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MILAN

## CHAPTER THREE

# THEY BUILT BETTER THAN THEY KNEW

(RALPH WALDO EMERSON)

In the interview with E. T. Winston regarding conditions in Pontotoc County after the War Between the States Merriam Herndon made this statement:

Church affairs were kept up all the time even when times were hard. There was only one service a month, with some churches having Sunday School, usually on Sunday afternoon, but never once did the people let their churches die down.<sup>1</sup>

Soon new churches and schools began to spring up in every little village and community, and the people worked together to erect the buildings for the church and school activities. Often the same building was used for both the church and the school.

Harmony community was one of the first to build a church. All the people worked on the first building which was located a few miles north of Pontotoc east of the Pontotoc-Ripley road. Although Harmony church was Methodist in denomination, all the people attended it and used the cemetery to bury their dead. The cemetery, which was located near the church building, can still be seen by passers-by, but the church has been gone for many years.<sup>2</sup> Those who were instrumental in getting the church started were the Ball, Wilder, Stark and Bigham families.

Bethel, a Methodist church in the northeast part of the county near Endville was organized in 1870. The lot for the building was donated by William P. Wilder. Among the charter members were David L. Hoyle, Ellen McCord Hoyle, Billup G. Dozier, T. Coon, Brazil McCord, and Mary Ann McCord, the Reverend Mr. W. C. Mimms was the first pastor of Bethel Methodist Church. Some of the early settlers in the Bethel community were the Hoyle, McCord, Dozier, Gambriel, and Medlock families. Another church, Locust Hill Baptist Church, near this same location in the county had its beginning in those early years for it was organized in 1877.<sup>3</sup>

*Remember Abner's wife 182 when a Medlock.  
Gambriel was spelled many ways.*

Reverend M. M. Pullam has served the church as pastor for more than 20 years. Brother Terry Johnson is superintendent of the Sunday School and others who teach or work in some other places are Sister Molene Johnson and Sister Dearma McGlaun. Sister Dolly Mae Cooperwood is secretary of the church and of the Sunday School. Serving as mothers of the church are Sister Dessie Cook and Sister Ola Clay.

The deacons are Brother Alfred Johnson, Brother James Cooperwood and Brother Robert T. Hodges.

Dorothy Givhan Stewart  
(Record book of Pontotoc Missionary Baptist Association)

#### CHERRY CREEK MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

Located in the Cherry Creek Community, the Cherry Creek Missionary Baptist Church was organized on October 15, 1867 with 110 members. Many of these had been members of the Cherry Creek Baptist Church and withdrew to form a church of their own. They asked for and were granted letters of dismissal from the mother church. Francis Sadler gave the land for the church and gave a deed to the property in May 16, 1870.

The first pastor was Reverend Jot Pitts, a white man who helped the church in many ways. In 1904 the church building was destroyed by a storm and a new building was erected as soon as the congregation could afford to build another one. This church building stood from 1905 until the new church building was erected in 1964. Reverend W. C. Keys was elected pastor of the church in 1930 and served until 1967, a total of 29 years.

Deacons serving at that time were Brother J. P. Cobb, Brother Rome Ball, Brother John R. Key, Brother U. A. Ball, and Brother Bob Roberson.

Reverend G. B. Townsend is the 17th pastor who has served the church.

Pontotoc Missionary Baptist Association Record Book

#### EAST PONTOTOC MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

The East Pontotoc Baptist Church was organized in 1910. The church was called Union Baptist until the name was changed to East Pontotoc Baptist. The first pastor was Reverend W. D. Dillard. The first deacons were Brother Tobie Roebuck, Brother Will Prude, and Brother Virgil Cain.

Reverend J. H. Kindricks was pastor when the name of the church was changed in 1930. Brother John Simmon's name was added to the list of deacons.

R. B. Austin was serving as pastor at the writing of these minutes. The deacons listed are Thomas Chewe, Terry Chewe, A. V. King, Robert Lee Dogan, and Lynn Eubanks.

Mrs. Minnie Pinson is serving as pianist and president of the Home Missionary Society.

This church located in East Pontotoc, one block south of Clark Street celebrated the 15th anniversary of Reverend Austin's pastorate recently.

(Pontotoc Missionary Baptist Association Minute Books)

#### FELLOWSHIP MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

The Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church was first located in the Oak Ridge Community on the Furrs and Oak Ridge road just north of the Valley or Verona Road. This church was organized before 1883 because Dave Dillard was ordained in this church in 1883 and was appointed as a missionary by the North Missionary Association. Reverend George Golding served as the first pastor.

The church building was burned three times and rebuilt twice. A few years ago the church was re-located in a new building on land belonging to Jamie Simmons. The new location is on King's Highway south of the Valley Grove Church.

Some of the pastors through the years have been Reverend Will Dillard, Reverend Dave Dillard, Reverend J. C. Hughes, Reverend Efford Satterwhite, Reverend Dowden Heard, and Reverend Robin Roberson.

