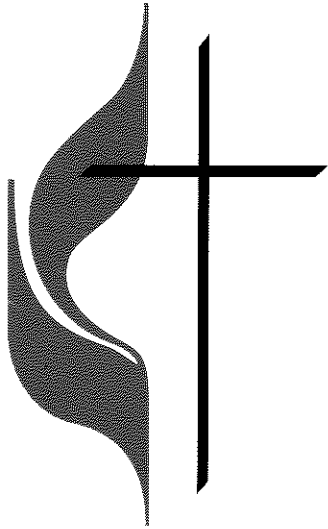


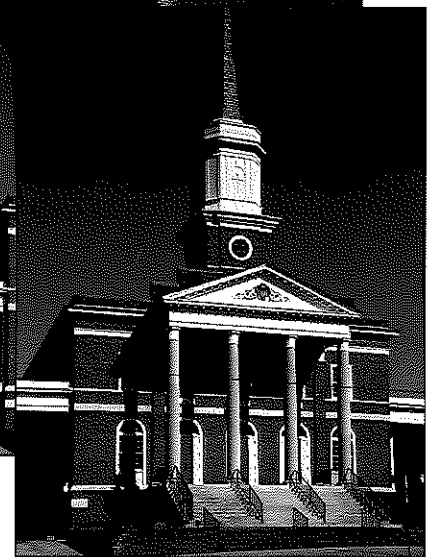
First United Methodist Church

High Point, NC

“A Century In Mission...”



Centennial History
1895-1995



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Centennial History
FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

High Point, North Carolina



PART I

The First Fifty Years

1895-1945

MINNIE PICKETT HARRELL

(Mrs. John M.)

(Joined Church September, 1896)



PART II

The Next Twenty-Five Years

1945-1970

VERTA IDOL COE

(Mrs. S.S.)

(Joined Church July 11, 1901)



PART III

The Next Twenty-Five Years

1970-1995

KEM B. ELLIS

(Joined Church April 11, 1965)

*First United Methodist Church
High Point, N. C.*



DEDICATION

In memory and in grateful recognition of those men and women who founded, joined, sustained and loved our church, we dedicate and pay tribute to them on this, our 100th Anniversary.

NAME HISTORY

Our church was originally affiliated with The Methodist Protestant Denomination and had the name Main Street Church. The name was changed a few years later to that of First Methodist Protestant Church.

This name was used for about forty years or until the union of The Methodist Protestant Church, The Methodist Episcopal Church and The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in 1939. The name was then changed to the First Methodist Church of High Point.

The last change of name occurred in 1968 when The Methodist Church and The Evangelical United Brethren Church united to form The United Methodist Church. Upon the confirmation of this union, our church was given the name the First United Methodist Church of High Point.

PART I

THE FIRST FIFTY YEARS

1895 - 1945

Minnie Pickett Harell

As all history resolves itself into the biography of a few strong, courageous men and women, so it was with the history of First Methodist Church—formerly Methodist Protestant, first called Main Street and later First Methodist Protestant.

Prior to 1894 the few men and women who belonged to the Methodist Protestant Church were members of some church back home. As the town began to grow and the numbers increased, a place for worship was felt necessary by these members. In this year, 1894, a young minister from Randolph County, the Rev. W. R. Lowdermilk, then a student of Oak Ridge Institute, came to High Point. With him to lead, the small group of Methodist Protestants began a campaign to raise funds for a church. During this year and early 1895, the few worked diligently; and by October, 1895, they had sufficient money in sight to organize the church. These contributions ranged from fifty cents to fifty dollars and came from citizens of all denominations in the community and a few from Greensboro.

On October 20, 1895, the Methodist Protestant Church was organized with thirteen charter members. Of these, the records show twelve assured names with three others about which records are not clear. They appear prominently in the early records, but not as charter members, the authenticity cannot be established. These three were: Mrs. J.M. Sechrest; Miss Mae Turner; and Mrs. Elizabeth Wheeler. The twelve were: Miss Parmelia Cole; Mr. J.W. Guyer; Mrs. J.W. Guyer; Mrs. A. R. Hammer; Miss Louie Pickett; Mr. W.P. Pickett; Mrs. Tyson Sechrest; Mrs. J.C. Welch; Mrs. J.J. Welch; Mr. F. M. York; Mrs. F. M. York; Miss Nannie York (later Mrs. S.D. Shelton).

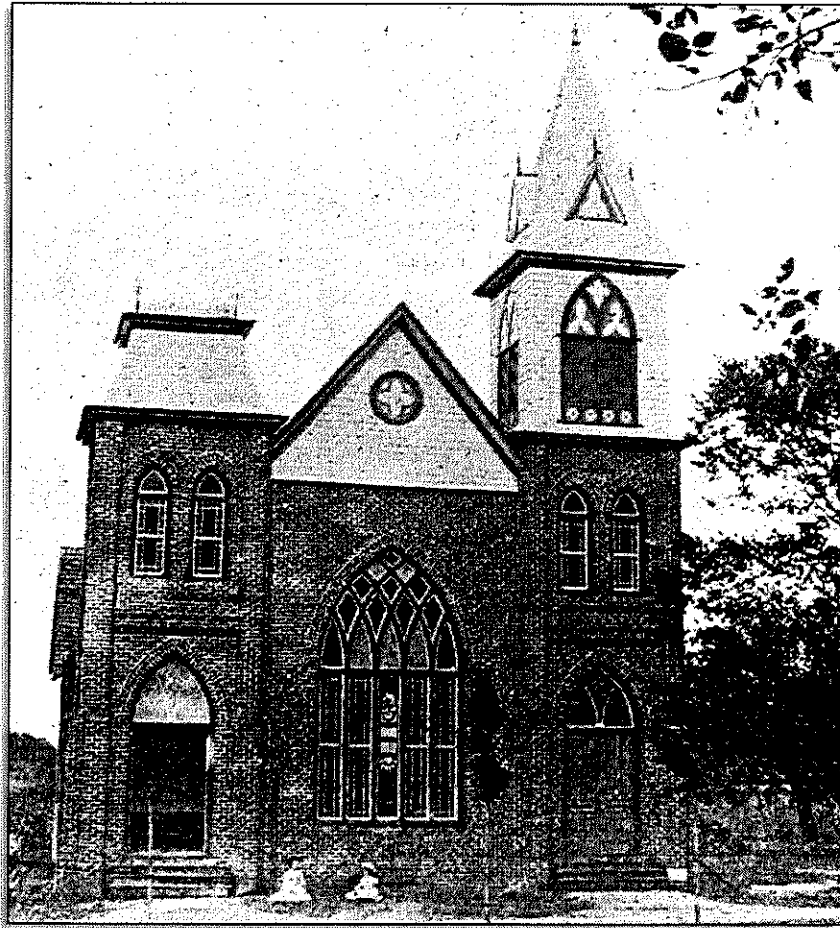
THE FIRST BUILDING

Soon after this Mr. Lowdermilk and the thirteen members purchased from Mr. Zimri Burns a lot on North Main Street (then Salem) Street for the sum of \$500.00. On this lot was erected a small brick church. The original value of the church property was listed at \$3,000.00. When, in the summer of 1896, the building was finished and the pews were placed, there were few furnishings: a small pulpit stand with two chairs, a small table and a reed organ, the gift of Mrs. J.J. Welch. This was first played by Miss Mae Turner on the Sunday of Dedication.

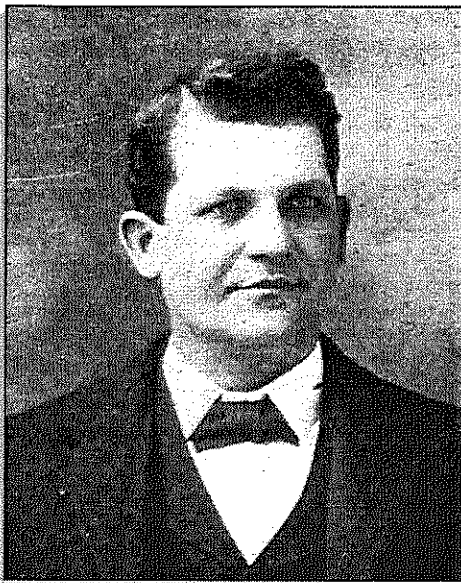
Mr. Lowdermilk thought the bare floor should have some carpet, so he went to the women of the church. Samples were secured from the few stores that sold carpet; and Mrs. W.P. Pickett visited the thirty families now in the church to get their opinions on the choice of carpet. It was bought for the aisles and the front of the church. Mr. Lowdermilk and the women laid this first carpet.

On September 27, 1896, the new church was dedicated. Dr. F.T. Tagg of Baltimore, Maryland, editor of the church paper, *The Methodist Protestant*, preached the opening sermon. When conference met within a few weeks after this, Mr. Lowdermilk was officially appointed pastor of the church.

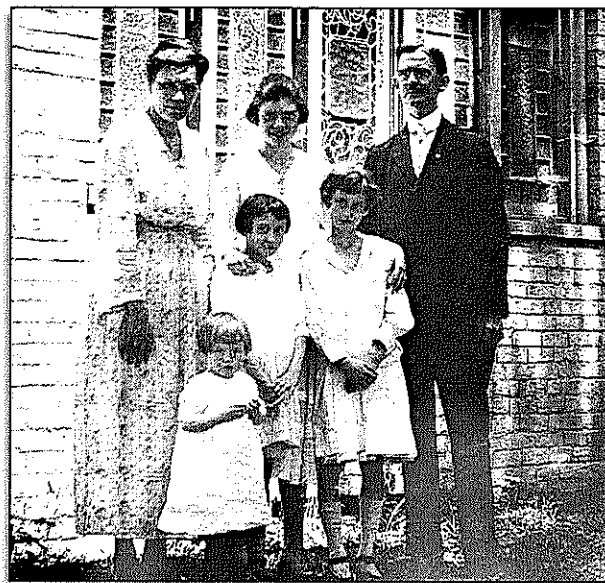
A Sunday School was organized within a few weeks. This was, in the beginning, a union or interdenominational Sunday School meeting on Sunday afternoons. The first teachers included Dr. J.W. Burton, Mr. D. H. Parnell, Mr. N.W. Beeson, Miss Mae Turner, Miss Nannie York, Mrs. J. M. Crouch, Miss Venetia Smith and Mr. A.J. Dodamead, most of whom were members of other denominations. The earliest membership record showed sixty-five interdenominational members; by 1900 this had increased to 146. By this time Sunday School was meeting in the morning; the church membership was 123 and the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor numbered 54.



The original church building constructed on the site where the Educational Building now stands. This small brick structure was completed during the summer of 1896 and was dedicated on September 27, 1896.



**Our first Pastor:
The Rev. W. R. Lowdermilk
1895-1900**



Former Pastor, the Rev. Dr. and Mrs. A. G. Dixon and Dr. Dixon's daughter, Vista with Dorothy (Dot) Rankin (left center), Elizabeth Reitzel (Urwick) (right center) and Robert Rankin (front). c 1921.

In December, 1899, Miss Annie Forrest, a missionary from Japan who was home on furlough, visited the church and organized the first missionary society which was officially called *The Foreign Missionary Society*. The main—maybe sole—interest of this early group was missions in foreign lands, largely Japan and China.

In 1900 the women saw a need for an organized group to assist in the work of the local church and the community. A "Ladies Aid Society" was organized with Mrs. L. J. Diffie as the first president and Mrs. W.P. Pickett as treasurer.

At the conference of 1900, Mr. Lowdermilk was assigned to another pastorate; and the Rev. William Porter was assigned to North Main Street Methodist Protestant Church. He was a young man of promise; but he lost his wife by death while he was in High Point and remained in the ministry for only a few years after leaving High Point in 1903.

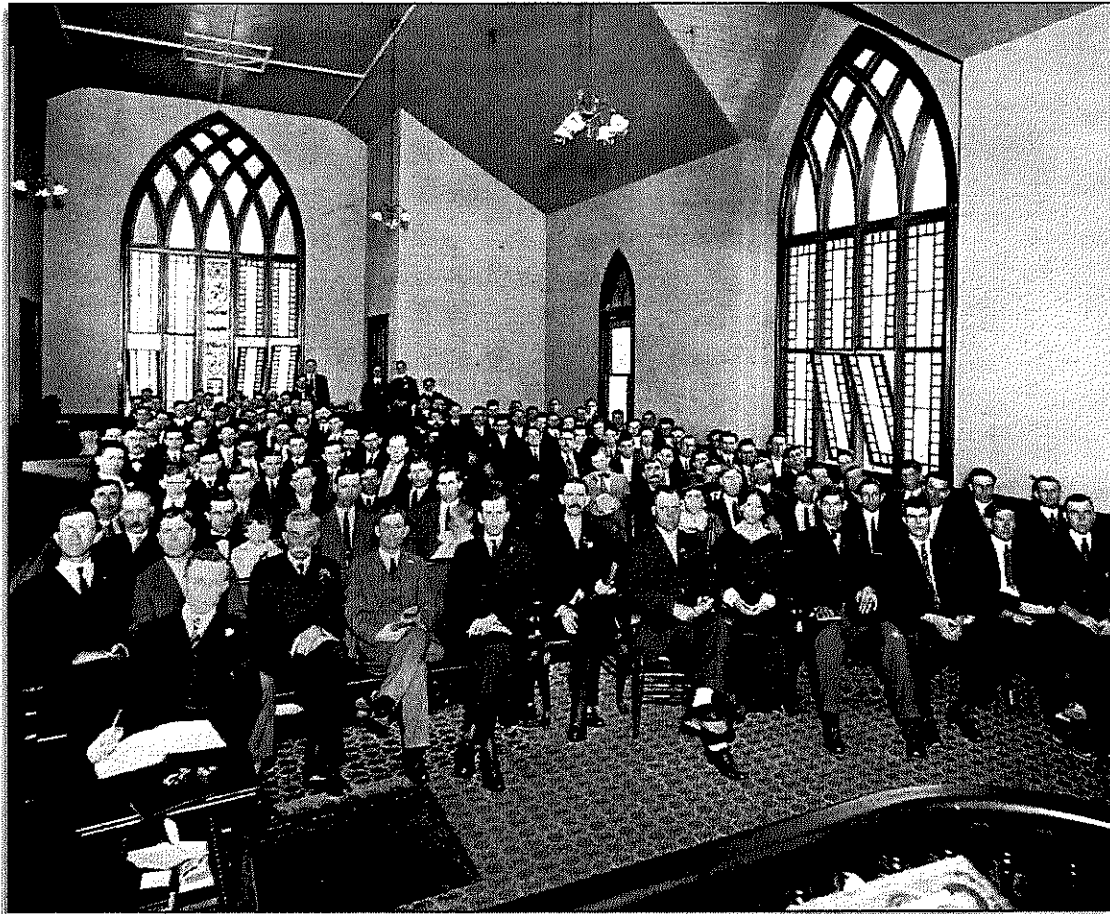
The Rev. J. S. Williams served the church well for one year (1903-1904). The membership had continued to grow and the influence of the church had broadened into the community. In 1904 Mr. Williams went to Asheville to direct the work of the Good Samaritan Mission, a post which he held for nearly half a century. During his pastorate the first parsonage, a two-story frame dwelling, was built on the west side of North Main Street about half-way between Ray and Sunset Drive—then numbered 609 North Main Street. The lot was bought from Mr. Frank Bain.

The Rev. C. L. Whitaker was appointed to the church in the fall of 1904. Soon after their coming to High Point, he and Mrs. Whitaker invited Miss Margaret Kuhns to visit the church. She had recently returned from Japan and was currently serving as General Church Mission Organizer. (Miss Kuhns was later married to Dr. A. G. Dixon.) As a result of her visit and with the direction and inspiration of Mrs. Whitaker, another Missionary Society—the Home Missionary Society—was organized. The major interests of this society were home—front projects: a mission school in Pine Ridge, Kentucky; Bethel Home for tubercular men at Weaverville, N.C.; and work among foreign speaking people in the Ohio Valley were the three outstanding projects. So for the next two decades the women of the church worked through three organizations—almost entirely the same group of women in all three societies. Even with dues in each being only ten cents a month, they carried forward many good works.

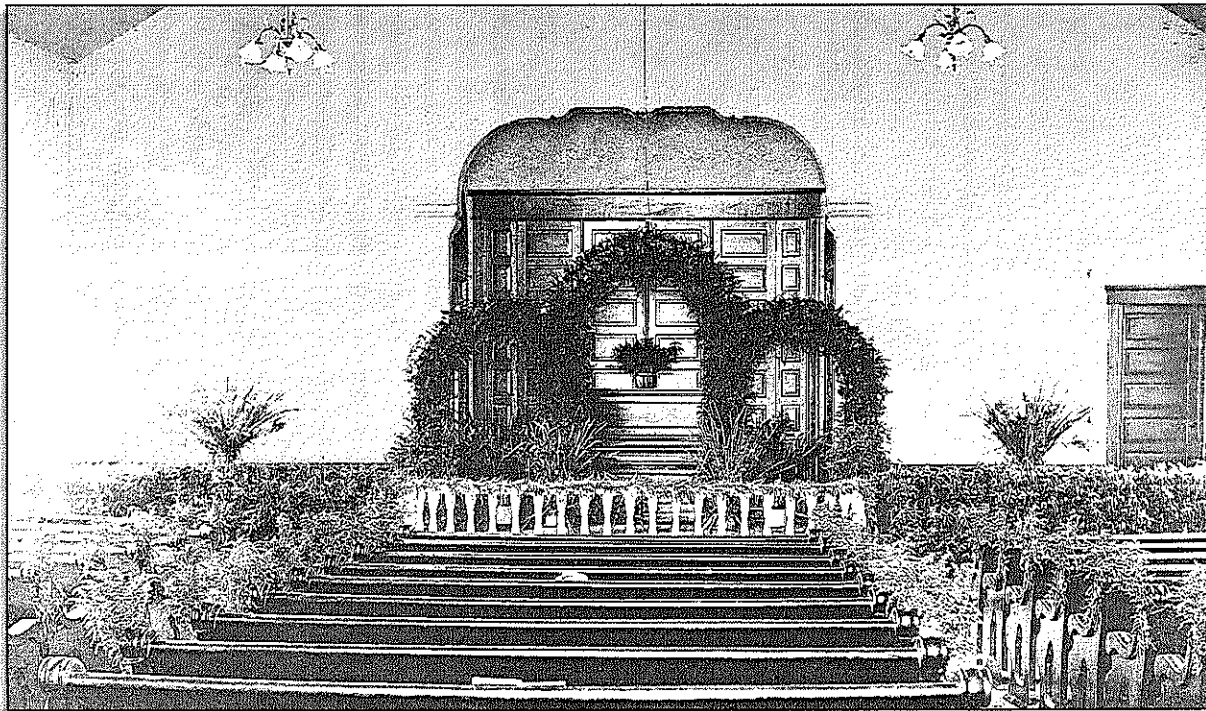
Mr. Whitaker stayed with the church for only two years, and he was succeeded by the Rev. J. D. Williams. It was during the ministry of Mr. J. D. Williams that a Sunday School building was erected behind the sanctuary. This consisted of a basement section with an assembly room in the center surrounded by alcoves for class use and the main floor arranged in the same way. A sliding door at the rear of the sanctuary pulpit made it possible to combine the two main floor sections in case of overflow congregations.

At the conference of 1908, Dr. Armenius G. Dixon was appointed as minister to the church. His years of service saw considerable growth in membership and a broadening of interest on the part of the church in Christian work throughout the world; but of special local interest was the removal from Denton to High Point of the North Carolina Methodist Protestant Orphanage. This small home had been established in 1910 through the efforts of the women of the conference led by Mrs. W. C. Hammer of Asheboro.

Miss Etta Auman (later Mrs. J. W. Austin) was the "mother—in—residence" at the time of the opening. With the assistance of Mrs. Mabel Williams Russell (sister of the Rev. J. S. Williams and a resident of Denton) she managed the Home until its removal to High Point. Rev. George L. Reynolds was pastor of the Denton Methodist Protestant Church at this time, and he gave valuable advice and assistance in the development of this project. Small in its beginning—three children—there were fourteen children moved to High Point in August, 1913; four others had been adopted or returned to their parents.



Showing the interior of the original church, the above is believed to be the Men's Bible Class. This picture was taken from the pulpit, facing the N. Main Street entrance. c. 1910.



Sanctuary of the original church decorated for the wedding of Dr. Samuel S. Coe and Verta Idol. September 27, 1916.

Thirty-eight acres of land on the Greensboro Road were bought and one building erected. Mr. and Mrs. H. A. Garrett were in charge and they remained until 1924. Mr. and Mrs. E. G. Lowdermilk were followed by Mr. and Mrs. E. F. Allman, each couple serving for two years. In 1928 Dr. and Mrs. A. G. Dixon accepted the leadership of the Home and directed it until the merger of the Methodist Churches in 1939, when the Home was closed and the children were transferred to the Methodist Home in Winston-Salem. In 1935 a record shows there were 115 children in the Home and that 158 had been reared and trained and gone out into the business and professional world.

In 1940 when the Home was closed, it owned 132 acres of land with three buildings—a boys' and girls' dormitory and the Superintendent's home with a very productive farm with barn and farm equipment. The property was sold to High Point College. In 1950 the college sold the section east of River Road to the Presbyterians. The Penny Building (boys' dormitory) became the nucleus of the Presbyterian Home for the Aging.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

After the organization of the Sunday School as a denominational school the following people served as superintendents during these first fifty years: Rev. W. R. Lowdermilk, J. A. Gray, A. M. Idol (15 years), R. H. Shaw (12 years), Rev. E. Lester Ballard, E. L. Douglass, Dr. C. R. Hinshaw, J. H. Jennings, Ralph H. Vance, J. H. Pritchard, A. J. Simeon; and in 1943 Mrs. T. R. Ballard became the first woman to serve as general superintendent. She served for two years.

THE CHURCH TREASURERS

W. P. Pickett, a charter member was the first treasurer, serving from the beginning in 1894 until his death in 1919—a period of twenty-five years. There has never been a more faithful and loyal member than this good man.

Captain A. M. Rankin followed with twenty-one years of service. During his entire connection with the church, he was devoted to every phase of the work. Only severe illness could keep him from any service—the first to come and the last to leave. No man in the church ever attended more conferences or heard more "Bishop's sermons" than did Captain Rankin. After his death his son, Robert B. Rankin, became treasurer with John B. Spencer as assistant. Mr. Rankin was followed by John B. Spencer and then A. M. Richardson who served until well into the third quarter of the life of the church, for he was treasurer for eleven years. These men were faithful custodians of the church.

At the conference in the fall of 1917, Dr. Dixon was chosen to serve as Secretary of the Board of Young People's Work of the General Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church. The "Main Street" church had, by this time, been renamed the "First Methodist Protestant" because of the organization of other Methodist Protestant churches in High Point, and because Lebanon Church was also located on Main Street several blocks north of First Church. Dr. George R. Brown had transferred from the West Virginia Conference to North Carolina, and he was assigned to First Church when Dr. Dixon was moved.

With the Children's Home now located in High Point with an increasing number of children, with the assurance that the proposed new church college would be built here, and with the growth in membership, it had become evident that larger and more up-to-date church facilities must be acquired. The membership in the early twenties was near 700. In 1922 the two lots just south of Richardson Street were purchased from Mr. Henry W. Frazier and the W. P. Pickett estate. The deed, dated March 13, 1922, showed these lots running from North Main to then Jordan Street (now North Wrenn) a depth of 200 feet with a frontage of 142 feet.

Definite plans were then begun toward a new church. Committees were appointed and Mr. Herbert E. Hunter was obtained as architect to draw plans. The old church building was sold to the Masonic Order for \$30,000.00. The Building and Finance Committee to direct this undertaking was composed of: John S. Pickett, Chairman; J. A. Gray; H. A. Garrett; R. H. Shaw; D. E. White; Mrs. S. S. Coe; S. C. Vuncannon; C. C. Robbins, Sr.; George T. Penny; H. A. Moffitt; J. H. Pritchard; Dr. S. S. Coe; A. J. Koonce; Lewis E. Teague; J. R. Montgomery; Mrs. J. A. Gray; V. W. Idol; M. P. Sechrest; and Miss Pearl Leonard.

By 1924 plans were completed and work was begun on the new building. High Point College had opened on September 15, 1924; so the congregation was even more concerned to have the new sanctuary and Sunday School building completed. When finished in the Spring of 1925, the value of the property was estimated at \$200,000.00 with a loan outstanding at Jefferson Life Insurance Company of Greensboro for \$80,000.00. The note for this loan was signed personally by seventeen members: C. C. Robbins, Sr.; O. R. York; J. S. Pickett; J. A. Gray; E. L. Douglas; S. P. Montgomery; H. A. Moffitt; Dr. S. S. Coe; George T. Penny; V. W. Idol; A. M. Rankin, Sr.; Lewis E. Teague; R. H. Shaw; E. L. Auman; W. A. Davis; J. B. Spencer; and A. A. Hill.

On April 26, 1925 the new church was formally opened for worship with impressive services conducted by the pastor, Dr. George R. Brown. Dr. T. H. Lewis of Washington, D. C., President of the General Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church delivered the morning sermon; and Dr. A. G. Dixon, former pastor and currently President of the North Carolina Conference, preached at the evening service.

GIFTS AND MEMORIALS TO 1924 BUILDING

The handsome new pipe organ was the gift of Mr. and Mrs. George T. Penny in memory of their daughter, Evelyn, who had died in 1922. Miss Novella McIntyre, piano teacher at High Point College, was the organist and Dan Smith, the choir director.

Seven piece pulpit furniture was given by the Reitzel family as a memorial to their parents, Dr. and Mrs. J. R. Reitzel.

The pulpit antependium and altar covering were the gift of Mrs. Lillian N. Jones in memory of her mother, Mrs. S. A. Noles and her mother-in-law, Mrs. John Jones.

Much later (1951) and altar set—the cross flanked on either side by candles and vases, all in polished brass—was given by Mr. and Mrs. Thomas W. Foister as a memorial to his mother, Mrs. Allie Welch Foister.

Illuminated cross above the choir was given by A. J. Koonce in memory of his father, J. D. Koonce.

Outdoor bulletin board was gift of Mr. and Mrs. T. R. Ballard.

Hymnal board was given by W. C. and T. D. Free.

Table for front foyer of church was the gift of the Rankin family as a memorial to Captain A. M. Rankin.

The wall clock for the assembly room was given by Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Gray.

Mr. and Mrs. S. P. Montgomery gave a drinking fountain for the corridor of the Sunday School building and also the kitchen cabinets which were built by Mr. Montgomery.

Three members of the early church have been memorialized by having adult classes carry their names:

The W. P. Pickett Men's Bible Class

The A. M. Idol Bible Class for Women

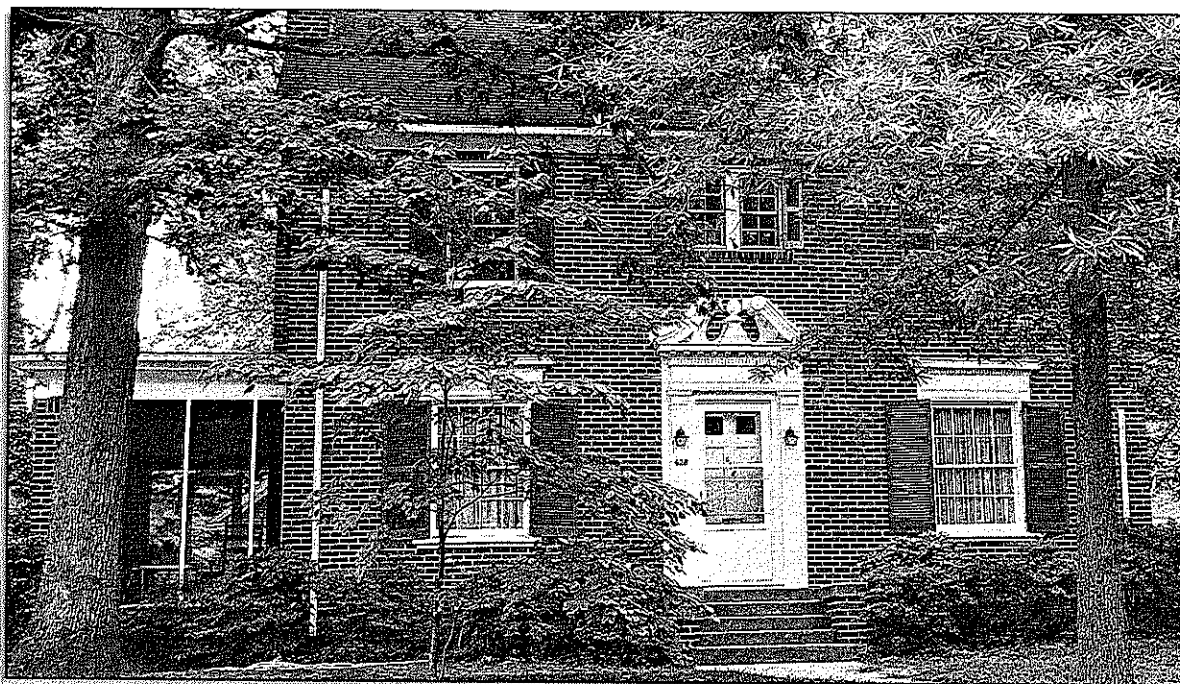
The Aunt Lizzie Welch Class for Older Women

Pictures of these persons were placed in their respective class rooms.

