

First United Methodist Church
Rocky Mount, North Carolina



The First Meeting House

The First Hundred Years

ONE HUNDRED YEARS: A HISTORY OF
FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
ROCKY MOUNT, N. C.
1856-1956

by
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FOREWORD

Historical records for First United Methodist Church in Rocky Mount, N. C. are limited. Before 1920 there exist only a brief notebook of the minutes of the official board for 1902-1910 and the quarterly conferences records of 1918-1919. While minutes of the official board become more regular after 1920, those of the quarterly conferences cover less than ten years and then are incomplete.

In such a case a researcher is left to his own devices. Footnotes accompanying this work will show the resources turned to in order to bring forth the past of this congregation.

It is well to remember that the church membership was drawn from the village/town/city of Rocky Mount. Persons brought their life experiences into the church and, in turn, carried their spiritual convictions back to the community. Because of this exchange, the growth and status of Rocky Mount at any given time is a valid part of First Church's past.

Grateful acknowledgement of assistance is extended to Miss Iola Parker, Joseph W. Watson, Reverend Christian White, Reverend C. Franklin Grill, Mrs. Andrew Harrell, Mrs. J. A. Braswell, and J. W. Aycock.

Miss Parker classified the existing minutes of the official board, a great help in compiling the later portion of this work. Mr. Watson's abstracts of deeds pertinent to Methodist churches in North Carolina, prepared for the North Carolina Conference Commission on Archives and History, made first hand work unnecessary in these essential documents. Reverend White, Mrs. Harrell, and Mrs. Braswell were encouraging and interested throughout preparation of this study. Reverend Grill and Mr. Aycock assisted in its publication.

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The purpose of this history is to summarize the known past of First United Methodist Church, Rocky Mount, North Carolina, that its heritage as part of Methodism and its place in God's work may be better realized.

Methodism began in England in 1729. Within ten years it reached the colony of North Carolina when George Whitefield preached on December 23 at St. Thomas Church in Bath to almost one hundred persons.¹ Whitefield was an ordained minister, the friend and pupil of Methodism's founder, John Wesley. The year that Whitefield made the last of his many voyages to America, an itinerant preacher, Joseph Pilmore, also left England for America. In the autumn of 1774 at Currituck Courthouse, Pilmore is credited with preaching the first "official" Methodist sermon in the colony.²

While the organization date of the earliest Methodist Society in North Carolina is not known, at the close of 1776 it is thought that there were present in the state 683 members. The Tar River circuit was constructed in 1778, and within it was that area which would eventually contain the present First United Methodist Church.

Rarely, perhaps once a month if they were fortunate, could these people then living within that circuit hear preaching at the time and into

¹Baker, Frank, "The British Background of North Carolina Methodism", Methodism Alive, O Kelly Ingram, ed. (Durham, 1976), p. 3.

²Ibid., p. 5.

the early 1800's.³ Bishop Francis Asbury appeared to think that the Tar River area was in especial need as his journal terms the settlers discouragingly worldly and indifferent to the hearing of the gospel.

The village of Rocky Mount clustered about the Great Falls of the Tar River. Since early colonial days the site had been attractive to settlers and traders, and one or more grist mills with the Primitive Baptist Church (1757) made a nucleus there by 1760. These were followed in the 1820's by turpentine distilleries, several stores having a brisk trade, an inn, a small cotton factory, a classical academy and possibly another school co-existent with the academy. Almost all of these stood upon the north side of the river and a bridge quite near the Falls joined the two banks.

Physicians and lawyers practiced in the village and the handsome homes of several planters were nearby. The pleasant natural setting and a high cultural level were favorably compared in a newspaper of the day to that of the state's best known and fashionable resort, the newspaper stating that Rocky Mount was the home of "polished, hospitable society. . . ."

While the growth of the village at the Falls seemed to have lagged in the 1840's, it was spurred anew in the decade that followed by the establishment of a hotel, a lively tavern, and a carriage manufactory. But most significant for Methodists was a meeting said to have been in the summer of 1856 in an old schoolhouse at the side of the river. Here five or more persons met to organize a new Methodist Episcopal congregation.⁴

³Grill, C. Franklin, Early Methodist Meeting Houses in Wake County, N. C. (Raleigh, 1979), p. 23.

⁴Church Bulletin, Jan. 25, 1959, anonymous historical account. Church Directory, 1928, files, church office.

The inspiration for this meeting is unknown. However, Battleboro, only three miles distant, had a Methodist congregation since 1805, and Sharon Methodist Church, between Nashville and Red Oak, was organized in 1808.⁵ It may have been that some Rocky Mount residents of Methodist persuasion had attended these churches and for convenience wished to worship nearer home. There were other small congregations of Methodists to the south, but Rocky Mount's ties at the time were with the north and west.

The available reference to this meeting in 1856 states that the building was "near the old Horse Ford, a short distance below the Falls Bridge." Diligent search has failed to locate the Horse Ford, although Horse Ford Island is known to have existed in colonial days. Placement just below the bridge would have meant placement in the immediate vicinity of the present cotton mills - of course, then not nearly so extensive as now. There is some indication that the schoolhouse may have stood on the north side of the river across from the mills.⁶

Present at this historic meeting were Mrs. Eliza Lindsey, age 28, the wife of John E. Lindsey, a wealthy farmer of Rocky Mount; Mrs. Mary E. Edwards, age 30, wife of William Edwards, local gunsmith; Marcus J. Battle, age 19, son of a prominent Edgecombe County farmer; and James P. Battle,

⁵Watson, Joseph W., "Records of the Methodist Churches in Nash County, 1777-1973", manuscript. Prepared for the N. C. Conference Commission on Archives and History.

⁶In R. D. Trevathan's The Life History of Dempsey Trevathan and Descendants (Rocky Mount, 1940, privately printed) there is mention of an old schoolhouse standing in 1836 on the north side of the river at the Falls. The Academy building, however, stood in 1823 on the south side of the Falls about one mile SW (Brazier Map, 1823, State Archives, Raleigh). Inasmuch as the historical account of 1928 is thought to have been written by one of the congregation organizers and this account states that the schoolhouse was below the bridge at the Falls, credence is given it and the Academy is considered unlikely as the congregation organization site.

age 27, a physician and planter of Edgecombe. The Battles were brothers, and all of the foregoing persons were acquainted with each other and of families well known in the vicinity. There are indications that the four were related as well through marriage.

It may be speculated that an additional immediate, if not actually an organizing, member was the Reverend John W. Jenkins, Methodist clergyman and pastor of the Rocky Mount church at a later date. Reverend Jenkins was in 1858 headmaster of the Rocky Mount Academy, where he taught Greek, Latin, and English.

At this time three Methodist clergymen are known to have been making their homes in Nash County, but it was a "silver-tongued orator" from Halifax County, the Reverend Thomas G. Lowe⁷ (1815-1869), who met with the four persons and who is called the organizing pastor for the Rocky Mount church.

Reverend Lowe was a preacher in the Methodist Episcopal church before he was twenty-one years old, the son of plain, honest parents. He did not enter the conference of the M. E. church but preached instead all his life in Halifax County and neighboring areas.

So inspired that he could speak eloquently without notes, so powerful in speech he could "draw his audiences still as night", so popular that people came by carriage thirty miles to hear him, Reverend Lowe was a clergyman of high character as well as magnetic personality. Called the "greatest natural orator born in North Carolina", this able man of God must have provided splendid focus for the enthusiasm of the little group. Their number grew and their work was soon evident.

⁷Kingsbury, Theodore Bryant, An Oration on the Life and Character of the Late Reverend Thomas G. Lowe (Weldon, N. C., 1882), pp. 2-25.

The old schoolhouse was only briefly used, since in 1857⁸ a tract of 1.6 acres of land was deeded to the church trustees for a building site. This land, located at the junction of Church Street with Falls Road, was a gift from Mrs. Piety Horne Gay just before her death. Mrs. Gay's name does not appear as a church organizer, but one may be certainly allowed to speculate that, in so donating land, she was an early member. Adjoining the church site to the north were the fairgrounds and to the east were the tracks of the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad, which were to play an essential and impressive part in the growth of the town.

