Since 1946 the South Central Conference has served the states of Alabama, Mississippi, Kentucky, Tennessee and the panhandle of Florida. How did the South Central Conference develop?
First Steps Toward Freedom

1863 - January 1 Lincoln issues Emancipation Proclamation
1863 - Seventh-day Adventist Church is organized to preach truth that frees.
1865 – Civil War ends
1865 – Education Movement begins
May 20, 1865 – The first school for Blacks south of the Mason Dixon Line was established in Lexington, Kentucky.

1865 the Methodist Episcopal Church allocated $10,000 for the education of Negroes and immediately opened the Central Tennessee College in Nashville.
Education Movement

• Other denominations opened . . .
• Fisk University and Meharry College in Nashville.
• Tougaloo College in Tougaloo Mississippi
• Lane College established in Jackson, TN
• Morris Brown in Atlanta
Ellen White Calls for Work in South

- In 1865, just after the close of the Civil War, Ellen White counseled the Church to begin working in the South.
GC Votes to Work in South

• The General Conference voted:

• Action: Resolved, that a field is now opened in the South for labor among the colored people and should be entered upon according to our ability.

• Other actions indicated that the Civil war had retarded the work in the south.

• Action: “Resolved, . . . we solemnly consecrate ourselves anew to this great work to which God has called us.”
Elbert B. Lane
The First Seventh-day Adventist Minister in the South

• In 1865 Lane married Ellen S. Edmond of Washtenaw County, MI. Ellen Lane became the first Seventh-day Adventist woman to receive her license to preach in 1868.
Church at Edgefield Junction

Lane preached for several weeks at the Edgefield Junction L&N Railway Station in 1871 and left a company there.

In 1873 he returned and organized the Edgefield Junction Church, the first Seventh-day Adventist Church south of the Mason Dixon line.
Reverend Harry Lowe, who is listed under the businesses, was an African-American Baptist minister in Edgefield Junction. He attended Lane’s meetings and became one of the Seventh-day Adventist ministers to serve the Seventh-day Adventist Church. He worked along with Charles M. Kinney and Alonzo Barry.
First Black Adventist Churches
Based on Charles M. Kinney Chronology

- 1883 – Edgefield Junction, TN
- 1890 – Louisville, KY
- 1891 – Bowling Green, KY
- 1892 – New Orleans, LA
- 1894 – Nashville, TN
- 1894 – Memphis, TN
- 1894 – Lexington, KY
- 1895 – Vicksburg, MS
- 1896 – Birmingham, AL
In 1883 the blacks in the Edgefield Junction Church were organized into a separate company called the First Colored Seventh-day Adventist Church by Elder Samuel Fulton. It officially became a church on November 9, 1886. Some were disappointed with the separation and left church.

The first colored camp meeting was also held at Edgefield Junction in 1901.

The Jonathan Allison family were among the charter members.
The Louisville Church was organized by Elder Alonzo Barry in 1890.
Oldest Member in the South Central Conference

- Maggie Hopper was born January 9, 1900. She is now 106 years old.
- She began attending the Louisville Church in 1911 and was baptized in 1914 by Elder Joseph H. Laurence.
Charles M. Kinney

- 1889 Kinney becomes the first Black ordained Seventh-day Adventist minister.
- 1891 Kinney organized the church in Bowling Green, KY.
Seventh-day Adventist Church #2

This church was organized on September 15-16, 1894 by C. L. Boyd. Ellen White visited this Church in 1904 while Charles M. Kinney was the pastor. The church started on Winter Street, moved to Meharry Boulevard, and is currently called the Hillcrest Church on 25th Avenue.
Lexington, KY Church

- Barry also organized the Lexington Church as a company around 1894.

- Two of the charter members were Attorney J. Alexander Chiles and Dr. Mary A. Britton.
James Edson White Decides to Go South

• After a talk with Dr. J. E. Caldwell; Edson wrote to his mother, “I have been thinking of going down into Tennessee to work among the colored people. . . . I shall go to work in the spring . . . I still hope and trust in God, and am sure He will care for me. I have proved my own way and it is a poor way. I now want God’s way, and I know it will be a good way.”
Edson had a steamboat built which he called the Morning Star. He then traveled from Michigan and down the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers to Mississippi.
Edson’s Productive Ministry

Edson worked in the South for eight short years, 1895-1903, during which time God blessed him to open

- Approximately 15 schools and churches
- The Gospel Herald Publishing House and
- the Nashville Colored Sanitarium
Morning Star Boat Staff

- 1. Isaiah Moore of Pulaski, Iowa.
- 2. S. W. Trump from Salem, New Jersey, printer and pressman in the Gospel Herald Publishing office on board the Morning Star.
- 3. Frank H. Bryant of Yazoo City, Mississippi. (More about Frank Bryant on next slide)
- 4. J. R. Moore of Vicksburg, Mississippi boat pilot.
Franklin H. Bryant

Morning Star Boat Staff

- 5. **Dan G. Stephenson**, a photographer from Tchula, Mississippi. He gave up his business and became the teacher at the Calmar School.
- 6. **Fred W. Halladay** of Ottawa, Illinois. Joined boat in summer of 1894. Holds ministerial license and is a Bible worker.
- 9. **Chester Rogers**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Rogers.
Morning Star Boat Staff

- 10. Mrs. Fred R. Rogers, assistant teacher in and Music teacher in Lintonia.
- 11. James E. White from Battle Creek, Michigan.
- 14. F. H. Schramm of Grand Rapids, Michigan. Bible Worker and teacher. He was also the photographer, pressman, and superintendent of the food work.
Now that we have met the Morning Star staff, let’s visit some of Edson’s School along the Yazoo River.

