

A Brief History of



John Wesley United Methodist Church

Celebrating 50 Years of Sharing Jesus!

1689 Old St. Augustine Road, Tallahassee, FL 32301

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(850) 877-1738



Ministers Who Have Served Our Church

<u>Rev. Danny E. Morris & Rosalie</u>	<u>1960-1966</u>
<u>Rev. H. Lee Pearson & Linda</u>	<u>1966-1969</u>
<u>Rev. Mitchell Florence & Nan</u>	<u>1969-1972</u>
<u>Rev. Dr. Thomas E. Farmer, Jr & Peggy</u>	<u>1972-1982</u>
<u>Rev. Harry Baas & Naomi</u>	<u>1982-1984</u>
<u>Rev. Dr. Robert M. Gibbs & Brenda</u>	<u>1984-1992</u>
<u>Rev. Barbara M. Stiles (Assoc.) & Joe</u>	<u>1989-1992</u>
<u>Rev. Hardy Sandlin, III & Barbara</u>	<u>1992-1995</u>
<u>Rev. Larry Kilbourn & Dede</u>	<u>1995-1998</u>
<u>Rev. Carrill Munnings, Sr. & Annjeanette</u>	<u>1998-2000</u>
<u>Retired Rev. Bud Harkey (Assoc.) & Sara Ann</u>	<u>1999-2006</u>
<u>Rev. Gerry Gilmer PhD. & Evelyn</u>	<u>2000-2005</u>
<u>Rev. Ron Z. McCreary & Elaine</u>	<u>2005-2009</u>
<u>Rev. Ric Walker & Linda</u>	<u>2009-2010</u>

Celebrating
50 Years
of Ministry!

at John Wesley United Methodist Church 2010

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John Wesley United Methodist Church

Celebrating 50 Years!

PREFACE

This booklet was created by a committee for the celebration of 50 years of members in ministry at John Wesley United Methodist Church in Tallahassee, Florida. The booklet is a work in progress; some stories of members and ministries have been missed. Feel free to donate your memories and photos to the church for consideration in the next edition. Special thanks go to Cindy Cospers, Allyce Smith, and Kelly Dixon.

INTRODUCTION

The birth of John Wesley United Methodist Church took place on April 3, 1960, when a group of 122 enthusiastic people met in the crowded Hartsfield Elementary School cafeteria to hear the charismatic young pastor, Danny Morris, preach that Sunday morning. Not a noise could be heard even from the rickety wooden folding chairs, as people held their breath in an attempt to hear every word Pastor Morris said. Even the bright young faces of children were enthralled by his inviting voice and youthful energy.

Both young and old attendees were looking forward to the establishment of their new church and believed that through God, anything was possible. When the sermon ended the congregation began to discuss the message that had been delivered especially for them. The feeling of love and commitment toward an unknown future created a common bond among the new members, many of whom had left the larger Trinity United Methodist Church with hopes of serving the new subdivision of Indian Head Acres. The caring of these special Christians helped even strangers feel like one large family.

They all departed with inspiration and hope—for on this day a family of believers gave birth to a church whose mission was to help others through the caring and welcoming attitude of its congregation. The new John Wesley Methodist Church in Tallahassee was organized on May 29, 1960, and chartered the next day on June 1, 1960. Pastor Danny Morris was officially assigned to the new church. Charter members totaled 146 and are listed in Appendix A. The first sanctuary was built in 1963 and consecrated on February 7, 1964. This new church planting was assisted by sister churches Trinity and Saint Paul's Methodist Churches (not "United" at that time).



*Groundbreaking service on purchased church grounds, with members viewing an image of the church before construction;
the finished first building on the right*

The Formative Years: 1960-1972

*“The grace or love of God, whence cometh our salvation, is free in all and free for all.”
John Wesley Works III, page 544.*

CHAPTER 1 – The New Congregation

The congregation of John Wesley Methodist Church consisted primarily of young families eager to create a second home for their children. It was a church that, whose banner declared “Giving until it helps: A dollar for us – A dollar for others,” embodied the goal of service to God and neighbors. A list of historic mottoes is found in Appendix B. This unique body of Christians wanted to give back to the local community, both spiritually and monetarily, in an attempt to bring people closer to Christ through their loving and welcoming attitude. This is a reputation that remains with the church today.

Our traditional story is that the idea to plant a new church in east Tallahassee came up on a fishing trip – when the Holy Spirit was at work fishing for men, while the men were just fishing. Early in the year 1960 it was decided that the congregation of Trinity United Methodist Church had grown so large that another church to serve families in the new area of Indian Head Acres could be planted. While a suitable location was sought, members eager to begin the new services and become acquainted with one another met in the cafeteria of Hartsfield Elementary School. Several of the members’ children attended that school. Every Sunday morning volunteers would set up wooden folding chairs as the new assembly of people flooded into the room. The first pastor, Danny Morris, was on “loan” from Trinity Methodist Church and worked to keep spirits high and create excitement for the future.

In the first months the John Wesley congregation paid the rent on the assistant pastor's parsonage at Trinity Church. The opportunity came to acquire a house at 1136 Maple Drive in the fall of 1960 which became the parsonage for Pastor Danny, Rosalie and family. Early meeting minutes note that a washing machine—not dining room furniture—was the priority purchase for the new parsonage.



New parsonage at Maple Drive; congregation meeting at Hartsfield School

Six acres of land (pine, pasture and cornfield) off Old Saint Augustine Road was the preferred site for the new home of the church. Member John Ausley donated his legal services, and Sam Teague was delegated by the congregation to negotiate for this site. However, acquiring the land was difficult. The Smith family, who owned large parcels of Tallahassee, was initially unwilling to sell, preferring only to lease. The matriarch of the Smith family, affectionately called “Miss Fanny,” a devout Methodist, sold the land to the church against the wishes of her family after George Palmer persuaded her to attend a church meeting.

Owning the land gave the new congregation a sense of belonging. The congregation was planting its roots firmly in the ground both spiritually and physically. Once the name of the church was chosen to be John Wesley Methodist Church by a close vote, Pastor Danny Morris negotiated with the City of Tallahassee to have the phone number and address designated as “**1738**”—the auspicious year of John Wesley’s Aldersgate experience. (The City changed the address to 1689 around 2005.)

After land was paid off in a year, plans were made and the building of a sanctuary and classrooms began in 1963. In May of 1964 the sanctuary and southern Sunday school wing of the church was completed, and members volunteered to complete a lot of the finishing work. The dedication service was held on February 7, 1964.



Rev. Danny Morris shakes hands with Governor Farris Bryant during consecration service in 1964

Danny Morris, wife Rosalie, sons Alan and David and daughter Diana (born during the pastorate at John Wesley **1960-1966** were the right people for such a time as this. In the first three and a half years of the church, Sunday school classes for all ages were held at Hartsfield School, in the basement of Robert Butler Lodge and at the Plantation Motel. Church Board meetings were held at local banks. Commissions on Education, Missions, Membership and Evangelism, Stewardship and Finance, the Worship Committee, the Building Committee, the Women's Society for Christian Service, the Wesleyan Service Guild and the pastor all reported monthly and there was a quarterly church conference meeting. It took two years to get a Methodist Men's Group organized at John Wesley.



Pastor Danny Morris and Rosalie and family at the 1979 Homecoming Sunday

CHAPTER 2 — A House of Worship at Work

Several church members dedicated hours to teaching, praying, singing, meeting, planning, and performing other functions of the church. Once the sanctuary/fellowship hall was in operation the growth began in earnest. The goal was to further the understanding of the word of God by knowing and doing God's word. With the constant activity, it was not uncommon to hear the "hustle and bustle" of children running in and out of the building or the fevered buzz of women discussing family matters.

By the end of 1964 membership was at 400. Nine Sunday school classes plus a nursery were bursting at the seams. Boy Scout Troop 110 was chartered September 27, 1964, and Cub Scouts and Girl Scouts followed. The Scout House/Hut was donated. The men's group launched and hosted the first fish fry in 1964. The Women's Society for Christian Service had a bake sale at the first fish fry. One hundred children attended the first Easter egg hunt. A Bidy League basketball team was formed and donated church funds were used to purchase uniforms. The Methodist Youth Fellowship meetings were on Sunday evenings. Gary Lanham, a master barber and carpenter, made the wooden crosses given to every new member who joined the church. In later years Tony Melvin took up that task.

A unique accounting approach to mission outreach work at the early John Wesley Church was the **Fund for Others**. In accordance with the church's goal of giving a dollar for us and a dollar for others, budget expenditures benefiting others were reported as such. Global missions slowly became an experience where members of the congregation could immerse themselves and serve Christ within the world parish due to the connectionalism of the Methodist Church. For example, in the mid 1960s a group of John Wesley members, Volunteers in Mission, traveled to Honduras to aid the construction of a local church. Returning members who had joined in the mission work felt a sense of well being, assurance of the love of Christ, and were thankful for their chance to help those less fortunate.

Two Methodist women's groups started in June 1960: the Women's Society for Christian Service and the Wesleyan Service Guild, which later merged into United Methodist Women in **1968**. The same year the **United Methodist Church** was created by merger with the United Brethren Church. After several years of steady membership, growth sub-groups called "circles" were formed which continue to this day. Susanna Wesley was the first circle formed at John Wesley. Each circle has varying study and service interests. The women's groups joined together for Day of Prayer and all manner of mission/agape work. Mission studies for the whole church were sponsored by the circles each year.

Choirs became an essential part of John Wesley life, and increased in members, number and talent along with the church membership. Several weddings between chancel choir members occurred over the years and lasting friendships were formed, many of which have withstood the test of time. There have been some truly awesome concerts, cantatas, youth choir tours, and music directors over the years. The

excitement of the common challenges and joys of their growing families and church activities created an immediate bond between the members of John Wesley Church.



Wanda Pelham at a Methodist Women's meeting; Youth Choir in their new sanctuary

CHAPTER 3 – The Great Experiment/ Ten Brave Christians

The church's popularity rose in Tallahassee and membership grew from 146 charter members to 440 in 1965. It was a time of growing pains. Week after week the Sunday school classes were filled to overflowing. One of the popular classes was the Christian Home Builders class. This class focused exclusively on young couples and adults ages 21-35. The class was led by the influential Sam Teague (later a mayor of Tallahassee), whose learned manner and personal methods of teaching attracted people. Despite the success of his class, Teague felt that something was missing. In search of answers he began to pray. Soon he felt the power of God as he wrote furiously for 20 minutes nonstop. What emerged from his writings were the following five steps to finding a life that truly mattered (from *The John Wesley Great Experiment* by Sam Teague):

For One Month – Wanted: Ten Brave Christians

1. Who will meet once each week to pray together,
2. Who will give two hours time each week to the church,
3. Who will give God 1/10 of earnings during the month,
4. Who will spend 5:30-6:00 each morning in prayer and meditation,
5. Who will witness for God their experience to others.

