

**New Hope United Methodist Church  
1884-2009**

**CELEBRATE THE MOMENT**

Look around.....take in the moment,  
It will never come again.  
Accept the blessing, feel its warm embrace..  
Glimpse the glory of the Giver  
in the wonders near at hand.  
Celebrate...for God is in this time and place.  
(BJ Hoff)

*What was the church community like in the mid-1800's? The churches shared a preacher--most often 4 churches--and each church got to hear a sermon or "preaching" service on their appointed Sunday. Services were lengthy--lasting from mid-morning to mid-afternoon. This situation existed at nearby Robert's Presbyterian, Asbury Methodist, Mt. Creek Baptist and New Prospect Baptist churches. Members of these 4 churches would go to the church with the preaching service and, with careful planning, could hear 2 Baptists, 1 Methodist and 1 Presbyterian service a month. Fifth Sundays were reserved as "singing Sundays".*

*The proximity of the churches, intermarriages, the spirit and necessity of the times, made for much coming and going of members between churches. Today, many of our old-family members have ancestors from Mt. Creek to Asbury!*

*It is important to note here, that in the early days of Anderson, not many of the denominations allowed music in the church, especially the "hard-shelled Baptists".*

*There was a practice in the Baptist church, called "churching", or being "turned out", for such things as cursing, drinking excessively, fighting, dancing, breaking the Sabbath or trading a horse on a Sunday. My, how times have changed!*

*The year was 1878---Rutherford B. Hayes was President of the United States--the silver dollar was legal tender, and petroleum jelly was marketed as Vaseline for the first time.*

*Here, in Anderson, as reported in the Anderson Intelligencer, an event occurred that had a wide impact on the community: "The exclusion of J.T. Busby from New Prospect Baptist Church."*

*Listen to an excerpt from the Busby Genealogy: "It is believed that at one time both Cynthia and Jim were members of New Prospect Baptist Church. Most Baptist churches, at that time, would not tolerate dancing and such types of entertainment. It seems that both Jim and Cynthia enjoyed going to old time square dances and did so on occasion. Jim could play the fiddle quite well and took part in the dances. It seems that the New Prospect Baptist Church people learned of Jim and Cynthia attending the dance and asked them to attend a church meeting about the incident. Jim evidently knew that they would turn him out of church for attending the dance. Before they could decide what to do about the incident, Jim told them that they could not turn him out, since he had resigned and was no longer a member. He further stated that he would build a church on his own property. He had plenty of timber on his land and his son-in-law, Charlie Mattison White, who was a good carpenter, cut the timber, had it sawed into lumber and proceeded to construct the church. This was the beginning of New Hope Methodist Church.....established in 1884. Its location was only about 300 yards from where Jim and Cynthia lived. Both Jim and Cynthia could preach a very good sermon, and did all they could to make it the fine and good church that it is today".*

### ***CELEBRATE--FOR GOD IS IN THIS TIME AND PLACE.***

*What do we know of James and Cynthia Busby? At age 16, Jim volunteered in the Confederate Army, and served until the end of the war. In later years, he was fondly known as 'Capt. J. T. Busby', a respected community leader. Cynthia Walker was the daughter of a school teacher (Peter Walker). Some believed they met on a trip to Stumphouse Mountain tunnel; they met and married in early 1866. They had 11 children.*

*Both James and Cynthia were deeply religious and always took an active part in church affairs. These same principles were instilled in their children and all grew up to be fine and good citizens in their communities. Their first-born, Anna married Charles White, the carpenter who helped build the church. Two of their children became ministers: Edward Chaffer White became a Baptist minister serving Oakwood for 44 years, and Scuddy B. White became a member of the Methodist conference.*

*Proverbs 4:18 says: "The lifestyle of good people is like the sunlight at dawn, that keeps getting brighter until broad daylight." The sunlight of Jim and Cynthia's life still reflects brightly in the lives of their descendants today.*

*Mr. Busby was the first credited leader of New Hope in 1884. Sunday School classes and prayer meetings were held weekly--that first class had close to 40 family and friends enrolled. Many of those families also helped build the church and their names are listed on the timeline in the fellowship hall.*

*In 1884, Jim and Cynthia had 8 of their 11 children, ranging in age from 1 year to 17 years old; three more children were born between 1887 and 1889. When bad weather kept people away from church, Jim would go alone to God's house, read his Bible, pray, and sing his favorite hymn "Amazing Grace".*