The Gay home was the only one on the west side of the railroad at the time, but shortly two others, one on either side of the church, were built. The church itself was fortunately situated, as the village continued to grow towards the south along the railroad and away from the Falls.

No time was lost in 1857 in the construction of a white or gray painted frame building. It was of considerable size, having a hooded entrance and narrow, Gothic type windows.⁹ Standing on a pleasant bluff in a grove of fine trees, it contained three galleries and an elevated chancel reached by twin stairs. It was at first lighted with candles and oil lamps and in early days heated by a wood stove that stood at the chancel end of the aisle.

⁸Nash County Superior Court, Spring Term, 1893. This court action between the Wm. Gay heirs and the Trustees of the Methodist Church concerns the title to the church lot. The original deed and a succeeding one were lost, and title was awarded by the court in 1895 through judgment. The court action of 1893 states that the first church was built in 1857, rather than 1858, as has been thought.

⁹Interview with Mrs. Maye Hackney Richardson, a frequent church visitor in 1901-1905. Copy of her statement is in church archives, corridor closet, church offices.

Ellen, Mrs. Joe, "Religious Life in Nash County", Nash Historical Notes (Rocky Mount, 1976).

The church was said to have been in continuous use in summer, doubtless the scene of summer services and dinners on the grounds and of Sunday School class meetings. A cemetery was established behind the church. Until their own sanctuary was built, Presbyterians worshipped in the Methodist Church, as sometime did the Baptists due to the inconvenient location of their own church at the Falls.

The congregation of the Methodist Church was as youthful as the organizers themselves. Fifteen probable members are known for 1859-1860,¹⁰ their average age - so far as is known - being 33. These members were: Dr. N. H. Murphey, J. B. Williford, W. T. Griffin, N. J. Battle, Miss R. Westray, Mrs. E. J. Petway, J. J. Battle, J. E. Lindsey, B. J. Lancaster, Mrs. John Tillery, Dr. James P. Battle, W. L. Williford, Miss K. Westray. (The last named may actually be the same person as Miss R. Westray.)

Among them were a teacher, two physicians, several prominent merchants, and a number of wealthy farmers. Although all cannot be identified, the conclusion can be made that the majority of known members at this time were persons of comfortable economic position. Their religious horizon extended beyond their village, all of these members subscribing to The Christian Advocate, official publication of the M. E. Church, South, in the state.

At this time, the new congregation may have come within the Raleigh district of the conference of the M. E. Church, South, or in the Washington district, wherein there existed then a Nash charge. By 1887, the Rocky Mount church fell into the Warrenton district, but was returned to the Washington district before 1902, where it remained for many years.

¹⁰The Account book of Jesse H. Edward, Rocky Mount Postmaster, 1859-1860, privately owned.

The years before 1861 were times of great growth for Methodists in the South, as they were a time of growth for the nation. But for both it was a time of serious divisiveness. The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was declared independent of the Methodist Episcopal Church in May, 1845 (May, 1846 is considered by some scholars as the formation date) over the continuing issue of slavery. Even in Rocky Mount, Methodists were not unified. The first major division within Methodism had developed 1828-1830 as Methodist Protestantism, and in 1861 there existed a congregation of this persuasion in Rocky Mount.¹¹

Continuing to reflect the society in which it existed, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, suffered with the Confederacy from 1861-1865. Hundreds of churches were destroyed, damaged, or abandoned. Severe losses in both leadership and membership occurred. Survival seemed doubtful,¹² yet in ten years the M. E. Church, South, was strengthened and improved. During this period the status of the Rocky Mount church is unknown.

But in February, 1867, itself a symbol of resolve to build a new life, Rocky Mount village - by now almost completely removed from the Falls of the Tar and reaching ever southward - officially became the Town of Rocky Mount. At the time there were about 300 persons living within it and the Methodist Church was, and remained until 1872, the only church inside town limits.¹³

¹¹Federal Census of 1860, Nash County, N. C. R. H. Jones, Methodist Protestant Clergyman, Rocky Mount.

¹²Burke, E. S., gen. ed., The History of American Methodism (New York, Nashville, 1964), Vol. II, p. 245.

Chaffin, Nora, "A Southern Advocate of Methodist Unification in 1865", The North Carolina Historical Review, Jan. 1941, p. 39.

¹³O'Quinlan, Michael, A Century of People, Purpose, and Progress, Rocky Mount, North Carolina, 1867-1967 (Rocky Mount, 1967).

Within three years of its incorporation, with a population of 357, three physicians and four or more lawyers opened their offices. Dry goods, millinery, and grocery stores supplied growing numbers of customers, and telegraph and express offices were opened. Town life offered an annual fair, a baseball team, several social organizations that regularly met, and frequent circuses. Six protestant denominations held services in the town (1880), including a black congregation.¹⁴

The Methodist church, growing with the town, now found its location unsuitable, and on May 25, 1885 bought a lot of 2/5 acres on the southwest corner of Sunset Avenue and Church Street.¹⁵ The church building was moved to this and, giving it new dignity, a tower and belfry were added. Since the original lot was larger than the new one, it must be assumed that growth of the town, rather than a need for space, warranted removal to the newer site. Then, in 1892, through a bequest in the will of a deceased member,¹⁶ additional land on Church Street increased the size of church property.

Indicative of the importance of the Rocky Mount congregation within the North Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Rocky Mount was in 1892 made a conference station¹⁷ and a parsonage was built at this time for the minister stationed here. Yet, the spiritual

¹⁴The Rocky Mount Progress, Aug. 20, 1880.

¹⁵Nash County Deed Book 64-60.

¹⁶Nash County Deed Book 98-579.

¹⁷Journal of the Wilson District Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church, South, June 29, 1892. Wm. R. Perkins Library, Duke University. Nash County Will Book 5-354, W. L. Hart. Nash County Deed Book 88 -- 518.

condition of the local church was troubling to its pastor, who noted in his annual report for that year that "...we have some good and true men and women as the world affords, but the spirituality of the major part is below the average." He nevertheless acknowledged that the sacramental service was better attended than any congregation he had served.

Shortcomings notwithstanding, it was a highly significant year for the Rocky Mount church. In 1892 it was able to establish a mission church,¹⁸ one now grown to well established status. In December, 1892 the pastor of the home church and his wife deeded the land for a small sum and the love they had for the church land on the south side of Falls Road adjoining Rocky Mount Mills property.

"We have built a 30 by 40 foot chapel at Rocky Mount Mills," he stated in his district conference report. Modestly, he does not elaborate upon his own part in this endeavor. He does, however, state that he supplies the pulpit and that they have a Sunday School with 125 children enrolled.

Corresponding with the burgeoning life of the local church was that of the town. A newspaper of that day (1892) declared that Rocky Mount was becoming one of the great railroad centers of the South, and the location of the Emerson shops and yard facilities in 1893, with the immediate influx of 750 families, assured the town's future. In addition, four tobacco warehouses (1895), and the stemming, prizing, and redrying industries that accompanied them provided payrolls to send money back into the town economy.

In 1895 the rapidly growing railroad community of south Rocky Mount established its own Methodist congregation (St. Paul), and First Church

¹⁸Nash County Deed Book 85-120, Reverend J. O. Guthrie, pastor. Nash County Will Book 5-354.

generously aided this group over a period of many years.¹⁹ Two years later, on April 3, 1897, the old church lot at Falls Road was sold at auction,²⁰ and the Methodist Church was committed to another, now rapidly growing area of the town.

The population rose to almost 3000 by 1900, a University School (1894) prospered, the first graded school opened, and a municipal building was erected to administer the expanding services of the town. In response to the many saloons then in Rocky Mount, First Church went on record opposing the use of intoxicating liquor and the location of saloons in proximity to the church.

