



Severn United Methodist Church

1815 - 1988

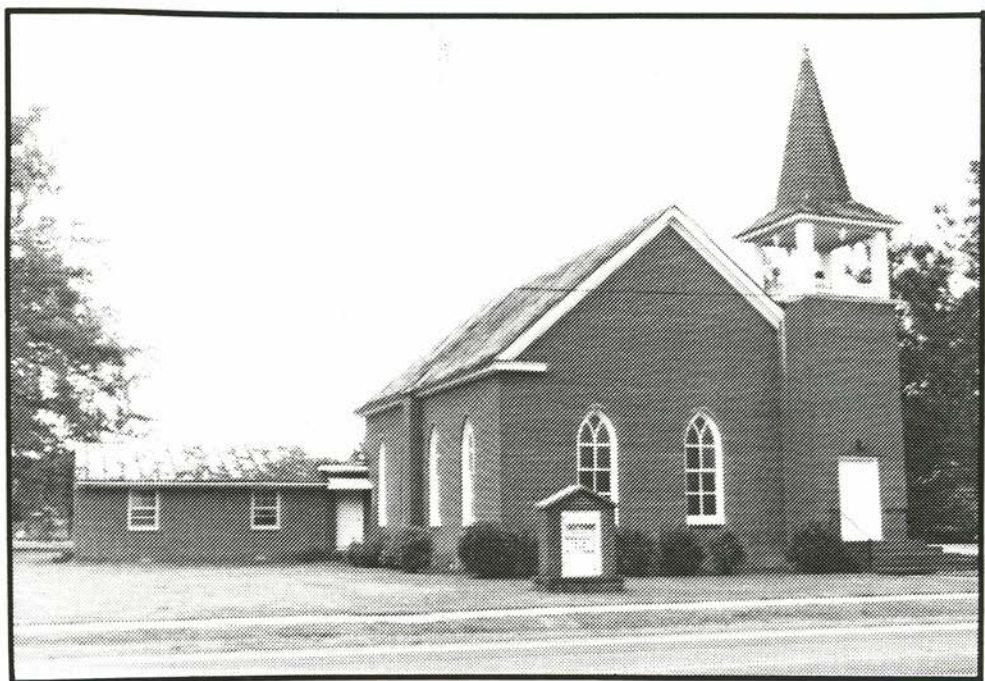
Severn, North Carolina

By Hazel Maddrey Long



Severn United Methodist Church

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“To all who mourn and need comfort, to all who are tired and
need rest, to all who are lonely and need companionship,
to all who sin and need a Savior, to all
who will, this church opens wide
its doors.”

DEDICATED TO

My mother, Virgie Hill Maddrey, who gave her best in service and support to this church all her adult life.

FOREWORD

In the early years, church records did not seem to be important, so compiling this history took a long time. I wrote many letters, made numerous telephone calls, and had discussions with those who were old enough to confirm my recollections. This helped me feel secure that what I have written is reliable and in fair chronological order. My special thanks to all those who have helped in compiling all this information, especially Mr. Malory Britt, whose memory stretched further back than my own.

For several years I have had a strong urge to preserve these facts. A church so small in numbers, with the accomplishments it has made and outreach it has had, should never be allowed to go unrecorded. I also felt a desire to recall, family by family, the dedicated members who have helped to make this dear old church what it has been.

There is no way to recall and record all each member has contributed, and there are surely some mistakes, but hopefully everyone who reads this record will know we were all here and trying. Many lives have been blessed because of the dedication of the leaders of this church throughout these one hundred and seventy-three years.

Hazel Maddrey Long
December 31, 1988

The mother church of Severn United Methodist Church was organized in 1815 and given the name of Providence Methodist Church. The first building was located four miles northwest of Murfreesboro, where the Joe Boone home (previously owned by the John Parker family) now stands. Although it was a small building, this church served the Methodists of our area including Murfreesborough, as the town was then known, for sixty years.

In 1875, B. Kelly White gave the church a plot of land nearer Severn on which to construct a new building, as long as it remained in use as a church. Even though the church was in North Carolina, the circuit belonged to the Virginia Conference until 1900. The 1875 Virginia Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, reported in their minutes that the Murfreesborough District with the Meherrin Circuit included six churches. The Reverend James D. Lumsden was minister. Although the conference records prior to 1926 show only the circuit names and not the names of the churches, it has been passed down by elderly members that the six churches referred to were Concord, Saint Andrews, Providence, Sharon, Zion and Bethany.

Records show that in 1900 the Meherrin Circuit was changed from the Virginia Conference to the North Carolina Conference within the Warrenton District, but remained the Meherrin Circuit until 1902. At that time the Conway Circuit was formed, and a parsonage was built there. Then Concord and Saint Andrews were placed in the Seaboard Circuit leaving Conway, Zion, Bethany, Providence and Sharon comprising the Conway Circuit. Sharon was soon also placed on the Seaboard Circuit. The district remained Warrenton until 1923 when it was changed to Weldon. When the Rocky Mount District was formed in 1931, the Conway Circuit became part of it.

In 1909, the members of Providence realized the need for a larger building and felt it would be an advantage to build in Severn, only about one mile away. Their request

was recognized and acted upon the same year. In the Quarterly Conference minutes of October 11, 1909, under miscellaneous business, we find this item recorded: "Ordered that the Trustees of Providence secure a lot in Severn and proceed to build, if they can see their way clear, and to dispose of old property." The Trustees at the time were J. B. Stephenson, Sr., D. Wallace Watson and Richard E. Railey who was the great uncle of our own J. R. Railey.

This did not take place immediately because two years later, in 1911, we read in the Conference minutes: "The Committee to dispose of Providence Church reported progress and on motion was continued." In July of that year Richard E. Railey died; however, it was almost two years later on April 12, 1913, that we find Richard E. Railey being replaced by John S. Watson as Trustee of Providence Church.

The church building was sold to my parents, Cecil Jarvis Maddrey, Sr. and wife, Virgie Hill Maddrey, who moved the structure about a half mile northwest and placed it on their land. Neither the date of the transaction, nor the price paid for the building is known. It is assumed they bought the building with the understanding services would continue there until the new church in Severn was built. With the sale of the church building, the land where it stood was returned to the B. Kelly White estate as the deed specified.

When the new church was completed in 1916, Daddy and Mama converted the old church building they had purchased into a home where our family lived for sixty-two years. The building still stands.

The lot chosen for the new building was in the town of Severn, where the church now stands. The recorded deed states that on June 13, 1913, D. W. Watson and wife, Jessica Watson, transferred the present lot of approximately one sixth of an acre to Providence Church for a sum of one hundred dollars. Boundary lines stated on the deed are as follows: "Beginning at the South West corner of the school lot, running thus fifty feet down the road to a stake, thus East one hundred and fifty feet to a stake, thus sixty-eight feet to the school lot, thence the school line to the beginning, said to contain about one sixth of

an acre, more or less." Signatures on the deed were J. B. Stephenson, Sr., D. W. Watson and J. S. Watson, Trustees.

Before the turn of the century, many Baptist families worshipped at Providence because they had no home church. In 1898, when the Severn Baptist Church was organized, the Baptist families moved to their own church in Severn. The membership of Providence suffered a great loss with that move and the fact that many of the pillars of the church had passed away. However, one must never underestimate what can be accomplished by only a few dedicated, God-fearing people who love their church. Such was the case during the early 1900's in planning and building the new church.

The Reverend E. E. Rose (1912-1915) wrote in the Quarterly Conference report on this church: "There is scarcely no ground for an outreach as to territory amongst us, and our growth will have to be of the more intensive order. We need to be thorough in the work we are trying to do."

It seems fitting to recognize here those loyal members who accepted that challenge and pushed forward in faith and determination to build a new church on the lot they had acquired.

The name of Joseph (Joe) Burton Stephenson, Sr. appears in every record book from 1896 (the earliest available) until his death in 1944. He was a self-made man, very intelligent and dedicated to his church, community and state, serving in the House of Representatives for three terms and as a Justice of the Peace all of his adult life. In Providence Church he served in all the positions of leadership when called on: Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Steward, Trustee, Lay Leader, and Conference Delegate many times. At the same time, he taught the Adult Class from the earliest record until he became too feeble to stand while he taught. Mr. Joe was married twice. His first marriage was to Fannie Hoggard who was a Baptist. They had four children: Clyde, Gladys, Claud and John B. who was called J. B. Clyde, Gladys and Claud were Baptists with their mother.

J. B. joined the Methodist Church with his father. You will read about Mr. Joe's second wife and family later.

J. B., a young man at this time, was able, willing and as dedicated to the church as his father was. He had a good voice and sang in the choir. He was also a member of the male quartet. He held the office of Secretary-Treasurer of the church for thirty-four years and Sunday School Superintendent for his last ten years. He served faithfully from his college days until his death in 1966, except for the time he served in World War I. Later in this history the activities of his wife and family will be recorded.

Mr. David Watson and wife, Sue, and their family, Wallace, Johnny, D'Arcy, Beulah and Emma Sarah also added a great strength to Providence during these early years. Mr. Wallace was Sunday School Superintendent from 1915 until his sudden death on Sunday morning, December 14, 1930. While the members sat waiting for him to appear and open the service, Mr. Joe Stephenson entered and said, "There will be no service today. Our Superintendent is just now dead." He was sorely missed because he was one of our strong leaders. He had a good voice, sang in the choir and was a member of the male quartet. He had also made available to us the land for the new church building. Another of his church responsibilities will be related later.

Mr. Johnny Watson, also a Trustee and Steward, was faithful in attendance and support. His wife was an active Baptist as was his daughter, Clair. His son, Royal and second daughter, Margaret, grew up in the Methodist faith and have remained in our church.

Mr. D'Arcy Watson loved, served where he could, and supported our church throughout his life. He never married.

Miss Beulah Watson never married. She served her church faithfully her entire life and was one of the adult teachers in the Sunday School even before the church was moved to Severn. Also in those years, she was Assistant Organist to Mrs. R. E. Railey before the later arrival of Mrs. J. B. Stephenson, Sr. She sang in the choir and was

one of the charter members of the Woman's Missionary Society where she filled many places of leadership as long as she lived.

Emma Sarah Watson left Severn when she grew up and married. She reared her family in another area of the state. Years later her daughter, Lillian, married Mr. Joe Stephenson's son, Moring. They never lived in the area but visited occasionally.

My mother, Virgie Hill Maddrey, grew up loving the church. Her parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts back further than she could remember were members of Providence. In 1905, she married a local farmer, Cecil Jarvis Maddrey, Sr. He was a Baptist, and a very loyal one. Mama loved Providence and that love never changed. She was very young and enthusiastic about the church. Our family grew as the years passed, but aside from her children and husband, serving the church was uppermost in her mind. She was there and participating whenever possible. She taught children's classes, sang in the choir, was a strong leader in missionary work, attended the School of Missions at Duke University two or more summers and was a delegate to the Annual Conference numerous times.

My brother and sisters who joined our church along with me were Cecil, Elise, Moselle, Helen, Julia Lynn and Maxine. Two of my brothers, William and Waudell, chose to become Baptists with my father. Throughout our childhood and youth, we all loved Sunday School and participating in programs and organizational activities. Some of us became outstanding leaders as you will read later. Cecil and I have remained in Severn and are still active in this church. Whenever the others are visiting they always attend the services here.

Mrs. Henry Maddrey wrote in a recent letter: "I still miss your dear mother (Virgie H. Maddrey). No one was more steadfast in love for her church, in giving and in service. She was a great inspiration to each one of us. I'd like to be quoted as saying this for us all." Others have made similar statements as this history was being compiled.

Mama died seven days before her eighty-seventh birthday. Her loss of hearing made it almost impossible for her to understand the messages, but she continued to enjoy attending church. She worshipped here ten days before her death on August 9, 1978.

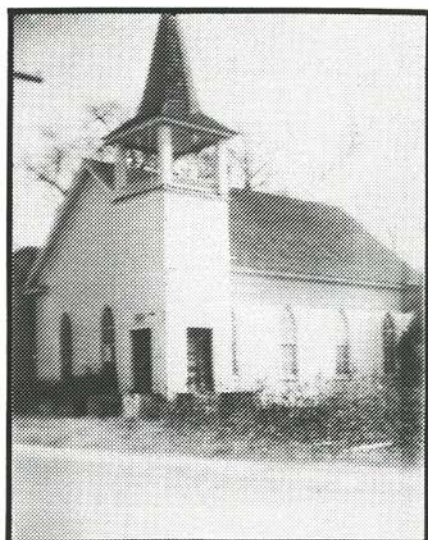
A memorial to Mama written by Miss Emma Boone appeared in The Christian Advocate. It stated in part: "She was faithful to her church, supporting it with her prayers, means and attendance. Her loving compassion brought joy and comfort to many as she reached out to them in their need."

Another active family in the early 1900's was Mr. and Mrs. Sidney (Sid) Preston Ricks and their six children. They moved from Murfreesboro to what was called the Boone's Bridge Farm in 1907. They joined Providence and strongly supported it until they moved to Branchville, Virginia, in 1914. Their young children at the time were Fred, Otis, Preston, Elliott, Nellie and Bernice. Later you will see where they returned to the same farm and our church in 1923.

During those early years, there were two other families due much recognition for the strength and regular support they gave Providence Church. They were Mr. and Mrs. Ed Lewter and Mr. and Mrs. William Morgan. Both had large families which swelled the Sunday School and church roll. They were an active part of the children's and young people's classes until they grew up and left the community. None have remained among us and they were sorely missed when they left. The Lewter children at that time were Darwin, Irving, Janie, Mason, Ollie, Inez and Frank. The Morgan children were Jesse, Willie, Estelle, Carrie, Ida Lois, Sadie and Robert.

This brings us to the building of the new church. The head builder was a black man by the name of Joe Scarborough. The church was built of wood with a tin roof. It had a one-room sanctuary with plastered walls and a wooden ceiling. The sanctuary was the same size it is today. There was a swinging flue in the center of the room where there stood a coal-burning stove of heavy iron which heated the entire room. There were two doors, just as there are today, one on the front and the other on the side

front, but with two separate sets of steps and no back door at all. The building was completed and ready for services in 1916.



Providence Church In 1916

Even though the church was new, the members chose to use the furniture from the old building. The pews, pulpit furniture and a bellows organ were all typical of the times. The pulpit chairs were narrow with no arms and very high backs. They had deep, beautiful carving around the sides and across the tops with the center backs and the seats cushioned in red velvet. There are few members alive who remember the pews, but all agree they were sort of crude and not very comfortable.

