



HAMPSTEAD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

100 Years of Faith
1907 - 2007

Celebrated September 16, 2007

This book is a church history written by members Edward
Coker and others. It contains articles, church decisions, and other church

HAMPSTEAD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

100 Years of Faith

Celebrated September 16, 2007

Hampstead United Methodist Church
15395 Highway 17
Hampstead, NC 28443
(910) 270-4648
www: hampsteadumc.org

**HAMPSTEAD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
100 Years of Faith
1907 - 2007**

Celebrated September 16, 2007

This summary was compiled from a church history written by member Edward Combs in 1994, from newspaper articles, church directories and other church records, and from the memories of several other devoted members of this church.

It is dedicated to.....

- all those early members who had a vision to start a Methodist Church in Hampstead, North Carolina
- all those members, visitors, guests, and families who have come through our doors to worship
- all the leaders who sought God's presence in our church
- all who built and re-built church facilities
- all who have cared for God's people and God's property at HUMC
- all who have cared for God's people outside the walls of HUMC

and

- all those who are here today serving God and His ministries

and

- all those who will continue to seek God's guidance and grace into our Second Century.....

Just as Methodism has played a prominent role in the history of our country, so has the Methodist Church in Hampstead been a vital force in our community during the past 100 years.

Founding and Early Years

As early as 1907, Mrs. Rachel Howard deeded land for a church site, to include a building, cemetery, and grounds around it, on the east side of Highway 17 about 3/4 mile from the intersection of Route 17 and 210. Another deed in 1910 designated it to the Methodist Episcopal Church (a forerunner of the United Methodist Church) and, through the efforts of Mrs. Howard's daughter, Hester Howard Simmons, the Hampstead Church was founded. A steam-powered saw mill on nearby land was operated by Mrs. Simmons' husband, William B. Simmons. In cooperation with the Duck Lake Lumber Company, a small wooden building was erected with lumber produced at this saw mill. This first Methodist Church building was heated by a pot-bellied wood-burning stove, and candlelight was used for illumination. Sunday school classes assembled in the corners of the sanctuary, since there were no separate rooms for this purpose. However, the arrangement probably worked quite well for the small membership at the time.

From about 1922 for several years, Harold (Buddy) Howard and his sister, Nellie Howard, taught Sunday school classes regularly. Nellie played the piano and organ. Harold served as Sunday school superintendent for many years.

The above building served as a place of worship for the Hampstead United Methodist Church until 1930 when a severe wind storm damaged the structure and it had to be razed. A new church was erected in 1930 on the same site with the assistance of the Duke Endowment Fund. The new building was about as long as the original structure, but much wider.

During its early years and for several decades, Hampstead United Methodist was served by itinerant pastors on a circuit, which also included Scotts Hill, Union Chapel (Harrison Creek), Sneads Ferry, Verona, and Seagate. The parsonage was in Scotts Hill, so services at the Hampstead Church were led by Rev. J. T. Stafford (the church's first circuit pastor 1907-1908) every three weeks. However, Sunday school was held every Sunday. A later itinerant clergyman, Rev. R. N. Fitts who served the church in 1914-1915, *walked* back and forth between Scotts Hill and Hampstead since he had neither a horse and buggy nor an automobile.

In 1968, a fellowship hall was built underneath the church and an adjacent parking lot was developed.

Circuit ministers serving Hampstead United Methodist Church:

1907-1908	J. T. Stafford	1941-1943	J. C. Whedbee
1908-1909	C. T. Rogers	1944-1948	J. M. Carroll
1910-1913	R. A. Bruton	1949-1950	C. H. Whicker
1914-1915	R. N. Fitts	1950-1951	W. C. Lowe
1915-1919	C. N. Phillips	1952-1953	R. C. Stubbins
1920-1921	R. E. Atkinson	1953-1954	R. H. Hoaglund, Sr.
1922-1925	E. W. Downum	1954-1956	R. C. Hamilton
1926-1929	J. K. Worthington	1957-1959	W. C. Lew, Sr.
1930-1932	C. T. Andrews	1960-1962	W. R. King, Sr.
1933-1935	C. B. Long	1963-1967	D. G. Davis, Sr.
1936-1937	W. J. Freeman	1968-1969	James R. Salmon
1938-1939	J. C. Harman	1969-1970	James R. Hines
1939-1940	C. U. Plyler	1970-1971	Earl F. Matoy

Turning Point in 1971

In 1971, the Administrative Board of the Hampstead United Methodist Church took a bold step of faith, requesting the District Superintendent grant station status to the church. Board minutes written by Lillian Ives, secretary of the board at that time, reveal several discussions about this undertaking. Requirements to become a station church: carry a full budget including a full-time preacher, build a parsonage, and receive approval from the other two churches on the circuit to separate. Recommendation: 85 to 90 members.

