HISTORY OF SALEM CHURCH

In the South corner of Clarke county in 1820 there was a little town called Candy. This land had been bought by several people from the Cherokee Indians and a town was built.

A group of people in this town realizing the need for a place of worship organized a Methodist church. Samuel and Elizabeth Hester deeded the land consisting of nine-tenths of an acre for the sum of $1.00 to the trustees, Joseph Smith, John Williams, John Floyd, Edward L. Thomas, and John Simmons. These people and others were prominent in the work of the church. With the labor of the community and donated timber the church was built and called Salem.

In the year of 1822 Samuel and Elizabeth Hester deeded a parsonage to this work. The trustees for this were: Joseph Smith, Ludwick Alford, John W. Graves, James Knott, Joel Williams, William H. White, James C. Branch, and James Anderson. The preachers were circuit riders and Salem was on the stage coach route from Atlanta to Macon. For quite a few years this little town and church was a thriving place although the church was small in membership its people went about doing good.

In 1835 the Georgia Railroad was built fifteen miles south of Salem and the little town of Candy began to melt. The people migrated nearer the railroad where a small town sprang up but the Salem community remained. Sometime through the years the parsonage was done away with and in 1850 we find Salem on the Watkinsville circuit.
From an old quarterly meeting minute book we find Salem on this circuit through 1878. Following is a list of preachers, junior preachers, and presiding elders serving this church from 1850 through 1878:

**PREACHERS**

J. D. Adams (1850)  
George Bright (1851)  
Wm. J. Cotter (1852-53)  
Jesse  
Jesse R. Littlejohn (1854)  
J. W. Tally (1854-57)  
David Blalock (1855-56)  
Wm. H. C. Cone (1857-58)  
John C. Simmons (1859-60)  
Fillman F. Reynolds (1861)  
Atticus G. Haygood (1862)  
D. J. Myrick (1863-65)  
A. G. Worley (1866)  
Cicero A. Mitchell (1867)  
Richard J. Harwell (1868-69)  
E. G. Murrah (1870)  
John W. Knight (1871)  
J. M. V. Morris (1872)  
John W. Knight (1873)  
Wm. W. Csa (1874-77)  
Miles W. Arnold (1878)

**PRESIDING ELDERS**

Wm. J. Parks (50-53)  
Alfred F. Mann (58)  
J. O. A. Clark (59-61)  
Roft. W. Bigham (62-65)  
Walter R. Branham (66-68)  
Emory F. Anderson (63-64)  
J. W. Bigham (69-71)  
Thomas F. Pierce (69-71)  
Emory F. Anderson (67)  
Henry J. Ellis (69)  
J. H. Baxter (69)  
James N. Bell (70)  
J. M. V. Morris (71)  
B. L. Hume (73)  
W. H. Trammell (75-76)  
Warren A. Candler (77)  
Mike D. Turner (78)

**JUNIOR PREACHERS**

John Harris (50-51)  
John H. Jrogan (52)  
Jesse R. Littlejohn (53)  
Thomas Boring (54)  
John Patillo (55)  
John W. McIahee (56)  
Jacob C. Reese (57)  
Aug. T. Williamson (58)  
W. C. D. Perry (59)  
Wm. G. Rowland (60)  
John R. Parker (61)  
Anderson J. Jarrell (62)  
Emory F. Anderson (63-64)  
James L. Polver (65)  
W. C. D. Perry (66)  
Emory F. Anderson (67)  
Wm. D. Arnold (68)  
J. H. Baxter (69)  
James N. Bell (70)  
J. M. V. Morris (71)  
B. L. Hume (73)  
W. H. Trammell (75-76)  
Warren A. Candler (77)  
Mike D. Turner (78)

In 1875 Clarke county was divided; the south end was cut off and formed Oconee county. This put Salem in Oconee county.

