These are records of the Emmaus Baptist Church, a United Baptist congregation near Courtois in the southwestern corner of Washington County, Missouri. The records include minutes of meetings, membership records, and miscellaneous church papers.

The Emmaus Baptist Church is located one mile south of Courtois, Missouri. The small congregation includes members from the area along the upper Courtois and Huzzah creeks between the village of Courtois and the town of Viburnum in northwestern Iron County. The church was organized on 11 February 1861, when six members were appointed to draft a constitution. J. G. Rutter was appointed pastor and M. S. Wiman, church clerk. One of the first orders of business was the drafting of a petition asking admittance of the Emmaus Church into the Franklin United Baptist Association, which was granted. Delegates from Emmaus attended the Franklin Association meetings until the church transferred to the Cane Creek Baptist Association, with which the church is presently affiliated. The fledgling congregation held regular meetings during most of the Civil War. There are no records for April 1864 through February 1866, but a notation in the record book indicates that there may have been meetings for which there are no minutes. Although membership has declined somewhat in recent years, the congregation continues to meet at Emmaus Church. Present membership includes about fifteen individuals.

The records of Emmaus Church reflect a typical rural Baptist church. The records consist of five volumes which contain primarily the minutes of church meetings. The minutes begin with the organizational meeting of the church in February 1861 and continue through December 1989. The minutes are complete with the exception of the period 1877-1900, for which there are no minutes. Church business as indicated in the minutes included the acceptance and dismissal of members, adjudicating complaints against members, ordaining ministers and engaging pastors, and appointing delegates to the annual meetings of the Franklin United Baptist Association and the Cane Creek Baptist Association. Delegates to the annual associations also carried funds subscribed by Emmaus Church to subsidize the printing of the minutes of the association, and to support mission work.

Membership records are found in four of the five volumes. An attempt to compile a complete list of members from earlier records may be found in Volume 5. However, the list does not include the names of the earliest members, among whom were James V. Carty, M. H. Dotson, John Godby, R. S. Laramore, John A. Love, Samuel Lucass, James Nipper, J. G. Rutter, and W. S. Wiman. The Laramore family of Washington County have been active throughout the history of the church as members and officials, and are currently the custodians of the records of Emmaus Church.

Volume 1: Record book, 11 February 1861 -- October 1876 (64 pages).


5 March 1990  Nora Laramore  Loaned for microfilming

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