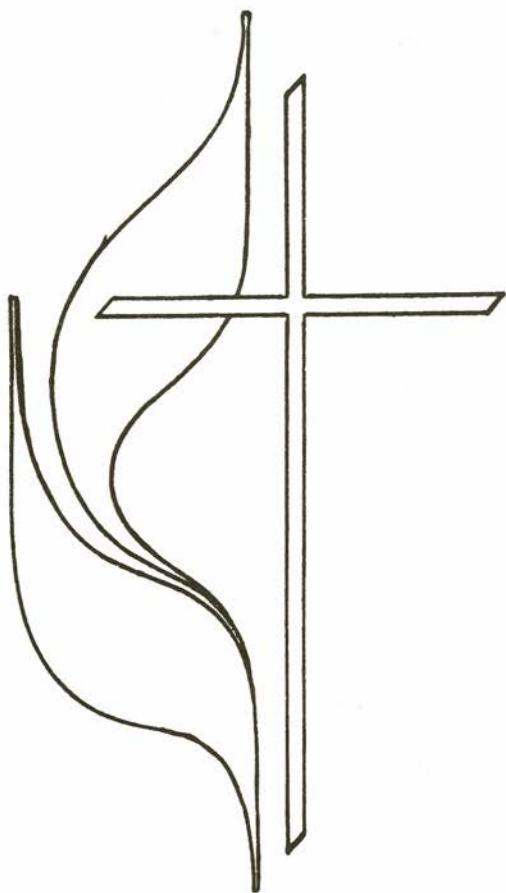


A BRIEF HISTORY  
OF  
OLIVET UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Marietta, North Carolina

1830 - 1980

## INTRODUCTION

This brief historical sketch is presented to preserve the dates and records of the church for future generations.

Facts presented here are found in records of the church, many of which are located here in the church, others from conference and district records. A much more detailed record can be found in "Methodism in the Marietta Community" by Miss Helen Oliver, our church historian, to whom we are indebted for the material presented here.

Our thanks are extended to Beth Farrior Floyd for her tireless effort in reducing the great volume of material available to a size that would lend itself to our purpose for this printing.

We trust that printing these papers will prove interesting to the present members and friends of Olivet, and more importantly will help our young people to love the church.

Paul S. Oliver, Jr.  
Chairman  
Administrative Board

**AN ABRIDGED HISTORY OF  
OLIVET UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 1830-1980**

Marietta, North Carolina

About the year 1794, Grantham's Church was organized and located on the Fair Bluff Road near Ashpole Swamp. This log house was used for a short period of time. Grantham's Church was in the Bladen Circuit, Pee Dee District, of the South Carolina Conference. The Reverends Henry Ledbetter (1794) and Thomas Heathcock (1800) served this congregation. From 1800 to 1806, the following pastors served the small flock: J.B. Martin and Calvin Plyler. The small membership had poor prospects for accomplishments so the preachers had Grantham's Church "thrown out of the appointment."

During 1806, Reverend John Oliver moved into the area from Moore County. Reverend Oliver was a local minister for sixty-seven years and a member of these ensuing churches for seventy-five years. Due to the efforts of Reverend John Oliver, the congregation of Grantham's Church banded together with others. About 1810, a house known as the "Free Church" was built on the present site of Bear Swamp Baptist Church. This building was open to all religious denominations in the Bladen Circuit, which extended from Little Pee Dee on the south and west to the Cape Fear on the north, embracing all of Horry County and part of Marion County in South Carolina; all of Robeson, Columbus, Brunswick, Bladen and portions of Cumberland counties in North Carolina. The two pastors for the Bladen Circuit were Reverends Thomas Shaw and Samuel Mills who served the circuit every ten weeks. However this arrangement lasted for a few years, before the Methodists withdrew from the "Free Church" due to conflicts among the members of its various denominations.

About 1817, the Methodist congregation built a Hewn log house which was located near the residence of William G. Oliver, naming their structure Grantham's New Church. The Reverends John B. Gleen (1815), W.L. Willingham (1816) and Joseph Travis (1817) served this Methodist congregation, organizing the first Sunday School which used the primary spelling books with class hours from eleven o'clock to one or two o'clock each Sunday. Grantham's New Church remained in the Bladen Circuit which was founded after the close of the Revolutionary War. For forty years the circuit supported two ministers for a salary that did not exceed \$64.00 a year.

Grantham's New Church "being rather dilapidated" was superseded in 1830 by a new hewn log house which was located at the present site of the Marietta Cemetery. This building was dedicated in 1830 as Olivet Methodist Church, being affiliated in the Robeson Circuit, Wilmington District, and the South Carolina Conference. In 1851, the Wilmington District was ceded to the North Carolina Conference, thus severing Olivet's affiliation with its South Carolina associates. Between 1830 and 1854 church records recognize three ministers: J.C. Lee, C.M. Pepper (1848), and S.D. Adams. By 1854, the old log building was in need of repair therefore being replaced by a frame structure that was repaired again in 1886. Church records show that in 1893 and 1894, Olivet Methodist Church was in the Rockingham District of the North Carolina Conference.

