

1995

# A Short History of New Hope Church

Margaret H. Prosser

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/bchs-pubs>



Part of the [History Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

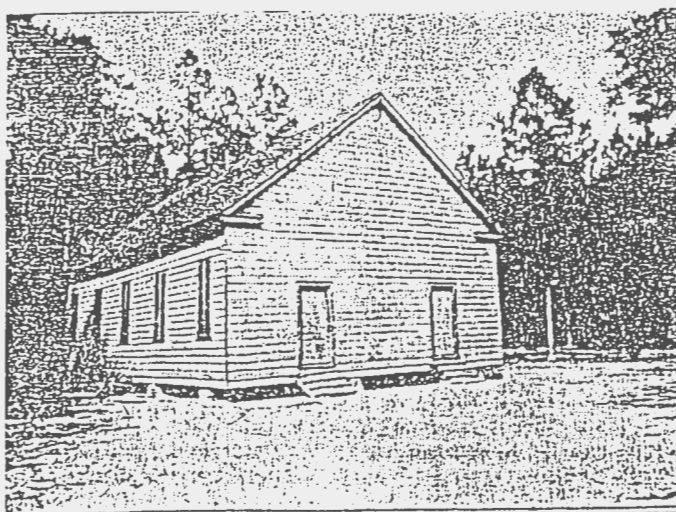
Prosser, Margaret H., "A Short History of New Hope Church" (1995). *Bulloch County Historical Society Publications*. 19.  
<https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/bchs-pubs/19>

This book is brought to you for free and open access by the Bulloch County Historical Society Collection at Digital Commons@Georgia Southern. It has been accepted for inclusion in Bulloch County Historical Society Publications by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@Georgia Southern. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@georgiasouthern.edu).

June 25, 1908.

## A Short History of New Hope Church Bulloch County, Georgia

In the year 1801, David Kennedy moved from Glynn county to Bulloch and settled at what afterwards became Mill Ray P. O. William M. Kennedy, Sr., (doubtless his brother) was then living in this county, being at that time Clerk of the Superior Court of Bulloch county. Both of these names with those of Josiah Everett, Jarvis Jackson and Burrel Whittington appear on the deed to a tract of land containing two and a quarter acres, which was granted to them on October 12, 1804, as trustees of "New Hope Meeting House." On this tract which is situated near what is now known as Bragg school house, about two miles Southwest of the present site, the first church stood. After a number of years this property was disposed of and two acres on the "Milledgeville and Savannah Stage Road," opposite where the church now stands, was purchased. The trustees of this property being David Kennedy, (one of the first trustees) Eli Kennedy, (his son), and Shepard Williams. This deed bears the date of May 12, 1825.



**THE OLD BUILDING**

The first church erected to our knowledge on this lot of land was re-placed in 1855 by the present building, which, with some changes made when it was repaired about 1880.

A few of the older members seeing the necessity of more land, as the country was constantly being enlarged, purchased with the assistance of a few friends, four acres adjoining and gave it to the church. Recently the church has been moved upon this tract, and now is undergoing repairs.

Rev. William M. Kennedy Jr, who was a member of the Florida and South Georgia Conferences from 1848 to 1873, was a son of Eli Kennedy, who lived at Mill Ray, and an official in this church.

We have no record of the first Sunday-school organized at this church, but some of the oldest members attended Sunday-school here when children.

There are now two Sunday-schools kept up by the members of New Hope membership, and both are in a prosperous condition; one at the church and the other at Oak Grove School House, about three miles from the church.

Harmony church, in this county, was organized about 1877 - its membership consisting principally of members from New Hope.

It is a fact worthy of mention that David Kennedy and his son Eli Kennedy, were among the first to advocate temperance in Bulloch. It was through their efforts, also, that the first P.O. in the county, Mill Ray, was established, with Eli Kennedy as Postmaster.

After the death of William M. Kennedy Sr., Eli Kennedy succeeded him as Clerk of the Superior Court of Bulloch County, and served in that capacity for many years.

We have been unable to find a roll of membership prior to 1842, but at that time it was kept by Eli Kennedy, who was then class leader. After his death, a year or two later, Hardy B. Hodges was appointed class leader, and from then until now we have a continued enrollment of the membership. We also have a roll of the colored members who worshiped with this church until a few years after the Civil War, when they obtained a church of their own.

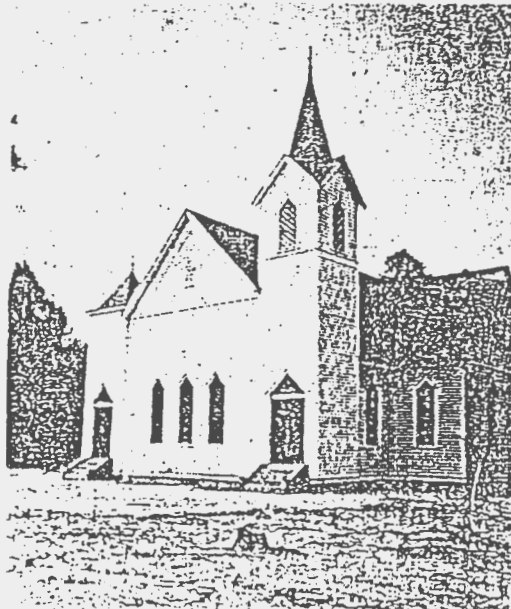
While we have not, as a church, accomplished great things, there has always been a "faithful few" who led in church enterprise.

We pray for a baptism of the Holy Spirit upon the church during these Centennial Services and that she may reconsecrate herself for greater and nobler deeds for God and humanity.

