Pine Grove Timmonsville - Church History

Pine Grove United Methodist Church, Timmonsville

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Pine Grove United Methodist Church

3544 Timmonsville Hwy.
Timmonsville, SC 29161
History of Pine Grove Church
By Lucille H. Anderson

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James Carter had a son, Reverend John E. Carter, who became a local preacher and is buried in the church’s cemetery. He too served at times as preacher of the early church. Some years later, date not known, the old log church was torn down and upon its foundation the old clapboard church was constructed.

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The Reverend W. L. Pegues was succeeded by the following ministers: A. B. Clarkson; J. C. Kilgo; J. W. Humbert; A. W. Jackson; J. E. Beard. Each of these contributed to the growth of the small church. In 1890, Mr. J. L. Thornal organized the first Sunday School and was elected Superintendent. This office he held for many years. About the same time, the name “Pine Log” was changed to Pine Grove because of the virgin forest that surrounded the clapboard church.

From 1890 to 1898, the following ministers served the church: W. S. Martin; R. W. Spigner; W. B. Duncan; E. D. Mann; A. B. Earle. The Timmonsville pastor supplied Pine Grove in 1898-1899 and 1899-1906, a conference supply, Reverend W. M. Ruff of the Cartersville Circuit, supplied. In 1906-1907, Pine Grove, Cartersville, Salem, and St. Paul formed a circuit named the Timmonsville Circuit with Reverend Hamlin Etheridge as the pastor. The Timmonsville Circuit
bought a lot in Timmonsville, and in 1910, under Reverend A. M. Gardner, a parsonage was built. Our pastors lived in this church home until 1932, when the circuit was discontinued. The pastors who served Pine Grove while a part of the Timmonsville Circuit were: A. M. Gardner; Reverend Youngblood; W. B. Baker; G. L. Rhoad; R. R. Doyle; O. M. Rountree; F. S. Hook; a. S. Leslie; R. P. Turnipseed; J. L. Mullinex; and L. W. Shealy.

Mrs. Ella Eargle, a local schoolteacher, organized on August 14, 1908, the Woman’s Auxiliary of the Foreign Missionary Society with fifteen members. Miss Maggie Alexander was elected president.

The Reverend L. W. Shealy was the first preacher to serve Pine Grove four years. Much progress was made spiritually and otherwise. Under his leadership the following was accomplished:

- In 1926 the youth were organized into the Epworth League. Miss Mary Easterling assisted Mr. Shealy in this work.
- The men of the community, regardless of church affiliation, were organized into the Men’s Business Club, a religious club to inspire and increase spiritual awareness. The first president was Mr. Luther Alexander.
- Four Sunday School rooms were added to the church building.

The Reverend J. F. Campbell came to lead us in 1930. Two years later he was transferred to Darlington, and Pine Grove became a part of the Darlington Circuit. The Darlington Circuit at this time was composed of Epworth, Indian Branch, Salem, and Pine Grove. Salem soon joined Timmonsville and Bethel was added to the Darlington Circuit.

The Reverend W. O. Henderson followed the Reverend Campbell. His wife re-organized the women of the church into the Women’s Missionary Society. The Reverend Thomas Kennerlin in 1935-1937 was our pastor and leader. Our first Vacation Bible School was held in the summer of 1937 under his leadership. The Reverend D. H. Busbee was our pastor for four years and did much to further the spiritual growth of the church.

About 1941, the church building was renovated and painted for a total cost of $912.87. The work of remodeling was begun during the Reverend E. B. Johnson’s pastorate and finished the first year of the Reverend J. M. Collier’s pastorate. The Reverend Collier was forced to retire the last year of his ministry due to bad health, and the Reverend Webb Garrison of Timmonsville supplied. The Reverend F. L. Frazier was sent to serve the Darlington Circuit following the Reverend Collier. He was very interested in building a new church. The congregation decided to start a building fund in 1946. Four years later in 1950, with $5,220.00 in the treasury, the building was begun.
A will left by the late J. I. Thornal stated that one acre of land adjoining Thornal Cemetery be given to Pine Grove Church to be used as a building site if they ever wanted to erect a new church. An heir, Charlie Jeffords, gave additional land thus extending the area of the building site to the Darlington-Timmonsville Highway. The congregation voted to build the new church on this site. The old clapboard church and land were sold to Mr. Ernest Jernigan and Mr. Herbert Davis.

