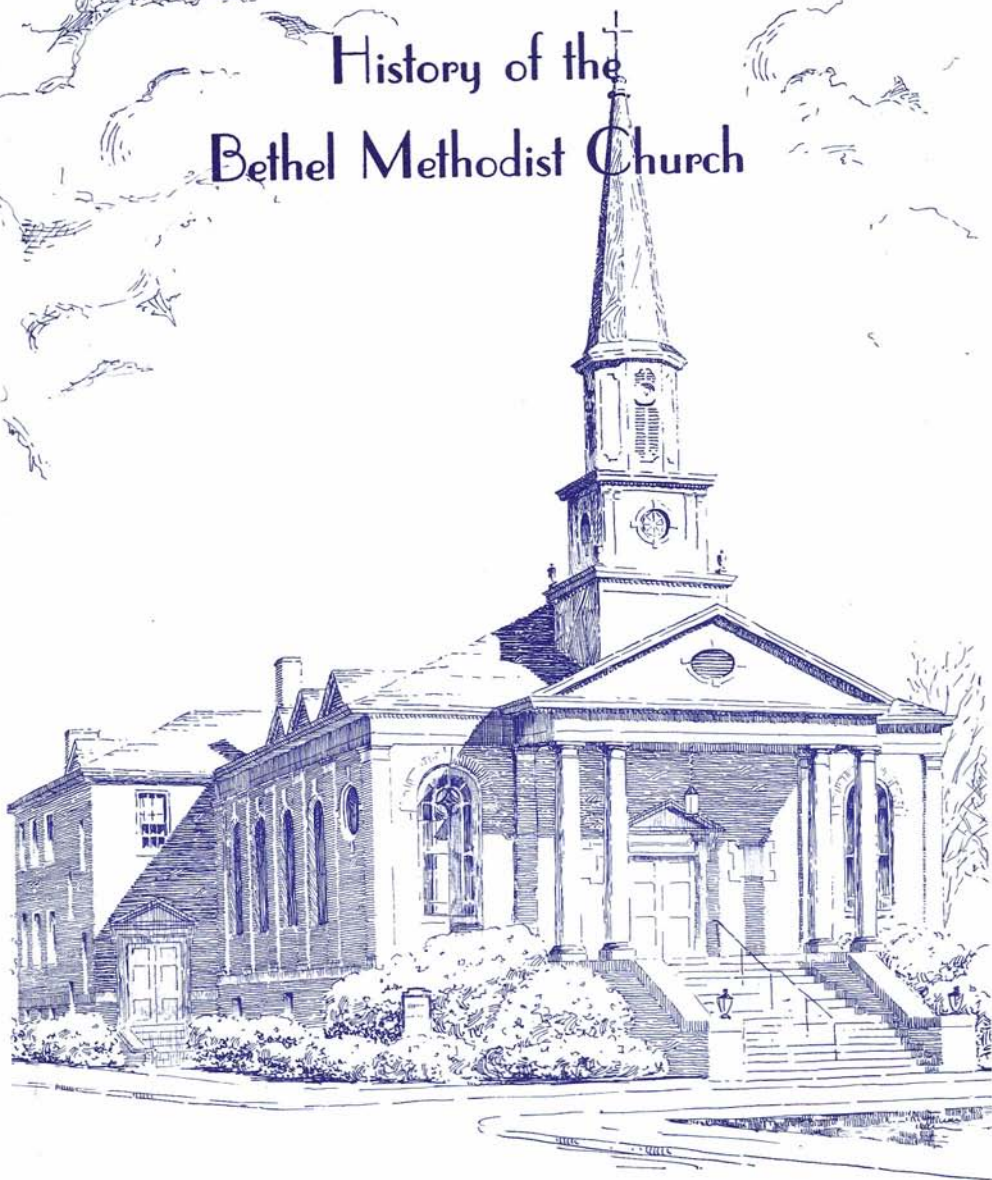


History of the Bethel Methodist Church



1814 - 1964

HISTORY OF THE BETHEL METHODIST
CHURCH

1814 - 1964

DAISY LEE CARSON LATHAM

SECTION I

THE FOREWORD

THE DEDICATION

BRIEF HISTORY OF NORTH CAROLINA METHODISM

HISTORY OF EARLY APPOINTMENTS
(Bethel was served by these)

Foreword

The writing of this history of our church was undertaken with misgivings. The historical records of our church are fragmentary on the whole and for some periods of the distant past, they are practically nonexistent. Also, those of the living are few who have memories which reach far into the past. The writer soon discovered that "Beginnings seldom have records" and that more recent happenings have few.

However the available accounts proved so engrossing and the folklore so interesting, that this writing soon became a "labor of love and dedication." The regrets lie in the lack of source materials and in the pressure of publication time which prevented further research, providing more source materials could have been found.

The writer is indebted to many, too numerous to mention, but especially to the following:

To Mr. John Staton who compiled a history of the church which was read at the 125 years celebration in 1939. This history became the foundation material for this book. It has been revised and brought up-to-date. Additional information has been added when available. To Mr. Staton we owe a large debt of gratitude.

To Mrs. Minnie Manning, whose interest in and devotion for her church must equal that of her forebears. Mrs. Manning is a "store house" of information about the church; also, she is well informed on town and family history. She has shared all graciously.

To Mr. W. J. Smith, to Mr. C. W. Everett, to Mr. Davis McWhorter, to the Rev. Kenneth Sexton (who brought our statistical report up-to-date); and to Mrs. S. D. Dewar, Mrs. John Rook, Jr., and Miss Sandra Lassiter for their parts in the typing of the manuscripts; and to Mr. B. W. Parker of Robersonville for the picture taking, we owe especial thanks.

Lastly, to my husband, Walter C. Latham, goes my appreciation for his tolerant understanding about the time spent on this undertaking and for his willingness that I undertake this endeavor.

D e d i c a t i o n

The founders of our church were people of strong faith, steadfast purpose, and remarkable zeal. For the most part they were people of little, if any, formal education. None the less schooled by the relentless teachings of adversity, heartbreak, and arduous toil, they gained a kind of wisdom far more priceless than academic knowledge.

Judged in the light of present day standards their lives were dull and uneventful. From a capricious Mother Nature they were forced to wrest their livelihood. Leading quiet and secluded lives, they found evidence of the wonders of their Maker in the vastness of the virgin forests, in the sparkling dew of the early morn, in the bounty of the harvest yield, and in the mystery of the boundless heavens. Demanding as their tasks were, they found the time to be still, to listen, and to know God.

They have left a priceless heritage. Many of us have our lineage in these founding fathers. For generations, through precept and example, they exemplified a just pride in and a zealous devotion to their church. This was evidenced time and time again by their achievements.

We the present members of the Bethel Methodist Church possess a splendid birthright coupled with a grave responsibility. Our Church fathers have left us a challenging bequest. God grant us the faith, the wisdom, and the zeal to continue to hold the flame of Methodism high and thus pass it on to succeeding generations.

Could these forebears be with us today, doubtless their admonition would be:

“Take thou the torch
And carry it out of sight
Into the great new age we can not know
Into that great new realm we can not tread.”

And so to these trail blazers of Bethel Methodism to whom we owe so much, we dedicate this hundred and fiftieth anniversary history.

DAISY LEE CARSON LATHAM

Brief History of Early North Carolina Methodism

The first Methodist Societies in America were organized around 1776 in the houses of Philip Embury in New York and of Robert Stawbridge in Maryland. In 1772 Joseph Pilmoor was the first itinerant Methodist preacher to visit North Carolina after the organization of the Societies. However, the first Conference held in 1773 makes no mention of members in North Carolina and of only 1160 in all the colonies. All but 100 of these were above the Virginia line.

In 1774 or 1775, Robert Williams either visited the North Carolina Colony or made a plan for a six weeks Carolina circuit on which Edward Drumgold, Frances Poythress, and Isham Tatum were sent as preachers in 1776. Six hundred and thirty eight members were reported in the colony at the beginning of 1776 showing that considerable work had been done already.

This was the time of the Revolutionary War beginnings and loyalties in the colony were strained and sharply divided. To make matters worse, leaders in early Methodism were "imprudent in speaking too freely against the proceedings of the Americans." Feeling between Whigs and Tories (Loyalists and Patriots) increased with the advancement of the war. Once branded as a British Loyalist, a preacher's usefulness ended and often he became the victim of persecution. In spite of this, at the close of 1776, there were 930 members reported in the state indicating a gain of 247 members.

Due to the war, these were years of great stress for Methodism. The whole Methodist movement was strongly attached to England due to its founders, John and Charles Wesley. All of the preachers who had come to the colonies in 1785 returned to England except Francis Asbury, who later became one of the two first Methodist Bishops in the United States. Due to the turn of events, it is not surprising that the church or society membership dropped to the alarming number of 57. Eight hundred and seventy three members had been lost. Whole circuits were abandoned. Either they could not be served or they were in the hands of the British. Not only the Methodist preachers but the Anglican ministers either returned to England or went into hiding.

During the Revolutionary War and immediately thereafter, the Methodist Societies, similar to the weak Confederation of States (the government which existed from 1781-89), went through a crisis which threatened their very existence. The clergy of the Church of England were nonexistent. The Methodist ministers were not ordained because the Methodist Episcopal Church had not been organized and was not until 1784. In the past Methodist ministers had depended upon the ministers of other denominations to administer the Ordinance of Baptism and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Where there were no other denominations, the people received none of these.

In 1779, the preachers of North Carolina and Virginia came to the conclusion that if God had called them to preach that he meant also for them to administer the ordinances. At broken Back Church they held a conference and chose a committee for the purpose of ordaining ministers. This was acceptable to most Methodist, but some of the older, more conservative objected. The Northern States opposed the ordinations so strongly that a break in the church seemed imminent. The South gave in and agreed to wait one year to consult with John Wesley.

It was not until the year 1784, that John Wesley decided to permit the privilege of ordination to the American ministers. As no further governmental or ecclesiastical authority was claimed over the newly established nation, he decided that his misgivings were at an end and he declared himself ready to exercise the right God had given him. He ordained Dr. Thomas Coke in England and granted him the right to ordain Francis Asbury in this country. These two were empowered with the authority to ordain elders to administer the sacraments for the Methodists in America.

In 1784 Freeborn Garrettson rode 1200 miles on horseback to invite Methodist preachers from New York to Carolina to a conference called by Francis Asbury. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the organization of the American Methodists. It was at this conference held in Baltimore in 1784 that the Methodist Episcopal Church of America was established. It was independent ecclesiastically of Britain and its constituents were independent politically. Thomas Coke and Frances Asbury were elected to administer the sacraments.

From 1784 until the present, there has been organized Methodism in America. May the American Methodist like the brook of Tennyson's famous poem "Go on Forever."

Early History of Appointments

(Bethel Area Served by These Appointments)

According to best resources the Baptist were established in this area of North Carolina before the Methodists. North Carolina and South Carolina were all one colony until 1729. Early information is fragmentary but in Hassell's *History of the Church of God* it is stated that:

About 1776 the Spirit of the Lord began to breathe upon some of the dry bones in the valley of Flat Swamp and the Conotoc Settlement, and several persons were seriously impressed with a sense of their lost condition and a desire for salvation. Elder Jonathan Thomas became pastor of the Toisnot Church. In 1776 Flat Swamp became a constituted church with John Page being ordained as the first pastor of the church. This church served our section more than a quarter of a century before an organized Methodist Church was formed.

In 1813 there was no North Carolina Conference, the North Carolina Conference was separated from the Virginia Conference in May, 1836. Prior to that date all the territory in North Carolina was contained in the Virginia, South Carolina, and the Holston Conferences. Naturally North Eastern Carolina was in the Virginia Conference.

In 1813 there was a Meherrin District in the Virginia Conference, which served all Methodism from Petersburg, Va., to Bath, N. C. This boundary remained the same until 1821 at which time a Roanoke District was formed in the Virginia Conference, covering the same territory as that of the Meherrin District. In 1813, the Rev. John Early was the Presiding Elder. In 1821, the charge nearest Bethel was Washington, N. C., and, since the preachers or circuit riders of these days served large areas, it is reasonable to assume that Bethel was served by C. S. Mooring, Presiding Elder and by the Rev. Swain Swift, then serving Washington as a Circuit Rider.

The names of the churches which composed the Washington charge are not known, but it is known that the membership of the entire charge was 163 Whites and 128 Negroes. In 1882, with the same Elder and Circuit Rider, the membership consisted of 187 Whites and 267 Negroes.

No records could be found to cover the years 1823 to 1826. In 1827 the first mention of a Williamston Charge is made. Bethel was in this charge. The Rev. Bain was the elder and the Rev. J. R. Carson was the pastor. Indications are that the Rev. Bain and the Rev. Carson served the Williamston Charge during the years 1828 to 1829. In 1830, Benjamin Devaney was the Elder and George McGregory, the pastor. There are no records available for the next two years therefore it is assumed that these same pastors served in their respective capacities during the years 1831 and 1832.

The Rev. John Tillet, later called "The Iron Duke of Methodism" in a book by Dr. A. W. Plyler, served the years 1840, 1841, and 1842. The Rev. George W. Nolley was Elder during the years 1839 and 1840.

Since the North Carolina Conference was not formed until 1832 and that the list of appointments mentioned above was obtained from records of the Virginia Conference, it is indicated that the section of North Carolina which was known as the Roanoke District continued in the Virginia Conference until 1840. In 1840 the North Carolina Conference, meeting in Mocksville, created the Washington District. In 1841, the Rev. W. E. Pell as Elder and the Rev. John Tillet as Circuit Rider were the first to serve this area as a part of the North Carolina Conference. In 1842 the Rev. Robert Bruton was District Elder and the Rev. Tillet, the pastor.

SECTION II

EARLY RULES AND REGULATIONS

THE ITINERANT MINISTER

THE EARLY REVIVALS

SUNDAY SCHOOLS BEGIN

Early Rules and Regulations

Tickets were given quarterly to such members of the church as were recommended by a class leader with whom they had met at least six months on trial.

Those without tickets were regarded as "strangers."

No "Strangers" were allowed to attend any meeting of the society.

No member could be admitted to the communion without a sacrament ticket. Sacrament tickets had to be changed (renewed) every quarter.

Superfluity of apparel was rigidly prohibited. "Allow no exempt cases. Better one suffer than many. Give no tickets to any that wear high heads, enormous bonnets, ruffles or rings."

Whoever married an "unawakened person" (defined as one who could not in good conscience be admitted to the society) was to be expelled from the Society.

The above regulations were revised in 1804 to read "Will be put back on trial for six months."

The conference allowed a salary of \$64 a year to each preacher, which they seldom received in full and often pay was in: socks, shoes, leather, hams, chickens and grain.

The Discipline stated that under no circumstances was an Elder or Deacon to receive a fee or present for the administering of the Ordinance of Marriage, Baptism, or Burial. Later a preacher accepted a fee for a marriage but gave it to the stewards to be applied to his "Quarterage."

Not until after 1800 were preachers allowed to keep marriage fees.

The early preacher and his horse were thought of together. (a man and a horse)

At the first annual conferences it was customary to take collections for preachers who had lost their horses during the year. The Discipline specified: "Be merciful to your beast. Not only ride moderately but see with your own eyes that your horse be rubbed and fed."

The Itinerant Minister

(The Circuit Rider)

"Never have so many owed so much to so few"

The itinerant minister had its beginning under the Leadership of John Wesley. It had its greatest development under Francis Asbury who set the example by traveling 270,000 miles during his ministry.

The itinerary proved to be a "tailor-made" system to reach the people and create a church under conditions which prevailed for a half century after the organization of Methodism.

