Religion came to Henry County with the first settlers. In 1821 Mr. Bellah, the first circuit Rider to come to this county, settled near McDonough.

September 1, 1826, James Coker deeded to P. Z. Ward, Thomas A. Ward, James W. Wilkerson, D. L. Coleman, and James Coker, Trustees, one acre of land, more or less, in the twelfth land district, Lot #124, line running East and West so as to embrace the Church and graveyard, Church known as Concord, located in the upper part of Henry County, McDonough Circuit, near old Stockbridge. Old Concord Methodist Church was ranked among the oldest church organizations in the county. A one-room frame building with a door at each end of the building, front door facing west. This one acre of land cost $10.00.

Some of the members of Concord were as follows: Elijah B. Arnold, Izah Hollingsworth, James Coker, George McCully, Crumbley, Joe, Wilkerson, P. Z. Ward, Elie Mays, James Arnold, William Askew, Henry Shields, James Crowell, Buck Dean, Raleigh Hightower, Wiley Milam, and Suttles. Also members were Gaston Hinton, Dodson, Harrell and Bowdens.

Annual Camp meetings, under the brush arbor, were held in the early history of Concord. From these camp meetings came the idea of Shingleroof Campground. William Harden, from McDonough, later donated fifty acres of land in the Rowan settlement to the North Georgia Conference. It was stipulated in the deed that this spot should be used only for religious services, and for such it has been used since the day of its opening, camp meetings being held a week every summer.

June 4, 1840 an additional acre of land was given the Concord Church by E. B. Arnold. Deeds being made to James Pattillo, Samuel Hanson, Isams Cain, Trustees.

Among the early preachers to serve Concord were: Rev. Sidney Smith,

The coming of the Southern Railroad in the year 1881 made great changes. A railroad from Atlanta to Macon was built. The settlers who owned land about Old Stockbridge, advanced the price to such a degree that the people would not buy it. The railroad would not locate a depot there. Two prominent Atlanta citizens, John W. Grant and George W. Adair, bought a tract of land about a mile south and offered the lots at a reasonable price. This offer was readily accepted by many and on this tract the town of Stockbridge began its existence in 1882.

This change resulted in the transfer of Old Concord Church to the present site of the Stockbridge Methodist Church. On May 9, 1884, John W. Henderson, for the sum of fifteen dollars, deeded the trustees, Edmond Bell, Elijah Lyons, Jackson Hambrick, Jackson Bell, James Smith, Moses Moseley, and Ephromes James, one acre of land for the purpose of building a house of worship and Sunday School. The Methodist Episcopal Church South was the second to build a house of worship in Stockbridge. The Protestant Methodist was the first.

The actual moving of Concord Church began in 1886, two years after the lot was purchased. The church was then in the Jonesboro charge under the leadership of John C. Davidson, pastor. Lumber for the new church was sawed from the G. W. McWilliams Estate. With all labor donated, the approximate cost of this building was $1,000. In 1888, the new church completed, Rev. W. P. Smith held the first protracted meeting.

Stockbridge was again placed in the McDonough circuit in 1894 and remained in this circuit for two years. In 1896 Stockbridge became a circuit composed of Stockbridge, Bethel, and Jones Chapel, with the parsonage at Ellenwood. The parsonage being so far away from the current churches was not satisfactory or practical. The only means of transportation being horse and buggy, and with preaching Saturday and Sunday the preacher had to be away from home four days to serve his churches. The parsonage which
serves the purpose today, was built at Stockbridge about 1900 or 1901.

Jones Chapel was transferred from the circuit and Noah's Ark added about five years later.

The Woman's Missionary Society was organized in 1907 by Mrs. M. B. Sams, wife of Rev. M. B. Sams, pastor serving at that time. Mrs. Bun Ward was the first President. In 1909 Mrs. C. M. Power was the first delegate to be sent from the Woman's Missionary Society to a district conference.

In the fall of 1910, Rev. W. O. Butler came to serve the Stockbridge Circuit. Union and Flippen were added and Noah's Ark removed from the circuit. Brother Butler served the charge two years and when superannuated came back to Stockbridge to make his home. He is buried in the city cemetery. Two years ago when the Methodist Church attempted to mark the graves of her beloved sons who had gone on, a most impressive service was conducted by Rev. Robt. L. Taylor. A beautiful wreath was placed on the grave by Mr. C. S. Keen, Chairman of the Board of Stewards, Stockbridge Methodist Church.

Many great revivals have blessed the church but the most outstanding was about 1912 when Rev. Charlie Dunaway had such a sweeping victory. Many souls were born into the kingdom of God and Stockbridge has been a better town and community since that great revival.

In 1922 Rev. Joe Thrailkill served Stockbridge Church as his first charge after joining the North Georgia Conference. Rev. Thrailkill served in this capacity two years. Later he served some of the largest churches in the North Georgia Conference and was District Superintendent of the LaGrange and Dalton Districts. We like to feel that Stockbridge had a warm spot in Brother Joe's heart and we pause here to pay tribute to his memory and extend to his family our sincere sympathy.

