HISTORY OF BOWEN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Bowen United Methodist Church has evolved through twenty-nine years of dynamic activities, growth and christian community service. Brochures in celebration of the first opening service, anniversaries, minutes, annual reports and conference reports all attest to Bowen's awareness of its destiny and its many efforts to achieve it.

Although documentation is not as complete as desired, the first history and records committee goes back to its first anniversary.

The present committee has researched a collection of documents, including anniversary programs, newspaper clippings, and other reports to give validity to this effort. Many significant documents were lost or destroyed by movement of location. Inspite of those limitations, this committee forged on.

Bowen Methodist Church had its beginning with the appointment of Rev. Simon Smell in November, 1950. The first service was the meeting of the Sunday School in the home of Mrs. Earls on Bowen Circle. Mrs. Kline Hornsby served as the Superintendent of Sunday School. Rev. William Hornsby and Rev. William E. Watts were two of the first Sunday School teachers.

Bowen began its relationship with the General Methodist Church in 1951, as a member of the Georgia Conference. The church was named for the late Bishop John Wesley Edward Bowen who saw the need for a church within the High Point Community. The stress to spur the community began to be felt early in the movement.

The land for Bowen Methodist Church was donated to the Georgia Methodist Conference by Mr. Howard Hughes, the proprietor of the Highpoint Apartment Complex. The land was formerly owned by Clark College and Gammon Theological Seminary.

The construction of the church was completed in 1951 and the first worship service was held Sunday, July 29, 1951, at 4:30 p.m. Rev. J. A. Baxter, District Superintendent, presided and Bishop J. W. E. Bowen delivered the first sermon.
The presentation of the Bible was by Rev. D. H. Stanton. Other ministers who participated in this service were: Reverends Dr. H. V. Richardson, J. P. Grisssom, Sr., and Rev. E. W. Newton. There was also a brief Evening Service at 8:00 p.m. and the sermon was delivered by Rev. Simon Snell, Pastor. A week of evening services followed. The following churches and pastors participated in the week's services. Central Methodist Church with Rev. S. Scott Allen delivering the messages, East Point Methodist with Rev. Maurice Woodward delivering the message, Ariel Bowen Methodist with Rev. A. S. Dickerson delivering the message, Warren Memorial with Rev. E. W. McMillan giving the message and Fort Street Methodist with Rev. H. L. Burney delivering the message.

The cornerstone was laid on Wednesday, August 1, 1951, at 7:00 p.m. The trustees were: The Reverends T. P. Grisssom, J. W. Swain, E. W. McMillan, Maurice Woodward, L. S. Allen, T. H. Fortson, H. L. Burney and P. H. Mayes.

Bowen's first pastor was the Reverend Simon Snell. There were twenty-nine members on record during Rev. Snell's pastorate. The family of Mr. James and Mrs. Lois Martin was the first to join the church. The remaining members consisted mainly of students from Gammon Theological Seminary, their families and other residents from the Highpoint Apartments. Rev. Snell's dynamic leadership ability produced the organization of a children's and adult's choir, children's usher board, adult ushers, men's organization, church school, communion board and a nursery school.

Rev. Snell's interest in the growth of Bowen Church carried him into the home of every available family in the Highpoint Apartments. A personal invitation was extended to each resident to come and worship at Bowen. As a result of this crusade many residents who were members of churches in other communities or cities came to Bowen to worship and rendered their services in the church.

Rev. Snell Pastored Bowen for approximately two years. The seeds for the church were sown on fertile ground and growth for the church was a reality.

In June 1952, the Reverend Horace C. Fisher was appointed, and accepted the challenge of the Bowen Church. Rev. Fisher's accomplishments were many, as he labored faithfully building a strong spiritual foundation for ten years.
It was during the period of Rev. Fisher's pastorate that Bowen experienced significant growth in every facet. His strength, abilities and patience far exceeded the challenge as pastor, and the work which he did, exemplified it.

He possessed a specific gift with the young people of the church, and his wisdom and love was the foundation of life for many. His accomplishments included the establishment of the L. P. Martin Altar and Courtesy Guild - a guild which still enthusiastically supports the church. This guild is named in the honor of the late Mrs. Lois Parham Martin, a devoted member of this church and a communion steward. We are grateful to Rev. A. S. Dickerson, and his late wife, Virginia, for their advice in the organization of the Altar and Courtesy Guild.

While Rev. Fisher was pastor, the stained glass windows were put in and the construction of the kitchen was completed. It was also Rev. Fisher who spearheaded the celebration of the church's first celebrated anniversary in September 1960. The F. C. Fisher Choir of the church carries the name of this tall giant in Methodism. He provided the congregation with a warm spirit and competent leadership. These, and other ingredients, led to his effectiveness as a pastor. Rev. Fisher's accomplishments were also supported by his wife, Mrs. Grace Fisher, who for several years served as the church pianist and church secretary. If one were to categorize these ten years of ministry, they would be considered, "The Growth Years."

