

Leaving a Legacy of Faith and Giving!

Logged into my childhood memories is a place that still brings a smile and a warm feeling: Saint Rest Baptist Church on the White Lightning Road.

It's a little red brick, 2 story church about half way between Vienna and Homer on LA Hwy 146. The building itself is interesting with the sanctuary sitting atop a partial-basement bottom floor that houses classrooms and a fellowship hall. The pews are made from 1x4 lumber cut at my granddad's sawmill. Before cushions were added, a wrong move meant a pinched bottom from those pew slats. The church also comes complete with a "ghost" in the cemetery and a "boogie-man" in the Dungeon (closet) under the stairs!

But what I remember most these days are the people who gathered there on Sundays and Wednesdays to worship and pray. Hardly anyone in this rural church was not related to someone else in the body which made for one big family of believers. Here are a few who come to mind;

Aunt Alvice – I didn't know then that she had a Southern drawl, it was just the way she talked. With a beautiful smooth-as-silk, lilting voice, she could tell a Bible story to a room of squirmy kids like no one else. She could pray like praying was meant to be – a conversation with Jesus as if he were standing next to you. And when she said "Come here, Hon," you knew a perfume and powder infused hug was coming!

"Aunt" Lucille – Lucille was not really my aunt, just a relative several times removed. No matter. She loved us all with a tough love that was evident. I recall hearing her voice carry down the hallway as she corralled the Young People's Training Union class. She could take on any of the older boys and make them behave... and learn! She also never turned down an opportunity to speak her mind in a business meeting. And could she ever organize a VBS Processional. In those days we lined up outside with our class and it was a Lucille-given-privilege to carry a flag or the Bible.

Uncle "Biggett" – His real name was Burl; I have no idea where the nickname came from. The main thing I remember about Biggett was that he was always there. Through most of my younger years – and his latter years – he was virtually deaf. Yet there he was, faithfully attending. I remember the pastor calling on him to close a service in prayer and his diminutive wife reaching up and tugging on his sleeve. He bent his tall frame close and Aunt Manny yelled "The preacher asked you to pray!" Then, at advanced age, Uncle Biggett found a doctor in Shreveport that put tubes in his ears and drained away the fluid that had been trapped for years. Burl was a new man, smiling and chatting with folks comfortably for the first time in years. And he remained faithful in his attendance but at least he could hear the preacher call on him to pray!

There are so many others I could name. Most have passed away; a few are still here with us. All of this family of believers at Saint Rest created a LEGACY that impacted my life and lives of so many others.

Giving was also part of their Legacy. I never saw their checkbooks or bank accounts or tithing records so how do I know they gave? Because Dr. Randy Ray currently has the privilege each Sunday of standing in the pulpit of this little red brick church called St Rest Baptist Church on the White Lightning Road and proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ. For over 160 years a long line of preachers and faithful members have invested themselves spiritually, physically, emotionally and financially to share the Gospel with the surrounding community.

Give. Serve. Invest yourself. Create a Legacy of Faith and Giving that others may know Christ!