

FLEMING BAPTIST CHURCH

For GOD's Glory!



Homecoming 2023

1913-2023

110 Years





~ Fleming-Baptist.org ~

¹⁸ *Where [there is] no vision, the
people perish: but he that keepeth the
law, happy [is] he.*

[Proverbs 29:18 KJV]

HISTORY OF

FLEMING BAPTIST CHURCH

The Fleming Baptist Church was organized on March 23, 1913. At that time it was called the Macedonia Baptist Church. The 1st church building was built by S. A. Haymans, W. D. Haymans, and C. L. Crowley on an acre of land across the railroad tracks in the small community of Fleming, Georgia. The donor of the land is not recorded. The men gave some trees and had the lumber sawed. They planed the lumber with their own hands. The structure was 30 by 40 feet. The seats were built by S. A. Haymans and W. D. Haymans.

The Altar Bible was donated by S.A. Haymans. The first service was conducted by Reverend W. J. Marlowe and there were nine (9) members in attendance. Those members were the following: Wade Clark, C. L. Crowley, Florine Crowley, W.W. Gill, W.D. Haymans, T.D. Milligan, Irene Patrick, J.M. Patrick, M. A. Penny. The first deacons elected were W. D. Haymans and J. M. Patrick. C. L. Crowley was elected as church clerk. Later that afternoon C. L. Crowley, Wade Clark, and T. L. Milligan were baptized at the river.

Church records of these early days seemed to indicate that it was the church custom that new members received into the church were baptized at the river that very afternoon of the day they were received or at least on the afternoon of the following meeting. Church records also reveal that at the next meeting, S. A. Haymans, Mack Myrick, and A. E. Clark joined the church. Ola Haymans, wife of S. A. Haymans, Pauline Haymans, wife of W. D. Haymans, and Maggie Gill, wife of W. W. Gill, joined their husbands in becoming members.

The historical ledger of the church minutes and treasurer's report revealed most of the early members pledged \$12.00 a year. The pastor's salary at that time was \$1.50 per month and the revival pastor was paid \$6.00. The newly established church held its service once a month.

In 1916 the church made application to be part of the New Sunbury Association and was accepted. The minutes of September 26, 1918, reveal even back then, the church paid a percentage of their income to home missions (\$7.50 per year) and foreign missions (\$5.50 per year) and the pastor's salary were increased to \$126.90 per year. In 1918, the first prayer meeting was organized.

The church continued to grow through the years in number and spirit as the Macedonia Baptist Church. In 1930, the name was changed to Fleming Baptist Church as it is known today.

In 1940 the church was painted for the first time and things were going smoothly, but then the doors were closed for about six (6) months. The church sought help from the Hinesville Baptist Church and its pastor, Reverend Hodges, began conducting services at 3:00 on Sunday afternoon. It is not contained in the old records of the church just when the first Sunday School was held, but we are told that at one time classes were held in the one-room sanctuary and in members' cars.

In the 1940s and 1950s the community of Fleming consisted of two (2) churches, Fleming Baptist and Mount Olivet Methodist Church. Everyone in the community attended each other's church and Sunday School. Fleming Baptist held services on the first and third Sundays and Mount Olivet Methodist had services on the second and fourth Sundays. Amazingly, there was great harmony in the community and all members shared everything with each other with one exception.

The Baptist Church had a closed communion, but the Methodist accepted this gracefully and didn't seem to mind, and in fact, offered their communion service openly to the Baptist congregation. They also had youth fellowship which the Baptists and Methodists seemed to enjoy.

“All of us who grew up during these days fondly remember the old pot-bellied stoves in each church during the winter and the hand-held paper fans from the funeral home in the summer. Later, there were a few electric fans added for the comfort of the congregation.” (Jewel Rogers Bowen)

The Sunday School grew to the point that we were allowed to hold classes in the old Fleming School House. In **1948**, Joyce Haymans moved with her family to Fleming when she was nine (9) years old. She had only been taking piano lessons for two years. Being as there was a need for a pianist she began playing for both churches. As of **2008** she has been playing for **sixty (60) years** and she is still the pianist for Fleming Baptist Church and Midway Methodist Church today.

In **1951**, Reverend M. W. Drawdy became the pastor. That same year they added the Women's Missionary Society and the Brotherhood. Brother Drawdy led a building program adding four (4) Sunday School rooms and an assembly hall. Two (2) bathrooms were also added and the sanctuary expanded from 30' X 40' to 30' X 54'. Training Union was also organized. Within the next few years, Reverend James Rich became our pastor. During those years two (2) additional rooms to the front of the building and the sanctuary was renovated. This included new pews, carpet, paneling, and air conditioners throughout the church.

