



Fuquay-Varina United Methodist Church's
MEMORIES

Just The Corner
Of My Mind

*Memories of people, places, songs and occasions. . .
Our Faith is strengthened by remembering
"how He first loved us"..*

In this book are recollections or memories
of days gone by

At

Fuquay Springs Methodist Episcopal Church South
Fuquay Springs Methodist Church
Fuquay-Varina Methodist Church
Fuquay-Varina United Methodist Church

***May the recalling of these memories
bless those who follow in their footsteps
and give glory to His name!***

IMPORTANT DATES IN THE LIFE OF FUQUAY-VARINA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

1903	Oct. 13	17 citizens organized Fuquay Springs Methodist Episcopal Church South.
1904	June	Rev. G.W. Starling named first Pastor; received 19 additional members New charge created within the Raleigh District out of 2 circuits: Fuquay Springs, Olive Branch (now Kipling), Cokesbury, Buckhorn, and Holly Springs.
1925	Feb. 28	Lot purchased at corner of Academy and Ennis Streets for parsonage.
1929	Nov. 13	First deposit on building fund.
1930	Jan. July 13	Work began on new church. Sanctuary completed and opened for services.
1931	Nov. 8	Dedication of new building (paid for within 2 years) and Homecoming.
1939		Methodist Episcopal Church South joined with Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Protestant Church to form a new denomination called the Methodist Church.
1944		Fuquay Springs Methodist Church becomes a "station" church (no longer a part of a circuit and sharing a pastor with other churches).
1948		Board of Trustees authorized to sell parsonage when deemed wise and to apply proceeds for erection of new parsonage. Congregation collected money to furnish the new parsonage.
1951	July	Parsonage completed on Academy Street.
1954		Methodist Men's Group chartered.

1956 Cont.	July Dec. 9	New education wing approved. Groundbreaking for addition to educational facilities.
1957	Sept. 15	Promotion Day and opening of new educational facilities. Home sold behind first parsonage which had served as a retirement home for Rev. E.C. Maness and Rev. E.D. Dodd.
1960		Memorial Chapel completed. Air conditioning and heating added; repairs to stain glass windows.
1963	May	Fuquay Springs and Varina unite to form Fuquay-Varina by an act of NC Assembly. Local church becomes Fuquay-Varina Methodist Church.
1966		Interest shown in acquiring McLean property behind church.
1968		William Johnson purchased property across street from the church and donated it to the church for additional parking. The Evangelical United Brethren Church and The Methodist Church merged to form The United Methodist Church. The local church becomes Fuquay-Varina United Methodist Church.
1970	Jan. Aug. Dec.	Renovations begin on sanctuary and worship services held in the basement. Completion of newly renovated sanctuary with addition of balcony. William Johnson donated monies from retirement house at 108 Ennis Street to be applied toward renovations and needed equipment. Early worship service begun during summer months.
1972		Fuquay-Varina United Methodist Church was moved from the Raleigh District to the Sanford District.
1973		United Methodist Women undertook Chrismon project.

1973 Cont.		Landscaping and paving project.
1974		Charter for Cub Scout Troop 320 accepted by FV Methodists.
1975	April	New library opens officially with 75-100 volumes. Church began ministry to Kinton's Rest Home (now Brighton Manor)
1976		Resolution adopted requesting return to Raleigh District. Storm windows and new floor in basement.
1977		Request for return to Raleigh District resubmitted and approved. Mike Eason became church's first candidate for ordained ministry. Children's Church begins. Charter for Boys Scout Troop 320 accepted by FV Methodists.
1979		Memorial sign for front of church donated in memory of Adele Prince and Molette Blanchard.
1981		Branson Sheets, Church's 2 nd member ordained to ministry.
1982		Parsonage renovated to create upstairs bedrooms and bath.
1983		Circle 4 of United Methodist Women started ramp fund - expanded later to church-wide effort.
1984		Addition of handbell choir; musical production of "Christmas with the Wesley's" celebrates Methodism Bicentennial.
1985		Purchase of first church van. Church made unsuccessful effort to purchase McLean property. Church decision: move forward with fellowship hall but 25% of cost be in hand before work begun. Church began holding 2 worship services.

1986		Part-time Educational Director for youth hired.
1987		<p>McLean property for sale again, but church declined: paved parking lot across the street.</p> <p>Administrative Board voted to go forward with new addition of 6500 square feet fellowship hall/office complex and conversion of old building into additional Sunday School rooms at cost of \$465,000. Fundraising campaign netted \$272,000 in gifts and pledges over a 3 year period with loan to complete financing. Preschool for ages 2-4 begun with 53 children and 10 teachers.</p> <p>First Associate Pastor hired: McLean property purchased to provide 2nd parsonage.</p>
1988		Property line straightened with swap of land with David Stroud.
1989	Feb. 5	Dedication of fellowship hall/office.
1990		Annual community-wide Thanksgiving service begins.
1991		<p>Long Range Planning Task Force formed and met 1992-93.</p> <p>Hiring of Program Director; Administrative Assistant position goes to full-time.</p> <p>New ministries: Wed. Night Live; Pentecost in the Park; Hinton Rural Life Mission.</p>
1992		<p>Half-time Children's/Family Ministry; half-time Lay Ministry Coordinator summer youth intern.</p> <p>NEW LIGHT: 4th worship service.</p> <p>New programs: Homeless ministry begun by youth; Puppet Ministry; Church affiliates with Stephen Ministry.</p>
1993		<p>Vision 2000 Task Force formed and met June 27 - Oct. 12, 1993.</p> <p>Adoption of Mission Statement and restructuring into pillars and age-levels.</p> <p>New half-time positions: Program Secretary; Pastor of Visitation.</p>

1993 Cont.		Candidate for Ministry: Jim Casper (who later decided on Lay Ministry).
1994		CONNECTINGS expands to 10 sessions. New full-time positions: Minister of Music, Custodian.
1995	April 4	Charge Conference: Building process put on "Pause" for determination of willingness of congregation to undertake a project that would either relocate church or expand it on present site.
	July 9	Charge Conference reported appraisal of parsonage at \$129,300. Construction of new parsonage to be \$198,500 with no profit taken by builder - motion was carried to start construction as soon as financing was approved. Report from Building Steering Committee: 8 subcommittees formed and Polycon, Inc. (construction management firm) and D.O. Tise Architects hired; broader need for expanded facilities.
	July 12 - 23	Congregational meetings to review progress of Building Steering Committee: List of options: 1. Do nothing. 2. Bring present facilities to state of excellent repair. 3. Repair, remodel and expand on present property. 4. Acquire adjacent property as available. 5. Acquire property in another location for new facilities. 6. Seed new congregation.
	Oct.	Congregation agreed to enter time of discernment. Fire Marshall visit results in formation of Re-allocation Committee to ensure children first grade and younger are assigned only to first floor; electrical and lighting violations are addressed as well as a manual fire alarm system installed.
	Nov. 14	Church Council gave Building Steering Committee charge of investigating, developing and presenting options. Dr. Compton's preliminary report: congregation equally divided on issue; positive about the church generally

1996	May 9	Admin. Council voted 75% preference for Twin Campus direction. 90% then indicated support for taking it to Church Conference on May 19 th .
	May	Faith/Unity Task Force created. Adjacent property appraised and Council advised that purchasing approximately 4 acres and preparing it for construction would cost between \$525,000 - \$650,000.
	May 19	Church Conference (chaired by Rev. Jim Lee, Dist. Supt. Of Goldsboro District). Video presentation of 3 options: 1. Stay (on existing campus). 2. Go (to new campus. Twin campus using existing as well as new campus) Vote presented by Council: Twin Campus with stipulation for an 80% approval although majority only needed per Discipline: 178 Yes and 160 No. 15 acres at corner of East Academy and Judd Road were offered to church at price of \$15,000 per acre for a total of \$225,000.
	Fall	Group calling themselves FV-UMC Members for "Stay and Grow" formed and sent letters to friends of Fuquay-Varina United Methodist Church urging them to vote "No" on November 12 th .
	Nov. 12	Vote to relocate: intent to relocate facilities and ministries to site in southwest corner of East Academy Street and Judd Road; purchase 15 acres at \$225,000 on or before April 1, 1997 with option to purchase additional 2 acres at \$15,000 per acre; Building Committee charged with bringing to Church Conference specific building plans, financing plans and transition. Motion for no debate passed by more than 2/3 majority; Jim Casper named Chairman.
	Dec.	Miracle Sunday: Over \$112,000 raised. Financial Secretary's position upgraded to Business Manager.
	1997	Feb.
	April	Church affiliates with ChristCare series of Stephen Ministry.

1997 Cont.	April Cont.	Church Council votes support for biblical stewardship education efforts. Workshops held for Building Committee.
	May	Church begins Network Ministries.
	August	Schematics completed.
	Sept.	New part-time position: Coordinator of Missions.
	Nov. 9	Special event held at Wake Technical Community College; all 3 worship services came to worship, hear presentation and see video as well as fellowship and eat together.
	Nov. 23	Celebration Sunday: monies collected in the Moved By The Spirit 3 year pledge campaign \$1.5 million.
1998	Feb. 28	Celebration to honor Rev. Bill Young's tireless devotion and "retirement" from Staff.
	March	Spiritual Renewal event with Dr. Dennis Kinlaw.
	April	Church begins cooperative ministry with Hispanic Church.
	May	Stewardship moves emphasis to mid-year for first time. Staff and members attend church transitioning seminar Staff and members attend Crown Ministries training.
	June 4	Raleigh District Board of Church Locations and Buildings reviews and approves building plans.
	June	New positions: Nursery Manager and additional workers; part-time security; Pastor of Gateway (comprehensive ministry to mid-teens to mid-thirties with emphasis on unchurched); part-time instrumental leader (position was not filled).
	June 17	Church Conference to approve final design and cost of new building.
	June 21	Groundbreaking for new building.

