The Avondale Methodist Church was organized in 1910 as the Ingleside Methodist Church. The organization meeting was held in the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Harrison on Old Rockbridge Road, and in addition to Mr. Harrison, those present were: Mr. W. P. Roseberry, Mr. J. R. Boyd, Mr. J. A. Camp, Mr. W. L. Robinson, and Mr. T. D. Hollingshead. In order to get the church started, this group of men planned a tent meeting which was held across the street from the site of their first church building, erected two years later.

Rev. J. W. Crenshaw was the Evangelist at this tent meeting. The first Pastor to serve this newly-organized church was Rev. L. G. Johnson. During the first year, the church meetings were held in the Ingleside Presbyterian Church building, and during the second year, when Rev. O. C. Simmons was Pastor, meetings were held in the Ingleside Baptist Church.

Rev. J. G. Dodson was the next Pastor, and it was during his pastorate in 1912 that the church members built a church building of their own. The members first bought a lot in Scottdale, but later decided to building their church at the corner of Rockbridge Road and Stone Mountain Road, so they traded their lot for the one where the little white frame structure still stands, on the southeast corner of the Rockbridge Road-Stone Mountain Road intersection. They continued to use this building until about 1929.
In the fall of 1912, Rev. C. L. Middlebrooks, who years later returned as District Superintendent (1944-1950), came to the church and served for two years. He was followed by Mr. Joe Dillard (1915). Then came Rev. Joe H. Barton (1916), who was the first of the two chaplains which this church has furnished to the armed services. During Rev. Barton's second year as pastor of the church, he was called into the Army and his term was completed by Rev. Asbury Ragsdale. The church was then served for one year by each of the following: Charlie Drake (1917), J. W. Brinsfield (1918), O. H. Logan (1919), and J. H. Alliston (1920).

In 1921, Rev. J. D. Milton began his five-year as Pastor of the church. It was during his stay, in 1925, that the church was made a Station and given a full-time pastor. Prior to this, it had been part of a circuit, along with Belmont, Wesley Chapel, and Oak Grove.

Rev. Milton was followed by Rev. Charles A. Norton and Rev. J. T. Pendley, each of whom served a year (1926 and 1927). Then in 1928, Rev. Ralph B. Hawkins began his two-year term as Pastor, and it was during his ministry that the site of the next church building was acquired. This larger lot was diagonally across the street and a basement was completed on this lot in 1930. Ben S. Forker donated one building lot, and the adjoining lot was purchased by the church. The address was now Old Stone Mountain Road and the name was changed to the Milton Memorial Methodist Church in honor of a beloved pastor, Rev. James D. Milton. Services were held in this basement for almost 10 years, since funds were not available to complete the structure. During these years the church was served by the Revs. E. D. Rudasill (1930), O. L. Kelley (1931), C. B. McDaniel (1932), G. G. Ramsey (1934), Walter Millican (1936), and J. V. Jones (1937).
During Rev. Millican's pastorate, a building fund was set up and one Sunday in every month, even the children were urged to bring their nickels and dimes in an offering which would eventually be used to put a top on the basement. Rev. J. V. Jones pushed this idea until a sanctuary above the basement was completed in 1939, even though the indebtedness was not cleared until eight years later. On July 21, 1940, at a Quarterly Conference, the name of the Milton Memorial Methodist Church was changed to Avondale Methodist Church.

Rev. Jones was responsible for the beginning of a fund to purchase a parsonage, though the plan was not carried out until many years later, in 1946.

Rev. Henry H. Jones served as District Superintendent from 1940 to 1944.

Beginning in 1940, Rev. Luther W. McArthur served the church until he was called into service as chaplain during the Second World War. His term was completed by Rev. W. S. Robison, who served until Rev. McArthur's return in 1946. This was the year the church bought a parsonage, which was located at 1108 East Ponce de Leon Avenue, Decatur, Ga. Rev. McArthur served this time for almost a year before he was recalled as permanent Air Force Chaplain. His term was completed by Rev. W. E. Williamson (1947).

