

A HISTORY OF CUMMING METHODIST CHURCH
CUMMING, GEORGIA

BY

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FOREWORD

I am aware of the fact that this history is incomplete. Space, time, expense, and misplaced and incomplete records have made it impossible to write a connected history. I hope, though, that this will be the background to which a factual informative report can be added each year.

Sources used for information were:

SOUTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE RECORDS, METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH RECORDS, GEORGIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE RECORDS, NORTH GEORGIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE RECORDS, EARLIER HISTORIES OF CUMMING CHURCH, QUARTERLY CONFERENCE RECORDS, CUMMING CHURCH CONFERENCE MINUTES, AND COURTHOUSE DEED RECORDS.

Mrs. Dean Barrett

HISTORIAN

CUMMING METHODIST CHURCH

Cumming First Methodist Church was constituted in 1836. It was given the name of the town in which it was founded. Cumming had been laid out as a township in 1833 and had been incorporated by an act of the legislature on December 22, 1834.

In 1836, an indenture was made between the trustees of Inferior Court of Forsyth County, who were: Ira Foster, Ruben Sams, Elias Fincher, and Joseph D. Foster, and the trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who were: Noah Strong, William H. Ray, Anderson Cook, and Allen Weems. Through this indenture, a building lot containing one acre, more or less, was obtained for the sum of fifty dollars. This transaction was recorded on June 14, 1836. The church sold this building site in 1956, and it was purchased by Phillips 66 Petroleum Company. Slacks Auto Parts and the Phillips 66 Service Station now occupy this lot.

According to legend, the first Methodist church building was constructed of logs and erected on this lot around 1840. That building was later sold and a frame structure was built at the same location. During the Civil War, the church was ceiled and glass windows were installed. Dr. Marcus Mashburn Sr. recalls this house of worship in his church history given at Homecoming in 1953 as follows:

"One of my early recollections was a little little church that set about where the present one now stands, built of wood, with a spire in the center pointing heavenward..... I can remember there was a little road in front of the church and the old Heavenbush tree that stood at some distance between the church and the road. In my mind's eye, I can see Ole Brother Andy Kelley as he drove his yellow mule to a side spring buggy and hitched it to this tree and went in to worship. If the preacher preached longer than two hours, this old mule would begin braying. Since I was quite a child then, as now, not interested in too long a sermon, I almost felt like joining in the chorus."

This wooden building was demolished and a brick building was erected in 1914-15. Rev. G. W. Hamilton was pastor at this time. The congregation met at the First Baptist Church for services while the construction was in progress. Those on the building committee were: C. L. Harris, Chairman; R. E. Hope, Treasurer; Marcus Mashburn, Secretary; and E. F. Smith, H. A. Kelley, W. J. Groover, Geo. L. Merritt, J. G. Puett, A. O. Barrett, J. E. Puett, H. C. Poole, H. L. Patterson, C. E. Davenport, and Claude Groover.

In 1920 when Bishop Warren A. Candler dedicated the Cumming Church to the service of God, the building was valued at \$10,000 and carried \$2,000 worth of insurance. The deed carried in it the trust clause. The last service held in this church was conducted by the Rev. John Ozley on January 13, 1957.

The present building site of three acres, more or less, was donated by the Mashburn Family who had previously purchased it for this purpose from F. E. Martin for the sum of \$2500. It is located on Pilgrim Mill Road about

one-fourth of a mile from the former location in town. The new building and equipment cost approximately \$66,000.00. The plans for the new edifice were drawn by Dr. E. J. Hammond. Ground-breaking ceremonies were held on Sunday June 9, 1957 at two P. M. Mr. Jerry Byers was contractor for the job. Services were held in the Forsyth County High School building during the erection of the new church.

