



The scene above the entrance to the fellowship center represents the events of **March, 1836**. Susanna Dickinson (far left with her daughter and slaves) walked back to Gonzales to inform Sam Houston (mounted on the white horse, right) that the Alamo had fallen. All the men were dead—including the 32 men from Gonzales who had gone to the aid of the Texans at the Alamo. The Mexican army was advancing on Gonzales, so the colony was abandoned and burned (shown in the background). This portrait of “The Runaway Scrape” gives an accurate account of the pitiful state of the women of Gonzales. Their husbands were dead and their homes were burned, yet they listened as Pastor Smith preached a sermon of hope and encouragement.



Around the large picture window adjacent to the courtyard, there are paintings of the flora and fauna of the Gonzales County area during this time. Deer and other wild life, including palmettos and oaks are still prevalent in the area today.



### About the Artist

Lynne Looney was born in Falls County and raised in Bell County. She has lived in Temple, Texas; San Miguel de Allende, Guanahuato, Mexico; Atlanta and Columbus, Georgia, and in Gonzales, Texas.

While working in Atlanta, she was diagnosed with cancer. Since her artistic talent was the only source of her income, Lynne found herself in dire straits! Being an extremely physical profession, art had to be postponed. Yet how do you postpone buying groceries or paying rent? When the Christians at the church in which she and her daughter, Laura, belonged discovered her plight, they banded together and helped her financially. She had to move back into her parents’ home in Gonzales County, but Christians involved with a prayer chain in Georgia, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Texas continued to send aid even after she had moved. She knew she could never repay them.

Concerned for the spiritual welfare of her young daughter, Laura, she joined the First United Methodist Church in 1998, because she was impressed with its youth program. When the congregation voted to build on to their worship complex, pledges were requested from each family. Lynne knew she had no money to give. All of her income at that time was used to support Laura and herself. But she thought, “I can donate my talent.” And so she did.

Lynne Looney has given back to the Christian community a portion of the love and support she received when she was ill. Gonzales Methodists are extremely fortunate to have been the recipients of her gift, and FUMC thanks God for the talent He gave her, because it can never be repaid. Thank you, Lynne.

**FUMC Worship Services**

**8:30 a.m.    Worship Service**

**9:45 a.m.    Sunday School**

**10:45 a.m.    Worship Service**

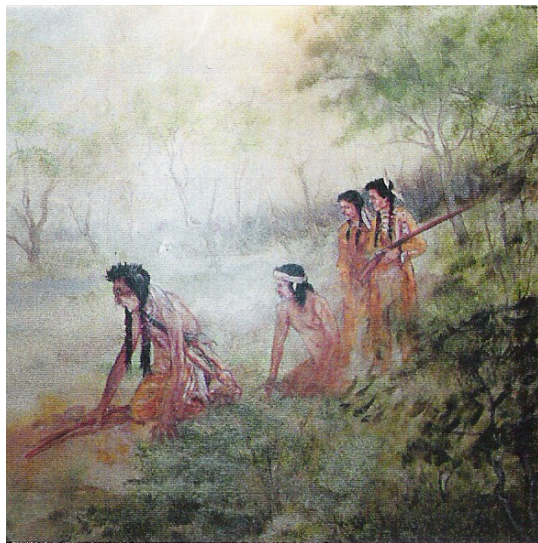
**[www.gvec.net/fumc](http://www.gvec.net/fumc)**



