

Northern Kentucky Views Presents:

The Ogg CME Church

As told by

Della Jones

From the Northern Kentucky African American

Heritage

Task Force Newsletter

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HERITAGE

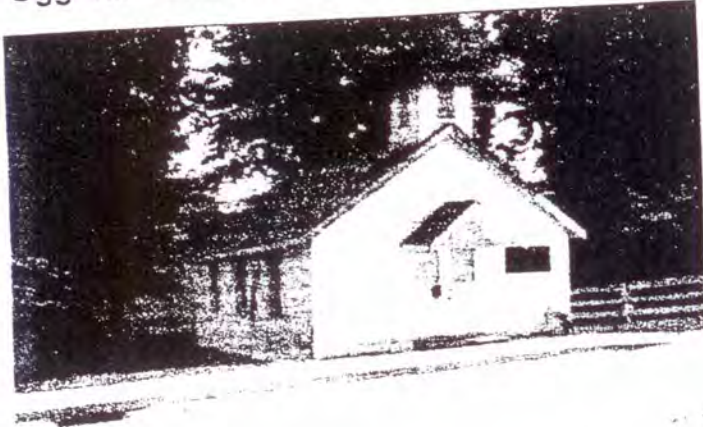
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"Righting" History in Northern Kentucky

Ogg CME Church – Williamstown, Kentucky



Della Jones, 98-year old retired teacher and resident of Williamstown, recalled the history of the church next to her home on Cynthiana St.

My father was a church trustee for the first church which was built in the late 1800's. I joined the church when I was quite young, eight or nine years old. I taught Sunday School and was superintendent at one time. We had 25-30 members then and the first church was larger than the one built to replace it in 1950. My father sat in the 'amen corner', took up the collection and sang. I never will forget his favorite song, 'At The Cross'. It was different then; we would give a quarter in the collection and it was a whole lot of money. My mother would have ice cream suppers. I remember sitting under the big tree in front of the parsonage and eating ice cream my mother had made with a hand-cranked freezer. At other times, we had basket dinners. We'd have a day once a year when we'd go to the woods, Webb's Woods across from the church and up a hill where a subdivision stands today, and spread dinner on tables on the grounds. Older people prepared the food and people would come from far and near for these basket dinners. I remember having week-long revivals, too, with visiting speakers. We just enjoyed the revivals and that's when people came into the church and all. Those were happy times.

We didn't have anyone living in the parsonage for several years. After we built the new church in 1950, Rev. Brent came out from Cincinnati on Saturday nights and stayed there and led services on Sunday.

Families who belonged to the church when I was a child included the Robinsons', Lears', Colemans', Williams', the Charlie Lewis family, Aunt Shirley Ellis' family, and my

parents Richard and Sarah Jackson Lewis. My maternal grandmother was Jenny Jackson, Older members died and others who had supported the church moved away. We didn't have church services for several years in the 1940's. There were not enough people to support a pastor. The building was condemned and the city was going to tear it down. My father wouldn't have been happy with that. I said I am going to write to Bishop Porter to see if anything can be done. He sent the Presiding Elder and some other men to see about it. We went from one board member and then another in the beginning to get an extension on it. We were successful and the church officials had it torn down in one day. Mrs. Coleman, Mrs. Mitchell and I served dinner in the back yard for the workmen. Now we had the problem of what to do next. I put an ad in the county paper and asked for donations. Some came to our aid and we got the new church built with volunteer labor. We named it Ogg Chapel after Rev. Ogg, pastor of the United Methodist Church on Paris St., who came to help with the building. The dedication was in 1950. It was a day of praise with a large crowd in attendance. There were more Negroes in Williamstown then, younger ones. Bishop Porter and his wife, former residents and their parents, and ministers from other districts came. We had a glorious day. We started without a penny; that's what I've always been proud of. We furnished it with donations of money, furniture and other things although we had pews from the other church. We

had a basement for the first time. The people in the community furnished the basement and we served dinners there. When all was said and done, we had a beautiful church and \$500 in the bank. We were just so proud of it. We had three or four people to join church and we did fairly well for awhile (after 1950) with Sunday School and church services each week. At times, the church was filled. Rev. Daniels was the first pastor of the new church. He came from Lexington for Sunday afternoon services. Succeeding pastors included Rev. Tyrone Davis, Rev. Goodman and Rev. Thompson. The Presiding Elder for several years after the new church began holding services was Elder Naylor. Elder Reid is the present Elder and visited here a few weeks ago. Bishop N. L. Linsey is one of the senior Bishops in the Ohio and Lexington District at the present time.

The two ladies, Mrs. Mitchell and Mrs. Coleman, passed, leaving just myself. We did not have church after 1987 but I rented the building a few times after that. The money we had left over from building the church and the rent money went into the bank and has been drawing interest ever since. All of it will go to the (CME) conference in time.