

Nellie Wallace
Church of the Nazarene
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Q: When was your church founded?

A: The Nazarene started in the fall of 1941. And in the spring of 1942 it was organized into an organized church, on February 15, 1942. The pastor from the Paris Nazarene Church and the evangelist went ahead and organized it. A class of 15 members were taken in at the time. It was Rev. and Mrs. Robert Hale, Evelyn Carroll, Mrs. Lota Carroll, Mr. Herman Carroll, Mrs. Vergil English, Bill Richmond, who was my cousin, Nellie Bartley, who was me, Norma Carroll, Mrs. Victorine Bartley, who was my mother, Donna Hutson, Jessie Shotts, Clarence Rimlinger, Irene Rimlinger, and Louise Rimlinger. And this is the minutes that was taken the day it was organized. It says, "A blessing of God was outpoured and his presence was felt by all, and election of officers was also held at this meeting with the following results, in the order elected; Rev. Elston was the acting chairman, with Rev. Cozad and Brother Hale a layman from Paris, Brother Dan Belts and Herman Carroll serving as teller. The board of trustees was Sister Carroll Brother Hale, and Sister Stover, who was my aunt. Board of stewards was Sister Carroll's Sister Stover and Sister Bartley which is my mother. And Sunday school superintendent was the pastor's wife Mrs. Louise Hale. In a church that small you have to use whoever you can to hold offices. A class of 15 members is a very small church. Rev. Robert Hale was our pastor from September 1941 until September 1945. And then Rev. Mertie Melton came, she was a school-teacher at the south side school and she was also our pastor from 1945 until 1953. Then Rev. John Barrick came in 1953 and he was our pastor until 1961. And then the Hales came back and

was our pastor from '61 to '65. And Rev. Retic was our pastor from '65 to '67. And Rev. Herschel Burton was our pastor from 1967 to 1976. And Rev. Doug Romine from '77 until '83. And Rev. Dennis Wright, who is our current pastor, came to be our pastor in 1983 and he still is. And I hope he will be for a long time to come. And that's a picture of the beginning of our church, that was before we ever moved to town and got into it. It started with a tent meeting at that little triangular park by the Trinity Church. To close the tent meeting they rented a little building at the corner of 7th and Locust, which is no longer there. It wasn't any bigger than my living room or this kitchen. Then it moved down to where Bennett and Schroeder's law office is now. Then we bought the building at the corner of 4th and Plum in 1946 when Mertie Melton was our pastor we bought that building from the American Legion and we moved our church into it and now its been bulldozed away and the Baptist Church has built their parking lot there because it was an old building anyway. But, uh, in 1977 we built the church where we are now. These are all pictures of it being built. This is the Sunday school class. My daughter is now, well she graduated with your dad, she was in his class and there she is as a little toddler in her Sunday school class. That's my mother and Sister Hail, and that's the children on Easter in 1955. These are former pastors and evangelists and this is how big the church got by 1948. That was the Sunday school, look at all the children. We had and, uh, it just grew and grew and grew and its growing now and we have a lot of new people now. We have a deputy sheriff and his family and the people who own Arby's in Terre Haute and just people are coming to us from everywhere. They always say when they walk in the door that they feel the love among the people and so, um, I'm thankful for, um, what it has meant to me and my family. I was like a lot of kids when I was a teenager. I didn't want to go to church, I wanted to go everywhere else and

do everything else and my mother said as long as she was my boss now you'll go to church. And when the doors would open we were there. Maybe we didn't want to be, but we were, we were. We wouldn't have it any other way, but of course when she died some of us just went our own way and did what we wanted to, but a year after she passed away, she died in 1946, and a year after that when I was having my 4th child, I went back to church and gave my heart to the Lord, and He's been so good to me and taken care of me and taken care of my family. You may or may not remember Herman Wallace that played basketball and football, he's one of my grandsons. His dad's name is Herman, named after my husband's father, and Ryan is a freshman this year. His picture showed up in this paper. I was really shocked. I couldn't believe it, but our church has been a giving church. We help people. If we have anyone that comes to our church and they can't pay their bills and have a hard time heating their homes or anything we just all give money and take care of them and anybody that has a lot hospital bills or things like that, a lot of sickness in the family, we have food poundings for them every so often and we carry in great loads of groceries. So our church is really a giving church, and um, these are the Hails in their older years. That is sister Melton, that came second, and that's Nell Smithly that was one of our leaders in our church. This is the Bertons that was there in the sixties. And I thought I had a picture of Reverend Romine, but I, yeah that's Reverend Romine and Reverend Hammond. He headed up the building of our new church, he laid the plans and drew up the plans and everything. And our church is down at the end of, almost at the end of South 7th street.