Mr. Richard E. Railey was the Sunday School Superintendent until his death in 1911 when Mr. Wallace Watson was elected. Since he was already holding the office in the old church, he continued and became the first Superintendent in the new church. He came very early each Sunday and kindled the fire so the church would be warm in time for the service. He also rang the steeple bell thirty minutes before the service would start, and again on the hour. He continued this until his death in 1930.

The responsibility for kindling the fire and ringing the bell was then shared by different families, one each

month. The young people cleaned the building for a minimal pay until rooms were added. The women of the Missionary Society then volunteered, two at a time for a month, to keep the building clean. It was not until 1968 that the church assumed responsibility for custodial service.

Members were proud of their new building, and being in town gave opportunity for better attendance. For the first five years, both congregations worshipped together, attending the Baptist church on Sunday mornings and Providence Church in the afternoon. Many names appeared on both rolls during those years.

Eventually the Methodist services were changed to the morning. For the first time in history we became two separate churches, but continued to work together on special occasions. For many years we have had joint Thanksgiving services, Easter Sunrise services, Memorial services and Vacation Bible Schools. Even Christmas programs are planned so everyone can attend both.

These were still the horse and buggy days, and there were no paved roads in this area. At times the weather made travel nearly impossible. There were sand and dust in summer, mud when it rained, and in winter it was too cold to travel very far to attend services. But whenever the weather permitted, services were carried out. On April 15, 1911, The Reverend B. H. Black, in his Quarterly Conference report, wrote: "We have been trying to do the pastoral work, though the weather has been very much against visiting. Have made only one hundred and fifty visits." (Imagine that kind of dedication on horse and buggy and with five churches on his charge!) So far as sketchy records show, he was with us only two years.

Early in the 1900's, Miss Nancy Clements came to Severn from Morrisville to teach music in the school. No dates are available, but sometime later, she married Mr. Joe Stephenson who had been widowed. The Conference record shows that in February, 1916, she became a member of Providence by certificate from Morrisville Christian Church. She was a dedicated and strong spiritual leader and organizer in the church. She first played the organ and later the piano as long as she was able. You will read some of her accomplishments later.

She and Mr. Joe had six sons: Burton, Clements, Moring, Lyndon, Ray and Robert Hugh (Bob). Burton and Lyndon died in childhood. The other four sons were very active in our church as they grew up, participating wherever they were needed. Bob was particularly active in the Young People's Division. All of them sang well and were generous with their talent. Clements sang in the male quartet and the others sang in the choir. As was so often the case, after college they settled elsewhere and visited the church only occasionally. Both Bob and Ray died in their early forties.

Severn's first and only bank opened in 1916. The cashier, Magnus L. Martin, and his wife, Mamie Chapel Martin, moved to town from Rich Square bringing two young sons, Stuart and Harold. Another son, Bernard, was born later. In July 1917, they were received into Providence by certificate from the Methodist church in Rich Square. They were both avid church workers and gave willingly of their many talents and dedication to add growth to the church and community. Mr. Martin had a beautiful bass voice, sang in the choir and in the male quartet. He held many positions of leadership including Steward, Trustee and Sunday School Superintendent for six years. He was Acting Superintendent for the three years following. He was regular in attendance and generous with his support until his death in 1948.

Mamie humbly, yet willingly, served her church for as long as she was physically able. She taught the Junior Class continuously for eighteen years. She was also leader of the Young People's Organization several times, often for extended periods. She was always an active member of the Woman's Missionary Society working, contributing, and leading as President for several years. During her last years, after Mr. Joe Stephenson's death, she taught the Adult Sunday School class. As was true of Mr. Joe, she had to sit while teaching as she became more feeble. She spent her last years in Roanoke Valley Nursing Home in Rich Square and died in 1974.

The Martin boys: Stuart, Harold and Bernard were busy in the church program as they grew up. Harold and Bernard left us when they married and both settled in Virginia. Stuart remained in Severn and is still active in the church. You will read more about his contributions later.

In the year 1917, we had the good fortune of adding another teacher to our roll. Moselle Coston White came to teach primary grades in the Severn High School. Later she married Henry Maddrey and joined Providence by certificate from New Hope Methodist Church in Perquimons County. When her father passed away, her mother, Minnie Coston White and foster sister, Emma, came and made their home with Moselle and Henry. Mrs. White, a dear lady, became a faithful and dedicated member and contributed much to the church as long as she lived. Emma married young, moved away and had a family elsewhere.

(The last paragraph refers to Moselle White teaching primary grades in the Severn High School. It may seem strange to the present generation, but the early schools included grades one through eleven on the same school ground. Grade twelve, which was added by the State Legislature in 1942, was optional for each school in 1943, but made mandatory in 1944. Kindergartens were private schools until the mid 1970's, when a few pilot schools proved valuable, and the program was then added to all public schools.)

Moselle learned to love our church dearly. She served capably and willingly on committees and taught many groups wherever she was needed for forty-eight years. When Henry passed away, she moved to the Methodist Retirement Home in Durham where she now resides. You will read about some of her many valuable accomplishments later.

In 1918, two Spencer brothers, Fred and Charlie, moved to Severn to manage a new sawmill, Farmers Manufacturing Company, which had been moved here (where Resinal now stands). Mr. Fred had a wife and four children. Mr. Charlie was married, but had no children at that time. There were two company houses built for them side by side on White Street. One was struck by lightning and burned completely in the early 1930's, but the other one still stands and is now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Carol (Dick) Eure and occupied by Velvin Boyd.

The Spencers were Baptists, but Mr. Charlie's wife, Maud, was a Methodist and soon joined Providence. She was a registered nurse, previously an Army Captain, and was a very fine, congenial person. She taught in the children's

department of the Sunday School several different years. In January, 1923, a son, Edmond, was born to the couple. When the mill was moved away after many years, Mr. Charlie moved his family to Emporia, Virginia, but Mr. and Mrs. Fred remained in Severn until their deaths. Later "Miss Maud" became head of the Southampton County Virginia Health Department; although, I do not know how long she held that position. During World War II, Edmond was drafted and in some way was badly burned. He survived but did not live many years.

Mission work during the early 1900's moved very slowly. Pastors realized the importance of missions, and through their insistence, encouragement and fervent prayers, the ladies' interest grew and slowly they began to organize throughout the area. In 1917, the first Woman's Missionary Society in Providence Church was organized with the help of the Conway Society which had been organized the year before. It was a small group but they carried out the program to the best of their ability under the leadership of Mrs. J. B. Stephenson, Sr. The Missionary Voice was the magazine provided to guide members in mission work according to Conference plans.

Recently, while going through some of my mother's old papers, I found a booklet entitled Yesterdays Memories by Vivian P. Mitchell. It begins:

" A brief sketch of the work of the women of the Methodist Churches in Northampton County, North Carolina Annual Conference, from the organization of the Northampton Federation in 1917 until the present time 1960."

"Back in those days, in 1917, we were divided into districts. We were in the Weldon District then and Miss Anna Graham was District Secretary. Mrs. J. B. Stephenson, Sr. from Severn suggested that the women might take a greater interest in the Missionary work if they could be organized into county units and have regular meetings in addition to their local meetings."

"Nobody knows the exact date, but the meeting was held at Seaboard Methodist Church in the early

fall of that year. Miss Graham and Mrs. R. W. Bailey, wife of the Seaboard pastor, invited all interested women of the county to attend. After the program and much discussion, the group voted to organize....and that's how the Northampton Federation, as it was then called, got started. Mrs. J. B. Stephenson, Sr. was elected president and served as leader until 1929—a period of twelve years."

"Miss Graham was so pleased, that she organized the other counties in her district. The idea soon spread over the state and into the whole Methodist Episcopal Church, South."

Who started it all? Our own Mrs. J. B. Stephenson, Sr.!

The Northampton Federation met four times a year with the summer meeting being held for the young people. These were all day meetings with lunch provided by the hostess church. During these meetings, the local societies reported on the work they had accomplished during the quarter and heard District and Conference officers explain the work which needed to be done. The highlight of the day's program was an inspirational address.

In 1932 the name was changed from the Northampton Federation to the Northampton Zone, but still included only our county. Some years later the group was enlarged to include other counties and became the Sub-District which holds its meetings now only once a year.

Members of the Severn Society who held office in the organization between 1917 and 1960 were:

President, Mrs. J. B. Stephenson, Sr.	1917-1929
Secretary/Treasurer, Mrs. Virgie Maddrey	1931-1933
President, Mrs. Henry Maddrey	1942-1947
Vice President, Mrs. H. P. Stephenson	1951-1955
President, Mrs. H. P. Stephenson	1955-1959

Providence never had an Epworth League organized for the young people; however, the early pastors insisted on

organizations for both youths and children. In the Quarterly Conference minutes the pastors always had to report what was being done for children. In 1909 S. T. Moyle submitted: "We are trying to look after the child life of the church for in the children is the hope for the future of the church." One Sunday each summer Children's Day was observed with a program given by the children.

Finally, in the early 1920's, members of the adult society decided to organize a Young People's Missionary Society. Once again, they appointed Mrs. J. B. Stephenson, Sr. to get it started. The young people were enthusiastic and it went well. They met with their leader at church once a month after school. They were organized on the same plan as the adult society with good program material made available to them. The money paid on their pledges went to missions through the adult society. Mrs. Stephenson continued as their leader for a while, but there is no exact record of how long. We do know that Mamie Martin followed her.

About the same time, the children under twelve years of age were also organized into a mission program. This program under the woman's work was named "The Bright Jewels". This group also met with their leader at the church one afternoon a month after school. They had regular programs, paid their dues to missions each meeting and were required to answer the roll call by quoting a verse of scripture. The pledge went through the adult society. Sometime later the group's name was changed to Willing Workers, but the program remained the same. Soon they started meeting after Sunday School on the first Sunday of the month. (At that time, the first Sunday preaching was at night.)

During the early years there was a children's magazine, The Young Christian Worker. It was a missionary magazine for boys and girls published by The Woman's Missionary Council of the Methodist Episcopal Church South and edited by Miss Sara Estelle Haskins. I do not remember when that was discontinued.

In 1918, God smiled on Providence again when Miss Essie Porter moved to Severn with her sister-in-law, Mrs. Ellon Porter. Miss Essie came by certificate from Mt.

Horeb Methodist Church near Newsoms, Virginia. To know Miss Essie was to love her. There is no doubt she was the most loved person who ever belonged to this church. That fact has been firmly fixed in my mind since I started researching for this history.

In 1921, Miss Essie was made teacher of the Intermediate Class. She served in that position for twenty-five years. Then she moved to the Primary Class where she taught until 1966, making a record of forty-five consecutive years of teaching. She had a quiet, loving way with the children and young people, and at the same time, demanded respect and challenged them to be their best. Throughout those years she was also active in all the woman's missionary work including being the leader of the Bright Jewels from its organization until 1966. A fall hospitalized her with a broken hip that same year. She had to be moved to a rest home near her niece in Smithfield and was never able to return to her home in Severn again. She died March 28, 1981, loving this church and its members dearly.

Going back to 1917, we had another family of good people move in to the area to a settlement called Princeton which was on the Meherrin River between Severn and Murfreesboro. They were Mr. and Mrs. E. Preston (Press) Odom and their youngest children, Mattie and Gordon. They joined Providence by certificate from Murfreesboro Methodist Church. They attended well and were loyal supporters for about six years. Then they moved to Pendleton and attended Robert's Chapel Church, probably because of the hardships of travel in those days. However, Mr. Press' granddaughter, Bernice Ricks Duke of Newsoms, Virginia, says that she well remembers they came back to Providence on each preaching Sunday. She also remembers Mr. Press was called on to pray regularly.

After a few years, the family moved to Emporia, Virginia. They were members there until Mr. Odom retired and moved back to Severn about 1937. He died during that year, leaving alone his wife, "Miss" Martha and his daughter, Mattie, who had never married. They made their home then with "Miss" Martha's niece, Mrs. Will Joyner, who lived on White Street. Mrs. Odom was too feeble to attend church, but Mattie immediately moved her membership back to

Severn Methodist Church. She attended regularly but was shy and retiring. She did not teach, but was anxious to serve wherever else she was needed. She was very interested in the Missionary Society and assisted with carrying out the programs, serving on committees and did her part in contributing to our missionary pledge. After her mother died, she married Harry Joyner in 1941. He was a Baptist, but she remained loyal to our church until her death on April 4, 1978.

Now let us go back to 1918 and World War I. Providence had only one member called into active duty. Our Church Secretary and Treasurer, J. B. Stephenson, Jr., was inducted March 23, 1918. After basic training, he served in a field hospital in France until April 16, 1919, when he was honorably discharged. He received a medal of appreciation for distinguished service rendered. The church felt proud of J. B., realizing that the ideals gained in his home and church played a large part in making him a successful, caring soldier.

Providence received another new member when, on April 20, 1920, a local young merchant, Hugh Pete Stephenson, married Helen Brichous Grant from Ridgeway. He was a Baptist, but she transferred to Providence Methodist Church by certificate from Jackson Methodist Church, where she had been a member. She became very active at once, serving wherever she was needed and was a hard worker. Sometimes she taught classes and at other times she assisted. She had a keen interest in the Missionary Society and served in many areas of the work. She was President for a number of years during which time she attended the School of Missions at Duke University. She was a delegate to the Missionary Conference many times.

After Pete's death, she served as house mother at Louisburg College from September, 1959, through May 1968.

She returned to her home in Severn where she lived alone for a year. In May, 1969, she moved to the Methodist Retirement Home in Durham where she spent the last eight years of her life, passing away September 20, 1977.

Their only daughter, Hazel Elizabeth, grew up in this church enjoying all the activities and being an interested member of all the organizations. In 1943, she represented

the Methodist Youth Fellowship at the Louisburg College Assembly. After college graduation, she taught in Wilson and married Dr. Joseph Meadows. They had a lovely wedding in our church.

When the new church was completed in 1916, the floor was not carpeted. A few years later, carpet was bought but had to be laid by the members themselves. In those days that did not come with the sale and no padding was used. It was no problem to unroll and tack it down the aisles, but it was quite a job to lay it properly in the pulpit and around the chancel. The cutting and fitting of the little squares around the chancel rails took many hours. Mamie Martin, being a seamstress, was invaluable doing this work. Beulah Watson, Helen Stephenson, Essie Porter and my mother were some of the members who worked many hours to help accomplish this job, but it was appreciated, and the carpet lasted many years.