The years following the completion of the 1924-1925 buildings were years of growth in church membership as well as church devotion; but the years of depression and then the war years came, and it was two decades before the church was privileged to find itself debt-free.

In the fall of 1926 Dr. Brown returned to West Virginia, and the Rev. E. Lester Ballard was assigned as *Associate Pastor in charge and Director of Religious Education*, a position he held for three years. Dr. P. E. Lindley, head of the Department of Religious Education at High Point College, served as pulpit minister for one year, and Dr. S. K. Spahr, a retired minister from Michigan who had been serving Grace Church in Greensboro, filled the pulpit for the year 1927–1928.

At the annual conference of 1928, the Rev. Roy Irwin Farmer, recently from the Ohio Conference, was assigned as minister to First Church. The first efforts toward a special eleven o'clock program for children were initiated by Mr. Farmer. For about two years Mrs. L. R. Johnston directed the younger children in a worship program, and Mrs. S. S. Coe had a similar service for older children. Soon after Mr. Farmer came to the church, a new parsonage, located at 628 Colonial Drive, was completed; and the old one at 609 North Main Street was sold. The Colonial Drive lot was bought from the estate of the late Mr. F. M. Pickett (Mrs. Nora C. Pickett, widow, and daughters, Ethel P. Sears, Frances P. Mellichampe and Blanche P. Walker); the deed was dated December 12, 1928.



The Colonial Drive Parsonage 1928–1969

Men and women in the church worked to reduce the church debt. The women served church suppers; they sold hundreds of pounds of peanuts that had to be skinned, fried, bagged and delivered to drug stores and private homes; and they stood for hours stirring and cooking gallons of brunswick stew which also had to be delivered to the homes. During the first two years after completion of the new church buildings, \$10,000.00 was paid on the loan.

In 1928, following the trend of that time, the women reorganized their three societies into one group to be known as the "Woman's Auxiliary of the First Methodist Protestant Church". Mrs. S. S. Coe, who was then president of the Ladies' Aid Society, was the first president of the Auxiliary. After fifteen years as president of the two organizations, Mrs. Coe was followed by Mrs. C. C. Robbins, Mrs. John Whitesell, Mrs. Paul S. Kennett, Mrs. Lewis E. Teague, Mrs. L. R. Peacock and Mrs. John H. Walker.

Mrs. Walker was president at the time of unification of the three branches of the Methodist Church and the organization of the "Woman's Society of Christian Service"; but because of illness she was forced to resign. Mrs. G. I. Humphries, wife of the High Point College President, succeeded her and became the first president of the new organization.

During his pastorate, Mr. Farmer felt the need for assistance in so many phases of the church work. A Committee of two—A. J. Koonce, Sr. and Lewis E. Teague—was appointed to secure the services of someone who might meet this need. They found the right person within the church membership; and on January 1, 1934, Myrtle Davis began a long term of service for the church—a service which covered practically every area of the church work (except filling the adult pulpit) and lasted for thirty-four years.

Two phases of her work were perhaps the most outstanding: her work with the young people and children and her “visiting”; though she was always ready to answer every call from any segment of the church program. In 1936 she organized again the Junior Church program and effectively led this for about six years. She was tireless in her “visiting” for the church—walking miles upon miles, or depending on buses and taxis—as she visited newcomers, prospective members, shut-ins, the sick and any who needed encouragement.

The depression years had come and little further reduction was made on the indebtedness during Mr. Farmer’s pastorate. In 1934 Mr. Farmer returned to the Ohio conference and a young minister, the Rev. Clay Madison, was assigned to the church. Mr. Madison was a consecrated, ambitious young minister and he led the church well for seven years—through the period of the unification of the churches. He was unmarried; so until his marriage in 1937, the parsonage was rented and he was furnished room and board. This income from the rent helped to meet the church budget and a small reduction of the church debt. On March 30, 1936, the note in Jefferson Standard was \$63,000.00. By 1938 this had been reduced to \$38,000.00; however, a mortgage of \$8,000.00 had been placed on the church parsonage in order to make this reduction. Thus, the total church debt at this time stood at \$46,000.00.

First Methodist Protestant Church had the privilege of hosting the last General Conference of that denomination. It was in this sanctuary that the vote was taken to merge the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church South, and the Methodist Protestant Church to form the “Methodist Church”. When this unification was effected in 1939, the name of the church became “First Methodist Church” since it carried “First” over most of the years of its history.

Mr. Madison remained as pastor for two years after this change, and he led the church smoothly into its new life as a part of a much larger Methodism. He was succeeded in 1941 by the Rev. W. A. Jenkins, who remained only one year and in this short time could no more than begin real service.

LIQUIDATION OF DEBT

When the Rev. Wilson O. Weldon came as pastor, the church and parsonage indebtedness amounted to \$43,100.00. Through Mr. Weldon’s stimulating leadership and the untiring efforts of the members and friends, a movement was started to pay this debt. A committee headed by J. H. Walker raised a total of \$14,033.00, which reduced the amount still owing to \$29,067.00.

George Haltom, chairman of the Official Board, with A. J. Koonce, J. H. Walker, J. B. Spencer and W. A. Davis worked as a special committee among church members and outside friends to raise the remaining amount. A group within Wesley Memorial Church composed of Dr. C. E. Rozzell, R. T. Amos, W. T. Powell and W. B. Hall raised \$4,500.00 toward this. First Church was deeply grateful and appreciative of this gracious kindness. On October 4, 1944, Mr. Weldon, pastor, A.M. Richardson, treasurer, and Rupert T. Pickens, trustee, carried the final payment to the Jefferson Standard Insurance Company in Greensboro, and saw the indebtedness canceled of the record of the Register of Deeds of Guilford County.

After two decades the church was finally debt-free and ready for dedication. On Sunday, November 26, 1944, the dedicatory service was held with Bishop Clare Purcell of Charlotte, the presiding Bishop of the conference, preaching the sermon, an impressive service with the first “Bishop” as its leader! Plans were now begun for the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary to be held in the spring of 1945.

ANNIVERSARY SERVICES IN COMMEMORATION OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

1895 - 1945

April 29 through May 6, 1945

The Golden Years by the Rev. Wilson O. Weldon, Minister

"Through the years our church has stood as a beacon light to souls in quest of God. Through the years our church has made an effective contribution to the community in which it has ministered and to the world-wide program of Christendom. Her one main aim and purpose has been to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ and through Him to lead many to better living. And now we come to the fiftieth year of her glorious history, in humble gratitude for God's gracious benediction and with high hopes for a more glorious tomorrow!

From the small band of thirteen charter members that organized the church in the year 1895, we have grown as a part of the Methodist Protestant Church; and since the year 1939 as an integral unit in the larger fellowship of United Methodism. Unfettered by debt, with our largest membership and the church fully organized in all departments, we are possessed with a growing desire to carry out the aim adopted at the Christmas Conference in 1784; 'to reform the continent and to spread scriptural holiness over these lands.' May God give to minister and people both the insight and the courage, the faith and the devotion to labor sacrificially in the Kingdom of Christ."

Appropriate services were held throughout the week. Among the distinguished speakers were Bishop Paul Kern of the Western North Carolina Conference; Dr. Franklin S. Hickman, Dean of Duke University Chapel; Bishop James H. Straughn, Resident Bishop of the Pittsburg area; Mrs. Kay Ferrell of Chapel Hill, former missionary in Japan; Dr. Holland Holton, Professor of education at Duke University; Miss Bettie Brittingham, editor of *The Methodist Woman*, and Dr. Roy H. Shore, editor of *The Upper Room*. Special music for these services was furnished by the high school A Capella Choir, directed by Mr. Carl G. N. Cronstedt; the High Point College Choir with Mr. Franklin Riker, director; and the First Methodist Choirs under the direction of Mrs. Harry Monroe and Mrs. T. E. Strickland, organist.

BURGESS MEMORIAL CHAPEL

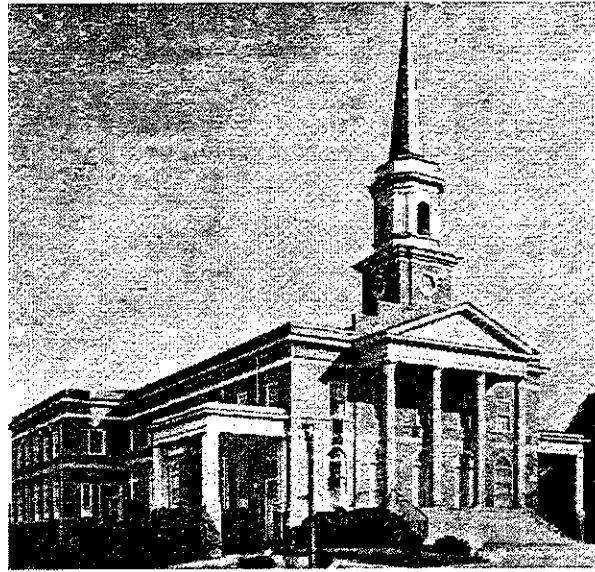
Soon after the dedication of the church in November, 1944, J. Harvey Burgess, a member of the Board of Stewards and chairman of the Music Committee, spoke to the pastor, Mr. Weldon, of the need for an added facility for worship and service. He offered to pay for the creation of a chapel in memory of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. D. Burgess—long active members of the church.

The Board of Stewards and the Trustees enthusiastically approved the gift. A large classroom just to the rear of the pulpit and choir was chosen as the site of the chapel. Tyson T. Ferree, an architect and a steward of the church, drew the plans and directed the work.

The chapel was ready for use by the close of 1945 and on January 6, 1946, was dedicated to the service of God, to the use of the church membership and to the church community. The membership was deeply grateful to Harvey Burgess for the beautiful chapel and its lovely furnishings.

For the dedication service Mr. Weldon used as the subject for his sermon: *A Dedicated Chapel and Consecrated Hearts*. Mrs. T. E. Strickland played the Hammond organ for this service.

There could be no more appropriate close to this first half-century (1895-1945) than this dedication of a chapel as a place of prayer for further guidance into greater service and a refuge for meditation and self-consecration. And as this door of time closes, another door of opportunity opens as First Methodist Church of High Point enters into its third quarter-century of life and service.



FIRST METHODIST PROTESTANT CHURCH

PROGRAM

GENERAL CONFERENCE
AND
GENERAL CONFERENCE REPRESENTATIVES

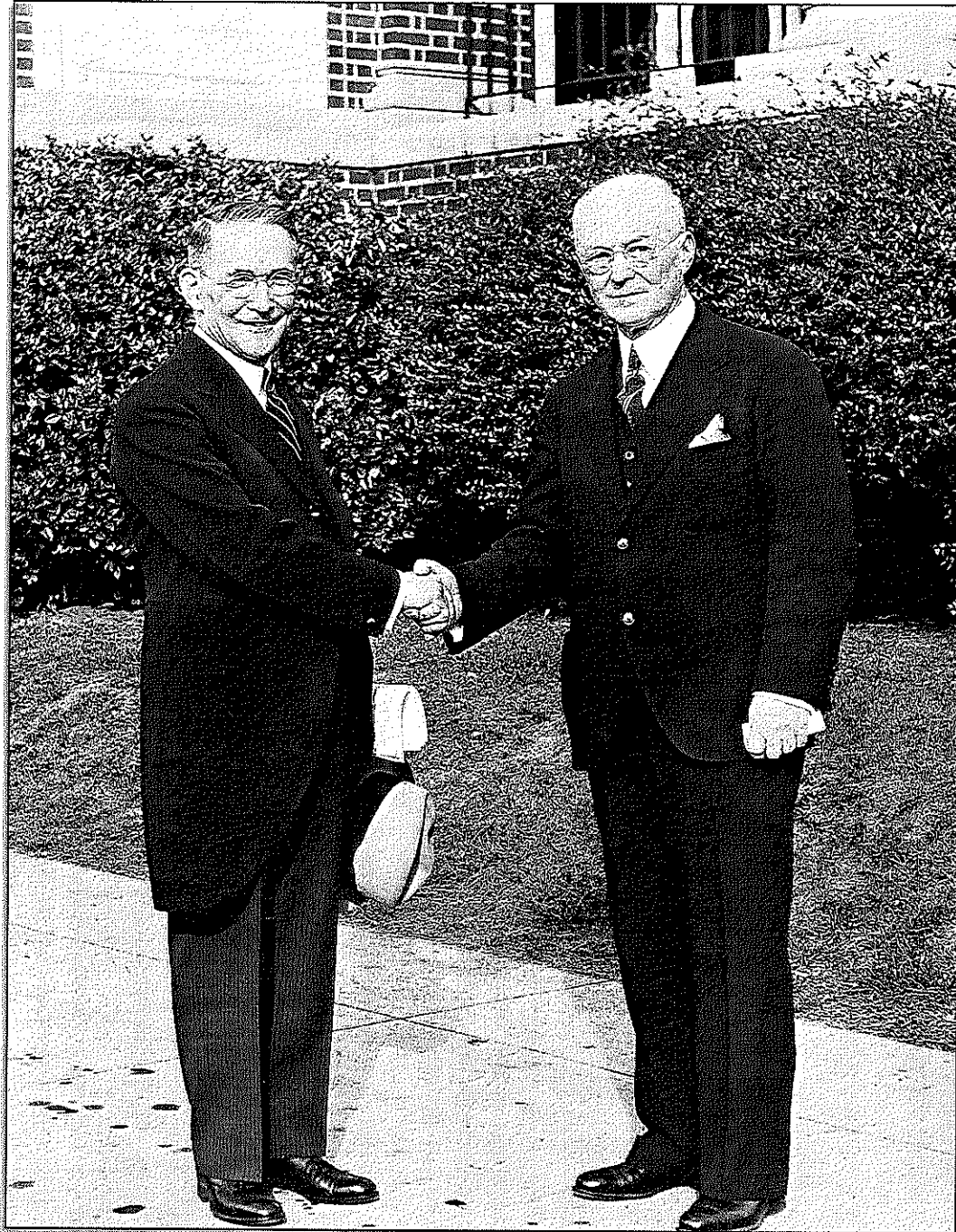
May 20, to 27 Inc. 1936

HIGH POINT, NORTH CAROLINA

In late May of 1936, First Methodist Protestant Church, High Point, North Carolina, was the meeting place for the 27th—and final—Quadrennial Session of the General Conference of The Methodist Protestant Church. It was at this historic meeting that the General Conference of The Methodist Protestant Church voted to unite with The Methodist Episcopal Church and The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to create—from the three—one denomination thereafter known as The Methodist Church.

Representatives to this historic General Conference came from Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington, D. C., and West Virginia.

Unification became effective in 1939, and the name of our church became First Methodist Church.



At the historic 1936 Quadrennial Session of the General Conference of The Methodist Protestant Church, held at First Methodist Protestant Church, High Point, NC, the Rev. Dr. J. C. Broomfield (left), outgoing President, shakes hands with the Rev. Dr. James H. Straughn (right), incoming President. The two men are shown standing in the driveway on the Richardson Street side of the church building.

PART II
THE NEXT TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

1945 – 1970

VERTA IDOL COE

Many members have given assistance in this undertaking and to all I am deeply grateful.

Without the help of Chloe Ferree it could not have been written. She searched out past records and spent much time in helping go through some of these for facts, names, figures and dates. To her I wish to say a very special "Thank You."

The other members of the History and Records Committee—John and Alta Walker and Mary Lou Brinson (Mrs. J. Woody)—have given help and encouragement when needed.

Dr. Wilson O. Weldon kindly furnished names and dates of events during his ministry.

Our pastors, Dr. Edgar H. Nease and the Reverend Robert W. Little, have given encouragement, suggestions and help in many ways.

The following members gave information from their files and their memories: Billy Morris, James Montgomery, Bill and Rachel Gray, Frances Davis, Irene Cannon, Mae Bulla, Bill and Anne Snottherly, Tommy Foister, Dot Gray, Raeville Gray, Myrtle Davis, Inez Vance, Gladis Kivett, Paulette Haltom, Don Boone, Dr. H. E. Conrad, Grace Kennedy, Wilma Nance, Gena White, Lee and Julia Sherrill.

Credit for the typing goes to Helen Hayworth.

To all of these, I express my deepest appreciation.

Dr. (at that time, the Reverend) Wilson O. Weldon led the church into its third quarter of service. These years of Dr. Weldon's ministry stand out as years of great material accomplishment. The men and women under his leadership had worked well, long and hard to pay off the debt that was still owing when he came to First Church. There were a few men who had contributed much of their time and efforts and whose names should be recorded. A.M. Richardson was the efficient treasurer during these years. A.J. Koonce and J. Harvey Burgess had served as chairmen of the Finance Committee. For the years 1945-1947 Ralph Vance was chairman of the Board of Stewards. F. Holt Hunter served as chairman for the year 1947-1948. During these three years, 1945-1948, George Haltom was chairman of the Finance Committee. It was at the beginning of the Conference Year of 1945 that the rotating system for the Board of Stewards was first used.

On January 2, 1946, Dr. Weldon began a series of Wednesday night radio broadcasts originating in the Burgess Memorial Chapel. This was a thirty minute program with the minister bringing the message and the choir or selected members of the choir furnishing the music. This series of services to and for the community continued uninterrupted until 1964. For the first months these broadcasts were financed by voluntary contributions, but beginning in 1949 they were included in the church budget.

An important addition to the church family was made in 1947. Miss Josephine Abrams, who was currently executive director of the High Point Y.W. C.A., went out from First Church as a missionary to Buenos Aires to teach English and serve as librarian in Ward College. The church assumed payment of \$1,000.00 of her salary. As the end of the third quarter came, Miss Abrams continued in her outstanding service to the youth of Argentina.

When Dr. Weldon left in 1948, he left the church free of financial indebtedness; but he also left it with a deep spiritual relationship between pastor, members and their God. His was a period of spiritual uplift and growth. Following the six years of Dr. Weldon's pastorate, another young and promising minister was sent from Wadesboro to First Church. This was the Reverend W. Kenneth Goodson-later to become a Bishop of the United Methodist Church.

Early in his ministry (1948-1953) there was a growing conviction within the church that the time had come to enlarge the educational facilities of the church. It was evident that there were two alternatives; to move outside the downtown area of High Point or to procure more land adjoining or across the street from the present location. Both ideas were explored. Wilbur Groome was chairman of the Board of Stewards (1948-1950) with J. Harvey Burgess as chairman of the Finance Committee.

Since Wesley Memorial Church was moving to a suburban section, it seemed to most members that it would be best to remain at the present site if land could be obtained. This would keep one Methodist church in the center of the city. Negotiations were begun with the Masons to buy the property which had been sold to them by the church when the present sanctuary and educational section had been build in 1924. G. Jay Williard was chairman of the Board of Stewards and A. J. Koonce was chairman of the Finance Committee (1950-1952). The first official action toward the possible purchase of this property was made by the church on November 2, 1952. A motion was carried by the Official Board on that date that the church should "buy the property owned by the Masonic Lodge for \$50,000.00" if and when possible (quote from minutes of Official Board, November 2, 1952).

At the General Conference meeting in 1952 the administrative responsibility of the local church was vested in an "Official Board" to be constituted of: 1. The pastor or pastors and deaconesses (if any). 2. The elected stewards. 3. The ex-officio stewards (Discipline of Methodist Church, 1952, page 208). 4. Trustees. This replaced the former official group which was only the Board of Stewards. Carter T. Holbrook was the first chairman of the Official Board and G. Jay Williard was chairman of the Finance Commission (formerly called committee) (1952-1954).

For several years after the 1952 November decision by the Board, little progress was made toward the purchase of the Mason property; but communications were kept open with the hope that First Church

might have the first opportunity for purchase if and when the Masons might decide to sell. No more definite steps toward acquisition of this property were made during Dr. Goodson's pastorate; but through his efforts several Masons became interested in helping the church come into possession of the land. Some of these men were members of First Church; prominent in this interest were D. A. Dowdy and A. J. Koonce. Two influential Masons from other churches were ultimately most helpful in the procurement of the property. These were R. B. Culler and Pat M. Brown.

With no indebtedness and with the growth in membership and the necessary expansion of the church program to meet the quite evident needs of the membership and the community, some reorganization and additions to the administrative staff and church personnel were made. Dr. Weldon had met the need for secretarial help by the employment of short-term or part-time secretaries. Mrs. C. A. Ferree (Maxine) ably filled the position for about two years. High Point College students worked part-time as the pressing needs arose until 1951.

In January, 1951, Dr. Goodson employed one from the church membership as permanent secretary to serve as his personal secretary and general secretary to the church. This was Mrs. Tyson T. Ferree—respectfully and lovingly known to and by all church members by her own name—"Chloe". She soon learned the membership, the goals and ambitions of the church as well as its needs; and she has served in whatever spot she has been needed.

The demands on her and her office continued to expand with the increase in church membership and its programs. As financial and other clerical duties multiplied, it became necessary to have part-time assistance for "Chloe". Early in January, 1955, Mrs. J. W. Snoterly (Anne), also a member of the church, came as assistant secretary and served most ably until August 1959; Mrs. Drucilla Miles accepted the position in November, 1959, and remained until March, 1964. On April 1st of that year another First Church member, Mrs. Garland Hayworth (Helen), took over this work; and, as the seventy-fifth year ends, she is still the most able assistant—carrying whatever responsibilities that call for her services.

Family night suppers became an interesting and inspiring highlight of the church program. Attendance reached a peak of near three hundred some weeks. To oversee these and other meals and to supervise other areas of the church work a church hostess was hired. Mrs. D. A. Nease filled this position for one year, November, 1952, till the fall of 1953. At this time Mrs. Louis White (nee Margaret Whitaker) was employed; and she faithfully served for twelve years when she retired in the spring of 1965. For the next two years (1965–fall 1967) this responsibility was carried by volunteer church women, with Mrs. W. D. Bulla (Mae) and Mrs. R. B. Rankin (Nanabeth) carrying the main responsibility. In the fall of 1967, Mrs. Bobby Suggs was employed as hostess with only the serving of meals as her duty. She resigned in November, 1968. In January, 1969, a member of the church, Mrs. Ross H. Davis (Mary), agreed to take this responsibility; and she served excellent meals for all occasions as this period came to its close.

After five years as an inspiring and much-loved pastor, a dynamic preacher and a most popular citizen of the community, in the fall of 1953 Dr. Goodson was appointed District Superintendent of the Winston-Salem District. Dr. Robert G. Tuttle was assigned to First Church, coming from Broad Street Church in Statesville. Dr. Tuttle (Fall 1953 – Spring 1958) was not only a consecrated spiritual leader but a zealous and ambitious worker toward the construction of an enlarged educational plant to better meet the needs of the membership, especially the children and the youth. As the first step toward an organized building campaign, soon after his coming to the church—in January, 1954—under his direction, a membership manual was compiled. This showed a membership roll of 1,495 with 292 living out-of-town, many of whom could not be located. Sixty-one geographical zones were set up with an active leader or couple-leader within each zone. Through this organization and these leaders a closer relationship was built up among the members, and communication was simplified.

With Dr. Tuttle's untiring leadership and foresight, the officials began to talk, plan and study all possibilities toward acquiring the land and getting work underway on a building program. By the end of

the year 1954 interest was alive in the congregation and a very small undesignated fund of \$796.38 was deposited in a Saving and Loan account as the "nest-egg" for a "Building Fund".

In the meeting of the Official Board on August 25, 1954, it was voted to give to the newly organized Northwood Methodist Church the bell which had hung in the belfry of the original church. This was deplored by many who had answered its call to services during the nearly thirty years that it had rung from that steeple. It had never been installed in the tower of the present building but had been stored in the basement for those thirty years, awaiting the offer of some member to defray the expense of installation.

In January of 1955 the original nucleus fund in savings was increased to \$1,844.08; and, with the hope that real activity might soon begin, a "Committee for Handling the Building Fund Program" was appointed. This committee was: Carter T. Holbrook, Chairman; Robert D. Davis; C. Paul Dedmon; Luther Draper; Robert B. Rankin; J. W. Snotherly; and Dr. Robert G. Tuttle.

Negotiations with the Masons seemed at a standstill; and in early 1955 the property across Richardson Street from the church was put on the market. On June 21, 1955, the lot at 109 Richardson Street (middle of the block) was purchased from Mr. T. C. Potts for \$8,000.00; and on December 23, 1955, the lot on the northeast corner of Richardson and North Wrenn Streets was bought from Earl N. Phillips for \$12,500.00.

Robert B. Rankin was chairman of the Official Board and J. Alson Gray was chairman of the Finance Commission 1954-1955. A Building Committee was now appointed as follows: Billy E. Morris, Chairman; Robert D. Davis; C. Paul Dedmon; Luther Draper; Carter T. Holbrook; James A. Hogue; J. K. Litton; Wade McInnis; S. P. Montgomery; Albert M. Peele; Robert B. Rankin; Charles C. Robbins, Jr.; J. W. Snotherly; Gilbert Weant; and Dr. Robert G. Tuttle. This committee began work toward plans for the erection of an educational building on the recently acquired land on Richardson Street. Luther Draper was chairman of the Official Board (1955-1956) with C. Paul Dedmon as Finance Chairman for 1955-1956.

Architects Voorhees and Everhart were employed; and on November 2, 1955, Wade McInnis and J. W. Snotherly (in the absence of committee chairman, Billy Morris) presented a preliminary sketch of the interior of the proposed building, with the exterior view to be ready by the December meeting. The Board voted that "the committee should have printed a brochure to present to the membership--this to carry floor and exterior plans; plans for raising funds, etc." (Quote from minutes of Official Board meeting on November 2, 1955).

Before this could be published, new developments had arisen which changed these plans. Early in the year of 1956 the Masons began serious consideration of selling their present property and moving their temple to another site. This information was given to church officials, and negotiations with them were re-opened. The Masons were holding the property for \$65,000.00 and First Methodist was offering \$50,000.00. In a special meeting of the Official Board on May 16, 1956, the Board voted unanimously to raise the church's offer to \$55,000.00.

The deal seemed to have reached a stalemate when Pat Brown--a public-spirited lumberman and a Mason interested in the all-round civic development of the community and the best growth of all religious denominations and with a strong desire for First Methodist to have the Masonic property--offered the Masons a cash donation of \$10,000.00 so that they might close the deal with the church for \$55,000.00. On February 27, 1957, a deal was closed with the Masons for the original site of the Methodist Protestant Church built in 1895. Final payment on this property was not made and deed recorded until June 2, 1958. John A. Eshelman, Jr., was chairman of the Official Board and J. K. Litton was chairman of the Finance Commission (1956-1958).

In the fall and winter of 1956–1957, when it became evident that this most desired site was to be available, it was time to begin an organized campaign toward raising funds for the financing of the educational building. The annual conference had voted in the fall of 1956 to change its time of meeting from September to June, thus making the conference fiscal year from June 1 to May 31; therefore, the fiscal year of 1957-1958 would cover only nine months.

Plans were made for a Building Fund Campaign to be launched in March, 1957. The Rev. William H. Matthews of Philadelphia, an official fund raiser of the Methodist Church, was obtained to direct the campaign. Charles C. Robbins, Jr., was named as chairman of the immediate intensive campaign committee with approximately two hundred (200) members named as "selected visitors" or members of the solicitations committees.

J.W. Snoterly was appointed continuation chairman. Five men were named as group leaders of the "selected visitors": W. B. Gray; J. K. Litton; Robert B. Rankin; Charles C. Robbins, Jr.; and Dr. L. H. Zimmerman. A goal of \$175,000.00 was set, to be raised in cash and subscriptions, this to be paid over a period of 150 weeks.

On June 10, 1957, the lots at 109 Richardson Street and corner of Richardson and North Wrenn Streets were sold to the Atlantic Savings & Loan Association for \$23,505.50. The Association bought these for parking area, and agreed that the church should have full privilege of using the parking lot for night and Sunday services. During the rest of 1957 and the six months of the conference year in 1958, the solicitations committees remained active in contacting new members and others who had not pledged. The building committee continued work with the architects on plans for the building now to be erected on the lot south of the present building and on preliminary plans for remodeling the sanctuary and the old educational section.

These were months of special stress on finances; but Dr. Tuttle never lost, and never let the membership lose, sight of the real purpose of the church: its own spiritual growth and its influence for Christian living in the community as well as its far-flung responsibilities. His interest in the youth program made possible the further "Church Camp" experiences for the young people: they went to Camp Albert Butler at Roaring Gap in August, 1954.

Dr. Tuttle's emphasis on tithing resulted in an increased number of tithers. Inspiring preaching missions were held each year; the most outstanding personage to come to High Point during these years was Dr. E. Stanley Jones, who came under the sponsorship of the College and the Methodist churches of the city and spoke at High Point College in October, 1957.

When conference met in June, 1958, Bishop Harmon assigned Dr. Tuttle to the District Superintendency of the Asheville District and sent to First Church the Rev. A. C. (Jinx) Waggoner from Ardmore Church in Winston-Salem. With the groundwork well laid under the leadership of Dr. Tuttle, it was under the consecrated direction of Mr. Waggoner that the erection of the new educational building and the renovation of the sanctuary and the old educational section were accomplished.

