

Summerfield Methodist Church

Address 7078 Tryon Rd, Longview TX

Year
Marker
Erected 2011

Marker
Location Longview, 7078 Tryon Rd.

Marker
Size 18" x 28"

Marker Texas:

SUMMERFIELD METHODIST CHURCH WAS BUILT IN 1869 ON LAND DONATED BY PARSON B.W. BROWN WHO WAS ALSO LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FORMATION OF GREGG COUNTY. NAMED AFTER A CHURCH THE BROWN FAMILY HAD ATTENDED IN ALABAMA, THE CHURCH STANDS AS THE ONLY REMAINING NAMESAKE OF THE PIONEER COMMUNITY KNOWN AS SUMMERFIELD. CONSTRUCTION BEGAN ON A NEW CHURCH WING IN 1952, AND A NEW CHURCH SANCTUARY, EDUCATION WING, AND PARSONAGE WERE BUILT ON THE ORIGINAL SITE BY 1975. THE ORIGINAL BELL REMAINS IN FRONT OF THE PRESENT SANCTUARY. THE CHURCH FORMED ONE OF THE FIRST OFFICIAL WOMAN'S CHURCH SOCIETIES IN THE AREA IN 1937 AND HAS BEEN THE ANCHOR OF THE COMMUNITY SINCE THE MID-19TH CENTURY.

Officers, Teachers and Students

- 1 J. W. Killingsworth, Pa. 3325
- 2 W. H. Lawrence, Sept. 20
- 3 J. H. Lawrence, Sept. 20
- 4 W. L. Dickson, Sept. 20
- 5 W. L. Martin, Sept. 20
- 6 J. H. Brown, Sept. 20
- 7 R. H. Harris, Sept. 20
- 8 W. H. Miller, Sept. 20
- 9 Wm. S. Anderson, Sept. 20
- 10 W. S. Anderson, Sept. 20
- 11 J. H. C. Anderson, Sept. 20
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Include
from
Dues



B. W. (Parson) BROWN

In 1873-74, Parson Brown was elected to the State Legislature, and again in 1880. During one of those terms of office he secured legislation that permitted the carving of Gregg County from the vast domain of Upshur County. He also introduced legislation that made it illegal to sell whiskey within four miles of the Summerfield Church. This law is still

Gem Meacham

From: KC52931@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, November 10, 2010 11:29 AM
To: Gem Meacham
Cc: kc52931@aol.co
Subject: marker info (additional)

Just a note to let you know (not that it's really necessary) that we have located the metal marker that was on our bell tower before vinyl siding was put on the tower necessitating its removal. It states: "The original Summerfield Meting House Bell, used from 1850-1968".

I have no idea what verification was used to put these dates on the placque but it was more than likely "word of mouth" except for the 1968, at which time I'm sure was the date of a new church being built. Just thought you would like to know. Chris has done such a good job of preparing this appliction, I surely hope it will be approved. Thanks for all your help. kathleen

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

**SUBJECT MARKERS:
2011 Official Texas Historical Marker
Sponsorship Application Form**

Valid September 1, 2010 to November 15, 2010 only

This form constitutes a public request for the Texas Historical Commission (THC) to consider approval of an Official Texas Historical Marker for the topic noted in this application. The THC will review the request and make its determination based on rules and procedures of the program. Filing of the application for sponsorship is for the purpose of providing basic information to be used in the evaluation process. The final determination of eligibility and therefore approval for a state marker will be made by the THC. This form is to be used for subject marker requests only. Please see separate forms for either Historic Texas Cemeteries or Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks.

Proposed marker topic (Official title will be determined by the THC): Summerfield Methodist Church

County: Gregg

Town (nearest county town on current state highway map): Judson, Texas

Street address of marker site or directions from town noted above: 7078 Tryon Rd,

Longview TX 75605-5542

Marker Coordinates:

If you know the location coordinates of the proposed marker site, enter them in one of the formats below:

UTM Zone 32 Easting 34'56 Northing 94

Lat: 44' Long: 39.8" (deg, min, sec or decimal degrees)

Otherwise, give a precise verbal description here (e.g. northwest corner of 3rd and Elm, or FM 1411, 2.6 miles east of McWhorter Creek): see coordinates above

Will the marker be placed at the actual site of the topic being marked? Yes No

If the answer is no, provide the distance and directions to the actual location from the marker (i.e. 100 yards east).

