

# History of Cedar Grove United Methodist Church

Contributed by Kathrine Nicks McDade, Irene Pender, Jo McDade Westbrook  
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## A History of the Cedar Grove United Methodist Church

Thomas Thompson and wife Ann arrived about August 1, 1752 and as Francis Nash records in his history of Orange County; they settled ten miles north of Hillsborough. John Anderson and his wife Anne Moore were already here. They settled on the Eno River in 1738. The same year in England, May 24, 1738, John Wesley, the founder of our Methodist Church, was moved to go out and preach the gospel. John Wesley's brother, Charles, wrote 6,500 hymns. Ships from England were bringing people of many denominations. Thomas Thompson and wife deeded a plot of land to John Anderson in 1754 for a newly formed "Meeting House." When Hugh McAden, a Presbyterian missionary, came to the home of John Anderson there was already a "Meeting House" for him to preach in. He preached on the second Sunday of August in 1755. The research done for the 1832-1982 history shows the Cedar Grove Methodist Church to be laid in the founding of the Old Eno Presbyterian Church in 1755. These devoted men and women who worshiped together as a body of Christians were not as much concerned about being Presbyterians as they were believers in Christ and his teaching. Their chief concern was that the spirit of God was abiding in them.

In 1780, Bishop Asbury preached in Hillsborough. We wonder if the people of Cedar Grove went to hear him preach. Bishop Asbury traveled about six thousand miles on horseback and became the first Methodist Circuit Rider in America. The preachers of the Methodist Church were soon called the traveling Methodist. Some of the traveling preachers came from Virginia.

The North Carolina Circuit was formed in 1776. The North Carolina Circuit was divided as Roanoke, Tar River, and New Hope. Not only were Leasburg and Cedar Grove connected by preachers but by schools and trade. Cedar Grove was also near a Christian school, Pleasant Grove or Mount Pleasant Academy. Daniel W. Kerr moved his school from Wake Forest to Orange County January 15, 1836 near the present Mount Zion Christian Church. In 1838, James Clark announced Fairfield School, about three miles south of Cedar Grove, was ready for scholars. As Katherine Nicks McDade wrote in the history written for the 150th anniversary celebration, "I speak of other nearby denominations because I believe our church is born of the Spirit of God found in the hearts of these early settlers who became the forefathers of many denominations."

Joseph Allison, the first Cedar Grove postmaster (1826), and John Kelly gave land for the first Cedar Grove Methodist Episcopal Church and it was organized the 9th day of May 1832.

Trustees, Joseph Allison, Thomas Taylor, William Maris, John Kelly, Hunter McCulloch, and Ira Ellis were directed to build the Cedar Grove Methodist Episcopal Church in 1834. The church built at this time faced the east and had only one door. The pulpit was in the west end of the church. Our first pastor was Isaac Haines. Often a log "Meeting House" was built until a church could be built. In 1843, the names of John McDade, Ashal Moore, Henderson McDade, Mary Moore, John A. McDade, Samuel P. Moore, George A. Ellis, John J. Allison, William H. Brown, and Thomas Anderson were associated with the new church.

After the Civil War, times were difficult and money was scarce, but the Cedar Grove Methodist Church began a building program. In 1876, the small church was enlarged by an addition on the south side. Two doors were placed facing the south. The men entered by the left door and the ladies entered on the right. The men sat on the left and the ladies on the right. The amen corner was on the left of the pulpit and the choir sat on the right of the pulpit. John A. Finley was overseer of the building and repair work in 1876. Daniel Graham made seats, altar, and pulpit for \$89.00. John S. Pope, treasurer, kept records of the money taken in and money paid out until July 27, 1876. Thomas Cox Ellis kept records of the building project until July 1880. Total money paid out was \$499.98. Cash received was \$398.35. The amount due was \$107.63 plus 6% interest to be paid by 1880. Times were very difficult and the amount was paid in four installments. (I mention these figures to help us keep everything 125 years later in perspective.) The first record of a church Festival was a Sunday School Festival held to pay off a building debt for the rebuilding done in 1876. The amount of \$45 was raised. We still use this method today of having a Harvest Festival to raise money for the church. There was a special Sunday

School Conference of the Durham District held in Chapel Hill, N.C. on August 1, 1884. J.J. Taylor reported a very good Sunday School at Cedar Grove between seventy-five and one-hundred scholars – well attended by parents and children - used church literature. He stated, "The Sunday School is an aid to public worship."

At a Durham District Conference held on July 29, 1885 at Leas Chapel in Person County near Leasburg, Rev. J.E. Gray reported, "The churches at Hillsborough and Cedar Grove are well kept, no parsonage... Some members drink something besides water – no dancing."

An interesting bit of history took place on August 31, 1886 during a revival service at the Cedar Grove Church. During the church service, an earthquake caused the church to tremble and the people rushed out of the church. The tremor that night was known as the Charleston Earthquake. About ninety percent of the Charleston, S.C. buildings were damaged.

