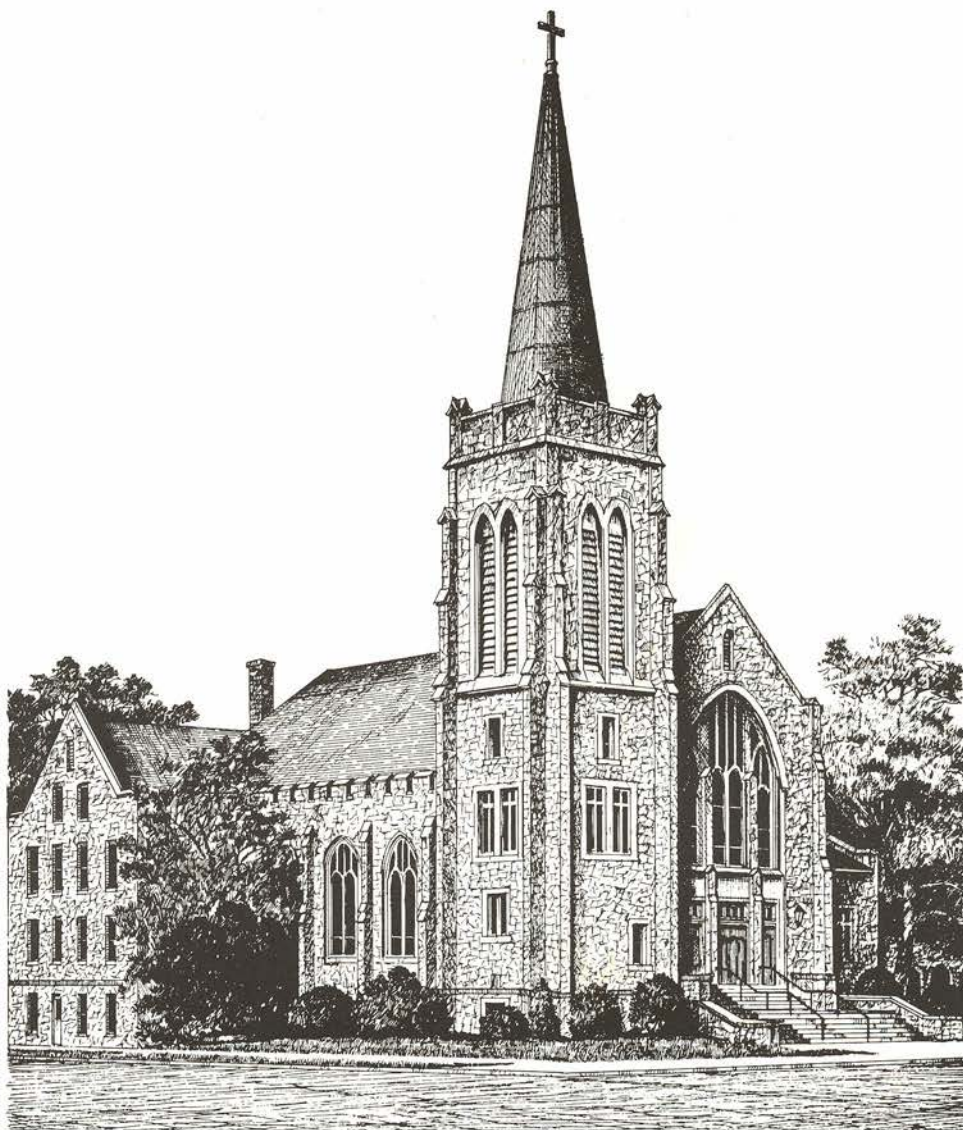


# 125 Years of Methodism in Henderson

1854-1979



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

HENDERSON, N.C.

**In Memory of**  
**Mrs. Julia Thomas Gary**  
**1895-1978**

*This history of Methodism in Henderson is published in memory of Julia Thomas Gary (Mrs. Richard C. Gary), a member of this congregation for more than 80 years. Mrs. Gary is especially remembered for her effective leadership in the Woman's Society of Christian Service of which she was treasurer and president, and in the Wesleyan Service Guild of which she was first conference secretary. She was a member of the Administrative Board and a frequent teacher of various Sunday School classes, and regularly occupied a seat in the front pew of the church each Sunday.*

*The Charge Conference of First United Methodist Church commissioned the preparation of a printed history as a part of the observance of the church's 125th anniversary. Dr. Julia Thomas Gary, Dean of Agnes Scott College, Decatur, Georgia attended the anniversary celebration and graciously offered to finance this publication as an appropriate way to honor her mother, a pioneer of Methodism in Henderson.*

**Credits**

The members of First United Methodist Church express their thanks to the saints who have given us so goodly a heritage; to George T. Blackburn, II for writing a documented history of Methodism in Vance County; to Jasper B. Hicks for writing a paper on the Methodist Union; to Samuel D. McMillan, Jr. for his research and editing; to Miss Karen Hale for her typing of articles for this history; to Mrs. Sandra C. Hilderbrandt for typing the manuscript; to William E. Hilderbrandt for his proof reading; and to Dr. Julia T. Gary for her continued interest in our church and her generous memorial gift which financed the printing of this history.

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## THE MISSION OF FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The Purpose and Mission of First United Methodist Church, Henderson, Is...

to provide a setting  
where the People of God may gather  
for worship and celebration

to be a center  
where children, youth and adults  
may encounter a variety of learning and growing experiences  
which will equip them to grow in Christlikeness

to inspire members of the Body of Christ  
to be good stewards  
of their time, energy, ability, possessions, and influence

to create a fellowship  
where love abounds  
and where mutual support may be experienced

to mold this congregation  
into one committed to Christ in every way  
and committed to ministry in His name

to make us sensitive as Christian Citizens  
to community needs, national issues, and world concerns

to motivate us to respond  
as a caring community and compassionate individuals

to develop a base station  
from which Christians are deployed  
into the community and the world  
to witness for Christ  
and to minister to all God's children in the name of Christ

to help spread the good news of Christ  
throughout the world.

--The Council on Ministries  
First United Methodist Church  
Henderson, North Carolina  
August 10, 1978

--The Administrative Board  
First United Methodist Church  
Henderson, North Carolina  
September 7, 1978



**PASTORS SERVING  
FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
HENDERSON, N.C. 1854 - 1979**

1854	Junius P. Moore
1855	P.H. Joyner
1856-1857	John Tillett
1858	Benjamin F. Long
1859	
1860-1861	Lemon Shell
1862-1864	James Reid
1865	
1866-1867	Ira T. Wyche
1868-1871	Henry H. Gibbons
1872-1875	Augustus Boshanmer
1876	Junius P. Moore
1877	Robert O. Burton
1878-1881	Lucien J. Holden
1882-1885	Joseph J. Renn
1886-1889	J.D. Arnold
1890	Franklin Bishop
1891-1894	W.L. Cunningham
1895-1896	Milton D. Hix
1897-1900	Alpheus McCullen
1901	M.H. Tuttle
1902-1903	J.D. Bundy
1904-1906	L.L. Nash
1907-1910	Rufus C. Craven
1911-1912	W.R. Royal
1912-1916	Daniel H. Tuttle
1914-1917	Rufus C. Beaman
1918-1921	L.E. Thompson
1922-1925	T.G. Vickers
1926-1928	H.B. Proctor

1929-1930	William Christian Martin
1930-1934	D.E. (Ed) Earnhardt
1935	Marvin Culberth
1936-1939	R.E. Brown
1940-1942	B.C. Reavis
1943-1945	Hiram K. King
1946-1948	Chancie D. Barclift
1949-1952	William Stanley Potter
1952-1954	Allen P. Brantley
1954-1958	A.S. Parker
1958-1965	Warren Bernard Petteway
1965-1969	Dermont J. Reid
1969-1973	John L. Joyce
1973-1977	M. Dewey Tyson
1977-	Samuel Duncan McMillan, Jr.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PASTORS SERVING  
THE METHODIST PROTESTANT CHURCH  
HENDERSON, N.C. 1881 - 1940**

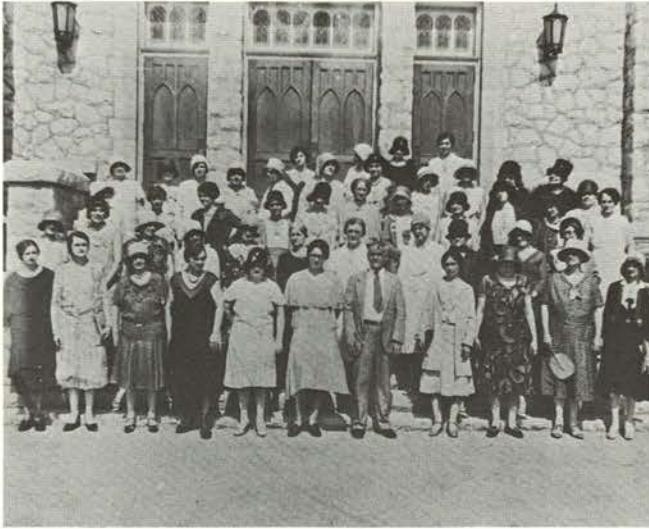
S.W. Cole	J.D. Williams
T.J. Ogburn	S.W. Taylor
T.M. Johnson	J.E. Prichard
J.S. Williams	R.A. Hunter
W.F. Kennett	L.W. Geringer
A.G. Dixon	Luther Medlin
R.M. Andrews	T.J. Whitehead in 1940 at time of merger.

**DIRECTORS OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION** who have served our church include: Walter Thompson, Louse Sessoms, Mildred Whitner Auman, Hazel Copeland, Mary Beth Joyner, Peggy Jean Thomason, Margaret Allen, Carolyn Wilkerson Cook, Betty Jean Coile Hicks, Carolyn Buchanan Farmer, and Peggy Faircloth Jones.

**ASSOCIATE MINISTERS** who have served our church include: R.D. Daniel, Gene Jester, Walter W. Gaskins, Jr., H. Edgar Moore, Robert K. Smith, and Joseph C. Tuttle.

**HENDERSON HOST TO CONFERENCE:** In 1904, 1930, and 1946 the N.C. Conference met in the M.E. Church, South. In 1887, 1901, 1911, and 1922 the Annual Conference of the M.P. Church met in Henderson.





**Harry Whitmore and Women's Class, 1930**



**Men's Bible Class, 1938**



**Whitmore - Wesley Class, 1979**



**Men's Bible Class, 1979**



**Kindergarten Class, 1979**



**Administrative Board, 1979**



# HISTORY OF FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

## I.

### DEVELOPMENT OF METHODISM IN THE VANCE COUNTY AREA 1780 - 1842

Prior to formation of the Methodist Episcopal Church at the Baltimore Conference of December 1784, Methodism existed as an unrecognized adjunct of the Established Church of England (the Episcopal Church). Bodies of Methodists were referred to as "Societies" rather than as "congregations" or "churches" and often met in buildings which regularly housed congregations of the Established Church--not so much as a result of cooperation of the Episcopal clergy as due to the more or less public status of Episcopal churches whose buildings in colonial America were generally raised by public revenue.

The number of or extent to which such Methodist Societies had developed prior to 1780 in the area which now constitutes Vance County and its immediate vicinity eludes documentation. But, in that year, when Francis Asbury,<sup>1</sup> the great circuit rider, made his first visit to our area, there were already a number of societies meeting either in homes of the members or in chapels of the Established Church. Asbury's first visit is recorded in his journal entry for June 23, 1780:

Friday, 23. I have peace, the Lord is my portion; this was a day of fasting; I rode fifteen miles, preached, prayed, and sung near two hours; ate a little about four o'clock, and preached at Nutbush Creek Chapel (a little log house, about twenty-five feet long and twenty wide), to about one hundred and fifty people; here I found a broken society. rode home with Dr. King; his wife was in society. I slept in peace, and rose about five o'clock; my heart is with God! Glory be to thee, O Lord! I had too mean an opinion of Carolina; it is a much better country, and the people live much better than I expected from the information given me.<sup>2</sup>

The Nutbush Creek Chapel referred to by Asbury in this entry was, originally at least, located about a half-mile to a mile north of Williamsboro in Vance County and near the Roanoke River. According to S. T. Peace, this building, a Church of England house, had been constructed in 1757 by the Lewis family and was moved in 1772 to the site it presently occupies at the Williamsboro crossroad as St. John's Episcopal Church.<sup>3</sup> This identification of Nutbush Creek Chapel with the building of St. John's seems unlikely though not impossible. Asbury's description of the chapel as a "little log house about twenty-five feet long and twenty wide" does not indicate a building of such construction as would have been worth the effort of removal. Furthermore, the dimensions--twenty-five by twenty feet--do not correspond to the dimensions of St. John's which, from its architectural style, had almost certainly assumed its present form by 1780. It seems more likely that only the congregation moved in 1772 after the present building had been completed and that from that date the humbler Nutbush Creek Chapel, retaining its name from custom, passed to the use of the Methodist society.



The next two days' entries complete the record of Asbury's first visit to Vance:

Saturday, 24. Though the weather was extremely hot, I, yet weak in body, rode to Col. Edmund Taylor's; and at the schoolhouse spoke to about seventy people, on 1 Peter IV, 18. Afterward was kindly entertained at Col. Taylor's: they were for ordinances here, though not heated.

Sunday, 25. Rode six miles to the Tabernacle; about four hundred people, rich and poor, attended; had very little liberty in speaking--the people very insensible. I think these people must be awakened by judgments, for it appears the Gospel will not do it. I spoke near two hours to little purpose; held a love feast; all the friends were stirred up. Then rode eight miles, lodged over Nutbush Creek at brother Reeves's.<sup>4</sup> I am kept in peace, but felt much ashamed for my unfaithfulness.

Col. Edmund Taylor mentioned in Asbury's entry for June 24, 1780 is cited by the editor<sup>5</sup> of Asbury's Journal as having lived "on Tar River, probably in Vance County."<sup>6</sup> He was born in 1723 and died in 1808 survived by his wife and nine children.<sup>6</sup> The exact location of his home is unclear but the Taylor family figures prominently in the history of Salem Church<sup>7</sup> (located on the Old Oxford Road near the Vance-Granville line)<sup>8</sup> which is traditionally cited as the oldest Methodist congregation in our area.<sup>8</sup> Taylor was the<sup>9</sup> most frequently mentioned host of Asbury in the Vance-Granville-Warren area<sup>9</sup> and is referred to by Bishop Thomas Coke as "a sincere friend and brother."<sup>10</sup>

The Tabernacle Church referred to in the entry for June 25, 1780 is probably to be identified with Tabernacle Methodist Episcopal Church located about two miles north of Townsville.<sup>11</sup> The size of his audience, four hundred people, indicates the attraction exercised by Asbury's preaching abilities for he notes in the next entry that the circuit preachers have only twenty souls to hear them as a rule.<sup>12</sup> The charismatic element of Asbury's ministry is what is referred to by his use of the term "liberty." This was "liberty in the spirit," a free and uninhibited preaching resulting from emotional inspiration that may or may not be attended by an open and receptive congregation.

From the Tabernacle, Asbury rode north into Mecklenburg County, Virginia then descended through Warren County to the southern end of Franklin and re-entered Vance just east of Kittrell, on July 10, 1780. His work of that date is described in the following entry:

Monday, 10. Through heat and for want of retirement, I suffer loss; but bless God for health and faith. I made my journey to Roger Jones's. About sixty people; God was with us; the people spoke of the goodness of the Lord.<sup>13</sup>

This meeting is generally accepted as the founding date<sup>14</sup> of the congregation which eventually erected Plank Chapel Methodist Church.<sup>14</sup> The home of Roger Jones still stands and was formerly inhabited by the late J. Bayard Allen. From



Vance, Asbury proceeded west through Granville to Wake, Chatham and Orange Counties then north to Virginia.

The next of the great leaders of early Methodism to record a visit in our area was the Rev. Jesse Lee (d. 1816) who eventually became the founder of Methodism in New England and the author of the first history of American Methodism.<sup>15</sup> Lee, a native of Prince George County, Virginia records the following entry in his journal for August 16-17, 1783:

I attended a quarterly meeting at the Tabernacle, Roan Oak [sic] circuit. The first day we had two sermons, and the next day we had a lively love-feast. There I preached, J. O'Kelly<sup>16</sup> preached and J. Easter exhorted. It was indeed a day of the Lord's power and many souls were comforted. One young man was awakened by the sermon I preached who afterwards became a travelling preacher.<sup>17</sup>

These journal entries of these two circuit preachers are the only documentation of the Methodist societies in Vance prior to organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church as an independent denomination.

In December of 1784, Thomas Coke, dispatched to America by John Wesley to serve as "superintendent" of the Methodists, convened in Baltimore what is generally referred to as the Christmas Conference. This conference of Methodist ministers established the Methodist Episcopal Church thus creating an ecclesiastical organization openly separated from the Established Church. Coke and Asbury were elected bishops, and the conference took one further significant step requiring that all Methodists free their slaves in order to retain membership in the church.<sup>18</sup> The strict position taken by the church with respect to the issue of slavery was in deference to the radical position of Bishop Coke himself.

