

Winter Beach Baptist Church

There was a Missionary Baptist Church on John's Island, town of Narrows. We do not know much about the church when it was located there, but we do know a few facts...

In 1913, the Missionary Baptist Church on John's Island, town of Narrows, joined with the existing Missionary Baptist Church on the mainland called Quay, and became one. This church was located on what is now 6600 block of Old Dixie.

One of the first preachers was Samuel J. Loudermilk, a circuit riding preacher, who came by to preach as often as he could at Narrows and Quay.

In 1928, Frank Armstrong, who worked for the county on its dragline, purchased the Baptist Church on John's Island. Preacher Loudermilk dismantled the building and brought it by boat across the river to Quay Dock. Preacher Loudermilk reassembled the heart of pinewood into a house. The Armstrong family members lived in it until just a few years ago. It still stands and was just remodeled in 2020.

Frank Armstrong came to Quay in 1906 from Drybranch, Georgia. After he settled here, he married Nellie Fletcher and they had 3 children: James who died at the age of 10, Hazel and Leroy. After Nellie died, he married Eutha Kersey and they had 3 girls: Erma, June, and Jessie "Bunnie." When Frank came here the town was named Quay, before that it was called Woodley, and then in 1925 it was changed once again to Winter Beach.

The church was also used as a school as Hazel Armstrong said she went there for her first two years as they were adding rooms to the Winter Beach Elementary School, two blocks south of the church (now Northwest corner of US 1 and 65th Street).

As the area grew, the church added rooms to be used as Sunday School for the children. First to the main building and then more rooms separate from the main building.

In 1960, the church had grown so much that a new sanctuary was built. The men of the church built it, costing on the price of material.

The original five acres for the church was donated by John McCullers, Sr. and later 2 acres on the east side was donated by Mr. Robbie Byrd.

There were many faithful people along the way sharing God's love to others. A few that come to mind: Fred McEwen, Russell Hurst, Andy Woods, Bertha Mae Woods, Lesta Ammons, Lora Ammons, Louise Anderson, J.W. Andrews, Luther Dukes, Mrs. Robbie Byrd, Edith Hamilton Pippin, Harry Hurst, Huey Walker, Johanna "Nanny" Dukes, Al and Ramona Hamilton, and many others.

Some of the pastors include: Samuel J. Loudermilk, John Martin, Rev. Edwards, Rev. Birely, J. A. Peterson, Arvil Miller, Jim Sartain, Sim Howell, Roy Carter, Cecil Carter, J. C. Glenn, Wiley Honea, Bobby Richey, Frank Ware, Larry Westman, Burdette "Bud" Docter, Randy Berry, Jim Kepler and Randy Irons.

The church was always involved in teaching children and young people the Word of God and about missions. There was always Sunday School, Training Union, Women's Missionary Union, which taught groups of Baptist Women Sunbeams, Acteens, Girls Axillary, and Royal Ambassador. Then the men added Brotherhood and took charge over teaching the boys in Royal Ambassadors.

The church closed its doors around 2005 and joined with Lakeside Fellowship. The building was sold and now houses the North County Charter School.

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