

BRACKEN RIDGE BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP

HISTORY 1979 - 1980

In 1979, Maurice and Glenda Simpson from the Geebung Baptist Church, who lived in Bracken Ridge, felt the need to somehow evaluate whether the local people would support a Baptist Fellowship of their own in the area.

On consulting with several families who lived in the area, all agreed it would be very helpful to have their own fellowship. This encouraged them greatly.

Travelling away from their homes to another suburb each Sunday morning and evening seemed somehow to act as a restraint against them asking their neighbours and friends to church. Their children also would meet different children from whom they saw only on Sunday and not at any other time in the week. Christian Fellowship was lacking at their doorstep. They were worshipping with people in whose area they were not residing. There is a principle of "blooming where God plants us", and they were going elsewhere.

An approach was made to the Baptist Union of Q'land, and a meeting was called for the Pastors and Deacons of the Geebung, Brighton and Sandgate Churches, to meet in the Simpson's home, at 16 Wilpie Street, Bracken Ridge, to see what interest there was, with this vision of commencing a work in the Bracken Ridge area. That was April 17, 1980. Convened by Rev. Roy Conwell.

Very few people showed any real enthusiasm for this venture, apart from the instigators, and it became clear that if it were to succeed, positive action was to be taken.

Maurice Simpson moved that a survey be conducted in the area. This was agreed to, with prayer meetings, to find the Lord's will on this matter of establishing a Fellowship in the area.

A few only of all who met resided in the area. The survey structure and questions were formulated and Mr. David Tonkin's expertise in organising same, was brilliant.

A subsequent meeting was held at the same home, on June 17, 1980, where with Rev Roy Conwell, the President of the Union, Mr. Fred Stallard, and Rev. Len Maycock, present, further discussion took place.

The survey was carried out mainly by people from Geebung, Brighton and Nundah churches. A large QRX truck, owned and operated by Mr. Clyde Greaves, was used each Saturday, complete with large signs, displaying what we were doing, enabling us to operate effectively.

Over 1,600 homes were visited in eight weeks.

The motivation for something to commence was always strong. After each Saturday of walking the "BEAT", the evidence was collated, and pointed to the fact that a Fellowship would be welcomed by most Baptists and many other interested persons in the area.

We found over 100 families who, at one time or another, had been associated with a Baptist Church, but now seldom went to church.

The results were passed on to the then President of the Baptist Union of Q'land, Mr. Fred Stallard, to keep him fully informed of its progress.

The area which caused most concern then, and still does today, is the area of YOUTH.

As the TAFE College, Norris Road, Bracken Ridge, was still being constructed, an approach was made to the Principal, for the first use of the Auditorium when it was completed. A telephone call later in the year confirmed that if we were to commence a work in Bracken Ridge and use this room, so suited for worship, a decision was to be made, or our request would lapse and another christian group would be given the use of it.

Approval came quickly from the Union and the first Baptist Fellowship meeting in the TAFE College was held on Sunday morning at 9 a.m., August 31, 1980.

We recognise the part played by the Officers of the Baptist Union of Q'land., for without their encouragement and support, this venture would not have been possible.

A special mention of Mr. Rob Smith who, for 10 months every Sunday morning brought his own organ and picked it up again at the end of each service. Sunday evening service, the same. Music will play an enormous part in our new church programme. This man provided it for us until we bought our own organ, July, 1981.

Over a period of years previously, the Sandgate Baptist Church commenced a Sunday School in the area, and had a block of 2½ acres in Norris Road, Bracken Ridge, set aside for development purposes.

The Fellowship was guided and encouraged at this time by the help of Mr. Hedley Barker and the Dept. of Home Ministries. This man has taken a keen interest in our progress and we thank him for his vigilance and strong partnership formed between us to this point of time.

A Moderator was appointed - Pastor Ted Brett, and he and his wife, May, commenced ministry amongst us as interim or part time. Within 7 days, this part time ministry became full time and has remained so ever since.

A Steering Committee was elected, with Chairman, Pastor Ted Brett, Secretary, Maurice Simpson, Treasurer, David Tonkin, Ralph Brett, Asst. Sect. to Div. of Church Life and Growth, Mavis Cartmill, Minute Secretary, and Mr. Ron Heitman.

Representatives of Brighton, Geebung and Sandgate were invited to join us. Sandgate declined.

We would like to acknowledge the encouragement by way of prayer concern and practical support which we received from Rev. Ian Stanfield and the people from the Brighton Baptist Church in the early days of our becoming established as a Baptist Fellowship.

Approximate attendances	...	1st Sunday	-	90
		2nd "	-	45
		3rd "	-	27

We have never fallen below 47 since.

Average attendance to February, 1983, ... 65 - 87.

The TAFE College staff has been marvellous. Claude, the Caretaker, and Mr. Greenhill, Principal, have been helpful and more than willing to give us extra rooms and any assistance necessary. We thank them with gratitude and pleasure being able to deal with men of this calibre.

Our Pastor and his wife endeared themselves to us, and loved us from the beginning. This warm christian love, their committment to Christ and their dedication to the work here, is an inspiration to all. God has equipped them well through the years and we are reaping the benefits of their walk with the Lord. Their maturity, experience and wisdom, is so evident, that in adversity as well as our mountain top experiences, their leadership and spiritual depth of understanding, is adhered to and appreciated by all. As a Fellowship of the Lord's people, whose emphasis is on the whole family involved in the church, we have been richly blessed and are extremely fortunate that in our lifetime, we have been able to sit under ministry and truth of such a high calibre. We thank God on every remembrance of them.

Along with Rev. Mel Williams, our Minister of Visitation, we are fortunate indeed to have such men in our ministry team.

Ted's brother, Ralph, has also been a strong supporter of the work. He has believed in Bracken Ridge for many years. As a part of the team, and with faith in the future, together we'll build a better tomorrow, with God's help, for our children of the next generation. We accept this as our responsibility before God, and something to the Glory of God will be built, a standing memorial to His faithfulness, and a spiritual home that our children can worship in with pride and become a part thereof.

NOT A MUSEUM FOR SAINTS
BUT (PRAISE GOD)
A HOSPITAL FOR SINNERS.

We believe in a God-given vision for this area, and with the Lord's help, this is just the beginning.

HIS WILL BE DONE