

Courtesy of the Tishomingo County Historical & Genealogical Society
Original files are housed in the John Marshall Stone Research Library

Tishomingo County Archives & History Museum
203 East Quitman Street
Iuka, MS 38852
Phone: 662-423-3500
E-mail: tcarchives@nadata.net
URL: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~mstchgs/>

TCHGS COPYRIGHT NOTICE: In keeping with our policy of providing free information on the Internet, materials may be freely used by non-commercial entities, as long as this message remains on all copied material, AND permission is obtained from the contributor of the file.

These electronic pages may NOT be reproduced in any format for profit or presentation by other organizations. Persons or organizations desiring to use this material for non-commercial purposes MUST obtain the written consent of the contributor OR the legal representative of the submitter and contact the listed Tishomingo County Archives & Historical Society (TCHGS) with proof of this consent.

Gospel Assembly Church, Highway 25 North, Iuka, Mississippi 38852

(The following information was compiled by Rev. V. L. Osborne for The Vidette (Iuka, Mississippi) Centennial Edition, July 4, 1957, page 1. It was transcribed by RaNae Vaughn in June 2006.)

In the spring of 1913, a successful young businessman, William Sowders, decided to retire from his thriving poultry business in Louisville, Kentucky, and make a hunting and fishing trip down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers to New Orleans. He stopped at many beautiful places along the Ohio but always felt the urge to move on.

Late in the spring one evening just at sunset, he tied his boat up in a bayou across the river from Olmsted, Illinois. While here in the Kentucky bayou, he made the acquaintance of a minister by the name of Frank Knight. Rev. Knight persuaded Mr. Sowders to come to his church and sing for them, and while attending these meetings, he was saved.

One day while working on his yacht, he was called to the ministry, the Lord speaking to him in a loud voice, saying, "I want you to preach my Gospel."

From there, Mr. Sowders began to study the Bible, being already educated, he progressed very fast in knowledge. For two years, he spent his time reading the Bible and in prayer, going to the woods and praying for hours.

God began to give him revelations far ahead of his associates, they not understanding turned against him, but he just kept on seeking God. After a number of years, a group of young men understood what he was trying to do and the church that is known as The Gospel Assembly became known.

One of Bishop Sowders' followers, Rev. W. T. Garland, established a church in Paducah, Kentucky. During the construction of the Kentucky Dam, some of the people of Iuka went there to work. While there, they attended Rev. Garland's church. Liking it so well, they got Rev.

Garland to come to Iuka and build them a church on the same doctrinal basis as the one in Paducah.

Rev. Garland pastored the church for a number of years, but in 1952, the pastoral work was taken over by Rev. V. L. Osborne. In the past five years, the membership of the church has more than doubled; present enrollment being approximately 80 members.

The Gospel Assembly churches are a non-organized body of people with churches in 18 states, some states having a large number of churches located in them.