

HISTORY
Friendship Methodist Church
By
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1961

Friendship Methodist Church was organized in 1834 in Fogleman's (or Orange) Schoolhouse, which stood a short distance south of the present Mt. Pleasant Lutheran Church. This organization took place to accommodate a few families who found the distance to Mt. Hermon Methodist Protestant Church too far for them to attend there.

The site was on the land of George Fogleman in Orange County and was known as Fogleman's Camp Ground and in due time it became part of the Orange Circuit which embraced churches in Orange, Chatham, and Guilford Counties. Rev. James H. Christie was the first pastor, followed by Rev. Alson Gray.

From the minutes of the Quarterly Conference of Orange Circuit, held at Salem Church, April 30, 1836, it is learned that the pastor filled appointments at 20 preaching places each month, with one or two days of rest each week. Some of these places were not then church organizations, and a few never became churches.

Very little is known about the early church and its members. John Johnson and wife, Elizabeth Fogleman Johnson and Solomon Albright and wife, Sallie Fogleman Albright, were among the first members. Worship was held in the schoolhouse for several years, but there is no record of just how long it was until the church was moved to the present site.

Jacob Isley, who lived on land adjoining Christian Isley's plantation, gave a log building for a church. Christian Isley gave permission to move the building to a site on his land just to the rear of the present church, and worship was held in there until 1856 when Christian Isley gave to Joel A. Isley, George Johnson, and Leonard Isley, trustees of Friendship Church, a deed for the present church lot.

A new church was built, and the old log building was moved back on the same farm and used for a barn. At first, a portion of the church was partitioned off in the rear for the slaves. There were slaves' names on the old church book which has been lost or destroyed. One name read, "Bessie Albright, slave of G. M. Albright."

The church at first witnessed a very slow growth, as the early settlers of the community belonged to the Lutheran and German Reformed Churches. The older people were slow to change their religious faith, and therefore, the newly organized church had to depend on the next generation for members. When the new church was built in 1856, the members came from these families: Albright, Johnson, Tinnin, Isley, Sharpe, Graves, and Garrett.

For a few years before and immediately following the Civil War, school sessions were held every two years in Friendship Church building. In the intervening years the school was held in the Mt. Pleasant Lutheran Church building not far distant. During the years 1870-1880, every session of school was held at Friendship until Fairfield School was established in a new log building on which is now Highway 49, near Mt. Pleasant Church road.

The Orange Circuit was divided in 1861, and Alamance Circuit was formed with Friendship becoming a part of it. There were eight churches on the circuit, Bethel, Center, Concord, Sapling Ridge, Flint Ridge, Rock Creek, Mt. Hermon, and Friendship. One pastor served all eight churches by having appointments on Saturdays for part of the churches. Camp meetings were held at most of these churches from early days, and

Friendship began camp meetings a few years prior to the Civil War and continued until 1872, when the last of these religious gatherings was held. Several families of the Friendship members had their log shelters on the grounds back of the church.

The Mt. Hermon Circuit was organized from the Alamance Circuit in 1891. Rev. J. N. Garrett was pastor of four churches: Mr. Hermon, Bellemont, Haw River, and Friendship. Some years later Cedar Cliff was added and Haw River changed. This arrangement continued until 1954 when Friendship became self-supporting and called a full-time pastor.

The early members of Friendship were buried at Mt. Hermon Methodist and at St. Paul's Lutheran Churches. It was not until 1881 that a cemetery was begun at Friendship, and in that year a child of L. L. Patterson was buried there. In the next year, 1882, there followed several burials, one of which was Christian Isley, giver of the land for the church and cemetery. More land for the cemetery was given by Dr. H. M. Patterson in 1942; and in 1958, a like donation was made by his son, Dr. G. G. Patterson.

The church has a substantial fund for the upkeep of the cemetery. This is governed by a committee. John Hoffman, by will, left \$500 for a cemetery fund; Swana Patterson Hoffman added \$500 to this amount, and Mrs. D. I. Offman later willed \$100 to this original fund. Dr. H. M. Patterson, at his death in 1956, left \$1,000 by will to the trustees of Friendship Methodist Church, and the interest on both funds goes for the upkeep of the cemetery.

