

SOME INTERESTING FACTS OF FIFTH AVENUE METHODIST CHURCH, TOGETHER WITH A COMPLETE
ROSTER OF ITS PASTORS

Fifth Avenue Methodist Church was organized in 1847 by Abel M. Chreitzberg who was then pastor of Front Street (now Grace) Methodist Church. From 1847 to November 1853, the congregation was served by pastors from Front Street Church. The appointment "Fifth Street" first appeared in the conference minutes for the conference held in November 1853. Wilmington was in the South Carolina Conference until November 1850; hence the appointments listed prior to that time are South Carolina Conference appointments. The Reverend L. S. Burkhead, D. D., was the first pastor who served this church from the North Carolina Conference. The Reverend Abram Weaver was the first pastor of this church after it was made an individual appointment separate from Front Street. For the first two years of its organization its meetings were held as a prayer group in private homes in the Castle and Church Streets vicinities. It is quite probable that even during this period the society worshiped regularly in some designated room improvised for a religious service.

In 1849, on a site of land on Fifth Street between ~~Man~~ and Church Streets, donated by Mr. Miles Costen, the first permanent structure was erected as a house of worship for this congregation. This was a simple one room frame building, having a balcony at the back and on either side running the full length of the church. This building was repaired during the pastorate of the Reverend J. M. Rhodes, December 6, 1875-December 5, 1877; and during the pastorate of the Reverend D. H. Tuttle, December 2, 1884 to December 4, 1888, it was remodeled and enlarged. The present brick structure was started in June 1889 and was under construction for about one year. Thus the original building, with its enlargement, served a period of forty years and the present building has served for fifty years. After many financial difficulties, the church was paid for and was dedicated during the pastorate of the Reverend J. H. Hall who served from December 6, 1898 to December 8, 1902. Our splendid educational building was begun in 1921 and was completed three or four years later.

During the history of this church its influence has not only measurably contributed to the moral and spiritual welfare of this city but it has reached to the ends of the earth. For it was in this church in 1881, under the preaching of the venerable and beloved Reverend T. Page Ricaud (familiarily and affectionately known as "Uncle Ricaud"), that Charlie Soong was converted. Soong had come to the port of Wilmington as a member of the crew of the U. S. Revenue Cutter Colfax. After the conversion of young Soong to the christian faith, Mr. Ricaud became interested in helping him to get an education. By the help of Col. Julian S. Carr of Durham, N. C., and others, he entered Trinity College. In addition to his training there he also attended Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tenn. After leaving Vanderbilt, Mr. Soong returned to his native China where he married a christian wife and they established a christian home. The children born to their union have distinguished themselves as servants of modern China and of the Christ who knows no color line. One of the children of this illustrious family of noble sons and daughters is Madame Chiang Kai Shek, wife of the present president of China. Therefore, the tribute that has often been paid to this church, that it has made the most unique and distinctive contribution to world christian missions, has much justification.

During the ninety-two years of its existence this church has had fifty pastors, fourteen of whom are still living; of these fourteen eight are in the active pastorate and six hold the superannuate relation. The superannuates are: Reverend J. T. Gibbs, who came to this church sixty-five years ago this coming December and who now lives at Warrenton, N. C.; Reverend J. M. Rhodes, who came to this church sixty-four years ago this coming December and who now lives in Bartow, Fla.; Reverend F. M. Shamburger, who came here thirty-seven years ago this December and who lives in Oxford, N. C.; Reverend G. T. Adams, who became pastor here twenty-nine years ago in December and who lives in Sanford, N. C.; Reverend J. H. Shore, who was assigned here twenty-four years ago in December and now lives at Roxboro, N. C.; and Reverend J. H. McCracken, who began his pastorate here twenty-three years ago in December and now lives in Durham, N. C.

The following is as complete and accurate roster of pastors of this church as is obtainable from data available in conference journals, church and quarterly conference record books, ledgers of church membership, copies of The Atlantic Methodist for July 6, 13, 20, 27, 1892, Historical Papers of the North Carolina Conference Historical Society and the Western North Carolina Conference Historical Society published in 1925, and from members of this church whose memory goes back for seventy-five years or more. That there are some inaccuracies relative to dates and names is within the realm of possibility. However, it is believed that this list is the most complete and accurate of any yet published.

