

1970 Griffin List

Thomaston, Ga.

HISTORY
of
ANTIOCH METHODIST CHURCH

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(As presented by Mrs. Donie Childs at Homecoming Day, June 12, 1949).

Just a little preliminary remark: It may be that some of you will notice the absence of a great many names that you expected to hear in this sketch of the history of our church. By way of explanation, let me say that no doubt that it was the case at that time as it is with us today in seeking for ones to fill these official places, so many refused to accept these positions if nominated, and we are expected to give the names of those we find on record who accepted the nomination, nevertheless, the ones who did not accept these places were true faithful Christians, and their faithfulness in regular attendance upon the services, and their noble contributions in all walks of life were an inspiration. We have been reliably informed that this church, Antioch Methodist Church, was first organized and constituted in a log house near the Alabama Road some distance west of where it now stands. It was founded by James Pierce, Casper Howell, Samuel Wilson and others of like faith about the year 1930. You will find in the clerk's office this deed made the 4th day of December, 1855, between William Crawford, executor of Casper Howell and Richard Ford, James R. Black, Mims Rodney, Washington McKenzie and Harvey Trice, Trustees of Antioch Church, Upson County, recorded Dec. 7, 1855. These trustees together with their companions were among the original members of Antioch Church. And we have been further informed that with the aid of the church and community, this sacred house was moved from its original place to this plot of ground. This church then had for its pastor such noble christians as William Crawford, James Stafford and others. These pastors were self-sacrificing going miles on horse-back to fill their appointments. This church was then known as Thomaston Circuit, which embraced so many churches the services of two ministers were required to do the work. During these first years and thru the Civil War, we have been unable to find any records. The first recorded minutes available were dated July 14, 1866, eleven (11) years after the deed was recorded, and one year after the close of the Civil War. W. D. McKenzie was elected secretary at this meeting, and as noticed by reading of the minutes, we find many items of interest which we no longer practice; but no doubt we would be better informed of the works of our church if this system could be revived. No doubt some of you older members may recall the order of business that was transacted at these meetings which were held monthly on Saturday after preaching; first, roll call and if it was found that there were delinquent members, some that had missed several meetings, a committee was appointed to visit them and ascertain the cause of their absence and report back at next conference. This today, seems like strict discipline, but if this was still in effect, we would not be wondering of the whereabouts of some of our members. Next came the report from the pastor in charge, stating whether he had filled the pulpit regularly, and the number of families he had visited since last meeting and lastly, the financial business. There was no Sunday School at this time. In October of that year, W. D. McKenzie, Peter Butts, W. P. Franklin, Thomas Black, Oliver Walls, and T. H. Barron were elected church trustees. At that time, Rev. John Reynolds was pastor in charge. Many other names we find appointed on different committees, not having a church register for these years, still we can safely rely on the names given below as original members. Many of these aged members, some of us remember: Alex Singleton, James Smoot, Henry Colquitt, Bill Graham, Fletcher White, Washington, William and Benjamin Gordy, John Burnette, Benjamin Storey, Mr. Hoyle and others. Some years later, we find the sons and daughters of older members uniting with the church. Many whose names time will not permit us to mention. Later on new ones moved into the community. Captain Frank Vining, J. W. Warren, J. W. Storey, F. M. Garner, J. R. Murdock, E. E. Thompson, Ed Smith, Jesse Howell, Nathan Zorn, W. S. Chalkley, and Henry Fullerton.

The following brethren served as secretary in the 60's, 70's, 80 's, and 90's: W. D. McKenzie, Thomas Black, J. W. Warren, J. R. Franklin, F. M. Garner, W. C. Franklin, Jas. E. White, J. W. Barron and many others. R. T., W. P. and Elihu Burnette, C. M. Gordy served as class leaders. With the passing of the Saturday meetings, these conferences were discontinued. We find several widows who were members at that time, Mrs. Martha Boyers, Mrs. P. Sledge, Mrs. Cum Fullerton, and later Mrs. Maggie Smith and Mrs. Nannie Grubb.

The following served as pastors during these years: J. W. Reynolds, W. W. Graham, T. A. Mitchell, J. R. Pate, J. B. Holland, B. R. Trammell, & J. P. Burgers. First Sunday School was organized in 1876. J. F. Lewis, W. D. McKenzie, J. W. Warren, E. T. Walls, Ed Smith, W. S. White were teachers. In 1873, Uncle Billie Franklin was elected Chorister. In 1892, the first organ was bought for the church. Since 1900, we have had the following pastors: Walraven, Tarpley, Lewis, Yarbrough, Carmichael, Bowden, Miller, Thurmond Self, and Hardy in 1916. On June 11th _____ at church conference a building committee was elected to raise money to build a new church, C. B. McKenzie, Chairman, C. A. Warren, J. C. Burnette, J. A. Harp, E. L. Harp, W. F. Beall, C. D. Smith, Mrs. W. S. White, Mrs. O. A. Franklin, & Mrs. C. B. McKenzie. We find this on record August 1, 1916, the old church was torn down by the people of the community, the ground was made ready in two days for building a new church. A finance committee was appointed by the pastor; Rev. J. H. Hardy was made foreman of the building and work was begun at once. After the foundation was about completed at a cost of \$290.00, the committee thought best to have building finished up by contract and was so ordered. E. L. Harp resigned and J. W. Barron was appointed in his place. Sealed bids were received for the completion of the building from the foundation up. The Garner Nelson Lumber Co. was awarded the contract for \$2500.00, they being the lowest bidder. After the contract was let, work was begun, and it was found necessary to make some changes in the plan of the building at an extra cost of \$320.00. The building was turned over to the committee and accepted Dec. 1, 1916. Milton, Knoles, Davis, Barton, Coffman, Elrod, P.E. Eaps, Walton, Pierce, Twiggs, Hunnicutt.