One of the most beloved pastors was W.H. Pucket (1888-1892). He encouraged the people to learn new hymns. His beloved wife, Alice Pell, was remembered for her lovely alto voice. The ladies cried when Rev. Pucket and his wife moved away.

Maude Rogers Liner remembered going to Cedar Grove Methodist church in a wagon drawn by two mules. She said all of the members had big families and came by wagonloads. She recalled the singing of the choir, the shouting at revival times and the happy occasion of Children's Day. One father told his little girl that he would take her to Sunday School on third Sundays but that the horses would have to rest on the other Sundays.

Rev. M.M. McFarland (1905-1909) was well liked and had a good sense of humor. One day he visited one of his members as his friend was killing hogs. As Preacher McFarland watched him salt down the hams, his friend said, "Preacher, I'm salting down this ham for you." The preacher walked around the board table thoughtfully. Then he looked up with a twinkle in his eye and said, "If you don't mind, I'll carry that ham right on with me today." He got his ham.

By 1911 Rev. J.M. Ormond (1911-1915) and his wife, Katrina Kern, moved to Hillsborough from Leasburg. All of the people at Cedar Grove loved Rev. Ormond. Dr. Ormond loved the rural churches and later served as Director of the Rural Church work of the Duke Endowment. He supervised the Duke students who went out to assist the minister in the country churches. Today The Ormond Center of Excellence in Ministry at Duke University is named for the Rev. J.M. Ormond. The Cedar Grove Methodist Church has been home to many student ministers. Only two of our student ministers, as far as the records show, actually came from our church and community to go on to become ordained Methodist ministers. They were Rev. Robert L. Nicks and Rev. James P. McDade.

Dr. H.W. Moore spoke of remembering Rev. T.M. Grant (1915-1917) and Rev. Marvin Hester (1917-1919). Dr. Moore recalled arriving at the church early one Sunday morning. He watched closely while a man cranked his Model T Ford. The Model T backfired and the crank spun back in the opposite direction causing the man to fall forward against the car and this caused a bad gash. The drug store was located a short distance from the front of the church. Dr. Claude M. Hughes sewed up the wound on the front porch of the drug store. Dr. Hughes rode horseback over the community to heal the sick. He was one of the best friends the people of Cedar Grove ever had.

Rev. E.C. Dunham (1923-1927) was the first pastor to live in Cedar Grove. The churches on the Cedar Grove Charge were Cedar Grove, Walnut Grove, Carr and Prospect. The parsonage was built in 1924 on the land given by Carl McDade. Henry Liner helped build and supervise the work of John and Arthur Finely, John C. McDade, Jim Hawkins and W.H. McDade. This parsonage was built the same year as Aycok High School. Rev. Dunham is remembered for his singing and his poems. Rev. E.C. Dunham, Cooper Compton, James Compton and Arthur Finley sang together.

Rev. F.A. Lupton (1927-1931) and his wife Rena Lupton led many to a profession of faith in Jesus Christ. He and his wife Rena reared a family dedicated in service. A judge and two doctors came from his family.

Rev. J.W. Dimmette's (1931-1933) daughter, Pattie, became a missionary. She married Inman U. Townsley at the Duke Chapel, August 20, 1937. She and her husband left after the wedding to sail for the Congo as missionaries.

At the third Quarterly Conference June 4, 1934, application was made for a permit giving us the privilege to build a

church at Cedar Grove, to appoint committees and solicit donations. At the fourth Quarterly Conference October 26, 1934, Rev. S.F. Nicks (1933-1940) reported the application to the Duke Foundation Fund for \$3,000 had been granted in full; the building committee had been appointed and that the estimate cost of the church was \$10,000. Rev. Nicks stated that the church would be erected in 1935.

Between forty and fifty men at different times worked on the construction of the church. Robert Earl Hughes was a Presbyterian but he worked along with his cousins and uncles. Charlie Oakley did the blasting of the stumps and rocks. Charlie Oakley also built the field rock gate that served as the entrance to our church cemetery. Sometimes there were eight or ten mule teams being used as the men dug the basement. Will Tinnin, Frank McDade, and James Compton hauled logs all day from Will Moore's farm. The weather was so cold the wagons never did break thru the ice-covered mud holes. They carried the logs to the sawmill located on Willie H. McDade's farm. They were already sawing the pine logs given by W.H. McDade for the frame of the church. Lewis and Lee Kennedy hauled lumber to Fitch Lumber Company in Mebane to be dried and dressed. When the lumber was ready, they hauled it back to the church. The rocks were hauled from Fletcher Pittard's farm for the basement. These dedicated, hard workers made the basement walls two feet thick. May 5, 1935, it was reported, "The wall is now up to the foundation level and the frame work is to be erected on the following week."

