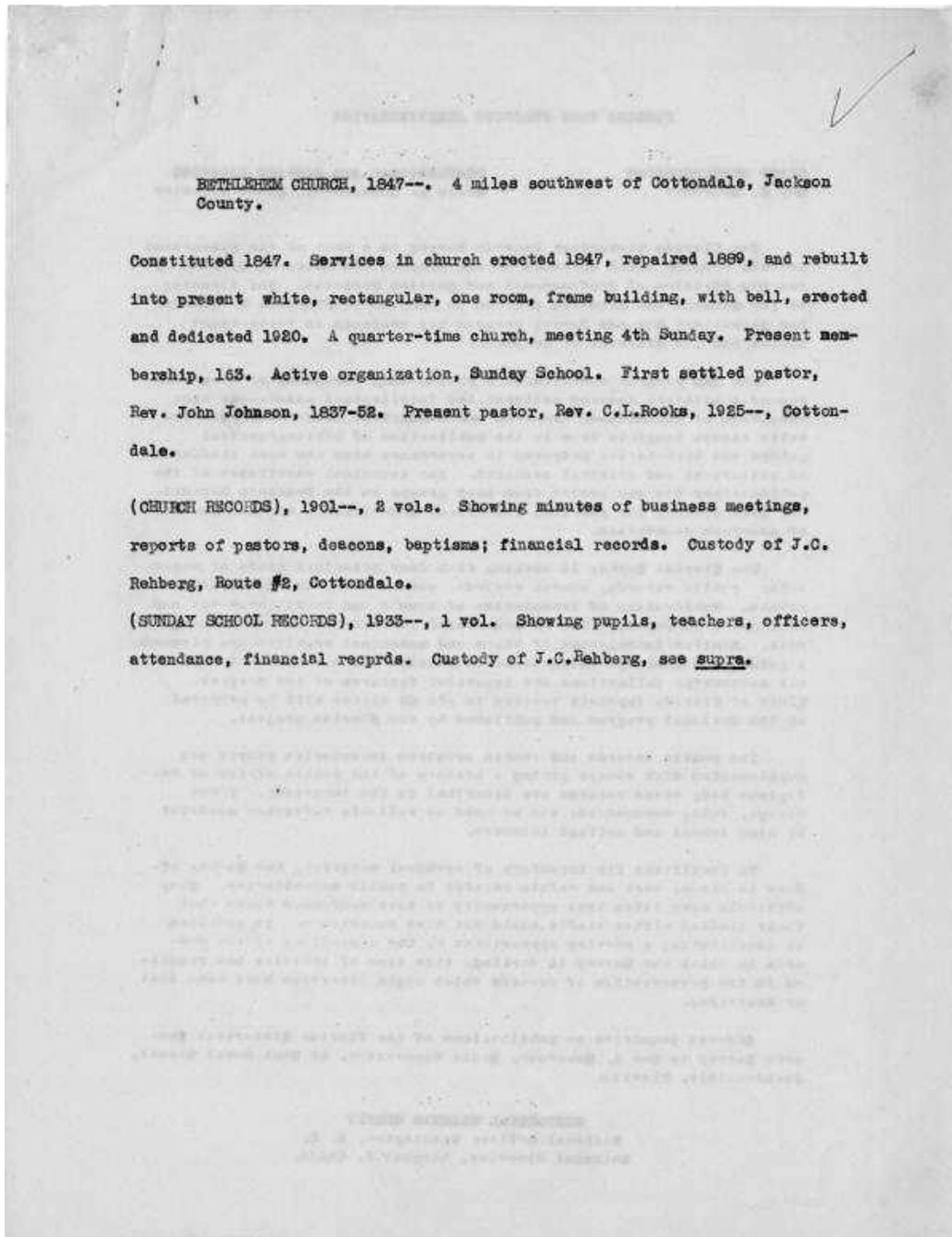


C. L. Rooks served as pastor of Bethlehem Baptist Church, Cottondale; Piney Grove, Cottondale, 1937; New Hope Baptist Church and Providence Baptist Church. He married Mrs. J. W. Rodgers of Malone in 1959.

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Tallahassee Sunday.  
**Rev. C. L. Rooks** of Cotton-  
dale, pastor of Providence  
Church, visited friends here  
Sunday afternoon.

## New Hope Church Is Dedicated

MARIANNA, Feb. 12—(Special)—  
Dedicatory services were held on  
Sunday, February 8, at the New  
Hope Baptist Church, about four  
miles south of Marianna.

The **Rev. C. L. Rooks**, pastor of  
Providence Church and the first  
pastor of New Hope upon its com-  
pletion several years ago, preached.

Greetings from Chipola Associa-  
tion by the **Rev.** A. G. Wood fol-  
lowed a welcome address by T. M.  
Spence, choir director.

The dedicatory prayer was by The  
**Rev.** Willis F. Melvin, pastor of  
Piney Grove Baptist Church.

Following a luncheon the full  
dedication program was conducted  
by the **Rev.** Pope Hulett, pastor of  
the church for the past year.

Around 125 members attended the  
dedicatory occasion.

Rev. C. L. Rooks resigned Sunday night as pastor of Providence Baptist Church.

**Kent Reunion  
Held Sunday**

About 1,200 members of the Kent clan, one of the oldest families in West Florida, held their annual reunion Sunday at White Pond Baptist Church, two miles south of Alford.

Family members from Northwest Florida, South Alabama, and Georgia were entertained by the Branton Quartet and the Florida School for Boys Band under the direction of M. D. Womack.

Rev. C. L. Rooks, pastor of the church, blessed the picnic dinner which each family brought and spread under the trees at noon.

In charge of the arrangements was John Kent of Chipley.

