

# CLARK'S CHAPEL CHURCH:A HERITAGE

OR

## The Church History From 1851 to 1977

Compiled by

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(Transcribed from hardcopy document by Rev Ray Kiess)

## Addendum: The Church History From 1977 to 2023

Compiled and Edited by Rev Ray Kiess



The name Clark's Chapel was given this church in honor of Dr. Davis W. Clark the first president of the newly formed Holston Conference in 1864. Dr. Davis was born February 25, 1812 at Mt. Desert, Maine. He received his doctorate from Wesleyan University, 1836. An influential author of literature pertinent to the issues of his times, he traveled extensively, working in different Methodist Conferences in various parts of the United States.

Bishop D. W. Clark died May 21, 1871 and is buried in Cincinnati, Ohio.<sup>1</sup>

The following history is taken primarily from the minutes of the Annual Conference of the Methodist Protestant churches of North Carolina.<sup>2</sup>

This conference first began and was held at Whitacker Meeting House in Halifax County in the year of our Lord 1828. Protestantism spread very rapidly in the state for the next twenty five years.

Most churches were in rural areas. These pioneer mission places were private homes, schools and crossroad buildings. Divided into huge circuits, the pioneer preacher rode horseback over many miles to preach once each month. They suffered hardships untold to spread the word of God and worship as they saw fit.

November 1852 the Annual Conference was held in Fayetteville. During this meeting Buncombe was declared a new circuit. It seems from the microfilm records at Lake Junaluska in 1850 the president had been ordered to correspond with the South Carolina conference concerning churches of the Henderson Mission. The Buncombe Circuit was born of that. The following is a quote from the 1851 conference minutes:

Buncombe is a new circuit in the first year of its existence but surely has much about it for the lover of truth to admire. Spreading thru one of the most beautiful and romantic countries in the world, an active and intelligent community, much disposed to religion and popular rights, with the blessings of God, our cause is destined to do well. The Lord give them success.<sup>3</sup>

Clark's Chapel Church lies in this territory.

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<sup>1</sup> Clark, E.T., "Davis Wasgatt Clark," Encyclopedia of World Methodism (The United Methodist Publishing House, 1974) Vol. I, p. 514.

<sup>2</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, et. al. (eds) Minutes of the North Carolina Annual Conference of Methodist Protestant Churches, 1828-1864. Microfilm. World Conference Building, Lake Junaluska, North Carolina.

<sup>3</sup> Minutes, op. cit., 1851.

By 1852 there were two churches given in the minutes for Buncombe Circuit. These were Mt. Zion at Jupiter and one other smaller one not named. It is known that other Methodist churches were in existence during this period. Sugar Camp Methodist near Marshall; Union on the island in Marshall; Walnut Methodist in what is now Madison County; Longs Chapel in Reems Creek.

Joseph P. Eller and his work is so closely related to the history of Clark's Chapel, it is appropriate to give a short biography of him at this time. He was born July 20, 1820, the son of Adam and Elizabeth Fields Eller in Buncombe County. He married Susan Anderson February 11, 1845. They lived on a farm at Sugar Camp near Marshall, N. C. Brother Eller was sent as a layman from Buncombe Circuit to the Methodist Protestant Conference in 1855 and again in 1863. Not very much is known of his early ministry, but it stands to reason that the old Possom Trot church and school house was one of the places he preached, since it was on the property of his brother, A. F. Eller. This log building has played an interesting part in the story of this church. It was not torn down until the early part of this century.

J. P. Eller was admitted to the M. P. Conference on the grounds of being a licentiate, was examined for deacons orders, and given papers to preach in 1865. He worked one year on Pigeon River.<sup>4</sup>

From 1866 to 1868 he was appointed Superintendent of the Buncombe Circuit and became a ministerial member. Brother Eller went to the newly formed, Holston Conference in 1869, where he accomplished a good work in the western mountain area, establishing missions and organizing churches even into Tennessee. The Witt Methodist Church near Whitepine, Tenn., and some on Pigeon River are still standing today.

In 1873 he sold his farm on Big Ivy and Sugar Camp, moving to a new home on the Clark's Chapel road. The house is still standing.

This resolution was offered the Conference in 1875:

Whereas, Brother Eller, Holston Conference, has served much faithful and efficient service in the past year within the limits of this conference; be it therefore resolved that the thanks of the conference be extended Brother Eller for the great interest manifested in the welfare of this conference and the advancement of

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<sup>4</sup> Minutes, op. cit., 1865-1869.

Methodist Protestant generally.<sup>5</sup>

Another quote from the 1877 conference written by the president reads:

Buncombe Circuit: This field was left by the conference to be supplied which was done by the appointment of Reverend J. P. Eller, who entered immediately upon his duties. When I visited this work, I found it in some degree of prosperity and enjoying some revival seasons.

