

1972 Guffin Dish

Locust Grove Charge

HISTORY OF LOCUST GROVE

METHODIST CHURCH

by

Kate B. Brown

The Locust Grove Methodist Church acquired its name from the village of Locust Grove in Henry County, Georgia. This village was so named because it nestled in a large grove of North American Locust trees, whose beautiful white blossoms in the spring time filled the air with a delightful aroma.

The first church was a small structure about one fourth mile south of Locust Grove on the Jackson road. As records were either lost or destroyed, it is impossible to give names of charter members or exact date of organization. However, from family records of people living here now, we find that such names as Rowser, Smith, Sandifer, Kimbell, Davis, Cleveland, Colvin, Spier, Barker and Dickens are known to have been on the membership roll.

Early in the 1800's a very spacious church, with a section provided for the slaves, was built in the village. For years this was the only church in this section. As time passed by, services were held very irregularly and finally, due to shifting of the population and conditions leading up to the War Between the States, the church was abandoned and fell into decay. After a long rainy season the heavy timbers of the church collapsed and crashed to the ground with such force that the sound was heard several miles from the village.

For the information concerning the two churches described above, we are indebted to Miss Delia Smith, who is eighty-two years old and one of the oldest citizens in our town. Miss Delia's grandparents were Methodists and she remembers vividly the stories of these two early churches. While no authentic records are available concerning these two churches, we feel the account given by Miss Smith is correct.

We find from the court house records in McDonough that G. M. Phillips, S. H. Maddox and Charles Barker, trustees, were deeded "2 acres of land - part of lot 167, or 186 lying on the S. W. of McDonough road, so long as used for church, then if church dissolved, land to revert to grantor, church to be sold and proceeds to go to said trustees or their successors". The grantor was Wm. H. Spier and the deed was dated March 12, 1861. This church was built on the site of the large one mentioned above.

For some time during the life time of this third church there was no Baptist church in the village and the use of the Methodist church was tendered to the Baptists in the community. They used it one Sunday in each month for preaching services, and the Methodist and Baptist Sunday Schools were held jointly each Sunday until the Baptist church was built. The names of Allums, Brown, Castellow, Daniel, Farris, Knott, Price and Pruitt were on the church roll.

In 1907 this church was sold and a new church was built of cement blocks in a more central part of town on a lot purchased from A. M. Sandifer for \$300.00. The lot is 182' wide and 228' deep. The church was dedicated and the corner stone laid the

209

same year. Joel T. Daves, presiding elder, conducted the ceremonies.

We learn from Mrs. R. C. Brown, the oldest member of the church, that a three room parsonage was bought in 1900 and used until 1903 when a six room parsonage was built just across the street from the church. I remember when I came to Locust Grove to live that the new parsonage was pointed to with pride as the prettiest cottage in the village. This parsonage was in use until 1948, when it was sold for \$2,800.00 and an attractive brick parsonage was built about one half mile north of town on State Highway 42. The lot, 100' wide and 200' deep, was donated by C. D. Lindsey, a steward of the church. The parsonage is valued at \$15,000.00 and was dedicated April 20, 1949 by Bishop Arthur J. Moore. The deeds to the parsonage and the church both contain the trust clause. The parsonage is owned jointly by the four churches on the Locust Grove Charge, namely Locust Grove, Mt. Bethel, New Hope and Philadelphia.

The church has been blessed by some great revivals. Perhaps the most far reaching was under the leadership of Rev. C. M. Dunaway in 1902.

We have no record of the first Sunday School, but for the past sixty years there has been a continuous Sunday School department. J. O. Allums is the first remembered Superintendent and after him came A. H. Price, R. C. Brown, G. R. Wilson, E. M. McDonald and L. H. Mason, who is the present Superintendent. Our present enrollment in the five departments is seventy-six and the total paid for all purposes last year was \$305.11.

The first organization for woman's work was a Ladies Aid Society organized in 1894 under the leadership of Mrs. Claude Bartlett. Next, a Home Missionary Society was organized with Miss Clyde Streeter as president. There has been a continuous Missionary Society since the organization and it is now functioning as a Womans Society of Christian Service, with twenty-three members. Last year our society paid for all causes \$126.73. Mrs. S. H. Ramey is the present president of the W. S. C. S.

At different times during the last fifty years our church has had a Cradle Roll department, Mite Box Brigade, Epworth League and now, a Methodist Youth Fellowship group.

Through the years, Layman's Day has been observed and among those visiting our congregation on that occasion were Avon Gaston, of Jackson, Georgia and P. Y. Luther, of Griffin, Georgia.

The congregation has contributed to the State. R. C. Brown in the state legislature; Mrs. Kate B. Brown as Superintendent of Education, Henry County; Harold Daniel, Superintendent of Education, Pike County. Miss Dorothy Price, Miss Minnie Lee Wilson, Mrs. L. L. Pitts, Miss Myrtle Price, Miss Marguerite Laney, Mrs. H. C. Childs, Miss Mary James Pitts, Miss Margaret Pitts, Howard Peek and Mrs. Lynn Maddox in the field of public school education.

