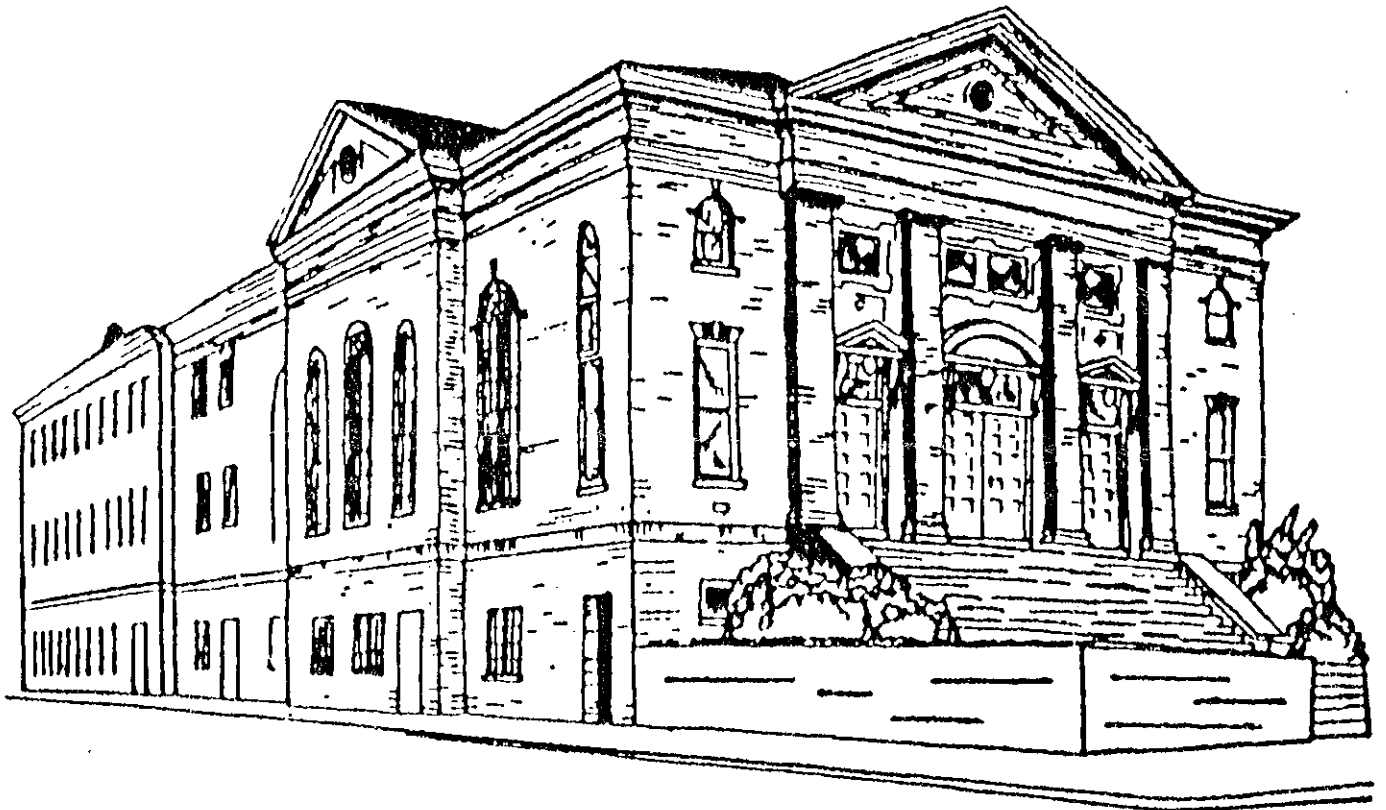


OFFICE COPY

Hedgemont

Baptist

Church



1003 East Main Street
Durham, North Carolina 27701

Office Phone: 682-3251
Church Office Hours: 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Enter to Worship

Depart to Serve

CHURCH HISTORY
EDGEMONT BAPTIST CHURCH
85th
ANNIVERSARY

This 85th history is dedicated
to those who have gone on
ahead, by those they left
behind.

