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“Preserving–Sharing–Caring”



# Crossroads

## Taking Their Places and Making New Spaces: Women Leaders in Trinity’s History

A Special Collection-Double Issue of Past Articles in  
Observance of the Bicentennial Year of  
Trinity United Methodist Church, Tallahassee

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## **Crossroads Publication of Historical Research Trinity United Methodist Church**

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Pamela Crosby, chief editor, at  
[pcrosby@tumct.org](mailto:pcrosby@tumct.org)*

*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.*

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#### ***In Memoriam***

*Linda Herold Yates*

*Bob Yates*

*Mary Margaret Rogers*



## This Is Not the End of the Story: Introduction to the Special Collection-Double Issue

By Pamela C. Crosby, Chief Editor

### Purpose of this Special Collection

**M**ost of the historical records in our archives are about white male leaders. Even the timeline wall display in the Yates Heritage Room features photos of mostly male ministers with photos of women in the church being recently added.

Currently, Trinity historians have sought to include women in the historical narratives published about our church leaders. However, women leaders were hardly mentioned until the late decades of the 19th century. When mentioned, they were generally about women who led and participated in separate women's organizations but not as leaders of the church as a whole. The reason, of course, was that they did not have full laity rights in the first 94 years of Trinity's history with full clergy rights occurring much later. The purpose of this issue is to highlight women who have influenced the church's history not only as leaders of women's groups but in other areas as well—as clergy, trustees, etc.

### Source of Articles

The primary content of these articles features women leaders and is reprinted, excerpted, or based on published articles in earlier issues of *Crossroads* (now in its 8th year of publication). This special issue, "Taking Their Places and Making New Spaces: Women Leaders in Trinity's History" brings together the past published stories of our Methodist women leaders. Also included are news briefs about women who were mentioned in other Trinity publications, such as the *Monthly Tidings*. Selected women not at Trinity but were Methodists (Northern and Southern) in the U.S. during Trinity's 200 years are also briefly highlighted. As is the case of journal issues, various voices speak in different writing styles.

### Future Articles and Issue

We have plans to feature articles on other past women leaders of Trinity who were musicians, teachers, office-holders, clergy, etc., at Trinity. Some will be based on video interviews. *It is up to all of us to write articles* and submit these stories to the *Crossroads*. Our editorial staff cannot write them all! We hope to highlight Black leaders who have contributed to our history but who have rarely been mentioned in our historical documents and publications. This has been a grave omission.

### Appreciation

Thanks to **Cecile Baker, Dot Binger, Gloria Colvin, Dr. Don Crosby, Melanie Gonzalez, Dr. Lynn McLarty, Susan Mick, Dr. Pat Striplin, and Rev. Dr. Matthew Williams** for their assistance in providing resources, writing, editing, commenting on, printing, and/or promoting the issue.

This issue could not have been completed without the foundational work of my colleague, **E. Lynn McLarty**. Lynn's work as a historian, researcher, interviewer, author, preservationist, and lecturer has helped me in numerous ways throughout the years of this journal's editorship.

*Pamela C. Crosby*  
Editor



As reflective of society in the early 1800s and 1900s, photos of white males dominate Trinity's timeline display in the Yates Heritage Center.



## Memory Adams

Circa 1821 (b.) to 1898 (d.)

*Crossroads* article: Reprinted from "Aunt Memory Adams: Devoted Member and World's Fair Visitor" by **Dot Binger**, July 2017, Volume 1, Issue 2, p. 8, [https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/202304/july\\_2017\\_hs\\_newsletter.pdf](https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/202304/july_2017_hs_newsletter.pdf)

**A**unt Memory Adams was probably the last Black person to remain a member of Trinity immediately following the Civil War. *Respectful titles such as "Miss" or "Mrs." were not given to Black women by White people at that time in the South, but those women who had drawn strong regard were often referred to as "Aunt."*

**Rubie Butterworth**, in the 1999 history of Trinity United Methodist Church, related interesting details remembered about the unusual woman called "Aunt Memory." She had been a children's nurse, a house cleaner, a carpet layer, and a believer in witchcraft who "carried a hearth broom to sweep the tracks at street corners to keep away evil spirits" (p. 37). Apparently, she felt safe with the people of Trinity and continued to appear for services on Sunday mornings.

The story about Aunt Memory that resonates with me is that of her ambition to go to the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893 when she was 70 years old. She earned the money to go by selling postcards of herself. All the details of how she got there and what she did while there have not been remembered and recorded. However, one significant quote has survived and is worth repeating. When asked by her hostess in Chicago why she came to the fair, she replied, "I came to see how man have used the wisdom God have given him" (p. 38).

We are not told whether Aunt Memory liked what she saw at the World's Fair or whether she came home to Tallahassee believing that man was using his wisdom in accord with God's intent, but for her sake I hope she did.

### Reference

Butterworth, R. P. (1999). "Preparing for a New Century – 1975-1919," in *Trinity United Methodist Church: Tallahassee's First Church 1824-1999* (pp. 37-38), Tallahassee, FL: Trinity United Methodist Church.

**Editor's Note:** An enslaved person, Memory Adams walked on foot from Virginia to Tallahassee at the age of 25. As the only Black member of Trinity's congregation, she sat in the gallery for years after emancipation. When the new church structure was built in 1893 without a gallery, she insisted on sitting in the front of the sanctuary.

**Reference of Editor's Note:** "Old Negro Auntie Was Suspicious." (1924, Nov. 21). *Smith's Weekly*, 1.

**Reference of Years of Life:** "Old Negro Auntie Was Suspicious." (1924, Nov. 21). *Smith's Weekly*, 1.  
"Aunt Memory Adams." (1960, August 31). *Fort Lauderdale News*, 1.



"Aunt Memory Adams posed for a photo – Tallahassee, Florida." (n.d.) *Florida Memory*. Photo Note: Aunt Memory was born into slavery. When she was twenty-four years old, she was taken to Tallahassee and sold to Mr. Argyle for \$800. Aunt Memory attended the 1893 World Fair, and sold enough photos of herself to pay for expenses. <https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/24745>

## Mary Antoinette Myers Blake

Years of Membership: 1829 to 1921 (with Intermissions)

*Crossroads* article: Based on “A May Queen Plays a Starring Role in the Earliest History of Trinity—as One Story Goes” by **Pamela C. Crosby**, January 2022, Volume 6, Issue 1, pp. 1– 9, <https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/January-2022-hs-crossroads.pdf>

**M**ary Antoinette Myers was born in Tallahassee on September 3, 1829. She was baptized at Tallahassee Station (now Trinity UMC). After her widowed mother died (1845), Mary lived with her brother **Selim** in Tallahassee (Patterson, 1921, p. 4; “Interesting Bit...,” 1909, p. 1).

Mary attended Wesleyan Female College in Macon, Georgia, where her brother **Edward** was a professor and later a president. In 1847, **Rev. Edwin L. T. Blake**—in his fourth year as a minister (Methodist Episcopal Church, South)—came to Trinity as minister, and he and Mary would soon marry (Patterson, 1921, p. 4).

Mary was active at Trinity, being one of the charter members of the auxiliary of the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society along with her daughters, **Jessie Blake** and **Florence Gorman**. An organization of Bible women (native Korean women who visited their fellow citizens in order to convert them to Christianity) was named after her in Wonsan, Korea (Davis, n.d., cited in Butterworth, 1999, p. 36; “Tallahassee...,” 1928, p. 5).

An important note is that Mary was the daughter of **Hezekiah Myers**, one of the earliest White settlers in Tallahassee, who, according to unconfirmed sources, may have hosted the organizational meeting of Tallahassee Station (now Trinity) in 1824 (McLarty, n.d.; Patterson, 1921, p. 4; “1825 Leon County...”; “An Interesting Mission...,” 1918, p. 1; Booth, 1999, p. 10;

Jordan, 1959, p. 21; “Marie Antoinette...,” 1941, p. 2).

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**Reference of Years of Membership:** Patterson, I. S. (1921, July 25). “Mrs. Mary Antoinette Blake.” *Tallahassee Democrat*, 4. Reprinted from I. C. Jenkins (Ed.), *Florida Annual Conference*



Photo from [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Black\\_Dutch\\_Abolitionist\\_SojournerTruth.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Black_Dutch_Abolitionist_SojournerTruth.jpg)

## American Methodist Women Taking Their Places Across the U. S.

*What Were Other American Methodist Women Doing During Trinity’s First 200 Years?*

### Sojourner Truth, 1796 (b.) to 1883 (d.)

**S**ojourner’s experiences as an enslaved person influenced her subsequent emancipated and productive life. She was a Methodist (Methodist Episcopal Church) itinerant preacher and advocated for women’s rights and abolition.

From “People & Ideas: Sojourner Truth.” (n.d.) God in America. PBS. <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/godinamerica/people/sojourner-truth.html>

## Woman's Missionary Society

Years Active at Trinity: 1878 to 1939

*Crossroads* articles: Based on "136 Years and Five Name-Changes: Women of Trinity Are Still Dedicated to Missions" by **Linda Yates**, April 2018, Volume 2, Issue 2, pp. 7-8, [https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/april\\_2018\\_hs\\_newsletter.pdf](https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/april_2018_hs_newsletter.pdf); "Taking Their Places and Making New Spaces: Women Leaders of Trinity's Past—Focus on Adah Celeste Russell Mickler" by **Pamela C. Crosby**, January 2021, Volume 5, Issue 1, pp. 12-22, <https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/january-2021-hs-crossroads.pdf>; and "Women Missionaries in China, Part 1: Lochie Rankin (雷金贞, Lei Jinzhen), First Unmarried Female Missionary of MECS" by **Pamela C. Crosby**, July 2023, Volume 7, Issue 3, pp. 1-17, <https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/July-2023-hs-crossroads.pdf>

The roots of the Woman's Missionary Society at Trinity can be traced to the organization of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society (WFMS) in 1878 and the Woman's Home Missionary Society (WMS) in 1890 in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (MECS) ("From These Roots," n.d.).

The goal of the proposed Woman's Foreign Missionary Society in 1878 was to

equip and send out women as missionaries to fields already occupied by our General Board, to open boarding and day schools, hospitals and homes, buying and building, supporting missionaries, teachers, physicians, Bible women and scholarships, with mental reservations to do many unthought of things which would surely come to mind later. (Tatum, 1960, p. 24)

The proposal passed at the 1878 General Conference with the recommendation "that the women of the church be authorized to organize missionary work under a constitution." Although on the whole, the women were pleased by the recognition of their proven skills as leaders and astute fundraisers, there still existed "very strong prejudices against societies of any

kind for women," and these attitudes would linger on in the Church (Tatum, 1960, p. 24; Butler, 1904, p. 63).

Soon to follow the formation of the national WFMS was the organization of Trinity's own WFMS auxiliary. According to a 1906 presentation by **Jesse Blake**, Trinity's auxiliary treasurer, the auxiliary was formed in 1881. A short report on the history of the district WFMS states that the church's "auxiliary was organized in January 1882 at the request of **E. L. T. Blake** [pastor]" (Blake, 1906; "Tallahassee District, 1938).

In 1904-1905, the auxiliary held meetings on the first Thursday of each month—at the church during warmer weather and in the homes of members during the winter. Their program was based on the guidelines from the periodical *Woman's Missionary Advocate*. Most members tithed, and finances were the result of freely given offerings. Especially important, according to Jessie Blake, was that the women "resort[ed] to no kind of entertainments and [took] no public collections so [we] receive[d] no outside help" (Blake, 1904-1905).

Trinity's auxiliary of WFMS supported people in countries where missionaries of the MECS were serving. In 1907 residents of Shanghai asked for help for a district where famine and floods were affecting 15,000,000 people. According to the *Quarterly Conference Minutes*, a primary project of the WFMS was collecting and sending money to the Chinese in those affected areas ("Appalling...," 1907, p. 39; "Minutes," 1907, July 10).

In 1910 the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society and the Woman's Home Missionary Society were joined under one governing body, the Woman's Missionary Council ("From These Roots," n.d.).

As reported in 1911 in the "Constitution of the Auxiliary Societies," each auxiliary society was to be called

the Woman's Missionary Society of the [name of church] Auxiliary to [name of conference] Conference Society of the Woman's Missionary Council of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. ("Constitution . . .," 1911, p. 59)

Requirements for membership were "prayer, service, and monthly dues of ten cents to either the Home or the Foreign Department, or twenty cents to



Some of the charter members of the Trinity Woman's Foreign Missionary Society are pictured as they began their first year in January 1882. From left to right are "Miss Jessie Blake, Mrs. A.L. Woodward, Mrs. O. C. Van Brunt, Mrs. G. W. Saxon, Mrs. T.B. Byrd and Mrs. F.C. Gilmore." Trinity United Methodist archives.



both” (“Constitution . . .,” 1911, p. 59).

The purpose of each Society was

to hasten the coming of the kingdom of God in the United States and non-Christian lands by enlisting the women, young people, and children in a study of the needs of the world and in active missionary service, by raising funds for the evangelism of mission fields at home and abroad, for the maintenance of the institutions under the care of the Woman’s Missionary Council, for the betterment of civic and social conditions, and for meeting neighborhood needs. (“Constitution . . .,” 1911, p. 59)

Educating members as well as the church community about home and foreign missions was one of the important goals of WMS. Combining educational programs with focused prayer on those serving in missions and the lives for whom they served, “The Week of Prayer and Self-Denial” was an annual event, observed by the WMS the world over. In 1911, the Week of Prayer for MECS’s Home Department of the Woman’s Missionary Council was set the first week in October, and that of the Foreign Department, Thanksgiving week (“Week of Prayer,” 1911, p. 4).

During 1912, Trinity’s WFMS auxiliary had 51 members. **Rev. S. W. Lawler** wrote in his report that there was a “missionary spirit” in the church, thanks to both the WFMS and the Woman’s Home Missionary Society, and donations to the cause of missions were “as large if not the largest contributions in the history of the church” (Lawler, January 10; December 9, 1912).

The WMS also advocated education locally; among the supported educational activities were those involving Florida State College for Women (FSCW) and the local public schools. Members invited young female students from FSCW to their homes and shared their automobiles with them for “delightful drives” (Mickler, 1923).

A reception for public school faculty in Leon County took place at Trinity to “build a spirit of cooperation between the church and the public school” (“Reception. . .,” 1922, p. 8).

Raising the funds to devote to these various projects demanded organization, time, and energy—and a bit of creativity. Monies came from “the loose collection on first Sunday in the month” to “dispense for charity”; rummage sales were orchestrated; and on at least one occasion each member was asked to earn a dollar and share how she earned it by means of an original rhyme. In April 1923, 100 members brought their dollars and rhymes to a meeting and contributed all of \$141.00 (Mickler, 1923).

One of the most exciting moments in Trinity’s WMS history was hosting the Jubilee (50 Years) Session of the Woman’s Missionary Society, a four-day session beginning April 17, 1928, with over 300 persons registering for the conference (“All Florida. . .,” 1928, p. 1).