Among those who have served as deacons are John Scales, Arthur Mallory, Ed Wilson, Johnny Ware, Dan Edwards, John B. Edwards, Ernest Lee Wilson, Nora Townsend, and Haywood Weatherspoon.

Dorothy Givhan Stewart  
and E. Z. Dillard (son of Dave Dillard)

#### FRIENDSHIP MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

Friendship Missionary Baptist Church is located just off highway 15 South of the Camp Ground Road. The exact date of the organization of this church is not known, but it is common knowledge that the church was in existence many years before 1900. The Reverend Jack Dent was one of the early pastors.

Presently serving as pastor of the church is Reverend A. R. Moore. Brother Willie C. Bell is vice president of the Sunday School and the B. T. U. Congress.

Deacons who are now serving are Willie C. Bell, C. J. Johnson and Joe Thomas. Mrs. Willie C. Bell is secretary of the church.

(Pontotoc Missionary Baptist Association Record Book)

#### MT. PLEASANT CHESTERVILLE MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

The Mt. Pleasant Church, located in Chesterville, is one of the oldest in the Association having been organized before 1869 as recorded in the legal record.

In 1928 a new church was built and the cornerstone was laid. Reverend Tom Roberson was the pastor.

Reverend N. T. Triplett has served as pastor of the church since 1952 according to the associational minutes. L. V. Vaughns is Church Treasurer and Sister L. M. Armstrong is church secretary, a position she has held since 1956.

In addition to also being a Sunday School teacher for many years Mrs. Armstrong has served as Secretary of the Pontotoc District Woman's Convention. This organization was begun under the direction of Sister Ida Brooks, also a member of the Chesterville Church. She is now serving as vice-president of the missionary organization in her own church.

Brother L. V. Vaughns is chairman of the deacons. Other names listed as deacons are R. B. Taylor, Allen Medley, Bob Satterwhite, Jeff Hamilton, Simpson Satterwhite, Whitt Satterwhite, Zed Eades, Liberty Norwood, T. V. Vaughns, Arnett Judon and Johnny Pannell.

(Pontotoc Missionary Baptist Association Record Book)

#### NEW RESIDENT MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

First located under a brush arbor in the College Hill community, this church was begun about 1900. The first location of the church was south of the College Hill cemetery, later moved one mile north of College Hill on the Longview Road and was called Residence. The first building was destroyed by the storm of 1911.

In later years the church was relocated on the Longview-Chesterville Road south of the Channel Bank Community and was called New Resident Missionary Baptist Church. A large brick church stands there today.

time. The first Church Record book was destroyed by fire several years ago in the home of the late Lonnie Lee Bramlitt, who was Church Clerk at the time. Present church records began June 1949.

Assisting Bro. Bryant in organization of the Buchanan Church was T. A. J. Beasley, an evangelist who helped Bro. Bryant hold a brush arbor meeting which resulted in a "great revival" and organization of the Church. Lloyd Purdon recalls the brush arbor revival as "a wonderful time, Mrs. K. L. Gortney shouting and others popping up like popcorn all over the place."

Mr. Purdon was converted and remembers the first baptism being held in a very small pond between the Jack Newell place (where the home of Virgil and Ruth Coker now stands) and the Jim Nix place (now owned by Claude and Zola Nix). Mrs. John E. (Altie) Nix remembers being baptized in a pond on the late Dunbar Baker's place where the Buchanan family previously lived. Hence the Community retained the Buchanan name and subsequently the Church was named Buchanan Missionary Baptist Church.

The Buchanan School building was located on the site where Mrs. Lavelle Coker's home now stands. The Bethany Primitive Baptist also held services at the Buchanan school. In 1942 a new building was completed, on land now owned by J. C. Nix, on a site located between the homes of Johnny and Deanie Bramlitt and Charlie and Hazel Poe. First deacons were Lloyd Purdon and Guy Gortney. Only one singing and the dedication had been held in the new wooden structure when it was destroyed by a tornado on March 16, 1942 around 4:20 p.m. Mr. D. G. Talley, a resident of the Buchanan Community since coming here from Webster County in 1919, recalls that everything was paid for when the tornado destroyed the new church building. Mrs. John Nix remembers that the piano, the cornerstone, and the pulpit were all that was intact in the rubble left by the tornado. Minor repairs had to be made on the pulpit which is still used in the Church today.

Mrs. Bluford (Hazel) Stevens and Mrs. Leighton (Marie) Mooneyhan recall that their mother and grandmother, the late Mrs. Jack Newell sold eggs to pay for materials used in building the pulpit. The late Mr. Henry Browning donated his time and built the pulpit. Mrs. Newell was also instrumental in starting the first Sunday School after the Church was organized.

