

THE HISTORY OF HICKORY GROVE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

1848-1979

*When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue
faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not
forsake them. Isaiah 41:17*

*Amy Muse
Janet Cunningham*

The History of Hickory Grove United Methodist Church

1844-1979

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Acknowledgments

This would not have been possible if my Mom had not squirreled away her copy of the original document distributed by the church. It was in her cedar chest. Along with some other treasures. I decided to try and bring life to try and bring life to it for future generations to read, research or just enjoy.

Also, Rodney Purser, Esq. has been instrumental helping me move this project forward with HGUMC. His advice is most greatly appreciated.

Thank {{historian/person}} for “About the Authors” section and those who helped proof read and improve this document.

And last, but not least, the staff and members, past and present, of Hickory Grove United Methodist Church. It is because of you and those who came before that the “The Rock Church” lives on today.

(More to come)

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Contents

The History of Hickory Grove United Methodist Church.....	1
1844-1979.....	1
PREFACE.....	c
ABOUT THE AUTHORS.....	d
FOREWORD.....	e
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	e
THE WAKE OF THE BOAT The Story of Hickory Grove United Methodist Church <i>I have a goodly heritage</i> Psalms 16:6.....	1
PROSPECT 1844.....	1
THE WORLD INTO WHICH PROSPECT CAME.....	2
WE BUILD.....	4
SABBATH SCHOOL.....	4
CLASS MEETINGS.....	5
THE COLORED.....	6
LIFE WAS SIMPLE.....	6
CAMP MEETINGS.....	7
1858 - AN ACCESSIBLE SPRING.....	10
OUR LAST ARBOR.....	11
THIRD HOME 1898.....	12
A ROCK CHURCH - 1926.....	20
A NEW PARSONAGE.....	26
LONG RANGE PLANNING.....	26
Addendum.....	28
HICKORY GROVE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH.....	28
Appendix.....	33
Copy of Deed to Our First Church.....	33
HICKORY GROVE PASTORS.....	34
Prospect Charlotte Circuit 1844-58.....	34
Glossary.....	36
Index.....	i

Preface

This document (sans Preface) was scanned as images from the original and each image was processed through Optical Character Recognition (OCR) to get a true and somewhat more correct version of the print version. (i. e. spelling check). It is the history of the HGUMC from 1848-1977. This document is a combination of two (2) different documents released at the same about time. One was staple bound with a red cover and the other was an insert for the bound version.

The scanned the images were placed into a multi-page PDF file and made available to the church. They are in color, like a photo of the pages. The PDF file can be placed on your website for all of the members to share.

Too bring the document to life again motivated me to pass each page through Optical Character Recognition (OCR) processing which reads the image of each typed key stroke and converts it to a digital character that can be placed into a modern format like a .txt file or a Word Document.

The value this adds includes, in addition to spelling check, searching for a key word, a key phrase, names, dates, etc. Which leads to telling you the process and results.

OCR is not perfect. After a page is scanned the resulting text is loaded into a word processor to find all of the misread characters. This leads to spell checking even when the word is correct (in context), but, misspelled by the author. I have corrected those words which were only misspelled, yet, left words that I was not confident was a simple typo. For example, you find the word "locomobile" which is not in the dictionary, but, when researched you see photos of the cars of that day manufactured by The Locomobile Company. I did not correct the capitalization because I consider it be colloquial.

All of the pages were combined into a single monolithic document including the 1969 inserted pages. Also, the lists of the staff from the two (2) documents have been combined. Modernity has allowed me to display that date in a more understandable format. Using tables and color keys it is much easier to rapidly consume the data like trends or anomalies. The drawings have been placed in this document as bitmaps using image processing tools.

Titles of publications, originally underlined on the typewriter, have been italicized to meet a common publication standard. Footnotes have been converted to endnotes and the footnotes I added to the staff tables use alphabetical characters to avoid confusion. Original footnotes are numeric.

"Sunday School" was converted to "Sunday school." Roman numeral chapter numbers were removed to improve readability.

About The Authors

TBD (page format may change based on size of content)

FOREWORD

Hickory Grove United Methodist Church has grown from a membership of 446 to 1400 since 1935 when the story of the church was last written. There are scarcely a hundred in the church today who were members in that year. It is to give the scores of new members welcomed into the church since, some appreciation of their heritage that this story has been written. It is not intended to be anything profound, but a story of homely things and early struggles fitted into a framework of fact. A story of a church which is also a story of the people.

Records are never quite complete, making research tedious—largely a matter of running down one thing that leads to another and fitting the whole together like a mosaic.

Facts have not been concealed or omitted for the glorification of the church. If, occasionally, it seems as though leaders come in for too great praise, it is but an unintentional spilling over of appreciation of those who laid the foundation of the church that we have today, and did it the hard way.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This story is a cooperative undertaking. For factual material the writer has had access to the files of the library of the Association of Methodist Historical Societies, Junaluska; the N.C. Room of the Library of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; the N.C. Room of the Public Library of Charlotte; Archives, Methodist Building, Statesville; and the Library of the Methodist Home. The Hickory Grove Church has also made available Quarterly Conference Minutes and other records. Scrap Books of the Golden Age Club and the Hickory Grove Community Club have enriched the material as well as a wealth of clippings, brochures, programs, and such in the possession of Miss Lila Mae Dulin and Mrs. Howard Russell.

To Mr. Crowder, our Pastor; Dr. James S. Price, Chairman of the Administrative Board; the Rev. H. M. Keever, Conference Archivist; the Rev. Rollin P. Gibbs, Executive Secretary, Stewardship; John L. Borchert, Methodist Information; Mrs. Howard Russell; Senior High U. M. Y F Mrs. Ed Jordan and the late Mr. Jordan; W. M. Pence, Van Dyke Alexander and others who have made valuable contributions goes our appreciation.

Two other members of the Committee on Records and History, Miss. Lila Mae Dulin and Mrs. G. P. Coursey, have stood by the project and been ready and interested in helping in any way possible.

THE WAKE OF THE BOAT

The Story of Hickory Grove United Methodist Church

I have a goodly heritage Psalms 16:6

PROSPECT 1844

A Plan of Separation between the Northern and Southern Methodist Churches was agreed on in 1844-- the churches couldn't see eye to eye on the question of slavery. The North had grown more "anti", the South more lax, and differences couldn't be reconciled. There is no record of the feeling on the subject in the scattered farming community of Hickory Grove Mecklenburg County, but it is interesting that Hickory Grove Methodist Church was born in that year. The skipper says he can tell how true his course has been by looking at the wake of his boat. The following is a backward glimpse of our "wake" at Hickory Grove.

There was no Baby Book for the infant church. Beginnings are fuzzy, but it began life as the Methodist Episcopal Church, referred to in the same records as "The Methodist Episcopal Society", was later a Methodist Episcopal Church South, in 1939 it became a Methodist Episcopal Church, and in 1968 a United Methodist Church. For the first twenty-six years the church was in the South Carolina Conference and was served by local and itinerant preachers.

The church was originally known as Prospect Church. The name first appears in the Fourth Quarterly Conference Minutes, December 7, 1844, with John Newell representing the Church on a Circuit Board of Stewards. A tract of land of one and a quarter acres "on the waters of McAlpin's Creek" was deeded by John G. Maxwell to James W. Martin, Robert A. Martin, Cyrus Query, James Clark, and James H. Morrison, Trustees, on November 21, 1844. Mr. Maxwell gave the land, it is said, through the influence of his wife, Peggy, "in consideration of the good will and affection that I have for the aforesaid Religious Society for the prosperity and advancement of the cause of religion."¹ The Second Quarterly Conference Minutes, 1845, report the deed "procured and recorded."

According to a little three page handwritten history preserved in the cornerstone of an early building, the church was also known as Scarboro. This name is not used in official records, but Lewis Scarbrough of the Charlotte Circuit led the group through the first years, which is enough to cause his name to be associated with the church. He was born in Montgomery County, N.C., but became an itinerant preacher in the South Carolina Conference when Hickory Grove was in the Conference. A newspaper clipping states that in the years when he served our church. "All the exercises of the day were crowded into¹ service and dismissal was made from the cemetery

¹ Deed reproduced in this book. Deeds referred to below are in Mecklenburg County Court House

grounds." His obituary, written in 1884, suggests that he had been a forceful witness, "His unique way of preaching attracted many by curiosity, not a few of them remained to pray and to find a Savior who was able to save to the uttermost."²

THE WORLD INTO WHICH PROSPECT CAME

Mecklenburg County was a Presbyterian field. The only other denominations were the Baptists and Methodists, both of which were poor and struggling. The five leading Methodist churches of today were not in existence, even Trinity and Tryon Street from which the First Methodist Church was formed were not organized. The first Methodist sermon has been preached in the Charlotte area but thirty years earlier.³ Francis Asbury had been dead just over a quarter of a century, and Charlotte had been a Station for only ten years. The stronghold of Methodism in Mecklenburg, if such it could be called, was at Harrison's near Pineville which, according to a citation from the Methodist Publishing House hanging in the entrance of the church has been active Methodist Church since 1789. It has been recorded that "originally those families with horses and vehicles attended Providence Presbyterian Church and only those too poor to have these conveyances attended the old log meetinghouse (Methodist) where the best of society was ashamed to be seen."⁴ It was years later, following the big revival of 1847 at Harrison's and after the first Harrison Church had burned and been replaced by a substantial new building, that it was written that "the Methodist Church had begun to grow and become respectable."⁵

There is a plot of ground on the corner of College and Seventh Streets, Charlotte, that seems deserving of a marker of sorts for at this corner prayers have risen from 1833 to the present time by Methodists,⁶ by Episcopalians who held services in the Methodist Church before the days of St. Peter's,⁷ St. Mark's congregation,⁸ and since 1873 by members of the Seventh Street United Presbyterian Church.⁹ On this spot in an earlier building of the United Presbyterian Church, Johnson C. Smith University also had its beginnings.¹⁰ This first Methodist Church on Seventh Street was a

2 Albert Deems Betts, *History of Methodism in S.C. Advocate in S. C. Advocate Press 1952* Columbia, S. C. p336

3 Rev. James Jenkins, *Experience, Labours, Suffering of James Jenkins*, S. C. Con. 1842 pp 219-20.

4 Rev. A. M. Christzberg, *Early Methodism in the Carolinas*. Nashville, Publ. House of M. E. Church South 1897.

5 J. B. Alexander, *History of Mecklenburg County 1740-1900*, Observer Printing House 1902 p268

6 Deed Book 25 p 200

7 *Mecklenburg Jeffersonian* 1841

8 Deed Book 4, p 628

9 Deed Book 8, p 365

10 Dr. A. H. George, Dean Emeritus, JCSU

“modest little edifice” according to Rev. David J. Allen, the preacher. When we read that it was sold to the Lutherans in 1862 for \$800 this appraisal is easy to accept.¹¹

Before the days of the Seventh Street Church, Methodists worshipped in a Community Church used by both Methodists and Presbyterians until taken over by the Presbyterians in 1832 by an agreement regarding a certain indebtedness.

The Seventh Street Church, South Carolina Conference, Lincolnton District, with an 1844 membership of 73 whites and 122 colored,¹² was the church of the Charlotte Station when the group of Wesley followers first banded together and formed what was later to become Hickory Grove Methodist Church.

The early churches had no rich legacies and no foundations gave funds to building programs although occasionally land was given on which to build a meetinghouse—often without the formality of a deed. Neither the Seventh Street Church nor the earliest Harrison's nor old Trinity on Beatties Ford Road nor the infant Prospect Church, later to become Hickory Grove, were any great shakes architecturally, but they were on a par with other buildings in the County. The Court House stands in the center of the street... and is no ornament to the village. The Court House wasn't anything great either. In 1841, the Editor of the *Camden Journal* wrote following a visit to Charlotte: “The Court House stands in the center of the street...and is no ornament to the village. It is in a very dilapidated condition either without window shutters or they are left open to the mercy of the winds. The boys... have amused themselves by breaking the windows until there is scarcely a whole pane left.”¹³ That fall the Methodist Conference met in this Court House.¹⁴

Three years later, the year of the organization of the Prospect congregation, James K. Polk had travelled the road from his log cabin home near Pineville in Mecklenburg County to Congress and the Governorship of Tennessee and was already elected President of the United States—a United States, the flag of which had but twenty—six stars, the latest representing the State of Michigan. Our President and the President of Texas were negotiating relative to the annexation of the Republic of Texas. Cotton was king, but gold mines were operating in the county and causing fear that they might affect agriculture. A branch of the U.S. Mint in Charlotte coined \$287,000 the previous than in any year until that time.¹⁵

A report of a new vein of ore made big news. Real estate ads held glowing prospects of gold in lands for sale. California was unknown as was California gold. Even in 1915 the hope of gold was still alive in the Hickory Grove section. Lands of Gleason Hagler, Wallace Johnston, and J. T. Thompson were leased by an Arizonian “for the purpose of hunting gold.”¹⁶ The first telegraph message was yet to be sent, and adhesive postage stamps were unknown. People crossed Trade and Tryon on

11 Deed Book 4, p 608

12 Conference Minutes 1844

13 *Mecklenburg Jeffersonian* 5/4/1841 Press 1952 Columbia, S. C. p 336

14 Ibid 11/9/1841

15 *Charlotte Journal* 2/8/1844

16 *Mecklenburg Times* 7/23/1915

stepping stones and if, after a rain, a man's foot slipped, he sank into red mud up to the tops of his old fashioned high shoes, It would be ten years before streets of Charlotte were macadamized [sic] and property owners at The Square required to have sidewalks curbed and filled with gravel or sand.¹⁷ It would be nine before the first twelve street lamps were installed in the center of town, and the Constable ordered to buy a barrel of oil to keep them burning.¹⁸ Newspapers of the day were full of notices of slaves for sale and rewards for runaway slaves. Drink was a problem. Bars were clustered on West Trade Street near the Square. Mecklenburg Division of the Sons of Temperance was organized to combat the evil; Sugar Creek Female Academy was advertising for boarding pupils at \$6 a month;¹⁹ Brawley Cates' horehound candy was touted as a sure cure for whooping cough, asthma, croup; Overman and Trotter were offering barouches, sulkies, and carryalls for sale; and the words "Ford" and "Plymouth" meant only a crossing in the creek or the rock on which the Pilgrims landed. The county was so new that there were few natives. People had come down from Pennsylvania and Virginia or up from South Carolina and even over from Europe.

