

Bethel United Methodist Church

7th Sunday of Easter

Ascension Sunday, Heritage Sunday

Aldersgate Day, Memorial Sunday

May 24, 2020

Lectionary Scriptures

This Week: Acts 1:1-11; Psalm 47; Ephesians 1:15-23; Luke 24:44-53

Next Week: Acts 2:1-21; Ps 104:24-34,35b; 1 Cor 12:3b-13; John 7:37-39

Welcome & Announcements, Birthdays, Anniversaries

Memorial Day Hymn: The Star Spangled Banner

***Hymn:** "All Hail King Jesus" TFWS 2069

***Responsive Call to Worship:** *on opposite page*

***Affirmation of Faith** (Apostle's Creed).....UMH 881

***Gloria Patria**.....UMH 71

Presentation of God's Tithes and Our Offerings

***Doxology**.....UMH 95

Old Testament Reading: Psalm 68:1-10

Music Special: "Jesus is Your Ticket to Heaven" Charlie Register

Youth Message "What's Your Superpower?"

Scripture: Luke 24:44-53

Joys, Concerns, Pastoral Prayer & Lord's Prayer

Message: "Overview of the Books of Titus and Philemon"

***Hymn:** "Shout to the Lord" TFWS 2074

***Closing Chorus & Benediction** "Bind Us Together"

**Please stand if able*

Call to Worship

Leader: We celebrate today a great event: the Ascension of Jesus Christ into heaven.

People: **IN THAT GREAT EVENT, HE IS EXALTED AND WE ARE INSPIRED.**

Leader: Our temptation is that of the witnesses to that event: to wish for this to be the end, and to long to join Christ in heavenly bliss.

People: **BUT OUR WORK HAS JUST BEGUN. WE HAVE A MISSION: TO BE WITNESSES TO OUR EXALTED MASTER UNTIL HE COMES AGAIN.**

Prayer of Confession: **God of mercy, we confess how much we often long to be rid of this world, to leave it behind and ascend to a heavenly state of bliss. Forgive us our impatience. Impress upon us the commission of Christ. Remind us again and again that there is work to be done on earth for your Kingdom in his name. Amen.**

Calendar of Events

Next Sunday: *Pentecost*

All Week: Easter Season, Keep Safe and Pray

Worship, Educational and Outreach Opportunities

Today: *Interactive Online Service thru link on Bethel Web Site, Service page*

Wednesday: Midweek Worship service is temporarily suspended

Prayer Concerns

Bethel UMC, The UMC, Our Country, Those in Military Service, Pastor Ralph, Lexi Allen, Family of Dorothy Carr, Sylvia Marsh, Carol Morgan & Family, Tina & Travis Oaks, Pam Plate, Pat Singletary, David Trimble, Benny Will

Please use a prayer request form, in the narthex, to submit requests for adding to the Prayer Concerns in the worship bulletin

Devotionals: *The Upper Room* and *Our Daily Bread* are daily devotional booklets that are available in the Narthex. Please take one or both and enjoy!

Bethel Website: <http://www.bethelumctlh.org>

Recordings of recent sermons are available on the web site

Recordings of sermons or services are available on CD by request

Heifer Fund: "Youth Message" offering goes to support Heifer International

Contact: Church phone: 850 576-1454

Pastor phone: 591-9785;

email: wrightstone@embarqmail.com



1940's



1960's



Today

The History of Bethel UMC

The earliest historical record of Bethel Methodist Church is that in August of 1834, a campmeeting was held on the banks of Bethel Pond. Church meetings were held in neighborhood homes following this. In good weather brush arbors provided meeting places for these early worshippers. Later, services were held in a small log schoolhouse about a mile north of the present church.

On March 17, 1847, Joseph and Thirza Hale deeded two acres of land to the Methodist Episcopal Church with the provision that Bethel Meeting House be built in the center of the two acres. A small frame church with wooden shutters was built where our Sunday School rooms are today.

In 1909 the congregation started building the present sanctuary. The church building was originally roofed with wooden shingles. The windows contain the original panes with the imperfections of early glass. The interior of the church was not completed until 1947. The narthex was added in 1970 and the steeple in 1972.

