

Missionary Bible Class

As a result of the missionary influence of the Sale Creek Missionary Bible Society of the very early years of the 20th century, the Missionary Bible Class was born. The earliest record of that Sunday School class came from a record book from 1938. The class at that time was under the tutelage of Mrs. Gertie List. One of her close friends, wife of her husband's business partner, and other active member of the Missionary Bible Society, was Licia Downey, wife of elder T.E. Downey. She was very active in the missionary work and ministry of the church but was the teacher for younger people in the church. Her interest in missionary work eventually led her to sell the Downey farm after her husband's death and move to Columbia, South Carolina and work for Columbia Bible College until her retirement.

Mrs. Downey's zeal for souls was illustrated by an event that took place during the early 1930's. She had been working on Milo Gothard to become a Christian for many years. She prayed for him. She had others pray for him. She visited Milo, and one time when he was sick, she and her husband, Ed, took turns at night staying up with him. One Sunday night Ed told Licia that it was time to go to evening service. Licia replied that she was not going. "Tonight it is time that Milo Gothard gets saved," she said. She got into her car and drove up Coulterville Road to Milo's house and got out. When Milo answered the knock at his door, Licia said, "Milo, it's time you got saved. Are you ready?" Milo answered that he was and for her to come inside. When she left, Milo had received Christ as his savior.

Mrs. List had a similar zeal for the work of missions and taught the Missionary Bible Class of older ladies for over 30 years. Their meetings and Sunday morning classes consisted of spiritual lessons from the Bible as well as reports from various missionaries scattered around the world. Two of the church's missionary families came through Bryan College at that time, Frances Warburton (wife of Michael Warburton) and Kenneth and Elizabeth Hood. Both of these families were adopted not only as official missionaries of the church but also as recipients of financial and prayer support from the class.

Another of the activities of the class was that of quilting for new families, families who suffered burnouts, or families who were having difficult times. The group was commonly known as the Sale Creek Sewing Circle. The class members also took upon themselves the cleaning of the church building at various times.

Mrs. List had another contemporary who taught the younger ladies and some young married couples and college age students from the 1940's until the late 1960's.. That lady was Elizabeth McDonald, wife of the editor of the Chattanooga News-Free Press, Roy McDonald. Mrs. McDonald had a similar missionary zeal that was characterized by a missionary's picture with the Bible verse, Isaiah 6:8 "Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' Then I said, 'Here am I. Send me.'" Mrs. McDonald continued her work as teacher in the church until moving back to Chattanooga in the early 1970's because of her failing health.

The Missionary Bible Class took up (and continues to take up) its own collection of money to contribute to its missionaries. Many years their contributions to their missionaries has exceeded \$1500. They direct their contributions to meet the needs of missionaries as they arise.

Listed below are the original members of the Missionary Bible Class in 1938.

Gertie List	Maggie Fleming	Bertha Wall
Lettie Shipley	Lizzie Blake	Bertha Coppinger
Mary Blake	Stella Patterson	Eliza Eldridge
Martha Coppinger	Beatrice Roberts	Maggie Troutman
Thelma Coppinger	Mollie Roark	Lena Northrup
Stella Bryant	Neva Bolton	Josie Coppinger
Delphia Gentry	Florence Coulter	Sylvia Hines
Clara Ketner	Florence Downey	Elsie Vinton
Mary Phillips	Claude Hoffman	Mildred Hancock
Olwyn Coulter	Mollie Cox	Mrs. Troxler
Cary Brown		

As stated in last month's newsletter article, after Mrs. List gave up the class in the late 1960's, Mrs. Neddo took over for her and relinquished it in recent years to Shari Dvorak.