1998 Cont.	Summer	Members interested in being part of possible new church start asked to complete information for District Superintendent by Sept. 11 th .
	Sept. 15	Judy Stephens recommended as declared candidate for ministry.
	Oct. 8	District Superintendent meets with group to discuss possibilities of church start.
	Nov. 1	Open House for construction of new building.
	Nov.	Lay Mobilization Research and Development Task Force formed to explore and identify ministries - successes and gaps. At Annual Charge Conference the "Stay and Grow Group" was given first right of refusal to purchase building by March 31, 1999.
1999	April 1	At Church Council approval was given openly market the property at 402 N. Main Street and seek options should available buyers not be imminent.
	June 8	Church Council unanimously passed a resolution calling for Church Conference to decide on sale of current facility; group of current members negotiating for selling price of \$1,050,000 with a \$50,000 non-refundable option to purchase on or before June 22 and a closing date on or before August 15 with \$50,000 applied to selling price, leaving a balance of \$1,000,000 had expressed desire.
	June 30	Church Conference to decide on sale of current building.

Memories



Rheunelle Ashworth

This church holds for me such beautiful memories! I came here as a bride in 1941. Throughout the years, as our family grew, our children were dedicated as infants and became members as they reached 12 or 13 years of age. Our son Joe and his wife Stephanie were married in this church 20 years ago. As the years progressed, I have participated in teaching Sunday School, chairing Bible School, active in UMW (United Methodist Women), served on several Board Committees and Communion Chairman until I had to "give it up" for health reasons. I love this church and it breaks my heart to see it split.



Kitty Blackburn

Our family moved to Fuquay-Varina in the fall of 1949. Immediately, we began attending Sunday School and church. We were so impressed because the people were so friendly. I remember so well the first person that spoke to us. Mrs. Adele Prince was sitting close to the front of the sanctuary and we were sitting near the back. She got up and made her way to where we were to welcome us. I fell in love with her that day and loved her as my Sunday School teacher and neighbor as long as she lived.

Through the years there have been several pastors. Each one was very special to us. Walter was already a Methodist and I became a member when Rev. Lineberger was

minister. Our daughter and son became members at an early age when Rev. Starnes was minister. Our daughter was married by Rev. Norwood Jones.

The sanctuary has been remodeled since we have been members, additional classrooms have been built and a fellowship hall. I have loved this building but I love the Church even more. There have been great times worshipping with and serving with fellow Christians. I have loved the saints who have gone to be with our Lord. I have been comforted in times of sorrow and sickness. We have enjoyed the fellowship of Christians in small groups since the early seventies studying the scriptures and praying for our church and nation, and all of our friends and loved ones. We are still growing in our Christian faith.

I am looking forward to worshipping and serving God in our new church home. I am grateful for all of our new members. They seem so anxious to serve. Truly, they are great assets to our church. God has been so good to us. May each one of us serve the Lord and praise Him so that He will be able to say of us, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant".



Carolyn Blanchard

How do you select just one memory from a lifetime of memories? As one of the longest members of Fuquay-Varina Methodist Church (maybe the longest since I was taken to the old church on South Main Street as a baby), this church has been there for me during the happy, sad, and everyday living times. Of course, I remember my joining the church as a child, my wedding, the christening of all three children, my daughter's wedding, the funerals of my parents and husband, the many wonderful and dedicated teachers. I thought Mrs. Lois Johnson was the prettiest and sweetest lady I had ever seen for one. However, with just one to tell about, I will always remember with joy the feeling that came over me as I walked back from the aisle after joining the church. I knew then that I was truly a child of God!



Donna Lane Brittain

I have many fond memories of our church. My earliest memory goes back to the mid-1960's. The Sunday School programs and VBS were my most memorable. The infant room was where the Toddler room is now and I remember my mother, Marian Lane, and Edith Parker rocking babies. There were two cribs, two rocking horses and one red "bouncy horse".

I remember when I was in Louise Burt's Sunday School class. We sat in a circle on the floor with Mrs. Burt and had lessons. Mrs. Parker would come into the room and played the piano which sat in the corner. We had a wooden handmade boat to sit in and when we turned it over, we could march up and down the stairs. As I grew older, for years Mrs. Parker came around to each room at a different time and played the piano and we sang songs. I remember when the pianos were removed from each room and I realized how much I missed the music.

My childhood friends from church were also special. I was in Sunday School, VBS, children's choir and Confirmation with the same children throughout the years. Branson Sheets, Mary Catherine Williams, Trey Prince, William Thomas, Stewart McLeod, Gina Scott, Andy Marley and "Bozo" Wade still all hold a special place in my heart.

As I grew older I had many wonderful teachers: Mrs. Polly Sheets, Mrs. Joanna Proctor, Mrs. Sarah Marley, Mrs. Iris Brown, Wray Stephens and many more. As young as 18 years old I joined the Christian Fellowship Class where Bobbie Talley helped me grow in my walk with the Lord. She helped me learn how to stand up for my beliefs and to always profess the Lord as my Saviour.

Of course I have to say I always went into the nursery with my mother and played with the babies before church. We ate "Ritz" and animal crackers. I remember how so many children would cry when leaving my mother on Sundays. My sisters and I always had an honorary sibling sitting with us in church as my mother would teach the 3 year olds how to sit in "big" church.

One of my funniest memories was in Youth Choir. We had about five of us standing in church singing (my sister Ginger, Tara Thomas, Tina Egsegian, Mary Kay Thomas and I were singing) and one by one stopped and began whispering and barely mouthed the words until the music was still playing and we weren't. That was the last Sunday I remember singing in a choir.



Iris Brown

I joined the Kipling Church which was on this charge. We all shared the same pastor. Later when I moved to FV I attended the Fuquay Springs Methodist Church. I was a young mother and I started working with the children in the nursery. Later I worked with the youth and later the adults, moving on up the line. One of the things I recall is adding the education building to our church. Rev. Poe was the pastor. William Johnson (Joanna Proctor's father) was head of the building committee. With the responsibility I had in the church at that time, it fell to my lot to decide about the furniture we would put in this new building – how many tables and chairs, what size and all. I remember this committee went to Siler City and purchased the furniture for the new building.

As I think about our church, one of the things I enjoyed was working in the library. Pastor Jerry Smith asked Helen Honeycutt and me to take it over. We had it in a little small Sunday School class, very crowded and not very satisfactory. Pastor Smith said if we would hang on and we got into the new building (they were talking about a new addition to our church), we would have his office for our library. And that is what happened. That is when the fellowship hall was added, a nice kitchen, office space and music room. But we grew in size and the music room was cut into office space and we were over-crowded once again. I look forward to spreading out once again.

As I became a senior citizen, I became interested in that age group in our church. The Prime Timers meet once a month. All are welcome. We have no age limitation, if they consider themselves a senior citizen. We travel a lot. We visit places of cultural or historical interest or some beautiful garden. We do a variety of things and I think that's important. We enjoy these trips. As a church gets larger, having small groups such as Prime Timers or Sunday School classes help to give a feeling of belonging. It's a time of real Christian fellowship and spiritual enrichment for us.

We especially like to go to Lake Junaluska for what they call the Fall Fling. We enjoy Christian fellowship and also meet people from all over the southeastern part of the United States.

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Ginger Lane Bryan

What do Marie Rollins, Savonne Mediin, Marian Lane, Hallie Reams, Molly Stephenson, Maude Adcock, Annette Stuart, Kay Dell Arnold, Judy Haire and Lorraine Rollins have in common? Well, if you guessed almost a perfect record on the first Methodist Women's softball team you'd be right.

I was in the 4th-5th grade and too young to play, but would go to all the games with my mother, Marian Lane. The games were rotated around the community at various fields competing against other churches. My mother was a player/manager and would be a nervous wreck prior to each game. The games were held at the present Middle School, behind Snipes Oil on Hwy. 42, at Piney-Grove Baptist, on a grass field across from Pleasant Grove Baptist, at Kennebec and the vacant field beside T's Tackle on 401.

The first season a lot of the players didn't have gloves and caught bare-handed and batted with wooden bats. I remember my mother's first glove that spring led to my first glove later that summer. To the best of my memory the positions went something like this: 1st base - Marie Rollins; 2nd base - Savonne Medlin; Short-stop - Marian Lane; 3rd base - Hallie Reams or Mollie Stephenson; pitcher - Annette Stuart; Catcher - Maude Adcock; outfield - Kay Dell Arnold, Judy Haire, and Lorraine Rollins. Sometimes Polly Sheets? Betty Ashworth? There were no uniforms and each team wore a different color tee shirt. I believe our color was yellow.

I remember with every pitch, Annette Stuart would go up on her tiptoes when she released the ball. I also remember how my mother's eyes became the size of golf balls every time she threw the ball to first. This continues to be a family joke.



