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HISTORY

of

HOGANSVILLE, ST JAMES CHURCH

ST. JAMES METHODIST CHURCH
HOGANSVILLE, GEORGIA

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The history of the St. James Methodist Church dates back almost to the beginning of the textile industry in Hogansville. The first cotton mill was built in Hogansville by the Hogansville Manufacturing Company around 1899. At that time there were only twenty-four homes in the village. In 1902, Mrs. Sally Covin, with the help of Mrs. Pearl Trimble, organized the first Sunday School in the community. The Sunday School classes met in the schoolhouse, which had been converted from a residence. This building still stands at the corner of Askew Avenue and Granite Street and houses a grocery store. The Sunday School was attended by all denominations represented in the village, and all the people attended worship services each Sunday also held in the schoolhouse where a visiting preacher would come to preach to them.

In 1905, or 1906, the Hogansville Manufacturing Company built a Community Union Church on a lot at the corner of Johnson Street and Askew Avenue and presented it to their employees. The St. James Methodist Church was organized the same year, and, sharing the same church building with the other denominations of the village, held services once each month.

Among the fifty charter members who organized the St. James Methodist Church on their own initiative were Mr. and Mrs. George McLaughlin, Misses Mary and Leona McLaughlin, Mr. Milton McLaughlin who was the church's first organist, Mr. and Mrs. Monroe Jones, Mr. and Mrs. F. Jones, a Mrs. Tarver, Miss Lena Tarver who later married another charter member, Mr. Frank Almond, Mr. James M.

Huff, and Miss Cludie Gable who later became Mrs. Warner Smith.

The church has kept no official record of pastors or finances; however, some of the older members remember that a Rev. Logan was the first pastor. In the beginning, St. James was put on the charge or circuit with the First Methodist Church of Hogansville and both churches were served by the same pastors. Some of the early pastors were Henderson, Maxwell, Mize, Hamilton and Holland. In 1934, St. James was taken off the charge with the First Methodist Church and given a resident pastor, the Rev. Mr. Paul Gunnels. Then, we began having services every other Sunday, instead of once each month, alternating with the Highland Baptists. The Church rented a five-room frame house from the U.S. Rubber Company, which had taken over the textile industry in Hogansville, to be used as a parsonage. St. James now owns this parsonage, having bought it in 1946. It is located at No. 1 Marshall Avenue.

Rev. Gunnels was married during his stay at St. James. He was our pastor until November, 1938. It was during his stay that the Women's Missionary Society was organized. A group of women met at the home of Mrs. Raleigh Parham on June 2, 1936 for the purpose of organizing the missionary society and elected the following officers: President, Mrs. D.C. Trussell; Vice-President, Mrs. J.L. Faulkner; Secretary, Miss Etta Mae Zimmerman; Treasurer, Mrs. Raleigh Parham; Program Chairman, Mrs. Virgil Clark; Publicity Chairman, Miss Floy Teal; Mission Study Chairman, Mrs. P.J. Teal; Chairman of Literature, Mrs. Jim Huguley;

Secretary of Baby Specials, Mrs. Tom Stone. The Society sent approximately \$30.00 to Conference their first year, and did a great deal of local work. One of the main projects that first year was furnishing the parsonage.

St. James also organized an Epworth League under the leadership of Rev. Paul Gunnels.

The Rev. Mr. V.L. Bray followed Rev. Gunnels in November, 1938. Bro. Bray stayed at St. James for a period of five years and endeared himself to the entire community. It was during this period that more members were added to the church roll than during any other period. During one revival, in 1939, there were fifty-two new names added to the church roll. In 1940, the new church building which had been hoped for, prayed for and longed for became "no longer a dream, but a glorious reality". The U.S. Rubber Company gave to the Highland Baptists and St. James Methodists a lot on Granite Street and donated \$9,000.00, or one-half toward the cost of building the church. Working together, the Baptists and Methodists raised the other half of the money needed to build the church. The first service was held in the new church building on November 17, 1940. Then, on January 18, 1942, when all the indebtedness had been paid, the Dedicatory Service was held with Bishop Arthur J. Moore and Dr. Willis E. Howard as guest speakers for the occasion.

The young people of the church took a very active part in the Methodist Youth Fellowship under the leadership of Bro. Bray, and on numerous occasions were hosts to the young people's departments from the other churches in the district.

Bro. Bray was followed in 1943 by the Rev. Mr. W.P. Rowe who served St. James for three years. In 1946, Rev. P.H. Stokes came to St. James and served until June, 1948, when Rev. L.G. Cowart came and stayed until June, 1949.

The present pastor, Rev. W.D. Webb, came to St. James in June, 1949, and became our first full-time pastor. On August 27, 1949 the Highland Baptist Church sold their interest in the church building to the St. James Methodists, and we began having services every Sunday. On August 28, 1950, when the church again became free of debt, and St. James came into complete ownership of the church building and property, the note was burned at an impressive ceremony at the church. The only indebtedness against the church at the present time is about \$400.00 which was borrowed from The Citizens Bank in Hogansville to make necessary repairs to the Sunday School rooms, furnace and auditorium. This is being paid from special donations by the members.

The present membership of St. James is two hundred fifty-five. There are eight departments in the Sunday School from cradle roll to the Adult Bible Class and the total membership is one hundred seven, with an average attendance of seventy. Approximately twenty young people are enrolled in the Methodist Youth Fellowship. The Woman's Society of Christian Service has a membership of forty-three.

Mr. Virgil Clark is the Superintendent of Sunday School; Miss Doris Matthews is the President of the Methodist Youth Fellowship; and Mrs. D.C. Trussell is the President of the Woman's Society of Christian Service. The following are members

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of the Board of Stewards: Virgil Clark, Chairman; T.P. Trussell, D.C. Trussell, P.L. Cliett, Tom Dale, C.W. Allen, Lee Staples, Raleigh Parham, and B.C. Granger. Those serving on the Board of Trustees for the Church are Raleigh Parham, P.J. Teal, Lee Staples, Virgil Clark and D.C. Trussell. The Trustees for the Parsonage are Mr. T.P. Trussell, Mr. Warner Smith and Mr. Tom Dale.

The church has recently experienced a very heart warming revival, during which seventeen new members joined the church. Bro. Webb, pastor of the church, brought the morning and evening messages.

Grateful acknowledgement is made to Mrs. Amos Lowery, Mrs. Jewel Todd, Mrs. Ola Haralson, Mrs. D.C. Trussell, Mrs. Wesley Partain, Mr. and Mrs. P.A. Huff, Miss Floy Teal, Miss Etta Mae Zimmerman, Miss Lovella Zimmerman, Mr. Raleigh Parham for their help in compiling this data.

Respectfully submitted by Thelma Trussell, Historian.

May 26, 1951.