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**Editor’s Note:** The Methodist Episcopal Church, The Methodist Protestant Church, and The Methodist Episcopal Church, South united in 1939 to form The Methodist Church. Different women’s home and missionary organizations joined together to form the Woman’s Society of Christian Service.

**Editor’s References:** “A Brief History of the People of the United Methodist Church.” (n.d.) ResourceUMC. <https://www.resourceumc.org/en/content/a-brief-history-of-the-people-of-the-united-methodist-church>  
“Timeline of Women in Methodism.” (n.d.) The People of the United Methodist Church. <https://www.umc.org/en/content/timeline-of-women-in-methodism>

## What Did the Discipline Say About Women in 1918?

### ¶ 614. WOMEN NOT PREACHERS, AND NOT TO BE SO RECOGNIZED.

Our Church does not recognize the employment of women as preachers, with authority to occupy the pulpit in reading the Holy Scriptures, and in preaching as ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ; nor does it authorize a preacher in charge to invite a woman claiming to be a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ to occupy our pulpits, to expound the Scriptures as a preacher. Such invitations given and services so rendered offend against the authority and order of our Church. (1896.)

*The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South*, 1918, pp. 258-259.

## Sue Parris Blake Crozier

Years of Sponsored Missionary Work by Trinity: 1892 to 1894

*Crossroads* article: Based on “Women Missionaries in China, Part 2: From Miccosukee to Soochow: Sue Blake, Florida’s First Female Medical Missionary” by **Pamela C. Crosby**, October 2023, Volume 7, Issue 4, pp. 1-15, <https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/October-2023-hs-crossroads.pdf>

**Susan Parris Blake**, the first woman medical missionary from Florida, was born on August 6, 1862, to **Walter Raleigh Blake** and **Caroline W. Leonard** in Miccosukee, Florida. Blake’s grandfather, **Miles Blake**, was one of the first individuals to serve as a steward for the “Tallahassee Station” (Trinity’s earlier name) and served from 1828 to 1834 (John, 1899, p. 63; “Missionaries. . .,” 1928, p. 1; “Early Florida. . .,” 1944, p. 4; “Quarterly...,” April 5, 1828; Feb. 17, 1834).

In 1879 at the age of about 17, Sue Blake converted to Christianity while attending a Methodist revival. Her call to Christian work was a specific one: to spend her life in service to God as a missionary. For two years she resisted the call but then “yielded everything to God” and began to plan for her education and preparation (John, 1899, p. 64).

We know that by 1890, Blake’s plans for serving as a missionary shifted from primarily intentions to that of action. The Woman’s Missionary Board of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (MECS) sent her to Chicago for nurses’ training that year, when she was 28, as preparation for medical work in the Woman’s Hospital in Soochow, China (John, 1899, p. 64).

Blake would leave for China in September 1892. But before she left, she delivered an address in June at the closing of the MECS district conference at Madison, Florida. She was also one of four persons who were honored with a lifetime membership of the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society. Trinity provided Blake with financial support in her early years in China (John, 1899, p. 64; No Title, 1892, p. 5; Butterworth, 1999, p. 36).

Following their arrival on October 18 in Shanghai, Blake and fellow missionary **Alice Waters**, a teacher, reached Soochow November 2 (John, 1899, p. 64; McGavock, 1894, p. 27).

After learning the language, Blake’s next task was to speak to people in their homes as a necessary way to draw people’s interest to the hospital. In addition, she wanted to teach them Christian beliefs and practices.

She explained,

I visited from house to house with the gospel and simple medicines. I found very strong prejudice to the hospital, and by going to the homes I could reach many, by means of the medicine, with the gospel whose doors would have been shut against me had I not had it. (John, 1899, p. 64)

Blake wrote that she taught two “very interesting Sunday school classes in Chinese and for a while one pupil in English” (McGavock, 1894, p. 27).

In a biographical “cameo,” Blake referred to “Bible

women”—a specific designation for native Chinese women who visited their fellow Chinese in order to convert them to Christianity:

For some months, with four native Bible women, I made daily trips by native boat to villages around Soochow. . . . Often the people would have nothing to do with us, and would beckon us to pass on and not stop at their homes, for they would not speak to us. When they were told we had medicine it was amusing to see how quickly their manner toward us changed. Those who a few minutes before had beckoned us to leave their door now came to us at the boat for help, where they also received the gospel. (John, 1899, p. 64)

While we know that Sue Blake became Mrs. Crozier on July 4, 1894, at the McTyeire Home in Shanghai, it is not clear how and where she met her husband, **The Rev. W.N. Crozier**, who was a missionary in the Central China Presbyterian Mission (“Married,” 1894, p. 1236). A report in 1894 on Soochow Station stated that Rev. Crozier had committed much time to “itinerating work” and had married

a very excellent worker connected with the Southern Methodist Mission, who is a trained nurse and who will be of great help to Mr. Crozier in his work, which will be mainly itinerating. (Presbyterian Church, 1895, p. 57)

According to one report of the Missionary and Benevolent Boards, Rev. Crozier volunteered to be transferred from Soochow to a station located close to Nanking, and this request was approved in 1896 with the Croziers being stationed “on the Yant-tse-Kiang River, ninety miles from its mouth” (Presbyterian Church, 1898, p. 43).

Sue Crozier returned from China in 1898; her third daughter was born in Tallahassee in 1899 (“Births,” 1899, p. 208; “Former ...,” 1944, p. 10; “Early...,” 1944, p. 4).

It is not clear the



Rev. W. N. Crozier, standing, back row, far right. Sue Blake Crozier, sitting in second row far right. Photo of Presbyterian missionaries in China. In Robinson, A. B. and Nelson, H. A. (1896). *The Church at Home and Abroad* (Vol. 19). Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., p. 132.



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exact dates when Sue worked at the University of Arkansas, but according to her obituary, she was the “head of the ROTC base hospital” during World War I. In 1920, she was listed as a University of Arkansas married student with her permanent home as Fayetteville (“Early. . .,” 1944, p. 4; “Twelve...,” 1920, p. 10).

In 1944, Sue Blake Crozier died in West Palm Beach, Florida (“Early...,” 1944, p. 4).

Over fifty years earlier—in 1893—a new Methodist church building was rising on a Tallahassee downtown corner, replacing an earlier structure. It was adorned with colorful stained-glass windows. The first panel of the west window featured a harp, crossed trumpets and sheet music of the missionary hymn. It was a tribute to this brave and dedicated woman from Miccosukee, the first female medical missionary from Florida. “**Sue P. Blake**,” read the dedication, “Our Missionary to China” (“Memorial Windows...,” 1894, p. 2).



Photo of memorial windows on west side of 1893 church. The first panel is dedicated to Sue P. Blake (later Crozier) and reads “Our Missionary to China.” Trinity UMC archives.



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## Snapshots of Women Leaders from Other Trinity Publications



From “Come Let Trinity’s Lenten Journey Change Your Life.” (2004, February). *Monthly Tidings*, p. 1.

## Come Let Trinity’s Lenten Journey Change Your Life

Small Group Leaders gathered in January to review the Lenten Journey materials and receive training in facilitation of small group study. Nancy Kerce, Pat Willis, Bill Kappes, Rubie Butterworth, Miriam Peirce, Gary Mathews, and Kathy Drake.



# Epworth League: An Early Co-Ed Youth Organization

Years Active at Trinity: 1896 to 1939

*Crossroads* articles: Excerpts from “One Common Master, Cause, and Name: The Epworth League, Part One, 1890 – 1899” by **Pamela C. Crosby**, October 2022, Volume 6, Issue 4, pp. 1-7, <https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/October-2022-hs-crossroads.pdf>; “How Far Does Love Reach?: The Epworth League, Part Two, 1900 – 1939” by **Pamela C. Crosby**, January 2023, Volume 7, Issue 1, pp. 1-13, <https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/January-2023-hs-crossroads.pdf>; and “Do Baptists Have More Fun? Fortune Telling, Oyster Roasts, and Playing Hooky—The Epworth League, Part Three” by **Pamela C. Crosby**, April 2023, Volume 7, Issue 2, pp. 1-13, <https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/april-2023-hs-crossroads.pdf>

The Epworth League was a Methodist youth organization in the 1890s-1930s that had significant influence on young people throughout North America. The word *youth* had an especially broad meaning in those years compared to our present day: The first age group to be established (later known as the “Senior League”) was for those 18-34 years of age (Smith, 1981, p. 226).

As a co-ed organization, it had several women presidents at Trinity. Among those were **Janet Byrd** in 1917; **Evelyn Grady** and **Sallie Nicholson** in 1927; **Clifton McKinnon** in 1932; **Ruth Hawes** in 1936, and **Alice Royster** in 1937 (Social..., 1917, p. 3; Grady, 1927; “Social...,” 1927, p. 5; McKinnon, 1932; Hawes, 1936; Royster, 1937).

In 1896, six years after the MECS called for local Epworth Leagues to be organized, Trinity announced that the church would hold its first business and social meeting (of the League) at the residence of **Brother C. B. Collins**. Fifty young people had joined. The Epworth League would also participate in a series of organized cottage prayer meetings (Hurst, 1903, p. 1341; “Quarterly...,” 1896).

The Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church would unify in 1939 as one denomination. The unification marked the end of Epworth and the beginning of the Methodist Youth Fellowship (MYF), when *youth* would be redefined as those 12 to 24 years old. Practices and policies that were successful in Epworth would be augmented in MYF (Smith, 1981, p. 228; Crosby, 2023, p. 4).

Although in May 1940, three Epworth Leagues were still noted in the *Quarterly Conference Minutes* of Trinity, by October 1941, the changes made by MYF had begun with a new “children’s division” as well as transitions in the youth and young adult groups. The promise of a new youth organization drew excitement, but such promise was overshadowed by a call to fight in a war that would have bearing on all aspects of church and community life (Philips, 1940; Anderson, 1941, 1942).

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Bessie Temple. 1911 circa. Photo provided by J. Doug Smith. Bessie was an active Leaguer at Trinity. Among other activities, she attended Epworth conferences, sang in church programs, and delivered addresses at meetings. One of her leadership roles was serving as second vice president of Trinity’s Intermediate Epworth League in 1909 (“Epworth...,” 1909, p. 3).

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### Snapshots of Women Leaders from Other Trinity Publications

Displaying their handmade crafts, at a church-wide bazaar in the mid-1980s, these members of the "Busy Bees" are pictured here: Janie Kalaf and Jewell Wollschlager.

Yates, L. H. (1999). Renovation, Revitalization, 1981–1988. In L. H. Yates (Ed.). *Trinity United Methodist Church: Tallahassee's First Church, 1824-1999* (pp. 83-94). Trinity United Methodist Church. Tallahassee, FL., 87.



## American Methodist Women Taking Their Places Across the U.S.

What Were Other American Methodist Women Doing  
During Trinity's First 200 Years?

### Mary McLeod Bethune 1875 (b.) to 1955 (d.)

After teaching school in various places, Mary Bethune founded the Daytona Educational and Industrial Training School for Negro Girls in 1904 with five students. In 1923 with Methodist sponsorship, her school merged with the Cookman Institute of Jacksonville, Florida, to become the co-educational Bethune-Cookman College, which is now the Bethune-Cookman University.

From Smith, L.R. (2004). *The New Deal and Higher Education in Florida, 1933-1939: Temporary Assistance and Tacit Promises*. (Unpublished dissertation), 27. <https://web.archive.org/web/20211226204520/http://etd.fcla.edu/UF/UFE0005121/smith.1.pdf>

Bethune-Cookman University website: <https://www.cookman.edu/>



Photo from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mary\\_McLeod\\_Bethune#/media/File:Mary\\_McLeod\\_Bethune\\_-\\_NARA\\_-\\_559194.tif](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mary_McLeod_Bethune#/media/File:Mary_McLeod_Bethune_-_NARA_-_559194.tif)



## Amanda Ellen Patterson

Years Active at Trinity: 1907–1910

**Crossroads** article: Based on “How Far Does Love Reach?": The Epworth League, Part Two, 1900 – 1939” by **Pamela C. Crosby**, January 2023, Volume 7, Issue 1, pp. 1-13, <https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/January-2023-hs-crossroads.pdf>

By 1907, the Junior Epworth League had been added to the youth program at Trinity, and in 1909, the League was boasting a membership of 115. The following year, this younger League was lauded as the premier Epworth League of Florida Methodists, winning the state banner, which recognized the organization for leading in all categories in its report. During **Rev. Dr. Ira Patterson's** time as Trinity's pastor (1907-1910), **Amanda Ellen Patterson**, wife of the pastor, increased the membership of the Junior League (ages 9, 10, and 11) to 186 members (Patterson, July 10, 1907; “Quarterly...,” 1909; “Tallahassee ...,” 1910; “Mrs. Amanda...,” 1940, p. 131).

Amanda was president of the Woman's Parsonage

and Home Missionary Society of the Florida Conference, which was a major organization prior to 1910. She was known as an outstanding administrator and leader, achieving statewide recognition for organizing two highly successful Junior Epworth Leagues (“Mrs. Amanda...,” 1940, pp. 131-132).

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## Beth Walton Moor

1897 (b.) to 1986 (d.)

**Crossroads** article: Excerpt from on “People and Clergy of Trinity: Stories of Service and Faith” by **Carrol Dadisman**, January 2018, Volume 2, Issue 1, p. 11, [https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/january\\_2018\\_hs\\_newsletter.pdf](https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/january_2018_hs_newsletter.pdf)

Beth Moor, a dynamo in the community, shared her husband's (Frank Moor) love of Trinity and was Women's Society of Christian Service president in 1948.

Photo from “Portrait of Community Leader Beth Walton Moor - Tallahassee, FL.” (1967). *Florida Memory*. <https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/45935#!>

**Biographical Note from Florida Memory:** “Beth Walton Moor was born April 3, 1897, in Pensacola, Florida. She graduated from the Florida State College for Women in 1918 with degrees in mathematics and home economics. She was married to Frank D. Moor in 1926. Organized the Tallahassee Garden Club with her husband in 1927. For many years she was considered Tallahassee's unofficial hostess and as house guest entertained such celebrities as Eleanor Roosevelt and author Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings. Mrs. Moor was a charter member of the Board of Trustees of the Florida State University Foundation and in 1967 was named ‘Woman of the Year’ by Tallahassee. Beth Walton Moor died on June 17, 1986.”



## Snapshots of Women Leaders from Other Trinity Publications

Circle 13 meets March 12 at 8 p.m. with Mrs. Rupert Seals, 315 Barbourville Drive.

From “United Methodist Women List Circle Meetings.” (1974, March). *Monthly Tidings*, 3.

**Editor's Note:** According to research based on interviews at Trinity conducted by Gloria Colvin, Georgetta Seals and her family were the first Black family to join the church following the Civil War. She and her husband, Dr. Rupert Seals, joined May 17, 1970.

