

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

SILER CITY, NORTH CAROLINA

1886 - 1986



BISHOP
C. P. Minnick, Jr.

DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT
James C. P. Brown

MINISTER
Travis W. Owen

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
and its predecessors
at Siler City, North Carolina
1886-1986

By
Wade H. Hadley, Jr.

PREFACE

This history was written to coincide with the Centennial Anniversary of the church, which was celebrated on Sunday, November 2, 1986.

It was compiled mainly from records in the church archives including the Church Register, Quarterly Conference record books, historical notes by early members, Midweek Bulletins, and Sunday worship programs.

The manuscript was submitted to the Rev. Travis W. Owen, Minister, for examination, revisions, and final approval. This was completed in July, 1987.

W. H. H., Jr.

ORIGIN OF THIS CHURCH AND THE EARLY YEARS: 1885-1920

The town of Siler City began to develop at Matthew's Crossroads when the railroad between Sanford and Greensboro started operating there in the spring of 1884. Families started to move in, build homes, and establish business enterprises. Early in 1885, a local union Sunday School was started with J. B. Guthrie as superintendent. This group first met under a brush arbor adjacent to the building now standing at 125 West Beaver Street. It was originally the Guthrie House, the town's first hotel. With the coming of cold weather, the Sunday School meetings were held in a tobacco warehouse, located at the corner which is now 144 North Chatham Avenue. Visiting ministers of various denominations preached there occasionally. This type of meeting was the predecessor of the first formally organized local church.

Many of the early residents of Siler City and members of the local union Sunday School mentioned above were Methodists. Soon they decided to establish a church here in Siler City.

A lot, 100 by 150 feet, was obtained from Samuel Siler and wife, Sallie Siler, and Julius A. Gray by a deed dated June 15, 1885. This was the same corner lot where the main church building now is located at 121 South Chatham Avenue. The land was deeded to W. F. Womble, E. R. McLean, J. B. Guthrie, J. C. Wrenn, R. F. Wrenn, D. G. Fox, and G. W. Walters, Trustees of the First Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at Siler Station. Early in 1886, W. F. Womble was elected treasurer of the building fund.

The local Methodist congregation was formally organized on November 1st of 1886. On that date the first entry was made in the Church Register. It recorded the reception of twenty-nine members, one by profession of faith and twenty-eight by certificate. They were received by Rev. R. T. N. Stephenson then acting as a temporary minister. It had been his earlier leadership which brought about the organization of this church.

Immediately after organizing, D. G. Fox was appointed as a representative of this new church to attend the annual Methodist Conference at Reidsville, N.C. in November of 1886. This resulted in Rev. Oliver Ryder being appointed pastor on December 7th of that year. At the same time the Siler circuit was formed. It was made up of the following five churches - - Concord, Mount Vernon, Providence, Rehobeth and Siler City - - with Rev. Ryder in charge. This new circuit was first placed within Trinity College District of the North Carolina Conference.

In the meantime, the church building at Siler City was under construction. By December of 1886 it was in usable condition with the walls raised, the building covered and rough slab seats installed. The entire town celebrated that year with a community Christmas tree at this new church. This was the only church within the village at that time. The church building was completed and dedicated on the first Sunday of April in 1887 by Rev. V. A. Sharpe, District Presiding Elder.

The initial group of 29 persons entered on the Church Register of Members on November 1, 1886, were listed in the following order:

G. W. Walters	Elizabeth H. Walters
Elizabeth Walters	D. G. Fox
John A. Walters	Nannie J. Fox
Rose E. Walters	E. W. Fox
Fannie Fox	Annie V. Hutson
J. B. Guthrie	A. A. Lambe
Sallie B. Guthrie	Ella Lambe
Sallie Guthrie	J. C. Wrenn
Ollie O. Guthrie	R. F. Wrenn
T. L. Guthrie	Emma Wrenn
J. A. Guthrie	E. Francis Wrenn
W. F. Womble	C. D. Wrenn
Olivia Womble	Callie Smith
Ida F. Crutchfield	W. C. Jones
Nannie K. Siler	

Growth of the congregation during the early years is shown by the following notes, based on the Church Register:

Nov. 1, 1886 (Charter Members)	29 members
Dec. 25, 1887 (1 yr. after org.)	41 members
Nov. 22, 1896 (10 yrs. after org.)	126 members
Oct. 7, 1900 (14 yrs. after org.)	200 members

First Adult Baptisms:

B. F. Griffith and J. J. Fowler
Baptized April 7, 1887, by Rev. Oliver Ryder

First Infant Baptism:

Flora May Wrenn (Parents - R. F. and Emma Wrenn)
Baptized October 16, 1887, by Rev. Oliver Ryder

First Church Marriage:

B. N. Mann and Miss M. G. Tucker

Married February 16, 1888, by Rev. Oliver Ryder

Remarks: Above information from the book labeled: "Church Register, Siler Church, M. E. South "

Prayer Meeting

Mid-week prayer meetings were being held by 1889 and said to be very well attended. At a meeting in the spring of 1907, there were seventy-five people present. These meetings were still being held as late as the year 1933.

Missionary Societies

A Juvenile Society was active by the spring of 1889. By 1891 it had thirty-eight members. It was engaged in home and foreign missions. This society was still active in 1908.

A Woman's Foreign Missionary Society was organized in the spring of 1899 with sixteen members. By 1909 there were 27 active members.

The First Organ

The Church obtained its first organ in March of 1892. This footpowered reed organ was used until July of 1920.

First Parsonage

The Church bought the J. D. Mann house and lot at Siler City for a parsonage in the fall of 1904 at a cost of \$700.00.

Ladies' Aid Society

This society was active by 1911 and may have been organized earlier. Activities to raise funds included bazaars, box suppers and a mock wedding. Funds were spent from time to time on items for the church and parsonage. A monthly payment for "Church Cleaning" was made. The bank balance of this society was \$1,338.00 on January 1, 1920. This money was probably accumulated for the new church building which was being planned at that time. This society continued until 1939.

The Church Beautiful Society

Miss Flora May Wrenn (later Mrs. Jack Morgan) and Mrs. M. M. Fox organized this group in or around the year 1910. It included the younger ladies of the church.

They held auction box suppers, among other activities, to raise money. This society is believed to have bought the first individual communion set for the church. Before that time, communion was taken in common from a chalice.

The Sunday School: 1886-1920

Local residents of the Siler City area had organized an interdenominational Sunday School in 1885 before any churches had been established there. This group was made up mainly from families recently moved to this new and growing little town, and were thus separated from their home churches. This group probably met in a single body without division into classes. Members of this Sunday School were instrumental in establishing the first local church - Methodist Episcopal, South.

This Church had a strong and well attended Sunday School from the start. By the end of 1888 there were 104 scholars enrolled, and the average attendance was eighty. There was no other church in Siler City at that time, and the population of the town was estimated to be approximately 200. W. F. Womble was the first superintendent, serving from 1886 until 1891. Robert F. Wrenn was one of the early teachers. He was teaching a class of young boys and girls in 1888. By July of 1899 the school had 140 enrolled along with eleven officers and teachers. By the early 1900's there were two major classes for adults: The BARACA for men and the PHILATHEA for women. These names are from an international organization founded in 1890. By mid 1919 the original building was overcrowded by the increased attendance, and plans for a new church were in progress.

