

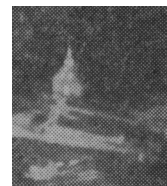


Central United Methodist Church Canton, NC

History

Approximately one hundred and thirty years ago the town of Canton was known as Pigeon River, and the nearest Methodist Church was on North Hominy. It was a log house, which was used by both the Northern and the Southern Methodists. It became difficult for the two congregations to use the same building; thus the property was sold and the money was divided. The Northern congregation decided to build near the same location and kept the same name until the two branches of the Methodist Church united. Today, this church is known as Plains United Methodist Church. The Southern congregation divided again, and the members who lived in and around the little town of Pigeon River began to meet in the old Reno schoolhouse on Newfound Street. This was in the year 1875.

The schoolhouse served as the meeting place of the congregation until a church could be built at the same location where the present church now stands. As money was scarce, materials and labor were donated. The work progressed slowly, yet about 1880, the church could be used. It was called "The Brick Church" (see photo to the right), since it was the only church made of brick in the vicinity.



The deed is dated March 3rd, 1879, for one acre of land to be used for church purposes. In the year 1910, a combined sanctuary and educational building (see photo on the left) replaced the old brick church. The name that was given to the church at the time of the dedication was The Methodist Episcopal Church South. After the merging of the Northern and Southern branches of Methodism, the congregation and official bodies voted to change the name to Central United Methodist Church.

Our present sanctuary was completed in December 1950. By December 1951, the building had been paid in full. No major renovations have been made since then.



Finally, the educational building was built on the site of the old sanctuary. That building was completed in the fall of 1956. The breezeway connects the educational building with the sanctuary. In the 1990's, the second floor was renovated to include new offices and air conditioning. Further improvements were completed in 2005 with the complete renovation of a pastor's study and minister of discipleship office.



The original deed from John Renno and Jane Renno states that the Church sanctuary is to be used as a place of divine worship for members of what was the Methodist Episcopal Church, South and is now Central United Methodist Church. This deed is recorded in Book 0, page 179 of the Haywood County Registry on December 4, 1879, ten years before the founding of Canton. The deed states that the property begins on a Spanish Oak and runs North 74 degrees East 13 poles to a second Spanish Oak.