The first lights in the new church were powered by acetylene gas. It was in 1927 that the Virginia Electric and Power Company brought the first power line into Severn. At that time the acetylene gas lights were replaced by electricity. Progress in the church, as well as the whole community, was being slowly realized.

As mentioned earlier, the Sid Ricks family returned to the area in 1923, to the same farm they left earlier. While they lived in Branchville, three more children were born: Lee, Gilmer and Louise. Soon after their return, another son was born, R. S., Jr., known as "Big Boy". Soon these ten children were back in our church. They were smart, interested and liked to participate, and were very much appreciated by teachers and leaders alike. Otis was secretary and treasurer of the Sunday School for the year 1927.

The family moved away again in 1930, but by that time, the older children were about grown, and beginning to go their separate ways. Louise and R. S., Jr. were the only two children still at home when Mr. and Mrs. Ricks again returned to Severn in 1938. They were with us for twelve more years, leaving permanently in 1950.

Joseph Lee Collier, wife, Lillian, and son, Vernon, moved to White Street in Severn about 1925. Joe was a

member of Robert's Chapel Baptist Church in Pendleton and continued to attend there until 1938. Lillian and Vernon joined Providence and Lillian became involved at once in the church activities. She was generous in giving her time and soon became Assistant Teacher in the Primary Department for six years, and full time teacher for ten more until she left Severn in 1944. Vernon was eager to be a part of everything: classes, Bright Jewel meetings and programs of all kinds.

Joe left Robert's Chapel to join Providence in 1938. He loved the children and was always special to them as they were to him. On Sunday mornings he would bring each of them a stick of chewing gum which he would not hand out until after the service was over.

In 1948, Joe married Ruby Thomas who came from Jackson. She joined with him, bringing her daughter, Jo Ann. Ruby attended church with Joe and assisted Louise Martin in teaching the intermediate class for a year. Two years later they moved to Murfreesboro. Joe never lived in Severn again, but after Ruby's death in 1952, he returned to worship with us regularly. Later he married Pat Wilder from Woodland and made his home there. He continued attending and supporting our church faithfully until his death in June, 1983.

Again the local board of education favored our church when it employed Margaret Morgan to teach high school English. She came from Corapeake in 1929, and taught here until 1946. She never moved her membership from her home church, but joined our Sunday School and attended regularly, supporting it and helping out whenever and wherever she was needed.

In the winter of 1928, Lokie L. Bryan and his wife, Rosa, moved to Severn from Lasker. They came by letter to Providence Church from Pinners Methodist Church near Rich Square. He was overseer of the J. J. White farm called "White's Quarter". He had older children by a former marriage but only three were still with them. They were Ronald, Robert and Ruth, but Ronald soon left. In addition, Mr. Lokie and Rosa had two daughters and a son by their marriage: Marie, Ella and Earl. As time passed three other children were born: Douglas, Betty and Frank.

They all loved Sunday School and Bright Jewels and, except for sickness, were always there for the services. Very soon the older ones joined the Young People's Division. They were really nice children and were very dependable.

To our regret, however, in 1937 they moved near Petersburg, Virginia, where Mr. Bryan farmed for two years. By this time, Robert and Ruth were already married and Earl had left home. While they lived in Virginia, another daughter, Shelby, was born and Marie was married. In 1939, the family moved back to Severn bringing five children: Ella, Douglas, Betty, Frank and Shelby. They all returned to church at once and were happy to be back in the various classes and organizations. Teachers and counselors alike welcomed them. As time passed, the older ones went on their separate ways and the couple had another son, Lokie L., Jr. (Junie). Mr. Bryan did not farm anymore but operated a store for a while. Later he worked for the State Department of Transportation and built a home on White Street.

Shelby and Junie grew up to love this church, as the older children had. Junie was president of the Methodist Youth Fellowship for a while and Shelby represented the church at Camp Don Lee in June, 1951. She also attended the Louisburg College Assembly with Thadys Garris in 1955.

Mr. Bryan retired from the state around 1958, and for five years was an invalid. Death came on Easter Sunday, April 14, 1963. Mrs. Bryan had always been as faithful in attendance as she could with so large a family. Now she was freer to give more time to her church and she did. She was very active in the Women's Society of Christian Service (WSCS), serving on committees, participating in programs and was very dedicated to contributing her part on pledges to missions.

Although she has become unable to attend church and the United Methodist Women (UMW), she remembers to send her pledge and church contributions regularly. Due to failing health she was forced to move into the Pine Forest Rest Home in Potecasi in 1988. We still miss her at services, as well as Shelby, who had continued to visit us often through the years.

Joe Mann, another of the long-time members of Providence, brought to town his bride, Bessie Draper, with her daughter by a previous marriage, Thelma, on January 16, 1929. Bessie came by certificate from the Conway Methodist Church and immediately became involved. She had a beautiful alto voice and sang in the choir. She served as teacher and assistant to the young people and filled important places in the Missionary Society. She was a tireless worker and is still remembered for the lovely flowers she grew, and the many, many bouquets she placed in the church.

Thelma soon married and moved to Norfolk, Virginia, but visited her mother often. Later she had a daughter, Sandra, who used to visit her grandparents in Severn. She wrote this message recently: "I have some wonderful memories of visiting there. Joe would take me with him to ring the steeple bell on Sunday morning. Severn was a good place to be." Joe died in 1947, and "Miss" Bessie later married again and left Severn. She passed away in 1971, but was buried beside Joe in the Severn Cemetery.

Even though the new church building was in Severn, the name remained Providence. No one here knew when our name was changed to Severn until this history was begun. In questioning the Conference Council on Ministries about this, I received the following answer:

"In the Conference Historical Directory, published in 1976, by the Conference Commission on Archives and History, we find the following: 'Severn Church located on County Road 35 in the town of Severn; founded in 1815 according to a church deed; earliest deed November 17, 1815 (Book 35, Page 147) for land whereon a meeting house called Providence stood'".

James H. McCallum, who did this research stated further: "According to the above information, this church was known by the name of Providence until about 1931. The Conference Journals do not list the names of the churches on a charge until 1926. Severn is not listed until 1931, and Providence is not listed after 1930. I would assume that the name of the congregation changed from Providence to Severn Methodist Episcopal

Church South at that time." The Reverend H. C. Ewing was pastor at this time (1928-1931).

I have found no church records mentioning the Great Depression (1929-1933) and its impact on the financial condition of our church. Church finances must have suffered along with individuals and all business and industry. If there were shortages, as the nation recovered, so did the church. God, in his wisdom and mercy, gave us strong leaders to gradually strengthen the nation's economy which in turn strengthened the church.

The name of the Young People's Missionary Society changed in 1930. At that time they became the Young People's Division of the church. The Severn group, now under the leadership of Mamie Martin, was well organized and became even more active than they were before. They started meeting on the second Sunday morning after Sunday School instead of after school on a week day. They had well-planned programs and a regular business session. They had periodic Bible and mission studies. Each one paid a pledge of money to missions and had a report each meeting on social service they had rendered during the month; such as flowers to the sick, meals to shut-ins, used clothing shared, or cards to the sick. On November 3, 1935, this group and its leader, Mrs. Martin, went to our parsonage in Conway. They took a bag lunch and worked most of the day setting shrubbery around the parsonage. The pastor and his wife, The Reverend and Mrs. L. V. Harris (1935-1939) were delighted.

The young people always prepared a program to present to the church on fifth Sunday nights. Often they would present the same program for other groups on the charge, and they would occasionally do likewise for us.

In July of 1934, and again in 1936, my sister, Moselle, a namesake of Mrs. Henry Maddrey, went with other delegates from the charge to represent their churches at the Young People's Assembly at Louisburg College.

For several years there was an organization called the Young People's Union which was comprised of all the Young People's groups in the county. They met in different churches and carried out on a larger scale what

the local groups were doing at home. The group was very interested in the organization and their activities brought the youth of the charge very close together. Moselle, who was the Severn President, was also the President of this group for two years. She represented the county Young People's Union at the assembly held at the Methodist Retreat at Lake Junaluska both of those years.

A young man from Bethany, Clifton Britton, was a great inspiration to all of us. He was an officer of the Young People's Union with an outstanding dramatic talent. He directed a charge pageant which we presented at Bethany Church with great success on Easter Sunday night, April 21, 1935.

The leaders during the 1930's and 1940's evidently felt that "all work and no play made Jack a dull boy" because recreation was very much a part of the youth programs. As former members who grew up during these years have been asked to recall facts they remember to help with this history, numbers of them have remembered not only the organizational programs and meetings, but the socials, hay rides and picnics, lawn parties and picture shows (movies) attended by the group.

In 1933, Mrs. Henry Maddrey became Severn's Sunday School Superintendent. With the help of the Young People's Counselor, Mamie Martin, the group began conducting the Sunday School service on the second Sunday of each month. They continued to do that for the next forty-four years.

In 1931, O. N. Edwards became the new railroad agent in Severn. He moved his family into the Billy Pruden house, now owned by Dorothy Long. He and his wife, along with their three teenagers, joined our church by certificate from Mount Horeb Methodist Church near Newsoms, Virginia. They attended regularly and were quite an asset to the church. Their son, Clarence, and daughters, Lottie and Jessie, were very active members of the Young People's Division. Their stay in Severn was short, however, because Mr. Edwards transferred to Branchville, Virginia in 1933, and remained there until his death. Such good and dedicated people were given up reluctantly.

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Gay also moved into town in 1931, bringing their family of four girls and one boy: Eleanor,

Margaret, Jessie, Ollie and Joe, Jr. They came to us from Mount Carmel Baptist Church near Jackson. They were regular in attendance and soon became appreciated because they were willing workers and loved this church. Mrs. Gay sang in the choir, belonged to the Missionary Society and kept their children busy in Bright Jewels and/or Young People's Division. Mrs. Gay was formerly Daisy Earnhardt, sister of one of our former pastors, The Reverend D. L. Earnhardt (1915-1918). They were only with us until 1933, but during that time Joe, Jr. joined the Severn Church on profession of faith. We were sorry to see this family go.

Mr. and Mrs. William (Willie) J. Garris came to us in 1933. They moved into the country home of the David and Sue Watson family where Miss Beulah Watson and her brother, D'Arcy, had continued to live. Miss Beulah and Mr. D'Arcy had just built a new home and moved to Severn on what was later named Watson Street. (The home is now owned by Johnny and Gloria Odom.)

When the Watsons left the farm home, Mr. and Mrs. Garris moved there and farmed the land for a number of years. Later they left the farm, but not the Watson family. They moved nearer town where Mr. Garris managed the Severn Cotton Gin belonging to Johnny Watson and Charlie Britt and later to their sons, Royal Watson and Ralph Britt. Mr. Garris held that job until his retirement.

Mr. Garris was a hard worker and dedicated to whatever he believed in. His children were J. W., Dora Lee, McDonald, Milton, Mary Elizabeth and a foster daughter, Annie Reece Spence. Mr. Garris came to Severn Church by transfer from Sharon Methodist Church near Margaretsville which was on the Seaboard charge. Mrs. Garris (Virgie) came from Robert's Chapel Baptist Church in Pendleton.

Mrs. Garris joined the Missionary Society and served with interest, dedication and financial support as long as she lived. She was a hard worker, always doing her part and more. She was President for a long time and served in that office almost until her death. Mr. Garris served in many capacities during those years. He had experience as a

carpenter and was able to advise on matters of that nature. He was often handy with a hammer and nails when called on to help with church repairs.

The children were young when they joined us. They loved and served the church throughout their growing years and were involved in their classes, Bright Jewels and the Young People's Division. J. W., McDonald and Milton were in a very hard-working and deserving MYF group in the early 1940's.

The three young men entered World War II and married women from other states while in service. The wives did not adjust to life in Severn, so the young men were influenced to return to the home states of their wives. Dora Lee was also married during the war. Mary Elizabeth and Annie Reece, who were younger, became interested MYF members. They represented their Severn Fellowship at the Louisburg College Assembly in June, 1948.

Another young Baptist, John Hoggard, married a teacher, Louise Pope, from Newsoms, Virginia, in 1933. He brought her to live in Severn. He continued in his church, but she soon joined our church by certificate from the Newsoms Methodist Church. Louise was a warm and friendly person who always seemed to be happy. It was good to have her join us. As time passed, three little girls and a boy were born to the couple: Pat, Betty, Lou and Johnny, Jr. They were also welcomed into our Sunday School classes. In 1942, John found better work in Norfolk, Virginia, and soon moved the family there. The church felt a loss when they left.

Severn High School employed another teacher, Doris Lawrence, who moved into town in 1933. She came from Gatesville and taught home economics. She was a member of the Baptist church in her hometown, so she continued in the Severn Baptist Church for the five years she taught here. In the meantime, however, she and J. B. Stephenson, Jr. fell in love and in July, 1938, they were united in marriage.

Doris immediately joined the Severn Methodist Church by transfer from Gatesville Baptist Church. Again we were blessed with a dedicated member who immediately became

involved in church activities. She became a faithful worker wherever she could be of service. She taught all age groups but served more years as Young Adult Teacher or Assistant. She joined the Missionary Society and has continued being a faithful leader through the years, supporting Bible studies, mission studies, and regular programs, as well as providing financial support to missions. Today she is Secretary of our United Methodist Women. She was MYF counselor from 1956 through 1959 and has served on many church committees including Nominations and Personnel, Parsonage, and Pastor-Parish Relations. She is currently Communion Steward.

She and J. B. have two children: Doris Lawrence, called "Little Doris", and J. B., III who was called Joe. They grew up being very active in church classes and organizations. "Little Doris" was trained in art and was called on often to use her talent for church projects. Joe's talent at the piano was appreciated when he was called on to play hymns for the church which he always did on second Sunday mornings. Like many others, they left Severn after college to make homes where there were greater opportunities. They visit their home church very often and home folks appreciate that.

Another dedicated Methodist, Kenneth Ervin Stokes, came to Severn in 1937 to teach agriculture in the high school. He came to Severn Methodist Church by certificate from Darlington, South Carolina. His wife, Ella Mae Parker, was an active Baptist and remained in that church, but he loved Methodism and gave his best to our church. He served in any capacity where there was a need. He loved young people and taught the Young Adult Class several years and later the Adult Class. In time he was a Lay Leader, Church Trustee, served on many committees and was Delegate to the Annual Conference several years. He was Sunday School Superintendent for four years and Assistant Superintendent for ten years. He served as Superintendent again for twelve more consecutive years. He died suddenly on December 27, 1981. He and Ella Mae had no children.

