

## History of Tuttle's Grove United Methodist Church

As a prelude to the history of Tuttle's Grove United Methodist Church, it seems appropriate that a short sketch about the coming of the Quakers or Friends into the county as early as 1721, and establishing the Core Sound Meeting House on the very site of the present church building, will be of interest.

Tuttle's Grove United Church building has the distinction of being located on the oldest church site in Carteret County, although it is not the oldest church building.

Let us look back to the year 1721. At that time a large group of Quakers, especially from Rhode Island, came into Carteret County to establish their homes, as well as to have perfect freedom to worship according to their belief.

History does not relate how these sturdy pioneers arrived in the county. Those who trekked their way through the unchartered forests over roads little better than Indian trails, were endowed with a rugged manhood not to be found in present-day generations.

It is believed that the greater number of these sturdy homeseekers, coming to a new land, came by boat, for two of the principal leaders of the band, William Borden and Henry Stanton were boat builders in Newport, Rhode Island.

As these two leaders stand out most prominent in Quaker history of the county, we will give them the credit for establishing a Quaker community, as well as being the leaders in the building of two Meeting Houses; one on the site of the present Tuttle's Grove United Methodist Church, known as the Core Sound Meeting House and one in the Clubfoot Creek section, known as the Clubfoot Creek Meeting House. The site of the latter has passed from the memory of present generations. Tuttle's Grove has kept alive the site of the Core Sound Meeting House.

William Borden, before coming to the new colony, was a prominent ship builder in Newport, Rhode Island, as well as a manufacturer of duck material from flax for the making of sails.

He settled in the Harlowe township, purchasing a large tract of land bordering Newport River, where he established a saw mill and shipyard in that section known today as Mill Creek. He took an active interest in the political affairs of the new county. He was elected to the Assembly, but was not allowed to serve because he would not take the oath of office as required.

Henry Stanton took up his grant of 1900 acres eastward from Core Creek, which must have extended to the boundaries of the churchsite, for there is recorded that he gave to Friends in Cartright Precinct, under date of September 23, 1737, two acres of land adjoining the land given by Nickles Briant on which to build a Meeting House.

The history of these two men make an interesting study. As one follows down the line of Henry Stanton, they will find that he was the great grandfather of Edwin Stanton, Secretary of War under President Lincoln and that Edwin's father was born on the old plantation a short distance from this church.

Growth of the Quaker settlement along the Newport River, as well as in adjoining counties, brought about the forming of several Monthly Meetings, including the Core Sound and Clubfoot Creek. The first meeting recorded as being held in this county was at the home of William Borden on August 1, 1733. From this gathering was formed the Core sound Monthly Meeting, growing in membership to the extent that by 1736 the need arose for the building of a Meeting House. From Friends in Rhode Island came the sum of 60 pounds to apply to the building of the Core Sound Meeting House.

Little is known of Nickles Briant except that he gave the first plat of land on which the Meeting House was built during the year 1736. The first meeting of Friends in the new structure was held on the third day of January, 1737.

The need arising for a community cemetery, Henry Stanton, under date of September 23, 1737, deeded to the Friends, two acres of land adjoining that given by Nickles Briant. Benjamin Small was assigned to pale or fence in the graveyard. Persons interested in genealogical research of early Quakers will find only one stone standing in this ancient burying ground upon which the inscription can be raised--it is that of Joseph Borden who died January 6, 1825 at the age of 25.

To get an idea of how long ago this site was used for worship, it takes us back to the time when we were under the flag of England--forty years before there was a "Star Spangled Banner" and to the time when George Washington was but four years old. It is true that services of the Church of England were read at intervals in the building in Beaufort used as a Court House, but there was no church building there for another 37 years and more, and the second church in the county, Bell's Chapel, on the Sound above Morehead City, was not built for another 20 years.



The old Quaker Meeting House, according to a sketch made from a description by Mr. Alex Foreman who "sat meeting in it" was a little in front and to the right of the present building -- facing toward Beaufort. In it over a period of 100 years and more worshipped Stantons, Hills, Bordens, Pacquints, Rustulls, Bishops, Hortons, Jessops, Maces, Williams, Fraziers, Robersons, Wests, Owens, Hollens, Davises, Eubanks, Chadwicks, Harrisers, Howards, Physiocs, Wades, Lovetts, Foremans, Rumleys, Scotts, Cartwrights, Dickinsons, and scores of others.