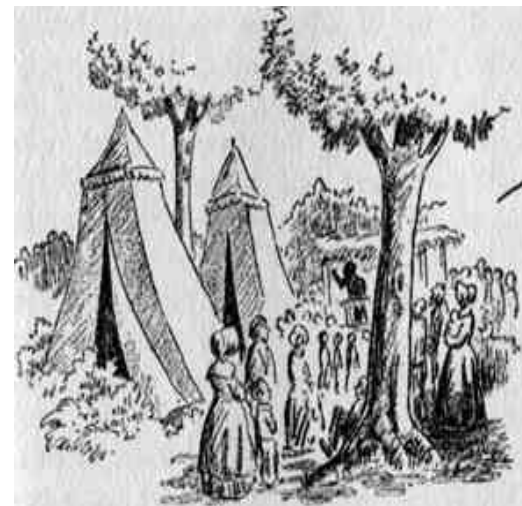
The furniture in the Church constitutes one of the most interesting parts of its history. The Pulpit was used by Bishop Joshua Soule on February 6, 1845 when he convened the first Florida Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in Trinity Methodist Church, Tallahassee, Florida. Trinity gave the pulpit to Bethel Church circa 1895. The chancel rail, communion table and two of the pulpit chairs were part of Trinity Church during the 1800's and were given to Bethel in 1946. The larger pulpit chair was a gift of John Sullivan, friend of our Church.

(history prepared for bulletin cover by Thelma Royce, church historian)



Celebrating Our Heritage

As you may know, from the brief history on the back of this sheet, "the earliest record of Bethel Methodist Church is that in August of 1834 a camp meeting was held on the banks of Bethel Pond". But do you know what one of these "old fashioned Methodist Camp Meetings" might have been like. In the Methodist "storybook", *Endless Line of Splendor*, we are told that "the camp meeting was as American as Indian corn or sweet potatoes" and occupied a "large place...in the life of the frontier and in the religious life of the people...".



While we might not think of Tallahassee as being on the frontier, in 1834 it had been just 10 years since the site for the new territorial capital was chosen near a picturesque cascade and the "old fields of Tallahassee". Methodists were on the scene early with itinerant preachers John Slade (the "Father of Methodism in Florida") and John Triggs reported to have given occasional sermons "before 1825" which were "probably the first ever preached in the city". Actually, the new territorial capital was chronologically just midway between the frontier town of perhaps 6 homes in 1824 and the state capital that it would become in 1845. That same year, Bishop Joshua Soule, standing at Bethel's pulpit in Trinity church, conducted the first meeting of the Florida Conference of the Methodist Church. Still, in 1838 Tallahassee was "reputedly a wild frontier town".

One of the hazards of life in this growing urban setting was the threat of disease. Outbreaks of yellow fever in 1831 and 1841 contributed to annual migrations away from the city during the unhealthiest months of August, October and November. Perhaps this desire to get out of the city during these months also contributed to the popularity of the open-air camp meeting in this area.

Though we have no details concerning the camp meeting at Bethel Pond, the history of Florida Methodism, *From Saddlebags to Satellites*, describes a typical camp meeting in this way: "They would, as a rule, meet for four days, starting on noon Friday and lasting till noon Tuesday. Prior to the meeting, land would be cleared for there were very few open fields in those years in Florida. Pine woods, with some of the trees thinned out, proved to be a favorite site for such meetings because there was less underbrush and palmettos to clear". A nearby source of water for animals and people was also important. "These meetings were important as social gatherings and visiting as well as the spiritual enrichment they rendered....Some came by ox carts, others on horse or mule back, others walked...they all came because the camp meeting was the most exciting event going on....There were times that shouting could be heard for miles from the camp grounds."

Yes, times have changed, but Heritage Sunday is a time when we can remember those who have gone before us, our spiritual mothers and fathers, as well as our own journey of faith which has brought us to this time and place...always remembering that: "The Best is Yet to Be!"

"Surely the Lord is in this place! This is none other than the house of God" Genesis 28:16