It is easy to see this church has been blessed with many school teachers who came, taught and remained in the community. Such was the case in 1937, when Emma Boone came to teach in the primary department of Severn High School. She came to us by letter from Rehobeth Methodist Church

near Jackson. She was a faithful member who loved her church and served wherever she was needed. She taught in the Junior and Intermediate Classes a number of years and was an active member of the WSCS. In 1948, she built a home in Severn where she enjoyed being a part of the community. After retiring from teaching she lived only a few years and died March 22, 1982.

When Providence Church was moved to Severn in 1916, I was just four years old, so my memory goes back almost to that time. In fact, I recall such things as the dynamic preaching of The Reverend Joshua Boone (1918-1921), and learning to say my first part in a Children's Day program in 1918. In those days parents taught children to love the church as a special place, to be quiet and reverent and to listen to the service. For many years there were no classrooms here so all teaching was done in different areas of the sanctuary and voices were kept low. There was so little entertainment for children and youth that church and school were thought of as good places to go with friends and neighbors.

As we grew up, we were organized into the Bright Jewels and Young People's Missionary Society. All of us were baptized and became church members. We soon began to sing in the choir and to teach classes. I taught the Primary Class when I was fifteen and was Assistant Organist on the bellows organ when I was sixteen. In 1937, I married a local farmer, Ardell Long. He was an active Baptist at the time and remained in his church. I was Methodist and chose to continue in my church. There were never any problems concerning our different denominations. We appreciated both churches.

Through the years I have never said "no" many times when called on to serve. I was Young People's Counselor from 1936 to 1942, Children's Coordinator and Primary or Kindergarten teacher for seventeen years, and Youth Choir Director nine years. At present I am Assistant Organist, United Methodist Women Treasurer, Adult Sunday School Teacher, Church Historian and Age Level Coordinator.

Ardell and I have three children: Jean, Margaret Ann and Samuel. They were in the church organizations and always loved the teachers and counselors. To this day they

say they have always been guided by lessons taught them in this church by the dedicated teachers. They love to come back and visit.

Jean represented her MYF group at Camp Don Lee in June of 1955 and again the following summer. In June of 1958, she attended the MYF Assembly at Louisburg College. She climaxed her years in the MYF by attending the North Carolina Conference at Duke University in August of 1959, the year before her high school graduation.

In 1938, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Maddrey, who never had children of their own, became foster parents of a welfare girl, Nellie Mae Thomas. She was a nice child who had an unfortunate background. They brought her to church regularly. The other children accepted her and enjoyed her presence and her natural wit. She joined the Young People's Division and became a good member and tried hard to please. The record shows she held several positions in the church until she left in 1944. Everyone missed Nellie Mae.

In 1936, Stuart Martin became a professional baseball player. While he was taking his winter time-out from the Saint Louis Cardinals in 1938, he married Louise Cornwell on December 14. She was from Sedley, Virginia, and was a member of the Methodist church there. After Stuart's career in baseball ended, they settled in Severn. He took over his father's insurance business when his father suddenly passed away in 1948. At that time, Louise transferred her church membership from Sedley Methodist Church to Severn Methodist.

They have three children: Mickey, Carol and Gene. Like all children in the church, they were busy enjoying class work, Bright Jewels and later, the MYF. Louise taught the Junior Class for several years and later served as MYF Counselor jointly with Margaret Johnson. The two leaders made outstanding accomplishments which will appear later in this history. Stuart served faithfully as Secretary and Treasurer from 1955 through 1984. In 1988, he was appointed Chairman of the Administrative Council. Mickey settled in Charlotte after college, but Carol and Gene continue living in Severn.

On May 10, 1939, Methodism passed an important milestone. At that time the Methodist Episcopal Church; the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; and the Methodist Protestant Church reunited after many years of separation to become the Methodist Church. At that time the name of the Woman's Missionary Society was changed to The Woman's Society of Christian Service (WSCS). There was very little change in carrying out the work of the Society, but the magazine Missionary Voice was replaced by The Methodist Woman which included information on program resources, ideas and organizational help for local units. The World Outlook was added to let women know more about the work of missions and its needs and accomplishments around the world.

At this same time the name of the Young People's Division was changed to Methodist Youth Fellowship (MYF). "Are Ye Able Said the Master" was adopted as the fellowship hymn. Each meeting was closed with the adopted benediction, "The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you; the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace. Amen."

The next year, 1940, Margaret Watson married Rufus Johnson, a young man from Johnston County. They did not live in Severn immediately, but in 1944, when he left for military service, she came home to Severn. After the war ended, he joined her here and they have remained in the area. Margaret taught at times, served on committees and was MYF counselor during several of the years when the group achieved some outstanding goals. Rufus was Sunday School Superintendent from 1949 to 1953 and Assistant to K. E. Stokes in 1965 and 1966. At the present time he is Church Auditor.

They have three children: Don, Margaret Sue (Peggy) and Joel. They took places of leadership through the years. They were busy in Sunday School, Bright Jewels and MYF as they grew up. Don and Joel moved away after college graduation, but Peggy has remained with us and is still serving faithfully.

Nine of our young men were called into service in World War II, 1939-1945. They were J. W., McDonald and

Milton Garris; Cecil Maddrey; Bernard and Harold Martin; Rufus Johnson; and Kenneth Stokes. Stuart Martin was in the Merchant Marines. These men served in different areas of our country and abroad while the church, families and friends prayed and waited hopefully for their return. Our prayers were answered because no lives were lost. There was great rejoicing in the church, home and community as each one returned.

Another of our members, Royal Watson, married a local girl, Josie Mae Barkley, in 1940. She was a Baptist and remained in that church, but as stated earlier, the members of both denominations were always very supportive of each other. Royal has loved and supported our church just as his family before him. He has been faithful in attendance and generous with his time and support, serving as Steward or Trustee or committee member. Whenever or wherever he was needed, whether for advice, service or financial help, he could be depended on.

Josie Mae and Royal have two children, R. P., Jr. (Parker) and Rebecca. Parker joined the Methodist Church and Rebecca joined the Baptist Church with her mother. Parker grew up attending regularly and participating in the classes and all the group activities. He settled here and has always been very supportive of our church. When Rebecca finished her education she chose a nursing career and moved where opportunities were better.

Even though Severn Methodist Church was a quarter of a century old, it had never been officially dedicated. The ladies became very concerned about this. During the tenure of The Reverend L. C. Brothers (1942-1944), they set things in motion for a dedication. On Sunday morning April 5, 1942, the service was performed by one of the Methodist Bishops, Claire Purnell. Mrs. Henry Maddrey reminded me recently that she and Henry entertained the Bishop for lunch following the service.

L. Weeks Anderson and wife, Ruth Boothe, moved to Severn from Halifax in 1942. With them came a son, Leonhardt and their first daughter, Jackie. They transferred their memberships from Pierce's Campground Methodist Church in Halifax to Severn Methodist Church soon after their arrival. Later, two more daughters were born

to the couple: Laura and Sarah. In a few years Mrs. J. B. Stephenson, Sr. became too feeble to play the piano and Ruth took her place as Pianist.

The children were soon involved in church activities, worked in all the organizations and were always present except when sick. In the summer of 1949, Leonhardt was chosen as a delegate to attend the MYF Conference held at the Methodist Retreat at Lake Junaluska. He was accompanied by the pastor, The Reverend J. E. Garlington. In June of 1958, Laura, along with Jean Long represented the Severn MYF at the Louisburg College Assembly. During those years the Anderson children showed a lot of enthusiasm in all the church activities. Weeks had a long illness and died April 19, 1951. When Jackie, Laura and Sarah finished their education, they settled elsewhere, as did Leonhardt.

When the electric organ was installed in 1979, Ruth, with no organ experience, practiced many hours until she mastered it and became our Organist. She has been active in the United Methodist Women through the years, participating in every phase of the work and serving on many committees. At present she is Church Pianist, Organist and Church Membership Secretary.

Two teachers, Irene Vaughan of Rehobeth and Miss Willie Pritchard of Seaboard came to teach in Severn High School in 1943. Irene taught Home Economics and Willie taught English. They attended this church regularly but did not join. They taught in Severn only one school year. School teachers were always an asset even though at times they did not stay long.

One young teacher from Severn, Elsie Lewter, went to Stem where she taught first grade in Stem High School for a number of years. During that time, she married a farmer, Hugo Umstead, and they made their home there. During World War II, the government chose an area of land on which to build an army camp, Camp Butner. The land which was chosen included the Umstead farm. Since Hugo and Elsie had no land, and her parents in Severn were getting feeble, they bought some of the Lewter land and moved in with her family in 1943.

In Stem, both of them were members of the Stem Methodist Church. Elsie was originally Baptist, and, upon returning, chose to go back to her home church. According to his sister, Vertee, Hugo remarked, "I'll join the church that, in my opinion, needs me the most." He chose to remain Methodist and transferred his membership to our church soon afterward. He learned to love this church and very soon we loved and appreciated him as well. He was an inspiration to everyone because of his willingness to try, and when he did, one would know the results were his best. During the next thirty-three years, he was a strong support financially and in service. He was Lay Leader, Steward, Assistant Superintendent, Assistant Adult Teacher, served on many committees and represented this charge at Annual Conference many times. He died suddenly in July, 1976.

Around 1943, the Methodist Orphanage in Raleigh sent out letters to churches in the Conference asking for volunteers to adopt a child from the home to clothe. Our church answered that call. We received a letter of introduction and were assigned a young girl named Jewel Hayes. Periodically we would receive a list of sizes and clothing and other items needed. The ladies of the church bought or sewed her clothes and sent money for shoes and other necessary items. We did that for her until she graduated from high school. She visited in the community several times, always staying in my mother's home. Jewel was most appreciative of everything we did for her. She loved the people of our church. Sometime during those years, we remember that a group from the orphanage, including Jewel, came here and gave a concert. I have been unable to locate the date or any other details about this visit.

The MYF continued strong during the war years, but some challenges were different. They met regularly and continued with good programs and Bible studies and paid a monthly pledge to missions. They responded to as many war drives as possible, such as clothes for the Russians, contributions to the Chinese fund and money for cigarettes for wounded soldiers in hospitals. In a Secretary's record book dated 1941, the Social Service Chairman Reported, "We gave two new song books to the Sunday School, took up an offering for overseas relief and we all gave a dime each to

the Red Cross instead of buying Christmas gifts for each other." Minutes were by Cecil Maddrey, secretary, with McDonald Garris, president.

It was amazing what this group did for others under social service. The list went like this: took meals to the sick, literature to shut-ins, a sick child to the doctor, a little boy for a hair cut, used clothing to the needy, vegetables to the needy, milk to a sick child, medicine to a sick woman, gave a sweater and hose to Jewel Hayes for Christmas, ran an errand for an elderly lady, gave bed quilt scraps to an old lady, chopped cotton for a sick man without pay, and visited the prison camp. One member, J. W. Garris, had gone in service, so they had a different member of the group write to him every two weeks.

In 1942, the group paid four dollars on the expense of a delegate to represent them at the Louisburg Assembly. My sister, Julia Lynn, was chosen to go that summer. The following year they paid four dollars each to help two delegates attend, Julia Lynn and Hazel Elizabeth Stephenson.

MYF record books from 1940-1945 have been located giving the names of the members at that time. They were all in high school or had graduated and were still living at home. Some of them had married and were waiting at home while their husbands were in military service. All continued to be on the MYF roll and participated in the meetings. They were Dora Lee, J. W. and McDonald Garris; Vernon Collier; Nellie Mae Thomas; Hazel Elizabeth Stephenson; and Moselle, Cecil, Helen and Julia Lynn Maddrey. The following became old enough by 1943 to leave Bright Jewels and join the MYF: Maxine Maddrey; Milton Garris; Tommie Barnes; and Elizabeth, Marie and Robert Woodard. Maxine attended Louisburg Assembly twice, in 1946 and 1947.

From time to time, as needs were realized, additions and renovations have been made to the church building. Sometime during the middle 1930's, it was decided that the furniture should be replaced with more modern pieces. The old bellows organ was replaced with an upright piano, but no one knows what became of the organ. It must have been

sold. The lovely old high-backed pulpit chairs were sold for five dollars each, and the present ones purchased at that time. No one remembers exactly when the old pews were replaced, but it may have been at the same time. We recall how pleased everyone was that the new ones were so much more comfortable.

In 1944, need for private classrooms was felt so, under the leadership of The Reverend J. E. Garlington (1944-1950), two rooms and a connecting hallway were added onto the back of the building. They were also built of wood with the work being done by Ben Cullifer Construction Company of Murfreesboro. A door was cut on the right side of the sanctuary leading into the first classroom. Another flue was run in a recess in the hallway between the two rooms for an oil circulator used for heating. From the beginning, there had been a window on each side of the pulpit for ventilation in hot weather. After the new rooms were built, the windows served no purpose. They were left there until the sanctuary was renovated in the 1950's.

In 1946, a cement walk was poured in front of the church. The payment for that work to Cline Construction Company was \$21.90.

Earlier, I mentioned Irene Vaughan who came to teach in Severn in 1943. She taught Home Economics in Severn High School. After one year, she left Severn to join the faculty of Conway High School in Conway where she taught two years. My brother, Cecil, was casting an eye in her direction from the first. That interest grew into courtship and love. As soon as he returned from the war, they were married on January 3, 1946. She immediately transferred her church membership from Rehobeth Methodist Church.

As our school teachers always did, Irene went to work wherever she was needed. She taught the Intermediate Class for a while, and then was elected to assist Kenneth Stokes with the Young Adult Class where she served for six years. She then was elected teacher of that class which she taught for ten years. She was appointed MYF Counselor from 1947 to 1949. In the meantime, she became a very active member of the WSCS and filled positions in the local society, and was elected a District Officer, serving well

for two years. Later she was Sub-district Leader for a term of four years in the early 1960's. At that time, she again became MYF counselor. The roll included Junie Bryan, Don Johnson, Carol Martin, Laura and Sarah Anderson, Parker Watson, Pearl Lane Maddrey, Thurman Beale and Margaret Ann and Samuel Long. A record shows that Peggy Johnson, Joe Stephenson, Mickey Martin and Jean Long had left for further education, and Doris Stephenson and Rosalyn Railey had just moved away to begin their careers as teachers.