It was determined that Duke had given the rock at the Duke Quarry in Hillsboro to the state to be used for building state roads. As Rev. Nicks stated in his handwritten history of the building of the church found in the 1935 church time capsule, "Mr. Sandy Graham, who at that time was Lieutenant Governor and Mr. Carl Forrest of Efland gave valuable assistance in securing the stone." The Cedar Grove Methodist Church was given permission to use the rock. Since only state trucks were allowed in the quarry, they hauled the rock to the church.

Joe and Josh Woods of Winston Salem were skilled masons and were hired to do the masonry of the church. Bob Lynch was hired to shape and break the rock. The men boarded with Ed and Ella Murphy and Tom and Lela Oliver. Thomas Finely and Lewis Taylor made the mortar. John F. Finley made the rafters on the ground. Fletcher Pittard supervised the raising of the rafters. It took six men to raise the rafters. Henry Liner was a most capable and patient overseer of the whole building program. He read and explained the blueprints of the architect, H.N. Hayes.

An interesting part of the history of the Duke rock church was that Paul Jobe took down the old wood church and in return for the lumber wired the new church. A picture of the old wood frame church being taken down directly beside the Duke rock church is on display in the church. Whitted and Sons did the plastering. Dan Graham and Sons painted the church and contributed their work. For many years, they continued to paint the church as needed.

The Duke Endowment made it possible for the church to be built. We really appreciate what they did for us. When C.B. Markham, Assistant Treasurer at Duke University, would send the pastor, Rev. S.F. Nicks, a check of \$881.25 covering one installment of the appropriation, he would state that \$118.75 had been deducted for the architect fee. The people were to raise and equal amount before another installment was to be paid from the Duke Endowment.

It was hard to raise money in the thirties. The James and Cooper Compton families, the Henry Pope family, and the Carl McDade family planted the Lord's Acre. The profit was given to the church. Walnut Grove and Carr Churches also grew the Lord's Acre. Throughout the community, there were gifts of time, work, and money. A record of donations was kept. There were 219 donations ranging from five cents to two-thousand two-hundred ten dollars and fifty cents. These handwritten records were saved and can be seen on display at the church. It was good for people to work together contributing pews, windows, and the Bible as memorial gifts. This same method of giving has been used for our new church as well.

The dedication of the Cedar Grove Methodist Church took place on October 29, 1939. Bishop W.W. Peele of Richmond, Virginia performed the dedication. F.S. Alridge, District Lay Leader, led a Rally of the Cedar Grove Charge. Rev. A.J. Hobbs was District Superintendent. Rev. S.F. Nicks invited former pastors. Picnic lunch was served under the oak trees. Virgil Queen, the Duke student who had assisted the pastor, spoke in the afternoon.

Other work had been going on in the Cedar Grove Charge. Prospect and Carr Churches had been painted. A new stone church at Walnut Grove was nearing completion. Rev. M.T. Plyer said, "Under the care of this devoted Methodist minister churches have made progress, uplift came to the people, and comfort filled their homes. Few men know so many people and have been in so many homes in all this section as Rev. S.F. Nicks."

May 32, 1936 our Sunday School was declared 96 years old. By way of an old record of 1840, James Compton (who remarkably held the position of Sunday School Superintendent for 25 years) read on that day. But, since schools existed in the community before our church was organized no doubt the Sunday School began at least by 1832. Emily Watson is given the credit of starting the Sunday School for children. In the cemetery, we find:

In Memory of Emily Watson

Born October 27, 1811

Died November, 1879

We find many remarkable endeavors by the people and ministers in these years during the thirties. One of these was mentioned in "The Pastor" December 1940. While at Cedar Grove, Rev. S.F. Nicks in his words, "Recently we put on a bus that serves 40 to 50 children every Sunday. Many of these children are underprivileged." These would be wonderful numbers and a worthy accomplishment for recent times. In the same article, Rev. Nicks spoke about his country ministry. "I have greatly enjoyed my work these years. The country people are very congenial and hospitable. They have a little more time to spend with their pastor than do the people of towns and cities. I like to see crops and wild flowers growing, the squirrels playing on the lawn and hear the birds sing. I think Christ, who came that we might have life more abundantly, must have enjoyed the country." Rev. S.F. Nicks, his wife, Emma Woods, and several of their six children made Cedar Grove their home for seven years. One daughter, Kathrine, Nicks McDade, made Cedar Grove her home for the rest of her life.

Rev. K.F. Duval (1940-1945) opened the parsonage to meetings of the church, especially to the Women's Society of Christian Services.

Daisy Fuquay, the wife of Rev. J.B. Hurley (1945-1948) was from the Prospect community. They had a personal interest in the church. Many wonderful families lived in this community. The pastor and his wife made a good team as they worked together in all the churches.

