

FOREWORD

Pre-Historical Notes of Sims Methodist Church

By: Miss Lessie Simpson

During the month of September 1919 the Rev. J. Herbert Miller, pastor of the Calvary Charge, (a Mission of the First Methodist Church of Wilson, N. C.), and Mr. Charles L. Coon, Supt. of Public Schools of Wilson County, organized a Sunday School at the Rock Hill Graded School, (now Lamm's School) with the hopes and aspiration of establishing a Methodist Church in that community. The School progressed nicely, reaching an enrollment of over 100, children and adults, in a very short time, but after nearly a years work it was concluded that the majority of the school's membership was Baptist minded, and that a Methodist Church in that locality would not be fruitful, the idea was abandoned. In the meantime the Pastor of the Bailey Methodist Charge contacted the Rev. Mr. Miller about a church he was serving located about two miles North of The Town of Sims, known as The Bethlehem Church.

The Bethlehem Church, which was organized sometime around 1828, was in a poor state of repair; the faithful members were nearly all deceased; the Church Community was largely made up of transit tenants; the attendance, support, and interest nearly nil. He assured Mr. Miller that The Bailey Charge would support the movement of the closing of Bethlehem, and aid him, in any way possible, in organizing a new Methodist congregation in the Town of Sims, N. C.

The Rev. Mr. Miller, and a number of interested Methodist who lived in The Town of Sims and the surrounding community, but held church membership in distant churches, set about getting such a movement underway.

On the 4th Sunday afternoon of May 1920 at 3 o'clock a Special Conference was held in The Sims Graded School, and The Sims Methodist Church was organized with the following members, by transfer certificates becoming its Charter Members:

W. H. Jones, from the Stantonsburg Methodist Church; Mrs. J. S. Bailey from the Pleasant Grove Methodist Church; D. H. Glover, J. W. Lamm, Mrs. J. W. Lamm from The Bethlehem Methodist Church; S. H. Glover, Mrs. S. H. Glover, Miss Nina Glover, R. C. Lamm, Mrs. R. C. Lamm, Hubert Simpson, Daisy Simpson, Florence Simpson, Lessie Simpson, Mrs. W. Anderson Daniel, all from The Hornes Methodist Church (Nash Co.), W. Anderson Daniel from The First Christian Church, Wilson, N. C.; and J. L. Hinnant from The Buckhorn Methodist Church, (wilson Co.)

Some years later the N. C. Conference sold the Bethlehem Church Building to a Methodist congregation near Walstonburg, N. C. who used its timbers in the construction of its Church.

HISTORY SIMS METHODIST CHURCH--1920-1965

Prepared from Records & Memory

by Lessie Simpson - Nov. 1965

ORGANIZATION OF SIMS METHODIST CHURCH: May 23, 1965

On the 4th Sunday of May 1920 at 3 P. M., there met in the Sims Graded School House a group of Christian Workers who were anxious to get a Methodist Church established in The Town of Sims, N. C. Meeting with this group was the Rev. J. Herbert Miller, pastor of the Calvary Charge, Wilson, N. C., a body of The Washington District, N. C. Conference.

After an inspirational sermon by the Rev. Miller, a Special Church Conference was held, with Mr. Miller presiding, and The Sims Methodist Church, Sims, N. C. was duly organized with (17) seventeen members by Certificates of Transfer. A Sunday School was also organized on the same date, with Hubert Simpson elected its Superintendent.

FIRST TRANSFER MEMBERS: W. J. Jones, Mrs. J. S. Bailey, D. H. Glover, J. W. Lamm, Mrs. J. W. Lamm, S. H. Glover, Mrs. S. H. Glover, Nina Glover, R. C. Lamm, Mrs. R. C. Lamm, Hubert Simpson, Daisy Simpson, Florence Simpson, Lessie Simpson, W. Anderson Daniel, Mrs. W. Anderson Daniel, and J. L. Hinnant.

FIRST OFFICIAL BOARD: by Nomination

Pastor ----- J. Herbert Miller

Steward ----- J. L. Hinnant

Trustees: ----- Hubert Simpson, J. L. Hinnant, D. H. Glover, S. H. Glover, W. Anderson Daniel

Sunday School Supt.----- Hubert Simpson

Building Committee ----- Hubert Simpson, Chairman
J. L. Hinnant, and D. H. Glover

These officers were duly elected by a Quarterly Conference held in The First Methodist Church, Wilson, N.C. with Rev. N. H. D. Wilson, Presiding Elder in charge, June 25, 1920

FIRST REVIVAL: Oct. 1920

During the month of Oct. 1920, Mr. Miller conducted a weeks revival services and received the following into the membership:

By Vows: W. O. Manning, Mrs. W. O. Manning, Mrs. C. F. Finch, Mrs. A. B. Lucas, C. G. Davis, Mrs. C. G. Davis, W. D. Liles, S. L. Atkinson, and Miss Iva Davis

By Certificate of Transfer:

Miss Fannie Perry, from First Methodist Church, Wilson, N.C.