This system was well adapted to reach the multitudes who moved westward during this period. The extent of this migration was so great that ten new states west of the Allegheny mountains were added to the Union between 1790 and 1820.

Along with this moving civilization went the Methodist Circuit Rider. The discipline and the flexibility of the itinerant system made it possible for him to follow these settlers as a stationed minister could never do. Only one other ministry—the lay ministry of the Baptist Church was able to cope with this pioneering situation. Some one has said facetiously that "The Baptist lay minister went along westward with his people; the Methodist circuit rode after them; the Congregational and Presbyterian waited until the trains were running; while the Episcopalians delayed their coming until Pullmans were put on trains." Theodore Roosevelt paid high tribute to the work of these early Baptist and Methodist preachers for their ministry to the pioneers.

A few figures are sufficient to show the results of their efforts. In 1784 there were 83 ministers and 15,000 lay Methodists. Five years later the number had doubled and that of the laity had tripled. By 1815 there was a total of 700 ministers and 200,000 laymen. Between 1800 and 1810 Methodism increased 168 per cent while the population of America increased only 36 per cent.

In counting the cost of this system one other item should be mentioned. Few of these men married. Ordinarily Asbury and the other leaders frowned on such entanglements. The fact that the minister was always on the move to cover a large circuit and was appointed for one year only made men hesitate to marry. Then too it was quickly discovered that the people of that day were in no mood to support a minister's wife. As a result most of the men who did marry soon located.

In this connection we may pause to speculate on the loss the country suffered in that there were no preachers' children. We are told now that there are more persons who were born in parsonage homes listed in *Who's Who* than come from any other household, professional or otherwise. If that be true now, doubtless it would have been true then.

Any appraisal of the achievements of these men should be accompanied with a statement concerning the cost in human effort and sacrifice. This is not a pleasant picture to present. The fact that most of these men ordinarily received not a salary but an allowance of less than \$100 in cost tells part of the story. Most of these "itinerants" died while still relatively young. "In 1847 nearly half of the Methodist preachers whose deaths were recorded had fallen before they were 35 years of age and two thirds of them had died before they were able to render more than twelve years of service."

These mortality statistics are eloquent evidence of the price paid for the spread of Methodism by those early leaders. These records of men exhausted by travel and labor so early in life justified the characterization of the itineracy as "a system of sacrifice."

The above excerpts came from a book entitled *Methodism, A Summary of Basic Information*, edited by William K. Anderson. The Chapter entitled "The Itinerant Ministry" by Horace D. Smith was the source material.

The Early Revivals

The following information is quoted directly from the book entitled *The Story of the Methodists in The Port of Beaufort* by Amy Muse.

It seems appropriate to stop here and say a word about the revivals in Methodism. W. L. Grissom in his *History of Methodism in North Carolina* said if asked to give a definition of Methodism in one short sentence, he would say, 'It is a revival of religion.' Our churches today may have lost much of their vital force but, nevertheless, the church grew out of a revival of spiritual life at a time when it was at a low ebb. 'A revival that could not find expression in any organization of that day.'

It is not my idea to attempt to explain or interpret these revivals. They were often accompanied by extravagant manifestations—penitent groanings in distress of minds waiting to be 'set at liberty', 'the falling exercise', 'the laughing exercise' and so forth, on the part of those of both high and low estate—Although to some among them religious emotion is said to have brought only unusual calm. Popular pulpit style was dramatic and stirring, yet over and over again in the early literature the word 'gracious' is used in describing these revivals—an outpouring of the spirit rather than man made demonstrations!

"The revival fire" is supposed to have been brought to North Carolina from Virginia in the latter part of the eighteenth century. For a dozen years or more, we read such reports as 'We had the greatest time and the most powerful works that I ever saw. It broke out about 4 o'clock in the afternoon and there was no intermission until after two o'clock the afternoon on Monday.'

Sunday Schools Begin

The early Discipline gave directions for preachers to give religious instruction to children in groups of ten or more when it was possible and then individual instruction when they visited in the various homes.

By the year 1790, the Church came to the realization that a true (established) Sunday School was needed. The first mention of the term "Sunday School" is found in the minutes of the general conference in the year 1790. The following excerpt comes from these minutes:

"Let us labour as the heart and soul of one man to establish Sunday Schools in or near the place of worship. Let persons be appointed to teach (gratis) all that will attend and have capacity to learn; from six o'clock in the morning until ten; and from two o'clock until six. The Council shall compile a proper school book to teach them learning and piety."

Sunday Schools were organized but were not well attended and soon they declined into abandonment. Dr. Paul Garber, Bishop of the North Carolina Conference says in his book *Romance of Methodism* that the Sunday Schools were not popular with the early preachers who were much more interested in pulpit oratory and professed to regard the schools as desecration of the Sabbath.

The American Sunday School Union was organized in 1824 and began preparing literature for missionaries and itinerant preachers. By 1828 it was required that every preacher organize Sunday Schools on his circuit or station. By 1843, Sunday Schools were well established and the long day of instruction became the accepted pattern. However, at Quarterly Conference in North Carolina in that year (1843) protests were registered against the lengthy hours:

"On ordinary occasions the Sunday School shall not remain in session above three hours. Many of our schools have been injured by being kept in session from morning until evening."

Early Sunday Schools were crude as compared to those of today. There were no songbooks, no separate Sunday School rooms, few classes, and little or no literature. Sessions were spent in repeating rhyme versions of the Ten Commandments responsively:

Superintendent: "Thou shall have no other Gods before me."

Children: "Before no idol bend the knee."

The never failing catechism was drilled and then drilled again. The catechism was stressed even until this century. Unison singing of hymns, taught by drill and learned by memory, played a vital part in the instruction of the young. Legends in all Methodist areas stress the opinion that many earlier people received all the "learning" they had from these Sunday Schools.

James Larson Pearson, present poet laureate of North Carolina, says that his mother could not read nor write, but that she learned the old hymns in Sunday School and Church and that their melodies and words did much to relieve the bleakness of her mountain life. She sang them before he was born and she sang them as she rocked him in his cradle. Mr. Pearson says that he believes that this hymn singing had pre-natal influence on him because the first sentences he ever spoke came out in rhymed couplets.

SECTION III

BETHEL

THE HOUSE OF GOD

Chapter I

Chapter II

Chapter III

Chapter IV

Chapter V

Chapter VI

Chapter VII

THE LITTLE CHURCHES IN THE WILDWOOD

THE METHODIST CHURCH OF 1814

THE METHODIST CHURCH OF 1849

THE FINEST CHURCH IN THE COUNTY—(1877-1910)

THE CHURCH (1910-1922)

THE PRESENT BETHEL METHODIST CHURCH

THE PAST QUARTER OF A CENTURY (1939-1964)

STATISTICAL REPORT ON MINISTERS SERVING THE BETHEL
METHODIST CHURCH (1846—1964)

HISTORY OF THE BETHEL METHODIST CHURCH

Chapter I

The Little Churches in the Wildwood

The history of Methodism in this area goes so far back into the past that some of it fades into fable and legend and cannot be actually documented. Consequently many of the unrecorded accounts which have come down to us through the generations have been partially forgotten or changed from passage of time and frequent telling. However, we do know that a meeting house was in the Bethel locale by the late sixteen hundreds and the early seventeen hundreds. It is not believed that this was an organized church of any one denomination but rather that it was a community meeting house and was non-sectarian. Mr. W. J. Smith tells us that while he was doing research in the Land Patent Office in Raleigh on original land grants in Bethel, he found the following information.

In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, there were two roads in existence in Eastern North Carolina. They were the Wilmington, North Carolina, to Williamsburg, Virginia, road and a road which led westward from Edenton to the back provinces (stopped at Hillsboro, North Carolina). The Edenton road came through the present Bethel vicinity somewhere out on the Big Oak Road close to the branch nearest Bethel. On this branch, or nearby, was a meeting house called Bethel. This fact is verified by Patent Office records which state that the stage coach which traveled this road stopped at Bethel Inn and Bethel Meeting House.

Some people think that a later church, which was located on what was known as Staton's Lane, was another community (non-denominational) meeting house. Others believe that it was strictly of Methodist origin.

Mrs. Minnie Manning (age 76), whose ancestry on both family lines extends far back into Bethel Methodism, says:

The Methodist Church on Staton's Lane was the first church that we know anything about. According to Uncle Stanley Barnhill, a Negro, age 95, the church was built of logs. My mother told me it was made of logs, too.

Mrs. Manning explained that Staton's Lane was on the old Greenville road. Signs of the lane can be seen today. She stated that it went behind the J. L. Gurganus pasture, behind their brick house, and came out to Highway 11 just before J. L. Brown's house is reached.

Whether this legendary church was a community meeting house or a Methodist house of worship will be hidden forever in the past. There

is evidence, however, that the famous Bishop Francis Asbury visited the Bethel area in 1782, 1784, and again in 1804. Since the documented Bethel Church of 1814 apparently was not in existence, evidence leans heavily toward the Staton's Lane House being Methodist. This writer's early Taylor ancestors were noted as entertainers of circuit riders, so could it have been possible that they were hosts to Bishop Asbury?

Chapter II

The Methodist Church of 1814

The Bethel Methodist Church is the oldest institution within the corporate limits of the town of Bethel. This church enjoys the honor of being only two years younger than "The Star Spangled Banner," our National Anthem, written in 1812. Both the first Methodist Church in Bethel and our National Anthem came into being during the years of the War of 1812. Much older than the town of Bethel which was incorporated in 1873, it has had great influence on the people and the affairs of this community for generations. Held in such high esteem, its name was chosen for the newly chartered town. The late Harry Biggs used to say that the Bethel Methodist Church enjoys the same status in this community as the Cathedral of Notre Dame enjoys in Paris.

The first Methodist Church building in Bethel was built during the days of Richard and Charles Whitehurst, William and John Bryan, and William Carney. It is known to have been a very small building made of hewn logs. Since the deed for the first lot was made to the above mentioned parties on October 11, 1814, this is the date taken as the permanent establishment of our church. Therefore this year is the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of its founding.

The late Mr. R. D. Whitehurst used to tell that his mother, Betsy Bryan Whitehurst, was a good Bible student and that she always told him that what little education she received, "learning" as she called it, was obtained from schooling in this building. Mrs. Maliza Bryan Ward told of attending preaching in this building when she was a child and that it was made of hewn logs. The late W. J. Manning stated that his grandmother, Betsy Matthews, always told him that the early Bethel Methodists preached under bushwhacks (arbors) before their first building was erected of logs. The Turners, John and Claude, reported that their mother, Martha Bryan Turner, always told them of the first church building being a log one. All this information was given to Mr. John Staton (age 80), who has made extensive research on the local church history. Therefore, it is well established that our first church building was constructed about 1814 by those old Methodist stalwarts to whom the deed was made on October 11, 1814.

The Church of 1849

On May 19, 1849, a deed by William W. Andrews and George W. Andrews for the same tract of land that had been deeded to the church in 1814 gives evidence that consideration was being given to the building of a new church. Apparently the trustees of the church were not satisfied with the first deed and wanted a more satisfactory one.

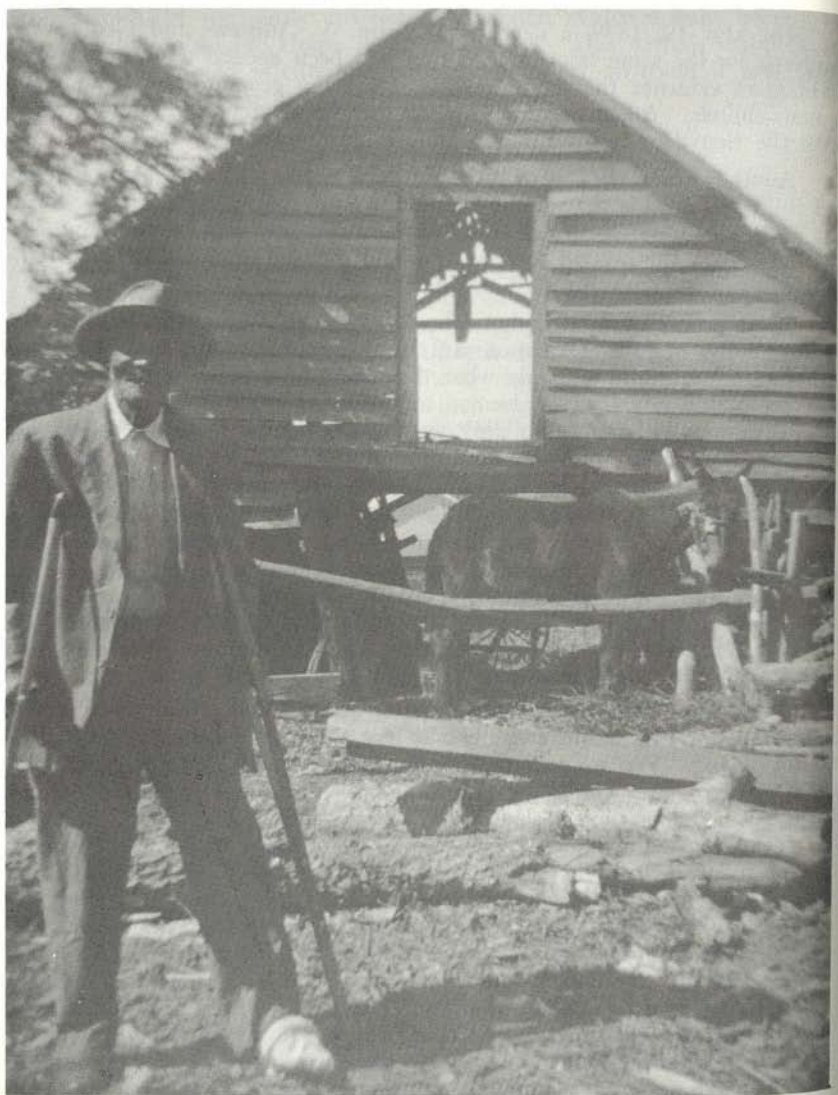
Another explanation of the second deed is that the congregation referred to in this deed is that of the Methodist Episcopal Church South. Since the Methodist Church divided into Northern and Southern branches prior to the Civil War, this second deed was probably needed since a different Methodist organization was in existence in the South.

It is generally conceded that John Whitehurst, William P. Whitehurst, James H. Bryan, John M. Bryan, and H. P. Bryan were the leaders in constructing a larger and certainly what they must have believed to have been a better building. However, human nature being what it has always been, all did not find the new building an improvement. It has been reliably reported that Elder William Closs, Presiding Elder at the time, was very critical of it, saying that his father and many other people had better barns for their cattle than this building which was used as a house of worship.

Mrs. Minnie Manning says that the church was standing when she was a child and that she had seen it many times in passing with her father. Stanley Barnhill, an aged Negro, says that it was used for a while as a blacksmith shop and that later he moved a portion of it to his lot and used it as a barn. The building has collapsed from the weathering of the elements, but remains of it are still visible.

That this building was crude is unquestionable. Timber was cut around the lot and sawing was done by the slow and laborious method of whoop sawing. We are told that Arden Hopkins and Lamb Hopkins, two elderly Negro slaves, and Zibe Barnhill (father of the 95 year old Stanley Barnhill), a much younger slave and a member of the church, did much of the sawing. Clayton Hines Taylor, forefather of many of our church members of today, helped in its construction. The whoop saw method, long since discarded for more effective methods, was the process of rolling the log up skid poles which were high enough for a man to stand beneath. The log was then dropped into a cradle formed by heavy timbers which formed an X. The log was barked and a rope was used as a liner and ordinary chimney soot used in marking the line. Hewn sills, sawed post and boards, floor boards near the ground, no ceiling and a balcony for Negro members made up the interior of the church. No paint was used either in the interior or on the exterior of the church. Homemade candles, given by the members and placed in crude homemade holders at designated spots around the church, made up the lighting.

