

*WORDS OF*  
**JOY**

*Jeremiah 15:16*



**FIRST MELISSA**

Your words were found and I ate them,  
and **Your words became for me a joy**  
and the delight of my heart; for I have  
been called by Your name, O Lord God of  
hosts. Jeremiah 15:16

# ***In this teaching series...***

Joy of God's Word

Joy of struggles

Joy of newness (Rosh Hashanah)

Joy of forgiveness (Yom Kippur)

Joy of provision (Sukkot)

Joy of salvation

Joy of hope

Joy of victory

# ***Joy of Heritage***

Tomorrow is the 137<sup>th</sup> anniversary of  
the founding of our congregation

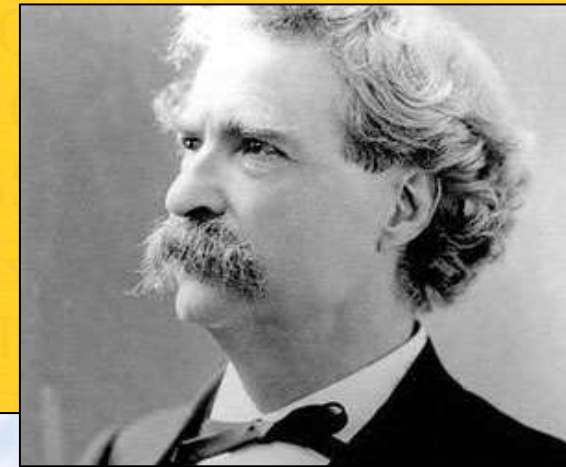
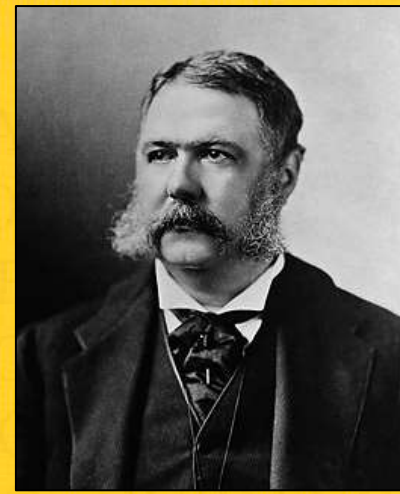
WORDS OF  
**JOY**  
Jeremiah 15:16

# HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

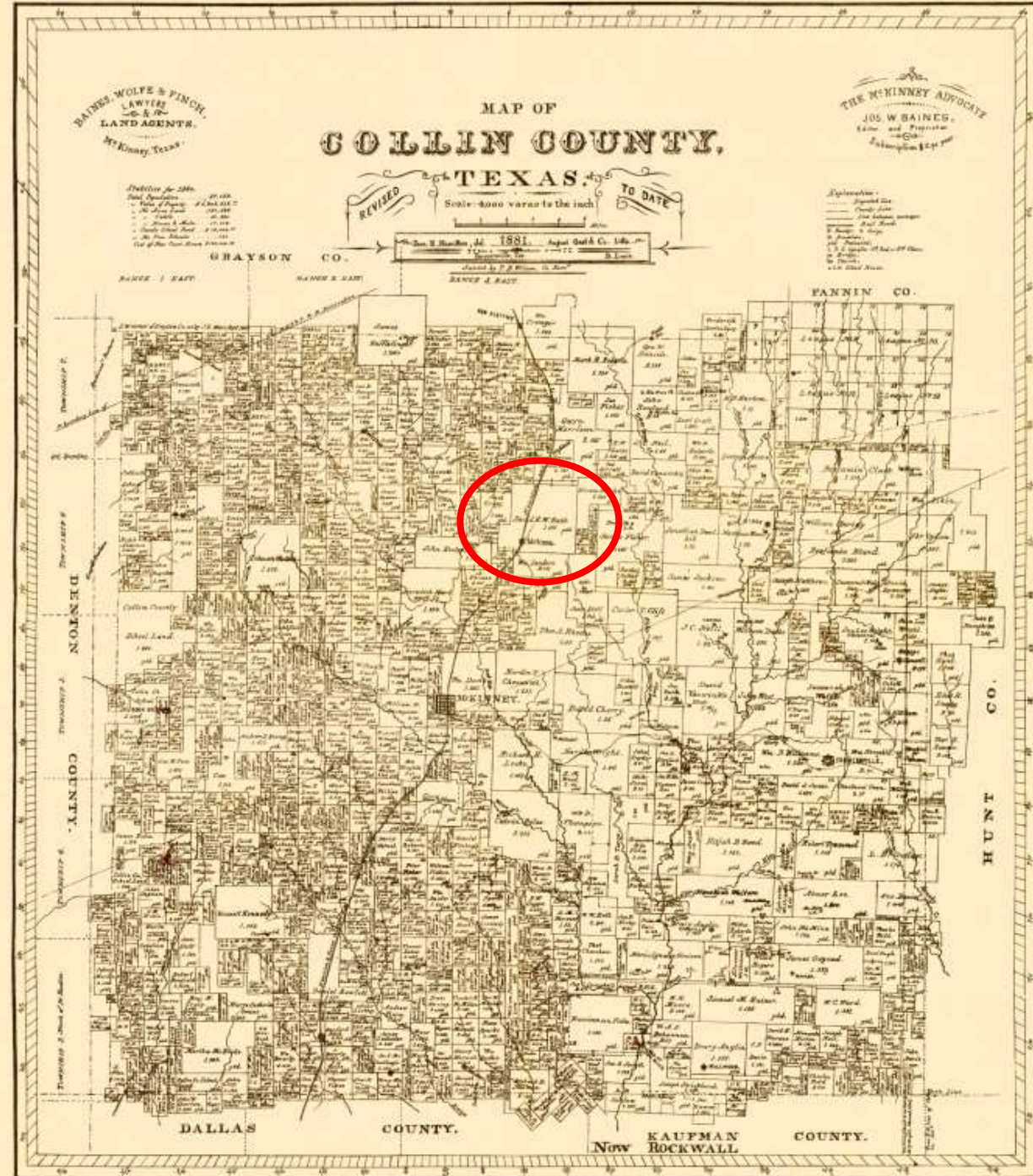
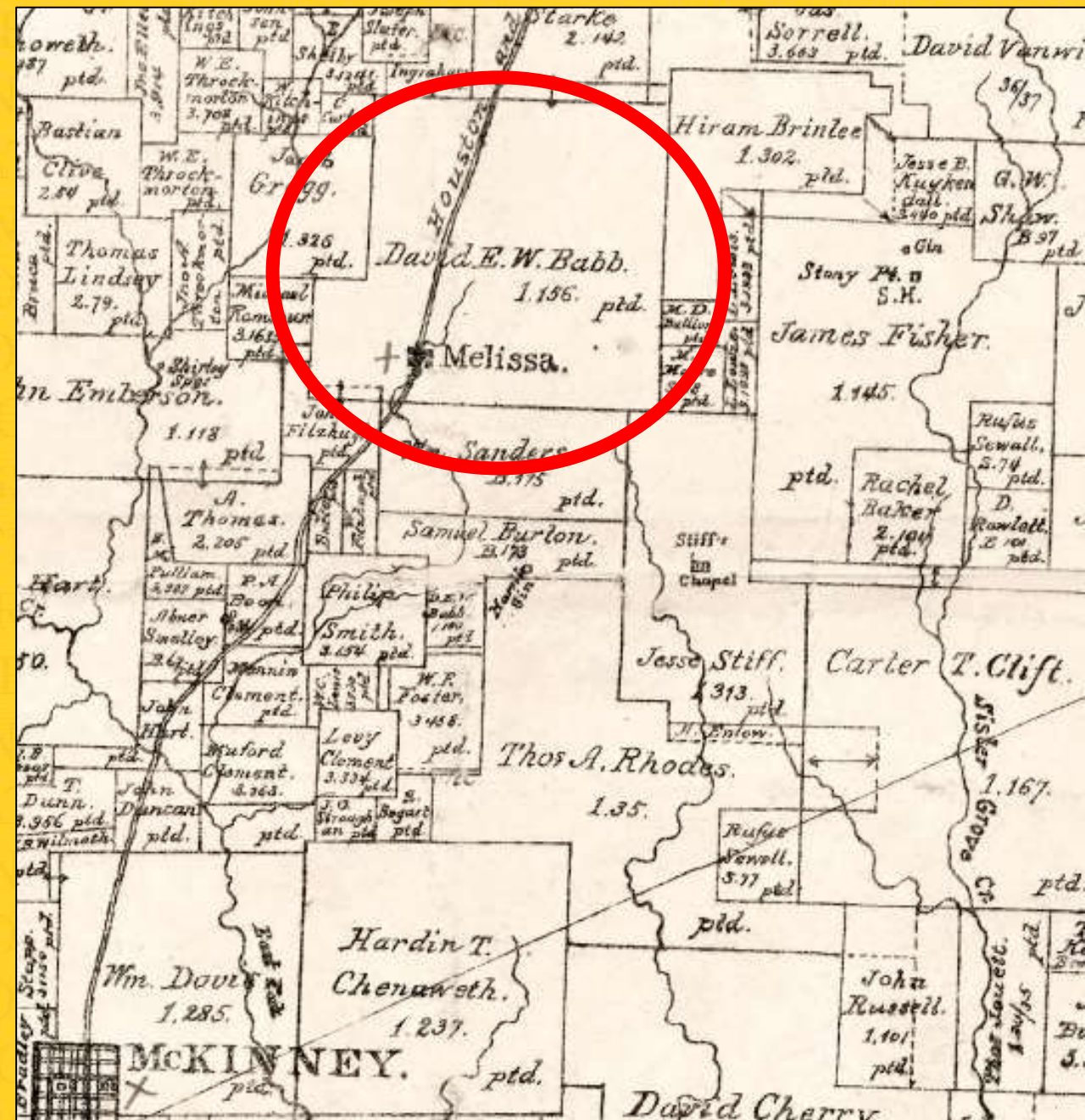
On Saturday, October 18, 1884,  
the Baptist Church of Christ at Melissa  
was organized by Pastor Levi Dunn  
and 22 charter members.