**Reference for Editor's Note:** McLarty, E. L. (Ed.). (n.d.) *Church Register Books Eight, October 1954 -November 1984*. p. 46. <https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Book-8-PDF-For-Printing-20230514.pdf>



<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/rgi/name/georgetta-seals-obituary?id=16168406>



## Lula Augustus Smith

(b.) 1874 to (d) 1967

*Crossroads* Article: Based on "Full Laity Rights: The Struggle for Equality for Women in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South" by **Pamela C. Crosby**, October 2020, Volume 4, Issue 4, pp. 8-16, <https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/October-2020-hs-crossroads.pdf>

**L**ula Augustus Whelchel Smith was the first woman lay delegate to the Florida Conference from Trinity. In addition to women attending the local conferences as lay leaders, Smith's selection as a Florida lay delegate in 1919 marked a new era for Trinity, and her involvement was representative of the new role women assumed throughout the Methodist Episcopal Church, South ("Conference...", 1919, p.1; Jenkins, 1919, p. 8; *Daily Democrat*, 1919, December 17, p. 4).

The 1918 *Doctrines and Discipline* of the Methodist Episcopal Church provides a glimpse of the evolution of the status of women from 1898 to 1918: "A woman may be elected a superintendent of a Sunday school, but is not thereby a member of a Quarterly Conference," approved in 1898, and, "It is not in harmony with the spirit of our law that women be members of a District conference," approved in 1910. (Thomas & Haley, 1918/1920, pp. 266, 249).

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"Mrs. Milton Smith, Tallahassee, Florida." *Florida Memory*. March 19, 1955. Image no.. RC20498. Speaking during the 50th anniversary of the Tallahassee Democrat. <https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/41639>

Thomas, F.M. & Haley, C. B. (Editors). (1918/1920). *The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South*. Pub. House M.E. Church, South.



## American Methodist Women Taking Their Places Across the U.S.

*What Were Other American Methodist Women Doing During Trinity's First 200 Years?*

### Belle Harris Bennett, 1852 (b.) to 1922 (d.)

**B**elle Bennett was known as the powerful leader and organizer in the fight for women's laity rights in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

From Crosby, P. C. (2020, October). "Full Laity Rights: The Struggle for Equality for Women in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South." *Crossroads*, 4 (4), 9. <https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/October-2020-hs-crossroads.pdf>

## Adah Celeste Russell Mickler

1872 (b.) to 1951 (d.)

*Crossroads* articles: Excerpt from “Full Laity Rights: The Struggle for Equality for Women in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South” by **Pamela C. Crosby**, October 2020, Volume 4, Issue 6, pp. 8-16, <https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/October-2020-hs-crossroads.pdf> and “Taking Their Places and Making New Spaces: Women Leaders of Trinity’s Past—Focus on Adah Celeste Russell Mickler” by **Pamela C. Crosby**, January 2021, Volume 5, Issue 1, pp. 12-22, <https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/january-2021-hs-crossroads.pdf>

**Adah Celeste Russell Mickler** was born in 1872 in Jackson County, Indiana (J. Doug Smith, personal communication). As an officer of the Woman’s Missionary Society, Mickler was active in recruiting and leading Trinity women in all sorts of service, social, and educational projects in the first half of the 20th century.

Her attendance at the Quarterly Conference in 1920, according to available records at Trinity (the 1919 QCM has not been located), provided evidence of beginning years of inclusion of women at the once all-male local Methodist church business meetings in Tallahassee. Her name was the first woman’s name to appear as those attending a Quarterly Conference meeting (church leadership business meeting; *Quarterly*..., 1920).

In 1922, Adah was elected as a delegate to the District Conference in Perry along with **R. A. Gray, E. T. Casler, and W. N. Sheats** (“Delegates...,” 1922, p. 1).

In her 1923 WMS president’s report to the *Quarterly Conference Minutes*, Adah remarked that “never has there been such a wave of ‘social service’ among our members.” She expressed her gratitude for the considerable amount of funds raised so that relief could be given to the “poor and needy” (Mickler, 1923, n. p.)

Mickler appears to have been especially taken with the composition of rhymes. For example, she composed

a poem, published in the *Daily Democrat*, entitled, “Invitation to a Missionary Social”:

In my home a social will be  
Come Thursday afternoon and see.  
Right inside, you’re invited to come  
A missionary lesson we’ll have and Then some fun.  
At five o’clock we’ll surely meet,  
And inside the house you’ll find a seat.

Mrs. P. T. Mickler, North Monroe Street  
 (“Invitation...,” 1921, p. 5).

Adah was married to **P. T. (Peter Theodore) Mickler, Jr.**—an active leader at Trinity and a well-known businessman in the city as owner of a prosperous grocery store (Racket Grocery) located on Monroe Street (*Directory* . . . , 1904, p. 38).

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- Quarterly Conference Minutes*. (1920, November 24). Trinity United Methodist Church Archives [Heritage Room]. Tallahassee, FL.
- "Tallahassee W.M.S." (1919, May 16). *Daily Democrat*, 4.



Adah Celeste Russell Mickler (right) and Bessie Ferguson May (Mrs. William D., Sr.) sit at the information booth on the corner of Park Avenue and Monroe Street. The small building assisted service men from nearby bases during World War II when they visited the city (“Two Women Seated at an Information Center.” Circa 1940s. Image no. PR12385. <https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/10778>).

## Beulah Pelot Steinmeyer

Years Active at Trinity: 1929 to 1933

**Crossroads Article:** Based on “Taking Their Places and Making New Spaces: Women Leaders of Trinity’s Past—Focus on Adah Celeste Russell Mickler” by Pamela C. Crosby, January 2021, Volume 5, Issue 1, pp. 12-22, <https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/january-2021-hs-crossroads.pdf>

One of the most successful Sunday school classes in Trinity’s history was the **Beulah Steinmeyer** Class, named after the beloved Sunday school teacher who attended Trinity and lived in Tallahassee with her husband, **Rev. F. E. Steinmeyer**, presiding elder (superintendent) of the Tallahassee district from 1929 to 1933 (“Fourth Day...,” 1933, p. 31).

By 1946, the Beulah Steinmeyer class had about 130 members and was divided into several groups (“Officers. . .,” 1946, p. 3).

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“Fourth Day Morning Session (1933). In *Journal of the Florida Annual Conference* (pp. 30-31). The Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church. [https://www.flumc.org/files/fileslibrary/archives+history/journal+archive/1933\\_florida\\_journal.pdf](https://www.flumc.org/files/fileslibrary/archives+history/journal+archive/1933_florida_journal.pdf)

“Officers, Groups of Beulah Steinmeyer Class Announced.” (1946, January 21.) *Daily Democrat*, 3.

**Editor’s Note:** Beaulah Steinmeyer, also known as Mrs. F.E. Steinmeyer, was a Sunday school teacher of “matrons.” Her class experienced considerable growth while she was a member of Trinity from 1929 to 1933. She was also a very active leader of Circle 6 of the Women’s Missionary Society at Trinity.

**References for Editor’s Note:** “Mrs. Thornton Has Her Class at Home.” (1931, June 28). *Daily Democrat*, 4.

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“Beulah Steinmeyer Class Holds Meeting. (1933, November 12). *Daily Democrat*, 2.



Trinity UMC Tallahassee Archives.

## American Methodist Women Taking Their Places Across the U.S.

*What Were Other American Methodist Women Doing During Trinity’s 200 Years?*

### Gustavy W. Delaney (Years Taught, 1920s)



Gustavy Delaney served as a director of Allen Home High School, a private school for African American girls, sponsored by the Methodist Episcopal Church. It was the first accredited school for Black students in Western Carolina. It also gave library access to Black residents in Ashville who could not access the city’s public library.

From “Messages from the Missionaries,” (1926, June). In *Woman’s Home Missions* (pp. 5-8), 43(6), p. 7. [https://www.google.com/books/edition/\\_/dnbQAAAAMAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&bsq=gustavy](https://www.google.com/books/edition/_/dnbQAAAAMAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&bsq=gustavy)



## Wesleyan Service Guild

Years Active at Trinity: 1940 to 1972

*Crossroads* article: Excerpt from "The Once Mighty Wesleyan Service Guild" by Dot Binger, October 2020, Volume 4, Issue 1, pp. 6-8, [https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/January\\_2020\\_hs\\_newsletter.pdf](https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/January_2020_hs_newsletter.pdf)

If long-time women members of Trinity thumbed through the *1953-54 Year Book Women's Society of Christian Service and the Wesleyan Service Guild*, they would surely say, "I knew her, and her, and . . . ." They would glance at the names of the chairman of each Guild unit and spot **Linda Yates's** name as chairman of Unit 3 and think, "Well, Linda is not only a significant part of Trinity history but is now a leader in preserving Trinity history!"

Some of that preserved history provides a partial story of the ancestral Trinity Wesleyan Service Guild (WSG), an auxiliary to the former Women's Society of Christian Service (WSCS).

The Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC) in the North had recognized by 1921 the need for an employed women's organization that promoted the values and purposes of the Women's Foreign Missionary Society and Women's Home Missionary Society and organized the WSG to fill that need. The Methodist Episcopal Church, South (MECS) had also recognized such a need and organized young women's and business women's circles in their mission societies (Blue, 2019).

After unification in 1939 of the MEC and MECS, all the churches organized a Wesleyan Service Guild as an auxiliary to their Women's Society of Christian Service. There were no longer separate societies for foreign and home missions (Blue, 2019).

Even though the WSG was part of the Methodist Church, church membership was not required. The WSG national handbook for the quadrennial 1960-1964 stated that the Discipline of the Methodist Church provided for the WSG, and though it had an auxiliary relationship to the Women's Society of Christian Service (WSCS), the WSG had its own officers, freedom to make its own plans and programs, and ability to manage its own budget while staying within the framework and bylaws of the WSCS (*Wesleyan Service Guild Handbook*, 1960-1964.)

Although the WSG at Trinity had a history beginning in 1940, the *1953-1954 Year Book* provides the first available detailed information about the Trinity WSG. The *Year Book* stated, "The purpose of the Wesleyan Service Guild shall be to provide a channel through which gainfully employed women can achieve spiritual enrichment and Christian fellowship and take an active part in developing a world Christian community" (*Year Book Women's Society...*, 1953-1954). That *Year Book* also listed members, officers, goals, budget, Guild emblem, Guild hymn, and other details. Though it included names of the presidents from 1940 forward to 1953, it provided no other information about activities of the Trinity WSG during those years.



WSCS and WSG Annual Tea at Trinity parsonage in March 1956. L to R: Lucille Shuler (president); Gladys James (pastor's wife); Elizabeth Heth, and Ann Burdick. Copy in *United Methodist Women* scrapbook. Archives [Heritage Room]. Tallahassee, FL: Trinity United Methodist Church.

However, it was apparently very active; by 1953 it had grown to seven units (later called groups) with each unit listing 19 to 25 members by name. Reflecting an emphasis on leadership development, each unit listed as many as 10 or 12 chairman positions (*Year Book Women's Society...*, 1953-1954). In a speech delivered by **Mabel Moore** at the September 1976 meeting of United Methodist Women and then printed in the October 1976 *Tidings*, she reported that by 1948 the Trinity WSG had 177 members and was the largest in the Florida Conference (Moore, 1976, p. 3 ).

The Guild in 1953-54 provided a budget of \$2,000, which included gifts to Vashti School in Thomasville, Georgia, a kindergarten in Tokyo, Japan, a nursing home in Seward, Alaska, and to the Wesley Foundation at FSU (*Year Book Women's Society...*, 1953-1954). Like the WSCS, it focused on both home and foreign missions, although the areas of focus varied from year to year. For example, the 1961-1962 *Year Book* listed foreign work in Africa, India, Korea, Latin America, and Japan (*Year Book Women's Society...*, 1961-1962).

An interesting difference appears in the way members of the WSG and WSCS were referred to in various publications. For example, a married woman listed as "Mrs. James Jones" in WSCS materials would

have been listed as "Mrs. Doris Jones" for WSG purposes. It was as if gainful employment gave a woman permission to claim her own name. A gradual change began in the 1970s, and today she would be listed simply as "Doris Jones" (or "Doris Brown" if she kept her maiden name).

The Guild joined the WSCS in some activities. The March 28, 1955, *Tallahassee Democrat* published a picture of a reception held at the parsonage by the senior pastor's wife, **Mrs. Glenn (Gladys) James**, for all the women of Trinity. She was assisted by members of the WSCS and of the WSG, and leaders of both groups are included in the picture (Trinity women Leaders, 1955).

A scrapbook, Women's Society of Christian Service and Wesleyan Service Guild, in the Trinity Heritage Room contains multiple clippings from the *Tallahassee Democrat*, featuring various activities of the WSCS at Trinity but almost none of the WSG. Either the Guild did not provide information to the newspaper or did not provide newspaper clippings to anyone preserving church history. The same is true for minutes of their meetings. Therefore, we have little record of the business or programs which occurred during the Guild unit meetings.

On the other hand, Trinity's Sunday worship bulletins often praised specific activities or work of the Guild.

The September 9, 1956, worship bulletin promoted a WSG seminar to be held in Live Oak, Florida, the following week and commented, "Trinity is proud that the leader of the WSG District is our own **Miss Gladys McFarlin**" ("Worship Bulletin," 1956).

Furthermore, members of the Guild were special guests on Sunday, January 26, 1958, when the bulletin noted,

The Guild here at Trinity is one of the largest and most effective in our Florida Conference. We are proud of its record, and we deeply appreciate the loyalty of its members to our church. (Worship Bulletin, 1958)

The Florida Conference School of Missions and Christian Service was originally developed for members of the WSCS; however, the School of Missions accommodated members of the WSG by providing a condensed version of the school with weekend classes prior to the weeklong school for WSCS members. The theme for both groups in 1960 was "Thy Word Our Law," according to a flyer sent by **Mrs. Paul M. Stewart**, Florida Conference chairperson of the School of Missions (Florida Conference School of Missions..., 1960).

In 1968 the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church united to become the United Methodist Church and retained both the WSCS and WSG (Blue, 2019). However, in 1972 the WSG and WSCS combined into one unit called the United Methodist Women. The Trinity Sunday worship service bulletin for January 14, 1973, featured this union. All women who had previously been in either the WSG or WSCS stood during the morning worship

service and together declared the following:

The organized unit of United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ, to develop a creative, supportive fellowship and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church. (Worship Bulletin, 1973)

As women's laity role in the church increases to equal the laity role of men, some question whether a specific women's organization within the church will thrive. **Ellen Blue** in her book *Women United for Change: 150 years in Mission* quotes from a video produced to mark the 150th anniversary of women's work: "When women organize for mission, the needs of women, children and youth are placed front and center" (Blue, 2019, p. 127). She does not suggest any diminishment of this effort in the future. Change does continue to occur, intentionally or otherwise, and United Methodist Church women will always strive to point it toward justice.

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## Mart Pierson Hill

Years Active at Trinity: 1920 to Present

*Crossroads* article: Excerpt from “Full of Enthusiasm”: Trinity’s Mart Hill—Scholar, Founder, Leader, and Lover of Life by **Pamela C. Crosby**, July 2022, Volume 6, Issue 3, pp. 1-16, <https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/July-2022-hs-crossroads.pdf>

**M**art Pierson grew up in the Trinity church community. Her early memories center on Sunday school where children would first meet together in a general meeting in the basement before going “into little alcoves ... for different age groups” (McLarty, 2022).

Mart stayed active in the youth groups and enjoyed going to festivities when she was a young teen such as a banquet for young people, sponsored by the Women’s Missionary Society (Young People...,” 1934, p. 2).

Although Mart would later be a busy college student at Florida State College for Women, she continued to maintain her connection to Trinity and participated in activities at the church, using her experience in and love for the arts to contribute to church life; for example, when she was a college senior, she delivered a message in story at the Methodist Vesper Service, which was part of a series of vesper services leading up through Christmas in 1941. At these services, led by **Rev. Jack Anderson**, church youth choirs performed special musical programs and led the congregation in Christmas music (Methodist...,” 1941, p. 7).

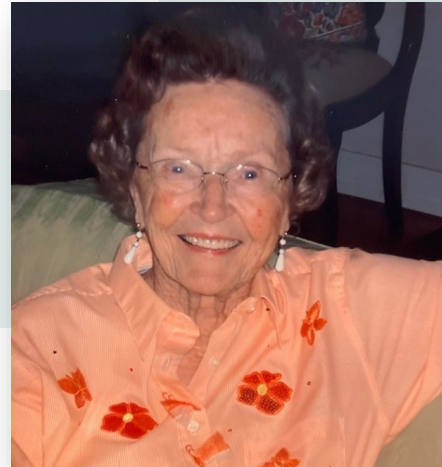
In addition to mentors at school, Trinity provided a place for other mentors who would make a significant difference in Mart’s life—such as **Frank and Beth Moor** (McLarty, 2022).

Mart married **Louis Hill** in 1944 (“Bride...,” 1944, p. 2).

Trinity benefitted from Mart’s leadership acumen. For several years, she led various circles in the Women’s Society for Christian Service (WSCS), such as chairing in 1947, Circle 14, and in 1953, Circle 6. She often hosted circles in the 1950s at her home in Plantation Heights, a subdivision off Meridian Road (“WSCS Committee...,” 1947, p. 3; “Trinity Methodist...,” 1953, p. 22; “Mrs. Hill Hostess...,” 1955, p. 7).

The WSCS at Trinity organized and taught courses of study, and in 1955, a particularly interesting topic was presented in several sessions on Native Americans. One of the sessions was “based on the Cherokee and Seminole tribes.” Mart applied her interest and skill in the arts by describing “Seminole history” with Patty Hill Smith and Lucille Ballinger in the form of a skit (“WSCS Course...,” 1955, p. 4).

Another of her volunteering roles at Trinity was serving on the Board of Stewards. She led the fund-raising drive to renovate the education wing, planned worship services, and served on the parish relations commission and administrative board (Chapman, 1958, p. 15; Clifford, 1984, p. 7G).



Mart Coleman Pierson Hill, taken on her 90th birthday. (Personal Photo taken by Missy Brown and provided by Almena Hill Pettit)

Even though Mart Hill has always lived an impressive public civic life, Trinity has remained an important part of her world. For her, a religious life and being happy go hand in hand, and she emphasized in her 2022 interview that church should be something enjoyable—something that adds to one’s happiness (McLarty, 2022).

To view the interview by Lynn McLarty that was video-taped by Rex Adams, please go to <https://youtu.be/tD2tmjBi6A?si=ixva8PZ72NelsUEN>

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## Rubie Plant Butterworth

Years of Service in Christian Education at Trinity 1968-1970; 1982-1997

**Crossroads** articles: Based on “Recollections of Trinity Life: Rubie Butterworth, Part 1” by **Pamela C. Crosby**, January 2019, Volume 3, Issue 1, p. 6; [https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/January\\_2019\\_hs\\_newsletter.pdf](https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/January_2019_hs_newsletter.pdf); “Recollections of Trinity Life: Rubie Butterworth, Part 3,” by Pamela C. Crosby, April 2019, Volume 3, Issue 2, pp. 6-7, [https://www.tumct.org/history/april\\_2019\\_hs\\_newsletter.pdf](https://www.tumct.org/history/april_2019_hs_newsletter.pdf); “Recollections of Trinity Life: Rubie Butterworth, Part 3,” July 2019, Volume 3, Issue 3, pp. 6-9, [https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/july\\_2019\\_hs\\_newsletter.pdf](https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/july_2019_hs_newsletter.pdf); “A Tribute to a Fellow Historian—and Friend: Rubie Plant Butterworth” by **Historical Society Leadership Team**, January 2022, Volume 6, Issue 1, pp. 12-15, <https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/January-2022-hs-crossroads.pdf>

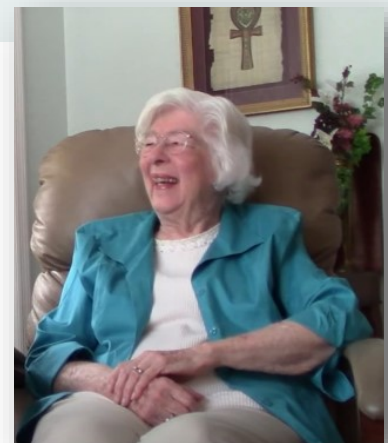
After **Rubie Plant** finished college in 1946, she replaced **Lynna Thompson**, the church secretary at Trinity. At the time, Rubie had no experience as a secretary, but she quickly learned such tasks as how to post member contributions on file cards, answer the phone, pour ink into an old mimeograph machine, and spread the ink around with a brush before making copies.

Although there were both tedium and challenge in being a church secretary—and it was not the type of career Rubie had had in mind when she graduated—she recalled that she “enjoyed it a lot” and it changed her career plans.

In fall 1948, Rubie left Tallahassee for graduate school, and it was not until 20 years later that she returned to the city. During the course of those years away, she earned a degree from Garrett Theological Seminary in Christian Education, pursued a career in that field, married, and had a family. When she and her family returned to Tallahassee, Trinity had changed considerably. The **Rev. Dr. George Foster** was senior minister, and church members were attending services in a newly constructed sanctuary, which had replaced the 1893 structure.

In 1968, Rubie succeeded **Madeline Wilson** as

director of Christian education until 1970 when her daughter was born. In 1982 she became coordinator of adult ministries, working in this position until 1997. She died on November 23, 2021, after dedicating many years of her life to the flourishing of Trinity, including mentoring members of the Trinity Historical Society on church matters in the context of her life and ancestors in Tallahassee.



The content of this series of articles was based on videos of Rubie Butterworth’s 2018 interview with Lynn McLarty and produced by Rex Adams. To view the videos, please go to the Historical Society YouTube playlist at <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLp1jaeD->

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLp1jaeD->

## American Methodist Women Taking Their Places Across the U.S.



*What Were Other American Methodist Women Doing During Trinity’s 200 Years?*

### The Bennett College for Women Faculty

The college at Greensboro, North Carolina, was established under the supervision of the Methodist Episcopal Church Board of Education and the Woman’s Home Missionary Society in 1926.

From “Bennett College for Women.” (1927, February). *Woman’s Home Missions* (pp. 6-7), 44(2), 6. <https://www.google.com/books/edition//dnbQAAAAAMAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0>

## Snapshots of Women Leaders from Other Trinity Publications



Mary Blackburn

### Trinity's Education Coordinators: Keeping It All Organized

Mary Blackburn is the director of Trinity's Pre-School. This program has been a real blessing to the church and the many youth who have attended over the years. Mary is also active in many other phases of the church.

From Fritchman, B., & Fritchman, G. (1985, June), "Trinity's Education Coordinators: Keeping It All Organized," *Monthly Tidings*, 12 (6), 2.



### Beth Fogle-Miller Finds Many Opportunities for Ministry at Trinity

"It was the first time I had ever heard a woman preach," the Rev. Fogle-Miller recalls.... "Hearing her planted a small seed that there was a possibility that I could become a minister. No one had ever told me I could not become a minister, but no one showed me how. Until I attended General and Jurisdictional Conferences that year, I simply couldn't imagine it."

From "Beth Fogle-Miller Finds Many Opportunities for Ministry at Trinity." (1988, November). *Monthly Tidings*, 15(10), 3.



Nancy Kerce, president of the Chancel Choir, shows the music stand the choir donated as a memorial to the late Delano Fenn, who sang in the choir for many years.

From *Monthly Tidings*. (1992, October). 19(9), 3.

## Helen Mullinix Sellers

Years of Membership: 1931-1998

*Crossroads* article: Reprinted from “Congratulations and a Rose” by **Linda Yates**, October 2017, Volume 1, Issue 3, p. 8. [https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/october\\_2017\\_hs\\_newsletter.pdf](https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/october_2017_hs_newsletter.pdf)

Some practices are too heartwarming to quit. That’s when they become very special traditions. Usually they are started and faithfully continued by special people. Trinity member **Helen Sellers** was such a person. She came to Tallahassee in 1932 when her husband, **Owen Sellers**, began teaching cello at Florida State College for Women. She was a musician herself, attended the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, and served as first cornetist with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra.



Helen Sellers with her second grade Sunday school class of 1955. She began teaching at Trinity soon after her arrival in 1932.

In Tallahassee she taught youngsters piano and cornet and immediately signed on as a Sunday school teacher and home nursery worker at her new church—Trinity. Every time a young mother of Trinity had a new baby, Helen was one of the first visitors to welcome, and many times to rock, the newborn.

Beginning in 1954, she placed a red rose on Trinity’s altar in honor of the new baby, and the bulletin proclaimed “Congratulations and a Rose” to the parents. During her tenure, it announced congratulations 387 times. Trinity’s Altar Guild continues the tradition today.

Helen died in May 1998 at age 95 and was buried at Roselawn Cemetery. I think of her every time I see a single red rose on Trinity’s altar.



Trinity’s home nursery visitor Helen Sellers holds 13-day-old Margaret Charlene McLarty in January, 1986. She placed a rose on the church altar to congratulate parents. (Photo: E. Lynn McLarty)

### Information Source

“Helen Mullinix Sellers.” (1998, May 5). *Tallahassee Democrat*, 32.

**Source of Years of Membership:** McLarty, E. M. [n.d.] *Church Register Book Six*. Trinity UMC archives, p. 194. <https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/BookSixComplete20200326.pdf>

“Helen M. Sellers.” [1998, May 4]. *Tallahassee Democrat*, 3B.

### What Did the Discipline Say About Women in 1813?

7. Let the women constantly sing their parts alone. Let no man sing with them unless he understands the notes, and sings the bass as it is composed in the tune book.

From *The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, 1813, 81-82.



## Dorothy Nelson Binger

Years Active at Trinity 1942 –Present (with Intermissions)

*Crossroads* article: Based on “A Quiet Welcome” by **Dot Binger**, April 2018, Volume 2, Issue 2, pp. 1-2, [https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/april\\_2018\\_hs\\_newsletter.pdf](https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/april_2018_hs_newsletter.pdf); and “Friend in Faith” by **Dot Binger**, July 2018, Volume 2, Issue 3, [https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/July\\_2018\\_hs\\_newsletter.pdf](https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/July_2018_hs_newsletter.pdf)  
Summarized below by **Pamela C. Crosby**

Although **Dorothy (Dot) Nelson Binger** lived and worked in various places since she was a college student at Florida State College for Women in the 1940s, she has been an active leader at Trinity and a model community advocate and activist during the many years she has lived in Tallahassee. Dot has always been a meticulous record keeper and has drawn from her journal to write articles for *Crossroads* such as her stirring recounting of the conscientious objectors who worked at the Civilian Public Service Camp, located in the Apalachicola National Forest. She noted that

At the Methodist Student House (Wesley Foundation), they found acceptance and opportunities to interact, sometimes participate, in one of the programs, share a meal, and just be human. (Binger, 2018, p. 1)

Dot was especially involved in the Wesley Foundation while at FSCW and has supported it for decades afterward. She wrote in *Crossroads* about Trinity’s women leaders’ involvement in the establishment of the organization as well as the Foundation’s early years pointing to the 1935 *Articles of Incorporation of the Methodist Student House* as signed by Trinity’s **Mrs. O. C. Parker, Sr., Mrs. Beth Walton Moor, and Mrs. W. E. Van Brunt** (Binger, 2018, p. 6).

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Binger, D. (2018, April). “A Quiet Welcome.” *Crossroads*, 2(2), 1.  
Binger, D. (2018, July). “A Friend in Faith.” *Crossroads*, 2(3), 6.



**Dot Binger, standing in front of FSCW Wesley Foundation in 1946**

**Editor’s Note:** Dot’s leadership at Trinity has included active involvement in various organizations such as Lay Academy, Staff Parish Committee, Historical Society, and United Methodist Women (now, Women in Faith). An award-winning educator retired from Tallahassee Community College, she is known by her fellow Trinity congregants as a model for social justice advocacy through her leadership in Guardian ad Litem. In 2017 she was recognized by Florida’s Governor Rick Scott as recipient of the Champion of Service Award from Volunteer Florida. She also received the Glenn J. Winuk Humanitarian Service Award.

**Reference of Editor’s Note:** Class of 2018 (n.d.). Hall of Fame. Tallahassee Community College. <https://www.tcc.fl.edu/media/divisions/alumni-amp-friends/hall-of-fame/Dorothy-Binger.pdf>

## Rae James

Years of Service at Trinity 1946-1975

*Crossroads* article: Excerpt from “Singing the Old Time Hymns” by **Nancy Kerce**, January 2018, Volume 2, Issue 1, page 9. [https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/january\\_2018\\_hs\\_newsletter.pdf](https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/january_2018_hs_newsletter.pdf)

**Editor’s Note:** Rae James began serving as organist and director of youth and bell choirs in 1946.

**Reference of Years of Service:** “James’ Day Observed.” (1975, October 25. *Tallahassee Democrat*, 15.



**Rae and Walter James**

## Snapshots of Women Leaders from Other Trinity Publications



### **Marti Chumbler Has a Host of Admirers in Aldersgate, on Education Ministry Team**

The Education Ministry Team has nominated Marti Chumbler for the Florida conference's Robert Raikes Sunday School teacher award, the recipient of which will be announced in conjunction with the annual conference in May.

From "Marti Chumbler Has a Host of Admirers in Aldersgate, on Education Ministry Team." (1998, March), *Monthly Tidings*, 25(3), 4.



### **Barbara [Hynes] Potter to Be Consecrated Diaconal Minister**

In ceremonies on Saturday, May 30, the last day of the Annual Conference in Lakeland, Barbara will be consecrated a Diaconal Minister by Bishop Cornelius L. Henderson.