Subject marker definition

Subject markers are educational in nature and reveal aspects of local history important to a community or region. These markers honor topics such as church congregations, schools, communities, businesses, events and individuals. Subject markers are placed at sites that have historical associations with the topics, but no legal restriction is placed on the use of the property or site, although the THC must be notified if the marker is ever to be relocated.

Criteria

1. **Age:** Most topics marked with subject markers must date back at least 50 years, although historic events may be marked after 30 years, and historic individuals may be marked, or may be mentioned in a historical marker text, after they have been deceased 10 years. The THC

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

may waive age requirements for topics of overwhelming state or national importance, although exceptions are rarely granted and the burden of proof for all claims and documentation is the responsibility of the narrative author.

2. **Historical significance:** A topic is considered to have historical significance if it had influence, effect or impact on the course of history or cultural development; age alone does not determine significance. Topics do not necessarily have to be of statewide or national significance; many historical markers deal with local history and a local level of significance.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Any individual, group or county historical commission (CHC) may apply to the THC to request an Official Texas Historical Marker for what it deems a worthy topic. Only complete marker applications that contain all the required elements and are received via email, as required, can be accepted or processed by the THC. For subject markers, the required elements are: sponsorship application form, narrative history and documentation. No photograph is required.

- Completed applications must be duly reviewed, verified and approved by the CHC in the county in which the marker will be placed. Paper copies of applications, whether mailed, emailed or delivered in person, cannot be accepted in lieu of the electronic version.
- The sponsorship application form, narrative history and documentation must be in the form of Microsoft Word or Word-compatible documents and submitted via email attachments to the THC no later than November 15, 2010.
- Required font style and type size are a Times variant and 12-point.
- Narrative histories must be typed in a double-spaced (or 1.5-spaced) format and include separate sections on context, overview, significance and documentation.
- The narrative history must include documentation in the form of reference notes, which can be either footnotes or endnotes. Documentation associated with applications should be broad-based and demonstrate a survey of available resources, both primary and secondary.
- Upon notification of the successful preliminary review of required elements by the THC, a non-refundable application fee of \$100 is required. The fee shall be submitted to the THC within 10 working days of application receipt notification.

APPROVAL BY COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

The duly appointed marker representative (chair or marker chair) noted below for the county historical commission will be the sole contact with the THC for this marker application. To ensure accuracy, consistency and efficiency, all information from and to the THC relative to the application—and throughout the review and productions processes—will be via direct communication with the CHC representative. All other inquiries (calls, emails, letters) to the THC will be referred to the CHC representative for response. By filling out the information below and filing the application with the THC, the CHC representative is providing the THC with notice that the application and documentation have been reviewed and verified by the CHC and that the material meets all current requirements of the Official Texas Historical Marker program.

As chair or duly appointed marker chair, I certify the following:

- Representatives of the CHC have met or talked with the potential marker sponsor and discussed the marker program policies as outlined on the THC web site. CHC members have reviewed the history and documentation for accuracy and made corrections or notes as necessary. It is the determination of the CHC that the topic, history and documentation meet criteria for eligibility.

CHC comments or concerns about this application, if any: This is a pioneer congregation, home church of Parson Brown who introduced the bill to form Gregg County.

Name of CHC contact (chair or marker chair): Ms. Gem Meacham, Marker Chair

Mailing address:1015 Meadow Ave. City, Zip: Kilgore TX 75662

Daytime phone (with area code):903-983-2554 **Email address (required):**

gmeacham@kilgore.edu

PERMISSION OF PROPERTY OWNER FOR MARKER PLACEMENT

Will the marker be placed on right-of-way maintained by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)? Yes No

If the answer is yes, the THC will secure the necessary permission from TxDOT, and no other information is required. If the answer is no, please provide the following information for the person or group who owns the property.

Property owner: Summerfield United Methodist Church

Address:7078 Tryon Rd City, State, Zip:Longview TX 756-5-5542

Phone:903-663-0116 **Email address:** cdcharles1973@gmail.com

NOTE: The property owner will not receive copies of correspondence from the THC. All correspondence—notice of receipt, request for additional information, payment notice, inscription, shipping notice, etc.—will be sent via email to the CHC representative, who is encouraged to share the information with all interested parties as necessary. Given the large volume of applications processed annually and the need for centralized communication, all inquiries about applications in process will be referred to the CHC for response. The CHC is the sole liaison to the THC on all marker application matters.