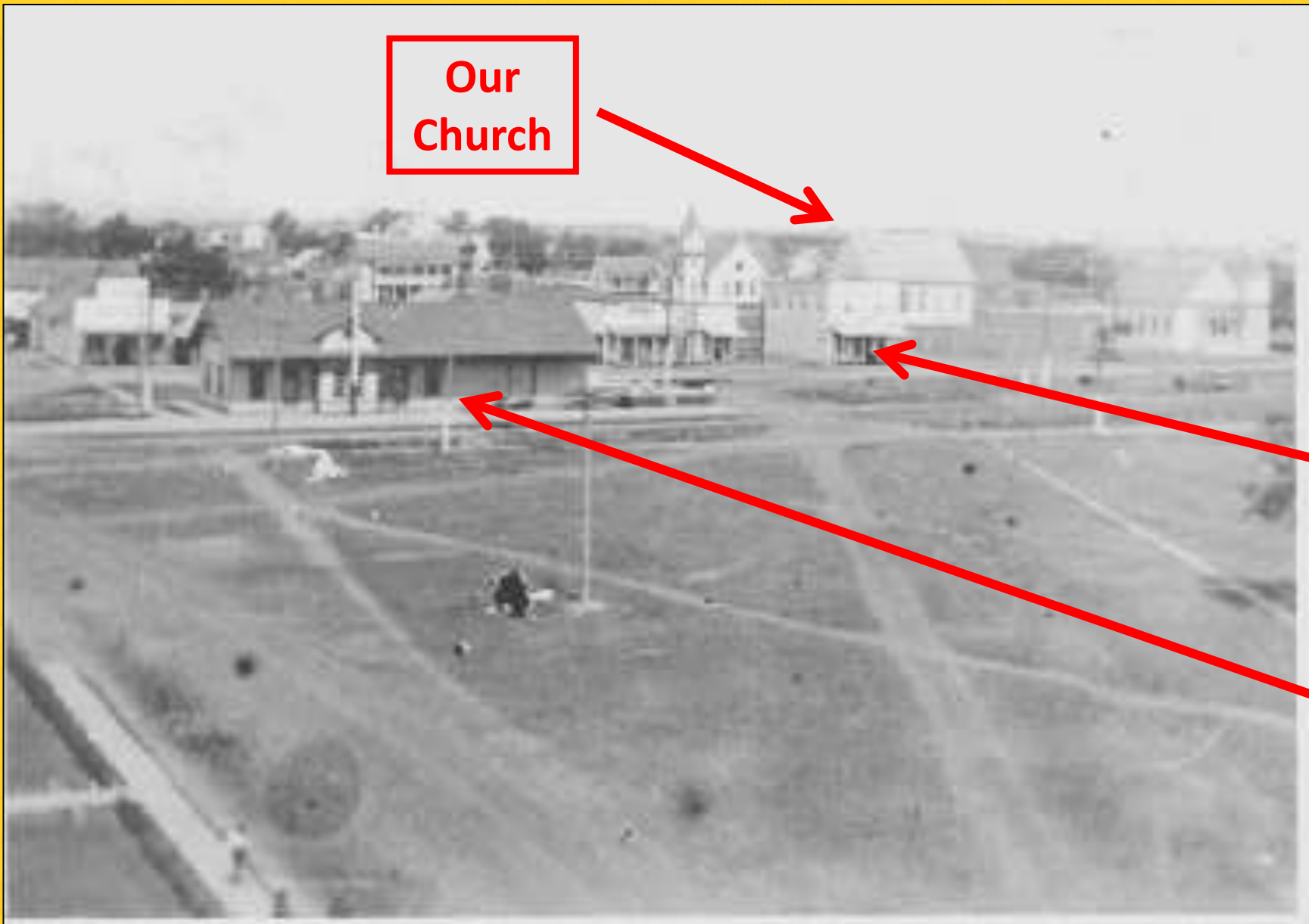
## In October 1884...