Shirley Burt

As a new bride, I came to Fuquay-Varina in 1978 not knowing anyone except my in-laws. I had grown up surrounded by a large, close-knit family in a small country church and, since my husband had grown up in Fuquay Methodist, I immediately transferred my membership. Allen Wentz was the pastor at the time. We attended the Christian Fellowship Sunday School class, taught by Bobbie Talley with about three or four other couples and a close bond of friendship was begun.

Somehow, though, I felt like something was missing. I had always gone to mid-week prayer service in my home church but my husband wasn't in that habit. He did, however, agree to go with me when I started to complain that I felt that I was never going to get to know the people in this church.

It was the Wednesday night prayer meeting, led by Mary Gray Fish that made me feel that I had found a church home. I was the youngest person there, surrounded by such saints as Sue Senter, Gertie Bowling, Elvie Roundy and Ella Daniel. We would open our Bibles and study - verse by verse - with added commentaries all around and then we would pray, not only for our church but for each other's personal concerns as well.

I felt right at home! I had found my place of belonging in Fuquay. The privilege of being nurtured and loved by those saints has continued even to this day. We don't meet on Wednesday anymore - now it's Monday mornings - and many of those precious saints have gone to be with the Lord, but His promise continues that "where two or more are gathered He will be in the midst."



John Collins

The memories I have of the FV-UMC are the people most of all, its loving, caring people who are interested in your family and what your needs are. The church represented that in terms of its programs. I came here in 1961 with four little children (6, 4, 3, 1) and

we all sat on one pew and John Wesley Smith and his family were usually in front or back of us with his four children.

Some of the people I remember in those early days are William Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Prince, Mrs. Edith Parker, Dr. Judd. Actually he was the one who supervised the house I live in. It was a Methodist parsonage built in 1925. I remember John and Sadie Smith, Newton Sauls, the Ashworth family and different other leaders. The second group of leaders that emerge in my memory are people like Bob Marley, Judy and Wray Stephens, Bob and Polly Sheets, Bernard McLeod.

I also remember the programs we developed for the young people of the church that included outings and special events, choirs, musical programs that gave them a chance to be involved significantly in the church. The Methodist Men's Breakfast shared a lot of fellowship; we ate on Sunday mornings with a different batch of cooks.

We had clean up days in the spring to clean up in the yard. People would bring their tools and equipment. I remember the unity and support we had when we came to an expansion like the fellowship hall and outside lighting. We had a lot of donations of time and equipment and furniture. That's how we got it done. People decided that that was what they wanted to do.

The church has always been a very warm and feeling place where you had a lot of friends. This is obviously a nice community to be a part of.



Laurie Collins

I have had many wonderful memories of growing up in the Fuquay-Varina United Methodist Church. However, when I think of "the church", I think of the people that have molded my Christian education over the years – and not just the building. In my opinion a church is made up of the people in it – without them the building is empty.

If I try to list all of the wonderful Christians that have taught me over the years, I am sure I will leave someone out. Therefore, I apologize ahead of time for anyone I do not mention here. Nevertheless, here goes anyway.

I remember Mrs. Estelle Tilley who was our youth choir director (she was also my English teacher). She was so full of spunk and spirit that it automatically wore off on you. She taught me things even when she wasn't trying to teach me.

I remember Mary Gray Fish who I had for Sunday School class. She was such a dedicated Christian lady and could answer any question I had about the Bible. She also had a great deal of patience – a definite gift from God.

I also remember when Judy Stephens taught our MYF group. We never thought of Judy as an adult. To us, she was one of us. To this day, I think of Judy as more of a sister than anything else. You can always depend on Judy to listen or help you with anything in her power to do.

This letter would not be complete without mentioning Sue Senter. How do I begin to recount the impact that wonderful lady had on my life. I am sure there are many other people out there who feel the same way. She was always concerned with how I was doing and always seemed to keep up with what was going on in my life. That was very touching and special to me.

All of these ladies, as well as others I have not mentioned, are truly some of God's saints. Those who are already with Jesus, I am sure have a special place. Those that we are blessed to still have with us (and hope to for a long time to come) have certainly got a spot reserved with the others in heaven. For they are what has made this church so very special to me, and a part of what has built this church into what it is today. God Bless You All.

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Tara Thomas Critcher

I've been here for 38 years and my most special memories of this church begin with choir as a youth under the direction of Mrs. Edith Parker and her pianist was Mrs. Helen Honeycutt. I remember learning how to sing parts. She was a strong lady and taught us a lot about music. I remember the Collins kids, the Lanes, the Powells, the Currins, the Sheets, the Stephens – a lot of special memories of that choir. I also remember the Adult Choir and the Hallelujah Chorus at Christmas time. That was always very special.

I have very fond memories of Pastor Jesse Bone. He was very special to the youth in this church. At that time when he was here, I became saved and during a youth Sunday I gave my profession in church along with other youth.

Bobbie Talley from the Christian Fellowship Class was the first one to introduce Discipleship training in this church. I remember many times when things were bad in my life and this church was very supportive. I was married in this church. Both of my children were baptized and confirmed here.

I joined the Chancel Choir which brought me back to my music roots in 1994. I joined the Wesley Singers. The music program has changed a lot in our church. We learned a lot under Sherry Grant and are awaiting a new music director. We have a new band called Living Proof and I'm a member of the praise team. I'm enjoying that very much. And I look forward to moving to the new church and enjoying the resources we'll have there.



Sue Fuller

The 23rd of April I was 90. I was 9 years old when we moved to Fuquay. We moved here because my mother had been in bed with arthritis and my Daddy heard about Fuquay spring and we came to see about it. Our purpose in coming was for her to drink the water and the hotel was the only place available. Mr. Joe Ballentine got after her to open it after it was closed and we ran it for about 15 years.

The old church did not have any Sunday School rooms. Each Sunday School had a little curtain around it. My first Sunday School teacher was Robert Prince's mother. I later had her sister, Mrs. J. K. Sessoms. They would not only have us at Sunday School but invite us over to their house to have a picnic.

I started going to church there even though I was Baptist. But when I married, I became a Methodist again. We were not in Fuquay at the time this church was opened, but we moved back here in 1950. I came back home.

In the early days in the summertime, young people would come to town for vacation. Entertainment was down at the spring with a self-player piano. The older people came to drink the water. Everyone had a quart pitcher and a glass which they'd take to the spring every morning. They'd get their water and go sit in the pavilion or on benches around the grounds. The water was free and it was shipped in 5 gallon drums everywhere.



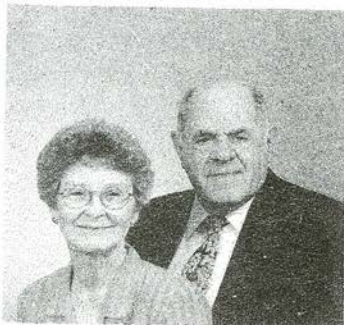
Shirley Hayes

My parents, Belle and Leon A. Mudge, began attending the Fuquay-Varina United Methodist Church about 1935, invited by Mrs. W. S. (Kate) Farabow in whose home they had an apartment. My mother very soon became active in church activities, teaching the toddlers Sunday School class for several years and also helping with Bible School.

I went to Bible School before I was really old enough because she was teaching and so had to take me with her. For years I was teased about the first Bible verse I learned which came out "Make a oiyful noise unto the Lord." I also remember that whenever one of mother's toddler class members had a birthday, she would make cupcakes, frost one, put one candle on it and take it to the youngster on Sunday.

I remember the year - 1970 - that the sanctuary was being remodeled and church services were held in the basement of the old building. On Easter Sunday morning, that's where services were, complete with the Hallelujah Chorus that sounded pretty magnificent in that small space, especially Mr. Robert Cotton's powerful brass notes.

I remember the year my little sister, Nancy, about five years old, was an angel in a Christmas pageant. She was dressed in a gauzy white outfit, wings, and white socks. She was supposed to step out of her scuffed brown loafers before walking down the aisle. She forgot. Mother was embarrassed.



Margaret and George Kissell

t's hard to put 50 years of being a member of the Methodist Church into words. But these 50 years have been a blessing to us. We came to Fuquay 50 years ago and as soon as we were settled, we started looking for a church home. We visited several and then

decided on the Methodist Church. The membership was much smaller then, and it has been with pride that we have watched the growth of this church. It is with some sadness that we will be leaving this "old" church building, but we do look forward to seeing this "new" building being filled each Sunday with those who are in our Lord's service.



Marian Lane

As a young woman coming from another state and being welcomed into my new church family I always felt a special warmth from the women of the Fuquay Springs United Methodist Church. Membership in 1961 was not nearly as large in number as it is today. The church had just added on a Chapel along with an addition to the Educational Wing. Lloyd and Margaret Lane played a big role in raising funds and decorating the Chapel. They made several trips to Richmond, Virginia getting the Bible in the Sanctuary restored. (I believe Mrs. Lane told me it was the original Bible used in the earlier Methodist Church.)

As our membership increased, the Church needed more worship space. Mr. William Johnson gave of his talents by drawing up plans for adding a balcony. The United Women decided that the interior worship center also needed improvements. As before, all members became involved with fund-raising projects and soon we had a new expanded worship area.

Parking became a problem. Mr. William Johnson stepped in again and bought the land adjoining the church grounds and the house on said property was moved across the street. Several years later, another addition to the sanctuary was required along with a new fellowship hall. Our Church became known as Fuquay-Varina United Methodist Church. Since times and circumstances change, outside architectural help was needed. New faces appeared on the scene along with new methods of paying off loans. Let us hope this is from stronger commitments on giving.

