

HISTORY OF LIMESTONE BAPTIST CHURCH

COCHRAN, GA

Preface

In presenting this history it will be noted that it comes from three sources. The first is written records, the second is history handed down from other generations and the third is imagination. When one and two are missing, in order to link it all together all available information is studied, then what is believed to be true is given.

Sometimes this history might seem to wander from the subject but there are some periods when it seems to add spice to bring in a little outside history.

In looking back at the early days of this church we find that Pulaski County was created in 1808 and Hartford became the county seat.

During the war of 1812 to 1814 the first road was opened up through this section. At that time there was an Indian trail running from the Ocmulgee River in Hartford to the Oconee River at a point near Dublin. This trail followed about what is now known as Chicken Road.

In the summer of 1814 Major Elijah Blackshear opened this road from Hartford to Fort Barrington on the Altamaha River. Major Blackshear followed this Chickasaw Trail as far as Empire where it turned south. This then was the first road and for years the only road in this section.

In 1828 the land along this road was parceled out by the state in lots of 202 ½ acres in what was known as the land lottery to the people who wished to settle in this section.

Five years later in 1833 people had settled along this road to the extent that they saw a need for a church in this section. At that time the nearest church was located in Hartford. The slow method of travel at the time made it a hardship on most of them to get to Hartford to attend church.

It is said that Limestone was organized by a group from Hartford Church. The Baptist Church at Hartford was incorporated in 1831. At that time Wright Lancaster is listed as one of the trustees of Hartford church.

The history of Limestone Church began in the year of 1833. The church we have now is the fourth building that has housed Limestone since the church was organized.

Limestone was an independent church until the Ebenezer Association was organized. The minutes of the association show that it was organized that year and also show that Limestone was constituted and received into the association on September 24, 1842, with Rev. Wright Lancaster and Deacon Pamel Sanders as charter members. The old association records show that Rev. Lancaster was pastor of Limestone from 1842, when the association was organized through 1853, the last year he is mentioned in the records. If he was the first pastor in 1833 and served continually to 1853, that would be a span of twenty years and would give him the honor of serving as pastor of Limestone longer than any other pastor in the church history.

After having been organized came the selection of a site and the erection of the church. It is said that William Allen drew the lot of land that Limestone is situated on in the land lottery and donated four acres on which to build the church. The Limestone Baptist Church located about five miles from the city limits of Cochran in Bleckley County.

After careful study of all information available the following is believed to be about what the first church looked like. The first church was a small log building about sixteen by twenty feet and is said to have been a school house. It was first believed this was the church that burned but, there is at least one person living today (March 26, 1960) (March 26, 1960) who remembers seeing the old church when it was still in use as a school. Another remembers his mother often talked about attending this school. He also remembers seeing remnants of this building in the form of old decaying logs and signs of the old stick and dirt chimney as late as the early 1900's. This seems to prove that this was not the church that burned. It was believed at first that this building was first used as

a school, but all facts indicate it was a church first and later used as a school. It was common practice in those days to use churches for school purposes.

In those days people wishing to build did not go out and contract the job nor did they go to town to get the building materials. They did the work themselves and the material was already on or near the site in the form of trees and certain types of clay. The body of the house was of logs, hewn square with a wide bladed ax known as a broad ax. It is said that the early settlers could square up a log with one of these axes as fast as a saw mill could in later years. The roof was known to be of hand hewn boards fastened with wooden pegs. The door and windows were of hand hewn boards with wooden hinges. The floor was known as a dirt floor but actually mad of clay which when it was packed and dried was almost like cement. The pews were undoubtedly hand hewn out of logs. The heating system consisted of a stick and dirt chimney with a large fireplace. These chimneys were built with the same type of clay used on the floor. The sticks were used to bind the clay together. The sticks were covered with about two inches of clay on the inside, but it is said the clay would sometimes crack and fall away exposing the sticks on the inside of the chimney. This caused a fire hazard, so it was always a rule when a fire was no longer needed it was put out and someone had to go on the roof with a pail of water and pour down the chimney and put the fire out. They always kept a ladder leaning against the church for this purpose.

This church undoubtedly got its name from the fact that it sits on the banks of the Limestone Creek. This stream was apparently known as Limestone Creek because of the limestone content in the water.

The only record of Limestone from 1842 to 1887 is from yearly reports the church made to the association during this time.