The following Sunday, Sam Teague excitedly proposed his idea to his Sunday school class and asked for ten volunteers, or "ten brave Christians." To his surprise, and that of the entire class, all 22 class members raised their hands. After two months of preparation during which appropriate Bible verses and studies were chosen for contemplation, the first group began the "Great Experiment" in March of 1965. The program was a success and seemed to "turn the church upside down."

Over the following months a second group participated in the program and once again it was deemed a success. Nearly all the brave Christians who followed the 30-day spiritual disciplines and prayer program claimed to feel closer to God and, for many, the change has been long lasting. The amount of insight gained into oneself and into God's word was profound, allowing participants to see what truly matters in life and to forge a stronger, more personal spiritual bond with God and his people.

Challenges experienced during the Ten Brave Christians study reportedly strengthened the participants' resolution and made the experience more meaningful for all. For example, charter member Cora Ann Chapman recounted the difficulty giving away 1/10 of her earnings for the month while trying to maintain a family life and raise four children. It seemed that God multiplied the other 9/10 of her earnings, and challenges were worked out through the grace of God. Some expressed difficulty in being able to devote 30 minutes each morning at 5:30 a.m. to prayer and meditation. However, once the practice had begun, the early 30 minutes of meditation became a way to "spiritually refresh" oneself while setting a more reflective mood for the rest of the day.

Sam Teague stated that his program would travel the world and enable others to find the meaning in life that often escapes us during our busy lives. Through the decades, the Great Experiment program has grown and has been translated into 26 different languages. For awhile it was a "Brave Christian Movement" world-wide with Holy Land tours. **The study continues to change lives today.** For more details on The John Wesley Great Experiment/ Ten Brave Christians, read "*A Life that Really Matters*" by Sam Teague, "*Any Miracle God Wants*" by Danny Morris, and "*Light and Fire: A spiritual biography of Danny E. Morris*" by Nancy Pfaff, available in our church library. Or do the program yourself by asking for a copy of "*The John Wesley Great Experiment*" by Sam E. Teague, Discipleship Resources, Nashville, Tennessee.

In Sam's own words "The remainder of this story is a miracle! A church, which was desperately short of Sunday school teachers, found itself with one teacher for every eight children. A church, which had a choir of only eleven faithful members, suddenly found the choir loft too small." (from *The John Wesley Great Experiment* by Sam Teague).

Danny Morris ended up on staff at The Upper Room in Nashville, Tennessee, where he continued to distribute The Ten Brave Christians program materials and create new discipleship resources. Church members also had a great time at our 40th Homecoming reminiscing with guest preacher Danny Morris. Homecomings started in 1979.



Charter members Jack Turner, Aleen Sinclair, Margaret Palmer, Maybelle Hollingsworth and Iris Turner

CHAPTER 4 – Fish Fry and Scouts

During the 1960s John Wesley Church sponsored several events that provided both joyful activities for youth and adults and spiritual outreach and kinship to the local community. One of the most enduring and beneficial traditions started in 1964—the annual fish fry. Originally held for two nights a week, this beloved event was first started as a project of the men’s group with the local Boy Scout troop 110. This group of men mentoring boys was a vital part of early John Wesley life. The fish fry successfully raised money for both the church and the Boy Scout troop while bringing the local community to the church grounds, giving the church exposure and offering a chance to showcase the renowned hospitality.

To better accommodate the increasing demand for food, church members joined together and purchased or created larger-than-life cooking machines. One of them, the large grits cooker made by Walter Godfrey and volunteers is still in use today. Since the cooking unit was mobile it was rented and loaned out to other churches. In 2009 a new sheltered area was built to house the fish fry equipment. Tim and Karen Few met at a John Wesley fish fry and the match has been a good one. Bishop Henderson visited one night at the fish fry and enjoyed a chat with Brett Dennis.



Cooking cheese grits at a fish fry

The result of an active long-term Boy Scout program was that the number of youth achieving the rank of Eagle Scout from Troop 110, the John Wesley troop, equaled 52. An Eagle Scout memorial area was started to honor Doug Godfrey who died in 1968 shortly after attaining the rank of Eagle, and now honors all 52 Eagle Scouts (see Appendix C for a list). In 1979 a special ceremony organized by Sam Murrow was held at the memorial area and many of the Eagle Scouts attended.



Boy Scout ceremony: Linda Pearson and Pastor Lee Pearson

CHAPTER 5 – Moving Forward

Pastor Danny Morris was followed by **Pastor Lee Pearson, 1966-1969**, with wife Linda, children Lee, Jr. Caroline, and Jolyn, and later Kevin. Lee, Jr. was a member of the Boy Scouts at John Wesley Church. Family oriented ministries and recreation events were appreciated by children and parents. Lee's ministry fostered deepening awareness and growth resulting in a more active and dedicated involvement in social outreach. Pastor

Pearson went on to serve the Florida Conference for many successful years as the director of the Life Enrichment Center in Leesburg/Fruitland Park.

Pastor Mitch Florence, 1969-1972, and his wife Nan and sons Mitch, Jr. and Mark were third to serve John Wesley. Nan was a teacher and wrote and published Sunday school lessons for the Methodist Publishing House. Her organizational talents served us well as youth coordinator. Mary Peters remembers that Nan was a personal friend of Mrs. Askew, the Governor's wife, and that Lee was a beekeeper. Lewis Jones shared that it was Nan Florence who encouraged Martha Capelouto to share her musical talent on the piano during worship. Martha's piano playing has continued to be a tradition and a treasured blessing at John Wesley Church.



Martha Capelouto at the piano;



Pastor Mitch Florence

During this period a Lay Witness Mission was held that greatly benefited the congregation. A movie projector was purchased and used during Fellowship Month and for Youth Week where films and discussion preceded worship. There were four choirs; the two for children were named Asbury Choir and Wesley Choir. The youth sang the Christmas cantata and hosted and performed for a parents appreciation dinner and concert. The children trick-or-treated for UNICEF followed by a party at the parsonage. The women's groups had a booth at **Springtime Tallahassee** and raised money for the church runner rug. The Women's Society for Christian Service was very supportive of the International Students Center, and during this time Church Women United began meeting at our church—as they still do. A pulpit exchange for race relations improvement during this period proved controversial.

The Glory Years: 1972-1982

CHAPTER 6 – Team Building with the Holy Spirit

One of the most memorable figures of the life of John Wesley Church was **Pastor Tom Farmer, 1972 to 1982**. His warm demeanor and youthful energy are fondly

remembered by church members who agree that Tom made an impact on the church. Assisted by his thoughtful wife Peggy and children Paige, Ashby and Brooke, Tom was charismatic and Holy Spirit connected with a special ability to relate to people of all ages. The John Wesley congregation felt that Tom knew them personally and cared about their soul. We often heard his distinctive call of “Glory” for the good things God has done. Each service ended with his constant reminder to “greet your neighbor.”

During sermons as the congregation prayed, Tom would walk around the entire sanctuary and touch the shoulders of people to remind them that Jesus was with them in their time of need. Pastor Farmer was also present consistently when there was any kind of need. He would be there to pray and visit at the hospital, no matter how early or late the hour. Margaret Palmer, charter member of the church, fondly remembers awaking at 5:00 a.m. to see Pastor Farmer sitting by her hospital bed. When she inquired as to why he had arrived there so early, Tom responded that he wanted to be sure they could say a prayer together before her surgery.



Dinner on the grounds with charter members Walter Godfrey, George and Margaret Palmer: Margaret Palmer more recently

Pastor Tom’s leadership came at a time when spirits were low and the church seemed stagnant, despite its ever blossoming congregation. The church had experienced a rapid rise to popularity and the congregation now lacked guidance to achieve its limitless possibilities. Pastor Farmer provided the gentle leadership necessary to lead the way and create a church that fulfilled its true potential. In addition, the church was full of children (there were soon three of his own), and others who had begun attending as toddlers had grown into teenagers. This pool of spirited youngsters created a challenge and Pastor Farmer assembled an excellent team to create new and exciting activities to help them grow spiritually.



Youth choir

Perhaps the best ever church secretary/administrator for these glory years was Lou Todd. Lou was a very organized, well trained, efficient and likeable person. In addition to her regular duties she would also arrange for the mobile Blood Bank to come and she proceeded to call members with their donation times. In the 1970s the church administrator, Lewis Jones (also music director), accomplished many things and was able to get lots of people involved in the life of the church. It was Lewis who encouraged the Faith Promise way of funding missions. Members promised on faith that if God gave them “x” amount of extra money they would give it to the church for mission work. The result was abundant giving. It should be noted that the church treasurers over the years have contributed over and above just doing their jobs. They have set up programs and accounts for helping the needy and even personally funded them at times.



Pastor Farmer in his first year, and Mary Lou Todd, Adm. Secretary



Reverend Dr. Tom Farmer and wife Peggy; Lewis Jones, Church Administrator and Music Director

CHAPTER 7 – Expansion

In 1972 the remodeling of the sanctuary for combined use as a fellowship hall provided more office space for the pastor and his staff. A small kitchen was built in the back and also became the Sunday school room for the Freedman Class. Events and chicken perlow dinners at John Wesley were more conveniently hosted with the added space. The William Rentz Memorial Library was also added, emphasizing the church's mission to educate.

As the 1970s progressed the church grew in notoriety for its welcoming attitude and moving sermons. The growing congregation of John Wesley looked to the future and made it their mission to attract more people to the church. Plans were implemented for a bus to pick up those who were unable to make the journey to worship. Twins Lynn Pico and Leslie Kitterman have expressed their fond memories of being picked up for Sunday school and church by the bus. Youth ministries were flourishing and youth choirs toured during the summer months.



Youth members of the church in the 1970s; Lynn and Leslie on women's retreat in 2010

The **United Methodist Women** (UMW) continued to grow in number and in knowing God, experiencing freedom as whole persons in Jesus Christ, in being a creative supportive fellowship and in expanding concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church. They have kept the global concern for others alive through spiritual retreats, mission studies, the reading program, local outreach and member support, not to mention the numerous bake sales and event hosting over the years. Peggy Farmer was a founding member of the new Joy Circle. Aleen Sinclair, a UMW leader/matriarch and charter member, bequeathed a full four-year scholarship to a Florida Methodist college through the United Methodist Foundation. The UMW administers a John Wesley scholarship for higher education from the Vesta Baird Scholarship Fund. Vesta Baird was a caring, creative, giving, welcoming member of John Wesley Church, whose husband Pope Baird established the scholarship.

As the congregation continued to grow it became obvious a larger sanctuary would be a welcome addition. Charter member George Palmer created a plan to ask the congregation to donate their tax income returns to the church for construction of a new sanctuary. The plan worked and the church received over \$25,000 from its faithful members! Numerous memorial gifts were made to furnish the building, and the new administrative wing with a choir room was made possible by and dedicated in honor of George Palmer. (Please see the memorial board in the church narthex/lobby.)