From "Barbara Potter to Be Consecrated Diaconal Minister." (1998, May). *Monthly Tidings*, 25(5), 3.



### **Trinity's Bazaar: "A Florida Festival" Set for October 24**

Mary Ann Moore, chair of the event, said,

The abundant natural resources of our beautiful state will be emphasized in all areas of the bazaar. Crafts will be made using natural, native materials and in the country kitchen, healthy and delicious food items will have a decidedly Florida flavor.

We are really trying to make a big difference in our attitudes about environmental concerns in our homes and in our churches. By concentrating our energies on the use of natural, recyclable, healthy materials in our crafts and food items, we hope to increase the awareness of our responsibilities to be good caretakers and stewards.

From "Trinity's Bazaar: 'A Florida Festival' Set for October 24." (1992, March). 19(3), 1.

## Linda Herold Yates

*Crossroads* articles: Based on "Sacrifice and Unity: Living Through the Great Depression and World War II" by **Pamela C. Crosby**, July 2020, Volume 4, Issue 3, pp. 1-11. <https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/July-2020-hs-crossroads.pdf>; "Linda Herold Yates: A Visionary for Trinity History Preservation" by **Rev. E. Wayne Curry** and **Historical Society Leadership Team**, October 2023 Volume 7, Issue 4, <https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/October-2023-hs-crossroads.pdf>

The father of **Linda Herold Yates** left Switzerland, his home country, at the age of 12. He arrived in the U.S. with his family after they escaped a potato famine which had left them with little to eat.

Living in America, he prospered to the point that he was able to acquire farmland near Miccosukee, Florida.

Linda would grow up there, the youngest of 12 children. She must certainly have inherited the hard-working ethic of her family!

Linda's interest as a youngster would focus on journalism as shown in her gig as a young column editor for the *Sunday-News Democrat*, with reports on teenagers' activities in the city when she was 17. She would later earn a degree in journalism from the University of Florida and serve as managing editor of the *Florida Bar Journal*.

Trinity would subsequently benefit considerably from Linda's interest in journalism. Among accomplishments in other areas of leadership at Trinity, Linda brought back in 1974 the *Monthly Tidings* from years of dormancy, serving as editor of Trinity's newsletter to 1995. In November 1990, the United Methodist Association of Communicators awarded her with the Certificate of Merit based on her editorship of *Tidings*.

One of the most enduring accomplishments in church's 200-year-long history was her leadership in the preservation and presentation of Trinity's history. Linda chaired the 175th anniversary in 1999, and in the same year published the church's most comprehensive history, *Trinity United Methodist Church: Tallahassee's First Church 1824-1999*, which she edited and co-authored.

In 2009, with the support of **Rev. Wayne Curry**, room 309 of the education building was put aside for the preservation and display of historical documents and artifacts. Linda and husband **Bob Yates** designed the layout and furnishings of the room. Ultimately, room 309 was consecrated and named the Yates Heritage Center in their honor.

In 2016, Linda founded with **Princess Palmer** the Trinity Historical Society and served as chair until 2020. The Society has made history come alive for Trinity members by inspiring Trinity historians to go *beyond preservation* that had mostly been the role of the Committee for the Preservation of Church History (which Linda also chaired from 2003 to 2019) to *presentation* by establishing a history journal, adding to accessible online archives, and presenting talks throughout the church.

She died on July 16, 2023; however, we continue to



Linda Yates in her beloved Heritage Room, later named "Yates Heritage Center." She and husband Bob were pioneers of history preservation and worked together to design and furnish the Center.

benefit from her achievements as Trinity's most influential historian and editor.

To view videos of Linda's talks on history at Trinity go to <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLpjaeD-QQHBcZLOphU4hkiwqHWZHAye>

### What Did the *Discipline* Say About Women in 1926?

**¶475. ART. XIV.** The office of deaconess is hereby authorized. The office and work of deaconess shall be under the direction of the Department of Home Missions, Section of Woman's Work. When accepted for service, a deaconess shall be a single woman or a widow not less than twenty-three years of age nor more than fifty. She must be a member of our Church, in good standing, and have shown fitness for her duties by active service in some Christian work. She must have good health, a high school education, two years of college work, and must have completed the prescribed course of study in an accredited training school.

From *The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South*, 1926, p. 224.



## Vacation Bible School

Years Active: 1932 to Present

*Crossroads* article: Excerpt from “Trinity’s Early VBS Focused on Serving God by Helping Others” by **Pamela C. Crosby**, April 2020, Volume 4, Issue 2, pp. 11-14, [https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/april\\_2020\\_hs\\_newsletter.pdf](https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/april_2020_hs_newsletter.pdf)

The beginning of Trinity’s Vacation Bible School can be traced (according to research so far) to at least 1932. **The Rev. W. F. Dunkle**, pastor, reported that Vacation Bible School had drawn considerable interest and attendance that summer with credit given to **Lillian Cross**, superintendent of the children’s division, and **Eleanor Wald**, superintendent of the junior department. Rev. Dunkle saw great promise in the program with expectations for even more interest in the upcoming year (Dunkle, 1932).



Lillian Cross would later be known as Lillian Cross Ruediger. She died in 1952 and a Tallahassee elementary School was named to honor her for her service as a general supervisor of Leon County School. Photo from Ensley, G. (2013, November 6). “Ruediger Elementary Honors Former Teacher.” *Tallahassee Democrat*, B6.

referred to it as “Vacation Church School” (VCS) instead of “Vacation Bible School” in both the worship bulletin and in the church newsletter (“Vacation Church School,” Jan. 27, 1957, n. p.).

For that year, the theme of the kindergarten (four- and five-year-olds) curriculum was “My Home and Family”; of the primary (first, second, and third grades) curriculum, “Friends at Home and in the Community”; and of the juniors (fourth grade and older) curriculum, “Work and Worship Around the World” (“Vacation Church School,” July 7, 1957, p. 1).

Lessons for kindergarten children focused on helping them in their home life; primary children studied how to become “helpers” in their community and show their love for other community helpers. The aim for juniors was learning ways to become involved in making the world a better place for all to live (“Vacation Church School,” July 7, 1957, p. 1).

In all, 190 children attended this comprehensive Vacation Church School that year (“Our Trinity Youth, July 14, 1957, p.1).

Vacation Church School in June 1983 brought to life the “Ways Bible People Lived.” The morning sessions were for three-year-olds through current third graders and began each day with chapel. For children (grades three through five) a dynamic new program began in 1983 at Trinity. “The Trinity Troopers”—an ongoing “children’s fellowship program and learning experience,” emphasized the importance of “helping others.” Trinity Troopers spent part of their VCS mornings in a large interactive learning center that was devised to incorporate the VCS theme. The remainder of the Troopers’ mornings, however, was spent in various service activities throughout the city such as assisting with Meals on Wheels, sharing craft time with older adults, helping at a day care center, and visiting some of Trinity’s homebound (“Trinity’s Vacation Church School Is . . .,” June 1983, pp. 1-2). Not only did the children provide a vital resource in community involvement, but they were engaged in service early in their lives.

In 1986, 40 children (three-, four-, and five-year-olds) “traveled” (via their VCS experience at Trinity) to “Bethlehem B.C.” Through their lessons and activities, they learned about the culture of that area in Jesus’s time through stories and projects relating to home life, the shepherds’ way of living, the tabernacle and school for children, and the market place (Mickler, Sept., 1986, p. 4).

The children did considerable work as “citizens” of Bethlehem! They baked bread, ground wheat, created mats to sit on, stitched money pouches, designed and decorated houses from refrigerator boxes, and made “sheepfolds to protect their sheep.” They visited the market place, drew water from the “well,” and watched other children working in the shops. They also observed a demonstration on making wool (Mickler, Sept. 1986, p. 4).

In July 1987, “Vacation Church School” was once again “Vacation Bible School,” but an exciting addition helped to create an extended holistic learning experience. VBS combined with a summer music camp program, and “Trinity’s Tunes and Tales 1987” was born. Registration fee was five dollars per child and included ages 3 and up through grade 12. The focus of the week-long event was on Moses, the plagues, and the Israelites’ release from Egypt. The stories, lessons, and music culminated in a presentation of the musical, *Moses and the Freedom Fanatics*, performed by the children (“Music Camp Vacation Bible School

Planned,” May 1987, p. 4) with 100 children attending (“Plans for Summer Music Program Told,” April 1988, p. 1).

While Vacation Bible (or Church) School has evolved over the years, religious education continues to be an important aspect of the church’s mission. As VBS (national) founder **Mattie Pritchard Miles** proclaimed in a spirit of inclusion and love, it is “for all children of whatever church—or no church at all” (Reed, 2017).

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## Dottie Roberts and Marna Mears, Trinity’s First Lady Acolytes

Early 1960s

Crossroads article: Reprinted from “Female Pioneers: The First Young Lady Acolytes at Trinity” by **Dottie Roberts**, January 2019, Volume 3, Issue 1, p. 10, [https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/January\\_2019\\_hs\\_newsletter.pdf](https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/January_2019_hs_newsletter.pdf)

My early childhood revolved around the activities, staff, and families of Trinity Methodist Church. It was the 1960s, and Trinity reflected the passions, the changing ideals, and culture of that dynamic time. Like most of our church friends, we participated in early church service, Sunday school, and evening services on Sunday and Wednesday nights. I (**Dottie Roberts**) remember well the **Rev. Dr. Melton Ware**, the towering minister who, to my nine-year-old mind, was at least eight and a half feet tall and our youth pastor, **J.P. Floyd**, a very sweet and patient man.

My closest friend in elementary school was **Marna Mears**, whose father, **Bill**, was an FSU music professor and active choir member, and whose mother, **Janet Mears**, was a teacher who administered Trinity’s kindergarten program. We all attended this half-day kindergarten program long before it became an academic requirement.

Marna and I were very spirited and willful, believing that Trinity’s welcome sign meant that this church was our second home. And although a former Sunday school teacher once told me we were considered the two holy terrors of the Methodist church and that teachers would draw straws to see who had to teach us scripture and to instill in us Christian values, I like to think that we added color to the children’s activities and projects.

One of our personal missions was to become acolytes, a responsibility only given to boys at the time. This privilege meant that *only* boys could walk alone before the ministers at the beginning of the service, light the candles, and then sit in the top pew on opposite sides of the choir loft. Such an honor held particular significance for me and Marna. If we were allowed such privilege, not only would we be on stage, but we would not have to sit with our parents at the front of the

church: the Mears on the front right, the Roberts family on the front left.

After pestering our parents for weeks, we finally approached J.P. Floyd one morning and asked him why we couldn’t be acolytes. I remember he just looked at us and said he didn’t know why, that he would speak with Dr. Ware. Dr. Ware then called the district office, and he received approval. We were thrilled that we would have this honor, and we dutifully served our rotation until the Mears moved away in 1966. Whether the decision was made with reason and consideration or to avoid another battle with a couple of fourth grade girls, I will never know.

This may seem insignificant to many, but I believe Trinity has always represented social change and readiness to adapt. The people and church administration I remember were congregants and staff of educated, thoughtful, and progressive people. The fact that Trinity moved forward concurrently in that time of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, anti-poverty programs, Medicare, Voting Rights Act, and more makes me very proud.

### What Did the Discipline Say About Women in 1906?

¶ 653. A WOMAN MAY BE SUPERINTENDENT OF A SUNDAY SCHOOL, BUT NOT A MEMBER OF A QUARTERLY CONFERENCE.

From *The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South*, 1906, 358.

## Snapshots of Women Leaders from Other Trinity Publications

### Needlepointed Kneelers Will Adorn Altar Rail by Summer



Trinity's needle pointers have completed the finely stitched cushion covers they have been working on for months, which will be backed with fabric and stuffed with foam cushions to be placed at the altar rail this summer. Shown are Jackie Long, Cinda Hortin and Gail Bass.

From Needlepointed Kneelers Will Adorn Altar Rail by Summer (1993, March), *Monthly Tidings*, 20 (3) p.3.

### Church Dedicates Needlepoint Kneelers in Special Service

Needlepoint Cushions Coordinator Cinda Hortin:

"Trinity is indebted to the stitchers for this extraordinary commitment of time and talent that was essential to the the completion of this very special gift to our worship enhancement.... We are most grateful, too, for the wonderful monetary gifts that enabled a project of this scope. And we are mindful of the people who are honored and memorialized with these gifts."

From "Church Dedicates Needlepoint Kneelers in Special Service." (1995, January). *Monthly Tidings*., 22(1), p. 4

### Needlepointed Kneeling Cushions

Right: Fleur de Lis with Dogwood Blossoms. Given by Grace Fisher Lipscomb in memory of her husband, Eugene Barnardo Fisher. Stitched by Cinda and David Hortin.



From "Needlepointed Kneeling Cushions. (1999). In L.H. Yates (Ed.) *Trinity United Methodist Church: Tallahassee's First Church, 1824-1999* (16-23). Trinity UMC, p. 22.



## Early Librarians at Trinity

1845? To Present

*Crossroads* article: Reprinted from "McKenzie Library: A Testament to Trinity's Heritage" by **Gloria Colvin**, October 2018, Volume 2, Issue 4, pages 4-5, [https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/October\\_2018\\_hs\\_newsletter.pdf](https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/October_2018_hs_newsletter.pdf)

**E**ducation and spiritual development have long been a part of Trinity's program, and the church's libraries are a testament to that heritage. As early as 1845, the *Quarterly Conference Minutes* included mention of a library containing 300 volumes. What became of that early library is a matter of speculation, but a century later documents record the creation of a new library for the Trinity community.

In 1952, books for children, youth, and adults were purchased for this new library. An accession book records the titles, authors, publishers, and prices of the books purchased or given to the library beginning that year. Some of the first titles added to this collection were *Learning from Jesus* by **A. B. Keiser**, *Religious Education Through Story-Telling* by **Katherine D. Cather**, *A Great Time to be Alive* by **Harry Emerson Fosdick**, and *Mr. Jones, Meet the Master* by **Peter Marshall**. According to an article in the June 1957 *Spire News* ("New Books in Church Library," p.1), the library was located in the church office on the second floor of Trinity Hall and was open week days from 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. and on Sundays from 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. **Estelle Ardrey**, maps librarian at Florida State University (FSU), served as Trinity librarian for a number of years in the 1950s and 1960s. Articles in the *Tidings* listed or reviewed new books, admonished members for failing to return books, and pleaded for their return ("Trinity Members Asked to Aid in Search for Library Books," 1960, p. 4).

By 1974, the library had moved to a room opening onto the arcade connecting Trinity Hall and was open whenever the church was open. **Josephine (Jo) Ezell**, a librarian in the FSU library's Science and Technology Division, headed the Trinity library. In 1975, approximately 105 books were checked out and 71 books were added, including many donated from members' personal libraries. A line item of \$350 for library and educational materials was included in the proposed 1976 church budget.

