HISTORY OF SMYRNA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
PAULDING COUNTY

It is a matter of profound thanksgiving to Christians to know that religion was not overlooked in past years. To the founders of the early churches we shall forever be grateful. Among the early founders of this church were: T. J. Pearson, J. J. Shell, J. G. Carter, F. Thompson and W. H. Morgan.

Earliest church records cannot be found and information has been gleaned from fragments gathered from scrap books and church records of the late 1880's. Among these is a deed for a parcel of land bought from Mary A. Blisset for a cost of $3.75. A copy of the original deed is enclosed.

According to hand down information the first church was located in what is now the location of the church cemetery. This was a crude log building and services were held one Sunday for the Methodist and the next Sunday for the Concord Baptist. At this time traveling was either by buggy, wagon, or even foot; hence there were few church buildings and the pulpit had to be shared by different denominations.

As conditions improved the Concord Baptist and the Smyrna Methodist moved to different locations. Smyrna moved across the road and built a small unpainted frame building in the early 1900's. This building was located north east of the present building. The land for the church was given in part by Mr. Andy Carden.

In 1940 a highway was built that ran directly at the back of the church. At this time members decided to build a new church facing the highway. The old church was torn down and the lumber that could be salvaged was used in the construction of a new church with four Sunday School rooms added to the back of the building. This was a white frame building and remained so until 1964 when the main part of the church and the Sunday School rooms were bricked. Improvements such as stained glass windows, carpet, pews, and ceiling fans have been added to the interior of the building.

On July 20, 1980, a new fellowship hall, complete with kitchen and two bath rooms was dedicated by Rev. Rudy Baker, District Superintendent for the Rome District. This building was completed under the leadership of the Rev. Ted McCutchen.
The land for this building and picnic ground was purchased from Homer L. Cohran and his heirs at a cost of $600.00.

We, like many other churches, have faced many hardships, but through faith we are moving forward from services once a month, to twice a month and now we are blessed with having services every Sunday. We eagerly look forward to being a full time church in the near future.

At the present time we have an active Sunday School, a women's organization, men's organization, a youth program, with a youth director, Tracy Ray, who is now serving as president of the student body at Berry College, and are in the process of getting a choir started. The attendance is good and the enrollment is increasing.

The Smyrna United Methodist Church has been served in a blessed way by a long line of pastors. Some of the very earliest were:

- 1891 - Rev. John F. Davis
- 1892 - Rev. Caleb E. Dowell
- 1894 - Rev. John M. Crow
- 1896 - Rev. W. L. Singleton
- 1898 - Rev. J. H. Taylor
- 1899 - Rev. G. F. Braswell
- 1901 - Rev. W. L. Davenport
- 1902 - Rev. S. D. Evans
- 1903 - Rev. George D. Frazer
- 1908 - Rev. Thomas J. Pearson
- 1909 - Rev. Thomas J. Owens
- 1914 - Rev. E. L. Dodson
- 1916 - Rev. T. J. Owens
- 1918 - Rev. George Bell
- 1919 - Rev. W. B. Taylor
- ? - Rev. C. B. McKenzie
- ? - Rev. Robert Steward
- ? - Rev. Brackman
- ? - Rev. A. B. King
- ? - Rev. E. P. Driskell
Ministers serving from the 1930's until the 1980's. Some of the records were lost and the exact dates are not known.

1934 - Rev. Joseph Black (Later became a District Superintendent)
? - Rev. Wallace Wiggins
1942 - Rev. Cleveland
? - Rev. Kenneth Siefert
? - Rev. Oscar Dyer
? - Rev. Hosea Garrett
1948 - Rev. Nesmer Britian
1949 - Rev. Gilbert Ramsey
1950 - Rev. Bobby Berrier (Later became a District Superintendent)
1952 - Rev. Albert Savage
Rev. Hugh Nichols (Served as Associate)
1954 - Rev. W. E. Jarboe
1957 - Rev. Ralph Broome
1960 - Rev. Charles Barnes
1961 - Rev. Harvey Bickers
Rev. Charles Thomas (Served as Associate)
1964 - Rev. Paul Bone
1966 - Rev. Jerry Wilkins
1967 - Rev. Jack Smith
1969 - Rev. Charles Stevens
1969 - Rev. Hoyt Johnson
1970 - Rev. Ross Tipps
1972 - Rev. Ted Langford
1976 - Rev. Dennis Baker
1977 - Rev. Joseph Watson
1978 - Rev. Charlie Doughton
1979 - Rev. Ted McCutchen
1983 - Rev. John Norton

In the listing of ministers, I failed to list Rev. Harry Fisch. He served this church sometimes in the late thirties. An active M. Y. I was formed during his ministry and remained so for some years.

The first Vacation Bible School was started in 1952 under the leadership of Rev. Albert Savage and has continued until the present time.