



Sumiton Church of God to Hold 100th Anniversary Celebration

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Words by Anna Lee Vaughn | Images by Ryan McGill and Courtesy of Sumiton Church of God

In 1923, seven Sumiton locals decided the community needed a Church of God. The individuals – Cliff and Rosie Brewer, Dovie Sellers, Jim and Martha Sandlin, Isabella Fowler, and Floy Dodd – took it upon themselves to bring this vision to life, starting the church in an old home they converted into a sanctuary.

“There wasn’t a Church of God in Sumiton, and these seven people were going to Dora Church of God and Sipsey Church of God. Sumiton was growing, so they decided that the town needed one,” says Pam Campbell, Sumiton Church of God member and historian.

Since its beginning 100 years ago, Sumiton Church of God has occupied four sanctuaries and been under the leadership of 31 pastors, including its first pastor, Reverend G.C. Dunn, and the current pastor, Reverend Harv Turner. Since 1976, the church has also been home to the Sumiton Christian School campus.

Pastors Harv and Kelley Turner note that God's faithfulness to this church has been evident over the years, and they look forward to celebrating its 100th anniversary with the congregation and the community.

On Saturday, November 4, there will be a music celebration for current and previous members of the church's music ministry, giving them the chance to reconnect and fellowship. On Sunday, November 5, at 10:30 a.m., there will be a special commemorative service, at which everyone is welcome! The church will recognize some of its former pastors, leaders, and oldest members, and there will be a focus on the church's history, music, and worship.



"There will be more musical and morning worship emphasis. We'll talk about the faithfulness of God through the years because we believe not only do we have an incredible foundation and heritage, but that those before us have paid a price and helped make a way for who we are now and where we believe we are going," says Harv.

Since the Turners joined the church in March 2022, they have picked up on its motto, "Greater is coming." Harv and Kelley are confident that God has great things in store for Sumiton Church of God and its importance to the community.

Kelley says, "Within the church, there is such love for the community and so many programs that flow out of the church and into our schools. We have 30 or 40 teachers in our church who teach at Sumiton Christian and other local schools, and I love that about our church."

Harv echoes similar thoughts about the church's community involvement. "The sense of community within the church has been such a joy. It's awesome to be a part of Friday Night Football and different events in the community. At any time, you can find three and four generations of families in our church, and I think there's strength in that." **WL**

This article was written by my former writing student Anna Lee Vaughn. After seeing her success with the real-world writing assignments from my composition class, I recommended her to the editor of *78 Magazine/The Walker Leader*. And the rest, as they say, is history.