In 1843 Rev. Wright Lancaster and William Little served as delegates to the association. This is the only information in the minutes for this year.

In 1844 Pastor Wright Lancaster and Pamel Sermons were delegates. This year the Baptists split up. The missionary minded became Missionary Baptists and the other became Primitive Baptists.

In 1845 Berry Tippen and L. P. Fann were delegates.

In 1846 Rev. Wright Lancaster and Berry Tippen were delegates. This year they list the membership as being 37 members and \$1.50 donated to the association.

The 1847 records are missing.

In 1848 Miles Bembrey and T. Williams were delegates; they reported 19 baptisms with a total membership of 50 and \$3.31 donated to the association.

The 1849 records are missing.

The second church at Limestone was apparently built in the 1850's. In the 1850's a water-powered saw mill was established at Bushes Mill. By 1856 the church membership had increased to over one hundred members.

It is believed that lumber having become available and the membership so largely increased, the people moved across the road and erected a frame church. There is very little information available concerning this building, but after studying all the facts, it is believed to have burned in the 1870's. All church records are said to have been lost in the fire. A number of years ago a large oak tree was standing at the corner of the church. This tree had a great scar on the side facing the church. The old people always said this scar was caused by the heat of the fire that burned the church.

In 1850 Pamel Sermons and U. B. Fann were delegates and \$2.50 was donated to the association. This is the last year that Pamel Sermons, one of the charter members is mentions. It is supposed that he died during the year.

In 1851 Rev. Wright Lancaster and Brooks Fann served as delegates to the association. The donation was \$2.10. This year they broke the membership down listing 35 whites and 8 blacks. In the early days of the churches the white and colored people attended the same church. This practice was carried on until the 1870's when the colored people were moved out into their own church. The early churches had sections for the colored people to sit; some had balconies, others had designated sections of the pews.

Rev. Wright Lancaster and Brooks Fann were delegates in 1852. The membership is listed as 41 white and 9 black with the donation being \$3.12 and services were listed as being held every first Sunday.

In 1853 Rev. Wright Lancaster and Isaac Horne were delegates. The membership listed 44 white and 9 black with the donation being \$2.75. This is the last time Wright Lancaster, the other known charter member of Limestone, is mentioned. It is probable that he passed on during the next year.

In 1854 J. G. Fleming and A. D. Batey were delegates, there were 2 baptisms making 42 white and 11 black members.

In 1855 Pastor R. E. Mills, pastor, and J. Horne were delegates with 15 baptized and 7 were gained by letter making the total membership 60 white and 13 black.

Pastor R. E. Mills and William Allen were delegates in 1856, 28 were baptized and 7 were gained by letter making 89 white and 14 black members

In 1857 Pastor R. E. Mills and Isaac Horne were delegates, 28 were gained by baptism and 6 by letter making 105 white and 17 black members. The donation was \$4.40.

In 1858 Pastor R. E. Mills and Isaac Horne were delegates. Six wee baptized making the membership 97 white and 17 black members. The donation was \$4.40.

The 1859 delegates were Pastor R. E. Mills and W. G. Fleming. The total membership was 112 white and 15 black having gained 9 through baptism and 7 by letter. This is the last year in which the membership was broken down by color.

In 1860 Pastor R. E. Mills and Isaac Horne were delegates. There were 15 baptisms making the total membership 134.

In 1861 Pastor R. E. Mills and D. Fann were delegates. Two members were added through baptism making 139 members. This is the year of the beginning of the Civil War. Many young men of the Limestone community were called into service for the Confederate Army during the war, some never returned.

In 1862 there were 3 baptized making the membership 142. R. E. Mills and D. Fann were delegates.

In 1863 Pastor R. E. Mills, D. Fann, and J. T. Kinchen were delegates. The membership rose to 157 with 23 baptized and 4 gained by letter. The association passed a resolution this year that is believed to be of interest. "That we commend to all Baptist the cause of the South and trust that we may never falter but be found ready to yield personal property or make whatever sacrifice that will be auxiliary to our course." (Copied from the microfilmed records of the minutes for 1863)

In 1864 Pastor W. J. Baker and R. E. Mills were delegates. Membership was 156 having gained 3 by baptism and 4 by letter.

