

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
BROOKSVILLE, FLORIDA**

**RECORD BOOK
1856 - 1920**

May 5th 1888: (1)

NOTE: It was ordered by the church in conference assembled Saturday May 5th 1888, that the Clerk transcribe into this book all of the old minutes of the Union Baptist Church now in his possession, beginning with its articles of faith, church covenant & order of Decorum.

Paul Willis
Mod.

John C. Law
Church Clerk

Note!
After corrections
were made the page
numbers are different

**Articles of Faith
Union Baptist Church of
Brooksville, Florida**

(1-3)

- 1st** We believe in one only true and living God and that there are three persons in the Godhead - Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- 2nd** We believe that the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the word of God and the only rule of faith and practice.
- 3rd** We believe in eternal and particular election.
- 4th** We believe in the doctrine of original sin.
- 5th** We believe in man's impotency of his own free will and ability to recover himself from the state he is in by nature.
- 6th** We believe that sinners are justified in the sight of God only by the imputed righteousness of Christ.
- 7th** We believe that God's elect shall be called, renewed and sanctified by the Holy Spirit.
- 8th** We believe that the saints shall persevere in grace and never finally fall away.
- 9th** We believe that Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of Jesus imposed upon his churches, that nothing is baptism except immersion: that believers are the only subjects of this ordinance, and that none but baptised believers are entitled to partake of the Lord's supper.
- 10th** We believe in the resurrection of the dead and a general judgment.
- 11th** We believe that the punishment of the wicked will be everlasting and the joys of the righteous will be eternal.
- 12th** We believe that no minister has the right to administer the ordinances only such as are called and have come under the hands of the Presbytery.

Church Covenant

(4-6)

Having been as we trust brought by divine grace to accept the Lord Jesus Christ and to give ourselves wholly to him, we do now solemnly and joyfully covenant with each other to walk together in him with brotherly love to his glory as our common Lord.

We do therefore in his strength engage:-

- 1st That we will exercise a Christian care and watchfulness over each other as occasion may require.
- 2nd That we will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, but will uphold the public worship of God, and the ordinances of his house.
- 3rd We will not omit closet and family religion [sic] at home, nor neglect the great duty of religiously [sic] training our children and those under our care for the service of Church and the enjoyment of heaven.
- 4th That as we are the light of the world and the salt of the earth, we will seek divine aid to enable us to deny ungodliness, and every worldly lust, and to walk circumspectly in the world that we may win the souls of men.
- 5th That we will in all conditions even till death strive to live to the glory of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. And may the God of peace who brought again from the dead the Lord Jesus Christ that great shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the everlasting covenant made us perfect in every good work to do his will working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight, strong in Jesus Christ to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Note

5th left out
That we will cheerfully contribute of our property according as God has prospered us, for the maintenance of a faithful and evangelized ministry among us, for the support of the poor and to spread the gospel over the earth

Rules of Decorum

(6-8)

- 1st** When the church meets in conference and the pastor absent, it shall choose a moderator pro tem in his place.
- 2nd** Conference shall be opened by prayer or praise, and then proceed to business.
- 3rd** Members of sister churches shall be invited to seats with us, but may not vote.
- 4th** The door of the church shall be opened for the reception of members.
- 5th** Minutes of the last meeting shall be read.
- 6th** The peace of the church called for.
- 7th** Resolutions and motions made and seconded shall be determined by yea and nay, except when withdrawn by the mover.
- 8th** Any business of the church may be laid over by the consent of a majority present.
- 9th** A majority shall rule in all cases except in the reception of members which shall be unanimous.
- 10th** The moderator shall have power to preserve order during conference, but any member (if he wishes) may appeal to the conference and a vote of a majority shall be final.
- 11th** No person shall be interrupted while speaking unless he depart from the subject. Neither shall any brother be allowed to speak more than twice on the same subject unless permitted by the conference.
- 12th** All persons shall rise from their seats to speak and address the moderator as brother.
- 13th** The term brother shall be used in speaking of any male member.
- 14th** Each member shall have the privilege of voting on any question put to the church.
- 15th** All acts of the church shall be recorded by the Clerk.
- 16th** This Decorum may be changed by a two third majority present.

Church established 1852 - no records except in the Alachua Baptist Assoc. minutes on microfilm, beginning 1848
Possibility of a pastor before Breaker. On June 28, 1857 Rev. R. G. B. Worley left this church to pastor Eden Bapt.

+(9)

Union Baptist Church at Pierceville. February..1856

After a sermon from our pastor Rev'd J. H. Breaker, conference was opened for business. The 4th and 1st Sundays in each month were announced as the regular appointments for Divine service at this place & the Saturday immediately preceding the first Sabbath in each month was adopted as a day to hold regular monthly church meetings. There being no further business conference closed in order.

Fred K. Lykes, Ch Clerk

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Union Baptist Church at Pierceville. March 2nd 1856.

After preaching by our pastor, Rev. J. H. Breaker, the church opened conference and a door of the church being opened for the reception of members Received by letter Tom a slave belonging to Mr. Joseph Hale. Took into consideration the propriety of appointing a Treasurer for the church and Brother F. Lykes who had previously resigned the office of church clerk was appointed Treasurer of the Church, and Brother Thomas C. Ellis was unanimously elected church clerk from this date.

Fred K. Lykes, Church Clerk

+(10)

Union Baptist Church. April 5th 1856.

After preaching by our Pastor the Rev. J. H. Breaker conference was opened. Application having been made by Bro. Jno. S. Taylor for a letter of dismission from this church. On motion it was unanimously agreed to furnish such letter.

A motion by Brother P. G. Wall was made to fix a certain time for holding church communion. Whereupon it was agreed to hold it quarterly commencing the 1st Sunday of Jan. last.

There being no further business conference closed in order.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk

+(11)

Union Baptist Church at Pierceville 3rd May 1856.

After prayer by our pastor the Rev'd J. H. Breaker conference was opened for business. The case of Clark's Ben being taken up. After some argument & consideration the case was continued for further consideration.

There being no further business conference closed in order.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk

+Union Baptist Church at Pierceville.

In consequence of Indian disturbance conference meetings were suspended in the months of June and July last.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk

+(11-12)

Saturday, August 30th, 1856.

Conference being opened for business, the Church Clerk not being present F. H. Ederington was appointed Clerk pro tem. On motion Brother F. Lykes was appointed to write our letter to the Association. Brother J. H. Breaker presented his letter of dismissal from the Baptist Church at Tampa, and asked for admission into the Union Baptist Church at Pierceville. On motion he was unanimously received in full fellowship. Upon further motion it was thought expedient to appoint delegates to our next association to be held at Fort Clark, whereupon Brother Breaker and brother Wall was unanimously appointed. Brother T. Ellis and F. H. Ederington alternates.

