HISTORY OF
FIRST METHODIST CHURCH
(Formerly PROSPECT)
CHAMBLEE, GEORGIA
In writing a history of a church one is obviously indebted to innumerable people. So it is with the History of First Methodist Church, Chamblee, Georgia. (Formerly Prospect). We wish to extend appreciation to all who have helped to make, and to write, the record. Especially do we wish to thank Mrs. Carlos D. Jones, W. W. Mendenhall, Mrs. Carl B. Wallace, and others, who compiled the present writing. Mrs. Carlos D. Jones, who headed the Committee, is the oldest member of the Church. Mrs. Selwyn Taylor, Mrs. H. H. Allen, Mrs. George Lavoie, Mr. and Mrs. J. Franklin Mims, Miss Judy Pressley, and Blair Robinson made invaluable contributions in typing, printing, and editing.

W. C. Bowen, Minister
An Exhortation to Praise God

Psalm 100

"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.

Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endurèth to all to all generations."
The land on which the former Prospect (now The First Methodist Church of Chamblee) stands is a small part of the territory ceded to the State of Georgia by the Creek Indians. It was originally a part of Henry County. In the Fourth Land Lot Lottery of 1821, the five counties composing the lottery were divided into tracts of 202½ acres each. The State sold these land lots for $19.00 each or 9 and 1/3 cents per acre. Benjamin T. Watkins of Oglethorpe County, Georgia, was the first white man to own Land Lot 309, the ground on which the Prospect Church building was erected.

Almost immediately settlers began to arrive. They came, not for diamonds, gold, silver, or iron. This land offered them none of these. They came to establish homes and to support them by labor. Best of all, with their striving for food they brought a hunger for righteousness. If their church buildings were crude log structures, it was because their homes were the same.

It is not known who organized Prospect Methodist Church. The date of its founding was 1826. Viewing the past of some 138 years, with very few records from which to gather information, Prospect Church seems to have been the spontaneous outgrowth of a people hungering for spiritual knowledge and fellowship as they tried to live a Christian life. These settlers formed Bible study classes or “societies” as they called them. They met regularly in the various homes on Sabbath afternoons. With undaunted faith and untiring zeal in the cause they loved, they saw their work prosper.

The Presbyterians were the first denomination in the community to acquire land. Their property was located near the entrance of the present Presbyterian cemetery. This was a convenient location on a ridge where two Indian trails crossed. In the early days, the white man’s roads largely followed the Indian trails.

The Presbyterian friends and neighbors were generous. Since the Methodist at that time had no edifice in which to worship, the Presbyterians tendered the use of their building. This offer was accepted and the two denominations worshipped together until the Methodist located and built their first church. There was preaching when a preacher of either denomination was available.

Later, the Methodists acquired 2½ acres south of the Presbyterian site. It is not known who originally donated or sold the land. In 1851 a warranty deed was executed by John Y. Flowers as executor of the estate of John W. Reeves, deceased, to Samuel House, Stephen Tilly, Alfred T. H. Pool, and Jabey M. Loyd, as Trustees of the Methodist Church, South, at Prospect, and their successors in office. As the DeKalb Courthouse fire of 1844 destroyed old records, it is not possible to determine who owned the land during the years between Mr. Watkins’ purchase and the settlement of Mr. Reeves’ estate.
The first church was a split-log house, as were most all buildings of that period. A few small windows were cut through the logs to provide light. That building stood about 300 feet to the rear of the present building and was erected in 1847. It was a frame house, weather-boarded with rough boards, had windows without sashes, no ceiling, floors were laid with undressed boards which left large cracks. There was no stove or fireplace for heating. It was very comfortable in warm weather, but in winter it was colder than being out in the sunshine. Yet, in this building the saints praised God, sang old hymns, exhorted and prayed to the uplift of their spiritual fervor.

There is no known reason for the name “Prospect” being given to the new church. However, since the Presbyterians had named their church “Prosperity”, and they and the Methodists had worshipped together in the former’s building, it might be surmised that the Methodists chose the name “Prospect” in the hope that their new church would become as great a blessing to the community as Prosperity Church had become.

We are unable to locate any records of the early years of Prospect Methodist Church. Therefore, it is not possible to give the number or the names of all charter members. We will list the names of those whom we are reasonably certain were charter members.

Stephen Tilly and family, consisting of three sons and four daughters, were all devout members. The sons were Ebenezer, Robert, and Fletcher. Robert went to Floyd County, Georgia, when a young man. The daughters were Margaret, Adeline, Caroline, and June. All lived a life of piety and their descendants can well rise up and call themselves blessed by such parentage.

