1972 LaGrange Den.
Gay Ch.

Gay Methodist Church
(Woodbury Charge)
LaGrange District
The Methodist Church of Gay was organized in the year 1905, a group of Pioneer Christians meeting in the music room of the Oakland School house for worship on Sunday afternoon. Some of the well known names numbered in the congregation were members of the families of D.P. Ellis, M.F. Bowles, W.L. Blakeley, The Sitton Family, Mrs. Dettie Baughan, Henry Clark, Marvin Neal, and others. J. Harwell House was Pastor in charge. Later the Oakland Baptist Church graciously offered the use of their church and regular services were held there once a month on Sunday afternoon. The Presiding Elder of the District at that time was B.P. Allen, the church was on the Primrose charge.

The Bishop was W.W. Duncan; another well known Bishop that served the conference in that epoch was Bishop Seth Ward; also Dr. John Robins served as Presiding Elder during this period. Some of the Pastors serving over a period of years during this era were Rev. V.E. Lanford, T.H. Maxwell, and A.W. Quillian.

In the year 1914 members of the Ebenezer Church, with the Methodist members from Oakland, united to form the Methodist Church of Gay, being transferred to the Woodbury Charge. The old School Building in Gay was purchased and remodeled for use as the Church. This building was used from this time until the year 1945.

During the ministry of Rev. J.H. Couch, on Thanksgiving Day 1945, ground was broken for the erection of a new church building, the membership at that time being forty. A building committee was named which comprised the following: Chairman J.L. Evans, E.B. Estes, Mrs. M.T. Estes, Mrs. R.M. Estes, Mrs. J.W. Keith, and Mrs. R.K. Mann. With great enthusiasm, untiring effort, and zeal on the part of the members, funds were raised and soon construction got under way. During the process of building the members again accepted the invitation of the Baptist people to worship in their church.

The Woman's Society of Christian Service, with eleven members, really had a vital part in raising funds for the furnishing of the church and kitchen. They worked whole-heartedly, in various ways to make enough money to buy pulpit furniture, a beautiful carpet, and kneeling pad for the altar. They also bought for the kitchen an electric stove, and all necessary equipment. The society bought three dozen chairs for Sunday School rooms, maps, charts, tables and etc. to be used as teaching aids for beginners and primaries.

Several outstanding gifts were presented the church, one being a lovely Bible given by Mildred Estes. Windows and pews were pre-
sented as memorials to different loved ones; One window, especially outstanding, in the choir loft, given as a memorial to the girls and boys serving in World War II. It is truly an inspiring scene, representing the Son of Our Lord with outstretched arms, always ready to minister to the needs of all humanity.

The first service held in the new Church was on Thanksgiving Day 1947 conducted by Rev. J.H. Couch, the Pastor. The entire congregation voiced heartfelt thanks for the beautiful sanctuary in which they could more adequately worship God.

The first funeral service was that of Mrs. M.F. Bowles, a beloved charter member, also conducted by Rev. Couch.

Rev. Couch officiated at the first wedding ceremony in the Church, that of Geraldine Evans, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. E.B. Evans.

In the Conference year of 1948 Rev. Forrest L. King was sent as pastor to succeed Rev. Couch, and is still pastor of the charge. Rev. King has greatly endeared himself to the membership by his untiring efforts and unbounded enthusiasm in every phase of the work of the Church. The Gay and Oakland communities have been richly blessed during his ministry and he, and his family, have won a deep and abiding love from the people.

In July 1950 the Church was dedicated, Bishop Moore presiding, assisted by District Superintendent J. A. Thrailkill, Rev.
Forrest L. King, and Rev. J.H. Couch, this will always stand out in memory as the greatest service of the Church. Bishop Moore preached in an inspiring and eloquent manner, using as a text a passage of Scripture from Isaiah, "In the year King Uzziah died I saw the Lord."

In April 1951 Dr. Waights G. Henry conducted Revival Services in the Church and on the last night of the services, after reception and baptism of new members, dedicated the Hammond Organ, which had been purchased previously, and the indebtedness paid off during the week.

The Organ was dedicated to Mrs. E.B. Estes in appreciation of the untiring service she had given to the church over a long period of years, in the ministry of music.

If the roll were called of Ministers that have come, over a period of years to the Church as guest Ministers during the Methodist Revival season, there would be many well known and loved preachers; Rev. Rembert Sisson, H.C. Holland, Dr. Pierce Harris, Rev. George King, Rev. W.M. Twiggs, Dr. Chas Forrester, Dr. Waights G. Henry; to these, and many others, we would pay loving tribute for a wonderful contribution to the Spiritual Welfare and the betterment of our Church and Community.