Less than ten years later, our numbers have grown. Now we not only need a bigger educational wing, but a new building. Not a new church, but a new building. The Founders of the Fuquay Springs United Methodist Church laid a good foundation for our religious beliefs – we just outgrew the four walls. We have had great pastoral leadership during my years as a member, each with his/her own style of leadership. With change, our faith must grow and leadership roles must take on new faces. I believe our Church was built on a solid foundation and we will continue to grow if God is always first.

Many wonderful people have guided me in the paths of becoming a better member of our church. I will name only a few: Mrs. Edith Parker in the role of being active in Sunday

School leadership; Mrs. Louise Burt in the role of caring for the very young children; Mrs. Mary Aiken, always a care giver and a warm welcome for all new members; Mrs. Bobbie Talley, Miss Sue Senter and Mrs. Mary Gray Fish, women always in prayer for others; Mrs. Savonne Medlin and Mrs. Rheunelle Ashworth as friends who have inspired me by always giving of their time and talents.



Bob Marley

I've been in this church for 42 years. At the time I came year, I moved from Hayes Barton in Raleigh and I enjoyed coming to what was then a small church. I wanted to be active here, so I came down and looked the church over before I ever moved. I wanted to find where the Methodist Church was. That was where I wanted to be. That Sunday we went out and dug the dirt for the new education building which they started after I got here.

Thinking of the church and the growth we've had, I think of the benches we've used in our classroom which were the original benches brought from the church on South Main Street. They were not sold with the building but were brought here and used in the young adult class. We've been together about 25 years. I've been their teacher most of this time. Now we use chairs, so there's been a tremendous amount of growth.

Many years ago when I was on the board, there was a discussion about whether to continue Wednesday night services because there were so few attending, just the loyal few. We decided to disband then. On Wed. nights now we have over 120 to come in for dinner and choir and other activities. I enjoyed helping with Wednesday Night Live - helping in the kitchen with whatever needs to be done.

I have done some mentoring at elementary school for some years since I retired. I enjoy being with small children, being a buddy to those who need help. I feel that is part of a calling to be a good Christian and member of this church...to provide services to others.



Cyrus Matthews

There were 5 churches back 80 years ago – Buckhorn, Cokesbury, Kipling or Olive Branch. Holly Springs and Fuquay. One preacher preached at all of them – on Saturdays, Sunday evenings and all. Today all have a church of their own with their own pastor.

We've had some sad things to happen. The church I joined was Olive Branch and back in 1931 it got burned. It was a wooden church. We built a brick church to replace it and it burned down. I was on the building committee down there for both churches. We moved to the Fuquay church in 1940

I was on the building committee here to build this church. William Johnson was the architect. It wasn't too bad to get money for the building back then. I've lived next door to the parsonage, just over the branch. One of the minister's wives had a bridge built so we could go back and forth.

We've had a lot of deaths in our church. My wife and I were married 70 years when she died. We had 4 children, lost our oldest son in WWII. Rev. Maness, the pastor here then, wrote a poem about our son Myron, who died when he was only 20 years old.

I was an usher for many years. Lately I've been coming to the church on Wednesday nights and I've enjoyed the dinners we have. You get lonesome. I've been cutting flowers for the ladies.



Bernard McLeod

My wife Virginia Cozart brought me here when we were wed, August 9, 1950. That was my first experience. We did not live here for a few years but eventually moved back to FV in 1955. In 1957 I was converted to the Methodist faith, having been Baptist all my life. I became involved in various ways of worship and experiencing God's gift to me. I've served on the Trustees for a number of years, since the 60's. I enjoyed being in the Methodist.

Men and we generated many funds, including the origination of our first van fund, and benefited those in need.

The first building program in which I was involved was the renovation of sanctuary in 1970. At that time William Johnson, Douglas Powell and myself were the prime ones as chairmen together. The renovation took place with changing the entire composure of the sanctuary. We did not have air until then. The pulpit area was like the old Baptist churches. We had 3 chairs and the pulpit was in the middle. What we have today is very different from the early design.

We did the fellowship hall in 1988 and I was involved in that as chairman of the committee. That took us a year. We were in a planning period since about 1985 with Judy Stephens as leader, planning for the future. Our growth was beginning to accelerate and we could see the future was bright.

I'm presently serving along with a number of others on the current building committee. Marvin Page has given us great guidance and we have worked diligently and we have one of the finest plants. It is first class and this is our first phase. The second phase will be a permanent sanctuary.



Virginia McLeod

I grew up in this church, having been here most of my life except when I went to college and was married early. I joined the church in 1939. Some of the things I remember as a child were our Sunday School class. Lois Johnson and Bill Hunt were our teachers. They wore the most beautiful hats. I remember going to Pullen Park for our annual church picnic. That was one of the few times that we would go swimming. We did not go to pools like the children today. We would go there, swim and ride the merry-go-round, which probably cost us a nickel. We did not call it Pentecost in the Park then but it was like that. And we would always have a big turnout for it. Everybody went.

can remember going to Bible School and also when I became an adult working in Bible School. That was a highlight in our Children's ministry. It was something big for us to do. My children were all baptized here and joined the church and were here until they took off in their own directions.

My mother and father were both active. Mother sang in the choir. I can remember church suppers they would put on to make money to help pay for the building. There were

7 of us. It probably cost us \$5 to eat because all food was donated and the women of the church helped with it. Mother was active in the Missionary Society.

One thing I will always remember about my Daddy is that he would never come to church before 11:30. He did not like preliminaries. He sat down on the right hand side near the front and at 12:00 he would take out his big pocket watch and he'd wind it up. You'd hear it all over the church. It was time to go. When Bernard and I were first married, he was bad about not going to church on time. I would tell him he was like my Daddy, that he didn't like preliminaries, he just went for the sermon. But Bernard goes on time now.

We had three children, Martha, Franklin and Stewart. There was a span in there where we lost our 9 year old daughter. The adults and the children gave us great support during her death and that is something we will always remember, having such tremendous help from our church family. There is a memorial today in her Sunday School class because the children were very touched by her loss.

The organ in the chapel was given in memory of my father by my family. That organ gave out and when my mother died, we gave another one in memory of both of them. There will be a memorial of a fountain at the new church in memory of Mother and Daddy and Martha.



Margaret Blanchard Morgan

Most of the important and memorable events in my life have occurred in Fuquay-Varina United Methodist Church. In this church, I was born and christened; attended many Vacation Bible Schools; was confirmed and became a member as a child; sang in the children's choir; attended UMYF; participated in Lay Witness weekends; attended the funeral of my father; married my husband; and baptized my children. I look forward to continuing the spiritual tradition started over 40 years ago in the beautiful new building that is Fuquay-Varina United Methodist Church.



Terri Lane Newkirk

When I was first asked to write down my memories from growing up in this church I wasn't sure if I could think of anything. However, once my sisters and I began talking about our life at FV-UMC I had a problem choosing which memories to share. There is the memory of walking into the education building and hearing the chatter and laughter from the United Methodist Men having breakfast in the basement kitchen.

I remember the babies and toddlers playing happily while my mother, Marian Lane, and Mrs. Louise Burt loved and cared for them. I remember going to Children's Church and to the altar and Rev. Bone doing our lessons in sign language. There are a lifetime of small memories that I carry with me, but my favorite is that of the Chrismons.

I think I was about 8 years old when the Chrismon project was undertaken. My grandmother, Mrs. S. L. Lane, was a very artistic woman who gathered the materials and began teaching the art of beadwork to some of the ladies in the church.

I remember watching for hours as she carefully twisted and turned the wire and beads until a symbol of the life of Christ was formed, and the awe when the larger ornaments were placed on the ring of life. My granddaddy was in on the project also and he stood at the kitchen table and carefully cut out the symbols from styrofoam. As a child my job was to sprinkle and glue sequins onto these ornaments.

Then there came the "Day of the Star". I remember Granddaddy filling a star shaped form with crystals and putting it into his radar-range and a beautiful star magically emerging a few minutes later.

Decorating the tree became a favorite activity. On the Saturday prior to Advent, Kenneth and Judy Haire would erect this huge tree that they had selected (it was really tall prior to our fire marshal's visit) and they would attach the circle of life and string the lights. Then it was time for fun. Each ornament would be carefully hung and the symbolism of each was discussed. Then when all the boxes were empty, we would stand back and admire the tree.

I feel very fortunate to have such a visual reminder of my grandparents' faith, and to have spent a lifetime as a member of this congregation.



Sarah Ogburn

I have attended this church all my life. Over the years, I have seen a lot of changes. I remember when the sanctuary was remodeled and the balcony added. We held worship services in the basement, with only one service. One of my fondest memories was singing in the children's choir. Mrs. Edith Parker was the director and we held practice in the adult choir room which is now the toddler nursery room. How this church and choir have grown over the years!



Joanna Proctor

joined the church as a child, was baptized and grew up in the Sunday School and youth programs. I have real fond memories of the youth program under Rev. and Mrs. J. W. Lineberger.

I've been a part of 3 capital campaigns. My father, William Johnson, was contractor along with Mr. Bill Dones of the education building we built in 1957. Then the next capital campaign was in late 70's when we set out to do renovation of the sanctuary. He helped Newton Sauls do that project. Our last project was the fellowship hall with Bernard McLeod heading up that committee.

My father had a lot of vision about property around this church. In late 60's he realized we needed a parking lot, so he purchased it and donated it to the church. He realized that we would need property to the back of the church so he bought it and donated that to the church, which is where our children have played.

