

NEW MEXICO CONFERENCE  
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HISTORICAL JOURNAL



**Zachariah Butler Moon**  
**1872-1943**

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# **NEW MEXICO CONFERENCE UNITED METHODIST HISTORICAL JOURNAL**

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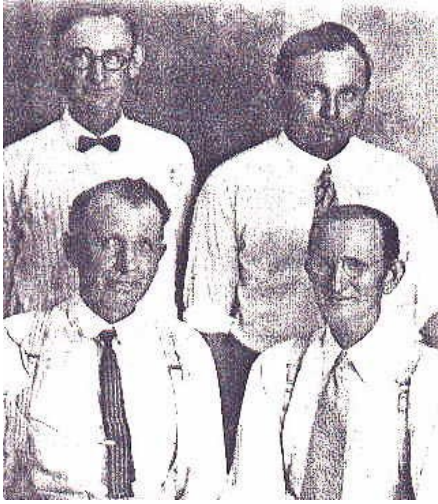


## **Zachariah Butler Moon**

By Will Steinsiek

Zachariah Butler Moon was born in Arkansas on July 1, 1872 to Kathleen Kirkley and Richard Davis Moon. His mother died in 1875 following the birth of his brother William Burr Moon. His father, a minister in the Protestant Methodist Church, remarried and so Zachariah soon had 2 half sisters and two half brothers as well. His brother, William Burr Moon, and his half brothers, Richard Brown Moon, and Paul Moon, also became ministers.

Zachariah's life led him<sup>3</sup> into the ministry also, but it was far from the only hat that he wore.



His education was partly in public schools and partly said to be “self education.” His education also later included some college classes and courses at Perkins as well.

He married Mary Virginia Duval in 1896, and their daughter Roberta was born in 1901. Their daughter later remem-

bered her mother as “a beautiful woman with a lot of tact and kindness. She was the perfect wife for a minister. Daddy used to say he was a preacher, but she was the minister.”

Zachariah was accepted on trial in the Central Texas Conference of the MECS in 1898, ordained an elder in 1902, and served under appointment in the Central Texas Conference until 1910 when he was placed on honorable location. According to his daughter he often had problems with his voice in cold or damp weather, and this may have played some role in his decision to locate. Then again it may just have been an opportunity to settle on some land in Red River County, Texas, along the Sulphur River.

The land was cleared and buildings constructed and the Moon Ranch took form. As he was able, Zachariah would still travel by horseback to preach at one or another of the rural churches nearby.

His daughter attended school, first in Johntown, which was about 4 miles <sup>4</sup>SE of Bogata, and then later

attended high school in Bogata.

Soon their ranch was doing well and Zachariah got into the lumber business as well, supplying railroad ties. He also began to take an active role in community life, even serving as Deputy Sheriff.

He may have earned his nickname as the “Fighting Preacher,” during that time. “He stood behind what he believed in and tolerated no abuse on anyone or any thing,” so his daughter noted. She also said that he used to tell people that he worked for a living, preached for the good of his soul, and played politics for fun.

For fun then, from January 14, 1919 to October 4, 1920, Zachariah served in the Texas Legislature. His committee assignments included Agriculture, Conservation and Reclamation, Stock and Stock Raising, Federal Relations, Public Printing, and on a special committee investigating “Exterminating Pink Boll Worm.” The



pink boll worm infestation was a matter of deep concern for cotton farmers at the time.

He also joined in the campaign for Prohibition, speaking all over Texas in its favor, of course. This was a natural evolution of <sup>5</sup>Methodism's long alliance with the temperance movement, which may or may

not have helped his political career much in Texas.

His growing business interests, which included selling stock in potash mining, brought him to New Mexico on occasion, and he found that the dry climate there suited him well.



After 11 years on location, Zachariah sold his property in Texas and was readmitted into the active ministry in the New Mexico Conference in 1921. He was then appointed to serve Hope, New

Mexico. At various times over the next five years that appointment also included Loving, Dayton, and/or Lake Arthur.

At the same time he once again began to dabble in politics. This time, probably beginning in 1925, it was in the New Mexico Legislature. His appointment was officially changed in 1927 to just read "Com of New Mexico Assembly" for 1927 and 1928. Then he was listed as supernumerary, ie without appointment, for the years 1929-1932. While "illness" was cited as the reason for this, it appears he was actually just busy as a politician in the NM State legislature.

Twila Roller, journalist, archivist, and historian, contacted his daughter Roberta Kile in 1987, and was able to learn a great deal from her about her father.

"He was known as an outstanding debater in the senate" Roberta wrote to Twila, "and was a very eloquent preacher. He was a good friend to all who need-



ed help, kind and understanding, much loved by his family and friends, also very witty with a great sense of humor. He was very tolerant and had great patience.”

The senatorial district that Moon served included Lea and Eddy Counties. This coincided with a time when there was an effort to redraw county lines and perhaps just do away with Lea county altogether. He is remembered for fighting to keep this from happening not once but twice. He also championed the establishment of a state highway which enabled travel from Lovington through Artesia, Cloudcroft and Alamogordo to reach Las Cruces.

In 1933 he returned once again to full time ministry, and was appointed to serve La Mesa and Berino for 3 years.

He then served Farmington for one year before

being appointed to Lovington in 1937.

In Lovington, he became the secretary of the Chamber of Commerce and was able to obtain a Public Works Administration grant for them to build a new school in 1938.

The Methodist Church came together in 1939, and in his only appointment in the Methodist Church he was sent to serve Van Horn and Lake Arthur.

In 1942 he retired to a farm in Midlothian, Texas, just outside of Dallas.

Soon after that he became ill and was treated for an enlarged prostate. The procedure may not have been successful, in as much as it was listed in the death certificate as contributing to his death in 1943.

He was buried in Laural Land Cemetery in Dallas.



The memoir, written by John Klassen for inclusion in the Conference Journal, credits Z B Moon with helping to frame the New Mexico Constitution in 1912, just prior to statehood. Although there is some mystery shrouding the identity of those who did so, there is no proof of that, and his involvement seems very unlikely.

Of him Klassen also said, "Z B Moon gave many years of his life to the work of God's Kingdom and became well known throughout the state of his adoption. Both in his life as a minister and as a civil servant he was always to be found fighting for what he thought to be right."