Q: When was that church built?

A: 1977. And uh, right now we're trying to raise enough money to enlarge it because it is not quite big enough for everybody we have, so we're trying to raise the money to build a new

sanctuary and then we're going to take the sanctuary we have and petition it off into more Sunday school rooms. We don't have enough, we have to have one Sunday school over in the annex.

Where we usually hold showers and parties and things.

Q: How long did you say that you'd been attending your church?

A: Since 1942. And then I kind of quit when I went to work. I had to quit high school and go to work to help my mother take care of my younger sisters. And when I went to work I had to work on Sundays. So I didn't go back to church till 1957.

Q: What are your baptism rituals at your church?

A: We usually baptize out in a flowing creek or something. I was baptized at Twin Lakes when I was a kid. But uh, we usually go out to, we have several people who are farmers. We usually go out to someone's farm. And they put a bunch of bales of hay there for people to sit on, you know, and watch. And we usually have a bapt, they put in a uh, a baptismal but nobody wanted to use it. So we finally just took it out and sold it.

Q: How would you compare your Christmas and Easter ceremonies, past and present?

A: Well back in the old days we usually put on a play and all the little kids would say poems. And we still do sometimes. But mostly for Christmas our choir sings a cantata, and Easter. Our choir usually sings a cantata for Christmas and Easter. My son Herman he's the choir director. And right now he's going to sing in the community choir, that the Christian Church is putting on.

Q: What was your most memorable event in the church?

A: I think probably the day it was organized in 1942. I remember that so clear and I was only eleven years old. Now I'm sixty seven but uh, I remember that so plain. Because my mother was there and everything, and I tell you when you lose your mother you just about lose

everything.

Q: Do you know what the approximate size of your church is now?

A: Well, when our church started out it was organized with fifteen members, but uh, I don't know how many members now. But I know it's well over 100. We just took a bunch of new members in Sunday. Jerry Parsly and his wife and Harry and Gayland Krouch, and a whole bunch of people.

Q: Is your church involved with any community services in Marshall?

A: Yes, the last Wednesday night of each month our pastor and some of the men in our church, and even some of the women, they go around town and do things for people. They trim people's hedges, they go up and wash the police cars, and they just do all sorts of community things. Because our pastor feels like that's what we should do. He said that if we just stay in our own building, we're not telling anyone anything about our faith. He says if we go out and help people we're sharing our faith with people and our love for the community.

Q: How many youth groups does your church have?

A: We have one youth group called NYI International, it's Nazarene Youth International. And they have a meeting every Wednesday night, while we're having prayer meeting in the church. They have their meeting over there, and I think Jarrod Ferris is in charge of it now.

Q: Is it for kids and adults?

A: No it's for teenagers, from the time they reach their teens until they're either married or up in their twenties they're involved. Because Herman Randold is twenty now. When he comes home he's in it.

Q: When did your church first start having youth group?

A: Well we had youth group when I was just a kid, it was called NYPS. Nazarenes Young People Society. But it's changed now because our church is international. We used to be a small denomination but now we're all around the world. We're in every country, practically, that there is. We're in all the former Soviet countries, we're in Vietnam, China, we have missionaries all around the world, they're called Nazarene Youth International now.

Q: What's the longest term that a pastor has been at your church?

A: This pastor we have now has been since '83, and this is '98 so, he's been here fifteen years. Fifteen years next month, I hope we can keep him another fifteen. I teased him one day, he said I want you people to tell me if you think I've been here long enough. I said no, I want you to be here as long as I live.

Q: Is there anything else that you'd like to add?

A: Well I just feel that our church is a very giving church. Also a very loving church. And I feel like that if you have a need and you're involved in our church, even if you're not a member, if you're involved at all and you have a need our church people will take care of it. We always have, and um, Richard Davis he's been on the police force and he has been really sick. In fact he's been so bad, we were afraid we were gonna lose him. The doctor won't let him go back to work so we've had several food poundings for him and done things for them because, if he can't go back to work it isn't easy. Rachel's their daughter and Eric's their son, their oldest son is Herman's age and he's out of school. They just don't have any way to get any help, so the church tries to help them all we can. Because when you can't work, you just don't have any money coming in. It isn't easy to pay your bills if you don't have any money coming in.