

CHURCH HISTORY

Marvin United Methodist Church



911 FALLS ROAD
ROCKY MOUNT, N. C.

“Anywhere I hang my hat there is a Mission Field”, states Teresa Hoover, member of the United Methodist Mission Board in addressing a session of United Methodist Women, on occasion.

This quotation must have expressed well the sentiments and feelings of need for a place of worship by a small group of Methodists of this area, having for some time conducted worship services in the homes, circa 1886.

In 1889 the Reverend J. E. Underwood, pastor of First Methodist Church of Rocky Mount, North Carolina, with the Reverend H. A. Humble as Junior Minister, promoted the organization and according to Methodist Discipline, established Marvin Methodist Episcopal Church, South – the name being given in honor of or in memory of Bishop Marvin of the Methodist Episcopal Church South.

A lot was purchased from J. O. Guthrie and wife in the 900 block of Falls Road, Rocky Mount, North Carolina, in the year 1892, and was filed for registration December 5th, 1892, in the Court house in



Nashville, North Carolina, on which a small frame building for worship was erected. Trustees of said property were: J. A. Barnes, A. W. Arrington, G. W. Smithson, G. F. Kersey, and M. Dixon. The building was of wooden structure consisting of sanctuary and two class rooms.

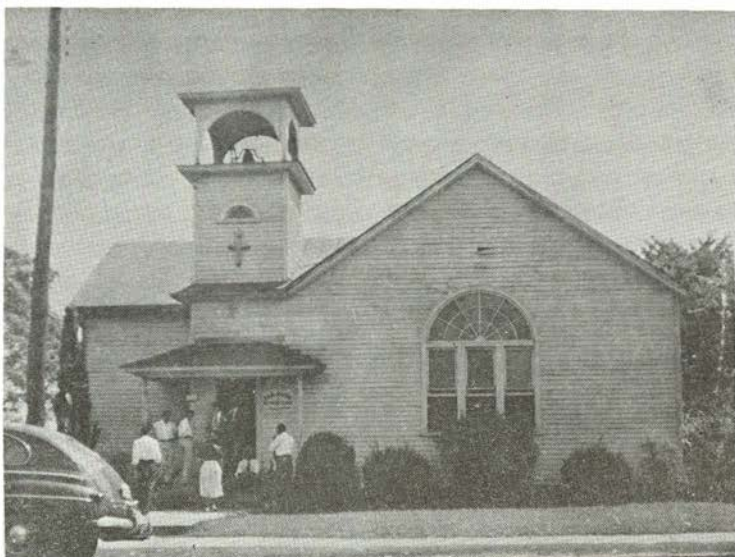
In November of 1911 there was an addition to the lot of twenty feet on the north side. Trustees at this time were: H. L. Holden, J. T. Moore, and E. Z. Pullen. In 1912 three additional rooms were added to the building; still another small addition in 1925.

For many years, Marvin was served as north and south Rocky Mount Circuit, later being transferred to the Rocky Mount Circuit composed of Marvin, Sharon, York's Chapel and Temperance Hall.

A meeting of the Rocky Mount circuits was called on May 17, 1922 whereby the trustees of Sharon Church were authorized to secure a lot and proceed with the erection of a church at Red Oak, thus eliminating Sharon Church from the circuit.

The following ministers served as pastors in the frame structure from 1900 to 1953: P. D. Woodall, R. C. Hunt, B. H. Black, H. E. Tripp, J. B. Thompson, G. P. Webster, F. T. Fulcher, J. B. Houser, O. P. Fitzgerald, H. W. Hoyle, T. T. Poole, N. B. Strickland, W. G. Farrar, William Towe, W. N. Grant, R. A. Cook, W. H. Neuse, R. H. Sales, M. R. Gardner, J. K. Bostick, A. S. Lancaster, and Tracy Varnum.

