

We Love to Tell the Stories
125 years of Making God's Love Real

Episode 1: Voices From the Past
Jim Harnish

The Facilities Task Force was stuck. The summer of 2001 they faced a critical turning point in the building process that began seven years before. With the completion of the new parking lot, the construction the Wesley Center, the Activities Center, and Ministry Offices, the demolition of the 1922 Education Building, and the renovation of Knox Hall and the Laurie Ray Chapel, work had begun on the final phase of the Master Plan, the renovation of the Sanctuary.

The architects and contractors offered three options for the ceiling of the sanctuary. Each had different implications related to the design of the balcony, quality of acoustics and cost. The Facilities Task Force was not conflicted, just stuck determining what would be the best option. They shared the three plans throughout the congregation inviting feedback from classes, ministry teams, and small groups, but there was no clear consensus.

Finally, the Task Force was invited to meet in the living room at the parsonage to pause, reflect, and pray about the decision.

That morning, Lynn (Roberts) Osborne was clearing out some dusty files and discovered a reel-to-reel tape recording labeled, *Laying the Cornerstone of the Remodeled Sanctuary, November 14, 1954*. She quickly found someone to transfer the recording to a disc. We heard the voice of Dr. Laurie Ray, leading the congregation in the service. Hugo Schmidt, who was serving on the current Task Force, had been Vice-Chair of the 1954 committee. Dr. Ray referred to Peggy McMichael who was also on the current Task Force. He recognized twenty people who were present that day who had been present for the original construction of the sanctuary in 1907.

We heard Dr. Ray led the congregation in the *Litany for Laying the Cornerstone*. The words were amazingly consistent with who the church had been and has become. They prayed for:

- *A building of which Jesus Christ is the chief cornerstone, the pillar and ground of truth.*
- *A building that shall stand as a symbol of the Church Universal, the cornerstone of which is truth, the creed of which is love, and the towers eternal hope.*
- *A church that shall exalt not a religion of creed or of authority, but a religion of saving grace, of personal experience, and of spiritual power.*
- *A church that shall exalt the ministry of the open Bible with its faithful record of human life, its unfolding of the redeeming grace of God through Jesus Christ, its message of warning, inspiration, comfort, and hope.*
- *A church that shall teach and incarnate the doctrine of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.*
- *A church that shall fulfill a ministry of social service and be a blessing unto man;*
- *A church with an open door for all people, rich or poor, homeless or desolate, who need the help of God through us.*
- *A church that shall gather the children in its arms and hold them close to Christ, that they may grow up in the church and never be lost from the fold.*

- *A church that stands for the sacramental truth: “It is more blessed to give than to receive.”*
- *A church which takes hold on two worlds and stands for the unseen and eternal and which offers the abundant life which now is, and which is to come.*

Members of the Task Force were moved to tears when they heard the congregation pray:

- *In loving memory of those who have gone from us, whose hearts and hands have served this church; with gratitude for all whose faith and consecrated gifts make this house possible, for all who may share this spiritual adventure; and with hope for all who shall worship in this house in years to come.*

They prayed for us! We experienced the way the same Spirit that gave birth to this congregation in 1899 and has guided it across the years would guide us into the future. We left that evening without making any decision but committed to continue to pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The next day one of the committee members asked, “Have we ever considered this?” An option they had never considered became the design the sanctuary today. The solution to the problem was, in the words of contemporary hymn, “*Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.*”

The history of Hyde Park United Methodist Church is the story of the way the God who has been at work in the past gives us wisdom in the present to fulfill God’s vision for the future. We tell our stories in the spirit of a song which became the theme song for the capital funds campaign.

*We're pilgrims on the journey
of the narrow road,
and those who've gone before us
line the way,
cheering on the faithful,
encouraging the weary,
their lives a stirring testament
to God's sustaining grace.*

*Surrounded by so great
a cloud of witnesses,
let us run the race
not only for the prize,
but as those who've gone before us.
let us leave to those behind us,
the heritage of faithfulness
passed on thru godly lives.*

*After all our hopes and dreams
have come and gone,
and our children sift thru all
we've left behind,
may the clues that they discover,*

*and the mem'ries they uncover,
become the light that leads them,
to the road we each must find.*

*O may all who come behind us
find us faithful,
may the fire of our devotion
light their way.
may the footprints that we leave,
lead them to believe,
and the lives we live
inspire them to obey.
O may all who come behind us
find us faithful.*

<https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=steve+green+find+us+faithful&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&si=ACC90nxka2Fvqm8pF4Tj4sQ1t1xOSu06t8HGiXAaQj290yXfNqBzkVxhmLZC6VEr4nmT7ybWwo0wvf4VgJUxXGG2YxFig0RWja1bg1XStjB0zAdrZ6cx5C0ow3rlx9mJmGV9cfxZ4TcR&ictx=1&ved=2ahUKEwie0sur4JmGaxVxq4QIHxi0BOcQyNoBKAB6BAgREAA>.

Source: [Musixmatch](#)

Songwriters: Jon Mohr

Find Us Faithful lyrics © Birdwing Music, Jonathan Mark Music

**HISTORY
OF
HYDE PARK
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

Tampa, Florida

1899 — 1984

Compiled and Edited

1899-1974

Dr. Mary Louise Lake

1974-1984

Mrs. W. B. Dickenson, Jr.

Mrs. Hugo Schmidt

1899 Foreword 1984

The year 1984 marks the two hundredth anniversary of Methodism in America. In these centuries of progress and service our own church has played its part.

The Hyde Park Methodist Church was founded at the turn of the century and has eighty-five years of labor and love behind it. Any history of a church is a history of its people - its faithful pastors and its loyal laymen. The historian would like to name all of those who have taken part in the growth of our fine church. Some, by virtue of their official positions, will be named, and others, who have worked as long and as faithfully, will not. We remember, too, that, as Christians, much that we do is not widely known and we prefer it so.

This is not a completed history. It is a simple resume of the past, pointing always to the future and serving only as an inspiration to those who will do the greater work of tomorrow.

This Church opens wide its doors to all who hunger for God and His righteousness. It seeks to provide rest for weary spirits, comfort for troubled hearts, and to inspire all to follow Jesus Christ in purity of life and in unselfish service to mankind.

HOW THE HYDE PARK METHODIST CHURCH BEGAN

We will begin this history with a story written by Leslie June Weller Connor, an original member. In this story are lavish interspersions by many who know and love the church. Since none of these memories were contradictory we combined them all in a composite old-members' narrative. For, in our opinion, no account written from hearsay can have the value of one written by an eyewitness.

“In Hyde Park in the middle Nineties, there were many little children up and down the sandy unpaved streets. In the old section, bounded by West Tenth Avenue (now the Boulevard), and Grand Central, which ran into a pond beyond the railroad, and down the streetcar line route through the woods toward Ballast Point, Methodist families with horses and buggies got their children down to the old First Church when they could. Some went by street- car, and those near enough walked across the bridge and through town. But there were some in those days who thought it was wicked to ride on the cars on Sunday, and for all the parents it was a problem, especially for the very small children. In those days it was nothing for the old bridge to stick fast when the draw was opened, and remain open for an hour or more. Then in 1898 when the Spanish-American War dumped upwards of 50,000 soldiers into the little town of 25,000 inhabitants, the problem became more acute, and many children were unable to go to Sunday School at all.

So, one Sunday afternoon there was a meeting of three fathers and three mothers in the home of the youngest of these couples. Mr. and Mrs. James Shaw, the oldest, who had come from England in the 1880's, brought with them their two talented daughters - Agnes, a musician, and Lucy, an artist. The second family represented were Mr. and Mrs. Heighington, who had come to Florida from Canada, and they brought with them their half-grown daughter, Ethel. The ones who had invited these neighbors in were Mr. John A. Weller, city auditor, and his wife, living at that time on the corner of Horatio and what is now Magnolia Avenue, then West Seventh. The Weller family had come down from Michigan, and there were three small children, Leslie June, Fred and Marguerite.

There were twelve, all together, that Sunday afternoon, and they decided to start a Sunday School for the neighborhood children. Mrs. Weller was a singer of note, and Miss Agnes Shaw could play anything from a broken-down reed organ to the largest instrument known.

There was a little two-room red school house on Platt and West Seventh Avenue (now Magnolia) where Fire Station No. 3 stands today. This was the first meeting place of the little Sunday School. It had an old organ and a small collection of old, torn song books. The word was passed around among neighbors, and there were thirty present the first Sunday, March 12, 1899. Mr. Weller was superintendent, Mrs. Weller led the singing, Miss Lucy Shaw acted as secretary, and Miss Agnes Shaw played the organ which had two hissing notes that would not play at all. They sang "Rescue the Perishing," "Onward Christian Soldiers," "Jesus Loves Me," and "I Love to Tell the Story." Everybody knew the words. Mrs. Shaw was appointed teacher of the Bible Class, the others divided the groups of children into classes, and the school started.

On the 26th of the same month, Rev. John Dodwell of Port Tampa City held preaching services morning and evening. Still there were no regular services for a while and in the evenings the Shaws and the Wellers used to walk down to attend the Epworth League services at First Church, and remain for the evening preaching service if the children did not have to go to school next day.

The Rev. R.H. Barnett, father of the wonderful Barnett family, was then a traveling preacher and colporteur for the Methodist Publishing House; he visited the little Sunday School and he was probably the first visiting preacher who held a service in the school house. Dr. John A. Giddens also visited the group and preached, and Presiding Elder Hilburn also met with them occasionally. The school thrived so that the Methodist Conference took notice of it, and decided to send a preacher down to take care of the Hyde Park services, mornings, and at Port Tampa, afternoons.

The first Christmas in the little school house was a very wonderful one for the Sunday School. Mrs. Weller made bags of tarleton; Mr. Weller brought home a wooden bucket of Christmas candy, and the Weller children had the exciting privilege of helping fill the bags. Tinsel decorations were gathered together. There were two oil bracket lamps cleaned and filled and set against the wall on either side of the larger room; there were also real candles on the huge tree, with no thought of fire or other danger - at least, not expressed. The tree had been cut from the woods only two blocks from the school house. There were speeches, songs, and a toy and candy bag for each child. It was probably the most wonderful Christmas that many of them had ever had, and all the grownups squeezed themselves into the little seats of the old school room and enjoyed it as much as the children.

The first picnic was likewise a great success. It was a real old-fashioned Sunday School picnic with all the fathers and mothers and children together. They seemed to have time to do it in those days. They went by streetcar, and some in wagons and buggies, to a beautiful, wild spot on the Bayshore where there was a grove of walnut trees. There was a little spring there, too - it was Palma Ceia Spring. There were great pans of home-baked beans, great piles of homemade bread and cakes and pies and potato salad; a washtub with a lump of ice held the lemonade. Ants got into the food, three snakes were found, children were warned about poison ivy, some got red bugs, but everybody was happy. They made wild grapevine swings, they sang "rounds" and other songs of the day. They also found an old ruin of some very old structure which some of them thought might have been built by DeSoto.

The Rev. Henry Hice was the preacher who organized the church in 1900, taking the first twelve who had started the Sunday School, and some others who joined at the time as charter members. Their names are in the cornerstone of the present church. A furniture store on Hyde Park Avenue at the place where Cleveland now cuts through was secured for the first church, and benches were built of slats. An organ was bought, a strip of matting put down from the front door to the first little altar, and the Hyde Park Methodist Church was an important institution in the growing section west of the river.

It was in this store building that the first church social was held. The benches were placed along the walls and the old building made into a bower of green by the ladies of the church who decorated it with palms, palmetto leaves cut from the nearby woods, vines from the woods, moss, and lots of flowers from home gardens. It was a combination reception for the new pastor, and for the members. Talented musicians sang and played and there were refreshments, served by the young girls of the church. Mrs. E. A. Dunn, then Jannie Johnson, was one of the girls who served.