Mr. Waggoner had been in High Point only a few months when he began to push toward the realization of the dreams of the church. In his characteristic way he urged the Official Board to "get on with this building—let's not dilly-dally." Lee Sherrill was chairman of the Official Board (1958–1960) with R. D. Davis as Finance Chairman (1958–1959) and C. T. Holbrook (1959–1960).

The building committee had continued its work, and tentative building plans were about ready for submission by Everhart and Voorhees. Because of death and removals from the church, it was necessary to slightly revise and reorganize this committee. Billy Morris was again named chairman and he faithfully directed the committee until the completion of the work. The revised groups were:

BUILDING COMMITTEE

Billy Morris, Chairman

J. Alson Gray, Gilbert Weant, Co-Chairman

S. A. Allred	J. A. Hogue	J. B. Noble
Mr. and Mrs. R. D. Davis	C. T. Holbrook	R. B. Rankin
C. Paul Dedmon	J. C. Horney	J. W. Snotherly
J. A. Eshelman, Jr.	J. K. Litton	E. K. Thrower
W. B. Gray	S. P. Montgomery	Mrs. Darrell Bulla

BUILDING FUND CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

David Dowdy	J. C. Horney	R. B. Rankin
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SPECIAL GIFTS COMMITTEE

David Dowdy	J. C. Horney	Lee W. Sherrill
J. Alson Gray	J. K. Litton	R. B. Rankin
C. T. Holbrook	R. B. Moore	G. H. Weant

DECORATING AND FURNISHINGS

Mrs. R. D. Davis and Mrs. Charles C. Robbins, Jr., Co-Chairmen
(later Mrs. Sam Cannon)

Mrs. R. E. Dingman	Mrs. Doris K. Marin
Mrs. Max Rogers	Mrs. Lee W. Sherrill

KITCHEN COMMITTEE

Mrs. Darrell Bulla, Chairman

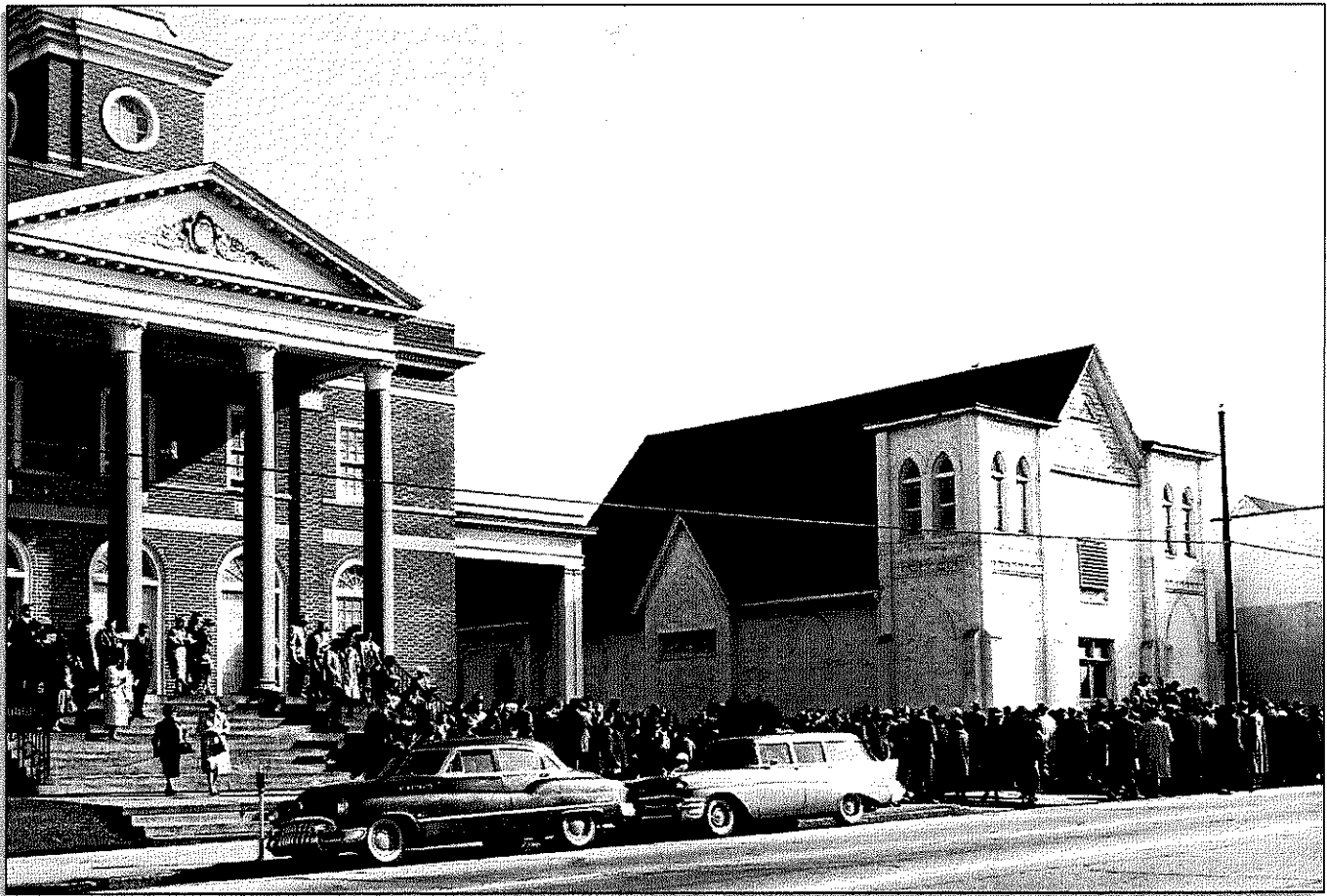
Mrs. D. E. Cadick	Mrs. C. L. Gray, Jr.
Mrs. J. Alson Gray	Mrs. J. K. Litton

In February, 1959, the preliminary plans for the new building were submitted by the architects and approved by the Official Board. By fall plans were ready for final approval. On September 9, 1959, Billy Morris, building chairman, presented the final plans for the new educational building and for the remodeling of the present structures. The cost was not to exceed \$350,000.00-\$250,000.00 for the new building and \$100,000.00 for renovation of the old building.

On September 27, 1959, the church membership voted to accept the plans as submitted by the Official Board. This was officially approved by the Quarterly Conference on December 9, 1959. Payments on the pledges made in the March, 1957, campaign were still being made; but it was evident that further efforts toward the raising of funds were needed. The Committee on Building Fund Campaign-David Dowdy, J. C. Horney and R. B. Rankin-began a quiet campaign to reach new members who had made no previous pledge and those old members who were in arrears in their pledges. In November, 1959, they reported 222 adult pledges and 89 children's pledges for a total of \$84,006.00. Contract for the construction of the building was signed with R. K. Stewart and Son in November, 1959; work was to begin as soon as the original church building could be removed.

Demolition of this first building, erected in 1895, and occupied by the Masonic Order since 1924, began on January 4, 1960; and the construction of the new building began in March. On February 22, 1960, a loan of \$250,000.00 was made to the church trustees by the Atlantic Savings and Loan Association. Dr. C. L. Gray was chairman of the Official Board (1960-1962) with Carter Holbrook as chairman of the Finance Commission (1960-1961) and Gilbert Weant for 1961-1962.

The educational building was completed in February, 1961; and the opening service in it was held on March 5. All youth and children's divisions of the Sunday School and all church offices were transferred to this building. The lovely chapel built on the Main Street end of the building to seat 140 people replaced the original Burgess Memorial Chapel donated by J. Harvey Burgess in 1945.



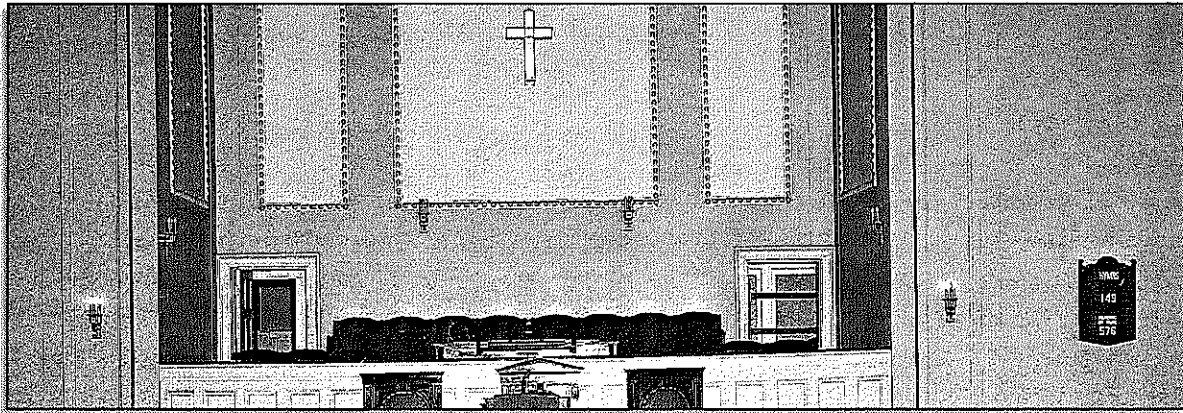
Service of remembrance and first brick removed prior to demolition of the Masonic Lodge, (our original church building) to make room for the new Educational Building. January 3, 1960

The next goal was the renovation of the sanctuary and the old educational building. When work was begun on this in the fall of 1961, it soon became evident that much more than \$100,000.00, the original amount designated, would be needed. In October, 1961, an additional \$75,000.00 was borrowed from the Atlantic Savings and Loan Association. In August, 1962, another loan was made available from the loan company; this brought the total amount borrowed to \$360,000.00.

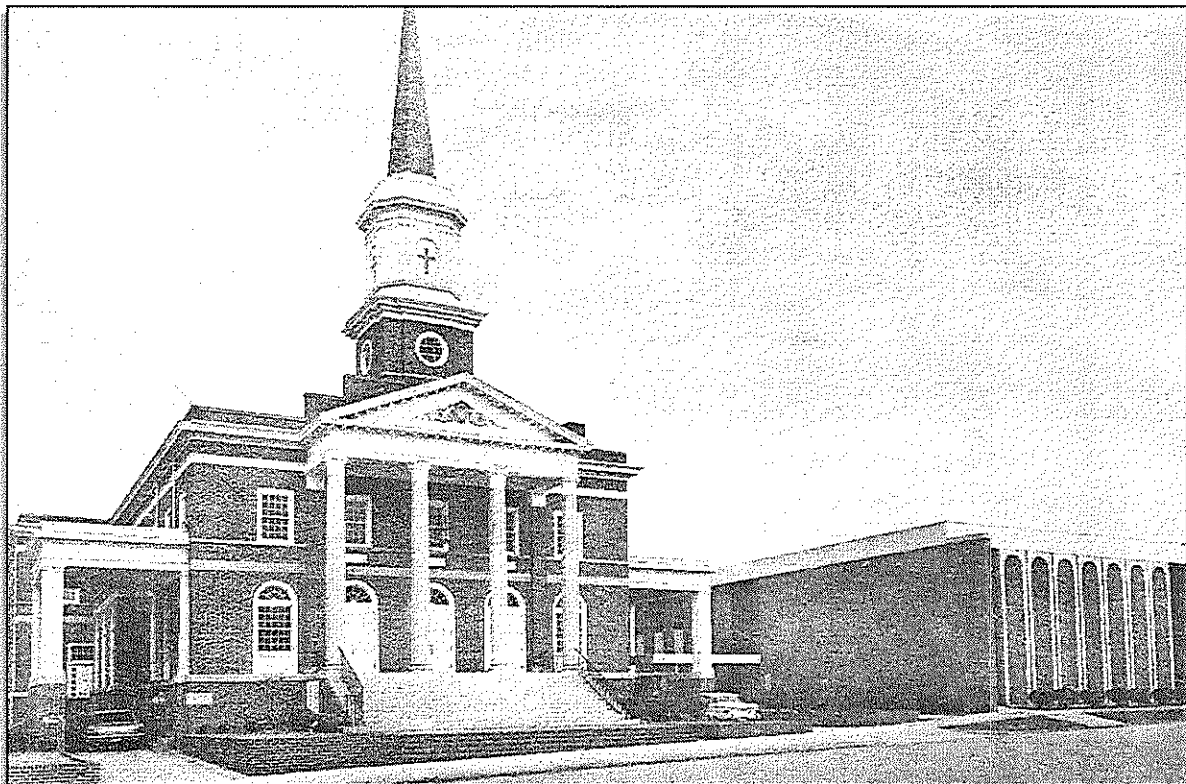
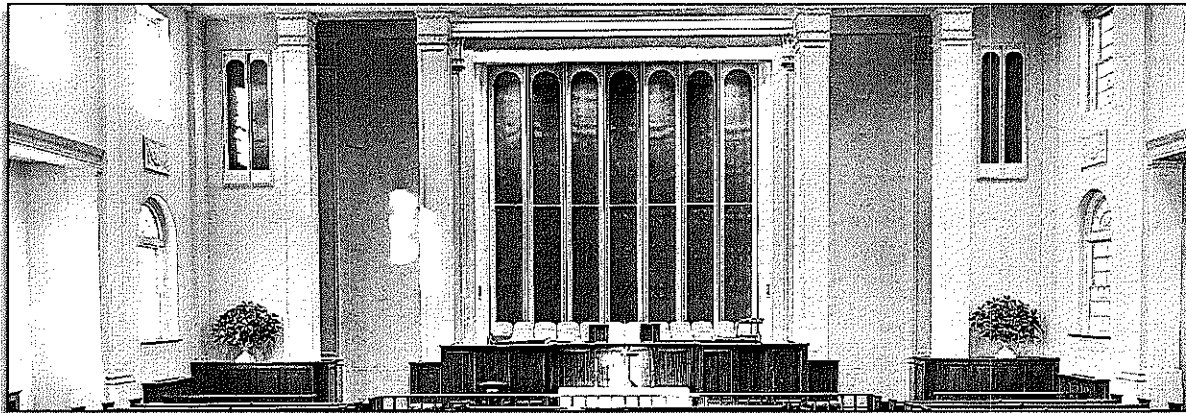
During the months of renovation, an eight-thirty Sunday morning service was held in the chapel and the eleven o'clock service in the assembly room of the Young Women's Christian Association on Gatewood Avenue. The Y.W.C.A. was most gracious in allowing use of this room as well as other rooms for the meeting of Sunday School classes. Perpetual Savings and Loan Company and Curtis Smithdeal, Realtors, were also generous in letting the adult classes meet in their buildings. First Church was most grateful to these three organizations for their kindness. Interest and attendance held up well during this period of disruption; and the congregation was well ready and grateful to God for His continuing guidance during these years and for the fruition of the church's goal.

The sanctuary was completed, the organ re-worked and re-installed and all furnishings set by early April, 1962. The first service was held in the now-renewed sanctuary on the morning of Palm Sunday, April 15, 1962, with the pastor, the Rev. A. C. Waggoner, bringing the message. Services were held throughout Holy Week with the following ministers speaking, three of whom were former pastors:

- | | | | |
|------------------|--|--------------------|----------------------|
| Sunday evening- | Dr. Robert G. Tuttle | Wednesday evening- | Dr. Wilson O. Weldon |
| Monday evening- | Dr. J. Clay Madison | Thursday evening- | Communion Service |
| Tuesday evening- | Dr. Ralph Taylor,
District Superintendent | Friday evening- | Rev. A. C. Waggoner |



Sanctuary interior showing pulpit area as it appeared from: (T) 1924 when the main church building was constructed until extensive renovations were begun in the fall of 1961, and as it appeared (B) after completion of the 1961-62 renovations.



Exterior of church facilities as they appeared after completion of the Educational Building. c. 1962

Besides the cash contributions there were many special gifts made to the church. For the preservation of the record of these gifts, the beautiful *Book of Remembrance* was made. The list of gifts and donors was compiled by Mrs. Charles Robbins, Jr. (later Mrs. Sam Cannon). The decoration and recordings in this lovely book were done by Mrs. Robert W. McAllister. The book is displayed in the foyer at the entrance to the chapel. Another book is in the foyer of the sanctuary. This book includes gifts and memorials to loved ones and friends. Mrs. McAllister, in her artistic way, keeps current the records in this second volume.

Four years of ministering service had brought Mr. Waggoner the reward of seeing the task well accomplished. When conference convened in June, he was transferred to Lincolnton, and the Rev. Douglas A. Corriher was assigned to First Church. Quote from Mr. Waggoner's Annual Report to Quarterly Conference on May 13, 1962: "We leave this church next month with the satisfaction of a tremendous job completed, and with a prayer of thanksgiving for having had the privilege of being the leader in it." But these years of Mr. Waggoner's ministry were by no means taken up only with a building program. The interruptions did not lessen the inspirational and worshipful spirit encouraged by Mr. Waggoner's leadership. Both minister and members tended to develop a closeness of relationships among themselves and a deeper feeling of consecration and will to carry on God's work.

The Rev. Douglas A. Corriher came to First Church from Providence Road Church in Charlotte and was the consecrated, spiritual leader for three years (1962-1965). Under his direction, his leadership and with his encouragement, the number of tithers was increased and many of the younger members came to find new avenues of service to their God.

During his first year pledges to the building fund had run out; and under his direction the Official Board combined future pledges with the regular church budget pledges. Since building pledges ran out in March and the conference year in May, the local church fiscal year was set from April 1 to March 31. This change was effective in the spring of 1963. In preparation for this change, a special "Tithing Campaign" was held. This campaign, from January 27 through February 24, began with a series of four dinner meetings for the membership. A panel, consisting of the minister and three laymen, led a discussion of tithing emphasizing the meaning, the importance and the value of tithing. Response to these meetings was quite gratifying, and results were evident when the campaign for church pledges was put on.

This change in the local church fiscal year from the conference year took care of the immediate financial situation; and the plan was continued until 1967. H. Broadus (Dusty) Leonard, Jr., was now chairman of the Board (1962-1964) with Lee W. Sherrill as chairman of the Finance Committee.

As related in the report of the church's youth program, Dr. Russell T. Montfort was brought into the church life in the summer of 1964 through the interest and efforts of Mr. Corriher. For the year that Mr. Corriher and he worked together, they developed a most well-rounded, well-organized and deeply spiritually-minded program in the church.

At the close of the conference year-June, 1965-Bishop Hunt felt that Mr. Corriher and Dr. Montfort should move. Even though neither had served a four-year term, the Bishop felt it was for their best interests that they change because of the available openings coming up at this conference. At this time Gilbert H. Weant (1964-1966) was chairman of the Official Board, and Dr. C. L. Gray, Jr. was chairman of the Finance Commission.

Dr. Edgar H. Nease, Jr. and the Reverend Robert W. Little-the former from Rutherfordton and the latter from Charlotte-were assigned to First Church. They proved to be a fine working pair of ministers-consecrated, enthusiastic, and tireless workers for the spiritual, social and material growth of the church and God's kingdom through the church.

Under the direction of Dr. Nease, First Church became more acutely aware of its responsibility as the "down-town" Methodist Church, and more efforts were made to set the church programs to better meet

the needs of the down-town community. Special Preaching Missions were held each fall. A noon-time service was held each day—a thirty-minute service with lunch served before or after the service. This was planned to fit the lunch time of business people; and these services were well attended by men and women of other denominations as well as members of First Church and many non-church members. Especially outstanding of these services were the ones held by Bishop Earl G. Hunt and Dr. Pierce Harris of Atlanta, Georgia. Both of these men were powerful and dynamic preachers and their messages inspired and uplifted all who heard them.

One of the most effective programs of this era was the plan of visitation. This was set up in the early fifties as a volunteer visiting project to visit, especially, prospective new members, new-comers to High Point and those people who had no local church affiliation. Wilbur Groome, who was at that time chairman of the Commission on Membership and Evangelism, was the main force in the organization and early development of this program: a program in which he continued to have an interest and to work for over two decades. Miss Myrtle Davis, who was the official "church visitor", was a valuable assistant in the planning of these visits. The groups went out in teams of two to visit on each Monday evening. Many men and women and young people gave much time to this program; but names of all who went cannot be recorded.

When Dr. Nease came, he added some new emphasis and interests to this work of the church. Soon after he came he began a plan of visiting the entire church membership with the steward (or stewards) assigned to the member. Two evenings each week—unless uncontrollable circumstances made it impossible—he and the steward visited members of that steward's group. This they persistently continued until the entire membership had been visited. A rewarding experience for the visited and the visitors! During the first three months of 1968, under the chairmanship of E. O. Lane, a pew by pew enrollment of church attendance was kept. At the end of each month, volunteers—largely from the Official Board—visited those who had failed to attend any service during that month. Many members returned to church services as a result of these visits and others showed renewed interest.

Another area toward which Dr. Nease and Mr. Little directed special attention was in developing or renewing closer ties with High Point College. They, being fully conscious of the fact that First Church was the "Mother Church" of the college and had a big part in bringing the college to High Point and in its beginnings, felt that all possible effort should be made to accentuate and hold a closer relationship with administration, faculty and students.

With the acquisition of a new church bus in the spring of 1968, it was possible to transport students more easily to the church for worship services and/or for social affairs. Students, especially those from Methodist homes or with no denominational ties, were invited and encouraged to become active or affiliate members of First Church. Not only the students, but also the trustees, administration, and faculty became cognizant of the ties between First Church and the college. As evidence of this Dr. Wendell M. Patton, President of the college, appeared before the congregation just after college opening in 1968 to emphasize this relationship.

Consistent and growing fiscal progress was made during these years of Dr. Nease's ministry. With the beginning of the 1967-1968 conference year, the church's fiscal year was changed again so that it would conform with the conference year. This change was made very smoothly by extending the 1966-1967 year to fourteen months; new pledges were made to begin June 1, 1967, instead of April 1 as had been the local church year since 1963.

At the beginning of the conference year of 1965 when Dr. Nease and Mr. Little were assigned to First Church, the indebtedness of the church was \$311,154.00. In the fall of 1966 with Plato Wilson and Billy Morris as volunteer, tireless workers, a special campaign was made to raise funds above the prescribed payments on this indebtedness. This campaign culminated with the Christmas White Gift offering. A total of \$25,063.00 was given at this time. This drive initiated a continuing program of special giving toward further reduction through memorial and other specific gifts. At the close of the conference year

1967-1968, the indebtedness stood at \$190,449.00, a reduction of \$120,705.00 over a period of three years.

In the spring of 1967 a valuable member of First Church died, Furman R. Auman. He had served as secretary of the Quarterly Conference for a period of twenty-five years; and each District Superintendent had commended him for his efficient service.

For the years 1966-1968 David Dowdy was chairman of the Official Board with Clyde Vaughn as Finance Chairman for 1966-1967 and Charles Brown in this position for 1967-1968. Membership at the end of the conference year 1967-1968 was 1,445, including about 200 out-of-town members.

In November, 1967, the men of the church met in a re-organizational meeting of the "Methodist Men". With an encouraging beginning the men met as an organized group in January, 1968, and elected Dr. Harold E. Conrad as its first president. On September 30, 1968, the Methodist Men met for their charter signing, and there were fifty (50) present who signed as charter members of the Methodist Men of First United Methodist Church.

April 23, 1968, was a day of much significance in the life of Methodism. On this date was the ratification of the official union of the two denominations: the Methodist and the Evangelical United Brethren into one great denomination now to be known as the "United Methodist Church". This new merger brought together 10,289,000 members of the Methodist Church and 745,000 of the Evangelical United Brethren Church in the United States with nearly a million members overseas. And so, for the second time within three decades, First Church changed its name: now the "First United Methodist Church of High Point". In the spring of 1968 a pictorial directory of the church was published. This contained 348 family group pictures plus the names of 182 additional families living in High Point and the names of 129 out-of-town members or family groups.

Another step toward the future was taken in October, 1967, when a movement toward acquiring a new parsonage was initiated. After forty years' use the parsonage at 628 Colonial Drive was in need of major repairs; and it was also out-dated to meet the needs of the present day minister. Times, conditions and needs change!

Billy Morris, Sturgis May and Mrs. W. B. Gray (Rachel) were named to a committee to spearhead a campaign for initial funds toward this project. Upon their recommendation and under their leadership, the white gift offering at Christmas (1967) went to this fund unless another cause was specified by the donor. The Christmas parsonage fund was about \$10,000.00; and by conference in June, 1968, the fund stood at \$20,417.00.

At its meeting on July 15, 1968, the board voted to go ahead with the purchase or building of a new parsonage as soon as possible (subject to approval of the membership). The hope of the board was to have the parsonage ready for occupancy by June, 1969. On Sunday, August 11, the church membership voted almost unanimously to accept the recommendation of the board and to go ahead with plans to buy or build the new parsonage. At the meeting of the board on September 18, the board chairman, Dan Herring, and Dr. Nease were authorized to appoint necessary committees. Committees appointed were:

PARSONAGE FINANCE

Carter Holbrook
Roger Blanchard

Billy Morris
Arnold Koonce, Jr.

Sturgis May
Ben Hill

PARSONAGE SELECTION

Clyde Pearson
Robert Rankin
Dr. Dennis Cooke

Harold Craven
Vernard Weant
Mrs. Clyde Vaughn

Mrs. Billy Morris
N. C. Halipilias

PARSONAGE FURNISHINGS

Mrs. Ray Keever
Mrs. C. L. Gray, Jr.

Mrs. David Dowdy
Mrs. H. B. Leonard, Jr.

Gary Reid
Mack King

Dan Herring was chairman of the Official Board (1968–1970) with Charles Brown as chairman of the Finance Commission (1968–1969) and Robert E. Hauser (1969–1970). When the Official Board met in regular session on November 18, 1968, the parsonage selection committee reported that a residence was being built at 921 Kingston Drive which they felt would be suitable for a parsonage. The Board voted to buy this property for the price of \$58,500.00—this subject to approval by the church membership.

On December 8 a congregational meeting was called to vote on this recommendation. After some questions and discussion a secret vote was taken; and when the votes were counted a good majority had voted in favor of the purchase. The new parsonage was scheduled to be ready for occupancy immediately after conference in June, 1969.



The Kingston Drive Parsonage 1969–

When conference met in June, 1969, Dr. Nease was named District Superintendent of the High Point District; and Mr. Little was assigned to a pastorate in Gastonia. First Church was most fortunate to have Dr. Ralph H. Taylor come from Salisbury as Senior Minister and the Rev. Donald D. Davis, just graduated from Duke Divinity School, as Associate Minister. As had been hoped, the new parsonage was ready for Dr. and Mrs. Taylor. This home valued at \$70,000.00 is fully paid for as this seventy-fifth year closes.

The year 1969–1970 was a transitional year in the United Methodist Church. It saw the initiation of marked change in the church structure; an adjustment in operation and implementation of local church programs: a "New Church for a New World". The ministers emphasized, through organization and participation, the importance of visitation to inactive church members and especially to those who were "our neighbors" and who were out of any church.

The Work Area on evangelism, headed by Gilbert Weant, initiated a Neighborhood Plan to emphasize this program. Since First Church is located in the heart of down-town High Point, its membership is scattered over a wide area. The membership was organized into fifty-six "Neighborhoods" with a couple as the leader within each neighborhood. Through these small groups, contacts could be more readily made possible and un-churched residents more easily found and contacted.

In cooperation with seventeen other churches of five denominations a most successful "Lay Mission" was held the weekend of November 21st, 1969. Six hundred lay leaders from over the Southeast were in High Point from Friday through Sunday, and many inspirational meetings were held in the churches and in the homes. A follow-up committee composed of: David Dowdy, Chairman; Mrs. W. H. Colonna, Jr.; Harry L. Hauser; Jack Lewis; Mrs. R. B. Moore; and Clyde Vaughn planned and led the continuing program of lay activity.

Dr. Taylor's Church School Programs of inspiration, sharing and prayer, held during the Church School hour have been a highlight for those attending. Mr. Davis' Bible Study Programs on Tuesday mornings have also been an inspiration and guidance to all who could attend. At the end of this first successful year under the direction of these two fine leaders, First Church now looks forward to future years of spiritual growth with them and others to follow.

SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY PROGRAM

Early in 1969 Dr. Nease named a committee to plan and lead in the celebration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the church. This committee was: Robert B. Rankin, Chairman; W. Darrell Bulla; Mrs. Sam B. Cannon; Mrs. S. S. Coe; Dr. C. L. Gray; Wilbur Groome; Mrs. B. Ivan Hill; Leonard F. Honeycutt; Arnold J. Koonce; E. O. Lane; Mrs. E. E. Mendenhall, III; and Mrs. A. Gorrell Payne.

One of the first goals of the committee was to bring back the bell of the early church. Northwood United Methodist Church, who had the bell, felt no special interest in or need for it; so through the interest and work of A. J. Koonce, R. B. Rankin, and Dr. Taylor, the bell was brought home and placed at the south entrance into the Educational Building. Aaron Allred of the firm of Allred and Mercer, Architects, (both members of First Church) planned and supervised the construction of the pedestal and mounting of the bell. Appreciation goes to Leon Green for the transporting of the bell from Northwood Church.