Cecil has been dedicated to this church all his life, starting in Sunday School and Bright Jewels and later as a leader in the Young People's Division during the early 1940's. With the exception of a year in college and two years in military service, he has been here continuously. During the years, he has been Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Church Trustee, a member of the Committee for Stewardship and Finance, and Chairman of the Administrative Board to name a few. He and his son, C. J., III, were responsible for getting the church pews refinished in 1981.

Irene and Cecil have two children, Pearl Lane and C. J., III. As they grew up, they were willing participants in their class work, organizations and all programs of their church. After college, Pearl Lane left for employment not available at home, but visits very often and still supports this church financially. She has made several contributions in memory of her grandmothers, Virgie Maddrey and Alice Vaughan. C. J. chose to remain in the community and farms with his father.

John and Goldie Garris moved into this community in 1947 with four children: Thadys, William, Marvin and Quinton. They were regular in attendance and support. Goldie worked with Miss Essie Porter in the Primary Class as long as they lived here. The children were nice to work with because they were so eager and cooperative. They were young, so their extra activity was the Bright Jewels. All of them had beautiful little voices and enjoyed singing specials in the church services. John and Goldie were with us only about two years before moving away.

In 1953, they moved back to the area and again enrolled in the church. By that time Thadys and William

were old enough to be in the MYF. They joined and, as before, were really helpful in all the programs of the church. Thadys, along with Shelby Bryan, was a delegate to the Louisburg College Assembly in June, 1955. The family moved away again in 1956. The church leaders felt a great loss when they left us because they were talented and so very cooperative.

When The Reverend E. R. Shuller was pastor (1950-1955) he encouraged the congregation to brick veneer the outside of the building. That was approved and done. At that time the two sets of concrete steps, one at the front entrance and the other at the side, were replaced by one set of brick steps for both entrances extending from the side door around the corner past the front door. By that time oil circulators were becoming more popular for heating buildings. The congregation decided it was time to modernize the church a little more by discarding the old coal-burning stove and removing the center flue. They decided to run a ground flue on each side of the building and install two oil circulators, one on each side. That was done in 1950, but the heating was never satisfactory. No changes were made concerning the heat, however, until a decade later.

Another small but beautiful addition to the sanctuary was made when the lighted cross was hung in the pulpit. A record shows the cross was purchased for the sum of \$36.88 on March 3, 1953. What a small price to pay for such lasting beauty!

Another worthwhile project was started in 1953. Our Primary and Junior Class teachers, Miss Essie Porter and Doris Stephenson started awarding pins to their class members for perfect attendance. They chose the cross and crown system with a pin, a wreath and then bars denoting the number of years of perfect attendance. The children were so pleased with the recognition they received, that the church has continued this as an ongoing project for thirty-five years. The project has promoted much better attendance among the children during their early formative years and encourages them to make attending church a habit. No records were kept at first, but since 1980, there have been 171 pins and bars presented. Laura and Sarah Anderson were two of the first recipients of attendance pins. The

longest record of eighteen years is held by my son, Samuel. The second longest are held by Keith, Rebecca and Vicki Lassiter for twelve years each. My daughter, Margaret Ann, has a ten year pin.

Early in 1953 the women felt the need for a mid-week prayer meeting, so the church decided to give it a try. Wednesday night was the chosen time. We decided to list the families in order and take turns conducting the services which proved to be a good plan. Programs were inspirational and attendance was very good. The services gave us a good lift in the middle of the week. We continued that plan until 1977, when The Reverend Vance Way (1977-1979) came to our charge. He was an excellent Bible teacher and was anxious to start a Bible study for the church. By this time prayer meeting attendance was dropping off, so we decided to replace that with Bible study. Attendance picked up and interest was good for the two years he was with us. When he left, The Rev. O'Brient came and continued with the study. Interest waned and there were only two or three attending, so it was discontinued in 1979.

This church was again blessed when Mr. and Mrs. John Richard Railey and daughters, Jane and Rosalyn, moved into Severn. He had been employed by Severn Peanut Company for some years, but continued living in Newsoms, Virginia. In 1954, they purchased the home formerly owned by Dr. A. R. Hodge and moved in August of that year. Mr. Railey transferred his membership from Newsoms Methodist Church to Severn soon after moving. Mrs. Railey (Carrie) and the girls were members of the Newsoms Baptist Church. Rosalyn joined us with her father and was active in the Church School and MYF through her high school and college years. Jane, already in college, attended when she was at home, but her membership was never transferred to Severn. Both daughters were married in our church and both left at that time.

This church never had a more willing and valuable member than Mr. Railey. He joined at a time when there was need for an Adult Class Teacher to assist Mamie Martin. He accepted that responsibility and continued for four years. In 1959, he was appointed teacher with Mrs. Martin assisting him. They continued to serve together until

1966. By that time, Mrs. Martin was too feeble to serve, so others were assistants from time to time, but Mr. Railey continued teaching until 1987. He had a heart problem which necessitated his resignation but he attended whenever he felt able. During those thirty-three years he gave to our church his best in dedicated service. He touched the lives of countless numbers of people with his understanding of Bible history and the ability to teach it to others. He died suddenly on October 4, 1987. Mrs. Railey suffers from an asthmatic condition but continues to attend church whenever she can.

For two summers, the pastor, The Reverend Shuller, had a ministerial student from Duke Divinity School stay in his home. The student worked with the young people of the charge. At that time, Conway was still with us making a four-point charge. The student went to each church one night a week where he would lead the group in a devotional and a pertinent meditation. After the service, they would go outside for games and singing. One night each week all four churches would get together for a fun night taking turns to host it. Royal Watson even had his big cotton warehouse cleared out for the activities when the weather did not cooperate.

Louise Martin and Margaret Johnson accepted co-leadership of the MYF early in 1950. The group continued to be active, loved the church and what they were doing for it, and respected their counselors. The MYF took on two projects during the summers between 1950-1956 and worked very hard to make their own money to fund them. The community was having softball games certain nights a week with unbelievably large crowds. The young people set up a concession stand and sold drinks and nabs (snack crackers). Insulated coolers were not available so they had to fill large tubs with ice and cold drinks late in the day, and cover them to keep them cold. It was hard work and a big responsibility for them but they were determined and enthusiastic about the project. In the end they had cleared enough money to put venetian blinds at the windows of the two recently added classrooms and to build the brick bulletin board which still stands in the church yard. The counselors deserve much credit for a job well-done. The MYF members during this time were Leonhardt, Jackie, Laura and Sarah Anderson; Rosalyn Railey; Doris and Joe

Stephenson; Jean Long; Mickey and Carol Martin; William and Thadys Garris; Parker Watson; and Peggy and Don Johnson.



Built By MYF In Early 1950's

In 1956, Doris Stephenson was appointed MYF counselor. The group met regularly for monthly programs and continued to conduct Sunday School each second Sunday of the month. Every member learned to conduct with dignity and usually added something extra as well. The summer Sub-District meetings of the WSCS were planned for the young people and most of them attended and participated. In this way, they became acquainted with many of the members from other churches in the district and enjoyed that fellowship.

On one occasion, our leader and members visited WTAR, a radio and television station in Norfolk. They were well received by the staff. The outstanding project of 1958 was making choir boy figures to be placed in front of the church each Christmas. The leader, "Miss" Doris, had the forms cut and "Little" Doris, being an art student at Greensboro College, painted the faces. Other members did

the rest of the painting. They worked at Doris' house for many days but finally got the job done. Just before Christmas on an appointed Sunday afternoon, "Miss" Doris met the members at the church and together, they proudly erected their "choir". They invited church members and a few friends to come and help them celebrate the occasion. When the job was completed, they went inside the church and had a short program explaining why they took on the project and how it was accomplished. They enjoyed a fellowship hour and refreshments. The choir boys are still being enjoyed each Christmas. They have had their paint renewed only once in the thirty years of bringing cheer to homefolk and all others who pass by during the holidays.



Choir Boys Made By MYF In 1958

In the 1950's, the conference WSCS conducted an annual School of Missions at Duke University during the summers. Local members were delegated to attend this school where they were prepared to return to their home societies and teach the studies there. Three of our members took advantage of this school more than once, though the exact times or dates are not available. One of our members, Mrs. Henry Maddrey, was a teacher in the school, while Helen Stephenson and my mother attended the courses.

As I stated earlier, during the 1950's, Mrs. Henry Maddrey served as District Secretary of Promotion for the Rocky Mount District for a term, and then served four years in the same position for the North Carolina Conference. A part of her responsibility was to keep the Conference records of each Society's giving. That is how we learned the Severn Society gave more per member than any Society in the Conference during those years.

The Severn Society also had the honor of having one of our members, again Mrs. Henry Maddrey, to teach in the Laboratory School in Virginia. She previously attended a workshop at the Methodist Retreat at Lake Junaluska in preparation for this teaching job which included both North and South Carolina.

In 1939, Marie Bryan married E. T. Beale. They lived in Southampton County, Virginia, until 1958, when they moved back to Severn bringing their son, Thurmon. A daughter, Hilda, was already married. They immediately rejoined our church, becoming involved in all the activities of the Sunday School. Thurman joined the MYF. It was good to have them back with us. Marie became active in the WSCS but their stay was short. They left us to move back to Virginia in 1964. Marie wrote recently, "I am proud of my Methodist heritage and I owe it to this little church you are writing about. I am so grateful for my years there."

Marie has always enjoyed writing poetry. Following is one of her earlier endeavors written when she was eleven years old and dedicated to Miss Essie Porter who was Bright Jewels counselor for forty-six years:

BRIGHT JEWELS

B-is for a little body busy as a bee.
R-is for right which I'll always be.
I-is for interest in jewels very bright.
G-is for God whom I'll pray to each night.
H-is for my heart of purest gold.
T-is for truth I have always told.

J-is for jewels, but not of silver or gold.
E-is for eagerness to be brave and bold.
W-is for a willing worker helping each day.
E-is for errands I'll run to help in every way.
L-is for light-and S means to shine.
Bright Jewels-they spell if you will read down the
line.

In 1960, the congregation decided to completely renovate the interior of the sanctuary, to seal the two chimneys and install central oil heat. A rest room with a broom closet and shelves was extended on the back of the building. On the side opposite the hall, where the oil circulator had stood, storage shelves were built in with two sliding doors. The pulpit windows left earlier were removed. The sanctuary walls were covered with sheetrock and the ceiling with Gold Bond insulation tile. The work was done by Hill Enterprises of Murfreesboro during the pastorate of The Reverend John Long (1960-1962). While that work was being done, services were held in the Severn Community Building.

As is usually the case, improvement in one area of a building makes another area show up badly. Such was the case in this instance. The renovation in the sanctuary called immediate attention to the faded and worn carpet. Some members opposed more indebtedness for a new carpet at that time, so the WSCS members decided to undertake the project on their own, realizing the work it would involve. A meeting was called to lay plans. We took advantage again of "Little" Doris' artistic talent and had her draw a sketch showing our need. We made many, many copies and mailed them out to friends, family members, doctors, lawyers, preachers, teachers, business firms and everyone

else we hoped would help us by sending contributions. In addition we sold cards, flavoring, served Ruritan dinners and begged.



Fund Raising Ad for New Carpet

In the end we had a lovely green carpet laid, added a green velvet backdrop in the pulpit, a green kneeling pad at the chancel, curtained the choir area, and added the altar cloth and three-piece brass set on the altar table. At the time there were only twelve WSCS members: Marie Beale, Rosa Bryan, Virgie Garris, Mrs. Owen Johnson, Mattie Joyner, Virgie Maddrey, Irene Maddrey, Moselle (Mrs. Henry) Maddrey, Mamie Martin, Doris Stephenson, Essie Porter and me. We raised a total of \$1,257.00 and paid the last bills in full on October 16, 1961.

At conference time in 1960, the Conway church pulled out of the Conway charge and became a station church. On September 1, 1960, for a sum of \$9,715.00 they purchased the parsonage we had been using. This left Severn, Zion and Bethany to form a new three-point charge, which was without a name and without a parsonage.

Under the management of The Reverend John Long (1960-1962), who in earlier years had been a carpenter, we built a new parsonage in Milwaukee. While the parsonage was being built, the charge rented a vacated home in Conway for The Reverend and Mrs. Long. The parsonage was dedicated in March, 1962, and our charge became known as the Milwaukee charge.

After the Severn Methodist Church sanctuary was renovated in 1960, and the indebtedness paid off, the members decided the light fixtures were outdated and should be replaced. The Superintendent, Mr. Stokes, had an electrician come and draw a plan and estimate a price. The electrician recommended there be more fixtures and a change in the placing of the lights in the ceiling. There were those who did not approve the plan because of the marks that would be left in the new ceiling when the lights were moved. A committee was appointed to select and plan new fixtures where the original ones were. That was done, but the lighting has always been poor.

On September 3, 1961, Margaret Sue (Peggy) Johnson and Kenneth Odom of Conway were married. Having grown up in this church, Peggy had belonged to Bright Jewels and the MYF and therefore was familiar with the program of missions in the church. Kenneth had grown up a Baptist but transferred from Conway Baptist Church soon after marrying.

Gradually they accepted places of leadership. Peggy taught for a while in the Primary Department and later was appointed Junior Teacher. She has served on several Commissions and was Chairman of Evangelism and Missions from 1978-1980. She and Gloria Odom were joint MYF Counselors from 1977-1979. In 1984, she was appointed Church Secretary and Treasurer when Stuart Martin resigned. She still holds this position.

Kenneth was on the Pastor Parish Relations Committee from 1978-1980 and served as Chairman from 1983-1984. He was Chairman of Finances and was Parsonage Trustee at two different times. He has served as Usher from 1984 until the present and Assistant Superintendent since 1987.

Kenneth and Peggy have three sons: Ken (Kenneth, Jr.), Richard and Jason. Ken and Richard are in college

and Jason is in high school. They all have good voices and sang in the Youth Choir, have all won pins for perfect attendance, and are always present for Sunday School and Church when they are at home.

On January 31, 1961, Stuart and Louise Martin's daughter, Carol, married Leslie Britt from Milwaukee. He attends with Carol but is still a member of Bethany United Methodist Church. Carol was a Co-Teacher in the Kindergarten Class and later the Primary Class in the early 1970's. When we moved into the new annex, she helped me finance the new furnishings we needed for the kindergarten classroom. Carol has also taught in Vacation Bible School. Leslie and Carol have two sons, Kevin and Keith, who were members of the Sunday School classes and attended regularly during their childhood.

