

The History of Bethesda Methodist Church compiled & written by Duncan Taylor & Kathy Taylor Norman

All this history was gathered from old membership roll books & history that I, Duncan Taylor, had recorded years ago from information given to me by older citizens like Mr. W. M. (Sam) Chafin & Mr. Mark Tiller. Presently Miss Lydie Sisk has been very helpful in supplying me with names.

The history of Bethesda Church dates back to 1879. At that time, services were held at White Oaks School. This was about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from the present location. Wesley F. Smith held services here until 1881, when he became the regular pastor & served until 1882. James S. Cosby served from 1883 until 1885. T. H. Gibson served from 1886 - 1887. Wesley F. Smith served in 1888. E. A. Gensy served from 1889 until 1893. E. B. Reese served in 1894. A. J. Hughes served from 1895 until 1899. W. A. Farris served from 1900 to 1902.

In 1901, Miss Babe Drake gave one acre of land to build the church at the present location. Miss Drake lived in a one room house nearby. She did her cooking on the fireplace.

Bethesda Church was organized in 1902 by Dr. E. B. Reese, the father of Miss Gussie Reese. The church was dedicated in April, 1903 by Dr. W. P. Lovejoy, District Superintendent. I believe at that ~~the~~ time, they were called Presiding Elders.

Around 1935, there was a bad storm cloud that caused the old church to lean to one side. Because of this, the old church was torn down in 1958. It was rebuilt using ~~some~~ ^{most} of the old materials. It ~~the~~ cost about \$2,600.⁰⁰ to ~~rebuild~~ build the present building. There was a lot of free labor from local people & others like Sam Woods, Sr., E. D. Moody, ~~the~~ Sammy Woods Jr., Scooter Bonner, Alton Mathews, & Hamp Arnold. The building committee at that time was Harris S. Taylor, Hamp Arnold, Paul Thaxton, Mark Tiller, Lena Tiller, Boyd Escoc & Duncan Taylor as Chairman.

Murry Harrison & Eugene Matthews did the frame work of the present Church. Elmer Boggs was pastor from 1975-1982. At this time, Sunday school rooms, bathrooms, & a new well was added. Howard & Ola Young put up the paneling, laid the floor covering, & Howard made the double doors at the entrance to the church. Hubert Aaron did the wiring. Later, some renovations were done to the church. The altar was rebuilt. Carpet runners were put down & the pulpit was redone. Most of this work was done by Howard & Ola Young with help from Duncan Taylor & Wayne Norman.

Some of the old members were:

① W. A. Bryant Sr., who was the father of W. A. Bryant Jr. W. A. Bryant Jr.'s children were Willie Mae Bryant, O'Neal Bryant, Alvin Bryant, Fred Bryant, who was the father of our present Board of Commissioners Chairman Billy Bryant, & Lydie ~~Smith~~ Bryant who married the late Stewart Sisk. ~~She~~ Their children are Marvin Sisk, who married Ruth Bray & Virginia Sisk who married Pat Shackelford Jr.

Mrs. Lydie attended school at the two room ~~sh~~ school house near the church. She also taught school there. This school was consolidated with Meson Academy in Lexington about 1939 or 1940.

② Mr. & Mrs. Otis Smith were members. Their children were Lucy Smith, who married Dr. W. L. Green, Lena Smith who married Frazer Wise, Hoke Smith who married Mary Brooks, Annie Laura Smith who married James Maxwell, Bob Smith, Mary Helen Smith who married James Mayo, & Virginia Smith who married Harvard Hopkins.

③ Another member was W. J. Culberson, who moved near Winterville. His son & grandson operate a shop, grocery store, & trailer park on Beaverdam Rd.

④ Mr. & Mrs. William S. Chafin, the parents of W. M. (Sam) Chafin, were members. Mr. & Mrs. W. M. (Sam) Chafin & their children were members.

Their children were Cornelius Chafin, Howard Chafin, Sidney Chafin, Lewis Chafin, Harriett Chafin, Annette Chafin, & Nelline Chafin.

⑤ Hal Escoe was a member. His children were Aubrey, Grady, Howard, Grace, Hazel, & Geraldine.

⑥ Mr. J. W. Woods, who was Sam Woods father, was a member. J. W.'s children were Lou, Mae, Sam, Willie, & Rob. Lou, Mae, & Sam were also members. Sam Woods married Frances Norman. Their children were Wallace, Sammy Jr., Mary Helen, James, & Martha.

⑦ Another member was Henry Lee Thaxton. His children were Carl, George, Paul, Sue, Martha, Jule, Allene, Lizzie, Winnie, & Birdie. Carl married Laura McCree. Their children were Robert & Vannie. George married Emma House. Paul married Laura Coe. Their child was Jimmy. Sue married Bob Bonner. Martha married Charlie Bonner. Jule married Buddy Young. Allene married C. E. Escoe. Lizzie married Emory Sanders. Winnie married Ralph Escoe. Birdie married Will Bonner.

Robert Thaxton, the grandson of Henry Lee Thaxton & the son of Carl Thaxton, later joined Bethesda Church. He married Pearl Palmer. Their children were Lee & Tommy. Lee married Beth Bennett. Tommy married Fran Bradford. Later Tommy joined Bethesda & after he & Fran married, she also joined. Fran's daughter, Charlotte Bradford, joined. Tommy & Fran's daughter, Carla, was christened at Bethesda. Later they moved their memberships to County Line Baptist Church but they still come back & help out with the music etc.

⑧ Mr. & Mrs. John Mathews were members. Their children were Alton, who married Willie Dell Woods (deceased) & later married Frances; Eugene; Loyd, who married Pauline McCannon; Viola; Mary Dell; Johnny Lou; & Everline, who married Bud Moon.

