HISTORY

OF

HIRAM-BETHEL CHARGE

Bethel Church
Flint Hill Church
Hiram Church
THE HISTORY OF FLINT HILL CHURCH, PAULDING CO., HIRAM, GEORGIA.

It is assumed that Flint Hill church gets its name due to the rocks of a flinty character surrounding the community.

There was no school or church in this immediate community.
The people wanted a church in which to worship God. The most appropriate place to build a church seemed to be the beautiful hillside with the surrounding wide spread oaks, the stately old pines, sweet shrubs, and other wild flowering shrubbery.
The site chosen was owned by Mr. William J. Gray. He gave to this community two acres of land on which to build a church.

It was in the springtime of 1840 when this group of God loving men and women started to worshiping under a Bush Arbor.

In the fall a small log church was erected to replace the Bush Arbor that could not keep out the winter weather.

People came from far and near to Flint Hill. Many joined this church. In years to come the little church so loved by many began to deteriorate, and was thus replaced by a more adequate building.

It was twenty-two years later, February 5th, 1867 that Mr. Gray deeded this land he had given to the trustees of the church and their successors.

According to the writer's research there has been four churches, of which the present church is one. The original lots have long ago been converted into a cemetery where many people of the old church have been interred.

The present building was erected about 1899, and is located in the second district third section, north-east corner, land lot number 831. This lot was one acre long and one half acre wide, and was deeded to the trustees and their successors by Mr. B. E. Croker. This indenture was made March 8th, 1894 and recorded Nov. 15th 1895. All deeds contained the Trust-Clause.

The church started on its own initiative.

Flint Hill church and the community originated long before there was a town now known as Hiram. In 1922 Hiram Methodist church was completed. Many of the members left Flint Hill and came to Hiram,
therefore, Flint Hill membership constituted Hiram membership.

Flint Hill church has not sponsored another church however, accurate information concerning this cannot be obtained at this time since most of the old records have been destroyed, and believed to have been burned.

Since Flint Hill is a country church and has always been on a charge with other churches it has never owned a Parsonage.

Many revivals have blessed this church under various ministers, Rev. Fred Thompson is one of the first ministers that the writer can find record of. He preached three or four years and walked several miles to serve the church on Saturday and Sunday. Rev. Thompson helped to organize Flint Hill church. He could not read nor write when he was converted. His wife read the Bible to him. He was known to have a wonderful memory, and could memorize a chapter after two readings. Later his wife taught him to read and he became one of the best Ministers of his day. During this time he moved to Yorketown Ga. (during the war between the states) and walked back to Flint Hill to preach. This was a distance of twenty miles. Rev. Thompson and his wife are both buried at Flint Hill. He was one of the first Mason’s to be buried in or near this community.

Other notable ministers were: Newton, Golden, Wood, Eaks, O’Neal Brown, Fowler, Nunn, Rorie, Gober (who was a blind man) Roper Ware, Irvine, Hutchinson, Bailey, Green Barton, Driskell, King, Black, Wiggins, Krams, Lamb, Webb, Garrett and others. The Rev. Hershell Sheets is the minister at the time of this writing.

The first Trustees of the present church were: Mr. James Lard, Mr. Ivery Rakestraw, Mr. Martin Porter, Mr. William Rakestraw, Mr. James Austin, and Mr. Thornton McClung.

The present Trustees are: Mr. Grady House, Mr. P.D. Shipp, and Mr. Gip Hunt.

Sunday School organized when Flint Hill originated. There was a large enrollment. The children carried their Bibles and Blue-back Spellers to Sunday School. The purpose of the speller was to teach the small children their letters so they could read
Mr. J. M. Austin was one of the first Sunday School Superintendents. Hiram was fast growing into a thriving town and being only one mile from Flint Hill more and more of the little country church's members moved their membership to Hiram Methodist church. Eventually, Flint Hill church went dead. For a long time there was talk of destroying the church however, through the grace of God, Flint Hill church still stands staunch as ever, with her steeple pointing skyward as her founders would have it.

The present Sunday School enrollment is thirty-six under the superintendency of Mr. J. J. Shipp. There are fifty-nine church members on roll at this date, while during the old church there were three hundred and seventy-five members.

From the writer's research Flint Hill has not sponsored any organizations. Also, no records can be found stating how much money was contributed for any or all causes the first year of the church. $143.00 was contributed for all causes last year, excluding the Pastor's salary.

The information for this History was gathered by the writer from personal interviews with Mr. P. D. Shipp, Mr. B. E. Croker, Mrs. Jim Story, and Mr. T. B. Gore. Also, from church deeds in the possession of Mr. H. G. House.

The writer was born and reared in Flint Hill community and joined Flint Hill church at the age of 13 years, and was baptized by Rev. W. N. Pruitt, a visiting minister who helped to revive the church.

Written December 28th, 1950, by: Boisie Fern Shipp Wolfe.