INMAN PARK

The last gun of the Civil War was fired in the rich fields of Georgia in May 1865, and hardly had its smoke settled on the Piedmont Hills before families of refugees were seen emerging from those heights. Among those returning were the families of David Seitz and John Wyley. These men with their wives and a few possessions settled on the eastern suburbs of burned Atlanta in 1866. They had survived the terrors of the war and out of the burned and discarded materials found, they built an arbor where they and their neighbors might gather for public worship.

Preachers were scarce during the reconstruction days but a devout layman, Mr. Hays, led the people in their services. In his honor they named the place of worship "Hays Chapel" and for several years it bore his name.

At the Conference of 1867 the Atlanta City Mission was established, comprising the territory east of Trinity Church. It was put in the charge of Rev. Charles J. Oliver and Rev. W. P. Patillo. St. Paul and Hays Chapel were the most prominent of the four stations because these two had homes in which services could be held.

About 1869 a new church building was erected on a lot on the south side of the Georgia railroad, approximately one-fourth of a mile east of the present site. The church was growing rapidly and by 1888 had a membership of 150.

On February 20, 1896, a committee of members of Edgewood Church, formerly Hays Chapel, met at the residence of Robert Winship to "consider and arrange to build a Methodist church in Inman Park." Mr. Asa G. Candler was elected secretary. The other members serving with him were: Robert Winship, Mark W. Johnson, James P. McDonough, Madison Harralson, P. H. Harralson, L. P. Skeen, W. E. Haynes, Rev. W. F. Glenn and Rev. H. J. Ellis. In the spring of 1897 a lot was purchased on the south side of Edgewood Avenue between Elizabeth and Hurt Streets. A contract was let with Mr. George Murphy, builder, and Mr. W. F. Denny, architect, for the erection of the building. On July 19, 1897, the first shovel of dirt was moved by Mrs. S. A. Seitz, and the actual construction was begun.

At Conference in Athens 1897, the name of Edgewood Church was changed to Inman Park.

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Inman Park - continued

The new building was completed April 17, 1898 and was dedicated by Bishop C. B. Galloway. Total cost was $11,000.00.

In 1922 additions were made on the DeKalb Avenue side for the use of the Sunday School. In 1925 "the rock building" was added adjacent to the sanctuary. A new parsonage was purchased in 1941 and in 1944 the "House Next Door" was acquired. A Scout Hall was built in 1947.

During the fifty years in its present location, Inman Park has had an outstanding place in Southern Methodism. It is the mother church of both St. Luke and Epworth, which were formed in 1890 and 1891 to meet the needs of the people in their communities. It was in a Stewards' Meeting that Dr. Charles R. Hurt, Chairman of the Board, suggested the establishment of a Methodist hospital. From this meeting, Wesley Memorial Hospital became a reality and today, Emory is serving humanity as a result of the action taken by this group of men.

About 1905 Rev. H. B. Mays appointed Mr. S. H. Fincher to give assistance to the struggling, almost failing Copen Hill Mission on Highland Avenue. At the first meeting of the Sunday School, there were ten members present. Bishop Candler and others urged him to continue his efforts with the mission until this fast-growing section of Atlanta could support its own church. When he finally resigned as Superintendent, there were 175 members, now Druid Hills Church.

A few members of Inman Park launched the Wesley Memorial Institution Church with all its attendant enterprise.

Emory University has her cornerstone in Inman Park Church and much of her financial aid and encouragement early came from the members.

The church's present membership is 1121. Raised for all purposes in the year 1952, $29,643.00.