As many early photographs as could be found were reproduced by L. F. Honeycutt for placement in the church archives. Under direction of this committee this history of the church has been published. The proposed program for the Anniversary Celebration includes:

Sunday, April 5th- 11:00 a.m. Service
Sermon: Bishop W. Kenneth Goodson
12:00 Noon- Bell Dedication

Wednesday Evening, April 8th
7:00-8:00 Reception
8:00 Music- Youth Choirs
Group from High Point College
Reminiscent Hour: Brief survey of growth of
First Church with pictures and memorabilia
Recognition and greetings from former
ministers and special guests

Sunday, April 12th- 11:00 a.m. Service
Sermon: Dr. Wilson O. Weldon
Editor of Upper Room

Report of these services and programs may be made available in the record of the fourth-quarter-of-the-century life of First United Methodist Church.

INNER CITY MISSION

Through the efforts of a group of laymen and ministers of several denominations, spurred by the Reverend Robert D. Weant of First Church, Inner City Mission became a reality in High Point. Bob Weant, an Approved Supply Minister of the Western North Carolina Conference and an active member of First Church, became concerned about conditions under which the underprivileged were living. In May, 1966 during a prayer breakfast of ministers and laymen of the High Point district, interest became active.

At the 1968 Western North Carolina Conference Bob Weant was assigned through First Church to head the Inner City Mission Program in High Point. The Official Board of First Church appointed as directors of the movement Bill Colonna, Tommy Foister and Dewey Crouse, and \$2,000.00 of the 1968 White Christmas Gift offering was designated for this work. The High Point District of the W.N.C. Conference also contributed a small supplementary fund.

In July, 1968 Ross Whetstone, Director of Telephone Ministries of the General Board of Evangelism of the United Methodist Church, was invited to High Point to explain the world movement, "Contact". By February, 1969, enough workers had been trained to begin the telephone service; and on the 9th of February the Council received its first call. Thus, High Point became one of the five accredited "Life Line (Contact) Telephone Ministries" in the United States--the first to be accredited in North Carolina. This service, under guidance of Bob Weant, was manned by members from several denominations.

The other Inner City Mission project, the "Pitcher and Cup" was opened in December 1968. This agency housed in a centrally located store building provided food (staples) and clothing and to offer counsel to worthy people in need. From December, 1968, through March, 1969, over 500 people had received material aid, and many of these were followed up with counseling or other professional aid as needed. The Official Board of First Church designated in the 1969-1970 budget the sum of \$3,000.00 for the Inner City work with the hope that other churches and agencies within the High Point District would give financial aid to the program.

WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

THE WOMEN'S SOCIETY OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE AND THE WESLEYAN SERVICE GUILD

In the record of "The First Fifty Years" recognition was given to the early organizations of the women's societies. These were the "Foreign Missionary Society", the "Ladies' Aid Society" and the "Home Missionary Society". In 1928 these three organizations merged into the "Women's Auxiliary". After the merger of the three branches of Methodism in 1939, in accordance with guide-lines set up by the General Conference Board the "Woman's Society of Christian Service" and the "Wesleyan Service Guild" were organized in 1940. There were 70 charter members of the Woman's Society and 40 charter members of the Guild. At the end of the conference year 1967-1968 the Woman's Society had a membership of 285 and the Guild had 41 members.

The membership, the goals and the effective contributions: spiritual guidance, friendliness and sometimes financial aid to its members and an ever broadening interest in community and world-wide programs and activities have characterized the women's organizations over the years. Each year the two societies have met their conference budgets and apportionments besides contributing to many miscellaneous calls within the church and many times outside the church. The shut-ins, the sick and the troubled have been given assistance--financial, social and spiritual. Clothing and materials have been

sent to the Cherokee Indians. Each year special love offerings have been sent to Miss Josephine Abrams, missionary to Argentina. In 1958 the Woman's Society established an annual \$100 college scholarship for a young person from the church who planned to go into full time Christian work within the Methodist church. This was increased to \$200 in 1967. Mission studies have been held as prescribed by the Woman's Division of the Board of Missions of the General Church.

During the church building project (1960-1962) many women spend many hours helping with the planning of the buildings, the decorations and the furnishings--many besides those whose names appear on committees. When the erection and renovations of the buildings became assured, the women began plans to raise additional funds to supplement the pledges and regular contributions. Many projects were carried through. Most outstanding of these were the annual bazaars with a luncheon and sometimes a dinner and the annual "bake sale". The first bazaar was held on April 8, 1959, with a brunswick stew luncheon. This was followed in the fall with a bake sale. Countless hours were spent by the women in preparation for all these bazaars. The good fellowship and new friends made through the workshops were very worthwhile "by-products" of the bazaars. The first bazaar and follow-up bake sale netted nearly \$1,600.00; each year the profits increased and from the bazaar alone in the fall of 1967 the proceeds were about \$4,500.00.

So many women of the W.S.C.S. and the Guild and many men should be given recognition for their varied contributions of ideas, materials and countless hours off work--all of which added up to the success of the bazaars. However, space allows only the names of the general chairmen to be mentioned. In the fall of 1958 (when the new buildings seemed assured) Mrs. Alson Gray and Mrs. R. B. Rankin were appointed as a committee to suggest general ideas for the best money making project. It was the idea of the bazaar and the bake sale that was settled upon. General chairmen for the bazaars were: 1959, Mrs. Darrell Bulla; 1960, Mrs. Alson Gray and Mrs. R. B. Rankin; 1961, Mrs. Alson Gray and Mrs. W. S. Baker; 1962, Mrs. W. Tommy Foister and Mrs. A. J. Koonce, Jr.; 1963, Mrs. C. L. Gray, Jr. and Mrs. Robert McAllister; 1964, Mrs. Raleigh Dingman; 1965, Mrs. Claude LeFevere and Mrs. George D. Beaston; 1966, Mrs. H. B. Leonard, Jr. and Mrs. Joe Gray; 1967, Mrs. Sam Cannon and Mrs. E. E. Mendenhall, III.

Mrs. Percy Payne was chairman of the brunswick stews; and others carried the responsibilities of lunches, dinners, snack bars and the various booths. Mrs. R. B. Moore from the Wesleyan Service Guild was chairman of the plant and flower booth for each of these nine years. Another responsibility that the women helped to carry was the upkeep of the parsonage. With some of the men as their able assistants, the women were active in the general care, repairs, re-decoration and re-furnishings when the need arose.

The interests of the Woman's Society and the Guild have not been entirely centered on home affairs. Besides the general mission interests, the women have served in varied capacities on the district and conference levels. There have been two District Presidents from the First Church Woman's Society. Mrs. George Haltom served two terms and Mrs. Stanley Baker, one. Mrs. Haltom was the first Secretary of Student Work in the Western North Carolina Conference and alter was Promotional Secretary and Chairman of the Research Committee of the Conference. Other members serving as Secretaries for the District have been: Mrs. Percy Payne; Mrs. James C. Montgomery; Mrs. William H. Colonna; Mrs. Dale Brown; Mrs. Raleigh Dingman; Mrs. Roy Gladden; and Mrs. Kelly Bullard.

Mrs. Percy Payne also served as sub-district chairman. Miss Gladis Kivett served two terms as District President of the Wesleyan Service Guild. The women who have served capably as presidents of the Woman's Society since its beginning in 1940 have been: Mrs. G. I. Humphreys; Mrs. L. R. Peacock; Mrs. J. R. Meredith; Mrs. George Haltom; Mrs. Percy Payne (2 terms); Mrs. J. H. Allred; Mrs. Roby Yarborough; Mrs. Robert D. Davis; Mrs. James S. Moffitt; Mrs. W. S. Baker; Mrs. Lee W. Sherrill; Mrs. Vivian Cater; Mrs. C. T. Holbrook; Mrs. C. L. Gray, Jr.; Mrs. H. B. Leonard, Jr.; and Mrs. T. W. Foister.

The equally capable president leaders of the Guild have been: Mrs. Ross H. Davis (2 terms); Mrs. R. B. Moore; Mrs. Ralph H. Vance; Miss Annabel Thompson; Mrs. H. E. Coble (2 terms); Miss Gladis Kivett

(3 terms); Miss Blanche Burgess; Miss Mary Wall; Miss Marie Rice; Miss Marcella Carter (2 terms); Mrs. F. Holt Hunter; Mrs. J. Lee Collins; Miss Violet Ponds; Mrs. Paul Bulla (2 terms); and Mrs. K. G. Kennedy.

After unification of the Methodist Church with the Evangelical United Brethren the name of the Woman's Society of Christian Service became the Women's Society of Christian Service. There were other changes in titles of officers and secretaries, some changes in administrative and procedural methods, and some changes in responsibilities; but the same ideals of Christian living, Christian devotion, Christian service and Christian fellowship were continued as the prevailing motives of the women's work.

On the evening of September 11, 1968, a dinner meeting of the Women's Society and the Guild was held followed by the installation of officers in both organizations for the ensuing year. Then followed the signing of the charters for the newly organized societies. Of the 285 members of the Woman's Society 181 women were present to sign as charter members of the Women's Society of Christian Service; and of the 41 Guild members 31 were present to sign. The privilege of signing as charter members was open until December 31, 1968, and there were several others to sign in each group. Mrs. H. B. Leonard, Jr. (Penny) was Women's Society President at this time and Mrs. K. G. Kennedy, (Grace) was the Guild President.

YOUTH PROGRAM

During the twenty-five years from 1945 to 1970 the youth program developed slowly, largely because there were many periods without trained leadership; and there were many changes in the leadership. But as the end of the period came, interest and effectiveness of work had grown. As 1970 approached, the young people were well organized under excellent leadership with interest and enthusiasm high. Many of the directors of the youth work were students at High Point College; and each one did a good job with the limited time that could be given to the church while carrying a full senior year program at college.

First among the leaders of the youth work was R. Harold Hipps—then a senior at the college and later a minister in the Western North Carolina Conference. He served from June, 1945, until June, 1946. In August, 1946, James Brown a rising senior, took the work and stayed until January, 1948. Until August, 1949, there was no leader. During the college year 1949–1950 another college senior, Betty Swafford, worked with the young people.

In the summer of 1950 Dr. Goodson secured Charmione Rose, a High Point College graduate, as the first full-time director. She started a well organized program and carried on effective work until September, 1952. In the summer of 1951 the first church camp was organized for the youth. This camp was held at Camp Betty Hastings—a Y.W.C.A. camp near Winston-Salem. She was followed by Thornton D. Adams and then Miss Willie Davis, each remaining for only a few months' duration.

In the summer of 1954 Anne Acey, whose father was a minister of the Virginia Conference and she herself a most enthusiastic and energetic young worker, came as director. She re-organized the youth into the organization as designated by the General Church—the "Methodist Youth Fellowship" (MYF) and successfully directed the Fellowship until the spring of 1958. Mrs. Marjorie Payne Case Daniels, a member of First Church and well qualified as a youth leader, agreed to carry on the work for the summer of 1958. This she did most ably.

In the fall of 1958, Mary Jo Young (later Mrs. Warren Hamilton), a High Point College graduate, became director and continued a successful program until February, 1960. Mrs. Virginia Burnett, another young member of the church, served well as temporary director until December, 1960. Mrs. Grady (Pansy) Whicker came in on a temporary basis and carried on the work until September, 1961.

Mrs. Bill (Pat) Colonna and her husband had been most active and effective volunteer workers with the youth for several years. In September, 1961, Mrs. Colonna accepted the position of Youth Director

on a full-time basis. She had directed the youth choirs for a period during 1959 and 1960. Under the leadership of Mr. and Mrs. Colonna, interest in the youth church camp was aroused; and for four summers inspiring camp experiences were afforded the young people. The 1959, 1960 and 1961 camps were held at the rugged but lovely Camp Nawawka site near Randleman. The 1962 camp was held at Camp Albert Butler, a Y.M.C.A. camp near Elkin. Mrs. Colonna's mother, Mrs. E. M. Doggett of Richmond, Virginia, was a most valuable assistant in these camp experiences. The devotional programs each evening, led by different invited speakers, were highlight experiences.

In the fall of 1963 Mrs. Colonna resigned and Mrs. Dale Brown ("B.G.") came as director and served well until the spring of 1964. When she resigned Mr. Corriher (then pastor) and the Official Board agreed that it would be a wise move to secure an associate to assist the minister with some of his duties and to work with the Education Commission in the youth program. This was to be done if Mr. Corriher could find a man that he felt could well do this job. He found a man who admirably filled this position for the next year. Dr. Russell T. Montfort was just completing work for his Master of Divinity degree at Duke University; and he accepted the position as associate minister on June 14, 1964. Dr. Montfort's enthusiasm and interest in the work with young people brought a renewed interest among the youth of the church and most especially with the college students who were affiliated with First Church.

Dr. Montfort was assigned to a Winston-Salem church at the conference of 1965; and Reverend Robert W. Little was assigned as associate minister of First Church. This same spring Henry Thompson, a 1965 graduate of High Point College, who was entering Duke Divinity School in the fall, was employed as youth director to work full time during the summer months and weekends during the school sessions. He worked most satisfactorily on this basis until June, 1967.

In the spring of 1965 the young people completed a project on which they had been working for many months. They had raised sufficient funds through varied work activities to buy a use bus. This they desired especially for transportation on long trips as to camp and on beach trips. They bought a used school bus from a Randolph County school for \$300.00. With some repairs and a new paint job, they hoped for many years' service. But hardly had the first year passed until there began to be numerous troubles. The bus became a liability rather than an asset to the youth and church alike; so in the spring of 1968, through the efforts of Mack King, it was sold.

Having realized the advantages that a bus might be to the program of the whole church, as well as to the youth, a small group of devoted men raised among themselves sufficient money to buy a new bus. Thomas Car Works and Lyles Chevrolet Company were most generous in helping to make possible the purchase of the new body and new chassis, respectively. College groups, many youth groups and others—especially older members—had many uplifting religious experiences made possible because transportation was available through the use of the bus.

Under the enthusiastic guidance of Mr. Thompson, with the added experience and assistance of Mr. Little, the interest and participation by the young people were very gratifying. Through their efforts and influence more adult members became interested participants in carrying on the work. When Henry Thompson left in the spring of 1967, Charles Teague and Wanda Wise—both rising seniors at the college—carried on the program under the direction of Mr. Little. Charles Teague continued part-time throughout the college year 1967-1968. During these months Mr. Little was devoting much of his time to the youth work; and his interest and efforts were continuing to draw help from adult members.

Since it seemed that a full time Director of Religious Education could not be employed, it was recommended to the March 1968 meeting of the Official Board that Mr. Little should assume heavier educational duties and lighter ministerial activities. This was recommended by the Education Commission (Dr. Locke reporting) with approval from the Pastoral Relations Committee (Ben Hill, Chairman) and, also, with the approval of Dr. Nease and Mr. Little. The board approved the recommendation. Ben Hill was asked to notify the Bishop of this change in duties, so that this might be taken into consideration in the making of the upcoming conference appointments.

In the summer of 1968, the church was fortunate to secure Diana Esau as full time Director of Religious Education. Diana, a native of Brooklyn, New York, had graduated from Pfeiffer College in 1967; and had served as Youth Director in Memorial Methodist Church in Charlotte for a year. She came to First Church in August, 1968, to direct the youth program and assist Carole Turner with the children's music. After the employment of Miss Esau, Mr. Little was able to resume his duties as associate minister; but he was the valued advisor and assistant in the youth program.

A phase of the youth program of the church that had a tremendous effect on the lives of many boys within the membership of First Church and many outside its membership has been the Boy Scout program. In 1938 James Montgomery organized Troop #55 with nine members. James was Scoutmaster for this troop for twenty years, 1938-1949 and 1957-1967. Many men of the church have given much to the success of this program, but one other should be named with James for his long service—that of Arnold T. Voelker. And there have been many mothers who served as "Den Mothers" for the Cubs.

Over this period of thirty years there have been about 350 boys to participate in the Boy scout program. Of these scouts there have been twenty-seven to achieve the Eagle Scout award and sixty-three to earn the God and Country award.

CHURCH SCHOOL

These twenty-five years saw steady progress in the work and effectiveness of the Church School. Membership about kept pace with the changes in church membership which was 1,445 (about 200 of these were out-of-town) at the close of the conference year 1967-1968. The organization, the program and activities changed with the changing times and demands.

Successful Vacation Church Schools were held each summer; and for many years Miss Myrtle Davis was the tireless, enthusiastic and consecrated organizer and leader of these schools. Teachers and other assistants led the children in most worthwhile worshipful experiences in these summer programs. The consistent and effective program of the Church School was due to the devoted services of many members throughout these years 1945-1970. Serving faithfully as general Church School Superintendent over this period were: L. F. Ferree; J. Wilson Rogers; J. W. Snotherly; W. B. Gray; Tommy W. Foister; Harold Lichtenberger; Mrs. H. B. Leonard, Jr.; Mrs. C. R. Overman; Roy Gladden; and T. Harold White.

Much credit has been due to workers and teachers in all departments for their loyalty, their willingness to cooperate and their much time given to preparation and use of materials. Modern teaching methods were studied, new devices for better learning were explored; and new ideas and plans were incorporated into the program. A few outstanding names must be given here, not only because of their consecrated service but especially because of their very long periods of work. Among these were: Mrs. Odell Culler- Nursery Group; Mrs. Lloyd Nance- Beginners' Department (Kindergarten); Mrs. L. F. Honeycutt- Primary Department; Mrs. Ralph Vance- Junior Department; and Mr. and Mrs. George Schmidt, Secretary and Treasurer of Church School. There were many others who taught and worked in these, the youth and the adult departments long and faithfully. These were always to be found with their classes unless Providentially hindered from being present.

During the year 1964-1965 under the direction of Dr. Russell Montfort an inter-denominational special Church School class for mentally retarded children was organized. With Mrs. Morris Adams and Mrs. William Barnett as teacher-leaders of the class, it was begun with five children- three from First Church and two from other denominations. The class has continued to meet a very vital need in lives of these and other children.

After careful study and much preparation, the new program of material was adopted and put into use in the children's division (nursery through sixth grade) in September, 1964. This was the "Wesley Series" prepared and recommended by the General Board of Education of the Methodist Church and published by the Graded Press of the Methodist Publishing House in Nashville, Tennessee.

In the fall of 1967 most of the adult classes adopted the new literature as prepared by the Board of Education. These lessons were organized around a special theme or thought for each quarter and were developed in line with modern ideas in education and Christian living. In the fall of 1968 the new lessons were adopted into use in the youth department. These lessons followed the same idea in development as those for the adult department. Dr. W. R. Locke, Head of the Department of Religious Education at High Point College and a valuable member of First Church, was one of the authors of this material.

Much credit for the success in the initiation of these new series in the youth and adult divisions must be given to the Associate Minister, the Reverend Robert W. Little. He studied carefully the programs of materials, the methods of teaching, the plans for organization and the potentials in personnel for leading the study of the new lessons. He presented all these phases to the classes before they made their decisions about changing from the International Lessons which had been in use over the long period of years.

The fall of 1968 found the entire Church School reorganized in accordance with plans as suggested by the General Board of Education. Each department had an efficient superintendent and there was a fine organization of assistants and an extended number of team teachers. Besides the value received from the use of the very excellent new material, these changes brought about the involvement of many more adult workers in the Church School program. Involvement creates interest and interest results in good works!

MUSIC PROGRAM

The music in the church had been a matter of pride since the beginning of the church; and especially so after the building of the larger sanctuary in 1924 and the installation of the pipe organ. But over the span of years there had been many changes of directors and organists.

High Point College had furnished two well-remembered directors: Mr. Ernest B. Stinson and Miss Margaret Sloan (later Mrs. Glenn Muse). Another director to be remembered was Mr. Carl G. N. Cronstedt, who was head of the music program of the City Public Schools. Mr. Dan Smith, both a talented organist and singer, filled the positions of organist and director at various times during the years from 1925 through 1966. In 1936 Ernestine Vuncannon Strickland (Mrs. T. E.), one of First Church's own girls and an outstanding organist, became church organist— a position she filled faithfully and competently until 1954.

The music program received a new emphasis and importance when, in the summer of 1953, George P. Clark was chosen as full time Director of Music— the first full time director for the church. He had recently been main soloist in the choir of the Chapel of Duke University. Mr. Clark, with the assistance of the organists and the choir members, put a real, live musical program into the life of the church. The membership and enthusiasm of the chancel choir was greatly enlarged; and interested youth, junior and primary choirs were organized.

Mrs. Strickland had returned to teaching in the city schools and felt compelled to resign as church organist in January, 1954. Following a period of eighteen months with interim organists, Mr. Dan Smith returned on September 1, 1956, and served well for ten years. In June, 1959, George Clark resigned as choir director to go into full time insurance business. Dan Smith— the ever faithful and competent organist— was always willing to serve as needed; so he ably filled in as organist—director during the lapses between directors. He directed and played from June, 1959, till the fall of 1960 when he asked to be relieved as director. Mrs. L. C. Dillon, a music teacher in the city schools, served as director until the summer of 1961 when she moved from High Point.

In August of 1961 Grady Miller, a mature and very gifted musician of this section, resigned from the First Baptist Church in Winston-Salem (after 18 years of service) and accepted the directorship of the music program of First Church. Grady Miller and Dan Smith made a fine team of two real musicians

who had worked together earlier in life! For five years they led a truly revitalized music program. Mr. Miller's youth and children's choirs reached a membership of 160. The four choirs led an outstanding music program of worship and inspiration. The Christmas and Easter programs were truly spectacular but most elevating and inspiring.

Both men chose to retire the first of September, 1966. Mr. Smith had played the organ for many shorter periods during previous times; but during this— his closing period— he had been at the organ for every service of the ten years. His devotion was such that he was in his place at the organ even when his dearly-loved wife had just died. Such consecration to duty and such a marvelous record!

To succeed Mr. Miller the church employed Mr. R. D. Wold— then on the music faculty of Greensboro College. He became director of the chancel and youth choirs; Mrs. Stanford Turner (Carole) was chosen to direct the junior, and primary choirs. After a period of temporary organists, Mrs. R. W. Rimmer (Martha) of Greensboro became organist on May 1, 1967.

With fine cooperation from the members of all choirs and excellent leadership from the directors and organist, the inspiring music program continued. During the Lenten service series in the spring of 1968 a most outstanding performance of "The Seven Last Words" by Heinrich Schutz was presented by the combined choirs of First Church and West Market Street Church of Greensboro. This was given in First Church on Palm Sunday evening, April 7, and in West Market Church on Thursday evening, April 11. Soloists from First Church sang the solo numbers in their home church while West Market soloists sang in their church.

CUSTODIANS

We have been told that "cleanliness is next to Godliness;" and it is a truth that a church is much more worshipful if it is well kept. First Church has had many workers over the years who have taken a real interest in the cleanliness and orderliness of the church and premises; but there are a few who served long and well that should be mentioned.

First, with a long history of serving was Alpheus Parker with his young son, William. Two others with many years of faithfulness were Solomon Hunt and Hayward Cobb. These three left the church service because of either age or illness.

In May, 1963, the Personnel Committee, headed by Mack King, was most fortunate in securing the services of Mr. and Mrs. James F. McLester. These two have been more than custodians, for theirs is a personal and devoted interest in every phase of the church program. It is hoped that they will continue their care of First Church property and their friendly interest in the individual members of the church well into the last quarter of the church's life.

As this seventy-five year period comes to an end, there are ten members in the church who are descendants of charter members:

Minnie P. Harrell (Mrs. J. M.)— Clearwater, Florida
Altah P. Walker (Mrs. John H.)
Daughters of Mr. W. P. Pickett

Evelyn S. Thorburn (Mrs. Charles F.)
Granddaughter of Mrs. J. Matt
Sechrest

Juanita H. Parker (Mrs. Neil)
Daughter of Mrs. A. R. Hammer

Patricia T. Nauman—Greensboro, N. C.
Great-granddaughter of Mrs. J.
Matt Sechrest

J. C. Welch, Jr.
Son of Mrs. J. C. Welch, Sr.

Robert Foister Emily Foister
Douglas Foister

Thomas W. Foister
Grandson of Mrs. J. C. Welch, Sr.

Great-grandchildren of Mrs.
J. C. Welch, Sr.

PART III

THE NEXT TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

1970 – 1995

KEM B. ELLIS

The task of updating the history of First United Methodist Church is one that has been shared by many people. The life of this church during the past twenty-five years has been rich and full, and now its story will be told by those who have lived it. I simply have been privileged to weave their stories together into one.

I would like to thank Robert B. Rankin, Chair of the Church History Committee, for having faith in my ability to complete this task successfully. The other members of the Church History Committee have been especially helpful in guiding me with encouragement and patience. They have spent long hours editing text, selecting photos, gathering data, confirming facts, and writing stories. It is through their persistence and enthusiasm that this project has been completed. The members of the Church History Committee are:

Robert B. Rankin, Chair

Susie Bland
Mary Lou Brinson
Hazel Cadick
Bill Gray
Martha Holbrook

Peggy Ingram
Helen Koonce
James Montgomery
Julia Sherrill

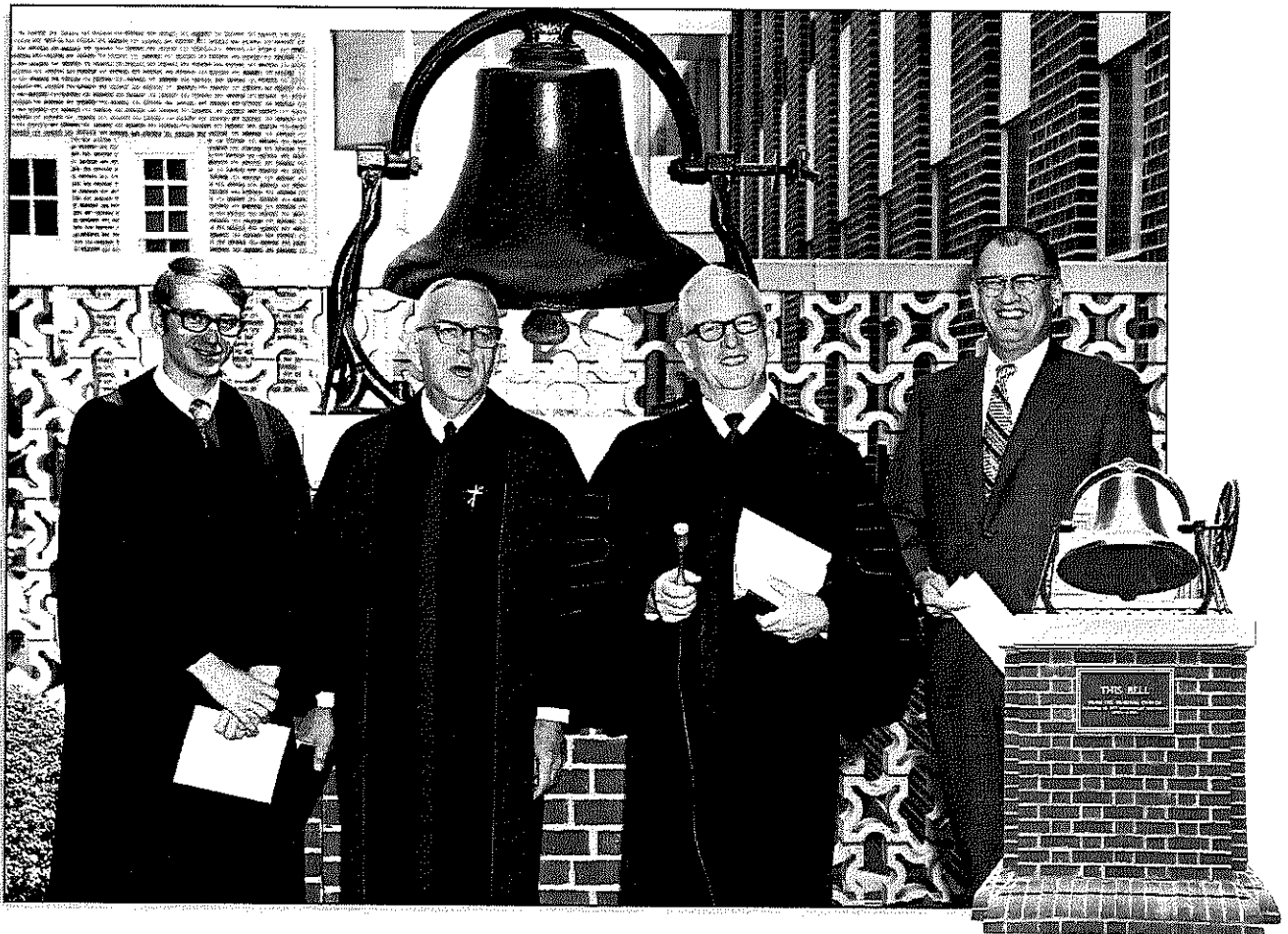
The following people, members of the church and others, have contributed stories, information and photographs for this one hundredth anniversary edition of our church history. I am grateful to them for their willingness to share their information, their memories, and their love for our church. Without their assistance, this written history would not have been possible. I am especially grateful to Gena White and Ann Morris for editing my work. Their suggestions for changes greatly improved the final results. Susie Bland should also be recognized for her tireless efforts to secure photographs for this publication. In some instances Susie even took new photographs in order to provide important visual records applicable to the past twenty-five years.

