

TEMPLE BAPTIST CHURCH
3615 Rockford Street
Mount Airy, North Carolina 27030
336-320-2090

Seven couples met on a Sunday evening in 1975 to discuss where to attend church. The decision was made to gather as "Temple Baptist Church" on the following Wednesday evening for the mid-week prayer service; which 76 people attended. This first meeting was held in a small building on Hwy 601 S, Mount Airy, North Carolina, in the Highland Park area, between what is now Papa John's pizza and Walgreen's pharmacy.

As there was no running water in the building, an "orange Igloo" cooler was filled each service with drinking water for the cone-shaped paper cups. A "port-a-john" was placed to the left of the building beside the tree. The "parking lot" held approximately 8 – 10 cars. Overflow parking was across the busy highway.

Rev. Teague Groce, from Rural Hall, North Carolina, and his wife, Marsha, along with their two daughters, became the pastor of Temple Baptist Church in 1977.

"Temple" continued to grow under Pastor Groce's leadership of the Holy Spirit.

Approximately five years later, the church purchased 15 acres of land on Hwy 601 S, between Mount Airy and Dobson, North Carolina; just south of the Hwy 601 S and the I-74 intersection, approximately three miles south of its original location.

Pastor Groce and the deacons later decided that the cost to grade the land needed to construct a church building would be too great. The decision was made to auction the land. The auction did not bring a suitable price. The land was pulled back and was not sold.

Pastor Groce had a good friend from Woodland Baptist Church in Winton-Salem, North Carolina that owned a grading company. Pastor Groce's friend cleared and graded three acres of "Temple's" land at a substantial savings.

The 150' x 50' cinder block building constructed on the location had a 288-seat capacity sanctuary with baptistry, seven Sunday School rooms, nursery, and offices, along with bathrooms and water fountains.

The church witnessed tremendous growth; and with chairs placed in every possible location, outgrew its seating capacity. People would come to the door, look at the crowded sanctuary and leave.

"Temple" began a building program in May, 1992. The \$1,000,000 building design would be built directly in front of the existing building and would allow for a 1000-seat sanctuary, plus a 90-seat choir loft. The building design also included a large vestibule, numerous Sunday School rooms, offices, and several restroom facilities. The existing cinder-block building would be used for Children's Church and additional Sunday School rooms.

Pastor Groce and the deacons approached every local bank and was refused the loan needed to begin construction of the new building.

With much prayer, Pastor Groce and church's deacons continued to believe God to provide the much-needed new facility. These men met again with one of local banks. This bank could not give "Temple" the \$1,000,000 loan due to their bank's loan guidelines. After praying about the situation, the bank officers rewrote the guideline to approve the (\$1,000,000) loan to "Temple".

On April 15, 2002, the congregation of Temple Baptist Church sang praises and celebrated the retirement of its \$1,000,000 loan for the new facility in only eight years --- seven years ahead of its 15-year loan term. (qtd. The Community Bank, 2002 Annual Report, pg. 12)

Building the new sanctuary led to the need of additional parking space. A Fellowship Hall and Prophet Chamber were all needed.

"Temple" owned the land needed; however, it was a large mountain that "banked" the back of the cinder-block building.

People of "Temple" began to pray about this need.

One day a man walked into the church office and asked who(m) to see about moving the mountain. He needed the dirt to fill a hole where a Walmart was to be built. . . . Walmart was willing to move the mountain and fix the driveway at absolutely no cost to the church. . . . Pastor Groce and (a deacon) signed the contracts and work began. Twenty-seven trucks working eight to twelve hours daily, five days a week for seven months moved 400,000 yards of dirt and rock. During this time Walmart was approached by a different person who offered their dirt at no cost and a shorter haul distance. Walmart refused stating that God wanted this mountain moved. That mountain is now under Walmart in Mt. Airy and Temple Baptist Church has its additional parking and a new Fellowship Hall and Prophet Chamber. (qtd. Answered Prayers, Leo R. LaVinka, pgs. 83,84)

Rev. Teague Groce continued as pastor of Temple Baptist Church until his death in October, 2002. Rev. Zane Fishel, with his wife, Amy, and their two daughters, obtained the pastoral position shortly thereafter.

"For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy *is* his name. (Luke 1:49)

The Community Bank; 2002 Annual Report

Answered Prayers; The Old Paths Publications, Inc.