The committee members were:

1. PLANNING - Mrs. John Pittard, Chairman, Mrs. Paul Holbrook, Mrs. Myrtie Poole., Dr. Marcus Mashburn, Sr., Mr. Clyde Mize, and Mr. Milton Patterson
2. BUILDING - Dr. Jim Mashburn, Chairman, Mr. Clyde Mize, Mr. Paul Holbrook, Mr. Emory Lipscomb, Mr. Jim Lankford, Dr. Earl Bearden.
3. FINANCE - Mr. John Pittard, Chairman, Mrs. Grace Palmour, Dr. Marcus Mashburn, Mrs. Doris Graham, Mrs. Jim Mashburn, Mr. Lee Scott, and Mrs. Eva Patterson.

A petition to incorporate the church was signed by Rev. John H. Ozley, as pastor; Mr. John Pittard, Mrs. Doris Graham, as chairman of the Official Board, and Mrs. Joel Webb, as Treasurer. It was granted by Judge Howell Brooke.

"Cumming Methodist Church, Inc." was duly incorporated on the 12th day of September 1957 for a period of thirty-five years. The state seal was affixed november 5, 1957.

The new church provides twelve Sunday School rooms, a kitchen, a large assembly room, pastor's study, church office, four rest rooms, and a sanctuary with a seating capacity of 300. Rev. John Ozley preached the first sermon in this church June 8, 1958. Rev. Horace Couch is the

present pastor.

In church records of 1867-68, there is a record of a parsonage valued at \$400. The exact site has not been located. The present parsonage house and lot were first deeded to the church on December 4, 1873. It was purchased for the sum of \$400 from Mr. and Mrs. Thomas M. Campbell by the trustees of the Methodist Parsonage: R. A. Eakes, F. A. Moon, J. T. Brown, J. O. James, R. N. Blackwood, J. A. Sims, A. W. Johnston, and A. P. Moon. It contained three acres, more or less. It was later sold to Samuel B. Patterson for \$250 on December 17, 1880. On February 16, 1893 the trustees: John Edmondson, R. P. Lester, and J. O. James, rebought the lot at a public auction of the estate of Margarette Patterson.

At Quarterly Conference on July 12, 1930 a motion was carried to sell some part of the unimproved land around the parsonage and apply said funds to the improvement of the parsonage. The present parsonage is valued at \$4,000. It became the property of the Cumming Church on May 24, 1952. The church purchased the interest of all the other churches or circuit when it became a full-time station.

The transaction was between the trustees of the Cumming charge: Dr. Marcus Mashburn, Sr., Carl Martin, W. E. Harris, B. D. Brown, H. H. Kellog, H. A. Pierce, and trustees of Cumming Methodist: John Pittard, Maynard Mashburn, W. E. Lipscomb, Clyde Mize, A. C. Kennemore, Dr. Marcus Mashburn, Sr., and F. E. Martin.

The Cumming Church has been in the following districts:

Cherokee District	1836 - 1844
Dahlonega District	1844 - 1845 1850 - 1851 1854 - 1873
Marietta District	1845 - 1846 1912 - 1940
Gainesville District	1847 - 1849 1852 - 1853 1874 - 1912 1940 - 1959

In the Georgia Conference, the church was first recognized as Cumming Mission and then as Cumming Circuit. Among the churches that have been associated with the Cumming Circuit are: Wesley Chapel, Mt. Zion, Antioch, Silom at Coal Mountain, Ebenezer, New Hope, Shiloh, Bethel View, Pleasant Grove, and Piedmont. Cumming became a full time station in 1948 when Hugh McKee was pastor.

In the 1836-37 records of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Cumming (do.) was listed as having 281 white members and 12 colored members. In 1869 the Cumming colored charge was constituted. Lawyer Washington, a colored preacher, was the first pastor. The negro churches and cemeteries were abandoned in 1912 when the negroes left Forsyth County. The present enrollment in 1959 is 158.

In 1837 collections were listed a \$8.25. In 1957-1958 total collections were listed a \$39,284. This last amount included bonds sold to pay for the new church.

