

Dear Bishop Lannan,

I thought you might be interested  
in this brief sketch as you prepare  
for May 2.

John

Thanks

HISTORICAL SKETCH

St. James UMC, Raleigh

PAST

On March 1st, 1959, thirteen families pledged their love, prayers, offerings and labor to organize Asbury Methodist Church. In a building located in the parking lot of Westinghouse Electric Corporation, U.S. #1 North, these people went about their task of doing just that. Everybody had a job to do. As Reverend Wesley Jones wrote in his report to the Quarterly Conference, "This church is one in which the spirit of Christ is active and alive, and is expressed in a willingness to serve both God and man. The majority of the members had never served actively on any of the commissions or committees, but no one has yet refused to serve whenever asked. This is a people who have never learned the two little words, "I can't" exist. Their reply is always "By the Grace of God we will." The spirit of the church is a spirit of cooperation and dedicated service to the total work of the Methodist Church."

The Reverend Wesley Jones served as our first minister. He was a dedicated man to God, his family and to our church. His dream was for the church that we now worship in. He knew it would take a lot of hard work, sacrifices and prayer, but he knew it would happen. By May 31st, 1959, there were 31 charter members.

The church school was organized on March 8, 1959, with 27 persons attending. Mr. Carl P. Frye, Sr. was our first Sunday School superintendent.

Milton D. Rountree was our first treasurer. On May 31st with 31 members, we had a budget of \$1,603.00 and we met it.

Anne Currin served as our first President of Women's Society of Christian Service (now United Methodist Women). There were 12 members.

Julia Franks served as our pianist. The piano was an old upright, painted white and about 75 of the 88 keys were in tune. With a few donated hymnals and Julia's magic at the keyboard, we lifted our voices in song - and it was beautiful.

Mrs. Carver Gattis and Mrs. Carl P. Frye, Sr. kept the church supplied with beautiful flower arrangements out of their own gardens.

The 13 charter families were:

Mrs. Mary Brown

Mr. & Mrs. S. T. Currin and Patricia

Mr. & Mrs. J. C. Jordan

The 13 charter families (continued):

Mr. & Mrs. Harold Horne  
Mr. & Mrs. Herbert Regan  
Mrs. W. S. Jones, Sherrill & Anita  
Mr. & Mrs. Carl P. Frye, Sr., Joe & Carl P. Frye, Jr.  
Mr. & Mrs. C. M. Gattis  
Mr. & Mrs. C. L. Franks  
Mr. & Mrs. M. D. Rountree  
Mr. & Mrs. W. E. Giles, Sr., Bill, Jr. & Woodson  
Mr. & Mrs. Mack Phillips  
Mr. & Mrs. J. G. Lee

Reverend Jones was with us from March 1st, 1959, through June, 1960. It was with sadness that we said farewell to him that June, but we waited to welcome our next minister and start the next phase of our church.

In 1960, the Reverend Charles Sparks came to take the reins of the young church now named St. James. We were on our own property and renting a metal building. This building was cold in the winter and almost impossible to stay in during the hot summer months. But, in spite of the discomforts, the membership grew and in July, 1962 we held our first worship service in our new chapel. We also had a fellowship hall, a kitchen and needed classrooms.

Reverend Sparks left us in 1964 with a membership of 294.

Reverend James I. Warren, Jr. was our pastor from 1964-1969 and during his ministry our membership grew to 440. Under his guidance we erected 4 additional much needed classrooms. Seeing the fast-growing membership, the congregation and Dr. Warren made plans for construction of the sanctuary and two large church offices.

Amos Stone came to St. James in 1969 and saw the congregation grow to 645. With the plans already laid out, the new sanctuary and church offices were completed at a cost between \$225,000 and \$250,000. Reverend Stone left in 1974.

The Reverend Lester P. Jackson served St. James from 1974-1978. He brought to us a leadership that helped to pull us all closer together and work to make our church one of love and fellowship. The membership grew to 789 members. His love and compassion for people endeared us to him. We also welcomed Jim Kemp, a Duke student, who was a great help to Reverend Jackson and our members.

#### PRESENT

In 1978 we were blessed to have the Reverend John White as our

↓ minister. John is one of the most dynamic men you will ever meet. He is so full of dreams and ideas for our church that he is hardly still a minute. He not only serves our church, but the community as well, giving 100% of himself in both. We are delighted to have him still serving as our minister.

The Reverend Rod Randolph came to us in 1980 as our associate minister. His work load at our church was tremendous, but he never failed to complete the tasks before him. We were sorry to see Rod leave us to move to Durham, but are thankful for the time we had with him.

In 1980 we had the pleasure to welcome Suzanna Helms. Words cannot express what she has meant to our church. We are indeed blessed with her ability to render so many services to us.

We are also proud to have Dr. Conrad Glass as a member of St. James. He has given to our church so much of his time and talents in so many areas. To Gaynelle Glass - our love and thanks for the superb job as our Director of Church Music, now in her 20th year with us. The many hours she and the choir gives to St. James is very apparent in the lovely music and song we hear each Sunday.

Our church membership is approximately 925 now with a budget of \$115,000. In March, 1980, the parsonage was paid for and now today, May 2nd, 1982 we join in celebration of a debt-free church. It has taken us a while to reach this goal and it hasn't been easy, but then we knew it wouldn't be. The hard work, long hours, sacrifices (big and small) have finally paid off - but it has been a labor of love on everyones part.

#### FUTURE

Our church is still bursting at the seams. What's in the future for St. James - not any of us know for sure, but with the dedication and love of her people she will continue to open her doors to all who are weary and need rest; to all who are lonely and desire companionship; to all who mourn and want comfort; to all who sin and need a Savior; and to whosoever will come.

↓ Time and space does not permit us to list by name all of the people who have given of their time and talents to make St. James the great church that it is today, but we would like to dedicate the service today in honor of those still living and in loving memory of those who are no longer with us.

MRS. BETTY ROONTREE