



Gause United Methodist Church

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Pastor Kenneth Byrd 979-279-7884

Kings and prophets have said, "I rejoiced with those who said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the LORD.' He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. In Gause, Texas, this can truly be said of Gause United Methodist Church. Our mission statement is and we desire to be "A Small Town Church with a Worldwide Reach."

To God be the glory for the way we have achieved our mission over the years and look to the future with great excitement. One of the ways our outreach has gone out to the world is our Prayer Blanket Ministry. The prayer blankets are made by one of our members and blessed by the congregation as an act of our worship. They are sent to our friends and family members who are suffering severe illnesses. In offering these blankets we make a covenant to pray for the healing hand of God to be extended to them. These blankets have been sent across America and to many foreign countries including Israel. Many great and wonderful testimonies of healing have come back to us.

Our outreach includes disaster relief funds and help for victims of floods, fire, and drought in Texas and throughout the nation. Also, this extends around the world by our support of international Christian relief organizations to aide where disasters have occurred. Our church annually tithes by giving to the Methodist Children's Home, the Wesley Foundation, ministries who help children whose parents are in prison, Still Creek Ranch Children's Home, and other organizations.

Our hearts are also tuned to our community where we provide help for the needy in the shadows of our church. Our members serve in community organizations and our schools to make our community better. Shall we say that we are a very busy church?

To enter our Church Sanctuary is to enter the House of the Lord reflecting more than one hundred years of sacrifice to the Lord by our founding families. Their great work is memorialized in stained glass windows and plaques honoring their sacrifices. From your very first visit, you will experience a very friendly and welcoming church. Everyone leaves with a feeling of being loved and encouraged. This is a church that you are not afraid to bring your out-of-town family and friends with you.

All who attend will say with King David, "I rejoiced with those who said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the LORD.'" Amen.

We pause today to celebrate another great milestone – the completion of our church restoration project. Attached is a synopsis of that journey.



Introduction

The Gause United Methodist Church completed a major restoration project in May 2014. Begun in July 2012, it involved the total demolition and reconstruction of all four walls of the sanctuary, plus a number of other repairs. It would not have been possible without the help of many wonderful, loving, and generous angels who supported this project. Through their support, the church continues to stand in Gause serving the local community.

We thank you for your prayers and we thank God for answering our prayers, guiding the way, and giving us the faith to proceed. All the Glory and Honor belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ! "For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them" MT 18:20.

Issues Causing Us to Suspect Larger Problems

One of our first clues of a problem was the extensive number of cracks that had appeared in each of the outside walls.



A lot of our stained glass was bulging, the lead was cracking or had broken out and glass was broken



Look closely at this next photo and you can see how the glass waves in and out from the bottom towards the top.



Cracked stained glass...



Here you can see how the various components of the center set of windows are leaning in toward each other and how the glass tends to have waves in it.



Antiquated electrical components had to be removed or replaced.



Several of the windows showed deterioration and loss of wood trim etc.



Others were just rotting in place.



Trustee Determinations

After seeing the above issues, in July 2012 the Gause United Methodist Church Trustees determined that the sanctuary walls were in urgent need of repair. Their decision was based on the following problems and issues:

- Exterior walls were significantly deteriorated
- The stained glass needed to be repaired
- The studs in the walls were, in many cases, almost totally rotted away
- The wall structure was so weak that the stained glass windows were under tremendous stress as they had tilted and their frames were leaning on each other
- Lead used in the stained glass in the 20's and 30's was almost pure lead and was now brittle and cracking
- Every single piece of stained glass in the entire sanctuary needed to be taken apart, cleaned, and re-leaded
- Many pieces of glass had broken or were missing
- Old electrical wiring and other electrical issues required attention
- Both rooms behind the altar were in dire need of repair and refurbishing
- Choir loft floor needed resurfacing
- Altar wall required painting.

The Trustees authorized the church to proceed with the project once financing was available.

Answered Prayers - Finances

The Trustees estimated the cost to repair and restore the structure and windows at around \$250,000. That was overwhelming for a church of about 40 active members! A lot of prayer ensued. We prayed that God would lead us through this project and help

us find a way to pay for it. Without the funding, we would not be able to proceed.

We began reaching out to everyone we knew, seeking financial assistance. We applied for grants. We contacted every current member and as many former members as we could locate. That is when YOU showed up – You, our support angels!

God IS good because you then reached out to others and over the course of the project we were able to raise all the funds we needed without ever having to use our bank line of credit. So, this little church with all the help of all the courageous and generous supporting angels was able to complete the \$272,000 project without owing a penny in debt! We raised \$243,420 and spent \$28,580 from our general fund.