Edgemont Baptist Church
May 17, 1987

In the 1901 minutes of the Mt. Zion Baptist Association the following appeared: "At Edgemont a new and promising field has been opened to us, and an encouraging work begun. There is a large and flourishing Sunday School opened by the united efforts of the Baptists in Durham. A house of worship has been built and nearly paid for, and a church will most probably soon be constituted and regular preaching provided."¹

These are the first recorded words that a church was being built in East Durham's Edgemont community. That church has been named Edgemont Baptist Church because of its central location in the community. Its first Pastor was the Reverend J. M. Arnette. Reverend W. F. Fry, Pastor of the East Durham Baptist Church, now known as the Angier Avenue Baptist Church, along with Reverend Arnette, of the Edgemont Mission and several other pastors of various churches, among them East Durham, Berea, Bethesda, Cary, Reedy Creek, Gum Springs, and Olives Chapel, assisted in the organization of the church.²

From the notes of the church conference of May 25, 1902 Reverend Arnette read letters from East Durham, Berea, Bethesda, Cary, Reedy Creek, Gum Springs, and Olives Chapel recommending the following for membership in Edgemont:²

W. F. Mason	Nora B. Dupree
J. J. Whittington	May Dupree
Nellie Scott	Addie Pope
Dora Scott	A. W. Sorrell
Swannie Scott	Mrs. Electa Sorrell
Willie Ferrell	R. E. Hurst
Lula Ferrell	J. P. Berry
L. L. Hudson	C. C. Poe
Louise Hudson	Mrs. Robena Poe
Nettie Hudson	Whit Hancock
W. R. Dupree	Mrs. J. A. Whittington
Adrelia Berry	

It should be noted that there are twenty-three names listed here. This is because, for some unknown reason over the years, the name of Adrelia Berry was omitted from the listing of the charter members. However, according to the notes of the meeting of May 25, 1902 her name is listed.²

Mr. W. R. Dupree was elected as the Church's first Church Clerk and assumed his duties immediately. The Church then elected the Reverend J. M. Arnette, Pastor of Edgemont Baptist Church by acclamation.²

A motion was then made that the Philadelphia Confession of Faith be adopted. After a few remarks, Reverend Fry then pronounced this an orthodox church.²

May 29, 1902 saw the first candidate for baptism being received into the Church. This candidate was Mr. N. T. Teasley.²

In the 1902 annual report of the Mt. Zion Baptist Association it was reported that the church was beginning to grow. The total enrollment was shown to be twenty-seven, twelve males and fifteen females.³

The Board of Deacons, on September 12, 1948, recommended that the Church seek a letter of dismission from the Mt. Zion Association in order to join the newly formed Yates Baptist Association. This recommendation was accepted by the Church.¹⁰

The Church has had fourteen full time pastors in it's eighty-five year history, along with several supply and interim pastors.

These are:

Rev. J. M. Arnette	May 25, 1902 - January 1, 1903
Rev. E. R. Harris	January 1903 - October 1906
Rev. G. H. Church	April 1907 - March 1909
Rev. O. N. Marshall	June 1909 - August 1911
Rev. C. C. Smith	March 1912 - August 1921
Rev. C. S. Norville	October 1921 - March 1941
Rev. Lovell F. Sodeman	June 1941 - April 1943
Dr. J. S. Johnson	November 1943 - June 1948
Rev. W. B. Carr	August 1948 - September 1954
Rev. B. R. Bruner	February 1955 - September 1958
Dr. John H. Bunn	March 1959 - 1968
Rev. Malcolm Cadd	June 1969 - March 1974
Rev. Norman E. Gossett	September 1975 - August 1981
Rev. Forest M. Gale	May 1, 1982 - To Date

There have also been a number of very fine and dedicated supply and interim pastors over the years, among these: Rev. D. D. Gross, supplied during the summer of 1948. Dr. John H. Bunn was an Interim Pastor from September 1958 until he was called to be Pastor in March 1959.²³ Dr. John Freeman served as Interim Pastor twice, in 1968-1969 and again in 1974-1975. The Reverend Hubert Mumford also served as an Interim Pastor from 1981-1982. Reverend Mumford also served as the Director of Home Missions of the Yates Baptist Association for many years.