My father taught me to have vision for the next generation. As a family we were all excited about the various building projects.



Corrine Ragan

A special memory for me was in 1971 when my children's father was terminally ill with cancer. The church people were with us in visits, prayers and gifts. The minister at that time was Jesse Bone. He came to the hospital every other day. He would come at 11:00 at night if too occupied to visit during the day. These memories are very dear to me and will never be forgotten.



Davis Reams

My early days with Fuquay Methodist Church begin about 1929. I was a member of this church when it was built and we moved up here. Mr. Maness was our first minister. He came to my house to get the lessons planned for his son, E. C. Jr. During the time I was growing up I was involved in church activities. For many years I was with the Epworth League and later they changed its name. I had excellent teachers in Sunday School – Mr. J. W. Dale, Mr. E. C. Fish Sr., Mr. Bill Kesler. Then I became the age where they started putting duty on me up here at the church. When I married, we took over the youth for many years.

I helped to teach a class and later we were involved in a couples class. I remember when the ladies joined our men's class. There was some discussion about the ladies taking over. But it worked out all right.

I was also involved in starting the Methodist Men's group along with Jerry Currin. It was rough going 'cause people didn't realize what was involved to get it going. We had cookouts for our own who needed help. The fish fries were real good. The work with the church could get as involved as you would allow it. You need help from a lot of people.

I joined the choir in 1933 and stayed in it for 65 years. That was one of the most enjoyable things that has ever happened in my life. To come in tired, you had a bad day and nothing went right and you come to church and start singing – it'd make a big

difference in your life. That went on until the music got so rough it was hard for me to sing. The notes were so high and volume so loud, I didn't have it.

Several of us (Gene Chosy, Frank McDowell) and I helped with the children in recent years. They are a curiosity. We would make things. The children would put the paint on. They would put it on wrong and get upset and then we'd have to straighten it out. But it was enjoyable. I worked with the children in school even after I retired.

I have served on the board and many committees in my time with the church. It means so much to go back for these memories. I remember sitting beside people in Sunday School. My tenure here has been most enjoyable...when you think of all the ministers who have been through here and of the lives of those who are no longer with us. I'm fortunate to have been a part of this church and I cherish it.



Judy Rowland and daughters

(Martha R. Fish (former member), Julia R. Yeargan and Virginia R. Miller)

As a family we represent four generations of members at FV-UMC. Our grandmother, Algier F. Rowland was a member for over 50 years. Every Sunday she would sit in the choir loft, singing God's praises and keeping an eye on us, especially since as teenagers we liked to sit in the balcony unattended. Grandmother was responsible for coordinating flowers in the sanctuary. Weekly phone calls were made, a great time to keep tabs on church news.

Even thirty years ago the church had lots to offer their youth. There was weekly youth choir practice with Kool-Aid and cookies, summer Vacation Bible School with lovingly made crafts and playing under the huge maple trees and grassy area behind the education wing. Sunday School was always a fun and exciting place to go, especially since our mother, Judy Rowland, seemed to always lead our classes throughout the years. And helping in the nursery as a small child was always a treat. As our family grows, we want to continue making new memories and traditions that carry from the old to the new.



Bob Sheets

I've been involved with FV-UMC for a long time, since 1961 when Polly and I got married July 16 on a very hot afternoon, before air conditioning. Our wedding was the first wedding performed by Rev. Norwood Jones who had come to be the minister. He served here from 1961-1966, coming here as pastor of Fuquay Springs Methodist Church and leaving as pastor of Fuquay-Varina Methodist Church. We were both nervous at the wedding. I didn't know who would pass out first.

I remember people who have been special to me. Louise Burt was good with our children and her husband Elmer was a Sunday School teacher and very supportive of us. I remember Mrs. Parker, Mrs. J. Carl Rowland (who saw flowers were put in the church every Sunday and who sang in the choir), and John Smith. Toward the end of his life, I visited John and Sadie on a regular basis, first as a Stephen Minister and then just to visit until his death. One of the experiences I remember involved his diabetes and his losing his eyesight. He had some experimental surgery and got that back. I remember the Sunday he stood up in the church and said, "Lord, you've opened my eyes. I can see." It was really a blessing to everyone.

I remember Harold and Ethelene Stuart and their support of the church. This church has been very special to me. It's now time to move on and I look forward to new ministries. I can't get by without mentioning the pumpkin patch. I'm now known as the Pumpkin Man and I have met so many new families. The money we raise has helped our mission program tremendously.



Polly Sheets

How does one choose one special memory from a lifetime in this church? I

remember coming to Sunday school and MYF under the loving leadership of Mrs. Adele Prince. My mother's wonderful friends nurtured and encouraged me. Bob and I were married here. Our children were also taught and nurtured here by many of you through Sunday School, choirs, youth groups, and other activities. They received much love and encouragement through the college years and two of them were married in our sanctuary.

As a young adult I was recruited to teach Sunday School by Mrs. Edith Parker and even though I was not very excited about doing this, Mrs. Parker would not accept "No" for an answer. I discovered that teaching little children was the greatest blessing imaginable and through the years taught in every class from nursery through senior high and even several adult classes. I also led Jr. High MYF and loved the retreats/ski trips we made to Teen Valley.

Making Chrismons with Mrs. Margaret Lane, preparing for special activities, and attending covered dish suppers were among special treats. The most meaningful leadership experience was as chairperson of our Council on Ministries through which I was able to work with many of you and Rev. Jerry Smith in planning of our church programs.

Though all of these activities make one a part of the life of the church, the most special part has been learning to love our Lord through worship and Christian fellowship at FV-UMC. What wonderful examples I have had to watch and to follow in saints like Mary Gray Fish, Sue Senter, Sadie Smith and others. Many opportunities were provided through study groups, prayer groups and sharing groups.

Perhaps the most life-changing experience came when we had a Lay Witness Mission and I met visiting Christians who shared activities like mine and helped me see Jesus in their lives. Suddenly I realized in a way that I had never understood before, that I wanted Him to be the leader of my life and my home. I made a new commitment to Jesus Christ at that time and I became a different person. Ann Wade (Myatt) opened her home to others who had had a similar experience for a sharing group. We all grew so much through that experience!

This church has offered so many opportunities through the years. How blessed I am to have been a part of this wonderful church family that I love so dearly. My prayer is that the Lord will continue to bless our church according to His will.

Photo:
Not
available.

Diane Schmelzer Smith

Small beads of sweat gathered across my father's furrowed brow as he and I waited for our cue at the bottom of the steps leading up to the entry door to the church. We were completely alone for the first time following several weeks of hectic preparation and anticipation in the days leading up to that moment. It was Saturday, August 1, 1970.

From the outside, the Fuquay-Varina United Methodist Church may have looked much the same as it had when first constructed in 1930. Stately Corinthian-style, white columns loomed about a simple but elegant double doorway with the words Fuquay Springs Methodist Church formed in stained glass above the lintel. Vertical, Tiffany-style windows of softly muted earth colors stretched down the sides of the building. The façade of North Carolina brick stood in stark but oddly compatible contrast to the elegance of the columns and windows, the visual blending of God's exquisite creativity and man's need for practicality.

And above all, perched lightly on the widely sloping roof was a modest cupola topped with a directional arrow weather vane – no enormous spire loomed above us dominating the landscape shouting God's presence in the community. There was uniqueness about the cupola blending nicely with the overall architecture. It represented God's glory in an unpretentious way, as Christ would have. With the slightest puff of wind, it gently spun in all directions of the globe where we might serve the Lord – North, South, East or West.

Dad signed with relief when the wedding director peeped her head out the door and motioned two more minutes. My thoughts were inside the church – wondering what the music sounded like, wondering if all the attendants were in order, wondering if my grandparents were comfortable and able to see the altar. There was an odd assortment of bridesmaids and ushers the coupling of which had given the wedding director a migraine. When the discussion of who was with whom got hot and heavy, my father declared the decision-making over, told everyone where they would stand and that was the end of that. Dad said the focus would be on the bride and groom. He was so practical and logical. He was on top of the details and I was grateful for his confidence and authority.

This was the very first wedding in the newly remodeled interior of the Fuquay-Varina United Methodist Church. The wedding had been planned nearly a year in advance and though the sanctuary renovations had been factored into scheduling and we had been assured that the church would be ready, when July arrived and things were woefully behind schedule my mother began to panic, and in turn my father's blood pressure and anxiety level rose correspondingly. Dad was at the church every day in July, at lunch, in the evening, talking to the contractors, checking out supply orders, reporting to my mother every nail hammered and each stroke of a paintbrush. Another wedding scheduled for the last weekend in July caved under the pressure and relocated to another church. But Dad held steady, convinced that God would have that church ready with his help!

On Thursday, July 24, my mother got into the act. The wedding rehearsal was set for the following Friday evening and there was no other location besides the sanctuary available to practice. Between work and wedding arrangements Mom accompanied my Dad on his inspection tours. At this point the contractors began to feel sorry for my family and I actually believe they worked more intensely, came early, worked overtime and took shorter lunch breaks. My father's mom and dad came from New Jersey that weekend and were appointed second shift inspectors.

In 1964, my family moved to Fuquay Springs from northern New Jersey when the fiber company my father worked for established a factory here and he was appointed manager. We were one of a very few "Yankee" families in town, much as I disdain using that term. The people of Fuquay were generally warm and friendly, especially those in our church, but we were still outsiders, not blood kin to anyone and Yankees to boot.

