

## HISTORY OF COOK SPRINGS BAPTIST CHURCH

September 1965

The following material was gathered by Mrs. Frank (Maude) Polk. It is partly from memory because our oldest records only begin in 1918.

The Cook Springs Baptist was organized in 1858. The first building was near the railroad tracks. Later it was moved to the hill facing the railroad.

Reverend C. J. Pike was pastor in January 1907 (before and after this date). He served the church seventeen years. During that time the Sunday School was held in the afternoon. Miss Jane Cooke started the Sunday School. She was organist, Superintendent and teacher. As long as she lived here she taught Beginners. In her declining years, she lived with her brother in Miami, Florida. Miss Cooke was one of the strong pillars of the church and one of her "sayings" was, "Well, I don't know, but it will be revealed to us at the proper time." She came back to Cook Springs and died here at the age of ninety-four.

Rev. Collis Cunningham was pastor from September, 1918 to September, 1919.

The church went on half-time December 7, 1924 with Rev. D. F. Funderburg as pastor. During the August revival, 1925, nineteen people were baptized. Rev. Funderburg preached at Cook Springs sixteen years in all. He was pastor when the earliest records were kept and again in later years. Rev. Cunningham serving one year in-between.

Rev. J.E. Griffin served the church as pastor from 1929 to October, 1936, accomplishing some wonderful work. The church moved near the cemetery during this time. After Brother Griffin's resignation, Rev. Paul Minton was called as pastor on a temporary basis.

Rev. R. F. Hallford was pastor from October 1936 to December 12, 1937. He was a student at Howard College. Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Reeves joined the church during his ministry. Mr. Reeves became a deacon. On April 10, 1937, Hubert Cooke, Herman Reeves and J. K. Gladden were ordained as deacons.

In April, 1938, Rev. J. C Hill accepted the church. He was a fine pastor and served until 1939. During his ministry, three committees were appointed. They were the Song Book Committee, the Building Committee and Finance Committee. In church conference, July 9, 1938, the repairing of the old church building was discussed. Everyone decided it was beyond repair, and a new building was discussed.. The people were asked to talk and pray about the matter. Soon work was started. Mr. Frank Polk and Mr. Vernon Ferguson cut the first tree for lumber to go into the building. The tree being on the building site. Mr. J. T. Reeves was selected to be in charge of the building of the church. Most everyone in the community helped in some way. The new building was dedicated on August 13, 1939. Rev. J. E. Dillard, Jr. was speaker.

Reverend J. W. Dean was called as pastor, September 24, 1939 for one year. After his resignation, October 6, 1940, Rev. Ira Tidwell accepted the church. While Prother Tidwell was pastor, Rev. W. A. Lockler helped in the August revival. Brother Tidwell resigned at the end of the associational year and Rev. W. A. Lockler was called as pastor beginning September 7, 1941. The church was still on half-time until September 7, 1942 when it went on full-time. The pastor's salary was \$20.00 per week. In November 1943, the salary was raised to \$110.00 per month. Few were bought for the church in March 1944. Brother Lockler resigned in May 28, 1944. While he was pastor, we had our first Vacation Bible School. The church was without a pastor until December 20, 1944 when the pulpit committee recommended Rev. E. L. Patton. He and Mrs. Patton did a great work while at Cook Springs. He felt led to go to other fields and went to Fort Knox to a church so he could go to the seminary in Louisville, Kentucky.

In September 1945, Rev. Earl Hall accepted the church. The first study course at Cook Springs was taught in March 1946. On April 27, 1947, definite plans were made to build a pastorium.

Timber was purchased from the School of Evangelism and the parsonage was built. Rev. Hall resigned, effective September 21, 1947 in order to continue his studies at Howard College.

Rev. C. A. Forehand came to Cook Springs as pastor September 28, 1947. L. L. Bowlin and Ed McLaughlin were ordained as deacons July 14, 1949. Brother Bowlin was ordained to the ministry September 24, 1950. After Bro. Forehand resigned September 9, 1950, Rev. Jimmy Hendricks came and began his work November 19, 1950. Brother Hendricks resigned in May of 1951 to continue his education.