The small, white Marvin Church having stood as a landmark and shedding its influence upon the Community for many years, now being in a state of disrepair, inadequacy of space, and facilities having given way to a need for progress. At a church conference in 1951, decision was reached that a new two-story, brick educational building be erected directly behind the wooden structure. The first floor consisting of a large fellowship hall, kitchen, two storage rooms, and two rest rooms. The second floor containing eight class rooms, construction of which



was done by day labor of the members, was completed in 1953, after which the original Marvin Church building was demolished.

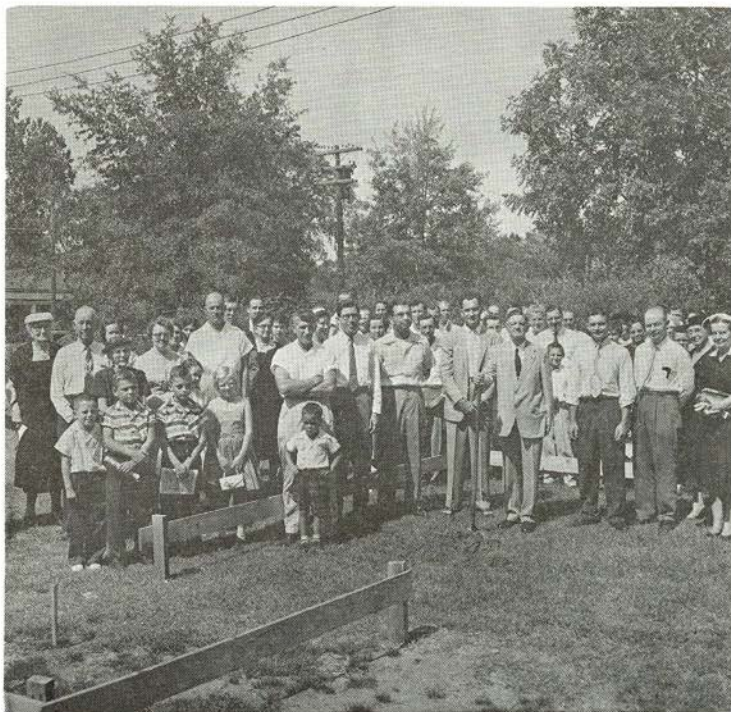
Worship services were then conducted in the new fellowship hall, by the following ministers: John T. Smith, L. C. Brothers, and A. L. G. Stephenson. While worshipping in the Fellowship Hall, there prevailed a sense of warmth and togetherness among the members, yet a need was deeply felt that progress toward erecting a sanctuary should be made.

A church conference on August 14, 1955, for the purpose to elect a planning and fact-finding committee to begin plans in this direction. Elected to serve were: W. E. Moore, S. C. Gallop, Mrs. L. L. Pullen, Mrs. L. E. Barnes, and F. M. Harper. This committee was delegated to report findings to the church after forty-five days. The committee's report being favorable, efforts toward raising the necessary finances were begun.

In the early months of 1956, a building committee composed of E. F. Pullen, chairman; F. M. Harper,

secretary; Carvie Strickland, Mrs. Cleophus Inscoe, H. D. Hoell, E. L. Strickland, and Shelton Gallop was appointed.

During July 1956, the building committee reported that blue prints had been obtained and proceedings toward a building permit are in effect. By early fall, approximately September, (the date not obtainable from records), a ground-breaking ceremony was held. The pastor, L. C. Brothers with the building committee chairman, turning the first shovel of soil.



Shortly thereafter, the foundation was laid. The erection of the sanctuary was delayed for a period of a few years, due to insufficient building funds.

In the fall of 1961, a loan was obtained from First Federal Savings and Loan Association of Rocky Mount, North Carolina. Modern Builders of Rocky Mount, North Carolina, completed construction of the beautiful, new sanctuary early in 1962, consisting of a vestibule, two coat closets, choir room, pastor's study, and two rest rooms.