Originally, this unit of the church now called Sunday School was known as the "Sabbath School".

Reports of Pastors During the Early Years

The reports on the spiritual condition of the church in the quarterly conference minutes by the pastor are an integral part of the history of his church.

W. H. Townsend's report of September 12, 1891, was as follows:

"The general state of the church is tolerable good. The members are generally circumspect in their lives. I think there is very little violation of the rules of the church. I hear of no dram drinking or other gross sins. Quite a number seem cold towards the church."

W. F. Craven's report of January 28, 1899, was as follows:

"Almost all those whose names now appear on our Church Register

showed some active interest in the church last year. Vigorous and almost heroic effort was made by many from the time of our last Quarterly Conference to the close of the year that the interests of the church might not suffer. We have much cause for profound gratitude and encouragement. I have preached at all of the churches since Annual Conference. Good congregations have met and warmly greeted me at all points notwithstanding rough roads, rough weather and other obstacles. Our people as a whole still love God, are loyal to the church, and want to see souls saved. They work and pray to that end."

Minister's Salary During the Early Years

For the year of 1887, the Pastor in charge of the Siler City Circuit was paid \$172.80 out of the \$212.33 raised for the support of the ministry from the five churches within his circuit. The remainder went to the Presiding Elder and to the Bishop.

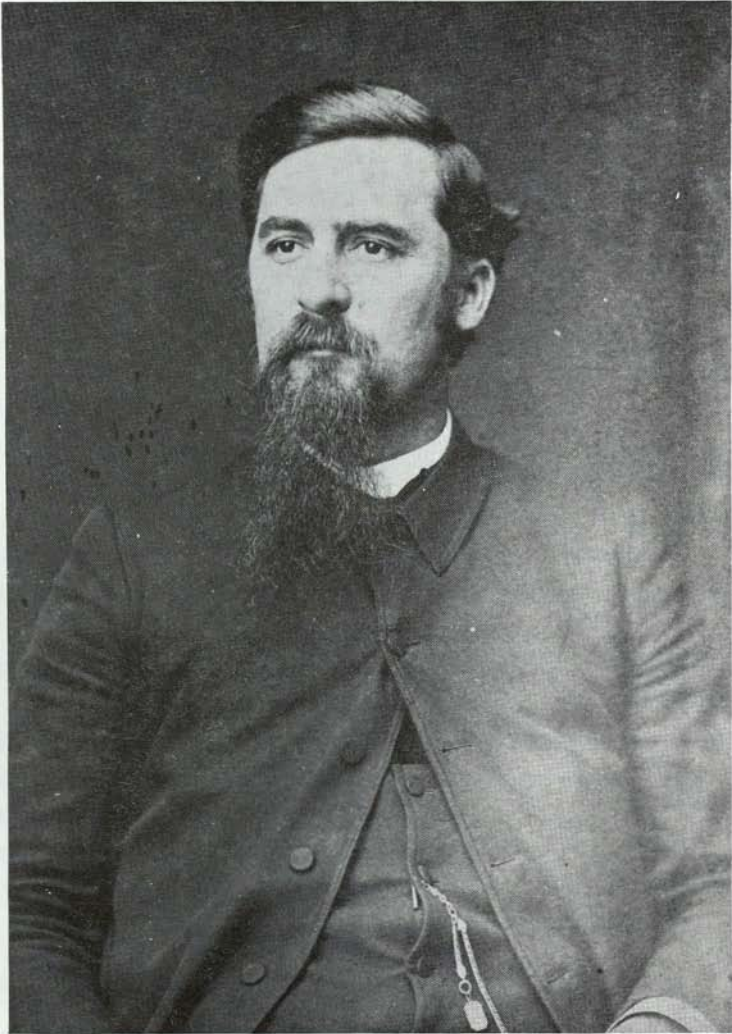
For the year 1890, the Pastor received \$355.14. The church at Siler City contributed \$190.95.

The Pastor in charge of the Siler City Circuit received a salary of \$400.00 in 1901. By the year 1916, it was up to \$1,000.00 a year. During this period he was serving three to four country churches along with the one at Siler City. The church at Siler City contributed \$193.00 to the Pastor's annual salary in 1900, and by 1916 its annual contribution was \$573.00.

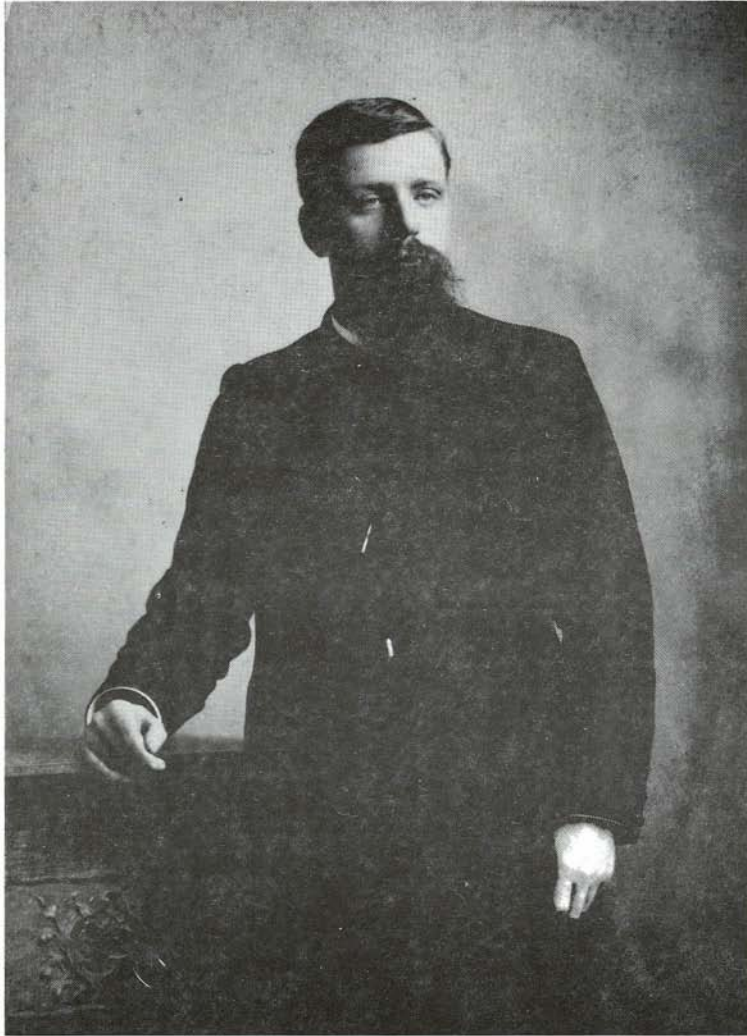
Transition Period: 1920 - 1922

The original wooden church building dedicated in April, 1887, was used for the last time on July 11, 1920. It was then torn down in August of that year in preparation for a new building on the site.

Church services were held on the second floor of the Riddle Building at 109 North Chatham Avenue until the new church building was ready for occupancy in August of 1922.