Moving to Fuquay was a wrenching experience in more ways than we could ever anticipate. It was so homogeneous in some ways and so divided in others. My family was used to communities of multi-ethnic backgrounds where differences were noted but not amplified to distortion. My mother's family had lived on farms in rural Pennsylvania and New Jersey since her Quaker forebear landed on the shores of Maryland in 1676. We owned the last farm in our New Jersey township. Our family had very similar values to those of the old farmer families in and around Fuquay, but because we talked a little faster and our clipped speech was nearly unrecognizable to the Fuquay natives we were treated differently. The assumption of the "pushy Yankee" couldn't have been farther from the truth.

We joined the Fuquay Methodist Church upon our arrival, and as we settled into our North Carolina life, my Dad joined the Fuquay Rural Fire Department and eventually became chief. My mother worked at Standard Homes and was a member of a number of local service organizations. My sisters and I attended school in Fuquay and gradually we blended, our accents softened, we adapted and were adopted by our Fuquay family.

On Friday evening, July 31, the wedding party gathered in front of the church in eager expectation. The pastor unlocked the sanctuary doors and flicked the light switch to reveal the newly finished interior of the church. The large room was cool and comfortable, the newly installed air conditioning system quietly purring away unnoticed but gratefully appreciated in the August heat. Gleaming white faux columns, reminiscent of the portico, lined the sides of the sanctuary. A reconfigured altar area and symmetrically placed lecterns spread along the front of the church above the newly upholstered burgundy cushions of the kneeling rail. The cross rising over all was beautifully illuminated by soft light from recessed fixtures placed high in the ceiling. Satiny colors, the scene of fresh paint and varnish hinted of new beginnings, wood trim and dark upholstery gave a sense of the unbroken connection to the past. The sanctuary renovations were finished, with one day to spare!

Suspended in that precious moment in time, we were in God's place and all was right with the world. It was a joyous occasion, one of many held at the Fuquay-Varina United Methodist Church in celebration of God's love for His children and His children's children, from North, South, East and West.



Sadie Smith

It was in 1935 that I came here to FV to live and I joined the Methodist Church. It was such a joy to be a part of the Sunday School class. Mrs. Robert Prince was our teacher and the best teacher I have ever known. She had such a wonderful gift and taught for many years as a faithful one. She didn't read to us, she told it. She objected to our naming the class after her but she deserved it.

We belonged to a missionary group. There were quite a few elderly ladies in the group and I was very young. It was very special to me as we met in the homes. We were very active and dedicated in the work of the Women's Society of Christian Service. We would have Quiet Days and they were beyond words in what they meant. Outstanding leaders were Mrs. Prince and Mrs. Eva Jones in making it meaningful. It was a challenge and a joy to be a part of it.

I remember Rev. John Poe being extra-special in everything he did because he enjoyed life so much and helped us all to enjoy life. It was during his time that we were thinking of expanding the church. He was extra special as a pastor and his delight in playing, not talking to, but playing with the children.

I liked Rev. Maness. He retired here and would preach from time to time. He was one of the most dedicated ministers in all his relationships with the church along with his wife. We had some mighty good ministers. Rev. and Mrs. Dodd were special. Rev. Lineberger was special to me because he was here when I had my children. He and his wife would visit in our home.

I was married in this church. Mrs. J. Carl Rowland put the flowers in. I didn't know what to do about anything, but she fixed the church beautifully. Mrs. Robert Prince was there to see that I did and said the right thing. Mr. Robert Prince was available with his camera, even though he was a banker. That was in 1943. It was a very hot, hot day with no air conditioning and everybody had a fan and they were moving.

When I think of the saints in this church, I remember how special they were to me. I was young and had a lot to learn. They made me feel so good to be a part of this church. I remember Mr. and Mrs. Max Burt. I loved to hear him pray. In those days men of the church would be called on to pray and he was a great prayer. His wife was such a dear lady. Mrs. Elmo Fish was a dear saint. Everybody was "honey" to her and she cared about all people.

One of the great things about William Johnson was that he was everybody's friend. He was one of the greatest givers I've ever known. He was constantly giving of himself and his money to this church. He was a devoted leader of this time. Lois was such a sweet kind lady. She and Mrs. Fred Hunt took care of the little ones. William, in his generosity, made it possible for the church to meet its obligations when it didn't seem possible.

Mrs. W. S. Cozart was also such a helpful person. She was active in the ladies Sunday School class, the Women's Society of Christian Service and opened her home for many meetings. She gave me a neat book and I still have it. The Wilkersons lived down in Willow Springs and came way up here to church. They were faithful members. There are other people who stand out in my memory were for whom I am grateful for the part they played in my life and in the life of the church.

Mrs. L. E. Tilley used to sing in the choir. I would go home with her adopted daughter. She always served in so many areas. Mrs. Eva Jones and her husband Jesse were a great pair with the youth. Sue Senter was such a praying woman. Then there was Mrs. Edith Holloway who was such a happy person who played for us for years and years. She was so talented, didn't have to see the music, in fact.

My sister Joyce and I were musicians at heart and we made our music with harmonicas. We could play about anything we ever heard. Off and on the church would call us in to play a tune for them. There was something about doing it for the church that was special.



Judy Stephens

I have many wonderful memories of worshipping, learning about and serving my Lord at Fuquay-Varina United Methodist Church. My parents brought my brothers, sister and I to the church from the beginning and I learned early on the importance of serving as I watched them in leadership positions. I have vivid memories of the collection plate being passed and my Daddy always putting in his tithe, even when I really wondered where the money was coming from.

I had godly Sunday School teachers and dedicated preachers who had a powerful influence on my life. I remember the enthusiastic singing at revivals, the testimonies and prayers we heard from people in the congregation.

The altar has always been very special to me. It was there that I was baptized by Rev. Lineberger, confirmed by Rev. Poe and married by Rev. Crutchfield along with the Baptist pastor, Charles Dorman. Many times I have come to the altar to pray and ask for guidance. It was here that we also brought our four children to be baptized by Rev. Bone, and Rev. Wentz. And it was at the altar that we brought my Daddy for his funeral when he passed away. That service was conducted by Rev. Jerry Smith, Rev. Bill Young and Rev. David Brownlee.

I remember the groundbreaking for the Education Building when I was a young child. The memory is very vivid in my mind because of the gold shovel that was used by the Bishop. Wray and I were the last marriage before the sanctuary renovations began in 1970 so everyone eagerly anticipated that day for us. We dedicated the fellowship hall in 1989, just two weeks after we lost our house in a fire. But I knew then, and now, that being with my church family, worshipping together, is what I need especially at a time of crisis.

God has blessed us as we have come to know him and share with others. I have learned that there is a time to give and a time to receive. Although we didn't intend to come back to FV when we first married, we did as we awaited a call into the armed services. In time, we settled in to become a part of this church community and found ourselves in leadership positions.

Mary Bone, the pastor's wife, kept our little ones in order for us to be youth counselors. Wray and I began the first Children's Church and I went on to serve in every leadership position with the exception of SPRC and Trustees. A most rewarding time was serving as chair of the Council on Ministries when we began a long range planning process for the future. I also pushed for the decision to go on computer in the church office and found myself entering most of the data for our church secretary.

I have been blessed to serve on staff since 1992 and have seen many changes in the following years. I have helped to bring on Stephen Ministries, ChristCare, DivorceCare, Network Discovery sessions, Lay Mobilization among many of our important ministries. Our daughter Karen was instrumental in starting the homeless ministry with the youth several years back. And the church is now supporting me in my pursuit of ordination.

I can remember bells ringing, ice cream socials, church picnics, missionaries speaking, the basement flooding, laughter and tears. My favorite memory is the entire congregation gathered in a circle around the walls of the sanctuary as we held hands and sang Blest Be the Tie.



Wray Stephens

My first recollection of this church was in high school. My first experience here was courting. I was a Baptist and she was a Methodist. This was a good place to be with her. I came to revivals and worship here. The second recollection was getting married in this church, Dec. 27, 1969. I remember that date for personal reasons but also because this church was waiting for that date for the wedding to be completed to start major

renovations of the sanctuary the next day. We were the last ones to be married and the last activity in the old sanctuary before it was remodeled.

This church is a very special place in my life for a number of reasons. I think Judy and I established our first adult to adult relationship with a pastor and his wife, Jesse and Mary Bone. We became friends and remained so over the years. That was a growing experience. We've had that kind of opportunity since then with other minister couples.

A lot of special things have happened in this building. Being a part of the Wesleyan Sunday School class that entire time, meeting in the same room except for a brief period to accommodate a couple of our members. But it was the class and not the space. All 4 children were baptized in this church, all grew up in Sunday School and MYF. Very special memories.

I remember things that I participated in like Faith to Focus in more recent years. Space becomes hallowed spaces because we encounter God in them. That's what makes a sanctuary, a Sunday School classroom, a chapel, so special to us. We know we were close to God. We establish very strong relationships with other people. That makes them unique. I guess I look forward to the new building for that reason. They don't have the memories yet, but we will make them as we worship and share, they will become hallowed spaces here.

I didn't know about the history of this church building until much later. But thinking back to the 1930's when a small Methodist congregation, probably more like the size of many of our Methodist churches today, made a decision to build a new church at a time when it probably would have been easier to make excuses for why they shouldn't step out during the Depression, but they did. I have to look back and say how grateful I am for what they did, not because God wouldn't have found a way to do with me what He wanted to do, but their faithfulness and vision became part of God's plan to provide a larger space where we could grow and there was a place for me. Judy and I had a choice and we discussed whether to be a part of this congregation or my Baptist congregation, but we chose this place because there was a place here for us.



