

Lavonia Charge

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HISTORY OF LAVONIA METHODIST CHURCH

by Mrs. Carrie Conwell

In 1880 the Lavonia Methodist Church was organized. The first services were held in an upstairs room of what was known as the Joe Vickery store. The Sunday School held meetings under a brush arbor and was organized before the church, and was later moved to the Vickery store. The following have served as Sunday School superintendent: Geo. W. Sewell, C. M. Clyde, J. F. Tabor, T. R. Knox, M. L. Allison, Ralph Cannon, A. C. Jackson, W. C. Loehr, and the present Superintendent L. W. Smith.

Listed as charter members of the church are Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Sewell, Mr. and Mrs. Tom Joe Blackwell, Mrs. T. F. Allison, Mr. and Mrs. W. O. Sayer, Mr. and Mrs. S. J. Walters, John W. Sewell, George Cannady, Messrs Ben and Ollie Ledbetter, Misses Fannie and Lizzie Ledbetter.

A few years after the organization of the church a permanent place of worship was secured. The deed is dated May 14, 1879 (for the consideration of \$ 5.00) from J. H. Jones, T. J. Bowman, J. H. Grogan to the Trustees. The building committee was G. W. Sewell, T. J. Blackwell, Ollie Ledbetter, and W. O. Sayer.

The membership increased rapidly and the Lavonia Methodist church entertained the Elberton District Conference, with Bishop Warren A. Candler as guest speaker.

The second Methodist church was begun in 1907 during the pastorate of Rev. John F. Yarborough and finished

ten years later during the pastorate of Rev. M. B. Sams. The building committee was C. A. Addington, J. F. Tabor, T. H. Roberts, C. P. Ray, Dr. S. B. Yow, with A J. Grubbs the builder.

The first Presiding Elder, now known as District Superintendent was Rev. Lovejoy, and Rev. J. H. Parks was the first pastor of the Lavonia Methodist church.

The Lavonia Woman's Missionary Society, now know as the Woman's Society of Christian Service, was organized by Rev. W. T. Norman in 1882 or 83. The charter members were Mrs. W. O. Sayer, Miss Icie Sayer, Mrs Tom Joe Blackwell, Misses Lizzie and Eliza Ledbetter, Mrs. T. F. Allison, and Mrs. T. H. Roberts. During the years the membership grew and much good has been accomplished by the band of women. Young people and Junior Societies were organized.

At present we have the Woman's Society of Christian Service and the Wesleyan Service Guild with a total membership of seventy-two. Some of the ladies to serve as president of the Society were: Mrs. J. W. Queen, Mrs Mamie H. Chandler, Mrs Swift Gilmer, Mrs. W. B. Richardson, Mrs. S. B. Yow, Mrs. G. A. Addington, Mrs. M. B. Sams, Mrs. J. C. Adams, Mrs. C. D. Read, Mrs. Laura Wilder, Mrs. M. P. Sewell, Mrs. W. C. Loehr, Mrs. R. A. Wilbanks, Mrs. Carrie Conwell, Mrs. R. L. Beasley, and the present president Mrs. L. W. Smith.

The Working Girls Circle, now known as the Wesleyan Service Guild, was organized by Mrs Sewell Dixon. The presidents of this organization were, Mrs. Robert French, Mrs. Robert Wilder,

Mrs. Ralph Cannon, Mrs. Roy Loehr, Mrs. Morgan Williams, Mrs. Milton Little, Mrs. Byron Clarke, and the present president Miss Peggy Jane Gaines.

On December 28, 1946 the church building was destroyed by fire. Plans were made immediately to rebuild and the present sanctuary was erected in 1948-49 during the pastorate of Rev. J. R. Phillips. In 1950, during the pastorate of J. F. Rollins the Church School^{rooms} were added. The members of the building committee were as follows: O. D. Cannon, Jr., Gladys Mason, J. H. Burton, D. W. Adams, J. R. Beasley, B. F. Cheek, H. H. Crittenden, Roy D. Loehr, Marie Williams. Roy E. Hitchcock, architect and Guy Mauldin, builder.

The following preachers have succeeded Rev. J. H. Parks: William Norman, Hendricks, Grogan, Lankford, A. D. Echols, W. A. Cooper, F. D. and A. C. Cantrell, W. T. Hamby, W. A. Simmons, S. H. Dimon, J. T. Lowe, J. F. Yarborough, Walter Millican, J. W. King, M. B. Sams, C. A. Norton, J. C. Adams, G. D. Read, W. A. Woodruff, W. W. Cash, J. H. Couch, L. P. Webb, S. H. Dixon, A. P. Watkins, A. T. Hind, J. R. Phillips, J. F. Rollins.

The present membership of the church is two hundred and twelve with the following officials: Trustees, O. D. Cannon, Sr., chairman, W. S. Haley, J. H. Burton, Ben F. Cheek, W. C. Loehr; Stewards, O. D. Cannon, Jr., Chairman, J. C. Loggins, Eugene Dye, Dr. J. W. Williams, Winston Morgan, Robert Wilder, E. H. Smith, W. E. Smith, and Harold Lacy. The general Superintendent of the Church School; L. W. Smith, Superintendent of Adult Department,

Phil Beasley, Superintendent of Youth Division, Miss Bernice Wilder, Superintendent of Children's Division Mrs. R. W. Rosen-
crance, President of Woman's Society of Christian Service, Mrs.
L. W. Smith, President of Wesleyan Service Guild Miss Peggy
Gaines, Charge and church lay leader Ben F. Cheek.

LAVONIA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

1878	I. G. Parks
1879	No Information
1880-1881	To be supplied
1881-1882	A, W. Quillian
1882-1884	W. T. Norman
1884-1885	A. D. Echols
1885-1886	W. A. Cooper
1886-1887	F. P. Langford
1887-1890	A. D. Echols
1890-1892	M. D. Smith
1892-1895	F. D. Cantrell
1895-1898	W. A. Simmons
1898-1899	S. H. Dimon
1899-1901	A. C. Cantrell
1901-1904	J. L. Lowe
1904-1908	J. F. Yarborough
1908-1911	Walter Millican
1911-1913	J. W. King
1913-1917	M. B. Sams
1917-1919	C. A. Norton
1919-1923	J. C. Adams
1923-1926	C. D. Read
1926-1927	W. A. Woodruff
1927-1929	W. W. Cash
1929-1931	J. H. Couch

1931-1932	J. A. Partridge
1932-1933	L. P. Webb
1933-1937	S. H. Dixon
1937-1942	A. P. Watkins
1942-1946	A. P. Hind
1946-1949	J. R. Phillips
1949-1953	J. F. Rollins
1953-1955	H. B. Simms
1955-1957	E. W. Dunagan
1957-1959	James R. Styles
1959-1962	Willie Berkner
1962-1966	R. R. Baker
1966-1967	Harvey Boyd
1967-1970	Dan Maxey
1970-1974	John Moler
1974-	Harold Lyda