

A Quarterly Publication of the
Trinity United Methodist Church
Historical Society, Tallahassee, FL



April 2022
Volume 6 Issue 2
Since 2017

“Preserving—Sharing—Caring”

Crossroads



“Do Not Sound a Trumpet”: Practices and Meanings of the Humble but Once Mighty Mite Box

By Pamela C. Crosby



Above: An illustration from the 1875 children's book *Marty and the Mite-Boxes* by Jennie Harrison. The caption says, “Why my boy, what is this: Are we getting our church built already?”

The children's book, *Marty and the Mite-Box*, is evidence of the far-reaching captivity by Christians in the 19th century of a special version of a little piggy bank. The *mite box*—as it was called—was used by congregations in the UK, the United States, and other countries as a means to raise money as well as to aid in the character and spiritual development of children.

In the book's story, set in England, a village rector recruits young boys, poor and often wayward, to sing in the choir and to raise money for a new church.

The left illustration shows one of the boys building models of churches to sell in order to add to his mite box fund that would go to the construction of a new church (Harrison, 1875, p. 120). This quarter's issue presents a history of the “mighty” mite box and its wide-spread influence in the Methodist Church.

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Once Upon a Time:

Worship Bulletin
Announcement
September 7, 1975

“We are fortunate in having located a small three-bedroom house for our Vietnam family, who for three months have been living in a one-bedroom apartment inadequate for five persons. We do need the following items for their new home: beds, a table and chairs, chest of drawers, small tables, chairs, lamps, blankets, rugs and a washing machine.”

How could a tiny box of paperboard do so much good in the world? Small coins that filled these little cartons generated millions of dollars, and the money was put to use in countless ways—even helping to end a cultural practice that had been in place for centuries—foot binding in China. This article tells how the humblest of artifacts can make the greatest of differences.

What Are Mite Boxes?

Mite boxes were generally made of cardboard that members of a congregation, organization, or group—most often a church—used to finance a particular project, ministry, or other need (Shenise, 2020).

As far as its religious beginnings, one theory for who established the practice of something like a mite box in religious gatherings was based on a passage in 2 Kings, where **Jehoiada**, a priest,

took a chest and bored a hole in its lid . . . , and set it beside the altar, on the right side as one cometh into the house of the Lord; and the priests who kept the door put therein all the money that was brought into the house of the Lord. (2 Kings 12: 9, quoted in *Harisburg Telegraph*, 1894, p. 1).



A bronze Widow's Mite or Lepton, minted by Alexander Jannaeus, King of Judaea, 103–76 B.C. Obverse: anchor upside-down in circle, reverse: star of eight rays. From the private collection of Randy Benzie. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Widowsmite.jpg>

A mite is also called a *lepton*. This Jewish coin was of the smallest value in the New Testament era, being worth 1/64 of a *denarius*, with a denarius being a day's wage for a common worker. Some guess that it would be 1/8 of one cent in today's time (Taylor, 2005).

The Poor Widow's Mite

The significance of the mite to the meaning of giving and sacrifice is brought to life in the Gospels of Mark and Luke: Jesus was at the temple and observed persons making their contributions. Coins that fell in a box made noise—the greater the number of coins, the louder the sound. Some wealthy persons were especially proud of themselves because they could attract admiring attention with their large contribution. In contrast, a person with few coins made little noise and would not be noticed. One such person was a poor widow who gave all she had—two small coins (mites). Someone did notice her efforts, however. It was her sacrifice that caught the attention of Jesus (Verhiley, 2016). In Luke, we see the following:

1 And He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury, 2 and He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites. 3 So He said, "Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all; 4 for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had." (Luke 21:1-4 NKJV)

Raising Money for Those in Need

The sacrifice of giving all one has is a noble act. While the *attitude* behind the giving was what was emphasized in the story of Jesus and the widow's mite, its *financial attraction*, that is, the idea of collecting coins—small amounts that all persons can easily give in order to raise a great amount of money for worthy causes—was what women's groups capitalized on. Mite boxes were known most widely in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (MECS) as a means for raising money for women's mission projects. The women had discovered that the best way to promote interest and raise funds was to ask for small change from a large number of givers (Shenise, 2020).