A long-range plan for 1982–1987 recommended by Trinity Planning Committee and



Josephine (Jo) Ezell served as one of the heads of Trinity's library.



In 1986, Trinity's library was named the McKenzie Library in honor of Guy McKenzie and Sarah Patterson McKenzie for their kind support of Trinity.

adopted by the Administrative Board May 18, 1982, included goals to "expand the library as a source for personal enrichment and leadership development" and to create a "library suitable for small children" as part of a new learning resource center to be located next to the Children's Division classrooms ("Administrative Boards Adopts Recommendations for 1982–87," 1982, p. 3).

A 1983 bequest from the estate of **Carolyn Hart**, long-time elementary Sunday School secretary, provided funding for books and furnishings for a new children's library, which was completed and designated the Carolyn Hart Memorial Children's Library in 1985. **Mary Ann Hensarling**, a school librarian, served as the children's librarian, assisted by a children's library committee.

As part of the Trinity Hall renovation, the room adjacent to the adult library was designed and furnished for an expanded library, and the adult library moved there, its current location, in 1985. The following year, the Board of Trustees named the library for **W. Guy McKenzie** and **Sarah Patterson McKenzie** in honor of their generous support of Trinity, specifically the challenge gift for the renovation of Trinity Hall.

**Frances McAdams**, an FSU librarian, headed the library from 1980s until 1999 and wrote monthly columns in the *Tidings* about the library. She received



Frances McAdams headed Trinity's library from 1980s until 1999.

Tallahassee's 1986 Volunteer of the Year award in the religion category for her work with the McKenzie Library.

Beginning in 2000, librarians **Gloria Colvin, Carolyn Taylor, and Adeline Wilkes** developed new library guidelines and policies, updated the collection, and began the process of converting the library records to an online catalog. The collection now includes more than 2,000 volumes, and once again

materials for children and adults share the same space.

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## Snapshots of Women Leaders from Other Trinity Publications



McKenzie Library committee members met to review policies and discuss plans. From left: Adeline Wilkes, Barbara Hynes (formerly Potter), Carolyn Taylor, and Gloria Colvin. A goal of the committee was an online catalog of the collection.

From *Monthly Tidings* (2000, January). 27(1), 9.



### Prayer Partners Come Together for the First Time at Sept 17 Luncheon

Pat Willis, Caroline Campbell and John Willis

From "Prayer Partners Come Together for the First time at Sept 17 Luncheon." (2000, October). *Monthly Tidings* 27(9), 6.

## Betty Flory Phifer

Years of Membership: 1956-1978

*Crossroads* article: Excerpt from "People and Clergy of Trinity: Stories of Service and Faith" by **Carrol Dadisman**, January 2018, Volume 2, Issue 1, pp. 8-11. [https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/january\\_2018\\_hs\\_newsletter.pdf](https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/january_2018_hs_newsletter.pdf)



**R**eligion instructor at FSU, dedicated Christian, and community activist, created and led the Advanced Studies Sunday School class that bears her name.

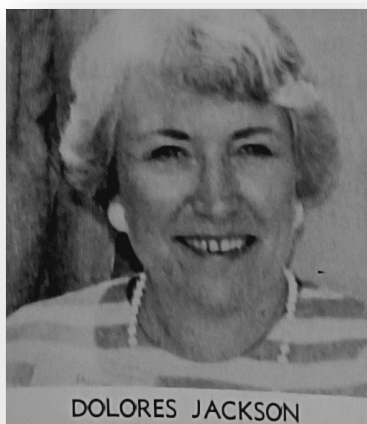
**Editor's Note:** Betty founded the Advanced Studies Class in 1963, and it continues to thrive today at Trinity, having been named for her after her death. Class members explore and debate controversial and intellectually challenging subjects. Although considered by some to be too daring in its approach to provocative topics, the class draws praise from others for its courage in engaging directly with theological and social taboos. Betty was also known for her passion for civil rights and social activism, taking stands against racism she saw displayed in Tallahassee; she was not intimidated by the officials whom she sought to persuade and who held power to make the changes for which she fought. Ironically, when teaching the course she created, "Death and Dying" at Florida State University, she was diagnosed with breast cancer and died at the early age of 47. Her course was the most popular one in the Religion Department at FSU at the time.

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**Reference of Years of Membership:** Church Register Books Eight, pp. 45, 116. <https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Book-8-PDF-For-Printing-20230514.pdf>

"Elizabeth Flory Phifer." (1978, April 28). *Tallahassee Democrat*, 3B.

## Snapshots of Women Leaders from Other Trinity Publications



### Dolores Jackson Elected Southeastern Conference Delegate

Dolores Jackson was one of 31 elected delegates (from a slate of 131 lay nominees from Florida) chosen to participate in the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference of the United Methodist Church at Lake Junaluska, North Carolina, on July 12-16, 1988, with the assignment to elect a bishop of the Florida Conference.

From "Dolores Jackson Elected Southeastern Conference Delegate." (1987, July). *Monthly Tidings*, 14(7) 1.



## May Nunnelley Hamilton

Years of Membership at Trinity: 1971 to 1992

*Crossroads* article: Excerpted from “Women Leaders of Trinity’s Past—Focus on May Hamilton” by **Pamela C. Crosby**, October 2020, Volume 4, Issue 4, pp. 3-5. <https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/October-2020-hs-crossroads.pdf>

**May Hamilton** was 64. She was still mourning the loss of her husband, and she was having medical issues and could not walk for a period of time. During these demanding days, few people knew about the challenges she faced; in fact, she hesitated to talk about her problems with anyone (Clifford, 1981, p. 5A).

When she was finally able to get around again, Hamilton turned to the task of finding ways to attend to others who were in need as she, herself, had been—identifying those who could benefit from special services and attention—and offering the kind of assistance that would have made her life much easier throughout her own days of hardship.

With these ideas in mind and applying her prescient and organizing acuity, Hamilton set out to found an organization at Trinity where members could seek out those in need, and—with guidance and resources—they could “help each other.” This was the beginning of HEO.

In the early years of HEO, or Help Each Other, stories of May’s involvement with the church’s organization were often published in the local newspaper, the *Tallahassee Democrat*. In a 1981 article, she was featured as one of 15 finalists for the prestigious Volunteer of the Year Award of Tallahassee, where she was praised for her HEO service. She was noted, for example, for directing special workshops to train volunteers whose tasks focused on visiting those experiencing hardships associated with lonesomeness, health concerns, and/or household upkeep (Clifford, 1981, p. 5A).

Hamilton’s personal and professional life was also notable news. She was a co-author with **Ellie Whitney** of best-selling books on nutrition. She had met Whitney when she was a graduate student at Florida State University. Earlier, Hamilton had earned an undergraduate degree in nutrition from the University of Kentucky and later attended grad school at FSU at the age of 56. She was among the first graduate students who studied under Whitney, who was 33 at the time, and they became life-long friends and colleagues (Guttman, 1982, p. 14E).

In 1981 when reporter **Kirk Spitzer** authored an article in the *Democrat* on a wonderful new invention, the “home computer,” Hamilton was featured as one of the first ones in the area to own one. In the article, she expressed her excitement with her new “\$6,000” “TRS\_80 Model III,” which could do everything except “address envelopes” and “lick stamps.” She explains to readers that

you can compose right on the screen. If you change



May Hamilton (seated) with co-author Ellie Whitney. *Tallahassee Democrat*, September 30, 1982, p. 1E. Published with permission from editors (Photo credit: Keith Hadley).

your mind, it takes no time at all (to make corrections.) It’s beautiful, just beautiful. (Spitzer, 1981, p. 1)

Hamilton died in 1992 at the age of 75. Her work at Trinity as helping to establish the Help Each Other ministry (later called “Helping Each Other”) as well as the work of subsequent HEO directors and volunteers throughout HEO’s 40-year history continues to be a model for organizations that have followed in making a difference in the lives of church members and the wider community.

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“Guttman, L. (1982, Sept.30). “Collaboration Put Duo on Top of Best-Sold List,” *Tallahassee Democrat*, 1E, 14E.  
Levy, J. (2020, October). “Back to Basics.” *Crossroads*, 4 (4), 1-3.  
Spitzer, K. (1981, September 6). “Computers Find a New Home—at Home,” *Tallahassee Democrat*, 1E-2E.

**Editor’s Note:** The ministry started by HEO is presently led by the Rev. E. Wayne Curry, minister of pastoral care. [See page 34 for further details.](#)

- References for Years of Membership:** McLarty, E.L. (n.d.) Church Register Books Eight (October 1954-November 1984), 59. <https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Book-8-PDF-For-Printing-20230514.pdf>  
“FSU Dean Dies at 62” (1977, January 19). *Tallahassee Democrat*, 16.  
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## Helping Each Other

Years Active: 1979-2021

*Crossroads* article: Reprinted from “Helping Each Other: Back to Basics by **Judy Levy**, October 2020, Volume 4, Issue 4, pp. 1-3. <https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/October-2020-hs-crossroads.pdf>

The role of HEO (short for “Helping Each Other”) is to take care of Trinity’s congregation. Its history goes back to the mid-1970s when **Rubie Butterworth** chaired a position on the United Methodist Women’s (UMW) Board at Trinity that focused on congregational care called “Supportive Community” (personal communication, Butterworth).

When Butterworth left the Board, **May Hamilton** (see article on Hamilton on p. 3 of this issue) took charge of attending to these needs. According to **Christine Puckett Moody** (1999), one crucial need of the congregation was assisting pastors who found it challenging to visit all of the homebound and sick older adults in the church’s community (p. 80).

A committee consisting of Hamilton as chairperson, along with members **Gail Hock**, **Georgianna Wollschlager**, **Dorothy Sauls**, and **Elaine Green**, hosted a workshop on September 17, 1979, for the purpose of setting up a program of services for the home-bound. The committee offering services was named “HEO,” or “Help Each Other” in 1980, with the United Methodist Women at Trinity providing funds for a part-time coordinator (Moody, 1999, pp. 80-81).

In the following years, members relied on HEO’s volunteers to “visit, assist, transport and provide regular contact to the church’s older members, including receptions following funerals” (Moody, p. 81).

May Hamilton enlisted help from FSU to design a survey for the congregation to determine needs and voluntary skills. With the results of the survey, HEO

was created. The idea was to match needs with volunteers who could meet those needs (personal correspondence, Rubie Butterworth).

Funds to supply the material for HEO were supplied through volunteers and UMW’s annual contribution. To get the mission started on a strong foundation, **Madeline Rolland** (a member of Trinity’s United Methodist Women) gave a generous gift of money to use as a principle with annual interest as working funds (personal correspondence, Nancy Kerce and Linda Yates). It continues to be the case that often monetary memorial gifts are designated for HEO.

In the 1980s a church-wide bazaar was initiated to help fund HEO. It grew into an all-church event with craft classes during the year to supply the items for the congregation (Moody, 1999, p. 87).

As HEO expanded to the local community, initiatives and services have been added. Today, the organization is responsible for funeral receptions, prayers and squares/shawls, visitation (including newborn family), greeting cards, and food for the ailing/needy home-bound (temporary and permanent). HEO has also started “Handy Helpers”—a team of trained disaster response volunteers who are able to do the heavy work/specialized work to cope with natural disasters.

HEO has had many dynamic women leaders who have served as HEO leaders, including **Mallie Slater**, **Christine Moody** (now **Mills**), **Anne Miller**, **Rita May**, **Leah Wright Johnson**, **Kelly Raines**, **Hillary Ryan**, **Ruth Ann High**, and **Erin Platt**



Trinity Chefs prepare ready to heat up meals for those in need as part of the HEO ministry. L-R: Earline Adkison, Patti Oakley, Oberley Brown, Judy Levy, Sandy Kappes, Mary Margaret Rogers, Nancy Waugh, Barbara Allen, and HEO Coordinator, Ruth Ann High. (March 2015, *Monthly Tidings*, p. 6.)

(United Methodist Women minutes).

But it was becoming clear that as the needs became more demanding and numerous, a part-time person could no longer handle such a vast responsibility. It simply became too much for one person to manage.

To take on that challenge, today's HEO ("Helping Each Other") has taken a lesson from the HEO of the early days (Help Each Other). It is now headed by a pastoral staff member (**Rev. Wayne Curry**), who coordinates the volunteers who are responsible for different initiatives and ministries. HEO is designated for "congregational care," while "community care" planning and activities are now covered by the committee on local missions.

Today's HEO lesson from the past—shared leadership—has brought about a return to the basics.

### Acknowledgement

Kudos to Rubie Butterworth (Trinity matron of lore for Trinity and Tallahassee), Earline Adkison, Beth Perry, Leslee Hancock, and Wayne Curry for their assistance in creating this article.

**Author's Note:** The early name was *Help* not *Helping*. Today it is called "Helping Each Other."

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*Tallahassee's First Church, 1824-1999* (pp. 70-82). Tallahassee, FL: Trinity United Methodist Church.

**Editor's Note:** Rev. Wayne Curry, retired senior pastor at Trinity, has been serving as minister of pastoral care to make sure that the initial vision of the organization lives on, although the work done is no longer under this name. Disaster relief has been one of the foci of this ministry, including attention given to those affected by the COVID pandemic and by natural disasters such as the May 10, 2024, tornados, which ravaged Tallahassee neighborhoods.

## What Did the Discipline Say About Women in 1876?

¶ 103. Rule 3. Converse sparingly, and conduct yourself prudently, with women. (1 Tim. v, 2.)

The

*Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1876*, p. 76.

## Snapshots of Women Leaders from Other Trinity Publications



### Walli Beall Chairs Global Ministries

Mrs. Louis (Walli) Beall was elected chairperson of the Work Area on Global Ministries during the regular meeting of the Administrative Board last month. She will work with a group of Trinity people in developing new global ministries goals and in initiating and carrying out programs designed to help Trinity fulfill a creative role in global outreach.

Mrs. Beall replaces Don Creedman who resigned in order to assume the role of president of Tallahassee Urban Ministries.

Photo from *Monthly Tidings* (1975, November), 2(10), p. 1.

Clipping from "Walli Beall Chairs Global Ministries." (1975, July). *Monthly Tidings*, 2(7), p. 1.



## Kitty Wade Ball

Years of Membership: 1962-2021

*Crossroads* article: Based on "Oral History Spotlight" by **Princess Palmer**, October 2017, Volume 1, Issue 3 p. 3. [https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/october\\_2017\\_hs\\_newsletter.pdf](https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/october_2017_hs_newsletter.pdf)

**K**itty Ball, a member of Trinity, discussed the history of United Methodist Women, a faith-based membership organization of lay women with the United Methodist Church. Kitty described how this organization made a difference in her life. A variety of local, national, and international missions were supported by the UMW. The UMW circles at Trinity and the monthly luncheon meetings developed over several years. The meetings were first attended by young women who stayed home to care for their children. Over the years the membership consisted mostly of working moms.