## ***CELEBRATE--FOR GOD IS IN THIS TIME AND PLACE***

*There is little recorded history between 1900 and 1930. The world was changing, for electricity was able to be transmitted longer distances, there was phone service and free rural mail delivery. Mills were coming to Anderson, and young farmers were leaving the farms to seek a better life in the cotton mills....a chance for an education.*

*I recently had the opportunity to meet Mr. Ed Hillhouse--a man who is 88 years young. When asked if he remembered anything of New Hope, as he lived in the community, he replied, "Oh, yes". Ed remembers coming to New Hope to a revival. He was between 8 to 10 years old (1929), and as the church was filled to overflowing, he*

*was allowed to stay outside. What 8 yr. old boy would find fault with that! Transportation was by horse-drawn buggy or wagon. It was best not to tie your horse to the wrong tree--kind of like sitting in the same pew today. This is a man who proudly put his penny in the collection plate, and memorized bible verses. He has traveled in a horse drawn buggy and a jet plane.*

*The first recorded superintendent of Sunday School was Mr. W. Y. Broadwell - Ethelyn Gleason's step-father.*

*The great depression years hit the nation hard, from the stock market crash in 1929, to the United States entering WWII in 1941. There were no 40 hr. work weeks, no coffee breaks, no hospitalization insurance, no credit cards, no vitamins, no penicillin, and no polio vaccine. A first-class stamp cost 2 cents.*

*But here at New Hope, the church grew and prospered. Electricity had come to the area, and lights were installed. Mrs. Viola Norris revitalized the Sunday School in 1931, with a "good nondenominational" staff: 3 Methodists, 2 Presbyterians and 1 Baptist. Mrs. Norris, Mr. Dolphus Bolt, song leader and Mrs. Lewis Martin, teacher, were Methodists, Mr. Frank Norris and Artie Coker (Brock) were Presbyterians, and Mrs. D. Bolt was the Baptist. Imagine the lively discussions in those households!*

*As this was the height of the depression, (in Mrs. Norris' own words: "a depression that was really a depression"), all ideas for making money were entertained. One practical idea involved chickens and eggs. Anyone who owned chickens would sell the eggs laid on a Sunday and the money was to be used for Sunday School materials. More often than not, it was used to buy medicine for ill members... was this our first discretionary fund?*

*Joyce Todd Cox recalls those little seats, made from apple or orange crates, and padded by the ladies of the church. The beginners used them for seats. When you use the water fountain, check out the step stool, as it is one of the original seats.*

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*History is more than facts and figures---it is people. It is most appropriate to mention Mrs. Luecile Todd. Miss Luecile joined the church when she was about "16 or 17" (around 1936 or 37). That would be 72 years of faithful service ! In her words: "They did not have the SS rooms when I started, curtains were used to section off the church and those areas were used for SS. I remember Mrs. Norris was the superintendent." When asked about Mrs. Norris, Luecile says, "she was a G-o-o-o-d teacher, you know, just like Alice Davis". Luecile has seen 5 generations of children attend New Hope. She wants people to remember that this is a loving church, one that loves God and each other.*

*As the history was researched, it spoke of Jimmy Sonofelt, a gifted artist, who would come to the church on a Saturday to draw the pictures that would illustrate the next day's lesson. Jimmie Cash says. "he was the only person who could draw Daisy the cow sniffing a flower and have it look like Daisy the cow". Jimmy Sonofelt was Randy's dad, grandfather to Jean's children and great-granddad to all their little ones.*

*The 50's were a time of lost innocence:*

*A--stood for atomic bomb*

*B--for baby boomers and blacklists*

*C--was for cold war, communism and civil rights*

*D--was for dreams--the American dream and*

*E was for Elvis.*

*Locally, the school districts consolidated from 72 districts to 5 (1951), the minimum wage was raised from 75 cents to one dollar per hour, and the US government approved 3 million dollars for the construction of Lake Hartwell.*

*At New Hope, it was people helping people and nurturing their children. Neighbors like The Hatchers, Reecie Hatcher, her husband Pete, and Kat Hatcher would load the neighborhood kids into a car and bring them to church or vacation bible school. These people had a major impact on the youth of the day. It was like seeing ten or fifteen kids pouring out of a Volkswagen. No seat belt laws then!*

*Marie Burden says Mrs. Willder Hatcher was like a second "Ma Ma" to her by teaching her how to can and freeze foods and even giving advice on taking care of sick children.*