The women of the Church were very concerned after the concrete steps were replaced with brick because there was no support for those who were not as sure-footed as they once were. A contractor, Hassel Lassiter, of Boykins, Virginia, was contacted. His advice was to put an outside iron railing on each side and one down the center from the corner of the building. The church agreed to his plan. That work was done in the spring of 1961.

When R. P. Watson, Jr. (Parker) grew up, he chose to remain at home and farm the family land in the area. In 1965, he married Jean Davis from Galatia. She was a member of Galatia Baptist Church and chose to remain there, but joined our Sunday School and has served in many capacities through her years here. She taught in the Nursery Class for several years and has been very generous contributing and serving at fellowship hours following occasional programs or services. She also served on the committee when two of the classrooms were carpeted in 1984.

Parker has always supported our church with regular attendance, finances, and serving on any committees he is asked to. At present, he is Church Trustee. Several times he has used his influence to get jobs done on the building. He was totally responsible for getting the belfry repaired in 1984, so that the bell could be rung again as in years past.

Jean and Parker have three children: Stephanie; R. P., III; and Jeanie. Stephanie and R. P. are in college and Jeanie is in high school. She is talented in piano and is beginning to help out with the church music. She has started taking organ lessons and hopefully will become our organist one day.

On December 31, 1963, an active and supportive couple, June and Wayne Summers, moved to Severn with their small son, Ronnie. We were delighted when they chose to worship with us. They moved here from Tifton, Georgia. Wayne was plant manager of Standard Spray and Chemical Company which opened up here at that time. They transferred from the Presbyterian Church in Tifton where they had been active members.

June was eager to participate in the church program. In 1966, she was elected assistant to Miss Essie Porter in the Primary Class. During that year Miss Essie fell and broke her hip and had to go to a rest home. June became the teacher and for five years proved herself a willing worker dedicated to the children. For the next twelve or fifteen years she taught in the Children's Department wherever she was needed. She served on a number of committees including Nominations and Personnel and Education. For two years, she was Secretary of the Administrative Board.

Wayne and Ronnie were as regular in attendance as June was, and they contributed generously until Ronnie grew up and Wayne became ill. Wayne died in 1985. In the summer of 1987, June decided to sell her home in Severn and move to Florida where she could be close to her mother who is in failing health. She moved on August 12, 1987. How we miss her!

Because of our dedicated members who gave so much of themselves to mission work in earlier times, our WSCS had a large outreach even though we have always been small in number. The Severn WSCS was honored when Mrs. Henry Maddrey was elected as a delegate to the World Conference of Methodism held in London, England, in the summer of 1966. It was a week-long conference and she was able to attend.

For many years, our WSCS members received the distinction of becoming life members. In order to do this, each member pledged a certain amount of money to contribute to missions each month. By contributing an amount in excess of the pledge amount, a member could be honored with a life membership certificate and a pin. In time, every member of the Severn WSCS was awarded this honor.

By 1967, our church needed a better piano. The committee to select a piano was comprised of my son, Sam, and Doris Stephenson. They selected a Hamilton which at that time was the best piano the Baldwin Company manufactured. The price was \$1,000.00. With a church discount and the trade in on the old one, the cost was \$700.00. The new piano was dedicated on March 19, 1967 by The Reverend Jimmy Sutton (1962-1967).



New Hamilton Piano Dedicated March 19, 1967

In 1968, new Methodist hymnals were donated to our church in loving memory of J. B. Stephenson, Jr. by his wife, Doris; daughter, Doris Ray ("Little" Doris); son, Joe; and sister, Claud. A service of dedication was conducted on March 17, 1968, by the Reverend Billy Herbert (1967-1972). During the same service, he expressed thanks to Lillian M. Stephenson, wife of Moring Stephenson, for the lovely new altar cloth and Bible marker presented to the church in memory of her mother, Emma Watson Mitchiner, and her aunt, Beulah Watson.

In the early years the Baptists and Methodists enjoyed an annual summer picnic. At first, there were few, if any cars in town, and the area roads were unpaved. My earliest memory is of the picnics being held close by on the school ground on July 4. The men nailed boards together to make long tables which the women loaded with food: fried chicken, ham and biscuits are well remembered. Loaf bread was not yet on the market, so naturally sandwiches were missing. Soft drinks were not available to us then, so the picnic drink was always lemonade. It was made in large pails and long-handled metal dippers were used to fill the cups as they were emptied by young and old. Everything had to be brought from home because paper dishes, cups, plates, napkins, etc., were unheard of. I have questioned people in the area older than I, and no one remembers what kind of picnic plates were used. Howard Barnes says he remembers the cups as if it were yesterday. They were made of tin, flat on the bottom with sides straight up and a round handle to hold them by. I remember that every child had one at home and it was almost impossible to turn them over, so there were not many spills.

After cars and better roads were available and nearby beaches opened up, we had our summer picnic at Colerain Beach, Colerain or at Tuscarora Beach near Winton. Still later we settled on Ocean View, Virginia, for our gatherings and went there many years. In the 1950's we were finding the beach so crowded that our experience there was no longer much pleasure.

Somehow, we learned about a privately owned lake resort between Petersburg and Richmond, Virginia, called Moore's Lake. We decided to try that, and found it delightful. My outstanding memory there is seeing my mother in front of the crazy mirror laughing at her reflections until she could laugh no more. Mr. Malory's outstanding recollection is drinking so much lemonade that he was almost sick. Margaret Johnson remembers taking pictures of her sister, Clair Britt, Mamie Martin and others holding up their skirts and wading in the lake. Our picnics were outstandingly clean fun.

Everyone enjoyed Moore's Lake so much that we decided to return a second time. We believe that was in 1956 or

1957. We were never able to go back again because it closed. I was told the owner, Mr. Moore, died and no one continued to maintain it. Everyone who took part in our church picnics thinks of our Moore's Lake experiences as the very best--a great climax!

For the third time in this church history, the railroad was responsible for bringing another Methodist family into our town. In 1966, Marshall Lassiter accepted the job as railroad agent in Severn. He lived in Boykins, Virginia for a while, but in 1967, he moved his wife, Mary, and small son, Keith, to Severn. Very soon they joined our church by transfer from Centenary Methodist Church in Smithfield. They became interested and willing to serve.

K. E. Stokes was Church School Superintendent at the time, but an Assistant was needed, so Marshall was appointed to that office. He served there until 1977. During that time, he either taught or substituted for the Intermediate Class or Young Adult Class wherever he was elected. In 1977, Mr. Stokes resigned from the Superintendent position, and Marshall was elected to take his place with my brother, Cecil, assisting. Marshall held that position until 1987, when he became Teacher of the Young Adult Class. He has worked on many committees and is always dedicated to good causes. He was a Church Trustee for a while, represented the charge as Delegate to the Annual Conference more than once, and is presently Lay Leader.

Mary has also worked in various positions and has served well as Junior and Intermediate Teacher or Assistant. She has directed Bible School, assisted in getting up Christmas programs, helped with fellowship hours and has served on the Educational and Nomination Committees. She is presently Chairperson on Nurture and Membership Care.

Keith was active as he grew up and enjoyed taking the lead to get things done. He started a plan for the youth of the Church School to conduct the service and teach all the classes for a Sunday from time to time. He organized the Youth Choir and sang in it until he left for college. He served as Acolyte when he was growing up. On March 5,

1988, he married Christine Doris Keller from Raleigh. They met while Keith was working there and were married in the Lord of Life Lutheran Church in Garner.

During the Lassiters' early years here their family grew with the birth of two daughters, Rebecca (Becky) and Vicki. They have also taken active parts in Sunday School classes and sang in the Youth Choir. Becky was a substitute teacher to Mr. Railey for a year. Vicki has been a faithful and dependable assistant to Carol Ferguson in the Nursery for three years.

A year ago, Marshall's niece, Carlotta, came to live with his family. She had perfect attendance for the year 1988. We have grown to love her and are happy to have her live in the community and worship with us.

Another change in Methodism took place in 1968. Through a union of the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church, the largest Methodist Church in the United States was formed, namely the United Methodist Church. When that took place, the name of the Women's organization was again changed from Woman's Society of Christian Service (WSCS) to the United Methodist Women (UMW). The magazine, The World Outlook continued, but The Methodist Woman was changed to Response. Also at this time, the Methodist Youth Fellowship (MYF) became the United Methodist Youth Fellowship (UMYF) and the children's missionary organization, The Bright Jewels, was discontinued. There was also a movement to coordinate all of the children's ministry within each local church according to information obtained from F. Belton Joyner, Jr. in July of 1987.

Early in 1968, we welcomed another couple to our Sunday School. They were George Robert and Brenda Francis. He came from Conway Baptist Church in Conway and she came from Barnes' Church near Newsoms, Virginia. They attended regularly. Brenda worked in the Children's Department either teaching or substituting for about ten years. Later she left Severn and our church. George Robert remained in Severn and continues to attend and support our church.

Later in 1968, another family moved to Severn and immediately joined us and became active members. They

were Mr. and Mrs. Major Manning and children, Teresa and Steve. They had lived a few years in Pendleton, but were originally from Bethel. They attended regularly and were very supportive. Mrs. Manning soon joined the UMW and was a faithful member participating in programs and studies. She upheld her responsibility to pledge to missions. Soon after being elected treasurer, her husband became too sick to work or be left alone. They decided to return home to Bethel where their parents were still living and could give them the help they needed. I'm not sure, but I believe they were with us only about two years. We regretted their having to leave us.

Junie Bryan, as did the other Bryan children, grew up participating in the church programs. He came regularly and enjoyed being a part of the youth activities. He was president of the MYF in the early 1960's. In 1963, he married Gail Vick who came to us from Branchville Baptist Church in Branchville, Virginia. They lived in a mobile home beside his mother's house. Their first daughter, Wendy, was born there. They later purchased a home on White Street and lived there until they moved to Franklin, Virginia, around 1972. The family attended church well and participated in all the church activities. Wendy was in the Nursery and Gail taught in the Children's Department for two years. We were sorry to see them go. A second daughter, Andrea, was born to them after they left Severn.

In the early 1970's, Raymond and Rita Bryant, with their two young girls, Michelle and Angela, moved to Severn. They purchased a home on White Street which was previously owned by Mr. E. T. Britt. They moved here from near Branchville, Virginia. A son, Lee, was later born.

The Bryants joined our Sunday School and attended well and supported the program for several years. Later Raymond and Rita seemed to lose interest, but the children continued coming and participating in their classes, all the programs, Bible School and later the Youth Choir. The girls joined this church on profession of faith and were baptized in the early 1980's. The family sold their home here in 1984 or 1985, and moved to Roanoke Rapids.

By the late 1960's, the teachers felt a need for more space in order to better separate the different age groups.

Just before The Reverend Billy Herbert (1967-1972) left, he and the Trustees tried to get financial help from the Duke Foundation to build additional rooms, but requirements were not feasible.

The members decided to undertake it with another bank loan. A plan was decided upon and the Trustees were authorized to borrow the amount of money necessary for the addition, not to exceed \$10,000.00. The plan called for an extension on the left of the present classrooms with three additional rooms and a connecting hallway, all to be heated with electricity. Hill Enterprises of Murfreesboro took the contract.

In the meantime, however, there were two trees which had to be removed to make room for this addition. My brother, Cecil, employed Phillips Drainage Company of Murfreesboro to cut the trees and level the ground for the building. This was done at no cost to the church.

Work was begun in May, 1972 and was completed a few months later at a cost of approximately, \$9,500.00. The final payment on that loan was made in April, 1977, during the tenure of The Reverend Dan Bowman (1972-1977).

Another highlight of our church came as a result of the effort of the United Methodist Women in making our first Chrismon tree. The word "Chrismon" is derived from two Latin words: Chris(tus), translated Christ and monogramma, translated (mon)ogram. The first syllable of each word combine to make the word Chrismon. The first Chrismons were designed and made in 1957 by the Lutheran Church of the Ascension in Danville, Virginia. Since that year they have rapidly become a tradition among Christian churches in the celebration of Christmas. The designs are monograms of, and symbols for, our Lord Jesus Christ. They are made in white and gold symbolizing purity, perfection, majesty and glory of the Son of God. Because these designs have been used by His followers since Bible times, they are the heritage of all Christians and serve to remind each of us, regardless of denomination, of the One we follow.

Early in 1972, some of our United Methodist Women heard about the Chrismon tree and became interested. Doris Stephenson and Ruth Anderson were appointed to

research the cost, materials, patterns, etc., and we decided to give it a try. Ruth and Doris gathered the materials and did the cutting. They would set a day for other members to come and help decorate the forms. It was a delightful endeavor.

Our first tree appeared for Christmas, 1972, which was the first year The Reverend Dan Bowman (1972-1977) was with us. The tree was the first of its kind in this area. That year, our Christmas program was given by the young people of the church and centered exclusively around the Chrismons on the tree. It was a very impressive service as they pointed out the symbols, told their meaning and quoted related verses of Scripture. Each Christmas we enjoy the beauty and sacredness of this tree and feel a deep appreciation for what it symbolizes.



The First Chrismon Tree, Christmas, 1972

During his last year as our pastor, The Reverend Bill Herbert built a home on Watson Street and moved his family to Severn. They transferred their memberships from Bethany, in Milwaukee to our church. His family included his wife, Temp; a son, Bill, Jr.; and daughters, Pam, Karen and Lori. He commuted to his next appointment for about two years and then left his family and gave up the ministry. The three older children were almost through high school.

Karen married very young on August 16, 1973 and has two children, Hope and Lee. The marriage did not last, but she remained here until 1980. The children came to Sunday School and were precious in the classes. In 1980, Karen married again and soon moved away with her husband who went into military service.

Bill married Retain Seladier, a Chowan College student from Micronesia. They also have two children, Anya and Billy, III, who were baptized in our church. They attend Sunday School often and are very nice children.

After Lori's graduation from college, she found temporary work in Jackson and later in Greensboro. She is now making her home in Nags Head where she has found better employment.

Tempi remains a member of our church and currently serves as the Hospital Home Sickness Chairperson.