There was growth from 3½ churches in 1876 to 5 churches in 1880.<sup>6</sup>

This man was a farmer, a carpenter, a layman, a preacher, a minister, a missionary, a true and faithful servant of the Lord. In toiling for his Master he saw some heartaches, some sorrows, some disappointments, some successes. The memorial window in Clark's Chapel Church stands not only for his work here but also for the other missions he established and other churches he organized and helped to build.

On March 4, 1892, God called J. P. Eller home. When he had preached at Witt Chapel near Whitepine, Tennessee, he took the train to Alexander Station. Then he rode his horse to his home on Clark's Chapel road. He took pneumonia. His journeys were over. Again the words of II Timothy 4:6-8 are heard.

The exact year that Clark's Chapel Church was formed is not known; however it is known that it had its beginning before the deed was made. By referring back to the Conference minutes, it is found that from 1879 to 1883, S. W. Coe was appointed superintendent to the Buncombe Circuit, with R. W. Pegram as minister.<sup>7</sup> The superintendent had great influence in the community and a strong friendship was formed between him and A. F. Eller. From this fellowship a prayer group was started that met regularly in the home of Uncle Abe. He went to the conference as a layman, while J. P. Eller and R. W. Pegram visited several points in the Pigeon and Surry circuits, holding revival meetings.

Here is a story told to me by my father many years ago.<sup>8</sup> A group of Methodist Protestant men met with Dr. Marion Roberts at the old Camp Meeting grounds where the first Flat Creek

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<sup>5</sup> Minutes, op. cit., 1875.

<sup>6</sup> Minutes, op. cit., 1877-1880.

<sup>7</sup> Minutes, op. cit., 1879-1883.

<sup>8</sup> My father was J. A. Eller of Flat Creek, North Carolina. He was the nephew of Joseph P. Eller.

Baptist church stood, above the church spring near the old Welsey Eller house. These men were the first members of Clark's Chapel Church. They were led to build a Methodist Church somewhere between Mt. Zion and Reems Creek. The site chosen was the 2½ acres where this building now stands. They began to build it in 1883.

Aunt Tina Reece gave the 2½ acres for the church and cemetery. Because it was a portion of her inheritance from her father, Adam Eller, the deed reads in part: “adjudged to be in due form and execution of the forgoing deed and conveyance by Christina V. Reece was duly bound by the oath and examination of Logan Mackey one of the sub se witnesses.” The deed was made April 13, 1885 to the trustees of the church and their successors. At that time they were W. T. Clinton, Ephraim Byerly, and A. F. Eller. It was registered August 18, 1885.<sup>9</sup>

The first building on the property has an interesting history. The first church members were: Billy Clinton, Andy Gill, I. W. Gill, A. F. Eller, S. V. Pickens, William Edmonds, George Roberts, Marion Roberts.

When the building was started these men did the work: William Edmonds cut down the first tree; W. T. Clinton struck the first lick on the pine tree to trim it; Jim Blackwell hauled the first load of logs to the mill to be sawed; Joseph P. Eller drove the first nail.<sup>10</sup> It is also said that he drove the last one for he built the church and the furniture in it. He made the lectern for the pulpit that is in the Sunday School rooms now.

The church itself was a clapboard building with handmade wooden shingles. It had two entrance doors at the east end. The pulpit faced the east as it does now. It served its purpose well. People met to hear the word of God preached by different preachers sent by the Conference as well as exorters and lay preachers.

According to old Bible records, William B. Cheek and R. E. Atkins were authorized by the quarterly Conference in 1883 to exort in the Methodist Church.

It was during these years that John H. Moton was converted and embraced the Methodist Protestant faith. He lived with his widowed mother on a farm at Flat Creek. They were tenants. One day when he was plowing, his heart became so heavily burdened, he left the team of oxen

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<sup>9</sup> Buncombe County Book of Deeds, 23 August 1885, 47, p. 507.

<sup>10</sup>Interview with Stella Cheek, Weaverville, N. C., July 1956.

to kneel under a pine tree to pray. The Holy Spirit descended and he heard the voice say "Go and Preach". He did, facing great hardships and temptations. We have heard him say "When I picked up my Bible, I laid my fiddle down."<sup>11</sup> He preached his first sermon in the log school house on Possom Trot. He was baptized by kneeling in running water and having it poured on his head. He married one of his students, Miss Rachel Priscilla Brittain.

In 1884 it was stated "New houses of worship have been built, or in the course of erection or have been completed in Buncombe".<sup>12</sup> This year Clark's Chapel was finished.

From 1885 to 1888, W. T. Kennett was the minister; Ephraim Byerly was layman.

