



"Preserving—Sharing—Caring"

Crossroads

Rooted in Relationships: A Portrait of the Hortins

The Rev. Dr. David Hortin was Trinity's senior minister from June 1988 to June 1999. Dr. Hortin and his wife, **Cinda**, have continued to live here in Tallahassee and to attend Trinity since his retirement. Much of this article on the Hortins is taken from an interview on February 9, 2024, in the Hortin home. The interviewer is **Dr. E. Lynn McLarty**, church historian and archivist, with videographer, **Rex Adams**, former director of communications at Trinity. You can access the video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=baFYjG7TLno>

One morning, after **Cinda Bradfield** went into work at Honeywell Aeronautical Division in Clearwater, Florida, she said to a friend that she "almost had a date with a preacher." **David Hortin** was his name, and he had recently founded St. Paul UMC in Largo after graduating from seminary. Two women she knew had tried to "fix them up," but Cinda was not available. Her work friend recognized his name and said she knew him. This led to a conversation about the young pastor, but at the time, what was said about Rev. Hortin seemed to be inconsequential ("Miss Bradfield...", 1963, p. 13E; Trinity UMC, 2024).



The Rev. Dr. David and Cinda Hortin in the dining room of what was at the time the Trinity UMC parsonage, where they hosted a variety of occasions. Dr. Hortin was Senior Pastor at Trinity from 1988-1999. Photo provided by Cinda Hortin.

Yet, six months later, the story gets more interesting. During this period, church members at St. Paul were meeting in an elemen-

tary school while they were waiting on the construction of their new building. Cinda was "directed" to attend the new church one Sunday, and there she

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(cont. from p. 1)

was able to finally meet Rev. Hortin. She was “favorably impressed”—even before she heard him preach (Trinity UMC, 2024).

Meanwhile, David became very interested in finding out what Cinda had written on her guest information card at St Paul’s that Sunday. Following up on that, he asked Tom Dailey, his neighbor and volunteer helper, “Where’s that card on that redhead?” Tom had a difficult time convincing David that she, in fact, had *not* completed an information card after all. However, the next Sunday, David’s persistence paid off. Seeing her in the hallway, he said, “You didn’t fill out a card last week.”

“I didn’t have a pen,” she replied.

It would be no surprise to anyone reading this scenario that David was more than happy to offer his pen so that Cinda could complete her information card. That was June 1963, and they were married in December (Trinity UMC, 2024; “David G....,” May 1988, p. 1).

The Rev. David G. Hortin

Childhood

The Rev. Dr. David Hortin was born in St. Petersburg in 1937 to **Dr. Paul R. and Mrs. Dorothy Nelson Hortin**. His father served as minister of Christ UMC (previously known as First Avenue Methodist) in St. Petersburg from 1931 to 1975. From 1933 to 1946, David’s father was away from his pastoral duties at the church in order to serve as a chaplain during WWII in the Army Air Corps (“David G....,” May 1988, p. 1; Kosharsky, 1990).

David likes to boast with tongue in cheek that his dad went to Harvard but then explaining that he actually went to military chaplains’ school at Harvard. After his training, his father was the post chaplain at Second Air Force headquarters in Colorado Springs, Colorado. The family moved to Colorado during that time, and David remembers fondly celebrating a white Christmas in 1944 when he was seven years old. He also remembers fishing in the mountains and seeing the 10th Mountain Division preparing to go to Northern

Italy to join in the fighting there (Trinity UMC, 2024; Hortin, Dec. 1997, p. 2).

David attended St. Petersburg High School. We learn about David’s reputation at the school through the words of **Louise McMullian**, a close friend, who had known David—or about David—for many years. In her “Completely Biased Narrative” (1999) in the *Monthly Tidings*, Louise described David as a high school sensation:

I first knew David when he was a student at St. Petersburg High School, but he didn’t know I knew him, which is probably a good thing. I was teaching at the school, and I heard the girls in my classes talking about this tall, handsome, good-looking boy on campus who was a basketball and track star. Since I heard so much about him, I made it a point to find out who he was (with 2,500 students on campus that wasn’t easy). He was, indeed, a good-looking fellow and a star athlete.

I transferred to a rival school the next year, but continued to follow his progress in basketball. I really couldn’t help but follow it because his team was giving our team a fit, and David was the reason for it. We (those of us at Boca Ciega) were glad when he graduated from high school and got out of the area. (McMullian, 1999, pp. 1, 3)

After graduating from high school in 1955, David attended Florida State University. He had become particularly interested in the university while attending Boys State there, discovering that he liked the area (“David G....,” May 1988, p. 1; Trinity UMC, 2024).

He was awarded a basketball scholarship, but in typically humble Hortin fashion, he explained that the scholarship was not a big deal.

He explained,

They did give me a scholarship, but that didn’t mean much in those days because they only had six scholarships to run the whole basketball program so they had to split them all up so I got tuition, yeah, but that was only \$75. (Trinity UMC, 2024)



“David Hortin.” (1956). Nolefan. <https://nolefan.org/ath/a03430.html>

And recounting playing as a freshman, he said, a “master of divinity” (“David G....,” May 1988, p. 1; Hortin, C., Correspondence).

In those days you had to have a freshmen team; freshmen couldn't play varsity, and so we practiced at the old Air Force gym out on the campus [of the old Dale Mabry Air Force Base]. The home team had a big advantage here because there were places where the floor had rotted out [at Dale Mabry] and [if you] dribbled there, the ball's not coming back up. (Trinity UMC, 2024)

David's FSU academic accomplishments included membership in the debate team and Tau Kappa Alpha national forensic fraternity and a degree in 1959 with a major in speech and history (“David G....,” May 1988, p. 1).

While a student at FSU, he also attended Trinity. **Dr. Glenn James**, who was a good friend of his father, was the senior pastor at the time. David was president of the College Age Sunday School Class during one of the years he was attending FSU. He also remembers **Dr. Myron Blee** (FSU professor) for making all the students feel especially welcomed (“David G....,” May 1988, p. 1).

After FSU, David went on to study at Candler School of Theology, Emory University. At Candler, he was a member of the University Senate and held the office of president of the Candler student body during his senior year (“David G....,” May 1988, p. 1).

David played in an annual basketball tournament as a student at Candler. While he confessed that during his FSU years, he never played in the NCAA tournament, he said,

I did play in the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary Invitational, which is a far more exclusive tournament. Fortunately, I did not play for the host team but for the Candler School of Theology Circuit Riders.

Our team, made up of former college players, played the Federal Pen each year. We tried to play them [in] a “home and home” series, but they could not come to our gym. So, they always had the home court advantage, and it was important to remember where you were. (Hortin, D., 1996, p. 2)

David would go on to earn a bachelor of divinity degree from Candler in 1962. Shortly after David graduated, Candler would retroactively change the “bachelor of divinity,” which was awarded based on three years in the seminary, to

Cinda Bradfield Hortin

Childhood, Education, & Work

Cinda Bradfield Hortin grew up in West Virginia, a state, she explained, that was formed during the Civil War (in 1863). This is an important fact, she said, because those living in the region that would later become West Virginia were against secession. Persons from West Virginia,

Theology Quintet Plays And Preaches

Headline of an article describing the participation of the Candler School of Theology Circuit Riders basketball team in their annual game at the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary. In (1960, January 17). *Tallahassee Democrat*, 26. <https://www.newspapers.com/image/244681236/>

therefore, were (and are) “Yankees” unlike those from Virginia, a state that had seceded in 1861 (Trinity UMC, 2024; “West Virginia....,” n.d.).

Cinda not only comes from a family of Yankees but also a family of Methodists, going far back for generations, according to her mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, who “saved things and talked about them and told a lot of stories.” In fact, there are many Methodists living in that region of the country, and, thus, she and her family “owe a lot to the Methodist Church.” In Spencer, the county seat, where she grew up, she remembers attending St. John's Methodist Church, recalling her nursery school and other classes; choirs; MYF; and other activities (Trinity UMC, 2024; Hortin, C., Correspondence).

After WWII, her family moved to California but moved back to West Virginia to help manage family illness matters. Because her parents had enjoyed “patio living” in California, they decided to move to Clearwater, Florida, when Cinda was in the ninth grade. After they had settled into Florida life, Cinda discovered that many of her belongings had not made it from West Virginia to Florida because her mom had not thought she

(cont. on p. 4)



David and Cinda Hortin in front of the newly finished sanctuary of Saint Paul United Methodist Church, Largo, Florida, December 1970. Rev. Hortin was appointed to what was first a vacant lot, but he began calling on prospects and soon inviting them to come to the new church, which first met in the parsonage. The church then met in Ponce de Leon Elementary School (in nearby Clearwater), where David met Cinda. Photo provided by Cinda Hortin.

would need them in the sunny Southern state. She explained,

All winter I was saying, “Where is [such and such]? And mother said, “Well, I did not think we would need it in *Florida*.”

