

HISTORY OF ENO METHODIST CHURCH

It was fifty years ago that the people of West Hillsboro met on the second floor of the office building of the Eno Cotton Mill. These were non-denominational services according to Dr. Charles E. Maddry who preached there occasionally. In 1906 the people formed what is now known as Eno Methodist Church, named from the river which bore that name back in the 1700's when the early Methodist circuit riders rode into town to preach. Yet no Methodist organization was had in West Hillsboro until Rev. E. M. Hoyle, then pastor at Branson Memorial Methodist Church in Durham, North Carolina, was invited to preach for the congregation.

Mr. William M. Clark heard Mr. Hoyle preach a revival at Hillsboro and decided he must come out to West Hillsboro and hold a revival in the office building of the Mill. Allen Ruffin donated a small piece of ground on the South side of Eno Street after being favorably impressed with the ministry of Mr. Hoyle in leading the congregation to organize. He told the young preacher he was too smart to be in the pulpit that he ought to be a businessman. Mr. Clark continued to help the new church to get started and became one of the first members.

On February 1st, 1907, the first pastor was assigned to the new charge by Bishop A. W. Wilson, Bishop of the M. E. Church, South. The Rev. J. B. Hurley was what was then called the Presiding Elder. The first pastor's name was C. R. Canipe. Many of the early pastors proved to be outstanding and capable leaders in Methodism. They include Dr. J. M. Ormond (1912), the Rev. W. A. Rollins (1919), the Rev. D. M. Sharpe (1921), the Rev. S. F. Nicks (1923), and the Rev. F. S. Lupton (1930) among many others.

In the summer of 1908 the present frame structure was completed and became the church building. At that time it was a one-room building and was used for educational purposes as well as worship. In the same year Mr. Allen Brown contacted R. V. Miller, nationally known Bible student, to hold a class for instruction in the Scriptures. It was not until the early 1920's that additional classrooms were added to the back part of the church building.

Three of the earliest members to unite with Eno Church who are still active are Mrs. Sallie Allison, Mrs. Lena Cole and Mrs. Mary Riley.

About 1925 the Rev. Paul Root held an outstanding revival at the church. Later he was appointed dean at the Divinity School at Duke University. Strangely enough he never served in this capacity for he died shortly before taking the new post. Other outstanding revivals were held by the Rev. W. A. Rollins, the Rev. Sam Moyle and the Rev. Odell Brown.

Thirty years after the organization of Eno Church it entered a period of a great harvest of souls and renewed activity. Bishop Paul B. Kern was then residing bishop and the Rev. H. B. Porter, Presiding Elder. Over eighty people joined Eno Methodist Church between 1936 and 1940 while the Rev. H. T. Coley was pastor. The former membership roll was revised and a new record began. An active young people's group was organized and they rallied around their young pastor. Additional ground was purchased on both sides of the church allowing for adequate space for future expansion. In 1938 the church building was remodeled and moved to the rear of the lot giving it a more impressive and attractive appearance. A spiritual highlight was a revival held in the fall

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of 1939 by the Rev. John Cline. Attendance in Sunday School reached a peak of 125.

This zest and vigor was stunned by the untimely death of Mr. Coley in August 1940 and for a few months the church was without a regular pastor. Then in November W. J. Neese was appointed pastor. The church had slightly over 140 members and operated on a total budget of some \$1,100.00. Palmer's Grove Methodist Church was added to Eno Church forming the Eno Charge, composed of the two churches. It was designated as a "student appointment" and supplied by students from the Divinity School of Duke University.

In 1948 the need was pointed out by the Pastor, the Rev. W. C. Feltman, for a parsonage and during his first year the house was completed. It was a brick-veneer structure evaluated at \$12,000.00. Although most of the former members had moved away or become absorbed into the organization of other churches of other denominations in West Hillsboro the church continued to add new members and grow financially.

In 1956 a new sign was erected by the Rev. C. F. Grill commemorating the 50th. Anniversary of the organization of Eno Church. On the sign next to the year of organization is a picture of the Circuit Rider commemorating the historic figure who rode the North Carolina Circuit over 150 years ago along with those memorable words of John Wesley, "The world is my parish." This is the symbol of this grownig church whose budget now exceeds \$5,000.00. The same year was marked by the completion of the debt on the parsonage and a dedication service led by the District Superintendent, Dr. W. L. Clegg. On May 27th. a 50th. Anniversary was celebrated memorializing all the past achievements and dedicating to the future the same spirit of growth which had been accomplished. The history was compiled from old records and from members and friends of the church and written by the Rev. C. F. Grill who was pastor at that time.