*Do you recall coming to the church one morning to find everyone outside? The stove pipe of the pot-bellied stove had fallen, filling the church with smoke. Crate Murphy (later Rev. Crate Murphy), in his green shirt and overalls taught a combined Sunday School class from the porch and Rev Foxworth held a "drive-in" church service. Something good came out of it, as a fund was started to put gas heaters and new pews in the church. Services were held in the old Mc Lees' clubhouse until the work was completed.*

*Many of the congregation of the 50's are also the congregation of today. Their impact on New Hope and its members is to be celebrated!*

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*Political and social transformation in the 60's made a sense of upheaval a significant part of American life -- a delight to some -- to others dismay. The moonwalk (not MJ's), ... "one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind", had special significance to Anderson. The spacesuits were made of Beta cloth, produced at the Owens-Corning plant of Anderson. The Vietnam War was in full swing, and this church family embraced Martha Thrasher, as she waited for John to come home.*

*There was a positive upheaval at New Hope as well, for ground was being broken for a new sanctuary. We were still on the Townville charge, with Rev. Dewey Brazill as pastor. "Clouds" were being picked and the fund drive was under way. There were men posing as women for the "Womanless Wedding", a popular fundraiser. Mr. W. Lewis Martin purchased land from the McLee's property, (1965) stating "it was to be used for a new building". Ground was broken on Nov 4, 1967 and "Opening Day" services were held April 20, 1969. In the midst of this, we became United Methodists, having merged with the Evangelical United Brethren Church (1968). I'd like to share a portion of an e-mail between Phil Vickery and Lisa Brazill Henderson: "My Dad, Dewey Brazill, was*

*the Pastor there when the new sanctuary was built years ago. I liked that it was on the second floor, and you basically looked out over a pasture. I remember fondly some of the things we did while there: an old fashioned homecoming, a womanless wedding, and many other fun times. I remember every fifth Sunday being just for singing old hymns. Dad loved to talk about when the sanctuary was built, they did not consider getting a coffin up to the second floor. He also talked about the builder giving a quote that was too low for the bell tower, but in the end, honored the quote and only charged the church what he had quoted. New Hope was one of my favorite churches”.*

*Phil's reply: “I remember spending many Sunday mornings watching the cows--but don't tell the preachers that!”*

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*The 70's were a great time for New Hope. A parsonage and fellowship hall were built with the help and generosity of Mr. Z.W. Dickerson. It was also a bittersweet time, as the original church was torn down. Be sure to look at the fireplace mantle in the fellowship hall, as it is made from wood from the Busby church.*

*This congregation has a wonderful history of not being indebted for long periods of time. Members were willing to donate monies to pay off the principal. From the list of donors, three names were drawn each month. Those people would be paid back that month. The Fellowship Hall mortgage was paid in full in 1987, instead of 1996.*

*Nurturing our young people (in the 70's) was a loving responsibility that many gladly undertook... such as Alice Davis, Lin and Joyce Cox. Cathy Burdette lovingly recalls the many cook-outs, camping trips, activities and gatherings that helped nurture her faith. When a camping trip was rained out, all of the group went to the Cox home for a sleep-over, and Joyce even cooked pancakes for the entire crew the next morning. And, says Cathy, “Oh, yeah, I shall never forget Joyce's hot fudge cake either”.*

*Remember those leaders of the 50's? -- Well in May 1977, a new ministry was started at New Hope--the Senior Ministry. The name was changed in June 1977 to the Sunshine Club.*

*After a contest to come up with a motto for New Hope, our theme was born: "New Hope--Where Your Hopes are Renewed" was submitted by Glenola Barth (1990).*

*The intervening years between then and now have seen some peaks and some valleys. God has been present through it all. The Men's work Ministry has kept the sanctuary, parsonage and fellowship hall in top-notch shape. All groups work together and take on tasks that show we have the faith and commitment to carry on the work of our Lord. But have we been just keeping up keeping up? Have we lost our vision for a New Hope in the future?*

*There are so many people whose names surface again and again throughout the years. Please take the time to read the timeline of events as displayed in the fellowship hall.*

*What lies ahead? We must now reach out our hands to the community, add educational programs that will encourage, and entice more young people. We must put into practice the love that was first given to us by our Lord and risen Savior, Jesus Christ.*

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### ***Resources:***

- 1. Forward through the Ages; A history of the Mt. Creek Baptist Church org. 1789*
- 2. Cherished Memories; A History of Roberts Presbyterian Church 1789-1989*
- 3. "Busby Family Genealogy"*
- 4. "Centennial Edition of Independent Mail"*
- 5. History of New Prospect Baptist Church*