In July 1951, the pulpit committee recommended Rev. W.E. Glidwell to the church and he was accepted. The following deacons were ordained July 20, 1952: E. B. Allred, Clinton McKee, Earl Stone, Lonnie Rich, and Elisha Stevens. The men organized a Brotherhood during this time and were very active. Earl Stone was given a vote of thanks for his help in getting steps made around the pulpit. A piano was bought for the Junior Dept. and the Electric organ was bought. A kitchen was equiped in the school house. Attendance was such that the Junior Department of Sunday School and Training Union met in the Cook Springs Schoolhouse. Brother Glidwell resigned October 8, 1958.

On November 2, 1958, the pulpit committee recommended Reverend W. H. Cruce to the church as pastor and the voted to accept him. February 4, 1959, a planning and building committee was appointed. We had \$2,256.96 in the Building Fund. The building committee consisted of the following men: M. F. Roper-Chairman, E. B. Allred, J. H. Reeves, J. B. Reeves, Carl Goodwin, Armond Ritch, L. F. Polk, and Troy Brown. The following made up the finance committee: J. B. Reeves-Chairman, W. E. Brown, E. A. Stevens, E. C. Henson, M. G. Allred, Lois Reeves, Clara Brown and Mrs. D. W. Moody. The church building progressed and we borrowed a total of \$15,577.00 to complete it. Many people contributed much money, time and effort to this building.

The Birmingham Association contributed 10,00 feet of lumber. The W. M. U. bought the pulpit furniture, costing \$1,025.00. June 4, 1961, the dedication service was held for the new building with Rev. Ralph Fields as speaker. This was also Homecoming Day.

The old auditorium was remodeled making an adult assembly room and rooms for the Sunday School and Training Union adult classes. Also, a new study for the pastor was included and a meeting room for the choir. Brother Cruce resigned in November 1964 and Rev. O. D. Duran of Pell City served as supply pastor until March 7, 1965 when Rev. C. I. Garrison from West Flockton, Alabama came to be our pastor. At this time, the church is very active with an organized program of work including many facets such as a visitation program.

The following information was added by Peggy Henson.

Rev. C. I. Garrison moved February 9, 1969 to Duckville Baptist Church. Serving as interim until November 1969 was Rev. B. R. Davidson.

The church called Rev. Gwin R. Coffey as pastor and he started as pastor October 19, 1969 until June 23, 1973, when he moved to the Eulaton Baptist Church. The associational missionary, Rev. Lee Gibbs served as interim until Rev. Harry Mynatt came as pastor September 1973. In July 1974 the church purchased a grand piano for the auditorium. Beautiful music has been enjoyed from this piano. Bro. Mynatt moved to Southside Baptist in Gadsden on August 18, 1975. Rev. Joe Bancroft served as interim pastor at this time.

On February 1, 1976, Rev. Howard Williams began serving as pastor. During his ministry new pews were bought and paid for by individuals in memory or honor of someone. The first service with the new pews was June 20, 1982. Pew committee was: L. F. Folk, Tom Graham and Peggy Henson. Rev. Howard Williams resigned as pastor, July 6, 1988. Rev. Jim Nixon was called as interim pastor August 14, 1988 and as full-time pastor, October 16, 1988 until his retirement January 2, 1991.

During the time of being without a pastor the pastorium was repaired and repainted. New carpet was installed throughout before Bro. & Mrs. Nixon moved in.

After Bro. Nixon's retirement Rev. Dudley Prickett, a retired chaplain served as interim from January 20, 1991 until March 3, 1991. Rev. Dale Creel was called as pastor and moved on the field March 11, 1991. After his resignation September 3, 1994, he went to Walnut Park Baptist Church, Gadsden. Rev. Jim R. Smith began serving as interim pastor on October 9, 1994. Bro. Smith is serving as chaplain at the St. Clair Correctional Center while he is at the church.