WE BUILD

An earlier history of our church states that the first of our church buildings dates from 1848. Before that the group probably did as many others of the period: they were called together in some home when a travelling preacher happened by or came by appointment every few weeks. The first church home is described as "of logs daubed with mud. It was 16 x 24 feet" and faced what is today Delta Road.. The door was in the center front and the pulpit on the opposite side. There were four benches on each side of the aisle leading to the pulpit and three benches in each Amen Corner. These benches were made of slabs with pegged legs and spaced far enough apart for one to kneel in prayer. The rostrum was raised one step from the floor, and the pulpit consisted of two posts with a board nailed across the top for the Bible. There was a window back of the pulpit and one on the right between the Amen Corner and the front seats.²⁰ An organ was unthinkable. It was still the feeling, as Bishop Waugh said, that "the fruit of the lips and the feeling of the heart might very well answer to this part of the worship of God."²¹ The preacher "lined" the hymns, stopping occasionally to ask, "Now, do you know what you said last? Did you speak no more than you felt?"

A list of charter members, although acknowledged to be incomplete, is given in the earlier history of the church: John Newell and wife Hailey Taylor, Joseph Taylor and wife Polly, Allison Teeter and wife Dorcas, George Jordan and wife Eveline, Addison Taylor and wife Lovie, John Tally and wife Susan, Robert Roberts and wife Betsy, William Carter and wife Mary (also his second wife Jane), John Taylor and wife Mary Anne, David Newell and wife Becky, John Taylor Alexander, William G. Hodges,

¹⁷ *Western Democrat* 1854

¹⁸ *N. C. Whig* 6/28/53

¹⁹ *Charlotte Journal* 10/4/1844

²⁰ A. A. Kyles, *A Short History of Hickory Grove Methodist Church, South*, , March 1935 p 1

²¹ *Lives of the Methodist Bishops*, Edited by T. L. Flood D. D. and John W. Hamilton D. D. p 250 NY: Phillips and Hunt 1882

William Maxwell, and William Taylor and wife Esther. Some of those added from other denominations were Mrs. Priscilla Keenan, Miss Nancy Keenan, Mrs. D. W. Hucks, Mrs. Sarah Maxwell, Miss Betsy Taylor Miss. Cenie Teylor, Miss Susan Ford, and Mrs. Eliza Furr.²²

SABBATH SCHOOL

A Sabbath School was made the duty of every pastor after 1828. They were thought of as "nurseries of the church." At first they were operated haphazardly. The Minutes of the Charlotte Circuit lumped reports together without naming individual churches. They flourished only during warm months and good weather and "suspended" at other times. The Fourth and First Quarters covering the winter months were particularly vulnerable. "Inclemency of the weather" and "For want of vulnerable stoves" are explanations given. Finally they would be given up altogether with the terse note, "Sabbath Schools have gone into winter quarters." When warm weather returned part of the pastor's routine was "recommencement" of the schools. It took some prodding to get them started again, but by summer such reports for the Circuit appear as, "Fifteen Sabbath Schools all doing well", or "Four Sabbath Schools in tolerable prosperous The peak report for the early years- was in the Third Quarter, 1855, when fifteen Sabbath Schools were reported with "between five and six hundred regularly taught." The Circuit in that year "expended \$130 or \$150. As a result about 1000 volumes are in the library." In the same Quarter it was reported that, "Many commit to memory in a week from 100 to 150 verses of scripture." When winter came again, the schools were discontinued, as before Hickory Grove Sunday School is first mentioned by name in 1870. R. M. Brown, the Pastor in Charge, reported two schools on the Charlotte Circuit. One was at Hickory Grove This was a report for the First or winter Quarter so the little clapboard church must have had a stove, The winter of the following year Hickory Grove is again reported as one of two schools operating which confirms the stove. Mr. Brown wrote, conformity with an old established custom others have gone into winter quarters. Mr. Kyles' earlier history of the church states that the Sunday school had two divisions: Bible classes for adults and *The Blue Back Speller* and catechism for the children. William Carter taught the Men's Bible Class, Mrs. Sarah Maxwell the Ladies' Class, and "anyone who could taught the Speller." Both William Carter and Mrs. Maxwell were active in the church in the 1850's which suggests that they might have been teaching many years before the school is mentioned in the Minutes.

Even as late as the 1890's the school was irregular. The Secretary's Report in the Files of the Church is at times either blank or has a notation such as, "NO school, weather unfavorable," or "NO school, rain storm." Looking over the records of 1694, we get a good picture of our school as it was then. The entire list of officers and teachers totaled fourteen. Their names not only represent leadership in that year, but a large number are surnames familiar in our church work today. As a commentary on the times, it might be added that for the entire year collections of the School only twice reached as much as a dollar and once was as little as seven cents! This is reviewed not to belittle those who came before, but in appreciation of

22 Ibid ²⁰

how much they did with so little. Lesson helps cost much less then than now. Rev. N, R. Richardson of High Point published helps authorized by Conference. Senior Quarterlies could be ordered in quantity at four cents a year and *The Children's Visitor* for the same price. It was in this century Mrs. J. L. Carter was first appointed in charge of the Cradle Roll.

CLASS MEETINGS

William Carter and Allison Teeter were onetime Class Leaders.²³ Generations have grown up and passed on since 1666 when attendance at Class Meetings became no longer a requirement of church membership. The Editor of the *N.C. Christian Advocate* wrote even in 1856, "It would not be a rare thing... in some neighborhoods to meet with persons who have been members of the church for several years and have never attended a Class Meeting."²⁴ In an earlier day, however, they were an important part of worship particularly when the visits of a preacher were weeks apart. At Hickory Grove Class Leaders held Sunday prayer services when the preacher had no appointment.²⁵

The Editor of *The Advocate* described a class meeting: "It is opened by singing which all unite ... The singing is followed by prayer ... After praying one who is experienced in the things of God tells what the Lord hath done for his soul ... After speaking of his own religious state, he inquires of each one present as to his experience in God's service and gives advice, rebuke, encouragement, and exhortation as they may severally require."²⁶ Once Rev. James Jenkins wrote of travelling twelve miles for class meetings: "I was drilled and instructed, warned and comforted, and so fond was I of them that I would rather miss hearing an ordinary sermon than neglect my class."²⁷ In almost every issue of *The Advocate* in the year of 1656 and thereafter for a number of years, the Editor is defending the Class Meetings and is concerned with what is referred to as "the tirade of abuse heaped upon them." He refers to some who compared them with "Romanish Confessionals."²⁸ He wrote, I'm am aware that some wise men have endeavored to turn the class meeting into ridicule.²⁹ Their function seems to have been taken over by other organizations, and like other departments of the church, their days of usefulness just seemed to pass.

THE COLORED

The colored had no churches. They were mostly slaves and unable to hold property. The early Discipline their spiritual life the responsibility of the whites. As far back as 1787 preachers were ordered by Conference "to unite in Society those who appear to have a real desire of fleeing from the wrath to come; to meet with such in Class,

23 *A Short History of Hickory Grove Methodist Church, South*, March 1935 p3

24 4/18/1856

25 Ibid ²³

26 1/18/56

27 *Experience, Labours, Suffering of James Jenkins* p 37

28 3/21/56

29 5/30/56

and to exercise the whole Methodist Discipline among them." In the year in which Prospect, the forerunner of Hickory Grove, began there were 680 whites on the Charlotte Circuit and 569 colored.³⁰ They usually worshipped in the galleries of the churches while the whites worshipped downstairs or met in the afternoon in the same rooms in which the whites met in the morning. In old Prospect there was a lean—to on the entire left side of the building just for the colored. It was separated from the main room by a rail.³¹ The blacks were, however, always a group with no voice in the policies of the church. They were never named to an official position; not allowed to exhort; on communion Sunday they were always the last to go to the altar; and in the church records only their Christian names were given, identified further by the names of their owners while whites were given their full names, marriage status, sex, and standing in the church as 'believer, or 'full member.

LIFE WAS SIMPLE

Life in Charlotte and Mecklenburg was still simple in the 1850's. The first train entered Charlotte in 1852. The speed of cars was limited to four miles an hour in the corporate limits, and the engineer was required to "ring the bell from the depot until beyond the town boundary."³² The *Western Democrat* declared, "It is customary to limit the speed cars the Locomobile (a brand of car) to be detached outside of town and horses to be used to draw the cars ... through the town."³³ In 1856 the *Advocate* was publishing a list of railroads that didn't operate on Sundays -- a kind of Honor Roll. The Roanoke and Seaboard Railroad "continues to run on the Sabbath despite the report that it is discontinued. Alas!"³⁴ On Saturdays the streets were thronged with wagons, a fire company was being agitated³⁵ as was a Town Hall in a proposed 125 x 66 foot room above a new store being built by Leroy Springs. The whipping post, stocks, and even branding irons were still on the grounds that punishments speedily inflicted were better restraints and less expensive than the cost of a gaol (jail.)³⁶ "Big pennies, three cent pieces, and half dimes were familiar coins Found in the collection plate on Sunday."³⁷ The Council had the downtown streets macadamized [sic] explaining, "Expensive ... but it will last for ages ... (last winter) it was almost impossible for wagons to drag through the mud."³⁸ In spite of the advent of the train, a preacher who had to move often called on a friend with a wagon to help. Conference was held in the fall, and when the journey was made in bad weather, as was often the case, frequently the wheels had to be pried out of the mud, sometimes requiring an extra team to help.

The Methodists were growing a little frightening in their enthusiasm. In 1853 the Editor of *The N. C. Whig* wrote regarding a revival of that year, "We are glad to see

30 Con. Min. 1844

31

32 *Western Democrat* 9/16/1854

33 *Western Democrat* 3/17/1854

34 5/9/1856

35 *Western Democrat* 12/8/1854

36 Ibid 12/15/1854

37 Letter from Treasury Department 1/22/1941 in personal files

38 *Western Democrat* 12/15/1854

this good work going on, but it is to be hoped that our friends in these exciting times will be equally careful to avoid the dangers fanaticism and the spirit of proselyting."³⁹ Even though they sometimes eyed one another suspiciously in their competition for members, churches seemed to get along fairly well together. *The N.C. Whig* in 1858 reports a Union Meeting with preaching at the Presbyterian Church followed by preaching at the Methodist and then the Baptist Church.⁴⁰

CAMP MEETINGS

The story of Hickory Grove cannot be separated from the story of the Methodist camp meeting. More than a quarter of a century since the last vestige of an arbor has disappeared from the grounds there are those who when they think of Hickory Grove think of "the brush arbor." It's an affectionage [sic] thing.

An old lady from Charlotte speaking with unbelievable warmth after all these years recently exclaimed, "Never have I heard anything more inspiring than when the arbor full of people sang, "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name."

Francis Asbury, in his lifetime, gave approval to the camp meeting. In 1806 he wrote, 'When all Quarterly Meetings become camp meetings and a thousand souls shall be converted, our millennium will begin.'⁴¹ In 1815 he said, 'The camp meetings in North and South Carolina and Georgia ... must supply an addition of hundreds and thousands to the Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian churches.'⁴² The Baptists and Presbyterians didn't stay with the movement as did the Methodists. For that reason the camp meeting has been more closely identified with the Methodists.