Dr. G. Howard Allred
Davis Beaston
Emily Bland
Mary Lou Brinson
Lou Cater
Dr. Richard J. Crowder
Anne Harris
Harry L. Hauser
Robert E. Hauser
Doreen Johnson
Doug Lain

Kathryn Leach
Penny Leonard
Jack Lewis
Dr. J. Clay Madison
Pam Mercer
Nan Overman
Mark F. Pierce
Nanabeth Rankin
Julia Sherrill
Gena White
Plato Wilson

The following pages contain stories of triumph and trials for this congregation during the past twenty five years. Through God's marvelous grace our triumphs have been many and our trials few. Our church has grown tremendously in commitment, activity, and giving during the past twenty-five years. Yet greater than all of our efforts is the reason for them—our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is therefore appropriate, before the first story is told, that we pause to reflect on our central and primary purpose as a fellowship of believers—to worship God and to glorify His Son, Jesus Christ.

During the week of April 5, 1970, First United Methodist Church celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary. Accounts of the week-long celebration submitted by E. O. Lane, long-time member of the church, were featured in the *High Point Enterprise* throughout the week. On Sunday, April 5, Bishop W. Kenneth Goodson, serving the United Methodists in the Birmingham, Alabama area, delivered the sermon for the 11:00 A. M. service. Bishop Goodson, First Church's pastor from 1948 to 1953, discarded his notes on a prepared sermon and instead gave a nostalgic review and a poignant renewal of personal relationships in which he said he was emotionally tied to old friends.

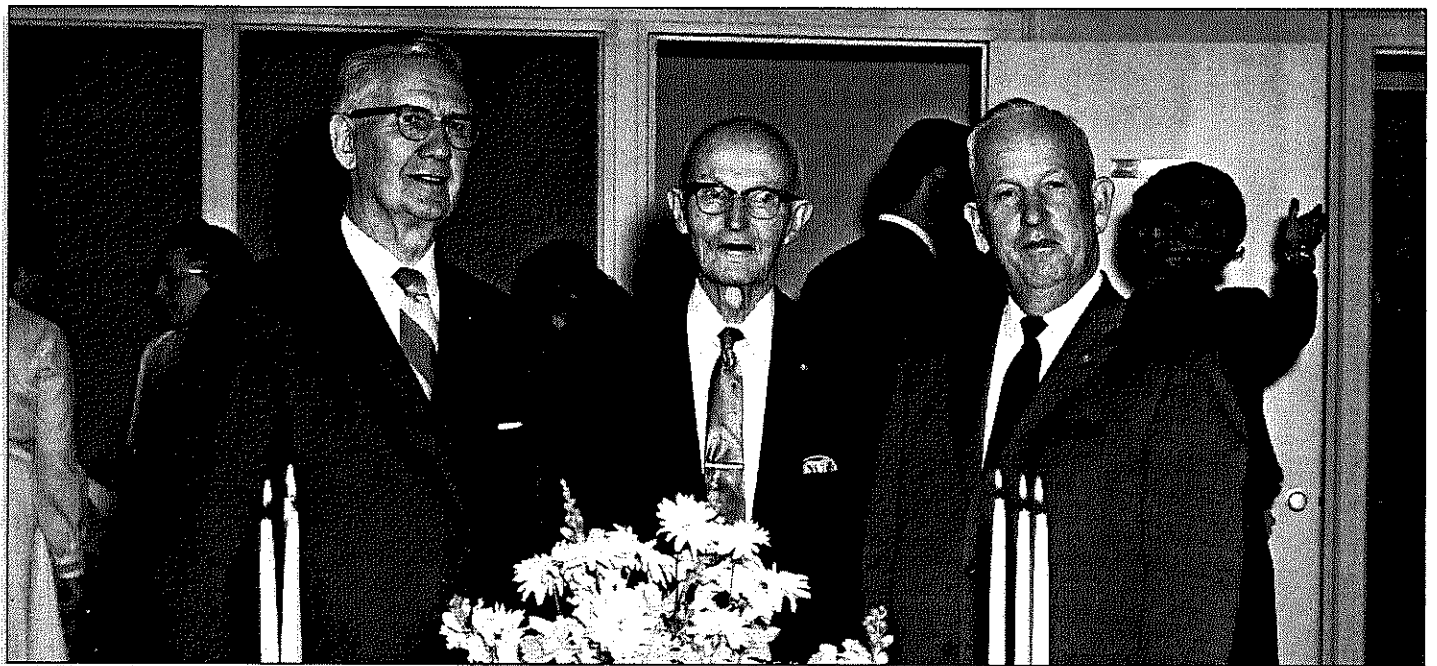


Dedication of the original church bell on Sunday, April 5, 1970. (l-r) The Rev. Donald Davis, Associate pastor, Bishop Kenneth Goodson, The Rev. Dr. Ralph Taylor, Senior Pastor, Robert B. Rankin, Chair of the Seventy-fifth Anniversary observances.

The highlight of the April 5 observances was the dedication of the church bell which had been used in the original church building and had been returned to First Church from Northwood United Methodist Church. Architects Aaron Allred and Ray Mercer, members of the church, designed a foundation of Flemish bond brick to hold the bell which was placed in the courtyard area between the church and the Educational Building.

On the evening of Wednesday, April 8, a reception was held for reminiscing about memorable incidents in the history of the church. Mrs. Verta Idol Coe related incidents in the life of the church with pictures and slides. Special music was provided for the evening by the youth choirs as well as a group from High Point College. Former pastors of First Church were invited, and many attended. Among those present were the Rev. Roy L. Farmer (1928–1934) and the Rev. E. Lester Ballard, our first Associate Pastor (1926–1928).

**Seventy-fifth
Anniversary Reception,
April 8, 1970.
(l-r) Mrs. S. S. Coe and
Mrs. Minnie Pickett Harrell.**



Seventy-fifth Anniversary reception April 8, 1970. (l-r) The Rev. Roy Farmer (Pastor 1928–1934), The Rev. Lester Ballard (Associate Pastor 1926–1928), The Rev. Dr. Ralph Taylor, Senior Pastor

The week of observance was officially closed on Sunday, April 12 with the 11:00 A. M. service. Dr. Wilson O. Weldon of Nashville Tennessee, editor of *The Upper Room*, delivered the sermon. Dr. Weldon was the pastor at First Church from 1942-1948. The week-long observance was really a week of dedication, as stated in the church history, "in memory and in grateful recognition of those men and women who founded, joined, sustained and loved our church, we dedicate and pay tribute to them on this our 75th anniversary".

At Annual Conference in 1970, Associate Pastor Donald D. Davis was moved to a two-point charge in Lexington, North Carolina. The Rev. Thomas J. Duncan, Jr., Pastor of Education at Christ Chapel United Methodist Church in Lexington was assigned to First Church to serve with Dr. Taylor.

In June, 1971, Dr. Taylor and his wife Violet retired from the ministry, and the Rev. Richard J. Crowder, a High Point native, was assigned as First Church's Senior Pastor from the Hickory Grove United Methodist Church in Charlotte. Mr. Crowder's arrival brought a much larger family to the new parsonage on Kingston Drive when he and wife Barbara, the former Barbara Lowe of High Point, returned to their home town with their three children. Mr. Crowder and Mr. Duncan made an effective team for the church. With their leadership the church flourished.

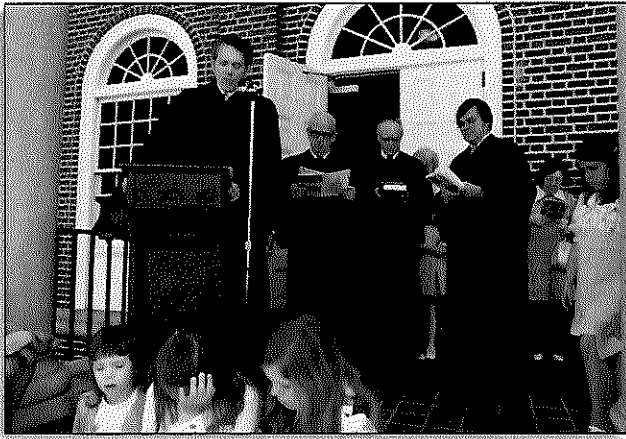
Early in 1972 an effort was made to organize the men of the church into an effective group for ministry. The Administrative Board appointed a committee composed of William P. Harris, Lawrence Leonard, Charles Sanders, Lee Sherrill, and Plato Wilson to look into the possibility of organizing the Methodist Men. The organizational meeting of the group took place on Sunday, March 12, 1972, with a breakfast meeting featuring Max Meeks as the speaker. At that meeting the following officers were elected for the first year: Harry L. Hauser, President; William P. Harris, Vice-President; James C. Montgomery, Secretary; and Edwin T. Nash, Treasurer.

On April 9, 1972, the members of the church voted in a church conference to purchase the home of church members Billy and Frances Morris at 708 Quaker Lane as a parsonage for the Minister of Education. Until that time the church had always rented housing for use by the Minister of Education. From 1964 until 1972 the church had spent nearly \$11,000 in rent. At the time the decision was made to purchase a second church parsonage, the house that the church was renting on Circle Drive needed numerous repairs which the owner was unwilling to make. The church did not want to pay for these repairs since it did not own the property. After careful study, it was the recommendation of the Parsonage Committee that the church not seek alternative rental property but instead purchase this second parsonage into which Mr. Duncan and his family moved in the summer of 1972.

On June 1, 1973, Mr. Duncan left his position as Associate Pastor to become Executive Director of Urban Ministry of High Point upon the resignation of founding Executive Director and First Church member Robert D. Weant, Sr. First Church was instrumental in founding High Point Urban Ministry in the late 1960's and the church's close affiliation with this mission was still strong with Mr. Weant as Executive Director, and church member L. Z. (Zeke) Ellis as Assistant Director. Mr. Duncan's appointment to this position was celebrated by the membership since it meant that he and his family would remain in High Point and continue to be involved in the life and ministry of the church, and also because our church would continue its close relationship with the High Point Urban Ministry. Mr. Duncan served effectively in this position until his untimely death on March 26, 1974. He is still fondly remembered by many members of the church for his faith, warmth, and wit.

Replacing Mr. Duncan as Associate Pastor in June of 1973 was the Rev. Charles Turner, Jr. Mr. Turner was a May, 1973, graduate of Duke Divinity School. He had served as a chaplain's assistant in the Armed Services.

On April 28, 1974, First United Methodist Church conducted a special service of dedication and a mortgage burning. The special service was a celebration of the final retirement of all debt owed on the church property and buildings. The 11:00 A.M. service that Sunday morning included a presentation of the building for dedication and the burning of the mortgage. The church building was presented "to be dedicated to the glory of God and the service of men". Special guests for the service included former First Church pastors Dr. Ralph H. Taylor; the Rev. W. Douglas Corriher, Superintendent of the Marion District; and Dr. Russell T. Montfort, pastor of Dilworth United Methodist Church in Charlotte. That evening at 7:30 the First United Methodist Church Youth Choir presented the musical program *Jubilation* by Lani Smith.



**Church dedication and mortgage burning, April 28, 1974.
(l-r) The Rev. Richard C. Crowder, former pastors The Rev. Dr. Ralph Taylor, The Rev. Douglas Corriher, The Rev. Dr. Russell T. Montfort.**

CHILD ENRICHMENT

In 1974 Mr. Crowder asked Mary Jo Hamilton, a member of the church, to direct a morning pre-school program for two, three, and four-year-olds. This was the beginning of the "Child Enrichment" program which has been so successful for over twenty years. In the beginning, four-year-olds met three mornings each week on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Two and three-year-olds met on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Wednesdays were a "Mother's Morning Out" for anyone interested. The tuition was \$20 per month for three days and \$15 per month for two days. Seven teachers were employed to teach forty children. Mrs. Hamilton directed the program for five years.

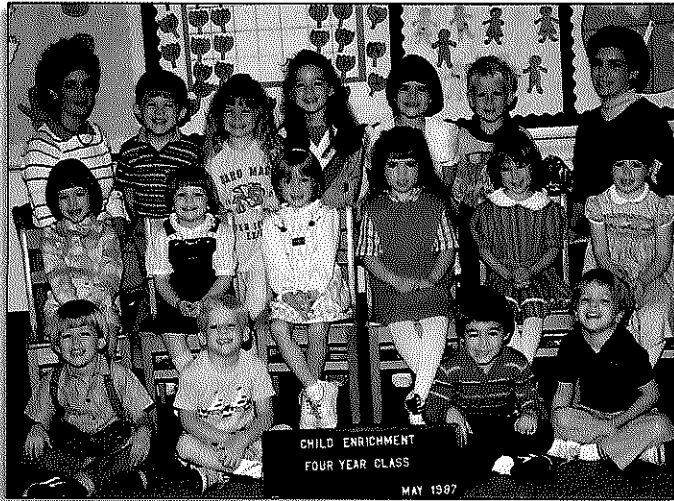
In 1979 the first Board of Directors met under the leadership of Grace Horsman who had replaced Mrs. Hamilton as director of Child Enrichment. The purpose of the board, which was directly responsible to the Council On Ministries, was to direct all aspects of the administration and operation of the Child Enrichment program. The board was composed of the pastors, the Director of Christian Education, the Director of Child Enrichment, the pre-school and elementary grade level coordinators, the Chair of the Council On Ministries, two Child Enrichment teachers, and six others. This model for the Child Enrichment board is still the governing body today.

On January 2, 1980, Nancy Gibbs was hired as the third director of Child Enrichment. Under Ms. Gibbs' leadership the board voted to have a lead teacher and an assistant in each classroom with lead teachers being certified teachers in all except the toddler classroom. In the summer of 1980 a summer program was implemented; however, this program was discontinued after the first summer session. In 1981 two new classes were added: a second class for three-year-olds and a second class for four-year-olds. This brought the total number of classes to six with one toddler class, one class for two-year-olds, two classes for three-year-olds, and two classes for four-year-olds.

In 1982 Virginia Sills became the fourth director of Child Enrichment. A newsletter, *The Chatterbox*, was begun in 1983 under the direction of Judy Marion, Child Enrichment's fifth director. Mrs. Marion also began the extended day program which allowed three, four, and five-year-olds to stay until 1:00 P.M. on Wednesdays, bring their lunch, and enjoy one extra activity. The children really enjoy bringing their lunches, and moms enjoy the extra hour!

In 1987 Pam Mercer became the sixth director of Child Enrichment. In 1988-89 a five-day class and a three-day class were offered for four-year-olds to meet parent demand. In 1990-91 the first kindergarten class for five-year-olds was offered. Also in 1991 the summer program was re-instituted as a six week session of three mornings per week from 9:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. The response this time was

tremendous, with all spots filling immediately. Mrs. Mercer's role expanded in 1991 when she was hired to direct the Children's Ministry program of the church; Marge Webb was hired as assistant director of Child Enrichment.



**Pam Mercer (l) and Margaret Williard
with the Child Enrichment Class for
four-year-olds. 1987**

In recent years classes have been added and existing classes have been expanded to meet the demand, but still there are waiting lists for Child Enrichment. In November of 1995, with church growth booming and Child Enrichment flourishing, Pam relinquished her duties as director of Child Enrichment to focus full time on children's ministries. Marge Webb and Suzy Chance serve as co-directors of Child Enrichment. They make a great team as they share teaching and administrative duties, and the transition has been very smooth.

Child Enrichment has grown from forty children in 1974 to one hundred eighteen children in the 1995-96 school year. It has grown from seven teachers in three classes, to twenty-two teachers in eleven classes. Tuition has gone from \$20 per month to \$75 per month, and the registration fee has gone from \$10 to \$30. Although some believe that pre-school programs are becoming unnecessary, many of the families participating in Child Enrichment are two-income families in which both parents work full time. Child Enrichment continues to grow and thrive as one of our best evangelism and outreach ministry tools as we continue to put children first here at First Church. The Child Enrichment staff strive to love and nurture each child in the love of Christ thus giving parents the peace of mind necessary to leave their precious little ones each morning.

* * *

At Annual Conference in 1975, Mr. Turner was assigned to the Kerr Street United Methodist Church in Concord. The Rev. Richard E. Burkhart came to First Church as Associate Pastor from Grace United Methodist Church in Greensboro where he had served as Associate Pastor.

In 1977 Mr. Burkhart was moved from First Church to become the Pastor of Westford United Methodist Church in Concord. Replacing Mr. Burkhart was the Rev. Lee Strange. Mr. Strange, a Greensboro native, came to First Church as Associate Pastor after two years as Pastor of the Bethel/Shiloh Charge in the Greensboro District.

That same year Peggy Elizabeth Crismond, a member of First Church, felt the calling of God to leave her job as a lab technician at High Point (Memorial) Hospital to enter the mission field. Ms. Crismond joined Worldteam, an inter-denominational mission board and was assigned to the West Indies Mission's Hospital Lumiere, "Hospital of Light" at Bonne Fin, on the southern peninsula of Haiti in the fall of 1977. Her ministry in Haiti was faithfully supported by our church for ten years until her retirement from the mission field in 1987.

THE PARSON'S TABLE

In 1977 Doris Dowdy, President of the United Methodist Women (UMW), cautiously brought an idea for a fund raiser to the UMW Board. The idea had been generated by Fred Councill, President of Councill Craftsmen; his furniture showroom was located on Wrenn Street directly behind the church. He stated that while many showrooms had opened in the Hamilton-Wrenn area, there were no restaurants in close proximity. Showrooms were having to cater food for their workers and for visitors to the showrooms or lose any traffic in the showrooms from 11:00-2:00. An obvious solution to him was for the women of our church to provide food service for about 200 people per day during the April and October markets.

The UMW Board felt there was not enough time to prepare for the October 1977 market, but three members of the board were enthusiastic enough to volunteer to head up the project for 1978—Anne Harris, Janice Miller, and Nanabeth Rankin. Mrs. Harris and Mrs. Miller were both home economics majors with a special interest in foods, and Mrs. Rankin had experience in the church kitchen in organizing and preparing meals.

Ida Mae McConnell, the church's part-time hostess, met with the Chairs to help with ideas for the menu. She stressed simplicity, boiled eggs and prunes. Mrs. Harris enjoyed making bread and suggested sandwiches be served on homemade bread. Mrs. Rankin knew the church's special recipe for chicken salad and vegetable beef soup. Soon a menu took shape with soup and sandwiches, salad plates, desserts, boiled eggs, and prunes.

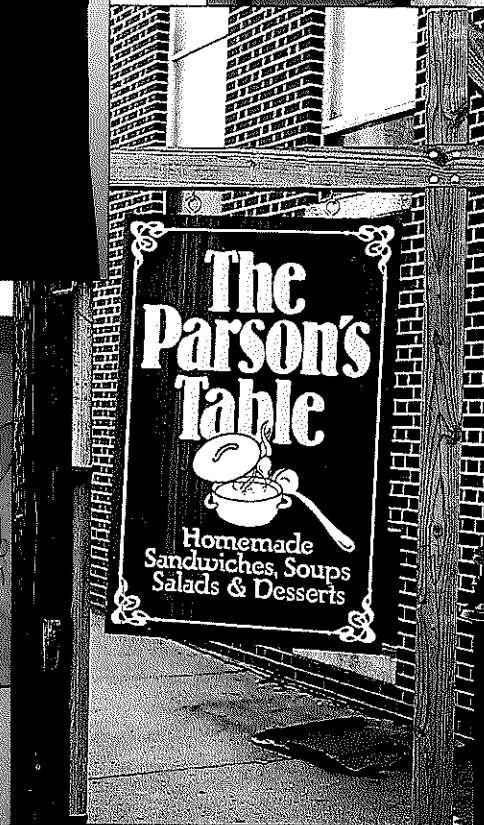
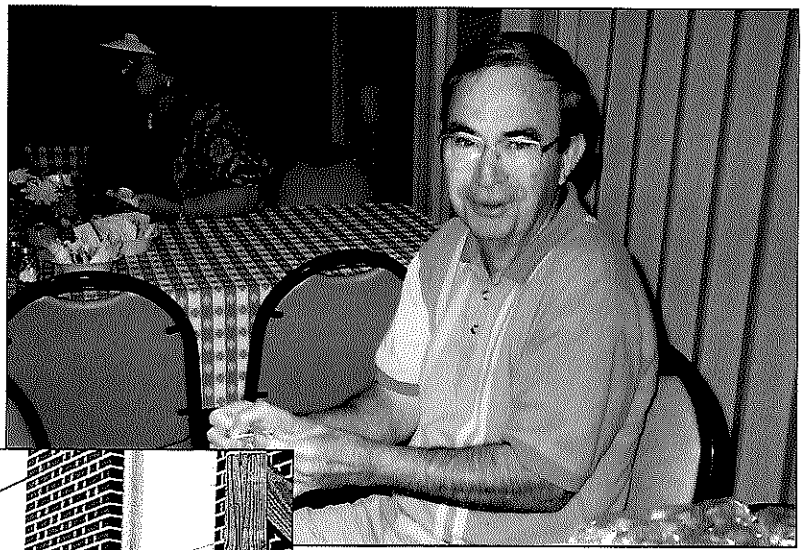
The three Chairs divided the work and soon the Parson's Table was open for business. Mrs. Miller worked with the Health Department, take-out, and kitchen cleanup. Mrs. Harris was in charge of the dining room, desserts and sandwiches. Mrs. Rankin oversaw all food preparation in the kitchen. Everything was made the day it was served, and there was a variation in the menu each day. That first market, soup sold for a dollar and a dessert cost forty-five cents!

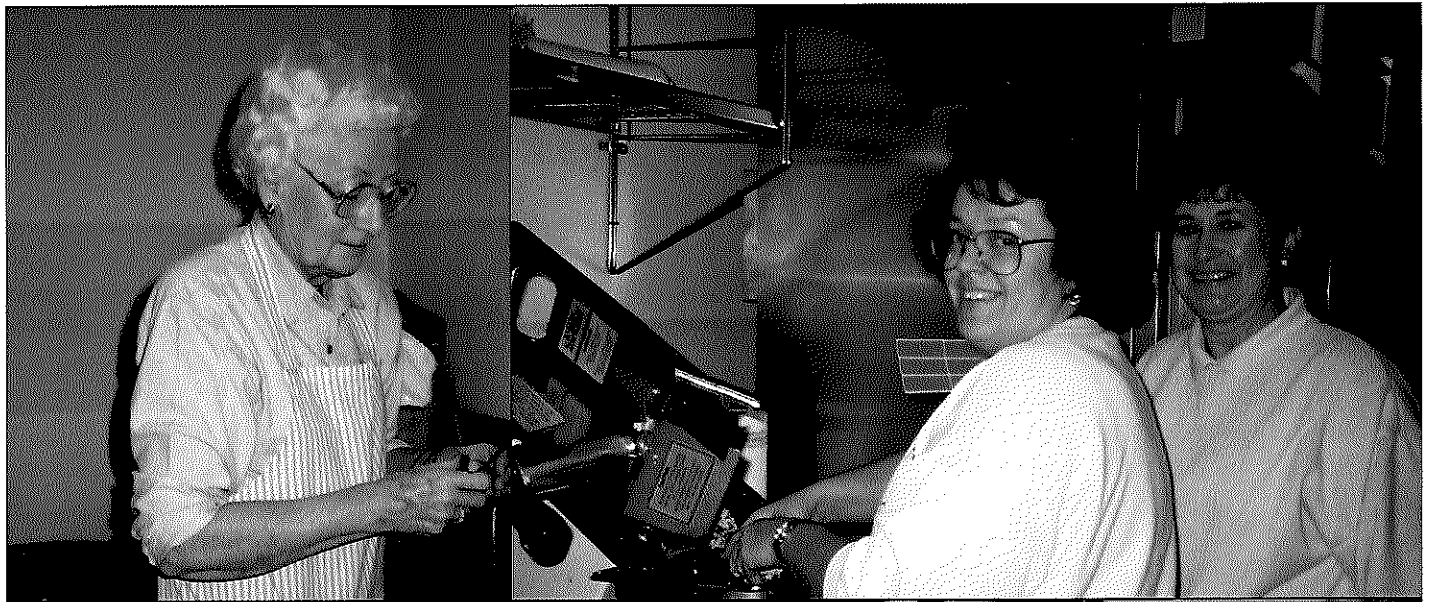
Expecting 200 people to burst in for lunch each day, the congregation had been warned not to come to the Parson's Table. When only 20 people came that first day, Mrs. Rankin went to the phones and called area businesses asking them to come eat lunch at Parson's Table. While Mr. Councill's company was very supportive of the Parson's Table, some showrooms were hesitant to stop having caterers until the Parson's Table proved itself.

Women who could not be at the Parson's Table helped by making bread, desserts, or baked the turkey breasts for the chicken salad. Mrs. Harris would deliver the turkeys and pick them up when they were cooked. She also sliced the bread and sandwich meats at home because of the lack of space in the church kitchen. Mrs. Rankin sometimes boiled eggs at home, and was constantly refiguring how to get everything prepared in the limited space we had. As an alternative to soup, Hazel Cadick's recipe for Polish chili was added to the fall menu. Thinking chili was too heavy to offer in the spring, chicken-rice soup was substituted on the spring market menu. Because of popular demand, Polish chili came back to stay on the menu year-round and chicken soup disappeared.

A sign was needed for the restaurant so out-of-town people would know our location. Church member Nancy Burgin Rankin designed a logo with the profile of a stout woman wearing a long aproned dress and bonnet and carrying a pie. Soon posters with our logo and menu were posted all over the Fellowship Hall and at outside entrances. A large metal sign was mounted on the rear of the church building and removed after each market. Later a large wooden sign was installed in the front yard of the church. A customer had commented that he could not tell he was in a church when he ate at the Parson's Table. Leone Ivey and Frances Woollen printed prayers on cards for the tables and on posters for the columns in the Fellowship Hall.

The Parson's Table was an exciting project, but the three Chairs knew they needed a lot more help. Some women did not see how the church could continue to support such a big project, because so





many women were securing market jobs or working full-time outside the home. Church member Judy Mendenhall was called upon to evaluate how we could simplify our operation. She suggested that some jobs such as publicity and scheduling could be done by persons who worked market jobs. Salads could be made at night by persons who worked elsewhere during the day. Rather than have the soup and salad people chop their own vegetables, a committee could work at night and prepare those as well. Soon our work force expanded.

The Parson's Table was always under the jurisdiction of the Health Department. After the third market, the Trustees agreed to replace the two walls of wooden cabinets with stainless steel tables. Another requirement in the kitchen was for workers to wear hair nets. Bless Ruth Groome for making triangular scarves and matching calico aprons for us to wear after the first few markets. In year four we set up a salad bar separate from the buffet line and had to buy sneeze shields to protect the food. We also had to provide hot water in the restrooms which meant purchasing a hot water heater. The Trustees were always very supportive of the Parson's Table and never charged for the overhead it created. When the kitchen cabinets were removed, the Hamilton-Wrenn Association showed their support of the Parson's Table by reimbursing the church for the stainless steel tables. Later the Parson's Table purchased an additional stainless steel refrigerator with its own funds.

The Fellowship Hall could hold a limited number of people each day and that maximum was being met three or four days each market. Some companies wanted their workers to stay in the showrooms for lunch and would not permit them to come to the church. In 1982 Parson's Table Chair Linda Wade organized a delivery service with the women dressed in long skirts and bonnets. This service met a need, but also drained the women's workforce. Thus, in 1984 the United Methodist Men were asked to participate in a delivery service and receive ten percent of the cost of the meals delivered.



The Parson's Table celebrated its 10th Birthday in April of 1988. Shown here are: (l-r) The Rev. Dr. Richard J. Crowder; Nanabeth Rankin and Anne Harris, two of the three Co-Chairs of the Parson's Table from its beginning in 1978 through 1981; and Furniture Executive Fred Council.

In 1987 Pastor Howard Allred began the tradition of having the pastors serve refills of coffee and tea in the fellowship hall. Pastors Ken Lyon and Morris Brown wore John Wesley outfits to serve our customers. All pastors have helped in the kitchen or Fellowship Hall during their tenure at First Church.

The first Parson's Table netted a profit of about \$500. By 1982 the profit for both markets was over \$10,000. By 1994 the year's profits were consistently over \$40,000. By the end of 1995, the Parson's Table had raised very close to \$410,000 since its inception. Some of the profits in the 1980's went to support Peggy Crismond, our medical missionary to Haiti. Hilda Vaughn coordinated the purchase of supplies for the Hospital of Light where Peggy worked. In all, the UMW donated gifts to the Hospital of Light totaling \$28,275. In 1989 when Peggy Crismond returned to the United States to further her education, the UMW held a "Peggy Crismond Day". At that time they presented Peggy with a check for \$6,400 which they have been saving in anticipation of her return to the states.

Another important foreign mission supported with proceeds from the Parson's Table was the work of Doctors Lynn and Sharon Fogleman in a hospital in Kenya. Over a three-year period the UMW was able to send \$15,000. In 1994 a three-year program of support was begun for a medical clinic in Kazakhstan, a former Russian republic.

Local missions, too, have benefited from Parson's Table over the years. These missions have included Mobile Meals, Urban Ministry, Open Door Shelter, United Methodist Agency for the Retarded, Hospice, religious education scholarships, funding health insurance for children, Association for Retarded Citizens, Hugo relief, Habitat for Humanity, Emmanuel Senior Center, Developmental Day Care, and the Jail Ministry. Our own church has benefited through gifts to Child Enrichment, the TV ministry, the Stephen ministry, Appalachian Service Project, bone marrow testing, the Minister's Fellowship Fund, and the upgrading of church facilities. At the present time the UMW gives the church a portion of the Parson's Table profits to be used as needed.