1889 E. A. Plyler was minister. This year 14,018 members were reported in The Buncombe Circuit with 3½ churches.

J. E. Hartsell was minister in 1889 and 1890; J. E. Barrett, layman.

1892 J. B. Naugle was minister; A .F. Eller, lay delegate.

From 1893 to 1897 J. R. Savage was the minister. The laymen were: William Clinton, Vance Pickens, Dr. J. N. Gill. There were six churches.

The name Clark's Chapel first appears in the 1894 conference minutes: Reems Creek, Clark's Chapel, Pleasant Grove, Mt. Zion, Flint Hill, Swannanoa.

Asheville and Swannanoa were detached from the Buncombe Circuit and became the Asheville mission in 1897.

From 1898 to 1900 J. H. Moton was minister; Dr. J. M. Gill, lay delegate. Enrollment of Church members at that time were: Mt. Zion-206; Clark's Chapel.-166; Swannanoa-51; Reams Creek-47; Flint Hill-20; Pleasant Grove-10.

1901 D. A. Braswell, preacher; E. H. Penland, lay delegate .

1902 and 1903 E. G. Lowdermilk, minister; Dr. J. N. Gill, lay delegate.

1904 and 1905 Buncombe was to be supplied by C. W. Bates, a student at Western Maryland during his vacation. The year was finished by J. S. Williams the minister of the Asheville District. A. P. Roberts was the lay delegate.

1906 W. A. Lamar was appointed preacher; Jasper Clinton, lay delegate.

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<sup>11</sup>Story was told to me by my mother, Florin Moton Eller. She was John Moton's oldest daughter. (See Obituary: John Hamilton Moton, page 14)

<sup>12</sup> Minutes, op. cit. 1884.

1907 to 1910 George L. Curry served as pastor. Porter Reece and D. P. Roberts were some of the delegates. During these years the church was moved to its present location. The best material from the old church was used, the foundation, the framing, and the flooring. There was much sentiment and strong feeling about the original flooring, where the old saints knelt and prayed the Holy Spirit down and souls were saved. Also there were new windows added. The pulpit stood where the belfry is now, but because it was not convenient, it was moved to the east between the memorial windows. Three Sunday School rooms with folding doors were in the back. It is impossible to say who all helped with the work, but it is known that Wesley Edmonds did the finishing on the inside. Brother Edmonds was a faithful member and lay delegate that year.

In 1911 G. L. Curry left and W. D. Fogleman came as pastor. G. A. Webster was lay delegate.

From 1912 to 1914 L. T. Hatley came as pastor but asked to be removed for health reasons. Samuel Angel was layman.

1915 to 1916 T. E. Martin was appointed, but was changed to L. F. Fogleman. He served until 1918. The minutes were not clear on the delegates.

In 1918 D. A. Highfill was appointed minister; L. F. Eller, lay delegate.

Clark's Chapel Church is remembered by all who knew anything about it as a meeting place for old friends, members, relatives, and visitors. The Children's Day programs, the decoration days, with dinner on the ground, the singings, and the revival meetings brought everyone together in happiness and Christian fellowship.

From 1919 to 1921 C. L. Spencer was minister; B. R. Watts, lay delegate.

B. M. Williams was minister from 1921 to 1924. Lay persons in that order were: Guy Edwards, Lester Watts, E. E. Roberts, B. W. Williams.

In 1924 J. T. Carter was minister; W. G. Edwards, delegate. When Rev. Carter came he was not ordained, but the second year he was. Clark's Chapel, it seems, has always been a church for beginning ministers. It is good to know that they are given a good foundation.

From 1927 to 1938 the name of Homer Casto appears predominantly. Although he was named minister for 1927-28, Fred Love, an unordained preacher, filled his appointments. These years saw increased interest among the young people. Later Mr. Love married Miss Alma Black.

L. R. Blackwelder and Fulton Roberts were lay delegates. Some statistics from the other years are:

1929-T. E. Pierce, minister; Jeff Carter, lay delegate.

1930-Homer Casto, minister; Fulton Roberts, lay delegate.

1931-E. G. Cowan, minister; W. Guy Edwards, lay delegate.

1932-Homer Casto, minister; J. D. Hampton, lay delegate.

1934-W. L. Harkey, minister; W. G. Edwards, lay delegate.

1935-Homer Casto, minister; J. D. Hampton, lay delegate.

1936-W. C. Clark, minister, who was active in both Weaverville and Asheville. Homer Casto was supply pastor. W. G. Edwards, delegate.

1937-W. C. Clark, minister; E. E. Roberts, lay delegate.

1938-Homer Casto, minister; Joe Roberts, lay delegate.

Brother Casto passed away June 6, 1963 at age of 89 years.

