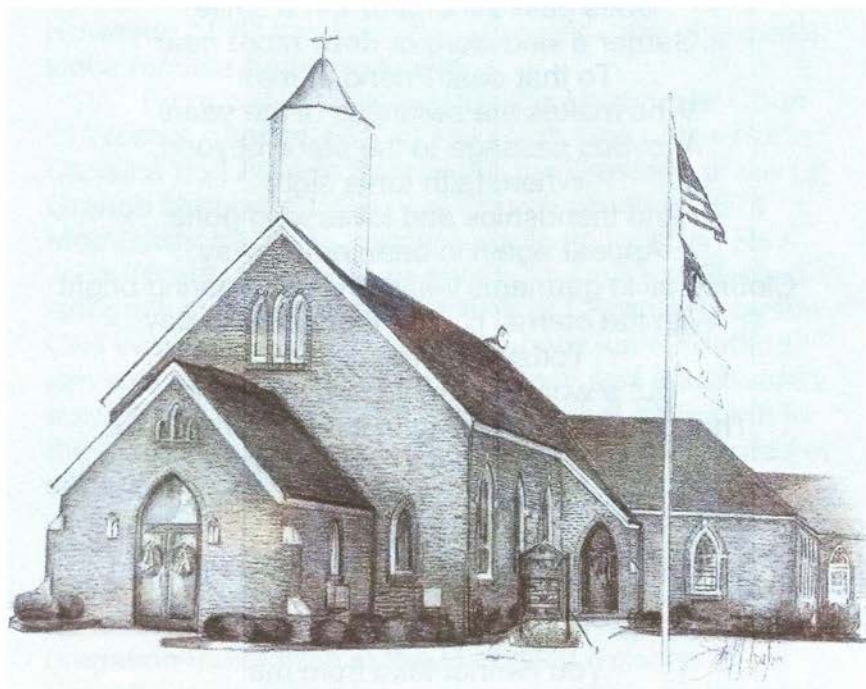


for archives

Happy Birthday

⁴⁰
1820-2016

176



**La Grange United Methodist
Church**

Church History

HOMECOMING

Time flies;
The years speed swiftly by.
Each passing year exacts its toll;
The bending back, the graying hair,
The dimming eye.
Yet, flying Time is not the victor quite,
For each passing year
Does gain a friend or win a smile
Garner a kind word or draw more near
To that dear Friend of man
Who makes the swiftness of the years
A joyous passage to the place beyond,
Where faith turns sight
And friendships and loves long gone
Appear again in beauteous array;
Clothed all in garments white and shimmering bright
With the eternal light of that celestial day.
Today's homecoming?
But a word, a symbol, a direction to
That great homecoming in the Father's house
Where all that's lost is found
And heart and spirit do regain
That sublime peace
Which banishes all ache and pain,
So, fly old Time.
Speed as thou wilt.
You cannot take from me
So much as thou must give!

Written by—
William S. Davenport

Celebrating 176 Years of Rich History!

This year Home Coming was delayed year do to Hurricane Matthew. November 06, 2016 marks the celebration of 176 years of history, heritage and witness in La Grange by the Methodist People. Now called La Grange United Methodist Church, the Methodist congregation in La Grange claims 1840 as its year of genesis. Most early records have been lost and records until the turn of the century in 1900 are fragmentary. However, 1840 has been the accepted date of genesis since records have been kept.

From our earliest records it is known that Council Wooten deeded a lot on the south side of the North Carolina and Atlantic Railroad to the Trustees of the La Grange Methodist Episcopal Church South in 1871. Methodism traces its history back to its founder, Rev. John Wesley, an Anglican priest. In America, Methodism grew to be the dominant form of Christianity by the Civil War era. As most denominations were, Methodism was torn over the issue of slavery and underwent a surprisingly peaceful parting of ways that gave birth to the Methodist Episcopal Church South. The process of separation was begun in 1844 but was not complete until the United States Supreme Court ruling over the division of property and publishing houses was made in 1854. Because of its geographical location and likely attitudes of its founders the La Grange Methodist Congregation found itself in the Methodist Episcopal Church South. The names of the Trustees on the earliest deed were: Asa McCoy, A.J. McIntyre, David P.L. White, John H. Sugg, Mumfort Brewer, George Pitts and Dlias C. McClean.

Shortly after the deed was made, a frame building was erected on the current site and remained until it burned in 1943. Drawings and memories report the structure as being largely similar to the former La Grange Presbyterian Church which is now the meeting place of the La Grange Rotary Club. As much as

possible was salvaged from this original building and used in the rebuilding of the current sanctuary. The church as it exists today was completed in 1944.

When it was rebuilt in 1944, the church had only the Sunday School rooms and hallway directly connecting with the sanctuary. A further enlargement was added prior to 1950 and is currently the children's classrooms. Cosmetically the two buildings appear to be one but they do not connect overhead or underfoot.

