

*Remembering the Past, Celebrating the Future*

**A Brief History of the Early Developments of Tullahoma and the Methodist Church**

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During the early 1850s, Tennessee experienced the developments of a new type of transportation with the railroad boom. With the construction of railroads, the landscape was dramatically changed and people began to have access to resources from different places in the state as well as the nation.

One of the main railroad lines that developed in Middle Tennessee during this era was the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad. As a result of this railroad line, railroad officials created the town of Tullahoma as a mid-point stop between the two cities.<sup>1</sup>

As the railroad boom helped develop the new town of Tullahoma, people quickly began to establish houses, churches and schools for the new community. Eventually, a community of Methodists began to worship in the area.



*Photo: A view of the trains and depot in Tullahoma in the 1900s.*



*A stone above the sanctuary entrance commemorates the construction of the Methodist church in 1889.  
Photo by Kevin Cason*

According to Coffee County deed records, First United Methodist Church of Tullahoma traces its origins to 1854, when a deed was signed in Coffee County among Thomas A. Anderson, Joseph M.P. Hickerson and the Reverends Joseph Smith and John Davis. This deed provided for a lot at the corner of Lauderdale and Jackson Streets to be used for the building of "a place of worship for the use of members of the Methodist Episcopal Church."

The original church was destroyed by fire during the Civil War and was replaced by another frame building. In 1889, the present brick building was constructed.

<sup>1</sup> Carroll Van West, "Coffee County," in *Tennessee Encyclopedia of History & Culture* ed. Carroll Van West, Nashville, TN: Rutledge Hill Press, 1998.