The new century, however, began less than smoothly for First Church. The pastor of 1901, later writing his recollections, says that his church had for some time been "unsettled", there apparently having been some lasting discord among members. "Religious conditions", he stated further, "were not encouraging."²¹

This pastor's remedy was a worthy enterprise that would arouse enthusiasm and unite the congregation through common effort. His proposal was a brick church building to be built squarely upon the corner of the church lot. Considering that at this time his salary payments were constantly in arrears, his proposal was especially courageous. At first his plan met with little success, but he persisted, convinced that a new church was the answer to difficulties.

¹⁹Minutes of the Quarterly Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Rocky Mount, N. C., Jan. 1920.

Minutes of the Board of Stewards, Methodist Church, Rocky Mount, N. C., Nov. 8, 1926; Dec. 7, 1937; Dec. 6, 1938; Nov. 1, 1946.

²⁰Nash County Deed Book 102 - 211.

²¹Nash, L. L., Recollections and Observations (Raleigh, 1916), p. 102.

At this time the church met its expenses through the assessment method, and when matters became desperate "collectors" of these monies were employed by the official board with a list of delinquents furnished them. This method proving unsatisfactory, stewards themselves later assumed the responsibility for collections.

By late 1903 conditions improved, plans for the new building went forward, and the cornerstone was laid Dec. 4, 1905.²²

Placed within it were a Bible, a list of members of various organizations in town, a copy of two newspapers of the day, the names of children who laid the first bricks of the new church, copies of the Christian Advocate, and an 1894 Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.²³

It seems incredible, but it is true that the available records for this period of time -- and there are some minutes of the Board of Stewards -- make no mention of the plans, construction, or completion of the new church except to state that a request was made to the town to turn out the light in the old church and turn it on in the new one.

But both the church and new parsonage were completed, faction and debt notwithstanding, and the pastor who instigated the building plan stated some years later that Rocky Mount had become (1916) one of the finest stations in the conference. The debt was amortized in 1909 and dedication services for the church extended for a full week. In addition, the home church now officially became First Church of Rocky Mount.²⁴

²²"Opening of the Sunday School Rooms", booklet, 1914. Church Archives.

²³The Rocky Mount Evening Telegram, April 20, 1957.

²⁴Church Directory of 1928, church archives; "Century of Progress", booklet, church archives; Minutes of the Board of Stewards, October, 1907.

The old wood church, however, erected in 1857 on the Falls Road site, still had many years to serve Methodism. When the new structure was begun, the old one was moved across the street upon a lot owned by a member, where the congregation continued to worship until the new church was completed. Then, when the original one was no longer needed, it was again moved, this time across town to Atlantic Avenue and Goldleaf Street. Here it became the St. John African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church building²⁵ until 1963, at which time it was torn down. Moved three times and calling members to worship for over one hundred years, it had been a durable and significant part of Methodism in Rocky Mount.

For the first time, when the new church was entered in March, 1906, those attending Sunday School had now a room set aside for their classes. In the earliest years it appears that all Sunday School enrollees were children,²⁶ and it is not known positively when adult classes were organized. Two of these, the Baraca (men's) and Philathea (women's) are thought to have been organized in 1905.

²⁵ Telephone interview with Mrs. William Spaulding, Highland Avenue, Rocky Mount. Mrs. Spaulding is the widow of Rev. Spaulding, pastor for many years of the St. John church. Also, telephone interview with Mrs. James Bellamy, a long time member of St. John's. Statements from both these persons confirm the removal of the Methodist Church building for use as a sanctuary for their church.

Rev. McDowell (unidentified) appeared before the official board in October, 1907, with a plan to remove the AME church building to a better site and asked for endorsement. The historical sketch in the church directory of 1928 states that this building was never moved across town and consequently did not serve the St. John's congregation but was sold and removed to the farm of a Mr. John Bullock. As it is apparent from the Rev. McDowell's request that the building had already been moved to another site and was serving a congregation, the historical sketch of 1928 seems to be in error.

²⁶ Annual Conference Minutes, report of the Rocky Mount Station, 1892. Reverend J. O. Guthrie, pastor. Wm. R. Perkins Library, Duke University.

Even in those years the fellowship and spiritual growth of the church developed through its organizations. The Ladies Aid Society, first known to have been in existence in this church in the 1880's and having only five members in 1886, became in 1893 the Woman's Missionary Society, and through successive changes the present United Methodist Women.

As early as 1902 the church had an active Epworth League for its young people, and eighteen years later this had developed into three groups. In that year a Cradle Roll and Beginners group were organized, these soon joined by numerous adult groups and several prayer bands. Mission Societies, the result of continuing mission emphasis in the church, functioned under changing names, as many as five of them in 1914.

A fruition of this mission endeavor was the organization in 1909 of Clark Street Methodist Church.²⁷ The site for this church, at the intersection of Clark Street with Redgate Avenue, was deeded for divine worship to the trustees of First Church, who continued in advisory and supportive position for the new congregation until it was firmly operative. The land was conveyed by the pastor of First Church²⁸ and his wife, and they four years later deeded additional land to this new church.

First Church, struggling in the early years of the new century to free itself of debt, nevertheless saw that debt as an investment in the quickening times. As early as 1905 an usher committee was formed to make welcome visitors and members and to facilitate seating procedures. An organist was appointed with authority to assemble and direct a choir, a telephone was installed for the church office (1907), bulletins were issued

²⁷Edgecombe County Deed Book, 140-467.

²⁸Reverend D. H. Tuttle and wife, Ella W.

at services, and a janitor employed to care for the new building. Then, with the debt finally cleared in late 1908 or early 1909, after extended consideration a splendid pipe organ was purchased and installed.

Even with members diverted to Clark Street mission church, First Church continued to grow, and in 1913 space needed for Sunday School classes reached the point that the Men's Bible Class petitioned the Board of Stewards to investigate possibilities for expansion. The Board, apparently quickly convinced that more room was needed, acted promptly to authorize an addition to the church building. The plans provided by architects advantageously used the small space available at the rear of the sanctuary, and in June, 1914, less than a year after the request was made, new Sunday School rooms were opened. These were considered of good proportion and an excellent use of the space.

This annex, however, would serve a merciful if unanticipated purpose when, during the national influenza epidemic of 1918, First Church became an emergency hospital.²⁹ Beds were placed in upstairs and downstairs classrooms for the sick and physicians with volunteer workers under the direction of the American Red Cross served long hours. Patients came from the railroad trains and the surrounding countryside, and doctors tended them without regard to their status as regular patients. Although church services were suspended for a month because of the disease, a minister was constantly on hand at the church hospital.

In the years immediately following World War I, First Church increased its membership to 800, a figure double that of four years previous. Keenly

²⁹The Rocky Mount Sunday Telegram, July 6, 1976.

aware of mission importance, it became involved in a centenary mission campaign in 1919, increased its missionary societies to three, and maintained an active missionary committee. A revival, the reorganization of church enrollment into a unit system which helped personnel to keep in touch with absent members, great efforts to place the official Methodist periodicals in all homes, and freedom from indebtedness marked these years of growth.

A first for the home church in September, 1922, was its service as host for a standard training school for Sunday School workers. Subsequent schools were held in the churches of other denominations, but to First Methodist went the distinction of holding the original seminar. Another first was the employment of a full time Director of Religious Education, whose duties began in January, 1922.

During the 1920's, possibly 1926 to 1928, it is thought that a change was made from use of the common communion cup in sacramental services to the individual offerings of the communion elements.³⁰ A five piece service of the earlier type stands in the Grant Memorial Library of First Church, a flagon, two goblets, and two patens. A third paten, also with this set, does not appear to belong with it.

Problems arose within the church at this time. With conditions described as "unfavorable"³¹ in early 1921 and with an interim pastor supplied during the latter part of that year, the official board nevertheless undertook consideration of the purchase of a lot on Church Street adjoining the sanctuary.

³⁰This date is inferred from the statements of Mrs. Bess Suiter and other church members.

³¹Minutes of the Quarterly Conference, Nov. 7, 1921.