In 1865 Pastor D. Fann and R. E. Mills were delegates and there were 159 members (4 by letter). This is the year the Civil War ended. The next 10 years were hard ones for the south. The Confederate money became worthless over night, but the people of Limestone had been used to living at home and they continued to make the best of what they had.

In 1866 Pastor W. J. Baker, D. H. Fann, and G. H. Burkhalter were delegates. Membership fell to 126 members (one baptism) this year when a group pulled out of Limestone and organized Corinth Church.

In 1867 Pastor R. E. Mills and D. Fann were delegates. Ten were baptized and there were 114 members.

In 1868 Pastor R. E. Mills was the only delegate. We had 17 baptized and 5 joined by letter. This year the minutes give the total membership of all churches in the association as 1420 white and 1320 black.

In 1869 the minutes are missing.

In 1870 Pastor R. Smith, R. E. Mills, B. A. Denson and J. T. Kinchen were delegates. There were 79 members, two joined by letter.

In 1871 the minutes show that the association was held in Marietta, GA. This year Limestone was not represented. The reason for it being held there is not clear, but a new association was organized the next year, so this could have been the reason.

Pastor W. J. Baker, B. Hobbs, and T. C. Allen were delegates in 1872. The membership was 89 with 4 having been baptized and two joining by letter. The new Ebenezer Association was organized this year; Limestone became a member of the new association. This association became the Dodge County Association when the Pulaski/Bleckley Association was organized in 1906.

The minutes from 1873 are missing.

In 1874 the minutes are missing, but records show that the association was held at Limestone this year. This is the first record of the association being held here.

In 1875 Pastor Robert E. Mills, W. J. Baker, S. E. Allen and Madison Cooper were delegates. There were 74 members; 5 baptisms and 8 joined by letter.

In 1876 Pastor W. J. Baker, B. Denson, and D. Thompson were delegates. There were 73 members with 2 having joined by letter.

The 1877 minutes are missing.

In 1878 Pastor B. A. Bacon, Z. H. Cornett and D. Thompson were delegates. This year they list the membership as all white; there were 68 members, 1 was baptized and 7 joined by letter.

In 1879 the minutes are missing.

Pastor E. H. Godwin, D. Thompson, H. T. Barrow and B. A. Denson were delegates in 1880. Seven joined by letter and there were 57 members.

In 1881 Pastor D. Fann and D. Thompson were delegates, there were 43 members.

The minutes from 1882-1885 are missing.

In 1886 Pastor J. M. Henderson, James Grimsley, Samuel Davis, and J. U. Bloodworth were delegates. Twelve were baptized, 1 joined by letter and the total membership was 64.

The minutes from 1887-1889 are missing; however the minutes of Limestone began in 1887. The oldest minutes of the church are dated June 4, 1887. They show J. M.

Henderson as pastor and T. C. Allen as clerk. Brother Henderson served until some time in 1890. There are three years between 1889 and 1894 that there is little record of, but sometime during this period D. E. Green was called as pastor. It is during Bro. Green's pastorate that the first record of a Sunday School is shown.

The minutes of Limestone dated February 10, 1894 state that a motion was made and carried that we proceed at once to elect officers for the Sabbath School. Elected were T. C. Allen, Superintendent; W. H. Perkins, Assistant Superintendent; H. M. Allen, Clerk; R. Hatfield, Assistant Clerk. Bro. Green served as pastor until September 1894.

September 9, 1894, Limestone minutes show that T. J. Mills was elected pastor by acclamation. Here again the records are sketchy but Bro. Mills apparently served until the fall of 1895 when S. A. Sheffield was called.

The Limestone minutes from 1896 to 1912 are missing. However the association shows E. W. Evans as pastor in 1896. He apparently was called before the association was held in the fall of that year. Bro. Evans is shown as pastor in 1897 and the membership is given as 47. There are people living today (March 26, 1960) who remember Bro. Evans. He is described as a powerfully built man, who when preaching in hot weather would shuck off his coat and become drenched with perspiration before his sermon was over.

In 1899 J. B. Mills was pastor; H. M. Allen, delegate and report no regular service being held this year. They report 41 members and also report that union services were held at Limestone on the fifth Sunday in July that year.

In 1900 J. B. Mills was pastor with 40 members. Services were held two Sundays a month.

In 1901 the associational minutes show that no services were held at Limestone this year. There are a number of people living today (March 26, 1960) who remember this time in Limestone history. They say the church almost went out of existence at that time, but it was not the will of God or the will of the people for Limestone to die. So they got busy and the church was back in operation the next year. They had a hard struggle for several years as the membership shows.