On December 30, 1973, Pam married Ronnie Phipps, Sr., who was a member of Murfreesboro Baptist Church. They did not settle in Severn until they purchased the Johnny and Mary Heller home in October of 1986. Pam moved her beauty shop here and Ronnie went to work at Resinall Corporation. By this time, they had three children: Jennifer, Ronnie, Jr. (Ron) and Candice. Pam was Co-Teacher with Frances Wheeler for a year in the Nursery. She was needed more as Young Adult Teacher, so for several years she served there. Later, when Mr. Railey's health failed, she replaced him as Adult Class Teacher. At present she teaches the Intermediate Class.

When Gene Martin found it necessary to resign as Superintendent of the Sunday School, Pam accepted that position where she is currently serving. In the past she has worked in Bible School as a Director, Co-Director and Teacher and she has helped with Christmas programs.

Ronnie is Teacher of the Junior Class at the present time. Jennifer is an Acolyte with Wendy Wheeler. She and Ron sang in the Youth Choir.

They have a foreign student, Robi Ruben, living in their home. He is a senior in Northampton County High

School East. The church has welcomed him; and he has proven himself to be a very nice young man. Wherever he goes from here, he will go with our love and blessings and he will be missed.

After Hugo Umstead's death in 1976, his wife, Elsie, wanted to make a contribution to the church in his memory. The Cokesbury Hymnals being used in our Sunday School were badly worn and needed to be replaced, so she gave new ones. Doris Stephenson purchased them for her and identified the honoree and donor on a sticker in the front of the book. Whenever we open a book we are reminded of what Mr. Hugo meant to our church through the years he was with us.

On March 21, 1976, C. J. Maddrey, III, married Deborah Ann Ross of Franklin, Virginia. Their wedding was held in our church, and she soon transferred her membership here. There was need for a Teacher in the Nursery Class soon after she came, and Deborah accepted the position. She worked in that class either as Teacher, Assistant or Co-Teacher for seven years. She has also helped with Bible School. C. J. taught the Intermediate Class for four years and served as Usher for several. As explained earlier, he played a large part in getting the pews refinished in 1981. C. J. and Deborah have three children: a son, Shawn, and two daughters, Jessica and Lacey. All of them are still in school.

Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Byrd had lived in Severn since 1970, but they were still members of Ashley's Grove Baptist Church. They have six children: Harvey, Jr.; Earl Judson (E. J.); William; Cynthia (Cindy); Debra (Debby) and Lisa. As they grew up, some of their friends invited them to attend the Methodist Church. They liked it and became active in the class work, attended regularly, sang in the choir and participated in church programs for a long time. As time passed, the boys grew up, left home, married and moved away. Mr. and Mrs. Byrd stopped attending, but the girls joined this church on profession of faith and are still on our roll.

Mrs. Byrd believes in baptism by immersion. She consented for the girls to become Methodists if the church would allow them to be immersed. Our minister, The Reverend Dan Bowman, arranged for the minister from the

Severn Baptist Church to handle the baptism. The Reverend Wyatt baptized both Debby and Cindy by immersion. They were received into our church in the summer of 1976. Lisa, who was younger, was baptized by immersion on March 23, 1980, by The Reverend Kenneth Pittman, the Baptist Minister at the time. She was received into membership of our church by The Reverend Clarence O'Briant.

When The Reverend Vance Way (1977-1979) arrived on the charge, he was concerned that the MYF in all the churches was at an almost inactive state. He immediately combined the three churches into one organization, meeting at the different churches. Leaders in each church helped to coordinate the program. He combined more than the usual amount of recreation with the planned MYF program, hoping interest would increase. When he left the charge two years later, however, the Severn fellowship disbanded. Even though the leaders, Peggy and Gloria Odom, tried very hard, they could never rekindle any interest. That was the first time in almost half a century there had not been an active Young People's Organization in this church. That inactivity has continued to the present time.

The Reverend Way also encouraged the church to air condition the sanctuary. In July, 1977, with the help of another loan, a unit was installed to cool the sanctuary and the two adjoining classrooms. The cost was \$2,740.00. The loan was paid off October 9, 1978.

On January 18, 1977, another couple joined Severn United Methodist Church. They were Johnny and Gloria Odom who had recently moved into town bringing their two sons, Randy and Scott, and their daughter, Crystal. Johnny transferred from Conway Baptist Church, and Gloria from Hobbsville Baptist. We welcomed them and they were soon attending Church School regularly. The children were nice and easy to teach and were happy in their class work. They had good voices and were among the leaders when the Youth Choir was organized. When The Reverend Way came and organized a charge MYF, the boys joined and Gloria served with Peggy Odom as a counselor for the Severn group for two years.

Gloria has taught or substituted in all the children's classes from Nursery through Intermediate and was Youth

Coordinator for several years. She served on the Nominating Committee for a term and also on the Pastor Parish Relations Committee. She has willingly worked in Bible School, Christmas programs and fellowship hours. Johnny has been generous helping keep the church grounds, and recently seems to have been appointed chief "shrubbery-keeper". He worked with Cecil and C. J. when the pews were being refinished in 1981, helping move them to Ahoskie, and helping unload and fasten them back into place when they were returned.

Tony Martin who had lived in Severn for some years married Eloise (Ellie) Outland from Murfreesboro in 1977. She had three teenagers by a previous marriage, two daughters, Shawn and Sharlene, and a younger son, Shane. We were delighted they chose to attend and join our church. Tony is still a member of Bethany Church in Milwaukee where he grew up. Ellie transferred her membership from the Meherrin Baptist Church near Murfreesboro. They all enrolled in Sunday School at once. They were regular in attendance and worked willingly, taking part in all the activities.

The children had good voices and sang in the Youth Choir until they graduated from high school. Each of them has a perfect attendance pin. Shawn and Sharlene have six bars and Shane has seven. Shawn joined the church on profession of faith and was baptized in 1980. The others joined later.

Tony is not regular in attendance anymore, but Ellie has been active in many areas: teaching or substituting almost continuously, serving as Assistant Coordinator of Age-Level Ministries, a member of the Parsonage Committee, Teacher of the Primary Class and recently, Chairperson on Nominations. Shawn married and moved away. Sharlene married and has a little girl, Calissa. She is living with the family here. Shane is in college, but as all of our college students do, he comes back when he can.

For several years in the late 1960's, Easter sunrise services for area churches were held on the Conway school ground. By the 1970's they had been discontinued. We had never observed such an Easter service in Severn. In 1978, the first Easter The Reverend Way was our pastor, one of

our members challenged him to plan a service for us and see what would happen. He did that, and we invited the Baptists to join us at a service at the cemetery. It was a big success. The morning was lovely with the birds chirping in the nearby woodland as the sun rose. It was such a realistic reminder of the Resurrection morning that we have never wanted to stop it. The Baptists assumed leadership the next Easter. The group was invited to the Fellowship Hall of the Baptist Church where Wallace and Elva Stephenson served doughnuts and coffee. We have continued to alternate the service and fellowship each year since. There have been only two rainy days when the service had to be held inside the church.

In July, 1978, it was brought to the attention of the members that there had never been a homecoming observed in honor of present members. A committee was appointed with Marshall Lassiter chairman and plans were set in motion. Letters were mailed to all former members of the church inviting them to come and attend the worship hour and then join in the fun. The Baptist Church members were included as well.

On September 10, 1978, there was a full house in attendance to hear The Reverend Vance Way deliver the message, assisted by The Reverend Kenneth Pittman, pastor of the Baptist Church. His congregation joined in all of the activities of the day. Flowers for the service were given by Ruth Anderson in loving memory of her father, the late Sidney Boothe.

Following the service, everyone went to the community building where they were registered by Emma Boone. The food was plentiful, especially the homemade ice cream served outside under the trees. The fellowship was delightful. It was good to visit with former members and loved ones happy to be together again. There were more than two hundred and fifty in attendance. Before departing, the members and guests declared it a most rewarding day of worship and Christian fellowship.

As I've stated earlier, my mother was a dedicated lifelong member of this church. At her death in August of 1978, a Baldwin Organ was given to our church in memory of her parents, Eulalia Flythe Hill and Rowland Hill. Both

were active members of the early church. The organ was installed the following spring and was dedicated on Easter Sunday, April 15, 1979, by The Reverend Vance Way.



New Organ Dedicated April 15, 1979

Miss Essie Porter's dedication to our church was recorded earlier. Even though she had lived in the rest home for more than a decade, she was still remembered with love by the children, now grown up, whose lives she had touched. In 1979, the Young Adult Class, under the leadership of Irene Maddrey, honored Miss Essie by placing brass collection plates in the sanctuary and a Bible in each classroom.

As the years went by, one by one, the early choir members passed away, but there were young voices to gradually replace them. The music continued to be good until the school system removed all music teaching and choral training from the schools and voices were no longer trained to sing. By the mid 1970's, those who had given the choir their best for a long time began to age and feel inadequate. They would no longer take the lead in the services so we had no choir.

When The Reverend Clarence O'Briant came (1979-1983) he said to some of the young people, "Please, let's get a

choir started. A service is just not right without a choir." Keith Lassiter, who was in high school took it upon himself to try to start a Youth Choir. He solicited the help of Ruth Anderson and me. We started with a group of twelve youths who knew nothing about singing or reading music. None of them had ever studied music with the exception of Keith who was a member of the school band. Because we wanted to develop into a group the church would be proud of, we accepted the challenge. We set up a one-hour practice session once a week. I assumed all the planning and responsibility for music. Attendance was good and they were soon able to sing specials for our preaching services.

Joe Collier was very proud of the group and, as I mentioned earlier, all the children and young folks loved him. Occasionally they would ask to sing his favorite hymn, "The Old Rugged Cross", as a special. He was instrumental in getting the church to purchase choir robes for them and paid the first \$50.00 to start the fund. His health was failing, and he was hospitalized while the robes were on order. The first Sunday they were worn, he was not able to attend the service. He did not live to return to the church he loved so much, not even to see the choir robes he was responsible for obtaining. The next time the robes were worn, it was to sing "The Old Rugged Cross" for his funeral service.

As the choir members finished high school and went on to college, as they all have thus far, they had to leave the choir. Others joined as they became old enough. During the nine years we worked together, the highlight came with a performance of the youth musical, "The Holy Child", for Christmas, 1984. Ruth Anderson was no longer helping us, so Frances Wheeler volunteered to assist me in all the arrangements and planning. At that time, there were thirteen in the group including Becky and Vicki Lassiter; Shawn Maddrey; Crystal, Jason, Ken, Randy, Richard and Scott Odom; Shane and Sharlene Outland; Jeanie Watson and Kim Wheeler.

By the spring of 1988, the last of the dependable singers with strong voices had graduated. The few who remained felt defeated, became dissatisfied and lost interest. There was no other choice but to discontinue the Youth Choir.

On April 24, 1980, Ronnie Summers and Debby Byrd were married in our church. When their little girl, Sandy, was born, Debby brought her to the Sunday School nursery before she was a month old. She had perfect attendance for four years. Sometimes Ronnie would come to Sunday School, but usually Debby brought her and came back for her after classes were over. It saddens the members of the church that this family is no longer attending.

On August 31, 1980, we had the good fortune to enroll Frances Wheeler and her daughters, Kim and Wendy, into our church. A son, Chad, later joined. Pins for perfect attendance the previous quarter were awarded that Sunday. Kim and Wendy were impressed and asked how they could get one, too. They were told, "Just be here every Sunday unless you are sick". That was eight and one half years ago and they are wearing pins with eight bars. Later, when Chad got to the Primary Class, he also became challenged. His pin has four bars. These children are smart and obedient and a joy to work with. All three sang in the Youth Choir and did their best. Chad did not like to sing but he tolerated it. Kim, now in high school, is Assistant Teacher for Ronnie Phipps in the Junior Class.

Frances has been Co-Teacher in the Nursery, Teacher of the Junior Class and most recently Teacher of the Intermediate Class. She served two terms on the Nominating Committee and is presently on the Pastor Parish Relations Committee, is a Church Trustee and is Secretary to the Administrative Council.

On December 21, 1980, Frances and the children were baptized and she joined our church. Kim has joined since then. Frances' mother lived with the family. Although she was Lutheran, she joined our Sunday School, attended regularly and contributed until she became ill. At her death, the family chose to have her funeral service in our church. The Reverend O'Briant carried out the family's wishes and used the Lutheran service.

Membership in Severn United Methodist Church has always been small--never reaching a hundred members. The roll usually stays between sixty and seventy-five members. November 3, 1981, was a red-letter day for us when The Reverend Clarence O'Briant baptized and received into

membership eight new members on profession of faith and one transfer by letter. They were Randy, Richard and Scott Odom; Shane and Sharlene Outland; Tammy Richardson; and R. P., III and Stephanie Watson. Eloise P. Outland Martin transferred by letter bringing the number of new members to nine.

Throughout the years the sanctuary pews were painted several times, and the paint buildup eventually became a problem. While the members were debating what action to take, my oldest brother, William, volunteered to have them refinished in memory of our mother. Other members of the family also contributed with my brother, Cecil, making all the arrangements. Since the work was being done in Ahoskie, it was considered best to move a few pews at a time. When they were finished and returned, more were taken. All the pews and pulpit furniture were done that way. Cecil and his son, C. J., with the help of Johnny Odom and Wallace Branch, who worked for the Maddreys, hauled them to and from Ahoskie and fastened them back in place when they were returned. This was a big job for the men, but they did it willingly, with no cost to the church. This work was done in 1981. The improvement in the interior of the sanctuary was almost unbelievable.

Gene Martin, youngest son of Stuart and Louise, married Betty Ann Martin of Milwaukee in 1981. They lived in Milwaukee for a while and then built a home on White Street here. Betty Ann came to us from Bethany United Methodist Church. They have a daughter, Tammy, and a son, Grant. The children both love coming to Sunday School and only sickness keeps them away. They both have had perfect attendance for two years. Betty Ann taught in Bible School in 1988, and also helped with the Christmas program.

Gene is presently on the Parsonage Committee and was Sunday School Superintendent for most of 1988. A change of jobs necessitated Sunday work and he had to resign from that position. He is generous with his time and electrical talent. He wired a bell system for the Sunday School rooms and put in a receptacle for the Chrismon tree. He keeps the light in the outside bulletin board in repair, sets up the spotlights for the choir boys at Christmas, and handles the spotlighting for programs inside the church.

When Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Garris became too feeble to live alone in 1982, their daughter, Dora Lee Williamson, retired from her job in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and came home to care for them. Her son, Stephen, came with her. They immediately transferred their membership back to this church, and Dora Lee joined our UMW. It was good to have them worship with us again, but it was only for a short time. Mrs. Garris died in July of 1985, and Mr. Garris in December of 1986. In the meantime, Dora Lee developed arthritis and later suffered a stroke. She could no longer live independently and in 1987 went to live with her daughter in Colona, Illinois, near Chicago. Stephen soon left this area, too.