Following the Christmas Conference, Coke travelled down to northeastern North Carolina where he expressed his anti-slavery position to several prominent individual ministers. But, on April 1, 1785 as he moved westward into the north central counties (in the area now including Vance) he began openly denouncing the institution and demanding liberation of the slaves.<sup>19</sup> In Vance County, Coke preached at the Nutbush Presbyterian Church (near Townesville) and stayed that night at the home of Edmund O. Taylor. His journal describes Taylor as "overjoyed at our late change"<sup>20</sup> presumably regarding establishment of the separate church.

On April 19, 1785 Coke arrived at the home of Major Green Hill, one mile south of Louisburg, where he was met by Bishop Asbury, Rev. Jesse Lee and a number of other Methodist ministers.<sup>21</sup> On April 20, the ministers were convened as the First Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America. The question of slavery immediately became the center of controversy.

In some respects it is particularly significant that our area was the host of this original debate on the subject of slavery. By 1790 the belt of counties running from Granville to the Albemarle Sound was the most heavily slave-



populated section of North Carolina.<sup>22</sup> Asbury had commented in his journal on the condition of the slaves during his first visit to our area. In the Haw Tree area of Warren County (which borders Vance) Asbury recorded on June 27, 1780:

There are many things that are painful to me, but cannot yet be removed, especially slave-keeping and its attendant circumstances. The Lord will certainly hear the cries of the oppressed, naked, starving creatures. O, my God! think on this land.<sup>23</sup>

Asbury's attitude toward slavery--an evil that "cannot yet be removed"--was shared by the Rev. Jesse Lee who in consequence became embroiled with Bishop Coke over the issue at the Green Hill conference:

The hostility to slavery was very general among preachers of early Methodism, but Dr. Coke opposed it with so much zeal, not to say imprudent zeal, that he stirred up antagonism almost everywhere he went in Virginia and North Carolina. His manliness and courage are more to be admired than his wisdom. Mr. Lee mildly, but firmly, opposed Dr. Coke's views. He advocated a more prudent policy. Coke thought by this that Lee was friendly to the idea of slavery, and made this as an objection to the passage of Lee's character. But Dr. Coke saw his mistake, and soon "made an apology which was satisfactory," and the breach was healed.<sup>24</sup>

The issue was resolved for a time at the next conference held on June 1, 1785 in Baltimore where the rule on slavery was relaxed on account of the great opposition it had received in the new circuits.<sup>25</sup>

There are two ironies of the Green Hill debate on slavery. The first was that Major Hill, the host of the conference, was himself an extensive slaveholder.<sup>26</sup> The second irony was that Jesse Lee, the moderate on the slavery issue, was subsequently father of Methodism in New England where rigorous anti-slavery views among his converts subsequently split the church north and south in 1844.

It was fortunate for the early growth of Methodism in our area that the slavery issue was debated here first in the 1780's, prior to the hardening of the Southern position in the 1830's, and then was faced by the church again in the early 1840's after the secession of the Methodist Protestants (who tended not to be slaveholders). Had Coke travelled the same circuit in 1835 he travelled in 1785 preaching against slavery, he would have never made it as far as Louisburg and Methodism would never have had an opportunity to take root in this area.

Our area also experienced the early controversy over episcopal organization of the church. The leader of the controversy was James O'Kelly whose activities in the vicinity of Vance County are recorded in the journals of both Lee and Asbury.<sup>26</sup> O'Kelly opposed the control of church governance by the bishops, advocating instead a council compound of two-thirds of the ministers to govern the church. When this proposal was defeated in the quadrennial conference of 1792, O'Kelly withdrew and organized the Republican



Methodist Church in 1793.<sup>27</sup> Dr. Larry Tise has remarked in an article on Methodism during this period the bond between the anti-episcopal movement led by O'Kelly and the then current anti-federalist sentiment which was dominant in central North Carolina, the area including our own county.<sup>28</sup> And there is no doubt a further bond between these sentiments and the Regulator movement which arose in the 1760's and included a significant proportion of the populace in our area.<sup>29</sup> In 1801 the Republican Methodist Church was renamed the Christian Church,<sup>30</sup> the fourth largest denomination in Vance County.

The same elements of discord re-emerged in the Methodist Episcopal Church in the 1820's. This movement was not only opposed to the dominance of the bishops but to lack of influence by the laity as well. The controversy broke out at Plank Chapel Church among others and was the subject of a letter from Rev. William Compton to the Rev. John Young, Sr., whose circuit included and was centered at Plank Chapel. Compton was noted for his harsh and needlessly antagonistic position on the issue. He advised Young:

Now it is no secret, but a notorious fact, that if to inveigh against the discipline of our church is the object of these disaffected men in appointing the aforesaid meeting [to be held at Plank Chapel in July, 1826] . . . that it is the duty of the Trustees of our houses of worship to shut their door against them.<sup>31</sup>

This controversy throughout Methodism culminated in the organization of the Methodist Protestant Church on November 2, 1830 in Baltimore. The Methodist Protestant Church discarded the title of bishop and named its chief executive officer "president."<sup>32</sup> The conferences included lay as well as ministerial representation.

Thus, it can be seen that the two great controversies of Methodist history--the questions of slave owning and church government--which split the church in 1793, 1830 and 1844, were not distant controversies which merely adjusted the names of our local churches. These controversies were fought out in our local churches and to some extent originated here.

Throughout the period from 1784 until organization of the North Carolina Conference in 1838, the Vance County area was served by Methodist preachers of the Virginia conference. In general the northern part of the county was included in the Roanoke River circuit, and the southern part of the county in the Tar River circuit. Tracing the appointment of ministers from year to year is largely frustrated by the frequent shift of these circuits among a number of larger districts and by the obvious variation in the area embraced by these circuits during the period. Preachers whose names I have encountered as specifically serving churches in our area during the period on a regular basis are: William Compton, John Young, Sr., and James Reid.<sup>33</sup> Other historians have listed as well Moses Brock and Hezekiah Leigh.



## II.

### BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH IN HENDERSON 1811 to 1922

#### Rock Spring and the Henderson Station 1811 - 1854.

The town of Henderson began its history in 1811 when Lewis Reavis located his store within what are now the corporate limits of the City of Henderson.<sup>34</sup> That same year, Lewis Reavis was named as one of the Trustees of Salem Church (located near the present old Oxford Road about one mile from the present Granville County line) on the deed from Abner Hicks of August 16, 1811.<sup>35</sup> However, less than a year later, Reavis was named again as trustee in a deed from William Little of Warren County to establish yet another Methodist Episcopal Church. This conveyance, dated March 23, 1812, conveyed a lot 70 yards by 70 yards "near a spring."<sup>36</sup> Although it has generally been said that the land for Rock Spring Church was donated by the Reavis family,<sup>37</sup> this is the only deed of record during the period that is recorded conveying lands for a Methodist Episcopal Church which is not clearly the deed of another known church.<sup>38</sup> The trustees named in the deed were: George Harris, Lewis Reavis, Edmund Taylor, Joseph Taylor, Jr., and John Brodie.

The origination date given for Rock Spring Church varies from 1811<sup>39</sup> to 1816.<sup>40</sup> But, in any event, the journal of Rev. John Young, Sr., records that he preached at Rockspring as early as 1814.<sup>41</sup> Henderson attorney J. H. Bridgers recounted the following history of Rockspring Church in an article which appeared in the Henderson Daily Dispatch for November 19, 1930:

The first Methodist Episcopal Church erected in this immediate section was built in the year 1816 on the site on which the colored college of Henderson Institute is now located.

The church was built mostly by Lewis and Samuel Reavis, Henry and Pressley Rowland, Thomas Brame, William Esets, John Daniel and John Weaver. It was a large frame building with a large space on the side or annex for the slaves. The spring at the foot of the hill, which was enclosed by oblong rocks formed by Indians, was said to have given the church its name.

For many years Rock Spring Church was served by preachers from the Virginia Conference. Among them were Hezekiah Leigh, Robert O. Burton, Moses Brock and others.

A camp meeting was held on the grounds each fall and large crowds attended, also many preachers from a distance came to preach. The last camp meeting was held in the fall of 1853.

After the first church was built in Henderson, Rev. William Holmes,<sup>42</sup> who lived in Henderson, advised and others agreed to move their membership to the church in Henderson. Some opposed



the plan, but the change was made in 1870. The old Rock Spring Church was sold and torn down and is now only a memory. . . .

No documentation of the early membership of Rock Spring Church survives. But the growth of that church like the growth of Henderson really begins about 1840 when the Raleigh and Gaston Railroad line passed through Henderson to Raleigh and established Henderson as the major municipal center for this area.<sup>43</sup> As a result, population gradually gravitated toward Henderson, and the Henderson Methodist churches<sup>44</sup> became the heirs of the various older congregations in the surrounding area.

The town of Henderson first appears as a regular ministerial station in the Raleigh District of the North Carolina Conference in the conference minutes of 1842. It is noted therein that Hezekiah Leigh is appointed to the Henderson station for the succeeding year.<sup>45</sup> In the minutes of the succeeding conference, it is noted that the Henderson station includes churches with a total membership of 181 white and 16 black; William Closs<sup>46</sup> was assigned to the station for the next year. During the period from 1843 until the outbreak of the War Between the States in 1861 the average membership at the Henderson station was 357 white members.<sup>47</sup> This was a fairly remarkable level of membership inasmuch as the station usually consisted of only two churches.

The ministers appointed to serve the Henderson station from 1842 until 1854 were:<sup>48</sup>

Hezekiah Leigh	-	1842 (date of appointment)
William Closs	-	1843
Robert O. Burton	-	1844 - 1845
Thomas S. Campbell	-	1846 - 1847
Peter Doub	-	1848 - 1849
Evan E. Freeman	-	1850
Thomas B. Reeks	-	1851
Philmer W. Archer	-	1852
Junius P. Moore	-	1853 - 1854

First Methodist Episcopal Church, South, of Henderson  
1854 - 1922.

On November 1, 1854, Albert H. Alley conveyed a lot fronting 90 feet on Garnett Street to trustees for the erection of a church under the discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The trustees were: Lewis H. Kittle, Archibald Turner,<sup>49</sup> Charles H. Wyche, Henry A. Burwell, Hardy Harris and George J. Reavis. The church constructed on this site (diagonally across the street from the Henry A. Dennis Building) was a frame building with a large gallery around three sides with the altar on the side farthest from Garnett Street. The church was on a circuit that allowed services twice a month with Sunday School and prayer meetings each Sunday and mid-week.<sup>50</sup> The ministers who served the 1854 church included:<sup>51</sup>



Junius P. Moore	1853 - 1854
P. H. Joiner	1855
John Tillett	1856 - 1857
Benjamin F. Long	1858
Lemon Shell	1860 - 1861
James Reid	1862 - 1864
(none listed)	1865
Ira T. Wyche	1866 - 1867
Henry H. Gibbons	1868 - 1871
Augustus A. Boshammer	1872 - 1875
Junius P. Moore	1876
Robert O. Burton	1877
Lucien J. Holden	1878 - 1881
Joseph J. Renn	1882 - 1885
J. D. Arnold	1886 - 1889

By 1886<sup>52</sup> membership at the First Methodist Episcopal Church had reached 229 members and a movement was begun for construction of a new church. This church, completed in 1889, was located at the intersection of Church and Garnett Streets beside the present Zollicoffer Law Office, a site formerly occupied by the Holy Innocents Episcopal Church. The new building was of red brick in the Norman Gothic style popular during the last two decades of the nineteenth century. The following detailed description of the 1889 church is included in the pamphlet "So Dear to My Heart"<sup>53</sup> by Frances Parker Woodlief who attended the church in her youth:

The Gothic exterior of conservative design and simple lines featured a pointed facade with triple Gothic window of stained glass and tower with turreted belfry. On the sides were tall Gothic windows with the pointed arch. One entered a small square vestibule in the tower from either Garnett Street or Church Street. A door directly in front of the Garnett Street entrance led to the right aisle of the sanctuary. A door to the left opened into a spacious entrance hall or narthex. This was separated from the sanctuary by a balustrade of dark oak turned columns. At the end of the narthex a stairway led to the balcony overhead and an arch to the right opened into the left aisle of the sanctuary.

The sanctuary was dominated by the large Gothic or pointed arch of the transept which extended from floor to ceiling. In the alcove of the arch were the organ and choir loft. Gilded organ pipes of graduated lengths were arranged arch shape over the organ. The pipe organ was built into a wall of dark oak paneling. Steps on each side led to the choir loft. In front of the choir was the pulpit which was semi-circular. The chancel rail was a balustrade which matched that of the narthex. It, too, was semi-circular. As well as I remember the vaulted ceiling with exposed beams followed the lines of the pointed roof. The chandeliers were single plain white china globes hung from brass chains. The walls were ivory; the window panes etched glass in a small snowflake design. The entire floor of the church, including choir loft and



pulpit, was covered with green Axminster carpeting in a small two-toned pattern. The choir rail was brass rods with a dark green velvet curtain on brass rings. The kneeling cushion at the chancel was red velour. The pulpit chairs were ornately carved in the style of that period and upholstered in black leather. A massive oak lectern, marble top communion table and white marble baptismal font completed the appointments. Since there were two aisles, there were three groups of seats in the nave. These were connected chairs of light oak finish. The rows of chairs at the front were placed in a curve to follow the line of the chancel and pulpit. When plans were being drawn for the new granite church, the architect, Mr. Eric G. Flannagan, Sr., was asked to incorporate into his design the main architectural features of this church. I think you will see that he did this perfectly.<sup>54</sup>

The ministers who served the 1889 church were:

J. D. Arnold	1886 - 1889
Franklin Bishop	1890
W. L. Cunningham	1891 - 1894
Milton D. Hix	1895 - 1896
Alpheus McCullen	1897 - 1900
M. H. Tuttle	1901
J. D. Bundy	1902 - 1903
L. L. Nash	1904 - 1906
Rufus C. Craven	1907 - 1910
W. R. Royal	1911 - 1912
Daniel H. Tuttle	1912 - 1916
Rufus C. Beaman	1914 - 1917
L. E. Thompson	1918 - 1921
T. G. Vickers	1922 - 1925
H. B. Proctor	1926 - 1928
W. C. Martin	1929 - 1930

In 1904 when the church celebrated its 50th anniversary, the Rev. L. L. Nash was then in his first year as pastor, and the church was host to the N. C. Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Rev. Nash reported to the quarterly conference a church membership of 377; a church valued at \$13,000.00; a parsonage valued at \$2,000.00; and a total of \$3,603.50 raised for all purposes during the year.<sup>55</sup>

#### First Methodist Protestant Church of Henderson 1881 to 1940.

The Methodist Protestant Church built its First Church in Henderson in 1881 on a site north of the railroad underpass between the railroad and Garnett Street opposite the former site of the J. Bailey Owen home. There were twenty-four charter members including D. E. Young, George A. Harris, William A. Harris, Fletcher Harris, Henry Hart, Miss Betty Wiggins, K. W. Coghill and others. The small wooden building was constructed by K. W. Coghill, contractor, and dedicated in June, 1882.<sup>56</sup>

In 1898 the First Methodist Protestant Church acquired a lot at the corner of Wyche and Breckenridge Streets in the name of its trustees: George A. Harris, J. F. Harris, George B. Harris, S. R. Harris, Dr. F. R. Harris and L. R. Gooch. This new church was a red brick gothic church in much the same style as the Methodist Episcopal Church. A large brick annex was added for Sunday School in 1924.<sup>57</sup>

The First Methodist Protestant Church continued as a Methodist Protestant congregation until 1939 when the Methodist Protestant, Methodist Episcopal and Methodist Episcopal, South branches of Methodism were merged by the Uniting Conference at Kansas City. Mr. Jasper Hicks of our church was a delegate and member of the Uniting Conference. As a result of this merger the local Methodist Protestant Church took the name Christ Methodist Church under which it operated from 1939 until complete merger was effected with the First Methodist Church of Henderson at a union service held November 17, 1940.<sup>58</sup> At the time of this merger the congregation of the Methodist Protestant Church numbered approximately three hundred fifty members. The ministers that served the church from 1881 until 1941 were:

S. W. Cole  
T. J. Ogburn  
T. M. Johnson  
J. S. Williams  
W. F. Kennett  
A. G. Dixon  
R. M. Andrews  
J. D. Williams  
S. W. Taylor  
J. E. Pritchard  
R. A. Hunter  
L. W. Geringer  
Luther Medlin  
T. J. Whitehead

The Methodist Protestant Church was sold to Rose's Stores, Inc., in 1941 for \$20,000.00.<sup>59</sup> The stained glass windows from the church were crated and are currently stored in the attic of First Methodist Church.



### III.

#### FIRST METHODIST CHURCH OF HENDERSON

##### Construction of the 1929 Church Building.

Between April 27, 1922 and January 6, 1923, the Trustees of First Methodist Episcopal Church, South, purchased six lots<sup>60</sup> on the opposite corner of Church and Garnett Streets from the 1889 church building. The combined cost of these lots was \$21,020.00 and provided frontage of 122 feet on Garnett Street and 121 feet on Church Street.

In an essay entitled "The Cross of Lights," Frances Parker Woodlief described some of the fund-raising efforts conducted by ladies of the church to aid construction of the new building.

The idea of a new Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in Henderson was conceived during the pastorate of Rev. T. G. Vickers who came to the Henderson church in 1922. The site selected was the corner lot on Garnett and Church Streets that lay opposite the church. When the lot was purchased a rude cross made of two boards was erected. On it was inscribed the word "Faith." Soon plans were laid and a building fund was started.