In 1902 Pastor J. B. Mills and J. M. Harrell were delegates with 34 members. This was the year the W & T Railroad was extended from Empire into Hawkinsville. At this time the auto had just made its appearance. There were possibly two or three in all of Pulaski County. People were still dependent on the horse and mule for transportation.

The railroad passed nearby Limestone's doors. A station was built at Bailey's Park and this little station became a thriving place in the following years. Visiting preachers and other visitors of Limestone from either direction could ride these trains to Bailey's Park and be in walking distance of the church. People of this section used the trains regularly to go to and from Hawkinsville. Incidentally the fare from Bailey's Park to Hawkinsville was 20 cents and worth every penny of it.

In 1903 Limestone reached its low point in membership with just 8 members. Pastor J. B. Mills and D. T. J. Champion were delegates and the membership started to climb the next year.

In 1904 Pastor R. C. Sanders and O. D. Bacon were delegates. Two were baptized and two joined by letter. The membership is listed at 17, so evidently they got 5 by restoration.

Somewhere along about this time in Limestone history there was a baptizing pool constructed right near the run of Limestone Creek just below the Chicken Road side of the next to the church. The waters of Limestone Creek have undoubtedly been used to baptize many a convert of this church through the years. The pool that was built filled up after a few years by the overflowing of the creek and was abandoned, but signs of it were still there as late as 1920.

After this they started using a swimming hole about half a mile down Chicken Road. There are members of Limestone today (March 26, 1960) who remember being baptized at that place. After the pool was built at Bailey's Park they started using it for baptizing. This pool was fed by live springs and stepping down into that water was like stepping into ice water.

In 1905 Pastor R. C. Sanders baptized 3 and had 17 members. We are told by one man that he remembers seeing signs of a cemetery at Limestone at about that time. There is very little information available regarding this, however there is one old lady who remembers being told about people being buried there. It seems that a few people were buried here in the last century and it was then abandoned. Back in those days people were buried in the ground with a mound of earth on the grave and a wooden headboard. It did not take many years for the signs to disappear.

In 1906 R. C. Sanders was pastor. He baptized 2 and there were 20 members. This is the year the Pulaski (now Pulaski/Bleckley) Association was organized at Corinth Church. Limestone became a member of the new association.

S. M. Anderson was pastor in 1907. The church property was valued at \$500.00. R. J. Lancaster was Sunday School Superintendent with 35 enrolled and 3 teachers.

The 1908 minutes are missing.

In 1909 Pastor S. M. Anderson, A. W. Trice, and J. C. Grimsley were delegates and there were 62 members.

In 1910 Pastor S. M. Anderson baptized 4 and one joined by letter. R. J. Lancaster was Sunday School Superintendent with 3 teachers and 43 enrolled.

In 1911 services were reported as being held three Sundays a month. There were eight baptisms and 1 joined by letter. S. M. Anderson was pastor and R. J. Lancaster was Sunday School Superintendent. There were 42 enrolled.

In 1912 Pastor S. M. Anderson, J. C. Grimsley, J. R. Hill, and C. C. Davis were delegates. Two were baptized and two joined by letter, there were 44 members. Services were held twice a month. This year the association was held at Limestone again. At that time the auto had begun to show up on the church yard and scare the daylight out of the horses and mules. This is also the year Limestone moved into a new county. Bleckley County was created by constitutional amendment ratified at the general election on October 2, 1912, when the county split off of Pulaski County. Limestone was then in Bleckley County.

The minutes of Limestone resume in 1913, the first is dated June 18. S. M. Anderson served as pastor of Limestone until September 1916.

In 1916 Bro. C. E. Long became pastor of Limestone. He was first called on August 19, 1916. Bro. Long served 12 years until September 1928. Many changes were made during this period. He saw the auto replace the horse and buggy and the first bridge built across Limestone Creek. The old auto appeared to have been about four feet off the ground but Limestone Creek got full at times and many people have had their cars stuck

in this creek and had to have a team pull them out. One man living nearby practically made a living pulling cars out with an old gray mule.

Before the first bridge was built at Limestone Creek there was a long plank footway across the creek for people to walk on and vehicles had to ford the creek.