According to request made by the last Association that each church in the bounds of the Association should use their best endeavors to secure as large a sum as possible for the support of missions in the bounds of this association, it was thought expedient to circulate at an early day a subscription list for this object. It was further requested that the church Treasurer should ascertain what amount the Church has contributed in any and every way for the promotion of Christ's Kingdom on earth and that it be embodied in our letter to the next Association. There being no further business conference closed. F. H. Ederington, Ch. Clerk, pro tem.

+(13)

Sunday Sept. 8th, 1856.

After preaching by our pastor, Rev. J. H. Breaker, the door of the church being opened, received for Baptism John Nevitt and Wm. B. Powell and the next Sunday appointed for their Baptism near Lake Lindsey.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

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Union Baptist Church Saturday Oct. 4th 1856.

After preaching by our Pastor, Rev. J. H. Breaker, conference opened. The letter prepared by brother Lykes to the association was submitted, amended and received. There being no further business conference closed in order.

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Next day Sunday Oct. 5th.

After preaching by our Pastor Rev. J. H. Breaker, the door of the church being opened, received for baptism a colored woman belonging to F. Lykes.

A collection was taken up by Bro. F. Lykes for the support of home missions and the sum of Eleven 75/100 dollars was received to be sent up to the association by our delegates.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+(14)

Union Baptist Church Pierceville Dec. 28th 1856.

After preaching by our pastor, Rev. J. H. Breaker, at the close of the service a colored woman of Dr. Mayo was received as a candidate for baptism.

Conference was then organized by appointing Bro. P. G. Wall moderator. On motion it was unanimously agreed upon to call our brother the Rev. J. H. Breaker to preach for the church the next year. There being no other business conference then adjourned.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

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Union Baptist Church Pierceville March 1st 1857.

After preaching by our pastor the Rev. J. H. Breaker the door of the church was opened and received by letter Mrs. Angelina Breaker. The services then closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+(15)

Union Baptist Church Pierceville Sunday April 5th 1857.

After preaching by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker, a colored woman Martha belonging to Cap. Wm. Hope presented herself to the church. After examination by the pastor she was received as a candidate for baptism. The Lord's supper was then administered. The meeting then closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

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Union Baptist Church May 24, 1857.

After preaching by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker the door of the church was opened and received as a candidate for baptism Mrs. Mary E. Powell. The meeting then closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

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Union Baptist Church Brooksville June 28th 1857.

After preaching by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker the door of the church was opened and received as a candidate for baptism Ben a colored man belonging to Anderson Mayo. Also received a colored man by letter by name of Jack Peck belonging to Mr. John May. Also our brother the Rev. ~~J. H. Breaker~~ ^{J. R. G. C.} asked to be dismissed from this church to join the Eden church at Lake Lindsey, which was granted with instruction to the Clerk to issue a letter of dismissal. The meeting then closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+(16)

Union Baptist Church, Sunday 27 Sept. 1857

After preaching by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker, the church resolved itself into conference for appointing Delegates to the Alachua Association to be holden with the New Hope Church Marion County, Fla. commencing Saturday before the 4 Sunday in Oct. next and for other purposes appointed P. G. Wall, Church (protem).

Brethren J. H. Breaker & Thos. C. Ellis were nominated and duly elected as such delegates and P. G. Wall & F. Lykes alternates. Bro. Ellis Church Clerk was appointed to write the usual corresponding letter from this church to the association. A collection was taken up for missionary and other purposes.

The propriety of establishing a Sunday School and bible class at our church at Brooksville was considered and on motion of brother F. H. Ederington was postponed until next Sunday for further consideration. There being no further business conference closed in order.

P. G. Wall, Church Clerk protem.

+(17)

Union Baptist Church Sunday 4th Oct. 1857.

After preaching by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker, conference convened for the purpose of acting on the unfinished business of last Sunday and for other purposes.

Whereupon it was decided that next Sunday should be appointed for a day to meet for preaching and organizing a Sunday School & bible class to examine a corresponding letter from this church to the Association. At the close after meeting a collection was taken up for missionary and other purposes and aded [sic] to that of last Sunday amounting to fifty nine dollars & ten cents.

On motion of bro. Wall brother F. H. Ederington was unanimously elected superintendent of the Sunday School and W. W. Wall Librarian. Brother J. H. Breaker was asked and agreed to superintend the bible class for the present. A small subscription was then subscribed to raise funds to purchase books for a Sunday School library and bro. Breaker requested to make the arrangements to purchase the books. There being no further business conference closed in order.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+(18)

Union Baptist Church Dec. 26, 1857.

After preaching by our pastor, Rev. J. H. Breaker, the church resolved itself into conference. The church clerk not being present Bro. P. G. Wall was chosen Clerk pro tem. The first business was the calling a pastor for the ensuing year, which was unanimously extended to our present pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker. There being no further business conference closed in order.

P. G. Wall, Clerk Protem.

+(19)

Union Baptist Church 21 March 1858.

After preaching by our pastor the Rev. J. H. Breaker, the attention of the church was called to an application made by the colored members of the church to hold communion separate from the white members. Whereupon motion said request was granted to them to do so. Done by order of the church.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

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Union Baptist Church 9th April 1858.

After preaching by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker conference being opened, case of our sister Douglass, who being in a helpless condition, was taken up and a subscription of thirty-nine dollars was subscribed for her support. From a request made by our sister church Eden asking for a committee from this church to meet with them in council on the Saturday before the 2d Sunday in May next to assist in settling some difficulty that had arose. No further business conference then closed in order.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+(20)

Union Baptist Church Pierceville 19th Dec. 1858.

After preaching by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker, the church then proceeded to the election of a pastor to supply this church for the ensuing year. The Rev. J. H. Breaker was unanimously chose.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

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Union Baptist Church Brooksville 10th of April 1859.

After preaching by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker, the door of the church was opened. Arthur a colored man belonging to Mrs. Matilda May presented himself to the church for membership and being examined by our pastor on motion he was received and the right hand of fellowship extended.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

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Union Baptist Church Brooksville 4th June 1859.

After preaching by Bro. Jno H. Benton, conference being opened for business Bro. Benton was licensed to preach the gospel. There being no further business conference was closed.

Thos C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+(21)

Union Baptist Church Brooksville June 18, 1859.

After preaching by our pastor the Rev. J. H. Breaker conference being opened for business, Nancy, Hampton & Merry, slaves belonging to Mrs. Matilda [?] N. May presented themselves to the church for membership. After being examined by our pastor they were received as candidates for baptism & the right hand of fellowship was extended to them.

Also Brother Chesley Hill & Sister Hill his wife & Brother Wm. H. Main was unanimously received into the membership of this church by letter and the right hand of fellowship extended to them. There being no further business conference closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+(22)

Union Baptist Church Brooksville August 7th, 1859.

