

History of the First United Methodist Church: 1969–1976

The years 1969 through 1976 were marked by continued activity, spiritual growth, and musical celebration within the life of the First United Methodist Church.

A highlight of this period occurred in 1971, when the Chancel Choir honored Joyce Walsh, who had organized the group 17 years earlier. This recognition reflected the church's strong commitment to its music ministry, which continued to thrive through the leadership of multiple choirs. The youth choir, under the direction of Mrs. Mary Bell Meredith, and the Carol Choir, along with the adult choir led by J.B. Robertson, all played vital roles in worship and fellowship.

In 1970, the church celebrated its Centennial Year with a special service on March 22, featuring Bishop Eugene Frank as the guest speaker. This milestone was a significant event in the life of the congregation, commemorating 100 years of ministry.

Even the weather could not dampen the church's spirit. On a snowy Sunday in January 1973, 150 people attended worship despite a thick blanket of snow. Just a month later, on February 15, 1973, the Methodist Messenger proudly reported 291 people in attendance, a sign of vibrant engagement within the congregation.

Pastoral leadership during this period included:

- Rev. Robert Core (1969–1973)
- Rev. Leland Butler (1973–1979)

These years reflect a church that remained faithful, active, and joyful, continuing its mission and ministry with dedication and hope.

During this period, the church also faced a challenge when it experienced an act of vandalism. A church Bible was partially destroyed (that Bible is still in the history room), and a flower arrangement was also destroyed. Though damaging and discouraging at the time, the congregation responded with grace and unity, repairing the damage and continuing its ministry without pause. It served as a reminder that even in times of adversity, the church's foundation remains strong.