HISTORY
of
MANCHESTER, ST. JAMES METHODIST CHURCH
The Saint James church building was first built in or about the year 1910 and was used as a community church for all denominations, and was so used until October 1918; at which time under the leadership of Rev. R.C. Clecker District Superintendent of the Lagrange District and Brother M.M. Trotter Methodist lay leader in the community and manager of the Manchester Cotton Mills together with the Methodist of the community a Methodist church was organized and first called, "The Methodist Mill Church. It continued to be called by this name until the fall of 1922, when the name Saint James, was given to the church.

At the North Georgia Conference meeting in November of 1918 Bishop Candler assigned Rev. B.H. Smith as the first pastor of the Manchester Mills Circuit. At the end of the first year the church reported a membership of one hundred and thirty-eight. During the thirty-three years of the church's history the largest membership ever to be reported was two hundred and eighty-nine in the year 1931 when Rev. John E. Tate was pastor. At the present time the church has a membership of two hundred and twenty-six.

The greatest growth of the church came in the year 1922 when sixty-two new members were added to its roll. In 1926, 1930 and 1931 each year reported an increase in membership of fifty-six. The church has had one great reversement in the year 1935 when it lost in one year one hundred and twenty-seven of its members without any additions on profession of faith. This was due to members moving away on account of the strike in the mill. The church has never fully recovered from this great loss.

During the history of the church three ministers have gone out to serve in the larger field of the kingdom's work. These ministers are Rev. C.W. Fruit and Rev. B.W. Kilpatrick of the North Georgia Conference and Rev. Russell Dixon of the South Georgia Conference.

In 1949 Saint James church shared its membership with Chalybeate Springs Methodist church, which had been organized under the leadership of the pastors the First Methodist and Saint James Methodist churches of
Manchester. The Saint James Methodist church now owns its own church plant valued at twenty-five thousand dollars. In 1946 the congregation purchased and paid for the parsonage on the adjoining lot to the church property, which is valued at five thousand dollars.

As of date April 3, 1963 the church has a membership of two hundred and twenty-six. It has a Sunday school enrollment of one hundred and forty-four. The Woman's Society of Christian Service has a membership of twenty-five, the Wesleyan Service Guild a membership of twelve, the Annual financial budget of the church will run around five thousand dollars.


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