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**Sanders, E. C.** served as pastor of First Baptist Church, Zolfo Springs, 1933-1936.

## History of the Zolfo Springs Baptist Church

There were few records kept, when the church was first organized. Therefore we are unable to write a complete record, as to the beginning of the first time it was organized.

However in checking the record books of the church, we find that, The Baptist Church of Zolfo Springs was organized in the fall of the year of 1904, with Rev. J. Entzminger, as Pastor, two seasons, and a total of twelve members.

In the fall of

Feb. 1904, S. V. Lewis, became concerned over the fact that there was not a Sunday School, in the Zolfo Community, realizing the need she or he (LoumanandnMaud, organized a S. S. at the School House with two grandchildren, in attendance. With a burden for lost souls, much discouragement, and with a great faith, the work was carried on. Efforts had been made before, but seemingly had failed.

With a small population, and very little money to finance the work, the growth was slow, however little by little funds were raised to build the first Church Building.

Then we do not have a record of the progress of the work, until Sept. 1907 Second Sunday.

During this period of time, five Ministers had served the Church. The attendance had grown, God was blessing the work.

During the summer of 1908, The church granted the Methodist People the use of the building, for a protracted meeting.

Until Dec. 1908, Church service was only held once a month.

At this time, the church wanted to hold service twice a month, but were unable to pay a Pastor, so it was agreed to ask the board, to help them.

During the year of 1908, there was eleven addition.

We know there were many hardships, and sacrifices to carry on the work of the Lord, But with prayer, faith and love for one another God abundantly blessed the faithful workers.

We cannot find the date that this Church went into the Association

But we find that in Oct. of 1910, A Church letter was prepared to be sent. By this time we have record, That the membership has grown to a number of 52, The Church is carrying on all phases of the work, would like to mention a part of this report,

S. S. expenses for the year, 29.86 cents, Asso. Missions, 7.00  
State Missions, 4.00, Orphanage, 15.11, offering for the poor  
44.35 Pastors salary, 107.85

(One of the messengers sent from the church, was Miss Rose Robert.

All along the record show that there were some who were not living as a Christian and they were excluded from membership.

The first record we have of any ordination in the church was Feb. 18, 1915,

Rev. Sam Durrance served as Pastor from 1909 1911 until 1915

Nov 14, 1915, the church called Rev. R.W. Harrell as Pastor.

In April of 1916, we find the church taking on a new task, that of sending the Pastor to the Southern Baptist Convention.

There is little said as to any one member or any group, until May 25, 1916, as of which date, the church adopted resolutions concerning the obituary of Brother Jonathan Irving Roberts, who was referred to as the strong arm of the church. The same date

the church appointed a committee to secure funds for building a pastorium. Those appointed to serve were, Bro. L. D. Roberts, Bro. Preston Aryers Bro. D. W. Mercer and Bro. E. O. Sawyers.

(I wonder how many of these brothers are present in this service.

Sometime between Sept. 1917, until May 6, 1918 Rev. Harrell resigned as Pastor. May 6, 1917 Brother T.R. Woodson was called to serve the church. Along about this time the Pastorium was built, we find, the church considering wiring the pastorium.

In Sept. 1919 The Zolfo Church assisted in the Organization of the Brownville Baptist Church.

On July 14, 1921 the church called Rev. W.D.M. Hays as Pastor.

Aug. 16, the pastorium question was brought up again.

Sept. 12th a conference was held to discuss separating the Peace River association, This church did not approve. adl later. March 21, 1926, During this time the Pastor Bro. Hays Passed on to his eternal reward. Rev. Henry Smith acted as moderator during this time/

May 4th 1926, the church called Rev. W.A. Pollard as pastor. back to Sept. 12

At this time we find the saints of God, fighting sin, much the same, as this church is still doing today.

April 17, 1927, the church passed a motion to ask the representatives in legislature, to stick to Antigambling law, and do what they could to stop hunting and fishing on Sunday.

As time went, June the 5th, 1927 Bro. resigned Pollard Nov. 1st, 1927, Rev. R.E. Burke was called to pastor the church. However his time serving the church, was short, for Dec. 18th, 1927 Bro. Burke resigned.

Feb. 19, 1928, the church called Rev. J.L. DeArmand, as Pastor.

The work was growing, for Sept. 1928, the church voted to pay, the Pastor six hundred dollars a year.

Also a suggestion was made to have full time services.

The work continued to grow with some opposition, for we find the church is still concerned about delinquent members.