The Rev. Wm. Carson led in the service before the Rev. J. H. Breaker proceeded to conference was opened and Jack a slave of Bro Ederington was received as being a member in Carolina after a statement of bro. Ederington knowing the fact. There being no further business conference closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

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Union Baptist Church Brooksville 15th Oct. 1859.

After preaching by our pastor the Rev. J. H. Breaker conference being opened a collection was taken up for the support of missions to the amount of fifth-one dollars and seventy five cents. The church then proceeded to appoint delegates to the association to be held at this place. On motion our pastor the Rev. J. H. Breaker & bro. Fred Lykes was appointed. Bro. P. G. Wall & Thos. C. Ellis alternates. There being no further business conference closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+(23)

Union Baptist Church Brooksville 16th Oct. 1859

After preaching by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker, the door of the church being opened, Mrs. Hannah Howe and Miss Sarah Watlington were unanimously received and the right hand of fellowship extended to them. There being no further business, conference closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

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Union Baptist Church Brooksville 20th Nov. 1859.

After preaching by our pastor the Rev. J. H. Breaker, conference being opened. After some discussion on Dr. Benton's case, on motion Bro. J. H. Breaker was appointed as a committee to wait upon Bro. J. N. Benton and notify him that his case would be tried on the 1st Sunday in Dec. next and that he was requested to return his license to this church. Otherwise he will be published. There being no further business conference closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+(24)

Union Baptist Church Brooksville 8th of Dec. 1859.

The Pastor being absent the church went into conference. Appointed Bro. Wm. H. Main to the chair. After prayer by bro. Main, Dr. John N. Benton's case was taken up. After examining all the evidence, he was found guilty and excommunicated by a unanimous vote by the church. The church then proceeded to call a pastor for the ensuing year. Bro. J. H. Breaker was unanimously chosen & the church agrees to pay the sum of two hundred dollars for preaching twice a month. There being no further business conference closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+(25)

Union Baptist Church Brooksville 4th March 1860.

After preaching by our pastor, Bro. J. H. Breaker, conference opened. The case of Jack Wall and Allen Frierson, colored members was taken up. They both appeared and confessed to falt [sic] and asked forgiveness of the church. On motion the sense of the church was taken & they were reinstated to their former position in the church. The charge being made against Henry Law for drunkenness and for using profane language, the church cited him to appear at our next meeting to answer said charges. There being no further business conference closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

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Union Baptist Church 18th March 1860.

After preaching by our pastor the Rev. J. H. Breaker, conference opened the case of Henry Law a colored member was called and on his refusing to appear and answer and by sending word by a messenger that it was not a proper case to come before the church he was excommunicated by a unanimous vote of the church & the clerk or any of the other brethren directed to inform him of the proceedings of the church. There being no further business conference closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+(26)

Union Baptist Church 15th April 1860.

After preaching by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker, conference opened.

On complaints being made against bro William Parlee [?] for drunkenness. On motion bro. Wm. H. Main was appointed to cite him to attend at our next regular meeting to answer said charge. On examination being made for a letter of dismission for Nancy, a colored member belonging to Mr. May, it was agreed to & the clerk directed to make out the letter. There being no further business the conference was closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+(27)

Union Baptist Church Brooksville 6th May 1860.

After preaching by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker, the case of Wm. B. Powell was taken up and on motion by his being found guilty of drunkenness and refusing to hear the church he was expelled [?] by a unanimous vote of the church. Done in conference and by order of the church.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

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Union Baptist Church Brooksville 20 May 1860.

A suggestion being made by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker, the propriety of employing a missionary for this associational district it was resolved by the church that our pastor direct a communication to Elder J. S. Baker pledging our contributions to make up in connection with the contributions of other churches of the Alachua Association the sum of five hundred dollars for his support. Done by order of the church. Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

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Union Baptist Church Brooksville.

After preaching by our pastor the Rev. J. H. Breaker, _____ Delsina Thigpen presented his letter for membership in the church. On motion ~~he~~^{she} was unanimously received and the right hand of fellowship extended the 5th day of July 1860.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+(28)

Union Baptist Church Brooksville Sept. 16th, 1860.

After preaching by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker, the door of the church being opened Martha a colored woman of Mrs. Saxon presented herself to the church & after she was examined by our pastor she was unanimously received.

On motion of Bro. Wall the clerk was ordered to furnish a letter of dismissal to Sister Sarah Clark. Done by order of the church.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+(29)

Union Baptist Church Brooksville Oct 7th 1860

After preaching by our pastor the Rev. J. H. Breaker, conference was opened. A colored woman belonging to Mr. Wiggins presented herself for membership. On motion on a profession of her faith she was received and the right hand of fellowship was extended. A collection was taken up for the support of the Association and for missionary purposes. The church then proceeded to the appointment of delegates to the Association to be held at Ocala.

On motion our pastor J. H. Breaker and John Nevitt were appointed. There being no further business conference closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

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The Union Baptist Church Brooksville Nov. 17th 1861

After preaching by the Rev. J. H. Breaker, the church being opened received as candidate for baptism Henry, a colored boy belonging to Capt. Lykes, and a colored woman belonging to Judge Wall. There being no further business conference adjourned.

Thos. C. Ellis, C. Clerk.

+(30)

Union Baptist Church Brooksville Dec 1st 1861.

After preaching by the Rev. J. H. Breaker, the door of the church was opened and Mrs. Elizabeth C. Henderson was unanimously received as a candidate for baptism. There being no further business the meeting closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, C. Clerk.

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Brooksville 8th Dec. 1861. Union Baptist Church.

The meeting being protracted from the first of this month up to this time, the door of the church was opened & Mrs. Marina May, Miss Susan Wall, Miss Manda Hill, Mrs. Sarah J. Taylor were unanimously received as candidates for baptism.

Thos. C. Ellis, C. Clerk.

+(31)

Brooksville 11th Dec 1861.

The meeting still being protracted up to this time, the door of the church being opened for the acception [sic] of members Sallie A. Hedick, March A. McCarty, Luvinia N. Yelvington, Sarah C. Allen, Charlotte E. Ederington, Mrs. Eliza Hale, Caroline Hale, Mr. Garrard, Indiana Hope, Mrs. Jane McLendon & Julia C. McLendon. All were unanimously received as candidates for baptism.

Thos. C. Ellis, C. Clerk.

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Union Baptist Church Brooksville 12th Dec. 1861.

After preaching by our pastor the Rev. J. H. Breaker, the door of the church being opened, Miss Mary Howell & Antonett Saxon came forward & joined the church & were received as candidates for baptism.

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Sunday the 15th of Dec. 1861.

