HISTORY

of

NORCROSS METHODIST CHURCH
The Methodist Church

NORCROSS, GEORGIA

CHURCH HISTORY

COMPiled AND WRITTEN
by

MISS LINA GARNER

NORCROSS, GEORGIA
The first building of the Norcross Methodist Church was located about one and a half miles southeast of Norcross on a piece of land, which many years later was a farm owned by Mr. Tom Rainey of Norcross. This little church was known as Medlock's Chapel. Tombstones in the churchyard still bear the names of families, some of whom lived more than a century ago.

The names on some of the tombstones are:

- Martha M. Hoyle - 1831
- Allen Jones - 1838
- Margaret Narcissa Jones - 1852
- Ben James Williams - 1853
- Thomas L.D. Medlock - 1864
- W.S. Medlock - 1864
- Robert Maloney - 1881
- Maj. E. Warlington - 1875
- R.A. Ellis - 1882

The latest date was John W. Ray, Company K 30 of Ga. 1912.

The second site was located southeast of Norcross, the church being called Flint Hill Methodist Church. The exact date of organization cannot be ascertained. It perhaps dates back to 1818 to 1820.

A very fine spring was on this camp ground and camp meetings were held there regularly from about 1825 to 1862.

A great religious awakening resulted from the preaching of such men as, Ira L. Potter, Atticus H. Haygood who afterwards became Bishop Haygood, and Young J. Allen who became one of the outstanding missionaries of the Southern Methodist Church in Shanghai, China. There was Joshua Bradford and others of like caliber.

Flint Hill is perhaps the only camp ground in the at which two camp meetings were held in the same year. Rev. Miles W. Arnold, a great preacher in those days, had that distinction.

From old Flint Hill Church, the Flint Hill Grays marched away to war, in the trying days of '61, clad in the bright new uniforms made by the deft fingers of the wives and sweethearts with whom they had worshipped at the old camp-ground.

In June 1870 the Airline Railway was completed as far as a station, that was given the name of Norcross and in the same month the first train was run to Norcross. The town was incorporated that same year. The location of the town was practically in the woods.

The first school building erected in 1870-71 by popular subscription and located on what is now known as "Holy Row" Street. The building was also to be used by all denominations. The Masons of Yellow River put on the second story. Baptist, Methodist and Presbyterians worshipped here until church buildings were erected.

At this time Goshen Church, a Presbyterian church was located about two miles from this place and Flint Hill was less than a mile. The two congregations decided to move to town, and build a joint church building in which both could hold services.

Goshen sold its building to one whom they considered honest. He used the material in the building, then took the homestead and left the debt unpaid.
The acre of land was not sold, but is now claimed by a man who bought the adjoining land. The Goshen congregation then offered to contribute to the building of a Methodist Church, for the privilege of worshipping in it one Sabbath each month. This arrangement continued from the building of the Methodist Church in 1875 until the present Presbyterian Church was dedicated December 10, 1899. Perfect Christian fellowship existed all these years between the two denominations and continues to exist to this day.

The Church was built on the present lot in 1875 and was valued at $3000. The original lot measured 100 by 154 ft. and was deeded by J.J. Thrasher and M.C. Livály, July 26, 1875. The rest of the property was added at a later date.

Thus far we are indebted to Miss Lola KeY, who wrote a short history of the church, to the Woman's Club who wrote a history of Norcross and to the Presbyterian Church who lent us their Church History.

The following information was taken from the church register that dates back to 1871. The secretary's book, dating back to 1872 and other church records down to the present.

The first building committee was appointed in 1871. Each year the old committee was dismissed and a new one appointed. These are some members of the building committee in 1872: S.T. McElroy, Dr. T. Boring, Dr. M. Richardson. In 1873 J.D. Medlock and Robert Medlock were added to the new committee. These ladies were appointed to help in raising the funds: Miss Martha Pittman, Mrs. M.R. Rap and Mrs. J.S. Peterson.

From 1871 to 1874 the membership list was kept as, Female List and Male List.
In 1874 the church was repaired and Norcross paid the preacher and presiding elder $148, Home Missions $30, and Foreign Missions $32.
In 1874 and probably before, Bethesda, Mt. Carmel, Mt. Calvary and Norcross were on the same circuit.
From 1867 to 1894 and probably until 1897, Prospect, Norcross, Duluth, Mt. Carmel and Winter's Chapel were on the same circuit.