Edgemort has had the pleasure of having several of its members enter the ministry. Among these are: L. L. Hudson, who was also a charter member;² Charlie Matthews, Earl B. Edwards, who became a Methodist Minister; J. I. Memory; M. Fred Scott, Jr.; Robert L. (Bobby) Weatherspoon, Jr.; Tommy Roberts; Elmo Whitaker; Coleman C. Markham, who also became a Methodist Minister, and Bill Evans the son of Pauline Evans, who became a Roman Catholic Priest. The son of Reverend C. S. Norville, Charles K. Norville, is now serving as Pastor of the Kenwood Presbyterian Church in Baltimore, Maryland.

The Church has grown steadily in size and influence in the community. The peak membership reached approximately eleven hundred members, it has now decreased to about five hundred and fifty. The Sunday School saw a membership of around nine hundred at its peak, however, now it is only about two hundred and seventy-five.

The Church began building during the ministry of the Reverend E. R. Harris in 1904. The building fund was started by the Reverend O. N. Marshall in 1910.^{2,4}

November 1, 1913 was a very dark day in the history of the Church. It was at this time that the wooden structured Church burned and was totally destroyed. However, with the diligence of many and the hard work of all once more a beautiful house of worship stood on the corner of Elm and Main Streets in which to continue the worship of God and the service to the community. During the two years it took to rebuild the Church the City of Durham Board of Education graciously placed the use of the Edgemont Elementary School, which was adjacent to the Church, at the disposal of the Church for what ever time needed. The services were held there until the rebuilding was complete.

The morning after the fire General Julian S. Carr was taking his usual morning walk when he came upon Mr. R. E. Hurst. He made mention to Mr. Hurst that he had heard a church had burned the night before. Mr. Hurst informed him that Edgemont Baptist Church had burned. The General then reached into his pocket and gave Mr. Hurst fifty dollars, no small amount at that time, this being the first money collected for the rebuilding of the Church.²¹

The money that General Carr gave was the beginning of a total of \$16,000 that would be needed to rebuild the Church. The first service was held in the present building on November 1, 1915, exactly two years from the date of the fire. On Sunday November 7, 1915 the building was dedicated to the work and Glory of God, with Dr. E. Y. Mullins, President of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky preaching the sermon. There were many who wished to attend the service but had to be turned away for lack of space. There was still a large indebtedness of the Church in the amount of \$3500. A special offering was taken that Sunday amounting to \$2000 leaving a balance of \$1500. Due to the tireless efforts of Reverend C. C. Smith, the Church membership gave generously and the result being that God's House was debt free and paid for in May 1918, and the note was burned on June 9, 1918. Up until this time the Church had been receiving a great deal of its financial support from the Mission Board, however, under the guidance of the Reverend Smith the Church rapidly became self-supporting.⁵

The year 1919 saw the need for a Church parsonage. On Sunday March 16, 1919 Brother R. E. Hurst reported the committee that was formed to look for a parsonage for the Church had found one located at 211 Parrish Place (now Hood Street).⁶ The Board of Deacons, whose members made up the committee, now recommended that this property be purchased for the amount of \$7500. This property belonged to Mrs. R. A. Honeycutt. The property remained in the hands of the Church until the latter months of Reverend C. S. Norville's ministry, and then was sold in 1941 for \$3,300.⁹ Then in 1941 the Church purchased the property located at 405 North Hyde Park and owned by Mr. J. E. Browning for \$4,800.⁹ This property was used as a parsonage by the Church then sold in 1968.

