So, this congregation has had five places of worship and has been known by five names in the past---Chattooga Circuit, LaFayette Circuit, LaFayette and Rock Springs, LaFayette Methodist Church and First Methodist Church, of LaFayette. Now we are proud to be The First United Methodist Church of LaFayette, and are grateful for our rich heritage.

"We can only pay our debt to the past by putting the future in debt to us."

Annie Moore (Mrs. E.P.) Hall
Church Historian

April 12, 1970
After more than 15 years of planning, praying and paying, members and friends of LaFayette's First United Methodist Church have come to a great day of celebration, when this house of worship will be dedicated "to the glory of God and the service of men."

The following history of Methodism in this place is a reprint (with necessary revisions) of one issued in September 1968.

The first house of worship for LaFayette (then Chattuga or Chattooga) Methodists was a log cabin on South Main Street where the Fortune home now stands. This is diagonally across from the present church. A report for 1836 stated that on Chattooga Circuit there were 149 whites, three negroes and three preachers.

The name LaFayette Circuit appeared first in 1839. The circuit then belonged to the Holston (Tennessee) Conference and the district was called New Town. In 1845 LaFayette Circuit was among eight taken from the Holston and given to Georgia Conference. Christopher Stump is thought to have been the first preacher here, probably as early as 1835. Evidently he had a large circuit (which he covered on horseback) for he is also named as the preacher that year at Pikeville, Tennessee, at least 50 miles away.

It is not known exactly when the next church was erected, but it was a one room frame building on a site southwest of the courthouse, about where the Pennington Hardware Store is now located. During the War Between the States, according to stories handed down from the older residents, the Union Army used this building as a stable, turning two benches together to make feeding troughs.

During the pastorate of S. P. Wiggins in the early 1900's, a new church was built on Cove Street, (now West Villanow). J. D. Fariss, H. P. Lumpkin and T. A. Jackson composed the building committee.

In 1924 this building was razed and a brick structure erected on the site. O. W. Bledsoe, E. P. Hall, Jr., I. H. Holleman, T. M. Quillian and T. A. Jackson were the building committee. Extensive remodeling was done during the pastorate of the Rev. Floyd Walden, in 1954.

On Sunday, July 1, 1956, the congregation marched in a body from the church on West Villanow to a site on South Main Street where ground was broken for the present facility. The home of Dr. and Mrs. J. A. Shields had been located there and both house and lot were donated to the church by their daughter, Mrs. S.B. Kitchens and Dr. Kitchens, active members.

After the singing of "Amazing Grace" and a prayer, the pastor, the Rev. Charles R. Williams, lifted the first shovelful of dirt. He was followed in succession by H. P. Burney, the oldest member; J. P. Stiles, of the building committee; E. E. Baker, chairman of the Official Board; W. E. Gudenrath, superintendent of the Sunday School; Fred Henry, of the Finance Committee; Ray V. Thurman, Jr., of the Board of Trustees; N. H. Corn, president of the Men's Club; Mrs. F. D. Leake, president of the Woman's Society of Christian Service; Betty Lou Hall, representing the Wesleyan Service Guilds; Gayle Giles and Ray Purvis, representing the Youth groups.

Plans for the new building were in charge of Dr. Kitchens, J. P. Stiles and F. D. Leake, and were approved by local and conference Boards.

Work began almost immediately and the first service was held in the new church on Sunday, September 8, 1957.