So instead of saying that she had moved to Florida, Cinda always says her *family* moved *her* to Florida. After attending high school in Clearwater, she went to St. Petersburg Junior College and soon was employed as secretary to the director of procurement at Honeywell. She was able to move out on her own to a small apartment while she was enjoying her work and the people she worked for (Trinity UMC, 2024).

Church Life

Saint Paul UMC Largo

Following his graduation, Rev. Hortin was appointed to establish a new church from the

ground up (“David G....,” May 1988, p. 1; Trinity UMC, 2024).

He described his first experience at the location where it was to be built, explaining that

Bishop James Walton Henley sent me to this vacant lot between Largo and Clearwater. There were no members. There was nothing started; [it] was just a vacant lot (Trinity UMC, 2024)

How does one start a new church in the Florida Conference? David explained in *Tidings* in 1997:

The District Board of Church Location and Extension had put a downpayment on a lot on Highland Avenue at Rosery Road. First Methodist Church in Clearwater had done a survey of the community to find prospective members. The St. Petersburg District secured a parsonage for me in which to live and to start the new congregation.

I called on the prospects and invited them to come to the first service on July 15, 1962. Thirty-seven came to worship. On October 7, 1962, we had the

service of organization and 51 people joined the church. By then, we were having two services in the living room/dining room area of the parsonage. Soon after, we moved to the Ponce de Leon Elementary School. In 1964, we moved into the first unit—the sanctuary/fellowship hall—on our property. (Hortin, Nov. 1997, p. 2)

We have Louise McMullian again to thank for providing us with insight into his reputation at the church:

The next time I heard about David Hortin he was making headlines in the Clearwater-Largo area. There were traffic jams, fender benders and minor riots at the construction site where this young, handsome Methodist minister was starting a new church—all caused by young ladies driving by to try to get a glimpse of the young preacher.

Everyone was talking about him. Rumor had it that mothers from all denominations were encouraging their daughters to transfer to his church. Sure enough, David was still charming everyone. In spite of those "obstacles," he was very successful there. But of course he was successful there because that's where he met and married Cinda. (McMullian, 1999, p. 3)

In 1964, Rev. David Hortin, his wife Cinda, and the congregation of Saint Paul UMC had their first worship services in their new building, which included the sanctuary and fellowship hall. In his nine years at Saint Paul, Rev. Hortin oversaw four new buildings (adding to the existing two were the church school and offices) (Hortin, D. G., Nov., 1997, p. 2; "David G....," May 1988, p. 1).

First United Methodist Church Lakeland

Rev. and Mrs. Hortin next turned their sights to Lakeland, specifically the First Methodist Church there. Bishop Henley appointed David to begin his pastoral assignment at the church in 1971 (Hortin, D. G., June-July, 1999, p. 2; "David G....," May 1988, p. 1).

At the time, there was no children's choir ministry at the church. Seeing the need, Cinda and Gerry Fraker started one until the church was able to hire staff and provide funds to sustain the ministry. She also applied her skills in creating banners for the children's ministry there, teaching the children how to craft their own banners (Trinity UMC, 2024).

Again, we turn to Louise McMullian—this time for some idea of how congregants at First Methodist felt about David:

In the early '70s, the Hortins moved to Lakeland. I moved to Orlando but kept up with them through friends who were members of his church. First United Methodist Church in Lakeland thrived under his leadership, and he was especially loved and appreciated by the youth groups. One mother told me that she had called the bishop and asked him not to ever move David from that church because he was such a good influence on her son (McMullian, 1999, p. 3).

Rev. Hortin served from 1971 to 1980. When he left, the church boasted 3,474 members, was first in the Florida Conference in church school attendance, fourth in average church attendance, and ninth in general and Conference Advance Specials. That same year, in 1980, Florida Southern College conferred on Rev. Hortin an honorary doctor of divinity degree from Florida Southern College in Lakeland ("David G....," 1988, p. 1).

First UMC Orlando

Next on Rev. Dr. Hortin's stops on his way to Trinity as the senior pastor was the First UMC in Orlando. In October 1980, **Bishop Earl G. Hunt** appointed him to the 4,400-member church. Orlando was at the time the largest church in the Florida Conference and "from which three bishops had come" ("David G....," 1988, p. 1; McMullian, 1999, p. 3).

Crossing his path again, Louise McMullian, who was attending the church at the time, said he was a

member's minister—he made a point of calling on the members and letting them know he cared about them. He restored their faith in what the church is all about. He reorganized the office and staff, which provided for more efficiency in the operation of the church. (McMullian, 1999, p. 3)

Christ UMC St. Pete

In 1982, the Rev. Dr. Hortin returned to his home church, the church that he had attended in his youth, which his father had pastored from 1931 to 1975 ("David G....," 1988, p. 1; Hortin, June-July 1999).

Christ Church (formerly First Avenue) had been in the St. Johns River Conference

(cont. on p. 6)

(cont. from p. 5)

(SJRC) (for a brief history of SJRC, see “The MEC in Florida” in this issue on [p. 21](#)). From 1886 to 1939, the Conference was actually a part of the Methodist Episcopal Church (Northern—not Southern) but located in Florida (Trinity, UMC, 2024; Crosby, 2026, pp. 21-25).

Trinity UMC Tallahassee

Dr. Hortin’s time at Christ Church led up to his appointment to Trinity beginning in June 1988. He followed **Dr. Walter Kalaf** as the church’s senior pastor (“David G....,” 1988, p. 1).

The following section is by no means a comprehensive description of the church’s history during the Hortins’ time here but serves as a sketch.

SUN Service

One ministry that began during Dr. Hortin’s pastorship at Trinity and has had a significant impact on church life to this day is the contemporary worship service. Its predecessor was launched on Sunday evening, September 10, 1995, at 7 p.m. in the Chapel and was “coordinated with” the Singles and Youth programs (Potter, 1995, p. 5).

It was discontinued after some months, but by September 28, 1997, the contemporary service had a new name and a new time: the SUN Service, occurring at 9:45 on Sunday mornings with Associate Pastor **Mark Caldwell** preaching on most

This Is the Sound of the SUN



MUSIC AT A QUICKER, HAND-CLAPPING BEAT filled Moor Hall Sept. 28 to usher in Trinity’s new, contemporary 9:45 SUN service. Backing up pianist Jeffery Ames, the service’s drama and music coordinator, at a rehearsal the week before were, from left, vocalist Michelle Moradi, Associate Pastor Mark Caldwell, who will deliver the message at most

of the SUN services, guitarist Wally Jordan, vocalist Jill Duff, drummer Chris Sham and vocalist Rhonda Dalton. This new service is perhaps the boldest exemplification of the 1998 Stewardship theme, “Let the Light Within Shine Without.” A story on the 1998 budget and the SUN service’s relationship to the Stewardship Campaign begins on page 3.

From “This Is the Sound of the SUN.” (1997, October). *Monthly Tidings*, 24(9), 1. <https://www.tumcthistory.org/wp-content/uploads/1997-October.pdf>



The Rev. Dr. David and Cinda Hortin on Dr. Hortin's first Sunday at Trinity in June 1988, taken at the corner of

Sundays (Yates, 1999, p. 103; "This Is...", 1997, p. 1). **Personal Communication**

It was described as an

alternative to the traditional [worship service] with contemporary music and situational dramas in the less formal setting of Moor Hall as an attraction to persons seeking a more casual worship environment. (Cherry, 1997, p. 3)

The SUN service was a result of an intentional partnership with the stewardship campaign, whose theme was "Let the Light Within Shine Without." The acronym stood for "Serving Unmet Needs" and included a "message that relates to the encounters of our world." Each service had a theme with the November 1997 *Tidings* posting upcoming Sunday topics: "Money-Luxury," "Debt-Financial," "Debt-Spiritual," "Priorities," and "Hope" (Cherry, 1997, p. 3; Caldwell, 1997, p. 1).

A priority for Dr. Hortin at Trinity was focusing on "pastoral ministry." In September 1988, following the beginning of his appointment in June, he was described as "visiting shut-ins in their homes, in nursing homes and hospitals. Others who are not available in the afternoon, he calls upon evenings." "Administration," therefore, was going to take a backseat to cultivating relationships because—as he explained—"afternoons and evenings" were designated for "visiting," which he liked to do (Yates, 1988, p. 3).

Taking these priorities seriously made Dr. Hortin a very personable pastor—someone the members knew well. For example, one Trinity member who remembers his leadership at that time praised the minister's close attention to her mother. Visiting her every Friday afternoon, Dr. Hortin made the weekly visit a meaningful part of her mother's life (personal communication).