At a call meeting Nov. 15, 1897 of the official board, they considered the expediency of asking Annual Conference to make Norcross a half station in connection with Prospect Church at Chamblee, Ga. This was done in Annual Conference in Dec. 1897. The first church conference of the Norcross - Prospect Charge, Gainsville District was held Dec. 21, 1897.

Copied from the church records 1881:
"The investigating committee reports Mr. ------- as having been intoxicated. He makes acknowledgement and is excused."
"Bro. ------- 's was taken up, A committee was appointed to see him again as to his faults."
And in 1892:
A committee was appointed to look after the religious condition and moral conduct of Mr. ------- and Mr. -------.
In 1893:
"After a regular trial in which the pastor presided as chairman, the accused, Mr. -------, was expelled from the church."
The quarterly conference on Oct. 22, 1887 asked Norcross Council for a railroad crossing, starting in front of C.P. Lively's and going across the railroad to J.O. Medlock's.

The present parsonage house and lot, 250 ft. by 150 ft, was purchased in 1887 for the sum of $600. The charge at this time included Winter's Chapel, Prospect, Duluth and Norcross. The property was deeded by M.A. Matthews to S.T. McElroy and other trustees. Recorded by D.T. Cain, clerk, Gwinnett Co. Apr. 17, 1888. Book x, page 319.

In 1897 C.V. Weathers had 96 accessions to the church, 55 on profession of faith.

During this same year the church was papered free of charge by Mr. Hunter.

In 1887 these men agreed to act as sexton of the church at the handsome salary of $1.50 per month: S.T. McElroy, M.S. Medlock, E.C. Dean, J.E. McElroy, C.T. Lively, W.H. Ellis and J.O. Medlock. In 1892 the sexton’s salary was raised to $2.00 per month.

In 1892 Norcross paid the pastor and the presiding elder $188.25.

In 1894 Miss Lola Key began her long years of service, joining the church in 1896.

1895 -- The Epworth League was organized and purchased the present pulpit chairs for $8 raised at an oyster supper. In 1897 the League reported 33 members.

1898-- T.P. Conally was the local preacher.
1898-- From church conference records;
"We are glad to know that the charge is in healthy condition, and gradual development. Our finances are in good shape. Our church buildings are in good repair except a small leak in the library of this church. We suggest that the Trustees look into this matter at once. The spiritual condition we think, good in the main. Sunday services are well attended."

1899-- Last Quarterly Conference:
"We are engaged now in finishing the year’s work. We have much for which to be thankful. I have received in thirty or more additions. Trust the effort put forth by the church may be as seed sown in good ground."

In the early 1900’s an annual picnic to Tallulah Falls was a great event.

The records from 1900 to 1915 with the exception of the treasurers report in part, and a list of members and pastors, have been lost.

1915-- On the Board of Stewards: E.C. McDaniel, J.E. McElroy, J.C. Davenport, L.B. deJernett, S.T. McElroy and J.A. Hunt. These men were prominent in church history for many years. P.A. Medlock and P.S. Barrett were also members.

The preacher’s salary was $1000.

For many reasons the following record will omit many details. If desired they can be obtained from the Quarterly Conference Records that are kept on file at the parsonage.

1917-- Many young men from the Golden Keys joined the army. Every young man came back at the end of the war.
1917-- The deeds contain a trust clause and are kept in the Bank of Gwinnett by S.T. McElroy.
NORCROSS, GEORGIA

1918- Fifteen young people were away in college.
1919- Uncle Nath Thompson came to be our pastor. His salary was $1400. It was he who planted the beautiful pecan trees behind the parsonage.
In this year the trustees were instructed to put a new roof on the church.

1920- The Sunday was growing to such an extent that there was not room in the church for all the classes. It was at this time that the Arbor Class was organized and an arbor was built by the church for a meeting place. This class was made up of the older members of the church.
July 8, 1920 the Board of Trustees were authorized to borrow money not exceeding $2500 for the purpose of enlarging the church. By Oct. the new Sunday School rooms had been completed and a basement added. The main auditorium had been repainted. This was done when labor and building material were at the highest peak and the panic which gripped the country at that time prevented a number of the subscribers to the building fund from paying their pledges, so the church carried a debt for a long time.

