History of Jones Chapel Methodist Church

by

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The exact date of the organization of Jones Chapel Methodist Church (first named Concord Meeting House) is not definitely known. Early history of Coweta county records both 1827 and 1828, with the best evidence indicating 1828.

The first church house was constructed of logs and was located in the extreme south-east corner of the 8th land district, in the south-east corner of land lot 18, about fifty paces from the rough rock (standing unto this day) marking the corner of land districts 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the original survey of Coweta county. This rock also marks the corner of lots 241 of the 5th district, 16 of the 6th district, 1 of the 7th district and 16 of the 8th district. Near where the church stood, there are a number of graves, in both the 6th and 5th districts, but the only ones marked for identification are of Jacob Redwine, a soldier of the American Revolution, and his daughter, Sarah Jarimore. These graves are in lot 241 of the 5th district, about twenty-five paces from the corner of the four districts. The Rev. William W. Steagall is credited with the organization of the church, and Rev. Willie D. Matthews was the first pastor in charge. The original trustees were Rev. Dabney F. Jones, James Kelley, William Penn, Lewis Redwine and John Redwine.

On November 22nd, 1835, for the sum of $12.00, William Sampler gave a deed to Dabney F. Jones, John Redwine, William Penn, Lewis Redwine and James Kelley, Trustees of "Concord Meeting House", for 6 acres of land in lot 176 of the 5th land district, and the trustees erected thereon (about three miles south of the original location) a log house for a place of worship, and meetings were held there until the spring of 1834, when, on April 14th, 1834, this land was deeded to C. S. Arnold, in consideration of $25.00, by Cyrus Black, Jesse Ballard, Levi T. G. Powell, Lewis Redwine and Hugh P. Arnold, Trustees for the "Methodist Episcopal Concord (formally known as Ballard's) Church."

From that site, the church was moved to 8 acres of land given by Lewis Redwine, on his plantation on the Old Neman to Palmetto road, between Little and Big Cedar creeks, in land lot 204 of the 5th land district, and here the above named trustees erected the third log church house, known as "Concord Methodist Church", and this was used as a meeting place until 1859. Rev. Robert Jones preached here in 1858 and Rev. J. L. Lowe was the pastor in 1859. It is interesting to find that no burial ground was established at this site, and that some of the founders continued to bury their dead at the first location as late as 1858.

George Powell, a Presbyterian, gave and deeded on June 4th, 1859, 4 acres of land in land lot 140 of the 74th District, C. M., to W. F. S. Powell, William M. Redwine and L. F. Redwine, Trustees, "and their successors in office, for ever in trust, that they shall erect and build, or cause to be erected and built thereon a house or place of worship for the use of members of the Methodist Episcopal Church South."

Shortly thereafter, a building committee composed of W. F. S. Powell, William M. Redwine, L. F. Redwine and W. R. Ballard began work on a substantial weather-boarded, cased and painted building, which was named Jones Chapel Methodist Church, in honor of Rev. Dabney F. Jones, the famous Methodist preacher and temperance lecturer, who had served as a trustee.
of the old church for years. The debt was liquidated on this building in 1883 by George Powell, Esq., and Judge Andrew J. Berry, and it served as a meeting house until 1941, when a building committee composed of B. L. Redwine, J. F. Cook and J. R. Wise had the present brick structure erected. The debt was paid on this building by B. L. Redwine and it was dedicated by Bishop Arthur J. Moore on July 20th, 1941. Later in 1941, the church acquired, through a gift from B. L. Redwine, 2 acres of land next to the cemetery on the original lot, and later 35 acres, a short distance west, on U. S. Highway 29.


The late Walter B. Brown, who long served as a member of the North Georgia Conference, grew up in Jones Chapel and was buried in the church yard.

Down through the years, this church has been blessed with many fine pastors, both regular and visiting. Perhaps, no history of the church would be complete without prominent mention of the Rev. W. F. S. Powell, a local Methodist preacher, who had the unique reputation of having never served any charge for money. During the lean times that follow the war between the states, he served at intervals over a period of years as pastor of this charge.

As late as around the turn of the century, the financial response in the churches was not too good - when the five churches on the charge were assessed $295.00 for the year's support of the preacher, and only $200.00 was paid. The optimistic circuit rider remained with us for another year, to receive only $155.25 the second year.

About that time the combined value of the five church buildings on the North Coweta Charge was fixed at $1,700.00, and 50 years later the conservative value of the Jones Chapel building alone is above $50,000.00.

After 125 years, the records show many of the present members are descendants of the founders and other pioneer settlers of the county, and that on every building committee and every board of trustees one or more Redwines have served.

Finally, on May 25th, 1951, on the old cornerstone, near the door of Jones Chapel Methodist Church, we find these words are still there: "This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven".