

HISTORY OF METHODIST WOMEN
DUKE MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Resource: Ninety Years of Duke Memorial Church
1886 - 1976

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Privately Printed 1977
Excerpts from Chapter 10, pg. 69

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As the new church began, there was of course, a need for the women to add their strength to this growing organization; and one of the first developments was the formation of a Ladies' Aid Society in 1886.

In 1901 the different small societies united in one group called the Woman's Missionary Society. Mrs. J. C. Angier was elected president. By 1906 there were sixty-six active members who pledged \$324 to the North Carolina Conference Missionary Society. In 1908 Miss Lillie Duke, Mrs. Angier's sister, organized a group known as the Bright Jewels. The purpose of this organization for young people was to inform and train them for missionary work.

By 1912 the foreign and home missionary societies in the Methodist Church, South, had officially come together as the Woman's Missionary Society.

Mrs. Angier served as president until 1921; by that time the pledge to the conference was \$537.86. Mrs. J. E. Stagg followed her as president. Under Mrs. Stagg's guidance a birthday fund was started for local work for the needy. In 1925 Mrs. H. C. Satterfield was elected president. She not only organized a junior missionary society for girls but also divided the membership of the adult society into four circles for better participation by each member. This method of organization remains unchanged.

The Golden Jubilee in 1928 was a celebration within the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. At the time, Mrs. C. D. Rigsbee was the president of the local society with 105 members; under her leadership two more circles were added. In 1929 the society published a cookbook named Digest of the Day.

In 1929 the women stated that they had collected \$12,000, with no contribution less than \$100 for a new Sunday School Building.

In 1930 while Mrs. T. E. Allen was president, the society paid the expenses of a Japanese girl who graduated from Duke University. Also, money was raised to buy kitchen equipment.

Mrs. James Cannon III was president in 1931 when \$1,000 was raised to furnish the ladies' parlor. By 1933 there were 225 members in the group. Mrs. J. P. Breedlove became president in 1934 and again in 1938. It was during her first term that the 240 members sent \$1,567 to the conference.

A big milestone was reached in 1940: the Woman's Missionary Society united with the women in the North under the name of The Woman's Society of Christian Service. At the same time this new organization came into being, a sister group was formed of working women and named the Wesleyan Service Guild.

In 1941 a new constitution and bylaws were drawn up for this new society. Mrs A. H. Borland was the charter president, and Mrs. W. R. Mattox was chosen as the first president of the guild.

During World War II all of the circles, now ten in number, met at the church on the day of the general business meeting in order to save time and gas. The Wesleyan Service Guild continued to meet at night as it was composed of working women.

Mrs. H. A. Borland again became president in 1949, and Margaret Umberger was made president of the guild. The decision was made to elect officers for two-year terms alternating with those of circle leaders. The budget for 1949-1950 was \$1,915. After a study of Japan, money was appropriated to keep two Japanese students in school.

The tenth anniversary of the Woman's Society of Christian Service was celebrated in 1950 with a program on the growth of the work and prospects of future development.

In 1951, while Mrs. Borland was still president, Mrs. Mary Canada Stone was elected president of the Wesleyan Service Guild. Mrs. Marshall T. Spears became the next president of the Woman's Society and Mary Anna Howard of the guild. There were now 247 members. A food sale was held to buy draperies for the ladies' parlor. Draperies were also bought for the junior department of the Sunday school. The society served supper on Sunday evenings for the Youth Fellowship and contributed \$69 toward the purchase of tables in the dining room.

Mrs. F. R. Darkis was the president in the 1953-1955 period. A fall bazaar, with Mrs. Fred Duncan as chairman, netted \$1,205.95.

In 1955-1957 Mrs. George T. Hargitt was president of the society and Mrs. W. R. Mattox of the Wesleyan Guild. Four large boxes of clothing were sent to Korea, and \$118 was given to help furnish the new building of the Methodist Retirement Home. With Mrs. Borland, Mrs. James Cannon III, and Mrs. Walter J. Seeley as the committee that did the work. The bylaws were revised and later they were used as a model throughout the conference.

Mrs. J. S. Harvey was president in 1957 when a bazaar, with Mrs. C. E. Jordan as chairman, was held to raise money for a dishwasher, a coffee urn, and other much needed equipment. In 1958 Mrs. James B. Heizer was elected president of the Woman's Society and Rhoda Fitzpatrick of the guild.