ERECTION FIRST CHURCH BUILDING: 1921

The Sims School was used for all church and Sunday school services, but by November 1920 the attendance and interest was fast outgrowing accommodation facilities of the school building, and a Church Building became a MUST, so the Trustees, by authorization of the membership, purchased a nice lot, as a Building Site, from J. S. Bailey and wife, Nannie B. Bailey; a deed for same was duly executed on September 22, 1920, and is of record in Book 125, Page 391, Wilson County Register of Deeds Office.

By solicitation and pledges the Building Committee secured sufficient funds with which to begin a Building Program, the plans were drawn for an A type roof building consisting of a Sanctuary with two Sunday School Rooms that would open up into the Sanctuary, giving it a seating capacity of 125. The building to be constructed of wood.

The contract for the construction was given to Mr. C. E. Williams, and work got underway in April 1921, and was completed in August 1921. The cost of Lot, Building and Furniture amounted to \$5,000.00 Morning worship was held in the New Church on the Second Sunday of September, 1921. Two services per month were held thereafter.

DEDICATION CHURCH BUILDING: Nov. 4, 1921

The Methodist of Sims realized the fruition of their fondest hopes on the First Sunday of November 1921, when the New Church, for which they had made many sacrifices to build was declared free of debt, and dedication to The Glory of God, with Rev. Miller, pastor in charge. The Rev. N. H. D. Wilson, Presiding Elder of The Washington District, received the Church for the North Carolina Conference.

After the Acts of Dedication, Rev. Wilson preached a sermon of dedication, taking his text from First Timothy, 3rd chapter and 15th verse: "But if I tarry long, that thou mayst know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the House of God, which is the Church of the Living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

The speaker gave himself considerable latitude in his explanation of the word church and the various relations it held to the members and the world, and the way it should be considered as a sacred place for the worship of the Almighty God.

In part he said: "Some speak of the church, meaning the building, some refer to it as a body of members, others think of it as the church universal; the Savior referred to it as His bride, the Lamb's wife."

"The word is derived from the Greek "Ecclesia" which means those whom God has called out from other folks to be His peculiar people, that they may be a shining example of His work here on earth. Therefore, we want this church to be a monument to God. A place you have erected in which to worship Him. a place forr the gathering of the people that they may in all sacredness and true holiness worship Him. Oh, that like Isaiah in the temple, the spirit of God may fill this house, and that it may be the trysting place for those who really and truly seek after Him.

Mr. Wilson further stated that since there are conflicting views and opinions on almost every subject, that it is quite natural to find people holding different religious beliefs, but that should not cause a rivary among the various denominations, but the realization that there is One God, and One Saviour, and the purpose of all the churches is to direct

the minds of men to Him that they might find everlasting life."

The services were very impressive, the music being especially good. In the choir were a number from Wilson which included Mrs. C. L. Coon, Miss Elsie Sparger, Mrs. Giles Winstead, Miss Clee Winstead, Miss Zell Winstead and Miss Gladys Foust; Miss Clee Winstead and Miss Gladys Foust accompanied Miss Zell Winstead, pianist, with their violins.

GIFTS AND MEMORIALS:

The following gifts to the church were acknowledged, namely

- Pulpit Bible----- By Rev. J. Herbert Miller
- Communion Service & Cloth-- By Dr. & Mrs. Wade Anderson
- Light Fixtures----- by Hubert Simpson and Julian Hinnant

The Rev. Mr. Miller served the church as pastor until November 1922. The Rev. W. Norman Vaughan followed Mr. Miller and served the church for two years.

At the Annual Conference of Nov. 1924, the Sims Church was removed from the Calvary Charge and placed with The Bailey Charge.

WOMANS SOCIETY CHRISTIAN SERVICE ORGANIZED: Aug. 1939

In August 1939 a Womans Society of Christian Service was organized for the Church, in the home of Mrs. J. D. Boyette. Mrs. L. T. Singleton was the Organizer. Mrs. J. D. Boyette was the organizations first President; Mrs. Garland Hammerick, its first secretary.