A celebratory groundbreaking was held on July 4, 1976. After three years, the plan had proved successful. The sanctuary was completed and the first service held on August 28, 1977. The choir led a procession from the old sanctuary to the new sanctuary, carrying the altar Bible and paraments to the new altar. Sue Fox designed the interior of the new sanctuary. The bulletin for dedication Sunday contained a two-page article, "The Symbolism in our New Facilities," written by Jim Cosper and Ray Fox, building committee members (included in Appendix D).



Now retired Pastor Terrie Brown with John Wesley children

The task of serving a congregation numbering 900 was made easier by the help of a volunteer assistant to Pastor Tom, Terrie Brown (Mrs. Joe Brown). Her mission work in Haiti strengthened her call from God. After serving as pastor's assistant and raising her children, Terrie later answered her call to full-time ordained ministry.



Rev. Tom Farmer and chancel choir during first service in the new Sanctuary 1977



In June of 1979, the church had its first Homecoming, inviting back Pastor Danny Morris. As the congregation was reminded of his book's promise in *Any Miracle God Wants*, ministries began blossoming. John Wesley members sought to help heal the hurting from the last war through the sponsoring of three **refugee families** from Cambodia and Vietnam in the late 1970s. The families became self sufficient within a

year. Many members helped teach them American culture, helped with transportation to jobs and childcare. The most exciting day was when Craig Dennis gave Mr. Sao from Cambodia driving lessons.

The year 1980 began with the theme, “reaching upward, inward and outward.” The congregation had grown significantly during the previous decade and members sought to continue reaching more people while improving the church from within. But unity came through tragedy. In 1973 the church had been tested by the untimely death of young Sandie Ray, the daughter of Dick and Elease Ray. In 1980 a trust fund for helping someone in a mission area was established at John Wesley. (As a member of John Wesley Youth, Sandie had participated in a mission trip to Belize when she was a senior in high school.) The interest from the Sandie Ray Trust Fund has been used for mission work. Not long afterward, beloved choir member Jeanne Bickner was tragically murdered and her fellow choir members sang “*Joy in the Morning*” at her memorial service. In Jeanne’s memory a garden area and a scholarship for someone pursuing Christian education was established and is still administered by the church trustees.

CHAPTER 8 – Softball Team

John Wesley Church’s softball teams were called John Wesley’s **Circuit Riders**. Ray Williams notes, “John Wesley has had a history of championship softball teams that played hard in the spirit of Christian fellowship.” The first team was organized during the Tom Farmer period and Lawrence Heitmeyer was the coach/player. Ray Williams took over as coach/player during the Pastor Gibbs era and coached until the team disbanded in the mid-1990s. Although some of the earlier teams were outstanding and won championships, there was an excellent period that included players such as Lawrence Heitmeyer, Bill Bolduc, Chris Meyers, Al Stodghill, Mike Chrisawn, James Brigman, Craig Dennis, Matt Hefelfinger, Ray Williams, Jim Stevenson, Dave Lewis, Rick Burnett, Kelvin Sands, Jimmy Hudson, Dave Davis, and Top Erwin. JW softball teams always represented our church in the very best tradition of competition and ministry. The teams will always remember and be thankful for their #1 fans, Julius and Libby Hawkins, who attended most of the games.

The Sao family arrives in the USA;



Libby and Julius Hawkins and granddaughter



CHAPTER 9 – Haiti Missions

In the early 1980s the church increased responding to God in a more international outreach direction. The church sponsored many district mission trips to Haiti. Members from John Wesley Church participated in four Tallahassee district United Methodist teams, raising the funds brick by brick. The purpose of the trips was to witness and spread the word of God while at the same time participating in volunteer construction work alongside Haitians who demonstrated the love of Christ in action. It is unknown who benefited more—the helpers or those who were helped. Those who participated identify with John Wesley the preacher, who did not claim to experience the joy of redemption until he went out into the fields as God bid him to do.



1979 and 1980 Volunteers in Mission Tallahassee District Teams to Haiti

A Time of Bounty: 1982-1990

CHAPTER 10 – Bicentennial; Birth of Wesley Players

Pastor Harry Baas, 1982-1984, and wife Naomi followed the popular Tom Farmer. The Baas' had two daughters who were already on their own. The 1983 theme was "Christian Unity" and an action plan was developed. Two teams went to Haiti and several members went on a United Methodist Volunteers in Mission team to St. Vincent Island. Children's church began during this time and 1984 was the Bicentennial of Methodism. Virginia Pelham served as the leader to the Bicentennial Committee. Studies and sermons on Methodist history, special events and plays were offered throughout the year. There was even a visit to the church by a John Wesley impersonator on horseback. Don Whiddon preached Wesley's sermon on giving for Stewardship Sunday. The district newsletter, the *Tallahassee Torchlight*, connected all the churches into a Mission Awareness Weekend in February 1984. Pastor Harry led a

small group of members on an Educational Opportunities tour of the Holy Land, and enriched Bible study and his sermons. Pastor Harry shared the following affirmation in one of his *Journal* articles:

I believe that my church is essential to the welfare of my community.

I resolve that I will promote the good of my church.

I believe that there is encouragement in numbers.

I resolve that I will be in my place on Sunday morning and invite friends to come with me.

I believe that friendship and fellowship are an important part of the Christian life.

I resolve that in my church I will greet others and make them welcome.

I will become a visitor and help to make my church home one that is liked and friendly

I believe that good finances are necessary in all enterprises.

I resolve that I will contribute to the work of my church in proportion to my means and I will keep my financial obligations paid in full so that the work of my church may not be crippled.

I believe that brotherly love, sympathy, and forgiveness are the evidences of a Christian spirit.

I resolve that I will cultivate Christian sympathy, be slow to take offense, and ready for reconciliation.

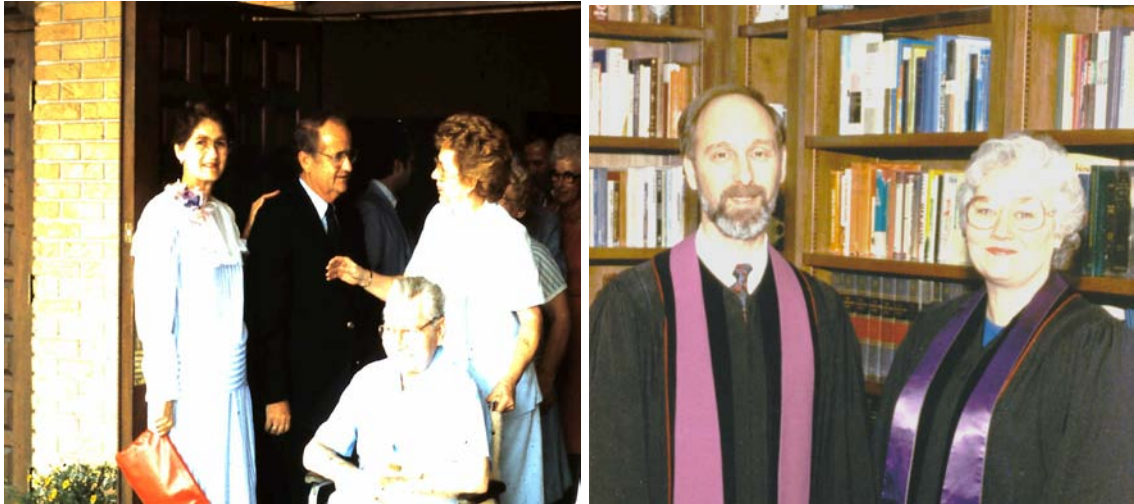
I believe that the past history of my church is sacred.

I resolve that I will maintain the unity of the spirit and the peace and goodwill of my church. I will try to make the present history of my church as sacred as the past.

I believe that the best of life is a helpful and cheerful Christian life.

I resolve that I will try to live such a life that through me my church may become a blessing to the world.

(Robert P. Burch, Grace UMC, Asheville. NC)



Naomi and Pastor Harry Bass, Mr. and Mrs. Jimmy Hawkins; Senior Pastor Robert M. Gibbs and Asso. Pastor Barbara Stiles

In 1984 **Pastor Bob Gibbs, 1984-1992**, became the new pastor of the church. Bob's wife Brenda was a budding actress, and their children Beth and Rob became talented performers. Brenda helped initiate the idea of a spring bazaar and children's carnival called May Fair. The annual church-wide yard/garage sale that raises funds for mission outreach began with the May Fair. These funds support missionaries, local hunger and justice ministries, local Habitat for Humanity builds and other projects suggested by members. The first reunion concert of the *Rainbeaux* occurred during this time.

The year 1984 marked the 200th celebration of Methodism in America. For this occasion, a group of church members organized a month-long series of costumed activities, from ushers dressed up in 18th century outfits to a Madrigal play, "*An Evening in the Home of Charles Wesley.*" At the end of the month, participants, still excited from their excursion into theater, formed a permanent drama club, the goal of which was "to bring together members and supporters of John Wesley Church in an effort to promote fellowship and a rewarding theater experience through the sharing of their skills, talents and abilities in a Christian atmosphere." They chose the name *Wesley Players*; their first president was Virginia Pelham. Pastor Bob's super singing voice came in handy.

Among the Wesley Players' earliest productions were "*You Can't Take It With You*" and Rodgers & Hammerstein's "*The Sound of Music*," both ambitious but highly successful undertakings. Throughout the Wesley Players' long run, they performed more than 25 popular plays and a variety of "fun(d)" raisers while giving everyone an opportunity to participate, not just in acting, but also in building sets, making costumes, working as stage hands, running sound and lights, and serving as ushers. The Wesley Players became well known in the community for the quality of their wholesome entertainment.



Scene from "An Evening in the Home of Charles Wesley"

The Wesley Players continued to attract new members and draw audiences through the 1990s. The stage area of the fellowship hall was enlarged and a professional light and sound system was installed. First-night performances were usually benefits for the Emergency Care Help Organization (ECHO); over \$8,000 was raised for that organization, of which John Wesley church was a charter sponsor.



Scene from a performance of "I'm Gonna Wash that Man Right Outta my Hair" from South Pacific; men in tights from the Christmas Madrigal Dinners

Under the auspices of the Wesley Players, a number of children's plays were performed. Brenda Gibbs and Debi Brigman directed the first of several productions of

the classic *“The Best Christmas Pageant Ever,”* which portrays the Herdman children’s first encounter with the Christmas story. Debi also directed the youth in two productions of *“For Unto Y’all,”* the story of Christ’s birth set in the wild, wild West. The Wesley Players also established the Wesley Players Academy which provided drama instruction in a Christian environment for children in grades 1-12. A Carolyn Kauffman memorial Scholarship assisted with Academy tuition.

Many lives, young and old, were touched and enriched through drama and the power of God’s Word in action on stage.