At first the camp meeting met a practical need. When so many people gathered for Quarterly Meeting or to hear an itinerant preacher that a little home couldn't hold them, they went outside. This called for shelter from the summer sun. When more came and stayed longer, more substantial arbors were needed. It was the popular thing to hold meetings in the late summer when crops were in and there was leisure time - time to spend a week, maybe two, at the camp grounds. On Saturday before camp meeting people could be seen hurrying toward the camp ground in wagons, carts, sulkies, on horseback, even on foot, often carrying their shoes in their hands as they walked the dusty roads. If a person wanted a horse and sulky in Charlotte during camp meeting, he spoke for it a long time ahead. One Charlotte nonagenarian [sic] tells of his eighteen year old determination to get to Hickory Grove for meeting. Horses were all engaged, and all Wadsworth's stables could offer was a mule. That is why on a certain Sunday one of Charlotte's future industrialist showed up in a mule drawn sulky. Sometimes people slept in their covered wagons, but "tents" or cabins eventually followed for those who came from a distance. At one time there were thirty or more of these encircling the arbor. Some had several rooms, others might have but one room with built-in bunks perhaps divided into

39 6/22/1853

40 2/16/1853

41 Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury Edited by Elmer T. Clark, Nashville, Abingdon Press 1958 Vol. III p 356 Hereafter FAJL

42 FAJL 1815

separate rooms by hanging quilts or sheets from the joists, Ticks filled with fresh straw served as mattresses. In front would be a substantial bench; behind, a cook shed so placed that smoke wouldn't blow into the area reserved for preaching. Plenty of firewood was stacked nearby. At meal time the air was pungent with the smell of wood fires, ham, coffee, sausage, beef, and other good things. Here and there would be a coop of chickens, sometimes a cow, and occasionally an enterprising farmer would kill a beef and offer meat for sale. At feeding time, boys from nearby farms made hurried trips home to feed the stock and do other chores. Visiting preachers were assigned to the best "tent" which stood just north of the present parsonage. They felt no concern about such mundane things as meals - "tent" owners vied with one another for the privilege of entertaining them.

Some preachers tried to deemphasize the good eating. Rev. James Jenkins wrote back in 1804, "I am grieved to see so much labor and parade about eatables ... I think we might do without pound cake, preserves, and many other notions."⁴³ More than fifty years later, in the same vein, the Editor of the *N. C. Christian Advocate* wrote, 'When the people assemble let it be in plain 'tents', in plain dress, and with plain substantial fare, Let feasting and display be avoided and prayer and praise be the order of the day.'⁴⁴ In spite of protests against the holiday air, visiting preachers, long noted for appreciation of good food, enjoyed with others the best of everything to eat.

Camp meetings were operated by individual churches and not promoted by Conference. Little mention is made of them in Conference Minutes, but in memory they have lived long. There is still a small circle of older members of the church who's first and fondest thoughts when asked about Hickory Grove are of "tenting", and the Sundays during camp meeting when the grounds were crowded with horses, wagons, sulkies, carryalls, and people from all over. In the very early days' preachers were often uneducated -- Andrews, Peters, James, and Johns of the New World - "homemade preachers" someone called them. Certainly they were not Seminary trained. Peter Doub, preacher, Presiding Elder, educator, had never seen a grammar when still in his teens he began to preach.⁴⁵ Many who later became Bishops of the Church began preaching before they were twenty with little formal education -- Asbury himself began at nineteen,⁴⁶ Beverly Waugh began at nineteen⁴⁷, Enoch Martin at eighteen,⁴⁸ Joshua Soule at seventeen⁴⁹, and the list is not exhausted. Most of those to whom they preached were also untaught -- farmers, carpenters, wheelwrights, joiners, well diggers, blacksmiths, millers, miners, coach makers, laborers. Intent on survival and with little time for books, it was not uncommon for responsible citizens to sign legal papers with an "x" duly witnessed. At best there were few books in the home in the first half of the nineteenth century

43 *Experience, Labours, Suffering of James Jenkins* p 149

44 2/22/1956

45 M. T. and A. W. Plyler, *Men of the Burning Heart* Commercial Printing Co. Raleigh 1918

46 *Lives of Methodist Bishops* pp 82, 85, 86, 88

47 *Ibid*

48 *Ibid*

49 *Ibid*

a Bible, Hymnal, Almanac, a book on home medicine, a speller, Psalter, *Wesley's Sermons*, *Pilgrim's Progress*, and perhaps a geography or dream book.

Interest in the camp meetings and the large crowds attending attracted more than the sincere worshippers the scoffers, the curious, the drunks, the idle. "Tents" were sometimes rocked, food snatched, pranks of all kinds played. Newspaper announcements of the meetings often specified, "All persons are strictly forbidden from bringing spirituous liquors or anything of the kind to sell or give away during the meeting. In reality there was a law against such."⁵⁰

The essential features of the camp meeting as developed thereabouts were services extending over several days or a week with food and shelter on the grounds. The meetings stretched the little preaching that was available. Services were held throughout the day and far into the night. They concentrated on religion, but they also offered fellowship and opportunity to exchange news with those who might not be seen for another year. In the early days when Methodism was despised, the fellowship helped the followers of Wesley to feel they were not alone. Dramatic conversions were commonplace and gave something to shout about. Conversion was a change that followed fervent conviction an exciting way! A spectacular experience often accompanied by extravagant manifestations! Years later a man could give the time and place when he decided to become a member of the Christian community with the same accuracy that he could give his birth date or the date of his marriage. The atmosphere was charged with emotion even for those who didn't shout aloud. One who attended tells of those around her calling out and clapping their hands. She "felt good" and wanted to shout, but she "couldn't make the words come."

Grounds were lighted with flickering pine knots or lanterns or candles fixed to shelves, casting weird patterns of light and shadow on the group, or in a later day with oil lamps swinging from the center and bracket lamps with reflectors on the sides. Pulpit style was stirring, sermons were loud and long, and movement and confusion followed as the curious passed from one group of "mourners" to another that might be wrestling to "come through." Occasionally an infant would wail and have to be nursed, or one a little older would have to be taken out by a parent or older sister.

Song services were zestful. Many songs were unsophisticated with folklore overtones; spiritual songs rather than hymns. People sang of death, destruction, hell fire, but the songs were personal, intimate, moving.

One favorite had many stanzas beginning with such lines as,
We have children over yonder or *We have mothers over yonder*
followed by the refrain.

Bye [sic] and bye we'll go to meet them.

Another went,

50 N. C. Laws 1800

*Jesus ere long will weed the crop
and pluck the tares in anger up*
with the refrain,
*For soon the reaping time will come
And angels shout the harvest home.*

Leaders tried to maintain a mood in which the Spirit could work effectively in the hearts of men, but to the young, camp meetings were sometimes something of a picnic, and many a romance was born or nurtured on the camp grounds. Today most new members enter the church as children instructed in the meaning of church membership in a class conducted by their minister. Nurtured in the faith from infancy, there are those who read of the great camp meetings with a feeling of deprivation as they think ruefully that they can't even name a definite date when they can say they were converted.

The very first arbor at Hickory Grove, or rather Prospect, was made of posts set up in the ground with poles across the top covered with fresh leafy branches and was built new each year. Inside were seats of logs split in half laid on other logs placed on the ground, and between the seats was a thick covering of fresh straw for prayer meant kneeling. At one end of the arbor there was an elevated rostrum. On it was a pulpit made of four posts and seats for preachers and song leaders.⁵¹ The day began with a sunrise prayer service announced by a bugle call. Everyone was expected to attend all the services, and they did, but the men stood around and talked until the last minute before the preachers took their seats. On a hot August camp meeting Sunday when the place was crowded with people and horses, a free flowing spring was a necessity. A lesser one could be literally drained. At times a man was stationed at the spring to keep people from watering their horses with water needed for thirsty people.

The first location of old Prospect was cramped for hitching space and soon needed a larger burying ground, but the main reason for moving was lack of a good water supply.⁵²

1858 - AN ACCESSIBLE SPRING

On August 18, 1858, three acres of land were deeded by John M. Johnston to William Carter, John Newell, Martin Alexander, William G. Hodges, and William Maxwell, Commissioners for the building of the New Methodist Church called Prospect.⁵³ The three acres "joined lands of the public school house and offered "free access to the spring at all times for the use of said Prospect Church. Two years later four more of Mr. Johnston's acres were added,⁵⁴ and in 1871⁵⁵ another nine and a half acres were acquired from him.

51 *A Short History of Hickory Grove Methodist Church, South* pp 5, 4

52 Ibid

53 Deed In Church Records

54 Deed Book 4, p 338

55 Deed Book 7, p 799

The new site was about a mile from the old and was with was covered with a grove of hickory trees. It was the natural thing for it to become Hickory Grove Church, and Martin Alexander, one of the Trustees, is said to have suggested the name.⁵⁶ Quarterly Conference Minutes for the 2nd Quarter of 1859 simply state, "The naming of the church heretofore called Prospect was changed to Hickory Grove." Old Prospect was eventually sold to Randolph Baker and was used for a barn on the old Maxwell place. John G. Jordan bought the surrounding land with the exception of the graveyard which is still reserved as such although now unused and sadly over grown.⁵⁷

The new church was a frame building about 24 x 35 feet with a door facing Plott Road or what is Market Street today. There was a door in front and on each side with a platform and pulpit at the east end. Inside there was a division in the center; the men sat on one side, the women on the other as the early Discipline specified. There was even an "Amen Corner for the men and one for the women. It was "plain and decent" as the early Discipline also specified. The church had its first organ in this building." "Miss Maggie" Taylor, wife of Zachary Taylor, was the organist.⁵⁸

Three years later and North Carolina had seceded from the Union. We were at war. Early records always meager were more so, but we know that the years were hard ones, yet the church seemed to prosper. William Taylor represented Hickory Grove on the Circuit Board of Stewards; John Newell was class leader.⁵⁹ An arbor was built for camp meeting which helped it grow. In 1870 Minutes for the Fourth Quarter list Trustees for the church as: W. H. Taylor, David Newell, T. A. Jerome, W. F. Cuthbertson, D. W. Hux, and John H. Phifer, and our church is reported as having five acres of land and a church "in good condition." In September, 1871, nineteen members were received into the church following camp meeting. Among them the name of James D. Pence appears for the first time. William Cuthbertson was named Circuit Steward/ and Harvey Taylor and David Newell were named to a committee to improve the Circuit parsonage, The Minutes state that two members were elected from the larger churches, and one from the smaller churches, which indicates that our church was beginning to be recognized as one of the larger churches of the Circuit. The following year J. N. James, Pastor in Charge, notes, "Having made one round on the Circuit find the congregations tolerably good." Joseph D. Taylor was the new Circuit Steward. Pastor James bemoans "want of attendance at class and prayer meetings."

OUR LAST ARBOR

Thirteen years later, in 1885, our last and most substantial arbor was built. It was a rectangular building with heavy oak timbers set up on stones for pillars and had a high shingled roof with morticed braces fastened at the corners with wooden pegs. This arbor was still standing although not in prime condition a full half century later. There was a rostrum at the north large enough for eight or ten preachers and a

56 *A Short History of Hickory Grove Methodist Church Methodist Church, South* pp. 4, 5, 13

57 Ibid

58 Ibid

59 Quarterly Congressional Minutes 1865—66

choir of fifty voices, and now the seats had back rests. Four large aisles ran the full length of the building and a broad aisle extended across the front of the pulpit.⁶⁰ This last arbor was built under the direction of William J. Taylor and was designed by Cicero McLellan, Houston Taylor, assisted by Harvey Taylor, cut and sawed most of the material. The actual work of construction was done by Lee Dulin, James Noles, Pinkney Berryhill, and others.⁶¹

After the turn of the century and the coming of the automobile, there were those who felt that the camp meeting had outlived its usefulness, others argued that there were those who would not attend church on common occasions who would worship at camp meetings. Meetings continued for a long time, but now the more affluent of the spiritually minded dressed in dusters and visored caps and scarves drove from home in open cars to attend services. "Tents" were no longer needed and were torn down. In 1933, rather than make needed repairs, the arbor was taken down. The open unlighted building became a tempting hangout for the profane and offered a grave fire hazard to the church standing close by. As Marvin King says, "People just used it for things out of line with the purpose for which it was intended." Considerable sentiment still clung to "the historic old arbor" as it was usually referred to, and the decision to take it down was not unanimous. One of the older members says with emphasis, "There was almost a split up." The spring that had once been a delightful and informal meeting place for those of all ages, by this time had given way to a less romantic hand pump back of the parsonage although water still flows from the original spring.

Big summer gatherings at Lake Junaluska have, in a measure, taken the place of the camp meeting. The shape of the Stuart Auditorium with its open sides even suggests some of the old arbors. Floors are cement, and there is no straw because people no longer kneel, although thousands of heads are there reverently bowed in prayer each season. Families leave behind business cares and go for short or long stays, and a rich variety of speakers meets the needs of every conceivable group. Lovely summer cottages and hotels covering the mountain sides are today's "tents." There is much singing, great spiritual uplift, and Christian fellowship. The camp meeting hasn't been so much discarded as changed to meet changing times.