In 1931 Stockbridge was placed permanently in the Griffin District, having been earlier a part of the South Atlanta District.

Until about 1940 Stockbridge had preaching services only once a month. At that time it became a half station. Rev. Y. A. Bailey, pastor.
In 1943, under the leadership of Rev. John Maxwell, the movement was started for building a new church School building. During that year approximately $6,000 was raised. Due to World War II the scarcity of material and labor shortage nothing else was done until the spring of 1947. At that time Rev. R. E. Lyle raised some additional funds and brought a church architect to make plans with the Building Committee.

In July 1947, Rev. C. J. Grilhe was sent to Stockbridge. He was an architect and builder who started at once to work with the Building Committee. December of that same year, on Sunday afternoon, a determined and happy group of people met for a ground-breaking service. J. W. Clark broke the ground with other members of the Building Committee gathered around: C. M. Keltner, Mrs. Hattie Goodhue, and Mr. Joseph Mann. Later, that same afternoon, Mr. C. M. Keltner was called to that fairer land, forever to be with Jesus.

After the ground-breaking, the group went into the church for a dedication service, each one determined to give his very best for the accomplishment of the gigantic task ahead, and asking for Divine guidance and strength. This building meant much sacrificial giving, hard work, and earnest praying by every member of the church.

The Educational Building was to have three floors,--basement, ground floor, and one story above, made of concrete block and brick veneered, equipped with a modern kitchen.

The top floor to be used for the children's division; Ground floor for church office, and adult Sunday School Rooms. The Assembly Room in basement to be used for place of worship until new sanctuary could be built.

Much progress was made and by the end of 1948 the Educational Building was half completed.

The building was at this stage of construction when on November 19, 1948 Mr. W. W. Milam, Sr. passed into the "Sunrise of Eternity". Brother Milam loved his church and from his sick bed he was actively and enthusiastically...
engaged in raising funds for the new church school building. His life and his ministry will continue to bear fruit for many years to come.

The formal opening of the new Educational Plant was held Sunday, Apr. 17, 1949. A large crowd of Stockbridge people as well as many out-of-town people attended this service. Following is the program outlined for this day:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assembly (In Old Building)</td>
<td>10:30 o'clock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devotional</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation of Keys (Chm of Bldg. Committee)</td>
<td>J. W. Clark, Sr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance of Keys (Chm. of Bd. of Education)</td>
<td>Mrs. John Christian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Session</td>
<td>11:00 o'clock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjournment</td>
<td>11:35 o'clock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morning Worship Service</td>
<td>11:45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basket Lunch</td>
<td>12:45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was a day of great gladness for all who attended.

The people continued to work and pray. It was their great desire to free the Educational Building of indebtedness before beginning the new Sanctuary.

Rev. Robt. L. Taylor was sent to the Stockbridge Charge in July 1949. He came to us from the Augusta District. Rev. Taylor had been a member of the North Georgia Conference for seven years, but this actually was his first move. It has meant much hard work, but we hope he has been as happy in Stockbridge as we have been to have him and his family.

The last Sunday in May 1950 the church had a great celebration and homecoming. The Educational Building was free from Debt and the mortgage was burned. There was great rejoicing in the hearts of all. Mr. Marshall Goodhue struck the match and Mrs. Goodhue held the mortgage while it burned.
From Easter 1949 until 1952, all church services were held in the au-
ditorium of the church school building.

The Building Committee, J. T. Mays, Jr., Joseph Mann, J. W. Clark, Rev.
Goodhue, Mrs. J. M. Christian Treas., as well as all the members were anx­
ious to get started on the new sanctuary. There was much to be done: the
old church to be torn down, all old lumber to be carried completely off
church ground.

Through the generosity of Mr. Ray Lambert of the Stockbridge Stone Co.
the lot was graded and basement dug with his equipment, which saved time
as well as many dollars.

There was a fast crew of workmen, a good supervisor, Mr. J. W. Clark,
so the new Sanctuary went up as rapidly as possible, approximately a year
and a half.

There is a large basement underneath the entire floor space of the Sanc­
tuary, which is used for the dining room. We have a spacious auditorium with
a balcony and choir loft that seats twenty-four. The auditorium is ceiled
with accousta-board, and has six recessed lights, as well as two beautiful
antique gold chandeliers. The sanctuary has twenty pews; ten on either side,
which are finished to match the woodwork and floors; both being in natural
wak woč. The sanctuary is heated by a central gas furnace located in the
large basement. It is cooled by a large ceiling fan. The pulpit furniture
is in natural oak to match the pews also.

