NEW HOPE METHODIST CHURCH is located five miles E. of Lawrenceville, Georgia, in Gwinnett County, on the corner of New Hope Road and the New Hope-Grayson Road. The deed for the property, recorded in deed book No. "3" on page 403 and 404, reads:

This indenture made this twenty fifth day of July in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty-two between Dudley Bonds of the county and state aforesaid and John Smith, William T. Harris, Adam Robinson, Tilford M. Connell, Elijah Adams, W. K. Bradford, Reddi M. Betts, Joshua Bradford, and John Martin, Trustees, in trust for the Methodist Episcopal Church South of the other part. Witnesseth that the said Dudley Bonds for a valuable consideration of the sum of ten dollars to him in hand well and truly paid by the said John Smith and Trustees aforesaid at and before the sealing and delivery of these presents the receipt whereof is acknowledge all truth, granted bargained sold and conveyed and by these presents doth grant bargain and sell and convey unto the said John Smith and other Trustees as aforesaid and their successors all that tract or parcel of land situate lying and being in the fifth District of said county adjoining land belonging to W. K. Bradford and said D. Bonds commencing at a post oak corner on Bradford's line at the name road thence down said road to a post oak corner thence North East a marked line to a read oak corner on the original line thence down line between Bonds and said Bradford to the spring a space of twelve feet containing three acres and a half more or less number not known together with all and singular the right members and appurtenances thereof whatsoever to the said tract or parcel of land for the purpose of building a meeting house and for the use of the Methodist Episcopal Church South so long as the methodist continues their society-ship at said Church but if the methodist society should sease to occupy the house it is then to be reverted back to said Bonds to have and to hold said tract or parcel of land and all and singular the right and premises aforesaid and every part thereof unto said John Smith and other trustees as aforesaid and their successors forever and said D. Bonds his heirs, Administrators and assigns unto the said John Smith and other trustees as aforesaid and their successors will warrant and forever defend against himself and heirs and the claims of all other persons whomsoever in witness whereof the said Dudley Bonds hath here unto set his hand and seal the day and year above written.

Signes sealed and delivered in the presents of

Abel Griffin
Jefferson Bradford

Dudley Bonds (seal)

An early source for some history is found in GWINNETT CHURCHES, A Complete History of Every Church in Gwinnett County, Georgia, With Short Biographical Sketches of Its Ministers by J. C. Flanigan. published privately in 1911. Pages 204 through 209 read as follows:

It is impossible to get the facts and dates concerning the date of organization of New Hope Church. The records have been so poorly kept that the date "when received" of but few names are visible. But the list of names cover a long period of time prior and up to 1880.

The record shows that Mrs. Marlena Robinson joined October, 1829, and her husband, Adam Robinson, October 1831. Their son, R. N. Robinson, in 1855. The date of a great many names are blank. Just who organized the present church is hard to tell. The present church is the third building and was built the latter part of the "70's". According to the record, Rev. Henry M. Quillian was its first pastor in 1878, and served three years.

The first New Hope church stood down near the old Tribble Mill, on the hill, and in sight of Harbin Bridge, spanning the Alcovia river. Later the church was moved to its present site, which church building also gave way for the present one. Some of the above names probably served as members in all three of the churches and this brings us up to 1880.