- Chester A. Arthur was president of the United States.
- There were 38 states in the United States.
- The cornerstone for the Statue of Liberty had been laid in August on Bedloe's Island in New York Harbor.
- Mark Twain had just written *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.
- The first long-distance telephone call, Boston to New York, had occurred in March.
- Ringling Brothers circus had just premiered in May.



# Map of Collin County, Texas in 1881





**Our  
Church**

**John Gibson  
Staple and  
Grocery  
Store**

**Railroad  
Depot**

***City of Melissa early 1900s***





***Melissa High School early 1900s***

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- A deadly tornado struck Melissa on April 13, 1921, killing 13 people and injuring many more. The tornado tore the roof off of the brick school building, but the children inside were not seriously injured. All churches in the town, three cotton gins, every business house except a bank, the post office, and the Houston and Texas Central railway station, were wrecked. The Waldon Hotel was lifted by the winds, turned halfway around, and thrown up against the school building.
- Eight years later, on August 8, 1929, a fire burned down many of the buildings that had been rebuilt after the tornado. Population declined from a high of 500 in 1925 down to 285 in 1949.



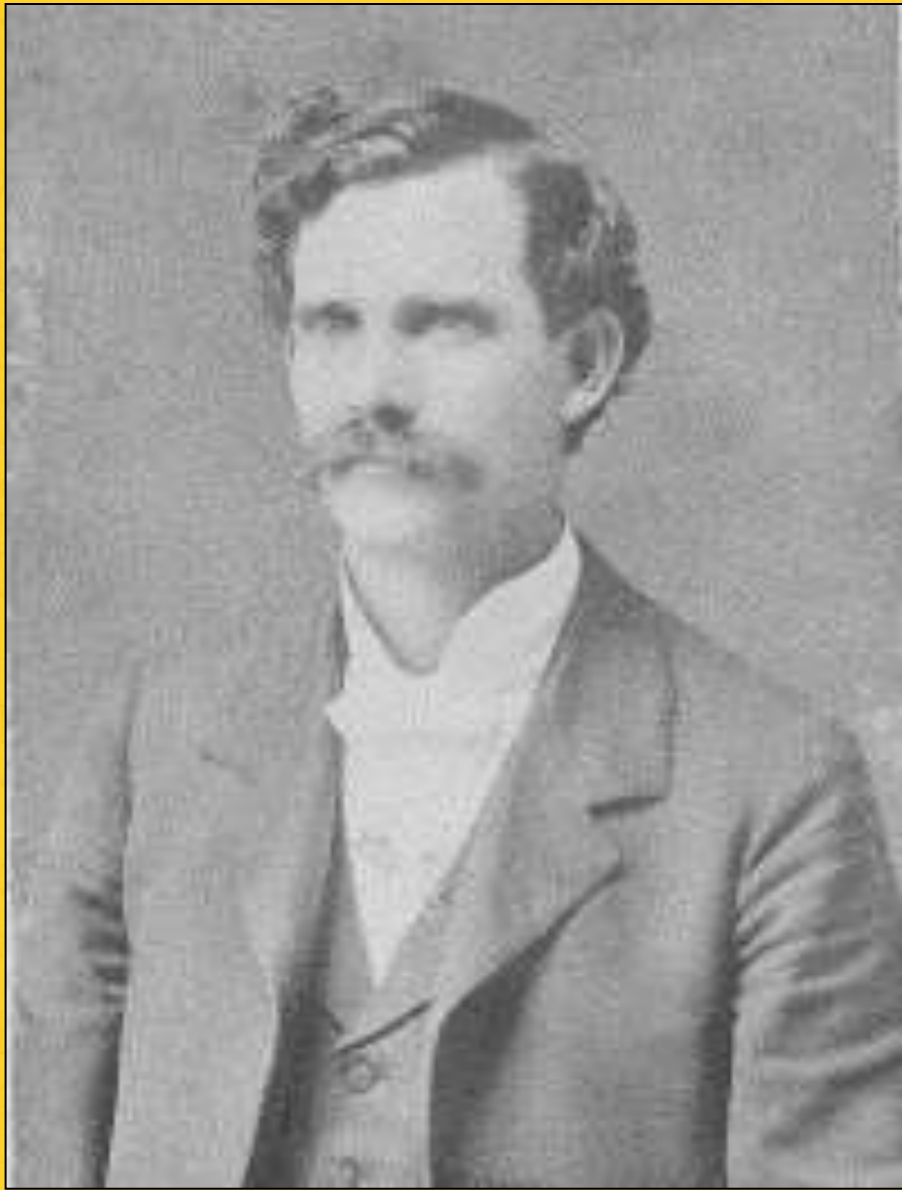
***Hotel Walden in Melissa, damaged in 1921 tornado***

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LEVI DUNN	1884-1885
WILLIAM DUNN	1885-1889
JOHN W. CONNELLY	1889-1895
J. F. SEAGRAVES	1895-1896
G. O. KEY	1896-1897
J. H. MYERS	1897-1898
G. O. KEY	1898-1902
J. L. TRUETT	1902-1907
M. L. FULLER	1907-1908
L. L. SAMS	1908-1909
BRO. BLACK	1909-1910
G. M. COOK	1910-1915
T. J. FURNESS	1915-1918
R. C. FLETCHER	1918-1919
G. L. WEST	1919-1921
JOE PEARCE	1922-1927
ED H. RATLIFF	1927-1929
R. L. BONNER	1929-1933
M. M. BARNETT	1933-1937

GEORGE HUMPHREY	1937-1939
BERNARD FRANKLIN	1939-1941
E. E. GILBERT	1941-1945
T. H. Mc SPADDEN	1945-1946
LEWIS FERRELL	1946-1947
TRUMAN SKAGGS	1947-1952
LOREN WHITE	1952-1956
PAUL MYERS	1956-1957
J. C. OGG	1958-1960
CLYDE T. BOYD	1960-1965
GLENN BRIDGES	1965-1973
RICHARD IVY	1974-1976
MAC POPE	1976-1978
MILTON MAGNESS	1978-1980
KEN KELLEY	1980-1986
DONNY CORTIMILIA	1987-1990
MORGAN MALONE	1990-2000
RAY MILLER	2000-2001
TREY GRAHAM	2002-Present

In the 137-year history of First Melissa, 37 different men have served as the church's senior pastor and spiritual leader.