Bro. Long's pastorate began at about the same time as World War I. The Model T Ford was just becoming popular. Many people remember what a thrill it was to become the owner of one of these cars. They were cranked by hand and at times balky. Sometimes you could crank on one until your tongue hung out without results. Sometimes if they were in a bad mood they would kick back at you. Many people have had their arms broken by one of these cars back-firing while cranking on them.

During Bro. Long's pastorate it was said people had plenty of everything except money. They used several ways to finance the church operations. One was the church cotton patch and a committee was appointed to see after the planting and cultivating of it. Another way of raising money was donating chickens and sometimes hogs. The minutes of January 3, 1925 state it was moved and carried that all would give their Sunday eggs as a fund to be used as the church saw fit.

The association was held at Limestone during Bro. Long's service as pastor. Minutes dated October 4, 1925 state that the church set the following Monday morning to meet and get the grounds ready for the association. The association was held Thursday and Friday of that week. Anyone who enjoyed the religious fellowship and fine feasts of this association will understand what it meant by plenty of everything except money.

In 1927 the church was given a new coat of paint. On October 1 the church named a committee to trade with a painter to paint the church and buy the paint as they saw fit.

Then in August 1928 Bro. Long's service as pastor came to a close. On September 1, 1928 Bro. R. G. P. McKinnon was called as pastor and was offered \$125.00 for the year. Bro. McKinnon accepted and then served as pastor the next 13 years until September 1941. Bro. McKinnon served through some of the most difficult financial times of the church's history. In 1929 about a year after he became pastor the stock market crash occurred.

Then by March 1933 when F. D. Roosevelt became president the financial times became desperate. The people had become used to some of the conveniences that had become available, such as the auto. Many who had cars could not afford to operate them. They solved this problem by chopping off the back seat and back wheels and attaching a pair of shafts and hitching up the old mule to it. These vehicles were known as Hoover Carts.

Bro. McKinnon led the church through these difficult times, and an example of their problems is revealed in the minutes dated November 30, 1935. These minutes state that the church was astonished to learn a party of thieves had entered the church on or about November 18 and stolen the lamps, chairs, tables, and the linoleum off the floor. A committee was named to buy and replace these items. The minutes of January 4, 1936 gives a list of the names of the people who donated chickens and cash for the stolen items.

In 1937 a move was started to put a metal roof on the church. On December 4, 1937 the deacons were named to raise funds for this purpose. This is the roof on the old building today (March 26, 1960).

On September 24, 1938 a motion was passed that as many as could were to give a hog to the church; eight hogs were given.

On October 1, 1939 the messengers to the association were instructed to invite the association for the next year. The association was held at Limestone the week of October 6, 1940. Then in August 1941 Bro. McKinnon's service as pastor came to an end. On September 13, 1941 Bro. Troy Abbott was called as pastor. He served as pastor until September 1942.

On October 4, 1941 Rev. R. G. P. McKinnon was made honorary pastor for life. On May 3, 1942 the church voted to discontinue Saturday services. Up until then for many years the church had held services on Saturday morning preceding the Sunday service.

Bro. J. B. Evans was called as pastor on September 12, 1942. On October 4, 1942, Bro. Evans notified the church that he would be unable to accept the call. Then on January 17, 1943 the church called Bro. J. A. West and offered to pay \$10.00 a month. Bro. West accepted and served the church until the fall of 1949. Bro. West served through World War II. During this time the church passed a motion on February 25, 1945 to get a flag with stars in honor of the boys and girls of Limestone who were in service. Then on April 22, 1945 the American Legion was invited to dedicate this flag.

In 1947 Bro. West's salary was raised to \$200.00 a year. Bro. West saw the first electric lights installed at Limestone. Prospects for rural power were bright as early as 1940 when REA began to run lines into the rural areas. Limestone minutes dated 1940 show the church voted to wire the church if a power line was built near the church. However, it was about 8 years later that the power reached Limestone. REA records show that electric lights were made available to Limestone March 26, 1948.

Up until 1945 there was no record of a deed to Limestone church grounds. Minutes dated August 25, 1945 show that this question was turned over to the board of deacons. Then on September 23, 1945 a motion was passed to accept the two acres of land offered to the church. The church grounds were supposed to have consisted of four acres of land, but the man owning the property at this time would agree to deed the church two acres and the church agreed to accept it.