The year 1939 is important in the history of churches. The Methodist Protestants, The Methodist Episcopal, South, and The Methodist Episcopal were brought together in one general conference. It is not necessary to go into detail other than to say Clark's Chapel, although small, stood up to be counted for the consolidation. R. M. Varner was minister; J. B. Edwards, delegate; James Cheek, alternate. The conference was called the Western North Carolina Annual Conference of The Methodist Church.

Plans for remodeling Clark's Chapel was begun in 1940 and 1941, but did not materialize for a few years. J. Max Brandon, Jr. was minister; .E. S. Reeves and Charlie E. Chambers, lay delegates.

1942 and 1943 was supplied by Vernon Hall. The delegates were Charlie Chambers and Miss Nell Mull. These were the years of World War II. Many ministers went into service as chaplains and many young men were taken from the congregations. In one of the Sunday School classrooms there is a honor roll of 38 young men who served in the armed forces. They were members of Clark's Chapel Sunday school at one time. Their names are listed in the back.

From 1944 to 1947 J. D. Pyatt was minister, and Charlie E. Chambers was delegate.

1948 and 1949 Durwood H. Knight, a student from Bob Jones University served as



minister; Thad Jones as delegate. In 1950 Calvin Schrodt, also from Bob Jones University served as substitute, but in 1951 Preacher Knight came back, having finished his studies. C. E. Clark was delegate; Mrs. Shelby Hensley, alternate.

J. E. B. Houser was minister, and Iberea Brittain was delegate in the years 1952 and 1953.

From 1954 to 1958 E. C. Gover was minister. Mrs. Gover was the supply preacher. Thad Jones, Wesley Rice, Mrs. Maggie Blankenship, and Mr. & Mrs. Roy Watts were delegates.

Rev. and Mrs. Gover did a wonderful work in the Weaverville circuit. These were the years the new parsonage, that stands on Church Street in Weaverville, was built. The actual work for remodeling the church was begun. The Educational Building, with the Sunday School rooms and the recreation area as finished. It is impossible to give the names of all those who worked on this project, but everyone in the community helped. There was a good feeling of fellowship and cooperation.

It was decided that the frame church would not be torn down but would be veneered with brick. It is to be remembered that the first logs cut for the first church in 1883 are still within its walls.

A pay-as-we-go plan was set up. The inside was done first. The altar was changed to face the east as in the first church. New pews were bought. New flooring was laid over the old one. The north side was finished, then the east, then the south and finally the west. The men who did this toiled long and hard. Leonard Ponder did the brick work. Conley Hyer laid the carpet. Lester Cheek did more than his share of the other work. Laurels for all those who worked on these projects can only be crowns of glory.

Robert W. Richardson was pastor in 1959. Lester Cheek was delegate. The remodeling of the sanctuary was begun that year.

From 1960 to 1963 James Holt Madison was pastor. The delegates for those years were Lester Cheek, Conley Hyer, Arthur McDaris, J. R. Parker, Mrs. Mary B. Hyder, Charles Sevier, Leonard Ponder. J. E. B. Houser was associate pastor in 1962.

P. S. Barnes was supply preacher in 1964, with Conley Hyer as lay speaker. Jerry Wright and Leonard Ponder were delegates.

From 1965 to 1969 Henry M. King was pastor, with Conley Hyer as church lay leader.

Delegates for those years were Charles Sevier, Dan Gutherie, Mrs. Clyde Blankenship, James Parker, Mrs. Charles Aiken.

There was a change in the annual conference in 1968. The United Evangelical Brethren were admitted. The conference took the name of "Western North Carolina Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church".

Leslie Ditchfield was pastor from 1970 to 1972. His wife, Mrs. Elizabeth Ditchfield, a licensed preacher, and John Nelson helped with the charge. Mrs. Clyde Blankenship was delegate. The churches on the charge were: Alexander Chapel; Clark's Chapel; Pleasant Grove; South Fork; Salem. Lay leader was Veronia Brittain. That year Weaverville Circuit was divided, Salem and Clark's Chapel became one charge.

Donald L. Shuman, present pastor, was appointed in 1974. Conley Hyer was elected lay leader and associate preacher. Lay delegates have been Mrs. Verona Brittain, Mrs. A. C. McCurry, Mrs. Ann White, Mrs. Carl Roberts.

The last phase of the remodeling was completed in 1976. The west end and the pulpit areas were finished. New furniture for the pulpit was donated by Mrs. Bessie Roberts in memory of her father.

A special vote of thanks goes to all who worked, gave, and supported the work.

The Ladies Auxiliary, or Ladies Aid, has always been a supporting organization in the church. In the conference minutes when individual church records began to be recorded, Clark's Chapel always showed a contribution to missions. The names of the first leaders are not known, but the Ladies Aid did exist. What was not contributed in money, was contributed in prayer. Who does not remember the fervent and ardent prayers of Aunt Mary Cheek, Aunt Hattie Parker, Grandmother Moton, Mrs. Fannie Rice Head, and the faithful devotion of Misses Stella and Louise Cheek?