Mrs. Hayden, an old resident whose family home originally included land where the Tampa Bay Hotel was built (now the University of Tampa), donated a lot adjoining her home on which to build a church, but as it was not centrally located, the church acquired one on the corner of Platt and West 6th Avenue (now Cedar). It was largely due to the untiring energy and promptness with which Rev. Hice took hold of this small but forceful group that the frame building was erected on the site of the present church, in which the growing congregation worshipped until 1907. It was a plain wooden structure with a steeple, costing \$1,400.00, and it is said that many an artistic soul in the membership writhed inwardly every time they looked at the awful windows, which were four-paned affairs, each pane a different color of glass. The children, however, used to be fascinated by the sunshine which came through first one color and then another, putting a red spot on a bald head, or blue one, or perhaps amber, or green.

The Rev. W. G. Fletcher, a rather handsome unmarried man was sent to the church for a time, to be followed by the Rev. J. A. Howland.

During the early years the Parsonage Aid Society was very active in securing furniture for a parsonage and seeing that it was clean and ready for the new pastor. Later the members raised a fund to buy the lot next to the church. There the first parsonage was erected in 1902-1903 for the use of Rev. J. A. Howland and his family. It was built "in keeping with the majority of the homes of the congregation and was the large task of the year."

Then came Rev. J.H. Dutill and his little family of two boys and two girls. Before his pastorate, Miss Ethel Heighington was married in what was probably the first elaborate wedding to be held in our church. At her marriage to Prof. J. W. Sherrill, the ten little girls who composed her Sunday School class were her bridesmaids. The ceremony was held Dec. 31, 1902, at 6 p.m., and the little girls were Aline Drew, Olivia Moody (Mrs. Karl Whitaker), Marguerite Weller, Carol Eliot, Pearl Jewell, Carlotta Wetherel (Mrs. T. Eros), Mary Louise Knight (Mrs. Whitfield Wilson), Louise Wetherell (Mrs. Jerry Hansen), Marie Eliot (Mrs. W. L. VanDyke), and Sophie Whitaker (Mrs. Chester A. R. Kurtz). The ushers were Don C. McMullen and Fred Millican, the best man Arthur Hagadorn. Mrs. C. S. Eliot was organist and Mr. John Turner, Jr., violinist. The Rev. Howland officiated.

Another wedding in the wooden church was that of Edna Ball and H. B. Ainsworth on June 8th, 1905.

A terrible typhoid epidemic swept Tampa and in the spring and summer of 1903 many were taken by death, including Mr. Weller, his little daughter Marguerite, and the young daughter of the pastor, Olive Dutill.

Thus weddings and funerals and baptisms made the first little church a sacred place to many.

CHARTER MEMBERS

Mr. and Mrs. Charles E. Ball

Mr. and Mrs. T. C. Folsom

Mrs. Rosa Braswell

Mrs. William Heighington

Mrs. A. C. Clewis

Mrs. H. C. Hargrove

Mrs. Lillian Craft

Mr. and Mrs. Frank D. Jackson

Mrs. Alread

Mrs. C. A. Johnson

Mrs. Mary Keller

Miss Lucy Shaw

Mrs. Julia Hanks

Miss Agnes Shaw

Mr. and Mrs. John McDermott

Mrs. W.W. Seat

Mr. and Mrs. I. W. Phillips

Mr. and Mrs. John A. Weller

Mrs. Lillian Powell

Miss Leslie June Weller

Mrs. M. L. Strickland

Mrs. John B. Moody

Mrs. Eliza Shaw

The story of the years 1905-08 is a story of faith and vision. To Rev. W. J. Carpenter, pastor, much of the credit for the building must be given. The church membership had increased from 27 to 150 and the Sunday School had grown so large that better facilities were necessary. After much prayer by day and night, a meeting was called at the parsonage, and initial subscriptions of

\$6,000.00 were made.

A building committee was appointed composed of:

Mrs. A. C. Clewis, Chairman

Mr. E. A. Gallaher

Mr. C. E. Ball, Secretary

Mr. F. D. Jackson

Mr. D. W. Johnstone, Treas.

Mr. L. J. Cooper, S.S. Supt.

Mr. I. W. Phillips

Rev. W. J. Carpenter, Pastor

In 1907 the present church was erected at a cost of \$24,000.00. Furnishings and extras brought the total to \$30,000.00. After delivering a masterly sermon Bishop C. B. Galloway laid the cornerstone and we think it was singularly appropriate since his namesake and nephew, Charles B. Galloway, was a long-time member of Hyde Park

and a former chairman of the Official Board. The church was dedicated by Bishop E.E. Hoss. The wooden building was moved to the rear of the lot, faced on Cedar Avenue, and used for the Primary Department, the Young People's class and as a recreation hall.

Everyone worked hard to make the Church the finest possible and gave of their time and money freely. Mr. Ball personally supervised the building. Mrs. P. O. Knight volunteered to raise the \$3,000.00 for the organ and Mrs. W. L. Hanks gave the pulpit and chancel in memory of her husband. The Sunday School, fewer than 150 members, with the assistance of Mr. D. C. McMullen, Superintendent, paid for the seats, raising \$1,200.00 in one year's time. Mr. A. C. Clewis planted the oak trees on the east. They were later replaced by palms. Those on the north were removed when Platt Street was paved and widened. The lovely windows which add so much to the church were gifts from members as memorials to their loved ones. The rose window from John Trice and his daughters; a group from Mr. & Mrs. A. C. Clewis; another group from Mrs. I. S. Craft; still others from Mrs. Rosa Murphy, Mr. & Mrs. J.E. McDermott, Mr. Robert A. Jackson, Mr. & Mrs. H. C. Hargrove, Carol Eliot and Marguerite Westcott Weller.

Windows in the vestibule were designated as memorial windows to the Rev. J.A. Howland, an early pastor, and to Mr. John Weller, the first Sunday School Superintendent.

On November 11, 1907, Mrs. J.C. McKay, president, called a meeting of the Missionary Society to decide about the carpet, cushions, and curtains. At the regular meeting of November 15th the committee, composed of Mrs. A. C. Clewis, Mrs. O. D. Wetherell and Mrs. Chan S. Eliot submitted samples. Selections were made and these were installed and financed by the auxiliary. Mrs. Frank D. Jackson and Mrs. W. J. Carpenter were appointed by Mrs. McKay to superintend the finishing of the floors. Dr. Dorchester, at the age of eighty-seven years, offered the first public prayer in the new building.

The 1907 Florida Annual Conference was held in the not-quite-completed church. Bishop Galloway presided. One of the charter members says that the thing he remembers best about that occasion was that a visiting minister was called upon to pray. He shut his eyes tightly and started. In the middle of the prayer a fuse blew out, of course unnoticed by the truly devout. The good brother came to the “Amen” and opened his eyes to absolute darkness. Immediately he cried, “Oh, Lord, I’ve been struck blind!” and had to be calmed quickly by those near him.

Before the church was quite finished Mabel Hanks and Anton K. Gramling were married there on December 10, 1907. The first wedding after the building was complete was that of Ida May Poage and Duval M. Smith, April 14, 1908. The ceremony was performed by the bride’s father, Rev. W. M. Poage, then Presiding Elder. Other early weddings were those of Jannie Johnson and E. A. Dunn, Nov. 11, 1908, and Olivia Moody and Karl E. Whitaker, on the anniversary of her parents, Mr. & Mrs. J.B. Moody, Sept. 10, 1913.

OUR TENTH YEAR

Since our previous histories were written, a rare 65-year-old item has come to light - the Hyde Park Handbook of 1909 - the only copy known to have survived. It seems fitting to preserve the following excerpts from this historic document published in our tenth anniversary year.

The Handbook included a list of the membership at that time with their addresses. Many of the same families are still represented in the church today, but only four names are on the roll then and in 1974 - Mrs. W. B. Dickenson, Sr., Miss Helen Hill, Miss Nellie Verri (Mrs. Dexter Sloan), and Miss Louisa Verri (Mrs. V. M. Newton, Jr.). The entire membership was 300 with over “470 Sunday School scholars, including the Home Department.”

There were two separate missionary groups - The Woman's Home Mission Society, and The Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, each meeting on a different day and with its own set of officers. On the annual report the WFMS had collected \$275.65, but the WHMS had collected \$3,919.96, which was more than the total church budget.

Hyde Park conducted two missions, Hopewell and another "on Grand Central Avenue, corner of Westland Avenue. (One block from where cars turn to go to West Tampa.)"

In Sunday School, the Senior department boasted a Baraca Class, Philathea Class, Prothean Class, and a Junior Baraca. All other classes were unnamed. The annual report of 1908 gave the Sunday School credit for raising \$1,419.46.

Rev. Wilson explained his method of appointing members to committees: "The effort has been made to give every member of the Church some definite work to do, without assigning too much work to some. In making, or omitting assignments, considerate regard has been exercised toward the aged, the infirm, the delicate, and those with heavy domestic or business engagements." These committees were grouped under Maintenance, Public Worship, Propagation of the Faith, and Social Service, the latter including separate committees:

1. On Relief of the Unemployed
2. On Relief of the Poor
3. On Reforms
 - Sec. 1. Temperance
 - Sec. 2. Prohibition
 - Sec. 3. The Social Evil
 - Sec. 4. Sabbath Observance
 - Sec. 5. Gambling
 - Sec. 6. On Jail Work
4. On Recreation

5. On Visitation of Members

The 1909 church liked mottos.

OUR CHURCH MOTTO

All at it, and Always at it.

MOTTO FOR OUR SCHOOL

Every member present every Sunday, on time, with their own Bible, a studied lesson and a mind to learn.

OUR AIM

Five Hundred Members in Twelve Months Time, and All Saved.

Two adjurations from the minister:

LET ME KNOW

When any proselyter, or sower of false doctrine, tries to disturb your faith, LET ME KNOW; that I may be able to help you as may be necessary.

If any such are working on any of your fellow members, and you know it, LET ME KNOW. I am set for the defense of the faith and of the faithful.

YOUR PASTOR

SIX THINGS

That should be in every Methodist Home, and not Neglected.

1. The Bible (a copy for each member of the family who can read)
2. The Methodist Hymnal
3. The Discipline
4. Your Church Paper
5. The Standard Catechism
6. The Methodist Armor

The Financial Table of 1909:

	Assessed	Paid
Presiding Elder	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00
Preacher in Charge	2,000.00	2,000.00
Bishops	22.00	25.00
Conference Claimants	123.00	153.00
Foreign Missions	93.00	93.00
Domestic Missions	141.00	141.00
Church Extension	71.00	81.00
Education	81.00	81.00
Delegates to General Conference	9.00	9.00
Special for Missions	60.00	60.00
American Bible Society	10.00	10.00
End't Fund for Sup'ts	7.00	7.00
For Conf. Entertainment	7.00	7.00

For Orphanage	10.25	10.56
For Missionary Evang.	28.00	28.00
Objects not elsewhere reported	415.00	415.00
		\$3,321.25

MORE EARLY YEARS

Hyde Park Church, like every other, has had years of prosperity and of depression. In 1905 the pastor reported that the attendance was poor. Many members had not returned from summer vacations because of the prevalence of yellow fever in the state. Statistics are unreliable to judge growth or loss. For instance, when Sunday School rolls are not revised for several years, it appears that membership is large but attendance is poor. Later, revision shows an opposite effect. Suffice it to say that the church has consistently grown in service and faith. We were out of debt in 1905 under Dr. W. J. Carpenter, whereupon we built a new church. While Rev. J. R. Cason was pastor in 1910-1911 we again were able to cancel all indebtedness.

An interesting note in the old records is that in 1908 there was a movement to sell 14 feet off the south side of the church lot. The question actually came to a vote and was narrowly defeated. Upon those 14 feet part of our John Wesley Building now stands, a monument to the vision of the negative vote.

A story from this period deserves to be preserved. It was once the custom for the preacher to call upon a prominent layman from time to time to offer the main prayer in the Sunday morning service. The practice came to an end when on one particular Sunday the minister called upon "Brother Phillips." Now Brother I. W. Phillips was a very able Chairman of the Board, but he had never prayed publicly in his life. A fervent plea rose to heaven, and promptly a mellow voice launched into an impressive prayer of suitable length. We'll leave it to you to determine whether there was an honest mistake on the part of the rising young attorney, Herbert S. Phillips, or a

kindly rescue of a brother in distress. In either case, it was clearly an example of answered prayer.