The descendants of the Hesters, Smiths, Graves, and Knotts were all prominent people in the work of the church in this community for more than one hundred years. Some of the Graves are still here. They were a musical family and took great interest in singing. Mr. William Graves was superintendent of the Sunday school for a number of years. Miss Mat Jacks was also one of the superintendents and valued teacher in the Sunday school here. She rode a horse from
Goshen which was seven miles away to teach the children about God and his love. Sometimes she brought her small niece or nephew with her. They would ride on the horse in back of their aunt.

In 1896 a new church was built, the one that is now used. The materials were donated, needing long sills, rafters and the like, the trees were given and the people came together, cut logs, hauled them to the saw mill, had them cut, then carried them to the church ground for building. A foreman was hired and the rest of the labor was given. About this time the Salem church was put on the Bishop Charge.

In 1904 space was needed for the cemetery. Fifty five hundredths of an acre was bought from Mr. Tom Middlebrooks for the sum of $15.00 on the northwest side of the church lot.

There was an active Sunday school and church service during these years. Beginning in 1900 special days were observed; Children's Day, Rally Day in early summer. These were all day affairs with dinner on the ground. Orphans Day was in the fall and a tree at Christmas time. The programs were arranged by a committee of women: Mrs. R. B. Thrasher, Mrs. I. L. Thrasher, Mrs. A. E. Nunnally, Mrs. J. P. Carson, and Mrs. J. W. Graves was in charge of the singing.

Over a period of years the Sunday school superintendents were W. T. Thrasher, J. E. O'Dillon, and H. H. Bowden.

A retired preacher moved into the community in 1908, Rev. A. C. Ledford, a good worker with the people, especially young folks. He helped them to take an active part in leadership, prayer meetings, and reading of the scriptures. Prayer meetings were held every Sunday and Wednesday nights.
The revival meetings were and are still held in August. In 1912 Salem was put on the Appalachee charge and was there for six years and then moved back to the Bishop charge. Sometime before 1918 our members began to scatter and after World War I our church work lagged, lots of our people moved away, the Sunday school ran out but was reorganized later. It ran on with a faithful few for several years. Then homecoming day was organized the second Sunday in May each year. People came back from everywhere for the all day services and dinner on the ground.

Sometime in the 1900's the church was given a new coat of paint and roofed with tin. Some years later a piano was bought to replace the organ that had been in service so long. In 1931 our first student preacher came. Our charge being near Athens the preachers can go to school at the University and hold a charge too. They stay from one to four years according to the number of years they need to go to school. I don't know who suffers the most the preacher or the people. They come here knowing they have to practice on someone and are praying that we will receive them kindly. We try to give them the encouragement they need and want so badly to help them press forward in the high calling of Christ our Lord. We can listen praying that they will bring us the messages of faith, hope, love, and courage that it takes to meet life with its joys and sorrows without too much stumbling. We must be a good bunch to practice on for student preachers are all we have had for twenty years. We pray they will go forward with the love of God in their hearts and a stronger determination to win souls for God.

In 1938 eighteen hundredths of an acre of land was given on the southeast side of the church property by D. F. Legrand for more cemetery space deeded to the trustees at that time. They were
W. S. Walker, J. S. Hale, and R. L. Neal. In 1936 the R.E.A. electric line came through the Salem community and electric lights were put in the church.

In 1950 the plastering inside the church was torn out and sheet rock was put in and celotex overhead with a new rug on the floor. Again the people had a mind to work. We made money by serving suppers and some gifts. All of the work was done by free labor. Our membership is still small but willing workers. Below is a list of preachers and presiding elders from 1904 to 1954.

