

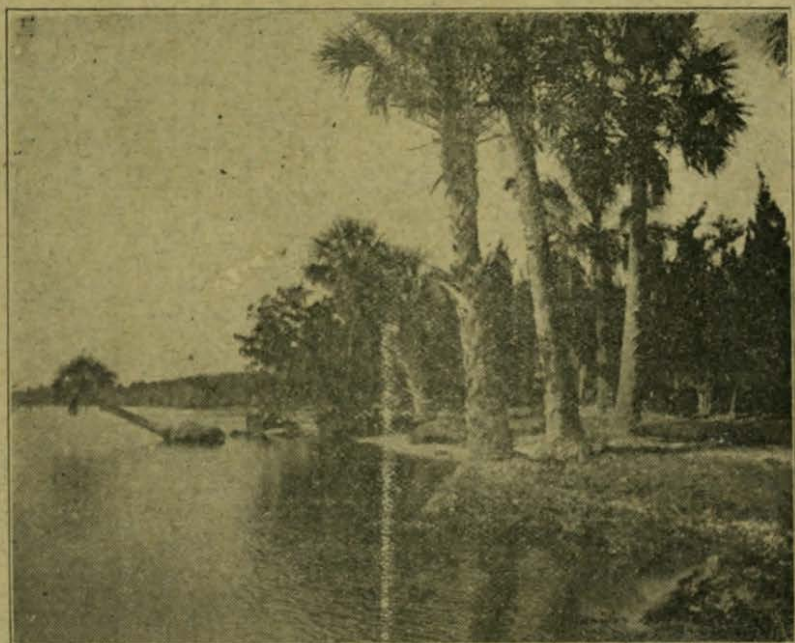
HISTORY AND SOUVENIR OF  
**Bethel Baptist**

Institutional Church

Jacksonville,

Florida

PHOTO-GRAVURES



PRICE TEN CENTS

"I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord."—Psalm 133: 1.

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*The Bethel Baptist Instl. Church*

*of Jacksonville, Fla.,*

*extend to you and your friends a cordial invitation*

*to be present at all services*

*strangers especially made welcome and*

*shown through the building*

*Souvenir Postal Cards and Literature at the office*

*John E. Ford D. D., Minister*

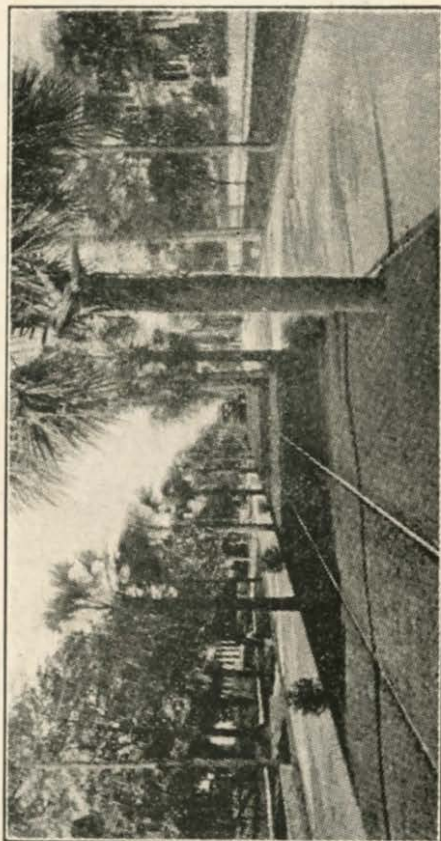
*J. M. Dennis, Church Clerk*

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"One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple."—Ps. 28: 4.

“Behold, I pray thee, the situation of this city is pleasant.”—2nd Kings ii; 19.