There had been some controversy regarding the location of the first structure so it was as centrally located as possible. However, it was agreed to change the location of the second and present building. Work began on the present structure in the autumn of 1942 on land donated by the late J. L. Knight. The building was completed in 1943. Building committee was composed of Percy Ray, Chairman, John Nix, and Alfonso Tatum. Mrs. John Nix recalls that the carpenters boarded at her home and also at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Alfonso Tatum.

James (Roy) Nix was first deacon at the present Church and recalls that the Rev. Percy Ray donated \$4,000 to help build the church. Dedication services for the new Church building were held the fifth Sunday in October - Oct. 31. Dr. R. G. Lee, pastor of the Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, and Dr. J. B. Lawrence, executive secretary of the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention delivered the dedication service. Services were held at 9:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 31, 1943, under the direction of the Rev. Percy Ray, home missionary for the revitalization of rural churches of the Southern Baptist Convention, according to the October 28, 1943 edition of The Pontotoc Progress.

At present (August 1976) the Rev. Ronnie Barefield is pastor of the Buchanan Missionary Baptist Church. Church Clerk is Waymon Wray and Sunday School Director is T. M. Nix. Tommy Hall is Training Union Director. Some charter

include Mrs. Mable H. Nix, deceased; Mirtle Tatum, deceased; Mrs. Annie Tatum Whitten, deceased; Grandma (Lou) Sullivan, deceased; and Mrs. K. L. Gortney, who now resides at Tupelo. Pastors in order of serve through the present include W. C. Bryant, T. C. Hodges, Bilbo Lively, Johnny McMillen, Frank Warren, Clyde Thompson, William J. Merritt, Jimmy Grubbs, Laymon Owens, Johnny McMillen (served on two different occasions), J. W. Owens, James McCrary and Ronnie Barefield, present pastor.

Jerry Ruth Montgomery

## CAREY SPRINGS BAPTIST CHURCH

Carey Springs Baptist Church was organized about 1900 and the members met in the community school building for several years. Since there were no records for the first few years exact dates and membership cannot be given.

In 1912 the white frame church building was erected and is still in use today. The Carey Springs cemetery is one of the early cemeteries of the county. The original plot no longer has available space for burial and a new section behind the church building has been developed and is used in place of the old one.

Reverend Newt McGregor was the first pastor of the church. Other early pastors were Bill Miller, Joseph Griffin, T. C. Hodges, Jessie McGregor, Mallie Brown, J. P. Mitchell, R. M. Holloway, Joe Wilson, J. S. Mitchell, Jim Wilson, Enoch Foshee, L. W. Frederick, Doyce Lyons, and Oaks. In 1934 J. S. Grubbs was pastor of the church, and he was followed by Frank Cox, Johnnie McMillon, Pardee Tutor, James Moody, Lamon Owens, and Layton Thomas. Reverend Ed Pettit is serving the church as pastor at the present time.

Carey Springs has no regular Sunday School or Church Training program. Hallett Miler is church clerk, Flake Foshee, treasurer, and W. L. Turner is chairman of deacons. The church has a membership at the present time of 75.

The Pontotoc County Baptist Association met with Carey Springs Church in 1950 and F. H. Cox preached the associational sermon. One of the outstanding events held at Carey Springs Church is the annual Old Harp singing held on the third Sunday in June. This is an all day affair with lunch spread at noon under the trees on the church grounds.

The annual Memorial Day services are held on the first Sunday in August. This, too, is an all day program with a basket lunch at noon.

Mrs. Bertha Pritchard  
(Information from Associational Minutes)

## CHERRY CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

In the first half of the eighteenth century there came settlers from Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia and Alabama seeking their fortunes in the hill country of the comparatively new state of Mississippi. They settled between the old Tusculum Road and Lappatubby. In the group at least a few were of Baptist belief and felt their responsibility to God and their church; therefore they brought their church letters and began to urge that a church be founded. Minute Book No 1 reveals: Agreeable to appointment, met at the house of Brother John Smith, a sermon was delivered by Rev. G. B. Waldrop. A presbytery was then named by Rev. G. B. Waldrop, Elijah Smith and Cokes Lisonbee. The following certificate was signed:

This is to certify that the undersigned, being called in by a number of Baptists in the vicinity of Cal Duncan's have obeyed said call. After examination and finding them to be orthodox in the faith, constitute the following, viz: Christopher Malone who is a licensed preacher and Elizabeth, his wife, James Smith, Sarah his wife, and Hiram Pitts, who are acting deacon and deaconess. Jehu Pitts and Rebecca his wife, Elizabeth Smith, Hannah Smith, Sarah Smith, Mary Smith, William Milan and Milly, his wife, Partheny Milam, Elizabeth Milam, Mary Milam, John M. Milam, James C. Pitts, William C. Pitts, and Margaret his wife, Joshua Smith, Elijah L. Pitts and Emily Leavell. Brothers and sisters into a church designated as the Baptist Church of Christ at Cherry Creek upon the following Articles of Faith.