(cont. on p. 8)

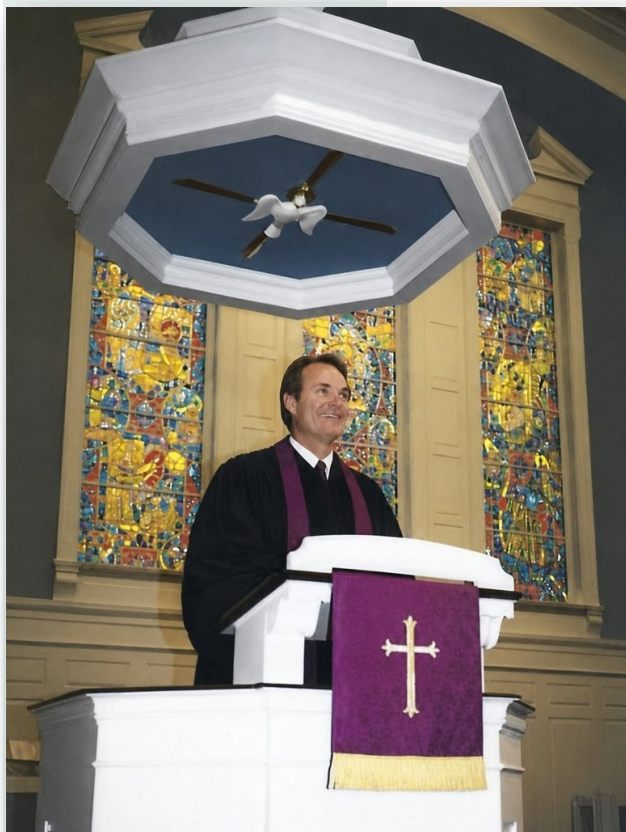
(cont. from p. 7)

He also took the time to send personal letters, thanking members for participation in services such as expressing appreciation to a congregant for the “fine prayer you prayed on Laity Sunday.” He sent letters noting that he had seen members in the local newspaper, often sending copies of the clippings to them. The tone of these letters was gracious and humble, signing simply “David G. Hortin” (Correspondence).

Obviously, this kind of ministry was not only important to Dr. Hortin but also to his congregants because they knew he knew who they were on a deeply personal level while he took the time to visit and write to them as a result of his own initiative, not merely as a response to a request.

Adult Education

Adult education provided congregants and leaders a way to pursue a greater depth in theolog-



The Rev. Dr. David Hortin behind the pulpit at Trinity United Methodist Church sometime in the early years of his appointment. From *Trinity United Methodist Church*. (1990). [Directory]. Trinity UMC., 11. <https://www.tumchistory.org/wp-content/uploads/1990-Directory.pdf>

ical and spiritual study when in July 1989, they were invited to sign up for the *Disciple Bible Study* course offered that September. *Disciple* is a United Methodist Church initiative that **Bishop Richard Wilke** and his wife **Julia** began in 1987 as a 34-week study and “commitment.” Its emphasis on commitment requires “daily reading and study and... weekly meetings of two and a half hours each....” Study groups are designed as gatherings “made up of 12 or fewer members” plus the leader, with some groups meeting in homes or at church (“What Is...,” 1989, p. 2; Jacobs, 2023; (“DISCIPLE...,” 1996, p. 1).

According to the introduction to the course in a July 1989 *Tidings* article, *Disciple* “aims at transformation, not just information,” that is, transforming church people into

better Sunday school teachers, better parents, better choir members, better church officers because their ministry will be inspired as well as informed. They will be biblically nourished persons committed to live as disciples. (What Is...” 1989, p. 2)

The Wilkes soon added *Disciple II*, *III*, and *IV* in subsequent years. The *Disciple Bible Study* series was at its peak in popularity throughout and outside the U.S. in the 1990s during Dr. Hortin’s leadership at Trinity. The four editions of the series have been “taken more than 3 million times” with students from all 50 states in the U.S. and other countries and have been translated into four languages (“United Methodist Church Mourns...,” 2025; Hahn & Kruh, 2025).

Course materials are still available to this day, but the time commitment and the efforts demanded to complete such a course can be perceived as presenting obstacles for involvement in our contemporary world. Seeing the need to make it more palatable to the online user has resulted in the development of a digital application (“United Methodist Church Mourns...,” 2025).

Local HIV/AIDS Awareness and Support

In 1994, the leading cause of death for all persons in the U.S., ages 25 to 44, was AIDS. The Center for Disease Control stated that in 1982, after the initial reporting of low numbers of people with AIDS, there was little media attention, but



“National HIV Testing Day (NHTD) was first observed on June 27, 1995. This is a day to encourage people to get tested for HIV, know their status, and get linked to care and treatment.” <https://www.hiv.gov/events/awareness-days/hiv-testing-day>

From the HIV.gov, an official U.S. Government website managed by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services and supported by the Minority HIV/AIDS Fund.

soon panic set in as more and more people across the spectrum of society became infected with the disease. Persons diagnosed with AIDS were often “stigmatized” (“1994,” n.d.; “The AIDS...,” n.d.).

In its 1988 statement, “AIDS and the Healing Ministry of the Church,” the United Methodist Church presented a recommendation for human societal rights protection and advocacy education. That same year, the Council of Bishops denied that the disease was a “curse” from God and said that it should not be reduced to a stereotype associated with gay men (all gay men have AIDS, and AIDS infects only gay men) (National Research Council, 1993).

The National Research Council in their booklet *The Social Impact of AIDS in the United States*, published in 1993, described the official position of the United Methodist Church in 1988 on human sexuality:

The church's teaching was restated by the bishops: heterosexual, monogamous sexual relations within marriage is the standard expected of United Methodists, and the practice of homosexuality is not condoned and is considered incompatible with Christian teaching. For people unable or unwilling to follow this standard, use of condoms is urged, as is avoiding intravenous drugs and needle sharing. The bishops' statement concluded by calling for the denomination at all levels and individuals to compassionate ministry, education, and public advocacy. (National Research Council, 1993)

In 1994, Cinda Hortin, who was a volunteer at Big Bend CARES with their Buddy Program, announced in a *Tidings* article that a “three-session seminar on AIDS” was scheduled that April. Trinity's Work Area on Church and Society and the Betty Phifer Sunday School Class were sponsoring the event, which would take place during the Sunday School hour. Dr. Hortin would be speaking at one of the sessions entitled, “Call to Commitment” (Hortin, C., Correspondence; 1994, p. 3).

In her article that contains material from the 1993 book, *Affirming Persons—Affirming Lives* by Johnson and Bowman and published by the United Church of Christ, Cinda presented the argument for a vocal and active compassion for those in grief who were affected in multiple ways by AIDS. She supported the call for Trinity to have conversations on the topic because each facet of people's lives is informed by God's love for all humanity through Christ (Hortin, C., 1994, p. 3; Johnson & Bowman, 1993).

Three years later in a 1997 *Tidings* article, Cinda invited those to heed the call to action by means of Canopy Connection, an initiative established to supplement Big Bend CARES—the area's comprehensive AIDS agency. (<https://bigbendcares.org>). Big Bend CARES still offers a range of supportive services to local individuals today (Hortin, C., 1997, p. 5).

The purpose of Canopy Connection was to “come together from various faith traditions to respond compassionately to those whose lives have been touched by HIV/AIDS.” One of Canopy Connection's events to bring people together was monthly dinners rotating among the participating churches for the clients and families of Big Bend CARES (Hortin, C., 1997, p. 5; Correspondence).

Volunteers were asked to represent Trinity at monthly meetings at First Presbyterian, attend World AIDS Day service at Trinity and help set up and provide food for a reception; assist in hosting and providing food for a Canopy Connection dinner at Trinity; and other activities (Hortin, C., 1997, p. 5).

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This fleur de lis pattern with dogwood blossoms was stitched by Cinda and David Hortin. It was given in memory of Eugene Barnarado Fisher by his wife Grace Fisher Lipscomb. From “The Cushions.” (1999). Symbols of the Christian Faith. In L. Yates (Editor), *Trinity United Methodist Church, Tallahassee’s First Church, 1824-1999*, 22.

Kneeling Cushions

Beautiful artworks that were created in the Hortin years and the result of meticulous labor of dedicated and caring hands still adorn the sanctuary today. These colorful creations are not displayed on the walls or ceilings but are below the pulpit at the altar rail. Their purpose is to enhance the worship experience while providing a practical function (“Needlepointed Kneeling...,” 1999, p. 16).