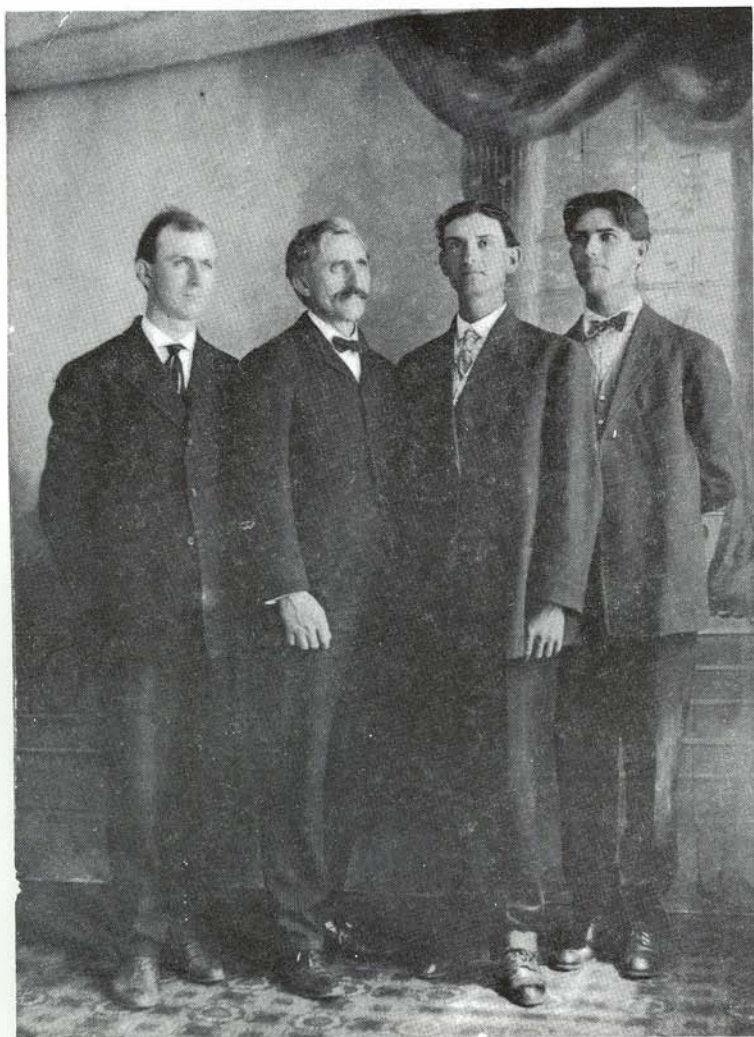


REV. R. F. W. STAMEY
First Presiding Elder of Siler Circuit, Methodist
Episcopal Church, South.



REV. OLIVER RYDER

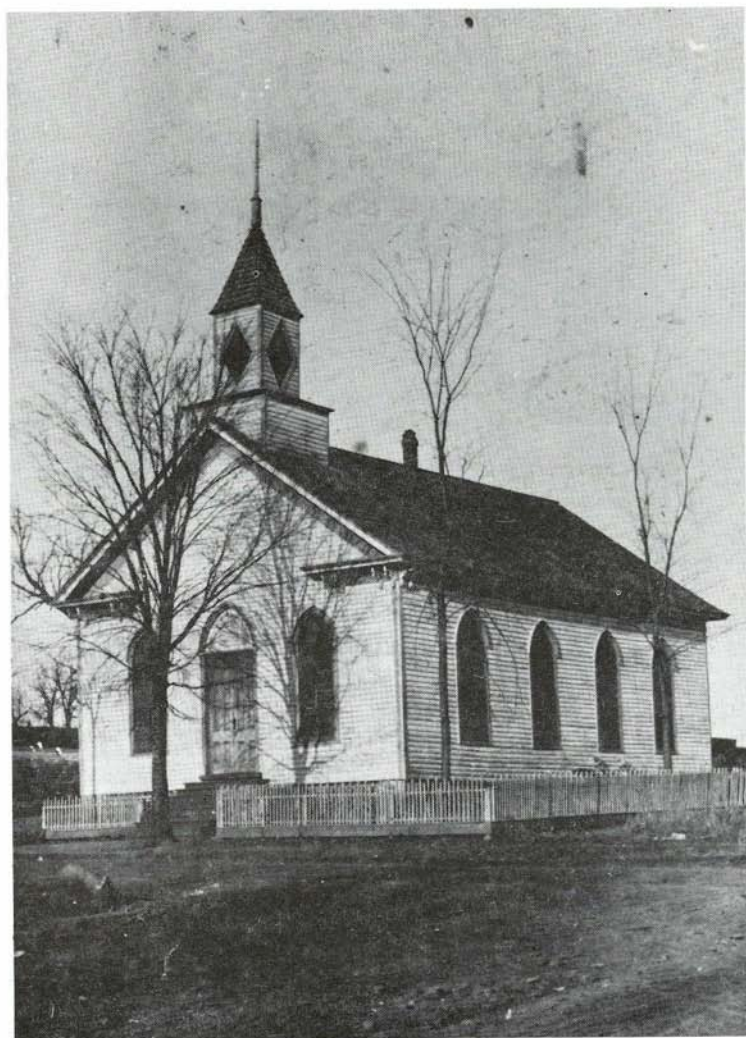
First Pastor of First Methodist Episcopal Church, South at
Siler City, N.C. appointed December 7, 1880 and served
three years.



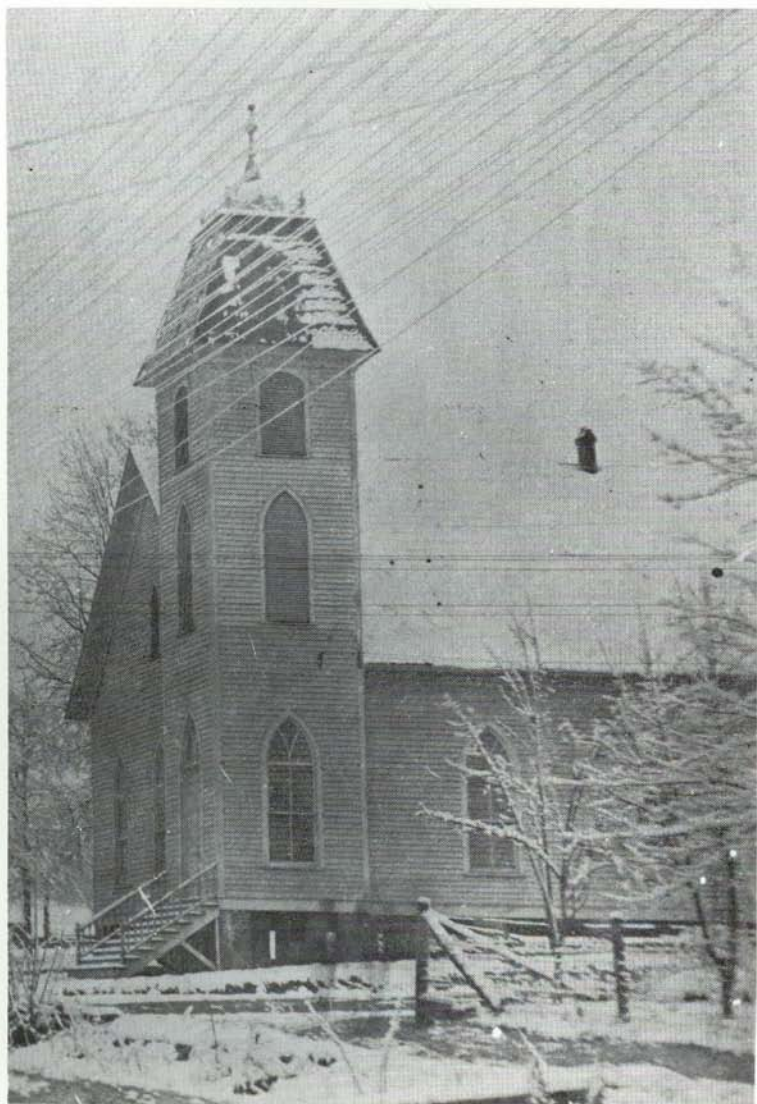
MALE QUARTET OF METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH,
SOUTH OF SILER CITY