PREACHERS

B. H. Mobley (1905-06)  J. S. Bryon
J. W. Sewell (1909)      W. L. Pierce (1909-10)
W. A. Woodruff (1910)   B. F. Allen (1911-14)
C. A. Swift (1911)      S. P. Wiggins (1915-19)
W. A. Wells (1912-13)   C. T. Venable (1919-23)
Walter Millinon (1914-15)  W. F. Roberson (1924)
J. A. Jordan (1916-17)   W. L. Allgood (1928-31)
E. B. Moll (1918)        A. C. Baggerly (1925-26)
B. F. Reed (1919-22)    J. A. Langford (1927-28)
C. N. Hays (1923)       Z. Speer (1929)
G. W. Ridley (1924)     A. O. Beggerly (1930-31)
A. G. Bagnerly (1925-26)  J. W. Veatch (1932-34)
J. A. Langford (1927-28) C. C. Jarrell (1935-36)
Z. Speer (1929)          H. G. Walker (1938-41)
A. Winstead (1930-31)   H. L. Byrd (1937-38)
C. H. Davis (1934-36)   C. Middlebrooks (1939-41)
John Maxwell (1937)      J. H. Barton (1942-45)
Loyd Jackson (1942-44)   Horace Smith (1946-49)
J. R. Thompson (1946)   James Coe (1947)
James Griffin (1948-51)  L. L. Fouche (1951-52)
L. L. Fouche (1951-52)  F. E. Jenkins (1952-54)

In 1947 the annual conference was changed from November to July. The preachers are given their new appointments in July now. At this time in 1951 Rev. L. L. Fouche was sent to Salem.

In August laymen were sent out to solicit money for the parsonage. They collected $500.00 which was used to install a bathroom at the
n parsonage. In November the ladies of the W.S.C.S. of Bishop charge served a chicken supper to make money to install gas heaters in the parsonage.

In January 1952 Mrs. Alfred Zackery and Miss Bert Winter met with the ladies of Salem to organize a W.S.C.S. It is beginning to be an interested small group. The people of Salem have made donations and with the supervision of Mr. J. W. Graves have built cement steps. One liberal donation of $50.00 from D. F. was given in memory of his mother who was a life long member of Salem church, bought a large heater several years ago. The steps were completed in July 1952. On October 4, Rev. L. L. Fouche resigned as pastor, Presiding elder Clyde Calloway sent us Rev. Frank Jenkins Sr. He and his good wife are faithful old people who are almost worn out in the Masters service. In April 1953 there was an evangelistic mission campaign having preachers from other sections come and hold a week of service. We didn't have services at Salem because there weren't enough preachers to go around so we went to Farming and Bishop. On May 24th there was a service in Athens at the Fine Arts Auditorium for the Athens-Elberton District with Bishop Arthur J. Moore as speaker and Clyde Calloway in charge of the program.

In May we put rubber matting in the isles of the church. The W.S.C.S. has grown to fourteen members in 1953. In 1951-53 we lost quite a few of our faithful members by death. In August 1953 the W.S.C.S. bought a communion set for the church. In November Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Hale had shrubs set at the front of the church. In July 1954 the conference was held in Atlanta. The district superintendent J. C. Calloway came back to the Athens-Elberton Dist.
for his fifth year. The Bishop charge received a new preacher, J. A. Thompson and his lovely young bride of a month. We are looking forward to the work of the church with these young people. We have had a good year with the Thompsons. In 1955 we traded our piano for a used one which is very nice and have paid for it. We have revised our church roll and find quite a few moved away but have some new members. The W.S.C.S. is still in progress but we do not have a Sunday school. In July 1955 we have a new preacher.

Another young man with this being his first charge. Rev. Kenneth Deitle and his wife Peggy. We also have a new district superintendent Rev. Harvey Holland. We had a good year with the Deitles. They became the proud parents of a little baby girl. She is growing and doing fine. Mrs. Deitle was in the hospital for quite sometime, she was very sick. The people of the charge helped them in every way possible. We added to the parsonage a set of bed springs, a chest of drawers, and venetian blinds. All of this came about after the people of the charge had a chicken supper and sale. We made $230.00 which we called the parsonage fund. We bought a new refrigerator and dug the well deeper.