An article written by Twila Roller about the life of



Z B Moon appeared in the New Mexico United Methodist Reporter on February 5, 1988, and can also be found in her book, *Methodism in their Madness*, published in 1993. We are very much indebted to her, and to Roberta Kile, for making sure that the life of this unusual man, who preached the gospel and also served in the legislature of both Texas and New Mexico, has not been forgotten.

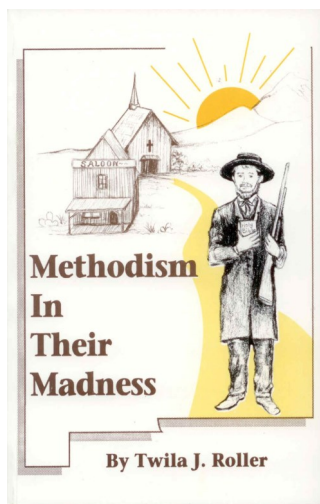
3-14-88  
Dear Ms. Roller,  
Thanks you so much for the copy of your article on my Father Z. B. Moon. We all appreciate your effort, concern, in his life history - My son had Capras made for our family at his office in session of the delay in expressing our appreciation, but my daughter, who lived in California, passed away while I was in Co - and we brought her home to rest in our family plot, at Laurel Land Cemetery in Dallas - It was a hard trip back under the customs - stanzas, and I hope not been well since - But we are very grateful to you and all concerned.  
Sincerely  
Roberta Moon Kile

## Resources

Roller, Twila J. "Minister Worked, Preached, and Played at Politics", *Methodism In Their Madness*. Creative Designs, Inc., 1993. page 91,

Library, Texas Legislative Reference. "Legislative Reference Library | Legislators and Leaders | Member Profile." *Legislative Reference Library | Legislation | Constitutional Amendments*, [lrl.texas.gov/legeleaders/members/memberdisplay.cfm?memberID=2535](http://lrl.texas.gov/legeleaders/members/memberdisplay.cfm?memberID=2535).

Additional correspondence and other documents are located in the archives of the New Mexico Conference of the United Methodist Church.



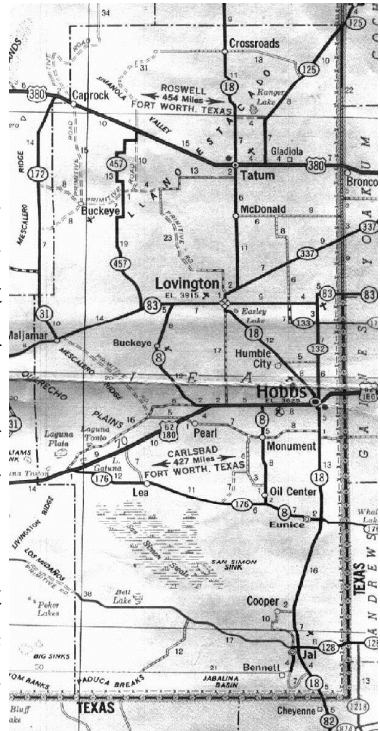
# Methodism in North Lea County

Written in 1956

The starting of Methodism in this area was the organization of a Methodist Church at Murphey's Chapel in 1907, by Rev. Bob Harris. Murphey's Chapel was located about 15 miles South and East of Tatum. In 1910 Rev. W. L. Self organized a Methodist congregation 12 miles East of Tatum at Highway. The King Church. 8 miles Southeast of town, was organized the same year with Brother Self as pastor of the three point circuit.

In 1912 a Methodist Church was organized at Tatum, in the home of Mr. & Mrs. O. M. Daniel, with Rev. W. L. Jenkins as pastor. There were nine charter members, as follows: O. M. Daniel, Mrs. O. M. Daniel, John H. James, Mrs. John H. James, Thomas J. James, Willie Daniel (James), Dr. Charles Bridges, Mrs. Charles Bridges, and Mrs. Carrie Copeland (Dillard).

A Sunday School was organized at the same date, with Dr. Charles Bridges as Superintendent, and Willie Daniel as organist. Services and Sunday School were held in the homes of the members



until the first school building was erected in the fall of 1912. Services were then held in the school building until it was moved away in 1920. For some time after that date services were held in a building moved in from Ranger Lake by the Church of Christ members.

In 1921 the Methodists of the circuit erected a church building on lots 10, 11, & 12 of block 10, in the Daniel addition to the village of Tatum. The lots were donated by Mrs. O. M. Daniel. Mr. J. B. Martin, a member, was lead carpenter. The labor was donated by members and friends of the church. After this church was built, the Methodists had service in it two Sundays each month, and the Baptists and Nazarenes had one Sunday each per month.

The Tatum circuit in 1921 included the work at Tatum, Murphey's Chapel, Highway, and King, plus a new work that had been started at Allen's Chapel, located a mile or two north of Gladiola.

Within five years of the first church organization in Tatum, the Methodist Women were organized...

In 1918 the first Methodist parsonage was built on lots 1, 2, 3, 10, 11, & 12 of block 2, in the Daniel addition, on Main street. These lots were donated by Mrs. O. M. Daniel. Rev. A. J. Brown was pastor at that time.

During the years from 1921 to 1928 the following churches were



added to the Tatum circuit: Bagley, some thirty miles or so west of Tatum, below the cap rock; Collum, 8 miles south and seven west, High Top, on top of the "cap" several miles south of the present New Hope community; and soldier hill, about twenty five miles west and now called New Hope.

The records do not clearly show whether this brought the circuit up to eight preaching places or if some of the earlier churches had ceased to be active. In either case both Eunice and Jal were added to the circuit in 1930 with Rev. Robert O. Tomlinson as pastor.



In 1928 the quarterly conference recommended the renewal of license to preach for Rev. H. W. Allen.

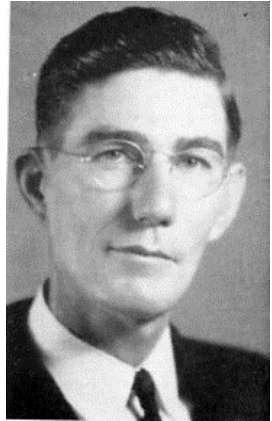
The first Epworth League at Tatum was organized in 1931 by Rev. Arthur Cox.