| | <u>PASTOR</u> | <u>PRESIDING ELDER</u> |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1847 | Abel M. Chreitzberg | Charles Betts |
| 1848 | Abel M. Chreitzberg | Charles Betts |
| | W. C. Parsons | |
| 1849 | William Crook | Charles Betts |
| | S. H. Brown | |
| 1850 | H. A. C. Walker | N. Talley |
| | J. T. Munds | |
| Nov. 13, 1850 to Nov. 25, 1851 | L. S. Burkhead | W. Barringer |
| Nov. 25, 1851 to Nov. 10, 1852 | W. H. Bobbitt | James Read |
| Nov. 10, 1852 to Nov. 9, 1853 | W. H. Bobbitt | Robert I. Carson |
| Nov. 9, 1853 to Nov. 14, 1854 | Abram Weaver | Robert I. Carson |
| Nov. 14, 1854 to Nov. 22, 1855 | T. Page Ricaud | D. B. Nicholson |
| Nov. 22, 1855 to Nov. 20, 1856 | T. Page Ricaud | D. B. Nicholson |
| Nov. 20, 1856 to Dec. 2, 1857 | Joel W. Tucker | D. B. Nicholson |
| Dec. 2, 1857 to Dec. 18, 1858 | J. E. Mann | D. B. Nicholson |
| Dec. 18, 1858 to Dec. 21, 1859 | Thomas W. Guthrie | C. F. Deems |
| Dec. 21, 1859 to Dec. 11, 1860 | Joseph Wheeler | C. F. Deems |
| Dec. 11, 1860 to Dec. 9, 1861 | Joseph Wheeler | C. F. Deems |
| Dec. 9, 1861 to Dec. 3, 1862 | Joseph Wheeler | C. F. Deems |
| Dec. 3, 1862 to Dec. 7, 1863 | R. S. Moran | D. B. Nicholson |
| Dec. 7, 1863 to Dec. 1864 | Simoon D. Peeler | D. B. Nicholson |
| Dec. 1864 to Dec. 1865 | Simoon D. Peeler | D. B. Nicholson |
| Dec. 1865 to Nov. 12, 1866 | Samuel Pearce | L. S. Burkhead |
| | J. W. Wheeler | |
| Nov. 12, 1866 to Dec. 3, 1867 | J. C. Thomas | L. S. Burkhead |
| Dec. 3, 1867 to Dec. 7, 1868 | Simoon D. Peeler | L. S. Burkhead |
| Dec. 7, 1868 to Nov. 30, 1869 | J. W. Robotham | L. S. Burkhead |
| Nov. 30, 1869 to Nov. 29, 1870 | Franklin H. Wood | William Closs |
| Nov. 29, 1870 to Dec. 1871 | A. A. Boshamer | William Closs |
| Dec. 1871 to Dec. 9, 1872 | C. W. Warren | William Closs |
| | James Willson | |
| Dec. 9, 1872 to Dec. 16, 1873 | W. N. Conoley | William Closs |
| Dec. 16, 1873 to Dec. 7, 1874 | W. N. Conoley | W. S. Black |
| | Franklin H. Wood | |
| Dec. 7, 1874 to Dec. 6, 1875 | J. T. Gibbs | W. S. Black |
| Dec. 6, 1875 to Dec. 5, 1876 | J. M. Rhodes | W. S. Black |
| Dec. 5, 1876 to Dec. 5, 1877 | J. M. Rhodes | W. S. Black |
| Dec. 5, 1877 to Dec. 2, 1878 | B. R. Hall | L. S. Burkhead |
| Dec. 2, 1878 to Dec. 8, 1879 | B. R. Hall | L. S. Burkhead |
| Dec. 8, 1879 to Dec. 6, 1880 | T. Page Ricaud | L. S. Burkhead |
| Dec. 6, 1880 to Nov. 28, 1881 | T. Page Ricaud | L. S. Burkhead |
| Nov. 28, 1881 to Dec. 12, 1882 | T. Page Ricaud | R. O. Burton |
| Dec. 12, 1882 to Dec. 4, 1883 | T. Page Ricaud | R. O. Burton |
| Dec. 4, 1883 to Dec. 2, 1884 | W. I. Hull | W. H. Bobbitt |
| Dec. 2, 1884 to Dec. 2, 1885 | D. H. Tuttle | P. J. Carraway |
| Dec. 2, 1885 to Dec. 7, 1886 | D. H. Tuttle | P. J. Carraway |
| Dec. 7, 1886 to Dec. 6, 1887 | D. H. Tuttle | T. W. Guthrie |
| Dec. 6, 1887 to Dec. 4, 1888 | D. H. Tuttle | T. W. Guthrie |