**Editor's Note:** Kitty Ball was the first woman to serve as chair of the Administrative Board at Trinity. She also served as lay leader, a high office of lay leadership in the church and a role she was very proud to perform at Trinity.

**References to Editor's Note:** "Kitty Wade Ball." (2021, September 16). *Tallahassee Democrat*. <https://www.newspapers.com/image/766150454/>

Peirce, R. (n.d.) "State of Trinity United Methodist Church." "Charge Conference Minutes: November 19, 1978." (In E. L. McLarty (Ed.) *Charge Conference Minutes: 1972-1980*. Trinity Archives. <https://www.tumct.org/history/1972-1980%20Combined.pdf>

### Snapshots of Women Leaders from Other Trinity Publications



Leslie Williams (center), as chairman of the Education Work Area, called a conference of all church school workers on February 17. Clockwise are Pat Weil, 3-year-olds; Carol Wooverton, 5-year-olds; Ann Lumsden, younger children's coordinator; Mrs. Williams, Alice Warren, 4-year-olds, and Dave Woolverson, 5-year-olds.

From *Monthly Tidings*. (1976, March). 2(2), p. 3

## Peggy Wells Hughes

Years of Membership: 1965-2010

Crossroads article: Reprint from "Peggy Wells Hughes: A Trinity Member with a Heart" by Wallace H. Beall January 2021, Volume 5, Issue 1, pp. 1-2. <https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/january-2021-hs-crossroads.pdf>

It is indeed a woman of unusual gifts who can meet the demands of a full family life as well as give generously of herself to become a leader in the life of her church and a community leader of note. Such a person was **Peggy Wells Hughes**.

Growing up in Monticello, the daughter of the late **Francis** and **Marie Wells**, her first church home was the First Baptist Church in Monticello. Active in the youth group, she honed well the attributes of commitment and involvement. Fortunately for Trinity, a young man in the Methodist Church in Monticello caught her eye and heart and after her marriage to **Joseph Raiford Hughes** in 1960 ("Miss Wells. . .," 1960, p. 7) and the completion of their education and military service, the couple moved to Tallahassee and Trinity.

It was here that they created a home, a family with two children, and a thriving dental practice for Joe Hughes.

Peggy's commitment to service was writ large in our church as well as our community. Early, while her own children were small, she gave volunteer hours weekly to the Raney School, a grade school for Black children located off Centerville Road. Peggy worked tirelessly on the Parsonage Committee, keeping our church-owned ministers' residences attractive and in working order. It was she who took the lead in the design of building a new home for the senior minister on Live Oak Plantation Road.

She and Joe were active members of the Bob Story Class at Trinity, and she brought many new members to Trinity through her enthusiastic witness. When Trinity leased the small house that stood at the corner of Call and Duval Street, it came to be known as "Terrell House" and was used as a place of respite for families of those imprisoned at the Federal Correctional Institution when they came to Tallahassee ("Peggy. . .," 2010, p. 6). Hughes provided the link to Trinity's outreach ministry there by serving on the Terrell House Board.

Peggy also provided leadership to Trinity's Board of Trustees. Over many years Peggy Hughes bemoaned the fact that our beautiful downtown lacked chimes. She envisioned brief concerts uplifting those who found themselves in the city. Rather than simply fret, she and her family gave the chimes to the church.

Perhaps her most lasting contribution was made in her role as one of three church members who led the drive to purchase our magnificent Casavant Organ ("Peggy. . .," 2010, p. 6). She, **Paula Smith**, and **Myron Blee** did the research, listened to countless instruments, and once the decision was made, embraced the task of raising the funds for its purchase:



Peggy Wells Hughes, as president of the Glenn Terrell Foundation, talks with Ames Swartstager, chaplain at the Federal Correctional Institution. (FCI). The Foundation, located at "Terrell House," was a center of support for families of incarcerated men serving at the FCI in Tallahassee. ("House Painters." [December 18, 1973]. *Tallahassee Democrat*, p. 10).

\$500,000.

While Peggy Hughes gave generously of her time and treasure to the church, she served more broadly in our community as a member and president of the Junior League of Tallahassee, as a nine-year member and chair of the Civic Center Authority Board, and was later a three-term member and a chair of the Board of Tallahassee Memorial Regional Medical Center ("Peggy. . .," 2010, p. 6).

Her life of service to both the church and the community was extraordinary, and her various roles of leadership within her service makes Peggy Hughes exceptional.

### References

"House Painters." (1973, December 18). *Tallahassee Democrat*, 10.  
"Miss Wells Bride of Dr. Hughes." (1960, June 15). *Tallahassee Democrat*, 7.  
"Peggy Wells Hughes." (2010, March 16). *Tallahassee Democrat*, 6.

**Reference for Years of Membership:** "Peggy Wells Hughes." (2010). *Tallahassee Democrat*. <https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/tallahassee/name/peggy-hughes-obituary?id=21861597>

McLarty, E. L. (n.d.). *Church Register Books Eight*. October 1954 – November 1984, 36. <https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Book-8-PDF-For-Printing-20230514.pdf>

## Snapshots of Women Leaders from Other Trinity Publications



Mary Ann Moore, Paula Smith, and Pat Willis

### Paula Smith Is Capital Faith Forum Speaker

Tallahassee community volunteer and Trinity member Paula Smith is the speaker for January's Capital Faith Forum. ... At Trinity she served as chair of the stewardship Committee in 1999 and 2000 and was chair of the campaign to raise funds for the new pipe organ in 1999 and was a member of the board of trustees from 1998 to 2001.

From "Paula Smith is Capital Faith Forum Speaker." (2004, January). *Monthly Tidings*, 31(1), p. 9.



### This Month's Friday Flicks Is Oct. 18

Dana Preu, left, and Friday Flicks coordinator Lora Chapman at September's gathering of Friday Flicks. Preu starred in the featured film, *Gal Young Un'*. She introduced the movie, answered questions, and led discussion afterward. Friday Flicks drew a record crowd of 66 people to this special event and attendees were treated to a Cracker-style dinner, courtesy of a number of volunteers within in the group.

From "This Month's Friday Flicks is October 18." (2002, October). *Monthly Tidings*, 29(9), 6.

#### TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH EXECUTIVE BUILDING COMMITTEE

Mr. Payne H. Midyette, Sr.....	General Chairman
Mr. W. Godfrey Smith.....	General Co-Chairman
Mr. Ernest M. Menendez.....	Chairman, Plans and Construction
Mr. E. Grover Rivers, Jr.....	Chairman, Landscaping
Mr. Weldon G. Starry.....	Chairman, Legal Matters
Mr. R. Spencer Burress.....	Chairman, Mortgage
Judge Ben C. Willis.....	Chairman, Memorials
Mr. J. Edwin White.....	Chairman, Special Gifts
Mr. Howell Wadsworth .....	Chairman, Bequests
Dr. Griffith Pugh.....	Chairman, Campaign
Dr. H. Melton Ware.....	Ex-Officio
Mr. Roy E. Berry.....	Ex-Officio
Mr. Owen Sellers .....	Ex-Officio
Mr. Frank D. Moor.....	Ex-Officio
Mrs. J. Kenneth Ballinger.....	Ex-Officio
Mr. J. D. Williamson.....	Chairman, Official Board

**Editor's Note:** Mrs. J. Kenneth Ballinger (Lucille) served on the Trinity Methodist Church Executive Building Committee for the 1964 sanctuary (our present structure).

From Worship Service Bulletin (1962, July 1). Trinity UMC. Tallahassee, FL, p. 4.



## Carol Williams-Gilbert (Formerly, Kowalski)

Years of Service: 1981 to 1982

*Crossroads* article.: Reprinted from "Blazing the Trail for Female Clergy: A Story of Strong Faith, Persistence, and "a Lot of Prayer" by **Susan Koehler**, January 2020, Volume 4, Issue 1, pp. 1-4, [https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/January\\_2020\\_hs\\_newsletter.pdf](https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/January_2020_hs_newsletter.pdf)

One chilly February evening in the mid-1970s, a young theater major in Salisbury, North Carolina, was walking back to her dorm when she heard the voice of God calling her into service. She was confused.

Although she had been a faithful member of the United Methodist Church her entire life and had even preached to her stuffed animals as a child, she had never seen a female in the pulpit. Much like Samuel did to Eli, she awoke her campus pastor in the middle of the night to help her discern this call. By the end of their conversation, her Broadway dreams were set aside, and **Carol Williams** committed her life to the ministry.

In May of 1981, Carol was ordained an elder in the United Methodist Church in her home state of North Carolina. Her new husband had just completed seminary, and together they packed a U-Haul and headed for Florida. This warm and enthusiastic young pioneer became Trinity's first female associate minister, **the Rev. Carol Kowalski**.

As Carol remembers, "I was a newlywed, in another state—without my parents and family and friends—and every love bug landed on my windshield for 700 miles!" The move to Florida was necessitated by the fact that Carol's North Carolina Bishop did not place "clergy couples." The Kowalskis' time in Tallahassee proved to be life-changing for Carol and for Trinity.

On her first day at Trinity, Carol recalls being in awe of the physical structure and church community. In the beautiful sanctuary, she felt "the Divine's footsteps in the pews and altar area." The physical structure of the church was different from any she had known. She remembers being awed by the large conference room and exquisite parlor. She was given an office on the second floor, and there was even an elevator!

However, the most impressive part of Trinity was the sense of community. Members dropped by her office, and although sometimes taken aback by the novelty of a female pastor, quickly became at ease with her warm smile and friendly nature. The parsonage was a lovely home, and members dropped by with dinners, desserts, and house plants.

Most significantly, for the first time, Carol was part of a ministry team that was a well-oiled machine. Childcare director **Marie Touchton** was a bedrock of the church, having already served over 20 years at that point, forming a kind and reliable foundation for children and letting young families know they were valued. A large and reliable population of volunteers chaired committees, provided outreach, and readily showed that "laity was the oil that greased this church."

The acceptance and encouragement Carol

experienced at Trinity began at the top. **The Rev. Dr. Walter Kalaf, Rev. Brent Byerman,** and Christian Educator **Rubie Butterworth** formed a professional network of unwavering support. In Carol's words, these church leaders "embraced me and freed me to try my wings!"

Dr. Kalaf readily gave Carol opportunities to preach and assisted her with Wesleyan theology. She also recalls that "the district superintendent and several retired ministers worshipped at Trinity and were encouragers just as the disciple Timothy was to others." Dr. Kalaf's trust in Carol to perform a wedding, in addition to several baptisms and funerals, helped her grow in confidence and experience.

Having served at smaller churches in North Carolina, Carol found Trinity's downtown atmosphere new and exciting. Congregants of the early 1980s desired strong Biblical preaching and inspirational music. Trinity offered both. The budget was large compared to any other church budgets she had known, and board members were skilled and experienced in managing sizeable funds.

Within Trinity's congregation, Carol met many female professionals who served as role models and encouragers. Decades later, Carol maintains a sisterly friendship with those among that group of female professionals.

Carol recalls that Trinity's interdenominational bond with area churches was also a thriving piece of its ministry:

I loved the downtown church presence in the center of Tallahassee, and the triangle of three denominational churches on the downtown square that worked together to build the Christian community in Tallahassee.



**The Rev. Carol Williams-Gilbert (formerly Kowalski) during her days as the first female associate minister at Trinity (1981 to 1982). Copy in *Pastors of Trinity: 1824–2009* scrapbook. Archives [Heritage Room]. Tallahassee, FL: Trinity United Methodist Church.**

During her time in Tallahassee, she also met **Bobby Bowden** at a memorial service and became a “converted” Seminole fan. To this day, she continues to root for the Garnet and Gold (unless the opponent is Duke!).

After her time at Trinity, Carol was appointed as pastor of Calvary United Methodist Church. There she grew in faith and experience while her personal life endured the grief and upheaval of divorce. Carol remained at Calvary until she transferred back to the North Carolina Conference in 1986. There, she remarried, raised two children, and touched countless lives across eight different appointments until her retirement in 2018.

For 42 years, Carol remained steadfast to God’s call. She served over a dozen congregations during her career, and at each one, she was the first female clergy. As a trailblazer, Carol endured sexism within the Methodist church culture. She was often belittled and sometimes intimidated: from being addressed as “Hon” and directed to make coffee at business meetings, to receiving hate letters, harsh words, and even a cross burned on the parsonage lawn.

Her faith, a lot of prayer, frank conversations, and good humor carried her through these difficult times. Additionally, leagues of supporters within the clergy and laity of the UMC helped her move beyond “the prejudice that can destroy the body of Christ and the workings of the Holy Spirit.”

For female clergy and others facing prejudice within the church, Carol offers words of wisdom:

- **Pray when you start becoming defensive. Be who you are for that is who God called into his work of ministry.**
- **Do NOT change for the church people and what they want you to be.**
- **Be assertive in all things that are JUST and TRUE.**
- **Get a support group of women—dear friends in Christ. They are out there—seek them.**
- **Know that God will be with you every step of your journey, and keep the faith that each of us can bring about the scripture of Micah 6:8 and 4:1-5.**
- **Stay strong, and be gentle to yourself!**

Recently retired, Rev. Carol Williams-Gilbert and her husband have renovated a small cottage in North Carolina. There they cook, entertain, and read, and have planted a garden on their acre and a half of land. Their home is designed to be a place of light and peace.

In addition to pursuing a healthy lifestyle and teaching English to Vietnamese women, Carol feels a divine directive to lead seminars for women who are weary and need peace. That college theater major who heard God’s call so many years ago is still listening today.

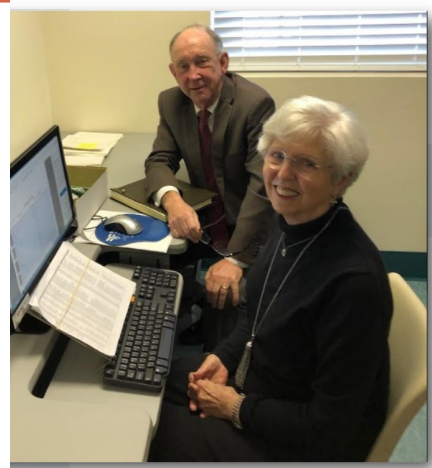
## Mary Margaret Andrews Rogers

Years of Membership at Trinity: 1937 to 2023

Based on “Historical Society Compiling Comprehensive Membership Records” by Linda Yates, January 2019, Volume 3, Issue 1, p. 7, [https://www.tumct.org/history/January\\_2019\\_hs\\_newsletter.pdf](https://www.tumct.org/history/January_2019_hs_newsletter.pdf) and “Our Work Continues Without Our Beloved ‘MM,’” by H.S. Leadership Team, April 2023, Volume 7, Issue 2, pp. 14-17, <https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/april-2023-hs-crossroads.pdf>

**M**ary Margaret Rogers, a member of the Historical Society and the Committee for the Preservation of Church History, took on one of the most tedious and challenging projects in Trinity’s archival preservation history: creating all-inclusive, bound, printed records, while entering all listings in a comprehensive format. This project included eight years of detailed information of baptisms, weddings, and deaths that had been missing in Trinity’s records because the digital format, now requested by the UMC *Book of Discipline*, allowed for the exclusion of some information families seek in creating a family genealogy. Missing information for baptisms and marriages was especially troubling. Before her untimely death, she—along with the assistance of **Cecile Baker**—completed records through February 2020. Her leadership in this project has provided Trinity families with the missing information they needed to keep alive the life and faith journeys of their loved ones. This contribution to the preservation of church history will be an enduring gift to the Trinity archives. Mary Margaret died on March 8, 2023.