There have been many great revivals held under the auspices of the Cumming Church. On several occasions, tent meetings were conducted. Two memorable series of services were preached by Reverend Marvin Williams and Reverend Nath Thompson.

In 1860 there were eight Sunday Schools in the charge. The first written report of a Sunday School was on records of 1904. Dr. Hockenhull, Judge H. L. Patterson, Mr. Enoch Mashburn, and Mr. E. F. Smith all served long terms as superintendents. Sunday School sessions were held around 2:30 O'clock on Sunday afternoon. In 1911 the conference sent out an edict that all Sunday Schools must be organized into Missionary Societies and one monthly collection must be given to missions. There are now 12 officers and teachers with a membership of 137. The present superintendent is Mr. Clyde Mize. The enrollment by departments is Nursery, 10; Childrens, 51; 12-23 Years, 22; Adults, 37; Home Member Adult, 5.

In the obituary of Sara Groover, wife of W. J. Groover, which was printed July 27, 1886 in The Clarian, an early Forsyth County paper, a mention is made of a W. F. M. Mrs. Groover had been an active member. Later this group became a Ladies Aid Society. In the minutes of the fourth Quarterly Conference in November 1913, a record is posted of a Woman's Home Mission Society with a membership of 21. The financial report showed a collection of \$130 for the year. Mrs. Charles Leon Harris was the president. In 1914 the foreign mission was added to the home missions. Mrs. R. L. Bagley taught the Bible Study to the group for many years. The Junior Department was organized in May 1914. Other early officials were: Mrs. E. W. Mashburn, President; Mrs. Mary Patterson, Secretary; Mrs. Myrtie Poole was in charge of the Junior Missionary Group. Today the officers are Mrs. Dan Devine, President, and Mrs. Paul Holbrook, Vice

President.

On Friday night, April 12, 1940, Mrs. Good Secretary of Young Peoples Missionary Society, and Mrs. Manning of the Alpharetta, Georgia Missionary Society organized the Wesleyan Service Guild at the home of Mrs. Paul Holbrook. Officers elected were: Mrs. Paul Holbrook, Counselor; Mrs. B. H. Kinney, Chairman; Miss Jimmie Lou Brown, Co-Chairman; Mrs. W. E. Lipscomb, Jr. Secretary; Miss Matha Tallant, Treasurer; Mrs. J. C. Roe, Local Work; Mrs. L. L. Stewart, Publicity; Miss Esta Lee Holbrook, Bible Study; Mrs. Dean Barrett, Mission Study. The Guild now has 19 members and the officers are as follows: Mrs. Doris Graham, President; Mrs. Grace Palmour, Vice-President; Mrs. Bryan Craft, Secretary; and Mrs. E. B. Bearden, Treasurer.

These two groups have helped the church in all phases of its work. Much of their time and money have been spent in repair and equipment for the local parsonage.

The first Epworth League was organized in 1920 with thirty members. In 1925, the League had fifty members and sent its first two delegates to Oxford. The Alpharetta, Cumming, Dawsonville Union was formed in 1932 with Miss Laura Lipscomb as first president. The Union sponsored an institute at Lumpkin Campground August 17 - 19, 1933 with President Gladys Kennemore as presiding officer. The Methodist Youth Fellowship is very active today under the leadership of Mrs. Clyde Mize, Counselor. The enrollment of twenty-four have elected these officials for the ensuing year. Harriette Bearden, President; Rance Rountree,

Vice-President, Gay Kennemore, Secretary and Reporter;
George Allen, Treasurer.

The Junior Fellowship meets on Saturday evening under the co-counselorship of Mrs. Paul Holbrook.

The Church Board Commission on Education was organized in 1949 by Reverend Hugh McKee.

The Men's Club was organized in 1957. It meets once a month for a supper meeting.

In 1917 the Marietta District Conference was held in Cumming. The delegates were house guests and were fed for three days.

