

HISTORY OF MT. ZION UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

According to a history of Mt. Zion Methodist Church written by Mrs. Lucy J. Williams, one of the first scholars of the Mt. Zion Methodist Sunday School which was organized on April 6, 1851, we find that Mt. Zion dates back to the period just following the Revolutionary War. The first church was built of logs soon after 1781. It must have fallen into disuse as it was torn down prior to 1851.

On April 6, 1851 it took on new life. A Sunday School was organized, land was donated for the church and cemetery, and a new church was started some two miles southeast of Pittsboro. It was built beside a plank road leading from Pittsboro to Lockville. Until the church could be completed, the people met in Moore's School which stood near the present church. Mr. Joseph Bynum donated the land for the church and everyone in the community assisted in cutting timber, hauling it to a saw mill, and building the church.

The church was built with a gallery in it for colored people but the steps going to the gallery were never built.

During the summer of 1851 a Revival Meeting was held in a brush arbor near Moore's School. There was a great ingathering of souls. This Revival was held by the Circuit Rider from Pittsboro, a Rev. Hefflin and four Local Preachers, Wilson Atwater, Lucius Burnet, Thomas Moses, and Gaston Farrow.

During the early years of the church they did not have services except in the spring, summer, and fall months since they did not have a stove. In the fall of 1879 Thomas Mansfield made the proposal to get a stove for the church. With the help of several others, the first stove was bought so they could have services during the entire year.

In 1851 there were seven churches on the Pittsboro Circuit. They were: Pittsboro, Brown's Chapel, Pleasant Hill, Chatham, Providence, Haywood, and Mt. Zion. (There is a question as to whether Chatham or Mt. Zion is the oldest Methodist Church in Chatham County.)

Three ministers have gone out from Mt. Zion. They were Rev. John A. Hornaday, Thomas Mansfield, who was a Missionary until he was recalled due to his health, and Rev. Delano Rogers.

During the first part of the Civil War things got so bad that the Church and Sunday School suffered, but it was revived in May 1863. It really took on new life in June 1864.

The first Missionary Society was started in the late 1870's or early 1880's. In 1934 Mt. Zion was taken off the Pittsboro Circuit and placed with Jones Chapel, Osgood, Moncure, and Buckhorn Methodist Churches to form a new Charge called Moncure. In 1973 it was taken off the Moncure Charge and placed with Chatham to form a new charge, Chatham - Mt. Zion.

Following is a partial list of Pastors: A Rev. Hefflin (initials unknown) 1850 - 1852, he was followed by a Rev. Archer (initials unknown). Then came Rev. R.S. Webb with Rev. A.M. Williams as his assistant. They were followed by Rev. S.D. Adams who moved away in 1862. Rev. H.H. Gibbons 1862 - 1866, J.B. Martin 1866 - 1870, C.C. Dodson 1870 - 1872, W.H. Moore 1872 - 1874, C.C. Dodson returned in 1874 and served just one year. John Tillett 1875. W.H. Moore returned in 1876. T.C. Gattis 1877-78, W.J. Gay 1879. T.C. Gattis returned in 1880 and was assisted by T.C. Moss. R.A. Willis 1881 - 84, he was assisted by Gaston Farrar in 1882, R.T.N. Stephenson 1885 - 87, N.E. Coltraine 1888 - 91, C.W. Robinson 1892 - 93, W.W. Rose 1894 - 96, L.E. Thompson 97, J. Sanford 98 - 99, J.H. Fizzelle 1900 - 03, C.P. Jerome 1904 - 07, V.A. Royall 1908 - 11, W.F. Craven 1912 - 15, P.D. Woodall 1916 - 19, J.J. Boone 20 - 23, C.M. Lance 24 - 27, J.A. Dailey 28 - 31, M.C. Ellerbe 32 - 33. A.M. Williams was assistant to J.A. Dailey in 1931 and to M.C. Ellerbe 32 - 33. H.L. Davis 34 - 36, Ray Holder 37 - 38, O.W. Matison 39 - 40, W.J. Watson 41 - 42, J.E. Sponenberg 43 - 45, A.R. Bell 46, H.C. Patterson 47, M.D. McLamb 48 - 49, W.G. Brogan 50 - 52, S.G. Dotson 53, G.C. Kinlaw 54 - 57, D.C. Boone 58 - 60, J.H. Crum 61 - 63, Dan Bowman 64 - 66, A.W. Winstead 67, P.H. Hager 68 - 73. In 1973 Mt. Zion was placed with Chatham from Pittsboro Charge to form the Chatham - Mt. Zion Charge. P.H. Hager was appointed as its first Pastor and is serving at the present time.