

## DESCENDANTS OF ELIAS ROBERT HODGES (1820-1901) and ELEANOR ELIZABETH “BETSY” SMITH HODGES (1825-1889)

Sister Betsy’s son, **William Elias Hodges** (1852-1914) was a deacon in Elim Church. His wife, **Nicey Ellen (Stewart) Hodges** (1849-1912) had nine children who were raised up in Elim Church.

Sister Betsy’s grandson, **Roswell Ernest “Ross” Hodges** (1901-1971), son of **John Gideon Hodges** and **Sarah Eugenia (Wheeler) Hodges** (daughter of Henry Jones Ripley Wheeler and Zilpha Brewer Wheeler – Charter Member), was a deacon at Liberty Missionary Baptist Church. His wife, **Mattie (Wells) Hodges** (1906-1993), a former schoolteacher, was a charter member of Liberty Baptist Church and she was the one who suggested the name of the church that was adopted. Mattie was also a charter member of Faith Baptist Church and a member of Elim Baptist Church.



Their daughter, **Edith Fay Hodges**, the granddaughter of **John Gideon Hodges** and **Sarah Eugenia (Wheeler) Hodges** and great granddaughter of **Sister Betsy and Brother Elias**, is an active worker in Elim Baptist Church today. Her husband, **Harold Tatum** is a deacon in Elim Baptist Church.

Their son, **Johnny Ross Hodges** (1938-1999), the grandson of **John Gideon Hodges** and **Sarah Eugenia (Wheeler) Hodges** and great grandson of **Sister Betsy and Elias**, was a member of Liberty Baptist Church where he served as church clerk and Sunday School Superintendent for many years. His second wife, **Phyllis White Hodges Gaskin** is a member of Elim Baptist Church. Her daughter, **Julie White** married **Daniel Wells**. They are both members of Elim. Julie sings in the choir. They are raising their son, **Ethan**, at Elim Baptist Church.



Sallie Etna Stewart Garrason (1881-1975)  
Played Piano and Organ

Picture Taken in 1970

Sister Betsy’s granddaughter, **Sallie Etna (Stewart) Garrason** (1881-1975), daughter of her eldest daughter, **Martha Ann (Hodges) Stewart** (1843-1918), played the organ in the church. Sallie moved from Elim Baptist Church to Rye Patch Church where her husband, **Milton Calter Garrason**, was a charter member.

Sister Betsy’s grandson, **Joshua Henry Hodges** (1884-1967), son of **William Elias Hodges** (1852-1914) and **Nicey Ellen (Stewart) Hodges** (1849-1912), was a deacon of Elim Baptist Church and later Rye Patch Baptist Church. His wife, **Lillie Belle (Garner) Hodges** (1883-1968), was a pianist at Elim Baptist Church.



Joshua Henry Hodges (1884-1967)  
and  
Lillie Belle Garner Hodges (1883-1968)  
Lillie was the pianist at Elim Baptist Church

Sister Betsy's grandson, **Hugh Malcolm Hodges** (1896-1967), son of **John Gideon Hodges** (1854-1923) and **Sarah Eugenia (Wheeler) Hodges**, was a deacon for 35 years in the Missionary Baptist Church where he also taught the Bible Class. He was a schoolteacher, County School Superintendent, Lawyer and Judge in Long County, GA.

Sister Betsy's grandson, **Elder Henry Clifton Hodges** (1889-1967), son of **John Gideon Hodges** and **Sarah Eugenia Wheeler Hodges**, was a Baptist Minister, founder of two churches, with a ministry spanning 40 years, eight counties, and 15 churches. In addition, he served as a missionary for ten years. One of Elder Hodges' memories of his childhood was reported in the Savannah Morning News Magazine, dated 1-9-1966, in an article entitled, A Country Parson, reported by Cliff Sewell. In the article, Elder Henry C. Hodges, reminisced about his childhood.



Elder Henry Clifton Hodges (1889-1967)  
Baptist Minister  
Founder of two churches, ministry spanning 40 years.  
"He preached and he preached."  
Henry grew up in Elim Baptist Church

*"At home the house was too small for all of us so we boys slept in the barn. About the time I was grown we built a small place away from the main house and we called it "the hotel." There we could make all the racket we wanted to and not disturb the old folks. I married Synthia Lou Weathers from Daisy, Georgia, when I was twenty-two and we lived in the hotel till our first child was born. We moved here in a two-wheel cart and it wasn't near half full and that was all we had. When I was a boy we'd put a chair for my mother to ride to church but the rest sat on the floor and the choice spot was in the back with our feet hanging out."*

The seeds of Elder Henry Clifton Hodges' interest in the church were sown during the formative years and he remembers the first time he attended Sunday School. *"The lesson was about the high priest Zachariah, and my Aunt Dosia was the teacher. I went regularly and remember winning a prize for perfect attendance, the prettiest necktie I ever saw."*

The son of **Elder Clifton Hodges** and **Synthia Lou Weathers**, **Reverend Clyde Earl Hodges** (1927-1947) was a Baptist preacher of the Coastal Baptist Church in Camden County, Georgia.

Sister Betsy and Brother Elias' great grandchildren continued their dedication to service. To name only a few of the many hardworking children, grandchildren and great grandchildren who as adults became responsible members of their communities serving as lawyers, educators, medical professionals and in other capacities, the following descendants are highlighted.

Sister Betsy's great grandson, **John Theodore Hodges** (1920-1981), the grandson of **James Luther Hodges** (1856-1926), and son of **George Archibald Hodges** (1891-1941), was a Baptist Minister in Long County, GA.