| <u>DATE OF PASTORATE</u> | <u>PASTOR</u> | <u>PRESIDING ELDER</u> |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Dec. 4, 1888 to Dec. 4, 1889 | R. C. Beaman | F. D. Swindell |
| Dec. 4, 1889 to Dec. 15, 1890 | R. C. Beaman | F. D. Swindell |
| Dec. 15, 1890 to Nov. 30, 1891 | R. C. Beaman | F. D. Swindell |
| Nov. 30, 1891 to Dec. 19, 1892 | L. L. Nash | F. D. Swindell |
| Dec. 19, 1892 to Dec. 11, 1893 | L. L. Nash | W. S. Rone |
| Dec. 11, 1893 to Dec. 10, 1894 | L. L. Nash | W. S. Rone |
| Dec. 10, 1894 to Dec. 16, 1895 | W. L. Cunninggin | W. S. Rone |
| Dec. 16, 1895 to Dec. 14, 1896 | W. L. Cunninggin | W. S. Rone |
| Dec. 14, 1896 to Dec. 6, 1897 | W. L. Cunninggin | R. C. Beaman |
| Dec. 6, 1897 to Dec. 6, 1898 | W. L. Cunninggin | R. C. Beaman |
| Dec. 6, 1898 to Dec. 11, 1899 | J. H. Hall | R. F. Bumpas |
| Dec. 11, 1899 to Dec. 10, 1900 | J. H. Hall | R. F. Bumpas |
| Dec. 10, 1900 to Dec. 9, 1901 | J. H. Hall | R. B. John |
| Dec. 9, 1901 to Dec. 8, 1902 | J. H. Hall | R. B. John |
| Dec. 8, 1902 to Nov. 30, 1903 | F. M. Shamburger | R. B. John |
| Nov. 30, 1903 to Dec. 5, 1904 | Alpheus McCullen | R. B. John |
| Dec. 5, 1904 to Dec. 4, 1905 | Alpheus McCullen | M. Bradshaw |
| Dec. 4, 1905 to Dec. 10, 1906 | Alpheus McCullen | M. Bradshaw |
| Dec. 10, 1906 to Dec. 8, 1907 | K. D. Holmes | W. L. Cunninggin |
| Dec. 8, 1907 to Dec. 14, 1908 | K. D. Holmes | W. L. Cunninggin |
| Dec. 14, 1908 to Nov. 29, 1909 | K. D. Holmes | W. L. Cunninggin |
| Nov. 29, 1909 to Dec. 5, 1910 | K. D. Holmes | W. L. Cunninggin |
| Dec. 5, 1910 to Nov. 27, 1911 | G. T. Adams | N. H. D. Wilson |
| Nov. 27, 1911 to Dec. 2, 1912 | G. T. Adams | N. H. D. Wilson |
| Dec. 2, 1912 to Dec. 8, 1913 | G. T. Adams | L. E. Thompson |
| Dec. 8, 1913 to Nov. 23, 1914 | G. T. Adams | L. E. Thompson |
| Nov. 23, 1914 to Dec. 6, 1915 | A. J. Parker | L. E. Thompson |
| Dec. 6, 1915 to Dec. 11, 1916 | J. H. Shore | L. E. Thompson |
| Dec. 11, 1916 to Dec. 10, 1917 | J. H. McCracken | J. H. Shore |
| Dec. 10, 1917 to Dec. 16, 1918 | J. H. McCracken | J. H. Shore |
| Dec. 16, 1918 to Nov. 24, 1919 | J. H. McCracken | J. H. Shore |
| Nov. 24, 1919 to Nov. 22, 1920 | J. H. McCracken | J. H. Shore |
| Nov. 22, 1920 to Nov. 20, 1921 | G. Stanley Frazer | J. M. Daniel |
| Nov. 20, 1921 to Nov. 20, 1922 | O. W. Dowd | J. M. Daniel |
| Nov. 20, 1922 to Nov. 19, 1923 | A. L. Ormond | J. M. Daniel |
| Nov. 19, 1923 to Nov. 16, 1924 | A. L. Ormond | J. M. Daniel |
| Nov. 16, 1924 to Nov. 16, 1925 | W. C. Martin | H. A. Humble |
| Nov. 16, 1925 to Nov. 15, 1926 | W. C. Martin | H. A. Humble |
| Nov. 15, 1926 to Nov. 13, 1927 | W. C. Martin | H. M. North |
| Nov. 13, 1927 to Nov. 4, 1928 | W. C. Martin | H. M. North |
| Nov. 4, 1928 to Nov. 11, 1929 | D. E. Barnhardt | H. M. North |
| Nov. 11, 1929 to Nov. 24, 1930 | D. E. Barnhardt | H. M. North |
| Nov. 24, 1930 to Nov. 22, 1931 | L. M. Hall | W. C. Martin |
| Nov. 22, 1931 to Nov. 28, 1932 | L. M. Hall | W. C. Martin |
| Nov. 28, 1932 to Nov. 27, 1933 | L. M. Hall | W. C. Martin |
| Nov. 27, 1933 to Nov. 25, 1934 | L. M. Hall | L. B. Jones |
| Nov. 25, 1934 to Nov. 25, 1935 | H. L. Hondricks | L. B. Jones |
| Nov. 25, 1935 to Nov. 23, 1936 | H. L. Hondricks | W. A. Cade |
| Nov. 23, 1936 to Nov. 21, 1937 | John Cline | W. A. Cade |
| Nov. 21, 1937 to Nov. 21, 1938 | John Cline | W. A. Cade |
| Nov. 21, 1938 to Nov. 13, 1939 | C. D. Barclift | W. A. Cade |

