

South Fairfax Church of Christ  
2834 S. Fairfax Rd.  
Bakersfield, CA 93307  
(661)366-5504

The Church of Christ which now meets at 2834 South Fairfax Rd. had its beginning as a congregation in the home of James (Jim<sup>1</sup>) and Helen Morris, at 1715 Orange St. in Bakersfield, California. The Morris family came to Bakersfield in the early '40s from Bonne Terre, Missouri. Other recent arrivals in the area included the Glen<sup>2</sup> McVey family, then living at 713 Washington Ave. in Oildale. Both of these families were contacted by evangelist Lloyd Riggins, who worked with several congregations scattered around California in those days. Bro. Riggins brought the Morris and McVeys together, and they began worshiping as a congregation in the Morris family home on July 26, 1942. They met in the Morris home for several months, and then were joined in that enterprise by some members of the Oxley family who also came to Bakersfield from Missouri in March of 1943. The families of Ed<sup>3</sup> Oxley, Nigel<sup>4</sup> Oxley, and Arnold<sup>5</sup> Stone came to Bakersfield from Almartha, Missouri and found work and made homes here for about a year at that time. They were a great encouragement to the families then meeting in the Morris home. The church, having grown too large for the Morris home, in August, 1943 purchased some lumber and erected a small building, about 20'X24', on the McVeys' property in Oildale for the church to meet in. The congregation also included the Marshall-Williams<sup>6</sup> family by that time, though the exact time of their arrival is not clear in the records and memories of the times. The Marshall-Williams family probably became a part of



Helen Morris, Elsie McVey, Janelle Oxley, and Ida Lee Williams, 1943

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<sup>1</sup>Jim Morris was a fireman (on the railroad). Jim and Helen had two daughters, Sandy and Kay, and later a son, David.

<sup>2</sup>Glen McVey was a storekeeper. Glen and Elsie had several children including a son Pat and daughter Glenda who were teens. Glen's father was also with them and is fondly remembered as "Grandpa" McVey.

<sup>3</sup>Ed Oxley worked as a carpenter. He and Lizzie lived at 322 W. Belle Ave., Oildale with their children, Janelle, Elmo, Mary, Carl, and Helen.

<sup>4</sup>Nigel Oxley worked in the oilfields. Nigel and Goldie lived at 212 W. Harding Ave. in Oildale during their stay. At that time they had one daughter, Virginia.

<sup>5</sup>Arnold Stone worked in the oilfields. Arnold and Erma lived at 326 Belle Ave. with their little daughter Lynda and infant son Burnell (Rocky).

<sup>6</sup>Sister (Ither L.) Marshall and her children, Laban Cox and Mrs. Ida Lee Williams, lived at 511 Washington Ave, Oildale. There was also a "Grandma" Williams. The Marshall-Williams family was from Oklahoma.

the congregation in about July or August, 1943. The church met in the dirt floored structure on the McVey property for about a year. Others became a part of the congregation during those months, including the Johnston family, and hopes ran high for continued growth and progress. Several soldiers in those war days became transient participants in the meetings of the church.

In the spring of 1944 the Oxley and Stone



Elmo Oxley, Sister Marshall, Allie Fry, Lizzie Oxley, Sister Weekly (from Exeter) and others at 613 Lincoln in about 1945

families returned to Almartha, Missouri, intending to stay in Missouri. It was a difficult and disappointing time for the church meeting at 715 Washington Ave. in Oildale. However, the economic conditions in Almartha continued to be bleak, and in August, 1944, the Ed Oxley family, and the Arnold Stone family, returned to California, settling in Oildale once more. This time the Charley Fry family was part of the band, but the Nigel Oxley family remained in Missouri. Just about a week after the Oxley families returned the McVey family sold their home and property, including the "church building" on Washington Ave. They gave a portion of the proceeds to the congregation and moved away to the Bay area. The church persisted briefly in the structure on the former McVey place, and may have rented a garage for a short time, but then rented a one bedroom house at 129 ½ Wilson Ave. in October of 1944. The house was not a very comfortable meeting place, apparently lacking heat and not too weather tight. Housing in the Bakersfield area was at a premium in those days, since there was work to be had in the area and many were migrating here for better opportunities. Rental options



Laban Cox, Charley Fry, Elmo Oxley, Ed Oxley and Sister Weekly (from Exeter) at 613 Lincoln in about 1945

were few.

In those early days in the '40s the church continued to receive occasional visits and help from Lloyd Riggins, an evangelist living in the Compton area of California, and starting in August of 1944 E.G. Johnson, an evangelist who lived in Colton, California (near Riverside) began to help the church in earnest.

In September of 1944 the church bought a lot at 613 Lincoln Ave in Oildale with funds from the McVey property and assistance from Bro. E.G. Johnson. Bro. Johnson, then in his sixties, built a one room church building there with the help of the members. At the same time he taught nightly Bible studies from his rocking chair in the rented place, and built up the members while they were building a meeting place. The Bill and Evelyn Powers family joined the congregation the following year.

Bro. Johnson worked with the church for several years to establish and strengthen it and appointed the first elders and deacons for the congregation in 1959. The first elders were Charley Fry and Leo Johnson, the deacons Gerald Crown and Elmo Oxley. The church continued to meet in the building Bro. Johnson constructed at 613 Lincoln Ave. from December 1944 until February of 1991. During those years the building was enlarged and

refurbished, bathrooms and classrooms were added and later remodeled, and the houses and lots on both sides were purchased and renovated for the use of the church. One often noticed feature of the building at 613 Lincoln was the three cables Bro. Johnson used to hold the east and west walls up and spaced, stretching across the auditorium just below the ceiling. The building Bro. Johnson and the members built is still in use by another church group. The benches he constructed for the church were used for about 30 years, but are gone now. However, the church today still uses a pulpit that is rebuilt over the structure of the original pine pulpit E. G. Johnson built.

