



“Thou Shalt Come into the Ark” — *Genesis 6:18*  
EUREKA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Farms line the country road in northern Wayne County that leads to Eureka United Methodist Church. The quiet, rural highway winds past one white clapboard farmhouse after another before reaching the crossroads of Eureka. Just past a row of turn-of-the-century storefronts stands the spotless white frame church. Built in 1884, Eureka United Methodist Church has served as not only a house of worship but also the social and cultural center of this farming community for more than a century. With Gothic Revival touches, the inviting exterior resembles many fine churches that dot the eastern North Carolina landscape with its weatherboard frame, lancet windows filled with wavy glass, central entrance, belfry, and gabled roof.

But the most distinguishing feature of Eureka United Methodist Church adorns the inside. Above the sanctuary stretches an intricately shaped wooden ceiling, skillfully crafted of Carolina yellow pine to form the shape of an ark.

The shelter of Eureka’s ark has reached beyond this intimate community of about 300. The memory of its spiritual strength and warmth helped Stanley Yelverton survive in a German prisoner-of-war camp while serving in the U.S. Army during World War II. “When I was in the POW camp thoughts about my church brought me comfort,” he remembered. “We had one Bible between us in the camp and when we would pass it around I would think about hearing God’s word on Sunday mornings back in Eureka.” Sunday morning memories were not the only ones Yelverton had. “I would think about those Sunday picnics, too. We had some good food — fried chicken, cherry pie, and cakes,” he laughed. Through those long days Yelverton felt the members of Eureka were praying for him. “I could feel the prayers coming my way. I knew the people cared for me.” — *Diane Silcox-Jarrett*

Location: **Eureka,  
Wayne County**  
Current Church Completed:  
**1884**  
Worship: **Regular Services**