This was the beginning of us being a full time church. (1951)

The minutes show that attempts were made at times to build a pastorium in the Fleming community. In August of **1960**, Wesley Crowley donated one (1) acre of land to the church for a pastorium to be built on Freedman Grove Road. The church entered in a contract with Modern Homes to construct the frame of the building with the members donating their time and labor to complete the building. The final payment and a note burning service were held April **1966**. Later, the pastorium was moved to a lot beside the church in the Fleming Community.

In 1974, Fleming Baptist Church was experiencing growing pains. The Old facility was no longer able to hold all the people. Harold Rogers located the parcel of land where the church is currently located and it was purchased as the building site for our new church. On May 24, 1975, there was a clean-up day to get ready to build. The men of the church donated many hours of time and labor while the ladies of the church furnished food, refreshments, and encouragement.

In April 1977, the church building was dedicated with an original payback of ten (10) years. The building was paid off three (3) years earlier than expected.

In 1986, the church endeavored together through God to build a pastorium beside current Sanctuary, and in the spring of 1987, our pastor, Reverend George Lanier, and his family were able to move into a debt free pastorium. Built through love, hard work, and pledges, we did not have to borrow any funds. Again, we had so much to be thankful for and God had truly blessed.

In **1989**, we expanded our bus ministry with the purchase of a new 15 (fifteen) passenger van. Chimes were installed in the sanctuary and speakers were installed in the steeple so that the music might be a ministry to the surrounding neighborhood.

A new sound system was also installed in the sanctuary. *In December 1989, the church realized a need for a fellowship hall.* As plans developed, it was decided to build the annex which included the fellowship hall to seat 200 people as well as five (5) classrooms and two restrooms. Gordon Blount oversaw this project to its successful completion. *In January 1990, construction began.* Through the gifts of time, labor, and financial support, the building was completed without having to borrow funds. *On June 3, 1990, dedication services were held. Reverend Joe Goddard was the pastor at the time.*

In December 1992, the church purchased a new organ. At the same time, a new piano was given as a gift of love by Harold and Jewel Rogers. These musical instruments have been a blessing to the music ministry and the church as a whole.

In **1994**, a long range planning committee was formed in order to seek guidance for the future. Their goal was to purchase a bus, improve the sound system, and build a Family Life Center.

In **1995**, funds were borrowed to purchase a 28 passenger bus. The bus proved to be great asset to the church and it was to be used to bring those to Sunday School who did not have a ride, to take youth on various activities, and to take the senior citizens on trips for their enjoyment. The sound system was also upgraded.

Later that year a building committee was selected to proceed with the Life Center. Reverend Jim Wilson was pastor at this time. Many of our church members donated their time. Carl Cox cut the timber and DeWayne Phillips cleared the land and put in the fill dirt. The foundation and concrete were poured, *and in 1996 many men joined together with their skills to get the building underway.* Our church had many talented men ---carpenters, electricians, roofers, plumbers, cabinet makers, and laborers, who worked diligently.

Our church had many talented men ---carpenters, electricians, roofers, plumbers, cabinet makers, and laborers, who worked diligently. This was a big task but God provided and many volunteers came to help with the heavy beams, walls, and roof. The ladies of the church provided meals to those who worked. Our people contributed most of the money but some was borrowed. God blessed and the loan was paid off early.

The Life Center was completed and the youth were using it for various activities. *However, on a Sunday evening in March 2000, the building caught fire inside and caused much damage.* The fire departments responded quickly and got the fire under control. The congregation was very sad, but God blessed and lifted our spirits. The pastor assured us that with God's help that the Life Center would be rebuilt. The insurance company paid for the damages and a contractor was found to reconstruct the building. Some things were not covered by insurance, and again the men of the church gave many hours to get it completed. In six (6) months, the building was completed, ready for use, and debt free. The Life Center has been a blessing for our young people, other churches, and community. The youth have enjoyed their games and there has been great fellowship among them. We have held skating nights for the youth in our community, as well as an annual Fall Festival outreach to the community. It is also the local voting precinct for Liberty County. The accommodations of the Life Center have been a blessing to our annual Vacation Bible School as well as to many social activities of our church. *In September 2002, the church was introduced to the Upward Basketball Program for the youth. After extensive research, we embarked upon this program under the direction of Curtis West.* The necessary equipment was purchased, our youth got involved, and the program was opened up to other churches and youth of the surrounding communities. The program was very successful and was held annually for several years.

