

## Marker tells history of county's oldest church

By Rebekah Davis

Limestone County Archivist

It's time for more stops on the historical marker tour of Limestone County.

I've been spending a few months sharing the information about these markers. To see the list of most of the markers and more information, you can get maps and GPS coordinates to each one by searching for Limestone County's historical markers on [www.lat34north.com](http://www.lat34north.com), or to view additional markers and directions, visit [www.limestonecountyhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.limestonecountyhistoricalsociety.org).

Today's marker tells the story of Limestone County's oldest continually-meeting church:

- **Round Island Baptist Church:** A church older than the county and state. First meeting house built in the fall of 1816, on Indian land, a few miles south of here along Round Island Creek. The first government land sales were in February 1818 after treaties with the Chickasaws in 1816 and Cherokees in 1817. Thomas O'Banion was interim minister until the church formally organized on June 17, 1817 when Jeremiah Tucker was elected its pastor. Families making up the 12 charter members were Tucker, Lambert, Morgan, Ables, McWilliams, Stamps, and Barclay.

The church relocated to the present site about 1823, after John Favor, a Revolutionary War veteran and member of the congregation, donated the land.

The original building, which faced the cemetery, remained unchanged until 1920, when the first of two additions was built, giving the church the shape of a cross.

The original buildings were torn down in 1974, and several building projects, including the sanctuary completed in 2002, brought the church to its present form. Many Baptist churches in the area were formed as missions of Round Island, the "springboard" of the Baptist faith in Limestone County.

With no pastor during the Civil War, the congregation scattered, but was reunited afterward. On Aug. 28, 1879, Pisgah Baptist and Round Island merged as one body called "Round Island Baptist Church." Over the opposition of some members, the first church organ was purchased in 1910 from Sears Roebuck & Co. for \$39.65. During a lengthy meeting in 1913, there were 75 conversions, 49 of whom joined the church, which thrives today with a large and active congregation.

This marker is located on Browns Ferry Road in the Reid Community, just south of the crossroads in Reid.

### About the Archives:

Limestone County Department of History and Archives

**Established:** 1980

**Staff:** Archivist Rebekah Davis and Assistant Archivist April Davis

**Location:** 102 W. Washington St., in the 1905 L&N Passenger Depot

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