**Reference for Years of Membership:** “Mary Margaret Rogers.” Tallahassee Democrat. <https://www.tallahassee.com/obituaries/tado69902>



Mary Margaret Rogers in the Yates Heritage Center workroom, with colleague, Lynn McLarty, on December 15, 2018.

## Beth Ferkany Curry

Years of Membership: 2008 to the Present

Based on "Ten Years of BFC Exercise: Supporting, Caring, and Praying" by Beth Curry, January 2019, Volume 3, Issue 1, pp. 8-9, [https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/January\\_2019\\_hs\\_newsletter.pdf](https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/January_2019_hs_newsletter.pdf)

When the United Methodist Church appointed **Beth Curry's** husband, **Rev. E. Wayne Curry**, as Trinity's senior pastor in July 2008, she planned to apply her passion for and education in health and fitness to teach exercise classes at the church. Her first class, which took place on September 2, 2008, in Trinity's parlor, welcomed six people. Her idea lit the Methodist flame for participation in a church activity, and attendance increased each week. Some exercise equipment was handmade but provided for students' needs, and "Becoming Fit at Church Series Exercise" became a new ministry at Trinity. More classes were added. Beth described in her 2019 *Crossroads* article the first years:

I was sole instructor for almost all of the eight years, leading up to the time of Wayne's retirement in 2016. Then four wonderful Trinity members volunteered to teach while we took one year off. I returned in 2017 to join **Elaine Freni, Jaqui Griffith, Ruth Ann High, and Amy Leach**, who together comprise the talented volunteer BFC Exercise Instructor Team today. In September 2018, BFC Exercise celebrated its tenth anniversary!

Key to its long-term success, in addition to Beth's teaching and organizing skills and the dedication of her fellow certified instructors, is its service component. Students are asked to donate a very small fee to take the class, with the funds going toward local or international community service.

As Beth explained about the close community, Participants have shared life's journey with each other. They have laughed together, cried together, prayed together in every class. They have lost members who have moved. They have lost members to death. They have welcomed new friends and new babies. BFC Exercise has not only helped people become fit, it has become a time for caring for, supporting, and loving one another!



Participants celebrated the BFC exercise ministry's ten-year anniversary in 2018.

### Editor's Note

*Crossroads* editors recognize that this is one of the most successful ministries at Trinity!



## Snapshots of Women Leaders from Other Trinity Publications

### Liz Smith Will Speak on Laity Sunday

Liz Smith, coordinator for Christian personhood for UMC Women and noted for her inspirational column, "Mustard Seeds," published in *Monthly Tidings*, will speak on "Loving the Loveable" on October 11, 1981.

From "Liz Smith Will Speak on Laity Sunday." (1981, October ). *Monthly Tidings*, 8(9), 1.



## Judith Tait Levy

1955 to 2021

*Crossroads* article: Based on “Celebrating the Contributions of Judy Levy: We Bid a Fond Good-bye,” by Historical Society Leadership Team, July 2021, Volume 5, Issue 1, p. 7, pp. 1-15, <https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/July-2021-hs-crossroads.pdf>

**J**udy Levy has been most widely known around Trinity as “The Pecan Lady.” Her leadership skills as an organizer and fund-raiser earned her that auspicious title. Only first-time visitors had to be told that it was time for the special annual fundraiser for United Methodist Women mission projects. Congregants knew the signs well. A familiar sight was Judy walking down the center aisle of the sanctuary prior to the worship service or interrupting Sunday school classes dressed in her placard over her shoulders and a crazy hat as a walking advertisement for bags of pecans.

She is also a superb chef, leading cooking classes, heading and organizing the “Trinity Chefs,” and preparing meals for shut-ins who were delighted to have these five-star meals brought to their homes.

While marketing and baking were obviously two of Judy’s talents, her most lasting legacy can be seen in the Yates Heritage Center and the online historical archives. Most people who think of her as “The Pecan Lady” may not know that she is a superb proof-reader and writer. Almost all (if not all) of the available records of official documents such as the membership records and minutes of business meetings have been provided in accessible format by Trinity archivist and researcher **Lynn McLarty**. But he will tell you that he relied on Judy for 11 years as his side-kick-proofreader in publishing these priceless documents online and in printed paper-bound format. And while she might tell you that in school her English teachers had very little

praise for her writing, she has most definitely proved them wrong in their assessment of her ability. She dressed up the articles she wrote in *Crossroads* with her own personality—which as anyone who knows her could tell you—is vibrant and engaging, and her works show a rare talent for creativity.

Judy moved from Tallahassee to Newnan, Georgia, to be near her family in 2021, but still lights up the sanctuary with occasional visits.



Judy Levy in 2017, hard at work proofing an impressive archival collection of official church records from Trinity’s past for online access as well as hard copy

**Reference for Years of Membership:** McLarty, E.L. (n.d.). Church Register Books Eight (October 1954–November 1984). Trinity United Methodist Church Archives, 3. <https://www.tumct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Book-8-PDF-For-Printing-20230514.pdf>

## Snapshots of Women Leaders from Other Trinity Publications



Stewardship Campaign Chair Eleanor Smith (left), Shirley Marshall, Betty Ebel, and Hubert Helton total pledges that arrive daily at the church.

From *Monthly Tidings* (1993, December). 20(11), p. 1.

## Making History: News from Trinity's Historical Society and Committee for the Preservation of Church History

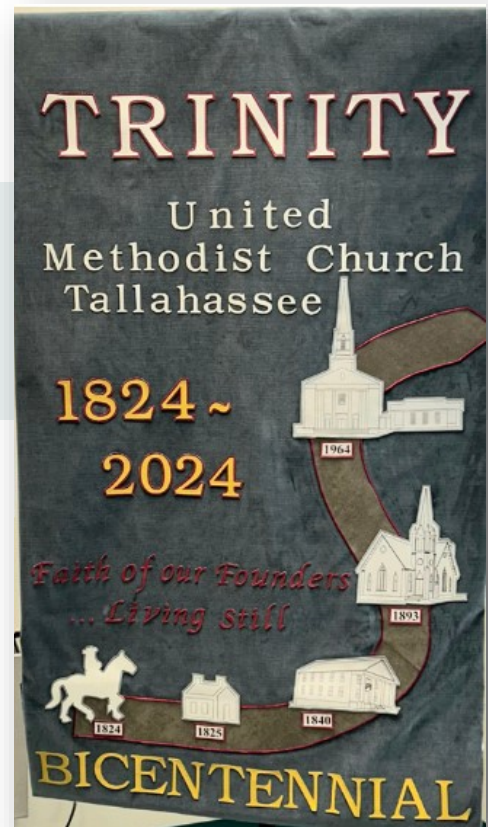
### A Banner Year for Trinity

The Bicentennial Banner made its debut on January 14 during the processional of Trinity's worship service with **Cecile Baker**, Committee for the Preservation of Church History chair, and **Lynn McLarty**, archivist, making their way down the center aisle behind the symbolic artwork.

At that moment, we witnessed an intersection of spiritual love, community, and history, a knitting together of the successes, tragedies, regrets, and accomplishments that make up the stories of Trinity's 200 years.

Energetic and resolute individuals made up the Bicentennial Banner Committee, including Cecile Baker, Lynn McLarty, **Barbara Ware**, **Gail Hill**, **Doris Mathis**, and **Susan Mick**. **Patsy Scott** and **Dan Scott** contributed items to the project, and **Margaret M. Cooke** drew the buildings' renditions for use in the banner reproduction. **Cinda Hortin**, whose creativity and expertise in banner making were evident in Trinity's earlier anniversary processional banners, served as advisor.

The banner's description and the story of its creation, authored by Cecile Baker in the March 2024 issue of *Monthly Tidings*, can be found [here](https://www.youtube.com/live/Kk9gtsoSQ1E?si=hSCF9gflcR4nvWTt). See the banner processional on Youtube at <https://www.youtube.com/live/Kk9gtsoSQ1E?si=hSCF9gflcR4nvWTt>







Lynn McLarty, official story-teller of Trinity, presents a talk on Trinity's history at the January 24, 2024, Lay Academy.

## (Making History, cont.)

### Lay Academy Presentations

**Lynn McLarty**, archivist, presented six talks at the winter and spring Lay Academy sessions: on January 24; January 31; and February 7, he gave a three-part history of Trinity. Later, on April 17, he presented a description and history of the 1893 church; on April 24, his talk was focused on the 1893 stained glass windows; and on May 8, he gave a history of the current sanctuary, which was built in 1964.

At the May 1 Lay Academy session, Historical Society members welcomed visitors—including our First Baptist friends who are interested in historical research—to the Yates Heritage Center for a tour (directed by **Susan Mick**) of artifacts and books.

Plans are underway for fall Lay Academy classes which will highlight World War II experiences by those in Trinity and Tallahassee, presented by Lynn McLarty, and three sessions on women leaders of the Methodist Church and Trinity, presented by **Pam Crosby**, Susan Mick, and **Pat Striplin**. Representatives from the First Presbyterian Church and the Florida Trust For Historic Preservation were welcomed by **Cecile Baker** and Lynn McLarty in July.

### Interviews

**Lynn McLarty** and **Rex Adams** have produced videotaped interviews with **Rev. David Hortin**, retired senior pastor, and his wife, **Cinda Hortin**, an active leader in Trinity's church life and with active Trinity member **Sam Rogers, Sr.** Articles in *Crossroads* based on the videos are planned in the coming months. To view the videos, go to our Historical Society play list at <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLp1jaeD-QQHBcZLOphU4hkiwqHWZHAye>

### History Festival

The Third Annual Tallahassee History Festival sponsored by Tallahassee Community College and Tallahassee Historical Society took place on Saturday, March 23, 2024, at Kleman Plaza in downtown Tallahassee. The Festival featured programs, exhibits, reenactments, and activities highlighting the city's history and that of the state of Florida. **Cecile Baker** and **Lynn McLarty** represented Trinity's Historical Society with a table exhibit of books, periodicals, and artifacts from the Yates Heritage Center.

### Sixtieth Anniversary of 1964 Trinity Sanctuary

On Sunday, May 5, 2024, **Rev. Dr. Matthew Williams**, senior pastor, spoke on the 60th anniversary of the current sanctuary built in 1964 at the 8:30 and 11:00 worship services.

### Yates Heritage Center Transformation

The Yates Heritage Center has undergone a transformation in the last few weeks, thanks to Trinity's custodial staff, renovation specialists, and our conscientious and industrious historians. This renovation was made possible by a generous donation from the family of **Mary Margaret Rogers** in honor of her contributions to the Historical Society and the Committee on the Preservation of Church History. Mary Margaret died on March 8, 2023.

The committee consulted with Trinity members **Bob and Ruth Bass** of Bass & Bass – Interior Design for needed improvements.

Antiquarian **Susan Mick** has contributed her display talents extensively to the makeover, joining with **Cecile Baker** (chair) and **Lynn McLarty** (archivist). Susan is an expert in completing inventories, cataloging, and displaying books, and arranging objects d'art.

In addition, replacing ceiling tiles and lighting with carefully selected filtered lighting for documents has improved visibility while avoiding damage to light-sensitive items.

The overall goal, therefore, has been to enhance visitors' viewing of artifacts and holdings while allowing for more exhibition space including centers for perusing scrap books and photo albums. Improving conditions for conducting serious research while accessing the on-site archives are in the plans as well.

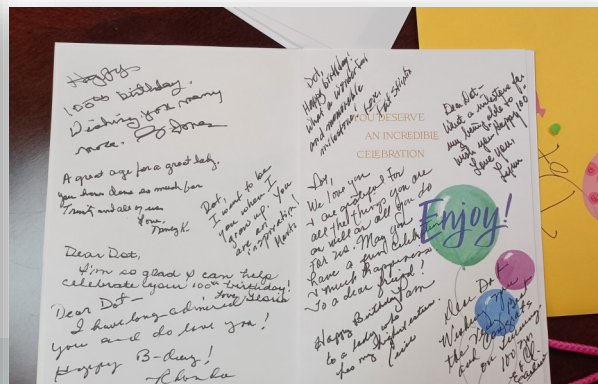
**Amy Jones**, who is the newest addition to our historical membership, is working on organizing and producing an inventory of archival holdings to determine missing and surplus items, and to catalog photographs, documents, books, and physical treasures.

Cecile Baker continues to update the archiving of periodicals, including the *Monthly Tidings* and worship service bulletins. Holdings perpetually change with donations of materials by families of past Trinity members that create ongoing demand for inventorying and organizing archives.





Photo taken by **Rev. Anna Brook Opalinski**. (Not pictured, **Gloria Colvin**, guest, and **Susan Mick**, member.)



One of the most beloved women leaders at Trinity will celebrate her 100th birthday on July 20, 2024. Read about **Dot Binger** on page 23 of this issue.

Seated in the Yates Heritage Center are members of the Historical Society who took part in an early celebration at our July 10th meeting. Standing L-R: **Marti Chumbler**, **Pam Crosby**, **Cecile Baker**, **Earline Adkison**, **Amy Jones**, **Pat Striplin**, and **Lynn McLarty**. Seated L-R: **Rhonda Work**, **Dot Binger**, and **Nancy Kerce**.

Above are the birthday greetings to Dot written that day.

(Not pictured, **Gloria Colvin**, guest, and **Susan Mick**, member.)

## Our Work in Highlighting Women Leaders at Trinity Has Just Begun

*Help Us to Tell the Stories! Our Editorial Staff Cannot Do It All!*

### Call for Stories and Articles on Women Leaders in Trinity's History

- **“I Remember When” snapshots:** These are short descriptions that recount church life memories. They are usually **25–100 words long**.
- **Oral interviews:** Interviews may be audio or video taped. Trinity historians write up the interviews in narrative form with approval from the persons interviewed before publication. Videos or audios of the interviews may be posted on Trinity's website with permission from persons interviewed.
- **Firsthand stories:** Individuals may submit stories based on their firsthand experience at Trinity. The stories are generally **500 words, but can be longer**.
- **Research articles:** These articles require citations and references based on documented evidence. Contact the editor for research guidelines.
- Submit Word document to **Pamela Crosby**, chief editor, at [pcrosby@tumct.org](mailto:pcrosby@tumct.org).