In 1919 Miss Josie Rymer was employed by the Church as the Pastor's assistant. Miss Rymer was one of the first of a long line of very talented, dedicated and faithful people to serve the Church over the years in such positions as Educational Directors, Church Secretaries, Music Directors and Youth Directors. They are: Larry McGill, Miss Elizabeth Draughon, Miss Janet Tarlton, Miss F. L. Pickett, Miss Virginia Hall (now Mrs. Claiborne Jacob) Mr. Dan O'Neal, Mr. Cyrus Jones, Reverend Robert Smith, Reverend Jarvis Brock, Mrs. Bob (Betsy) Chester, Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Byrd, Mrs. Margaret Coe Spivey, Mrs. Annette Stokes, Reverend Ole Bergen, Mrs. Rebecca Carnes, Mr. Buddy Burton, Mr. Talmadge Penland, Mr. Ronnie Tyndall, Jean Howerton, Miss Brenda Colfield, and our present Secretary, Mrs. Louise Gale. The custodians, W. B. Rogers, Mr. Gattis Murray, who served over thirty years, and at present Mr. Robert Parrish. There are also Mr. Roy Melton, Dr. Brent Sandy, Mr. Earl Echols, Reverend Mark Moser, Mr. David Phipps, Miss Pam Poston and now serving Mr. John Mayfield.

On March 7, 1928, the Board of Deacons formally went on record as endorsing a suggestion by the Pastor. This suggestion of Pastor C. S. Norville was that the Church begin a program of systematic giving.⁸ This was the first of its type introduced into the Church.

The Church voted to purchase a pipe organ on June 12, 1938⁹ and it has been a joy to the membership ever since. Mrs. Virginia Warren Pickett was the longest serving pianist and organist in the Church, having served well over forty years. Upon the departure of Mrs. Pickett, Mrs. Annie Poole became organist. Many have spoken of her inspiring work as the Church organist.

Another of the longest serving members of the Church and also as a member of the Church Staff has been Mr. Frank Denning. Mr. Denning has served as the Church Treasurer for nearly fifty years. This is a very unique position in that most church treasurer's are not staff. Some large churches hire financial secretaries, rather than have a church member, treasurer.

Over the past years the Vacation Bible School has been a source of great satisfaction to the Church members. Past Directors of the school along with the present, Mrs. LuAnne Latta, have worked tirelessly to see that the children receive excellent training. Directors of the past have been: Mrs. D. C. Markham, Mrs. Lib Knight, Mrs. Odell Barbee, Reverend W. B. Carr, Reverend Robert Smith and Mr. Earl Echols.²⁷

Another of the most dedicated servants of the Lord and the Church was Mrs. Ether M. Fulghum. In 1972 the Homecoming Committee and the History Committee dedicated the 70th Anniversary Booklet to Mrs. Fulghum.²⁶ Mrs. Fulghum began her work on July 15, 1945 and left the Church in September 1951.^{10,11} She served as the Visitation and Enlistment Worker.

The Reverend W. B. Carr worked endlessly in order to implement the use of the Unified Budget in the fall of 1948.¹⁰ This was very successful in that it increased the gifts and tithers.

Over the past forty years or so many things have come about in the Church from the replacing of the tile floor in the kitchen to painting the outside wood trim of the Church. The boiler needed replacing and this was done, as was the air-conditioning of the sanctuary. The stained glass windows were covered with plexiglas as were the windows in the educational building after a considerable amount of vandalism

Awards and trophies won by the members in various activities have been numerous. These are displayed throughout the Church.

The year 1964 saw the formation of a Kindergarten and First Grade department. This was organized by Mrs. John H. Bunn, the Pastor's wife.¹³ The North Carolina Board of Education approved of the school and a certificate of merit and approval was issued. Mrs. Bunn served as the Principal of the school and was assisted by Mrs. Cooper Hight. Dr. Bunn served as an advisor.

This past year, at the recommendation of the Board of Deacons, the Agape Corner was invited to use the Church facilities for the education of disadvantaged children. These children came from homes where they have been abused in various ways. After much discussion and soul searching the Church approved and agreed with the recommendation.

Due to time and circumstances, it is impossible to list all of the Honorariums, Memorials and gifts that have been given to the Church in the last eighty-five years. However, for the sake of time some of those that have been presented in the last few years will be presented.

The royal blue choir robes that the choir is now using were presented to the Church in honor and memory of Mr. Hubert Mumford, Mr. Mumford being one of the Churches Interim Pastors. The brass Cross that is hanging here in the sanctuary was presented to the Church in honor and memory of Mr. Victor Braswell, a former Deacon, by his wife. The brass candlesticks, which are found on the alter table were presented to the Church by the Board of Deacons in memory of Mr. Norris Strickland, who served on that board. The plaque, found in the Adult Sunday School department downstairs is also in memory of Norris Strickland, and was given by the Baptist Men's group. And last, but far from least, the red Bibles that are found in the pews of the sanctuary were each given in loving memory or honor of a friend or loved one.

