

Did You Know? ~ FPC History at a Glance ~

Bulletin- 1/22/17

Pastor Dana is the 26th permanent pastor of FPC. She was installed Sept. 29, 2013, after serving as our interim pastor for two years.

Bulletin- 2/5/17

Ethel Mando was the first woman voted into church office by the congregation. She took her seat on the Board of Deacons in 1972, nine years after the PC(USA) approved the ordination of female elders. She also served as church treasurer and bookkeeper from the late 1960s through 1987. Today there are eight female Elders on our 12-member Session, as well as Clerk of Session Elizabeth Bumgarner.

Bulletin- 2/12/17

Before the Civil War, FPC's African American members worshipped in the two second-floor galleries overlooking the sanctuary. In 1867, two years after the end of the Civil War, many of these members left FPC to establish Second Presbyterian Church of Mocksville. Land for a church building was purchased in 1893 from longtime First Church member Thomas Braxton Bailey. The church and cemetery were located on the eastern side of the railroad tracks (just beyond the depot) between Depot Street and Lexington Road (U.S. Highway 64 East). The church building burned down a few years later, and in 1910, the present church was built on Pine Street. The church cemetery still remains on the original property.

Bulletin- 2/19/17

There are three families in our congregation today that have direct ties back to the church's congregation of the mid to late 1800s: the Sanfords (Lash Sanford), the Woodruffs (Eleanor Woodruff Frye and her niece, Sadie Thompson), and the Horns (Dorothy Morris Horn). These families have played pivotal roles in the life and witness of First Presbyterian Church in Mocksville. Eleanor's grandfather, Sanford A. Woodruff, and Dorothy's grandfather, Ephraim L. Gaither (baptized at the church on Aug. 4, 1850), were both elected to the Board of Deacons in November of 1890 and then to the position of Ruling Elder in September of 1897. Lash's grandfather, Rufus B. Sanford, was elected to the office of Church Deacon in March of 1910 and Church Elder in March of 1916.

Bulletin- 2/26/17

Our church bell was purchased from the Town of Mocksville in 1922 for \$140. Its first home was in the original Davie County courthouse that stood in the middle of today's town square. In 1850 the Board of Commissioners of the Town of Mocksville ordered that the court house bell be rung for public preaching, which of course included Sunday morning services. The bell resided in the courthouse nearly 100 years before taking up residence at First Presbyterian Church. It has now been ringing clearly at the intersection of South Main Street and Lexington Highway for 95 years.

The bell was joined last August by a Sonata Digital Carillon Bell System, given to the church by Jack and Dorothy Corriher in memory of Dorothy's late husband, Joe Hemrick. The carillon features the genuine sound of real cast bronze bells, and includes an extensive library of hymns, seasonal music and bell peals that can be heard throughout downtown Mocksville.

Bulletin- 3/5/17

The original church manse was built in 1890 and was located at the same spot where our present manse sits today. Over the years there were times when it was rented, usually because the church was without a minister, or the minister chose to utilize other housing. That was the case around 1935. The manse was occupied by two families- the James and Mary Adams family and the Paul and Stella

Beaver family (Stella was the daughter of James and Mary Adams). Three future long time church members lived there with their families- Virginia Adams Waters who was 22 years old at the time and remained a faithful member of our congregation until her death in 2005 at the age of 92; Jimmie Lou Adams Grubbs who was 19 years old at the time and remained a faithful member of our congregation until her death in 2012 at the age of 96; and, Gordon Beaver who was 10 years old at the time and remained a faithful member of our congregation until his death in 2016 at the age of 90.

Bulletin- 3/12/17

Our church has had 26 permanent pastors in its history. Of the five surviving former pastors, the Rev. Paul Richards has been in the ministry the longest. He recently retired at the age of 90. He served FPC from 1951-57. The other surviving pastors are the Rev. Bill Long (1958-1962), the Rev. Leland Richardson (1970-1997), the Rev. Neal Carter (1998-2004), and the Rev. Paul Seelman (2006-2011).

Bulletin- 3/19/17

The Reverend W.I. Howell (1932-1935) was a 29-year-old bachelor when he became our pastor. Instead of living in the manse, he chose to reside with the John and Mary Larew family (Hugh Larew's parents) on Salisbury Street. In September 1933 he married Virginia Long, sister of William, Robert, and Caroline Long. Both brothers entered into the medical field and served the residents of Mocksville and Davie County for many years- William as a doctor and Robert as a dentist. Caroline married Gaither Sanford and later gave birth to our church member Lash Sanford.

Bulletin- 3/26/17

James William Wall was a devoted member of our congregation for over 50 years. Jim served as elder, deacon, Chairman of the Board of Deacons, Sunday School Superintendent, Sunday School teacher, and Session member serving numerous terms. He was also a gifted educator in our local school system and noted historian. With his wife Esther by his side, he wrote the book "History of the First Presbyterian Church" in 1963, with an updated edition coming in 1997. In 1969 he penned the book "The History of Davie County."

Bulletin- 4/2/17

First Presbyterian Church is the oldest church in Davie County. In Jim Wall's book, "The History of Davie County," he states that evidence exists showing that Heidelberg Evangelical Lutheran Church was established along today's Cornatzer-Bixby Road in the early 1760s. Even though the church cemetery remains, the church discontinued operations around 1860, leaving First Presbyterian Church to now hold the honor.

