The first building was a split log house, as most all churches, schoolhouses and dwellings were at that period, with a few small windows cut through the logs. It stood about 100 ft. in the rear of the present building. The next building was erected in 1847, and was just in the rear of the present one. It was a frame house weather-boarded with rough boards, windows without sash, no ceiling inside, floor laid with undressed boards which left large cracks, no stove or heating device. It was very comfortable in warm or pleasant weather, but colder in Winter than being out in the sunshine. Yet the saints praised God in singing the old church hymns, and in prayer and exhortations to the uplifting of their spiritual fervor, often to such a degree as to make December as pleasant as May. The present nice comfortable building was erected in 1885 just in front of the former one, and dedicated by Bro. Bigham, the first Sunday in July of that year.

I have been unable to find any records whatever of the first twelve or fifteen years of this church. So can't give names in full of charter members, but will give as far as my information goes.

Stephen Tilly and family, consisting of three sons and four daughters, all were devout members. The sons were Ebenezar, Robert, and Fletcher. The former and latter spending all their lives in this section were men of marked piety. Robert went to Floyd County, Georgia, when a young man, and was an honor to the church and community where he lived. The daughters, Margaret, Adeline, Caroline and Jane were all women of the highest Christian type, their children rise up and call them blessed.

David Ballenger and family were members. He and his son William were local preachers; he also had two or three daughters. This family was a part of the salt of the earth.

Dr. John Ballenger and family, of whom I know but little, were all Methodists. They moved to Cobb County early in the history of this church.

Other members were John M. Ridling and family, Thomas Akin and family. There were still a few others who helped to plant this vine, but I am unable to name them. This little band, while few in number, were inspired to make all the sacrifices necessary that our beloved Methodism might be instrumental in salvation of souls, and glory for the great Head of the church. Others came into the church from time to time. They were also men of God, and so recognized by all who came in contact with them. Their names also deserve to remembered and perpetuated for their good influence and works for the church. Some or these are as follows: Samuel House, class leader, who was full of zeal and fervor, and often so filled with the Holy Ghost that his cup would run over. Jake Leyd, also a class leader and a good man; devoted to duty whatever it might be. Joseph Elliott one of the best and finest men that I ever know and exerted a great influence over all that he came in contact with. Asa Braswell, George Gaddy, Alfred Peel and Frances Metcalf were all true to the church and no evil reports were ever made against them. Later came George Braswell, he was one of the best young men of the country, was licenced to preach and was very gifted, but was called in defense of our South Land and in that service passed to his home in Glory. His brother, our beloved S. H. Braswell, a preacher of fine ability and very efficient did much for the church at large, filling many charges as a supply and was especially very helpful to Prospect. John T. McElroy came to us from the Presbyterian church and was licenced to preach. He had a very bright mind and a live Christian experience. He
war a rather frail man and the good Lord took him. Then there was Philip, Jake, George, John, Jeff and Crocket House all good men. Nort Miller was a man of prayer, loved the church and all good people. Dr. George N. Flowers, one among the last to cross over, of the old band, was a staunch friend to the church and beloved by all who knew him.

All these from charter members down to the last one named, besides many others including good women, have crossed over and are resting under the shade of the trees in the New Jerusalem.

Oh! What a multitude of our loved ones and friends are up yonder waiting and watching for us. God help us to be faithful so that some sweet day we will meet them again.

Prospect was in the Decatur Circuit until some years ago, when it was made Norcross and Prospect Charge. In the early history of Decatur Circuit, as well as all other circuits at that time, each Charge had quite a number of churches. This caused the pastor, who was then called the circuit rider, to preach from four to six days in the week in order to get around once a month. Therefore, Prospect had week-day preaching once a month by the pastor, Wednesday, I think, being the day. This lasted until about 1855 to 1860. Nevertheless, we had services three Sundays in the month, preaching one Sunday by a local preacher, prayer meeting one Sunday, and class meeting one Sunday. The remaining Sunday we went where we chose, generally to Nancy's Creek. Our prayer and class meeting days were good and often the Holy Spirit was very manifest. In those days we had a goodly number of local preachers in the Decatur Circuit, which was a great blessing to the church and to the people. They were men of very marked piety, and their preaching was often accompanied by the presence of the Holy Spirit. These devout men would ride from ten to twenty miles to an appointment. I now call the names of all that come to my mind: Noah Smith, David Ballenger, Henry Clark, Jimmie Williams, Elijah Byrd, Dr. Fowler, Joe Huis, William Holbrook, S. H. Braswell, Mr. Chandler. I may have omitted some. These also have passed away and rest from their labors, and their works do follow them.

There has been a Sunday School at Prospect for more than seventy-five years.

I had hoped that I would be able to give the name and statistical report of all the pastors that served this church at least until 1870. Since that time we have perfect records. I failed to find any records, even annual conference minutes prior to the Civil War except for a few years which I found through the courtesy of Prof. Stone at Oxford College. We found a few old copies of the Georgia Conference which were very meager in the statistical reports. I give them as follows:


I would not forget to speak of the Exhortor we had in those days. They were a class of men who did a lot of good, and were often used by the preacher in closing the services by exhortation, song, and prayer. I mention one that in the long ago belonged to this church, Elijah Boggs. He was unlearned, not knowing a letter in the book, but knew many hymns and much scripture by memory. His exhortation and prayers were full of the Holy Ghost and Power and would reach the hearts of the people.