Rev. C. L. Middlebrooks, one-time pastor of the church, was District Superintendent from 1944 to 1950.

In 1948, Rev. P. G. Curry came to the church and served as Pastor for two years. Then in 1950, Rev. H. S. Smith became Pastor, and Rev. E. G. MacKay was District Superintendent from 1950 to 1956.

During the fall of 1950, the church was redecorated and provided with new pews and pulpit furniture. Funds for these were raised...
by subscriptions, some people buying a single space and others giving a whole pew. Since the church had never been really completed, it had not been dedicated officially, so October 15, 1950 was designated as Dedication Day in combination with Homecoming Day.

In 1953, Rev. W. L. Cawthon began his seven year ministry at Avondale, and it was during his stay, in 1957, that the present church site, 150 N. Clarendon Avenue, Avondale Estates, Ga., was acquired. This lot was formerly the site of the Avondale High School and was purchased from the DeKalb County Board of Education for approximately $70,000. The following improvements and renovations were made: Architectural and Engineering $1,225.00, Plumbing $2,800.00 and Heating $7,300.00, making a total for improvements of $11,325.00. The estimated value of the two buildings on the church property now is $194,750 - estimated value of land $70,000 - estimated value of furnishings and equipment $15,000. The title of the church property is held in the name of the local church corporation. Avondale Methodist Church of Avondale Estates, Inc. is the title to which the church buildings and parsonage is recorded, as shown by civil land records of DeKalb County (DeKalb County Court House, Clerk of the Court, Book 1234, Page 322-23) in which the property is located. Each deed contains the trust clause.

The new pews which were installed in the sanctuary, during Rev. W. L. Cawthon's ministry, were given in honor and in memory of loved ones by various groups and individuals within the church and by friends of the church. The pulpit furniture and paraments are also memorial gifts. The church organ was dedicated on November 22, 1953. It was a gift of the congregation in memory of James Howard Wynn, who was killed in action in World War II.
Our District Superintendent from 1956 to 1959 was Rev. Walker Chidsey.

In 1959, the property at 21 Avondale Road was purchased for the church parsonage. This property is valued at $17,500 (building) and $2,000 (furnishings) making a total parsonage value of $19,500.

On May 22, 1960, the Avondale Methodist Church celebrated their Fiftieth Golden Anniversary (1910-1960). A copy of the printed booklet is attached with this report. This was a most memorable occasion in the history of this church.

In June, 1960, the Fellowship building of Avondale Methodist Church was given the name, by the Official Board, of the William B. Cawthon Fellowship Hall, in honor of the service and loyalty of this Pastor during his seven years at Avondale.

In 1960, Rev. George E. Clary became Pastor of Avondale and Rev. Delma L. Haggard became District Superintendent (Decatur-Oxford District) and is with us at the present time.

Rev. W. Jack Lamb began his ministry with this church in 1961, and it has been during this time that the church began to grow and expand and made the people realize the necessity for more space. The present membership of the church is 492.

During the 1961-62 church year, $3,400 was received from the Gym Building Fund to develop new school rooms, $388 was received from the Parsonage Committee and $110 from the Men's Club for improvements in the parsonage and Fellowship Hall, respectively.

In the fifty-two year history of the Avondale Methodist Church, it is interesting to note that only six men have served as Church School Superintendent. Mr. C. W. Ewing served from the organization of the church school until 1920, when Mr. Ben S. Forker took
the office and served as Church School Superintendent for twenty years. Between 1940 and 1950 this position was shared by Mr. C. H. David and Mr. Roscoe E. Snead. Mr. Ben T. Woodham served as Superintendent for one year from 1955 to 1956. Since that time, Mr. J. C. Hanson has served continuously and faithfully. We now have 285 members enrolled in our Church School, with over 200 of this number attending regularly, contributing an offering of approximately $200 per Sunday. Our record Church School attendance was 264. The Church School has been a contributing factor to the growth of the church.