Mrs. James Cannon III was president of the society in 1961-1962; Mrs. Wyatt Dixon, of the guild. During this time books were given to the church library; used Christmas cards were sent to Taiwan, Liberia, and Sarawak; transportation was provided for the residents of the Methodist Home; clothing was provided for a boy in the Methodist Home for Children; clothes were sent to German refugees; money was sent to Taiwan, Japan, Pembroke, Bennett College, and an Alaskan college; and a contribution of \$280 was given to Dr. and Mrs. June Stallings and Gloria Stevens for the Nicaraguan project. In his report to the quarterly conference, the Reverend Edgar B. Fisher stated, "It is hard to estimate the amount of good that is being accomplished by this group of women."

In 1963 Mrs. J. C. Saunders, Jr., became president of the Woman's Society. Mrs. Franklin Harrell was the next president of the guild.

In 1965 the Silver Anniversary of the Woman's Society of Christian Service was celebrated at the annual conference, which was held at Duke Memorial Church. "One Witness in One World" was the theme of the conference.

There were 327 members at this time; the pledge sent to the conference was \$4,822.60 from the WSCS and \$680 from the guild.

During this administration the church library was completely reorganized with Mrs. James Cannon III as the chairman of the project. In 1966 the library was named the Margaret Faw Cannon Library in appreciation of her dedicated work.

Mrs. Borland was still president in 1966. The circles were re-arranged to facilitate the attendance of their respective members. The Wesleyan Guild, with four units, continued its evening meetings. The co-ordinator of the WSCS and the guild was Mrs. C. L. Read.

Mrs. Lucile Shore Coburn was president of the society, 1967-1968; Mrs. W. J. Seeley, 1969-1970; Mrs. Alan Whanger was elected in 1971. During Mrs. Whanger's first year, partial support of missionaries in Brazil was started; and the society became especially interested in the Reverend and Mrs. J. W. Garrison. In 1971 an alter guild was formed following a proposal by Mrs. George Cleeves.

In the fall of 1972 the first big festival was held in the Bradshaw Room and Fellowship Hall. Over \$4,000 was the net result; \$1,813.23 was allocated for home missions, to be used within the city; \$1,812.22 was earmarked for foreign missions. The 1973 Fall Festival was a huge success clearing over \$5,000.

As the women's work in the church was completely re-organized about this time and the society year was changed to coincide with the calendar year, Mrs. Whanger continued to serve as president. The official name of the organization was changed to United Methodist Women. The Wesleyan Guild lost its identity and became another circle. Many offices were combined; and the officers were given new titles such as Mission Coordinator for Christian Personhood, for Supportive Community, for Christian Social Involvement, or for Christian Global Concerns.

The purpose of United Methodist Women is to form a "community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of missions through participation in the global ministries of the church."

PAST PRESIDENTS

1886 - 1900	Officers unknown
1901 - 1921	Mrs. J. C. Angier
1921 - 1925	Mrs. J. E. Staggs
1925 - 1928	Mrs. H. C. Satterfield
1928 - 1930	Mrs. T. E. Allen
1931 -	Mrs. James Cannon III
1932 - 1934	Mrs. J. M. Ormond
1935 - 1937	Mrs. J. P. Breedlove
1938 - 1940	Mrs. W. P. Clements
1940 - 1942	Mrs. A. H. Borland
1943 - 1944	Mrs. F. R. Darkis
1945	Mrs. Charles E. Jordan
1946 - 1947	Mrs. W. H. Cherry
1948	Mrs. T. W. Young
1949 - 1951	Mrs. A. H. Borland
1951 - 1953	Mrs. Marshall T. Spears
1953 - 1955	Mrs. F. R. Darkis
1955 - 1957	Mrs. George T. Hargitt
1957 - 1959	Mrs. J. Shields Harvey
1959 - 1961	Mrs. James B. Heizer
1961 - 1963	Mrs. James Cannon, III
1963 - 1964	Mrs. J. C. Sanders, Jr.
1964 - 1967	Mrs. A. H. Borland
1967 - 1969	Mrs. Lucille Shore Coburn
1969 - 1971	Mrs. Walter J. Seeley
1972 - 1975	Mrs. Alan D. Whanger
1976 - 1977	Mrs. W. T. Coman
1978 - 1981	Mrs. Spencer Ervin
1982 - 1983	Mrs. Robert W. Weynand
1984 - 1985	Mrs. Houston V. Blair
1986 - 1989	Mrs. Thomas S. Coble
1990 - 1991	Mrs. Thomas A. Langford
1992 - 1993	Mrs. W. A. Wilson, Jr. & Mrs. Thomas H. Stark, Co-Chairmen
1994 - 1995	Mrs. Alan D. Whanger
1996	Mrs. Word C. Clark

List of Presidents updated by
Virginia P. Clark
1996 President UMW - DMUMC