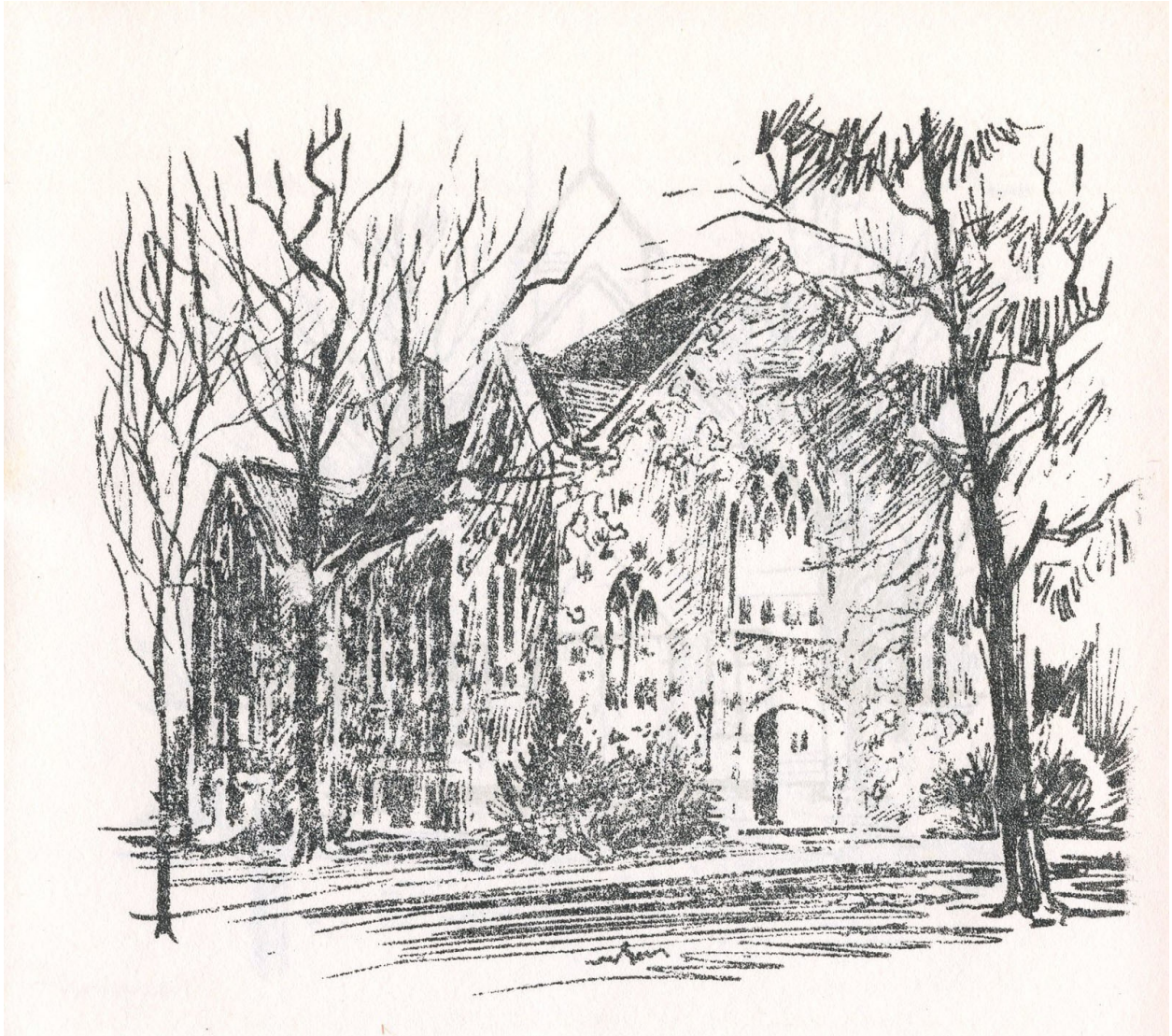
THIRD HOME 1898

The congregation of a 24 x 36 foot church doesn't have to grow much for the church to break out at the seams, The 1858 church had to be replaced in 1898, The second church in the grove of hickory trees and the third home of the Hickory Grove congregation is remembered today. It was 40 x 60 feet with a vestibule and entrance facing Pence Road and the graveyard. The pulpit was across the north end. One small room was built on either side of the vestibule for the Sunday school. Later a belfry was added to the southwest corner. Years later when both the church and belfry were gone, the bell was fastened to the limb of a hickory tree and still called

60 *A Short History of Hickory Grove Methodist Church, South Methodist Church* pp.6-7

61 Ibid

the people to worship and was tolled solemnly when a member died. It was from this church that six of our boys served in World War I.⁶² Hobson Knott made the supreme sacrifice, another of the



Pictured here is the first rock church, Construction was begun in 1926. The men of the church, with teams of mules, scooped up the stone with drag pans and hauled it to the church in their own wagons. Hundreds of hours were spent by our men hauling the rock.

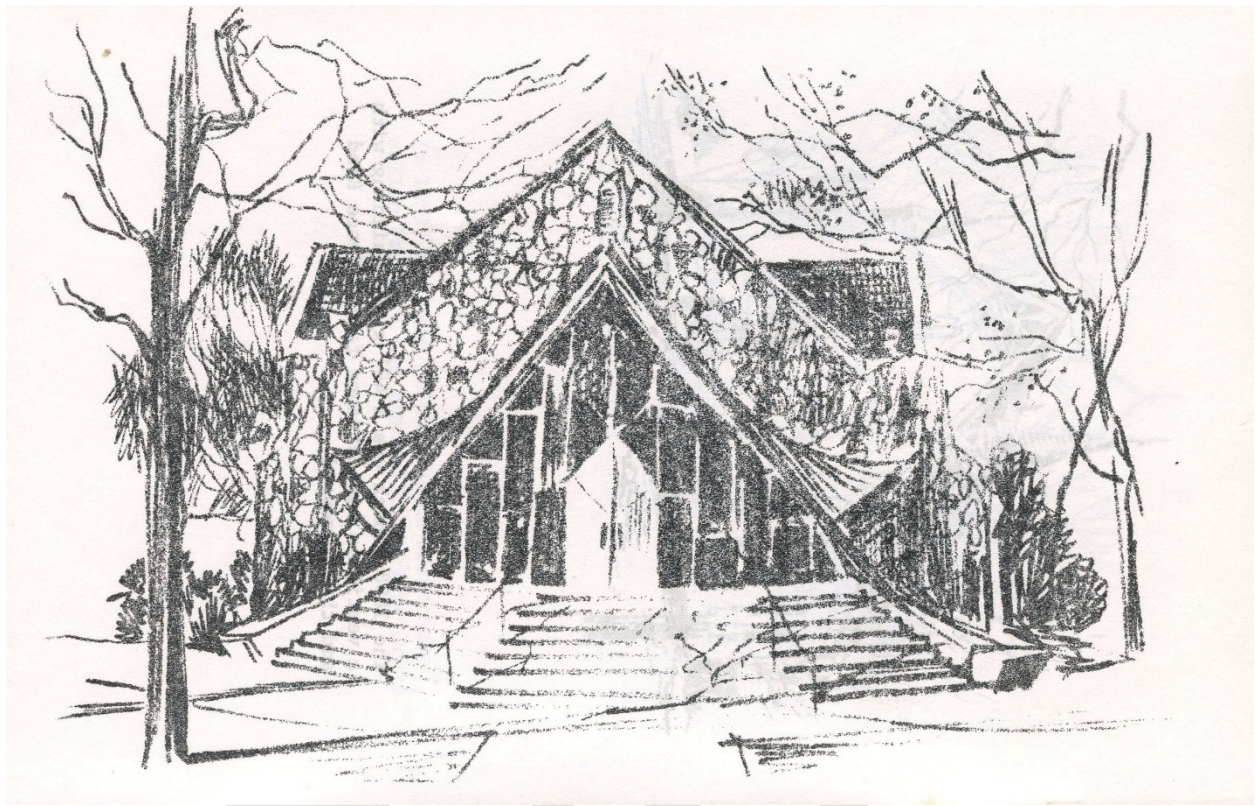
⁶² Ibid



In 1859 "the name of the church heretofore called Prospect was changed to Hickory Grove."



The 1898 church was a 40' x 60' building with a vestibule and entrance facing Pence Road and the graveyard.



In the late 1950's the rock sanctuary was given a face-lift. A vestibule with steps leading into the church was added to the sanctuary. Also, the sanctuary was redecorated and an educational building was constructed. The cost was well over \$200, 000 and the church will finish paying the indebtedness in December of 1969.



Picture of nearly complete church that appeared in the in the *Mecklenburg Times* in 1935.

The rock church at the dedication
on May 17, 1935.



The rock church at the dedication on May 17, 1935.



Pictured here is the brush arbor that was built in the year 1885. When the name of Hickory Grove is mentioned today, many of the old-timers around Charlotte and Mecklenburg County think of camp meetings and services held in the arbor.

six was James Noles, and the other four represented two sets of brothers: Odell and Burdette Teeter, Carol and Burdette King.

The early preachers were always thought of with their horses, The Discipline specified, "Be merciful to your beast, not only ride but see with your own eyes that your horse is rubbed and fed. We had been on the Matthews Circuit, and preachers came out on horseback from Matthews, Weddington, or Big Springs to keep their appointments. Beginning with the new church, we were on the Derita Circuit until 1914, when Hickory Grove was made a charge. M. T. Steele was the first to be appointed to the new charge in 1915. He was a veteran of the Civil War who joined the Conference in 1886 and was almost ready for retirement. He was actually superannuated in 1918. A membership of 384 was reported, a house of worship valued at \$3,000 and a parsonage at \$1,500. The roll was copied from the Derita Circuit Roll, but at the end of the year had to be revised, and the number of members reduced to 313, Reminiscent of World War I years, Quarterly Conference Minutes report a special collection for Belgium Relief. The Sunday school had 222 scholars with A. G. Hagler as Superintendent. There was no Woman's Missionary Society, no Epworth League, but "a prayer service each week was well attended." Trustees were: M. H. Jordan, J. D. Pence, D. C. Berryhill, M. V. King, J. L. Carter; Stewards: A. S. Hagler, J. W. Dulin, J. G. Jordan, E. N. King, C. M. Jordan, W. S. Hagler, D. H. Wilson, I. N. Hagler, T. M. Allen, and G. C. Taylor.⁶³

The small Derita Church was still served by the Hickory Grove preacher, and at times Quarterly Conference was held there although the church made but a very small contribution to the support of the Pastor in Charge. Derita had an active Sunday school with W. E. Carter as Superintendent, and three church trustees are named in the Minutes: G. A. Fincher, J. P. Hardt, and W. R. Jordan, of which Mr. Jordan was the most active, inspiring an expression, "As Jordan goes, so goes Derita."

A third congregation under the watch care of Hickory Grove met at Newell although there was no church building. S. M. McCall is named as Sunday School Superintendent, with I. N. Hagler and T. M. Allen named as stewards.⁶⁴ No contribution seems to have been made to the support of the preacher, and three years later the Quarterly Conference Minutes report: "We have disbanded Sunday School at Newell," and Superintendent T. M. Allen is "authorized to sell the seats and pay the house rent." In 1926 Derita was taken from Hickory Grove and placed with Big Springs.

A ROCK CHURCH - 1926

For the third time, Sunday congregations began to tax the capacity of Hickory Grove Church. The story of the fourth and most substantial of the church buildings covers a period of almost ten years from its beginning under James P. Morris in 1926 until every stone had been laid, all debts paid, and the building was dedicated in March, 1935. The Editor of *The Mecklenburg Times* described the community of Hickory

⁶³ Quarterly Congressional Minutes 2nd Q. 1915

⁶⁴Ibid 2nd Q. 1917

Grove as, "A prosperous one with several brick business buildings and practically every home looks as though it has been recently painted."⁶⁵

The idea of a new church first appears in the Quarterly Conference Minutes in late 1926. J. P. Morris, Pastor in Charge, wrote, 'Our people want a church, and I believe we are going to get together and build a good one. A Building Committee was appointed: J. D. Pence, James N. Cline, G. C. Taylor, W. D. Maye, E. N. King, D. H. Wilson, J. L. Carter, C. W. Teeter, W. T. Simpson, W. C. Mullis, J. B. King, R. C. Alexander, C. H. Furr, J. C. Ware, and M. C. Dulin.'⁶⁶ No one is so naive as to credit these men alone. Everybody worked and everybody sacrificed. Mr. Morris appropriately selected as his text for the Sunday morning on which the cornerstone was laid, "So built we the wall ... for the people had a mind to work."⁶⁷

Hugh and Joe Jordan, Zeb Teeter, Dewitt Barley, Raymond Hagler, Murry and Allen Russell, and Grier Barley, are said to have initiated the building program the day they began cutting timber for the ground work back in 1926. The first lumber is said to have been placed on the ground by Joe Jordan and Raymond Hagler in February. The lovely stone that forms the walls didn't come from faraway places. *The Mecklenburg Times* states that all stone was quarried the church.⁶⁸ Our men were not professionals; it was their first experience with "rock work." In reminiscent mood, old-timers tell that the first stick of dynamite initiating the quarrying was set off by Dan Pence. Afterward he often asked Olin Mullis to do the "shooting." In a struggle with one stone "'big as a bale of cotton," Mr. Mullis was left with a piece of stone embedded in his left cheek -- an honorable reminder today of his work on the church. Mr. Pence was the grand old man of the movement for a rock sanctuary, both permanent and beautiful. When other waived, he held tenaciously [sic] to his dream. After the stone was blasted, the men of the church with teams of mules scooped up the stone with drag pans and hauled it to the church in their own wagons. E. N. King is credited with hauling the first load of stone. It is said that on one day fourteen men with teams and wagons hauled 133 loads of rock and "saw logs" to the location. More rock and sand was hauled in the weeks that followed. Piled high on each side of the site, the quantity was impressive. It was discouraging to have J. W. Brown, the contractor, shake his head and say, "Not half enough."⁶⁹ Some were ready to give up. Busy days followed. These men were farmers with personal responsibilities and "quarrying had to be done just when they had the spare time", Mr. Pence's son says. They were days of hard work but interesting days. One member of the church tells of sitting in school as a little girl and hearing explosions. Aware that it meant rock for the new church, the Methodist children looked at one another knowingly, stirred with excitement." Before the supply was declared to be enough, there had been quarrying not only from Mr. Pence's but from Jeff Bost's, Joe Black's, and other places. Before the basement could be started,

65 2/5/1925

66 Quarterly Congressional Minutes. 4th Q. 1926

67 Nehemiah 4:6

68 1/26/28

69 *A Short History of Hickory Grove Methodist Church, South* pp 8, 9, 10

there was considerable excavating, all done the hard way with plows, shovels, wheelbarrows and drag pans. Mr. Pence, with his dreams of a beautiful church, didn't stop with blasting stone and working on the excavation. Neighbors say as he would start to the church or to Carter's store, he'd take his mattock and dig up a little water oak, then stop by the church yard and plant it. He had a way with growing things, and they always seemed to live.