The Marietta District Meeting of the Woman's Missionary Society met with the ladies in 1914. The wooden church was being demolished to build the new church. It rained torrents and it was hard to find a dry spot in the church.

In March 1920, when Bishop Warren A. Candler was to dedicate the new brick church, the weather was again a factor. Saturday was clear and pleasant, but Sunday dawned a blustery and rainy day. Bob Hope was chairman of the committee, and he drove to Buford on the slick dirt roads to meet the train and bring the Bishop back for the service. Dinner had to be served inside the church. Everyone remembered this as one of the highlights among the church's notable days.

The first Homecoming was held October 4, 1953. It was a day of informal fellowship and reminiscing. Mr. Clyde Mize, Chariman of the Board of Stewards, was Master of ceremonies.

On September 23, 1956 a secon Homecoming was observed with Mr. Mize as chairman of the plans for the day.

One of the most impressive services in the church's history was the presentation of a lighted cross to the church by the Geo. L. Merritt family. The gift was a memorial to Lt. Col. George L. Merritt, Jr. who was killed in the European Theater in World War II.

The following are among those who have gone from this church to preach the Gospel of Christ: R. F. Eakes, J. H. Eakes, H. L. Edmondson, R. A. Edmondson. The following were associated with the Cumming Church although not members at the time they served: Bond Flemming, Preacher, Miss Laura Lipscomb, Medical Missionary to India, Mrs. Eloise Groover Lovell, Missionary to Africa, D. W. R. Dunn, Medisal Missionary to Africa sponsored by the Presbyterian Board of Missions.

These surnames represent families whose works enriched the early history of our church. Smiths, Bells, McAfees, Listers, Mashburns, Sims, Merritts, Duffees, Grovers, Pooles, Kelleys, Puetts, Pattersons, Fosters, Harrisons, Martins, James, Clements, Browns, Hockenulls, Holbrooks. Many of these moved away, but the imprint of their lives live on.

Cumming Circuit and church have been blessed with many excellent men of God. A chronological list has been used later in this history. The early minutes and the pastor's written reports contain many preferences to the weather and roads making it impossible to fulfill obligations.

The Children was the subject of one question asked at each Quarterly Conference. Most of the answers to this

question could be summed up as follows: "The children are favored with the attention of your pastor wherever he comes in touch with them. We take notice of the children and have them on our heart. I am planning to hold some special service for them in the future. Children's Day has been observed in some of the churches."

The inquiry concerning Christian education was usually answered: "Conditions beyond the control of your pastor have prevented the sermon on Christian education being preached at all the churches, but it will be attended to in the near future." Many of the early reports spoke of the lack of foreign missions zeal, and the financial reports bear out that local work conferences pledges were often paid in full when only a small amount of other assessments were met. In the last decade a marked change in the reports are seen. This could be a reflection of the change of the county from agriculture to industrial.

PASTORS OF CUMMING METHODIST CHURCH

Date	Pastor
1835-36	P. C. Graham
1836-37	Abraham Pennington Abner T. Low Thomas L. Thomas
1837-38	No Conference Preacher
1838-39	William S. William Rueben E. Olsen
1839-40	W. S. William James McPherson
1840-41	Dahlonga Mission
1841-42	Dahlonga Mission
1842-43	No Conference Preacher

PASTORS OF CUMMING METHODIST CHURCH (Continued)

Date	Pastor
1843-44	V. H. Shelton
1844-45	Akin N. Ross
1845-53	No Conference Preacher
1853-54	J. H. Mashburn
1854-55	John R. Mashburn
1855-56	D. D. Cox
1856-57	J. W. Turner
1857-58	No Conference Preacher
1858-59	William G. McMichael
1859-61	John Mashburn Gene Hughes
1861-62	Robert A. Seale
1862-63	John Mashburn Gene Hughes
1863-64	John Mashburn James M. Armstrong
1864-65	John Mashburn M. G. Hamby
1865-66	John Mashburn L. Q. Allen
1866-68	John Mashburn Jas. D. Anthony
1868-71	Alfred G. Carpenter
1871-72	Noah H. Palmer
1872-73	Benjamin J. Johnson
1873-74	J. W. Myers
1874-75	L. P. Neese
1875-76	M. W. Arnold
1876-77	W. T. Paine
1877-81	J. R. Gate

