HISTORY

Of

ROME CELENASE AND WEST ROME METHODIST CHURCHES
The Celanese Methodist Church grew out of a movement which started as a union Sunday School organized at the Celanese School, some time after the erection of the plant and village. For several years the Methodists and Baptists alternated each Sunday in having speakers to hold services. The first Methodist speakers were laymen from the various Methodist churches of Rome.

In the autumn of 1931, Rev. H. G. Garrett, the pastor at Floyd Springs, made a survey of the village, and found a large number of Methodist living here. The President Elder, Rev. J. W. McKee, was called in and a church with approximately 40 members was organized. Of the original 40 members only five are members of the present church. They are: Mrs. Ben Bell, Miss. C. J. Haley, Mrs. V. O. Andrews, and Mrs. W. M. Hurley. Serving as Board members of the original church were the following: W. M. Hurley, Chairman, G. S. Berry, Secretary, Mrs. J. L. Crabbe, J. L. Vandiver, B. Stencil, W. H. St. Charles, and Beulah Bell. Rev. Garrett served as pastor until Conference.

The Conference of 1934 sent W. G. David as pastor of the charge which included the following churches: Tubize, Shannon, Beach Creek, Mt. Pleasant, and Costanaula. Bro. Irwin served one year and part of another. He accepted a position at Kinehart College before the second year was out, and Harry Free, from Lindale, finished out the year.

The Conference of 1936 sent Rev. Louie Hunkaby as pastor of the charge, and the parsonage, which had been on Juniper St., was moved to Elmwood St. Bro. Hunkaby was pastor until 1939, and while he was pastor, many improvements were made, including a new church, to be used by both Methodist and Baptists. The building was completed and dedicated with elaborate ceremonies, in which both mill and church officials participated. This was done during Bro. Hunkaby's last year as pastor.

Bro. J. K. Kelly was sent by the conference of 1939 to serve the charge, which consisted of only Shannon, Tubize and Costanaula. As Bro. Kelly had a larger family that his predecessor, the parsonage was moved to Elmwood, which continues to this time as the residence of the pastor. Bro. Kelly and his co-worker, Rev. J. H. Poultry, were very co-operative and brotherly and both were greatly beloved by all the people of the community, and each of them had very successful pastorate at Tubize.

The conference of 1944 moved Bro. Kelly to Thomaston, and sent O. Herman Smith to serve the Tubize Charge. Bro. Smith was a very hard worker and did some untiring work on the charge. The work proved so heavy that his health went down on him, and he was forced to go to Florida at the end of his second year. However, at the end of his first year, both Shannon and Tubize became full time churches.

When Bro. Smith made full time churches out of both churches, his choice was Shannon, and W. Jack Lamb was sent as pastor at Tubize. This was Bro. Lamb's first full time church, and as he was attending school, he had a pretty full job. But Jack was equal to the task, and did good constructive work, for the three years he was here. While he was pastor, the Celanese Corporation of America bought out the Tubize Co. and the church became Celanese. As Bro. Lamb wanted to complete his education at the Candler School of Theology, he was moved to Griffin, nearer to Atlanta.

Bro. T. C. Ford was sent at pastor in 1948 and did a good piece of work, despite the strike, which took place just after he moved in. He is especially remembered by the young people of both churches for his untiring efforts in their behalf. During the strike, as is always the case, it was very hard to reconcile both sides, but Bro. Ford did a good job holding the church in very good shape.

W. Jack Asta was sent as pastor in 1949, and is in his second year on the charge. The first year was a very successful one, and with the help of Almighty God and the co-operation of both the pastor and the people, I am sure that another great year will be rounded out in June of this year.

Beginning with a membership of 40 the church now has a membership of 290, with about 65% active. The Board of Stewards now had 21 members, which was originally 18 months, meet regularly once each month. On Wednesday night following the Second Sunday in each month.

The Board has a prayer meeting at the church on Sat. with before each preaching day.
The other organizations of the church have grown proportionately as the Board has.
The Women's Society of Christian Service, which began as the Women's Missionary Society, has grown from a small organization of a few women to one now with three circles meeting regularly and each doing good work.

The Sunday School, which is a Union School with the Baptist, now has an enrollment of 500, and recently there was an attendance of 385. It is thoroughly organized and is doing splendid work.

The Young Work or Evening meeting of the educational work, is very well organized, but not attended as well as should be. We have four departments which meet regularly each Sunday. The Children's department, the Intermediates, the Young People, and the Young Adults. The presidents of both of your local Sub-Districts, are from our church.

There is a Methodist Men's organization which meets at a dinner meeting once each month. Besides furnishing an opportunity for good fellowship, much inspirational and promotional work is carried on at these meetins.

In finances, the church has kept pace with the forward movement of the whole church. It now pays the pastor $175 each month, with the other ministerial claims above that. Our World Service asking and acceptance was $350. We have accepted as a Mission Special $250 on an orphanage in Belgium. Besides this all the other special offerings such as Golden Cross, Children's Home, Week of Dedication, Race Relations Day offering, etc., are taken care of.