Under the leadership of Jennie Shaw Corbitt the ladies of the First Methodist Church launched a crusade the like of which has never been undertaken, much less accomplished, by any other group of women in Henderson--a crusade to build the new Methodist Episcopal Church. These ladies gave Mrs. Corbitt their loyal support and unquestioning cooperation.

Various money-making projects were carried out and the proceeds given to the church building fund. One of the projects was the serving of Kiwanis and Rotary Club suppers. The suppers were held weekly in the Croatan Club rooms and the young girls of the church acted as waitresses. An annual booth at the Golden Belt Fair served hot home cooked food. The most ambitious venture was the operating of a teashop which was located on South William Street in the store occupied by Hoyle's Hardware. It was called the "Susanna Teashop," after John Wesley's mother. Mrs. Bessie Strause was chosen as manager on a salary. Regular kitchen help was employed also. The ladies of the church were assigned by groups to assist in the kitchen and with the serving.

For each of the above enterprises the ladies donated the food. I never heard that any of the husbands complained about the grocery bill. Much of the food was prepared by the ladies themselves in their own kitchens.<sup>61</sup>

Many of the ladies who participated in these efforts are listed in Miss Woodlief's essay.



The building eventually cost approximately \$180,000.00<sup>62</sup> the majority of which was financed by personal contributions or by amortized loans. The effort was supervised by a building committee consisting of R. J. Corbitt, Chairman; J. H. Bridgers, Secretary-Treasurer, Henry T. Morris; and J. W. Jenkins, Sr. Ground-breaking ceremonies were held on June 22, 1925 and the following account appeared in the Henderson Daily Dispatch for that date:

Ground was broken at 10 o'clock today for the new building of the First Methodist Church on the lot at the corner of North Garnett and Church Streets, opposite the present church property. The formal ceremonies were attended by a number of the members of the official board of stewards, trustees and the building committee, and of the congregation. Photographs of the ceremonies were made and these will be placed in the cornerstone of the church when that is laid later on.

The exercises were conducted by the pastor, Rev. T. G. Vickers, who read the Old Testament account of God's commission to Solomon to build the great temple for the people of Israel, and then offered a prayer for divine guidance in the new work and for the success of the undertaking. He then lifted<sup>63</sup> the first shovelful of dirt and tossed it into a nearby wheelbarrow.

The cornerstone, bearing the date 1925, is on the southwest face of the church tower immediately above the ground floor window.

The building, designed by local architect Eric Flannagan, Sr., is in the early English Gothic style characterized by simplicity of plan and detail. It is constructed of rock-faced or rough-hewn Indiana<sup>64</sup> limestone with dressed stone trim. The main body of the church is flanked at the facade by a two-staged square tower crowned by a conical spire of weathered copper. The traditional Anglican Gothic arrangement, exemplified by the local First Baptist Church which Flannagan also designed, does not employ the elongated tower or the crowning spire employed by the architect in our church's design. This arrangement emphasizes the gothic spiritual nature of the building.

The front or main facade is gabled and dominated by a pointed arch window with panelled tracery containing a stained glass depiction of the Resurrection. Each side of the nave or sanctuary is flanked on the exterior by stone buttresses between which are centered four pointed-arch windows of stained glass with panelled tracery. The walls culminate in a crenelated pattern immediately above the roof line. From the nave, the original classroom-administrative wing extends perpendicularly to a gabled end with rectangular windows arranged in a pyramiding pattern in the gable.

Many of the furnishings in the church are derived from the earlier churches. The bell of the 1854 church is mounted in the tower. The baptismal fonts are those from the 1889 Methodist Episcopal Church (given by E. G. Brodie)<sup>65</sup> and from the Methodist Protestant Church. The organ from the 1889 Church was brought to the new building but subsequently replaced by an organ purchased from a contribution of Mrs. J. C. Cooper, Sr.<sup>66</sup> The illuminated cross on the spire was given by Mrs. R. G. Corbitt, Sr.



The stained glass windows in the sanctuary were executed by Payne Studies, Inc., of Patterson, New Jersey and depict scenes from the life and teachings of Christ. The donors and subjects of the windows are:

- Mr. L. C. Kerner: Christ Blessing the Children
- Mr. P. H. Rose: The Nativity
- Mr. W. E. Gary: The Resurrection
- Mr. M. B. Thomas: Christ and Nicodemus
- Mr. J. T. Cheatham: Annunciation to the Shepherds
- Mr. J. H. Bridgers: Jesus in the Home of Mary and Martha
- M. E. Church, So.: The Ascension
- Mrs. J. D. Cooper: The Good Samaritan
- Mrs. G. H. Edwards: Christ in Joseph's Carpenter Shop

The Rev. W. C. Martin preached the first sermon in the new church building on November 10, 1929; and a sermon was preached that evening by the Rev. T. G. Vickers, then serving the First Methodist Church of Rocky Mount, during whose ministry at Henderson the movement for the new church building had begun.

The Church struggled during the next five years of the Depression to reduce its indebtedness. By 1934, this had been reduced from \$180,000.00 to \$57,000.00, under the active leadership of church officials and the Rev. D. E. Earnhardt. The remaining \$57,000.00 of bonded indebtedness, owed to the American Bank & Trust Company of Richmond was cancelled by payment on November 7, 1934. Four days later, on November 11, 1934, Bishop Paul B. Kern dedicated the church in formal ceremony.

The ministers who served the church from 1929 until union with Christ Methodist Church in 1940 were:

W. C. Martin	1929 - 1930
D. E. Earnhardt	1931 - 1934
Marvin Culbreth	1935 -
R. E. Brown	1936 - 1939
B. C. Reavis	1940 - 1942

#### The First Methodist Church 1940 to 1979.

On November 17, 1940 a uniting service was held at the First Methodist Church merging the congregations of Christ Methodist Church (the former First Methodist Protestant Church) and of First Methodist Church as a single congregation. The sermon was delivered by Dr. S. W. Taylor former pastor of Christ Methodist Church and former president of the Methodist Protestant Conference in North Carolina. The following account appeared in the Henderson Daily Dispatch for November 18, 1940:

Hundreds of members of the two uniting churches, representing the former Methodist Protestant and Methodist Episcopal, South, churches, jammed the First Methodist edifice for



the morning service and were joined by a number from other religious faiths in the community. Aside from Dr. Taylor's sermon, the principal event was the reading of the affirmation of the merger by the pastor, joined by the members, including sections of prayers . . . . Rev. Mr. Reavis spoke feelingly in welcoming Christ Church members in the First Methodist congregation assuring them that from this time on all would be one and all would share equally in carrying on the work of union . . . . Mr. Reavis announced that 342 members of Christ Church had been transferred in the merger.

The combination of congregations in 1940 gave the church a membership of about 840 members with real property evaluated at \$185,000.00. This placed the First Methodist Church second only to Edenton Street Methodist Church, Raleigh, in size of congregation and valuation of property within the Raleigh District of the North Carolina Conference.

The First Methodist Church has enjoyed a considerable growth in the size of its congregation and in the value of its properties since the union of 1940. In 1956 the church building was renovated and the educational wing and chapel were added. These improvements were designed by the firm of Charles C. Benton & Sons of Wilson, North Carolina at an estimated cost of \$210,000.00. The chapel was given in memory of Paul H. Rose (1881-1955) by contribution of Mrs. P. H. Rose. The Garnett Street facades of the educational wing and chapel were designed in conformity to the original building and, since removal of the Frank B. Powell homeplace, <sup>70</sup> enclose a fine garden area that is currently being developed by the Church through memorial contributions.

Many of the most valued features of the Church have been the result of memorial donations over the years. These have been catalogued by the Church in a memorial book, and the following brief list is not intended to represent a complete list of even the most conspicuous contributions: the carillon bells (in memory of Capt. Norwood Thomas Jenkins); the altar service (in memory of George Leggett); the altar paraments (in memory of Misses Kate T. Gary and Marial L. Gary); the pall (in memory of Mrs. Sadie H. Parham); our present organ, an Aeolian Skinner installed in 1968, through numerous individual memorials; and the developing Church library also through numerous individual memorials.

One of the particularly notable furnishings of the sanctuary is the kneeling cushions at the chancel which were needlepointed as a memorial tribute to Jennie Shaw Corbitt. This project required over twenty-five hundred hours of labor performed by Mrs. E. T. Alston, Mrs. E. H. Bradley, Mary Fuller Green, Mrs. S. R. Harris, Jr., Mrs. Thomas G. Horner, Mrs. E. G. Royster, Mrs. A. J. Watkins and Miss Mildred Ellis, Lillie Fuller and Marian Gary. The cushions were designed by the Misses Tebbetts of Kent, Connecticut, who were nationally famous for such designs. The design is a series of shields bearing Christian symbols such as the dove and bell, punctuating a continuous pattern of grapes and wheat symbolizing the bread and the wine of the eucharist.



In 1966, the Church purchased the Edmund W. Creekmore home<sup>71</sup> on the corner of Hillcrest and Cypress Drive for use as a parsonage. The house and lot were purchased for \$36,850.00 and have increased greatly in value since that time. This is the third successive parsonage of the First Methodist Church still standing. The parsonage for the 1889 church is the two-story frame home located at 117 Church Street, currently occupied by Mrs. F. B. Hight. In 1937 the Church built a red brick parsonage immediately behind the present church. This building currently houses Franklin-Vance-Warren Opportunity, Inc.<sup>72</sup>

The most recent project for addition to church properties was the purchase of a bus in December, 1978, the result of a number of fund-raising activities and personal contributions.

The Journal of the North Carolina Annual Conference for 1977 listed the value of church property at First Methodist as \$1,744,000.00, the fourth largest valuation among churches in the North Carolina Conference. Our membership listed in the 1977 Journal was twelfth largest at 1435. A table comparing the twelve largest churches in the North Carolina Conference by size of membership is included in the appendices to this article.

The ministers who have served First Methodist since merger in 1940 are:

Rev. B. C. Reavis	1940 - 1942
Rev. Hiram King	1943 - 1945
Dr. C. D. Barclift	1946 - 1948
Rev. Stanley Potter	1949 - 1952
Dr. Allen P. Brantley	1953 - 1954
Rev. A. S. Parker	1954 - 1958
Rev. W. B. Petteway	1958 - 1965
Rev. Dermont Reid	1965 - 1969
Rev. J. L. Joyce	1969 - 1973
Rev. M. Dewey Tyson	1973 - 1977
Rev. Samuel D. McMillan, Jr.	1977 -

On April 23, 1968, the union of the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church, formed by the Uniting Conference at Dallas in 1966, became effective. There were no congregations of the Evangelical Church in our area, and the only effect on our local church was to alter our name to First United Methodist Church of Henderson. This ecumenical work which healed the 1830 breach with the Methodist Protestants in 1929 and brought the union with the Evangelical Church in 1966, is continuing through dialogues with the Christian Church that may ultimately heal the breach of 1793 with that church.



#### IV.

#### CONCLUSION

There is a great deal in the history and development of the First United Methodist Church in Henderson for which its congregation can be justly proud. Ours is one of the finest Methodist churches in the North Carolina Conference and yet the town is of only moderate size. Our church has experienced a truly ecumenical growth having united the comparatively large congregations of the local Methodist Protestant and Methodist Episcopal Church, South. This union has strengthened the congregation with a broader religious perspective and with larger resources of leadership and service.

But these are only the foundations of the church, the base of operations, as the past is always only prologue. The true life of the church is in the daily exercise of faith; and the recent history of that aspect of our church is not something that can be documented from contemporary newspapers, deeds of conveyance and financial records. One can only reasonably suggest that our church is being affected by the same forces, largely remarked, that are affecting the church at large: fading common knowledge of the Bible in the congregation and a dangerous tendency to religious eclecticism in the Methodist clerical institutions that guide the development of Methodist ministers. These challenges are more intractable and more essential to the life of the church than any problems of institutional maintenance or expansion in our church's history. How and whether we face those challenges will answer the fervent expectation that our Methodist forebears voiced in their dedication to the growth and development of this church.

Written by George T. Blackburn, II



**Rev. T.G. Vickers**  
1922-1925



**Rev. W.C. Martin**  
1929-1930

APPENDIX

TABLE COMPARING THE TWELVE LARGEST CONGREGATIONS  
OF THE  
NORTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE

	<u>Membership</u>	<u>Value of Properties</u>	<u>Minister's Salary</u>
First Methodist (Henderson)	1435	\$1,744,000	\$18,000
Hay Street (Fayetteville)	1450	545,000	18,500
Jarvis Memorial (Greenville)	1495	2,025,000	22,350
Hayes-Barton (Raleigh)	1543	800,000	15,000
First Methodist (Cary)	1559	460,000	16,500
St. Paul's (Goldsboro)	1581	2,062,000	18,700
St. Mark's (Raleigh)	1602	617,000	17,200
Highland (Raleigh)	1671	1,369,900	16,200
First Methodist (Wilson)	1825	1,139,000	18,825
Duke Memorial (Durham)	1877	1,615,000	20,000
Front Street (Burlington)	1958	1,547,000	21,000
Edenton Street (Raleigh)	3055	4,158,000	21,200

Journal of the N.C. Annual Conference, 1977, p. 457f



- 1 Francis Asbury (1745 - 1816) is generally considered the father of American Methodism. His travels throughout the eastern states were unequalled by any other cleric before or since. He served as one of the two original bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church from its establishment in December, 1784 until his death. His leadership established itinerancy as the guiding principle of Methodist organization.
- 2 Francis Asbury, The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury, Elmer T. Clark, editor (Nashville, 1958) Vol. I, pp. 359-360 (cited hereinafter as "Journal")
- 3 Samuel T. Peace, Zeb's Black Baby (Durham, 1956) pp. 79-80. See also: I Journal p. 360, fn.60
- 4 I Journal, p. 360
- 5 I Journal, p. 360, fn.61
- 6 Edmund O. Taylor, Last Will and Testament, Office of the Clerk of Superior Court Granville County
- 7 Deed: Abner Hicks to Trustees, Book V page 329, Granville County Register of Deeds
- 8 Peace, op. cit., p. 70
- 9 See Journal entries for May 29, 1788; Nov. 9, 1798; March 8-12, 1800; Nov. 27-29, 1804.
- 10 W. L. Grissom, History of Methodism in North Carolina (Nashville, 1905) Vol. I, pp. 120-121
- 11 Peace, op.cit., p. 50
- 12 I Journal, p. 360
- 13 I Journal, p. 365
- 14 Peace, op.cit., pp. 43-44
- 15 I Journal p. 176, fn.5
- 16 James O'Kelly was an early Methodist preacher whose dispute with Bishop Asbury over ecclesiastical organization of the Methodist Church led him to found the separate Republican Methodist Church which was later renamed the Christian Church, see infra
- 17 Minton Thrift, Memoir of the Rev. Jesse Lee with Extract from His Journals (New York, 1823) p. 56

- 18 Larry E. Tise "North Carolina Methodism from the Revolution to the War of 1812"; Methodism Alive in North Carolina, O. Kelly Ingram, ed. (Durham, 1976) p. 44
- 19 Ibid., pp. 44-45. See also: Grissom, op.cit., pp. 120-121
- 20 Grissom, op.cit., pp. 120-121
- 21 Ibid., p. 121
- 22 Hugh T. Lefler and Albert Ray Newsome, North Carolina: The History of a Southern State (Chapel Hill, 1954) p. 119
- 23 I Journal, p. 362
- 24 Grissom, op.cit., p. 121
- 25 Tise, op.cit., p. 45
- 26 Grissom, op.cit., p. 125
- 27 Thrift, op.cit., p. 56; I Journal, p. 365
- 28 Tise, op.cit., p. 42
- 29 Ibid., p. 43
- 30 Peace, op.cit., p. 74
- 31 Letter: William Compton to John Young, July 7, 1826; Papers of John Young, Sr., Manuscript Department, William R. Perkins Library, Duke University
- 32 William W. Sweet, Methodism in American History (New York, 1933) p. 183
- 33 Peace, op.cit., p. 70
- 34 Peace, op.cit., p. 289
- 35 Deed: Abner Hicks to Trustees, op.cit.
- 36 Deed: William Little to Trustees, Book V, page 341, Granville County Registry of Deeds
- 37 Rebekah Young Dodd Cooper, Reminiscences: 1811-1911, (Henderson, 1941) p. 24
- 38 Joseph W. Watson, ed., Records of the Methodist Churches in Granville County, North Carolina: 1746-1977 (unpublished research paper; Archives and History, Raleigh, N.C., 1977)



