, and it severely damaged much of the upper part of the Church structure. The skill and efficiency of the Westbrook Fire Department played a very large part in saving the structure, however, so that by replacing a portion of the roof, and strengthening many of the roof rafters, it was possible to save the building. At this time the high arched ceilings were lowered, and the interior of the Church was redecorated, the total cost of damage repairs and redecorating being about \$9,000. The organ, pianos, hymnbooks, and pews were not damaged because of the care of the firemen in getting them all covered.

During the rebuilding and redecorating, services were held in the basement of the Universalist Church by invitation and kindness of those people, for which we are very grateful.

In 1954, more room was needed for Sunday School classes, and the basement was reconstructed again with Modernfold doors, tile flooring, and new lighting. At the same time, the two old hot air furnaces were removed, and a new forced hot water heating system was installed.

These improvements helped the Sunday School for a while, but continuing to grow as it was, the need was again felt for more adequate facilities. In 1959, the Welch home joining the Church lot was purchased, and this with its many rooms provided much more space for the Sunday School, as well as dwelling quarters for the Church Custodian. At this time, the Baldwin electronic organ was installed by the Portland Studios.

The Church, also growing and needing more adequate seating and entrances, gave rise to the recent 1963 project in which much of the interior of the Church sanctuary and vestry have been reconstructed, including new lighting, new flooring, new pews, removal of folding doors, and new entrances to the sanctuary, vestry, and basement. The left front entrance which had been closed so long was reopened.

This work was done only after a long, careful, and thorough survey of all avenues of life in the Church and city, with a view to providing adequate facilities for the Church until the Lord provides a way to a new and larger Church edifice.

During the 1963 reconstruction program, Church services were held for most of the summer in the Methodist Church through their gracious kindness. Several services were also held in the Universalist Church through their gracious kindness. Our deep gratitude is extended to both of these Churches for their thoughtfulness, generosity, and cooperation in helping us to continue our services uninterrupted through the project.

Through the years of the life of the Church with its many improvement programs and needs for both planned and unforeseen repair projects, it has received generous assistance from the United Baptist Convention of Maine, and from the Greenough Church Edifice Foundation, for which our deepest gratitude is expressed.

Music has always played an important role in our Church life. The first instruments were two foot-pump organs which were rented at \$7.00 a month and later purchased for \$240 by the Church and Sunday School. These were followed by at least two later reed organs, and finally by the present Baldwin Electronic Organ, installed in 1959. The organist with longest service was Mrs. Mabel Leighton, who served 52 years.

The 75 years of our Church life have been marked with spiritual vitality, and some of this is shown in the number of men sent forth to the ministry. They are George McCombe, Paul E. Alden, Harvey H. Bishop, Arthur L. Maye, and Robert Frederick, with others in preparation at this writing. Often visitation programs have been carried out with teams going out two by two as the Lord instructed us to win souls for Christ.

The outlook for our future is indeed brighter than ever, and as we thoughtfully mark the 75th Anniversary of the founding of our Church, we look with fresh, glowing ardor to the perpetual challenge that the Lord so fittingly gave us when he said "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."

--- Sheldon Cushing, Clerk

Pastors who have served this Church since its founding are:

Rev. A. N. Dary	October, 1888 - November, 1897
Rev. J. B. Slocumb	December, 1897 - May, 1898
Rev. Whitney	
Rev. George B. Illsley, D.D.	October, 1900 - October, 1913
Rev. Adrian D. June	December, 1913 - April, 1919
Rev. A. A. Walsh	July, 1919 - December, 1922
Rev. Burton H. Tilton	May, 1923 - October, 1945
Rev. Charles H. Berry	October, 1945 - April, 1946
Rev. Charles F. Frederick	May, 1946 - October, 1960
Rev. Gordon A. Bourne	November, 1960 ---

CHURCH RENOVATION PROGRAM 1963

It is difficult to pinpoint the beginning of a project such as our Church renovation program for it is not always clear how the idea is first conceived. Of this we are certain, there was a growing awareness among our people that we needed to do something with our church building to make it more worshipful, more attractive and, at the same time, solve some of the structural problems. The first definite step was taken when the Pastor and Trustees extended an invitation to Dr. Lincoln B. Wadsworth, church building consultant, of our American Baptist Home Mission Society, to meet with them and render his opinion of our needs. This meeting was held on Monday, June 11, 1962. At Dr. Wadsworth's suggestion, the Church authorized the establishing of a Church Building Planning Council to study every phase of church life, and the communities which we serve. This council was representative of all the church activities and was divided into five committees:

Community Survey Committee	Rev. Joseph Mills, Chairman
Public Worship Committee	Dale Caruthers, Chairman
Church Administration Committee	Forrest Mills, Chairman
Christian Education Committee	George Huston, Chairman
Fellowship & Recreation Committee	Oswyn Hammond, Chairman

The Council worked hard, and on the evening of January 30, 1963, they met to hear the reports and findings of the five committees. The reports definitely indicated that all phases of the Church activities were handicapped by lack of proper facilities and room.

From this, the Council unanimously voted to recommend to the Church that they instruct the Trustees to engage professional assistance to work with a committee in an effort to arrive at some definite possibilities in regard to a solution to our problem. At a business meeting on April 9, the Church voted to engage Mr. Douglas Goodspeed, architect, to draw up plans to redecorate the sanctuary, remove the vestry partitions, and enlarge the entry way with coat room facilities. The Church also established a building committee to work with Mr. Goodspeed.

At a special business meeting held May 22, the Church approved plans presented by the Building Committee for renovating and redecorating the Church. Drawings and a sketch prepared by Mr. Goodspeed were displayed.

The work was begun early in July and took about three months until completion. It is with thanksgiving that we rededicate our newly renovated Church at this Anniversary observance.

This has been a step of faith for our people as the total cost of the project was in excess of \$30,000. Our people have cheerfully undertaken this financial responsibility in order that the future ministry of our Church might be effective.

We take this opportunity to recognize the dedicated service rendered by the Building Committee. They have had to meet many times and have given much time, both in the planning stage and during the time of construction. We congratulate them on a job well done.

This booklet is made possible through the kindness of the following Church Renovation contractors and suppliers:

Architect	Douglas K. Goodspeed, A.I.A.	Portland
General Contractor	C. E. Waning & Son	Portland
Heating Contractor	Fels Co., Inc.	Portland
Painter	Walter Enemark Co.	Portland
Electrical Contractor	John E. Allen, Inc.	North Windham
Floor Covering	Gulian's Floor Coverings	Portland
Pews	Merle C. Rideout Co. (Distributor for N. E. for Ossit Church Furniture Co.)	Cape Elizabeth
Roofing Contractor	James A. McBrady	South Portland
Building Materials	L. C. Andrew, Inc.	South Windham
Concrete Contractor	Blue Rock Quarry	Westbrook
Excavating Contractor	Lès Wilson & Sons	Westbrook
Doors	Windham Millwork, Inc.	North Windham
Hardware	Hardware Consultants, Inc.	Portland

The appropriate and meaningful observance of the 75th Anniversary of the Church has been planned by the Anniversary Committee. We express our appreciation to them for their work in helping us to look back over the past and for the new inspiration that has come to us as we face the future.

Anniversary Committee

Mrs. Hugh Morton, Chairman
Miss Nellie Dinsmore
Mr. Sheldon Cushing, Church Clerk

Tableau Committee

Mrs. Evelyn Burgess
Mrs. Charles Lord
Miss Lillian West

Decorating Committee

Mrs. Sheldon Cushing
Mrs. Bernice Parker
Mrs. John Gorvo, Jr.

Refreshment Committee

Mrs. Clarence Skillings
Mrs. Earle DuCett
Mrs. Stanley Hayes
Mrs. Harry McKeague



Church Sanctuary

THE BUILDING COMMITTEE: Mr. Elmer Maye, chm., Mr. Willis Brown, Mr. Dale Caruthers, Mr. Philip Christie, Mr. John Hoskin, Mr. Stanley Kowalczyk, Mrs. Marion Lord, Mr. Philip Maye, Mr. Philip Millett, Mrs. Bernice Parker, Mr. Daniel Spiller.



"The future is as bright as the promises of God"

"... behold, I have set before thee an open door. . ." Rev. 3:8