A Men's Bible Class was organized during the pastorate of Rev. J. B. Mitchell. It continued until the late 1950's as the McMullen Men's Bible Class, renamed to honor Mr. Don C. McMullen, its long-time teacher.

Between 1916 and 1921, seven young men of the church dedicated themselves to Christian services and entered training. Also, during the ministry of Rev. L. M. Broyles, Hyde Park had the distinction of being the first church in the Florida Conference to include women on its official board. Women had just been granted laity rights by the General Conference and Mesdames T. L. Walker, Minnie L. Strickland, I. S. Craft, E. L. Sparkman, O. D. Wetherell and C. S. Eliot were the first women stewards of Hyde Park Church and of Florida.

While working for its own people, Hyde Park has also given a helping hand to many outside Christian projects. Our record of service, though little known, is an impressive one. Hyde Park started a mission at Hopewell and another at Ballast Point. Our assistant minister conducted regular services at the latter, paid partly from our budget and partly through the Mission Board.

In 1909 Hopewell Mission had a Sunday School of 23 and another one of 25 on Grand Central Ave., both under the leadership of Hyde Park members. Mr. C.

E. Rowe of the Board of Stewards, and with its backing, worked faithfully at an Ybor City Mission and had an average attendance of 75 men every Friday night. Another mission was started at Palmetto Beach, but the people were less responsive. Mr. & Mrs. Rowe also conducted a Sunday School at the Detention Home, where they endeavored to "gather up the fragments and out of chaos build character."

In 1921 Hyde Park built Bayshore Chapel, at a cost of \$5,000.00, to serve the district adjacent to Palma Ceia Park, and contributed \$600.00 a year to the support of its minister. This chapel beginning has grown over the years to become the thriving Bayshore United Methodist Church.

The church has long been interested in the Orphanage at Enterprise. Dr. Waller served for four and a half years there as executive secretary before coming to Hyde Park.

In 1923 a congregation of people of the Jewish faith were building a new synagogue in the Hyde Park area and appealed to our church for a place to worship until its completion. We gladly lent them the use of our auditorium every Friday night during that period.

FLORIDA BOOM AND DEPRESSION

The first pastorate of Dr. Felix R. Hill, Jr., and those of J. T. Myers, Walt Holcomb, and the return of Dr. L. M. Broyles covered nine years. The specific accomplishments of this period are covered under other headings. During this time Florida went through the land boom and the ensuing crash and long years of depression. The church reflected the times. While prosperity was at its height the church was full to overflowing with the many newcomers added to the regular members. At one time the Sunday School had over 1,300 enrolled.

Walt Holcomb's wife was the daughter of Sam Jones, the famous evangelist, and Rev. Holcomb had talent as an evangelist himself. He was quite a showman and those who were in the church at the time recall one particular well-advertised and dramatic sermon in which he held a debate with the devil. Hyde Parkers weren't quite sure how they should take it, but the visitors seemed to like it. The church was so overfilled that special services such as Mother's Day, Christmas and Easter were held in what was then the Park, now the Falk Theater.

The period of prosperity was followed by years of hard work, reduced salaries, and general money worries which allowed no expansion of activity. The church grew in character from bearing burdens. It arose from those experiences stronger than before.

1931 - 1940

Homer Thompson, Felix R. Hill, Jr., for his second appointment, and Carlock Hawk served during this period.

Rev. Thompson was a forthright man who made a strong attack on gamblers and other sinful characters of Tampa's underworld, with the result that he received dire threats of retribution. His response was, "They know where to find me. I'll be sitting on the parsonage porch, right next to the church, smoking my cigar," and he very frequently was.

It was said of the Rev. Hill that he was dryly pontifical in the pulpit but more delightful out of it than any preacher ever associated with Hyde Park. He was a superb storyteller on informal occasions and loved a practical joke, offering his dribble glasses to everyone from nervous soon-to-be-wedded couples he was counseling, to Bishop Arthur Moore himself. Mrs. Hill was much younger, a brilliant woman who wrote widely - articles for religious publications and ghost-writing of reports and papers for doctors and other local people.

The old parsonage occupied part of the area now the site of the social hall, but there was a gasoline station on the corner beyond it. One night during a gas war, someone set off a bomb in the station which demolished it and blew out all of the parsonage windows on the west side. Mrs. Hill suffered some damage to her hearing. The next day Rev. Hill informed the Board that he would not spend another night at that location, and didn't. A house on South Oregon Avenue was rented for him.

At Birmingham, Alabama, in 1938, the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, voted for unification with the Methodist Episcopal Church. The northern branch had already voted affirmatively, and so the Uniting Conference met at Kansas City, Missouri, in 1939, to reestablish a unity which was broken before the Civil War.

The Florida unification ceremony was held at Hyde Park Church in June 1939, and combined the Florida and St. John's Conferences. Bishop Paul B. Kern of Nashville, Tennessee, South, and Bishop Charles W. Flint, of Syracuse, New York, North, presided. The Rev. Carlock Hawk was our pastor at the time.

1940 - 1945

The advent of Dr. Harry H. Waller, his wife, and four children emphasized the pressing need for a new parsonage. The old one had been for several years entirely inadequate even for our small pastoral families. The church crowded and overshadowed it, business property encroached, it was noisy and in need of extensive remodeling, so it was simpler to rent the old house as it stood and to apply the returns on a more suitable home for the pastor. As a result, the home at 717 S. Willow Avenue was bought for \$6,600, the Wallers moved in and on November 18, 1941, entertained the congregation at an informal open- house reception, afternoon and evening.

It was in 1941, too, that Mrs. Craft presented the handsome lighting fixtures which were retained in the remodeled sanctuary of the present. Rosa Mae Thornton, then Dr. Waller's secretary, remembers how anxious he was to have the new lighting in place for the Easter service, but the days and weeks went by and they didn't appear. Finally, on the Saturday before Easter they arrived and Dr. Waller managed to get them installed that afternoon, just one more reminder of how times have changed.

During this same period the old ceiling fans were removed and replaced by two fifty-inch ventilating fans over the annex, which was a part of the sanctuary before 1954.

The year 1942 was an outstanding one in the history of the church. It saw the end of a debt of twenty years' duration, the nearly \$19,000 still due on the Educational Building erected in 1921. It took courage to inaugurate a two months' campaign to raise such a sum after the years of tight money, but the following committee had both faith and determination:

Mr. Charles B. Galloway	Special Gifts
Mr. W. H. Toole, Sr.	Steering Committee
Mr. J.M. Graham	General Gifts

Mr. D. Hoyt Woodbery	Mr. J. A. Perry
Mr. V. V. Sharpe	Mr. P. D. Cochran, Sr.
Mr. L. N. Dantzler, Jr.	Mr. John C. Henry
Mr. Tom Whitaker	Mr. E. D. Cooper
Mr. T. L. Walker	Mr. Nathan R. Graham
Mr. John M. Hammer	Dr. Harry H. Waller

It is obviously impossible to list all who helped in this work. Many small gifts showed as much love and sacrifice as the larger ones. The interest shown by those outside the church served to inspire the leaders. For instance, the Coca-Cola Company read of the effort and, unsolicited, sent a check for \$500. The Hav-A-Tampa Cigar Company, with closer ties to the church, gave \$6,000. The newspapers were generous with publicity and encouragement.

In all, there were 309 individual contributors and we shall mention only one other specifically which will serve to show the spirit of those who gave. One member, when first approached, said she “could die happy” if the church were free of debt, and pledged \$1,000. In the final stages of the campaign, when the last few hundreds were proving very difficult to find, the committee returned to the lady and asked if she felt she could increase her contribution. She wrote out a check for \$250 as a memorial to her daughter and when the men thanked her, said, “Don’t thank me. All I did was to sign my name on a piece of paper. I could never have given all the time and made all the calls you men have.”

The Tampa Morning Tribune wrote an editorial of commendation:

CHURCH ACHIEVEMENT

“A fine piece of financing has been accomplished by Hyde Park Methodist Church, under the dynamic leadership of its Pastor, Rev. Harry H. Waller, assisted by a determined committee of church workers, who wouldn’t stop until the job was done.

The task was paying off the church mortgage, which has been hanging over the membership for 20 years, and which, although it doesn’t mature until 1948, was an incubus the church greatly desired to remove. Hence, a fundraising campaign was started June 28, and Pastor Waller now is proudly exhibiting a canceled check for \$18,995, which the church membership and other friends contributed to wipe out the last vestige of the church debt. There were 306 donors, and they have enabled the church to stand clear of financial obligation and go on, unhampered, in its good work for a cleaner community and the dissemination of God’s Gospel.”

On January 17, 1943, Bishop Arthur J. Moore, in a very impressive service, dedicated the Educational Building. Hyde Park Church had then a membership of 1,300 and a

large congregation witnessed the burning of the mortgage by Charles B. Galloway, Chairman of the Board of Stewards, assisted by T. L. Walker, Sunday School Superintendent. W. H. Toole, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, presented the building for dedication. During 1943 organ trouble developed and since priorities and war-time restrictions prevented the purchase of a new instrument, or the rebuilding of the old one, an Everett Orgatron was purchased in December for \$1550.

During 1940 the church, with a membership of 1,350, felt the need of two services on Easter. The first, complete with music and ritual, also included the reception of new members and the baptism of babies. Since it occupied the former Sunday School time, many of the young people came to this service. During Dr. Waller's tenure both services were filled to capacity.

On Easter Sunday of 1944 a charming custom was inaugurated which has been continued to the present time. A large wire-covered cross was placed in front of the church and the members as they came brought flowers to place upon it. Before the start of the regular service a truly beautiful floral cross some seven feet tall stood completed, with the overflow of blooms banked about its feet. Dr. Bob Livingston was the instigator of this tradition and over- saw the placement of the flowers until his death.

1945 - 1951

Dr. Waller left us to become District Superintendent and was succeeded by Rev. Richard Broyles, a scholarly man. It was during his ministry that Ruth Glass became our Director of Christian Education, a post she held for five years. Charles Morrow became choir director, also in 1945.

The 50th Anniversary of Hyde Park fell in 1945 and for the Homecoming Celebration we invited the church's second minister, Dr. W. G. Fletcher, to be the guest speaker. In our earliest history Dr. Fletcher was described as "a rather handsome man" and he

still was. He had been a missionary in Cuba, a professor of Bible and later a trustee of Florida Southern College.

At this time Hyde Park was giving \$50 a month on the salary of the minister at Palma Ceia, the first new Methodist church in the Tampa District in 20 years. Our Sunday School classes, with 482 members and an average attendance of 300, were giving an additional \$10 a month to the same cause.

The church expended \$4,000 painting and repairing the Educational Building, paid \$750 for parsonage repairs, and furnished an automobile for Miss Glass.

There were a number of firsts during the four-year ministry of Rev. O. Alton Murphy. Rev. M. M. Meredith was our first official associate minister since 1923; the first loyalty dinners were held, though not the Ray plan now used; and we employed our first church hostess, who also had the duty of leading the children's choir. Rotation of stewards was instituted in 1950. We bought our first movie projector in 1947.

When Rev. Murphy came, the roof was off of the sanctuary and church services were being held in the basement of the Educational Building, which was just one large room at the time. A new roof had been an absolute necessity to avoid a literal collapse reminiscent of Samson and the temple of the Philistines, but the \$40,000 required was very hard to come by. The lectern in the chapel stands as a memorial to Dr. Murphy.

Other notes of interest during this period included our support of Dr. & Mrs. Howard Hardee as medical missionaries in Africa and the \$1,500 we gave for a cabin at Leesburg. In 1950 the church installed acoustical tile, twelve 16-inch Emerson fans around the wall in the sanctuary, and \$265 worth of additional gas stoves for better heating.

In 1948 a survey of Hyde Park stewardship was made:

Only 50 members paid more than \$1.25 per week

69 members paid between \$1.00 and \$1.25

The vast majority paid \$.50 or less.

