Orthodox Church **[1]**

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Orthodox Church

by Wiley J. Williams, 2006

[2]

The Orthodox Church [3] has 225 million members worldwide and 6 million members in North America. In North Carolina, the church is represented by the Greek Orthodox Church and, to a lesser extent, the Russian Orthodox Church. From 1900 until about 1920-paralleling the nation's "third wave" of immigration-the number of Greek and Russian immigrants to the state increased. Orthodox churches were subsequently established, beginning in about 1905 with a Greek Orthodox Church in Asheville [4]. Some 30 years later, the number of Greek Orthodox churches in the state had grown to three, with a total membership of about 400 communicants. By the early 2000s there were about 1,000 members altogether in Greek Orthodox churches in several metropolitan areas, including Asheville [5], Burlington, Charlotte [6], Durham [7] (which traces the Parish of Saint Barbara from 1945), Fayetteville [8], Greensboro [9], Raleigh [10], Wilmington [11], and Winston-Salem [12].

North Carolina was, for many years, home to the only Russian Orthodox Church in the South-Saints Peter and Paul, formed in 1932 in St. Helena, a small Pender County [13]community. In that year, on land acquired from Wilmington [11] real estate [14] promoter Hugh MacRae, the tiny red brick church began with 15 charter members and their families. By 2006 Russian Orthodox congregations could be found in the Piedmont [15] and Mountains [16] as well as the Coastal Plain [17], in the form of Holy Trinity Orthodox Church in Durham and St. Nicholas Orthodox Church in Fletcher.

Reference:

Paula Maria Stathakis, "Development of a Greek-American Community in the South: Charlotte, North Carolina, 1900-1940" (M.A. thesis, UNC-Charlotte, 1988).

Additional Resources:

Orthodox Church in America: http://oca.org/ [3]

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"St. Mary Coptic Orthodox Church." Image courtesy of Flickr user David Hoffman. Available from http://www.flickr.com/photos/universalpops/7241974924/ [2] (accessed June 5, 2012).

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