Methodist Church

History Recalled

By ASHLEY B. FUTCHELL
Editor & Publisher

An interesting Sunday School hour at 9:45 a.m., good preaching service beginning at 11:00 a.m., and a picnic spread for kings and queens just about to tell the story of what will happen at the First United Methodist Church in Washington on "Homecoming Day", this Sunday, October 14. "Invest in your church's future" is the theme of the day, and the Rev. Charlie Mike Smith, who grew up in the local church will be preaching at the church reminds all of the great investment they made in those early years. Joseph Hinton also gave the early church strength and sustenance. In 1881 the first station preacher was sent to Washington in the person of the Rev. Wm. Wright. The old unventilated, poorly arranged church was renovated, a pulpit and altar built, and a bellry erected. For all this the record shows that "the Methodists of Washington raised $609 and thought it no trouble." In 1881 a new church was built on West Second Street where the present church stands. The site was donated by Mrs. Sarah Katherine Quinn. The spire was placed in 1944-1945. The Conference met here in 1944. Revivals came and the membership grew. In the years before the Civil War such names as Daniel Wharton, Joseph Farrow, John A. Arthur, Sarah Redding, and Elizabeth Buckman - names to which were familiar to the hearts of the church membership and which would bring honor always to the church through the years. Many a name, such as John, Julia Benpsas, Josiah Gaikill, N. S. Fulford, Elizabeth Lucas, and Olivia Drigg would add lustre in their time too. Then came Lockwood Hays, Warren Mayo, John Small, Ben Tripp, Diama Harris, Benjamin Cowell, and A. W. Thomas, each in his or her own time to give a new glory. During the dark days of the Civil War the church was burned, and Mrs. W. B. Cowell saw it go up in flames. Her testimony in later years would bring the church $4,000 from the government. This sum was used to start the old Sunday School building which now needs renovating. In 1829 Mrs. C. V. Swan beautifully accented the Silver Cummonet society which had been preserved. The set is certified truly "Elizabeth L. Gregory, to her beloved church, Washington N.C., 22, Decembar, 1872." Growing pains came along, and Methodists felt that a new church was needed. They were properly asked either by growth within the church or the building without being carried out by the Episcopalians and Presbyterians. Dr. T. N. Nicholas was Chairman of the board of the Episcopalians and Presbyterians. Dr. T. N. Nicholas was Chairman of the board of Bishops. Dr. E. T. Nicholson was pastor, and in 1888 a new church was finished. Then E. W. Ayers, J. F. Buckman Sr., and the pastor bought the lot adjacent to the church for $250. The first wedding to take place in the present church came on July 21, 1887 when Ben Taylor and Effie Wright were united in holy wedlock - even before the new church was completed. Unluckily, the last couple to be married in the old church before it was burned

First United Methodist Church
down was the mother and father of Effie Wright. The new church put the congregation in debt some $6,000, and many members considered that a staggering sum. But F. W. Ayers and J. F. Buckman Sr. took over and assumed the note so that the church might be dedicated by Bishop Hendrix. And the entire indebtedness was paid off within five years - a remarkable feat, they said. A parsimonious was built on West Second Street in 1939 during the pastorate of Dr. M. T. Plyler. In 1968 when the church was built the Board of Stewards were: Dr. Sam Nicholson, chairman, James A. Arthur, E. W. Ayers, J. F. Buckman Sr., C. W. Munger, A. W. Thomas, H. B. Mayo, W. E. Jones, F. B. Moore, W. R. Jacobson, Dr. A. S. Wells. The Building Committee members were: Dr. S. T. Nicholson chairman, E. W. Ayers, J. F. Buckman, W. P. Baughman, C. W. Munger, and Capt. Tillman.


This Sunday, October 14, Homecoming Day, is a great day for the church of Washington. Odeell Walker says "let us make it a greater day for our Lord and for those who shall follow us in this church."