In the fall of 1949 Bro. J. B. Evans was again called as pastor. The records are missing for this period, but Bro. Evans accepted and served until December 1953.

The association was again held at Limestone in 1949. This is the last association held here to this date.

During Bro. Evans service the Brotherhood and the W. M. U. were organized and new Sunday School rooms were built.

On September 9, 1951 the church started a fund for these new rooms and exactly three months later on December 9, services were held to dedicate them with the sermon being preached by Bro. McConnell.

On August 23, 1953 the church called Bro. Cecil C. Becham as pastor. Bro. Becham was unable to accept at that time so Bro. Evans served until December 1953. On December 13, Bro. Becham accepted the call and then served until September 1958. Bro. Becham is the preacher that kindled the flames that got the new building program started and is due much credit for his tireless efforts toward getting the fine church building we are dedicating today (March 26, 1960). Among the many things done during Bro. Becham's service as pastor are these:

May 23, 1945 the church voted to buy new pews

November 1955, a committee was appointed to draw up plans for a new building to put before the church.

February 12, 1956 the church voted to drill a deep well

August 26, 1956 the church voted to go full time, until then services had been held two Sundays a month.

August 11, 1957 the church voted in favor of building a new Sunday School building. This building was dedicated in 1959 after Bro. Becham's service as pastor had ended.

On the first Sunday in October, 1957, the church called Bro. O. W. Gardner as pastor. While the church was in conference Bro. Gardner had a heart attack and died before he was notified he had been called as pastor.

The third church at Limestone was the building moved to make room for the present church constructed in 1960. This building was dedicated to the work of the Lord on March 23, 1960. The last Sunday in March has been set aside for Homecoming to be observed each year.

A new Sunday school building was completed in August 1957. In November 1959, construction was begun on the new parsonage. Later, a social hall and two educational wings were constructed. In 1962 the church built a nursery in part of the young people's assembly.

On November 9, 1958 the church called Bro. Fred Swann. Bro. Swann took the building program from Bro. Becham and never let it slow down. First the new Sunday School building started back in 1957 was dedicated on March 29, 1959 with Bro. Becham preaching the sermon. On September 28, 1959 David Simpson donated five acres of land adjoining the church grounds for a cemetery. Then on September 30, 1959 the church approved a bond program in the sum of \$40,000.00 for a new church building. These bonds were soon sold but rainy weather delayed the removal of the old building and the start of the new one. On November 20, 1959 removal of the old building was completed. The following Monday, November 23, 1959 the contractor for the new church started the foundation. Also, in November 1959 the new parsonage was started on church grounds. The parsonage was finished in January 1960 and today (March 23, 1960) scarcely 17 months after Bro. Fred Swann became pastor and to the amazement of lots of us here we are dedicating this fine church building to the Glory of God. After the new church was dedicated Bro. Swann served as pastor for two more years.

The church voted on January 13, 1960 to purchase an organ. The church has both a piano and organ.

The church voted on May 29, 1960 to air condition the new building. This was done and the church continued on with good attendance.

On January 11, 1961 it was voted to appoint a committee to purchase the land on which the Limestone School was located. The county schools had been consolidated and it was no longer needed. Lights had already been installed for a soft-ball field by the church with permission of the school board. The school house and one acre was to be purchased by a private party and the other three acres of the school land be purchased by the church and developed into recreational facilities for the church use. February 12, 1961 a committee was appointed to work with this project.

July 12, 1961 the church voted to borrow money from the bank to build a new wing on the east end of the Educational Building. This was done and used by the Young People in Sunday School and Training Union. A church office was built on the south end of this wing.

December 13, 1961 it was voted to have a Youth Revival the week of February 5-11. This revival was held with Bro. Hugh Arnold preaching.

February 11, 1962 Hugh Arnold was called as Minister of Music. No money was set up for this in the budget, so a group of men agreed to pay his salary.

May 1962 it was voted to build a nursery in part of the Young People's Assembly on the south end.

January 16, 1963 the church voted to enter an additional bond program in the amount of \$35,000.00 for another wing on the west end and to air condition the entire building. Two rooms were added to the parsonage.

On June 12, 1963 the church adopted a Constitution and By-laws and also voted to install a system of rotating deacons.

July 28, 1963 the church voted to sell the old church building. This was carried.

August 18, 1963 Bro. Hugh Arnold was named as interim pastor.