Virtually no children gave.

Just 309 of the 1550 members pledged at all.

The Church Budget for 1949-50 was \$32,575 in its entirety.

Hyde Park has an impressive number of specialists in various fields and it isn't safe to make statements not backed by solid fact. A case in point was the occasion when a certain minister who shall be nameless was recounting his activities at the Official Board meeting - so many pastoral calls of such and such duration, weddings, funerals, sermon preparations, etc., etc. Hobart Pelhank listened without comment until he was through, then remarked to his neighbor in the pew, "According to my calculations he has been working 72 hours a day for the last 30 days."

1951 - 1962

Rev. Laurie G. Ray was appointed to serve Hyde Park in 1951. He remained for 11 years, the longest tenure of any minister in the history of the church. Since he received an honorary doctorate during the time he was with us, he will be given that title henceforth.

Rev. Meredith, who had been associate minister under Rev. Murphy, remained with us a second year. It was said that he knew every man, woman, and child at Hyde Park by name before his first year was out. Names were not one of Dr. Ray's strongest points, and he kept Mac close to his side during the early months.

Dr. Ray had exceptional talents as a fundraiser, and our church plant was greatly expanded and enhanced during his ministry. Perhaps his most lasting contribution to church financing was his Loyalty Dinner Plan which is widely used by many denominations. This plan was inaugurated during Dr. Ray's first year at Hyde Park and was used for many years.

Building Fund drives launched by Laurie Ray resulted in the complete renovation of the church and the building of the new social hall, chapel and parsonage. Property for these additions was bought, existing structures were removed, and a parking lot was paved and marked. Beautification, notably the massive plantings of azaleas, was directed by Mr. Wesley Hamiter who for 20 years expended time, effort, and often his own money on such projects. The Official Board voted him a special commendation on his retirement in 1967. The Wesleyan Service Guild planted azaleas on the east side of the sanctuary in memory of Carrie T. Wallis.

Perhaps the most remarkable fact of this period is that the church emerged from it free of debt. It almost seemed easy, but that was due to Laurie Ray's special genius. The first time he suggested a major drive, the Board was less than enthusiastic. Many of the leaders had had recent experience in door-to-door pleas for members to help to pay for a mere \$40,000 roof. Dr. Ray's figures sounded not only astronomical, but downright foolhardy. One devoted and generous member rose in the general meeting to oppose strongly any such suicidal step. However, by that time Dr. Ray had built up enough of a following to schedule a congregation-wide "Day of Destiny" dinner at the Hillsboro Hotel in November, 1953. Members browbeat other members to at least attend, though the reluctant ones vowed openly that they would not contribute a cent. After a good dinner, Dr. Ray launched confidently into one of his eloquent pleas, emphasizing the joys and rewards of giving, and as a stunning climax, asked, "Now, who will give \$30,000?"

The crowd sat aghast, but by the time he had gradually worked down to \$10,000 with more forceful and effective persuasion, the amount sounded reasonable and hands began going up. The aforementioned member who had spoken out opposing the drive was one of the first to say, "I'll give \$10,000." One of the not-a-cent opposition

dropped in a pledge of \$1,500 muttering, “If you ever tell what’s on that, I’ll kill you!” The next day he called the church office. Second thought? Changed his mind? Yes, in a way. What he said was, “Add another thousand to my pledge.”

By the time we left the Hillsboro Hotel everyone knew that the pipedream was a reality. Dr. Ray was by no means our most eloquent or forceful pulpit master, but in persuading people to give and to be proud and happy about what they were accomplishing, he had no equal. An orator might have swayed people at the time, but Laurie Ray’s words hit home and stayed with them. By November 22, \$165,283 was pledged; a week later, \$180,000; December 6, over the top, the final total \$204,455.92!

For the next five months, church services were held in the basement of the old educational building, but the generated enthusiasm did not abate even when temperature control was far from ideal.

Of course, the new sanctuary cost more than had been anticipated, and there wasn’t enough money left for completing the original ambitious plan of buying the service station on the corner, building new church offices, classrooms, social hall, and a chapel.

Therefore, on October 14, 1956 we were back at the Hillsboro Hotel at a “Finish-the-Job” banquet aiming at \$165,000. No one was in the least surprised that this was also a success. The work went ahead with appropriate proddings from Dr. Ray, such as, “Catch up, Keep up, Pay up by Easter,” and the bulletins kept us aware of how well we were doing.

In 1957, from November 4 to 10 there was a swift “Bridge-the-Gap” campaign to raise an additional \$20,000 still needed. But “money talk” was not keeping people away. On Easter Sunday just preceding the second major drive there was a record attendance of 682 at the 11 o’clock service, 186 at the early service, 40 in the nursery - 908 in all!

Our regular budget was not lagging either. In 1960-1961 it was \$68,603. Dr. Ray had his own attitude toward budgets. He said, "If you raise the whole budget, your budget is too low." Needless to say, we never managed to raise quite all of his. Drives? Yes. Budgets? No.

For those who are interested, we will include the 1956 stewardship survey to compare with the one made in 1948, just 8 years before.

190 members gave from \$1.25 to \$25.00 per week.

406 out of the total membership pledged.

The budget was \$54,284.54, but it is notable that in the same year we raised the \$165,000 Building Fund.

After the drives, Dr. Ray introduced the Program of Progress, separate from the budget and earmarked for capital fund enterprises. In 1960, a parsonage for the associate minister was purchased at 3416 Fair Oaks for \$15,100, and the Educational Building was completely renovated at a cost of \$27,676. We also paid \$620 for pianos.

In 1961, the church bought a lot on Davis Islands and started the new parsonage which was completed in just 88 days. Frank McGrew, a long-time member of the church, was the contractor. The cost of the 2,812 sq. ft. building, including the lot, was something under \$34,000. The old parsonage was sold and the Rays lived in an apartment from October until February when they moved to the new location at 149 W. Davis Boulevard.

The dedication and open house reception were held Sunday afternoon, February 11, 1962, with Bishop Henley and District Superintendent H.M. Ware officiating. Visitors especially noted the lovely original paintings created and presented by Mrs. Karl Whitaker, whose mother was a charter member of the church.

The new parsonage brought us to a grand total of just under \$400,000 which Hyde Park had raised for buildings and improvements in ten years. At the same time, we had virtually doubled our contributions to missions and benevolence, the total in 1961-1962 was about \$19,000.

The new facilities led to expanded activities. Regular Wednesday-night suppers and Coffee Hours after church were begun. Mrs. Bertha Oppenheimer became the church hostess, a position she was to hold for 20 years. The social hall was used by groups unrelated to the church, such as the School Curriculum Council. A nursery was provided during Sunday services and on Wednesday nights, with a paid attendant.

Dr. Ray long resisted robes for ministers, and he and his associate in their summer white linen suits will not be forgotten by those members who saw them. However, he accepted the change in October 1960, and robes have been worn since.

Associate ministers were virtually a necessity when Laurie Ray was the senior minister. The Conference would have liked for him to spend his full time on money-raising campaigns, but Dr. Ray wanted his own church. The compromise was the associate, for there were many demands outside of the home church. Dr. Ray conducted campaigns for churches in and out of Florida for many different denominations, yet was rarely out of the pulpit on Sundays.

In 1960 Hyde Park granted a two-month vacation in order that Dr. Ray and his wife might take a trip around the world. J.P. Floyd Jr. occupied the pulpit for that time and refused compensation.

David Stone found his niche as a youth leader at Hyde Park in 1960, an experience which led him to choose the ministry as his life work.

Laurie Ray left Hyde Park in 1962 to become District Superintendent. He died December 23, 1963. Mrs. Ray chose to have the funeral at Hyde Park, his last church and where he had served so long. Anyone attending that service will never forget it. The church was packed with ministers from all over the conference, plus many from other denominations, in addition to Hyde Park members. It was a singing funeral, and the voices and fervor of all these men sent thrills down one's spine. Methodists sing - Methodist ministers most of all. It was a triumphant funeral, such as we could wish all Christian funerals might be.

Shortly afterward the Official Board voted to name the chapel the "Laurie G. Ray Memorial Chapel" and his memorial fund to which many contributed was used in its beautification. The silver service owned by the church is inscribed "In appreciation of Laurie and Jane Ray. Hyde Park Methodist Church 1951-1962." It was bought by a special gift committee in October 1962.

One final note should be added to this period. Cuba was a special field for Hyde Park missionary work. In 1956 we helped to finish Dr. Evans' church there. Miss Maruja Olmo regularly received \$2,000 a year and additional special gifts such as 80% of the money the young people made on the Gasparilla Parade in 1957. The first youth mission was to Cuba.

We had budgeted \$10,000 to be used for a new church at Manicaragua, Cuba, but there was a strong feeling by many on the Board that the money would not be used for its intended purpose. Dr. Ray urged that we should send the money as planned, but Robert Hill, whose signature was essential, represented the loyal opposition and flatly refused to sign the check. He had labored too long raising money for the church to be a party to wasting it, and so that sum was saved for more worthy purposes than Castro's.

1963 - 1973

For the first five years of this ten-year period Dr. Harold E. Buell was our minister. Dr. Buell's wife, Jean, and their three sons, Rod, Bruce, and Mark were very active in church affairs. Jean's mother, Mrs. Charlotte Russell, lived with them.

Dr. Buell was a forceful speaker and on special days, such as Easter, the church was over-filled, necessitating the extension of the speaker system to the chapel in 1964 to take care of the overflow.

Church budgets were substantial and the money was raised. For example, the 1965-66 budget was \$81,125 with an additional \$17,500 in the Program of Progress. Major expenditures were \$4,500 for the Cedar Street property, some \$10,000 for the Azeele Street property, stage lighting for the social hall, the Dial-a-Prayer program instituted, and the old Educational Building covered for termites.

Rev. Walter Pearson was added to the staff as a Minister of Visitation, Charlotte White as Director of Christian Education, and exchange minister Francisco Pitty came to us from Panama for a year.

Various churches were helped. St. Paul's in Tampa figured in budgets for \$15,000, \$7,500, \$2,500. The Third Methodist Church of Santiago, Chile received \$10,500 for rebuilding; \$1,500 went to Rev. Pitty's home church in La Concepcion, Panama; and \$1,000 for a portable chapel in Argentina.

During the summer of 1964, Dr. Buell exchanged pulpits with a minister of Port Elizabeth, South Africa for three months. Hyde Park enjoyed having Rev. C. Edgar Wilkenson and his wife, Olive. Some summers, during his vacation, Dr. Buell conducted tours of the Holy Land, which a number of our members joined.

On February 28, 1965, Hyde Park planned Organ Sunday, the beginning of a three year organ fund drive. Over \$30,000 of the \$47,622 required was pledged almost at

once. In 1966, Dr. Buell suggested that we name the bulletin "Good News". This change in format entitled the church to a reduced postal rate for those mailed to the membership, a practice begun in 1957.

Jean Buell instituted a special dramatization of The Last Supper, a custom continued in the sanctuary every Maundy Thursday during the five years the Buells were at Hyde Park. The men of the Keystone Class played the parts of the disciples, and the current associate minister that of Christ.

In 1965, the old Educational Building finally received a name - The John Wesley Building. The new social hall complex became the Memorial Building, incorporating the Laurie G. Ray Chapel.

Rev. Caxton Doggett and his family followed the Buells for two years. Major accomplishments during his ministry were the actual installation and dedication of the Reuter pipe organ, the cushioning of the chapel pews, purchase of a set of hand bells for a bell choir, and the complete refurnishing of the library as a memorial to Mrs. B. G. Adams. The last three were made possible by generous individual gifts. The Azele Street house was razed as it had become a problem to keep rented.

When the church year was changed to coincide with the calendar year, it was no longer appropriate for the Loyalty Dinners to be held in the spring. The year was therefore extended, and the 1969 budget was presented in the fall, a rearrangement which has continued.

