

OUR HISTORY

Our church is over 200 years old.

We predate the formation of the State of Tennessee. We were founded by “pioneers” and still consider ourselves innovators always seeking better ways to grow the Gospel and disciple believers.

1820-70

1820 – Thirty-five persons organized church in the county courthouse.

1821 – First building built on Church Street at the cost of \$6,000.

1822 – Richard Dabbs called as first pastor.

1826 – Philip Fall called as a pastor.

1827 – Sam Houston inaugurated as governor in NFBC Building.

1828 – “Campbellism” reduced membership from 123 to five.

1828 – Jackson is elected President of the United States; He would serve two terms, 1829-1837.

1830 – First Baptist Church pulled itself together and began again, meeting for worship in the Masonic Hall (Church Street).

1831 – Peter S. Gayle called as pastor.

1833 – NFBC Members helped start Baptist State Convention of Tennessee

1834 – R.B.C. Howell called as pastor.

1835 – *The Baptist* (later called *Baptist and Reflector*) first issue.

First successful Sunday School established.

1841 – Second building dedicated (Fifth Avenue, North)

1842 – First mention of a church choir in church records.

1843 – Nashville established as permanent state capital.

1845 – Southern Baptist denomination formed.

1846 – Mission to African Americans begins, which later leads to establishment of FBC, Capitol Hill

1848 – First mention of church ushers.

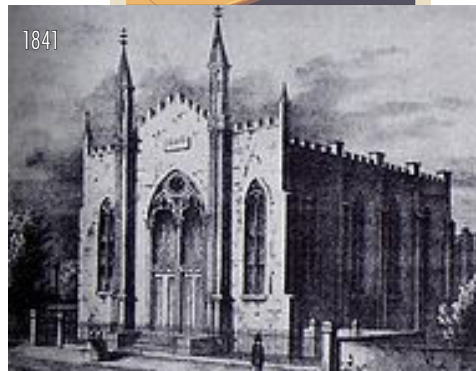
1850 – Samuel Baker called as pastor.

1853 – Church organist is recorded as being paid.

1854 – William Bayless called as sixth pastor.

1857 – R.B.C. Howell returns for second pastorate.

1858 – State charter of incorporation secured.



“Landmarkism” and J.R. Graves brought to trial.

1861 – Civil War begins

1862 – Nashville surrenders to Federal troops.

Pastor R.B.C. Howell jailed for refusing to take public oath of allegiance to the United States government.

1863 – Church confiscated by the Union and used as a military hospital.

1864 – Battle of Nashville shattered the Confederate Army of Tennessee and marked the end of major Confederate offensives in the Western theater during the Civil War.

1865 – Civil War ended and building returned to church members from the federal government.

1867 – Thomas Skinner became pastor.

1871-1920

1871 – Tiberius Gracchus Jones becomes pastor. Adopted an envelope system to encourage regular giving.

1880 – Nashville celebrates the 100th anniversary of its founding. The city’s population is 43,350.

1883 – Charlton Hines Strickland called as pastor.

1886 – Entered building at new location on 7th and Broad.

1888 – Women’s Missionary Union established at NFBC

1889 – William Robert Lee Smith became pastor.

1891 – Baptist Sunday School Board (now called Lifeway) established in our building.

Tennessee Baptist Children’s Homes founded in our church.

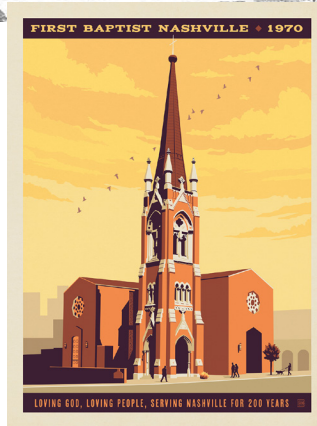
1893 – James Marion Frost called as pastor.

1895 – Position of “church collector” discontinued.

Baptist Young People’s Union formed.

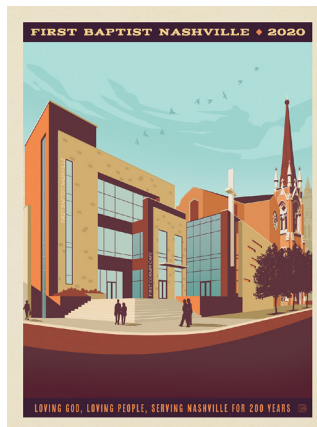
1896 – James Boardman Hawthorne called as pastor.