Pastor G. O. Key  
1896-1897, 1898-1902



Pastor J. L. Truett  
1902-1907

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- In 1884, the first deacon was J. M. Graves, F. H. Ogilvie was the first church clerk, and J. S. Hill was the first church treasurer.
- Worship services were held one Sunday per month from 1884 to 1898.
- In December 1886, the church selected a site on which to build, on the south end of the F. H. Ogilvie lot. Services led by Pastor William Dunn.
- By 1887, missions funds were being sent to Home Missions and Buckner Orphans Home. Records show gifts of \$5.00 to Home Missions and \$11.00 to the orphans home were sent that year.
- Church's first building was dedicated debt-free in March, 1890.
- Name of the Baptist Church of Christ at Melissa was changed in December, 1891. The church became known at that time as Melissa Baptist Church. Services were led by Pastor John W. Connelly.
- In 1898, the church decided to meet twice per month.

- On May 1, 1921, a meeting was called to rebuild the church after the tornado. In July of 1921, a \$2,000 note was issued for rebuilding costs.
- The new building was dedicated debt-free in 1924.
- In April of 1925, pews were purchased for \$700 from the First Christian Church of Sherman.
- Weekly worship services began August 15, 1948.
- In 1950, a new of building improvements were completed, including re-papering, repainting, carpet added, piano purchased.
- Name of the church was changed in June, 1952, to First Baptist Church Melissa.



Our church's first building was destroyed in the 1921 tornado. This second building was constructed in 1924.





Women of the church standing outside church front doors  
Date is late 1920s

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The former location of First Melissa as it looked in 1969. This building still stands on Harrison Street.

WORDS OF  
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Jeremiah 15:16

- In 1977, major structural improvements included a new peaked roof built over existing flat roof, stucco exterior, new foyer, new choir loft, repainting inside and out, new carpet, paneling, and folding door panels. Cost was \$49,000.
- In 1998, the church votes to relocate. Land search committee formed. Land identified and secured in December, located at intersection of SH 121 and FM 545 in Melissa. Land was purchased for \$214,000.
- On February 28, 1999, a special worship service was held on the new property, led by Pastor Morgan Malone.

Mission:  
**HIM POSSIBLE**



**Ground Breaking Ceremony for Building A in May 2003**

WORDS OF  
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***Construction of Building A  
began in March 2004***



***Grand Opening of Building A***  
***in November 2004***



# Ground-Breaking for Building B in April 2010



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# ***Construction of Building B in November 2010***

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# **COVID-19** ***in 2020***



WORSHIP SERVICE  
STREAMING SUNDAYS  
AT 11:30 AM  
FIRSTMELISSA.COM

A laptop computer is shown from a slightly elevated angle. The screen displays a live worship service. Several musicians are performing on a stage. There is a keyboardist, a guitarist, and a drummer. The background is dark with some stage lighting. The laptop is silver and has a black keyboard.

[youtube.com/firstmelissachurch](https://youtube.com/firstmelissachurch)

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# ***New ways to worship together***



**“Drive-In” Church on Easter Sunday 2020**

*WORDS OF*  
**JOY**  
*Jeremiah 15:16*

# ***New ways to worship together***



**“Lawn Chair Church”**



# ***The Great Flood of 2021***

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# 137 Years of Honoring Jesus

For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

Philippians 1:6



Here we  
are today

WORDS OF  
**JOY**  
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led by  
Tyler Normand







**First Melissa Kids Ministry led by Kati Jones**





led by Maghan Achimon

# ***Joy of Heritage***

## ***Psalm 78***

Listen, O my people, to my instruction; incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old, which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not conceal them from their children, but **tell to the generation to come** the **praises of the Lord**, and **His strength** and **His wondrous works** that He has done.