The following names appear on old church roll, all of whom were members at various times perhaps, probably among the first members of the church: William S. Harris, Adam Robinson, William E. Brand, Jesse A. Pate, John D.
Buchanan, John R. Robinson, James H. Buchanan, Silas A. Pate, Major John Martin, Tilford McConnell, Plesant J. Buchanan, Charley W. Griswell, John L. Pate, John Robertson, John I. F. Buchanan, Thomas A. Pate, E. Henry Buchanan, John W. Robertson, Philo W. Simonton, William K. Bradford, Melvin W. Corbin, Andrew A. Bramblett, James Bradford, James H. Robertson, William F. Buchanan, W. Asbery Brand, Jackson Coker, David F. Bradford, George M. Brand, Thadius Lowe, John W. Harris, Alex. A. Hunt, Franklin Winn, Robert H. Pratt, Lumpkin Pratt, William G. Jacobs, George Jacobs, John F. Pate, Joseph G. Robinson, R. N. Robinson, O. R. McElroy, Wesley C. St. John, Joseph C. Robinson, James A. Robinson, James Conner, W. N. Pate, A. S. Robertson, Thomas A. Robertson, Marvel F. Freeman, Charles A. Robertson, Benjamin Robinson, M. D. Bodciun, Marion Taylor Buckner P. Bradford P. Mrs. Sintha Harris, Mrs. Maranda Robinson, Mrs. Nancy Bradford, Mrs. Millie C. Pate, Mrs. Nancy E. Griswell, Mrs. Rebecca Robertson, Mrs. Margret C. Brand, Mrs. Julia W. Smith, Mrs. Catherine Camp, Mrs. Mary E. McConnell, Mrs. Sarah E. Pate, Mrs. Margret Conner, Mrs. Mary Robertson, Mrs. Penina Bradford, Mrs. Louisa Robinson, Miss Francis Robertson, Miss Francis A. Buchanan, Miss Mary J. Buchanan, Mrs. Sophia C. Buchanan, Mrs. Sarah Francis Martin, Mrs. Francis L. J. Griswell, Mrs. Nancy E. Griswell, Mrs. Mary L. Buchanan, Miss Francis E. Griswell, Mrs. Mary Caroline Corbin, Mrs. C. J. Johnson, Mrs. Patience Jacobs, Mrs. Mary A. Pratt, Mrs. Amanda Cates, Miss Alice Cates, Mrs. Isabella E. Pate, Mrs. Mary Robinson, Mrs. Mary Dewayberry, Mrs. Nancy A. Buchanan, Mrs. Martha A. Bonds, Miss Martha Ballow, Miss Mary Jackson, Miss Matilda C. Bradford, Mrs. Anna Hunt, Mrs. Emily I. McElroy, Mrs. Sarah F. Bramblett, Mrs. Martha Pratt, Mrs. E. A. Brand, Mrs. Ida F. Brand, Mrs. Synthia J. Ewing, Mrs. Nancy D. Buchanan, Miss Ann Robertson, Miss Malisa Robertson, Miss Jane Robertson, Mrs. Regina Reynolds, Mrs. Martha Robertson, Mrs. Rebecca Talent, Mrs. Sarah Wallis, Miss Nancy Bradford, Mrs. Julia Bradford, Mrs. Lucinda Wood, Mrs. Mary Stevens, Miss Lula Bonds, Miss Julia Brodgon, Mrs. Mary Lowe, Mrs. Mary C. Robinson, Mrs. Mary Harris, Miss Lucinda Pate, Miss S. M. Brand, Miss Sarah E. Griswell, Miss Ann M. Griswell, Miss Syntha E. Jacobs, Miss Francis E. Robertson, Mrs. J. C. Bond, Miss M. J. Partee, Mrs. Mary J. Strand, Miss Georgia Strand, Mrs. Marget McElroy.

(there follows a list of pastors. See below for complete list)

J. M. Bennett is superintendent of the Sunday School, M. A. Still, assistant, J. A. Smith, chorister, Miss Beatrice Downs, secretary; Mrs. J. M. Bennett, organist, and J. A. Smith and C. A. Mahaffey, teachers.

The church has the following members: (year of 1911)

(End quote, pages 204-209, GWINNEIT CHURCHES)

From all of the records consulted, and the memory of those still active members of New Hope Methodist Church, the interim history of the Church is not too dramatic. We were a part of the Bethlehem Charge in the Gainesville District until 1905. As near as can be known, the church was painted - on the outside - during the ministry of Rev. B. H. Tramel in the years 1888 and 1889. There seems to have been some controversy over this,
Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Freeman, Mrs. Ida Griswell, Thea Simonton, John Simonton, and the pastor was remembered as having purchased the paint on the Church's account without proper authority.

Many of the pastors lived with the family of Major J. and Francis Martin until they moved to Lawrenceville in January of 1898. Many of the facts here recorded were given by the children of Major J. and Francis Martin, who also have taken an active interest in the growth of the Church in recent years.

In 1905, New Hope Methodist Episcopal Church, South, became a part of the Loganville Circuit, in which it was to be associated for the next forty-three years (until the June Annual Conference of 1947). The Churches of this circuit were New Hope, Loganville, Zoar, Walnut Grove, Snellville, and Asbury (this latter church became "Grayson" when the town in which it was located - Trip - became Grayson, Georgia).

