About eleven miles east of Canton in Cherokee County, Georgia on the Canton - Cumming highway on what is known as the Smithwick Hill there stands a remodeled house which was originally Orange Methodist Church. This building was erected by early settlers some of whom reportedly helped drive the Indians from this part of the county. The oldest records available show the names of only three who were charter members in 1848. They were: Tyre Harris Smithwick, Martha Lathem Smithwick and Sarah Burton.

The original building was a wooden structure about thirty feet wide by forty feet long consisting of only one room. In 1907 the members decided to move the church to a location which would more easily serve the membership. The three acres of land on which the original building stood were bought by Ernest Smithwick who converted the church into a dwelling. William A Lathem, Sr. donated two acres of land on which the present church building is located at Lathemtown about two miles east of the site of the original building. The trustees then were T. L. Smith, R. C. Davis, W. A. Lathem, C. C. Davis, E. J. White, S. W. Lathem, and M. J. Sandow.

The present building originally consisted of only one room about thirty-five feet by fifty feet. In 1930 eight classrooms were added and in 1947 a basement was constructed underneath the classrooms. In 1950 gas floor furnaces and heaters were installed bringing the value of the building to $15000.

Orange church is one of four churches on the Holbrook Charge in the Atlanta-East District, so we share a parsonage with three other churches. Long years ago there was a Post Office called Orange, Ga. from this the church derived its name.
now has an enrollment of 28 and paid $118.00 for all causes last year. Miss Mary Smith is now our president.

Twenty-nine years ago the Epworth League was organized for the young people with Mrs. Arthur Lathem as president. This has been a very active organization, and the present enrollment of the Methodist Youth Fellowship is 22. Miss Joyce Lathem is the president, and the young people enjoy attending the Cherokee - Pickens Sub-District Meetings.

The church has produced three lay preachers, namely: Andrew Lathem, better known as "Uncle Bud"; Wes Lathem, his son; and Major Williams, a living grandson of "Uncle Bud". The lives and precepts of these men have meant much to the entire membership of the church.

The members of Orange Church have taken an active part in the Holbrook Camp Meeting for over a century.

The congregation has been privileged to hear Miss Mae Perry, missionary to Nigeria, Africa, tell of her work and experiences there. An interesting account of his years spent in a Japanese concentration camp was related by Wesley Thomas of a neighboring community who is now a ministerial student at Emory University.

There is at present a membership of 250. The total amount contributed by the members for all causes last year was $1800.

April 18, 1952
The present pastor, Rev. Frank Ray, has served the charge only one year. Preceding him were Rev. Robert Bringman and Rev. James Riddle, who served one year each. Rev. W. E. Purcell whose term of service was from 1940 to 1948, was born and reared in the Holbrook Camp Ground Community which is only about three miles from Orange Church. Our records show that the following served as pastors during the past 103 years. Prior to 1900 these men served: Rev. Worley, Rev. Tyson, Rev. Taylor, Rev. J. E. Bailey, Rev. Irwin, Rev. Clin King, Rev. Lou Sullivan and Rev. Belk.

Since 1900 the following have served as pastors:

Rev. D. Brown
Rev. E. G. Thompson
Rev. J. W. King
Rev. L. H. Ward
Rev. L. A. Wright
Rev. R. I. Johnson
Rev. W. B. Hughes
Rev. J. L. Moore
Rev. Elbert E. Davis
Rev. Fred Ray

Rev. Sewell Dixon
Rev. V. C. Gentry
Rev. H. L. Gurley
Rev. W. E. Mills
Rev. T. E. Sherwood
Rev. Newton Wise
Rev. J. E. Ward
Rev. W. E. Purcell
Rev. J. Riddle
Rev. R. Bringman
Rev. Frank Ray

Some of the oldest living members recall attending Sunday School in the original building. Some of the early leaders were Mr. Wes Lathem, Mr. Bob Lathem and Mr. E. M. Lathem, and since they had no literature they studied only the Bible with emphasis on memorizing verses of the Scripture. As the years passed, they began to use literature along with the Bible, and at the present time the Sunday School has an enrollment of 162 with 15 teachers and officers. The present superintendent is Roy White. Others who have served as superintendent are E. M. Lathem and Major Williams.

The Woman’s Missionary Society was first organized in 1929 by Miss Bert Winter with Mrs. Arthur Lathem as the first president and 30 charter members. The Woman’s Society of Christian Service