Rev. Henry Lewis (1948-1953) and his family were much loved by our community. Rev. Lewis was our minister during a transition when many were leaving the rural areas. This situation shows how a rural church has contributed members to the Methodist Churches in town. A member is not lost if he continues to serve God in any church. One of the favorite verses of Rev. Lewis was, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Jesus Christ." (Phil. 2:5) Rev. Lewis and his wife, Sara, have recently passed away. Memories of Cedar Grove still live in the hearts of their daughters, Jean and Ann. Jean recalls that no matter where they moved after leaving Cedar Grove when asked where they were from they always answered "Cedar Grove." For many years, Jean and Ann would talk to their husbands endlessly about their Cedar Grove memories. After hearing about Cedar Grove for years, Jean brought her husband to the village. They drove from Pender Store to McDade Store. Jean said, "OK, we can turn around and go back." Her husband was astonished after hearing of Cedar Grove for so many years and said, "You mean that was it." You just had to grow up on or near that two or two-and-a-half mile span of road to know the feeling Jean and Ann still have. Jean recalls her love for "Aunt" Ella Murphy, a sweet, longtime member of our church.

Rev. R.Z. Newton (1953-1956) and his wife gave enjoyment to everyone with their talks on Alaska. They also had a way of reaching the hearts of people who needed comfort.

During these years in the mid-fifties to early sixties, the church membership and the MYF seemed to do very well. Memories of wonderful revivals stand out. The music especially was very inspiring to a young person growing up in the Cedar Grove Methodist Church during these years. We had a very active choir led by Janie Pope who remarkably was our choir director for forty-seven years. I, like Mrs. Maude Liner, loved our church revivals. Hearing the sermons and music and seeing members and nonmembers come to the altar at the end of the service to rededicate their lives to Christ were times that filled our hearts with God's love. As a young person, I loved watching Margaret Wright and Ruby McDade sing; the sheer joy of what they were doing could be read on their faces. The music of Ralph Compton, Jr. has been the greatest contribution to our church. Ralph's first time to play for a church service was at the age of fifteen. At the age of seventy-five, he is still blessing us with his wonderful organ music. Dedicating his music to the glory of God shows us that we too need to give our talents in the service of God. Ralph's brother, Joe, gave his beautiful singing voice to the glory of God and we were so blessed to hear him sing for many years. "Miss Annie Compton (Ralph's mama) taught the kindergarten and nursery Sunday School Class for many years. We all remember those Cradle-Rolls.

In 1958, the Cedar Grove Charge was divided. Walnut Grove and Carr became one and Cedar Grove and Prospect became the other. Rev. Richard Peterson (1958-1962), a Duke student, was our scholarly, energetic minister during this time. He was filled with the power of God and did more work than seemed possible. He was a scholar and tried to teach us more about the church and its mission. We studied biographies of John Wesley and Martin Luther. His wife Barbara was a joy to know. Rev. Petersen worked hard with the young people. The MYF seemed to thrive during the years Rev. Petersen was with us. Rev. Petersen had it as his aim to know the members personally by visiting them all in their homes. Not all pastors do this. The pastors who learned to know the people as they worked appreciated the community more.

Rev. Petersen mailed this memory of Cedar Grove. "When I arrived in Cedar Grove in 1958 to be pastor of the church, I soon learned that the telephone had arrived in Cedar Grove only five years before we did. It was a new gadget, and few knew what to do with it. Folks would still hop in their cars and drive over to someone else's farm to talk with their neighbors. They never considered using the phone. I found myself doing the same things. We shared our phone with nine others on a ten-party line. Among the others were Gordon and Frannie Liner, Polly Pope, Charlie and Lorraine Langston, Don and Jean McDade, The high school principal's home, the Aycock High School, the McDade Store located a little way north of the high school, and a few others.

We only heard Polly Pope's ring. We did have a dial, but we dialed only four numbers. We had a three-minute limit on the use of the phone, and then we were cut off. Outside the parsonage we had a fuse box, and the phone company (which served only Hillsborough, Efland, and Cedar Grove) furnished us with fuses because every time we had a thunder and lightning storm the fuses would burn out. Nevertheless, we never had a problem with anyone, and I guess the reason was that nobody ever really used the phone." Recollections such as these make histories delightful and memorable.

Our church was very fortunate to have Rev. Clyde Tucker (1962-1963) and his family with us for one year. When a preacher is a messenger from God, one year can be priceless. The Tuckers, from Chile, brought us closer to the work of missionaries and to the country of Chile and to Christ.

Rev. Tom Gensel (1963-1964) and his wife made close friends among the young couples. It is interesting to note how different preachers reach different people. That is God's way of working through them.

Rev. Frances Bradshaw (1964-1966) was a preacher of the third generation. The lives of his Grandfather, Mike, and Father, Bobby, blessed him in his ministry. In the verse, "Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh unto you," we see God working and we can see and feel God at work in the lives of these dedicated men.

Mildred Finley gave an acre-and-a-half for a new parsonage. Those serving on that building committee were Harris Pope, Chairman R. Cooper Compton, Sr., Oscar Compton, Glenn Caruthers, Howard Pittard, and Kathrine McDade. James Parker was finance chairman. Our current parsonage was built in 1966 for \$18,500.