By 1927, the inside of the Church, which had never been painted, had become stained and did not lend itself to a worshipful atmosphere. In that year (bill for materials is dated July 18, 1927, in the possession of Griffin Duncan) the inside of the Church was painted for the first time in its history. New windows were bought and installed. The cost of the eight windows was $21.00 and of all other materials $11.85. Work was done under the direction of Will Griswell and Griffin Duncan, who remain as members to this day (June 1962).

A large Pulpit Bible was purchased and presented on June 3, 1934 in memory of M. F. Freeman by the members. The members who took part in this gift to the Church were: J. G. Turner, Flonnie Turner, Bob Summerfield, Lewis Mahaffey, Miss Loy Brown, W. S. Freeman, L. H. Lowe, G. J. Duncan, R. M. Higgins, C. G. Turner, William E. Freeman, A. T. Haney, Miss Lola G. Smith, James F. Freeman, Mrs. Lillian Dunagan, Mrs. Henry Wade, Miss Alice Freeman, Mrs. J. J. Freeman, Mrs. Ida Griswell, Theo Simonton, John Simonton, W. T. Griswell, W. P. Simonton, A. L. Simonton, H. H. Bramblett, Mrs. Bertie Bramblett, and Lewis Bramblett.

Electricity came to the country in 1939, and the church was wired for electric lights by December 29, 1939 for a cost of $15.35 (statement in possession of Griffin Duncan). However, the power lines did not reach the Church until April of 1940. At a special service on April 3, 1940, the lights were first turned on. Rev. J. M. Guest was pastor at that time.

In 1939, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, became a part of The Methodist Church under the plan of union, so that it might be said "Light (electricity) and union came at the same time."

At the June Annual Conference (the first to be held in June - previous years being in November) 1947, New Hope Methodist Church became a part of the newly formed SNELLVILLE-GRAYSON CHARGE, of the Decatur-Oxford District. This Charge consisted of Snellville, Zoar, Grayson, and New Hope Methodist Churches. Rev. Monroe C. Hatch was named pastor, and was the first student pastor to serve the church. Since this time, all of the pastors have been students. This has had some disadvantages, but also many advantages.

During the pastorate of Rev. "Dick" Blanchard, a parsonage was built in Snellville. Rev. Blanchard served two years, the second year being full time on the Charge. In his second year, the SNELLVILLE-GRAYSON CHARGE made the best record for evangelism in the entire district. Rev. Blanchard was followed by Rev. Travis A. Warlick who brought into membership of the church a great many families who are now the backbone of the church - Mr. and Mrs. Leland Everett, Mr. and Mrs. Meloe Holcombe, Mr. and Mrs. Horace Buffington, and Mr. Roy Wells. Since that time, most of the new members have been children of these families.

Rev. Warlick remained three months beyond Annual Conference time - because of the lapse between the Georgia and the Alabama Conferences - then returned to his home conference, Alabama. Rev. John T. Parker finished that year, during which the new gas heater and blower system was installed in the Sanctuary. The statement is dated January 29, 1954, and the cost was $291.54. Rev. C. A. Bickley, Jr. followed Rev. Parker.

In June of 1955, Rev. Douglas D. Mosely was sent as pastor of the SNELLVILLE-GRAYSON CHARGE. By this year, the church was very much in need of repair. As some of the members have said, "You could throw a cat through the cracks in the floor." So a fund was begun to repair, rebuild, and modernize the Sanctuary. In 1956, the single entrance was constructed and the old double entrance (one for ladies and one for men) was sealed up. Also in 1956, a flooring was put down.

This new interest in beautification spread quickly to some of the older families who had since left the community. And in 1957, eight new memorial windows were placed in the Church in memory of some of the early members of the Church. On the right, facing the pulpit, and from the front, there were windows in memory of: (1) J. P. and Sarah E. Griswell, (2) Major J. and Frances Martin, (3) James Albert and Daisy Smith, and (4)
James E. Pratt. On the left, facing the pulpit, and from the front, there were windows in memory of: (5) Joe and Estelle Turner, (6) Marvel and Ann D. Freeman, (7) Pleasant and Mary Buchanan, and (8) Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Simonton.