David Ballenger and family were members. He and son, William, were local preachers; he also had two or three daughters.

Dr. John Ballenger and family were all Methodist. They moved to Cobb County while Prospect Church was quite young.

Other members were the families of John M. Riddle and Thomas Akin. There certainly were others who helped plant the vine at Prospect but we are unable to name them. This little band, while few in number, were inspired to make necessary sacrifices so that their beloved church might be instrumental in the salvation of souls and glorify the Head of His spiritual kingdom.

Church membership increased as other settlers moved into the community and the children of these early pioneers became old enough for church membership. These people were also children of God. Their names deserve to be remembered because of their good influence and works. Some of these are as follows:

Samuel House, a class leader, was full of zeal and fervor. He was often so
filled with the Holy Ghost that his cup would run over. Jake Loyd was another class leader who never shirked a duty whatever the task might be. Joseph Elliott exerted a great influence over all with whom he came in contact. Asa Braswell, George Gaddy, Alfred Peel, and Frances Metcalf were all true to the church. Later came George Braswell who was licensed to preach. He was a very promising young preacher. But when the War Between the States broke out, George joined the army of his beloved Southland and died while in service. His brother, S. H. Braswell, was a preacher of great ability and did much for the church-at-large. He filled many charges as a supply pastor and was especially helpful to Prospect Church.

John T. McElroy transferred to Prospect from the Presbyterian Church. He was licensed to preach and had a very bright mind and a real Christian experience. He was a frail man and died rather young.

Then there were Philip, Jake, John, George, Jeff, and Crocket House—all good men.

Newt Miller was a man of prayer and loved the church. Dr. George N. Flowers was one of the last of the older members to pass to the Great Beyond. He was a staunch friend of Prospect Church and was loved by all who knew him.

Where there is life, it follows that there is physical death. So a new cemetery was begun. There is a story concerning the first grave. In the early days of Prospect Church, families moved great distances by wagon as they looked for places to settle and make a home. A young couple was passing down Peachtree Road, which was then as now, a main thoroughfare. The couple had all of their belongings loaded on the wagon. They also had one small child, who became sick while they were in the Prospect vicinity. They stopped for assistance and found not only shelter but also kindness and help. The neighbors came together and ministered to the child with such medicines as they had. But the child died and a little casket was made. The little body was laid to rest in the new church yard with a simple service. Prayers were offered for the parents who journeyed on. For some time only the one little grave marked the place where so many were to lie through the years.

During the early years of Prospect Methodist Church, it was a part of the Decatur Circuit. That was in the days before there was an Atlanta or even a Chamblee. The Reverend A. Pennington was the first pastor on record; the Reverend J. H. McArver was Junior Preacher. There were ten local preachers. The white members in the Circuit numbered 566 and there were 74 colored members. It is not known how many of the 640 Decatur Circuit membership belonged to the Prospect Church. The year was 1838.

In studying Methodism in Georgia, written by Doctor Alfred Mann Pierce, in the hope of finding some information concerning Prospect we found the general
information that about 1834 or 1835 when the Cherokee District was laid out, it took in the northern part of the state all the way from the Savannah to the Coosa Rivers and from Henry County to the Blue Ridge Mountains. In 1847 when the Wesley Chapel, Atlanta, located on the present-day Candler Building site, came into being, it and Prospect had the same pastors, the Reverends Anderson Ray and Eustace Speer, Junior Preacher. Wesley Chapel later became First Methodist Church of Atlanta. Both of these churches were a part of the Decatur Circuit. We conclude that Prospect Church had never been a part of the Cherokee District. In 1846, the Districts were Savannah, Augusta, Columbus, Macon, Athens, and LaGrange.

Doctor Pierce’s book states that the Decatur Circuit included DeKalb, Fulton, Gwinnett, and Campbell Counties. There were 22 appointments. The salary was set at $180.00 per year. In 1846 when the first Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was held in Athens, the allowance for a preacher was $150.00 per annum for the man, same for the wife, and a small amount for each child under 14 years of age.

Preachers had to be deeply consecrated to be away from home so much and to receive such a small stipend. The circuit-riding pastor had to preach almost every day in order to get around once each month. Mr. McElroy writes that he thinks Prospect’s preaching day was Wednesday. Nevertheless, Prospect Church had services three Sundays each month and members visited other churches on one Sunday. These services were possible because of the large number of local preachers within the Decatur Circuit. These devout men would ride from ten to twenty miles for an appointment. Some of the men who served in this capacity were Noah Smith, David Ballenger, Henry Clark, Jimmie Williams, Elijah Byrd, Dr. Fowler, Joe Huie, William Holbrook, S. H. Braswell, and Mr. Chandler.

