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Causes Leading to Its Organization. On July 19, 1900, a group of about 18 members was excluded from Baldwin Chapel Church, er, in church parlence, "the right hand of fellowship was withdrawn from them."

The members of this ejected group felt that they had been unfairly treated, especially because some of them had not been present to speak for themselves at the meeting at which they were turned out. They resolved that they would not go back to Baldwin Chapel but would attempt to form an organization of their own.

Accordingly, in September 1900, a meeting was held at the home of Frank Pugh, who together with his wife Carrie, had been among those turned out of Baldwin Chapel. The Reverend C. H. Patrick, an old missionary of the Ritter Lake District Association, was called in to preside over the meeting and to help perfect the organization. Some others present at this meeting were Wesley Littles, Ned Gipson, Dewitt Dials, LaVanda Dials, C. Mosely, Richmond Wortham, and Rose Ella Wortham. Wesley Littles had not been among those turned out of the Baldwin Chapel Church. His membership was in a church at Old laurelia (Benders), Texas. He was invited in to participate in this meeting in order to make out a quorum and help perform the work of the organization of the church. This he did and thus became a charter member of the little congregation which took the name Rose Hill.

Administration of the Reverend I. H. Hubbard. The Reverend I. H. Hubbard of Kittrell, Texas, who was ^Moderator of the Ritter Lake Association, was recommended by Ned Gipson, and without a dissenting vote, was elected pastor of the little congregation.

He came to Groveton and conducted his first services on the Third Sunday in November 1900. This first service was held in the old Lewis Johnson home on the south side of town. The complete official staff of the church, as it stood at this first ^{meeting} held under the new administration, was I. H. Hubbard, ^Pastor; Dewitt Dials, clerk; Ned Gipson, ^Superintendent of Sunday School; ^Deacons: Frank Pugh, Wesley Littles, Ned Gipson, Dewitt Dials.

The pastor and his little congregation found themselves facing two major problems -- the problems of increasing the membership and of erecting a church building.

At the very first preaching service held, LaVanda Dials united with the church and thus became the first member to be taken in by the new congregation with its new pastor. In the course of time, revivals were held and the other members added until there was a relatively large membership.

A church building now became a pressing necessity. The present site was purchased from the Trinity County Lumber Company and a small building erected. This little building was probably about 30' x 45'. It was soon lengthened to 60'.

As time passed, the congregation grew by leaps and bounds.

The pastor possessed a pleasing personality, and his administrative policies appealed to the folks in the section of the community in which the church was located. Moreover, ^{they} there were attracted to the preaching services of this church each Third Sunday, large ^{numbers of} members from the other churches of the little town which held their services on some other Sunday. ~~In consequences of this,~~ ^{The} congregation in a short time found themselves again faced with the problem of erecting a church building. *Church*

This new building when completed was much more spacious, and at the time of completion, modern; its dimensions were about 60' x 90'.

Financing the building of a church is always a problem, especially in a rural community. In this case, there was the usual round of church support, rallies, literary programs, and entertainments of various kinds. As a final effort, a number of men who were employed by the Trinity County Lumber Company agreed to have a stipulated amount deducted from monthly earnings by the bookkeeper and applied to the church account. In this way the building debt was soon liquidated.

The movement to finance the building of the church served to bring into prominence some auxiliaries of the church and their leaders, ^{which} ~~and~~ enabled them to function for the good of the community in a very wholesome way. *Church*

There were no picture shows in the little town at this time. Wholesome activities of recreation and diversion were scarce, in fact, hardly existent. Hence, entertainment

sponsored by these auxiliaries served to bring together the folks of the community in wholesome entertainment and made the church the center of community life and activity.

Fortunately, these auxiliaries at this time were headed by people who were energetic and resourceful and who provided a fine type of leadership.

Heading the B.Y.P.U. was I. W. Whitfield. Under his leadership there was an almost continuous round of entertainment of various kinds. There were literary programs with their debates, declamations, and singing. Occasionally, there were bazaars of a week or two weeks duration. These would feature fish ponds, post offices, wonder wells, fortune telling booths, and things of that nature. To these the ingenious Whitfield often gave the name "Zobo" or some such high sounding designation. *to RESEMBLE THEM.*

Still, another organization whose purpose was to provide entertainment for a younger group, then was cared for by the B.Y.P.U., was the Starlight Band. This organization was sponsored by the Women's Home Mission Society and was presided over by Miss Lear Perkins, a young woman who was very resourceful and who possessed an attractive, pleasing personality.

She seemed to have the confidence and respect of the younger set to an almost miraculous degree. Each Sunday afternoon, she was the center of a large group of these youngsters who met at the church for literary programs, singing and various forms of entertainment.

The Women's Home Mission Society and the Sunday School drew large groups, also and contributed their share toward enriching church and community life.

The Sunday School and its superintendent, L. J. Johnson, deserve a few words of special mention. Johnson was indeed a rare character; he was a pious, sober type of man who held the esteem and respect of all who knew him. He was above the average as a scholar for a man of his time who had received no college training and made an admirable leader for the Sunday School.

Under his administration the organization of the work of the Sunday School was not so modern as at present. There were only three classes into which the entire membership was divided. All adults, men and women together, were put into one of these. At the bottom in the card class were the children who could not read well. Between these two groups was the third class composed of boys and girls of various ages and grades.