In June 1946 the Methodist Church of Bailey became a Station work, therefore the Bailey Charge was dissolved and a New Charge was organized, embracing the Mt. Pleasant, Middlesex and Sims Churches, which charge was known as The Mt. Pleasant Charge, of the Raleigh District.

Since 1920 - 1954 two members of the Sims Church have answered the call to preach, namely M. M. Walters and Charles E. Page. Rev. Walters is now a member of a New York Conference, serving a church in New York City. Rev. Page is a member of The Western North Carolina Conference, and currently (1965) serving a church in Greensboro, N. C.

PRE-PLANS FOR A NEW BUILDING PROGRAM: 1952

During the pastorate of Rev. T. H. House, (1949-1954) the need for adequate facilities to take care of the youth work, weighed very heavy upon the hearts of Mr. House, the leaders of youth work, and a public spirited citizen, Mrs. Etta Burnett.

As a first step toward providing more space, Mrs. Burnett, her son, J. T. and wife, Ruth Burnett, on June 16, 1952 graciously presented a deed to the Sims Church Trustees, Hubert Simpson, Albert Nichols and H. F. Williamson, for a lot 105 x 105 ft on the corner of Pine and Barnes Street, same adjoining the Methodist Church lot, which Deed is recorded in Book 479, page 244, Wilson County Registry.

BUILDING OF SECOND CHURCH BUILDING: 1954 - 1959

April 11, 1954, under the Leadership of Rev. T. H. House, a new building program was authorized by a Special Church Quarterly Conference. The following Officers were elected:

- Building Committee: W. N. Glover, Hubert Simpson, A. J. Nichols, L. H. Glover, Jr., and Albert Daniel
- Finance Committee: L. A. Adams, Mrs. T. G. Bailey, Mrs. S. E. Flowers, Mrs. Albert Daniel, W. N. Glover, L. O. Wilson, and Mrs. Bruce Williamson
- Treasurer: W. N. Glover
- Secretary: Miss Lessie Simpson

After the organization of these committees, they began the task of Fund Raising Projects, and Building Plans. One-half of the estimated cost had to be raised or pledged, before a building could be started.

After many plans had been studyed, a final plan was approved and adopted on Feb. 27, 1955, as drawn by Architects Benton & Benton, of Wilson, N. C. The plans were:

Let the original church structure stand upon its site and extend it in length By 20 feet from the back, in order to make it, (the sanctuary) a seating capacity of 200; construct an Educational Building, adjoining the sanctuary in back, of a two story , consisting of 8 class rooms, two rest rooms, a kitchen and a Fellowship Hall. The entire building to be brick vaneered. The Estimated cost was around \$40,000.00

The construction of the Education Building was begun in June 1955, on a "pay as you go" plan, which work was largely done by donated labor and materials, too numerous to itemize here, but a valuation as follows:

Materials -----	\$5,437.57
Labor -----	2,495.27

~~SIGNING OF NOTE FOR LOAN: Nov. 29, 1959~~

~~xxxx On the 29th day of~~

APPLICATION FOR A LOAN: Oct. 1958

By October 1958 The Building Fund was expended, the work not nearly finished; the uncompleted building rapidly depreciating, so under the leadership of Rev. L. E. Lugar, pastor, a Special Conference was held Oct. 19, 1958, for the purpose of presenting a resolution authorizing the Board of Trustees to sign a Note and Deed of Trust, in the amount of \$14,000.00 bearing interest at the rate of 4½%, withx payable to the Board of National Missions of the Methodist Church.

SIGNING OF NOTE FOR LOAN: Nov. 29, 1958

On the 29th day of November, 1958, the following Board of Trustees, L. O. Wilson, H. F. Williamson, J. C. Duke, Dennis Nichols and Albert Daniel, signed a Deed of Trust, accompanied with a Note of even date, in the amount of \$14,000.00 bearing interest at the rate of 4½%, with

semi-annual payments of \$750.00 for 18 payments and one (1) payment of \$500.00, payable to H. G. Connor, Trustee for The National Board of Missions, same being duly recorded in Book 678 page 205 of the Wilson County Registry. The check in above amount was delivered to L. O. Wilson, Treasurer, on Dec. 1, 1958.

COMPLETION OF BUILDING: August 1959

On January 9, 1959 the Trustees entered into a contract with H. H. Strickland, Contractor, to complete the Sanctuary. The Sanctuary, Educational Building were finished, and furnished in August 1959, at a cost of \$48,216.64.

