HISTORY

of

BISHOP CHARGE

Bishop Church
This history could very well be titled, "A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM."

One day during the year of 1905, when enroute to church at Farmington Georgia with her parents, little Lallie Virginia Johns asked, "Mother, why do we have to go to church at Farmington? Why can't we have a church at Bishop?" Mrs. Johns replied, "My dear, it takes lots of faith, lots of hard work, and lots of money to build a church." Where upon, Lallie opened up her small purse, pulling out a dollar bill (which she had earned selling Dear Balm soap) and handing it to her Mother said, "Here is some money, now let us build a church at Bishop." With that a church was born.

At the Annual Conference in November 1904 the Rev. B.H. Mobley had been appointed to the Farmington charge, the parsonage of that charge being located at Bishop. Upon hearing the story of Lallie's interest and gift, he became so inspired that he went immediately to work, organizing various committees, etc.

The church was organized with sixteen charter members, namely:

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<tr>
<th>R.E. Branch, Sr.</th>
<th>Dr. O.L. Branch</th>
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<td>H.M. Bishop</td>
<td>Mrs. H.M. Bishop</td>
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<tr>
<td>S.P. Christopher</td>
<td>Katie C. Christopher</td>
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<td>Dr. E.H. Kenimer</td>
<td>Mrs. E.H. Kenimer</td>
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<tr>
<td>J.J. Johns</td>
<td>Mrs. J.J. Johns</td>
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<td>Jewel Johns</td>
<td>Irene Johns</td>
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<td>Lallie Johns</td>
<td>Mrs. J.T. Biggs</td>
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<td>J. Howard Parrish</td>
<td>Mrs. J. Howard Parrish</td>
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On September 28, 1905 a plot of land was purchased from Mr. John W. Chandler and deeded to J. J. Johns, Dr. E. H. Kenimer, Dr. O. L. Branch, S. P. Christopher and G. W. Wallace, as trustees.

With Bro. B. H. Mobley's enthusiastic leadership, the church and the church building went forward so that at the District Conference meeting at Rutledge Georgia July 12, 1906 he reported that Farmington Circuit had a good year. That he had completed one church at Bishop, costing $1800.00.

Then came the discussion of the name for the church and plans for its dedication. The name "Lallie Virginia Chapel" was considered, in honor of the little girl who had started the movement for erecting the church; but the name, Bishop Methodist Church was finally the unanimous decision.

There still remained a sum due before the church could be dedicated. One day while Mr. Marcellus Branch, a member of Farmington Methodist Church, was in Mr. J. J. Johns store he heard a discussion of the need for more money and the hope of dedication soon. Mr. Branch offered to give what was lacking if they would have his very close friend, Dr. John B. Robbins preach the dedicatory sermon. Mr. Branch's offer was gladly accepted and later Dr. Robbins graciously accepted the invitation to dedicate the church.

Following is the program of that day:
I. Song
The Glory Song, by the Choir.

II. Song
(Congregation Standing)

1. Behold thy temple, God of Grace
   The house that we have reared to thee.
   Regard it as thy resting place,
   And fill it with thy majesty.

2. When from its altars shall arise
   Joint supplication to thy name.
   Deign to accept the sacrifice
   Thyself our answering God proclaim.

3. And when from thence the voice of
   Praise shall lift its triumphs to thy
   Throne, Show thy acceptance of our lays
   By making all thy glory known.

4. When here the ministers shall stand
   To speak what thou shalt bid them say
   Maintain thy cause with thy own hand,
   And give thy truth a winning way.

5. Now, therefore, O our God, arise
   In this thy resting place appear;
   And let thy people's longing eyes
   Behold thee fix thy dwelling here.

III. Prayer.
(Congregation Kneeling)

IV. Reading of Scripture Lessons.

VI. Sermon By
REV. JOHN B. ROBBINS, D.D.

VII. Collection.

VIII. Words of presentation by officers of Church to minister officiating:

"WE present you this house, to be set apart from all unhallowed or common uses, for the worship of Almighty God."