Sister Betsy's great grandson, **Paul Milburn Stewart** (1912-), grandson of **Martha Ann (Hodges) Stewart** (1843-1918) and **William Frederick Stewart**, son of **Glenn Hartwell Stewart** (1876-) and **Magnolia Johnson**, was a minister for 40 years of which two years were spent in Asia and Indian Evangelism.

Sister Betsy's great grandson, **John Sloan Hodges, Jr.**, the grandson of **James Luther Hodges (1856-1926)** and **Martha Corrine Wheeler** (sometimes spelled Wheler), and son of **James Sloan Hodges, Jr.** (1897-) and **Olive Ryals**, was an ordained deacon in the Bethlehem Baptist Church, where he served five years as Sunday School Superintendent.

Sister Betsy and Brother Elias were following the tradition of a godly family as set down by Betsy's father, **William Smith, Jr.** From his son, **James Madison Smith** (1823-1893) who married **Mary Louisa Baggs** (1822-1987), there was **Milton M. Smith** (1855-1914) who married **Sarah Ann Lang** (1860-), the parents of **Dowse Bradwell Smith**. **Dowse Bradwell Smith** (1894-1978) and his wife, **Carrie (Lee) Smith** (1903-1988) served in Elim Church. Brother Dowse built the steps leading into the old sanctuary.



**Dowse B. Smith (1894-1978) and Carrie Lee Smith (1903-1988)**  
**Dowse laid the bricks for the front steps**  
**Carrie served in the Nursery - 1960's**  
*Picture Taken in 1977*



Today, their son, **Garland Smith** is a deacon at Elim Baptist Church. His wife, **Mary (Browning) Smith**, sings in the choir and works hard to support Elim Church.

Their son, **James Smith** is also a deacon. His wife, **Tammy (Caison) Smith**, serves in many ways leading the children of the church. They have two children, **Brandon** and **Madison**.



Brother Garland and Mary's son, **Steven Smith**, sings in the choir and is one of Elim Church's prayer warriors.

Brother Garland and his sons helped in the construction of Elim's new sanctuary. Sister Mary, his wife, made sure the crews were fed.

Brother Garland's sister was **Maxine Smith** (1932-1991) who married **Carl Oswald Gaskin** (1919-1994) (the son of **Charlie T and Maggie L. Way Gaskin**, grandson of **John E. Way and Margaret C. Robinson Fennel Way**, great grandson of **John Way, Jr. and Sarah Ann Deloach Way – Charter Member**). Their children, **Denise** and **Dwayne** are members of Elim Baptist Church.

**Mrs. Jeannie Lou (Smith) Baxter** (1896-1993), daughter of **Milton M. Smith and Sarah Ann (Lang) Smith**, married **Rufus Leland Baxter** (1893-1968). Their son, **Hillis Baxter** and his wife, **Kathryn (Durrence) Baxter**, are faithful members of Elim Baptist Church as are their children, **Kay (Baxter) Lagasse**, **Geral Baxter** and **Revis Baxter**.



**Revis Baxter** and **Betty Lou (Futch) Baxter** and their children, **Brittany** and **Clint**, attend Elim Baptist Church.

<Revis Baxter Family



Kay (Baxter) Lagasse>

The sister of **Brother Elias (CM)** was **Caroline Hodges** (1827-1902). Caroline (Hodges) Clark's second marriage was to **Thomas Benjamin Lee** (1833-1913). The Lee family were early members of Elim Baptist Church and raised their children in the church. Their son, **John Alford Lee (1860-1940)** grew up in the church. He was called to be a deacon in the church. His second wife, **Ida (Lang) Lee** (1879-1978), served in the church.



Andrew Franklin Herbert (1889-1930), son Lemuel, Sarah Louise Ginn Herbert (1894-1941), HJR Wheeler (1863-1933), Ida Lang Lee (1879-1970) and John Alford Lee (1860-1940) Gertrude Herbert Kellow  
Picture Taken in 1920's



Annie Lee McCall Shaw (1904-1995); Carrie Lee Smith (1903-1988); Lannie Lamar Lee (1909-1984); John Lenton Lee (1906-1942)  
Picture Taken About 1911

**John Alford Lee** and **Ida (Lang) Lee** were the parents of **Carrie (Lee) Smith** (1903-1988), **Annie (Lee) McCall Shaw** (1904-1995), **Lannie Lamar Lee** (1909-1984), and **John Lenton Lee** (1906-1942).

Brother John's sister, **Lilla E. Lee** (1866-1933) married **Henry Ripley Wheeler** (1863-1933), the son of **Henry Jones Ripley Wheeler** (1822-1881) and **Zilpha (Brewer) Wheeler CM** (1822-1896).



Annie Lee Shaw  
(1904-1995)

Picture Taken 1993

**Annie (Lee) McCall Shaw** (1904-1995), daughter of **John Alford Lee** and **Ida (Lang) Lee**, was a prayer warrior of Elim Baptist Church for many years.



Lilla E. Lee Wheeler (1865-1933) and her bother, John Alford Lee (1860-1940)  
Picture Taken About 1930

**Annette Abbey**, the granddaughter of **John Alford Lee** and **Ida Lang Lee**, and daughter of **Lannie Lamar Lee** (1909-1984), is currently a member of the church, a steadfast prayer warrior, and a person who has used her many talents for planning and carrying out numerous festive church celebrations over the years. She is married to **Charles Abbey**.