When the church moved from Lincoln Ave. on its way to a new and larger building on Fairfax Rd. in February, 1991, we met temporarily in a borrowed facility at 8300 Kern Canyon Road, courtesy of an arrangement made by Austin Chaffee with the management of the mobile home park he lived in, until the facilities under construction on Fairfax Road were finished for occupancy.

On April 14, 1991, the congregation had its first Sunday assembly in the new member-built<sup>7</sup> building at 2834 South Fairfax, and an open-house celebration with numerous out of town guests the following Sunday. Since then we've had the joy in this place of sharing in numerous professions of faith and baptisms, a number of weekend meetings and vacation Bible studies, a few weddings and other celebrations, and also the shared grief of some funerals and memorial gatherings, and other poignant and sometimes painful farewells.

More than 60 years after its formation, the children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren of those families who started the church and built it up and supported it in the 1940s are scattered far and wide. Over the course of years many others have been a part of the church, some by conversion, some by renewal, some by relocation. Some have come and stayed, many have come and gone. The list of scattered heirs and former members is considerably longer than the list of present active members. From its beginnings until the present day the congregation has had many "ups" and "downs." There have been successes and failures, joys and heartaches, high hopes and disappointments. The Spirit that brought the church into being many years ago and sustained it through the years continues to live in its members and to bless their faith. If perchance another 60 years lies before us, undoubtedly there will be both great successes and great disappointments to be experienced, highs and lows and joys and griefs of many kinds, while brothers and sisters seek the will and purposes of God and lend their strength and determination to His cause.

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<sup>7</sup>Members in this case being both local members and volunteers and donors from several other congregations.

*The following are Notes from Western States News – published by George Robinson and Kenneth Morgan. Each news item was generally published in the month after it was written. These notes provide glimpses into the early experiences of the disciples who formed what is now the South Fairfax Church of Christ, and some of the highs and lows in the first several years of the congregation.*

August, 1942 1715 Orange, Bakersfield, California – Surprised? A Bro. and Sister Morris, his sister and our family have started worship here at above address. Bro. Riggins was instrumental in bringing the two families together. We had our first meeting July 26. Bro. Riggins stopped here night of August 7 on his way to Reedley. He will be in charge of the congregation here. Does anyone know of others in or near Bakersfield, whom we might interest? We have nine members to start with. We ask interest in your prayers. – – Glenn S. McVey R.3, Box 215

August, 1942... We have located two families at Bakersfield and they now meet in Bro. Morris' home, 1715 Orange. Brethren passing through will find a welcome here... – – Lloyd Riggins

September, 1942 1745 Orange Street, Bakersfield, California – We plan to support Bro. Riggins to extent of \$10 per mo. in future. It is no more than right that smaller congregations bear part of the burden, especially since we shall benefit by using him in meeting, etc. Bro. Morris work does not permit him being with us all the time and I have had but little experience in leadership but we realize our responsibility. Pray for us and drop in when you can. – – Glen McVey, R.3, Box 215

October, 1942 1745 Orange Street, Bakersfield, California – We continue to hold services in our home, and getting along very nicely. We are looking forward to Bro. Riggins holding us a meeting here. He has promised us some time in the near future. Send us names of those whom we might influence. – – Mrs. James Morris

October 1942... We visited Bakersfield on the way up and found them “on the rock” spiritually, but not “on the rocks.” ... – – Lloyd Riggins

February, 1943 ... Have just returned from Bakersfield, where some work was in prospect, but which did not develop as expected. However, brethren strengthened... Lloyd Riggins

April, 1943, Bakersfield – Since last report we have grown in numbers here by 5; a Bro. Oxley and his family. Surely glad to have them. Bro. Morris fell and broke his arm about four weeks ago and has been able to meet with us regularly on that account. We are trying to locate a permanent place of meeting, as we have outgrown a private home. – – Glen S. McVey

July, 1943 ... On the way home, wife and I spent the night with Bro. McVeys in Bakersfield and found them enthused with the prospect for work in that city. The brethren there, though few in number, are worthy of encouragement and support, morally. – – Lloyd Riggins

August, 1943, Bakersfield, California – Since last report we have increased in numbers. Bro. Johnson has been with us since 1<sup>st</sup> L.D. of the month. Two have taken membership. We tried to rent a building, but couldn't. Bro. Johnson helped finish our seats after he came. Nothing preventing, we start our own building next week. It won't be much, but we won't have someone tell us we can't have the building. We now meet in our home. – – Glen S. McVey, 713 Washington St., Oildale, Calif.