Their exquisite beauty is the result of years of a “thoughtful process of research, decision, and gifts of time and money” from scores of Trinity members. These artworks are the kneeling cushions—each of detailed needlework, displaying unique designs specific to Trinity (“Needlepointed Kneeling...,” 1999, p. 16).

The history of the artwork goes back to the late 1980s, when a planning committee consisting of **Georgiana Wollschlager** and other members commissioned **Martha Webb** from Jacksonville to design the kneelers. On her many visits to the

church, the artist listened to the committee’s ideas while also offering her own suggestions (“Needlepointed Kneeling ...,” 1999, p.16).

In the end, the chosen designs of the cushions would feature symbols of the Holy Trinity and native flowers of Tallahassee. Symbols of the Holy Trinity are bordered by azaleas, lilies, or dogwoods. An outside border reflects the grillwork above the choir lofts (in place at the time before the 1999 redesign of the Chancel area) (“Needlepointed Kneeling...,” 1999, pp. 16, 18-24).

The next phases of the project were in the early 1990s when **Georgianna Wollschlager** and Cinda enlisted stitchers and planned for the “finishing work”—including having the upholstery done by Watson’s Upholstery (“Needlepointed Kneeling...,” 1999, p. 16).

The stitchers who accepted the challenge of “lovingly needlepointing 144 stitches per square inch” spent thousands of hours on the task (as recently computed by Cinda). It was calculated that “120,500 stitches” went into each cushion—

demanding an extraordinary time commitment to complete. Dr. Hortin attested to this fact by saying that one section he stitched demanded the “time to watch four Atlanta Braves baseball games” (“Needlepointed Kneeling...,” 1999, p. 16; Hortin, C., Correspondence).

In addition to the 15 altar cushions, there was also a wedding kneeling cushion, which was stitched by newlyweds **Kitty Mae (Taylor) and Al Grant**. “An invaluable person in keeping the whole project moving,” Kitty Mae “taught a class to all who wanted to renew their knowledge of needlepoint” (“Needlepointed Kneelers...,” 1993, p. 3; Hortin, C., Correspondence).

For those who hit rough spots along the way, Cinda went to their homes for a few hours to get them back on track. There were several who gave money for a kneeler as a memorial gift but had not done much needlepoint in their past, yet still wanted to do the stitching for “their” kneeler (Hortin, C., Correspondence).

The service of dedication and consecration of the kneelers took place on Sunday, November 6, 1994 (“Needlepointed Kneeling...,” 1999, p. 16).

To see individual photos of the kneelers with explanations of their monetary donors and the names of their stitchers, individuals can visit the Yates Center on third floor to peruse the back pages

of



Newlyweds Al and Kitty Mae Grant in the Glenn C. James Chapel, displaying the beautiful needlework they stitched for their wedding kneeling cushion. Photo provided by Cinda Hortin.

Trinity United Methodist Church: Tallahassee's First Church, 1824-1999, edited by **Linda Yates**.

Banners

One might call the Hortins' decade at Trinity the decade of the banners. Cinda again displayed her artistic skills by creating Trinity banners for the Florida Annual conferences held in Lakeland. She explained,

Linda Mobley—when she was director of Christian education—was very active in the Conference, and so she was always getting me to do some big banner for some conference gathering. (Trinity UMC, 2024)

We had seen earlier that Cinda had begun banner work when the Hortins were in Lakeland. She had also continued crafting banners at St. Pete's Christ Church (Trinity UMC, 2024).

The result of this expertise was an impressive display at the Florida Annual Conference in June 1995. The founding of the Florida Conference had been in 1845 at Trinity, and to mark the 150th anniversary were two stunning banners, designed and created by Cinda with one designating the Tallahassee District and one designating Trinity UMC (Blee, 1994, p. 3).

In addition to the two celebratory banners, Cinda worked at Trinity on one celebratory banner “in the biggest space” she “could find”—on the floor of the craft room. Her workspace determined the banner size, which was so large it would have to be transported in a moving van to Lakeland, the site of the Conference. Planners of the event had required a specific design, and it was her “job to enlarge that [design] to the size that would be right for this piece” (Trinity UMC, 2024).

Cinda described the process:

It . . . sounds primitive now, but I would enlarge [the image of the set design] on the copy machine, and I just kept enlarging pieces and then numbering and lettering. . . so I could fit it like a big jigsaw puzzle. (Trinity UMC, 2024)

The 150th anniversary of the founding of the Conference at Trinity was also celebrated at the church on February 5, 1995, a day before the actual founding date of February 6. The parade of banners led the processional into the sanctuary.

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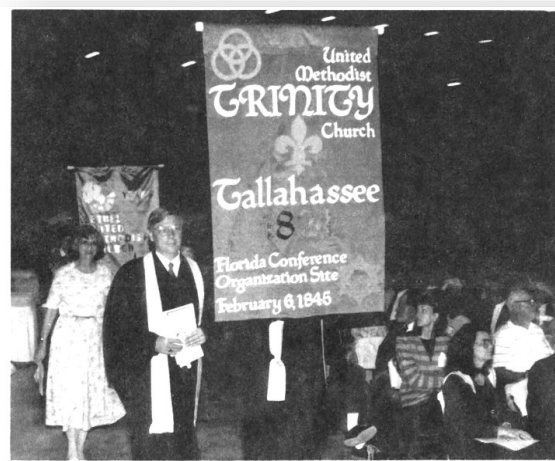
Among the dignitaries attending the celebration was **Florida Governor Lawton Chiles**, who spoke about his great-grandfather, **Seaborn Chiles**, who had attended the 1845 organization of the Conference, along with 31 other preachers ("Church Filled...", 1994, p. 1; Yates, 1999, p. 102).

Musicals

Chances are very good that those who attended Trinity during the 1990s will remember the musical dinner theatres produced there. For example, in June 1991, Trinity's music director **Jeff Bradford** recruited talented individuals from two other local Methodist churches to join with Trinity's own gifted performers for the production of *Carousel* ("Trinity Musicians...", 1991, p. 1).

The cast included performers of all ages. **Sonya Shehane-Bradford** directed the play, and **Dr. Myron Munday** was the accompanist. The Appalachian youth service project benefited

from the proceeds as well as the Church's music department ("Trinity Musicians...", 1991, p. 1).



Cinda Hortin worked about six weeks on a 12-by-18-foot banner to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the organization of the Florida Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church (Shortly after Florida's organization, it joined the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.). The photo is taken from "Banner Marks Marks 150th Anniversary" in the *Tallahassee Democrat* published on May 28, 1994, by Mark Wallheiser, page 7D. <https://www.newspapers.com/image/247623529/>



Dr. Myron Munday during the early years of the pastorate of Dr. David Hortin (1988-1999) with members of the Boy Scout Troop as young William Hall sits on the piano. From Trinity United Methodist Church. (1990). [Directory]. Trinity UMC., 8. <https://www.tumcthhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/1990-Directory.pdf> Additional information from Cinda Hortin.

Dr. Myron Munday

Dr. Myron Munday was senior organist at Trinity from 1984 to 1995. He was “Myron the incomparable,” a term Dr. Hortin used to describe him because “nobody compared to him in skill or personality.” His titles also included “pianist, harpsichordist, and artist-in-residence.” He was a performer, scholar, and composer; and his research focus was on the topic of Black composers for the keyboard (Carrington, 1995, p. 4C).

In an article about the 44-year-old musician in the November 1995 *Tidings*, Cinda wrote about the joy Dr. Munday had brought to overall church life and the loss his fellow church people were experiencing as they were mourning his death, just a few days before. Cinda wrote,

Our wonderful friend and colleague, Myron Munday, slipped away from us November 7, 1995. A friend remarked that it's difficult to believe that someone who brought us so much sound has been silenced.

I believe that many of us share in an important relationship—that Myron Munday is the only person in our lives who ever called us “Sug”—short for “Sugar,” of course (Hortin, C., 1995, p. 1).

Myron held two master’s degrees—one from Northwestern and one from Florida State—and a doctorate from FSU. He also studied at North Carolina’s Brevard Music Center and Toronto’s Royal Conservatory of Music. Awards he received included the Martin Luther King Jr. Award for Artistic Achievement and an honorary Lieutenant Colonel Aide de Camp Certificate (Carrington, 1995, 4C).

An Atlanta native, Munday was on Spelman College’s faculty and was a choir master and organist at Union Baptist Church and Ebenezer Baptist Church. As an artist-in-residence in both Atlanta and Tallahassee, he performed for more than 5,000 children (Carrington, 1995, 4C).