After preaching by our pastor the door of the church being opened, Mrs. Sings [X] & Miss Idella Hope came forward & joined the church & was unanimously received as candidates for baptism. The congregation was then dismissed & the colored people were called in and after a short exhortation by our pastor the door of the church was opened & eight came forward & presented themselves to the church. After being examined by our pastor, they were received as candidates for baptism, to wit: Mrs. May's Frank. Mr. Eubanks' Sta. Mr. Law's Isaac. Mrs. Peterson's Dinanah. Harriett, Flora & Henry belonging to Capt. Lykes & Mrs. Wm. Eubanks' Louisa. Henry Law, a colored man, who had been excommunicated from the church came forward to be restored. After being examined by our pastor he was restored & the right hand of fellowship extended. The meeting then closed with night.

+(32)

Monday 16th, 1861.

At night after preaching by our pastor, the door of the church was opened & John C. Ellis, Josiah B. Law, Frances Law and Miss Catherine Eubanks came forward & were unanimously received as candidates for baptism. Mrs. Law also presented herself for membership after sufficient evidence of her having been a member of the baptist church in Georgia. She was unanimously received as a member of this church.

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Dec. 17th, 1861. At night.

After preaching by our pastor, the door of the church was opened & Miss _____ Ederington was unanimously received as a candidate for baptism. The meeting then closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, C. Clerk.

+(33)

Brooksville 19th Dec. 1861.

After preaching at night by our pastor, the door of the church was opened. Mr. Randolph Saxon was unanimously received as a candidate for baptism. Meeting then closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

[Note: The dates in original are out of order and transcribed as written. AMOH]

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Friday night 18th Dec. 1861.

After preaching by our pastor, the door of the church being opened, Joseph ~~Law~~ & Miss Jane Law came forward & were unanimously received as candidates for baptism. The meeting then closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Cl'k.

+(34)

Saturday night Dec. 21st 1861.

After preaching by our pastor, the door of the church was opened for the reception of colored members.

Charles & Susan belonging to Maj. Peterson. Prince belonging to Mr. Frierson & Louisa belonging to Mrs. Friebele, & Bettie belonging to John A. Sutton & Lucy belonging to Mrs. Taylor. Nancy belonging to Mrs. Saxon, also April belonging to Mrs. Howell, who had been expelled came forward to be restored being examined by our pastor. He was restored & right hand of fellowship extended him. The meeting then closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, C. Clerk.

+(35)

Sunday 22nd. [1861]

After preaching by our pastor the door of the church was opened for the reception of members & Miss P. Eubanks & Mrs. Lang came forward and were unanimously received as candidates for baptism. The meeting closed. The congregation then repaired to the pool for the purpose of administering the ordinance of baptism.

The door of the church being opened as the pool, Joe belonging to J. E. Frierson, Sallie belonging to Mrs. C. B. O'Neil, Fannie belonging to Mr. A. Frierson presented themselves and were unanimously received.

Thos. C. Ellis, C. Clerk.

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Sunday night 22 Dec. 1861.

After preaching by our pastor the door of the church was opened for the reception of members and G. P. Yelverton and Mrs. Thigpen were unanimously recd. as candidates for baptism. Also, John E. Howell presented his letter of dismissal from the church fellowship in Marion Co. After reading the letter he was unanimously received. The meeting then closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, C. Clerk.

+(36)

Dec. 23rd, 1861. Monday night.

After preaching by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker, the door of the church was opened & Miss Annie Law came forward and joined the church & was unanimously rec'd. The meeting then closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, C. Clerk.

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Dec. 26th, 1861.

At night after preaching by our Pastor, J. H. Breaker, the door of the church was opened and ~~Sr. [?] King~~ and Mrs. C. Q. Nevitt came forward and were unanimously recd. as candidates for baptism.

Thos. C. Ellis, C. C.

+(37)

Union Baptist Church March 1st, 1862.

After preaching by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker, conference was opened for church business. It was resolved and carried that one Sabbath in each month should be assigned to the colored people for preaching. The 3rd Sabbath was appointed to them by the pastor. There being no further business, Conference closed in order.

Thos. C. Ellis, C. Clerk.

+(37-39)

Union Baptist Church 2 day March 1862.

My being absent at different time when members have been received, I have not been able to keep a regular record, but from the 1st day of Dec. 1861 up to this time, the following white members have been received and baptised. The colored members will be found on another page.

1. Mrs. Elizabeth Henderson

2. Miss Susan Wall

3. Mrs. Marina May

4. Mrs. S. J. Taylor

5. Miss Mandy Hill

6. Miss Eliza Hale

7. Miss Caroline Hale

8. Mrs. Margaret Sings

9. Miss Antonett Saxon

10. Miss Leonora Yelverton

11. Miss Sarah Hedick

12. Miss Marsh McCarty

13. Miss Indiana Hope

14. Miss Idela Hope

15. Miss Kittie Eubanks

16. John C. Ellis

17. Miss Charlotte Ederington

18. Miss Frances Ederington

19. Miss Mary E. Howell

20. Miss Dora Saxon

21. Miss Sarah Allen

22. Miss Martha Garrard

23. Josiah B. Law

24. Mrs. Frances Law

25. Miss Jane Law

26. Joseph Wall

27. Mrs. C. Q. Nevitt

28. Mrs. Mary Lang

29. Mrs. Jane McLendon

56. Miss Freddie Lykes

57. Miss Precious Ederington

58. Frank Saxon

59. Thos. P. Gary

60. Mrs. T. A. Gary

61. Miss Pauline Ellis

62. Miss Rebecca Hope

30. Mrs. Thigpen
31. Miss Annie Law
32. Miss Pressie Eubanks
33. Dr. King
34. Mr. G. P. Yelverton
35. Miss Mary Seals
36. Wm. L. Frierson
37. Joseph H. Taylor
38. John Henderson
39. Lott Allen
40. Mr. Hedick
41. Mrs. Martha Frierson
42. Mrs. Hedick
43. Mrs. Allen
44. Mrs. Minnie Wall
45. Miss Alice Peterson
46. Miss Catherine Peterson
47. Miss Isabella Law
48. Miss Julia McLendon
49. Cornelius Seals
50. Mrs. Eubanks
51. Mr. Wm. D. Eubanks
52. Miss Carrie Eubanks
53. Randolph Saxon
54. James Sanderson
55. Miss Virginia Hope

63. Miss Mary Saxon
64. M. Baumgardner
65. Mrs. Frances Hope
66. Mrs. Mary Hope
67. Miss Charlotte Hope
68. Miss Penlope Crum
69. Thos. B. Ellis
70. James L. Ellis
71. Mrs. Mary McMinn
72. George Bishop
73. John E. Harville by letter
74. Mrs. Seals by ~~letter~~ permission
75. Allen B. Henderson by letter
76. Mrs. Elizabeth Munden [?] by letter
77. Mr. Bowden
78. Mrs. Bowden
79. Ann Wilson
80. Mary M. Frierson.

