
Grady County Historical Society – Churches

Midway Baptist Church

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Midway Baptist Church to celebrate centennial

Midway Baptist Church is holding its Centennial Celebration on April 14, 2013.

Church members are asking members, former mem-

bers, former pastors and friends to join in as they celebrate 100 years of ministry in Grady County's Midway Community.

Services will begin at 10:30 a.m., April 14, followed by lunch. Nursery services will be available. The church is located at

2389 Georgia Highway 93
South, Cairo.

"We are looking forward to seeing you!"

CM 3-6-13

children also survive.

Rev. Leo Lewis Begins Ministry At New Bethel

9961-1966
FEB 5 1966

The Rev. Leo Y. Lewis, who served as pastor of Midway Baptist Church in Grady County for the past 4½ years, has accepted a call to New Bethel Baptist Church in the Colquitt County Association and will preach his first sermons Sunday.

He succeeds the Rev. Hubert Mercer, who accepted a call to the pastorate of the Boston, Ga., Baptist Church.

New Bethel Baptist Church, which has a membership of approximately 380, with a full church program, recently renovated the sanctuary and now has completed changes in the pastorium.

The Rev. Lewis is a native of Grady County and Midway Church which he has served for more than four years is located in the community where he was reared. He is a graduate of the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. After graduation he performed associational missionary work and pastored churches in Arkansas for 18 years. He also was pastor of Bethel Baptist Church at Flomaton, Ala., for three years before returning to Georgia.

Mrs. Lewis, a native of Ocala, Fla., attended the Seminary in New Orleans and has engaged extensively in Woman's Missionary Union work, Sunday School, Training Union and the music ministry of churches where her husband has served as pastor. She was active in the state, district and associational W.M.U. and Sunday School work in Arkansas.

The Rev. and Mrs. Lewis have one son, a certified public accountant in Tennessee, and they have three grandchildren. The oldest is a student in Baylor University, Tex.

Dear Julien:

This from Saturday's Moultrie
Observer is sent to you just as
a matter of information.

81 ✓ He is a great grandson of
Prior Lewis, Sr. Sharshele preacher
and a powerful influence
in the territory which is now
Grody County 100 years ago,
also before and after that time.
Until I read this I didn't know
Leo Y. Lewis was a Seminary graduate.

Preachers have come a long
way in education, but I doubt
they are better men and I am
sure they do not now wield
such powerful influence in
their communities as the
old timers did -

2/7/1966

W. B. D.

Re L Co 1st attempt

Today I phoned Mr. Leo Lewis and asked him about his ancestor Elder Pryor Lewis and he didn't know much about his ancestor but told me to phone Mrs. Hattaway Billingsley who was the daughter of Mr. Wilbur Key, and she was a great-granddaughter of Elder Pryor Lewis. I did call Mrs. Billingsley and she had studied her family history and had even been up into Carolinas, Virginia, to find about whence they came and it was interesting talking to her. She said Elder Pryor Lewis migrated from South Carolina and she was not sure but she thought probably he stopped along the way further up in Georgia, maybe North Georgia or middle Georgia before coming South to settle permanently in what was then Thomas County. One of the neighborhoods where the Lewis' lived was in the area around what is now Midway Church on the Cairo to Thomasville Highway. I have been to the Lewis Cemetery and she said that there was Pryor Lewis and also ~~Pryor~~ Pryor Lewis, Jr., buried there but I will get the dates from the tombstones there if I use this name in connection with one chapter in the Genesis of Cairo book.

What is given here is authentic and I already knew it but I wanted a source ^{or a} ~~of~~ reference that was dependable.

JBR

This a truly great
Brower of Thomas Co
before I died

July 20, 1965

Dear Julien:

Churches.

Your letter of yesterday, July 19.

As previously suggested by you, I will mention the fact that Leo Y. Lewis, grand or great grandson of Elder Prior Lewis, Sr., is now pastor of Midway (Missionary) Baptist Church, located within a mile of Poplar Springs Primitive Baptist Church, etc. This will be done in connection with the sketch on Poplar Springs Church—and not as a separate sketch about Midway Church.

As to making any changes in the wording of that first paragraph in the preamble or preface to the subject "Churches", I will give this some further consideration and thought.

But let me say now that "I don't give a rip" as to what the preachers of Cairo or church members think of me personally. I don't intend for any of my writing to be a "sop" for them. Neither do I want any praise or acclaim for what I am doing. The only pride or vanity that I have in all this is the fact that my name is Roddenbery and I glory in my ancestry. I am undertaking to honor our grandfather, my father, and your father. That is my primary motivation in publishing this book. I am trying as far as possible to refrain from injecting my personal opinions and philosophy. But I am doing my utmost to be honest and truthful in everything that is said. The WAY I say it may not please some people but that is immaterial to me. Yet I have no intention of offending (unless such offense is deserved), and there will be times when disagreeable truths will be left unsaid, unless the telling is necessary.

Am momentarily expecting word as to when you will be here.

Yours,

JBR

Just as an item of interest to you, regarding people switching from Primitive Baptist to Missionary Baptist, although I am not close to the Lewis family and barely know them, I do know that since Leo Lewis became pastor at Midway, his parents switched from Poplar Springs to join his church at Midway, and Mr. Ira Lewis (Leo's father) is now in his 90's. This means that he, at the age of near 90, switched from Primitive to Missionary Baptist to be a member of his son's church.

MCA

6-24-1961
This is not in what was
to be
the church
The church is not in
Centennial In
Month Of August

OCHLOCHNEE, Ga. —Midway Baptist Church, one of Thomas County's oldest churches, will commemorate its centennial in August.

The church was constituted in 1861 before either the towns of Meigs or Ochlochnee were chartered. It was located at a point about "mid-way" between Thomasville and Camilla, hence the name Midway Church.

Only four churches in the county are older than Midway. They are Thomasville First, 1849; Friendship, near Metcalf, 1848; Summerhill, near Boston, 1853; Barnett's Creek, near Thomasville, 1856. It appears that Friendship is the oldest church in the county, and when organized, was a member of the old Florida Baptist Association of Leon and Jefferson Counties.

The Centennial celebration at Midway is to be combined with "home-coming" exercises on August 13, which will be the closing date of the annual revival services. Planning committees have been appointed and arrangements will be made for the entertainment of the present congregation, former members and guests. The Rev. Charles C. Baker, of Pelham, is the present pastor.

The church, with a century of active and useful Kingdom services, is today one of the outstanding and well organized rural churches of this section. Of the hundred year period two men served as pastor for 63 years, the late Rev. J. B. Alagood, 40 years and the Rev. J. Gorham Garrison,



an

1861

Church

Could go in either

Part 3

or " 4

+ as is still active best

Put in Part Four