The main floor of the sanctuary seats one hundred fifty people, and a balcony above the vestibule seating approximately fifty people. The pulpit in the chancel area, being designed in the divided style of structure with its appropriate appointments, forms an attractive worship center. The first service for worship was conducted March 4, 1962, by the current pastor, J. Thomas Smith.

The following pastors have since served the church: Lloyd C. Judy, William D. Taylor, Leo C. Thompson, and C. R. Hollowell. Assistant pastors have been: Walter McDonald, David Daniel, and currently, Mac L. Ricketts.

Mrs. L. L. Pullen, E. L. Strickland, L. E. Barnes, Kenneth Fisher, Mrs. Inez Williams, and J. H. Waters, comprised the decorations committee who selected the carpeting, communion table, baptismal and pews, which were given by individuals, as were the stained glass windows. The organ which is located immediately behind the pulpit was purchased through funds set aside for this specific purpose, and was dedicated to Mr. and Mrs. L. E. Barnes, who so generously gave of their time and talent that music might be a vital factor in our worship services.

The brass candle holders and vase for the altar are gifts by Mr. and Mrs. Linwood Pullen, former members of Marvin. Mrs. J. W. Daniel, as a memorial to her husband, presented the collection plates.

Memorial flags which adorn either side of the communion table are also memorials: the United States flag for Steve Jeans, son of Mr. and Mrs. Nelson Jeans, who lost his life in an automobile accident; Mrs. Gladys Smith, who supplied the flowers for the

altar for many years, is memorialized by the Christian flag.

In memory of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. D. W. Knight, Mrs. Pearl Knight Biggs of Florida, gave the beautiful parament sets in keeping with the seasonal church calendar year which lends a lovely display of color to the chancel.

Our pastor's study was furnished by the Couples Class of the Church School in memory of Mr. Henry Harper who was their teacher, as well as serving in other capacities of the church program with great ability until his untimely death.

In April 1919, a frame dwelling located at 131 W. Ridge Street, Rocky Mount, North Carolina, was purchased for use as a parsonage for many years, and sold in 1974, with receipts deposited in Building and Loan for use toward purchasing a new Parsonage at a later time.

During the early nineteen-twenties, there was organized the Ladies Aid Society, later becoming the Woman's Aid Society of Christian Service. At the time of the merger of the Evangelical United Brethren and all Methodist churches, Marvin then became Marvin United Methodist Church, changing the name of The Woman's Society of Christian Service to that of United Methodist Women, which is presently a very active group, consisting of three circles, and contributing much to the progress of the church and community service.

Another organization within the bounds of the church is the United Methodist Men, who received their charter on February 26, 1954, which plays an active role in the life of the church and community. Some of their worthy projects have been: air conditioning the sanctuary, painting in the Educational Building, financing fruit bags for each individual attending the Christmas program, to name a few.

Marvin United Methodist Church has an active United Methodist Youth Fellowship, engaging in

several projects as ways and means of financing the erection of a bricked Bulletin Board for the church lawn, as well as their Christian Services to the community.

Mention should be made of some of the outstanding work of the Church School. The Intermediate Class has established a library which contains several volumes of various types of reading, some of which are also memorials.

The Couples Class is well known for its barbecued chicken suppers, which are a great asset to the church in enabling them to generously assist in financing various causes within the church, and at the same time enhancing a wonderfully inspired fellowship in working together.

Through the combined efforts of those who have long since passed away, and those who in recent years, have exercised their energies, having met their dream, there stands today, in 1976, a brick church, beautiful in its simplicity, awaiting the planned Dedication Services by the current Bishop Robert M. Blackburn, on March 21, 1976, a landmark in the community known as Marvin United Methodist Church.

We have researched all available church records, city library papers, and various other sources of material for our information in the preparation of this document. It has been our desire to be factual and inclusive of all persons involved in our research. All statements and remarks have been made from our best knowledge, and our sincere thanks and appreciation is extended to all those who have assisted us in any way.

Herman and Esther Allen
March, 1976