The first record of church minutes were written in April 1891. The first pastor serving was Bro. J.W. Johnson. In February 1892 a Standing Committee was elected to tend to the church business at that time.

In 1892, Bro. D.W. (Dan) Creamer was elected as pastor and John Jefferson Ebenezer Washington Taylor was elected Clerk of the church.

In 1893, Rev. S.W. Locke was elected pastor and served for three years. Also in 1893 the church sent delegates to the association in August.

In 1896, Bro. J.W. Johnson served as pastor again. About 1896 the church finally agreed to observe the service of foot washing once a year on the Friday before the last adjournment of the pastoral year. They also set up the rules a member must follow.

In May 1897, Bro. Charley Locke was ordained at Piney Grove Church and then was called to preach there the same year.

Bro. William Sapp served as pastor for one year in 1898.

Bro. Loudermilk was called and he preached for the next two years, 1899-1900. During his tenure the church began talking about a new church.

In April 1900, Bro. John Walker came and served about 8 months. A meeting was called to get a committee to see about securing a plot of ground for a church and a grave yard.

Then in 1901-1903, Bro. William Sapp was called again to serve the church as pastor. They continued to work on ways to earn money for the new church for the next couple of years.

In 1903, the church approved taking bond for title from George Tharpe to build the church house on. Mr. Tharpe donated the land but the pine trees were to be cut off the land in order to build on it.

On August 21, 1904 the church called Bro. Adams to serve as pastor. At the same conference they approved a plan for the church building to be built.

In December 1904, Bro. Carter was called to serve as pastor, he served the until sometime in 1906.

In May the land was deeded to the church and the building was completed. They moved into the new frame church during this month and at the business meeting for that month, the cost of the new church was quoted as \$181.03. The amount that have been raised was \$140.71 so they had to finish paying the debt. The actual date that the church moved into the frame building was May 16, 1906.

The next preacher who served Piney Grove Church was Bro. W.H. Bryan. He was called in late 1906 and served until 1910. An interesting note is that his salary for the one weekend a month services was \$6.08. It was the amount they collected at those services. Sometimes he was given vegetables and produce from the families.

In 1911, Bro. C.L. Burns came as pastor and served until 1914.

Bro. C.T. Stuart served as pastor in 1916. In 1917, Bro. L.M. Jones served as pastor. He was followed by Bro. C.S. Locke who served in 1918. The Association letter dated 1918 stated that the church had 168 members at that time.

In November of 1919, Bro. Samuel Carter came to serve as pastor and served until 1925.

In November, 1926, Bro. C.E. Locke came to serve the church as pastor and served for three years.

In 1929, Bro. E.B. Riddles came to the church. He served for either 2 or 3 years. During his tenure as pastor the church began to discuss adding Sunday School rooms to the side of the church.

In 1931, the records show that the church was involved in Cooperative Program. Mr. J.W. Holley donated a quarter acre of cotton for the Cooperative Program. And in 1932 the church had begun to support an orphanage in Pensacola.

In September 1933, the church called Bro. B.R. Camp to serve as pastor. In September 1935, the church called Bro. F.L. Dykes as pastor.

In December 1936, the church voted to have half-time services.

In 1937, Bro. C.L. Rooks was called as pastor. And the church was again discussing the need for Sunday School rooms. At the end of Bro.

Rooks tenure, Preacher Manuel was called, but he only served for two months. Then the church called Bro. E.H.S. Beall as pastor, he began his service in January 1939 and continued to serve for five years.

In 1939, the church began to build the needed Sunday School rooms. In 1940, electrical service was installed.

In October 1944, Bro. C.G. Garrett was called to serve as pastor. During this pastor's tenure the church became concerned about the shape of the frame church and appointed a committee to collect funds for a new church.

The church minutes for the period of 1945-57 were missing, but the following information was either obtained from associational minutes or members. During this time Bro. Robert Middleton was called as pastor and he served for one year.

The church then called Bro. J. Tolbert Hagler of Bascom to serve as pastor. During this time the church began actively discussing the need for a new church building. Bro. Hagler served from 1947 to 1950.

At this time the church called Bro. Willis Melvin to serve as pastor, he served the church from 1950-1953. It was during this time that the church really got busy and moved forward with the building plans and earning the money to finance it. The new church was finished in late 1953 or early 1953. The new church was a welcomed change to the church family and is still a beautiful building. Bro. Melvin was soon called to serve another church.

In 1954 the church called Bro. C.N. Walker to serve as pastor. He was a professor at the newly opened Baptist Bible Institute at the time of his tenure at Piney Grove. He served the church from 1954 to 1956.

At this time the church recalled Bro. Willis Melvin to serve as pastor. Bro. Melvin returned to the church in 1956 and still serves the church today.

Some of the things that have been done since Dr. Melvin's tenure began are the addition of the annex that is used for Sunday School rooms, the remodeling of the front part of the church, upholstering of the pews, stained glass windows installed, central heat and air conditioning was installed, carpet throughout the auditorium and the Sunday School rooms, drapes in front of the church, and a baptistry was installed.

He has served the church faithfully and has inspired the church to look toward new goals of service for our fellow man and our community. He has been serving the church since 1956 which really is a record for one pastor in continual service.

Piney Grove  
Cottondale  
(Chipola 1984)

## **Rodgers - Rooks** **Wedding Planned**

Cotondale (Special) Mrs. J. W. Rodgers of Malone and **Rev. C. L. Rooks** of Cotondale are announcing their engagement. The wedding has been planned for March 15 at 3 p.m. in the New Hope Baptist Church West of Cotondale. **Rev. Ferrell Melvin** will be the officiating minister. All friends attend.