G. B. Waldrop, Elijah Smith, and Cokes Lisonbee, preachers. The church called Rev. Elijah Smith as its first pastor. James T. Teague was elected church clerk and musician clerk. In August 1843 the church voted to join the Chickasaw Baptist Association.

In September 1843 reference is made to the church at Pontotoc: "From a request granted our pastor, Bro. E. Smith, the privilege to open a door of the church at Pontotoc." It seems that from a letter the Pontotoc church was called "the arm at Pontotoc" and was accountable to the Cherry Creek Church. The Minutes of May 10, 1848 records, "A number of members living in the vicinity of the town of Pontotoc, through Bro. Lisonbee, ask the privilege of choosing their own supplies, receiving and dismissing and excluding members, which was granted, they being accountable to this church for their conduct."

Friendship Baptist Church seems to have come out of this church also. From the minutes of March 1848, the conference granted letters to a number of persons to organize a new church at Friendship, west of Lappatubby.

In the Minutes of October 1904 "on motion of Bro. V. B. Tucker a number of members withdrew to form a new church at Ecu." The Ecu church was organized under the leadership of Rev. T. A. J. Beasley, pastor of Cherry Creek at that time.

From the records and from what older members relate, there have been four church buildings at Cherry Creek. For some time it seems that the organized church met in the home of a Mr. Stephens since the minutes reveal "Saturday, 10th February 1844. Mr. Stephens being afflicted (at whose house the church still convenes) public services was omitted."

The Minutes earlier recorded the following resolution: Whereas, the Cherry Creek Church, together with the neighbors, have determined to build a house at or near the eight mile post on the Old Ripley Road on the land of Mr. E. Magehee who hath proposed to donate four and one-fourth acres to the use and benefit of said Baptist Church. Resolve therefore the deed be made to the deacons of this church and their successors in office.

The records fail to give the date when the first house was built or the exact location but a former member, T. H. Spencer, writes that "It was north of the cemetery then but the spot is in the northeast corner of the cemetery now." This must have been a temporary building for in the December 1858 minutes "The committee appointed to report on the property recommended the building of a new house." This building was destroyed by fire on August 18, 1881. This building was replaced and dedicated in May 1882 with Dr. M. P. Lowrey of Blue Mountain preaching the dedication sermon.

The present building at Cherry Creek is a modern brick building constructed in 1949 with an auditorium, adequate Sunday School rooms and a fellowship

hall. All modern conveniences are present.

During the long life of this church many great preachers have pastored. Among these are Elijah Smith, James Boswell, Martin Ball, Louis Ball, J. T. Pitts, Daniel Potter, M. L. Ball, G. W. Potter, D. C. M. Bigham, I. H. Anding, J. S. Berry, Ike Smith, R. A. Cooper, L. R. Burress, T. A. J. Beasley, I. P. Randolph, Henry Pannell, J. S. Grubbs, G. C. Potter, E. L. Davis, W. C. Tyler, R. B. Deline, James Travis, Ray Bryant, and Joe Herndon, the present pastor. One of the more recent persons to fill an important position is Earnest Earl Kelly who is Executive Secretary of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Many denominational leaders have come from this congregation. Bro. Z. T. Leavell became president of the Southern Baptist Convention. In the Fount Leavell family there were nine boys, eight of whom were ministers or in religious work.

Miss Birdie Lou Clark served as a Home Board Missionary to the Cubans in Tampa, Florida in 1921 but ill health forced her to give up her work.

In 1910 Miss Pearl Caldwell went to China as a foreign missionary and spent more than thirty years in Shantung Province at Lia Chowfu and Pingtu. During World War II she was held prisoner by the Japanese at Singtao, China, but returned home on the last ship sailing, the Gripaholm. Her work lives on.

Information from Birdie Lou Clark  
R. B. Deline

#### COOK MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH

While Brother Foy Rogers was county missionary he came to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Dewey Hood and Mr. and Mrs. T. B. Cook to discuss the organization of a Baptist Church in the community. He agreed to preach every Saturday night in the old school house, even though coal oil lamps had to be used for lights. When Bro. Rogers could not be present he sent others, among them being Kermit McGregor, Dewey Rowland and Bill Baker. Later when James Webster became county missionary he brought a group from Pontotoc Baptist Church to teach the Bible School before organizing a church.

The final organization was August 19, 1956 with eight charter members who moved their letters to become regular members: Mr. and Mrs. Dewey Hood, Mr. and Mrs. T. B. Cook, Mr. and Mrs. Alton Tutor, Mrs. Daisy Howell, and Mrs. Joyce Clements. Articles of Faith were read to the group by Bro. W. T. Douglas pastor of the First Baptist Church, Pontotoc, and these were adopted.

Bro. Herman Bryant was chosen as the first pastor and preached the first revival in the church beginning October 21, 1956. One person was received by baptism. Deacons who were chosen and ordained on May 12, 1957 were T. B. Cook, Dewey Hood, and Alton Lee Tutor. The church was received into the Pontotoc Baptist Association October 16, 1958.