August 9, 1943 ... I have visited over a Lord's Day with the brethren at Bakersfield and found them doing well... – – Lloyd Riggins

September, 1943, Bakersfield – Since last report we have the new church house so we can meet in it, with enough seats for about 70 persons. Had no additions in Bro. Johnson's meeting, but we hope much good was done. We are meeting L.D. evenings and also on Wed. evenings for Bible study. Note change of address of meeting-place, 715 Washington St., Oildale – – Stella J. Oxley, 322 Belle Avenue

October, 1943 ... On my way north I stopped with the Bakersfield brethren two nights. I found them rejoicing in the fact that they have a new meeting place of their own. Not a mansion, but serves their purposes; as they grow they can build larger. Bro. Johnson had been with them about three weeks and encouraged them very much... – – Lloyd Riggins

November 7, 1943, From Bakersfield, California – Have been so busy with the new meeting house, haven't taken time to write. We enjoyed very much and benefitted greatly by the visit of Bro. and Sister Wilbur Storm (and Butch). Bro. Wilbur helped us in our singing very much; 3 added while he was here; other outsiders coming. Had three good sermons last L.D. Increase our papers to twenty. 38 out las L.D. evening, quite a difference from July 26, 1942 when we started with 13! – – Glen S. McVey, 713 Washington, Oildale, Calif.

December, 1943 Report From Oildale, Calif. (Bakersfield) Church of Christ – We have our church building almost completed at this writing, thanks to the untiring efforts of Bro. Glenn S. McVey and his father. Our attendance has increased greatly since the congregation was started. WE are finding that this neighborhood is full of Christian people, who, not knowing there was a Church of Christ so close, had been driving quite a distance to church each L.D. Bro. and Sis. Johnston placed membership during the past month.

Since Bro. Wilbur Storm's visit, three young Christian boys have been encouraged to take upon themselves the duties of the church. Each man takes a turn at leading songs, waiting on the table, and praying. We are thankful for these boys and the work they are doing.

Since our attendance has increased we have found it necessary to divide our group into more than one class. The McVeys very kindly consented to have the young people's class in their home (next door). We are sure every gets more benefit from a smaller class, since all get a chance to teach and freely discuss the Bible. – – Ida Lee Williams, 511 Washington Ave., Oildale, Calif.

January 4, 1944, Bakersfield – The beginning of the New Year finds this little congregation full of Hope and Faith that the coming months will bring as many improvements and encouragements as has the past. The Lord has indeed been good to us during 1943. The church here has grown strong in attendance and faith. In our young people's class, various members are encouraged to make 5-min. talks on a subject of his own choice. Last Lord's Day Bro. Elmo Oxley spoke on "Faith." This gives our young men a chance to become accustomed to speaking before an audience. (Ida Lee Williams, 571 Washington Avenue, Oildale, Calif.)

February, 1944 Oildale (near Bakersfield) Calif. – Church here much encouraged by visit and a good lesson by Bro. Riggins at our regular Wed. eve. service Feb. 2<sup>nd</sup>. Quite a few visitors and almost all new members present; everyone greatly benefitted.

Bro. Johnston, a recent recruit, had a sign made for our new building, so that passersby will know there is a church of Christ in the neighborhood. We expect this to increase our attendance at all services. We believe there are still people in this locality, especially those moving in, that do not yet know that we are trying to carry on the Lord's work here.

We wonder how many congregations has all male members on active duty. The Oildale church has eight male members and every one takes his part in the duties of the church. Three of these are young men learning to do their part along with the rest. – – Ida Lea Williams, 511 Washington Ave., Oildale, Calif.

February, 1944 ... On my way home I visited Bakersfield. They are an enthusiastic little group... --  
Lloyd Riggins

March, 1944, Oildale (near Bakersfield) Calif., - At this writing this little band is faced with serious losses! Three of our foremost families, comprising seven members, the Oxley's and their in-laws are leaving for their Southern homes next week. With three of these active male members, our loss will be all the more. Another sister who, altho not a member here, attended regularly, left us this week. We regret very much losing these faithful workers, for our flock will be diminished considerably. Their going takes one of our young men who is learning to work in the church. We hope he will continue his splendid work. Sister Helen Morris was again present last L.D. after an extended absence due to illness of their children. Everyone's presence is greatly needed at all times; especially now will we all need to work harder than ever. Mrs. Ida Lee Williams, 511 Washington Ave.

April, 1944, Oildale (near Bakersfield), Calif. Our little congregation is much smaller now that the Oxley families have moved away, but we are still carrying on the Lord's work to the best of our several abilities. Bro. Storm is scheduled to hold us an extended meeting, beginning about April 16<sup>th</sup>. Everyone is invited to attend. The officers of the church haven't decided on the means of advertising the meeting, but if everyone will work hard at his own personal advertising we will do well.

We hoped to be able to have a floor in our meeting house ere this, but it seems as though we are going to have to wait awhile longer, due to financial shortages just now. We hope it won't be too long until we shall have our building completed.

Since we lost so many of our young members, our young people's class has had to go back with the older ones. The children's class seems to grow every L.D. as our little pupils bring their friends. We certainly have some wonderful lessons. The children take a real interest in learning verses and taking part in the discussion of the lesson. We have great hopes for these little ones in later life. -- Mrs. Ida Lea Williams, 511 Washington Ave., Oildale, Calif.

(Some of the mid-west congregations looking around for a good place to do mission work could find no better place than to purchase the material for a floor of the building mentioned above. These brethren have never asked for any assistance, but liberally donated time and money; so you may be sure YOUR money will not be wasted either. And to all such weak congregations, my advice is (from experience in St. Louis and observations at Sacramento) make your property SECURE insofar as humanly possible, so that the enemy will not sneak in and "grab" it). Ed. GAR

May 10, 1944, Oildale (near Bakersfield): Our long awaited day has arrived, Bro. Wilbur Storm and family have been with us since April 15<sup>th</sup>. We are indeed glad to have them with us again. Our meeting began last L.D. April 30<sup>th</sup>. The two previous weeks were spent doing development work, special attention being given to singing. Bro. Wilbur spent all time possible with our young leaders. Last L.D. a.m. a sister Morris, formerly of Texas, placed membership. She had lived in this community for some time without knowing of the church here, which indicates there is still a lot of work for us to do. The children's class remains about as usual; a few "regulars" but a large part of the class is "visitors," changing most every L.D. Everyone who can come is cordially invited to our meeting. Ida Lee Williams, 511 Washington Avenue.