By way of expansion a basement was dug under the church building. This project was completed in 1937 for use as a fellowship hall and for Sunday School rooms. The same year the sanctuary was sheetrocked. Rev. Ellis Peterson was the pastor at the time. That same year the circuit acquired still another appointment, Prairieview, located east and a little north of Lovington.

Led by Rev. Sam Freeman, in 1939 the members of the church worked together to paper the Sanctuary. Tatum became a station appointment, no longer a circuit, under Sam Freeman.

The present parsonage was built in 1940 on the

rear of the lots occupied by the church building. Rev. John Cox was the first pastor to occupy the new parsonage.



For most of the years of its activity the Tatum charge has depended on the various Mission boards for part of its ministerial support. The last record of such support was an allotment of \$1600 for the year 1950-51.

In July of 1952 Rev. & Mrs. Richard Flowers held a revival meeting at Tatum. Mr. Flowers suggested that a new building was needed. The Board of Stewards met after Church services the evening of July 24 for the purpose of discussing the possibility of erecting a new building. The meeting was called to order by steward chairman W. O. Dunlap, and the result was a unanimous vote to undertake such a building campaign...

The date for the kick-off of the campaign was set for Easter Sunday of the following year, 1953. This service brought in a total of \$2,465.71. Following this, money was raised by several ingenious means. The women of the church made and sold over 400 aprons which brought in more than \$1,400. More than \$40,000 was provided by loans which the bank made to individuals. The individuals signed the notes and the money was put into the Church Building fund. Many of these loans were set up so that the person was to pay, not a specified amount, but 5% of his income until the note was paid out.

The first goal set for cost of the building was \$50,000... This figure was raised somewhat by some changes of plans that were made after construction was begun. Then there were furnishings to buy. The total cost furnished was upwards of \$75,000.

The first services were held in the new building on February 26, 1956.

The campaign was not without its moments of sorrow.



Just ten weeks after the first service was held in the new building, on May 10, the congregation was saddened by the death of their beloved pastor, Frank A. Matthews. He had faithfully guided them through the turmoil of construction and his loving spirit will long be remembered. Not long before he died, Rev. Matthews is quoted as saying, "You have a lovely new building, now build a Church in it."

This admonition of a great leader has been the oft repeated goal of the present pastor, Rev. J. J. Spurlin, who came to Tatum May 20, 1956, and is the present pastor.

Author Unknown. *Methodism in North Lea County*. 1956. TS



## **The Church That Didn't Move**

Excerpts From

The History of University Heights UMC, 1997

The merger of the Evangelical United Brethren Church and the Methodist Church was completed in 1968. On March 4, 1969, the final meeting of the E.U.B. Local Conference was held. Dr. and Mrs. Nichols were in attendance, as our outgoing District Superintendent and wife. Dr. and Mrs. Charles Thigpen were our incoming District Superintendent and wife.

The 1969 Annual Conference was held in this Church. On May 15, 1969, the Church was transferred from the Rocky Mountain Conference of the E.U.B. Church to the New Mexico Conference of the United Methodist Church. Rev. Unger was anxious

that his congregation adjust well to the merger. He introduced us to the new structure and Discipline of the U.M.C. He carefully and prayerfully guided us into the acceptance and working of methods somewhat foreign to our former ways of doing...



Rev. Clarence Stanfield came to us in June 1969.

One of the differences between the E.U.B. and the U.M. churches policies was in the furnishing of the parsonage. E.U.B. ministers owned their own furniture, U.M. pastors lived with whatever furniture the church saw fit to furnish.

Mrs. Ben Mitchell (now Mrs. Raleigh Pickering), a member of the church and interior decorator, was given the freedom of furnishing the parsonage. The Stanfield's were lucky in having Mrs. Pickering. The main floor was all that was furnished at that time; cost of the furniture was \$4,300.

In November 1969, the church entertained a "lay witness" group from the southwest. It was an interesting and successful adventure.

Rev. Stanfield came to a congregation that was really trying, but not quite accepting the new ways, to us, of running a church. He led us quietly and prayerfully through a difficult time for both the elected leaders and the members of the congregation. We were slowly learning much of how the structures of both groups could work together. These must have been discouraging days for the pastor. To Rev. Stan-



field goes the credit for sometimes pushing, sometimes leading, but always guiding us into a better understanding of the United Methodist Church.

The organ fund had been slowly building up financially and the decision was made to rebuild the organ, not to buy a new one. David Jennings was given the task and did a beautiful piece of work. On August 22, 1971, Mr. Jennings played an organ recital which was beautiful and well attended. We all enjoy our organ.

The carpeting in the sanctuary was becoming quite frayed. The floor was refinished and new aisle carpet put down. The pads on the kneeling rail were recovered. The fellowship hall was repainted. The Junior Choir was reorganized; they furnished the anthem for the 9 a.m. worship service.

Our softball team was still doing well. They won first place in the tournament for the year 1971. Hovey Corbin was manager. Many of the "church people" enjoyed going to watch "our guys" play...



Rev. Clement Lewis was sent to us June 1, 1972.

There were rumors that the conference was talking of moving our congregation to a new church, yet to be built. Our properties on Silver and Yale, S.E. would be listed for sale.

On September 17, 1972, a charge conference with charge conference powers met in the sanctuary. Rev. Bervin Caswell, District Superintendent, was in attendance. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the possibility of moving the congrega-

tion of University Heights United Methodist Church to a new location in the far northeast heights.

There was a great amount of discussion, both pro and con. It finally came to a vote, and the results were to make a resolution directing the trustees to enter into investigation for the sale of all properties bordered by Silver, Yale, and Harvard, S.E. The new site was on Juan Tabo Road, N.E., north of Montgomery Blvd. The second resolution was made authorizing the election of a building committee, which would look into facts concerning construction of a new church building at the new location. During the next few months, many meetings with realtors, city planning commission, the building committee and builders kept the church members busy.

On December 10, 1972, another charge conference with charge conference powers was held. Every member of the church was eligible to vote. It was voted that the UHUM Church be relocated to the proposed site on Juan Tabo Road.

There was much unrest and many members transferred to other churches. The plans for moving were being worked on, several architects gave bids for the new building. Several prospective buyers looked at the property, but no firm offers were made. The asking price for all property was \$285,000. The city was slow in zoning the new site. There was difficulty in coming to an understanding with the conference on a loan amount.