It may appear that many of those that have placed gifts in the Church have been slighted. But this is not the case. As near as possible a complete listing will be found in the history of the Church that is in the process of being written now. Should you know of anything that should be included in this history, please let the Church Historian know.

Over the years past many things have happened to the Church. In many instances these have been great. However, the future calls for many great things also. With the entire membership working together many things can be made to happen. But just a few cannot make them happen. Someone once said that a chain is just as strong as its weakest link, pray that there are only strong links in the Church

and that these links will work to strengthen God's House and further His work for the lives of the membership, the Church and the community. For without the Church we would be nothing and the Church is Christ.

In the near future you will be seeing photographs and other various memorabilia in the Library. Please look at these items and if they have not been identified perhaps you can help identify them. Should you know of additional items not included but would benefit the Church Museum please let a staff member know of them so that they can be recorded. We were indeed fortunate in that when we had the fire in 1913, many of the records were rescued. Let us continue to keep these records and add to them for the future of the Church.

Today we are dedicating the Church Library to the memory of one of our most illustrious Pastors. The Dr. John H. Bunn Memorial Library will be open for the use of the entire Church membership. In the future it will be of immense help to the teacher and student alike. However, without the extreme dedication of a great many people we would not be able to have a Library. Special thanks must go to the Brotherhood, the Board of Deacons, the Royal Ambassadors and the Church Membership who were so free with their own books to help build the Library. A special thanks should go to the Pastor for having the foresight and desire to see that the Church should have a Library that would be a credit to the Church and a benefit that can be enjoyed by all. It has been reported that the Church Library of Edgemont Baptist Church is the best in the Association.

References used to prepare the 85th Homecoming History:

1. 1901 Minutes of the Mt. Zion Baptist Association Annual Meeting
2. 1902 - 1910 Church Conference Notes, Edgemont Baptist Church
3. 1902 Minutes of the Mt. Zion Baptist Association Annual Meeting
4. 1910 - 1914 Church Conference Notes, Edgemont Baptist Church
5. 1914 - 1918 Church Conference Notes, Edgemont Baptist Church
6. 1918 - 1920 Church Conference Notes, Edgemont Baptist Church
7. 1920 - 1923 Church Conference Notes, Edgemont Baptist Church
8. 1923 - 1932 Church Conference Notes, Edgemont Baptist Church
9. 1932 - 1941 Church Conference Notes, Edgemont Baptist Church
10. 1941 - 1948 Church Conference Notes, Edgemont Baptist Church
11. 1949 - 1955 Church Conference Notes, Edgemont Baptist Church
12. 1955 - 1959 Church Conference Notes, Edgemont Baptist Church
13. 1960 - 1964 Church Conference Notes, Edgemont Baptist Church
14. 1974 - 1979 Church Conference Notes, Edgemont Baptist Church
15. 1979 - 1987 Church Conference Notes, Edgemont Baptist Church
16. 1955 - 1958 Advisory Committee Meeting Notes
17. 1926 - 1933 Board of Deacons Meeting Notes
18. 1942 - 1951 Board of Deacons Meeting Notes
19. 1951 - 1956 Board of Deacons Meeting Notes
20. 1956 - 1967 Board of Deacons Meeting Notes
21. Interview with Mr. W. R. Parker, March 1987
22. History prepared by Mrs. D. C. Markham, May 1, 1951
23. History notes for 1950 - Feb. 1960 by Mrs. Annette Stokes, Dr. John H. Bunn and W. B. Rogers
24. History notes from 1964 Homecoming
25. History notes from 1967 Homecoming
26. History notes from 1972 Homecoming
27. Various Church Members
28. Durham Morning Herald April 13, 1913
29. Durham Morning Herald Nov 1 and Nov 7, 1915

This 85th history written
and compiled by:

Richard M. Conover
May 12, 1987