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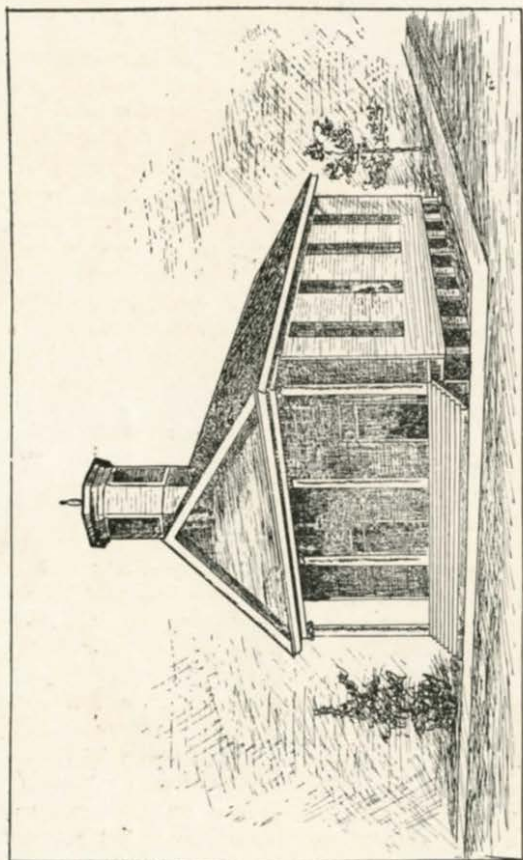
A view of one of the main streets of Jacksonville near  
Bethel Baptist Institutional Church

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“Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth  
is Mount Zion.”—Ps. xlviii: 2.

"Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."—I Samuel vii: 12

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FIRST BETHEL, BAPTIST CHURCH

Built in 1868. Torn down in 1895

Bethel's congregation worshipped in this building for twenty-seven years, and grew from a few souls to several hundred.

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"Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer \* \* \* \* for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people."—Isaiah lvi: 7.

"Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation."—Joel i: 3.

## H I S T O R Y

The Bethel Baptist Institutional Church of Jacksonville, Florida, was organized in July, A. D., 1838, under the title of Bethel Baptist Church. "Elder James McDonald was the first pastor. There were six charter members: Deacon Jas. McDonald and wife, Rev. J. Jaudan and wife, and two colored persons, slaves of Mr. Jaudan. The first meeting place was the Government Block house, which stood near the County Court House. In 1840 the Church purchased the lot on which the McTyeire Memorial Church now stands. Five years later, this property was sold to the Methodists, and the Baptists removed to Lavilla where they remained for about five years, when it was thought best to secure a more central location. Deacon Jaudan purchased a lot on Church street, between Hogan and Julia and gave it to the Church, upon which a meeting house was erected, and the congregation entered the new building in the spring of 1861. During the Civil War the church was used as a hospital by the Federal troops, and left greatly damaged."

At the close of the Civil War, the white members of the church went into court and endeavored to dispossess their colored brethren and sisters of the church property and name, but as the colored members were in the majority the court decided that they were the "Bethel Baptist Church" and the rightful owners of the property of said church.

A short while after this the Bethel Baptist Church sold the property on Church street between Hogan and Julia Sts., to their white brethren, and purchased a lot on the N. W. corner of Main and Union streets, and erected thereon in 1868 the one-room frame building which is shown on the opposite page. In this edifice the church continued to worship until it was displaced by a large red brick structure in 1895. This second church house was erected at a cost of \$26,000.00 and was occupied by the church until its destruction by fire, May 3, 1901.

On November 16, 1894, The Bethel Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Florida, was incorporated by the State of Florida as an Institutional Church with authority to carry on Social Betterment and Industrial Training work, a Bible Institute and a Publishing and Tract Repository Department, in addition to the regular work of a Missionary Baptist Church.

"Now, my God, let I beseech thee, thine eyes be open and let thine ears be attend unto the prayer that is made in this place."—II Chronicles vi: 40.

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BUILDINGS OF THE BETHEL BIBLE AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL AND THE  
BETHEL INSTITUTIONAL CHURCH OF JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA.

Erected in 1895 and destroyed five years later in the great fire of 1901

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"Come near and bring sacrifices and thank-offering unto the house of the Lord."—II Corinthians xix: 31,

“Lord of hosts, to thee we raise  
Here a house of prayer and praise.”

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### I N F O R M A T I O N .