May 10, 1944, At Bakersfield: We finished our work with the Pomona congregation April 30. We enjoyed our work there, canvassing the neighborhood for prospects, and doing advertising. We closed with a two weeks meeting. This was my first effort in this line, and I enjoyed it. We had regular, if not large, attendance. We were plagued with sickness, having an epidemic of measles hitting us at the beginning of the meeting and carrying on thru. However we pray that good was accomplished. From Pomona we came to Bakersfield for two weeks to assist in a meeting, leading the singing. From here

we go to Exeter for one L.D.; thence Sacramento for 10 days and on to Oakland for the Meeting. Will we see you there? -- F. Wilford Landes. P.S. Brethren McVey and Morris and their wives hope to attend the Business meeting from Bakersfield.

May 29-30, 1944 Business meeting at Oakland, Calif.

Glen McVey outlined Bakersfield's needs, emphasizing his own weakness and pleading for the life-line to be thrown out to them....

Glen McVey outlined the plan whereby Bakersfield uses Bro. Johnson one-third of his time, that Home Gardens (Riverside) was willing to use him one-third of the time.

June, 1944, Oildale, Calif.: Our meeting came to a close May 21<sup>st</sup>. Our expected good works were hindered a great deal by an epidemic of measles in this neighborhood, but we feel that we received much good from Bro. Wilbur Storm's visit. we had two weeks of church development work first, which benefitted us greatly. When our meetings started, Bro. Landes and wife came to assist us in our singing. We were very grateful to them, and enjoyed having them with us. Bro. and Sis. McVey accompanied Bro. Storm to the Business Meeting. Bro. Jim Morris and wife had also planned to go, but illness in their family prevented.

We are sincerely thankful to the church at Sullivan, Ill. which sent us \$50 toward getting a floor for our church building. We surely need, as well as appreciate the help, and are glad to find such willing helpers in the church at Sullivan, Ill.

Work here progressing as usual. Attendance about the same. Lots of room for improvement, and we wish Bro. Storm could have stayed with us longer. -- Mrs. Ida Lee Williams, 511 Washington Ave.

June, 1944: Since last report we have labored 6 weeks with the congregation in Bakersfield, including a two weeks meeting and developing the talent. Due to sickness we were unable to accomplish as much as we had hoped, but we believe much good was done in the way of strengthening the church. There were several who became interested in the work, and especially did one family of the Baptist faith manifest their interest. On several occasions we studied the Bible with them, reasoning with them concerning the church, and man's duty to God. Our greatest regret is that we were unable to stay longer.

After finishing our work there, we went to Oakland for the meeting of the churches in California. We enjoyed immensely the hospitality of the Oakland congregation, as well as the spiritual food that was given by many who had traveled from afar for the same purpose.

At present we are conducting a Vacation Bible Study at W. Riverside. The interest is very encouraging. Highest attendance 55 during first 3 days; ages range from 3 to 14 years. I feel much good is accomplished in these studies. It advertises the church and creates good will in the community, which indeed makes it worth the effort.

We plan next to go to Pomona for a Vacation Bible Study there. -- Wilbur Storm.

June 1944: Almartha, MO: Recently returned here from Bakersfield, Calif. We like the News very much and want to keep it coming to us. -- Ed Oxley.

August 1944, Oildale, Calif.- Bro. Wilbur Storm and family spent July 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> with our little congregation, on their way to Sacramento. We appreciated the lessons he gave very much and everyone got much good from them.

As some of you know, Bro. McVey has located at Richmond and is planning to sell his home here. As our church building is located on his property this means we shall be obliged to find another location soon. No definite plans yet, and the congregation is so small it is quite a problem. In the meantime we are carrying on as usual. We have a soldier, Pvt. Albert Crocker, from Camp Roberts attending services here and today he was re-installed into the church. We are surely glad to welcome him. He is

to be commended for coming so far to worship. -- Ida Lee Williams, 511 Washington Ave.

August 1944 – Convening for a co-operative all day meeting at Long Beach L.D. August 6<sup>th</sup>, members from various faithful congregations of the southland enjoyed an inspirational day of fellowship, sermons by various brethren and a business session to discuss the matter of supporting evangelists in the field.

At the business session, it was decided in view of the vital need for a strong hand to guide the destiny of the church at Oildale (Bakersfield), that Bro. E. G. Johnson, a fully qualified and well known evangelist in his own right, would be supported to take charge of the work there. The arrangement has been entered into for a period of six months. Other conditions may later alter the time to begin, but Bro. Johnson expects to be back in California after an evangelistic trip to Colorado and Missouri, to start work at Oildale about Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>. Bro. Wilbur Storm is expected to move to Compton to begin work here, dividing his time with Long Beach while he takes an intensive course of study at Compton Junior College to begin after his work at Sacramento is concluded... -- Paul McKenzie, JR. 115 ½ Termino

Sept., 1944, Oildale (near Bakersfield) Calif. – We were very fortunate in having Bro. Johnson visit and preach for us on August 20<sup>th</sup>. It helps our little congregation for different ministers to give us a lesson at various times. We need to get acquainted with Bro. Johnson, for as you know, he is to work with the church here when he returns from the east.