- 39 John B. Watkins, Jr., Historic Vance County (Henderson, 1941) p. 43
- 40 J. H. Bridgers in Henderson Daily Dispatch, Nov. 19, 1930, p. 3
- 41 John Young, Sr., Journal (entry for August 7, 1814); Papers of John Young, Sr., Manuscript Department, William R. Perkins Library, Duke University
- 42 William Holmes (1798 - 1873) died in Henderson on June 8, 1873 from injuries received two days previously by being caught between a car and the platform at the depot, where he had gone to settle a freight bill for some shingles, just received to put on the Methodist Church in Henderson. See Conference Minutes, 1873, p. 803.
- 43 Peace, op.cit., pp. 299,230
- 44 Ibid., p. 70
- 45 Minutes of the North Carolina Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (cited hereinafter as "Minutes"), 1842
- 46 William Closs (1809 - 1882) was the father of Lucy Closs Parker (wife of W. Scott Parker) and the grandfather of Willie Parker Peace and Fannie Parker Parham of Henderson
- 47 Minutes, 1843 - 1861
- 48 Minutes, 1842 - 1853
- 49 Deed: Albert H. Alley to Trustees, Book 20, page 399, Granville County Registry of Deeds
- 50 Peace, op.cit., p. 70
- 51 Minutes, 1852 - 1888
- 52 Record of the Quarterly Conferences, First Methodist Episcopal Church, South (Henderson, N.C.) 1886 - , p. 10
- 53 Francis Parker Woodlief, So Dear To My Heart (Henderson, 1972)
- 54 Ibid., pp 5-7
- 55 Henderson Daily Dispatch, October 9, 1979, p. 6
- 56 Peace, op.cit., p.68
- 57 Ibid., p. 69

- 58 Henderson Daily Dispatch, Nov. 15, 1940; Nov. 18, 1940
- 59 Peace, op.cit., p.69
- 60 These conveyances are set forth at: Book 100, pages 438, 483, 587, 612, and 614 (two lots), Vance County Registry of Deeds
- 61 Woodlief, op.cit., pp. 31-32
- 62 Henderson Daily Dispatch, Nov. 19, 1930, p. 1
- 63 Henderson Daily Dispatch, June 22, 1925, p.6
- 64 Henderson Daily Dispatch, Nov. 19, 1930, p.1
- 65 Peace, op.cit., p.71
- 66 Letter: George L. Payne to R. J. Corbitt, July 12, 1929
- 67 Journal of the North Carolina Annual Conference, 1941
- 68 Henderson Daily Dispatch, October 11, 1979, p. 12.
- 69 Ibid.
- 70 Deed: Whitfield et al to Trustees, Book 424, page 593, Vance County Registry of Deeds (dated February 9, 1966)
- 71 Deed: Edmund W. Creekmore to Trustees, Book 424, Page 417, Vance County Registry of Deeds
- 72 Henderson Daily Dispatch, October 6, 1979, p. 6



**Rev. D.E. Earnhardt**  
1930 - 1934



**Rev. B.C. Reavis**  
1940 - 1942



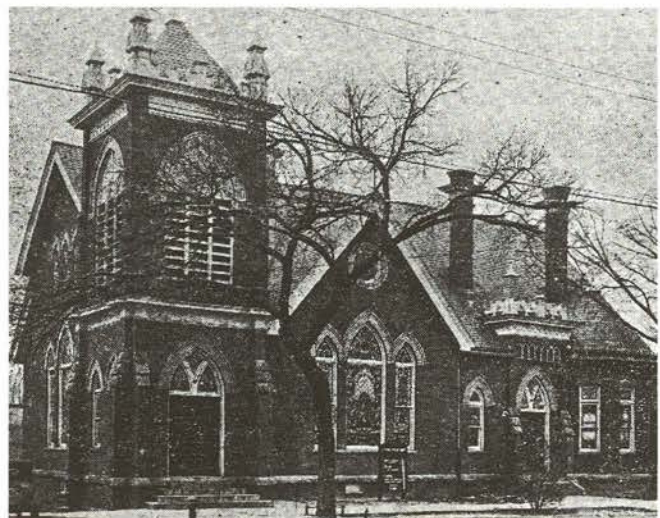
No change in name or otherwise was made in our church until the merger in 1968 with the Evangelical United Brethren at which time the name was changed to United Methodist Church. While there was no church of the Evangelical United Brethren in this area, we feel it was a good move and for the best interest of our church. We go forward after Union a bigger church, a better church, saying to all truly, "The Methodist Are One People."

"Blest be the tie that Binds,  
Our hearts in Christian love;  
The fellowship of kindred minds  
Is like to that above."

Jasper B. Hicks  
May, 1979



**M.E. Church, South  
Completed 1889**



**M.P. Church  
Built, 1900**

ARTICLES FROM THE PAGES OF THE  
HENDERSON DAILY DISPATCH

"Gothic Architecture Is Followed Throughout, Both in Building and Furniture for New M. E. Edifice"

By Rev. W. C. Martin

The writer has been requested to give a description of the furnishings of the First Methodist Church, but before undertaking this task, he wishes to take the liberty to say a few things about the building and those who have made great contributions to make this beautiful stone structure possible. Someone had wisely said, "A building is a church only by virtue of what it tells of God." A church that is labeled with a name but devoid of the fundamental principles underlying real architecture in reality is a church building in name only. Without making inquiry, it is indeed difficult to recognize some churches because the architecture belies the purpose which the building serves. Frequently plans are found to be poorly designed, loosely arranged, incomplete or out of date.

Church-Like Church

The First Methodist Church is a church-like church. A name plate is not necessary for identification. The truthful expression of the function which the architect has woven into the design speaks louder than a sign board. In recent years the enlarged program of the church has introduced outstanding changes in the arrangement and equipment of church and Sunday School buildings, so great care has been exercised to safeguard every interest of the modern church with its growing needs and requirements. This building meets every requirement of the General Sunday School Board and the Joint Committee on architecture of the Southern Methodist Church. From the standpoint of beauty, a more attractive church building is not to be found in this section of the country. The style of architecture is the Fifteenth Century English Gothic.

Building Committee

The Building Committee composed of R. J. Corbitt, Chairman, J. H. Bridgers, Secretary-Treasurer, Henry T. Morris, and J. W. Jenkins, and the architect, Eric G. Flannagan, have done their work well. This beautiful building will stand for centuries as a monument to their vision and faithful labors. Then there are others who have contributed much to the success of this undertaking whose names should at least be mentioned in this paper. M. L. Wood, Superintendent for the Building Committee in the construction of the exterior, and his Foreman, E. C. Morris, Rowe and Roach Company of Greensboro, N.C., stone contractors, personally supervised by Mr. Roach, who soon after finishing his work here fell from the First Prebyterian Church, Wilmington, N.C., and was killed. The limestone was cut by H. A. Wooley and Son, of Bloomington, Ind., and it is said that so perfect was their work that not a hammer was ever used on a piece of the stone. The green glazed tile roof was constructed by the Tanner Roofing Company of this city.



J. W. Stout, Inc., of Sanford, general contractor for the interior work, O. L. Bordeaux, foreman for Modern Electric Company of Durham; John Askey of Raleigh, paint contractor; Wilson Electric Company, Henderson, and J. C. Grinnan of Norfolk, Va., insulation contractor; all of these contractors lived up to the letter of their contracts and the foremen on the job were courteous and pleasant, each man doing his work in an efficient and satisfactory manner.

### Sacrifices by Members

But it should be remembered that it required something more than contractors to make this building possible. There are hundreds of people who have made sacrifices in giving the money for the construction and furnishing of this church plant. The congregation for five or more years have been giving as God prospered them, some have given large amounts, others the widow's mite, but practically all have given, and it is doubtful if any other congregation in the State has done more.

### Windows Show Life of Christ

I have given a good bit of space to a matter I was not asked to write about, so now we will go on the inside and look the interior over.

In keeping with the style of architecture employed, the building committee, and architect adopted the middle century European style of memorial windows. The window is executed in the conventional manner and not in the modern realistic style, which marks the American type of window.

All of the glasses, originally made at the factory, of solid colors, are taken to the stained glass studios, where they are cut from intricate patterns, as shown by the cartoons that are prepared by an artist. These glasses are then painted with a special glass composition and antiqued and then burned in special kilns, so that the surface compound as applied to the glass adheres to it the same as decoration of china work. This glass reaches a temperature of twelve hundred degrees during the process of work, and after it goes through a cooling process it is then leaded together with a special channel lead, so that the whole design is created, piece by piece, from the picture that the artist originally created.

The flesh work is done by a special artist who excels in this line, and the windows of the First Methodist Church have a very artistic and unusual effect, which has been secured by the use of richly colored glasses, some of which came from the oldest glass shops of England and some of the glass shops of America.

The work was designed and executed entirely by the Payne Studios, Inc., of Paterson, New Jersey, who have been window makers for three generations, and the subjects are various events in the life of Christ.

The ornamental portion of the work is designed in keeping with the architecture of the building and its period style, and altogether these windows will grow more and more in favor as they are left in place, and in years to come



these windows will be looked on as a type that has set a style in this country for a better class of church windows.

### Especial Design

The entire furnishings for the auditorium consisting of pulpit, tri-seat, choir front screen, communion table, altar rail and pews were designed for this church. The material is of the best to be had, selected white oak and finished in a rich brown color with gray pores. The more ornate pulpit and communion rail down to the smallest article are tied together by moldings, tracery and carvings that give intimate relationship. The beautifully matched grain of the wood and warmth of the color, together with good design, detail and proportion, not only carries out the spirit of the Gothic architecture, but is inducive to and creates an atmosphere of worship.

The American Seating Co., known for their high grade work, made the furnishings for the auditorium and the Baraca Classroom.

The furnishings for the Sunday School, consisting of chairs, from beginners to adults, teachers' tables, department desk and tables were furnished by the General Seating Co. of Charlotte. This furniture is handsome in appearance, massive in construction, substantially built and made of selected white oak. The color of this furniture matches perfectly the furnishings in the church auditorium.

The light fixtures which were selected with great care, considering their service, beauty, and cost, were furnished by Blumenthab-Kahn Studios of Baltimore, Md. The auditorium and other main fixtures are of Gothic design to go with the church architecture. The main fixtures in the auditorium are arranged with two sets of switches, so that part of the light in each fixture can be cut off during the sermon to make a soft light and save electricity.

### Acoustics Perfect

A scientific analysis of the acoustical condition of the main auditorium was made by the Engineering Department of Celotex Co., of Chicago, Ill., with the architect, and the ceiling has been treated with acoustic celotex in strict accordance with the manufacturer's directions, and the acoustics are nearly perfectly designed.

The church plant is equipped with Pearch Eastwood radiators, with 4,331 square feet radiation, and has a Peace American 12,000-foot boiler. This system is the Warren-Webster vapor vacuum, 1888. The reason why Webster systems are preferred throughout the sunny South is the moderation control. Where most systems tend to overheat in mild weather, this patented feature of Webster systems makes a moderate temperature possible at all times, thus assuring both comfort and economy. And yet, with an effortless twist of the hand, the Webster moderation valve makes all the difference available in ample heat for the severest cold weather. The church also installed the Williams Oil-O-Matic oil burner.

HENDERSON DAILY DISPATCH, Saturday, November 16, 1929.



## ERIC G. FLANNAGAN CHURCH ARCHITECT

Eric G. Flannagan, widely known architect of this city, was in charge of the construction of the new First Methodist Church as the architectural supervisor. He has served in that capacity since the building program was started a little more than four years ago, and has been steadily in touch with the work, and has directed it in a professional capacity. He has directed the handling of bids and the minor alterations that have been made from time to time, and much of the fineness of the property that has been completed is credited to his skill and faithfulness in attending to the work.

Mr. Flannagan has been the designer and has directed construction work of a number of well known and important business and charity structures in this city and county and section of the state. The Vance County Hospital and the Scott Parker Tuberculosis Sanatorium in this county and the County Home in Northampton County are his work. He is just now engaged in designing a tuberculosis hospital in Wayne County, for which he drew plans. He also has designed a number of school buildings in various localities, and one of the finest business properties to his credit is the new P. H. Rose Building on Garnett Street here.

HENDERSON DAILY DISPATCH, Saturday, November 16, 1929.

### "FAITH" SIGN HAD PART IN PROGRAM

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#### Illuminated Cross Finally Crowns Building on Its Completion

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Two features of the building of the First Methodist Church have been outstanding.

When work first started on the project, there were many who said it could not be done. They thought it too big an undertaking for the congregation, and shook their heads. A post with a board nailed to the top of it, on which was painted the word "FAITH" was planted in a sand pile on the site of the rising structure. As the building went higher and higher, the "FAITH" sign went along with it. Finally it got to the top.

When the tower and steeple were completed, a huge electrically lighted cross was perched on top. That cross is illuminated every evening when services are held in the church. It is visible for many miles out from Henderson, and is a reminder, as a speaker during the past week said, of the "cross triumphant." It is brilliantly lighted, and stands as a beacon to the traveler pointing to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on a cross for the salvation of the world.

These two things in connection with the new church project stand out prominently in the minds of members of the memory of the church. They are regarded to many as a memory of the struggle that has been and still is being made, and of the triumph of the Christ to whose glory the edifice has been erected.

HENDERSON DAILY DISPATCH, Saturday, November 16, 1929.



## METHODISTS TO DEDICATE CHURCH SUNDAY MORNING

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Bishop Paul Kern, One of Denomination's Leaders,  
Will Preach Special Sermon

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### NUMBER OF FORMER PASTORS EXPECTED

Will Have Parts on Program; Dedication Follows Recent Payment on Entire Bonded Debt on Church, Which Was Occupied in September, 1929.

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The \$180,000 building of the First Methodist Church here will be formally dedicated at special services to be held tomorrow morning at 11 o'clock. Bishop Paul B. Kern, of Greensboro, now in charge of Methodist Conferences in the Carolinas, and one of the outstanding bishops of the Southern Methodist Church, will be here to preach the dedicatory sermon.

In addition, several former pastors of the church will be here to participate in the exercises. Rev. T. G. Vickers of Oxford, and Rev. W. C. Martin of Rocky Mount, who had big parts in the building of the church will have places on the program.

The building will be presented to the bishop for dedication ceremonies by T. B. Rose, Jr., Chairman of the Board of Stewards, and Joel T. Cheatham, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, and J. H. Bridgers will also have a duty to perform in that connection. W. E. Moss will apply the match to burn the bonds that have been paid and cancelled.

Rev. D. E. Earnhardt, present Pastor of the church, and who started the debt raising campaign, will be in charge of the program. Special music by the choir will consist of two anthems, the group being in charge of by R. J. Jones as Director and Mrs. E. F. Shaw as Organist.

The church building program was launched in 1925 at the time Rev. Mr. Vickers was pastor here. The church was completed in a "turn-key job" in 1929, during the pastorate of Rev. Mr. Martin, while the last of the church structure was raised and paid with a campaign during October and early this month during the pastorate of Rev. Mr. Earnhardt. J.W. Jenkins, who was Chairman of the Board of Stewards for many years until recently, was general chairman of the debt campaign.

The general public is invited to the dedicatory service. Although the program appears rather lengthy, it is not expected that it will last much beyond the regular one-hour period allotted for Sunday services.

A check for \$34,243 was delivered in Richmond last Wednesday by a committee of the local congregation, in return for which the liquidating agents of the Richmond bank financing the bond issue surrendered the \$50,000 bonds they still held. This check however was not all the amount raised and paid.



There was an additional \$1,000 donated by the Board of Church Extension of the Southern Methodist Church, which was sent direct to Richmond from the Board's Louisville, Ky., offices when there was not time to handle it through the local committee after it became certain that the debt campaign started in early October as a binder to the agreement. In all, the payment at Richmond was \$36,043, which cancelled the \$50,000 of bonds and an interest item of \$7,000 making a total of \$57,000 in all.

HENDERSON DAILY DISPATCH, November 10, 1934.

#### METHODIST CHURCHES WILL FORMALLY MERGE SUNDAY WITH TAYLOR PREACHING

Plans were completed today for formal merger next Sunday of Christ and First Methodist Churches into one congregation, with a special sermon on the occasion being preached by Dr. S. W. Taylor, of High Point. Dr. Taylor is a former pastor of Christ Church here and now is District Superintendent of the High Point District in the Western North Carolina Conference. His sermon subject Sunday will be "Spiritual Enlarging of the Methodist Church."

Christ Church formerly was Methodist Protestant and First Methodist formerly was Methodist Episcopal, South.

Rev. B. C. Reavis who has served one year as pastor of First Church was returned by the North Carolina Conference in Wilmington last week to become pastor of the merged congregations.

All details for the merger have been completed by election of members of Christ Church to the Board of Trustees and Board of Stewards of First Church. They will have one-third representation on the trustee group and approximately one-fourth membership on the Board of Stewards.

At one service Sunday morning, Rev. Reavis will conduct the service of affirmation of the merger, proceeding Dr. Taylor's sermon.

Transfer of the membership rolls of Christ Church has already been made with some 350 members joined with the more than 800 in the First Church plant which will be used by the unified group.

A brief sketch written several years ago outlines the history of Christ Church, for many years ago known as the Methodist Protestant Church of Henderson. It follows:

"During the Summer of 1881, this church was organized by William A. Harris, K. W. Coghill, W. Henry Hart, John F. Harris, George A. Harris and their families. The first church building was erected by K. W. Coghill and was built of selected lumber from Moore County, and at the time of its erection was the most spacious church building in Henderson. William A. Harris was the largest contributor.



Rev. S.P.J. Harris, a local minister of this church, preached frequently during the year and kept the organization functioning until the first regular pastor was installed. This was Rev. James P. Simpson. The church has been served by the following pastors: Rev. S. W. Coe, Rev. T. J. Ogburn, Rev. T. M. Johnson, Rev. J.S. Williams, Rev. W. F. Kenneth, Rev. A. G. Dixon, Rev. R. M. Andrews, Rev. J. D. Williams, Rev. S. W. Taylor, Rev. J. E. Pritchard and Rev. R. A. Hunter."

