FRANKLIN CHURCH

It is impossible to find or prepare a complete history of the Franklin Methodist Church. Its records have been burned several different times - in 1843 when the first court house was burned, again in the seventies, again in 1894 when the court house and all records went up in smoke a second time, and from time to time the membership and conference records have been destroyed by various fires which the town has suffered through the tragic years.

It is currently reported that about the year 1822 a group of God-loving and God-fearing men and women organized the Franklin Methodist Church. At the time Indians occupied the country west of the river and still roamed the region throughout the county. The first building was of logs and was erected east of the present church on top of the hill in front of the present home of Mr. M.W. Lipford, this whole square being church land. This building served until about 1930 or 1933 when the present building was erected - that is, the hull of the house, which remained unceiled for many years. The rear was fitted for slaves and negro members, and so remained until 1880, when the colored section was removed, and then in 1866 a new steep roof and steeple were added.

Today, as this historic building with its 14 inch square sill put together by wooden pegs, withstanding all gales and storms, is in excellent preservation; however, during the year 1933 a general line of repairs and remodeling began on plans to convert it into a modern house of worship and church plant. The first step was to raise the church to street level and build a rock foundation under it. The basement was hulled in and a furnace installed. Due to a limited seating space resulting from the building of Sunday School rooms in the rear of the church, a balcony was built. Stained glass windows were installed and a hard wood floor placed in the church. At this same time the walls were pine paneled, carpets laid, and the outside brick veneered. The grounds were made beautiful with rubble stone terraces, shrubbery and flowers.
Up until 1945 the attendance was very small. At this time a new interest was born and the membership began to grow in leaps and bounds. Because of this increased attendance the church was not able to meet the needs of the people. A generous donation by the Goodson Brothers launched a new remodeling program. The first step was to beautify the auditorium by painting, adding new pews, new altar rail, pulpit and chairs, communion table and Hammond electric organ.

When the upstairs was completed steps were taken to complete the basement. The walls were pine paneled, three class rooms, a small auditorium and two rest rooms built. A modern kitchen was installed with built-in cabinets, gas stove, sink, hot water heater and tile floor. Other additions in the basement were three dining tables, chairs, and gas heaters.

At this same time a new piano, song books, equipment for nursery, and a new Bible was purchased. For the first time in the history of the Sunday School sufficient amount of literature was provided for pupils and teachers.

Recently two beautiful memorials have been placed in the auditorium. A stained glass window depicting Christ at Gethsemane was installed behind the altar in memory of P. T. McCutchen, Sr., and a brass altar set was given in memory of Mrs. Mamie Daniel.

Honor should be given to the men and women who held membership and gave their loyal support in the past. Few of the descendents of the early members are among the present communicants. But the memories and traditions that cluster about the historic old church are and should be inspiration to us all for greater deeds of service in continuing the worldwide conception of the Master when he said, "God and teach all nations."

The men who have so bravely and consecratedly guided the church over hazardous situation, wars and financial depressions, make a long line of noble men. From the Georgia Conference records, these being incomplete, the names of the early pastors of the church cannot be found, the earliest available being in 1851.