August, 1904

#### THE NEW BUILDING

Entering upon a new century it was resolved to build anew, thereupon, the Fourth Quarterly Conference, held at New Hope, September 28, 1905, a building committee, consisting of B.R. Sharpe, M. Williams, W.A. Hodges, T.J. Morris, L.B. Hagin, J.R. Dutton, W.M. Scott and others, were appointed to sell the old church and rebuild, the committee thereupon entered upon their duties; they selected B.R. Sharpe chairman and treasurer - they sold the old church and in the year 1906 commenced building. May 27, the Lord saw fit to remove by death, Bro. B.R. Sharpe, our chairman, who had taken a great interest in the work and had aided very liberally in the building. After his death Bro. S.J. Morris was elected - was completed by the end of the year, and dedicated May 31, 1908. - Ed W.C.A.



THE NEW BUILDING

Erected at a cost of \$2,000 and dedicated May 31, 1908. Rev. W.A. Brooks, Pastor.

July 1995

The Brooklet-New Hope Charge was formed in 1909 with Rev. W. M. Carmichael as pastor and New Hope as a half station.

The revival of 1919, led by Pastor C. E. Cook assisted by Rev. Harry Allen, received 67 members into the New Hope Church family. This was the largest number received at one time in New Hope's history. Reverend Allen was a general evangelist of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

September 5, 1954, marked the 150th anniversary of the founding of New Hope Church. Pastor J. B. Hutchinson and Rev. Mack Anthony, guest preacher, led the morning services. Rev. Frank Jordan and Reverend Ansley assisted in the afternoon.

An annex to the church building was completed in 1961, giving needed rooms for the Church School and other church activities. More Sunday School rooms were built in 1976.

Brooklet-New Hope Charge was selected as "Charge of the Year" in the Statesboro District in 1963 and in 1966.

Brooklet became a full time station in 1968. The New Hope-Nevils Charge was formed with each church being a half station and with the preacher living in the newly built parsonage adjacent to the New Hope Church.

New Hope celebrated its 175th year in 1979. The homecoming was a time for members to dress in period costumes. The annex was filled with artifacts. Pastor H. Curtis Tillman wrote a poem which was presented as a drama.

New Hope was again selected as "Rural Charge of the Year" in the Statesboro in 1979 and in 1989.

The Lord blessed this historical church in 1988 as we became a full time church with Oliver church as a half station. Pastor James Aycock and District Superintendent James Rush gave us a good beginning during our first three years as a full time church.

We continued to have spirit filled events such as Lay Witness Missions, prayer meetings, a minister's "We Care Mission," revivals, Miracle Sunday, annual homecomings, Bible study and Appreciation Day for Naomi Hodges in 1989. Bishop Richard C. Looney delivered the Gospel message during the revival in 1993.

Improvements to the church building and grounds since 1988 include the construction of a new Fellowship Hall joining the back of the church with a portico, a paved concrete driveway from the highway to the Fellowship Hall. A new organ was installed. New padded church pews replaced the old wooden ones.

Also since 1988, a playground area was fenced and equipment purchased. A Live Oak tree was planted and dedicated, replacing an old Live Oak tree which had to be cut. These changes have been made in the structure and grounds to provide 20th century conveniences but the architectural integrity of the church building has been preserved.



In July of 1995, New Hope United Methodist Church has eight Sunday School classes, worship services twice each Sunday, an adult choir, a weekly sharing group, a weekly Bible study group, two United Methodist Women groups, a United Methodist Men group, Youth Fellowship group, Kingdom Kids and a Little Angels class.

Most important, a Lifestyle Relational Evangelism Ministry has been organized with teams visiting in the community. The primary objective is to reach the unchurched by building meaningful relationships.

During 1995, the average attendance at Sunday School is 49 and at Sunday Worship Service average attendance is 79. We are few in number but we pray for the Holy Spirit to touch others to join the "faithful few" at New Hope to serve and work for the Lord.

New Hope members are looking forward to the year 2004 and the church's Bicentennial Year Homecoming Celebration to give thanks to our Lord and Savior who will make this possible.

For more information about this historical church, you may write or visit New Hope United Methodist Church at 9623 GA HWY 24, Statesboro, Georgia 30458.

Margaret Prosser  
Church Historian 1995



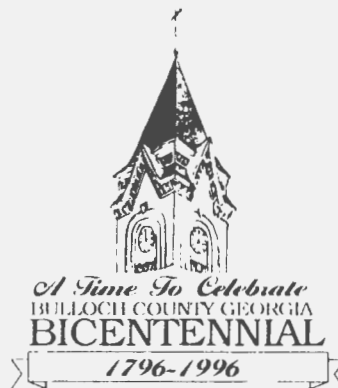
# Bulloch County Historical Society

P. O. Box 42  
Statesboro, Georgia 30459

Bulloch County was formed in 1796 out of Screven and Bryan Counties. The oldest churches now in Bulloch County are Nevil's Creek Primitive Baptist (1790) and Union Methodist (1790).

We have many churches now, some old and some young. Each church has a history.

We urge you to write or to update your church history for the BULLOCH BICENTENNIAL OBSERVANCE in 1996.



BULLOCH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
Post Office Box 42  
Statesboro, GA 30459

Non Profit Org.  
U. S. Postage  
PAID  
Statesboro, GA  
Permit No. 400

Is your Church History up to date?

Inside is an Abstract of the New  
Hope Church History 1804-1995  
and Update by Margaret Prosser,  
Church Historian and member of  
the Board of Directors of the  
Bulloch County Historical  
Society.

We encourage Bulloch churches  
to write or update their  
histories for the BULLOCH  
BICENTENNIAL in 1996.

MARVIN GOSS  
729 HILLWOOD DRIVE  
STATESBORO GA 30458

Return Postage Guaranteed.  
Address Correction Requested.