In order to economize, the men of the church did much of the labor themselves. Besides giving labor and money, some gave trees which were cut and hauled to a local saw mill owned by one of the members. The saw mill owner took his hands and sawed the logs into lumber free of charge. Most of the lumber used in the building’s construction was donated in this manner. An architect was hired to draw the plans for the building. A member who was a skilled carpenter was appointed to supervise the construction. Not only did he supervise the work, but did much himself. Skilled laborers were secured to do the brick work, plastering, lifting, and placing the steel beams. The plumbing was donated and installed by a member. Another member donated and installed the heating and wiring free of charge. The art glass windows, Hammond organ, and pulpit furniture were given as memorials or honors by families. Shrubbery around the building was given by the Lake Swamp Home Demonstration Club. The altar set was given by the Youth Fellowship. The WSCS donated the carpet in the sanctuary. The building project was a task that each and every one gave of his best.

Thanksgiving Day, 1951, the first worship service was held. It was truly a service of thanksgiving led by the Reverend W. A. Beckham whose leadership inspired every member to give of his talents, time, and money. On November 2, 1952, the building was formally dedicated with Dr. Wright Spears, President of Columbia College, preaching the dedicatory sermon. Other ministers assisting him were the Reverend W. A. Beckham, and Superintendent Paul Whitaker of the Florence-Kingstree District. Pine Grove was then a part of the Timmonsville - Pisgah Charge. Later this charge was split, and Pisgah-Pine Grove Charge came into being with the Reverend B. S. Hughes as pastor. In 1953, the Fellowship Hall was constructed in a like manner as the church with everyone sharing in its construction.

The Reverend J. E. Clark served the last year of his ministry as pastor in 1955-1957. The Reverend S. H. Poston followed in 1957-1961. He, with the help of Mrs. Turner, organized a youth choir. During his pastorate, the Fellowship Hall was dedicated on May 9, 1958, and the hut and educational building were painted. The Reverend Allen Long served us for three years in 1961-1964. During his pastorate a new central heating and air conditioning system was installed. The
Reverend Kenneth Bobo followed and served us for two years in 1964-1966. Pine Grove changed to a station in 1966 and the Reverend Robert Wells became our pastor and labored with us until 1972. In 1972, Pine Grove was moved from the Lake City District to the Hartsville District and became a part of the Twitty Chapel, Wesley Memorial, and Pine Grove Circuit with Reverend Guy Mayer as pastor.

We gained many friends by being moved from one circuit to another. But deep down was that desire to own a church home. This desire was fulfilled in three months after actual construction was begun in the Spring of 1974. Mr. and Mrs. Robert White, Jr. gave an acre of land near the church for the homesite. A member of the church did the construction at a sacrifice price thus enabling Epworth and Pine Grove to become a charge and have a church home in the Summer of 1974. The Reverend Dwight Mims, our present pastor, moved into this home. Under his leadership the classrooms and hall have been renovated and carpeted. A children’s choir was organized by Mrs. Esther Mims.

God, please bless us as we move on to do Your work....

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Pine Grove Historical Time Line

1877 - Earliest Records begin with the Reverend W. L. Pegues, a local preacher, and James Carter in charge of membership. Family names at that time include: Carter, Cook, Jefford, Kilpatrick, Thompson, Parnell, Power, Anderson, Register, Stoke, Campbell

1888 - According to a deed recorded August 28, 1888, in Darlington County Court House, a tract of land, two acres more or less, was deeded to “Pine Log” Church by George W. Dargan, an extensive land owner in the community at that time. The Reverend W. L. Pegues was succeeded by the following ministers: A. B. Clarkson; J. C. Kilgo; J. W. Humbert; A. W. Jackson; J. E. Beard. Each of these contributed to the growth of the small church.

1890 - Mr. J. L. Thornal organized the first Sunday School and was elected Superintendent. “Pine Log” was changed to Pine Grove because of the virgin forest that surrounded the clapboard church.