The United Conference of the Methodist and Evangelical United Brethren churches was held in April 1968. The vote for unification was: Methodists 20,009 for, 4,174 against (87.3%); the E.U.B. - 3,714 for, 1,590 against (70%). The church was renamed the United Methodist Church and now claims almost 11 million members, the second largest U.S. Protestant body.

In 1969, the Florida Annual Conference, Central Jurisdiction (formerly all black), and the Florida Conference S. E. Jurisdiction (formerly all white), were merged into one United Methodist Conference in Florida.

This was a time of desegregation, student unrest, “civil disobedience,” and church-giving centered on Inner-city work, the Bishop’s Fund for Reconciliation, and continuing support for Miss Agnes Malloy in Peru.

Hyde Park uncovered more hidden talents during this period. Two fine artists, Mrs. Guy Toph and Mrs. B. A. Grubbs conducted painting classes twice a week in the Keystone classroom and the resulting works were much admired.

Dr. and Mrs. Kenneth G. Rogers (Wilma) were at Hyde Park during the final years of this interval, their last church before retirement. Wilma Rogers was one of the hardest working of our ministers’ wives, and we have had many at whom we marveled. When robes for the Junior Choir proved to be rather expensive, Mrs. Rogers made them. She contrived badges for the ushers in lieu of expensive flower boutonnieres each Sunday. She organized and conducted Junior Church for 6-10 year olds. She taught an adult Bible Class and was in the forefront of any project that the church undertook.

In 1970 Hyde Park was the host church for the Florida Conference United Nations - Washington Seminar. Various members housed and entertained the 27 girls, 9 boys, and 3 adults who were the seminar leaders.

As our 75th anniversary drew near, we became more conscious of Homecoming and held one on our 72nd anniversary in 1971. Dr. Waller was scheduled to return to speak, but illness prevented and Rev. Lloyd Knox took his place. After the service there was a covered-dish Sunday dinner in the social hall.

The 73rd anniversary Homecoming was in March 1972 with Dr. Buell as our

guest speaker. For this occasion, a number of members dressed in turn-of-the-century costumes. Some especially interesting hats appeared, now a most-endangered species of wearing apparel. A modern dinner-on-the-grounds (in the social hall) followed.

In 1972, the various churches of the city agreed on a joint effort to deal with local charitable calls. There had been much duplication of effort as the same people were being helped by several ministers, especially in the downtown and Hyde Park areas. The new venture became The Metropolitan Ministries, and Hyde Park members have been very active in serving on the board and contributing money, goods, and volunteer workers.

This was a period of much emphasis on young people. Girls were serving as acolytes for the first time, sons served with fathers as ushers and Sunday School classes made social creed banners and displayed them in the sanctuary. Songs and creeds written by church youth groups were featured in the 11 o'clock service, and special music appealing to the younger contingent, featured guitars and modern religious songs.

When one reads a condensed history, such as this, it seems that repairs and renovations are required overnight; but large plants do deteriorate, and the Wesley Building in particular was greatly in need of refurbishing - even reconstruction. The Building Repair Fund was launched in November 1972 with a goal of \$40,000; in response \$44,897 was subscribed for this project.

The retirement party on May 27, 1973, for Ken and Wilma Rogers is a high point in the memory of those who crowded the social hall that night. Delegations from churches around the state where the Rogerses had served were much in evidence, too. Hyde Park's women outdid themselves with an abundance of food for the covered-dish supper spread in two other large rooms in addition to Fellowship Hall.

Marga Kiss and Woody Lamb were the prime movers in the planning, and John Hammer, Jr., and James Ferman, Jr., helped with the narrations. More were involved than there is space to mention. The theme was "The Lifetime Special" featuring a mural of a train with each car one of the ministerial appointments. Key people were in railroad costume and much hilarity was caused by huge cartoons of funny incidents in the Rogers' life together (material supplied by daughter Maxine Tyree). It was a very special lifetime, for this couple who helped to rear over 50 foster children in their home, in addition to their own.

The enthusiasm was great enough to surmount even a power failure. Just after the food was served, fortunately, all lights and air-conditioning went off in the whole Hyde Park area, and the program was conducted by flashlights and candles hastily gathered. Finally, the current came on again just as the party was all over, which allowed everyone to find his dishes to take home!

The regular farewell reception given the following Sunday for our departing preachers - Dr. Rogers and Rev. Fife and their wives - would have been an anticlimax except for the church gift to the young Fifes and a check which enabled the Rogerses to pay off the balance due on their new trailer.

1973 - 1977

During the late sixties and early seventies, it became apparent that Hyde Park, as one of the churches in transitional neighborhoods, was facing a potentially precarious future. Other Methodist churches in such situations had seen their memberships decline, and the average age of their members rise. At Hyde Park our old members were not leaving, but there seemed to be little to draw younger people, and our growing edge was blunted.

It was this series of problems that Lloyd Knox faced when he came as pastor in June 1973. He had grown up in Hyde Park and made his decision to become a minister at a

Sunday evening service in August 1947 in the church sanctuary. His first pastoral appointment in Florida was at St. John's Methodist Church in Tampa. Then he and his wife, Edith, who is a registered nurse, along with their two children, Mike and Carol, went as missionaries to Cuba and later to Argentina. In 1965 he returned to Miami to serve as Coordinator of Spanish Ministry until 1973, when he came to us.

Lloyd immediately involved himself in the entire community. He spearheaded a survey of the Hyde Park neighborhood, involving other churches in the area, and assessed the needs of all ages. That interest was expanded to inner-city concerns, and within a short time there were few people involved in church or community affairs who didn't know Lloyd Knox and his church. His energy was boundless, and he had no hesitancy in asking any and everyone to work with him. Young people, in particular, responded to his challenge.

Virginia Anza came as Youth Director, and with some help from her, Lloyd visited sixty percent of the members. He organized those who lived in the same area into colonies, so that we came to know each other better, and the whole church took on a friendlier aspect.

Lloyd's "irons in the fire" can be shown by some of the church's contributions and activities of these years: Argentina Missions, Florida Methodist Spanish Ministry, Florida Migrant Ministry, Church and Community work in the Gainesville District, Meals on Wheels, World Hunger Appeal, Metropolitan Ministries, Tyer Temple, and Hyde Park Tutorial Programs, Tampa United Methodist Centers, Hyde Park Revitalization Program, Bethune Cookman College Choir visit, (Lloyd was on the Board of Trustees), and St. Paul's Methodist Church in Ybor City. We also sponsored one large Vietnamese family and helped another.

In March of 1974 Bible Study Fellowship began to meet at Hyde Park each Wednesday morning. This international, non-sectarian group grew from ninety-four to five hundred members, and attracted people from the whole of Tampa and

surrounding areas. As a result, many of these members have chosen Hyde Park as their church home and have become valuable members.

Jack Trusler retired as choir director after twenty years, and we showed some small measure of our appreciation with a dinner in his honor. The best part was that we still had his fine baritone voice in the choir as Bea Lumppp took over his duties as director. Marion Loomis, a member of our church, succeeded Helen Baker as organist. Lloyd and Edith both had good voices, but while she wore a robe and sang with the choir, Lloyd raised his voice with the congregation, but from the pulpit.

After we were convinced Hyde Park was going up and not downhill, we entered upon a number of projects to enhance its appearance. Eleanor McInnis and her committee of talented young women decorated the nursery and kindergarten classrooms with charming murals. The parsonage was completely redecorated by Linda Ward and her committee. Upon completion, the congregation was invited to a tea to see and admire.

Prodded by Betty Rae Mason, a number of ladies worked long hours on needlepoint kneelers for the entire altar rail. Bonnie Corral organized a Chrismon Circle as a unit of the United Methodist Women. Many hours of work by these young women have resulted in the decorations for a magnificent nineteen foot tree each Christmas, thickly studded with gleaming gold and white Christian symbols (Chrismons). This circle has also designed and made lovely banners, which are appropriate for each of the church seasons.

The Keystone Class gave equipment to utilize the fine chimes records owned by the church. This time Van Kimber, with no little effort, worked out a placement for the speaker where it could not be stolen, as it has been twice before.

The most ambitious improvement project was the Mary Ellen Rendall Memorial Courtyard. An initial gift from the family, plus contributions from friends and the congregation at large, have produced a lovely passageway between the sanctuary and

the fellowship hall. The plantings and the walkways are so attractive that people enjoy lingering to talk. The iron grillwork gates are a much needed safety feature as well. On a purely utilitarian note, new parking lots were grass-sodded and the John Wesley Building re-roofed.

Lloyd inaugurated the annual Planning Retreat. Early in January, the Administrative Board and Council on Ministries go to a meeting place away from Tampa, usually Brooksville, for a Friday and Saturday “brainstorming session.” The past year is evaluated, and each Commission makes its plans for the new year.

William Matthews came as “Assistant to the Pastor” in 1975, but these few words in no-wise do justice to Bill who could turn his hand at anything. He kept his eye on the plant and its operation, comforted the sick, visited and cheered the shut-ins, soothed hurt feelings, knew and liked everyone, and was everywhere he should be and nowhere he shouldn't. If you wanted to know anything about the church, you could ask Bill. His wife, Ernestine, was an additional asset.

Sally Wilkinson joined Blanche McGrew as church secretary, replacing Edith Hall, and Sheri Ruland followed a short term by Helen Baker as youth director.

Virginia Jamerson, who had worked with Bertha Oppenheimer, became our kitchen hostess in September 1973. Soon Hyde Park was known city-wide for its fine food. Wednesday night suppers were well attended, and our dining room was much in demand by church and professional groups for meal functions.

The Youth groups, too, were active during these years. In August 1974 the Senior UMYF went to Jamaica on a mission trip. Fourteen young people, accompanied by Rev. and Mrs. Knox, and Joe and Judy McBride, lived at the University of West Indies, two miles from the Providence Methodist Church where they helped conduct a Vacation Bible School. Later the Jamaica youth were guests of our UMYF for Youth Week, and their pastor, Rev. Albert Aimes, was a guest preacher in our pulpit.

Hyde Park has long been a supporter of Missions, and Lloyd's background and interests added special emphases. During these years, brothers Rick and Carlyle Clewis, sons of Dick Clewis (long time member and Certified Lay Speaker) joined the ranks. Carlyle served ALFALIT, a literacy program for adults in Latin America, before going on to seminary. Rick has done various types of mission work, including an overseas assignment in the Middle East. Hyde Park was host to its first Lay Witness weekend in 1973 and then again in 1975.

The historic milestone of Lloyd's tenure was our seventy-fifth anniversary, or Diamond Jubilee. Former ministers, Drs. Buell and Rogers, were invited to preach on Sundays before the main event on June 9, when Bishop McDavid was guest speaker. There was a nice interview with pictures in the newspaper, and members who had turn-of-the-century garb donned it for the occasion. Those who didn't "dress up" enjoyed looking at those who did, and everyone felt a part of the Homecoming celebration.

Lloyd introduced various other innovations which our church has enjoyed. A rose on the altar (red for boys, pink for girls) at the Sunday service announced the birth of a new baby in the church family. A file of the congregation's birthdays ensured that each member would receive a card from the pastor on the special day. The two-minute greeting promoted friendliness each Sunday morning. The candlelight communion service on Christmas Eve took on a new format, and attendance grew. Our first pictorial directory was published in 1974, and the first issue of the church newspaper went to press April 1, 1977, with Norman Olson and Sherry Taylor as editors. This task was later taken over by Sally and Bill Wilkinson.

After four busy years of renewal, Lloyd left us to join the Bishop's Cabinet, and continued his ministry as Superintendent of the DeLand District.

1977 - 1984

Enthusiastic Billy Pickett didn't miss a beat as he continued our renewal. Born and educated in Chattanooga, Tennessee, Billy met his future wife, Georgia, while they were attending Florida Southern College. After graduating from the Candler School at Emory University, he was accepted first in the Holston Conference, then transferred to the Florida Conference. With as many 7's as Revelations, Billy served Oak Crest in Jacksonville for 7 years, Casselberry 7 years, before coming to Hyde Park in 1977. Georgia was soon back in the elementary classroom as a public school teacher, and Mark, Clark, and Phillip were college students. Billy told us about Tennessee and Casselberry, and began an active personal spiritual emphasis. As someone put it, "We've had a missionary, and now the Conference has sent us an evangelist."

