

Jones Memorial Library

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Revised 8-20-25

Finding Aid to the Fairview United Methodist Church History Room Collection <1905-2025>

Collection Number: MS2137

Creator: Fairview United Methodist Church, Lynchburg, Virginia

Title: Fairview United Methodist Church History Room Collection

Dates: 1905-2025

Volume of collection: 10 cubic feet

Language of materials: English

Collection summary:

This collection contains materials removed from the History Room, established in 1975, at Fairview United Methodist Church to document the founding and history of the congregation.

Organizational history:

This is the History Room Story, as written by Joan Lawhorne Precious on February 21, 2025:

In 1975, according to Pastor Buzz Moore, "The excitement and enthusiasm can be seen in those who worship with us..." as many prepared for the Fairview United Methodist Church Homecoming and Heritage Sunday on October 12, 1975. The History and Records Committee composed of Ed Carwile, Mrs. George (Lucy) Suthard and Mrs. W. B. (Fannie) Patterson planned the celebration with former ministers participating in the morning Church School and Worship Service, followed by lunch and an afternoon Fellowship Program with the Committee presenting highlights of the history they had worked for many months to gather.

A 63 page book entitled A History of Fairview United Methodist Church was written by Dot Carwile and was presented to church members and friends at the celebration.

The book dedication reads:

"This book is dedicated to the History and Records Committee which is composed of the following members:

My mother, Fannie Mason Patterson, oldest living charter member

My dear friend, Lucy Krause Suthard

My husband, Edward M. Carwile, chairman

And to all other members and friends who helped the committee in the research and in the gathering of materials. I am very grateful.

Doris P. Carwile”

The Fairview United Methodist Church History Room was established at this exciting time by Doris (Dot) Patterson Carwile and her husband Edward Malcom Carwile. The room featured photos of pastors displayed in chronological order from picture rails surrounding the room, along with photos of pastors' wives and Sunday School teachers. Flanking the window were two charcoal drawings of the original church building, one depicting the structure as it was erected in 1909 and the other after an addition in 1922; both of these drawings were created by Dot Carwile. Encased displays included retired pulpit Bibles, flags, paraments and communion cloths and bowls. Ledges displayed publications, including church cookbooks, directories and various artifacts. Glass topped tables displayed certificates, including bonds purchased by members to finance the original church building, bulletins and inserts from the dedication of church improvements, newsletters, newspaper articles and many photos from special events. Records included Ministers' reports to the Quarterly Conference, many hand-scribed by the pastor, membership rolls, attendance records and inventories. Since the time of its inception, the History Room has also been lovingly maintained by Church Historians Blanche Watts, and Helen Suthard and Peggy Suthard Knight, daughters of Lucy Suthard.

In a letter to church members dated January 8, 2025, it was announced that continuation of the ministries at Fairview was no longer sustainable due to declining membership, financial instability, increases in operational costs and aging infrastructure. The final worship service at Fairview UMC took place on February 2, 2025. The difficult task of closing the church would proceed in the weeks to come, including a plan to relocate our beloved History Room. Rita Fitzgerald contacted Jones Memorial Library, Genealogy and History Collections and she and Joan Precious met at the church with Director Deborah Smith and Archivist Gwen Wells, who were impressed with the organization and detail that made this room so special. While they were sympathetic to our situation, they were excited to provide a place to preserve our history and offered instructions for packing the History Room contents. In the weeks to follow, members pitched in to lovingly dismantle, sort, label and box the contents of the History Room. While this was a sad task to undertake, it provided a time to reminisce, telling stories and sharing memories of special times in our past. Those who participated were Pastor Liz Ecklund, Rita Fitzgerald, Joan Precious, John Precious, Teresa Watson, Brenda Johnson, Brenda Phillips and Heidi Carwile Morris, daughter of Dot and Ed Carwile.

It is only fitting that on Valentine's Day, February 14, 2025 the contents of the History Room of Fairview UMC were delivered to Jones Memorial Library on Memorial Ave. in Lynchburg VA. The contents, over time, will be digitized and made available as a special collection for those who search for family history and memories of the special love that was shared by this community.



The rich history of Fairview United Methodist Church will live on in the capable hands of Jones Memorial Library and in the hearts of those who worshipped and experienced God's never-ending love through this church.



Joan Lawhorne Precious

Collection description:

Collection contains materials removed from the History Room of Fairview United Methodist Church to document the founding and history of the congregation. Includes information about the founding of the congregation and the church and parsonage buildings, Quarterly and Charge Conference records, Sunday School Attendance Books, Inventories, Church Directories, and Account Books. Also includes photo albums and bulletins of church events and anniversaries, audio cassette tapes of services and programs, and published works including a few Disciplines, Methodist Hymnals and a children's book. Digital photos exist on our JML digital collections site with copies on a USB drive in Box 1 of the collection.

Arrangement:

The creators' original order has been maintained with materials organized chronologically in each box according to type of material.

Digitized Copies:

Parts of this collection have been digitized. For information about obtaining digital copies, or having more material digitized, please contact the Jones Memorial Library reference desk at refdesk@jmlibrary.org."

Access restrictions:

There are three boxes of audio cassettes which will need specialized equipment for accessibility

Digital materials:

Digital photographs are on a USB drive located in the first box of the collection; these electronic materials are available in our Digital Collections Online.

Technical requirements:

An audio cassette player is required for accessing the audio cassettes.

Use Restrictions:

Access to this collection is open, but some materials may be restricted under data protection laws.

Some materials may contain sensitive or confidential information protected under federal and/or state privacy laws and regulations. JML takes steps to identify and in some cases remove this kind of information. Therefore, materials may need to be reviewed by staff prior to access.

Patrons are advised that the disclosure of certain information pertaining to living individuals may have legal implications. **Patrons who find sensitive or confidential information in any collection agree to immediately notify a JML staff member.** Patrons also agree to make no notes or other record of privacy protected information if found within the collections and further agrees not to publish, publicize, or disclose such information to any other party. Users assume all responsibility for infringement of right to privacy in use of these materials and agree to indemnify and hold harmless Jones Memorial Library and agents against all claims, demands, costs, and expenses arising from the use of JML materials.

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Preferred Citation:

George M. Jones Library Association (Lynchburg, Va.), "Finding aid to the Fairview United Methodist Church History Room Collection."

Works used in preparation of inventory: [Required]

All biographical information about the creators and the collection have been provided by members of the congregation.

Acquisition note:

This collection was deposited to the Jones Memorial Library by the members of the Fairview United Methodist Church on February 14, 2025, along with a deed of gift signed by Pastor Liz Ecklund on January 31, 2025.

Processing information:

Processing of this collection began in late April of 2025 and was completed in September of 2025 by Volunteers Allie, Ginny, Marge, and Maya, and Archivist Gwen Wells. Box one contained oversized three ring binders that were disassembled, re-folded, and labeled by Allie. In August 2025, Marge and Gwen added the Rev. Turner scrapbook to a black flat box (box #5) with loose bulletins from the scrapbook placed in 3 envelopes (original order maintained) and added to the box with the scrapbook. Due to a crumbling backboard the "First Parsonage Collage" from Box 3 Folder 7, Gwen disassembled it and encapsulated the contents in mylar and returned it to its original location. Photographs of this process can be found in the digital collection. Audio cassettes were divided into 3 boxes (boxes 6, 7, 8) and organized chronologically by Marge and Maya. This collection was described by Archivist Gwen Wells in September 2025 using current DACS standards. Original folder and binder titles were retained and used in the box description in the container list below.

Container list:

A container list description by box is kept with the first box of all collection materials and is attached separately to the finding aid.