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This was the first Institutional Church building ever erected in the South by a colored church. It was built of red pressed brick and trimmed with Georgia Marble. The building contained a main auditorium with a seating capacity of 1150, and nine class rooms, and cost \$26,000. It was erected by colored mechanics under the direction of colored contractors, and was at the time of its erection, the most convenient and attractive church building in the city.

The congregation in the meantime had grown beyond the five hundred mark, and in order to provide for its still further increase, it was deemed wise to secure a larger site and off of the business streets. In 1903, “The Rivers’ Square” was purchased, bounded by Hogan, Eagle, Julia and Caroline streets, facing the New City Park, one of the most desirable blocks in the City for Church purposes, and Bethel’s congregation proceeded to erect thereon one of the most modern and commodious church buildings in the South, as will be seen on the next page. Rev. J. M. Waldron, D.D., the pastor, always believed that Bethel should stand as a refutation of racial inferiority and an object lesson of the better side of Negro culture and progress in the South.

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“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.”—  
Mark xvi. 15-16.

“Spirit divine attend our prayer  
And make this house thy home.”

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FRONT VIEW OF THE THIRD NEW BUILDING OF  
BETHEL BAPTIST INSTITUTIONAL CHURCH FRONTING HOGAN  
AND CAROLINE STREETS

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“Walk about Zion, and go round about her; tell the towers thereof.”  
Psalm xlviii: 12.



## DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDING

*From the Florida Daily Sun of December 24, 1904.*

"One of the largest and most attractive church edifices in the city is the building erected by the Bethel Baptist Institutional Church, corner of Hogan and Caroline streets. It is rectangular in shape; its dimensions are 108x86½ feet, with a main story and basement, and a main tower on the corner and two smaller towers on Hogan and Caroline streets."

"The style of architecture is what is commonly known as the composite; on the outside of the roof accords in three gradual and graceful tiers from the lower point of the rear wall to the highest part of the building proper and culminates in a cupola. The main entrances are three in number and are located in the towers. There are three other entrances to the building so that in case of fire it can be emptied in three or four minutes."

"The edifice is not only a church but a school house as well; it has been erected so as to not only to afford all the needed facilities for an aggressive and up to date church and Sunday school, but also to provide ample room for a Bible and Industrial training school. In the main story and in the three towers are six large class rooms and a lecture room in addition to the main auditorium. In the basement are large, well lighted and airy rooms, and here will be located the Kindergarten, Primary School, Young Men's Baraca Club, dining room, reading room and the library, bath and toilet rooms for men and women, baptismal-robing rooms, a print shop, a room for socials and in-door athletic sports and two rooms in which to teach cooking on oil, gas and coal ranges. The entire building will be heated by hot air, generated by two large furnaces and hot and cold water and lavatories have been placed at convenient points throughout the building. Most of the class rooms, lecture rooms and the main auditorium are divided by roller partitions and sliding doors so that they can be opened into each other if necessity requires."

"This church is a monument to the Industry, Morality and Religious enterprise of Jacksonville's colored citizens,"

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"What hath God wrought."—Numbers xx'ii. 23.

"The Lord is in His Holy Temple, let all the earth keep silence before Him."—Habakkuk ii: 20.

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INTERIOR VIEW OF THE MAIN AUDITORIUM INTO WHICH THE  
SUNDAY SCHOOL AND LECTURE ROOM AT THE LEFT  
MAY BE OPENED

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"One thing have I desired of the Lord and that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life."—Psalm xxvii: 6.

"And saw others standing idle in the market place."—  
Matt. xx: 3

## DEPARTMENTS

Bethel church is at present organized and equipped for "Service" as well as "Praise and Worship." Its motto is—"EVERY MEMBER A WORKER, EVERY WORKER TRAINED." For this reason it has many departments each designed for a specific work, as follows:

### REGULAR BOARDS.

Deacons Board, Assistant Deacons Board,  
Deaconess's Board, Trustee Board,  
Finance Committee, Choir and Music Dept.,  
Ushers Association, Pulpit Club,  
District, Visiting and Praying Bands  
District Financial Clubs.