HENDERSON DAILY DISPATCH, November 15, 1940.

FROM THE PAGES OF THE HENDERSON DAILY DISPATCH . . .

November 8, 1948...

Rev. C. D. Barclift, pastor of the First Methodist Church here the past three years, will be succeeded this week by Rev. W. Stanley Potter. Rev. Mr. Barclift was advanced to District Superintendent of the Wilmington District.

December 22, 1948...

The college students of the First Methodist Church will be in charge of the evening worship service this coming Sunday, December 22. Following the theme, "By My Spirit," . . . two students, Julia Thomas Gary and John Falkner, will give a talk on the subject, "We Do Not Leave Our Church Behind."

April 4, 1949...

Elaborate exercises were held at the First Methodist Church at 11 o'clock Sunday morning in dedication of the carillon bells recently donated to the church by Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Jenkins, Sr., as a memorial to their son, Captain Norwood Thomas Jenkins.

Members of the Men's Bible Class of the First Methodist Church and the Baraca Class of the First Baptist Church held a joint meeting at the First Methodist Church for presentation of the trophy won by the Methodist Class in the attendance contest between the two classes for the past two months.

Some 600 to 700 men filled the church auditorium and part of the balcony for the program.

April 1, 1949...

Cub Scout Packs 30 and 91 held their pack meeting last night at the First Methodist Church with over 100 cubs and parents present.

January 7, 1952...

The annual Methodist Leadership Training School for Vance County will be held at the First Methodist Church here the week of January 22-31.

March 18, 1952...

An article in the Daily Dispatch last week about the tearing down of the old Methodist Protestant Church at the corner of Breckenridge and Wyche Streets brought a letter from Dr. J. E. Prichard about some of the history of the local congregation.



The church is being removed to make way for a development project by Roses' 5-10-25¢ Store Company, which purchased the property about ten years ago after merger of the Methodist Protestant Church with the Methodist Church.

Dr. Prichard wrote . . . For a long period of years the church at Henderson was the leading church in the North Carolina Annual Conference of the former Methodist Protestant Church. The standing of a church can be determined to some extent by the number of its members who are elected delegates to the General Conference. In this respect, few churches had a better record than did the Henderson Church. Here is a record as far back as the present generation can remember: 1892, George B. Harris; 1896, F. R. Harris; 1900, A. J. Harris; 1904, S. R. Harris; 1912, S. R. and A. J. Harris; 1916, S. R. Harris; 1920, A. J. Harris; 1928, J. B. Hicks; 1932, J. B. Hicks; 1936, L. R. Gooch and J. B. Hicks; and for the Uniting Conference in 1939, J. B. Hicks.

April 9, 1952...

The First Methodist Church will bring their Lenten prayer meetings in the homes to a close tonight when everyone comes together for a prayer service in the church sanctuary at 7:30 o'clock.

September 13, 1952...

Many out-of-town visitors are expected to attend the performance of "Ruth" on Sunday evening at 8 o'clock at the First Methodist Church. Mrs. Harold M. Hardy of Warrenton will direct the cantata. Soloists will be Mrs. Smith Young, soprano, Miss Tempe Bradley, contralto, Stanley Potter, Jr., tenor, and Harold M. Hardy of Warrenton, baritone. The choir is composed of 13 voices. The musical drama is based on the biblical story of Ruth and Naomi with the arranged and original text by William B. Hight, Jr., and the music composed by Mrs. George Holden, both of this city.

October 1, 1952...

A congregation which filled the main auditorium of the First Methodist assembled Tuesday night for the service of dedication and thanksgiving marking the completion of the Revised Standard Version of the Holy Bible. The gathering was inter-denominational and participated in by church people throughout the community.

October 7, 1952...

At the monthly meeting of the Board of Stewards of the First Methodist Church last night, J. W. Jenkins, Jr., was elected Chairman of the Board for the coming year. R. C. Carter was named Vice-Chairman, and Mrs. Bessie Cox was reelected Secretary-Treasurer . . . . Rev. W. Stanley Potter is rounding out four years as pastor.

October 27, 1952...

Dr. A. P. Brantly who has served St. Paul Methodist Church in Goldsboro the past four years, was transferred to Henderson as pastor of the First Methodist Church . . . . He will succeed Rev. W. Stanley Potter, who goes to Haymount Church in Fayetteville after serving as pastor here for four years.



November 8, 1956...

About 100 men attended a dinner meeting last night at the First Methodist Church to plan for organization of a Methodist Men's Club in the church.

W. Jasper Smith of Bethel, until recently lay leader of the North Carolina Methodist Conference, was the speaker.

November 12, 1956...

Louisburg \_\_\_\_\_ Several hundred persons, including delegates from colleges, trustees, ministers, and others attended the inauguration of Dr. Cecil W. Robbins as President of Louisburg College today.

December 8, 1956...

Morning and evening services Sunday, with others to follow on Monday and Tuesday nights will mark the centennial of the First Baptist Church. The celebration coincides with occupancy of the new educational building by the congregation.

December 23, 1957...

More than 120 voices were included in the Christmas musicale given by six adult and young people's choirs at the First Methodist Church Sunday afternoon. The program was heard by a congregation which filled the main floor and balcony of the sanctuary for one of the largest groups ever to assemble in the building.

Included were the chancel or senior choir of adults, vested in black; the antiphonal choir composed of teenage girls vested in blue; the chapel choir, of children nine to twelve years of age, all girls in black; the boys' choir of unchanged voices, vested in black; the carol choir of boys and girls of seven and eight years, vested in green, and the cherub choir, consisting of children six years old, both boys and girls, vested in red.

The concert was directed by Mrs. H. M. Hardy, choir director, with Mrs. Nella Sharpe Holden at the organ.

Rev. A. S. Parker, the pastor read the Scripture from the second chapter of Luke's Gospel . . . .

#### FIRST METHODISTS WILL OCCUPY NEW QUARTERS

New Educational Facility Ready; Chapel is Complete

For the first time since work was completed recently, the Sunday School of the First Methodist Church will occupy the new educational building, it was announced today.

The chapel facing Garnett Street has likewise been completed but is not furnished, and formal opening of that structure will be deferred for several weeks.



The new construction, including the chapel, which is the gift of Mrs. P. H. Rose in memory of her late husband, represents an investment of approximately \$300,000, it was stated. A formal open house in the new quarters will be arranged after the first of the year.

The new building will provide accommodations for Sunday School departments from the intermediate group down to the kindergarten. Adult departments and classes generally will continue to meet in the old building. Old and new structures are connected, the new educational plant being located to the rear of the church proper.

In the new building, the first floor will have three rooms for the kindergarten, three rooms for the nursery and a mothers' room adjoining, and rooms for the Boy Scouts and the church parlor.

The second floor will have three rooms for the Junior Department, three for the primary division, and four rooms for the intermediate groups, together with an office for the department superintendent.

In the basement have been installed the heating plant and air conditioning equipment.

In the old building, the Men's Bible Class, which has for some time been meeting in the sanctuary, will move back to the basement auditorium. The Whitmore Wesley and Christine Jenkins adult classes will occupy present quarters on the first floor.

The young adult group will have accommodations on the second floor, and on that level have been provided also much larger quarters for the choir. Church offices including the pastor's study, will remain on the second floor as now.

Quarters have been arranged immediately to the rear of the sanctuary for arranging communion services and to prepare flowers for the sanctuary on Sunday and other occasions.

Concrete approaches to the new educational building are now under construction and will be completed within a few days.

Senior and young people's departments and the older youth groups will be provided for on the third floor of the old building.

HENDERSON DAILY DISPATCH, December 19, 1957.

## ROSE MEMORIAL CHAPEL OF METHODISTS OPENED

### Two Services Held There in Sunday Evening Hours

First services were held Sunday night in the new Paul H. Rose Memorial Chapel of the First Methodist Church. One service was held at eight o'clock,

followed by another at nine. The two were necessary because those desiring to attend could not all be accommodated at one time.

Rev. A. S. Parker, pastor of the church, conducted the services, most of both programs consisting of a recital on the new Allen organ installed in the chapel. The concert was given by Richard Van Sciver, organist and minister of music in the First Presbyterian Church in Charlotte.

The chapel is the gift of Mrs. P. H. Rose in memory of her husband, the late Paul H. Rose, founder and head of Rose's 5-10-25¢ Stores Corporation, of Henderson, who died three years ago. The chapel fronts Garnett Street and abuts church property to the rear. It has been built and furnished at a cost in excess of \$65,000.

The interior is finished in oak throughout, including the pews and the pulpit and choir furnishings. Seating capacity is approximately 130, exclusive of the choir, for which there are accommodations for a dozen or more singers, cathedral lights hang from the ceiling.

The chapel was dedicated at services held in December, but at that time it had not been furnished.

Rev. Mr. Parker announced last night that Sunday night services would be held in the chapel the next two Sundays, immediately preceding the session of the North Carolina Methodist Conference in Wilson the week of June 12. The chapel will also be used for weddings, funerals and other services from time to time.

The organist played a prelude prior to starting last night's program, which included congregation singing of "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name," followed by the pastor.

The program given by Van Sciver included:

"Prelude in D," Clerambault; "Prelude and Fugue in F," and "Air in D," both by Bach; March, from "Occasional Oratorio," by Handel, constituting the first of the three divisions of the program.

In the second group were Gavotte in F, by Martini; Solo de Flautom by Capocci, and Evening Son, by Schumann.

The third group of numbers offered "The Squirrel" by Weaver; "Dripping Spring" by Clokey; "Toccata in F," by Widor, and "Humoresque," "The Promitive Organ," by Yon.

Rev. Mr. Parker gave the benediction, followed by an organ postlude.

HENDERSON DAILY DISPATCH, June 9, 1958.



October 19, 1968...

The first recital on the new Aeolian-Skinner organ at First United Methodist Church will be played at 8 p.m., Sunday by Dr. Richard M. Peek, organist and choirmaster of Covenant Presbyterian Church, Charlotte . . . .

The new organ was designed specifically for the Methodist sanctuary, for use in worship services and for playing of organ literature of all periods.

The three-manual instrument was built by Aeolian-Skinner of South Boston, Massachusetts. It has 38 ranks with a total of 2,183 pipes. The Swell and Choir divisions are enclosed, the Great and Pedal are unenclosed and exposed . . . .

June 8, 1978.

Pastors of three United Methodist Churches in Henderson were returned here for another year when assignments for ministers were read by Bishop Robert M. Blackburn at the closing session of the North Carolina Methodist Conference in Fayetteville today.

Returning were the Rev. Samuel D. McMillan, Jr., for his second year at First Church; the Rev. Neil Smith for a fifth year at City Road; and the Rev. Lem Mason at White Memorial.

The Durham District, in which the local churches are located will have a new district superintendent in the Rev. Charles Mercer, who succeeds the Rev. Langill Watson, who is returning to the pastorate (FUMC, Wilson).

A new associate minister, the Rev. Robert K. Smith, has been appointed to First United Methodist Church.

November 10, 1979.

The United Methodist Women of First United Methodist Church will sponsor a food fair at the church Wednesday from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. Featured will be a number of food booths, an arts and crafts division, trash and treasure section and other attractions. Shown in the above photo preparing items for the fair are, left to right, Mrs. Lee Coghil, Mrs. Frank Legg, Mrs. Clyde Hight, Mrs. R. A. Leggett, and Mrs. J. W. Roswell. The public is invited to attend the event in the fellowship hall, it was announced. Proceeds from the fair will be used in support of local missions.

## METHODISTS HAVE 125TH ANNIVERSARY

Members of the First United Methodist Church in Henderson marked the 125th anniversary of the church in services held Sunday. A capacity congregation of 600 attended the forenoon worship service at which the pastor, Rev. Sam D. McMillan, Jr., presided.

The sermon was by Rev. Warren B. Petteway, superintendent of the Raleigh District, who was pastor of First Church from 1958 to 1965, or seven years, the longest pastorate of any minister who ever served the congregation. His theme was "To Serve the Present Age."

Rev. Robert K. Smith, associate minister, gave the children's sermon, presented the church with birthday cake, and had the children sing "Happy Birthday" to the church.

Under direction of William E. Hilderbrandt, director of music, the Youth Choir and the Girls Youth Chorus sang "How Lovely Is the House of God," and the Chancel Choir sang "Except the Lord Build the House."

Recognized as the oldest member present was Clarence S. Finch, 90. Recognized as members with the longest continuous membership in the church Sam R. Harris, Jr., who became a member Nov. 11, 1900; Mrs. Maude Renn Grissom who joined Oct. 6, 1901; Miss Carrie Marrow and Miss Lillian Stallings who joined the church in 1907, and Robert Carter in 1909.

Also recognized were members of the former Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church.

Before Sunday School and again before morning worship, and before afternoon service, the church bell was rung. This bell was in the original church of 1854 on South Garnett Street, was later moved to the M. E. Church, South, in 1889; and then to the present church, which was begun in 1925 and completed and occupied in 1929. Following the morning worship service, the newly repaired carillon was played for the first time in recent years.

Lunch in the Fellowship Hall followed the morning service, and was attended by an estimated 500. Many viewed a historic display in the Whitmore Wesley Classroom.

At the afternoon service, following the luncheon, some 200 persons attended an historic program presided over by John R. Mundy, chairman of the 125th anniversary committee. A brief history of the church was given by George T. Blackburn, II, which will be printed later.

A paper on the union of the Methodist Church, Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church, entitled "The Methodists Are One People," was given by Jasper B. Hicks. Hicks was a delegate to the uniting conference of the three denominations in Kansas City in 1939.



Following were a series of presentations by several members on memorable and humorous incidents in the life of the church. Those who spoke were Sam R. Harris, Jr., Mrs. Lettie Finch Payne, Robert S. Hight, Mrs. Helen Whitmore Burleson, Richard C. Carter, Edgar Marvin Edwards and Sam T. Peace, Jr.

The afternoon program began with a hymn sing led by Robert L. Johnson and ended with the singing of "Blest Be The Tie That Binds," and the benediction by Rev. Sam McMillan, Jr., the pastor.

HENDERSON DAILY DISPATCH, October 15, 1979.

### 125th Anniversary, Oct. 14, 1979



Rev. Sam McMillan, Mrs. Maude Grissom, Sam Harris, Clarence Finch, Rev. Warren Petteway and John Mundy, Chairperson of the 125th Anniversary Committee.



Henry Dennis, G.T. Blackburn II, J.W. Rogers, and J.C. Stabler.



## MISCELLANEOUS ARTICLES

### HAPPINESS UNCONFINED AT HENDERSON

Sunday, November 11, 1934, will be cherished long by the Methodists of Henderson. Rev. D.E. Earnhardt and his people of First Church know the joy of work well done. The church, relieved of a \$75,000 debt, was ready for dedication to the worship of Almighty God. Songs of victory and hearts filled to overflowing were the order of this Holy Sabbath Day. The presence of our new leader, Bishop Paul B. Kern, for his first appearance in this immediate section added to the delight of the occasion.

The church was crowded below and above. The vested singers filled every seat in the choir loft; and the potted plants and big vases of white chrysanthemums about the altar rendered beautiful the entire chancel. In the pulpit with the pastor and the bishop, joining with them in the services, were Reverends, F. S. Love, presiding elder, T. G. Vickers, a former pastor, and M. T. Plyler, editor of the North Carolina Christian Advocate. In the corner to the left of the chancel was seated the entire official board. The fine autumn day without and the eager and responsive worshippers within contributed to the success of the occasion.

The sermon by Bishop Kern was most appropriate. He presented so clearly the place of the church in the world that it made a profound impression on his eager listeners. In a fine way this prepared the way for the exercises of dedication, in which all the officials entered. Mr. J. H. Bridgers, an honored member of the Henderson Bar and a familiar figure at Methodist conferences, told of the work begun under the leadership of Rev. T. G. Vickers, finished under the leadership of Rev. W. C. Martin, and now freed of debt under the inspiration of the Rev. D. E. Earnhardt. Then came the burning of the mortgage, to be followed by the presentation and the dedication, with the official board kneeling around the altar as the congregation stood.

Spontaneously, following the benediction, were greetings and handshakings all over the house. Were all Methodist congregations as fervent and as friendly as was this, the charge of coldness in our religious assemblies would disappear. Well, they had something to feel good over! Yes, Sunday, November 11, 1934, will be cherished long by the Methodists of Henderson. We could wish that they might continue to sing as they did on this happy day. May Christians solid as those granite walls be nurtured here.

--N. C. Christian Advocate

### Brief Historical Sketch

During the Summer of 1881, this Church was organized by William A. Harris, K. W. Coghill, W. Henry Hart, John F. Harris, Geo. A. Harris and their families. The first church building was erected on Garnett Street, where the residence of John Rose now stands, almost opposite the home of J. Bailey



Owen. The lot was given by William A. Harris, the building was erected by K. W. Coghill and was built of selected lumber from Moore County, and at the time of its erection was the most spacious church building in Henderson. William A. Harris was the largest contributor to the church. His brother, John F. Harris, was the next largest contributor.