On August 13<sup>th</sup>, our visiting soldier, Bro. Albert Crocker, whom we mentioned in last report, made confession that he had not been living “in all good conscience toward God.” We were glad to receive him; however he did not place membership here, as his location is so uncertain.

More good news – the Oxley family has returned from the east. They expect to stay this time and brought another daughter and family to worship with us. Things did look pretty black for this little band, but we have renewed hope now that we have greater strength in numbers.

Still no definite plans as to where we will worship, but if things go well, we will be able to rent the same building, at least for awhile. (Ida Lee Williams, 511 Washington Ave., Oildale)

(By the way, where are the McVeys? The church at Oakland has seen them only once since they left Bakersfield)

Nov. 5, 1944, Bakersfield (Oildale), Calif.: Note our new address: 129 ½ Wilson Ave., which is a dwelling, but the most suitable place we have had, and very fortunate in finding a building so soon. The house has one large and one small room; the first time we have had a separate room for the children’s class.

Quite a few more people have learned of the congregation here since we moved. Sister Powers, whose husband is overseas, placed membership Sept. 24<sup>th</sup>. Have had visitors almost every Lord’s Day. Sister Rose Bell of St. Louis, MO, who met with us the past few months, has returned home. We miss her faithful attendance.

On Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup> Bro. Wilbur Storm, in company with three other brethren, met with and preached for us. They gave our little band real encouragement, and we were all greatly benefitted by Bro. Wilbur’s lessons. We especially enjoyed their singing. It’s a real treat to have good leaders and singers in our midst. About 45 were present to hear Wilbur. A record attendance for us and our house was full. Nov. 5<sup>th</sup> Bro. E. G. Johnson was with us to complete arrangements to work with us the next few months. As we need guidance so badly, we have been looking forward to his help. We’re sure he’ll be able to do much good! Ida Lee Williams, 511 Washington St. Oildale.

December, 1944 – The work here is progressing nicely. Bro. E. G. Johnson is with us all the time now. Since his arrival Nov. 5<sup>th</sup> we have had Bible study 5 nights a week from 7:00 to 9:00, with the exception of five days Bro. Johnson spent at home. We have completed Genesis and Exodus; next the Roman and Hebrew letters, as these two books tie in with Genesis and Exodus. We enjoy having someone like Bro.



Johnson to help us learn more of the Bible as this was our greatest need. Due to cold weather, our attendance hasn't been at its best. Our new location, while providing a roof over our heads, isn't all that it should be in the way of protection against the elements. We hope to find a better place a little later.

Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup> we had two soldier visitors; Pvt. Albert Crocker from Camp Roberts and Pvt. Glenn Phillips from Camp Haan. Both attend services here whenever possible to do so, and we're certainly glad to have them. Bro. Crocker located us thru the News, which is just another indication of the good work "we" are doing. Bro. Jim Morris was also with us Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup>, a rare and appreciated privilege for him, as he is required to be away from home so much. Ida Lee Williams, 511 Washington Ave., Oildale.

January, 1945, Oildale, Calif.: Attendance here is about as usual. Cold weather causes people to stay away. We have been having Bible Study every night, except a few. Bro. Johnson spent the holidays at home. He has been very active in trying to find us another meeting place. Our building is very uncomfortable when it is cold. The congregation has decided it would be better to buy a lot and build, rather than try to rent another house, the housing situation being what it is. Bro. Johnson located a lot on Lincoln Ave., Oildale, close to the bus line and if we can finance it we plan to buy and start building as soon as possible. This is a big undertaking for our small congregation, but we feel the money paid out for rent could be more adequately spent on financing something permanent. And we really need something better to meet in. We are fortunate in having Bro. Johnson with us, as he is a builder of houses, as well as a builder of fine sermons... We lost one of our most faithful members when Miss Stella Oxley went to Glendale, Ariz. to be married to an aviation cadet, Leo Johnson, Dec. 23<sup>rd</sup>. Her brother, Elmo, accompanied her there, but returned later. We shall miss Stella very much but her many friends wish her and her husband a happy future. Leo met with us often before he was transferred to Lake Wield. Ida Lee Williams, 511 Washington St.

March, 1945, Oildale, Calif.: Biggest news we have at the moment is that our new building is sufficiently complete so that we can move into it. We've waited a long time and Bro. Johnson has worked long and hard for us, and at last it's ours! We still have the ceiling and walls to finish. We had our first meeting in the building last Thursday evening. We certainly are thankful for this nice looking place to worship and we have Bro. Johnson to thank for it. We are very grateful to him. We are glad to have Lt. Tommy Graven of Sullivan, Ill., now stationed at Minter Field, meeting with us. We are always glad to have new members and others attend our services. Tommy has been meeting with us on L.D.s and we hope he will also attend our Bible Study. Pvt. Albert Crocker, our young brother from Camp Roberts, attended services again Mar. 4<sup>th</sup>. We wish he could be with us more often. Had several visitors at church evening of Mar. 4<sup>th</sup>. It's encouraging to have people take an interest in our services. Ida Lee Williams, 511 Washington Ave.