Nine of these pastors stayed four years. Fully 25% of the fifty pastors served as presiding elders of some district in the conference. Mr. Ricaud and Mr. Moran are buried in Wilmington. A few of the first pastors went to the South Carolina Conference when the territory was divided; and several others went to the Western North Carolina Conference when that section of the state was set off from this conference in 1889.

The seven former pastors who are still in active service are serving charges as follows: Reverend G. Stanley Frazer, St. Francis Street Methodist Church, Mobile, Ala., and lives at Flo Claire, Mobile, Ala.; Reverend O. W. Dowd, Oxford Methodist Church, Oxford, N. C.; Reverend W. C. Martin, Hay Street Methodist Church, Fayetteville, N. C.; Reverend D. E. Earnhardt, Carthage Methodist Church, Carthage, N. C.; Reverend L. M. Hall, Divine Street Methodist Church, Dunn, N.C.; Reverend H. L. Hendricks, First Methodist Church, Laurinburg, N. C.; and Reverend John Cline, Branson Memorial Methodist Church, Durham, N. C.

Of the thirteen former pastors still living, four, the Reverends J. H. McCracken, F. M. Shamburger, O. W. Dowd, and J. H. Shore, attended some service during the week of our celebration and preached for us. Of the other nine, a communication was received from eight of them in which they expressed their regret at being unable to attend and sent their love and best wishes to the church. The following excerpts are brief quotations from their several letters:

"I gratefully appreciate being so pleasantly remembered after a pastorate of sixty-five years ago. I am now in my 92nd year and cannot undertake to render public service. I still greatly love Fifth Street Church and pray that the divine blessing may be upon you all."

J. T. Gibbs

"I shall not be able to be with you on the occasion of your celebration - this I regret more than I can tell you. I shall be with you in spirit, praying that the occasion may prove a great spiritual blessing to all. Blessings on all the good people of dear old Fifth Avenue."

G. T. Adams

"I am deeply grateful to you for your invitation to be with you on your anniversary occasion. I only wish it were possible for me to accept ---- I recall with the greatest pleasure my residence in Wilmington, and association with the splendid people of Fifth Avenue Church. It was indeed a very happy year. I have often felt that that congregation gave about as much evidence of faith and courage and planning for the future as any group I have ever served. I send sincere regards to the members and any who may remember me."

G. Stanley Frazer

"You have no idea how happy I would be to go back to dear old Fifth Avenue Church and preach, but I find it impossible. I am working day and night trying to prepare for the entertainment of the Annual Conference with a 40% increase over last year, and I cannot be away from here until this job is completed. I hope you will have a great celebration. A more loyal congregation cannot be found in Methodism."

W. C. Martin

"I am very sorry that I cannot be with you on October 26. On that date I am preaching in Henderson in a revival. Please accept my thanks."

D. E. Earnhardt

"I thank you for your invitation. I would like to have a part on the program you mention, but I suspect that I had better decline, since I was away from my work this summer for almost five weeks. I send my heartiest good wishes to all."

L.M. Hall

"Wish I could be with you and the good people of Fifth Ave. for the celebration, but owing to previous engagements, it will be impossible." H.L. Hendricks

H. L. Hendricks

"I thank you for your invitation to participate in the services. I hope to visit Fifth Ave. some day again --- I should appreciate it if you would give my expressed love and appreciation to my friends there."

John Cline

Owing to infirmity the Reverend J. M. Rhodes was not able to send greetings.