Rev. Carson Wiggins (1966-1969) and his family made many friends in the community and many young people became active while he and his family were here.

Rev. Bob Wallace (1970-1974) and the smiles of the Wallace family made Cedar Grove a happier place. The young people were soon playing softball. In 1971 Rev. Wallace encouraged members to be better friends by having a church directory. In 1974, a new Cedar Grove Methodist Church Year Book was printed. Rev. Wallace and his sweet wife, Chris, and their children still return to Cedar Grove functions such as the Harvest Festival. We are always glad to see them.

Rev. Buddy Champion (1974-1975) and his wife Kathryn, seemed to be a part of our community immediately. His family had great love for people.

Rev. John Young (1975-1978) and his family came to us from Milton. Rev. Young studied Family Counseling and spent many hours helping people who sought his advice. When Rev. Young had an operation, he found that he lived in a caring community. A Duke student, Mark Wethington, and his wife, Bobbie, helped wonderfully. Mark took over the job of preaching for Rev. Young. It was amazing how well he and Bobbi worked with the youth fellowship and the youth choir.

Rev. Carson Tyson (1978-1982) and his wife Peggy had great faith in God. His cousins Bobby, Tommy, and Vernon have preached in our church. The Evangelistic work of this dedicated Tyson family is prompted by the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

Rev. Tyson encouraged the remodeling of the basement of our church. Sam Evans was given the contract with approval of the Administrative Board of the church. The Basement Committee included Bill Ray, Chairman Edna Caruthers, Eloise Rountree and Kathrine McDade. Inflation prices caused the remodeling of the basement to cost more than the building of the church. The cost of the basement was \$15,636.59. The cost was high but it was a job well done.

Miss Mildred Finley, Cedar Grove Postmistress, longtime Sunday School teacher and choir member, passed away July 11, 1978. Miss Mildred's greatest hobby was the love of books. After her death, Thomas B. and William L. Finley gave Cedar Grove Methodist Church approximately six-hundred books providing the church with a wonderful library. The fourth Sunday of June 1979 the library was dedicated. William Finley presented a memorial saying, "In memory of Mildred Finley we present to this church this memorial to be dedicated to the Glory and Praise of God." In closing the dedication, Rev. Tyson responded, "In the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, I dedicate this memorial to the Glory of God, and in memory of thy servant Mildred Finley; in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit."

Rev Tyson was our minister during our 150th Anniversary Celebration held on Homecoming Sunday, May 16, 1982. Bishop William Cannon and District Superintendent Barney Davidson participated in the service.

Rev. Charles Lizenberger (1982-1984) was quick to learn who we were. He had a sense of humor. He loved being around children.

Rev. Jimmy Tatum (1984-1987). Jimmy had a strong faith well honed by his divinity school experience. He taught us with a sense of humor. His interest in hunting and fishing helped to endear him to many in the congregation.

Rev. Tatum, as John Wesley, rode Phillip Dabb's horse, Super B, for our Days Gone By Celebration. Edna Caruthers was Susannah Wesley. John Hughes led a Camp Meeting under the oak trees.

Rev. David Harvin (1987-1991) brought a connection to the conference that helped us to better use their resources.

Rev. Milton "Tony" Collier (1991-1995) was a very enthusiastic and engaging preacher. Rev. Collier was very faithful about visiting members in the hospital. While Rev. Collier was our minister, the church built a wheelchair ramp and an alcove entrance in the back of the church. This construction was paid for by generous donations from church members and Duke Endowment.

Frances Griffin remembers, "At one time before the millennium there were five members who were more than ninety-five years old. They were Mr. Gaines Liner, Mr. Bill Pope, Mrs. Marvel Kennedy, Mrs. Nellie Miller, and Mrs. Estelle Haley. Mrs. Miller lived to be 104 years, 9 months and 23 days old. Mrs. Haley lived to be 103 years, 10 months and 13 days old."

Rev. Ira Smith (1995-1997) was a very loving preacher. Rev. Smith was faithful about visiting shut-ins and felt he gained from them as much as he gave.

The dedication for our beautiful church sign was held on Homecoming Sunday, May 18, 1997. Tom Rountree, Donnie Rountree and family generously donated the church sign in memory of Eloise Rountree. The Rountree family has and continues to be wonderful members of our church. Eloise was a tireless worker in our church and community. Mrs. Lorraine Langston Porterfield also donated the sign in memory of Charlie Langston and their son Dwight Langston. Mr. and Mrs. Langston and family were longtime members of our church and Mr. Langston was the Agriculture teacher at Aycock High School for many years. Our former minister Rev. Buddy Champion was our guest minister for the Homecoming service.

Rev. Steve Chaney (1997-1999) brought enthusiasm and vigor of youth to his ministry and grew along with us.