In September 2002, the church was introduced to the Upward Basketball Program for the youth. After extensive research, we embarked upon this program under the direction of Curtis West. The necessary equipment was purchased, our youth got involved, and the program was opened up to other churches and youth of the surrounding communities. The program was successful and was held annually for several years. Also, In September 2002, the church withdrew from the New Sunbury Association and became affiliated with the Savannah Baptist Association. In 2006 A committee has been selected to research and study the feasibility of rejoining the New Sunbury Association. In October of 2006, the church agreed to rejoin the New Sunbury Association.

The next project undertaken was the installation of new carpet, shingles, and appliances at the parsonage. The south parsonage (trailer) had repairs made on the porch, carport and roof. The loan for the trailer was paid off early.

In the Family Life Center, we installed a new scoreboard for games and a new projector for the AWANA Program. The ladies' and men's bathrooms in the Center were redecorated. New outdoor covers were installed from the church to the Life Center as well as paving improvements to the north parking lot. An automatic screen was installed in the sanctuary and the baptistery was refinished. Also, the ladies' and men's bathrooms in the church were beautifully redecorated. Our thanks and appreciation was extended to Ann Jones, Linda Smith, and others who gave their special talents to these projects.

In August 2004, Randy Dykes became the youth minister and Greg Wilson the music minister. Both the Youth Group and the Choir flourished under their direction. **Randy Dykes resigned on September 27, 2006 to move to Richmond Hill Baptist Church.**

The AWANA program was a great success under the leadership of George and Linda Hall. The addition of an evening meal before AWANA and our prayer service has been enjoyed under the capable leadership of Sandra Quick in our kitchen. John Hubbard was elected as the new AWANA director.

In December 2007, Brother John Hubbard was ordained to the Gospel Ministry by agreement of pastors in the New Sunbury Association. Ordination service was led by our Pastor, Reverend Major Dykes. **Also in December 2007 Brother John Hubbard left to become the Pastor of Walthourville Baptist Church.**

At that time the church decided to put the AWANA program on hold.

In *January 2005*, a deposit of \$991.50 was given to Bowling United Industry for a new steeple. *In February 2005, the new steeple was installed.*

In October 2006, Brother George Hall was ordained to the Gospel Ministry by agreement of pastors in the New Sunbury Association. Ordination service was led by Reverend Major Dykes.

On January 6, 2008, Brother Chris Bowen began his youth ministry at Fleming Baptist Church. The Church welcomed he and his wife, April, to our church.

In *January 2008*, a new roof was installed on the south parsonage. In *February 2008*, a new air conditioner was also installed in the south parsonage.

On May 18th, 2008, at a regular church conference meeting, our Pastor Major Dykes presented Brother Greg Wilson to the Church to be licensed and ordained as a minister, Reverend Wilson was licensed that very night.

Also on *May 18, 2008*, Brother J. C. Thompson reported that Fleming Baptist Church would soon be holding brotherhood meetings again. On June 21, **2008**, first brotherhood meeting was re-established.

In June 2008, Brother Greg Wilson was ordained to the Gospel Ministry by agreement of pastors in the New Sunbury Association. Ordination service was led by Reverend Major Dykes.

During the **2007-2008** church year we had 2 baptisms and 8 memberships by letter, statement or ways other than baptisms. We have 119 active members. We are sad to report the passing of the following members during the **2007-2008** church years. They were Earline and Gordon Blount, Mr. Jonathan Quick, Mrs. Patsy Wynn, Mr. Marvin Schell, Mrs. Inez Phillips, Mrs. Mildred Haymans, and Mr. Don Sweat.

In February 2009, Brother Greg Wilson prayerfully resigned his position for a sabbatical.

In May **2009**, the remodeling of the front wheelchair ramps was completed.

In August **2009**, the church had one death, young Ms. Kelly Moore.

In February 2010, our pastor, Reverend Major Dykes, Jr. resigned.

In March 2010, Brother Kenny Ferguson and Brother Bob Barnes were ordained as deacons. *Sadly Brother Bob Barnes passed away this September(2017) after a 16 year battle with cancer.*

Brother Jerry Bragg was reinstated as an active deacon.

In April **2010**, the renovation of the men's front restroom was started and completed.

At the end of our church year, as of September 30th, **2010**, we have a total of 89 active members.

