

Church Homecoming Dedicated To Raising Funds For New Sanctuary

November 4th, 1979 was homecoming day at the Ebenezer United Methodist Church on Rt. 1, Granite Falls (the Dudley Shoals Community). A large crowd of members, former members, friends and neighbors were there.

The Rev. Wayne Hoyle, a former pastor of the church, brought the message for the service entitled "Love In Action" from the text in 1st John 4th Chapter.

After the worship service, a bountiful meal was spread on tables which had been set up in the educational building, where worship services are being held while a new church sanctuary is being built.

Homecoming day was dedicated to the task of raising \$5,000 to be applied to the building fund. The amount contributed was in excess of the goal.

After everyone had eaten, the congregation settled down for an hour or so of gospel singing by several different groups which had been invited to participate in the celebration.

Two groups from Lakeview Baptist Church of Hudson, the Bumgarner Family of the Granite Falls area and Little Ann Stafford, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Max Stafford of Hickory, the Ebenezer choir and the Ebenezer quartet participated.

The fellowship, the leading of the Holy Spirit and the love expressed and shared among the people was a marvelous testimony that God is in His world and that He is having His way in many lives today.

A week following the homecoming, Leo McRary turned up a copy of an old church bulletin of "Ebenezer Methodist Church, Dudley Shoals Circuit," dated August 23, 1931, with a picture of the old wood-frame church on the front of the cover. Rev. Jesse L. Ingram, Sr., was pastor at that time. The church at that time was located where the present church cemetery is.

Mrs. Charles T. de Vries said reading the bulletin and seeing names of some that have come and gone "brought back memories of that time I had attended that church as a child and grew up in it."

She said "I was told that the land and the first old log cabin church was donated by the John Spencer family back in mid-1850s and was called the Spencer M.E. Church."

According to Mrs. de Vries, in this church was ten log benches on each side of the building with a dirt floor. The church was replaced by a new wooden church in 1876. It was named Ebenezer Methodist Church South. The pastor at that time was Rev. John L. Brooks. That makes the present church about 130 years old.

The old church had two separate front doors where the ladies and children entered through the door on the right and the men entered on the left. It was heated by an old pot bellied wood burning stove. There was an "Amen Corner" on one side of the church up front where the devout men sat and the "Amen's" were heard throughout the service.

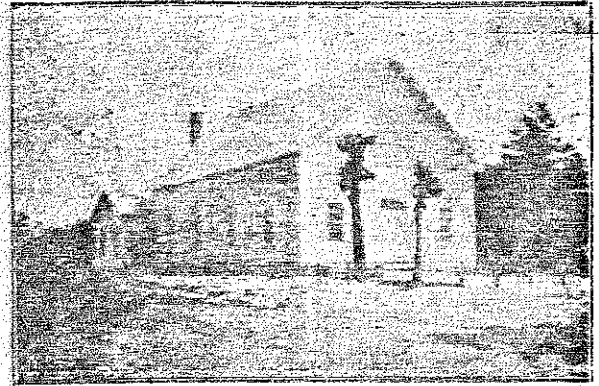
Music was provided by an old pump organ. Members came to church on horseback, in two-horse wagons, buggies, and tassel topped surrys.

Revival services lasted for two weeks, two services per day. The preachers traveled around horseback or walked from home to home visiting the members and neighbors and were served fried chicken, etc., at many homes they visited.

The old wood-frame church building was remodeled in 1930 to provide more space for the growing congregation. Then in February, of 1933 tragedy struck and the building burned to the ground. With help of God and a lot of hard work by a lot of devoted people a new brick church was built, about 500 feet east of where the old church was, and was dedicated the same year, 1933.

Many preachers and Sunday School superintendents and officers of the church have come and gone through the years since then.

In the early 1950's, the need for an educational building became a reality under the leadership of Rev. Thomas McLean or "Preacher Tom" as he was so affectionately called by everyone who knew him, both young and old. "Preacher Tom" served the church for seven years; during his time there the educational building was completed and put to good and needed use.



This old wood-frame Ebenezer Methodist Church in Dudley Shoals was built in 1876, remodeled in 1930, and then tragedy struck. The church burned to the ground in 1933. The structure was located where the church's cemetery is now located.