Another important factor to the growth at Avondale has been the Woman's Society of Christian Service, organized many years ago as "The Lady Workers", on October 18, 1910. Officers were: Mrs. C. W. Ewing, President; Miss Emma Lewis, Vice-President; Miss Jenna David, Secretary and Treasurer. Dues were set at 5 cents a month. In 1912, the name was changed to "The Ladies Aid Society". Miss Kate Strickland was President of this society in 1914.

On April 12, 1921, the ladies of Ingleside Methodist Church met and organized a Woman's Missionary Society. Mrs. P. V. Ryals was President and the first meeting of the Woman's Missionary Society was held May 3, 1921. Following is a list of this society's Presidents:

Mrs. Sam Farrar (1924-25), Mrs. Roscoe Ford (1926-28), Mrs. E. A. Wells (1929-30), Mrs. Mamie Oliver (1931), Mrs. Trollinger (Jan.-Oct., 1932), Mrs. Roscoe Snead (November, 1932-Jan., 1933), Mrs. R. S. Hicks (1933-34).

Mrs. W. F. Biggers was the President at the first meeting of this society after the church name was changed to Milton Memorial. The next president was Mrs. Phillips (1938) and Mrs. Roscoe Ford became president again and remained so until 1940.

In May, 1938, the church gave its first Baby Life Membership
In 1940, the Woman's Missionary Society was changed to the Woman's Society of Christian Service, (W.S.C.S.). Mrs. J. C. Hanson was president from this time until 1942. Later presidents are as follows: Mrs. Sam Farrar (1943-44), Mrs. Irwin (1945), Mrs. O. L. Baxter (1946-47), Mrs. C. W. Caldwell (1948-50), Mrs. Grace Wynn (1951), Mrs. Martha Elliott (1952-55), Mrs. Lottie O'Kelley (1956-59) and Mrs. W. R. Mitchell (1960-61). The W.S.C.S. now has 64 members and the Wesleyan Service Guild has 20 members. Mrs. E. J. Seelbach has been chosen president of W.S.C.S. for the 1962-63 year.

During the years the W.S.C.S. have given many Life Memberships, Baby Memberships, Special Memberships, Honorary Youth Memberships and of course, Adult Memberships. In 1960, Mrs. W. H. O'Kelley received a $100 Honorary Life Membership, the only one been given by this church.

An outstanding event in the history of the Avondale W.S.C.S. was the celebration on May 10, 1961, of the 20th Anniversary of this organization. Mrs. W. R. Mitchell, President, presented the program, "Twentieth Anniversary Special", and gave the history of this group. Two charter members and five past presidents were among the 45 members and guests present to celebrate this great event and enjoy the white anniversary cake, topped with the blue and gold W.S.C.S. emblem, made of icing to commemorate this occasion.

The Wesleyan Service Guild, mentioned earlier, is actually a branch of the W.S.C.S., and was organized on September 10, 1940, for working women of the church and this group meets at night and works with the W.S.C.S on it's projects, as well as their own endeavors.
The Methodist Men's Club of Avondale was organized on February 25, 1948. At the second meeting, there were 15 members present and the following officers were appointed: Roscoe Snead, President; J. C. Hanson, Vice-President, Ernest Hudlow, Secretary and Treasurer, and A. O. Baxter, Program Chairman. At the present time, Walter McCartney is President, and there are 36 members.

The records of all departments of Avondale Methodist Church give evidence of the interest and devotion which has been demonstrated throughout the years by faithful members of this congregation. Some are no longer with us, but their memories and faith linger on to inspire and encourage us, and others have come to take their place and to consecrate themselves anew to the advancement of the Kingdom of God through this church.

This history of Avondale Methodist Church has been compiled by Mrs. Grace Wynn, Church Historian, from old records and remembrances of church members.