Pastor Bob Gibbs and the talented choir made musicals possible for Wesley Players

CHAPTER 11 – Banners

Pastor Gibbs told Ann Todd, who was then the Worship chair, that he would like to have large liturgical banners to adorn the sanctuary walls. Ann proceeded to honor that request by coordinating a year-long project. The goal of the project was to create two banners to honor and celebrate each season of the church year. Discussion ensued concerning the colors and images that would enhance worship during the respective seasons. Susan Marvin and Al Stodghill drew patterns for the images and Lucy Baer purchased fabric suitable for the season and the content. Once the designs were completed and cut out, the labor intensive task of sewing began and continued for months. Debbie Gibson and Gail Perkins worked together with assistance from Lynn Pico and Leslie Kitterman. The two banners for the Easter season depict the foot washing at the Last Supper and the cross with a crown of thorns. The mere size of the banners (3’ x 8’) made them difficult to hang with precision, but that issue was solved with Jeanne Heitmeyer’s expertise. The banner project was clearly a labor of love that continues to visually inspire worshippers each and every time they enter the sanctuary.

In the late 1990s for the first time John Wesley Church included the “Stations of the Cross” in the Lenten worship services. Ann Todd and was seeking to promote participation and pique community interest through worship ministry. She created the station banners from half-inch pictures she had seen on a church bulletin using blue and black colors for Lent. They can be used both as the centerpiece for worship or for individual reflection.

CHAPTER 12 – Alternative Christmas Market



Alternative Christmas Market booths

In 1987 a Christmas tradition was begun: the Alternative Christmas Market. In the past 23 years, the Alternative Christmas Market has amassed over \$800,000 for over 50 non-profit organizations worldwide with more than 400 shoppers per year attending the two-day event. The premise of the market is simple: why not aid those less fortunate with goods they can use? Instead of giving money to only local organizations, the market allows individuals to help people on a global scale as well as locally. For example, there are stalls where one can “purchase” (through a monetary donation) a cow or a chicken for a needy family in Brazil, who will use the animal to provide for their

family. The market creates a fun, non-traditional gift-giving experience. Cindy Cosper even described it as “a festival of love for those who love their neighbors.” The market reminds everyone of the true meaning of Christmas and what gifts Jesus would want given. John Davis was the director of the Alternative Christmas Market for the first 19 years and has helped create similar events at other churches.



Rob, Brenda and Beth Gibbs singing gospel hymns at Tacky Talent Night; Lucy Baer, John Davis and Peggy McCollum at Alternative Christmas Market

CHAPTER 13 — Education Wing

In 1988 building began again with the groundbreaking for the new education wing. With a nursery and larger kitchen, space was available for a preschool one day. The district superintendent at the time was Dr. Charlene Kammerer, who later became a Bishop of the United Methodist Church. Ned Terry was in charge of the Building Committee and drew up the building design. The educational wing connected the sanctuary with the fellowship hall, enlarged the administrative offices and added a choir room.



Builder Bob Thornton, District Superintendent Rev. Charlene Kammerer in robe, Bill Morrow and Cindy Cosper with shovel, Craig Dennis, Pat Davis, and Terry Denham at educational wing groundbreaking 1988



Celebration for educational wing groundbreaking

As the 1990s approached, John Wesley Church had finally achieved the dream of an associate pastor. **Associate Pastor Barbara Stiles, 1989-1991**, introduced “DISCIPLE I, Becoming Disciples through Bible Study,” a 34-week in-depth study covering 80 percent of the Bible. She and Pastor Bob Gibbs led the first two classes of DISCIPLE I. Later “DISCIPLE II, Into the Word, Into the World” (32 weeks), was added and the legacy continued under the leadership of Chip Jordan and Larry and Barbara George. Ultimately, two more studies were offered in the **DISCIPLE series**, and by 2004, 213 DISCIPLE certificates had been awarded to 106 persons. During this 15-year period, 13 groups completed DISCIPLE I, seven groups completed DISCIPLE II, four groups completed DISCIPLE III, and two groups completed DISCIPLE IV. DISCIPLE’s powerful, life-

changing encounter with the Word of God continues to impact the life of John Wesley today.

Pastor Barbara also spearheaded the Stephen Ministry program at John Wesley which facilitated one-on-one shepherding and helping those within and outside the congregation with emotional support and caregiving. Michael Chrisawn visited one Sunday when Pastor Barbara was preaching and the women were ushering. He was quite impressed by the whole service and decided to make this his church home. This was a Godsend for the church since Michael has become Mr. Fix-it and Mr. Get-It-Done for the fish fry and many other projects.

Small groups are the method for making disciples and helping church members experience and contribute to the community of believers. Different types of groups have come and gone, and the strongest relationships have been forged in the Sunday school classes. The stories of these classes will be the subject for future inclusions.



Wesleyan Fellowship Class

Struggle with Relationships and Change: 1992-2000

CHAPTER 14 – Preschool

For many years members sought to create a child daycare program to serve the community and teach the gospel with specific guidelines and goals. A 1980 church bulletin states that our goals were:

- 1. To provide quality Christian weekday educational, creative learning for children from infancy through kindergarten.*
- 2. To help each child to achieve his greatest potential in a loving concerned environment.*
- 3. To provide opportunities for the physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual development of each child; participation in many forms of creative art, an appreciation of nature, and of the intrinsic worth of each individual.*
- 4. To provide opportunities for teaching Christian principles in the routine of daily living.*

It took another 13 years to realize the dream of a preschool.

Despite the difficulties of the next decade, and the church losing members, blessings still occurred. 1993 brought the birth of the Little Lambs Preschool. On October 12, 1993, the vision of John Wesley Methodist Church and several young mothers became a reality. A Mother's Morning Out paid-childcare program opened on Tuesdays and Fridays after extensive planning by Libby Sandberg, Mona Lewis, and Kim Meadows. Chris Hunt, Susan Marvin, Susan Parsons, Jane Johnston, and Lynn Hudson served on the first Advisory Committee (now renamed the Little Lambs Preschool Board).

Due to parent demand, the drop-in program quickly developed into a regular service for a number of young mothers. By February of 1994, the program was open five days a week. Beginning in the fall of 1994 with 18 children, the program became a morning preschool program called Little Lambs Preschool. Since the fall of 1997, Little Lambs has been a full-day program.

Church and preschool parent volunteers have improved the playground and rooms several times. Volunteers from the church read books to the children and help with other activities. For several years, the church and preschool have had an annual multicultural lunch after church, close to the date of United Nations Day, to celebrate the many cultures that are represented in the multi-cultural student body.

The purpose of Little Lambs is to provide quality care for young children in the community in a loving, Christ-centered environment and to reach out with God's love to the families of those children. The preschool is designed to provide a developmentally appropriate learning experience for children with exposure to real-life experiences in a loving Christian atmosphere lifting up Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. It is accredited by the United Methodist Association of Preschools and uses various play-based and theme-based curricula. It is also licensed with the State of Florida and as such follows rules and guidelines set out by the Department of Children and Families.

Today the Little Lambs Preschool is a fully accredited pre-kindergarten and kindergarten for 90 children who daily learn of God's Love.

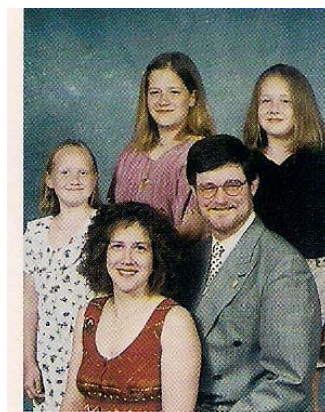


Sylvia Owens reading to Little Lambs preschoolers; Rachael Choutupalli on Multicultural Day

CHAPTER 15 – Younger Pastors and People

Pastor Gibbs was followed by **Pastor Hardy Sandlin, III, 1992-1995**, with his wife Barbara and their two sons. (Rev. Dr. Bob Gibbs earned a doctorate after Tallahassee.)

On Homecoming Sunday in 1993 John Wesley Church held a big celebration of burning the mortgage on the 1977 sanctuary. Lighting the fire (again) was Rev. Dr. Farmer, Rev. Sandlin, and District Superintendent J.C. Powell. That year members wrote a 30-year vision statement for the church, ushering in the new century.



**KILBOURN, LARRY & DEDE
LOTTIE, LAUREN, EMILY**

Burning the mortgage: Rev. Farmer, Rev. Sandlin, District Superintendent Powell; Pastor Larry Kilbourn & Family

Pastor Larry Kilbourn, 1995-1998 (who was once youth director at John Wesley under Rev. Farmer), his wife Dede and three daughters Lauren, Emily and Lottie, came to John Wesley Church in 1995. During this time the Helping Hands Ministry was started, along with Mothers Morning Out. Pastor Larry got involved in Promise Keepers and encouraged men members to attend. There were also a marriage enrichment workshop, Lenten Bible Study, teacher workshops, and lots of children's activities like the children's cookies and craft night. Pastor Larry often took youth with him to visit members in nursing homes and the hospital.

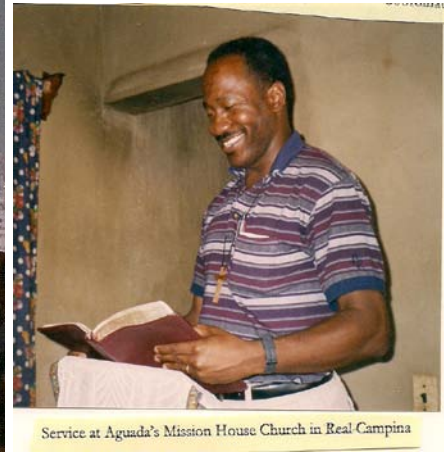
Many of the ministries from the 1980s continued: youth the camp, scouts, Wesley Players, Stephen Ministry, and Alternative Christmas. For stewardship there was Tithe Sunday instead of the former Loyalty Dinners. Several members participated in the Walk to Emmaus spiritual growth weekend including Pastor Larry, and a reunion group subsequently began meeting monthly. This program is still available for any pilgrim, although the reunion group "Friends of Ruth" is no longer meeting.

Under the pastoral leadership of Pastor Larry Kilbourn and assisted by Carolyn Glynn, the John Wesley congregation took the lead in establishing a Religion and Race Task Force consisting of Allen Temple Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME), Anderson Chapel African Methodist Episcopal (AME), Flipper Chapel AME, Fountain Chapel AME, St. James CME, as well as Bethel United Methodist and John Wesley United Methodist. The late Rev. Walter Jones of St. James CME was elected the task force leader. The goal was to schedule events and activities that would promote harmony, understanding and fellowship based on common Wesleyan traditions.

Representatives from these churches met together for about two years and planned occasions for members of their respective congregations to talk openly and listen to each other—and in doing that to encourage racial tolerance and mutual understanding. Times of memorable fellowship included a potluck dinner in the fellowship hall at John Wesley that was particularly lively. Seated at the piano was St. James CME member, Charles Atkins. Attendees had the pleasure of experiencing his musical talents glorifying God. Charles Atkins has become one of the finest blues musicians Florida has ever produced as evidenced by his being knighted an "Official Florida Treasure" under the Jeb Bush administration.

