

An Abridged Version of FUMC Palmetto's Church History

*As provided by Church Historian and lifetime member, Alice Myers,
upon the celebration of FUMC's Memorial Dedication*

Dedicated February 29, 2004

Church Memorial Tour Route and Comments
(Numbers represent stopping points)

#1

From the south, we enter by the **Bill and Irene Boyd Garden and Fountain**, a memorial gift from the Boyd family and friends honoring Rev. Bill and Irene Boyd who served as visiting ministers of our church. Irene also sang in the choir. They were well loved by members of our church.

#2

This entry way was constructed in 1992 when our church and Fellowship Hall were joined. Our church, the first church to be organized in Palmetto, was recognized formally by the Florida Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, with the appointment of its first pastor in 1882. **Our Fellowship Hall on our right was built in 1992 and named Centennial Hall.** It is a story of its own, spearheaded by the United Methodist Women who had raised and invested the funds to completely and professionally stock the kitchen. The hall brought new life to our church. In 1998, (six years ago tomorrow) in a special ceremony, the Fellowship Hall was dedicated to honor Virginia Gillon Smith, whose foresight, research and solid leadership brought about the creation of the church Thrift Shop, which enabled the church to retire its long standing indebtedness.

#3

Our Sanctuary on the left, was our second church structure. Construction of this new church began in 1924, with the consecration of the church following in 1925. (We Methodists do not dedicate buildings until they are debt free.) **The church cost \$35,000.**

#4

The stained glass windows by the elevator were two of the original windows centered in the front wall (the 4th Street side) of this church. This one was installed here when this hallway was built to join the old church and the Fellowship Hall. The recently installed second window was mounted, hung and lighted by the Thrift Shop.

#5

Now, we will walk down this short flight of stairs to the Chapel. **This floor of the church housed the original Sunday School rooms, Fellowship Hall and kitchen.**

#6

The Chapel and the rooms immediately above it (library and sacristy) were added to the church in 1959. For a while, the Chapel was used for that purpose and later only as a Sunday school room. **It was completely restored in 1994 by the Glory Group.** Its members, with memorial gifts, bore the expenses of the restoration. They did the work with the help of some of the faithful men of the church, who moved the pews by rope down from the northwest storeroom of the choir loft. The stained glass in the Chapel doors was the creation of our friend Mrs. Betty Wheeler Plum.

Our stained glass artist for the windows depicting the life of Christ was Brad Smith.

Brad Smith is a distinguished veteran, a retired naval officer who spent seven years in solitary confinement as a Vietnamese prisoner of war. (Mr. Smith hopes to join us before the conclusion of this program. His first grandchild is being christened at this very hour at another church.) Mr. Smith chose the background color for the Chapel windows to complement the existing stained glass in the door panels. The designs were created at the requests of the families who commissioned the windows.

#6a

The south window, the Guardian Angel, is a memorial to Mr. and Mrs. Edward H. Marshall by their daughter, Ann Marshall. As where they grew up, this is a peaceful setting of hills and lakes as a background for the guardian angel who has guided and watched over the Marshall Family, including many short-lived lives. Mr. and Mrs. Marshall were faithful members of this church.

#6b

The scene of Christ in the garden is a memorial for three longtime church families. The Parrish Family joined the church in its second or third year (1883-1884). The Pollard Family came in the 1890's, and the Myers Family in 1920. This is the gift of Alice Myers, honoring the love and service of five generations of her families to this church.

#6c

The center panel, the Cross and the Crown, is the focal point for the stained glass panels. It is a memorial to J. Raymond Smith by his wife, Virginia Gillon Smith and their son, Dr. C. Gillon Ward. Raymond Smith was a member of this church for 75 years, a former Trustee and a member of the Administrative Board.

#6d

The window of Christ and the Children was the gift of Calvert N. and Nancy Campbell Courtney, honoring their families – the Campbell and Courtney Families – who have been active members of this church for more than 80 years. The window represents the love of this family and their children for each other and Jesus Christ. Ralph Campbell was a longtime greeter and user. He spoke each Sunday to everyone who attended this church.

#6e

The beautiful Ascension window was commissioned by Carl Foust, before his accident and death, as a memorial for his family. He and his beloved wife, Dorothy, have been devoted workers in the life of this church.

Now we continue our journey.

For the windows in the Sunday School rooms, Brad Smith recreated the scallop shell which is the base of the beautiful stained glass windows in the sanctuary.

#7

Classroom 1 was the original church kitchen. After the stained glass candy session each year, the church was permeated with the spicy scents of those candies.

Here is the Patricia Langford memorial window. This stained glass window is a memorial by her husband and children. Pat Langford was a life member of this church, who was greatly involved in its music ministry as was her mother, Hazel Smith Toft, a longtime member of the choir.

#8

In Classroom 6 are the windows dedicated to Robert James Boast and Roger M. Murray, Sr.

#8a

This window is a memorial to Robert James Boast by his wife JoAnne Boast. Robert Boast was a faithful friend of this church.