The Parson's Table is the single largest project of First Church. It involves more than 200 church members twice each year as well as countless volunteer hours organizing and preparing for each Parson's Table. Those women who have served as Chairs of the Parson's Table are: 1978-1980 Anne Harris, Janice Miller, Nanabeth Rankin; 1981 Jean Apple; 1982 Linda Wade; 1983 Martha Heafner; 1984 Katie Leach; 1985-1986 Margaret Pierce; 1987-1988 Daphne Hensley; 1989-1990 Lena Hedrick; 1991-1992 Betty Hauser, Lena Hedrick, Nanabeth Rankin; 1993-1994 Lena Hedrick, Jeanne Montgomery, Nanabeth Rankin; 1995-1996 Helen Davis, Lena Hedrick, Jeanne Montgomery.

In June of 1978, the Crowders' seven years of pastoral ministry at First United Methodist Church came to an end. During Mr. Crowder's years the church family accomplished many things, including: roofing both buildings and repairing the steeple; purchase of the Associate Pastor's parsonage; retirement of all church debt; renovation of the organ and purchase of a new grand piano; organization of the United Methodist Men; organization of Mother's Day Out, Child Enrichment, Parson's Table, several handbell choirs; provision of taped services to shut-ins; and institution of the traditions of the Chrismon Tree and Easter Cross. After seven years, the Crowders had served our congregation longer than any family since the Rev. J. Clay Madison (1934-1941).

Among Mr. Crowder's parting words for the congregation were these. "No words can possibly express our feelings of love and appreciation to this wonderful congregation whom we have been privileged to serve these seven years. Preaching has been rewarding, and 'shepherding the flock' has been the most enjoyable experience of my life. You are the greatest!" Mr. Crowder was transferred to First United Methodist Church in Charlotte.

Moving day 1978 brought the Rev. Dr. Ray F. Swink and his wife Mary to First United Methodist Church from the Albemarle District where he had served for six years as District Superintendent. Dr. Swink joined with Mr. Strange to lead the congregation.

On the evening of Sunday, October 22, 1978, a possible tragedy was averted when fire broke out in the third-floor area of the church building while fifteen members of the junior choir were rehearsing.

Judy Ramsey, assistant choir director, had just finished issuing choir robes to the children and was preparing to rehearse some new music when she smelled smoke. Mrs. Ramsey went into the corridor where she encountered choking black smoke. She encouraged the children to remain calm and told them to hold hands and follow her down the hallway to safety. The children, some of them crying, worked their way down the stairwell, but the smoke became so thick so quickly that Mrs. Ramsey began calling them to return to the choir room. "You can't make it!" she screamed.

Across the street from the church, two men working in a furniture market showroom had noticed a glow in the church's windows. They ran to the corner and pulled the fire alarm which sounded at the fire department. At about that time Dr. Swink arrived at the church for a meeting and learned of the fire. Within minutes smoke was boiling from the windows of the second and third floors, and Dr. Swink saw children at the third floor windows!

On the third floor Mrs. Ramsey had called in vain through the darkness to the children who had already entered the stairwell. With smoke burning her throat, she gathered the children around her and groped her way back to the choir room. She had no idea how many children were with her because she could not see. She herded the children into the choir room office and closed the door. Inside, she counted heads. There were only six. Mrs. Ramsey opened the windows of the third-floor room so that the children could breathe fresh air.

Meanwhile, the other nine children in the stairwell blindly groped their way down to the second floor only to find the door to the outside locked for security purposes. They managed to work their way further down the hallway to a door leading to the sanctuary--there was not much smoke there, but they could see flames at another door. At that moment, Mr. Strange unlocked the exterior door from outside and called to the children. Following his voice, the nine children made their way outside and to safety.

Mr. Strange led the nine children across Wrenn Street behind the church. He saw Mrs. Ramsey and the other six children still inside the church screaming to him from the third floor windows of the choir room. Mr. Strange and Mrs. Ramsey did a quick head count and found that all fifteen children were accounted for. Mrs. Ramsey knew that she had fifteen children because she had just finished registering them for choir robes.

Four fire trucks reached the scene within minutes. The firemen quickly raised a ladder to the third floor windows and within a few minutes Mrs. Ramsey and the six children were safely on the ground where they along with the other nine children were treated with oxygen by the Rescue Squad. They had been overcome by smoke, and all had sooty black faces. Only one of the children had to be taken to the hospital to be treated for smoke inhalation; he was found to be all right.

When the ordeal was over, it was difficult for everyone to believe that only ten minutes had passed since Mrs. Ramsey had first smelled smoke. It took only another ten minutes for the firemen to extinguish the blaze, but it was several hours before the smoke was cleared from the building. Anxious parents arriving to pick their children up from choir practice frantically searched the small group for the sooty faces of their children. Meanwhile, investigators pored through the charred halls of the second floor where the fire was thought to have started in the small acolyte room located there. The next day, everyone spoke of the luck and the bravery of the small band of children and their courageous leader, Mrs. Ramsey. Parents praised the children, Mrs. Ramsey, the firemen and the pastors.

Damage to the church building and its contents was considerable. The final costs of reconstruction, repairs, and replacement was \$113,623.35. The fire also resulted in much inconvenience and dislocation for a time as repairs and cleanup progressed. The rehearsal rooms for the Chancel Choir shifted to the second floor of the Educational Building; this became their permanent home. The A. M. Idol, Hays, and Pathfinders' Sunday School Classes which met on the second floor behind the sanctuary had to be relocated until May of 1979. The church organ could not be used until it had been thoroughly cleaned and repaired, a process which took several months. The first day that the church organ would be played again following the fire was February 24, 1979. Amazingly, the fire did not damage the Fellowship Hall

and church kitchen, so the one event which continued on schedule was the second Parson's Table, which served lunch to furniture market visitors as planned on Monday, the day after the fire!

In January of 1981 Bishop L. Scott Allen appointed Dr. Swink to be his Administrative Assistant. Dr. Swink preached his last sermon at First Church on January 25 and assumed his new duties in the Bishop's office on January 28. So in a mid-year move, the Rev. J. Patrick Heafner came to First Church from St. Andrews United Methodist Church in Charlotte.

In 1981, Sandra Davis, President of the United Methodist Women, asked if the members of First Church would be interested in having needlepoint kneelers in our sanctuary. The response was enthusiastic. Penny Leonard and Lou Cater became co-chairs of the group responsible for producing the kneelers which would be used not only to beautify the sanctuary but also to aid in the teaching of the Methodist faith. These two persons completed a course at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro taught by Meredith Finch of Thomasville. They came back to lead the committee to the goal of praising God through work, to find beauty through design and color, and to educate by telling the message of the Bible— the message of God's constant effort to redeem mankind.



Penny Leonard (left), and Lou Cater, Co-Chairs of the needlepoint project, display the needlepoint cushions.

Space does not permit a list of all those who worked on the kneelers, but these eleven persons gave hundreds of hours to this project: Mary Lou Brinson; Mildred Brown; Lou Cater; Helen Davis; Ellen Evans; Sybel Hayworth; Penny Leonard; Margaret Pierce; Julia Sherrill; Anne Snotherly; and Lee Worden.

So it was with a great faith, love and dedication that the needlepoint workers set forth on an exciting and creative adventure to transform a blank canvas with needle and thread into a tapestry telling

the story of the Bible. The Administrative Board of the church soundly endorsed the proposal by providing the initial funds for the project with hope that memorials and gifts to the project would keep it going.

Mrs. Leonard and Mrs. Cater designed the complete set of cushions. They chose dental moulding found in the church sanctuary and designs in the ceiling stained glass windows as unifying elements for the cushions. Their design called for each kneeler to feature a central picture in a circle, with four smaller circles containing other pictures. Each cushion would also contain symbols from Biblical history and the Methodist faith. Invaluable insight into the Bible stories was given by Dr. William R. Locke, retired professor of religion at High Point College, and Dr. William F. Stinespring, retired professor of Old Testament at Duke University. All of these pictures were forwarded to church member Phil Pierce, a professional artist, who painted the pictorial guides for the needlework. Phil's mother, Margaret Pierce, Penny Leonard and Lee Worden transferred the artwork to the canvases with acrylic paints, following the art to determine which shades of yarn to use. Willie Hauser served as yarn steward throughout the project; Darrell Pierce constructed frames to hold the canvases; and Verne Snotherly made frames for the original artwork.

Rigid rules were imposed on the stitchers--no food or beverages in the workroom and no hand cream that might create spots on the yarn! During the seven years that it took to complete the project, a total of 2,412,760 stitches were completed by fewer than 100 persons who stitched for a total of 11,179 hours! The total project consisted of 18 cushions including one wedding kneeler, two offertory steward seats, and fifteen kneelers at the altar rail. At the time of their dedication in September 1988, the monetary value of the kneelers was placed at \$116,799.00. Their intrinsic value to our church is inestimable. They were a significant addition to the overall renovation and beautification of the sanctuary.

Mr. Strange left First Church in June, 1982, to become the pastor of Canaan United Methodist Church in Thomasville. The Rev. Linwood C. Brooks, having recently graduated from Duke Divinity School, was assigned to our church as Associate Pastor to serve with Mr. Heafner.

In the summer of 1982 several church members expressed a desire for a time other than Sunday evenings for agency meetings. As a result the Education Work Area requested the Council on Ministries to set up a task force to study the feasibility of having weekly Wednesday evening meals and activities in conjunction with scheduled agency meetings. The task force, headed by Anne Harris, did an excellent job of researching the possibilities and made recommendations incorporating dinner, supervised activities for pre-schoolers, children's choir and activities for elementary age children, adult choir and handbells, and elective activities and agency meetings for youth and adults. Thus Wonderful Wednesdays began on February 16, 1983. As of this writing in 1996, Wonderful Wednesdays are still held weekly, except during the summer months.

UMAR AND THE BLAND CLASS

In 1983, the Western North Carolina Conference (WNCC) of The United Methodist Church sanctioned the formation of a new WNCC Health and Human Services agency. This agency was named the United Methodist Agency for the Retarded in Western North Carolina, Inc. (UMAR-WNC, Inc.). The mission of this agency was to develop a conference-wide residential group home ministry for adult persons with mental retardation.

Since the mid 1960s--through the formation of the Special Education Class--First United Methodist Church has supported a ministry to persons with mental retardation and their families. The initial purpose of this ministry was to serve three children within our church family. The long-range purpose of this ministry was that--over time--it would serve others in similar situations and be interracial and interdenominational. These purposes have been realized.



Members of the Joseph F. Bland Special Education Class include (l-r) seated: Gary White; Emily Bland, Teacher; Sara Bohannon; standing: (also residents of the UMAR-Ervin Group Home) David Carver; Billy Ervin; Thomas Littlejohn; Bill Newton; Norman Peatross (not pictured: Mike Branch, also a UMAR resident, and Susie Bland, Teacher)

William G. Ervin, a former member of First Church, and his wife Alice gave to the Western North Carolina Conference and UMAR-WNC, Inc., the agency's first group home located in High Point. Their son, Billy, a resident of the group home in 1983 was a member of our church's Special Education Class and a member of our church. In time, five men came to reside in the group home with Billy, and they too came to be a part of our Special Education Class.

On November 2, 1980, the Special Education Class was renamed the Joseph F. Bland Class in memory of Joe Bland, a teacher who died that year in a plane crash in Warsaw, Poland. This honor to Joe read, "In memory of his life and dedication to persons with special needs, we name the class the Joseph F. Bland Special Education Class". Joe's wife, Emily, and other members of her family have taught the class since 1967—almost thirty years! As of this writing in 1996, Emily Bland and her daughter Susie still serve as class teachers.

Since the formation of UMAR-WNC, Inc. in 1983, eleven group homes have opened and are meeting the residential needs of sixty-two adults with mental retardation. As of this writing in 1996, five more of these UMAR group homes are on the drawing board with plans to be in mission and ministry for thirty more adults by the summer of 1997. The agency will continue to grow and to serve all across the Western North Carolina Conference. It is a great joy to have the six men who live in the UMAR-Ervin Home here in High Point to be part of the work and worship of First United Methodist Church.

OUR BRIDGE TO THE FUTURE

In the early 1980s, The United Methodist Church—nationwide and conference-wide—experienced declines in membership, attendance, and giving. First Church experienced these declines and faced additional concerns: prospects of costly maintenance; remaining downtown or moving to suburbia; staying downtown and acquiring additional land for parking. Various committees were appointed to study these concerns.

Following reports of the findings of the committees and a consultation with the Duke University Ministerial Services, the outcome was an overwhelming vote that our mission was to remain downtown. We then proceeded to see just what land was available adjoining our church property and the cost. There was land available across the street where the NationsBank building now stands. The Sheraton Hotel parking lot was available and would yield approximately 75 parking spaces; the lot was owned by Mrs. Delos Hedgecock and was available for a price of \$300,000.00.

At a Church Conference held after the 11:00 A. M. service on April 8, 1984, the findings were explained. In a majority vote, the congregation decided to obtain the Hedgecock property. Shortly thereafter, a campaign plan was formulated under Co-Chairs Plato Wilson and Doug Lain. Others

serving on this Campaign Committee were David Dowdy, Bill Green, Carter Holbrook, Ann Morris, Bill Morris, Sr., Mark Pierce, Robert Rankin, and Bill Snotherly. By May 13, 1984 the campaign was ready for a May 30 kickoff with former pastor, Bishop W. Kenneth Goodson as the motivational speaker.



Don Horne (left) and Plato Wilson burn the mortgage for the church parking lot property as the Rev. Milford Thumm looks on. September, 1986.

The campaign plan was unique in that it worked in reverse of most financial campaigns. Past campaigns had taught that 80% of the amount needed, \$318,250.00, would be given by 20% of the congregation. The Campaign Committee sought to see what size gifts would be necessary to make this possible. The committee listed the necessary gifts that would raise the amount of money needed, hoping that various givers would find their appropriate place on the list. In essence, the results of earlier campaigns were worked backwards.

The results were amazing as the actual giving response nearly matched the original expectation. Fourteen months were allotted in which to raise \$318,250.00. The first payment was due on August 1, 1984, in the amount of \$115,000.00; this was made on time. On January 1, 1985 another \$50,000.00 plus interest was paid. The balance was paid on August 1, 1986. The big money came early in the campaign. Mrs. Delos Hedgecock asked to make the first pledge of \$25,000.00! She was allowed to do so! By March of 1985 250 pledges in the amount of \$249,328.00 were in hand, leaving a balance of \$68,922.18 to be raised.

When the official campaign came to a close on August 1, 1985, the church had raised \$280,000.00 but was short of the goal by \$40,000.00. A quiet campaign continued which reduced the remaining indebtedness to \$28,000.00. The decision was made to finance this amount since the time for the Every Member Canvass to underwrite the church budget was at hand. The debt for the church parking lot was paid off as funds were received. The last payment was made in August of 1986! There was a small Note Burning held on the site of the church's new parking lot in September of 1986. All of those members who responded with sacrificial gifts that enabled the congregation to secure the parking lot at a time of great need are due a debt of deep gratitude.

In June, 1984 Mr. Heafner and his family were moved to Irving Park United Methodist Church in Greensboro, and the Rev. Milford Thumm was assigned to First Church from Central United Methodist Church in Mooresville.

In the fall of 1984, work was completed on a columbarium within the walls of the church. The completion of this project was due in large part to the efforts of Fran Davis, a long-time member of the church. In December of 1983, Mrs. Davis went before the Board of Trustees to present the idea of building a columbarium for the use of our members and their immediate families. The plan was well-received and she was authorized to develop plans for the project. On June 6, 1984, approval was granted by the Board of Trustees.

Working together, Fran Davis and Aaron Allred saw the project through to completion. Aaron, a local architect and long-time member of the church, donated his architectural services in drawing the plans and overseeing the work. The site chosen was the atrium adjacent to the chapel in the Educational Building. A brick wall was constructed containing seventy niches, each sufficient for holding two containers of ashes. A central terrazzo walkway leads from the foyer of the building to the inurement wall. Material for the walkway was given by Mr. Bill Smith of Carolina Marble and Tile Company. Also contributing greatly to the project was Leone Ivey; many of her ideas and suggestions were incorporated into the finished project.

Work was completed in the fall of 1984, and on September 10 of that year Dr. Harold Conrad became the first person whose ashes were inured in a niche. The columbarium was consecrated at a service on October 14, 1986.

In 1990 David Dowdy, a life-long member of the church, sculpted a bronze bust of John Wesley which he placed on a pedestal of Vermont marble that he purchased for that purpose. The bust was unveiled on May 13, 1990 and was then placed among shrubs in the columbarium, thus giving rise to the name "Wesley Gardens" for the area.

In June of 1985 Mr. Brooks was assigned to a pastorate at Trinity United Methodist Church in Gastonia. The Rev. Ron Robinson, pastor of Burnett's Chapel United Methodist Church in Greensboro, was appointed as our Associate Pastor to serve with Mr. Thumm. At that same time the Rev. Earnest (Earnie) Price joined the church staff as a part-time Pastor of Visitation. Mr. Price had just retired the month before as the Director of Human Relations Studies at High Point College where he was a Kearns Professor.

Mr. Thumm decided to retire from the pastoral ministry at the end of the 1986-1987 conference year, so in June of 1987 the Rev. G. Howard Allred was appointed as Senior Pastor of First Church High Point. Pastor Allred (as he prefers to be called) came to High Point from the Northeast District where he was serving as District Superintendent. Aaron Allred is Pastor Allred's youngest brother.

A NEW DAY DAWNED

In April, 1988, the Board of Trustees took note of structural problems in the church building: the roof leaked causing plaster damage in the sanctuary and the third-floor rooms used for education; the exterior doors sagged; and concrete in the north portico was severely cracked. During 1988, a rubber valley was placed around the entire roof and damaged shingles were replaced. All exterior doors were removed, reworked, and repainted.

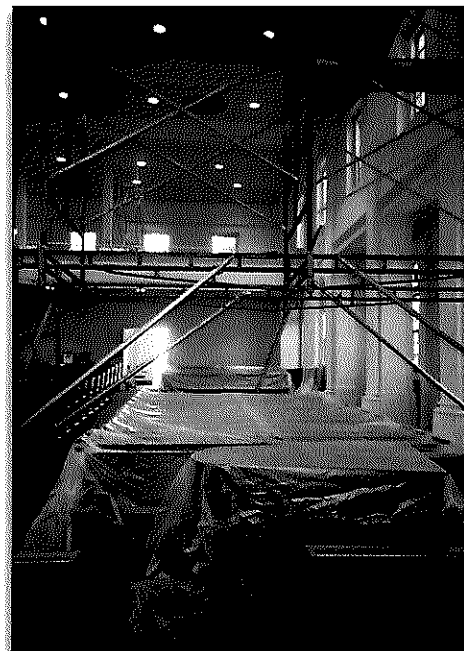
In the fall of 1988, the architect for Duke Endowment, Jim Ward, was employed to speak to our church officials about renovating the sanctuary. He made several recommendations: replace the reredos (screen behind the choir); install an eight-foot brass cross; install new cloth in front of the organ pipes;

remove the theater seats from the choir loft and install pews; remove and replace all damaged plaster; paint the interior of the sanctuary using a new color scheme; move the altar rail forward to give additional room for administering the sacraments; remove the front row of pews to provide additional room for weddings and funerals; install six brass chandeliers to break up the distance between the floor and ceiling; strip the pews to the bare wood and refinish them; and install a marble floor and two lighting fixtures in the narthex.

The Board of Trustees promptly named a Sanctuary Renovation Committee. Mrs. Penny Leonard was elected Chair. The committee asked that Church Interiors, Inc., of High Point give us a bid. The bid was for approximately \$120,000.00. Church Interiors, Inc. was contracted to do the renovation.



Scaffolding greeted worshippers each Sunday as renovation of the sanctuary progressed. 1989-1990



Where was that \$120,000.00 to come from to renovate the sanctuary? Pastor Allred shamelessly got in the pulpit and sold carpet by the yard, paint by the gallon, lighting fixtures, refinished pews, and pieces of furniture as memorials. When the old carpet was removed, it was discovered that the floor, dating from 1924, was not strong enough to provide a proper base for the new work being done. Pastor Allred asked members to pay for four-by-eight foot pieces of plywood to cover the old floor. The Methodist Men, Clyde Hedrick, President, gave \$5,000 and the United Methodist Women, Mrs. Lena Hedrick, President, bought cushions for all the pews. We had faith to believe that the needed funds would be given. Worship services were not moved out of the sanctuary during construction. As scaffolding was moved, worshippers sat wherever they could.

Members of the congregation gave of their time and talent to help hold down the expenditures of renovation. For example, Greg Mercer, architect with the Allred & Mercer firm, designed the reredos. Clyde Hedrick and Arnold Voelker dismantled the choir area and rebuilt it. They installed an oak floor to provide better sound resonance. Verne Snotherly installed speakers for the choir and a power source for the sound equipment. The Work Area on Worship, Mrs. Ann Morris, Chair, continued the process of procuring new paraments and banners for all the Seasons of the Christian year.

A Church Conference was held after the 11:00 A. M. service on February 5, 1989 for the purpose of deciding whether or not to sell the Quaker Lane parsonage. The Trustees had earlier recommended to the Administrative Board that the parsonage be sold. It was their opinion that the home was no longer needed since the trend seemed to be toward younger associate pastors who were either single or had small families. The associate pastors did not have time to properly care for the house and lawn, and the cost of upkeep was significant. The membership voted unanimously to sell the Quaker Lane parsonage.

In the Spring of 1989 the Work Area on Worship, Adele Byrum, Chair, proposed that we purchase 650 new hymnals at a cost of \$7,500. Money was not available, so persons were asked to give hymnals in memory or honor of individuals. The response was so overwhelming that the congregation was asked to stop buying hymnals! Before the new hymnals arrived, Mrs. Bonnie Gehweiler, a member of the Hymnal Revision Committee for The United Methodist Church, came and introduced the new hymnal to us. The new hymnals were dedicated on November 19, 1989.

The Property Maintenance Supplement Fund allocated \$4,000 for sanctuary plaster repair during 1989. As we entered 1990, the sanctuary renovation was completed. The exterior of the church was waterproofed with a silicon sealer to assure the renovation work in the interior would be protected. The steeple which was damaged during hurricane Hugo was also repaired. The front lawn was landscaped and directional signs were erected around the facility. Renovation of the Fellowship Hall and parlor was made possible by gifts from the United Methodist Women.

The sign on the lawn was moved to a new location at the corner of Main and Richardson Streets and the correct name put in place. Methodism became "united" in 1968, so the new sign read "First United Methodist Church". A new entrance to the parking lot was built. It was placed opposite Church Street. Curbs were constructed and planting areas were built. Trees and shrubs were planted and a new sign for the parking lot was erected. The renovated sanctuary was dedicated on Sunday, May 13, 1990, with special guest Bishop L. Bevel Jones III of the Western North Carolina Conference in attendance.



Completed at last, the beautifully renovated sanctuary is dedicated on May 13, 1990.

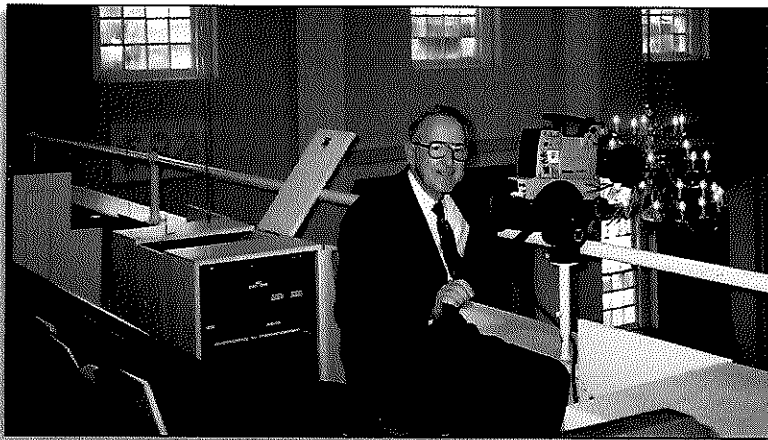
The sacrificial giving of the congregation during 1990 was phenomenal. In addition to the \$400,000.00 budget, the people gave \$120,000.00 for sanctuary renovations, \$11,000.00 for television equipment, \$15,000.00 for air time, \$6,500.00 for a sound system, and \$7,800.00 for new hymnals. The United Methodist Women spent \$10,000.00 refurbishing the parlor, \$7,000.00 for a new floor in the Fellowship Hall, and many thousands more for mission projects. The United Methodist Men gave \$5,000.00 for construction.

In September of 1988, Mr Robinson, Associate Pastor, left First Church to become the Youth Minister at Myers Park United Methodist Church in Charlotte. Miss Belinda Peoples replaced Mr. Robinson as the Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries. Belinda was a second-year divinity student at Duke Divinity School at that time. The following June the Rev. Earl Y. Freeman, III came to First Church as Associate Pastor after completing his Master of Divinity degree from Duke University. Mr. Freeman was engaged at that time to Belinda Peoples, and they were married shortly after his arrival at First Church.

TELEVISION MINISTRY

In early 1989 Jack Lewis, a life-long member of the church, approached Lay Leader Dr. N.C. Johnson with the idea of broadcasting the 11:00 A.M. worship service as a way for First Church to share its ministry with the greater community. During that spring and summer, Dr. Johnson chaired a special Council on Ministries committee to study the feasibility of a TV ministry for the church. The committee recommended that the 11:00 A.M. worship service be taped and edited into a thirty-minute broadcast to be telecast the following Sunday morning. These details were presented to and were approved by the Council on Ministries, the Finance Committee, the Administrative Board, and Pastor Allred.

An early decision was that the financing of the project would be done outside of the church budget. It was also decided that there would be no paid advertising but that the cost of the weekly broadcast would be underwritten by special donations and memorials. Responsibility for bringing the approved idea into reality was given to a Television Ministry Committee chaired by Jack Lewis. Other members of the first Television Ministry Committee were Dr. N.C. Johnson, Frank Shaw, Pete Mendenhall, and Wayne Johnson.



George Beaston pioneered efforts to tape the 11:00 service for weekly telecast.

Things began to come together very quickly after the committee went to work, and within three months the television ministry became a reality. One major step forward occurred when George Beaston, a church member and President of Communicon, Inc., volunteered to shoot the video and edit the tapes. His professional background in this type of work assured the committee that the church was capable of producing a professional broadcast. Pete Mendenhall, Jack Lewis, Jr., and the Rev. Rodney Hagans volunteered to operate the camera, and Wallace "Dickey" Glenn operated the sound system.

Another major step toward the goal was the gratifying way that the congregation responded with donations, memorials, and fund raisers to underwrite the \$500 per week cost of the broadcast. Church members gave as individuals, families, and groups; and this strong financial support of the television ministry continues. Also, several technical problems with the sanctuary sound system had to be remedied. These remedies included placing speakers in the choir loft, installing shielded microphone cables, and relocating the sound system controls to the balcony where they could be linked directly to the television camera. Even the cost of all of these changes—\$6,500 was covered by a generous anonymous donor!

On the first Sunday of May, 1990, First Church began to televise the 11:00 A.M. worship service on Channel 48 WGGT in a thirty-minute video-taped broadcast each Sunday morning. This first broadcast was the culmination of a vision that Jack Lewis had worked hard to bring to reality. Pastor Allred referred to Jack as “the visionary behind this ministry without whom this ministry would not have begun”.

From the beginning it became apparent that the television ministry was having an impact as cards and letters of support and encouragement began arriving at the church from viewers across the seventy-mile broadcast area. In June of 1990 Bishop L. Bevel Jones praised First Church’s television ministry in *The Bridge*, the conference paper. In his article, Bishop Jones stated that “Dr. Howard Allred and his leaders have taken a bold step—the first, I believe, of any church in the Western Carolina Conference to broadcast their Sunday worship services”. Bishop Jones went on to say that he wished more of our people would exercise imagination and initiative in the use of the media.

Since it began in 1990, our telecast has moved from WGGT Channel 48 at 9:00 A.M. to WGHP Channel 8 at 7:00 A.M. However the basic philosophy behind the telecast has not changed. In his 1990 Charge Conference report, Pastor Allred summarized the philosophy of the television ministry this way. “The \$500-per-week cost of the telecast is supported by free will contributions of our people. We don’t sell anything nor give away anything over the telecast. We ask nothing of the listening audience except the joy of presenting the Gospel”.

THE LITTLE BOOGER BAND

The Little Booger Band started quite by accident at the Chancel Choir Christmas party in 1989. The party was held at J. Basul Noble’s Restaurant where a set of drums and a piano were available for regular musical entertainment. After dinner members of the choir were chatting, when the request was made for some musical entertainment. At the urging of Mabel Greer and some others, Ray Wardell said to Bob Hauser, “If you’ll play the piano, I’ll play the drums and we’ll have some fun.” The two did play, and everyone seemed to get into the swing of things and really have a good time.