Since coming to Hyde Park, the Picketts have used the center aisle to double their family with three lovely daughters-in-law, and have baptized a much acclaimed granddaughter. "Pickett's Post," a vacation home in North Carolina built during this time, has become a retreat mecca much like Laurie Ray's Englewood home was during the 50's.

Hyde Park ministers have each brought their own individual talents, interests, and concerns. Certainly Bill Pickett will be remembered for his deep spiritual commitment and his evangelistic thrust. These were reflected in a period of great spiritual awakening and growth. Small study and praise groups within the Church grew and flourished, and there was a caring and shepherding feeling that was contagious. Certainly, one of the most noteworthy examples was the Single Adult Ministry. This is a fellowship of varying ages cemented by a common Christian faith that enables the members to work, play, study, and worship together. They especially gave and received inspiration through music, and shared their faith in song. Bible verses and hymns were sung to the strumming guitars of Tom Whitaker, III, and Jim Brady. Sometimes they strayed from the dignified old Methodist order of worship and taught us that there are many ways to praise the Lord.

Billy provided inspiration and leadership to this group. He and Georgia hosted them for weekend retreats at Pickett's Post in North Carolina, and cooperated in other endeavors. Raft trips on the Suwanee River, Sunday lunches together, Wednesday night Prayer and Praise sessions were only a few of their activities. The Abundant Life Conference, co-sponsored with the First Presbyterian Church for the whole Tampa area, was very successful. Hyde Park is proud that three of its young adults: Glenda Aldridge, Debbie Staley, and Melissa Campbell have made the decision to go into full time Christian service.

Witnessing and sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ was the purpose of both the Masters Plan and Evangelism Explosion programs, which Billy introduced. Lay renewal and weekend retreats continued. Koininea groups were organized by the Evangelism Commission under the leadership of Mike Hogan.

Other spiritual hunger was evidenced by the interest in Bible study. Almost any day or night of the week, there was a Bible study class in progress at Hyde Park. Bible Study Fellowship celebrated its tenth year with record attendance. In addition, smaller classes were taught by church leaders: Tom Moore, Mary Louise Lake, Peter Church, and others. The Youth and Single Adults had their own Bible Study, and Billy organized a Pastor's Bible Study and Prayer Breakfast in 1980, primarily for men. The Gentle Spirits might be termed the women's equivalent, though they met at noon and brought their own lunches.

In the grand singing tradition of Methodism, Billy Pickett set out to make "a joyful noise unto the Lord" with a superior music program. Vee Severs came in the fall of 1977, and the children's and youth choirs became Son Rise, King's Kids, Carol and Cherubs. There were spaghetti suppers, Music Machine costumes, trees, trips, and local engagements. Almost every family could claim a participant or an involvement. The chancel choir was not growing, however, and there were several temporary directors and organists. Then one day a petite young lady from Charleston walked into the church office and said "try me." Music Director and organist Nancy Callahan enlarged the choir to an average of 40 members, inaugurated special music concerts with Tampa University, and raised our music appreciation level to Bach. Finally, in

1983 the choir was invited to sing at the Florida United Methodist Conference, and our own Nancy led the choirs from the Tampa District.

To accommodate our larger choir, the chancel area was enlarged, lovely new screens covered the organ openings, and a handsome grand piano was given in memory of Arthur Brown by his family. Our 1982 Christmas candlelight service was televised in part by Channel 8. It was exciting to go home and see the lovely service at 11:00 p.m., realizing how many people were sharing the beauty and spirit of our church.

As a final touch, a new Klug and Schumacher tracker organ was donated for the chapel. This little gem was built in Germany by Franz Heissler. The keyboard has the black and white keys reversed in the antique fashion. The organ was installed in a renovated and rep paneled chapel in January of 1984.

In the late seventies and early eighties, Hyde Park found itself in an even more rapidly changing neighborhood. The nearby downtown area was burgeoning and other large developments were planned for the future. As a result of urban renewal and revitalization, the immediate Hyde Park community, too, was taking on a new face. Old buildings were being razed and restored. Property values were increasing. Banks were moving into the area, and it appeared that within a few years our church would be in the center of things.

It was in this challenging set of circumstances that our farsighted church leaders began to assess Hyde Park's physical needs for the future. As property surrounding the church became available, it was purchased for present much-needed parking and future expansion. The goal was to acquire the whole block in which the church is situated. In this eighty-fifth year this has been accomplished, as well as the acquisition of two corner lots across the street. The Magnolia House was bought at a cost of \$25,000, the corner lot at Magnolia and Azele Streets purchase price was \$17,500, the Cedar and Azele lot was \$18,500, and the Azele Apartment House was \$120,000.

Already our growth in membership, staff, and related activities had increased the use of our buildings to the point where we were suffering from “growing pains.” The need for additional and more functional office space had become imperative and was long overdue. So in 1980, a building and remodeling program was launched that added a new office suite and conference room to the south side of Fellowship Hall. This \$90,500 addition, which was finished in 1981, provided four new offices and improved facilities, which made for a more efficient day-to-day operation.

The Magnolia House, too, gave us needed space to “spill over into” and became the center of many activities. Since it was used more often by the Youth, it soon became known as the Youth House. A playground added next door was welcomed by neighborhood children and youth, as well as our own.

The additions and improvements provided impetus for a number of cosmetic projects around the church and parsonage. The narthex was repainted and new light fixtures added to the niches; the room once used as the secretary’s office was transformed into a lovely parlor and bride’s room; and the parsonage was the recipient of a new porch and other needed renovations. Several of the adult Sunday School classes, which meet in the John Wesley Building, decorated their classrooms with fresh paint and new furnishings. Boy Scout projects included landscaping and installing sprinkler systems on the church’s vacant lots.

The year 1980 brought several staff changes. After serving 25 years as church financial secretary, Blanche McGrew retired. She was appropriately honored in Fellowship Hall with speeches, cake, and lots of love. Only a computer could replace Blanche’s grasp of the budget, the membership, and all of the church activities.

Kay Salmon was hired for the new position of volunteer coordinator. She designed a membership commitment questionnaire for the congregation. From these forms, volunteers were placed in the office and other areas to help with the work of new programs in the church. One was a shepherding program in which women at home called those people who were absent from church. Another result was the use of

office volunteers on a regular basis. Betty McDonald and Ruth Smith were among the faithful, often doing double duty.

John Barham was also a new face in 1980. As a help to Grace United Methodist Church, we hired John part-time for our Neighborhood Ministry. He started the Fall Festival, an enlargement of the Men's Club Country Fair. The sale of baked goods, hot dogs, plants, and discards raised a modest sum, but the primary purpose was to foster fellowship between the congregation and the neighborhood.

A Good Samaritan food barrel and a Thanksgiving offering of groceries and money were started at this time. Shelia Spicola began a Vegetable Co-Op for the neighborhood, which grew beyond expectation, and a truck was bought to transport food cartons from the Farmer's Market. Wonderful Wednesday Bible Study and Child Evangelism were efforts to reach the local children.

John set up the first Health Fair in 1982. A day was given to present health education and to screen people for possible health care needs. Medical personnel worked in the areas of testing, with church volunteers helping with the registration and paperwork. John went to a full time pastoral ministry as Grace Church grew, and we continued his community work in cooperation with the Hyde Park 6.

Hyde Park 6 was the name given to the First Baptist, First Christian, Davis Island Community, St. John's Episcopal, Hyde Park Presbyterian, and the Hyde Park United Methodist Churches. In conjunction, they printed a brochure for city newcomers. The brochure was a guide to the worship and other services offered by these six churches in the Hyde Park area. Later they started and supported a neighborhood food and clothes closet located in our Youth House.

Steve King, our Youth Counselor, went to seminary at Vanderbilt University in 1980. He was replaced by Ed Phillips, now Director of Contact Ministries, and later Pete Aubin. A summer youth helper was Lisa Lamb. Steve, having graduated, returned to

take on an enlarged role as Director of Family, Youth, and Single Ministry. Pastoral duties were also part of his work toward acceptance for membership in the Florida Conference.

Our youth also caught a community outreach spirit as they participated in the Methodist Center Walk-A-Thons. For their projects they sold pecans at the Fall Festival, and with the Boy Scouts shared the fruits of the congregational newspaper collections.

The staff during the period from 1980-1983 grew and changed. Bill Matthews retired to Brooksville, to be replaced by Jim Goode. Jim served for a year before he and wife, Kat, left to work in a full-time Evangelism Ministry for the Florida Conference. Robin Pendino stepped into Jim's shoes as office and plant administrator. Archie Williams and Harvey Johnson assumed maintenance and custodial duties. It was during this period we began to count kilowatts and to turn off our electricity more systematically. The office began to think about a computer.

It is hard to imagine Hyde Park without William Harrelson, who has been an integral part of it for so long. After 52 years, with 2 years absence during the war for defense work, William retired from custodial duties in 1982. However, he still helped with weddings and special events. William, reminiscing about all his years at Hyde Park remarked, "I guess I've been lucky to have been here. In all this time I've never had a serious disagreement with anybody." We're not quite sure whether that was a character and personality reference for all of us, or for William himself. Perhaps it was a little of both.

Viola Fleming, who shared duties with William and also helped in the kitchen, retired at the same time. Her term of service was only slightly less - 30 years. Now Carlee, her daughter, is also working toward a long term service as she helps in various capacities. Viola, too, is still about for special occasions, continuing to delight the district with her fried chicken.

To offer fellowship and learning opportunities to the congregation, there were a variety of special programs. Begun in 1978, the longest run has been the Golden Years fellowship luncheon. It is a nine-month activity involving some two hundred senior citizens. Each month the luncheon has a theme, with table decorations, activities, and appropriate entertainment, usually presented by our Hyde Park staff. Our two vans are used to pick up groups from John Knox Village and other retirement homes for those who have no transportation.

Demonstrations of crafts, needlework, and C.P.R. were also offered. Charlotte Lehnherr is the leader of a particularly successful fitness exercise class. Our notices, posters, and name tags reflect the calligraphy skills learned in a class taught by Carolyn Talley.

Family Life was served with a Mom's Morning Out program, giving mothers freedom from tiny ones on Mondays and Fridays. An annual Mother- Daughter Banquet served by the dads was started in 1981; followed in 1982 by the Father-Son Banquet served by the moms. Seminars and speakers encouraged Christian Family Life in the home.

To serve the church as a whole, a blood bank was begun in 1979. The first drawing was for 40 pints of blood. The program makes blood available for the needs of our membership.

A meeting place was given to AA, Christian Athletes, A.A.R.P., Retired Teachers, Hyde Park Civic Association, and others. There is a hum about the place.

In the spring of 1983, Hyde Park appointed a planning committee, under the leadership of Charlie Davis, to set goals for the future. A consultant was hired to draw a congregational growth profile. The results of this study revealed that Hyde Park is a predominantly upper middle class church in heritage, education, and income. Most of the people live within five miles of the church. This is somewhat typical, but what is not typical is the evenly distributed age grouping in the congregation. The leadership,

without exception, is considered to be very capable of leading the church in growth. What is needed is a clear direction by the leaders so that the members might follow. There appears to be ample resources to accomplish almost any plan that is prayerfully worked out and presented to the people. Hyde Park has a positive self image and an excellent foundation on which to grow.

We will give separate summaries of the history and work of several organizations and areas of the church, since their individuality can best be preserved in this way. These brief histories by no means give a complete picture of their great contributions to the life of the church.

THE CHURCH SCHOOL

The first thought in the minds of the founders of the church was the welfare of the children, so in 1899 a Sunday School was organized. The church itself came a year later.

During the first ministry of Rev. L. M. Broyles the need for a new Sunday School building was felt and plans were drawn by local architect F. J. Kennard, but it was not until 1921, when Dr. Norton was pastor, that the building was actually erected at a cost of \$65,000. Members of the building committee were:

Dr. L. A. Bize, Chairman

Mr. T. F. Alexander

Mr. J. W. Frazier

Mr. V. V. Sharpe

Mr. E. H. Robson

Mr. R. M. Clewis, Sr.

