

The Lord's House at Macedonia

I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Psalms 122:1

I have been asked questions by many about Macedonia Primitive Baptist Church's new meeting house in northern Bartow County, GA. Some want to know why we moved. Some have asked about the cemetery. Some have asked about the process of the move and others about where we are now located. I hope that this article will, in a brief summary, address those questions as well as provide thanks to our Father in Heaven for our blessings at Macedonia (Ephesians 5:20).

Macedonia Primitive Baptist Church was located on Georgia Highway 20, 0.5 miles east of I-75 for about 64 years (Late 1940's until May 2011). This location provided many children of God a blessed place to worship their Saviour. Even though I was only blessed to worship at this location for about 3.5 years, there were a multitude of memories made, and each Sunday, I felt as David did in the text above, "glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." Many who are reading this article have probably had similar experiences there. After I had been the pastor at Macedonia Church for about 2 years, the Lord began to impress upon me a burden to speak on subjects pertaining to the future of the church at Macedonia. God had blessed the church to begin the process of preparing to build a new church building several years before I became the pastor and the church began to explore her options concerning the use of those blessings from God. From early 2010 until August 2010, the church met regularly for prayer and business meetings concerning building a new church building (Luke 14:28). Due to several factors (i.e. Noise of traffic, speed of cars, small lot, encroachment of urbanized setting and others), in August of 2010, the members of Macedonia voted unanimously to look for a piece of property elsewhere to build a new church building.

In October of 2010, the Lord blessed the members of Macedonia to settle on the purchase of an 18.5 acre pasture in the community of Pine Log, GA. The hope in purchasing a larger tract of land was that the additional space would provide a buffer from future development in this community. Members of the church spoke of the desire to have space for the children to run without fear of a busy highway (Zechariah 8:5). We were praying for the Lord to bless us with a place that was nice and inviting so that the saints of God could enjoy the day in fellowship with each other. This setting, with the Lord's blessing, would allow brethren to "hardshell" under the shade tree while the aged sisters passed their wisdom onto the younger ones (Titus 2:1-6). Our prayers were then, and still are, that after each Lord's Day at Macedonia, we may be able to say, "a day in thy courts is better than a thousand" (Psalms 84:10). Once the new property was purchased, the Lord impressed Macedonia to begin the building project at the new property.

As do many Primitive Baptist Churches, Macedonia's property on Highway 20 included a cemetery. Once the Lord had led the church to begin the new building project at our new property, we began to discuss and pray about what would happen to the cemetery once Macedonia Primitive Baptist Church no longer met at this location. The church wanted to ensure that the cemetery would be maintained without burdening the future generations of members. The Lord blessed the families who were members at Macedonia to organize a meeting including the families of all of the loved ones who were buried in the cemetery. By God's grace, a corporation was formed; independent of Macedonia Primitive Baptist Church, and the cemetery was deeded over to this corporation. Another group began to show interest in the rest of the property, which included the church building. Once again, Macedonia church prayed to God for wisdom and guidance. Even though the church knew that it would be more than a year before a new building was completed, the majority of the membership voted to sell the existing building and land on Highway 20. The first Sunday in May, 2011 was our last Sunday in that church building. We observed communion that day and what a blessing it was to receive the strength of the Lord's service that day.

For the next couple of months, Macedonia met in members' homes, yards and other places in the community. In July of 2011, a family offered the use of a building on their property for the church to worship in. The building was remodeled with some paint, lights and a pulpit and we met at this location from the 4th Sunday in July of 2011 until the 3rd Sunday in June of 2012. During this period of time, many in the church felt to be like the children of Israel as they wandered in the wilderness for forty years (Acts 7:36). We didn't feel to have a permanent home, but just as the Lord met with the children of Israel with a "pillar of a cloud" by day and "in a pillar of fire" by night (Exodus 13:21), we felt that the Lord was leading us as well. Praise God for His providence! The Lord blessed this to be a time of adding to His church

(Acts 2:47). We were blessed to have 3 new members join during this time, 1 by letter and 2 by baptism. While we met in this temporary location, the Lord continued to bless the efforts of the members of Macedonia to build the Lord's house (Nehemiah 4:6).

From the time that we were blessed to break ground in September of 2011, until the 1st Sunday we met in the new church building (4th Sunday in June), there were several principles that the members of the church tried to implement in planning and construction of the new church. To keep this article from being too lengthy, I will discuss only three of those principles.

1. We were building a new church for the glory of God and not for ourselves. A reading of the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai and Zechariah teaches us that our focus should remain on God and His glory while in the midst of building His house of worship. There were many "Sanballat's" and "Tobiah's" (See Nehemiah 2 and 4) around to frustrate the efforts of the Lord's people, but a continual focus on why the effort was being undergone helped to keep our mind in the right place.
2. Timeless. The Lord's gospel truth is timeless. Jesus is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow (Hebrews 13:8). We wanted to model that timelessness in the new church building by minimizing items that were contemporary. There may be building items that the next generation church members may decide to change, but the hope was to keep those to a minimum. As the worldly religions around us change and the weaker saints are tossed "to and fro" (Ephesians 4:14), we hoped that our building would model what we are supposed to be, "stedfast" and "unmoveable" (I Corinthians 15:58). Even though there may be building updates that become necessary, changes and upgrades to what the Lord has instituted in His church should never be improved upon.
3. Focus on the future. The Lord's church should always be focused on the future. Discipleship is a forward looking task (Luke 9:62). Just as we are to be looking forward to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in the clouds (Titus 2:13), we should also be laboring to ensure that the kingdom of God (the Church) is still alive and well at Macedonia. The Lord has promised that "gates of hell shall not prevail against" the church (Matthew 16:18). Therefore, there will be faith on earth when our Lord returns. But nowhere do we have a promise that the Lord's church will be our home church. We labored, with diligence and prayer, to ensure that generations after us are partakers of the Lord's true church (John 4:23).

The Lord has been good to us at Macedonia. I hope that this article has given credit to where it is due, the Lord. Come and visit with us at Macedonia any Lord's day at 10:30. I pray that you find a group of warm and thankful disciples gathered together in a new church building, for the purpose of worshipping and praising our God. Thank God for His blessings upon Macedonia!

God Bless.

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Announcements

1. Lord Willing, the Marietta Old School Primitive Baptist Association will convene at Crossroads Atlanta Primitive Baptist Church on Friday October 5th and Saturday October 6th.
2. At the close of services yesterday, Brother Jim and Sister Dawn Doles asked for a home with Macedonia Church. Their baptism will be in the next few weeks. We are thankful to have this couple in our membership.
3. This coming Sunday, October 7th, several of the Sisters have agreed to prepare our 1st Sunday meal. The occasion is for us to celebrate Sister Charlotte Taylor's 1st Sunday at church. Please plan to stay and enjoy the fellowship.