In 1927, the year that Trinity and Tryon Street Churches in Charlotte combined to form the First Methodist Church, work began on the new Hickory Grove Church according to plans drawn by Louis H. Asbury of Charlotte.⁷⁰ The cornerstone was laid July 24, 1927. In it were placed a 1926 *Discipline*, the current issue of the *N. C. Christian Advocate*, a three page history of the Church, a list of the official members of the Church, the Building Committee, the Bishop, Presiding Elder, Pastor in Charge, and Nelson Cline, the youngest member of the church, added a Bible.⁷¹ On August 3, 1927, the stone work on the foundation was complete and ready for the roof. In the spring of the following year the old frame church was torn down.⁷²

According to our Methodist system, Mr. Morris was moved in 1929, after serving three years. Rev. Elzie Myers, his successor, saw the church finished. The building started in a time of prosperity, ran into years of the greatest depression in American history, beginning with the stock market crash of October, 1929, making the story one of faith and courage and perseverance that a more affluent generation today finds it hard to understand. Farmers were farming at a loss, which crippled progress on the church. Everyone had burdensome personal problems. Stewards for this critical period were: J. B. King, D. H. Wilson, W. D. Maye, C. W. Teeter, C. H. Furr, James N. Cline, J. C. Ware, H. B. Teeter, J. W. Biggers, W. B. Berryhill, M. C. Dulin, Luke Simpson, and W. S. Hagler.⁷³ The congregation prayed that ways might be opened to complete the work on the church under the leadership of these men. Sunday school was held in the high school building.⁷⁴ Dreams for it hinged on completion of the church. Six of the Sunday school rooms were finished in 1928, but more were needed to make a departmental school. An attempt was made to raise three or four thousand dollars to apply to the debt of nine thousand, which would mean they could go forward. Loans had to be sought, some property sold. The Ladies Aid, and fortunately we had one then, busied itself with suppers, plays, quiltings, ice cream festivals, barbeques, and such, to raise money for furnishings.⁷⁵

Anyone reading the Quarterly Conference Minutes realizes that these were these were troublous days for those who felt the responsibility of the church, in page after page appear such "Finances behind as our people are feeling the statements as, depression, n "We are hoping to finish the church this year."

70 Ibid

71 Ibid

72 *Mecklenburg Times* 1/26/28

73 Quarterly Congressional Minutes 1928

74 Ibid

75 Ibid

"Collections badly behind," "Concentrating on one thing ... completion of the church." The preacher was apportioned \$1600, but the congregation was having such a struggle to meet the Building and Loan payments and a note at the bank that he was not receiving it. One member pays Mr. Myers the tribute of saying when problems were heaviest that they should forget his salary. Quarterly Conference Minutes of April 6, 1932 bear this out for Mr. Meyers wrote in his report, "There has been some increase in collections for the pastor's salary ... but we are badly behind. However, I want to say that no one has heard the pastor complain." Once Mr. Myers wrote, "The heating condition of our school auditorium is never comfortable on Sunday morning, Sunday school has fallen off, all good reasons for rushing work on the church." In the Minutes of the Third Quarter, 1930, he wrote, "The auditorium is now ready for the pews, and on October 8, he was able to report in the Quarterly Conference Minutes the victorious, "We have completed the church building." J. N. Cline, the first foreman, died before completion, and the final work went forward under the direction of L. L. Litaker. It was a pretty church, and everyone was justly proud. Rev. E. K. McLarty, Presiding Elder, described it in the *Advocate* in 1931 as, "The prettiest country church and community in this part of North Carolina."

Edmond Dowd Ballard followed Mr. Myers as pastor, but he stayed for only a year. It was under the ministry of his successor, the Rev. A. A. Kyles, that the new church was dedicated.

Early preachers often seemed to be always against something or deploring something -- profanation of the Sabbath, divorce, dancing, drink, [and] lawlessness. It was said of Rev. James Jenkins at the time of his death in 1847 that, "His ministry was emphatically a ministry of rebuke."⁷⁶ Mr. Kyles was a positive person. He was for something. In this case, he wanted to see the church out of debt. He was regarded as a man of sound financial ideas. Someone described him as "a special sort of preacher good at such." There was a debt of \$5,000 on the building. He called for "nothing less than our best ...to the Master in loyalty to his church and in service to our fellow man, The Church was still suffering from the depression, early in 1930 electric current had been brought to the community and an electric pump had to be installed to furnish water for the church and parsonage, there was more than the usual share of bad weather, almost impassable roads, repair work was needed on the church and parsonage. Mr. Kyle's reports in the Quarterly Conference Minutes are full and satisfactory. He came to the church in November, 1934. In his second Quarterly Conference Minutes he announced the Church debt wiped out, parsonage painted, grounds graded, a cover for the well, running water in the kitchen from the gravity flow tank, new screens, a stone wall 210'x 41' x 16" in front of the cemetery built by Grady Knotts, shrubbery planted around the front of the church ... identification board placed on the grounds in front of the church ... a short history of the church prepared and printed. All, he remarked, "requiring much planning and sacrificial giving." The church was ready for dedication. Stewards working with him were J. W. Biggers, Campbell, A. F., Cuthbertson, T. C. , H. M. Dulin, M. C. Dulin, W. C. Gray, J. B. King, W. D. Mayer W. C. Mullis, J. T. Plott, M. H. Stilwell, Luther Taylor, with

⁷⁶ Obituary, Quarterly Congressional Minutes 1847

G. C. Taylor and H. W. Teeter as honorary stewards. There were 446 members at the time to glory in a new church valued at \$35,000 and a parsonage valued at \$2,000, all paid for with pledges as of January 20, 1935.

Less than two months later, at three o'clock on Sunday afternoon, March 17th, the church was dedicated by Bishop Edwin D. Mouzon, assisted by J. B. Craven, Presiding Elder, and Pastor Kyles. It was a great moment, crowning years of faith and prayer and patience and sacrifice for those who had dreamed of a worthy church home. An impressive list of visiting ministers attended, including members of other denominations. R. H. Kennington, Edworth Newton Crowder, J. P. Morris, and Elzie Myers had served the church, which gave them a personal interest in the dedication. There were, too: W. S. Cherry, R. H. Taylor, S. J. Hood, M. R. Gibson, W. B. McSwain, G. W. Fink, W. W. Peele (later Bishop Peele), G. T. Bond, G. N. Dulin, D. D. Holt (not President of Scarritt College), L. B. Hayes, J. G. Wilkinson, C. L. Brown, I. L. Roberts, W. J. Miller, and W. R. Odell, distinguished layman.⁷⁷ They were all seated in the choir loft, which then was behind the pulpit. The new church was much larger than the little clap board building it replaced, but even then the 502 worshippers on the day of dedication filled it to overflowing.

In a solemn moment Bishop Mouzon said, "We present to you this house to be set apart from all unhallowed or common use for the worship of Almighty God."⁷⁸ In January, 1968, thirty-three years later, a Hickory Grove minister, Rev. Richard Joseph Crowder, who on that day of dedication was but a boy, busy with the concerns of a preschooler, by coincidence, used a quotation in his Church Bulletin expressing similar thoughts for Hickory Grove Church: "Enter this door as if the floor within were gold and every wall of jewels, all of wealth untold; as if the choir in robes of fire were singing here -- no shout, nor rush, but hush, for God is here.

The day of dedication was an occasion to honor many of the faithful. Miss Martha Ann Baker, "Aunt Matt," the oldest member, was recognized. She lived nearby and at eighty—seven had walked to church as she did every Sunday, and furthermore was able to boast that she had never had a doctor come to see her. Born in 1848, she had worshipped in all of the churches, beginning with old Prospect. "Uncle Harvey" and "Aunt Mary" Taylor had also worshipped in all of the buildings. Miss Lila Mae Dulin was saluted for her contribution to the history of the church and hard work in helping to clear the church of debt.

The service closed. The congregation went outside where Mr. Kyles carried out the ritual of handing the note, the last evidence of debt on the church, to "Aunt Matt," she passed it on to little Betty King, who in turn handed it to "Brother Pence," the oldest member of the Board. He lighted it and held it high so that all the members might see it burn to ashes.

77 Register in Church Records
78 Program of Dedication

Mrs. Laura Hagler had been recognized as the daughter of a charter member of the 1844 congregation. The dedication program carried a parody on *The Little Brown Church in the Vale* called *The Gray Stone Church in the Grove*. The last stanza went,

*From the church in the grove by the roadside
When day fades away into night
I would fain from the spot of my childhood
Wing my way to the mansions of light.*

Miss Laura's son, Junius H. Hagler, did actually "Wing his way to the mansions of light" from the church one Sunday morning in May of 1965. He was a godly man whose family had spanned the years of all the Church buildings. It was a solemn moment, but a benediction to have the Father enter one's church and all a member to himself.

A spur to the congregation to complete the church had been the prospect of entertaining District Conference representing Mecklenburg, Union, and Anson Counties. The group met in April following the dedication. Bishop Arthur J. Moore, Bishop Edwin D. Mouzon, and Dr. W. W. Peele later a Bishop of the church, were among those attending.⁷⁹

J. M. Barber followed Mr. Kyles in the new church, then R. L. Young whose service was interrupted in his second year. He had served in World War I and left to serve again as Army Post Chaplain at Strothers Field, Kansas, when his only son was called to serve.

Mr. Young had made a sweeping statement in his early Quarterly Conference Report, 'We contemplate doing everything that needs to be done.' His accomplishments in the years of World War II in the days of rationing and tire and gas shortages with many of the men of the congregation in some branch of the service show how energetic he was in trying to fulfill that promise. The old barn was sold and torn down, a new piano bought, the grounds cleaned and new shrubbery planted around the church and parsonage, improvements were made in the graveyard, the parsonage roofed and painted, repair work done on the church, and although not a project of the church, the State Highway Department put the road in front of the parsonage in good shape than which nothing could have given more encouragement. Robes for youth and adult choirs were made, the organ in memory of John Walter and Mattie King Dulin was given by their children and dedicated.

Under J. N. Randall, the church had its hundredth birthday. Flowers in the sanctuary were in memory of J. D. Pence, J. W. Dulin, A. G. Hagler, and G. C. Taylor, all of whom had made immeasurable contributions and passed on. The Rev. M. W. Heckard, who had entered the ministry from Hickory Grove, spoke in the morning and two others who had gone into the ministry from the home church spoke in the afternoon: the Rev. G. N. Dulin and the Rev. Carl H. King. It was a folksy, informal occasion. Mr. King reminisced feelingly about the early days and the old spring under the hill side that

79 Plaque in possession of Hickory Grove American Legion Post 400

had figured in the choice of the site for the church by furnishing free flowing water so necessary for people and horses. Later, others recalled the days when "Brother Pence" raised the grapes and himself made the wine for the celebration of the Holy Communion, and about the time of the prolonged drought when he came to prayer meeting with, his umbrella. When someone razzed, "How come?" the man of faith replied, "Rain's what I come to pray for." The mood was sentimental, and it was appropriate that a feature of the service was "Precious Memories, sung by a quartet of Miss Emma Wilson, Miss Ida Simpson, Howard Wilkinson, and Grady Knotts.

Before the year was over, Mr. Randall passed away -- the only Hickory Grove pastor to die during his period of service to the church. He was not old but had suffered several years of declining health and had actually been called back from retirement to help the church during World War II. His funeral services were conducted from the Church on the last day of September, 1945, by the Rev. J. C. Cornette and the Rev. Howard P. Powell.

Sixteen years of change by steady growth began in 1945 with the pastorate of H. P. Myers. Four ministers each served four full years: Mr. Myers, H. R. Simpson, R. P. Gibbs, D. E. Bailey, in these years the membership grew from 524 to more than 800.

Because the church was larger, we had been more involved in World War II than in those before. Nearly a hundred went into the service of their country. Under Mr. Myers, Fellowship House was built in appreciation of these members with special thought of Otis W. Jamison and Marshall Davy Barber who did not return. J. W. Tant was Chairman of the Building Committee and Miss Betty Hagler the faithful Treasurer. It was during Mr. Myers ministry, too, that Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Stilwell gave chimes to the Church.