The original old bell, first used at Concord, now hangs in the steeple
of the new Church. There was much excitement in town the day the steeple
was raised to the top of the new building. The top-most section of the
steeple was built on the ground. Mr. Ray Lambert sent a 90-foot crane and
hoisted it on to the tower. This event was witnessed by all the school
children of the Stockbridge School.

On Sunday morning, June 22, 1952 this bell pealed forth the glad tidings
that the dreams of the Methodist people of Stockbridge had come true. A
beautiful new sanctuary opened its doors to a large congregation.

At the morning worship service, Mrs. J. M. Christian, Treasurer of the Building Fund, presented the keys to the building to Mr. G. S. Keen, Chairman of the Board of Stewards, as the act of official opening after which Mrs. J. W. Clark and Mrs. H. C. Callaway sang, "Open the Gates of The Temple".

The other main features of the day were Dedication of Pulpit Furniture and Organ in memory of Mr. W. W. Milam and Mrs. Byrd Morris Mann. Mrs. Milam representing the Milam family presented the pulpit furniture and Roy Mann, representing the Mann family, presented the organ.

Then much to his surprise, Mr. J. W. Clark was presented a beautiful Hamilton wristwatch for the long hours of hard work he so unselfishly gave to this task.

Rev. Robert L. Taylor preach a soul-stirring sermon on "Building for Eternity".

Immediately following the worship service, lunch was served in the basement.

On the same day Revival Services began with Rev. Hamp Watson, Director of Music at First Methodist Church, Griffin, Ga. leading the singing and Rev. R. Taylor preaching.

We pause here to thank each and every person who made this building and this opening service possible. Especially do we thank the following people for contributing the pews: Mrs. J. M. Christian, Mr. J. M. Christian, Mrs. J. T. Mays Jr., Mr. J. M. Branan, Mrs. S. C. McWilliams, Mrs. S. C. McWilliams for Mr. Dan and Mrs. Zue Ward, Mr. G. S. Keen, Mrs. Grace McCain, Ellis McCain, Mr. C. T. Loder, Mr. Joseph Mann (2 pews), Mr. and Mrs. Ben F. Holland, Mr. H. C. Callaway, Mr. Perry Foster, Mr. J. W. Clark, Mr. and Mrs. Marshall Goodhue, Mrs. C. M. Power, Mr. Aldine M. Mays, and Mr. Herman Elliott.

The beautiful red velvet altar pad was given by Mrs. Mae Glass Brannan. The pulpit scarf, in matching color, was given by Mr. J. D. McCullough.
The runner for the communion table, also in red velvet, was a gift of Mr. and Mrs. Francis Clay Callaway.

The three panel memorial windows were gifts of the following: The W. K. Branan Family, The Joseph Mann Family, the R. E. Brannan Family, The J. T. Mays Sr. Family, Mrs. Cornelia Lee Ladson, Mr. J. W. Clark, and Mr. Perry G. Foster.

The two-panel memorial windows were given by: J. B. Keen Family, the G. S. Keen Family, Mrs. Lola Milam in memory of W. W. Milam.

The one-panel windows were given by: Mrs. Cornelia Dodson Hightower Family, Mrs. Ellis McCain, in memory of Dr. Ellis McCain.

The M. Y. F. presented the Christmas pageant December 1951 at the three churches of the Charge. Following the presentation at Stockbridge an offering was taken to go toward the purchasing of a window in the church. On Dec. 23, 1951 the M. Y. F. presented the Church a "Christ in Gethsemane" stained Glass window for the front of the church. It is placed in the gable front of the church, where it is lighted each night.

The beautiful boxwood and other shrubbery were gifts of Mrs. Rosa Smith and Mr. H. P. Branan which add much to the building and grounds.

The bulletin board was built by Mr. Marion and Bass Tapley and donated by Mrs. Perry G. Foster.

The Methodist Church has prospered here and now has about 230 members. Among them- some are leading businessmen and influential people of the town. This church has been the spiritual home for many devout and staunch Methodists and here has been laid the foundation of strong Christian Characters.

"I love thy Church, O, God,
Her walls before Thee stand
Dear as the apple of Thine eye
And graven on Thy hand".
In July 1953 Rev. Jack D. Smith was appointed to serve the Stockbridge Charge and Church. He came to us from the South Georgia Conference where he served in a very fruitful capacity as pastor of Ludowici Church for five years.

At the time of writing this history, the membership is in the process of liquidating all indebtedness from the sanctuary with a goal set for new March 1, 1954; Also, planning the building of a much-needed parsonage.

Note: In reference to the aforementioned life of Rev. Joe S. Thrailkill and his loving service here, his widow has recently presented to the church a beautiful set of Altarware in his memory.

History Committee:

Mrs. H. B. Branan
Mrs. W. D. Mays
Miss Hattie Mae Penland
Mr. J. D. McCullough

(Material for this history was secured from old deeds, church records, county papers, and descendents of members of Old Concord Church)