A parsonage was built about 1908. Three pastors who occupied it were: Rev. J. A. Burgess, Rev. E. G. Lowdermilk, and Rev. Cary Whittaker. For several years the building was not used as a parsonage, and finally it was sold. About 1934, a house and lot was bought on Highway 49 from Mr. and Mrs. Lester Watkins and remodeled for a parsonage for the Mt. Hermon Charge. This served until 1954 when Friendship became self-supporting and built a new parsonage near the church at a cost of \$16,500. The land on which this parsonage was built was donated by Robert C. Moser and wife, Elia Isley Moser.

The present church was built in 1911 at a cost of \$5,000. Rev. J. A. Burgess was pastor. The building committee was composed of George W. Patterson, T. E. Sharpe, Leonard L. Patterson, Jasper Albright, and John Tinnin. The building was of cement-block construction. The blocks were made on the church lot, using native sand and much of the labor was given by members. When finished, this building was considered one of the nicest churches in rural Alamance County. It has a large and beautiful stained glass window at the front. This was given by Joel Sharpe and wife, Sarah Sharpe, at a cost of \$600, in memory of their only child, Permelia Sharpe Keck. Sunday school rooms of brick construction were added in 1929.

The first Sunday school was organized March 12, 1871. Rev. J. W. Heath was pastor but much credit went to Mrs. Eliza Lamb Isley who, at that time was teaching a session of public school in the church building. Mrs. Isley was an excellent teacher and her influence for good was felt in the community. Mr. James P. Sharpe was the first superintendent, with Mrs. Isley as his assistant. The minutes of the first meeting show that due to unfavorable weather, only twenty pupils were present. This number steadily increased until there were thirty-seven men and thirty-nine women, a total of seventy-six by the month of July. The first recorded list of teachers was J. P. Sharpe, Barbara Garrett, John M. Tinnin, Maria Garret, Almeda B. Moser, and Nancy Jane Tinnin. Miss Queen Patterson and Miss Nancy Jane Tinnin helped with the singing for the newly organized school and later J. M. Albright served as choir-leader and superintendent for many years. An organ was bought about 1901, with Miss Myrtle Stuart as the first organist, followed by Miss Daisy Page, who served for several years. In

1914 a new organ was purchased but was later replaced by a piano. Now a Hammond organ, gift of Mr. and Mrs. A. H. Patterson, of Burlington, is used. The church began the use of regular church hymnals in 1902, and practically every family owned a copy of "The Methodist Protestant Church Hymnal."

About 1947 the church undertook a remodeling program. Ralph Braxton, L. L. Isley, and Fred Ingle were the members of a building committee, and the church received a donation of \$1,000 from the Duke Foundation to aid in the work being done at that time.

In 1948, it was decided to remove all the clear glass windows and replace them with memorials to the following twelve families: G. W. and Mattie A. Patterson; W. A. and Rosetta T. Tinnin and family; Thos. E. and Mary N. Sharpe; W. A. and Julia N. Patterson; W. A. and Mattie Moser Johnson; Lacy A. and Callie A. Isley; William M. and Elizabeth I. Graves; Thomas F. and Vessie I. Overman; Lemuel L. and Callie C. Isley; J. G. Holt and family; Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Allred; and Mr. and Mrs. Moody Isley. The windows were gifts from these twelve families.

In 1950, Dr. H. M. Patterson and Swana Patterson Hoffman erected a community building on the grounds adjoining the church lot. This building of brick construction, 30 x 60 feet, is used for church and community activities.

The Woman's Foreign Missionary Society began its work at Friendship in August, 1922. Mrs. J. A. Burgess and Mrs. W. L. Spoon of Mt. Pleasant Church, were responsible for the organization. There were 12 charter members with Mrs. Whitney Isley as first president, and Mrs. Clela Murray as secretary-treasurer.

Mrs. Lydia Albright Kernodle of Burlington, who was a former member of Friendship, organized the first Woman's Home Mission Society. This took place at the church during the summer of 1925. Mrs. D. I. Offman served as first president and Miss Mae Patterson as secretary-treasurer. There were 27 charter members.

These two societies began working together and were merged into the Woman's Missionary Society. Later in 1939, it became known as the Woman's Society of Christian Service, and now it has 74 members.

The unification of the Methodist Protestant and Methodist Episcopal churches came about 1939. Friendship then became known as a Methodist church.