SPONSORSHIP PAYMENT INFORMATION

Prospective sponsors please note payment must be received in full within 45 days of the official approval notice and be accompanied by the THC payment form. The THC is unable to process partial payments or to delay payment due to processing procedures of the sponsor. Applications not paid in the time frame required may, at the sole discretion of the THC, be cancelled or postponed.

- Payment does not constitute ownership of a marker; Official Texas Historical Markers are the property of the State of Texas.
- If, at any time during the marker process, sponsorship is withdrawn, a refund can be processed, but the THC will retain the application fee of \$100.
- The Official Texas Historical Marker Program provides no means of recognizing sponsors through marker text, incising or supplemental plaques.

Marker sponsor (may be individual or organization): Summerfield United Methodist Church

Contact person (if applicable): Rev. Christopher Charles

Mailing address:PO BOX 65 City, State, Zip: Lonview TX 75660

Phone:903-663-0116 **Email address (required):**cdcharles1973@gmail.com

SHIPPING INSTRUCTIONS

If the proposed marker site is on TxDOT right-of-way, the marker will be shipped directly to the district highway engineer for placement, with consultation from the CHC. If the marker will go on property other than TxDOT right-of-way, provide full information in the space below. In order to facilitate delivery of the marker, residence addresses, post office box numbers and rural route numbers are not permitted. To avoid additional shipping charges or delays, use a business street address (open 8 a.m.—5 p.m., Monday through Friday).

Name: Summerfield UMC, c/o Rev. Christopher Charles

Street address: 7078 Tryon Rd. City, zip: Longview TX 75605-5542

Daytime phone (required): 903-663-0116 Email (required): cdcharles1973@gmail.com

TYPE AND SIZE OF SUBJECT MARKER

As part of its review process, the THC will determine the appropriate size of the marker and provide options, if any, for the approved topic based on its own review criteria, including, but not exclusive of, historical significance, replication of information in other THC markers, relevance to the Statewide Preservation Plan and the amount of available documented information provided in the application narrative. In making its determination, however, the THC will also take into account the preference of the CHC, as noted below.

The sponsor/CHC prefers the following size marker:

- 27" x 42" subject marker with post (\$1,500)
- 27" x 42" subject marker without post* (\$1,500)
- 18" x 28" subject marker with post (\$1,000)
- 18" x 28" subject marker without post* (\$1,000)

*For a subject marker without post, indicate to what surface material it will be mounted:

- wood
- masonry
- metal
- other (specify)

*For markers without posts, the CHC must receive prior approval from the THC for the planned placement. Such prior approval is based on the following:

- Submittal of a detailed plan for where the marker will be mounted, including the surface to which it will be placed (masonry, metal, wood); and
- A statement of why a marker with a post is not feasible or preferred.

SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION (via email required)

When the CHC has determined the application is complete, the history has been verified and the topic meets the requirements of the Official Texas Historical Marker Program, the materials should be forwarded to the THC via email at the following address:

markerapplication@thc.state.tx.us.

- The CHC or marker chair should send an email containing the following attachments (see attachment function under file menu or toolbox on your computer):
 - This application form
 - The subject history (including documentation)

RECORDS RETENTION BY CHC:

The CHC must retain hard copies of the application, as well as an online version, at least for the duration of the marker process. The THC is not responsible for lost applications, incomplete applications or applications not properly filed according to the program requirements. For additional information about any aspect of the Official Texas Historical Marker Program, visit the Markers page on the THC web site (<http://www.thc.state.tx.us/markerdesigns/madmark.html>).

Texas Historical Commission
History Programs Division
P.O. Box 12276, Austin, TX 78711-2276
Phone 512/463-5853
history@thc.state.tx.us



TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
real places telling real stories

Summerfield Methodist Church

I. Context:

Just two miles North of Longview, Texas lies a sleepy community called Judson. Most people wouldn't notice much riding through it. They would see a small post office, a couple of schools, a middle-class residential area, and a Methodist Church. However, this little Methodist Church has been the anchor of the small community since the mid-nineteenth century, and it stands as the only remaining namesake of the pioneer community known as Summerfield.