May, 1945, Oildale, Calif.: The congregation here has four more regular attendants. Bro. Clarence Williams, wife, daughter, and mother, all from Texas. Sister Stella Johnson has gone to San Antonio, Texas to be with her husband. Lt. Tommy Graven has left here, having been sent to Merced. We were sorry he had to leave and we miss him. We understand he is with Bro. Paul Cassell and we are glad they can be together. We had Bro. Walter Weekly and family with us April 8. He delivered a fine sermon that morning. Hope they can be with us often. Bro. Clarence Cassell and family from Pomona were here April 22<sup>nd</sup>. He gave us a good lesson at the morning service. We hope they can be back again soon. We miss Bro. Johnson very much. He will be with us the 1<sup>st</sup> Lord's Day of each month. Ida Lee Williams.

July 4, 1945, Oildale, Calif.: This small congregation is still carrying on the Lord's work. We are very happy to report that Bro. Bill Powers, who has been discharged from the navy, is among us. He is a great help to us. Two of our male members are subject to induction into the army anytime. We are

sorry to lose Lt. Tommy Graven, but glad he can return home. Bro. Albert Crocker of Camp Roberts has been with us the last two L.D.s. Happy to have him with us. We hope Bro. Wilbur Storm can be with us this summer for a meeting.

We are endeavoring, with only a few members, to pay off a \$500 loan on our building and trying to save for a meeting later on. Send us more copies of the News, please. Ida Lee Williams, 511 Washington St.

August 7, 1945, Oildale, Calif.: The little church here enjoyed having Bro. and Sis. E. G. Johnson and their two grandsons with us L.D. Aug. 5<sup>th</sup>. We certainly appreciate Bro. Johnson's interest and labors here for the church. We had a nice crowd for services, which do increase when there is preaching. We hope to be able to have more preaching in the future than we have in the past. We are made sorrowful by the loss of one of our young song leaders, Bro. Elmo Oxley, who was called into the Armed Forces July 30<sup>th</sup>. We miss him very much, as he was a great help here. We hope the war will soon be over and the boys can return home to their loved ones. Let us have the courage to carry on the Lord's work and keep the church alive, even though it is very discouraging at times. Ida Lee Williams, 511 Washington Ave.

October 8, 1945, Oildale, Calif.: This congregation was greatly benefitted by Bro. and Sis. E. G. Johnson being with us Lord's Day, Oct. 7<sup>th</sup>. We also had visitors L.D. evening which encourages us to carry on the Lord's work here. Bro. Albert Crocker has been with us the last two L.D.s in September. We are so glad he can still be with us... the small band of disciples here has almost got the debt on the church property paid now... We are looking forward to our meeting soon... Brethren, pray for us... I was on vacation in Texas in Sept., that's why there was not a report from here. Ida Lee Williams, 511 Washington Ave.

March 3, 1946, Oildale, Calif.: The work at Oildale is going along very well, but there have been several away the last two times I have visited, on account of sickness. There is usual interest taken in the Bible study each L.D. There are four young men that are good teachers, and take an interest in church work. The church is out of debt now and are saving their money to pay for a protracted meeting in which a campaign of house to house work is planned. Bro. James Morris taught the class this a.m. and Bro. Powers and Oxley took part in song leading and prayer. My visit with them each first Sunday of the month is of much interest to me, for at that time at least we have visitors from around the neighborhood. While they are few in number, they are strong because of able talent of the members. E. G. Johnson, Rt. 1, Box 177A, Colton, Calif.

August, 1946, Oildale, Calif.: The church is going about as usual, but has lost a valuable worker in the death of sister Marshall. They have some visitors of late among them: Brother Easter of Bonne Terre, MO visiting his daughter. He did valuable public work leading the singing and teaching. We hope he will be back some time this fall. Another family from Illinois met with the church several times. On my regular visit a month ago, one made the confession and was baptized. Yesterday after the morning services, we went to Kern County Park for a basket dinner. At nearly every service, when I am there, we have some outside visitors, which makes us believe there is good to be done by the church. E. G. Johnson.

September 22, 1946, Oildale, Cal., - Brother and Sister R. O. Webb have been with us for two weeks. He conducted an analytical study of 1 Thessalonians. We think this new kind of study is very educational, and want more of it some time in the future, the Lord willing. The final session will be tonight, "The Second Coming of Christ." ... The Webbs go next to Bend, Ore. E. G. Johnson is to be back with us the first Sunday in October. We've had Sister Mildred Carlo, of St. Louis, Mo. visiting with us. We are few in number and appreciate visiting brethren. Our prayers and thanks to God for all the faithful. Charley

Fry.

October 22, 1946, Oildale, Cal. – Brother and Sister E. G. Johnson were with us again the first Sunday of this month after two months of vacationing in the north. Glad that they had an enjoyable trip and saw many of their friends and fellow-workers of the faith. For Sunday nights we study memory verses to be able to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of the hope that is within us... Brother James Morris was with us again Lord's Day. Brethren Powers and Ed Oxley painted some more on the church building last week. (Brother Powers is on the sick list.) Our prayers for a greater and better work in the Western States. Charley Fry.

December 2, 1946, Oildale, Cal. – We enjoyed having Brother and Sister Johnson with us again, as usual, the first Sunday of each month. Attendance is much better now than it has been for sometime. We are happy that young brother Elmo Oxley, discharged from the army, is with us again to stay. Sister Ida Lee Williams, one of our faithful members, is able to be with us more regular now. Our little folks class, with Sister Morris as instructor, is showing lots of interest now. They have memory verses and questions. Brother Powers has given us several good talks. We have more system to our services, since we have someone appointed beforehand to take each part. If the Brewer-Ketcherside debate is printed, we hope to get it. Charley Fry.