1922- Average Sunday School attendance 123 with 221 on roll.
Rev. J. W. O. McKibben was sent to the Norcross - Prospect Charge. He began immediately to make plans to pay off the debt.

1925- A large number from the church attended camp meeting at the Lawrenceville Camp Ground to attend a training school.
The pastor (J. W. O. McKibben) in observing Children's Week, visited every home represented in the elementary grades at Norcross.

1926- An intermediate League was organized.
1927- Bro. A. J. Sears (our pastor) was appointed a committee of one to dispose of the tent at the Lawrenceville Camp Ground to the best advantage.

The church and land was valued at $10,000. The parsonage at $3000.

1928- The parsonage trustees were authorized to raise funds and install a bathroom in the parsonage.
1928-Oct. 28. Pastor's Report. So far as we know there is no friction in our ranks, and we have a hopeful spirit.
1929- Pastor's Report. We now have a steadily growing mid-week prayer meeting at Norcross.

No records were found for 1930 - 1932.

1932- The Epworth Pioneers were organized in Feb. This was a fellowship group that met each Sunday evening. This was largely due to the work of Henry B. Mays Jr. The group grew until there were about forty members, ranging in ages from 18 to 40.
Rev. H. E. Mays (superannuated) and his family who had just moved to Norcross were a great addition to the church.
In 1934 the Pioneer League built an attractive log cabin behind the church. This was a very helpful addition to the church. A complete history of the League is on file.

1934 the Board of Parsonage Trustees were authorized to place a new roof on the parsonage.
In 1935 a list of the membership was divided among the stewards and the envelope system of collecting money was begun.
The Sunday School enrollment reached 241.

Apr. 15, 1936. From Quarterly Conference Report.
The Methodist Church
NORCROSS, GEORGIA

"we have recently organized a Beginners Department. They meet in the
basement and have their own devotional under the supervision of Mrs. W.E.
Davenport."

1942 Pastor's Report. The women of the church have the work well
in hand.

1944 - A Junior Church was organized under the leadership of Mrs. H.N.
Rominger.

Repairs and improvements to the parsonage,$708 The church redecorated,
$275. An electric stove was bought for the parsonage by the W.M.S.
at $185. A new furnace was put in the church at a cost of $300. Total
expenditure,$1468.

Oct. 1944- Pastor's Report. "It is with Sadness and deep regret that we
report the loss of two of our members, Quillan Letson and Joe Davidson,
who gave their lives in the service of our country."

May 6, 1945-
On a quota of $675 on our Crusade for Christ, we ascribed $1200,
with $1060 in cash.
The church was painted at a cost of approximately $500.
The women of the church bought a baby grand piano for the audi-
torium of the church from Mrs. Young for $500.

Aug. 16, 1936
From the report of the W.M.S.
"We sent a young colored girl to Paine College in June."

1937-38 All church affairs reported doing nicely.

Jan. 1939 . The Young Men's Wesley Class changed its name to, The
Henry B. Mays Class. This class became one of the largest if the largest
class in the history of the church.

1940- It was in this year that the Methodist Episcopal South under
unification became, the Methodist Church. Our Missionary Society became
The Woman's Society of Christian Service and our Presiding Elder became
our District Superintendent.

From the Quarterly Conference Report- The Church School, Missionary
Societies and other organizations of the church are wide awake to their
responsibilities. The church buildings and parsonage are in good repair.

June 8, 1941- The local preachers recommended to annual conference
that Benson C. Barrett be received into the conference on trial.

Sept. 21, 1944- Norcross-Prospect Quarterit Conference.
The following resolution passed:
Where-as the Board of Stewards of each church and the church conference
of each church petitions the Bishop of the North Georgia Conference for
the statue of full time station.
The petition was granted and Rev. R.P. Ethridge became our first
after we became a station.
1942-44-45 record at top of page.