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Union Baptist Church Brooksville March 9, 1862.

After preaching by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker, the door of the church was opened. Mr. Bowden presented himself for membership and was unanimously received as a candidate for baptism. There being no further business conference closed in order.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+(40)

Union Baptist Church Brooksville 16 March 1862.

This being the day appointed for colored people. After preaching by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker, the door of the church was opened for the reception of members & twenty-two came forward & joined & was received as candidates for baptism. Chany Bassett, a colored woman, was restored. The names of those that joined will be found recorded on the list of colored members.

The candidates & congregation then repaired [sic] to the pool & received the ordinance of baptism. The congregation was then dismissed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+

Union Baptist Church Brooksville April 5th - 1862.

Bro. After preaching by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker, conference was opened for business. Charges have been preferred against Br. Baumgardner for drunkenness and using profane language. He not being present to answer said charges, it was moved and carried that his case be put off until the next conference meeting. Bro. Lykes and Bro. Wall were appointed a committee to see him and talk with him. Bro. C. Seals then arose and stated to the church that in the heat of passion he had cursed, and gave as a reason, that it was a remark made by Bro. Gary for which he was sorry. Bro. Seals then repeated the remark that he said Bro. Gary made. Bro. Gary denied making use of the remark. On motion the case was put off until the next conference meeting. There being no further business, conference then closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+(41)

Union Baptist Church Brooksville 4 May 1862.

After preaching by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker, conference was opened for business. The case of Bro. Baumgardner was called and he being present arose and stated that he was sorry for his conduct and promised that he would not be guilty of such any more. On motion the church agreed to continue him as a member of this church. The case of Bros. Seals and Gary was then called. On motion a committee of five was appointed to confer with them on their case. Brethren Breaker, Wall, Taylor, Ederington and Ellis were appointed to act with them. The parties then came before the committee separately [sic] and after agreeing to the proper conditions the case was amicably settled. The church then ratified the settlement. There being no further business, conference closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+(42)

Union Baptist Church Brooksville 18 May 1862.

This being the 3rd Sunday preaching for the colored people. After preaching by our pastor, the door of the church was opened and ten presented themselves for membership and were unanimously recd. Their names will be found among the list of colored members. No further business conference closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+(43)

Union Baptist Church at Brooksville 5th July 1862.

After preaching by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker, conference was opened for business.

Charges being preferred against Bro. M. Baumgardner for drunkenness and disorderly conduct on motion he was excommunicated. There being no further business, conference closed in order.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk

+

Union Baptist Church Brooksville 20th July 1862.

After preaching by our pastor for the colored people, the door of the church was opened and nine came forward and joined. The names will be found on the list of colored members. The congregation then repaired to the pool and nineteen recd. the ordinance of baptism. Ten of the members had joined on the 18th of May. The right hand of fellowship was then extended to the nineteen.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+(44-46)

Union Baptist Church Brooksville Sep. 6th - 1862.

After preaching by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker, conference was opened for business or to receive members. George Black, Hampton Kersey and Mary Kersey, his wife, presented themselves and on motion they were received as members of this church. There being no further business, conference closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+

Union Baptist Church Brooksville Oct. 19th - 1862.

This being the 3rd Sunday, the appointed time for preaching for the colored people. After preaching by our pastor, the door of the church was opened for the reception of members. The following named came forward and were recd. as candidates for baptism: Ann belonging to Wm. Hope; Louisa belonging to Mrs. Sarah Eubanks; Martha belonging to Eubanks; Bert belonging to Mr. Eubanks; Robert belonging to C. B. O'Neil. Also: Ellen belonging to Mr. McCarty was recd. on the certificate of Sister Martha J. Easty that she was a member of the Baptist Church at Tampa.

Charges being brought against Phillip belonging to Mrs. May for taking a horse and riding it without permission and for making false statements and for quitting his wife. After some considerable discussion and he confessing his guilt and stating that he was sorry for taking the horse and making false statements, the church voted to retain him in the church. In the case between his wife it was put off for the next regular meeting for the colored people, which is the 3rd Sunday next November. Charges then being preferred against Tilda belonging to Mrs. May for quitting her husband, the case was put off for next meeting. Charges then being preferred against Stephen belonging to Dr. Mayo, for stealing a knife. He not being present, Charles and Nero were appointed a committee to notify him to appear at the next meeting and answer the charge. The church then examined a letter that had been prepared to send to the Association and adopted it.

.....October 19th, 1862.....continued:

Elder J. H. Breaker, Thos. C. Ellis & Josiah B. Law were appointed delegates to the Association. Wm. L. Fryerson[sic], J. Bowden and John Nevitt alternates. A collection was then taken for Associational purposes, to the amount of \$10.00. Amount contributed by the colored people \$6.65. P. G. Wall, F. H. Ederington and David Hedick were appointed a committee to contract and have built a suitable house at the pool. There being no further business conference closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+(47)

Union Baptist Church Brooksville 29th Nov. 1862.

Conference opened with prayer. Louvinia Yelverton being charged with fornication. The proof of the charge being well established, she was excommunicated from the church. Done by order of the church. There being no further business conference closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+

Union Baptist Church Brooksville 31 Jan. 1863.

Conference opened by prayer and short discourse by our pastor. The question was discussed in regard to the best way to raise money for the ministerial services in our midst and for church expenses. It was moved and carried that a uniform system be adopted on the advalorem[sic] sistem[sic] to raise funds, according to the amount of State Tax. It was farther moved that a committee be appointed to arrange the plan if the church agree to said plan. Brethren F. Lykes, J. M. Taylor, F. H. Ederington, A. B. Mundon, P. G. Wall and Thos. C. Ellis were appointed as a committee.

There being no further business conference closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+(48)

Sunday 1 day of Feb. 1863.

At the close of the services the question of raising money by advalorem sistem was laid before the church and unanimously adopted. The committee then retired and agreed to raise the amount of six hundred dollars for the support of the ministry and church expenses. There being no further business conference closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+

Union Baptist Church Brooksville Feb. 7th - 1863.

Conference opened by prayer by our pastor. The decision of our last conference in regard to raising funds for the support of our minister by an advalorem system was changed. And the church agreed to raise the amount necessary by private subscription. The case against John Henderson was taken and he was excommunicated from the church on proof of his being guilty of fornication. There being no further business conference closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+(49)

Union Baptist Church Brooksville 22d Feb 1863.