Members of the “Little Booger Band” seen here include: (l-r) Charles Bryan, Ray Wardell, Mark Pierce, Perry McDowell, Tom Gray, and Plato Wilson.

A short time later Pastor Allred and choir director Buddy Wade asked Ray and Bob to play for a Wonderful Wednesday supper at the church. They added to their little band—Mark Pierce on the trumpet and Plato Wilson on the “Gut Bucket”; they were on their way! Soon Tom Gray joined the band on the trombone, and before long they were playing numerous engagements—or “gigs”—as they called them. Ray Wardell made some music stands; Bob Hauser wrote the musical arrangements; and they began collecting other necessary equipment, including their trademark funny hats! The hats let the audience know that the band is more interested in having fun than in musical perfection. Later Charles Bryan joined the band as second trumpet, Bill Struss joined as second trombone, and Jack Cecil became the band’s vocalist. Several others have played or sung with the band from time to time, and all seemed to enjoy the experience.

The band's name is perhaps undignified—but then, the members of the band are quick to say they are too! The name was suggested by two of the original members who were in a college fraternity band with a similar name and wanted to carry on the tradition. The other members agreed, so the “Little Booger Band” was born.

Over the years the band has played for civic clubs, dance clubs, country churches, choir retreats, store openings, a Sunday morning worship service, a water park outing, Fourth of July outings, family reunions, a wedding and several wedding receptions, birthday parties, anniversaries, furniture showrooms, and numerous charitable fund raisers. The band has had fun traveling from Goldsboro to the mountains of North Carolina for these performances. All of the fees earned by the band are donated to the church— usually for the television ministry. The band has all the fun, and the church gets all the funds. The band has been a substantial fund-raiser over the years.

Plato Wilson is now the booking agent and Tom Gray has become the band leader. Both of these men do a tremendous amount of work keeping the band running smoothly. The band does not have rehearsals—since every “gig” is a rehearsal of sorts, and the band believes that one day they may get it right! Since all of the band members are busy people, they limit their out-of-town “gigs”, and book no more than two “gigs” per month. It is their hope that First Church will have a “Little Booger Band” for all of the next 100 years and that it will bring joy and a Christian message to the band members, the church members, and the entire community.

BONE MARROW TESTING

Since early 1990, First Church has conducted an ongoing program to recruit persons from throughout the community to participate in bone marrow testing. The Work Area on Church and Society became involved in this project after the members of the congregation became aware that Blair Wood, the daughter of church member Janet Wood, was diagnosed with severe aplastic anemia. Blair's doctors felt she might possibly need a bone marrow transplant; so the members of First Church, led by Emily Bland and Blair's grandparents, Roy and Betty Frazier, sprang into action. At the family's request, the church worked through the National Bone Marrow Registry program in the hopes that we could help Blair, or others, to find a bone marrow match.



(Left)
Bone marrow testing... Penny Turner prepares for her test.



(Right)
Betty Frazier assists Doris Towers with the registration process.

March 18, 1990

Further discussion of the project brought the committee to the realization that the project was too big for just our church, and that it should be a High Point project. Penny Turner volunteered to be our “publicity agent” to spread the word to the other churches in town. The goal for the first testing drive was

fifty people. The church worked with the Carolina Region Bone Marrow Program to conduct the testing program in the Fellowship Hall. Participants in the testing project who were willing to become potential bone marrow donors had to be between the ages of eighteen and fifty-five.

The blood test required of each participant cost \$60. The committee realized that some citizens who wished to participate might be unable to pay this fee. The church began to ask for donations from the community to the Blair Wood Bone Marrow Fund. The goal of this fund drive was to raise \$1,500 to be used to cover the cost of testing for those who were unable to pay.

With Emily Bland and Doreen Johnson as project Chairs, the first testing of potential donors was scheduled for Sunday, March 18, 1990. Seventy-three people turned out on that day to be tested as bone marrow donors. With this fantastic response, a second testing day was scheduled for May 6. Forty people signed up to be tested on that day.

The fund continued to grow, too. Trinity artist Kitty White, a relative of the Wood family, donated 200 numbered prints of a sketch she made of the church. The first two prints were framed, and one was given to Blair Wood and the other to the church. All of the others were to be sold for \$20 each with the proceeds to go to the Blair Wood Fund which had already contributed \$2,610 to the March 18 testing drive.

Today, First Church continues to participate in the bone marrow testing and registry program as one of its many outreach programs. Since that first testing day on March 18, 1990, more than five hundred people have been tested, and two confirmed successful matches have been found among these local donors. This goes to show that while the odds of matching are only one in ten million, it is possible to save someone's life.

During the 1991 church year, Pastor Allred disclosed to the congregation his decision to retire from the pastoral ministry in June of 1991 at the end of the conference year. Pastor Allred's decision was prompted by the need to devote himself to caring for his beloved Florence whose health was seriously affected by a stroke in October 1990. This news was met with great sadness and yet understanding by a congregation who had made a special place for Howard and Florence in their hearts.

In his final report to the Administrative Board in May of 1991, Pastor Allred made these remarks—"...There isn't a congregation in the Conference where we had rather complete our pastoral ministry than this wonderful church. You have responded to our limited leadership, listened kindly to our ordinary preaching, and loved us through the most painful experience we have ever had. When you learned that we were spending over a thousand dollars a month for nursing assistants, you insisted that we not take this out of our retirement funds, so you rallied around us and raised enough money to pay for Florence's care for a year. When you became aware that we needed furniture, you responded with sufficient funds to equip us for the remaining years of our lives. You've done both of these extraordinary acts of sacrificial love in spite of the largest budget in our history (over \$438,000), raising enough money to keep us proclaiming the Gospel over television (\$25,000), and setting out to raise enough money to build a Habitat House for Humanity (\$25,000)... you are the greatest church in the Conference. I know that there are other churches with larger memberships, but not another one with a larger heart!"

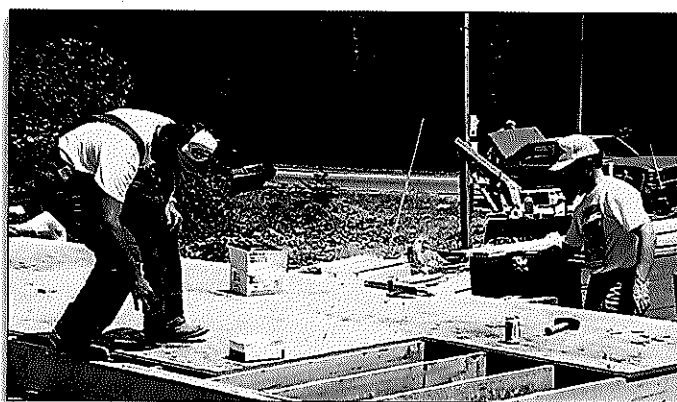
Upon his retirement from the pastoral ministry, Pastor Allred chose First Church as his church home. In May of 1995 the Administrative Board voted unanimously to designate him Pastor Emeritus. On Sunday, June 18, 1995, with his family present, the Rev. Dr. G. Howard Allred was formally recognized as Pastor Emeritus of First United Methodist Church by the congregation. In this capacity Howard has continued to serve as mentor, counselor, guide and friend to pastors, staff, and members alike.

Also in 1991, Earl and Belinda Freeman made the decision to leave the Western North Carolina Conference for the North Alabama Conference which was Pastor Freeman's home conference. Both Earl and Belinda were to be assigned to two Huntsville churches as Associate Pastors.

So, in June of 1991, our church received a new Senior Pastor and a new Associate Pastor. The Rev. Kenneth Lyon was assigned to First Church as Senior Pastor, moving from the First United Methodist Church in Rutherfordton. The Rev. Morris Brown came to our church as Associate Pastor after completion of his studies at the Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. Both men were young and energetic pastors who, along with their families, were quickly involved in leading our church toward its one hundredth anniversary.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

In January of 1991, the Work Area on Church and Society, chaired by Doreen Johnson, voted to construct a Habitat House. Only one other church, St. Mary's Episcopal, had undertaken such a project in High Point at that time, and this group felt that our church should be the next congregation to build one. The Rev. Earnie Price was serving on the Board of Habitat for Humanity at the time, and his enthusiasm for the project was contagious. Throughout the course of the project Earnie would become our valued liaison to the local Habitat chapter as he continually guided our efforts by assisting with various and numerous technical details.



Scenes from the Habitat House project: construction underway during the summer of 1991 and Dedication of the finished home on Sunday, December 15, 1991

The group's decision was endorsed by the Administrative Board as a non-budgeted project, which meant that the funding for the project would have to be contributed. David Wall volunteered to handle the fund raising, and under his leadership 118 direct donations were brought in, as well as 69 gifts in honor of individuals. In all, \$22,000 in cash was raised. In addition to cash contributions, there were many in-kind contributors to the project. Major in-kind contributors included Varner Electric, Quality Hardware, Dee Mac, Household Appliance, Hunt Electric Supply, Valspar, High Point Refrigeration, Closet Connection, High Point Hardware, Bill and Anne Harris, Leone Ivey, David Horne, Dewey Crouse, the Hays Class, M&M Building, Piedmont Natural Gas, and Doug Taylor.

The Habitat Committee Chairs were: Construction, W.G. (Boy) Hart and Jerry Jackson; Procurement, Dewey Crouse; Volunteers and Food, Rachel Gray; Finance, David Wall and Seba Norman; Publicity, Ray Koontz; Photographs, Kathryn Leach.

Construction on the house began on June 14, 1991. The building site and house plans were provided by High Point Habitat for Humanity, Inc. The organization also handled insurance coverage, city permits and utilities, and transfer of the property. In all, one hundred volunteers worked on the construction, including the Little family, the owners of the house selected by the Habitat Board. Fifty two volunteers donated food.

The project was a series of victories—victory over doubt, over fear, over common sense that had to admit lack of money, lack of skills, and a general dearth of everything else required, except leadership. We had excellent leadership supported by energetic labor, creative scrounging, and prayerful fundraising. Combined, these blessings produced a neat little Habitat house that welcomed its family and made them feel at home. The new house, located at 1419 Cedrow Avenue, was dedicated by the church on Sunday, December 15, 1991, following the 11:00 service. The sun shone warmly and brightly; Christmas flowers were lovely; and a happy throng joined in the service led by Pastors Ken Lyon and Earnie Price. It was a day to remember.

APPALACHIA SERVICE PROJECT

First Church became involved with the Appalachia Service Project (ASP) for the first time in the spring of 1986 when a group from the church went to Jonesville, Virginia for a long weekend to repair houses in that area. Pastor Ron Robinson and Boyd Chapman were responsible for organizing this first trip which involved approximately 24 youth and adults from the church. Although this group had a very successful trip, the church did not participate in the ASP again until 1990.

In the fall of 1990, Pastor Freeman was looking for something that would provide a meaningful experience for the youth of the church. At that same time the Senior High Sunday School teacher, Anne Harris, was looking for a direction in which to lead the Senior High group. Mrs. Harris had heard that for several years the youth of Jamestown United Methodist Church had participated in the Appalachia Service Project, a mission trip to Appalachia to spend a week on home repairs. She invited this group to come and speak to her class. They came and brought slides and some of their youth who had gone on these mission trips shared their experiences. The youth learned that the Appalachia Service Project began in 1969 in Kentucky where it was founded by a United Methodist pastor. In the years since the program began, it grew considerably until it involved thousands of youth repairing hundreds of homes. Thus, the seeds were planted with our youth to pursue the week-long program.

Pastor Freeman and Mrs. Harris organized a meeting for anyone interested in exploring the possibility of sending a mission team to Appalachia. Application was obtained and Pastor Freeman started organizing our participation, but it was shortly thereafter that Earl and Belinda Freeman learned that they would be leaving First Church to go to the North Alabama Conference. Mrs. Harris stepped in to continue as organizer and leader with Denise Gray as her assistant. As a result of Mrs. Harris' outstanding organizational skills and leadership, First Church took two teams consisting of three adults and four youth on one team and three adults and three youth on the other to Iaeger, West Virginia the week of June 23-29, 1991. The group had a very positive experience and returned home filled with excitement and joy at what they had accomplished and learned. They shared this mission trip with the congregation through a slide show and appreciation dinner for the stockholders, those whose donations funded the trip.

The success of the 1991 trip encouraged Mrs. Harris and Mrs. Gray to take another group in 1992. Although the group was headed by very dedicated lay people, our Associate Pastor, Morris Brown, went with the group. This time three teams would make the journey to Appalachia to Whitesburg, Kentucky. By the time this group returned, the seed was already planted to go again in 1993. A strong, committed core of adult leaders, along with a growing number of interested youth would keep this mission project in the forefront of a very caring congregation.

The 1993 ASP trip consisted of four teams headed by Mrs. Gray with help from Beth Johnson and Carol Gray. This time Jonesville, Virginia was the group's destination. Although the previous mission teams had journeyed to the coal mining areas of the Appalachians, the 1993 teams would see an impoverished agricultural area. Pastor Lyon provided much spiritual and leadership support for this most worthwhile project. In 1994 the lay leadership for ASP passed to Carol Gray and her very able administrative assistant Beth Johnson. Four mission teams headed to Eolia, Kentucky accompanied by our new Director of Youth Ministries, Pete Freeman; this was quite an introduction for Mr. Freeman to this youth group. The excitement to serve in the mission fields continues.



**1995 ASP Team (l-r) included:
Amelia Risner, Susie Skager,
Homeowner, Katie Mercer, Kacie
Lankford, Cameron Curry,
Doug Lain**

In 1995, our new Associate Pastor Jeff Hassel, a former full time worker for ASP, led four teams deep into the mountains of West Virginia to Delbarton in Mingo County. Poverty is very visible in this coal mining area where huge coal trucks rumble along the narrow, twisting mountain roads. Again, because First Church cared, homes were made warmer, drier, and safer. Some of the original people who went on that first week-long trip in 1991 are still making the journey into the Appalachian Mountains to be servants of God. This includes youth and adults. This is truly a testimony of the personal commitment and the commitment of First Church to continue to support this most worthwhile mission project. As I John 3:18 says, "Let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action". First United Methodist Church—Love in Action.

During 1992, Pastor Lyon introduced two innovative worship opportunities for the congregation. On March 29, 1992, First Church observed "Celebration Sunday" which inaugurated a third Sunday morning worship service beginning at 9:45 A.M. This worship service was designed for those who preferred to attend worship services while their children were in Sunday School, as well as for those who wished to worship earlier on Sunday morning. Eighty-one persons attended the first 9:45 worship service. The music program was also expanded with the formation of two new choirs; a Sanctuary Choir for the 9:45 service and a Chapel Choir for the 8:45 service. During the month of August, 1992, the congregation began the custom of "Camp Meeting". Worshipers were invited to dress casually for several Sunday morning worship services which included familiar old hymns as well as contemporary Christian music. As of this writing in 1996, Camp Meeting is held every August.

In August of 1992, the Rev. Roy Grant came to First Church to replace Mr. Price who had retired as Pastor of Visitation. A member of the Western North Carolina Conference since 1953, Pastor Grant was in High Point from 1971 to 1982 as the hospital's first full time chaplain. During the next ten years Mr. Grant served various churches throughout the conference until returning to High Point and First Church.

In 1994, at Annual Conference Pastor Brown was appointed to be the Pastor at Mitchell's Grove United Methodist Church in High Point. In August, the Rev. Jeffrey A. Hassel was appointed to First Church as our Associate Pastor. Ours was Mr. Hassel's first appointment following his graduation from Duke Divinity School; he had served as a hospital chaplain in Burlington.

In June of 1995, after four years of dynamic leadership at First Church, Pastor Lyon and his family were assigned to the Matthews United Methodist Church near Charlotte. The Rev. Clyde K. Penry was assigned to our church from the First United Methodist Church in Murphy, North Carolina. Mr. Penry's assignment to First Church kept it "all in the family", since Dr. Lyon's wife, Lydia, is Mr. Penry's sister.

STEPHEN MINISTRY

On Sunday, May 29, 1994, eight lay people from the congregation were commissioned as Stephen Ministers—a special ministry of care and concern for others. This rite of commissioning culminated a long period of training and organization for this lay caring ministry which was developed and administered by Stephen Ministries of St. Louis. The Stephen Ministry is a lay caring ministry which involves the training of lay persons in basic pastoral care skills.

During the summer of 1993 Pastor Morris Brown, Lou Cater, and Ardie Praetorius spent two intensive weeks at the Stephen Ministry Training Seminar in Baltimore Maryland. These Stephen Ministry leaders returned to First Church and enrolled the first class of twelve Stephen Ministers. Training of this class began in January of 1994. The training involved fifty hours of class time and a two-year commitment.

These Stephen Ministers received training in such areas as dealing with feelings, crisis intervention, asserting oneself with gentleness and firmness, and numerous other topics dealing with specific aspects of helping people who are experiencing problems in their lives. The Stephen Ministers work with people who are experiencing life crises such as hospitalization, retirement, severe financial setback, loss of a loved one, as well as many other problems that people have in daily living. The first Stephen Ministers to be commissioned were: Barbara Becker, Emily Bland, Sandra Davis, Thomas DuVall, Maquita Ikerd, Lydia Lyon, Margaret Phillips, and Paula Smith.

CHURCH SCHOOL

During the past twenty-five years the Church School program has continued to change and grow in response to the needs of a changing, growing, and living church. It has seemed wise to organize a "new" young adult church school class every few years, and several have been started during the past twenty-five years.

During the 1969–1970 church school year, the Wesley Class was organized to embrace the spiritual needs of young adults who had no immediate family in High Point. The first six couples to join the Wesley Class were: Al and Sherrill Elder, Bobby and Ann Johnson, Ed and Nancy Powell, Vic and Grecia Sanniota, Martin and Shelby Senell, and Harold and Gena White. Marty Senell was the first class President, and Gena White was the first teacher.

This emphasis on the needs of young adults in the church led Associate Pastor Linwood Brooks and his wife Joyce to start a class for single young adults during the 1984–1985 church school year. The charter members of this class were Jesse Brinson, Rachel Eldridge, Pam Fitch, and Keith Peters. Rich Towers was their first teacher. He and his wife Doris were guiding forces for the group during their formative period.

By 1987, the time had come for a "new" young adult class. The Associate Pastor at that time, Ron Robinson, helped with the organization of the new class and served as its first teacher. Through the efforts of Mr. Robinson the New Directions Class was started with ten young couples as charter members including: Davis and Karen Beaston, Barry and Elizabeth Dunsmore, Phil and Brenda George, Jerry and Amy Hill, Bobby and Debbie Irvin, Danny and Susan Keever, Greg and Pam Mercer, David and Elizabeth Ann Murphy, Steve and Liz Penrod, and Craig and Penny Turner. Davis Beaston served as the first President of the class.

Classes for young adults will continue to be formed as children in the church continue to reach young adulthood and as young couples continue to join the church. Some of these classes will continue for years and others will last only a short while, but each one will be founded out of an expressed need among young adults in the church for spiritual fulfillment and fellowship.

Another aspect of change during the past twenty-five years has been the disbanding of two significant church school classes of long duration. The W.P. Pickett class for men and the A. M. Idol class for women were church school classes rich in history and tradition at First Church. But as the trend moved away from separate adult classes for men and women, the membership of each was dwindling because of deaths and infirmity. In the spring of 1988 the W. P. Pickett class voted to disband, and the few remaining members of the class agreed to merge with the Family Fellowship class. Charles Brown was the last President and teacher of the W. P. Pickett class. In 1993 the ladies of the A. M. Idol class also voted with sadness to disband their class. They too merged with the Family Fellowship class. Foda Lewis was the President of the A. M. Idol class at the time.

Through the early 1990s, a small class for mature single adults—"Singles United", evolved through which four persons joined the church. Maquita Ikerd was the teacher for two years. Due to the lack of a permanent classroom, members of the class became discouraged with being shifted from one room to another. The class disbanded as the members decided to join other classes. A viable ministry for singles is always a concern, and efforts are underway to meet this need.

MUSIC PROGRAM

When First United Methodist Church celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary in 1970, Mr. Robert D. Wold was the director of the Chancel Choir, and Martha Rimmer was the organist. In 1976 James R. (Buddy) Wade replaced Mr. Wold as Director of Music. As Director of Music for the past twenty years, Mr. Wade has provided the stability and continuity that has enabled the Chancel Choir to thrive. Mr. Wade has encouraged all who will to join the choir. He has also enlisted special musicians from within our church as well as visiting musicians to lend their talent to special musical presentations. The addition of trumpet, violin, flute, harp, and piano to the organ's accompaniment of the choir has added much to the music program of the church.

During Mr. Wade's tenure as Director of Music, First Church has been fortunate to have many fine organists to help lead the music program of the church. Mrs. Judy White Ramsey replaced Martha Rimmer as organist in 1976. In 1981 Jon Gossett came to First Church as organist and was followed by Larry Potts in 1984 and Brink Bush in 1990. Mr. Bush served as organist for one year. Between Mr. Bush's leaving and Robert (Bob) Phillips' coming in April of 1991, Nancye Tothill served as interim organist. At the present time we are truly fortunate to have an outstanding organist in Bob Phillips and an excellent pianist in Betty York. Their frequent duets during the eleven o'clock service on Sunday mornings are spine-tingling. First Church has been well-served by other substitute organists during the past twenty-five years including Ruth Ann Hinnant and Betty Hunt Groome.

The music program for children and youth has also flourished during the past twenty-five years, and especially in the last few years as more and more children have come into our church family! When the Crowders came to First Church in 1971, Mrs. Crowder's fine musical ability led her to become very involved in the music program of the church. In 1975 Mrs. Crowder became the director of the Youth

Choir. She also directed a youth handbell choir, the children's choir, a children's handbell choir, and a training handbell choir for children.

When the Crowders left First Church in 1978, church organist Judy Ramsey took over as director of all of the choirs for children and youth. Her departure in 1983 brought Sonya Tomlinson to First Church as youth and children's choir director. Mrs. Tomlinson remained in this position until June, 1984. Diane Upchurch Vaughn directed the youth and children's choirs during 1985 and 1986. She was followed for a brief time in early 1987 by Rene Cline. Claire Greer Collins, a life-long member of the church and the daughter of church members Ed and Mabel Greer, served as the Director of Music for Children and Youth from August of 1987 until May, 1988. Mrs. Collins left High Point to move to Germany where her husband, Lt. Collins, was stationed.

By 1988, the number of young children in the church was growing and so was the potential for an expanded music program for children and youth. Sue Horney was hired to direct the children's choirs. Under her leadership the choirs for the younger children grew rapidly. As the number of children in the church continued to grow, it became necessary to add another choir director to work with the youth. In 1993 Susie Skager became the choir director for the youth. Under her guidance the youth of the church have formed a truly dynamic and energetic musical program known as the Right Direction. Today there are more children and youths participating in the music program of the church than at any time since the Grady Miller era of the early 1960s.

On May 26, 1996, Mr. Wade announced his plans to retire as Director of Music effective August 31, 1996. At press time, a replacement had not been named.

CHURCH STAFF

Among the many blessings of our church during the past twenty-five years have been the fine people who have served so ably in a variety of staff positions. First Church has been truly fortunate to have a fine office staff for many years, and that tradition continues. When our church celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary in 1970, Mrs. Chloe Ferree was our church secretary, a position she had held since 1951. Upon her retirement at the end of 1975, Mrs. Doreen Johnson was hired to take her place. Elizabeth Dunsmore followed "Do" in 1988, and served the church well for five years. In October, 1993, Mrs. Mendee Ellis Surrett who grew up in First Church, the daughter of church members L. Z. (Zeke) and Bernice Ellis, was hired as office manager, a position she still holds as of this writing in 1996.

For many years Mrs. Ferree filled a variety of office roles, but as the church continued to grow this became more difficult. In 1970 Mrs. Helen Hayworth became assistant to Mrs. Ferree as financial secretary. Mrs. Hayworth retired in late 1977, and Dot Wasserman replaced her as financial secretary in 1978. Sally Coleman became the church's third financial secretary in 1981. She was followed by Seba Norman in 1989. When Mrs. Norman left First Church in 1994, Valerie Townley was employed as financial secretary, but she stayed only a short time. Mrs. Surrett assumed more financial responsibilities, and in 1995, Mrs. Linda Brown was employed as Administrative Assistant.

In the early 1970s several individuals were employed by the church as custodians to serve with Building Superintendent Charlie Young, but these stayed only a few months. When Cecil Garlington came to First Church in April, 1974, he proved to be the exception. After more than twenty-two years on the job Mr. Garlington is now the church's senior staff member in terms of longevity. Over these years his responsibilities and his value to the church have grown. Today, as Maintenance Director, Mr. Garlington oversees all aspects of the church's maintenance and upkeep. He is ably assisted by Mr. Kuba Cash as custodian, a position he has held since 1990.

LONG RANGE PLANNING

In the Spring of 1992, a steering committee of twelve members of the congregation initiated a long range planning process for the purpose of evaluating our church and developing a blue print for the future. These twelve lead a group of more than fifty church members representing a cross-section of the congregation through this process. This Long Range Planning Team used materials developed by internationally recognized church consultant Dr. Ken Callahan to guide them through the process.

In December of 1992, Dr. Callahan came to First Church to consult with Pastor Lyon and the Long Range Planning Team over a period of five days. Dr. Callahan worked with four specific areas that the Long Range Planning Team had selected as focal points for the consultation. These four areas were selected to help the congregation grow as God's people during the coming three to five years. Dr. Callahan's visit provided the opportunity for an open and honest appraisal of our strengths and the gifts God has given us to be used in mission to our community.

In the early Spring of 1993, the major components of the Long Range Plan were presented to the Administrative Board and then to the entire congregation. The Administrative Board directed the appropriate work areas and task forces to begin work toward implementing the plan. The planning process had taken a full year and had involved over two hundred and thirty-six people.

The major components of the plan were grouped into six areas. The six areas were ranked in order of importance and would be accomplished in order as resources permitted. The first component, mission with children and their families focused on building on our strength in the area of service to child care and parenting skills. Expansion in this area was planned over a three-year period and would include expansion of some programs and development of others.

The second component focused on mission with youth and their families and called for further development of our middle and senior high youth programs. Additional plans included the development of a youth retreat program, a recreation program, and youth work trips. A recommendation central to success in this area was securing a competent and mature Youth With Families Director.

Component three focused on leadership and recommended a comprehensive plan for developing leadership skills among the congregation. Another important aspect of leadership was pastoral continuity with the idea being that long term pastorates promote a stable and growing congregation. Specific recommendations for additional staff were also presented as a part of this component.

Component four looked at the importance of solid financial resources. The proposals in this area included developing a balanced range of giving, development of a short term major project, and increased annual and endowment giving.

The fifth component emphasized mission with senior adults. Specific recommendations included developing helpful resources for seniors and their families, continuation of shepherding contacts with senior and homebound adults, and developing relationships among senior adults.

The sixth component looked at land, landscaping, space and facilities. Included in this component was a recommendation for a land study and a plan for acquisition of adjacent property. Other specifics included revamping landscaping, lighting and security as well as installing elevators in both buildings. The final recommendation in this component was to explore the possibility of a family life and educational center.

Pastor Lyon encouraged the congregation to accomplish the entire plan. He said that the plan would be accomplished "as we catch the vision for the future and each of us helps as we can to bring it to be". The Long Range Plan provided the impetus for major accomplishments as we began to work through these components together in preparation for our one hundredth anniversary in 1995.

LANDMARK 100

In June of 1993, a process of originating a campaign to fund church renovations was begun. The project grew from a simple paint job to various upgrades which many members of the church felt were desperately needed. It soon became obvious that the ideas under consideration were for significant renovations which would require major funding.

During the next twelve months a group of key church leaders continued to meet and to discuss possible ideas for a campaign theme that would excite the membership and encourage them to pledge the funds that would be needed. It was decided that the campaign should use as its theme the one hundredth anniversary of the church and thus, the "Landmark 100" campaign was born. Davis Beaston and Michael Gay agreed to co-chair Landmark 100. In a letter to the congregation, they explained that the name Landmark 100 was chosen for three reasons: 1) our church is a "Landmark" to God's work in our community, 2) 1995 is our centennial year, and 3) the goal is for 100% of the congregation to participate in the campaign.

On July 21, 1994, a breakfast meeting was held at the Radisson Hotel to initiate the campaign. The presentation to church leaders who formed the steering committee included the vision and goals for the campaign, the campaign literature, and details of the renovations planned for the church. The members of the Landmark 100 campaign steering committee were: Davis Beaston and Michael Gay, Co-Chairs; Mary Lou Brinson; Bill Green; Bill Harris; Harry Hauser; Carter Holbrook; Pastor Ken Lyon; Bill Morris; Craig Peters; Mark Pierce; Bob Rankin; Scott Skinner; Ruth Thore; Clyde Vaughn; David Wall; and Plato Wilson.



The extensive renovations to the church building that are included in the "Landmark 100" program are well underway in the summer of 1996!

The goal for the Landmark 100 campaign was to raise \$400,000 in a three year program of giving by every member of the church. Pastor Lyon announced the Landmark 100 campaign to the congregation at the morning worship services on August 21, 1994. The goal of the steering committee was to have 100% participation with all pledges in by October 9. Although the public campaign ended on October 9, pledges continued to be received; and on November 20, 1994, Davis Beaston presented a larger than life check to the congregation. The check was made out to First United Methodist Church in the amount of \$400,054.00, and was signed by the congregation. The goal had been met!