### MISSIONARY

Woman's Home Mission and Educational Society  
L. C. Fleming Foreign Missionary Society.

### PRAYER MEETINGS

Week Prayer Meeting.  
Early Sabbath Morning Meeting.  
Men's Sabbath Evening Prayer Meeting.  
Woman's Sabbath Evening Prayer Meeting.  
District Praying Bands (Deaconess).

### YOUNG PEOPLE'S WORK

#### SUNDAY SCHOOLS

Primary Intermediate Adult

#### BARACA

Senior Junior

#### PHILATHEA

Senior Junior

B.V.P. Union.

### EDUCATIONAL

Night School. Business College  
Florida Baptist College Auxiliary.

### TEMPERANCE

Women's Christian Temperance Union.  
Men's Christian Temperance Union.

"It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth."—I. am iii: 27

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S. M. DENNIS, CHAIRMAN DEACONS BOARD, AND  
THIRTY YEARS CLERK OF BETHEL BAPTIST INSTITUTIONAL  
CHURCH

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"Be of good courage and let us play the men for our people."—II  
Samuel x: 12.

“Behold now, there is in this city a man of God, and he is an honorable man.”—I Samuels ix: 6

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### B I Ö G R A P H Y

What is said of brother and sister Dennis may also be said of many members and families of Bethel Baptist Church. The church has been blessed with faithful and honorable families and members who have held up the hands of faithful pastors.

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“HONOR TO WHOM HONOR IS DUE.”

Samuel M. Dennis, whose picture, (unknown to him,) on the opposite page, was born at Pablo Beach, 18 miles from Jacksonville, October 12th, 1857. He was reared in Bethel Sunday school, baptized in Bethel church November 1877. Was married to Henrietta Conyers the next month, December, the wedding also taking place in the church.

He has filled almost every position in the church; choir, superintendent of Sunday school, chairman of Deacons Board, and church clerk for thirty years. Brother and sister Dennis have been prominently identified with every movement and building enterprise of the church. Quiet, modest, earnest, faithful, industrious, they reflect the spirit, teaching and example of Bethel's members.

### BETHEL'S EX-PASTORS FROM 1869

Rev. C. B. Simmons, deceased.

Rev. R. D. Dunbar, deceased.

Rev. J. Gardner Ross.

Rev. M. W. Gilbert, D.D.

Rev. J. M. Waldron, D.D.

Rev. John E. Ford, D.D., present pastor.

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“The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord and he delighteth in his way.”—Psalm xxxvii: 23.



*Yours very truly,*  
*John E. Ford*

"A good man showeth favor and lendeth."—Psalm 112:5

#### A STATEMENT

The Finance Committee of this church require \$100. weekly to meet all current expenses, bonds and interest. We earnestly appeal to every member and friend of Bethel to give regularly and liberally in their envelopes, that the Lord's money may be on hand to meet obligations.

Those who cannot come in person or bring their offering, may send it to the church treasurer, Mr. A. H. Hudson, 625 W. Union street, Jacksonville, Fla.

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"Thou shalt open thy hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy in thy land."—Deut. xv: 11,

"Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."—Ps. 133: 1.

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How did my heart rejoice to hear  
My friends devoutly say,  
In Bethel let us all appear,  
And keep the solemn day!"

I love her gates, I love the road;  
The Church adorned with grace,  
Stands like a palace, built for God,  
To Show his milder face,

Up to her courts, with joys unknown,  
The holy tribes repair;  
The Son of David holds his throne,  
And sits in judgement there.

He hears our praises and complaints;  
And, while his awful voice  
Divides the sinners from the saints,  
We tremble and rejoice.

Peace be within this sacred place,  
And joy a constant guest!  
With holy gifts and heavenly grace  
Be her attendants blest!

My soul shall pray for Bethel still,  
While life or breath remains;  
There my best friends, my kindred, dwell;  
There God, my Savior reigns

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"Therefore, many of them believed; also honorable women, not a few."—Acts 17:12