A new pulpit was given to grace the front of the sanctuary which had been rebuilt. Two Sunday Schools rooms and a pulpit-choir area were divided off from the front of the Church. The pulpit lectern was given as a memorial to Lawrence H. Lowe by his wife. Then, urged on and encouraged by the family of Major J. and Frances Martin (the children are Miss Darrinda Martin, R. V. Martin, V. N. Martin, David H. Martin, and T. B. Martin) construction was begun on a Church School Annex. On April 3, 1958, grading was begun. In the meantime, the Annual Conference of June 1957 had sent Rev. Charles H. Duffey to replace Rev. Mosely. Rev. Duffey won the District award for the Town and Country Circuit of the year in the Decatur-Oxford District.

As the Church was beautified and became more worshipful, and as the people joyed in working for their church, their love for the church increased. And on May 25, 1958, the first wedding to take place in the Sanctuary was performed by Rev. Duffey, uniting in Holy Matrimony Anne Healan and Donald Jackson. The following year, on March 27, 1959, Joan Buffington and Hugh Stephens were joined together by Rev. Duffey. And on October 27, 1961, Mary Jo Simonton and Roy Lee Everett were married by Rev. Augustus L. Cole, Jr. These are the only weddings having been solemnised in the Sanctuary to date.

At the Annual Conference of June, 1959, the SNEILLVILLE-GRAYSON CHARGE was divided, Snellville becoming a single church charge, and the other three Churches (Grayson, Zoar, and New Hope) going to make up the GRAYSON CHARGE. Rev. Duffey remained as pastor of the Snellville Methodist Church and Rev. Augustus L. Cole, Jr. was sent to be pastor of the GRAYSON CHARGE. A new parsonage was built at Grayson, and the pastor and his family moved in during the third week of July, 1959.

During this Conference year, the major part of the construction of the Church School Annex was completed. Impressed by the work that was being done, another son of an early member family, Elery W. Oliver, presented the church with a Communion Table in memory of his mother, Hattie T. Oliver. And he also generously offered to construct a vestibule and steeple for the entrance of the Church. Plans were drawn up and approved.

Then with the help of the Martin family (David H., T. B., R. V., and V. N. Martin) a new experiment was attempted for the Conference year beginning in July of 1960. A student Assistant Pastor was assigned to the GRAYSON CHARGE, and specifically given duties as the pastor of New Hope Methodist Church. For the first time in her history, New Hope had an individual pastor whose duties were to serve New Hope Methodist Church alone. Rev. J. Larry Amos was so assigned. He began serving in July of 1960, just as construction on the vestibule and steeple began. His ministry was made possible by the Martin family who, though not members of the Church, pledged to pay half of the entire Church budget of $2400 for that year in order that this experiment might be attempted. This year was a good year, the first year during which services of worship were held each and every Sunday of the year at the Church.

During this year, the GRAYSON CHARGE again won the Circuit of the Year award for the Decatur-Oxford District - tying for first place with Monroe Circuit.

But the Martin family suffered some financial reverses, and some long hospitalization during the year so that it was not possible to continue this experiment beyond June of 1961. This was unfortunate, for such an experiment ought to have at least two years to produce concrete results. Another setback occurred early in that Conference year, when Raymond Higgins, along time member and chairman of the Official Board, was called to his reward by Our Lord October 5, 1960.

Thus it was that a somewhat strengthened, somewhat weakened Church again came under the pastoral charge of Rev. Augustus L. Cole, Jr., the pastor of the GRAYSON CHARGE. But the year had not been wasted: a well had been dug, and water brought to the Church, and this had been paid for. And due to the growth of Zoar Methodist Church, who asked for a student Assistant Pastor such as New Hope had received, it was possible to continue with worship services every Sunday under Rev. Cole.

During the Conference year, July 1961 through June 1962, much of the finishing work and the furnishing of the Sunday School rooms was done - much of it through the generosity of Elery W. Oliver. The indebtedness on the Parsonage at Grayson was paid off in February, and on February 21, 1962, Bishop John Owen Smith, resident bishop of the Atlanta Area, The Methodist Church, conducted Services of Dedication. The general building indebtedness was reduced from almost a thousand dollars in 1959 to $77 in June of 1962.

The first record of Sunday School was given in conference, November 1899. Records show the school has been organized and discontinued several times. In 1952, there were forty members on roll, with Mr. Kelley Holcombe as Superintendent. Rev. R. E. Blanchard
organized the M.Y.F. in 1949 and the organization has been and is active up to the present. (This paragraph from a report dated January 15, 1952, submitted by Mrs. R. M. Higgins.)