However, some of the names of the Ladies Aid presidents are known. They are Mrs. Hattie Parker, Mrs. Lela Watts, Mrs. Walter Cheek, Mrs. Anne Pine, Mrs. J. D. Pyatt, Mrs. Vernon Hall, Mrs. Pantha Houser, Mrs. Francis Mackey Hensley, and Mrs. Maggie Blankenship.

Time and space does not lend itself to give the names of all the active ladies, but all have contributed generously to missions and the local work in the church. They erected the monument

to Mrs. Christina Reese who gave the church property. They prepared dinners for different groups and clubs to assist in paying for the Educational Building. They raised money by different projects to help pay for the remodeling of the church. There are other deeds too numerous to mention.

After the consolidation of the different churches, the organization was called the Women's Society of Christian Service. The Society is active now with Mrs. Clyde Blankenship as president and Mrs. Carl Roberts as secretary.

The earliest members of Clark's Chapel Church were:

William Edmonds  
 A. F. Eller (Uncle Ab)  
 George Roberts  
 Marion Roberts  
 Billy Clinton  
 Andy Gill  
 I. W. Gill  
 Andy Roberts  
 Ephraim Byerly

The Trustees of the Church in 1885 were:

W. T. Clinton  
 Ephraim Byerly  
 A .F. Eller

The Trustees of the Church in 1896 were:

A .F. Eller  
 W. T. Clinton  
 J. B. Roberts  
 T. N. Edwards

The Superintendents of the Sunday School as far back as could be ascertained are:

Andy Roberts	Lester Watts
John Gill	Arthur McMahan
Albert Eller	Mrs. Vistula Woodall
Arch Webster	Buris Grider
John Henry Rice	B. R. Watts
Walter Cheek	Thad Jones
Fulton Roberts	Lester Cheek

The Sunday School has always been a vital part of the Church. It has held the Church together over many difficult times. When the ministers could not reach the post, the Sunday School took his place. It is regrettable that the names of all the Superintendents could not be found.

Some who contributed to the music are:

Georgia Clinton	Isabella Mackey	Jannelle Jones
Florin Moton	Lucile Roberts	Mrs. Robert Richardson
Ellen Webster Waddell	Merla Watts	Mrs. J. E. B. Houser
Stella Cheek	Iris Blankenship	Mary Ruth Miller
Maydala Brittain	Alma Medler	

A partial list of the Sunday School Teachers:

Mrs. Ataska Kirk	Lucius Eller
Miss Madala Brittain	B. R. Watts
Miss Hattie Roberts	Carl Eller
Mrs. Delnora Phillips	Lester Watts
Mrs. Vistula Woodall	Arthur McMahan
Miss Estie Swain	Uncle Bob Brittain
Mrs. Nelia Cheek	Shelby Hensley
Miss Kate Eller	Don Watson
Mrs. Mary Cheek	Conley Hyer
Mrs. Mamie Watts Black	Lester Cheek
Miss Stella Cheek	James Cheek
Miss Louise Cheek	Rev. J. E. B. Houser
Miss Sara Roberts	Rev. Don Shuman
Miss Vistula Edmonds	Miss Linda Ponder
Mrs. Francis Hensley	Miss Elaine Hensley
Miss May Orlaney	Miss Diane Riddle
Mrs. Carla Blankenship	Mrs. Mary Jo Jones
Mrs. Arch Webster	Mrs. Lela Watts
Mrs. Marjorie Jones	Mrs. Shirley Roberts
Mrs. Maggie Blankenship	Mrs. Conley Hyer
Miss Donna Blankenship	Miss Phyllis Blankenship

There was the Baracca Class for men, and the Philathea Class for the ladies.

The Christian Endeavor was first organized by Lester Watts as president, and Miss Carlie May Cheek as secretary. Mrs. Margaret Willingham was advisor. Later it was changed to Epworth

League.

A ROLL OF YOUNG MEN IN THE ARMED FORCES OF WORLD WAR II

Bill Blankenship	Lattie P. Head, Jr.
Bob Blankenship	Clyde Hensley
Eugene Blankenship	Herbert Hensley
Kenneth Buckner	H. Milton Jones
Alton Carson	Charles Kennedy
Faine Carson	Jesse Kennedy
Ray Carson	Clarence Lankford
Charles Cheek, Jr.	L. B. Mackey
James Cheek	Albert Peeke
Lester Cheek	Bill Peeke
Vance Cheek	Ethan Revis
Edward Cole	Jimmy Revis
Edwin Cole	J. B. Roberts
Alfred Daniels	Carl Robinson
Bill Edmonds	Douglas Weaver
James Edmonds	Leon Weaver
Paul Edmonds	Walter Weaver
Roy Eller	Edward Roberts
Lee Evans	

Miss Louise Cheek, a lifelong Sunday School teacher at Clark's Chapel, made this roll of the young men that had been in her class at some time.