The story is told that a local citizen, Mr. Neal James, a renown prank-



Portion of 1849 church in Stanley Barnhill's yard used as stables and barn.

ster, was in sympathy with Mr. Closs, who was the first preacher who began to plead for a new church building. In order to emphasize the actual use that he thought the building should be put to, Mr. James stabled his horse inside it for a night.

Information concerning church endeavors between 1849 and 1877 is scarce indeed. 1849 was close to those troublesome years which preceded the War between the States. It could have been that the threatening chaos of a civil upheaval, followed closely with The Civil War itself, took much of the thoughts and the energies of the people. We do know that following The Civil War the Southland was a scene of poverty and destruction. The period of Reconstruction held the Southern states in the vise of military rule and the spirits of the people were at a low ebb. Since the Yankees held Washington during the War, all the preachers' appointments in the district were interrupted. Nonetheless, we are sure that the spiritual life of the people flourished, for it is in time of adversity that a people draw nearer to God.

We know that revivals were held. Mrs. Minnie Manning remembers her parents telling her of a revival held in either 1863 or thereabout. Mrs. Manning says:

My mother and father joined the Methodist Church during a revival conducted by L. L. Nash. My mother was about 17 years old at that time. The revival lasted three weeks or five weeks, I have forgotten which. My mother went every night but one and on that one, her mother made her stay at home and sleep. I have heard my mother and father talk a lot about this revival. They said that the church was lighted by candles brought by the members and first placed on the altar. People would carry long light-wood splinters for lights on their way home from church. It was nothing for some to walk several miles. My father and mother went to school in this church. Mr. Nathaniel (Nat) Hammond was the teacher.

It is proper to stop here and discuss the ministry of Dr. L. L. Nash, which must have been a long and fruitful one. Doubtless his influence in the work of the church in this and surrounding areas must have been immeasurable. Following the mention of him in this revival in 1863, we hear from him again concerning a later revival around 1877, which will be discussed later. The Reverend Mr. Nash served the Williamston Circuit for one year, 1887, while Bethel was on this Circuit. Then he served the Greenville Circuit from 1878 until 1882, but due to Bethel being transferred to the Greenville Circuit in 1878, he was the Bethel pastor for five years in all.

Concerning Dr. Nash, a short history of the Jarvis Memorial Church in Greenville says:

In 1878 the Rev. L. L. Nash came to serve for four years. He said he found a church of twenty members and that most of

them were women. The church building was dilapidated. So following a revival which added sixty-six members, the congregation bought a lot on the southeast corner of Second and Greene Streets. The cornerstone was laid on November 7, 1878, and the first service was held in the new Saint Paul's Methodist Church February 7, 1880.

While the writer was searching the records of the church to obtain the names of our oldest members in terms of church membership, I found that Mr. F. L. Blount, Sr., and the late Mr. Z. V. Bunting were received in the church in 1907 by the Rev. L. L. Nash. It is possible that he was here for a revival or as a visiting preacher in 1907, as the regular pastor at that time was the Rev. J. W. Martin. Thus in the annals of our church, the Rev. L. L. Nash's influence extended over thirty-four years.

The year 1877 saw the end of Reconstruction in the South and military occupation was withdrawn by order of President Rutherford B. Hayes. This must have been a time of great rejoicing on the part of all the people, and the good Methodists must have felt that they wanted to show their heartfelt gratitude to God in some tangible form, for we quote the following from the Rev. L. L. Nash, who was pastor at that time:

The most extensive revival was at Bethel Church in Pitt County. The revival began the third Sunday in August and the people came for miles around. We built an arbor and preached under it three weeks, morning and night. There were as many as three thousand who attended the services and fully five hundred were converted. At the close of the meeting, I raised two thousand dollars to build a new church there and we erected what at that time was the best church in the county.

Chapter III

The Finest Church in the County

(1877-1910)

Many people have said that when the church, which was built as a result of the revival of 1877, was completed, it was the most beautiful church building they had ever seen. In the light of present day standards, it was very simple indeed, but to those who had known the rough construction of the past, it was a miracle in architecture. It was constructed with a bell tower, lightning rods, weather vanes, and advanced styled (stained glass) windows.

The church received two very fine gifts. A bell was given by Joseph Staton, a great admirer of Dr. Nash. This bell is still in use in our present church building and bears Mr. Staton's initials, J. G. The more beautiful of the two gifts was a chandelier given by a cultured, Christian lady, a former Bostonian. She was the wife of Dr. F. C. James. This chandelier is re-



The exterior view of the church of 1877. Note the live oak tree planted about 1880 by Mr. Gray Manning.



The interior of the "finest church in the county," built in 1877, as it is today. There have been some structural changes made.

membered by some today and, at that time, it was the object of admiration by all and was the talk of surrounding towns.

The chandelier hung from the center of the church. It had about twelve kerosene lamps in it. It was designed in the shape of a wheel and the swing lamps were placed at intervals to extend toward the corners of the church. A keeper took especial pains to keep the lamps clean and filled with kerosene.

Men and women did not sit together in this church, nor had they, in all probability, in any of the others. There was an "Amen" corner located to the left of the pulpit, opposite the choir, and it was here the male church leaders sat to lend their vocal support to the pastors.

This church was used by the congregation until the new church was occupied in 1910. Many people living today have tender memories of that old church.

Mrs. Novella Bunting Staton said that she played the organ at times in that church. She said that she began playing at the age of 14. She refused to play unless the late Mr. Sam Carson was there to help her work out the meter for the songs. She stated that Mr. Carson was a fine musician and that he would play the violin (fiddle) along with the organ. She recalled, also, that Mr. Carson was considered a "pillar" of the church and was for many years Sunday School Superintendent.

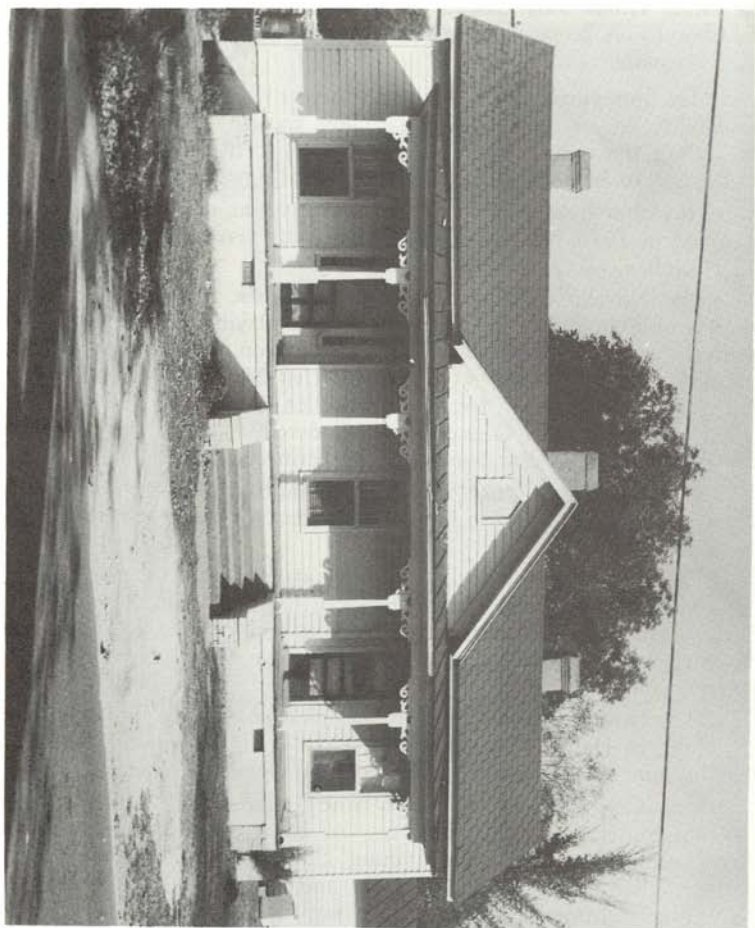
Mr. Davis McWhorter said that his mother played the organ there also when she was young, long before Mrs. Staton. Mrs. Sara Whitehurst was an organist there, too.

The organ was the kind, as all were at that time, that had to be "pumped" manually. The late Mr. Theodore Brittain, who moved to Houston, Texas, as a young man, used to help in this capacity. Mr. Jasper Smith says that he remembers "pumping" the organ there at times when he was a very young boy.

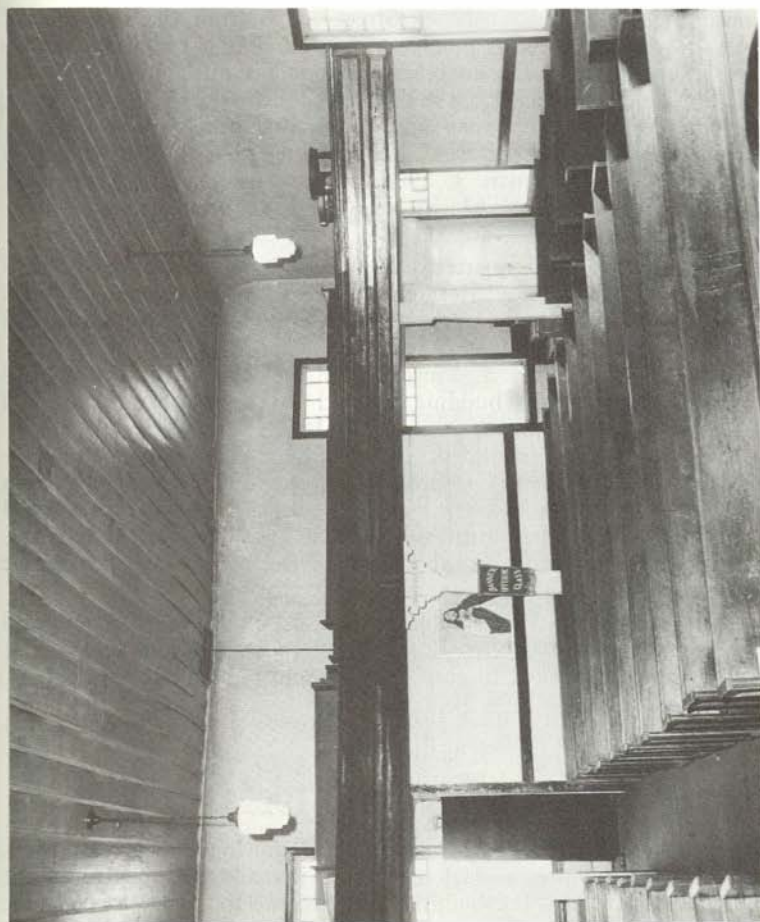
Mrs. Novella Bunting Staton was married in this church on November 25, 1908, to Henry Vernon Staton. Mr. X. E. Manning told her recently that he remembered going to her wedding there when he was very young.

Mrs. Clay McCall (Clefa Wynne) of Asheville and her sister, Mrs. Thomas Suiter, Sr. (Alice Wynne) of Rocky Mount remember attending this church when they were young children on visits with their grandmother, Mrs. Louise Carson Brittain and with their aunt, Mrs. Alica Martin. They returned to Bethel once for the purpose of viewing again this church of their childhood. They both remember a beautiful grove of oak trees which was on the north side of the church. Here picnics and dinners were held.

This church and its grounds were given tender loving care. On one side (the South) a flower garden was tended within a white picket fence. Mr. Gray Manning, father of Mrs. Minnie Manning, brought live oak acorns



This was the first parsonage in Bethel. It was purchased in 1902.



Interior 'back view' of the "Finest Church in the County" (1877-1910).

back from Southport, North Carolina, about 1880 and planted one in this garden. The tree is standing beside the church today.

On March 10, 1902, the house now owned by J. C. Wynne, Sr., and used as rental property, was bought from W. J. Whitehurst (husband of the former Roland Carson). This house was known originally as the Albert Ward house and is located on James Street across from the residence of John Rook, Jr. The house was purchased by the church for \$800 and became the first parsonage. The membership found it difficult to meet the payments, and on September 12, 1903, at the fourth quarterly conference, the Board of Stewards ordered that help be solicited from nearby churches. On October 3, 1905, the pastor, E. C. Sell, reported that the parsonage was embarrassed with debt. January 1, 1906, at the first quarterly conference, a final drive headed by H. W. Martin and the pastor was successful in removing the debt. The pastor was the Rev. J. J. Barker.

On August 11, 1909, a quarterly conference meeting at Jones Chapel ordered the trustees to sell the Methodist Church to the colored brethren. Uncle Stanley Barnhill, a son of Zibe Barnhill, the young slave mentioned in the report of the church of 1849, said that he was present at this conference meeting. Apparently a delegation of the Negro Methodists had attended to request that the building be sold to them. The Pentecostal Holiness members wanted to buy it also. Mr. M. O. Blount, long an outstanding leader of the church, stated, "I am not the chairman, but my suggestion is that we sell it to our colored friends for \$50. Personally, I am not willing to let it go to anybody but Methodists." The trustees agreed and Uncle Stanley says that his delegation came away clapping their hands and shouting. Thus the once finest church in the county was left in the hands of Methodists. It is still in use today.

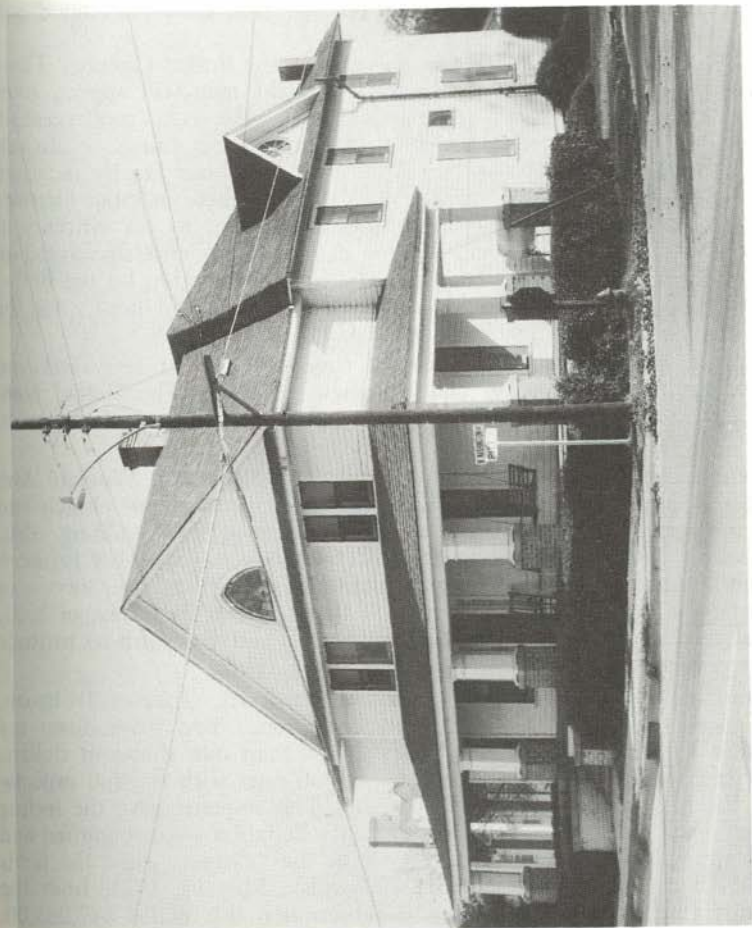
A building committee was appointed at this time. It was composed of M. O. Blount, H. W. Martin, R. D. Whitehurst, and the Rev. J. W. Autry. They were empowered to purchase a lot and build a new church.