By 1951, there were 50 on roll, with an average attendance of 37. Today (June, 1962) there are 61 on roll, but our average attendance is only 27. Roy Wells has been named Superintendent for 1962-63 and Mrs. Don Eller has been appointed Church School treasurer.

The pastors who have served, with the date of appointment, are as follows:

- Henry M. Quillian Dec. 4, 1877
- L. P. Neese Dec. 1880
- H. M. Newton Jan. 1883
- Lovick W. Rivers Dec. 5, 1883
- Dick Harwell last # of 1884
- S. D. Evans Jan. 1, 1885
- J. M. Venable Jan. 1, 1887
- B. H. Tread Jan. 1, 1889
- H. M. Newton (2nd time) Jan. 1890
- W. R. Stillwell Jan. 1891
- George W. Morgan Jan. 1893
- James W. Taylor Jan. 1894
- Henry D. Pace Jan. 1896
- J. W. Austin Dec. 1896
- A. M. Pierce Dec. 1897
- W. A. Maxwell Jan. 29, 1899
- S. H. Braswell March, 1900
- Lucian Roper Jan. 20, 1901
- R. D. Smith Jan. 1903
- H. W. Morris Jan. 1904
- W. W. Gaines Jan. 1905
- William O. Butler Dec. 9, 1906
- Stephen H. Dimon Dec. 13, 1908
- F. A. Ragland Nov. 27, 1911
- G. W. Tumlin Nov. 25, 1913
- T. W. Darnell Nov. 1916
- Walter Millican Nov. 1917
- J. S. Askew Nov. 1919
- Richard J. Bryces Nov. 1922
- R. A. Coleman Nov. 1924
- Charles W. Fruit Nov. 1925
- Thomas Edward Sherwood Nov. 1926
- Sam A. Bailey Nov. 1927
- W. H. Venable Nov. 1928
- J. B. Smith Nov. 1930
- Frank Q. Emberts Nov. 1932
- G. F. Cantrell Nov. 1935
- J. M. Guest Nov. 1936
- L. G. Gowart Nov. 1940
- William B. Hughes Nov. 1942
- J. Ray Stuart Nov. 1945
- Theodore W. Jennings Nov. 1946
- Monroe C. Hatch June 1947
- Richard E. Blanchard June 1948
- Travis A. Warlick June 1951
- John T. Parker Sept. 1953
- C. A. Bickley, Jr. June 1954
- Douglas D. Mossel June 1955
- Charles H. Duffy June 1957
- Augustus L. Cole June 1959
- James Larry Amos (Asst.) June 1960
- Augustus L. Cole June 1961

Presiding Elders (District Superintendents) are not listed before January 1, 1885, but beginning then, they are, with date of Annual Conference first serving, as follows:

- W. A. Parks Jan. 5 1885
- A. G. Worley Jan. 1886
- George W. Yarbrough Jan. 1890
- J. T. Gibson Jan. 1891
- M. J. Cofer Jan. 1893
- M. L. Underwood Dec. 1896
- W. Louis Jan. 20, 1901
- W. L. Pierce Jan. 1903
- J. R. King Jan. 1906
- S. R. Beek Nov. 25, 1913
- J. H. Tates Nov. 1916
- Wm. H. LaPrade, Jr. Nov. 1920
- W. L. Purce Nov. 1924
- J. G. Logan Nov. 1926
- Henry Clay Emory Nov. 1928
- Nath Thompson Nov. 1931
- R. Z. Tyler Nov. 1932
- Wallace Rogers Nov. 1933
- T. M. Sullivan Nov. 1937
- H. H. Jones Nov. 1941
- C. L. Middlebrooks Nov. 1945
- Edward G. Mackay June 1950
- died in office, after June 1955
- J. Walker Chidsey completed year & June 1956
- Delma L. Hagood June 1960

Rev. George M. Brand was an early member of New Hope Methodist Church, who was instrumental in the organization of Asbury (later Grayson) Methodist Church in Trip (later Grayson) and served as the pastor of Grayson for two years, 1892-1893. As far as can be ascertained, this is the only preacher of the Methodist societies to have been called out of New Hope Methodist Church. Several youth who attended New Hope have been called into the ministry and membership of the Southern Baptist denomination.

Submitted in June 1962

Augustus L. Cole, Jr. (pastor)  Mrs. R. M. Higgins (historian)
Methodist Parsonage  690 Pike St. N.W.
Grayson, Georgia  Lawrenceville, Ga.