In November 1958 the church voted to begin a church building. In February 1959 Birdie and Kenney Cook donated timber which was cut for the construction. Mr. and Mrs. T. B. Cook deeded the land and construction was begun under the direction of the building committee composed of Dewey Hood, T. B. Cook and Bro. Herman Bryant. The first funeral in the church was for Timothy Moss in 1962.

Records show that the church has grown until now there are eighty-nine resident members and seventy-one non-resident members. The six persons who have surrendered to preach are Danny Moody, Larry Roberts, Junior Ritchie, James Hall, Alton Lee Tutor, and Glen Gillespie. Those who have been ordained

August 11, 1983.

Pastors who have served the church are Herman Bryant 1966-1968, Dovie Tidwell 1968-1969, Herman Bryant 1969-1968, James Moody 1968-1974, and C. C. Ritchie, Jr. 1974 to the present.

The new church was dedicated in October 19, 1967 and a fellowship hall was added in 1975. The land for the cemetery was given by Birtie Cook and the fence was built around it in 1973. Mr. Cook was the first person to be buried in the cemetery on July 20, 1974.

C. C. Ritchie, Jr.

## ECRU BAPTIST CHURCH

According to previous appointment, the people of God met in the new E cru School House Building on Sunday, the 30th day of October, 1904, for the purpose of organizing a Church of the Lord Jesus Christ after the pattern of the one set up by Himself.

Brother T. A. J. Beasley and R. A. Cooper, having been invited to be present and assist in the organization.

Services began by song led by Bro. T. A. J. Beasley, "I Want to Be a Worker." Prayer by Bro. R. A. Cooper. Scripture lesson read by Brother R. A. Cooper, being the 1st 16 verses of the 3rd chapter of 1st Timothy, a strong presentation of what the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ should be.

After sermon, prayer was offered by Bro. N. J. Weaver. After prayer, Brother T. A. J. Beasley announced that all who had letters and who desired to go into organization today would now be given the opportunity, and the Letters were called for. While the Letters were being handed in the congregation sang "Children of the Heavenly King."

Brother J. H. Collins and V. B. Tucker were asked to read said Letters, Seventy-five (75) members being enrolled by Letter.

On motion of Bro. M. W. Andrews, Bro. T. A. J. Beasley was appointed Moderator and on motion of Bro. J. H. Collins, Bro. V. B. Tucker was appointed clerk.

On motion of Bro. O. B. Souter, Sister H. W. Pitts was read into the Organization with the understanding that her Church Letter be forth coming from Oak Hill.

An opportunity was given to any that should wish to unite with this Church by Experience and Baptism when Bro. D. Winders, S. M. Holditch, and Sister Angie Neel were unanimously received as Candidates for Baptism and after Baptism invited to all the Church privileges. The right hand of Christian fellowship was given. The Moderator appointed Brethren T. L. Wooten, J. H. Hattox, and O. B. Souter to look out a suitable place for baptizing and report to the Church at her next meeting.

On motion of Bro. J. H. Collins, the 2nd Sunday in each month was set as the time for the regular meeting.

On motion of Bro. O. B. Souter the church adjourned to meet on next Sunday at 2½ o'clock p.m. to transact any business that might present itself.

Dismissed by Bro. R. A. Cooper; T. A. J. Beasley, Moderator; and V. B. Tucker, Church Clerk." (Minutes of the first meeting.)

From this beginning in October of 1904, the E cru Baptist Church has continued to be blessed with the leadership of excellent men and women and the Lord has blessed their work.

This first organization did not have a meeting house, and was held in the grave matter of concern. The Minutes taken by the Church Clerk concerning the erection of their first Meeting House tell how they did it.

"In July 1908, the first action was taken toward that of building a house of worship and a committee of five was named: V. B. Tucker, J. H. Hattox, J. M. Owen, B. O. Garner, J. E. A. Browning. In the business meeting of May, 1909, the Building Committee was authorized to get the approximate cost of a brick building and also that of a frame building.

On September 28, 1909, the vote was taken to build a frame building, and that those have subscribed to building a brick building be released from their subscription if desired.

In the October 17, 1909, business meeting, the church rescinded everything it had done in regard to building a House of Worship, and a committee of seven (7) men were appointed to collect subscriptions, select a place, and build the house. The committee appointed was V. B. Tucker, J. M. Owen, W. H. Sage, J. E. A. Browning, J. H. Collins, J. W. Graddy, J. M. Pritchard, and on motion B. O. Garner was added.

In the February, 1910, business meeting, it was voted that the committee be instructed to order seats for the new church building.

In the business meeting of October, 1910, it was voted to dedicate the new church building on the third Sunday in November.