But most importantly, he was a lovable person as Cinda described in her article:

(cont. on p. 14)

(cont. from p. 13)

Myron loved people and we loved him! Wherever he went, he endeared himself to all those whose lives he touched.... Myron paved innumerable paths with good will. He was an ambassador for Trinity Church and the other churches he had served. He was an ambassador for his Christian faith, which meant so much to him. And—just by being Myron—he was an ambassador for human relations as God intended human relations to be! (Hortin, C., 1995, p. 1)

Retirement

Dr. Hortin retired from Trinity and the Florida Conference in June 1999. He had served 11 years at Trinity and 38 years in the Conference and had officiated over 960 funerals, 604 weddings, and 600 wedding rehearsals. He wrote in his last days as pastor in 1999, “I always hope that a minister's last appointment will be a happy one. It certainly has been for us....” (Hortin, C., Correspondence; Hortin, D., June-July 1999, p. 2).

Calling Trinity, the “mother church of Florida Methodism,” he said,

These 11 years have been very happy here in Tallahassee for Cinda and me. We have enjoyed the church and the city and our experiences with the wonderful folks of Trinity and of the community. (Hortin, D., June-July 1999, p. 2)

Moving out of the parsonage brought sadness but owning their first home brought joy:

When we moved out of the beautiful parsonage early in May, it was very sad for us. Sad because we had enjoyed that home and that neighborhood so much. . . .

Cinda and I moved to our home that we purchased.... We are very excited, of course, about owning our first home. And, we look forward to happy years of retirement there. So, although I am no longer your pastor, we still hold you dear in our love and friendship. (Hortin, D., June-July 1999, p. 2)



One of the many ways that Trinity commemorated Dr. Hortin's retirement was with a program in the sanctuary. Seen here are Cinda and David Hortin in 1999. Photo provided by Cinda Hortin.

Louise McMullian summed up the ministerial career of the Rev. Dr. David Hortin:

David Hortin has had a marvelous career. He has served in the largest churches in the Florida Conference.... His sermons are thought-provoking and scholarly and are designed to nudge you with a funny story just in case your mind starts drifting.

...his knowledge and love of the ministry are still very much in evidence and appreciated. He has touched so many lives in a very positive way through these 38 years, and we are grateful for his guidance, leadership and ministry. (McMullian, 1999, p. 4)

Reflections

Dr. Hortin

Trinity

Dr. Hortin said that Trinity was a place where the members “know that every preacher is going to be different from the last one.” The fact of their differences was not a problem for the church—knowing already that the present minister “will do things for us that the last [minister] didn't do” and will be different from what the next minister will do (Trinity UMC, 2024).

An Important Role of the Pastor

Dr. Hortin emphasized that a preacher needs to engage with their members on a personal level, learning about their stories. “You can learn so much about life and living by engaging with other people. The preachers that don't get to know their congregations and their people are really losing out” (Trinity UMC, 2024).

Staff

Dr. Hortin noted that **Rubie Butterworth**, coordinator of adult ministries, was an ideal staff person: “When I came [to Trinity], **Beth Fogle-Miller** [Associate Minister] came, too. We were

Rubie Butterworth goes on part-time schedule January 1

After eight years as full-time director of older adult ministries and assistant to the minister, Rubie P. Butterworth will relinquish some of her duties and work part-time starting January 1.

She will work 25 hours a week as supervisor and coordinator of all older adult ministries at Trinity, continuing her work with the Older Adult Fellowship and Trinity Travelers and assisting the minister with the needs of older adults, including visitation to retirement and nursing homes.

Her duties will include meeting with the Older Adult Council, the Council on Ministries and Administrative Board for planning and coordinating programs, direct and supervise on-going older adult programs, coordinate older adult Sunday school classes, a class by telephone to shut-ins, and the van ministry.



Rubie Butterworth

Mrs. Butterworth was asked to conduct a workshop at the Older Adult Conference at Lake Junaluska a few years ago, and continue to take a group from Trinity to that conference each summer.

She has escorted hundreds of Trinity seniors on tours to the Caribbean, Canada, and to points of interest in the United States.

both new here, and who are you going to call [when you need help]? Well, the answer is Rubie Butterworth. She knew all about the church and all about people, and she's the one that could help you and keep you out of quicksand” (Trinity UMC, 2024).

Laity

One important characteristic of effective laity that Dr. Hortin mentioned was strong leadership skills as exhibited in such individuals as **Peggy Hughes** and **Godfrey Smith**. **Dr. Myron Blee** was the head usher at Trinity when David was a student at Florida State: “He [Dr. Blee] had a knack. He could keep a committee on track better than anybody I ever saw”—a crucial characteristic of lay leadership (Trinity UMC, 2024).

Worship Service

The one aspect of a church that “makes everything else possible” is “Sunday

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(cont. from p. 15)

morning worship. It is the rallying point in the church.” As a result, an increase in worship service attendance is necessary for a church to sustain its strength (Trinity UMC, 2024).

Membership Growth

“A large church has to take in a lot of members to maintain its strength—some say an increase of at least 7 percent a year. If it doesn’t, it will be weaker. Even if it maintains the same number of members, it will not be as strong because a certain number will become inactive or move away” (Quoted in Yates, 1988, p. 3).

Advice for Retired Pastors

There are certainly volumes written about what makes a good pastor, but what makes a good *retired* pastor? Dr. Hortin’s answer is based on his 38 years of being a pastor, and he shared some thoughts on the topic: “I’ve known a lot of really wonderful retired preachers, and I want to be among them so I’ve got a job description for a retired minister.” His advice is, “If it’s something good, encouraging, uplifting, supportive, do it [and] say it. If it’s not, shut up. I’m here to encourage because I’m not doing the work anymore so [my role is] to encourage the person” (Trinity UMC, 2024).

The Natural World

“We see so many marvelous things in our natural world that we begin to take them for granted. It is grand when a miracle of nature strikes us with fresh meaning regarding the creative genius of God” (Correspondence).

War

“At Antietam, on September 17, 1862, more Americans died than on any other day in history. Great lines of Blue and Gray faced and shot each other in a corn field and around the edges until twenty-three thousand died. As I read of the details of the battle, I was horrified at the pain, suffering and death. Of course, it was not anything like the numbers of people who died at Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

“We who are God’s people and are disciples of the Prince of Peace must be working in all good ways to bring peace to people everywhere and to bring freedom without killing someone in the process. As Americans the words of Jesus are especially applicable to us, ‘Those to whom much is given, much is required’” (Hortin, D. G., 1989, p. 2).



David and Cinda near Lake City, Colorado, a favorite place to visit during their early retirement years. Dr. Hortin retired from Trinity and from the Florida UMC Conference in 1999. Photo provided by Cinda Hortin.

Faith in Times of Suffering and Loss

“In the very trouble that seems to deny the reality of a loving God, we find that God” (Correspondence).

Cinda Hortin

People's Stories

Cinda echoed David's emphasis on getting to know people: “I would just say there is such a wide variety of interests and gifts that people can bring to the church... and of all the things I've done in the church... my favorite is calling on people in their homes... Sometimes people don't know what interesting stories they have in their lives” (Trinity UMC, 2024).

Needing and Supporting One Another

Referring to disaffiliation of churches from the UMC, such as Killearn Methodist Church, Cinda remarked that “as sad as we feel about Killearn... and what happened to them and the [distress] and the heartbreak that they've had, we need them, and they need us... and it's a new day of the church when we need to support each other and reach out in new ways” (Trinity UMC, 2024).

Parsonage Living

Cinda acknowledged that a “clergy family” should “feel a sense of stewardship” toward the parsonage in which they live. In turn, volunteers on a parsonage committee often provide considerable and invaluable guidance and assistance. “When people step in and see something that needs to be done [such as house repairs] and do it, it's very refreshing” (Trinity, 2024).

But sometimes these positions can be ill-used, causing much “stress on a clergy family.” Such abuse of power can be found in some churches regardless of size and place—from the small, rural congregations to those of great size. These problems should not be ignored (Trinity, 2024).

Being a Pastor's Wife

Cinda explained that most individuals get the training they need to do their jobs, but, unfortunately, that is not the case for a wife of a minister.

She said that “you don't go to school to be a preacher's wife... sometimes it's baptism by fire and... every church is different—every spouse is different and yet many times the churches want to meld the preacher's wife into what they think that should be” (Trinity UMC, 2024).

Learning to heed God's call has been a way to use her best gifts, saying, “When we've moved to a new church, I try to see what isn't being done that I might be able to help with, and something always opens up ... and usually I'm happy with it and sometimes I get to the point that I say, “I'm taking a year off.” (Trinity UMC, 2024).