Chapter IV

The Church (1910-1922)

For a number of years the town had been moving North and West. Since many of the members walked to church, it made the location of the church inconvenient. Also the building had become too small to meet the needs of the congregation. At an auction sale of lots, one was purchased at the corner of Pleasant and Woolard Avenue by Mr. M. O. Blount and Mr. H. W. Martin, each agreeing to pay one-half of the purchase price.

Between the date of purchase and the passing of the deed, the church and community suffered a terrible blow on April 25, 1910, in the tragic death of Mr. Henry W. Martin. A freak stroke of lightning, apparently



This was the Methodist Church building from 1910-1922. It is now a residence.

out of a clear sky, took from our midst one of our best citizens. Mrs. Martin, a devout church member, fulfilled her departed husband's obligation. The committee took courage and, under their direction, a church was built. This church building is still standing, but it was converted into a residence in 1922 at the completion of the fifth (the present) church building. The former church is now the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Cary Hammond and family.

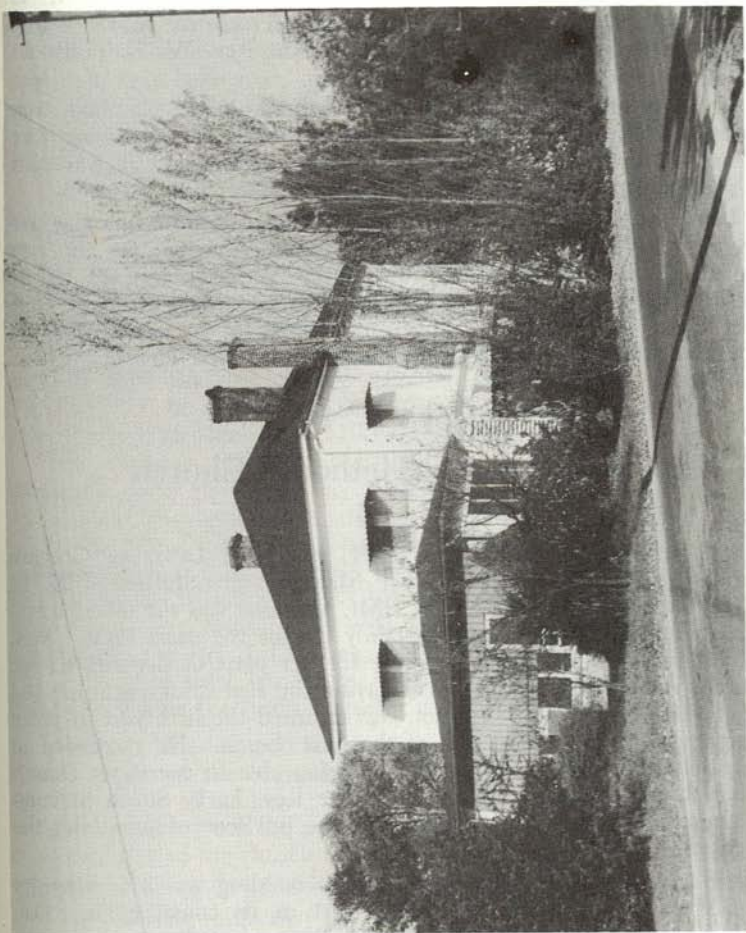
In 1917, the Rev. W. E. Trottman came to the Bethel Circuit. Those who believed that when the need arises the right man will appear, must have felt this was true in Mr. Trottman's arrival. He was a good preacher and a forceful leader. A revival of interest in the better things of life stirred the church membership. Material blessings had been greatly increased due to the economic demands of World War I and these material blessings were appreciated by the membership of the church and by the citizenry of the community, both White and Negro. Many Negro citizens wanted to make a contribution toward the erection of a house of worship for the Bethel Methodists (White) which would be a source of pride and beauty for the community and a witness for the glory of God.

Great revivals were held. Some of the nation's best revivalists and song leaders were obtained to conduct these revivals. The Bethel community experienced the greatest spiritual awakening since the days of Dr. Nash.

The present church on the corner of Pleasant Street and Woolard Avenue was not large enough to serve the religious program of our church and Sunday School. There was an increasing desire for a larger building. Mr. Trottman, the pastor, called a meeting of the Board of Stewards to ascertain their thinking, knowing that their attitudes determined the success or the failure of a new building program. On that night in the spring of 1921, there was an outpouring of generosity evidenced and the spiritual attitude manifested there must have been pleasing to our Lord.

Some of the "Old Pillars" of the church remarked, "Brother Trottman, I want to do my part. You know my condition. You write down my pledge and I'll sign it." No one pledged less than one thousand dollars. Most of them considered these pledges as initial ones with the full expectations of making further liberal contributions. This response gave the feeling of assured victory. Teams for the purpose of solicitation were appointed and out into the field on the appointed day went the "gleaners while the fields were white unto harvest." On that Wednesday, May 11, 1921, from the community and neighboring towns, the subscription list totaled \$17,083.00.

From members and well-wishers	\$14,837.00
Thursday's solicitation	2,210.00
Friday and Saturday	1,942.00
Sunday	335.00
	<hr/>
	\$21,295.00



This residence was used as a parsonage from 1921 until 1957.

Parsonage sold to J. A. Staton	4,650.00
Loan on church	2,500.00
	<hr/>
Total available May 11, 1921	\$28,445.00

A building committee was appointed which was composed of M. O. Blount, Chairman; Z. V. Bunting, Secretary and Treasurer; R. D. Whitehurst, H. V. Staton, J. A. Staton, Laymen; and the Rev. W. E. Trottman, Advisor.

Joe W. Stout and J. P. Koch of Rocky Mount, North Carolina, were engaged as architects and O. S. Puckett was employed as supervising foreman. Work on the parsonage was started immediately and it was completed in 1920 before work on the church began.

The family of the Rev. Mr. Trottman was the first to occupy this parsonage which was built on a portion of the land purchased for the new church building. The family of the Rev. Carlos Womack was the last to reside in this dwelling. This was sold to Mr. Bruce Gardner after the completion of the new one, and it was moved to a corner lot on Woolard Street. It is the residence of Mrs. Bertha Crane and Mrs. Melana Powell.

Chapter V

The Present Bethel Methodist Church

(1922-)

On a brisk early fall morning in 1921, Mr. John Lawrence Graham Manning (Gray), father of Mrs. Minnie Manning, grandfather of X. E. Manning, turned the first shovel of dirt. Mr. Manning was the oldest member of the church at that time and certainly one of the most loyal. Mrs. Sarah Whitehurst, still revered in memory for her years of devoted service to the church, was awarded the honor of laying the first brick enclosing the cornerstone. Mr. Trottman, the pastor, was returned the fifth year in order that he might aid in the completion of the new church. He succeeded in completing the educational building and in being able to use it for church worship; but it was left to the ministry of the Rev. L. L. Smith to complete the church sanctuary. Mr. Smith had the privilege of preaching the first sermon in it.

Truly it can be said that this new church building was a community endeavor. Multitudes seemed to want a part in its construction. Day laborers, tenant farmers, both White and Negro, clerks, businessmen, friends inside and outside the state, warehousemen, bankers, lumbermen, and others made liberal contributions. Work days were held. Men of all occupations and walks of life worked side by side in lathing the church. The Woman's Society served meals on the grounds.

Too much praise cannot be given to these loyal women of the church

for their assistance in the endeavors connected with the construction of this new house of worship. They sought many praiseworthy and practical ways to make money to apply to the cost. They sponsored baby contests, Hallowe'en parties, oyster suppers, turkey suppers, booths at the Pitt County Fair, and numerous other projects. The Woman's Society purchased the heating plant for the church. They bought the pews and made a loan of \$500 to the building committee. Later they cancelled this debt. Through the years, they have given moral and financial support in projects too numerous to mention. As a result of their efforts, our present parsonage, completed about 1957, has furnishing as nice as can be found in any of the Rocky Mount district.

A ten-thousand-dollar loan was secured from the Jefferson Standard Life Insurance Company around July 16, 1922. The payment of the \$600 yearly interest became burdensome. Consequently, with the same "never-die spirit" or with the "give until it hurts" attitude, a drive was made and \$10,137 was pledged. On November 3, 1924, the \$10,000 was repaid to Jefferson Standard. The members of this church owe a large debt of gratitude to the late Mr. W. A. Hart of Tarboro, North Carolina. He gave \$500 to help pay the Jefferson Standard indebtedness. On "Rally Day," June 5, 1924, he served as master of ceremonies and also made a contribution of \$750, at which time \$10,137 was pledged.

On October 12, 1927, a \$3100 note to the Bethel Bank and Trust Company (now the Wachovia Bank and Trust Company) was cancelled. An unpaid balance was left, the exact amount is unknown. On June 2, 1929, the recently completed basement was opened for the use of the primary department. At this time, it was reported that the total indebtedness on the church building was \$3,300 and that on the parsonage was \$375. Both these debts were finally paid and on November 6, 1932, during the pastorage of the Rev. J. O. Long, the church was dedicated. Bishop Collins Denny was the guest speaker for the dedication ceremonies. Again, Bethel had at that time the finest house of worship in Pitt County.

Later a large supper was held in the basement of the church. The featured event of the occasion was the burning of the cancelled note. The late Mr. R. D. Whitehurst, father of Mrs. Joe Burt Johnson and Mr. Paul Whitehurst, was given the privilege of burning this note. He was the oldest living member of the church and was always a faithful one. Others gathered around to witness this wonderful event which signified a debt-free church.

The genuine pride that the membership and the friends of this church took in the appearance and care of the house of worship and in that of the parsonage was remarkable. Although these were still in good condition considering usage, there was a desire that both should be completely renovated. Mr. M. O. Blount, for many years chairman of the Board of Stewards and a very excellent one, proposed to give a \$2000 Hammond Electric Organ as a memorial to his late wife, Florence Nelson Blount, who, until



The present Methodist Church (Built in 1922).

her death, was one of the most loyal church members. Mr. Blount stipulated that the organ would be given upon the condition that the other members would finance the renovation of the church and parsonage. The challenge was accepted. After an organization supper, under the direction of the Rev. W. L. Clegg, a one-day canvass was made. The response was wonderful. The sum of \$2,508.04 was spent on the church and the parsonage. Thereby, this Methodist church, built in 1921-22, had its first organ.

Chapter VI

The Past Quarter of a Century

(1939-1964)

On October 11, 1939, during the ministry of the Rev. M. Y. Self, the 125th anniversary of the Bethel Methodist Church was celebrated. Former pastors of the church were invited to return and to conduct services during the week. The schedule of sermons was as follows:

Monday—The Rev. W. L. Clegg
 Tuesday—The Rev. J. O. Long
 Thursday—The Rev. J. R. Edwards
 Friday—The Rev. W. T. Phipps

The Rev. L. C. Larkin, District Superintendent of the Rocky Mount District, conducted the service on Wednesday evening.

On the third Sunday Dr. M. T. Pyler, editor of the "Christian Advocate" was the guest preacher. This was Homecoming Day and Mr. J. A. Staton read an excellently prepared history of the first century and a quarter life of the church.

In 1941, the Rev. J. G. Phillips was sent to Bethel by the North Carolina conference to replace the Rev. M. Y. Self. Mr. Phillips began his ministry by consolidating the gains which had been made during the preceding years. He paid especial attention to the financial program of the church with the purpose of putting the church budget on a sound financial basis. As a result of this, the church budget was established on a "pay - in - advance" assessment program. At first this was worked on the quarter system on an experimental basis.

Mr. Phillips' pastorage was shortened by his appointment to the position of Executive Secretary of the N. C. Methodist Board of Education. As a result the Phillips family moved to Durham, N. C.

To replace Mr. Edwards came the Rev. W. M. Howard, Jr., a native of Mocksville, N. C. The Rev. and Mrs. Howard came to our church at a sad time in their lives. Shortly before their arrival they lost their first child (an infant son at birth). During their stay in Bethel, two daughters, Katharine and Margaret were born to the Howards.

The Rev. Mr. Howard is a man of many talents. He is an excellent scholar, a fine musician, and possesses business acumen. During his ministry the advanced assessment payment plan was changed from quarterly payment to one annual assessment payment. Assessments were given to all members of the church even to the small children in order that they might grow in church responsibility. Due to the cooperation of the church officials and the membership, the "Budget Plan" of the Bethel Methodist Church became an outstanding example to all churches.

The writer is taking the liberty of quoting a letter she received from the Rev. Howard concerning his ministry in Bethel.

On the death of the Rev. George Perry, minister of Jarvis Memorial Church in Greenville, the Rev. R. W. Bradshaw went to Jarvis Memorial, the Rev. J. G. Phillips went from Bethel to the Board of Education Office, and the Rev. W. M. Howard, Jr., was sent from Elm City to Bethel. We moved from Bethel in December of 1949, when I was assigned to University Church in Chapel Hill.

No building program or expansion was undertaken during my pastorate. The war came on and building and travel were curtailed.

Perhaps the most noteworthy thing in my pastorate at Bethel was the return of the service men and the great number of marriages of Bethel girls and quite a number were church weddings. With the return of the service men, I organized a class of young men which I taught as long as I remained in Bethel. Many of these are now the leaders in the life of the church and the community. I received into the church more mature men at Bethel than I have received at any place.

While I was at Bethel, Mrs. Harold Staton was the organist and choir director most of the time. Mrs. S. C. Whitehurst directed the choir part of the time. Mrs. Henry Staton played at night.

During the war the Methodist Church put on the Crusade for Christ, whose goal was 25 million dollars for relief and emergency projects. Bethel's quota was \$2700. Under the chairmanship of Jasper Smith, the church raised its quota within a week to become one of the first churches in the conference to do so.

These years saw the death of many faithful and devoted servants of the Lord. It would be impossible to name them and names are omitted because a complete list is unavailable.

While there is nothing spectacular to report of my pastorage at Bethel, I think it could be characterized by steady growth and a strengthening of the life of the church.

We wish so much that we could be with you on November 29 but we were there so recently we do not feel justified in taking off so soon again. Bethel is a dear spot to us and will forever be so and our friends there are among the dearest in the world.

May the Eternal's blessing be upon 'the house of God' forever.

The Rev. W. M. Howard, Jr., was our pastor for six years. So far, only two other ministers have served more than the allotted four years. They were the Rev. L. L. Nash and the Rev. W. E. Trottman, both of whom served five years.

The Rev. N. W. Grant became our pastor in November, 1949. He, his wife Ruth, and young daughter, Nancy, soon became an integral part of the community.

The Rev. N. W. Grant proved to be a person of energy, purpose, and great spirituality. He gave considerable attention to the instruction of his congregation in the organization parts of the Methodist Church and the purpose and function of each.

During his ministry here Mr. Grant served as Secretary of the Rocky Mount district and as one of the Assistant Secretaries of the North Carolina Conference. He proved efficient in both positions.

In 1950, Miss Marian Burton, a member of our church, left for a three and one-half year term of service as a mission teacher in Montivedeo, Uruguay.

During the winter of 1949-50, the parsonage was renovated and its appearance was greatly improved by structural changes and the usual application of paint and paper.

