

A Brief History of
EPWORTH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Bull and Thirty-Eighth Streets
Savannah, Georgia

“The land on which thy feet standeth shall be holy unto the Lord” was the remark made by Rev. W.M. Blicht when he made the selection of this site for Epworth Church seventy years ago.

In the year 1883 the seed of Epworth United Methodist Church was planted in the organization of a Sunday School Class in the home of Mr. C.W. Winningham on Wilson Street, in a section of the city known as Robertsville. From this grew a mission church and given the name of Marvin after Bishop Marvin. This church was sponsored by a group of men from Trinity United Methodist Church and was located on Roberts Street. Organized in 1889 with a membership of seventy-three.

In 1890 the congregation built a new church and parsonage on West Broad and Charles Streets and the Conference appointed Rev. J.M. Mather city missionary and pastor of Marvin Church. They remained at this site for seven years. Becoming dissatisfied with the location they sold it to a negro congregation. While waiting for the building to be completed the congregation met in a room on Whitaker and 35th Streets and in Second Presbyterian Church at Barnard and Anderson Streets.

On October 10, 1897, the name of Marvin Church was ...hanged to Seventh Street Methodist Church. Later the name of the street was changed to Thirty-Seventh Street. At this site the congregation decided to change the name to Epworth after the birthplace of John Wesley in England. In this location the membership grew to three hundred and seventy-two. This site was sold to the Seventh Day Adventists in 1912.

In January 1912, Rev. W.M. Blicht chose our present site -Bull and 38th Streets. While waiting for building to be started on rear of lot, the congregation met in a tent on Bull Street side for about a year.

Excavation for the permanent building began July 9,1912. The Cornerstone was set at ceremonies on February 14,1913. Sunday School was occupied Easter Sunday, 1913, and the church October 18, 1914.

A home at 2205 Bull Street, beside the church, was bought for our parsonage March 13, 1918, but due to growth in membership we needed space for Sunday School rooms, so on August 21, 1919 we bought the home at 2117 Bull Street, for the parsonage, and the old parsonage turned over to the Children’s Department. Our pipe organ was bought and accepted July 7,1922.

Ground breaking on site of old parsonage for the Educational Building was held in a ceremony August 20, 1949. A reception in the new building was held on June 16, 1950, when it was opened for use.

We sold our parsonage at 2117 Bull Street on October 5, 1956, and bought the present one for our minister at 334 East 53rd Street.

Our church sanctuary was completely reconstructed on the inside and additional educational facilities and church office suite added, starting December 1959. A contract with Hugh Jackson, general contractor, for \$267,829, was executed December 17, 1959. For more than a year we met

in the Educational Building for worship services. Palm Sunday, 1961, was the first day we worshipped and rejoiced in our beautiful new auditorium as it is now.

During the nearly 100 years of her existence our church has moved, built, and renovated her buildings only to offer a better place for her members to worship God in spirit and in truth. Many ministers and laymen have shared in teaching and aiding in time of trouble the wonderful people in her congregation.

Truly, *“The land on which thy feet stondest shall be holy unto the Lord.”*