September 11, 1963 the church received the deed for the property of Limestone School.

September 29, 1963 Bro. Don Robert came for a three-day revival and trial sermon. He was called as pastor.

October 27, 1963 the church called Bro. Joel Roberson as pastor. Bro. Roberson resigned on July 29, 1964 to re-enter seminary.

August 12, 1964 Bro. Hugh Arnold was again called as interim pastor. Bro. Hugh made a motion for a library to be started.

On September 13, 1964 the church recalled Bro. Fred Swann as pastor. He refused. The pulpit committee presented Vernon T. Vaughn to the church, he was called and accepted. He came in November 1964 and served until February 1967. Bro. Vaughn became chaplain of the Pulaski Prison Branch and served as long as he served as Limestone's pastor.

On February 24, 1965 a librarian was elected and March 17, 1965 was set aside as Library Day to get books for the new library, during Bro. Vaughn's ministry. The church approved a budget of \$483.30 per week. This was done on January 20, 1965.

Bro. Hugh Arnold requested enrollment into the Baptist Bible Institute and a statement was prepared to do this on March 14, 1965.

The church voted to change the fiscal year from October 1 to January 1 on July 14, 1965. The church also voted to hold the association at Limestone in 1966, then again in 1968.

Bro. Vaughn resigned January 22, 1967. A pulpit committee was elected January 25, 1967. Bro. Harold Padgett was presented, called and accepted on February 26.

The association held Easter Sunrise Service at Pulaski-Bleckley Memorial Gardens in 1967. Limestone agreed to join in this service.

May 1967 the church voted to raise the price of the cemetery lots. Twenty dollar lots would sell for \$100.00 and \$35.00 lots for \$150.00 to be effective June 1, 1967.

The church voted to purchase a statue for the cemetery October 16, 1968 for \$1025 with a 5% deduction if paid within 90 days.

November 20, 1968 the church voted to purchase new choir robes at a cost of \$16.00 each.

Limestone gave up the Chaplain-ship at the prison to another church on March 12, 1969.

On June 11, 1969 the church voted to buy film and place in Stetson Library in Macon.

June 15, 1969 the church voted to give Bro. Padgett a 30-day leave of absence. The pulpit was filled by the deacons and various speakers during his absence. Bro. Padgett resigned on July 15, 1970.

The church called Bro. Hubert Hollis on August 12, 1970. He would not accept. Bro. Charlie Smith served as interim pastor until November 1970.

The church called P. J. Baker on October 20, 1970, he accepted.

February 17, 1971 the deacons recommended the church purchase a new organ and install a p.a. system in the vestibule and nursery. The total cost was \$3,140.00 less \$1,420.00 trade-in. This was postponed until March 17, 1971. The church also voted to hire a secretary for \$5.00 per week to work three hours a week.

June 6, 1971 the church voted to install new air conditioning equipment at \$3,676.57. This was to be paid for by selling \$2,850.00 church bonds and through donations.

On October 6, 1971 the church voted to start a fund for carpet.

The church voted to raise money to paint the outside of the building for \$600.00 on April 5, 1972.

A recommendation was made September 6, 1972 for the church to help support an area missionary. The church also voted to add an additional Music Director at a salary not to exceed \$25.00 per week.

October 11, 1972 it was recommended to the church to raise \$3,500.00 for a new roof for the church and the parsonage. This work was done in early 1973.

December 17, 1972 the church voted to place new insurance on the church and to get insurance on the parsonage for \$849.00 per year.

On a cold (20 degree) night of December 10, 1977, the entire educational building was destroyed by fire with minor damage to the sanctuary. It is believed that the furnace blew up. The sanctuary was saved but had lots of water and smoke damage. The fire departments from Cochran, Eastman, and Hawkinsville assisted. No services were held that day. The deacons met at 4 p.m. at the parsonage to make decisions as to what would be done next. We held our services in the chapel at Middle Georgia College.

Mother's Day, 1978 a vote was taken to build an \$189,000 educational building. Rev. and Mrs. Paul Jones were welcomed to Limestone on May 17, 1978 with a covered dish supper. Then on November 26, 1978, a dedication service was held for our newly constructed educational building.

There were several changes in 1979. In February it was recommended to have a Family Night Supper the third Wednesday of each month. In May the deacons recommended locking the church when services were not being held. In June the deacons recommended that the Senior Citizens have a lunch once a month. In December it was recommended that Children's Church begin on a trial basis for one quarter with volunteers in charge and sponsored by the Baptist Young Women.