1890 - 1898 - the following ministers served the church: W. S. Martin; R. W. Spigener; W. B. Duncan; E. D. Mann; A. B. Earle.

1898 - 1899 - The Timmonsville pastor supplied Pine Grove

1899 - 1906 - Reverend W. M. Ruff of the Cartersville Circuit, supplied

1906 - 1907 - Pine Grove, Cartersville, Salem, and St. Paul formed a circuit named the Timmonsville Circuit with Reverend Hamlin Etheridge as the pastor
1908 - Mrs. Ella Eargle, a local schoolteacher, organized on August 14, 1908, the Woman’s Auxiliary of the Foreign Missionary Society with fifteen members. Miss Maggie Alexander was elected president.

1910 - The Timmonsville Circuit bought a lot in Timmonsville, and in 1910, under Reverend A. M. Gardner, a parsonage was built. Our pastors lived in this church home until 1932, when the circuit was discontinued. The pastors who served Pine Grove while a part of the Timmonsville Circuit were: A. M. Gardner; Reverend Youngblood; W. B. Baker; G. L. Rhoad; R. R. Doyle; O. M. Rountree; F. S. Hook; A. S. Leslie; R. P. Turnipseed; J. L. Mullinex; and L. W. Shealy.

1926 - The Reverend L. W. Shealy was the first preacher to serve Pine Grove four years. Much progress was made spiritually and otherwise. Under his leadership the following was accomplished:

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- The men of the community, regardless of church affiliation, were organized into the Men’s Business Club, a religious club to inspire and increase spiritual awareness. The first president was Mr. Luther Alexander.
- Four Sunday School rooms were added to the church building.

1930 - The Reverend J. F. Campbell came to lead us in 1930.

1932 - Reverend Campbell was transferred to Darlington. Pine Grove became a part of the Darlington Circuit. The Darlington Circuit at this time was composed of Epworth, Indian Branch, Salem, and Pine Grove.
Timmonsville Circuit Discontinued
Salem joined with Timmonsville and Bethel was added to the Darlington Circuit.

The Reverend W. O. Henderson followed the Reverend Campbell. His wife re-organized the women of the church into the Women’s Missionary Society.

1935-1937 - The Reverend Thomas Kennerlin was our pastor and leader. Our first Vacation Bible School was held in the summer of 1937 under his leadership.

1937-1941 - The Reverend D. H. Busbee was our pastor for four years and did much to further the spiritual growth of the church.

1941 - Church building was renovated and painted for a total cost of $912.87. Remodeling was begun during the Reverend E. B. Johnson’s pastorate and finished the first year of the Reverend J. M. Collier’s pastorate. The Reverend Collier was forced to retire the last year of his ministry due to bad health, and the Reverend Webb Garrison of Timmonsville supplied.

1946 - The Reverend F. L. Frazier was sent to serve the Darlington Circuit following the Reverend Collier. He was very interested in building a new church. The congregation decided to start a building fund in 1946.

1950 - With $5,220.00 in the treasury, the church building was begun. A will left by the late J. I. Thorna stated that one acre of land adjoining Thorna Cemetery be given to Pine Grove Church to be used as a building site if they ever wanted to erect a new church. An heir, Charlie Jeffords, gave additional land thus extending the area of the building site to the Darlington-Timmonsville Highway. The congregation voted to build the new church on this site. The old
clapboard church and land were sold to Mr. Ernest Jernigan and Mr. Herbert Davis.

1951 - Thanksgiving Day - the first worship service was held in the new Sanctuary. It was truly a service of thanksgiving led by the Reverend W. A. Beckham whose leadership inspired every member to give of his talents, time, and money.

1952 - On November 2, 1952, the building was formally dedicated with Dr. Wright Spears, President of Columbia College, preaching the dedicatory sermon. Other ministers assisting his were the Reverend W. A. Beckham, and Superintendent Paul Whitaker of the Florence-Kingstree District. Pine Grove was then a part of the Timmonsville - Pisgah Charge. Later this charge was split, and Pisgah-Pine Grove Charge came into being with the Reverend B. S. Hughes as pastor.

1953 - The Fellowship Hall was constructed in a like manner as the church with everyone sharing in its construction.

