

directly behind the church, was converted to a youth house and is now used primarily by the Senior High youth. The Junior High youth converted and began using the old "scout hut" in 1998.

It was a long time dream of Judge Raymond Campbell that the church have a steeple. The motion was denied during his lifetime primarily because of the enormous cost of such a project and because of other financial needs of the church. After his death, and the death of Mrs. Campbell, money was left to erect a steeple in his memory. The steeple with a cost of approximately \$50,000.00 was completed and dedicated in July, 1997.

The heating and air conditioning system controlling the sanctuary side of the church building was replaced in 1997. A major undertaking of changing the heating system of the educational building to heating and air conditioning at an estimated cost of \$200,000 was completed in 1998. On faith, the Administrative Council voted to raise all of this money on one Sunday, "Victory Sunday." Their plan worked, the church's faith showed through, and the money was there to pay for the system before it was installed! The final cost, including later necessary modifications came to \$220,000.

A generous gift to the church of \$125,000 made by Paul Gentry in loving memory of his wife, Pocahontas, has made it possible to pay off the loan on the "Black" property and do some much needed remodeling of the fellowship hall and lower level. We have now moved to the sanctuary level in our remodeling efforts and hope to go on to the third floor before it is over.

Several names have been mentioned in this brief history, but we hold in high honor the countless members, down through the years, whose sacrificial and untiring efforts to serve the church have caused a witness to remain in this town for over 170 years. They all deserve our sincere gratitude. Likewise, there have been pastors, secretaries, musical and educational staff, custodial staff - all working endless hours through the years. There have been church officials and volunteers in all areas working for the glory of God without pay except for the satisfaction of being a part of the Church of Jesus Christ in Elizabethton.

We have all dreamed and worshiped together; sung and prayed together; working and laughing - and sometimes grieving and crying together - in this great fellowship that is First United Methodist Church.

May the memories of those who have served and labored through the years be an encouragement and inspiration as we move ahead into the twenty-first century!

This brief history of First United Methodist Church was adapted from
"A Story of the History of First United Methodist Church, Elizabethton, Tennessee"
written by Carsie Hyder Lodter on June 16, 1996 for our homecoming celebration that year.