One writer in an 1878 article in the *Biblical Recorder* said that the success of the mite box approach to fundraising was due to the little notice that persons had in giving small amounts, that is, when they were giving pennies—and other coins—they were barely aware of giving anything and felt no great loss. This approach to giving, of course,



A video still taken from Shenise, M. (2020, May 27). *Methodist History: Mite Boxes for Missions* [Video & Transcript]. General Commission on Archives and History. United Methodist Communications. <https://www.umc.org/en/content/united-methodist-history-mite-boxes-for-missions>

was not the attitude that Jesus praised in speaking of the widow. For Jesus, one should be deeply aware that one has made a sacrifice while at the same time genuinely conscious of the act of giving and sincerely wanting to do it. The writer of the article stressed that

In every community and country there are more than a hundred times as many people, who can and will give a cent for a good purpose as there are who can and will give a dollar. (Pritchard, 1878, p. 2)

Yet he commented that the number of times a person gives establishes a habit of giving which helps to build character:

The giving of a cent a hundred times repeated, is more than the gift of a dollar. The repetition of the act forms the habit at giving, which is only another name for beneficent character. This character formed is a fountain of ever increasing beneficence [sic]. (Pritchard, 1878, p. 2)

The impressive result of the mite boxes promoted one writer to say in a letter to the publication

let the pastors preach on Foreign Missions. . . and then let us adopt the mite box system.... It is not the large amounts from the few but the small subscriptions from the many which swell the stream of benevolence. ("State Missions," 1882, p. 2)

So for good management practices, committees of foreign mission societies were asked to collect the money regularly as part of their required role in the church (Pritchard, 1878, p. 2).

And the Woman's Home Missionary Society

(WHMS) of the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC) relied on mite boxes to aid their fund-raising as well. With **Mrs. Rutherford B. Hayes** (wife of the nineteenth U. S. President) presiding on October 27, 1885, in Philadelphia as president of the Grand Board of Managers of the WHMS, the Committee on Mite Boxes recommended that

in each conference organized for home mission work, there [would] be appointed by the president and corresponding secretary an officer to be known as the "mite box agent," whose especial duty shall be to enlist the district officers and those of auxiliaries in the matter of distributing mite boxes freely among the people. . . . ("Home Missions," 1885, p. 2)

Mite Box Fund-Raising Practices and Events

Innovative and clever events were planned with impressive results as the money came pouring in these tiny cardboard boxes. The funds could be collected on many different occasions with various names, such as "thank-offerings, memorial offerings, birth-day offerings" ("Aunt Mary...", 1886, p. 7).

Often at the end of a fundraising drive—according to United Methodist Church Archivist **Mark Shenise**—persons would come up in front of the church to the tune of something like "Marching to Zion" and throw their contents in a larger box. The sound of the coins falling into the box would be an important part of the ritual. This practice might be at the beginning of a (cont. on p. 4)

(cont. from p. 3)

Sunday school opening where Sunday school members would gather before their classes (Shenise, 2020).

And families were also encouraged to place their mite boxes in their homes if there were no special places at church for them so that “upon breakfast or tea-table every Sunday,”

each member of the family having cause for gratitude [would] drop in a penny and if this custom be observed throughout the year, though small may have been each gift, the box will be full, and many hearts brought nearer to Jesus. (“Aunt Mary...,” 1886, p. 7)

One creative means of raising money with mite boxes was through skits and dramas. Individuals might “dress up in the mite boxes” in order to illustrate a theme that pointed to the purpose of mite boxes. With so much attention drawn to the boxes, they used the clever promotions to ask for donations for some cause (Shenise, 2020).

Children were an important source of raising money, and often the act of dropping coins in the mite box was treated as a means of character and spiritual development. For example, in Panola, MS, in 1872, a woman in the church established a weekly Friday meeting where children could enjoy

activities that would culminate with their giving “five cents” in the mite box. It served two purposes: gathering the children together for a worthy project and raising money for the church (“The Methodist Church...,” 1872, p. 3).

Children enjoyed filling the boxes—giving them a sense of accomplishment that became more meaningful to them when they believed that they were helping other children in foreign lands (Shenise, 2020).

A manual for Christian youth suggested that mite boxes, which could be found for free or for little costs from mission boards of local churches, should be only kept at home. Youth were asked to open them at a “grand ceremony” at church where each one would present his mite box while reciting a Bible verse about the call for giving and then empty the coins—before anything is counted—so those who had little to give might not be embarrassed to be seen by others giving a small amount (Wells, 1895, p. 268).

As the money was counted, the youth were requested to stand and read Matthew 6: 1-4:

1 Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.



This photo taken at Covenant Church in Evanston, IL (likely in 1940s) shows children in their Primary Department looking at mite boxes at a mite box opening. Photo credits: # H40668, Board of Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, “Mission Photograph Album - Religious Education #1 page 0151,” *UMC Digital Galleries*, accessed March 15, 2022, <https://catalog.gcah.org/images/items/show/52240>.



68776 Left to right - Mrs. T. K. Tsai, Treasurer Miso Mieh, President, Miso Lin, Secretary. Mite box opening. May 7th 1919. China.

Left to right. Mrs. T. K. Tsai, Treasurer Miso Mieh, President, Miso Lin, Secretary. Mite box opening. May 7, 1919. China. Photo credit: #68776, Board of Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, "Mission Photograph Album - China #9 page 0174," UMC Digital Galleries, accessed March 15, 2022, <https://catalog.gcah.org/images/items/show/2680>.

2 Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

3 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth

4 That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly. (KJV)

Following the announcement of the amount of the gift, they were directed to repeat a short prayer, "asking God to bless the gift and make it fruitful in his service" (Wells, 1895, p. 268).

Uses and Projects

The use of the money varied considerably. Part of the money collected in the mite boxes, for example, contributed to a movement that ended foot binding in China (as mentioned earlier), and funds aided other East Asian efforts. Money from the boxes was used to finance education missions for African children and projects in India. Per-

sons of all ages benefitted, included indigenous women, while assistance also went to operating experiences in hospitals, schools, and universities (Shenise, 2020).

Pennies, dimes, and nickels could also be used for local church projects such as the purchase of a bell that was promoted in a Methodist Church in Mississippi ("The Methodist Church...", 1872, p. 3).

As the years went by, the little modest cardboard boxes became more elaborate. Themes were illustrated on the outside that included children, scenes of foreign countries and inhabitants, and other motifs. In a UMC video on mite box collections housed by the General Commission on Archives and History, some mite boxes from days of old are shown as examples: One that looks like a cradle is directed to children. Another is a red box that has the Chinese word for

happiness, and another displays an illustration of a Japanese girl (Shenise, 2020).

Other Uses

The mite box also served as a means to raise money for charitable organizations and those dedicated to helping communities and other causes which may not have been associated with church groups (Shenise, 2020).

In these cases, the mite boxes must have been made of sturdier material than simply a cardboard box. In an 1863 newspaper in Fremont, OH, an article featured a public invitation by The Ladies of the Soldiers Aid Society to attend the Weekly Social Meeting to assist the Soldiers' Aid Mite Society. Mite boxes were to be "placed conspicuously into which visitors can drop whatever they please" in order to raise funds to help those soldiers who were sick and wounded during the Civil War ("Soldiers'...", 1863, p. 2).

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In Boston in 1895, there were mite boxes at hospitals, restaurants, stores, saloons, and other public venues throughout the city (“More Mite Box...,” 1895, p. 2).

