

## Growing Up At Hyde Park

Mary Lou Compton

As a young child I attended Sunday school and church every Sunday at Hyde Park. At that time there were two buildings on the very limited piece of property the church owned. The Education Building and the Sanctuary. The Education building housed the kitchen, the fellowship hall and all of the Sunday school classes from Nursery to Adult. It had a basement and two stories beyond that. On the second and third floor in the building on one end was a large main room with smaller rooms off to the side. We all met in the larger room sang a few songs and went into the smaller rooms for our Sunday school lessons.

In the third grade we received Bibles. I still have mine and when I teach Bible boot camp to our current 3<sup>rd</sup> graders, I always show them I still have mine. My favorite teacher was Sarah Ramsey. In her class we learned the books of the Bible (memorized in order) the Lord's Prayer, the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm and various of scriptures and important things in the Bible and about our church.

In 1956-57, what is now known as Knox Hall, was built. A lot of what was in the Education building moved into Knox. The fellowship hall, church offices, Sunday school classrooms, the nursery and a very nice chapel. That was when the education building became just that, an education building.

On Sunday mornings in the fellowship hall, they would serve coffee from silver tea sets to anyone who wanted coffee after the service. It also became a meeting place for everyone after church. Over time, the tea sets disappeared and the courtyard between Knox Hall and the Sanctuary became the meeting place on Sundays. The flower cross at Easter was on the Platt Street end of the courtyard.

As a teen we went to MYF on Sunday nights and ate dinner as a group, broke up into Junior High and Senior High small groups and then came back together and attended Chapel together. Anyone in the congregation who desired could attend the Chapel service on Sunday nights along with the youth. As time went on the evening Chapel services disappeared.

My parents, Hugo and Lou Schmidt, were very active at Hyde Park. Both taught Sunday school for various ages for many years. They tag teamed at one point the Senior High Sunday school class. At that time I was 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade. My mother

taught first and then my father and then my mother again. In my High School years, I had my father, as did my brothers, who are two years younger than me. My youngest brother had my mother. On Sunday morning their classes were packed. Everyone loved them as teachers.

Dad went on to teach Adult Sunday school classes, Disciple Bible Study, and Christian Believers. He really loved to teach and did so until he was in his late 80's and was unable to get about. After the stint with the Senior High's my mother started teaching younger children and ended up teaching the 4's with me until she retired in her 80's. She also taught DBS and co-taught Christian Believer's with my dad.

My parents served on many Committees at the church. Dad was on every building committee, starting with Knox Hall, the church ever had. He did not serve on the one for the Magnolia Building because his age caught up with him and he was unable to. He served on every committee of leadership the church had. Some twice. He loved his church and would do anything for it. My mother served on Altar Guild and was on the original parsonage committee, along with many other committees. I'm guessing the reason I'm so active in our church is because of my parents.

When I graduated from college and returned home, I started attending church with my family again. I was looking for a place to fit it. I found it in children's ministries and have been there ever since. I started teaching 2-year-olds because there was a need and over time moved up to 4-year-olds, now called Pre-K 4. I have been doing this since 1971. In 1973 I married at Hyde Park and in 1976 our first child was born. We raised our children at Hyde Park, pretty much the same way we were raised.

Much of this has changed over time and it's all good. I was fortunate to be working at the church when the major changes came about and I saw my church become a church of the future. We had gone from three buildings to a campus with adequate facilities for learning and teaching about God's Love.