A "Family Fun Day" at the Walker Ford Community Center provided the opportunity to recreate together and include children and youth from the various congregations. Participants were able to learn further about and celebrate our common Wesleyan roots at a special Aldersgate service planned by the task force. Choirs were combined and the respective preachers each had a role in the service. Thanks to the task force events participants had experiences and formed relationships that wouldn't have happened otherwise.

The time came to sell the parsonage on Maple Drive in 1995 and a new parsonage at 5421 Pedrick Crossing Drive was purchased for \$138,000. The new parsonage was eight miles east of the church in a new neighborhood. Jack and Iris Turner furnished the landscaping and there were many donations for new furniture.



The pastorate of **Pastor Carrill S. Munnings, Sr., 1998-2000**, was short but challenging. Annjeannette Munnings sang in the choir and the children Carrill Jr. and Carmine were active in Sunday school. The church joined the Tallahassee Equity Action Ministries (TEAM). Pastor Munnings taught an interesting course on the "Seven Ships of the Church," and participated in a Ten Brave Christians/Great Experiment group. The Methodist Men were revived and had fun playing softball and cooking breakfast for the church. Church members worked on disaster response and preparedness, hosted a parent support group with Little Lambs Preschool, did spring cleaning and church policies updates, hosted the Habitat for Humanity banquet, a Passover meal, a Wesleyan Love Feast, Seniors Day Lunch, a "Have a Heart for Missions" banquet, Madrigal Dinner, hosted Spanish lessons, and attempted to start an after-school program called RAMS and RIOT.

In 1999 there was a well attended church revival with Rev. Jackie McKnight McMillan, a charter member. Note: Jackie's husband Don McMillan was a pastoral candidate for the ministry sponsored by John Wesley Church years earlier. And he preached on Homecoming Sunday in 1989. A Wesley Players Academy after-school program was attempted, and some students were funded through the Carolyn Kauffman Scholarship Fund. Dr. Barbara Williams, Kent Sprigs and Sylvia White served on a medical mission team to El Salvador. An effort was made to encourage all members to be active in a small group by neighborhood ministry including those members who drive in from Wakulla and Gadsden counties.

Retired Pastor Bud Harkey was associate pastor, 1999-1996, during the term of Pastor Carrill Munnings and subsequently Pastor Gerry Gilmer, PhD. Bud was twice retired from the ministry in 1989 and 1999. He and his wife, Sara Ann had been looking for a church when they attended a revival at John Wesley where Pastor Jackie McMillan was preaching. Sara reports that God spoke to Bud and told him "...to get to work here" and Bud obeyed. Bud started the Senior Adult Ministry (S.A.M.) program which continues today. Pastor Bud had a way of listening for and affirming each person's

ministry. He loved fellowship, fun, prayer, his Savior and lively music. During his last months he was serenaded several times by church groups. The beautiful picture of Jesus in the narthex was dedicated by the S.A.M. group in his memory. Bud served the Lord and John Wesley faithfully without pay. Sara Ann continues to love our church in many ways. The congregation held a fine celebration of his graduation to heaven.



Rev. Bud and Sara Harkey, Becky Blackburn, and Nell May going to a church party; Debi Brigman and youth

Some ministries regenerated. John Wesley Church had an active youth program under the leadership of Debi Brigman, and the youth participated in Jesus Day 2000. Of course the United Methodist Women stayed strong and the choir continued to sing. Rhea Oats retired and Diane Dawson became the church's administrative secretary. Thanks to the Memorial Fund and Jack Chapman the church sign became a marquee on Old St. Augustine Road.

CHAPTER 16 — Florida-Cuba Covenant



1999 parsonage, "Sister-Church" and school at Aguada de Pasajeros, Cuba; youth clowning at Aguada Iglesia

In 1999 Cindy Cospers, Terry Denham and Pastor Carrill Munnings Sr. were in the first Florida caravan to visit their sister church in Aguada de Pasajeros, Cuba under the Florida-Cuba Covenant Agreement. The tradition of mission trips is something that still

goes on today. In 1998 John Wesley United Methodist Church was officially linked with the country of Cuba by signing the **Florida-Cuba Covenant**. John Wesley Church was united with a sister Methodist church, Iglesia Metodista, in Aguada de Pasajeros, Cuba. (Aguada de Pasajeros translates to “water for travelers/passersby.”) Our sister church’s name has now been changed to “El Salvador” because of the work Christ the Savior has done for them. (El Salvador means “The Savior” in Spanish.)

According to the covenant the two churches are to do as follows:

- 1. To pray for one another and develop a common study of Scriptures.*
- 2. To engage in the interchange of people as work teams, preachers, laity, caravans, study teams, professors, teachers, and choirs.*
- 3. To respond to the priorities of the Methodist Church in Cuba.*
- 4. To build relationships between districts and churches in the Florida Conference and the Methodist Church in Cuba for mutual support and encouragement.*
- 5. To support the Advance Specials of the Methodist Church in Cuba.*
- 6. To enable the training of pastors and lay people for the equipping of Cuban disciples.*
- 7. To mutually share the history, current events, culture, and spirituality of both Churches.*

John Wesley has most certainly fulfilled the church-to-church covenant in the past 12 years with prayers, letters, six visits by members, hosting of two pastors and the musical group El Nuevo Pacto during their 2001 evangelistic crusade. El Salvador Church has been able to create a library, expand their church, construct an office, remodel the kitchen and bathrooms, visit mission churches on bicycles, conduct Bible school, and develop a ministry to the needy called “Bread of Life/Vida de Pan.” The church of “The Savior” prays for John Wesley Church daily. In 2009 the covenant program was renamed “**Methodists United in Prayer.**”



1999 team and friend in Cuba with Pastor Santiago Machado on right

Remnant Seeking Renewal: 2000 – 2010

CHAPTER 17 – The New Century

To celebrate the new 21st Century a prayer stone circle memorial was constructed honoring people such as Mrs. Bobby Landrum (our first woman church council chairperson), Becky Tranchand (another youth who died tragically), Sunday school and circle groups, mentors, past pastors, choir directors and others. (See the full list of memorials in Appendix E.) On several occasions a large prayer labyrinth was laid out in the grass area at the front of the church. Beth Moore Bible Studies are very popular as of this writing making Wednesday night Bible study classes a new tradition. And new John Wesley shirts were purchased by members.



Blessing benches in the prayer stone memorial; Denise Birch, Miriam Davis, Debbie Gibson in kitchen

Throughout the latest decade of John Wesley United Methodist Church, the Wesleyan tradition of caring for neighbors was most evident in mission-evangelism-outreach programs made possible in part by the spiritual gift of giving. The Alternative Christmas Market experienced its second decade generating \$30,000 - 60,000 annually for local and global non-profit ministries. The annual garage/yard sale for missions was generating \$3,000 for missions and spirit-led outreach. Some members were involved in the “salty service” of building local Habitat for Humanity houses while others supported the SHARE Florida food program. John Wesley United Methodist Church sponsored the Woodville SHARE Florida food program until they became independent.



Pastor Gerry Gilmer; Sam Murrow Building under construction and finished

During the pastorate of **Gerry Gilmer** PhD., **2000-2005**, the parsonage was sold and a new multi-use building was built. Leon County approached John Wesley Church with a desire to purchase the development rights to the southern portion of our property (where the holding pond and scout hut were located). Rev. Gilmer, with the help of Don Whiddon and other members of John Wesley, skillfully negotiated an agreement for the county to pay the church \$400,000 plus cover all legal and other costs associated with the agreement. The agreement turned out to be a lease and not a sale. The scout hut was torn down by Leon County in 2010 to make way for a larger storm-water holding pond (still to come), the purpose of the lease. The Eagle Scout memorial is still to be relocated up the hill.

The \$400,000 was a most welcome windfall to the church. Initially many updates to the church facility were made including payoff of a roof repair loan, new carpets for the administrative offices and Sunday school rooms, a new phone system and a new state-of-the-art digital electronic organ. The old organ had been struck by lightning several times over its 25+ year life and was on its last legs. The bulk of the remaining land sale funds were allocated to build a new multi-purpose recreation building. The purpose of the new building was to help attract new members by increasing recreational and other ministries to youth and adults within the congregation and for the community.

The multi-use building was dedicated to the memory of Sam Murrow, a long-time member and scouting program leader and supporter. The Sam Murrow Building is used by the youth, is a voting precinct for the surrounding community, and serves as an exercise gym for heart-healthy Jazzercise classes. Jazzercise participants were particularly happy when the Trustees could finally afford new flooring for the building.

Pastor Gilmer taught an afternoon Bible study on Sunday afternoon. The attendees found it very convenient to attend a class after the morning service and they appreciated his teaching expertise. The contemporary service featuring the Praise Band was held on Sunday evenings. Children's Ministries teamed with Little Lambs Preschool to offer a spring fishing trip at the lodge pond for families and it was a big hit. A major church audit was done and administrative adjustments made during this time.

A new United Methodist Church evangelism program called “Celebrate Jesus” came to our district. Volunteers from around the state joined with the members of the John Wesley congregation in the summer of 2007. It was a week-long community-wide effort to reach out to the neighborhood, far and wide, residents and business, to invite people to come to a Saturday block party. Participants walked neighborhoods within a two-mile radius of the church and gave each person greetings, a light bulb (signifying the light of Christ in our lives), and an invitation. Participants also stood outside busy stores and handed out cold bottles of water to thirsty citizens. Celebrate Jesus teams asked for any prayer needs from the community, and brought them back to the sanctuary where they were prayed over.

At the Saturday block party, two bands performed in John Wesley's front yard. Food was free, including hot dogs, chips, brownies and drinks. Some great prizes were given away that had been donated, including a portable TV. Children participated in an art contest or simply expressed their artistic side on boards placed just for that purpose. Appreciating the families of Little Lambs Preschool was also included. It was fun making mini pizzas with the children and celebrating this special place in God's Kingdom.

“It was a grand celebration of community and introduced members to neighbors who had previously had no contact,” reported Janet Dennis. The event demonstrated the kindness of the church and new efforts to draw more people in to experience the grace of God and a community of faith.



Participants enjoy the Celebrate Jesus block party; John Wesley singers



Elaine and Rev. Ron Z. McCreary; John Wesley Praise Band performing at Tallahassee Equity Action Ministries Nehemiah Action Assembly in 2008

CHAPTER 18 – Praise Bands

A large step in the church's efforts to revive attendance and seek younger members was the new contemporary service held on Sunday evenings starting in the 1990s and continuing under **Pastor Ron McCreary, 2005-2009**. The services featured a praise band which performed more modern praise songs, and there were drums! Although not as successful as the traditional service there were visitors. The new contemporary option demonstrated the church's abilities to change with the times and hopefully connect with a new generation. Ron Alford, Angelyn Hirai, and currently Justin Crews, have led the evening service bands in recent years. Earlier we had an 8:30 a.m. contemporary service praise band lead by the Strubble family.