As the community of Marietta began to prosper, it was evident the old Olivet Church building would be replaced with a new structure located in the village. During the ministry of Reverend S.T. Moyle (1912-1913), a lot was donated by D.J. Oliver. The building committee, W.M. Oliver, chairman, decided to purchase plans for the new building from Mr. Price of New Jersey. The old structure was sold and the profits applied to the new church. Mr. Gregg was employed as contractor, materials being hauled with teams and wagons to the new church site by members. On the first Sunday in November 1914, the structure was opened for worship. It cost \$8,000. The cornerstone was laid May 31, 1916. It is believed the cornerstone contains a Bible, various clippings from area papers, and paid notes of indebtedness on the new church. Reverend B.E. Stanfield stated at the dedication service July 7, 1918... "Money was scarce, war declared, prices low, farm products below costs of production; but we had the faithful ones who were willing to either sign notes or double their subscription that this church might be completed."

In 1927, Olivet Methodist Church remained in the Rockingham District and was served by the Fairmont charge.

Ministers who served Olivet Methodist Church from 1914 to 1947 are listed with their years of service:

B.E. Stanfield	1914-1917
J.T. Draper	1918-1919
W.T. Traywick	1920-1923
N.B. Johnson	1924-1926
F.B. Peele	1927-1930
J.W. Bradley	1931-1934
J.E. Blalock	1935-1938
J.R. Dixon (student)	1938
F.B. Joyner	1939-1942
B.F. Boone	1943-1947

In 1947, Olivet Methodist Church was part of the South Robeson charge being served by the Reverend Paul Edwards from 1947-1949.

In 1949, Olivet Methodist Church became a part of the Fair Bluff Charge being served by Reverends Daniel Lane (1950), E.G. Purcell, Jr. (1950-1953), and C.B. Long (1953-1954).

In 1954, Olivet Methodist Church became a part of the Olivet-Cerro Gordo charge being served by the Reverends W.C. Teachey (1954-1959) and Edward Coleman (1959-1962).

In 1965, Mrs. J.E. Oliver; Paul S. Oliver, Jr.; and Bryan Barnes served as the planning committee for the new Educational Building. The new addition was made possible by the joint efforts of the congregation, costing \$19,700. \$1,585 worth of lumber was donated, bazaar and church suppers raised \$600, membership labor donated was \$2,800, and membership pledges plus the Duke Endowment Grant reached \$5,384.01. At the 1970 dedication, all indebtedness had been paid.

The Olivet Charge was formed in 1962 and its pastors are listed with their years of service:

James Ralph Oliver, student	1962-1964
Samuel McMillan, student	1964-1966
James Blanton	1966-
Woodrow Wells, layman	1966-1968

April 23, 1968, Olivet Methodist Church became Olivet United Methodist Church signifying the union with the Evangelical United Bretheran, U .S.A.

Walter Dawson, retired	1968-1970
William Presnell, student	1970
Lorenzo P. Plyler, D.D.	1971-1972
Wesley Brown, assistant	1971-1972
Jerry Jackson, student	1972

In June 1972, the Rockingham District was reorganized, again placing Olivet United Methodist Church in this jurisdiction. Layman Richard V. Mabe served as pastor until 1974.

Fairmont's Trinity United Methodist Church and Olivet's United Methodist Church agreed to share the same pastor in June 1974. Reverend Robert M. Drew (1974-1977) and N.B. Hill, Jr. (1977-present) have served as pastors during this union.

Olivet United Methodist Church's present membership is seventy-four.

Olivet United Methodist Church official records recognize the following men and their years of service as Sunday School Superintendents.

John A. Hill	1883
Daniel Jones	1884
W.P. Oliver	1885-1889
David Adams	1890, 1895, 1898-1902
L.H. Price	1894
Dr. W.A. Oliver	1896
D.E. Oliver	1904, 1907-1914
H.L. Edens	1906
W.M. Oliver	1917-1944
J.S. Oliver	1945-1954
Paul S. Oliver, Jr.	1955-1964
A. Welton Harrington, Jr.	1965-1980

The Women of the Olivet United Methodist Church have remained faithful by their labors, their donations, and their prayers. In the early history Olivet Women formed a Ladies Aid Society. However in the early 1950's, the Woman's Society for Christian Service was reorganized with Mrs. W.T. Janerette as President. The following ladies have served as president:

Mrs. W.M. Oliver  
Mrs. N.E. Farrior  
Mrs. Hoyt Harrington  
Mrs. J.E. Oliver  
Mrs. James L. Hayes  
Mrs. B.L. Temple  
Mrs. Paul S. Oliver, Jr.  
Mrs. J.S. Oliver  
Mrs. A. Welton Harrington, Jr.

