

CALVARY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Calvary United Methodist Church is located in Halifax County approximately four miles east of Littleton. It was founded in 1852, the year the Roanoke Conference was organized by Dr. Robert Oswald Burton. In those days the Roanoke Valley was populated with planters and small farmers. Because of the importance of the area, the Roanoke River terminal of the Raleigh and Gaston Railroad (the second oldest railroad in North Carolina) was built. Calvary Methodist Church was the only one in the area and was probably founded under the direct supervision of Bishop Francis Asbury. It is known that he traveled on horseback through this region and preached to congregations on the eastern seaboard.

The original church deed shows the property was purchased on October 16, 1852. Five dollars was the price paid for approximately one acre of land. Joshua Wilson of Halifax County sold the property to the trustees of the church: M. A. Allen, Thomas W. Harris, John King, Sanford Jenkins and Charles Skinner.

For a long time, the congregation was without a church building and they met in the homes of members, some convenient building or bush arbor. In 1854, Sanford Jenkins donated an acre of land and a bush arbor was erected.

Later a log cabin was erected and was located on the land purchased from Josh Wilson. This church was used about 17 years.

The second church building, a white frame structure was built in 1871 and was located to the right of the road leading to the present church in a forest of original pines and faced the railroad. The land for this building was donated by Mark Allen and Josh Wilson. After using this building for 52 years, it was torn down in 1923 and sold for \$100.

In 1922, a third white framed church building was started during the pastorate of Rev. N. M. Wright and was built on the site of the present church. It was finished in 1923 and used until November 9, 1943 when it burned to the ground.

In the spring of 1944, under the pastorate of Rev. H. L. Davis, the construction of the present brick structure was begun. The congregation drew up plans for the building. Many church suppers were served over a period of year to help raise money for the new church. Sometimes these suppers were served in private homes, the first being in the home of John House. Some were served in the basement of the Littleton Methodist Church. The present church building was dedicated by Bishop Peele in 1950.

The Calvary Charge with four churches - Calvary, Weavers, Corinth and Vaughn - was designated by the Rocky Mount District in the 1956 Annual Conference. It is very befitting that Calvary was selected for its name since Calvary Church is known as the mother church of Methodism in the area having been organized 26 years before the Littleton Methodist Church.

The Calvary Homemakers Club organized in 1921 played a vital role in the community. For over 30 years club members met in private homes and the public school located next to Calvary Methodist Church. The Club members educated the community in the use of improved