The Ebenezer Methodist Church in the Dudley Shoals community has come a long way since its founding in the 1850s as Spencers M.E. Church.

Today, the church is building a new sanctuary in front of the church educational building. The new sanctuary replaces the church that was built in 1933 after the second church, which was built in 1876, burned down.

The sanctuary under construction is located at the same site that the previous church was. The previous church building was moved across the road and will be converted into a recreation center for the community.

The church building that stood from 1876 to 1933 was known as the Ebenezer Methodist Church, Dudley Shoals Circuit.

A program of the church's Sunday schedule was printed in 1931 and was located

at the same site that the previous church was. The previous church building was moved across the road and will be converted into a recreation center for the community.

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In recent years, the church became aware that the old 1933 sanctuary was deteriorating to the extent that something was going to have to be done — either spend a lot of money to repair it or replace it. A building fund was started and the church decided to replace the old church with a new structure.

The church is now in the process of building a beautiful new sanctuary and should have it completed in the near future.

Mrs. de Vries said "looking back to where we were and where we are now, I am sure we will move forward with faith in God, with confidence and with hard work and get the job done just as our forefathers did. We are looking forward to our Homecoming service next year in a new and lovely sanctuary."

Members, friends and neighbors are also reminded that if they would like to make a donation or purchase a pew in honor or memory of anyone, to do so as soon as possible by contacting Leo McRary at 396-1815 or 396-1422. He is building committee chairman.

recently by a church member, Leo McEary.

In the printed program dated Sunday morning, August 23rd, 1931, it bears the picture of the church building with Jesse L. Ingram, Sr., as minister.

Sunday School Superintendent was U.S. Spencer and Secretary was Ray Williams. Clyde Burns was church lay leader.

The program noted that the first circuit-wide Epworth League meeting would be held Sunday afternoon, August 30, at 3 pm. Rev. R.D. Ware, pastor of the First Methodist Church, Lenoir, was to deliver the address.

In the director, G.G. Williams was listed as Charge Lay Leader.

Sunday School Superintendents for the Cedar Valley church was D.C. Flowers; U.S. Spencer for Ebenezer and J.P. Marshall for Grace (Grace Chapel).

President of the Epworth League at Cedar Valley was D.T. Smith; Clyde Burns at Ebenezer and G.G. Williams at Grace; President of the Missionary Society at Cedar Valley was Mrs. D.T. Smith; Mrs. J.L. Ingram at Ebenezer and Mrs. J.E. Yount at Grace. Church lay leader at Cedar

Valley was Fred Deal; Clyde Burns at Ebenezer and J.E. Yount at Grace.

Cedar Valley trustees were D.C. Flowers, T.L. Anderson, and M.J. Smith. Ebenezer trustees were U.S. Spencer, T.C. Williams and Clyde Burns. Grace trustees were I.E. Williams, E.C. Smith, and J.D. Sherrill.

Stewards for Cedar Valley

were D.C. Flowers, D.T. Smith, T.L. Anderson, and M.J. Smith.

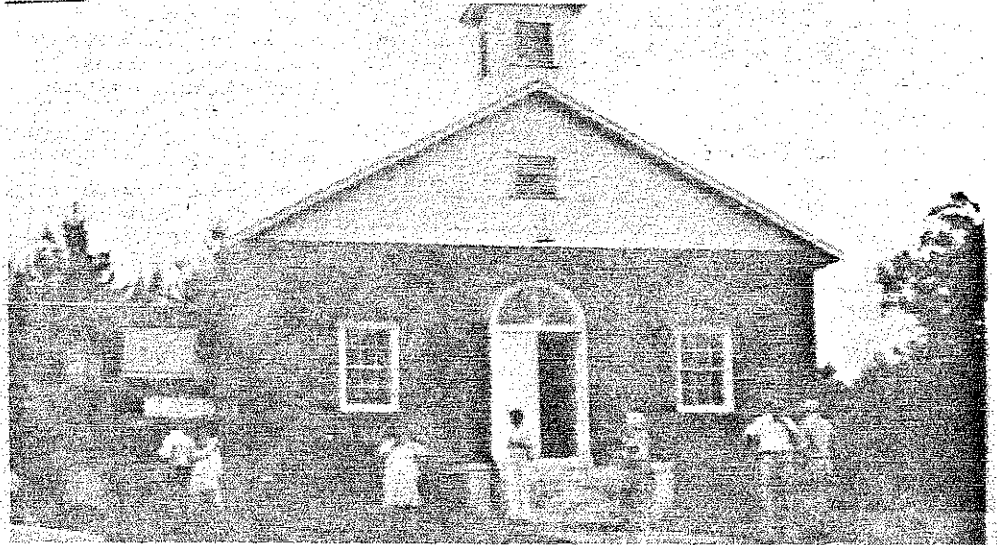
Stewards for Ebenezer were Spencer, Seth Stafford, Burns, Leonard Starnes. Stewards for Grace were John Fowler, P.L. Richards, C.A. Sherrill, G.G. Williams; Mrs. J.E. Yount and M.P. Williams.