In spite of these defects in organization, enthusiasm ran high; and each Sunday morning a large number of adults, young people, and children came together for a discussion of the Sunday School lesson. These discussions were sometimes waxed heated, and led to arguments and displays of temper. There was an instance where two men went home for guns as the culmination of such a discussion. In many cases these discussions would be postponed until afternoon and the interested persons would return to the church and renew the

argument after having gone home for lunch.

The deacon board of this period was also one of the bulwarks of the church. It was composed of such men as W. H. Littles, Levi Johnson, James Dolphus, and J. D. Harrell. These men were noted for their sobriety and interest in the affairs of the church. Much credit is due them for the success of the church at this period, especially in the effort to erect the second church building. Dolphus was especially good at raising finances and made himself popular in that respect in the drives for building funds.

In 1925, after a pastorate of 25 years, the administration of the Reverend Hubbard came to an end. While filling his pulpit at the Pilgrim Rest Church of Palestine, Texas (a place to which he had been called for two Sundays per month), he suffered an attack of high blood pressure. He never recovered sufficiently to resume his duties as pastor. He was kept for several months while his pulpit was filled by the Reverend O. Jones, the Reverend W. C. Scott, and other local preachers. It was finally decided that he would not be able to serve further, and reluctantly, his pulpit was declared vacant.

Before the contract for work on the building was made, it was decided to turn all money over to the contractor whenever a contract was signed. When the committee met to go over their books, the treasurer maintained that he had not used the money. Many believed him and felt that members of his family may have stolen money from him while it was in his possession before being deposited.

Some months after all this, when things had somewhat subsided, Pastor Parker decided to make some inquiries at the bank. The teller informed him that there had been an account at the bank under the caption, "Rose Hill Church Building Fund, D. F. Bennett, Treasurer," but all funds in this account had been withdrawn. As Parker was about to walk out of the bank, he was called back and told that another account had been discovered in which a single deposit of \$125 had been made and that this money was still there. It was in the name, "Rose Hill Church, D. F. Bennett, Treasurer." It was found that a young clerk who was not familiar with the church building account had accepted this deposit and mistakenly placed it in a separate account. This find exonerated Bennett. Since he had worked and repaid the shortage, which was an unusual thing in a Baptist Church, the \$125 was his. The remodeling movement now moved swiftly to completion. The approximate cost of papering, painting, repairing the roof and foundation was \$1,200.

Soon after completion of this effort, the Lumber Mill, which had been maintained by the Trinity County Lumber Company, ceased to operate. People who had formerly been employed at this mill for years found themselves out of work and began to move away from town. Hence the membership of the church began to fall off, and it became necessary to materially reduce the salary of the pastor. At the same time, the Good Will Church of Lufkin, Texas had called the Reverend Parker at a very attractive salary. In 1930, he resigned his post at the Rose Hill Church to accept the pastorate of the Good Will Church. Thus, his administration came to a close.

The Administration of the Reverend Sherman Fisher. Due to the closing down of the Lumber Mill, economy had become a pressing necessity in the affairs of the church. Quite a few members had moved away. Many of those who remained were unemployed and therefore unable to contribute much to the financial support of the church. This factor deserved serious consideration in the election of the pastor.

Because he was a "home boy" and would have relatively light expenses in connection with his services, it was felt that the Reverend Sherman Fisher would make an ideal pastor.

Moreover, he had proved his ability as a preacher and Christian gentleman. Those among whom he lived knew him to be a pious, God-fearing man honored and respected him. He would probably have been elected under any circumstance.

He was elected and assumed his duties on May 3, 1931 and served until his death, October 31, 1931. While returning from a church which he served near Crockett, Texas, he was stricken with paralysis from which he never recovered. Though his administration was short and uneventful, he convinced those who were skeptical at the time of his election that he possessed ability as an executive and a preacher.

The Administration of the Reverend D. W. Taylor. After a short period during which local preachers again served, the Reverend D. W. Taylor was elected pastor, July 8, 1937. His administration had been uneventful and marked by the usual ups and downs of ordinary Negro church life. No reforms had been attempted and no innovations introduced, except the custom of observing Homecoming each Third Sunday in August which was begun in 1940. The repair of the church building had again become a pressing problem.

District Affiliations and District Work. At the time the Reverend Hubbard was called to the pastorate of the Rose Hill Church, he was moderator of the Ritter Lake District Association which had recently split from the General Bowen District Association. Naturally, Hubbard, through his influence, carried the young church into the district of which he was chief executive.

It was not long after entry into the district that Rose Hill became one of its leading churches and stood in the fore in participation in all district projects.

At this time, during the first decade of the twentieth century, a wave of enthusiasm for religious education was sweeping Texas. All the denominations were either maintaining or attempting to establish colleges. Conroe College was in the heyday of its glory. The struggle for Kountze College was on, at Beaumont, Texas. The Reverend M. E. Robinson, as moderator of the General Bowen District, was making rapid strides in setting up the Beaumont Normal Industrial College while Wiley and Bishop were names with which to conjure.

This wave of enthusiasm and ambition for recognition swept the Reverend Hubbard and his Ritter Lake District along with it, and they joined in the movement for the establishment of a college.

The Rose Hill Church, the leading church of the district, and pastored by the moderator, took a most active roll in the movement. It probably furnished more workers and made