II. Overview:

The "Summerfield" community, which stood where today's Judson sits was, prior to arrival of Anglo settlers, part of the Spanish province headquartered in Nacogdoches.¹ After Mexico gained independence from Spain, it awarded a land grant to Haden H. Edwards on October 28 1835 which encompassed the Judson area.² This grant, consisting of two-thirds of modern Gregg County and one third of lower Upshur County, was nothing but forest filled with deer and turkey. After Texas won its independence from Mexico, many new counties sprang into existence. Upshur County was incorporated in 1846, encompassing all of modern Upshur and the Northwest section of modern Gregg counties.³ By 1860, small farms were dotted across the area.

The first "white" church in the area, known as the "old meeting house" was built in 1850 less than one mile east of the present site of Judson Middle School.⁴ In 1852, Hitson Brown, and his wife, Winford Ray Brown arrived in Texas from Alabama, along with the T.J. Allison family, and the Thomas Sweatt Killingsworth family. Hitson's son, B.W. Brown remained on his farm in Alabama during the Civil War, but in 1865, B.W. (Parson) Brown joined his mother and father in Upshur County. During the separation, B.W. Brown had joined the Methodist Church. Prior to his arrival, the area had been

1 Marybelle Tutt, *The Roots of Judson*. (Judson: Files of Summerfield United Methodist Church, 1995) p .1.

2 John B. Dickson, *History of Gregg County*. Thesis. Austin: U.T., 1975) p. 34.

3 Ibid.

4 Albert Sanders, & Mrs. Dewey Fuller, *A History of Summerfield Methodist Church: Gregg County Texas:1869-1955*. (Gilmer, TX: *Gilmer Mirror*, 1955) p. 1.

frequented by circuit riders, but Parson Brown started preaching at the “old meeting house” by 1866. Also that year, Brown raised forty bales of cotton, enough to secure his finances for many years to come, and by 1869, he donated a tract of land measuring 7.4 acres, situated 5.7 miles North 6 degrees West from Longview.⁵ On this land, Parson Brown realized the construction of Summerfield Methodist Church in 1869. Church tradition holds the church was named “Summerfield” after a church the Brown family had attended in Alabama.⁶

Until 1874, Parson Brown would serve as one of three regular pastors for Summerfield MC. In 1873-74, Parson B.W. Brown was elected to the Texas State Legislature and was re-elected in 1880.⁷ In regular session of the Thirteenth Texas Legislature, Parson Brown introduced a bill to carve a new county out of southern Upshur. The governor finally approved House Bill 23 on May 21, 1873, establishing the new county to be named after Confederate General John B. Gregg.⁸ Parson Brown was also responsible for legislation that made it illegal to sell whiskey within four miles of Summerfield Church.⁹ This law still stands on our books today. In 1879, Parson Brown built a home in Longview which bears an official State of Texas Historical Marker.¹⁰

By 1893, the area formerly known as “Summerfield” became known as Judson, a namesake of the Judson Baptist Church built nearby.¹¹ The original post office sat five hundred yards south of its present location. Though the name of the community changed, the name of Summerfield Methodist Church did not.

Judson experienced growth cycles throughout the remaining nineteenth century and into the twentieth. With the oil boom and the subsequent rise in population, Summerfield Church enjoyed a robust congregation and a series of talented preachers. By the 1940s, the church building was quite

5 Deed Records of Gregg County, TX, Vol. 28, p. 242 & Vol. 37, p. 288.

6 Sanders, p. 3.

7 Yett, Tommy, comp. *Members of the Legislature of the State of Texas from 1846-1939* (Austin: n.p., 1939) pp. 71-72.

8 *Journal of the Thirteenth Texas Legislature* (Austin 1873-74) p. 1097.

9 Sanders, p. 5.

10 Brown-Birdsong House, Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (<http://atlas.thc.state.tx.us>), accessed Nov. 2, 2010.

11 Jonilea T. Rankin, *A Brief History of Judson*. Unpublished essay. N.d., n.p.

small and cramped. In 1952, construction began on a new church wing, completed in 1953 under the direction of Rev. Royce Robb.¹² By 1975, the structure had become so old as to be unserviceable. A new church sanctuary and education wing, along with a new parsonage were built on the site of the original church building.¹³ Today, the original bell from Parson Brown's Methodist Church is on display in its own housing in front of the present sanctuary of Summerfield UMC. Summerfield United Methodist Church is a small, but vibrant church community who loves to tell strangers all about their small church with a proud history.

