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BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Tennessee Valley pastor keeping history alive



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By [Trent Butler](#) | February 27, 2020 at 11:34 AM CST - Updated February 27 at 2:11 PM

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. (WAFF) - “If you don’t know where you’ve come from, you don’t know where you’re going.”

Maya Angelou said it, and Tennessee Valley pastor Harrison Burruss has been trying to live out her mantra for more than three decades.

“What you see is what the Lord put in my spirit to do. Everything is laid out in order.”



Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Association Historical Room (Source: COURTESY: Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Association)

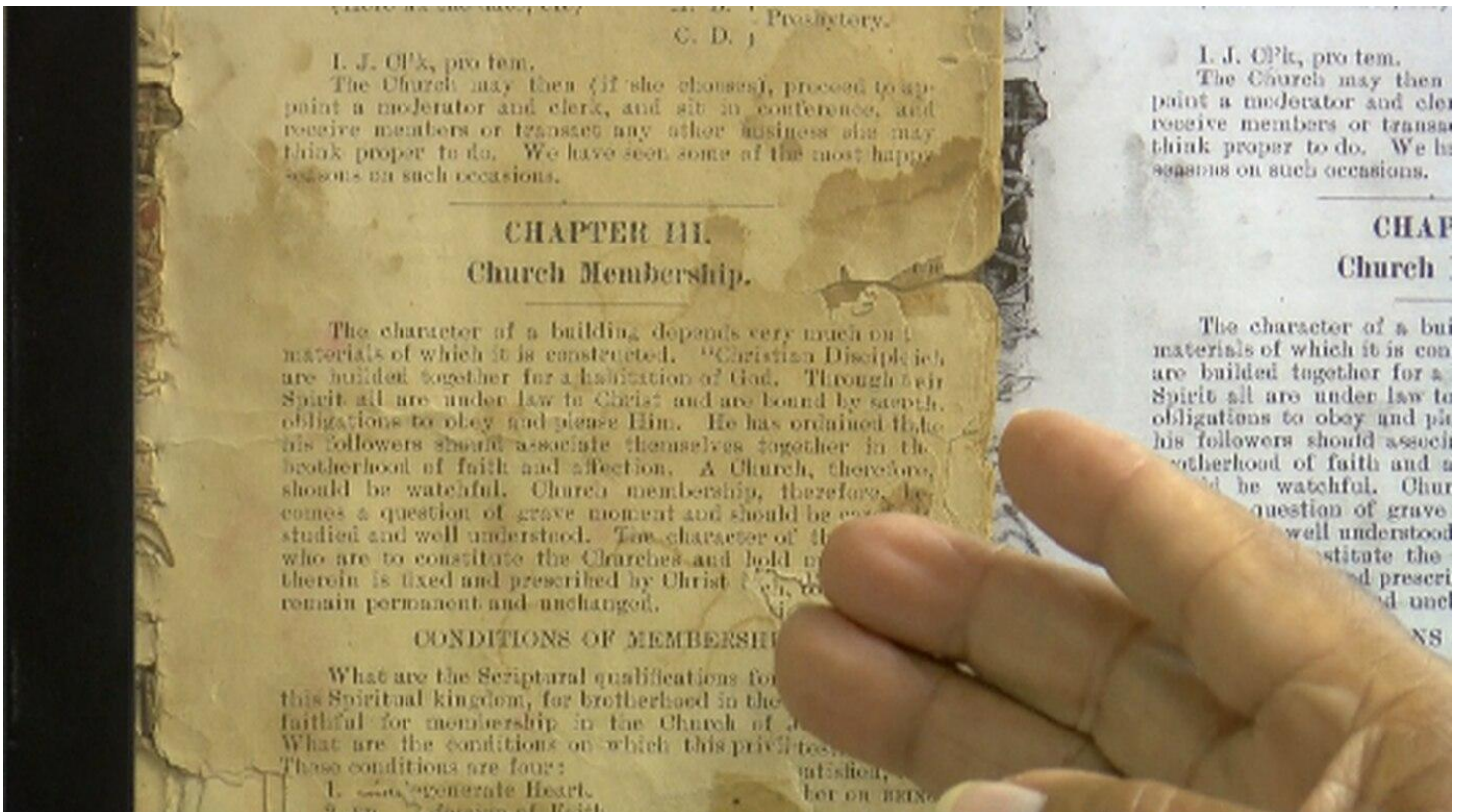
Every picture on these walls tells a story.

Burruss told us, “You’ve got to be able to look back and see the sacrifice that somebody else made for you to have what you have today.”



Harrison Burruss/Historian Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Association (Source: waff)

Pastor Harrison Burruss is the pastor of St. Elizabeth Primitive Baptist in Elkton, Tennessee, but he's also the historian for the Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Association. He's spent 35 years collecting pictures, programs, anything that symbolizes a journey of faith.



Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Association Historical Room (Source: CREDIT: Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Association)

Burruss loves to talk about the reaction he gets when people enter the history room for the first time.

He said, “One of the things people say when they come into this room is that I can see the love in this room. And I say, how is that? And they say, every picture is equally laid out. On the wall. And they say, you must’ve taken time in doing this. And I did take time.”

Four churches congregated in an open field, outside Huntsville, in 1870 to form the Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Association. It featured as many as 70 churches, led by pastors like Raymond Gardner who would go to great lengths to preach the gospel.

“They would tell me how he would hitchhike to get and from Guntersville. And travel then was difficult. But, they made it.”

Raymond’s father, Matt, was a former slave who started the first colored school in Elkton even though he had no education himself.

“Couldn’t read or write but you can’t beat them preaching the Bible or quoting the scriptures in the Bible.”

The Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Association is marking its 150th anniversary in May. This celebration couldn’t come at a better time, and for people like Harrison Burruss, it couldn’t have any more meaning.

“We want our generations and generations to come to know that, keep your history alive. Keep your history alive.”

If you’d like to see this room of history for yourself, Pastor Harrison Burruss says, tours are given on request at Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church in Huntsville.

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