In 1917 and 1918, Rev. Wright and Rev. Tatum were faithful pastors in charge, and we find encouraging reports read at each quarterly conference. Just for a moment, let us notice the amount of the salaries paid at that time. In 1902, W. C. Franklin, W. P. Burnette, W. H. Boyers, J. W. Warren, stewards, assessed our church for pastor in charge and presiding elder, \$115.00. In 1917, \$300.00 assessments. It is hard to realize the salaries being so small, but they were gradually increased from year to year. At that time, the Sunday School was in a prosperous condition. J. W. Barron was secretary for a number of years latter part of 1800 and 1st years of 1900. This brings us up to 35, 36, 37 and 38 with Rev. Timberlake in charge. During these years, the church gradually moved forward. The revival at Antioch began with homecoming in August. Rev. C. B. McKenzie brought the homecoming message. During the next year, he preached soul-stirring sermons to his home church as probably no other preacher could have done. His sudden passing a short time afterwards brought deep sorrow to a large circle of friends. On that home-coming day, our own Annie Mae White, who six years previously had answered the call to carry the message to far distant lands, brought a wonderful message of the work being accomplished from time to time. On that visit, and on recent visits to her home church, she has poured out the soul messages stored away for her own church.

In the minutes of these years, we find interesting reports of the Epworth League, having as earnest leaders Mr. and Mrs. E. H. Storey, Christine Storey, Kathleen Downs and others. We find on record outstanding reports from our Missionary Society which was organized by our consecrated and efficient president, Miss Mary Kelly in 1933. In 1940, the W.S.C.S. was organized to take the place of the Women's Missionary Society. From the beginning until the present time, our Society has moved forward with enthusiasm on the part of all. Well prepared and inspiring programs are given at each meeting, and there has been renewed interest and increase in attendance. We are keeping well in advance of all financial obligations and bringing our pledge up to date and all reports are sent to conference and district officers on time. For all this, we are indebted to our group of efficient officers. We enter each New Year with prayer and faith in God to help us do better work than ever before. The spirit of cooperation manifested each to the other is inspiring as the proceeds collected, and perhaps more valuable. Our goal is to enlist every woman who is a member of our church in the W.S.C.S. All through the years, as we review the records we find excellent reports from the Sunday School under the efficient leadership of our faithful and consecrated superintendent, J. C. Burnette. A wonderful record is his, having filled this place _____ years. During these years, several daily vacation Bible Schools were held in these schools and a great deal of interest was manifested as a result of these schools. Great interest has been shown in our church school; all officers and teachers have been unusually faithful. During the war, Antioch had 23 sons in service and many others in defense work. The Upper Room was sent to all the boys. Many gracious revivals have been held during these years. Brother Trammell reported the largest number received in any one year, number was 80 on profession of faith. This included all four churches.

In '37, three Sunday School rooms were built. One given by the Sunday School class, one by Annie Mae White in memory of her mother. Many useful gifts have been presented to the church by Mr. and Mrs. Harrison Storey, Mrs. Ruby Sellers, J. W. Warren and others.

During these years since 1938, we have had the following pastors: H. L. Smith, Olin Burkholder, B. N. McHam, Sam Millsap, W. Landrum, H. L. Gurley and W. P. Rowe. P. E. Twiggs, Russell, Maxwell, Pierce and Turner have served as District Superintendents. Stewards during these years were: Harrison Storey, Marvin Barron, M. M. Harpe, honorary J. E. Warren, Mrs. Bessie Childs, John Childs, B. E. Salter, Powell Salter and J. B. Downs. Stewards at present are Col. George Miller, Marvin Barron, Henry Traylor, William Threadgill, Willie Greathouse, Robert Storey, A. W. McKenzie, L. F. Echols, Frank Warren, N. J. Fowler, Marion Howell and J. B. Downs. Trustees are C. D. Smith, A. W. McKenzie and C. A. Warren. Of recent years, we have had seven families move into our neighborhood and have put their letters in with us and are rendering valuable service in our church for which we are thankful. Threadgill, Echols, Carson, Ewing, Harris, Greathouse and Col. Miller.

In 1938, our church was made a half-station. Just a few months ago, a move was launched by Brother Rowe if carried out successfully, will give us full time service and a parsonage. This move is meeting with success. Our hearts go out in thankfulness to all who have so liberally contributed to this move. As a church, we have so much for which to be thankful. Such a noble heritage left by those who have passed.

May we earnestly pray that more of the mantle of these good people whose memory we honor today will fall on us. May we keep faith with those who have passed the torch into our hands, and may we renew our vows to the church, our love and christian fellowship, one to the other.