LATE 1890's AND EARLY 1900's

Left to Right: Millard Fox, Charles Wrenn, Tom Siler
and Paul Elkins

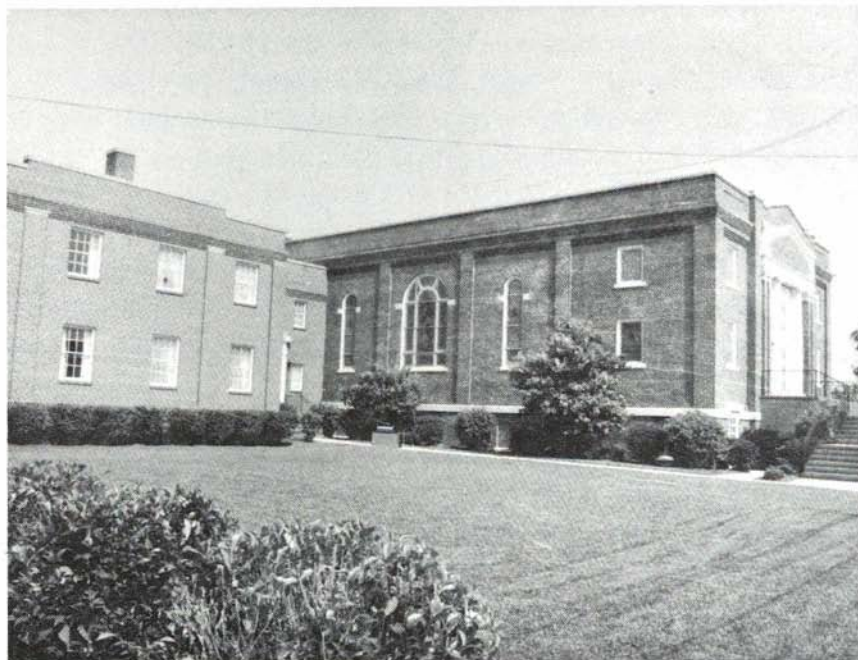


FIRST METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH
at Siler City, N.C. dedicated April, 1887. Used for last time
July 11, 1920. Stood on corner at 121 S. Chatham Ave.



METHODIST PROTESTANT CHURCH

at Siler City, N.C. Built around 1895. Active until March 29, 1940 when this church was united with the Methodist Episcopal congregation to form The First Methodist Church of Siler City.



PRESENT SANCTUARY AND EDUCATIONAL BUILDING

THE LATER YEARS: 1920 - 1986

A New Church Building: 1921 - 1925

A building committee appointed in 1920 consisted of the following members: W. S. Durham, Walter Ferguson, J. C. Gregson, J. F. Lambe, S. J. Marley, C. K. Wrenn, Junius Wren and M. M. Fox.

Plans for the church were drawn by A.A. Honeywell Co. of Kokomo, Indiana. B. B. Bray, a local contractor, was in charge of the construction work.

Construction of the new church started in the spring of 1921. It was used for the first time on June 3, 1922, when Junius Wren and Cara Lambe Siler were married by the pastor, H.B. Porter, assisted by Rev. W.F. Womble. This was well before construction was completed. The church basement was in shape for Sunday School to be held there for the first time on August 27, 1922. The new church was dedicated on June 7, 1925, by Bishop Horace M. DuBose. The basic cost of this new building, without furnishings, was around \$35,000.00 and was mainly debt free at the time of completion. This pay-as-you-go policy was mainly responsible for the long period of time during which the building was under construction. At the time the new building was dedicated, church membership was approximately 300.

Pews were installed during the summer of 1929 at a cost of around \$2,000.00.

A piano was used in the sanctuary until the late 1930's, when the first pipe organ was installed. The second pipe organ was placed in service in 1965 at a cost of around \$11,000.00 and is the one now in use.

Educational Units Built: 1939 and 1959

In July of 1939, construction of a new educational unit adjacent to the main church building was approved at an estimated cost of around \$16,000.00.

A second addition to the main church building was made in 1959, at a cost of approximately \$13,000.00. This was an enlargement of the educational unit. The building committee consisted of: W. B. Carroll, Chairman; F. G. Brooks, Sr.; L. C. Bruce; S. S. Clapp; and J. S. Wrenn, Treasurer.

Expansion and Renovation: 1973 - 1974

On April 20, 1972, the members present at a Church and Charge Conference voted to proceed with a major program of enlargement and improvement in line with the recommendations of the Building and Improvements Committee.

This included the erection of an addition at the rear of the sanctuary building to provide a new kitchen, restrooms, church office, a new choir room, and one large classroom. The improvements included a re-design of the front exterior of the sanctuary building, remodeling the interior of the sanctuary, and enlargement of the Fellowship Hall.

The educational building was remodeled and redecorated during this period with church members doing much of the work. Three walls were removed to enlarge three classrooms. All of the rooms and halls were

painted, and the floors were carpeted or tiled.

For the most part, the above work was completed by November, 1974. Total cost was \$185,000.00 with \$52,000.00 paid from the building fund and \$133,000.00 by a ten year loan.

The Building Committee: Baxter P. Reitzel, Jr. - Chairperson, Mrs. H. E. Stout - Secretary, Jack L. Tanner - Treasurer, Mott P. Blair, Paul Braxton, James L. Brewer, John W. Brigham, Frank G. Brooks, Jr., Miss Leah Brooks, Fred J. Fullington, Paul D. Johnson, Jr., Mrs. William R. Smith, William L. Wall, T. K. Wrenn.

Educational Building Improvements: 1977 - 1978

During 1977 and 1978, the men of the church sponsored the purchase and installation of individual heat/air-conditioning units for all thirteen rooms of the Educational Building at a cost of approximately \$11,382.00. This money was raised from ham and egg suppers conducted by the men, by sizeable contributions from the United Methodist Women, a contribution from the Young Adult Class, and an appropriation from the general budget.

A New Parsonage: 1983

The First United Methodist Church, Siler City, made a decision to build or buy a new parsonage stemming from a recommendation of the Council on Ministries planning session and approved by the Administrative Board and the Charge Conference in the fall of 1980. After searching long and hard to buy a parsonage, the Trustees decided to secure a lot and build a new home.

Once approval was given by the Charge Conference in the fall of 1982, the Trustees began forming a Building Committee comprised of Angus Currie, CP; Bill Milholen, Shirley Brewer, Sara Elder, Peggy Fullington, John Justice, Hal Phillips, Jerry B. Wood, Jr., and Ida Smith plus the Parsonage Committee and the pastor, the Rev. Travis W. Owen.