- Vicksburg (2)
- Calmar
- Palo Alto
- Joe’s Walk
- Yazoo City
- Lintonia
- Wilsonia – A floating school
Edson's First School
The Walnut Street School

Edson opened his first school in Vicksburg on the corner of Walnut Street and East First Avenue in 1895. He purchased three bells in Battle Creek. One was on the roof of this school.
The Mission School was moved from Walnut Street to 209 Fayette Street. It was designed by W. K. Loughborough. Ellen White preached the dedication sermon for this school and chapel on March 18, 1901.
Drawings of Vicksburg School
Morning Star Church

- The original church was destroyed by a tornado in the early 1950’s. It was replaced with this building which has recently been renovated.
At Redwood - Franklin Warnick leaped from a train to escape a lynch mob that was called to kill him. Warnick was the grandfather of the Simons family.
At Calmar, Mississippi

- In Calmer is the Ballground Plantation where N. W. Olvin was whipped and his wife shot because of their commitment to keep the Sabbath.
Yazoo City

This school was opened in 1897. It was first a moveable chapel but was rebuilt in 1906. It is believed to be the oldest original Adventist building in the South.
Wilsonia Floating School

This barge was used for the Wilsonia floating school.
Southern Missionary Society

- Edson established the Southern Missionary Society on September 13, 1898.
  - First Headquarters in Yazoo City, Mississippi
  - The Dixie Food Company
  - The Herald Publishing Company
  - The Nashville Colored Clinic
  - 28 Mission Schools with 1,000 pupils (October, 1908)
  - In 1901 it became a branch of Southern Union
In 1898 Edson launched the *Gospel Herald* to inform Adventists about the work in the South.

The first nine issues were printed on the Morning Star. Subsequent issues were printed in Battle Creek and Nashville, TN.
Edson Moves to Nashville

- The Nashville Office for Edson White. It opened in 1900 and was probably located at 1908 Grand Avenue.

- The Edgefield Junction home of Edson White
The Nashville Colored Sanitarium was managed by Fred and Fannie Young, a Black couple who came to Nashville from Illinois. They were joined in 1902 by Dr. Lottie Isbell Blake.
Gospel Herald Publishing Association

The headquarters for Edson White’s printing company was at 1908 Grand Avenue and then 1025 Jefferson Street. *The Gospel Herald* was published here.

This building later served as the office for the Southern Publishing Association and the Southern Union Conference.
• Oakwood College opened on November 16, 1896 in Huntsville, Alabama with sixteen students.
The Atlanta office of the Review and Herald was moved to Nashville and incorporated on June 4, 1901. The 25th Avenue location shown here was purchased from Edson White in 1905. The *Message* magazine was first published here in 1935.
Dr. Lottie Isbel Blake
Rock City Sanitarium

The Rock City Sanitarium was opened by Drs. David and Lottie Isbell Blake on Foster Street in February 1909. It closed because Blacks were not ready to accept alternative medical treatments such as hydrotherapy.
Dr. Mary Britton
Physician, Suffragist, Witness, Civil Rights Activist

- Britton became a charter member of Lexington Church when it was organized around December 1894.
- 1901 she became the first black female physician in Lexington
- She fought the Separate Coach Bill
- Her great-nephew is Dr. Benjamin Hooks, former national president of NAACP
Riverside Sanitarium

Opened by Nellie Druillard for Blacks in 1927, the Riverside Hospital served the Nashville community for more than 50 years. Dr. Carl Dent served as Medical Director for many years. It was sold in 1983.
Early Evangelists

A. C. Chatman  Sidney Scott  J. H. Laurence  M. C. Strachan
Early Evangelists

J. G. Thomas  W. H. Sebastian  John Crichlow  B. W. Abney
Anna Knight
Missionary, Educator, Nurse, Administrator

• From Soso, MS
• First Adventist woman to serve as a missionary in India.
• Served Southern Union in Education, Health and Youth Ministry.
• Served on the Colored Survey Committee that recommended formation of the South Atlantic and South Central Conferences in 1944.
Morning Star Adventist Heritage Tours

are available by appointment by calling the South Central Conference Archives at 615-226-6500, ext. 136 or 133.
Other Tours

- Nashville Adventist Heritage Tour – by appointment
- Graysville Tour – by appointment
We Need Your Help

The South Central Conference Archives is dedicated to researching and preserving the history of Seventh-day Adventists. If you have historical information, records or photos that you wish to share; they will be greatly appreciated. Historical records and financial gifts may be brought or sent to:

The South Central Archives

715 Youngs Lane

Nashville, TN 37207

615-226-6500, Ext. 136 or 133