Like many other Methodist churches of its time, Summerfield Methodist Church has carried a few different names on its door. At the time of the old meeting house, Methodists in America and her territories were known as the Methodist Episcopal and Methodist Episcopal Church South. The division in the Methodist Episcopal Church occurred in 1844, stemming from the issue of slavery.¹⁴ Summerfield Methodist Church was originally known as Summerfield Methodist Episcopal Church-South. In 1939, a merger between the North and South Churches plus the Methodist Protestant church was finalized. The separate denominations merged into simply the Methodist Church.¹⁵ Now called Summerfield Methodist Church, she continued in ministry throughout all the social upheaval. In 1967, the Methodist Church merged with another denomination similar in doctrine, the Evangelical United Brethren Church, to form the modern United Methodist Church.¹⁶ Today, she hangs a third name on her door, Summerfield United Methodist Church.

From early on, Summerfield Church was shaped by the women of the community. One of the first official woman's church societies in the area formed at Summerfield in 1937.¹⁷ The Woman's Society of Christian Service, as they were known, acted as the official welcoming committee for any

12 Sanders, p. 9.

13 *Minutes*, (Judson: Files of Summerfield Methodist Church, February 1975) n.p.

14 Neil M. Alexander, Ed. *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2008*. (Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 2008) p. 14.

15 *Ibid.*, p. 15.

16 *Ibid.*, p. 16.

17 Sanders, p. 11.

new families moving into the area, and worked extensively with children throughout the community. Their success translated into a thriving youth fellowship during the great "East Texas Oil Field" days. Thirty-five or more children were in attendance each Sunday.¹⁸

In 1955, Summerfield Methodist Church was featured in a journal, written by Albert Sanders and Mrs. Dewey Fuller. It was published by the Gilmer Mirror in 1955.

Today's Summerfield UMC consists of the children and grandchildren of those early women and children. Summerfield UMC is a small membership church within the North District of the Texas Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. Today, the church is officiated by Rev. Christopher D. Charles, overseen by District Superintendent Rev. William Taylor, and presided by Bishop Janice Rigg Huie of the Houston Area Episcopacy. Though the youth have scattered, Summerfield remains vibrant and effective in its ministry to the Longview community. It works in partnership with Longview Community Ministries, Asbury House Child Enrichment Center, and the Hiway 80 Mission. Summerfield also plays host to the annual East Texas Singing Convention, a meeting of lovers of old gospel music from all over the Ark-La-Tex.

III. Significance:

This church is historically significant for a number of reasons:

1. It was built on land furnished by, and was officiated by Parson B.W. Brown, who was largely responsible for the formation of Gregg County.
2. It is the only surviving place in the community to bear the namesake "Summerfield," the original name of the community.
3. Though the original building no longer remains, the bell from that first church still does.
4. Even after one hundred forty-one years of existence, Summerfield UMC remains a vibrant and welcoming community of faith nestled on the northern fringe of Longview, yet remains in ministry to all of East Texas, and to the larger world in mission.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 12.

IV. Sources:

Alexander, Neil M., ed. *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2008*. Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 2008.

Brown-Birdsong House. Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (<http://atlas.the.state.tx.us>), accessed Nov. 2, 2010.

Deed Records of Gregg County, TX, Volumes 28 and 37.

Dickson, John B. *History of Gregg County*. Thesis. Austin: U. T., 1975.

Journal of the Thirteenth Texas Legislature. 1873-74.

Minutes of Summerfield United Methodist Church. Judson: Files of Summerfield United Methodist Church, February, 1975.

Rankin, Jonilea T. *A Brief History of Judson*. Unpublished essay, no date.

Sanders, Albert and Mrs. Dewey Fuller. *A History of Summerfield Methodist Church: Gregg County Texas: 1869-1955*. Gilmer, TX: *Gilmer Mirror*, 1955.

Tutt, Marybelle. *The Roots of Judson*. Judson: Files of Summerfield United Methodist Church, 1995.