Scandals and Scoundrels

Although the money was a sacred contribution to God’s work on earth, sometimes the money would fall into unscrupulous hands. And in these cases, again, the mite boxes must not have been the little cardboard ones but made of sturdier material and larger. They were sometimes placed in churches and outside in public places. In 1871, it was reported in a Pennsylvania newspaper that a “sacrilegious scoundrel” had broken into the First Baptist Church, stealing money from the mite box that was designated for the building fund—an amount between \$5-\$10 (*Intelligencer Journal*, 1871, p. 3).

In Pittsburgh in 1870, persons were putting large number of “counterfoil stamps” in the mite box. The writer of the news report mused that

They [the counterfeiters] are presumptuous Chris-

tians who would lay away treasure in heaven which wouldn't be redeemed at a United States depository. (“City and Suburban,” 1870, p. 4)

In 1895, the *Boston Globe* in an article entitled “More Mite Box Robberies,” reported that mite boxes all over the fair city had been broken into. The boxes were the object of a “regular conspiracy” because they contained considerable amounts of money—containing \$4 or so. A police officer lamented,

We didn't think that there was a man in Boston that would rob a hospital that might be called upon to shelter him at any moment. (“More Mite Box...,” 1895, p. 2)

However, according to the article, it was a puzzle that

Boxes have been robbed that stood in front of churches, at the ferries and in public streets, but not one that is in a saloon has been even tampered with. (“More Mite Box...,” 1895, p. 2)

Trinity Takes on Mite Boxes

Trinity’s involvement in the mite box fundraising movement was significant, and women leaders



This is one of the sites of mite box openings for Trinity’s Home Missionary Society in the early 1900s. From Florida Memory, caption: “Mickler House was Mrs. Temple's boarding house located at Calhoun and Jefferson streets. Identified in the photograph are: 4. Tilly Mickler Temple, 5. Marjorie Penny, 6. Bessie Ferguson May, 7. William H. May, 8. Bessie Temple Jones, 9. Thomas F. Jones.” 1919. <https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/25839>.

in the early 1900s often paired the occasion of the collection of money with a social event at missionary meetings.

The Home and Foreign Mission societies at Trinity held separate meetings and mite box openings. Usually, the program consisted of music performed by church members and/or invited students from Florida State College for Women (FSCW) with recitations by children and readings by members.

Mites.

ONLY a penny! A gift so small
Seems scarcely worth the giving at all;
But pennies multiplied dollars make,
So we'll gather the pennies for His dear sake
Who suffered and died on the cross to save
A world of sin from death and the grave.

Who can measure the generous meed
That springs from the tiny planted seed?
Beside all waters let it fall,
And the Master's care shall guard it all.

Then bring in the mites; let them gathered be
Into the Master's treasury.
Remember the widow's mite of old
Outranked rich gifts of silver and gold.
Her *all* she laid at the Master's feet,
And *love* made the offering complete.

"Mites." (1902). In E. R. Smith (Ed.), *The Gospel in All Lands*, Methodist Episcopal Church. Missionary Society, p. 285.

Hosting Mite Box Openings and Socials

The sites of the meetings were generally in a member's home. There would be as many as 50 to 60 ladies attending and as much as \$25 donated for various causes—which would be about \$750 today ("What Is Doing...", 1910, p. 2; "Inflation Calculator," 2021; "Missionary Mite Box...", 1907, p. 7).

Examples of venues and their hostesses of Home Missionary Society openings included in 1908 were **Mrs. T. B. Byrd's** home and "**Mrs.**

Temple's" (at the Mickler Boarding House) in March 1909 ("Mite Box Opening...", 1908, p. 8; "Mite Box Opening...", 1909, p. 5).

Examples of venues and their hostesses of Foreign Missionary Society openings were **Mrs. R. J. Evans** in 1907 and in December 1908, **Mrs. P.T. Mickler** (Missionary Mite Box..., 1907, p. 7; "W. F. M.," 1908, p. 2).

