

HISTORY OF EMMANUEL PARISH

1887. Southern Pines was incorporated. That same year the Rev. Robert T. Thorne, a semi-retired Episcopal priest residing in Asheboro, began coming to Southern Pines to offer non-denominational services on a regular basis. In 1891 land on the corner of New Hampshire Avenue and Page Street was purchased, and by June, 1893, the first service was held in the new non-denominational church. It was a service in memory of the Rev. Thorne who, unfortunately, had died in December, 1892, without seeing the completion of his church.

As time passed, the other original denominations constructed churches of their own and this early church became increasingly Episcopalian in character. In 1897 a resident priest, the Rev. Henry T. Gregory, was assigned to the church; on Christmas Day, 1899, the church was designated an Episcopal Mission and named "Emmanuel." In the spring of 1900 the church was officially consecrated by Bishop Joseph Blount Cheshire. At that time, Bishop Cheshire set the bounds of the parish as Moore, Lee, Hoke and Montgomery Counties. While today Emmanuel serves only Moore County, it remains one of the nation's largest parishes. During the Rev. Gregory's ministry, land uphill on the "outskirts" of town at Massachusetts Avenue and Ridge Street was purchased as a permanent site for Emmanuel Church.

Following the Rev. Gregory's retirement in 1912, the church languished until April, 1926 when, with the Rev. Alaric J. Drew as the new rector, services were held year round and church attendance grew. Plans were laid for a large sanctuary, a parish hall and a rectory to be built on the Massachusetts Ave. site; by September of that year, ground was broken for a new "parish hall" which was completed the following March.. During the hard economic times of the 1930's the vestry realized that the "parish hall" could be made into a suitable sanctuary. Then, during World War II a new parish hall was added to the back of the church, and in 1946/47 a new pipe organ was donated, as was the new addition to house it. In 1945 Emmanuel was formally consecrated a church and two years later the original mortgage was paid off. Eventually the rectory was built. Over the years additions to the original building were made. In 1982 the rector, the Rev. Nicholson B. White, developed a plan for moving the altar away from the back wall so the priest could face the congregation while celebrating communion and for moving the organ to an enlarged balcony. The empty space left by the removal of the organ was transformed into the chapel. In 1987-88, during the tenure of the Rev. Samuel C. Walker, the present parish hall was built and renovations were made to the existing church building.

Throughout our history we have celebrated our faith with reverence and joy in **liturgy and music**. In the early years of the parish, Morning Prayer was at 10:30a.m. on Sunday followed by Sunday School. Evening Prayer was every Friday at 7:30 p.m. For many years services were held only in the fall, winter, and spring as many parishioners returned north for the hot summer months. Also for many years, Morning Prayer was the norm for Sunday morning with communion celebrated once a month. Eventually, an early morning communion service was celebrated every Sunday. When the Rev. James D. Franklin arrived at Emmanuel, Holy Eucharist became the norm at all three Sunday services. The Rev. Franklin also encouraged lay people to become more involved, resulting in a strong program of lectors and lay eucharistic ministers.

Music has been an integral and joyful part of worship at Emmanuel. Throughout the early history of the church there were choirs. Following the installation of the original organ in 1947, choir directors were paid a small stipend for their services on Sunday. Eventually a children's choir was formed, It wasn't until 1986, however, that the Vestry hired it's first full time organist/choir director. Under the leadership of first, Alan Reed, and ten years later, Johnny Bradburn, the choirs have performed many special musical programs: sacred programs, concerts, musical plays and Evensongs. Music at Emmanuel continues to be a joyous highlight of Sunday worship.

Outreach has played a major role in Emmanuel's history. Early in the twentieth century the Women's Auxiliary was organized. Through sales of homemade goods these women raised money to help fund church repairs and to donate to hospitals and missionary organizations. In addition, Sunday offerings went to help domestic missions.

During the early 1930's the women of Emmanuel established the Thrift Shop, the proceeds to be used on a fifty-fifty basis for the needs of the church and for community outreach. Today, one-third of the profits are given to the church and two-thirds to community outreach. For many years the shop occupied various locations in Southern Pines until, finally, the Thrift Shop used their own funds to buy the building on East Broad Street between Pennsylvania Avenue and New Hampshire Avenue; they paid off the mortgage three years later.

During World War II the parish hall was open 24 hours for soldiers who sometimes bedded down for the night.