New members can bring blessings of new ideas. That's what happened in 2006 when Angelyn Hirai convinced John Wesley Church to enter a float in the Springtime Tallahassee Parade for all willing children to ride on. The float celebrated children around the world and used the international children dolls that were made by Sue Fox many years ago. Santa (Jim Cosper) drove the truck pulling the simple float. Some John Wesley members, such as Basil McKnight, who were also part of the Springtime Tallahassee organization, helped with decorations.

Pastor Ron excelled at social holiness involvement. He joined members, especially United Methodist Women, at the Disaster Depot work days, TEAM (Tallahassee Equality Action Ministries) work, and served as an advocate for children with Bishop Whitaker at the State Capital. His wife Elaine was an excellent organist and pianist and eventually was given the job of church organist. Both Ron and Elaine sang in the chancel choir, participated in United Methodist Women (pastors are members), and attended Wednesday prayer breakfasts. Elaine also took on a leadership role in the

SHARE Florida food program and the Education team. Pastor Ron shared he was most encouraged by his dedicated and prayerful accountable discipleship group that met for two years. Thanks to Pastor Ron we all reconnected with our roots at Hartsfield Elementary School. Several disciples (Craig and Janet Dennis, Charlotte Hicks, and Betty Carol Taylor) have become mentors to assigned children. Ron was a lunch-buddy. The church has collected school supplies and responded to other needs for the school where John Wesley Church first met. And thanks to Peggy Woodham, liaison with the school, John Wesley Church now provides a teacher's appreciation luncheon each August.

Social holiness, or loving your neighbor made visible, has brought inspiration to our Vacation Bible Schools of late. Curricula for the last few years have been focused on teaching about agencies that help others, such as Heifer International, Habitat for Humanity, and The Shelter. In 2009 the children collected a "mountain" of toilet paper for The Shelter.



Vacation Bible School kids learn about Heifer Project animals; toilet paper mountain for The Shelter

A process to **refocus** our John Wesley Church toward a Biblical purpose based on our past, our gifts and God's vision of our future began in 2008. An initial "starter" group was trained, and each member developed a personal mission statement and explored a current calling by God. These individuals then led subsequent small groups of church members who participated in these same activities. Later, these group leaders held two day-long workshops ("summits") involving many church leaders and members of the congregation to continue the focusing process. One activity involved a "journey wall" that captured the church's history as a series of "chapters." The section titles of this 50th anniversary booklet come from the journey wall's chapter headings. (See a copy of the journey wall in Appendix F.) Participants learned that as a faith congregation members are able to be a loving community that brings God to others and others to God.

The Biblical purpose that has been developed in this process is: "John Wesley United Methodist Church exists to share the love of Christ and to prepare people to serve and glorify God." The Refocus team will continue to work with the congregation to

prayerfully develop a plan for the future recognizing that at this point, the end of the story is yet to be written.



Cindy Coper, Rev. Ron McCreary and Debbie McKinnon at Capitol; Praise band leader Angelyn Hirai, singers Peggy Woodham and Steve Kauffman, lead guitar Kelly Hirai

Once upon a time in Tallahassee there was a gift store called “Tillmans.” The owners were Tillman Hawkins and Durwood Smith. Tillman was a member of John Wesley along with his brothers Jimmy and Julius, their wives, and sister Margaret Duggar. The family established a trust. Upon the death of the last trustee, Julius Hawkins, the trust was bequeathed to John Wesley Church with a request to remember the family. The gift of \$50,000 was joyfully accepted and it was voted to name the Fellowship Hall the Hawkins Fellowship Hall. Libby Hawkins still worships with us.

CHAPTER 19 – Thirty Years of Prayer Breakfasts

Another continuing group from the 1970s is the Wednesday Morning Prayer Breakfast Group. Pat Davis explains, “When John and I joined John Wesley Church in 1980 a prayer breakfast group was meeting at 6:30 every Wednesday morning in the lounge of the Howard Johnson’s restaurant on the Apalachee Parkway.” John Davis kept the prayer lists for the group.

During the years 1982 and 1983 more than 40 members of John Wesley Church participated, with the usual group size between 10 and 25. Attendees made jokes about meeting in the bar, but knew that God was there with them. Members of the restaurant staff often made specific requests for prayer during that time. Many of participants took turns preparing a devotional for the group. Those who attended regularly during the early 1980s were Mary Barnes, Naomi and Pastor Harry Bass, Bob

and Miriam Berry, Jeannie Bickner, Carolyn Cain, Donna Carter, Cora Ann and Jack Chapman, Cindy and Jim Cospers, Sue Walker, Jay Davis, John and Pat Davis, Terry Denham, Bonnie Gwaltney, Adam Hayden, Beverly and Bob Hayden, Mother Hayden, John Hoover, Jim Jordan, Janet Martin, Bill Morrow, Virginia Rounds, Phyllis Sandberg, Helen Saunders, Evelyn Swift, Ann Todd, Lou Todd and Tom Wood.

The group later moved to the dining room of a hotel on the corner of Magnolia and Apalachee Parkway where the new Applebee's restaurant is currently located. The next move was to the Village Inn on the Parkway. The group size varied, and at one time the size of the group dwindled to just three members—Janet Osgood, Bill Morrow and Pat Davis. Peggy McCollum later joined and because of her interest the group grew back to eight or more members. Peggy was instrumental in the prayer group developing a card ministry to church members and others letting them know that a group was praying for their recovery and care. A consistent request for prayers from those who have served breakfast to the group over the years has been a vital component of its prayer life.

Following Bill Morrow's death and his long and faithful participation in the Wednesday morning prayer group (in addition to his many contributions to John Wesley Church), the group recommended—and Cindy Cospers found an artist who produced—a beautiful stained-glass peace window in honor Bill's faithfulness to his prayer life. Bill Morrow served for many years as communications coordinator and compiled the *Journal* newsletter. He had a strong faith and assurance that God is with us.

When the prayer group moved to its current location at Panera Bread on Blair Stone Boulevard, the regular participants were Pat Davis, Phyllis Kennedy, Elaine and Pastor Ron McCreary, John Menge and Jan Peters. New participants are always welcome.



Chris George and Erin Harrell in Cuba 2007; Pastor Ron McCreary with Cuban Pastor Orimar Falcon Gonzalez in 2009; Roida Said, Jan Peters, Pastor Falcon, and Kevin Lewis during sister-church visit in 2009

Rev. Rick Walker, 2009-2010, and wife Linda arrived just in time for the 50th anniversary celebration planning and to complete the Refocus process that began in 2008. Pastor Rick challenged our church to pay 100 percent of the Methodist Church's

apportioned support. In 2010 John Wesley Church is well on the way to meeting that goal. Linda Walker used her talents to create a photo directory of members for the 50th anniversary, nametags and a bookmark. Linda Simmons has led a committee of dedicated people who have worked for over a year to plan the events and invite past members and preachers. Ann Todd designed the banner to take to the Florida United Methodist Annual Conference in June 2010.

Missionary Dan Terry visited in 2010 for a breakfast and lecture on current conditions in the Muslim world. Several ministries have ceased (SHARE Florida food, contemporary worship) due to lack of participation and replacement leadership. Rick and Linda were honored with anti-malarial mosquito nets given on their behalf through the United Methodist Committee on Relief on “Rethink Church” Sunday. Pastor Rick sometimes sang a message as part of his sermons.



Linda and Pastor Rick Walker

The John Wesley music program continues small but mighty. Deanna Szabo, church organist, used her talents to create the 2009 original Christmas musical “*The Coldest Night of the Year.*” Thanks to the praise band, the choir, and the actors, it was a live and lively multi-media event. Those who attended were pleased at the quality and contemporariness of the Christmas Story message in 2009.

CHAPTER 20 – The 50th Anniversary Celebration!

Several Sundays in April, 2010 have been blessed with the preaching of past pastors, Rev. Dr. Tom Farmer and Rev. Bob Gibbs. A reunion choir sang on April 11, 2010. The big celebration for the 50th anniversary is on Pentecost/Aldersgate weekend, May 22-23, 2010. There will be a picnic with fireworks and a Homecoming worship service with **Bishop Timothy Whitaker** preaching, followed by a covered-dish lunch. The reunion choir will sing again, and the Wesley Players will perform. The children will have a special birthday party with a clown and face painting. A monetary gift will be

provided to Hartsfield School enabling each child at the school to receive a new book (from an approved reading list) in their birthday month from John Wesley Church.

Special mention needs to be made of three “gardener-guys” who over the years have kept the John Wesley Church grounds looking beautiful. Jack Turner, a forester and day lily expert, planted the Saw Tooth Oak (grown from a seed) in the middle of the parking lot that has enticed many children to climbing. Dancing Bear Bill Mahoney took over the beautifying with multitudes of flowers after his retirement. Now George Lewis, faithful custodian and groundskeeper, is the current green-thumb expert. These gifts of beauty are greatly appreciated.

CONCLUSION

Fifty years ago a seed was planted; a church began with excitement and joy. The Holy Spirit moved within and through the founders of the church, and through them reached out to touch others. During the span of these first 50 years, this spark, this life, passed on to others, and God touched more lives. Many have been part of this church body but, more importantly, many more have been touched by the Holy Spirit working through them.

What is the span of 50 years in the eyes of God and in what the Lord has for the church at John Wesley? It is but a blink of an eye. But in each moment—every act of love, every touch of compassion, and every word of encouragement— burdens are lifted, joys are shared, and God changes lives.

Through the joyous fellowship that is indeed a gift from God, the John Wesley family, friends, visitors, and saints reach out to those of the future. God has a purpose for all those who have been and will be called to be part of His body in this place. May the seed that was planted bear much fruit, with the Lord’s steady guidance and presence among us.

APPENDIX A

JWUMC Charter Members

Listed below are known Charter Members, it includes members who were registered on or before June 19, 1960. Charter Members who are now reported to be deceased have been indicated by a (dot).