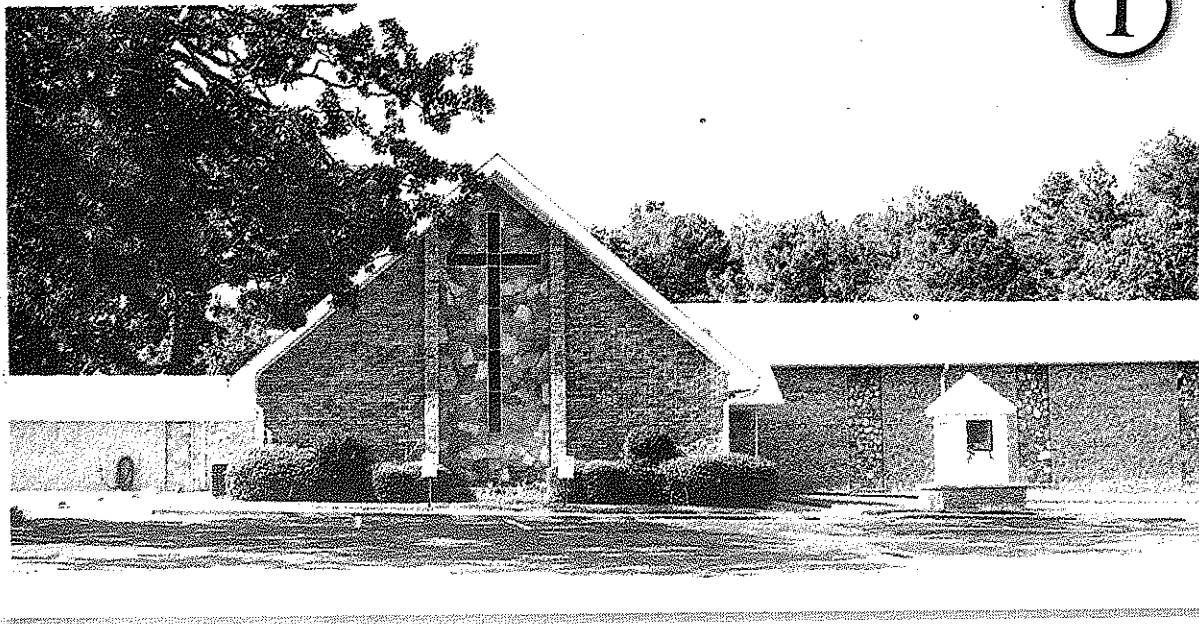
Yett, Tommy. comp. *Members of the Legislature of the State of Texas from 1846-1939*. Austin, 1939.

Summerfield United Methodist Church began near Judson schools as 'The Meeting House' in the 1850s

Words and Photos by GWYN KERSEY-WEATHERFORD

Facing east, gravestones mark the final resting place of folks who once sang old hymns long ago in what was then Summerfield Methodist Church, which is located adjacent to the cemetery where the gravestones are located.

Some of the older gravestones even



located between Judson and Summerfield.

And in 1866, Parson Brown began to experience a climb back up the ladder to success.

He produced 44 bales of cotton, and by 1869, gave one acre of land to the church for a proposed building site

GO BACK TO a time when worship services were held in a tiny log structure known as "The Meeting House." Not only was it a place of worship, but the structure also served as a one-room school. The land on which it sat belonged to the early pioneer, Elmer Henderson.

"The Meeting House" was a landmark for a community known as Summerfield (which was later to be called Judson).

From 1850 until 1869, nearby residents traveled by horseback or by buggy to hear God's Word preached - probably by a godly member or circuit rider preacher.

Services at "The Meeting House" were attended by many families with names that have been significant in the Longview area's history - names such as Killingsworth, Dickard, Wooley, Williams, Oden, Adrian, Fuller and Brown.

While Hitson Brown's family joined the congregation in 1852, B.W. Brown, the 21-year-old son of the Brown family remained in Alabama and tried to salvage the family's cotton farm after the Civil War. But in 1865, B.W. (Parson) Brown, his wife Nancy and their children joined other members of the Brown family in Summerfield. Soon, Parson Brown was preaching at "The Meeting Place."

Parson Brown never forgot his faith, the source of recovery from both physical and emotional wounds caused by the war. The land on which the Browns settled was known as "Gibson land" and was

for a new building.

As soon as the deed was recorded, members of the Summerfield Community went to work. Men cut and planed logs and nailed boards in place while women fed the hungry workers. Children worked beside parents. Before the end of 1869, the first Summerfield Methodist Church opened its doors and preached the Word of God to its community.

Other pastors would follow Parson Brown - including the Rev. D.F. Fuller, the first appointed pastor who served not only Summerfield Methodist but preached alternate Sunday mornings at LaGrone Chapel and at a church in Longview alternating Sundays afternoons with Ft. Crawford.

On top of the new building was a steeple, which housed a bell tower. The sound of the bell pierced the air every Sunday morning for many years.