Besides the consecrated men in the ministry, there was another group called “Exhorters”. They were men who did a lot of good and were used by the pastors in various capacities. When one mentions them, it must be remembered that most of them did not belong to the Prospect Methodist Church. However, Elijah Boggs was one of those exhorters who did belong. He was an unlearned man, but he knew many hymns and much scripture by memory. His exhortations and prayers were so fervent that he reached the hearts of many people.

The year of 1845 brought changes in the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, came into being because of a division over slavery. The Decatur Circuit was assigned a new pastor, the Reverend J. B. Jackson, in 1846. As far as the records show, he was the first appointed pastor since 1838. The work had apparently been carried on for eight years by the Reverends Pennington and McArver and the local preachers and exhorters. In 1847, the the Reverend Anderson Ray became pastor and the Reverend Eustace Speer, Junior Preacher. The years 1848-49 brought the Reverend J. W. Yarbrough to head the flock and the Reverend Mr. Winn as Junior Preacher. In 1850, the Rev-
erend Noah Smith was appointed pastor and the Reverend Mr. Neese, Junior Preacher. The Reverend R. Lane was sent as pastor and the Reverend J. R. Owens as Junior Preacher in 1852. The year 1853 brought the Reverend J. L. Davies as pastor and the Reverend W. M. Watts as Junior Preacher. The Reverend J. H. Ewing came in 1854 and the Reverend Albert Gray in 1855. The year 1855 also ushered in the Dahlonega District and apparently the Decatur Circuit became a part of it. White members were 1150 and colored, 329. That year $55.00 was paid to missions and $18.00 to Conference Collections.

The 1856 Conference appointed the Reverend Alford Dorman to be pastor and the Reverend H. H. Parks as Presiding Elder. The Reverend J. M. Armstrong became pastor in 1857. The amount of $91.00 was paid to missions, $416.00 to Conference Collections, and $40.00 to Sunday School. This is the first reference to a Sunday School and the same is not located. Since the white membership dropped from 1150 to 457 and the colored from 329 to 152, it is assumed that the membership again referred to the Circuit. Still there is no record of what part of this total was Prospect Methodist Church’s membership.

The Reverend A. Maulsby became pastor in 1858, and about this time, the Atlanta District came into being. The total of $7.00 was paid to missions and $421.00 to Conference Collections. White membership was 417 and colored, 186. It is assumed that the Decatur Circuit was placed in the Atlanta District.

In 1859 came the Reverend N. E. Ousley. Conference collections were $141.75. Later Ousley Chapel in DeKalb County was organized by this pastor and named for him.

The Reverend T. T. Arnold came in 1860. The Reverend J. W. Yarbrough was Presiding Elder. Conference collections were $115.05. White membership was 534 and colored, 200. This is the last year that the colored are listed as members. Some of these colored members were very zealous, loved the church, were religious in their homes, and preachers were numbered among them.

In 1861, the Reverend J. H. Mashburn became pastor and the Reverend J. W. Yarbrough continued as Presiding Elder. The year 1862 brought the Reverend J. M. Lowry as pastor. He was followed in 1863 by the Reverend Mr. Williams. Conference sent the Reverend H. Crawford as pastor in 1864 and the Reverend Walter Branham as Presiding Elder. The pastor was succeeded in 1865-66 by the Reverend J. J. Morgan. The period just referred to were war years and there is little information available.

The white membership of the Decatur Circuit was 563. The colored, not being listed, further indicates that they had organized churches of their own.

Since 1869 there have been quite a number of preachers whose talents, lives, and all that they had were consecrated to the church and Kingdom of our Heaven-

Up to the year 1919 the Circuit which included Prospect Church had a total of 48 pastors during the 72 years of which there is a partial record. The average tenure of these pastors was one and one half years. The reason for such short periods of service causes one to believe that Dr. Pierce was right when he wrote that a pastor's wages were considered cancelled when he was moved. So with such a pittance for continuous travel and unpaid salaries, it is no wonder that the preachers moved often.