From plans made by the Building Committee, the Parsonage Committee, including Sara Elder CP, Shirley Brewer, Sallie Milholen, Nancy McKinley, Peggy Fullington, Margaret Currie, Nancy Burke, Riley Fields, Norman Lisk, and Mary John Resch, began co-ordinating the interior. With the contributions of time, talents, and gifts, the work was completed. Our Church family occupied their new home February 20, 1984. An open house was held for Church members to view the completed project on October 14, 1984.

At the time of this writing, our parsonage debt is two-thirds paid.

Submitted by the Parsonage Committee
Sara Elder, Chairperson September, 1986

The above parsonage is located at 522 West Glendale Street. The cost was as follows:

Parsonage construction cost	\$150,309.59
Furnishings	14,100.71
Lot, paving, and landscaping	15,556.42
Total Cost	<u>\$179,966.72</u>

A New Church Van

The Church bought a new fifteen passenger 1986 Dodge B-350 Maxi Wagon during February of 1986. The price paid, after a discount and allowance for the old 1973 Dodge van trade-in, was \$16,680.00.

Estimated Values of Properties: 1986

The church building: \$650,000; Furnishings and equipment, \$35,000; Land, \$50,000. Total: \$735,000.

The parsonage: building, \$160,000; Furnishings and equipment, \$35,000; Land, \$15,000. Total: \$210,000. This final cost includes furnishings given by individuals which were not included in the above figures.

Methodist Episcopal and Methodist Protestant

Churches Unite: 1939 - 1940

The Methodist Protestant Church of Siler City was organized in March of 1894, by W. W. Amick, a Methodist pastor. The organizational meeting was held in the Thompson School building. This was where the Town Hall now stands and adjacent to where the Methodist Protestant Church was built. This church was located on the northeast corner at the intersection of North Chatham Avenue and East 3rd Street.

The following is a list of the charter members:

- Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Brooks
- Mr. and Mrs. George W. Coble
- Emma Coble
- Jennie Coble
- Mollie Coble
- May Coble
- Minter Coble
- Ivey Coble
- Myrtle Coble

(charter members continued)

Mr. R. C. Siler and Children

Willie Siler

Emma Siler

Ila Siler

Mr. P. S. Siler

Mrs. W. A. Teague

Prof. and Mrs. J. A. W. Thompson

Mr. and Mrs. John C. White and Children

Sarah White

Conner White

Maggie White

Mr. and Mrs. William Wren and Children

L. L. Wren

Hettie Wren

The following is a list of the pastors appointed to the Methodist Protestant Church at Siler City and the years of their pastorate:

W. W. Amick	1894-1897
E. G. Lowdermilk	1897-1898
W. C. Kennett	1898-1902
D. A. Highfill	1902-1904
Unsupplied	1904-1905
J. L. Giles	1905-1906
W. D. Reed	1906-1908
C. W. Bales	1908-1909
J. R. Hutton	1909-1910
J. H. Bowman	1910-1913
W. A. Ledford	1913-1914
J. H. Bowman	1914-1915
T. E. Davis	1915-1916
	(did not serve)
E. G. Lowdermilk	1916-1917
P. S. Kennett	1917-1920
J. D. Williams	1920-1922
F. W. Paschal	1922-1923
A. D. Shelton	1923-1925
F. L. Gibbs	1925-1927
Dr. A. G. Dixon	1927-1929

(Pastors continued)

J. D. Williams	1929-1931
Unsupplied	1931-1932
H. L. Isley	1932-1934
J. A. Burgess	1934-1936
A. M. Smith	1936-1939

NOTE: List of charter members and of pastors from records of the late L.L Wren.

The Methodist Episcopal Church, South and the Methodist Protestant branches of the Methodist Church were officially merged late in the year 1939. The merger came about through the Uniting Conference in Kansas City in 1939, which merged the former Methodist Episcopal Church, South, The Methodist Episcopal Church and The Methodist Protestant Church into what was known as The Methodist Church.

The two churches at Siler City were consolidated over a transition period of about six months. The bulletin of October 1, 1939, shows that union worship services were held at each church on alternate Sundays. They were designated First and Second Churches under the heading of The Methodist Church, and the scheduled events at each were recorded in a single bulletin.

The union was completed on March 29, 1940, when the two congregations met as one body, and all activities at the Methodist Protestant Church were ended. The physical properties of the Methodist Protestant Church were sold. The church building which had been the Methodist Episcopal Church was dedicated to the service of the united congregations under the name of First Methodist Church of Siler City.

The organ which was used in the Methodist Protestant Church has been preserved and is now in the Wren Bible Classroom of the present church.

First Methodist Church Celebrates 75th Anniversary

This church was organized November 1, 1886. To celebrate the 75th Anniversary, the entire month of November, 1961, was designated as a period in which to give special recognition to this milestone. Rev. John M. Cline was the local minister at that time. The main observance took place on Sunday, November 19, 1961, at the 11:00 a.m. worship service. All living former pastors had been invited to attend. E. R. Clegg, C. Freeman Heath, and W. L. Maness were present and participated in the service. Also taking part in it was Rev. Robert Harry Jordan, a native of Siler City and formerly a member of First Methodist Church.

SILER CITY, NORTH CAROLINA TUESDAY, APRIL 2, 1940

Methodist Churches Are United



The 100th Anniversary

This event was celebrated with a Centennial Service on Sunday, November 2, 1986. All living former pastors had been invited to attend. Revs. Aubert M. Smith, Douglas L. Byrd, and Wilbur C. Teachey were present and participated in the service. Rev. John M. Cline also was present. Messages from former pastors not present were received from Cuyler Freeman Heath, O.L. Hathaway, Henry B. Lewis, and J.K. Bostick. The sermon was delivered by James C.P. Brown, District Superintendent. Rev. Travis W. Owen, minister at that time, made the statement of welcome at the start of the service. Attendance for this event was 241.

A message of greetings from Rev. Harry Jordan along with his mother, Cara Wrenn Jordan, was received. Mrs. Jordan's parents, Robert F. and Emma Wrenn, were charter members of this church, of which she is still a member. Rev. Harry Jordan is a native of Siler City and formerly a member of this church.

Following the Centennial Service a covered dish dinner took place in the fellowship hall.

Historical items pertaining to the church were displayed.

One hundred strokes of the church bell were sounded during the Centennial Service.

The Sunday School: 1922 - 1986

When the Sunday School returned to the new church in the fall of 1922, the enrollment was around 200. The average attendance for September of that year was 163.

By the spring of 1925, the Sunday School had seventeen officers and teachers, 290 pupils enrolled, and the average attendance was 190 during the first quarter.

At that time there were two major classes for adults: The BARACA for men and The PHILATHEA for women. There was also The Bible Class composed of senior church members. It is indicated to have been organized in 1910. By 1925 the name had been changed to The Friendship Bible Class, as shown by a memorial window placed in the church that year. The membership of this class was always small and consisted of elderly men and women. This was brought about by the reluctance of the older members of the other adult classes to progress into a group which was referred to by some as "The Old Folks Class." W.H. Hadley, Sr. was the teacher of this class from 1921 to 1931.