Rev. S. P. J. Harris, a local minister of this church, preached frequently during the year and kept the organization functioning until the first regular pastor was installed. This was Rev. James P. Simpson, of Georgia. Following Brother Simpson the church has been served by the following pastors: Rev. S. W. Coe, Rev. T. J. Ogburn, Rev. T. M. Johnson, Rev. J.S. Williams, Rev. W. F. Kenneth, Rev. A. G. Dixon, Rev. R. M. Andrews, Rev. J. D. Williams, Rev. S. W. Taylor, Rev. J. E. Pritchard and Rev. R. A. Hunter.

In the year 1899, steps were taken to erect a new building, which was completed and occupied during the year 1900. The growth of the Sunday School required additional space, and in 1924, the new annex was finished, under the pastorate of Rev. J. E. Pritchard.

The Annual Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church of North Carolina met with this church during the years 1887, 1901, 1911, and 1922.

During the forty-eight years of its life, this church has maintained regular services as follows: Sunday School, preaching morning and evening, and prayer meeting Wednesday evening.

The church in its first year had about thirty-five members, all of whom have joined the Church Triumphant, except Mrs. F. S. Harris (Miss Carrie Coghill, daughter of K. W. Coghill), who now resides in Washington, D.C.

The faith of the founders of this church will appear when we recall that the population of Henderson did not exceed 2,000 and the Methodist Episcopal, South, the Protestant Episcopal, the Presbyterian and Baptist Churches all had flourishing organizations, equipped and actively engaged in the work in the little town, at the time of its organization, and the fact that their faith was well founded is made clear when we see that the present membership is about 375, ten times as many as in 1881.

The population of the city is now about 10,000 and two other churches, the Christian and Roman Catholic, have been organized. For more than two score years this church has done its work well, standing by its faith and its doctrine, which is the Armenian taught and interpreted, as in other Methodist Churches of America. It is thoroughly organized for active work among its membership and the un-churched of the community. The Sunday School is one of the very best of the denomination in the State. It is thoroughly organized from Cradle Roll to Home Department.

Year Book and Directory  
First Methodist Protestant Church  
Henderson, N. C.  
April, 1929.



## HISTORICAL SKETCH OF FIRST M. P. CHURCH HENDERSON, N.C.

The church was organized in the summer of 1881. The membership came largely from five families--William A. Harris, W. Henry Hart, John F. Harris, K. W. Coghill, and George A. Harris. The first church building was erected on a lot which was given by William A. Harris. At the time this was the most spacious church building in the town which then had a population of around 2,000.

During the summer and fall of 1881, Rev. S. P. J. Harris, a local preacher, served as pastor. On November 30th, 1881, Rev. James P. Simpson of Georgia was appointed as the pastor at the session of the conference which was held at Chestnut Ridge in Orange County. On December 9th of that year the church held a meeting for the purpose of organizing the official board of the church. The following have served as pastors since the organization of the church: D. A. Fishel and T. T. Ferree as associate pastors, F. M. Totten, J. T. Jones, S. W. Coe, T. J. Ogburn, T. M. Johnson, J.S. Williams, W. F. Kennett, A. G. Dixon, R. M. Andrews, J. D. Williams, S. W. Taylor, J.E. Pritchard, R. A. Hunter, L. W. Gerringer, L. R. Medlin, and T. J. Whitehead. In the history of the church a large number of these pastors have been elected as Annual Conference Presidents. The following have been Presidents during fifty-seven years history of the church: J. R. Ball, R. H. Wills, T. J. Ogburn, W. A. Bunch, T. T. Ferree, W. E. Swain, T. M. Johnson, C. A. Cecil, C. S. Cecil, G. W. Holmes, R. M. Andrews, A. G. Dixon, S. W. Taylor, J. E. Pritchard.

METHODIST PROTESTANT HERALD, December 15, 1938.

### ANNIVERSARY SERVICES AT HENDERSON

Last Sunday morning it was my privilege to be in the anniversary services of our church at Henderson, commemorating its fifty-seven years of active service. The weather was almost ideal and a fine congregation assembled to take part in the services. Several people of other denominations came to help our people make the day a success. Greetings were read from all of the living former pastors and from the family of the late Dr. L. W. Gerringer who went to his reward from this church. It is always difficult to properly appraise the work of a church but this one especially. For in more than half a century, members of this congregation furnished the money to educate a number of the ministers in our conference and several of these men came back and served this church as pastors. Three former presidents of our Annual Conference who are still in the active work, Drs. R. M. Andrews, A. G. Dixon, and S. W. Taylor, have served this church as pastors. It was my privilege to serve it for five years.

One of the outstanding things about this church has been the character and quality of its leadership. From the very beginning it has numbered among its members some of the leading citizens of the city. Many who were once prominent in this church and in the life of the city have passed on to their rewards while others are not able to take the active parts which they once took, but there are still those in the church who are able to carry on. While the church has never grown as much as some of our churches have done, it has been a tower of strength. For a long period of years it was, perhaps, the best



known church in our conference. There has seldom been held a General Conference in the last half a century that did a magnificent piece of work. Fortunate were they to be able to lay the foundation and fortunate have been the pastors who have been able to minister at the altar of this noble church.

The present pastor is the Rev. Talton Johnson Whitehead, an Alamance County man, a graduate of High Point College and the Duke school of religion. He and his good wife have the work well in hand and are very happy in it. The people speak in the highest terms of them, so it seems to be a happy situation both from the standpoint of the pastor and the people. It was a great joy to be there. Long live the Henderson Church!

METHODIST PROTESTANT HERALD, December 15, 1938.

FIRST SERVICE OF FORMER M. P. AND M. E. CHURCH, SOUTH  
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1940

The church bulletin of First Methodist Church, Henderson, N.C., for Sunday, November 17, 1940, was lent to our church for the 125th Anniversary Celebration. This bulletin reveals that Dr. S. W. Taylor, a former pastor of the M. P. Church, and then Superintendent of the High Point District of the Western N. C. Conference preached at the eleven o'clock service on, "Spiritual Enlarging of the Methodist Church." The pastor, the Rev. B. C. Reavis, lead an "Affirmation of Merger" at the morning worship service and preached at the evening service on "Light." The offertory anthem at the morning service was "Inflamatus, Stabat Mater" by Rossini, with Mrs. H. M. Hardy as soloist. Supper for the young people was served at 6:00 p.m. Announcements in the bulletin included: "We take this opportunity to express our sincere and cordial welcome to the members of the former Christ Methodist Church who are making their church home here now. Unification has made us one denomination, merger has made us one church, and God our heavenly Father, has made us one family."

OUTSTANDING SESSION OF NORTH CAROLINA  
CONFERENCE HELD AT HENDERSON

WARRENTON, Nov. 12.--When the final benediction was pronounced last Sunday afternoon in lovely First Methodist Church, Henderson, six hundred ministers and laymen had the profound conviction that the North Carolina Conference had closed one of its outstanding sessions. And there were at least five reasons for this unanimous feeling. First, the lavish and unbounding hospitality of the Rev. Chancie D. Barclift, pastor-host, and his big-hearted congregation; secondly, the excellent character of the program; thirdly, the unusual reports made by the 259 charges of the Conference; fourthly, the superb generalship of the presiding officer; and finally, the high objectives set for the new Conference year.

It is no easy task to entertain six hundred people in these days of critical housing and food shortages. Yet when larger communities in our Conference hesitated to assume this task, Mr. Barclift and his splendid congregation accepted the responsibility. And measured by any standard, they did it



magnificently. Even the most fastidious were well pleased. The delicious meals served in the dining room of the church, the general atmosphere created by the pastor, his family, and the splendid staff of workers, the superior music by the choir, and the unstinted hospitality of the people who opened their homes to visitors, made no small contribution to the high character of the Conference.

From beginning to end the program maintained a high standard. The Communion of the Lord's Supper, administered by Bishop Peel and the seven District Superintendents, on Wednesday evening prepared spiritually every heart for the significant days ahead.

Sunday was the outstanding day of the Conference. The day began with the annual Love Feast, conducted by the Rev. E. H. Davis of Louisburg, assisted by the Revs. J. T. Draper, J. H. Shore and C. P. Jerome. The Conference sermon was delivered by Dr. Gilbert Rowe, acting dean of the Duke Divinity School. Speaking on the topic, "Fishers of Men," Dr. Rowe declared that the obligation of the minister was to take men out of the puddle and put them into the ocean of God's love. In the afternoon Dr. H. I. Glass brought the Memorial Address, and Bishop Peeple read the appointments, adjourning the Conference.

-C.W. Robbins, N.C. Christian Advocate, November 14, 1946.

#### A GOODLY HERITAGE

The Psalmist said, "The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places, yea, I have a goodly heritage." (Ps. 16.16) Surely we can echo these words as we come this Sunday to celebrate our 125th anniversary.

In 1854, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, completed a frame building which had a large gallery across both sides and across the front or main entrance. The bell installed in that first church was moved to the brick church built in 1889 on the S.W. corner of Church and Garnett; in 1929 it was moved to the present church building, and it is still in use today. A picture of this bell is on display, and we rejoice that for 125 years it has been peeling out the good news.

In 1881, a Methodist Protestant Church was organized on north Garnett; in 1900 a brick church was built at the corner of Wyche and Breckenridge; and in 1924 an educational annex was added. One of the baptismal fonts in our present sanctuary came from the M. P. Church, and the other came from the old M. E. Church, South.

In 1934, the debt was paid off on the present sanctuary; and a dedication service was held under the leadership of the Rev. D. E. Earnhardt. In 1940, the M. P. and M. E. South churches united with Rev. B. C. Reavis as pastor. In 1956, during the pastorate of the Rev. A. S. Parker, the present educational building and the Rose Chapel were begun. We entered the educational building in December of 1957 and held the formal opening of the Rose Chapel in June of 1958. In 1958, the Rev. Warren Petteway began a successful seven year ministry here; and in 1966, we purchased the present parsonage on Hillcrest Drive.



In our 125th year, we are a strong church; proud of our heritage; and determined to offer a creative ministry to the children, youth, and adults of our community.

--Cover for News Letter  
First United Methodist Church  
Henderson, N.C.  
Oct. 14, 1979

### FIRST CHURCH HENDERSON CELEBRATES 125th YEAR

The First United Methodist Church of Henderson observed its 125th Anniversary on Sunday, October 14. Rev. Samuel D. McMillan, Jr. is the church's pastor.

Rev. Warren B. Petteway, Superintendent of the Raleigh District of the N. C. Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church was guest speaker for the eleven o'clock worship service. Petteway served the Henderson church 1958-1965, and has the distinction of serving the church longer than any of its forty-three pastors.

Mr. John Mundy was chairperson of the 125th Anniversary Committee. The 125th anniversary celebration included: a luncheon in the Fellowship Hall; an historic display in the Whitmore Wesley Class; and an historic program in the sanctuary following the luncheon. G. T. Blackburn, II, local attorney, has written a history of the church. He shared highlights of the history with the congregation.

Methodism came to Vance County as early as 1798 when Bishop Francis Asbury organized Salem Church; but the first Methodist Church in Henderson was built in 1854 on South Garnett Street on a lot given by Albert Alley. An article in the Henderson Daily Dispatch dated Nov. 16, 1929, indicates that the church was on the site "of the present Hawkins Building," and lists the first Trustees as Henry Burwell, Parry Wyche, Albert Alley, Archibald Turner, Lewis H. Kittle, and Thomas Blacknall.

Rev. Junius P. Moore was pastor at the time the church was organized in 1854; and Archibald Turner who owned a saw mill, furnished the material. The bell installed in this church was later moved to the church built in 1889 on N. Garnett St., and is in use now in the church which was begun in 1925. Rev. W. C. Martin preached the first sermon in the present church on Nov. 10, 1929; and the debt was paid off in 1934, under the leadership of Rev. D. E. Earnhardt. The Rose Chapel and educational building were added to the church in 1956-1958. The Chapel was given in memory of Paul Howard Rose by his widow, Mrs. Emma Myrick Rose.

The parsonage for the church of 1889 is the stately two-story home now occupied by Mrs. F. B. Hight at 117 Church Street. In 1937, the church built a brick parsonage immediately behind the new church. This building is currently occupied by the Franklin, Vance, Warren Opportunity, Inc. In 1966, the church purchased a new parsonage at 371 Hillcrest Drive.



The Methodist Protestant Church was organized in Henderson in 1881 on N. Garnett Street on a lot given by William A. Harris. In 1900 the M. P. Church built a new church at the corner of Wyche and Breckenridge (the site of the present Rose parking lot); and in 1924 they added an educational annex.

In 1939, Jasper B. Hicks of Henderson was a delegate to the uniting conference at which the Methodist Episcopal Church, the M. E. Church, South, and the M. P. Church reunited to form the Methodist Church. In 1940, the Christ Protestant Church and the First Methodist Church, South, united to become the First Methodist Church of Henderson. The present sanctuary is unique in that it has two baptismal fonts; one from the old M. P. Church; and one from the old M. E. Church, South.

--The North Carolina Christian Advocate, October 16, 1979.



Preparing for 1979 UMW Food Fair, Mrs. Lee Coghill, Mrs. Frank Legg, Jr., Mrs. Clyde Hight (Pres.1980), Mrs. Robert Leggett (Pres. 1979), and Mrs. J.W. Rowell.



## FROM THE QUARTERLY CONFERENCE AND CHARGE CONFERENCE MINUTES

In 1904, as the Henderson Charge celebrated its 50th anniversary, we were in the Warrenton District of the N. C. Conference. Rev. G. F. Smith was the Presiding Elder, Rev. L.L. Nash was the Pastor in Charge; R. D. Daniel was listed as Assistant Pastor, and F. H. Russiter was listed on the Quarterly Conference Roll as Local Deacon. Sunday School Superintendents were listed as follows: O. O. White, Henderson Station; George Haughtaling, Henderson Mission; and W. L. Gorlick, Harriet Mill Mission.

The First Quarterly Conference, March 7, 1904 reported: 377 members; two houses of worship valued at \$13,500 (\$86.17 indebtedness); one parsonage valued at \$2,000 (\$263.50 indebtedness); \$900 paid the Preacher in Charge; and \$2,603.50 as the total amount raised from all sources during the year.

Rev. L. L. Nash reported, ". . . we have good Sunday Schools that have kept up well through the exceedingly bad weather during the winter. The officers and teachers are diligent and efficient in their work . . . the general condition of the church is very hopeful. The attendance on the preaching services and communion and prayer meetings has been good through the winter

The collections ordered by the annual conference were paid in full last year. We hope to pay them in full this year."

"Bro. J. L. Currin, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, reported that the Harriet Mill Chapel was burned (Nov. 30, 1903), having insurance of \$300.00 and indebtedness of \$86.17 and about \$18.00 for seats. Bro. Currin was appointed to raise funds, and rebuild the chapel."

At the Second Quarterly Conference, June 7, 1904 . . . "The deed in fee simple for Harriet Mill Chapel was paid before the Conference and ordered recorded."

The following report was made on the Sunday Schools. . . "The Sunday Schools are in a flourishing condition, at the station 193 scholars are enrolled, being an increase of 50 over the number enrolled at this time last year . . . At Henderson Mill we have 100 on roll and the average attendance is 75 . . . At the Harriet Mill we have 45 scholars enrolled, with an average attendance of 26. We have been badly crippled in our work here for the want of a house."

The Pastor reported, "The spiritual condition of the church is improving. The prayer meetings and preaching services and communion services are well attended." He went on to say, "Collections for missions are being taken and the subject is kept before the church. We have a good Women's Foreign Missionary Society, and a Home Mission Society, and an active Bright Jewel Society."

At the Third Quarterly Conference, August 19, 1904, the Pastor reported, "The Sunday School has not been as well attended during the hot weather as it was during the Winter and Spring. There has been and still is a considerable number of our people sick. . . . We have organized an Epworth



League which is starting off well." E. M. Brady was President of the Epworth League.

Members of the Board of Stewards in 1904 were: J. H. Bridgers, N. B. Thomas, W. E. Moss, S. N. Rowland, L. I. Kerner, W. T. Cheatham, R. R. Piekston, Rufus H. Powell, George Houghtaling, R. H. Craig, J. B. Pridgen, and Stephen A. Kelly.

The First Quarterly Conference, April 7, 1929. As the church celebrated its 75th year, the Pastor, Rev. W. C. Martin, reported, "The Epworth Leagues are active in their work, carrying on a constructive program of activities which mean much to the young life of our church."

A Special Session of the Quarterly Conference Meeting, April 22, 1929 authorized the borrowing of \$60,000 from the American Bank and Trust Company of Richmond, Virginia to complete work on the church. Interest was at 8%. Payments of \$5,000 per year for nine years and \$15,000 in 10th year. Motion by T. W. McCracken and second of James W. Jenkins. Motion passed 11-0. The Quarterly Conference also passed a motion authorizing the sale of church lot with 77 feet on Garnett St., by 100 feet on Church Street for \$15,000 by Nov. 30, 1929. Passed 10-0.

At the Third Quarterly Conference, June 26, 1929, Pastor W.C. Martin reported, "Another item worthy of record is that the new church will be completed in early August. We will move into the Sunday School Building and Basement auditorium the last week in July. The old church has been sold, and we will hold our last service here July 28th."

Mr. J. H. Bridgers presented a resolution, ". . . that the deed for the old church property . . . which the Quarterly Conference has heretofore contracted to sell and convey to James W. Jenkins be executed by the trustees upon payment of the purchase price . . . on or before the 29th of July, 1929." The resolution passed 9-0.