When conference came along in July 1956 our preacher was sent to Canon and we have another young man unmarried, Paul Callahan. He is still in school. We had our regular revival services the second week in August. This fall we decided to take a special collection for the parsonage fund each church gave $25.00. We have repainted the outside of the parsonage, bought new drapes for the living room, curtains for the front bedroom, and a cabinet for the kitchen. On December 16th our preacher was married. Now we have Paul and Betty for team work with us.
Well the years come and go here we are with a new year. Conference came in June it seems we have hardly gotten acquainted with Paul and Betty; now they have moved on. We have Robert and Carol Ann Partridge another young couple. Before they came we added a cabinet and some cooking utensels to the parsonage. The revivals are past. We had wonderful attendance. Robert brought some good messages. This is their first charge, guess we must be good practice material as we seem to be able to get them started and we hope on the right foot. Our district supt. died just after conference. Rev. Paul Turner is now the D.S. in June of 1957. In September we had our first quarterly conference for the year. The W.S.C.S. is still in session with fourteen members. We enjoy the programs very much. We added gas heat in the church in the fall.

Here we are in 1958 with Bobby and Carol Ann. Rev. Turner as D.S. Bobby is still in school improving felt in building sermons and getting acquainted with people. We have made progress in keeping up the church some members met and removed the old stove flues. We don't need them any more having gas heat. We put in new window frames, and filled in the yard in front of the church with dirt. Our preacher and wife have a new addition, a little son born in November, 1958.

In January 1959 the charge bought a new electric range for the parsonage much added to the comfort of the parsonage. In June the Annual Conference sent Bobby back to us we have Farmington church added to the Bishop charge. We welcome those working people. An August 9, 1959 our revival service began. We had an exchange preacher, Rev. W. E. Cochran from Watkinsville. We all enjoyed he,
his wife, and four teenage children, two boys and two girls. Bobby was sent to Gordans Chapel for the exchange. During the week our men got together and painted the church at a cost of $100.50. Our time of service was changed this year to ten o'clock second Sunday morning and the preacher has to hurry on to Farmington to preach at eleven. We don't like the change but we will put up with it until another change comes. Sunday September 20, 1959 quarterly meeting was held at Bishop. The parsonage committee met and discussed some needs of the parsonage. September 26th a committee of six representing the four churches investigated and bought a two piece living room suit for the parsonage at the price of $100.00. The churches each paid their share. Through the winter of 1959-60, which was very severe with rain, snow, and ice, we had several repair jobs on the parsonage. The bathroom was fixed and also the roof.

We have now had our last quarterly conference of the year. To our sorrow Salem fell behind in our Educational fund we hope we will soon make it up. The annual conference will be held in Atlanta June 27th through July 1st. Mrs. A. L. Hale was elected delegate to the conference and Salem gave $24.00 for her expenses. The money was very much appreciated. June 12th was our regular preaching day at Salem, the last for this year's work. Bobby brought a wonderful message. We hope he will be sent back to us for at least another year.

Conference is over and we have another young preacher and family, Gerald Dillard, wife, and baby. We like him fine and look forward for a new year of pleasant work. 1961 is here and conference time is not far off. May 10th the men of the church came together to
build tables of stone with cement block legs. The eight foot slab of hewn rock is so nice and substantial. Our homecoming day is the second Sunday in May and is always enjoyed by all. There are a lot of people coming back for the day. So many of our people have passed away the last few years. Mr. Walter Graves passed on in March, he did lots of work here at Salem. He was also our music director for a number of years.

Conference has come and gone, Gerald and family are with us again. Our revival in August had good attendance and we were blessed with a visiting preacher, Brother Ruork from Madison.

Johnny Marshall joined the church this year. We enjoyed two years work with Gerry and Betty and their little son.

We come to conference time again in June 1962 we were sent a young man just married, Paul Brown and wife Ann. Ann is finishing her education in South Carolina. They will not move to Bishop until September. We found the parsonage in need of repair so while it is vacant we are doing it over. With the hard work of members from the charge the job is done. We repaired the roof, a paint job was done inside and out, got new furniture, and restored the whole house.