- Ausley, John C.
- Ausley, Susan (Mrs. John C.)
- Baird, J. Pope
- Barron, James Mack
- Baron, Ann (Mangam)
- Barron, James III
- Barron (Lacayo) Penny Ann
- Billingsley, Joseph E.
- Brandies, Cortez Martin
- Brandies, Jean (Mrs. C.M.)
- Brazil, Maude R. (Riddle)
- Brooks, William R.
- Brooks, Dorothy C. (Mrs. Wm. R.)
- Carter, Richard Earl
- Carter, Mary Elizabeth (Mrs. R)
- Chastian, Joseph Harold
- Conrad, Henry Green
- Conrad, Myrtice (Mrs. H.G.)
- Conrad, Janice (Thompson)
- Conrad, Susan Frances
- Cook, Edith (Mrs. W.H.)
- Corbett, Kate (Mrs. W.T.)
- Cuneo, Nelle J. (Mrs. George A.)
- Davis, Mary L.
- Dean, Herbert Carlos
- Dean, Edith Burwell (Mrs. H.C.)
- Delaney, Verma (Mrs. J. M.)
- Dellar, Frank
- Dellar, Martha (Mrs. Frank)
- Fielding, C. Waldo
- Fielding, Sara (Mrs. C.W.)
- Finley, Charles Ayers
- Finley, Gladys (Mrs. C.A.)
- Foster, Mary Frances (Mrs. Tom)
- Fraser, Hiram E.
- Fraser, Jeanette (Mrs. H.E.)
- Fraser, Patricia (White) (Lawhon)
- Gilchrist, Terry C.
- Gilchrist, Sara E. (Mrs. R.C.)
- Gilchrist, John
- Gilchrist, Terry Ann
- Glisson, Dorothy (Mrs. W.E.)
- Hansen, Phillip
- Hansen, Elise (Mrs. E.P.)
- Hart, Edwin H.
- Hart, (Mrs. Edwin H.)
- Galvin, Hart (Clara Sue)
- Helms, Grace
- Helton, Hubert
- Helton, Mary Ann (Mrs. H.E.)
- Hollingsworth, Joseph
- Hollingsworth, Maybelle (Mrs. J.B)
- Hollingsworth, Martha
- Hollingsworth, Ida V.
- Hough, Otto B. Jr.
- Hough, Otto B III
- Hough, Barbara Ann (Mrs. O.B.)
- Houston, E. Royce
- Houston, (Mrs. E.R.)
- Jay, William C.
- Jay, Miriam (Mrs. W.C.)
- Jay, Walton
- Jay, John Carlton
- Kennedy, Mrs. Roger
- Knoblock, Katie
- Larrimore, Arthur M.
- Larrimore, Helen E. (Mrs. A. M.)
- Lewis, Terrell
- Lewis, Martha (Mrs. Terrell)
- Mackey, Jack Leonard
- Mackey, Elixabeth (Mrs. J.L.)
- Marley, Joseph
- Marley, Verie (Mrs. Joseph)
- Morris, S. Barry
- Morris, Betty (Mrs. S. Barry)
- Morris, Rosalie (Mrs. Danny E.)
- Murrow, Charles Samuel
- Murrow, Lurline F. (Mrs. C. Sam)
- Murrow, Barbara Jean (Heideman)
- Murrow, Charles Samuel Jr.
- McClellan, Jack Paul
- McClellan, Frances (Mrs. J.P.)
- McCullum, Jordan Brooks
- McCollum, Marjorie (Mrs. J.B.)
- McCollum, Carol Joe
- McKnight, Bertis Thomas
- McKnight, Gladys (Mrs. B.T.)
- McKnight, Jackie (McMillan)
- McKnight, JoAnn (Behr)
- McKnight, Joyce Ann
- McKnight, Judith Ilene
- McKnight, Judy (Lister)
- McLendon, Mary (Mrs. H.R.)
- McLendon, Ralph
- Oakley, E. Karl
- Oakley, Helen (Mrs. E. K.)
- Oakley, James
- Oakley, Steve
- Palmer, George Edwin
- Palmer, Margaret M. (Mrs. G.E.)
- Palmer, Gail E.
- Parker, Marcellous Harvey
- Parker, Gladys (Mrs. M.H.)
- Parker, O.R.
- Parker, Julia (Mrs. O.R.)
- Parker, O. Reese, Jr.
- Peters, Bob
- Peters, Mary (Mrs. Bob)
- Phillips, Wilma (Mrs. Charles)
- Pinson, C.V.
- Pinson, Dot (Mrs. C.V.)
- Pinson, Pamela
- Roberts, George W.
- Roberts, Nancy (Mrs. G.W.)
- Robinson, Hazel (Mrs. Sterling)
- Robinson, Paul Grey
- Robinson, Vernon L.
- Robinson, Geenie B. (Mrs. V.L.)
- Robinson, Jacquie
- Robinson, Tim
- Ryland, Louise (Mrs. Frank)
- Ryland, John
- Ryle, Frances (Mrs. C.E.)
- Sellars, Leah
- Shuler, Frank
- Shuler, Mrs. Frank
- Sinclair, Carson
- Sinclair, Aleen (Mrs. Carson)
- Sipes, Charles G.
- Sipes, Barbara (Mrs. C.G.)
- Smith, Mary W.
- Stuckey, Woodrow
- Stuckey, Mary (Mrs. Woodrow)
- Stuckey, Bragg
- Surles, Glenn, Sr.
- Surles, Joane (Mrs. Glenn)
- Teague, Samuel E., Jr.
- Teague, Myre (Mrs. S.E., Jr.)
- Teague, Deppie Dell
- Turner, John E. (Jack)
- Turner, Iris (Mrs. J.E.)
- Watson, Jonathan C.
- Watson, Iris (Mrs. J. C.)
- Watson, Mark Alan
- Wentworth, Dean
- Wentworth, Winifred
- Wildner, Gertrude
- Wildner, Charles Richard
- Wildner, Wilma (Mrs. Charles)
- Yancey, Clice
- Yancey, Olive (Mrs. Clice)
- Yancey, Scott Talmon

Appendix B.

*John Wesley United Methodist Church
Historic mottoes and themes*

Giving until it helps

A dollar for others - A dollar for us.

Putting God First

Unless you want to you never will

Whatever It Takes

1738

The church with a warm heart

Making disciples of all nations

Come Holy Spirit Come

Reach Up – Reach Out

Preparing for Harvest

For such a time as this

Greet your Neighbor

Appendix C

DEDICATION SERVICE

EAGLE SCOUTS OF TROOP 110
JOHN WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

EAGLE SCOUT MEMORIAL

Name Date of Eagle Rank

C. Sam Murrow, Jr.	3/31/1965
Bill Robison	10/28/1965
Bill Wehunt	10/28/1965
Scott Stephens	3/29/1966
Richard Addison	7/19/1967
Barry Maher	7/19/1967
Peter Durland	11/13/1967
Doug Godfrey	11/13/1967
David Peters	11/13/1967
Ronnie Hartsfield	8/16/1968
Ken Luttrell	8/16/1968
Ray Haupt	11/11/1968
Lewis Harrison	3/26/1969
Wade Pierce	5/28/1969
David Helton	10/09/1969
Ray L'Amoreaux	10/09/1969
Danny McClellan	1/13/1970
Chris Wentworth	1/13/1970
Bryan Taylor	5/27/1970
Frank Harrison	12/02/1970
Chuck O'Hair	12/02/1970
Ken Tyson	12/02/1970
Bert Roberts	1/06/1971
Jimmy Godfrey	6/09/1971
Mike Madden	6/09/1971
Bill McKittrick	6/09/1971
Mark Pascale	6/09/1971
Martin Shipman	8/04/1971
Kelley Luttrell	9/01/1971
Bill Twomey	1/19/1972
Tommy West	3/01/1972

Master of Ceremonies C. Sam Murrow, Jr.

Opening Ceremony Boy Scout Troop 110

Invocation Rev. Carrill Munnings, Sr.

History & Special Recognitions C. Sam Murrow, Sr.

Dedicatory Message Rev. Carrill Munnings, Sr.

Benediction Rev. Carrill Munnings, Sr.

Dedicated to all Scouts and Scouters

In Loving Memory of

Eagle Scout Doug Godfrey

and

In Honor of the 52 Eagle Scouts of
Troop 110

Name

Date of Eagle Rank

Chuck Reed	7/12/1972
Joe Draper	12/19/1973
Lambert West	12/19/1973
Kevin West	12/09/1976
Christopher West	12/09/1976
Russell Rainer	1/10/1977
David Harrison	7/29/1977
Keith Chapman	10/13/1978
Mike Harris	6/09/1992
Jack Landers	11/12/1992
Justin Harrell	6/14/1994
Richard Long	6/14/1994
Brian Bradshaw	7/12/1994
Zack Smith	7/12/1994
Ashley Berg	10/10/1995
Scott Perett	10/10/1995
Paul Taylor	4/09/1996
Jason Woodell	6/11/1996
Isaac Smith	9/10/1996
Chris Bailey	6/19/1997
Michael Haight	10/10/1997

A TRIBUTE TO EAGLE SCOUTS OF TROOP 110

This Memorial was originally dedicated to the loving memory of Eagle Scout Doug Godfrey by many Scouts and friends following his death in 1968, soon after he received the rank of Eagle Scout.

Over the passage of time as a result of the dedicated leadership of the Scoutmasters, Troop Leaders and the encouragement of parents, 52 young men have obtained the coveted rank of Eagle Scout.

It is now appropriate to rededicate this Memorial to all the Scouts of Troop 110 who have attained the Eagle rank. It is hoped that this memorial will be an inspiration to future Scouts of this Troop.

Appendix D

The Symbolism In Our New Facilities

Sometime before the beginning of recorded history, man found a need to express himself, his view of life, his history, and his hopes and fears for the future. This expression is found in action (behavior and dance) and in vocalizations (language and music). Man early learned to express himself by the use of symbols - visible signs by which something is known. The most common form which this symbolism has taken is the written language - the very words you are reading are but symbols for verbalizations, thoughts, or ideas. Man also was aware that life was more than mere physical existence; rather, he knew of spiritual things and sought to express these spiritual truths in symbolic terms.

Our new sanctuary is, in the physical sense, just mortar, brick, wood, and metal. In a symbolic sense, on the other hand, it is a sanctuary, a house of prayer, a house of God, and a church. The word church comes from the Greek, KYRIAKON, which means "belonging to the Lord," and refers to the whole body of Christ and to the building within which a Christian congregation worships.

After Jesus' life on earth was over, His followers sought means of symbolizing the great spiritual truth, lesson, and promise that His physical life means to the world. The cross became the symbol of Christian faith, since it was upon a cross that Christ suffered to become the Redeemer of mankind. Therefore, it is most appropriate that, when looking forward in the sanctuary, the wooden cross occupies the focal point of our attention. The cross identifies us as Christians and symbolizes our goal in life which is, according to Jesus, "To take up (your) cross, and follow me" (Matt. 16:24).

It is also most appropriate that the center of attention of our sanctuary when looking outward is a stained glass representation of a horse and circuit preacher, the symbol of Methodism. Stained glass windows originally served as illustrations of Gospel narratives during a time when few could read. The actual stories told were remembered by the illiterate faithful from their colored pictorial depictions. The window itself symbolizes the Christian life in that it allows the passage of light and warmth (is open to good) while keeping out cold and wind (is closed to evil). Just as the circuit rider's horse was a vehicle for spreading the word of God, Methodism is our vehicle for travelling from the darkness of the world into the light of faith. This journey is symbolized by the gradation of darker colors around the perimeter to the lighter colors at the center of the window. There is a visual affect unique to our window which draws those on the outside into the sanctuary and from the inside establishes a visual perspective which compels us to go forth, renewed, into the world. This is representative of Christ's invitation "to come unto me" and of His charge to "Go ye (forth) therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 18:19).