## JOHN HAMILTON MOTON

John Hamilton Moton was born April 4, 1854, in Athens, Ga. His family moved from Georgia to South Carolina when he was but a small boy. After the death of his elder brother he took the place of Father to a widowed mother. In the seventies the family moved to Buncombe County, North Carolina, where he attended Weaverville College and at his conversion at the age of nineteen he decided to enter the ministry.

Brother Moton did quite a lot of work as a local preacher and was a great helper to his pastor in this way. He worked in revivals on Pigeon River Charge and was very effective as a revivalist. His work in Western North Carolina was so effective that he was known through all that section as one who was ever ready to help in the forwarding of God's Kingdom in leading souls to the cross.

He began his ministry as a regular pastor on Ivy Charge after working for ten years as a local preacher.

On December 12, 1879, he was happily married to Miss Rachel Priscilla Brittain, of Weaverville. She proved to him a faithful and courageous helper in all the changing scenes incident to an itinerant preacher's life. They reared a large family of children, five daughters and three sons, all of whom survive, together with the faithful wife. They are as follows: Mrs. Florine Eller, Weaverville; Mrs. J. C. Bodenheimer, Concord; Mrs. Charles Goodman, Lynchburg, Va.; Mrs. M. A. Honeycutt, La Grange; Miss Beulah Moton, High Point; Messrs. A. C and Elmer, Washington, D.C.; C. S. Moton, Albemarle.

For 46 years he served as regular pastor on the following charges: Ivey, Buncombe, Ivey second pastorate, Cleveland, Buncombe second pastorate, Alamance, Winston circuit, Lebanon, Fallston, Albemarle, Welch Memorial, St. Paul, English Street and Winston Station. Upon all these charge he left his impress in such a way as the people who worked with him or were led to Christ by him as to make for better living because of his consecration and earnestness. After a life of faithful service to his Master and the people with whom he came in contact he went home June 23, 1929, after living here for 75 years, two months and 19 days.

When we think of Brother Moton's faithfulness and the irreproachable character which he possessed, and the joy that always came to him when he was permitted to lead a soul to Christ, we cannot but think of what a rejoicing there was when he entered the gates of the Celestial City; for doubtless there were many there to join in the triumphant chorus of the redeemed coming home, and we can imagine though faintly something of the joy of his enraptured soul when he heard Jesus say: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord." Then we feel sure that there were many there to say: "He led me to accept you, dear Master," and this of course added to his crown of rejoicing, for he was among our greatest soul winners and few men of his opportunity ever led so many souls to the foot of the cross.

W. F. KENNETT, Chairman,  
N. G. BETHEA.

# Addendum: The Church History From 1977 to 2023

Compiled and Edited by Rev Ray Kiess

## **Pastors and Lay Leaders**

From the Conference Journal, this is the continuing list of pastors and their years of service:

William Wombough served from 1978 to 1981 and was followed by Harrison Hinson who served through 1985. William Ralph Jacks served for one year and then J. Gregory Dickens served from 1986 through 1991.

The first female pastor appointed to Clark's Chapel was Julianne (Jan) Brittain, who was appointed in 1991 and served until 1994.

When Rick Dean was appointed in 1994, Clark's Chapel became a single ¼ time charge. Rev Dean was a licensed local pastor who became a provisional elder following his service at Clark's. Retired Elder William (Bill) Clodfelter was appointed in 1997 and served until 2003 when Raymond (Ray) Kiess began serving as a licensed local pastor until 2021. In 2020, Clark's Chapel and Alexander Chapel were put on a charge together for one year, adding Marjory Kiess to the list of appointed pastors.

Licensed local pastor Rev J.P. Bolick served from July 2021 until August 2022. Revs Robert Griffin (Christ UMC) and Ray Kiess (Alexander Chapel) served as interim pastors from September to December 2022. Rev Kiess was appointed to serve at Clark's once again beginning January 2023.

Lay Leaders and Lay Delegates have included Gary Massey, Joyceline Huennekens, and Harriet Burnette.

## **Music Ministry**

The music ministry has been anchored by Joyceline Huennekens throughout much of this period, with Mary Miller and Charlotte Clodfelter also helping. In addition, Joyceline's talents as an artist and calligrapher have graced many a bulletin and she donated paintings for the sanctuary. Her husband, Marc, provided expert help on the building appliances and grounds, keeping them functional.