Church members were having second thoughts about giving up their University Heights Church. They began to consider the possibility of reversing

the decision to move. The building committee requested having another charge conference with powers to definitively decide if we move or stay!

It came as a great surprise when the New Mexico Conference called Rev. Lewis to a post in Los Alamos, New Mexico. Now the Church must deal not only with the moving problem, but having a new minister step into a church where unrest was very evident.



Rev. Joe Emanuel came to us in August 1973.

Almost immediately, his calm but strong manner began to still the troubled waters. By the end of the year, financial support was increased and a Church Conference was called for on January 20, 1974, immediately following the worship service, to take a written

ballot on the proposed relocation of the Church.

This had been a topic of discussion for several months and the officials of the Church felt this must be done to settle the issue. It was voted not to relocate. Once this question was settled, many former members came back and once again the congregation began to take care of the physical plant of the Church.

On July 11, 1974, the Committee of Concerns met with the District Superintendent, Rev. Bervin Caswell and Mr. Andres of the United Methodist Financial Board. The purpose was to ask if we would

get financial aid to keep the Church going from the Conference, should we need it. The answer was that if we wished to remain where we were, we would be responsible for our



own finances. That year, we were one of the churches that paid all Conference obligations, as well as making improvements on our property.

Our church softball team did very well and won first place for 1973 in the City Church tournament.



**My witness**  
***I saw your face and I  
remembered gifts, pain***

By WILLARD L. STEINSIEK

I saw your face the other day, though you were thousands of miles away. It came back to my mind as I sat listening to them talk about you. They didn't know, of course, that it was you that they were talking about. Their minds were fixed on only one thing — a label that some use to condemn. They had never even met you. Therefore, they didn't understand that "homosexual" could also mean human

talked about your desire for the same quality of human relationship that we take for granted. You talked of what it was like to never be able to hold hands with another person in public because it would endanger you both. You talked of the fear, always present, that sooner or later someone would find out — someone who didn't care. You talked of the "meat racks" (gay bars) and their loneliness and their sorrow.



### **I Saw Your Face**

By Will Steinsiek

*The following article appeared in a copy of the United Methodist Reporter dated August 17, 1979 in a regular column called "My Witness". It concerns a petition to the 1980 General Conference passed by the New Mexico Conference*

*on May 24, 1979 which read as follows:*

**SUBJECT: STANDARDS FOR ORDAINED MINISTRY**

In the book of Discipline, add sub-paragraph 2542 (f) which would read as follows: "Currently professing to being a "homosexual.""

**RATIONALE:** The sex act has been a private matter not to be discussed or bragged about in public in our American Society. This society has done a great job in the past upholding the teaching of Jesus and maintaining high moral standards. Our Church and society cannot afford to go against these teachings by encouraging the "Gay Movement."

***I saw your face  
and I remembered gifts, pain***

I saw your face the other day, though you were thousands of miles away. It came back to my mind as I sat listening to them talk about you. They didn't know, of course, that it was you that they were talking about. Their minds were fixed on only one thing - a label that some use to condemn. They had never even met you. Therefore, they didn't understand that "homosexual" could also mean human being.

But I saw your face and I remembered you.

We were colleagues together once, studying for the ministry. From the first day I met you in class you impressed me. There was understanding, and compassion, and courage in you. There was humor, too, and an ability to reach out and lighten the load of others. No one there was more involved in the pain and suffering of others than you were, however. John Wesley's affirmation of "The world is my parish" seemed also to be yours. Many times your words pricked the conscience of those whose pious devotion was sometimes used as a shield to hide from the demands of faith. For all these things I admired you.

One day we walked together and you told me your secret. I was surprised and amazed. You did not look the part. I thought of some things I had said once many years before, unkind words of scorn and derision. I was ashamed and wondered what you might say if you knew.

I listened to you talk that day. There was pain in your words, as deep as <sup>22</sup>the nails on Calvary's tree. "They talk of repenting," you said. "Good God, don't

they think I've done that? It's not something I choose." You went on to share with me your life in that alien world that I can barely understand. You talked about your desire for the same quality of human relationship that we take for granted. You talked of what it was like to never be able to hold hands with another person in public because it would endanger you both. You talked of the fear, always present, that sooner or later someone would find out - someone who didn't care. You talked of the "meat racks" (gay bars) and their loneliness and their sorrow.

"Every homosexual I've ever known has considered suicide," you told me. "You, too?" I asked. Then you told me about your dreams of becoming a pastor and serving Christ. One day the dream died. It could never be. Someday someone would find out, and then they would crucify you. I wondered what it was like to have the church declare that you were not Christian and that you were not even human. You had almost died. For a long time you wanted to.

I graduated with you finally, and I was proud to share that moment with you. I went on then to become the pastor of a church. I don't know where you went. It was not into the pastoral ministry, I know, though I would have been glad to call you pastor and turn to you for advice.

I did not see your face again until that day as I sat on the conference floor and listened to them talk about you.

Resolution to General Conference - Subject:  
Standards for Ordained Ministry; add to paragraph 2542, under offense for which a Local

Pastor shall be liable to accusation and trial,  
'have professed to being a homosexual.'

I saw your face.

Some people tried to speak out against this resolution, but they were not heard. Finally, I stood up to speak, too. I wanted to say something, anything on your behalf. I was booed off the conference floor. Now I know a little of how it must hurt you.

I'm sorry that I was not more effective. Perhaps others at General Conference will find the right words. My hope though is that you will not be as unkind to them as they have been to you. Maybe it is not really their fault. You see, of all the people there, only a handful of us had ever seen your face.