Fund-Raising Projects

Money collected was used for projects relating to those assisting the local church and community and to those serving the church in other lands. A project for which funds were raised by the Home Mission Society at that time was designated to assist in the building of an addition of a Sunday school room. For the Woman's Foreign Society, support was earmarked for those missionaries from Florida who were serving in other countries ("Mite Box Opening...", 1908, p. 8; "Missionary Mite Box...", 1907, p. 7).

Mite Box Opening Programs

Mite box openings and socials presented programs that could be especially elaborate with musical renditions, recitations, and readings. In December 1908 at Mrs. P.T. Mickler's, guests were led in singing "Jesus Lover of My Soul." Other performances were,

a recitation of "Heathen Children," by little Helen Evans; a song, "Little Workers," by Mary Zackery, and recitation, "Mission and Obedience," by Bessie Temple, all of which were well performed." ("W. F. M.," 1908, p. 2)

Closing the program was a performance by **Rubie Byrd** of Scharwenska's "The Polish Dance."

In May 1910, the Foreign Missionary Society featured **Ella Sue Wagner**, a missionary who talked about her work and service in Korea ("What Is Doing...", 1910, p. 4).

Mite Box Opening Food and Decorations

Not only programs could be elaborate, food and decorations could be especially extravagant, the attitude behind such extravagance—it might be argued—was in contrast to the intended message

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*“Take my silver
and take my gold
Not a mite
would I withhold”*

—From “Consecrated Jewels,” 1902

“Consecrated Jewels.”(1902). In E. R. Smith (Ed.), *The Gospel in All Lands*, Methodist Episcopal Church. Missionary Society, pp. 139-140.

of the story of the widow’s mite. Far from the image of a humble, poor widow’s sacrifice of all she had, the ambiance of a mite box social could dazzle the eyes and the fare gratify the palate.

At the October 1909 Mite Box Social and Musical, sponsored by the Home Missionary Society at the home of Mrs. P. T. Mickler, the “little mite boxes merily [sic] jingled,” and a “silver tray” was adorned with many “free will offerings.” After a reading of John 13th, “I am the vine and ye are the branches,” the hostess served a delicious one-of-a-kind “Home Mission Fruit Salad,” in the form of “grape leaves” (“Mite Box Social...” 1909, p. 1.).

The meeting report continued,

Kate Mickler entered the parlor bearing a beautiful china dish with this salad which she passed to every one.... (“Mite Box Social...” 1909, p. 1)

The house was

beautifully decorated with vases of roses and dahlias and pot plants everywhere. Refreshments other than Mission fruit salad [included] “Home Mission” candies and cake and ice cream delicious! (“Mite Box Social...,” 1909, p. 1)

Time of Change for Southern Methodist Women

In the *Quarterly Conference Minutes* that covered 1913 to 1914, a report described the beginning of a dramatic change for Methodist women in the South. The Woman's Home Missionary Society and the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society had merged in 1910 in the MECS, but meetings of the Foreign Department and Home Department had continued to meet separately. According to the report, beginning in 1915, the two departments would

merge wholly into one organization having one set of officers and only one channel through which all ... money [would] go. (December 4 Quarterly..., n.d.)

At the time of the report there were 78 persons on the roll with 60 of the 78 participating in the Foreign Department and 48 of the 78 participating in the Home Department. They had collected a total of \$648.50—with two monthly meetings each month—one being a “literary” meeting and the other a business meeting. Each quarter the mite box opening was combined with a business meeting (December 4 Quarterly..., n.d.).

In 1918, the mite box social sponsored by Trinity’s Woman’s Missionary Society presented an especially impressive program on Japan. With Mrs. Carroll Smith hosting the event, the topic covered “Religions of Japan” with talks on

The Christian Movement in Japan—Mrs. W. E. Lewis. Revival of Buddhism in Japan—Mrs. A. L. Woodward. How are the Differences Shown in the Temple—Mrs. W. L. Moor. What is the Effect of Shintoism on Japan—Mrs. B. M. Cates. The Japanese Women in Public Activities—Mrs. J. A. Ball. The Lambeth Memorial Training School—Mrs. Rivers. Buddhist Sunday School in Japan—Mrs. G. S. Roberts. (“Mite Box Social,” 1918, p. 3)

The End of a Tradition for Mite Box Socials

By the late 1930s, the attention to mite boxes was much less pronounced. The Methodist women had begun meeting in *circles* of smaller groups, and the reference to *mite box opening* or *mite box social* as the designated name of a meeting or social event seems to have disappeared in the meeting reports.