## **Significant Events**

### **Lightning Strike**

Rev Dickens recorded the following about the lightning strike. “On Monday, June 26, 1989, lightning struck the steeple of Clark’s Chapel United Methodist Church of Weaverville, NC. Extensive damage was done to the roof structure over the church sanctuary and to the entire steeple and sanctuary area. Subsequent inspection proved it feasible to rebuild within the church sanctuary structure. The church voted to also do major renovations to other portions of the church building as funds would permit. Clark’s Chapel received a \$5,000 emergency grant from the Duke Endowment for the purpose of hiring an architect and securing building plans. Mr. Donnie Luke of Architectural Design Studio (ADS) in Asheville was hired on as our architect. Greene Construction Co. was hired for roof replacement over the sanctuary, and later, Ray Shepherd was hired to construct new sloped roof over the Educational Building roof. Many churches and individuals donated funds; many workers and individuals donated time and materials.

The Sanctuary was thoroughly rewired with all new electrical wiring and all new lighting systems and the sanctuary received a new oil furnace equipped with air conditioning. The sanctuary entrance-stained glass windows were removed for cleaning and restoration. Much of the building was carpeted. An all-new fellowship hall ceiling with panel lighting was installed. All exterior doors were replaced throughout the church and a handicap access ramp was constructed – as were new front steps and all new sidewalks. New energy efficient windows covered with new vertical blinds inside line each side of the sanctuary. All the sanctuary furniture except for two pews destroyed by fire, were refinished; the two pews were replaced by hand-crafted reproduction made by Phil Ledford of Franklin. A new church sign was designed and placed on the front corner approaching the church.”

### **Building Improvements**

Rev Clodfelter recorded the following. “An electronic Allen organ was donated by Mark Huennekens in 1999. It was dedicated by Rev Clodfelter. A new cloth from Jerusalem was hung behind the cross. The office was decorated and converted into a combination office and parlor. Wallpaper, carpeting, and a new couch were purchased. Old chairs, flower stands, and a



bookcase were refinished. This was done in 2000.

The two stained glass windows behind the pulpit were donated by Ruby and Ott Massey in memory of Ruby's father, Carl H. Roberts, and mother, Bessie F. Roberts in 2000.

New carpet was installed in the Sunday School rooms in 1998 as well as new tables and chairs. Windows were replaced in the education building in September 2001. The Fellowship Hall and kitchen were painted in February, 2003 with paint and labor donated by ?? Mullinex. Two new furnaces were installed in May 2003 funded in part by a District Mission Society grant of \$3,500 towards the total cost of \$5,088."

The roof was replaced in Fall, 2003.

### **Senior Citizens Lunch**

One of the ongoing ministries of this period was the monthly Senior Citizen Luncheon. Organized by Ruby Massey and Perl Phillips, it was a potluck event that provided friendly fellowship and meals to the community. Many who attended spoke warmly of Clark's Chapel's influence in their lives. Sadly, it ended following Ruby's death and Perl's declining health.

### **Connectional Ministry**

During the tenure of Pastor Kiess, Clark's and Alexander Chapel engaged in several activities together, spurred in part because his wife, Marjory, served as pastor at Alexander Chapel. Together, they offered joint Bible Studies, Worship Events and Services, began a United Methodist Women's chapter with Jenny Roberts as the first president, and began a Medical Lending Closet for the Weaverville area.

In addition to partnering with Alexander Chapel, Clark's Chapel was involved in the North Buncombe Missional Network. This area group of churches formed an alliance to promote mission activities together. As this group matured, the major partners became Salem, Christ, Alexander, and Clark's. Highlights included mutual support, hosting of Lent / Easter services in which Clark's hosted the sunrise service followed by breakfast, pulpit swaps, shared choir specials, invitational Bible Studies, and financial support for the Medical Lending Closet.

### **Digital Ministry and the Covid Pandemic**

Clark's Chapel evolved with the technology of the day. Its initial website, [clarkschapelweaverville.org](http://clarkschapelweaverville.org) has been in existence for several years. Recording the worship

services began in 2017 and DVDs were sent to members who were unable to come or who lived far away. Prayer requests not only go over the phone network, but also by email. Rev Kiess has even been known to show videos from time to time in the worship service.

The COVID-19 pandemic presented challenges and opportunities. While in person worship was suspended from March 2020 to January 2021, a weekly service was always provided. Sometimes it was a joint outdoor service at Alexander Chapel, but every week a recorded worship service was provided on the church website. The DVD ministry stopped in favor of the web-based worship service. In addition, a joint Facebook private group page with Alexander Chapel started and Rev Marjory Kiess began a series of devotions and the Howdy Neighbor to facilitate connection. In January 2021, in accordance with CDC, state, and conference guidelines, indoor in-person worship resumed. Clark's Chapel can be proud of its faithful ministry during this difficult time ... the medical lending closet continued to operate, the worship services reached more people, there was partnership with area churches, and continued prayers and financial support.