December 3, 1946, Oildale, Cal. – I made my regular first Sunday of the month visit to Oildale, and found the members interested in keeping the work going. We had three interesting meetings, with nearly all the members present. Brother Elmo Oxley, back from the service, is taking an active part in the meetings. Brothers Fry, Oxley, and Powers are good workers in the church... We had some outside attendance. E. G. Johnson.

January 5, 1947, Oildale, Cal. – With a larger attendance than we've had in several Lord's Days, we made a good start into the New Year. Brother and Sister E. G. Johnson were with us today. We enjoyed the three talks from Brother Johnson, last night, this morning and tonight. He will be with us two more nights this time, since he is staying for two days to help Brother Powers with his new house. Brother James Morris made a good talk last Lord's Day on "Adding To and Taking From the Word of God." Our prayers and thanks to God for the church, and we hope for a better and stronger work through the coming year. January 26 – We are happy to have such an able teacher as R. O. Webb in our midst again, bringing us several very interesting lessons from the Bible. There was rejoicing in heaven last Lord's Day when Sister Stella Johnson was restored and her husband making the noble confession was baptized. We are encouraged to press on in the work of the Lord. Sickness in several families hindered attendance at the Bible study. Brother Webb returns to his wife tomorrow, and then on in the field spreading the gospel to others. E. G. Johnson will be with us the first Lord's Day of February. Charley Fry.

January 18, 1947, Bakersfield, Cal. – I just heard of the death of Brother E. O. Huffman at Bend, Oregon. O! How we will miss him! And how we do need him! I am in the hospitable home of Ed Oxley. Interest is increasing, here at Oildale. I am preaching and teaching by night, and some calling and visitation by day. I am sure it is strengthening. Most of February and March I will be advertising for the Pomona church, the Lord willing. R. O. Webb.

February 28, 1947, Oildale, Cal., – Last Lord's Day we were encouraged to keep pressing on the upward way, by the presence in the service of many who have been absent on account of sickness. Sister Mary Armstrong is still under the Doctor's care. For our lessons on the "first day of the week" we have started with Matthew, planning to follow on through the books in order. Many wonderful lessons were brought forth about the life of Christ as a child. Brother William Powers made a talk on

“The Morals of the Church and of the World.” We look forward to the coming of Brother and Sister E. G. Johnson, the first Lord’s Day in March. Our prayers and thanks to God for the church of Christ. Charley Fry.

March 31, 1947, Oildale, Cal. – The picture looked pretty bright here yesterday, with most all the members present. This is an improvement on a few services of the past, when many were missing. If only all who come part-time would be present every time, we’d have a pretty good attendance. Thanks be to God, there’s never a time when there aren’t enough members present to have services. Perhaps if we’ll just keep pressing on, some day we’ll hear that “well done” at the end of the race. Some of our members are moving away and will be greatly missed. But we pray for strength to keep fighting on in the good fight, though we be few in numbers. Charley Fry.



July 28, 1947, Oildale, Cal. – We have a new cooler in our building now, which helps to make all comfortable. We also have the lawn leveled, with forms set for a concrete walk. We plan to set shade trees and sow a lawn before long. And have some painting to do. We are happy to have the Powers family back with us again. Sister Siler’s mother, Mrs. Armstrong, has been with us for some time. Mary Armstrong continues on the sick list, afflicted with rheumatic fever. Sister Johnson is on the sick list now – we hope she will soon recover and be with us in our services again. Sister Morris is still on her vacation. Charley Fry.

September 2, 1947, Oildale, Cal. – We are still pressing on with about the same number. Sister Morris is home from her vacation. Sister Armstrong and daughter, Mary, have returned to their home in Missouri – we shall miss them. Sister Johnson was able to be with us last month when Brother Johnson visited us, and we hope she is still on the mend. Charley Fry.

September 30, 1947, Oildale, Cal. – We are going right along, with most all members present on Lord’s Day morning, though not so many at night. Our evening services are usually very interesting, with most everyone taking part. We are taking up the book of Mark now in the adult class... We are happy that Brother Morris can be with us more regular. The Powers family have a new son. Charley Fry.

October 27, 1947, Oildale, Calif. – Another month passed and time to say “Hello” to the News readers; thirty more days on the strait and narrow road which leads to the heavenly kingdom, which the blood of Christ bought on the cross of many years ago. Brother William Powers has brought out many wonderful points in his lessons the last three Lord’s Days. The E. G. Johnsons will be with us the first Sunday in November, the Lord willing. Our Sunday night meetings are very interesting. We have memory verses and many questions from Genesis to Revelation. The children take part, as well as the “older children.” Sister Siler wasn’t with us Lord’s Day. James Morris had to make his run on the railroad on Lord’s Day and we missed him. We have completed the sidewalk in front of the church building. We ask the prayers of all the churches that we may be strengthened in the faith of our Savior. Charley Fry.

December 1, 1947, Oildale, Calif. – Since last report, our building has received one coat of paint on the outside ... During Brother Johnson’s visit last month one made confession of wrongs. Brother Powers

gave a good talk yesterday on the subject "Home." Last Lord's Day Elmo Oxley gave an interesting talk on "Endurance." Among our visitors was my soldier brother Calvin Fry, and Mrs. Risch was with us again last evening. Charley Fry.

February 28, 1948, Oildale, Cal. - Greetings. We seem to be almost pressing up against a blank wall. Our number has decreased in past weeks, although we have very interesting lessons and talks each Lord's Day by some of the brethren. Some have been very sick. But we are happy to report them much improved. Brother James Morris, unable to be with us in morning services, is a very great help in the evening services. Elmo Oxley led a very interesting lesson this morning on Luke 1. I made a short talk on "Seven Musts of the Bible." Charley Fry.