*"My Witness" is a column through which TM /UMR readers may express meaningful experiences of Christian life. This week's contributor, the Rev. Willard L. Steinsiek, is pastor of St. Paul UMC in Socorro, New Mexico.*

*Following the publication of this article, I received dozens of letters, many from pastors serving in churches, and others from individuals serving the various boards and agencies of the United Methodist Church.*

*A few simply apologized for what had happened and asked me to prayerfully reconsider my position. Most shared their own life experience and expressed their thanks for the article. The common thread among many of them was their faith in Christ, their desire to serve, and the part of themselves that they hid from others in order to do so. I kept these letters at first, but then grew concerned about the confidential nature of what they had shared with me. I eventually burned all of them<sup>74</sup> in the late 1980's to ensure that their identities and what they had shared with me in*



*pastoral confidence would never be revealed.*

*The petition itself was not directly included in the 1980 Book of Discipline. Instead the language under Chargeable Offenses, paragraph 2621, was altered to include “(b) practices declared by the United Methodist Church to be incompatible with Christian Teachings,” which included homosexuality. –WS*

## **2016 Book of Discipline Statements**

- ¶ **304.3:** The practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching. Therefore self-avowed practicing homosexuals are not to be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church.
- ¶ **341.6:** Ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions shall not be conducted by our ministers and shall not be conducted in our churches.
- ¶ **2702. 1.** A bishop, clergy member of an annual conference (¶ 370), local pastor,<sup>9</sup> clergy on honorable or administrative location, or diaconal minister may be tried when charged (subject to the statute of limitations in (¶ 2702.4)<sup>10</sup> with one or more of the following offenses: (a) immorality including but not limited to, not being celibate in singleness or not faithful in a heterosexual marriage;<sup>11</sup> (b) practices declared by The United Methodist Church to be incompatible with Christian teachings,<sup>12</sup> including but not limited to: being a self-avowed practicing homosexual; or conducting ceremonies which celebrate homosexual unions; or performing same-sex wedding ceremonies;<sup>13</sup> (c) crime; (d) disobedience to the order and discipline of The United Methodist Church; (e) dissemination of doctrines contrary to the established standards of doctrine of The United Methodist Church; (f) relationships and/or behavior that undermines the ministry of another pastor;<sup>14</sup> (g) child abuse;<sup>15</sup> (h) sexual abuse;<sup>16</sup> (i) sexual misconduct<sup>15</sup> including the use or possession of pornography, (j) harassment, including, but not limited to racial and/or sexual harassment; (k) racial or gender discrimination; or (l) fiscal malfeasance.

**Excerpt from First United Methodist Church,  
Portales, New Mexico: Building Values in the First  
Decade, 1899 to 1909**

By W. Douglas Mills

The establishment of the town of Portales and its First United Methodist Church occurred nearly simultaneously. According to some legends of the West, Methodist preachers followed the early pioneers on the frontier, establishing preaching stations at every settlement. Methodist preachers arrived on horseback, just behind the settlers, so the story goes, months ahead of the stagecoach and years before the trains. But in some parts of the West, the stagecoach lines and the railroads themselves created settlements and brought the settlers. Communities grew around the way-stations and water tanks where the stages or trains changed horses or crews or took on water...



In 1899, Rev. Arthur Marston, who served the Methodist Church in Roswell, felt that there were already enough people in the area around Portales Springs to justify a missionary trip. One Sunday a month, Marston travelled from Roswell to Portales, where he preached in the afternoon at the train depot. The depot at Portales was the hub of community activities. Indeed, the depot, the stock pens beside it, which were provided by the railroad company, and the general store were the only permanent structures in the town for a time. The few inhabitants of the im-

mediate area--mostly railroad hands--lived in tents. Marston performed this monthly service for a year. The Pea Vine, as the railroad had already become known, was a freight and stock train, but for the short run from Roswell to Portales to Texico, the ca-boose served as a passenger car. It was equipped with a pot-bellied stove for heat ...

By the end of the year, 1903, there were three churches in town and the weekly Portales newspaper regularly carried announcements of the services. Where only a couple of years earlier there had been a union Sunday School class, now there existed a Baptist Church and a Presbyterian Church along with the Methodist Church. Though the Methodists had been the first to send a preacher to the area, they were the last of the three to construct a building. The Presbyterians built first in 1901, followed by the Baptists early in 1903. The Methodists met morning and evening each Sunday in the Woodmen's Hall, which was located above the Portales Bank.

Sometime before 1903 the Rev. M. D. Hill began serving the Portales mission. Rev. Hill was a popular preacher in the area. Though three separate churches existed, the three cooperated with revivals, and Hill, when the Baptist or Presbyterian ministers were away, occupied the pulpits of the other two on more



than one occasion. After one week-long revival, held at the Methodist Church in July of 1903, the editor of the Portales Times found occasion to praise Hill. "He seems to be gifted with power on high," the paper rec-

orded, "and the church has certainly been revived by his preaching." The article went on to report that the word of God had been scarcely heard only a year prior, "but now there are several good preachers ... "

The Methodists started construction of their first building in April of 1903 under the leadership of Rev. Hill and contractors Perry and Martin. By the middle of the month, Hill was reporting in the local paper that the building had been framed and was "assuming a rather imposing appearance." The building, a white frame building complete with steeple and bell, was completed in June of that year and in his announcement to the town, Hill took notice of its two-fold purpose. The new structure stood as a monument to the faith and loyalty of the local Methodists, and it served "the interest of the people of Portales in the morals of her people." A month later, an Epworth organ arrived, provided by the church's Women's Home Mission Society.

That year, 1903, was a turning point for both the town and the church. Portales became the county seat for the newly formed Roosevelt County. As the county seat, Portales also gained a sheriff, Billy Odom, who required cowboys to check their guns before coming into town. With its new building, the Methodist Church became a social center, hoping to displace the saloons. Sunday School, which had been organized in April of 1903, met regularly each Sunday morning. Young people gathered for the Junior Epworth League on Sunday afternoons, the women of the church met twice monthly on Mondays, and a weekly Wednesday prayer meeting was offered.

Bishop Joseph S. Key of the Methodist Episcopal

Church, South made the first episcopal visit to Portales on September 12, 1903. The church folks were evidently proud to host an episcopal visitor, for they showed their appreciation by taking up an offering and paying off the church debt of \$615. Because one week prior the newspaper had announced that M. D. Hill would be leaving the church, Bishop Key assured the members that another elder would be appointed. He warned them, however, not to be wholly dependent upon any preacher who was sent them. Paradoxically, the members were not to depend wholly on God, either, for "man makes himself," the Bishop proclaimed, and with some attention to the biblical literature the town could sanctify itself. The town would try.

The next day W. K. Breeding, the newly appointed County Assessor, escorted the Bishop to the train back to Roswell. Many of the first politicians in Portales, such as Breeding, were members of the Methodist Church. They evidently thought that church membership and political service went hand in hand.

But the greatest news was that the church was debt free, and "it [became] possible for the Methodists to keep up their church within their own membership." No longer was the church to be dependent on the community-at-large.