In between these central symbols are those which represent the whole history of Christianity. The basic floor plan of the contemporary church has been derived from that of the temple at Jerusalem, which consisted of three areas: an outer area for the people, which we now call the narthex; an inner area for the exposition of the Word, traditionally called the nave and now called the sanctuary; and, the "holy of holies" which was for priests only. In the temple the nave was set-off from the "holy of holies" by a curtain, which excluded the

common worshiper. In the Christian tradition the "holy of holies" became the chancel and was separated from the nave by a chancel rail. Passage into the chancel area for all but the clergy was prevented by a chancellor - the keeper of the gate. In the modern church the chancel rail no longer serves as a physical barrier, but as a symbolic meeting place where we can commune with the divine spirit of God, as is represented by the openness of the structure of our chancel rail with its opened gates.

Within the chancel area are the basic symbols of our Christian tradition which lead us to worship. The three faces of the reredos wall symbolizes the Trinity. The lines of the cedar walls form incomplete sides of a triangle which would meet at a point beyond the physical structure of the sanctuary, symbolizing our journey through life towards completion in God. The most prominent face of the reredos wall represents the Old Testament stone altar upon which sacrifices were offered. The cross on that face represents the last sacrifice made by Christ for us all. The three angled shapes of the wooden altar, the pulpit, and the chancel rail and the three steps leading to the chancel area are other symbolic statements of the Trinity. The open Bible represents the word of God, and the two candelabra symbolize the two natures of Christ - divine and human. The steps on each candelabra represent the three virtues of faith, hope, and charity, while the three flames on each candelabra determine two lines which meet at the base of the cross.

Christ said that "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me should not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12). This symbol of life is prominent throughout our sanctuary, as in the glow of light behind the cross, the flame of the candles, the chandelier light, and the filtration of light through the stained glass window. The flame of the candles and the flame on our Methodist flag both represent the Holy Spirit and Christian zeal.

The warmth of colors and the natural materials used in the sanctuary represent the qualities we find in our John Wesley family. In the future our new sanctuary will gain meaning far beyond our understanding as certain places and things within the building become symbols of personal spiritual experiences. Individuals and groups will find God, will find peace ("a peace which passeth all understanding"), will find hope for the future as we feel the presence of people who care and the loving, guiding spirit of Jesus Christ in a structure which will symbolize many different things to many different people who are united through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

- written by Jim Cosper & Ray Fox

Appendix E.

PRAYER STONE CIRCLE
REPRESENTING
TWO CENTURIES OF SALVATION IN CHRIST
JESUS
AND
40 YEARS OF MEMBERS AND MINISTRIES AT
JOHN WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

BLESSING BENCHES:

In memory of Ben May *by* Nell May and family. **Matthew 18: 19**

In celebration of 60 years of marriage *by* Iris and Jack Turner. **Romans 14: 1**

In memory of Becky Tranchand *by* Freedman Class and friends. **Romans 8:38-39**

PRAYER STONES: (large stones in bold)

1. **Celebrating Missions, UMVIM and our sister church at Aguada de Pasajeros, Cuba by Cindy and Jim Cospes. Proverbs 25: 25**
2. Celebrating Little Lambs Preschool by Director Jean Jacobs & teachers. **Matthew 19: 13-1**
3. In memory of Jeanne Bickner by Carolyn Cain and Jerry Snyder. **Proverbs 3: 5-6**
4. In honor of Danny and Rosalie Morris. **Matthew 9: 20**
5. In honor of Frances Y. Gilmer by Rev. Gerry and Evelyn Gilmer. **John 8: 12**
6. In memory of Billy G. Pelham by his loving wife Wanda Pelham. **John 3: 16**
7. In honor of the Freedman Class by the members in ministry. **Acts 15: 11**
8. In memory of Lawrence Weyers, father of Dr. Barbara Williams. **Proverbs 4: 1**
9. In memory of Agatha Godfrey by church friend & secret pal, Dee Wilder. **Philippians 4: 13**
10. In honor of Terry and Judy Denham. **John 15: 12**
11. **In memory of Richard Ray and Sandie Ray by Eleese Ray. John 14: 27**
12. In memory of Agatha Godfrey by the Senate Group. **Matthew 5: 16**
13. In honor of Lou Todd Bonnell by Phyllis Kennedy. **Psalms 46: 1**
14. In honor of M. Timothy Simmons by Sylvia W. White. **John 15: 9 KJV**
15. In honor of Phyllis Sandberg by friend Phyllis Kennedy. **Lamentations 3: 24**
16. In honor of Terri S. Cariaga by Sylvia W. White. **Romans 15: 13**
17. In memory of Helen Saunders by the Chancel Choir & Susanna Wesley Circle. **Psalms 149: 1**

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18. In honor of the JOY Circle by its members who serve Jesus and others.
Romans 16: 13
19. In honor of the Watford family by Jeanette Watford Locke. **James 2: 22**
20. In memory of Agatha Godfrey by Jack and Iris Turner. **II Corinthians 4: 16**
21. **In memory of Bernice D. "Bobby" Landrum by her loving sons Ney C. & R. Gary Landrum. Psalm 91: 2**
22. In memory of Dan and Ruth Moor by Verlon & Sylvia Owens. **Matthew 7: 8**
23. In honor of Pastor Dr. Tom Farmer, Jr., Peggy and family. **Philippians 4 :6-7**
24. In honor of Phyllis Critten Kennedy by her children Jane and Michael Harlin.
Matthew 5: 9
25. In honor of Sam and Lurline Murrow. **Genesis 28: 16**
26. In honor of Lawrence, Jeanne, Angela and Rich Heitmeyer. **II Corinthians 1: 3**
27. In honor of Pastor Dr. Robert M. Gibbs, Brenda, Beth and Rob. **IICorinthians 5:18**
28. In memory of Angie Hancock by John and Pat Davis. **Isaiah 26: 3 NRSV**
29. In memory of "Bobby" Landrum by the Susanna Wesley Circle. **James 1: 22**
30. In memory of Aleen Sinclair by Barbara & Dennis Williams and family.
Philippians 1: 3-5
31. **In honor of F. Lewis and Carol Jones by Phyllis Kennedy. Joshua 24 : 15**
32. In memory of Jackie Van Nordwick by Bob and Erline Males, Dee Wilder and Billy and Ouida Miller. **Genesis 31: 49 KJV**
33. In honor of Martha Capelouto and her music by Terry and Judy Denham.
John 11: 25
34. In memory of Lynn Owens Hill by Verlon & Sylvia Owens and family.
Psalm 100: 1-2
35. In memory of Jennifer Nicole George. **Mark 10: 14b KJV**
36. In honor of Betty and Henry Sands by their Budd grandchildren.
Deuteronomy 6: 5
37. In honor of the Mary Martha Circle of the United Methodist Women.
Proverbs 31: 30
38. Enthusiastically in honor of Pearle Wood by the ladies who go to Leesburg spiritual retreats. **Lamentations 3: 22-23 NIV**
39. In honor of Evelyn and James Swift by Sharon Sands Budd. **Psalm 118: 24**
40. In appreciation for all Chancel Choir Directors of our first 40 years (Mary Ann Helton, Judy James, Janeen Jones, Ann Guckert, Lewis Jones, Chuck Robinson, Sara Lynn Baird, Roy Delp, Olivia Ahyoung, Carlos Rivera-Aponte) by the Chancel Choir. **Psalm 98**

Since 2000 a place of prayer and remembrance.

God is Faithful, No Matter What

Formative Years

A Time of Bounty

Struggle with Relationships

Remnant Seeking Renewal

1960's and 1970's

1980's

1990's

2000+

10 Brave Christians
 Mitch Florence
 Past Pastors in jail
 Tom Farmer-church growth
 Wooden crosses
 Men's & Women's spiritual retreats
 Bus pick-up to bring to church

Community involvement Boy Scouts, Fish Fry
 Pastoral guidance & ministry
 Wesley Players & arts in general
 May Fairs & yard sales
 Bob Gibbs
 Alternative Christmas Market (1986)

Significant members left church "post Bob Gibbs"
 Appointment challenges & change
 Past Pastors in jail
 Carrill Munnings
 Inter-cultural pastor & family
 Stephens Ministry
 FL-Cuba covenant Sister church '98 - 2008

Homeless shelter denial
 Decline in membership (1990's/ 2000's)
 Frequent changes in leadership
 SHARE
 Little Lambs
 Prayer, discipleship & education
 Music ministry

Gerry Gilmer
 Gerry Gilmer
 Bud Harkey
 Beth Moore classes
 Church prays, prayer chain
 Loving actions of church family

Ron McCreary, community focus
 Celebrate Jesus
 Contemporary service
 Neglect of the Bible (focus on social)
 TEAM
 Church picnics

Community outreach
 Children's Day at Capitol
 Missions emphasis - UMW, more
 Missions: Children's Home
 Missions: Alt. Christmas Market
 Missions: Garage sale, Grace bags

Lessons We Learned

- **60's & 70's** – We can do more through the work of the Holy Spirit
- **80's and 90's** – We learned through conflict & pain to trust God & remain faithful & patient
- **2000+** That we are **able** to reach out to the community
- Involve the youth
- Acceptance of change
- God is still at work
- Pastors have had an enormous influence on the church
- The pastor should not be the focus of our spiritual journey
- Focus on God & His will for our ministry
- Use outreach ministries to bring others to God
- The programs in God's will have endured (Alternative Christmas Market, Little Lambs, Fish fry, Rummage sale, SHARE, etc.
- We can be a loving vehicle that brings others to God

John Wesley United Methodist Church Pastors (according to the picture wall)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ◆ Danny Morris, 1960 – 1966 | ◆ Hardy Sandlin, 1992 – 1995 |
| ◆ Lee Pearson, 1966 – 1969 | ◆ Lawrence Kilbourn, 1995 – 1998 |
| ◆ Mitchell Florence, 1969 – 1972 | ◆ Carril Munnings, 1998 – 2000 |
| ◆ Thom Farmer, 1972 – 1982 | ◆ Gerry Gilmer, 2000 – 2005 |
| ◆ Harry Baas, 1982 – 1984 | – Bud Harkey, assistant |
| ◆ Robert Gibbs, 1984 – 1992 | ◆ Ron McCreary, 2005 – |
| – Barbara Stiles, associate | |

Actual Values (good or bad)

- 1 – Community outreach
- 2 – Resistant to change, inward focused
- 3 – Fellowship
- 4 – Innovation
- 5 – Idolize ministers
- 6 – Nurturing, caring, welcoming

Ideal Value

- Select one of top three values. How would we change it? Change old value #2 “resistance to change” to new value:
- **Openness to His will**
 - **Courage to be open and accepting** (people, ideas)
 - **Openness to change**
 - **Vision and openness to change in God's will**