Reverend Michael Carden accepted pastoral duties of Fleming Baptist Church on July 31, 2011. His wife, Nancy, and their children, Emily, Jamie, and Chrissy are members also.

Also in 2011: We are sad to report that we had several deaths. Those were Helen Gilbert, Odis King, Linda Smith, and Leroy Woods. We are happy to report that we have 26 new members that joined our Church during the past year. They are: Montine Peacock, Georgia Ferguson, Emma Ferguson, Rolanda Fandrick, Arianna Bride, Cameron Van Allen, Tammy Carter, Frank Joyner, Charlotte Joyner, Michael Carden, Nancy Carden, Emily Carden, Jamie Carden, Chrissy Carden, Noah Courtney, Jennifer Courtney, Jenny Bader, Jacob Harris, Emily Harris, Larry Combs, Donna Combs, Kari Sands, Kayla Sands, Kylie Sands, Paula Massy, and Pat Rancourt. Some of the accomplishments during **2011** was the refurbishing of the Fleming Baptist Church Parsonage and the purchase of a new Church Van. All of the trees were removed from the property of the Church Parsonage and the south Parsonage. Also, all of the stained glass windows of the Church were covered with plexi-glass for protective measures.

On January 1 2012, Brother Greg Wilson and his wife Delores returned as Minister of Music.

In July 2012 we as a church called Joe Hanks to be our Youth Minister and Joe and his wife Danielle were moved down from Kentucky.

In October 2012, Brother Joe Hanks was ordained to the Gospel Ministry by agreement of pastors in the New Sunbury Association. Ordination service was led by Reverend Michael Carden.

In February 2014 Reverend Michael Carden abruptly resigned.

On May 25th, 2014 Michael Hughes was ordained as a deacon. He served through a year of Deacon Watch Care and Training.

*From May **2014** until September **2015** Reverend Bob Briley was our interim Pastor. He and his wife Trish were such a blessing to us. **Sadly, Brother Bob passed away. (July 2017)***

Over the last few years we have had numerous outreach events, i.e. 2 Yard “Non-Sales”, “Skate Nights”, Gospel Sings, and “Fall Festivals”. In **2016** we had an unusual “Trunk or Treat” fall festival which was enjoyed by many folks.

In December **2015**, Reverend Tim Hogan became the Church Pastor. In February **2017** the Church was made aware of some health issues Pastor Tim was experiencing and thus Pastor Tim went out on sabbatical. Pastor Tim Resigned in May **2017**.

In the July **2017** Business meeting, Youth Pastor Joe Hanks resigned to pursue a Full-time ministry call @ Northwest Baptist Church in Gainesville, Florida. We will miss Brother Joe and his wife Danielle and his 2 children that have been added to his family while he had been with us. He served well at Fleming Baptist and had several people get saved under his ministry.

Former Pastor Major Dykes passed away February 21, 2018.

In **2018** Under the Leadership of our Children and Youth Teams we had numerous Skate Night events, Fall festival, and an Exceptional VBS time. There were numerous additions to the Church.

The Women of the Church (WOM) had numerous successful projects of outreach. School Supplies for Students, Ditty Bags for the Seaman’s ministry in Savannah, and of course the Operation Christmas Child shoebox ministry.

The Brotherhood of the Church engaged in numerous work day projects and community outreach projects, i.e. handicap ramp builds.

From September 2017 until February of 2019, Pastor Earnie Pirkle was our Interim Pastor. He served in the role of “transitional Pastor” to aid in our recovery, and direction setting, as well as training in leadership. Pastor Earnie served as Pastor of Bull street Baptist in Savannah for 22 years and was foundational in the start up of the Church at Godley Station in Pooler. We thank God for his service alongside us. Under his leadership we had a trained Pastor Search Team that worked diligently to find the will of the Lord in whom we feel is our Current Pastor.

We were greatly blessed, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, Pastoral guidance of brother Earnie, and diligent work of the Pastor Search Team, to have extended a call to our current Pastor, Josh Parker in February of 2019. He was in his 20th year of Gospel Ministry. He brings with him his lovely bride, Jennifer and 4 awesome children, Chloe, Joshua Jr., Madelyn, and Tobey. We have seen Amazingly wonderful growth in our church already since their arrival. Thanks Be Unto The LORD GOD! The Youth Group has exploded. We have had many additions and an Exceptional number of new converts and Baptisms.