The Third Sunday in November, 1910, the new church building was dedicated before the dedication sermon, Brethren C. B. Pannell and Edward Brown were ordained to the gospel ministry. The dedication sermon was preached by Rev. T. A. J. Beasley whose text and message was taken from Matthew 16:18, "Upon this Rock I will Build My Church." In the evening service on the same Lord's Day Brethren E. M. Hattox, and George L. Winders were ordained as deacons.

In the July 17, 1955 business meeting, and during the ministry of Brother C. B. Sims, it was voted to build a Sunday School Annex. The Building Committee elected the same day was Lacy Browning, George Tucker, Brooks Hamilton, Knox Tutor, and G. W. Holditch, Jr.

In the September 3, 1958 business meeting, it was suggested by Deacon W. L. Mounce that there was need for a new sanctuary, and that the fifth Sunday offerings should be set aside to be used toward a building fund for its construction. This was done.

A new sanctuary was built and dedication services for it was held August 24, 1969, this was during the pastorate of Brother Bill Boulton.

On February 10, 1974, the church celebrated the "Note-Burning" Day for the final payment of the indebtedness for the construction of the new sanctuary.

On October 27, 1974 the church celebrated its seventieth birthday. Former pastors were invited back and ministers who had been ordained to the gospel ministry were special guests. H. G. West, Jr., brought the morning message and William G. Dowdy the message in the afternoon service.

On May 25, 1975, the church voted to purchase a building lot for the building of a new pastor's home, and in keeping with this new program of work, the plans for the new home were approved in business session on April 11, 1976. Then on April 25, the Building Committee was appointed G. W. Holditch, W. L. Mounce, C. N. Owne, Bobby Pannell, and Lester Willis.

Pastors who have served the E cru Baptist Church are:

T. A. J. Beasley; H. M. Collins; E. L. Wesson; C. S. Wales; H. G. West; H. H. Ward; W. C. Tyler (interim); G. M. Coker; C. B. Simms; Wayne Black; E. V. Holmes; H. D. Perry; William Boulton; and Charles L. Stubblefield.

Men ordained to the gospel ministry sent out from the Ecru Baptist Church. C. B. Pannell; T. C. Waldron; H. G. West, Jr. (At Cherry Creek); Riley Williams and William G. Dowdy.

Members of the church who have served as church treasurers: O. B. Souter; V. B. Tucker; E. H. Pitts; Miss Ruby McCoy; Mrs. W. L. Friday; W. L. Friday; Clyde W. Browning; and Guy W. Bigham.

For the 1975-1976 church year, the church adopted its largest budget of \$47,650.00. Of this budget, \$8,250.00 is designated for the Cooperative Program and \$1,800.00 for Associational Missions. Above these budgeted mission gifts, the 1975 Lottie Moon Christmas offering for Foreign Missions was \$2,373.06. The 1976 spring offering for home missions was \$917.58.

The Ecru Baptist Church is a growing church, a giving church, a mission minded church, a church with a wonderful history, and an open door set before it for the future.

Charles Stubblefield

#### FRIENDSHIP BAPTIST CHURCH

A small group of dedicated people who had moved into the Friendship community were determined to serve God as revealed by the early minute books:

After a sermon by Bro. Martin Ball, a presbytery was then formed by Brethren Ball and Elijah Browning and the following brethren and sisters were constituted into a church, namely: Stephen Threlkeld, Elizabeth Jones, C. C. A. Bigham, J. J. Andrews and wife Susan, Hiram Pitts, and wife Clarissa who are acting as deacons and deaconess, Nancy M. Pitts, Lucinda L. Pitts, Abner Shettles, George Thompson, B. B. Martin, Drury J. Pitts and wife Maria M., J. S. Cobb and wife Milinda, R. L. Harris, William McCraw and wife Elizabeth.

On March 18, 1848 after the church constitution was adopted Bro. Martin Ball was appointed as moderator to preside for the election of a pastor and clerk. Elijah Browning was elected pastor and Drury J. Pitts was clerk and the name of the church was to be Friendship. J. J. Andrews, J. S. Cobb, and D. J. Pitts were to serve as a committee to draft rules of decorum for the government of the church. Mr. Andrews and Mr. Cobb were chosen as the first deacons.

At the July meeting of the church a petition was filed to join the Chickasaw Association. In October the first deacons were ordained. In the April 1849 conference Article II read: That it shall be the duty of the members of the church to render an excuse for missing two successive meetings, especially the males.

At the July conference 1851 reference was made to the filling of the house with seats. The record is not clear as to the building being used but evidently this was the old school or some other building. In October 1851 a committee was appointed to build a church house and in January 1852 it was agreed that this building should be 30 feet by 45 feet and the contract was awarded to Elijah Buchanan for \$168.50 with the church furnishing the materials.

On January 15, 1853 a committee was appointed to secure a deed to the land on which the church is located. In March 1854 a Sabbath School was begun.