Rev. Julia Dees (1999-2001) exposed us to charismatic approach to worship and continually engaged us in the study of the word and our spiritual walk. She supported us with enthusiasm and prayer as we responded to the flooding in Belvoir. When Hurricane Floyd ravaged the eastern part of North Carolina with a great flood on September 17, 1999, a group of members from our church went to Belvoir to help the victims. John Hughes and our church group helped to feed the people in this flooded area for seven days. God's work was surely being done. Money, clothing, and cleaning supplies were donated.

Sadly, in the early morning hours of December 11, 2000, the beautiful Duke rock church built by our forefathers burned beyond repair. Many members gathered during the night and during the next day in disbelief. Many cried and comforted one another. John Hughes found himself in the difficult position of trying to stop a fire that could not be stopped. John and his sweet wife Charlotte have been faithful members for over thirty years. On that sad December day, John's words were in the hearts of many. He said, "I think the true emotion hasn't hit us yet. We've lost our gathering place. That's probably the biggest emotional loss. We need to re-establish that." Over the next weeks and months, the kindness of so many was heartwarming. Offers of help came immediately. The Cedar Grove Ruritan Club offered the use of their building. Walker's Funeral Home in Hillsborough offered the use of their chapel. Eno Presbyterian Church invited us to worship with them. Fairfield Presbyterian Church offered their facility and we have worshipped in that lovely church since 2001.

Rev. Carl Singley (2001-2003) was very knowledgeable and used biblical history in his sermons. Rev. Singley's wife, Jan, was a wonderful educator. She was a gifted teacher of Disciple Class. The early stages of building our new church began while Rev. Singley was here.

On September 11, 2001, life changed. The routineness of our lives changed that morning. We wanted to be near our families and grieve with the rest of our country. The importance of building a church seemed to be put on hold. After a period of time, we began to ease back into our lives.

Many decisions needed to be made. More land was obtained and it was determined that the new church would be built on the original site. The Tise-Kiester Architectural Firm was hired. Phillip Kiester is the architect for our new building. Lewis Crabtree has very ably chaired our building committee. He would be the first to admit it has taken a huge effort from many. We will never know the hours of work, the many miles driven, or the sacrifice these committee members have made. We must continue to thank them and show our appreciation. The Interior Committee chaired by Paula Crabtree and Terri Stinson did a wonderful job. These decisions were not easy and many hours were given. A Kitchen Committee was formed and their efforts are evident in our lovely, modern kitchen. The tireless work of the Fundraising Committee Co-chaired by Sam Hobgood and Vicki Compton is and continues to be beyond comparison. Vicki Compton has organized with the help of many others an endless list of meals from which much money has been raised. Edna and Glenn Caruthers serve as Treasurers of the Building Fund, have handled all the donations, and have responded with hundreds of cards of appreciation. A donation and memorial book is being prepared and will be on display at the new church. All of the hard working committee members are listed at the end of this history. There are many who, though not serving in name on a committee, have given much of themselves in the many different capacities needed to get us where we are today. All are greatly appreciated.

Rev. Grace Hackney (2003- ) came to us with her sweet family directly from Duke Divinity School. Husband, Tony, daughter Sara, and son, Zac have all been wonderful and refreshing additions to our church community. Even though we are Pastor Grace's first church, her wisdom far exceeds her experience. Pastor Grace has facilitated much of our progress in rebuilding our church.

Again, wishing to leave no one out but feeling this generous and touching donation should be mentioned. At the beginning of our building process, the John H. Wilson Grading Company leveled the remaining walls of the old church and filled in the basement. Tommy Wilson gave all of this costly grading work in memory of Larry Oakley, Peggy and Dwight Oakley's son.

Our Ground Breaking Service was held Sunday, October 19, 2003. This was our first real sign that our new church would really be built. Harris Pope was our oldest groundbreaker and newly baptized Kylee Harris was our youngest. Paula, Keith and Will Crabtree represented our young family on this tent filled, sunny day. Our Burlington District Superintendent, Rev. Rodney Hamm, took part in the service.

Sparrow Construction was hired to oversee and build our new church. Many good things have been said about this company and there is much evidence to substantiate what has been said. Sparrow hired the Mountain Stone Company and Mr. G.D. Mace to do the beautiful stone masonry work.

The time capsule found in the wall of the old church was opened with much anticipation on July 11, 2004. Sadly, some of the materials were water damaged. A Tar Heel Star News from April 1939 was salvaged. An Orange County News from Thursday, November 2, 1939 with a wonderful article on the dedication of the old Duke rock church was saved. Seven handwritten pages by Rev. S.F. Nicks giving a history of the building of the old Duke rock church were saved and are a treasure. The wording of this document has been joyfully reconstructed and, along with the original writings, will be on display at the new rock church. A reconstruction of those seven pages has been included in this history. Seventy cents in coins from 1930 and 1939 were found in the old time capsule. These were placed back into the time capsule of the new rock church.