In 1954, the congregation had grown to a point where it could be self-sufficient. Prior to 1954 La Grange Methodist Church was part of a charge or circuit of churches which shared the same minister. Prior to La Grange becoming a "station" charge, La Grange shared a minister with the Institute, Trinity, Hickory Grove and Bethel Methodist congregations

Two mergers are significant in La Grange United Methodist Church's history. The first was in 1939 which united the Methodist Episcopal Church with the Methodist Episcopal Church South and the Methodist Protestant Church. Little is known about the Methodist Protestants in La Grange. La Grange United Methodist Church currently possesses silver goblets and plates used in Holy Communion services from the Methodist Protestants in La Grange.

The Methodist Protestant Church broke from the Methodist Episcopal Church formally in 1830 concerning two main issues: The authority of the bishops (Methodist Protestants had no bishops) and lay leadership (Methodist Protestants wanted more leadership roles for lay people than the Methodist Episcopal Church permitted).

There was a congregation of Methodist Protestants in La Grange who used the facilities of the Missionary Baptists and the Methodist Episcopalians until 1887. They erected their own building on land donated by Dr. Jacob Milton Hadley on Caswell Street which was sold to the Free Will Baptists in 1916. The structure still stands near Rouse Funeral Home and has recently become a house of worship again after serving briefly as a Dinner Theater among other things. All records of the La Grange Methodist Protestants have been lost.

The second significant merger occurred in 1968 and united the Methodist Church with the Evangelical United Brethren (a group of Christians with compatible theology as well as a Wesleyan heritage but not directly founded by John Wesley). Hence, the congregation of Methodists in La Grange is now known as the La Grange United Methodist Church. Currently there is talk of further unions of Methodist bodies. The Christian Methodist Episcopal Church (formerly the Colored Methodist Episcopal church which was formed of African-American Methodists in the Methodist Episcopal Church South as an intentional segregation),

The African Methodist Episcopal Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Zionist Church (both composed largely of African-American Methodists in the North and East respectively, years before the major 1844 schism) and The United Methodist Church have begun talks which may eventually lead to another merger. However, such a merger is yet many years and perhaps decades away. (Now the major barrier to merger is not race but the role of the episcopacy and the division of property and assets.)

Significant Dates in the Life of La Grange United Methodist Church

1840: A Methodist Congregation was begun in La Grange.

1871: Land was deeded to the Methodist congregation and a building was erected on the current site of the La Grange United Methodist Church.

1919: A lot was bought from H.E. Dilon for the old parsonage. This lot is currently our paved parking lot.

1922: The first parsonage was built.

1943: Original building was destroyed by fire.

1944: Current building was erected from the ashes of the former building.

1950: A Fellowship Hall was added to the current brick structure and has been used as Sunday School space.

1962: A lot was bought on Lake Pines Drive for a new parsonage. That same year the current parsonage was built.

1964: The former parsonage was sold and moved. The lot began to be used for parking.

1977: The sanctuary was remodeled.

1982: Our current Fellowship Hall was begun. It was finished in 1984.

1987: The house and lot on the South side of the church was purchased. The house was bought by Mrs. Irene Howell and moved to her Bear Creek Facility where it was remodeled and remains in use. This lot is now part of our yard which is used for many things, including an Outdoor Nativity Scene at Christmas.

1996: The hallways and rooms behind the sanctuary were re-modeled and a new roof was put on the Fellowship Hall.

1997: A new sign was built and erected in place of the former sign and in the same design. A cement walkway was installed between the sanctuary and Fellowship Hall.

1998: Work was begun on the new roof and steeple repair. The existing tin top on the steeple was replaced with a copper top of the same cosmetic styling. The church began the La Grange United Methodist Day Care Center.

2000 The daycare began helping with church expenses. Highlights of the year include Christmas live nativity scene; Easter drama; church yard improvements.

2006 The parsonage on Lake Pines Drive was renovated.

2008 Renovations including new carpeting were made in the sanctuary.

2010 New flooring was installed in the parsonage den.

2012 Began using Church grounds to provide a local Farmer's Market. A DVD recorder was installed in the sanctuary for digital audio recording. Video capabilities will be added at a later time. A new kitchen floor was installed in the Fellowship Hall. La Grange UMC became part of a charge with Institute UMC.

2013 The church parking lot was repaved. New furniture was donated for the den at the parsonage. In July, all of the hardwood floors in the parsonage were refinished and new plantation blinds were installed in all of the windows. A very successful church bazaar was held during the Garden Spot Festival and the funds are to be used to update the furnishings in the parsonage formal living room. All landscaping was replaced at the church and memorial garden was created in memory of Martha Holland.

2014 Updates and improvements continued at the parsonage this past year. The formal living room, dining room and entrance to the parsonage were updated with new furniture. Two chairs and a mirror were added to the foyer. A new couch, curio cabinet, tables and two chairs were added to the living room. A new china cabinet was added to the dining room.