At the December 1862 conference, after a sermon by the pastor Isaac Smith the church met in conference and adopted the following resolution: WHEREAS,

*Myron Nixon can tell you<sup>533</sup> about Shettles from Pontotoc related to us. Shrad or Sally Nixon married a Shettles.*

on account of the present existing war the male members of this church are necessarily absent from home and the services of a pastor exceedingly difficult to obtain, therefore, resolved that this church suspend conference business indefinitely but that we endeavor to have preaching at house of worship as frequently as possible.

Conference was held regularly to December 1867 when it had under consideration a move to dissolve this church but the move was lost. During the years a clear deed to the land on which the church stood had not been secured, but on February 1879 W. L. Souter and A. M. Scott delivered the deed to the church. Bro. Souter was appointed to keep the deed which called for two acres of land signed by W. M., H. E., and William Parks. This was thirty years after the church was organized before the deed was clear.

In 1928 while Bro. John Heath was pastor the members decided to remodel the old building by leaving the same framing but changing the front entrance from the south to the north.

In July 1949 Bro. Bilbo Lively who was pastor held a revival which resulted in fifty one additions to the membership by conversion and by letter. Sunday School increased to 123 and Training Union was organized with an enrollment of eighty and an average attendance of seventy. A fully graded WMU, GA, RA, Sunbeams and Brotherhood were organized.

A new church building was completed in four months with the building committee being composed of Clay Gooch, Bill Windham, T. Todd, Frank McCarver, Hubert Montgomery, and Jewel Windham. Dedication services were held on April 30, 1950. In October 1953 a pastorium was started and completed in the summer of 1954. In 1961 new pews were added.

Friendship made a big venture in October 1962 when the church voted to go to full time services. This move caused the church to continue to grow in members and services. In 1966 a system of rotation of deacons was adopted. The membership now is over 350.

Pastors who have served during the years are: Elijah Browning, Joe Gibson, Isaac Smith, T. A. J. Beasley, W. L. Brown, John Heath, Bro. Hoyle, J. B. Wages, H. G. West, C. W. Smith, J. A. Tully, Bro. Wilbanks, John Grubbs, Herman Dugard, Bilbo Lively, Boyd LeCroy, Bill Prince, Fred Hague, L. W. Frederick, Doyce Lyons, M. L. Swinney, Norris Garner, Lee Hudson, Herbert Howell and Euclean Tutor.

Jewel Windham

#### FURRS BAPTIST CHURCH

Furrs Baptist Church began on November 2, 1915 with eight charter members: R. P. King, J. M. Kelly, Will Box, John King, Ronie King, Jennie Kelly and Zorma Cleveland. Rev. G. W. Wages was the pastor who organized the church. One acre of land was donated by John Wester for a permanent building site. The first building, a one room auditorium, was free of debt on February 2, 1917.

Rev. Wages was followed by Bro. Huffstatler who began his ministry in 1919, but in October of that same year Bro. Wages returned to be pastor until 1923. Typical offerings during these early days were \$2.00, \$4.13, \$4.00, \$16.41 and \$1.50. Even though these gifts were small in comparison to today the Furrs Baptist Church gave to missions from the very beginning. Even in 1923 the church gave \$9.70 to missions.

## OAK HILL BAPTIST CHURCH

The Oak Hill Baptist Church was organized in August 1849 at the Republican Meeting House, now known as the Jack Dillard farm. The original name was Oak Hill Baptist Church of Christ. Charter members were William and Frances Young, Mary Nixon, Luthana Nixon, Abner and Ritter Nixon, George W. and Rebecca Hill, Martha Clements, W. R. and Mary A. Lyons, Joseph T. and Parthena Garner, John and Milly Millam, Mary Millam, John Millam, Jr., Leake Millam, and William and Agnes McDavid. W. R. Lyons was the first church clerk, M. Brown the first treasurer, and William Young was the first pastor. C. C. Pegues and Milam Brown were the first deacons.

The church records reveal that in December 1851 plans were initiated to purchase land and build a church building between six and seven miles on the Tuscumbia road. By May of 1853 the church was completed and authorization was given for the purchase of seats. In early 1855 land was purchased to provide a grave yard adjoining the church area.

In 1870 the church organized a Sabbath School and adopted rules by which this would be governed. Constant and consistent growth of church membership was a reality. Again there was need for construction of a building and by 1884 the new building was occupied. Members donated their labors plus one contractor, M. Y. Caldwell, provided the necessary labor.

In 1890 Mrs. Sallie Leavell helped with the organization of the Woman's Missionary Society since from the beginning the Oak Hill church had been mission minded and had made regular donations for mission efforts.

In April 1906 in the minutes for the first time the church was referred to as the Oak Hill Missionary Baptist Church yet through the years the affiliation had been with the Southern Baptist Convention.

