HISTORY
of
INMAN PARK METHODIST CHURCH
The last gun of the Civil War was heard in the rich fields of Georgia in May, 1865, and hardly before its smoke had settled on the Piedmont Hills, families of refugees were seen emerging from those heights. Among these returning home-lovers, 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 Civil 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 in these construction days, but a devout layman, Mr. Hays, led these people in their services. In his honor they named their place of worship, "HAYS CHAPEL," and for several years it bore this name.

At the conference of 1867, Rev. W. A. Dodge recommended the establishment of the Atlanta City Mission to comprise all the territory east of Trinity Church. The Mission was effected and put in charge of Rev. Chas. T. 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.

The Conference of 1869 created a Mission of Hays Chapel and East Point with Rev. W. A. Dodge assigned as its pastor. In 1870, Hays Chapel became Edgewood and Third Ward; then Edgewood and St. John; and in 1873, Edgewood Mission with Rev. W. H. LaPrade as its pastor. About this time, 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 1880 had a membership of one hundred and fifty.

On the 25th day of February 1896, a committee of members of Edgewood Church met at the residence of Robert Winship to "consider and arrange to build a Methodist Church in Inman Park." Mr. Asa Candler was elected secretary and the other gentlemen serving with him were: Robert Winship, Mark W. Johnson, James P. McDonough, Madison Harralson, P. H. Harralson, L. P. Skeen, W. E. Hanyre, 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 E. Murphy, builder, and Mr. W. F. Denny, architect, for the erection of the building. On July 19, 1897, the first shovel of dirt was removed by Mrs. S. A. Seitz, and the actual construction was begun.

At the conference held in Athens 1897, the name of Edgewood Church was changed to Inman Park and when the new building was completed and furnished on April 17, 1898 Inman Park Church was dedicated by Bishop Charles E. Galloway with appropriate ceremonies. The total cost of building and furnishings was $11,000.00.
The original building served the Church until 1922 when additions were made on the DeKalb Avenue side for the use of the Church School. In 1925, an increased membership and an enthusiastic Church School prompted the erection of the rock building 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 the rear of this lot in 1947.

During the 81 years of its history and especially during the 50 years on 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 Steward's meeting that the Chairman of the Board, Dr. Chas. D. Hurt, 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 of this group of men.

About 1905, Rev. H. B. Mays appointed Mr. S. H. Fincher to give active assistance to the struggling, almost failing, Copenhagen Mission on Highland Avenue. At the first Sunday School meeting, Mr. Fincher had ten members present. Bishop W. A. Candler and others urged him to continue his efforts until this fast growing section of Atlanta could support its own church. Mr. Fincher's loyalty and faithfulness never wavered and when he finally gave up his office as Superintendent of the Sunday School, 175 members were on the roll of the Copenhagen Church, now Druid Hills.

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

The magnificent Emory University standing so high in the realm of Christian education, has her corner stone in Inman Park Church and much of her financial aid and encouragement came from the members.

Other pages of noble history will be added in the future to these of the past, as the rich heritage of Inman Park Church passes on to its ever-increasing number of devoted and loyal members.

The past 50 and more years have been great in achievements. Now, at our Mid-Century, we look toward the future with all its glorious opportunities to share the "Wonder of His Gospel" to the yet unborn.
Inman Park Methodist Church

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HONOR ROLL OF LEADERSHIP.
The following devoted, consecrated pastors, have served Inman Park Church during its history. They have been stalwart "men of God, "whose faith and courage and devotion have blessed their members thru-out the years.

1870. Rev. Alvin G. Dempsey.
1873. Rev. Wm. H. LaFrade.
1881-82. Rev. R. J. Bigham, D.D.
1884. Rev. Thomas A. Seals.
1885. Rev. Wm. R. Foote.
1888-89. Rev. J. E. Mixon, D.D.
1899-1900. Rev. Peter M. Ryburn.
1903. Rev. R. C. Cleckler.
1911-12. Rev. S. A. Harris.
1914-16. Rev. Wm. H. LaFrade, Jr.