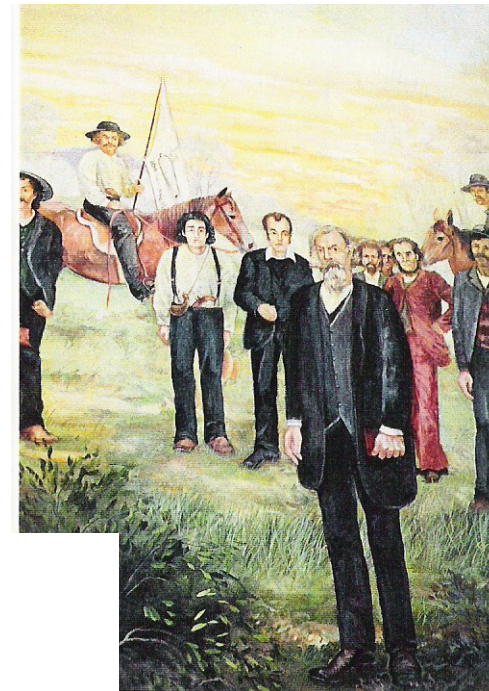
## First United Methodist Church

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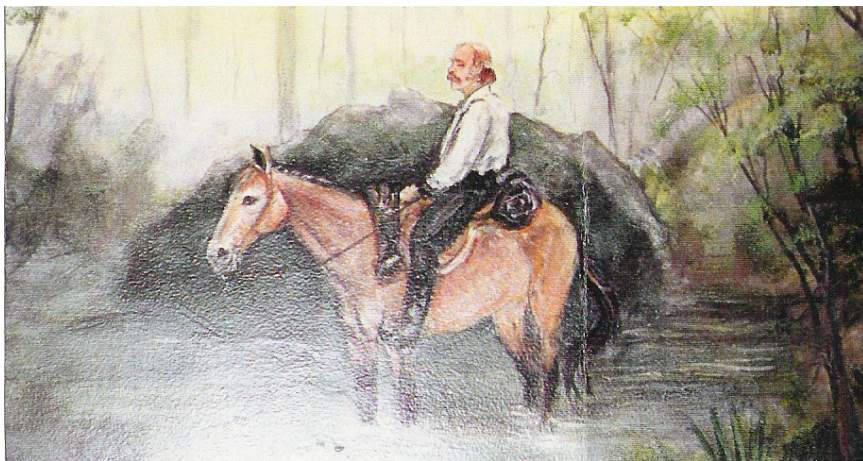




In the first scene, closest to the steps leading to the sanctuary, the artist painted the Native Americans who first lived in this part of Texas. They are believed to be Karankawas.



A circuit rider is shown in the next scene. In **1824**, Henry Stevenson was the first Methodist/Protestant assigned to this area. He held services on Peach Creek in the eastern part of Gonzales County. In this same year John Wesley Kenney preached on the banks of the Guadalupe River near Gonzales. Pastor Kenney was one of the pioneers of Texas Methodism and founded the Methodist Gonzales Society in **1835**. Early circuit riders were required to cover large areas over many square miles.



To the right of the doorway, the artist has depicted one of the circuit riders meeting with some Gonzales families in the lean-to for worship. When the pioneers first arrived, their first priority was shelter for their families. After crops were established and protection assured, they could think about a building for worship. In **1841** the Texas conference was formed, which placed the Victoria Circuit in the Ruterville District. Because Pastor J.P. Sneed organized the Methodist Church at Gonzales in the same year, it has the distinction of being the oldest continually worshipping congregation in Texas.

On the left side of the doorway, the mural shows the building constructed on this site by the Methodists and the Masons in **1853**. They shared it until **1874**. That year the congregation purchased the building and replaced it with a red brick structure at a cost of \$3,708.75. Red bricks were found on this location during the excavation for the present new building.

On the south wall facing the sanctuary entrance is an excellent portrayal of the beginning of the "Come and Take It" conflict in **1835**. Methodist elder and practicing physician, Pastor William P. Smith (shown in the front, right), gave a stirring and patriotic address to 150 Texans, many of whom were citizens of Gonzales, assembled on the banks of the Guadalupe River on the evening prior to **October 2**. He led them in prayer the next morning and, shortly after, the first shot of the Texas Revolution was fired.

Previously, Santa Anna, the president of Mexico, had given the citizens of Gonzales a small cannon for their protection against the Indians. At the end of September, 1835, the Mexican soldiers were camped on the other side of the Guadalupe River. This scene is painted on the opposite wall. The soldiers demanded the return of the cannon, but the people of Gonzales refused the order, answering instead, "Come and Take It!"

