

Section I. HISTORICAL CHURCHES OF THE WEST DISTRICT

These photographs were taken by B.R. and Katie Black of the Mt. View UMC in Alma in 2006.

Thanks to the West District for submitting these photographs.

The other eight other districts are invited to gather their church photos to be highlighted in future Journals.



Alma UMC



Altus UMC



Barling UMC

From the Conference Archives:

Barling: "My great-grandparents, Benjamin and Mary, had moved across the river to pick cotton. They came home in 1889 for the dedication of the new church in Barling. They crossed the river with team, wagon and ferry." The building was used by both Methodists and Baptists. *Lilly Wingfield, church historian.*



Birdsview UMC



Bonanza UMC

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Booneville UMC



Branch UMC



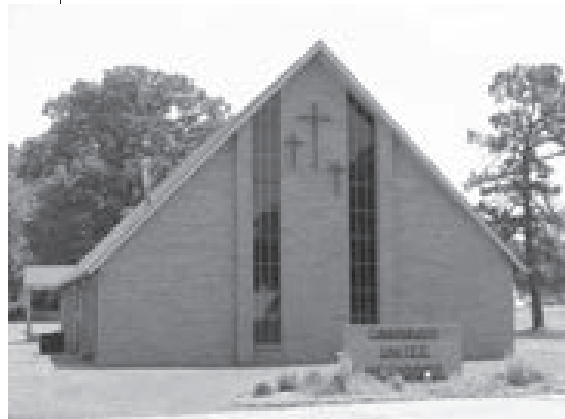
Cauthron UMC



Cauthron School

From the Conference Archives:

Cavanaugh: "Most of us felt we needed a Methodist church here. In 1963 the *Ft. Smithian* reported that the concrete church building had been a barn before it became a church. The church made a kitchen in the back, and was given a pulpit from the Midland church. Meeting in the barn was a symbol of the congregation's determination to be a church." *History of the Cavanaugh United Methodist Church by Doug Kelly.*



Cavanaugh UMC

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Cecil UMC



Cherry Hill UMC



Charleston UMC

From the Conference Archives:

Charleston: The Methodist Church in Charleston was organized around 1858 by Rev. Russell Renaud. While traveling in the area the pastor ran into soldiers who told him they would kill him. They offered him a moment to pray. The pastor said he had long ago prepared for his death. He said the only thing he regretted was dying by the hands of villains. He was let loose by the villains who were too cowardly to shoot a Methodist pastor. *The Beacon, June 1995.*



City Heights UMC



Clarksville UMC

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Coles Chapel UMC



Dyer UMC

From the Conference Archives:

Fort Smith: In 1831, a young pastor, Rev. John Harrell, came to Arkansas from the Tennessee Conference. In Van Buren, John reported preaching under the trees to trappers, stragglers, and a few settlers. He helped to build Harrell Chapel, a little red brick church that housed the Fort Smith Methodists until 1889. *The Arkansas Methodist Newspaper, 1937.*



First UMC, Fort Smith



Faith UMC



Grace Community UMC

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From the Conference Archives:

Goddard: In 1907, the first services of the Goddard church were held under a brush arbor where the church would later be built. Following the brush arbor services the church met in a shed lined with paper with a sawdust floor. A newer frame structure was used for 22 years. Names of the original members were placed in a cornerstone. *Church History, 1934.*



Goddard UMC



Greenwood UMC



Grenades Chapel UMC



Hackett UMC



Hartford UMC

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Hartman Thompson UMC



Hatfield UMC



Hays Chapel UMC

From the Conference Archives:

Hays Chapel: Hay's Chapel is west of Clarksville and was organized prior to the Civil War. Before the Civil War the church met in the Cherry Valley School. Later, severe damage by cyclones prompted the replacing of it's first building. The hand hewn log sills from the first building were in good condition and used in the current building. A story is that the women had shutters placed on the west side of the building to keep the parishioners from looking outside during the sermons. *From the church's file.*



Heritage UMC



Huntington UMC

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Journey UMC



Kibler UMC

From the Conference Archives:

Mena: The year was 1896 and the first train had yet to arrive in town. A group of Methodists met for a prayer meeting. Testimonies were shared under a brush arbor. That was around 111 years ago. The church has had its home in three buildings. In 1996, the church celebrated its 100 year. *The Arkansas United Methodist News 1996.*



Mena UMC



Lamar UMC



Lavaca UMC

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Magazine UMC



Mansfield UMC



Midland UMC



Midland Heights UMC

From the Conference Archives:

Mount Olive: In November of 1988 a series of tornados left behind piles of rubble and twisted bits of metal. Near Clarksville, the Mount Olive UMC was damaged and declared a total loss. An earlier building was completely destroyed by another tornado in 1945. The congregation continues to minister to the community. *From the church's file.*



Mt. Olive UMC

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Mission UMC



Moore's Chapel UMC



Milltown UMC

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Mt. Olive, Van Buren UMC

From the Conference Archives:

Mount Olive, Van Buren: The Mount Olive church began in 1869. The congregation grew rapidly and a building was needed. An underground stream forced its delay. The church was finally finished and enough rock was brought in to build a foundation. Mount Olive is thought to be the oldest African American church building west of the Mississippi and listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The original Mt. Olive UMC closed some years ago. In 2005 a new Mt. Olive UMC began in this empty building as a second campus of the Heritage UMC.

From the church's file.

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Mt. View, Alma UMC

From the Conference Archives:

Mt. View, Alma: “When we were to have a ‘Protracted Meeting’ the preparations began long before the circuit rider came—cooking, cleaning, the smell of ham and canned jellies, sweets and tea cakes that had to be hidden from the little boys. The meeting was to last at least a week. People engaged in song and prayer. Aunt Bertie limped to the altar with tears and gave her testimony. A widow, she had raised her children by growing cotton and corn. I saw her scrubbing her floor. She was singing, ‘Jesus, lover of my soul.’” *From the church’s file.*



Mt. View, Mena UMC



Mulberry UMC



Newberry Chapel UMC



New Bethel UMC

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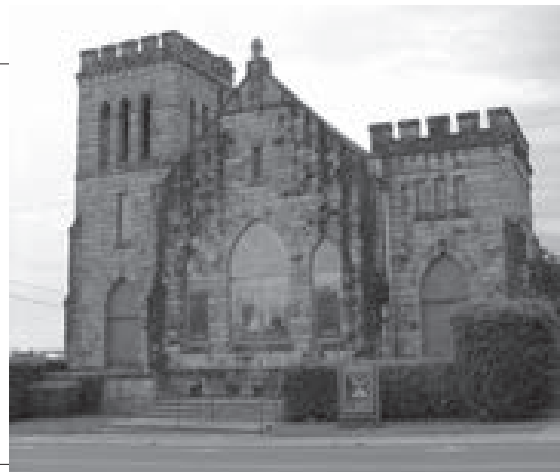
Mt. Pleasant UMC



New Hope UMC

From the Conference Archives:

Ozark: "In the fall of 1897, there was no church in the town. A preaching was to be held in town. The school was packed and the program was under way. The under pinning of the building gave way and the floor fell in. A red hot stove came tumbling down. Everyone was rushed out. Folks used their coats to pick up the red hot stove pipes. Soon it was quite and the preaching began again." *The Spectator, July 1992.*



Ozark UMC



Parks UMC



Paris UMC

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Pioneer Memorial UMC



Prairie View UMC



Scranton UMC



Spadra UMC

From the Conference Archives:

St. Paul (Ft. Smith): As Ft. Smith expanded east, a group of people met for worship under a grove of trees. This group expanded to its own building on Easter Sunday in 1924 naming itself East End. Later the church would be Second Methodist. In 1949 it moved to 4100 Grand Avenue and renamed itself St. Paul. This move increased Sunday School attendance by 30% and church worship attendance by 90%. A growing church seen in moves and buildings is not the main focus of the church. The personal side of life, births, marriages, deaths and baptisms is its most important ministry. *From the church's file.*



St. Paul UMC

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From the Conference Archives:

Waldron: Converted in 1868, Church School Superintendent, John T. Forrester, served for 45 years only missing two Sundays of that time. "Faithful" was "Uncle John's" slogan. The church at Waldron was organized prior to the Civil War. It's first building was a large white frame building with Gothic windows. Following a storm in 1910, the structure was remodeled with a bell tower. The present building was constructed in 1910. *From the church's file.*

Waldron UMC



Vesta UMC



Square Rock UMC



Washburn UMC



Wickes UMC

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Waveland UMC



West District Office



Wesley UMC

From the Conference Archives:

Wesley: Wesley in South Fort Smith has a history of relocation and merger. Beginning early in the 1900's its family of churches now includes St. Lukes, Pine Street Methodist Episcopal, Towson, and Glover all Methodist congregations. In 1989 the church became Wesley UMC. *From the church's file.*

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Local church histories and information on Arkansas pastors are kept at the Arkansas Conference Archives at Hendrix College. The Archives are open to the public on Thursdays from 9:30 am to 4:30 pm and other times arranged by contacting:

Mauzel Beal or Marcia Crossman
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1600 Washington Ave., Conway, AR 72032
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