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ATHENS YOUNG HARRIS MEMORIAL METHODIST CHURCH
In 1908 a group of Christian men and women in the western sector of Athens decided that they should have a Church in which to worship. They had been having Sunday School on Sunday afternoons in an old discarded warehouse and in the homes of the community. Rev. Joe Y. Dunaway, a local Methodist preacher, offered to give a lot on the south east corner of Chase Street and Nantahala Avenue for the location of the church, provided it was named Young Harris Memorial in honor of a Christian layman who had befriended him during his college career. His offer was accepted and Young Harris Memorial Methodist Church of Athens, Georgia was organized January 3, 1909, with a membership of one hundred and twelve. Six on the Charter roll are still members in 1951. They are Printice Conaway, Iris Conaway Bishop, Earnest Fowler, Maude Fowler Bell, Rosa Lee Prater and Mrs. H.M. Williamson.

Rev. Frank S. Hudson served as the first pastor of the Church. Rev. E.E. Hoss was Bishop at that time and Rev. W.L. Pierce the Presiding Elder of the Athens District. On October 17, 1910 the Church was dedicated by Bishop Warren A. Candler, and on that day all indebtedness for building and furnishings was paid.

In December 1910 the Rev. George D. Stone came as the pastor and during the next year he was instrumental in getting a nice comfortable parsonage built. It is the attractive bungalow at 685 Boulevard.

In 1912 during the pastorate of the Rev. Sherman R. England it was decided that it would be for the best interest of the church to have it located on the Boulevard. December 10, 1912 the lot on the corner of Chase Street and the Boulevard was purchased and the church rolled to this site. From time to time various improvements were made in order to try to meet the growing needs of the church.

Excavations were made and basement rooms added, also a balcony and eight balcony rooms as well as two rooms on the main floor. In 1930 the Sunday School Annex was built on to the rear of the church. This annex was named the Cobb Lampkin Annex in honor of one of the charter church members who was ever working for the progress of the church in a spiritual and financial way.

In 1940 Mr. Eustace Lampkin, gave ten thousand dollars to Young Harris Memorial Church for repairing, remodeling or reconstruction. The Board of Stewards and Trustees studied present and future needs of the church and found that remodeling or rebuilding would be very impractical. They advised the selling of the church and parsonage on the Boulevard and the purchase of a lot on Prince Avenue, known as the Judge Edwin K. Lumpkin property, on which to construct a new church building and parsonage.

On January 16, 1946 the quarterly conference presided over by District Superintendent Horace S. Smith, elected a building committee composed of, F.G. Bell, Paul Saye, G.H. Bell, Francis Jackson, C.H. Stone, R.L. Lester, Julius Bishop, Robert Stone and H. Curtis Stephens. The Boulevard property was sold and the Lumpkin property purchased. The old home was renovated and made into a temporary place of worship and a permanent Church School building.
This building has a historical background in that it was in the front parlor of the home that the first Ladies Garden Club in America was formed. In selling the property the right was reserved to place a bronze plaque in the building signifying this fact.

On May 5, 1946 the district superintendent, Rev. Horace S. Smith dedicated the building. It consists of a chapel that seats about two hundred and has sixteen classrooms and a kitchen. Work was immediately begun on the construction of a ten room brick parsonage in the rear of the Church School Building. By August 1946 this lovely structure at 64 Prince Place had been completed and furnished beautifully. On September 15, 1946 it was dedicated by the Rev. R.J. Kerr and open house was held.

On October 7, 1946 the church official board decided to have a service in memory of Mr. Cobb Lampkin, a much revered charter member who departed this life April 29, 1942. To help perpetuate his memory it was decided to name the church school plant the Cobb Lampkin Building and a marble tablet in the hall of the building signifies this honor.

On January 12, 1949 the ground breaking service for the new church building was held. By October 1949 the lovely sanctuary was completed, furnished and the grounds beautifully landscaped. On October 16, 1949 the opening service was held in the new structure, which is one of the most beautiful and worshipful to be found anywhere.

The unprecedented growth and achievement of Young Harris Memorial Church in its forty years history shows conclusively that the Lord is in the work and that His faithful laborers in this part of the vineyard are doing their part to help advance His Kingdom. The history of this church is replete with interest and its triumph calls forth much praise. Among those who have gone into the ministry from its ranks are the Reverends; Bird Betts, Jessie Warwick, Alfonso Adams, R.M. Whitman, Gordon G. Thompson, M.H. Conaway, Wesley Stephens and Bennie Moore. For many years Rev. J.V.M. Morris, a retired Methodist Minister was a member of the church and taught the Men's Bible Class.


Many faithful men and women with the divine help that they have received deserve much praise for the advance of Young Harris Memorial Church. No one is due more credit than Mr. Fred G. Bell. Since April 18, 1909 he has been a leading
Young Harris Memorial Methodist Church
973 Prince Avenue
G. M. SPIVEY, Pastor
64 Prince Place
Athens, Georgia

figure in every phase of the work of Young Harris Church. As chairman of the Building Committee and church lay leader he is due much credit for the present modern parsonage historic education building and beautiful new church. He has been the guiding spirit for the many faithful members who have worked so untiringly for the advance of the church and its righteous cause. Posterity will ever be grateful for noble deeds of their revered ancestors, and strive to build well on the foundations that have been laid for them.