While in earlier years, the focus was on the ritual of opening the mite box, in these later years, the

collections from mite boxes as described in the meeting reports seemed more akin to an afterthought ("Mrs. Gorman...", 1936, p. 2; "Trinity Circle...", 1938, p. 2; "Methodist Circle Ten...", 1938, p. 2; "Trinity Circle...", 1939, p. 2).

While the total money collected could go to things like refreshments, flower containers, and the church beautification program, as well as furnishing and providing repairs for the student house at the Wesleyan Foundation, social justice projects seem to have been the focus of the missionary society's financial assistance ("Mrs. Gorman...", 1936, p. 2; "Trinity Auxiliary...", 1940, p. 2; Trinity Circles...", 1939, p. 2).

These projects included supplying clothes and household equipment for three children who were given blood transfusions, providing milk for a crippled child, attending to sick members and others who were needing help, supplying medicines, food, medical treatments, and school supplies for indigent children, and raising money for the Leon County Welfare Association. Although most of the money generated by the missionary society was devoted to home missions, part of the money went to the foreign mission in South America ("Trinity Auxiliary...", 1940, p. 2; McMillan, n.d; Hardwick, n.d.).

Children were still involved in mite box events in the 1930s. In 1938, little members of the "baby division of Trinity Methodist Church" were guests at "a lawn party," where children played games and ate ice cream and cookies. All children brought their own mite box so that they could add their pennies to a fund for "underprivileged children throughout the world" ("Trinity Baby...", 1938, p. 2).

After 1940 and on into the early 1960s, newspaper reports of mite boxes in the *Tallahassee Democrat* appeared to be limited to Episcopal and Lutheran Churches in the city (newspapers.com).

There is no doubt that Trinity's women leaders became a widely influential power in the church and beyond its walls. **The Rev. Jack Anderson**, in his pastor's report May 14, 1940, said that Trinity's Missionary Society was the

(cont. on p. 10)

One Mite Box.

BY ALLIE TOLAND CRISS.

It was a tiny mite box,
That stood on the mantelshelf,
So low that even baby
Could reach on tiptoe herself;
A dainty bit of pasteboard,
With letters of shining gold,
But that simple little box
A most wondrous story told.
"God loves a cheerful giver,"
"Send my Gospel unto all,"
Were blessed texts of Scripture
Adorning the pasteboard wall.
So each one dropped an offering,
With an earnest, thankful prayer,
And out on joyful mission
It went in the Father's care.
God, in his gracious wisdom,
Blest the hearts of those who gave,
And their gifts sent the Gospel
Across the stormy wave.
Beyond the world of waters,
In the land of heathen shame,
It told the blessed story
Of the Saviour's priceless name.
Into the homes of darkness,
And into the hearts of woe,
It carried glorious sunlight,
With its peaceful, radiant glow.
Lifting the veil of blackness,
That shrouded souls for long years,
It brought a blissful dawning,
And gave joy in place of tears.
It told how Christ the Saviour
Gave his life for one and all,
How souls in sin and sorrow
Can answer the Father's call.
Then let us fill each mite box
With offerings that shall prove
Our wish to tell the story
Of our Jesus and his love.

Criss, A. T. (1902). "One Mite Box." In E. R. Smith (Ed.), *The Gospel in All Lands*, Methodist Episcopal Church. Missionary Society, p. 285.

“largest woman’s organization in the state” and praised the leadership of “**Mrs. C. L. Hardwick.**”

Although the mite box was slowly losing prominence, the effect of a thriving spirit of generosity and compassion was by no means diminished (Anderson, n.d.).

