

The founders of Sevierville were God-fearing people and as early as 1787 Methodist Circuit Riders were preaching in area homes of Methodist People.

In 1802, Bishop Francis Asbury, the first Methodist Bishop preached in the home of Mitchell Porter one mile south of Sevierville near the present Vulcan Quarry.

A monument to Bishop Asbury is in the Shiloh Cemetery in Pigeon Forge and notes that he preached at the log Shiloh Methodist Church in 1808. Shiloh was the first Methodist Episcopal Church in Sevier County. It may also have been the first south of the French Broad River.

The Methodist Episcopal Church split over the issue of slavery in 1845 but Sevierville Methodists continued to worship together. In 1853 the congregation along with Mountain Star #197 F and Am and Division 327 of the Sons of Temperance purchased a lot on the south of Main Street for \$70.00. There a building was erected, the first floor for church services and the Masons met on the second floor.

In 1865 Holston Annual Conference reorganized to form the Methodist Episcopal church and Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Shortly thereafter, a portion of the local congregation withdrew from the Methodist Episcopal Church, South and began to worship at the Nancy Academy, an early Sevierville school. The Methodist Episcopal Church continued to worship there until 1883. Nancy Academy moved from Main Street to Bruce Street.

The Methodist Episcopal Church built a new church in 1883 on the south side of Bruce Street between Parkway and Broady Lane. This white frame building was used until 1908 when a new brick church was erected on Cedar Street. This lovely brick building's square bell tower housed the bell from the church on Bruce Street and was noted for beautiful memorial stained glass windows. The new church cost around \$8,000.00 and was constructed of locally made brick. On August 21, 1908 the cornerstone was laid.

In 1939 the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South and the Methodist Protestant Church united to become the Methodist Church. In 1940 the two churches in Sevierville united and the old community building housing the former Methodist Episcopal Church, South on Bruce Street was sold. The funds were used to build an addition to the church on Cedar Street.

In the Fall of 1948 a lovely, spacious two-story education building was built. This building memorialized and honored those serving in World Wars I and II. The building was renovated in 1979-80 and still serves the present congregation.

The Methodist Church united with the Evangelical United Brethren Church in 1968 thus forming the United Methodist Church. We have since been known as First United Methodist Church.

On October 29, 1967, the Church and Quarterly Conferences voted to build a new

sanctuary. A new cornerstone was laid with material from the old cornerstone, a copy of the deed, three Bible translations, Sunday School materials and other relevant materials. The new sanctuary was consecrated on December 20, 1970. The cost of was approximately \$375,000.00 and was totally debt free by 1976. The bell from the previous church was mounted on the front lawn and the debt free building was dedicated October 4, 1976.

The existing education building and Great Hall were constructed and consecrated January 14, 1979.

Additions to the present church include a 24 hour Prayer Chapel built in 1993 and the acquisition of the Broady Hospital and house in 1994-95. The property presently serves for parking and the house as the parsonage. In the summer of 2001 property on the south side of Cedar Street was purchased for future needs.

We are grateful for our history and we believe our future is even brighter than our past.