The present organization, United Methodist Women, has twenty-four members with Mrs. J.S. Oliver, president.

Modes of worship in the early churches varied from our present day services. In the ear of the "Free Church" gentlemen, including the minister, wore no coats during the worship services. For many years ladies and gentlemen sat on opposite sides of the sanctuary. The Amen corner was usually near the altar and filled with elderly gentlemen of the congregation. Often during the worship service, these gentlemen felt moved to shout "Praise the Lord!" or "Hallelujah!" Slaves were seated in the balconies or at the rear of pews. Early church records indicate members were assessed dues. In the early 1900's Olivet's congregation used the Official Hymnal of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. This hymnal contained no musical scripts, only the verses of the songs. It was a custom for the first verse to be sung and the second chanted, these being led by a choirster. The people were "exhorted to kneel in prayer, keeping their faces forward toward the minister." The Order of Worship states after the Lord's Prayer, a lesson from the Old Testament was read, however, if verses from the Psalms were used they "may be read responsively." Following the Gloria Patria, a lesson from the New Testament was read.

One custom of yesteryear that still prevails at Olivet is the lingering on the church grounds after services for families to visit.

Indeed Olivet United Methodist Church has a glorious past. We, the present membership, shall continue to cherish its history, its customs, and its service to others; fulfilling the scriptures...

"And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Jesus, St. Matthew chp. 16:18, Revised Standard Version.

# OLIVET UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

## 1980 Officers and Committees

Chairperson, Administrative Board	Paul S. Oliver, Jr.
Chairperson, Council on Ministries	Mrs. John P. Floyd
Secretary, Administrative Board	Mrs. Bryan Barnes
Church Lay Leader	Paul S. Oliver, Jr.
Delegate to Annual Conference	Welton Harrington

### Members at Large

Mrs. N.E. Farrior	Mrs. Charles F. Jones
Mrs. A. Welton Harrington	A.C. Oliver
Mrs. Johnny Shooter	J.R. Oliver
Mrs. Charles Pearce	Miss Willa Nance
Mrs. Bryan Barnes	Mrs. A.C. Oliver
Johnnie Bare	Mrs. J.S. Oliver
Charles H. Pearce	Johnnie Shooter
Mrs. B.L. Temple	Robert Oliver
John P. Floyd	Julia Oliver
Mrs. J.R. Oliver	Honorary, Mrs. Hoyt Harrington
Mrs. Paul S. Oliver, Sr.	

### Work Area Chairpersons:

Ecumenical-Mrs. Charles F. Jones	Social Concerns-Mrs. Paul S. Oliver, Jr.
Education-Mrs. John P. Floyd	Stewardship-A.C. Oliver
Evangelism-Mrs. J.R. Oliver	Worship-Miss Helen Oliver
Missions-Mrs. A.C. Oliver	Religion & Race-J.R. Oliver

**Pastor-Parish Relations Committee**--Chairperson: A. Welton Harrington; Paul S. Oliver, Jr., Mrs. Charles Pearce, Mrs. Bryan Barnes

**Finance Committee**--Chairperson, James L. Hayes; Bryan Barnes, Albert Nance, Mrs. J.S. Oliver, Miss Willa Nance, Mrs. Vivian Page, Robert M. Oliver, D. Justin Oliver, A.C. Oliver

**Nominations Committee**--Chairperson: Pastor; Mrs. Charles Jones, Sec. (1979); Miss Willa Nance (1980); Mrs. Paul S. Oliver, Jr. (1981).

### Records and History

#### Secretary of Enlistment

Miss Helen Oliver

#### Church Treasurer

Mrs. Charles F. Jones

#### Financial Secretary

A.C. Oliver

#### Communion Stewards

A. Welton Harrington

#### Supt. of Study Program

Mrs. B.L. Temple, Mrs. J.S. Oliver

#### Director of Music

A. Welton Harrington

#### Memorial Fund Committee

Mrs. N.E. Farrior, Mrs. Johnny Shooter, Asst.

V. Chrm., Mrs. Bryan Barnes

Chairperson, Paul S. Oliver Jr.

Robert Oliver

Sec.-Treas. Mrs. Hoyt Harrington,

### President United Methodist Women

Mrs. J.S. Oliver

### Audit Committee

Paul S. Oliver, Jr., Robert M. Oliver

**Trustees:** Helen Oliver (1982), Robert Oliver (1980), J.R. Oliver (1981)