By 1912, the Quakers were beginning to be concerned over the Methodists who came in after the Revolution. "Fourth month" of that year, William Ripley was called up for forsaking Meeting and attending "several meetings amongst the Methodists and following their modes".

The Core Sound Meeting began to fall off from then on, not because all the Quakers became Methodists, but because pressure was brought to bear on them from within their church for owning and employing slaves. Farmers can't farm without labor, so with the opening of the free states in the West, family after family migrated to Ohio and Illinois. As the group left behind grew smaller and smaller, more and more frequently members were disowned for "marrying out of unity", and "marrying out of unity" usually meant marrying a Methodist. Until about 1850 Methodist was the only other church denomination in this section.

By 1841 the number of Quakers had become so small that the meeting was "laid down", records were given up to the Quarterly Meeting, and members were transferred to Contentnao Meeting. Quakers are said to have revisited the Meeting House until it perished from decay. One of the families left is also said to have taken up residence in the Meeting House until he could erect his own, and as long as the building stood, he and other families met regularly for silent worship.

The Meeting House was built on the land of Nickles Briant, long dead at the time the Meeting was "laid down", and it was 1855 before a deed to the property was perfected. At that time it was deeded to Charles G. Foreman and Ambers Jones from William H. Davis to be held in trust for the yearly Meeting of Friends at Guilford College for \$1.00 and the further consideration of having the privilege of holding worship of Almighty God....shall we ever so desire, deeded the property to the Methodists. Many of the old Quaker families were Methodists by this time so it seems a natural transfer. In the present day membership of Tuttle's Grove are Methodists whose forebearers worshipped here as Friends and were among those disowned for loving and marrying Methodist boys and girls.

Beside the highway in front of the church today is an historical marker which is numbered C-35, erected by the Archives and Highway Departments in 1959, which reads as follows: "Core Sound Meeting, Quaker Center for more than 100 years after 1733, migration west was one cause of decline. Meeting House was 50 yards west."

It was on the site of this Meeting House, which had been deeded by the Friends to the Ann Street Methodist Church in Beaufort, that in 1898, just before the turn of the century, the Rev. D.H. Tuttle, who at that time was pastor of the Ann Street Church, conducted an evangelistic service or old-time revival. A tent answered for a house of worship, benches for pews and the packed ground for a floor.

Crude as this "house of Worship" was, under its canvas roofing there was created a spiritual awakening that brought forth the present church which stands as a memorial to the Rev. Mr. Tuttle.

Within the next year or two following that meeting and the holding of several religious meetings in homes of the community, a church organization was formed on September 18, 1902, under the leadership of the Rev. J.H.M. Giles, who was on the Carteret Circuit at that time. Until a house of worship was built, services were conducted in the Wire Grass school building.

Seven charter members made up the church society: Durant E. Langdale, Isadora Langdale, William D. Hunnings, Martha C. Hunnings, Sara V. Dudley, Mrs. Edward Chadwick, Mary Arthur, and Sophronia Jennett.

Construction of the present building was started in 1902. Generous donations were made of building material and labor. From the saw mills of Tom Norris came the frame work for the building, cut from the trees on the church site. Financial aid came from various sources both from individuals and from the work of the women of the church.

The following year the first wedding was solemnized by the pastor of the young church when Miss Emma Dickinson and West Noe were married.

By 1904 the membership was increased by the following persons: George P. Lewis, George H. Lewis, Susan J. Lewis, Louis J. French, Emma French, John R. Hill, Emma L. Hill, Annie S. Hill, Allee Lewis, Daisy G. Dudley, and Dollie L. Dudley.



On Sunday, April 29, 1906, the Rev. Mr. Tuttle, then located at Fayetteville, returned to the scene of his evangelistic service from which this church was begun and dedicated the new church. On this occasion were baptised Sterling Lewis, Geraldine Lewis and Virginia Simpson.

The Rev. W.A. Piland was pastor at the time of the dedication and the trustees and stewards were: Durant Langdale, William D. Hunnings and Mrs. Sara Dudley.

Within the next year both Mrs. Sara Dudley and Mr. Hunnings passed away. Mr. Hunnings was the first to be buried in the Methodist cemetery adjoining the church.

The depression of 1931 found the church in bad condition, both spiritual as well as financial, to the extent that the Conference was considering abolishing the charge. To the Rev. F.B. Brandenburg, who was on the circuit from 1921 to 1934, is given the credit for building up the church again, raising funds for general repairs, and increasing attendance.