April 17, 1932, the church sent Bro. DeArmand to the southern Baptist Convention. At St. Petersburg, Fla.

The summer of 1932, the need of a new church building, began to be discussed. So On June 24th 1932, the men gathered to haul sand to begin work on new building.

In Sept. 1929, we have the first record of a traing Union.

Place this when coping over O))))))))))

This wa during Bro. De Armands pastorate.

Some time in Sept. of 1932. the church sponsored a mission,

Nov. 10th, the church granted permission to Bro DeArmand to baptize several candiates, the location is not stated other than Above Wachula.

The Church was realizing the need for the members to thithe, as special was called to this in conference. Jan. 15, 1933, The Pastor reported another Sunday School had been organized, at Center Hill. The record tells us that this was the third Mission Sunday School Sponsored by this church.

The Other Mission Mentioned as the Altman Sunday School/

July 1933, the church Or Pastor organized another mission S.S.

August 1933, Bro. DeArmand resigned as Pastor.

Sept. 17, 1933 the church called Rev. E.C. Sanders as Pastor.

Sept. 1935 Brother Sanders gave up the work, on this field.

Jan. 5, 1936 the church called Rev. Vernon Coker as Pastor.

April of 1936, the church agreed to have Bro. Coker to preach every Sunday.

God continued to bless the church, we have the first record of the church grant liscense to preach the Gospel to Bro. Vernon Harper. During the summer of 1937, The people realized the need of a dditional room in order to take care of the Sunday School attendance. so they built rooms.

Oct. 2nd 1938 Solfo Church ordained Robert Harper as minister to serve Gardener Church.

Oct. 30, 1938 this church ordained him to the ministry.

Sept. 15 1940 the Church ordained deacons.

Feb. 16, 1941, Bro. Coker resigned as pastor,

On June 15, 1941, The church called Rev. Mercer Gilmore, to serve for the balance of the year.

On Oct. 31, 1943, the church met to ordain Bro. A. J. Graves to the full gospel ministry. Having been called to serve the Union Baptist Church, near Lily community.

Some time along in Oct. 45, Bro. Gilmore resigned as Pastor.

Oct. 46, 1945, Brother Lewin was called to pastor the Church.

March 9th 1947, Bro. Lewin resigned,

May 25, 1947, the church called ~~xero~~ Rev. Lorin Williams as pastor, and was accepted.

All along the church, had its hardships, as well as many blessings, seemingly at times it was on the mountain top, and satan with all his cunning habits, would creep in and cause some to stumble along the way, but the church was being ever mindful of the fact, that If God be for us, who could be against us., Has continued to hold to the faith once delivered to the saints.

Then in June of the same year, the church sponsored the first Vacation Bible School. Which was very successful.

On June 20, 1948, the Bro., Williams resigned to take up the work in Perry, Fla.

On Sept. 5th, 1948 the church called Rev. Henry Locklear as Pastor. However being unable to come at this time, the church voted to wait to accept his proposition, being unable to close his work in so short of time.

Again the church met to ordain Bro. Marvin Lynn to the full gospel ministry. Having been called to Ft. Odgen Church.

During the time of waiting, for present pastor, the church called Rev. Dr. W. K. McClure to supply as pastor, and he was willing to serve. I might add that this time, the church had two pastors.

Yes time goes rolling in, times change just as the weather, people move in the community, others move away, very often the church is not aware, that some homes have been vacated, as so many do not attend any church, are not interested in carrying on the work of the Lord, while others may move in for just a short time, but immediately place their letters with the church and go to work for the Lord.

We have just recorded our records for our Vacation Bible School 130, pupils enrolled, better than 95 average attendance.

Surley the Lord has blessed this church, even tho satan is still at work, doing every thing possible to tear down all that the saints have tried so hard to build up and carry on the spread of the Gospel.

Yes I'm sure all through the years, these men of God has faced many trying ordeals, the going has not been easy, It has taken real courage, a strong zeal, and a faith in God that could not or cannot be shaken. But God Has promised to go with us all the way, even unto death. Solfo Springs church is still growing, she has outgrown the present building, and God willing, a new building will soon be started. Only God knows what the future holds for us, but may we keep our faith grounded in Jesus Christ, and tho the storms may come and the winds of satan, abuse us, we can say with Paul of old. I have fought a good fight I have kept the faith, henceforth a crown of righteousness awaits all those who will endure to the end.

May We pause for just a minute, in memory of those who so willingly gave of their time, talent, and money to help carry on the spread of the Gospel, who have departed this life, to live with Christ.