Psalm 78:1-4

For He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which He commanded our fathers **that they should teach them to their children**, that the generation to come might know, even the children yet to be born, that they may arise and **tell them to their children, that they should put their confidence in God and not forget the works of God**, but keep His commandments Psalm 78:5-7

**As year 138 begins at First Melissa...**

**We have a Past  
and a Future**

**Jeremiah 29**

*WORDS OF*  
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Jeremiah 15:16

Now these are the words of the letter which Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem to the rest of the elders of the exile, the priests, the prophets and all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon. (This was after King Jeconiah and the queen mother [Nehushta], the court officials, the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, the craftsmen and the smiths had departed from Jerusalem.) Jeremiah 29:1-2

\*King Jeconiah יְחֹנָיָהּ also known as Jehoiachin יְהוֹיָכִין

\*A sophisticated mail system existed 2,600 years ago

# How did this exile happen?

In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim [father of Jeconiah/Jehoiachin] king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. The Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the vessels of the house of God; and he brought them to the land of Shinar [modern day Iraq], to the house of his god, and he brought the vessels into the treasury of his god. Daniel 1:1-2



The letter was sent by the hand of Elasah the son of Shaphan, and Gemariah the son of Hilkiah, whom Zedekiah king of Judah sent to Babylon to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, saying... Jeremiah 29:3

**Who were the recipients?** (see Jeremiah 29:1)

Jeremiah the prophet sent a letter from Jerusalem to “the rest of the elders of the exile, the priests, the prophets and all the people taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon”

(God-fearing people facing a national crisis)

# What did God tell His people when they were living in a godless land that they did not recognize?

“Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon, ‘Build houses and live in them; and plant gardens and eat their produce.’” Jeremiah 29:4-5

\*The people of God are where they are because of God’s divine will.

\*Instead of hoping for Babylon’s quick demise they were encouraged to seek its peace and prosperity. – Bible Knowledge Commentary

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# Don't Stop Living

“Take wives and become the fathers of sons and daughters, and take wives for your sons and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; and multiply there and do not decrease. Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf; for in its welfare you will have welfare.”

Jeremiah 29:6-7

\*Are we condemning America or praying for America?

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# Be Careful When We Listen To Leaders

“For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, ‘Do not let your prophets who are in your midst and your diviners **deceive you**, and do not listen to the dreams which they dream. For they prophesy falsely to you in My name; I have not sent them,’ declares the Lord.” Jeremiah 29:8-9

# Don't Give Up

“For thus says the Lord, ‘When seventy years have been completed for Babylon [see Jeremiah 25:11], I will visit you and fulfill My good word to you, to bring you back to this place [Jerusalem].’” Jeremiah 29:10

\*Our sovereign God sees and knows the future even when we don't

\*Lots of spiritual growth can happen during exile

\*Will we wait on the goodness of God?

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“ ‘ For I know the plans that I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans for welfare [שְׁלוֹם shalom] and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope [תִּקְוָה tikvah].’” Jeremiah 29:11

Q: Did the Lord give this promise to the winners/victors/champions/powerful?

A: This promise was given to the exiles/defeated/downtrodden/persecuted.

**Q:** When do you need to know that God has a plan?

**A:** When the world seems chaotic and uncertain.

**Q:** When do you need to know that God will provide for you?

**A:** When the world faces economic and political crises.

**Q:** When do you need to know that God knows the future?

**A:** When the world can't even properly predict tomorrow.

**Q:** When do you need hope?

**A:** When the world seems hopeless.

“ ‘ Then [when you are in exile and feel lost and hopeless] you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with **all your heart**. I will be found by you,’ declares the Lord, ‘and I will restore your fortunes and will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you,’ declares the Lord, ‘and I will bring you back to the place from where I sent you into exile.’” Jeremiah 29:12-14



# What has God promised us for Year 138?

- A plan מַחְשָׁבָה machashabah
- Welfare שְׁלוֹם shalom
- Not calamity רַע ra'
- Future אַחֲרִיית achariyth
- Hope תִּקְוָה Tikvah
- He will listen שָׁמַע shama'

\*See Jeremiah 29:11-12

# What should we promise God for Year 138?

- call upon Him
- come to Him
- pray to Him
- seek Him
- find Him
- search for Him

**with all our hearts**

\*See Jeremiah 29:12-13

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# What does the future look like?

For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him. Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.

1 Thessalonians 5:9-11