In the last fifty years we have had quite a number of preachers whose talents, lives, and all that they had were consecrated to the church and Kingdom of our Heavenly Father; endeavoring to help the Christian to a better life and the sinner to repent and be saved. Such men are worthy of our appreciation and gratitude. They are Rev’s Jesse Boring, James Evans, F. B. Davies, G. E. Gardner, C. C. Casey, W. T. Lane, W. A. Farris, W. W. Lampkin, Walter Yarborough, W. M. D. Bond, W. A. Simmons, W. P. Smith, J. R. Mason, J. T. Christian, H. M. Newton, W. M. Winn, W. W. Arnold, W. F. Robinson, J. W. Quillian, W. E. Dillard, C. V. Weathers, J. S. Sappington, A. D. Echols, R. M. Dixon, A. C. Cantrell, V. E. Landford, and C. F. Carey, our present beloved pastor. Most of these have gone to their Mansion above.

When we look up to Heaven with an eye of faith and behold the large volume of prayers uttered by these Saints, from the beginning down to this good day, for us and our beloved church, we ought to take fresh courage and strive to be better men and women than ever before. We should appreciate more and more what our ancestors have done for us, and thank God most sincerely for the church and all these good men and women, and especially for His Son our Savior who gave himself for us that we might have everlasting life.

May Heavenly richest blessing be with you and the future members of Prospect. And some sweet day may we form an unbroken church in the paradise of our Father.

This history is dedicated to the memory of my precious mother, who was a charter member and the last surviving one, she passed over in her one-hundred and second year.

Respectfully Submitted,

Written:

September 28, 1919.

S. T. McElroy

Post Script: (Requested to be added to the above by one of the granddaughters of S. T. McElroy)

The Mother of the writer, S. T. McElroy was formerly Margaret Tilly, wife of William McElroy. She is still remembered by many of the older members of Prospect. She was familiarly known as Aunt Margaret but more affectionately known as "Grannie McElroy".
In 1920, and for the next three years, Uncle Nath Thompson preached and worked and saw six class rooms added, by taking from the auditorium to make four and adding two with entrance on front.

In 1926, under the leadership of J. W. O. McKibbon, Pastor, the 100th Anniversary of the Church was planned. October 31, 1926 was a great day, one ever to be remembered by those present.

Sunday School at 10:00 o'clock. Preaching by A. Candler. Text - John 21:5 - "I Go A-Fishing", an able sermon. At noon dinner for all in the grove. In the afternoon an Anniversary Program. As complete a history of the church as could possibly be made, after weeks of study by S. T. McElroy, was read by him and if it is available, will be placed in safe-keeping for the church in later years. At the close of the program a big Birthday Cake with 100 candles was sliced and divided among the older members and visitors.

Also, during the pastorate of Rev. McKibbon, the property lines were established and marked. The old silver communion service, consisting of two goblets, pitcher and two plates were replaced with a new individual service costing $65.00.

Following the pastorate of Rev. McKibbon, Rev. A. J. Sears served faithfully for one year. Beginning in 1927, three years of faithful service were given by Dr. T. M. Elliott, S. F. Wiggins, Presiding Elder.

Then came a change from North Atlanta District into Decatur-Oxford District; R. Z. Tyler, Presiding Elder and J. J. Copeland pastor for two years. Rev. E. P. Eyebanks served well for the next three years followed by Rev. H. C. Stratton - Dr. Wallace Rogers, Presiding Elder.

For five years Rev. Stratton labored with love and helped push forward the building of the West wing of the church for class rooms and also rest rooms, Mrs. Stratton guided the organization of the Young Women's Service Guild. The Guild is now growing and active and a great blessing to the cause of the church at present.

1940 - Dr. E. G. Mackay District Supt. - Rev. E. F. Etheridge Pastor - Change into East Atlanta District. By the untiring help of the pastor, the church was brought up into a place of station having for years been a one-half station with Norcross.

B. L. Barton was the first pastor for full time. During his pastorate a nice brick parsonage was built and furnished. He served two years and was followed by C. E. Brantley. During Rev. Brantley's two years the church auditorium was re-worked throughout - new overhead, new floors, new window and new furnishings. A Pulpit Bible was given by Mrs. A. J. Sears and Misses Dorothy and Mary (Now Mrs. H. H. Allen) Walkor in memory of Rev. A. J. Sears. The Hymnals were given in memory of Mrs. Green, sister of Mrs. Minors. The cross for the communion table given by Mr. and Mrs. S. D. Johnson, Sr. in memory of their parents. Mr. J. W. Furrcell donated the Baptismal Pedestal. Each were dedicated at different times, as given, by the pastor.

Rev. J. C. Moore served the next three years and shared in the plans for building the East wing and basement with kitchen, also furnishing most of the class rooms.

Rev. J. Howell Hearn, now closing his second year as pastor, has shared in the work of furnishing the kitchen and had the pleasure of dedicating a new electric organ.

These are a few outstanding developments up to the present. But most important of all regular worship services have been held. It has in the years past and continues to be a place for spiritual uplift and fellowship and a blessing for all who attend.

June 20, 1961

BY: Mrs. C. D. Jones