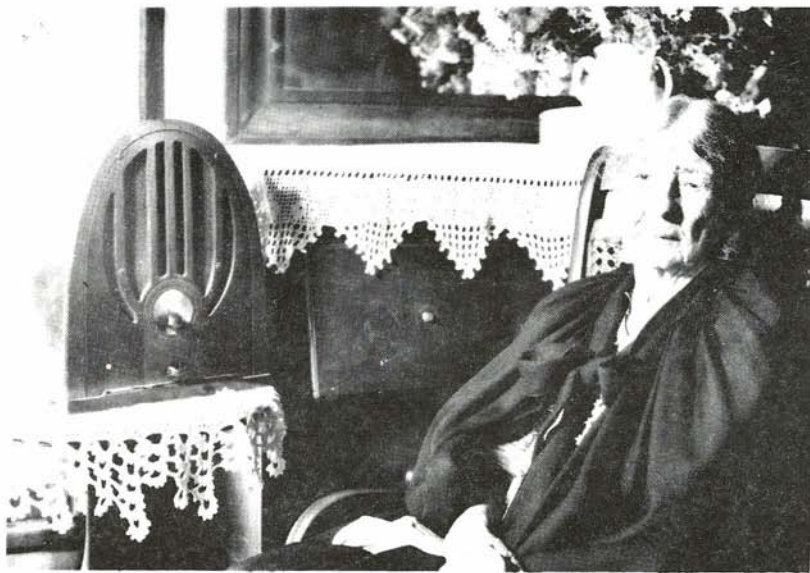
Another former Sunday School group of historical interest is the following:

Martitia Mann Class: 1943 - 1974

This class was organized October 19, 1943, on the 100th birthday of Mrs. Mann, for whom it was named. She had long been a revered member of this church. Her father and husband were Methodist ministers. She was the daughter of Rev. Josiah and Martha Bailey Bowden. Her husband was Rev. Isaac Newton Mann. Mrs. Mann died February 16, 1945, in the 102nd year of her age. She gave an antique glass pitcher from her belongings to the class which is now kept in the meeting room of the Carroll Class.

Membership was originally made up of ladies who had formerly belonged to the Philathea Class.

Mrs. W.B. (Gladys) Carroll served as teacher from 1944. until 1974.



MRS. MARTITIA B. MANN
(1843 - 1945)

Over the years the trend has been for the number of classes to increase. The present Sunday School consists of fourteen classes. Total enrollment was 189 and average weekly attendance 130 at the time this was written. The Sunday School is divided into three divisions: Adult, Youth and Children.

Adult Division

Most of the seven classes in the division are of long standing. Their members have tended to remain in the same class for long periods of time.

Carroll Class

This name was adopted in 1974 in recognition of more than thirty years of service by Mrs. W. B. (Gladys) Carroll as teacher of the Martitia Mann Class. The original membership was that of the earlier (1943 - 1974) Martitia Mann Class. Mrs. Carroll continued as teacher from 1974 until July, 1976, when she moved from the Siler City area. Mrs. Dorcas Stout was the teacher from 1976 to 1980 and Mrs. Peggie G. Dunn from 1980 to 1983. The teachers when this was written were Peggie G. Dunn, John Justice, William F. Poad, and Roderick Tidy, who serve one Sunday each month and Dorcas Stout, who serves on the fifth Sundays. Enrollment during mid 1986 was 12 members.

The projects and contributions of this class include the following:

The placing of a rosebud on the Church Altar honoring a new infant of Church members

Regular visits and gifts to shut-ins

Cash memorials to the Church upon the death of a church member or the death of an immediate relative in a class member's family

Membership in "The \$10.00 Club" with contributions of \$30.00 per year to our Conference

Support for mission work of Robert and Mary Beth Conerly of Brownsville, Texas, usually \$150.00 per year.

Men's Bible Class

This group originated from the BARACA class of earlier years. The present name was in use as early as 1947, with M. M. Fox as teacher. The membership of this class culminated in May of 1951, with an enrollment of one hundred. Sam Clapp then provided a barbecue supper for the group to celebrate the occasion. M. M. Fox was still the teacher. Later, a long term teacher of this class was Walter R. Brewer.

The teachers now are John Justice, Ben Moody, William Poad, and Roderick Tidy, who serve one Sunday each month and Donald Suchy who serves on the fifth Sundays.

Paul Braxton, Ben Clark and Russell Williams have been members of this class for at least forty years.

An annual event of this class is a supper to which widows of the church family are invited.

Present enrollment is twenty-four active members.

The officers are Lee Hodgkin, President; Max Hough, Vice-President; and Ben Clark, Secretary/Treasurer.

Wren Bible Class

After the merger with the local Methodist Protestant Church in 1940, L.L. Wren taught the ladies Philathea Class at First Methodist Church until shortly before his death in 1954. The Wren Bible Class, named in his memory, is a continuation of the main body of what formerly was the Philathea. Mrs. Ed Woody was a teacher of this class during its early years. The present teacher is Mrs. Jean Higgins. Mrs. Eugenia Reitzel and Mrs. Gladys Farmer are substitute teachers. Enrollment during mid 1986 was 12 members.

Friendship Class

This class was organized in the mid 1940's. The first teacher was Mrs. Clayton Beane. The present teacher is Mrs. Dora Lawson. Enrollment during mid 1986 was 22 members.

This class has furnished many of the teachers for the other departments of the Church School.

The class is a member of the \$10.00 Club.

Joyner-Brewer Class

The Joyner-Brewer class is primarily composed of couples and individuals in their 40's and 50's. The class was first started in the 1950's by a group of young adults. A decision was made to stay together as a unit and it was named the Joyner class in memory of the Rev. F.B. Joyner, who was pastor of this church from 1941 to 1947. The name was later changed to the Joyner-Brewer class in honor of a long term teacher, Walter R. Brewer, who was a great inspiration to the members of the class.

Over the years, Joyner-Brewer has been extremely active, contributing much to the Church and each other. The main project of the class is the awarding of the Walter R. Brewer scholarship, given annually to a deserving high school graduate who was active in the affairs of the Church. The class serves the stockholders of the Farmers Alliance Store for their annual meeting as a fund raising project. This money is used for many church-related projects. The class also provides a gift package for the children

at the Christmas Tree festival. Several projects have been undertaken with the Challengers class.

Additional Church related projects are fellowship activities for its members, including covered dish breakfasts and dinners and socials with other classes. Class members are remembered with flowers and meals in time of sickness and death in their families. In conjunction with the Challengers, class members assist in providing transportation and a Sunday meal for member of the Church family residing at a rest home.

At this writing, the 1986-87 class officers include Don Suchy, President; Angus Currie, Vice-President; and Cathren Brooks, Secretary-Treasurer. The teachers, who rotate on a weekly basis, are Deloris Collins, Don Suchy, Bill Elder, Roy McCollum, and John Brown.

Enrollment during mid 1986 was 21 members.

Submitted by Sara and Bill Elder
September, 1986

Challenger Class

The name for the class was adopted on October 29, 1978, for a group previously known as The Young Adult Class. The latter was organized in June of 1969. Rev. Joe Bostick was the first teacher. As of June 1, 1969, the class had 23 members. At that time, ten of the members were serving as teachers of other classes.

During mid 1986 this class had 24 members.

Officers for the 1986-87 Sunday School year are Baxter Reitzel, President; Danny Marly, Vice-President; Patsy Andrews, Secretary-Treasurer; and Janice Andrews Cheer Chairperson.