Weymon Marshall of Salem built cabinets in the kitchen, his wife Edith, a teacher at the grade school in Bishop, paid for the material to build with. P. B. Middlebrooks of Farmington gave the paint for the house. We hired Leonard Hopkins to do the repair and paint job. We added a new cover on the living room furniture and several chairs, a china cabinet, new drapes, and curtains all gifts from members and interested people. It looks very nice now. A new heater in the living room too. Paul and Ann moved in on September 21, 1962. They
appreciated the parsonage very much. We had open house with a reception Sunday afternoon, October 14, with a rededication of the parsonage. The speakers were our new District Superintendent Rev. Ruff, John Maxwell, a former pastor, and Paul Brown, our present pastor. He is very eager to serve. We are looking forward to a good year with this new team.

Here we are March 21, 1963 quarterly conference with weather is cold and windy. We had fair attendance but good reports from all of the churches. Our W.S.C.S. is out of action at Salem. We are getting the road by the church paved we hope this will give the church a new lift. When finished we won't have the excuse of bad dirt roads. The dirt roads do get bad in winter or anytime it rains. We pray we will have some new members at Salem soon to help us move on. We also need a renewal of spirit for the older members.

August 11, 1963 revival began with Luther Fouche bringing the messages. He was a former pastor at Salem. Here we are enjoying Paul and Ann Brown our young preacher and wife but Paul resigned in January 1964. Rev. John Jenkins was appointed in his place. His wife, Helen, is the associate editor of the Oconee Enterprise, the county paper. They have five children and live in Athens where Sallie and Jimmy are in high school. Johnny is away in college and Robert is attending the University of Georgia in Athens and working at Anaconda wire and cable plant in Watkinsville. Laura is still at home. Annual conference in 1964 sent Rev. John Jenkins back to Salem. We appreciate him very much. They are still living in Athens so we rented the parsonage out in July 1965. In October
of 1968 the Jenkins moved into the parsonage at Bishop. Laura is in school there in Bishop. Sallie is in college in Atlanta now. We revised the church roll at Salem in November 1964. We lost one of our younger members in December of 1966 by death. Calvin Marshall, whom we miss very much. We appreciate his son Johnny who is our pianist. The John Jenkins are still with us. June 1966, we enjoy our work with them.

In June 1967 Alvin Taylor and his wife Pam was sent our way. We are enjoying them very much. Ray Middlebrooks, his wife Mary, and their daughter Debby joined the church at Salem. The charge did quite a lot of work on the parsonage. We bought a new refrigerator, livingroom suit, and dinett set. The Taylors also bought a braided rug for the dinningroom.

June 1968 we have a new presiding elder or as they are called now, district superintendents, Rev. Lamar Cherry and his wife Dolly. Our new preacher is Bill Currie and wife Frances, they seem like good workers. We are planning two services at Salem every month. The first on the second Sunday of the month and the other on the fourth. Ray Middlebrooks is our new treasurer of the church following Herbert Thrasher who was treasurer a number of years. In January we began planning for repair work on the church. Painting the inside and outside, putting in hardwood floors by May, and buying new benches was all accomplished with the help of the members of the church. Then we sanded and varnished the floor and put down carpeting in the aisle and around the pulpit. The total job was completed in Sept.

February 1969 W. C. and John Hale hired a bulldozer to push over the old oak tree in front of Salem church. A cement walk was
put down in front of the church and two water oak trees were planted a little further out. All of this changed the looks of the church very much. The grass that was cut out a year ago is growing fine.

Bill Frances had a baby boy born May 7, 1969. He is growing fine now. We had our revival second week in August, Bobby Partridge did the preaching. Bill is making a wonderful speaker. We enjoyed him very much, until he joined a disorderly group in Athens. Then his church work fell apart and the charge was terribly upset for awhile.

In June 1970 conference sent us another young man, Robert Shook and his wife Sandra, from Illinois. It was awhile for them to get adjusted to the South. We did the parsonage over again before they came. We have enjoyed them for a year now, hope they can be with us for awhile. We had two new members in 1970 Gay Nell and Rena Middlebrooks. We lost three in death, P. W. Stoval, Miss Martha Ellis, and a faithful worker Herbert Thrasher. Our oaks in front of the church died and pines have been set in their place.