Restoration

After a bidding process, The Tool Guys, LLC (owners Russell Sisco and Randall Pitcock) from College Station was selected for the project. With faith we began restoration of the West wall, as it appeared to be the worst. That would give us a better idea as to what we were facing in the rest of the structure. They dismantled the wall without damaging the foundation or roof and then replaced the entire wall. This was done without the church services having to be moved to another location except for one Sunday.

Between October 2012 and May 2014, we restored all four walls plus re-leaded all the stained glass and completed the other interior repairs.

During that process, we discovered that the walls were actually in worse shape than we had anticipated at the beginning the project.

What We Found During the Project

Following are photos of what the inside of the walls looked like once we removed the outer layer of material.



Notice how these studs below do not go all the way down to the foundation (blocks were inserted under the rotted studs to help support them during demolition). They had simply rotted away from the foundation and were just hanging in place.



Rot and deterioration around the window frames.



This is one of the window frames that was holding our precious stained glass in!



We were fortunate to correct all these problems and restore the sanctuary to its former glory. This was a big step for a small church, but our history of service will continue as we move forward. Thank you for helping make this project such a big success.

And, now our church history...

History of the church (as told by Edrie Wilson Browder)...

In the Beginning

The Methodist Church was originally a frontier missionary church and was active in this area among the earliest settlers in Nashville (1834). In 1887 the Gause Episcopal Church South was organized. Originally, only the local schoolhouse was available for services, and the Methodists occupied the building on Sunday afternoons.

In 1895, the congregation acquired a tract of land, and shortly thereafter the Methodists erected there a simple frame structure that was the first church built in Gause.

The charter members of this institution who gave liberally of their time and wealth were: Dan Fowler, R. E. Watts, Fayette Watts, Jim Dixon, W.J. Gause, C.C. Moore, J.C. Gidley, Mrs. William Grigsby, Mrs. Willie Covington, Mrs. John Needham, Mrs. Tom Peel, and Mr. and Mrs. Allen Varner.

R. E. Watts was the contractor and financier of the new church. Reverend Smith was the Presiding Elder and Reverend S. P. Brown was the first pastor. Fayette Watts was the first superintendent of the Sunday School. Succeeding superintendents in the order of service were Adrian Plaster, R. E. Watts, Clarence Varner, M. M. Arendell, Oshen O. Gaston, Fritz Hauptfleisch, J. H. Thomas, J.P. Harris, T. C. Wilson, H. M. Walker, Sr., Elvis Wilson, Mr. J. H. Thomas, and Dr. Henry J. Bonorden.

Pastors serving the charge from 1892 to 1933 were Rev. S. P. Brown, Herschel Timmons, J. D. Burke, W.W. Adams, G. W. Riley, J. T. Garrett, J. Cole, J. W. Wardlow, L.W. Cansler, R. O. Wier, F. O. Prather, M. J. Biggers, W. F. Weeks, G. C. House, and D. S. Burke.

All churches are built with love, but some of us think that the present Methodist church building has a little extra love consecrated within its structures. In the late 1920's the congregation felt the need for a new building and began planning. After the plans were made they began to look for a contractor. This was in late 1931, and the congregation had just lost one of its most beloved members, Fritz Hauptfleisch, born in Germany in 1882, had come to America as a young man of 22 because his sweetheart, Louise Fuhrmann, had sailed for America with her mother the year before. They came to Milam County in 1905 and were married the following year by Thomas Dean Ferguson, Justice of the Peace. Fritz had been educated for the ministry and had done evangelistic work in Germany; he and his family were deeply dedicated to the work of the church. He served as Sunday School superintendent for many years and worked with the youth; and he often filled the pulpit for pastors throughout the county. Fritz had died the previous June; and his older brother, Robert Hauptfleisch, a competent carpenter, asked if he might have the job of building the church and dedicate it to the memory of his bother, Fritz. As the organizer of the Gause Mother's Day Homecoming Picnics during the early 1920's, Fritz is often remembered even today at the annual affair.

Music

We have always been blessed with ladies to play the organ. I'm guessing we started off with the foot-pumped organ in the late 1800's and early 1900's. Fronda Watts was the first organist, succeeded by Minnie Gidley, Mrs. Maggie Griggsby Thomas, Mr. S. R. Cochran, Lena Gaston, Merle Hickman, Elsie Hauptfleisch, and Fern Critchfield, who served as organists or Pianists. Mrs. Bob Goode and Gertrude Luce also assisted with the music.