During Mr. Simpson's ministry the yard was landscaped. Provision was made for the upkeep of the graveyard, and new Sunday school class rooms were added. In his fourth year, the Board called a Congregational Meeting which voted 100% to consider a new parsonage "in the vicinity of the old garden." A Finance Committee was named with L. R. Black as Chairman and a Building Committee with Sam Hobbs as Chairman.

A NEW PARSONAGE

It was under Mr. Gibbs, Mr. Simpson's successor, that the new parsonage actually became a reality completed, paid for, dedicated, and lived in.

In the beginning preachers lived in Charlotte or Monroe or Derita or Matthews and came out to Hickory Grove on horseback, but in 1915 when M. T. Steele was appointed, Hickory Grove became a separate charge, and we had our own parsonage. A feeling of need for a modern parsonage was stirring in 1954, but it was in the fall of 1955 that District Superintendent Frank Jordan spoke at the ground breaking for the preacher's new house, "We break this ground in loving memory of those who have gone from us, whose hearts and hands have served this church; with gratitude for all those who shall live in or visit this house for years to come."

The new home was dedicated in January, 1956, at the parsonage steps with the Rev. Frank Jordan again taking part praying "that it may ever be to those whose home it is, a dear haven of peace and joy.

The old parsonage was rented for a time but later was given to Will Barnes who had taken care of the Hickory Grove buildings and grounds for years. There is something sacred about a building that has housed the preacher's family for a long time, to which in happy moment's members have met for fellowship, and to which those in trouble have come for guidance and comfort. It was not a large house, but it had to be separated into two parts for moving, and it is understandable that one of the older members who had at times helped to ready it for a new preacher found tears welling up as it was taken down Hickory Grove Road to its new location on Johnette Drive, Mary Barnes, Will's wife, was there at the time. They cried together, but Mary's were tears of joy for her new home. Will Barnes can appreciate life in a parsonage for he is a part time preacher in his own right, and the ideals of the old place will be upheld as it, too, becomes "a haven of peace and joy" for one of the Lord's servants.

LONG RANGE PLANNING

The new parsonage was but one of the needs of the growing church. Rather than let it grow haphazardly, Mr. Gibbs appointed the first Long Range Planning Committee to consider needs in their proper perspective. In 1951 Robert L. Allen had joined the church and become involved in the work of both Church and Church School, He was named the first Chairman of the Planning Committee. Serving with him were Mrs. R. F. Dorton, Jr., W. R. Dulin, L. G. Black, and W. J. Maye. In addition to the parsonage, some of the goals set by the Committee were:

- o Remodeling of the sanctuary and Educational Building
- o Plans for the present Educational Building
- o A full time Director of Christian Education
- o A full time Office Secretary
- o More adequate parking
- o A kindergarten

The last of these to be accomplished was the parking space under J. B. Hurley. The first little church had been abandoned for want of a good spring and enough "hitching space." These problems came up again in Mr. Hurley's and Mr. Crowder's ministries. A new electric pump had to be installed to meet the needs of a larger church for water, and the "hitching space" had to be enlarged and surfaced. Today's version of "hitching space" is parking space for 114 cars. Already this has been outgrown and each Sunday morning cars extend beyond, lining Pence Road, Market Street, Highland Avenue, and even into the school and preacher's yards all -- this with two morning services. There is the future -- tomorrow for the church, and work of the Long Range Planning Committee continues as members of the Committee, now headed by Joe H. Cathey, Jr., wrestle with such problems as parking space, a sanctuary that is too small, and an Educational Building already outgrown.

The character of Hickory Grove has been changing for some time. With good roads and automobiles in every family, only the farm of A. M. Thompson remains of the large farming community. It's amusing to think that once the school enrollment could not be completed until late in October "after the very busy condition of the farm is relieved."⁸⁰ Farm lands have been made into residential developments for people who drive into the city each day for work or cover large territories for industries in the great distributive center of Charlotte. According to John L. Borchert of "Methodist Information" there are 32,000 Methodists in Mecklenburg County as of now. With a population of 350, 000⁸¹ this means that almost one in eleven people in the Charlotte District is a Methodist. Hundreds of these are included among those moving into the new houses at Hickory Grove making for a phenomenal growth in the church that has almost doubled the membership in the past ten years, giving it a membership of 1400 and making it the sixth largest Methodist Church in the Charlotte District.

Never, it seems, have so many had such a personal relationship with their church. It gives an affection for the church home that few congregations share. As Mr. Marvin King, brother of the late Dr. Carl King, said in 1958 "It has always been a dear place in the minds of the people."

Remove not the ancient landmark which your fathers have set. Proverbs 22:28.

⁸⁰ *Mecklenburg Times* 10/10/24

⁸¹ Charlotte Chamber of Commerce

Addendum

HICKORY GROVE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 1969 - 1979

The following account was hurriedly written for distribution at our 1979 Homecoming. There was no time for research, which is necessary for a comprehensive history. In less than one week, I wrote from facts gleaned from old copies of Grove Echoes, church bulletins, and communications. In some cases, I dared to trust my memory.

I wish to acknowledge Mrs. Merle McLester, church secretary, and Mrs. Margaret Russell, a member of the Records and History Committee, for providing many of the sources. Also, I wish to acknowledge my husband, Tom, who provided details on construction of the Activities Building.

For any omissions and inaccuracies, I apologize. Please keep in mind that this is only intended to be a chronological sequence of happenings as interpreted by me, a member of the congregation.

-- Janet Cunningham

An important part of Hickory Grove United Methodist Church's heritage is its ability to recognize problems as challenges. These include relocating the church to provide an adequate supply of water and additional hitching space, and building a new sanctuary during the depression years.

The past decade has been no exception. Only this time, challenges centered around meeting needs of a growing and fast-changing like its founding fathers, the church accepted these challenges and church buy an Allen Electronic Organ which cost approximately \$24,000. On Sunday, September 13, 1970, the Administrative Board voted to purchase the new organ. Through funds made available in the church budget, special contributions and memorial gifts, the much-talked-about instrument became a reality. During the spring of 1971 it was installed, and Milton Burgess was hired as organist and director for the adult choir and men's chorus. The older organ was moved to the chapel for use in weddings, etc.

Hickory Grove became a "two-preacher" church in 1968 when it hired the Reverend Clyde Levergood as Associate Minister. The Reverend Richard Crowder was minister at the time, and Mr. Levergood remained on the staff until his death in 1972 during the ministry of the Reverend Herbert Garmon.

As Mr. Levergood served, the church learned how much an associate minister enhanced the total ministry. Therefore, it looked to Annual Conference to assign associate ministers in the future. But the church needed another parsonage.

In August of 1973, the church purchased a three-bedroom brick veneer house located at 9508 Gregory Place, off Albemarle Road. To date, this has been home for four associate ministers: The Reverend and Mrs. Jim Morgan; the Reverend and Mrs. Clark Poole; The Reverend and Mrs. John Lockman, and present, The Reverend and Mrs. Owen Peeler.

It was also during this ten—year period that the church bus fell apart in a hurry! The true and faithful servant, affectionately dubbed “the ole green lizard”, reached the point of no repair. Since groups in the church, as well as the community, depended on bus transportation, in January of 1974 the Administrative Board authorized purchase of a new bus. While waiting two months for delivery, a committee headed by Don Sinclair, raised \$10, 504.62, the total cost of the vehicle.

Many of the church's founding fathers are laid to rest in the church cemetery along Pence Road. In June of 1975, the Trustees that a perpetual care and trust fund be established for maintenance and care of the cemetery. The trust would come from four sources: by money currently held in escrow by the former Cemetery by a \$100 fee for subsequent burials; and by conations and contributions. Also, \$1200 would be requested each year from the regular budget for care and maintenance and would be paid into the trust fund until the principal reached \$10, 000. At that point, interest from the trust fund would be used to maintain the cemetery.

Beyond a doubt, the biggest undertaking of the decade was building the activities building, located beside the parsonage on Market Street. This type facility had been considered in the past, to the point of forming but each time roadblocks brought planning to a halt. But early in 1973, many of the congregation felt it was now or never.

On March 4, a Charge Conference voted to continue developing plans for the proposed building.

A Building Planning Committee was formed whose job was to "sell the idea." Earl Allen was elected chairman of this committee, and Harry Russell was vice chairman. In December the proposed facility was submitted to the membership at a Church Conference for a vote. A substantial majority approved the project. This marked the beginning of an exciting, three year venture in "BUILDING OUR FUTURE TODAY.

A Building Finance Committee, under the leader ship of Tom Cunningham, asked the Reverend Rollin P. Gibbs to lead our congregation in a fund-raising drive. The Reverend Gibbs came to Hickory Grove the week of June 16, 1974 to direct the Stewardship Building Fund Crusade. John Rockey was General Crusade Chairman of

our congregation served on numerous committees which contributed to the crusade vs success.

Mr. Gibbs is a former minister of the church, and for several years served as Director of Department of Finance and Field Service for the Western North Carolina Conference.

In the beginning, Mr. Gibbs made it clear that fund-raising was not the only goal of this campaign. The program would be creative, cooperative and Christ- centered. He emphasized that the spiritual growth of individuals and the congregation would undergird the total efforts. "If the campaign is successful," he said, "the result will be stronger individuals and a stronger church."

The Reverend James Bellamy also played a vital part in the campaign's success. Someone once said that people can be divided into three groups: those who make things happen; those who watch things happen; and those who wonder what happened. In a positive way, Mr. Bellamy made things happen through his concern for those who watched and those who wondered. He had a special talent in helping individuals better understand themselves and their relationships with others. This made them caring, productive persons capable of making things happen on their own.

Mrs. Merle McLester, church secretary, served double duty-before, during and after the Crusade assembling information, preparing mailings and keeping things organized. Part of the time she was assisted by several volunteers.

The Crusade ended with an inspirational "BUILDING OUR FUTURE TODAY" Banquet held at Independence High on July 8, 1974. Over 300 members of the congregation attended. Several persons of various ages expressed enthusiasm and support of the new building. At the banquet, 120 families pledged \$129, 942.20 toward the new facility, to be paid over the next three years.

The results of the Crusade gave direction to a new Building Committee, which was formed to oversee design and construction of the facility and to arrange for financing required. Co-chairmen of the committee were Tom Cunningham and Earl Allen. Serving with them were Don Crocker, Sam Freeman, George Heinzerling, Mary Kizer, Bill Mellichamp, Benny Merrell, Nick Newton, Jim Parnell, Rod Purser, Hart Roberts, Harry Russell and Alleewee Taylor. J. D. Kizer was appointed Treasurer of the Building Fund and became an ex-officio member of the committee.

Each member of the Building Committee was most diligent in his contribution of time, thought and effort. What resulted was a highly successful facility.

Construction started on April 27, 1975 with a ground breaking ceremony. The Confirmation Class at that time had the privilege of turning the first spades of dirt on the building site. Then, others were invited to participate. In just a few days, construction began. On December 5, 1975 the church officially received the completed facility from the general contractor.

The following Saturday was a day the church had anticipated for years, Over 400 people - young and old, players and spectators- visited the new building for the first basketball games.

The facility is designed to serve every age in the church and surrounding community: the Golden Years Club, United Methodist Women; United Methodist Men, Church School Classes, and Scouts.

In addition to basketball, the activities building can be used for volleyball, badminton, shuffle board, ping pong, square dancing, exercise programs, Bible School activities, drama club, etc. The gymnasium with multipurpose room can also serve district meetings, family night suppers, family reunions, homecomings, etc.

Ferebee & Walters Associates was architect for the project, and Laxton Construction Company was general contractor. Both are Charlotte firms. The 9,000 square-foot structure was completed in approximately eight months. The construction Cost was \$292,000 and furnishings cost \$20, 000. Loan Interest, fundraising costs, architect's fees, and other miscellaneous costs means that over \$490,000 will be paid for the activities building before the loan is retired.

On January 18, 1976 Dr. Wilson O. Weldon, Superintendent of the Charlotte District participated In the Consecration Service for the activities building. What a heartwarming occasion!

During certain seasons, the facility is used continuously. A member of the congregation said, "Whenever we invite other churches and groups in to share our facility. I am humbly proud."

A majority of those who helped "BUILD OUR FUTURE TODAY" do not have their names listed in this account. To do so would double the length of the document. But everyone who participated is a shareholder in furthering God's work.

In August of 1975, Clark Poole, Associate Minister of only several months, was transferred to Waxhaw United Methodist Church to serve as minister. For the rest of the conference year, Mrs. Bobbie Phillips was hired to assist the minister at Hickory Grove, particularly in a program of visitation.

Once the activities building was finished, the church didn't have an opportunity to rest on its laurels, even if it were tempted.

In 1978, the first harbinger of spring also brought news that the heating system was ailing. Underground pipes located outside which carried hot water from the boiler room to the sanctuary, educational building and chapel, had corroded to the point they must be replaced ... at considerable expense. This, plus the unsatisfactory air conditioning units located

in the educational building and chapel, led to the church's decision that it was desirable to have a combined heating and air conditioning system.