Betty Tilley

When I was given the opportunity to write about something that meant a lot to me during the years that I have been a member of Fuquay-Varina United Methodist Church, I immediately thought about my years in the choir. After my marriage in 1950, I started attending the Methodist Church. Almost immediately Mrs. Holloway invited me to join the

Chancel Choir. I had known the Holloway family all of my life and "Miss Edith" knew of the love of music that my family held dear. My Grandfather led the music in his church for many years and my Mother and Father are music lovers. I was pleased to become a soprano in the choir. The choir has been a vital part of my life ever since.

During the early years of my "career" we had a small group that we considered a part of our families. We sang together and socialized together. Mr. Robert Cotton was singing bass and he always made sure that we had an annual Thanksgiving dinner together. He supplied the turkey and "Miss Edith" made the dressing from "scratch biscuits". The other choir members filled in the remainder of the meal. We enjoyed the fellowship but we knew we had a more important objective as we led the congregation in song.

In January, 1994, I married Jimmy Tilley, who also came from a musical family. Jimmy's Grandfather, J. W. Dale, sang bass for many years. (We have traced back as far as the late 1930's). Jimmy's mother, Elizabeth Dale Tilley, sang soprano in the Chancel Choir for 55 years. We have had quite a few choir directors during my years as a choir member. I liked every one of them and regretted to see them leave. However, "Miss Edith" was the one that taught us choir "etiquette". She always wanted the choir to present the gospel to the congregation in the words of the music and in the way we looked and acted. I have never forgotten her "lessons"!

I am in my 49th year in the choir and I have tried to give back to God in a small way the talent that He has given me. Thanks be to God for Christian leaders who gave so much, many times on a volunteer basis, to help me and others enable ourselves to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ through music. Let me take this opportunity to encourage our young people to consider using any musical talent that they may have by joining the Chancel Choir. It will be a real personal blessing!



Joe Weede

I arrived here from the Navy and WWII on Nov. 9, 1945. We lived next door to the church. While we had been members of another denomination, we felt right at home among these fine Methodists - especially those in our neighborhood, the Dones and Garretts.

My first Sunday School assignment was boys about 6-7 years old. As I approached my first class, I saw a boy hitting his brother over the head with a hymnal. One is now a splendid God-fearing Pastor and the other is doing well too.

I like to recall our preachers. While they came in many sizes, shapes and personalities, I enjoyed all of them, because most or all had his own style and message. My first recollection was of Rev. Dodd. One choir member used to get up and leave right at 12 o'clock so as to pick up his wife at the Baptist Church. One morning as he was leaving, Rev. Dodd paused and said, "you can all leave if you want to, but I'm going to finish this sermon."

Other specific preachers were:

Rev. Lineberger was a very serious and sincere preacher and man; well-liked. Rev. Poe was jovial "Pal" Poe, a good preacher and story-teller. Rev. Crutchfield was a slender man who was very sweet and gentle. Rev. Jesse Bone brought new angles to old thoughts. He was a thinker and very serious. Rev. Allen Wentz, Jr. was witty, very likeable and also wise-cracking. Rev. Jerry Smith had a pleasing personality with time for everyone. He was excellent at baby baptisms – kissing, caressing and talking to them.

Rev. Branson Sheets was an up and coming associate pastor; well prepared; had a good message; appealing to all. He was homegrown. I told him he had found his niche. Rev. Jerry Juren was very likeable with a good message and always cheerful. Rev. Randy Cirksena was likeable but with a different outlook than most of us. Ms. Rebecca Lile was delightful and the first lady on our pastoral staff. She was very sweet with a pleasing personality. Rev. Marti Hatch was our second lady on our staff. She appealed to all and had a good sense of humor. She was delightful.

Rev. David Brownlee was another thinker, innovator, organizer and promoter of the spirit in many ways. There is real good substance in his sermons. He is another Jerry Smith with the babies and baptisms. Rev. Elaine Lilliston is our latest member of the staff. She is a delightful person who preaches a good sermon, too. She is always smiling and laughing. Rev. Sherry Grant was great as the director of our senior choir as well as some of the "lesser" ones.

The trips on the church van, our retreats at Camp Agape and Lake Junaluska are also highlights for me.



Mary Weede

My first experience in this church was visiting with friends years ago, when Rev. Poe was here. Then I married a member of the church and moved here in 1969. My children were raised in the church and now my grandchildren. I've been involved in the choir, Methodist Women, the circle, with youth and in the kitchen.

I helped start the first library in 1974. We've had quite a few changes since then. We've moved 3 times in the church and I was looking forward to this new move if we have enough space. We have between 900 and 1000 volumes, covering all kinds of things from how to do projects to reference books, dictionaries. We have lots of Christian education devotional books as well as a juvenile collection. We have many books still to process. It's a growing thing. I think good literature to back up Christian education and to help keep things in perspective is good.

There's always something to do in the Methodist Church. Plenty of service! We've enjoyed being involved over the years. My children were involved in a very active youth group, back when there were not that many youth. Now there are so many things my grandchildren can be involved in, more than they can do.

Tributes

of some of our former pastors who have passed on

Rev. Leonidas M. Chaffin, served our church on the Buckhorn circuit from 1910-1913. He, like his father before him, served actively as a pastor for 50 years, dying at the age of 75 in 1939. Rev. Chaffin was married twice. He and his first wife, Nora, had seven children, one of whom (Mrs. Kate Johnson) is a current member of our church at the remarkable age of 101. He and second wife Elizabeth had two other children.

Brother Chaffin is remembered for his sincerity and honesty and steadfast loyalty to Christ and his cause. He was fearless and uncompromising in his convictions and preaching, but firm, approachable and neighborly. He spent much of his time among his people, sharing with them their joys and burdens.

Rev. Eli Carson Maness, who also was a faithful pastor for 50 years, 39 of which were active, is remembered most, however for his personal work in the completion of our facility on North Main Street in 1930. Brother Maness mixed mortar and carried bricks and other materials until his hands literally bled for what he would call "a very substantial modern church". He was a leader in a number of building programs where he served and always tried to leave a change in better condition than he found it.

Rev. Maness was once quoted in The Courier Journal about the recurrence of the number 13 relative to Fuquay Springs Methodist Church. This church was organized on the 13th day of October, 1903; the first deposit on the building fund was made on November 13, 1929 and the church building was first opened for services on July 13, 1930. Along with his leadership the church was able to complete and entirely pay for the splendid building in less than two years.

Rev. Maness and his wife Annie retired in Fuquay-Varina where he passed away in January, 1968 at age 76 His funeral, held in the church he so dearly loved, was conducted by the district superintendent Dr. Leon Russell, assisted by then pastor Rev. G. W. Crutchfield and Rev. S. J. Starnes, another former pastor of Fuquay Springs, a long-time friend of the family.

His Journal obituary referred to his strong religious convictions, one who never compromised with evil. His people had great confidence in him and he never sought preferment, but accepted his assignments at the hands of the appointive powers and sought to do his best wherever he was sent. He left behind loved ones, together with a host of friends who will cherish his memory until they meet him again in the land of the redeemed.

Rev. Julian Lewark Midgette only served one year, 1931-32, on the Fuquay circuit, during which he began to struggle with a serious illness. He asked to retire early three years later but lived a very short time in his hometown before passing away. He and his wife, Loudisa, were parents of one son. Rev. Midgette was a great preacher who had a message to be delivered, never minimizing the needs of men lost in sin for doubting the power of the Gospel to save. He had the zeal of an evangelist and was privileged to lead hundreds to Christ.

After his death his wife, who often walked in and found him reading from a piece of paper in his Bible in his later years with tears in his eyes, found the words that touched him so:

**“Laid aside! Why, Oh God, has thou made this decree?
With all my soul I long so, just to be
Out in the harvest fields for they are white and ready.
Precious souls are dying. Soon the night is coming.
Soon the little space that we call life is past. The harvest time is waning fast.
Workers now are bringing in the sheaves and I am idle here.
Since I may not go out and help them bring the harvest home,
Perhaps little melody I sing may cheer them on.
Perhaps a little prayer I say will easier make their way.”**

Rev. Eli Baxter Craven also served near the end of his life on the Fuquay Springs Circuit, from 1939-1942. He and his wife, Clara were the parents of three children. He preached the old gospel with spiritual insight and power and his able services as evangelist pastor were much in demand. It was said of Rev. Craven that he had three things definitely in mind in his pulpit ministry – his subject, a clear-cut purpose to get a verdict and the audience. The people heard him gladly because they loved him devotedly.

Rev. Ernest Creasy Durham was another former pastors who retired in Fuquay, living at Kinton Rest Home (now Brighton Manor) for a year before his death in 1974. He and his wife Roberta moved here after an injury suffered in a fall. For many years he had been a prolific writer and his poems had appeared in the News and Observer, the Raleigh Times and the Christian Advocate. In 1948 he compiled many of his best known poems in a volume titled “Poems of a Lifetime”. Among them were a poem he wrote in memory of current church member Cyrus Matthews’ son, Myron, who was killed in the war.