In 1953 a new Hammond organ was donated to the church by the J. C. Gidley family in memory of their parents, Rev. J. C. and Mrs. Martha Gudley. The organ was dedicated on December 27, 1953 at a service officiated over by the Reverend Fred Dibble. Mrs. Eddie Varner Doty gave a talk on the life and times during the early 1900's when the Gidley family lived in Gause. An organ recital of sacred music followed the dedication, performed by Miss Betty Gidley, granddaughter of the Rev. and Mrs. Gidley and daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Gidley.

Another organist, Mrs. O. L. Gause Harlan, had left Gause after she married James Harlan and he had to move whenever he could find work. Finally, he got work in Hearne, and the highway bridge had been constructed across the river, so they could live in Gause. O. L. would wear many “hats” in working in the Methodist Church – pianist, teacher, secretary, administrative board members; she would serve in any capacity and was always in perfect attendance.

Not only did we have “showers of blessings” we had a flood! Jimmy Harris, who had grown up in our church but had to leave to pursue the job market, returned about 1975. He teamed up with his very talented wife, Helen, with her at the organ and him at the piano. No church in the Texas Conference has had better music.

Dudley Varner Annex

Late in 1956 the church board met to discuss the need for more classrooms as well as space for recreational and social activities and a place where the pastor could study, counsel and relax. A committee was formed to study the feasibility of the building an annex and methods of raising funds to finance the costs. Members of the committee included J. P. Harris, Elvis Wilson, G. R. Varner, Mr. J. P. Harlan, Edrie Browder, Mr. J. H. Thomas, Mr. H. M. Walker, and Thomas Clyde Wilson, all of whom set a fine example by making pledges and plunging into the work of raising the necessary funds. Members and friends raised money for the project in a variety of ways: some sold vanilla extract, black pepper and furniture polish; some sold craft items at livestock auctions. One of the cleverest ideas came from Mrs. Dudley Varner, in whose honor the annex was dedicated. She asked members of the Women’s Society of Christian Services to sew tiny aprons and send them to friends, along with a verse asking each person to donate a dollar for each inch of his or her waist measurement. By the time the annex was completed and dedicated in 1959, friends had donated money, free or cheap labor, and a multitude of furniture and furnishings, including tables, chairs, dishes, cutlery, cooking utensils and other items necessary for entertaining. Threta Lee Cannon, a third generation member of the Gaston family, completed an oil painting of our 1895 church to adorn the walls of the annex.

Building the annex was truly a community project, and it is freely used by all members of the community for a variety of functions-family reunions, funeral dinners, anniversary parties, and wedding receptions, as well as church-related activities.

In the spring of 1992, Pastor Rev. Max Adams invited a group of Wesley Foundation students from A&M University to reroof the annex.

Stained Glass Windows, Furniture and Other Memorials

The stained glass windows in the sanctuary are beautiful memorials dedicated to the memory and/or honor of some of those who planted seeds of faith in the early years in Gause. (God knows how hard they worked, for at one time Gause had six saloons and no jail – drunks were just chained to a tree until they sobered, or so the story goes!) Nearly all of the fixtures and furniture have memorial plaques. As indicated earlier, the organ was given by the Gidley family in memory of their family. The pulpit is in memory of the John Gaston family, who came to Gause in 1907. (Ola Gaston Wilson used to tell her children that at that time Christians attended the Baptist services on odd Sundays and the Methodist services on even Sundays. Before they had their own building, she said, they shared the schoolhouse; one denomination had morning services, the other had afternoon services.) The Holy Communion table and brass candlesticks are memorials to Mr. and Mrs. Allen Varner. Leland Bowling, son of Vola Gause and Phillip Bowling, made a beautiful desk for his aunt, O. L. Gause Harlan, to the memory of her husband, James P. Harlan. It holds a beautiful red book in which memorials to the church are recorded. Most of the Methodist Hymnals are memorials. The brass collection plates, brass lamps on the organ and piano, and the lectern are memorials to Clyde and Ola Wilson. The chair in the pastor’s

study was donated by William J. Gause, for whom the town was named; it had been used for a pulpit chair until recent years.

