

Ga.

History of Palmetto Methodist Church.

In 1828 when this country was a wilderness with here and there a log cabin to mark the home of some pioneer settlers.

Horton Ballard - after conferring with some neighbors, came to the conclusion they could not rear their children as they should be, without spiritual instruction and Bible influence.

The results of these conferences was the sending of Horton Ballard to then Fayette county, and presenting the conditions and the needs of his neighborhood to William Stegall, who was engaged in missionary work, then under appointment from the Georgia Conference.

The result of this visit was the placing of an appointment by William Stegall to preach at the house of Horton Ballard. (This was in the early part of the year)

This appointment was followed by others at the same place, the fruits of these meetings was the organization of a Methodist Society and the building of a log meeting house,

as they were then called. In the fall of 1828 called Concord or Ballards meeting house.

Stegall served them again in 1829 and 1830. In 1831 Stegall was sent to other fields and his brother Ivey took his place and during the year the field was so enlarged and the spiritual needs so pressing, the necessity of all interested, called for organizing another society and the building of another house of worship.

Another meeting house was built eight miles north of Concord, called Watts meeting house, for Maj. C. B. Watts, a prominent citizen of Campbell county. An energetic worker in early Methodism in this part of Georgia for the moral and religious uplifting of all around him, humble, unassuming and kind. He was a power for good in all walks of life.

From 1831-1834 the population of this country had largely increased by immigration from the older counties of Georgia and North Carolina, these

settling centrally between the two churches - Concord and Watts.

In 1834, another meeting house was built midway between the two already built and was called Hearn's meeting house.

In 1835 D. P. Jones (Dabney Jones) deeded to the conference 18 acres of land upon which was built a few tents and a bush arbor, was called Jones Camp Ground. The first Camp Meeting for this country held here in the Fall of 1835. By 1840 the work had increased the need was greater changes were necessary.

A conference of the three societies resulted in the building of a church at Jones Camp ground called New Hope, these two churches absorbed the membership of Hearn's, a part of Concord and Watts, the rest of Concord moved farther west and built Black's meeting house.

In 1843 the membership of Watts being weakened to such an extent by removals to New Hope, it dis-

banded and united with New Hope and Camp Ground.

In 1840 under the pastoral charge of Rev Noah Smith, we find the membership at Camp ground as follows:

W.P. Menefee, J.H. Johnson, E.L. Bailey, Wm Hearn, S. White, Dabney P. Jones, W.W. Brooks, C. Arnold, William Ballard, H. Kelley, H. Russell, Emily Russell, C.P. Duke, S.P. Steed, A. Steed, H. Stipe Sr., H. Stipe Jr., J. Stipe, W.L. Mobley, J.L. Menefee, Frances Johnson, Polly Bailey, Willie Hearn, Rebecca White, Polly Jones, Catherine Brooks, Mary Arnold, Judy Ballard, Lena Kelley, Leah Russell, Lavecia Duke, Patty Steed, Caroline Steed, Polly Stipe, Sophy Stipe, Emily Stipe, Mary Mobley, Frances Penn, Becky Smith.

From 1828 to 1840 the Societies had been served by the two Stegalls, Bella Wynn, Douglas Stephens and Pennington. Willie D. Mathis was the first Presiding Elder, next after Mathis were William Stegall and

James Payne. Organizing the Church at Camp Ground under the pastorate of Smith. Harris Russell was appointed the first Class leader.

During the next eleven years the Church membership was largely increased and strengthened spiritually under the preaching of the Gospel by the Pastors, Smith - Stegall - Yarborough and Pennington and local preachers A. Steed, S. Steed, Jones, E. Pennington - Skeen, Hearn - & Smith.

In March 1851 a Sabbath school was organized with J. C. Mison as Supt. & W. P. Menefee, asst. Supt.

During the following May the Church service and Sabbath school were moved to Palmetto and conducted in Skeen's Hall until the latter part of the year when it was moved to the school house.

In June 9th 1851, Willis P. Menefee, deeded a lot, 1½ acres for Church Bldg. to P. N. Skeen, E. L. Bailey - W. L. Mobley - Wm. Hearn -

and J. C. Nixon as Trustees.

In 1852 a neat wooden building was erected and dedicated in which services were held for several years.

The building becoming unsafe, services were held in the academy for sometime. Then the Rainey house was purchased and fitted up in which services were held two or three years. In 1872 a brick building was completed on the Church lot and dedicated by Bishop Wightman. In 1886 improvement to the amount \$1,100.00 were made. *

Copied & sent to me, Evelyn Ballard,
by Mrs Margaret Steed, Palmetto,
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a write-up used for their 100th anniversary.