In 1946 a nursery school/kindergarten using the the Sunday School rooms was begun. Two years after the Reverend Martin Caldwell became the rector, an "education building" was constructed to service both the Sunday School classes and the nursery school. With this expanded space, the nursery school was expanded and renamed "Episcopal Day School." Today the school serves approximately 200 students - from three year olds through fifth grade.

Prior to his death in 1958, Bishop Edwin Penick expressed a desire to situate an Episcopal retirement home in North Carolina. Mrs Katherine Boyd, widow of James Boyd, gave land for what is now known as Penick Village. Later, Mr. Peter Katavalos gave the adjoining property to enlarge the site. From the beginning, there has been a strong relationship between Penick Village and Emmanuel.

In January, 1983, the Rev. White proposed serving food from Emmanuel's kitchen to the indigent in the area, the Bethlehem Project. With the arrival of the Rev. Walker, this project was expanded and renamed Bethlehem Two. Through Bethlehem Two, in conjunction with Moore County Social Services, bags of groceries were provided to needy families. This project grew to be what we now know as the Coalition for Human Care; it remains an important outreach of our congregation.

Also under the stewardship of the Rev. White, a relationship between the diocese of North Carolina and Haiti was established. Our youth traveled to Haiti on mission trips and teams of doctors and nurses from Emmanuel went to teach and to perform surgery. While the Rev.

Walker was here, clergy and parishioners went on mission trips to Belize, and under the stewardship of the Rev. Franklin youth and adults traveled to Honduras to help the people there.

The Rev. Walker led a group of parishioners interested in bringing Habitat for Humanity to Moore County. Members of Emmanuel worked on all aspects of the project of building of houses and also provided Habitat with office space in the old rectory. In 1995 Emmanuel partnered with The Village Chapel in Pinehurst to build a Habitat house. Habitat for Humanity also remains as an important outreach of Emmanuel.

As houses on the block around Emmanuel were purchased by the church they were used by the Children's Center and by Hospice in their formative years and later renovated for use by the day school.

During this time, the Moore County Literacy Council had it's beginnings with training and meetings held at Emmanuel. We continue to provide space to the council for training, tutoring and special functions.

The Rev. Franklin brought the Stephen Ministry, a ministry of pastoral care espoused by 75 denominations, to Emmanuel. That ministry has grown to involve members of several churches in the community.

Our youth have been very much involved in outreach. It was the young people of Emmanuel who brought "Young Life" to this area. As mentioned above, these young people have also been involved in mission trips to Haiti in the 1980's and to Honduras in the 1990's. They have worked in the local community helping to repair homes of those unable to do so themselves. More recently, our youth traveled to New Orleans to help rebuild homes there and to Durham to partner with La Iglesia el Buen Pastor, a Spanish speaking mission church, in building their playground.

In 1999 Emmanuel enjoyed a year long Centennial celebration with the burying of a time capsule, music programs and a celebration dinner.

Sadly, in March, 2005, the congregation was stunned by the sudden and untimely death of the Rev. Franklin. After a year and a half of working through the healing process, Emmanuel called our current rector, the Rev. John G. Tampa.

Since the arrival of the Rev. Tampa, significant progress has been made in the four areas of a strategic plan formulated by the Vestry: 1) to broaden and deepen Pastoral Care, 2) to focus on balanced growth to include all demographic groups in the community, 3) to re-establish a vibrant youth ministry, and 4) to have a more active and visible presence in the community. We have had a 19% increase in average Sunday attendance with the result that we are now exceeding the desired 80% capacity, after which attendance begins to decline. Such growth impacts staff size as well as space for Christian education, fellowship, outreach, parking and the Episcopal Day School facilities. Therefore, we have begun a comprehensive plan to expand our facilities to meet our needs for many years to come.

"This project is so much more than an 'expansion plan'. It is truly a parish-wide mission guided by the Holy Spirit and a journey of faith for each of us. The expanded facilities will enable us to broaden and deepen our pastoral care for both Emmanuel parishioners and members of the wider community. They will enable us to welcome all who come to us for growth, healing, comfort or just to worship in beauty and peace. The facilities will provide gracious spaces for children, youth, and young adults. And in these spaces we will be able to accommodate the entire parish at fellowship events and to provide an educational environment for the children we are blessed to serve." (Our Heritage...Our Generation)

Let us, the Emmanuel family, as we move forward growing our programs and enlarging our facilities, pause to remember all those saints who have gone before us, loving and serving God, to make Emmanuel the strong vibrant church it is today.

(Much of this history was excerpted from "Emmanuel Episcopal Church -- The First Hundred Years" written by Deirdre Newton for the Centennial booklet. Copies of the complete history are available in the church office.)