This collection is available at The State Historical Society of Missouri. If you would like more information, please contact us at shsresearch@umsystem.edu.

These are minute books, membership registers, and papers of Bethany United Baptist Church at Roselle in Madison County, Missouri. Records exist from the founding of Bethany Church in 1829 as an arm of Providence Church of Washington County.

Eight individuals living in what is now the northwestern corner of Madison County first met to form Bethany Church on 5 September 1829. The church was formally organized at the house of Robert Sinclair on 26 June 1830 with the assistance of Baptist ministers James Williams and Littleton Lunceford. The church joined the Bethel Baptist Association in 1831. The church sided with anti-mission Baptists in 1833, evolving as the United Baptists of the present.

The church draws its members from the area around Big Creek (now Marble Creek) and Brewer’s Creek along the current boundary between Madison and Iron counties. The post office for the community was Roselle (1895-1959), in Madison County. The congregation met in private homes until 1855, when “Meeting House Hill” in Madison County became the site of the first permanent church building. The fourth and present church building, in Roselle, was built in 1922.

William Polk was the first pastor, filling that post for thirty years until he was murdered during the Civil War. Other early church officers were Jacob Baughman, Martin Collins, William Downs, A. V. Lashley, Robert C. Martin, H. F. Tong, A. J. Vance, and Harrison Vance. Among the members of the church in its earliest years were Peter Williams, Cely Williams, Amanda Baughman, John Baughman, Dorothy Baughman, Jacob Baughman, James Baughman, John Sharp, Susannah Sinclair, Polly Thomas, and Sarah Young. At least one member of the congregation was an African-American. “Moriah a coulered Woman” was excluded from the church in August 1841. The church numbered 15 members in 1832; 73 members in 1860; and 118 in 1914.

Members of Bethany Church were instrumental in forming other churches prior to the Civil War, including those at Big Creek, Creek Nation, Mount Pleasant, Turkey Creek, and White Water. There are no records of any meetings from April 1861 to April 1866. Since the Civil War, the congregation has met regularly to the present day. There have been several other divisions of the church reflecting doctrinal differences, most notably during 1916-1917. Membership remained steady at 80-90 members until the 1980s.

The records of the church consist of record books and miscellaneous papers. Minutes of meetings begin with the organizational meeting on 5 September 1829 and continue through September 1991. Business matters included the admittance and dismissal of members, appointments
of delegates to Baptist associations, and matters pertaining to church property. Volumes 1-4 contain both minutes and registers of members. The membership registers are alphabetically ordered but are not indexed. The Folders include membership papers and miscellaneous correspondence.

Written permission of Bethany United Baptist Church is required prior to the use of this collection. This restriction will expire on 1 January 2076.

Shelf List

These are minute books, membership registers, and papers of Bethany United Baptist Church at Roselle in Madison County, Missouri. Bethany Church began as an arm of Providence Church of Washington County. Records exist from the founding of the church in 1829.

Volumes 1-4: Record books, 1829-1992

Volume 1: Record book, 5 September 1829—July 1900
   (registers of church members are at the end of the volume)

Volume 2: Record book, March 1889—May 1910
   (register of members, pp. 14-28)

Volume 3: Record book, June 1910--May 1944
   (register of members at front of volume)

   (register of members at front of volume)

Folders 1-3: Miscellaneous papers, ca. 1930s-1990

Folder 1: Membership papers, ca. 1930s-1980s.
   (Letters of admittance, transfer, and dismissal, arranged alphabetically by surname of member.)

Folder 2: Miscellaneous papers and correspondence, 1942-1990


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Baughman, Jacob.
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