

ST. EMMANUEL MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

DENTON, TEXAS

Historical Narrative researched and written by Marvlous Gowans for Texas Historical Commission  
Subject Marker Application. Denton County. 2006

## St. Emmanuel Missionary Baptist Church

St. Emmanuel Missionary Baptist Church was organized in August 1906, 100 years ago, according to the cornerstone of the present church building at 509 Lakey Street.

The first St. Emmanuel church was in the community of Quakertown, an African American community that existed from the late 1800s until 1922, when the city of Denton bought all of the property to be developed into the park now located between McKinney Street and Texas Woman's University. St. Emmanuel, known at first as Second Baptist Church, was one of three African American churches in Quakertown. <sup>1</sup>

The residents who met in the Odd Fellows Hall in Quakertown to organize the church included the first pastor, Rev. F. Scroggins, Rev. and Mrs. David Griffen, and Rev. and Mrs. L.J. Johnson and their daughters. <sup>2</sup>

The church then acquired land in the W.M. Jagoe Addition, Lot 6 in Block 2, of the addition, between Oakland Avenue on the west and Sanders Street on the east. Sanders was a small, narrow alley-like street sometimes called Commercial Street. <sup>3</sup>

Church services initially were held in a tabernacle -- a temporary outdoor facility. Some members recall being told that the tabernacle had only a podium for the minister, while the congregation sat in the shade of the trees. The congregation soon built a frame church. <sup>4</sup>

The new state school for women, the College of Industrial Arts, opened in 1903 just north of the African American community. Within the next decade, a campaign began to move the black community, apparently from such close proximity to the school for white girls, and turn the land into a city park. Voters approved bonds for the park in 1920, and the city began buying property and forcing the African American residents to move.

Rev. J.A. Ayers, who had become pastor of St. Emmanuel after Rev. Scroggins left for another church, was outspokenly critical of the forced removal of the black community -- so outspoken that he had to flee threatened reprisals in the middle of the night. <sup>5</sup>

1. Glaze, Michelle: *The Quakertown Story*,
2. Church records
3. Denton County deed records
4. Jewell Logan and Henrietta Clark
5. Glaze, Michelle: *The Quakertown Story*,

In 1923, three church trustees, Willie Sanders, Neal Hardeman and Cleveland Prince, who had been authorized by the church to handle sale of the church property, sold the lot on Sanders Street to the city of Denton. According to the deed, the building or buildings on the lot were not included in the sale. <sup>6</sup>

The church moved to Lakey Street in what became known as Southeast Denton, where many of the African-American families moved. The first church there was a frame building, which was followed by a brick building. In 1962, the church agreed to build a new sanctuary. Deed records show the church pledged Lots 4 and 5 in the Amended Jasper Addition to the City of Denton as part of a \$30,000 note to finance the new church building. The note was paid off in 1980. <sup>7</sup>

In 1975, the church acquired additional property, part of Lot 6, and in 1997, bought three lots just north of the sanctuary from the Mount Calvary Baptist Church. The former Mount Calvary church is now known as the Annex. Bible studies and women and youth organization meetings are held there. <sup>8</sup>

In 1982, the church bought a parsonage at 508 Boardwalk, Denton, at a cost of \$30,000. The parsonage is at Lot 20, Block C, Second Section, Lincoln Park Addition to the city of Denton. <sup>9</sup>

St. Emmanuel is affiliated with the Denton Baptist Association, the Southern Baptist Association and the National Baptist Convention. The church also participates in the Denton Vicinity Ministerial Alliance. Members of the church choir also are members of the North Texas Mass Choir, a special choir made up of members from several African American churches.

The church community outreach includes a program called the Helping Hands Ministry which tries to locate work for those who need a job. People who need work can help mow lawns and do other chores for seniors unable to do their own work and also can find more skilled employment at businesses owned or managed by members of St. Emmanuel.

During the Hurricane Relief efforts last year, St. Emmanuel was a reception area where clothing, food and other necessities were distributed to families displaced by the hurricanes.

6. Denton County deed records

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.

Church youth organizations include programs for college students as well as teens, and young people also participate in the local chapter of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People). Church member Katherine Bell is president of the Denton County NAACP chapter.

Jewell Logan, a member of St. Emmanuel church for 71 years, remembers holding services in a two-story building at the corner of Robinson and Skinner Streets while the new church was under construction. A cafe occupied the ground floor of the building and the church services were held in a meeting room on the second floor.

Mrs. Logan and her sister, Henrietta Haynes Clark, are among the oldest living members of St. Emmanuel. The sisters were born in Dallas, Jewell on June 22, 1921. When their father was killed in a construction accident, their mother moved to Denton, making the trip in a wagon. Jewell was two years old and Henrietta was three.

They joined St. Emmanuel in 1935 and have been stalwarts of the church ever since. Among other church positions, Mrs. Logan served for 15 years as secretary of the Sunday School - beginning when she was 14 years old — was youth director for 20 years, choir secretary and is still secretary for Mission I, an organization of senior women. Ahs also is a Home Missionary, a position in which she responsible for calling on homebound church member and providing help to them..

Mrs. Clark has also held a number of church positions, ranging from usher to choir president, youth director under five different ministers, and has worked in the training union and with youth. She was named Woman of the Year at St. Emmanuel in 1999.

The sisters also can look back at fund-raising campaigns to build two of the churches. They sold fried chicken dinners, barbecue dinners and fish dinners; they sold clothing at Fred Moore Park, and helped stage plays and programs. When the church was built, each member bought a pew for \$10 each.

Ten ministers, beginning with the first organizing pastor in Quakertown, have served the St. Emmanuel congregation. The present pastor, the Rev. Lloyd Anthony Pullam, came to St. Emmanuel in 1987.

## Bibliography

1. Glaze, Michelle; *The Quakertown Story*, published by the Denton County Historical Society, Second Edition, published by Denton County Historical Commission.
2. Denton County deed records; Denton County Clerk's Office, County Courts Building, 1450 E. McKinney St., Suite 1103, Denton, Texas. Vol. 180, Page 588; Vol. 1000, Page 203; Vol. 1131, Page 663
3. City of Denton Assessor's Abstract of City Lots, Denton City Hall, McKinney Street, Denton, Tx.
4. St. Emmanuel Missionary Baptist Church records; 509 Lakey Street, Denton, TX.
5. Logan, Jewell; personal interviews, April and May, 2006;
6. Clark, Henrietta; personal interviews, April and May, 2006.

Pastors Who Have Served  
St. Emmanuel Missionary Baptist Church:

Rev. L.F. Scroggins - 1906 - circa 1920  
Rev. J.A. Ayers - 1920s  
Rev. Mitchell (initials unknown) - 1930s - 1944  
Rev. S.L. Davis - 1945 - 1951  
Rev. E.B. Johnson 1952 - 1954  
Rev. E. Gibbs - 1954  
Rev. J.J. Thompson - 1954 - 1973  
Rev. C.B. Miller - 1974 - 1977  
Rev. A.B. Henson - 1978 - 1986  
Rev. C.D. Lockhart - 1986 - 1987 (Interim pastor)  
Rev. L.A. Pullam - 1987 - present