

Written for "Homecoming" in 1949 for
Apr 24th History Of Inman Methodist Church Centennial Celebration

One hundred years ago our church has its beginning in a small log house which was built on a 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ acre wooded area given by Uncle Roland Stubbs. In the deed which was dated February 6, 1849 this building was called a meeting house. It stood in a grove of trees across the road from our present cemetery. The Trustees were: Elisha Hill, James Hightower, Mozee Harp, and Thomas Turner. It was well attended and during revivals a brush arbor was built to accommodate the crowds, who came from miles around in carriages, wagons, on horseback and on foot.

No record of the pastors of this church has been found but we know that they were real circuit riders and that their churches were far apart. Rev. Alfred Dorman is known to have been one of these. In December 1853 another acre of land was obtained and long before the War Between the States a new church was built across the road from the old one. Two new trustees were added at this time - A. W. Gray and William Chambers. The Pastor of this church, called "Liberty Chapel", lived in Fayetteville and served several other churches. They sometimes has preaching during the week, and especially on Saturday. This was no occasion for dress and the men would often stop their plows, strip off the gear and ride to church in their work clothes. Day schools were scarce and the Sunday School teacher often taught the "blue back" along with the Bible. In this way many were taught to read who would have had no other opportunity to learn. There was no musical instrument in the old log church and none in this one until some years later when an organ was put in. The members brought their own hymn books from home and sang some of the same good old songs that we sing today.

It was not customary to put flowers in the church at that time but the woods on the grounds were beautiful with wild flowers. There were many local preachers and exhorters, as they were called, but the first pastor we have on record was J. W. McIntosh in 1883, sometime after that came J. R. Smith and B. Sanders.

It was a common thing for members to be tried for misconduct and they were often dismissed from the church. Many of them were afterward re-instated.

About 1890 Inman was taken off the Fayetteville Charge and the Inman circuit was formed. This circuit consisted of Inman, Brooks, New Hope and County Line for sometime. The pastor preached on one Saturday and Sunday each month. At our church there was preaching every Sunday, the local elders filling the pulpit except on the pastor's Sunday. Uncle Daniel McLucas, Uncle Bogan Mask, and Uncle J. W. Elder had regular appointments for years.

The Sunday School at this time was well attended. There was a large Bible Class and many of the older people were regular attendants.

Other ministers who served this church were: C. M. Verdell, C. S. Wright, S. M. Thomas, W. C. Davis, N. E. McBrayer, B.E.L. Timmons, J. W. Bailey, J. S. Askew, A. E. Scott, R. P. Tatum, J. S. Hill, C. D. Read, and J. R. Jones.

By 1920 our church was badly in need of repairs. In winter the road would sometimes get almost impassable and Sunday School would have to be suspended. So it was decided to build a new church at Inman. This was done in 1920 under the leadership of Rev. A. W. Conway who felt that he was sent to build our church. Some of the members gave timber, others cut, hauled and sawed it into lumber, many gave of their time and worked faithfully. The last of the money was raised and the church was cleared of debt at a homecoming in 1924. It was then called the Inman Methodist Church. The women raised the money to paint the building, buy a piano and bell, by working a cotton patch.

During the hundred years since it was founded, our Church has had members in three wars. During World War II our flag had 23 stars, one of them a gold star.

Our pastors since Bro. Conway have been: W. E. Brown, Z. Speer, J. R. Terrell, J. S. Askew again, W. R. Williams, J. C. Callaway, V. O. Gentry, L. P. Huckaby, G. H. Stone, Z. V. Hawks, T. W. Holbrook, H. G. Garrett, Lamar Cherry, N. B. Dickens, W. J. Graham, Jacob Lackey, R. E. Whatley, Fred Stinson and J. R. Thompson.

We love our church and we pray that its influence may spread and that it will be a blessing to many people.

"Oh, God, our help in ages past
Our hope for years to come
Be thou our guide while life shall last
And our eternal home."

"Advance, O Church of God, Advance!
We dare not longer wait
To share our Christ with all the world
It is already late."