

Mocks Church History 1903 – 2023

By Anna Hancock

A brush arbor meeting was held for several years behind the old log one room schoolhouse (for grades 1-8) by a local preacher, Mr. Wiley Riddle. In 1902, the people attending the meetings decided to build a church for the Mocks community. Most families in this area were driving their horse and buggy or horse and wagons to Advance Methodist Church for Sunday morning worship services. (Cars had not been invented yet). A building committee was established composed of Abington Phelps, John Thomas Phelps, I.H. Mock, W.J. Jones, J.C. Beauchamp, and J.E. Orrell. These ancestors are buried in our graveyard. Mocks Church was put under construction in 1903 and completed in 1904 under the leadership of Rev. W.M. Curtis. Dedication was in 1905. The building was a white clapboard one room church. In the winter, heating the building was a potbellied stove. In summer, the cooling was provided by open windows and hand fans. Sometimes the horses hitched outside would put their heads in the windows and neigh (probably indicating they were ready to go home). There were no indoor bathroom facilities, but a men's and women's outhouse were situated at the rear of the property. Local men volunteered to build the church and locals also donated the wood. Thus, the Little White Church was dedicated in 1905 with 56 founding members. Later several Sunday School classes were added on to the church. You always had to remember that there was a step down from the sanctuary to the Sunday School classes.

In 1957, termites had invaded the Little White Church, so another committee was formed to build a new brick church with construction beginning in 1958. Church members and community men worked Saturdays, and some weekday evenings constructing a new church. The ladies of the church provided lunch on Saturdays. The ladies also baked pies and cakes for sale one Saturday morning each month at Mayberry on Stratford Road. We loaded our car trunks with these delicious baked goods and usually sold all of the homemade treats. The "city ladies" loved these baked goods. After lots of hard work with Charlie Allen as the "contractor" directing the work, our new brick church building was completed and the first service was on Sunday, April 17, 1960. Rev. Fletcher Andrews was our pastor and lead the dedication ceremony on October 2, 1960. Mr. George Mock, a charter member, proudly announced: "We name this church Mocks Methodist Church."

Mocks Methodist Church continued to grow, and the church basement became too small to accommodate fellowship meals and other activities. A decision was made to build a fellowship hall beside our brick church on the grounds where the White Church had stood. Work began in August of 1987 – again with congregation members and community members working together to build this building. The new fellowship hall was dedicated on Sunday, June 3, 1990.

Our church members decided that we did not want to continue to be a two-point charge with Advance UMC, so we began the preparation to become a station church with our own pastor. We were approved to become a station church in 1994. Once again, the hammers, nails, saws and building materials were brought out with church members and community members working together to complete the new parsonage located at the corner of Mocks Church Road and Hillcrest Drive. Time was of an essence as our new pastor would be arriving July 1, 1995. Rev. Bruce Gwyn was the first pastor to occupy the new parsonage.

During the years of 1996 – 2000, other projects began. Renovation of the church sanctuary was started, and you guessed it – church members again came out and constructed a new choir loft and altar. Under Pastor Gwyn's direction the church grew rapidly, and we expanded to two worship services. We also purchased three lots in the new Windemere housing development and made a walking trail for the community to use, expanded our graveyard and held one lot for perhaps a second parsonage. Land and a house were purchased on the corner of Mocks Church Road and Beauchamp Road. The house was converted to the church office and moved from the fellowship hall to provide more Sunday School rooms. The church also used this property to house a mission building and parking facilities for church vans.

In 2023, our congregation contemplated leaving the United Methodist Church due to doctrine adaptations by the UMC conference. After much consideration, a vote was held to leave the UMC conference. Then another vote was held to determine if this congregation would go with the Global Methodist Church or become an independent church. The vote was to become an independent church. A few weeks later another vote decided that the new name of our church would be MOCKS CHURCH.

Mocks Church became an independent church on April 30, 2023.

A new chapter in the history of Mocks Church began on May 1, 2023. Mocks extraordinary heritage will continue with a renewed hope and spirit.

In the 120 years since the decision was made to build a church for the Mocks Community, on land donated by I.H. Mock, landmark decisions have been made. This church has grown from a five-point charge to a two-point charge to a station church. We have been served by 39 former pastors, and Pastor Roger Rayburn will be our 40th minister to guide this congregation at Mocks.

Our last pastor under the two-point charge was Rev. Harry Sherrill and wife Juliene. Since becoming a station church in 1995, we have been honored to have seven ministers: Rev. Bruce Gwyn and wife Debbie, Rev. Donnie Durham and wife Deborah, Rev. Bob Symanski and wife Sherri, Rev. Jonathon Brake and wife Alisha, Rev. William “Bill” Taylor and wife, Jackie, Rev. Gary Elrod and wife Sandra, Rev. Luke Mitchell and wife Kari, and now our 40th minister, Rev. Roger Rayburn and wife Mary.

Let us continue to pray for God’s direction for Mocks Church. In His service may we continue to be a loving congregation and in prayer always for God’s will to be done in our lives and the life of Mocks Church.