A parsonage was purchased from Bruce and Della Ray King next door to the church in the fall of 1971. With only 72 members, the church was indeed granted station status in June 1972 with the full-time appointment of Rev. C. Everett Price, Jr., who served until 1979. In 1976, a beautiful Hammond organ was donated and his wife Grace became the church organist. Mrs. T. V. Strong and Mrs. Stanley (Jean) Smith played the piano.

Full-time appointed pastors:

June 1972 – June 1979	C. Everett Price, Jr.
1980-1981	Ralph Hill
1982-1983	Johnnie Huggins
June 1983 – June 1992	Francis Daniel
June 1992 – June 1996	Bruce E. Stanley
June 1996 – June 2004	James Bell
June 2004 - present	Joseph Casteel

Continued Growth

Under the leadership of Rev. Price, the church experienced steady growth and by 1977 had 135 members. The Methodist Men's club, the United Methodist Women and the Methodist Youth Fellowship were established. A newly equipped kitchen and social hall became the site of various functions, and, in time, a recreation area and improved parking lot provided for additional activities. The choir of 15 youth and adults presented special music at the morning worship hour.

Records for 1977 show Joe Howard as Sunday school superintendent with teachers George Simmons, Irene Winter, Brooks Jones, Lillian Ives, Kay Batts, and Brenda Howard. Vacation Bible school was held regularly in August. Another summer activity was the Sunday school picnic where Captain Buddy Mizelle would take whole Sunday school classes for a cruise on his boat, "Buddy's Pirate."

With about 40 members, the Men's Club met every second Tuesday for a dinner, program, and fellowship. President was John Nichols. Supporting the Methodist Home for Children in Raleigh and Good Shepherd Home in Lake Waccamaw were among their altruistic projects. The Hampstead Methodist Women, with Lillian Ives as president, met every third Thursday and sponsored bazaars, suppers, etc., to support missions and various church needs. The Methodist Youth Fellowship group had about 16 members under the leadership of counselors Joe Howard and Ralph Simmons.

The regular Sunday morning worship service was followed by a fellowship dinner on the first Sunday of each month. A prayer meeting and Bible study class assembled on Wednesday evenings.

Growth continued under the next two ministers: Rev. Ralph Hill from 1980 to 1981 and Rev. Johnnie Huggins from 1982 to 1983. Rev. Hill was responsible for building an office back of the parsonage, and it was during Rev. Huggins' tenure that plans were made to purchase another parsonage and convert the old parsonage into Sunday school rooms. In early 1980, the church parking lot was dedicated to the memories of Pearl Lea, Herman Moore, and Bill Womble. The first cantata was held at Christmas 1981 with Ginger Wells as choir director and Bob Wells as pianist. The music program continued to expand and became one of the primary ministries of Hampstead United Methodist Church. By 1982, church membership had increased to 215. The Hampstead Women's group had grown to 36 members in 3 circles with Stella Honeycutt as president.

New Church Building - 1992

Under the leadership of Rev. Francis Daniel (June 1983-June 1992), it became increasingly apparent that our facilities were inadequate to accomplish the mission of the church in the Hampstead community. Increasing membership demanded a larger sanctuary and expanded facilities for additional fellowship and support groups: for senior citizens, singles, widows, a Stevens Ministry program, children's church, and recreational opportunities for the youth. In 1986, congregation membership stood at 270. By the late 1980's, a second worship service was added at 8:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings.

Unfortunately, a large tract of land, which had been donated for a "New Beginning," was found to be 80% wet lands and, therefore, unsuitable for building purposes. A study committee was then appointed to consider remodeling the existing sanctuary and purchasing adjacent land for an education building. When this proved unfeasible, a Charge Conference was held to elect a Church Building Committee. With long and careful planning, a six acre site was purchased about a mile north on the west side of Highway 17 and plans for a new church moved forward. Ground was broken in January 1991 in hopes of starting construction soon. Again, with the help of the Duke Endowment Fund, an education building, with offices and a worship center, was erected in 1992. Members of the congregation at that time served as contractors for the building project, doing most of the construction themselves. Meals were often provided by the women of the church.

On Easter Sunday, April 26, 1992, Rev. Daniel, carrying the Pulpit Bible, led about 100 congregants in a procession to walk from the "old" church to the "new" church (where we now worship). There, they were met by another hundred people and all entered through the doors to hold a consecration service in the new sanctuary. The altar table, pulpit and lectern, baptismal font, and pulpit chairs were moved from the old church into the new sanctuary and refurbished to the lighter color. The organ and sound chamber were also moved and re-installed. Later, a grand piano was purchased to replace the previous upright piano.

During his ministry, Rev. Daniel introduced an Adopted Family program for assistance to needy families, helped establish a community food pantry, and promoted fellowship with other churches through song fests and joint worship services.

More Growth

With the arrival of Rev. Bruce Stanley in June 1992, the second phase of a building program began. Two commitment ceremonies on the site of more educational space and a possible future sanctuary indicated the church's support for this next endeavor.