The year 1953 proved to be a banner year in the history of the Bethel Methodist Church. This year marked the beginning of the Church Expansion Program (The \$10 membership club). The first 30 members of this club came from the Bethel Church. Only 80 memberships were obtained in the entire district that first year. This year of 1953 was also the year of the United Evangelical Mission and revivals were held at the same time throughout the North Carolina Conference. Dr. Harold Smith, of Englewood, New Jersey conducted the revival at Bethel. Mr. Grant reports that he considers this the most effective revival held during his ministry at Bethel. Our church proved to have the best attendance of all the churches in the Rocky Mount District at these United Evangelical Mission revivals.

The Rev. N. W. Grant is serving in the capacity of Superintendent of the Raleigh district. He received this appointment in 1964 following successful ministry in Washington, N. C. (where he served after Bethel), Raleigh, and in Goldsboro, N. C.

The Rev. Henry Lewis became our pastor in 1953 but he did not remain but one year. It was during his ministry that the plans for the building of a new parsonage was formulated. The present parsonage was fast becoming inadequate due to age and use. Also, many felt that it was not in keeping with the architectural beauty of our church.

In 1954, the Rev. Carlos Womack and his wife, Jane, came into our midst. During Mr. Womack's ministry, the much anticipated new parsonage came into being. A lot adjoining the present parsonage was purchased

from Mr. Bruce Gardner for the sum of \$6,000. Mr. Gardner removed the former Will Minton house from the purchased lot. Mr. W. J. Smith was appointed Chairman of the Building Committee. Mr. Smith, who possesses somewhat of a Jeffersonian talent in architecture, drew the plans for the new house. The new parsonage was completed around 1956 at a cost of \$18,003.40. The builders were the firm of H. L. Tetterton and Sons. In building the parsonage, the church incurred some indebtedness. The debt was between seven and eight thousand dollars. Mr. S. C. Ives became Chairman of a drive to remove this indebtedness and through his successful efforts, the parsonage became debt free.

Bishop Garber and his wife visited Bethel during the Womack ministry. This visit was soon after the Bishop's return from Switzerland where he had been serving as Bishop of the Geneva area. A reception for Mrs. Garber was held at the home of Mrs. J. L. Gurganue, Sr.

In 1958, Jack Wynne III, a member of our church, became a member of the Methodist Youth Caravan to Europe. On his return Jack visited various agencies of this church and neighboring churches to acquaint them with conditions in Europe.

The writer quotes from a letter received from the Rev. Carlos Womack, who is presently serving as Minister of the First Methodist Church in Elizabeth City, N. C.

It was good to chat with you this morning. I'm sorry that I could not supply you with a more dazzling list of accomplishments during my ministry there.

So far as Jane and I can recall, the two incidents which have a bearing on the history of your church are the ones we discussed in our telephone conversation: building of one of the finest parsonages in the N. C. Conference and an "Open House" which served the dual purpose of giving the congregation and friends opportunity to view the parsonage and to add significance for Jane and me in the celebration of our 25th wedding anniversary."

In 1959, the Rev. Carl Barbee was appointed to the Bethel Methodist Church from the Enfield Charge. The following letter contains the remembrances of Mr. Barbee as to what he considered the most important events of his ministry. We quote as follows:

We were happy to be appointed to Bethel Methodist Church and arrived in June, 1958. One of the first efforts by way of building improvement was to have underground drainage along the sides of the educational building to keep water out of basement during heavy rains. Later improvements included plaster and paint in the sanctuary and outside painting on church and parsonage. In our opinion the most welcome was the air conditioning of the sanctuary at the cost of approximately \$4,000. This was done when W. R. Hunnicutt was Chairman of the Board of Stewards.

The first College Campaign for two new colleges and assist-

ance for our other institutions of learning came in the fall of 1958 during our first months in Bethel. This was one of our finest hours when our church gave a loyal and encouraging response to the high quota assigned by the conference. It was during this time that the pastor became seriously ill and was in the hospital for eleven days. We now remain deeply grateful for restored health and strength and for the great kindness shown our family all through this trying time.

Our daughter, Patricia Ellen, was married to James William Gray, Jr., in the church on September 2, 1961. Again our friendly congregation showed great kindness and assistance and helped to make this occasion one of our best and most memorable.

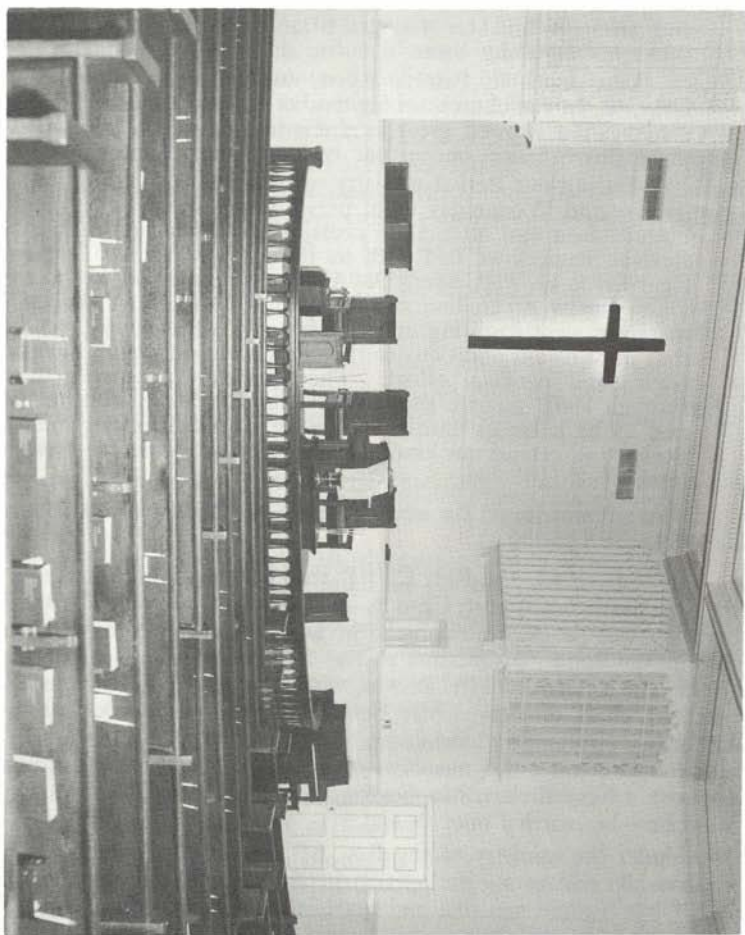
During our Bethel ministry we continued morning and night services and Wednesday night prayer meetings the year round with both interest and attendance remaining fairly steady. To assist in Revival Services we had with us the Rev. R. Grady Dawson, the Rev. Clyde G. McCarver, Dr. A. Purnell Bailey on two occasions, Dr. Thomas A. Collins and Dr. Edgar B. Fisher. While these meetings were inspiring and helpful in a general way, we believe that most of our additions to the church came through membership classes and personal effort. The Conference Journals for 1959 through 1962 indicate that 43 were received on profession of faith and 23 by letter of transfer. We are thankful for our ministry at Bethel and extend our kind regards and best wishes for a very good future.

The amount raised for new colleges and assistance to other institutions in 1958 was \$25,000.

In June, 1962, the Rev. Carl Barbee was appointed to the pastorage of the Plymouth Methodist Church and the Rev. Kenneth Sexton, who had been serving the Erwin Church, became the minister at Bethel. Besides securing an active, progressive pastor, the church was most fortunate in receiving the services of Mrs. Sexton, who is an accomplished musician and an excellent choir director. Mr. Sexton remarks often that he is the first Methodist preacher to have come to Bethel since the time of the Rev. Mr. Howard who was not a musician of a kind (some excellent, others in lesser degrees). Nevertheless, Mr. Sexton reminds that he does not have to be a musician—he married one.

Under the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Sexton the church has moved forward in all endeavors. Bethel remains a progressive church in every respect and it has enjoyed spiritual and material blessings too numerous to record.

On March 21, 1963, the members of the Bethel Methodist Church, as well as the entire community, faced the threat of a great loss. During the process of roof repairing, a workman accidentally set the loft of the church sanctuary on fire with a blow torch. The tinder dry old timbers fed the fire with rapidity. For a while it appeared that the entire church building would be destroyed. Young and old alike watched with tears as this beloved



The Sanctuary (rebuilt and refurnished after fire in March, 1963)

church building became ravaged by fire. Many had been christened or had professed their faith at its altar; others had pledged their marriage vows in its cherished walls; while others had attended the last rites for loved ones within its comforting shelter. It appeared that nothing would be left but memories.

However, due to the heroic efforts of the Bethel fire department and the splendid assistance of fire departments from Belvoir, Robersonville, Greenville, Staton-House, and Conetoe, the fire was brought under control. The education building of the church was left intact but the sanctuary was in complete ruin.

Fortunately some of the sanctuary furnishings were removed through efforts of church members and other citizens. The Boy Scouts of the community aided greatly and they became self-appointed guards of the church property during the night following the fire.

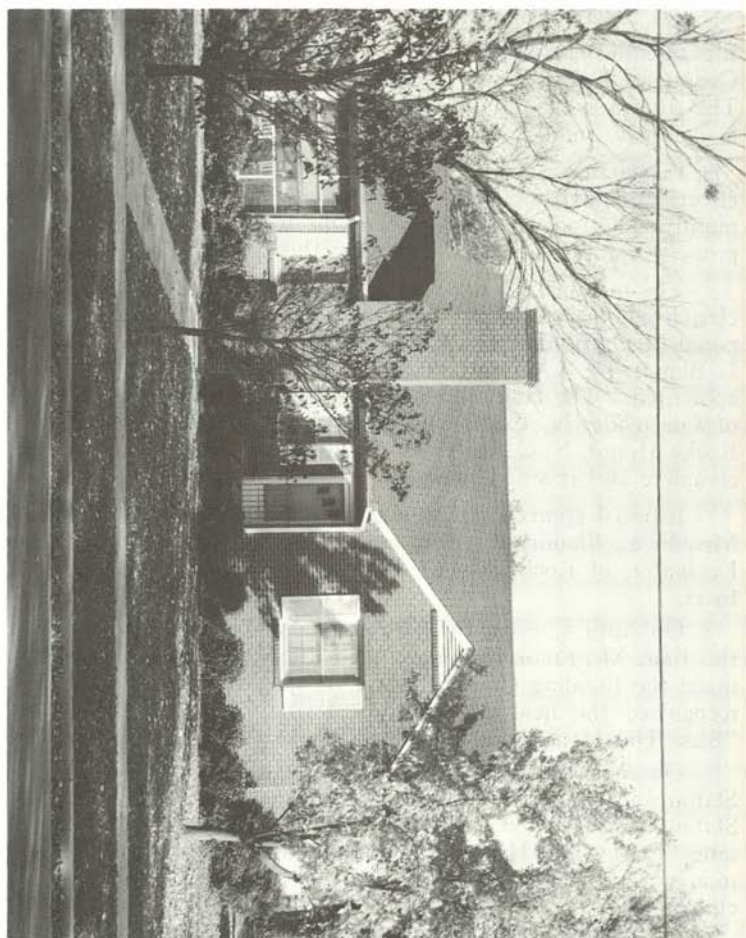
The members of the church began efforts immediately to restore their church sanctuary in beauty and in usefulness. A Building Committee composed of C. W. Everett, Chairman; F. C. Martin, Vice-Chairman; and F. L. Blount, Jr.; J. M. Butterworth; Miss Camille Staton, and D. O. Spier was appointed. The committee secured the services of Leo Hawkins and Co. of Greenville, N. C., for the rebuilding and of Mr. Harry J. Harles, of Rocky Mount, N. C., as architect. By April, 1964 the Church sanctuary was complete and it stood more beautiful than ever.

Especial appreciation should be expressed to Miss Camille Staton and Mrs. F. L. Blount, Jr., who, with the aid of Mrs. Mary Proctor, Interior Decorator, of Rocky Mount, directed the interior decorating of the sanctuary.

On April 5, 1964, the first service in the new sanctuary was held. At this time, Mr. Frank Hemingway, Chairman of the Board of Stewards, recognized the Building Committee for its splendid effort. Mr. C. W. Everett recognized the new gifts and memorials. Mrs. Sam Keel, soloist, sang, "Bless This House" and the Act of Dedication was read responsively.

On April 26, 1964, a Teller Pipe organ given by Mr. and Mrs. Harold Staton and Miss Camille Staton, honoring their parents, J. A. and Bertha Staton, was dedicated. Mrs. J. Herbert Waldrop, Jr., relative of the Statons, sang "Lord Thou Hast Been Our Dwelling Place" and the dedicatory sermon was preached by the Rev. W. M. Howard, Jr., former pastor of the church.

October 11, 1964, marked the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the founding of our church. Due to conflicting appointments the Homecoming Day planned to celebrate this wonderful blessing was moved to November 29, 1964. This is the Sunday following our National Observance of Thanksgiving. How fitting that our church should have one of its own during this holiday season.



The present day Methodist parsonage.

Now we are entering the threshold of a new half century of Christian endeavor in the life of our church. May we, its members, never forget the admonition of our Methodist Discipline when it says:

Dearly beloved, the Church is of God, and will be preserved to the end of time, for the promotion of His worship and the due administration of His word and ordinances, the maintenance of Christian fellowship and discipline, the edification of believers, and the conversion of the world. All, of every age and station, stand in need of the means of grace which it alone supplies.

Chapter VII

List of Appointments to Bethel Methodist Church

(1846-1964)

YEAR	DISTRICT	PRESIDING ELDER	PASTOR	CIRCUIT
1843		Robert Bruton		
1844		James Reid		
1845		James Reid		
1846		James Reid	Jeremiah Johnson	Tarborough 1
1847		James Reid	Wash. Chaffin	Tarborough 2
1848		Robert Carson	Nathan Anderson	Tarborough
1849		Robert Carson	Williams Walsh	Tarborough
1850		Robert Carson	W. L. Martin	Tarborough
1851		William Closs	W. L. Martin	Tarborough
1852		William Closs	Robert J. Carson	
1853		William Closs	Robert Carson	Tarborough
1854		William Closs	F. H. Boring	
			Robert Carson	Tarborough
			F. H. Boring	
			John Jones	Tarborough
			George Wyche	

1. In 1846 there were 14 appointments—all Edgecombe and Martin, Greenville and all of Pitt north of the Tar River, and part of Halifax and Beaufort.

2. In 1847 Williamston paid \$106.27; Hamilton, \$10.10; Sharon, \$8.50; Williams Chapel, \$24.25; Carmie, \$23.45; Greenville, \$53.05; Bethel, \$12.75; Mt. Zion, \$15.00; New Hope, \$33.00; James Town, \$17.05; Holly Springs, \$16.90; Tarboro, nothing, making a total of \$312.32.

YEAR	DISTRICT	PRE. ELDER	PASTOR	CIRCUIT	SALARY
1855			T. B. Reeks	Tarborough	
1856	Washington	J. R. Carson	Henry Gibbons	Williamston	
1857	Washington	Ira T. Wyche	Henry Gibbons	Williamston	
1858	Washington	Ira T. Wyche	Isaac Keerans	Williamston	
1859	Washington	Ira T. Wyche	Abram Weaver	Williamston	
1860	Washington	Ira T. Wyche	N. A. H. Godin	Williamston	
1861	Washington	Ira T. Wyche	James Wheeler	Williamston	
1862	Washington	L. L. Hendren	E. A. Wilson	Greenville	
1863	Washington	L. L. Hendren	E. A. Wilson	Greenville	
1864	Washington	L. L. Hendren	B. F. Long *		
1865	Washington	L. L. Hendren	B. F. Long		
1866	Roanoke	R. S. Moran	J. J. Hines	Williamston	
1867	Washington	R. S. Moran	W. H. Wheeler	Williamston	
1868	Washington	R. S. Moran	W. H. Wheeler	Williamston	
1869	Washington	R. S. Moran	James Mahoney	Williamston	
1870	Washington	S. D. Adams	James Mahoney	Williamston	
1871	Washington	S. D. Adams	B. B. Culbreth	Williamston	
1872	Washington	S. D. Adams	T. B. Reeks	Williamston	
1873	Washington	S. D. Adams	T. B. Reeks	Williamston	
1874	Washington	William Closs	T. B. Reeks		\$645.84
1875	Washington	William Closs	W. H. Call		\$500.57
1876	Washington	William Closs	Jeremiah Johnson		

* The Civil War interfered with his work.