This purchase was held in abeyance, however, as discussion during 1924 and 1925 was carried on regarding the desirability of selling the church property and relocating at a new site not too far distant. Increasing traffic at the busy intersection was a factor in seeking removal as was the need for more room. With the church sanctuary seating less than forty percent of the membership and the Sunday School less than seventy percent, debate is understandable.

A decision was made in the fall of 1926³² when the Quarterly Conference was advised that purchase of the available lot adjacent to the church and erection thereon of a new Sunday School building would be the best solution.

A building committee was authorized to purchase the 100 by 156 foot lot and to arrange for renovations to the auditorium of the church building. Ground was broken August 12, 1927, for the new structure.

It represented a heavy investment, one that was to be a troublesome debt for many years, but the building was a source of pride and enthusiasm within the congregation and was considered a handsome and well equipped plant. It was home to eight departments - the Cradle Roll, Beginners, Primary, Junior, Intermediate, Young People, Adults, and a Home Department.

In joyful acknowledgment of its completion and anticipated long usefulness, the Sunday School classes were first held in it on April 8, 1928. The following Sunday the new building was opened for public inspection and the evening afterwards the Boards of Stewards from all the local Methodist Churches were guests at a supper served from the new kitchen. The Woman's

³²Nash County Deed Book 316-434.

Society, with 210 members, served this meal from the kitchen and dining room, both of which they had themselves fully equipped.

It was October, 1940,³³ before the debt was dissolved and a service of dedication finally held. With renovation and some adaptation, the building has served until the present (1979).

Almost co-incident with the building's completion in 1928 was a city-wide Methodist revival - the first - which First Church organized and coordinated. A cooperative activity of the four congregations, the novel idea was effectively carried out.

There was no standing still. In less than ten years after the dedication of the Sunday School building, it was seen that the church itself needed extensive work. Its condition was considered at length by the Board before a new heating system, roof repairs, redecorating, and painting were recommended. The completed work was a source of satisfaction and it was felt that the physical aspects of the church were well in hand.

That period was brief. The need for a new home for the pastor was soon realized. In May, 1943, by the terms of an initial gift³⁴, a parsonage fund was established. About this time, however, the advisability of relocating First Church again was considered. The building of 1905 was far too small now for the approximately 1600 members (including those non-active), and the continuing need for repairs was troublesome.

When a decision was finally made to remain on the corner of Church Street and Sunset Avenue, an available lot directly behind the church was

³³The Evening Telegram, Oct. 12, 1940.

³⁴Minutes of the Board of Stewards, May 26, 1943, a gift for construction or purchase of a parsonage only.

bought in October, 1951.³⁵ This purchase, one which had been deliberated for years, squared the church property line. It was an indication of things to come.

In April, 1952, the pastor and Board of Stewards³⁶ approved the important action to establish a building fund, termed the Centennial Enlargement Program. At the meeting following that one, a full steering committee with certain authority was appointed and First Church was underway with a venture which, it was hoped, would translate to adequate facilities for the congregation by its 100th anniversary in 1956.

However, the parsonage took precedence in planning. The original sum given towards a pastor's home was doubled through gifts from the congregation within a year and received an additional boost by the donation of a lot as a building site for this. Although this particular lot was eventually sold, another lot was later chosen and bought on December 14, 1948. The building contract for the eight room traditional home was let in the spring of the following year, and it was ready for occupancy in early 1950. On February 14 a reception was held therein for the congregation. The new parsonage was the culmination of years of accumulation and careful management of funds.

Late in the following year - November 13, 1951 - the church library was opened. Later named the Thomas McMillan Grant Memorial Library for the pastor who died shortly after it was opened, the library's aim was to prepare church workers more fully for their tasks. The first volumes bought

³⁵Nash County Deed Book 567-249.

³⁶Minutes of the Board of Stewards, April 8, 1952. Reverend T. M. Grant, pastor.

illustrate this well. They were: Teaching the Church School (McLester), Look at the Missionary (Thorne), Look at the Ministry (Nelson), Young Christians at Work (Noll), and God and the Day's Work (Cochran). Children's books were added when a basis of about forty volumes were acquired. Gifts from classes and individuals augmented the library's acquisition ability almost immediately. In the new building the library would have an accessible and comfortably furnished location and an ever growing collection under supervision of conscientious church librarians.

First Church encountered a considerable membership loss in early 1955, when Englewood Methodist Church was formed. The result of a survey by the Board of Missions, Church Extension, the new congregation was officially recognized in March of the above year and began building its sanctuary and Sunday School. While membership was drawn possibly ninety-five percent from First Church, no cut back in building figures was apparently considered, and First Church offered the new congregation its hearty endorsement while furthering its own centennial plans.

Yet another challenge to First Church was the proposed establishment of a four year liberal arts college in Rocky Mount. The possibility at first (1955) was that of locating an institution affiliated with the Presbyterian denomination. This was later changed to the considering of moving Louisburg College to Rocky Mount. For both prospects the Board of Stewards of First Church passed resolutions of support and recommended in 1956 that the City of Rocky Mount supply certain specific facilities and financial aid to any such college locating in the area.³⁷ The church made a pledge to a college for the coming year (1957) and continued to play an active part in

³⁷Minutes of the Board of Stewards, April 10, 1956.

seeking the location of such an institution, committing itself to North Carolina Wesleyan College of Rocky Mount when it finally came into existence.

In helping develop plans for a college, First Methodist did not forget its one hundredth anniversary. Arrangements for a celebration of this began in September. In December, a dinner, held at a nearby civic center in order to accommodate the large number of people attending, was held.

During 1953 and 1954, opening the way for the new church building, the parsonage at the rear of the church was demolished. An architect was employed to work closely with officials regarding the needs of the congregation, and final plans were ready for approval by October, 1955.

On December 11, 1956, a ground breaking service was held for the structure that would contain a sanctuary, chapel, offices, library, fellowship hall, and additional classrooms.

The building of 1905 and the addition of 1914 were removed and the new building begun in March and April of 1957. Memorial stained glass windows from the old church were stored, their disposition to be considered later. The 400 pound cornerstone was removed, its contents (see preceding pages in this study), although badly deteriorated, to be placed in the cornerstone of the new church. The stone of 1905 itself would be reset into the northeast wall of the narthex of the new church. The church bell, given to Marvin Methodist Church, was later returned since the building structure of that church could not support it. It remains today in the present church yard of First Church. Other furnishings were sold.

Behind all the events in the life of the church and apart from its property and buildings is its essential quality -- the members. To read the

existing records is to be continually aware of many persons, often unnamed, who served their church. Upon their efforts and those of committed pastors and officials the church has advanced.

That there have been periods of discord among members -- and there were several -- only illustrates the sincerity of those involved. That there have been crises which were weathered attests to the church's viability. The handsome brick church soon to be erected to the glory of God would stand at one of the city's busiest intersections, historically integrated with the life of the city and spiritually, like its tall spire, reaching over it. Appropriately, the building would mark one hundred years.

EARLIEST KNOWN TRUSTEES

1885

T. J. Hackney
J. P. Daughtry
F. J. Thorp

1892

T. J. Hackney
J. P. Daughtry
L. Lancaster

1893

B. R. Arrington
M. S. Fulford
L. Lancaster
J. P. Daughtry
A. W. Arrington

1895

T. J. Hackney
Joel Daughtry
L. Lancaster
A. W. Arrington
M. S. Fulford
F. J. Thorp
R. D. Armstrong

1897

J. P. Daughtry
S. L. Rowland
A. W. Arrington
F. J. Thorp
J. H. Baines
E. L. Daughtridge

KNOWN MEMBERS OF THE OFFICIAL BOARD

Note: Many of these lists are incomplete.