Adventures in Needlepointing

Initially, one would not think that needlepointing is a dangerous sport, but Cinda learned that sometimes it can put your life at risk. For example, on a getaway in Yellowstone, Cinda was stitching (the kneeling cushion featured on page 9) while sitting on the shore of a river as David was fishing. She described the scene: “I heard this noise and a huge herd of buffalo are coming down the mountain to the water. It was called Buffalo Ford, and I called out to David, ‘Do you think I should jump on that rock out there in the water?’”

“That probably would be a good idea” (Trinity UMC, 2024; Hortin, C., Correspondence).

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Volunteer Openings for Historical Society Announced

The Leadership Team members of Trinity's Historical Society announce that the following volunteer opportunities are available:

- **Researching sources for, writing, and/or copy editing** *Crossroads* articles
- **Copy editing and updating** history website
- **Designing** sanctuary and chapel windows pamphlet
- **Developing** a Trinity walking tour
- **Indexing** *Crossroads* and *Tidings* collections
- **Identifying and sorting** photographs into categories (youth, music, preschool, missions, special events, etc.)
- **Classifying and filing** archival documents
- **Updating and creating** memory scrapbooks
- **Assisting** creation of special papers collections of past ministers or other staff members

Opportunities can be a one-time commitment or longer as preferred. Send statement of interest to Dr. Pamela Crosby at pcrosby@tumct.org.

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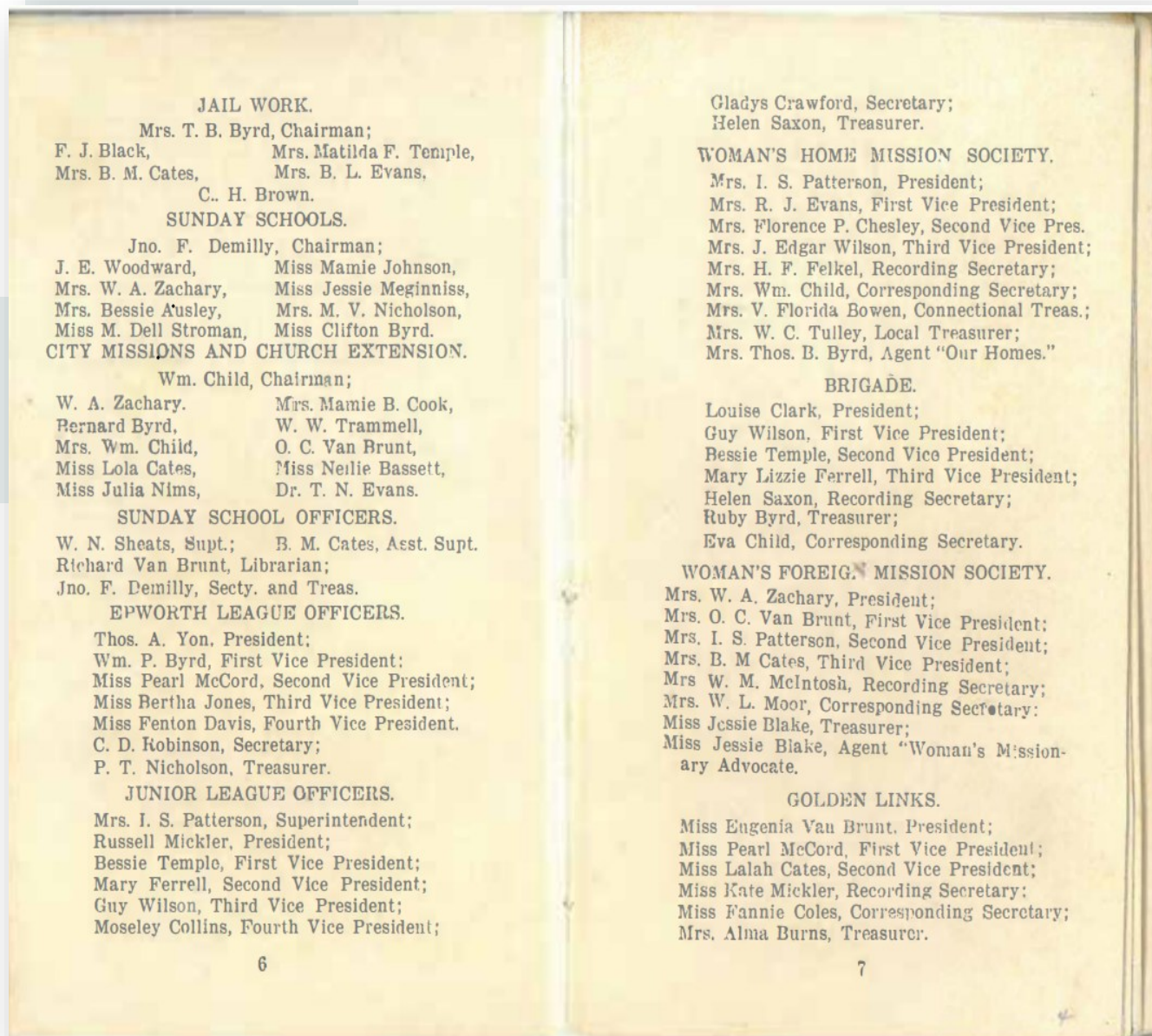
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Bob Yates
Mary Margaret Rogers

~

Correspondence and Submissions

Send your comments, corrections, and requests for printed copies, as well as inquiries about submissions, to Dr. Pamela Crosby, chief editor, at pcrosby@tumct.org

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Past Trinity Membership Directories Are Now Online

Past Trinity membership directories that so far have been located in our records are now on the Trinity History website. The directories, scanned by **Amy Henderson**, are of the following years: 1908, 1973, 1982, 1985, 1990, 1995, 1999, 2003, 2006, 2010, and 2015. **Lynn McLarty** oversees the ongoing project.

They can be viewed with a searchable index bar and downloaded at <https://www.tumcthistory.org/directories/>.

Above are two pages from the 1908 directory (<https://www.tumcthistory.org/wp-content/uploads/1908-Directory.pdf>).

To send comments and corrections to our history website ([tumcthistory.org](https://www.tumcthistory.org)), email the webmaster, **Dr. Pamela C. Crosby** at pcrosby@tumct.org.

A Northern Church in a Southern State: The Methodist Episcopal Church in Florida, 1860s-1939

By Pamela C. Crosby

Rev. Dr. David Hortin served as pastor of Christ Church in St. Petersburg from 1982 to 1988 before his appointment to Trinity. As noted in the previous article in this issue, Dr. Hortin had remarked that Christ Church (formerly First Avenue) had once been in the St. Johns River Conference—a Northern Methodist conference. The fact that a Northern conference could be located in a Southern state such as Florida seems to be a geographical contradiction. Knowing how this came about adds to the important context of Trinity's history as a church in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South during and after the Civil War.

Among Northern denominations that thought religious as well as military expansion in the South would be beneficial during the Civil War was the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC) (Thrift, 1944, p. 105).

As a result, Northern “agents” worked in cooperation with the Union Army during the Civil War to replace Southern ministers with those who were loyal to the United States government rather than to the Confederacy (Sisson, 2021, p. ii).

The order came about after **Bishop Edward Ames** of the MEC met with **Secretary Edwin Stanton** in Washington. The result was the Stanton-Ames order by which Stanton gave Ames “sweeping authority”:



“Edwin McMasters Stanton Secretary of War.” (1850). Wikipedia. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Edwin_McMasters_Stanton_Secretary_of_War.jpg

To the Generals commanding the Departments of the Missouri, the Tennessee, and the Gulf, and all Generals and officers commanding armies, detachments, and corps, and posts, and all officers in the service of the United States in the above mentioned Departments.

You are hereby directed to place at the disposal of Rev. Bishop Ames all houses of worship belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church South in which a loyal minister who has been appointed by a loyal Bishop of said church, does not now officiate. (quoted in Sisson, 2021, p. 63)

Although **President Lincoln** had thought it prudent to allow the Southern churches to remain autonomous, the order was handed down with Bishop Ames, who proceeded with “missionary zeal” to retake the Southern churches and absorb



“Edward Raymond Ames.” (1978). Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Raymond_Ames#/media/File:Edward_Raymond_Ames_\(1806%E2%80%931879\).png](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Raymond_Ames#/media/File:Edward_Raymond_Ames_(1806%E2%80%931879).png)

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Taylor, J. E. (1866.). *Glimpses at the Freedmen-The Freedmen's Union Industrial School, Richmond, VA.* <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3a38219/>

them into the MEC (Sisson, 2021, p. 5).

Freedmen

Before the end of the Civil War, the federal government created the Freedmen's Bureau in order to provide assistance to the formerly enslaved. While the MEC staunchly supported the Bureau, emancipated Blacks living in Southern states were often victims of exploitation (Thrift, 1944, p. 106; Temple, 1987, p. 188; Sisson, 2021, p. 60).