The ringing of the bell is still a favorite childhood memory of many of those who remain as members of what is now Summerfield United Methodist Church.

Parson Brown also served in the Texas Legislature - where he was responsible for legislation carving Gregg County out of Upshur and Rusk counties.

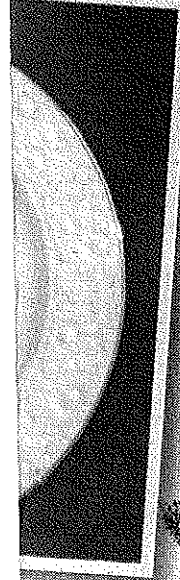
Meanwhile, the "Little Church in the Wildwood" continued to grow and prosper.

But the structure built in 1869 would eventually become unsalvageable.

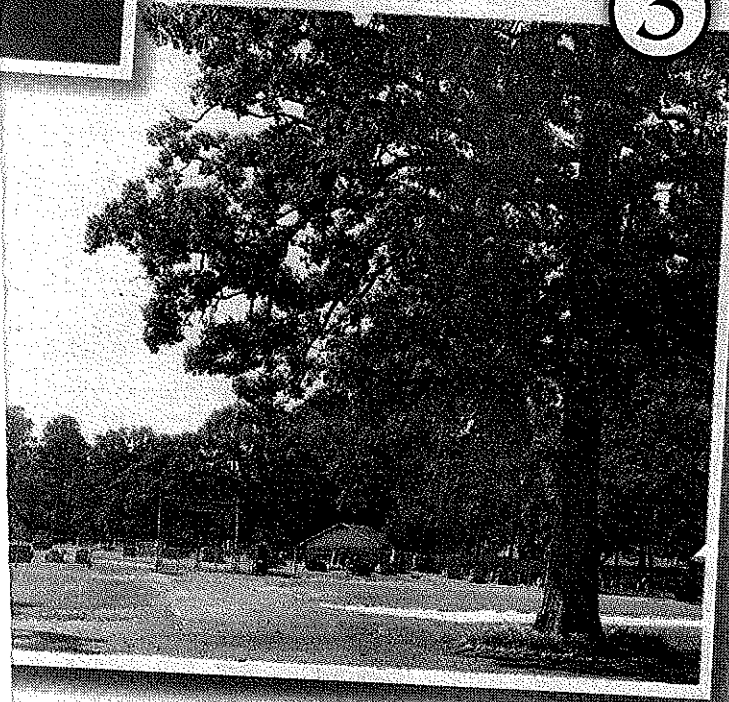
low the ceremony. The Sunday following the dedication - on Oct. 6 - Summerfield Homecoming is scheduled to take place. The celebration of 144 years preaching the gospel on the land dedicated by Parson Brown will be a joyous event.

Many families of early pioneers still attend the church and homecoming will host even more.

All are invited to share the worship, food and fellowship both days or join the 2nd Sunday evening singing every month at 6 p.m. - which is followed by fellowship and finger food.



3



2



In 1975, a new building was constructed for the Summerfield United Methodist Church.

But the bell remained. It does not sit on top of the church building, and its clapper no longer summons members when it is "time for church." The bell is now located in front of the church in the original bell house structure with a rope attached. The Rev. Christopher Charles, the current pastor, admits small children delight in ringing the bell.

The quaint brick building sits back a short distance from Tryon Road. And horses and buggies once tied to the twisted and snarled oak tree in front of the church have been replaced by automobiles parked on pavement.

However, the walk from the parking lot, past the old bell and through the front door takes one into a building still located on the same land Parson Brown deeded to the church in 1869. The flat ceiling in the old building's sanctuary has been redesigned, and beautiful wood-ribbed beams form an beautiful archway pointing to a massive stained glass cross.

Although the ringing of the bell is no longer heard, music still fills the air. Music has been a major tradition at Summerfield Methodist Church from the beginning - with afternoon singings and dinners on the ground, gatherings in members' homes and covered dish dinners.

The Rev. Charles proudly proclaims, "If it is a Methodist gathering, food is served."

In fact, the church began holding an annual barbecue in the 1960s - a tradition that lasted approximately 30 years. This event was popular throughout the Longview area, and hundreds of tickets were sold to support the church's building fund.

At 11 a.m. on Oct. 5, the Gregg County Historical Commission will be dedicate a historical marker for the church. Singing will fol-