1902

J. O. W. Gravely
J. P. Daughtry
B. B. Williford
W. L. Petty
T. J. Hackney
J. C. Wynn
J. C. Stout

1904

E. L. Daughtride
B. B. Williford
J. P. Daughtry
J. H. Westbrook
L. Lancaster
W. L. Petty

1905

E. W. Smith
E. L. Daughtride
J. H. Westbrook
W. L. Petty
B. B. Williford
E. W. Jeffreys
J. O. W. Gravely
L. Lancaster
J. P. Daughtry

1906

J. H. Westbrook
E. W. Smith
J. P. Daughtry
L. Lancaster
E. L. Daughtride
B. B. Williford
W. L. Petty
W. E. Jeffreys
L. L. Hardin
W. V. Boyle

1906-1907

J. H. Westbrook
W. L. Petty
W. E. Jeffreys
L. Lancaster
L. L. Hardin
J. P. Daughtry
E. L. Daughtride
E. W. Smith
W. V. Boyle
J. C. Robertson
W. G. Williams
C. B. Brewer

1907-1908

J. H. Westbrook
J. P. Daughtry
E. V. Brown
C. L. Gay
W. H. Newell
J. C. Braswell
E. W. Smith
W. E. Jeffreys
W. V. Boyle
E. H. Crews
J. Benton
E. L. Daughtride
Edm. Bachelor
J. C. Robertson

1910

J. H. Westbrook
E. R. Hines
R. W. Rawls
E. H. Crews
John Benton
E. W. Smith
J. P. Daughtry
C. L. Gay

OFFICIAL BOARD
(continued)

1911

J. H. Westbrook
J. C. Braswell
R. W. Rawls
E. R. Hines
John Benton
C. L. Gay
E. W. Smith
W. M. Johnson
E. W. Jeffreys
F. M. Fitts
E. H. Crews
L. P. Howard

1918-1919

E. J. Johnston
L. D. Harper
W. H. Newel
M. J. Barnhill
J. P. Daughtry
L. C. Gorham
J. H. Westbrook
J. C. Braswell
C. L. Gay
W. E. Jeffreys
E. W. Smith
W. G. Williams
S. W. Staley
John Benton
L. L. Gravely
R. A. Broome
J. L. Hinton
A. C. Bone
E. R. Hines
M. P. J. Williams
C. R. Preddy
G. T. Burnett
J. G. Hammon
L. C. Gorham

1920

Mrs. J. P. Whitehead
Mrs. J. W. Aycock
E. R. Hines
G. S. Burnett
L. R. Gorham
F. P. Davis
M. V. Barnhill
E. G. Johnson
M. P. J. Williams

1920 (continued)

Mrs. W. H. Horne
J. C. Braswell
W. H. Newell
W. E. Jeffreys
J. P. Daughtry
C. L. Gay
John Benton
L. L. Gravely
S. W. Staley
L. D. Harper
R. A. Broome
J. L. Suiter
J. G. Hammond
W. G. Williams
C. R. Preddy
G. T. Burnett
L. L. Shamburger
W. H. Horne
J. W. Aycock

1921

John Benton
A. C. Bone
Mrs. K. D. Aycock
J. C. Braswell
J. R. Bennett
J. P. Daughtry
W. T. Barnhill
L. R. Gorham
L. K. Gravely
Mrs. T. A. Cooper
Mrs. M. McDearmon
Mrs. T. S. McDearmon
F. P. Davis
C. E. Hamilton
E. G. Johnson
M. V. Barnhill
W. H. Newell
R. A. Broome
J. C. Suiter
Mrs. W. H. Horne
E. R. Hines
S. W. Staley
C. L. Gay
L. L. Shamburger
E. E. Hamilton
L. D. Harper
G. F. Burnett
Mrs. J. P. Whitehead

OFFICIAL BOARD
(continued)

1921 (continued)

C. R. Preddy
W. G. Williams
M. P. J. Williams
F. P. Davis
E. L. Daughtridge
J. C. Wynn

1926-1927

W. F. Parkerson
W. G. Williams
A. C. Bone
T. R. Easterling
C. L. Bonney
T. Crouch (?)
W. K. Helms
J. L. Horne, Jr.
G. T. Matthews
V. S. Watson
L. R. Gorham
W. C. Whitehead
Miss Nannie Daughtridge
Mrs. Neal Howard
Mrs. W. O. McGowan
L. J. Craven

1926

E. N. Brewer
M. P. J. Williams
L. L. Gravely
E. I. Fleming
J. L. Suiter
Mrs. J. A. Higgins
Mrs. W. H. Horner
W. V. Newell
Mrs. T. A. Cooper
Mrs. J. P. Whitehead
Mrs. T. S. McDearmon
J. C. Braswell
Mrs. W. H. Horne
L. L. Shamburger
G. T. Burnett

1926-1927

C. E. Hamilton
R. A. King
E. N. Brewer
Mrs. J. W. Aycocck
Mrs. J. A. Higgins
M. V. Barnhill
E. G. Johnson

1926

J. R. Bennett
L. D. Harper
C. K. Proctor
J. H. Westbrook
E. R. Hines
R. A. Broome
C. L. Gay
L. V. Barrett
J. P. Daughtry
C. R. Preddy
M. V. Barnhill

1928

J. T. Lassiter
L. R. Gorham
Miss Luta Carter
Mrs. T. A. Avera
Mrs. T. B. Harris
Mrs. ----- Perritt
G. T. Matthews

1928-1929

W. K. Helms
T. R. Easterling
Earl Spruill
Mrs. W. H. Horne
W. F. Parkerson
R. R. Gay
W. H. Newell
Mrs. T. A. Cooper
Mrs. J. P. Whitehead
W. G. Williams
J. H. Westbrook, Sr.
L. D. Harper
J. L. Suiter
J. P. Daughtry
A. C. Bone
J. C. Braswell
V. S. Watson

1929

John Benton

1932

Mrs. Harry Moore
Roy Norton
E. H. Reaves
J. L. Horne, Jr.
R. Fred Hunt
E. D. Spruill

OFFICIAL BOARD
(continued)

1932 (continued)

N. B. Dozier
R. W. Rawls
H. L. Pace
J. R. Simpson
J. L. Williams

1931-1932

R. R. Gay
Mrs. W. H. Horne
E. R. Hines
E. G. Johnson
R. A. King
L. B. Aycock
G. T. Matthews
Mrs. T. S. McDearmon
W. H. Newell
W. F. Parkson
V. S. Watson
W. Gray Williams
M. P. J. Williams
L. D. Harper
J. L. Suiter
C. L. Bonney
G. T. Burnett
M. N. Barnhill
J. R. Bennett
J. C. Braswell
A. C. Bone
R. A. Broome
Mrs. T. A. Cooper
J. P. Daughtry
T. R. Easterling
E. I. Fleming
L. Gravely
L. R. Gorham
J. O. Blount

1933

Mrs. P. H. Griffin
R. W. Rawls
H. L. Page
Roy Norton
Mrs. C. W. Ivey

1934-1935

F. F. Cherry
D. T. Boone
Mrs. A. R. Corinth
J. R. Gunn
Mrs. Phil Griffin
Mrs. T. W. Smithson

1936-1937

E. H. Reaves
J. R. Bennett
N. B. Dozier
Jay Powell
J. L. Horne, Jr.
Mrs. T. W. Smithson
Mrs. T. A. Cooper
Mrs. Phil Griffin
Mrs. W. R. Bradley
Mrs. A. R. Corinth
R. A. King
E. I. Fleming
J. C. Braswell
R. R. Gay
R. A. Broome
D. L. Grady
J. R. Fawkes

1937-1938

R. R. Gay
A. C. Bone
J. W. Aycock
R. A. Broome
D. T. Boone
J. C. Braswell
I. R. Gunn
J. R. Bennett
Mrs. W. R. Bradley
Mrs. T. A. Cooper
Mrs. W. C. Liverman
Mrs. T. W. Smithson
Mrs. A. R. Corinth
Mrs. ----- McDearmon
J. S. Gorham
J. M. Baker
J. L. Horne
T. R. Easterling
Mrs. Phil Griffin
J. R. Bennett
G. T. Burnett

OFFICIAL BOARD
(continued)

1937-1938 (continued)

H. F. Hinson
I. E. Ready
J. Q. Robinson
R. L. Sides
W. G. Stigleman
D. L. Grady
L. L. Gravely
L. D. Harper
E. R. Hines
R. A. King
M. P. J. Williams
W. D. Boseman
W. J. Adams