In 1913 members of Oak Hill recognized the need to organize a neighbor church so the following were granted letters of dismissal in order to form the Center Hill Baptist Church which is still active: H. D. Pitts, Ada Pitts, Flora Pitts, B. B. Little, Florence Little, W. W. Caldwell, Mamie Caldwell, Pres Caldwell, Betty Caldwell, John Homan, Ravanna Homan, Beasley Homan, Tom Kelly, Armittie Kelly, and Bertha Mae Kelly. The first Thanksgiving service was held in the church in November. The great tornado of 1913 had caused great havoc and the church had experienced growth through difficulties.

On September 11, 1920 letters of dismissal were granted to members to organize a new church at the Compromise school house. This was named Immanuel Baptist Church with the following being charter members from the Oak Hill church: Claude Clayton, Mary Clayton, Emma Clayton, Eva Clayton, Anna Brown, Annie Dillard, Henry Dillard, Virgie Sappington, Lilly Sappington, W. C. Dillard, Mattie Belle Dillard, Blanch Dillard, Phil Bramlett, Pearl Bramlett, M. F. Clayton, Gertrude Clayton, Aubrey Clayton, Bertha Clayton, A. J. Watts, Corra Maffett, John Laprade, William Laprade, Roy Bramlett, W. H. Dillard, Mary Dillard, Gerta Dillard, Ruth Dillard, Carl Dillard, Conrad Sappington, Dalton Day, Verna Day, Fred Laprade, Jim Maffett, and Annie May Winfield.

Oak Hill Baptist Church continued to grow in numbers and in services so in September 1947 a group was granted letters of dismissal to assist with the organization of the Harmony Baptist Church, as follows: Ella Hitt, Merrell Vaughn, Joyce Vaughn, Lamar Wilder, Marie Dowdy, Maggie Bowen, Mrs. Raymond Ball, Mr. and Mrs. Luther McCord, Samuel McCord and Florence Anderson.

In January 1949  
By September 1947  
was organized,

Those who  
McNeil, Ger  
E. Pitts, Fr.  
Bryon, Thomas

Pastors have been: Young, Elijah Browning, J. J. Andrews, D. Potter, J. T. Pitts, D. J. Austin, J. R. Sumner, J. H. Jenkins, J. J. Pannell, C. B. Pannell, H. G. West, J. S. Grubbs, W. C. Bryant, T. A. J. Beasley, J. P. Measada, Bilbo Lively, J. S. Hearn, Partee Tutor, Charles Bryant, Lonnie Bell, J. C. Harvey, L. C. Edwards, Larry Maxey, Billy W. Mitchell and E. E. Fulton.

Mrs. Wayne Laprade

## FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH PONTOTOC, MISSISSIPPI

Baptist work in the town of Pontotoc was an outgrowth of the Cherry Creek church. The minutes of the organizational meeting of the church in Pontotoc on February 9, 1846, state "The Brethren and sisters convened at Pontotoc and requested Elders G. B. Waldrop, Dodson, and Smith to constitute a church in this place and they accordingly formed themselves into a presbytery and after prayer, appointed Brother G. B. Waldrop moderator and Brother John Smith clerk pro tem. The confession of faith, church pledge and rules of decorum were read and adopted. The church met on Tuesday, February 10, 1846, and called Reverend Elijah Smith as the first pastor. After a sermon by the new pastor, a building committee was elected to "adopt the best measure as early as practicable to procure means to build a Baptist meeting house in the town of Pontotoc." Following the organizational meetings in February, the church held only three more services in 1846: one in March, one in August, and one in November.

During the 130 year history of the church twenty-three pastors have served, namely: Elijah Smith, J. Morton, E. W. Young, Martin Ball, William H. Holcomb, Henry H. Tucker, J. C. Kung, W. L. Slack, John Bateman, A. J. Seal, G. W. Potter, R. A. Cooper, T. L. Holcomb, J. J. Mayfield, J. L. Robinson, E. L. Davis, John F. Measells, A. L. Goodrich, B. B. Hilbun, John W. Cook, James C. Monroe, W. T. Douglas, W. Levon Moore. Dr. Larry G. Rohrman served as interim pastor from August, 1975 to May, 1976. Dr. Gordon Sansing is pastor at the present time.

During the first ten years of the church's life, eight men served as pastor. The longest continuous part-time pastorate was that of R. A. Cooper who served twenty-five years. W. L. Slack served three different times as part-time pastor, for a total of twenty-four years. The longest full-time pastorate was that of W. Levon Moore who served a little over fourteen years. The combined terms of the three longest pastorates (Slack, Cooper and Moore) total sixty-three years; almost half the church's life. The first full-time pastor was T. L. Holcomb. The only man to serve more than once as pastor was W. L. Slack.

Although the records are silent about buildings, it is assumed that for the first few years services were held in the home of some member of the church. As the organizational minutes state, one of the first official actions was to elect a building committee to "adopt the best measure as early as practicable to procure means to build a Baptist meeting house in the town of Pontotoc."

So was Luthana Nixon? 541