While the excitement of a mite box opening subsided over the decades, other types of fundraising by Methodist women took its place with the number of studies, established schools, and social justice and foreign projects increasing as more members joined the circles. Jesus’s message of sacrifice resonated in terms of giving oneself in time and attention in addition to money while Methodist women expanded their leadership and influence in serving their community and world.

The humble but mighty mite box may have been largely forgotten in Methodist Church history, but the story of the widow’s mite is still one that symbolizes to Christians throughout the world that everyone has something vital to give to God’s kingdom and creatures—no matter how little in monetary value an offering might have. A mite can be just as blessed as a million.

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History Festival & Expo Showcases Historical Groups and Presenters March 26, 2022



About 60 persons came by to see the display presented here with Historical Society members Lynn McLarty and Rhonda Work, who also serve on the Committee for the Preservation of Church History at Trinity. Newsletters, bulletins, meeting records, photos, a banner, and easel arrangements were among the items exhibited.



Always willing to lend a helping hand, Ruth Ann High, Trinity member, helped Rhonda Work to stabilize the tent on a most windy day in Tallahassee at the History Festival & Expo.

Tallahassee Community College, with partners that included the Tallahassee Historical Society, sponsored a History Festival and Expo on Saturday, March 26, at Kleman Plaza in downtown Tallahassee. **Rhonda Work** and **Lynn McLarty** represented Trinity's Historical Society with documents, publications, and artifacts to display for visitors stopping by their table.

The goal of the event was to foster in all persons, especially youth in the Big Bend area, a love of history.

Making History: Quarterly News from Trinity's Historical Society and Preservation of Church History Committee



John Wesley Comes to Trinity!

Members of the Historical Society send our appreciation to **Ken Armstrong**, Trinity member, for his donation of a bust of John Wesley to Trinity.

Ken's father acquired the art piece in the late 1960s and gave it to Ken about 25 years ago. The sculptor ("Marvin James" or "James Marvin"—Ken is not sure) was from Palmyra, NJ. He initially cast the bust in 1964. Ken has been on an exciting trip around the world. His blog—which is a fascinating read about his experiences in the countries he is visiting—discusses topics from food to languages. You can travel vicariously with Ken at <http://kentrack.com/>.

Narthex Display

A narthex display with alternating historical pictorial vignettes is the newest resource used by the Historical Society to tell our church's stories.

Among those resources have been worship bulletin briefs; an edited volume, which will be updated for our 200th anniversary; a quarterly publication that includes original research; artifacts, documents, and a timeline wall display in the Yates Heritage Center; an online archives; and a past Lay Academy series.

The first narthex display was introduced in January, and it featured our historical marker, designating

Trinity's historic significance in the state of Florida, the plaque celebrating Trinity as the site of the first Florida Methodist Episcopal Church, South Conference, and the script of the dedication of the state marker.

The display changed in March to depict the different buildings of our church body. Members and guests who attend services at Trinity have an opportunity to learn from this portable exhibit, arranged with great care and artistry by **Lynn McLarty** and **Lisa Boyd**.



Above Earline Adkison, Dr. Wayne Wiatt, and Donna Bryan view the pictorial historical display in our narthex on January 9, 2022.

Appreciation to Dot Binger, Lynn McLarty, Mary Margaret Rogers, and Rhonda Work for assistance with this issue. Special thanks to UMC Digital Galleries and UMC Communications for their permissions to publish photographs.

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The purpose of **Crossroads** is to provide descriptions of historical events and to publish news related to the Trinity United Methodist Church Historical Society. Its intent is not to endorse or criticize theological or ethical positions related to issues that these descriptive accounts might raise. While we strive to be as accurate as possible, we make mistakes sometimes. Please send your comments, corrections, and requests for printed copies as well as inquiries about submissions to Pamela Crosby, chief editor, at pcrosby@tumct.org.