At 2 o'clock services was held for the colored people. At the close the door of the church was opened and Charlotte, belonging to Mr. Friebele, presented her letter of dismissal from the church at Tampa & was received as a member of the church. No further business. We received the benediction.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+

Union Baptist Church Brooksville 14 March 1863.

After preaching by our pastor, conference for business. Bro. Wm. L. Frierson having resigned the office of church Treasurer on account of having to go in the service. On motion bro. F. Lykes was unanimously elected Treasurer. There being no further business, conference closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, C. C.

+(50)

Union Baptist Church 26 April, 1863.

After preaching to the colored people, conference was opened for business. Hester Mayo & Martha Saxon was expelled from the church for fornication. Conference closed in order.

Thos. C. Ellis, C.C.

+

Union Baptist Church Saturday 2 day of May 1863.

After a short sermon by our pastor, conference was opened for business.

A complaint being made that Sister McLelon required assistance. On motion Bro. Hedick & Bro. Yelverton was appointed to attend to her wants. There being no further business conference closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, C. C.

+(51)

Union Baptist Church Brooksville 20 July 1863

After preaching by our pastor, conference was opened for the transaction of business among the colored members. On sufficient evidence Rheuben Mayo & Wm. Law - Frank & Estel & Grace was excommunicated from the church for committing fornication.

Thos. C. Ellis, C.C.

+

Union Baptist Church Brooksville 1st August 1863.

After a short discourse by our pastor, conference was opened for business. Bro. Hedick presented his account for furnishing Mrs. McClenon provisions to the amount of \$48.25 which allowed & the committee discharged. There being no further business, conference closed in order.

Thos. C. Ellis

+

Union Baptist Church Brooksville 2 day August 1863.

After preaching by our pastor, the door of the church was opened & Rosa Ann Bassett was received as a candidate for baptism & John Bassett, Sr., reinstated in this church.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+(52)

Union Baptist Church Brooksville 26 Dec. 1863.

After preaching by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker, the Church proceeded to elect a pastor for the ensuing year. The church present called the former pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker & agreed to pay him \$800.00 for the year. The church agreed to organize a neighborhood prayer meeting, to be held at nights weekly. No further business, the meeting closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+

Union Baptist Church Brooksville 28th Feb. 1864

After preaching to colored people in the evening, the door of the church was opened & Will, belonging to Wm. Hope, was received as a candidate for baptism. Several other cases among the colored people was put off until the next meeting. No further business, conference closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+(53)

Union Baptist Church Brooksville 7th March 1864.

After preaching by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker, the door of the church was opened & David Hedick was received as a candidate for baptism.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+

Union Baptist Church Brooksville 2d day Oct. 1864.

After preaching by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker, the church proceeded to appoint delegates to the Association. Brethren J. H. Breaker, F. Lykes, P. G. Wall & David Hedick was appointed. The Clerk was appointed to prepare a letter to be sent up to the Association. There being no further business, conference closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+(54)

Union Baptist Church Brooksville 21 day Jan. 1865.

After preaching by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker, conference was opened for business.

Charges being preferred against bro. F. H. Saxon for being drunk & using profane language. On motion bro. P. G. Wall & Ellis were appointed a committee to notify him to appear at this Church on Saturday before the 1st Sabbath in Feb. to answer said charge. There being no further business, conference closed in order.

Thos. C. Ellis, C.C.

+

Union Baptist Church Brooksville 4th Feb. 1865.

After preaching by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker, conference opened for business. The case of bro. F. H. Saxon for drunkenness & using profane language was called up & he being present acknowledged his guilt & expressed a sorrow for so doing. The church then restored him to his former standing. There being no further business, conference closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, C. C.

+(55)

Union Baptist Church Brooksville 26 March 1865.

After preaching by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker, the door of the church was opened for the reception of members. William Mundane presented himself and asked to be admitted. Stated that he had belonged to a baptist church in Georgia, but had no letter of dismission, but from his orderly conduct for a length of time in Christian like deportment known to this church, he was received as a member of this church. There being no further business, conference closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, C. C.

+

Union Baptist Church Brooksville 8th April 1865.

After preaching by the Rev. J. H. Breaker, the door of the church was opened for the reception of members. Dr. W. W. Hester came forward & was received by letter from the Sante fee[sic] Church. Conference was then opened for church business. The question of dancing or attending balls was brought & the church passed the following resolution:

Resolved that when a practice of the members of this church whether it be dancing or any other practice tending to immorality or unfits the person for the performance of religious duty or the enjoyment of religious consolation, it is wrong and becomes an act of discipline.

There being no further business, conference closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, Church Clerk.

+(56)

Union Baptist Church Brooksville 13 May 1865.

After preaching by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker, conference opened for business. Charges of fornication being preferred against Catherine Eubanks & sustained, she was excommunicated by a unanimous vote of the church. On motion of Bro. F. H. Ederington, the church decided to reconsider the resolution that was passed at our last church meeting on the subject of dancing & on Saturday before the 4th Sabbath in this month was appointed for the church to meet and act on this subject. No further business, conference closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, C. C.

+(57)

Union Baptist Church Brooksville 10th June 1865.

After a short discourse by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker, conference opened for business. The following resolution was passed on the subject of church members dancing.

Resolved that we as a church will not tolerate dancing among our membership, as we believe it to be against the teaching of the Gospel.

Bro. J. H. Breaker then read a communication that he had received from bro. F. H. Saxon. Brethren Judge Taylor, Ederington & Dr. Hester were appointed to wait on bro. Saxon & report. No further business, conference was closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, C.C.

+(58)

Union Baptist Church Brooksville 10th June 1865.

After singing and prayer by our pastor, conference was opened for business. The committee that was appointed to report at our last church meeting in the case of a letter received by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker, from bro. F. H. Saxon. On motion the same committee was continued & requested to report at this meeting. No further business, conference closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, C. C.

+

Union Baptist Church Brooksville 15th Oct. 1865.

After preaching by our pastor, the Rev. J. H. Breaker, for the colored members, conference opened for business. Charges being preferred against the following named colored persons.

Jenny for using profane language.

Martha for taking another woman's husband.

Bill for the same crime.

Flora Lykes for using profane language.

~~Till~~ & Nero for dancing.

Hope, Sam, Tom Lykes, Charlie May & Tom Wall was appointed a committee to cite the same to appear at the next meeting for colored members to answer to said charges. There being no further business, conference closed.

Thos. C. Ellis, C. C.

+(59)

Union Baptist Church Brooksville March 10th- 1866.

After singing and prayer by the Rev. J. H. Breaker, conference opened for business. So few members being present, conference closed. The next Saturday being appointed to make arrangements for the calling of a Pastor for our church the present year.

+ 60
Union Baptist Church Brooksville March 17th - 1866.