PASTORS OF CUMMING METHODIST CHURCH (Continued)

Date	Pastors
1881-82	J. T. Curtis
1882-82	L. P. Winter
1883-85	J. M. Armstrong
1885-86	N. E. McBryer
1886-67	W. G. Hanson
1887-89	W. G. Hanson G. W. Farr, Supply
1889-90	W. T. Irvine
1890-91	H. N. Strozier
1891-93	W. C. Fox
1893-94	T. P. Graham
1894-97	J. E. Rorie
1897-99	W. G. Crawley
1899-1900	W. A. Mallory
1900-01	Artemas Lester
1901-02	H. W. Morris
1902-04	L. P. Winter
1904-07	Lucien Roper, Supply
1907-08	Clement Ivey (Unmarried)
1908-10	M. B. Whitaker
1910-11	L. A. McLaughlin
1911-13	Z. Speer
1913-14	A. T. Hind
1914-16	G. W. Hamilton
1916-18	J. W. Gober
1918-21	F. C. Owens
1921-22	W. S. Gaines

PASTORS OF CUMMING METHODIST CHURCH (Continued)

Date	Pastor
1922-24	H. O. Green
1924-26	W. S. Jolley
1926-28	Z. V. Hawks (Fiddle)
1928-32	J. W. Segars
1932-34	Geo. P. Gary
1934-36	A. W. Williams
1936-37	G. C. Knowles
1937-39	L. G. Cowart
1939-42	J. W. Coffman Russel R. Lee
1942-43	T. M. Luke
1943-47	Claude Patterson
1947-50	Hugh McKee
1950-51	J. P. Lupo
1951-52	D. S. Patterson
1952-58	John Ozley
1958-	Horace Couch

Georgia had been a part of the South Carolina Conference until 1830. The nearest location of churches to Cumming were Suwanee, Gwinett, Chistalee Mission. The Bishops who had served this Conference up until that year were Robert R. Robert, Joshua Soule, Elijah Hedding, Beverly Waugh, Thomas A Morris, and James O. Andrew. Later Bishops are shown in the following table

BISHOPS OF M. E. CHURCH SOUTH

Name	Dates
Geo. F. Pierce	1865-1867-1870-1876-1877-1882-1885
H. N. McTyeire	1866-1878-1880-1881-1886

BISHOPS OF M. E. CHURCH SOUTH (Continued)

Name	Dates
David S. Daggett	1869
Wm. M Wightman	1871-1872
Enoch M. Marvin	1873
John C. Keener	1879
J. C. Granberry	1884
Alpheus G. Wilson	1885-1896-1910-1911
E. R. Hendrix	1888-1899-1900-1909
C. B. Galloway	1889-1897-1901
Attieus G. Jaygood	1890-1893-1894
J. S. Key	1891
O. P. Fitzgerald	1892
W. W. Duncan	1898-1904-1905
J. S. Key	1903
Seth Ward	1906-1907
E. E. Hoss	1908
J. H. McCoy	1912
Collins Denny	1913-1914-1915
Warren A. Candler	1902-1916-1917-1918-1919-1920-1921
W. B. Murrah	1922
U. V. W. Darlington	1923-1924-1925
W. B. Beauchamp	1926-1927-1928-1929
J. M. Moore	1930-1931-1932-1933
W. N. Ainsworth	1934-1935-1936-1937
J. L Decell	1938-1939
Arthur J. Moore	1940-----

Mrs. Gladys H. Barrett