Patty Herring was the teacher of the class when this was written.

Class projects include the following:

An annual Christmas party for foster children of Chatham County

Adoption of Mrs. Eliza Clark as a class Grandmother

Membership in the \$10.00 Club

Washing the Church light bulbs and shades periodically.

Good News Class

This class adopted the above name in March of 1985. Prior to that date it had been The Young Adult Class. Enrollment during the current year was 21 members.

The officers when this was written were Ben Shivar, President; Debbie Johnson, Vice-President; Dacia Jones, Secretary; and John Stackhouse, Treasurer. The teacher is Steve Blanchard.

Youth Division

Junior High

This class had six students in mid 1986. Sallie Milholen was the teacher. Carolyn Clark and Lilla Furcron were substitute teachers.

Senior High

This class had twelve students in mid 1986. Eileen Williams was the teacher and Susan Bowman substitute teacher.

Children Division

Nursery I

Teachers: Rachel Boone, Bette Gilmore, Nancy Reitzel. This class had four students as of December, 1986.

Nursery II

Teachers: Tempie Blinde, Beth Overman, Cindy Hughes. This class had nine students as of December, 1986.

Preschoolers

Teachers: Kathy Grigg, Jan Brewer, Pat Hensel. This class had thirteen students in mid 1986.

Elementary I - III

Teachers: Fran Newlin, Camela Beane, Betty Wood. This class had eight students in mid 1986.

Elementary IV - VI

Teachers: Evelyn Tidy, Leigh Anne Grice. This class had four students in mid 1986.

AUXILIARY UNITS

The auxiliary societies have been an important part of this church since its early years. The Ladies Aid Society was a major unit from its organization prior to 1911 until 1939. After the Methodist Protestant and Methodist Episcopal churches were merged, the main ladies' auxiliary was named the Women's Society of Christian Service. It included the Wesleyan Service Guild and five circles. After the merger in 1968, of The Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church, resulting in the United Methodist Church, the above society along with the other auxiliary units were absorbed into the United Methodist Women and United Methodist Men organizations.

United Methodist Men

The original local group was chartered May 7, 1954, with eighty-one charter members. The name was Methodist Men until the 1968 merger. The most visible regular activity has been the breakfast meetings at 7:30 a.m. on the fourth Sunday of each month. These meetings have featured guest speakers, instrumental music and singers. There have also been appreciation breakfasts for law enforcement officers (county wide) and for the volunteer firemen.

For several years this group sponsored a community Halloween street festival in downtown Siler City. There has been a continuing practice of person-to-person benevolent activity based on anonymous gifts.

The local group received the Bishop's Award for Excellence on February 5, 1973, "selected as the most outstanding unit of the United Methodist Men in the Sanford District of North Carolina Conference."

Early presidents of the Methodist Men include: Clark Allred, Donald Brewer, Charlie Dark, Roy Marley, and Fred Poston. Samuel Rees was president for approximately twenty years and was serving in that office at the time of his death on May 6, 1980.

Officers at this time are Lee Hodgin, President; William Smith, Vice-President; Roy Marley, Secretary/Treasurer; and Jack Tanner, Sergeant-at-Arms.

United Methodist Women

This organization was established in December of 1973 following the church merger of 1968. This merger was of the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church into what is now known as the United Methodist Church. The former women's societies were united under this new name. The present organization at the Siler City church is composed of five groups, formerly known as circles. They are: Mary Beth, Daisy C. Hughes, JOY, Susannah Wesley, and Dorcas-Ruth.

Officers at this time are Mrs. William Herring, President; Sallie Milholen, Vice-President; and Evelyn Ellis, Secretary/Treasurer.

The United Methodist Women made a substantial contribution towards improvements of the Educational Building during 1977 and 1978. A bazaar is held each year as a fund raising project. An annual contribution of \$1,400.00 is made to missions. Recently, a love offering of \$1,500.00 was made to a sick person.

SERVICE ROSTER

List of Pastors

<u>Name of Pastor</u>	<u>Date of Appointment</u>	<u>Term of Service</u>
Oliver Ryder	Dec. 7, 1886	3 years
J. E. Woosley	Dec. 6, 1889	1 year
W. H. Townsend	Dec. 15, 1890	1 year
J. R. Newlin	Nov. 30, 1891	2 years
E. C. Sell	Dec. 11, 1893	3 years
H. W. Whitaker	Dec. 7, 1896	1 year
W. F. Craven	Dec. 6, 1897	3 years
Jonathan Sanford	Dec., 1900	3½ years*
J. A. Sikes	July 8, 1904	1½ years
R. W. Bailey	Dec., 1905	1 year
E. R. Welch	Dec., 1906	2 years
E. B. Craven	Dec., 1908	4 years
T. H. Sutton	Dec., 1912	4 years
C. W. Robinson	Dec., 1916	2 years
H. B. Porter	Dec., 1918	4 years
O. I. Hinson	Dec., 1922	3 years
W. L. Maness	Dec., 1925	3 years
J. W. Bradley	Dec., 1928	2 years
F. B. Peele	Dec., 1930	4 years
D. A. Clarke	Nov., 1934	1 year
C. F. Heath	Nov., 1935	4 years
C. B. Culbreth	Nov., 1939	2 years
F. B. Joyner	Nov., 1941	6 years
E. R. Clegg	1947	4 years
O. L. Hathaway	1951	2 years
E. L. Hillman	1953	5 years
C. P. Womack	June, 1958	3 years
J. M. Cline	June, 1961	2½ years
H. B. Lewis	Jan., 1964	4½ years
J. K. Bostick	June, 1968	3 years
D. L. Byrd	June, 1971	4 years
Wilbur C. Teachey	June, 1975	6 years
Travis W. Owen	June, 1981	_____

*Jonathan Sanford died in service on June 19, 1904.

Remarks: The above is a list of regular appointed pastors who served this church. There may have been others who served short assignments as acting or visiting pastors.

Members of this Church who became Ministers:

Kenneth Eugene Beane
Clyde Alston Brooks (Deceased)
Ernest W. Fox (Deceased)
Robert Harry Jordan
F. Belton Joyner

Members of this Church who became Missionaries:

Mary Beth Joyner Conerly

Retired Ministers:

Two ministers who served this church lived in Siler City after retirement.

F. B. Joyner (Deceased)
W. L. Maness (Deceased)

List of Sunday School Superintendents:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Years of Service</u>
W. F. Womble	1886-1891
John F. Lambe	1891-1910
M. M. Fox	1910-1929
Junius Wren	1929-1932
George W. Brooks	1932-1935
C. A. Shelton	1936-1951
E. V. Wood	1951-1957
L. C. Bruce	1957-1961
James L. Brewer	1961-1966
Mrs. Ida M. Smith	1966-1973
Mrs. John Brigham	1973-1976
L. Carroll Burke	1976-1977
J. Byron Lee	1977-1978
Roy L. Marley	1978-

Remarks: The above notes are based on records in the files of the local church, including "Historical Sketch of Siler City Methodist Church" by M.M. Fox written around 1936.