1938-1939

W. J. Adams
J. W. Aycock
J. M. Alford
J. M. Baker
M. V. Barnhill
J. R. Bennett
A. C. Bone
C. L. Bonney
D. T. Boone
J. C. Braswell
R. A. Broome
G. T. Burnett
P. G. Coble
Mrs. T. A. Cooper
Mrs. A. R. Corinth
N. B. Dozier
T. R. Easterling
E. I. Fleming
R. R. Gay
J. S. Gorham
D. L. Grady
L. L. Gravely
Mrs. Phil Griffin
I. R. Gunn
L. D. Harper
E. R. Hines
H. F. Hinson
J. L. Horne
R. A. King
Mrs. J. A. Lambert
G. T. Matthews
Mrs. T. S. McDearmon
Jay Powell
A. L. Dozier

1938-1939 (continued)

I. E. Ready
E. H. Reaves
J. Q. Robinson
R. L. Sides
Mrs. T. W. Smithson
W. G. Stigleman
V. S. Watson
Mrs. J. P. Whitehead
J. L. Williams
M. P. J. Williams
Mrs. W. R. Bradley

1940

W. J. Adams
J. W. Aycock
D. L. Alford
F. A. Abernathy
J. M. Baker
Guy Barnes
J. R. Bennett
A. C. Bone
D. T. Boone
J. C. Braswell
R. A. Broome
G. T. Burnett
P. G. Coble
Mrs. T. A. Cooper
Mrs. A. R. Corinth
Graham Dozier
T. R. Easterling
E. I. Fleming
H. H. Elliott
R. R. Gay
J. S. Gorham
D. L. Grady
L. L. Gravely
I. R. Gunn
E. R. Hines
H. F. Hinson
J. L. Horne
Leslie H. Hinson
R. A. King
Mrs. J. E. Lambert
Mrs. T. S. McDearmon
Jay Powell
I. E. Ready
E. H. Reaves
J. Q. Robinson
R. L. Sides

OFFICIAL BOARD
(continued)

1940 (continued)

Mrs. T. W. Smithson
W. C. Stigleman
V. S. Watson
Mrs. J. P. Whitehead
M. P. J. Williams

1940-1941

D. L. Alford
W. J. Adams
F. A. Abernathy
J. M. Baker
A. C. Bone
J. C. Braswell
R. A. Broome
G. T. Burnett
P. G. Cobb
Mrs. T. A. Cooper
Mrs. A. R. Corinth
Graham Dozier
N. B. Dozier
T. R. Easterling
E. I. Fleming
H. H. Elliott
R. R. Gay
J. S. Gorham
L. L. Gravely
I. R. Gunn
E. R. Hines
H. F. Hinson
J. L. Horne
L. F. Hinson
R. A. King
Mrs. J. E. Lambert
Mrs. T. S. McDearmon
Jay Powell
I. E. Ready
E. H. Reaves
J. Q. Robinson
Mrs. T. W. Smithson
W. G. Stigleman
V. S. Watson
Mrs. J. P. Whitehurst
M. P. J. Williams
R. L. Sides

1943

J. L. Horne
R. R. Gay
R. A. King
J. Q. Robinson
J. R. Bennett
E. I. Fleming
Jay Powell
J. M. Baker
L. G. Hooks
L. M. Pearsall
P. G. Cobb
N. B. Dozier
R. W. Joyner
D. T. Boone
J. S. Gorham
A. T. Cronenberg
Mrs. L. B. Aycock
Mrs. W. H. Whitehurst
Mrs. J. E. Lambert
Mrs. M. F. Jones

1944

E. A. Howton
J. L. Horne, Jr.
P. G. Cobb
R. A. Broome
L. M. Pearsall
T. S. Newbold
D. L. Grady
Jay Powell
Mrs. Joe Barrett (1945?)
H. H. Elliott
A. C. Bone
J. G. Hammond
R. A. King
N. B. Dozier
J. R. Bennett
M. P. J. Williams
Ray Bandy
Mrs. L. B. Aycock
Mrs. A. R. Corinth
Guy E. Barnes
D. T. Boone
G. T. Burnette
R. W. Joyner
T. R. Easterling
Mrs. M. F. Jones
I. E. Ready

OFFICIAL BOARD
(continued)

1944 (continued)

Thomson Cronenberg
Mrs. W. J. Whitehurst
Ray Bandy
D. L. Grady
J. G. Hammond
A. C. Bone
M. P. J. Williams
J. R. Bennett
J. Q. Robinson
Mrs. T. A. Cooper
J. S. Gorham
G. T. Burnett

1945

A. C. Bone
J. M. Baker
N. B. Dozier
R. R. Gay
F. A. Abernathy
R. A. King
D. T. Boone
J. W. Robinson
J. R. Mauldin
J. S. Gorham
E. I. Fleming
P. G. Cobb
M. P. J. Williams
L. M. Pearsall
Mrs. Joe Barrett
Mrs. L. B. Aycock
Mrs. W. J. Whitehurst
Jay Powell
R. A. Broome
J. C. Braswell
E. A. Howton
D. L. Grady
D. S. Johnson
J. A. Gorham
T. S. Newbold
N. B. Dozier
L. F. Hinson
J. G. Hammond
M. P. J. Williams
E. H. Reaves
Mrs. A. R. Corinth
J. R. Bennett
D. G. McLeod
T. R. Easterling
Thomson Cronenberg

1945 (continued)

R. W. Joyner
G. T. Burnett
J. M. Baker
Mrs. M. F. Jones

1946

A. C. Bone
Jay Powell
J. R. Bennett
J. R. Mauldin
E. I. Fleming
W. Dee Taylor
E. H. Reaves
M. J. Cowell
L. J. Hooker
J. Q. Robinson
J. M. Aldridge
D. S. Johnson
J. W. Aycock
M. P. J. Williams
T. R. Easterling
D. L. Grady
G. T. Burnett
R. A. Broome
B. W. Mallison
C. L. Bonney
N. B. Dozier
D. T. Boone
R. W. Joyner
Mrs. M. F. Jones
Mrs. L. B. Aycock
Mrs. W. J. Whitehurst
Guy Barnes
J. M. Baker
C. L. Bonnet
D. L. Alford
E. T. Baysden
T. R. Easterling
R. W. Joyner
D. T. Boone
Mrs. J. E. Lambert
W. Dee Taylor
M. J. Cowell
Jay Powell

OFFICIAL BOARD
(continued)

1947

R. W. Joyner
L. G. Hooks
M. P. J. Williams
D. L. Grady
J. R. Mauldin
P. G. Cobb
J. S. Gorham
T. A. Abernathy
L. L. Gravely
N. B. Dozier
R. A. King
Jay Powell
M. T. Bailey
E. E. Adkins
R. L. Sides
R. T. Jeffreys
Ray Bandy
D. L. Grady
J. Q. Robinson
G. T. Burnett
E. I. Fleming
J. W. Aycock
Ray Bandy
D. L. Grady
T. R. Easterling
Mrs. L. B. Aycock
N. B. Dozier
Earl Baysden
J. G. Hammond
Guy Barnes
J. R. Bennett
G. T. Burnett
R. A. King
T. A. Cronenberg
T. S. Newbold
Mrs. A. R. Corinth
Mrs. W. J. Whitehurst

1948

J. R. Mauldin
J. M. Brock
R. W. Joyner
M. J. Cowell
M. T. Bailey
B. W. Mallison
F. A. Abernathy
D. L. Grady
C. A. White
R. L. Sides

1948 (continued)