April 1, 1948, Oildale, Calif. - We have been setting flowers and sowing lawn to improve the looks of our meeting place. We look forward to Brother E. G. Johnson being with us again next month. Brother Elmo Oxley recently gave an interesting talk on "The Light." We are always glad to have visitors; last month they were Mr. Pickle and the Percival family. Sister Ida Lee Williams has a new son; we hope she will be able to be with us next Lord's Day. Charley Fry.

August 1948, Oildale, Cal. - We appreciated having the Orville Easters, from Missouri, with us August 22<sup>nd</sup>. We are always grateful for visitors, as we are still few in numbers. But we are comforted by the words of our Savior, that "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." We look forward to having the E. G. Johnsons with us the first Lord's Day of the month. We meet Lord's Day evening for Bible drill and singing practice. Elmo L. Oxley.

September 26, 1948, Oildale, Cal. - This church hopes that September has been a prosperous one for all the churches of Christ throughout the nation, which stand wholly for the cause of Christ. We are grateful and pleased to have the Lewis B. Riggins of Inyokern, Cal. With us today. And also Brother Burnett of Glendale, Ariz. who was with relatives who live here. Few in number, we miss the faces of those not permitted to meet with us because of illness in their families. During the past month we have painted the interior of the church house ... Let us, as the Apostle, Paul, says, "press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Elmo Oxley.

October-November, 1948, Oildale, Cal. - (NOTE: Two reports condensed. Your editor likes the sentiment expressed here by this young Christian.) This election month of November will probably make changes in our government; and we hope these changes will be steps toward the goal of peace and brotherly love. Let us pray that this nation and all others will ever be governed by the people, and that the people may be God-fearing. ... The last month saw the holiday "Thanksgiving" - today we should be thankful that this is still a land of liberty, where we can choose the way we want to live. We, in Oildale, are thankful that there is a church of Christ meeting here, able to meet each Lord's Day and commemorate the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord. ... We were glad to have the Prices of the Carmichael, Calif. congregation with us on November 28. We invite you all to visit us, as you pass this way. Elmo Oxley.

January 3, 1949, Oildale, Calif. - Happy New Year! This is the first Lord's Day of fifty two that we are to observe by the Lord's commandment during this coming year, in often commemorating his death, burial and resurrection. See Hebrews 10:25. This year the proclamation of Christ over all the country is as necessary as ever before. The great need is easily seen ... We enjoyed having J. D. Powers (Stockton, Calif.) With us for both services on December 12. We were also glad to have the E. G. Johnsons with us the first Sunday of the month. Let our resolution be to meet as the Lord appointed, upon each First Day of the Week. Elmo Oxley.

August 28, 1949, Oildale, Calif. – Another first day of the week slipping into the past, another time the church here has met to worship God in Spirit and in truth. The James Morris family, having returned from their vacation, was with us again. We have interesting Sunday evening lessons, with drill questions from Genesis to Revelation, and memory verses by all ... E. G. Johnson will next visit us on September 4. Charley Fry.

May 1, 1951, Oildale, Calif. – Greetings. Attendance here has increased the past two weeks, since many who have been ill are back again. The James Morris family have a new son, David James, and have had to miss more lately. We are beginning a reading and study of the Old Testament in our Lord's Day evening meetings. We were happy to have as our visitor Mildred Carlo of St. Louis, Mo. on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. We look forward to E. G. Johnson's visit on May 6. With vacation season coming up we hope to see visiting brethren this summer. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Charley Fry.

June 3, 1951, Oildale, Calif. – Attendance was small last Lord's Day with some away on vacations. The E. G. Johnsons were with us, and in the evening he gave a very impressive talk on Proverbs 14:12. ... Among our visitors the past month were Sister Floy Kastning of Compton; the Prices of Carmichael; and Virginia Cox of Oildale. ... May God bless the Leo Johnsons for acting the part of the good Samaritan on their vacation trip; an example of true Christianity. Mrs. Charley Fry.

September, 1951, Oildale, Calif. – We missed the James Morris family last Lord's Day because of illness. We now have singing practice on Saturday nights. We are glad to have Charley Fry back with us after a four weeks stay in Montana. E. G. Johnson will be missed here again next Lord's Day since his physician thinks it best for him not to drive until he gains more strength. Carl Oxley.

April 1, 1952, Oildale, Calif. – We feel we have been greatly encouraged and strengthened from the meeting held here in February by Bernell Weems. We are thankful also for the good work of Bob Hand in drilling the children. ... We wish to announce the Gerald Crowns are the happy parents of a new daughter, Diana Sue. ... Colds and flu have kept our attendance down through the month of March. We hope April will bring better health to all. ... We are looking forward to the visit of the E. G. Johnsons next Lord's Day. Mrs. Charley Fry.

April 28, 1952, Oildale, Calif. – We know that there is rejoicing in heaven, as well as in Oildale, for another soul has been added to the fold of God. Gerald Crown was baptized into Christ on April 6 by E. G. Johnson. ... The Leo Johnsons are in North Carolina where his father is critically ill. They are surely missed. Some of the James Morris family have been ill, but they are better now. ... W. G. Roberts was an old friend of ours. And, now that he has gone on, we are glad to have his book, "Lessons From Yesterday." His good sermons will always be impressed upon our minds. ... We congratulate the Morgans on the birth of their son. Mrs. Charley Fry.