Another young and valuable couple moved near Severn and came to our church first in 1983. They were L. T. and Carol Ferguson who came from Boykins, Virginia. They joined the Young Adult Class, but before too long Carol was needed in the Nursery. She accepted the position as teacher where she currently serves. They have three children: Bryan, Stuart and Heather. They have had perfect attendance records all their lives. It takes dedication for parents to accomplish a record like this. L. T. is a faithful member of the Young Adult Class and serves as Class President. The church is proud of them and glad they decided to worship with us.

Our church members always prided themselves on having the only church steeple bell to ring out across the area on Sunday mornings. After many years the steeple began to leak, the support holding the bell rotted and instead of it swinging back and forth, the bell would turn over and hang. The men of the church who thought they knew, said it could not be made to ring again. But, as stated earlier, never underestimate a bunch of determined women who are reluctant to take "no" for an answer. We continued to insist until a housetop man, Louis Greg, of Boykins, Virginia was contacted by Parker Watson. He agreed to give it a try. Parker never let him forget it until the belfry was repaired. In 1984, the bell was again rung for the first time in many years.

Eventually the walls of the two classrooms and connecting hallway, added in 1944, were in need of paint. The young adult class brought that to the attention of the

church in 1984. The Reverend Hobie Burnside (1983-1988) liked to paint. He volunteered to do the job with the help of some of the young people. Paint for the rooms was \$100.61 and on July 29, 1984, \$250.00 was paid to The Reverend Burnside for his work. With the walls improved, the floors needed to either be painted, refinished or carpeted. The church voted for carpeting and Jean Watson was asked to head that Committee. Lloyd's Carpet Shop of Roanoke Rapids accepted the job for a price of \$905.23 which was paid October 22, 1984.

The church had received memorial and honorary contributions for a number of years. The UMW requested that this amount not be put into the regular budget but held for a special project. By 1984, after twenty-four years of use, the green velvet in the sanctuary was badly faded and needed replacing. The women contacted Mrs. Dorothy Harrell of Dorothy's Antiques in Murfreesboro and had her replace the green with the red now in use. The bill for the kneeling pad, choir curtain, upholstering of the pulpit chairs and pulpit backdrop was \$1,000.16 and was paid on May 5, 1985.

On September 12, 1987, the Town of Severn celebrated its centennial. Being a small town, having a parade would have been impossible without the cooperation of everyone in town and for miles around. Churches, civic organizations, businesses, schools and anyone who had something interesting to show, were invited to participate. Our church asked the Youth Choir to furnish a float. My brother, Cecil, and Gene Martin did the building; Keith Britt did the painting; and Ruth Anderson and I were in charge of covering and decorating. Ruth played the piano on the float and I directed the choir members who chose to ride and sing with us. Some members chose to be clowns and did not ride on the float. Small though we were, we were there doing our best.



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Church Float for Severn Centennial

Earlier in this book there is a record of Joe Gay being a member of this church in the 1930's. When he grew up, he married Mary Lee Bottoms of Margaretsville and joined Sharon Church. They have one daughter, Jonell, who is a member of Sharon Church and also Sharon UMW. She married David Little and they have one daughter, Beth. Sharon Church has no young parents left on the roll except Jonell and David, so there are no children except Beth. They wanted to give Beth Sunday School experience with other children, so Jonell brought her to Vacation Bible School and enrolled her in Sunday School here in 1987. If there is a reason Jonell needs to be in Sharon for a Sunday, it is understood. Beth wears a one-year attendance pin because she is counted present at whichever church she attends. Jonell has an outstanding personality. She is always warm and friendly and helps out wherever she is needed. She substitutes for teachers when asked and has played an outstanding part in both Christmas programs since she came. We are delighted to have them.

The most recent addition to our Sunday School is an exchange student from Norway, Malvin Kvanne. He is

spending the school year with the Jackie and Frances Wheeler family. He seems happy with us; and we love having him with our group of young people for each service. He always attends with the Wheeler children and now has a six-month pin. We feel sure he will be wearing his nine-month pin by the time he graduates and returns to his home in Norway in June. We will miss him, but he will be remembered with love as he goes with our blessings.

SHORT TERM MEMBERS

The church record books of early membership seem to have been lost or destroyed. Only the very recent ones are available. I wanted to add to this history the names of all who worshiped with us and gave of their talents and support, even if for a short time. Some of these families, as well as individuals, did unite with the church. Others were here for so short a time that they joined only the Sunday School. I believe some were church members during the early years, but were not active because there is no record of their performance. These names are from the Providence Sunday School record books from 1916 when the new building was erected in Severn.

1916 until their deaths were Rebecca (Becky) Williams and her three unmarried daughters: Augusta (Pink) Wood, and Helen and Laura Williams who were by a second marriage. They were members on roll, but there is no record of any participation in the church program and I cannot recall any. The last one to die was Miss Pink in 1950.

1916 Mr. Jimmy Darden, the first railroad agent in Severn; wife, Louvenia; and son, Jimmy, Jr. When Jimmy, Jr. was only about eight or ten years old, he was kicked by a horse and died a few hours later. Mr. Darden died soon afterward. Mrs. Darden lived with her sister, Mrs. John Howell. She did not attend regularly but was a member of the Woman's Society of Christian Service and became a life member in 1952. Records indicate she died in 1955.

1916 Mrs. Lou Darden's brother, Waverly Smith and children: Lizzie, Clyde, Will, Maggie, Carrie and Edward were members here until about 1920 when they moved to Portsmouth, Virginia.

1917 a school teacher, Miss Jenny Newby.

1917 a school teacher, Mrs. Pittman.

1918-1924 Garnet Grant, daughter of Ulyses S. Grant, joined Providence on profession of faith in 1918, but nothing is recorded, except occasional attendance. She was a sister of Janie Grant's husband, Ulyses (Ulie) R. Grant.

1919-1920 C. K. Harvey, contractor and builder of all the concrete houses in town--all on White Street. Working with him, M. C. Osborn, whose wife came with him. They were nice people and attended often but moved on somewhere else when the homes were completed.

1919-1920 Miss Irene Pritchette, a fourth grade teacher, and her sister, Miss Lou Eva Pritchette, a high school teacher.

1921 Miss Essie Mae Truitt, school music teacher.

1921 Mrs. Clara Morricle, primary teacher.

1921 Miss Joy McBane, teacher.

1927-1935 Dr. A. R. Hodge joined our church but seldom attended. He died at thirty-five years of age.

1929 Mrs. Mary Long Woodard, wife of Henry Woodard of Pendleton, and young daughter, Betty Long Woodard.

1929 Miss McGhehe, school teacher.

1929 Mr. and Mrs. Willie Brewer and Virginia.

1931-1932 Ralph, Raymond and Hilda Ricks. Their father farmed for Mack Long.

1935-1938 Herman (Shorty) McCoy joined this church and attended regularly and was a supportive member until he moved to Boykins, Virginia in 1938. His younger brother, Thurlow, lived with him and also attended until he left.

1936 Dr. and Mrs. W. F. Gibson came to replace Dr. Hodge, but stayed a very short while.

1936 Carol Melson. I can recall the name but no one remembers more.

1943 Miss Willie Pritchard, high school English teacher.

1943 Rubin, Nannie Lee and James Bottoms--teenagers, but we cannot remember who they were.

1943-1944 Mr. and Mrs. Robert Woodard and children: Elizabeth, Robert and Marie. They farmed the Archie Fleetwood land for two years. They all joined the Sunday School and attended regularly. The children were active in the MYF.

1943-1946 Tommie Barnes was a Sunday School member and very active in MYF.

1948-1952 Shirley Collier, granddaughter of Minnie Adams, with whom she lived at that time.

1951-1953 Jean Gregory, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Otto Gregory, and Nellie Mae, Gladys, William Lee and Barbara Jean Johnson, children of Mr. and Mrs. Johnny Johnson who lived in the old Sam Britt home on the Murfreesboro road.

1954-1956 Mrs. Marvin Gray and children, Susan and Jimmy. They lived in the old Sheriff Stephenson home.

1954-1962 Mrs. L. O. Johnson, mother of Mrs. Howard Barnes, attended regularly and contributed financially. She joined the WSCS and was active.

1960's Mrs. Nita Baker, Sam, Sissy and Carolyn.

1970 Bruce Beasley, Marshall Lassiter's nephew who lived with them about three years and attended Northampton East High School. He attended this church during that time. He left Severn in January of his senior year.

1974 Mr. and Mrs. John Ahearn and children, John Patrick and Lisa lived on Watson Street. He was business administrator of the Northampton County Health Department a short while. During that time Mrs. Ahearn assisted Jean Watson in organizing a Christmas program.

1987-1988 Ricky and Mary Beth Birdsong joined the Sunday School. Mary Beth had three months of perfect attendance. He sang in the youth choir a short while. Mary Beth is still on our roll and attends.

PASTORS FROM 1874

1874-1875	James L. Lumsden
1875-1876	Ben P. Jordan
1876-1880	Ben F. Tennile
1880-1883	J. E. McSparren
1883-1887	B. S. Herrink
1888	John M. Campbell
1889	N. J. Pruden
1890-1892	J. H. M. Giles
1892-1895	A. J. Parker
1895-1898	Phillip Greening
1898-1900	Rufus Bradley
1900-1904	W. C. Merritt
1904-1908	W. T. Craven
1908-1910	S. T. Moyle
1910-1912	B. H. Black
1912-1915	E. E. Rose
1915-1918	D. L. Earnhardt
1918-1921	J. J. Boone
1921-1924	J. B. Thompson
1924-1928	E. B. Craven
1928-1931	H. C. Ewing
1931-1935	G. B. Starling
1935-1939	L. V. Harris
1939-1942	J. L. Smith
1942-1944	L. C. Brothers
1944-1950	J. E. Garlington
1950-1955	E. R. Shuller
1955-1960	Carl L. Wright
1960-1962	John Long
1962-1967	James E. Sutton
1967-1972	W. E. Herbert
1972-1977	Daniel D. Bowman
1977-1979	Vance C. Way
1979-1983	Clarence O'Briant
1983-1988	Hobart W. Burnside
1988-present	David Spaulding

In 1984, I questioned the Conference Historian, C. Franklin Grill, concerning some of the pastoral appointments which seemed to conflict with the Charge records. On September, 6, 1984, I received the following answer:

"In many cases during the early years, the conferences met in December and the preacher actually served the church the following year. This may account for some of the discrepancy we may note in the dates above."

CHURCH OFFICERS

Sunday School Superintendents

1896-1902	R. E. Railey
1902-1905	J. B. Stephenson, Sr.
1905-1911	R. E. Railey (died July 1911)
1911-1915	no record
1915-1930	D. Wallace Watson (died December 14, 1930)
1931-1933	M. L. Martin
1933-1945	Moselle (Mrs. Henry) Maddrey
1945-1949	K. E. Stokes
1949-1953	Rufus Johnson
1953-1955	Cecil Maddrey
1955-1965	J. B. Stephenson, Jr.
1965-1977	K. E. Stokes
1977-1987	Marshall Lassiter
1988-6 mos.	Gene Martin
1988-present	Pam Phipps

Assistants

E. K. White
R. E. Railey
J. B. Stephenson, Sr.
J. B. Stephenson, Sr.
Royal Watson
Royal Watson
Royal Watson
Cecil Maddrey
Hugo Umstead
K. E. Stokes
Rufus Johnson 65-66
M. E. Lassiter 66-77
Cecil Maddrey
Kenneth Odom
Kenneth Odom

Secretaries and Treasurers

1915-1916	D'Arcy Watson
1916-1918	J. B. Stephenson, Jr. (while J. B. was in service, the records were signed "Secretary", no name)
1919-1923	J. B. Stephenson, Jr.
1924-1926	Royal Watson
1927	Otis Ricks
1928-1954	J. B. Stephenson, Jr.
1955-1984	Stuart Martin
1984-present	Peggy Odom

Those who were united in wedlock, having lovely ceremonies in this sanctuary, were the following:

Hazel Elizabeth Stephenson to Dr. Joseph H. Meadows
July 16, 1950

Constance Maxine Maddrey to Carlton Durwood Allen
June 7, 1952

Naomi Jane Railey to Malcom Reid Chitty
June 16, 1957

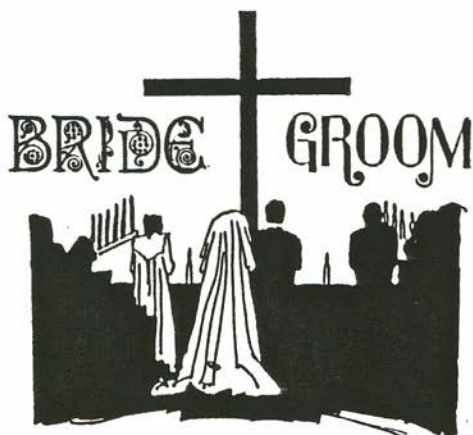
Rosalyn Worrell Railey to Bruce Cannon Johnson
December 24, 1961

Karen Patrice Herbert to Edward Lee Johnson
August 16, 1973

Deborah Ann Ross to Cecil Jarvis Maddrey, III
March 21, 1976

Debra Ann Byrd to Ronald Wayne Summers
April 24, 1980

Karen Herbert Johnson to Rickey Ray Sawyer
December 28, 1980



CONCLUSION

We love our church and are proud of our heritage. Many of our members have gone out in various areas of the world and have served well. To our regret, we have never sent out a full-time minister of the Gospel or a full-time Christian worker. Shall we let that be a challenge for the future? May God strengthen us.

I am not proud that in ¹⁸⁹⁵1985 we had only ten subscriptions to our church paper, The Christian Advocate, and today there is only one. The Advocate is an excellent, reliable way to know what happens in North Carolina Methodism.

Our UMW is smaller in number than it has ever been. We challenge the younger women to join with us, or organize separately. We are all needed to help carry on the mission work of the world. We are also hoping and praying that very soon we will again have an active and enthusiastic UMYF.

As stated in the Severn Centennial book in 1987:

"This has been a church home for area Methodists longer than any of us can remember, but those who know its life story and accomplishments know that it has always stood for all that is good and worthwhile in a Christian Community."

May it continue so!