The information concerning the history of the church, one of the oldest in the North Georgia Conference, was given first hand from the late Mrs. Laura Hall, wife of the late John R. Hall, a confederate veteran.

In 1828 (123 years ago) a young man by the name of Young Hall settled on the plantation that is now known as the John R. Hall home in Troup County, and about this time a log church was built on this place, East of the house and was named Big Springs, because of five big springs of natural water nearby. This was the first and only church at that time in this community.

In 1840 this church was moved to the present site, but was of a frame structure with plain wooden shutters for windows.

In 1861 this present church was built from donations, Nathaniel Howell donated the land 2.3/5 acres where the church now stands.

Mr. Jimmy Flowers gave $500.00, of course there were other donations, each settler helping all he could.

Dr. Beasley got the contract for the church and slaves were used for labor. All the lumber in the church was kiln dried and prepared by hand, Dr. Beasley and Mr. Flowers still have some relatives and friends in our community and La Grange.

Rev. Burch was the first Pastor of the church.

You may still find places on the backs of some of these pews, where a dividing line was used when the slaves worshipped with the white people. Sometimes the slaves would have their own service with the white pastor preaching and with the white congregation taking the back seats.

Something very interesting concerning the first service held in this church, is that the first settler, Mr. Young Hall's funeral was preached and on that same day, his son, John R. Hall, was received into the church, he having joined six months before on probation.

The First Sunday of the month has been the regular preaching day every since the church was built 123 years ago and the first week in August is revival week.

The first Sunday School we know about was organized in 1881, Mr. Charlie Freeman was the first superintendent with 60 on roll.

In 1912 a small band of zealous women organized a club, the purpose of which was to cooperate with the school, for better home and school improvements, to buy a piano and other school and church furnishings, to be of service to each other and to God. They fixed high ideals and accomplished much good, working not only for the glory they got out of their work, but for the good they accomplished by their work.
This club was known as "Big Springs Home and School Improvement Club", a big name wasn't it? Well the name wasn't any too big because they did things in a big way and accomplished great good. The first President of this club is one of our own members and perhaps LaGrange First Methodist Church will say their own, Mrs. G. T. Leslie. Later the name was changed to "Ladies Aid" continuing to do good work, particularly local work with the church, parsonage, Orphans Home etc.

A few years later this same organization, composed mostly of younger women, was known as "Big Springs Community Club", and how well did this title fit, for they have done all kinds of work in and for the church and community, such as the upkeep of the church, coming to the rescue of the pastor's salary, and even helping to bury the poor and needy. Never tiring or complaining but always cheerful and lending a helping hand.

Our Pastor's wife, Mrs. C. M. Rogers in 1931, realizing the work these women were doing and not getting any special recognition for it, insisted or advised that they be organized as a missionary society. This was done under the leadership of Mrs. Rogers and Mrs. Durand Miller of Chipley. Mrs. Julian Jones was first president.

The Epworth League was organized in 1920 with the late Marvin Hall as president.

In the fall of 1928 the church was reroofed with pine shingles.

In 1935 the church was painted inside and out.

In 1937 the church was wired for electricity.

In the fall of 1943 in cleaning the flues sparks caught the shingles and almost burned the church. We reroofed with asbestos shingles.

A member of our church, C. Leon Smith, Jr. entered Emory University in 1937 to study for the ministry. We are very proud of Leon who is getting his PHD in June.

In 1947 a cyclone blew the roof off and gables completely off and left just the walls standing which was badly damaged by rain. We had enough insurance to replace the roof. We have been working on a plan to remodel the church since 1947. We obtained our money through barbecues, cattle sales, fish fries and donations. Big Springs Community won $600.00 as 1st prize in Chattahoochee Valley Farmers Club, which was added to the fund. Mrs. Robert Combs was president of this club.

The plan was: two Sunday School rooms and vestibule to be made from the front of auditorium, two front doors to be replaced by one double door, 1 front sill, one new hardwood floor, removed side door, paint inside and out with two coats, brick steps in front, stairway to basement, windows and blinds repaired, floors sanded and varnished, foundation painted and grounds graded and soiled. The cost was approximately $4000.00.
God has been mercifully good to us, giving us a reasonable amount of health, wisdom and understanding. A community of good homes and good people. Surely we can and will do no less than serve him with our time, our talents and our substance.

Historians
Mrs. Neil Hall
Mrs. Julian Jones, Sr.
LIST OF PASTORS

Rev. James Hunter 1828
Rev. C. W. Evans 1846
Rev. Sidney M. Smith 1855
Rev. J. M. Bowden 1873
Rev. N. T. Bell 1890
Rev. A. S. Harris 1894-95
E. C. Marks 1895-96
J. D. Milton 1896-98
M. H. Edwards (Death) 1898-99
L. P. Heese 1899-1901
B. N. Trammell 1901-1902
J. S. Embay 1902-1905
A. H. S. Bugg 1905-1906
W. A. Simmons 1906-1907
B. P. Searcy Robinson 1907-1908
W. A. Maxwell 1908-1909
M. K. Patillo 1909-1911
J. Ware 1911-1912
L. L. Roper 1912-1914
J. W. Bailey 1914-1916
D. S. Patterson 1916-1919
T. H. Shackleford 1919-1922
J. C. Burty 1922-1924
P. S. Anderson 1924-1925
J. A. Sprayberry 1925-1928
B. N. McHan 1928-1929
C. M. Rogers 1929-1932
H. Z. Zoeller 1932-1933 May (resigned)
W. E. Brown 1933 June 1936
J. J. Davis 1936-1938
S. A. Dailey 1938-1941
C. J. Dodds 1941-1943 (left April as Chaplain)
H. L. Morgan May 1943-1945
A. J. Gillam 1945-1946 (resigned)
W. E. Brown 1946-1948
J. G. Lupo 1948-1950
J. A. Riddle 1950-1951

This is a list of the pastors of the Mountville, Big Springs and Odessa Methodist churches. Odessa pastors will begin with the founding of the church in 1897. Presiding Elders are also the same.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Years</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J. F. Mixon</td>
<td>1894-1895</td>
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<tr>
<td>J. T. Gibson</td>
<td>1895-1896</td>
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<tr>
<td>T. R. Kendall</td>
<td>1896-1897</td>
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<tr>
<td>W. R. Foote</td>
<td>1897-1898</td>
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<tr>
<td>J. W. Quillian</td>
<td>1899-1900</td>
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<tr>
<td>M. G. Cofer</td>
<td>1900-1901</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. P. Allen</td>
<td>1902-1905</td>
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<tr>
<td>J. E. Robins</td>
<td>1906-1907</td>
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<td>W. P. Lovejoy</td>
<td>1910-1911</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wallace Rogers</td>
<td>1923-1927</td>
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<tr>
<td>R. C. Checkler</td>
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<td>W. M. Barnett</td>
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<td>Irby Henderson</td>
<td>1935-1939</td>
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<td>A. E. Ernest</td>
<td>1938-1940</td>
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<td>C. L. King</td>
<td>1940-1944</td>
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<tr>
<td>W. M. Twiggs</td>
<td>1944-1949</td>
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<tr>
<td>J. S. Thrailkill</td>
<td>1949-1951</td>
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