

A BRIEF HISTORY OF
 MACKEYS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

compiled by
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No one can truly write the history of a church. Its influence reaches far beyond the vision and reality of man. The love and warmth of the church grows throughout the years, having been planted in the hearts of men and women in early childhood and develops into a great spiritual strength.

Just as the prophets of old established altars and our pioneer fathers erected places of worship, our ancestors in more recent years, too, felt the need of a meeting place where the lives of the young people might be dedicated to God and trained in His services.

It was this purpose in the hearts and minds of a small group of people living in the area of Mackeys Ferry that promoted the organization of a Sunday School in the Veasy School House located at the forks of the Cross Road. This building is remembered now by only the oldest citizens of the community. It was in the early spring of the year 1899 that Mr. J. F. Swain, father of Mrs. Iva Chesson, Mrs. Rasha Chesson and Mrs. Estilda Woodbury was superintendent. The Reverend E. H. Davis, pastor of the Cooper charge, met with this group and held a service regularly on the third Sunday afternoon. Even at this time the third Sunday of each month is the regular preaching date at Mackeys.

In 1903 the Sunday School began meeting in the house known as the Charles Green House, now the residence of The Paul Thompson family. Mr. W. S. Davenport was now the superintendent. At this time Reverend F. B. McCall became pastor of the Cooper Charge succeeding Reverend Davis. In 1908 the church record shows that the organization process was completed and fifteen charter members were now recorded: Luther and Edgar Atkinson; Charlie, Gerald, Joseph, and Stanton Blount; Hermon, Clair, Ethel and Job Clayton; Darlton A. Davenport; Annie and Lena Bell Strawbridge; and Iva and Myrtle Swain. By September of 1909 that number had been increased to thirty-five. It was decided a church structure was needed and Mr. and Mrs. W. S. Davenport donated the land on which this structure was erected, and the sturdy little group of charter members contributed time, labor, and financial aid. The Reverend J. H. Hall, presiding elder of the Elizabeth City District, preached the first sermon in the new building in 1909.

Mr. Joe Latham drew the plans for the building and Mr. Tom Swain of Creswell supervised the construction. The dedication was conducted by the Reverend J. C. Ormond of Duke University. The first stewards of the church were: W. S. Davenport, J. F. Swain, J. L. Singleton. When Mr. Singleton moved out of the state he remained on the board of trustees until the debt was paid. S. N. Blount was elected in his place and served until he moved out of the county.

In 1923, during the pastorate of Reverend E. L. Hill, four classrooms and a steeple were added. During the summer of that year the district conference was held in this church with Reverend C. E. Culbreth presiding.

Mr. W. S. Davenport served as superintendent of the Sunday School from the time of the organization until his death in December, 1922. He was succeeded by his son, W. B. Davenport, who served until his death in November of 1956. This position was filled by Ben Robertson who served until July of 1960. Since that time C. J. Belch, Jr., Al Hartkopf and Margaret Everette have served.

Walter C. Waters

Four former members of the church have entered the ministry of the Methodist Church: Ishmael Strawbridge, Eugene Chesson, W. S. (Bill) Davenport and Russell Knowles.

Below is a partial list of the gifts and donors to Mackeys United Methodist Church: Church bell and bookcase, W. S. Davenport; hymn-board, Roy Riddick; silver baptismal bowl and Bible, W. R. Spruill of Baltimore; book racks on pews, Adult Class of 1926; lecturn, pulpit cross, choir rail, U. S. and Christian flags, W. B. Davenport; clock by Compen Jewelry Co., Denton; aluminum communion service, Mrs. Mittie Hassell and Mrs. J. E. Davenport; light fixtures and brass flower bowl, Matilda Swain Woodbury; picture of Head of Christ in pulpit, Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Swain; altar candles and painting in vestibule, Elsie Davenport Coley; altar cross, family of W. B. Davenport, brass collection plates, E. R. Swain; brass baptismal bowl in memory of Bengie Robertson by his family. There have been four organs and two pianos used in the church. The first two organs were pump organs and were sold to Mrs. A. Papineau and Mrs. Edith Womble. The proceeds along with pledges and donations to purchase a small electronic organ. On June 26, 1977 a new and larger electronic organ was dedicated in memory of Mrs. Alma D. Chesson and Josh and Deulah Griffin. The first piano had previously been in the Mackeys High School. The present piano was a gift of Mr. and Mrs. B. B. White former residents of the Mackeys community.