#8b

This window is the Roger Murray memorial window, a gift of his wife Lucille and family. Roger Murray served in many capacities in this church, including the Board of Trustees and was Chairman of the Administrative Board. He gave many hours of service to the Drive-In ministry that began in this church.

#9

Classroom 2 is the site of the memorial to Clara Dorothea McRee, given by Tom and Patty McRee. Mrs. McRee was a longtime Communion Steward of the church. She chaired the Women's Missionary Society and accepted many other responsibilities in the church.

#10

Classroom 3 has become the long-awaited Bride's Room and church parlor. The Restoration Fund underwrote the cost of furnishing this room with Nancy Courtney, Eileen Hoffner and Lois Skokos overseeing the work. Carol Hutchinson and Corinne Thompson, Amy Vigil's mother, gave beautiful pieces of counted cross stitch. (Amy Vigil is the wife of Pastor Rafael "Rafe" Vigil, Jr.) Betty Wheeler Plum created the stained glass cross.

This is the location of the Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Hunt memorial window, a gift of their son and daughter-in-law Wendell and Melba. Both couples served the church in many ways. Among her other services, Mrs. W. B. Hunt was a longtime Communion Steward. Son Wendell accepted many duties including longtime service as Church Treasurer.

#11

Classroom 5, the Searchers' Classroom, is the site of the memorials honoring Dr. Sam and Jean Miller and honoring Irma Walkup and Johnny Maloney.

#11a

The Miller memorial is a gift of Dr. Sam Miller and his family. His service to the church is extensive and includes chairing the Board of Trustees. Jean was very active in the music ministry of the church. Her "Joyful Noise" youth choir was popular and very proficient.

#11b

This memorial is the gift of Dr. Scott and Suzanne Maloney. They honor her mother and his father who were cancer victims. The Maloneys are greatly involved in the children's ministry and prayer ministry of the church.

Now this tour continues upstairs via the small staircase at the end of this hall, or you may use the elevator. Return to the Sanctuary level and visit the narthex and the Library/Groom's Room. Also note the descriptions of the Sanctuary stained glass windows. Observe the Rose window over the front entrance. The Ladies Aid Society paid a total of \$250 for that window.

#12

The narthex, at the front entrance to the church, was added in 1970 to protect church goers from inclement weather. It was then the center doors were hung, replacing the six original stained glass windows including the lighted one you just saw downstairs. (Before this time, one entered the church through the side aisle doors. Our original sanctuary in this church was extensively remodeled in 1958 at a cost of \$50,000. In the early life of this church, the aisles ran from the northwest to southeast corners of the sanctuary, with the chancel area, pulpit and altar located in the southeast corner.) The other windows were reserved for future use. Two were placed at either end of the narthex, and two were used to decorate the new parsonage. Plain glass windows were used in the front of the entrance so that the attention of those entering the church was captured immediately by the beautiful Indian mahogany cross that had been constructed by Cofer Lybrand. The imported wood was the gift of Mrs. Anita Mount. Later, the windows were etched with angels – a gift of the Thrift Shop.

#13

The Library/Groom's Room and Sacristy in the southeast corner of the church were formerly the offices of the pastor and his secretary. These were added to the church in 1959. As a gift to the church, the Thrift Shop commissioned the White Studios in Sarasota to design and create those stained glass windows. Note all of the windows.

The circuit rider is symbolic of John Wesley and all those who served the early Methodist Church in America. Our own church was served by a circuit rider until the appointment of our first pastor in 1882. Note also the window that pictures our own original church. The Thrift Shop also provided the furniture and other appointments for these rooms.

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If you have any questions about the history of the church, Church Historian Alice Myers, 722-3102, will be glad to answer them. Tours can be conducted for your family and friends.

Artist Brad Smith's comments to Church Historian, Alice Myers, about creating and producing stained glass windows include the following:

Brad Smith said he chose the background color for the Chapel windows to complement the existing stained glass in Mrs. Plum's door panels.

Mr. Smith, in describing the production of artistic stained glass, said 60% of the time is spent in design and study of glass to achieve what the artist envisions the final design will be. The artist must have the final goal in his mind because he cannot see what it will look like. The artist envisions what the final design will look like when it is finished. Glass is selected from a variance of glass. Colors and shades are selected to give depth to two-dimensional design. All colored glass is made by mixing various elements in the furnace as it is produced. For example, red is made by adding gold. That is the most expensive glass. The red/cranberry in the background of each window would cost about \$30 per sq ft wholesale. Each company has its own staff of chemists who have their own secret recipes to produce their own unique colors and patterns. The mixtures are top secret, i.e. as is the "Coca-Cola" recipe, and are closely guarded. The glass with color in it comes that way. The glass used here is a combination of domestic glass and imported glass. As to glass made here in the United States, many of the companies producing domestic glass did so during the "Tiffany era." Some of the glass of colors was produced in Germany and France. Smith further described the work by saying that in producing stained glass windows, the artist must go through 30 plus distinct steps to complete the windows. This includes the design, cutting, fitting the glass and soldering. This is an extremely labor intensive process. About 80% of the cost is labor.