Serving the Fuquay Methodist Church from 1936-38, Rev. Durham also served as Chaplain of the Senate of the North Carolina Legislature for 16 years. He was a gifted artist and shared his talents with many people. From the closing poem in his book we read:

**Sunset! And all across the west
Are broken clouds and light;
The storms are gone, and now comes rest;
I do not fear the night.**

**‘Tis not the end of perfect day:
Storms came and brought me fear;
But in the dark I learned to pray,
And found the Father near.**

**And now that a life's storms have passed,
And I see sunset's glow,
I've found a perfect peace at last;
I'm not afraid to go.**

Rev. Robert Grandison Lee Edwards, or Preacher Bob, as he was affectionately known, preached faithfully and effectively the Gospel of our Lord and Savior for 46 years. He touched, blessed, and enriched thousands of lives and was a faithful and hard worker. There were no barren years in his ministry as he received more than 1600 people into the membership of his churches and nearly 1000 of them on profession of faith, not counting the many revivals he led in other churches.

Preacher Bob was also a church builder and wherever he and his wife Annie went, he also improved the physical properties of the church. He served in Fuquay from 1940-43. Even after he retired in 1954 he accepted an appointment to a church with no members, no building nor a lot. With his characteristic spirit of faith, optimism, cheerfulness and persistent effort, he brought into being a church and left to his successor a well organized church of 109 members with an adequate temporary building equipped for Church School and worship services.

Rev. Eff David Dodd served as pastor in the Fuquay Methodist Church from 1943-48 when he retired to live here until his death in 1966. He is buried in Fuquay-Varina. After his retirement he was very faithful to the church in assisting the pastors, and taught a Sunday School class as long as he was able. An excellent preacher, he proclaimed with profound sincerity The Unsearchable Riches of Christ. He knew what he believed, why he believed and Whom he believed. He was the foremost leader of a union revival held in Williamson during his pastorate there which stirred the town from the center to the circumference. Deep were his convictions as to the difference between right and wrong. In his last illness, while in the hospital, he witnessed to nurses and orderlies as to the saving power of Jesus.

Rev. Dodd enjoyed making furniture on the side and several of his pieces are in the homes of church members today. He also made an altar that will be in our new building. He retired in Fuquay-Varina and lived in a home provided by the church behind the first parsonage. He was a meticulous record keeper probably because of the impact of a 1925 loss of all his goods, especially his books, in a fire at the A.C. Line Railroad depot. His family has given to the church a ledger he kept in his own handwriting of the fees he collected in his ministry. Regarding the Fuquay Springs Church, his record for 1944 included a monthly salary of \$100.00 with a special Easter collection of \$384.00.

Rev. James Worth Lineberger, Sr. served Fuquay-Varina from 1948-1952. He was married more than 63 years to his wife, Allene, who continues to reside today in the Methodist Retirement Home in Durham. They had one son, Jim, Jr.. Rev. Lineberger, who died in 1995, wanted to be remembered as a servant of the Church. After having served as a pastor, he had a 12 year ministry with the Methodist Home for Children where he helped shape and influence the lives of children and youth.

He also is remembered as a person of mission and outreach. He and Allene helped form the camping ministry of the Conference. In 1956 they forever became "Mom and Pop" when they led a caravan of 10 youth for three months of mission in war-struck Europe. In retirement, for 21 years his warmth brought grace and affirmation to "everybody in sight" at Edenton Street Church in Raleigh.

Rev. Lineberger knew how to die well (as John Wesley said of the Methodists). In the closing days of his life, he talked without fear, with no regrets and with a live curiosity about his upcoming death. He was prepared and wanted all those around him to be prepared. His faith bore the calm assurance about which Isaac Watts wrote: "Ill praise my Maker while I've breath; and when my voice is lost in death, praise shall employ my nobler powers."

Rev. Shirley Judge Starnes served 61 years in the ministry, holding thirteen appointments, the one at Fuquay Springs from 1952-56. He served for many years as Editor of The Christian Advocate. He was also the author of many poems and two books. He took an active role in the North Carolina Annual Conference, serving for many years as Secretary of the Conference Board of Missions and Church Extensions. His perfect attendance record reflected his cherished relationship and took him to his last session, which ended one week before his death.

Three months before his death he had been informed about the inevitable progress of a cancer but he accepted the news with profound faith in his Lord. He looked forward with joy to the reunion with his dear wife, Daisy and two of their seven children who had preceded him. His death, in fact, came for him as a beautiful experience rather than a tragedy. On the day of his death, he walked into the hospital unafraid. He and another minister, who happened to be his hospital roommate, knelt beside their beds and shared a prayer. He then returned to his bed and peacefully answered God's call to eternity.

Rev. John Robert Poe, Sr. was a man loved for his humor and evangelism. He always had a joke to tell and his own laughter was generally as funny as the joke. The overwhelming emphasis of John's ministry was offering Christ. He is remembered for his soul-saving sermons and the joy of Christian commitment. To him, the most exciting line in the Conference Journal was the number received on profession of faith. Rev. Poe (or Pal, as he preferred to be called), had a brilliant mind but was born to parents who offered faith, food and family ties, but little in the way of financial support for his education. But God worked in mysterious ways to open doors to Pal Poe.

When he was 18 years old, while in a country store, the door to Christian ministry opened through the need of others. Someone came into the store pleading for help as there was a man trapped in a well. John responded by being lowered into the well and rescuing two men, one who survived and the other who died. This became a major turning point in John's life as his name was submitted to the Dale Carnegie Foundation, which declared him a national hero. The Foundation paid for John's education at Duke University where he completed his undergraduate work and entered the Divinity School, which was free in those days. He served for 38 years with his beloved wife Sally until his retirement in 1973. His time at Fuquay Springs was from 1956-1961. They were the parents of two children, John Jr. who works today at the School of Math and Science in Durham and Susan, who recently passed away. He was devoted to his wife who preceded him in death.

Rev. Walter Allen Wentz, Jr. served in Fuquay-Varina from 1976-1980. Someone has written, "Allen Wentz had a faith and spirit and an integrity that was transportable. His faith, his spirit, his integrity were the same everywhere he went and his character defined his circumstances." He knew how to listen and he knew when to speak. His love of ministry with children and his stewardship of God's created order took focus in his four years on the staff of the Conference Council on Ministries as Coordinator of Children's Ministry and Camping. After his retired, he continued to be active in outdoor and camping ministry and encouraged young pastors.

Allen is to be remembered most for the caps he wore. One never knew whether they were for his pleasure or for the delight and amazement of friends who counted an untold range of color, design, condition, shape and coverage. Wearing the caps was playful, useful, creative - it was Allen.

Rev. Wentz died at home in Franklin Va. In December of 1995 after having put the Christmas tree in place. His wife, Shirley, continues today to live in Franklin. Their three children reside in the Cary and Raleigh area. A poem written by Allen explores how much God in love gives us and how much we in love give God. The poem closes in this straightforward way:

*Oh for
A thousand
Hands and hearts
To give and
Give
Again and,
Again to give
Thanks to
Him...
My God.
Amen...that much!*

BOB SHEETS UPDATES US ON OUR FORMER PASTORS: (based on correspondence received from the specific individuals)

Rev. Norwood Jones and his wife Helen live in Clayton where they have retired. Rev. Jones offers his time as pastor of visitation for Clayton United Methodist Church.

Rev. Gilbert Crutchfield and his wife Jessie came. I remember her work with the children. She has lost her memory now and they are unable to be with us now as he is 91 and unable to drive. They are living in the Methodist Home in Durham.

Coming next was **Rev. Jesse Bone** and wife Mary. While he was here he started a special ministry for the deaf since they had a child who was hearing impaired. After leaving here he decided to make that his ministry and he went to Oklahoma to work for the deaf in the conference there. But after it took so much time away from his family, he came back to our conference. He is retiring this year from his church in Simpson, N.C. and they are going to be traveling in a camper for some years.

Dr. Robert McKee was the only doctor assigned to our church. He was more an Episcopal type, wearing a stiff collar and he put a lot of time in his sermons. I got close to him since I was lay leader at that time. At the end of his time here he had a heart attack. As lay leader I was involved until the end of the year setting up the order of service, getting speakers, visiting in the hospital and to newcomers. It was good experience and I was glad to do it. He now lives in S. C. with his daughter. His wife has passed on.

Following him was beloved **Rev. Jerry Smith**. He served here from 1983-89. He was loved by all and was an excellent minister. Under his leadership we had our first associate who was our son, **Rev. Branson Sheets**, assigned here at the request of Jerry. He got excellent training from Jerry who shared leadership duties and gave Branson the opportunity to speak often and visit.

While Jerry and Carolyn were here they made a request to build a house and move out of the parsonage. This was granted and they lived in their house for a number of years and the parsonage was rented. They moved back in just before re-assignment.

Rev. Jerry Juren followed him and he and his wife are also retiring this year. We had another associate pastor with him named **Rev. Randy Cirksena** who was here one year. He is no longer in the ministry.

When **Rev. David Brownlee** came in 1991 things changed and we hired a program director. Rebecca Lile was a lovely person loved by everyone and helped in this transition period. The growth had begun under Jerry Smith. When David came, growth continued and accelerated. When she left, we had a chance to go back to an associate pastor. **Rev. Marti Hatch** had been pastor of churches but she agreed to come as an Associate Pastor. She served in our church from 1994 to 1996 and is currently on leave from the North Carolina

Conference as she serves as youth/young adults pastor at Buncombe United Methodist Church in Greenville, South Carolina.



All God's Children

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