A "Mothers' Morning Out" expanded into a Christian Pre-school program; Disciple Bible studies continued; an Altar Guild was organized; the number of Stephen Ministers increased; and the men's, women's, and youth groups, including Scouting, continued to provide fellowship and support. Our hand bell choir was dedicated at worship on Sunday morning, May 12, 1996, at which our student intern minister, Shana Harrison, delivered the sermon.

Hurricanes Greet a New Pastor

In June 1996, Rev. Jim Bell arrived as pastor at Hampstead United Methodist Church and shortly thereafter Hurricanes Bertha and Fran stormed through the area!

During 1999, several men and women of HUMC joined the very first walks of the Coastal Carolina Walks to Emmaus Community. This program remains strong at our church today.

After a successful building fund campaign, in October 1999, six new classrooms were completed as a wing in the rear of the building and a 1,500 square foot activity building was erected behind the rear parking area. Also in 1999, a prayer garden, designed by Norma Lee Hoyt, was completed outside the sanctuary with the help of many members, working together, and stands today as a beautiful addition to our church property.

In 2000, three acres adjacent to the church property were purchased from Mr. Jessie Lea. In 2002, we were given the opportunity to purchase eight more adjacent acres from Mrs. Sylvia Ditmer. On Miracle Sunday, May 19, 2002, \$229,000 was received for land purchase, the largest single offering in the church's history. The property was consecrated on June 23, 2002, affording the church an additional parsonage and potential church expansion, as well as outdoor recreational space. Hampstead United Methodist Church now held 16 acres of usable land on which to expand God's ministry in the community.

During Rev. Bell's ministry, ChristCare small group ministries were established; the Pre-school expanded; the number of participants in Disciple Bible study increased; and a prayer ministry was founded. Sunday school programs for both youngsters and adults were expanded; and church mission and vision statements were written, as well as child protection guidelines. Christmas cantatas expanded to include an orchestra, and presentations were made several times each season. Attendance at the two Sunday worship services had risen to 250-275, with Easter and Christmas counts exceeding 300.

In January 2001, Rev. Bell and nine members of the congregation traveled to the John Wesley School in Santiago, Chile, to work on physical improvements to their facility. Over \$8,500 was raised by HUMC members to support this mission effort. Rev. Shana Harrison, a former student pastor at HUMC, is the missionary in charge at the John Wesley School.

Hampstead United Methodist Church in 2007

In June of 2004, Rev. Joe Casteel became our current pastor. During the past three years, HUMC has expanded its Pre-school and Vacation Bible School even further, to the point there are waiting lists for both. We established a Disaster Preparedness Response program for Hampstead that is being modeled outside our community, expanded adult educational opportunities with a Christian Believers class, and continued to provide Disciple Bible study classes. A community healing service has been established at noon on Wednesdays in the chapel.

A lay reader program was set up in February 2005 for members to provide scripture readings during Sunday worship. In the spring of 2005, a youth Upward Soccer program, led by Melody Doyle, was begun with 80 children and has proved to be a very valuable outreach ministry for our church. Over 200 children were enrolled for the spring 2007 season. After much planning and discussion, a third Sunday morning worship opportunity was established at 9:45 a.m. on November 13, 2005. Attendance at the three worship services on Sunday totals about 275. A Yard Sale was held in October 2005 as a fund raiser for future church expansion. This effort has grown into the Third Annual Fall Festival scheduled for October 13, 2007.

Our church's official web site [www:hampsteadumc.org](http://www.hampsteadumc.org) was launched in 2007 and has quickly become a focal point of information about our church and its many ministries.

In June 2007, Rev. Dede Britt was appointed to Hampstead United Methodist Church as its first full-time associate pastor. She actually "returned" to us, since she and her family worshipped at HUMC before she decided to continue her education to become a minister.

The youth program at HUMC remains strong; the prayer ministry continues to touch many people's lives; the garden club, begun in 2003, has expanded its care of our church property including a blueberry patch planted in 2004; scouting activities are plentiful; children's church and Sunday school classes thrive;

and on and on.....

In this summary, only a few people have been called by name, of the hundreds who have been and are today a part of Hampstead United Methodist Church.
But ALL are important to God and are vital to HUMC.

Truly, Hampstead United Methodist Church has been blessed in so many ways during the past "100 YEARS OF FAITH." We celebrate our heritage because it is important to remember who we are, to honor those who have gone before us, and because our history is a ministry too. Our North Carolina Conference reminds us: "History shows us how God's people have struggled, failed, triumphed, and endured. It records God's work in human lives and in human events. Even as we celebrate people, events, and places, we witness about our church's high calling in Jesus Christ. We do not celebrate uncritically, however! Real people make real mistakes, even in the church! An honest celebration recognizes that the past was not perfect, and honors men and women who relied on God's grace to rise above their own weaknesses."

We call on God to continue to be at work in our church, our community, and our world to make all a place of honor to Him.

Let us remember, honor, teach, and minister. May we step forward into our SECOND CENTURY at Hampstead United Methodist Church with the confidence that God's presence is with us.



Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.

The people of The United Methodist Church®