During this period Prospect Church made progress. In 1895, six acres of land was purchased for $245.00 - "to have and to hold for church purposes forever in fee simple". This deed was from H. P. Tilly to E. S. Purcell, C. J. Carroll, R. F. Bolton, and C. C. Hart as Trustees of Prospect Church. Again in 1901, three acres between Peachtree Road and the Southern Railroad were purchased. The price was $100.00 and the deed was from H. P. Tilly to R. F. Bolton, E. S. Purcell, W. M. Elliott, and G. A. Metcalf as Trustees of Prospect Church and their successors in office. So we see that, regardless of whatever Circuit the Prospect Church was a part, she, as an individual church, was expanding. For not only were two additional tracts of land purchased, but in 1885 the third and present main building was erected to replace the second one built in 1847. The cost of these buildings is unknown. It is assumed that the first two were constructed from donated material and labor. The same may be said about a part of the third structure. Another sign of progress was that the Chamblee and the Norcross Churches were removed from the Decatur Circuit, and became a Charge with the pastor residing in a parsonage at Norcross.

Things did not always go well with our beloved Prospect Church. She, too, has known hours of discouragements. During the years between 1905 and 1910 several of our leading families including the Metcalfs, the Tillys, the Eldons, the Christians, and others, sold their homes and moved to South Georgia. Their moving away left our church crippled and discouraged. But out of our misfortune came a blessing to the community into which they moved, for these faithful families organized a new Methodist Church and named it Prospect. Here at home the pastor, the Reverend J. S. Sappington, continued to preach and work. Slowly, renewed faith and activity took hold and growth started again.

About 1905 the Woman's Missionary Society was organized and met in the home
of Mrs. A. R. Watkins. Mrs. C. D. Jones and Mrs. Ashford were charter members. It grew slowly but never lacked a serious desire to serve at home and abroad.

World War I dealt Prospect Church another blow. Old Camp Gordon took the homes of several of our members and forced their moving away. This, too, was followed by a great blessing. For at the war's close, the indomitable Reverend Nath Thompson, affectionally known as "Uncle Nath" was appointed pastor. He worked and preached and saw six classrooms added to the church.

Prospect Church took great pride in 1922 to see the Reverend Charles B. Drake ordained Elder in the North Georgia Conference of the Methodist Church. He served faithfully for thirty-six years until his retirement in 1957.

In 1922 the Reverend J. W. O. McKibben was appointed to the Chamblee-Norcross Charge. During his pastorate the property lines were established and marked. Also, the 100th anniversary celebration of the organization of Prospect Methodist Church was planned. The old silver communion service set was replaced with a new individual service set costing $65.00. In the fall, the 100th anniversary of our church was celebrated. October 31, 1926, was a great day! Sunday School began at 10:00 o'clock; preaching service at 11:00. Bishop W. A. Candler delivered the sermon. His text was from John 21:3 — "I Go a-Fishing". He preached a very inspiring sermon. At noon a dinner for all was spread in the grove. In the afternoon as complete a history of the Church as could be assembled was read. Mr. S. T. McElroy had prepared the history. It was dedicated to Mr. McElroy's mother, Mrs. Margaret Tilly McElroy, a charter member of the church.

The 1926 Conference appointed the Reverend A. J. Sears as pastor. His stay with us was one year; the first training course for Sunday School teachers was taught by the Reverend J. C. Adams, Conference Secretary of Education. Following the Reverend Mr. Sears, Dr. T. M. Elliott served as pastor during 1927, '28, '29. The Reverend S. P. Wiggins was the Presiding Elder for these years.

In 1930 Prospect Church was changed from the North Atlanta District to the Decatur-Oxford District. The Reverend J. J. Copeland served as pastor for two years and the Reverend R. Z. Tyler was Presiding Elder. Mr. George Pierce, Sr. served ably for many years as Sunday School Superintendent.

Beginning in 1932, the Reverend D. P. Eubanks served as pastor for three years. He was followed by the Reverend H. C. Stratton who was pastor for five years. Dr. Wallace Rogers was Presiding Elder. For five years, the Reverend Mr. Stratton labored among us with love and pushed forward the building of the west wing of the church. During this period the Woman's Missionary Society became the Woman's Society of Christian Service. Mrs. Stratton guided the organization of the Young Woman's Service Guild. Both groups are still growing and active.
The year 1940 not only saw our pastor changed but this church was taken out of the Decatur-Oxford District and became a part of the Atlanta-East District. The Reverend R. P. Ethridge was appointed Pastor and Doctor E. G. Mackay, Presiding Elder. By the untiring efforts of the pastor, the church was brought into a position to become a station in 1942. Prospect had for many years been a half station with the Norcross Methodist Church.