At the Fourth Quarterly Conference, Sept. 4, 1929, the Pastor reported, "We approach the close of this conference year with the feeling that the general state of the church has improved during the year. For the most part the congregation has followed the leadership of the pastor and has given maganimous support in carrying forward the completion of the new church during the conference year."

At the First Quarterly Conference, December 30, 1929 we reported: 580 members; \$190,000 value of church and equipment; \$60,000 indebtedness on church buildings; \$60,000 indebtedness; \$8,000 value of parsonage; 125 women in two missionary societies; a Sunday School Enrollment of 430; \$3,600 paid Preacher in Charge; \$1,054 paid Conference Work; \$721 paid General Work; \$50 paid Foreign Missions; \$733 paid for Orphanages; and a grand total of \$40,306 paid for the year for all causes. On a vote of 13-0 the Quarterly Conference adopted a motion by J. W. Jenkins and second of J. H. Cheatham to borrow \$4,000 on the parsonage to pay off unexpected debts on the new church.



At the First Quarterly Conference, January 21, 1934, the records indicate that Dr. F. S. Love was Presiding Elder, Rev. D. E. Earnhardt was Pastor in Charge, J. H. Bridgers was Recording Steward, and W. E. Moss was Lay Leader. The membership was listed as 700; 630 was reported as the Sunday School Enrollment; and there were 130 members in the Women's Missionary Society. The value of the buildings was listed as \$180,000 with an indebtedness of \$57,000; and the parsonage was listed as valued at \$8,000 with a \$3,000 indebtedness. The Pastor's salary was \$3,240; and the total paid for all causes was \$15,116.

Rev. D. E. Earnhardt reported: "The tides are rising in the life of our local church . . . . The financial strain has considerably lessened in the last three months. The new finance plan whereby the Sunday School and Church budgets unified is working wonders here. The Stewards have their meetings now with their minds free to consider something besides current expenses in arrears. Our bills are now paid by the month and what is left is placed on our church indebtedness . . . . There is renewed interest in the prayer meeting . . . . There is an atmosphere of expectancy in our church and there would be no surprise among our people if we were to experience a great awakening this year."

At the Third Quarterly Conference, July 10, 1934, Rev. D. E. Earnhardt reported, "We have taken care of our twins at the orphanage, also a leper in the leper colony--besides sending in our regular dues . . . . All officers are showing a lovely spirit of cooperation in making our society worthwhile. . . . During the present quarter we have been attempting to negotiate a settlement of the church debt."

At the Fourth Quarterly Conference, November 11, 1934, the following Sunday School Officials were listed: H. A. Dennis, General Superintendent; F. M. Barnhardt, Intermediate; Mrs. J. W. Jenkins, Young People; Miss Mariel Gary, Children.

Brother Earnhardt reported, "We have recently put on a campaign to clear the church of debt and succeeded with it, as far as the bonded indebtedness was concerned. We owed the American Bank and Trust Company of Richmond \$57,000. That has been paid and the church building is clear of all encumbrances. We owe about the same at local banks that we did before the campaign, but we have made plans for gradual retirement of it."

The following persons were reported as elected Stewards for the ensuing year: Frank M. Barnhardt, J. H. Bridgers, J. H. Cheatham, Joel T. Cheatham, R. J. Corbitt, C. A. Crews, H. A. Dennis, G. W. Gurgerson, J. E. Hite, J. W. Jenkins, Tobias Kearnes, L. C. Kerner, George Leggett, T. W. McCracken, J. E. Mann, A. M. Massenburg, H. T. Morris, C. G. Patterson, W. D. Payne, S. T. Peace (Honorary), I. M. Petty, R. B. Powell, H. M. Robertson, E. M. Rollins, T. B. Rose, Jr., and I. D. Smith.

At the Second Quarterly Conference, April 23, 1939, Pastor R. E. Brown reported, "We have just closed the best Easter Meeting we have had at First Church, Henderson in four years . . . . We have for two years had joint meetings with the Young People of the Methodist Episcopal and Methodist



Protestant Churches. Each Sunday night we have about 40 young people and a light supper is served and the Young People all remain for the program. At the night service these young people fill the choir and assist in other ways in the worship."

At the Third Quarterly Conference on July 16, 1939 it was announced that the Pastor's son, Robert McLean Brown, had answered the call to preach during the senior assembly at Louisburg. This made the third generation of Browns to hear the call. Pastor Brown reported, "On Mother's Day we dedicated a wonderful two manual Pipe Organ, the gift of Mrs. J. C. Cooper . . . . A two week Vacation Bible School has been held with an enrollment of over 130. . . . We have participated in the countywide program for the abolition of liquor . . . . Our Women's Missionary Society, Sunday School, and general state of the church are in healthy working condition. We wish to recommend J. W. Sanders as Superintendent of the Church School and C. A. Crews as Assistant Superintendent."

At the Fourth Quarterly Conference on October 24, 1939 it was reported that we had 114 members in the Missionary Society; that W. B. Beasley was Treasurer; and that the Trustees were--J. H. Bridgers, R. B. Powell, N. B. Thomas, Joel T. Cheatham, S. T. Peace, and E.M. Rollins. The value of the parsonage was listed as \$12,000.00 with an indebtedness of \$5,500.00. The value of the church was listed as \$185,000.00. Pastor R. E. Brown reported that Bishop W. W. Peele preached on July 30th ". . . and joined in the local celebration of the Union of Methodism." He went on to say, "It is the purpose of the church to report all items in full at the Annual Conference November 8th in Fayetteville."

At the First Quarterly Conference on December 8, 1940, Dr. H. I. Glass, Superintendent of the Raleigh District presided and J. H. Bridgers served as recording secretary. Pastor B. C. Reavis reported: "The spiritual state of our church is good. A beautiful spirit of harmony and cooperation prevails." It was also reported that the Finance Committee had secured the services of Mrs. Bessie W. Cox as full time Church Secretary. The Conference authorized the sale of the property formerly owned by Christ Protestant Church; and it was reported that we had received 340 members from the Methodist Protestant Church when the two churches merged. At the second Quarterly Conference on March 16, 1941, it was reported that Walter Thompson had been hired as the new DCE.

At the First Quarterly Conference on January 4, 1942 it was reported that Mrs. R. C. Gary had been reelected to the Presidency of the Women's Society of Christian Service and that Mrs. Della H. Hayes had been elected President of the Wesleyan Service Guild.

At the Third Quarterly Conference on August 16, 1942 it was reported that "Miss Mildred Whitener, our Christian Educational Director is off to a fine start . . . ." Our Church's involvement in the Second World War was reflected in these reports. ". . . On July 12 two beautiful flags were dedicated to the church, the United States flag being given by Mrs. L. J. Rox and her daughter, Mrs. Graham Boyd in memory of Lt. Lawrence J. Rox and a



Christian flag given by the daughters of Mr. and Mrs. N. B. Thomas as a token of appreciation of their parents. In connection with this service of dedication a roster was presented which bears the names of each man in service from our church. . . . Our church with other churches in the community is working on a plan of recreation for soldiers who visit our city. This is being done in connection with the USO."

At the Fourth Quarterly Conference Held September 16, 1954, Mrs. Alta H. Gordan, President of the WSCS reported 250 members in the WSCS and 58 members in the Wesleyan Service Guild. The WSCS had placed Bibles in every room in the local hospital and held four studies. Sixty attended the Bible Study; 55 the World Missions Study; 40 the National Missions Study; and 50 the Christian Social Relations Study. In 1954, as the church celebrated its 100th anniversary, Mr. J. C. Stabler was Chairman of the Commission on Education; Mr. J. W. Sanders was Church School Superintendent; and the Church School reported 70 officers and teachers; 30 Nursery Home Members; 243 in the Children's Division; 95 in the Youth Division; 30 Adult Home Members and 448 in the Adult Division, for a total enrollment of 916. We reported an average attendance of 460 in Sunday School and 40 at Sunday Evening Youth Fellowship. Divisional Superintendents were: Mrs. R. W. Ingram, Children's; J. G. Burleson, Youth; and W. D. Payne, Adult, and Assistant Church School Superintendent. Joe Farmer, Jr., was MYF President, and our youth counselors were: Mrs. B. H. Mixon, Mrs. Rebekah T. Dodd, and Miss Edna Briggs. Rev. R. Grady Dawson, District Superintendent presided at the Charge Conference and Jasper Hicks served as recording steward and secretary. The Pastor's salary was set at \$6,600--a \$600 increase. Dr. A. P. Brantley, Pastor reported 1314 members, a gain of 31 since December, 1953. He also reported 24 from the church in the Armed Services (Korean War); 40 away at College, and 32 attending summer camps, institutes, and assemblies. In our 100th year, W. D. Payne was Charge Lay Leader; T. B. Rose was Chairman of the Commission on Finance; Mrs. Bessie W. Cox was Secretary-Treasurer of the Church; and Jasper B. Hicks was Chairman of the Board of Trustees. The audit report by W. B. Beasley dated 1-4-54 indicated: \$369.39 on hand 10-31-53; \$35,758.29 received November 1952-October 1953; disbursements of \$35,102.23; and cash on hand of \$646.06 Oct. 31, 1953. The Budget for 1954-1955 was reported as: \$15,000.00, Salaries; \$6,612.00 General Expenses (only \$750.00 for fuel); and \$10,162.00 Benevolences and Conference Obligations for a total of \$32,974.00.

Church officials elected for 1954-1955 included: John T. Church, Chairman of the Administrative Board; Trustees, E. O. Falkner, S. R. Harris, Jr., J. B. Hicks (Chm.), J. W. Jenkins, M. F. Legg, and T. W. McCracken; Richard A. Davis, Chairman of the Commission on Missions; and Miss Carolyn Wilkinson, DCE. Committee Chairmen included: E. C. Kittrell, Church Property; S. H. Young, Social Life; J. B. Hicks, Records and Church History; A. P. Brantley, Social Service; Harold Zekaria, Scouts; J. B. Hicks, Pastoral Relations; C. D. Rollins; N. D. Holloway, Audit; T. W. McCracken, Jr., Building Committee; J. G. Burleson, Music; Mrs. F. B. Robards, Temperance; Miss Mariel Cary, Church Literature; Stewart Finch, Ushering; Carroll V. Singleton, Publicity; and J. W. Jenkins, Gifts and Memorials.



The Reverend A. S. Parker served as Pastor of our church from 1954 through 1958. In December of 1957 we entered the new Educational Building; and in June of 1958, we held the first service in the Paul H. Rose Memorial Chapel which was given by Mrs. P. H. Rose in memory of her husband, the founder of Roses Stores, Inc.

The Reverend Warren B. Petteway has the distinction of serving the Henderson church longer than any other pastor. Brother Petteway was a greatly loved and highly effective minister, and during his seven year ministry (1958-1965), the church experienced remarkable growth from 1338 to 1562 members--a net gain of 224.

The Fourth Quarterly Conference of June 8, 1959 reported a Sunday School Enrollment of 929; and an average attendance of 475 at Sunday School; and a membership of 1338. The Annual Conference now meets in June instead of the fall; and we reported \$42,373.95 received July 1, 1958 through June 1, 1959. Mrs. S. T. Peace, Jr., Mrs. Fred B. High, Miss Rosa Long Thomas, and Miss Agnes Moore were listed as Communion Stewards. Commission Chairmen included: Dr. Walter H. Finch, Jr., Membership and Evangelism; J. W. Jenkins, Jr., Education; Mrs. R. C. Gary, Missions; and F. S. Royster, Stewardship and Finance. Other Church Officials included: W. D. Payne, Lay Leader; W. B. Beasley, Church School Superintendent; Mrs. P. S. Harris, Mrs. B. H. Mixon, and Edgar M. Edwards Divisional Superintendents; and Stewart Finch, Chairman of the Ushering Committee.

The Fourth Quarterly Conference of May 25, 1960 reported: a membership of 1340; 244 members in the WSCS; 45 members in the WSG; and \$41,500.00 owed on the Building Fund note. It also revealed that Barney Beasley was Church School Superintendent; J. C. Stabler was Lay Leader; and Mrs. J. T. Barker was President of the WSCS.

Rev. W. B. Petteway's Pastor's Report to the Fourth Quarterly Conference of May 28, 1962 included these statements:

". . . Almost every Sunday morning our sanctuary is filled to capacity. We have fine attendance at our evening services.

". . . You have heard the membership summary for the year (90 received, net gain of \_\_\_ and total membership of 1490). This would indicate that our church is experiencing steady growth. You will be interested to know that the pastor makes from 75 to 100 calls a month, when possible, in the homes of this parish; this in addition to regular calling at the hospitals of this area.

". . . During the year \$30,000 was spent to renovate the sanctuary and a portion of the educational building.

". . . The Commission on Finance and the Commission on Missions, and the Official Board recommended a Benevolence acceptance of \$17,000 for the coming year. This is a \$7,000 increase in the last four years.

". . . Mrs. Fannie Cooper Gilliam has recently given a memorial gift of \$10,000 which will be used to renovate the organ in the sanctuary.



. . . In our recent Every Member Visitation we subscribed the amount of \$83,134.92.

In closing, let me say that ours is a wonderful church, accomplishing many things. But we are rising above the routine of things, facing up to the fact that in our world there are wrongs to be righted, walls to be leveled, obstacles to be overcome, and a world to be redeemed for God."

Rev. Warren Petteway's Pastor's Report to the First Quarterly Conference of June 12, 1961 said in part:

"This was a year of busy activity and achievement for First Methodist Church. Our people have given full cooperation to the program and work of the Church.

During the year we paid \$41,312 on our Educational Building, which we dedicated on May 21 (1961).

The Pastor has attempted to visit our people regularly. However, the pastoral load of the church becomes heavier each year.

The Pastor believes that our people are growing in the grace of our Lord, in the knowledge of His will for them, and in their service in His vineyard. Our people have wrought well in many things, and they are catching a vision of even finer things."

The minutes also contain this statement: "J.W. Jenkins, Jr., wants to express appreciation of our pastor's fine work and ask that he be returned next year. The District Superintendent assured us Mr. Petteway would be returning to us."

At the First Quarterly Conference on November 1, 1961 the following were recommended as Certified Lay Speakers: Edgar Marvin Edwards, John Rainey, Jasper Hicks, J. C. Stabler, W. D. Payne, and Robert S. Hight. It was reported: that the WSCS had paid \$1,000 into the Building Fund; that we had 45 students in college; and that 8 youth attended summer assemblies. Mr. J. W. Rogers, Chairman of the Commission on Membership and Evangelism reported that we had received 107 members.

The Fourth Quarterly Conference was held May 28, 1962, and reported the following financial matters: \$17,000.00 paid in benevolences; \$8,300.00 paid on salary and \$1,000.00 on travel; \$117,222.52 total raised for the year, including a \$30,000.00 loan. The Church School reported an average attendance of 460 compared to 475 the year before. The Church School enrollment was: 91 Officers; 245 Children's Division; 217 Youth Division; and 371 Adult Division; for a total of 924. This was down from the year before with a major loss being 58 in the adult division. It was reported that there were 239 members in the Women's Society of Christian Service and 46 members in the Wesleyan Service Guild for a total of 285. The Church membership was reported at 1490; with 90 members having been received; 42 members lost; and a net gain of 48 for the year. The church membership was still growing, but a decline of 53 was noted in the Sunday School Enrollment. Our church officials included: T. W. Ellis, Jr., Lay Leader; W. B. Beasley, Church School Superintendent; Mrs. E. G.



Royster, WSCS President; Greg Tapson, MYF President; Jasper B. Hicks, Trustee Chairman; Donald Gupton, Chairman of the Commission on Education; J. L. McInnis, Finance Chairman; Mrs. Nora Watkins, Chairman of Church Grounds Committee; and Mrs. Smith Young, Chairman of the Music Committee. It was reported that the church had pledged \$36,000.00 to the three million dollar College Development Crusade.

Rev. W. B. Petteway's Report to the Quarterly Conference Meeting on October 15, 1963, said in part:

"Concern for people is not a new emphasis in First Methodist Church. Indeed this spirit has been characteristic of this congregation for a long, long time.

Ours is a concern for children, youth, and adults. We are concerned for the unsaved of our community and the inactive members of our church. This concern is reflected in the efforts of the Church School to stem the tide of declining enrollment. . . .

Our Commission on Missions is concerned that our people be made aware that the Christian churches are moving into a period which will test their courage.

Stewardship cultivation is an ever present concern of our Commission on Stewardship and Finance. Through efforts of this Commission, the budget for the church year 1963-1964 has been subscribed. Our acceptance for World Service and Benevolences is \$17,000.

The Commission on Membership and Evangelism reflects a spirit of concern. A goal of 100 new members for the year has been adopted. Membership training classes have been planned for November and December, and February and March. . . . Special attention is given to our Sunday night services. . . . We have an active unit of the Twelve and a Prayer Group. We constantly maintain an active prospect list.

This Church accepted a quota of \$36,000 on the latest College Campaign. \$12,000 will be remitted to the Treasurer during this Conference year."