His motto was "Never Too Late To Call." His name was Harvey Hill, Jr. Rev. Hill whose mastery of religious speaking, leadership ability and the ability to work with others, offered the church continued growth and renewed vitality. He established the first church office, organized the Harvey Hill, Jr. Male Chorus, purchased new communion vestments and kneeling pads. The pastor's study was renovated, as well as tile and florescent lights were placed in the Recreation Room and lobby. While Rev. Hill pastored Bowen, He was indeed a good pastor just as his predecessors before him, for he believed in visiting the sick and assisting persons regardless of their needs.

His wife, Mrs. Ruby Hill, contributed two dozen of personalized hymnals to the youth choir of the church, donated wicker baskets for flowers and the Baptismal Font of the church.
The zeal which Rev. Syvester Huff brought to the church coupled with that of past pastors, carried Bowen to even greater heights. Rev. Huff's abilities in stewardship led Bowen to excellent financial status, and courage for the future. His accomplishments included the installation of new pews, the laying of carpet, and the installation of central heating and air conditioning units.

He established the S. T. Huff Club which was instrumental in spearheading the purchase of the church's organ, which will be dedicated in his memory. Rev. Huff's abilities in church administration provided effective structure for the church to move within the community. Bowen also experienced growth in membership under Rev. Huff's eleven years as pastor.

The inspiration which Reverend and Mrs. Huff gave to the congregation shall always be felt, for indeed history can attest to their leadership abilities.

With the passing of Rev. Huff in 1979, Bishop William Cannon sought the leadership of the Reverend Richard Don Winn, Sr., to serve as pastor of the church. Rev. Winn came to Bowen from the Northern Illinois Conference.

With the willingness of spirit, the humility and strong dedication, Rev. and Mrs. Winn accepted the challenge of Bowen. At the time of this writing, October 1980, Rev. Winn has pastored this church for one year. During that year, Rev. Winn has attempted to provide the congregation with leadership and to recapture the fervor, and commitment of years gone. His visions include the establishment of a strong Sunday School, membership growth and the renovation of the present property.

Throughout the years, the Bowen Church has weathered the storm of extreme adversity and brutal doubt. The pastors of Bowen must agree, that it was the will of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ that allowed this foundation to remain.

Bowen has exemplified its willingness to be the church as the covenant community, the church as the body of Christ, and the church as the community of the Holy Spirit. Baptisms, Confirmations, Communions, Marriages, Births and Burials are embedded in the walls of this church's history. Prayers, Hymns, Anthems, and Sermons have been heralded from the pulpit.
of this church. Colorful human interest stories regarding the church's growth and development has been orally transmitted through the years.

The Bowen Family for twenty-nine years have shared their meager purses and many have given of themselves entirely. In an attempt to recall some of them, please consider the following:

Mrs. Lois P. Martin 1st. Communion Stewart
Mr. James C. Martin Sr. 1st. Treasurer
Mr. Donnie L. Trammell 1st. Pres. H. C. Fisher Choir
Mr. Aaron Holloway 1st Pres. Paul Parker Choir
Mrs. Kline Hornsby 1st. Supt. of Church School
Mrs. Morteen Terrell 1st Pres. District of Woman's Society of Christian Service from Bowen

Mrs. Eunice Butler 1st Membership and Financial Secretary
Miss Juanita Martin 1st Sunday School Sec.
Mr. John Robinson and 1st District Laymen
Mr. John Mitchell 1st. Acolyte
Mr. David Terrell, Jr. 1st. Methodist Men Pres.
Mr. Marion Berry Methodist Youth Fellowship Pres.
Miss Julia Martin 1st. Pianist for H. C. Fisher Choir and Pres. of the L. P. Martin Guild

Mrs. Mable Robinson 1st. Youth Choir Pianist
Miss Beverly Jackson 1st. Pres. Usher Board
Mrs. Barbara Jacobs and Finally

Whereas God called us into existence from non-existence.
Whereas Jesus Christ is the Foundation of the Church.
Whereas the community of the Holy Spirit represents those persons who congregate in fellowship.
Whereas the Pastors and Parishioners alike are empowered with the same gift of Grace.
Whereas the community of the Church reflects God's action.
Whereas the work of the Spirit is given to serve.
Whereas the work of the Spirit is to Love.
Whereas the community of the church is called to bring others into the fold.
Whereas the power of God transcends that of all humankind.
Therefore

Be it resolved that if any man should boast, he should boast and give praise to our God Almighty for it was God's action that gave birth to Bowen.

SO BE IT.
COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY

Mrs. Mable Robinson  
Mrs. Julia M. Gilmore  
Mrs. Monteen Terrell  
Mrs. Elizabeth Taylor  
Mrs. Eunice Butler Strong  
Rev. & Mrs. Horace Fisher

Rev. Richard D. Winn, Pastor

RESOURCE PERSONS

Rev. Simon Snell  
Dr. H. V. Richardson  
Rev. A. S. Dickerson  
Bishop L. Scott Allen  
Dr. M. J. Jones  
Mrs. Frances Huff  
Mrs. Ruby Hill  
Rev. T. P. Grisson  
Mrs. William Hornsby  
Mrs. Barbara Jacobs  
The Martin Family