Educational Directors:

Charlotte Whitfield	1956-1958
Jack Fulghum	1958-
Betty Edmonson	1962-1963
*Billy Joe Frazier	1963-1965
*Charles Giddens	1968-1970
*Randall Perry	1970-1973
*Donald Burns, Jr.	Summer, 1973
Charm Yearby Allen	Oct., 1973-1978
Ellen Metcalf	Nov., 1978-1980
Robin S. Marley	Oct., 1980-1983
*Angela L. Harvey	May, 1983-1986
Steve R. Blanchard	June, 1986-

*Served part time.

Pianists and Organists:

During the early years, a footpowered pump organ was in use. After the new church was completed in 1925, a piano was used in the sanctuary until the late 1930's, when the first pipe organ was installed. The second pipe organ was placed in service in 1965, at a cost of around \$11,000.00, and is the one now in use. The following record of pianists and organists is from "History of the Music of the First United Methodist Church, Siler City, N. C.," dated January, 1973, and compiled by Mrs. Walter R. Brewer.

(a) Volunteer Service: 1925-1947

Mrs. Louise Alexander	Mrs. D. W. Lambe
Mrs. Frank Brooks, Sr.	Mrs. Betty Owens
Mrs. June Wren Butler	Miss Frances Shelton
Mrs. Virginia Joyner	Mrs. Russell Williams

* Mrs. Junius Wren

*Mrs. Wren (then Mrs. Cara Lambe Siler) also served at the old church prior to 1925.

(b) Paid Organists: After 1947

John Kalldoff	Mrs. Gaynell Glass
Tommy Andrew	Mrs. Jane Davis
Miss Mary Blanchard	Allen Harris
Miss Peggy Bland	Norman McCorkle
Mrs. Martha Bruton	Mrs. Joyce Mitchell
Edward Caldwell, Jr.	Mrs. Royce Williams

Mrs. Danny Marley, the present organist-choir director, has served since August of 1975.

Church Secretary

A record of those who did volunteer work in this area prior to October, 1961 was not available. After the position of Church Secretary became a regular staff position, the record is as follows:

- Mrs. H.C. (Betty Wright) Owens: October 15, 1961 to February 1963.
- Mrs. Tommie (Ada Jo Boren) Burke: February 3 to September, 1963.
- Mrs. R.F. (June Dark) Huddleston, Jr., the present Church Secretary, has held that position since September, 1963.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Church Membership

Total membership as of September 30, 1986 was 673.

The membership included approximately 270 family units.

As of the above date, there are twenty-seven persons who have been members of this church for sixty years or more. This includes those who were members of the local Methodist Protestant Church before the consolidation in 1940 and a few non resident members. They are listed in chronological order below.

<u>Name</u>	<u>A Member Since -</u>
Mrs. Kate P. Sears	1905
** Mrs. Cara W. Jordan	1908
Mrs. Dena Brady	1909
Miss Annie E. Lambe	1909
Mrs. Mae C. Kennedy	1914
Mrs. Myrtle W. Foster	1915
Miss Mildred M. Brooks	1919
Paul L. Brooks	1920
Mrs. Violet M. Shoffner	1920

Wade H. Hadley, Jr.	1922
Mrs. Nell P. Smith	1922
Mrs. Jerusha J. Clark	1923
Mrs. Marie G. Cooper	1923
** Mrs. Ila Hinshaw	1923
O. Dean Sizemore	1923
Mrs. Mary A. Stone	1923
Mrs. Hazel W. Whisnant	1923
Russell A. Williams, Sr.	1923
Mrs. Eula P. Beane	1924
Charles R. Crotts	1924
Mrs. Margaret H. Johnson	1924
Mrs. Nancy G. Perry	1924
J. Cletus Whitehead	1925
Mrs. Hazel P. Campbell	1926
Mrs. Verta Fox Goodwin	1926
R. Victor Williams	1926
William M. Wren	1926*

**Deceased (since September 30, 1986)

*Or earlier.

Annual Budget

The general budget for the Centennial year of 1986 was \$121,343.00.

Notes Concerning the Cornerstone

After the new church building was dedicated on June 7, 1925, a variety of items was placed in a tin box which was then sealed in a cavity behind the cornerstone on the southwest corner of the church. Around 1970 the brickwork around the cornerstone had deteriorated and was in danger of falling apart. The tin box with its contents was removed and stored in the pastor's study. When the brickwork was repaired, the above mentioned box with its contents was not returned to its original place behind the cornerstone. A few days before the celebration of the Centennial anniversary of the church on November 2, 1986, the box with the material from the cornerstone was discovered in the pastor's study, where it had been for approximately sixteen years.

The contents of the box at that time were as follows:

A new Bible: "Holy Bible - Sunday School Superintendents Editions"

A "to whom it may concern letter " dated June 7, 1925, recording the presentation of the new church to Bishop H.M. Dubose by the Trustees for dedication. Bishop DuBose accepted the church from the Building Committee, dedicated the church, and delivered a sermon on the above mentioned date. (Not signed, but probably written by O.I. Hinson, Pastor at that time.)

A directory of Siler City Circuit, Methodist Episcopal Church South, 1925, includes rolls of officers, committees, and members of First Church (Siler City), Mount Vernon, Hickory Mountain, Providence, and West End (at Siler City)

A copy of - Journal of the North Carolina Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Eighty-eighth Annual Session held in Wilmington, N.C., November 12-16, 1924

A copy of - North Carolina Christian Advocate, June 4, 1925, Volume 70, Number 22, Greensboro, N.C.

A copy of - Christian Advocate, Whole No. 4408, Volume 86, Number 22, May 29, 1925, Nashville, Tenn.

A book - The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1918

A Methodist Episcopal Hymnal - Official Hymnal of Methodist Episcopal Church, South and the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1921

A photograph of Robert Franklin Wrenn with notes on back by his daughter, Cara

A copy of "Greater Chatham County" edition of The Chatham News, Siler City, N.C., Dec. 18, 1924

Note: The above items will remain stored in the pastor's study. Items pertaining to the Church's centennial anniversary will be placed in the cornerstone.

Joint Work with West End Methodist Church

When West End Church was organized in 1913, the first meetings were held in a dwelling house. At the start, members from First Methodist staffed the Sunday School department. John F. Lambe acted as Superintendent. C.K. Wrenn taught the adult class. Misses Annie Lambe, Cara Wrenn and Lois Wrenn taught the children's classes.

Mementos from Earlier Church Buildings

At least three substantial items from the past are now preserved within the present church and are identified by attached plaques.

- (1) The foot powered pump organ used in the Methodist Protestant Church until the merger in 1940. Plaque: "Organ used by Methodist Protestant Church of Siler City in early 1900's."
- (2) A desk used in the original Methodist Episcopal Church building between 1887 and 1920. Plaque: "Desk used in the early 1900's in the first building of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, of Siler City."
- (3) A pulpit chair from the first church building which was completed in 1887 and used until 1920. The plaque reads: "In memory of Thomas Andrew Burns, Jr. by Mr. and Mrs. T.A. Burns 1974."

Variations in the Name of this Church

The church at Siler City, N.C., with which this history is concerned, has had the following names:

- (a) First Methodist Episcopal Church, South - from 1885 to 1940.
- (b) First Methodist Church - from 1940 to 1968.

This name was adopted when the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church were merged.

- (c) First United Methodist Church - Since 1968.

This name was adopted when the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church were united in a nationwide merger.

NOTE: The subject church buildings have always been located at 121 South Chatham Avenue.