Golden Cross Directors for Cedar Valley was Lucie Deal;

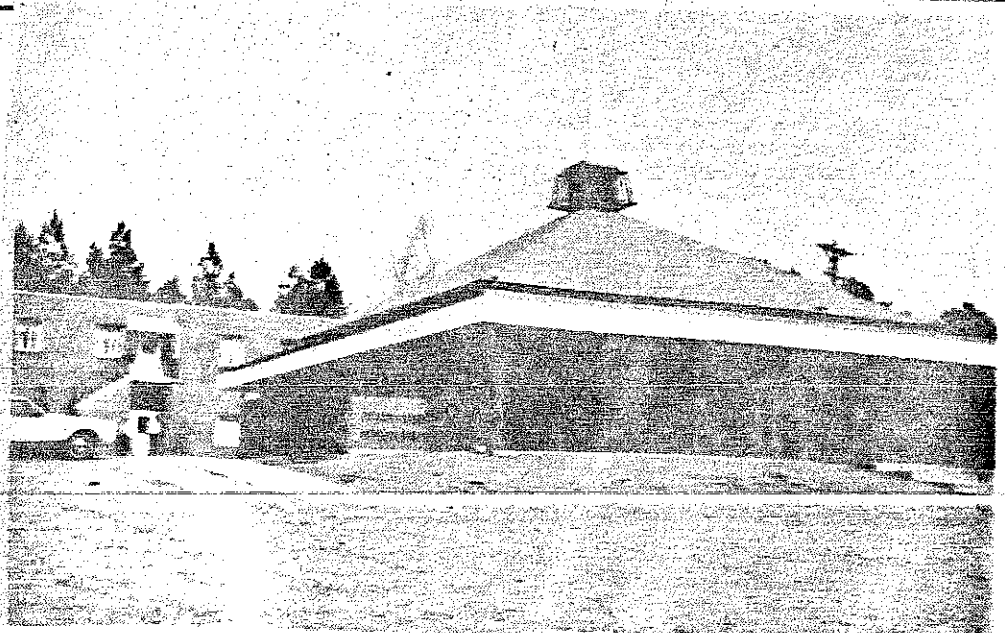
Mrs. Frank Munday, Ebenezer and Mrs. Albert Parlier at Grace.

District Steward was D.C. Flowers and Recording Secretary was D.T. Smith.

The program had advertisers on the back. They were Mackie Furniture Co., Granite Falls; Dr. K.A. Link, Optometrist, Lenoir; Hallman & Williams grocery store, Granite Falls; Granite Upholstering Co., Granite Falls; Falls Print Shop, Granite Falls and Kent's Drug Store, Granite Falls.



Several members of the Ebenezer Methodist Church in Dudley Shoals are shown in front of the church sanctuary that was recently removed to make way for a new sanctuary. The sanctuary pictured was built in 1933.



Church Open House Celebration Set *(Cancelled because of snow)*

An open house will be held at the new Ebenezer United Methodist Church sanctuary on Rt. 1, Granite Falls (the Dudley Shoals Community), March 2, from 2 to 6:30 pm. At 7 pm, there will be an official opening service in the sanctuary which will be conducted by Rev. Gene Little, District Superintendent of the Statesville District. Beginning with this service on March 2, a week's revival will begin. The services will be led by Rev. Garland Winkler of Hickory. Everyone is invited.

Granite Falls Press Times, Feb. 28, 1980