Mr. W. F. Miller

Mr. I. S. Craft

Mr. C. E. Ball

Mr. W. P. Hodnett

It is interesting that the Young People's Wesley Bible Class held its sessions, while the new building was under construction, in Fire Station #3, the site of the old grammar school where the original Sunday School had been held.

The Church School is the growing edge of any church and those who serve in it are building for the future. Under the new organization the superintendent has been replaced by several officers, but Earl Jeter, Jr. has had the longest service in recent years.

In the past we were taught by devoted teachers who served for 20 years or more: Don C. McMullen, Mrs. W. G. Mason, Miss Bess McMillion, Dr. R. O. Livingston, Dr. W. B. Hopkins, Sr., Mr. & Mrs. W. B. Dickenson, Judge Nathan R. Graham, and others.

They were followed by equally faithful, 20-year workers: Arthur Brown, Walter Pearson, Mrs. Robert Wallace, Mrs. Claud Ellis, Mrs. Lem A. Bell, Mrs.

E. H. Wade, Miss Helen Hill, Dr. Burdette Smith, Miss Kathleen Gerald, Mrs.

F. M. Dugger, Mrs. Kenneth Hall, Dr. Mary Louise Lake, Mrs. J. H. Steel, Richard M. Clewis, Jr., Mrs. Frank P. McMichael, Mrs. Hugo Schmidt and others who seem destined to continue as long.

Equally important are those who work organizing, handling literature, keeping classrooms well-kept and supplied. A very special province is also the Vacation Church School held every year shortly after the closing of public schools. It is a week of intensive effort, but very important in the total church- school program.

In 1974 there were 16 Church school classes - 5 for adults, 9 for children and 2 for young people.

THE UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

In 1900, the Women's Foreign Missionary Society was formed by a small group of enthusiastic women. Their object was to help better the women and children in

foreign lands. They supported Bible women in the foreign field and gave to established missions in both hemispheres.

A few years later Mrs. E. S. Patterson, district secretary, formed the Home Mission Society which included the Parsonage Aid Society of whose good work we have already spoken. These two societies, the Foreign and the Home, flourished side by side, answering all the calls of the conference in dues, pledges, and local gifts for missions and clinics until they united as the Woman's Missionary Society, May 8, 1912. They were the second united society in the Florida Conference, the first in Tampa.

In 1906 the Home Mission Society distinguished itself by pledging \$3,000 toward the new church. This missionary society gathered for an all-day meeting of fasting and prayer and then made its pledge. The president led the way by promising all that she thought she could give and then adding the money she had saved for a silver teapot.

In 1907 we have our first list of members:

Mrs. C. E. Ball	Mrs. R. J. Wells
Miss Fannie Ball	Mrs. L. A. Bize
Mrs. A. C. Clewis	Mrs. J. M. Harvey Mrs.
Minnie L. Strickland	Mrs. F. E. Muller
Mrs. R. J. Weller	Mrs. W. A. Dickenson
Mrs. L. J. Cooper	Mrs. Guy Toph
Mrs. Sam Everett	Mrs. T. B. Sherrill
Mrs. H. C. Hargrove	Mrs. James Steele
Mrs. D. W. Johnstone	Mrs. Dawson
Mrs. Sara Lesley	Mrs. W. J. Carpenter
Mrs. J.E. McDermott	Mrs. D. W. Bullard
Mrs. D. C. McMullen	Mrs. Martha C. Wilson

Mrs. R. M. Link	Mrs. C. S. Eliot
Mrs. G. N. Patterson	Mrs. W. A. Gallaher
Mrs. A. F. Wilson	Mrs. F. D. Jackson
Mrs. W. B. Coarsey	Mrs. P. O. Knight
Mrs. B. Marion Reed	Mrs. John B. Moody
Mrs. O. D. Wetherell	Mrs. I. W. Phillips
Mrs. I. S. Craft	Mrs. E. G. Hester
Mrs. H. B. Ainsworth	Mrs. Charles Grable
Mrs. Hewitt Hill	Mrs. A. E. Homes
Mrs. Gordon Keller	Mrs. Steve Woodward
Mrs. R. G. McEwen	Mrs. Smith
Mrs. J. C. McKay	Mrs. B. L. Jordan

Mrs. A. C. Clewis was the first president of the Missionary Society in Hyde Park Church and served a number of years. She was “loyal, generous, and universally loved.”

The later presidents, in order, are:

Mrs. F. D. Jackson	Mrs. E. A. Dunn
Mrs. J. C. McKay	Mrs. Bert Dekle
Mrs. C. E. Ball	Mrs. Frank Hunt
Mrs. B. L. Cooper	Mrs. H. L. Culbreath
Mrs. John Trice	Mrs. E. H. Wade

Mrs. O. D. Wetherell	Mrs. Paul Jacobs
Mrs. C. S. Eliot	Mrs. F. M. Dugger
Mrs. Minnie L. Strickland	Mrs. V. M. Newton
Mrs. Guy Toph	Mrs. Frank Cochran
Mrs. Marshall Bize	Mrs. Manuel Corral
Mrs. James Steele	Mrs. Warren Rendall
Mrs. W. N. Ferguson	Mrs. W. B. Dickenson, Jr.
Mrs. J. A. Wallis	Mrs. George Nieves
Mrs. J. G. Jeffcoat	Mrs. H. M. Hendry
Mrs. J. F. Metz	Mrs. W. H. Hunt
Mrs. T. L. Walker	Mrs. G. W. Lamb
	Mrs. Paul Hardiman

In 1940 the name of the organization was changed to The Woman's Society of Christian Service. Then in 1968, "Woman's" was changed to "Women's." Finally, when the WSCS and the Wesleyan Service Guild were united in 1973, the name became The United Methodist Women.

Members meet monthly in circles for study, fellowship, and special projects. The Wesleyan Service Guild, a group which met at night, was especially active with many projects of its own until the unification with the general society. Now the entire organization meets together once a month for lunch, to conduct business and enjoy a planned program.

The names of the circles have honored Hyde Park women who have given outstanding service to the work of Missions: Helen. Gibson (our first deaconess), Britomarte Eliot, Anne Estelle Mohler, Harriet Wetherell, Minnie

L. Strickland, Carrie T. Wallis, and Agnes Hunt.

Those who are not members of the body do not know of all its fine work. It receives no money from the Church budget, raising most of the money for its projects from its own members. Nationally, "The United Methodist Women give nearly half of the budget of the Board of Missions."

Hyde Park women give more generously than those of many larger churches and rank high in the Tampa District. In recent years they have expanded their support to include mission specials, scholarships, camping programs, and inner-city projects. In addition, they give clothing, and time to process and distribute it, to the Clothes Closet, a Church Women United project. A silver coffee has become an annual event, and the proceeds are used to send underprivileged children to Christian camp.

The women have always contributed where there was greatest need. During the war years they supported the U.S.O., Red Cross, and Christian Education for servicemen. At all times they are closely aligned with the Church, and over the years have helped on old debts, as well as new endeavors involving the whole church.

In the fifties, Mrs. C. B. League and other women of the Church began a Hyde Park tradition. Using palmetto fronds, they met at the Church on Saturday and made palm crosses, which were pinned on each member at the Palm Sunday service.

On December 1, 1970, the women of Hyde Park held the first Church Bazaar, with Mrs. J. P. (Helen) Floyd as general chairman. It represented months of hard work, was great fun, and a fine financial success. Viola's ham biscuits were a delight. This was followed by Bazaar II on November 30, 1971, with Mrs. Robert (Betty Ann) Guyton

and Mrs. Charles M. (Margaret) Davis co- chairmen; and Bazaar III, November 28, 1972, with Mrs. John (Caroll) Guyton as chairman.

Of course, those ham biscuits were now an institution. Other highlights to remember were the old-fashioned flavor of the bazaars, featuring handmade articles and needlework; creative Christmas decorations (a special province of the young marrieds); the delicious baked goods; preserves and pickles; the sun- bonnets, aprons, and old-time costumes worn by the workers; the men's booth (brain-child of Bill Key, Jim Robinson, and Ernie Replogle); and the fun and fellowship after all the work. We had never realized how many artistically talented and creative people we had in our Church.

A special feature of Bazaar III was 'The Hyde Park Cookbook, chiefly due to Margaret Davis's determination and effort. Hyde Park women are exceptional cooks, and it was a fine way to get all of those recipes we had wished we had.

The three bazaars netted over \$11,000, the bulk of which was applied on the much-needed new air conditioner for the sanctuary, and the rest used to redecorate the Fellowship Hall and replace chairs there and provide a new curtain for the stage.

THE METHODIST MEN

Several times over the years there have been short-lived attempts to form a men's group in Hyde Park. The most successful and lasting organization was started under the capable leadership of Dr. Marlon L. Ellison. This group's culinary arts range from cooking their own breakfast to church-wide neighborhood barbeques. One of their own members, Jim Talley, has served as Vice President of Methodist Men for the Florida Conference.

THE ALTAR GUILD

A quiet group that works behind the scenes is the Altar Guild. It was formed March 1, 1936, at the instigation of Mrs. J.C. Pate for the purpose of providing flowers for each service and caring for the properties which enhance the altar and the pulpit.

The Guild is limited to twelve members, each responsible for one month of the year. Memorial flowers can be given, but otherwise the Guild provides them. After services, the flowers are taken to our Church members who are in special need, with the Guild's own card of sympathy. The Guild assumes the responsibility for the care of the altar appointments and changes the colors to reflect the church seasons. Members also are involved in weddings and other occasions when the altar is in use.

In 1973 the Guild introduced our first Advent wreath, with children from the Church school performing the ceremony of lighting the candles Sunday by Sunday until Christmas. Memorial poinsettias were added to the candles and greens in 1977.

The charter members of the Guild were:

Mrs. J.C. Pate	Mrs. V. H. Northcut	Miss Frances Neale
Mrs. H. G. Lester, Sr.	Mrs. D. H. Woodbury	Mrs. LS. Craft
Mrs. D. C. McMullen	Mrs. W. L. Van Dyke	Mrs. C. E. Ball
Mrs. E. A. Dunn, Sr.	Mrs. Paul Singleton	

Mrs. G.E.W. Hardy became the twelfth member, and Mrs. J. C. McKay, Mrs. W. B. Hopkins, Sr., and Mrs. Harry Johnston filled the first vacancies. Over the years, many of Hyde Park's women have served as faithful members of the group.

Until 1982, flowers for the Chapel were provided by the Wesley Fellowship Class under the leadership of Kathleen Gerald. Members rotated this responsibility. Since

that time, the Guild flowers are first used for the early service in the chapel and then taken to the sanctuary for the eleven o'clock service.

COMMUNION STEWARDS

The general membership seems to treat communion as something that appears as if by magic. We partake, and walk away. The silent and unacclaimed women who prepare and arrange for the first Sunday in every month are seldom thought of, though theirs is a very real and important service. We no longer have bread cut meticulously and tediously into tiny squares by hand, nor do we hand-wash the little cups. We honor all those dedicated women who have served as communion stewards through the years.

MUSIC

Our key music people have tended to give long and faithful service. Mrs. John Trice gave of her talent freely both as singer and as choir director. It was she, also, who gave and raised money for the first electric ceiling fans and for the communion table. Mrs. C. S. Eliot contributed her services at the organ for many years. She was followed by Mrs. Mamie B. Hart, also a volunteer, and active in numerous other church endeavors as well. During the depression, she even bought the music which was used. Netta Gracy Pearson contributed richly to our musical enjoyment for a very long time indeed. She played in some capacity for over 50 years. Her fine piano work supplemented and blended with the organ in a particularly lovely fashion. She always made her talent her gift to the church. Christine McCreary, who retired in the early seventies was our beloved organist for more than twenty years. Many others who have served faithfully and well are listed elsewhere in this history.