This church has furnished seven men for the ministry: T. M. Johnson, L. L. Albright, W. M. Loy, O. C. Loy, C. G. Isley, J. C. Loy, K. G. Holt. ^{7.} *Used 50.*

One of these men, Rev. T. M. Johnson, D.D., grandson of John Johnson, one of the founders of the church, became very prominent in the Methodist Protestant Church. After receiving his education at Friendship Academy, Western Maryland College, and Westminster Theological Seminary, he began his pastoral work at Henderson, N. C. in 1893. He became president of the N. C. Annual Conference, serving four years, 1903-1907. Dr. Johnson was considered one of the best and most beloved pastors of the Methodist Protestant Church. He married Miss Mary Weatherly of Greensboro. This home was blessed with five children, three of whom are living: Mrs. Pomona Amick of Burlington; Talton M. Johnson of Graham, and Mrs. Mary Ward Harris of Alexandria, Virginia. Dr. Johnson served 47 years in the ministry, retiring in 1940.

Friendship has sent one missionary to the foreign field, Rev. L. L. Albright, grandson of Solomon Albright, one of the founders of the church, gave five years to missionary work in Japan. The following item is taken from the Annual Report of

The Board of Home and Foreign Missions of the Methodist Protestant Church, 1887: "At the recent session of the board, Rev. L. L. Albright, of North Carolina, was appointed a missionary to Japan and started July 1, 1886, for Yokohama where he is to assist in the missionary work of that station, until his services are needed by brother Klein at Nagoya." It was during this first year that he was duly ordained as an Elder in Yokohama. His wife, who before marriage was Miss Madge Slaughter, joined him in the second year, and together they worked four more years at Nagoya. After his return, he was pastor of the Methodist Protestant Church at Winston-Salem. Rev. Albright received his education at Friendship Academy, Western Maryland College, and Westminster Theological Seminary.

In 1877, the Western North Carolina Conference was organized from the Annual Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church and met separately for two years only. The second session of the Western Conference was held at Friendship Church on the Alamance Circuit on December 3-9, 1879. Rev. A. M. Lowe was president of Conference, and Rev. W. W. Amick was pastor. At this time, Alamance Circuit had eight churches with 820 members. Six of the churches, including Friendship, had Sunday schools.

Friendship community was an educational center dating from the Civil War until 1928, when the last school session was held at that place. It is now a part of E. M. Holt school, three miles distant. Friendship Church is located in southwestern Alamance County on the Patterson Mill Road, near Highway 49, and now has a membership of 361.

Pastors who have served the church include:

James H. Cristie, 1834	J. N. Garrett, 1890-1892
Alson Gray	W. F. McDowell, 1892-1894
Alexander Albright	W. F. Ashburn, 1894-1897
John Hinshaw	W. E. Swain, 1897-1903
John Martin	E. A. Plyler, 1903-1905
Thos. L. Carter	J. H. Bowman, 1905-1907
H. T. Weatherly	O. P. Routh, 1907-1908
R. R. Prather	J. A. Burgess, 1908-1911
Daniel W. Thompson	E. G. Lowdermilk, 1911-1913
W. J. Ogburn	C. H. Whittaker, 1913-1915
John C. Forbis	J. A. Burgess, 1915-1919
T. H. Peagram	J. H. Bowman, 1919-1920
J. W. Heath, 1858-1860	A. O. Lindley, 1920-1924
A. W. Lineberry, 1864	W. F. Ashburn, 1924-1926
J. W. Heath, 1866	J. E. Carroll, 1926-1931
J. W. Heath, 1869-1872	L. E. Mabry, 1931-1934
C. F. Harris, 1872-1873	T. H. Whitehead, 1934-1936
W. W. Amick, 1873-1876	J. R. Anderson, 1936-1939
W. C. Kennett, 1876-1877	R. L. Hethcox, 1939-1941
W. W. Amick, 1877-1879	W. B. Cotton, 1941-1945
C. F. Harris, 1879-1882	H. H. Cash, 1945-1947
John H. Totten, 1882-1883	R. Z. Newton, 1947-1953 read -
G. W. Bowman, 1883-1885	✓ R. E. Whitely, 1953-July, 1954
J. N. Garrett, 1885-1886	- Robert Wallace, July, 1954-July, 1958
W. W. Amick, 1886-1890	✓ Earl R. Meekins, July, 1958-July, 1961

Rev. J. E. Staton, July, 1961-1966

W. S. Hopkins, Jr., June 1966 - June 1968

Geo. Davis - 68 -

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