List of Appointments to Bethel Methodist Church

YEAR	DISTRICT	PRE. ELDER	PASTOR	CIRCUIT	SALARY	MEM.	CHS.
1877	Washington	William Closs	L. L. Nash	Williamston	\$446.04		
1878	Washington	J. E. Mann	L. L. Nash	Greenville			
1879	Washington	J. E. Mann	L. L. Nash	Greenville			
1880	Washington	J. E. Mann	L. L. Nash	Greenville			
1881	Washington	J. S. Nelson	L. L. Nash	Greenville			
1882	Washington	J. S. Nelson	S. C. Hoyle	Greenville			
1883	Washington	J. S. Nelson	S. V. Hoyle	Greenville	\$800.00		
				Bethel			
1884	Washington	J. S. Nelson	C. M. Anderson	Greenville	\$850.00		
				Bethel			
1885	Washington	W. H. Moore	C. R. Raven	Tarborough	\$760.00		
				Bethel			
1886	Washington	W. E. Moore	T. H. Gattis	Tarborough	\$800.00	431	
				Bethel			
1887	Washington	W. H. Moore	T. H. Gattis	Tarborough	\$900.00	501	
				Bethel			
1888	Washington	W. H. Moore	A. R. Raven		\$457.25	401	4
1889	Washington	G. A. Oglesbye	E. L. Pell		\$490.00	379	4
1890	Washington	G. A. Oglesbye	D. R. Bruton		\$300.00	391	5
			F. Taylor				

Note: In 1888 we were taken from Tarborough-Bethel and known as Bethel Circuit.

Note: In 1890 it seems as though Rev. Bruton's health failed him, or he was given some conference work, and Rev. R. F. Taylor, a young preacher, was sent to complete the work. Conference Board of Missions gave \$300.

YEAR	DISTRICT	PRE. ELDER	PASTOR	SALARY	MEM.	CHUR.
1891	Wilson	G. A. Oglesbye	T. J. Dailey	\$535.00	456	3
1892	Wilson	G. A. Oglesbye	J. C. Jones	\$370.00	495	2
1893	Wilson	G. A. Oglesbye	G. G. Harley	\$480.00	419	3
1894	Wilson	G. A. Oglesbye	W. A. Forbes	\$350.00	442	3
1895	Washington	G. A. Oglesbye	W. A. Forbes	\$340.00	360	1
1896	Washington	R. R. Hall	A. S. Barnes	\$257.20	341	1
1897	Washington	R. R. Hall	B. B. Culbreth	\$412.00	364	1
1898	Washington	R. R. Hall	B. B. Culbreth	\$310.38	322	1
1899	Washington	R. R. Hall	J. E. Bristowe	\$337.75	282	1
1900	Washington	F. A. Bishop	J. E. Bristowe	\$357.43	319	3
1901	Washington	F. A. Bishop	A. D. Betts	\$376.10	307	3
1902	Washington	F. A. Bishop	J. J. Barker	\$650.00	377	3
1903	Washington	F. A. Bishop	J. J. Barker	\$700.00	409	4
1904	Washington	J. D. Bundy	W. H. Kirton	\$700.00	412	4
1905	Washington	J. D. Bundy	E. C. Sell	\$802.00	384	4
1906	Washington	R. B. John	E. C. Sell	\$558.15	378	4
1907	Washington	A. McCullen	J. W. Martin	\$700.00	329	4
1908	Washington	A. McCullen	J. W. Martin	\$529.70	307	4
1909	Washington	A. McCullen	J. W. Autry	\$700.00	275	4

Note: In 1895 we became Bethel Station.

Note: In 1900 and 1901 we were Bethel-Jamesville Circuit.

Note: In 1902 we became Bethel Circuit and continued so until 1918.

List of Appointments to Bethel Methodist Church

YEAR	DISTRICT	PRE. ELDER	PASTOR	SALARY	MEM.	CHUR.
1910	Washington	A. McCullen	J. W. Autry	\$ 650.00	290	4
1911	Washington	J. T. Gibbs	J. W. Autry	650.00	280	5
1912	Washington	J. T. Gibbs	D. A. Futrell	733.00	282	5
1913	Washington	J. T. Gibbs	D. A. Futrell	726.99	294	5
1914	Washington	J. T. Gibbs	H. E. Tripp	668.00	313	4
1915	Washington	C. L. Read	H. E. Tripp	668.00	387	4
1916	Washington	C. L. Read	H. E. Tripp	668.00	397	5
1917	Washington	C. L. Read	H. E. Tripp	668.00	387	5
1918	Washington	C. L. Read	W. E. Trotzman	1,111.00	265	5
1919	Washington	N. D. Wilson	W. E. Trotzman	1,500.00	321	4
1920	Washington	N. D. Wilson	W. E. Trotzman	1,804.00	311	4
1921	Washington	N. D. Wilson	W. E. Trotzman	1,800.00	284	2
1922	Washington	S. A. Cotton	W. E. Trotzman	1,908.00	261	2
1923	Washington	S. A. Cotton	L. L. Smith	1,800.00	308	2
1924	Washington	S. A. Cotton	L. L. Smith	1,800.00	302	2
1925	Washington	S. A. Cotton	L. L. Smith	2,000.00	314	2
1926	Washington	S. E. Mercer	L. L. Smith	2,250.00	338	1
1927	Washington	S. E. Mercer	W. T. Phipps	2,250.00	338	1
1928	Washington	S. E. Mercer	W. T. Phipps	2,150.00	363	2
1929	Washington	J. H. McCracken	J. R. Edwards	2,100.00	382	2
1930	Washington	J. H. McCracken	J. R. Edwards	2,000.00	395	2
1931	Washington	J. H. McCracken	J. R. Edwards	1,550.00	398	2

Note: In 1918 we became Bethel Charge.

YEAR	DISTRICT	PRE. ELDER	PASTOR	SALARY	MEM.	CHUR.
1932	Rocky Mount	L. B. Jones	J. O. Long	\$1,800.00	417	2
1933	Rocky Mount	L. B. Jones	J. O. Long	2,000.00	455	2
1934	Rocky Mount	W. C. Martin	J. O. Long	2,100.00	502	2
1935	Rocky Mount	W. C. Martin	J. O. Long	2,100.00	500.	
1936	Rocky Mount	J. M. Culbreth	W. L. Clegg	2,100.00	504	2
1937	Rocky Mount	J. M. Culbreth	W. L. Clegg	2,250.00	512	2
1938	Rocky Mount	J. M. Culbreth	W. L. Clegg	2,250.00	517	2
1939	Rocky Mount	L. C. Larkin	M. Y. Self	2,500.00	527	2
1940	Rocky Mount	L. C. Larkin	M. Y. Self	2,500.00	533	2
1941	Rocky Mount	L. C. Larkin	J. G. Phillips	2,400.00	519	2
1942	Rocky Mount	L. C. Larkin	J. G. Phillips		532	2
1943	Rocky Mount	T. M. Grant	J. G. Phillips	2,700.00	532	2
1944	Rocky Mount	T. M. Grant	W. M. Howard	2,700.00	541	2
1945	Rocky Mount	T. M. Grant	W. M. Howard	2,700.00	541	2
1946	Rocky Mount	T. M. Grant	W. M. Howard	3,000.00	541	2
1947	Rocky Mount	T. M. Grant	W. M. Howard	3,300.00	476	2
1948	Rocky Mount	A. J. Hobbs	W. M. Howard	3,600.00	489	2
1949	Rocky Mount	A. J. Hobbs	W. M. Howard	3,800.00	492	2
1950	Rocky Mount	A. J. Hobbs	N. W. Grant	3,900.00	494	2
1951	Rocky Mount	A. J. Hobbs	N. W. Grant	3,900.00	494	2
1952	Rocky Mount	A. J. Hobbs	N. W. Grant	4,500.00	492	2
1953	Rocky Mount	J. F. Herbert	N. W. Grant	4,800.00	514	2
1954	Rocky Mount	J. F. Herbert	H. B. Lewis	5,000.00	537	2
1955	Rocky Mount	J. F. Herbert	C. P. Womack	3,334.00	538	2
1956	Rocky Mount	J. F. Herbert	C. P. Womack	5,200.00	546	2
1957	Rocky Mount	W. C. Ball	C. P. Womack	5,500.00	545	2
1958	Rocky Mount	W. C. Ball	C. P. Womack	5,500.00	554	2
1959	Rocky Mount	W. C. Ball	C. W. Barbee	6,000.00	547	2

YEAR	DISTRICT	D. S.	PASTOR	SALARY	MEM.	CHUR.
1960	Rocky Mount	W. C. Ball	C. W. Barbee	\$6,000.00	558	2
1961	Rocky Mount	W. C. Ball	C. W. Barbee	6,000.00	559	2
1962	Rocky Mount	W. C. Ball	C. W. Barbee	6,000.00	554	2
1963	Rocky Mount	J. W. Page	K. B. Sexton	6,300.00	573	1
1964	Rocky Mount	J. W. Page	K. B. Sexton	6,600.00	582	1
1964-65	Greenville	W. R. Stevens	K. B. Sexton	6,800.00		1



The famed old Bethel Academy, where many old Methodists were educated.
It is in a bad state of repair.

SECTION IV

LIST OF OLDEST MEMBERS OF OUR CHURCH—LENGTH OF MEMBERSHIP

THE WOMANS SOCIETY OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE

THE WOMANS CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION

CHURCH ORGANISTS

LAY SPEAKERS IN BETHEL METHODIST CHURCH

N. C. CONFERENCE OFFICERS FROM THE BETHEL METHODIST CHURCH

THE METHODIST YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

MEMORIALS, GIFTS, HONORS

MEMORIAL SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES

MEMORIAL CIRCLES IN THE WOMANS SOCIETY

HONORARY CLASSES AND WOMANS SOCIETY CIRCLES

MISCELLANEOUS FACTS ABOUT METHODISM

(a) Bethel

(b) National

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BETHEL COMMUNITY

Oldest Members of Our Church

(50 Years or More Membership)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Year Received</i>	<i>By Whom</i>	<i>Length of Membership</i>
Mrs. Flaudia Barnhill (D.C.)	1891	T. J. Dailey	73 Years
Mrs. Dave Bowers, Sr.	1901	A. D. Betts	63 Years
Mrs. Jennie Watson	1902	J. J. Barker	62 Years
Mrs. L. J. Whitehurst, Sr.	1902	J. J. Barker	62 Years
Mrs. John Rook, Sr.	1906	E. C. Sell	58 Years
Mrs. Mamie Andrews	1907	J. W. Martin	57 Years
Mrs. Don Carson, Sr.	1907	J. W. Martin	57 Years
F. Leighton Blount, Sr.	1907	L. L. Nash	57 Years
Mrs. John Staton	1908	J. W. Autry	56 Years
(moved her membership from the Methodist Church in Hendersonville, North Carolina)			

Members for Forty Years or More

Mrs. F. L. Blount, Sr.	Marshall Whitehurst
Mrs. Elizabeth Benton	Miss Camille Staton
F. L. Andrews, Jr.	Mrs. W. Z. Wilson
John L. Brown	Mrs. Jessie Carson
Mrs. Thelma Brown Williamson	J. A. Staton
Mrs. Thelma Bunting Pollard	Barney Sutton
Fred Baker	Mrs. Eunice Minton Binder
Mrs. Ozel C. Windam	Mrs. William H. Andrews
J. L. Gurganus, Sr.	Mrs. Floyd Thomas
D. S. Harper	Mrs. W. C. Whitehurst, Sr.
Mrs. Elizabeth Harper Carson	J. Royal Carson
O. W. House	Wadie T. Carson
David T. House	Mrs. Wadie T. Carson
Mrs. J. L. Gurganus, Sr.	Ralph Carson
Mrs. J. P. Hooker	Henry Rogerson
S. C. Ives	Wadie T. Ward
Russell James	R. Harold Staton

Members for Forty Years or More (continued)

Miss Olive Jones	F. C. Martin
Mrs. F. C. Martin	Mrs. J. O. Warren
Mrs. Minnie Manning	Mrs. Malena Powell
Ronald E. Riddick	Mrs. W. J. Taylor
Mrs. J. V. Taylor, Sr.	Mrs. J. A. Edmondson
Floyd Thomas	Theodore Whitfield
Mrs. Clara W. Roberson	Mrs. T. A. Whitfield
L. J. Whitehurst	Mrs. S. C. Ives
Mrs. M. M. Edmondson	Mrs. Henry Rogerson
Leighton Whitehurst	C. G. Whitehurst
Robert Joseph Whitehurst	Mrs. C. G. Whitehurst
Walter C. Whitehurst	Mrs. Walter Latham
Sam C. Whitehurst	Sam Henry Martin

The Woman's Society of Christian Service

In 1874, a request was made to the General Conference for the authority to organize a Womans Department of Missions. The request was not granted. However, four years later at a meeting of the conference in Atlanta, Georgia, after eight days of consideration, a favorable answer was given. Consequently on May 23, 1878, the first Womans Missionary Society of the Methodist Church was organized. In 1912 The Womans Missionary Society and the Ladies Aid Society were united into The Womans Society. Dues were 25c per month.

The Ladies Aid Society of the Bethel Methodist Church came into being on the first Wednesday night in January, 1904 at the church after the weekly prayer meeting. Mrs. E. C. Sell, wife of the pastor, organized the society. Charter members were: Mrs. E. C. Sell, Mrs. Nathaniel Hammond, Mrs. Lonie Bristoe Holder, Mrs. Sadie Bristoe and Mrs. F. L. Andrews, mother of F. L. Andrews, Jr., and Mrs. Elizabeth Benton.

Novella Bunting (now Mrs. H. V. Staton) was the first new member although she was about sixteen at the time. The membership fee was \$1.20 a year (10c a month for silver chain).

The local society was discontinued around 1915 but was reorganized later in 1919 by Mrs. W. E. Trotman, wife of the pastor. Later the organization became known as The Womans Society of Christian Service.

Founding of the Bethel Womans Christian Temperance Union

Although the Womans Christian Temperance Union is not an organizational part of the Methodist Church, it has always had the whole-

hearted support of the Church. Two of our early loyal church members served as its president and many of our members have held membership in this organization.

The Womans Christian Temperance Union was organized in Bethel about 1898. Mrs. Alice Martin was chosen as its first president. Dues were 10c a month. Later Mrs. Sarah Whitehurst served as its president.

In the early days each member was supposed to wear a white ribbon bow. In all probability this is where its magazine "The White Ribbon" obtained its name.

"Make a Joyful Noise Unto the Lord"

"The early Methodists had an experience in their hearts and a song on their lips. Methodism sang its way into the life of the people."

Due to the age of our church it would be impossible to obtain the names of all those who have acted in capacities of organist, pianist, and choir director. The list of the choir members through the years would mount into the hundreds. Therefore we are confining our mention to the names of some of the organists, the ones we were able to secure. We wish this list could be more complete.