The Landmark 100 campaign raised funds which will be used to do many exciting things for the youth including a new Acolyte Vestry, a scout activities room, two new youth classrooms, and renovations for the youth lounge. The campaign will serve worshippers with special needs by providing for an improved exterior ramp, an elevator, and a chair lift to make all levels of our church easily accessible. A

new powder room and handicapped accessible restrooms will also be added as will new floor tiles and windows in the Educational Building and a new ceiling in the chapel.

As this church history is going to press in the summer of 1996, many of these renovations are well underway. Shortly after this work began Cecil Garlington found a plaque which had obviously been in storage for many years. Realizing its historical significance, he immediately turned it over to Robert Rankin, Chair of the History Committee. The inscription on the plaque reads- "The Tower Crosses are in memory of Clyde H. Bass, Jr., George E. Humphreys, Carter H. Allen, R. E. Shelton who gave their lives for their country in World War II".

In May, 1947, the Official Board approved an expenditure to install lighted crosses in the church steeple in memory of these four young men who were members of the church killed during World War II. The crosses were installed in the steeple in 1948 and are lighted from within. Their light still shines from the steeple nearly fifty years later. Perhaps a new and permanent location can be found to display this plaque after the current renovations have been completed.

Landmark 100 is a celebration of the foresight of a small group of Christians who over 100 years ago set out to share their message of faith from the First Methodist Protestant Church in High Point, North Carolina. It is also a statement of appreciation to the many who over the years have accepted the responsibility of caring for and perpetuating that original purpose.

As the physical and spiritual needs of our flock have grown we have managed to adapt, and today as the First United Methodist Church of High Point, we continue to serve the Christian community locally and throughout the world. With time comes the need for change. The commitment to continue to minister to our community as a "downtown" church was made over ten years ago. Since that time renovations have been made and facilities have been upgraded on an "as needed" basis.

We are the custodians of a great heritage. Landmark 100 is our opportunity to pass on our legacy at First United Methodist Church and to insure its continued growth. While we are unable to see what great things lie ahead in the next century, we know that, with God's help, First United Methodist Church will continue to bless generations of worshippers to come.

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

On October 15, 1995, First United Methodist Church launched a yearlong Centennial Celebration. The organization date of the church was October 20, 1895; and the dedication date was September 27, 1896. Therefore, the yearlong celebration spanned the months from October 15, 1995, through September 29, 1996.

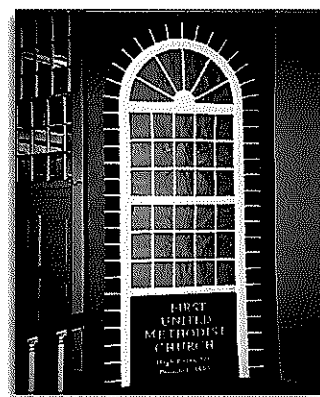
Mark Pierce and Gena White served as Co-Chairs of the Centennial Celebration Planning Committee. Others who served on this committee were Susie Bland, Martha Holbrook, Doreen Johnson, Jane Lain, Jane Martin, Jeanne Montgomery, Ann Morris, Blair Rankin, Nanabeth Rankin, and Robert Rankin.

Early in the planning process, the committee decided upon a theme for the year: A Century in Mission...A Mission for a New Century. Mr. Pierce sketched a bulletin front design, and Ray Koontz refined the design on the computer. Both the theme and the design were used for every Centennial Celebration event.

The 1990 Work Area on Worship commissioned lifelong member, Blair Rankin, son of Robert B. and Nanabeth Rankin, to compose an original work of music for the Centennial Celebration. Mr. Rankin

provided a congregational hymn, several anthems, a spiritual, songs for children and youth, and several taped instrumental pieces.

In 1995, the Work Area on Worship acquired a Processional Banner. Designed and made by Brydon and Beverly Shirk, liturgical textile artists of Fullerton, California, the banner features one of our distinctive arched windows, the names of the church and the city, and the church's organization date. The banner provided a celebrative touch as it was used in procession for the Centennial Celebration Sunday Services of Worship. A commemorative Centennial Directory was printed and distributed in the fall of 1995.



Processional Banner

To inaugurate the Centennial Celebration on October 15, 1995, Bishop L. Bevel Jones, III, episcopal leader of the Western North Carolina Conference, served as the visiting preacher. Participating with Bishop Jones in the three Services of Worship were Clyde K. Penry, Senior Pastor; Jeffrey A. Hassel, Associate Pastor; David Carver, lector; Jacquelyn Mishoe, sacred dancer; and Lynn Burgess, accompanist. The processional banner bearers were Emily Foister Miller and her three daughters—Sally, Ellen, and Julie Watson—great-granddaughter and great-great granddaughters, respectively, of Mrs. J. C. Welch, an 1895 charter member of the Methodist Protestant Church (now First United Methodist Church). As of this writing in 1996, Mrs. Miller and her daughters are the only direct descendants of a charter member who are still active in the church.

Former pastors who, at this writing, have returned to preach on Centennial Celebration Sundays were the Rev. Dr. Ralph Taylor (1969–71); the Rev. Dr. G. Howard Allred (1987–91); and the Rev. Lee Strange (1977–82). Former pastors scheduled to return in the remaining months of the Celebration Year are the Rev. Dr. Richard J. Crowder (1971–78) and the Rev. Dr. Russell T. Montfort (1964–65).

Also, on October 15, 1995, the High Point Museum featured First United Methodist Church's Centennial with a display of historic memorabilia.

On November 19, 1995, an afternoon Centennial Celebration Musicale featured several of Blair Rankin's compositions as well as performances by several former and current vocalists, pianists, organists, and instrumentalists. Mr. Rankin's compositions were *Stand and Be Counted*, *Sunday Morning*, *Heaven Comin' Round*, *May the Path That Leads You Home*, and *Jesus Wept*. Participating former and current musicians were Betty Fouts (violin), Charles Medlin (cello), Robert Phillips (organ), Larry Potts (organ), Alexa Schlimmer (soprano), and Bettie York (piano). The Legacy Quartet, a quartet of area men—Greg Gibhardt, Dennis Harris, Michael McDowell, and Douglas Sousong—sang four of Mr. Rankin's compositions.

On May 19, 1996, the Chancel Choir presented—for the 11:00 Service of Worship—selections from *A Heritage in Hymns—200 Years of Worship Through Music*. This inspiring work of narration and song combined the great heritage in hymnody we have from Charles Wesley with the gifts of present day writers and arrangers. *A Heritage in Hymns* was originally part of a grand celebration planned by The United Methodist Church for 1984, the Bicentennial Year of the Wesley movement in America.

In the Celebration Sunday worship bulletins, various "histories" have been shared. The first was a reprint from The Sunday (Charlotte) Observer entitled *New High Point Methodist Church*. The article was dated April 26, 1925, and featured a picture of the new church building and a story of the church's first Sunday in use. Other "histories" featured the following Sunday School classes: Family Fellowship,

Stand and Be Counted

Moderate

Blair Rankin

E^b A^b Dm^{7(b5)} G⁷ Cm⁷ F⁷ G⁷ Cm E^bm⁶ F⁷ B^b Gm

Stand and be count-ed, rise to the call. Sing with your heart and soul,
Stand and be count-ed, join hand in hand. Spread-ing God's mes-sage now,

7 C⁷ F B^{b7} E^b A^b Dm^{7(b5)} G⁷ Cm⁷ F⁷ G⁷

come one and all 'cross the land. Stand all to- geth- er, for- ward with Christ,
One ho- ly mis- sion, one shin- ing path,

13 Cm E^bm⁶ F⁷ B^b Gm C⁷ F F⁷ E^b E^bm

join in a migh- ty hymn re- new your life. Stand and be count
no time for sit- ting back, ri- se to the task. Stand and be count-ed,

19 B^b C⁷ E^b Cm F⁷ B^b Dm^{7(b5)} B^{b7}

stand proud and true, op- en your eyes and see what God's done for you. We must
(Stand) f

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25

stand all un - it - ed, nev - er a - part, _____ feel Je - sus' love in ev' - ry

31

1. B^b heart. 2. B^b B^bmaj⁷ B^b7 B^b6 A _____ (me - en

Congregational Hymn composed by Blair Rankin for the Centennial Year 1995-1996.

Hays, and Pathfinders. Additional classes will be featured in the concluding Celebration Sunday worship bulletins.

Offered in conjunction with the Centennial Celebration of First United Methodist Church was a ten-day Methodist Heritage Tour to England, May 21-30, 1996. With former pastors, the Rev. Dr. G. Howard Allred (1987-91) and the Rev. Dr. M. Kenneth Lyon (1991-95) as tour hosts and church member Ann Morris as tour escort, a group of twenty-seven persons made the trip to English sites rich in the history of Methodism. Participating church members were the Rev. Dr. G. Howard Allred, Betty Bottoms, the Rev. Roy Grant, Doreen Johnson, Jeanne Montgomery, Ann Morris, and C. R. and Nan Overman. While visiting John Wesley's birthplace-Epworth in Lincolnshire-on Tuesday, May 28, 1996, the group celebrated Pastor Emeritus Howard Allred's 74th birthday!

As of this writing in 1996, plans are in the making for the year's Grand Finale on Sunday, September 29, 1996. Following the celebrative Services of Worship, a covered dish luncheon will be held; and memorabilia-featuring pictures, artifacts, and mementos from the past one hundred years-will be on display.

Plans also in the making will launch the church into its second century. On Sunday, October 27, 1996, former Senior Pastor, the Rev. Dr. M. Kenneth Lyon (1991-95), will be the guest preacher. Incorporated into the plans for that morning will be the revelation of the contents of a Time Capsule and of the plans for its safekeeping until such time as it is to be opened on a future anniversary date.

As First United Methodist Church moves toward the conclusion of "A Century in Mission", it stands ready to respond to the challenges of "A Mission for a New Century"!

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
SENIOR AND ASSOCIATE PASTORS
EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS

Senior Pastors

1895-1900	W. R. Lowdermilk	1953-1958	Robert G. Tuttle
1900-1903	William Porter	1958-1962	A. C. Wagoner
1903-1904	J. S. Williams	1962-1965	Douglas A. Corriher
1904-1906	C. L. Whitaker	1965-1969	Edgar H. Nease, Jr.
1906-1908	J. D. Williams	1969-1971	Ralph H. Taylor
1908-1917	Armenius G. Dixon	1971-1978	Richard J. Crowder
1917-1926	George R. Brown	1978-1981	Ray F. Swink
1926-1927	P. E. Lindley	1981-1984	J. Patrick Heafner
1928-1934	Roy Irwin Farmer	1984-1987	Milford V. Thumm
1934-1941	J. Clay Madison	1987-1991	G. Howard Allred
1941-1942	W. A. Jenkins	1991-1995	M. Kenneth Lyon
1942-1948	Wilson O. Weldon	1995-	Clyde K. Penry
1948-1953	W. Kenneth Goodson		

Associate Pastors

1926-1928	E. Lester Ballard	1982-1985	Linwood C. Brooks
1964-1965	Russell T. Montfort	1985-1988	Ron Robinson
1965-1969	Robert W. Little	1988-1989	Belinda Peoples
1969-1970	Donald D. Davis	1989-1991	Earl Y. Freeman III
1970-1973	Thomas J. Duncan, Jr.	1991-1994	Morris Brown
1973-1975	Charles Turner, Jr.	1994-1996	Jeffrey A. Hassel
1975-1977	Richard E. Burkhart	1996-	Elizabeth Coppedge-
1977-1982	Lee Strange		Henley

Educational Assistants

Hired:		Sep. 1963	Betty Gray Brown
Jun. 1945	R. Harold Hipps	Jun. 1965	Henry Thompson
Aug. 1946	James Brown	Jun. 1967	Wanda Wise
Feb. 1948	Harry Jordan	Sep. 1967	Charles Teague
Aug. 1949	Betty Swafford	Aug. 1968	Diana Esau
Oct. 1950	Charmione Rose	Nov. 1969	Lynne Trexler (left 5/70)
Feb. 1953	Thornton D. Adams	Sep. 1974	Carol Bowman
Jun. 1953	Willie Davis	Jun. 1975	Jeannie Peterson
May. 1954	Anne Acey	Mar. 1979	Yvonne Vredenburg
Jun. 1958	Marjorie Daniels	Mar. 1985	Martha Thumm
Nov. 1958	Mary Jo Young (Hamilton)	Jan. 1987	Gail Rose
Feb. 1960	Virginia Burnett	Sep. 1988	Belinda Peoples Freeman
Dec. 1960	Pansy Whicker	Jun. 1991	Morris Brown
Sep. 1961	Pat Colonna	Jun. 1994	Pete Freeman

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
CHAIRS—CHURCH BOARDS

Board of Stewards:

1895–1928	Unrecorded
1928–1929	Lewis E. Teague
1929–1935	Unrecorded
1935–1936	J. C. Whitesell
1936–1937	Arnold J. Koonce
1937–1940	Unrecorded
1940–1941	Alson Gray
1941–1943	Unrecorded
1943–1944	George C. Haltom
1944–1945	L. F. Ferree
1945–1947	Ralph H. Vance
1947–1948	F. Holt Hunter
1948–1950	Wilbur Groome
1950–1952	G. Jay Williard

Official Board:

1952–1954	Carter T. Holbrook, Jr.
1954–1955	Robert B. Rankin
1955–1956	Luther Draper
1956–1958	John A. Eshelman, Jr.
1958–1960	Lee W. Sherrill
1960–1962	Dr. C. L. Gray
1962–1964	H. B. Leonard, Jr.
1964–1966	Gilbert H. Weant
1966–1968	David A. Dowdy, Jr.
1968–1969	W. Dan Herring

Administrative Board:

1969–1970	W. Dan Herring
1970–1972	Darell Pierce
1972–1973	James A. Moffitt, Jr.
1974	George D. Beaston IV
1975	W. Vann York
1976	William P. Harris
1977	Harry L. Hauser
1978	A. J. Simeon
1979	Clyde C. Vaughn
1980	John Morris
1981	Mrs. T. Harold White
1982	James A. Penley
1983	C. Morris Adams
1984–1985	J. W. Snotherly
1986–1988	Robert D. Davis, Jr.
1989–1990	Mark F. Pierce
1991–1992	Dr. N. C. Johnson
1993–1995	William P. Harris
1996	George D. Beaston V

CHAIRS—COUNCIL ON MINISTRIES

*1969–1970	Darrell Pierce	1981	Kem B. Ellis
1970–1971	Ben G. Hill	1982–1983	Mrs. T. Harold White
1971–1972	Ben G. Hill/Mrs. Russell Payne	1984–1985	Mrs. William P. Harris
1972–1973	Ed C. Greer	1986–1988	Mark F. Pierce
1974–1975	Plato S. Wilson	1989–1991	C. Howard Cross
1976–1977	William B. Gray	1992	Mark F. Pierce
1978–1979	Dr. William R. Locke	1993–1995	Mrs. William P. Harris
1980	W. Mark Combs	1996	Kem B. Ellis

*The Council On Ministries was formed as part of the restructuring of the United Methodist Church in 1969.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
CHAIRS-BOARD OF TRUSTEES

1895-1924	Unrecorded	1970-1972	J. W. Snotherly
1924-1925	A. M. Rankin, Sr.	1972-1973	W. Darrell Bulla
1925-1928	Unrecorded	1974	Lee W. Sherrill
1928-1929	C. C. Robbins	1975	E. Vernard Weant
1929-1935	Unrecorded	1976	Carter T. Holbrook, Jr.
1935-1937	C. C. Robbins	1977	Darrell Pierce
1937-1938	Unrecorded	1978	H. B. Leonard, Jr.
1938-1939	A. M. Rankin, Sr.	1979	Mrs. Robert D. Davis, Sr.
1939-1940	Unrecorded	1980	T. Harold White
1940-1941	S. P. Montgomery	1981	David B. Wall
1941-1944	Unrecorded	1982	C. Ed Powell
1944-1945	J. H. Pritchard	1983-1985	Bill J. Green
1945-1954	Unrecorded	1986-1987	Donald A. Horne
1954-1965	F. R. Auman	1988-1992	Gregory V. Mercer
1965-1969	Unrecorded	1993-1994	Bill J. Greene
1969-1970	Dr. Dennis H. Cooke	1995-1996	C. Ed Powell

CHURCH TREASURERS

1894-1919	W. P. Pickett	1964-1967	Charles H. Brown
1919-1940	A. M. Rankin	1967-1970	William G. Ervin
1940-1942	Robert B. Rankin	1970-1979	Robert B. Rankin
1942-1943	John B. Spencer	1980-1982	Richard Sossaman
1943-1954	A. M. Richardson	1983-1984	Richard P. Worden
1954-1960	Mrs. Tyson T. Ferree	1985-1994	Harry L. Hauser
1960-1964	Robert E. Hauser	1995-1996	L. Richard Nifong

CHAIRS-FINANCE COMMITTEE

1895-1940	Unrecorded	1967-1969	Charles H. Brown
1940-1941	F. R. Auman	1969-1970	Robert E. Hauser
1941-1945	Unrecorded	1970-1972	William G. Ervin
1945-1948	George C. Haltom	1972-1973	Clyde C. Vaughn
1948-1950	Harvey Burgess	1974-1975	W. Darrell Bulla
1950-1952	Arnold J. Koonce	1976-1977	Plato S. Wilson
1952-1954	G. Jay Williard	1978-1979	C. Morris Adams
1954-1955	J. Alson Gray	1980	Lawrence S. Leonard
1955-1956	C. Paul Dedmon	1981-1982	Harry L. Hauser
1956-1958	J. K. Litton	1983-1984	Richard Sossaman
1958-1959	Robert D. Davis, Sr.	1985	Darrell Pierce
1959-1961	Carter T. Holbrook, Jr.	1986-1988	Richard S. Towers
1961-1962	Gilbert H. Weant	1989-1992	Robert D. Davis, Jr.
1962-1964	Lee W. Sherrill	1993	L. Richard Nifong
1964-1966	Dr. C. L. Gray, Jr.	1994-1995	William R. (Pete) Bradley
1966-1967	Clyde C. Vaughn	1996	Randy Burge

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
PRESIDENTS–WOMEN’S ORGANIZATIONS

The Foreign Missionary Society	1956–1958	Mrs. James S. Moffitt
1899–1924 Unrecorded	1958–1960	Mrs. W. S. Baker
1924–1925 Mrs. George R. Brown	1960–1962	Mrs. Lee W. Sherrill
1925–1928 Unrecorded	1962–1964	Mrs. Idis B. Cater (Vivian)
	1964–1966	Mrs. Carter T. Holbrook, Jr.
Ladies’ Aid Society	1966–1967	Mrs. C. L. Gray, Jr.
1900–1901 Mrs. L. J. Diffee	1967–1968	Mrs. H. B. Leonard, Jr.
1901–1918 Unrecorded		
1918–1928 Mrs. S. S. Coe	Women’s Society of Christian Service	
	1968–1969	Mrs. H. B. Leonard, Jr.
Home Missionary Society	1969–1970	Mrs. T. W. Foister
1904–1928 Unrecorded	1970–1971	Mrs. George D. Beaston
	1972	Mrs. T. Harold White
Woman’s Auxiliary of the		
First Methodist Protestant Church	United Methodist Women	
1928–1933 Mrs. S. S. Coe	1973	Mrs. Roy W. Gladden
1933–1934 Mrs. C. C. Robbins	1974	Mrs. W. H. Colonna, Jr.
1934–1935 Mrs. John Whitesell	1975	Mrs. Harry L. Hauser
1935–1936 Mrs. Paul F. Kennett	1976	Mrs. Robert E. Hauser
1936–1937 Mrs. Lewis E. Teague	1977	Mrs. David A. Dowdy, Jr.
1937–1938 Mrs. L. R. Peacock	1978	Mrs. W. Dan Herring
1938–1939 Mrs. John H. Walker	1979	Mrs. C. Morris Adams
	1980	Mrs. W. Vann York
Woman’s Society of Christian Service	1981	Mrs. Robert D. Davis, Jr.
1939–1940 Mrs. G. I. Humphreys	1982	Mrs. Russell M. Payne
1940–1942 Mrs. L. R. Peacock	1983	Mrs. Darrell Pierce
1942–1943 Mrs. J. R. Meredith	1984	Mrs. H. A. Moffitt, Jr.
1943–1945 Mrs. Percy Payne	1985–1986	Mrs. William P. Harris
1945–1946 Mrs. George C. Haltom	1987–1988	Mrs. Clyde J. Hedrick
1946–1949 Mrs. J. H. Allred	1989–1990	Mrs. George Davis
1949–1951 Mrs. Percy Payne	1991–1992	Mrs. Ed C. Greer
1951–1954 Mrs. Roby C. Yarborough	1993–1994	Mrs. W. S. Halstead
1954–1956 Mrs. Robert D. Davis, Sr.	1995–1996	Mrs. Idis B. Cater (Louise)

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
PRESIDENTS—MEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

Laymen's Fellowship		1978	Russell M. Payne
1935-1936	James S. Moffitt, Sr.	1979	David B. Wall
		1980	Philip L. Wylie, Sr.
Men's Fellowship Club		1981	Gerald (Jerry) Kyle
1947-1948	George Case	1982	Jesse C. Brinson
		1983	David B. Wall
Methodist Men		1984	Jesse C. Brinson
1954-1955	H. A. Moffitt, Jr.	1985	Russell M. Payne
1968-1969	Dr. Harold E. Conrad	1986	W. G. Hart
1969-1970	Thomas E. Dickerson, Jr.	1987	James C. Montgomery
1970-1971	Unrecorded	1988-1989	Clyde J. Hedrick
1972	Harry L. Hauser	1990	Charles H. Brown
1973	William P. Harris	1991	Jerry Koontz
1974	Roy Frazier, Jr.	1992-1993	John C. Teague
1975-1976	James A. Penley	1994	Jerry Koontz
1977	C. Alex Miller	1995-1996	Clyde J. Hedrick

LAY LEADERS

1895-1940	Unrecorded	1974-1975	Darrell Pierce
1940-1941	Arnold J. Koonce	1976-1977	C. Morris Adams
1941-1945	Unrecorded	1978	Harry L. Hauser
1945-1946	Ralph H. Vance	1979	John Morris
1946-1959	Unrecorded	1980-1981	Clyde C. Vaughn
1959-1960	Wilbur Groome	1982	Robert B. Rankin
1960-1962	Unrecorded	1983	Mrs. William P. Harris
1962-1963	Thurman C. Wall	1984	George A. Davis
1963-1964	H. B. Leonard, Jr.	1985-1986	Plato S. Wilson
1964-1967	Gilbert H. Weant	1987-1988	Mrs. T. Harold White
1967-1969	W. B. Gray	1989-1990	Dr. N. C. Johnson
1969-1971	Harry L. Hauser	1991-1992	Mark F. Pierce
1971-1973	J. Harold Craven	1993-1996	David B. Wall

LAY PERSON OF THE YEAR

1990	*Mrs. T. Harold White	1994	Mrs. John Morris
1991	Clyde Vaughn	1995	*Mrs. C. R. Overman
1992	*Mark F. Pierce	1996	Harry L. Hauser
1993	Mrs. Clyde Hedrick		

* Also Named District Lay Person of the Year

**PRELIMINARY LIST
OF
ITEMS TO BE PLACED IN THE CENTENNIAL TIME CAPSULE
To Be Buried in the Columbarium
First United Methodist Church
October, 27, 1996
To Be Opened September, 2046**

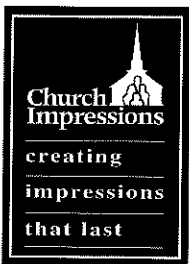
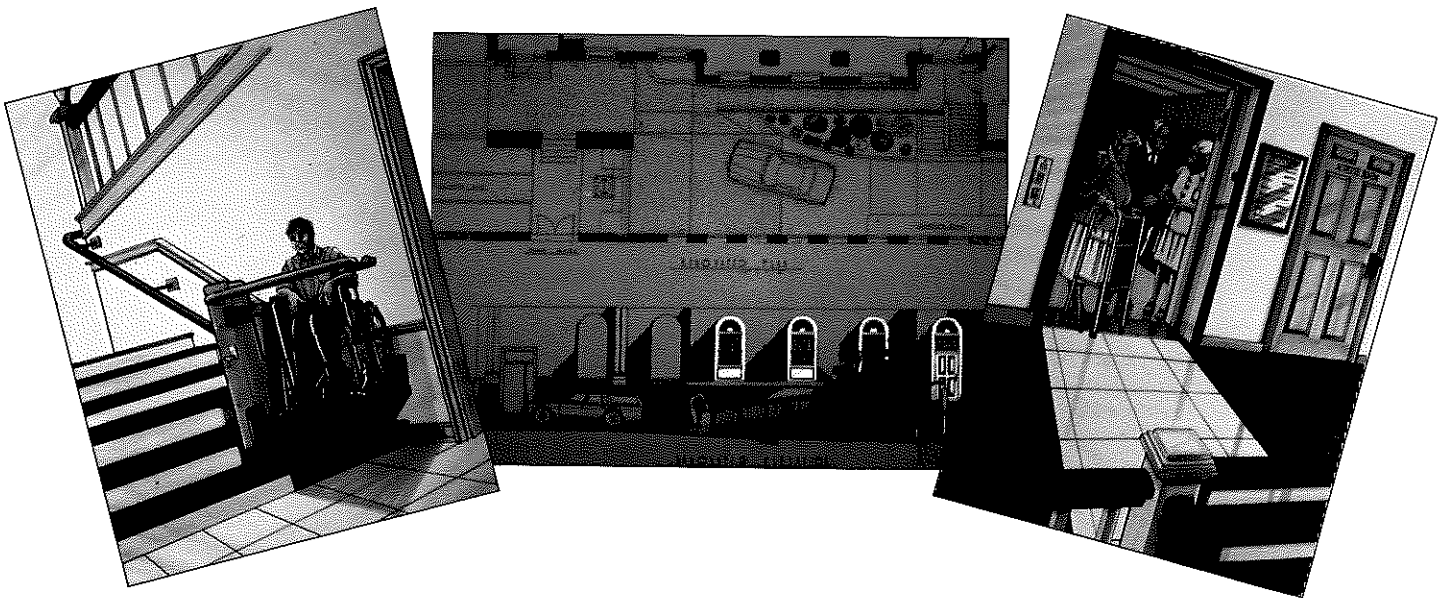
Vault donated by Sechrest Funeral Service
Stone marker donated by Ed and Carol Smith
Ceremony conducted by the Reverend Clyde K. Penry, Senior Pastor and the
Reverend Dr. M. Kenneth Lyon, Senior Pastor 1991–1995
Items selected by members of the Fourth and Fifth Grade Sunday School Class, 1995–1996

A photograph of the Fourth and Fifth Grade Sunday School Class and their teachers
Original paragraphs written by members of the Fourth and Fifth Grade Sunday School Class
about their favorite things at First UMC
Original paragraphs written by the Fourth and Fifth Grade Sunday School Class members
about their local concerns in 1996
A copy of the Centennial Pictorial Directory 1895–1995
A copy of the 75th Anniversary 1895–1970 History
A copy of the Centennial History
Photographs of the interior and exterior of the church sanctuary and of the chapel taken by Darrell Howard
A photograph of the parsonage located at 921 Kingston Drive
A photograph of the Centennial processional banner
Autographed copies of Blair Rankin's original music and lyrics composed for the Centennial Year
A video tape of the Service of Worship of the Grand Finale of the
Centennial Year – September 29, 1996
Copies of the bulletins for the Services of Worship for the eight Centennial Celebration Sundays
during 1995–1996 and of the afternoon Musicale
A copy of the brochure for the Methodist Heritage Tour to England, a Centennial Year event, May 21–30, 1996
A copy of a MESSENGER
A copy of the December 19, 1995 issue of THE CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE with an article concerning
the celebration of the first Centennial Sunday, October 15, 1995
A copy of the October 13, 1995 edition of the HIGH POINT ENTERPRISE with an article concerning the
beginning of the Centennial Year
A copy of the HIGH POINT ENTERPRISE concerning the Grand Finale activities of the Centennial Year
A letter written by Bishop Charlene Kammerer, elected to the episcopacy in 1996; she is the first
female elected bishop from the Southeastern Jurisdiction and the first female appointed to serve
as the presiding officer of the Western North Carolina Annual Conference
A letter from the Reverend Richard A. Howle, District Superintendent
A letter from the Reverend Clyde K. Penry, Senior Pastor
A letter from the Reverend Jeffrey A. Hassel, Associate Pastor, 1995
A letter from the Reverend Elizabeth Coppedge-Henley, first female Associate Pastor, 1996
A copy of the 1995 Charge Conference Report containing a list of church officers
A copy of the 1995 church budget
A copy of the NIV New Adventure Bible presented to the third graders on September 8, 1996 and a
photograph of the recipients
A copy of the United Methodist Hymnal published in 1989
A map of the City of High Point



A CENTURY IN MISSION . . . A MISSION FOR A NEW CENTURY

"A Mission For A New Century"



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