After singing and prayer by the Rev. J. H. Breaker, conference opened for business. When it was agreed upon to call The Rev. Mr. Perry as pastor for our church, it was also agreed that Bro. Lykes confer with him as to the terms in behalf of the church; also the following named members - Sarah Clark, Hannah Howe, Idella Allen, Indiana Garrison, Wm. H. Main was withdrawn the hand of fellowship, not for immorality but for joining another church not of the same faith and order.

There was a committee appointed of the following named brothers - Wall, Ederington, Hedick to report at our next meeting. A request being made by Bro. Thos. C. Ellis for a letter of dismission from this church for himself and family, namely - Thos. C. Ellis, J. B. Ellis, Sarah Ellis and Pauline Ellis, which was granted and to be written by the clerk and officially signed by him. No further business, conference closed.

Wm. L. Frierson, C.C.

+(61)

Union Baptist Church Brooksville, Florida April 25th, 1866

After singing and prayer by Bro. Simmons, he was elected to the chair and conference was opened for the transaction of business.

The minutes of last meeting was called for but could not be procured on account of the absence of the clerk. 1st. it was agreed that Bro. Perry be paid for his services in visiting and preaching to the church on two previous occasions, this to be done by public collection.

The report of the committee which had previously been appointed to wait on parties who had been dancing was then called for. After which report, the case of Dr. Gary was acted upon & he was expelled from the church for the act of dancing. The cases, that of Mrs. Gary, Mrs. Virginia, Mrs. Samuel Hope, Miss Mary Howell, Miss Carrie Hale, & Mrs. F. Saxon were acted upon & they were also expelled from this church for the act of dancing & it was determined that a written notice of their expulsion be furnished to each one of them by the clerk. The case of Mr. James Landerson was then presented with a charge of drunkenness, fighting & profane swearing. A committee was appointed consisting of brethren F. Lykes & J. H. Breaker to wait upon him. Request was then made for a letter of dismission for bro. Drew & was granted. The letter was to be written by the Clerk & signed by him officially. After which conference closed.

J. B. Law, Church C pro tem.

+(62)

Union Baptist Church Brooksville January 15th, 1871.

After reading by bro. Lykes & prayer by bro. Welch, conference opened for the transaction of business, Bro. Welch presiding as moderator.

The subject of procuring a pastor for our church was presented and acted upon, which resulted in the call of bro. G. G. Kirkland to the pastoral care of the church for the present year.

Bro. Welch then applied for a letter of dismission from the church that he might unite with some other church of the same faith and order which was granted. There being no further business conference then adjourned.

J. B. Law, Church Clerk pro tem.

- 136 Brooksville Sun, September 22, 1944.
- 137 Brooksville Journal, August 4, 1949.
- 138 Ibid., September 15, 1949.
- 139 Brooksville Sun, April 14, and 20, 1950.
- 140 Brooksville Journal, December 10, 1953.
- 141 Ibid., April 22, 1954.
- 142 Ibid., April 14, 1955, Brooksville Sun-Journal, November 9, 1969, and Economic Development Profile, p. 23.
- 143 Brooksville Herald, March 5, 1926.
- 144 Ibid.
- 145 Ibid., March 23, 1926.
- 146 Ibid., April 9, 1926.
- 147 Ibid.
- 148 Ibid., January 28, 1927.
- 149 Ibid., February 11, 1927.
- 150 Ibid., June 10, 1927.
- 151 Ibid., July 12, 1927.
- 152 Brooksville Journal, July 10 and December 4, 1930.
- 153 Ibid., August 6, 1931.
- 154 Ibid., August 6, 1931.
- 155 Ibid., August 13, 1931.
- 156 Ibid., September 10, 1931.
- 157 Ibid., August 27, 1931.
- 158 Ibid., September 17, 1931.
- 159 Ibid., October 29, 1931.
- 160 Ibid., January 28 and July 14, 1932.
- 161 Cox and Dovell, Florida From Secession to Space Age, pp. 182-84.
- 162 Brooksville Journal, July 14, 1932.
- 163 Ibid., July 21 and August 11, 1932.
- 164 Ibid., October 20 and November 24, 1932.
- 165 Ibid., March 9 and April 6, 1933.
- 166 Ibid., August 10 and September 21, 1933.
- 167 Ibid., April 11, 1935 and October 1, 1936.
- 168 Brooksville Sun, January 18, 1952.
- 169 Economic Development Profile, p. 19.

Chapter Five

POT POURRI Selected Church Histories

As in the case of most frontier areas, religion played a prominent role in the life of the early residents of Hernando County in both a religious and a social sense. However, much of the spiritual development of the nineteenth century has been lost and that which is known has been pieced together from the recollections of early citizens and more modern sources. As it would be impossible to accurately cover the histories of all the churches which have flourished in the county since its founding, the following account will only describe the religious development of some of the oldest and largest churches in the county.

One of the earliest religious institutions to organize a congregation was the Union Baptist Church. Although it may have had earlier antecedents, its oldest records date back to 1852, when it was located in the settlement of Pierceville situated some three fourths of a mile southwest of today's county court house. John Townsend, a pioneer resident of the county, was one of its principal backers. Frederick Lykes and Thomas C. Ellis were its first clerks. At that time there were no resident ministers and services were conducted by a circuit rider on two Sundays per month. In those days, slaves were permitted to worship with their masters. An early example of this occurred on May 2, 1856, when Tom, a slave belonging to Joseph Hale, became a church member. The slaves sat in the galley and were accorded a separate communion. This policy was followed as late as 1862, but ceased after the Civil War when the slaves became free. The

start of the Third Seminole War and the Indian raid at nearby Darby against the Bradley's forced a suspension of church services in June and July 1856. The pastor then was the Reverend J. H. Breaker who served until 1866. He was paid \$200 per year for his services. The first reported collection for missions totaled \$11.75 on October 4, 1856.¹

When Joseph Hale died in 1855, he left a one acre plot of land to the church which was included in a larger one donated to the county for the development of a county seat. In 1857, the Union Baptist Church moved into a wooden structure built on that land on North Main Street across from today's Hernando State Bank. Frank H. Ederington was listed as the Sunday School Superintendent for that year. At that time, Baptismal ceremonies were held at the edge of nearby lakes. They were later moved to a pool in the Shadow Lawn Subdivision which was used down to the 1890's. Operating budgets were then very small, that of 1863 amounting to only \$600. At the first recorded prayer meeting held on December 29, 1863, it was decided to organize weekly neighborhood meetings. Services were held in the building on North Main Street until it burned in 1882. A paragon of the church during the 1880's was Mrs. S. S. Campbell who had come to Brooksville with her husband about 1869. She was active when the name of the church was changed to the First Baptist Church of Brooksville in 1889.² Disaster struck the church's building again in January, 1899 when it burned for a second time along with about one-fourth of Brooksville. Only a large bell survived which had been rung each Sunday for years by a black sexton named Uncle Jackson.³