The Fourth Quarterly Conference of April 28, 1965 was the last one which Rev. Warren Petteaway attended. He reported 1562 members; which was a net gain of 27 for the year and a net gain of 224 for his seven year ministry. The Trustees reported that \$8,000.00 had been received from the Estate of Willie Parker Peace to be used to install an elevator in the church. The Sunday School reported an enrollment of 947--a gain of 78 for the seven years; and an average attendance of 458--an increase of 22 over 1958. Junior High MYF officers were: Betty Lord, President; Tommy Jenkins, Vice President, and Christ Young, Secretary-Treasurer. Senior High MYF officers were: Shirley Alexander, President; Tempe Southerland, Vice President; and Frances Jordan, Secretary-Treasurer. An average attendance of 30 was reported at Jr. Hi. MYF and an average attendance of 20 at Sr. Hi. MYF. The Pastor's salary was set at \$9,000.00 and his travel at \$1,500.00; and \$20,000.00 was accepted for World Service and Conference Benevolences.



The Reverend Warren Petteway was appointed to Duke Memorial Methodist Church in Durham in June of 1965; in 1971 he was appointed to First United Methodist Church in Wilson; in 1975 he was appointed as Superintendent of the Raleigh District; and on October 14, 1979 he returned to Henderson to deliver the sermon for our one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary.

The Reverend Dermont J. Reid served as Pastor of our church from 1965 until 1969. Early in his ministry a new parsonage at 371 Hillcrest Drive was purchased and air conditioned. On Sunday, October 20, 1968, Dr. Richard M. Peek presented the first recital on the new Aeolian-Skinner organ. The new organ was designed specifically for our sanctuary by the Aeolian-Skinner of South Boston, Massachusetts. The three manual instrument has 38 ranks with a total of 2,183 pipes. In 1968 the EUB and Methodist Churches united to form the United Methodist Church. The Quarterly Conference became the Charge Conference and met only once a year. The Official Board became the Administrative Board; and the Council on Ministries assumed responsibility for planning and implementing ministry.

The Reverend John L. Joyce received his first appointment in 1933 to White Memorial-City Road in Henderson. He also closed his ministry in Henderson. He came here from First United Methodist Church in Rocky Mount in 1969, and served First United Methodist Church until his retirement in 1973.

The Reverend M. Dewey Tyson came from First United Methodist Church in Roanoke Rapids to our church in June of 1973, and served here through May of 1977. During his ministry a new furnace was installed for the sanctuary and the steeple was repaired.

The Reverend Samuel Duncan McMillan, Jr., was appointed as Pastor of our church in June of 1977, after serving five years as Pastor of the First United Methodist Church in Laurinburg. In the fall of 1977, Mrs. Nella Sharpe Holden retired as Church Organist after some 40 years of devoted and creative work. At the same time Mr. Henry Ross resigned to take a position with the Henderson-Vance Recreation Department. In October of 1977, Mr. William E. Hilderebrandt began work as our Organist-Choir Director. In the first year of Mr. McMillan's pastorate the Young Adult Fellowship and the L&F Club (Love and Fellowship Club--an organization for Senior Citizens) were organized. In May of 1978, work was completed on the covering of our stained glass windows at a cost of \$25,000.00. This project was spearheaded by T. B. Rose, Jr., Chairman of the Board of Trustees, and was financed by contributions from the congregation and generous bequests from the Estates of Mrs. Emma Myrick Rose and Miss Lillie Fuller. The church observed its 125th anniversary on October 14, 1979. Mr. George T. (Tim) Blackburn, II, prepared a history of this celebration; Mr. Jasper Hicks prepared a paper on the union of the Methodists; and Rev. Sam McMillan researched the Quarterly Conference Records and the Henderson Daily Dispatch in preparation for the printing of a history of the church.

Members of the Administrative Board in 1979, in our 125th year, were: Gene C. Ayscue, George T. Blackburn, II, Charles W. Blanks, W. Barney Beasley, Ted F. Bowen, Eliza Boyd, Eugenia Boyd, (Glenn Boyd), Robert



Brantley, Mr. and Mrs. Hall Brooks, Dan Brummitt, Sam W. Brummitt (Chairperson), Roy A. Bruch, Joseph B. Callahan, Robert K. Catherwood, John T. Church, Sr., John T. Church, Jr., Richard C. Clapp, Aaron Creech, Mrs. Richard A. Davis, Mr. and Mrs. T. W. Ellis, Jr., Horace E. Falkner, III, John H. Falkner (Vice Chairperson), Mr. and Mrs. Thomas H. Farmer, Mrs. C. W. Finch, Robert F. Fleming, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas W. Frazier, III, Mrs. Sidney Fuller, Joseph W. Grant, George H. Gooch (Treasurer), M. Donald Gupton, Mrs. R. B. Harrison, Robert S. Hight, William E. Hilderbrant, J. Thomas Jenkins, J. W. Jenkins, Jr., Melinda Jones, Mrs. R. H. Jones, Mr. and Mrs. Robert A. Leggett, Jr., Curtis R. Maupin, Joseph D. Mayo, Jr., Samuel D. McMillan, Jr., Randolph D. Mills, Jr., John R. Mundy, Mrs. R. W. Parham, Mr. and Mrs. William D. Payne, Ray Pegram, Linwood T. Peoples, Mrs. W. L. Preddy, Willis E. Prichard, Becky Rainey, John A. Rainey, Melanie Ray, Junius W. Rogers, Jr., Thomas B. Rose, Jr., Mrs. T. B. Rose, III, Mrs. Herb Siner, Robert K. Smith, Mrs. Thomas H. Smith, Mrs. R. A. Southerland, J. C. Stabler, Robert A. Stamper, Rosa Long Thomas, Mr. and Mrs. Doug Wassum, Mrs. Harold U. Watkins (Secretary), Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Wiggins, Jr., Roy Wiggins, and Mrs. Smith Young.

Honorary Members of the Administrative Board in our 125th year were: Mrs. J. H. Baity, Miss Ruth Carter, Henry A. Dennis, Mrs. C. L. Finch, Mrs. Ada B. Pierce, and John Wesley Sanders.

The Members of the Board of Trustees in 1979 were: W. Barney Beasley, Robert L. Johnson, Charles W. Blanks, Jr. (Secretary) T. W. Ellis, Jr. (Chairperson), Robert S. Hight, Mrs. George Gooch, Sam T. Peace, Jr., Stewart Finch, and Mrs. Richard A. Davis.

Our Commission Chairpersons in 1979 were: J. Tommy Jenkins, Ecumenical Affairs; Mrs. Peggy Jones, Education; John Rainey, Evangelism; Mrs. Smith Young, Missions; J. W. Jenkins, Jr., Religion and Race; Mrs. T. B. Rose, III, Social Concerns; Charles Blanks, Stewardship; and Jack T. Wiggins, Jr., Worship.

Other Church Officials in 1979 included: Gene C. Ayscue, Lay Leader; Robert F. Fleming, Chairperson of Council on Ministeries; M. Donald Gupton, Church School Superintendent; Robert S. Hight, Finance Committee Chairperson; Mrs. Sybil Leggett, United Methodist Women President; Becky Rainey, Sr. Hi. UMYF President; Sara McMillan, Jr. Hi. UMYF President; John T. Church, Pastor-Parish Relations Committee Chairperson; Miss Rosa Long Thomas, Chairperson of the Communion Stewards; and Mrs. John T. Church, Jr., Chairperson of the Altar Guild.

Members of the 125th Anniversary Committee were: John R. Mundy (Chairman), Mrs. Anne Rose Allen, George T. Blackburn, II, Mrs. J. G. Burleson, Mr. and Mrs. Richard C. Carter, Sam R. Harris, Jr., Jasper B. Hicks, Robert L. Johnson, Sam T. Peace, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Ben O. Pugh, Jr., John W. Sanders, Miss Rosa Long Thomas, Mrs. A. J. Watkins, and Mrs. Elizabeth Jenkins Young. Mrs. Betty Wilson Rainey was in charge of the 125th anniversary dinner.



The Charge Conference met on October 11, 1979 with the following oral reports being given:

Devotional by Dr. Charles Mercer, D.S., on Acts 1:8, "You shall be my witnesses."

Mr. John Falkner, reported that the Administrative Board met regularly, was well attended, and received good reports. He also reported a spirit of harmony in the congregation and among the church officials.

Robert Fleming, reported for the Council on Ministeries. He said the COM met every other month; and that all of the Commission were working well. Most commissions he said meet every other month; but the Commission on Education and the Commission on Worship usually meet monthly. He reported that an annual planning retreat was held in June, goals were set for the following year. He said that most of the goals set for 1979 would be met, and that goals had also been set for 1980. A copy of the 1979 and 1980 goals were recorded in the Charge Conference Minutes.

John Rainey reported for Evangelism. He said the commission met every other month; that a Lenten Study was held; that a very successful revival was held in September with Rev. Albert F. Fisher preaching and Mr. David Wingate serving as song leader and guest soloist. He said that goals had been set for 1980 which included: getting an outstanding revival speaker; holding a 13-week confirmation class; and working to have a "Churchmanship Class" for adults (like confirmation for children). He reported that we had not been successful in getting a lay visitation program off the ground, but that he hoped the "Proclaim the Word" evangelism event in February would help us with this.

Mrs. Peggy Jones reported for the Commission on Education that it met almost every month. She reported that 10 persons from our church attended the Christian Workers School in Durham in September and that three persons from our church were on the staff--Rev. Robert Smith, Rev. Martha Smith, and Rev. Sam D. McMillan, Jr. She reported an average attendance of 223 in Sunday School in 1979. She said she felt we were holding our own against a nationwide downward trend. A new intergenerational class is being taught by Rev. Bob Smith; there are plans to reactivate the two year old class; an assembly has been reinstated in the Children's Division by Bill Hilderbrandt and Florence Oakley; the kindergarten and 1-2 grade classes have been painted; new curtains have been placed on the windows facing the inside courtyard; and our UMYF attendance has increased to 25 or 30 per Sunday.

A report on our Church Membership and Sunday School Enrollment for 1929-1979 prepared for the Proclaim the Word Event to be held in February of 1980 revealed the following trends:



<u>Year</u>	<u>Church Membership</u>	<u>Ave. Att. Worship</u>	<u>Sun. School Enrollment</u>	<u>Avg. Atten. Sunday School</u>
1929	580		390	
1939	819		475	
1949	1,197		812	
1959	1,338		929	
1969	1,546	550	832	555
1979	1,417	320	546	223

Mrs. Lettie Finch Payne reported for the United Methodist Women. She said there were 11 very active circles. Plans are underway for the Food Fair, Nov. 14, with proceeds to be used in local mission work and the needy family fund. The clothing closet is staffed on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and some 500 children were helped in the last year. She added that she hoped the D.S. was duly impressed with our ministers and staff who are doing a fine job.

Becky Rainey, Pres., of the Sr.Hi. UMYF reported that elections had recently been held. Youth are ushering once a month; they are planning annual Youth Sunday Service for Sunday, Nov. 11; the youth went caroling to the shut-ins at Christmas; they will plan to trick or treat for UNICEF again Oct. 28; four delegates went to ACS at Methodist College; youth raised \$500 for the bus fund and \$50 for YSF; a retreat is held about once a quarter; heard "Messiah" in Duke Chapel last year; went on a canoe trip; and went on a snow skiing trip; held annual planning retreat at Emerald Isle; took bus to mountains and beach (brakes gave out on way to beach).

John Mundy reported for the 125th Anniversary Committee. He said, "We are proud of our heritage, and privileged to celebrate our 125th anniversary on Oct. 14. Not to dedicate garden yet, want another year or two to allow to grow. Changed menu for Sunday to Vance County Special--barbecue and brunswick stew. Will print history later rather than have available on Oct. 14. This will allow us to have pictures of the 125th anniversary in the booklet.

Sam McMillan reported on cost of booklet-\$1,500 to \$3,000. Cost lowest if we do our own typing. Question of asking members to pay for their copies. On motion of Robert S. Hight and seconded by Sam McMillan, the Charge Conference authorized the printing. It was understood that we would get bids, etc.

Bill Hilderbrandt reported that we had a graded choir program with six choirs--four singing and two handbell choirs. Plans now underway for Great Day of Methodist Singing to be held in November. All choirs will participate.

The Reverend Robert K. Smith, Associate Minister reported that, "This has been a year of learning and doing. Learning about people--about how they love their Lord and their church. Learning that Henderson and First Church has more than its share of good people. It has been a year of learning about how a church should be run--watching Sam McMillan do what should be done, even if it took him long hours, rather than come up short. This has been a year of personal growth for me. But this has also been a year of doing; going



skiing with young people, driving our new bus up the side of a mountain and back, trying to bring the young children back into the fellowship of the morning worship by developing a program of children's sermons, supporting the youth, crawling around cramped quarters trying to find switches for air conditioners, holding a wrinkled hand in a hospital room, working with the Education Commission to establish a new church policy of nursery services for young children at all major church events.

T. W. Ellis, Chairperson of the Board of Trustees reported that the Trustees were duly elected and met regularly. He called to the attention of the Conference that we have building facilities valued at over two and a half million dollars and that a new gas furnace is being installed in the educational building at a cost of \$6,600.00.

The Charge Conference elected officials for 1980 including: Jack Wiggins, Lay Leader; John Falkner, Chairperson of the Administrative Board; and Tommy Jenkins, Chairperson for the Council on Ministries.

The Administrative Board meeting in September had approved a budget of \$169,935.96 for 1980; and the Charge Conference meeting on October 11, 1979, officially approved \$38,854.00 in benevolences (including \$34,587.00 for Fair Share Outreach); \$25,773.96 for salary, travel, utilities, and insurance for the Senior Minister; and \$15,707.96 for support of the Associate Minister.

When complete financial information for 1979 was available, the following information was added to the Charge Conference Report: \$153,819.34 raised on the 1979 budget; \$3,887.95 brought forth in checking account into 1980; \$2,222.00 in advance pledges collected on 1980 budget; and thus, \$6,109.95 available to begin the new year--a record amount brought forward for the church. It was also reported to the Annual Conference that in 1979: \$3,810.00 was paid on indebtedness; \$5,700.00 paid on building and improvements; \$57,473.00 paid on local program; \$17,161.00 paid on other current expenses; \$22,986.00 paid Senior Pastor in salary, travel and utilities; \$11,100.00 paid the Associate Minister in salary, travel and utilities; \$6,100.00 paid on Pension Funding Crusade; \$36,001.00 paid in Single Figure Asking; and \$167,615.00 Grand Total Paid for all causes.

The Pastor's Report by Rev. Samuel D. McMillan, Jr. to the Charge Conference meeting in the Whitmore Wesley Class on October 4, 1979, was as follows:

#### The State of the Church

The spirit of our people is good.

The church is organized according to the Book of Discipline and continues to move forward on all fronts.



### Some Significant Events During the Past Year

An early morning communion is held the first Sunday of the month in the Rose Chapel (if we are not having communion that month in sanctuary).

Five young ladies received the God and Community Award, after a year's work and a field trip to Washington, D.C.

We held our second annual Day Camp at Camp Kerr Lake.

We held our third annual planning retreat in June and have projected our goals for 1980.

We held a revival in September with Rev. Albert F. Fisher preaching, and with Mr. David Wingate leading the singing.

The L&F Club continues to offer a vital ministry to the senior citizens of our church under the able leadership of Mrs. Hall Brooks.

The Young Adult Fellowship and the large number of baptisms indicate that that our church will continue to grow.

We have reversed a trend of declining membership, and report 1,424 members as of this date—a net gain of one in nine months.

In December of 1978, we secured a 46 passenger church bus, and in 1979, we have used it in expanding our ministries to children, scouts, youth, senior citizens and others.

### As We Look Ahead

We will celebrate our 125th anniversary on Oct. 14 with special services in the morning and afternoon.

We will use the Pony Express Stewardship Plan this November in seeking to underwrite our 1980 budget.

We will hold a Thanksgiving Eve Service for the first time in recent years.

We look forward to special Christmas and Easter music.

We will participate in the "Proclaim the Word" (SEJ) Evangelical Event in February, and we will seek to continue to show a net gain in membership.

### Conclusion

As we come to celebrate our 125th anniversary, we rejoice in our rich heritage;

But we are determined not to rest on our laurels;  
And we are resolved to demonstrate a pioneering spirit.

As we move into the 1980s  
And as we head toward the 21st Century

We are resolved to be the  
Studying, worshiping, witnessing, ministering congregation  
That God wants us to be.



## EPILOGUE

We are most grateful to Almighty God for those men and women of faith and valor whose labor of love has given us so noble a heritage at First United Methodist Church.

This brief history has been prepared so that you who celebrate the 150th, 200th, and 500th anniversary of this congregation may know something of the goodly heritage which is yours.

Let history record that as the members of this congregation celebrated their 125th anniversary and prepared to move into the twenty-first century, that they demonstrated love, commitment, faith, compassion, vision, and perseverance.

Like our spiritual forefathers we have tried to obey the call of Him who said, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." (Mark 8:34) It is our purpose to individually accept the terms of costly discipleship; and to demonstrate in our corporate life, that we are a company of the committed who minister to our fellowman in the name of Christ, who calls us to be disciples, stewards, apostles, and good samaritans.

This is the tradition we have received; this is the life style we seek to lead; and we hope that you will receive this goodly heritage with glad hearts; and that you will seek to pass it on to your children and your grandchildren.

--Samuel D. McMillan, Jr.



**Mrs. Stewart Finch**  
**Church Secretary**  
1956-



**Rev. S.D. McMillan, Jr.**  
**Pastor**  
1977-