1946-Sept. 15.
During this quarter new hardwood floors were laid in the audit-
orium of the church and five rooms and the hall at the parsonage. The
same rooms at the parsonage were papered and painted.
This beautiful hardwood flooring was obtained by Mr. E.O. Hicks at
The Methodist Church
NORCROSS, GEORGIA

Dec. 1946. New pews have been purchased and are to be delivered within the next six or twelve months.

1947. Beginning this year annual conference will convene in June. This change made the 1945-46 year a short one.

1948. Due in large part to the generosity of Mrs. T. E. Summerour a new electric organ was installed in the church.

A stoker and venetian blinds for the basement were bought. The two costing $160.

The new pews were installed in the church at a cost of $1725.

1949. New chairs were bought for the choir, $7140. A hot water heater was bought for the parsonage. $96.

One of the most encouraging things that has occurred this year is the decision of the official board to put the church on a sound financial basis by the institution of a pledge system with Mr. R. E. Nesbit as financial secretary.

Progress is being made toward the enlargement of our Church School facilities. About $1500 has been collected in cash; lumber has been donated by Mr. William Everett, and the county has agreed to make the excavation.

1950. June 7. The new church annex has been completed. $6807.88 has been paid toward the cost. Church repairs $34.12, parsonage repairs $261.88.

Through the years outstanding work has been done by the W. S. C. S., the Leagues, the Church School Superintendents, and all officers and teachers. We regret that we cannot name them one by one and tell of their individual achievements.

The Register of Pastors who have served this church is as follows: (The names were taken from "The Complete Church Register", begun in 1874, but dated back to 1871.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W. A. Farris</td>
<td>1871-72</td>
<td>Decatur Circuit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. B. Davies</td>
<td>1873-74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. E. Gardner</td>
<td>1875-76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. C. Casey</td>
<td>1877-78</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. T. Lane</td>
<td>1879-80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. W. Lumpkin</td>
<td>1881-82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. P. Smith</td>
<td>1883-84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walter Yarborough</td>
<td>1885-86</td>
<td>Gainsville District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. R. Mason</td>
<td>1887-88</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. J. Christian</td>
<td>1889-91</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. M. Newton</td>
<td>1890-94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. M. Winn</td>
<td>1895-96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. W. Arnold</td>
<td>1896-99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. F. Robinson</td>
<td>1900-02</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. W. Quillian</td>
<td>1903-04</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. B. Dillard</td>
<td>1904-06</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. V. Weathers</td>
<td>1905-07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. C. Atkinson</td>
<td>1908-09</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallace Rogers</td>
<td>1910-11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. M. Dixon</td>
<td>1912-13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. L. Patillo</td>
<td>1914-15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. P. Marchman</td>
<td>1916-17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Years</td>
<td>District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. Echols</td>
<td>1908-09</td>
<td>North Atlanta District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.S. Sappington</td>
<td>1909-1911</td>
<td>North Atlanta District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.C. Cantrell</td>
<td>1911-1912</td>
<td>North Atlanta District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.E. Lanford</td>
<td>1912-1916</td>
<td>North Atlanta District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.P. Gary</td>
<td>1916-1919</td>
<td>North Atlanta District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nath Thompson</td>
<td>1919-1922</td>
<td>North Atlanta District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.W.O. McKibben</td>
<td>1922-1926</td>
<td>North Atlanta District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.J. Sears</td>
<td>1926-1928</td>
<td>North Atlanta District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T.M. Elliot</td>
<td>1928-1930</td>
<td>Decatur - Oxford District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.J. Copelan</td>
<td>1930-1932</td>
<td>East Atlanta District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.P. Eubanks</td>
<td>1932-1935</td>
<td>East Atlanta District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.C. Stratton</td>
<td>1935-1940</td>
<td>East Atlanta District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.P. Ethridge</td>
<td>1940-1941</td>
<td>East Atlanta District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.W. Hamilton</td>
<td>1941-1942</td>
<td>East Atlanta District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.V. Jones</td>
<td>1942-1943</td>
<td>East Atlanta District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.W. Elliot</td>
<td>1943-1945</td>
<td>East Atlanta District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.Kyle Tomlinson</td>
<td>1945-1948</td>
<td>East Atlanta District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan H. Williams</td>
<td>1948-1950</td>
<td>East Atlanta District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hollis D. Brigman</td>
<td>1950-</td>
<td>East Atlanta District</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>