

DUPONT BAPTIST CHURCH

The Dupont Baptist Church grew out of the efforts of Sugar Loaf, Knob Creek, and Ellejoy Baptist church members who had moved into the Dupont Community. They met in the Old Pickens School and with Reverend W. E. Conner as moderator, J. P. Rogers as secretary protem, and Reverend R. C. Rule, preacher, and organized the Dupont Baptist Church.

December 7, 1907, Reverend W. E. Conner became pastor for \$50 per year salary. An appointed committee found land which was bought from John Latham for \$25 and with sawed down huge poplar trees hauled from the hollow below the old Pickens School, a building was constructed. Members agreed to make a certain number of boards for the roof and Aunt Mary Reagan rode in a hack all over the countryside asking for donations to help build the church. People gave chickens, eggs, produce of every kind which was converted into money at Dick Reagan's store.

Dedicated people finished building the church in September, 1909 for \$812.83 with \$108 unpaid. By September 24, the church was paid for and dedicated. A revival followed with 44 additions, 33 by profession of faith, under the preaching of Reverend E. A. Cate.

There was no back door. Women entered at the left front door and men at the right. Once Pastor W. E. Conner came to church on an icy day with his britches frozen and his feet numb. He was faithful through all kinds of weather.

In February, 1910, men gathered at the church with long poles and ropes to skid the new bell into the belfry. It tolled for every church service and many times for deaths. The church cemetery was purchased in 1911. Until 1920 there were only Saturday and Sunday services once a month. At that time they began having preaching on the second and fourth Sundays.

The first musical instrument, an old pump organ, was bought in 1923 when Robert Householder was organist. In 1938 an \$80 piano was purchased.

In the following years class rooms were added. A concrete baptistry took the place of river or creek baptizing. Many dedicated wonderful pastors served, each adding to the church's history.

In 1950 the church was completely remodeled and put on a solid foundation of mountain stone. Stained glass cathedral windows, paneling, hardwood floors and new lighting made the church beautiful.

When Reverend T. M. Cody was pastor, an unusual revival was held with cottage prayer meetings preceeding. Christians came to church in teams of twos every thirty minutes from 7 p.m. until 9:30 a.m. praying for the revival. No one talked except to God

during the thirty minute period. The revival lasted three weeks and resulted in 31 professions of faith.

Ladies organized WMU in 1954 and have always been a strong influence on the church growth. The church now owns a nice pastorium. There is a nursery for the babies, a sound system is installed and a beautiful river scene painted in the baptistry. There is now an organ and the membership has grown to over 400. We pray it will always be a Christian influence in Dupont Community.

Pastor, Leon Mayo, 1989.

Information came from a Dupont History book written by Edna G. Valentine.