At that particular time, it was a struggle meeting monthly mortgage payments on the new activities building; therefore, a loan was not feasible. Nevertheless, the sanctuary had no heat, and there were only a few months ahead to prepare for winter. What would they do?

What followed was a real experience in stewardship.

Under the able leadership of the Reverend James Armstrong and his associate, the Reverend Owen Peeler, everyone was urged to "Give 'Till it feels good." Mr. Armstrong explained that as giving until we have to depend upon God and reap the benefits of His blessings.

Over 200 families and organizations responded to the emergency and contributed \$70,000 over the general budget and building fund.

Dewey Winchester, as a committee of one, working with the Trustees and Ministers, directed the contractor, Mechanical Contractors, in the design and installation of our part-new, part-reconditioned heating and air conditioning system. As scheduled, heat was available for the first cold snap of fall.

Again, in true Hickory Grove spirit, the congregation followed their ancestors those times when they thought something couldn't be done. They did it, and more....

And even a little more! Soon after completion of the heat and air conditioning system, it was necessary to replace the leaky roof on the Educational Building at a cost of \$6400.

Throughout the years, many people expressed a desire to be able to see the choir during worship services. So, during July of 1976, the Trustees appointed a special committee to study its relocation from the balcony to the chancel area. After the Trustees and Administrative Board approved the plan, the congregation approved it on February 13, 1977.

Bob Dellinger contributed his talents as architect for the relocation. And Eddie Foil went beyond the line of duty on construction of the project, built by Laxton Construction Company, for whom he works. Memorials for Mr. Henry Sinclair were used to purchase chairs for the choir.

The relocation project, which cost \$12, 000, materialized when an anonymous church member contributed \$10,000 to the project and because individuals, classes and organizations in the church generously contributed the rest.

During the first services after the choir's relocation, there were comments such as "I didn't know our sanctuary could be so beautiful," and "Our organ sounds brand new. There were also various comments from the small fry, but they meant the same

thing: Parents wouldn't be nudging them during worship service to turn around and face the front!

Hickory Grove United Methodist Church, with a current membership of 1,542, is truly a great church.

Its leaders have vision, and its members have courage that dares big dreams and challenges that come their way in the name of the Lord, They are not content to see their church just drag along in some previously-beaten path, afraid to move, afraid to serve in Jesus' Name.

Our faith is a life-long task, and we can be proud of the goodly heritage that is ours. So, as we begin another era in the history of our church, let us look to the Lord for guidance in our growth and development.

Appendix

Copy of Deed to Our First Church

This Indenture made the 24th day of November In the year of Lord (1844) One Thousand Eight Hundred and Forty four, between John G. Maxwell of the County of Mecklenburg and State of North Carolina of the one part, and James. W. Martin, Robert A. Martin, Cyrus Query, James Clark and James. H. Morrison --Trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Prospect on the ether part. Witnessed that for and in consideration of the good will and affection -- that I have for the aforesaid Religious Society, for the prosperity and advancement of the cause of Religion do give, grant, bargain and sell unto the sd. John G. Maxwell, near the lands of Hugh Keenan James. W. Martin, Robert. A. Martin, Cyrus Query, James. Clark and James H. Morrison Trustees as aforesaid, and their successors in office, a certain tract or parcel of Land lying and being in the State of North Carolina in the County of Mecklenburg, on the Waters of McAlpin's Creek, Adjoining the Lands of the sd. John G. Maxwell, near the lands of Hugh Keenan Bounded as follows viz. Beginning at a large Black Cak [sic] on the side of a Road and Runs S. 4 1/2 E. 15 pole to a Black Cak [sic], thence S. 81 W. 15 1/2 pole to a large Hickory Thence N. 42 W 15 pole to a small Post Cak [sic] thence N. 81 E. 15 1/2 pole to the beginning. Containing by survey one acre and a quarter and 27 poles To have and to hold together with all and singular the woods, ways, waters, privileges, and appurtenances thereunto belonging, or in any wise belonging, to them the said Jas. W. Martin and others as before mentioned, Trustees of said M.E. Society and their successors in office, in fee simple absolutely and forever, free and discharged from all and any encumbrance whatsoever in trust whatsoever for the use and benefit of the said Religious Society, to them and successors in office forever And [sic] the said John G. Maxwell doth at all times warrant and forever defend the aforesaid tract or parcel of Land against the lawful claim or claims of himself his heirs, and assigns or any other person or persons lawfully claiming to the aforesaid J. W. Martin, R. A. Martin, Cyrus Query, James. Clark and James. H. Morrison Trustees of the said Methodist Episcopal Society -- to them and their successors in office. In witness where of the said John G. Maxwell hath Hereunto [sic] set his hand and seal the day and above written.

J. G. Maxwell (SEAL)

Signed Sealed and delivered in the presents [sic] of
D. Maxwell and
Wilson Wallace

HICKORY GROVE PASTORS

Prospect

Charlotte Circuit 1844-58

Vagaries of early records make it impossible to faithfully reconstruct this list, Lewis Scarbrough was the first PC. He served 1844-46. In his second year he is listed as Presiding Elder pro tem.

Hickory Grove First Church 1858-98

Circuit Key (1858-1913)

Charlotte Circuit	Matthews Circuit	Derita Circuit
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Staff Key (1844-1927)

Pastor in Charge	Junior Pastor	Local Preacher	Not Specified
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1858-59 (2)	Edmond A. Price	1874-75 (2)	A. Philip Greening
	John W. Abernethy ^A	1876	Miles Foy
1860-61 (2)	W. W. Jones	1877-80 (4)	Maxwell Humphrey Hoyle
1862-64 (2)	Lewis Scarbrough	1878	Dr. Sam Pharr ^B
	John W. Abernethy	1881	T. H. Edwards
1865-66 (2)	Basis G. Jones	1882-85 (4)	S. M. Davis
1867	J. G. Prather	1886	Maxwell Humphrey Hoyle
	R. C. Duffy	1887-89 (4)	J. A. Lee
	John W. Abernethy ^A	1890	J. T. Bagwell
1868	James. N. Cline	1891	Robert Marion Taylor ^C
1869	N F. Meltan	1892	Charles Clay Brothers
1870	R. M. Brown	1893-1894 (2)	Robert Theodore Stephenson
	J. M. Jourdan	1895	Colin George Little
1871	J. N. Somers	1896	Zadoc Paris
1872	J. N. James	1897	Theodore P. Bonner
1873	Thomas Lewis Triplett		

A. Listed as Junior Pastor and later as Local Preacher

B. "Dr. Sam Pharr to preach at Hickory Grove once a month for the year to be paid \$36" Note taken from Quarterly Minutes 38

C. Served part of year only

D. Hickory Grove became a station

Hickory Grove
Second Church 1898-1926

1898-99 (2)	Robert S. Howie
1900	L. M. Brower
1901-04 (4)	Walter Lee Nicholson
1905-08 (4)	J.H. Bradley
1909-11 (3)	Seymour Taylor
1912	Pinkney L. Terrell
1913	T. A. Plyler "Supply"
1914	C. Excell Rozelle ^E
1915-16 (2)	Martin Thornwell Steele
1917-20 (4)	R. H. Kinnington
1921-23 (3)	Ebenezer Meyers
1924	W. H. Robbins
1925	Adolphus R. Bell
1926	Edworth Newton Crowder

E. Hickory Grove became a station

Hickory Grove 1927-
Third Church
Staff Key (1927-1977)

Senior Pastor	Associate Pastor	Nor Specified
---------------	------------------	---------------

1927-29 (3)	James P. Morris
1930-32 (3)	Elzie Myers
1933-34 (2)	Edmond Dowd Ballard
1935-37 (3)	Adolphus Alexander Kyles
1938-40 (3)	J. M. Barber
1942-43 (2)	Russell Lowell Young ^F
1943-44 (2)	J. N. Randall
1945-48 (4)	Horwood P. Myers
1949-52 (4)	Harold Ross Simpson
1953-56	Rollin Parker Gibbs

(3)	
1957-60 (4)	Daniel Edwin Bailey
1961-62 (2)	Jesse Leo Pittard
1963-66 (4)	John Bernard Hurley
1967-71 (5)	Richard Joseph Crowder
1968-72 (5)	C. Clyde Levergood
1971-72 (2)	Herbert Garmon
1972-73 (2)	James Morgan
1972-76 (5)	Clark Poole
1975-77 (3)	John Lockman
1976-	James M. Armstrong
1977-	A. Owen Peeler

F. Left in his second year to serve as Army Chaplain. Died during his ministry at Hickory Grove

Glossary

gaol – British spelling of jail. It is pronounced the same as jail in US English.

locomobile – having the power to move about according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary. There was a company around that time called The Locomobile Co., too.

macadamized – to construct or finish (a road) by compacting into a solid mass a layer of small broken stone on a convex well-drained roadbed and using a binder (such as cement or asphalt) for the mass. It is named for the last name of a Scottish engineer, McAdam, who developed the process.

Index

- 1979 Homecoming, **28**
A Short History of Hickory Grove Methodist Church, South, **4, 6, 10, 11, 21**
A Short History of Hickory Grove Methodist Church, South, **5**
Abernethy, John W., **34**
Advocate, The, **5, 6**
Alexander, J. B., **2**
Alexander, John Taylor, **4**
Alexander, Martin, **10**
Alexander, R. C., **21**
Alexander, Van Dyke, **e**
Allen Electronic Organ, **28**
Allen, Earl, **29, 30**
Allen, Rev. David J., **2**
Allen, Robert L., **26**
Almanac, **9**
Amen Corner, **4, 11**
Anson County, **24**
arbor, **7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 19**
Armstrong, James, **31**
Armstrong, James M., **35**
Asbury, Francis, **2, 7, 8, 21**
asthma, **4**
Bailey, D. E., **25**
Bailey, Daniel Edwin, **35**
Baker, Martha Ann, **24**
Baker, Randolph, **11**
Ballard, Edmond Dowd, **23, 35**
Baptist, **7**
Barber, J. M., **25, 35**
Barber, Marshall Davy, **25**
Barley, Dewitt, **21**
Barley, Grier, **21**
Barnes, Mary, **26**
Barnes, Will, **26**
barouches, **4**
Bell, Adolphus R., **35**
Bellamy, James, **29**
Berryhill, D. C., **20**
Berryhill, Pinkney, **11**
Berryhill, W. B., **22**
Bible, **4, 5, 9, 22, 30**
Big Springs, **20**
Biggers, J. W., **22, 23**
Black, Joe, **21**
Black, L. G., **26**
Black, L. R., **26**
Blue Back Speller, The, **5**
Bond, G. T., **23**
Bonner, Theodore P., **34**
Borchert, John L., **e, 27**
Bost, Jeff, **21**
Bradley, J.H., **35**
Brawley Cates', **3**
Brothers, Charles Clay, **34**
Brower, L. M., **35**
Brown, C. L., **23**
Brown, J. W., **21**
Brown, R. M., **5, 34**
Building Finance Committee, **29**
Building Fund, **29, 30**
Burgess, Milton, **28**
camp meeting, **7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 19**
Campbell, A. F., **23**
Carl King, Dr., **27**
carryalls, **4, 8**
Carter, J. L., **20, 21**
Carter, Mrs. J. L., **5**
Carter, W. E., **20**
Carter, William, **4, 5, 10**
Carter, William and wife Mary, **4**
Carter's store, **21**
Cathey, Jr., Joe H., **27**
Charlotte, **1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 19, 21, 26, 27, 30, 31, 34**
Charlotte Chamber of Commerce, **27**
Charlotte Circuit, **1, 4, 6, 34**
Charlotte Journal, **3**
Cherry, W. S., **23**
Christzberg, A. M., **2**
Circuit Board of Stewards, **1, 11**
Civil War, **20**
Clark, Elmer T., **7**
Clark, James, **1, 33**
Cline, J. N., **22**
Cline, James N., **21**
Cline, James. N., **22, 34**
Cline, Nelson, **22**
College (Street), **2**
Committee on Records and History, **e**
Conference Minutes, **1, 3, 8, 10, 20, 21, 22, 23**
Consecration Service, **31**
Cornette, Rev. J. C., **25**

Coursey, Mrs. G. P., **e**
 Cradle Roll, **5**
 Craven, J. B., **23**
 Crocker, Don, **30**
 croup, **4**
 Crowder, Edworth Newton, **23, 35**
 Crowder, Richard Joseph, **e, 24, 27, 28, 35**
 Cunningham, Tom, **29, 30**
 Cuthbertson, T. C., **23**
 Cuthbertson, William F., **11**
 Davis, S. M., **34**
 Dellinger, Bob, **32**
 Delta Road., **4**
 Department of Finance and Field Service, **29**
 Derita, **20, 26, 34**
 Derita Circuit, **20, 34**
 Discipline, **6, 11, 20, 21**
 Dorton, Jr., Mrs. R. F., **26**
 Doub, Peter, **8**
 Duffy, R. C., **34**
 Dulin, G. N., **23, 25**
 Dulin, H. M., **23**
 Dulin, J. W., **20, 25**
 Dulin, Lee, **11**
 Dulin, Lila Mae, **e, 24**
 Dulin, M. C., **21, 22, 23**
 Dulin, Mattie King, **25**
 Dulin, W. R., **26**
 Early Methodism in the Carolinas, **2**
 Edwards, T. H., **34**
 Enoch Martin, **8**
 Epworth League, **20**
Experience, Labours, Suffering of James Jenkins, 2, 6, 8
 Fellowship House, **25**
 Ferebee & Walters Associates, **30**
 Fincher, G. A., **20**
 Fink, G. W., **23**
 First Methodist Church, **2, 21**
 Flood, T. L., **4**
 Foil, Eddie, **32**
 Ford, Susan, **4**
 Foy, Miles, **34**
 Freeman, Sam, **30**
 Furr, C. H., **21, 22**
 Furr, Eliza, **4**