By 1945, the church having increased in membership and interest, an extensive program of remodeling took place. Funds were raised and from generous donations the church was repaired and repainted.

Preaching services had never been held more than once a month until 1950, but a weekly Sunday School had been maintained in which families of the members had been increased by members of other churches living nearby. This remains true even today. Ten superintendants have served the Sunday School since its beginning. They are: Durant Langdale, Mrs. Mollie Stanton, Mrs. Effie Sabiston, C.E. Dail, Henry Lewis, Mrs. Dollie Dudley, Mrs. W.B. Norris, Mrs. Marie Campen, Mr. B.A. Phelps and Mrs. Marie Campen who is serving at the present time for her second term.

Under the leadership of the Rev. R.M. Poulk, who was assigned to the charge in 1953, the church enjoyed an increase in membership and attendance. In 1956 the membership numbered 45 and in that same year an addition was made to the building which furnished the much needed room for the growing Sunday School and young people's societies. This new addition was dedicated "the Martha Hunnings" annex, in honor of Mrs. Martha Hunnings, who at that time was the only surviving charter member of the church.

The church seems to have been tossed about somewhat by Conference: First it was on the old Carteret circuit; in 1919 it was placed on a newly created charge known as the Harlowe circuit; in 1925 Conference combined the Newport and Harlowe circuits into one, known as the Newport-Harlowe circuit; in 1928 the church became a part of the Straits-Harlowe circuit; in 1949 it was changed over to the Havelock circuit. At this time, 1949, the Core Creek Church was received into the Methodist Conference. This newly received church, Tuttle's Grove Church, and the Merrimon Church, along with the North River Church united in 1950 to compose the Beaufort Circuit. These four churches made up the Beaufort Circuit until 1962, when the North River Church was taken off the charge by Conference. This left Core Creek, Merrimon, and Tuttle's Grove composing the Beaufort Circuit. These three churches today compose what is known as the Core Creek Charge.

The United Methodist Women of the church, locally known as the "Dollie Dudley Circle", has been one of the most active arms of the Church since its inception.

The first music of the church was furnished by a bellows organ which was purchased new. This was followed by a piano which was used solely until 1961 when a new Baldwin electronic organ was purchased by the church. The first organist of the church was Dollie Foreman, Dudley; she was followed by Daisy Dudley Lewis, Lela Merrill Nelson, Ruby Sabiston Felton, Mamie Merrill Nelson, Geraldine Lewis, Rosa Eubanks, Mrs. Nettie Taylor Tallman, Mrs. Daisy Springle, and Mrs. Evelyn Jordan, who is the present organist. Dollie Foreman Dudley was active in the music of the church for a period of fifty years or more.

The present church membership is 50.

During the life of the church the following pastors have served:

Rev. J.H.M. Giles	1902-04
Rev. W.A. Piland	1905-06
Rev. D.A. Futrell	1907-09
Rev. J.P. Pate	1909-10
Rev. C.O. Durant	1911
Rev. F.T. Fulcher	1912-13
Rev. W.B. Humble	1914
Rev. C.H. Caviness	1915-18
Rev. Guy Hamilton	1919
Rev. J.M. Caraway	1920
Rev. W.T. Cheek	1921-22
Rev. J.C. Carter	1924
Rev. H.L. DAVIS	1925-26



Rev. E.W. Downum	1927-28
Rev. E.L. Stack	1929
Rev. J.C. Harmon	1930
Rev. F.B. Brandenburg	1931-34
Rev. J.L. Joice	1935-37
Rev. M.D. McLamb	1938
Rev. M.W. Stevenson	1939-43
Rev. C.J. Honeycut	1943-46
Rev. H.B. Lewis	1946-47
Rev. W.D. Caviness	1947
Rev. C. Maness Mitchell	1949
Rev. L.A. Lewis	1950-53
Rev. R.M. Poulk	1953-58
Rev. James E. Smith	1958-60
Rev. Leonard Mayo	1960-63
Rev. W.D. Moore	1963
Rev. G.T. Bridgers	1963
Rev. L.A. Lewis	1964
Rev. C.P. Mason	1964
Rev. C.I. Umstead	1965-69
Rev. H.F. Yearick	1969-72
Rev. Ronald Cyr	1972-74
Rev. Stephen Mann	1974-75
Rev. Vance Lewis	1975-

The site upon which Tuttle's Grove United Methodist Church stands has served as a landmark for Christians for more than 250 years. May it long continue to serve as "God's Acre".