## **RESOURCES**

Mills, W Douglas. *First United Methodist Church, Portales, New Mexico: Building Values in the First Decade, 1899 to 1909*. NM Conference Archives UMC, 1994.

## We're Going to The East Side!!

By Carol Kaemper

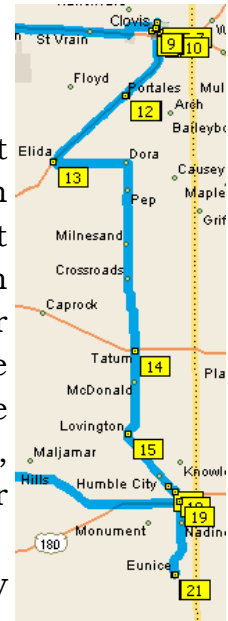
From learning about one church that has outfitted a railroad box car with medical and dental supplies and had it sent to Kenya, Africa, to another church that has outfitted a room especially for the transient population needing a place to rest, a shower, and perhaps some funds so their journey can be continued, this year's Conference Heritage Tour yielded one amazing visit after another!



We were so happy to greet the fourteen tour-goers in Clovis on September, 29, 2018, as the cars pulled into the Trinity Methodist Church. Pastor Amy Jordan met us at the door with a warm welcome and an invitation

to walk through the church before we gathered in the all-purpose room where so many activities take place and where we heard how that church is extending hospitality and grace outward to the surrounding community and beyond - even to Africa!

Clovis has three Methodist churches and along with Trinity, we were happy to visit Kingswood as well as the First United Methodist on the first day of the tour. Kingswood, to this author, is the most architecturally beautiful church I had ever seen. A “daughter church” to First UMC, the<sup>30</sup> red brick walls soar to an



exceedingly high tower and the inside of the church feels as though Heaven is, indeed, just beyond the cloud-like and ethereal-looking ceiling. What a treasure! Visit the church if you can; you will be as inspired as we were.



First UMC, the beginning of the Methodist churches in Clovis, was originally located right in the middle of town.



However, that building became too costly to maintain and had to be made compliant with new standards. Therefore a choice was made to move to its present location on Sycamore. We were met by the

church archivist/historian, Dave Tanner and treated to his enthusiasm and obvious love of history. In fact, on Friday, September 28, a workshop had been scheduled in the chapel (the older sanctuary) and we were pleased to spend several hours hearing about the beginnings of First UMC and how it is continuing to serve. Dale is striving to make a file for each of the pastors who have served First UMC and he had found that one pastor, D. M. Ausmus, although serving the church for a little over a year, was not listed in the usual way. Dale asked Will to look into the matter and, of course, Will said he would search the matter as soon as he returned to the Conference Archivists'

office. (*I did.* – WS)



Our next stop was First UMC Portales and we were warmly greeted by Rev. Roland McGregor who is serving the church until the end of the calendar year. Roland divided our group into two parts and we

were treated to the historical room and the sanctuary by Bill Wood and Pansy Jordan. Roland joined us for lunch at a local restaurant, called Something Different, where we fueled up on bowls of Teriyaki and rice - good choices for the long roads ahead.



Elida has always fascinated Will and we did take a short jog west from Portales to see what was in that small farming community. The church is very pretty and decorated with all manner of flowers

almost everywhere you look. At the altar was a large painted blue milk can filled with a gorgeous arrangement that the sun was shining on. It was perfectly located. The caretaker and long-time member of the



Elida church said that she had been a member most of her life and it was obvious that she enjoyed looking after the church and property. In fact, when we drove up, she was on a small tractor, cutting the grass. Again, we were treated with hospitality and charm.



That was true wherever we went.

Next, we turned east and south for the trip to Tatum. A table had been set for our visit and there were home-made chocolate chip cookies among other good things and lots of iced tea, with and without. The pastor there has served several churches in the area, including Elida, and it was very gratifying to hear how much she valued the older members in the congregation, finding ways that they can feel included and comfortable in the ever-changing world we live in. Tatum actually has a small

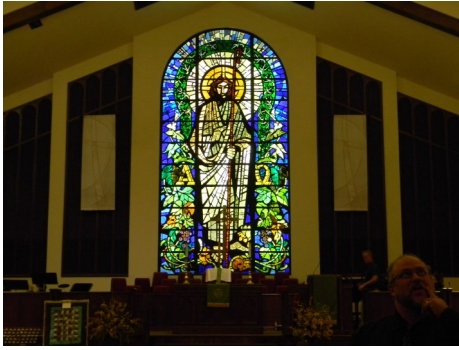
dwelling between the church and the parsonage that has been made into a rest stop for the transient population that comes into the oil patch looking for work. Pastor Beth Anderson-Anthony is finding



that the room, complete with a shower and a comfortable bed, has even served as a temporary place for members of the Tatum community who find that they can also use the facility when it is temporarily needed.

We continued on south to Lovington and visited with Pastor Matt Bridges, his daughter, and two members of the congregation who were life-time members and had known each other





from the time they were in nursery school at the church. What stands out in a tour like the one we were on was the unfailing friendliness and hospitality of everyone we spoke with.

People are proud of their churches and ready to share experiences.

We then set off for Hobbs, not a far stretch from Lovington, to eat dinner at the Pacific Rim Restaurant. From there we found our rooms and retired for the night knowing that we would be up bright and early the next morning to worship at First UMC.

At First UMC we enjoyed the music and apparent fun people were having as they talked about a recent concert many had attended at the church the night before, and as we noticed the rows and rows of “shoebox ministry” boxes the congregation planned to support to help supply needed toiletries and supplies for people who needed a hand-up, not a hand-out. Pastors Nick and Blossom Matthews were enthusiastic and lively.

We left the church a little early for a trip to Eunice, our last stop. Our arrival coincided with the beginning of the sermon but we did find that we had missed the children’s portion with praise and singing. The church is



small but mighty, I'm thinking. It serves a diverse population of construction workers and oil patch folks. There is a great deal going on in that area and it was good to see so much activity. Between the wind farms to the north and the oil patch to the south, that part of New Mexico appears to be in good shape for the future. Church members provided a perfect lunch for us, even though there were many all-church activities planned for the day. We particularly enjoyed visiting with Mary Ann Reese who had lived many different places before settling down in Eunice 30 years ago.

