

Elim Baptist Church was organized and managed by men and women who valued hard work, Sunday worship, and Bible education for their children. The roots of Elim Church have been put down deep. The constituting members established a hardworking standard that is continued into the present and is shored up daily to carry Elim Baptist Church into the future. This is an outline of some of the rich heritage shared among one of the families who in 1857 made the decision to charter Elim Baptist Church.

Sarah Ann (DeLoach) Way (1806-after 1880)

Information about Sarah "Sallie" Ann (DeLoach) Way (1806- after 1880) Charter Member and wife of John "Jack" Way (1790- after 1850) follows. This family donated the 3 1/8 acres of land as a place of worship for any denomination to use. Sister Sallie was one of the charter members of Elim Baptist Church who dedicated the land and organized the church. Jack Way probably died sometime before 1860 because in the 1860 census, Sallie is the only member of the household recorded. The following information was extracted from family records of the Way Family provided by Clyde Garrison Way, great-great grandson of Sister Sallie and her husband, Jack.

Sarah "Sallie" Ann (DeLoach) Way, was born around 1806 either in Bulloch County or McIntosh County, Georgia. She was the daughter of Mr. Hardy DeLoach, Jr. (1758-1828) and Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Ross DeLoach (1762-). Mr. DeLoach was a revolutionary soldier who served in the South Carolina militia and later settled in the Taylor's Creek area. Sister Sallie had three sisters and three brothers. She married John "Jack" Way Jr. on August 19, 1828 in Liberty County, Georgia. At the time of her marriage, Sister Sallie was 22 years old and John Way, Jr. was 38 years old.

John Way Jr. was called "Jack." He was the son of John Way Sr. According to the census records, there were a number of people with the last name of Way living in the 16th and 17th District of Liberty County, Georgia. There were also several persons with the first name of John Way. Presently there are a number of Way family trees with conflicting information concerning the spouses of John Way, Sr. Therefore, at this writing, there is no firm information as to the parents of John Way Jr. A few of his ancestors settled with the colonists establishing Midway Church in Liberty county. The Way family having been identified with the Dorchester colonists in their journey from Dorchester, England, to Dorchester, Massachusetts, and down the years to Dorchester, South Carolina, and finally to Dorchester, Georgia.

His grandson, **Mr. William Byron "B" Way** (1858-1934), indicates in his book entitled, "*B. Way's Book Of Fun, Facts, and Home-Made Philosophy*," that Jack Way came from England as a small boy. He tells us that Jack Way had a good education that he never applied to great advantage. Jack Way was congenial in manner and greatly respected by his friends and very attractive by reason of his wit and humor.

We know for sure that Jack Way and Sister Sallie lived among the Elim community and had a number of Way relatives who were planters and farmers of numerous acres of land. One Way relative, Edward Way, was the sheriff of Liberty County in the 1850's. Another Way relative, W. John Way, was a daguerreotype artist. In 1846, Jack and Sister Sallie donated 3 1/8 acres of their land and deeded the land to the Presbyterian, Methodist, and Baptist denominations to be used so as to divide the Sabbaths equally.

Sister Sallie and her husband, Jack, had two children, **John E Way** (1832-1922) and Sarah A. Way (1837-). Sister Sallie and her children were devoted members of the church of the brush arbor and later Elim Baptist Church. At the time Elim Baptist Church was chartered, Sister Sallie was in all likelihood a widow. She was 51 years old and her children were grown. Nevertheless, her son, **John E. Way** was called to be one of the first deacons of Elim Baptist Church. He was a wheelwright and a blacksmith. He was a veteran of the Confederacy. On August 14, 1861, he enlisted as a private in Company F, 25th Infantry Regiment of Georgia of the Confederate Army. He was wounded on 15 Jun 1864 at Kenesaw Mountain, GA. Because he was called to be a deacon of the church, he would have to have personal holiness, spiritual maturity, and a godly home life, simply because that is what is required of a deacon. Brother John was one of the original congregation of Elim Baptist Church, numbering 25, and was present at its dedication. Brother John also held the distinction in 1922 as the last surviving member of the little group that organized the church.



Elim - 1st Generation
John E. Way (1832-1922) Deacon

Sister Sallie's son, **Brother John E. Way** (1832-1922) married **Margaret (Robinson) Fennell** (1834-1913) on June 11, 1852. Margaret Robinson Fennell Way was the widow of John W. A. Fennell (1801-after 1850). John W. A. Fennell was the son-in-law of Robert John Wheeler CM and Catherine Pamela Bacon Wheeler CM of Elim Baptist Church. John W. A. Fennell's first wife, Sarah Wheeler Fennell, was the daughter of Robert John Wheeler CM and Catherine Pamela Bacon Wheeler CM.