A. C. Bone
E. I. Fleming
R. A. King
D. L. Alford
J. W. Aycock
G. T. Burnett
M. P. J. Williams
Mrs. T. A. Cooper
E. E. Adkins
Thomson Cronenberg
J. Q. Robinson
P. G. Cobb
N. B. Dozier
Mrs. W. J. Whitehurst
J. S. Gorham, Jr.
Jay Powell
Mrs. L. B. Aycock
Mrs. J. E. Lambert
T. S. Newbold
R. T. Jeffreys
J. L. Horne
Guy Barnes
J. W. Aycock
W. Dee Taylor
J. M. Baker
P. G. Cobb
J. M. Brock
Mrs. T. A. Cooper
Mrs. J. E. Lambert
Earl Baysden
R. A. Broome
Mrs. M. F. Jones
C. L. Bonney
J. G. Hammond
J. M. Aldridge
Ray Bandy
D. T. Boone
T. R. Easterling

1949

J. R. Mauldin
J. R. Bennett
J. C. Braswell
Tom Cronenberg
F. A. Abernathy
M. J. Cowell
E. I. Fleming
C. L. Bonney
M. P. J. Williams

OFFICIAL BOARD
(continued)

1949 (continued)

A. C. Bone
J. M. Aldridge
W. Dee Taylor
J. S. Gorham, Jr.
D. T. Boone
J. Q. Robinson
J. G. Hammond
B. W. Mallison
D. L. Grady
R. W. Gay
Jay Powell
N. B. Dozier
M. W. Ivey
G. T. Burnett
Mrs. W. J. Whitehurst
Mrs. L. B. Aycock
Mrs. J. E. Lambert
Mrs. T. A. Cooper
Mrs. J. P. Whitehead
E. I. Fleming
E. T. Baysden
M. E. Beland
R. A. King
K. C. Diehl
J. L. Horne
J. W. Aycock
J. Q. Robinson
J. S. Gorham
T. S. Newbold
C. D. Eatman
R. A. King
R. W. Joyner
M. J. Cowell
J. M. Brock
R. W. Gay
E. E. Adkins
D. L. Alford
T. R. Easterling
J. L. Horne
R. T. Jeffreys

1950

R. W. Joyner
W. J. Ecklar
G. T. Burnett
J. W. Aycock
D. L. Alford
N. B. Dozier
F. A. Abernathy

1950 (continued)

Mrs. L. B. Aycock
K. C. Diehl
B. W. Mallison
D. T. Boone
Jay Powell
Mrs. J. E. Lambert
Miss Alice Jones
C. D. Eatman
Guy Barnes
J. S. Gorham
M. W. Ivey
Milton Brock
Jay Powell
A. T. Cronenberg
Ray Bandy
M. T. Bailey
T. S. Newbold
W. Dee Taylor
L. L. Gravely, Jr.
J. W. Aycock
Mrs. L. B. Aycock
L. G. Hooks
A. H. Martin
Mrs. T. A. Cooper
E. T. Baysden
D. L. Alford
J. M. Aldridge
T. S. Newbold
J. M. Brock
J. G. Hammond
W. Dee Taylor
M. T. Bailey
J. R. Bennett, Jr.
E. I. Fleming
E. E. Adkins
J. C. Braswell
C. L. Bonney
J. M. Baker
R. A. Broome
A. C. Bone
P. G. Cobb
T. R. Easterling
R. W. Gay
D. L. Grady
J. R. Bennett
M. P. J. Williams
E. I. Fleming
J. L. Horne
J. J. Hilburn
D. S. Johnson

OFFICIAL BOARD
(continued)

1951

E. E. Adkins
W. J. Ecklar
F. A. Abernathy
A. C. Bone
R. A. King
M. E. Beland
D. S. Johnson
C. L. Bonney
G. T. Burnett
R. A. Broome
B. W. Mallison
W. Dee Taylor
D. L. Alford
L. G. Hooks
Jay Powell
N. B. Dozier, Jr.
Albert Rabil
D. T. Boone
M. T. Bailey
J. M. Brock
J. M. Aldridge
M. J. Cowell
R. W. Joyner
Ray Bandy
R. W. Gay
H. H. Hilburn
Earl Baysden
J. S. Gorham, Jr.
L. L. Gravely, Jr.
W. L. McMillan
Miss Alice Jones
Mrs. J. E. Lambert
W. D. Bennett
Mrs. T. A. Cooper
Mrs. L. B. Aycock
Mrs. A. R. Corinth
J. W. Aycock
K. C. Diehl
M. W. Ivey
M. P. J. Williams
J. L. Horne
R. L. Sides
J. B. Keller
R. G. Dozier
T. S. Newbold
Mrs. L. B. Aycock
Ray Bandy
Mrs. M. F. Jones
Mrs. W. J. Whitehurst

1951 (continued)

B. W. Mallison
Guy Barnes
R. A. King
M. T. Whitley
J. M. Brock
A. H. Martin
J. M. Aldridge
W. D. Bennett
F. A. Cronenberg
M. J. Cowell
J. M. Baker
M. W. Ivey
C. D. Eatman
Mrs. A. R. Corinth
C. L. Bonney

1951-1952

J. G. Hammond
H. H. Hillburn
H. F. Hinson
L. G. Hooks
J. L. Horne
M. W. Ivey
Mrs. M. F. Jones
R. W. Joyner
J. B. Keller
R. A. King
Mrs. J. E. Lambert
A. H. Martin
T. S. Newbold
Jay Powell
R. L. Sides
W. Dee Taylor
Julius E. Thorne
Mrs. J. W. Whitehurst
Mrs. J. P. Whitehead
M. T. Whitley
M. P. J. Williams
George C. Winstead
W. G. Stigleman
W. L. McMillan
R. A. Broome
G. T. Burnett
Mrs. T. A. Cooper
Mrs. A. R. Corinth
M. J. Cowell
Thomson Cronenberg
K. D. Diehl
R. G. Dozier

OFFICIAL BOARD
(continued)

1951-1952 (continued)

N. B. Dozier, Jr.
Aubrey Dunn
T. R. Easterling
C. D. Eatman
W. J. Ecklar
E. I. Fleming
R. W. Gay
J. S. Gorham, Jr.
D. L. Grady
L. L. Gravely
F. A. Abernathy
E. E. Adkins
J. M. Aldridge
D. L. Alford
J. W. Aycock
Mrs. L. B. Aycock
Millard Bailey
J. M. Baker
Ray Bandy
Guy Barnes
Earl Baysden
M. E. Beland
J. R. Bennett, Jr.
W. D. Bennett
C. L. Bonney
D. T. Boone
D. Y. Brannock
J. M. Brock

1952-1953

J. S. Gorham, Jr.
D. L. Grady
L. L. Gravely
L. L. Gravely, Jr.
J. G. Hammond
H. H. Hillburn
L. G. Hooks
J. L. Horne
M. W. Ivey
D. S. Johnson
Mrs. M. F. Jones
R. W. Joyner
J. B. Keller
R. A. King
Mrs. J. E. Lambert
W. L. McMillan
B. W. Mallison
G. T. Burnett
R. L. Carr

1952-1953 (continued)

Mrs. T. A. Cooper
Mrs. A. R. Corinth
M. J. Cowell
Thomson Cronenberg
J. L. Cummings
C. F. Diehl
K. C. Diehl
R. Graham Dozier
N. B. Dozier
N. B. Dozier, Jr.
Aubrey Dunn
T. R. Easterling
C. D. Eatman
W. J. Ecklar
E. I. Fleming
R. W. Gay
A. H. Martin
T. S. Newbold
Jay Powell
Albert Rabil
R. L. Sides
W. Dee Taylor
Julius E. Thorne
Mrs. W. J. Whitehurst
M. P. J. Williams
Geo. C. Winstead
W. G. Stigleman
E. E. Adkins
J. M. Aldridge
D. L. Alford
J. W. Aycock
Mrs. L. B. Aycock
Millard Bailey
J. M. Baker
Guy Barnes
Earl Baysden
M. E. Beland
J. R. Bennett
W. D. Bennett
C. L. Bonney
D. T. Boone
J. M. Brock
R. A. Broome
F. A. Abernathy

OFFICIAL BOARD
(continued)