We did not all make it to Jal but some of our numbers did as we parted ways in Eunice to either drive back to Albuquerque as Will, his son, Jared, and I did, or they planned to stop in Carlsbad and Artesia for the night; a very wise plan that helped several couples continue their exploring and enjoyment of New Mexico's East Side. Other than a flat tire we experienced on the road from Hobbs to Artesia, the trip was without incident. We had a rather miraculous "save" provided by some young men who just happened to be in the area at the right time to take our tire to Artesia, get it fixed, and return to place the tire back on Jared's car. The "coincidence" of people being there at the right time and place was not lost on us.

A special *thank you* to all those who shared this adventure with us.

Gratefully acknowledged,

Carol Kaemper, President

New Mexico Conference Historical Society

# IN MEMORY

## From the 2017 New Mexico Conference Journal

48. Deceased (List alphabetically in the spaces provided)

a) What associate members have died during the year?

None

b) What provisional members have died during the year? (Indicate credential.)

None

c) What elders have died during the year?

Retired:

Name	Date of Birth	Date of Death
Rodney L Williams*	Aug 28, 1936	May 25, 2017
Merriel Abbot	Dec 27, 1927	Sept 7, 2017
Robert Dulaney Barrett	Jan 29, 1935	March 28, 2018
Alice May Helfrich	Oct 30, 1931	Feb 28, 2018

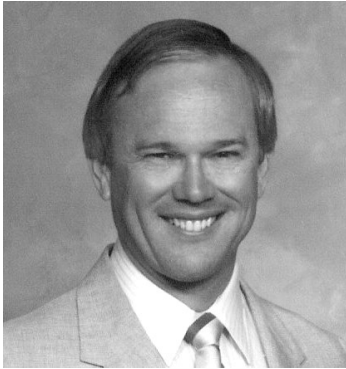
d) What deacons have died during the year?

none

e) What local pastors have died during the year?

Oliver H Davis                      Sept 19, 1933                      April 12, 2018

*The following pages are meant to share some of the historical record of those names most recently added to our roll of the Honored Dead. We can not hope to tell their full story of sacrifice and service in so few words, but here is where they left their footprints in our story...*



## Rodney Lee Williams\*

**NW Texas:** 58 PM; 60 FE

**New Mexico:** 98 RE

### **APPOINTMENTS:**

**NW Texas:** 58 Odell/Farmers Valley; 60 Rochester; 62 First, Pampa, associate; 63 St. Matthew, Lubbock; 68 Albany; 70 Albany/Moran; 72 Seminole

**New Mexico:** 74 First, Carlsbad; 79 St. Paul, El Paso; 82 NM Conference; 84 First, Roswell; 87 LA; 88 extension ministry; 98 Retired

**DOB:** August 28, 1936

**DOD:** May 25, 2017

### **EDUCATION:**

McMurry University; SMU, Perkins

**MARRIED:** Belva J Hollingshead, 8/7/1982

**CHILDREN:** Beverly Milam, Joan Edelen, Linda Henry, John McLain, David McLain

### **NOTEWORTHY:**

For the first part of his ministry he was a member of the Northwest Texas Conference of the UMC where he served churches in West Texas. In 1974 Rodney moved to the New Mexico Conference of the UMC, serving churches in Carlsbad and Roswell, NM and also El Paso, Texas. He served as Director of the NM Conference Council in 1982-1984. For the last 6 years of his ministry he was on special appointment, working as a Director and then President of Ward, Dreshman and Reinhardt assisting churches with capital fund campaigns. He retired in 1998. In his retirement, he conducted funerals for Porter Loring Mortuary in San Antonio. He was a volunteer for the Institute of Texan Culture, Meals on Wheels, Airport Ambassadors, and Methodist Stone Oak Hospital as a chaplain.

*(\*Also listed in last years journal.)*



## **Merriel Abbot**

**NW Texas:** 52 LP; 54 PM; 58 FE;  
**New Mexico:** 93 RE

### **APPOINTMENTS:**

**NW Texas:** 52 Spur; 53 Lone Oak; 55 Wesley, Lubbock; 58 Loraine; 61 Clyde; 65 Crowell; 67 Wesley, Amarillo; 70 Idalou; 72 Slayton; 76 Brownfield; 82 San Jacinto, Amarillo

**New Mexico:** 86 First, Lovington; 93 Retired

**DOB:** Dec 27, 1927

**DOD:** Sept 7, 2017

### **EDUCATION:**

Winters High School  
Texas Tech,  
Perkins

### **MARRIED:**

Darene Nell Mayhew 9/5/1951

### **CHILDREN:**

Kenneth, Mark, Paula (Hawkins), Melinda (Reed)

### **NOTEWORTHY:**

Went to Texas tech for one year before enlisting in the Army Air Corps in 1946 and serving in the Hawaiian Department. He served 39 years in pastoral ministry, 32 years in the Northwest Texas Conference and 7 years in the New Mexico Conference, from which he retired. In all he served 12 different churches. First UMC in Lovington was the only charge that he served in the New Mexico Conference, serving as pastor, from 1986 thru 1993. After seven years, it became time for them to retire in 1993. They bought their first "real home," and a travel trailer. That enabled them to "see many interesting places and enjoy fellowship with family and friends."

# Robert Dulaney Barrett

**New Mexico:** 57 PM; 59 FE; 02 RE

## APPOINTMENTS:

**New Mexico:** 57 SMU; 60 Wesley Foundation UNM; 62 Socorro/Pie Town; 63 University, Las Cruces;

**Oklahoma:** 68 Clinton/Watonga; 70 Sand Springs; 74 Chaplain OK City U; 77 Sunny Lane, OK City; 79 First, Durant; 79 LA

**Central Texas:** 80 Iredell/Cranfills Gap

**Southwest Texas:** 82 St Mark, McAllen; 84 Travis St., La Grange; 85 Goldthwaite; 88 First, Lockhart

**New Mexico:** 90 Director Sacramento Assembly; 94 First, Gallup; 96 Paradise Hills; 99 DS Clovis; 02 Retired

**DOB:** Jan 29, 1935

**DOD:** Mar 28, 2018

## EDUCATION:

McMurry University - B.A. 1956

Perkins School of Theology, SMU - Master of Theology 1959, S.T.M. 1960, Cum Laude, Dr.M 1975 Magna Cum Laude