Plans were quickly formulated to construct a new church on the same location. William S. Jennings, A. N. Chelf, W. E. Law and W. S. Jordan were appointed as a building committee.⁴ Its construction was slowed by the difficulty of getting a builder and that of obtaining the desired materials. David Ferdon, a contractor from St. Petersburg, was asked to come to Brooksville to discuss construction plans, but he replied that he was so busy that he would be unable to do so

for some time.⁵ Then materials were so slow in arriving that Jennings had to inquire as to their whereabouts. But he received no clear explanation for the delay.⁶ At last, on November 1899, the building committee applied for and received permission from the city commission to construct a 30x40 foot building, containing an 8x20 foot vestibule and a 10x20 foot room at the rear. It was to be of frame construction with brick veneer and a metal roof.⁷



Brooksville Baptist Church c. 1908

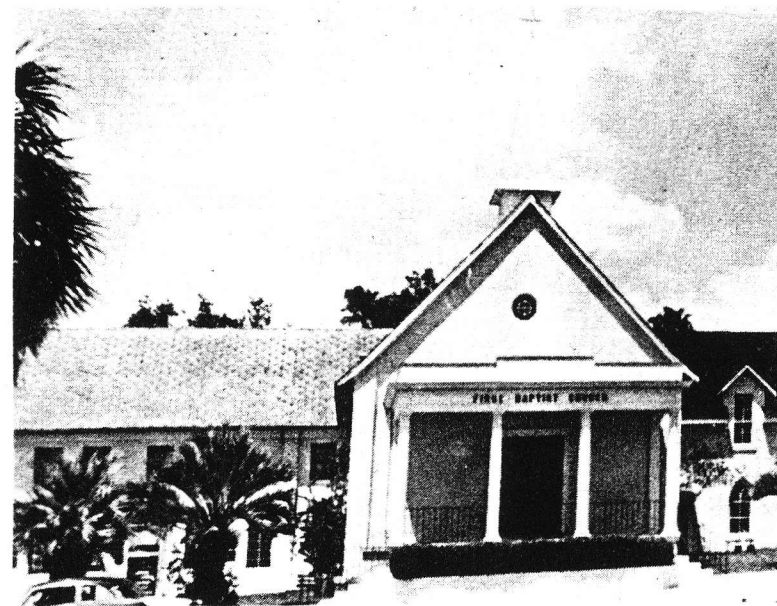
Using the 1899 building as a nucleus, the church was enlarged from time to time during the next several decades. A pastorium was built in 1907 when Reverend George Hyman arrived as the institution's first full time minister.⁸ The congregation continued to grow, especially in the boom period when Sunday School attendance jumped from an average of 110 in 1926, to 196 in 1927. Speculation concerning the reason for it led to the conclusion that it might have been due to the preaching of J. S. McLemore who



Brooksville Baptist Church c. 1920

had recently become the new pastor. In any event, accommodations were so tight that a three classroom addition to the church was added in 1927.⁹ The membership continued to rise reaching 577 in 1952.¹⁰ Presently, the church occupies a relatively new group of buildings on Howell Avenue having moved there in the early 1970's.

Another early church which served the pioneer residents of Hernando County was the Brooksville Methodist Church. Its first minister was A. J. Devours who was appointed by the Florida Methodist Conference in 1843.¹¹ From then until the 1870's Brooksville Methodists were apparently served by circuit riding clergy who held services in the homes of the congregation. The first building was erected in the late 1870's or early 1880's under the ministry of either A. M. C. Russell or H. W. Joiner. It was a frame structure which served only a



First Baptist Church c. 1953

small membership. Services, originally held only once or twice a month, were conducted weekly by the late 1880's.¹² The one room structure costing but \$5,000 was destroyed by a hurricane which swept through the county in the late 1880's.¹³

When the Reverend George W. Sellers came to Brooksville in 1891 he found no building, few members, and a subscription of only \$142 left by the previous pastor, Reverend Wilson. Sellers went to work immediately, increasing the membership from 50 to 240 and subscribing \$7,000 for a new church within a span of six months. Plans were designed and a builder hired and within a short time a new church was built on Broad Street where the present one now stands. It was composed of brick brought from Palatka. The lumber, bricks, sand, and other materials were donated by local businessmen. The railroad even deadheaded the freight for materials shipped into Brooksville.¹⁴ By the



The First Baptist Church of Brooksville was established as the Union Baptist Church of Pierceville in 1852 and is one of the oldest Baptist churches in the state of Florida. The church has four major buildings situated on six and one half acres on a hill three blocks north of the downtown public library and five blocks from the county government center. The church is proud of its history and heritage and has opportunity to minister as a traditional presence in the life of the community. The church is a leader in innovative ministry approaches and in benevolence ministries. The church has been active in associational and state Baptist life. The congregation is made up of a wide range of ages, vocations and economic demographics. The leadership is made up of people who have joined our church in many different decades. There is a distinct traditional feel to worship and structure but there are many evidences of innovation and experimentation.

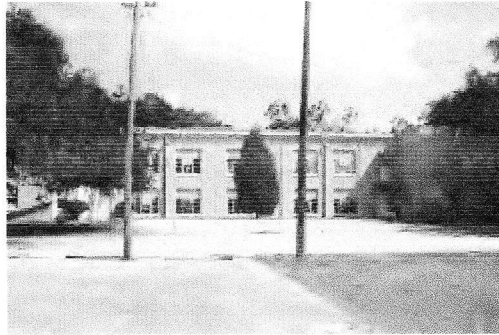


The church is located in the heart of Brooksville. For a map and detailed directions on how to find us just click on the the above picture.



The church's business and ministers' offices are located in the Administration Building. The main reception room is in the center of this building. The door is clearly marked "Church Office". This reception room also services our Helping Hands Ministries which is a benevolence

ministry providing food, clothing and emergency gasoline vouchers for those in our community in need. Six other churches join with us in this ministry. Office hours are normally 8:00AM till 5:00PM Monday through Thursday and 8:00AM till 4:00PM on Friday. Appointments can be arranged ahead of time. Helping Hands is open from 9:00AM till Noon Monday through Friday.



The large flat roofed building is the main classroom building for Sunday School and Wednesday activities. Many meetings take place in this building during the week. A special adapted area has been prepared to care for preschoolers during most regular church activities. Enter either of the ground level doors. The preschool suite is located in the hall way connecting the two entrances. This Building was built in 1925 as Hernando High School.



The white building next to the sanctuary is the fellowship hall. Many meetings including Sunday Morning Adult Study classes meet here. The building was built in the 1930s originally to serve as the cafeteria for Hernando High School.