ORGANISTS (includes pianists)

Mrs. Anna Nelson McWhorter (deceased), Mrs. Sarah Whitehurst (deceased), Mrs. Novella Staton, Mrs. J. A. Staton, Mrs. Joe Bowers, Sr., Mrs. W. J. Smith, Mrs. Robert Whitehurst, Mrs. J. L. Brown, Mrs. Harold Staton, Mrs. W. R. Hunnicutt.

Mr. Samuel Carson (deceased)—Violinist.

Lay Speakers

Lay preaching began with Thomas Maxfield. Much to John Wesley's horror, Maxfield, a layman, preached at the Foundry in London late in 1740 or early in 1741. Wesley was away at the time but rushed back to silence him. At the urgent request of his mother, Susannah, John first heard him, then withdrew his objection to Maxfield's preaching. Lay preaching, thus accepted, became an important factor in early Methodism both in England and America.

BETHEL METHODIST CHURCH LAY SPEAKERS

David Spier, J. C. Wynne, Sr., J. C. Wynne, Jr., Walter C. Latham, C. W. Everett, Ray Jones (recently moved to Florida).

Conference Officers furnished by Bethel Methodist Church

Bethel Methodist Church has been privileged to furnish several outstanding workers in the fields of endeavor in the North Carolina Conference.

Mr. W. J. Smith, presently Comptroller of North Carolina Wesleyan College in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, was North Carolina Conference Lay Leader from 1942 until 1956—a period of 14 years.

Mr. John Staton served as Chairman of the North Carolina Conference Board of Pensions for thirty years, from 1926-1956. He was succeeded in this Chairmanship by his son, R. Harold Staton, who served from 1956 until 1964, a period of eight years. In turn, in 1964 Clifton W. Everett was appointed to this position. It is a singular honor that this position should have remained in the same church for almost 40 years.

Mr. C. W. Everett has served as Associate District leader. At present Mr. D. O. Spier is Associate Leader of the newly organized Greenville District and a former Associate Leader of the Rocky Mount District.

Miss Camille Staton is presently serving as Vice-President of the Women's Society of Christian Service of The North Carolina Conference.

The Bethel Methodist Youth Fellowship

The Methodist Youth Fellowship is an outgrowth of the first National Church Youth organization established in 1880. This organization has been a part of the Church enterprise here for many years (at least 40, possibly more). The writer is not certain that it has been in continuous existence. However, she does remember that one of the first public speeches she ever made was at a meeting of this organization. The late Mr. and Mrs. M. O. Blount were there and apparently they were acting in the roles of advisors.

Today there are two youth groups within the activities of the church; namely, the Methodist Youth Fellowship (formerly the Epworth League) and an affiliate organization, the Intermediate Fellowship; an organization for the Youth of the 7th and 8th grade age.

These groups meet each Sunday night at six o'clock in the Education Building of the Church. Supper is served at this time.

Some immediate presidents of this organization have been Don Dewar (a student at Duke University), Harry Latham (a student at the University of North Carolina), Patsy Joe Gurganus (a student at Peace College), and David James, a Senior at Bethel High School. David has served also as Vice-President of the District. The membership of the Fellowship is approximately 60 members.

“LEST WE FORGET”

Memorials

MEMORIAL WINDOWS

Thomas G. Carson
January 28, 1849—January 13, 1917
Jane Taylor Carson
August 14, 1948—September 15, 1920

John R. Bunting
April 1, 1863—June 20, 1915
Sallie L. Bunting
September 4, 1867—April 15, 1936

Joseph J. Carson
January 13, 1856—December 22, 1930
Sallie Manning Carson
November 4, 1859—July 15, 1934

Marion Orlando Blount
August 12, 1864—March 2, 1939
Florence Nelson Blount
November 10, 1860—May 3, 1928

Samuel T. Carson
June 22, 1859—October 1, 1921

Fernando T. Whitehurst
June 7, 1870—November 27, 1947

Viola House Whitehurst
December 31, 1884—January 19, 1923

WINDOWS GIVEN IN HONOR OF THE CHURCH

J. M. Lloyd—Given by the late Mr. John Lloyd
L. J. Whitehurst—Given by the family of L. J. Whitehurst, Sr.
Staton—Given by the John Staton family
Gurganus—Given by the J. L. Gurganus family

OTHER MEMORIALS (Past)

Baptismal Fount—In Memory of W. A., J. C., and Arcena Taylor by the late J. V. Taylor and Mrs. Taylor

The Interpreter's Bible (set for Pastor's Study)—In Memory of Mr. and Mrs. Z. D. McWhorter—by their children

- Outside Bulletin Board*—In Memory of the late Mr. and Mrs. W. R. James, Sr.—by their children
- Illuminated Cross and Velvet Drapery* *—In Memory of Sallie L. Bunting—by her son, John Burton Bunting
- 100 Pew Hymnals*—In Memory of M. O. Blount and Mrs. Florence V. Blount—by their children
- Marble Tablet* *—In Memory of Henry W. Martin—by his wife, Mrs. Alice B. Martin
- Hammond Electric Organ* *—In Memory of Mrs. Florence Nelson Blount—by her husband, Marion Orlando Blount
- Candle Sticks (brass)* *—In Memory of Mr. and Mrs. Fernando Whitehurst—by their children
- Lighted Lamp Post*—In Memory of Mr. J. A. Manning—by Mr. and Mrs. W. A. House
- Lighted Lamp Post*—In Memory of David Thurston House, Sr., 1877-1946, and Mattie Whitehurst House, 1881-1949, by David T. House, III and Anne House Carroll
- Lights on Front Steps*—In Memory of Sara E. Tucker (Miss Sallie)—by Mrs. A. E. Printz
- Brass Rail (front steps)*—In Memory of James Henry Whitehurst and Della Thomas Whitehurst—by their children
- The Hanging Entrance Light*—In Memory of Mr. and Mrs. David Thurston House—by Mrs. Bernice House Gurganus
- * These memorials are in storage; were removed during fire in 1963 and are being preserved to be used in a much desired Chapel.

GIFTS (Past)

- The Church Bell in 1877*—by Mr. Joe Staton
- A Chandelier in 1877*—by Mrs. Fernando James
- Communion Table (about 1922)*—Mr. W. E. Stroud
- Brass Flower Vase*—Womans Society of Christian Service
- Picture "Hoffman's Christ in Gethsemane"*—Womans Society of Christian Service
- Organ Alcove Draperies*—Womans Society of Christian Service
- Pulpit Scarf*—Womans Society of Christian Service
- Chancel Cushions*—Womans Society of Christian Service

THE FOLLOWING GIFTS AND MEMORIALS WERE GIVEN TO THE CHURCH
FOLLOWING THE RENOVATION OF THE SANCTUARY AND THE
STEEPLE AFTER THE 1963 FIRE:

MEMORIALS

- Brass Flower Urn*—"In memory of Mr. Lewis Ayres"—Given by the Ayres family
- Cross Behind Choir*—"In memory of Fernando C. and Sophronia Martin"—Given by Fernando C. and Manolia Martin
- Brass Collection Plates*—Offered as a gift by Mr. Z. V. Bunting before his death on December 10, 1963
- Choir Pews*—Given by Mrs. Minnie Manning—"In loving memory of her parents, who were both dedicated church members"—John Lawrence Graham Manning, November 2, 1846—November 21, 1921; Margaret Taylor Manning, June 28, 1846—February 18, 1922
- Pew Cushions*—Given by Mrs. D. C. Barnhill—"In memory of her parents, faithful life-long members of this church:"—Elisha M. Turner, March 28, 1829—March 14, 1900; Martha Bryant Turner—October 23, 1835—August 17, 1918
- Cash Donations*—Mr. D. Russell Clark, Tarboro, N. C., Miss Sallie Brown, the Estate of Mrs. D. N. Bland, M. O. Blount and Sons
- Gift in Honor of the Church*—Cross on top of Church Steple—given by Mr. and Mrs. W. A. House
- Honor Gift*—Teller Pipe Organ—Given by Mr. and Mrs. Harold Staton and Miss Camille Staton, "In loving honor of their parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Staton"

Memorial Organizations

The Sara Whitehurst Circle of The Womans Society of Christian Service

This Circle was named to memorialize one of the most loyal and devout of Methodist women. She was a faithful organist, a tireless worker in the Womans Society of Christian Service, and an inspiring Sunday School teacher for a number of years. Olive Jones says that "Miss Sara" used to teach her and that her eyes would glow as if they were receiving light from above. I have heard older people remark on numerous occasions, "If ever there was a saint, 'Miss Sara' was one."

The Sallie Tucker Circle of The Womans Society of Christian Service

The Sallie Tucker Book Club (No connection with Church activities)

The above organizations bear the name of a wonderful Christian lady of little financial means but wealthy in love and Christian spirit. She gave

unselfishly of her time, devotion, and small means to the young of our church and community in Sunday School teaching and wherever the need for love and charity arose.

Miss Sallie was not a native of Bethel. She was reared in Baltimore, Maryland and came to Bethel to live with her sister, Mrs. P. C. Rives. She and Mrs. Rives were the founders of our town library. They obtained the nucleus of books to start it from the Enoch Pratt Library in Baltimore.

Her cheerful smile, her gracious manner, and her kindly spirit indicated love for all people. In turn, everybody loved Miss Sallie.

Honor Organizations

The Marion Burton Circle of the Womans Society of Christian Service

This Circle is named in honor of Miss Marion Burton, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. C. M. Burton, Sr., who served the Methodist Church in the capacity of teaching missionary in Montivedeo, Uruguay, for three and one-half years (1950-1953).

The Bertha Staton Sunday School Class

This class is named in honor of Mrs. John Staton, the oldest member of the class and its teacher for more than 25 years. "Miss Bertha" has been a loyal supporter of the church in all its endeavors. For years she sang in the choir. She is held in high esteem in the community and her influence for good has been immeasurable.

Miscellaneous Facts about Methodism

BETHEL

Only three teachers, exclusive of substitutes, have taught the Mens Class of Bethel Methodist Church since 1920 or thereabout. The late Mr. Joe Bowers taught from around 1920 to 1932. W. J. Smith taught from 1932 until 1942. Mr. C. W. Everett became the teacher in 1942 and is still serving in that capacity.

Mr. Sam Henry Martin, descendant from a long line of Methodists is the oldest member of our church. He is 86 years old.

Bethel was the first town in Pitt County to vote prohibition. This was, in large part due to the sentiments of the Methodist women, many of whom were founders of the Womans Christian Temperance Union in Bethel.

F. L. Andrews, Jr., has served as our efficient Church Treasurer for over 21 years.

The Bethel Baptist Church was organized on March 18, 1887, 73 years after the establishment of the Methodist Church in 1814.

The same bell, donated to the church in 1877 by Mr. Joe Staton, hangs in our church belfry today.

Mr. F. C. Martin says that he remembers when Mr. M. O. Blount (around 1910 and thereafter) would drive a horse and buggy out to the old Brown schoolhouse to hold Sunday School on Sunday afternoons. He said that often some of the Bethel school teachers would come with him to assist. Mr. Martin said it was here that he started Sunday School.

Stanley Barnhill, a highly respected Negro citizen of Bethel (the oldest, being 95 years of age) says that he is the oldest living Methodist in the Bethel community.

Oliver Spain built the first store and house at Bethel Crossroads across from the Bethel Methodist Church (1814) in 1840. The crossroads took the name of the church.

A disastrous fire practically destroyed the sanctuary of the church on March 21, 1963. The sanctuary has been rebuilt and is more beautiful than ever. Approximately \$64,000.00 was spent on its renovation. This amount does not include many valuable gifts by members.

Bethel became a member of the newly formed Greenville District in 1964. Until this date, Bethel had been a member of the Rocky Mount District for 32 years.

The North Carolina Conference of the Raleigh Area was separated from the Richmond, Va. area in 1964. Bishop Paul Garber, who had been presiding Bishop in the Richmond area has become presiding Bishop of the Raleigh area. Consequently, Bethel retained her Bishop.

Bethel Church has supported one member of The Annual Methodist Youth Caravan movement. Jack Wynne III, went to Europe in 1958 to aid in rebuilding of churches.

Bethel Church has furnished one teaching missionary. Miss Marion Burton served three and one-half years in a mission school in Montivedeo, Uruguay.

NATIONAL

The first National Methodist Church Youth group, the parent organization of the Methodist Youth Fellowship was established in 1880.

The first religious publishing house on the continent was Methodist and it is still the largest in the U. S.

Charles Wesley was one of the great hymn writers of all time. He wrote 6,500 hymns among them being some of the most majestic and matchless hymns found in hymnals of all denominations today.

Some of his best known hymns are: "Jesus, Lover of My Soul," "O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing," "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing," "Christ the Lord is Risen Today," "Come, Thou Almighty King," "Love Divine, All Love Excelling," "A Charge to Keep I Have."

Frances Asbury, Circuit Rider and one of the first Bishops of the Methodist Church in America traveled 270,000 miles. He traveled 20,000 miles more than that traveled by Wesley.

Membership in the Methodist Church in the United States now totals 10,304,184, it was announced by the Rev. Don A. Cooke, General Secretary of the Church's Council on World Service and Finance. He said that this is a gain of 69,198 above the 1963 total.

The Beginning of the Town of Bethel

The following information was obtained through the courtesy of Mrs. Minnie Manning, Mr. W. J. Smith, and Mr. Davis McWhorter.

It should be interesting to the readers of this church history to know something of the beginning of their town, especially since the town is named for the Methodist Church. It was a general custom in earlier days to first build a house of worship, and then as a few houses and stores sprang up to incorporate the settlement into a town. Often the town was named for the oldest establishment, namely, the church. Thus it was in the naming of the Town of Bethel.

The original land grants (as found in the Land Grant Office in Raleigh, N. C.) shows that the present town of Bethel is located on three different tracts of land. The first was the Andrews land which comprised 400 acres and was settled about 1760. It reached from what is now the railroad south to Grindel Creek and extended about two blocks beyond the present James Street in Bethel.

On the north side of the railroad and east of the Andrews land was 300 acres of land settled about 1770 by Joel Whitfield and later bought by Lanier Ward as it joined a tract of land already in his possession.

The third tract of land was 200 acres granted to James Catenhead in 1783. Catenhead was a school teacher. This tract reached from Smith Street in Bethel to the Larry James farm on the Tarboro Highway. It included the R. D. Whitehurst land, the Will Lewis land and the Lloyd land across the railroad. Mr. Catenhead's house was near the location of Julian Smith's house.

The first school house built in Bethel for the definite purpose of schooling was located near the Smith house and in all probability was where D. T. House, Jr.'s house is today. This was called the Catenhead School.

About 1845 Lanier Ward (great-grandfather of the writer) gave a lot for a school. This was located southeast of the present water tank.

The Lanier Ward house was located where Mr. and Mrs. Robert Weeks live. In fact, the old house is incorporated in the present dwelling.