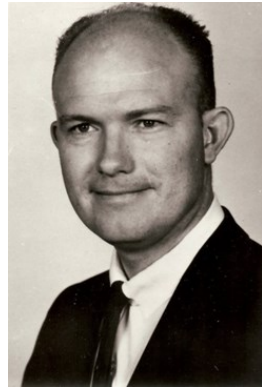
**MARRIED:** Cora Joan Arnold 9/4/1954; DIV 1979

Susan Elizabeth Daley 2/15/1980

**CHILDREN:** Lydia Joann Barrett, Robert Dulaney Barrett, Jr.,  
Suzanna Marie Barrett, Cari Elizabeth Barrett

## NOTEWORTHY:

His "proper education" included being a roughneck on an oil rig near Jal, building fences for Winkler County, and pulling broomcorn on a dry land farm. Served in 4 different Conferences. When he returned to New Mexico a decade in 1990 he served as the Director of The Sacramento Methodist Assembly, and later as the Clovis District Superintendent from 1999 until his retirement in 2001. In retirement he was often involved in local politics, and continued fighting for things he believed in both in and out of the Church. Many have called Dulaney a force of nature. He didn't win every battle, but he never shied away from any either.





## Alice May Helfrich

**New Mexico:** 97 FD; 98 RD

### **APPOINTMENTS:**

**New Mexico:** 69 Good Samaritan Village, Las Cruces; 98 Retired

**DOB:** Oct 30, 1931

**DOD:** Feb 28, 2018

### **EDUCATION:**

NMSU, Bachelors of Individualized Study with an emphasis on English and Gerontology

### **MARRIED:**

George Helfrich 11/1/1952

### **CHILDREN:**

Janet, Paul, Don

### **NOTEWORTHY:**

After moving to Las Cruces in 1959, she became Director of Christian Education at St. Paul's Methodist Church. In 1986 she became the first local person hired at the newly built Good Samaritan Retirement Village as Assistant Administer. She later became Director of Resident Services where she remained until she retired in 1998. Alice's continued involvement in the United Methodist Church led to her Ordination to The Order of Deacon in 1997. Near the end of her life she suffered from Alzheimers, dying at the age of 86.



# Oliver Henry Davis

**New Mexico:** LP 1992, OD 1995; RL 1996

## **APPOINTMENTS:**

**New Mexico:** 1994 Elida/Floyd/Inez; 1995 Elida;  
1996 RL

**DOB:** Sept 19, 1933

**DOD:** April 12, 2018

## **EDUCATION:**

LPS 1986; CSS 4yrs

## **MARRIED:**

Jessie L ? 1/15/54, DIV 3/1/94

Lenora F Stendebach, 3/12/1994

## **CHILDREN:**

Curt, Sharon

## **NOTEWORTHY:**

He enlisted and served in the U.S Navy during the Korean conflict, and was stationed in Hawaii. His family notes "He had four distinct calls to the ministry, interspersed with years of making a living as a salesman, but God would not let go and Dave returned to the ministry time after time." Over the years as a lay pastor he served small Methodist churches in Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, and New Mexico. His more formal path into the ministry began in 1986 with the course of study, but it wasn't until 1992 that he was granted a license to preach. In 1994 he was asked to serve three small churches on the eastern plains of New Mexico, Elida, Floyd, and Inez, as a Full Time Lay Pastor. His service to Elida lasted only a couple of years before he retired as a lay pastor and moved back to southeast Texas.



# Archives and Historical Society

## *Preserving our History*

**Purpose:** The purpose of this Society shall be to aid in the collection and preservation of facts, documents, reports, records, relics, memoirs, books, periodicals, reminiscences, etc. which may be of historic value relating to the origin and growth of the United Methodist Church and its historic antecedents within the bounds of the New Mexico Annual Conference.



**Membership** in the NM Conference Historical Society is open to all interested persons.

**Officers for the Historical Society** shall be chosen annually by a ballot mailed to all members. Only members in good standing shall be eligible to vote.

**Annual dues** are \$12.00 per calendar year, which shall include 2 copies of the New Mexico Conference United Methodist Historical Journal to be received by mail in May and November.

**Archives and History Endowment:** A fund has been established to benefit the NMAC Archives. Donations to this fund are tax deductible. An amount will be allocated from this fund each year to purchase supplies for the day-to-day operations of the Archives, and to carry out projects to preserve photos, books, documents and historical objects found within the Archives. We welcome any and all donations. Please consider supporting this fund to help preserve and share our history.

## **Donations can be sent to**

Archives and History Endowment  
NM Conference of the UMC  
11816 Lomas Blvd NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87112

## *Sharing Our Story*

**Heritage Tour:** The NM Conference Historical Society sponsors an annual Heritage Tour, highlighting places and events in our NM Conference History.

**Kate Warnick Award** (TUMHS) for the Best Local Church History written during the past year. Guidelines are available and entries should be addressed to W. J. Bryan III, P.O. Box 750133, Dallas, TX 75172 by January 31. Copies of the guidelines can be obtained by emailing [wbryan@smu.edu](mailto:wbryan@smu.edu).

## *Recognizing Service*

**Living Archives Awards** are presented at the Annual Conference. The purpose of the award is to lift up and honor exemplary individuals of the conference whose work and/or spirit provide hope and inspiration. The full criteria for this award can be found in the 2011 Conference Journal, page 214, and is available on request.

**Nominations** may be made either by letter or EMAIL to the Archives at the NM Annual Conference Office, prior to February 1st. The nomination should describe the reasons you believe that the individual deserves consideration, sharing their spiritual journey, any offices held, recognition or honors received, and their contribution to the life of the NM Annual Conference.



Raymond Gray  
1877—1971

I want in this final message to leave my witness. I am not a super Christian. I have never claimed to be a saint, but when as a boy of 17, I was converted and at the same time was called to preach, I rejected the call to preach and fought it for nearly 2 years. Yet, when I surrendered to God, I think I surrendered fully and dedicated my life and all to God and to his cause.

I have had a happy ministry. Since I am 93 1/2 years old I do not expect to stay here much longer. Most any time you will hear the report that Brother Gray is dead. Do not believe it! It will not be true. I will be more alive at that moment than at any moment during the last 93 years. And I expect to live on after that in the eternities.

May God bless and keep and guide each of you always and in all ways.

Amen and Amen.