In April of 1980 it was recommended that Children's Church continue. The Nominating Committee named Cindy Lucas as the Children's Church director in May. In June of 1980 it was recommended that the Family Night Supper be suspended during the summer months of June, July, and August. In August of 1980 a motion was made to purchase a steeple for the church at a cost of \$369.00 plus mounting. In September it was recommended that Children's Church be discontinued. In November a recommendation was made to purchase a Nativity for in front of the church.

In 1981 a committee was appointed to buy a bus in April. In May a recommendation was made to pave the parking lot for \$10,230.90. In August it was recommended to add a walkway from the church to the parking lot.

June 16, 1982 it was recommended that Limestone join with the other churches in our area for a July 4th celebration entitled "God Bless America" at the Jaycee building. In September it was recommended that the Sunday School and Training Union display boards be moved from the sanctuary to the hallway. In November a recommendation was made to purchase cassette recorders to tape sermons. The sermons were to be placed in the library to be available to check out for shut-ins.

Children's playground equipment was purchased in 1984 for the ballpark.

In 1985 Limestone accepted a gift of stained-glass windows.

Handicap ramps were installed in 1986.

The 4' by 6' two-sided brick and plastic sign in front of the church was installed in 1989.

Limestone had the privilege of licensing and ordaining Calvin Bobo into the ministry in 1990.

It was recommended that the sanctuary be renovated in August of 1990.

April 14, 1991 was designated Mrs. Kanawha Smith Day. Mrs. Smith was honored with a plaque and a special dinner.

In June of 1991 Amy Griffin was hired as the first part-time summer Youth worker. Then in May, 1994, Jeffery Miller was called as the first part-time year-round Children/Youth worker.

November, 1994 saw the first LBC Christmas Post-Office. The cards were "mailed" to church members and shut-ins for just ten cents each.

Rev. John Solano was called as interim pastor October, 18, 1995. A reception was held October 29, 1995 to honor Bro. Paul Jones upon his retirement after seventeen years of service.

Rev. Jay Moore was called to Limestone June 9, 1996. In July a vote was taken to allow Bro. Jay begin a monthly newsletter. Easter, 1997, was celebrated with a Passover Seder on Maundy Thursday, a special Good Friday service and the annual Easter Sunrise Service on Easter morning.

The second phone line was added January, 1998. The Deacon Family Ministry began in March of 1998. Then Judy Smith was hired as the church custodian in May.

Rev. Chuck Yzenski was called as pastor in July, 1998, after Bro. Jay was called to work with the Convention. Bro. Chuck resigned in September 3, 2000.

In April, 2002, a new metal roof was installed on the church building and Rev. Jeff Cummings was called as pastor.

In June, 2003, Jason Johnson was called as the first full-time Children/Youth Minister. Jason was ordained into the ministry at Faith Baptist Church on November 2, 2003. On December 19, Pat Jordan retired from service as church secretary after 13 years. Robin Davis began her ministry as church secretary on December 8, this allowed for a two-week overlap/training period.

In March of 2004 we began alternating hosting a joint Easter Sunrise service with Corinth Baptist, Hawkinsville. In May we approved our mission statement: *“The Mission of Limestone Baptist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ and to help them grow in His likeness.”*

January, 2005 the adjoining land belonging to Mike and Nita Eastman was purchased and was dedicated in March. August saw the beginning of G*R*O*W (God Rewards Our Work) outreach program.

The church’s web ministry began in April of 2006 thanks to Shawn Wall. In March, the front parking area was paved. In July, we began using the 911 address. In October the Constitution and By-laws were revised and updated.

In February, 2007, a new video/audio cabinet built by Jerry and Stella Dixon was donated to Limestone Baptist Church in loving memory of their daughter, Heather Nicole. In July, new pew Bibles were dedicated. In July, Calvin, Janet and Adam Bobo were with us to share about God’s call on their lives to become missionaries in the Ukraine. This was very special since Calvin grew up in our church and was ordained into the ministry here.

Bro. Jeff resigned on September 16, 2007.

Today marks the 175th Homecoming Anniversary of Limestone Baptist Church. Our membership is currently 507 members.

Mark Shaw accepted call as pastor June 14, 2009.