The Reverend B. L. Barton was Prospect's first full-time pastor. During his pastorate a nice brick parsonage was built on the church property near the sanctuary and was appropriately furnished. There is no record of its cost. The Reverend Mr. Barton served two years and was followed by the Reverend C. E. Brantley who served two years. During these two years of service the church auditorium was reworked throughout—new overhead, new floors, new windows, and new furnishings. A pulpit Bible was given by Mrs. Sears, Miss Dorothy Walker and Miss Mary Walker, now Mrs. H. H. Allen, in memory of the Reverend A. J. Sears, a former pastor. Hymnals were given by Mrs. Elizabeth Hays in memory of her mother, Mrs. Green, a sister of Mrs. Myrtle Minors. The cross for the communion table was given by Mr. and Mrs. S. D. Johnson, Sr. in memory of their parents. Mr. J. W. Purcell, Sr. donated the Baptismal pedestal. These gifts were made at different times and dedicated when given.

The Reverend J. C. Moore was appointed pastor in 1945 and served five years. During his pastorate the east wing of the Church and the basement with a kitchen were built. Mr. H. H. Allen served as Church School Superintendent. The enrollment and attendance increased steadily.

The meeting date of the annual North Georgia Conference was changed from November of each year to June. In 1949 the Bishop appointed the Reverend J. Howell Hearn as pastor of the Prospect Church. His pastorate was most fruitful. He shared with his predecessor the accomplishment of completing the furnishings of the kitchen and adding a classroom. He also had the pleasure of dedicating a new electric organ. On November 29, 1951, while he was pastor, the 125th anniversary of the organization of the Prospect Methodist Church was celebrated. So ended twenty-five years of outstanding growth and service since the celebration of the 100th anniversary. Herman Loyd served as Church School Superintendent. He was a young man of pleasing personality and great zeal. His loyalty led to organizing an active Board of Christian Education.

The Annual Conference in June 1952, saw fit to send to the Prospect Methodist Church a new pastor, the Reverend Dan Maxey. His sermons made lasting impressions with such subjects as "Altitudes vs. our Attitudes", "Ye Are the Light of the World", "A Church as Christ Would Have It", "The Cities of Refuge", "The Rose of Sharon", etc. Under the Reverend Maxey's guidance a much needed Educational Building was completed at a cost of $110,000.00. This increased accommodation added much to our temporal and spiritual growth.

The Reverend Ralph Hawkins was appointed pastor in June 1956. His pastorate
was very fruitful. He had the pleasure of seeing the debt on the Educational Building paid in full. Through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. C. D. Jones a gift from the sale of a valuable tract of land started a fund for a Sanctuary. A kindergarten was begun and continues to run successfully. Chimes were dedicated March 2, 1958, a gift from Mr. and Mrs. C. D. Jones. A speaking system was installed February 23, 1959, a great aid to those with impaired hearing. But most gratifying was our Sunday School attendance which attained first place in attendance in our District. By a vote of the congregation the name Prospect Methodist was changed to First Methodist Church, Chamblee. This occurred in 1961.

In June 1961, the Reverend W. C. Bowen was appointed to serve the Chamblee Church. With his inspiration and zeal, the church has made great progress. We are most grateful for our two young men who have been called into the Ministry. The Reverend Grafton Pressley is now serving in our North Georgia Conference. The Reverend Douglas Brown was chosen as our Assistant Pastor while a student in college and is now a member of our Conference.

Since the Reverend Mr. Bowen is still our pastor (1965-66), it seems fitting that the years of his pastorate be used to illustrate the growth of the First Methodist Church of Chamblee. At the beginning of the Conference year June 1961, the church membership was 972, at its close June 1962, 1056 or a net gain of 84. Total Church School membership was 901 with an average attendance of 519 and was under the leadership of Superintendent Jim Hubbard. He was succeeded by Mr. Lynn Johnston. The average attendance at the Vacation Church School was 229. The Men’s Club numbered 45 members. The Woman’s Society of Christian Service increased rapidly and the work became more fruitful.

The 1962-63 Conference year brought a net gain of 39 in church membership and the total became 1095. The average attendance at the Vacation Church School increased to 270.

In May 1962, the Atlanta-East District Woman’s Society of Christian Service made Mrs. W. A. Mendenhall a Sustaining Life Member. This was the first membership of its kind in the North Georgia Conference. Mrs. Mendenhall served as District President of the Woman’s Society of Christian Service for eight years and is a past President of our local Society.

