

Making Room, History of NBCC Part One, with Betty Morillo

Milk was \$1.27 a gallon, bread was \$.39 a loaf, eggs were \$.62 dozen, a gallon of gas was \$.21, and a new car was \$3,556. Buzz Aldrin and Neil Armstrong landed on the moon. The United States was engaged in the Vietnam War (history.com). The population of James Island was less than half of what it is now (census.gov). The year was 1969. That same year, a group of 11 James Islanders met at one of their homes for a prayer service and to formulate plans for what would become Clear View Baptist Church, which we now know as New Beginnings Community Church. Now on the 56th anniversary of the early roots of our church, we sat down with church historian and long-time member of NBCC, Betty Morillo, to hear more about the history of the property on which NBCC rests.

On October 8, 1969, a group of 11 James Islanders decided a new church was needed in the Stiles Point area of James Island. Services were first held at the local YMCA, in what we now know as the Rec Center. There were 18 children in the first Sunday School and 20 adults at the first morning worship service on October 12th. The name Clear View Baptist Church was adopted that day. The following Sunday saw continued growth in attendance, reminiscent of the book of Acts 6:1 and the early church, "The number of disciples was multiplying."

The first pastor of the church was Rev. Young, who was a senior at the Baptist College of Charleston. It was during his tenure that the present 8.3 acres that NBCC now sits on was purchased and the church moved to its new home. Prior to becoming a church, this land contained three homes, as well as a chicken farm. The church continued to grow dramatically in those first few years and a sanctuary for 300 was then built. The Bible states direct instruction for church expansion, "The Holy Spirit provides the power for witnesses to spread the gospel from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth" Acts 1:8. One of the deacons of the church was a contractor, and as a result, the sanctuary was built largely in part by members of the church. The sanctuary was dedicated in August of 1971 and the brick homes continued to be used for Sunday School. Not long after, the decision was made to construct an education building with ten classrooms. The rooms quickly filled with child and adult classes, so much that the brick homes had to once again be used for classrooms.

Betty and Don Morillo began attending Clear View (NBCC) in 1971. They were both baptised in the NBCC baptismal tub, the same day, under the same cross we still have at NBCC. Their three children were also baptized here. Betty reflects fondly on 54 years of weekly services, church group trips, senior classes, and the ups and downs of change. Betty has served as the church teller during most of that time and continues to do so.

When asked to reflect on 50 years of attendance on this property, and of her steadfast faith, she says that God remains the focus and the foundation of it all. As the Bible states, “I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth” (1Corinthians 3:5-7).

The decades that follow will be explored as we continue to interview folks who have been here since the early history of NBCC. As we continue to look at the growth of NBCC, the words of early church members still ring true today, “Clear View (NBCC) is a living memorial to the dream of those 11 people who saw a need and had the courage to step out. It is a vibrant, growing family of God which is striving to be the body of Christ to a world in need and in a very specific way to our section of James Island. This history is written not to make us a proud people, but to make us humble. Humble because we realize it is God who is working through us and only as we continue to pray and to work and to do His Will, will we continue to grow.” (A Brief History of the Church, Clear View Baptist). As we grow now from one service to two services, it is interesting to think about that number...11.

Betty's favorite Bible verse:

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures.
He leads me beside still waters.
He restores my soul.
He leads me in paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.
Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.
You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
forever.
Psalm 23:1-6 (ESV)