1955-1957 - The Reverend J. E. Clark served the last year of his ministry as pastor.

1957-1961 - The Reverend S. H. Poston followed Reverend Clark
He, with the help of Mrs. Turner, organized a youth choir.
During his pastorate, the Fellowship Hall was dedicated on May 9, 1958, and the hut and educational building were painted.

1961-1964 - The Reverend Allen Long served us for three years in 1961-1964. During his pastorate a new central heating and air conditioning system was installed.
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1966 - 1972 - Pine Grove changed to a station and the Reverend Robert Wells became our pastor and labored with us until 1972

1972 - Pine Grove was moved from the Lake City District to the Hartsville District and became a part of the Twitty Chapel, Wesley Memorial, and Pine Grove Circuit with the Reverend Guy Mayer as pastor.

1974 - Church Homesite established in the Spring of 1974 and completed by the summer Mr. and Mrs. Robert White, Jr. gave an acre of land near the church for the homesite. The Reverend Dwight Mims, pastor, moved into this home.
Addendum to the History of Pine Grove Church
By Ann Register, Historian October, 2010

Since 1974, when the last church history was written, the members of Pine Grove have been busy just keeping up with routine repairs and updates. The Fellowship Hall had extensive work as it was updated with the kitchen being enlarged. There was a new ice machine added as well as storage rooms.

Our membership is declining because of deaths and students going away to college and then finding jobs in other areas. However, the members that still come are dedicated to the advancement of Pine Grove.

Of course, we had new ministers all during this time since the last history was written.

The Reverend Dwight Mims June 1975-June 1976
James Grigsby June 1978- June 1983
Charles Dudley June 1983-June 1985
Robert Clemons June 1985-June 1988
Terry Beckom June 1988- June 2004
Donald Boatwright June 2004-June 2006
Roger Dobbs June 2006-September 2006
Joanne Lochard-Hawkins October 2006-June 2008
Larry Brown June 2008-June 2010
A Word From Our Pastor

To Pine Grove Church -

Pine Grove United Methodist Church celebrated her 25th anniversary on Sunday, November 21, 1976, representing the years in her new church. She has a long heritage, dating back to 1898.

In the following pages of this pictorial directory, you will find the people who are Pine Grove United Methodist Church. She is the “Ekklesia”, a body of believing people called out and given identity in Jesus Christ.

Pine Grove is grateful for its past but aware that the past is of value only as it serves as a stepping stone to accepting the greater challenges of God’s Kingdom now and in the future.

Pine Grove is basically made up of people who listen with their hearts to the hurts, sorrows, and cries of their neighbors and who faithfully live out the call of the Gospel. God is forever reminding us not to fear change and growth but to be responsive to his call to “Come, take up the cross, and follow him.”

May God give you the peace and joy that comes only by being submissive to His will.

Grace and Peace,

Dwight H. Mims, Pastor
Pine Grove United Methodist Church
The exact date that Pine Grove Methodist Church was organized is unknown.
However, it is believed to have been in the late 1850's. Records reveal that in circuit rider
days it was a “bush arbor”. Some years later a one room log building was erected. As
the church membership grew it was soon possible to enlarge the church, replacing the logs
with weather boarding. During the years, the old church was renovated several times.
However, this building became inadequate and the members voted to erect a new church
building at the present location on the Darlington - Timmonsville Highway. This
building was begun on January 1, 1951. The first service was held Thanksgiving Day,
November 22, 1951. The church was officially dedicated November 2, 1952. Reverend
W. A. Beckham was our pastor at that time.

Pastors serving during the last twenty-five years were Rev. W. A. Beckham,
Rev. B. P. Hughes, Rev. J. E. Clark, Rev. J. H. Poston, Rev. Allen Leng, Rev.
Kenneth Bobo, Rev. R. N. Hells, Rev. Guy Meyer and at present, Rev. Dwight
Mims.
Brian Mims, Nada Davis, Mavis Davis, Timmy Jordan, Hillary Mims, Sandra Blackmon, Melinda Davis, Melissa Dewitt, Frances Davis, Dean Lloyd, Pam Jordan, Mrs. Esther Mims, Leader, Gay Dewitt, Pianist.

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BY
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