Garmon, Herbert, **28, 35**
 George, A. H., **2**
 Georgia, **7**
 Gibbs, Rollin Parker, **e, 25, 29, 35**
 Gibson, M. R., **23**
 Golden Age Club, **e**
 Golden Years Club, **30**
 graveyard, **11, 12, 15, 25, 26**
 Gray, W. C., **23**
 Greening, A. Philip, **34**
 Grove Echoes, **28**
 Hagler, A. G., **20, 25**
 Hagler, A. S., **20**
 Hagler, Betty, **25**
 Hagler, Gleason, **3**
 Hagler, Junius H., **24**
 Hagler, Laura, **24**
 Hagler, Raymond, **21**
 Hagler, W. S., **20, 22**
 Hamilton, John W., **4**
 Hardt, J. P., **20**
 Harrison Church, **2**
 Harrison's, **2, 3**
 Hayes, L. B., **23**
 Heckard, Rev. M. W., **25**
 Heinzerling, George, **30**
 Hickory Grove, **e, 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 34, 35**
 Hickory Grove American Legion Post 400, **24**
 Hickory Grove Community Club, **e**
 Hickory Grove Sunday School, **5**
 Hickory Grove United Methodist Church, **e, 28, 32**
 High Point, NC, **5**
 Highland Avenue, **27**
History of Mecklenburg County 1740-1900, 2
 Hobbs, Sam, **26**
 Hodges, William G., **4, 10**
 Holt, D. D., **23**
 Hood, S. J., **23**
 horehound candy, **3**
 Howie, Robert S., **35**
 Hoyle, Maxwell Humphrey, **34**
 Hucks, Mrs. D. W., **4**
 Hurley, J. B., **27**

Hurley, John Bernard, **35**
 Hux, D. W., **11**
 Hymnal, **9**
 Independence High, **30**
 J. T. Bagwell, **34**
 James, J. N., **11, 34**
 James. W. Martin, **33**
 Jamison, Otis W., **25**
 Janet Cunningham, **1, 28**
 Jenkins, James, **2**
 Jenkins, Rev. James, **6, 8, 23**
 Jerome, T. A., **11**
 Johnette Drive, **26**
 Johnson C. Smith University, **2**
 Johnston, John M., **10**
 Johnston, Wallace, **3**
 Jones, Basis G., **34**
 Jordan, C. M., **20**
 Jordan, Frank, **26**
 Jordan, George and wife Eveline, **4**
 Jordan, Hugh and Joe, **21**
 Jordan, J. G., **20**
 Jordan, Joe, **21**
 Jordan, John G., **11**
 Jordan, M. H., **20**
 Jordan, Mrs. Ed, **e**
 Jordan, W. R., **20**
 Jourdan, J. M., **34**
 Keenan, Hugh, **33**
 Keenan, Nancy, **4**
 Keenan, Priscilla, **4**
 Keever, H. M., **e**
 Kennington, R. H., **23**
 King, Betty, **24**
 King, Carol and Burdette, **20**
 King, E. N., **20, 21**
 King, J. B., **21, 22, 23**
 King, M. V., **20**
 King, Marvin, **12, 27**
 King, Rev. Carl H., **25**
 Kinnington, R. H., **35**
 Kizer, J. D., **30**
 Kizer, Mary, **30**
 Knott, Hobson, **12**
 Knotts, Grady, **23, 25**
 Kyles, A. A., **4, 23**
 Kyles, Adolphus Alexander, **35**
 I. N. Hagler, **20**

Ladies Aid, The, **22**
 Ladies' Class, **5**
 Lake Junaluska, **12**
 Laxton Construction Company, **30, 32**
 Lee, J. A., **34**
 Letter from Treasury Department, **7**
 Levergood, Clyde, **28, 35**
 Lincolnton District, **3**
 Litaker, L. L., **22**
 Little, Colin George, **34**
 Lives of Methodist Bishops, **8**
Lives of the Methodist Bishops, **4**
 Lockman, John, **29, 35**
 Long Range Planning Committee, **26, 27**
 lyrics, **9**
 macadamized, **3, 7**
 Market Street, **11, 27, 29**
 Martin, James W., **1**
 Martin, Robert A., **1, 33**
 Martin, Robert. A., **33**
 Matthews, **20, 26, 34**
 Matthews Circuit, **20, 34**
 Maxwell, John G., **1, 33**
 Maxwell, Sarah, **4, 5**
 Maxwell, William, **4, 10**
 Maye, W. D., **21, 22**
 Maye, W. J., **26**
 Mayer, W, D., **23**
 McAlpin's Creek, **1**
 McAlpin's Creek, **33**
 McCall, S. M., **20**
 McLarty, Rev. E. K., **23**
 McLellan, Cicero, **11**
 McLester, Mrs. Merle, **28, 30**
 McSwain, W. B., **23**
 Mechanical Contractors, **31**
 Mecklenburg, **2, 3, 6, 21, 24, 27, 33**
 Mecklenburg County, **1, 2, 3, 19, 20, 27**
 Mecklenburg County Court House, **1**
 Mecklenburg Division of the Sons of Temperance, **3**
Mecklenburg Jeffersonian, **2, 3**
Mecklenburg Times, **3, 17, 22, 27**

Mecklenburg Times, The, **20, 21**
 Mellichamp, Bill, **30**
 Meltan, N F., **34**
Men of the Burning Heart, **8**
 Men's Bible Class, **5**
 Merrell, Benny, **30**
 Methodism, **2, 9**
 Methodist Conference, **3**
 Methodist Episcopal Church, **1, 33**
 Methodist Episcopal Society, **1, 33**
 Methodist Publishing House, **2**
 Meyers, Ebenezer, **35**
 Miller, W. J., **23**
 Monroe, NC, **26**
 Montgomery County, N.C., **1**
 Morgan, James, **35**
 Morgan, Jim, **29**
 Morris, J. P., **21, 23**
 Morris, James P., **20, 35**
 Morrison, James H., **1, 33**
 Morrison, James. H., **33**
 Morrison, Peggy, **1**
 Mouzon, Bishop Edwin D., **23, 24**
 Mullis, Olin, **21**
 Mullis, W. C., **21, 23**
 Muse, Amy, **1**
 Myers, Elzie, **22, 23, 35**
 Myers, H. P., **25**
 Myers, Horwood P., **35**
N. C. Christian Advocate, **8, 22**
N. C. Laws, **9**
N. C. Whig, **3**
N. C. Whig, The, **7**
N.C. Christian Advocate, **5**
 Newell, **20**
 Newell, David, **4, 11**
 Newell, David and wife Becky, **4**
 Newell, John, **1, 4, 10, 11**
 Newell, John and wife Hailey, **4**
 Newton, Nick, **30**
 Nicholson, Walter Lee, **35**
 Noles, James, **11, 20**
 North Carolina, **1, 7, 11, 23, 33**
 Odell, W. R., **23**
 Overman and Trotter, **4**
 Paris, Zadoc, **34**
 Parnell, Jim, **30**

Pastor in Charge, **5, 11, 20, 21, 22, 34**
 Peele, W. W., **23, 24**
 Peeler, Owen, **29, 31, 35**
 Pence Road, **12, 15, 27, 29**
 Pence, Dan, **21**
 Pence, J. D., **20**
 Pence, J. D., **21, 25**
 Pence, James D., **11**
 Pence, W. M., **e**
 Pennsylvania, **4**
 Pharr, Sam, **34**
 Phifer, John H., **11**
 Phillips, Mrs. Bobbie, **31**
Pilgrim's Progress, **9**
 Pineville, NC, **2, 3**
 Pittard, Jesse Leo, **35**
 Plott Road, **11**
 Plott, J. T., **23**
 Plyler, M. T. and A. W., **8**
 Plyler, T. A., **35**
 Polk, James K. Polk, **3**
 Poole, Clark, **29, 31, 35**
 Powell, Rev. Howard P., **25**
 Prather, J. G., **34**
 Presbyterian, **2, 7**
 Price, Edmond A., **34**
 Price, James S., **e**
 Prospect Church, **1, 3, 6, 10, 11, 14, 24, 33**
 Providence Presbyterian Church, **2**
 Psalter, **9**
 Purser, Rod, **30**
 Quarterly Conference Minutes, **e**
 Quarterly Conference Report, **25**
 Quarterly Meeting, **7**
 Query, Cyrus, **1, 33**
 Randall, J. N., **25, 35**
 Records and History Committee, **28**
 Richardson, N. R., **5**
 Roanoke and Seaboard Railroad, The, **6**
 Robbins, W. H., **35**
 Roberts, Hart, **30**
 Roberts, I. L., **23**
 Roberts, Robert and wife Betsy, **4**
 Rockey, John, **29**
 Romanish Confessionals, **6**

Rozelle, C. Excell, **35**
 Russell, Harry, **29, 30**
 Russell, Mrs. Howard, **e**
 Russell, Mrs. Margaret, **28**
 Russell, Murry and Allen, **21**
 Sabbath School, **4**
 Scarboro, **1**
 Scarbrough, Lewis, **1, 34**
 Scarritt College, **23**
 Seventh Street, **2**
 Seventh Street Church, **2, 3**
 Seventh Street United Presbyterian Church, **2**
 Simpson, H. R., **25**
 Simpson, Harold Ross, **35**
 Simpson, Luke, **22**
 Simpson, W.T., **21**
 Sinclair, Don, **29**
 Sinclair, Henry, **32**
 Somers, J. N., **34**
 Soule, Joshua, **8**
 South Carolina, **1, 3, 4, 7**
 South Carolina Conference, **1, 3**
 Springs, Leroy, **7**
 St. Mark's, **2**
 St. Peter's, **2**
 State Highway Department, **25**
 State of Michigan, **3**
 Steele, M. T., **20, 26**
 Steele, Martin Thornwell, **35**
 Stephenson, Robert Theodore, **34**
 Stewardship Building Fund Crusade, **29**
 Stilwell, M. H., **23**
 Stilwell, W. H., **25**
 Strothers Field, Kansas, **25**
 Stuart Auditorium, **12**
 Sugar Creek Female Academy, **3**
 sulkies, **4, 8**
 T. M. Allen, **20**
 Tally, John and wife Susan, **4**
 Tant, J. W., **25**
 Taylor, Addison and wife Lovie, **4**
 Taylor, Alleewee, **30**
 Taylor, Betsy, **4**
 Taylor, G. C., **20, 21, 23, 25**
 Taylor, Harvey, **11**
 Taylor, Houston, **11**

Taylor, John and wife Mary Anne, **4**
 Taylor, Joseph and wife Polly, **4**
 Taylor, Joseph D., **11**
 Taylor, Luther, **23**
 Taylor, R. H., **23**
 Taylor, Robert Marion, **34**
 Taylor, Seymour, **35**
 Taylor, W. H., **11**
 Taylor, William and wife Esther, **4**
 Taylor, William J., **11**
 Taylor, Zachary, **11**
 Teeter, Allison, **4, 5**
 Teeter, Allison and wife Dorcas, **4**
 Teeter, Burdette, **20**
 Teeter, C. W., **21, 22**
 Teeter, H. B., **22**
 Teeter, H. W., **23**
 Teeter, Odell, **20**
 Teeter, Zeb, **21**
 Tennessee, **3**
 Terrell, Pinkney L., **35**
 Teylor, Miss. Cenie, **4**
The Children's Visitor, **5**
 Thompson, J. T., **3**
 Trade (Street), **3**
 Trinity, **2**
 Trinity Church, **3, 21**
 Trinity on Beatties Ford Road, **3**
 Triplett, Thomas Lewis, **34**
 Tryon (Street), **3**
 Tryon Street, **2**
 U. M. Y F, **e**
 U.S. Mint, Charlotte, **3**
 Union County, **7, 11, 24**
 United Methodist Men, **30**
 United Methodist Women, **30**
 University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, **e**
 Virginia, **4**
 Wadsworth's stables, **8**
 Walter, John, **25**
 Ware, J. C., **21, 22**
 Waugh, Beverly, **8**
 Waxhaw United Methodist Church, **31**
 Weddington, **20**
 Weldon, Dr. Wilson O., **31**
 Wesley, **3, 9**

Wesley's Sermons, **9**
Western Democrat, **3, 6, 7**
Western North Carolina
Conference, **29**
whooping cough, **4**
Wilkinson, J. G., **23**
Wilson, D. H., **20, 21, 22**

Winchester, Dewey, **31**
Woman's Missionary Society, **20**
Young, R. L., **25**
Young, Russell Lowell, **35**