The Church Conference in February 1963 voted to relocate the church in the area north of the Industrial Boulevard and south of the Perimeter Road. This had been previously passed by the Official Board and the Quarterly Conference. Also, it was voted to put into effect the plan for the perpetual care and enlargement of the cemetery. The Trustees were given the authority to negotiate the sale of the present property.

A called Quarterly Conference was held in August 1963. The Conference voted to purchase the Flowerland property on 4147 Chamblee-Dunwoody Road as the
site of the new church. The price was $96,000.00. The property consists of
38.1 acres—the largest acreage of any Methodist Church site in Georgia. At
this time Chamblee First Methodist Church was in the Atlanta-Emory District
with Doctor W. Rembert Sisson as District Superintendent.

The church membership was increased by 15 and began the 1964-65 year with a
membership of 1110.

Junior and Youth Choirs were organized under the direction of Robert Bowling,
the Youth Director. These groups added spiritual contributions to the ever in­
creasing Sunday evening worship services.

On April 18, 1965, a ground-breaking service was held on the site of the future
First Methodist Church, Chamblee. Mr. and Mrs. Carlos Jones removed the first
shovel of dirt at the ground-breaking service. Mrs. Jones has been a member of
the Chamblee Church for almost 75 years. Also present at the ground-breaking
was James Colquitt Taylor, infant son of Mr. and Mrs. Selwyn B. Taylor. The
young James was the youngest child of the congregation. Pictures were taken
as Mrs. Jones, the church’s oldest member, held little James Colquitt Taylor,
the youngest. At this service the pastor opened the doors of the church. Mr.
and Mrs. B. G. Martin and family presented themselves for membership.

Several others participated in removing a shovel of dirt. Another unique circum­
stance was that the ground-breaking was attended by Carlos Jones, Carl Wallace
and his three sisters, Mrs. Ida Carroll, Mrs. Alma Eidson, and Mrs. Sam Johnson,
Sr. All of these were born on the site of the new church.

Also present and participating in the ground-breaking ceremony were Dr. Claude
M. Haynes of the North Georgia Church Extension Board, Dr. Gordon Thompson,
our Atlanta-Emory District Superintendent, the Reverend Douglas Brown, Asso­
ciate Pastor, and the Reverend Robert Bowling, Youth Director.

The June 1965 session of the North Georgia Conference returned the Reverend
Mr. Bowen to our church. We entered this new Conference year with a member­
ship of over 1200. We began construction of the new church consisting, first,
of an educational wing and interim sanctuary. In February a spiritual revival
accompanied a financial campaign. At this time pledges were made that will
see us through the first phase of our building program.

Truly, the Good Lord has prospered us. From a humble beginning of 2½ acres
of land and a building which at the time probably had a total value of less than
$50.00, we press onward toward the construction of a new education building and
sanctuary in which to study and worship. Membership increased from a charter
membership of approximately 15 to 1200. So closed the 1964-65 Conference
year. We began the 1965-66 year with our same pastor.
As supplements to this history are added in future years, it is our sincere desire and prayer that the fellowship, loyal devotion to the Service of our Master, and of "the present age", be continued with the fervent enthusiasm of the early church.

EPILOGUE

After breaking ground a contract was let to Daniel and Daniel, Inc. for grading of a twelve acre section of the new property and, for the erection of a bridge across the creek at the Chamblee-Dunwoody entrance. The date of this was May 28, 1965. Work proceeded for one day and was interrupted by a lengthy "operators' strike."

A contract for the erection of the building was awarded to W. E. Carroll and Son on October 10, 1965. Work was to be completed in 360 calendar days. Again, strikes interfered. Carpenters, Steel-Workers, and Sheet Metal Workers were on strike for three months during construction. The Congregation moved into the new facilities on January 1, 1967. The Building Committee, composed of Cicero A. Johnston, Chairman, Robert F. Brown, Sr., Frank L. Berry, Lynn H. Johnston, and Glenn S. Hinshaw, had done their work well. Robert T. Beall, Chairman of the Official Board, and Herbert W. Hatley, Church Lay Leader, served as Ex-Officio Members. A large debt of appreciation is due these faithful men.

The Reverend W. C. Bowen was the Pastor and the Reverend Richard B. Long, Associate Pastor, at the time of occupancy of the new facilities.

For the past six years, the history of the Church has been recorded in ASPIRE. Future historians have but to compile the record.
The Sanctuary of the old church, as it is pictured above, was erected in 1885. Two wings, plus additions to front and rear, were also added changing the original building into the structure that we knew.
Our present Georgian Structure was begun in 1965.