Northern Methodists wanted to improve the economic and social circumstances of these freedmen, while at the same time, they also saw them as an opportunity to regain an expanding MEC presence. To help achieve both goals, the MEC created the Freedmen's Aid Society, its programs consisting of "evangelism, education, and church building" (Sisson, 1921, p. 60; Thrift, 1944, p. 106).

The Society committed

- (1) To give relief to the suffering and needy,
- (2) To contribute to the literacy of the illiterate,
- (3) To proclaim the message of salvation to all regardless of race or color. (Simpson quoted in Temple, 1987, p. 189)

By 1869, this strong commitment of the Society was apparent, establishing schools and ten new Annual Conferences in the South, which included both Blacks and whites. But no MEC Florida Conference yet existed at that time, primarily because Blacks preferred to be members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME) and whites in Florida had little interest in organizing (Thrift, 1944, pp. 106-107).

Yet, Northern Methodist missionaries and Black preachers from South Carolina were persistent over the years, forming the "South Carolina Mission in Florida," which led to the organization

of the Florida Annual Conference in 1873 (Temple, 1987, p. 189).

The first session took place in Jacksonville from January 29 to February 1 at Ebenezer Church with both Black and white preachers attending and officiating. Laypersons were not represented. The session was very short, and 23 preachers were sent to 28 appointments in two districts: St. Johns District and Suwannee District (Temple, 1987, p. 189).

However, the districts were randomly organized. They were St. Johns District: Fernandina to St. Augustine (Atlantic coast) and Jacksonville to Tallahassee (north); and Suwannee District: centered around Gainesville, with 13 appointments for each district (Temple, 1987, p. 189).

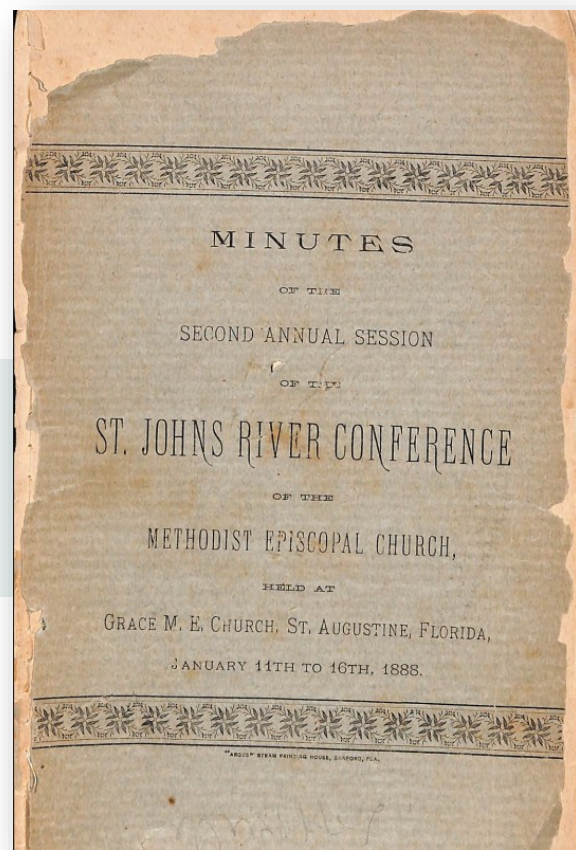
The years following the Conference grew at a slow pace with its diverse composite of white and Black ministers. But after the 1876 elections and subsequent weakening of the Republican Party, there emerged calls for the Conference to split. With the Conference made up of mostly Black members, some of the white members wanted to be “free from Negro influence and domination” (Thrift, 1944, p. 125; Temple, 1987, p. 190).

Rev. John A. Simpson observed:

It is strange and unfortunate that when more self government came to the people, human relations took on a great change, especially in the church where the change was manifested by the white members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. . . . They began to act like Simon Peter did in Antioch—to draw back and to draw away from the colored brethren. (Quoted in Temple, 1987, p. 190)

While in other Southern states, Black members of Northern churches were calling for division, it was the white members in the Northern Methodist churches in Florida who were calling for separation—and Black members opposed the split (Thrift, 1944, p. 126).

The question of separation came to a vote at Jacksonville’s Ebenezer Church in 1886. Debate and voting on the question continued for many days with Black members, who were in the majority, opposing division, but “when they realized the un-Christian spirit of their white brethren, they



From the Digital Archive of Florida Conference Journals at https://www.flumc.org/files/archives+history/journals_1860-1892/st.+john%27s+river+conference+journal%2c+1888..pdf

voted for the separation” (Thrift, 1944, p. 126; Simpson quoted in Temple, 1987, p. 190).

The Black members kept their original name “Florida Conference,” and white members gathered at Trinity Methodist Church (Jacksonville) that afternoon to organize a separate conference to be known as the “St. Johns River Conference” (SJRC) (Temple, 1987, pp. 190-191).

According to Simpson, for those in the “Florida Conference” of the MEC, there were

gloom and heart break that marked the separation of the conference [with] the loyal and heroic pastors return[ing] to their respective appointments in hope and faith in God to build up the church and conference.” (Quoted in Temple, 1987, p. 192)

Although the SJRC of the MEC included all the areas east of the Apalachicola River, as was the case for the Florida Conference of the Methodist
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Episcopal Church, South (MECS), most of the SJRC churches were concentrated between Jacksonville and Eustis. This concentration was due to the migration of Northern settlers. The SJRC was divided into two districts: East Florida and Eustis. At the time of organization, only 657 total members were in the Conference (Thrift, 1944, p. 127).

The division of the MEC in the South extended to education. In the 1888 Minutes of the SJRC, under the section of "Education and Freedmen's Aid," the following lines were included, indicating the social stigma associated with a Black education:

We are of the opinion that our educational work among the white people of the South, should not be administered by the Freedmen's Aid Society, but by the Board of Education, thus removing a large share of the impediment out of the way of our educational efforts to help the whites (Fitch & Hawley, 1888, p. 25)

Meanwhile, ministers in the now much smaller Florida Conference of the MEC were provided with little financial support—they "toiled during the weeks" and then "preached on Sunday" and were dependent upon "what the people were able to give." The Black members of the MEC in Northwest and [North] Middle Florida were cruelly treated: "Their property was destroyed, farms

confiscated, places of worship burned to ashes..." (Simpson quoted in Temple, 1987, pp. 192-193).

Such brutality levied against Blacks in the MEC resulted in the loss of churchwork in "Monticello, Quincy, Madison, and Tallahassee." In Monticello, for example, the Ku Klux Klan burned down an MEC church, killing some of the members. According to Temple, the violence and intimidation provide one of the explanations for why few predominantly Black UMC churches exist today in Tallahassee, for example (Temple, 1987, p. 193).

Simpson described the ongoing cultural divide of Black and white ministers and church leaders:

From 1873 to 1941, each session of the Florida Conference was presided over by a white bishop. Some we saw but once, others returned after years; none lingered among us. They knew but little of the problems, anguish and soul struggle of the ministers and people. (Simpson quoted in Temple, 1987, p. 243)

Many of the buildings throughout the Conference were destroyed by fire or storms. "All of these projects required money from the pockets of and labor from the bodies of Black Methodist Christians—most of them poor" (Temple, 1987, p. 243).

Because none of the Annual Conferences in the Florida Conference of the MEC were ever held south of Tampa, pastors serving in the Southern region of Florida found it difficult to attend. As a consequence, the South Florida mission was created in 1905 (Temple, 1987, p. 214)

By the beginning of the new century, the SJRC of the MEC had 1160 members, with churches being in wider areas such as "between Jacksonville and Tampa and St. Petersburg in one direction and between Jacksonville and Miami and Key West in another." The map dividing the districts would continue to change throughout the decades with any increase in membership still being substantially smaller than the MECS in Florida (less than 6 percent) (Thrift, 1944, p. 129).

The fastest growth occurred in the mid-1920s when large numbers of Northern Methodists moved to the state. However, disaster soon struck:



Parker, W. S. (ca. 1870-1930). "Methodist Episcopal Church." The church was built in Quincy, Florida. <https://www.digitalcommonwealth.org/search/>

The economic depression together with crop freezes and a destructive hurricane made “the twelve months intervening between the sessions of 1926 and 1927 [as] perhaps the most disastrous in Florida’s history,” resulting in financial loss to the Church (Thrift, 1944, pp. 142-143).

