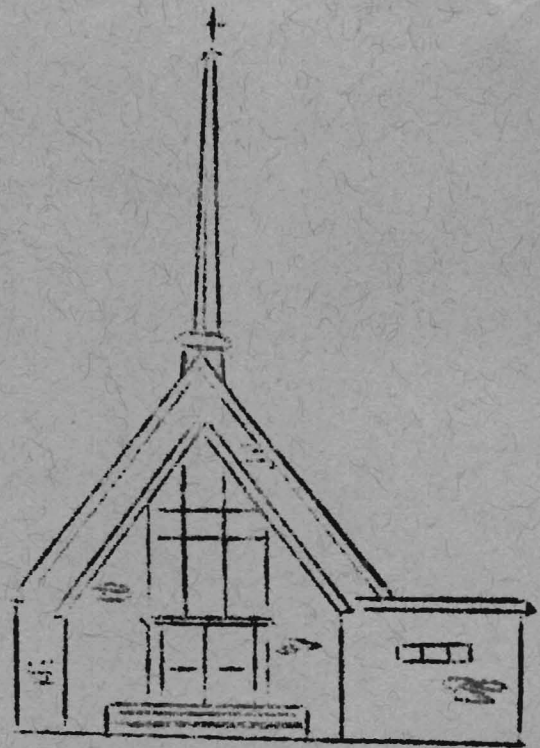


CLIFTON UNITED  
METHODIST CHURCH  
2918 Clifton Church Rd..  
Atlanta, GA 30316



1830 - Ninety-eight years after Oglethorpe landed at Yamacraw Bluff,  
nine years after DeKalb County was settled by white men, one year after  
Andrew Jackson became President --

At Salem Camp Ground in 1830, a new Methodist Protestant Church was organized. This church was named Clifton Meeting House after Mr. Aaron Clifton, the first man to own the property on which our church stands.

On September 20, 1832, Mr. Starling Harris deeded approximately two acres to the trustees, "in consideration for the love which he hath and beareth unto the Methodist Protestant Society, a plot of land for the Clifton Meeting House and a burial ground." A log house with a chimney and a fireplace served as the first meeting house for the worshipers and doubled as a schoolhouse.

On May 1, 1858 an additional half acre of land was deeded to the trustees by Mr. William C. White. Around 1870 the main portion of what we now call the "old building" was erected. Its main timbers are 12 x 12 heart of oak hewn by hand with a broad axe. Originally there were two front doors and two aisles. The left door was for the men and the right door was for the women. Its first pulpit was a large waist high box affair which was notorious for being a "sweat-box." Amen corners were set aside in the front, one for men and one for women.

In the early 1900's several of the Presidents of the Georgia Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church served as pastors of Clifton. Among these were W. M. Hunton, S.C. Campbell and E.P. Cowan.

Mr. Gus Pitts, "a Presbyterian all his life", was one of Clifton's early leaders. He organized the Sunday School and was the Superintendent until his death in 1905. He was influential in organizing the Mills District Sunday School Singing Celebration for all the churches in the district, regardless of the denomination. The third Wednesday in July everyone packed a picnic lunch, hitched up the wagon and came to Clifton to compete for the "banner." The Sunday School that won the banner took it home to display all year the fact that they were the best singers. At first the group sang under a brush Arbor. Later the men of the church built the Tabernacle for the celebration.

Around 1920 two Sunday School rooms were added on the sides of the building and around 1930 two more rooms were added on the back. In 1923 the interior of the church was remodeled. New pews were bought and the pulpit still in use last Sunday replaced the old "Sweat-box". The two doors were made into windows, the large double doors cut for the main entrance, and men and women were allowed to sit together.

In 1932 a Youth Training Camp for the District was established at Clifton. Dormitories were built behind the Tabernacle and a kitchen behind the church building. Local church leaders served as teachers and workers. The outstanding pastors of the conference district participated in the training school and Pastors Seminaries were held at the camp.

In 1939 the Methodist Protestant Church United with the Methodist Episcopal Church to form the Methodist Church of the United States.

On March 17, 1947, Mr. G. M. Wright deeded to the trustees 3.94 acres of land around the original plant. This brought the total acreage to 6.44 acres.

Clifton has always been recognized as a leader in the community and had an average membership of 100 even in its earliest days when this area was very rural and neighbors lived far apart. Around 1945 this section of DeKalb County began to grow and Clifton grew with the County.

In 1947 we had our first "full-time" Pastor who preached at Clifton the 1st and 3rd Sundays, at Cedar Grove the 2nd and 4th Sundays and lived at Cedar Grove's parsonage. In 1954 Clifton's parsonage was built and Clifton became a full-station church.

In 1957 the lower floor of the new building was completed and in 1964 the dream of a new Church Building was fulfilled with the addition of the Sanctuary for which consecration services are being held today, June 28, 1964.

This is only an outline of the Highlights of Clifton's History. Many dates and events, and most of its outstanding leaders are not included. Most of the facts about the church before 1900 have been gathered by talking to the older members. We hope to write a complete history which will include all the facts, figures, dates, people, and anecdotes of Clifton's 134 years. If you have any information, old stories, old pictures, or church records, please let us know.



## THE HISTORY OF CLIFTON

In 1830, ninety-eight years after Oglethorpe landed at Yamacraw Bluff, nine years after DeKalb County was settled by white men, one year after Andrew Jackson became president, a new Methodist Protestant Church was organized at Salem Camp Ground. This church was named Clifton Meeting House after Aaron Clifton, the first man to own the property on which this church stands.

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Gus Pitts, a Presbyterian, was one of Clifton's early leaders. He organized the Sunday School and was the Superintendent until his death in 1905. He was influential in organizing the Mills District Sunday School Singing Convention for all the churches in the district, regardless of denomination.

Around 1920, two side rooms were added to the "Old Building" as Sunday School rooms, and around 1930 two more were added to the back. In 1923 the interior of the church was remodeled, new pews were bought and a pulpit replaced the old "sweat box." The two doors were made into windows, large double doors were placed in the center for the main entrance, and the men and women began to sit together.

In 1932 a Youth Training Camp for the district was established at Clifton. Dormitories were built behind the tabernacle and a kitchen behind the church building. Local church leaders served as teachers and workers.

On March 17, 1947, G. M. Wright deeded to the trustees 3.94 acres of land around the original plant. This brought the total acreage to the present amount of 6.44 acres.

In 1947, the pastor preached at Clifton on the first and third Sundays, at Cedar Grove on the second and Fourth Sundays, and lived at Cedar Grove in the parsonage. The year 1954 was when Clifton's parsonage was built and Clifton became a station or full time charge.

The first floor of the new building was completed in 1957, and on June 28, 1964, the dream of a new church building was fulfilled with the completion of the Sanctuary.

On May 1, 1975, the final note on the new building was paid and we rejoiced on the achievement of a debt free building. On May 25, 1975, a Service of Dedication was conducted along with the "presentation and burning of the mortgage."