John E. Way and Margaret Robinson Fennell Way had ten children who were raised in the early Elim Baptist Church during a period of war and hardships and later through the uncertainties of reconstruction. Sister Sallie, Sister Margaret and other women of Elim Baptist Church of the 1860's would have been fiercely loyal, resourceful, and very supportive of the war. Many sent their soldiers off with a blessing and prayed mightily for their safe return. The ladies formed sewing societies. They kept the family and livestock fed and the land worked. Southern women ran the everyday operation of the farm, plowing, cultivating and taking care of their families while their men were away. The children were required to carry a heavy workload at a young age. The women coped with the grief of losing children at a young age due to disease and injuries that today's medicine could have prevented. Yet the young of that age endured.

Sister Sallie's daughter-in-law, Margaret Robinson (Fennell) Way (1834-1913), was one of the women who started the first building fund by donating monies from selling her chicken eggs.

Sister Sallie's grandson, **William Byron "B." Way** (1858-1934), son of John E. and Margaret (Robinson) Fennell Way, grew up in the church and became a lawyer, a published humorist, poet, and author. Brother B. wrote the first history stories of Elim Church that may be found on the History Page of Elim's website. In his article, he noted that after 100 years, there was a new set and their customs differ from ours. A favorite saying and song of his was "wait till the sunshines Nellie." A story full of humor and wit about the church customs as written in his book entitled, "*B. Way's Book Of Fun, Facts, and Home-Made Philosophy*," goes like this:

"Forty years ago I went to church in the ox wagon and the minister preached nearly all day, turned us out just in time to get home by sundown, starved nearly to death. Now I can leave home in the Ford just as the preacher starts up in the pulpit, and get there in time to hear him give out his text. He preaches thirty or forty minutes, I leave at the conclusion of the last song and get home before the sound of music has quit ringing in the air. A fast age, a high powered people, and the gates of eternity stands open day and night passing the travelers in."

Brother B. Way married **Alice Theodora Devereau** (1860-1955) in 1880 and they had 8 children. Sister Alice also joined the other women in the church to contribute her egg monies for the building fund. Sister Alice was a formidable woman. She kept her wit and sense of humor all through her life. Brother B. wrote fondly of her in his book. An article in The Ludowici News, dated May 14, 1954 (see ["In The News" tab](#)), highlighted Sister Alice as one of the most remarkable woman in this section of Georgia. She was a devoted member and prayer warrior of Elim Baptist Church for over 75 years. She frequently walked from her home to Elim Baptist Church, a distance of about a mile, and often walked the return trip up to the time of her death at 95 years of age. Sister Alice was an inspiration to her children, grandchildren and the church fellowship. When she was very young, she lost one of her eyes. She was chopping wood and a splinter flew up and hit her in the eye causing blindness. However, she did not let that hinder her. Her greatest delight was doing handwork sewing for her family and for her neighbors. She raised her children in the way they should go. At the time of her death in 1955, she had six living children, 33 grandchildren, 48 great grandchildren, and one great, great grandchild. Sister Alice was also a businesswoman in that she was wise enough to buy acres of land in the Elim community that today belongs to her descendants.



William Byron "B" Way
(1858-1934)
Alice Theodora Devereau Way
(1860-1955)

Photo Taken in 1930

Of Brother B. and Sister Alice's children, Pearla Alice Way Shaw (1881-1973), Katherine Viola Way Moran (1889-1948), Benjamin Gordon Way (1892-1980), Nannie May Way Floyd (1896-1985), and Maggie Lee Way Gaskin (1901-1986) greatly contributed to the advancement of Elim Baptist Church.



(Pictured: Maggie Lee (Way) Gaskin, Pearla Alice (Way) Shaw, Benjamin Gordon Way, Waldo Emerson "Fulton" Floyd, Nannie Mae (Way) Floyd

Sister Sallie (CM) died sometime in the 1880's in her seventies. She leaves an awesome legacy of hardworking, church-going, and faithful children, grand children and many great(s) grand children. She undoubtedly had a heart that was clean and a goal that was high. She is an inspiration. Sister Sallie's great grandchildren continue 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, preachers, educators, business men and women, her descendants are highlighted.