Waleska

REINHARDT CHAPEL METHODIST CHURCH

A History

1834-------1951

Written by: R. W. Greene Jr.
Pastor, Waleska Methodist Church, Director Religious Life, Reinhardt College
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Preface

Herein is written a short account of the foundation and development of the Reinhardt Chapel Methodist Church. It is in no wise complete since many facts and names are not preserved in any records. Credit is due to Dr. R. M. Moore, Miss Alma Cline, and Mr. J. R. Burgess who supplied much of the information. Some facts are also taken from "The History of Cherokee County" by Rev. Loyd G. Marlin and "A History of Reinhardt College" by Albert Lee Clark.
The area in which is now situated the community of Waleska was little more than a wide place in a new frontier in the year 1831 when Cherokee County was first established. Even as the State of Georgia drew up a claim to the original "Cherokee" which now is divided into twenty-four counties, the Cherokee Indians made new plans to defend this territory which had been a rich possession of theirs through the years.

This very same year of 1831 marked the beginning of a new home in the Waleska settlement out of which was to come the leadership of the Waleska Methodist Church and of Reinhardt College which was founded in 1883. For in this year young Mr. Lewis Warlick Reinhardt (27) married Miss Jane Harbin and built a home on the location of the present Reinhardt College campus.

Three years later while still a young man Mr. Lewis Reinhardt gathered others living in the area together with his own kin and established the first Methodist Church in this area of Georgia. Thus Reinhardt Chapel Methodist Episcopal Church was founded in 1834 as the second church in the county, preceded only by a Baptist Church in Canton.

II. Reinhardt Family

Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Reinhardt established a home into which came eight children, four boys and four girls. At least three of the girls and one of the boys have made a perpetuating contribution to the life of the church and the Waleska Community through the years. Augustus Michael Reinhardt, the youngest son was the founder of Reinhardt College which still is actively engaged in the carrying on of Christian Training under the supervision of the Methodist Church. Mary Jane married Colonel J. J. A. Sharp who did much to help in the founding of the institution. Their son, Ramsey Sharp, later served as President of Reinhardt College. Another daughter of Lewis, Susan Amanda married the brother of J. J. Sharp. Her daughter was the late Mrs. Lucy Sharp Moore, wife of Dr. R. M. Moore. Still another of the daughters, Martha Ann married a Mr. Blanton and contributed a daughter to the teaching profession who taught for many years at Reinhardt. Her name was Miss Fredonia Blanton. Many other family ties might be revealed through tracing this family further.

Needless to say the life of the Reinhardt Chapel Methodist Church has largely depended upon the leadership of these ones who descended from its founder.
III. Early Life

There is no knowledge as to who was the first pastor of the Reinhardt Chapel Church, but it is believed that it's founder, Mr. Lewis Reinhardt first acted as lay preacher. One of the earliest recorded ministers serving this church was Rev. Smith Crandall who died and was buried in Canton in the year 1840. It is likely that Rev. Bob Cowart served the church in the period after 1842 until the time of Dr. William J. Cotter who preached in the Chapel while serving as pastor of the Canton Methodist Church. His ministry lasted until 1851.

Little is known about the activities of the church from this time until the time of the founding of Reinhardt College in the year 1883. It was after the founding of the college that the church took on new life and grew to be one of the highly recognized churches of Georgia Methodism.

At sometime about the middle of the nineteenth century a campground was built just across the highway from the Reinhardt Chapel Church. This was known as the Waleska Methodist Campground and served as a center of summer revival activities for more than a half century. Today there can be found no trace of the camp site.

IV. College-Church Development

After the founding of the college by Captain A. M. Reinhardt in 1883 the development of the church paralleled the growth of the college. A good deal of the time the president of the college was also the appointed pastor of the church.

The first large building for the college was constructed in 1884 by the Reinhardt and Sharp families and others of the Waleska community. Two years later the Reverend O. C. Simmons came to Reinhardt as president and was also pastor of the church. He stayed only through the 1886-1887 term and was succeeded by the Rev. C. M. Ledbetter who likewise was pastor and president of the school for one term. In 1888 Rev. Hubert Smith was joint pastor and school official, and in 1889 he was succeeded by the Rev. R. F. Bakes. By this time the enrollment had risen to about one hundred students, and the church was therefore becoming an active organization, serving both the college and community group.

In 1890 the college officially came under the ownership of the Methodist Church and was chartered as such by the State of Georgia. In that year Rev. C. E. Patillo became president and pastor and continued for a five year period. His administration is remembered as the one in which the college saw its most sharp advancement.

