

**Record Series #:** 1121-064.15  
**Name:** Unincorporated Chatham County Community Collection  
**Dates:** circa 1940s -2024, no date  
**Extent/Size:** 1 folder, 7 digital files (0.1 cubic feet; 4 GB storage)  
**Language:** English

***Community History:***

Chatham County is the northernmost county located on the Atlantic Ocean in Georgia. It is located between Effingham, Bryan, and Liberty counties, and the South Carolina state border. Chatham County was incorporated in 1777 and is named after William Pitt, 1st Earl of Chatham. The county is comprised of the municipalities of Bloomingdale, Garden City, Pooler, Port Wentworth, Savannah (the county seat), Tybee Island, Thunderbolt, and Vernonberg, as well as unincorporated areas such as Whitmarsh Island, Wilmington Island, Isle of Hope, Sandfly, Georgetown, and Skidaway Island.

Oakland Missionary Baptist Church is located at 187 Buckhalter Road in unincorporated Chatham County. The church was organized in 1796 by enslaved people who lived along the Ogeechee River on or near the Silk Hope Plantation. The enslaved parishioners bought the land for the church for fifty dollars, which they raised by selling chickens and eggs. The original church building was a brush arbor, which was used until 1800. In 1800, a wooden church building was built which was used until 1865 when it was burned by General Sherman's troops during the Civil War. A new building was constructed in 1933 and served as the home of the church until it burned down in 1970. The church was rebuilt again in 1977 and this structure remains standing today. For more history of the church, its leadership and its members, see Item 1121-064.15-005 *Marching Onward in Christ: The History of Oakland Missionary Baptist Church*.

***Scope and Content:***

The Unincorporated Chatham County Community Collection was created through the Savannah Community Memory Project District Five collecting event in early 2024. The collection primarily reflects the history of Oakland Missionary Baptist Church in unincorporated Chatham County. The collection contains digital reproductions of photographs and one oral history interview. There is one folder of written reflection prompt cards from area residents.

***System of Arrangement and Ordering:***

Files are both physical and digital in format. Digital files are arranged according to donor or interviewee. Physical files are arranged by donor.

***Conditions Governing Access:***

None

***Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use:***

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**Record Series 1121-064.15, Unincorporated Chatham County Community Collection**

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***Digital Access:***

Oral Histories are available through the [Voices of Savannah page](#). Select digitized materials are available through our [Online Catalog](#).

***Access Points:***

***Preferred Citation:***

Record Series 1121-064.15, Unincorporated Chatham County Community Collection. City of Savannah Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

***Collected on:***

January 26 – February 1, 2024

***Processed by:***

K. Zacovic, June 2024

***Inventory:***

**Physical Files [housed in Box 1121-064-002]**

<i>Folder #</i>	<i>Description</i>
1121-064.15_001	Prompt Cards with written reflections from area residents, 2024*

**Digital Files [housed in E-Archives]**

See attached inventories for detailed descriptions and identified individuals of Digitized Items

<i>Folder #</i>	<i>Description</i>
1121-064.15_002	Scanned items from residents (6 files) Donor 1: Hines, Irene on behalf of Oakland Missionary Baptist Church [6 files]
1121-064.15_003	Oral History Interviews (1 file) Interview 1: Oakland Missionary Baptist Church members [Irene Hines, Sheila Michael, Viola Underwood]; January 26, 2024

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\* Prompt Cards include topics that encourage written reflection about neighborhood history.

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***Digitized Items Inventory***

Note: Identifications provided by donor at point of collection.

**Donor 1:** Hines, Irene on behalf of Oakland Missionary Baptist Church

<i>Item #</i>	<i>Description</i>
1	News article "Church Struggling – Again" about fire damage to Oakland Missionary Baptist Church; circa 1970 [1 file]
2	Hand-drawn map of Silkhope Plantation with the location of the church, signed by Robert D. Gignilliat, C.E.; October, 1938 [1 file]
3	Deed designating property lines for the plot of land owned by the Church; October 10, 1973 [1 file]
4	Mortgage paperwork between Oakland Missionary Baptist Church and The Citizens and Southern National Bank; April 1974 [1 file]
5	<i>History of Oakland Missionary Baptist Church, Organized in 1796</i> , no date [1 file]
6	Oakland Missionary Baptist Church 223 <sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Program, 1796-2019; 2019 [1 file]