We are indeed grateful to all those who had the vision and dedication to call this church into being and to keep it alive. We are also grateful for the many gifts of time, talents and energy of our members and friends.

During its history Mackeys United Methodist Church has lived under many conditions. It originally was Methodist Episcopal, South and is now United Methodist. It has always been a part of a charge sharing ministerial appointment with other Methodist congregation. At various times it has been connected with Creswell, Rehoboth, Jamesville, Siloam, Hebron (Roper) and Pleasant Grove Churches. At the present time it is a part of the Albemarle Charge consisting of Hebron, Pleasant Grove and Mackeys United Methodist Churches. We are indeed proud of our Church heritage both locally and internationally. We are grateful, too, for the episcopal and ministerial leadership of this Church. Below is a list of bishops, presiding elders (District superintendents) and ministers.

BISHOPS

C. E. Galloway
 A. W. Wilson
 E. R. Hendrix
 E. E. Hoss
 Collins Denny
 J. H. McCoy
 R. G. Waterhouse
 John Kilgo 1915
 W. A. Chandler 1917
 W. V. W. Darlington 1918
 Collins Denny 1922
 Edwin A. Kouzan 1925
 Paul B. Kern 1934
 Clare Purcell 1938
 W. W. Peele 1939
 Clare Purcell 1940
 W. W. Peele 1944
 Carl M. Garber 1951
 William R. Cannon 1968
 Robert M. Blackburn 1972

Presiding Elder (District Superintendent)

John H. Hall 1907
R. H. Brown 1909
M. A. Plyler 1910
G. T. Adams 1914
R. H. Willis 1915
C. E. Culbreth 1921
Henry Glass 1925
O. W. Dowd 1928
J. F. McCracken 1932
B. B. Slaughter 1934
T. M. Grant 1941
W. L. Clegg 1942
J. H. Miller 1944
F. S. Love 1950
C. Freeman Heath 1954
R. L. Jeramen 1959
Henry Ruark 1965
G. R. McKenzie 1970
Norwood L. Jones 1974

MINISTERS

F. B. McCall 1907
J. M. Benson 1908
J. W. potter 1910
G. B. Perry 1914
J. T. Pure 1915
N. L. Seabolt 1916
L. E. Sawyer 1918
L. L. Hill 1920
R. T. Taylor 1923
D. A. Clark 1925
H. A. hester 1926
J. Bascom Hurley 1929
R. Ernest Atkinson 1932
E. L. Stack 1934
W. J. Watson 1935
J. I. Stanford 1937
H. R. Gardner 1939
G. C. Hood 1941
T. H. House 1945
C. H. Lewis 1946
Duell Bingham 1947
Vance Lewis 1952
J. T. Phipps 1954
P. W. Aitken 1955
Leon Ross 1956
J. A. Williams 1958
Max Pulin 1960
Charles Woodruff 1962
George Smith 1966
Evander Parnell 1970
Durward T. Goodwin 1974
Ray Thomas Gooch 1975

1st Wedding

Alma Davenport & Herbert R. Chesson

January 3, 1911

Current altar coverings & Brass Communion set given by UMW

1907	E. B. Bell
1908	L. A. Landon
1910	J. W. Potter
1911	G. H. Perry
1912	J. T. Stone
1913	F. J. Seabolt
1914	J. R. Sawyer
1915	A. H. Hill
1916	H. V. Taylor
1917	D. A. Clark
1918	A. A. Carter
1919	E. Bacon
1920	J. Ernest Johnson
1921	A. L. Stack
1922	A. L. Watson
1923	A. L. Seabolt
1924	G. W. Cook
1925	F. J. Brown
1926	C. H. Larkin
1927	W. H. Stagner
1928	W. H. Lavin
1929	J. L. Shaw
1930	A. L. Allen
1931	J. L. Allen
1932	J. L. Allen
1933	Charles Covert
1934	George Bell
1935	Walter Farrell
1936	Wm. H. Booth
1937	Ray Thomas Good