IX. Sentence of Dedication.

X. Prayer. (Congregation Kneeling)

XI. Doxology and Benediction.
The Sunday School had been organized with T.H. Dillard, a local preacher as the first Superintendant. He served well until moving to Arnoldsville in 1910. Mr. W.A. Norville succeeded him, remaining in office until 1913 when Mr. J.E. O'Dillon was appointed. Mr. O'Dillon served faithfully for twenty six years, followed by Mr. Reese O. Few from 1936 to 1949; at which time Mr. Few accepted a pastorate. Mr. Hoke Turnbull is the present Superintendant and the Sunday School is going forward under his splendid leadership.

July 7th 1908, at Farmington Georgia, Bishop was chosen by unanimous vote of the District Conference as place of meeting for the following year. Therefore, the 43rd session of the Athens District Conference convened in the new Methodist Church at Bishop, Ga. July 13th, 1909 at 4 P.M. Rev. W.L. Pierce P.E. In the chair.


The Rev. F.E. Jenkins preached the introductory sermon. Farmington Circuit reported: "Well up on every thing except religion. A revival much needed."

Bishop M.E. Church had been hostess for the first time to the District Conference. The following is the Resolution of Thanks.

Resolved: - That the thanks of the conference be extended to Rev. J.M. Sewell and the good people of Bishop for the splendid hospitality and courtesy extended during the session. It has been a season of great pleasure and benefit to all who have been in attendance and the conference esteems itself under lasting obligations to its generous and hospitable host.

SIGNED: Cobb Lampkin
T.W. Reed
During the Annual Conference of November 1912, the Bishop Circuit was formed, with the parsonage located at Bishop. Mr. C.A. Swift was the first pastor in charge of the newly formed circuit. During the pastorate of L.W. Neff in 1917 - 1918 the new parsonage was built, costing $2500.00. The last payment being met before the Annual Conference of November 1921.

Bishop Church has furnished two preachers to the ministry. Reese O.Few, now pastor at Buckhead Methodist Church and Chessel Lovern, Pastor at Laurel Heights M.E. Church, San Antonio Texas.

The following are the pastors who have served the Bishop Church:

B.H. Mobley, 1904 -1908 (Organized Bishop Church)
J.W. Sewell, 1908 - 1909
W.A. Woodruff , 1909 - 1910
C.A. Swift 1910-1913
R.J. McElrath 1913 - 1916
J.G. Adams 1916 1916 - 1917 (later known as Bishop of Heard County)
L.W. Neff 1917 - 1918 (Built Bishop Parsonage)
E.B. Moll 1918 - 1919
B.P. Reade 1919 - 1923
C.N. Hayes 1923 - 1924
G.W. Ridley 1924 - 1925
A. O. Baggerly 1925 - 1926
J.A. Lankford 1926 - 1928
Z. Spear 1928-1929
Adrian Warwick 1929 - 1931
A.C. Prickette 1931 - 1932
W.G. Davis 1932 - 1936 (Chaplain USS Army)
J.D. Maxwell 1936 - 1938
Henry Walker 1938 - 1941
Lloyd Jackson 1941 - 1944
W.W. Byington 1944 - 1945
E.R. C. Thompson 1945 - 1946
L.J. Coe 1946 - 1948
James Griffen 1948 -

"These be the men that thou has made
And holdest them in thought,
Who have the hero humbly played
And long and well have wrought."

We salute them.
This year of 1951 has been a good year. With Mr. Hoke Turnbull, the efficient Sunday School Superintendent, as chairman of a building improvement committee, the interior of the church has been redecorated; and much more is planned for the calendar year.

There has been no wealth in the membership of the church. It has been composed of that class known as the middle class, which we are told is the backbone of the country and of which Abraham Lincoln said, 'the Lord must have loved for he made so many of them.'

At the present time there is the greatest harmony between the pastor and people and it is our hope and prayer that Our Heavenly Father, who has blessed and cared for this church through the years, will inspire it to go forward to greater things in the future, so that we may pass on to others the heritage that has been ours.

Signed:

[Signature]

(Mrs. Herbert Breedlove)