HISTORY
of
SOUTH BEND METHODIST CHURCH
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South Bend Church was organized in 1886 from Oakland Church situated on the corner of Jonesboro Road and Lakewood Terrace in what is now known as Lakewood Heights. Oakland was organized in 1868 from Trinity Church. The property for Oakland being donated by Col. John Miller Clark Reid, (a Confederate Colonel in the Civil War and whose home was Hexigon Hall, the scene of much Southern hospitality), he realized the necessity of a church in this community and did much toward its organization. Among the charter members were Col and Mrs. Reid Mr. and Mrs. Ben Thurman, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Todd, Sr., Mr. Robert Todd, Jr., and Mr. George Todd. The church grew and was the scene of many wonderful revivals and meetings. On one special occasion Gov. Alfred Colquett and Gen. Clements Evans were guest speakers. Later Atlanta Water Works was to be located at Lakewood and this necessitated the removal of the cemetery which was across the road from the church, so the cemetery and church was removed to its present location and has been known as South Bend ever since. The first pastor, Rev. Brooks. Among others serving this church were: Rev. M.M. Marks, Rev. O.B. Quillian, Rev. W.E. Tarpley, Rev. R.A. Seals, Rev. W.O. Butler, Rev. M.L. Underwood, Rev. Dock

On Easter Sunday morning, April 9, 1939, Rev. Fred Gwin had read his text for the eleven o'clock service when the roof of the church burst into flames caused by a defective flue. By the heroic efforts of members of the congregation the piano, twenty-one pews and a few song books were saved; unfortunately the building was a total loss. There was no insurance owing to the small membership, further handicapped by some of the members being out of work.

This group of sixty-five members realizing the need of a church in this growing community, set to work making plans to rebuild. Sunday School and preaching services were held in the homes of the members until a small tabernacle was erected on the north-west corner of the church lot. The first services were held Sunday May 21, 1939, by the pastor with seventy-three for Sunday School and sixty-two for preaching. The members under the leadership of the pastor, Rev. Fred Gwin, immediately began making plans to rebuild the church.

A building committee was appointed to look into plans. The following were elected by the Quarterly conference, R. E. Tarleton, Chairman, W. L. Duncan, Homer Peir, M. J. Sullivan, and Lavata Jordan, Secretary and Treasurer.

The splendid response of the members and generous donations from their friends and the public in money, material and labor, made it possible to start the new church late in August 1939.
A modern frame structure of fifty feet long, thirty feet wide, the choir loft, twelve by fourteen feet, also two Sunday School rooms across the back, seventeen by fourteen feet. Upon completion of the church a furnace was installed.

The official opening of the church was held on November 12, 1938, in the nature of a home-coming day, preaching at eleven o'clock by Rev. D. C. Starnes. Special music by Mrs. Ernest Bell. Basket Dinner at noon on the church yard. In the afternoon addresses by Perry Floodworth and Ernest Bell, also short talks by former members.

Twenty-nine members have united with the church during the year. The church is now in the Griffin district under Dr. R. L. Russell as District Superintendent.

The pastor, Rev. Fred Gwin, conducted the morning service, followed by the laying of the cornerstone. A basket dinner was served on the church yard. The following Ministers were asked to take part in the afternoon program, Rev. Jesse Harderson, Rev. W. B. Carr, Rev. T. M. Elliott and Rev. H. E. McBrayer. The music was furnished by several quartets and the choir of the church.

The building committee was composed of the following:

R. E. Tarleton, Chairman
H. L. Fair
W. L. Duncan
M. J. Sullivan
Laveta Jordan, Secretary and Treasurer

The following were appointed officers of the church for the year 1940,

Robert E. Todd, Trustee
Homer L. Fair, Trustee
W. L. Duncan, Trustee
Trustees
R. E. Tarleton, Trustee
W. J. Grogan, Trustee

Stewards
Rev. E. Tarleton
H. L. Fair
H. L. Pate
W. L. Duncan
Joe A. Reid
J. F. Carter
Mrs. Mary Sullivan
Miss Laveta Jordan

At three o'clock, this April 7, 1940, Rev. E. C. Wilson

delivered the dedication sermon for South Bend Methodist
Church.