⑨ Another member was Mrs. Bennie Saxon.

Her children that were members were Frances; Rosa Lee, who married Joe Chafin; Leila; Effie, who married Bill Williford; & Helen, who married Dial Tayl

Some of the members dated back so far that we didn't know anything about their families. These are: Tucker Chafin, John Chafin, Reese Chafin, Luther Chafin, Howard Chafin, Pauline Chafin, Thad Chafin, Mr. & Mrs. Roy Chafin, Betty Chafin, Jessie Chafin, Rosa Chafin, Emma Chafin, Dora Chafin, Fannie Lou Chafin, Love Chafin, J. J. Chafin, Amelia Chafin, Frank Chafin, Coile Escoe, Mack Escoe, Martin Escoe, Myrtis Escoe, Bell Escoe, Charlie Escoe, Tom Escoe, Mrs. Boyd Escoe, John Henry Thaxton, Dora Thaxton, George Judson Wynn, Hess Wynn, George Wynn, Birdie Wynn, G. M. Peterson, Rebecca Peterman, Mrs. R. H. Peterman, Ola Peterman, Willie Peterman, Mr. & Mrs. G. N. Peterman, George Peterman, Mrs. R. N. Peterman, Loumar Peterman, G. N. Peterman, Gid Peterman Jr., Howard Peterman, Mr. & Mrs. William Coleman Vaughn, Mrs. Hester Browner, Mrs. Martha Joe Per teet, May Per teet, Estelle Per teet, Teddy Per teet, Mercer Atkins, Hattie Atkins, Mr. & Mrs. J. E. Sayers, Mr. & Mrs. Charles A. Frye, Bonnie Frye, Estelle Frye, William Henry Willoughby, Charles Buford Willoughby, Connie Johnson, D. D. Johnson, Lula Bell Johnson, Mr. & Mrs. V. L. Johnson, Barbara Johnson, Martha Ann Hayes, ~~Leonard~~ Boggs, Mandy Hansford, D & Sallie Hansford, Mr. & Mrs. T. J. Black Sr., Mrs. J. A. Salters, Gertrude Gilbert, Miss Maude Fambrough, Mr. & Mrs. W. T. Fambrough, Joseph Walker, Mrs. Connie Weisman, Mr. & Mrs. W. P. Smith, Hattie Smith, Charlie Smith, Mary Smith, Kate Smith, Mr. & Mrs. John Benton, Rosa Bridges, Sarah Drake, Mrs. S. E. Drake, Babe Drake (she donated 1 acre of land for church), Rebecca Nowell, Amanda Arnold, Mr. & Mrs. Otis Arnold, Julia Arnold, Melissa Arnold, Frank Arnold, Mr. & Mrs. M. P. Arnold, Mr. & Mrs. Neal Arnold, Mr. & Mrs. Moses Arnold, Mrs. Lillie Mae Adkins, Mr. & Mrs. Gordon Colley, Osborn Colley, Hazel Colley, Carl Goolsby, Mr. & Mrs. W. M. Goolsby, Mr. & Mrs. J. L. Byrd, Mary Etta Clark, Mr. A. L. Clark, Mrs. Gordon Cunningham, Billy Cunningham (Billy graduated from

Meson Academy in 1947 along with Duncan Taylor. He was the son of Mrs. Vince Tiller. She was also a member.) Mr. & Mrs. Frank Coik, Mr. & Mrs. J. H. Doster, Emory Doster, Walter Doster, Thomas Doster, Jonathan Doster, Mrs. Lois Little, Joe Lankford, Mr. & Mrs. W. J. McCree, Mr. & Mrs. Worth McCree, Pitman McCree, Lee Miller, Frank Sherrer, Kate Sorrow, Mrs. Mamie Youngblood, Mr. & Mrs. R. L. Young, Mrs. J. W. Wood, Mattie Hammonds (who later married Paul Hilley), Mr. & Mrs. W. G. Morris, Harriette Louise Morris, Eunice Morris, Mrs. W. J. Sisk, S. E. Bonner, Robert Bonner, Henry Bonner, Addie Bonner, Sybil Bonner (married J. T. Hayes), Betty Bonner (presently married to Harold Jr. Echols, who was also a classmate of Duncan Taylor & graduated in 1947 at Meson Academy), Mr. & Mrs. J. I. Teasley, Edwin Teasley, Mrs. Waver Brooks, Her grandson, Johnny ~~the~~ McCannon, was later a member & also helped out in playing piano. Mrs. Bud Fields, Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Wolf, Mrs. Paul Thompson, Early Hewett, Mr. & Mrs. Neal Harrison (Neal was Sunday School teacher for several years & very active in Church), Mr. & Mrs. F. H. Coe.

Some of the later members not covered in the above are: Tammy Farmer, Annie Mae Arnold (deceased), Mr. & Mrs. Mark Tiller (both deceased), Mrs. Lena was a Sunday School teacher & very active in the Church), Rev. Marion F. Dunn (deceased) Mr. & Mrs. F. E. Lebkuecher, Mr. & Mrs. William Lindelof, Mr. & Mrs. Riley Whitlock, Jan Brown, Lynn McCannon Taylor, Greg Taylor, Glenda McCannon Bridges, ~~the~~ Gloria McCannon Bridges, Lucy McCannon, Grace A. Dwyre, Lizzie Patton, Betty Maxey, Mr. & Mrs. Leon Hill, Phyllis Hill, Rev. & Mrs. Etmer Boggs (Pastor from 1975 - 1982), Alice Ashly, George Arnold, Mr. & Mrs. Richard Smith, Mr. & Mrs. Everett Hobbs, Martha Tiller, Stephen Abernathy, Lisa Pittard.

Howard & Ola Young were very active members. They were always there when any job came up, ready to do their part.