METHODIST YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

In 1905 a Junior League was started under the leadership of Mrs. Minnie L. Strickland, but a regular Epworth League was not organized until July 7, 1906. The Annual Conference reports show varying success of the two leagues which sometimes disappeared completely but were always later reorganized. Mrs. I. S. Craft at one time paid half the yearly salary of a young people's worker to help in this capacity. Rev. Andrew Turnipseed did fine work and the League prospered. We suffered a double loss at his departure since he married and took with him one of our fine young girls, Miss Martha Owens.

The years 1923-1930 seem to have been outstanding ones, since the Conference Report of January 27, 1930 states that Hyde Park's Epworth League had been voted the most efficient in Hillsborough County four out of the last seven years.

After the consolidation of northern and southern Methodism, the Epworth League became the Methodist Youth Fellowship (MYF), with a later change to the United Methodist Youth (UMY) following the merger with the Evangelical United Brethren church. The UMY meets every Sunday night for a snack supper with programs for juniors and seniors.

Some of the most interesting and worthwhile projects undertaken by the young people have been the series of missions to neighboring island communities. The first was in 1956 to Cuba. Dr. & Mrs. Ray, Edith Hall, Mario Alfonso, and 23 youth worked with local missionaries there. A second mission planned for 1957, was cancelled because of Cuba's political unrest.

It wasn't until 1963 that a second youth mission was carried out. This one was to the Bahamas under the leadership of Dr. Buell, Med Stanley, David Stone and Mrs. Dan Stowe. The group was divided - one section going to Andros and the other to Inagua.

In June 1965, a third group of 18 young people and adults, including Dr. Buell, went on a similar mission to Abaco Island in the Bahamas. Anne Stowe earned special acclaim by offering to do the cooking.

A fourth project, Operation Beaver, was a work mission to Oracabessa, Jamaica, in 1967. It included a Vacation Bible School on which the 25 youth and 5 adults, including Rev. Doggett, worked with local people.

For trips and projects, the young people raised money by selling seating and snacks during the Gasparilla parade, giving spaghetti suppers, and having Slave Sales of their services. Church members also contributed generously to underwrite the expenses.

BOY AND GIRL SCOUTS

One of the most healthful signs of the church has been its continued interest in our boys and girls. Palmer Smith attests that Troop 22 was organized in 1921, in a room in the southeast corner of the old sanctuary and that Karl Whitaker was the first scoutmaster. However, the first mention of the Boy Scouts in the records was in June 1923, when the Board of Stewards complained that they were overrunning the whole Sunday School building. They must have been organized long enough before that to feel perfectly at home. By October of the same year the Scouts were so well under control that the same Board voted to give them and their fathers a banquet and did so. In 1926, the church gave \$600 for a cabin at Boy Scout Camp. In 1927, the Scoutmaster threatened to move the troop to Benjamin Field since their quarters in the basement of the Educational Building were so often usurped by other organizations on Tuesday nights. The Board promptly voted exclusive use of said quarters to Troop 22 on every Tuesday night as long as the troop existed.

During the early thirties, Troop 22 grew so large it was necessary to form a second troop, number 29. In this period, Troop 22 had at least 18 Eagle Scouts, many of

whom in later years filled positions of leadership in the program of Scouting as Scoutmasters, Commissioners, and Executive Board members.

During the 13 years between 1934 and 1948, while Dick Clewis, Jr. was Scoutmaster, the troop was particularly outstanding. Troop 22 and Explorer Troop 22 (the first in the Council for boys 15 years old and older) produced 34 Eagle Scouts and more than a dozen adult Scout leaders from our church and our troops. Since that time Dan Stowe, Howard Hunt, and David Ward, Jr. are members who have done fine work with our Scouts. In addition, Billy Neuberger, while not a member of our congregation, gave more than ten years of dedicated service to Troop 22.

The Girl Scout Troop dates from 1938, though not in unbroken operation. As an outgrowth of our community involvement, Troop 791 was a combination of Brownies and Juniors under the capable and experienced leadership of Miss June Patnode until 1980.

MISCELLANEA

Our softball teams won the city championships in 1978 and 1982. - Alan Young designed birthday cards and a new bulletin cover. - A banner honoring our church was received from the Preservation Society. - A men's chorus joined the 4th of July music celebration. - The Loyalty Dinners became a single Sunday pledge service in the sanctuary. - Bill Holman retired from his job and volunteered for full time visitation to shut-ins and those in the hospitals - The 1921 architect's plans of the Wesley Building came to light and the many columns around the roof line were originally designed to hold trellises for a roof garden - District Superintendent Ray Finklea's

father-in-law is Donald Cook, a former national treasurer of the Methodist Church. Dr. Cook was Hyde Park's first associate pastor in 1923 when the Wesley Building was new - In 1983 Hyde Park over-subscribed a \$44,500 quota to build new churches in our growing state.

MINISTERS OUT OF HYDE PARK

Hyde Park is proud of this known list of its members who have answered the call to the ministry.

Paul Wagner

Allan Stuart

Lloyd Knox

Mitchell Johnson

J.P. Floyd, Jr.

V. M. Newton, III

Lawrence McCleskey

John Bickerstaff

David Stone

Wallace Draper

Burton Schoepf

James Reeher

M. L. Funkhouser, Jr.

Mrs. Sheri Ruland

Stephen J. King

Rev. Richard J. Parker, a member of Hyde Park, was our first Minister of Visitation, serving from September to May in 1955. He was made Honorary Lifetime Pastor in 1958, and served as he was able in that capacity until his death in February 1960.

The best-remembered by old-timers was Dr. W. M. Poage, whose descendants (the Palmer and David Smiths) are still Hyde Park members. At the time of his death in 1942, at the age of 91, he was the oldest Methodist preacher in Florida. Dr. Poage was active in his interest and in his attendance upon the services of the church until Friday preceding his death on Wednesday. No account can so fully portray Dr. Poage's life as his own report, typed by himself, sent to his last Quarterly Conference, June 6, 1941. His age was 90. The historian included it as a reminder to us all, "Be not weary of well-doing."

"Dear Brethren:

I have been supplying the Port Tampa City Methodist Church for the last three years, giving them a Sunday evening service every Sunday. I have enjoyed the privilege of preaching for them and the members have been very appreciative. The Church has only fifty-eight members. About 75% attend the services. They have made several hundred dollars improvements on their church property and have each year paid their financial acceptances. They have met all claims in full for the present year. We have had several accessions to the church membership.

I have attended the Church School and morning services of Hyde Park Church and visited my own membership and some others during the year.

Very truly your brother,

W. M. Poage"

HELP TO OTHER CHURCHES

Hyde Park has a long and distinguished record as a mother of other churches. Some instances are noted in the general history, but a sampling from the Official Board records for a few years best illustrates the claim.

1954 - \$1000 each to Manhattan Methodist and Wesley Memorial plus

\$150 and \$250 on their pastors' salaries.

1955 - \$1000 to Manhattan Methodist plus \$600 on the pastor's salary

\$300 to Wesley Memorial in West Tampa.

1956 - \$1000 to Manhattan Methodist plus \$600 for the pastor

\$1000 to Forest Hills Methodist

\$300 to Wesley Memorial

\$200 to Orient Park Church, Uceta

1959 - \$1000 to Belmont Heights Church

\$500 to Lutz Church

\$100 to Wesley Foundation, Gainesville

1962 - \$15,000 to St. Paul's, Tampa

1963-64 - \$7,500 to St. Paul's (two-year period)

1965 - \$3,700 for new churches in Tampa

After 1965 contributions to other churches are listed under the individual minister's tenure.

CHAIRMEN OF THE OFFICIAL BOARD

All that we have a record of prior to 1944 are the following:

R. M. Clewis	Maynard Ramsey
Charles E. Ball	G. E.W. Hardy
T. F. Alexander	Hoyt D. Woodbery
L.L. Parks	Nathan R. Graham
I. W. Phillips	Charles B. Galloway

The list since that time should be complete:

J. A. Perry	W. P. Key
T. F. Alexander	H. Grady Lester, Jr.
Tom Whitaker	Maynard Ramsey
Dr. W. B. Hopkins	T. W. Hood
R. M. Clewis, Jr.	Charles M. Davis
W. J. Barritt	G. E. Lamb
Robert D. Hill	T. F. Aldridge
H. Grady Lester	Tom Aitken
Palmer Smith	Dr. W. B. Hopkins, Jr.
Hobart D. Pelhank	James L. Ferman, Jr.
L. E. Swatts	Nicholas A. Pender, Jr.
Arthur D. Brown	Steve Gardner
Tucker W. Hood	David E. Ward, Jr.
C. D. Newbern	Esther Thames
Dan C. Stowe	Keith Hensley

Hugo Schmidt

BISHOPS, DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS, AND MINISTERS

1899 - 1984

BISHOPS

J. C. Cranberry	1899-1902
H. C. Morrison.....	1902-1906
C. B. Galloway	1906-1907
James Atkins.....	1907-1909
H. C. Morrison.....	1909-1915
W. A. Candler.....	1915-1920
W. N. Ainsworth	1920-1924
Hoyt M. Dobbs.....	1924-1929
John M. Moore	1930-1934
S. R. Hay.....	1934-1938
Paul B. Kern	1938-1940
Arthur J. Moore	1940-1948
Roy H. Short	1948-1952
John W. Branscomb.....	1952-1959
Arthur J. Moore.....	1959-1960
James W. Henley.....	1960-1972
Joel D. McDavid.....	1972-1980
Earl G. Hunt, Jr.....	1980-

DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS

J.P. Hilburn.....	1899-1902
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I.S. Patterson	1902-1906
W. M. Poage.....	1906-1909
J.F. Bell	1909-1912
O. A. Thrower.....	1912-1920
W. A. Myres.....	1920-1924
J. P. Hilburn.....	1924-1929
S. W. Walker.....	1929-1931
J. H. Daniel.....	1932-1935
M. H. Norton.....	1935-1941
P. M. Boyd	1941-1944
H. H. Waller	1945-1951
R. C. Holmes	1951-1955
R. L. Allen.....	1955-1960
H. Melton Ware.....	1960-1962
Durward McDonell.....	1962-1967
Robert C. Boggs.....	1967-1973
Monroe C. Hatch.....	1973-1979
W. Ray Finklea.....	1979-

MINISTERS OF HYDE PARK

Henry Hice	1900-1901
W. G. Fletcher.....	-1901
J. A. Howland.....	1902-1903
Howard Dutil.....	1903-1905
W. J. Carpenter	1905-1909
J. Edgar Wilson.....	-1909

J. R. Cason	1909-1911
J. B. Mitchell.....	1911-1915
L. M. Broyles	1915-1921
M. H. Norton.....	1921-1923
Felix R. Hill, Jr	1923-1924
Donald A. Cook.....	1923-1923
John T. Myers.....	1924-1926
Walt Holcomb	1926-1929
L. M. Broyles	1929-1931
Homer Thompson.....	1931-1935
Felix R. Hill, Jr	1935-1937
Carlock Hawk.....	1937-1940
Harry H. Waller	1940-1945
Richard Broyles.....	1945-1947
O. Alton Murphy.....	1947-1951
McLaurin Meredith.....	1950-1953
Laurie G. Ray	1951-1962
Patrick McBride	1953-1955
Mario Alfonso.....	1955-1958
Richard England.....	1958-1961
Meredith Standley	1961-1963
Harold E. Buell	1962-1967
Elmer Fant	1963-1965
Gerald Puckett.....	1965-1966
Caxton Doggett	1967-1969

John Lasater	1966-1968
Gary L. Conner	1968-1969
Kenneth G. Rogers	1969-1973
Arthur Holmes	1969-1970
Wayne Leaver	1970-1971
Richard Fife.....	1971-1973
J. Lloyd Knox.....	1973-1977
William A. Pickett.....	-1977
John Barham.....	1980-1982

This is Hyde Park on its 85th birthday. Only God can make a church, and only He knows its full influence. He makes the church by making men, and influences men through the work of the church. Never before has the future held so many challenges, as we dedicate ourselves anew to the ongoing task of sharing and serving Christ and His church.