- 1899 — Lansing Burrows called as pastor.
- 1901 — Contributions (amounts and names) began to be printed annually.
- 1904 — The Baptist Hymn and Praise Book purchased.
- 1905 — McKendree Methodist Church burned, so they met in our building.
- 1909 — Richard Inlow called as pastor.
- 1914 — Allen Fort called as pastor.
- 1915 — “Common Cup” replaced by individual communion service cups.
- 1917 — Electric lights replaced gas lights in sanctuary.
- 1918 — Services cancelled for four weeks due to epidemic of influenza.
- 1919 — Passage of 19th Amendment giving women right to vote.
- 1920 — Church celebrated centennial.



1921-1970

- 1921 — William Francis Powell called as pastor.
- 1923 — Budget system adopted for better financial planning.
- 1924 — Balcony added to sanctuary; increased seating capacity to 1200.
NFBC began city's first licensed radio station (WCBQ)
- 1925 — First Vacation Bible School conducted.
- 1928 — Education building completed.
- 1929 — First Adult Training Union formed.
First educational and financial director hired.
- 1933 — Grape juice replaced wine served in Lord's Supper services.
- 1934 — Fire damaged sanctuary, church displaced for six months.
- 1937 — B.B. McKinney employed to direct training union.
- 1939 — World War II begins
- 1944 — “Future Program” adopted calling for complete church staff.
- 1945 — Cora Tibbs Mission established in northeast Nashville.
W. Hines Sims launched first graded-choir program.
- 1946 — Church building was air-conditioned.
- 1949 — Recreation program began.
- 1952 — Neil Darnell became first full-time minister of music.
- 1954 — Billy Graham Crusade brings many converts to FBCN.
- 1956 — H. Franklin Paschall began pastorate.
- 1960 — “Starting in Sixty Campaign” began. Robert Hall building renovated into gymnasium.
- 1963 — John F. Kennedy assassination



- 1967 — Last service in 1886 building.
Services held at Hume-Fogg High School during construction of new building.
- 1970 — First service in present sanctuary at corner of 7th and Broadway.

1971-2021

- 1981 — Recreation Center renovated and dedicated.
- 1985 — Charles Page called as pastor.
- 1986 — Space Shuttle Challenger explosion.
- 1987 — Three women elected as deacons.
“Room at the Inn” program begins at NFBC.
Thompson Station Mission began (later became FBC Thompson Station)
- 1988 — East Building purchased and renovated.
Missions House given to church.
- 1991 — Dan Francis became pastor.
- 1997 — Frank R. Lewis called as pastor.
- 1998 — Three tornadoes sweep across Nashville, along a 42-mile path, causing one fatality and over \$100 million in property damage.
- 2000 — Billy Graham Crusade comes to Nashville.
- 2001 — Steeple tower renovated.
Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attack in New York and Washington D.C., prayer service held.
- 2003 — The Next Door formed from a group of “Wild Praying Women” at NFBC.
- 2003 — “Door to the Future” Campaign developed to fund community ministry efforts and build new back entrance.
- 2005 — SBC Annual Meeting held in Nashville; NFBC participates in Crossover Nashville.
- 2006 — Building Bridges Campaign started to reach community.
- 2012 — Recreation center destroyed in fire; surface area parking lot created.
- 2013 — Music City Center complex opens.
- 2016 — NFBC sells 1.3 acres of property at 7th and Demonbreun for \$20 million, which equates to roughly \$353 a square foot.
- 2016 — Missions Partnership with Tusculum Hills started.
- 2017 — Fellowship on Broadway Service begins.
- 2019 — NFBC begins construction on new 80,000-square-foot facility that includes a coffee shop and entrance that will open to Broadway.
- 2020 — COVID-19 pandemic shuts down church for 27 weeks, delays 200th Anniversary Events
- 2021 — New 80,000 square foot Broadway Addition opens Easter Sunday.
200th Anniversary events held

Note: Some non-church dates & events given for context.