At the beginning of the following decade, familiar names in Trinity’s (Tallahassee) history would surface in the SJRC: **Rev. Glen C. James** at 36, became superintendent of the Miami district, perhaps the youngest assuming this role in “20th century Florida Methodism.” Rev. James was pastor of Trinity from 1953 to 1962. And **Rev. Paul R. Hortin** in 1933 became pastor of First Avenue (now known as Christ Church) in the SJRC after serving as associate pastor; his son, **Dr. David Hortin**, as we have seen, served as Trinity’s senior pastor from 1988 to 1999 and was senior pastor of Christ Church from 1982 to 1988 (Temple, 1987, p. 277; Yates, 1999, p. 8).

In 1939, the SJRC had its final meeting. Its congregations would unify with the Florida Conference of the MECS and the Florida Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church, becoming the Florida Conference, Southeastern Jurisdiction of The Methodist Church (Thrift, 1944, p. 145; “History...” n.d.).

At the time of unification, the SJRC had

14,176 members; fifty-two pastoral appointments; fifty-four parsonages; ... sixty-eight church buildings; two district superintendents; ... forty-three pastors; eleven supply pastors; three deaconesses; sixty church schools with 11,221 pupils.... (Temple, 1987, p. 284)

The Southeastern Jurisdiction was one of five geographical Jurisdictions nationally, and the Florida Conference and Southern Florida Conference (composed primarily of Black congregations) were part of the Central Jurisdiction. Therefore, the Methodist Church continued to perpetuate segregation by separating Black members from the white members under the deceptive name of “unification.”

Although the MEC had not competed in any serious way with the MECS, still, it was clear that some Southern Methodists had resented the presence of those representing the Northern Church,

seeing them initially as invaders with a haughty attitude as evidenced in the 1888 *Florida Christian Advocate*:

The Northern Methodist Church is doing a great work in the North.... It is at home [there] and knows how to work. But this is not true respecting the South. Here it is an importation, a stranger, and not suited to the state of things. It has come into the South as a superior to an inferior; comes as an accuser with the conviction that the Southern people are disloyal citizens; comes doing the evil work of reviving sectional feeling and old buried recollections of the past; comes with impracticable plans and exciting views of Negro equality; comes as a special favorer of a particular political party; and, coming thus, it cannot have a mission of usefulness in the South, and must fail. (Thrift, 1944, p. 128)

For decades, Southern Methodists would consider the Stanton-Ames order as justification for maintaining their separation from the MEC (Sisson, 2021, p. ii).

Yet by the time of unification, the SJRC would bring to Florida Methodism a “family-oriented” atmosphere. Temple explained:

St. Johns River people, being few, close and somewhat isolated from friends and relatives in the North became a family-oriented Conference. This atmosphere was expressed even in the reports of district superintendents, who felt that it was just as important to mention parsonage births as financial and membership statistics. Thus it is not uncommon to read about infants who bore such names as Nancy Cathcart, Dorothy Anne Head, **David Hortin**.... (Temple, 1987, p. 279)

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Making History: News from the Trinity Historical Society and the Committee for the Preservation of Church History

By Leadership Team



Among the items in the 2010s and 2020s time periods added to the timeline wall display are Guatemala mission; historical marker; Yates Center dedication and renovations; *Crossroads* historical publication; Capital Area Justice Ministry; Sleep in Heavenly Peace building ministry; Becoming Fit at Church fitness program; Prayers and Squares quilt ministry; addition of members from UMC disaffiliated churches and establishment of Open Hearts and Abundance Grace churches; snack packs for the unhoused; Ukrainian organist Viktor Billa and his wife Yuliia, music director; bicentennial observance; and senior ministers Rev. Dr. Wayne Wiatt (2016-2022) and Rev. Dr. Matthew Williams (2022-present).

Timeline and Addendum

The timeline wall display in the Yates Center has been updated to include photos and information representing the years 2000 to the beginning of 2025 (to include the delayed bicentennial celebration of Trinity).

FASTSIGNS Printing Company completed the printing of the addition, and **Chip Huggins**, Trinity's maintenance technician, replaced the molding with beautifully crafted framing. Those who have worked on the project over the years

have been **Rhonda Work**, former CPCH chair; **Gloria Colvin**, project committee chair; **Cecile Baker**, history chair; **Lynn McLarty**, church historian; **Susan Mick**, artifacts curator; and **Mike Melder**.

The publication of the addendum to *Trinity United Methodist Church—Tallahassee's First Church 1824-1999*, edited by **Linda Yates**, went to press on July 23 and will cover a similar time frame as the timeline display. The addition was authored by **Marti Chumbler** with assistance from **Cecile Baker** and **Lynn McLarty**.

Historical Society Is Ten Years Old



Standing: Rev. Dr. Matthew Williams, Mike Melder.
Seated, beginning left: Lynn McLarty, Amy Jones, Susan Mick, Pam Crosby, Earline Adkison, Brenda Menendez, Terrie Lee, and Nancy Kerce.

Rev. Dr. Matthew Williams, Trinity's senior pastor, congratulated the Historical Society on its tenth anniversary at our April 2026 meeting.

On March 22, 2016, a small group of people at Trinity met to form the Society. **Linda Yates** and **Princess Palmer** were instrumental in organizing the small group, crafting by-laws, writing up membership applications, designing a logo, and persuading the church leadership to approve the founding of the organization. Founding members also included **Pam Crosby**, **Bob Jones**, and **Lynn McLarty**. The purpose of the Society is to cast a wider net of eligible volunteers, whereas the members of the Committee for the Preservation of Church History are formally appointed by the Church Council. Anyone who is interested in Trinity's history and enjoys activities relating to preserving or sharing historical information is welcome to join the action-focused group.

Historical Society Welcomes Two New Members

Our two newest members, **Terrie Lee** and **Brenda Menendez**, have quickly become involved in projects that are crucial to our preservation efforts.

Using sorting guidelines created by **Amy Jones**, lead archivist, Terrie has been sorting

through photographs of church-related events. Visitors to the Yates Center can already peruse albums of photos, newspaper articles, and other relevant items of various events. With Terrie's help, more albums can be added to our collection for viewing. In addition, Terrie's adept skills as a recorder came in handy during those meetings when our recording secretary, Pat Striplin, was out due to shoulder surgery.

Brenda has assisted Cecile Baker, our history chair, in reviewing documents saved from the 1990s related to weddings and changes in membership. They have compared this information to online archives to note any discrepancies so that any needed corrections can be made.

The Rev. Dr. George Adair Foster Papers

Brenda Menendez has also taken on the **Rev. Dr. George Foster** papers project. Dr. Foster's papers and albums, collected and preserved by his daughter Julia Foster, were earlier stored in family homes and in Trinity's archives. Brenda has been sorting through these items as preparation for Trinity's designation as the official repository of Dr. Foster's papers. Visitors, including interested researchers throughout the Florida Conference and General Conference, will be welcome to visit the Yates Center to explore the letters, photos, programs, and other items in the holdings once they are in their designated location.

Silver Serving Pieces and Other Items

New-old items (old in years but new to us as Historical Society members) continue to be rediscovered at Trinity. Among recent treasures are silver pieces including a silver tray and candlesticks. Preservationists are grateful to **Renee White** for her careful, attentive cleaning and polishing of the items before they are to be stored and displayed in a safe and secure space for viewing.

Ledges Provide Educational Opportunities

Nine ledges, which display photos, documents, and other artifacts, are providing additional ways for visitors to learn about Trinity's history. The

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shelves are mounted on the walls in the prep room (room 310) next to the Heritage Room in the Yates Center. **Lynn McLarty** hatched the idea of the display shelves and built them, and **Chip Huggins** mounted and painted them. The ledges allow for rotating displays in order that more items from our archives can be viewed.



Byrd Family Visit to the Heritage Center

Descendants from a beloved family in Trinity's history visited the Yates Center in the spring. Just a quick perusal of articles in the back issues of *Crossroads* shows the prevalence and historical significance of the **Byrd family** in the church's leadership. Past articles include names such as **Fannie S. Byrd, Janet Byrd, Rubie Bernard Byrd, William Parrish Byrd, Lillian Byrd, Tom Byrd Van Brunt, Kate Byrd, Thomas Blake Byrd, Bradford Byrd, T. B. Byrd, and Lina Clifton Byrd**. With much appreciation, the Yates Center received two family Bibles from the **Clifton Byrd Lewis family**.



"Byrd Family Portrait on the Steps of Their Home." (1905). Florida Memory. <https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/10039> General Note: From left to right, Back row: A. Bernard Byrd, Grandfather Jesse Talbot Bernard, Rubie Bernard Byrd (Mrs. Thomas Blake Byrd), Thomas Blake Byrd, and Bradford Byrd. Front row: Clifton (Mrs. William E. Van Brunt), Janet (Mrs. James Plant), Elizabeth (Mrs. Robert Taylor), Kate (Mrs. Leroy MacGowan), Rubie (Mrs. C. L. Harwick), and Willie.