210

P. M. Minter, to the ministry and to business E. T. Peek, John S. Brown and J. L. Wilson as past masters.

Ninety-nine is the present membership and the church contributed for all causes last year \$903.28. Broken down, the above figure is as follows:

Pastor	\$600.00
Dist. Supt.	48.00
Episcopal Fund	10.50
Conference Claims	72.00
Minimum Salary	12.00
District Fund	9.00
Benevolence	<u>151.78</u>
TOTAL	\$903.28

Locust Grove is one of the four churches on the charge and therefore, the above is a fractional part of total salaries and amounts paid.

At one time in 1901, the church was in the South Atlanta District, but for many years it has been in the Griffin District.

The present board of stewards is composed of H. C. Childs, Chairman, E. M. McDonald, S. H. Ramey, C. H. Martin, C. D. Lindsey, C. E. Buchanan, Mrs. L. L. Pitts and Mrs. Kate B. Brown.

The junior stewards are Charles McCarter, Lamar Wilson and Jack Gibson.

Following is a list of pastors and presiding elders who have served the church:

#### PASTORS

1.	B. Rogers	1879
2.	J. C. Davison	1883
3.	J. T. Timmerman	1884
4.	J. L. Lupo	1885
5.	E. M. Wright	1886
6.	J. D. Milton	1887
7.	H. S. Adams	1888
8.	J. W. Bailey	1889
9.	C. C. Davis	1890
10.	D. C. Brown	1891-92
11.	J. A. Thurman	1893
12.	L. P. Neese	1894
13.	J. T. Loyal	1895
14.	T. R. Kendall	1896
15.	Roy Sibley	1897
16.	J. W. Myers	1898
17.	R. A. Seals	1899
18.	J. M. Fowler	1900-01
19.	J. S. Leake	1902



# PASTORS

20.	J. D. Lewis	1903-04
21.	A. E. Sansburn	1905
22.	C. V. Weathers	1906-07
23.	A. F. Ward	1908-09
24.	W. J. DeBardleben	1910-11
25.	F. R. Smith	1912
26.	L. L. Landrum	1913-14
27.	J. J. Copelan	1915-16
28.	H. L. Byrd	1917-18
29.	D. A. McBrayer	1919
30.	D. P. Johnston	1920-23
31.	W. E. Brown	1924-25
32.	J. L. Varner	1926-27
33.	R. H. Timberlake	1928-29-30
34.	H. M. Strozier	1931
35.	H. M. McNeil	1932-33-34
36.	Jesse Warwick	1935-36-37-38
37.	R. C. Shea	Nov. 1938 to Feb. 1939
38.	J. H. Hager	Feb. 1939 to Nov. 1939
39.	J. W. King	1940
40.	E. F. Martin	1941
41.	A. E. Purviance	1942 - June 1943
42.	Nath Thompson	June 1943 to Nov. 1943
43.	Eugene Drinkard	1944-45-46
44.	J. B. Ward	1947-48-49 to June 1950
45.	Warren C. Hamby	June 1950 to Aug. 1950
46.	Clyde Blackstock	Sept. 1950-

# PRESIDING ELDERS

G. H. Patillo	1883-84-85
W. W. Wadsworth	1886-87-88
G. P. Richerson	1889-90
T. F. Pierce	1890-92
W. F. Cook	1893-94
John W. Heidt	1895-96-
W. P. Lovejoy	1897-98-99-1900
J. B. Robins	1901-02
W. F. Glenn	1903-04-05-06
Joel T. Daves	1907
J. H. Eakes, Sr	1908-09-10-11
Fletcher Walton	1912-13-14-15
W. L. Pierce	1916-17-18
Luke Johnson	1919-20-21-22
J. H. Eakes, Jr	1923-24-25-26
L. M. Twiggs	1927-28-29-30
W. L. Duren	1931
W. T. Hunnicutt	1932-33-34-35
W. M. Twiggs	1936-37-38-39
R. L. Russell	1940-41-42-43
M. M. Maxwell	1944
Paul A. Turner	1945-46-47-48
H. H. Jones	1949-50-51

212

On April 10, 1949 a lovely seven-room brickvener building in the convenient form of a \$1,5000 parsonage, newly furnished throughout was presented free of all indebtedness by Locust Grove Charge to God and His cause, with a dedication oration by our Bishop, Arthur J. Moore, assisted in this service by Reverend J. B. Ward, P.C.; Dr. Paul Turner, D.S.; and Dr. J. W. Veatch, District Superintendent of East Atlanta District. Over one hundred WSCS Presidents and officials and laymen were present at this "open house." Others to come.

Many said it couldn't be done, but with faith, we did it! How well we know the truth of the Bishop's encouraging words, "These things do not just happen." In great triumph we left the parsonage with the spirit of the Panama Canal Builders' Song: "Got any rivers they say aren't crossable? Got any mountains that can't be cut through? We specialize in the wholly impossible, Doing things nobody ever could do!"

Our records show that \$1210 of this money went through the writer's hands. Mrs. M. M. Allums raised \$188 and Mr. J. E. Miller had credited to him \$191 on our book. There was more to Mt. Bethel's credit. P. U. Bledsoe did a lot of free carpenter's work. There were several sizable checks of \$25.00, \$50.00, and \$75.00, but much of this money was paid by strangers. There was a long list of \$1.00 bills which meant a lot of work. People as a whole were wonderful. There was a lot of fun and good times along with the headaches in this march forward.