Bulletin- 4/9/17

Thomas Braxton (T.B.) Bailey joined First Presbyterian Church on Jan. 30, 1876. T.B., a noted area attorney, along with his wife Jessie, became actively involved in the life of our church. T.B. became an elder in 1877 and Clerk of the Session in 1883. He held both of these posts until his death in 1916. Jesse was active in the Women of the Church. She was a charter member of the group, formed in 1890, which was known at that time as "The Ladies Benevolent Society." The Baileys were blessed with two daughters, Sarah in 1880 and Evelyn in 1881. The Baileys' third daughter, Annie, was born in 1886, but passed away in 1887. It was recorded in our church's Sessional record book that, "the young girl fell asleep." Tragically, the two remaining sisters passed away 21 days apart- victims of the typhoid fever epidemic of 1899. In 1905, construction of the new church sanctuary was underway. As a way to honor the memory of their three daughters, the Baileys gave a generous gift to the church, resulting in the building of the original Sunday School Annex. The annex, remodeled years later but still in use today, is comprised of the first two classrooms on the left side of the sanctuary along with the two hallways. In its original form, there were four small petitioned classrooms and a central assembly area with a few pews and a piano. A plaque on the hallway wall serves as the dedication.

Bulletin- 4/16/17

Today's sunrise service was held at Joppa Cemetery, the original site of our church. Located just outside of Mocksville on Yadkinville Road, the cemetery includes the graves of Daniel Boone's parents, Squire and Sarah Boone. Squire was buried in 1765, two years before the "Forks of the Yadkin" church petitioned the Synod of Philadelphia and New York for a supply minister. The church's name was soon changed to Joppa- a Biblical word meaning "beautiful"- and later to First Presbyterian.

Bulletin- 4/23/17

The Reverend E.P. Bradley (1909-1931) served our church for almost 23 years- the second-longest pastorate in the history of First Presbyterian Church. He also served our community as Superintendent of Davie County Schools from 1909 until 1928- the longest term in the history of our local school system. Mrs. Bradley stated years later that when her husband was elected to the job, a school board member dropped off a burlap sack of papers on their front porch- the complete set of school records at the time.

Bulletin- 4/30/17

After the death of Reverend E.P. Bradley in 1931, his widow, Fannie, and their two daughters, Fannie and Jane, remained in Mocksville and continued to be involved in the life of First Presbyterian Church. Both daughters were married on the same day, July 12, 1936, at our church by Reverend W.C. Cooper, who had become our pastor only a month earlier. The older daughter, Fannie, married local farmer Paul Blackwelder. For many years they were active leaders in our church and also owned and operated Twin Brook Farms- a local Sealtest milk production and home delivery operation. In the late 1950's when Jim Wall began to do research for his book, History of the First Presbyterian Church of Mocksville, Fannie was a librarian with the Davie County Public Library and provided much appreciated assistance.

Bulletin- 5/7/2017

Eleanor Woodruff Frye is our oldest member. She was born in Davie County on June 14, 1920. She joined First Presbyterian Church on Aug. 9, 1930, by "examination."

Bulletin- 5/14/2017

The Reverends P.H. Dalton (1889-1896) and E.P. Bradley (1909-1931) both passed away while actively serving our church. Three of our ministers were married while serving First Presbyterian Church: the Revs. William A. Hall (1827-1851); W.M. Kilpatrick (1864-1866); and W.I. Howell (1932-1935).

Bulletin- 5/21/2017

Our church was established 22 years before North Carolina became the 12th state to ratify the Constitution (1789) and 69 years before Davie County was created from Rowan County (1836). In his book, "The History of Davie County," Jim Wall states that evidence exists that supports the assumption that the small village of Mocks Old Field dated back to the time of the Revolutionary War. The town name of Mocksville did not surface until some time between 1823 and 1826, roughly 58 years after our church was founded.

Bulletin- 5/28/17

The Presbyterian Church USA states that the oldest Presbyterian Church in America is thought to be First Presbyterian Church in Southampton, Long Island, New York- founded in 1640. The North Carolina Presbyterian Historical Society recognizes that the two oldest Presbyterian Churches in North Carolina were both established in 1736. They are in the eastern part of our state and are located only 20 miles from each other- Rockfish Presbyterian Church in Wallace and Grove Presbyterian Church in Kenansville. The society also acknowledges that there were only 25 Presbyterian Churches founded in North Carolina before ours.

There are three other Presbyterian Churches in Davie County: Second Presbyterian Church (1867); Cooleemee Presbyterian Church (1901); and, Bixby Presbyterian Church (1932).

In 1985 we were part of the Presbytery of Concord. At that time there were 172 churches in the presbytery. Our church was the seventh oldest church. The two oldest churches, First Presbyterian Church of Statesville and Thyatira Presbyterian Church in Rowan County, were both established in 1753. In 1989, our church became part of the newly created Salem Presbytery- formed from parts of Concord and Orange Presbyteries. Today, there are 138 churches in Salem Presbytery and First Presbyterian Church of Mocksville is the ninth oldest.