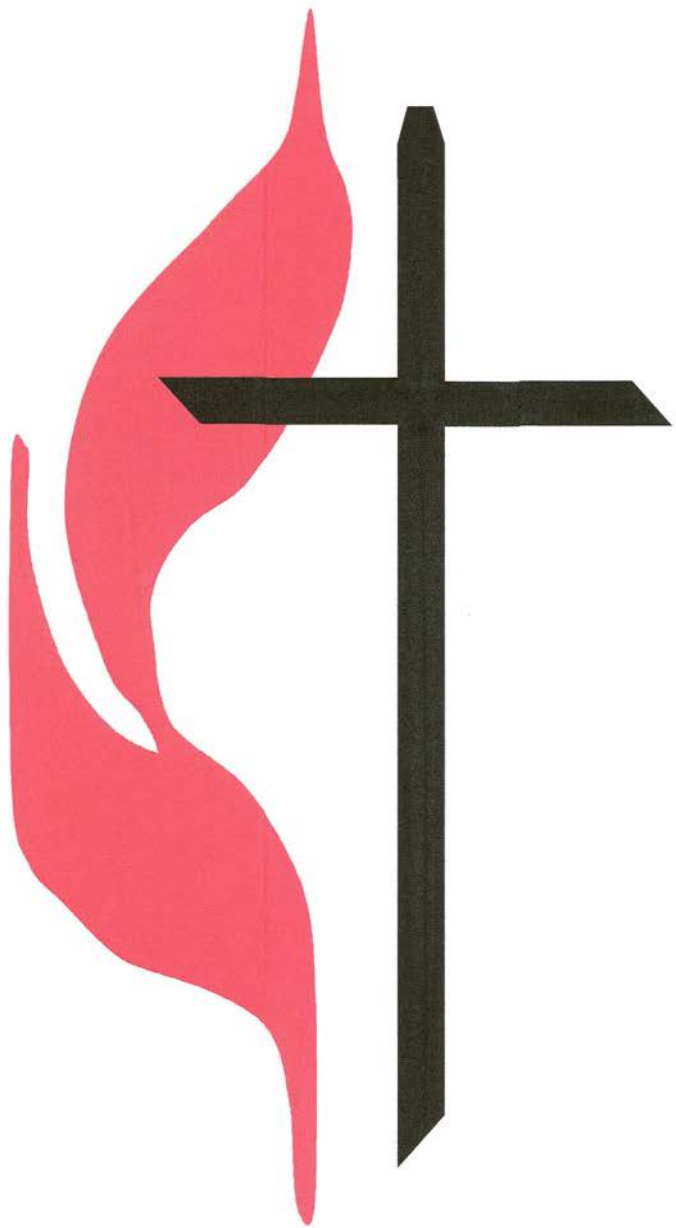
2015 Updates to the sanctuary sound system to improve sound quality and to acuminiate those who have hearing difficulties.

2016 The deck at the parsonage was repaired and stained this year along with three ceiling fans being installed.

**Former Pastors of:
The La Grange United Methodist Church**

Name	Years
Served	
G.T. Simmons	1900-1913
J.M. Carraway	1913
J.J. Boone	1914
W.O. Davis	1914
K.F. Duvall	1915-1920
W.C. Benson	1920-1922
R.E. Pittman	1922-1929
R. Bradley	1929-1933
L.V. Pattishall	1933-1935
L.L. Smith	1935-1937
J.C. Humble	1937-1939
C.E. Hix, Jr.	1939-1943
J.D. A. Autry	1943-1951
Robert L. Bame	1951-1954
Murrell K. Glover	1954-1955
E.B. Edwards	1955-1957
Van T. Crawford	1957-1961
Ellis J. Bedsworth	1961-1967
John T. Smith	1967-1971
W.S. Davenport	1971-1976
Robert C. Flynn	1976-1982
Carson Tyson	1982-1985
Alan P. Swartz	1985-1987
Rufus E. Butner	1987-1991
Don Paul Lee	1991-1995
Thomas W. Newman	1995-1999
Walter W. Gaskins, Jr.	1999-2001
Benjamin N. Sims	2001-2006
F. Karl Grant	2006-2010
Janet L. Balasko	2010-2012
Ray Teague	2012-2017
Kathryn Johnson	2017-

(All records prior to 1900 were lost in the fire of 1943)



Covenant Prayer

From John Wesley's Covenant Service, 1780

I am no longer my own, but thine.

Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom
thou wilt

Put me to doing, put me to suffering,
Let me be employed by thee or laid aside
for thee,

exalted for thee or brought low for thee

Let me be full, let me be empty.

Let me have all things; let me have nothing.

I freely and heartily yield all things
to thy pleasure and disposal.

And now, O glorious and blessed God,
Father, son, and Holy Spirit,

thou art mine, and I am thine, So be it.

And the covenant which I have made on earth,
let it be ratified in heaven.

Amen.

*The La Grange United Method-
ist Church
Homecoming
Candle Burning Service*







HOMECOMING

HOMECOMING