

Church History

HISTORY OF WESTWOOD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The Westwood Methodist Church had its beginning in 1954 which was the beginning of a period referred to now as "the Garber era". It is so referred to as a result of a gigantic stride in the organization of new Methodist Churches. Over a period of seventy-two months no less than seventy-two new congregations were organized within the bounds of the North Carolina Annual Conference of the Methodist church. During this era two new four year Liberal Arts Colleges were established and more financial aid was pledged to the existing Junior College. It is easy to see why this period of time is referred to as the Garber era in recognition of the leadership of the late Bishop Paul N. Garber.

Westwood church was organized as the Raleigh Highway Methodist Church and was located just outside the city limits of Goldsboro, N. C. Due to rapid industrial and commercial growth the church was forced to move westward. In fact the church has had three previous locations and it seemed wise and prudent to move each time until the present site was purchased from the late D. C. Cogdell in 1959. It is easy to understand that the unstable condition of the church was not very conducive to any outstanding growth. People seemed to have a wait and see attitude. With the purchase of the present site things began to be different. A metal building was erected for the purpose of assembly. This was the first time the church had occupied a building used exclusively for divine purposes. The first service was held in the steel building on December 6, 1959. While this building was a great step forward it still was not the fulfillment of the dream in the hearts of some very dedicated individuals. They still visualized a church building designed for the purpose of divine worship and church school. Because of this dream and perseverance a contract was awarded in 1967 for the construction of new facilities. This work was completed in March of 1968 and it stands today as a monument to the dream and dedication of a faithful few who refused to let obstacles crush their aspirations.

Far more important than the building itself, is the fact that their effort built a closely knit fellowship. These people will never forget the struggle, and as long as they shall live they will be able to look upon each other as fellow laborers in a great enterprise that exists to bless this community, not only in their lifetime but for generations to come.

The present building was dedicated March 9, 1975 by Bishop Robert M. Blackburn of the Raleigh Area of the United Methodist Church. A few weeks later new pews were added to the sanctuary. This is indicative of the continuing progress of this church.

The Westwood Church has a very warm and cordial fellowship and anyone can find here, not only spiritual training, but also spiritual fellowship that is not excelled anywhere. In addition we have organizational activities for all ages and groups.