Reverend H. C. Embry was nominated president in 1896 and served the church also during his one year administration. He was succeeded by Dr. Richard W. Rogers the following year and he served successfully until the year 1901.
Ramsey C. Sharp was elected to the presidency of the college in 1901, and here was again instituted a direct linkage with the original founder of the church, Lewis Reinhardt. Mr. Sharp was a grandson of Mr. Lewis Reinhardt, and a nephew of Captain Reinhardt who founded the college. Here began the longest period of succession of a president, and the most fruitful one from many standpoints.

V. The Past Half-century

In the year 1909 the community had grown to the extent that the church merited having a pastor appointed who would not act as president of the college but who would coordinate his work with that of the college. Thus in this year the Rev. Nathan Thompson was sent as pastor. He remained as pastor three years and during his stay took into the church one-hundred-twenty-four members. The church was brought to its strongest peak during these years.

From this time forward the church was on a strong footing, and always found a great opportunity of ministering to the needs of the many students who came to the school as well as to the ever increasing populace of the community of Waleska.

Following is a list of the pastors during the succeeding years, also a list of the presidents of the college who always worked actively for the strengthening of the church:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Years</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Nath Thompson</td>
<td>1909-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. J. L. Allgood</td>
<td>1911-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. A. A. Sullivan</td>
<td>1914-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. M. B. Sams</td>
<td>1919-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. C. D. Read</td>
<td>1921-22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. A. T. Hind</td>
<td>1922-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Ralph W. Wood</td>
<td>1923-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. M. B. Sams</td>
<td>1924-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. C. F. Hughes</td>
<td>1926-28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. W. B. Hughes</td>
<td>1928-30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. R. H. Timberlake</td>
<td>1930-32</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. J. W. King</td>
<td>1932-35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. G. W. Irwin</td>
<td>1935-38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. L. F. Vanlandingham</td>
<td>1938-39</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. M. R. Chambers</td>
<td>1939-40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. J. R. Phillips</td>
<td>1941-43</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Fred Glisson</td>
<td>1943-45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Edmund Perry</td>
<td>1945-46</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Plemon Folds</td>
<td>1946-48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Reynolds Greene Jr.</td>
<td>1949</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R. C. Sharp</td>
<td>1901-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. F. Clark</td>
<td>1916-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. M. Sullivan</td>
<td>1918-22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. C. Sharp</td>
<td>1922-27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
At the writing of this history the Rev. Reynolds Greene Jr. is in his third year as pastor of the Waleska Methodist Church, and J. R. Burgess is in his seventh year as president of Reinhardt College.

In 1949 a modern parsonage was built on the campus of Reinhardt as a joint project of the church and college. The pastor and family thus live on the campus and are in close contact with the college as well as the community. The pastor acts as Director of Religious Life for the college and teaches Bible and Religious Education.

Worship services during the past few years have been conducted in an auditorium provided by the college during the winter months and in the little Reinhardt Chapel church building during the summer months. Soon the new Reinhardt College Administration building will be completed in which will be located a lovely new Chapel-Auditorium. This will be used for church services during the school year.

VI. Conclusions

Reinhardt Chapel Church has seen one of the longest periods of service of any Methodist Church in the state. She was born in the midst of frontier life, nourished by men and women of high purposes and ideals, and has been continued by men and women who have added to her glorious heritage.

There is no way of estimating her value in terms of Christian virtue and character for that can only be seen in the lives of the many peoples who have come into her fellowship, knelt at her altars, and have gone away having found there the true spirit of God.
CHURCH DIRECTORY -----1951

Pastor..................................Reynolds W. Greene Jr.
District Supt........................Dr. Lester Rumble, Atlanta
West District
Bishop.................................Arthur J. Moore, Atlanta
Area
Director of Choir....................Mrs. Ralph Sawyer
Charge Lay Leader....................J. R. Burgess
Church School Supt..................Carl Tarpley
Church Treasurer...................Kleven Boston

Trustees

Paul Boston
D. P. Moss

W. R. Edwards
Lee Mackey
Jesse Fincher

Stewards

Lee Mackey
Jesse Fincher
Lester King
Max Dixon

Carl Tarpley
Kleven Boston
Mrs. Elizabeth Bailey
J. R. Burgess

Board of Education

Carl Tarpley
Mrs. W. R. Edwards
Mrs. J. M. Dixon,
Mrs. Tinie McDaniell
J. R. Burgess

Hudon Vann
Grace Hadaway
Jean Sawyer
Mrs. Reynolds W. Greene Jr.
James Odum