Also since Pastor Josh walked in the door and setup his drums (which he plays pretty dog-gone good) we have been working on live music. With the hand of God blessing, Worship Pastor Greg and his wife Delores, and her 2 brothers Randal and Fred, along with Pastor Josh, have been able to form our Worship Band. The 1st in Fleming's history from what we can tell. **(2020 update** The Praise Team is now up to 13 with singers and band members)** **Also in 2019** We had a work day were over 60 souls came together for breakfast and to better our facilities here.

Also in January **2019**, we began a project to place our services on Facebook Live. That project has expanded with the blessings of GOD. We have made many updates in all of the Church's audio and video systems to better that effort. The views of our services and other activities around here have grown well beyond any of our expectations. Also in **2020** the world was hit with the Covid19 Pandemic. During all of the times of Quarantine God blessed us with everything needed to continue services online including the blessing of online giving! This was perfectly finalized and set up mere weeks prior to the time of Quarantine beginning and without us knowing a quarantine was even coming. God is amazing! We are engaged in big plans and incredible Vision here under Pastor Josh's leadership and direction of the Holy Spirit. We began "back in the sanctuary" services on **June 7, 2020**, while a huge majority of the world was still at home from the Covid scare. We have been increasing weekly with both, in house, and online growth. A few weeks ago (**Sept, 2020**) we were blessed by God with additions to our Leadership Team. During a special "called" conference vote, the church added Pastor Michael G. Mahoney, Sr. as associate Pastor and Brother Randy Evans as Deacon. Since then we have affectionately named our Leadership Team,

MAG 7 (Men About GOD).

This team now consists of: Senior Pastor Joshua Parker, Sr.

Assoc. Pastor Michael G Mahoney, Sr.

Worship Pastor Greg Wilson

Chairman of Deacons Kenny Ferguson

Deacon Michael Hughes

Deacon Randy Evans

Sunday School Director Bill Buttersworth

Today, we want to pay special tribute to the Charter members and early members who, in spite of hard times in many cases, were dedicated, God-fearing members who persisted to build a church to present God's word to its community and surrounding communities. It is only because of their selflessness, dedication, and generosity that we today enjoy Fleming Baptist and all its facilities and activities. There are still descendants of the Charter members and early members who are active members of this church today.

C. L. Crowley and Florine Crowley

Mildred Crowley Haymans was the great niece of C. L. Crowley and Florine Crowley. Mildred Haymans passed away in September 2007.

Mack Myrick

Karen Yawn is the great granddaughter of Mack Myrick and her sons Brian and Bobbie are his great-great grandsons.

S. A. and Ola Haymans

Gordon Blount was the grandson of S. A. Haymans and Ola Haymans. Gordon Blount passed away in 2011.

Cody Rozier and Kelly Moore are the great-great grandchildren of S. A. and Ola Haymans.

Wesley and Birdie Haymans

Joyce Haymans is the daughter-in-law of Wesley and Birdie Haymans. Cody Rozier and Kelly Moore are the great grandchildren. Kelly Moore passed away in August 2009. Gordon Blount was also the nephew of Wesley Haymans.

Maude Rogers

Eva Rogers was the daughter-in-law of Maude Rogers. Joyce King is the granddaughter of Maude Rogers and daughter of Eva Rogers.

Brunie Love Shuman

Jewel Rogers Bowen is the daughter of Brunie Love Shuman. Mrs. Jewel passed in Late 2019

If there are any other descendants of our Charter and early members visiting with us today we would also like to thank you for attending this special Homecoming service.

Thanks be unto God whom has never left us or forsaken us!! We have many projects in the works and great hope and joy for our future if the Lord tarries His return. We would hope that our community will be saved for the Kingdom of Christ and their eternal welfare. May Our Great GOD continue His work through us for as long as He pleases and may we be found faithful in His service! Praise be Unto God our Father and The Lord Jesus Christ and The Holy Spirit. 3 in 1 and 1 in 3! Amen.....We the People of Fleming Baptist Church thank you for being with us for this **Home-Coming Gathering 2020**.

May our church continue this legacy and proudly carry the torch in the same spirit, dedication and faith of those who came before us.

(updates since 2011 compiled from various sources by Brother Greg)

Blessed [is] the man who walks not in the
counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path
of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;
But his delight [is] in the law of the LORD,
And in His law he meditates day and night.
He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of
water, That brings forth its fruit in its season,
whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever
he does shall prosper.

Psalms 1:1-3 NKJV

Workday 2019



The Cooks







Our New Logo