The laying of the cornerstone for our new church took place during the day on Tuesday, August 24, 2004 at 10:00AM. It was a very warm day but a wonderful number of members attended. Pastor Grace led us in devotion, music and prayer. Lemonade provided some relief from the heat.

The time capsule for the new church was placed in the church on October 24, 2004. Many wonderful written articles, historical documents, the church directory, pictures, and objects were placed in the new time capsule. Mr. Wade Griffin, with much skill, made our time capsule and Walker's Funeral Home and Glory Enterprises out of Greensboro donated a Wilbert stainless-steel vault. The air was chilly on this October day but a large number of members gathered for prayer and song and you knew each felt the excitement knowing many years from now grandchildren and great-grandchildren would joyfully open this hand-welded capsule. The list of items placed in the new capsule is available in the historical display at the new church.

Along with the wonderful help from Duke Endowment and over five-hundred and sixty-five donations, our church was built. Many gifts of furnishings and windows have been made as was done in the building of our two previous churches. These donations have come from far and near. We are so humbly thankful and greatly appreciative of so much generosity.

This process has been a community effort. It is amazing how many parallels we find in life. Julia McDade Oakley told of the forest fire that began in Efland on Saturday before Easter in 1893. Nannie and Emma Woods were walking from Caldwell Institute to their home and saw the smoke. Julia McDade's mother Martha Maris McDade gave breakfast to the men who had fought the fire all night long. The fire burned the Eno Presbyterian Church and the Compton Mill. Rev. W.F. Wilhelm preached to the members of Eno at the Methodist Church on the fourth Saturday and the Fourth Sunday after the fire. The Presbyterian Church was an almost new building being only fourteen years old. It was a tremendous loss to the community. In a short time, plans were made to erect a new building in the village of Cedar Grove. In the meantime, the Methodists and the Presbyterians were spiritually blessed as they worshipped together.

The Cedar Grove Ruritan Club, the Eno Presbyterian Church, and the Fairfield Presbyterian Church have shown by their actions that we are certainly a community in Christ.

Pastor Grace came to us with boundless energy and genuine love for her fellow man. Along with these qualities in our pastor and God's love, we will soon be in our new church building.

The quaint little Fairfield Church has been our home for four-and-a-half years. There has been something peaceful about looking out those beautiful old windows. As we look to moving to our new church on May 1, 2005, we can be mindful of Pastor Grace's words, "We should be humble and thankful for our church building and use it as God would have us do so."

Joy and excitement will be filling our hearts as we first enter into our new building. We will strive to be an open, loving, giving church family and good stewards of our community. These are worthwhile goals for this new church building and our church family.



The beautiful morning of May 1, 2005 turned out to be the Sunday we moved from Fairfield to our new church. Before we left Fairfield to drive together to our new church, Pastor Grace presented Charles Waddell with a gift of appreciation from our church family to theirs. Pastor Grace said Fairfield was an example of Christian generosity and love.

Sunday, May 1st a stream of cars left our quaint Fairfield home to begin our new life in our new church building. As we entered our new church Pastor Grace read from Psalm 122:11; "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." Pastor Grace did not pick the scripture for this our first Sunday in our new church. The scripture for the sixth Sunday of Easter had been determined many years ago and yet it was so fitting. Psalm 66: the last part of the 12th verse, "...we went through fire and through water, yet you have brought us out to a spacious place."

Glen Caruthers presented Ralph the key to the new church organ. As Glen stated, Edna Caruthers and Ralph represent over one hundred years of dedicated service to our church by Ralph's playing and Edna's beautiful soprano voice.

The first song Ralph played after offertory was Amazing Grace. The beautiful sound of those chimes will remain in our hearts.

The Gospel Lesson was from John. As Jesus comforted his disciples, we are also comforted by these beautiful words.

John 14:1-4:

"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself that where I am, there ye may be also.

And whether I go ye know, and the way ye know."

It seemed providential for us to move in our new church on this day.

Sunday, May 15th was our first Homecoming on Pentecost Sunday in our new church building. We were honored to have Bishop Kenneth Carder, Director of the Center for Excellence in Ministry at Duke University. Pentecost celebrates the gift of the Holy Spirit and the formation of the church. What an appropriate Sunday. Bishop Carder urged us to listen to and live the words Christ has given us. Such as the above scripture in John 14 and John 13:34, "And a new command I give you: Love one another."

Pastor Grace spoke about the flames we were given as we entered the church. The flames were turned down rather than up. The flames that consumed our old church came from the earth up. We now have the flame of God's Love and Spirit coming down to fill and renew our hearts. Pastor Grace, also, spoke about this "piece of land." Land meant so much to many here on this day and the land was our mothers and fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers life's work. This "piece of land" holds a special place in those hearts gone before us, our hearts, and in the hearts of future generations. The inscription on our cornerstone reminds us of how we should use this special "piece of land" to His Honor and Glory.