FORMAL OPENING: August 30, 1959

Formal Opening of the Sanctuary and Educational Building was held August 30, 1959 with the pastor, Rev. Robert E. Wood in charge. The District Supt., Rev. Graham E. Eubanks, of the Raleigh District Rev. T. H. House and Rev. L. E. Lugar, former pastors, taking part. The Rev. Lugar preached the Formal Opening Sermon, using as his subject: "A Great Church".

MEMORIALS & GIFTS:

Several items in the Sanctuary were acknowledged as follows:

Memorial Window in memory of C. G. Davis, by Polly P Davis
Memorial Window in memory of Juanita Glover, by Mr. & Mrs. W. N. Glover
Memorial Window in memory of Albert Nichols, by Mr. & Mrs. A. J. Nichols
Memorial Window in memory of Mrs. Albert Nichols, by Dennis Nichols
Memorial Window in memory of Albert & Nealy Davis, by Chas. E. Page
Memorial window in memory of James D. Peele, by Mr. & Mrs. Carnell
Peele;

Other Windows were given by:

Mrs. Irene Hinton
Mr. & Mrs. J. C. Duke
Mr. & Mrs. J. D. Boyette
Mr. & Mrs. S. E. Flowers
Mr. & Mrs. R. T. Harrison
Mr. & Mrs. W. T. Williamson

Altar Cross: by Mr. & Mrs. Cullon Nichols

Candle Sticks by Lessie Simpson in honor of Rev. J. Herbert Miller
and Hubert Simpson.

Pulpit Bible by Mr. & Mrs. W. K. Corbitt, in honor of Mr. & Mrs.
Howard F. Williamson

Offering Plates by Edward Hardy Wilson

Desk for Pastor's Study by Mr. & Mrs. Howard F. Williamson

Cross over Guest Register by The C. F. Finch Family

Duke Endowment Fund, a Grant of \$4,000.00

_____ Bequest from Miss Fannie Perry Estate

Members of the Building Committee at time of Opening were:

W. N. Glover, Chairman; A. J. Nichols, and R. W. Alford.

The Church has since acknowledged further gifts as follows:

Candle Lighter by Miss Beatrice Jones

Flower Urn by Mrs. Thelma High Jerkins, in memory of Luther High

In the June 1962 Annual Conference the Sims Church was taken off the Mt. Pleasant Charge, and became station work with the Rev. J. S. Pearsall being assigned its pastor; he is also Chaplain for The Eastern North Carolina Hospital, Wilson, N. C.

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In the June Annual Conference of 1964 the Sims Church became a body of the Rocky Mount District, J. S. Pearsall, Pastor

PRESENT STATUS OF CHURCH: Dec. 1965

Of the seventeen (17) original members 10 are deceased; 5 still hold membership with the church, and 2 have transferred to other churches.

Present Church Membership: -----	148
Sunday School Enrollment -----	63
Officers & Teachers -----	9
Womans Society Christian Service -----	27
1965 Budget: -----	\$5,148.00
1965 Indebtedness: -----	\$4,250.00
1965 Valuation all Property -----	\$52,000.00 (Approx)

OFFICIAL BOARD: Mrs. Irene Hinton, Chairman ; Asst. Chairman Mrs. Albert Daniel

Trustees: L. O. Wilson, William A. Stott, Aubrey Nichols,
J. C. Duke, Albert Daniel, A. J. Nichols

Stewards: Royster Alford, Leon A. Adams (Honorary), Mrs. T. G. Bailey, Mrs. J. C. Dyke, Mrs. Berta Flowers, W. N. Glover, Beatrice Jones, Cullen Nichols, W.T. Williamson
T. Glenn Bailey

Recording Secretary: Mrs. T. Glenn Bailey

Treasurer: Mrs. S. E. Flowers

Lay Leader: Bonnie Lee Glover

Communion Steward, Mrs. Florence S. Williamson

S. S. Supt.: William A. Stott

President Womans Society: Mrs. Albert Daniel

LIST OF PASTORS WHO HAVE SERVED THE SIMS CHURCH: 1920-1965

J. Herbert Miller-----	1920-1922	
W. Norman Vaughan -----	1922-1924	
E. C. Manness -----	1924-1928	
J. C. Williams -----	1928-1933	
W. G. Farrion -----	1933-1938	
L. T. Singleton -----	1938-1939	
W. L. Loy -----	1939-1943	
D. A. Petty -----	1943-1945	
I. T. Pool -----	1945-1946	
W. G. Brogan-----	1946-1949	
T. H. House -----	1949-1954	
L. E. Lugar -----	1954-1958	
R. E. Wood -----	1958-1962	
John S. Pearsall -----	1962-	Currently serving