The Andrews home (ancestors of F. L. Andrews, Mrs. Elizabeth Ben-

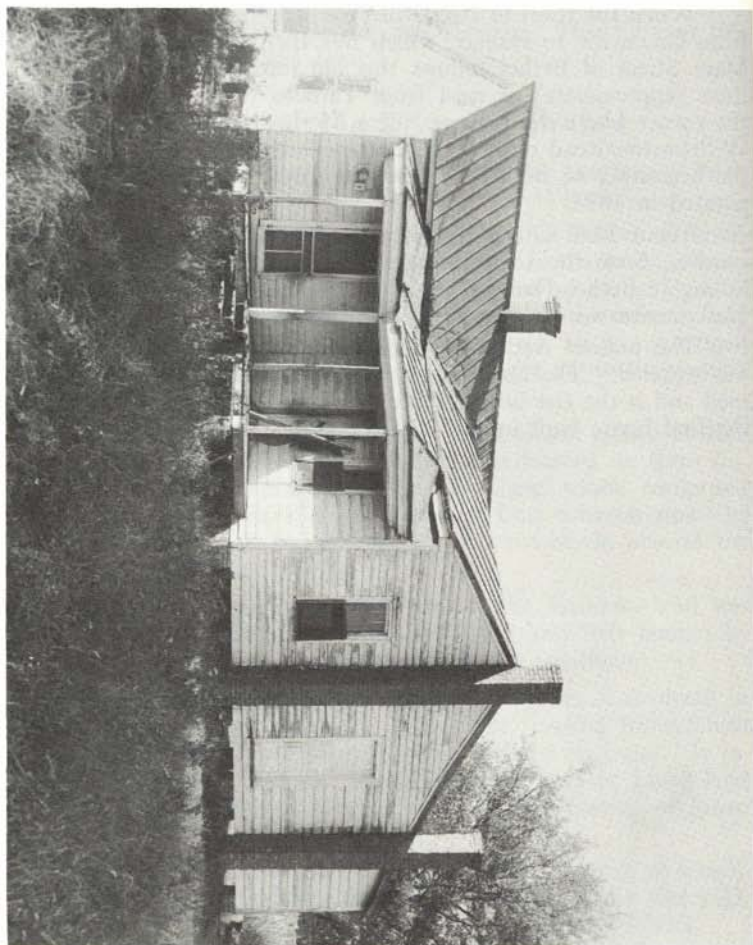
ton, W. H. Andrews, Tom Andrews, Jr., and others) was located near the water tank tower.

The western part of the Andrews land was later owned by Mrs. Lucinda Davenport. Her house stood on what is now Railroad Street near the Gentry McLawhorn house.

When the town of Greenville was settled about 1774, a road was made from Greenville to Halifax, which was then the capital of North Carolina. Main Street of Bethel follows this old road approximately. At the same time (approximate), a road from Tarboro to Williamston was built. At the corner where the present Negro Methodist Church stands, the Tarboro-Williamston Road crossed the Greenville-Halifax road. This crossroads was the beginning of Bethel. Bethel remained a crossroad until it was incorporated in 1873.

About 1840 Oliver Spain built a store at the crossroads and a house nearby. Soon the United States Government established a postoffice here calling it Bethel Post Office, after the Methodist Church on the corner. Mail service was twice a week from Greenville.

The present Andrew Whitehurst home stands where the Spain house was situated. The Spain house has been moved back facing the Big Oak road and is the last house before the water tank road is reached. This was the first house built in the then corporate limits of Bethel.



This is the Oliver Spain house, first dwelling built in corporate limits of Bethel.

SECTION V

“Remove not the ancient landmarks which thy fathers have set”—Proverbs 22, Verse 28.

OLD CHURCH DEEDS

1814 Deed for Church Lot

Book T, Page 270

This Indenture made entered into this 11th day of October in the year of one thousand eight hundred and fourteen between Warren and William D. Andrews of the State of North Carolina and County of Pitt of the one part and Richard Whitehurst, John Bryan, Charles Whitehurst, William Bryan, William Carney Trustees in Trust for the purpose herein after mentioned of the same State and County of the other part, Witnesseth that the said Warren and William D. Andrews of the first part for and in consideration of the sum of Five Dollars currency to be paid th esaid Warren and William D. Andrews paid before or at the Sealing of these presents by the Trustees of the Second part above mentioned hath given and granted, bargained and sold and do by these presents give, grant, bargain and sell unto the said Trustees of the second part above mentioned in Special Trust and to these successors in the following tract or parcel of land bounded as follows beginning on the side of the road running by Warren Andrews' from a lightwood post running along the road seventy yards near West to another part from then 70 yards near North to another part from then 70 yards nearly an East course to another part from then to the said road 70 yards nearly South and lying in the County of Pitt and State aforesaid containing 1 acre for the express purpose of a place for the erection of a meeting house thereon together with a space for its yard on which land the said Trustees of the second part doth engage if in their power to erect or cause to be erected a house thereon as a place of worship in which house the denomination of christians known by the name of Methodist shall always have the right to appoint, assemble and worship and hold these various meetings without hinderance and the said trustees of the second part and their successors in trust or a majority theirs or shall always have the power to permit ministers of other professing christians whose morals and characters they may approve to appoint, assemble and worship and hold their various meetings not incompatible with the first privileges herein granted and licensed to the Methodist ministers and members and that perpetuity of successors of trustees shall always be kept up the said trustees herein mentioned if the second part are hereby empowered and erected that when any one of the present member shall die refused to act or remove then the successors or remaining trustees shall proceed to elect some likeable who shall be a member and in fellowship in the same church if possible to fill such vacancy or recession as may happen as above and to always instruct the said person or persons hereafter to claim from time to time as shall become necessary to all intents and purposes, intent and possess the same right and privilege of the present trustees of the second part mentioned and under the same direction and restriction as these. To have and to hold the said Richard Whitehurst, John Bryan, Charles Whitehurst, William Bryan and William Carney, Trustees in trust and to these successors in office with all improvements and appurtenances to the same belonging and the said Warren and William D. Andrews for themselves, their heirs, executors and administrators doth hereby warrant and defend against all claims to the said premises.

In witness whereof we the said Warren and William D. Andrews hath hereunto set our hands and seals this day and date above mentioned.

Signed, Sealed and delivered

in presence of

Rueben Manning W

William Manning

his

Warren x Andrews (SEAL)

mark

William W. Andrews (SEAL)

Pitt County February Term 1815

This deed was exhibited into open court and proved in due form of law on oath by Ruben Manning one of the subscribing witnesses thereto ordered that it be registered.

ALEXANDER EVANS, *Clerk*

1849 Deed for Lot

Vol MM

Page 223

Wm. Andrews & George W. Andrews to Jno Whitehurst, H. P. Bryan & Others. DEED

This indenture made the 19th day of May A. D. 1849 between William Andrews and George W. Andrews of the County of Pitt of the first Part and John Whitehurst, William P. B. Bryan and James Bryan Trustees in trust for the uses and purposes hereinafter mentioned elected by that Religious Society or Congregation in the Said County and State of North Carolina known as The Society or Congregation of the Methodist Episcopal Church South in said County and State that usually meet for the purpose of Divine Worship at The Meeting house called Bethel of the second part. Witnesseth, that the said parties of the first part for and in consideration of the sum of Five Dollars to them paid by the parties of the second part before the Execution of these presents the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged have granted, bargained, sold, aliened, released and confirmed and do by these presents, grant, bargain, sell alien, release and confirm unto the said parties of the second part and their successors Trustees in trust for the uses and purposes hereinafter mentioned all the estate rights title interest and demand whatever either at law or in equity, which the said parties of the first part have of in and to all that or parcel of land lying and being in the County and State aforesaid and bounded as follows (viz)

Lying in the Northeast of Tar River, joining Robert Teel Hines land and George W. Andrews, supposed to contain one acre of land with all the improvements and appurtenances to the same belonging or in any wise pertaining to have and to hold the said piece of land with all its improvements and appurtenances, rents the said parties of the second part and their successors forever.

In trust to hold the same with all its improvements and appurtenances to and for the use and benefits of The Religious Society or Congregation and the members thereof in the said county and State that usually meet for religious worship at the premises called Bethel said acre of ground and meeting house called the Society or Congregation of the Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in The United States of America and in trust that

the house or place of worship now there on erected or that may be hereafter erected shall be to the only use and benefits of the said religious Congregation or Society and the members thereof and in the further trust and confidence that they shall at all times hereafter and forever hereafter permit such ministers and Preachers, belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church as shall from time be duly authorized by the General Conference of the ministers and Preachers of the said Methodist Episcopal Church or by the annual Conferences authorized by the said general Conference to preach and Expound God's Holy Word therein and to execute the discipline of the said church and administer The Sacraments therein and also they shall at all times forever hereafter permit all persons to assemble and meet therein for worship who shall observe the rules and discipline which from time to time may be agreed upon and adopted by the ministers and Preachers of said Church at their General Conference in The United States of America and observe the laws of the said state for preserving the peace welfare and good government and also in further trust and Confidence that as often as a vacancy shall from any cause whatever occur in the said board of trustees of if all the said Trustees should die or resign or by any means whatever all shall cease to be trustees then and in such case the said vacancy shall be from time to time and from all times filled according to the provisions of the law of the State of North Carolina. Provided that every trustee hereafter chosen shall have been one year a member of said Methodist Episcopal Church of and in The United States of America immediately preceding his being chosen to a trustee and be at least twenty one years of age. In testimony whereof we have hereto set our hands and seal, the date first herein written.

Witnesses

John H. P. Bryan
James Bryan

Wm. W. Andrews (Seal)
Geo. W. Andrews (Seal)

August Term 1849

This this deed from W. W. Andrews, & Geo. W. Andrews to John Whitehurst & others was exhibited into open court & proved in due form of Law by the oath of James Bryan one of the Subscribing witnesses thereto, Ordered to be registered.

attest

H. SHEPPARD, *clerk*

1910 Deed for Property

Book R-9, Page 533

Known all men by these presents that M. O. Blount and Florence V. Blount, his wife of Pitt County in the state of North Carolina in consideration of the sum of One Hundred and Thirty Dollars (\$130.00) the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged have granted bargained sold and released and be their presents do grant bargain sell release and convey Jas W. Bryan, S. T. Carson, C. J. Whitehurst, James W. Whitehurst and A. Ward as Trustees of the Bethel Methodist Episcopal Church South of Bethel, N. C. and their successors in office as from time to time appointed according to

the laws and usages of the Methodist Episcopal Church South or under and pursuant to the laws of this state on that tract of land situated in Pitt County and state of North Carolina and described as follows to wit:

Being lot number 18 in block D in the property situated at West Bethel, N. C. and south of the ACL Railroad which property is known as the Blount Plot of which appears of record in Book P 9, at page 50 of the public registry of Pitt County. This lot being on the south side of Pleasant Street and on the East side of Pitt Avenue extended and being 50 feet by 150 feet in size being 50 feet on Pleasant Street and 150 feet on Pitt Avenue adjoining the lands of M. O. Blount and W. R. Baker.

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the said premises above described together with all and regular rights members hereditaments and appurtenances to the same belonging or in any wise appertaining unto the said trustees and their successors and assigns forever. In trust that said premises shall be used kept unwarranted and desposed of as a place of divine worship for the use of the ministry and membership of the Methodist Episcopal Church South subject to the usage Discipline and ministerial appointment of said church as from time to time authorized and declared by the General Conference of said church and by the annual conference within whose bounds the said premises are or may be hereafter situated. When it shall become necessary or may be declared expedient by the proper authorities of the said church to sell or otherwise despose of the said bargained premises or any part thereof, they may and are hereby empowered to sell or otherwise despose of and convey the same by and through the said Trustees and their successors under and pursuant to the rules and regulations of the discipline of the said Methodist Episcopal Church South there and at that time in force fully discharged of all limitations, uses and trusts herein imposed and the grantee or purchaser shall in no event be responsible or liable for the application or reinvestment of the proceeds of such sale. The said grantors do hereby bind their executors and administrators to warrant and forever defend all and singular the said premises unto the said Trustees of the Bethel Methodist Episcopal Church South of Bethel, N. C., their successors and assigns against every person whosoever lawfully claiming on to claims the same or any part thereof. And the said grantor and his wife, the said Florence V. Blount do hereby waive and relinquish all right of dower and homestead in and to said premises. In testimony whereof the said grantors have hereunto set their hands and seals this fifth day of October A D 1910.

W. H. Woolard

W. H. Woolard

M. O. Blount (Seal)

Florence V. Blount (Seal)

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
PITT COUNTY

Be it known that on this the 7th day of November, 1910 personally came before me M. O. Blount and Florence V. Blount his wife the signers and sealers of the foregoing deed and acknowledged the same to be their own free act and deed and Florence V. Blount wife of the said M. O. Blount upon examination by me separate and apart from her said husband acknowledged that she executed the same freely and of her own accord for the purpose and interest therein expressed and without fear or compulsion

of her said husband or any other person and that she doth voluntarily assent thereto. Witness my hand and notarial seal.

N. P.
SEAL

W. H. WOOLARD
Notary Public, Pitt Co. N. C.
My Commission expires Oct. 17, 1912.

NORTH CAROLINA
PITT COUNTY

The foregoing certificate of W. H. Woolard, a Notary Public of Pitt County is adjudged to be correct. Let the instrument with the certificate be registered this November 28th 1910.

D. C. MOORE *Clerk Superior Court*

Received in office November 28, 1910 2 P. M.

W. M. MOORE, *Register of Deeds*
J. J. Harrington, DR

1920 Deed for Property

Book S-13, Page 209

WARRANTEE DEED.

Mabel Barnhill
to

Trustees of Bethel M. E. Church.

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA.
PITT COUNTY.

THIS DEED, Made this 6th day of May, 1920 by Mabel Barnhill, of Pitt County and State of North Carolina of the first part, to The Trustees of Bethel M. E. Church, of Pitt County and State of N. Carolina, of the second part;

WITNESSETH: That said Mabel Barnhill in consideration of Four Thousand and Fifty Dollars, to her paid by The Trustees of Bethel M. E. Church, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged have bargained and sold, and by these presents do bargain, sell and convey to said Trustees and their successors and a certain tract or parcel of land in Bethel Township, Pitt County, State of N. C. adjoining the lands of Mabel Barnhill, and others, bounded as follows, viz;

Beginning at corner of James and Washington St. thence East parallel and with Washington St. 150 feet to a stake and corner thence southward one hundred sixty three feet and three inches to a stake and corner, thence west with Mabel Barnhill line, to James St. thence northward one hundred sixty seven feet and six inches to the beginning, at corner of James and Washington Sts.

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD, the aforesaid tract or parcel of land and all privileges and appurtenances thereto belonging to the said Trustees of Bethel M. E. Church, and their successors heirs and assigns, to their only use and behoof forever.

And the said Mabel Barnhill, covenant to and with the said Trustees heirs and assigns, that she seized of said premises in fee, and have a right to convey the same in fee simple; that same are free from all encumbrances, and that she will warrant and defend the said title to the same against the claims of all persons whatsoever.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, The said Mabel Barnhill have hereunto set her hands and seals, the day and year first above written.

Mabel Barnhill (Seal)

NORTH CAROLINA—PITT COUNTY

I, S. T. Carson, a Notary Public, do hereby certify that Mabel Barnhill personally appeared before me this day and acknowledged the due execution of the annexed Deed of conveyance;

This 6th day of May, 1920.

S. T. Carson, N. P.

My commission expires Dec. 28, 1920
(N. P. SEAL)

NORTH CAROLINA—PITT COUNTY

The foregoing certificate of S. T. Carson of Pitt County is adjudged to be correct and sufficient. Let the instrument with the certificates be registered. Witness my hand and official seal, this 4th day of September, 1920.

B. F. Tucker, Dep. CSC.

J. C. Gaskins, *Register of Deeds*

Received in office September 4th, 1920 at 9 A.M.
(U. S. REV. \$4.00 PD)

“Mr. Harry Harles of Rocky Mount, North Carolina, Consulting Architect for the interior planning of the rebuilt church sanctuary, was kind enough to donate an ink etching of our church. It has been used on the front cover of this book. This design can be used for stationery, letter-heads and for other printing usage.”
