

Over Two Centuries Old Reedy Creek Baptists Lay Claim To Rich Heritage

By DIANE DAVIS
Staff Writer

Formed over two centuries ago, Reedy Creek Baptist Church has an astounding history that is known only by its church family and researchers.

Located near a small creek in Grove Hill named Reedy Creek, the first church on the site was said to have been a brush arbor, founded in the year 1745. Land deeded from William Mangum gave the church and its few members area on which to build a meeting house. In 1771, another

church house was constructed on land given by Thomas Ormsby in 1778. The church was moved in 1779 to a place where it remained until the early 1950s.

The church's founder was Dr. Josiah Hart, a traveling General Baptist minister, or evangelist. After founding a church in Pungo in Beaufort County near Bath, he became dissatisfied and felt a need to help the unsaved settlers on the western frontier of the state.

So, he moved west of the Tar River to join William Sojourner

at Kehukee Baptist Church in the region of Scotland Neck. Still, he felt unfulfilled and was eager to begin churches for the unsaved settlers.

It was then that he moved into Bute County (now Warren County). In the vicinity of Grove Hill, he set up his headquarters and gathered a congregation, which he called Reedy Creek Church.

Dr. Hart set up an evangelistic program that engaged the services of many ministers, an accomplishment that utilized the spiritual development of the settlers for many miles around. He began using the church to ordain many men to the gospel ministry. He baptized, ordained and trained young men and placed them in nearby churches that were in need of pastors. Thus, Reedy Creek Church became the center from which ministers spread the word and beliefs of the church. This brought on the growth of General Baptist churches in North Carolina until there were 16 in 1755.

The term General Six-Principle Baptist refers to the affiliation of the earliest members. The doctrine of the church at this time taught members that Christ died for all men. This meant that anyone who believed in Christ could be saved.

They were called Six-Principle Baptists because of their insistence on the six points of Hebrews 6:1-2, which are repentance from sin, faith in God, the doctrine of Baptism, the laying on of hands and eternal judgment.

William Walker, the first pastor of Reedy Creek Church, became dissatisfied with the theology of the General Baptists. In 1752, he traveled to the Baptist association in Charleston, S. C. and spent a year there learning about the Particular Baptist faith and the "Calvinistic" theory. He returned in 1755 to resume his pastorate and preach his new beliefs.

The Philadelphia Association, the only other Baptist association at this time, became interested in the condition of the North Carolina churches. In 1755, the association sent John Gano to North Carolina to convince churches to change from the General Baptist to the Particular Baptist belief. He attended a meeting at Reedy Creek and preached about the Particular Baptist faith to the ministers of the local Baptist churches.

In December of 1755, Peter Peterson Vanhorn and Benjamin Miller, both of the Philadelphia Association, were sent to North Carolina. They reorganized Reedy Creek Church to the Particular Baptist beliefs and the doctrines of "free grace."

Although William Walker has been serving as the pastor of Reedy Creek at the time of their arrival, he was put on probation and replaced by Thomas Pope in order to prevent a relapse of the church into the General Baptist theology. Reedy Creek was the second church to convert to the Particular Baptist faith.

The transformation of Reedy Creek was radical. It has been referred to in many history books as a "re-constitution" because the new beliefs of the church required the adoption of a new constitution.

The transformation to the Particular Baptist faith involved many things. It meant that in the requirements of conversion and baptism, the emphasis would no longer be placed on baptism. Conversion or regeneration was the key.

The previously loosely organized church was now a closely organized body which attested for the conduct and life of its members. The church also cele-



Reedy Creek Baptist Church, one of the first ten churches formed in North Carolina, is situated in the Grove Hill community of Warren County. Members take pride in the church's history and work hard to keep the church and the grounds im-

maculate. The pastor, the Rev. Donald L. Godfrey, who recently accepted the pastorate at Hickory Rock Baptist Church in Louisburg, preached his last sermon at Reedy Creek Baptist Church on Sunday. (Staff Photo by Dianne T. Rodwell)

My Church

By LOUISE WILSON

My church stands in a quiet place,
Long ago the members were of more than one race;
It's made of brick now, and has a fine steeple,
A cemetery, pretty lawn, and the congregation,
Sometimes a small group of people.

There's dignity and respect, a lot of love one for the other;
All stand and talk after service, of work to do, fishing trips,
Or how to help a needy brother.

When crops were very thirsty, the earth so dry,
It seemed as if every green thing was just going to die;
Members asked the pastor to pray for rain,
We all silently joined him, believing it was not in vain.
Before that service ended the thunder just rolled;
Then came the downpour, a blessing tenfold.

You need not take my word, ask the members, anyone
They'll quickly tell you that what I've said was done;
Maybe you know a soul you feel needs to be saved
Bring them on down, the road is paved.

Revival is held the last week in June,
Time passes quickly, it will be here soon;
Everyone is welcome, there is good preaching,
Good food, too, on homecoming day,
Most people know of Reedy Creek Church
And will gladly tell or show you the way.

NOTICE OF VOTING PRECINCT CHANGE

This is to notify the public that the voting place in SIXPOUND TOWNSHIP Precinct N. 2 has been changed from The Old Macon School to the Macon Fire Department in Macon. Located on Hwy. 158 in Macon.

General Election November 8, 1988.
Sept. 7, 14, 21, 28, Oct. 19, 26-Nov. 1

NOTICE OF GENERAL ELECTION

A general Election will be held in Warren County on Tuesday, November 8, 1988 to elect the following officers: President and Vice President of United States, Member of Congress, Governor and State Officers, State Judicial Officers, State Senate for District #2 and District #10, State House of Representatives for House District #7 and House District #22, District Court Judges and County Officers.

All voters registered with Warren County Board of Elections are eligible to vote in the general election. Voters who are already registered to vote need not re-register to vote in this election. Residents of the county who are not registered to vote must register by 5:00 p.m. October 10, 1988 in order to be eligible to vote in the General election. Also, a voter who has moved since the last election must notify the board of elections of that change by the same date October 10, 1988. A person may register to vote at the Board of Elections office 103 Front Street, Warrenton, N.C. between 9:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. or by appointment at the home of his precinct register or judge.

Any voter who will be out of the county the entire time the polls are open on Election Day, or who will be unable to go to the polls because of sickness or physical disability may vote by Absentee Ballot. The voter may apply for an absentee ballot beginning on September 9, 1988. Application must be made in person or in writing to the County Board of Elections. The deadline for applying for an absentee ballot is 5:00 p.m. November 1, 1988.

Tuesday, October 11, 1988 will be the starting date for "ONE STOP VOTING" If you are going to be out of the county the entire day of elections you can vote in the office of the County Board of Elections. The last day of "ONE STOP VOTING" is 5:00 p.m. Friday, November 4, 1988. The deadline for receiving the voted absentee ballot is 5:00 p.m. Monday, November 7, 1988.

Any questions about registration, absentee ballots, ONE STOP VOTING location of polling places and other election matters may be answered by telephoning the Board of Elections Office at 257-2114.

RUBY JONES
Supervisor

Come To Warrenton On Saturday Morning For A Super Treat!



PLACE: COURTHOUSE SQUARE

DATE: SEPTEMBER 10

TIME: 10:00 A.M.

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