

Nottingham United Methodist Church History

Present day Nottingham UMC can trace its founding back to December 12, 1898. On that date at a local church conference in Gate City, the Rev. W.C. Carden and the Rev. John L. Weber appointed a committee of men from the Nottingham Community to study the idea of constructing a church within the community. The committee was composed of D.L. Freeman, M.L. Agee, G.H. Nottingham, J.I Agee and W.C. Quillen. M.L. Agee was the grandfather of our current Pastor, Bill Porter.

On February 3, 1899, George and Martha Nottingham deeded the present building site to the Methodist Episcopal Church South of Scott County. The new church was constructed and was dedicated September 3, 1899 by Bishop A.W. Wilson. The text for the sermon came from Romans 8:28: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."

All things had worked together for the people of Nottingham in the construction of the church. The building of the church had to have been a labor of love for God. The men had to float logs down the Holston to Darter Mill where they were sawed into lumber. The lumber was then hauled back to the building site by wagon where it was dressed. They also contributed their time, money and labor in constructing the new church. The women of the community did their part by furnishing food and refreshments to the workers. The result was a new church that was used for worship until Homecoming, August 21, 1983. The interior was lighted by wall and ceiling kerosene lamps. Heat was provided by a wood burning stove. Also on the walls was a clock given by George and Martha Nottingham. The clock hangs today in the narthex of the present day church.

The new church was named Weber's Chapel in honor of its first pastor, Rev. John L. Weber. The church was reportedly filled to capacity as people of the community came by wagon, horseback and walking to hear sermons once each month. In the summer a revival with both morning and evening services would take place for approximately two weeks.

Sunday School was five or six classes with all being taught in the Sanctuary. The superintendent of Sunday School had many duties: That of sexton, providing wood for the stove and building the fire, and ringing the church bell calling the community to worship. Weber's Chapel was one of eight churches

on the Bloomingdale Circuit served by one pastor. The preacher traveled from church to church by horseback. Because of distance and time he would usually spend the night in the community where he was preaching.

In 1950, four classrooms were added to the church. One of the fund raisers for these rooms was a birthday supper. Also in the 1950's the church was renamed Nottingham in order to recognize the Nottingham generosity in donating the church land; and, also to link in more closely to the community it served.

In 1975, the Administrative Board appointed a building committee to study the possibility of building an educational building. The committee was composed of Jim Henderson, Bill Hart, Jack Helms, Bill Porter, Irene Porter, and Gerald Leonard. Ground breaking for the project was held in March 1976, by District Superintendent Rev. James Ball and Pastor Charles Kilbourne. The \$65,000 structure consisting of classrooms, an office, restrooms, kitchen and a fellowship hall was made possible by the generosity of one of the church's earliest members, Mary Ann Cookenour. The enthusiasm of the congregation then turned toward the construction of a new sanctuary. Plans were made; however, financial considerations hampered the effort.

In September 1982, the Pastor Parish Relations Committee appointed a building committee: Jim Henderson, Gene Jayne, Jack Helms, Jacob Wolfe, Mike McMeans, Darrell Kerns, Seburn Phelps, Bill Stapleton and Rhea Jones, Sr. Groundbreaking ceremonies were held on Easter Sunday, April 3, 1983 by District Superintendent Rev. Bob Smith and Pastor Paul Lane. Many years of fundraising by the congregation and a loan from the Holston Conference led to the construction of a new sanctuary in five months. The \$80,000 structure was dedicated on Homecoming Sunday, August 21, 1983 by the District Superintendent Rev. Bob Smith. His sermon was entitled "Whose Church is This?" Approximately 150 people attended the service. In November 1998, over a three-day period, Nottingham celebrated its founding. There was a play about the beginnings of the church, a supper and special celebration services. People shared their memories of different generations of church-goers. These many years has seen richness in programs, plays, singings, and fund raisers. But the most important contribution that Nottingham has made over the years is that of offering the people of the community a place to worship God. Our current pastor is Rev. Bill Porter who has been at Nottingham since June 21, 1998.

The following is a known list of Pastors that served the congregation through the years.

1895-1896 John L. Weber	1933-1938 F.M. Buhrman
1896-1897 J.E. Fogelman	1938-1939 C.G. McKay
1897-1898 S.W. McConnell	1939-1940 No pastor listed
1899-1900 Barney Thomson	1940-1941 W.E. Cavins
1900-1902 J. Wesley Smith	1941-1945 William Marsh
1902-1903 C.H. Fogelman	1945-1947 N.F. Lawhorn
1903-1906 S.T.M. McPherson	1947-1952 W.J. Mercer
1906-1908 J.F. Jones	1952-1953 John Luster
1908-1909 J.I. Cash	1953-1960 J.W. Gott
1909-1911 E.L. McConnell	1960-1968 Carl V. Jones
1911-1913 J.S. Henley	1968-1969 Charles Lindholm
1913-1917 A.B. Moore	1969-1980 Charles F. Kilbourne
1917-1919 W.T. Evans	1980-1987 Paul Lane
1919-1920 F.R. Snavely	1987-1992 Debra Watson
1920-1922 T.J. Houts	1992-1993 Larry Dial
1922-1923 K.W. Cox	1993-1995 Curtis Sluss
1923-1925 G.W. Cox	1995-1996 Doug Tweed
1925-1927 J. W. Stewart	1996-1997 Bill Poister
1927-1929 J.B. Simpson	1997-1998 Bill Wells
1929-1931 K.G. Murray	1998-To Present Bill Porter
1931-1933 T.H. Francisco	