

Christmas Carol Service

December 17, 2006



Barratt's Chapel

Frederica, Delaware

"The Independence Hall of American Methodism"

1780

Welcome to Barratt's Chapel

Built in 1780 on land donated by Philip Barratt, the High Sheriff of Kent County, Barratt's Chapel is the oldest surviving church building in the United States built for Methodist worship. With a seating capacity far exceeding the needs of a local congregation, the Chapel was intended from the first to provide a meeting place for Methodists from all over the Delmarva Peninsula.

Here on November 14, 1784, Francis Asbury, the leader of American Methodists, met Thomas Coke, recently arrived from England as John Wesley's personal emissary. The two men laid plans for the organization of what would become the Methodist Episcopal Church. Also at this meeting the sacrament of communion was celebrated for the first time anywhere by an ordained Methodist preacher with the approval of Wesley. This act of worship was a symbolic declaration that from this point on the Methodist Movement in America would take its own course independent of the Church of England. Because Methodism played such a significant role in the development of the United States, no other building in Delaware can claim a greater place in American history.