Church Bell

The church bell mentioned in Maggie Grigsby's diary in 1908 was first rung from a steeple of the first Methodist Church built in the late 1890's. How sweet the sound of the church bell calling worshipers to a service (not everyone had striking clocks in those days)! In 1932, when the present church building was erected, a wooden tower was built at the northeast corner of the church, where it served until the tower gave up and dropped the bell. In time, it was laid to rest at the Bill Gause home until about 1991, when nostalgia surfaced and recalled the bell to a new life. It was refurbished and brought back to the church, mounted in a place of honor on a brick and concrete foundation with a plaque attesting to the memory of those who have gone on before – a fitting tribute to the old bell that had stirred the spirit of early Christians, calling them to worship or softly tolling its message as the body of a loved one was arriving at the church for friends and relatives to pay their final respects.

As a tribute to EDRIE WILSON BROWDER, this history was adapted from her book, "GAUSE, Texas, A Legacy in Pieces" by Edrie Wilson Browder, Copyright 1997, Nortex Press. Printed with permission from Ms. Browder's nephew, Wilson Kyle.

Historical Update (not included in the Browder book):

In 2014, the church positions are filled by the following:

Pastor	Kenneth C. Byrd
Music	Kathy Turner, piano Dee Bonorden, organ on special occasions
Liturgist	Janna Byrd
Finance Secretary	Dee Bonorden
Board Chairman	Henry Bonorden
Sunday School Teachers	Mary Neely Archer Hoyt Linda Hoppe
Custodian	Sherry Whitley

The church is so blessed to have those people working in our interests and their efforts are much appreciated. In addition to those, this church is truly blessed to have a wonderful congregation. Members generously step forward to assist with projects or to substitute for others when the need arises. Such activities include, but certainly not limited to helping with the yard and flower beds, preparing the church directory, ushers, sewing prayer blankets, making banners for the sanctuary, bringing food to events, helping organize events and activities, children's activities, Christmas decorations – and the list goes on.

Former Members and List of Pastors

A spreadsheet of all current and former church members has been developed based on actual records. You will see many gaps because our records have many gaps! You may know of others that should be listed, and we would be happy to know about them, but can only list them if we have authoritative proof. The membership roster is in a notebook in the Fellowship Hall.

List of Pastors

1882 –	J C Grindley	1947	C.E. Ditterline
1883-1886			Roger Whiddon
1887-1890	W.F. Brinson	1948	Roger Whiddon
1891	C.G. Hocutt, H.T. Hart	1949	W.W. Watts
1892	E.M. Myers	1950	Bobby Peterson
1893	J.W. Thompson	1951	L. A. Spell
1894-1897	S.P. Brown	1952	Fred W. Dibble
1898	J.C. Moore		Bob Sneed
1899	J.L. Yeats		L.A. Spell
1900	H.T. Hart		David Hines
1901	R.S. Collier		Jerry Harper
1902	J.W. Thompson		Richard Spinn
1903	J.W. Thompson	1953-1954	Fred Dibble
	J.D. Burke	1955	A. L. Baustrom
1904-1905	J.D. Burke	1956-1957	Richard Spinn
1906	W.W. Adams	1958	Richard Spinn, David Hines
	H.W. Timmons		Jerry Harper
1907	H.W. Timmons	1959-1960	Richard Jenkins
1908-1933	G.W. Riley	1961	James Turnage
1912		1962	Richard Lockhart
1913-1914	J.W. Garnett		C. Huey Clements
1915	James W. Cole	1963	Eric Williams
1916-1917	J.W. Wardlaw	1964-1965	Douglas Meyer
1918	L.W. Cansler	1966	William Haake, Ed Hillyer
1919	L.W. Cansler	1967	Ed Hillyer
	F.O Favor		Ed Hillyer
	Robert O. Weir	1968-1969	R.W. Hillencamp
1920	F.O. Favor	1970-1971	Jim Ross
1921	M.J. Biggers	1972-1974	Jim Ross
1922-1924	J.W. Wardlaw	1975	R. E. Bishoff
1925-1927	G.C. House		R.E. Bishoff
1928	G.C. House	1975-1977	Curtis Grissett
	W.F. Weeks	1978-1981	Calvin Beckendorf
1929	W.F. Weeks	1981-1985	Robert G. Waldman
	Ed Prater	1986-1989	J. Max Adams
1930-1932		1990-1991	J. Max Adams
1933-1934	D.S. Burke	1992	James E. Leggett
1935			James E. Leggett
1936	J.D. Weaver	1993-1995	William G. Webb
1937		1996-1997	James McRae
1938	Arthur Williams	1998	Kenneth C. Byrd
1939-1941	J.D. Davis	1999-Present	
1942	O.N. Cole		
1943	O.N. Cole		
	Bill Shirley		
1944	George Adrian		
1945	E.O. Dewald		
	George Moore		
1946	C.E. Ditterline		