#### **Gift from Elkwood United Methodist Church**

Member Mary Miller writes: "On Sunday June 26, 2022, Pastor Linda-Arlen Hoxit from Elkwood United Methodist Church presented to Clark's Chapel an official check from Elkwood in the amount of \$238,202.10 to be used 'for pastor's housing or capital improvements to Clark's Chapel's current property.' June 26<sup>th</sup> was the last Sunday before Elkwood United Methodist closed. The money was from the previous sale of their parsonage and was approved by the WNCC to be given to Clark's Chapel. We are grateful for this gift! Pastor Hoxit also presented us with 'A History of Elkwood United Methodist Church', authored by James DeWeese in July 2003.

It is interesting to note that on this date 33 years ago in 1989, lightning struck the steeple at Clark's Chapel and did significant damage to the sanctuary. We held church in the Fellowship Hall until it was repaired. The first Sunday back in the sanctuary was March 4, 1990." (cross reference Rev Dickens entry on page 16 of this document.)

As of May 2023, the Elkwood gift has been used to replace the sanctuary air conditioner with a heat pump, provide for pastor's housing allowance and other small capital improvements. There are plans to address the seepage of water into the furnace room and re-pave the parking

lot.

### History Dedication

In July 2004, Clark's Chapel celebrated a Homecoming Sunday in which Mary Jo Eller Jones' history was dedicated and presented to the church. Rev Greg Dickens was the preacher that day. Here is the service of dedication for the history led by Rev Kiess:

#### Dedication of History

Today, we have a special opportunity to dedicate a history of Clark's Chapel UMC compiled by Mary Jo Eller Jones. Remembering our past is not only important for us today, but it was also important for God's covenant people in the Old Testament. Two events recorded in scripture come to my mind and I'd like to share them with you and reflect on them for a moment. The first recounts the crossing of the Jordan led by Joshua:

#### **Joshua 4:4-7 (NIV)**

*So Joshua called together the twelve men he had appointed from the Israelites, one from each tribe, and said to them, "Go over before the ark of the LORD your God into the middle of the Jordan. Each of you is to take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the Israelites, to serve as a sign among you. In the future, when your children ask you, 'What do these stones mean?' tell them that the flow of the Jordan was cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD. When it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. These stones are to be a memorial to the people of Israel forever."*

And the second recounts the finding of the book of the law under Josiah:

#### **2 Chron. 34:14-15 (NIV)**

*While they were bringing out the money that had been taken into the temple of the LORD, Hilkiah the priest found the Book of the Law of the LORD that had been given through Moses. Hilkiah said to Shaphan the secretary, "I have found the Book of the Law in the temple of the LORD." He gave it to Shaphan.*

#### **2 Chron. 34:29-32 (NIV)**

*Then the king called together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. He went up to the temple of the LORD with the men of Judah, the people of Jerusalem, the priests and the Levites--all the people from the least to the greatest. He read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant, which had been found in the temple of the LORD. The king stood by his pillar and renewed the covenant in the presence of the LORD--to follow the LORD and keep his commands, regulations and decrees with all his heart and all his soul, and to obey the words of the covenant written in this book.*

*Then he had everyone in Jerusalem and Benjamin pledge themselves to it; the people of Jerusalem did this in accordance with the covenant of God, the God of their fathers.*

The Israelites knew what it meant to remember their heritage and their relationship with God. Joshua wanted the people to always know the meaning of crossing over the Jordan, so he commissioned the stone memorial. When the seminary I attend, Gordon-Conwell

in Charlotte, had their ground breaking ceremony for the new building, we were asked to bring a stone of remembrance to that dedication in following this tradition. There is a stone from Weaverville there amongst the many and I have a story to tell of how that building came to be. Homecoming is a time of remembrance for us as we come home and recall the goodness that God has blessed us with. Today, we have the opportunity to see a stone of remembrance as we dedicate a history of Clark's Chapel. The story of Josiah finding of the Book of the Law gives another insight to remembering. I in no way am implying that the finding of a church history is equivalent to finding a piece of forgotten scripture. But I want to suggest that the same excitement and dedication to which Josiah dedicated the Book of the Law is appropriate for us as we dedicate this history. Even more so, I hope that we add to this history so that many years from now, another group of people will be able to look on us with eagerness and excitement as they remember what God had done through us.

I'd like for Harriet Burnett (our Trustees Chairperson), Gary Massey (our Lay Leader) and Janelle McCloskey (daughter of Mary Jo Eller Jones who comprised the history) to come forward as we dedicate this history.

## **Conclusion**

Clark's Chapel's long history in service to the Kingdom of God continues. May another addendum be added that shows the continuing ministry and mission of the people of Clark's Chapel United Methodist Church. Reverend Raymond (Ray) Kiess, Pastor, July 2003 to June 2021; January 2023 to ???.