Our Service of Consecration and Thanksgiving will be Sunday, June 5, 2005 at 3:00PM. We will be honored to have North Carolina Conference Bishop Al Gwinn, Burlington District Superintendent Rev. Bill Gattis, and Director of Rural Church Division of Duke Endowment Rev. Joe Mann to join us on this awaited day. Pastor Grace and Rev. Bill Gattis will lead the service. Our speaker will be Bishop Al Gwinn.

An explanation of a service of consecration from the United Methodist Book of Worship, "We will be setting aside this building to God's glory, asking that this be a holy place and that within its walls, we can be formed as Christ's Body, able to go beyond the walls to be Christ for the world."

Our children, youth and adults will present a special anthem. The anthem is called "Look Around." Certainly, we all will be looking around our new church building and taking in the beauty and the feeling of almost being wrapped by loving arms. "Lizabeth Collins and Margaret Griffin are directing the music.

Wonderful food and fellowship will follow the service. We thank the ladies of the church for what we know will be wonderful refreshments.

Diane Schmidt has worked hard on two beautiful and inspiring pictorial scrapbooks taking us from the fire that destroyed our quaint Duke rock church to Consecration Sunday for our new rock church. These wonderful books will provide a detailed glimpse of this period in our churches history for now and generations to come. These will be on display for all to enjoy.

Dwight Oakley took his camera with him to work each day during the building of the new rock church. He would stop and record the progress. This wonderful pictorial record is on display to browse through.

Remarkably, we do have items not lost in the fire from our church history. We also have on display pictures, old documents, records, and other memorabilia for all to see.

A most interesting experience happened to John Hughes relating to the church. Lay leaders going to Quarterly Conference were asked to bring a rock from their church. John walked to the church grounds and gathered a beautiful, though slightly heavy, stone. John decided this might be a little large to transport to Fayetteville. He walked back and picked a smaller, flat stone. John carried the stone to the conference and placed it with the others from different churches. John returned home with the stone and placed it on his front porch. In the fall of the next year, John was relaxing on his porch and picked up the rock. When John angled the rock he could see a name etched on the surface. The name was J.H. Liner. Mr. Henry Liner, father of Jean Liner McDade, was the foreman of the building of the 1935 church from the beginning to the end. This stone is one of our items on display. What a wonderful sign of how the Lord guides us in our lives.

Some of the items not damaged in the 1935 rock church time capsule are on display. Seven handwritten pages from Rev. S.F. Nicks describing the history of the building of the 1935 rock church were saved from the time capsule. These are on display and an easily read version is also on display and included in this history.

This congregation has done what our forefathers did seventy years ago. Found in those seven handwritten pages, Rev. S.F. Nicks writes in describing the members, "The people had a mind to work and the task was joyfully done."

1832

Isaac Haines

1909

C.R. Ross

1837

Addison Lea

1911

J.M. Ormond

1851

W.H. Brown

1915

T.M. Grant

1852

A.H. Johnson

1917

Marvin Hester

1853

J.L. Fisher

1919

J.E. Blalock

1854

N.A. Hooker

1923

E.C. Durham

1855

H.T. Hudson

1927

F.A. Lupton

1856

T.W. Moore

1931

J.W. Dimmette

1857

Henry Gray

1933

S.F. Nicks

1858

S.D. Peeler

1940

J.C. Williams

1860

B.F. Guthrie

1944

K.F. Duval

1862

S.D. Ruler

1945

J.B. Hurley

1863

Alexander R. Raven

1948

Henry B. Lewis

1864

N.F. Reid

1953

R.Z. Newton

1866

W. Wilson

1956

O.V. Elkin

1867

W. Bobbit

1958

Richard Peterson

1870

William Barringer

1962

Clyde Tucker

1871

S.W. Crawford

1963

Tom Gensel

1872

J.T. Harris

1964

Francis Bradshaw

1874

H.P. Cole

1966

Carson Wiggins

1876

J.H. Wheeler

1969

John Rutland

1880

J.O. Guthrie

1970

Robert Wallace

1883

J.E. Gray

1974

Buddy Champion

1886

L.E. Thompson

1975

John K. Young



1887

J.G. Nelson

1978

Carson Tyson

1888

W.H. Puckett

1982

John Litzenberger

1892

J.M. Lowder

1984

Jimmy Tatum

1893

D.N. Cavines

1987

David Harvin

1896

L. Lutch

1991

Milton Collier

1897

J.M. Terrell

1995

Ira Smith

1898

E.W. Fox

1997

Steve Chaney

1902

J.T. Draper

1999

Julia Dees

1903

Rufus Bradley

2001

Carl Singley

1904

N.C. Yearby

2003

Grace G. Hackney

1905

M.M. McFarland  
2010

Karl Grant

2017      Monica Beacham

Written by:

Irene Pender

Taken from the Cedar Grove United Methodist Church History compiled for the 150th Anniversary Celebration (1832-1982)

Rewritten and updated by:

Jo McDade Westbrook

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