1953-1954

F. A. Abernathy
E. E. Adkins
J. M. Aldridge
D. L. Alford
J. W. Aycock
Mrs. L. B. Aycock
Millard Bailey
J. M. Baker
Ray Bandy
Guy Barnes
Earl Baysden
M. E. Beland
J. R. Bennett
W. D. Bennett
C. L. Bonney
D. T. Boone
J. M. Brock
R. A. Broome
A. H. Martin
T. S. Newbold
Jay Powell
Albert Rabil
J. E. Thorne
Mrs. W. J. Whitehurst
M. T. Whitley
M. P. J. Williams
G. T. Burnett
R. L. Carr
Mrs. T. A. Cooper
Mrs. A. R. Corinth
M. J. Cowell
Thomson Cronenberg
J. L. Cummings
A. F. Hill
K. C. Diehl
R. Graham Dozier
N. B. Dozier
N. B. Dozier, Jr.
Aubrey Dunn
T. R. Easterling
C. D. Eatman
W. J. Ecklar
E. I. Fleming
R. W. Gay
J. S. Gorham, Jr.
D. L. Grady
L. L. Gravely
L. L. Gravely, Jr.
J. G. Hammond

1953-1954 (continued)

H. H. Hillburn
L. G. Hooks
J. L. Horne
M. W. Ivey
D. S. Johnson
Mrs. M. F. Jones
R. W. Joyner
J. B. Keller
Mrs. J. E. Lambert
W. L. McMillan
B. W. Mallison
J. V. Boatner
John G. Fleming
H. B. Grant
Henry Harris
Mrs. J. W. Whitehurst
Chas. F. Lane
Mrs. Bruce Lea, Jr.
Bruce Lea
Mrs. J. K. Murrill, Jr.
Miss Nancy Newbold
Mrs. Harry S. Pearsall
Mrs. J. T. Tyree
Mrs. Van Watson, Sr.
T. W. Harris
A. S. Heath

1954-1955

L. H. Felmet
Edw. Fike
E. I. Fleming
D. L. Grady
J. S. Gorham
R. D. Gorham
Ed Hallford
D. P. Harris
Henry C. Harris
Thomas Harris
A. S. Heath
J. L. Horne
S. F. Horne
M. W. Ivey
D. S. Johnson
Mrs. M. F. Jones
Mrs. J. W. E. Joyner
R. W. Joyner
T. E. Jolley, Jr.
Frank Jones
J. B. Keller

OFFICIAL BOARD
(continued)

1954-1955 (continued)

R. A. King
Mrs. J. E. Lambert
Chas. F. Lane
Mrs. Bruce Lea, Jr.
W. B. Lea
B. W. Mallison
A. H. Martin
Mrs. T. M. Maxwell
Davis Modlin
Josh Munden
T. S. Newbold
Jay Powell
R. O. Purvis
W. D. Quarles, Jr.
Mrs. Harry Pearsall
Albert Rabil
S. L. Reynolds
T. E. Taylor
W. Dee Taylor
Julius E. Thorne
Mrs. J. T. Tyree
John A. Vann
Mrs. Van Watson, Sr.
Robert M. Wiley
M. P. J. Williams
M. T. Whitley
Mrs. J. M. Aldridge
F. A. Abernathy
E. E. Adkins
J. M. Aldridge
J. W. Aycock
Mrs. L. B. Aycock
J. M. Baker
Ray Bandy
Guy E. Barnes
Earl Baysden
M. E. Beland
William D. Bennett
John D. Bissette
R. R. Braswell
R. A. Broome
J. V. Boatner
C. L. Bonney
D. T. Boone
G. T. Burnett
R. L. Carr
C. J. Coclowitch
Ed. Coleman
Mrs. T. A. Cooper
H. L. Denson

1954-1955 (continued)

N. B. Dozier
N. B. Dozier, Jr.
R. Graham Dozier
Aubrey Dunn
B. H. Dixon
T. R. Easterling
C. D. Eatman
W. J. Ecklar
Mrs. S. L. Edmunson
L. B. Edwards
H. O. Eggleston

1955-1956

J. M. Aldridge
D. L. Alford
J. W. Aycock
Mrs. L. B. Aycock
M. T. Bailey
Mrs. R. H. Baker
Ray Bandy
Guy E. Barnes
M. E. Beland
S. D. Bennett, Jr.
William D. Bennett
John D. Bissette
J. V. Boatner
C. L. Bonney
D. T. Boone
R. R. Braswell
J. M. Brock
G. T. Burnett
C. J. Cocowitch
E. W. Coleman
Mrs. T. A. Cooper
A. T. Cronenberg
J. L. Cummings
Hiram Cuthrell
H. L. Denson
B. H. Dixon
N. B. Dozier, Sr.
N. B. Dozier, Jr.
R. G. Dozier
T. R. Easterling
C. D. Eatman
W. J. Ecklar
Mrs. S. L. Edmunson
E. W. Edwards
Jean Edwards
L. B. Edwards
H. O. Eggleston

OFFICIAL BOARD
(continued)

1955-1956 (continued)

H. O. Felmet
J. H. Felton
Edw. L. Fike
Paul W. Flye
R. W. Gay
D. L. Grady
L. L. Gravely, Jr.
J. S. Gorham
R. D. Gorham
Mrs. H. T. Gunn, Sr.
E. J. Haley
E. U. Hallford
D. P. Harris
T. W. Harris
C. B. Harrison
L. G. Hooks
J. L. Horne
S. F. Horne
M. W. Ivey
Mrs. J. W. E. Joyner
R. W. Joyner
T. E. Jolley, Jr.
L. F. Jones
J. B. Keller
R. A. King
Mrs. J. E. Lambert
Chas. F. Lane
Mrs. W. B. Lea, Jr.
Gordon S. Lynch
Mrs. T. M. Maxwell

1955-1956 (continued)

D. L. Alford
J. W. Aycock
Mrs. L. B. Aycock
M. T. Bailey
J. M. Baker
Ray Bandy
Guy E. Barnes
M. E. Beland
S. D. Bennett, Jr.
William D. Bennett
John D. Bissette
J. V. Boatner
C. L. Bonney
D. T. Boone
R. R. Braswell
J. M. Brock

1955-1956

G. D. Modlin
J. W. Munden
T. S. Newbold
W. D. Quarles, Jr.
Mrs. Harry Pearsall
Albert Rabil
S. L. Reynolds
L. A. Shaw
T. E. Taylor
W. Dee Taylor
J. E. Thorne
A. L. Tilley
Mrs. J. T. Tyree
John A. Vann
L. O. Vickers
R. M. Wiley
M. T. Whitley
J. M. Aldridge

KNOWN FORMER PASTORS

Moses J. Hunt*	James Cannon - interim
M. H. Hight*	H. M. North - 1921-25
John W. Jenkins*	C. K. Proctor - 1925-28
L. W. Holden - 1874-75*	F. G. Vickers - 1928-32
T. B. Reeks - 1876*	G. W. Perry - 1932-36
F. D. Swindell - 1877-78*	R. D. Ware - 1936-39
J. N. Andrews - 1879-1880	E. L. Hillman - 1940-47
R. O. Burton - 1881*	T. M. Grant - 1947-52
J. N. Cole - 1882-83*	Ralph Cushman - interim
James Wilson - 1884*	Leon Russell - 1953
A. R. Raven - 1885-86*	
W. B. North - 1887*	
B. B. Culbreth - 1888*	
J. O. Guthrie - 1889-92	
J. E. Underwood - 1893-95	
R. J. Moorman - 1896-99*	
N. E. Coltrane - 1900*	
L. L. Nash - 1901-03	
W. S. Rone - 1903-06	
D. H. Tuttle - 1906-09	
L. P. Howard - 1910-13	
C. L. Read - 1914*	
W. A. Cade - 1918-19	
J. F. E. Bates - 1919-21	

Note: Those names with asterisks were drawn from printed sources, the remainder from available minutes of the official board and of the quarterly conferences.

MEMBERSHIP

1915 - 532

1920 - 800

1925 - 1119

1931 - 1341

1935 - 1411

1940 - 1480

1945 - 1634

1950 - 1767

1955 - 1528

Note: Figures are for total membership. Source: The N. C. Conferences Journals.